
FREE LEAGUE
CORIOLIS
MERCY OF THE ICONS – PART 1
EMISSARY LOST

CORIOLIS DESIGN TEAM
Christian Granath, Tomas Härenstam,
Nils Karlén, Kosta Kostulas

WRITERS
Rickard Antroia, Mattias Johnsson, Nils Karlén,
Kosta Kostulas, Mattias Lilja, Adam Palmqvist

EDITORS
Nils Karlén , Kosta Kostulas

GRAPHIC DESIGN
Christian Granath,
Cristoffer Wiker

COVER ART
Martin Grip

INTERIOR ART
Magnus Fallgren,
Gustaf Ekelund

MAPS
Christian Granath,
Tobias Tranell,
Rickard Antroia

TRANSLATION
Tim Persson

PROOFREADING
John Marron

PLAYTESTERS
Jonatan Ericsson, Joel Grimm, Johanna Håkansson, Petra Medin, David Semark,
Mascoll Silverstolpe, Maja Thalén, Matthew Tyler-Jones

PRINT
Livonia, Riga 2018

ISBN
978-1-912743-02-5

CORIOLIS™ Copyright© 2018 Paradox Interactive AB. All rights reserved. www.paradoxplaza.com



INTRODUCTION 4

BACKGROUND 4
OVERVIEW 6
GM TIPS 6

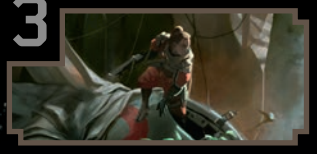


WAKE OF THE MARTYR 8

INTRO 8
ACT 1 – THE MYSTICIDES 16
STARTING SCENE: THE ATTACK 17
CHASING DOWN THE FAKE GUARDS 24
THE DISAPPEARANCE OF THE EMISSARY 36
ENDING ACT 1 37

ACT 2 – HIGH STAKES 38
STARTING SCENE: FRIENDS IN HIGH PLACES 38
THE EMISSARY'S LAST SONG 43
CONNECTING THE DOTS 48
A DANCE OF BLOOD 58
ENDING ACT 2 62

ACT 3 – THE ABYSS 63
STARTING SCENE: INTO THE SHADOWS 64
IN THE COURT OF THE SLUMMER QUEEN 70
THROUGH THE LABYRINTH 76
THE MARTYR'S EMBRACE 83
ENDING ACT 3 92
AFTERMATH 93



THE KUAN CONNECTION 94

INTRODUCTION 96
ACT 1 – LOST IN THE JUNGLE 100
- STARTING SCENE: BLOOD ON THE LEAVES 100
- EYES AND EARS 108
- ON THE BRINK 112
- ENDING ACT 1 124

ACT 2 – BIG TROUBLE IN LITTLE ALGOL 125
- STARTING SCENE: THE PROCESSION 126
- CRIMINAL ROYALTY 138
- THE STATESMAN'S LAST DANCE 150
- ENDING ACT 2 154

ACT 3 – THE SULTRA MARSHES 155
- STARTING SCENE: THE DEAD MARSHES 156
- HEART OF DARKNESS 163
- A GREAT WINGED SHADOW 170
- THE MESSENGER'S WHISPER 180
- ENDING ACT 3 185



EPILOGUE 186

- AFTERMATH 188
- MISSION GENERATOR 189

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to **Emissary Lost**, the first part of the epic **Mercy of the Icons** campaign for Coriolis – The Third Horizon. Emissary Lost tells the tragic tale of the Emissary on Coriolis, the Horizon's growing mystic population, and the deadly conspiracy targeting them both.

EMISSARY LOST is made up of two scenarios, *The Wake of the Martyr* and *The Kuan Connection*. It is a thrilling story full of intrigue and action, leaving plenty of room for the group to make it their own. They will gradually get to know the Third Horizon as the campaign takes them far from home to see new places and experience new things. Emissary Lost establishes the PCs' involvement in the *Mercy of the Icons* arc and introduces important NPCs, themes, and events that will return throughout the campaign. The background to the events in *Mercy of the Icons* is described below, some of which will become known to the PCs as they start to unravel the secrets surrounding the abductions of the mystics and the Emissary on Coriolis.

BACKGROUND

The story begins when infiltrators serving the Eternal Emperor of the First Horizon finally break through to the Third Horizon via the portals in the Taoan system.

THE FALL OF TAOAN

The events that eventually warranted the ultimately unsuccessful rescue mission to Taoan are at the core of the dark tide that is about to wash over the Third Horizon once more. The portals between the First Horizon and the Taoan system are not dead, only sleeping, and they are about to wake up. Their short windows of stability are rare and unpredictable, but the great enemy on the other side has launched ship after ship into the darkness between the stars, until finally one vessel made it through – a white, butterfly-shaped ship, sneaking up on the unsuspecting Taoan mining colony. The goals of the First Horizon invaders are clear: prepare the Third Horizon for a swift take-over, ideally without too much bloodshed. Hidden survivors from the cult of Nazareem's Sacrifice are to spread chaos and fear to destabilize the factions and local governments, after which the fleets of the First Horizon will show up to restore order, peace, and stability. A violent invasion will only be necessary if the efforts of the Nazareem's Sacrifice fail, and open hostilities would have to be short and brutal – all of the Emperor's forces are needed in the ever-raging war against the Second Horizon and the Symmetry.

⚙ THE LAST VOYAGE OF THE GHAZALI

The attack on the Taoan mining colony was a brilliant success except for one thing – the colony managed to transmit a distress call. When the mining station had been converted, the invaders set out to find the surviving members of Nazareem's Sacrifice and ran into the ships dispatched for the rescue mission. When the Legion destroyer Zafirah was entering the portal fields in the Hamura system, she was attacked by The White Butterfly in the darkness between the portals. The destroyer was defeated but managed to send a warning back to the repurposed cruise ship Ghazali before the portal field detonated. A powerful energy blast hit the Ghazali, knocking her off course, with a trajectory towards Hamura's unforgiving star.

THE ORDER'S PROPHECY

The Order of the Pariah is an ancient cult, its origins lost in time, but with many teachings and values that stem from long before the Portal Wars isolated the Third Horizon. The devastation caused by the Wars destroyed much of the Third Horizon's history. The

Order hurled everything they had against their enemies in the final battles in the Odacon system and won, but suffered terrible losses. The remnants of the victorious fleet rose from the ashes, celebrating the glorious dead and piecing together their shattered history – much had been destroyed, insights that should never have been forgotten were lost forever.

The Order of today carves old prophecies and prayers on temple walls and ship hulls – salvaged holy words from the past to protect against future terrors. The messages are sometimes clear to those who can read them, but in other cases are obscure and dark, with only the prophet's name and deeds vouching for their value. Contradicting the teachings of old matriarchs and patriarchs or doubting the visions of faction martyrs is political suicide within the Order. One of the darker prophecies, spoken by a holy tongue during the great final slaughter during the Portal Wars, is now demanding fulfilment, gruesome actions to be carried out for the greater good. As the holy words are about to be put into action, some within the Order reach the limits of their convictions and refuse to push on, while others are willing to become true martyrs for the cause – something which will happen very soon on the Coriolis station.

DARK OMENS

One of the Order's holy warriors, Iria Urahuk, formulated a holy statute while on the brink of death, staring into the void beyond. It spoke of signs by which the devout will know that the darkness is growing, signs that are now appearing all across the Horizon, demanding actions without hesitation.

THE CONSPIRACY

The conspiracy threatening the lives of the mystics onboard the Coriolis station is cruelly simple in all its complexity. It can be summarized as follows: Priot Chabaun and Deacon Salamah are high-ranking members of the martyr strike team known as The Warriors of the Holy Light, a fanatical splinter group from the Order. The strike team has set up a secret base on Kua and infiltrated Coriolis to kidnap and murder the station's new mystics. The reason for this is that the strike team believes the mystics to be heralds of a coming menace, the dark between the stars threatening to invade the Third Horizon.

A slightly more detailed breakdown of the conspiracy looks like this:

- The Zenithian Hegemony, headed by Abarren Quassar, are looking to expand their influence in the Horizon, and particularly in the Council of Factions. The Hegemony is torn and plagued by in-fighting over how to do this.
- The neo-Zenithians favor negotiation and cooperation with the other factions over aggressive expansion. The neo-Zenithians are ruled by the Ariantites clan and control the faction's mighty fleet.
- Their opponents are the hegemonists, under the leadership of captain Abarren Quassar himself. Together with his loyal spy chief Lenove Astir, captain Quassar has tasked the secret Astûrban police force with staging a spectacular operation onboard Coriolis to unify his faction and claim the title of ruler of the Third Horizon.
- Through intermediaries and undercover agents, the Astûrban have funded and encouraged an extremist cult known as The Warriors of the Holy Light and their plans to go after the Coriolis station's growing mystic population.
- The endgame for the Astûrban is to blame the Order of the Pariah for the attacks and make sure they are portrayed as aggressive and dangerous. When tensions eventually erupt and war breaks out, the Hegemony plan on winning a decisive victory and establishing themselves as the new guardians of peace and stability in the cluster.

THE RETURN OF NAZAREEM'S SACRIFICE

The White Butterfly and her crew of First Horizon infiltrators have been hard at work since their arrival. They have reached out to ancient sleeper cells from Nazareem's Sacrifice with long-awaited new orders. The White Butterfly is currently making its way to the heart of the Third Horizon: Kua. The secret cults of Nazareem's Sacrifice, sworn to the darker aspects of the Dancer Icon, have managed to place their spies within the highest levels of the government of the Zenithian Hegemony and its fearsome secret police, the Astûrban. The First Horizon agents, the vestals, have realized that the Hegemony is the perfect cover to use when preparing the Third Horizon for the dawn of a new age. They have even managed to convert the Priot of The Warriors of the Holy Light, and Astûrban's false prophet, the agent placed in the martyr cell out in the Sultra marshes. The elimination of the Emissaries in the Third Horizon, and through that destabilizing the Second Horizon's grasp, is one of the crew of The White Butterfly's prime objectives.

OVERVIEW

The scenarios that make up the *Mercy of the Icons: Emissary Lost* story are briefly described below.

THE WAKE OF THE MARTYR – PAGE 9

The first scenario throws the PCs into a wild hunt for the missing mystics and their captors after one of their close friends or relatives goes missing. During the scenario, the Emissary on Coriolis disappears, and the group is contacted by a judge and a judicator who urge the PCs to also look for the missing Emissary. At the end of the scenario, the clues point to the steaming jungles of Kua.

THE KUAN CONNECTION – PAGE 95

The search for the missing Emissary continues through the jungles to the base of the Monolith. In the sinking city of Sultra, the PCs finally catch up with the last cell of the Warriors of the Holy Light, and find the Emissary on its deathbed. They see The White Butterfly take off and disappear into the night and the Emissary begs them to protect its brothers and sisters – avatars for the Icons themselves, risen from the depths of Xene, now spread among the systems of the Third Horizon.

AFTERMATH – PAGE 188

As the dust settles, the PCs and their employers know that both the Astûrban and the Order of the Pariah have been compromised. They also know that a number of Emissaries are spread across the Horizon. The Aftermath section briefly describes some tips for adventuring before starting part two of the *Mercy of the Icons* campaign. Coming scenarios published for Coriolis will contain suggestions on how to connect them with the overarching storyline.

GM TIPS

The *Mercy of the Icons* campaign is structured as a classic RPG epic, but you and your group are encouraged to tailor the scenarios to fit your playing style. The scenarios are pretty straightforward, but you are free to alter the timelines and the order of the scenes as you please. The Important Facts and Ending sections contain suggestions of what the PCs should have figured out before moving forward. Your job as the GM is to make sure that both looking for and finding the necessary clues are dramatic and rewarding tasks.

SCENES

Coriolis is played in scenes. This way of structuring the story enables you to skip long stretches of time or travel when nothing of importance happens. The scenes in the scenarios come in two forms – starting scenes and regular scenes – but they are all described in the same way. This should give you, as the GM, a good enough understanding of the important aspects of the scenes to enable you to modify them depending on how your group tackles the scenario. With the exception of the starting scenes, the order of the scenes as they appear below is not fixed and you are free to play them in any order.

NPCS

Each scene description contains an overview of the situation, the important events it contains, where it is located, what the important clues are, and a list of which NPCs the group will encounter. Several NPCs have talents or abilities that will cost Darkness Points to activate, but only if they are used against the PCs – if the talents or abilities are used only for the benefit of that particular NPC or if they are used to aid the PCs, you could instead limit their use to one free activation per scene.

BOOKMARKS

The book contains bookmarks which you can use to mark where your players are in the story as well as provide easy access to clues under Important Facts entries or to the NPC lists.

SCENARIO LOCATIONS

Emissary Lost will take the PCs to many new locations on Coriolis and Kua that haven't been described in detail in earlier Coriolis supplements. The scenario locations are described with more detail than is perhaps necessary for the *Mercy of the Icons* campaign – with maps, lengthy descriptions, conflicts and narrative hooks, backgrounds and NPCs – but such information might come in handy if your group wishes to return for more adventuring later on:

Help the skavara society at the bottom of Coriolis' Cellar – dive in the Baybasin treasure caves – liberate the coal slaves on Verkâna Ridge – barter in the Conglomerate slums – search for lost artifacts in the ruins of the Sultra marshes – and last but not least, seek out the remaining Emissaries in the far reaches of the Third Horizon.

EVENTS

Each scene contains a number of events that might happen during it. These events are fuelled by DP, usually costing you o DP for small or mandatory events, but more for events that pose new challenges for the PCs. The clues contained in a scene are usually not linked to any particular skill check, as a failed roll shouldn't slow down the story, only force the players to choose a different path. Make sure that the clues are available for the PCs to find and remind them of things that a player might forget but that her PC would not.

MYSTIC ECHOES

You can let the disappearance of the Emissary affect mystic PCs in your group. The mystic will experience fragments of what has happened to the Emissary in the form of mystic resonance, echoes left behind by the Emissary's powers. Resonance events can be found throughout the campaign but are of course optional.







THE WAKE OF THE MARTYR

Friends.
We have arrived.
We are the answer to your prayers.
When the night is closing in, we are the light of peace.
Friends.

THE WORDS OF THE FIRST EMISSARY UPON ARRIVING AT XENE, CC 60

INTRODUCTION

The first chapter of the **Mercy of the Icons** campaign will see events put in motion that threaten to change the future of the entire Third Horizon. The players are drawn into a mystery that shakes the Coriolis station to its core: the disappearance of the enigmatic Emissary from Xene.

IN THE WAKE of the Martyr, the PCs stumble upon a ruthless conspiracy against the mystics of the Coriolis station. As the group is about to meet up with an old friend, they end up in the middle of a bloody attack, and become inescapably connected to the chain of events that eventually culminates with the Emissary's disappearance. In the end, it is up to the PCs to discover the truth about the fate of the mystics and the lost Emissary.

BACKGROUND

Ever since the first reports of their appearance, the mystics have been the focus of intense debate on Coriolis. From the gutter to the throne rooms, everyone has an opinion about the people upon whom these strange and fearsome gifts have been bestowed – be it one of blind hate or pious jealousy. Hate crimes against mystics are on the rise and some have been so badly persecuted that they have been forced to leave their families and flee Coriolis. Most mystics, while they struggle to control their newfound powers, have been able to live lives almost like before their powers manifested – until now. Recently, a wave of disappearances has befallen the mystic community. Just in the last segment, over two dozen people have vanished without a trace, and another ten have turned up dead – murdered. The Guard, the Judicators, and the Council have yet to address the issue with any real interest, but a few within their ranks have begun to realize that something very big and very strange is afoot in the shadows. Street reporters have dubbed the bizarre crime wave "the Mysticides".

THE WARRIORS OF THE HOLY LIGHT

The truth of the matter is that a so-called martyr strike team from Zalos called The Warriors of the Holy Light are orchestrating a cleansing of Coriolis, to purge the station of all mystics, who they believe to be heretics and heralds of darkness. The strike team has split up into two groups, secretly watching, kidnapping, and sometimes murdering people they identify as mystics. Most victims are drugged and taken to a secret vault in the Cellar where they are put in stasis and loaded onto drop pods for transportation to the strike team's secret base – an abandoned hyper sickness research facility in the Kuan jungles. The fate of the mystics who survive long enough to wake up at the secret base is often one worse than death.

The strike team, led by Zalosian officer Salamah ach-Abaud, is preparing to strike against their top priority target: the Emissary from Xene. Unbeknownst to the martyr warriors, the Zenithian Hegemony have infiltrated the strike team to further the faction's political interests, and it is the Hegemony's ambassador, Johar Quassar, who has arranged access to the Emissary's residence for the warriors.

The strike team's plans have been ruthlessly executed, and many of the station's residents are secretly relieved to be rid of the mystics. The authorities' response is too weak and too slow and when the Emissary is kidnapped, the game is over – the strike team's mission has been carried out and the balance of power in the Third Horizon has changed forever. There is however one factor that neither the Warriors of the Holy Light nor the scheming politicians secretly directing them have taken into account: the PCs.

OVERVIEW

Through the disappearance of a friend or relative, the PCs end up in the middle of a bloody purge against the mystics of Coriolis. The search for the missing friend and the people responsible will lead them toward the guilty parties: the Warriors of the Holy Light. The strike team is a splinter group from the Order of the Pariah that is being manipulated by the Hegemony's secret police, the Astûrban, to carry out a spectacular action onboard Coriolis. The Hegemony's endgame is to bring war and chaos to the Third Horizon – and to rise victorious from the ashes, conquerors of worlds.

ACT 1 – THE MYSTICIDES (PAGE 16)

In The Mysticides, the PCs will discover a nefarious plot threatening the lives of all the station's mystics – and in the end, the station itself. When a friend of the group disappears, the PCs end up right in the middle of a bloody attack in the spaceport, and their search for the perpetrators of the Mysticides begins.

During their investigation, the PCs will meet the corrupt inspector Merk Ahuro and the ambitious reporter Jeyla Kuhari. The leads found by the PCs will point in the direction of one Aram Yafa, a mystic forced to act as bait for the martyr strike team. The act ends with the abduction of the Emissary.

ACT 2 – HIGH STAKES (PAGE 38)

In the second act, the PCs are contacted by judge Kurahan through the mysterious judicator Akouba. They are told that the disappearance of the Emissary was no coincidence – the same organization responsible for massacring the mystics of the station is also behind the kidnapping of the Emissary. Judge Kurahan doesn't trust the Coriolis Guard to handle the matter, so she turns to the PCs for help and grants them access to investigate the residence of the Emissary in the Spire. After a visit to the residence and a meeting with Johar Quassar, the Zenithian Hegemony's ambassador to the Council, the clues point the PCs in the direction of the Samaritan Sanatorium. When they arrive there, they get a taste of Sister Robwah's righteous fury and encounter the wavering Brother Ramas, who proposes a clandestine meeting in the Garden of Seekers. Before Ramas is able to reveal the truth about the missing mystics to the PCs, the strike team attempts to silence him for good. Whether he survives or not, the PCs get their hands on a tag with access codes to the innermost halls of the Sanatorium. The pieces are rapidly falling into place, and everything seems to point toward the Cellar.

ACT 3 – THE ABYSS (PAGE 63)

In the final act of the scenario, the PCs descend into the darkness of the Cellar. They encounter Slummer Queen Elmeda and other shady characters, who will challenge the PCs with difficult choices. Finally, they will make it to the forgotten loading bay used as a base of operations by the strike team and there discover the fate of the missing mystics – they have been sent down to the dark jungles of Kua.

FACTIONS AND GROUPS

The Coriolis station is the hub of civilization in the Third Horizon and ripe with tension and intrigue even before this scenario begins. In *The Wake of the Martyr*, three of the key factions are directly involved in the events that are about to unfold – the Order of the Pariah, the Zenithian Hegemony, and the Consortium.

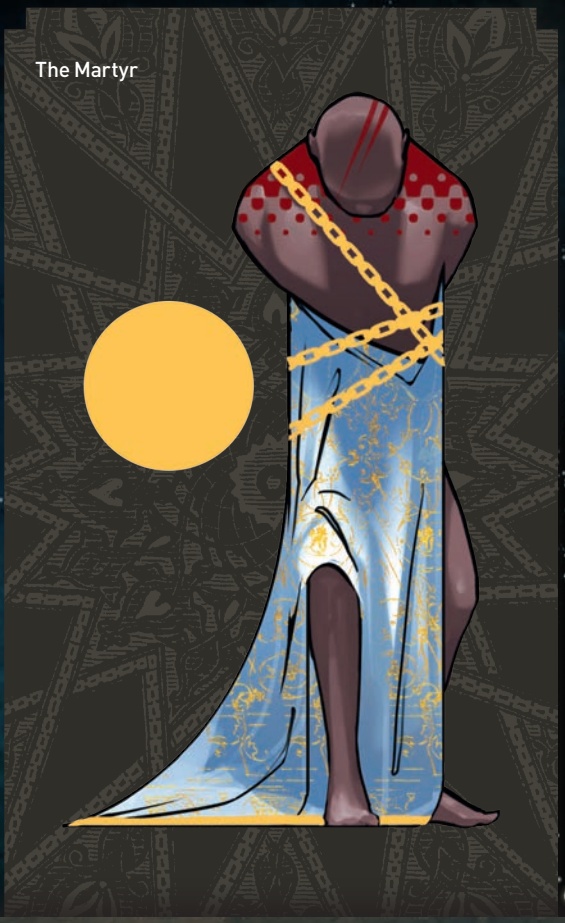
THE ORDER OF THE PARIAH

The Order is often portrayed as the biggest threat to peace in the Horizon and is demonized day and night by the Consortium through the Bulletin. It is true that the strictly religious order has an intolerant and unforgiving view on heresy and weak hearts, but the faction is at its core pragmatic and more concerned with survival than aggressive imperialism, which is something that is not reported on. The Order's leadership view the Consortium and the Legion as the great enemy but are well aware that they would not win a battle against them both without help. Despite this pragmatic attitude, they are unable to control the splinter groups and fanatics within their ranks who choose actions before words.

The Martyr Strike Team: In this scenario, the splinter group known as the Warriors of the Holy Light and their secret allies in the Sanatorium are the main antagonists, but the truth is not quite that simple – on Coriolis, it rarely is. The extremist warriors are actually right – the dark between the stars and the powers awakening in the mystics are directly connected to a mighty power that threatens the entire Third Horizon – just not in the way they think. Over the course of the scenario, the PCs will encounter various members of the strike team, including its leader, Salamah ach-Abaud (page 88).

MAJOR CHARACTERS

- **AKOUBA KOSHA** – Judicator loyal to the hegemonists (page 43)
- **ALTHEA** – Mystic on the run (page 19)
- **ARAM YAFA** – The strike team's bait (page 31)
- **BROTHER RAMAS** – Samaritan with a guilty conscience (page 54)
- **ELMEDA** – Slummer Queen in the Cellar (page 72)
- **JOHAR QUASSAR** – Ambassador for the Zenithian Hegemony (page 52)
- **NIGELIA KURAHAN** – Judge with a mission for the PCs (page 41)
- **LENOVE ASTIR** – Cultural attaché and spymaster (page 53)
- **SALAMAH ACH-ABAUD** – Leader of the martyr strike team (page 88)
- **SISTER ROBWAH** – Fundamentalist Samaritan Akbar (page 53)


The Martyr

The Samaritans: The Samaritan healer cult is quietly fading away onboard Coriolis – the widespread anti-Zalosian sentiments on the station have made sure that only the poorest and most vulnerable in society seek medical treatment at the Sanatorium. The hospital is run calmly but firmly by Sister Robwah, who secretly assists the Warriors of the Holy Light with transporting those lost to the mystic's disease down to the Cellar for more "appropriate" care. No one except for Sister Robwah knows about these secret transports, neither in the Sanatorium nor in the various poorhouses run by the Samaritans on the station. The most important Samaritan in this scenario is Brother Ramas (page 54), since his qualms will lead to the unveiling of the strike team's operation.

THE ZENITHIAN HEGEMONY

The Order may appear to be the driving force in this scenario, but the Hegemony is hard at work in the shadows, plotting and deceiving. Under the leadership of the aging Abarren Quassar – once the captain of the Zenith – the Hegemony have taken it upon themselves to recapture their position as the leading and uniting force of the Third Horizon. To reach this goal, Quassar and a select few from the elite of the faction's hierarchy have begun manipulating the Order of the Pariah, their archnemeses, through the Warriors of the Holy Light. In this scenario, the PCs will interact with the Hegemony through its ambassador Johar Quassar (page 52) and its cultural attaché and spy chief Lenove Astir (page 53).

The Astûrban: The infamous secret police known as the Astûrban is a faction within a faction, and the part of the Zenithian Hegemony many believe to be the group's de facto rulers. Headed by Lenove Astir, the Astûrban are aggressively trying to further Zenithian interests throughout the Horizon. It is Lenove Astir personally who has established contact with the Warriors of the Holy Light by feeding strategically beneficial information to the strike team's leader, Salamah ach-Abaud. The Astûrban also have deep cover operatives working inside the Judicators to influence and spy on the affairs of the Consortium and the neo-Zenithians.

The Judicators: The Zenithian Hegemony is loosely divided into two groups: the expansionist hegemonists, dominated by the Quassars and the Astûrban, and the more moderate

neo-Zenithians ruled by the Arianites clan. The latter group also controls the Judicators and neither the Judicators nor the neo-Zenithians are involved in the conspiracy. At the start of *The Wake of the Martyr*, however, the PCs are unfortunate enough to encounter a judicator secretly loyal to the Quassars – Akouba Kosha, an undercover Astûrban agent (page 43). As per usual on Coriolis, nothing is what it appears to be.

THE CONSORTIUM

The Consortium dominates Coriolis, and thereby the entire Horizon, through cunningly crafted trade agreements, exploitation and export of natural resources, and gunboat diplomacy, backed by their loyal sister faction the Legion. In The Wake of the Martyr, the Consortium leadership is slow to realize that a scheme is afoot: their main concern is the growing conflict with the Order of the Pariah, and all focus is directed toward trying to solve the problem once and for all. The Taoan debacle and the destruction of the Ghazali in the Hamura system appears to be the perfect excuse for showing the Order who is really in charge. The faction is too busy with interstellar power games to spend adequate resources on finding out what actually happened. Their political tunnel vision has made them blind to the larger danger, which eventually gives them and their allies an uncomfortable surprise. Contact with the Consortium in this scenario happens mainly through Judge Kurahan (page 41).

NAZAREEM'S SACRIFICE

In this scenario, the Astûrban are pulling most of the strings by using the Warriors of the Holy Light and the Order to weaken the Consortium and level the field for the hegemonists to rise to power. Later in the *Mercy of the Icons* campaign, however, the Astûrban and several other factions will turn out to have been infiltrated and manipulated by Third Horizon agents from Nazareem's Sacrifice all along.

THE EMISSARIES

The Emissary on Coriolis is one of five mystics from the Symmetry, a faction in the Second Horizon. The spirit of the mystic inhabits the body of the Miran prospector Alam Dania, who participated in the Foundation's attempts to send a team of scientists to Xene to obtain sensor data from the depths of the gas giant. The Emissaries are powerful mystics, residing in human bodies. They have the power to stop aging, and even to force cell regrowth, but this is a slow process. If their host bodies become too damaged, the mind will have nothing to hold onto. The Emissaries' host bodies require little to no maintenance – virtually no nutrition is needed and no waste is produced. This means that the Emissary on Coriolis really only uses one of the rooms in the residence, the lounge. Nothing of this is known by anyone in the Third Horizon, and therefore not by the PCs nor the players either. As the GM however, you can use this knowledge to portray the Emissary as a mystical being that doesn't appear to function like a normal human.

What is known about the Emissaries, however, is that the individual who remains on the Foundation's Xene research station has declared itself to be an incarnation of the Judge Icon, or Hukim-mu-Qad. News of the arrival of the Emissaries to the Third Horizon and the rumors linking them to the Icons have therefore resulted in pilgrims and mystics increasingly referring to the Emissary on Coriolis as Nabi-mu-Qad, or just Nabi – the Messenger. As the GM, you can use this expression when the PCs interact with mystics or very pious believers. The Zenithian factions use only the official title "Emissary" and the Order refuses to acknowledge them as anything more than the heretical monstrosities they claim them to be.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

The Wake of the Martyr is at its core a story about investigating a mystery. The PCs are tasked with finding out who is murdering and kidnapping mystics on Coriolis and will spend most of the scenario chasing down leads they believe will bring them closer to the truth. At the heart of the scenario are the questions of what part the mystics are playing in the drama of the Third Horizon, and who is responsible for the crimes committed against them, but this is also a story about the Coriolis station and the society found there. Each act is focused on one part of the station: Act 1 (The Mysticides) takes place mainly in the mid-levels of the station, with their residential complexes, entertainment districts, and offices. Act 2 (High Stakes) brings the PCs up into the Spire to see the affluence and naked ambition of the station's elite. And, finally, Act 3 (The Abyss) is a nightmarish descent into the underworld of the semi-abandoned Cellar, the dark underbelly of Coriolis, called home by only the poorest of the poor and the most desperate.

PC INCENTIVES

There are many possible ways to involve the PCs in the plot of this scenario. They might have a relative or protegé on Coriolis that has vanished, whom they know was affected by the strange mystic's disease. They could also have been hired by their patron or someone they have worked for in the past. The opening scene, The Attack, described below, can also be used. If the group have played through the The Last Voyage of the Ghazali, the missing Khomina character can be used as well.

PREPARATIONS

For a really good session playing The Wake of the Martyr, we recommend some measure of preparation. You should have read the scenario in its entirety at least once. Regardless of whether this is the first scenario you play with your group or if you are already seasoned adventurers in the Horizon, it is always good for you as the GM to spend some time getting the PCs' entrance right. Think of the PCs' different qualities and backgrounds to determine a suitable kind of entrance, both for individual characters and for the group as a whole. The group concept can be very helpful here.

Lastly, we wish to warn you that investigation stories can be a tough affair for you as the GM. Players have an annoying tendency to overlook even the most obvious of clues, and there is nothing more boring than a murder mystery that has hit a wall. Help them by making sure they organize the clues they find and remind them of things that a player might forget, but that her PC wouldn't. If they get stuck, use one of the events to get them back on track. If things are going really poorly, use one of the major NPCs to give the group a push in the right direction. The correspondent Jeyla Kuhari, Ahuro of the Guard, and judicator Akouba can serve as excellent sources for tips and leads for example.

TIMELINE

As the GM, you are free to place *The Wake of the Martyr* and the following suite of scenarios anywhere along the timeline of the Third Horizon, as long as the mystics have started to appear and the Emissary on Coriolis has taken its seat on the Council. However, below is the official timeline leading up to the disappearance of the Emissary:

- **The Ghosts from Xene:** CC60, during the segment of the Traveler. The Emissaries arrive in the Kua system.
- **The Judge:** During the celebration of the Cyclade, breaking news from the Bulletin reports that an Emissary onboard the Foundation's Xene research station has declared itself the Judge incarnate.
- **The Messenger:** The next day – the first day of the new year – one of the Emissaries arrives at Coriolis onboard a Foundation cruiser escorted by two Legion battleships. The Governor of Coriolis makes an official statement inviting the Emissary to the Council of Factions.
- **The Mystic's Disease:** Since the Emissaries' arrival on Xene, people all across the Horizon have begun developing strange powers, leading to accidents, fear, hate, and persecution. Many mystics have flocked to Coriolis for protection, and to be close to the Messenger Emissary. A smaller group also gather at the Xene station to be close to the Judge Emissary.
- **The Ghazali Incident:** After a distress signal is picked up from a mining colony owned by the Colonial Agency in the segment of the Gambler, CC61, a rescue mission consisting of the enormous cruise liner Ghazali and Legion cruiser *Zafirah* is launched for the Taoan system. *Zafirah* disappears and Ghazali is destroyed under mysterious circumstances while traveling through the Hamura system.
- **The Mysticides:** As CC61 nears its end, mystics begin disappearing all over Coriolis, and some are later found murdered. The Cyclade and the festivities marking the new year are just a week or so away. When the Emissary also goes missing, it might prove to be the spark that lights the flame.

A good place to begin *The Wake of the Martyr* would be in the segment of the Faceless One, nine days before the Cyclade. When the Emissary goes missing, judge Kurahan takes action to try to solve the mystery before the new year and the anniversary of the Emissary's arrival to Coriolis. If the matter is not taken care of quickly, a major political disaster will be almost impossible to avoid.



ACT 1
THE MYSTICIDES

In The Mysticides, the PCs are introduced to a secret conspiracy threatening not only the lives of the mystics of Coriolis, but the whole station itself. Act 1 is an investigation into the fates of the mystics kidnapped or murdered by the martyr strike team.

ACT 1 CONTAINS details about important NPCs, a suggestion for a starting scene, and a series of following scenes and locations. The scenes can be played in the order below, or as you see fit. Finally, a few possible endings are described together with suggestions for the jump to Act 2.

OVERVIEW

The PCs have made their way to the largest spaceport on Coriolis after receiving a mysterious message from a close friend or relative studying at one of the station's academies asking for help. While waiting for the meeting, Iconic intervention leads to an encounter with a mystic on the run who informs the PCs that their friend has gone missing and that she herself is being hunted by armed men. The PCs realize that their friend's disappearance and the fleeing mystic are connected, and clues found at the university point toward an unemployed deckhand, Aram Yafa, whom they eventually track down. Just as they find out that Aram has helped an unknown group to kidnap mystics on the station, the news breaks about the Emissary having disappeared from its Spire residence. Riots break out in the Core. If the PCs encountered the mystic Khomina during The Last Voyage of the Ghazali, they might try to contact her – only to find that she too has gone missing.

KEY INSIGHTS

There are a few key insights and clues that the PCs must have acquired before they can move on to Act 2:

- A large number of mystics have either been murdered or have gone missing during the last segment on the station.
- The perpetrators have been impersonating members of the Guard, but their motives or where they are taking the mystics are unknown.
- The Samaritan Sanatorium in the Core keeps coming up in the investigation, and would be a good place to continue the search.

If you can, try to make the PCs feel as though time is running out – many innocent lives are in the balance and only their actions can save them. You can use the timeline of the nine days leading up to the Cyclade to gradually escalate the conflict and the number of disappearing mystics. Keep the tempo high, and try to take the PCs through the first scenario in a few days, so that a majority of the time is instead spent on Kua.

IMPORTANT CHARACTERS

Act 1 will see the PCs try to grasp the scope of the conspiracy. They will interact with a few key NPCs, and might encounter some of the independent actors.

- **Althea** – Hunted stevedore and mystic (page 19)
- **Aram Yafa** – Deckhand and bait for the martyr strike team (page 31)

INDEPENDENT ACTORS

- **Merk Ahuro** – Corrupt inspector of the Guard (page 21)
- **Jeyla Kuhari** – Nosy journalist (page 32)

DARKNESS POINTS

In this act, DP can be used to make key situations tougher, but you should go easy on the PCs until they have found their direction in the story. As usual, you start with as many DP as there are PCs.



STARTING SCENE: THE ATTACK

In this opening scene, the PCs are waiting for a friend in the Neoptra spaceport. They encounter the fleeing mystic Althea who is being hunted by the martyr strike team disguised as members of the Coriolis Guard.

THE SITUATION

The PCs are waiting for their friend at Madame Shari's chai house when the scene begins. Choose one of the PCs for Althea to approach. Act or read out the following text:

You are waiting for your friend at Madame Shari's chai house in the Neoptra. The chiming of the bells marking the beginning of the night watch is drowned out by the turmoil of the spaceport: shouting merchants, crying children, conversations in dozens of foreign languages, and the high pitched chatter of a group of Kuan monkeys on the roof above you. Cheap speakers blast this segment's smash hit from the Bulletin. You can't make out the words, but the throbbing rhythms can be heard over the chaos around you – pop music as an actual pulse in the heart of the Horizon.

Noor should have been here ages ago. In the brief recorded message sent to you, ne had sounded worried about something – which, these days, isn't all that strange. The Bulletin reports almost daily about unrest on the station, about disappearances, arson, and violence. People blame Algolan rebels, scheming Draconites, and the increasingly powerful Syndicate akbars, but above all others, they blame the ghost from Xene. The mysterious Emissary has, since its arrival almost a cycle ago, been accused of foul play more and more whenever something goes wrong onboard the stqtion.

You sit and watch the people in the waiting hall outside the chai house when suddenly a well-dressed woman pushes her way through the crowd, followed by angry curses. She spots you, looks around nervously, and starts running toward your table. A group of guards breaks out of the crowd behind her, shouting at her to stop. The woman lunges at [PC], grabbing hold of your clothes, overturning your bowl of sugared dates which shatters on the floor.

"You there! Are you friends of Noor?" She breathes heavily, panicking. "Your friend... I... Please, you have to help me!"

REFERENCING THE FRIEND

The friend whom the PCs are meeting with is described below as Noor, a student living in the Student district in the Core. As the GM, you are free to modify this NPC as you like, changing the name, the relationship to the PCs, or gender, profession, and residence, for example. The NPC is here referred to with the neutral pronoun ne, nem, nirs, nemself – instead of he/she, him/her, his/hers, himself/herself. The standard use of they as a singular gender-neutral pronoun has been rejected to avoid confusion with references to the player group. The goal is to make the players feel an emotional bond with the person, or a deep enough sense of duty or responsibility to make them want to investigate. Noor's disappearance is the group's main reason for solving the mystery (at least to begin with). It is convenient if Noor lives alone and if the apartment is easy to access when searching for clues.

ACTION!

The important thing in the starting scene is to engage the PCs in the story in a dramatic way and to establish the threat against the mystics. One of the independent actors could also be introduced here. The PCs should leave the scene with clues leading to people and places that require further investigation. You could use an independent actor's talents to steer the scene. Ahuro of the Guard could call for reinforcements (1–3 DP) if necessary.
Firearms are permitted in the spaceport, just like on the rest of the station, as long as the PCs have the proper licenses.

Just as you have finished reading the text above, the game is on and the fake guards rush up to the PCs to try and "arrest" Althea. The fake guards have bribed the real squad who normally patrol the Neoptra to stay away. How the confrontation plays out is up to the PCs. You can use the Events section below for inspiration.

IMPORTANT FACTS

Below are the "keys" that the PCs must take away from the opening scene. Keep them in mind, but introduce them in a believable way.

ALTHEA

- **The Survivor:** Althea must either be rescued in the scene, or be allowed to escape so that the PCs can find her again when the dust settles. She possesses vital information for the scenario and must survive long enough for the PCs to have a conversation with her.
- **The Disease:** Althea has the mystic's disease. She discovered it about a cycle ago, when her telekinetic powers started to manifest. She got to know Noor during the last Cyclade, and they have since helped each other live with the burden of their awakening mystic powers.
- **The New Friend:** About a week ago, Noor was contacted by another victim of the disease, the frightened deckhand Aram Yafa.
- **The Guards:** Althea was supposed to meet with Noor and Aram in the Ozone Plaza a few days ago, but instead, a group of guards showed up.
- **The Player Characters:** The guards have been after her since then, but earlier today, she managed to get to Noor's apartment in the Core where she found the message to the PCs. En route to the meeting with the PCs, she was spotted by the guards again.

THE FAKE GUARDS

You should supply the PCs with one or more of the following clues so that they realize that they are not dealing with real members of the Guard.

- **Appearance:** The guards are clean shaven and speak Zeni with a faint accent. Passing an insane (–3) **CULTURE** test allows a PC to recognize the accent as Zalosian. If one or more PCs are from Zalos, or if they have an actual conversation with the guards (when they try to arrest Althea for example), the difficulty is reduced to demanding (–1).

- **Bribes:** If the situation escalates to include violence, the guards at the post by the entrance to the waiting hall will not be able to stand idly by. The real (bribed) guards under inspector Ahuro's command will arrive on the scene, and the fake guards will exit immediately. The PCs should notice that inspector Ahuro seems strangely disinclined to pursue the imposters.
- **Behavior:** If a fight breaks out, a strategically trained PC might spot certain patterns in the combat tactics of the guards. Passing a demanding (–1) **COMMAND** test allows a PC to determine that the guards seem to have military training, rather than the usual Coriolis Guard training.
- **Weapons:** The guards are more heavily armed that what is normal for a Ring patrol – Vulcan carbines and dura knives rather than Vulcan pistols and shock sticks – something which a successful **OBSERVATION** or **COMMAND** test can tell the PCs.

THE NEOPTRA SPACEPORT

The starting scene takes place in the Neoptra spaceport and possibly in the Stevedore Central underneath. Both locations are described in the *Coriolis* Core Rulebook on page 250. See also the map on the next page.

THE HANGARS

The Neoptra is the largest of Coriolis' four commercial spaceports, located adjacent to the Spice Plaza. It consists of an enormous hall with hangar doors on many levels along the hull of the Ring. Armanite pillars support three large, crescent-shaped balconies harboring docks and landing platforms. The lowest balcony and the floor of the hall house simpler docks where functionality trumps aesthetics, and a vast network of loading cranes and grav shafts connect to the vents, corridors, and hangars of the Stevedore Central below. These levels are reserved for freighters coming in from reloading on the Net or that are transporting cargo from the bulk haulers that pass through the system once every few weeks. The higher balconies are more adorned and used by tourists, traveling merchants, and pilgrims.

THE WAITING HALL

Before you get to the actual docks, you pass through the waiting hall. The pillars here are decorated with beautiful reliefs, the floors are white Kuan marble rather that steel and concrete, and mosaics surround subtly splashing fountains. Travelers, peddlers, and stacks of smaller crates share the space with travel agencies, exchange offices, and all sorts of shops. Many visitors choose to rest a bit in one of the many cantinas or in the courtesan salon to get away from the crowds. The main exit takes you past the customs station and the security checkpoint to the bustle of the Spice Plaza and the market streets of the Promenade.

NPCS

In this scene, the PCs will encounter Althea, the martyr strike team, and possibly Merk Ahuro and his guards.

ALTHEA, ASPIRING PROXY STAR AND HUNTED MYSTIC

Althea is not even twenty years old, but has already faced problems that make regular teen angst look like a flea bite. A year ago, her life changed forever as hidden, supernatural powers began to manifest with disastrous consequences: during an audition for the Stars of Daleem game show, Althea became so nervous that she made an entire balcony full of influential entertainment hosts collapse by sheer force of will. With her dreams of a career in films shattered, she has been working as a singer in shady bars, far from the glamour of the entertainment palaces of the Mulukhad. Her parents are dead and she lives in a simple module near the Stevedore Central together with her uncle Len.

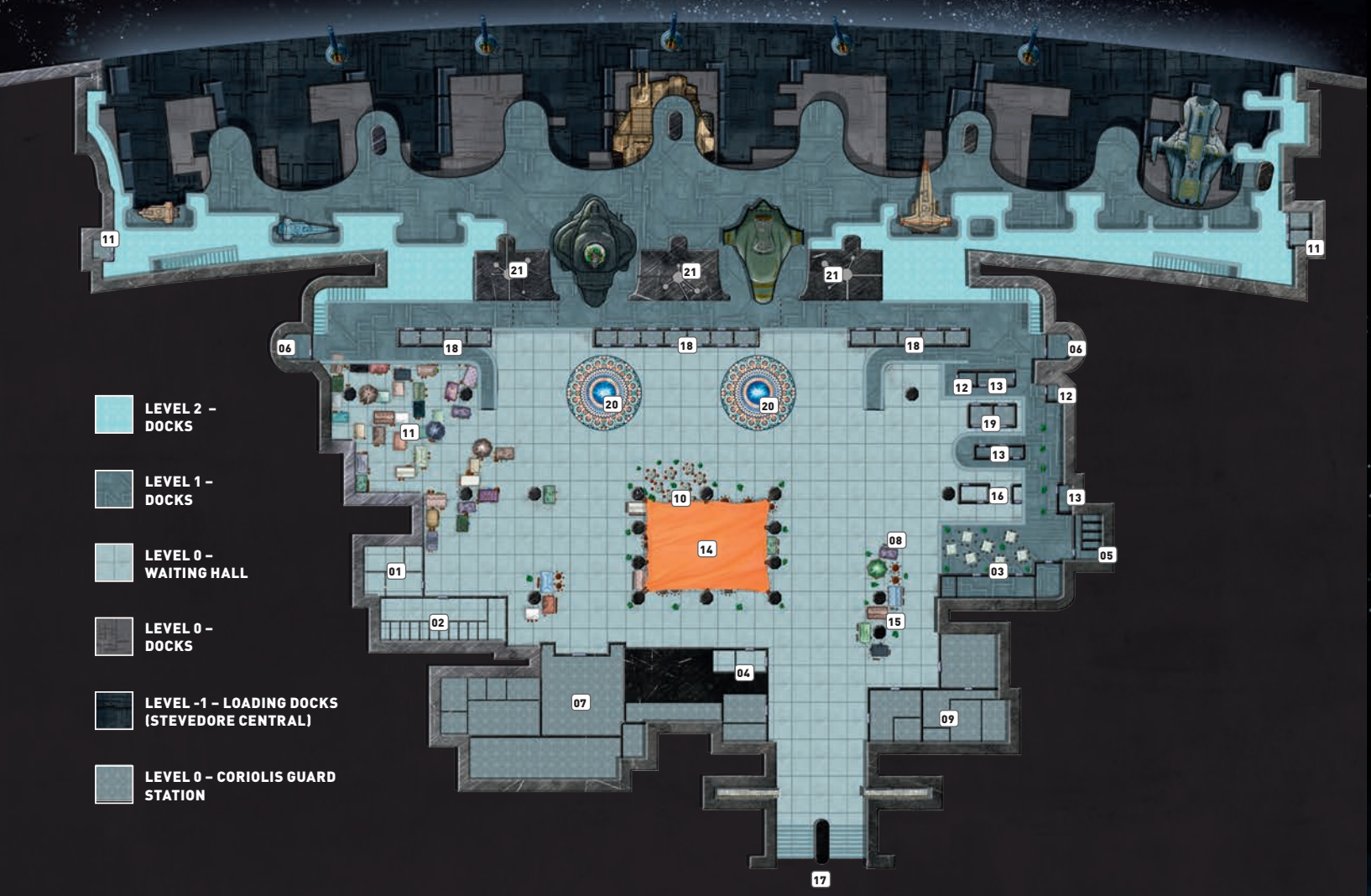
Her life looks pretty dark at the moment, but she has managed to stay hidden and learned to live with her affliction – she can control her powers most of the time now – but she has recently been discovered by the agents of the martyr strike team. This has made Althea wake up to the facts of her situation, and if she survives the Mysticides, she will focus all of her efforts on being accepted into the Lyceum of Propaganda and then spread the truth to the people as a correspondent.

APPEARANCE: Curly brown hair, green eyes, and simple earrings with a matching necklace that her father bought for her from a Dabaran merchant from Lotus. Dressed in a kameez with simple embroideries and wide pants.

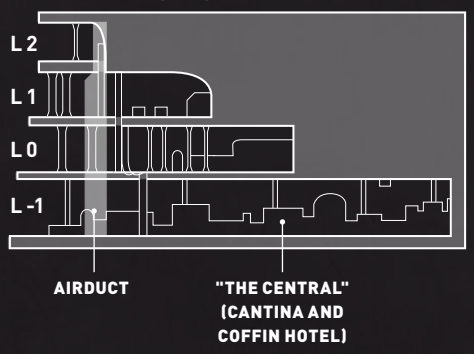
CHARACTERISTICS: Constantly looking over her shoulder and moving around anxiously. Speaks clearly and with careful articulation. Tries to give an impression of being richer than she actually is.

THE NEOPTRA SPACEPORT

10x10 meters



Intersection of spaceport



1. The Infirmary
2. Coffin Hotel "Starry Dreams"
3. The Journey's End Cantina
4. Exchange and bank offices
5. The 'Oasis' courtesan and massage salon
6. Icon Chapel
7. Guard Point #13
8. Giakovo's Kawah Trolley
9. Customs Point #1
10. Madame Shahari's Chai House
11. Spaceport Souk
12. Travel Agencies
13. Store
14. Cantinas
15. Food Carts and Peddlers
16. Bathroom
17. Entrance to the Loading Docks
18. Passenger Elevators
19. Cargo Elevators
20. Fountain
21. Airducts to Stevedore Central

ATTRIBUTES:
STRENGTH 2, AGILITY 2, WITS 3, EMPATHY 5

HIT POINTS: 4

MIND POINTS: 8

REPUTATION: 0

SKILLS: Manipulation 3, Mystic Powers 3, Dexterity 2

TALENT: Tunnel Child, Telekinetic Blast (Mystic power)

GEAR: Sugar globe, tools, tag with 54 birr, small scarab necklace.

- **TUNNEL CHILD:** Althea grew up near the Stevedore Central and has kept away from the streets since the game show incident. She can find quick shortcuts and secret passages under and around the spaceport and in the station-wide network of maintenance shafts. This gives her a +2 to **DEXTERITY** when hiding or a –2 to **OBSERVATION** for her opponent (1 DP).
- **TELEKINETIC BLAST:** At the cost of 1 DP, Althea can generate a telekinetic blast that can knock over objects (weapon damage 3, CRIT 2, Short range).

MERK AHURO, CORRUPT INSPECTOR OF THE GUARD

Seasoned inspector Ahuro of the Guard fits in perfectly with the popular view of the station's police force: corrupt, feared, and merciless in his treatment of those who break the law (as interpreted by Ahuro himself, of course). As long as Ahuro is sober, he also possesses a trait not found in your average member of the Guard: competence. In this scenario, Ahuro takes half-hearted charge of the Guard's investigation into the murdered and missing mystics. This turns into a rather complicated affair thanks to the fact that Ahuro himself is a mystic and could end up on the martyr strike team's death list if he isn't careful. The disease manifests itself in that his mind wanders from his body when he sleeps. He first believed this to be just a series of vivid nightmares, until he "walked in" on his neighbor engaging in some extramarital activities. He has since learned to keep his power in check by drinking himself to sleep.

Since his days as a patrolling guardsman in the Mulukhad and his subsequent position as head of the fearsome "Kneecappers" squadron, Ahuro is known as a brutal, greedy, and cunning lawman who is more than willing to look the other way as long as there is birr to be made. If he is confronted with the fact of his disease, he just might have a change of heart and become a valuable ally in the PCs' investigation – or he might try to drown his sorrows in kohôl and take out his aggressions on some unlucky street thug (or an annoyingly inquisitive PC). Ahuro is usually accompanied by a few of his loyal guardsmen and can call for backup if the situation warrants it.

APPEARANCE: Heavyset, with a uniform that is slightly too tight. Usually a personal sensor covering one eye.

CHARACTERISTICS: Reeks of kohôl and cheap perfume. Curses a lot and has a fondness of bad puns. Describes in vivid detail what he will do to those who question his authority.

ATTRIBUTES:
STRENGTH 4, AGILITY 3, WITS 3, EMPATHY 3

HIT POINTS: 7

MIND POINTS: 6

REPUTATION: 4

SKILLS: Manipulation 3, Melee Combat 3, Ranged Combat 2, Dexterity 1, Mystic Powers 1

TALENT: Defensive, Gang Friend, Snitch Network, Dream Walker (mystical power)

GEAR: Personal communicator, temple-mounted personal sensor, arrash, one bottle of kohôl.

- **DEFENSIVE:** Despite his size, Ahuro is a surprisingly slippery opponent in close combat. He is quick to get back on his feet and to dodge incoming attacks. He has a +2 to **MELEE COMBAT** when parrying.



- **GANG FRIEND:** Ahuro is taking bribes from the Lama gang and lets them conduct their business in peace. He can call on brutal gang members to attack someone when he is not there. Costs 1–3 DP.
- **SNITCH NETWORK:** Ahuro has access to several informants in the central areas of the station and can always find the PCs when they are in the Ring. This costs 1 DP.
- **DREAM WALKER:** If Ahuro goes to bed sober, he can temporarily leave his body and move his mind 10 meters (slow action, 1 DP), appearing as a dark shadow. His spirit cannot lift or touch anything in the physical world but can pass through thin physical objects such as drywall or wood. To pass through stone or metal he must pay another DP. If his physical body is harmed in any way, his mind returns to it immediately.

MARTYR WARRIORS IMPERSONTING THE CORIOLIS GUARD

The small group of martyr warriors who are chasing Althea are dressed as members of the Coriolis Guard, but their disguises aren't perfect and they speak with a strange accent (see above). They are more heavily armed than regular guards as they carry Vulcan carbines. At first, they rely on the authority of their uniforms to get Althea to come with them, but if this fails, they will become threatening and might even open fire. Read more about the martyr strike team in Act 2 (page 38).

ATTRIBUTES:
STRENGTH 3, AGILITY 3, WITS 2, EMPATHY 2

HIT POINTS: 6

MIND POINTS: 4

REPUTATION: 2 (0 if exposed as frauds)

SKILLS: Dexterity 2, Melee Combat 2, Observation 2, Ranged Combat 2, Manipulation 1

TALENT: Fanatics

ARMOR: Light armor 4

WEAPONS: Vulcan carbine, stun gun, dura knife, stun grenade.

GEAR: Personal communicator with pulse function.

- **FANATICS:** The martyr warriors' blind faith enables them to get back up at 2 HPs after having been broken in combat. Costs 2 DP.

THE CORIOLIS GUARD

The typical station guard knows when to take a bribe and look the other way. They are used to people obeying their orders, and they themselves follow the commands of their squad captains and other higher-ranking officers without question.

ATTRIBUTES:
STRENGTH 2, AGILITY 2, WITS 2, EMPATHY 2

HIT POINTS: 4

MIND POINTS: 4

REPUTATION: 2

SKILLS: Melee Combat 2, Observation 2, Ranged Combat 2

ARMOR: Light armor 4

WEAPONS: Vulcan pistol, stun gun, shock stick

GEAR: Personal communicator, tag for accepting bribes.

EVENTS

The tempo in the opening scene is high, and the events for the scene are therefore quite few.

THE FAKE GUARDS

Immediately following Althea's stormy introduction at the PCs' table, the angry, commanding voices of a group of guards are heard as the uniformed imposters make their way through the crowd toward the chai house. They are unusually rough, pushing people in their way into kawah trolleys and fountains. As the guards are approaching, Althea pleads with the PCs for help, promising to tell them all she knows if they get her to safety. The fake guards will try to arrest her, and if the PCs get in their way, a very heated argument will follow (that might turn into a gunfight if the martyr warriors feel threatened).

- **The Survivor:** Althea must survive this encounter, and if the PCs cannot get the guards to back off, she will use her telekinetic powers to clear an escape route for herself and head for the spaceport and the underlying network of tunnels at the Stevedore Central.
- **Commotion:** If Althea escapes, the guards will take out their aggressions on the PCs. If the PCs back down, they will shove them violently aside anyway, and pursue the fleeing Althea. If a fight breaks out, or if the two groups get stuck in an angry discussion,

the real guards will have to intervene. Inspector Ahuro will head for the chai house to resolve the conflict (see below).
Cost: 0 DP (Mandatory)

INSPECTOR AHURO ARRIVES

If the situation escalates – for example if a fight breaks out – the corrupt inspector Ahuro will feel forced to step in to sort out what is going on. He has accepted a rather substantial bribe to stay away from the martyr strike team's business, and will be reluctant to intervene. He will be smart about balancing his split loyalties, however, ordering his squad to advance slowly and loudly toward the chai house. The fake guards will hear Ahuro's squad coming, and everyone at the chai house will see the crowds outside slowly being parted by the shouting guardsmen. The martyr warriors will try to escape, either by going after Althea or by getting away from the spaceport to regroup and find the PCs again at a later time.

- **Surrounded:** If the PCs have managed to surround or disarm the fake guards, Ahuro will order the PCs to drop their weapons and lay face down on the floor. In the commotion when Ahuro's squadron secures the chai house, the martyr strike team will escape, and the real guards will let them, shooting a few carefully misdirected warning shots after them.
- **Arrested:** If the PCs cause a scene, Ahuro will arrest them and let them sweat in the cells at the nearby Guard point for a few hours, insinuating all sorts of unpleasentness unless they pay him a hefty bribe to release them and then stay out of trouble for good.
  Cost: 1 DP



THE STEVEDORE CENTRAL

If the PCs don't help Althea with the guards, she will escape from the waiting hall and disappear into the Stevedore Central's maze of tunnels. After the incident at the chai house is resolved, the PCs could try to find her there. If they did help her, however, she will suggest that they head for a more discreet location. She will lead the group through the spaceport and down into the service shafts that run inside the skeleton of the station. This is a dark, strange place of dripping moisture and flickering lights. Big crates and containers are transported through the tunnels by stevedores in loader exos or on ground loaders, working in focused silence under the watchful gaze of grim-faced supervisors. Spirits are higher in the Free League's cantina, however, located at the heart of the Stevedore Central. The establishment, which consists of one big room, is a mix between a coffin hotel, kawahnio (small café), cantina, and day room. There is a kitchen running along one of the sides of the room and tables, cots, and small sleeping modules have been mounted on the beams and pillars running from floor to ceiling. Cooking smells, tabak and arrash fumes, and the sweat of hundreds of stevedores fill the room. When the ventilation systems are down, the pungent smell travels all the way up to the spaceport. The corridors and recesses surrounding the central are full of secret, makeshift hideaways where stevedores sometimes sleep, or even live. Read more about the Stevedore central on page 250 in the *Coriolis* Core Rulebook. This is where the PCs need to go for information about the area, such as where the fleeing Althea has disappeared to, or details about Aram Yafa later in the scenario. The PCs could, among others, encounter the following NPCs here:

- **Xiu Xichama (Stevedore Akbar):** An aging Xinghur from Lubau and one of the most respected and trustworthy akbars in the central. Xiu is a member of the Free League and has access to help from all League-affiliated stevedores and deckhands. She is also close friends with several pilot akbars on the Net, and can arrange transport there – secretly, if necessary. She has not been involved in refugee smuggling, but has noticed the increased demand, especially in the last segment. Unless the PCs have working class backgrounds, she will be cold and dismissive. She might be persuaded to let the PCs into the Stevedore Central, but she will not tell them where Althea went. They can come back here later for information about Aram Yafa however.

- **Rauw (Skavara):** An unexpected inhabitant of the central is Rauw the skavara. The stevedores view the tiny semi-intelligence as a mascot and bringer of good fortune, and make sure to bring him food and shiny trinkets that the little creature quickly stashes away somewhere secret deep below the docks. Rauw is not much of a talker, but if he likes the looks (or scent) of someone, he does his best to help, and no one knows the tunnels here like Rauw does. He can show the PCs the smuggler tunnels from the docks to the cellars underneath the Spice Plaza, be he doesn't know who uses them. If the PCs are kind to Rauw and give him food or something shiny, he will happily show them where Althea is hiding (if she fled here).

  If the PCs are taken to the Stevedore Central by Althea, both Xiu and Rauw will be friendly toward them and include them in the worker community. They are welcome to use the Central as a hiding place whenever they are on Coriolis, so as the GM you should let the Central be a sanctuary from guards and martyr warriors.

  Cost: o DP

⚙ ALTHEA'S CLUES

When the PCs have exited the waiting hall, either through the tunnels under the Neoptra or through the crowds on the Spice Plaza, they will eventually find a more private place where they can be alone with Althea. If she was forced to flee the chai house to escape the fake guards, she will instead wait until the heat has died down and then seek out the PCs again. If they didn't try to help with the fake guards, she will approach them cautiously.

Nervously, Althea can tell them the following:

- **The Friend:** She is a close friend of Noor's. They met roughly a year ago during the Cyclade celebrations and started hanging out more and more. Noor told her about nirs illness – visions and dreams showing nem where to find lost things (the mystical talent Find) – which gave Althea the courage to tell nem about the time she made a balcony in the Mulukhad collapse by the force of her will.
- **The Kidnappings:** A segment or so ago, the Bulletin started reporting about a wave of kidnappings and murders. When the rumors that the victims were all mystics were confirmed, Althea wanted to go underground.
- **Like-Minded:** Noor contacted her about a week ago, wanting her to meet another mystic, Aram Yafa. Noor only told Althea that Aram was a deckhand who lost his job when his powers started to manifest.
- **The Meeting:** She never got to meet Aram. A couple of days ago, Noor had arranged for the three to meet at the Ozone Plaza outside Al-Said's Oporium, a well known tabakery, at the beginning of the second watch (at lunch time). Instead of Noor and Aram, a group of guards showed up and tried to arrest her.
- **The Escape:** Althea used her powers to evade arrest and hid in a basement in Little Horizon, as far away from the Promenade and the Ozone Plaza as possible.
- **The Search:** This morning, she finally left her hiding place and went to Noor's apartment in the student barracks near the Academy tube stop in the Student district. The room looked untouched, but the guards showed up again and she barely made it out.
- **Help:** Althea found Noor's communicator and saw several messages from Aram, as well as the message sent to the PCs. When guards showed up to search Noor's apartment, Althea saw no other option but to try to find Noor's friends. In the commotion, she accidentally dropped the com as she ran from the apartment.

After the conversation, Althea will leave the PCs to go hide again. If they promise to keep her safe or can offer her some-place to hide, she will come with them instead.

Cost: o DP (Mandatory)

CHASING DOWN THE FAKE GUARDS

In the next scene, the PCs will have gotten their hands on some clues and can begin their investigation. This scene is open and will describe a series of places for the group to visit and what happens there rather than just a chain of events.

THE SITUATION

The situation is simple – the PCs look for traces of their missing friend by following up on Althea's clues from the previous scene. They can:

- Look for Aram Yafa, Noor's mysterious friend who never showed up to the meeting. Althea doesn't know where Aram lives, or how and where he and Noor met.
- Investigate Noor's apartment. They will find clues pointing toward the Samaritan Sanatorium and clues that help them track down Aram Yafa.
- Ask around the Ozone Plaza, the Student district, the Guard point, or the Neoptra for information about the fake guards.

The martyr strike team is continuing the search for Althea and unless she is under the PCs' protection, there is a substantial risk of her being kidnapped (see Events below). Wherever the PCs go, they will be met with suspicion if they ask questions about mystics – people will be more helpful if they are asking about a missing friend or relative. Tensions are running high on the station, with fights and loud arguments breaking out here and there in the streets. The Bulletin news shows are on in the background in most shops and cantinas, and will feature the PCs' investigation if they uncover something that would make a dramatic headline.

IMPORTANT FACTS

The PCs must find the clues and pieces of information below in order for the scene to end. Most of it is either leads pointing in the direction of the Sanatorium or more information about the fake guards. It is not necessary for the PCs to find Aram Yafa, and as the GM you could choose to progress to the next scene as soon as the group's suspicions about the Sanatorium and the fake guards have been firmly established. The goal of the scene is for them to carry these suspicions with them into Act 2.

THE SANATORIUM

The PCs must find one or more of the following clues pointing them toward the Samaritan Sanatorium:

- **The Apartment:** There is a pamphlet in Noor's apartment with information about the mystic's disease and the Sanatorium. Scribbled on the back is a date from a few days ago, before Noor disappeared.
- **The Diary:** Noor appears to have sought out the Sanatorium on Aram Yafa's recommendation to be cured from nirs illness.
- **The Communicator:** Noor's com contains information about two appointments made with healers at the Sanatorium.
- **The Snitch:** If Aram Yafa is found and threatened, he will divulge that the fake guards probably will have taken the missing mystics to the Samaritan Sanatorium in the Core.

REFERENCING THE FRIEND

In addition to the missing friend, the commotion in the spaceport has brought more eyes on the PCs. Players who aren't willing to look for clues and try to solve The Mysticides will become a part of it whether they want to or not. The Bulletin's snooping journalist, Ahuro's corrupt guards, or the strike team themselves may all be interested in the PCs' actions. However, if you find that it's hard to progress through Act 1 you can instead choose to escalate the conflict to the disappearance of the Emissary and the start of Act 2.

"Can't sleep. Don't dare to. I've got the curse, it's me they are talking about. Everything they're saying is happening to me."

--

"Aram was right. The medicurgs at the Sanatorium do really listen. Everything will be fine they say."

--

"It is contagious they say. Must keep it within me, must not let anyone else be affected by this."

--

"I have received a gift. The Icons have blessed me! The Emissary spoke to me in my dreams. A time of Change is soon here!"

Noor's Diary

THE FAKE GUARDS

During the scene, it is important that the PCs start suspecting that they are dealing with a group of fake guards, although the true identities of the martyr warriors should not be revealed yet. They must find one or more of the following clues:

- **The Diary:** A few diary entries describe that Noor has noticed someone following nem. One of the stalkers is described as "scarred, with a shaved head".
- **Witnesses:** Clean shaven guards have been seen on the outskirts of the Ozone Plaza, which is unusual as it is the Legion who normally keeps the peace there.
- **The Guard Points/Ahuro:** There is no squad of shaved guards working at any of the Guard points in the Neoptra or on the Ozone Plaza.
- **The Snitch:** Aram Yafa is himself a mystic and has been forced to help the fake guards catch other mystics under threat of being taken away himself.

THE SNITCH

Although catching Aram Yafa isn't strictly necessary, questioning the unlucky deckhand will provide the most obvious grounds for suspecting the Sanatorium and the fake guards. The following information should lead the PCs to Aram:

- **The Diary:** Several meetings with Aram in the last couple of weeks are mentioned here, in cantinas near to or on the Ozone Plaza, such as Wahib's and Al-Said's.
- **The Communicator:** Noor's com has recently been wiped of most of its data, but apart from the message to the PCs, it also contains a message from Aram saying that he wants to meet Althea and Noor outside of Al-Said's Oporium by the Ozone Plaza.
- **Witnesses:** Witnesses both around Noor's apartment and around Wahib's and the Ozone Plaza can describe Aram Yafa to the PCs.
- **The Infonet/the Stevedore Akbar:** Aram Yafa is not difficult to find as his address is listed in logs from previous employers in the spaceport.

THE RING AND CORE OF CORIOLIS

As this is an open scene, there are a number of places the PCs could visit when searching for clues. Below are descriptions of a few locations in the Ring and the Core the group might seek out. You can read more about the different areas of the station in chapter 4 of the *Coriolis* Core Rulebook. Read up on the locations and then read the events associated with them below.

A general theme for both the Ring and the Core is the constant appearance of dusk. Streetlights, storefronts, and neon signs are the only lights here. The streets are crowded with people, and depending on where the PCs are, the air is either stale and sweaty or heavy with spices and perfume. The residential modules by the Promenade are especially busy.

NOOR'S APARTMENT

If you altered where the Noor character lives or who it is, the paragraph below may need some changes. The location's clues are what is important.

Noor lived in a dorm room in one of the student barracks by the Academy tube stop. The neighborhood is bustling with every kind of student: Legion cadets in immaculate uniforms; courtesans in light, intricately embroidered burkanas; engineers crowding around tabulas; and tabak smoking aspiring correspondents with piercing eyes and flaming hearts. The different universities try to outshine one another, constructing magnificent lecture halls and office buildings, but the student dorms look more like a Colonial Agency mass housing project on some distant frontier. Read more about the University and Student districts on page 262 in the *Coriolis* Core Rulebook.

Althea can show the PCs the way to Noor's room if they ask her. Noor lived alone in a sparsely furnished room containing a bed, a desk covered in notes, and a shelf with a few paper books on it. The room contains several important clues for the PCs to find – see the At Noor's event below. Althea also dropped Noor's communicator while fleeing from the fake guards here. When searching the apartment, or while looking for the missing communicator, the PCs can encounter the following NPCs:

- **Mimia Moridorah (First year student):** Most people would describe first year students as confused chain smokers who constantly misplace their tabulas and mix binge drinking with bursts of intense studying. Mimia fits the bill perfectly, but she is also a mystic – sometimes, she gets a vision of the answers to an upcoming test, and is currently being accused of cheating. As she is on a scholarship, the accusations have made her future very uncertain. She lives in the same corridor as Noor and heard the guards search the area. She hid until they had left, and found Noor's communicator going back to her room. She is low on birr and is considering selling it to afford next segment's rent.

THE RING AND THE CORE

Locations of Interest:
O1 Student District
O2 The Samartian Sanatorium
O3 Guard Point #37
O4 Guard Point #13
O5 Stevedore Central
O6 Aram Yafa's Home
O7 Headquarters of the Judicators

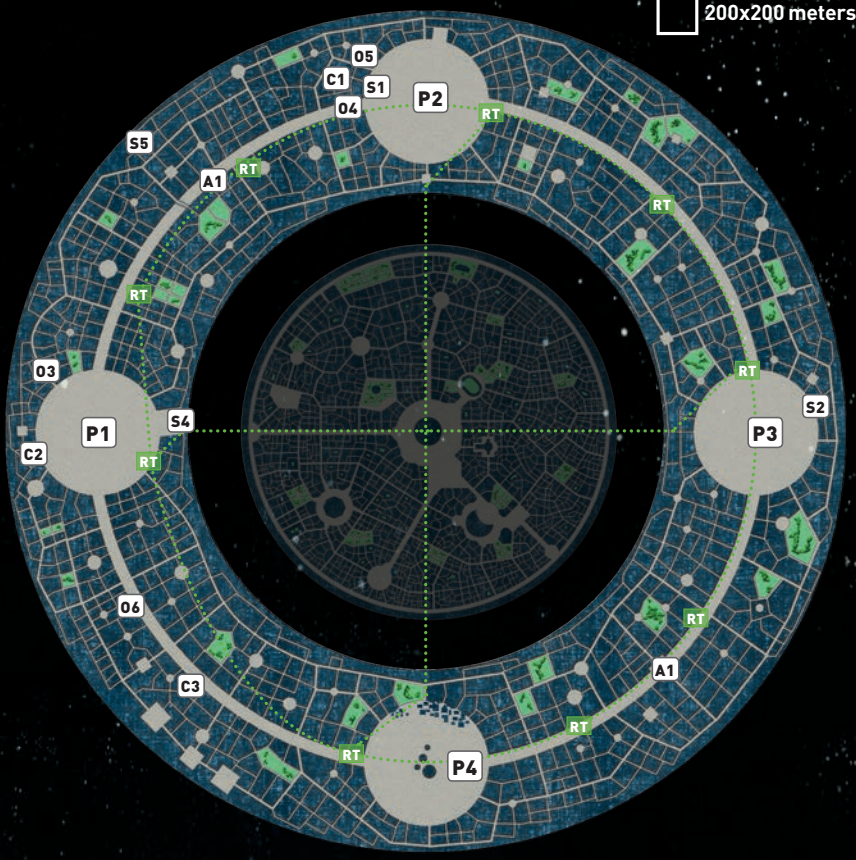
Cantinas
C1 Madame Shari's Chai House
C2 Al-Said's Oporium
C3 Wahib's Cantina

Plazas and meeting places
P1 Ozone Plaza
P2 Spice Plaza
P3 Market Plaza
P4 Spring Plaza
P5 Core Plaza
P6 Garden of Seekers

Avenues
A1 The Promenade
A2 The Core Circle

Spaceports
S1 Neoptra
S2 Askerio-Val
S3 Vyapaar
S4 Mercanda
S5 Saltaara

RT RING TUBE STATION
T TUBE STATION
V VERTICAL TUBE STATION





- **Ekvias Memoxes (Dorm supervisor):** As a long time student and experienced flunker, Ekvias is starting to become a part of the furniture on campus. He thinks that this gives him respect, but the more successful students all laugh at him behind his back. As a dorm supervisor in a building with a lot of students from the Lyceum of Propaganda, Ekvias has his hands full but knows just about everything that goes on in the area. He has noticed both the dodgy group of guards and that Noor has been on edge, and has just heard a rumor saying that someone in his dorm is looking to sell a slightly outdated com.

OBSTACLES ALONG THE WAY

The Samaritan Sanatorium should start to look really suspicious during this scene, but the PCs should not investigate it until Act 2. If the group decides to visit the Sanatorium now, it is time to introduce one of the more threatening events. The martyr strike team has been shadowing them and is starting to realize that the PCs are getting a little too close to the truth. If the group is wavering in their resolve to visit the Sanatorium, a warning might be enough (the threatening message on their coms), but if they seem undeterred, they should get attacked by the group of stevedores, and then hear the news about the disappearance of the Emissary.

THE OZONE PLAZA AND AL-SAID'S

Althea has told the PCs about the meeting that was supposed to have taken place at Al-Said's Oporium (a gambling den and tabakery) a couple of days ago, when the fake guards first tried to arrest her. This tip should lead the group to the busy markets of the Ozone Plaza, the place where every technological need can be satisfied – if a gadget or gizmo cannot be found here, it probably doesn't exist. Among the tents and stalls brimming with goods, loud merchants scream out their prices and street urchins and thieves do their best to empty the pockets of inexperienced shoppers. If the PCs ask around the plaza they will find a number of people who can help them, either for free or for a handful of birr (You can use table 11.15 on page 256 of the *Coriolis* Core Rulebook to generate additional NPCs if you like):

- **Karoum (Peddler):** Karoum is an old ship mechanic who was able to leave the darkness of the void and become a peddler on the Ozone Plaza after an unusually lucrative salvage job. He has purchased all the right permits from the Judicators and has paid off the local gangs to be left alone to conduct his business in

AL-SAID'S OPORIUM

At the edge of the Ozone Plaza, where the haggling arms dealers, light-fingered cyber merchants, and rugs covered in spare parts give way to simpler stalls and kawah trolleys, one finds Al-Said's Oporium. The establishment began as a traditional tavern, and became a second home for Legionnaires and merchants who needed food, drink, and somewhere to rest during the early hours of the fourth watch. Dark pillars made of Kuan hardwood draped in silk hide the dirty beams in the ceiling and the dusty ventilation system. The floors are covered in Sadaalian rugs and the small tables are lit by sugar globes floating in small pots of syrup. The proprietor is the Sadaalian hedonist and connoisseur of fine drugs Tahir Em Al-Said. He is an ex-Lama member and has the gang's signature lip tattoo, framed by a big beard decorated with pearls. His rough hands are covered in gold rings and his icy blue eyes are surrounded by very tasteful face painting. Tahir is a respected man despite his checkered past, and can count many merchants and deckhands as well as Legionnaires and gang members among his friends. The Oporium is a calm haven where the guests leave their shoes at the door and their guns holstered to come together over a purring hookah, a nice meal, or a relaxed game of dice.



a small stall strategically close to Al-Said's. His main problem is the gangs of shoplifting children that roam around the area. Karoum dresses in a simple but stylishly purple gallabeya and the loose opening shows a scarred chest covered in whitening hair. His hands are sinewy but strong, and he is as competent with delicate soldering on stolen coms and tags as he is with banging dents out of a Legion chestplate. Karoum can fix up almost anything (Wits 4, Technology/Science 4). He witnessed Althea being chased by guards a few days ago.

- **Iala, Tam, and Mahmo Janoun (Street Urchins):** The streets around the Ozone Plaza and the sacks of spices in the stalls outside of Al-Said's are where the Janoun siblings call home. They roam the streets, taking what they can from unsuspecting visitors and yelling merchants. The children are dirty and have dried snot under their noses, but their eyes are clear and brown, ready to tear up against gullible passersby. They wear simple and worn clothing – wide trousers and over-sized caftans that can hide a surprising amount of loot. They have heard about the incident with Althea and the guards, and a few hours prior, they spotted the clean shaven guards meeting with a young man inside the tabakery.

⚙ GUARD POINT 37 – THE OZONE PLAZA

In the encounter with the fake guards in the Neoptra, the PCs might have suspected that something was wrong. Such suspicions could have been strengthened by Ahuro's intervention and the fact that the fake guards got away so easily. When the PCs visit the Ozone Plaza police station, they notice that the stone front facade of Guard point 37 is cracked and riddled with holes from Vulcan fire. On the steps underneath the sigil of the Guard, a stylized diamon, lies a snoring drunk. A guard leans casually against the door jamb, chewing tabak with her hair let down. These are the station's finest – the Coriolis Guard. Guard point 37 is a typical neighborhood office, or a karkolu as they are called on the station. It is located in the alleys by the Ozone Plaza and a lot of criminals, guards, and Legionnaires pass through here. Inside there is a large reception desk, staffed by Sergeant Chima Ouros – a few smaller desks where the guards handle their paperwork, a large jail, and a cellar containing a weapons locker and an evidence room. There is a constant smell of tabak, sweat, and urine here, despite the hard work of Gelof the cleaner.

The station is low on personnel and the few guards here are either going somewhere or hunched over stacks of arrest forms. If they put their minds to it, the PCs can meet the following NPCs:

- **Chima Ouros (Sergeant):** Chima towers behind her desk like a stiff, enormous statue. She is responsible for logging all arrests, complaints, and reports. She wears her chestnut hair in a tight knot and her dark, unsettling stare makes sure that visitors to her office keep their conversations short. She wears a shoulder holster containing a massive Vulcan pistol that looks to have seen extensive use. She is very reluctant to answer questions about alleged corruption in the Guard, but could be persuaded to reveal that they have no guards in service here that match the descriptions of the fake guards from the spaceport.
- **Gelof (Cleaner):** Gelof is Guard point 37's cleaner, and he never seems to leave the building, much like Sergeant Ouros. Gelof is a young man with a crooked back and curious eyes that peek out from behind thick, black bangs. His tireless mopping and scrubbing never quite seem to make a room clean, just cleaner. Gelof hears about everything that happens in the building. He might pass on a whisper or two if there is birr to be made, with Sergeant Ouros' silent approval, of course. He can tell the PCs that inspector Ahuro and some of the guards have made some form of deal with some people on the Ring. During the investigation of the Mysticides, the dirty guards have promised to stay away from certain places at certain times.

GUARD POINT 13 – THE NEOPTRA

The PCs could also choose to visit Guard point 13 in the Neoptra, which is not as busy as point 37. Here they will meet with inspector Ahuro (page 21).

- **Bribes:** Guards at several different posts around the Ring have been ordered by Ahuro to accept bribes to ignore the fake guards. No ordinary guard would ever admit to this and the PCs will only hear this information if they truly win over Ahuro to their side. Doing that requires both figuring out that he himself is a mystic and that the fake guards are the ones responsible for the Mysticides.
- **Previous Entanglements:** If the PCs were arrested or yelled at by inspector Ahuro in the starting scene, he will make it very clear that he never wishes to see them again in his life. A large enough bribe might sooth his wrath however, and if the PCs promise him a drink or five, he might even be willing to talk.

THE STEVEDORE CENTRAL

The group's investigations may lead them to the stevedore central. If they have been here during a previous scene, the outcome of that will of course affect how they are received this time.

- **Aram Yafa:** When asking around about Aram Yafa – by name and profession or by com number – stevedore Akbar Xiu Xichama (page 23) might be persuaded (**MANIPULATION** –1) to look through old employment records for information. In addition to the **MANIPULATION** roll, the PCs will have to also provide some additional information about Aram, like his communicator number, full name, or profession. Just his first name won't be sufficient. The records contain an address – three residential modules between Wahib's and the Ozone Plaza, just above the Promenade.
- **After the Ambush:** If the PCs have been attacked by the group of stevedores, they can try to find out more about this from Xiu. After some resistance, she promises to ask around, but if the martyr strike team is the last missing link in the PCs' investigation, you could have Xiu tell the PCs that a group of guards paid the stevedores handsomely to teach the nosy PCs a lesson. They didn't act like normal guards however, and if the group doesn't know this yet, Xiu can tell them that the guards had a strange accent.

THE YAFAS' MODULES

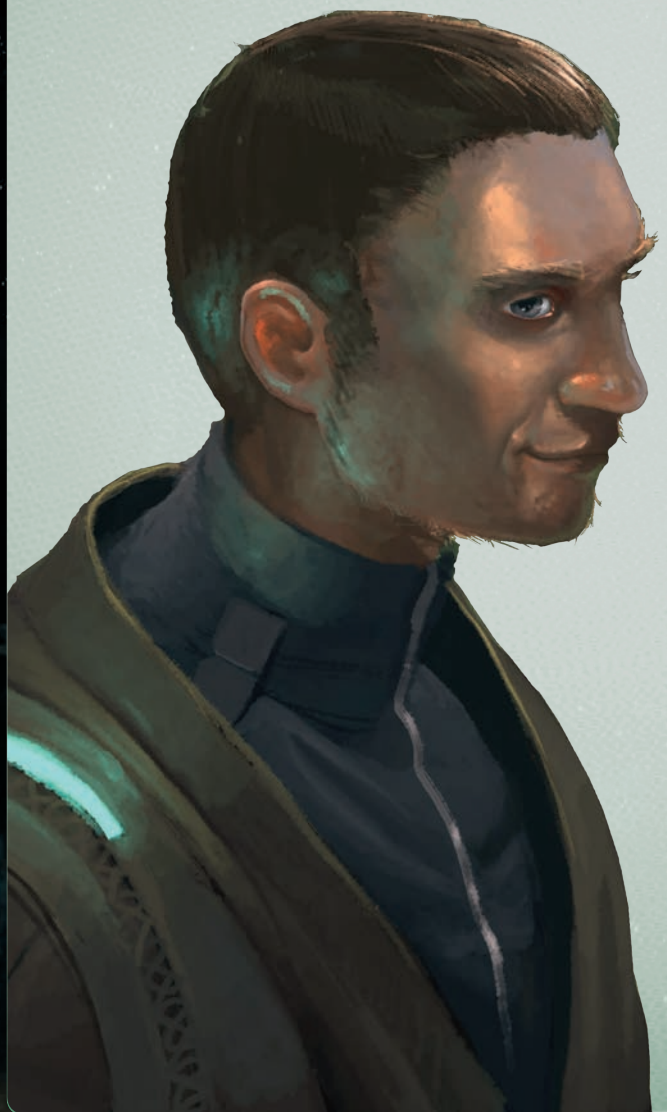
Laughing and squabbling neighbors, crying children, and barking dogs – the residential modules above the Promenade are a constant whirl of noise and activity. The modules themselves are made from different materials and painted in every imaginable color, and the maze of balconies, canopies, and crisscrossing clothes lines outside only add to the neighborhood's chaotic appearance. The Promenade can be heard as a distant murmur from below.

The Yafases live in three conjoined residential modules – each of them made up of just a single room, forcing much of the family life out onto the narrow terrace outside. The Promenade is located a few stories down, and the colorful roofs of the merchant stalls below look like a strange, organic mosaic.

If the PCs come here looking for Aram Yafa, his family will insist on them staying for baklava and kawah. Aram's father is a regular contestant in the highly prestigious baklava competitions on the Spice Plaza. The pastries are served with

strong, black kawah, thick with sugar, and the conversation is framed by constant interruptions from four over-excited children being chased around the PCs by the older siblings. The Yafases' modules are a packed mess of bunk beds, stoves and cheap furniture. The family will gladly entertain their guests until their son comes home, and as the GM you are free to determine if you want to end the scene in this location (see Events below).

- **Cheram Yafa (Master Baklava Chef):** Aram's father and "head" of the family. Cheram is a multiple baklava tournament winner with a big belly and an even bigger laugh who loves to talk to new people – mainly about pastries though. He is of the opinion that his son lacks motivation, but not that he is up to something illegal.
- **Yohara Yafa (Family Matriarch):** The actual decision-maker in the clan is Yohara, Aram's mother. She makes sure that there are always dates, hot kawah, and big trays of Cheram's pastries on the table. She is more worried than Cheram about Aram's lack of direction, but doesn't know any details about her son's affairs.



NPCS

In this scene, the PCs could encounter the independent actor Jeyla Kuhari (see Events) as well as numerous other characters who can provide them with the clues described above. The NPCs that are tied to specific locations are less detailed. Should you need their attribute or skill levels, use the NPC list on page 343 in the *Coriolis* Core Rulebook. Finally, the PCs might find Aram Yafa, who can give them some much needed answers (see Important facts).

ARAM YAFA, DECKHAND AND BAIT

Aram Yafa is deeply miserable, but he doesn't show it. From the outside, he looks like any other temporarily unemployed deckhand, spending his days in cantinas such as Wahib's around the spaceport or the Ozone Plaza. He is part of a large family with their roots on Amedo, represented on the station by four generations of Yafases sharing three residential modules just above the Promenade.

His loving family notwithstanding, Aram is deeply unhappy – he has been afflicted by the mystic's disease and battles a serious gambling problem, something which the martyr strike team used as leverage when they confronted him. By paying him enough to keep up his gambling (the carrot) and threatening to tell his family about his illness (the stick), the martyr strike team has coerced Aram into helping them track down other mystics, whom they then send away for "treatment". Aram is not sure about what happens to the mystics after he has played his part, and he fights hard to keep his suspicions at bay.

Aram's last refuge is his family, and he will only come home when he sees no other option. Through his family's connections, he can get help with most kinds of problems, as long as it isn't illegal.

APPEARANCE: Short hair, shy eyes. Wears a stevedore's overalls with fluorescent symbols on it, the kind common in spaceports.

CHARACTERISTICS: Bites his nails when he thinks no one is watching. Almost a little too kind. Talks a lot about his big family.

ATTRIBUTES:
STRENGTH 1, AGILITY 2, WITS 3, EMPATHY 4

HIT POINTS: 3

MIND POINTS: 7

REPUTATION: 1

SKILLS: Observation 3, Dexterity 2, Mystic Powers 2

TALENT: Telepathy (mystical power)

GEAR: Personal communicator, tag with 3,500 birr, gambling chips from the Sewers and Al-Said's.

- **TELEPATHY:** Aram has the supernatural power of mind reading which enables him to hear other people's thoughts (not everything, only "strong" thoughts). He can also transmit short telepathic messages. When he is stressed, his thoughts sometimes spill over into the heads of those nearby, especially other mystics (no DP cost).

JEYLA KUHARI, CURIOUS REPORTER

Jeyla Kuhari is a young and promising reporter that up until a few segments ago was the Bulletin's hottest correspondent – but something went wrong. One of her most trusted sources leaked information to her about a high-ranking politician's illegal activities. When she published her story, it was the scoop of the year – until it turned out to be false. Her career was ruined overnight and she has been demoted to work the obituaries, spending her days writing boring articles praising recently departed merchants. When mystics started disappearing on the station, the disgraced reporter's instincts came to life again. A tip led her to the Neoptra where she encounters the PCs (see Events). Jeyla suspects that something big is behind the gruesome crime spree and believes writing about it could be her way back to the top. She will go to any length to restore her honor – pay any price.

APPEARANCE: Short black hair and glasses where one of the eyes is covered by a micro camera. Dresses in a long, anonymously patterned djellaba.

CHARACTERISTICS: Constantly sniffing her smelling tabak. Piercing eyes. Leans in close and speaks intimately with her sources.

ATTRIBUTES:
STRENGTH 1, AGILITY 2, WITS 3, EMPATHY 4

HIT POINTS: 3

MIND POINTS: 7

REPUTATION: 5

SKILLS: Manipulation 4, Culture 3, Observation 2

TALENT: Contacts

WEAPONS: Vulcan cricket

GEAR: Communicator with an advanced recording upgrade, holograph mounted on her glasses, tabula, tag with birr for bribes.

- **CONTACTS:** Kuhari has several trusted informants on the station that can help her for something in return. At the cost of 1 DP, Kuhari can obtain information about or access to places, events etc. This enables her to show up where the PCs are without warning.

STEVEDORE THUGS

Dressed in dirty coveralls. They outnumber the PCs but are cowards and will try to run away if things start to look bad. Bribes might achieve the same result.

ATTRIBUTES:
STRENGTH 3, AGILITY 2, WITS 1, EMPATHY 2

HIT POINTS: 5

MIND POINTS: 3

REPUTATION: 2

SKILLS: Force 2, Melee Combat 2

WEAPONS: Blunt instrument, brass knuckles, power glove or dura knife.

EVENTS WHILE CHASING THE FAKE GUARDS

The events in this scene are linked mainly to the fake guards' level of activity, or to the witnesses the PCs interview when looking for clues about Noor's final week of freedom.

NOOR'S APARTMENT

The PCs enter Noor's room to look for clues. This is the location with the most clues in the scene, but let the PCs search for the information, instead of just giving it to them. The module is small, with little furniture except for a mattress on the floor, a small desk, and some simple kitchen appliances. If Althea (who has a key) is not with the PCs, they will have to find some other way to enter. The lock on the door is weak and can be forced or hacked (normal **FORCE** test/easy **DATA DJINN** test), but if the roll fails, the group will have attracted the attention of dorm supervisor Memoxes. The following clues can be found inside the apartment:

- **Pamphlet:** A pamphlet on the desk containing information about the Samaritan Sanatorium, advertising treatment for the mystic's disease.
- **The Cache:** Noor's back-up transactor with 2,000 birr (**DATA DJINN** –2 to unlock) is hidden under a loose tile in the floor. The cache also contains Noor's diary with entries up until the day of nirs disappearance.
- **The Diary:** The diary describes several meetings with Aram over the last couple of weeks in cantinas such as Wahib's and Al-Said's around the Ozone Plaza. It also reveals that Noor, on Aram's suggestion, has contacted and visited the Sanatorium. The entries after the visit to the Sanatorium are erratic, describing the mystic power as both a blessing and a dark shame. The last entries are increasingly paranoid, speaking about "scarred, bald" guards following Noor.

The students Mimia and Ekvias can both be found close to Noor's home. They have seen or heard parts of what has happened and can give further information:

- **Stolen Com:** Mimia Moridorah, a student living in the same corridor as Noor, has found the com unit Althea dropped when she ran from the guards (**DATA DJINN** –1 to track the com signal, **MANIPULATION** –2 to find it by asking around). Mimia has put the word out that she is looking to sell the com for 100 birr.
- **Messages in the Communicator:** The communicator contains several conversations between Noor and Aram, and a message

Handout #1: The Sanatorium Pamphlet



from Aram asking Noor to show up an hour early to the meeting with Althea so they can talk before she arrives. The last message is followed by several unanswered calls from Althea (Noor left the com at home). The last message from Aram can be used to contact him, or to find out where he lives.

- **The Dorm Supervisor:** If Ekvias can be convinced that the PCs aren't burglars, he will share with them that he has spent many late nights drinking with Noor, who has seemed scared and nervous lately. He has also heard about a com for sale in the building. Earlier today, he encountered a group of guards turning Noor's apartment upside down (after Althea had escaped them).
- **The Guards:** Ekvias can reveal that today wasn't the first time he saw these particular guards – two of them visited the corridor in plain clothes about a week ago, but he shooed them out.

Cost: 0 DP

⚙ THIEVES AND SPICES

If the PCs visit the Ozone Plaza or Al-Said's, chances are good that they will run into the Janoun children. A young girl in simple clothes but with an embroidered, red dupatta tugs at the sleeve of one of the PCs (the one with the lowest Empathy score). She looks up with tears in her eyes and stretches out a shaking, empty hand.

- **The Thieves:** At the cost of 1 DP, you can have the Janouns steal something from the PCs. Unless a PC makes an active attempt to spot the crime (**OBSERVATION** –1), Liala's two brothers will try to steal one thing each from someone in the group and then run in opposite directions. Liala ducks under Karoun's tool stand and disappears into the crowd, leaving only her red shawl behind. The PCs might try to catch the thieves and can apprehend one of the kids by successfully testing **OBSERVATION** and **DEXTERITY**.
- **The Janoun Humanites:** Older sister Liala lives with her two younger brothers, twins Tam and Mahmo, in the alleys around the Ozone Plaza. The are humanite descendents of the Krahin, workers from the Marfik system brought to work on Coriolis under slavelike conditions. Their humanite talent is equivalent of the Regenerate sculpt (see page 77 of the *Coriolis* Core Rulebook), and also slows down their aging. The kids look significantly younger than they actually are, and have learned to use this to their advantage. If one or more of the siblings are caught by the PCs, they will do whatever they can to escape – promising to help the PCs, steal for them, sell them secrets – anything they can think of. If the PCs let them go before they have revealed the promised information, they will slither away without another word. They can be questioned for clues as long as they are in captivity, however.
- **The Children's Story:** If one of the Janouns is captured or bribed, they can tell the PCs about the guards who chased that poor woman through the spice stands outside Al-Said's. The Coriolis Guard usually stay away from the Ozone Plaza, and the children mainly have to worry about Legionnaires and judicators. A few hours before the spectacle at the oporium, Mahmo (one of the brothers) saw the guards talking to a young man standing outside Al-Said's (he describes Aram Yafa). A little later, Liala saw another person (Noor) meet up with Aram, after which they both slipped into one of the alleys next to the plaza. In the alley, the children saw three bald guards threaten one of the visitors (Noor) with guns and lead nem away.
- **The Merchant:** The old tech pusher and repairman Karoum has a stall close to Al-Said's, and will offer his sincere sympathies if the PCs were pickpocketed by the Janouns. For a nice chat and some birr to go with it, he can also tell them about a strange thing he witnessed a few days ago. A young woman came to Al-Said's, obviously looking for something, but she suddenly started pushing people and ran out with a group of angry guards chasing her.
- **The Gambler:** If you want to, you can let the regular crowds at Wahib's or Al-Said's recognize a description of Aram Yafa and recall his frequent visits, sometimes together with others, but usually alone and with money on his mind. Just recently, he has begun betting larger sums than before, and has paid off some old debts.

Cost: 0–1 DP

⚙ FOLLOWED

Someone is following the PCs. Use this scene to let them attempt an **OBSERVATION** roll or to make them aware that someone knows about their investigation. Depending on who the followers are, this scene could also introduce an independent actor such as Kuhari the correspondent or inspector Ahuro. The main goal of the scene is to create suspense, but a captured follower could of course provide clues of great value.

Cost: 0 DP

A CURIOUS REPORTER

"Weren't you involved in that spectacle in the spaceport?" asks a woman in discreet but exclusive clothes. She holds up a com set to record and continues: "What are you doing here? Maybe a short interview, ne?"

Jeyla Kuhari, the disgraced reporter, recognizes the PCs and tries to get an interview to find out what they are up to. She is looking into the Mysticides and has been tipped off about the PCs' investigation. If the actions of the PCs cause further disturbances, Jeyla might show up again and be even more insistent in her attempts to find out what is going on.

Cost: 0 DP

AMBUSH!

You are suddenly surrounded by grinning stevedores who seem to materialize out the shadows, armed with pipes, brass knuckles, power gloves, and knives. "You should keep your noses out of other people's business!" says the one who seems to be the leader – and then they attack! The martyr strike team has had enough of the PCs' snooping and wishes to warn them, test their mettle, or simply get rid of them. A group of spaceport thugs are hired to sort out the problem. Some of them might know Althea, or she might know them. The thugs have been ordered to make it look like a mugging gone wrong. One of the fake guards could be hiding nearby to supervise the attack and the PCs can spot this if they win an opposed **OBSERVATION** test. If the strike team is discovered, they will quickly try to get away.

Cost: 2 DP

ARAM – THE PRODIGAL SON

If the PCs visit the Yafases' residential modules and are friendly (or at least not overtly rude or hostile), they can spend a few pleasant hours in the company of the loud and cheerful Cheram (Aram's father) and quiet and firm Yohara (Aram's mother). There seems to be an endless supply of kawah, dates, and baklava at hand, and as the hours pass, Aram's four younger siblings begin to like one or a couple of the PCs more and more.

- Eventually, Aram shows up in the middle of the umpteenth cup of kawah, bursting through the door, looking worn and worried. His father grins at him and says that some friends of his have stopped by and that everyone is having a great time, but Aram's nervous smile disappears in an instant and he rushes out into the street to try to disappear into the crowds on the Promenade below.
- The PCs could either try to catch him now or seek him out later (see below). If they chase Aram now, let it be a desperate scene where they clearly have the upper hand. As they are starting to either catch up with or surround him, one or a few of the PCs receive telepathic visions of his cries for help.

  If the PCs catch Aram, he will admit to what he has done and tell them all he knows (see below).

Cost: 0 DP

ARAM'S CONFESSION

This event will most likely mark the end of the scene. When cornered, Aram will give up and tell the PCs everything he knows. This should give the group enough information to proceed to the end of Act 1.

- **The Guards:** He was apprehended by a group of guards a few weeks ago. They threatened to tell his family about his illness (the mystic's disease) and to make sure that Cheram – the family's main provider – would be out of a job if Aram didn't do as they told him.
- **The Reward:** They also gave him a tag with 5,000 birr (of which he has already spent 1500 on his gambling addiction) and promised him more money for every mystic he could help them "treat".
- **The Mission:** Aram's task was to befriend other mystics and tell them to show up at a certain place at a certain time, where the fake guards would be waiting for them after Aram had sent a message via an encrypted communicator. With a hard (–2) roll for **DATA DJINN**, the recipient can be tracked to the vicinity of the sanatorium.
- **The Mystics:** The guards told Aram that they could cure the mystics of the affliction, but after the recent news reports about murdered mystics, Aram is not so sure anymore. Any mystics identified by Aram were first to be taken to the Sanatorium for evaluation. If the PCs specifically ask for it, Aram can give them a list of all the people he has either sent to the Sanatorium or given up to the guards. This could come in handy during Act 2.

Cost: 0 DP

ARAM'S DEATH

If the PCs choose to let Aram go after they have questioned him – or if you as the GM think that the hunt for the bait should have a darker ending – use the following event:

- The leader of the martyr strike team, Salamah ach-Abaud, starts to regard Aram as a security risk, a loose end. When the kidnapping of the Emissary draws closer, Salamah decides to tie up all such loose ends. She sends three of her warriors to kidnap and murder Aram.
- Only a few hours before the news of the disappearance of the Emissary break, the Bulletin reports that yet another body has been found, but that the Coriolis Guard are unsure of whether it has anything to do with the so-called Mysticides or not. Inspector Merk Ahuro of the Guard releases a short statement soon after saying that the murder of deckhand Aram Yafa looks to be gang-related, in light of the deceased's massive gambling debts.

Cost: 2 DP

THE DISAPPEARANCE OF THE EMISSARY

In this scene, the PCs, together with the rest of station's population, find out that the Emissary from Xene has vanished. Riots break out.

THE SITUATION AND EVENTS

The martyr strike team has moved to the final stage of its operation and kidnapped the Emissary in a daring raid against its residence in the Spire. This scene is not optional and will provide the PCs with vital information, for example via a press release or a Bulletin news report. You can choose when to start this scene, but a suggestion is to wait until the PCs have enough leads pointing them in the direction of the Sanatorium. The scene is not tied to a specific location, but written as if it is taking place in the Ozone Plaza.

The Ozone Plaza is silent – only a low murmur can be heard from the crowds huddling around the info terminals and the holo screens in the shops, but it heralds the coming of a storm of unseen magnitude. The air is thick with anticipation and almost painful to breathe as you make your way toward the nearest terminal. A reporter on the screen says in a grave voice: "The Emissary from Xene has disappeared..."

The risks of demonstrations and rioting are great on the station as the news about the disappearance breaks. The PCs will also be contacted by judge Kurahan who has a mission for them: see Ending Act 1.

BREAKING NEWS

"... we have just received word that the news about the Emissary having disappeared does indeed appear to be true, and that the investigation has been turned over to the Judicators. We turn to Harnek Mara, Bulletin representative at the Council, for an update."

"Thank you Jabal. Rumors about the Emissary's disappearance started to circulate this morning as the Emissary – who attends the meetings of the Council in an observer capacity – did in fact not attend yesterday's Council meeting..."

"Which you can confirm as you were at the meeting, correct?"

"That's right Jabal, the Emissary's chair was empty during the meeting and all attempts at contacting the Emissary today have failed..."

"Now... now... Excuse me Mister Mara, reports are just coming in about crowds gathering out on the Ring around the Spring Plaza. Our reporter Mafra Sarmin is on the scene and knows more."

"Thank you Jabal. Rumors are spreading quickly and people are already gathering here to express their despair, sorrow or anger over the disappearance of the Emissary. The first to gather appear to have been a group of pilgrims destined for the Xene station where the Emissary known as the Judge resides, and more and more people are arriving every minute. It looks as if some form of protest is being organized, but against who or what is uncertain. The Guard is understaffed but doing their best to keep the crowds confined to the plaza. Back to you Jabal."

"Thank you Mafra. Reports are coming in from all around the station from people claiming to have seen the Emissary – just recently we heard from a very agitated slummer saying that the Emissary just "floated" past him in a corridor in the Cellar. The situation is likely to be chaotic for some time in regard to what has actually happened, isn't that right Marnek Hara?

"Yes, the opor fumes in the Cellar have already produced some rather fantastical eyewitness reports about the so-called "new mystics", and one could expect more of the same to follow now...

"What will the disappearance of the Emissary mean for the Third Horizon? I now have Boro Bruhari, noted Icon scholar, with me to answer that question. What is your opinion about this mister Bruhari?

"Well, right now it is hard to say what will come out of it – people are undoubtedly in shock over what has happened – many viewed the arrival of the Emissaries as a sign that the return of the Icons was close at hand."

"You are referring here to the myths about how the Icons, after teaching mankind how to travel the void, promised to return in humanity's darkest hour, correct?"

"Yes, but that is only one of the many apocryphal stories about the Icons that flourishes within the Church and..."

"Thank you mister Bruhari, we will now go back to Mafra Sarmin, our reporter on the streets, who has been asking passersby on the Ring what they think about today's events – over to you, Mafra."

"Thank you Jabal, I am standing here with Sarai Namaran – what does the disappearance of the Emissary mean to you?"

"Well, it's all because of these new mystics, they siphon energy off the Emissaries you see... They channel the Dark and the wrath of the Icons and..."

"Eh, thank you Mafra, that's just about all the time we have..."

DEMONSTRATIONS AND RIOTING

On a larger plaza or avenue somewhere, the PCs suddenly find themselves in the path of a marching crowd, venting the population's boiling discontent by taking to the streets. The crowds wash over and surround the PCs. Suddenly, something goes wrong, fighting breaks out, and people start running. The PCs might get attacked by rioters (equivalent of the stevedore thugs, 2 DP) or even by the Guard (3 DP). If there is no fighting, this event costs 0 DP.

Cost: 0, 2–3 DP

RESONANCE – A SUDDEN SONG

Before you introduce the disappearance of the Emissary, you could throw in the following event. An hour or so before the news breaks, all mystic PCs suddenly experience a crushing headache and a ringing in the ears.

They become disoriented for two turns and feel as if they can hear a short, repetitive sequence of notes, or a fragment of a song. After the two turns, they feel normal again. If this happens during a fight (when chasing Aram Yafa or during the stevedore ambush for example), the event will cost you 2 DP. This event occurs at the same time as the attack on the Emissary's residence (see Act 2).

Cost: 0 or 2 DP

ENDING ACT 1

At the end of the first act, the PCs will most likely have figured out the following:

- A group of fake guards are kidnapping and murdering mystics
- They are aided by a person acting as bait, Aram Yafa
- Where the fake guards come from is not known
- Where the kidnapped mystics are taken is not known either
- The Samaritan Sanatorium seems to be connected to the disappearances somehow

The event that ties Act 1 and 2 together is the disappearance of the Emissary. Mightier forces intervene to help the investigation through the action of judge Kurahan who hires the PCs to find the Emissary and who gives the group access to the Emissary's residence in the Spire.

HIGH STAKES

ACT 2

During **High Stakes**, the PCs will discover that some of the factions seem to be involved in the conspiracy against the mystics. As indicated by the pun in the name, Act 2 takes place mainly in the Spire.

ACT 2 IS described in the same way as Act 1, with a suggested starting scene, a chain of subsequent scenes, and descriptions of all the important NPCs. The chapter ends with a summary of what the PCs should have figured out before Act 3.

OVERVIEW

Almost immediately after the Emissary disappears, the PCs are contacted by judge Kurahan, who asks them to find out who is responsible. They are given access to the Emissary's residence and find clues there pointing at both the Zenithian Hegemony and the Samaritans. After pursuing these two leads and meeting with Brother Ramas – whom they possibly know from the stand-alone scenario *The Last Voyage of the Ghazali* – they are attacked by the martyr strike team in the Garden of Seekers. At the end of the act, the group is given a map to the Cellar by Brother Ramas.

KEY INSIGHTS

The main goal of Act 2 is to lead the PCs to the Sanatorium where they can appeal to Brother Ramas' conscience for assistance.

- The clues found in Act 2 indicate that the Order of the Pariah is somehow involved in the kidnappings.
- Samaritan Brother Ramas helps the PCs find a way down into the Cellar and gives them information about what is going on inside the Sanatorium.
- The Hegemony's ambassador appears to be involved in the disappearance of the Emissary.

IMPORTANT CHARACTERS

The key NPCs in the second act are:

- **Nigelia Kurahan** – Judge in the courts of Coriolis (page 41)
- **Akouba Kosha** – Judicator, Astûrban agent, and liasion between judge Kurahan and the PCs (page 43)
- **Johar Quassar** – Ambassador for the Zenithian Hegemony (page 52)
- **Lenove Astir** – Spymaster for the Astûrban (page 53)
- **Brother Ramas** – Samaritan member of the Order of the Pariah (page 54)

DARKNESS POINTS

Darkness Points in Act 2 can mainly be used to put obstacles in the PCs' way. When the Emissary disappears at the end of Act 1, the GM automatically gets 4 DP. For increased dramatic effect, you can take these four points as you subject a mystic PC to the A Sudden Song event (see Events above).

STARTING SCENE: FRIENDS IN HIGH PLACES

The second act begins in the luxury restaurant Alkamaar's in the Spire. At some point after the Emissary has disappeared, the PCs receive an invitation to Alkamaar's.

THE SITUATION AND EVENT

The invitation doesn't arrive as a com message but in a beautiful envelope smelling faintly of jasmine, handed over by a personal courier.

When the PCs arrive at Alkamaar's, they are asked to leave their weapons, armor, and whatever gear they can't hide under their caftans in a special room in the foyer. Unless they are smartly dressed, the other guests will frown and sigh as they enter. PCs who work as courtesans, who move in social circles such as this, or who have the right kind of connections will know how to dress to blend in. Read this as the group is shown in:

A low, soothing baria hangs gently in the air above Alkamaar's luxurious decor and refined conversations. Waiters in white uniforms, courtesans in richly embroidered dresses, and tasteful, discreet laughter from the guests form a sophisticated potpourri around you as you are escorted to a corner table facing the glittering darkness of the void outside. The emerald green sphere of Kua shines at you from the other side of the glass dome in the ceiling, but despite the splendor around you, your attention is immediately drawn to your dinner companion at the table: a large, imposing woman on a divan, a silent, stern-looking warrior in full combat dress behind her – one of the judicators by the looks of it – and a beautiful, well-dressed hijra – probably a courtesan – on a cushion on the floor.

The people at the table are judge Kurahan, judicator Akouba Kosha, and Apion, the judge's courtesan for the evening. After a short introduction, the PCs are offered hot towels by Apion to rub their faces, hands and feet with, after which the dinner can begin. Judicator Akouba remains standing throughout the dinner until a deal has been struck between the PCs and judge Kurahan.

⚙ JUDGE KURAHAN'S MISSION

The PCs are offered comfortable divans across the table from the judge. Apion rises in one perfectly choreographed motion and supplies the PCs with hot towels and rose water. They offer to take care of any heavy clothing, shoes, or other gear. Gentle but precise hands move softly across tired limbs and tense shoulders. The stress of the last few days seems to melt away in the blink of an eye. Judge Kurahan smiles at the PCs and waits for Apion to sit back down before she starts to speak.

The authoritative, obviously Zenithian, woman is friendly and well-mannered and seems to know a lot about the PCs, but not in an unsettling way. She makes it clear that she has chosen the group precisely for their background. As the GM, you should prepare her speech and take into account both the unique skills of the group and their actions during Act 1, as well as any previous scenarios you have played. When everyone is sitting down comfortably, the judge begins to speak:

- **The PCs:** She knows a lot about them and can describe their backgrounds in detail.
- **The Investigation:** She knows about their investigation, even things that haven't become public knowledge.
- **The Conspiracy:** The last segments have been plagued by kidnappings, murders, and rioting, and she suspects that this is all part of a single conspiracy. The Coriolis Guard have tried to do something about it, but failed. Judge Kurahan sees the disappearance of the Emissary as an escalation that could carry catastrophical consequences as the Cyclade celebrations are just about a week away. The festivities coincide with the one-year anniversary of when the Emissary at the Xene station declared itself to be the Judge incarnate. The first day of the new year is also the anniversary of when the so-called Messenger Emissary arrived at Coriolis, which makes the timing of its disappearance unlikely to be coincidental. Judge Kurahan believes that all these events are linked and asks the PCs to investigate them both effectively and discreetly.

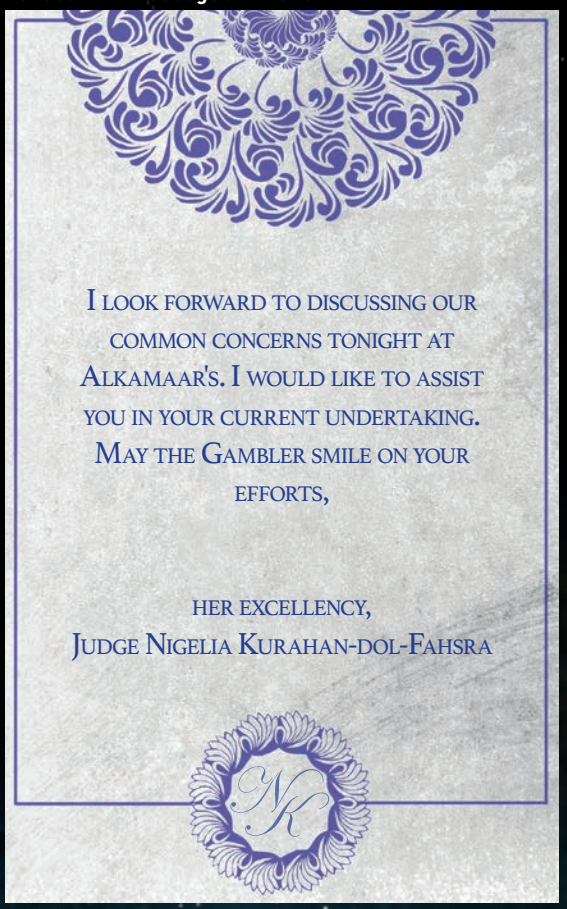
During the conversation, the judge tries to get as much information from the PCs as she can without them noticing it. She doesn't share her motivations for launching a private investigation alongside the official one unless she is pressed about it and the PCs somehow find out about her mystic son. She concludes by saying:

- She is interested in speeding up the investigation into the disappearance of the Emissary as much as she can, officially because she is worried about the potential societal consequences – but unofficially because she worries about the safety of her son Arlain.
- Through judicator Akouba, she has arranged access for the PCs to the Emissary's residence.
- Judicator Akouba can be of assistance if the PCs need any help from the station's law enforcement.
- The PCs are expected to report their findings to the judge via Akouba (they are given a pulse com set to reach the judicator).
- The group is also given a direct link to the judge's private communicator, but it is only to be used in emergencies.

IMPORTANT FACTS

In this scene, it is important to establish judge Kurahan as a reliable patron and cooperating with her could prove

Handout #2: The Judge's Invitation



INQUIRY!

Investigation into the mysterious judge Kurahan before the meeting using the infonet (the *Coriolis* Core Rulebook page 228), CULTURE, or the Faction Standing: The Consortium talent will provide some general information: judge Kurahan is a Zenithian who has risen quickly in her career after ruling in a series of high-profile cases at the station.

extremely beneficial. The scene should also introduce the mysterious judicator Akouba Kosha, although no details about her are presented yet.

- **The Emissary:** At the end of the scene, it should be clear to the PCs that going to the Emissary's residence by Lake Abhrra is the next step in their investigation.

ALKAMAAR'S RESTAURANT

Food and drink are integral parts of most cultures in the Third Horizon – most evidently displayed by the different elites who use certain forms of eating and drinking as a way to distance themselves from the common people and – even more so – each other. Whether it is a craving for flower extracts from the Monolith or a ravaging hunger for the Sadaalian lugal mollusk, one place in the Horizon has it all, a treat for every imaginable appetite – Alkamaar's, at the top of the Spire. You can find a short description of Alkamaar's at page 265 in the *Coriolis* Core Rulebook.

One's first visit to Alkamaar's is an unforgettable experience. Before entering the circular main room, spanning 120 meters in diameter, one has to wait in the foyer, surrounded by the restaurant's legendary gallery of stone statues. The foyer is full of sensors and discreet guards who make sure that no weapons or other forbidden gear is brought into the main hall.

The first thing that strikes a visitor as she strides through the doorway with a courtesan on her arm, is the awe-inspiring, all-encompassing sinister beauty of the nothingness as it is revealed through the transparent dome above the restaurant. The walls lean inward and meld seamlessly with the ceiling to form an enormous window toward space, and contrasted by the darkness outside, the light in the faces of one's friends, in the food and drink, and in the song, the dance, and the laughter seems to burn that much brighter. When the visitor is reclining comfortably on the divan she has been shown to, waiters approach to describe tonight's menu as they offer her a refreshing bowl of rose water to wash her hands in. After that, the hours rush by at the speed of light, the evening leaving the visitor profoundly moved – and wanting more.

NPCS

This scene introduces the judge and the judicator who will act as valuable contacts for the PCs during this and coming scenarios.

NIGELIA KURAHAN-DOL-FAHSRA, JUDGE

Judge Kurahan is one the youngest judges on the station, and well aware that she is being watched – by her colleagues, by the Governor, and by her family. Her youngest son, Arlain, is showing signs of having the mystic's disease, which would shame her blood-obsessed family if it came out, and the few who know about it expect Nigelia to deal with it as discreetly as possible. As a judge, she belongs to the Consortium, something which, paired with her pragmatic view of society, makes for a difficult balancing act when it comes to managing the relationship with her older relatives and their hegemonistic traditions.

Nigelia's prime concern at the moment is to solve the problem of the Emissary's disappearance, and she would prefer to find out things for herself, not via the Governor or her colleagues in the Consortium. She has contacted Akouba Kosha for help as the judicator owes her a debt, and Akouba has in turn been keeping herself up to date about the PCs' investigation into the missing mystics (they might also already be public figures after the Ghazali incident, if the group has played *The Last Voyage of the Ghazali*)

APPEARANCE: Big, with short hair covered by a tastefully decorated cap. Wears traditional Zenithian face makeup and expensive but discreet jewelry around her wide neck.

CHARACTERISTICS: Formal and courteous. Hides her fiery emotions under a cool facade. Clicks her lips as she talks.

ATTRIBUTES:
STRENGTH 3, AGILITY 1, WITS 4, EMPATHY 5

HIT POINTS: 4

MIND POINTS: 9

REPUTATION: 8

SKILLS: Manipulation 4, Culture 3

TALENTS: Judge of Character, Faction Standing: The Consortium, Judge, Zenithian Blood

GEAR: Personal communicator with pulse function, expensive clothes.

- **JUDGE OF CHARACTER:** Being a judge, Nigelia is used to people lying to her. If she maintains a conversation with someone for more than a minute or so, she can tell if the person is lying without testing **MANIPULATION**.
- **FACTION STANDING: THE CONSORTIUM:** Nigelia is a well-known judge on Coriolis, and by extension a member of the Consortium. This gives her access to the faction's support and resources. She gets a +2 to **MANIPULATION** when threatening or scaring someone.
- **JUDGE:** The -dol-Fahsra suffix is an honorary title given to all publicly appointed judges, giving Nigelia the power of the justice system of the station to back her up. She has contacts on many different levels of government, from generals in the Guard to captains working the streets. She can access any information available to her contacts and can arrange access to crime scenes, acquire weapon licenses, and maybe even get the PCs law enforcement backup.
- **ZENITHIAN BLOOD:** The Kurahans are one of the few Zenithian clans who regard themselves as neutral in the schism between the hegemonists and the neo-Zenithians, although with hegemonist leanings. Her family expect a lot from Nigelia, but their influence can help Nigelia and her allies in the plantations and around the Monolith, something that could prove very useful during The Kuan connection.





AKOUBA KOSHA, JUDICATOR

Akouba Kosha is an experienced judicator, something which has made her more inclined to prioritize results rather than nitpicking about jurisdiction. She gladly passes on minor offences and the punishment thereof to younger, less experienced judicators, or even to the incompetent fools in the Guard. Unlike other judicators who uphold neo-Zenithian ideals, Akouba has actually been an Astûrban mole since her first day at the Judicators' Forensics Institute and has worked toward strengthening the power of the hegemonists on Coriolis and to the detriment of the Consortium for many years.

Her cunning knows no bounds. She has purposely gotten herself indebted to judge Kurahan to make sure she is asked for favors, in the hopes that the judge would appoint her to the Mysticides. Her plan worked, and she now plans to expose the martyr strike team, thereby forcing the Consortium and the Order into open confrontation. Her mission objectives also include making sure that the martyr strike team is taken care of after it has played its part.

APPEARANCE: Always in the armor of the judicators and never showing her face. Only the eyes are visible when she opens her visor.

CHARACTERISTICS: Stern voice but doesn't speak much. Maintains eye contact in conversations to stare down her opponent.

ATTRIBUTES:
STRENGTH 4, AGILITY 4, WITS 4, EMPATHY 3

HIT POINTS: 10

MIND POINTS: 9

REPUTATION: 7

SKILLS: Dexterity 2, Force 3, Manipulation 3, Observation 2, Ranged Combat 3, Command 2

TALENTS: Tough, Hardened, Codex of the Judicators, Astûrban Lackey

ARMOR: Judicator armor 7

WEAPONS: Judicator model accelerator pistol (Initiative +1), dura sword, shock stick

GEAR: Personal communicator with pulse function, sensor visor.

- **TOUGH:** Akouba has survived the relentless elite training of the judicators and gets 2 additional HPs.
- **HARDENED:** Long years of danger and conflict have hardened Akouba, who gets 2 additional MPs.
- **CODEX OF THE JUDICATORS:** As a judicator, Akouba has contacts within her organization both on Coriolis and on Kua. She also keeps up appearances that she is adhering to the Codex of the Judicators, meaning that she works to fight and prevent crime quickly and effectively, usually acting as police, judge, and executioner at the same time.
- **ASTÛRBAN LACKEY:** Akouba has a whole ring of secret agents at her command, although the communication goes through courtesan houses and kawah stands using coded slips of paper, and the whole thing takes time. It can often take up to a whole day for her orders to be carried out. Akouba can receive reinforcements in combat at the cost of 1 to 3 DP.

THE EMISSARY'S LAST SONG

The PCs are escorted to the Emissary's residence by the silent judicator Akouba to conduct their own investigation of the crime scene. She provides them with some basic information and leaves after giving the group the call code to her communicator.

THE SITUATION

The Emissary's residence is on the Abhrra floor in the Spire (see the *Coriolis* Core Rulebook, page 266), right on the slope by the waterfront. It is a three-storey building partly built into the hill with balconies made from green Miran marble and ornate Sadaalian granite archways, surrounded by smaller buildings, paths, orchards, and Kuan vines and trees. The main house is empty, save for three modestly furnished rooms and a balcony on the third floor facing the water. The front door is sealed and the judicators have changed the entrance codes to close off the area. Akouba leads the way and lets the PCs inside. You can use the following text as it is or as inspiration when you describe the house:



The apartment consists of three rooms and a small kitchen alcove. The kitchen is dusty and doesn't appear to have been used in a long time. The bathroom is spotless and empty except for a few meticulously folded pairs of undergarments. The bedroom is perfectly ordered. The bed is made and a beautiful caftan hangs neatly folded over a chair next to it. The wardrobe contains about a dozen expensive, modern outfits complete with many layers of shawls and veils that the Emissary has been seen in when it has been captured on a Bulletin show or attended the Council. An exquisite hand fan lies next to the bed.

The sitting room is more interesting – there has clearly been fighting here: overturned furniture, a shattered music station, and torn books strewn across the floor. A mosaic depicting men and women descending from the Zenith to Kua covers most of one of the walls, but it is riddled with bullet holes – dotted black lines pointing toward a large pool of dark, dried blood on the floor. There are several other pools of blood and tracks that lead into the hallway – tracks made by bodies being dragged.

Judicator Akouba can provide the PCs with the information that the crime scene technicians have found, or you could let the PCs investigate on their own and let Akouba fill in the blanks afterward.

IMPORTANT FACTS

In this scene, the PCs are expected to investigate the Emissary's residence and combine their new findings with the clues they found in Act 1. Judicator Akouba makes herself available to the PCs so that she – in her capacity as an Astûrban agent – can tailor the leads to point more obviously toward the martyr strike team, and by extension – the Order of the Pariah. She is also there to make sure none of the other factions become suspects, especially not the Hegemony.

THE RESIDENCE

A small group has obviously managed to bypass the security systems in the Emissary's residence and then leave the Abhrra again without being noticed, carrying at least one body. The PCs should have figured out this much before they leave the scene, and if they don't find the clues themselves, let judicator Akouba give them the following information (as she has been instructed to do by ambassador Johar Quassar):

- **The Security System:** Motion detectors and cameras covering the path outside the residence were disabled at the time of the break-in. In the basement, there is a security central for the entire complex where the PCs can investigate the system's previously stored data. The last one to visit before the system was shut off was none other than the Zenithian Hegemony's ambassador to the Council, Johar Quassar, and there is no footage of him leaving the residence. Akouba can inform the PCs that Johar Quassar has not been interviewed about the case yet as he has factionary immunity. See the info about the data meme below.
- **The Blood:** Fighting broke out in the residence and at least one person was injured. There is blood that can be analyzed in the next scene (Zalosian blood from five different individuals and Miran blood from one person). There are blood stains around the door, on some of the books on the floor, and in the colonnade outside (Zalosian). The prayer rug on the floor has a rather clear imprint of a bloody right hand (Miran).
- **The Weapons:** The weaponry used in the house consisted of Vulcan carbines (which can be determined by examining the hole patterns in the mosaic by testing **COMMAND** normally, or **OBSERVATION** at –1). The damage to some of the books on the floor appears to come from the vibrating blade of a dura weapon. If the PCs noticed the fake guards' weapons in the opening scene in the spaceport, they should be able to connect the dots by now.

In addition to the above, you should make sure that the PCs have found at least one of the following clues before the scene ends:

- **The Vulcan Bullet:** One of the holes in the mosaic contains a bullet that is intact enough to be examined in the next scene. The rifling pattern on the bullet shows that the bullet was handmade by a gunsmith from a duramite/copper alloy to create almost noiseless vibro ammunition. This kind of bullet is not available on the open market and not produced by any of the Consortium companies, but is rather popular among rebels and shady weapon dealers.
- **The Cracks:** The walls around the door in the sitting room as well as parts of the floor around several of the pools of blood are shot through with a fine mesh of tiny cracks. The cracks seem to emanate from a point on the floor near the door and disappear a few meters from the prayer rug before reaching the mosaic on the wall. It looks almost as if the cracks have been caused by concentrated soundwaves (see the description of the attack below and of the Emissary's mystic powers).
- **The Data Meme:** Investigating the surveillance and alarm systems will show that they were disabled by a locally introduced data meme. Passing a hard (–2) **DATA DJINN** test reveals that the code appears to resemble the memes used on the Order's monastery cruisers, and thus appears to be of Zalosian origin.

THE EMISSARY

It is important that the PCs don't find out too much about the life of the Emissary, but you could give them something – be mindful not to confuse them however.

- **The Bowls:** In the midst of the chaos in the sitting room, there are four overturned bowls on the floor – one with water, one with incense that has burned the rug on the floor, one with couscous and one with a small candle. The four bowls are religious symbols used in a prayer ritual. PCs who are preachers, come from Algol or Mira, or who have the Faction Standing: The Church of the Icons talent will know this with no dice rolls needed – otherwise they must pass a **CULTURE** test where each bonus success will provide an additional clue about the bowls (see The Four Transformations). This clue says nothing about the attackers, but hints at the Emissary's faith sharing roots with that of the Firstcome of the Third Horizon.
- **The Books:** The book collection now strewn across half the room is made up of holy scriptures, legends, and songs from many of the Third Horizon's original settlers or from old nomad swarms. There are books from almost all known systems and several of them where written during the golden age before the Portal Wars. Such books are rarities that aren't given away, and only someone with impressive influence could ever hope to buy one.

THE EMISSARY'S RESIDENCE

Beautiful skylights with cubist mosaics paint kaleidoscopic rainbows on the white floors. Brush strokes of blood on the walls disrupt the symmetry. The stairs leading up from the hallway hint at the chaos further in.

The Emissary's residence is located on the Abhrra floor, right on the slope by the man-made lake. The residence is a three-room apartment in a large, luxury complex reserved solely for the Emissary by the Council. The surrounding buildings are also kept empty. Narrow paths run between the buildings, allowing for passage on foot or by palanquin only. The main house is reached through a semi-covered, sandstone gallery with klefsi vines on trellises climbing up to form a ceiling. The fallen leaves form a soft blue carpet around the door.

THE FOUR TRANSFORMATIONS

The four bowls most likely represent the four spiritual transformations, or "elements", although using physical objects is rare:

- **ALGOL: Physical representations of the four transformations are mainly found in prayer towers, common in the Algol system. The lowest, passive form (couscous as life from the earth) is the base from which the other forms spring; first the reactive form (water as life in motion), then the active and social form (a candle representing the fiery intensity and necessity of human relations) and finally intellect as the crowning stage (burning incense representing the whirling movement of free thought).**
- **MIRA: Miran art uses a wider variety of euphemisms for the different stages. Different natural phenomena are common, as are animals. Stone, minerals, gems, and metals represent the first stage, plants represent the reactive stage as they can only respond to their surroundings, and animals are portrayed as social agents, interacting with the world and each other. Mankind has intelligence and free will and therefore a moral responsibility. However, humans can – through wrongful actions and thoughts – learn to accept a lower form of existence and blame the consequences of their actions on circumstances. Accepting the weight of one's free will is a constant struggle. These ideas are present in all Miran art, architecture, painting, poetry, and theater.**
- **AHLAM'S TEMPLE: The faction Ahlam's Temple also adheres to the ideas of the four transformations, and they form a theme recognizable through the faction's eight temple dances, one for each for the eight visible Icons.**
- **THE CIRCLE OF SEEKERS: The Circle's followers use the transformations as a representation of life and death: first comes the skeleton, at the core of every human being, and after that comes blood, body heat, and lastly breath. Death is life in reverse: the person stops breathing, grows cold, stiffens and begins to rot. The skeleton is broken down and only stardust remains. The four bowls as representations are not used by the Seeker cult.**

VISITING AN ICON

When the Emissary on Coriolis spends time in its residence, it devotes itself to meditation or self-education about society in the Third Horizon since the Wars. Apart from the full-body clothes worn by the Emissary outside of the house, it asks for very few material possessions. During the year at the station, the Emissary has studied legends and songs from the holy scriptures of the nomad swarms and the Firstcome societies to try to find connections to the first two Horizons that could explain the current political intrigues. A large mosaic of Kua and the Zenith covers one of the walls, put there by the Consortium as a reminder of Zenithian might and the light they brought to the isolated Third Horizon. The sitting room contains a high-end music station linked to the Bulletin's vast audio archives. The bathroom, bedroom, and kitchen are practically unused and all cupboards and shelves are empty. In the middle of the sitting room, between the mosaic and the music station, is a large prayer rug, woven according to the traditions of the mogul nomads from the Quadrant of the Pillar. This is where the Emissary studies, meditates, and sleeps. There is a small stool by the rug on which there usually sit four small bowls, containing water, incense, couscous, and a candle. The room is otherwise empty.

EVENTS

SIGNS OF STRUGGLE

You can let the PCs test **SCIENCE** or **RANGED COMBAT** to find out the following information, or you could have judicator Akouba tell them what the forensic team has figured out so far, depending on how the players investigate the scene:

- The blood is from six different people. Akouba says that biocode analysis is underway.
- The bullets in the wall are soundless vibro shots from Vulcan weapons.
- No bodies have been found.
- The surveillance systems covering the surrounding paths and the gallery outside were disabled before the attack began. The last one to visit the Emissary before the systems were shut down is none other than Johar Quassar, ambassador of the Zenithian Hegemony. Security was disconnected during the ambassador's visit. The ambassador has not been interviewed yet as he has factionary immunity.



THE KIDNAPPING IN DETAIL

To give you as the GM a better understanding of the crime scene, the kidnapping is described in detail below. The description also hints at some of the Emissary's mystical powers, such as its ability to manipulate sound waves.

- **THE STRIKE TEAM:** One of Salamah ach-Abaud's s squads of warriors leave the base in the Cellar after lengthy preparations. The commandos enter the Spire via a secret passage leading directly to the Abhrra.
- **FALSE SUPPORT:** Not knowing that the martyr strike team is being manipulated by the Zenithian Hegemony through spy chief Lenove Astir, Salamah accepts the help offered by Johar Quassar who makes sure that the security systems are turned off for the attack. The strike team is also unaware that Astir has made sure that the meme used can be traced back to the Order.
- **THE ATTACK:** Five members of the Warriors of the Holy Light enter the Emissary's residence through the main door. The Emissary has seen a vision of the attack and is prepared, so as the door opens, three of the attackers are hit by a powerful sonic blast – a high frequency scream beyond human hearing that pounds organs, shatters eardrums, and breaks bone, marble, and stone. Two of the warriors are thrown sideways across the room and the third backwards out into the gallery.
- **MIND OVER MATTER:** The two unharmed warriors open fire with their Vulcan carbines against the Emissary who stands calmly on the rug in the middle of the room. The first salvo of the silent vibro rounds are pushed away from the target as the air in the room begins to vibrate. The stray shots hit the mosaic and knock over a few of the book piles. The guns quiet and the two attackers pale as they watch their hands turn the guns toward each other – forced by the will of the Emissary who has taken a few steps toward them. Shots are fired and the two warriors stagger out of the apartment, severely wounded.
- **FOR THE MARTYR:** The martyr warriors have minds of steel and two of those wounded in the Emissary's initial attack spring from the ground again, blood running from their noses, ears, and a myriad of tiny cuts. One of them charges at the Emissary with a dura knife. Several of the holy texts on the floor suddenly float up to form a swirling shield around the Emissary, withstanding the warrior's ferocious attacks.
- **WOUNDING AN ICON:** The Emissary's head suddenly twitches and slumps forward – it looks down at the hilt of a dura knife sticking out from its chest through the dark blue cape. The second warrior who got back up after the sonic attack stands in the corner of the room, now with empty hands.
- **OVERWHELMED:** The warrior who threw the knife approaches the Emissary and fires several shots with a stun gun into its neck, after which it collapses to the floor. It grabs at the edge of the rug with a bloody hand and kicks over the stool with the Miran bowls as it falls.
- **THE KIDNAPPING:** Two of the martyr warriors now have gunshot wounds, two have been badly damaged by the sonic pulse and one lies dead in the gallery outside the door, killed by brain haemorrhages caused by the sound waves. The four survivors put the Emissary in a bag with grav units attached to it, collect their dead comrade and leave the scene. They use the Abhrra floor's air vents and maintenance shafts to get back down to the Cellar through the hull of the Spire. The group lose their dead brother in the ventilation shafts and the two warriors with gunshot wounds seek out the Samaritan Sanatorium for emergency care under Brother Ramas and Sister Robwah. The last two survivors bring the Emissary to their base in the Cellar.

- The kidnappers have left the Abhrra level without being picked up by any other active surveillance systems, such as those by the vertilane station.

Other than the above, the PCs could find more clues that reveal further details about the attack or about the Emissary. Let them use **SCIENCE**, **OBSERVATION**, **CULTURE**, or relevant experiences from their backgrounds to find more clues. Examining a clue more closely can also reveal more information, but this might take until the next scene – see the Important Facts above for details about the clues in the scene.
Cost: 0 DP (Mandatory)

RESONANCE – CHILDREN OF THE SONG
A mystic PC will feel uneasy as soon as she enters the Emissary's residence. The air is thick with the smell of ozone and the PC experiences a migraine-like episode, with heavy pressure over the temples and forehead and spotty vision. Non-mystic PCs feel nothing.

- The affected mystic PC must pass a demanding (–1) **MYSTIC POWERS** test or suffer 2 mind points of stress. She can feel her heart racing as if she is about to have a panic attack, lasting until she leaves the Abhrra.
- If she passes the test, she will hear the echo of a song – a repeating series of notes that appear to come from the music station's speakers. If someone in the group thinks of analyzing the radiowaves in the room (**TECHNOLOGY**–1) with the proper gear, they will pick up a weak but curious pattern of high frequency radio waves. This is the echo caused by the Emissary's use of its powers, although that is unknown to the PCs. It is also the same sound pattern as any mystic PCs might have heard at the end of Act 1.

Cost: 1 DP

CONNECTING THE DOTS

The PCs follow up on the leads they have found. The scene is open and the PCs are free to explore it as they please.

THE SITUATION

A number of clues found in the Emissary's residence cannot be properly examined on the scene and have to be taken or followed up elsewhere. Meanwhile, the martyr strike team is yet again made aware of the PCs' efforts to expose them and might act to stop this.

IMPORTANT FACTS

The PCs are now meant to add their new information to the clues they found in Act 1 and come to the conclusion that they need to investigate the Sanatorium. As the GM, you should be well prepared for this scene and be ready to improvise to make sure the group find answers that point toward the Sanatorium and the martyr strike team. At least one clue from each category should be in the PCs' possession before they visit the Sanatorium and meet Brother Ramas. This meeting is what leads to the next scene, in which the PCs go to their second meeting with Brother Ramas, this time in the Garden of Seekers, where he tells them how to get down into the Cellar.

THE ORDER OF THE PARIAH

- Information from Johar Quassar about the martyr strike team's blackmail.
- Bio code analysis of the blood from the crime scene revealing that five of the people present were from Zalos.
- Analysis of the data meme used to disable the security systems reveals that the code appears to come from the Order of the Pariah.

SPLINTER GROUP

- The Vulcan round recovered is not made in a Consortium factory but appears to be handcrafted.
- The combat technique, appearance, and weaponry of the fake guards reveal that they have military training and don't appear to come from either Coriolis or Kua.
- The substantial bribes paid by the martyr commado to the Coriolis Guard point toward them being rebels or terrorists, rather than operatives working for any of the Zenithian factions.
- If the PCs find the way through the hull from the Abhrra used by the warriors after the attack, they might find the body of the dead warrior at the bottom of a vent shaft.

THE SANATORIUM

- The ties to the Order make the Sanatorium a good place to go next as it is the faction's only official business onboard the station.
- Aram's confession coupled with the clues found at Noor's point to the Sanatorium.
- If the PCs manage to track the warriors from the Abhrra, the two shot martyrs will lead them to the Sanatorium.

LOCATIONS, QUESTIONS, ANSWERS

There are several places the PCs might visit to investigate leads found in previous scenes. Suggestions are named in the clue descriptions, but the two locations they are more likely to visit are:

- The Palace of the Hegemony
- The Samaritan Sanatorium

You could encourage the group to revisit some locations and contacts from Act 1, such as:

- The Stevedore Central
- The tech pusher on the Ozone Plaza
- Althea or Aram, if they are still alive

THE PALACE OF THE HEGEMONY

The Palace of the Hegemony is a located on the Therr floor, almost at the top of the Spire, with only Alkamaar's dome above it. Enormous holo screens cover the ceiling and walls, projecting the view of the sun-drenched jungles and the delta around the Conglomerate as seen from the top of the Monolith, complete with a small dot – the Coriolis station – in the sky high above. The hegemony's revered locale is meant to be perceived as the highest point, on Kua as well as the Coriolis station. The building at the heart of the Therr is a revelation and blasphemy at the same time – its eight towers rise twenty meters into the air, reaching almost all the way up the screens, reminding visitors of the Zenithian legend of the Therr-Aybbalon, the monolith on Ardha smitten by the gods for its masters' hubris a long, long time ago.

The whitewashed palace is crowned by a sky blue dome with eight Icon towers placed octagonally around it. The geometric perfection between the dome and the octagon and the ratio between the towers and the dome demands respect even from Dabaran architects. Small jungle oases with Kuan flora surround the palace and special ED fields keep temperature and humidity high.

The entrance to the palace lies at the top of thirty-meter-wide staircase made from white Kuan marble. The dimensions of the stairs are a bit over-the-top, both because they are on a space station and because of the tremendous amount of birr it cost to transport all the marble up from Kua. Visitors are greeted by palace guards from the so-called peacock troops, guarding the gates. Underneath their garish uniforms, the guards are all business, equipped with the latest in acc tech and advanced heavy armor. The large audience hall behind the security corridor is a deep, open room with high ceilings, paintings and mosaics on the walls, and fancifully fashioned flowerbeds containing the Kuan jungles' most beautiful flora. Meetings are usually held in small alcoves in the walls where visitors are treated to comfortable divans around small, round tables and served anything from steaming kawah to chilled honey wines by master courtesans. Special guests are sometimes brought in to see the inner parts of the palace through winding corridors and staircases and up into the Icon towers (as in the Captain's Orders event below). When the PCs visit the palace, they are greeted by court hostess Vivera:

- **Vivera Ariadnes (Court Hostess):** One way to hone one's diplomatic skills is to serve as court hostess at one of the Hegemony's many consulates or embassies – usually called palaces. Vivera is relatively new in her position, but makes up for it by being from an excellent bloodline. She wears classical makeup and ties her hair in a high knot as per the fashion in the Monolith, with a veil on top covered in her family's patterns and glyphs. She is always polite, smiling, and interested when greeting new people, while at the same time subtly pumping them for information to pass on to the delegate or dignitary they have come to meet.

THE HULL OF THE SPIRE

Despite many attempts to hide the duralite beams, oxygen regulators, and air pumps, some aspects of the station's life support systems are still visible along the outer walls of the Abhrra. Along the edges of the park, behind low walls and hidden behind floral arrangements, one can find control panels and hatches leading to service points along the power and irrigation grids, maintenance shafts, trash chutes, and vents. In here, the workings of the station's internal organs produce a constant buzz and the framework of the hull groans under the pressure of the grav projectors. The corridors are warm and humid and everything is covered in some unnameable greenish grey film – probably algae, or some strange form of fungus.



This is the path used by the martyr warriors as they exited the Abhrra carrying the sedated Emissary. Through dark shafts and via ladders, they slowly descended through the outer walls of the Core, continuing to the Sanatorium and eventually the Cellar.

THE SANATORIUM

The Sanatorium is briefly described on page 264 in the *Coriolis* Core Rulebook. It is located in the Core, opposite the Infotheca, just a short walk from the Student and University districts. When entering the main gate, one find oneself in a large foyer where one must state one's business to be allowed further into the building. The marble floors, white walls, and high, arched ceilings give the place an atmosphere of peace and purity, which is further aided by the hospitable Samaritan staff.

Two archways lead from the first hall to the courtyard, surrounded by the open galleries and balconies of the higher floors. The courtyard is a beautiful place of peace, with green, flowing hills and serpentine mosaic paths in blue and white – a place of rest and meditation where one's heart can heal and where the air is easier to breath than anywhere else in the Core. There are several low, white buildings in the courtyard, made from Kuan clay. They contain the Samaritans' lodgings, several treatment centers, and a central chapel devoted to the Martyr. Stairs connect the courtyard with the upper floors as well as with the basement levels. When the PCs visit the Sanatorium, they will meet Sister Robwah, Brother Ramas and a few of the establishment's current patients:

- **Sana Tohrm (Mystic):** Near the door in the foyer stands a young woman with golden brown skin and Zenithian gold makeup on her forehead. Her hair is long and tightly knotted high on her head. Her knee-length, freshly ironed kameez held together by a simple Algolan silk shawl makes it obvious that she comes from money. She fingers nervously a tabula of the kind usually given to students at the Bulletin's Lyceum of Propaganda. About a week ago, she was contacted by a young man (Aram Yafa), who told her to seek treatment for her issues at the Sanatorium, but now she is getting cold feet. Her mystic powers, which are only in the early stages of manifestation, give her short flashes of future events, and it is one such flash, full of pain and anxiety, that causes her to hesitate. When the PCs encounter her here, she is very insecure about what to do next.

- **Brother Jarmis (Samaritan):** Young Brother Jarmis is a quiet, kind man who works in the reception at the Sanatorium. He refuses to speak about any of the "guests" with strangers or call for Brother Ramas if the PCs ask about him. After some persuasion or outright threats, he will summon his stern supervisor, Sister Robwah. His reluctance to call for Brother Ramas is due to the fact that Ramas is in the middle of operating on the two shot martyr warriors when the PCs arrive.
- **Melko Iamas (Patient):** "Part of the furniture" is how Melko describes himself – he has been treated here for several cycles for a bad case of lung mold after a visit to the Dabaran spore deserts, which – although not transmittable – has proven hard to cure. Between coughing spells and breathing into his nebulizer, the curious and bored mister Iamas is more than willing to talk to anyone visiting the Sanatorium – if they can bear to listen to him. He knows most things that go on in the open areas of the complex.

INVESTIGATING THE DIFFERENT LEADS

Below are a few examples of locations and methods to visit or use when looking for answers to some of the complex questions posed by the intricate case so far. The locations and their accompanying events can of course be switched out or improvised instead:

- **The Data Meme:** Apart from the evidence pointing at ambassador Quasar, the PCs could also choose to analyze the meme used to disable the Emissary's security protocols. Using a tabula, the PCs could do this themselves by passing a **DATA DJINN** test at –2, or at –1 if they use a ship computer. They could also pay Karoum, the old ship mechanic outside of Al-Said's, 500 birr to help them, or ask judge Kurahan who can make sure the analyses are performed (in this case, Akouba will forward the results to the PCs after about a day).
- **Blood Analysis:** The bio code analysis of the blood splatter at the Emissary's residence reveals that the DNA from five of the individuals present indicates that they were from Zalos, home system of the Order of the Pariah. It belongs to three males and two females and these persons are treated as the main suspects in the official investigation. The last DNA profile (from the hand print on the prayer rug) reads as Miran blood, but with an incredible regenerative rate – many times that of the Krahin humanites from Marfik, known for their fast healing, or any of the bionic sculpts available in the Horizon. The bio data seems partially corrupt and it cannot be determined whether the code is male or female.
- **Damaged Apartment:** Judicator Akouba, or even spy chief Lenove Astir, can tell the PCs that the damage to the mosaic on the wall seems to come from a Vulcan carbine and that the torn books have been cut with an activated dura knife. The PCs can figure this out for themselves by passing a **COMMAND** test, or **OBSERVATION** at –1. The arms dealers on the Ozone Plaza, or one of criminal street gangs, could also provide them with the info if they have enough birr or the right contacts,
- **The Vulcan Round:** The recovered Vulcan round can be examined at the Judcators' forensics lab, or the PCs could do it themselves using **SCIENCE**. Alternatively, they could ask a gunsmith on the Ozone Plaza. The details revealed by an examination are that the round is soundless, has been hand-made from a duramite/copper alloy, and that none of the Zenithian companies or factions manufacture ammunition like this. It is used extensively by terrorists and rebels, however. The tests also show that the round has been deformed mid-flight: one of its sides has been flattened and it has been pushed off course to hit the mosaic instead of its intended target. (As the GM, you know that this was caused by the Emissary's mystic powers pushing the rounds away). The round has been deformed twice – first lengthwise by a shock wave and then frontally when hitting the mosaic.
- **Smuggling:** The PCs might start suspecting that this is an advanced operation that would have required a lot of illegal gear to pull off, which might lead them to ask around with the Birbasils' foot soldiers in the Lama gang. The Lama controls the Ozone Plaza and the smuggling of much of the station's unregistered firearms. The PCs could also ask around in the Stevedore Central. Using the proper contacts or after passing a hard (–2) **MANIPULATION** test, the PCs eventually find out that the gear and weapons they are asking about have been smuggled onboard during the last segment. If they scored an extra six on the roll, they will also find out that the objects were brought onboard and then put into boxes containing medical supplies. After the Consortium, the Samaritans are the largest importers of medical supplies on the station. A Critical success tells them that the operation was handled by a Sadaalian mercenary – Dara Hirsha. She has made a career of moving illegal goods between Kua and the Coriolis station, mainly with the help of her connections within the Syndicate and the Lama gang. (The GM should know that she has been the contractor handling all transportation for the Warriors of the Holy Light and additional clues may appear in the second adventure –The Kuan Connection.)
- **The Four Bowls:** To crack the mystery of the Emissary's strange

prayer customs, the PCs would be wise to seek the help of a Firstcome faction or cult such as Ahlam's Temple, the Church of the Icons, or the Circle of Seekers. The clergy of these groups can all tell them about the theory of the four stages, but their individual explanations will be heavily influenced by the traditions of their respective group (see The Four Transformations on page 46). None of them can give the PCs any information about the faith of the Emissaries, but they can all spot the similarities with several mystic traditions in the Third Horizon.

- **The Books:** Examining the books at the Emissary's residence reveals that they cover all the known systems in the Third Horizon, as well as some things introduced by the arrival of the Zenith.

NPCS

This scene introduces several members of the Zenithian Hegemony as well as from the Order of the Pariah that may return in later scenarios within the Mercy campaign.

JOHAR QUASSAR, ZENITHIAN AMBASSADOR

Johar has been entrusted with the heavy responsibilities of ambassador to the Council of Factions by his father, but he loves his job and the political drama at the Council. He has been partly briefed about the plan to abduct the Emissary, but doesn't know the details and believes that the martyr warriors are Astûrban agents. He knows that he is supposed to blame the events on them, however. Johar's plans for his own future include inheriting his father's position, but it is taking longer than expected and his cool exterior sometimes lets a little of his internal frustration shine through. Flattery is the way to stay on his good side and avoid being the target of his intermittent fits of rage.

APPEARANCE: Johar is bio-sculpted, almost unnaturally beautiful, with sharp features, brown eyes, and the slightly curved Quassar nose. He wears the captain clan's traditional cap that looks like a stylized exo helmet and a long robe covered in geometrical patterns.

CHARACTERISTICS: Clicks lips. Chews grapes with his mouth open. Smiles arrogantly.

ATTRIBUTES:
STRENGTH 3, AGILITY 3, WITS 3, EMPATHY 4



HIT POINTS: 6

MIND POINTS: 7

REPUTATION: 9

SKILLS: Culture 4, Manipulation 4

TALENTS: Faction Standing: The Zenithian Hegemony

GEAR: Smart, expensive clothes, transactor with 70,000 birr.

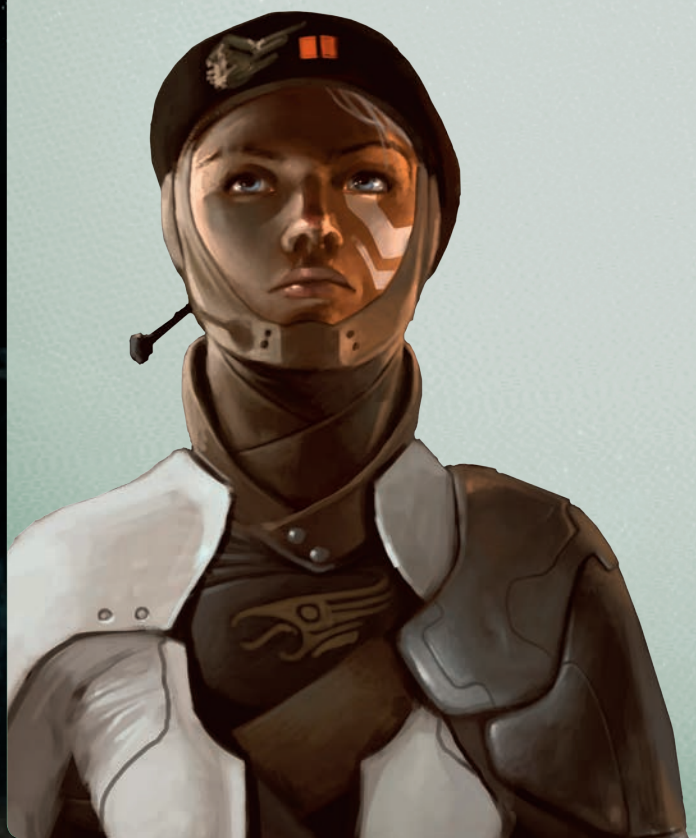
FACTION STANDING: THE ZENITHIAN HEGEMONY: Johar is a well-known ambassador on Coriolis, but his status on the station comes mainly from his last name. Through the influence of his father and the Quassar clan, he acts with the entire Hegemony behind him, both hegemonists and neo-Zenithians. He gets a +2 to **MANIPULATION**.

LENOVE ASTIR, CULTURAL ATTACHÉ AND SPY CHIEF

Lenove grew up as the youngest in her family and have always had to fight to get noticed. In her teens, she applied to the Astûrban's secret school, to which very few are accepted – and even fewer live to graduate. Lenove made it through of course, and the experience made her cold and hardened. Her goals are completely in line with those of the Hegemony, but she regards the Astûrban as the true rulers of the faction. Her enormous arrogance is only overshadowed by her world-class intelligence and a complete lack of empathy. No one can shake or seduce her, except maybe for the love of her youth, Yivon din Hrama, whom she has tried to put behind her.

APPEARANCE: Short hair worn in an asymmetric knot. Factionary forehead makeup and a slick, black uniform. The handle of a ceremonial mercurium sword hangs clearly visible from her belt.

CHARACTERISTICS: Keeps her hands behind her back. Bows at the beginning of every conversation. Piercing eyes.



ATTRIBUTES:
STRENGTH 3, AGILITY 4, WITS 5, EMPATHY 3

HIT POINTS: 7

MIND POINTS: 8

REPUTATION: 7

SKILLS: Command 5, Melee Combat 5, Manipulation 4, Ranged Combat 4, Observation 3, Infiltration 2

TALENTS: Executioner, Faction Standing: The Zenithian Hegemony

ARMOR: Protective clothing 3

WEAPONS: Astûrban-issued mercurium sword (weapon damage 4), superb acc pistol (weapon damage 3)

GEAR: Dress uniform with sown-in protective clothing, personal communicator with pulse function, tag with 20,000 birr.

- **EXECUTIONER:** Lenove is ice cold and always on guard. She is a blade ready to strike down the enemies of the Astûrban and the Hegemony and can subdue her opponent with just one hit. Unless her target has the Nine Lives talent, whenever Lenove inflicts a critical injury, she can choose which of the dice to read first for maximum damage. This effect applies to extra dice if she spent more sixes on the critical injury as well.
- **FACTION STANDING: THE ZENITHIAN HEGEMONY:** The Astir family is incredibly powerful and through the Astûrban, Lenove has access to the full force of the secret police, as well as countless contacts among elite hegemonists. Whenever she intimidates or threatens someone, Lenove gets a +2 to **MANIPULATION**

ROBWAH, SAMARITAN SISTER

Sister Robwah used to be soulmates with her mentor Brother Ramas. She is calm, devout, and places great trust in the Order. She belongs to the more orthodox wing of the Samaritans and sees it as her duty to assist The Warriors of the Holy Light by picking out patients in the Sanatorium for them to bring down to the Cellar and ship off to Kua. Her day job includes conversation therapy, collecting groups of patients in the hills of the courtyard to talk, pray, and tell stories of the mercy and sacrifices of the Martyr. When Brother Ramas severs his connections with The Warriors of the Holy Light, she will stay true to their cause, dying for it, if necessary.

APPEARANCE: Samaritan's hat and a robe in black and white.

CHARACTERISTICS: Stolid face. Soft, quiet voice. Scratches neck when nervous.

ATTRIBUTES:
STRENGTH 2, AGILITY 2, WITS 2, EMPATHY 3

HIT POINTS: 4

MIND POINTS: 5

REPUTATION: 6

SKILLS: Medicurgy 4, Culture 3, Manipulation 3

TALENTS: Judge of Character, Blessing of the Martyr

GEAR: The Martyr Scrolls hanging from her belt.



- **JUDGE OF CHARACTER:** Through her long service at the Sanatorium, Sister Robwah has become very good at reading patients and visitors. At the cost of 1 DP, she can tell if someone is lying or not without having to test **MANIPULATION**. It takes a few minutes and she cannot tell any details.
- **THE BLESSING OF THE MARTYR:** Through her calm voice and collected composure, Sister Robwah can bestow the Blessing of the Martyr on another person. This can only be done once per act in the scenario and gives the recipient +1 to an action of their choice. At the cost of 1 DP, Sister Robwah can recite a holy song instead and test **EMPATHY**. If she passes, the bonus provided by the blessing increases to +1 per six on Sister Robwah's roll. The test may be re-rolled for 1 additional DP. The blessed may use the modifier all on one dice roll, or divide it between several actions.

BROTHER RAMAS/YANOUS, DOUBTING SAMARITAN

The sullen Brother Ramas is a survivor of the Ghazali incident. If he died during that scenario, replace him with brother Yanous.

If the PCs have tried to contact Ramas before the second act, he will have ignored their attempts. He survived the Ghazali incident but came back wavering in his convictions. Since his return to Coriolis he has undergone a transformation and the once strict and dogmatic brother is now suffering a deep crisis of faith. His earlier grumpy exterior has been replaced by a quiet sadness. Through his work at the Sanatorium, the abductions of mystics have always been known to Ramas but he has chosen to look the other way. The Order's stance on the mystic's disease is clear and uncompromising – they are the spawn of the dark between the stars and must be destroyed. As the story progresses, Brother Ramas eventually turns against the heinous crimes committed by the martyr warriors, sealing his own fate by doing so.

Ramas spends all his time at the Sanatorium as he also lives there. He almost never visits the Core or the Ring.

APPEARANCE: Shaved head with the symbol of the Martyr tattooed on his forehead. Dressed in a simple shirt and caftan.

CHARACTERISTICS: Looks down to avoid eye contact during conversations. Hands folded in front of him. Speaks quietly.



ATTRIBUTES:
STRENGTH 2, AGILITY 2, WITS 3, EMPATHY 3

HIT POINTS: 4

MIND POINTS: 6

REPUTATION: 6

SKILLS: Culture 4, Medicurgy 4, Manipulation 2

TALENTS: Blessing of the Martyr

GEAR: Martyr talisman, tag with information (see below), three M-doses, one T-dose, one P-dose (*Coriolis* Core Rulebook page 113).

◆ **BLESSING OF THE MARTYR:** See Sister Robwah above.

EVENTS

In this open scene, the associated events are like tiny scenes themselves. Examination of clues found in earlier scenes and events is left up to you as the GM to improvise.

CAPTAIN'S ORDERS

There are several ways to acquire an audience with ambassador Johar Quassar. The PCs could ask judge Kurahan for help, use the Faction Standing talent if they have it, or simply turn up at the embassy and state their business at the reception. Either way, they will be granted a meeting, but only after waiting a long time in a foyer outside. Judicator Akouba will not be allowed to participate in the meeting. They will eventually be called upon and taken to an audience chamber at the top of one of the Icon towers of the palace. Here, they will have the opportunity to speak freely and off-the-record with the ambassador who – given the circumstances – is surprisingly eager to help.

The room where ambassador Quassar receives you is exquisitely furnished, with dark draperies covering the walls. There are servants in black robes posted around the chamber, almost invisible against the dark background. Each of them carries a small ornate pot containing a jungle vine whose red petals match the servants' makeup, a red line running from forehead to chin. The holo screen above you projects the night sky over the Monolith. The ambassador sits on a crimson divan at the back of the room, bathed in starlight but shadowed by a dark figure standing behind him.

The audience begins as the PCs sit down on cushions on the floor before the ambassador's throne. The servants place their jungle vines on hidden shelves in the walls and serve the group Kuan fruits and nuts, small pastries, and sweet, hot wine, after which they return to their posts. A knowledgeable PC (**CULTURE**) will identify the vines as pelicosa armantum, a poisonous plant with razor-sharp leaves – even the smallest cut can be fatal. The servants obviously carry these lethal burdens as a display of the ambassador's power.

When the meeting starts, the dark figure behind the throne steps out into the light and introduces herself as Lenove Astir, cultural attaché, after which she returns to the shadows and remains silent for the rest of the audience, although she occasionally whispers something in the ambassador's ear. The talent Faction Standing: The Zenithian Hegemony/The

Consortium or a successful **CULTURE** test will tell the PCs that the Astir clan belongs to the hegemonist wing within the faction.

- **The Meeting:** The ambassador confirms that he met with the Emissary on his father's orders, but cannot divulge the exact nature of the meeting.
- **The Security System:** The security systems and locks were all functional when the ambassador arrived. Using **MANIPULATION** or the Judge of Character talent, the PCs will note that the ambassador seems nervous, especially when talking about the security systems.
- **The Threats:** After some persuasive questions from the PCs and discreet whispers from cultural attaché Astir, the ambassador confesses to having deactivated the alarms using a tag given to him by an agent who approached him at Alkamaar's, but that he acted under duress as the agent had threatened his family. Using **MANIPULATION**, **MYSTIC POWERS**, or Judge of Character, the PCs can spot that he appears to be lying regarding the details of his confession. Ambassador Quassar is actually trying to point them in the direction of the martyr strike team – no threats against him have been made. When pressured for information, he describes the agent who threatened him as one of the waiters at the restaurant, but with a shaved face and head. The Hegemony's agents have not been able to identify or track down the waiter afterwards.
- **The Tag:** If they ask for it, the PCs will be given the tag in question. It is of the anonymous sort that can be purchased on every street corner on the Ring. The software – which requires a successful **DATA DJINN** test and a few hours of work to analyze – is a meme with sophisticated spy and kill code capable of deactivating security systems. The code signature looks like that of the Order of the Pariah. The PCs might already have extracted this information from the Emissary's residence, in which case they will see that the data meme on the tag is identical with the one at the apartment.
- **The Order:** The ambassador cannot tell them anything about the Order of the Pariah outside of common knowledge – the only known members on the station are the Samaritans at the Sanatorium in the Core.

After the meeting, the PCs will have clues implicating the Order and the Sanatorium in the conspiracy. If you played The Last Voyage of the Ghazali, they might already have a contact at the Sanatorium, Brother Ramas. The Hegemony's plans to put the blame on the Order are set in motion, but the PCs might have sensed that the ambassador was lying about something.

Cost: o DP

⚙ RENDEVOUZ WITH RAMAS

The PCs might visit the Sanatorium to look for Noor, or they might be here following up the leads given to them by ambassador Quassar. Whenever they arrive, they soon discover that getting answers or a meeting with someone is easier said than done. Brother Jarmis at the front desk is friendly, but adamant in his refusal to speak about any of the "guests" with strangers or call Brother Ramas if the PCs ask for him. His unwillingness to call for Brother Ramas is due to the fact that the wavering Samaritan is currently operating on the two martyr warriors that got shot during the attack on the Emissary.

Using **MANIPULATION**, the PCs could get Jarmis to call on his supervisor, Sister Robwah. Although stern in appearance, Sister Robwah can quite easily be persuaded to give them the information below or to call Ramas (**MANIPULATION** +1). When Ramas arrives, he nods silently to the PCs if they met before on the Ghazali, otherwise he makes a more formal introduction. Sister Robwah remains present for the conversation, which can provide the group with the following information:

- **The Mystics:** The Samaritans take care of several victims of the mystic's disease. Their names are of course kept secret due to the Samaritan's oath, and their medical records are not shared with anyone outside the Sanatorium, but if the PCs apply some additional pressure, or go as far as threats, Brother Ramas will make an exception.
- **Noor's Symptoms:** Noor sought out the Sanatorium after suffering from sleep deprivation and strange visions. Brother Ramas was treating Noor and appears genuinely sad to hear that ne is missing.
- **Conversations with Noor:** The topics discussed during their treatment sessions were mainly existential, concerning the Icons, fate, and being chosen. Noor became increasingly convinced that ne had been chosen by the Icons – and the Martyr specifically – to perform great deeds. **CULTURE** or a relevant background will tell the PCs that the Martyr is the name given to the Judge Icon by the Order of the Pariah.
- **The Last Visit:** Noor was supposed to have shown up for an appointment about a week ago, but never came – instead, ne passed through the Sanatorium in the hands of nirs captors on the way to the Cellar. Both Ramas and Robwah are aware of this.

When the conversation is over, the Samaritans will bid the PCs a hasty farewell.

- **The Message:** Brother Ramas will shake hands with the PCs and discreetly pass a small personal communicator to them while doing it. He seems nervous and is very careful not to let Sister Robwah see the hand-over. The device is pre-programmed with Ramas communications code. The PCs can then try to contact Brother Ramas but will not succeed until just before the A Dance of Blood scene. Until then, a neutral voice at the other end will inform them that the person they are trying to reach is unavailable and will get back to them at their earliest convenience.

Cost: 0 DP (Mandatory)

⚙ A DANGEROUS CLIMB

If the PCs try to figure out how the martyr warriors exited the Abhrra without being seen, this will take them into the slimy vents inside the hull:

- **Following the Blood:** If someone in the group has a talent that allows her to find the kidnappers' tracks (or if someone passes an **OBSERVATION** test at –2), they will find the warriors' escape route – through the damp maintenance shafts in the hull of the station. The tracks end by a service hatch in the core, straight into the Sanatorium's lower levels.
- **A Martyred Warrior:** If the PCs pass the initial **OBSERVATION** test with more than one six, you could let them find the dead warrior. The climb down was very difficult for the warriors and in one of the more hazardous shafts, the group dropped their dead brother. The body fell to the bottom and was torn apart by a fan. Temporarily disabling the fan to get to the remains requires a successful **TECHNOLOGY** test.
- **A Difficult Descent:** The PCs might need to test **DEXTERITY** when climbing down the narrow, slippery chutes. If they have climbing equipment, exos, or some equivalent gear, no tests are needed.
- **A Lethal Draft:** At the cost of 2 DP, you could have the vent system perform routine cleaning with the PCs still inside. This means that shaft is closed off and opened to space. This has the same effects as an explosive decompression, pulling the PCs out through the vent hatch and into space. After two turns, the hatch is closed again and the system turns back online, with a lot less algae dregs and trash (and PCs) to block the airflow.

Cost: 0, 2 DP

EXPLOSIVE DECOMPRESSION

When the chute is vented, all loose objects are pulled toward the opening. If you want to move during the venting, you must first pass a hard (–2) DEXTERITY test. If you just want to grab onto something for dear life, test FORCE at –1. Both tests count as a slow action (3 APs). If you wear an exo, both tests are unmodified instead. A critical success is required to help someone else as well, or to save a loose object (within Close range if you test FORCE or Short range if you test DEXTERITY). These rules can also be used if the hull is breached during space combat or a violent firefight near the hull of a ship (for example during the attack on the martyr strike team's base in Act 3).

FOLLOWING THE MARTYRS

At the Sanatorium, the PCs can follow the blood trail to one of Brother Ramas' operating rooms, but also onwards down into the Cellar (as the strike team splits up). This is achieved by a successful roll of **OBSERVATION** at –1. (As a GM you can now decide if you want to skip ahead and go straight to Act 3 on page 63. If the PCs have enough evidence or feel pressured for time it may be better to just keep up the pace.)

BREAKING NEWS

This event can be used at any point during Act 2. The PCs see a newscast featuring judicator Akouba Kosha. Use the following text as it is or improvise based on it:

People have gathered around a holo screen showing the latest news from the Bulletin. Proud dignitaries, beautiful courtesans, and wealthy merchants discuss the event in low voices.

Correspondent Jeyla Kuhari is standing on the Promenade outside Wahib's. Next to her stands judicator Akouba Kosha, shifting uncomfortably in the limelight.
"Over to our correspondent Jeyla who has more information about the shooting at Wahib's."
"Thank you Jalab, that is correct. I have with me judicator Kosha who is in charge of the investigation. My sources tell me that the victim of the shooting in the cantina here behind us is not the first so-called mystic that has been killed recently. Is that true, judicator?"
"That is correct."
"Is it true that you have linked the events of today to seven other murders?"
"That is correct."
"And isn't it probable that more bodies will surface during your investigation, as over a dozen new mystics have been reported missing?"
"We will not speculate about the investigation at this time. Many of the new mystics choose to leave their old lives behind, which could be a factor contributing to the reported disappearances."
"What is your comment on the rumor that only Firstcome people have been affected by the mystic's disease?"
"I cannot comment on that."
"Can't, won't – or aren't allowed to?"
"Can't, as I don't know the answer."
"Going back to the six victims you have examined so far, what can you say about their backgrounds?"
"That it would appear on the surface that your rumor might hold up so far, but that doesn't mean..."
"Thank you, judicator Kosha – back to you, Jalab."
"Thank you, Jeyla. With us for commentary here in the studio are..."
A group of serious experts from different factions and organizations sit around a table in the studio. They all talk a lot and with earnest dedication, but no new facts are added.

The events at Wahib's are directly linked to the martyr strike team – it has hunted down and killed an escaped mystic from the Cellar. The victim might be a mystic from the Ghazali such as Khomina, or someone that the PCs have met during the scenario so far, such as Althea, if they haven't made sure she is protected. Alternatively, you could let this be the end of Aram Yafa, unless you had him killed earlier. The name of the victim can be found out through judicator Akouba.
Cost: 1 DP

A DANCE OF BLOOD

In this scene, the PCs are contacted by Brother Ramas who tells them that the Samaritans have helped the martyr warriors and tells the group of a way down to the Cellar.

THE SITUATION

It is up to you as the GM to decide when Brother Ramas activates the communicator he gave the PCs during the Rendevouz with Ramas scene. He will wait until he is alone and sure that no one is listening, which may take a while in the crowded, somewhat technophobic Sanatorium. Ramas will contact the PCs and ask them to meet him in the Garden of Seekers during the evening watch. He will keep the call short and to the point, without time for questions, and ask for a meeting time the following day. Unbeknownst to Ramas, the call is being monitored by the martyr strike team that now decides to get rid of both Ramas and the PCs with one swift blow.

It is early evening and the holo light from the ceiling in the park is slowly fading. The green garden changes into evening dress, cycling through blue and grey, reaching black just when the last visitors start to leave. A group of tarrabs and artists linger, practicing their acrobatics, singing, and juggling torches in the dark, but they eventually pack up as



well. Their voices fade as they exit and you are alone – where is Brother Ramas?

Let the PCs find their own way to the Garden and describe it using the text on the previous page and in the next section. It is important that the PCs watch the other visitors leave and spot the tarrab group (wandering storytellers) practicing. Ramas will show up late, and when he finally arrives, he is interrupted before he can tell his story. The martyr strike team, disguised as tarrabs, attacks!

IMPORTANT FACTS

This is the last scene of Act 2 and the most important pieces of information for the PCs to bring into Act 3 are:

- The martyr strike team, a splinter group of the Order of the Pariah, is behind the kidnappings and murders of the station's mystics. The strike team commandos have a temporary base in the Cellar to which they bring their victims.
- The strike team is divided into several fire squads, one of which focused on the mystics and another of which carried out the attack against the Emissary.
- The Emissary has been brought to the Cellar.

THE GARDEN OF SEEKERS

The Garden of Seekers is open to anyone: the guard who beat a troublemaker one time too many; the spice merchant mourning his stillborn daughter; the couple who have loved each other since before the station was constructed; the deckhand who needs to get out of her family's cramped apartment to eat a quiet picnic in the grass – the Garden welcomes them all. By tradition, and out of respect for the Seekers, the calm is seldom broken here and violent intentions are left at the gate.

The Garden of Seekers consists of around twenty miniature landscapes centered around the Seeker cult's strange temple in the middle. The place is a collage of beautiful environments from across the Horizon. The Garden of Seekers is described on page 263 in the *Coriolis* Core Rulebook.

- **Wahira (Almond Peddler):** The bent, old Wahira pushes her small trolley around the least hilly parts of the Garden, and wherever she goes, people gather to get a taste of her roasted, salted almonds, sold in cones of old newspaper. Wahira is, despite her age, sharp as a knife and knows the Garden like the back of her hand.


GARDEN OF SEEKERS
1. Meeting Place
2. Artist's Tent
3. Statue
4. Walking Bridge
5. Pond
6. Waterfall
2x2 meters
03
02
04
05
01
03
03
03
04
06
06
06
06

- **Iouri Binti Saad (Tarrab):** A searcher and tarrab from Algol who just recently arrived on Coriolis. He has the mystic's disease but hides it well, and has sought out the Garden to visit the temple at the center. While waiting to be allowed inside, he spends his days at a pond where circus performers and other tarrabs gather, making a living off of their art.

Use the map to the left to make the fight in the park dramatic, turning into a deadly game of cat and mouse among the dark trees.

NPCS

The martyr strike team has sent some of its best warriors to the Garden of the Seekers in order to eliminate the PCs and Brother Ramas. However, none of the warriors are equipped with any of the Order's secret faction tech.

MARTYR WARRIORS IN THE GARDEN OF SEEEKERS

The warriors have come to the park to silence the PCs once and for all. They will use lethal force, but prefer to do it quietly and will use vibro ammunition for their Vulcan carbines. If they can, they will sneak up close and aim carefully before firing concentrated bursts. They are not afraid to die, only to disappoint their fellow martyrs.

APPEARANCE: Dressed in anonymous djellabas which they throw off when the fight begins. They wear black, hooded outfits underneath.

CHARACTERISTICS: Silent and precise.

ATTRIBUTES: **STRENGTH 4, AGILITY 3, WITS 2, EMPATHY 3**
HIT POINTS: 7 (9)
MIND POINTS: 5
REPUTATION: 2
SKILLS: Ranged Combat 4, Dexterity 3, Infiltration 3, Melee Combat 3, Observation 3
TALENTS: Fanatics and Executioner, or The Hassasin's Thrust and Tough
ARMOR: Light armor 4
WEAPONS: Vulcan carbine (vibro), dura knife, stun grenade
GEAR: Personal communicator with pulse function, expensive clothes.

- **FANATICS:** The martyr warriors' blind faith enables them to get back up at 2 HP after having been broken in combat. Costs 2 DP.
- **EXECUTIONER:** The martyr's are trained to always be on guard. They can subdue their opponents with just one hit. Unless the target has the Nine Lives talent, whenever the martyr warrior inflicts a critical injury, she can choose which of the dice to read first for maximum damage. This effect applies to extra dice if more sixes are spent on the critical injury as well. Costs 2 DP.
- **THE HASSASSIN'S THRUST:** The Warriors of the Holy Light are specially trained to carry out kidnappings and assassinations. When they perform a sneak attack (page 85 in the *Coriolis* Core Rulebook) with a Small weapon, they get a +2 to **MELEE COMBAT**. Costs 2 DP.
- **TOUGH:** Some of the warriors are extra hardened to withstand torture. These warriors have 2 extra HP.

EVENTS

The main event in the scene is the ambush performed by the strike team at the Garden of Seekers.

THE AMBUSH

The PCs spend the evening watch waiting by a beautiful stone bridge, surrounded by a small lake with exotic Menkar lillies in full bloom. Artists and tarrabs entertain passersby along the neatly raked paths and walkways around them. Four members of the martyr strike team are hiding among the tarrabs, waiting to strike when Brother Ramas arrives. A successful **OBSERVATION** test can alert the PCs to the attack a few seconds before it begins, and they can also avoid being surprised if they explicitly say that they keep an eye on the entertainers.

- Brother Ramas shows up late and is notably shaken, walking quickly across the bridge. He looks around nervously and nods to the PCs while taking a tag from his pocket, handing it to them.

This is when the martyrs attack. One of the jugglers approaches Ramas from behind and fires a Vulcan burst into his back. Unless the PCs are prepared and try to stop the gunman, Ramas will stumble bleeding toward the railing and fall down into the shallow lake. Make sure that the PCs either see him

holding the tag in his hand as he falls, or that he has just given it to one of the PCs. It is important that the PCs acquire the tag before they leave the Garden. Unless they focus on helping Ramas, you could let him live long enough to grab onto one of the PCs, hand over the tag and say "I am so sorry for letting it happen..." before drawing his last breath. As a GM you can use Darkness Points to bring in reinforcements for the strike team (see the rules on page 57). Vigilant PCs may also anticipate the ambush and can thereby get the tag and escape combat.
Cost: o DP (Mandatory)

THE TAG
After escaping or defeating the warriors, the PCs will need to hide from the judicators and the Guard who quickly arrive at the scene. Judge Kurahan and judicator Akouba can vouch for the PCs' story and loyalty.

Once in a safe place, the tag containing the following information can be examined:

- **The Chosen:** Noor could never rid nemself of the feeling that ne had been given nirs powers for some higher purpose, instead of them just being a side effect of the arrival of the Emissaries, although they started to manifest around that time (as is true for many other new mystics).
- **Captured:** As revealed by Robwah and Ramas at the Sanatorium, Noor visited only a few times. The last time ne showed up, ne had fire in nirs eyes and was being escorted by members of the Guard after having been arrested on the Ozone Plaza.
- **The Vision:** Noor claimed to have received a vision from the Emissary at the Xene station, and preached violently about the imminent end of the Third Horizon. Ne promised Ramas that he would also come to see "the real change" – the Emissary would show itself to him as well. Brother Ramas didn't understand if Noor meant the Emissary on Coriolis or the one at the Xene station, the heretical self-proclaimed "Judge." (Ramas cannot hide his anger at the heresy of the false Icon's claim, which becomes apparent in his wavering voice and clenched jaw.) When Ramas asked Noor to explain nemself, the answer was cryptic: "There will come a time when the darkness in invited in, when people speak without mouths, when sister betrays sister. Only they who live in the darkness will see the light."
- **Kidnapped:** Shortly thereafter, Noor was removed from Ramas' ward and taken down through the restricted areas of the Sanatorium to the Cellar. This is the last time Ramas saw nem.
- **The Cellar:** The tag contains a map showing the way to the Cellar through the lower levels of the Sanatorium. It can guide the PCs through the lower levels of Coriolis and will also give a +2 bonus to any INFILTRATION rolls relating to finding a way through the Sanatorium undetected.
- **The Recording:** The newest file on the tag is a holo recording:

"I don't know what you have found, and I guess I never will. But I must speak up, even if doing so means betraying my order. Before the Icons, there is no room for lies. A martyr strike team from Zalos is operating on the station with a mandate to wipe out all new mystics. They take them to a place they call "the real sanatorium". I know that it must be somewhere in the Cellar, but not exactly where. You will have to find it yourselves. Maybe there are others who can help you."

Brother Ramas turns to the side as if he heard a noise. He leans forward to terminate the recording. *"Remember me in your prayers."*
Cost: o DP (Mandatory)

ENDING ACT 2

When the second act ends, the PCs have almost all the pieces:

- They should have figured out that martyr warriors from the Order of the Pariah are responsible for both the Mysticides and the abduction of the Emissary.
- They have a map showing them the way down to the Cellar.

How they relay the information to judge Kurahan is not important. Unless they decide to do so on their own, the judge will immediately instruct them to try to find the Emissary and the missing mystics. The judge will not want to lend them judicator Akouba even if they ask for it, or implicate herself by giving them official clearance to enter the Cellar. The PCs will have to enter the station's lower levels discreetly.

THE ABYSS

ACT 3

The final act of **The Wake of the Martyr** brings the PCs down into the winding darkness of the Cellar. They find the heart of the mystery, but the final truth eludes them.

THE WAY DOWN to the Cellar is difficult and ends with the PCs finding out that the mystics have been taken down to Kua. The act ends with a scene that ties in with the next scenario of the campaign. Important characters, a starting scene, and a string of following scenes and events are described as in the previous acts.

OVERVIEW

The PCs enter the upper Cellar through the Sanatorium and find themselves in The Third Sphere, the domains of Slummer Queen Elmeda. The queen demands tribute to give them a map showing the way to the lower Cellar via the Labyrinth and the Slum Cemetery. In the lower Cellar, they finally find the martyr warriors' secret base.

KEY INSIGHTS

- The Slummer Queen can give the PCs the map they need.
- In the strike team's secret base, the PCs will learn that they are from the Order and called The Warriors of the Holy Light, but not that they are a splinter group.
- Stasis beds and drop pods show that the mystics are put on ice and them dropped down to Kua.
- Similar tracks as those found in the Abhrra show that the Emissary has been in the strike team's secret base before being shipped down to Kua.

IMPORTANT CHARACTERS

The final act is mainly focused on the hunt for the missing mystics and the NPCs who stand in the PCs' way:

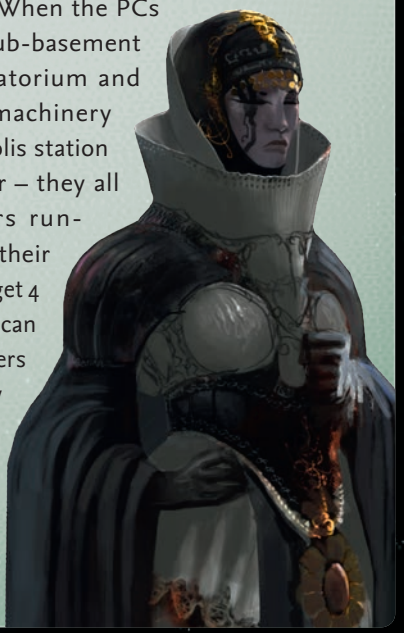
- **Elmeda** – Slummer Queen in the Cellar (page 72)
- **Salamah ach-Abaud** – Deacon and leader of the martyr strike team (page 88)
- **The Beast** – Creature preying on those who wander into the Labyrinth (page 79)

There are also a few independent actors that you as the GM can use as informants and helpers to the PCs:

- **Frax** – Disgruntled nekatra in queen Elmeda's service (page 73)
- **Awl** – Skavara market entrepreneur and rival to the queen (page 74)
- **Goba the Lame** – Beggar who also barters with smugglers seeking to pass through the Cellar (page 73)
- **Bathos** – Mad poet and self-proclaimed champion of the light, fighting the Beast in the Labyrinth (page 79)

DARKNESS POINTS

In the final act, it might be wise to pool some DP to make the confrontation in the secret base the grand finale it deserves to be. You could of course also spend DP to activate events or enhance the other inhabitants in the Cellar. When the PCs leave the sub-basement of the Sanatorium and enter the machinery of the Coriolis station – the Cellar – they all feel shivers running down their spines. You get 4 DP, and you can use the Shivers event below if you like.



Elmeda

STARTING SCENE: INTO THE SHADOWS

Act 3 begins with the PCs entering the upper Cellar. If the ambush in the Garden of Seekers left some of them wounded, help can be found with judge Kurahan and judicator Akouba. They are both impatient to get the PCs back on their feet and can arrange a doctor (Wits 5, **MEDICURGY** 3) right away, or a couple of M-doses.

THE SITUATION

The PCs are heading through the basement of the Sanatorium to find the entrance to the upper Cellar. The map given to them by Brother Ramas will take them into the Cellar right next to The Third Sphere where Slummer Queen Elmeda holds court. As the GM, it is important to create the right atmosphere for the descent into the Cellar and the climb down should be dangerous (see Events below). Let the PCs use their skills to make it down, but bear in mind that this path is used regularly by the martyr strike team so you shouldn't make it too difficult. The climb will take the group two to three hundred meters down toward the bottom of the station. Alternative ways to enter the Cellar are described on page 268 in the *Coriolis* core rulebook.

THE SAMARITAN'S WAY

The route through the Sanatorium requires some persuasion and stealth – first, they must find (or make up) a reason for entering the Sanatorium, which likely will require a successful **MANIPULATION** test. Once inside, they must test **INFILTRATION** to sneak down the stairs without being noticed while following Brother Ramas' map. **OBSERVATION** could also come in handy when looking out for patrolling Samaritans in the basement levels in the Sanatorium.

If the PCs are spotted trying to sneak through the Sanatorium, they will not be stopped – the Samaritans are pacifists, but those loyal to the cause of the martyr strike team will radio ahead to the Cellar, which might lead to an ambush along the way, in the Labyrinth, or near the secret base.

THE JUDICATOR'S WAY

If the PCs hesitate to try their luck finding their way through the Sanatotium, judge Kurahan will remind them of the dire importance of the mission. She will offer them judicator Akouba as a guide if they ask for help, which will enable them to take the Guard's way down (see page 268 of the *Coriolis* core rulebook). In the headquarters of the Coriolis Guard, there are two elevators going down. Akouba can arrange for the PCs to use them, but will only come along for the ride down and not set foot in the actual Cellar.

IMPORTANT FACTS

The PCs need to know that there is a way down to the Cellar, but you could slip them a warning about the area being dangerous and difficult to navigate. If they lack direction, have judge Kurahan suggest Akouba as a guide, but not in an official capacity. The route will then be via the Guard's way (see the *Coriolis* core rulebook, page 268). In the Coriolis guard's headquarters at the Core, two elevator platforms will take the PCs down into the Cellar, but Akouba will not accompany the PCs beyond the entrance to the Cellar's dwindling maintenance levels.

THE BASEMENT OF THE SANATORIUM

The steps leading you down into the darkness remind you of old, planetside crypts. Here and there, enormous beams and riveted ceramic plates show you that you are walking inside the skeleton of the station. Endless drops and empty darkness can be seen around you when you pass from one level to the next. You descend into the shadows of Coriolis for what seems like an eternity.

The Sanatorium has five basement levels below the courtyard, with claustrophobic tunnels and storage areas wedged in between the floors. The basements are in varying conditions, from worn-down corridors with flickering light strips to more well-kept, tiled areas containing operating rooms and supplies, but most parts of the underground facility are not in use any more. The lower floors contain mostly old patient rooms and cells, empty but with a lin-

THE CELLAR

It is absolutely pitch black around you, and the only sounds come from the ventilation and from condensation dripping off ancient cooling systems. In front of you, something moves in the darkness, slithering softly across the floor – a native resident of the Cellar, far from lights and civilization.

The Cellar is the dark undercarriage of Coriolis, a twisted, shadowed, reflection of the world above: dark, damp, and haunted by creatures whose existence is denied by the station's official representatives. The decay and hostility increases the further down one goes. Despite the spatial proximity to safety, ships, and other things that make life bearable, the Cellar might as well be light years away and travelers here are left to fend for themselves. Corridors full of leaking pipes lead to giant, empty halls with creaking fans and wailing vents where rusted service platforms and staircases moan unnervingly, suspended above bottomless, black pits.

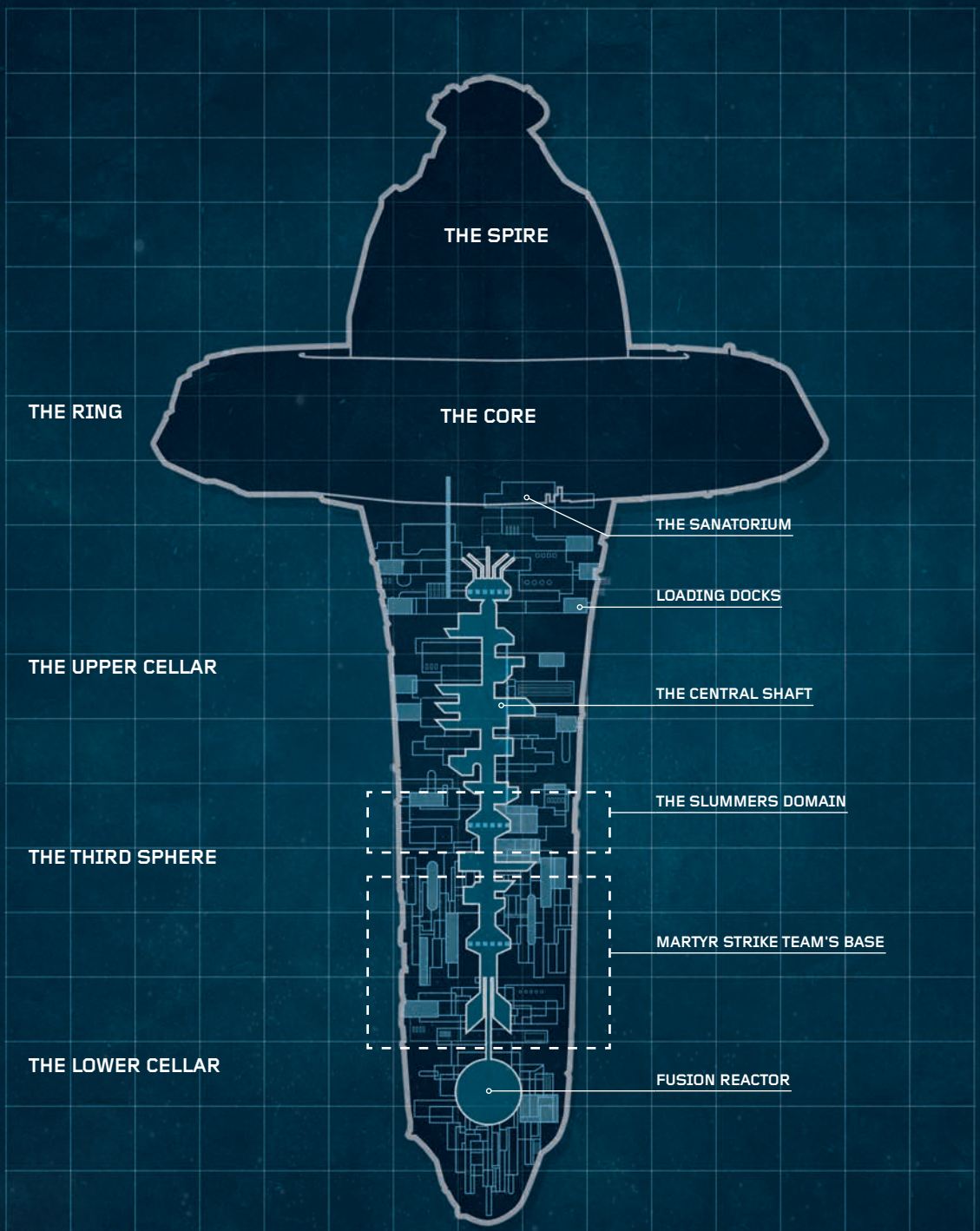
THE UPPER CELLAR

The higher levels are pretty much abandoned. They are worn down but essentially in working condition. They are used every now and then for docking and storage when the Net is busy with some bulk hauler. The Guard patrols the upper Cellar, but not very often. A more accurate description of the Guard patrols here would be purge patrols, hunting the area's few residents who almost certainly are hiding or smuggling something – or someone.

THE LOWER CELLAR

The lower levels show a rapidly increasing degree of decay. In the weak gravity at the bottom, mad, opor-sick slummers and semi-intelligences rule. Carrion eating skavara are quite common. Bundles of fiber optic cables and copper wire hang from the ceiling as most of the covers have been taken down to be sold or used as building material for huts. The air is thick with the smell of urine, opor, and fire. Sparks rain down over careless visitors followed by short periods of darkness as the fuses recover. The graviton projectors run on lower effect at the bottom of the Cellar due to sloppy maintenance and local slummers having stolen vital components. Down here (below The Third Sphere, see page 71), the PCs receive a –1 to **DEXTERITY**, **MELEE COMBAT**, and **FORCE**.

Handout #3: Brother Ramas's Map



gering atmosphere of fear and pain. The stairs and ladders leading down to the Cellar can be found on basement level 5. The door to the staircase is locked but can be opened with a security tablet and a successful **TECHNOLOGY** test. From there, the stairs will take the PCs straight down to the Cellar.

THE GUARD'S ELEVATORS

In the headquarters of the Coriolis Guard, located at the Core Plaza, two elevators connect the Cellar with civilization. This is the way down used by service personnel and Guard patrols. The Judicators' offices are in the same complex, and their status in the building makes the guards posted at the elevators step aside immediately as judicator Akouba approaches with the PCs in tow. The elevator cars are slow and only relatively safe – the railing has come loose and the controls are rusted. The two shafts run through the spine of the station together with the central lines of power and water. The two guards insist on accompanying the car down but stay silent, glaring angrily at Akouba standing in the front with her back turned on the other passengers.

The platform groans tiredly and starts its slow descent into the darkness. The two guards keep a respectful distance from the judicator while glancing nervously at each other. The noise of the plaza above is quickly replaced by a low rumbling. Dark pipes in the walls transport purified water upwards. Endless rows of rivets pass you by and you can feel the weight of your gear and weapons slowly lessen as the artificial gravity starts to wane.

When arriving at the bottom, the judicator explains the way to the next level via a nearby spiral staircase, but refuses to come along herself. She has much work to do in the chaos above left behind by the disappearance of the Emissary.

THE UPPER CELLAR

When the PCs have continued a little bit further through the darkness, they reach an area where all shafts, staircases, and ladders are welded shut or blocked by collapsed debris. Next to the welding is usually a sign with the Coriolis Guard's stylized diamond mark, indicating that further travel is prohibited. No routes from here seem to lead either down or outwards toward the hull. By now, you should let the PCs find The Third Sphere (see the At the Court of the Slummer Queen event below).

NPCS

Use the preacher stats (page 343 of the Coriolis core *Coriolis* core rulebook) when dealing with the Samaritans in the scene.

PURGE PATROL

The purge patrols consist of senior members of the Guard, with heavier weapons and better discipline. A respectable level of corruption is still present of course. They are used to the residents of the Cellar running at the mere sight of them and will be surprised if this doesn't happen. The follow the orders of sergeant Gamila (**COMMAND** 2) without question.

ATTRIBUTES:
STRENGTH 3, AGILITY 2, WITS 2, EMPATHY 3

HIT POINTS: 5

MIND POINTS: 5

REPUTATION: 2

SKILLS: Ranged Combat 3, Melee Combat 2, Observation 2

ARMOR: Light armor 4

WEAPONS: Vulcan carbine, dura knife

GEAR: Personal communicator, tag for accepting bribes.

EVENTS

Only use one event in this scene, as it should mainly be used to set the mood for the final act and not slow down the tempo of the story.

THE CENTRAL SHAFT

The blocked-off corridors eventually merge with the central shaft. Rather than being a straight shaft, it looks more like a complicated cave network of conjoined duralite halls and enormous rooms stacked on top of each other in a chaotic fashion. A myriad of overhangs and balconies connected by a spider's web of beams and cables keeps the colossal construction in place. The shaft has three huge junctions called the "necks". At the junctions, the halls converge to form an octagonal passage fitted with twelve large ventilation turbines. The first neck is just below the Core, at the top of the Cellar. The second neck is located near The Third Sphere. The third neck can be found deep down, pushing up air from the filter units, the lack of gravity notwithstanding. Using the central shaft to get down is a strange and dangerous journey – the



PCs will climb stairs along the walls that shake and creak from the vibrations caused by the enormous turbines. Some halls are somewhat sheltered from the vibrations and wind, and contain dripping condensation and swarms of odd-looking fireflies. From seeing the decrepit state of the station's life support systems, one would be hard pressed not to view the fact that the station is functioning at all as miracle. At the cost of 1 DP, you could collapse or block a staircase, forcing the PCs to climb or jump to continue. Don't forget the negative modifiers caused by the low gravity.
Cost: 0–1 DP

RESONANCE – SHIVERS

The closed-off corridors and welded-up doors make the journey through the darkness appear as a winding maze, full of dead ends. When the group reaches the central shaft, mystic PCs might suddenly feel a strange uneasiness followed by a throbbing headache. They hear the crack of stun gun in their heads and smell ozone in the air. Only mystic PCs can feel it, however. If the PCs pass a demanding (–1) **OBSERVATION** test, they can spot a Vulcan carbine pinned to a beam a few meters up in the middle of the shaft. If there are no mystics in the group, they will all just feel anxious and uneasy instead.

- **The Emissary Wakes Up:** On the way down through the central shaft, the Emissary suddenly woke up (the warriors had underestimated its resistance to shock weapons). A powerful sonic blast threw one of the warriors over the railings to be mangled by the fans in the neck above. The sonic impulse is still partly active, changing the direction of the air coming from below. The martyr warrior dropped his carbine in the fall, which got stuck under a beam in the shaft, held in place by residual winds from the Emissary's sonic impulse. The last warrior managed to subdue the Emissary once more, using a stun gun, before continuing down toward the secret base far below.

Unless the PCs pray to the Icons, asking for their favors, the GM receives 4 DP (see Darkness Points at the beginning of Act 3).
Cost: 0 DP (GM gain 4 DP)

THE FREE FALLING ELEVATOR

The climb down is tiring and slow. Every now and then, the PCs reach floors that don't seem to allow further passage down. At one such floor, they come across an elevator room with three seemingly functional elevators. One of them can be activated using **TECHNOLOGY** and looks to be in decent condition.

- **Falling Elevator:** The mag locks on the elevator are unfortunately broken. The ride starts out fine, but the car starts to pick up speed as it moves through the Cellar. The emergency brakes are unresponsive. The PCs must pass a difficult (–2) **TECHNOLOGY** test to short-circuit the emergency brakes and stop the car. If the PCs fail to stop the car, certain death will be avoided only by the decreasing gravity slowing the acceleration, but riding the car all the way down is certainly not a healthy pastime! Passengers in the elevator will receive fall damage equivalent to an 8-meter fall (see *Coriolis* core rulebook page 97). Gravity is low at the bottom of the elevator shaft, and exiting the crushed car requires passing a difficult (–2) **DEXTERITY** or **FORCE** test. After one PC has climbed out, the others can follow without rolling dice.

Cost: 2 DP

PURGE PATROL

A Guard patrol is on a purge of the Cellar. They open fire on anything that moves and shoot to kill. They have found a camp made by slummers and beggars and are just about to execute the prisoners when the PCs arrive. The group can choose to intervene or sneak past.

The patrol could also be sneaking around, which would require a successful **OBSERVATION** test from the PCs to spot them and a successful **INFILTRATION** test to avoid them. If the PCs are spotted, a firefight is unavoidable if they cannot persuade the guards using **MANIPULATION**, contacts or the Faction Standing talent.
Cost: 2 DP

UPPER CELLAR AMBIANCE

- Echoes of gunfire come drifting through the corridor from far away. Weak voices cry and whimper. Then silence.
- Repair work is being done. Welding sparks shoot across the floor. The workers shout profanities at each other. Bored guards oversee the work but will ignore the PCs unless they make contact.
- Two mysterious figures haggle over something, but slip into the shadows as the PCs approach.
- A monitor suddenly comes to life, showing a Bulletin show. It seems old. Then the monitor goes dark again.

IN THE COURT OF THE SLUMMER QUEEN

In this scene, the PCs arrive at queen Elmeda's court after having wandered around the Cellar for a bit before finding their way down through the central shaft. Elmeda's society can be found close to the middle neck of the central shaft.

THE SITUATION

Queen Elmeda is the leader for a group of slummers and exiled artists who live in a make-shift village in one of the larger halls at the heart of the Cellar. The location is ideally chosen, close to the central shaft. The village is called The Third Sphere, and lives off of salvaging as well as plundering from smugglers, other slummers, and skavara. When the PCs arrive, they will be taken before the queen either by residents of the village or by a nekatra from Elmeda's bodyguard. Let the PCs' arrival coincide with the afternoon "market" (see The Third Sphere below).

The Slummer Queen is the key to the deepest parts of the Cellar and staying on her good side is necessary to continue the descent. The arrival of the PCs is well timed for Elmeda as several conflicts in the village are nearing the boiling point and she could use some help:

- A slummer in her inner circle, Danthë Farrah – who also happens to be her mistress – is conspiring to take over the leadership of the village and launch an exodus upwards. You should let Danthë be off on a mission when the PCs arrive, but the group can sense the tension at the court if they mingle with the residents.
- Awl the skavara has a bigger market and threatens to steal the slummers away from Elmeda.
- Frax, a nekatra in the queen's guard, is not as loyal as Elmeda thinks and is making plans for the future.



IMPORTANT FACTS

The PCs should leave the queen's court with at least the following information:

- Elmeda can describe how to find the martyr strike team's base.
- Awl is the queen's nemesis.
- The strike team's base is located beyond the Slum Cemetery and the part of the middle Cellar known as the Labyrinth.
- The Labyrinth is guarded by a terrible monster that devours anyone who isn't careful.

The main piece of information is of course the description of how to pass through the Labyrinth to find the secret base. They can acquire this info by trading with one of the influential players in the village or by gaining access to Elmeda's map.

- Awl or Goba can describe the way to the strike team's base.
- Awl can tell them of gaps in the sensor grid around the base.

THE THIRD SPHERE

The ceiling in the hall is almost as high as on some of the floors in the Spire, but lacks the holo screens of its civilized counterpart – the ceiling here is black, and the glittering rivetheads form squares rather than star constellations. Cables with multi-colored lights criss-cross the room, supported by pillars rising like trees among the tents that cover the floor – tents made from cardboard, old blankets, plastic trash, and old dura plates. Marketplace noises can be heard from the center of the village. This is the home queen Elmeda – The Third Sphere.

The Third Sphere is the name of the halls ruled by Slummer Queen Elmeda – or by her cult, depending on how one sees it. The main hall is wide, with high ceilings, but without any original lighting left. The people of the village have arranged what illumination exists themselves, using whatever they can find: lamps, lanterns, light strips – all in different colors. The Third Sphere is both secluded and strategically convenient, located just above the second neck in the central shaft. The only way inside is through one of four security doors that have been restored to working condition (can only be opened using TECHNOLOGY) by the gravely alcoholic former ship mechanic Danthë Farrah, counselor ,and on-again, off-again mistress of the queen. The location of the queen's court makes it a junction for all traffic and smuggling between the upper and lower Cellar:

- One door leads to the central shaft.
- One door leads to the semi-functional elevator (see The Free Falling Elevator above).
- The third door leads to the Skavara market and the Slum Cemetery.
- The last door is guarded, hidden behind Elmeda's throne, and only those who have carried out a mission for the queen are allowed through. It leads directly to the Labyrinth, without passing the central shaft and the Slum Cemetery.

THE COURT

The queen's residence consists of four tent pavilions. At some point, they were probably colorful and beautiful, but years of tabak, arrash, and opor smoke have turned them yellow, and countless tears in the fabric have been fixed with copper wire harvested from around the Cellar. The queen's four tents are at the center of the village, and the surrounding tents are in much worse condition, built primarily from odds and ends scavenged in the surroundings. Elmeda's subjects are mostly humans, but descendants of the Tehl humanites – incredibly strong unskilled laborers brought in from Errai when Coriolis was first constructed and then forgotten about when their services were no longer needed.

THE VILLAGE

The Third Sphere is made up of around two hundred people, a quarter of which are children. Four individuals stick out – Elmeda's four bodyguard nekatra, escapees from the gladiator matches in the Mulukhad. All residents in The Third Sphere are malnourished, bordering on starving, and many suffer from crippling injuries and disabilities caused by their living conditions. Children and the elderly are the worst off as the queen has decreed that food is primarily reserved for those able to work. The survival of the village is dependent on long and dangerous scavenging trips through the Cellar.

The people living here are proud of their village however. Even if the name alludes to the vulnerable state of the colony, both geographically and socially, its residents view themselves as a natural part of the station in the same way as residents in the Core or the Spire do.

NPCS

The most important NPC in this scene is the Slummer Queen. The other NPCs described are her bionic cobra, the nekatra guard, and a typical villager.

RUMORS

In The Third Sphere, the PCs can find the following rumors (some true, some not):

- **The Slum Cemetery is the place where the slummers of old buried their dead.**
- **At the heart of the Cellar lives a terrible "beast" that devours both bodies and souls.**
- **Smugglers use the Labyrinth for storing and transporting contraband.**
- **A mad prophet wanders the Labyrinth. His prophecies always come true.**
- **The skavara have a whole village in the Cellar where they grow crops in the light from the central reactor.**
- **With the guidance of "The Savior" the people of The Third Sphere are about to march down into the darkness to seek a new life, without hardship and sickness.**
- **Danthë has contacts within the the council of factions, and has promised that soon The Third Sphere will be recognized and its people shall rise from the abyss and take their rightful place in the Spire.**

ELMEDA DOL-PARNASSO, FALLEN COUNTESS AND SLUMMER QUEEN

She used to be a real beauty with a bright future – Elmeda dol-Parnasso, first countess of the Parnasso clan, heiress to a mighty bloodline destined for the Monolith. Her downfall was swift and merciless – love set fire to her heart and led her to damnation. Her lover, Vasilev Zarif-Konstantinides – also from a good family – chose to listen to his family's advice to set his aims higher. Elmeda fell into a heavy opor daze and woke in slavery as a courtesan to an exiled Sadaalian merchant. She employed her natural, hegemonist cunning and escaped, fleeing into the depths of the Cellar. The only things she has left from her old life are a few pieces of jewelry and her bionic cobra Kahnara. She has created a new society in the darkness, ruling a rather large and unusually well-organized group of slummers. She is once again a person of status, with power over others – but this is just a stepping stone to something better. Elmeda plans on returning to the surface to seek vengeance on both her family and the treacherous Vasilev.

APPEARANCE: Dresses in an impressive, slightly outdated hegemonistic ball gown. Her oiled hair is woven into a hat with gold embroidery. Her cobra is always by her side as she holds court in one of her four make-shift pavilions.

CHARACTERISTICS: Sneers and moves her hands in soft circles as she speaks. Wrinkles her forehead when she tries to hide her anger or frustration.

ATTRIBUTES: **STRENGTH 3, AGILITY 3, WITS 5, EMPATHY 5**
HIT POINTS: 8
MIND POINTS: 10
REPUTATION: 7
SKILLS: Culture 4, Manipulation 4, Melee Combat 4, Command 2, Ranged Combat 2
TALENT: Slummer Court, Pure Blood, Malicious, Familiar
WEAPONS: Thermal cricket
GEAR: Exquisite, hegemonistic formal gown

- **SLUMMER COURT:** Elmeda's court in The Third Sphere would do anything for her, and as they are a motley band of subjects, there is almost always someone who has the skills the queen needs. Her power in the Cellar is considerable, and she can use it to intimidate visitors – she gets a +2 to **MANIPULATION** if her opponent is aware of the Cellar's internal hierarchies.

- **PURE BLOOD:** The Parnasso clan have pure, Zenithian blood and are closely related to the Quassar family. This makes Elmeda strong, resilient, and healthy, and slows down her aging. She is much older than she looks. The talent counts as equivalent to the Regeneration sculpt (doubling her recovery rate after being injured) and gives her 2 extra HP.
- **MALICIOUS:** Elmeda is charismatic, but more importantly extremely persistent when it comes to long negotiations. She will do anything to get her way, and if she passes a **MANIPULATION** test, she can choose to inflict 2 extra mind points of stress to her opponent for each additional success on the roll.
- **FAMILIAR:** Elmeda has a bionic snake familiar. It will protect her from enemies (see Kahnara below).

KAHNARA, LARGE BIONIC COBRA

The Parnasso clan's sigil is a snake. Several family members have snake familiars of different sorts. Kahnara is a bionically enhanced cobra with heigthened intelligence, stronger muscles, and a larger body.

ATTRIBUTES:
STRENGTH 8, AGILITY 6

HIT POINTS: 14

SKILLS: Infiltration 3, Melee Combat 3

ARMOR: Scales 2

WEAPONS: Bite (weapon damage 2, CRIT 3, poisonous)

- **POISONOUS BITE (1 DP):** If a bite attack breaks the skin, the victim may (for one darkness point) be subjected to a strength 5 poison attack against her Agility score. See page 113 in the *Coriolis* core rulebook for information about poison or use the advanced poison rules from The Kuan Connection, page 168 in this book.

FRAX, NEKATRA

Frax has seen it all and survived it all, first as a scout for the Legion and then as a gladiator in the Mulukhad. Now, it is time for another new chapter, to leave the Cellar behind – serving as Elmeda's bodyguard is easy but tiring, and the queen's privileged ways make Frax want to slit her throat. Frax will take the first opportunity he sees to get out, for example, if he is sent along with the PCs as their guide on the mission to kill Awl the skavara. Frax is one of Elmeda's four nekatra. They all have the same stats.

APPEARANCE: Black fur with streaks of grey. Differently colored eyes. No clothes except for a bandolier with bottles and bags.

CHARACTERISTICS: Growls at the beginning of a sentence. Scratches an old scar on the neck. Squints.

ATTRIBUTES:
STRENGTH 5, AGILITY 5, WITS 2, EMPATHY 3

HIT POINTS: 10

MIND POINTS: 5

REPUTATION: 1

SKILLS: Melee Combat 4, Observation 3, Infiltration 1

ARMOR: Fur 1

WEAPONS: Bite (weapon damage 3, CRIT 2), claws (weapon damage 2, CRIT 4)

GEAR: Water bottle, one day's worth of dried meat.

- **NEKATRA ABILITIES:** See Throat Attack and Feral Hunger on page 317 in the *Coriolis* core rulebook.

GOBA THE LAME, BEGGAR

One of the less fortunate inhabitants of The Third Sphere is Goba, a lame man who could have been in the prime of his life. Instead, he is skinny, tired, and has to lean on a broken crutch for support. There is still some fight left in the wise cripple, and he desperately wishes to leave the Cellar. He secretly sells his knowledge of stairs, elevators, shafts, and other things to the guards and maintenance staff, in spite of Elmeda's wishes. Goba could show the PCs the way to the strike team's base if you like, but he doesn't know about the sensors. He has made a deal with the martyr warriors to allow unhindered access to the central shaft.

APPEARANCE: Dressed in worn-out layers of fabrics that loosely resemble a caftan. A long, spotty beard bears witness to the malnourishment and hardships of life in the Cellar. His knuckles are bony and twisted from pain, and his tired eyes are bloodshot

CHARACTERISTICS: Pulls his bony fingers as he thinks. Clicks his lips and fixes his burning eyes on the person he is speaking with.

ATTRIBUTES:
STRENGTH 1, AGILITY 2, WITS 3, EMPATHY 3

HIT POINTS: 3

MIND POINTS: 6

REPUTATION: 4

SKILLS: Manipulation 4, Technology 3, Culture 2, Ranged Combat 2

TALENT: Nine Lives

WEAPONS: Sawed-off grape rifle (hidden under his caftan, weapon damage 2, CRIT 3)

GEAR: Tool belt, cane, worn tag with 9 birr

◆ **NINE LIVES:** Goba is in bad shape, but has a strange knack for survival. Whether his luck comes from the Icons or from an alliance with something unholy is not known. Regardless, Goba can choose which of the dice to read first, and which dice to use, when he suffers a critical injury. The more dice rolled, the greater are his chances of making it.

AWL, SKAVARA

Awl – pronounced as a growl – is an entrepreneurial skavara who wishes to trade her scratched and broken things for shiny trinkets or pieces of the PCs' clothes and gear. The trade will be most disadvantageous to the PCs, but Awl knows things about the martyr strike team and its base that could be of great help to them. Like most skavara, Awl has a very limited vocabulary, and can only bark out the occasional word in Zeni, handling the rest of the conversation with sign language and gurgling. She understands Zeni quite well, but long sentences and subtleties such as irony or jokes are lost on her. Awl's biggest dream is to get away from the Cellar – help her with that and you'll have a friend for life.

APPEARANCE: Dressed in a caftan made from semi-transparent plastic held together by a girdle fashioned from copper wire. Greying fur.

CHARACTERISTICS: Growls and moves around constantly. Has a nervous tic that makes her show her teeth.

ATTRIBUTES:
STRENGTH 2, AGILITY 3, WITS 3, EMPATHY 3

HIT POINTS: 5

MIND POINTS: 6

REPUTATION: 3 (due to a growing network of contacts)

SKILLS: Infiltration 3, Observation 3, Manipulation 1, Melee Combat 1, Ranged Combat 1

TALENT: Stench, Sniff (see Skavara, page 318 of the *Coriolis* core rulebook)

WEAPONS: Vulcan pistol

GEAR: Medallion with the Foundation's seal on it, goods to trade (see above), bric-a-brac.

EVENTS

Suggestion for events in The Third Sphere.

AUDIENCE WITH THE QUEEN

The PCs reach the village and Elmeda's court via one of the security doors. After climbing down through the central shaft or surviving the falling elevator, they finally find the hidden settlement. It is surrounded by lights in many colors, and the walls are fancifully decorated (testing **CULTURE** can reveal that the art celebrates Zenithians, primarily hegemonistic ideals).

Knocking on the door will eventually lead to two slummers opening it. They are wiry but muscular women with pale, chapped skin, and their hair in tight, oiled knots. Both are armed with makeshift spears made from duralite plates and pipes. Their tone is stern, but the PCs are welcomed to The Third Sphere and the domains of queen Elmeda. What is their business here? Do they have something to trade with, or have they come to offer their services and loyalty to the queen?

The PCs are instructed to hand over their weapons. If they obey, or instead manage to threaten the guards, they are then taken through the colorful hall, down a few steps and shown to Elmeda's tents. More armed slummers show up along the way, blocking the PCs' way back to the door as they are presented to the queen. She is wearing perfect makeup and her presence exudes cruelty and power. The audience takes place in her tent with her nekatra guard present, plus a few unwashed servants and Kahnara, her bionic cobra.

During the audience, the PCs will come to know the following:

- Elmeda claims to know everything about the Cellar and its roads, smugglers, and lunatics.
- She knows the Labyrinth and the Slum Cemetery, and about the mad poet Bathos.
- She confirms that a group of smugglers have transported sedated people downward through the Cellar (Goba the Lame has handled the details).
- She knows where these smugglers have their base.
- She can share the location with the PCs for something in return.

Elmeda is not interested in birr, jewelry, or guns in return for giving up he location of the martyr strike team's base. She wants the PCs to do her a favor: kill Awl the skavara, whom she describes as a feral beast, more nekatra than skavara. Awl can be found in the Skavara Market and Elmeda can provide the group with a guide to find their way, such as Frax the nekatra (see NPCs above).

- **The Guide:** The real reason for offering the PCs a guide is that the queen needs eyes and ears at the scene to see if they actually carry out her bidding. She suspects that Awl may try to persuade the PCs otherwise.
- **The Nekatra Guide:** If Frax is sent along with the group, chances are good that the PCs might sway the loyalties of the bitter nekatra.

Cost: 0 DP (Mandatory)

THE QUEEN'S REWARD

If the PCs make a deal with Elmeda, she will wait for confirmation of Awl's death before helping them. If the PCs proved to be extra reliable, she will also tell them that the smugglers recently installed security systems in the corridors around the base (see the The Martyr's Embrace scene below). Possible rewards for the murder of Awl include:

- Knowledge of the exit behind Elmeda's throne, leading down straight into the Labyrinth.
- Elmeda's map showing the way through the Labyrinth, all the way down to the strike team's secret base.
- A locket with the dol-Parnasso seal (gives a +2 to **MANIPULATION** against Algolan servants and Zenithians in the Monolith).
- Frax as nekatra escort.
- Information about the strike team's security systems.
- A holy talisman to ward of the Beast in the Labyrinth (gives a +2 to **INFILTRATION** when hiding from the Beast)

Awl is described in the The Skavara Market event below. As the GM, you could also choose to alter the target of the PCs' mission – they could be asked to kill Frax, or perhaps Goba (Elmeda knows that he has made a deal with the martyr warriors behind her back). Regardless of who they are sent to kill, their target will turn out to be far from the "wicked beast" described by Elmeda and, on top of that, also capable of showing them the way through the Labyrinth.

Cost: 0 DP

REJECTING THE QUEEN'S OFFER

If the PCs refuse to carry out Elmeda's mission, she won't tell them how to find the smuggler base and the audience ends. She chooses to keep their confiscated weapons and if they ask for them back, they will be removed from the village at knife-point. If the PCs linger too long in the village, the nekatra guard will come and take them to one of the three doors. They won't be let back in and will have to find their way further down on their own. You could let the events in the Through the Labyrinth scene give the group clues as to where they can find the martyr warriors.

By spending 3 DP, you could have the queen's slummer guards attack the PCs and throw their unconscious bodies into the Labyrinth as food for the Beast if they lose.

Cost: 0, 3 DP

THE QUEEN'S MARKET

The open area in front of the Queen's pavilions act as the marketplace in The Third Sphere. Merchants and slummers gather each afternoon in what for outsiders may look like a pathetic parody of the markets held up in the Ring and at the Core. The slummers who have found or stolen something not worth keeping for themselves, or not already confiscated "for the glory of the third sphere," place their wares on damp blankets, lined up along the cold metal floor. Eatable food is practically unheard of, and mostly the "goods" offered are random spare parts, trinkets and cigarette butts. Sometimes decent, or even fancy clothes can be on offer, taken from a murdered or diseased slummer colleague. A small group of artists, who've for some reason or other joined The Third Sphere, show off and sell their creations, most often built out of the scarce materials found here in the station's belly – cables, metal debris, or packaging materials.

Cost: 0 DP

THE SKAVARA MARKET

An old hangar near the hull contains a market where skavara and slummers meet and trade scavenged objects. It is close to The Third Sphere, above the Labyrinth. The following text can be used when describing the market:

Below the steps, you hear growls, yaps and whining – a group of skavara by the sound of it. The open hall, supported by duralite beams thick as shuttles, contains a group of tents reminding a learned traveler of the nomad camps on Amedo. Blankets, sheets of cardboard, and plastic bags are spread out everywhere, covered with junk. Skavara scuttlet back and forth between the market and the tents, and a few slummers can also be seen.

A meaningful conversation with a skavara requires a **CULTURE** test. This scene can be used when the PCs need somewhere to rest, when they have gotten lost, or if they have accepted Elmeda's mission to kill Awl. You could decide that the market contains something of value, stuff left behind by the Guard or the Syndicate during an expedition: half-empty cells or Vulcan clips, M-doses, bandages, or tools. Such things may not always be of use to slummers and could be traded away.

Awl will quickly notice the PCs' arrival, and will try to talk with them, trade with them, and perhaps even try to join them, trading passage upwards for loyal service. Awl can offer them much valuable information – depending on how well the PCs negotiate with her (**MANIPULATION**), she will share more or less of the following:

- **Trade:** She has things to trade: 1 T-dose, 1 Vulcan clip, and a gyro driver (tool that gives a +1 **TECHNOLOGY**).
- **Guide:** She knows the Cellar inside and out and can give the group various skill bonuses and make sure they don't get lost. She has also stolen a small sensor from the strike team's base (which looks like a glass orb) and can show them the way.
- **Scout:** She can keep a lookout and warn them of hostile slummers (such as in the Slummer Attack event) and knows how to scare them off (she demonstrates with a few bites and snarls).
- **The Medallion:** She can sell them a small medallion with the Foundation's symbol – a stylized galaxy – on it, stolen from a warrior who has been at the martyr warriors' camp down on Kua.
- **The Sensors:** She knows about the security systems around the strike team's base and can describe how to find them, as well as point out where the blindspots in the system are – two of the "eyes" are missing (she closes one eye to explain what she means).

Cost: 0 DP

THROUGH THE LABYRINTH

In the second to last scene of the scenario, the PCs travel to the lower Cellar and finally find the martyr warriors' camp. Emphasis in the scene should be on the passage through the dreaded Labyrinth.

THE SITUATION

Getting to the lower Cellar is difficult and dangerous. The PCs will either have a map, a description of the way, or a guide – Frax, Awl, or Goba the Lame. The first part is a climb down a series of long shafts, on rusted ladders along the walls. After that, they reach the Labyrinth. The scene will require the PCs to prove their worth – they will have to test **DEXTERITY**, **FORCE**, **OBSERVATION**, and **INFILTRATION** so as to either avoid or confront the Beast at the end of the scene. Make sure to establish a dark, terrifying atmosphere as the PCs climb down into the bottomless unknown.

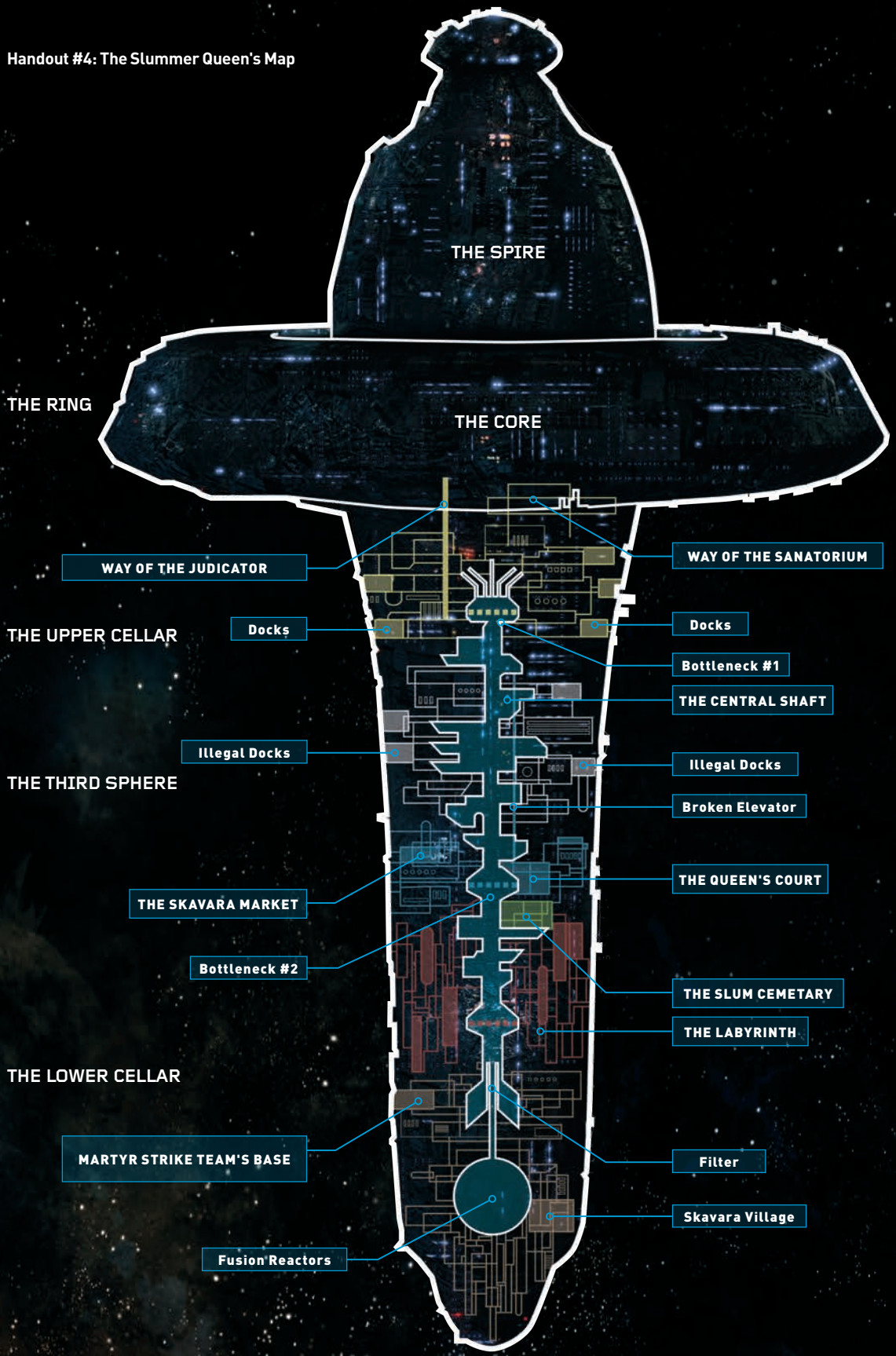
IMPORTANT FACTS

The PCs have left The Third Sphere with information that will lead them to the secret base. As they cross the Labyrinth, they will find out that the Beast is real, and something they should attempt to avoid. If the group left the previous scene without any knowledge of the location for the strike teams' secret base, or without knowing about the sensors around the base, you should use The Mad Poet event, and have Bathos tell them what they need to know.

THE LABYRINTH

The Labyrinth is an area encompassing several floors separating The Third Sphere from the lower Cellar. It is almost impossible to find the way through without a map or a guide. The floors in the Labyrinth range from large open spaces shot through with black pits to thick forests of beams and cables. A maze of stairs, elevator

Handout #4: The Slummer Queen's Map



shafts, vents, and pipes surround the group on all sides. It is not always possible to keep climbing down – to find the right way, one must sometimes turn back and head up or sideways to find the right passage. The lighting is poor and groups of potentially dangerous slummers wander the area, either lost or living here. Rumors say that sarcofagoi have found their way here from the deepest darkness between the stars.

THE SLUM CEMETERY

The way down from The Third Sphere or the Skavara Market passes through a few floors close to the Labyrinth left alone by the residents of the Cellar – no trash is dumped here, nothing is scavenged, nothing is repaired. The dark, decrepit corridors start below the second vent neck, just a few stairs from the gates of the queen's domains. Algae and cold moss cover the walls and the thick layers of organic waste are used by the more civilized of the Cellar dwellers to bury their dead in – and by the Syndicate when they need to hide a body. The stench of decay can sometimes be overwhelming or even dangerous when gases are confined in tight spaces. The graves are often marked by some simple signs, a name and perhaps a short poem or a date. Icon symbols made from debris mark the rooms that are in use and there are lanterns here and there, kept lit by the cemetery warden. No one stays here longer than necessary, out of fear of the souls of the dead – and even worse things.

- **Joubas (Warden):** Aging preacher Joubas tends to the graves, makes sure the Icons symbols are looked after, and keeps the lanterns lit to ward of dybuks and sarcofagoi. Supported by his long staff and armed with a lighter, a flashlight, and an enhanced humanite immune system and night vision, Joubas is perfectly suited for life in the darkness. He sometimes misses the company of the living – speaking with the souls of the dead is just not the same thing.
- **Hima Iamas (Syndicate Cleaner):** Dragging bodies down to the Slum Cemetery – from the Sewers or from gangfights higher up – is very dirty buisness. Luckily for Hima, she is only required to bring people important enough for a "clean" burial down here – those whose spirits one wishes to put to rest. The biggest problem with her job is that most of her predecessors have ended up here themselves, and she fears the same fate – spending eternity in the company of those she has buried here.

NOTES IN SHAFIR THE WANDERER'S JOURNAL

The railing suddenly disappeared and we looked out across an entire floor filled with the detritus of the Cellar. As we went further in, the mush on the floor – an unnameable goo with pieces of plastic and wood visible here and there – became thicker



and the stench of decay became worse. We passed tiny rooms where we could see small Icon statues on the floor, made from trash. There were short texts scribbled on the walls, eulogies to slummers buried here.

THE LAIR OF THE BEAST

At the center of the Labyrinth, in the very heart of the Cellar, the corridors are empty. They range from regular height to massive chasms, narrow but many stories high. Pipes that used to carry power, gases and water run along the walls but everything is long since silent and dark here. Black holes in the walls lead to cramped crawlways and old service stations. Slummers who get lost down here tell stories of corridors that move around and change direction without you noticing. Some claim to have heard the fearsome howls of the Beast echo through the central shaft, or to have seen its shadow in the twisted corridors of the Labyrinth: "The savage sentinel – a black shadow that can move through walls, locking its victim in a fatal embrace and sucking out their souls."

NPCS

The residents of the Labyrinth consist of withered, old slummers, lunatics, and the Beast.

THE BEAST

The Beast is quite similar to the being called Yal-shir, or The Ensnarer, in other parts of the Horizon (page 331 of the *Coriolis* core rulebook) but has different origins. It used to be a bionically sculpted animal dumped here by its masters who thought it dead after a fight in the Mulukhad Arena. It managed to hide away and heal, feeding on slummers, and eventually found its way to the Slum Cemetery where food was plentiful in the form of the recently departed. Slowly and gradually, the dark between the stars twisted the creature into something new, a dark monstrosity.

The Beast doesn't have Yal-shir's ability to bend time, but can twist space around itself, making sure all the corridors around it in the Labyrinth eventually lead its prey to it. The Beast doesn't have the Phase shift and Portal healing abilities but instead a unique ability called Dark Embrace. It usually attacks its victims with this ability, but can also use its dagger-like talons.

APPEARANCE: The Beast is a shadow in the shape of large predator, with a withers height of three meters. Some say that it looks like a bear, others that it must be some form of large cat. It is completely black and has no visible eyes. It growls and snarls like a jungle beast.

CHARACTERISTICS: Whispers softly before it attacks, the sound resembling wind through the corridors, rattling loose object and cables.

ATTRIBUTES:
STRENGTH 12, AGILITY 5

HIT POINTS: 17

SKILLS: Force 5, Dexterity 4, Melee Combat 3

ARMOR: 10

WEAPONS: Dark talons (weapon damage 5, CRIT 2)

- **DARK EMBRACE (1–3 DP):** The Beast can embrace a victim within Short range, enshrouding it in shadows. The victims must pass an Empathy or **MYSTIC POWERS** test or suffer 2 mind points of stress per DP spent by the GM on the attack. A maximum of 3 DP may be spent on each attack.

BATHOS EMOUD, MAD POET

The lanky Bathos is dressed in torn rags and armor he has patched together from scrap metal. He is armed with a "light whip," which – despite its impressive-sounding name – is nothing more than a bundle of fiber optic cables, and he has run out of cells, so there is no actual light involved. Bathos is a grandiose, hyperbolic person, greeting the PCs with a challenge: "Are you the children of the light, or warriors of the darkness?". He has no plans to leave the Cellar before it has been cleansed of darkness once and for all.

If you need stats for Bathos, use the preacher archetype on page 343 of the *Coriolis* core rulebook.

SLUMMERS

Skinny and wrapped in rags, living their life in the Cellar for many different reasons, all equally tragic. The refuse of human civilization with only one thing in common – desperation. They will gang up (2–4 individuals per group, depending on how dangerous you want to make it) and attack individual PCs.



ATTRIBUTES:
STRENGTH 2, AGILITY 2, WITS 1, EMPATHY 1

HIT POINTS: 4

MIND POINTS: 2

REPUTATION: 0

SKILLS: Melee Combat 2

TALENT: Judge of Character

WEAPONS: Improvised melee weapons

GEAR: Some opor and scavenged materials worth 2D6 birr (fiber optics or scrap metal) to trade for more opor.

EVENTS

These events could take place on the way to the Labyrinth, inside it, or when the PCs leave The Third Sphere.

THE MAD POET

Bathos is a demented ex-bureaucrat who has taken it upon himself to rid the Cellar of sinners, but he isn't doing so well at it. Regardless of whether the PCs identify as children of the light or warriors of the darkness, he will strike up a conversation with them. He is stark raving mad, but may know a few important things about the Cellar. If the PCs help him repair the "light whip" – he is missing a cell – he will

be eternally grateful (+2 to all further **MANIPULATION** tests when dealing with Bathos). The PCs spot him at a distance wandering around singing. Use the following text as it is or as inspiration when describing the meeting with Bathos:

A weak voice echoes through the empty hallway: crackling singing, interrupted by dry coughs, describing life in the Cellar. Suddenly, the singer appears in front of you, a tiny little man wrapped up in sheets of plastic, waving a bundle of fiber optic cables around, as if he was conducting an invisible orchestra.

- **The Song:** The song he is singing is his "threnody" (see the adjacent quote).
- **Slummers:** There are mad slummers who attack "travelers" in the Cellar. "The first ten or so times were the worst, but they eventually learned that it wasn't worth it."
- **The Beast:** There is a beast at the center of the maze. Avoid it at all costs. "Not even I am powerful enough to defeat it. I don't have enough light to disperse the darkness feeding its hate."
- **The Emissary:** He has spoken with the Emissary, who also happens to be a poet. "Well, the Messenger's works were somewhat naïve, but they expressed artistic ambition. I remain hopeful." The Emissary was being held captive, and was unable to answer any questions – eight guards with sugar globes in their hands covered his mouth. The only thing the Emissary managed to communicate was a half-decent attempt at poetry:

  "When the unworthy speak without tongues
  When sister betrays sister
  When the light of peace nourishes the servants of darkness
  When brother kills brother"

- **The Dream:** If he is pressed for details, he will reveal that he never actually met the Emissary, but that they shared a psychic experience, like a dream. "They were imprisoned in a dark place, but promised me everything was going to be fine. I felt calm and relieved by their words."
- **Mystics:** Bathos has seen unconscious or drugged mystics being dragged through the Labyrinth, to the newcomers' temple, which is what he calls the strike team's base. "Not just the Emissary has been claimed by the Cellar."
- **Sensors:** The strike team's base is surrounded by sensors. "The jailors' gaze reaches outside the prison."

I open the first door
A small and dark room
A tiny slummer passes by outside
Causing the drapes to move
I open the second door
Fiends! You drank the dark waters
You thought it made you invisible
Third door, a spacious room
Without a view
Cascading sparks
Eaten by the silence
Fourth door, a well-lit shaft
I provoke and scream
The dirty remains of memories
Fifth door
Shut
None out, none in. Blue!
Door number six says click
I say "Die, hatch, die"
We cry together
Like we used to do
The seventh door
I just walk past it
An outlaw
There is no eighth door
But a ninth. Dripping frame
When everyone cries
Things become wet
And warm. Like no one.

– The Door's in the Cellar, Bathos Emoud, Mad Poet

If the PCs manage to sift through Bathos' ramblings, his eyes will clear for a second and he will say in a calm voice: "You won't be able to save the living Icon, but you must find them – so that they instead may save you."
Cost: 0 DP

SLUMMER ATTACK

This floor appears to be in use. Signs of human habitation are scattered all over the place – tattered clothes, boxes, blankets, and garbage. It is very quiet however, abandoned and forgotten. If the PCs pass an **OBSERVATION** –1 test, they will hear a sudden scratching noise around a corner, a little too loud to be the ventilation. A horde of slummers suddenly emerges, a brown mass of worn scraps and broken bodies.

The hungry and opor sick slummers surround the PCs. They are desperate and calculate their chances to steal the PCs' gear and chew the supple flesh off their bones. How it all plays out is up to the PCs – they can either try to use **MANIPULATION** or fight for their lives. If a fight breaks out, the slummers in the front will fight to the death, and those in the back will run away with equal conviction. It will be a short battle. If the PCs try to keep them away and run, they will follow, unless the chase takes them somewhere they are afraid to go, such as close to the Beast, deep shafts, the Skavara Market, or the martyr strike team's base.
Cost: 3 DP

THE CELLAR'S WRATH

This event can be used multiple times and includes accidents and dangers in the Cellar not relating to NPCs – it could be collapsing beams and floors or lights that go out. Use table 15.2 on page 346 in the *Coriolis* core rulebook for examples. The threat level you want to enforce defines the DP cost.
Cost: 1–3 DP



THE MARTYR'S EMBRACE

In the final scene of the scenario, the PCs finally find the martyr warriors' secret base. How the ensuing confrontation ends will depend heavily on what help they have had along the way. The events described for this lead the PCs into a final battle and should set them up to find enough information in the base to complete their mission. They should have enough information to continue directly into the next part of the campaign, *The Kuan Connection* (page 96).

THE SITUATION

The PCs arrive at the base just as the strike team is preparing a group of drop pods for the journey to Kua. Some of the station's few remaining mystics are forced into stasis beds and then loaded onto the pods. The Emissary is long since gone, sent to Kua and taken through the jungles to the strike team's headquarters by the Monolith (see *The Kuan Connection*). The same goes for Noor, or whomever it is the PCs are trying to rescue. The PCs might have been given clues or tips by the residents of the Cellar on the way down that could make breaking into the strike team's base easier (see below).

The scene is open and it is up to you as the GM to improvise depending on how the PCs plan their attack, how they move around (see the map below), and how the martyrs and their leader Salamah ach-Abaud act.

THE STRIKE TEAM'S ORDERS

The martyr strike team has strict orders on how to act if their base is discovered. The first response should of course be to neutralize the attackers, while shipping out the remaining mystics, regardless of whether they have received unmonitored entry clearance to Kua from the Guard or not. If they are unable to defend the base, the hangar is to be blown. Explosives are already in place.

IMPORTANT FACTS

The most important information in this scene is that drop pods are sent to Kua from the ejection ramp in the hangar. Make sure that when the PCs get their first glimpse of the hangar from the inside (or the dock if they approach from the outside), a pod is just being launched and another one prepared. This can be seen when entering the hangar, from the outside, if the PCs are performing a spacewalk to reach the camp, or through the video feed of any hacked surveillance cameras:

- **Kua's Pods:** In the following scenario, The Kuan Connection, two pods have just been sent down, both containing a message to the strike team's representatives on Kua that it is time to tie up loose ends and shut down the operation.

During and after the fight with strike team, the PCs have their suspicions about the warriors' backgrounds confirmed:

- **The Order:** Many items in the base as well as a few temporary altars are clearly Zalosian, confirming that it is the Order of the Pariah that are responsible for the kidnappings (see the Personal Effects event below).
- **Kidnapped Victims:** The prisoners in the hangar are marked with either a black or a white cross on their foreheads – black means mystic, white means non-mystic.

You should let one of the drop pods remain in the hangar to give the PCs a chance to examine it for clues:

- **The Destination:** The pods are all programmed with a specific course and crash vector. **DATA DJINN** is required to extract the coordinates from the pod, and **SCIENCE** is required to cross-reference it with Kua's land mass to pinpoint the destination – a dense jungle canyon on the Verkâna ridge situated in Kua's southern hemisphere.

THE MARTYR STRIKE TEAM'S BASE

The strike team has set up camp in an abandoned freighter hangar. The docking mechanisms are broken, and the commandos have installed their own ejection ramp that they use when sending the drop pods to Kua. An old service airlock has been repaired to allow them to receive new pods manually. The rest of the base is sparsely furnished, containing only a row of cages, an open bed chamber, a Martyr chapel, and a small kitchen. The hangar is used for storage of mystics in stasis awaiting transportation. A "blink" – an unmonitored entry vector – is delivered via encrypted coms when it is time to make a delivery.

PERSONAL EFFECTS

The PCs will find the warriors' personal effects if they search the base, or the bodies of the martyr warriors. Some examples of what they might find are described below:

- **PRAYER BEADS: A set of prayer beads in the shapes of tiny skulls, made from different kinds of wood, stone, and metal. The wearer counts the beads while praying. CULTURE can reveal that this particular necklace is a made as a reminder of death, keeping the devout aware that everything, no matter how solid and eternal it may appear, will one day crumble and disappear.**
- **A HOLY BOOK: A Zalosian prayer book, honoring the Martyr and the prophecy of "The Return of Darkness" (a more complete version than the one recited by Bathos, the Mad poet):**
  "There will come a time when mankind turns to darkness once more
  When the unworthy speak without tongues
  When sister betrays sister
  When the light of peace nourishes the servants of darkness
  When brother kills brother
  Only they who live in the darkness will see the light"
- **TALISMAN OF THE MARTYR: A meteoric iron pendant, shaped like a serpent. CULTURE reveals it to be Ourbos, the eternity aspect of the Martyr, worn by soldiers for protection. The talisman is blessed and provides a +2 bonus when praying to reroll, but only when the act is to avoid direct, physical damage, or when performing a self-sacrificing test.**
- **DAGGER: A dagger with Zalosian writing on it. A PC with CULTURE can read the inscription: "Righteous Leveller."**
- **PRAYER RUG: Personal prayer rug with stylized spaceships on it. Small ships and torpedoes (PILOT will reveal them to be injectors) approach a strange-looking craft with crenelated wings. A successful CULTURE test reveals that the patterns appear to be from Zalos-B, the system of the heretics.**

SECURITY SYSTEMS AND GUARDS

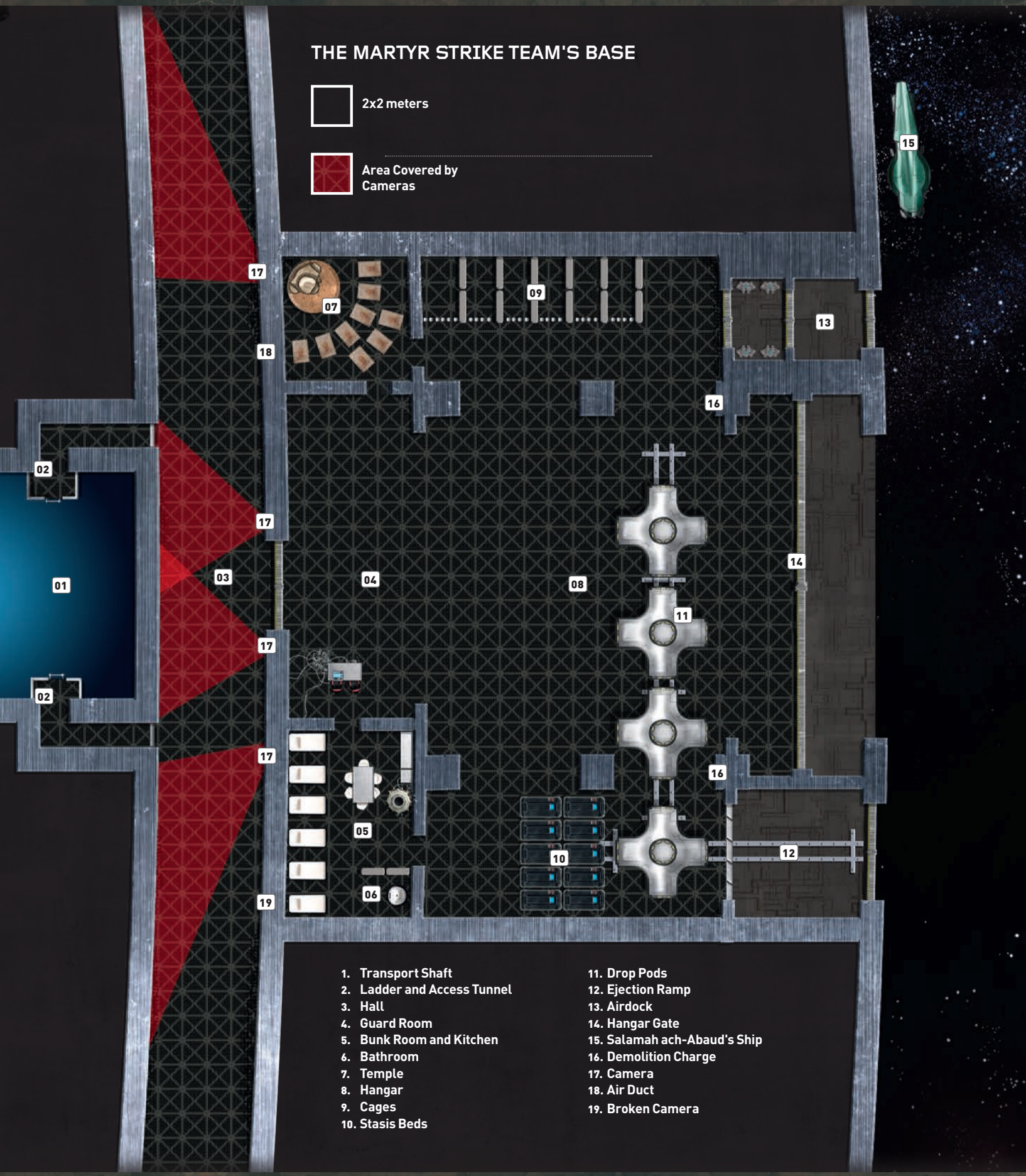
The base is surrounded by multiple sensors, placed in the corridor that runs outside the hangar. The sensors' coverage areas overlap and an alarm is triggered if they are disabled or disrupted. The only way for the PCs to pass them unnoticed is to hack them without interrupting the feed, and then program a sensor loop. This requires a successful **TECHNOLOGY** test at –2 or a **DATA DJINN** test at –3. Critical success, or prior knowledge from The Third Sphere, also gives them the knowledge of how to move past the cameras without being seen. Failure means that the guard in the guard room spots them and sounds a silent alarm, shortly after which a group of warriors storm the corridor. The strike team commandos don't patrol the corridor, choosing to rely on their sensors. If the PCs manage to fool the security system, there will be between one and four warriors is the guard room depending on the time of day.

The Security System: If the group chooses to hack the sensor grid and the computers they are linked to using **DATA DJINN**, they will discover that there are cameras inside the hangar as well, and that one of them is online. Through the camera feed they can see some stasis beds and part of a drop pod on an ejection ramp. By passing another **DATA DJINN** test (or scoring a critical success on the first roll), they can see a localized communication system in the hangar, which only appears to be able to receive, not send. The receivers are placed on two pillars near the main hangar door and the pod ejection ramp. This is the rigging set up by Salamah ach-Abaud to trigger, remotely by voice command, the two explosives mounted on the main supporting pillars (if things should turn ugly). The PCs cannot tamper with the com system from the outside as Salamah's voice command is required to set off the charges. They won't be able to blow the base up – deliberately or by accident.

THE MODIFIED HANGAR

The map describes the different places of interest in the hangar but not the locations of the martyr warriors or any specific objects. The NPCs section describes the warriors and their gear, as well their potential posts throughout the base.

- **Transport Shaft:** A deep transport shaft spanning several floors. There is no gravity in the shaft and the airlocks to each floor open inwards and upwards. Most airlocks are broken or, as on the strike team's floor, welded shut. Ladders run the length of the shaft along the walls.


THE MARTYR STRIKE TEAM'S BASE
2x2 meters
Area Covered by Cameras
01
02
02
03
04
05
06
07
08
09
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
16
17
17
17
17
18
19
1. Transport Shaft
2. Ladder and Access Tunnel
3. Hall
4. Guard Room
5. Bunk Room and Kitchen
6. Bathroom
7. Temple
8. Hangar
9. Cages
10. Stasis Beds
11. Drop Pods
12. Ejection Ramp
13. Airdock
14. Hangar Gate
15. Salamah ach-Abaud's Ship
16. Demolition Charge
17. Camera
18. Air Duct
19. Broken Camera

- **Ladder and Access Tunnel:** There is a small ledge on each floor connecting to a narrow corridor leading to the wider corridor. The doors between the corridors are not locked and look like they are used regularly.
- **Wide Corridor:** A corridor wide enough for two ground loaders to pass each other, connecting the different freighter hangars on this level. The martyr strike team has mounted multiple sensors along the walls. The two sensors outside the bed chamber are broken. Awl the skavara knows about the broken sensors (see the The Skavara Market scene on page 76).
- **Guard Room:** A large gateway toward the wide corridor, with sides of corrugated duralite. The door is suspended from rails in the ceiling. The wall on the other side of the room is one huge airlock, kept open. There are tables to the right in the room where a computer and a few old monitors are hooked up to ancient cables coming out of the wall. The guard is usually sitting by the screen but will approach the door if it is opened.
- **Bunkroom and Kitchen:** An old store room made into a bed chamber, containing military style bunkbeds. There is a small kitchen unit in the far corner, a small table, and a small refrigeration unit, hooked up to a portable reactor of foreign make. A difficult (–2) **TECHNOLOGY** test will reveal that it is a portable thermal reactor made by the Order of the Pariah.
- **Temple:** A makeshift temple celebrating the Martyr containing half a dozen whips, haircaftans, and cilices – spiked ribbons worn inside out to inflict pain in honor of the Martyr. A single Icon figure looms above an altar in the back of the room, identifiable as the Martyr, the name given to the Judge Icon by the Order of the Pariah. There are simple prayer rugs on the floor (the patterns contain typical Order motifs, something which **CULTURE** can reveal). Below the Icon statue, a parchment containing Urahuk's Statutes has been affixed to the wall. The text is in old Zalosian which requires a successful **CULTURE** test to read. The parchment looks to be at least a century old. **MEDICURGY** reveals that the text is written on human skin rather than paper – tattooed on a living martyr most likely, and cut from the body after her death. The text resembles the words Noor, the PCs' friend, said to brother Ramas at the Sanatorium (see the prophecy under Personal Effects above.)
- **Hangar:** A large hangar, with an open airlock inwards at one end, and a closed gate toward space on the other. Large signs with writing in Zeni on the walls warn about decompression and arrows describe the direction of the movement of the airlock



Salamah ach-Abaud's ship

doors. Duralite beams support the ceiling. An old crane hangs from rails in the ceiling by the closed gate. There are three dark pods parked on loaders – also on rails – by the gate. Most of the hangar is open and tidy, but along the walls are piles or debris, a row of cages, the stasis beds, and one launch-ready drop pod.

- **Cages:** Tiny, rectangular cages, made from duralite plates and steel bars. There are no toilets in the cages, and the whole area around the cells reeks of excrement. When the PCs arrive, only six of the prisoners are still alive, three of which are mystics. Five corpses are spread out across the cages, some of them sharing a cell with a living prisoner:
  1. Kiran – Arrash pusher from the Spice Plaza, middle-aged woman (mystic)
  2. Saira – Student from Ahlam's Courtesan Academy, young woman
  3. Farrukh – Stevedore from the Saltaara spaceport, middle-aged man
  4. Aisha – Apathetic child, girl (mystic)
  5. Dipa – Terrified child, girl
  6. Arif Shamoun – Heir to wealthy merchant, sad boy (mystic)

  The prisoners are very weak and hardly react when the PCs arrive. They will follow direct orders as long as it doesn't require strength or willpower.
- **Stasis Beds:** Empty stasis beds, stacked on top of each other, two by five along the wall. The crane railing runs just above.
- **Drop Pods:** Three oval pods of the Heirmat model on loaders. A successful **PILOT** test reveals that they were made at the Hegemony's dockyards. Using the crane (**PILOT** test), one can move a pod to the ejection ramp. This takes a few minutes.
- **Ejection Ramp:** A ramp made by the martyr strike team. It contains a pod ready for launch. The ramp ends at a circular iris gate in the wall. The gate has ED technology and can be opened to let a pod through without having to go through an airlock cycle.
- **Airlock:** A regular airlock large enough for four people in exos. A cycle (to move through the airlock) takes a few minutes.
- **Hangar Gate:** A hangar gate for spacecraft, repaired but welded shut. It was originally designed to fit shuttles, small freighters, and scooters but the hangar was condemned by Station Maintenance after an accident, thus allowing the martyr strike team to claim it without any trouble from the Guard or the judicators.
- **Salamah's Ship:** Salamah ach-Abaud's injector is docked with magnet clamps outside the airlock. It is black and very hard to spot unless one knows where to search for it.

THE INJECTOR

The injector is an armored space scooter carrying one pilot and a passenger, or a metric ton of extra cargo. It's almost impossible to open without the deacon's permission and is fitted with a security mechanism that makes the ship explode if someone tries to break into it. This has the same effect as an antimatter torpedo. The self-destruct mechanism is linked to the injector's kinetic intelligence and will warn any would-be burglars of their imminent death if they continue their attempts. Breaking into the ship is hard, but not impossible. It requires an insane (–3) DATA DJINN test, while another PC performs a hard (–2) TECHNOLOGY test at the same time. Success with both tests will disarm the security mechanism and antimatter bomb, while rebooting the kinetic intelligence to give access to the pilot's seat.

CLASS: I (Karrmerruk shipyards, Zalos)

EP: 3

HP: 2

MANEUVERABILITY: +2

SIGNATURE: -3

ARMOR: 2

SPEED: 4

MODULES: Cargo Hold (1 ton, or extra passenger), Torpedo System (1 Antimatter torpedo, 1 ion torpedo, 4 mines)

FEATURES: Atmospheric Entry, Stealth Technology, Precise Thrusters (+2 to PILOT when docking or taking evasive action in space combat), Ship Intelligence (attributes 1, skills 3)

ARTIFACTS & FACTION TECH

Several of the factions in the Third Horizon have performed specialized research and investigations of the remnant weapon systems and mystical artifacts left behind and forgotten after the devastation of the Portal Wars. In the Artifacts & Faction Tech PDF (sold separately), you can read about these technological wonders, and use them in your own adventures.

NPCS

The key characters in the scene are the martyr warriors and deacon Salamah.

SALAMAH ACH-ABAUD, MARTYR STRIKE TEAM DEACON

Salamah is a seasoned warrior, scarred from hundreds of battles with the heathens on Zalos-B. Her convictions are absolute and she chants the Martyr's praise as she storms into battle with her fearsome dura axe. But Salamah is far from mad or reckless – the mad and the reckless don't become deacons. She knows how to pick her battles and will retreat if things look bad, to regroup and strike again at a later time, with a better plan and better resources.

APPEARANCE: Black, short hair. Shaved patch around the left temple with a tattoo of the Snake of the Martyr, the Ourbos. Wears a black suit of heavy, armanite armor covered in inscriptions and strange grooves. No helmet.

CHARACTERISTICS: Fixes her eyes slightly above the head of people she speaks to. Always in motion, even when talking. Bursts into loud prayer during both combat and conversation.

ATTRIBUTES: **STRENGTH 4, AGILITY 5, WITS 4, EMPATHY 5**
HIT POINTS: 14
MIND POINTS: 14
REPUTATION: 6
SKILLS: Command 3, Melee Combat 4, Observation 4, Ranged Combat 4, Infiltration 3, Manipulation 3
TALENT: Deacon, Righteous Dogma, The Way of the Martyr, Order Technology
ARMOR: Heavy Order armor 7
WEAPONS: Sacrificial pistol, dura axe, riot shield
GEAR: Four magazines of homing ammunition for the sacrificial pistol, AM grenade, throat-mounted link.

- **DEACON:** Salamah is a master strategist and exceptionally alert and quick-witted. At the cost of 2 DP, Salamah and all her warriors within earshot can roll two dice when determining their Initiative score and choose the best one.
- **RIGHTEOUS DOGMA:** Salamah knows all the holy texts by heart, both the righteous ones and the false teachings of the Church of the Icons. She can use her religious knowledge to get people to see things her way – whenever she chooses talking over axe fighting, that is. She gets a +2 to **MANIPULATION**.
- **THE WAY OF THE MARTYR:** Salamah has been selected for an experimental augmentation program including blessed bionics and special training known as The Way of the Martyr. This has made her exceptionally tough – she gets 5 additional HP and MP.
- **ORDER TECHNOLOGY:** Being a deacon in the Order of the Pariah gives Salamah access to several pieces of faction tech, such as the antimatter grenade, the sacrificial pistol, and her getaway vehicle, the injector. The antimatter grenade counts as a thermal grenade but with a blast effect of 10. The sacrificial pistol is a sanctified Vulcan pistol that gives Salamah a +3 to **RANGED COMBAT** when using it against heretics – which basically covers everyone outside of the Order.

MARTYR WARRIORS

The warriors' orders are clear when the PCs arrive – exterminate the enemies of the Order by any means necessary. They work as a team, use actions like overwatch and full automatic fire and utilize the different



cover available in the hangar. They have no reason to be discreet anymore and use the full potential of their deadly arsenal – homing ammunition and concussion grenades. Like all members of the strike team, they aren't afraid to die, only to disappoint their fellow warriors or the Martyr. Unless they gain the upper hand in the first turn, they will start using their extra sixes for critical injuries to kill the PCs as fast as possible.

APPEARANCE: Men and women in black caftans with light armor underneath.

CHARACTERISTICS: Silent except when giving orders. Preaches about the glory of the Martyr if captured and interrogated.

ATTRIBUTES: **STRENGTH 3, AGILITY 4, WITS 2, EMPATHY 3**
HIT POINTS: 7
MIND POINTS: 5
REPUTATION: 4
SKILLS: Melee Combat 4, Infiltration 3, Medicurgy 3, Observation 3, Ranged Combat 3, Manipulation 1
TALENT: Fanatics
ARMOR: Light armor 3
WEAPONS: Vulcan carbine (homing ammo), concussion grenade, dura knife
GEAR: Homing ammo, throatmounted link, personal effects (see suggestions above)

- **FANATISM:** The martyr warriors' blind faith enables them to automatically get back up and gain 2 HP after having been broken in combat. Costs 2 DP.

EVENTS

The final battle between the PCs and the martyr warriors is the main event in the scene, but you could use the following events as well to spice up the end of the scenario.

ATTACKING THE MARTYRS

The abandoned hangar used to be a loading dock during the construction of the station after which it has only been used a couple of times when reactor parts were brought onboard. A few cycles ago, there was an accident in the hangar that tore up the hangar gate and vented the room. The unit was condemned and the doors inward were sealed. It still looks as if the hangar is sealed up, but a closer look reveals that the welding has been cut open with a plasma torch and that cables from the ceiling in the corridor has been diverted through the ventilation and into the hangar.

The martyr strike team has repaired the hangar using material brought to them by the smuggler Dara Hirsha, from Kua. This has allowed the commandos to repurpose it for their needs. As it only has one point of entry, it is easily defendable and the sensors outside warn of intruders.

- **The Martyr Warriors:** There are seven warriors in the hangar when the PCs arrive, including deacon Salamah. More could show up if the GM spends DP (see Reinforcements, page 57 of the *Coriolis* core rulebook), or if the PCs fail to pass through the Sanatorium without being detected by the Samaritans.
- **Guards on Duty:** The strike team observes Kuan time during the mission, and more of them will be awake during the morning, day, and evening watches than during the night watch.
- **The Temple:** Praying to the Martyr is traditionally done in the morning and at the beginning of the evening watch (**CULTURE** or a Zalosian background will tell the PCs this). During the day, the warriors train in the hangar, interrogate and torture their prisoners, or prepare captured mystics for transportation to Kua.

The obvious way in is through the door from the corridor, but the GM could reward enterprising players with alternative points of entry, to use to get in or to create a distraction:

- **The Corridor and the Door:** The door is locked with a simple code lock that can be hacked using **DATA DJINN** or disabled using **TECHNOLOGY**. It is quickly taken care of (slow action), which makes the sensors the main thing to worry about. If the power to the hangar is cut, forcing the door open requires a successful **FORCE** test at –1.
- **The Sensors:** See the description of the sensor grid under Security Systems and Guards above. If the power is cut, the sensors stop working.
- **Spacewalk:** The PCs could cut a hole in the hull on one of the floors above or below the base and then spacewalk the rest of the way. The main hangar gate is welded shut and cannot be opened. The iris gate by the ejection ramp requires a successful **TECHNOLGY** test at –2 to open from the outside. If the roll is successful and there were extra sixes, the PCs could also tamper with the ramp to make sure the last pods are stuck in the hangar. The security protocols on the regular airlock can be overridden with a **DATA DJINN** test, forcing them to open without activating the cycle and thereby causing explosive decompression in the hangar (page 84). The ED fields are no longer working and everyone in the

hangar will be affected, including the prisoners. The cell bars will stop them from being sucked into space, but they will be subjected to the vacuum (test **FORCE**, or choose who lives and who dies). Youths and adults have a Strength score of 2 and 5 HP, children have Strength 1 and 3 HP. None of the prisoners have a **FORCE** score.

- **The Cables:** When the hangar was being repaired by the strike team, they hooked it up to the power grid in the Cellar. As they are so close to the reactor, the stability is rather decent despite the years of neglected service. The PCs can cut the power to the hangar by passing a **TECHNOLGY** test, but they must first pass an **INFILTRATION** test at –1 to sneak up through the ventilation shaft in the ceiling without the guards inside hearing them.
- **The Ventilation Shaft:** The opened vent shaft leads to the strike team's temple. Passing a **DEXTERITY** test enables a small person – such as a child or an adult with a Strength score of no more than 2 – to crawl inside.

Cost: 0 DP (Mandatory)

⚙ A LAST RESORT

If deacon Salamah is cornered or captured, she can set off the explosives in the hangar remotely. Two medium size breach charges are fastened to the supporting beams closest to the hangar gate. At the cost of 2 DP, Salamah can activate the detonation sequence by speaking a code sentence into her throat link: "For righteous victory, in the shadow of the Martyr!"

- If the PCs discover the charges before they blow (a test for **OBSERVATION** in the hangar, or a critical success on the previous hacking of the security system), they can be disarmed by two separate **TECHNOLGY** tests (two slow actions) or one difficult (–2) **DATA DJINN** test (one slow action). Failure means that the charges blow.
- Each charge weighs about 10 kilos (blast effect 8, CRIT 2). When they blow, they will destroy the airlock and the hangar gate, but spare at least one of the remaining pods (so the PCs can use it for the next adventure).
- As per the normal explosion damage rules, anyone standing within Close range of the support beams is hit by an eight dice explosion attack. Everyone else in the hangar each suffers a two dice explosion attack and the entire area is hit by an explosive decompression (page 57). The broken hull can be repaired using a slow action and a demanding (–1) **TECHNOLOGY** test.

Cost: 2 DP





THE ICON'S SWAN SONG
As flesh is frozen in time's embrace,
the cage is broken by the nightingale
The sound of her wings is a gift to all
but those who perished without names
The song will lead you to the truth
as the butterfly shadows the horizon
A sigh for my brothers and sisters,
in the waves between the stars, we are one

– Nabi-mu-Qad, the Messenger Emissary on Coriolis

RESONANCE – AN ICON'S SWAN SONG

As the PCs approach the secret base, you could let mystic PCs receive a final message from the Emissary. You can use this event as an omen that they are on the right track and to build up tension before the final battle.

During the climb down the shaft, just a floor or two from the hangar, a flashing pain suddenly shoots through the mystic's head. Everything goes dark and all sounds appear far away. The melody from the earlier visions come back as the PC's heart starts racing. The PC must pass a demanding (–1) **MYSTIC POWERS** test or suffer 2 mind points of stress and start to shake violently. The vision ends abruptly with a whisper in Miri (see the adjacent quote) and the headache disappears. The whisper is an echo of the final words spoken by the Emissary as it awoke for a few seconds before the lid of the stasis bed slid shut.

- As the GM, you should know that the Emissaries are not necessarily killed if their bodies are destroyed (or put on ice).
- The whisper is a warning, saying that Nazareem's Sacrifice are coming back and that a First Horizon butterfly ship has arrived in the Third Horizon (which the PCs will find out during the next scenario, The Kuan Connection).
- Finally, the whisper contains a hint about the other Emissaries, now spread across the Third Horizon, something which will be revealed more at the end of this book (see the Epilogue on page 188).

Cost: 1 DP

ENDING

The third act of The Wake of the Martyr ends at the bottom of the Cellar. The PCs have seen the true face of the Order of the Pariah – just as the Astûrban and the Hegemony planned it (page 5). The PCs may have succeeded in defeating the martyr strike team, but their victory is not complete. They might have been able to save some of the mystics, but far from all – and they have found neither Noor nor the Emissary. How the next scenario begins depends on the actions of the PCs at the end of this act and how the confrontation with the strike team ends. If any of the warriors survived and are interrogated, they won't say a thing – unless they are tortured. How far are the PCs prepared to go in their search for the truth?

- They don't know where the Kuan base is located, as it is handled by another cell controlled by the priot Chabaun Kheml (see *The Kuan Connection*, page 163).
- They know that some of the captives aren't mystics and that these prisoners are used as payment for access to the smuggling route used on Kua.
- They don't know that the Syndicate are involved in the smuggling.
- Clues in the hangar make it obvious that the strike team is from Zalos, which by extension means the Order of the Pariah.

The PCs could choose to track down the drop pods – possibly by using the remaining pod or pods themselves? Or will they return to the Core to report back to judge Kurahan first? This choice will affect how the next scenario starts, and whether or not the trail goes cold before their chase begins.

AFTERMATH

How the scenario ends will of course have political consequences – if the PCs report their findings to judge Kurahan, that is.

THE CYCLADE CELEBRATIONS

If the PCs return to the Core, they arrive just as the celebrations of the Cyclade are beginning. Shopkeepers decorate their storefronts, religious processions slowly walk the Ring, crowds gather to pray together at the Core Plaza. Since the disappearances of both the station's mystics and the Emissary, people are desperately turning to the Icons for guidance. New pilgrims arrive every day and the station is beyond overcrowded. As the cycle nears its end, people fear the dark times ahead. There are still demonstrations almost every day and tensions between different groups onboard have increased even more during the PCs' absence.

JUDGE KURAHAN TAKES OVER

Judge Kurahan will present the PCs' report about the strike team's base to the Guard, and leak it to the Bulletin. Her motivation is purely to increase her own power within the Consortium's ranks and her actions have nothing to do with the Hegemony's conspiracy, but it ties in perfectly with the plans of the hegemonists. Kurahan will also suggest that the PCs continue their hunt by going to Kua, unless they have already decided to do so themselves. Through judicator Akouba, she will stall the official investigation for as long as she can, even withholding the coordinates of the landing site if necessary, to ensure that all credit for finding the Emissary will belong to her alone – there is still time. Depending on how quick the PCs have been to complete the scenario, there may be one or more days left before the Cyclade, and still hope of finding the Emissary.

BREAKING NEWS

The Bulletin reports about the events in the Cellar will cause an uproar in the Core and the Sanatorium will be surrounded by an angry mob. The Guard will reluctantly act as human shields to protect the Order's embassy and the Spire residences of the faction's ambassador. Rumors will start going around saying that a group of "external specialists" (the PCs) were hired to deal with the situation, regardless of whether the Guard have stolen the credit for the raid or not.

THE OTHER FACTIONS

The news that the Order of the Pariah were behind the kidnapping of the Emissary will cause other factions to act:

- **The Consortium:** The Consortium's Special Branch will start looking for the Emissary, first on Coriolis and then down on Kua.
- **The Order of the Pariah:** The Order will deny having anything to do with abducting the Emissary, but that is all. Behind the curtains, an internal investigation will be launched to try to find out who sponsored The Warriors of the Holy Light.
- **The Draconites:** The faction's agents on the station will secretly start investigating the affair.
- **The Church of the Icons:** The Church wants nothing to do with religious extremism and their representative on Coriolis, council member Wasimah Umm, will issue a statement saying that the Emissaries are recognized by the church as the envoys of the Icons – mankind's honored guests – and should not be harmed under any circumstances.





THE KUAN CONNECTION

The Kuan jungles are full of wonders – from healing herbs and bushes to towering trees, from tiny insects to the mythical Azaëleans. Explorers still have a long way to go in this strange, steaming world, but a curious traveler will surely be satisfied after a visit to the Hegemony's impressive nature cabinet, containing vast collections of insects, molluscs, amphibians and stuffed jungle beasts.

KUA, THE EMERALD WORLD – IBSALIM DIN-NIVERE

INTRODUCTION

The second scenario of **Emissary Lost** takes the PCs to the home of the Zenithians – planet Kua – where they attempt to find out what has happened to the abducted Emissary. The story begins in the steaming, hot jungles, continues into the Conglomerate, and ends at the foot of the Monolith.

THE KUAN CONNECTION is a scenario in three open acts where the PCs can choose many different paths toward their goal. Each act has a starting and ending scene, but just as in the *Wake of the Martyr* scenario, you are free to play the rest of the scenes in any order. *The Kuan Connection* should be played immediately after *In the Wake of the Martyr*.

BACKGROUND

The Warriors of the Holy Light and their samaritan allies quickly realized that it would be impossible to interrogate and examine all of their mystic prisoners onboard Coriolis, especially after the disappearance of the Emissary. They hired the help of Syndicate-affiliated slavers to set up a secret method of shipping their prisoners from the Cellar down to Kua using old escape pods. On the ground, the stasis pods are collected by smugglers working for shipping akbar Artyr Ghôlam and transported down the Ramishah river to the Conglomerate. When the pods arrive in Little Algol, they are inspected by smuggler prince dol-Quassar and sent to the Sultra marshes.

The ruined city of Sultra has been abandoned since the CC57 flood, which makes it a perfect location for all sorts of shady business. Gaddar-e-Abrar – a false preacher inserted into the martyr strike team by the Astûrban – helped the martyr warriors secure an abandoned Foundation hyper-sickness research facility and turn it into their base of operations. Prisoners who survive the perilous journey and make it to the marshes are interrogated, tortured, and executed – a fate that eventually also befalls the Emissary.

POLITICAL SCHEMING

Since it came out that the Order of the Pariah were responsible for the chaos on Coriolis, their diplomatic mission to the station has been under severe pressure. The Order has responded by flexing its muscles – the Bulletin recently reported that the two cathedral cruisers Nimbus and Burana have performed weapons tests of their enormous antimatter missile systems. The escalation is a key part in the Astûrban's – or really the Nazareem's Sacrifice's – plans to provoke their old enemy into open war with the Legion and the Consortium.

OVERVIEW

The three acts of The Kuan Connection are briefly summarized below.

ACT 1 – LOST IN THE JUNGLE (PAGE 100)

The first act takes place in the wilderness – in the hot, humid, and treacherous jungles of the Verkâna Ridge. The PCs' survival and negotiation skills will be tested as they follow in the footsteps of the Emissary's kidnappers.

ACT 2 – BIG TROUBLE IN LITTLE ALGOL (PAGE 125)

The second act begins when the adventures in the jungles are dealt with. The PCs enter the Conglomerate and continue to look for the Emissary, but an assassin sent by the Order of the Pariah gets in their way. Their investigation begins in the labyrinthine blocks of the Khabal docks and ends with a visit to the palace of the Dabaran noble dol-Quassar.

ACT 3 – THE SULTRA MARSHES (PAGE 155)

In the third act, the PCs reach the sunken city of

Sultra where the martyr strike team is keeping the Emissary prisoner in an abandoned Foundation installation. Here, the group experiences dreams and visions of the future of the Third Horizon.

FACTIONS AND GROUPS

Many different groups and factions struggle for power on Kua and in the jungles. In The Kuan Connection, the main faction involved is the Zenithian Hegemony through the Astûrban. Some of the smaller organizations include the Shaukar guerilla and the Nestera defense forces.

THE ASTÛRBAN

The Astûrban are behind the plot to vilify Zalos and the Order of the Pariah in order to create chaos on Coriolis. The Zenithian Hegemony is trying to increase tensions between the Consortium and the Order and use the uncertain political situation to seize the Coriolis station and spearhead a campaign for peace and stability. The Astûrban agents in the scenario are Gaddar-e-Abrar, the false prophet in the martyr strike team's base in the Sultra (see Act III), and Akouba Kosha, a judicator working for judge Nigelia Kurahan. Kosha is sent to Kua to secure the allegiance (or silence) of dol-Quassar while at the same time making sure that the PCs' suspicions continue to focus on the Order and the martyr warriors (see Acts II and III).

THE MARTYR STRIKE TEAM

The martyr strike team act mainly through intermediaries on Kua and will not interact with the PCs until they are closing in on their base. Their leader on Kua, Priot Chabaun Kheml, is responsible for the ground operations and it was on his orders that the cell on Coriolis acted. He will never give up any of this information however, not even under torture. Chabaun set up the whole operation via the leader of the cell on Coriolis, Salamah ach-Abaud, who in turn hired Artyr Gholâm and the Dabaran noble Leod dol-Quassar. The latter two therefore believe that the whole thing is run from Coriolis. Artyr's job was to collect the pods and bring them to dol-Quassar, who was free to take as many of the non-mystic prisoners as he liked and use them for his own profit as long as he made sure all the marked mystic prisoners were shipped to a certain location in the Sultra marshes.

THE DABARAN NOBLE

Leod dol-Quassar is a Dabaran noble with considerable

MAJOR CHARACTERS

The key characters in this scenario are divided between several different groups with agendas that all put them in the PCs' way. The central group is the smuggler ring hired by the martyr strike team:

- **ARTYR GHOLÂM – shipping akbar and smuggler (page 117)**
- **RAMSES – leader of the smuggler group Ramses' Jackals (page 104)**
- **TUBRA GHUTAN – foreman for Artyr's operations in Little Algol (page 131)**
- **LEOD DOL-QUASSAR – Dabaran noble and smuggler living in Little Algol (page 142)**
- **JARJA DOUGHA – gun smith and engineer in the dol-Quassar slum palace (page 142)**

The martyrs of the strike team themselves are relatively absent from the story until the PCs close in on their base:

- **CHABAUN KHEML – leader of the martyr strike team (page 175)**
- **ATAIA – agent for the Order of the Pariah activated to clean up in Little Algol (page 132)**
- **KEZIAH-VEN – Vestal onboard The White Butterfly and agent for the Emperor of the First Horizon (page 170)**

OTHER CHARACTERS:

The Astûrban have agents in place to make sure the blame for the events on Kua and Coriolis falls on the martyr warriors and the Order:

- **GADDAR-E-ABRAR – Astûrban agent inside The Warriors of the Holy Light (page 177)**
- **AKOUBA KOSHA – Judicator and double agent for the Astûrban (page 143)**

A few characters of slightly less importance also feature in the scenario:

- **BIRBASIL – Syndicate representative in the jungle settlement of Baybasin (page 118)**
- **HAQUIM AND AQUEDA – scouts for the Shaukar guerilla at Verkâna Ridge (page 104)**
- **DALI OSMAN – officer in the Shaukar guerilla (page 119)**



power in Little Algol. He has made his home in one of the abandoned marble palaces scattered around the Dignitary City islands. The palace looks as decrepit as the rest of the surrounding slums, but is a marvel of hegemonistic luxury on the inside. The smuggler prince's dreams of becoming a Monolithean allowed him to be swayed by the sweet nothings of the Astûrban agents who hired him to work for the martyr warriors. The Order seems to be cleaning house however, and as Leod handles stress rather poorly, he is rapidly becoming a problem for his Astûrban employers.

THE SLAVERS

The local smuggler group Ramses' Jackals has been hired by shipping akbar Artyr Gholâm to collect the pods the martyr warriors land on Verkâna Ridge. They load the pods on crawlers and take them to the jungle village of Baybasin, on the shores of the Ramishah delta. The Shaukar guerilla have noticed the smugglers' business and are starting to become a problem.

THE SHAUKAR GUERILLA

The Shaukar guerilla is a revolutionary organization formed as a reaction to the factions' and the corporations' oppression of the Kuan peoples. They have taken up arms and fight against faction forces and paramilitary warbands in the southern provinces. The name of the guerilla derives from the man known as Shauk – "The hand who said no" – a worker who one day defied his foreman and walked out of his plantation. Shauk is described as a Qad hú-Gan, which is a Kuan term for a self-educated preacher who can recite the holy texts without having read them and who constantly hears the voices of the Icons. It is said that Shauk traveled extensively between the plantations, secretly teaching the workers to read and write and telling them about the hardships endured by all hands everywhere. The movement that grew around Shauk soon spawned the Shaukar guerilla, a group with sympathizers from all strata of society, although arguably mainly from the lower classes.

THE SOGOI

The Kuan jungles are home to the modern descendents of the planet's original Firstcome settlers. The Sogoi tribes live in almost perfect harmony with nature, and have forsaken

the comforts of civilization. Most Sogoi live in huts deep in the jungles, but some of the tribes are nomadic and roam the lush forests around the equator or travel along the waterways in the Ramishah delta. Their knowledge of local plants and game is vastly superior to that of the modern settlers. Ancient crafting and hunting traditions enable the tribes to live off the land in primitive affluence, eating well and dressing in beautiful, brightly colored clothing (SURVIVAL 5, automatic success in all basic jungle survival situations). The tribes are hard pressed by Kua's mainstream society however, and many have either been enslaved by plantation owners or forced into employment under slavelike conditions. Many Sogoi can also be found working as scouts and soldiers in shady mercenary companies.

THE NESTERA DEFENSE FORCES

A low-intensity war is being fought in the Conglomerate between the hands and the Consortium companies, represented in Little Algol by the Nestera defense forces. The Nestera soldiers will become involved in the story if it interferes in the Little Algol conflict.

THE VESTALS

The CC61 incident in the Hamura system resulted in the loss of both the Ghazali line cruiser and a Legion destroyer named Zafirah when the portal from Hamura to Taoan released a massive burst of energy (which is further explored in the stand-alone scenario The Last Voyage of the Ghazali). The portal leading from Hamura to Taoan is now closed, but what no one in the Horizon knows is that the incident marked the return of the forces of the First Horizon into the cluster. For many years, the leaders of Ardha have sent their most trusted agents – the Vestals, high-ranking members of the imperial clergy, as well as mighty warriors – into the void to try to find a way into the Third Horizon, and at Taoan, they finally found one. The Vestals who made it through are now traveling around activating old sleeper cells of Nazareem's Sacrifice and infiltrating the factions to destabilize the Third Horizon. They usually stay hidden, but in this scenario, as it involves something as crucial to their plans as the abduction of an Emissary, they reveal themselves, arriving at Kua in their white, buterfly-shaped ship. The arrival of the Vestals is what connects *Emissary Lost* to the upcoming scenarios in the campaign.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Unlike *In the Wake of the Martyr*, *The Kuan Connection* will feature more action and conflicts. The PCs are chasing the missing mystics and must survive the dangers of the jungles, a rebel uprising, and street fighting in the Conglomerate. The final showdown features both the remaining members of the martyr strike team and a darkmorph spawned by the actions of the First Horizon agents. To keep the pace up, provide the PCs with a clear course to follow. The first scene (Blood on the Leaves) contains clues that will help the PCs find their way through the rest of the scenario.

PREPARATIONS

By now, the PCs should be firmly invested in the hunt for the missing mystics and the kidnapped Emissary. Before you start this scenario, spend some time preparing the different antagonist groups featured in the story and make sure that there are more ways than the Vulcan method to resolve the conflicts ahead.

There are some investigative elements in the scenario, and the tips provided on page 14 of *In the Wake of the Martyr* can be used here as well. Remember to help the players keep track of important details that their characters wouldn't forget.

ALTERNATIVE INTRODUCTION

The PCs might have opted for their own ship over the strike team's drop pods at the end of the previous scenario. If they did, they will arrive much later than the cargo they are chasing, but the Icons are smiling on them – a terrible storm has ravaged Verkâna Ridge and the pods have not yet been collected. The Shaukar guerilla are on the warpath however, and will fire on the PCs on approach, either shoting them down or forcing them to land in the jungles. Regardless, they will be forced to undertake the long trek through the jungles described in Act I. Spare parts for their ship can only be found at the market in Baybasin (page 116). This might feel a bit forced, but it will give the PCs a chance to interact with the residents of the Ridge, which will affect later events in Little Algol. As the GM, you could of course skip this part, but be prepared to alter the rest of the scenario accordingly if you do.

ACT 1
LOST IN THE JUNGLE

The heat and humidity of the jungles are an overarching theme for the first part of the scenario. The journey through the wilderness and the encounters there will carry consequences later in the story.

act i is set in the Kuan jungles and describes the PCs' landing on the planet, their trek across the Verkâna toward the Baybasin outpost, and the complications they face when they arrive.

OVERVIEW

The PCs are attempting to catch up with the kidnapped mystics after leaving the turmoil of the Coriolis Core behind them. After a bumpy (crash) landing in the jungles, they run into the smugglers who have come to collect the stasis pods. This encounter brings the PCs to Baybasin where they find the smugglers' employer, Artyr Gholâm. Suddenly, the Shaukar guerilla attacks and in the midst of the fighting, the PCs realize that the pods are already en route to the Conglomerate. The hunt continues.

KEY INSIGHTS

When the PCs finally catch up with the smugglers and make it out of the jungles, they should have learned the following:

- The martyr strike team is not acting alone. Several groups, such as Ramses' Jackals, assist with transporting the kidnapped prisoners from Coriolis.
- Not only mystics are smuggled down to Kua. Ordinary people have also been abducted and sent to the jungles.
- The stasis pods are shipped to Little Algol in the Conglomerate via Verkâna Ridge to avoid faction import fees and customs inspections.
- The martyr strike team members are now covering their tracks as they are finishing up their business with local contacts such as Artyr Gholâm.

IMPORTANT CHARACTERS

- **Ramses** – leader of the smuggler group Ramses' Jackals (page 104)
- **Artyr Gholâm** – shipping akbar and smuggler hired by Salamah ach-Abaud (page 117)
- **Raquin Birbasil** – Syndicate representative and ruler of Baybasin (page 118)

INDEPENDENT CHARACTERS

- **Haquim and Aqueda** – scouts for the Shaukar guerilla shadowing the PCs (page 104)
- **Dali Osman** – officer in the Shaukar guerilla (page 119)

DARKNESS POINTS

Darkness Points can be used to animate the jungles and make them a dangerous place, as well as to have the different antagonists in the scenario call for backup. The GM will start this scenario with more DP than usual – one per PC plus two extras.

STARTING SCENE: BLOOD ON THE LEAVES

In the starting scene, the PCs crash their drop pod on Verkâna Ridge. Before they have time to recover from the crash and search for clues, smugglers from Ramses' Jackals arrive turning the situation into a deadly threat.

THE SITUATION

The PCs have crashlanded in the Kuan jungles close to two other drop pods containing nine occupied stasis pods (see Events). After briefly examining the pods, the Jackals arrive. The

smugglers will immediately attack the PCs if they spot them. Close to the crashsite, two Shaukar scouts are watching from the shadows. Their role in this scene is limited, but their being there will be important later in the scenario as they will tell their superiors about the PCs.

IMPORTANT FACTS

In this scene, it is important that the PCs figure out that the Jackals have collected prisoners from the earlier drop pods (including the Emissary and Noor) for further transport:

- The cargo is brought to Baybasin, the closest outpost beyond Verkâna Ridge.

The PCs can find this out in several ways, for example through one of these three methods:

- **Interrogation:** The PCs can capture and interrogate a Jackal member who can tell them that the group operates out of Baybasin and also describe how to get there.
- **Conversation:** Directions to Baybasin can be aquired from the guerilla scouts or from Verkâna locals (see the *Eyes and Ears* scene on page 108). If the PCs are unsure of how to proceed, introduce the Shaukar scouts and have them tell the group about spotting the Jackals moving stasis pods to Baybasin.
- **Tracking:** If the PCs are skilled in either **OBSERVATION** or **SURVIVAL**, they can track the smugglers through the jungles themselves. Alternatively, they can plant a tracker on one of the pods using **TECHNOLOGY** and wait for the smugglers to lead the way to their hideout.

THE DROP PODS

The PCs will be bruised and sore from the crash. The pods are described in the last chapter of the previous scenario (page 87). As they climb out of the wreckage, the first thing they spot is that the pods pulse with a red light. The flashing red beacon also contains an encrypted message from Salamah to Artyr Gholâm. The message can be decrypted by passIng a demanding (–1) **TECHNOLGY** test (see the handout below).

THE CRASH SITE

The crash site is located in a valley below a steep slope. The surrounding hills are covered in thick undergrowth, interwoven layers of roots and thick vines. Thick trees with wide crowns grow in the valley, providing a perfect cover for the drop pods.

Handout #5: Message to Artyr

Akbar Artyr, I humbly extend my sincerest gratitude to you for the excellent partnership between our two organizations in the recent segments. Sadly, pressing matters warrant an end to our arrangement with immediate effect. Complications onboard the station have made going forward a hazardous affair. The accompanying cargo will be the last shipment, to be handled as usual. We shall settle our outstanding debt in full upon completion and by our mutual acquaintance's verification of delivery. You have a reputation for keeping your books in excellent order, thus I feel obliged to remind you that all transcripts regarding our business, in Baybasin or the Conglomerate, must be destroyed. These precautions apply to all parties, yourself as well as the recipient and inspector of the cargo. Discretion is paramount, for all our safety.

I wish you the very best of luck in future endeavours,

– S

THE FOREST

The trees here have massive, pyramid-shaped root systems supporting huge, dark trunks. Walking or climbing through the valley is difficult – the undergrowth is tough, deep holes and sharp rocks are hidden under it, and the roots are wet and slippery. The valley has been used for quite some time however, and the combination of earlier landings and the Jackals' crawlers has created paths between the trees. The area is littered with debris and mangled trees and plants.

THE DITCHES

Two shallow, overgrown ditches near the crash site are filled with mud and moss. The Jackals have hidden older pods here that they haven't been able to haul away, planning to sell them at a later time.

THE DROP PODS

There are currently two unopened pods at the crash site. One sits in a clearing in the middle of the valley, but the other has slid down the slope toward one of the ditches and become entangled in a thick net of branches and vines, making it harder to reach. Passing a demanding (–1) **SURVIVAL** or **DEXTERITY** test allows the PCs to clear a path down the slope to the drop pod, and two people may then test **FORCE** to unload one stasis pod at a time. The Jackals use portable cranes and winches on their crawlers to unload the pods.

THE HEIGHTS

The crash site is being watched by the two Shaukar scouts, Haquim and Aqueda, sent there by officer Dali Osman. Their orders are to observe only, but they may become involved in the scene anyway.

NPCS

This scene introduces Ramses' Jackals.

RAMSES' JACKALS, SMUGGLERS

The Jackals are a group of smugglers who specialize in collecting contraband from drop pods to avoid faction tolls. They were contracted by Artyr a couple of segments ago and are unaware that they are working for the martyr strike team – they believe that one of the Syndicate families are sending the pods, but the details are really of no concern as long as they are paid. Artyr compensates them with a rare metal called neodym. The Jackals travel through the jungles in a gravcraft and a crawler, which they also use to transport the stasis pods (see The Drop Pods event below). At this point in the scenario, the Jackals number two Sogoi, three Algolans, and five warhounds (see below).

APPEARANCE: Dressed in muddy djellabas and caftans with bandoliers across their chests. The Sogoi are barechested and carry little gear.

CHARACTERISTICS: Shouting orders to each other in combat, otherwise quiet and sticking to the shadows.

ATTRIBUTES: **STRENGTH 3, AGILITY 3, WITS 2, EMPATHY 2**
HIT POINTS: 6
MIND POINTS: 4
REPUTATION: 3
SKILLS: Survival 5 (Sogoi), Infiltration 2 / 4 (Sogoi), Observation 4 (Sogoi), Ranged Combat 3, Melee Combat 2, Pilot 2
ARMOR: Primitive armor 1 (Sogoi), protective clothing 3 (Algolan)
WEAPONS: Long rifle (Sogoi), Vulcan carbine (Algolan), knife
GEAR: Herbal remedy, jungle Icon talisman, waterskin with D6 water rations, D6 food rations, D6 Vulcan carbine reloads (only roll if the Jackal is searched by the PCs).

RAMSES' WARHOUNDS

The warhounds are aggressive but turn to run away if they face serious resistance. The Jackals have five hounds. The beasts are trained to Grapple in melee combat (see page 87 in the *Coriolis* core rulebook) with a +2 to **MELEE COMBAT**. This bonus stacks with the regular +2 for Clinch attacks (for a total of +4), but the hounds make a Mangle attack (see below) against pinned opponents rather than a normal Clinch attack.

ATTRIBUTES: **STRENGTH 3, AGILITY 3**
HIT POINTS: 6
SKILLS: Melee Combat 2, Observation 2
ARMOR: 0
WEAPONS: Long rifle (Sogoi), Vulcan carbine (Algolan), knife
GEAR: Bite (weapon damage 1, CRIT 3), Mangle (weapon damage 1, CRIT 2)


07
08
06
08
01
05
08
04
08
02
08
03
THE CRASH SITE
1. Drop Pod in Clearing
2. Drop Pod Stuck in Trees
3. The PCs' Landing Site
4. The Shaukar Scouts
5. Waterfilled Ditch with Old Pods
6. Overgrown Ditch with Old Pods
7. Ramses' Jackals and the Way to Baybasin
8. Hill
10x10 meters
Paths
Ramses' Scouts



ATTRIBUTES:
STRENGTH 4, AGILITY 4, WITS 3, EMPATHY 4

HIT POINTS: 10

MIND POINTS: 7

REPUTATION: 4

SKILLS: Observation 5, Command 4, Ranged Combat 4, Infiltration 3, Melee Combat 3

TALENT: Battle-Tested, Tough

ARMOR: Light armor 4

WEAPONS: Accelerator rifle (weapon damage 3, CRIT 1, Extreme range, sensor sights bonus +2) grenade launcher, Vulcan cricket, dura knife

GEAR: State-of-the-art Dougha accelerator rifle with a security system that prevents anyone but Ramses from firing it, concussion and smoke grenades, light Ranger armor (+1 to **OBSERVATION**, built-in thermostatic suit to prevent overheating in the jungle), hover scooter.

- **BATTLE-TESTED:** Ramses is a seasoned soldier and rolls two dice when determining Initiative score, choosing the best result.
- **TOUGH:** The life of a smuggler is tough, but Ramses is tougher. He has 2 extra HP.

RAMSES, SMUGGLER LEADER

Ramses is a hardened warrior with much bloodshed and sorrow behind him. He was recruited at a young age as a scout for a mercenary group who had taken it upon themselves to protect the mining outpost he lived in under the white sun of Melik. The young man washed away all traces of mercy and remorse in the blood of his enemies, and bodies keep piling up around him wherever he goes. He is currently in charge of a group of Algolan and Sogoi smugglers in the Kuan jungles. He was hired by Artyr Gholâm in Baybasin and sees himself as head of the operation, unaware that he is only a small cog in a much larger machine. He believes that the final customers are the Syndicate. His motivations for working for Artyr are strictly financial. Ramses is cold-hearted, cunning, and tough, and he leads his crew accordingly.

APPEARANCE: Wrinkled forehead. Black djellaba with a Meliki crescent pattern.

CHARACTERISTICS: Clenches his teeth as he speaks. Points with two fingers when giving orders.

HAQUIM AND AQUEDA, SHAUKAR SCOUTS

The stats and weaponry below can be used for other members of the guerilla as well, but the missile launcher and the chameleon suit are unique to Haquim and Aqueda.

Haquim and Aqueda are two of commander Dali Osman's most loyal fighters, and have proven themselves time and again during the guerilla's campaign against the oppressors of the Kuan peoples. They have witnessed firsthand how the Firstcome settlers are forced into slave-like employment on the plantations, or in the Consortium factories. Haquim is an Algolan descendent born on one of the plantations that were flooded by Iconic intervention in CC59 when the Ramishah river rose in anger to stop the exploitation of the delta's inhabitants. Aqueda is Meliki, a former deckhand from a bulk hauler on the Dabaran circle who one day left for a week's leave on Coriolis and never looked back. She harbors a flaming hatred for Ramses, the smuggler leader.

APPEARANCE: Haquim has a dark beard and chapped lips and dresses in a frayed and patched chameleon suit. A dark dupatta

covers the green sensor visor. Aqueda wears a dirty kameez tucked into a dhoti. She is wrapped in leather belts and bandoliers covered in grenades, supplies, and recon equipment.

CHARACTERISTICS: Both are taciturn and guarded, but Haquim licks his lips when he is thinking and Aqueda touches her right eyebrow – where she has an old scar that healed badly – when she becomes angry or worked up.

ATTRIBUTES: **STRENGTH 3, AGILITY 4, WITS 4, EMPATHY 2**
HIT POINTS: 7
MIND POINTS: 6
REPUTATION: 1 (+3 among the slaves in the Conglomerate)
SKILLS: Infiltration 5, Dexterity 4, Observation 4, Ranged Combat 3, Survival 3, Melee Combat 1
TALENT: Jungle Dweller, Battle-Tested (Haquim), Archer (Aqueda)
ARMOR: 0
WEAPONS: Long rifle, missile launcher, combat bow, frag grenades
GEAR: Chameleon suit (+2 to **INFILTRATION**), personal sensor and long rifle (Haquim), Legion issue rocket launcher (one-shot, equivalent of a missile launcher, weapon damage 6, CRIT 1, Extreme range), simple binoculars, combat bow and 5 frag grenades (Aqueda).

- **JUNGLE DWELLER:** The guerilla lives and trains in the jungles alongside Sogoi hunters and its members are well versed in jungle survival. Shaukar soldiers have an armor rating of 2 against the heat and humidity of the jungle and can always find food or shelter there without testing **SURVIVAL**.
- **BATTLE-TESTED:** Haquim was born a slave and participated in the uprising during the floods a couple of cycles ago. He has sharp reflexes and a tactical mind and rolls two dice when determining his initiative score, choosing the best one,
- **ARCHER:** Aqueda is a master marksman and can reload as a free action once per turn, both arrows and grenades. Further reloads counts as fast actions.

EVENTS

As the GM, make sure that the PCs have a chance to find clues and information about the pods, but keep the tempo rapid. For further drama, you could decide not to give them enough time to search all the stasis pods. They might catch a glimpse of someone they believe tp be the Emissary just as they are interrupted by the arrival of the Jackals. Below is a list of events to use in the scene.

DROP PODS

The PCs get to search the area around the crash site briefly before the Jackals arrive (see the crash site map).

- **The Beacons:** The pods have built-in beacons that flash red and transmit coordinates and a message. An effortless (+2) **DATA DJINN** test is required to extract the coordinates and read the message on a computer, communicator, or pod monitor. Shutting off the beacon is also very easy (**TECHNOLOGY** +2). Apart from getting the coordinates, the PCs can also read Salamah ach-Abaud's last message to Artyr Gholâm (see the description of the crash site above).
- **Loading Area:** The area around the crashed pods has been used by the smugglers on several occasions, and is covered in tracks from vehicles, animals, and people. Tracks lead from here to the two ditches. Hidden in the ditches are scraps and remains of broken pods, covered in fast-growing vines and bushes.
- **The Stasis Pods:** Both drop pods contain stasis units. The pod in the clearing is occupied by five people on ice – three mystics and two non-mystics (destined for the slave markets). The pod in the ditch was the last one out and its coordinates were somewhat hastily calculated, which explains the unlucky landing. It contains four beds, three of which contain mystics and one with a non-mystic occupant.
- **Marked Cargo:** The stasis units in the pods are marked with black and white numbers. Most of them (six pods) have black numbers – denoting mystic cargo – and three have white numbers (non-mystics). The markings are there to guide the stevedores in Baybasin and Little Algol.
- **Stasis Profiles:** The beds have their own batteries with rather unique energy signatures. If the PCs have some form of sensor equipment, they can detect the energy signatures with a successful **TECHNOLGY** test (see box below).

BEFORE THE AMBUSH

Shutting off one or more of the pod beacons will delay the arrival of Ramses' Jackals, giving the PCs more time to examine the crash site, but the smugglers will then be more cautious when they arrive. Give the PCs a chance to notice the incoming warband:

- The low whining sound of quickly approaching energy turbines can be heard (successful **OBSERVATION** test) as well as the rumbling of some form of crawler vehicle (critical success).

Depending on how the PCs choose to handle the situation, they will either be ambushed (see the Ambush! Event below) or have a chance to plan an ambush of their own. They can of course choose to avoid combat altogether and shadow the Jackals back to their camp instead (see Tailing the Smugglers below). The smuggler group consists of:

- Three Algolan smugglers with five warhounds (kept in a cage in the crawler).
- Two Sogoi.
- Two hover scooters (see gravbike, *Coriolis* core rulebook page 118).
- One jungle crawler (see sand crawler, *Coriolis* core rulebook page 117) equipped with a crane and a gravcraft for loading.

Cost: 0 DP (Mandatory)

⚙ PREMATURE THAWING

A prisoner in one of the stasis beds wakes up, but the lid won't open. She starts to panic and pounds the glass, screaming, but the sounds are muffled and barely audible. Will the PCs save the person? Will the frightened prisoner activate her mystical powers? At the cost of 1 DP, you can decide to have the freshly thawed abductee attack the PCs with a mystic power, or wander off, possibly alerting the smugglers that something has gone wrong.

Cost: 0, 1 DP

⚙ TAILING THE SMUGGLERS

The smugglers arrive oblivious to the presence of the PCs. The PCs should have a little time to examine the pods before this. It is when the vehicles roll into the clearing and the smugglers jump out to carry out their task, which by now has become very much a routine affair, that they might spot the unwelcome guests. The situation will escalate quickly and turn into a firefight unless the PCs can come up with some brilliant lie to fool the smugglers. An insane (–3) **MANIPULATION** test is required to dupe Ramses and his soldiers. The Jackals have come to collect the stasis units and then hide the drop pods in the ditches. Ramses goes up to one of the pods and downloads the encrypted message to his tabula.

- **Hidden observers:** The PCs could choose to avoid the conflict

SENSOR TRACKING

If the PCs have a personal sensor, it can be programmed to track the energy signature of one of the stasis beds with a successful DATA DJINN test. The sensor must be set to active mode, which will make the group easier to detect in return (+2 to OBSERVATION for opponents trying to spot the PCs using sensors). It is also possible to modify an environment scanner or a communicator (class III or above) for the task, but this requires a hard (–2) TECHNOLOGY test to accomplish, and failure risks damaging the device. If the PCs manage to track the stasis beds, they can follow the trail all the way to Baybasin and through the river delta. If the group is slow, you can tell them how the signal becomes fainter and have them test DATA DJINN to recalibrate.

altogether by hiding (+1 **INFILTRATION**) from the Jackals and then shadowing them to Baybasin (opposed **INFILTRATION** test vs highest Jackal **OBSERVATION** score) in the next scene, Eyes and Ears.

Cost: 0 DP

AMBUSH!

If Ramses discovers the PCs at the crash site before the smugglers themselves are spotted, he may choose to stage an ambush. He instructs the Algolans to closely surround the PCs and cover the clearing with a Vulcan crossfire while he delivers the killshots with his acc rifle from Long range (shots from farther away are impossible due to the topography of the area). He will climb the ridge opposite to the Shaukar scouts.

Cost: 3 DP

THE SHAUKAR SCOUTS

The Shaukar scouts are hiding nearby but the PCs just might spot them anyhow, which should tell them that the smugglers aren't the only active group in the area. As the scouts are well hidden on a hill at Long range from the pods, spotting them requires a successful **OBSERVATION** test at –3.

- **Haquim and Aqueda, scouts:** Haquim is the more patient of the two, hidden under his chameleon suit (+2 to **INFILTRATION**) and equipped with a personal sensor and his father's long rifle. Aqueda is older, but driven by a flaming devotion to the cause and with a soft spot for explosives and sabotage. She has a Legion rocket launcher that can be used to shoot down incoming ships and a combat bow with both arrows and frag grenades.

Cost: 0 DP

RESONANCE – A WAYWARD SONG

Mystic PCs who have experienced resonance from the Emissary's mystic powers before might do so again. You can use this resonance event to show the PCs that they are on the right track.

- Before the Jackals arrive, as the PCs are examining the pods, the mystic PC is suddenly overcome with anxiety and nausea. The sounds of the jungle fade to white noise. Her vision blurs and goes dark. She feels cold and begins to shake uncontrollably.
- At the cost of 1 DP, have the mystic PC test **MYSTIC POWERS** to remain in control of herself. Failure means 1 point of damage and stress and that the character falls to the ground, caught in a violent seizure for D6 minutes. If you instead spend 2 DP,

THE ICON'S LAMENT

A herald born of flames, dreaming of life.
By lightning smote and bound, in shackles cold as ice.

– Nabi-mu-Qad, the Messenger Emissary

SLAVES IN STASIS

If the PCs defeated Ramses and his soldiers, they will be in control of the nine stasis beds and a total of six mystic and three non-mystic prisoners, probably very scared and confused. The prisoners come from all corners of the Horizon, and traveled to Kua with dreams of a better life on Coriolis, only to be drugged and abducted when they got there. If they are questioned, three of the prisoners marked with black crosses will reluctantly admit to having experienced symptoms of the so-called mystic's disease. If the PCs are fair to the prisoners and treat them with respect, it is possible that the Shaukar scouts reveal themselves and offer their assistance, for example by showing them the way to Baybasin or by offering to take the prisoners to a secret guerilla camp on the ridge to enable the PCs to continue their hunt.

this happens just as the PCs hear the engines of the Jackals' vehicles approaching.

- In the deafening darkness, the affected PC notices faint singing. The song consists of repeated lines in Miri full of loss and loneliness. The singing eventually slows down and fades away. The PC is experiencing the effects of stasis on the Emissary. The episode ends after a few minutes and all symptoms disappear.

Cost: 0–2 DP

EYES AND EARS

The PCs cross Verkâna Ridge and make it to the Baybasin outpost in their search for the smugglers. This scene focuses on the trials the group faces in the jungle and is affected by the outcome of the starting scene.

THE SITUATION

The PCs are stranded in the jungle. They either came in drop pods or tried to land their own ship or shuttle, but were shot down by the Shaukar scouts. They must now make it across the plateau, catch up with the smugglers, and possibly also deal with confused kidnapping victims fresh out of stasis. The events below describe what might happen to the group on their trek. How much time the journey will take depends on their means of transportation:

- Four days on foot
- One day using the jungle crawler (can carry twelve people)
- Six hours by hover scooter (can carry two people per scooter)

The events below may modify the time table. The time alterations are written for a journey on foot.

IMPORTANT FACTS

The journey will take the PCs to the Baybasin outpost, located where the Verkâna Ridge jungles meet the Ramishah river. The coordinates of Baybasin can be obtained in a number of ways, and they may already have found them in the previous scene, either by interrogating a smuggler taken prisoner or by speaking to the Shaukar scouts.

FINDING THE WAY

This scene offers a few different ways of finding the outpost:

- Jungle encounters (see Events)
- Tracking the Jackals' vehicles
- Shadowing the smugglers
- Using sensors to track the stasis units

VERKÂNA RIDGE

Verkâna Ridge is an unforgiving nightmare of dense undergrowth, monsoon rains, wild beasts, and hilly terrain. Crossing the ridge is almost impossible by vehicles other than tiny gravcraft or heavy crawlers. The intense heat means that travellers will have to drink twice as much water as usual. The area is full of scorpions, spiders, and snakes that could put the group in all sorts of dangerous situations. Jungle fever is also a tangible threat. Local insects are very interested in the PCs' supple flesh unless they cover themselves completely – herb salves can be used during the day and mosquito nets in the night.

Traversing the ridge is a demanding task and the PCs must all test **SURVIVAL** during their first day. Those who fail will slow the group down, get stung or bitten by wildlife leading to infection, or fall victim to some bacterial disease (see Fever Dreams below). A critical success by one PC can negate the failure of another. From day two and onward, only one PC needs to test **SURVIVAL**. Again, a failed roll will slow them down (see below).

HUNGER AND THIRST

Each traveler must consume one ration of food per day and one ration of water every six hours. Lack of food results in a –1 penalty on all physically demanding skill tests. Lack of water means 1 point of damage for every two missed water rations, consecutive or not. This applies to both the PCs and any prisoners they might have brought out of stasis. A traveler who suffers 2 points of damage or more counts as exhausted (see Fever Dreams below). The Shaukar guerillas (and the Sogoi smugglers) have a talent that enables them to find food, water, and shelter in the jungle, which might help the PCs – depending on how they interact with these characters of course.

TRACKING

If the PCs are unsure of exactly where the smugglers came from, they can follow the tracks left by the jungle crawler. If they defeated the smugglers and are following the old tracks backward, finding the way requires a successful **OBSERVATION** or **SURVIVAL** test at –2. If they let the smugglers escape, the difficulty is reduced to –1. Have the PCs roll dice once per day – or as often as you like.

PURSUERS

The PCs could have let the smugglers go without a fight in the previous scene. If they have remained undetected by the Jackals, the smugglers are less cautious about covering their tracks, giving the PCs a +1 to their tracking rolls.

THE LAW OF THE JUNGLE

A failed tracking or jungle survival roll enables the GM to activate an event of your choice without spending any DP.

NPCS

In this scene, the PCs might encounter local jungle dwellers, wild animals, members of the Baybasin militia, and suspicious slavers.

MILITIA MEMBERS AND GUARDS

The militia members are described in the On the Brink scene and their stats can be used for the slaver guards as well (see the Slave Column event below).

JUNGLE LOCALS

Human jungle inhabitants (Sogoi and slaves) count as trailblazers (*Coriolis* core rulebookpage 343) with 2 in all attributes. They have no combat skills, but a **SURVIVAL** score of 5 and automatically pass basic jungle survival checks.

THE FROZEN PRISONERS

Awoken abductees count as having attribute scores of 2, but currently only 3 HP and MP due to their incarceration. The mystic prisoners may have fully manifested powers (*Coriolis* core rulebookpage 77).

JUNGLE FEVER RULES

As the GM, you can either treat the jungle fever as a strength 4 poison, or use the following rules: Jungle fever is a strength 4 opposed roll vs one of the victim's attributes (which attribute depends on the cause of the disease) and affects either HP or MP:

- **Insect and snake bites affect Strength and inflict damage.**
- **Bacteria affects Agility and inflicts damage.**
- **Lack of food or clean water affects Wits and inflicts stress.**

Failure results in 4 points of damage or stress. The victim also suffers a –1 to the affected attribute until all the damage or stress has been recovered. If the victim is broken by the fever, she immediately suffers a atypical critical injury (see page 95 of the *Coriolis* core rulebook), loses conciousness, and dies after D6 days of burning fever and vomiting. A separate MEDICURGY test is required to treat the fever, in addition to the one required to treat the Broken condition.

- **Limited Success means that the victim suffers a –1 to the affected attribute for 4D6 hours, but nothing further.**
- **Critical Success means that the victim suffers a –1 to the affected attribute for D6 hours, but nothing further.**

EVENTS

The events in this scene have to do with different encounters along the PCs' way to Baybasin. None of the events are mandatory and the rules for the trek itself can be found above.

⚙ FEVER DREAMS

Regardless of whether it is from hunger, thirst, strange bacteria, or insect bites, one traveler suddenly begins to sweat heavily, develops a fever, and becomes lightheaded. She collapses and vomits, expelling what little her stomach still contains (see the Jungle Fever box). This events costs 2 DP for the GM if it affects a PC, but 0 DP if it affects one of the prisoners from the pods.

Cost: 0, 2 DP

⚙ THE WATER BUFFALO

A domesticated water buffalo is stuck in a bog. Two young half-Sogoi are desperately trying to free it. If the PCs help them, they share their meager supplies with them (D6 rations each of food and water) and give them directions to Baybasin, which takes one day off of their travel time. The buffalo could, on the other hand, feed the entire party for the whole trek. If they attack and kill the buffalo owners, the GM gets 2 DP. If they only scare them off and then proceed to kill the buffalo, the GM gets 1 DP.

Cost: 0 DP (May generate 1–2 DP)

⚙ HARRIERS

A group of soldiers from the Baybasin militia have rounded up the inhabitants of a small village and are harassing them to make them give up their valuables. The villagers look malnourished and unable to resist the shakedown, or produce anything worth stealing for that matter. The situation is growing crueler and more grotesque by the minute. The PCs may spot the affair before entering the village, and may also discover a group of teenagers hiding behind one of the houses, preparing to attack the harriers with clubs and an old long rifle. If the PCs help the villagers, they will be eternally grateful and offer them one day's worth of food and water. If they instead alert the militia to the surprise attack, the soldiers will escort them to Baybasin as thanks. The teenagers will be "brought to justice" and made an example of. Unless their execution is stopped by the PCs, the GM gets 2 DP.

Cost: 2 DP (May generate 2 DP)

⚙ SLAVE COLUMN

The PCs encounter a marching column heading for a clearing on the ridge. The majority of the workers are slaves from near and far and are chained together. The overseer is merciless and pushes the group so hard that one of the slaves falls to the ground. The slaver immediately begin beating her and screaming at her. The rest of the column are kept in check by armed guards but the mounting tension threatens to escalate past the breaking point. If the slave on the ground is killed, a handful of the other slaves will attack the five foremen, who will have a clear advantage as they are armed with acc pistols and a Vulcan carbine. None of the groups will attack the PCs unless they choose sides in the conflict. If the PCs allow the slaves to be killed without interfering, the GM gets 2 DP.

Cost: 2 DP (May generate 2 DP)

⚙ MANEATER!

A group of Sogoi from one of the local tribes approach the PCs. They are armed and alert. Their village has suffered from predator attacks for a long time now, and this group has finally decided to move to Baybasin to get away from the monster, even if they run the risk of losing their freedom by doing so. They pray to the Icons that the maneater won't catch the PCs' scent. They might be willing to team up with the PCs for the remainder of the journey to Baybasin, for protection. If the PCs accept this, they will soon discover that their new companions have trouble keeping up. One day is added to their travel time.

Cost: 0 DP

⚙ THE JUNGLES' WRATH

The extreme climate on Verkâna Ridge forces the PCs to use all of their wilderness knowledge in order to survive. Below are some examples of the dangers of the jungle:

- **The Monsoon.** A storm comes roaring in from the southern ocean, forcing the PCs to find shelter as fast as they can. The gale drains their energy and falling trees and flash floods could be very dangerous. Depending on how you wish to use the storm, have the PCs test either **SURVIVAL**, **FORCE**, or **DEXTERITY**.

Cost: 1 DP

- **Quicksand.** The PCs enter an area where the sand has become liquefied. The treacherous patches are hard to spot (**SURVIVAL** –2). PCs who start to sink must pass a hard (–2) **DEXTERITY** test to climb out. The test is modified by encumbrance. PCs who pass the test may attempt to help stuck comrades by testing **FORCE** – for each six rolled, the stuck PC gets a +1 to her test.

PCs who fail their initial roll and become stuck will lose pieces of their equipment when trying to climb out. They must give up items equivalent to one or more rows of their gear list to be allowed to roll again, with a +1 to the test to each row sacrificed. Alternatively, they can wait for someone to pull them out, which requires an insane (–3) **FORCE** test, in which case they will lose only one row worth of items.

Cost: 2 DP

- **Azaëlean Tunnel.** The jungle boils, trees are uprooted, and the ground disappears beneath the PCs' feet. They must pass a **DEXTERITY** test or suffer 2 points of damage (may test armor normally). Alternatively, you could subject the PCs to a fall of D6 meters (minimum three meters, see page 97 of the *Coriolis* core rulebook). After the quake, an underground tunnel has opened. Courageous PCs may choose to use the tunnel and shorten their journey by one day before the tunnel veers off and forces them back above ground. Read more about the Azaëleans on page 320 of the *Coriolis* core rulebook.

Cost: 3 DP (2 if the tunnel can be used by the PCs)

RAMSES' JACKALS

If the PCs left the combat from the previous scene unresolved and have faster means of transportation than the Jackals, they can catch up with them and stage an ambush. If the smugglers are traveling on foot, the PCs just need to pass their first day **SURVIVAL** test to catch up. If they fail the test, only a fast vehicle will enable them to stage the ambush. If combat breaks out, use the NPC stats from the previous scene.

Cost: 0 DP

ON THE BRINK

On the edge of the giant sinkhole now occupying the place where the Hyderas spaceport used to be, the PCs find the the Baybasin outpost. The junk town is a cluttered amalgamation of small corporations and criminal gangs trying to make it on the fringes of the Conglomerate. The town is built from jungle wood, steel scraps, and the sweat of honest hands. Its residents make their living from logging, prospecting, and farming. This is where the PCs must try to find out what has happened to the stasis pods, either through persuasion, manipulation, stealth, or brute force. Shortly after the PCs' arrival, the Shaukar

ARRIVAL AT BAYBASIN

Your eyes are blurry from exhaustion. Every step sends jolts of pain through your limbs and your bodies are covered in cuts and insect bites. The humid heat against your skin makes your fingers want to scratch and claw and never stop – you envy the many reptiles you have seen along the way and their ability to shed their skin. The knotty trunks of the large trees that grow on Verkâna Ridge seem to close in around you – a mighty wall of dark green, scarred but not tamed, despite the Conglomerate's attempts at expansion. You are at the mercy of the Icons, held hostage by a hostile planet.

Just as you start to lose all hope of ever finding your goal, you catch a glimpse of the blue sky through the trees. The jungles' suffocating grip wanes and the smell of fire, cooking and human civilization greets you as you near the edge of the forest. The fertile lowlands beyond Verkâna Ridge stretch out before you in stark contrast to the green nightmare behind. A network of jetties and docks criss-crosses between the orchards and plantations that cluster on the banks of the Conglomerate's lifeblood, the Ramishah delta. On the edge of the giant sinkhole that used to be the Hyderas spaceport, you see the end of your journey – the junk town of Baybasin.

guerilla attacks the outpost in order to free the hands living there in bondage.

THE SITUATION

The Baybasin outpost is the first glimpse of civilization the PCs get as they exit the jungle. Have the PCs arrive at dusk to establish the settlement as a dark, dirty place whose residents work around the clock. Artyr Gholâm is preparing to leave town. Through clues found in earlier scenes, the PCs may have figured out that he is the stasis beds' intended recipient and very likely to know their final destination. Artyr can be found in his residence on the north side of the settlement.

As the PCs arrive, the Shaukar guerilla launch an attack on the town to liberate its people. The exact timing of their attack is up to you as the GM to decide. Information about Artyr and the stasis beds' final destination can be obtained from several different sources to make the transition to Act II smooth and easy:

⚙ ARTYR UNDER PRESSURE

By either manipulating or burgling and threatening Artyr, he can be made to give up information about the stasis pods (from his shipping manifest and tag). This information can also be obtained by threatening or torturing Ramses or one of his Jackals.

⚙ HEROES OF THE PEOPLE

If the PCs assist the guerilla in their dawn raid and manage to overthrow Raquin Birbasil, Shaukar officer Dali Osman will send out scouts and spies to find out where the stasis beds go after Baybasin. They will return with information from the spaceport, or with a tortured Jackal. Alternatively, if you let Artyr escape (see below), the guerilla might have apprehended him and will deliver him, beaten to a pulp, to the PCs for them to treat as they please. If this is the case, disregard his reputation score when he is interrogated by the PCs, and he might even tell them what he knows about Salamah ach-Abaud's involvement.

⚙ THE BIRBASILS' GRATITUDE

If the PCs accept and carry out Raquin Birbasil's mission to escort Artyr and protect her from the guerilla attack, she will provide them with the information they need from the late merchant's office or from a Jackal with sufficient respect and fear for the Syndicate. The PCs are invited to Raquin's mansion and shown to a room in the basement, tiled in blue and white, with a miniature delta of tiny canals flowing along the walls. Either Ramses or one of his Jackals is tied up in the room, and the PCs are left to carry out their interrogation however they please.

IMPORTANT FACTS

The journey through the jungle has taken the PCs to the mining outpost of Baybasin. This is where Ramses' Jackals deliver the stasis beds to Artyr Gholâm for transportation down the Ramishah. The following details are important for you as the GM to convey to the PCs before they leave for the Conglomerate:

- **The Smugglers:** Ramses' Jackals are a known group in town and they have been hired by Artyr Gholâm.
- **The Merchant:** Artyr Gholâm runs a small shipping company working the river to the Conglomerate. His office and warehouse is located on the factory island by the river, near the spaceport (see Places in Baybasin below).
- **The Stasis Pods:** The units are loaded onto river barges at Artyr's office, which local stevedores can testify to. According to Artyr (and his minutely detailed manifest), the barges carry the cargo to the Khabal district in Little Algol, in the shadow of the Monolith. The last shipment departed almost immediately after arriving at Artyr's warehouse. No stasis beds remain in Baybasin.

⚙ FURTHER INFORMATION

Inquisitive PCs may also find out some of the following during their stay in Baybasin:

- **Local Rulers:** Baybasin in under the control of the Birbasil family, one of the major Syndicate families.
- **Bad Blood:** Artyr has gotten on bad terms with Raquin Birbasil after dumping a shipment of opor in the river to avoid arrest, and rumors have it that Raquin is planning to replace the current shipping company with a more loyal one.
- **Payment:** Bars of neodym can be found in Artyr's home which he has received as payment for his services from Salamah ach-Abaud and that he has used to pay Ramses' Jackals.
- **Employer:** If Artyr is beaten or tortured, he will reveal that Salamah ach-Abaud is the one who hired him, but that payment was handled by intermediaries in Little Algol.



BIRBASIL TERRITORY

Baybasin is a textbook example of a class society with rampant inequality. The living conditions of the common people are abysmal and the divide between government and the governed is oceans wide. The social divide is manifested by the Ramishah that runs through the city, separating the clean, well-constructed north side – home to various entrepreneurs and business akbars – from the southern shantytowns where the hands and slaves live. Baybasin is so remote that practically none of the slaves are in chains – escaping into the wilderness would almost certainly mean death. Criticizing the rulers here is dangerous and pointless. Hands who raise their voices have a tendency to go missing. That being said, the population is far from broken – under the calm surface, rebellion is brewing.

INDUSTRY

All business in the outpost is connected to the Birbasil family in one way or another. There is a small coltan mine on the slopes underneath Verkâna Ridge, a coal mine half a day's journey to the east, and several large poppy plantations to the north. The outskirts on all sides are swidden farmlands-to-be, with the occasional clearcut and tabak or palm oil plantations here and there. In the central bazaar in the shantytown, one finds peddlers of scavenged or stolen tech, jungle game or fish from the river or the deep, dark sinkhole lake. Slavetrading is done more or less in the open here, fronted by Algolans secretly working for wealthy Zenithian families.

HISTORY

The booming mining town of Hyderas was originally constructed by exiled Sadaalian count Efrem un-Awaan under mysterious circumstances in CC 29. Tales from the first settlers to move to Hyderas have survived and accuse Efrem of having made a pact with the powerful efrit Tarwa-ghan in his quest for fame and wealth. Legend says that Tarwa-ghan showed Efrem the way to underground riches, but cursed the place in return. For thirteen years, the jungles gave up their fruits to Efrem, but eventually turned on him, demanding payment in blood for every gram. The Hyderas spaceport collapsed during the quakes of CC 42, Efrem disappeared and the area was abandoned. The riches of Verkâna Ridge lay undisturbed until the Colonial Agency heard about the abandoned coltan mine in CC 50 and sent new prospectors to the area. Apart from a Sogoi tribe calling

themselves The Servants of the Pit, no one was around to resist the faction's new plans for expansion. The mine was restored to working order, but the sinkhole soon started to claim victims once again. The mine collapsed again in CC 57 and the Agency chose to sell the town to the Birbasils in return for secret, shady services up on Coriolis.

GOVERNMENT

Although officially independent, informal leadership lies with Raquin Birbasil and her two sons Aulus and Oto. The Birbasils' interests here are mainly in poppy growing and they therefore own most of the fertile lands around the settlement. Other companies operate here by the crime family's permission and pay the Birbasils regular fees to remain in the area, under the protection of the mercenary company The Righteous Brigade.

Other prominent names in Baybasin include:

- **Mori Dakka (mineral prospector)** – Mori is responsible for a big portion of the claims in the area and is one of the major employers of unaffiliated daylaborers – hands brave or desperate enough to enter the semi-waterfilled coltan mine or undertake the arduous trek through the jungle to the unstable coal mine a few hours away. Mori lives in the part of the shanytown that clings to the slopes of Verkâna Ridge – called Mining Town – in a log cabin at the end of a serpentine road, surrounded by a terraced garden. If a powerful smell of fresh chai hangs around the cabin, Mori is probably at home – she can otherwise be found overseeing work at one of her claims or in the cantina near the docks.
- **Hashema Behari (ex-Legionnaire)** – Coordinator of all scavenging and hunting in the area and therefore the de facto ruler of the bazaar at the heart of the town. Hashema's prospectors dive on the sunken ruins of the old spaceport and scavenge more or less useful objects that end up for sale in the markets. They also supply the local smokehouses and boiling Bamsieh pots with the surprisingly meaty and delicious rubiyan crab that only lives in the deep waters of the sinkhole. Behari is an ex-Legionnaire who chose a simple life on Kua after the Tanshiin confrontation in the Yastapol system in CC 51.
- **Tanam ed-Garaam (free trader)** – The Free League have taken over the old hangar near the new spaceport and have a virtually unchallenged monopoly on stevedoring in the spaceport and on the river barges. The operation is run by Tanam ed-Garaam, an old customs officer, who seems to know everything about everyone who does business in the area, but who makes sure to stay on Raquin Birbasil's good side.

SECURITY

Local law is enforced by the Nestera-owned mercenaries The Righteous Brigade, paid for by the Birbasils. The Righteous, led by Aidjaz Moreno, have in turn recruited a corrupt militia to handle the day-to-day operations. The real reason for the Righteous accepting the mission is so that they can study the Shaukar guerilla up close, but this is a secret even to Raquin.

- **The Militia** – The militia numbers around a hundred strong and have a somewhat questionable approach to their mandate. The troop is made up of more or less shady elements from all over Kua, all affiliated with the Birbasils in one way or another. Most of them have no military training, and lack of discipline has made many of them prone to dirty dealings outside of their mission. Their gear is poor and they are known to take bribes wherever they can get them. Their leader is a cutthroat by the name of Barabbas who answers directly to colonel Moreno.
- **The Exo Squadron** – The pride of the militia is its exo squadron, consisting of five exos in bad shape – salvaged from the sinkhole. The squadron is commanded by the aging engineer Marsamas.

PLACES IN BAYBASIN

A few of the important places in Baybasin are described below:

THE HYDERAS SINKHOLE

The old Hyderas fell into an enormous sinkhole in CC 42 and only the parts of the city constructed on the rocky slopes of Verkâna Ridge survived. The sinkhole exposed a large natural cave system and an underground river coming from the plateau above. Old technology and several large spaceships are buried deep in the muddy waters, making the hole a veritable goldmine for the bold divers who dare explore the caves underneath the town.

THE COLTAN MINE

One of the mouths from which the underground river bursts forth belowVerkâna Ridge connects to the deep cave system underneath the plateau. A major reason for the return of civilization to Baybasin was the discovery of the rare metal coltan there, which prompted the Colonial Agency to found a new outpost. In the aftermath of a political power struggle on Coriolis, the outpost was taken over by the Syndicate

who now control the mine and the deliveries of coltan to the Conglomerate and the tech labs in Covenant City.

THE POPPY FIELDS

The Birbasils' largest export commodity from Baybasin, aside from the coltan, is the fast-growing strain of poppies that thrive in the rich soil around the outpost. The harvest is processed on site and then hidden in coltan shipments or crates of salvage from the sinkhole to avoid detection. The concentrated poppy juice is then transported to refineries in the Conglomerate or to the gangs on Coriolis for distribution.

NORTH TOWN

North Town – socioeconomically speaking – starts at the spaceport and continues over the bridge to the Birbasils' gated community of warehouses, poppy fields, and masterfully landscaped mansions. The factory island is also a part of North Town. The island houses the other larger trading houses – such as Artyr Gholâm's – as well as the factionary businesses and the various freight companies.

SOUTH TOWN

The messy shantytowns clinging to edges of the sinkhole are collectively referred to as South Town. As the rock underneath is slowly eroded by the underground river and aggressive coltan mining, more and more houses on the edge run the risk of sliding into the waters. The people of South Town live one day at a time, taking whatever jobs they can to feed their families.

BASIL BRIDGE

The bridge that connects the spaceport to the Birbasil domains was constructed by the Colonial Engineers when the faction founded their outpost and the sturdy colossus looks as reliable today as it did ten cycles ago. A handful of militia members are always around to keep watch, with at least one exo soldier as backup.

THE DOCKS

The Baybasin docks are a chaotic maze of jetties and pontoons, welded-together rows of derelict barges and rafts, old shacks, and warehouses. Cranes tower over mine cars brimming with ore and coal from the local mines. Free League stevedores work here around the clock, as well as daylaborers who get called in to cover especially busy shifts. The air is heavy and the water black from soot and mineral dust. At the edges of the docks, the workers' barracks give way to simple cantinas, gambling dens, and overcrowded residential units, wedged in-between the souk and the bustling life of the loading piers.

THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE BIRBASILS

The Birbasils' domains are separated from the noise of the rest of the town by the grey green waters of the Ramishah. Behind a high brick wall, decorated with beautiful mosaics and crowned with broken glass, one can just spot the upper floors of the family's whitewashed headquarters. The grand mansion stands out from the rest of the settlement with its clean walls and sophisticated design and has a well-kept garden surrounding it. Red poppies grow all the way up to the outer walls, and a couple of warehouses nearby are used for distribution of goods to and from the much calmer north docks. Only a handful of workers' barracks are located on this side of the river, and most workers have to line up by the bridge before their shifts, sometimes for hours, and wait for the guards and overseers to let them cross the river.

ARTYR GHOLÂM'S OFFICES

Artyr's offices, Ghôl-Akandra, are located in the business district near the spaceport and look like most other houses in Baybasin – low and a bit crooked, built from jungle wood and sheets of corrugated metal. Artyr normally receives visitors accompanied by Ramses and two bodyguards, usually on the roof terrace above the office. Chilled palm wine and dates are served and Artyr makes polite conversation about the economical boom that is sure to come any day now. After the first glass is emptied, he is ready to discuss business.

THE OFFICES OF THE FREE LEAGUE

A modest warehouse constructed when the area was repopulated houses the offices of the Free League. After the Syndicate took over Baybasin a few segments ago – after which trade has increased in the region – the Free League acquired some limited trading rights, exporting raw materials and scavenged goods. The faction organizes the stevedore force in the spaceport as well as on the barges in the docks. They have made a deal with the Birbasils to supply the Syndicate with workers for the poppy fields. The League's local administrator, ex-customs officer Tanam ed-Garaam, is working hard to improve labor conditions for workers in Baybasin but has little leverage to speak of when dealing with Raquin Birbasil.



THE NEW SPACE PORT

Rather than repeating old mistakes, the Colonial Agency chose to build the new spaceport on more solid ground. A high head on the eastern side of the ridge is now home to a flat area paved with stones that functions as a landing strip, surrounded on three sides by the green waters of the Ramishah.

THE HARBOR SOUK

At the center of the settlement – between South Town, the factory island, and the spaceport – we find Baybasin's heart, the harbor souk. Most local business goes through here one way or another. Food, produce, and opor milk are sold in various stalls here and scavenged treasures from Hashema's divers are displayed on dirty rugs on the ground, with indentured Sogoi or orphans hunched over the piles, scrubbing the mud off the merchandise. Coltan ore and coal can also be bought here, but the quality for sale is usually stray pieces found in the river.

MEESAN'S CANTINA

The group of shacks crowding the edge of the sinkhole, between the noisy souk and the busy spaceport, houses entertainment establishments catering to worn-out prospectors and miners. The largest den of sin on the block is Meesan's Cantina, known as the Scales by its patrons. The Menkar humanite sisters Ana and Mandri Meesan run the place, usually hiding their forked, highly sensitive tongues by speaking as little as possible. They are extremely good at reading their customers however, and have honed their skills to almost eerie perfection after Ana was blessed by the Icons and developed empathic mystic powers when the Emissaries arrived at the Xene station.

DAHK'S OPOR DEN

The area on the banks of the black river that snakes its way out of the coltan mine is run by slaver gangs and inhabited by mine slaves. This is where a visitor looking to lose herself goes to find Dakh's opor den. Dahk is an old Sogoi slave, long since freed from bondage, who has created a refuge from the woes of the world in an abandoned, semi-collapsed customs house. The floors are covered in worn rugs and dirty pillows, beds line the walls and a bowl of sugar globes in the middle of the room is the only light source. The place is frequented by Baybasin's desperate and down-trodden, looking to spend their last birr on a few hours of narcotic escapism. Dakh's trusty helper Jasmina is actually a Shaukar agent, reporting what the patrons let slip while under the influence directly to Dali Osman.

NPCS

In this scene, the PCs are likely to encounter Artyr Gholâm, his bodyguards (for whom you can use the Jackals' stats on page 102), Ramses (page 104), and perhaps also Raquin Birbasil. They might also run into the militia and soldiers from the Shaukar guerilla (see Events below).

ARTYR GHOLÂM, SMUGGLER AND SLAVER



The man who has made a name for himself in the Kuan jungles is actually from a prominent family from Akhandar on Algol. Born the youngest of ten siblings and without much luck when it came to dividing the inheritance, he soon figured out that any success in his life he would have to create on his own. With the winds of commerce in his sails, he set out for the distant Coriolis station, stopping at nothing to get what he wanted – "unscrupulous minds dream the sweetest dreams" is a mantra he repeats every night before going to sleep as he sends a quiet prayer to the Merchant. Apart from money-making, Artyr loves a good mystery – riddles, puzzles, wordplay etc. His lifestyle demands a certain level of luxurious consumption, and he is constantly trying to order strange and exotic things from the Monolith.

APPEARANCE: Dressed in the finest Dabaran silk and with expensive perfumed oils in his hair. His beard is neatly trimmed, his face shiny with sweat and his eyes are pale with small, black pupils, constantly on the lookout for a good deal.

CHARACTERISTICS: Tries to use complex wordplay when he talks. Steers all conversations toward making a deal. Keeps his hands in his lap, but starts to pull his ear lobe when nervous.

ATTRIBUTES: **STRENGTH 2, AGILITY 3, WITS 4, EMPATHY 5**
HIT POINTS: 5
MIND POINTS: 9
REPUTATION: 6
SKILLS: Manipulation 4, Culture 3, Observation 3, Ranged Combat 2
TALENT: Voice of the Merchant
WEAPONS: Vulcan cricket
GEAR: Transactor with 10,000 birr, encrypted tabula with logs, trading contracts and cargo manifests for the stasis pods (**DATA DJINN** –2 to decrypt), perfume, scented hair oil.

- **VOICE OF THE MERCHANT:** When negotiating a trading contract, Artyr gets a +2 to **MANIPULATION**.

RAQUIN BIRBASIL, LOCAL SYNDICATE AKBAR

Raquin is far down on the Birbasil hierarchy, and has ended up in Baybasin because her more powerful sister decided that the family should take control over more of the planet's raw material exports. Raquin had no say in the matter and was forced to move with her two sons to Baybasin to oversee the new operation. She hates her sister bitterly and thinks of Baybasin as a living nightmare. Her two sons are constantly getting into trouble – Aulus* is an avid opor smoker and Oto's* bad temper makes him unfit to handle even the most basic level of criminal administration. The local merchants are always complaining and Raquin wishes that the Birbasils would just buy them all – that would get her the respect she deserves. To top it all off, it would seem as if a local shiping akbar, one Artyr Gholâm, is refusing to get in line and do as he is told. A tangible assertion of authority might be in order, and the fawning Free League representative Tanam might make a good replacement.

APPEARANCE: Black hair with a grey highlight. Dresses in a black djellaba with the Birbasil family pattern embroidered on hems and collar. Wears a curved dura knife in a jewelled sheath strapped across her chest.

CHARACTERISTICS: Keeps her sentences short. Looks disappointed. Sighs a lot.

ATTRIBUTES: **STRENGTH 4, AGILITY 3, WITS 4, EMPATHY 4**
HIT POINTS: 7
MIND POINTS: 8
REPUTATION: 8
SKILLS: Manipulation 4, Melee Combat 4, Command 3, Observation 3, Ranged Combat 3
TALENT: Faction standing: The Syndicate
ARMOR: Protective vest 1 (equivalent of a short light armor)
WEAPONS: Vulcan pistol, dura knife
GEAR: Transactor with 5,000 birr, jewelled sheath (Birbasil heirloom, worth 7,000 birr), personal communicator with pulse function.



- **FACTION STANDING: THE SYNDICATE:** Despite her low position in the family, Raquin still has access to much of the family's assets and their violent street gangs. She controls Baybasin and gets a +2 to **MANIPULATION** when threatening or intimidating someone.
- **AULUS AND OTO**: Raquin's sons have the following attributes: Strength 3, Agility 3, Wits 2, Empathy 2 (HIT POINTS: 6, MIND POINTS: 4). Skills: Ranged Combat 3, Melee Combat 2, Manipulation 1. They live off their mother's reputation and can use Raquin's Faction standing talent, although only at +1.

MEMBERS OF THE MILITIA

The militia is anything but disciplined but keeps the peace in the settlement. When things become heated they deploy the exo squadron, the mere sight of which is usually enough to deter even the most hot-headed of bar brawlers.

APPEARANCE: Scruffy men and women in worn overalls or djellabas. A black scarf makes them stand out from other thugs.

CHARACTERISTICS: Curses and spits a lot. Usually drunk or on arrash.

ATTRIBUTES:
STRENGTH 3, AGILITY 3, WITS 2, EMPATHY 2

HIT POINTS: 6

MIND POINTS: 4

REPUTATION: 5

SKILLS: Melee Combat 3, Ranged Combat 2, Observation 2, Infiltration 1, Pilot 3 (exo squadron)

ARMOR: Protective vest 1 or Exo 2

WEAPONS: Vulcan carbine, dura knife or scrapyard exo (see below).

GEAR: Bottle of palm wine, Baybasin arrash (very strong), Icon pendant, tag with (D6)00 birr.

- **SCRAPYARD EXO:** Old loader exos fitted with a Vulcan machine gun, a steel sword (weapon damage 3, CRIT 2), and a grenade launcher with smoke and frag grenades. The exo has an armor rating of 2 as it is too hot inside to wear anything heavier than a protective vest underneath. There are five exos in the squad, of which only one at a time is deployed to break up fights.

DALI OSMAN, SHAUKAR OFFICER

Stats and weapons can also be used for other guerillas during the attack. Dali's unique stats are listed in brackets below.

Dali Osman is a former plantation owner from the Shadaam province whose enslaved workforce rebelled and flocked to the banners of Shauk Qad hú-Gan, the hand after whom the Shaukar guerilla is named. The neighboring plantation owners turned their backs on Osman and as he surrendered, he chose to give full control of all his wealth and land to the guerilla as retaliation against his former ruling class allies. Renouncing all privileges, he joined the ranks of the guerilla army and soon rose through the ranks, affiliated with the more extreme wing of the movement. The contempt he had felt for the weakness of the hands has turned to a flaming hatred of the factions' aggressive expansionism and the plantation owners' grovelling before the Zenithians. Osman is now part of the group of officers who oversee the guerilla's different branches, acting as spokespersons for Shauk Qad hú-Gan and bringing the words of the wise and just leader to his followers.

APPEARANCE: Wears simple, grey green overalls and a red dupatta wrapped around his head and shoulders. Bandages cover a burn on his right arm that refuses to heal in the humid heat.

CHARACTERISTICS: Sharp brown eyes and a white beard that he twirls around his left index finger when thinking. Rests his wounded right hand on a Vulcan pistol in a chest holster. Unbuttons the holster and strokes the ornamented pistol when suspicious.

ATTRIBUTES:
STRENGTH 3, AGILITY 4 , WITS 4, EMPATHY 2 (DALI 3)

HIT POINTS: 7

MIND POINTS: 6 (Dali 7)

REPUTATION: 3 (+3 among hands)

SKILLS: Infiltration 5, Command 4 (Dali), Dexterity 4, Observation 4, Manipulation 3 (Dali), Survival 3, Melee Combat 1 (Dali 3)

TALENTS: Jungle dweller, Nine lives (Dali)

ARMOR: 0, Protective vest 1 (Dali)

WEAPONS: Vulcan carbine, Vulcan pistol, dura knife, 1 concussion or smoke grenade (Dala has one of each)

GEAR: Chameleon suit (+2 to **INFILTRATION** (Dali)), simple binoculars.

- **JUNGLE DWELLER:** The guerillas live and train alongside Sogoi hunters and have learned to live by the law of the jungle. Shaukar soldiers have an armor rating of 2 against the damp heat and can always find food or shelter in the jungle without testing SURVIVAL.
- **NINE LIVES:** Dali is an idealist and a fanatical follower of the guerilla's teachings. His convictions enable him to keep fighting the good fight no matter the odds. If he suffers a critical injury, he can choose the dice combination most favorable to him.

EVENTS

The events in On the Brink revolve around the PCs' different ways of finding the clues they need, but also include the Shaukar guerilla's attack on Baybasin. The raid begins at dawn, regardless of whether the PCs are in on the plans or not. If they were not part of planning the attack, the GM chooses three preparation actions from the Shaukar's Gift event that automatically fail. The The Uprising Begins event is more or less mandatory, but as the GM, you are of course free to change the scene to your liking.

MOUNTING UNREST

The muddy streets are littered with leaflets saying “Freedom is coming – Shaukar will liberate Baybasin” in both Zeni and

the local dialect. Workers stop what they are doing to read the short message. Whispers become murmurs become chanting. A crowd assembles with violence in their eyes. The group begins chanting "Free Baybasin!", but suddenly stops, and the street empties as quickly as it filled. Only the PCs remain and it becomes obvious why the crowd scattered – the militia is fast approaching, one of the soldiers in an old loader exo with heavy weapons welded onto it. For 1 DP, you can have the crowd stay in the street and challenge the militia, but after one of the people at the front is impaled on the exo soldier's sword, the threat of smoke grenades and more violence from the militia captain is enough to make the rest of the demonstrators turn and run. If the PCs attack the militia and prove themselves (or are arrested), you can choose to have them escorted to Raquin Birbasil for a private meeting (see the The Birbasils Intervene event below).

Cost: 0, 1 DP

AUDIENCE WITH ARTYR

If the PCs want to visit Artyr, getting an audience is no problem. The offices of his shipping business Ghôl-Akandra can be found on the beachfront of the factory island with a view of the Ramishah and the plantations on the other side. Artyr's servant Yoham handles his schedule and can arrange a meeting. Depending on the PCs' Reputation scores and if one of them has the Faction standing talent, Artyr will see them sooner or later. If the Jackals haven't returned to Baybasin, he will be frightened and ask Yoham to stall the PCs while he heads for the spaceport. The PCs should have a decent chance to figure out that he is making a run for it by testing **MANIPULATION**, **OBSERVATION** or some appropriate talent. During the meeting with Artyr, the PCs can find out the following:

- He is a businessman who helps his customers avoid "unnecessary" tolls and taxes.
- He will not admit to having anything to do with human trafficking, the martyr strike team, or the Order of the Pariah. If he is pressed on these issues, he will skillfully dodge the questions and steer the conversation toward safer topics.
- If the PCs confront him with evidence of his connections to the smuggling of the captured mystics, he will ask them to take their lies elsewhere and tell his bodyguards to show these lunatics out. If any of the Jackals are still alive, he will order them to dispose of the PCs as soon as the sun sets (see the Daggers in the Dark event below).
- If the PCs attack Artyr's bodyguards and then threaten the merchant, he will surrender a tag containing a manifest detailing where the mystics are taken (see Artyr's gear and the Artyr's Escape event).
- If Ramses has survived a confrontation with the PCs, their request for a meeting with Artyr will be denied. He will send both his bodyguards and the Jackals to take care of the PCs while he himself heads for the spaceport.

Cost: 0 DP

BURGLING ARTYR'S OFFICES

The PCs might also choose to burgle, or shoot their way into, Artyr's offices to find his manifest ledger. The building is guarded by three of his bodyguards (for whom you can use the militia stats). If shots are fired outside of the office, the militia will arrive there shortly after, unless the PCs have made a deal with Raquin Birbasil (see the The Birbasils Intervene event). Artyr's daily routine looks like this:

- He gets up early, eats breakfast, and climbs into his palanquin for the trip to the market, where he inspects all new findings brought up by the divers.
- He then goes to the office and works for a few hours. His house slave prepares his lunch.
- He rests for a few hours in the afternoon, after which he entertains potential new clients and negotiates business with the other local merchants.
- Some nights, he is called down to the docks to oversee important shipments coming in or shipping out.

Cost: 0 DP

THE WEAKEST LINK

The PCs might use Ramses and the Jackals to get to Artyr or to get information about the stasis beds. Ramses usually keeps to himself, busy fighting inner demons in a thick opor haze on the floors of Dakh's. The other Jackals are more out and about, spending most days in the cantinas drinking themselves blind. The nights tend to end with them paying or threatening unlucky passersby to carry them home after they pass out. Kidnapping a drunk Jackal is easy, but if the other smugglers figure out what is going on, they will fight for their comrade.

- **Aeza, kidnapped smuggler:** She will not tell the PCs anything about Ramses or her comrades even if the PCs successfully interrogate her using **MANIPULATION**, but if they achieve a critical

success on the roll, she will point them in the direction of Little Algol. If the PCs use torture, they get a +2 to their roll, but this generates 1 DP for the GM.

Cost: 0 DP (May generate 1 DP)

THE BIRBASILS INTERVENE

If one of the PCs have the Faction standing: The Syndicate talent, or if they either helped the militia in the Eyes and Ears scene or fought the militia in the Mounting Unrest event above, they will be called to the Birbasil headquarters. They will be slipped a tag by a street urchin containing a short message instructing them to come to the Birbasil manor on the other side of Basil Bridge. They will have to leave their weapons with the guards at the door before they are allowed in to see Raquin Birbasil. She is very upfront – she wants the PCs to kill Artyr Gholâm for her. In return, they will get his ledger, 2,000 birr, and the Syndicate's gratitude. If they decline, Raquin will instead try to have the PCs murdered to keep them from warning Artyr about her intentions (see the Daggers in the Dark event below).

Cost: 0 DP

SHAUKAR'S GIFT

If the PCs have helped the common people during their trek through the jungles, they will be approached by Jasmina, the Shaukar guerilla's mole in Baybasin. She will ask them to help in the uprising over a glass of kohôl in a shady cantina. Their reward will be information about Artyr and his ledger. If they accept, the scouts Haquim and Aqueda will materialize from the shadows and escort the PCs to their shack, where they can spend the night and wait for the arrival of Dali Osman. The PCs are thoroughly questioned about their motivations for helping the guerilla, and then briefed on the plan of attack. The guerilla aim to fan the flames of the working hands' shame and anger, seize the factory island and the spaceport, and kidnap or kill Raquin Birbasil and her sons.

If the PCs choose to aid the guerilla, their relationship with the Syndicate will be significantly affected (–2 in all dealings with the faction in the Kua system). The PCs can help the guerilla in a number of ways, for example by helping with the preparations below:

- **Popular Support:** The guerilla cannot take Baybasin without the support of its residents. Jasmina has instructed demagogue Sirwan Rusar to rally the people behind the Shaukar banner, but many are still on the fence. If the PCs pass a demanding (–1) **MANIPULATION** test, they can get the doubters onboard. If they fail, you could play the Mounting Unrest event above, but without it costing you a DP.
- **Levelling the Field:** The Birbasils' stranglehold on Baybasin can be broken by convincing their allies to switch sides. The PCs might be sent to recruit either ex-Legionnaire Hashema Behari, stevedore akbar Tanam ed-Garaam, or mining akbar Mori Dakka to the cause. Each of the three require a –2 **MANIPULATION** test to convince, but for every one of them to switch sides, the PCs get a +1 when convincing those remaining. A failed roll means that the person warns Raquin Birbasil and threatens their workforce, which leads to a –1 modifier for the Popular Support roll above and that both the bridge and the Birbasil manor are reinforced. Raquin will also dispatch a militia squad to take care of the PCs (See the Daggers in the Dark event below). Each of the recruiting attempts count as separate preparation actions.
- **Arming the Struggle:** The PCs can help the guerilla smuggling arms and explosives into the settlement. Have them test **OBSERVATION**, **INFILTRATION**, and **MANIPULATION**, and a failed roll should lead to the militia finding out that something is about to happen and the uprising beginning prematurely.
- **Artillery Fire:** Grenade launchers must be set up around Baybasin. The guerilla have only limited experience with heavy weapons, and a PC with a military background can help them find strategically advantageous, defendable positions for the launchers (**COMMAND**). A failed roll means that Basil Bridge will be very hard to cross, as the militia is alerted and the entire exo squad is deployed to protect the Birbasils' domains.
- **Sabotage:** The exo squad should be taken care of (or at the very least decimated) before the attack begins. It can be handled either by sabotaging the exos or by incapacitating the pilots. Failure means that the militia is made aware of the danger and extra protection is added around the Birbasil manor.

Each of the preparation actions above should take a few hours, so the PCs will have time for three actions before the attack begins. In addition to what is described above, each failure also means that the preparation in question takes twice as long (two failures automatically starts the attack) and generates 2 DP for the GM.

Should the PCs need it, the guerilla can supply them

with some basic gear (one weapon and one piece of gear per PC):

- Weapons: Vulcan carbine with 2 reloads or Vulcan pistol with 4 reloads
- Gear: Frag grenade, ordinary tools, or medkit

Cost: 0 DP (Generates 2 DP per failed preparation)

⚙ DAGGERS IN THE DARK

Ramses' Jackals or the Birbasil militia stages an ambush in an alley in Baybasin to silence the PCs for good.

Cost: 2 DP

⚙ THE UPRISING BEGINS

As the day dawns, the Shaukar attack begins. Their plan is to rally the hands in South Town and then move on to securing the factory island while the grenade launchers provide fire support. They then plan to move on the spaceport, fortifying the Free League hangars there and using them as a base of operations when launching the final assault across the bridge to seize the Birbasil manor. A barrage of mortar fire across the river will stop the North Town merchants and the Syndicate leadership from fleeing. In addition to the consequences of failed preparations in Shaukar's Gift above, the fighting may also result in the PCs finding themselves in the following situations:

- **Attacked by Guerillas/the Militia:** Three soldiers attack the PCs as they believe them to be hostile combatants.
- **Mortar Fire:** A stray grenade comes screaming through the air toward the PCs. PCs who fail a demanding (–1) **DEXTERITY** test are hit by a blast effect 8 attack (see page 98 of the *Coriolis* core rulebook).
- **The Exo Squad Attacks:** Two soldiers in exos attack the PCs. The battle lasts for three turns before the surrounding chaos separates the parties.
- **Massacre:** The PCs witness members of the militia starting to shoot at unarmed civilians. Unless they intervene, 1 DP is generated for the GM.
- **A Call to Arms:** If the PCs successfully recruited at least one of the Birbasils' allies during Levelling the Field above, they call on reinforcements during the attack in the form of three hands loyal to either Hashema (scavengers), Mori (miners), or Tanam (stevedores). Use the stevedore stats found on page 32 of *In the Wake of the Martyr*. They can call on reinforcements once for each of the three akbars they successfully recruited, and each use generates 1 DP for the GM.

If the guerilla (and/or the PCs) manages to reach the Birbasil manor and kidnap or kill Raquin and her sons, the militia will surrender and the battle is won. The guerilla is temporarily in control of Baybasin, but for how long is uncertain. If the attack fails, the militia begins a vicious purge of the city to find and deal with Shaukar sympathizers. Regardless, the PCs must find the information they need about the fate of the prisoners in stasis and then either chase Artyr down the river, or set off for Little Algol.

Cost: 0 DP (Mandatory, may generate DP)

⚙ ARTYR'S ESCAPE

When the attack begins (or earlier, if he was tipped off about the PCs somehow), Artyr will attempt to flee Baybasin, taking his manifest ledger with him. He will forget to wipe his decryption software at the office however, and a copy of the manifest can be extracted from it by passing an easy (+1) **DATA DJINN** test. The message from Salamah (page 101) can also be found here if Ramses retrieved it from the crash site and made it back to Baybasin. A search of Artyr's residence reveals a stash of metal bars coated in kerosene. If the bars are analyzed, they turn out to be neodym, a very rare metal on Kua. A successful **TECHNOLOGY** test can tell the PCs that neodym is used in components that go into advanced machines such as stasis beds and lasers. Testing **SCIENCE** reveals that neodym is mined on asteroids, which makes it hard to say exactly from where these bars have come.

Cost: 0 DP (Mandatory)

ENDING ACT 1

When the act ends, the PCs will have figured out that they should head for the Conglomerate. They should know by now that the stasis pods are shipped to Little Algol and unloaded on pier 58 in the Khabal district. If they have acquired Artyr's

Handout #6: Artyr's Manifest

GÔL-KANDRA
NEGOTIATION & DISTRIBUTION

DELIVERY: CARGO VIA KHABAL DISTRICT, PIER 58, LITTLE ALGOL
FOR FURTHER TRANSPORT AS AGREED.
PAYMENT AFTER REVIEW* OF DELIVERED GOODS.

Invoice:

Date:

Customer-ID: 23654

Invoice tol: Q (see contract)

Send to: Tubra Ghutan (for Niobe Hassam)
HASSAM, Panee Square, Souk Habra

HASSAM

Date	Order Nr	Our Order Nr	Seller	FOB	Delivery via	Terms	Tax Class
X	0096	651	A.Ghôlam	6893	Little Algol	Acc. Agr.	X

Quantity	Item	Unit	Description		Unit Price	Sum
8			Sogoi (Baybasin)		80	640
2			Algols		250	500
1			Mirans		350	350
6			X		650	3,900

*) Deduction per unit of damaged goods.
Reported by customer Q. Payment to S via Q.

Subtotal	5,390 ₰
+ Shipping	1,250
+ Other	475
TOTAL	7,115 ₰

REMITTANCE

Customer-ID:

Date:

Expirated sum:

Attached sum:

manifest, they will know that the Hassam shipping company picks up the cargo in Little Algol and that their offices are located by Souk Habra.

THE JOURNEY TO THE MONOLITH

How the PCs make their way to the Conglomerate is up to the group to decide. If the uprising failed, shuttles can be chartered from Baybasin for about 2,000 birr per person. They could also return to their own ship in the jungle, repair it and then fly straight to Little Algol. The cheapest and simplest way is to travel down the Ramishah by river barge. 100 birr per person gets them all the way to the Conglomerate, or it might be free altogether if either Raquin Birbasil or the guerilla was impressed by the PCs' actions in Baybasin.

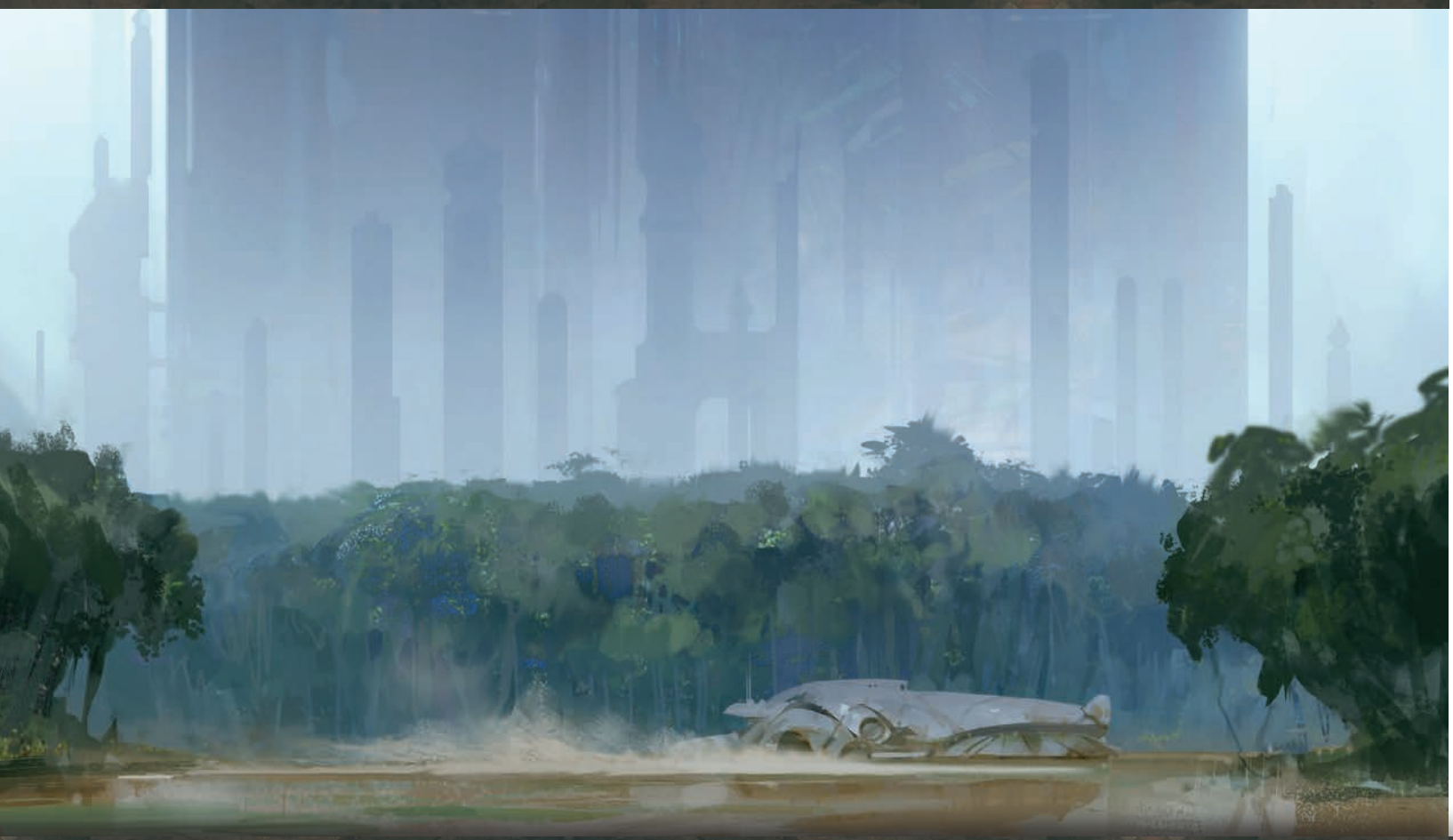
We made our way through the outskirts a few hours ago and are nearing proper civilization. Traffic in the delta has been more intense around the trading hubs further up, and is now slowing down and evening out – a steady stream of fishing boats, river peddlers, and barges are now accompanying us down the Ramishah toward our shared destination.

At first only a small dot on the horizon, it now towers, a mighty pylon pointing to the heavens – the Monolith. Space – and aircraft of all imaginable makes and models swarm around it like bees around a hive. As the shadow of the colossus falls over us, the river narrows and the surrounding wilderness gives way to human settlement. A mixture of smells – cooking, spices, sewage, incense, soap, cremation – greet us, carried on the evening breeze.

We have arrived in the shantytowns that surround the Spear of the Icons, the bustling microcosm known as the Conglomerate.

.

MY JOURNEY DOWN THE RIVER – A TRAVELER'S ACCOUNT – JIANA DOL-HRANa



LITTLE ALGOL

ACT 2

The second act of **The Kuan Connection** takes the PCs to the foot of the Monolith and the rundown Little Algol district. The act contains floating markets, dark alleys, and the memories of golden days past in Dignitary City.

THE STARTING SCENE is written as if it takes place as soon as the PCs arrive in Little Algol or at the Khabal docks in search of the stasis pods. The rest of the act is open and revolves around the mystery of where the stasis units have gone. The act ends with the PCs planning and carrying out a daring heist, breaking into an old palace in Dignitary City.

OVERVIEW

The PCs arrive in Little Algol searching for the abducted mystics and explore the Khabal district and the floating Souk Habra. They soon discover that time is running out as an Order assassin has been activated to take care of all loose ends having to do with the martyr strike team's operations. Potential survivors will lead the PCs to the palace of Dabaran noble Leod dol-Quassar in Dignitary City. In the palace, the PCs learn the final destination of the abductees and Leod dol-Quassar dies by the hands of a mysterious assailant.

KEY INSIGHTS

During their search for the truth in Little Algol, the PCs will find out the following:

- The stasis pods have been handled by stevedores employed by a shipping company called Hassam. The prisoners have been brought to dol-Quassar's palace as per Hassam's agreement with Artyr Gholâm.
- Someone (an Order assassin) appears to be killing everyone involved with the martyr strike team's operation on Kua.
- The final destination of the pods is known by engineer Jarja Dougha and her benefactor, nobleman Leod dol-Quassar.
- Jarja Dougha can be found in Leod's palace. The deal made between Salamah ach-Abaud, Artyr Gholâm, and Leod dol-Quassar names Jarja as the person responsible for inspecting the pods before Artyr gets paid.

Clever PCs may also uncover parts of the deeper levels of the intrigue:

- Leod dol-Quassar is compensated for his participation by the smuggling of fresh slaves – he is free to help himself to any non-mystic prisoners in the pods. Emptied pods can be found in Jarja's workshop as evidence of this.
- On his deathbed, Leod dol-Quassar reveals that the Astûrban are involved and that they are controlling the martyr strike team through a double agent.

IMPORTANT CHARACTRS

- **Tubra Ghutan** – foreman employed by Artyr's companion Niobe Hassam in Little Algol (page 131)
- **Leod dol-Quassar** – Dabaran nobleman and smuggler based in Dignitary City (page 142)
- **Jarja Dougha** – gunsmith and engineer working in Leod dol-Quassar's palace (page 142)

AGENTS

The act also contains two secret agents that might become major headaches for the PCs:

- **Akouba Kosha** – judicator and double agent working for the Astûrban (page 143)
- **Ataia** – assassin employed by the Order of the Pariah activated to clean house in Little Algol (page 132)

DARKNESS POINTS

In Act II, Darkness Points can be spent on putting additional obstacles in the PCs' way – the Nestera defense forces, the Slummer Brigade, or the Order's assassin for example. The GM receives no new DP at the beginning of Act 2.

STARTING SCENE: THE PROCESSION

In the starting scene, the PCs find the bodies of a couple of the stevedores employed in Artyr's operation. They then visit the Souk Habra where they might end up caught in the crossfire between armed slummers and the Nestera defense forces.

THE SITUATION

The PCs' barge enters Little Algol and moors at Pier 58 in the Khabal district. This is where – according to the manifest and potential witnesses – all of Artyr's previous shipments have been sent for redistribution. A pillar of smoke can be seen nearby, and the PCs soon find its source: Artyr's warehouses. Someone got here before them.

The scene is open and takes place on Pier 58, in the Khabal slums, on the floating Souk Habra, and along the Little Algol beaches. As the GM, you are free to tailor the scene to fit your group. The PCs should be getting busy following up on leads found in the first act, as well as new ones uncovered during the scene. Artyr's manifest points toward Tubra Ghutan and the Hassam shipping company. The stevedores employed to unload the pods on Pier 58 are being killed one by one however, and the desperate survivors have gone into hiding.

⚙ QUID PRO QUO

The PCs' actions in Baybasin have most likely made considerable local impact. If they require aid in their search for the stasis pods, they could contact their new Conglomerate allies – either the Birbasils or Shaukar sympathizers within Yjala Bakou's slummer brigade.

⚙ A LITTLE HELP FROM ABOVE

The PCs may also wish to contact judge Kurahan or judicator Kosha. Both will be careful not to have their names officially connected with any of the drama surrounding the attack on the martyr strike team's base or its aftermath – the Council of Factions is in turmoil and there is plenty of potentially career-ending blame to go around – but judge Kurahan is very eager for an update on the investigation. If they contact her, the PCs will receive the following reply:

"Continue the investigation no matter the costs. We are onto something much bigger than just the whereabouts of the mystics. The missing nightingale must be found – without its song, all is lost."

IMPORTANT FACTS

When the PCs arrive, they are immediately pulled into the intrigue surrounding the deaths of Artyr's associates in Little Algol. Their clues from Act I tie in with new information uncovered in the scene.

- **The Manifest:** The shipping manifest names Tubra Ghutan, the Hassam shipping company and the Souk Habra.
- **The Shipping Company:** The Hassam offices are located in the middle of the Souk Habra and are run by Niobe Hassam.
- **Murder Victims:** Several people involved with handling the stasis pods have recently been murdered.
- **The Survivor:** Tubra Ghutan is a foreman with Hassam and has gone into hiding at a nearby bathhouse after the incident at Pier 58 and the attack on Niobe Hassam.
- **The Stasis Units:** Tubra knows that the stasis units are transported to Leod dol-Quassar's palace in Dignitary City.

It is important for the PCs to find Tubra alive so that they may hear about Leod's palace.

THE KHABAL DOCKS

The docks on the northeastern shores of the Ramishah are bustling with life. The view of the docks with their sixty-meter-long piers embracing the enormous Souk Habra is a somewhat impressive sight. A multitude of trading offices and customs houses are located on or next to the piers. The narrow streets are packed with people. Gang members, peddlers, faqirs, musicians, acrobats, beggars, and carriers mingle with prophets and seers loudly sharing their wisdom with the people. The air is thick with the smell of cooking, spices, sewage, incense, soap, and burning bones.

The Khabal district houses Little Algol's docks, a hub for much of the river traffic going further into the Conglomerate. Since the flooding of the Mibea factory island, the Khabal docks are also used for the redistribution of cargo from incoming river barges to hovercraft – or, in many cases, the backs of hands – for transportation to the Souk Habra or the markets in Ara-Ara via Dignitary City. The increase in commercial traffic through the area has made bandit attacks more frequent. The hovercraft have begun forming convoys to reduce risks, which has resulted in fewer but more focused bandit raids.

The Syndicate, primarily through the Birbasil and Rafa families, maintain a heavy presence in Little Algol and have infiltrated all levels of society.

PIER 58

Where the green waters of the Ramishah first meet the debris and filth of the Little Algol shantytowns, we find the piers – jetties on piles held together by frayed ropes and old chains. Both river barges and small canoes moor here to unload their cargo at the pier warehouses awaiting further transportation. Pier 58 is on the edge of the docks, a massive jungle wood construction housing two warehouses.

FIRE!

The pillar of smoke is visible from far away, accompanied by the nauseating smell of fire. Pier 58 now houses two smoldering ruins instead of its warehouses and several of the moored watercraft nearby have also been destroyed. Stevedores are putting out the last flames as the PCs arrive and the local slummers have already started to gather, hoping to plunder the ruins.

THE SOUK HABRA

The Khabal river markets, the Souk Habra, are busy and chaotic. The local vendors often live in, or close to, their shacks or stalls. Slippery pontoons and rotting jetties connect the different platforms, but paying a gondolier to take you where you need to go is usually quicker as the markets are crowded around the clock. A slow-moving mass of merchants, customers, hands, and palanquin carriers fill every street and alley and the noise can some days be almost deafening. Beggars sing hymns to passersby while shaking their cups in the hopes of a few birr. Pickpocketing is a booming and relatively safe business, as a quick leap into the water usually saves the thief the trouble of getting arrested even if she is spotted in the act.

THE HASSAM OFFICE

At the heart of the Souk Habra, a few larger pontoons float next to each other, forming a stable center known as Panee Plaza. A group of shacks and houseboats contain the warehouses of wholesale spice merchants Lamsha, the Kaltash Amim brewery – famed officially for their fruit wine, but equally so for their secret, opor-based products – and the office of

"They think they are the masters. That their white towers are the ones ruling Kua.

But they are just dried corpses under a merciless sun. They are already dead."

Yjala Bakou, Freedom Fighter

CYCLADE CELEBRATIONS

At the beginning of In the Footsteps of the Martyr, the recommended date was nine days before the start of the new year. Preparations for the Cyclade were well underway onboard Coriolis, although the mysticides and the disappearance of the Emissary ruined the holiday spirit for much of the station's population. On Kua however, most are unaware of what has been going on in orbit, and this cycle's celebrations will be as lively as ever. Tarrabs and traveling circus groups perform in even the smallest neighborhoods and enormous amounts of food are being prepared for the annual feast. Unless the PCs have wasted time and missed the Cyclade, the celebrations might coincide with their stay in Little Algol.



the Hassam shipping company. The entrance to Hassam is anonymous and easy to miss – only a small hexagonal stained glass window faces the street next to a narrow door with no sign above it. Hassam's warehouses at the docks are rented out to the highest bidder and they also supply their clients with reliable stevedore crews. The company have no boats or hovercraft of their own, instead preferring to rent space onboard barges or in the convoys to Ara-Ara.

HAMAM TAMINA

The Hamam Tamina can be found at the edge of the Souk Habra, near Dignitary City. Merchants who have had a good day at the markets flock to Tamina's, as well as wealthy tourists from near and far. In the golden age of Dignitary City, when Little Algol grew to become a district of its own and not just a nameless part of Ara-Ara, this used to be a bathhouse for diplomats and royalty. Today, none of its former customers would dare to cross the dangerous slums to get here, but Tamina has managed to find a new clientele base among the upper classes of Little Algol.

The building is constructed around an atrium with a mosaic skylight in the middle depicting the constellations in the night sky above the Icon City on Mira. The soft light from above makes the shallow pools below shine like silver, illuminating a beautiful Deckhand statue in the middle. The statue is of a small child with short hair hunched over a stone bowl with a rag in its hand, as if just about to polish the surface of the water. Both the statue and the walls of the atrium are covered in lush, green vines.

Tamina receives all new visitors in person and remembers the face of everyone who has ever bathed here. Already on your second visit, she will greet you by name, offer you your favorite kawah, and ask how that aunt of yours back on Algol is doing. For about the price of a night out, she supplies you with fresh towels, soap, and a copper washbowl after which one of her employees guides you to a room referred to by the regulars as the Water Temple – a room with high ceilings on fluted columns where small waterfalls shoot from cracks in the walls high above. The next room in is the steam sauna,

followed by the central bath chamber with its three larger pools and corridors leading to private rooms where a more intimate bath experience is offered, along with rose tea and massages, for a few extra birr. These back rooms are where trade agreements are finalized, marriages negotiated, and deals struck. When you leave, your clothes are freshly washed and ironed and Tamina wishes you the Icons' grace with a conspiratorial wink.

LIVING IN THE SHADOW OF THE MONOLITH

A common misconception is that the Conglomerate is an eternal city spanning most of Kua's equator, but this is not the case. The city is actually not that big – the residential districts, factory islands, and slums cover large areas, yes, but are mostly made up of abandoned and forgotten buildings slowly being reclaimed by the jungles. Countless rivers snake their way through the urban wasteland and are used as roads for most of the local trade. The buildings in the Conglomerate range from enormous skyscrapers to low, hangar-like warehouses and decrepit shantytowns. As one gets closer to the Monolith, jungles and farmlands are replaced by outposts, ruins, factory islands, and estates, which in turn eventually give way to residential districts and the splendor of Covenant City (see page 288 of the Coriolis core rulebook).

DISTRICTS AND FACTORY ISLANDS

There is a fair amount of confusion going around as to what distinguishes a factory island from a residential district, but the only ones who really care are probably the Zenithian bureaucrats and corporations as business permits differ between the two types of zone classification. A factory island usually houses countless manufacturing units and workers' barracks, and there is often a tall tower somewhere on the island where the company or family who owns the factories have their headquarters. Beautiful gardens, ornate balconies, and impressive mosaic walls usually surround the central offices, in stark contrast to the simple exterior of the factories.

Residential districts – usually referred to as just districts – are often more a mix between apartment buildings, shantytowns, tent camps, and factories. Smaller companies tend to operate here rather than on the islands, owning or renting a single factory. Businesses run by "free" hands are also common here.

NATURE'S MIGHT

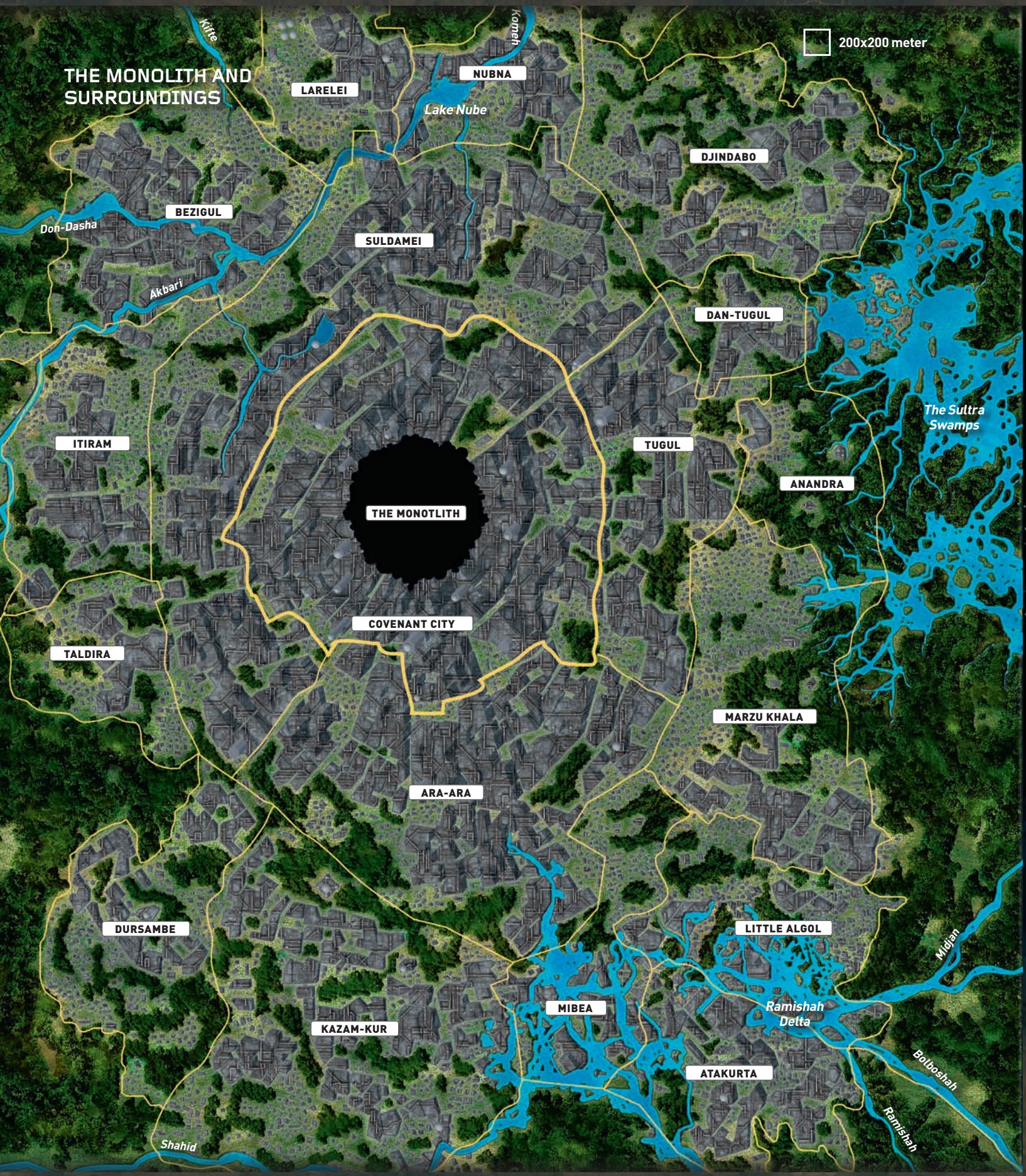
The Conglomerate is not miraculously shielded from nature's wrath, despite popular beliefs to the contrary. When the yearly monsoon comes sweeping in from the Gyrides ocean south of the equator, large parts of the delta around which much of the city is constructed risk flooding. Gigantic dams – called the Cataracts – keep the waters at bay, but should they fail, whole districts and islands could be swept away. The latest Cataract failure happened during the Mibea offensive where the flooding of Lake Ytamara enabled the Nestera defense forces to halt the Queen Slummer's advancing armies. Word on the street is that Nestera intentionally opened Cataract 7, not caring about the countless innocent lives lost in the process. The monsoons are not the only natural hazard in the area. Wild storms, stronger than hurricanes, sometimes strike without warning. Much of the higher levels of the districts are destroyed and abandoned, or undergoing constant repairs.

CIVIL UNREST

Both in the Khabal shantytowns and in the Souk Habra, the hottest topic is currently Yjala Bakou, the "Queen Slummer". Rumors have it that more and more cells supporting her rebellion are forming. The Nestera defense forces have blocked off Bakou's route to Ara-Ara, and as a result, her movement is expanding in Little Algol instead. The conflict between Nestera and the slummers is visible everywhere around the Khabal docks. The fighting has intensified over the last few weeks, largely due to a recent influx of cheap firearms. The recruiters for the armed slummer resistance are targeting younger and younger age groups, some of the new fighters barely more than kids. Nestera fights fire with fire and has begun staging public executions of accused Bakou fighters, despite claims of innocence and only circumstantial evidence. Voices are being raised saying that it has all gone too far, but neither side seems to be willing to listen.

NPCS

During the scene, the PCs will encounter slummer fighters and the Nestera defense forces. The number of combatants on either side is left to the GM to decide. The PCs should also be able to track down a survivor from Hassam from whom they can get more information about the deliveries to Leod dol-Quassar.


THE MONOLITH AND SURROUNDINGS
200x200 meter
Kiffe
Komeh
LARELEI
NUBNA
Lake Nube
DJINDABO
BEZIGUL
Don-Dasha
SULDAMEI
Akbari
DAN-TUGUL
The Sultra Swamps
ITIRAM
TUGUL
ANANDRA
THE MONOTLITH
COVENANT CITY
TALDIRA
MARZU KHALA
ARA-ARA
DURSAMBE
LITTLE ALGOL
Midjan
MIBEA
Ramishah Delta
KAZAM-KUR
ATAKURTA
Bolboshah
Ramishah
Shahid

BAKOU'S FIGHTERS, SLUMMERS

APPEARANCE: One of Yjala Bakou's many armed cells preparing an offensive in Little Algol. Dressed as mercenaries with djellabas and shawls to hide their faces.

CHARACTERISTICS: Terrible but enthusiastic marksmen, quick to run away if they face serious resistance.

ATTRIBUTES:
STRENGTH 3, AGILITY 3, WITS 2, EMPATHY 2

HIT POINTS: 6

MIND POINTS: 4

REPUTATION: 2

SKILLS: Ranged Combat 3, Infiltration 2, Melee Combat 2

ARMOR: Protective clothing 3

WEAPONS: Vulcan carbine, knife

GEAR: D6 Vulcan carbine reloads (roll if looted). One fighter per cell has a stun grenade.

NESTERA DEFENSE FORCES

Nestera's soldiers are trained in strategic urban combat and each squad member has a specialized role in the group. Their violent lives have made them grim, suspicious, and guarded.

APPEARANCE: Red heavy body armor with Nestera's white logo on the chestplate.

CHARACTERISTICS: Stern, move as a coordinated unit, tend to wounded and fallen comrades.

ATTRIBUTES:
STRENGTH 4, AGILITY 4, WITS 3, EMPATHY 3

HIT POINTS: 8

MIND POINTS: 6

REPUTATION: 4

SKILLS: Ranged Combat 5, Melee Combat 4, Dexterity 3, Infiltration 3, Observation 3, Force 2, Medicurgy 2

TALENTS: Firestrom, Strategic Movement

ARMOR: Heavy armor 6

WEAPONS: Dura knife, Vulcan carbine, Vulcan machine gun, frag grenade

GEAR: Frag grenade, stun grenade, battering ram (**FORCE** +2), medkit (**MEDICURGY** +2), sensor sights (**RANGED COMBAT** +1)

- **FIRESTORM:** The group functions better when acting together. At the cost of 2 DP, the entire squad get a +2 to **RANGED COMBAT** for one turn, but only if they all attack the same target.
- **STRATEGIC MOVEMENT:** The soldiers are trained for anything, and at the cost of 1 DP, a member of the squad gets 1 additional AP to spend on finding cover or performing a movement action. The extra AP can only be used when the soldier is up to act in the turn order.

TUBRA GHUTAN, HASSAM FOREMAN

Tubra is a half-Sogoi who came to seek her fortunes in the Conglomerate after most of her village was wiped out by hemorrhagic fever ten cycles ago. She worked her way up from slave-like house servant to carrier for the previous owner of Hassam, Niobe's uncle Marksu, and has held the position of foreman for the last few years, overseeing the work teams and making sure that the cargo reaches its destination in time and without incidents.

APPEARANCE: Tubra is large, wiry, and down to earth. She wears rough work pants and occasionally a dupatta, held in place by a harness containing ammunition for her sawed-off grape rifle. On hot days, she ties her shawl around her head instead, working bare-chested in the blazing sun, her awe-inspiring muscles putting the fear of the Icons into even the strongest men in her crew.

CHARACTERISTICS: Avoids eye contact with people of higher social status. Becomes quiet and obedient if she feels threatened. Speaks very little but commands her work teams with an iron fist.

ATTRIBUTES:
STRENGTH 5, AGILITY 4, WITS 3, EMPATHY 3

HIT POINTS: 9

MIND POINTS: 6

REPUTATION: 2

SKILLS: Force 4, Command 2, Melee Combat 2, Ranged Combat 2



ARMOR: 0

WEAPONS: Sawed-off grape rifle, light axe (weapon damage 3, CRIT 3, not Heavy)

GEAR: Carrying harness, worn tabula with work orders and schedules

ATAIA, ORDER OF THE PARIAH ASSASSIN

One of many such sleeper agents placed by the Order of the Pariah around the Horizon. She was activated after the events on Coriolis exposed the splinter group's operations. Her orders are to shut down the Kua operation by disposing of all witnesses – and she is extremely good at what she does.

APPEARANCE: Prefers to dress in many layers of fabric to be able to dress down quickly in a crowd to change her appearance. Throws off her robes and fights in a black jumpsuit if cornered. The many layers also hide a wide array of weapons, although she prefers to use poison or arson.

CHARACTERISTICS: Quiet and attentive. Appears passive and uninteresting so as not to stand out. Faint Zalosi accent when she speaks.

ATTRIBUTES:
STRENGTH 2, AGILITY 3, WITS 5, EMPATHY 5

HIT POINTS: 7

MIND POINTS: 12

REPUTATION: See the Chameleon talent below.

SKILLS: Observation 5, Dexterity 4, Infiltration 4, Manipulation 3, Medicurgy 3, Melee Combat 3, Ranged Combat 3, Culture 2, Technology 2

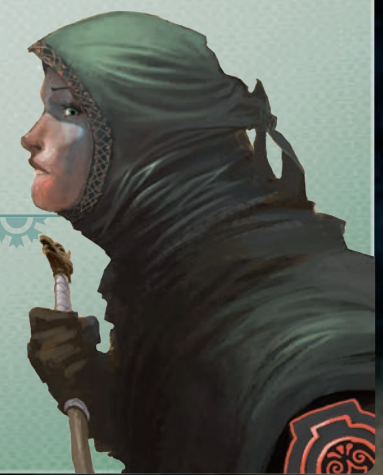
TALENT: Tough, Desensitized, Chameleon, Fanatic

ARMOR: 0

WEAPONS: Firebomb or breach charge, accelerator pistol (silenced), poison (strength 6), acc rifle (silenced, uses it only when staging ambushes)

GEAR: Whatever she may need at the moment

- **TOUGH:** The Order's secret training programs have given Ataia 2 extra HP.
- **DESENSITIZED:** Countless mock executions and hours of torture at the academy have made Ataia numb to the world. She gets 2 extra MP.
- **CHAMELEON:** She blends in wherever she goes and is extremely good at adjusting her behavior to new social codes. When disguised, she gets a +2 to **INFILTRATION** and if she has to negotiate with someone, her Reputation counts as being the same as that of her opponent.
- **FANATIC:** The blind faith of Zalos' agents enables them to get back up at 2 HP after having been broken in combat. Costs 2 DP.



EVENTS

The events in the scene are mostly optional, but the first – Arrival – and the last – The Last Pallbearer – should be regarded as more or less mandatory. The first event establishes the threat against potential witnesses and leads the PCs to begin their search for hidden survivors, and the last event describes the meeting with Tubra Ghutan. The goal of the scene is for the PCs to find someone who can tell them that the stasis pods are being taken to Leod dol-Quassar's palace in Dignitary City. The events listed as Investigative contain important clues.

⚙ ARRIVAL

Pier 58 is bustling with activity. The smoldering ruins of two warehouses sit there as reminders of a terrible fire just prior to the PCs' arrival. The fire was the work of Ataia, the Order's agent, who placed two firebombs on the pier set to go off just as the Hassam carrier crew were to transport the latest shipment of abducted prisoners to Leod dol-Quassar's palace. Dark smoke hangs over the pier and charred pieces of wood and plastic float around in the water.

- **Artyr on the Run:** If Artyr managed to escape Baybasin, the PCs will find his boat sunk just next to the pier. Inside, in the dark, waterfilled engine room, they also find Artyr with his throat cut. Getting to the body requires a successful **DEXTERITY** test.
- **Charred Ruins:** The warehouses appear to have been empty at the time of the fire. A strong scent of ammonia can be smelled if the collapsed doors are pried open (**FORCE**). An enamel sign on the door displays the logo of the Hassam company, matching the one found on Artyr's manifest. Moving around inside the still burning building requires a **DEXTERITY** test. Failure means fire damage (D6 damage first turn, then Fire (D6) for two turns or until the victim or someone within Close range successfully tests **DEXTERITY**). Alternatively, the PCs may attempt to put out the fire before entering (**DEXTERITY** –2), after which they can examine the ruins without the risk of injury.
- **The Stasis Pod:** Closer examination reveals that the warehouses are not completely empty after all. Under the debris, a tank of some sort is leaking an unknown liquid that contributes to the strong smell of ammonia. A successful **TECHNOLOGY** test reveals the container to be a broken tank of coolant liquid for a stasis unit, and at the back of the room, the PCs find a cracked and blackened stasis pod with a burned body inside, twisted in agony.
- **The Bodies:** A successful **OBSERVATION** test lets the PCs find two additional bodies nearby. Two stevedores got trapped inside the burning building and fought each other for what they believed to be the safety of the stasis unit. The winner stabbed her coworker, emptied out the thawing body from the pod on the floor and climbed in, unaware of her imminent and terrible fate – she was boiled alive in stasis fluid minutes later. The stab victim crawled away and bled out behind some crates nearby. Both workers appear to be Sogoi. One of them has a tag with a week's wages on it (25 birr). A successful **DATA DJINN** test can trace the transfer back to Hassam's payroll account. When the PCs examine the two bodies on the floor, they see that one of them is still alive – the kidnapping victim from Coriolis. She has terrible burns and can hardly breath, much less talk. All that remains for the PCs is to say a prayer and put her out of her misery.

After this event, the PCs should begin to follow up on the leads from Act I. Asking around the markets about the fire is a good – but dangerous – start. Artyr's manifest lists the address of the Hassam company, which also might be of interest. The search for the survivors hiding from Ataia should be pretty straightforward, with a few events thrown in here and there for dramatic effect.

Cost: 0–1 DP (Mandatory)

⚙ RESONANCE – VOICES IN THE MIST

PCs who have been affected by mystic resonance in the previous scenario or the opening scene in Act I may experience additional dreams if you wish to give them a hint that they are on the right track.

- At some point during their time in Little Algol – most likely during either a stressful situation or the complete opposite, such as sleep or intoxication – the mystic PC suddenly feels the now all too familiar anxiety and nausea setting in. Her vision blurs, sounds are distorted, and she loses her balance.
- At the cost of 1 DP, have the PC test **MYSTIC POWERS** to remain conscious. Failure means suffering a strength 2 poison attack (see page 113 of the Coriolis core rulebook) and D6 minutes of seizures and vomiting. At the cost of 2 DP, this happens during a conflict of some sort.
- In her mind's eye, the affected PC sees a foggy mirror image of the world, and out of the mist comes the distant echoes of a song. At first, it is just a ringing in the ears, but it gradually changes into an enormously powerful voice delivering a sad,

THE ICON'S INSIGHT

The tunnels lead only forward.
Like an arrow leaping from its string,
I steady myself for the journey's end.
Living, still, in death. All that was shall be again.

– Nabi-mu-Qad, the Messenger Emissary



Hassam's Emblem

woeful lament (see the adjacent box). Water can suddenly be heard dripping on stone, accompanied by harsh voices. The song is interrupted by pain shooting from the lumbar and the back of the head. A cold, tight grip closes around the neck, making it harder and harder to breath.

This experience is an echo of the Emissary being brought out of stasis in the Sultra marshes. The song forebodes the arrival of the agents of the First Horizon and the imminent death of the Emissary itself. After a few minutes, the episode is over and the affected PC feels fine again.

Cost: 0–2 DP

THE MEETING AT HASSAM

Hassam Shipping is located at the center of the Souk Habra, near Panee Plaza. Hassam was brought into Artyr's operations thanks to their discretion and careful cargo handling. Panee Plaza is crammed full of stalls and crowds of people. Outside the local Kaltash Amim brewery, spirits are high as local merchants and hands sit down around low tables to share some wine and a relaxing hookah. A sailcloth roof shelters the patrons from the blazing sun. Rows of brimming sacks of spices in the nearby Lamsha stall envelop the plaza in a mouth-watering potpourri of different smells, shifting focus from the unpleasant odor of the molding cushions outside the brewery. Wedged in-between the two larger establishments sits a small, anonymous-looking shack.

- **The Seer:** As the PCs approach the shack, they spot an old soothsayer outside the door to the office (see the The Order's Agent box). She seems uninterested in speaking to anyone and quickly disappears into the crowd.

  A discreet metal door with a multi-colored mosaic depicting the sign of the Messenger and a small enamel sign showing Hassam's pyramid logo are the only things hinting at the business going on behind the door. The door is unlocked and a narrow corridor behind it leads to the office, which is a cluttered mess of boxes upon boxes of exotic tea. Just inside the door however, Anou the eunuch lies motionless on a bloody Algolan rug.
- **Niobe:** Short and dressed in simpler clothing than others of her station – a simple, black kameez with floral patterns and a yellow shawl. A blue facial tattoo of two lines running from forehead to cheek acts as a reminder of the life she led before inheriting her uncle Marksu's business.

- **A Final Message:** The PCs find the bloody Niobe on the floor in the inner room, face down with her arms underneath her. If they turn her body over, they find her clutching a communicator in her hands.
- **Niobe's Communicator:** The com contains a message from Tubra sent this morning asking Niobe to leave the Souk Habra and meet her at the Hamam Tamina baths near Dignitary City. Niobe had replied, saying she couldn't leave yet as she was still waiting for payment from dol-Quassar.

Cost: 0 DP (Investigative)

ASKING AROUND THE SOUK HABRA

Chances are good that the PCs will start to ask around the Souk Habra for more information. They will find rumors in abundance here about both stasis pods and recent sales of coolant fluid, as well as about Tubra Ghutan and her work crews' recent stroke of fatally bad luck. The narrow streets, tiny chai houses, oporias, and proxy dens are perfect places for private conversations over some kawah or chilled palm wine. Have the PCs test **CULTURE** to find suitable informants and **MANIPULATION** to convince them to share what they know.

- **The Stasis Pods:** A lot of used stasis pods have been coming in from Baybasin and Verkâna Ridge lately. They probably come from the Hyderas sinkhole.
- **The Stevedore Crew:** Hassam and Tubra are relatively well-known names at the souk. Strangely enough, neither Tubra nor her stevedore crew of shady Algolans and Sogoi have been seen since about the day before yesterday. A visit to the slave market or Shamoud's fight club might shed more light on the issue. If the PCs acheived a critical success on their **MANIPULATION** roll, you could proceed to play the Tubra's Partner event as a reward.
- **Leod dol-Quassar:** Even if the PCs have picked up information linking Tubra and Niobe Hassam to Leod dol-Quassar, a regular slummer will point them to Hassam's office on Panee Plaza. They know nothing of the affairs of the smuggler prince.
- **Rumors:** A fairly well-established rumor claims that the slummer brigade is aided by weapons from master gunsmith and engineer Jarja Dougha. A confrontation seems fast approaching, in both the city and out in the plantations. The plantation owners are apparently having trouble keeping their workers in line. Some say that the living prophet Shauk – "the hand who said no" – is wandering the countryside in secret, teaching the plantation workers to read and write – and as the saying goes: "A learned hand is a dangerous hand". Whether Shauk and the slummer brigade are working together is hard to know, but the mere possibility that they are is deeply troubling for the upper classes.

Cost: 0 DP (Investigative)

10 BIRR FOR A DREAM

Little Algol is full of them – proxy dens. The PCs pass a discreet establishment where dreams (and nightmares) are sold. The den is crammed full, and some of the patrons look as if they have been there a long time – far too long.

Cost: 0 DP

THE SLAVE MARKETS

The PCs reach an open space in the middle of the Souk Habra aboard a moored, wide barge. Merchants in expensive clothing and stern-looking overseers haggle around a makeshift stage made from a couple of crates with a rug on top. Two guards bring up the "merchandise" from the cargo hold – malnourished, filthy shadows of human beings. A kabbara welcomes everyone to the auction and begins describing the items for sale. The PCs have arrived at one of the Conglomerate's many slave auctions.

- **The Little Boy:** A Miran boy stands in the middle of the stage. Tears stream down his dirty cheeks and he looks in horror across the crowd. His right arm looks wounded and is wrapped in dirty bandages. A successful **CULTURE** or **OBSERVATION** test allows a PC to recognize the boy as one of the many young people to have disappeared from Coriolis recently. He is a young student or the son of wealthy dignitary.
- **Haggling:** The PCs can try to buy the boy, which requires either a successful **MANIPULATION** test at –1 (300 birr, or 50 birr on a critical success) or them offering 500 birr, an offer no one will try to outbid.
- **Confrontation:** They can also attempt to use force to free the boy and the four other slaves chained up in the cargo hold. Have the two slaver guards and D6 thuggish bodyguards working for visiting customers attack the PCs if they do. Use the slummer stats, except for one of the slaver guards who is an enormous brute – use Tubra Ghutan's stats instead.

If the boy, Nalad sin-Dalara, is rescued, he can recount waking up in a dark basement in a stasis pod and seeing a woman in a green shawl (Jarja Dougha). There were several other pods lining the walls and tools were scattered everywhere. He was thoroughly examined by the woman, who then muttered and bandaged his right arm saying:

"Your fate in Sky City would be much, much worse than if you go the markets – do not take off these bandages, okay?"

The boy was then brought up to a see a well-dressed man (Leod dol-Quassar) who sighed and waved him off as damaged goods. He was returned to the basement and brought to a rickety jetty where men in a boat waited for him.
Cost: 0 DP (Investigative)

THE NESTERA PATROL

A Nestera patrol sweeps the area where the PCs are, behaving very cruelly toward the locals. The brutality with which innocent slummers are treated is shocking to the PCs. If they interfere, you can spend DP to escalate the situation, all the way to a firefight if you feel like it. At the cost of 1 DP, the patrol has three members, and at the cost of 2 DP, it has five.
Cost: 0–2 DP

ONLY THE DEAD

This event happens just as a funeral procession passes down the street: a Nestera squad attacks one of Yjala Bakou's armed cells. An intense firefight breaks out. Hired mourners and grieving relatives of the deceased flee for their lives. Most make it, but some are cut down by bursts of Vulcan fire. Pools of blood form in the muddy street, shoes and torn clothing are strewn everywhere. The PCs find themselves in the middle of the battle and may have to choose sides, or shoot their way out.
Cost: 1 DP

THE ASSASSIN STRIKES

Unless the PCs' investigations are conducted discreetly, Ataia will become interested in them and their affairs. As they are searching for clues about the fate of Tubra, the assassin will try to kill them. Ataia knows that her key targets are Tubra Ghutan and Leod dol-Quassar and won't risk exposure by facing the PCs in person. She plants an explosive device either in their lodgings or in a place they visit often. It is a motion-triggered bomb placed under a bed or a table.

- **The Explosion:** Have the PC closest to the bomb test **OBSERVATION** to sense that something isn't right. If the roll fails, she spots nothing out of the ordinary and the bomb goes off when a PC comes too close or makes a sudden move (triple satchel charge, blast effect 4, weapon damage 1, CRIT 2, Close range).

Cost: 2 DP

THE WITNESS

In the crowded souk, the PCs suddenly spot one of the scavengers who raided the warehouse ruins on Pier 58. She sits outside one of the Souk Habra's many chai houses, examining her haul from the pier while sipping on a hot cup of tea. In front of her are also two containers of coolant liquid identical to the ruptured one found at the scene by the PCs, but the scavenger is very reluctant to tell them where she got them. She claims to have found them in the debris on the pier, but they are much too clean to have been through the fire.

- **Silver Tongues:** A friendly approach and a difficult (–2) **MANIPULATION** test is required to convince her to tell the PCs the truth. If they succeed, she admits to getting them from two of Hassam's workers in exchange for letting them hide at her cousin Shamoud's fight club. Shamoud is a pit dog trainer working out of a basement storage in a condemned building in Dignitary City. Where the workers got the canisters from, she doesn't know, but they are worth 300 birr each on the black markets in the Marzu Khala spaceport.

A donation of a couple of birr buys the PCs the address to Shamoud's fight club (see below) and a dirty Gambler talisman which they will need to show at the door to be let in.
Cost: 0 DP (Investigative)

SHAMOUD'S FIGHT CLUB

Shamoud's gambling den and arena is located underneath a collapsed customs office on the border between the flooded Mibea and Dignitary City. The house is in bad shape and surrounded by walls of sandbags and sheets of metal to keep the rising waters of Lake Ytamara at bay. The entrance is hidden under a semi-collapsed colonnade surrounded by shacks and huts. A Sadaalian bouncer is hidden in the shadows by the door with scars and face tattoos identifying her as a former Legionnaire (use the soldier stats).

- **Getting In:** Getting in requires either a successful **MANIPULATION** test at –1, the Faction standing: The Syndicate talent or having helped the Birbasils in Baybasin. If the PCs acquired the Gambler talisman in the The Witness event above, they are let in straight away.

The club is a large two-story basement with stairs along the walls leading up to balconies overlooking the steel cages in the middle where the fights take place. The old desks once used by the customs officers have been cannibalized to construct a sturdy bar and few rows of low benches where visitors can sit down to drink, smoke, and watch the matches.

- **Asking Around:** If the PCs start asking around about where they might find the stevedores working for Hassam, a heated argument in Algolan breaks out around them. Tensions run high and people ready themselves to fight. Calming the situation requires a successful **MANIPULATION** test at –2. If any of the PCs speak Algolan, the test is without modifiers.
- **High-Strung Patrons:** If the PCs fail the test, you may spend 1 DP to escalate the argument to a fistfight (use the slummer stats) or 2 DP to sic four pit dogs (page 102) on the PCs. If a fight breaks out, Shamoud will shout at the group: "You follow in Death's footsteps! No good will come from Hassam's dealings with that false Zenithian. Leave now – or we'll make you leave."
- **De-Escalation:** If the PCs manage to calm the situation down, Shamoud and his staff will reveal that the two workers who hid in the club were found dead in one of the dog cages a few hours ago. Noticeably nervous patrons can also share that they have heard about other members of Hassam's work crew turning up murdered around Little Algol. The workers' foreman, Tubra Ghutan, has gone into hiding, and people who know her are scared. Tubra is a respected name in the hands' community in the Khabal district and someone who many turn to for guidance. Why her workers are ending up dead is not known, but many suspect that Niobe Hassam has somehow soured her relationship with Little Algol's slummer prince, Leod dol-Quassar.

Cost: 0–2 DP (Investigative)

TUBRA'S PARTNER

If the PCs at some point during their investigation make it obvious that they are trying to help the remaining stevedores working for Hassam, they will eventually be approached by a young half-Zenithian:

- She introduces herself as Wala and asks to speak to them in private. Wala explains that she and Tubra are life partners in secret and that they often meet in one of the private rooms in the back of the Hamam Tamina baths in Dignitary City.

Cost: 0 DP (Investigative)

THE LAST PALLBEARER

Eventually, the PCs will figure out that Tubra is likely to be hiding at the Hamam Tamina and go there to speak to her. No one is allowed to enter the baths armed, and all gear will be taken care of by the staff in the foyer. The PCs are then given towels and washbowls and shown to the Water temple, where their clothes are also taken away. The establishment is very discreet and professional, and Tamina can proudly say that she never accepts bribes or shares any information about her clients. After sweating through the mandatory sauna stop, the PCs enter the main baths, where they must be careful as they go about their investigation. They can either subtly converse with the regulars and test **MANIPULATION** at –1 to find out which room to go to, or test **OBSERVATION** if they have previously encountered or helped someone who might have described Tubra to them.

- Tubra's partner: If the PCs met with Wala and were friendly to her, she will tell them which room she and Tubra usually meet in.

When they find Tubra, the situation becomes very tense. She thinks that the PCs are here to kill her and gets ready to fight. A successful **MANIPULATION** or **COMMAND** test is required to calm Tubra down, after which she becomes her normal, obedient self and shares the following:

- **The Pods:** Her work crew have been shipping stasis pods with people inside from Artyr's rented warehouses on Pier 58 to the basement in Leod dol-Quassar's palace.
- **The Nobleman:** Leod is a Dabaran noble running much of Little Algol's slave trade for the Syndicate. He dreams of leaving his run-down palace and moving to Covenant City.
- **The Arrangement:** Leod and Artyr have struck a deal which allows Leod to keep some of the pods for himself. All pods are inspected by Leod's engineer, Jarja Dougha – a well-known gunsmith in the area – before Hassam gets paid, sometimes in birr and sometimes in bars of some kind of strange metal.
- **The Final Destination:** Tubra has heard rumors that some of the people in the pods have been sold as slaves to the Monolith, but that others have been transported to an unknown location in the Sultra marshes by Leod's own workers.
- **The Assassin:** A few days ago, two of Tubra's workers failed to show up for their shift, but she thought nothing of it at the time. Just as the rest of the crew had finished up shipping Artyr's latest delivery to dol-Quassar's palace, the warehouses burst into flames and some of her workers were trapped inside. Tubra started suspecting foul play and began hiding her workers, but was constantly one step behind the killer. She eventually contacted Niobe Hassam, her employer, and warned her about the threat.

- **The Closed Palace:** When arriving at the palace with the last delivery (if the final delivery of kidnepped victims got this far), the guards initially refused to let Tubra's workers in. The smuggler prince has a huge banquet planned to celebrate his son's betrothal to a wealthy Zenithian, but the rumors of a killer on the loose in Little Algol have him worked up and paranoid.
- **Aid:** If the PCs can help Tubra escape Little Algol, preferably together with Wala, she will do anything they ask in return.

Cost: 0 DP (Mandatory)

CRIMINAL ROYALTY

After encountering a surviving member of the Hassam work crew, the PCs continue their hunt for the stasis pods through the Conglomerate. They must now locate the palace of Leod dol-Quassar and find Jarja Dougha, the engineer responsible for inspecting the pods upon arrival at the palace. The PCs must infiltrate a banquet full of neo-Zenithian dignitaries, unimpressed hegemonists, wealthy Algolans, and networking Dabaran royalty.

⚙ THE CYCLADE

If the PCs have been quick, you could let the banquet coincide with the Cyclade celebrations. If they have been slow on the other hand, the celebrations are almost over and life is returning to normal.

THE SITUATION

The last surviving stevedore has identified Leod dol-Quassar as the next person in the chain of secretive middlemen between the martyr cell on Coriolis and the stasis pods' unknown final destination. The Dabaran nobleman has ties to the Syndicate, but his drive to be accepted into the Zenithian Hegemony is what really motivates him. The Birbasils secretly regard Leod's dreams as a possibility to start doing business with the hegemonists and pretend not to notice his split allegiances. Leod's slave-trading and smuggling have been lucrative, and he has made sure to always save his best merchandise for the more prominent Monolithean families. His grovelling toward the higher-ups is finally paying off, and a deal is being finalized regarding the betrothal of his oldest son Marok to Theda Din Hrama, the fifth daughter of Aedon, leader of the mighty Din Hrama clan. The arrival of a Zalosian assassin in Little Algol has Leod spooked however, and he has increased security around his palace in Dignitary City with both extra guards and hired mercenaries. The PCs must take this into account when trying to find a way inside the palace.

⚙ QUID PRO QUO

The PCs might be able to call in favors from people they have helped earlier in the campaign to get inside the palace, or to get an audience with Leod dol-Quassar. If they have ties to the Syndicate or helped the Birbasils in Baybasin, they can be added to the guest list. If they helped the Shaukar guerilla, the organization's ties to Yjala Bakou can get them smuggled in through a staff entrance. The same goes for if they fought Nestera in the souk during the Only the Dead event above. Have the PCs test **CULTURE** to understand the intricate ties between Leod and the hegemonists, and **MANIPULATION** to introduce themselves properly to the local Syndicate representatives or the agents from the slummer brigade. A final option might be to contact judicator Akouba Kosha, who can help them get in through a service entrance by using her contacts in the Astûrban.

IMPORTANT FACTS

The clues clearly indicate that the abducted mystics are being brought to Leod dol-Quassar's palace and that is where the PCs finally find some of the pods and further details of the mysterious end customers. As the GM, start to reintroduce Akouba Kosha at this point in the scenario and present her as a trustworthy ally to the PCs. It is important that they believe her to be on their side as it makes her possible betrayal later in the scenario much more dramatic. At the end of Act II, the PCs should have the following information:

- **The Mystics:** The stasis pods marked with black crosses are treated differently than the rest of the cargo. The prisoners are kept on ice and after the pods are inspected, they are sent to the Sul-Mahala, a grand palace in the Sultra marshes. The palace was flooded long ago after the collapse of Cataract 27 (see Act III).

Depending on who the PCs interact with during the banquet, pieces of the following might also be revealed to them:

THE CARGO

The stasis units are brought from Pier 58 to Jarja's workshop in the palace basement.

- **Inspection:** Jarja inspects the pods and their occupants carefully. Artyr's payment from Salamah depends on her approval of the condition of the cargo. She is also in charge of the logistics of shipping the marked pods to the Sultra marshes, and has accompanied the shipments there on two occasions.
- **The Cargo:** Apart from the stasis pods, Tubra's crew have also transported slave labor to the palace on several occasions to earn some extra birr. The slaves, as well as all white-marked pods, are separated from the black-marked units and kept by Leod as payment for his services.
- **Frequency:** There have in total been six deliveries of pods marked with black crosses made to Leod's palace. The first four runs contained three pods each but the last two have been packed – eight and six mystics respectively – putting the sum total at twenty-six suspected mystics (not counting the Emissary). Around fifty Sogoi and thirteen people from Coriolis have also reached the palace, either to be sold in the markets or given as gifts to Zenithian families in the Monolith.
- **Murders:** Leod's pallbearers – the workers used by Jarja to ship the pods to the marshes – have recently gone missing. Leod only knows that they are missing, but Jarja has heard that at least one of their bodies has been pulled up by fishermen on Lake Ytamara.

THE EMISSARY

Jarja is the only one still alive who knows about the special arrangements that surrounded one of the pods:

- **The Emissary:** The last delivery, which was a few days before the Cyclade, contained special cargo. Jarja was called down to Pier 58 to inspect one of the pods there instead of at the palace. There were twelve stasis units at the warehouse when she arrived, of which eight were marked in black. The transparent lid of the pod in question was painted over and Jarja was only allowed to inspect it using her tabula. The pod's coolant system had a back-up battery attached to it. Salamah's orders to Artyr regarding the pod explicitly stated that it be shipped directly to the marshes, but the other pods were brought to the palace for a more thorough inspection as usual.



THE HEGEMONY'S BETRAYAL

Behind the curtains, the marriage of Theda Din Hrama to Marok dol-Quassar has actually been orchestrated by ministers in the Cabinet of Thousands along with Lenove Astir, the Astûrban's spy chief. Astûrban agents implied to Leod that a very beneficial marriage proposal might be coming his way if he accepted Salamah ach-Abaud's contract. The Din Hramas are fully aware of Leod's intentions while going forward with the betrothal, and intend to break off the engagement as soon as the martyr strike team has played its part in the Hegemony's plans. As Aedon never intends to see the marriage contract fulfilled, the disdain he and his fellow hegemonists feel toward the "slummer prince" might shine through their polished facades in the small hours of the night as wine and narcotics begin to loosen the visitors' tongues. Din Hrama's bodyguards are part of the security detail for the party, but are only focused on the well-being of the Zenithian guests and won't lift a finger to help Leod's family or any of the other party-goers.

SECRET DEALS

The PCs might also find out a little bit more about the history of the smuggling operation (below). Further details might also be revealed in Leod's death scene, The Statesman's Last Dance, or by speaking to Jarja if she accompanies the PCs to the Sultra marshes (see Act III).

- **The Deal:** Jarja (or Leod, if appropriately motivated) can reveal that the deal regarding the stasis units has been struck with a Baybasin merchant, Artyr Gholâm, and his Coriolis associate, someone named Salamah ach-Abaud.
- **The Martyr Warriors:** Jarja and Leod believe that Salamah, the likely mastermind of the operation, is a smuggler akbar on Coriolis. They know that Artyr gets paid by Salamah's representatives on Kua only after Jarja has reported the results of her cargo inspection.

LEOD DOL-QUASSAR'S PALACE

Years of groveling at the feet of the Monolitheans have finally paid off – Leod is moving up in the world. The banquet he is about to throw, Alsirsah, is the formal acknowledgement of his son's betrothal to a prominent Zenithian. Leod is under much pressure to present himself as a worthy father-in-law, both economically and socially, which has prompted a meticulous cleaning of the entire palace and many costly renovations. The new rugs have gold fringes, exotic plants fill his garden and clusters of hanging sugar globes illuminate the palace's many dark rooms. The last shipment of delicacies has just arrived and an enormous red carpet with embroideries depicting the Zenithians' blessed arrival into the Third Horizon – specially commissioned for the occasion – covers the steps by the main entrance.

THE ATRIUM

Inside the front doors, visitors are greeted by courtesans and members of the house staff and escorted through a marble colonnade with tasteful floor mosaics. The hallway is dimly lit and the cracked walls are covered with large draperies. The party-goers are taken to the atrium, which the palace's former owner spent a fortune on renovating – white marble walls and floors with inlaid Algolan calligraphy in gold. Eight fountains discreetly praising the Icons serve as natural hubs for mingling. An assortment of dates, exotic fruits, nuts, and refreshing beverages are served here – with servants ready to sample everything

before the more paranoid guests partake. Shaded alcoves line the walls, occupied by important hegemonists reclining on divans, attended to by their own staff. In the middle of the atrium, a dance troupe dressed in swirling burras perform a tastefully modern take on Tempestuous, a classical religious masterpiece, in stark contrast to the statuesque household guards positioned around the room.

THE BANQUET HALL

After some light refreshments in the atrium followed by Leod's welcome speech, the golden gates to the banquet hall are opened. The hall is a grand courtyard lined with palm trees and flower beds. In the center, a fountain showing a stylized Monolith in black obsidian rises high into the air, with a miniature Covenant City in mother of pearl clinging to the base. Flowering vines climb the statue toward the high mosaic ceilings, through which the night sky and the distant lights of the actual Monolith can be seen. Leod's worship of the Zenithians is almost embarrassingly evident.

A large open space at the other end of the hall holds several long tables. Bread sculptures, trays of fruit, and ice statues complete the dinner service, and servants in the shadows stand ready to bring the guests whatever they desire. On an elevated stage, tables and divans are especially prepared for the Din Hramas and dol-Quassars.

THE KITCHENS

Several discreet doors lead from the banquet hall to the staff corridors that connect it to the heart of the palace; the kitchens. The corridors are strictly guarded, and security only allows people dressed as either waiters or slaves through, plus members of the dol-Quassar family of course. Curious or lost guests who wander into the staff areas are kindly but firmly escorted back to the banquet hall. The corridors have simple draperies or panels covering the walls and are dimly lit by strip lights. By following the smell of cooking one can find one's way to the kitchens, via detours to the preparation rooms where the food artists tend to the aesthetic side of the dishes before they are brought out to the guests. Here and there, alcoves for small Icon statues or altars can be found, now crammed full with boxes and sacks of imported foods and spices.

THE BASEMENT

The service corridors also lead to the staff residential areas, from where spiral staircases lead down through storage rooms and wine cellars and eventually reach the basement. Deep underground, thick duralite beams support the enormous weight of the palace above. The corridors here are dark, damp, and smell of stale water and rotting seaweed. The Ramishah's brown waters run underneath the palace, and an old loading dock allows for easy transportation of goods in and out. Jarja Dougha's home and workshop are located near the docks (see the Jarja's Workshop event below).

NPCS

If the PCs run into trouble during the banquet, it likely involves either the dol-Quassar household guards or a hegemonist party-goer's security detail.

HOUSEHOLD GUARDS AND MERCENARIES

Leod's personal guards and those of some of the hegemonist guests are the best money can buy. Their care and loyalty are more or less absolute, as a reputation for being a sloppy bodyguard would ruin any chances at future employment, or end up getting them killed.

APPEARANCE: Leod's guards are stone-faced soldiers in red coats and white turbans. The hegemonist guards prefer more practical uniforms with tasteful embroideries and usually wear berets with their employer's family sigil on them.

CHARACTERISTICS: Quiet and stern, but respectful toward people of high status.

ATTRIBUTES: **STRENGTH 3, AGILITY 4, WITS 3, EMPATHY 2**
HIT POINTS: 7
MIND POINTS: 5
REPUTATION: 3
SKILLS: Ranged Combat 3, Melee Combat 2, Observation 2, Dexterity 1
ARMOR: 0
WEAPONS: Expandable baton, Vulcan carbine
GEAR: Cuffs

LEOD DOL-QUASSAR, SMUGGLER PRINCE

Leod is a nobleman descended from matriarch Yijdi dari-Karila, a Dabaran pasha from the lowlands north of Dar Bahri. Leod's grandmother worked together with Algolan slavers to hunt down and capture Krahin humanites in the Marfik system. Business was booming as the construction of the Coriolis station and much of the early heavy industry around the Monolith wore out slaves faster than they could be replaced. Leod's father was less successful however, and lost much of his inherited business around the Conglomerate, to the point where he was no longer welcome to trade in Covenant City. When Leod assumed the title of dar and head of the family, he took it upon himself to make up for his father's mistakes and get back on the Monolitheans' good side. By cooperating with the Birbasils, he gradually took over Little Algol, out-maneuvering the Algolan slavers who used to run the district. His pursuit of Zenithian acceptance led him to renounce his Dabaran origins and change his name to the more suitable dol-Quassar. Leod's operation in Little Algol is virtually unchallenged, and he makes an enormous profit from the slave trade he runs with the help of both the Syndicate and several smaller, independent groups. He knows many dirty secrets about important people in the Monolith, which has enabled him to orchestrate the marriage of his only son to the fifth daughter of Aedon Din Hrama.



APPEARANCE: Thin and somewhat weary-looking, dressed in expensive silk clothing and with Zenithian face paint closely modelled on the patterns used by the Quassar clan.

CHARACTERISTICS: Looks around anxiously and scratches his left arm when nervous.

ATTRIBUTES: **STRENGTH 3, AGILITY 3, WITS 3, EMPATHY 4**
HIT POINTS: 6
MIND POINTS: 7
REPUTATION: 7
SKILLS: Culture 5, Manipulation 4, Command 2, Science 1
TALENT: Smuggler, Favors Owed
GEAR: Communicator with pulse function, expensive clothing.

- **SMUGGLER:** At the cost of 1 DP, Leod can come up with a clever lie to avoid conflict, giving him an extra six on his **MANIPULATION** roll, in addition to the result of his dice.
- **FAVORS OWED:** Over the course of a long career, Leod has gathered outstanding debts and favors from the top of the Monolith to the alleys of Little Algol. At the cost of 1 DP, he can either halve or double the price of a contract he is negotiating, whichever is the most favorable to him.

JARJA DOUGHA, GUNSMITH AND ENGINEER

The Dougha family name is a guarantee of skill and quality when it comes to engineering. Many important metalworkers, architects, and engineers have sealed their work with the Dougha crest over the years. Jarja was brought up in the shadow of the achievements of her half-brothers, which led to her leaving home at an early age to work as an engineering apprentice aboard the Niliora, a bulk hauler working the Miran chain. Her interest in gunsmithing was first encouraged by the captain of the Niliora, Ordana mogul-descendent Mandril Dûlghan. He was secretly running arms for both the Legion and the Order, which eventually cost him his life, and

Jarja returned to Kua, badly burned and having lost one eye after a terrible battle. Leod dol-Quassar found her working as a low-level fixer and arranged for her to live and work under slave-like conditions in the basement of his palace.

APPEARANCE: A meticulous woman who looks much older than she actually is thanks to burn scars that never healed properly. She usually wears a dark green kameez with gold details and a simple, lighter green shawl around her head. She keeps her cybernetic eye closed or fixed on the ground when speaking to strangers.

CHARACTERISTICS: Adjusts her shawl constantly to cover the burn scars. Touches her cheek now and then to make sure her thick makeup cover is intact.

ATTRIBUTES: **STRENGTH 2, AGILITY 3, WITS 5, EMPATHY 3**
HIT POINTS: 5
MIND POINTS: 8
REPUTATION: 4
SKILLS: Technology 4, Science 3, Data Djinn 2, Medicurgy 2, Manipulation 1
TALENT: Gunsmith, Adaptive Cybernetic Eye, Reputable Employer
GEAR: Simple tools (+1 on **TECHNOLOGY** tests), simple clothing, tabula, tag with 250 birr

- **GUNSMITH:** Jarja loves guns and understands them better than she understands people. She gets a +2 to **TECHNOLOGY** when it comes to making or repairing guns and ammunition.
- **ADAPTIVE CYBERNETIC EYE**: Jarja's right eye was destroyed years ago, and Leod paid for surgery to replace it with a cybernetic one. The implant can zoom in on details and gives Jarja a +1 to **TECHNOLOGY** when making fine repairs, and a +1 to **RANGED COMBAT** and **OBSERVATION** (Slow action).
- **REPUTABLE EMPLOYER:** Jarja's employment with Leod dol-Quassar is well-known around Little Algol. She gets a +3 to Reputation when negotiating with or threatening someone on Leod's orders.

AKOUBA KOSHA, JUDICATOR AND ASTÛRBAN AGENT

Judicator Akouba Kosha is an undercover Astûrban agent working for the hegemonists to spy on the Consortium. She has allied herself with Judge Kurahan to make sure important missions are sent her way. Her objective in this scenario is to make sure the PCs come to the right conclusions and expose the martyr strike team's operation, thereby forcing the Order of the Pariah and the Consortium into conflict. If the PCs' investigation seems to be turning up other evidence, Akouba will intervene and make sure that all witnesses that could implicate the Astûrban in any way are taken care of. She has chosen to attend Leod's banquet to meet with the PCs there to check up on their progress.

APPEARANCE: Dark hair in a knot. Zenithian face-paint. Quiet and watchful with piercing, reddish-brown eyes. Dresses in a loose, red gown with many layers of fabric that hide her acc pistol and body armor.

CHARACTERISTICS: Stern voice but doesn't speak much. Maintains eye contact in conversations to stare down her opponent.

ATTRIBUTES: **STRENGTH 4, AGILITY 4, WITS4, EMPATHY 3**
HIT POINTS: 10
MIND POINTS: 9
REPUTATION: 7
SKILLS: Manipulation 3, Melee Combat 3, Ranged Combat 3, Command 2, Dexterity 2, Observation 2
TALENT: Tough, Hardened, Codex of the Judicators, Astûrban Lackey (see page 43)
ARMOR: Protective vest 2
WEAPONS: Judicator-model acc pistol (+1 to Initiative), power glove
GEAR: Personal communicator with pulse function

EVENTS

Few of the events below require DP to activate, but several of them contain opportunities for the GM to spend points to challenge the PCs further. The PCs may attempt to infiltrate the banquet in a number of ways, either via the main entrance – the The Red Carpet event – or through a service entrance, as described in Behind the Scenes. The events that take place inside the palace describe several different chains of events.

THE RED CARPET

Rows of armed guards surround the palace, dressed in red caftans and white turbans. Their Vulcan carbines are polished and shine in the light from the setting sun. A closer look does however reveal that the rest of their gear varies, and a trained soldier (with at least COMMAND 1) will immediately recognize the group as a mix of household guards and hired guns.

On the night of the banquet, the palace gates are opened. Braziers and sugar globes floating in bird baths illuminate the night. The red carpet leading up the stairs is packed with people – wealthy merchants with their families in tow next to hegemonists in palanquins surrounded by bodyguards in strict formation. Five guards and a bio scanner by the door make sure no uninvited guests are let in.

- **Outraged Guest:** As the PCs make their way through the crowd, a commotion up ahead catches their attention. An outraged merchant walks up to the guards by the door, screaming angrily: "By the Judge's mercy, I shan't suffer such slander from the likes of you! Do you have any idea of who I am? Leod dol-Quassar's third cousin – that's who! Now let me in at once…". A baton strike to the stomach cuts off the indignant trouble-maker mid-sentence and four strong hands quickly haul him away down some side steps toward the dark waters of the river.
- **The Guest List:** If any of the PCs have either the Faction standing: The Zenithian Hegemony talent or contacts within the Syndicate, their names can be added to the guest list and they are allowed in without problem. If they aren't properly dressed however, they will be the focus of numerous muttered comments and head shakes by the other guests throughout the evening.
- **Concealed Weapons:** Guest list or not, if the PCs try to smuggle weapons into the banquet and are caught, they will be regarded as trespassers and treated accordingly. PCs who wish to push their luck must win an opposed INFILTRATION vs OBSERVATION test (as the guards have the bio scanner, they roll seven dice, and the normal bonus from a Small item is negated).
- **Uninvited:** If the PCs try to enter through the front door without invitations, the guards quickly lose their patience. The PCs are told to leave, and unless they do so immediately, the guards will use batons and handcuffs to escort the group away from the palace, back toward the Souk Habra.
- **The Judicator Intervenes:** If there is a fight between the PCs and the guards by the door, Akouba Kosha will try to step in and cool things down. She thanks the guards for their excellent sense of duty but says she can take it from here, escorting the PCs away from the crowds. She then helps the PCs get in through one of the service entrances (see Behind the Scenes below).

At the cost of 2 DP, one or more of the PCs have accidently been erased from the guest list. The guards will quickly raise their voices and pull out the batons, but a demanding (–1) MANIPULATION test can calm the situation, after which an additional scan reveals that the PCs in question belongs on the invitation list after all.

Cost: 0, 2 DP

BEHIND THE SCENES

Dignitary City is an exclusive community and attending Leod's banquet is nothing but a dream if you lack the proper contacts or social status. Without the hard work of the many slaves and hands who carry the food trays, tend to the gardens, and wait at the tables however, there wouldn't be much of a party to speak of. The palace staff live a quiet life in the shadows, sharing over-crowded dorms, grubby kitchens, and moldy bathrooms. Deliveries intended for the party are admitted through the many service entrances around the palace or arrive by water directly to the basement warehouses. In the days leading up to the banquet, an endless stream of carriers have shuttled back and forth from the Souk Habra or the black markets by the Marzu Khala spaceport to the palace. Even as the guests are starting to arrive, the last shipments of exotic beverages – Sadaalian honey, Dabaran highland wine, and juice made from Miran fruits – are still on their way. Leod has also hired extra security for the evening, bolstering the ranks of his household guards with a group of mercenaries.

- **Security:** All cargo brought inside is inspected – two guards are posted at every entrance with an open line to Khalim al-Arim, the head slave in charge of all party purchases. Convincing the guards to let something in without them checking with Khalim first requires a successful MANIPULATION test at –2. If the roll fails, the PCs are asked to leave, and more guards will arrive to arrest them if they refuse (see the At the Prince's Mercy event below).
- **The Judicator:** Akouba Kosha keeps an eye on the PCs from a distance regardless of whether the group have contacted judge Kurahan by now or not. As the GM, you can have the judicator contact the PCs and help them get inside if they are struggling. Her status as a judicator will enable her to convince both suspicious guards and Khalim al-Arim that the PCs are special detectives brought in to neutralize the threat of the rumored assassin.

This ruse won't give the PCs full access to the palace, but might get them an audience with the paranoid Leod after the party is over. After helping the PCs get inside, Akouba enters through the front gates and mingles with the other guests.

- **In the Shadows:** Inside, the PCs can move relatively freely throughout the staff areas, but guards block their way down to the basement and keep them from taking part in the actual party. Listening from the shadows, they can vaguely make out the gist of Leod's welcome speech.
- **Disguises:** If the PCs acquire waiter or entertainer disguises, they can move between the staff areas and the party unhindered. Getting the disguises requires either a **MANIPULATION** test or the use of force, as well as an **INFILTRATION** test to blend in properly (one test for the entire group is enough). Each indiscretion or breach of etiquette while in disguise will remove one six from their roll, and when no sixes remain, a guest will loudly challenge their professionalism and a group of guards will take them away for questioning.

Cost: 0 DP

THE BETROTHAL DANCE

When all guests have arrived, Leod delivers his welcome speech and raises a cup to Aedon Din Hrama, his daughter Theda, and his own son Marok (see the box below).

- **The Hegemonists:** If the PCs look around the crowd during the speech, they will spot several hegemonists talking and joking amongst themselves about Leod's complete lack of honor. Some of them look uneasy when the Icons are mentioned, but proudly sip their wine when the Monolith or the Zenithian way of life is praised in the speech.
- **The Gunsmith:** The PCs might also spot Jarja Dougha among the guests. She is not formally dressed, nor does she appear to belong to the staff – her clothes are practical but discreet. She approaches Leod after his speech and they exchange a few words, after which she returns to the shadows. Later during the evening, she exits the party and heads down to her workshop.
- **Tense Host:** Jarja and Leod share an important feature – when not conversing with someone or entertaining the guests, they look nervously around the room and seem on edge.

After the speech, a group of musicians begin to play and courtesans escort Marok and Theda to the center of the room. They perform a formal betrothal dance, kept far apart by a swirling sea of hired dancers to illustrate the distance between their aching hearts that will soon be over. The first dance of the Alsirsah is a prelude to the couple's Dance of the Union, a traditional dance at their coming wedding symbolizing their melding into one.

Cost: 0 DP (Mandatory)

ALSIRSAH

The Alsirsah is originally a Dabaran traditional feast where the families of the betrothed meet to finalize the terms of the wedding. The life bond concerns not only the happy couple but their families as well, and the Alsirsah marks the end of an often lengthy period of negotiations over the two sides' respective duties toward one another. The party is usually thrown by the family who marries upward, to show that they are worthy of the coming union.

During the banquet, Leod makes a welcome speech praising both the Din Hramas and the other guests – they will act as witnesses when the final contract is signed, making their opinions of the host very important.

"Honored guests and friends, I welcome you with all my heart to the Alsirsah. Tonight, we celebrate the union of the dol-Quassars and the noble Din Hramas, paragons of Zenithian light and wisdom, whom we have to thank for opening our eyes to a new Horizon.

Marok dol-Quassar of the proud Dabaran blood – exalted Dabaran who stalwartly fought off the darkness during the Long Night! – seeks the hand of Theda Din Hrama, a child of Ardha, a bringer of light from humanity's cradle.

Honored guests, today is a proud day. May the Icons hear us as we raise our glasses toward the Monolith and pray for their blessing of this blood bond. May they guide us to honor our history and welcome the future.

Dearest of friends, may your cups never run dry, your plates never be empty and your spirits lose themselves in music and dance – may this Alsirsah be a fond memory for all of us until She the most Merciful comes to grace us with her slumber. May this day mark the birth of a brighter tomorrow."

– LEOD DOL-QUASSAR, DABARAN NOBLEMAN

LADY IN RED

If the PCs haven't met judicator Akouba Kosha in this scenario

yet, she will approach them during the banquet. It doesn't matter if the PCs are there as guests or disguised as staff. One of them will suddenly bump into her and meet her fiery eyes or spot a group of guests parting as a woman in a red dress heads across the floor straight toward them. She pulls them aside and informs them that judge Kurahan has sent her to guarantee their safety and help them with their investigation.

- Coriolis: If this is the first time since the end of *In the Wake of the Martyr* that the PCs have met someone from Coriolis, Akouba will update them on the current state of affairs. The Order of the Pariah's cathedral cruisers Nimbus and Burana have conducted weapons tests, and the Cyclade celebrations have been plagued by riots. The disappearance of the Emissary has the Council on edge and accusations of incompetence and sloppy security have shaken the Consortium. Legion cruiser Sandrif and a flotilla of torpedo ships have taken up positions around the Kua system's portal station as a show of force.

Cost: 0 DP

LOOSE LIPS

The PCs spot a group of neo-Zenithians sitting around Marok dol-Quassar's table, complimenting him for the grand party and toasting in his honor. It is getting late and spirits are high. They give him wine and stuff a hookah for him, but a closer look reveals shady intentions behind their smiles. The wine in Marok's cup comes from one of the guest's private cooler and there is a faint smell of opor oil in the air.

- **Blood Purity:** As the drugs kick in, the group laugh at Marok's ramblings and some of them spit demonstratively on the floor while making scornful remarks about how the Din Hramas won't go through with the wedding. No hegemonist bloodline would ever dream of marrying into a clan of degenerate Firstcomes. They theorize amongst themselves about the motivations for the union, and agree that Leod is either blackmailing a high-ranking Din Hrama family member, or that the Cabinet of Thousands have plans that for now require the help of the smuggler prince. In any case, they find the prospect of the Din Hramas honoring the marriage contract laughable.

At the cost of 1 DP, you can have the group spot the PCs eavesdropping. They will loudly accuse the PCs of making threatening comments about their families and signal their bodyguards to remove them from the party. At the cost of 1 additional DP, the bodyguards take the PCs to the atrium and rough them up a bit (a couple of baton strikes and punches for a PC of your choice). A successful **MANIPULATION** test by a PC with a high Reputation score can calm the situation down, but if the PCs try to defend Marok's honor, the household guards will be alerted to the commotion and cause a scene. Alternatively, have Akouba Kosha intervene before things get out of hand.

Cost: 0, 1–2 DP

UNDER THE JACKBOOT

On the dance floor, a member of the Din Hrama party bumps into one of the waiters who drops a bottle of wine on the floor. The hegemonist's djellaba darkens with stains, and as the waiter bends down to pick up the shards of glass from the floor, a foot stamps down hard on his hand, further shattering the glass underneath his palm. The bleeding waiter desperately tries to get the foot off his hand, but the Zenithian alerts some nearby guards and accuses the waiter of assaulting a guest. The guards brusquely shove the waiter away toward an entrance to the staff corridors.

Cost: 1 DP

AN AUDIENCE WITH THE PRINCE

The PCs have two ways of getting a private meeting with Leod – either by having their names on the guest list and politely asking to see the host later in the evening, or by posing as Akouba Kosha's aides, in which case the spooked prince will demand to see them. A discreet courtesan will approach the PCs at some point during the evening, and ask the PCs to follow them to the atrium. A sharp-eyed PC might spot guards discreetly surrounding them, but maintaining a respectful distance. Unless the PCs accept the invitation without hesitation, the guards will close in and rather roughly escort the PCs to the atrium. After a few uncomfortable minutes alone with the guards, Leod dol-Quassar arrives. See the A Chat with Leod box below.

Cost: 0 DP

AT THE PRINCE'S MERCY

The actions of the PCs during the evening of the banquet might have landed them in trouble. Their gear is seized and their hands and feet are tied. Guards drag them into a dark, empty room. Moonlight seeps in through a skylight, but a thick stained glass window makes escaping upward impossible. In the back of the room, there is a simple bed and an Algolan rug with a scrolling vine pattern in gold. Dark, ominous stains

both on the carpet and on the cushions on the bed raises suspicions about the fate of previous visitors. A copper tray holds a pitcher of water and a plate of dates and grapes. If the PCs try to resist or break free, the guards will beat them up with their batons before leaving them and locking the heavy door from the outside. At the cost of 1 DP, the guards are in an especially foul mood, and beat one PC regardless of whether she resisted or not. In this case, choose the PC best equipped to take a beating – or the weakest one, for a darker turn of events. The party can still be heard in the distance, but no one seems to notice or care about the PCs regardless of how much noise they themselves cause. Many hours later, the door finally opens and Leod, dressed to the nines, enters, accompanied by eight of his guards. See the A Chat with Leod box below.

- **The judicator:** After the audience, a guard escorts Akouba Kosha into the room, who exchanges a few words with the nobleman. Leod agrees to let the PCs go if they promise never to challenge his authority again.

Cost: 0, 1 DP

A CHAT WITH LEOD

Unless the PCs manage to charm or impress Leod, he won't answer any of their questions. Resolve this using an opposed **MANIPULATION** roll, with Leod having much better leverage (see page 61 of the Coriolis core rulebook). See the Important Facts section at the beginning of the scene for more information.

- **THE ASSASSIN:** Leod is interested in anything the PCs can tell him about the recent killings in Little Algol. If they caused trouble during the banquet, he will accuse them of being in league with the killer.
- **THE DEAL:** If the PCs win Leod's trust, he will reveal that he believes the assassin is coming for him because of a deal he struck a while back with one Salamah ach-Abaud, a smuggler on Coriolis who needed help shipping slaves through Little Algol. Artyr Ghôlam has been in charge of the retrieval of the merchandise from the jungle, and Hassam work crews have then transported the pods to Leod's palace.
- **LEOD'S COMPENSATION:** Leod's payment for his services was that he could keep any slaves and pods not marked for further delivery. His engineer Jarja inspected all pods that arrived and compiled a report for Leod, which he in turn relayed to Salamah ach-Abaud via an intermediary working at the Marzu Khala spaceport called Dara Hirsha.
- **THE END DESTINATION:** He points out that Jarja knows more about the end destination of the marked cargo than he does. She has been in charge of the logistics along with a trusted team of carriers – jokingly referred to by Leod as "pallbeareres" – who recently all went missing during a job in Little Algol. He knows that the cargo is taken to somewhere in the Sultra marshes, but didn't inquire after more details as he was content with having a steady supply of slave labor to sell or gift to the Monlitheans. He is reluctant to let the PCs see Jarja, but will agree to a short meeting if they appear to be on his side.
- **THE EMISSARY:** Leod knows nothing about the Emissary and is adamant that its disappearance is unrelated to his affairs. The Xenian ghost has absolutely not been in his palace.

JARJA'S WORKSHOP

A spiral staircase and two elevators lead down to the basement. Visitors are immediately greeted by a heavy odor of mold and rotting seaweed, inadequately masked by burning incense and dried fruit. The worn corridor ends at an anonymous door, beside which an alcove houses a wooden Dancer statue on a makeshift altar surrounded by little bowls of dried fruit and sticks of burning incense.

Jarja can be seen in the shadows during the first part of the banquet, but she quickly tires of the party and heads back downstairs. Four large rooms make up Jarja's apartment/workshop. The lock on the door is not that advanced, and a successful **DATA DJINN** or **TECHNOLOGY** test can circumvent the security system, opening the door without setting off the alarm (see below). Jarja lives mainly in the first, sparsely furnished room – it holds a simple bed in an alcove in the wall, some worn rugs, a table, and a low divan, plus a modest kitchen unit in a corner and a few cupboards.

An open garage door from the first room connects to a larger hall with a crane on rails in the ceiling and high shelving lining the walls. In the back, another large door leads to a stone pier. One of Dignitary City's many canals diverted from the Ramishah runs through a tunnel underneath the palace. The workshop room is packed full of empty stasis units. Eight metal cages in the far corner stand ready for the next group of thawed slaves. Vats of coolant liquid stacked on top of each other sit next to the cages, some of them leaking their corrosive content onto the floor.

THE WORKSHOP

1. Altar
2. Bedroom
3. Main Workshop and Warehouse
4. Loading Docks
5. Empty Stasis Units
6. Cages
7. Spare Part Storage
8. WC
9. Jarja's Workshop
10. Elevator
11. Stairs
12. Nekatra
13. Weapons Locker

1x1 meters



- **Frozen Corpses:** Two of the stasis units are active, humming faintly. An easy (+1) **MEDICURGY** or **TECHNOLOGY** test reveals that the people inside are dead. The pods have been damaged during transport, with fatal interruptions to the stasis cycle as a consequence. One of the pods has white markings, the other black. The corpse in the black-marked pod is twisted in quiet agony and frozen fingers have clawed in vain against the lid. Loose objects and pieces of clothing also seem to have attempted escape and are frozen to the lid in a strange manner (the deceased mystic inside was telekinetic).
- **The Tabula:** There is a tabula on a workbench nearby. It is locked and requires a successful **DATA DJINN** test to open. It contains miscellaneous notes about stasis units and spare part orders as well as a manifest listing all pods that have passed through the palace. The manifest lists twenty-five pods with black markings (Jarja didn't register the Emissary), of which six have been classified as "damaged in transit". Of the thirteen white-marked pods that are included in the manifest, four show as damaged (one of them is the young slave the PCs may have met in the Souk Habra earlier). The manifest also states that fifty-two Sogoi slaves have been delivered from Artyr to Leod as compensation for the damaged goods.
- **Nar'sh – the Prisoner:** The cages are simple constructions made from welded-together steel rods. The doors have simple code locks and the narrow space inside is just enough for a bed and a bucket. One of the cages contains a nekatra, gnawing desperately on a bone. Torn clothing and more pieces of bone in the cage suggests that the prisoner is chewing on the remains of former cellmates – three of them to be exact, which a successful **MEDICURGY** test can reveal. The nekatra is famished and has been treated very cruelly by Leod's people for many segments. She cannot talk and is very scared and aggressive. A critical success on a **MANIPULATION** test is required to make her trust the PCs, but if they also give her food and dress her infected wounds

(**MEDICURGY**), she actually becomes rather attached to the group. She manages to convey to the PCs that her name is Nar'sh. Use the nekatra stats from page 317 of the Coriolis core rulebook, but in her current conditon, Nar'sh has only 1 MP and 4 HP. Her claws have been surgically removed and her paws are scarred and twisted. At the cost of 2 DP, you can have Nar'sh attack the PCs when they let her out, even if she first appeared calm.

Next to the open garage door to the main workshop, a second door leads to a storage room for spare parts that also contains a toilet and shower. A PC who passes a **TECHNOLOGY** test can scavenge D6 ordinary spare parts here. A small door behind a shelf leads to the last room, Jarja's private, smaller workshop. The workbenches in here are covered in gun parts, ammunition, and tabulas with schematics. A gun locker and a high shelf in a corner display Jarja's finished projects, waiting to be sold by Leod, but she keeps much of what she builds secret from her master (see below).

- **The Gunsmith:** If Jarja is home, she can be found in her private workshop, hunched over her latest project. She works on a Vulcan stock in a metal lathe while glancing at a tabula and will only notice the PCs when they enter the room. She quickly realizes that fighting her way out isn't an option, and will try to ascertain what the PCs want instead, in the hopes that they will let her go if she helps them out. Unless the PCs pass a **MANIPULATION** test however, she will lie and look for an opportunity to escape. If they achieve a critical success, Jarja realizes that the PCs are her best shot at escaping her indentured servitude under Leod's cruel reign and will trade all her knowledge about the smuggling operation for safe passage out of the palace (see the Important Facts section above). As the GM, you could also decide that Jarja is out when the PCs search her workshop, instead introducing her during the audience with Leod or in the next scene, The Statesman's Last Dance.
- **The Gun Locker:** The room contains 3D6 Vulcan reloads – that look very much like the special ammunition used during the



attack on the Emissary's residence – and a gun locker. The locker is locked and very hard to force open. If Jarja is convinced of the PCs' noble intentions, she will open it for them, but opening it without her help requires passing both a normal **SCIENCE** test and a difficult (–2) **DATA DJINN** test. The locker contains a Vulcan carbine equivalent of a Legion Dayal-3 (see page 124 of the Coriolis core rulebook), two Vulcan crickets, a smoke grenade and some important new leads (see below).

- **The Smuggler:** The gun locker holds a file containing the contact information of a smuggler in Little Algol called Dara Hirsha. Dara is a Sadaalian mercenary turned smuggler using old connections within the Lama gang on Coriolis to ship contraband camouflaged as medical supplies onto the station. The file also contains an order placed by Salamah ach-Abaud for ten Vulcan carbines, four protective vests, and several cases of special ammunition, signed as delivered to Coriolis about a segment ago. A complementary order for more ammunition and an assortment of tools was placed and delivered about a week later. Jarja has kept her dealings with Salamah secret from Leod, hoping to put aside enough money to be able to escape the palace at some point in the future.

At the cost of 2 DP, Jarja has rigged her home with a silent alarm that goes off as the PCs enter even if they passed the test to open the door (if they failed, the alarm goes off without it costing you the DP). After a few minutes, four guards storm the workshop and the risk of a firefight is high. If the PCs are defeated or give up, they are brought upstairs in chains (see the At the Prince's Mercy event).

Cost: 0, 2 DP

THE STATESMAN'S LAST DANCE

The PCs have made their way to Leod dol-Quassar's palace and finally found out the end destination of the abducted mystics – the Sul-Mahala palace in the Sultra marshes – as well as more details about the arrangement between Leod, Salamah, and Artyr. The banquet infiltration has diverted their attention from the Order assassin however, who now makes a return in style – prince Leod suddenly collapses on the cold marble floor!

PANIC

This is the last scene in Act II and it begins with Leod collapsing on the floor. In the ensuing turmoil, bodyguards belonging to different factions of party-goers will open fire on one another and then escort their respective dignitaries out of the way, trampling unlucky waiters and staff who get in their way.

THE SITUATION

After the PCs' meeting with Leod or Jarja, someone poisons the prince, and as he collapses, panic breaks out among the guests.

IMPORTANT FACTS

The PCs should know about the Sultra marshes by now. If they are accompanied by Jarja, she can fill in the blanks afterwards if they still lack some of the information.

LEOD'S CONFESSION

If the PCs make their way through the chaos to Leod and try to help him, he will whisper all he knows of the operation to them:

- Salamah ach-Abaud is actually not the mastermind behind the operation. The people in the Sultra are clearly the end customers, but someone else is behind the planning of it all.
- Leod's informants in the Monolith have revealed to him that the Zenithian Hegemony – more specifically some of the hegemonist ministers in the Cabinet – are manipulating the operation for some unknown reason.

LEOD'S LAST WORDS

The following information is only revealed to the PCs if they really put their backs into keeping Leod alive, thus shielding him from Akouba Kosha's attempts to kill him (see the The Dying Dandy event below).

- Leod has come to the conclusion that the hegemonists wish to destabilize Coriolis to wrestle control over the station from the Consortium.
- He has been approached by the Hegemony's secret police, the Astûrban. They wanted to make sure he took Salamah's offer by promising to get his son married to Theda Din Hrama.
- His informants tell him that the Astûrban have agents inside Salamah's group, both on Coriolis and on Kua – "...don't trust anyone!"

BANQUET HALL

1. Fontain
2. Walkway
3. Servants Area
4. The Grand Stairs
5. Statues
6. Door to Kitchen
7. Dol-Quassar's Seat

2x2 meters



THE PALACE

The scene begins with Leod's collapse in the banquet hall. From there, the guests and their bodyguards can either move toward the plaza outside the palace by crossing the atrium, or they can hide in the staff areas, or even in the basement. Consult the descriptions of the palace in Criminal Royalty above for more details (page 140).

NPCS

You can use many of the NPCs already described above. The scene mainly involves the bodyguards, (page 141) who try to escort their clients to safety; Jarja, (page 142) who tries to flee the palace; Akouba Kosha (page 143) and Ataia the assassin (page 132), the latter two having unfinished business in the palace.

EVENTS

During the scene, the PCs must try to exit the palace as it rapidly descends into chaos. It is important that the PCs witness Leod's death and that the ensuing chaos makes their escape both dangerous and dramatic, but they should eventually make it out and head for the docks to continue their journey to the Sultra marshes.

THE DYING DANDY

Over the course of the evening, the final marriage negotiations between the Din Hramas and the dol-Qaussars have taken place. Read out the text below or use it as inspiration:

Leod gets up and walks over to the steps leading down from the head tables. He looks out across the room and raises his hands toward the Din Hramas in a welcoming gesture.

"Honored guests, an accord has been signed. Dabaran and Zenith shall become one.

Ours will be a line courtesans will sing of for centuries to come.

This is the beginning of something new – a beautiful, more harmonious Horizon.

Witness, friends, the miracle we call unity."

Just before Leod collapses, an alert PC who passes an **OBSERVATION** test spots the soothsayer they saw outside the Hassam offices earlier in the scenario. She is dressed as a household

servant, standing in the shadows at the far end of the hall. The PC also see that she is the one who shoots at the bodyguards with a silenced acc pistol after Leod's collapse (see below) and then disappears into the crowd.

As Aedon Din Hrama rises with clenched jaws and a sullen face to acknowledge the legality of the contract, Leod suddenly slumps forward in a convulsive spasm. Bloody saliva sprays across the floor as he gasps for air, and he stumbles toward his bodyguards but falls to the floor. He hits his head hard on the steps, and a pool of blood quickly begins spread across the white marble.

The nobleman's house guards lunge toward the stairs as the rest of the guests let out a collective scream and the wealthier party-goers' bodyguards get in formation around their clients. As Leod's guards near their master, they also suddenly fall to the ground, turning the elevated platform by the head tables into a massacre as blood splatters across the white linen. Akouba Kosha gets into cover behind a nearby column and shouts at you to do the same as the bulk of the crowd start to flee toward the nearest exit. Leod lies alone and bleeding on the steps, stretching a trembling hand out toward you.

If the PCs move toward Leod, you can spend 1 DP to have three guards approach them, guns drawn, shouting at them to get away from him and throw down their weapons. The group must either buy one PC enough time to speak to the dying prince by stalling the guards, or prepare to fight them.

- **At Death's Door:** If a PC gets to Leod in time and manages to stabilize his wounds, he will reveal more details about the



operation (see Important Facts above). He is at 0 HP and has suffered a critical injury equivalent of Severed carotid artery (see page 97 of the Coriolis core rulebook), but he remains conscious.

- **Akouba:** Akouba really doesn't want Leod to say another word to the PCs, and if they approach the dying prince, she will as well. She offers to carry him toward an exit if the PCs protect her. After a hectic escape to the atrium, they find that Leod has passed. Unbeknownst to the PCs, Akouba hastened his demise during the run. If a clever PC somehow catches onto this and confronts her with it, she will deny it and, if all else fails, turn on the PCs. She would prefer not to blow her cover however, as she wishes to remain close with the group to steer their suspicions toward the Order.

Cost: 0–1 DP (Mandatory)

THE GUNSMITH'S PLEA

As the PCs are about to exit the banquet hall, Jarja comes rushing up to them. She thinks she might be next on the assassin's hit list and asks them to help her escape. She is desperate and will do anything to leave the palace alive – even show them the way through the Sultra. There are river barges ready and waiting in the basement that could get them out of the city. Unless the PCs already investigated her gun locker, she gives them the weapons and the file it contains.

At the cost of 1 DP, you can have Ataia fire a silenced shot at Jarja before disappearing into the staff corridors.

- **Jarja's last words:** If Jarja doesn't manage to escape the palace, you should have her reveal the abductees' end destination before she dies – the Sul-Mahala palace, located right underneath Cataract 27. She wishes to make up for the crimes she has committed by sending so many people to their deaths in the marshes, or to a life in chains in the Monolith.

Cost: 0–1 DP (Mandatory)

COLLATERAL DAMAGE

When the majority of the guests have made their way to the atrium, a bomb hidden near the front door explodes. The assassin has booby-trapped the main door as a back-up plan.

- **Explosion:** The charge is a quadruple satchel charge (blast effect 4, weapon damage 1, CRIT 1) and the GM decides who is close enough to the explosion to get hit. Armor may be tested normally, and the main door or one of the columns nearby count as cover 4 and 5, respectively.

Cost: 2 DP

THE ICON'S REFLECTION

The butterfly's wings shadow the Horizon.
The pain of birth awaits us
between moments lived and moments lost.
The mirror defines the distance
between reflected and reflection.

– Nabi-mu-Qad, the Messenger Emissary

FRIEND OR FOE

A group of between three and five guards – either household guards or some party guest's personal security forces – get in the PCs' way. The guards feel threatened and shout at the PCs to drop their weapons (if they have any). Unless they obey, combat is imminent. The same situation might also arise if the PCs get too close to, or in the way of, a dignitary being escorted out of the palace.

- **Threat Level:** At the cost of 1 DP, the guards are threatening but cautious, and a fight can be avoided by successfully testing **COMMAND**, or **MANIPULATION** at –1. At the cost of 2 DP, the guard immediately open fire.

This event can be used multiple time during the PCs' escape from the palace.

Cost: 1–2 DP

RESONANCE – INTRUDERS

A mystic PC might pick up traces of resonance left behind by the Emissary.

- During an especially stressful situation, such as the escape from the palace, the PC suddenly feels a sharp pain in her chest. Her skin crawls, her eyes tear up, and everything goes dark.
- At the cost of 1 DP, the PC must test **MYSTIC POWERS** to remain in control of herself. Failure means that the intense pain and discomfort becomes so bad that she gets a –2 to all actions where she must rely on sight or touch for D6 minutes.
- Searing, stabbing pain overwhelms the PC and she hears voices chanting in Zalosi. A successful **CULTURE** test is required to interpret the chant: "We carry your crown within us. Your suffering – our actions. Our hands – your blades. In the name of the Martyr, we separate darkness from light…"
- The affected PC can also hear a monotonous song, a shielding prayer. The song sweeps the pain away and the PC feels a divine calm surround her (see the boxed text below). The stabbing feeling ceases, the pain disappears, and the song becomes a single note.

What the PC is experiencing is the Emissary being tortured. In the martyr strike team's secret base in the Sultra, the warriors are trying to interrogate the Emissary, but the wounds from the torture heal as fast as they are inflicted.

Cost: 0, 1 DP

THE KILLER STRIKES

When Jarja and the PCs have exited the palace and are making their way across the plaza or along the river, the assassin strikes again. Her goal is to take out Jarja and then escape, but she is very stressed and her shot might hit someone else instead. As the GM, you could for example roll a die to determine who is hit – 1–3 means Jarja, and 4–6 means a randomly chosen PCs. Ataia will strike from an elevated position and from behind cover, and will try to funnel the PCs toward groups of guards in the area to possibly escalate the violence. At the cost of 2 DP, you can play the Friend or Foe event above during this event to aid Ataia in her attempts to take out Jarja.

- **Death Before Dishonor:** The assassin will do whatever it takes to kill Jarja, and if she succeeds, she will disappear into the night. If the PCs get the upper hand and manage to wound or capture her however, she would rather take her own life than allow herself to be interrogated.
- **Mission Accomplished:** See the The Gunsmith's Plea event above.

Cost: 0, 2 DP

ENDING ACT 2

When you end Act II, the PCs will have figured out that the pods they have been chasing all the way from Coriolis eventually are intended for a palace in the Sultra marshes. They have acquired details regarding the smuggling operation, and may have started to suspect that not just the Order are behind all this. Akouba will want to accompany the PCs for the rest of the mission, but they are free to decide for themselves if they wish to have Jarja guide them through the marshes or not.

After escaping the carnage in Dignitary City, the PCs leave the shadow of the Monolith and venture out into the sunken ruins that once housed the wealthiest district in the entire city – the Sultra.

THE SULTRA MARSHES

ACT 3

The closing act of **The Kuan Connection** takes the PCs from the Monolith to the sunken Sul-Mahala palace. They make their way through the ruins of the Sultra valley and find the Emissary's deathbed in an abandoned hospital.

THE THIRD ACT begins with a scene that brings the PCs into the dead marshlands of the Sultra and into a mysterious skip zone. They investigate the final destination of the stasis pods and find the ruins of an old hospital. They confront the remaining members of the martyr strike team and find the body of the Emissary as well as a terrifying darkmorph.

OVERVIEW

The leads found during Leod's banquet have provided the PCs with a destination. They head for the Sultra marshes and find the martyr strike team's outpost. This is where the abductees are brought out of stasis, after which they are drugged and taken to an abandoned Foundation research facility nearby, a hospital for the treatment of hyper sickness. At the hospital, the PCs face off against the martyr strike team and find the Emissary.

KEY INSIGHTS

- The martyr strike team is a splinter group from the Order of the Pariah called The Warriors of the Holy Light and they are acting on their own in the hopes of stopping the spread of the mystic's disease.
- The PCs catch a glimpse of the mighty White Butterfly and hear of the Vestals – an unknown group that have convinced the martyr strike team that they are the Serafs, angels sent by the Martyr to purify the Horizon.
- The Vestals have studied, tortured, and eventually killed the Emissary, and in doing so, they released a terrifying darkmorph into the world.
- In a vision, the PCs learn more about the background of the Emissaries and the mysterious forces who wish to bring war to the Third Horizon.

IMPORTANT CHARACTERS

The journey through the Sultra is lonely and dangerous. Apart from scattered marshland locals, the PCs will only interact with the people they might have brought with them:

- **Akouba Kosha** – judicator and Astûrban agent (page 143)
- **Jarja Dougha** – Leod dol-Quassar's engineer whom the PCs might have helped to escape (page 142)

THE MARTYR STRIKE TEAM

- **Darius and Nepotha** – martyr strike team scouts positioned at the Sul-Mahala (page 164)
- **Chabaun Kheml** – leader of The Warriors of the Holy Light (page 175)
- **Gaddar-e-Abrar** – undercover Astûrban agent inside the strike team (page 177)

DARKNESS POINTS

Darkness Points in the third act should be used to force the corrupting power of the dark between the stars on the PCs. The GM gets 1 DP per player when the group enters the marshes.

GROWING DARKNESS

From the Heart of Darkness scene and onward, prayer rerolls generate 1 additional DP for the GM.

A MIGHTY FORTRESS

If the PCs say preparatory prayers to a certain Icon, or wear its talismans, they are protected against some of the darkness, negating the extra DP generated when praying to that specific Icon for a reroll.

STARTING SCENE: THE DEAD MARSHES

During their journey through the marshes, the PCs gradually become aware of the malignant forces that appear to have the sunken city in their grasp. At the heart of the swamp, darkness has corrupted the creatures that didn't make it out when the Cataract collapsed, and huge schools of twisted beings reside underneath the surface, referred to by the locals as the Thu'ban. The martyr strike team has set up jamming equipment to turn the Sultra valley into a skip zone, but the PCs eventually find their goal, the sunken Sul-Mahala palace just below Cataract 27.

THE SITUATION

The PCs have left the Conglomerate and are following either Jarja or Leod's directions toward the stasis pods' final destination. They have either procured boats of their own or are using the swamp barges found in Leod's basement (see the The Gunsmith's Plea event in the previous scene). The journey begins on the outskirts of the city, where only scattered ruins are protruding here and there above the water. After a few hours, navigating the swamp becomes harder and harder. The PCs meet humans and animals going in the opposite direction, fleeing the heart of the swamp. Tales of djinn and demons spread fear among the locals. As the GM, it is important that you introduce the swamp to the PCs as a twisted place, removed from the real world, to make them feel alone, isolated, and afraid.

⚙ CROSSING THE MARSHES

The journey from the Conglomerate is difficult. Under normal circumstances, it takes four hours by boat or twelve hours by foot to get to the Sul-Mahala. The PC who takes charge of the group must test **survival** at –1 once every four hours to keep up the pace. Failure means that the group encounters one of the Sultra's many dangers without it costing you any DP (see Events below), and all PCs suffer 1 point of stress. You are of course free to subject the PCs to nasty surprises as often as you like, but a recommendation is to limit major events to one every four hours.

⚙ THE FINAL DESTINATION

If Jarja accompanies the PCs to lead the way, they know where they are going (see the Interference box below), but if the group only have a set of rough coordinates to go on, one PC must pass a difficult (–2) **observation** test to find the course. Failure adds four hours to the journey.

IMPORTANT FACTS

The PCs are using the coordinates obtained in the previous scene to find their way to the Sul-Mahala, or are guided there by Jarja. She might be keeping certain details about their destination secret if she is unsure of the PCs' trustworthiness.

THE SULTRA MARSHES

A few hours out of the Conglomerate, the waters darken with strange algae and patches of high reeds slow the group down. Tiny islands have formed around the chimneys of the sunken factories and gas pockets let out nauseating puffs of toxic smoke from below. The balconies and domed roofs of the tallest buildings protrude from the water, overgrown by the labyrinthine roots of the Ma'arak trees. The mud and sludge around the trees is home to strange thorns and pale, razor-sharp weeds.

⚙ FAUNA

Seabirds nest on the fringes of the marshes on high cable poles or in the trees. Scattered fish and shellfish can be spotted moving carefully under the surface. In the shadows of the Ma'araks, the water is dark, oily and still. A thick mist enshrouds the heart of the marshes, almost blotting out the warm light of the Kua star. Very few birds or fish live here, and it appears almost as if the mist forms a barricade around downtown Sultra. Only if you dig deep in the mud will you find insects here, such as the kashb, a fist-size type of isopod. The absence of wildlife and the still waters make the silence heavy and ominous. The PCs intrusion seems to disturb something better left alone.

THE SUNKEN CITY

The ruins of downtown Sultra rise from the muddy waters at the heart of the swamp. Cracked domes, terrace gardens, and leaning towers connected by archways are being reclaimed by the wilderness in the shadow of Cataract 27. The breach in the dam exposes the remains of the hydroelectronic machinery that once satisfied large parts of the Conglomerate's power needs. Next to the dam, a climbing series of marble terraces – constructed by the Consortium's regional manager Tristan Dayal – used to offer visitors a spectacular view of the waterfall, but the palace gardens below and the aqueducts of the Sul-Mahala have long since become silent and dried up. Moss and seaweed cover the mosaics and statues of old. Reeds and Ma'arak roots surround the downtown area, forcing visitors out of their boats and onto treacherous paths snaking their way up toward the palace. Jarja's crews had to carry the stasis pods the final stretch up the hill.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE SULTRA

The Sultra is located northeast of the Monolith in what used to be one of the planet's most fertile regions. Many of the Ramishah's branches run through the plateaus surrounding the valley, concentrating nutrients and minerals here and filling the Sultra with exuberant life and vegetation. People from across the Horizon came here to create a future for themselves as the place seemed so obviously blessed by the Icons, but disaster struck and the valley was turned into a place of death and despair:

- **The Shipwreck:** In CC 57, the lost Foundation research vessel Abdusala was found drifting in Border Space after more than a decade in dark space. The ship was intact and some of her crew still in stasis, although most of the pods were empty and their occupants no longer aboard. The Abdusala was taken to a dockyard closer to the system core and the remainder of her crew were sent to the Foundation's Hospital for the Treatment and Study of Hyper Sickness in the Sultra.
- **Frostbite:** It soon became obvious that most of the survivors had suffered massive psychological trauma as a result of their long sleep, but all records of their treatment have been classified by the Foundation. Rumors say that they displayed a wide range of disturbing deviations from normal human behavior, but also that the hospital staff were sometimes baffled by their razor-sharp perception and insight.

FLYING

If the PCs choose to fly to the marshes, the trip shouldn't take more than half an hour, but the radio interference makes for unreliable sensor data and the thick mist surrounding the palace makes it difficult to navigate manually. The sensor operator must first pass a demanding (–1) **DATA DJINN** test to calibrate the ship's outer cameras. Each six on the roll gives the pilot a +1 to her **PILOT** test. The ship must maintain a low altitude to get underneath the fog, which puts it at risk of colliding with the taller ruins. To avoid a collision, the pilot must pass an insane (–3) **PILOT** test (potentially modified by the result of the sensor roll). Failure means 1–3 points of damage and forces the group to make an emergency landing at a location of the GM's choosing.

INTERFERENCE

As the PCs enter the marshes, coms and other radio equipment begin to falter. Static and bursts of atonal whining cause the equipment to restart over and over. Strong communicators (classes III and above) can still be used until the PCs reach the silent downtown area, after which they also fail. A successful SCIENCE test informs the PCs that their gear is being jammed by an active transmitter somewhere nearby. A successful TECHNOLOGY test can further reveal a pattern in the interference that can be traced using a tabula by passing a demanding (–1) DATA DJINN test.



- **The Flood:** The catalyst for the dam disaster was when the captain of the Abdusala, Yasin Sabaaha, convinced the hospital staff that the group should be allowed to visit the nearby Cataract 27. Later in the evening, the floodgates opened and the dam collapsed.
- **The Cause:** Rumors further claim that when the first responders – a Colonial Marines squadron – arrived, they found dead bodies sitting in a half-circle around a singing Yasin Sabaaha. The cause of death was found to be a massive heart attack in all cases. Yasin was alive, but she had clawed her eyes out and burned off her ears. Everything about the investigation into what happened at the dam and regarding the current whereabouts of Yasin is classified and only known to senior Special Branch officers.

Parts of the valley are today below water and have few remaining inhabitants. Locals who survived the flood either scattered across the Horizon or went to live in enormous refugee camps throughout the Conglomerate. The camps have turned into permanent parts of the slums in Djindabo, Marzu Khala, and Little Algol. Most who managed to escape the valley suffered terrible losses. Heartache is the only constant in the lives of ordinary Kuans.

NPCS

The journey through the Sultra is lonely and dangerous. Apart from scattered marshland locals, the PCs will only interact with the people they might have brought with them. As they get closer to the Sul-Mahala, the darkness grows stronger around them and encountering darkmorphs become a threat.

THE SOGOI GLOBE DIVERS

The Sogoi who have decided to stay in the valley are hardened loners or small, tight-knit families. They have either made an elevated ruin their home or travel between the less toxic islands in small canoes. They carry an oil lantern, a torch, or firebombs to be able to defend themselves against darkmorphs.

ATTRIBUTES:
STRENGTH 3, AGILITY 2, WITS 4, EMPATHY 2

HIT POINTS: 5

MIND POINTS: 6

SKILLS: Survival 5, Dexterity 3, Melee Combat 2, Observation 2

TALENTS: Jungle Dweller

ARMOR: 0

WEAPONS: Spear or axe, firebomb (equivalent of a thermal grenade, Blast Power 6)

- **JUNGLE DWELLER:** The divers have an Armor Rating of 2 against the damp heat and can always find food or shelter in the jungle without testing **SURVIVAL**.

THE CREW OF ODINA'S FLOWER, SMUGGLERS

The valley is home to a couple of smuggler groups looking for discreet landing spots away from the Conglomerate. The crew of Odina's Flower, a class III freighter (see the Oryx freighter on page 158 of the Coriolis core rulebook), consists of captain Jor Andela, a Zenithian self-made man; pilot Ghûr as-Sarai, a middle-aged Mogul woman; Harian the engineer, a nerdy young man from Altai, and the agendered humanite siblings Janïr (sensors) and Sundï (deckhand).

APPEARANCE: Scruffy, in worn coveralls or djellabas.

CHARACTERISTICS: Tough people leading tough lives. Suspicious toward strangers and prefer to keep one hand on the gun.

ATTRIBUTES:
STRENGTH 3, AGILITY 3, WITS 2, EMPATHY 2

HIT POINTS: 6

MIND POINTS: 4

REPUTATION: 3

SKILLS: Manipulation 3 (Jor), Ranged Combat 3, Dexterity 2, Melee Combat 2. Each person also has a skill level of 3 in the skill associated with her crew position.

ARMOR: 0

WEAPONS: Vulcan carbine or grape rifle, dura knife

GEAR: Icon pendant, tag with (D6)00 birr, D6 days worth of food and water, caged ekilbri

THU'BAN, DARKWORMS

After the dam disaster, darkness corrupted the Sultra. From the depths of the muddy waters, a new breed of twisted worm-like creatures has risen to the surface. They move in huge schools just below the surface of the water, reflecting the dim sunlight like multichrome patches of boiling oil. Local Sogoi call them Thu'ban.

APPEARANCE: Huge schools of black, eye-less worms. Each individual ranges from between thirty centimeters to a full meter in length. They climb on each other to encapsulate and drown their prey. Their skin looks like a shimmering mesh of stringy muscles.

CHARACTERISTICS: The schools are attracted to movement and remain motionless below the surface until the water nearby is disturbed. When something moves near the worms, they begin to move and the water around them changes from deep black to a thrashing, boiling chaos in all the colors of the rainbow.

SIZE: When the worms are still, a difficult (–2) **OBSERVATION** test is required to spot them. If they are active, the test becomes easy (+1). The schools vary in size – from a few meters in diameter (no modifier) through about ten meters in size (+1) up toward the size of a small pond (+2).

ATTRIBUTES:
STRENGTH 7 (5*), AGILITY 7 (3*)

HIT POINTS: 10 (small school), 16 (average-sized), 24 (large school)

SKILLS: Observation 5, Dexterity 3, Melee Combat 3

ARMOR: 3 (small school), 6 (average-sized), 12 (large school), +4 against fire and Vulcan weapons

WEAPONS: Cocoon attack (weapon damage 3, CRIT 3), suffocation (see atypical damage on page 95 of the Coriolis core rulebook)

- **SWARM:** The Thu'ban can only be damaged by fire, explosions, and Vulcan weapons. They are fire-resistant and get a +4 to their armor rating against fire and Vulcan weapons.
- **SPLIT (1 DP):** At the cost of 1 DP, an average-sized or large school can split, releasing a smaller group from the main body that can attach itself to a vehicle or pursue prey out of the water. The attributes of the smaller group are lowered (Strength 5, Agility 3).
- **SUFFOCATING COCOON (2 DP):** The Thu'ban can attack in a coordinated wave and encapsulate a victim in a slithering cocoon

of worms. The victim may attempt to evade the attack (normal action) by testing **DEXTERITY** at –1. Failure means suffering 2 points of stress and that the worms start to suffocate the person (see Weapons above). The suffocating victim or a nearby ally may try to break open the cocoon by testing **FORCE**. The roll is insane (–3) from the inside and difficult (–2) from the outside.

EVENTS

The journey to the Sul-Mahala is not meant to take up too much time. The important thing is to use it to establish the ambiance of the swamp – fear and corruption closes in on the group the nearer they get to their goal. Before the group reaches the palace gardens, use one or two of the events below.

SMUGGLERS IN DANGER

The PCs suddenly hear voices through the mist ahead. On a semi-collapsed roof sits a small freighter about to slide into the water, and her crew is working as fast as they can around the ship to keep it from happening. By the ship's loading ramp, two crew members are desperately trying to fasten ropes and wires to five large cages that have fallen out of the cargo hold and into the mud. Shrill cries can be heard from the cages – about ten ekilbri (page 318 of the Coriolis core rulebook) in each cage are minutes away from death.

- **The Ship:** The freighter Odina's Flower is a refitted class III courier vessel of the Oryx model (use the express freighter configuration from page 158 of the Coriolis core rulebook).
- **The Smugglers:** Captain Jor Andela is a Zenithian born and raised on Coriolis but the crew appears to originate from the Quadrant of the Pillar.
- **The Pilot:** Mogul-descendent Ghûr an-Sarai is wrestling with the thruster controls to try to maneuver the ship to safer ground. Her engineer, former Altai corsair Harian, fell out of the ship along with the ekilbri and is slowly sinking into the dark water.
- **The Crew:** Deckhand Sundï and sensor operator Janïr are agendered humanites from the Khôban portal station in the Odacon system. They are trying to rescue the sinking ekilbri.
- **A Helping Hand:** The PCs can help the smugglers in a number of ways. They can help save the ekilbri by testing **FORCE** at –2, or coordinate the crew's efforts by testing **COMMAND** at –1. An engineer can assist Ghûr inside the ship by testing **TECHNOLOGY** to reroute additional power to the thrusters. The ship's engineer is trapped underneath one of the sinking ekilbri cages and will suffer the effects of drowning (page 97 of the Coriolis core rulebook) unless someone successfully tests **DEXTERITY** at –2 to get him up.
- **Fight:** The PCs can choose to stay out of the smugglers' way, help them, or take advantage of their perilous situation and attack. If they try to help, Jor is first suspicious of their intentions and draws his pistol, but he quickly realizes that he is running out of time and needs all the help he can get. At the cost of 1 DP, something startles the captain and he opens fire on the PCs.

If the PCs succeed in helping the smugglers rescue Harian and the ekilbri, they are treated as heroes. The smugglers offer them food, basic medical supplies, and other handy gear if they need it. If they managed to save all the ekilbri, Jor promises them a cut of the profit once the delivery has been made (1,500 birr). If the PCs decline his offer, he instead promises to recommend them to his secret benefactor, antiques dealer Lea Marhoun on Coriolis. Lea can be used as a potential future employer.

Cost: 0, 1 DP

THE GLOBE DIVERS

The PCs reach an area where the water is deeper and the vegetation not as dense. Cracked concrete spires and bent dura beams from an old factory protrude from the water like the broken ribs of some ancient leviathan. The group spots a long canoe tethered to one of the beams and catch a glimpse of a faint light deep in the water. The light seems to emanate from clusters of small spheres climbing the ruins. Two Sogoi, a man and a woman, suddenly breach the surface, dressed in primitive diving gear and carrying nets full of sugar globes. The divers are frightened at the sight of the strangers and reach for their weapons in the canoe unless the PCs act calmly and in a friendly manner. If a fight breaks out, use the stats of Ramses' Jackals from *Blood on the Leaves* on page 102. The divers are armed with long rifles and bows. If the PCs instead strike up a conversation with the two Sogoi, they are soon invited back to the diver camp nearby.

- **The Sogoi Diver Camp:** The divers belong to a group that chose to stay in Sultra after the Cataract failure. The family consist

of two adult men, four adult women and two young children. They have three canoes and a few tents, but have recently moved into the top floor of a ruined apartment building. They have discovered that the moss covering the house somehow purifies the polluted water just enough to make it drinkable. An older, sinewy woman introduces herself as Unkra, the group's matriarch. Her Zeni is slighly better than the others' and she offers to barter with the PCs. The Sogoi can offer food, sugar globes, and tabak of a very high quality in return for medicines, medical supplies, and ammunition.

- **Sugar Globes:** The divers usually sell the sugar globes for about 25 birr a piece at the markets around the Conglomerate. A PC with at least **CULTURE** 1 will know that the globes are worth around 500 birr on Coriolis however, and the rarer red ones can bring as much as 1000 birr. The globes are large enough to hold with two hands and are sometimes used by scryers at the souks who believe them to hold magic powers. If the globes are "fed" – rubbed with sugar water for example – they give off a strong, warm light for about an hour. They are commonly found in nicer restaurants placed in jars of sugar water to shine for a whole evening. They count as artifacts, but are easy to comprehend (**SCIENCE** +3). The globes are fragile and breaking one is considered a bad omen. The white slime inside is very sticky and has a potent, sweet smell that lingers for days.
- **The Curse:** The divers have moved away from the central area of the swamp after hearing frightening tales of dark creatures and ancient curses. They fear the evil, fire-breathing djinn that live in the darkness beyond the palace. The djinn rumors started after the martyr strike team rigged traps with flame throwers and thermal grenades around the hospital (see the A Great, Winged Shadow scene). The divers also avoid the old palace as angered ancestral spirits have awoken to haunt its dark corridors. The spirits are in reality darkmorphs that have woken up in the palace basement after the martyr strike team set up its operation nearby. The Sogoi group are unaware of the martyr strike team, but have noticed an increased number of travelers in the area over the last segments, including boats carrying stasis pods.
- **The Living Darkness:** The Sogoi also wish to warn the PCs of the Thu'ban who live in the swamp. They describe the phenomenon as water brought to life by evil djinn. The surface of the water can suddenly rise up and swallow you, pulling you down below to drown you. Sudden movement and noises attracts the Thu'ban (see the Dark Waters and The Terror From Below events below).

Cost: 0 DP

DARK WATERS

The water is dark but appears quite shallow. At first glance, it looks as if a web of thick roots and seaweed grow just below the surface of the water, but a successful **OBSERVATION** or **SCIENCE** test reveals that it must be much deeper; the ruins that are visible nearby are the tops of towers and high buildings.

- **It's Alive:** Suddenly, the roots below the water seem to move – twisting and slithering in a snake-like fashion. The sunlight is reflected in cascades of bright colors as if the surface was covered in oil, and the calm surface stirs all around the PCs. If they are in a boat, they hear scratching noises from underneath.
- **Darkworms:** The PCs find themselves in the middle of a slumbering school of Thu'ban, lying in wait just below the surface of the water. If the PCs remain completely still and pass an easy (+2) **INFILTRATION** test each, the water calms down again and they can escape slowly and carefully. Alternatively, they can choose to move away as fast as possible (**PILOT** –1). If either of the tests fail, the darkworms attack – see The Terror From Below.

Cost: 1 DP

THE TERROR FROM BELOW

The PCs are caught in the middle of a school of Thu'ban, darkworms living and hunting in huge, merciless groups. They are attracted to sound and motion, but can sense living things nearby after they have awoken.

- **Schools:** See the description of the Thu'ban above. The DP cost depends on the size of the school; 1 DP for a small school, 2 DP for an average-sized one, and 3 DP for a large school.
- **Slumbering Death:** If you choose to let the PCs encounter a slumbering school of Thu'ban, the DP cost is reduced by one (0–2 DP). The PCs might spot the worms and avoid them by testing **OBSERVATION** (see modifiers above). If the worms are awake and ambush the PCs however, the cost is 1–3 DP, depending on the size of the school.

Cost: 0–3 DP

THE PALACE GARDENS

After many hours in the dark swamp, the Sul-Mahala and the broken Cataract appear out of the mist. Hundreds of tiny brooks and waterfalls from the northern plateau cut through the ruins in the valley. The water becomes shallower and when the palace's towers and aqueducts dominate the view ahead, the boat reaches shore. Moss-covered trees and bushes grow among the once beautiful marble benches and pavilions.

Low walls and paths run through the area, but the tasteful landscaping has been turned into an overgrown maze by the flood. The PCs have reached the palace gardens, the ring of terraces and architectural marvels that used to be the heart of the Sultra. Several of the terraces have collapsed and the road up to the palace is covered in thick undergrowth and loose gravel and mud. The ground looks steady but has been hollowed out in many places and might collapse.

If Jarja has accompanied the PCs here, she pales in horror upon seeing the palace and asks if she can wait by the boat. If the PCs insist she comes along, she will, although trembling with fear.

The last stretch of road up to the palace must be walked and climbed, which might prove difficult and dangerous. Use one or more of the unpleasantries below:

- **Landslide (1 DP):** When the group climbs onto the next terrace, the earth beneath them suddenly shifts and moves. Loose soil and mud begin sliding down the slope. Finding a root to grab onto is the only way to keep upright. All characters caught in the slide must pass a **DEXTERITY** test or get swept away, suffering a strength 6 attack (weapon damage 1, CRIT 3, armor may be tested).
- **Sinkhole (1–2 DP):** The ground suddenly disappears under the feet of one (1 DP) or several (2 DP) PCs. The affected characters must pass a demanding (–1) **DEXTERITY** test or get sucked down into an underground river beneath the terrace. A PC who achieves a critical success can help a comrade who failed her roll. A failed roll means landing in thick mud and risks drowning after three turns (page 97 of the Coriolis core rulebook). Escaping the mud requires passing an insane (–3) **DEXTERITY** test, or for the other PCs to help the trapped person by testing **FORCE** at –1. Rope or other climbing gear provide a bonus to the roll.
- **River (1–3 DP):** A wide stream has separated two terraces, blocking the PCs' path. At the cost of 1 DP, the makeshift bridge set up earlier by Jarja's crew is still there, but at the cost of 2 DP, the bridge has collapsed. Crossing the bridge requires passing a **DEXTERITY** test, and at the cost of an additional 2 DP (for a total of 3 points), the bridge collapses while one or several of the PCs are on it. The affected PCs first suffer damage from the fall (six meters, strength 4 attack, weapon damage 1, CRIT 3) and then the effects of drowning (page 97 of the Coriolis core rulebook) unless they pass a demanding (–1) **DEXTERITY** test to climb back up.

Cost: See above

LANDING A SHIP

If the PCs used their ship to travel to the Sultra and managed to navigate all the way to the palace, they can land on one of the terraces outside. Landing safely requires a PILOT test at –1. Failure results in 2 points of damage to the ship. As the PCs disembark, you could choose to subject them to either the Landslide or Sinkhole effects above without spending DP. The landing has made the surrounding area unstable.

HEART OF DARKNESS

After an arduous climb up the terraces, the PCs reach the Sul-Mahala. The ruins of the palace are used by the martyr strike team as a collection point for supplies and prisoners, and it is here that they have set up their jamming equipment. The PCs find the stasis pods they are hunting – but none of the prisoners.

THE SITUATION

The PCs have reached the pods' final destination. The martyr warriors have thawed their prisoners here, drugged them, and brought them to their base in the nearby Foundation hospital. The empty pods are dumped in a chasm that opened when the basement was flooded and collapsed. Inside the palace, the PCs encounter two strike team scouts, Darius and Nepotha, but they are not alone; the immense suffering and despair witnessed by the palace has corrupted it, and haunted shrieks can be heard from the lower levels where darkbound remnants of former palace residents have taken refuge, trapped in a living nightmare. The darkbound keep to the shadows, and the martyr strike team has so far been able to keep operating on the upper floors.

IMPORTANT FACTS

The PCs should somehow figure out that the abductees have been thawed at the palace and brought to the nearby hospital. Most of this information can be found in the room used by the martyr scouts as a reloading point for incoming deliveries (see the Terminus event).

THE SUL MAHALA

The Sul-Mahala palace is located next to the beautiful Mahala terrace gardens. Many hundreds of years ago, prince Mahala Em ab-Dalak used the palace as a summer residence and the gardens were home to fantastic birds said to sing in perfect harmony ever since the day the prince met his beloved Sharim. After an incident involving the prince's brother Alakh, Mahala had Sharim executed and all the birds suddenly fled the gardens. Their final song contained a prophecy saying that all things the prince had built and cherished would one day be destroyed.

Today, the palace and the surrounding gardens have been reclaimed by nature. The Cataract failure swept much of the gardens away, and over the years since the flood, many of the brooks and rivers that come down from the plateau have carved out new paths through the area. Deep trenches cut through old roads and plazas, and hundreds of tiny waterfalls slowly transport the water down through the palace grounds toward the black waters of the marshlands below.

ENTRANCES

What used to be the highest of the walled terraces has collapsed, forming a dark pond from which broken ruins protrude here and there. Broken glass and shattered mosaics glimmer just below the surface in the faint light that penetrates the mist. In the middle of the pond, the central tower of the palace looms, dark in the distance. The main entrances are deep underwater, but some of the higher balconies are accessible and connect to the interior of the palace. The area is still and eerily quiet. If one listens very closely, a strange hissing sound can be heard coming through the cracks in the walls.

THE CENTRAL TOWER

The palace interior consists of wide, dark chasms and slippery, winding marble stairs. Vines and thorns suck tainted life from the dark waters and climb the broken pillars inside the palace toward the broken stained glass windows above. The air is thick with dust and soot. On the lower levels, one finds fragile coal statues that disintegrate on touch and thick layers of grimy ash (see the Ghosts of the Sultra NPCs below). The upper levels of the central tower are full of long halls and corridors, cracked balconies, silent fountains, and galleries filled with broken marble statues, columns, and empty pools. The mosaics tiles break beneath the feet of the PCs, apart from in the rooms where old draperies and paintings have fallen to the floor and degraded into a fine layer of soil. It is one of these rooms – on the upper levels, in order to get away from the smell of the bog and the cries from the basement – that the martyr strike team has set up its outpost.

THE OUTPOST

The room chosen by the martyr warriors has high ceilings resting on pillars. Two large trees grow in the middle, supporting the cracked outer wall that looks like it is about to collapse. Workbenches and a tent have been set up along the inner wall by the only entrance to the room, an open doorway leading to a wide staircase. Shattered glass and clay mosaics have been collected and arranged in the shape of a martyr's crown on a clean stone table. Candles and sticks of incense surround the altar. In the back of the room, a broken balcony overlooks one of the deep chasms. The martyr scouts have pushed the empty stasis pods over the edge and let them fall into the darkness. The thawed prisoners have been drugged at a makeshift medstation – a couple of cots and a table with some basic medical equipment. More information can be found in the Terminus event below.

NPCS

The palace first appears empty, but inside, the PCs run the risk of encountering the darkbound or walking into an ambush set by the martyr scouts. Judicator Akouba Kosha will follow the PCs to the end, always making sure to point out that the evidence uncovered seems to point toward the Order being behind the operation.

DARIUS & NEPOTHA, DOUBTING MARTYR SCOUTS

The two scouts Darius and Nepotha are among Chabaun Kheml's most loyal warriors. They were among the first to join The Warriors of the Holy Light to follow the teachings of the radical splinter group. They are alert and trained to stage ambushes to defend themselves against intruders (page 85 of the Coriolis core rulebook), but they have recently started to doubt the strike team's ways. The kidnapped mystics don't look like servants of the dark and their suffering have taken a hard toll on the two scouts. Their separation from the rest of the group has kept them from Chabaun and Gaddar-e-Abrar's reassuring truths, and their faith is wavering. The scouts will initially try to lure intruders toward the darkbound on the lower levels so as not to reveal their own presence. They are capable warriors however, and will use the Overwatch and Automatic fire actions to quickly and brutally defeat their enemies if they are spotted. If the PCs arrive together with Jarja or with the final delivery of stasis pods, Nepotha will come out on one of the balconies to meet them. She keeps it short and speaks only to Jarja. The scouts will remain vigilant even if they believe the PCs to be allies, and anyone who wishes to perform a suspicious-looking action must pass a difficult (–2) **MANIPULATION** or **INFILTRATION** test to do it undetected. Darius keeps to the shadows while Nepotha does the talking, ready to attack at the first sign of trouble. The scouts can be convinced to give up if a fight breaks out, after which they will tell the PCs how to get to the hospital.

APPEARANCE: A man and a woman dressed in black caftans worn tightly over their light armors. Darius has a martyr's crown tattoo across his torso, with holy glyphs covering the entire chest and back. Nepotha has small, white scars covering her back – nine hundred and thirteen to be exact – one for each of mantras spoken by the prophet Iria Urahuk.

CHARACTERISTICS: Fight in silence. They act as one and have no need for verbal communication. Both preach about the Martyr's greatness if captured and interrogated, but their strong front soon gives way to doubt.

ATTRIBUTES: **STRENGTH 3, AGILITY 4, WITS 4, EMPATHY 3**
HIT POINTS: 7
MIND POINTS: 7
REPUTATION: 4
SKILLS: Melee Combat 4, Ranged Combat 4, Infiltration 3, Manipulation 3, Medicurgy 3, Observation 3
TALENT: Fanatics, Synergic Training
ARMOR: Protective clothing 3
WEAPONS: Vulcan carbine (homing rounds), two concussion grenades, dura knife
GEAR: Homing Vulcan rounds, throat-mounted link, personal affects

- **FANATICS:** The blind faith of Zalos' agents enables them to get back up at 2 HP after having been broken in combat. Costs 2 DP.
- **SYNERGIC TRAINING:** At the cost of 1 DP, Darius and Nepotha may roll one Initiative die each at the beginning of the fight and then both choose the best one. The GM chooses which of the scouts goes first. If their Initiative score changes during the fight, it does so individually.

THE GHOSTS OF THE SULTRA, DARKBOUND

Former palace residents turned wraith – dark shells full of corruption haunting the corridors on the lower levels. They differ from other darkbound in the Horizon (page 327 in the Rulebok) in that they are weaker and without claws. Instead, they have rows and rows of grotesquely misshapen teeth. Like other darkbound, they cannot be reasoned with using **MANIPULATION** and cannot suffer stress. They prefer to move in groups of two to three individuals.

APPEARANCE: The Sultra ghosts are black shadows on all fours, looking like statues sculpted in tar. Black ooze drips from their bodies. Their eye sockets and wide mouths burn red like fire when they hiss and snarl, trying to catch the scent of potential prey. If they detect something living nearby, they begin to twitch and lunge screaming at their victim.

CHARACTERISTICS: The black, grimy residue is in some places collected in heaps so high that the PCs have to climb over them or smash them to pieces to continue. The ghosts keep their eyes and mouths closed except when they search for prey, and their internal fire burns white hot if they detect something. They attack with fearsome howls.

ATTRIBUTES: **STRENGTH 5, AGILITY 4, WITS 3, EMPATHY 3**
HIT POINTS: 9
MIND POINTS: 6
REPUTATION: 4
SKILLS: Dexterity 6, Mystic Powers 5, Melee Combat 4, Force 3
ARMOR: 0
WEAPONS: Bite (weapon damage 2, CRIT 3)

- **NIGHTVEIL (1 DP):** The ghost can darken the minds of everyone around it. This counts as a mystic attack and costs 1 DP. The affected victim must roll an opposed Empathy (or **MYSTIC POWERS**) vs **MYSTIC POWERS** test. If she succeeds, she gets a –2 to **OBSERVATION**, advanced skill tests, and Initiative rolls. If she fails, the skill check penalty extends to all skill tests. The penalty is in effect until the ghost has been defeated, or until the affected person leaves the area (Extreme range).
- **LIVING SLUDGE (1 DP):** The ghosts can sense motion and heat through the trail of dried ooze they leave behind. At the cost of 1 DP, the ghost can tell exactly where a person is who touches or comes close to the dark residue. A PC who tries to avoid getting close to the sludge must pass a difficult (–2) **INFILTRATION** test or step on it by mistake. If the roll succeeds, the GM can't activate this mystic power.
- **AGILE:** When a ghost has located a victim, it moves incredibly fast. Its movement speed is twice that of a normal human, and climbing walls or ceilings causes no penalties.

EVENTS

The PCs' goal in the scene is to get inside the palace and find the martyr warriors' outpost there. As the GM, you are free to make the scene longer (by adding combat with the darkbound or the martyr scouts for example) or keep it short to enable the PCs to find the clues they need straight away.

RESONANCE – THE DEATH OF THE EMISSARY

This is the final resonance event reserved for mystic PCs.

- When the PCs enter the palace, or the room used by the martyr strike team, the group's mystic feels uneasy and faint. Her skin crawls and the world seems gray and distant.
- At the cost of 1 DP, the affected PC must test **MYSTIC POWERS** to remain in control of herself. Failure causes her to suffer a –2 to all actions where she must rely on sight or touch for D6 minutes. At the cost of 1 additional DP, the itching in her skin rapidly becomes worse until she feels like she is on fire, and the PC suffers 1 point of damage and 2 points of stress.
- Through the gray mist, the mystic PC sees three ghostly silhouettes approaching, dressed in long, white gowns. A monotonous chanting grows steadily until it cuts like knives in her ears. Suddenly, the affected PC hears a faint song emanating from inside herself. The soft words force the ghosts to retreat and the PC slowly begins to understand the meaning of the song. The pain intensifies nonetheless, until it becomes unbearable and the shielding song turns into a cry of pain. The PC feels as if she is being flayed alive and collapses on the ground. She is unconscious for a turn or two before the vision fades and she feel fine again.

The PC experiences the final moments of the dying Emissary. At the martyr strike team's base, the White Butterfly has arrived, bringing with it the agents of the First Horizon, the

THE ICON'S GRACE

The fragments come together,
a thousand faces for the shadows.
My children, my beloved,
hear my song and become it.
In your darkest hour,
hear my song and defend it.
Sing brothers, sing sisters,
sing it.

– Nabi-mu-Qad, the Messenger Emissary

Vestals. They have convinced the martyr warriors that they are Serafs – angels sent by the Martyr to help the faithful defeat the Emissary's dark powers. They use their immense knowledge of the dark between the stars to destroy the Emissary's host body.

If you'd like, the event can be used as a clue to the location of the martyr strike team's base. After the visions fades, the affected PCs can see the direction of the place where the event took place as a small bright dot on her retina when she closes her eyes.

Cost: 0–2 DP

THE STASIS PODS

In the black water at the bottom of the chasm sits a pile of discarded stasis pods. After thawing and drugging their prisoners, Darius and Nepotha have pushed the empty pods into the chasm. At least one of the pods cracked from the fall but several of the others look more or less intact.

- There are about twenty pods in all in the hole, all with black numbers painted on the lids. Several of them are still full of stasis fluid, but much has leaked into the water from the ruptured pods.
- There are eight intact, salvageable containers of stasis fluid in the hole, but diving into the water without an exo results in 1 point of radiation.

If you want to make it more of a challenge for the PCs to salvage the stasis fluid, the darkbound ghosts have covered the top pods with their black secretions and might be lurking nearby (see the Dark Sentries event below).

Cost: 0 DP

ECHOES IN THE DARKNESS

Soot particles hang in the air and a humid mist obscures the lower floors. A spiral staircase covered in slippery algae leads down into the darkness from the high balconies above. As the PCs step out on the balcony and look down, they hear a hissing sound from below and spot something moving.

If the PCs are loud, the creature will let out a terrifying scream and try to find the source of the noise. It avoids the light coming in through the broken windows but ascends the side of the stairs with incredible speed.

Cost: 0 DP

DARK SENTRIES

The PCs reach an area or a part of the stairs where strange, knee-high ash formations block their way. They are porous and fragile and the air is heavy with soot and dark dust. Passing through the area without touching the black statues requires a successful **INFILTRATION** test at –2. Alternatively, the group can climb past by testing **DEXTERITY**, but critical successes are required to avoid detection by the nearby darkbound. If any of the rolls fail, see the Dark Hunters event below.

Cost: 1 DP

DARK HUNTERS

At the cost of 1 DP, you could have the ghosts of the Sultra use their Living Sludge ability to sense the location of the PCs. This leads to one creature beginning to move toward the group. At the cost of 1 additional DP, a group of two to three ghosts attack, and for 2 additional DP, a total of four or five ghosts surround the PCs and attack from different directions. Their hunting screams echo through the corridors and their burning mouths and eyes can be seen through the darkness. They dislike sunlight but will attack regardless if there are more than one.

Cost: 1, 2–3 DP

RUINS

The palace interior consists of decrepit stairs, corridors, and balconies slowly being torn apart by thick vines with crimson leaves. The trip through the palace might be difficult and dangerous:

- **Thorns (1 DP):** A section ahead is so full of thorns that getting through will be tough. Each PC must test **DEXTERITY** or **FORCE**, with a +1 from cutting melee weapons. Failure results in 2 points of damage and 1 point of stress.
- **Collapsing Floors (1–2 DP):** The balcony the PCs are on suddenly shakes and tilts. At the cost of 1 DP, one PC is affected and at the cost of 2 DP, the whole group risks falling off. Affected PCs must pass a **DEXTERITY** test or suffer damage from the fall (strength 6 attack, weapon damage 1, CRIT 3, armors may be tested). A critical success achieved by one PC can be used to negate the failure of a comrade.

Cost: See above

TERMINUS

The martyr strike team's outpost is located on one of the upper floors (see the description on page 163). The scouts are reluctant to let anyone enter their base, and have dealt with earlier shipments on a balcony one floor down. Unless the PCs have dealt with Darius and Nepotha earlier, or convinced them to let the group enter the outpost, there is a great risk that they will attack as the PCs near the room (see the Ambush event below). Investigating the room reveals the following:

- **The Cracks:** Two tall trees grow in the room. The crowns support the collapsing roof and the outer wall, through a crack in which one has a clear view of the surrounding area. Tarps suspended from the higher branches provide cover from rain for some assorted technical gear and a fusion unit next to one of the trees. Peering through the crack in the wall, a PC who passes an **OBSERVATION** test can see lights at the nearby hospital.
- **The Laser Communicator:** Cables connected to the faintly humming fusion unit under the tree run to what looks like a telescope on a tripod. An easy (+1) **TECHNOLOGY** test can tell the PCs that the gadget is an advanced laser communicator, pointing toward the abandoned nearby Foundation hospital, rumored to be the source of the valley's cursed fate and the dam collapse. The com has been used by the scouts to communicate with their superiors and to report on new shipments. All communication via the unit is encrypted and the key is only known by the scouts. If the PCs have been noisy or slow getting through the palace, the scouts have sent a warning to their commanders, and the martyr strike team will subsequently be more alert in the next scene, A Great Winged Shadow. The communicator has been given to the strike team by the Astûrban, and a demanding (–1) **TECHNOLOGY** test can reveal that it looks Zenithian, and that it's probably not available on the open market.
- **The Jamming Equipment:** The fusion unit is also connected to a radio transmitter. A successful **TECHNOLOGY** or **DATA DJINN** test reveals that it appears to be an advanced and upgraded class IV communicator functioning as a jammer. A demanding (–1) **TECHNOLOGY** test reveals it to be Zenithian, and a military model only used by tactical forces and elite units. Turning it off without it sending a warning to the martyr strike team is an easy (+2) **TECHNOLOGY** test. Keeping it on but limiting its jamming spectrum requires a demanding (–1) **DATA DJINN** test.
- **The Workbenches:** By the inner, less damaged wall, a simple tent and two workbenches have been set up. Boxes of ammunition and food are scattered around the benches, as well as two advanced tool kits, five blessed M-doses (+2 to **MEDICURGY**),

and ten injectors. A **SCIENCE** or **MEDICURGY** test reveal the contents of the injectors to be some form of psychotropic drug. A critical success reveals it to be a carefully tailored mix of opor and a synthetic component known as sinthropane. The drug induces a trancelike state where the affected person becomes very susceptible to suggestion. A small chemical laboratory on one of the workbenches has been used by the martyr scouts to modify one of the injectors with a higher dose of sinthropane (to use on the Emissary). Sinthropane is very hard to come by as it is almost exclusively produced as a military interrogation drug (see the The Interrogation Drug box below).

- **The Altar:** Pieces of broken glass and clay are laid out in an intricate pattern on a beautifully carved stone table, surrounded by candles and sticks of incense. The area in front of the altar is covered in tiny blood spatter and a leather whip nearby is dark with dried blood. As the mission grew to weigh heavier and heavier on Nepotha's mind, she devoted herself to prayer and flagellation in the hopes of divine guidance.
- **The Balcony:** Opposite the entrance to the room, a balcony overlooks the deep drop below. The railing has been smashed and scratch marks on the floor lead off the edge. This is where the stasis pods have been pushed down into the darkness.

Cost: 0 DP (Mandatory)

AMBUSH

The martyr scouts Darius and Nepotha try to avoid a direct confrontation with the PCs. They trust that the ghosts will deal with the intruders, but if the PCs close in on their outpost (see the Terminus event above), you might spend 2 DP to have the scouts prepare an ambush for the PCs from an elevated, fortified position.

- **Interrogation:** If the scouts are captured, they might be convinced to reveal the position of Chabaun's base in the nearby hospital. Resolve this with an opposed **MANIPULATION** test. If both scouts are alive, they get a +2 to their roll. If the PCs win the test, the scouts also confess to waning belief in the Priot's brutal methods, and that they don't trust the new prophet in the group. They are adamant in their devotion to the wisdom of Iria Urahuk however, and believe that the Horizon must be cleansed of all dark omens, such as these so-called new mystics. If the PCs achieve a comparative critical success – winning the test by three sixes or more – the scouts can also inform them that the tech in the outpost, as well as most of the weapons used by the strike team, are gifts from "sympathizers within the Hegemony's leadership". If the PCs press the scouts

THE INTERROGATION DRUG

You can either choose to use the regular poison rules for a strength 6 poison or use these, more advanced, rules: The drug forces the affected person to roll an opposed Empathy vs poison strength 6 test. The special batch used to drug the Emissary is instead a strength 12 poison.

Failure results in 6 points of stress, which almost certainly results in the person becoming broken. The victim also suffers a –1 to Empathy until all of her HP and MP have been restored. If the victim is broken by the stress suffered, she also suffers an atypical critical injury (page 95 of the Coriolis core rulebook) and dies after D6 days unless treated with MEDICURGY. Despite being broken, the person is not unconscious, but rather in a trance-like state. She can only move if explicitly told to.

Limited Success results in a –1 to Empathy for 4D6 hours, but no stress.

Critical Success results in a –1 to Empathy for D6 hours, but no stress.

on this issue, one of them eventually reveals a piece of shocking information: the Astûrban are in on the operation. If this is the first the PCs hear of this, it will probably change their view of the investigation, but it also puts them in the crosshairs of the hegemonist conspirators through their double agent, judicator Akouba Kosha.

- **The Judicator's Betrayal:** If the interrogation of the scouts begins to turn up damning information on the Hegemony or the Astûrban, Akouba will – if present – try to dismiss and silence the scouts by saying that they are trying to con the PCs. Unless the PCs buy this, she realizes that the only way forward is to eliminate them and bring the evidence against the Order to the Council herself.

Cost: 2 DP

THE WHITE BUTTERFLY

During the PCs investiagtion of the Sul-Mahala, they witness something extraordinary. As the GM, you are free to play this event at any time – perhaps as the PCs realize where the laser communicator is pointing to, or as they leave the palace to head for the Foundation hospital. Read out the text below or use it as inspiration:

In the darkening sky, high above the still waters around you, the stars slowly become visible, one by one. Your breath suddenly hangs in clouds before you as the mist turns cold, much colder than what should be possible in the Kuan jungles. You feel your chests tightening as a wave of fear and anxiety washes over you, and as you turn to look up, you see it: a hazy apparition illuminating the ruins of the Sultra – a white butterfly in the darkness. Its great wings seem to bend light around them in an impossible way, and it ascends like no other ship you've seen before. For a moment, it seems to hang motionless above the trees, and then the wings come alive with brightly glowing, perfectly symmetrical glyphs – like blood vessels filled with liquid light. A halo of light forms around the ship as it sets off for the dark void – leaving Kua, but going where?

At the cost of 1 DP, the event severely affects the mental health of the PCs. Have them test **MYSTIC POWERS** (or Empathy, if they lack the skill). Failure results in 3 points of stress. Success results in (3 minus number of sixes on the roll) points of stress.

Cost: 0, 1 DP

You and your group will encounter the Vestals and their ship, White Butterfly, again in coming scenarios in the Mercy campaign. This scene is merely designed to hint at the awesome powers they wield, and to assure the PCs that they are on the right track – the hospital is very close, and that is where their investigation finally ends.



A GREAT WINGED SHADOW

After a long and dangerous journey, the PCs finally find the leader of The Warriors of the Holy Light. After leaving the Sul-Mahala, the PCs head for the Foundation's Hospital for the Treatment and Study of Hyper Sickness, a place very much associated with the terrible flooding that laid the valley in ruins. The PCs must now confront the strike team's Priot and find Nabi-mu-Qad, the lost Emissary.

THE SITUATION

The group have finally arrived at their journey's end. In the ruined hospital, they find the final pieces of information dealing with the kidnappings on Coriolis, they find the Emissary's dead body and they confront the remaining martyr warriors. The final stretch of their trek takes them through another swamp. Lights in the distance lead their way toward the hospital. The leader of the strike team, Priot Chabaun, has been corrupted by the darkness that lives in the swamp, and when the PCs arrive, they find that the warriors go about their wicked work with a fanatic fervor. They torture and interrogate their mystic prisoners to figure out who they might break and manipulate to use as bait to catch other mystics. Prisoners who refuse to be broken are tortured to death. The strike team has recently changed direction, as Priot Chabaun has begun interpreting the holy scriptures much more literally. He believes that the final battle between darkness and light is close at hand, and has therefore increased the pace of the operation considerably. The PCs must somehow infiltrate or attack the strike team's base, while staying clear of the traps and alarms set up around the area. If they make it inside, they meet the remaining strike team members and the Astûrban's secret agent, the false prophet Gaddar-e-Abrar. Gaddar had been inserted into the strike team to fan the flames of their righteous wrath, and the Priot listened willingly – until the agents from the First Horizon arrived and used powerful dream powers to enslave him.

THE MARTYR'S SERAFS

Under the leadership of executor Keziah-Ven, three of the stunningly beautiful imperial Vestals made their way to the Kua system when the news broke of the Emissary's disappearance. They approached the martyr strike team purporting to be the Martyr's Serafs, angels sent to aid the righteous in their struggle against evil, and proceeded to interrogate the Emissary to find out the location of its siblings scattered across the Horizon (see Epilogue, page 188). They employed torture and darkness powers, which eventually killed the Emissary. With their missions completed, the Vestals boarded their ship, White Butterfly, and left Kua.

THE FALSE PROPHET

Although the strike team members have lost their way during their stay in the corrupted marshes, secret agent Gaddar-e-Abrar views his Astûrban mission as a success; the Emissary has been captured and the Order of the Pariah appear to be the guilty parties to a public living in fear and uncertainty. In all, the shah board is set up perfectly for a strong and unified force to appear and give the people a banner to flock to. When the vestals arrived however, Gaddar realized that the game had changed into something that neither he, the Astûrban, or the hegemonists had predicted, and he stopped preaching to the warriors. He hopes to keep his cover intact until he can return to the Monolith and spends his time in the temple in the northeast wing of the hospital.

THE PALADIN

Priot Chabaun Kheml supervises the operation, both planetside and on Coriolis. In the last few segments, he has often turned to prophet Gaddar-e-Abrar for guidance, but after the plans to kidnap the Emissary moved into their final phase, a new voice has been growing stronger inside him. In dreams and visions, the Martyr has spoken to him through divine messengers dressed in shining white, naming him the purest one, the chosen one. Through Chabaun, the Vestals infiltrated and took over the strike team. Since his recent exaltation, Chabaun has begun to grow suspicious of Gaddar-e-Abrar's wisdom.

IMPORTANT FACTS

The PCs find the last pieces of information about the martyr strike team's operation, but they will likely leave the scene with only a limited understanding of the underlying levels of the conspiracy. A final clue about the Emissary's origins can be found in the last scene, The Messenger's Whisper.

- **The Emissary:** The body of the mythical Emissary appears perfectly ordinary at first sight – a middle-aged woman with traditional Miran tattoos. She has been horribly tortured and her body is a lifeless husk, stiff and bruised. The eyes and mouth have been reduced to blackened holes. Contrary to first impressions however, the Emissary's body was far from ordinary – the martyr warriors were unable to torture it as the wounds healed faster than they could inflict them.
- **The White Butterfly:** When the Serafs arrived, the warriors rejoiced. In the name of the Martyr, they were finally able to torture and eventually kill the Emissary (see the The Messenger's Whisper scene below) The Serafs' dark powers have left traces however – a tear in reality through which the dark between the stars can enter the Third Horizon in the shape of a bestial avenger.
- **The Metal Bars:** In the strike team's base, the PCs find chests full of neodym bars – the rare metal used to pay Artyr Ghôlam and the other smugglers. The chests are branded with a logo; "Asteroid Exports".
- **An Unknown Enemy:** If the airstrike is called in, or if Akouba Kosha is exposed as a traitor at some point during the scenario, the PCs will probably figure out that someone else is involved in the operation other than the Order. If the judicator's cover remains intact, the PCs will still spot advanced weapons and faction tech at the strike team's base and might get suspicious anyway.

THE FOUNDATION'S HOSPITAL FOR THE TREATMENT AND STUDY OF HYPER SICKNESS

An important hub on Kua in ages past, the Sultra was constructed by Firstcome colonists over many centuries, but it wasn't until the Consortium's construction of the enormous Cataract 27 that the valley's potential truly blossomed. The golden age began during the office of mayor Tristan Dayal in CC 41, a man whose ambitions saw the Sultra grow into one of the area's most lucrative districts. Conservation projects soon exposed ancient technology and artifacts from the earliest settlers, and excavations in Old Town gave the Sidonna family and the Foundation increasing power in the valley. Tristan was succeeded by Dahil Sidonna as governor and many new research institutes were founded, as well as a state-of-the-art explorator center. The construction of the Foundation's Hospital for the Treatment and Study of Hyper Sickness in CC 50 marked the beginning of the end for the Sultra valley's golden age.

NO LOOSE ENDS

Agent Gaddar is waiting for the right time to call for extraction from his Monolith masters, but since the Vestals' visit, the Priot has been on alert and makes sure that someone is always watching the prophet. This is not Gaddar's biggest problem however: unbeknownst to him, he has become a liability and a target for the Astûrban. If Akouba Kosha has accompanied the PCs all the way to the hospital, her orders include silencing him.

If Gaddar manages to send a message to the Astûrban, they respond by calling in an airstrike on his position. They have no intentions of extracting their agent, instead aiming to take him out while at the same time neutralizing the martyr strike team to make sure they hold all the cards when the day comes to present evidence against the Order to the Council. Black torpedo drones, painted with symbols from the Order's holy scriptures are sent to the Sultra. Just as the PCs have secured the area and are about to call for backup, the drones strike (see the Death From Above event on page 179).

THE HOSPITAL RUINS

The hospital was constructed on one of the Sultra's factory islands. Specialized research wings, gardens, and residential modules surrounded a hill upon which the main hospital complex was located. From the southern courtyard, two ornate marble stairs took visitors up to a terrace and the entrance to the enormous admission hall. North of the main building, a walled recreational area was constructed to give the patients a serene and shielded place to enjoy the long, hot Kuan evenings. The basement, currently underwater, contains a huge, three-story complex dedicated to the research of hyper sickness, mind memes, and the effects of portal jumping on the human psyche. The wings on either side of the main building contained patient and examination rooms. The most severe cases were kept isolated in a bunker separate from the main hospital.

- **Neodym Bars:** There are three sturdy chests of neodym in the base. Two of the chests are half full and worth about 8,000 birr each. The are bulky and heavy, and require either a grav loader to move, or two people passing a demanding (–1) **FORCE** test each. One is located in the temple and one in Chabaun's chambers. The third, empty chest can be found in the admission hall.

THE TEMPLE

In the old hospital chapel, Chabaun and Gaddar-e-Abrar have set up a Martyr temple, complete with whips, haircaftans, and cilices. The temple reeks of death, swamp fever, and nightmares. The pillars in the room have long slices of human skin nailed to them – some dry, others still wet with fresh blood. A Martyr statue towers with pride of place in the back of the room. Below the statue, a parchment containing Urahuk's Statutes is on display. The text is in old Zalosian which requires a successful **CULTURE** test to read. The parchment looks to be at least a century old. **MEDICURGY** reveals that the text is written on human skin rather than paper. PCs who manage to decipher the text recognize the stanzas as those spoken by brother Ramas after his meeting with Noor during *In the Wake of the Martyr*:

"There will come a time when mankind turns to darkness once more
When the unworthy speak without tongues
When sister betrays sister
When the light of peace nourishes the servants of darkness
When brother kills brother
Only they who live in the darkness will see the light"

The temple also contains twenty-something sugar globes and one of the chests of neodym bars. The logo on the chest says "Asteroid Exports" in Kuan.

THE LIVING QUARTERS

Two rooms in the east wing have been sparsely furnished with washbowls, cots on the floor, and a few boxes of food and water. Chabaun's room looks no different, except for a small Martyr statuette on a wooden stool in the middle. On a stained prayer rug next to the statuette sits a glass jar smeared with what looks like dried blood. In an alcove in the north wall, the floor is slippery from a semi-coagulated pool of blood. The glass jar was used to store the synthetic blood needed by Chabaun to power his animate armor, but as he ran out of the synthetic stuff, he began using real blood from the strike team's prisoners.

THE CELLS

The west wing contains three examination rooms used as prison cells by the strike team. The rooms are practically empty, with no furniture and without toilets. When the PCs arrive, there are three mystic prisoners still alive, sharing the cells with five dead bodies. One of the survivors is a middle-aged man, the second an elderly lady and the third is a young humanite girl with dry and chafed gills on her neck. The trio is in bad shape and will hardly react to the PCs' arrival, but will obey if given a direct order that doesn't require fortitude or willpower (use the Frozen Prisoners stats on page 110). Above the stairs in what used to be the wing's waiting room, two workbenches have been set up, covered in the same tools and chemicals as those found at the outpost in the palace. The warriors use the workstations to make more of the interrogation drug they use to subdue their prisoners (see the The Interrogation Drug box on page 168). The waiting room contains 2D6 doses of the regular kind, and three doses of the stronger batch made especially for the Emissary. Both variants are highly sought-after on the black market, fetching 500 and 1000 birr per dose, respectively. Trying to sell them will however attract attention, both from the Syndicate gangs and Zalosian agents.


THE HOSPITAL RUINS
N
★ The Prophet
✱ Martyr Warriors
♦ Sensor Operator
✹ Chabaun
1. Walkway from Palace
2. Grav Loader
3. Entrance (Terrace and Defense System)
4. Backdoor
5. Sentries
6. Water-Filled Elevator Shafts and Stairs
7. Neodym Chests
8. Admission Hall (Laser Communicator in Eastern Corner)
9. Corridor
10. The Temple
11. Dormitory
12. Chabaun's Room
13. Waiting Room
14. Altar
15. Drug Lab
16. Cells
17. The Emissary
3x3 meters

FINDING THE FRIEND

The campaign began with the PCs going off to find their missing friend Noor, and you could consider giving them some good news as a reward at their journey's end – Noor might still be alive. If you are a benevolent GM, replace one of the surviving prisoners above with Noor. Should you wish to give them a completely different sense of closure however, have them find their friend dead among the flayed bodies on the floor.

OTHER WAYS OF GETTING INSIDE

Since the flooding of the basement and the collapse in the east wing, the main entrance is no longer the only way in. Agile PCs could attempt to climb the rubble to get to the roof of the east wing and then attack the sentries from above. This approach requires that they first swim up to the wall without being seen (**INFILTRATION** –1) and then climb the unstable rubble (**DEXTERITY**, critical success or spotted by the guards).

Another way inside is to dive down and find a crack in the wall leading into the flooded basement. This requires diving gear, or some equivalent cybernetic or bionic sculpt, plus a successful **DEXTERITY** test at –1. Once inside, sneaking past guards is resolved with opposed **INFILTRATION** vs **OBSERVATION** tests.

FACTION TECHNOLOGY

The strike team cell set up its base in the abandoned hospital after being advised to do so by Gaddar-e-Abrar. The false prophet's motivation for suggesting the location is that the Astûrban already knew the layout of the facility and had installed secret surveillance gear there to keep tabs on the warriors' affairs. The faction tech that the strike team has been supplied with through the prophet's "friends" comes directly from the Astûrban's armory: hyper-modern ammunition, deadly defense systems, the laser communicator, advanced interrogation equipment – such as drugs and bio scanners – and the powerful radio jammer set up at the Sul-Mahala (which is secretly programmed to keep a certain frequency chosen by the Astûrban open, enabling the secret police to receive data from their spy gear at the hospital).

ID TAGS

The martyr warriors have electronic ID tags in their armor to be able to pass through the security perimeter without being shot at by their own defense systems. The tags also protect against friendly fire in combat, as their homing Vulcan rounds will avoid hitting anyone wearing them, giving them an additional +1 to their initiative rating each round. If the PCs get their hands on one of the ID tags, its frequency pattern can be copied by passing a difficult (–2) **DATA DJINN** test. It requires access to a tabula or a computer, and the copy must be uploaded to a suitable com unit, such as a personal communicator. Having the right ID signature will get a person through the perimeter (see below), but not without prompting a log entry at the central computer set up in the main admission hall. If the PCs are in luck, the guard at the computer might be elsewhere when they pass the outer sensors.

GUARDS

There are ten martyr warriors at the base, not including Chabaun or Gaddar. Below are some suggested positions around the area, but if the PCs trip the alarms around the base, or if the scouts at the palace radioed ahead to tell their superiors that trouble is coming, the martyr warriors may instead attack the PCs before they make it inside the hospital.

- **South Courtyard:** Two warriors, either busy adjusting the Firestorm system installed above the entrance, or keeping an eye on the two gravcraft they use to transport prisoners and gear from the palace.

- **Admission Hall:** Chabaun and two warriors, one of whom is keeping an eye on the computers and the laser communicator aimed at the Sul-Mahala through a crack near the ceiling in the south wall. The room is full of crates of ammunition, weapons, and all sorts of gear.
- **West Wing:** Two warriors, at the top of the stairs in what used to be a waiting room. They are alert, but at least one of them is either praying at the small altar in the north corner or making more of the interrogation drug at the workbenches by the south wall.
- **East Wing:** Three guards. Two act as sentries at either side of the collapsed main corridor where lookouts have been constructed from sheets of durasteel. The sentries have sensors and watch the northern and southern approaches, respectively. The lookouts are manned around the clock. The third warrior is keeping an eye on Gaddar-e-Abrar in the temple.
- **Sleeping Warriors:** At least one warrior can usually be found in the dormitory, but during the night, you could decide that the two guards in the courtyard as well as one from both the admission hall and the west wing are there as well, to sleep, cook, or eat. Chabaun only visits his private room five short times a day, to take off his armor and whip himself to honor the Martyr.

Unless the PCs are especially clumsy, they should be able to infiltrate the base and attack a scattered and surprised enemy. If they trip the alarms however, the warriors quickly get ready for combat and set up an ambush (page 85 of the Coriolis core rulebook). How the strike team members do this is up to you as the GM to decide, but they likely stage one ambush in the admission hall and one in the west wing, close to the Emissary's body.

THE DEFENSE SYSTEMS

The entrance to the admission hall is guarded by a sensor-guided Firestorm system (page 127 of the Coriolis core rulebook), and two motion-triggered flamethrowers are mounted on the outer north wall. The area of the swamp surrounding the hospital is booby-trapped with thermal grenades. Spotting the defenses requires **OBSERVATION** tests for each of the three systems (with a –1 to spot the grenades). The grenades can be disarmed by passing a demanding (–1) **TECHNOLOGY** test, or one can carefully avoid them by testing **DEXTERITY**. Failure means setting off a grenade (see Thermal grenade, page 127 of the Coriolis core rulebook). Getting past the automated weapons by the main entrance is trickier. The weapons are connected to a whole series of sensors that measure things such as heat fluctuations and movement. If the PCs have acquired one of the warriors' ID tags, they can get close enough to disconnect the weapons by testing **DATA DJINN** or **TECHNOLOGY** at –1. Failing the test means setting off a silent alarm, alerting the strike team to their intrusion.

NPCS

Priot Chabaun Kheml is head of the remaining cell of the strike team. After the death of the Emissary, they are preparing to pack up the operation and leave the Sultra. They have heard the news of the Order assassin in Little Algol, but Chabaun's zeal blinds him to any political fallout that might come from his operation. The remaining warriors will fight to the death, except for Gaddar-e-Abrar, who very much wishes to survive his mission. He might be open to negotiations with the PCs if they promise him safe passage out of the marshes.

CHABAUN KHEML, PRIOT OF THE WARRIORS OF THE HOLY LIGHT

Chabaun is an experienced soldier with many campaigns on Zalos-B behind him. He descends from a long line of defenders of the Order of the Pariah, and can trace his lineage back to the Portal Wars. When the current operation was launched, he was appointed head of the strike team and elevated to Priot by his uncle, Khaleem Hydarnes, who understood the need for firm leadership during such a difficult assignment. The Warriors of the Holy Light adhere to a very literal interpretation of Iria Urahuk's Statutes – a collection of prophecies warning about the return of darkness to the Horizon as well as describing the sacraments necessary to cleanse the world from evil. The radical beliefs and methods of the strike team differ so much from those of the rest of the Order that they have been shunned by the faction and are classified as a splinter group. Chabaun has always loved poetry, and dedicates what little free time he has to sacral poems and ancient prose. During his time in the Sultra, darkness has corrupted his mind, and he is now lost in the Vestals' dreamscape. They have forced him to do unspeakable things, and in his brief lucid moments, he is overcome by shame and guilt.

APPEARANCE: Shaved head with tattooed glyphs running from temple to neck. His back is terribly scarred from flagellation. Always dressed in a suit of animate armor inherited from his mother, Daya Hydarnes. The golden plates are covered in holy

symbols, and thick layers of dark silk cover the underlying artificial muscles typical of the Order's holy body armor.

CHARACTERISTICS: Speaks to the Martyr constantly, praying and grovelling before the might of the One. He is very aggressive and quick to resort to violence, and he demands absolute obedience from his acolytes. Before the arrival of the Vestals, he was calmer and more methodical, but he has always been a fanatic.

ATTRIBUTES: **STRENGTH 5, AGILITY 5, WITS 3, EMPATHY 3**
HIT POINTS: 15
MIND POINTS: 11
REPUTATION: 7
SKILLS: Command 5, Melee Combat 5, Ranged Combat 5, Manipulation 3, Infiltration 2, Observation 2
TALENT: Relentless, The Way of the Martyr, Holy Armor
ARMOR: Animate glyph armor 10
WEAPONS: Holy thermal carbine (gear bonus +2), mercurium sword



ALSIRSAH

The Alsirsah is originally a Dabaran traditional feast where the families of the betrothed meet to finalize the terms of the wedding. The life bond concerns not only the happy couple but their families as well, and the Alsirsah marks the end of an often lengthy period of negotiations over the two sides' respective duties toward one another. The party is usually thrown by the family who marries upward, to show that they are worthy of the coming union.
During the banquet, Leod makes a welcome speech praising both the Din Hramas and the other guests – they will act as witnesses when the final contract is signed, making their opinions of the host very important.

"Honored guests and friends, I welcome you with all my heart to the Alsirsah. Tonight, we celebrate the union of the dol-Quassars and the noble Din Hramas, paragons of Zenithian light and wisdom, whom we have to thank for opening our eyes to a new Horizon.

Marok dol-Quassar of the proud Dabaran blood – exalted Dabaran who stalwartly fought off the darkness during the Long Night! – seeks the hand of Theda Din Hrama, a child of Ardha, a bringer of light from humanity's cradle.

Honored guests, today is a proud day. May the Icons hear us as we raise our glasses toward the Monolith and pray for their blessing of this blood bond. May they guide us to honor our history and welcome the future.

Dearest of friends, may your cups never run dry, your plates never be empty and your spirits lose themselves in music and dance – may this Alsirsah be a fond memory for all of us until She the most Merciful comes to grace us with her slumber. May this day mark the birth of a brighter tomorrow."

– Leod dol-Quassar, Dabaran nobleman

GEAR: Martyr talisman (+1 to one **RANGED COMBAT** or **COMMAND** roll), throat-mounted link

- **RELENTLESS:** Chabaun is absolutely merciless toward both his warriors and his enemies. At the cost of 2 DP, he can roll two dice when determining Initiative score, choosing the best one. At the cost of 1 DP, he may perform one additional normal action (2 APs) instead of another warrior that hasn't yet acted in the turn. The warrior in whose slot he performs the extra action has her Initiative score lowered by three, but may otherwise act normally. Chabaun can only do this once per turn.
- **THE WAY OF THE MARTYR:** Chabaun has been selected for an experimental augmentation program including blessed bionics and special training known as The Way of the Martyr. This has made him exceptionally tough – he gets 5 additional HP and MP.
- **HOLY ARMOR:** As a member of the highest warrior caste, Chabaun has inherited his mother's animate glyph armor. It is a hybrid between the regular suits of animate armor and the glyph technology used in the ship hulls of the fleet. To be able to wear it, Chabaun has undergone months of symbiotic linking and advanced training. The armor absorbs the first hit in combat without taking damage, and after that, Chabaun can negate one additional hit per turn at the cost of 2 DP.

GADDAR-E-ABRAR, FALSE PROPHET

Gaddar-e-Abrar (whose real name is Salama Ar Aterio) is the Astûrban's secret agent among the martyr warriors. Over the course of his assignment, he has used all of his cunning to try to make the strike team act in accordance with the plans of the secret police: to create chaos. Gaddar has successfully posed as a zealous preacher fighting the good fight, always with a suitable spin on some ancient religious text ready to justify the actions of the strike team. Unbeknownst to him, his orders are given to him by moles within the Astûrban working for Nazareem's Sacrifice. His orders have recently become more and more extreme, and although he views the operation as more or less successful, he can feel his power over the strike team slipping through his fingers. Chabaun has started to suspect him, and he fears for his life. He keeps a thermal cricket ready under his robes at all times and desperately looks for a chance to signal his employers for extraction before it is too late.



APPEARANCE: A weary-looking man with a well-kept mustache and a jewelled beard. A small piece of wood is fastened through the skin just below his lower lip. Bald and with fake facial tattoos. He wears a caftan with religious, Zalosian patterns covered with many layers of expensive shawls around his torso.

CHARACTERISTICS: Tries to act calm, but looks around nervously and sweats a lot. When he manages to compose himself, he wipes his forehead and face with beautifully embroidered silk handkerchiefs.

ATTRIBUTES:
STRENGTH 2, AGILITY 3, WITS 4, EMPATHY 4

HIT POINTS: 5

MIND POINTS: 10

REPUTATION: 5

SKILLS: Observation 5, Culture 4, Manipulation 4, Ranged Combat 4, Data Djinn 3, Melee Combat 3

TALENT: Hardened, False Prophet, Agent

ARMOR: Protective clothing 2

WEAPONS: Astûrban M-III thermal cricket (Small, Silenced, Reliable)

GEAR: Martyr talisman (not blessed), hidden class II communicator, incense burner, prayer tower

- **HARDENED:** Gaddar is trained for the mental strain of undercover operations. He gets 2 additional MP.
- **FALSE PROPHET:** Gaddar is very empathic which – combined with his great knowledge of the Horizon – makes him very convincing. He gets his **CULTURE** skill level as a bonus to Reputation when trying to convince someone of something using **MANIPULATION**.
- **AGENT:** Gaddar is trained for infiltration as well as for stealthy assassinations. He gets an extra six to all attacks made within Close range, both melee and ranged, as long as he rolled at least one six.

WARRIORS OF THE HOLY LIGHT

The remaining martyr warriors attempt to kill the PCs as quickly as possible, acting like a single, remorseless body. Their weapons are loaded with homing rounds and they all carry grenades. They are not afraid to die, but they wish to die well. When they meet Iria Urahuk in the afterlife, they want to do it with their backs straight and their eyes clear.

APPEARANCE: Men and women in the Order of the Pariah's dark body armor with glyph-covered helmet visors.

CHARACTERISTICS: Quiet except when giving orders. Praising the Martyr if captured and interrogated.

ATTRIBUTES:
STRENGTH 4, AGILITY 4, WITS 2, EMPATHY 3

HIT POINTS: 8

MIND POINTS: 5

REPUTATION: 4

SKILLS: Melee Combat 4, Infiltration 3, Medicurgy 3, Observation 3, Ranged Combat 3, Manipulation 1

TALENT: Fanatics, Spray and Pray

ARMOR: Light Order armor 5

WEAPONS: Vulcan carbine, concussion grenade, dura knife

GEAR: Two reloads of homing Vulcan rounds (**RANGED COMBAT** +2), throat-mounted link

- **FANATICS:** The blind faith of Zalos' agents enables them to get back up at 2 HP after having been broken in combat. Costs 2 DP.
- **SPRAY AND PRAY:** The warriors are trained for intense firefights. They ignore the first one rolled when firing Automatic fire (page 89 of the Coriolis core rulebook).

EVENTS

In this scene, the PCs must infiltrate or assault the hospital. Information about layout and guards can be found above, as well as a map of the complex along with descriptions of the different rooms.

TREACHEROUS PATHS

The PCs carefully walk through the razor-sharp cirta grass that dominates all solid ground in the Sultra valley. The ground looks steady enough, but might suddenly give way and trap an unlucky PC in the murky mud below. At the cost of 1 DP, a PC gets stuck in the mud or in some tangled roots. Getting up is a slow action and requires a **FORCE** test. Failure means dropping one random possession into the water before making it to safer ground.

- **Mines:** The event can be used to introduce the minefield as the PCs approach the hospital.
- **Ambush:** At the cost of 1 additional DP, the martyr strike team suddenly ambushes the group while one PC is stuck in the mud.

Cost: 1–2 DP

MINES!

The PCs wander into the area mined with thermal grenades by the martyr strike team (see the The Defensive Systems above for more information). If you allow the PCs a chance to spot the danger beforehand, the event will only cost you 1 DP. At the cost of 3 DP however, the first notice of the mines they get is a detonation when one of them walks through a tripwire obscured by the tall grass. After the explosion, they find themselves surrounded by mines on all sides.

Cost: 1, 3 DP

PRISONERS

Even though the warriors are prepared to fight to the death, the PCs might be able to take prisoners. Gaddar is desperate for a way out of the marsh and will be easier to capture.

- **The Fallen Prophet:** When fighting breaks out in the base, Gaddar tries to find a safe place to hide. If he believes that the PCs appear to be winning, he might surrender to them to save himself. He will continue to pose as the strike team's prophet however, to make sure the Order looks like the ones responsible. If he is attacked by Akouba, or is saved by the PCs from the airstrike, he becomes more than willing to share certain parts of the truth however. He admits to being an undercover Astûrban agent tasked with spying on the strike team, but he won't say anything about the secret police actually running the operation or about their plans to destabilize the Council and the Consortium. If he is questioned about the strange ship that departed the hospital earlier, his eyes become glassy with fear and he recounts with a trembling voice the arrival of the tall, white-clad Serafs. Chabaun seemed to know of their arrival and kissed the ground at their feet before welcoming them inside.
- **Defeated Warriors:** The martyr warriors know very little of the structure of the operation – they are here to rid the Horizon of darkness by dealing with its tainted spawn, the mystics. Their cause is blessed, and the Serafs' visit is proof of that.
- **Chabaun's Madness:** Chabaun is completely crazy and zealous like never before. Speaking to him at all requires passing an insane (–3) **MANIPULATION** test, or the use of powerful mystic powers. He might then reveal that he has been chosen to serve as the Martyr's right hand in the salvation of the Third Horizon by following the teachings of Iria Urahuk. As he wishes to boldly go where no one has gone before and research the nature of corruption, he began flaying his prisoners last week to find more answers. Iria's spirit talks to him day and night, encouraging him to press on. The Serafs are the Martyr's eternal love made flesh. If interrogated, he will just sing ancient hymns praising the Martyr, even if tortured. If captured and brought away from the Sultra, it will take months of treatment and interrogation to get anything useful out of him.

Cost: 0 DP

DEATH FROM ABOVE

If the PCs shut off the jammer, or if you as the GM want to make it a little more obvious that someone else is interfering with the operation, you can play the drone attack while the PCs are inside the hospital, either during their attack on the strike team or later, after the final scene at the Emissary's deathbed (see The Messenger's Whisper below). An alert PC can hear whirring engines above the trees and may test **OBSERVATION** to realize that a group of small aircraft is fast approaching. A critical success identifies the craft as drones or possibly torpedoes. The PCs have barely enough time to get to safety before the strike hits, with remarkable precision.

- **Cover:** Finding cover in time requires a successful **DEXTERITY** test (provides cover 6). Failure means that the cover is inadequate (cover 3) and a critical success means that the person finds something especially sturdy to get behind (cover 8). If the PCs are unaware of the drones, they may of course not try to find cover.
- **Damage:** A missile strike (weapon damage 6, CRIT 1, Extreme range).
- **False leads:** The drones are designed to look like they come from the Order of the Pariah, with Zalosian glyphs painted on them. A difficult (–2) **CULTURE** test, or closer study of shrapnel in a laboratory, reveals that the glyphs appear to have been put on after the construction of the drone, which differs from the Order standards of inserting the glyphs into the cases as they are being molded. A demanding (–1) **TECHNOLOGY** test of the electronics of the payload reveals them to be Zenithian. Examining the site after the strike shows that the drones were very precise, targeting the area where Gaddar was and the rooms mainly used by the strike team, such as the dormitory, the temple, the admission hall, the gravcraft, and Chabaun's quarters.

Cost: 3 DP (1 DP if the PCs turned the jammer off)

THE MESSENGER'S WHISPER

In this, the final scene, the PCs find the Emissary's dead body, and interact with its spirit that still lingers in the hospital. They experience a vision containing the Emissary's final plea for help and a clue about its origins.

THE SITUATION

In an operating room in the northern corner of the east wing, the PCs finally find the Emissary. Before the door slides open, a chilling wind blows through the dark corridors behind them. Anxiety suddenly wells up inside them and their hearts race as the reinforced door slowly opens.

In the dark room, a contorted body lies motionless on a steel bed. Medical apparatuses line the walls. Dirty tools, candles, and incense burners are scattered across a couple of Zalosian prayer rugs on the worn floor. The large windows are covered but a domed skylight lets in a little starlight from above, illuminating a whirling snowfall of dust and ash in the heavy silence. The body on the bed is on its back and partly clothed in a simple, white Miran formal dress. The limbs and facial expression of the Emissary are twisted in a final pose full of pain and despair. The steel bed is cracked, and a fine mesh of cracks in the floor seem to emanate from it. The machinery along the walls is broken and thrown about with bits of plaster from the ceiling lying here and there. It looks as if all loose objects in the room have been pushed away from its center by a powerful shockwave. The body on the bed looks crackled, and is covered with a fine, grey white powder – like ash. The cracks in the dry skin run along the slim, androgynous body up to the face, where the open mouth and the empty eye sockets have expelled a dark, strange substance, now dried. Before the PCs lies that which once was one of the ghosts from Xene – the observer at the Council, the Messenger Icon, Nabi-mu-Qad – but now, only a lifeless husk remains.

❁ RESONANCE – THE DREAM

Read out the text below or use it as inspiration. Let the PCs react to the event, but not avoid it. All PCs are affected, not just mystics as before.

As you stand above the Emissary's mummified body, the steel bed suddenly begins to shake and the soot in the air forms a whirlwind above the body. A shrill, high note intensifies inside you, blocking out other sounds, and you feel yourselves start to vibrate. A throbbing headache sets in and your skin begins to crawl as the whirlwind of soot and dust suddenly envelops you.

If there is a mystic in the group, she hears loud chanting as the vibrations intensify.

Suddenly, it appears as if your body and the room vibrate in harmony, and you experience a moment of perfect stillness. Fire bursts forth from the Emissary's dark eyes and mouth and you are blinded by a bright light as the ground beneath your feet disappears and you are transported somewhere far away.

You regain your senses surrounded by terraced fields and high crops. Farther down in the lush, green valley, you see a small group of white, spherical buildings in perfect rows. Two pale suns chase each other across the blue sky. On the horizon, three enormous ziggurats reach for the heavens. A wind chime can be heard somewhere in the distance.

You hear singing behind you, and spot someone approaching you across the field. The song is in a foreign tongue but it moves you deeply. The singer, on the other hand, seems quite ordinary; a short, androgynous-looking person dressed in a long, yellow robe with simple floral embroideries in white and gold, held together at the waist with three white ribbons. A red shawl covers the shoulders, a simple hat in many colors protects the shaved head from the sun and tattoos of scrolling vines on the forehead and cheeks – contrasted in gold against the black skin – frame a friendly smile in a weathered face. The singer bows courteously and addresses you, leaning on a short walking stick:

"We meet at last. You must pardon me the circumstances, but my vessel has been destroyed and can no longer speak for me. Poor bastard. I was able to repair both the damage from the gas giant's fumes and withstand the martyrs' futile attempts at torture, but it would seem that our ancient nemeses finally caught up with me."

The singer looks up toward the hastily darkening sky. A thunderstorm comes rolling down the mountain sides and the wind picks up as a gentle rain begins to fall.



THE ICON'S REFLECTION

The butterfly's wings shadow the Horizon.
The pain of birth awaits us
between moments lived and moments lost.
The mirror defines the distance
between reflected and reflection.

– Nabi-mu-Qad, the Messenger Emissary

"We don't have much time. The enemy have advanced their plans much further than expected. The Taoan incident was just the beginning. The white butterfly will continue to chip away at the barricade you built all those years ago. Its agents are awakening and my siblings are in danger. We had hoped to reach you sooner, but the song wasn't strong enough. Together, we hope to stir your forgotten memories and ready you for the coming storm, but the winged shadow threatens everything. Will you fall too, like I have? I am but an echo of my true self, a winged songbird whose frail notes only live in the vibrations of temple windows, in the heaving breath of marble floors and in the sighing of the wind. Without the others, the song will never be strong enough, and without the song, there is no hope for the Third Horizon."

The clouds above are suddenly lit up brightly from behind and a deafening bang reverberates through the valley. The singer looks up and then turns to you again with a troubled look in the piercing eyes.

"The butterfly sought to destroy me by sapping energy from the darkness. Something is about to break through. We will meet again, but you must return home now."

The singer bows again, and a blinding flash of light later, you find yourselves back at the hospital in the Sultra next to the Emissary's dead body. The air above the bed vibrates, and an impossible crack appears at the heart of the vibrations, around which light seems to ripple and bend. A powerful wind roars through the room as the rip widens and flaps of darkness unfold, fluttering like flags in a storm. The Emissary's body is torn to shreds as if it was a slip of paper and the dark flaps gather to form a grotesque entity crowned in a halo in all the colors of the rainbow. A creature of absolute darkness hisses at you, evoking primordial memories of everything mankind has ever feared.

THE SHADOWS OF THE VESTALS

The First Horizon agents went to the Kua system to gather information about the plans of the Symmetry. After seeing the strike team fail in its attempts to interrogate the Emissary, the Vestals took over. They used powers drawing on the dark between the stars and were eventually able to destroy the Emissary, ripping the mind of the Symmetry mystic from its broken vessel. This event

caused a permanent tear to open in the Third Horizon. Corruption and darkness can leak in through the crack and manifest itself in the area around the hospital. A horrifying darkmorph breaks through, attacking anything that moves – PCs and martyr warriors alike. The creature remains in the world as long as you have DP left to spend.

AYAAM'SHA, DARKMORPH

The darkmorph known as Ayaam'sha was created as a result of human manipulation of the dark between the stars. The First Horizon have been harnessing energy from the great darkness for many centuries. The use of their powers to torture and kill the Emissary permanently corrupted the area around the hospital, creating a tear in reality. If living matter approaches the tear, the darkness on the other side can push through the crack. Ayaam'sha has not been seen in the Third Horizon before and only ancient Mogul texts mention the shapeless shadow in references to the previous Horizons' Exile Wars.

APPEARANCE: Ayaam'sha is a two-dimensional being, consisting of strings or flaps of darkness assuming physical form. They bend and twist around each other to form a three-dimensional body. Light bends around the creature, making it appear as complete darkness with shimmering edges. The being is hollow, and the flaps can be rearranged to be closer or farther apart, enabling it to change in size from a one-dimensional dot to a cloud as large as a house.

CHARACTERISTICS: When the creature materializes, the pressure in the surrounding area is affected – powerful winds come out of nowhere and people usually experience ear pain, headaches, and nosebleeds. The being makes no sound, but it makes its victims hear their own fear and anxiety as a hissing, sickening breath coming from the creature.

ABILITIES: The darkmorph has no attributes or skills, instead only using its abilities. It can be damaged by sharp melee weapons, fire and explosions, as well as by non-traditional firearms such as thermal and Vulcan weapons. There are ancient rituals that banish Ayaam'sha, but they are not yet known in the Third Horizon.

HIT POINTS: 10 (see Darkborn below)

SIZE: The creature has four different sizes that define its stats (see Size shift below).

- "One-dimensional" – unable to attack, moves two meters per action, cannot be damaged.
- "Humanoid" – attacks within Close range, moves twenty meters per action, inflicts 5 points of stress, armor 3
- "Small room" – attacks within Short range, moves ten meters per action, inflicts 3 points of stress, armor 6
- "Large hall" – attacks within Long range, unable to move, inflicts 1 point of stress, armor 12

WEAPONS: see the Darken Mind ability below

- **DARKBORN (2 DP):** As Ayaam'sha is a manifestation of pure darkness, it relies on Darkness Points for all its actions. It cannot be killed in any traditional sense of the word, and only disappears if the GM has no more DP left to spend. Critical injuries sustained are noted down, and when the creature's HP are reduced to 0, it disappears for as many turns as the number of critical injuries suffered. It then returns at full health at the cost of 2 DP.
- **DARKEN MIND (1–3 DP):** The being's attacks cost 1 DP each, count as normal actions and only inflict stress (armor may not be tested). A swarm of dark folds whirls around and through the victim. The attack automatically hits and inflicts stress depending on the creature's current size. If the victim hasn't yet acted in the turn, she uses a reaction (1 AP) to test **EMPATHY** or **MYSTIC POWERS**. The test is the equivalent of an armor roll, and each six rolled negates 1 point of stress. The victim may pray for a reroll, but this will only strengthen the creature (see Darkborn above). At the cost of 2 additional DP, the attack can be made to inflict a critical injury as a result of the intense terror experienced by the victim. Blessed talismans automatically protect someone from an attack, but are destroyed in the process.
- **SIZE SHIFT (1 DP):** At the cost 1 DP, Ayaam'sha can shift between any of the four sizes above. Each step shifted counts as a fast action (1 AP).
- **ONE-DIMENSIONAL:** As a normal action, Ayaam'sha can pass through solid objects thinner than two meters. To do so, it must first size shift to a one-dimensional dot (see Size shift above).



ENDING ACT III

The *Emissary Lost* story ends with the Emissary's dream vision and the battle with Ayaam'sha. The PCs are free to choose how they wish to report back to their employer and what evidence to present. If Akouba is alive and hasn't yet been exposed as an Astûrban agent however, matters are somewhat beyond their control. She arranges an escort out of the Sultra and makes sure that the right evidence finds it way to the Council of Factions, the Judicators and (possibly) judge Nigelia Kurahan. The Bulletin reports around the clock about the brave group that punished those guilty for the kidnappings, and if there were any thrilling heroics involved, the PCs receive a +1 to Reputation.

INTERPRETING THE VISION

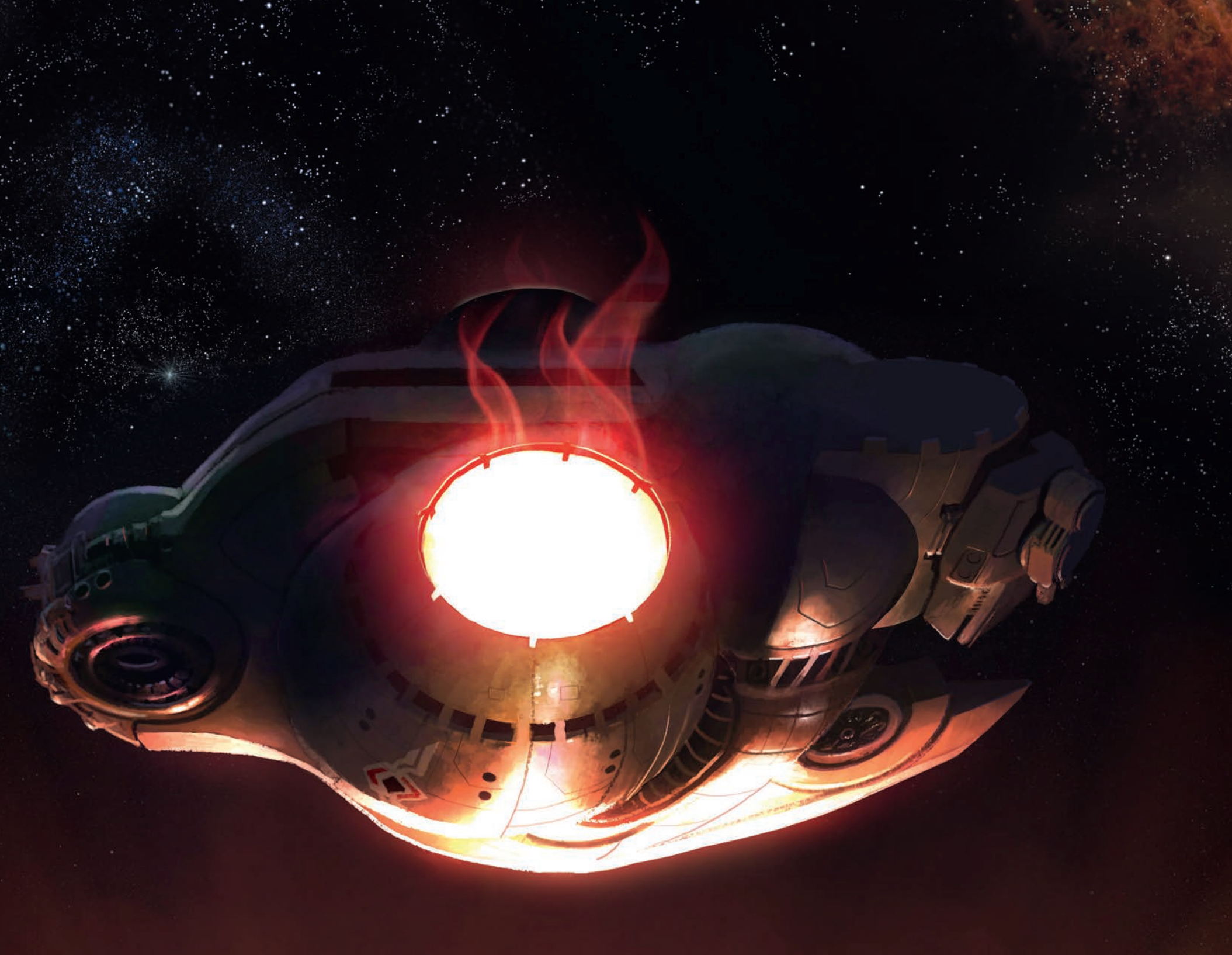
If the PCs try to find out more about the world they visited in the Emissary's vision, there is currently not much information to be found:

- A **CULTURE** test can tell them that there are no known ziggurat temples in the Third Horizon resembling those they saw in the vision.
- A **SCIENCE** test can tell them that there are no known green planets orbiting a pair of pale suns. The crops they saw are also unidentifiable.
- A **CULTURE** test can inform them that the robes worn by the singer are vaguely reminiscent of the ritual robes of the clergy of the Circle of Seekers, but that the hat and shawl look more like those worn by the leaders of the Mogul fleet.

THE SECOND HORIZON

The PCs have seen a vision of the Second Horizon and its golden world, Argonnas. The singer in the field was Urni en-Argonnas, a mystic from the highest ranks of the Symmetry known as a Santulan – "They who balance the universe". Five of these spiritual leaders managed to transport their minds to the Third Horizon using an ancient mystic power called resonance, originally discovered after the Portal Wars by the Symmetry's chief mystic, Rima en-Aldaan.

The five mystics inserted their minds into a group of explorers that had crash landed on Xene, and used their incredible powers to keep their new host bodies alive during their escape from the depths of the gas giant. Urni is the mystic whose vessel would become known as Nabi-mu-Qad, the Messenger Emissary. None of this is for the eyes of the players of course, but it will feature more prominently in future installations of the Mercy campaign. In the meantime, it is enough if the players begin to realize that their story is much more complex than it first appeared.





EPILOGUE

The song leads us to the truth,
under a great, winged shadow.
A moment's reprieve for my brothers and sisters,
united in the waves in the void.

– NABI-MU-QAD, THE MESSENGER EMISSARY

The PCs have caught their first glimpse of the Second Horizon and Argonnas, its golden world. They have met Urni, one of the Symmetry's head mystics. The remaining four Emissaries, risen from Xene and spread out across the Third Horizon, are now in mortal danger from the Vestals. The PCs leave the Sultra with many unanswered questions and Urni's final message on their minds.

AFTER THE DEATH of the Emissary and the destruction of the martyr strike team, there is nothing more to do in the sunken flooded city of Sultra and the events in the dark marshes have likely spawned more questions than answers. The PCs must leave the swamp and seek the truth about the mystery of the Emissaries elsewhere.

AFTERMATH

This is the end of the first part of the *Mercy of the Icons* campaign. The PCs leave the Sultra and return to other adventures in the Horizon. As the GM, you are free to let your players explore other planets and systems. Some of the questions they may have will not be answered until the second installation of the *Mercy of the Icons* campaign, but until then, the search for the other Emissaries may be used to create thrilling adventures. The political consequences of the events in the scenarios above may also be used as a backdrop for further play.

THE FIVE EMISSARIES

Five Emissaries emerged from the depths of Xene. The minds of five Symmetry mystics traveled through the mystic node at Xene and possessed a group of explorers working on a Foundation probe researching the gas giant. Since then, the Emissaries have scattered across the Horizon to find out more about the plans of the First Horizon. They have all chosen to present themselves as an incarnation of one of the nine Icons, but only the Emissaries known as the Messenger and the Judge have received large-scale public attention. The coming scenarios in the *Mercy of the Icons* campaign will feature more Symmetry mystics, so for your own scenarios in the meantime, you should only use the Emissaries found in the tables below. The circumstances regarding the two best known Emissaries are somewhat special:

THE MESSENGER

The Messenger Emissary has lost its host body and only remains as an echo in the void around Coriolis and Kua. If your group wishes to explore the story of this particular Emissary, there are two paths to investigate. The first one revolves around the mystics drawn to Coriolis by the echo, and around the Children of the Song, a cult of mystics growing stronger on the station. They are under the protection of the Circle of Seekers and can be used as a focal point for political drama on the station, or as possible employers in the search for the remaining Emissaries. The second path will take the PCs to Mira to investigate the origins of the Messenger's host body, the explorer Alam Dania. This could reveal more information about the group of prospectors who went down to Xene as humans, and returned as something else.

THE JUDGE

he Emissary known as the Judge residing on the Foundation's Xene station is featured in one of the mission suggestions below but will also play an important part in coming scenarios in the campaign. If the PCs travel to Xene, they will therefore find that the Judge has been evacuated from the station. Keep the focus on the political consequences this might lead to, and on the stories shared by those who have met the Judge. As the GM, think carefully before using the actual Judge Emissary in your game.

MISSION GENERATOR

The tables and descriptions below can help you introduce the Emissaries into your game. A few of the plots below also suggest ways in which to connect them to further explorations of mysteries the PCs might have caught glimpses of during the first part of the campaign. The missions can be generated using dice rolls or by choosing the table entries you like. You can either construct a plot of your own around one of the Emissaries, or choose one of the mission suggestions.

This chapter can help you:

- Construct scenarios around a specific Emissary. It also contains a list of mission ideas to build from.
- Create the setting for a dramatic conflict and create its major characters.
- Establish the Emissary's role in the story
- Flesh out the Emissary itself and determine its manias and powers
- Create a wide range of dramatic missions with tempting rewards.

MAJOR PLAYERS

The groups and factions involved in the plot shape the conflict. The plot should contain one allied force and one antagonist group for the PCs to interact with. Choose from the list below or let the dice decide. Also choose a suitable entourage for the Emissary, and determine the type of location for the scenario.

THE EMISSARY AS AN NPC

If the Emissary itself is a character in your scenario, decide what powers it has and what manias the Symmetry mystic has developed as a result of the mental strain. Only the Messenger Emissary, Urni en-Argonnas, was able to insert their mind into the host vessel without complications. Use the same base stats for all Emissaries, modified by their manias. While they may appear weak in comparison to the forces hellbent on destroying them, their mighty powers and their ability to heal wounds incredibly fast make them worthy opponents for any faction. You are free to decide if you want to handle them as regular NPCs and let stats and dice do the talking, or if you

THE ATLAS COMPENDIUM

You can combine this chapter with much of the information found in the Atlas Compendium supplement for even more detailed plots.

TABLE 1 THE EMISSARY

D66	ICON	KNOWN AS	SYMMETRY MYSTIC	HOST BODY
11–14	THE MESSENGER*	Nabi-mu-Qad	Urni en-Argonnas	Alam Dania, Mira
15–16	THE JUDGE	Hukim-mu-Qad	Unknown **	Yorûg om-Khalil, Altai
21–26	THE DANCER	Kama-mu-Qad	Aisha en-Barka	Harish Verma, Mira
31–36	THE MERCHANT	Karob-mu-Qad	Hiam en-Lamra	Faisal Kham, Kua
41–46	THE FACELESS ONE	Hane-mu-Qad	Chera en-Megrina	Leila Hatami, Dabaran
51–66	FALSE EMISSARY	(choose one of the above)	–	***

* THE CHILDREN OF THE SONG: Bear in mind that the death of the Messenger Emissary changes much on Coriolis.

** THE SPIDER'S WEB: The Judge Emissary disappears from the Xene station, leaving much political uncertainty in its wake.

*** THE IMPOSTER: Someone is impersonating an Emissary: a mystic gone mad, someone lusting for wealth and power, or a Nazareem's Sacrifice cell setting a trap for the PCs.

TABLE 2 MISSION SUGGESTIONS (SEE DESCRIPTIONS ON PAGE 195)

D66	PLOT	FOCUS	SUGGESTED LOCATION
11–12	The Curse of the Abdusala	Yasin Sabaaha and the dead crew	Kua and one location of your choice
13–14	The Faceless Scavenger	Emissary, the Faceless One	Yastapol/Odacon
15–16	The Caged Dancer	Emissary, the Dancer	Sadaal/Zalos
21–24	The Miran Explorer	Alam Dania, possessed prospector	Mira
25–26	The Kuan General	Emissary, the Dancer/the Merchant	Uharu/Algol
31–32	In the Shadow of the Monolith	Emissary, the Merchant/the Faceless One	Menkar/Kua
33–36	The Spider's Web	Emissary, the Judge	Xene/Border Space
41–42	Izar's Prisoner	Emissary, the Dancer/the Faceless One	Erequ
43–44	The Merchant from Kalidha	Emissary, the Merchant	Dabaran/Uharu/Hamura
45–51	The Imposter	Choose an Emissary from table XY	Anywhere
53–55	The Miner's Dilemma	The Asteroid Exports mining company	Any system with an asteroid belt
56–62	The Fate of the Sultra	–	Kua, Cataract 27
63–66	The Children of the Song	Emissary, the Messenger	Coriolis/Kua

wish to decide beforehand how they fare in specific conflicts.

CHARACTERISTICS: An Emissary is focused and collected, calmly aware that it has the necessary tools to handle any situation that might arise. Its slumbering manias might however prompt strange and erratic behavior from time to time.

ATTRIBUTES:
STRENGTH 3, AGILITY 3, WITS 6, EMPATHY 6

HIT POINTS: 10

MIND POINTS: 12

REPUTATION: 10 (except when dealing with the Order of the Pariah)

SKILLS: Mystic Powers 10, Culture 8, Science 8, Manipulation 6, Observation 6, Command 5, Dexterity 2. Skill level 5 in one of Medicurgy, Technology, or Survival.

TALENT: Recreate (level I to III), two resonance powers of your choice (see table 7)

THE EMISSARY'S POWERS

The Symmetry mystics known as Santulans that have possessed the bodies of the explorers are among the most powerful in the Second Horizon. The mystic powers that have begun manifesting in the Third Horizon are a crude, basic form of what the Symmetry refers to as resonance. Unlike the First Horizon's manipulation of the dark between the stars, the Symmetry mystics prefer to let their minds follow the vibrations of the universe and are therefore capable of interacting with mass and energy over vast distances.

NEW RULES: RESONANCE

Resonance powers are a new group of mystic talents. If they are used by a trained Symmetry mystic, they neither cost nor generate DP. The powers come in four levels, of which the first two are more or less equivalent to some of the regular mystic powers in the Third Horizon described in the Rulebook.

- **I – Marked:** Instantaneous, limited powers.
- **II – Mystic:** Powers capable of affecting a small number of people for a short time.
- **III – Resonant:** Powers capable of affecting an area or a group of people for an extended period of time.
- **IV – Santulan:** Extraordinary powers capable of producing permanent change.

TABLE 3 MAJOR PLAYERS (CHOOSE ONE OF EACH)

D66	ALLIES	ANTAGONISTS
11–15	The Foundation	The Zenithian Hegemony
16–23	The Legion	A Dabaran pasha
24–31	The Free League	The Syndicate
32–35	The Mogul fleet	The Astûrban
36–42	The Draconites	Algolan slavers
43–51	The Circle of Seekers	The Order of the Pariah
52–54	The Judicators	Nazareem's Sacrifice
55–62	The Syndicate	The Foundation
63–66	Ahlam's Temple	Rebels

TABLE 4 THE EMISSARY'S ENTOURAGE

D6	ENTOURAGE
1	**ALONE:** The Emissary is hiding or held captive
2	**LOVERS:** The Emissary is being courted by one or more lovers
3	**FOLLOWERS:** The Emissary is accompanied by a group of sympathizers
4	**APOSTLES:** The Emissary is being worshipped by a group of fanatics
5	**WATCHED:** The Emissary is either travelling with an escort or with its captors
6	**HUNTED:** The Emissary is being hunted by a group aiming to capture or kill it

TABLE 5 TYPE OF LOCATION

D6	LOCATION (EXAMPLES)
1	**AMONG TRAVELLERS:** pilgrims, vagabonds, nomads
2	**A CREW:** spaceship, research station
3	**A CAMP:** souk, refugee camp, rebel base
4	**AN OUTPOST:** colony, portal station, bulk hauler
5	**A SPACE STATION:** large space station, nomad swarm
6	**A CITY:** the Conglomerate, a capital city

Symmetry mystics are as stated above not reliant on DP, but instead draw power from successful dice rolls and meditation. Each time the mystic meditates or makes a successful dice roll, Resonance Points (RSP) are generated (see below).

Resonance: Sixes rolled in a skill check not used to achieve bonus effects there and then can be saved as RSP – one extra six equals 1 RSP. Activating a resonance power costs RSP equal to the level of the power (for levels I, II, and III). A critical success automatically increases the effect of the power one level without extra cost, and it is the only way to activate a level IV power. However, the mystic cannot increase the effect of her power beyond its talent level by achieving a critical success.

Rerolls: The Symmetry equivalent of praying for rerolls is for the mystic to focus and merge with its surroundings. This generates no DP but costs 2 RSP. Unless the mystic has 2 RSP to spend, she may not reroll a skill test.

Meditation: The mystic's pool of RSP wanes over time (2 points per twenty-four hours), but it may meditate to refill the pool. Test **MYSTIC POWERS** (may not reroll) once per four hours of meditation. All sixes rolled are converted into RSP. The mystic may "store" as many RSP as its Empathy score plus its **MYSTIC POWERS** skill level combined.

Experience: Each level of a resonance talent costs 5 XP. Mastering all four levels of one power thus costs 20 XP. When purchasing level IV of a resonance talent, the mystic gets 1 additional HP and may raise one attribute of its choice by 1.

TABLE 6 THE EMISSARY'S MANIA

D66	MANIA	DESCRIPTION
11–22	Latent divinity	The Symmetry mystic and the explorer share control of the host body without knowledge of each other, taking turns at the wheel. This results in the host body never sleeping. The mystic can only use its powers when in control of the vessel.
23–31	Blind faith	The Emissary has convinced itself that it actually has become the Icon it presents itself as. It forgets everything about its past, both as explorer and mystic. Empathy and MPs are raised by 1 and Reputation is raised by 2.
32–34	Decay	The host body is dying, but the mystic's mind is clear. It is forced to replace parts of the body with cybernetics and bionics. Choose five cybernetic or bionic talents but lower Reputation, Strength, and HPs by 2.
35–41	Blood lust	The mystic has been corrupted by the darkness and suffers fits of murderous rage (costs 1 DP). Lower Reputation by 4, but raise Agility and HPs by 2.
42–44	Wanderlust	The mystic is no longer fixed to its original host body, and wanders temporarily between the different worshippers that surround it. When the mystic switches bodies, use the stats of the new vessel but raise Wits and Empathy by 2 and MPs by 4. When the mystic forces itself into the mind of a new host (costs 2 DP) it must win an opposed **MYSTIC POWERS** test. Failure means its spirit is scattered across the cosmos.
45–54	Under the influence	The mystic can only control its host body when it is under the influence of alcohol or drugs. The explorer tries to stay away from the strange blackouts, but the mystic spirit keeps tempting it with just one more hit. Lower Wits and MPs by 1, but raise Agility and HPs by 2. The mystic may act normally when in control of the drunk body.
55–66	Phobic	The mystic is more or less in control of its vessel, but has developed an uncontrollable phobia. Can be activated as a Personal problem at the cost of 1–3 DP, depending on its severity.

TABLE 7 RESONANCE POWERS

D66	POWER (LEVEL)	DESCRIPTION
*	Recreate (I): REGENERATION	Test MYSTIC POWERS instead of MEDICURGY when treating the mystic's own injuries. May test even if broken, but at –2.
11–12	Recreate (II): SOOTHING TOUCH	Test MYSTIC POWERS at +2 instead of MEDICURGY when treating any form of injury, on anyone.
13–15	Recreate (III): SCULPT	The cells are instantaneously recreated. 10 HPs and 4 MPs are restored, one critical injury of your choice is healed and the mystic gains a natural armor rating of 6 for four hours.
16	Recreate (IV): RESTORATION	All HPs and MPs are restored, all RPs and critical injuries healed. Permanent effects from previous injuries are also healed. The power can be used on the mystic itself or on another person within Close range.
21	Translocation (I): MIND WALKER	Equivalent to the Mind Walker talent on page 78 of the Rulebook.
22–23	Translocation (II): SPIRIT SHIFT	The mystic can enter a trance and have its spirit leave the body. The spirit moves ten meters per slow action and experiences visual, auditory, and rudimentary emotional input from within ten meters. The spirit cannot affect the physical world but can move through thin objects. If the host body is damaged, the spirit immediately returns to it.
24–25	Translocation (III): ASTRAL TRAVEL	The mystic can enter a trance and have its spirit leave the body. The spirit moves freely through any material as well as through vacuum at its normal movement rate. Tiny and Small objects can be lifted. Winning an opposed MYSTIC POWERS test allows the mystic to temporarily possess another being. Damage to either of the host bodies results in the spirit returning to the original vessel.
26	Translocation (IV): TRANSLOCATION	The mystic can send its spirit to a place it has previously visited in the flesh, regardless of distance. Winning an opposed MYSTIC POWERS test allows the mystic to possess another being for an indefinite time, or until the new host body dies. If the original vessel is destroyed while the mystic is away, its stays in the new body but suffers a mania (see page 337 of the Rulebook).

RESONANCE POWERS

The Emissaries can only partially control the powers they wield back in the Second Horizon. All Emissaries have three resonance powers at between levels I and III, of which one must be the Recreate talent at a minimum of level I (see the table above). If you choose a level III power for your Emissary, it does of course also possess that power at levels I and II. Each level of a resonance power is activated as a separate talent and has its own description (see below).

Activation: Unless stated otherwise, activating a resonance power is a slow action (3 AP) and requires a successful skill roll.

Reaction: Some powers can be used as reactions. This means that they can be activated before or after the Emissary's slot in the turn order – as long as it has APs left to spend – or normally, like regular actions (see page 83 of the *Coriolis* Core Rulebook).

Concentration: Certain powers require active concentration on the mystic's part to remain active. The mystic must spend one normal action each turn to maintain focus. If the mystic's concentration is broken, the power is deactivated. Santulans in the Second Horizon have no need for sleep and can keep powers active for very long periods of time, but as Emissaries, the mystics have only partial control of their host vessels' bodily functions, and will eventually have to factor in rest.

D66	POWER (LEVEL)	DESCRIPTION
31	Telekinesis (I): TELEKINESIS	Equivalent to the Telekinesis talent on page 78 of the Rulebook.
32–33	Telekinesis (II): TELEKINETIC BLAST	A blast capable of knocking people to the ground. A MYSTIC POWERS attack (weapon damage 3, CRIT 2, Short range). Sixes rolled may be divided between targets within Close range of each other.
34–35	Telekinesis (III): BARRIER	Reaction. Concentration. Loose objects from the surroundings form a shield around the mystic. Armor rating 6. Each extra six rolled adds a +3 to the armor rating. Passing through the barrier requires winning an opposed FORCE vs barrier armor rating test.
36	Telekinesis (IV): MASTER BARRIER	Concentration. Heavy objects from the surroundings such as rocks, metal, and the ground itself form a shield around the mystic. The barrier has 10 HPs, covers everyone within Close range of the mystic and cannot be passed through. People on the outside risk losing loose items or weapons unless they pass a FORCE test. The barrier can be moved or hurled at targets within Short range as a mystical attack (weapon damage 4, CRIT 1). This destroys the barrier.
41	Control (I): STOP	Equivalent to the Stop talent on page 78 of the Rulebook.
42–43	Control (II): PREVENT	The mystic can stop an opponent's action or reaction (including attacks) by winning an opposed MYSTIC POWERS test. If the mystic wins the roll, each level of success lowers the opponent's APs by 1. If the opponent is reduced to 0 APs and there are extra sixes left on the roll, each remaining six results in an Initiative penalty of –2 for the opponent.
44–45	Control (III): FORBID	Reaction. Slow action. The mystic can hinder multiple persons in sight from performing actions. Test MYSTIC POWERS. Each six rolled stops one person from acting in her slot in the turn order. Extra sixes can be used to lower the Initiative scores or MPs of affected opponents by 1 per extra six.
46	Control (IV): DOMINATE	Like FORBID above, but the mystic may also choose to maintain its control of the affected characters (concentration). The victims may attempt to break free by achieving a critical success on a MYSTIC POWERS roll (may roll once per turn in combat, or once per minute out of combat) but are otherwise unable to perform actions. Each turn (or minute) under the mystic's dominance, all victims suffer 2 points of stress. When a victim is reduced to 0 MPs in this way, the mystic can assume direct control of the person and guide its actions for as long as the victim is in sight.
51	Mind shift (I): PREMONITION	Equivalent to the Premonition talent on page 78 of the Rulebook.
52–53	Mind shift (II): MIND READER	Equivalent to the Mind Reader talent on page 78 of the Rulebook.
54–55	Mind shift (III): SOUL READER	The mystic can read the mind of someone within Extreme range, including her deepest, most detailed memories and emotions. The mystic remains in control of its own body while doing so and doesn't have to concentrate.
56	Mind shift (IV): MEMORY STEALER	The mystic can alter someone's memories (one strong or a few weaker memories). The affected memories are permanently replaced with false ones, but turn into echoes that may appear in dreams around the location where the mystic used the power.
61	Destroy (I): SENSE POSSESSION	The mystic can sense if a person or object is possessed. The mystic understands the intentions of the intruding spirit but not what or who it is.
62–63	Destroy (II): EXORCISM	Equivalent to the Exorcism talent on page 77 of the Rulebook.
64–65	DESTROY (III): BIND	The mystic can expel an intruding spirit from itself, someone else, or an object and force it into another person or object by winning an opposed MYSTIC POWERS roll. The spirit is bound to the new person or object until the mystic falls asleep or loses consciousness.
66	DESTROY (IV): BANISH	Like EXORCISM above, but the expelled entity is altogether destroyed and can never return. The spirit's intentions and emotions linger like echoes in the location of the banishing.

MISSION SUGGESTIONS

If you don't want to build your own plot from the ground up, a few play-ready missions featuring the mysteries that surround the Emissaries can be found below. They contain suggested clues and rewards, but you are of course free to alter them as you see fit.

THE CURSE OF THE ABDUSALA

The grav projectors have fallen silent and the vibrations have stopped. Her ears are still ringing from the explosion. They must have hit a mine. Pearls of frozen blood spin in the cold darkness on the bridge. Breath in, breath out. Scrape the ice from the helmet visor. Anatu, sensor operator of the torn-apart courier vessel Sans Salim looks up through the hole in the dome. In the pale light from distant Kua, she spots her target as the debris clears – the Abdusala, the ship that came back from the darkness, hidden away at the Legion's secret Alhudu dockyards.

The Situation: The Abdusala Foundation vessel was investigating the possibilities of reaching the mythical Fourth Horizon when something from the dark void infested the ship and enslaved its crew. The invading intelligence eventually steered the ship back to Border Space where it was discovered and boarded by the Legion who transported the remainder of her crew to Kua. Captain Yasin Sabaaha soon realized that the entity on her ship was calling to her and her crew through some terrible, dark link formed in deep space. To prevent the intelligence from taking control of her crew, Yasin chose to sacrifice them (see page 157) and was then captured. As the only survivor she was taken to the Legion's Alhudu docks in the asteroid belt. Meanwhile, the entity onboard the Abdusala began creating a new group of loyal servants...

The Mission: The PCs are searching for information about what happened to Yasin and the Abdusala after the Cataract collapse, either out of curiosity or because someone has hired them to. Possible employers might be interested in breaking Yasin out of her cell, or the Alhudu might suddenly go silent, and the PCs are sent there to investigate.

Clue:

- Yasin tells them that the Abdusala awakened something in the darkness. She can still hear it searching for her, whispering in her mind. The entity is a sort of Bah-jin that has become one with the ship (see page 331 of the *Coriolis* Core Rulebook, but add the Nightveil ability from page 165)

Reward:

- If the PCs manage to save the Legion base or banish the dark entity from the Abdusala, they get a +2 to all further **MANIPULATION** tests when negotiating with the Legion or the Foundation. They are also allowed to begin using the base as they please and may service their ship there for free.

THE FACELESS SCAVENGER

A quiet song resonates through the dura beams inside the hull. As the melody reaches the scavenger families in the dark underbelly of the bulk hauler, it intensifies. A peaceful stillness falls on the workers of Tameena II as they listen to the song, not understanding the words but still grasping the meaning. The song emanates from the improvised chapel onboard, wedged in-between algae tanks and protein vats. A meditating figure wrapped in Miran silk sits on a prayer rug on the floor, and glyph-covered clay shards move across the embroideries in a strange dance, commanded by the voice of the singing Icon.

The Situation: In the dangerous darkness of the Ash belt or a ship cemetery, an Emissary has taken it upon itself to recreate the technology and weaponry of the Symmetry in the Third Horizon. Acting as leader or patron for a motley crew of scavengers, the mystic collects materials and artifacts from the Portal Wars. Someone else is also interested in the ancient riches however...

The Mission: The PCs might be hunting for artifacts for the Emissary, or perhaps they cross paths with the Emissary's scavengers when raiding a derelict vessel. They could also be chasing corsairs through the dark and stumble upon the Emissary, perhaps getting mistaken for pirates themselves!

Clue:

- The Emissary can sense the direction of the cadaver clocks that count down to when the warriors of Nazareem's Sacrifice are

coming out of stasis. If the PCs bring the mystic aboard their ship, it can guide them to the hidden sleepers, or to darkmorphs in forgotten crypts.

Rewards:

- An artifact constructed by the Symmetry mystic, such as a Symmetry Helmet (see *Artifacts & Faction Tech* supplement), or parts of a few simpler artifacts.
- The Emissary may act as a future patron and employer for the group.

THE CAGED DANCER

Twelve people sit in a circle in a dark basement, meditating. The dust on the floor vibrates and the air circulates around a hovering thirteenth figure in the center of the circle. Screams suddenly break the silence. Gunfire echoes. The master descends to the floor and its swirling shawls are caught in the wind. With its eyes closed, the Dancer Emissary becomes one with the moment and begins to move. A final dance before sunset...

The Situation: One of the Emissaries has been working to change the minds of the Firstcome factions that refused to accept the Emissaries as reborn Icons. From the shadows, the Emissary called upon mystics, outcasts, and pariahs, and its worshippers formed the Atbaë Alri – the Followers



of the Wind. The Emissary trained them in the use of mysterious energies and they have become capable of changing their surroundings (level II resonance powers, table 07 on page 193). The cultists are now being hunted down one by one, and the Emissary has gone into hiding. With nowhere left to run, the trap is about to close...

The Mission: The PCs could be guns-for-hire tasked with eliminating the Emissary, or perhaps infiltrators secretly planning to kidnap the Emissary for their own gain, or help it escape? It is also possible that the Emissary has already been found, and that the PCs have been hired to negotiate a peaceful surrender. After its capture, the PCs could also be planning to threaten or blackmail the jailers for the Emissary's release.

Clue:

- Surviving member of the Albaë Alri are running for their lives, but tell the PCs where they will resurface. They have realized their similarities with the Children of the Song, and aim to seek out the Circle of Seekers to learn more about the Emissaries' powers.

Reward:

- A mystic PC may spend 5 XP to acquire a resonance power at level I (or level II, if she already possesses the regular mystic power equivalent of that power at level I). When a PC uses resonance powers, each use generates 1 DP instead of using RSP. Regular mystics can not learn resonance powers above level II.

⚙ THE MIRAN EXPLORER

"This is chief explorer Faisal Kham. The data from probe quadrant 3 is confirmed – the frequency matches the Jarouma pattern. A certain level of deviation is present of course, but it's well within the acceptable margin. Dania is activating the sensor probe now and initiating data dump. The winds are picking up but we are continuing toward quadrant 4 for the final readings. By the Icons, I think we did it..."

The Situation: The SS-7 is a Foundation research station on one of Xene's moons. In CC 60, a group of scientists managed to activate the probe network placed in orbit around Xene after the discovery of the similarities between radio frequency patterns around Xene and the Izar net in the Erequ system. The probes were designed to obtain calibrated readings for cross-reference and a group of specialists was called in to retrieve the data from the stormy atmosphere of the gas giant (see table XY). The explorers got trapped, and the minds of the Symmetry mystics possessed their bodies after arriving in the Third Horizon at the heart of the storm. All information about the expedition has been deleted from the records – but there were witnesses...

The Mission: The PCs might be curious to find out more about the true identity of the Messenger Emissary. Perhaps they try to investigate the arrival of the Emissaries at Xene and find dangerous faction agents silencing all witnesses, or encounter Zalosian martyr warriors plotting against the Foundation?

Clue:

- The explorers were recruited from prominent institutes and scientific academies across the Horizon, but they were all without life partners or children – loners whose disappearances would be easier to cover up.

Reward:

- A relative or friend of one of the missing explorers become a future patron or employer for the group. A portion of their debt is paid off.

⚙ THE KUAN GENERAL

"Hear my words and dream of freedom beyond the Horizon." A dark silhouette steps out of the shadows. "No palace can rest on a single pillar." The tall, red-clad figure looks up toward the smoky skies."We are come together, and the hawks of oppression shall bend before our will." The light from the fire falls on a set of ancient signet rings on the leader's hand. A great crowd has gathered around the living Icon, greeting their savior with thundering bursts of Vulcan fire.

The Situation: Under a new leader, the rebel groups have put their differences aside and united to challenge the factions. The charismatic general arrived from the Kua system, without name or history, and entered a political minefield. The negotiations soon faltered, and war broke out. Rumors of the mighty warrior prophet spread from

system to system and the ranks of the insurgents grow with each passing day...

The Mission: The PCs could be hired as negotiators to broker a peace treaty between the parties involved, or perhaps as secret agents tasked with terminating the rebel leader? Is the Emissary's war with the factions really about liberty, or is it just the only way to take out the servants of darkness?

Clue:

- The Emissaries chose different paths after arriving in the Third Horizon to ready its inhabitants for the schemes of the agents of the First Horizon.

Reward:

- The Emissary's five rings, ancient artifacts from before the Portal Wars. They count as blessed talismans (+1), one for each of the five Icon Emissaries (see Table XY).

IN THE SHADOW OF THE MONOLITH

A noticeably uncomfortable Bulletin reporter looks into the camera with the towering shadow of a monolith in the background, pulling her shawl closer around her shoulders. The latest prognoses from the Foundation's Geo-Physical Institute assure us that the seismological activity and extreme weather witnessed in recent weeks is about to pass." The reporter flinches as lightning strikes nearby and a heavy rain begins to fall."There is no reason for concern..."

The Situation: In the last segment, storms and small earthquakes have plagued the area around one of the Horizon's monoliths. Doomsday cults preach about the end-times in the shanty-towns and the Zenithian scientists try to explain the phenomena as passing and natural. A prophet in red robes moves through the sub-levels of the city, trying to find a way inside the monolith's glyph-covered halls. The enormous artifacts seems to be protected however, most likely by the same factions who seek to use its secrets for their own gain...

The Mission: The interior of the monolith is sacred ground. The PCs have perhaps heard rumors of the prophet trying to find a way in, but will they try to help or hinder the Emissary's plans? Are they more concerned about the safety of the locals, or about the secrets they might unveil if they make it inside?

Clue:

- In the inner sanctum, an octagonal chamber with glyph-covered pillars, ancient machinery is coming alive. Bolts of lightning shoot from the top of the monolith toward the sky. Depending on how you play the scenario, the Emissary might explain one of the monolith's functions to the PCs: it acts as a stabilizer for the universal balance, and the discharge of lightning counteracts the effects of the corruption generated by the nearby portals (the GM's DP pool is emptied when the monolith discharges).

Reward:

- Regardless of which side they choose, the PCs might impress and make friends with people in one of the involved factions (**MANIPULATION** +2 for future dealings).

THE SPIDER'S WEB

The well-dressed man places a leather-bound book on the prayer rug. He gently touches the gilded pattern on the spine. His mind wanders across the fields of his home planet, Darakk – a place he will never see again. Security guards arrive to bring him through a sterile, steel corridor onboard the Foundation's Xene research station. At the airlock, he is greeted by his escort – or perhaps his captors? With unwavering resolve, the Emissary steps through the airlock and boards the ship that will take it out into the Third Horizon.

The Situation: The protection of the Legion is no longer enough to keep the other factions away. Diplomatic pressure and stealth ships threaten the Emissary's safety. With much secrecy, it is evacuated from the station, but something goes wrong...

The Mission: The PCs could be travelling to Xene not knowing that they are about to step on a political hornets' nest, or they might be part of the plans to divert the enemy's attention while the Emissary is brought to safety. Alternatively, they are secret agents sent to infiltrate the Xene station, only to discover that the Judge's chamber is empty!

Clues:

- The Judge Emissary's holy book contains ancient Mogul texts from before the Portal Wars. They speak of the First Horizon's enslaved population and of how the Janhagir fleet left the blood-soaked worlds of the Second Horizon behind for a fresh start as exiles in the Third Horizon.
- The Foundation's station computer contains encrypted sensor data from the probe network around Xene and from the Izar net in the Erequ system (see page 29 of the *Atlas Compendium*). The readings from both locations are eerily similar. The first data entry is from CC 58, and the log ends with the arrival of the Emissaries in CC 60.

Reward:

- If the Emissary is evacuated without too many incidents, the PCs are rewarded a ship module, a weapon, or some other piece of gear from the Legion's factionary arsenal. Alternatively, they can purchase the Licensed talent (page 73 of the Rulebook) as a group talent for 2 XP per person.

⚙ IZAR'S PRISONER

The struggling cooling systems of the stasis pod hiss as the lid slides open. Life returns to heavy, aching limbs and chapped lips. By the door, sensor operator Ghanime makes a strict salute. "Captain, we have arrived at Erequ. Active reading already shows massive activity." Mercenary captain Latoush groans and reaches for a kameez next to the pod, glances over toward the frozen cargo and gets up to head for the bridge. She views the swarm of transponders surrounding Izar's black cage on the sensor screens. "Good. The others are already here."

The Situation: One or several factions have gotten their hands on the sensor readings from the Foundation's survey of Izar's net, the hexagonal cage of jet black beams that surrounds the stormy Izar in the Erequ system. They have abducted mystics and brought them here to surround this ancient Symmetry machine (see the *Artifacts & Tech* supplement). The last piece of the puzzle is the prisoner that just arrived – only the sacrifice of a living Emissary will be strong enough to make the Icons listen...

The Mission: This time, the mystics come from all over the Horizon. Perhaps the PCs are hired to smuggle the last shipment of stasis pods to Erequ? Maybe they arrive late, and find nothing there but dead wreckage orbiting the net? They could also have tracked the Emissary down for their own reasons, and have now either infiltrated or joined the secret conspiracy that aims to activate the net to open a portal to the Second Horizon.

Clues:

- In CC 58, the Foundation vessel Gyaan V was sent to Erequ under the command of chief explorer Jarouma Had Peleter. Upon their return many segments later, Gyaan V's sensor data from the Izar net was analyzed and revealed a curious radio wave pattern and strange processes inside the beams of the net that closely resemble the behavior of a portal field.
- In a short vision, the PCs return to Argonnas in the Second Horizon and learn that the Circle of Seekers are the Symmetry's lost siblings in the Third Horizon.

Reward:

- Data from the failed attempt to start the Izar machine is very valuable. If the PCs sell to the right faction, they stand to make between 15,000 and 40,000 birr.

⚙ THE MERCHANT OF KALIDHA

Sana disembarks from her ship and looks out across Kalidha's spaceport. Stevedores and merchants move easily through the mess of stacked goods and small kawah trolleys. She clutches the tag with the sensor data in her sweaty palm and keeps her other hand on her holster. What she saw at the portal will haunt her memories for the rest of her life. Suddenly, the crowds part and a silk-draped figure approaches the merciful truth-seeker, the Horizon's redeemer!

The Situation: The Kalidha commerce station is crowded and lively. The lifeblood of the Horizon – commodities, pilgrims, and information; it all passes through here at some point or another. At the heart of the plot is the Emissary that has taken it upon itself to guard the now closed portals to Taoan (page 184 of the Rulebook) and eliminate the agents of Nazareem's Sacrifice that have begun manipulating the factions. Since the Taoan incident, the portal station is under the control of the Legion and

the Foundation. The Hegemony's fleets have formed a blockade around the gas giant Nestero to gain leverage, and two temple cruisers from the Order have forced the Consortium's mercenary fleets to retreat from Uharu. All it takes now is one little spark...

The Mission: Are the PCs part of the Emissary's network, for example as couriers or as assassins? They could also be impartial in the matter, but trapped on the wrong side of the blockade with no way home, or negotiators hired to calm down the situation.

Clues:

- The faction agents all have the same secret orders: don't draw first blood, and send all sensitive information via special couriers. The PCs find evidence linking these couriers to Nazareem's Sacrifice.
- Something happens in the chaos at one of the blockades: two butterfly-shaped ships without signatures are caught on camera exiting the portal field, but they disappear into the night before anyone has time to react.

Reward:

- The PCs become friends of Kalidha and are always welcome to service their ship for free there in the future.

⚙ THE IMPOSTER

"Have you seen the Emissary and heard its words?" The old man pulls up the sleeves of his caftan and leans over toward the proprietor of the chai stand. "Finally, we get to hear the truth." He takes a little sip of the hot tea. "All we have to do is follow, and obey." The man holds up his arms to show tattoos of intricate, pre-War design. "Look. The Emissary's love is all-encompassing. Follow the Icon and walk forever in the light."

The Situation: A person either from the bottom of society, or someone who has been sidelined in the corridors of power, wakes up one day believing that she has developed strange powers (perhaps she has been possessed?). By presenting herself as one of the Emissaries, the person uses her new-found powers to acquire wealth and status. Worshippers flock to her side, but as time passes, a corrupt hunger for unlimited power grows inside her...

The Mission: The PCs might be hired to expose the Emissary as a fraud or to stop the spread of its cult. However, they might also believe the Emissary to be genuine, instead seeking to protect it from its enemies.

Clue:

- The false Emissary has had a real vision, and can share insights about the real Emissaries, or clues about the location of a cell of Nazareem's Sacrifice.

Reward:

- Local law enforcement or the faction whose interests they defended offer the PCs future favors (+2 to **MANIPULATION** when dealing with this group or faction in the future).

⚙ THE MINER'S DILEMMA

The glow from the holo com lights up the room. Kara forces back her tears and looks at the projection. Her son sits on a cold temple floor. His torso is bare and covered in scars. Five silhouettes stand in a half circle on the edges of the projection men and women Kara has learned to identify as the Warriors of the Holy Light. One of them steps forward and puts a hand on the boy's shoulder. "You have the place and time for the delivery. Don't fail us. May you travel in the shadow of the Martyr."

The Situation: The Warriors of the Holy Light have found an easy way to fund their heinous actions. A sympathizer working at the Asteroid Exports mining company and a corsair captain forced into obedience ensure a steady supply of birr. The neodym bars are valuable enough to be accepted across the Horizon, with no questions asked.

The Mission: The PCs might be following up on the martyr strike team's funding after leaving Kua, or they might be hired anonymously by another cell of the same group to meet the corsair captain and handle a delivery. Or has corsair queen Kara tired of the blackmail and hired the PCs to get her son back?

Clue:

- The corsair captain shares just enough information about the strike team for the PCs to be able to track down the cell in question.

Reward:

- The owner of Asteroid Exports, Jabil Samem, will become a grateful patron in the future if the PCs helped uncover the truth about the missing neodym.

THE FATE OF THE SULTRA

A young girl walks through the alleys of the shanty-town. She clutches a package of water bottles, fruit, wheat, and pills wrapped in a shawl – today's alms from the Samaritans and the Agency. This is her home and her earliest memories all contain the feeling of not getting enough air – the taste and smell of dry earth, moldy tents, and rusted fences. A graceless, naked fight for survival. In the evenings, she lies in the dark tent and listens to the grown-ups tell stories around the fire and she forgets her fear and hunger for a while. Her favorite stories are about the palace, and the days before the flood...

The Situation: The flooding of the Sultra valley forced hundreds of thousands of people into refugee camps in the surrounding districts (see page 158). In the dark control chamber of Cataract 27, a light switches from red to green – the system has finished auto repairs and is ready for a reboot...

The Mission: The PCs could be hired to investigate the dam and stumble upon the secret restoration project, or have they been hired to protect the project from intruders perhaps? The debate about the refugee camps is nearing a boiling point and they might also have been hired as negotiators.

Clue:

- Not everyone is happy about the possible restoration of the Sultra – the Hegemony and the Syndicate are actively trying to sabotage the attempts to rebuild as they fear it would upset the power balance in the Conglomerate.

Reward:

- If the dam is brought back online, it will take a long time for the valley to come alive again, but the water level drops and the refugees can start to move back home. Which faction will swoop in to claim the laurels for this noble act, and how much would they be willing to pay for the PCs' silence?

THE CHILDREN OF THE SONG

A group of pilgrims fresh off the freighter huddle together in the chaos of the Neoptra – they all have the mystic's disease and still hear the Emissary's song reverberating through the station's beams and windows. They call themselves the Children of the Song, and as their numbers grow, the words of the Messenger Emissary begin to appear as graffiti in the Mulukhad and in the alleys along the Promenade: "We are the answer to your prayers. When the night is closing in, we are the light of peace."

The Situation: After the death of the Messenger Emissary, civil unrest is escalating both among the common people and in the Spire. The Consortium tries to keep the station together, but the population's fear of the Icons' retribution is massive and unpredictable. The Children of the Song begin squatting in a remote area of the station, and the situation soon spirals out of control.

The Mission: The PCs might be called upon to negotiate with the leader of the Children, or perhaps to eliminate them. Alternatively, they are hired by the cult to protect its members from persecution. Are they themselves listening for the echoes of the Emissary's song in the vibrations of the walls and the white noise on the radio?

Clues:

- Information found might lead to the location of another Emissary, for example the Dancer and its cult, the Atbaë Alri (see The Caged Dancer).
- The PCs learn that the deceased Emissary lives on as an echo inside mystics and in the void around Coriolis and Kua.

Reward:

- The Children of the Song become future patron and employers. They hold many clues about the whereabouts of the remaining Emissaries.

NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

A
Akouba Kosha 43, 143
Althea 19
Aqueda 104
Aram Yafa 31
Artyr Gholâm 117
Ataia 132
Awl 74
Ayaam'sha 183

B
Bathos Emoud, Mad Poet 79
Beast, The 79

C
Chabaun Kheml 175
Coriolis Guards 22

D
Dali Osman 119
Darius 164

E
Elmeda dol-Parnasso, Slum Queen 72

F
Frax 73

G
Gaddar-e-Abrar 177
Goba the Lame 73

H
Haquim 104

J
Jarja Dougha 142
Jeyla Kuhari 32
Johar Quassar 52

K
Kahnara 73

L
Lenove Astir 53
Leod dol-Quassar 142

M
Martyr Strike Team, as Guards 22
Martyr Strike Team Base 83
Martyr Warriors 88
Martyr Warriors, Garden of Seekers 61
Merk Ahuro 21

N
Nepotha 164
Nesteras Defense Forces 131
Nigelia Kurahan-dol-Fahsra 41

R
Ramas, Brother 55
Ramses 104
Ramse's Jackals 102
Raquin Birbasil 118
Robwah, Sister 53

S
Salamah Ach-Aboud 88
Slummers 80
Sultra, Ghosts of 165

T
Tubra Ghutan 131

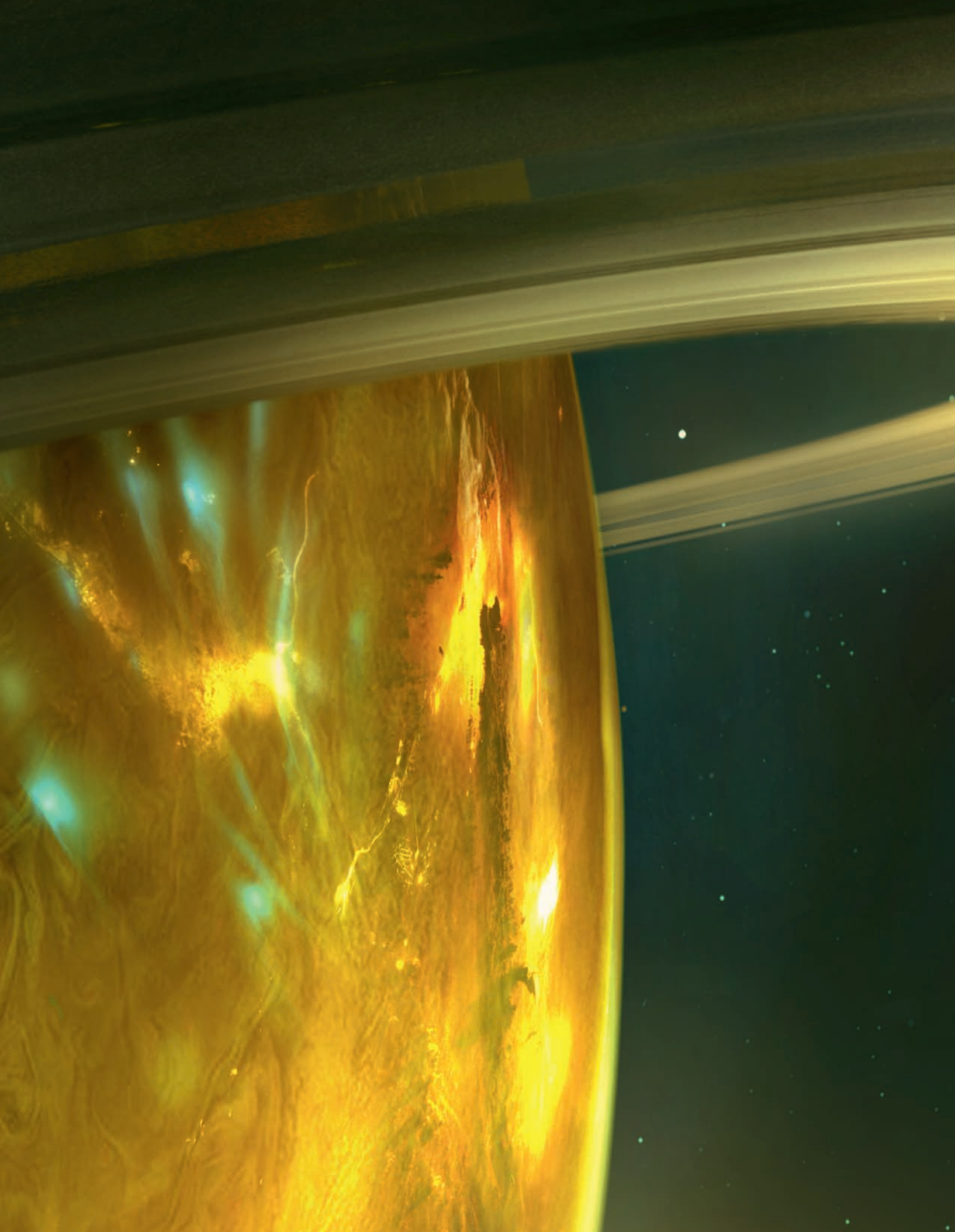
MAPS

Banquet Hall 151
Baybasin 116
Conglomerates 131
Crash Site 103
Emissary's Residence 46
Garden of Seekers 60
Martyr Strike Team's Base, The Hospital 173
Spaceport Neoptra 20
Workshop 148

HANDOUTS

Handout #1: Sanatorium Pamphlet 33
Handout #2: The Judge's Invitation 40
Handout #3: Brother Ramas Map 66
Handout #4: The Slummer Queen's Map 77
Handout #5: Message to Artyr 101
Handout #6: Artyr's Manifest 123







A SONG FOR JAROUMA

By the Icons, it looks like we have succeeded. Readouts from quadrants 2 and 3 are confirmed. Both frequencies align with the Jarouma Pattern. Alam will attach the data dumps. But, we have grave news. The mission is in danger. Weather is getting worse, and we've had several incidents during the mission. Two of our crewmembers are hurt, and simulations indicate that the shuttle may not hold up to the stress as we try to reach quadrant 4. We pray to the Icons that this message will get through...

XENE, THE LAST MESSAGE OF SANDIR II – FAISAL KHAM

INTRODUCTION

Two years ago, Chief Scientist Jarouma Had Peleter and her crew of the science vessel Gyaan V, made an extraordinary discovery. Their destination; the distant system of Erequ, at the far reaches of the Algol trade route, home to the mysterious artifact known only as the *Web of Izar* – a hexagonal structure of unknown origin, forming a cage of light-bending blackness around the small planet of Izar. The result of their journey; sensor data of a mysterious energy pattern emanating from the structure. The *Web of Izar* had awoken from its long slumber.

THE PLAYERS ENTER the story in the year CC60, in the segment of The Traveler. There are two segments left until the Cyclade. They are scientists, recruited by the Consortium's research branch, the Foundation. Stationed at the research installation FS-7, in orbit around the gas giant Xene, they are officially said to be overseeing the mining and prospecting operations in this area of Kuan space. The nearby moons, Eod, Santir, and foremost Calest, are all rich in minerals, but for the past Coriolis Cycle, the Foundation has been focusing its efforts on placing probes and installations in the dense atmosphere of the gas giant itself.

OVERVIEW

Welcome to a stand-alone scenario depicting the incident leading up to the arrival of the Emissaries in the Third Horizon. It consists of three parts and is meant to be played in just a few hours, preferably as a flashback epilogue to the two Emissary Lost scenarios.

ACT 1: THE STATION (P 213)
The characters wake up to a new day aboard FS-7. They are researchers, part of the team contracted to install and oversee an experiment known as the *Jarouma Pattern*. The station is in a state of anxiety and anticipation. Jarouma Had Peleter herself is arriving to oversee the team's efforts, but the project has suffered from a few mishaps, and a heated discussion ensues.

ACT 2: THE GAS GIANT (P 219)
As the installation goes online, and readouts begin to indicate that the energy pattern is indeed changing, the turmoil in Xene's atmosphere turns into a dense storm. Hurricane winds destabilize two of the quadrants, and electromagnetic disturbances disable the sensory output from the data probes. The team has to enter the atmosphere and recalibrate the pattern manually.

The entry is hazardous, and the shuttle takes damage as it docks with the first installation. During repairs, mishaps and dire accidents threaten the crew, but the stern science officer has her orders from Jarouma herself – the mission cannot be aborted. All installations must be activated, and the pattern stabilized in accordance with the algorithm.

After repairing the third quadrant installation, the network is back online, but now the storm becomes even more severe. Electromagnetic discharges threaten the lives of the team. But there is also good news –

the patterns match! All they need to do to complete their mission is to reach the last installation and get the final readouts from its damaged sensor array. However, as the pilot is dying, the science officer has second thoughts. She is willing to abort.

It's during this turmoil that the team's analyst approaches other team members, suggesting that they must continue. The implication of this potential discovery is too great. He will try to convince his teammates, start a mutiny, or steal the shuttle himself.

ACT 3: THE ARRIVAL (P 225)

As the storm reaches its climax, suddenly an unforseen event happens. The analyst prays to the Icons and sabotages the ship. One by one, the Emissaries arrive, inside the minds of the five unfortunate scientists.

BACKGROUND

The research group has been selected because of their expertise and lack of attachment to other people. They have no known family members, and generally very few close loved ones. For the past Coriolis Cycle they have been installing probes and monitoring sensor readouts from the gas giant itself, work connected to the secret project known as the *Jarouma Pattern*.

THE PATTERN

On the ninth day of the segment of The Traveler, the installation will go online. It's purpose is to change the fluctuating magnetic field and electromagnetic patterns of the gas giant Xene. Two Coriolis Cycles ago, CC58, Jarouma Had Peleter discovered that the artifact around Izar emitted an energy pattern only previously seen in the fields forming and collapsing around stars – the patterns used to calculate portal jumps.

Although the pattern at Izar was similar, it could not form an actual portal field. This had the researchers confounded for two cycles. The clue that would unlock the riddle came from old data logs from a weather station in Xene's atmosphere – another pattern, almost identical with Jarouma's discovery at Izar, had formed at the same time.

DARKNESS POINTS

The scenario starts with a number of darkness points equal to the number of players, minimum 4 DP. The game master should use these DP to introduce minor faults during Act 1. The early arrival of Jarouma Had Peleter also adds 1 DP for dramatic effect. Finally, as the storm intensifies, and the research team descends into the atmosphere of Xene, an additional 4 DP is given, to be used for the intrigues in Act 2. Since the scenario contains no outside threats of combat, use the darkness points to break down equipment, create mishaps, and to activate the events in each act.

Death & Resurrection: You can also use the death of a crew member as a reason to add 1 DP to the pool. The same goes for when they witness a character coming back to life (when she is taken over by an Emissary). As madness and panic strikes, darkness should grow.

HAZARDOUS ATMOSPHERE

The gravity in Xene's atmosphere makes it hard to move comfortably. Even with an exo, all movement or heavy lifting has an extra –1 penalty when outside the shuttle. As the hurricane winds gradually become more severe (end of Act 2), this penalty changes to –2 for the finale.

THE INSTALLATION

Foundation Station 7 and the nearby mining facilities are protected by a company of legionnaires known as the *Chau'kedaar* – the Watchers. After the *Jarouma Pattern* was discovered on Xene as well, researchers at FS-7 began installing a grid of stabilizers in the atmosphere. The placement of the nodes has been based on the cage-like structure of the *Web of Izar*, and once activated, they should be able to adjust the fluctuations to match. Jarouma's theory is that identical patterns might form a bridge between the two planets, and create a new form of portal. At the scenario's start, it's the eighth day of the segment of *The Traveler*, and the installation is almost ready to be activated.

FACTS ABOUT XENE

At 18 AU from Kua's star and 13 AU from Coriolis, Xene is situated just outside of the system's main space. The inner asteroid belt forms a line between the colonized inner planets and the more industrialized outer system. Xene doesn't have much commercial traffic, with the exception of the Consortium's mining operations, some independent prospectors, and research projects run by the Foundation. It is, however, a vital transfer point and refueling station for ships on their way to the Rimward Reach.

- **DIAMETER:** 143,200 km (roughy 11 times larger than Kua)
- **EQUATORIAL CIRCUMFERENCE:** 449,648 km (roughly 11 times larger than Kua)
- **SURFACE AREA:** 64 billion square kilometers (roughly 128 times larger than Kua)
- **GRAVITY:** 2.15 standard gravity
- **DAY LENGTH:** 9.5 hours
- **SIDEREAL YEAR:** 11 Kuan years
- **AXIAL TILT:** 86 degrees
- **MOONS:** 6 major (diameter larger than 50 kilometers), 23 minor. **SANTIR** - mining installation | **NINDA** - surveyed | **CALEST** - mining installation | **AISH** - stripped bare, mining rigs disabled | **ONID** - prospecting for future operations | **EOD** - neutral mining operations, prospector base Kalder's Dream

SCENARIO ACTORS

This is a closed-environment scenario with only a few characters who are restricted to a locked down section of the FS-7 station, and later to the atmospheric shuttle they will use to enter Xene's atmosphere.

STATION CREW

FS-7 holds about 500 researchers, technicians, prospectors, and office staff, all under the watchful care of station commander Tariek Sidonna. The entire perimeter is protected by a company of 85 legionnaires, with ten fighter ships on standby, two atmospheric shuttles, and about 50 combat-ready soldiers positioned at the various Consortium rigs on Xene's moons. This leaves 25 soldiers on FS-7, all led by the hardened and loyal veteran Tehira Markoon. Jarouma has her main research labs on Kua and Coriolis, and will only visit the station during crucial milestones. Her research assistant never leaves her side.

- **Tehira Markoon (Algol)** – Legion captain (Firstcome)
- **Tariek Sidonna (Kua)** – Station commander for FS-7 (Zenithian)
- **Jarouma Had Peleter (Kua)** – Chief scientist (Zenithian)
- **Frendi Kurahan (Coriolis)** – Research assistant (Zenithian)

RESEARCHERS

The crew is quarantined in section 31 of the station, separated from other research groups. They have their own quarters, a research and tech lab, a drone launch bay, as well as their own dock and airlock for visiting ships. There is no hangar bay, and any ship needs to be requisitioned for use by the team.

- **Faisal Kham (Kua)** – Scientist, team leader (Zenithian)
- **Leila Hatami (Dabaran)** – Pilot (Zenithian)
- **Yorûg om-Khalit (Altai)** – Analyst (Mogul Firstcome)
- **Alam Dania (Mira)** – Technician (Firstcome)
- **Harish Verma (Mira)** – Archaeologist (Firstcome)

PLAYER CHARACTERS AND NPCS

A Song for Jarouma primarily focuses on the interaction between the five researchers. Each character is written as a playable role, but the amount of players in the group don't have to match this number. Any remaining roles will instead be played by the gamemaster as non-player characters (NPCs). Since the scenario's core are the interactions within the research team, it's important that each player reads through her character's stats, personal problems, secrets, and goal carefully. These may contradict other character descriptions, a deliberate element of the scenario to create tension within the group.

For ease of reference, each skill on the character descriptions has its attribute defined. For example, "Dexterity [A] 2" means that rolling for **DEXTERITY** allows for two dice, plus whatever the character has in Agility.



FAISAL KHAM

Scientist

"Why are you still here? Don't you have work to do?"

Faisal grew up on Kua, in the sprawl of the cities surrounding the Monolith. She studied at the Foundation's science university on Coriolis, and managed to secure a position as research assistant on Gyaan V. Growing up in a Zenithian family of low social status, she devoted herself to her career – honoring her heritage. She befriends few, and trusts even fewer, but during her time on FS-7, she has come to respect and take pleasure in Leila Hatami's coarse language and hot-headed, but honest temper.

CHARACTERISTICS: Passion and progress over empathy. Cannot let go of her research and seldom looks up from her notes when talking to someone else. She is, however, to-the-point, and almost always correct.

ATTRIBUTES:
STRENGTH 3, AGILITY 3, WITS 5, EMPATHY 2

HIT POINTS: 6

MIND POINTS: 7

REPUTATION: 5

COMMON SKILLS: Dexterity [A] 0, Force [S] 1, Infiltration [A] 0, Manipulation [E] 2, Melee Combat [S] 2, Observation [W] 1, Ranged Combat [A] 0, Survival [W] 0

ADVANCED SKILLS: Command [E] 3, Culture [E] 0, Data Djinn [W] 0, Medicurgy [W] 0, Pilot [A] 0, Science [W] 3, Technology [W] 2

TALENTS: Malicious

ARMOR: Environment suit (Exo shell) 2

WEAPONS: Dura knife (INIT +1, Damage 2, CRIT 1)

GEAR: Tabula with research notes, Personal comlink, Emergency flare (p115), Bio monitor (p112)

- **MALICIOUS:** When Faisal successfully uses **MANIPULATE** on someone, inflicting at least 1 point of stress, the victim takes 1 additional point of stress.

PERSONAL PROBLEM: Focused to a fault. Faisal can get so stuck on a task or problem that she ignores danger or crucial information, sometimes including people in need of help.

SCENARIO GOAL: Faisal will not cancel the mission, under any circumstances. She believes the trust put in her by Jarouma must be fulfilled ,and is willing to order, threaten, or physically fight to achieve that goal. There is only one thing that can change her mind – the risk of losing her secret love, shuttle pilot Leila Hatami.

SECRETS

- **Faisal has killed. When on the Izar expedition with Jarouma, she got so jealous of a research assistant (Menia Tan-Baduh) that she arranged for an accident to happen. She wanted to hurt and scare the young student, but a miscalculation led to the untimely cleansing of the ship's outer ventilation system. Jarouma knows about the cause of the accident, and has requested Faisal's unquestionable loyalty in order to keep the truth hidden.**
- **She is in love with Leila, the team's pilot, but refuses to act upon it.**



LEILA HATAMI

Shuttle pilot

"Is there something you need? Perhaps I can make the Icons listen to your prayers – what do you have for me?"

SECRETS

- Leila has forged her family tree, buying favors from institutions and administrators to gradually adjust her history. Her family actually has no Zenithian heritage. They are all firstcome settlers, once rich, but crushed over the dark centuries following the portal wars.
- She is addicted to opiates and stimuli. Her abuse has led to heavy debt with the Syndicate, and she is looking for research data she can sell to settle her debt.

Leila comes from a family of merchants, trading goods along the Dabaran circle. Leila is daring and smart. She sees the social advantages of being Zenithian in the Third Horizon, and she clings to that heritage with discriminating precision. She served in the Legion as a fighter pilot, and turned to freighters only when an opportunity in the Consortium's rimward expeditions opened up. She is the only one in the research team who is allowed to leave the station for supplies and VIP transports..

CHARACTERISTICS: Leila talks a lot. She will talk out loud without a second thought. This could've been a disadvantage if it weren't for her elitist views and favoring of Zenithians. She is always chewing on something, and if observed closely, one will notice that she can't seem to get her right hand to stop shaking from the opor addiction she tries to hide.

ATTRIBUTES:
STRENGTH 3, AGILITY 4, WITS 4, EMPATHY 2

HIT POINTS: 7

MIND POINTS: 6

REPUTATION: 4

COMMON SKILLS: Dexterity [A] 0, Force [S] 0, Infiltration [A] 2, Manipulation [E] 2, Melee Combat [S] 2, Observation [W] 0, Ranged Combat [A] 2, Survival [W] 0

ADVANCED SKILLS: Command [E] 0, Culture [E] 0, Data Djinn [W] 2, Medicurgy [W] 0, Pilot [A] 3, Science [W] 0, Technology [W] 1

TALENTS: Skin electrodes (CYB)

ARMOR: Flightsuit 1

WEAPONS: Hidden vulcan cricket (Bonus +1, INIT +2, Damage 2, CRIT 2)

GEAR: Survival mask (p117), Bio monitor (p112), Kambra (2 doses, p108), Opor (1 dose, p108)

- **SKIN ELECTRODES:** Leila has fitted her palms with conductive surfaces, capable of transmitting powerful electrical shocks. After an unarmed attack, she can choose to inflict 2 points of stress instead of damage. Each additional six rolled inflicts 1 extra point of stress.

PERSONAL PROBLEM: Leila is extremely daring and won't back down from a challenge. She enjoys danger, and will try to prove her skills and worth at any opportune moment.

SCENARIO GOAL: Leila is hell-bent on reaching all three quadrants. The weather is something she is secretly afraid of, but her fear of failing in the eyes of Jarouma and high-ranking Zenithians is worse.



YORÛG OM-KHALIT

Analyst

"I can see your destiny in the pattern surrounding you. You need to trust yourself and listen to your inner voice."

Yorûg was born on the Mogul family ship Dar'shaat, one of the smaller vessels that once crossed the grand expanse from the Second Horizon as part of the Janhagir fleet. The elders spoke of the great war, the conflict that finally led to the exodus of the Mogul fleet. Since he was a child, he has traveled the star systems of the Third Horizon. He studies interactions between factions and systems, seeking answers and portents of things to come. A man of few words, but friendly, observant, and devoted.

CHARACTERISTICS: Yorûg is both empathic and analytical. He touches the shoulder of someone in need, or holds them to release stress. He is the one most devoted to the Icons, praying regularly.

ATTRIBUTES:
STRENGTH 2 , AGILITY 2, WITS 4, EMPATHY 4

HIT POINTS: 4

MIND POINTS: 8

REPUTATION: 3

COMMON SKILLS: Dexterity [A] 0, Force [S] 0, Infiltration [A] 0, Manipulation [E] 1, Melee Combat [S] 0, Observation [W] 2, Ranged Combat [A] 0, Survival [W] 0

ADVANCED SKILLS: Command [E] 0, Culture [E] 4, Data Djinn [W] 3, Medicurgy [W] 0, Pilot [A] 1, Science [W] 2, Technology [W] 1

TALENTS: Blessing

ARMOR: Environment suit (exo shell) 2

WEAPONS: None

GEAR: Survival mask (p117), Recon probe (p121), 3 M-doses (p112), Bio monitor (p112)

- **BLESSING:** Once per session, Yorûg can bless another character in close range (slow action), giving her a +3 to one action. In combat, the GM gets 1 DP when the talent is used.

PERSONAL PROBLEM: Yorûg is devoted. When fear and doubt strikes he has to pray to the Icons.

SCENARIO GOAL: Yorûg is the instrument sent forth to secure the arrival of the Emissaries. He will do anything to keep the ship and the crew on Xene long enough for the portal to open. This will at first be through manipulation, seeking like-minded supporters, like the religious Alam – but he has also rigged explosive charges within the ship which can be remote-detonated through a dead man's switch if his hand is forced. When activated, the explosives will ground the ship, or make it drop into a slow descent into Xene's atmosphere. This action gives 2 DP to the GM.

SECRETS

- **Yorûg's family knows about the lost system Shinda in the Quadrant of the Pillar. The convent there, known as the Order of Rima, is sometimes visited by the elders of the Nomad fleet. Only a few Mogul families hold the key to opening the portal leading to the Shinda system.**
- **After traveling the Horizon, Yorûg was invited to visit Shinda. He stayed and cared for the Four that are One – the ascetic elders of the order. He now has a mission – to open the gateway for the Icons to enter the Third Horizon so that the Emissaries can walk among the humans as they are destined to do.**



ALAM DANIA

Technician

"Please no... Don't use it that way. I can... Just let me get my tools, please."

SECRETS

- **Alam is an orphan. She doesn't know about her family and tends to lie about her upbringing. She was born on the streets, and after running away from several foster families, ended up living on the streets near one of the temples.**
- **She doesn't approve of the Consortium's control in the Kua system, and is looking for ways to allow other factions, like the Free League and the Nomad Federation, to gain more power.**

Growing up on the space docks of the Icon City, Alam found stability and compassion in the Church of the Icons. Yet she always felt torn, longing for the adventure of outer space. She therefore left the busy life of Mira and went on a pilgrimage. What started as a spiritual journey instead brought her to the nostalgic passion of hard work and the comfort of machines. Thinking the Icons would bring her happiness, she instead found it in the precise work of fixing up or building ships and computers.

CHARACTERISTICS: When the burden of social interaction becomes too much, she retreats into fixing things. To break something is to not respect the work that went into making it. This makes her nervous, often asking for other people's opinions before she takes on a task.

ATTRIBUTES:
STRENGTH 2 , AGILITY 3, WITS 5, EMPATHY 3

HIT POINTS: 5

MIND POINTS: 8

REPUTATION: 3

COMMON SKILLS: Dexterity [A] 1, Force [S] 1, Infiltration [A] 0, Manipulation [E] 0, Melee Combat [S] 2, Observation [W] 2, Ranged Combat [A] 1, Survival [W] 0

ADVANCED SKILLS: Command [E] 0, Culture [E] 0, Data Djinn [W] 2, Medicurgy [W] 0, Pilot [A] 0, Science [W] 2, Technology [W] 3

TALENTS: Gearhead

ARMOR: Environment suit (Exo shell) 2

WEAPONS: Cutting torch (INIT +1, Damage 2, CRIT 2)

GEAR: Survival mask (p117), Cutting torch (p113), Advanced tools (p114), Bio monitor (p112)

- **GEARHEAD:** With just one success on a **TECHNOLOGY** roll, Alam can repair an item with great success, adding two successes to the roll. She can also roll for **TECHNOLOGY** to jury-rig a one-time-use contraption for a specific task, using the number of sixes to determine the gear bonus of the new item (up to +3).

PERSONAL PROBLEM: Alam is nervous and sometimes don't trust her own capability. Simple tasks suddenly take a longer time to complete, and stressful tasks become even harder (–1 or –2 depending on the situation).

SCENARIO GOAL: Alam is there to fix things. She is the hard-working technician who just tries to do her job and not get in the crossfire. Her religious background also makes her a great candidate to join Yorûg in his endeavor to herald the arrival of the Icons.



HARISH VERMA

Archaeologist

"I'll get it done. Just get me up close and I'll have a look. Ready the dockside airlock."

Harish grew up rich. Her family is one of the older ones on Menau, the third and farthest star of the Mira tri-star system. Isolated at the far reaches of the system, Harish became anxious to leave and explore. Once she was of age, she signed up as deckhand on a freighter. Finding a lover on the space docks, Harish signed on for a hard-labor position aboard a local prospecting ship, taking her further out into the Third Horizon. After a fatal accident somewhere deep within the debris belt of Yastapol, she returned, alone, to civilization. She left the space-faring life behind and went to university, studying archaeology. That, in turn, led to multiple expeditions funded by the Foundation, and a position on Gyaan V for the analysis of the *Web of Izar*, in CC58.

CHARACTERISTICS: As an older woman, Harish shows a stern face and an unreadable facade. She is not easy to get close to, and tends to keep herself occupied with hard physical work, or long hours in the lab.

ATTRIBUTES:
STRENGTH 5, AGILITY 3, WITS 3, EMPATHY 3

HIT POINTS: 8

MIND POINTS: 6

REPUTATION: 3

COMMON SKILLS: Dexterity [A] 2, Force [S] 3, Infiltration [A] 0, Manipulation [E] 0, Melee Combat [S] 1, Observation [W] 0, Ranged Combat [A] 0, Survival [W] 2

ADVANCED SKILLS: Command [E] 0, Culture [E] 3, Data Djinn [W] 0, Medicurgy [W] 2, Pilot [A] 1, Science [W] 1, Technology [W] 0

TALENTS: Exo specialist

ARMOR: Reinforced exo shell 3

WEAPONS: Power gloves (Bonus +1, INIT +1, Damage 2, CRIT 3)

GEAR: Medkit (p112), Tabula with research notes.

- **EXO SPECIALIST:** Harish gets +2 to **DEXTERITY** or **FORCE** when handling an exo. It cancels out the normal penalty of –2.

PERSONAL PROBLEM: Harish sees herself as an older (and wiser) sister to the members of the crew. She will put herself at great risk to help or protect others. That self-sacrificial tendency will primarily look out for any Firstcome members of the crew.

SCENARIO GOAL: Harish secretly hates Faisal, and wants nothing more than to discredit her, or take over the position as leader of the group. She is also the one most likely to sacrifice herself for the wellbeing of the crew.

SECRETS

- **Harish knows that Faisal worked as a research assistant on Gyann V. There are rumors of an accident. A research assistant (Menia Tan-Baduh) was ejected into space during a routine check of the ship's life support systems, and Faisal was somehow responsible. But if that is the case, Chief Scientist Jarouma Had Peleter must have covered it up.**
- **Harish's family earned most of their wealth from selling Humanite slaves to the Consortium during the construction of the Coriolis space station.**
- **The prospector ship Huma found something in the dark void beyond Yastapol's ship graveyard. An old weapon system from the portal wars, driven by an insane kinetic intelligence, devoted to protecting the wreck of an old battleship.**

JAROUMA HAD PELETER, CHIEF SCIENTIST

"I expect everything to go according to schedule. Do not return until you have all the readouts."

Jarouma is a Zenithian schooled within the harsh system of the noble houses. As a direct descendant of the Zenith, she takes great pride in establishing the Consortium as the leading faction of peace and prosperity in the Third Horizon. She got her own command on the research vessel Gyaan V early in her career, but after a couple of failed expeditions, her funding was cut. It wasn't until her father managed to stumble over some hard-earned information about the outer systems, that things changed. From the lips of a dying archaeologist, poisoned by radiation after a terrible accident near the Eanu portal, Jarouma found out about the possible activation of the *Web of Izar*. An artifact silent and dead for as long as anyone could remember, was soon supposed to come to life.

SCENARIO GOAL: Jarouma is under a lot of pressure from home. Birr have been heavily invested into her projects, by investors not only from within the Foundation or the prospecting branch of the Consortium. She has also done a fair amount of shady deals with Syndicate and Free League representatives in order to cover up the fact that she has been skimming funds for her own, non-sanctioned projects. Over a cycle late with her promised findings, her status is falling in the eyes of the more hegemonistic families on Kua, and she only has days left before her project is threatened with cancellation.

SANDIR I AND II, ATMOSPHERIC SHUTTLES

A small atmospheric shuttle with the Foundation's white coating and precise patterns across the hull. It can hold 8 people and 5 metric tons of cargo. The reactor and life support system can handle one week of space travel or two days of atmospheric work before it needs to be refueled and go through a maintenance check.

CLASS: II

ENERGY POINTS: 4

HULL POINTS: 3

MANEUVERABILITY: +1

SIGNATURE: -1

ARMOR: 4

SPEED: 4

MODULES: Docking station, cargo hold (5 tons), Advanced workshop (**TECHNOLOGY** +1, p148)

FEATURES: Atmospheric entry, Advanced workshop

PROBLEM: -

COST: 250,000 birr

BECOMING AN EMISSARY

The beings later known as the Emissaries are powerful mystics from the Second Horizon who transcended space and let their minds take over bodies in the Third Horizon. When this happens, the victim will first see flashes of darkness, and hear whispers in their ears. These whispers become words of reassurance, as if someone is comforting or soothing the pain or stress of the character. The Emissary who is about to enter can then partially control, or suggest actions, to its victim. The mind feels tired, gradually developing tunnel vision, beginning with the peripheral view, then gradually eating up more space until only a pinprick of light remains. The character hears static, picking up the rushing of blood in their own head. Letting go, being knocked out, killed, or in any other way losing consciousness or control will allow the Emissary to fully enter the victim (see page 225 for the final scene).

SECRETS AND LIES

All playable characters have secrets. To add some interconnections between the characters, each player can decide one secret, or part of a secret, that some other character in the group knows about. Also decide if the character whose secret is known is aware that someone else knows.

PLAYING AN EMISSARY

Once taken over, you can let your players continue playing as an Emissary for the remainder of the final scene. The character is calm, controlled, and soothing – never angry or violent, even if attacked. It's highest wish is to ease everyone's pain. To help, and give them a higher purpose. Any wounds they suffer heal almost instantly, and the Emissary cannot be affected by stress. It will try to comfort and convince any other members of the crew to let go – that everything will be wonderful, and that they will finally rest, bathing in the love and light of the Icons.

THE STATION

ACT 1

Foundation Station 7 dances around the yellow gas giant, locked in place by the moon Calest. Its characteristic three sections, stacked upon each other, rotate around a central shaft, each section a wheel of spokes connected to a circular outer hull. At first glance it looks inconspicuous – innocent even – but after further analysis an observant viewer can spot the high end equipment, sensor arrays, and sleek docking stations littering the hull. As with most Foundation installations, everything is white and polished – a testament to Zenithian design.

IN ACT 1, the players wake up and start their day. Anticipation and anxiety should dictate the interactions they have with the other characters on the team. Roleplay the morning meeting, breakfast banter, and the work required to start the scenario.

FOUNDATION STATION 7

The research team wakes up in the living quarters of sector 31, situated in the isolated outer wheel closest to Xene's radiating surface. The simple quarters consist of a common area, gym, a small kitchen and recreation area, as well as the crew's small sleeping pods. After their usual morning routine of heated honey-water and protein porridge, the researchers head to the lab section of the wheel. A small research lab with the latest equipment, as well as an engineering workshop, both connected to the closed off, and legionaire-guarded corridor leading to the only airlock. In the other direction lies the corridor leading back to the main shaft and the rest of the station. A large bulkhead with electronic locks and three stern station guards stands in the way of breaking the research team's long isolation.

Everyone is ready for a day of final calibrations and system checks. Tomorrow will be a grand day, and everyone is on edge. In one day, Chief Scientist Jarouma Had Peleter will arrive to oversee the project. It's time to activate the installation; a remote-controlled array of machines floating in Xene's atmosphere, with the sole purpose of gradually shifting the magnetic fields and electromagnetic currents to match the previously discovered fluctuations known as the Jarouma Pattern.

EVENTS

The arrival of Jarouma, and remotely activating the grid located within Xene's atmosphere, are both part of the first day. However, after a few hours, sensor data and any communication with the installations will be lost. Before that happens though, the GM may use one or more of the personal events to incite suspicion and distrust within the group.

⚙ EARLY ARRIVAL

A day earlier than anticipated, the proximity alert is heard throughout section 31. It's an announcement: –*"Visiting shuttle is arriving in ten minutes. Prepare for VIP protocol at airlock 31A".*



A group of five legionnaires arrive from the main corridor, doors hissing shut behind them. They form up with the other three guards in front of the airlock doors as the unexpected visitors enter the complex. Jarouma Had Peleter, the explorer that discovered the pattern at Izar, and the brain behind this entire initiative. She walks in dressed in gold and bright red, followed by a more conservatively dressed research assistant. Her stern face is covered with the white paint of Zenithian nobility. She greets the team leader, Faisal, and has a brief conversation before she addresses the entire team: –*"No more delays. We go active now. I don't want any excuses. In one hour we will launch."*

There are complaints. The ninth day was selected specifically to let the Icons bless the project, and starting a day early is risky, but Jarouma won't hear any of it. She moves off to the lab with a detail of two bodyguards, expecting the team to follow. This change of events sends a cold shiver down the spine of the team members.
Cost: 0 (mandatory, GM receives 1 DP)

⚙ CHECK AND CHECK AGAIN (YORÛG)

As the team calibrates the equipment before countdown, under Jarouma's vigilant eyes, Yorûg is noticeably anxious. He checks every configuration multiple times, and someone may notice that he's almost at the breaking point, muttering to himself: – *"It has to work, there is no other alternative. Everything depends on it."*
He prays to *the Traveler* with tears in his eyes and needs help (**COMMAND** or **MANIPULATION**) to break out of his obsessive praying.
Cost: 1 DP

⚙ COUNTDOWN CYCLE

The team goes through their routine checks, preparing for the activation. The hardware needs to be stabilized and set to the right configuration with a **TECHNOLOGY** roll. The arrays on Xene require remote calibration with **DATA DJINN**, and the exact order of activation is defined with **SCIENCE**. All of these duties are performed by the team members under high stress (–1 to the die roll). Any failure risks building up tension and delays the procedure, angering Jarouma if discovered. Each failed roll also generates 1 DP, and the character loses 1 Mind Point.

PERSONAL EVENTS

Several events are directly connected to specific scenario characters. They should primarily be used by the GM to portray the non-player characters. However, they can also be suggested scenes for the player-controlled characters to initiate. If the events are used by the players, they do not cost any darkness points, and the outcome is completely player-driven.

SHUTTLE PILOT

If Leila is a player character, the GM can pull her away with a secret order after breakfast, to fly the shuttle to a nearby Legion cruiser and pickup a VIP executive (Jarouma).


SECTION STRUTS
SHUTTLE
SENSOR ARRAY
CENTRAL ACCESS SHAFT
SECTION 31-33:
RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT
SECTION 21-26:
ADMINISTRATION & DATA STORAGE
SECTION 11-12:
SECURITY DETAIL & DOCKS
REACTOR CORE
GRAVITON PROJECTOR

SECTION 31:
ISOLATED RESEARCH FACILITY, THE JAROUMA PROJECT



01: Central shaft
02: Security gate
03: Section corridor
04: Airlock
05: Kitchen & common area
06: Cabins (coffin modules)
07: Sanitation unit
08: Engineering workshop
09: Node testing facility
10: Research lab
11: Mainframe
12: Observation window
13: Emerald data storage

- **Activation:** Once all checks have been performed, the project is ready. Almost a cycle of preparations has led to this moment. Faisal nods to Jarouma and indicates the main panel: *"We are ready. Everything is ready. You will have the honor."* Jarouma enters the initialization code, and all the tabulas and holograms light up.
- **Success:** At first there is nothing, but then a set of frequency patterns blinks into existence. One for each quadrant of Xene. They are mapped to replicate the pattern from Izar. Graphs detail any deviations, and none of them has currently hit the right frequency. Everyone holds their breath, too nervous to speak, but after a painfully long period of nothing, suddenly one of the quadrant readouts changes, and gradually falls more in line with the original pattern. The long period of stress and hard work has panned out. The release of tension is palpable in the lab.

Cost: 0 (mandatory)

BLIND SPOT

Something goes wrong. This can happen during preparations or right after activation. One of the sensory arrays down on Xene suddenly deactivates. At first, the readout says it has suffered damage, but then it comes back online. A roll for **DATA DJINN** shows that there are atmospheric disturbances that temporarily blocked the signal.

Cost: 1 DP

THE SHAKES (LEILA)

Leila takes a back seat as the installation is activated. Her normal duties of transporting material, or flying the shuttle during the probe installations down on Xene, are both far different from what's currently happening. Normally she would help out with any **DATA DJINN**-related tasks, but when asked, she distinctly and angrily says no: –*"We've done this simulation a thousand times. You can't be that incompetent? Just do your job, and I'll do mine."*

Her lashing out is followed by leaving. Once away from prying eyes, she grabs her right arm, which now shakes visibly. She bites her lip desperately, stopping her teeth from chattering as sweat breaks out on her forehead. She leaves for her quarters in secret, to take a dose of her stashed kambra drugs, and returns with new vigor, changed back into her old, assertive self.

Cost: 1 DP

DATA DUMP (ALAM)

A few hours after activation, the research team gets their first break since the installation went online. Only Alam and one other member remain in the lab as the others go to the kitchen area for food and some brief rest. She will try to convince the remaining person to take a brief break as well – she can handle the readouts and data cores for a while. Regardless of whether she manages to be alone or not, Alam then discretly attaches a tag to the data core, and starts transfering sensor data and blueprints from the project.

If she's caught and accused, she will only say that the data is so crucial that it requires a secondary backup – when in actuality the data is for further distribution to the Free League if the Foundation chooses to keep the experiment a secret in the future.

Cost: 1 DP

SACRIFICE (HARISH)

As the grid installed on Xene is activated, Harish is nowhere to be seen. She has left the lab and taken a few minutes alone in the common area of the living quarters, away from prying eyes. Deep in thought, she prays to the Lady of Tears to bless the project and the station.

In prayer, she remembers the terrors of losing her friends aboard Huma (see her secret), and starts cutting her already scarred arm to numb the mental pain. The character loses 1 Mind Point.

Cost: 1 DP

THE DISTURBANCE

As the situation is monitored throughout the day, the team calms down. They even start celebrating. That's when someone notices the additional readouts from the weather stations. Xene's atmosphere is in turmoil. A massive storm is building up, and electromagnetic discharges are reaching the limits of what has been simulated. Faisal assures Jarouma that the installed arrays will hold. There is no need to worry. But as the day ends and the team splits up into surveillance shifts for the night, the anxiety is back, and a lump of dread has lodged itself in everyone's gut.

Cost: 0 DP (mandatory)

THE GAS GIANT

ACT 2

The hull groans from the stress as the shuttle descends into the growing storm. The passengers hold on tight as Xene's hurricane winds hit the hull and steering jets, doing their best to push the shuttle back out into the dark void. The pilot is focused on the flight control screens. Interfering noise washes over the internal speakers as she bites down nervously on a piece of well-chewed tabak. – *"We should be there now. Check the sensors for any sign of the beacons. I need a coordinate NOW, or this ride will end in flames!"*

IN ACT 2, the players descend into the atmosphere of Xene, in order to repair one of the main installations in quadrant 2, and reboot quadrant 3 after a power failure. The growing storm interferes with any sensor output from the probes, but once they are all online, they should be able to manually gather data from each quadrant. As long as the shuttle holds, and no one gets hurt.

DESCENT TO XENE

During the night shift, what everyone dreaded suddenly becomes reality.

- **Quadrant 3:** As two team members monitor the sensor data, suddenly the readouts from quadrant 3 shut down. The warning message indicates an emergency reboot after a power failure, but for some reason the restart won't initiate. The installed djinn software is dead.
- **Bad Connection:** As everyone wakes up abruptly and gathers at the lab, the remaining probes show fluctuating readouts. Data transfer from Xene is choppy from packet loss and a bad connection. Hurricane winds and electric discharges are now way beyond simulated values. Historical weather station data has never before logged values this high.
- **Quadrant 2:** As the team members scramble to try to force a reboot in quadrant 3 and boost the signal (**DATA DJINN** aided by **TECHNOLOGY** or **SCIENCE**), the dark fate of the Icons strikes once more. The installation in quadrant 2 is hit by a massive electromagnetic discharge, and the system logs multiple hardware failures before it goes offline.
- **Lost Connection:** Shortly thereafter, the entire remote data feed goes silent, replaced by static noise. All the frequency readouts in the lab flatline, and darkness descends. Everyone has to make a Wits roll with +1, or lose a Mind Point.

As the readouts flatline, everyone on the team watches each other with fear in their eyes. Silence turns into action. Suggested solutions are shouted and rejected as everyone panics. Faisal will try to **COMMAND** her team, but if that fails, Jarouma steps in. The situation is clearly dire, but she makes it perfectly clear that failure is not an option: –*"Ready the shuttle. There is nothing more to be done from up here."* The team will have to descend into Xene's stormy atmosphere to manually reboot, repair, and analyze the current state of the pattern. They are not allowed back until they have succeeded.



EVENTS

The events in Act 2 will build tension and remove hope. During the act, players should go from worrying about the experiment itself, to eventually fearing for their own lives, as they descend into chaos.

- **Objective:** The team can choose which quadrant to go to first. Q2 for repairs (**TECHNOLOGY**) or Q3 for a software reboot (**DATA DJINN**). Once those tasks are done, they can activate the grid manually. They will get sensor data from Q1, 2 and 3, but still have to travel to quadrant 4 to gather data from the sensors there, as they are blanked out by atmospheric disturbance.
- **Fierce Leader:** Faisal is a determined leader, focused on completing the mission and not failing Jarouma. Regardless of the damage she and her team takes, she talks about it as an acceptable sacrifice – a position she will enforce at knife point, or backed up by Leila's hidden gun (see character stats, page 208).

THE DESCENT

Everyone scrambles to get their gear in order. An atmospheric shuttle is docked at the airlock, and Leila runs the startup sequence as the rest of the team get into their exos and load up all the equipment. Once aboard, Leila detaches the clamps and steers the shuttle into a drop towards the projected entry point of Xene's angry, yellow atmosphere. Lightning discharges light up the dense cloud layer, and hurricane whirlwinds form a hazardous wall, threatening to tear the shuttle apart.

For 1 DP, Leila needs a calculated flight plan, either by herself (with –2 dice), or by shouting to the team to find her a safe path through the storm.

- **Calculate:** Use **DATA DJINN** to look at sensor readouts to calculate a path through the storm in order to reach quadrant 2 or 3's assumed position.
- **Pilot:** Use **PILOT** to descend into the atmosphere, with additional dice from the calculation roll.

Failure to find a good path will damage the ship (Hull –2, roll for Armor) and knock out some of the sensors (**DATA DJINN** –1 on future sensor rolls) as the bumpy ride brings the characters straight into a lightning storm.

Arrival: Finally, the clouds part, and the installation rig lights up in a thunderous flash – makeshift grav projectors and a sensor array, all connected to a small platform and a fragile docking rig. The team has reached their first destination.

Cost: 0, 1 DP (mandatory, GM receives 4 DP

A CURSED LANDING (SHUTTLE)

As the rig appears right in front of the shuttle and Leila initiates the docking sequence, a section of the platform is ripped lose by the strong winds, and metal shrapnel is hurled towards the shuttle. An active sensor operator (**DATA DJINN**) can detect the problem right before it happens and warn the pilot in time to course-correct. Otherwise, the pilot will have to take evasive actions with a **PILOT** –1 roll.

Failure results in the shuttle ramming into the platform and partially damaging the sensor array (take 1 hull damage), and forces everyone not specifically strapped in to roll for **DEXTERITY** to avoid taking 2 damage (armor rolls apply).

If a character has specifically prayed to the Icons to bless the atmospheric entry, this event costs 2 DP. If no one prayed, it is free.

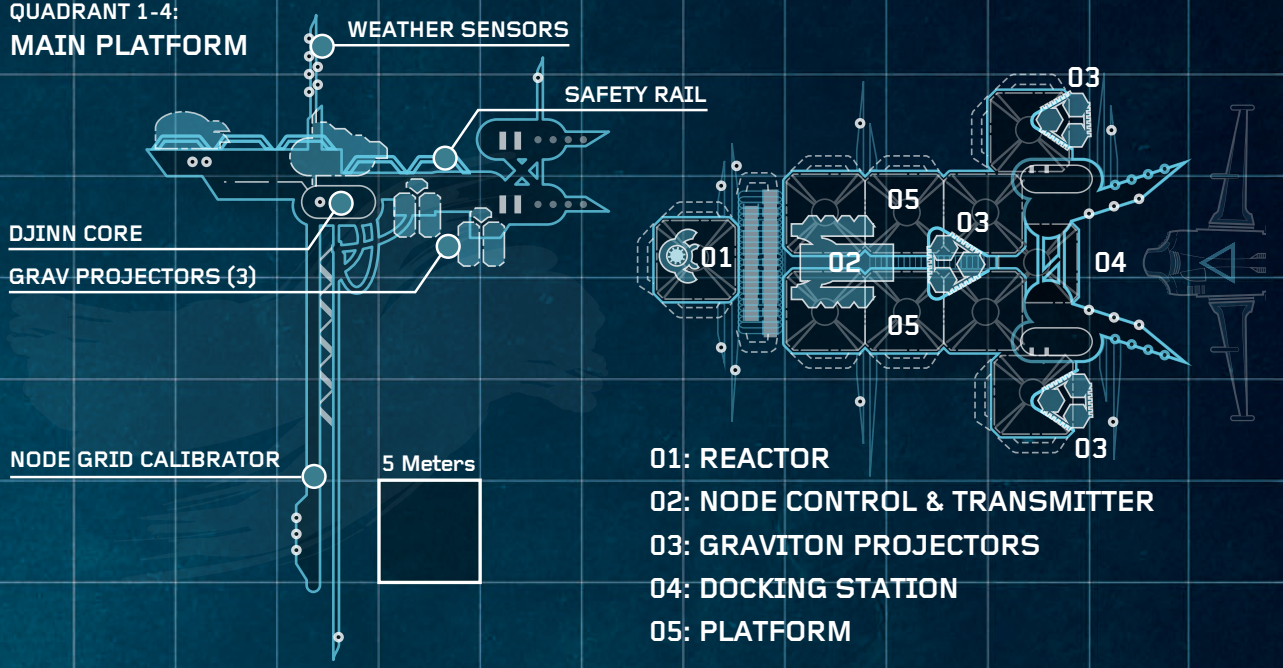
Cost: 0, 2 DP

QUADRANT 2 REPAIRS

The installation has suffered heavily from the harsh weather. The grav projectors are running on reduced power, and the platform has dropped far below its assigned coordinates. The sensors still work, but the circuits in the installation's electromagnetic control system are fried. Without this system, the array can't be used to correct Xene's energy pattern using the nodes positioned in the atmosphere.

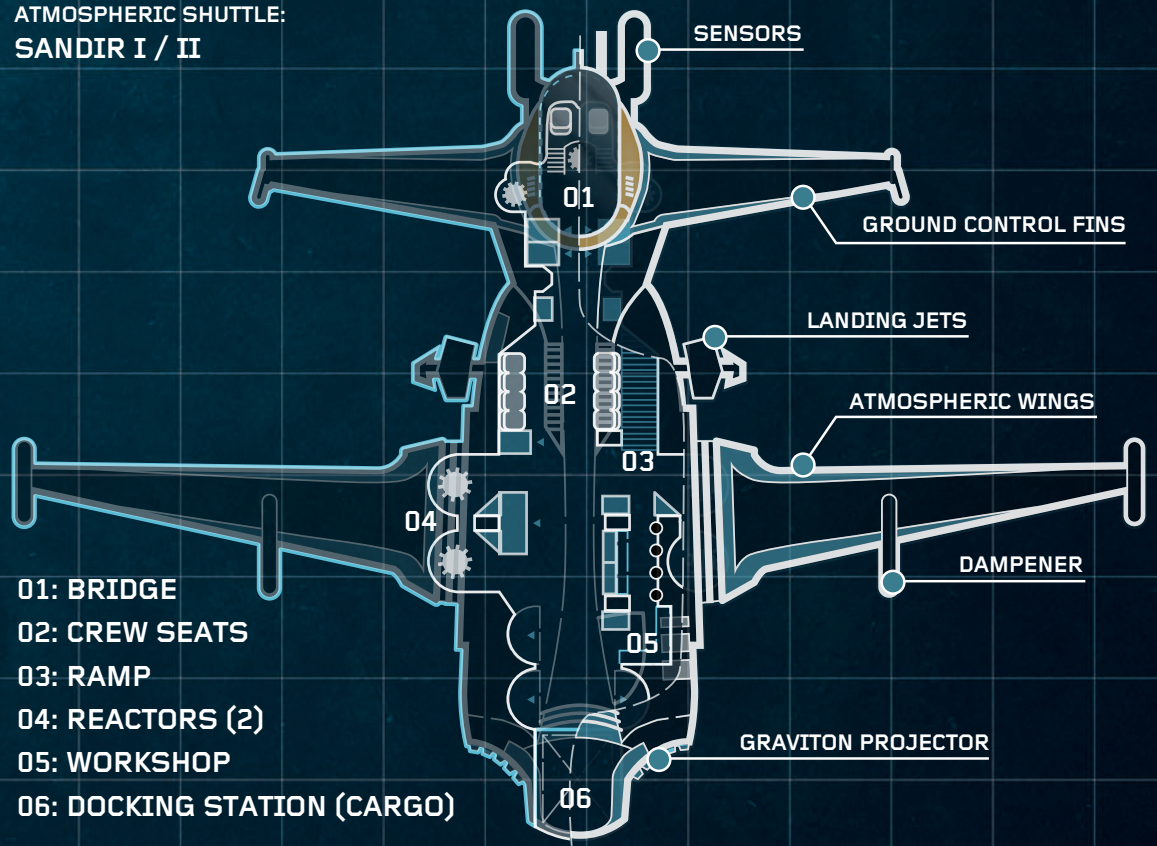
- **Shuttle:** Either the shuttle can tow the platform into position, realigning it (**PILOT** roll with –1), or the grav projectors can be jury-rigged to draw extra power from the reactor and lift the platform into position (**TECHNOLOGY** and **SCIENCE** roll). Failure results in the shuttle taking 1 hull damage from the maneuver.
- **Reactor Restart:** The reactor is not damaged and can be restarted manually. It is, however, hard to reach, and requires a **FORCE** roll with –1 to account for the strong winds. Failure

QUADRANT 1-4:
MAIN PLATFORM



01: REACTOR
02: NODE CONTROL & TRANSMITTER
03: GRAVITON PROJECTORS
04: DOCKING STATION
05: PLATFORM

ATMOSPHERIC SHUTTLE:
SANDIR I / II



01: BRIDGE
02: CREW SEATS
03: RAMP
04: REACTORS (2)
05: WORKSHOP
06: DOCKING STATION (CARGO)

results in the team member losing hold and crashing into the railing, taking 1 damage, and losing 1 Mind Point.

- **Control System Repair:** The electromagnetic control system runs at half power due to its fried circuits. They can either be repaired in place with a **TECHNOLOGY** –2 roll, or be moved into the workshop of the shuttle, using **FORCE** (see Reactor Restart to move the equipment). Failure damages the control system severely, and the group's only options are then to either scavenge for parts by destroying the shuttle's sensors (gaining +2 to **TECHNOLOGY**), or boost the remaining circuits with a **SCIENCE** roll at –1 to take on the extra strain.

Cost: 0 DP (mandatory)

⚙ QUADRANT 3 REBOOT

The platform at quadrant 3 is in good shape, apart from the deactivated control core. As the shuttle approaches, the sensor operator can detect that a faint remote connection does exist. It is possible to reboot the software without leaving the ship (**DATA DJINN**).

- **Bad Link:** Failing the remote link roll, or, for 1 DP, the remote link can be severed as they approach. The research team will have to land and get out onto the platform for manual connection. It's a roll for **FORCE** or **DEXTERITY** at –1 (with the risk of taking 1 HP and 1 MP of damage), and an easy **DATA DJINN** (+1) roll to activate the software.

Cost: 0, 1 DP (mandatory)

⚙ SEIZURE (LEILA)

As a team member returns to the shuttle after an outside task, they discover Leila lying on the floor of the cockpit, shaking with spasmodic force. She has had an epileptic seizure, her cybernetic implants discharging violently. Leila shouts repeatedly if someone comes close: –*"Let go of me. Get out! Get out!"*

- **Invaded Mind:** For Leila's player, describe how she is experiencing a sense of exhaustion and decreasing peripheral vision, as if the void is closing in. Leila can't hear her surroundings, and in the distance, what began as a single sharp note, turns into an orchestra of sharp noise. She is instinctively fighting it, hence the violent reaction.
- **Caretaker:** A successful roll of **COMMAND** or **MEDICURGY** can snap her out of it, but failure means she takes 1 HP and 2 MP of damage.
- **Out of Control:** For 1 DP, Leila makes an involuntary **MELEE COMBAT** attack using her implants against the helping person. The attack starts out as 3 successes (2 MP of base damage + 1 MP for each of the extra successes). Each six on the roll then removes one of these initial successes (three sixes means no damage, and two means only base damage).
- **Sedated:** Drugs can also work, if someone has found the doses of kambra and opor Leila has stashed away somewhere.

This event can be used on any other member as well. It's one of the Symmetry mystics trying to make a connection, but the field is not yet stable, and they do not manage to take control of the poor researcher's body.

Cost: 2–3 DP

⚙ JUDGMENT (SHUTTLE/TEAM)

As the team is delayed, whether by repairs, traveling to their next destination, or arguing over the mission – one of the massive thunderstorms claims the area. Dense clouds of whirling particles and ominous thunder clashes strike at the members, or their shuttle. The severity of the storm varies depending on how many darkness points the GM spends:

- **1 DP:** The wind is charged with crackling electromagnetic particles. Technology is unpredictable, and any use of tabulas or electronic tools, sensors, or similar get a –1 skill roll penalty until the team leaves the current quadrant.
- **2 DP:** The shuttle or installation platform is being charged by the electromagnetic particles. Energy builds up and discharge every 30 minutes or so. The discharges count as an attack with five dice, CRIT 3, but can be avoided with a successful roll at –2 for **SURVIVAL**, **INFILTRATION**, or **PILOT** (for the shuttle). The first six counts as 2 points of damage, and every additional six is 1 hull- or health point of damage. The victim may roll for armor.
- **3 DP:** A crippling blow strikes the platform or the shuttle. The particles cluster around electronic equipment and find a way inside the thrusters of the shuttle. Everyone in the area suffers from an attack with 6 dice, CRIT 2. Armor is their only protection.

Cost: 1–3 DP

⚙ A HOLY CAUSE (YORÛG)

Yorûg is getting more and more anxious if the team

members start discussing aborting the mission. During repairs or other tasks where the members are split up, he will approach individuals to try to convince them about the significance of their mission:

–"*This is not just about us, or Jarouma's experiment. What we are doing here has the potential to shape the Horizon. We have to be willing to bleed for the Icons, to sacrifice ourselves so that they can hear our prayers. They can set things right, as long as we believe.*"

He argues that the implication of another type of portal would change everything. He also plays on the suspicions of the one he talks to. If they mistrust another team member, he confirms that fear, if it can win the person over to his side.

- **Manipulator:** A player using **MANIPULATE** for an opposed roll can get more information out of Yorûg. If they intimidate him, he will confess that he is on a holy mission to aid the Icons. If instead they flatter him and play along, or get a great success, he may tell them that there is a living Icon in the Quadrant of the Pillar, hidden away from the prying eyes of greedy Zenithian factions.

Cost: 0 DP

⚙ DYING LOVE (FAISAL)

Up until now, anyone suggesting they abort the mission has been firmly shut down by Faisal. However, suddenly Leila becomes very ill. She suffers from a near fatal epileptic seizure – this time with blood coming out of her nose and mouth. The whites of her eyes turn red from popped blood vessels.

- **Invaded Mind:** For Leila's player, describe how a sharp pain gnaws at the back of her head, and that her eyes are burning. Her vision is quickly reduced to a pin prick. Leila can only hear the rushing sound of her own blood, and a whisper in her native tongue: –"Let go. Rest now and be at peace."
- **Breakdown:** Leila is critically injured (counts as a bleeding gut, see Rulebook page 97, but requires a **MEDICURGY** roll at –2 to stabilize). She is in need of proper hospital care within 1D6 hours. Faisal panics. She can't keep herself collected anymore, and instantly switches from doing everything for the mission, to ordering that it be abandoned – the team has to return to the station, and she will threaten other members to get what she wants.

Cost: 2 DP

⚙ SABOTAGE (YORÛG/SHUTTLE)

If the arguments within the team shift towards leaving, Yorûg will take extreme measures. He has rigged the reactor of the shuttle to remote detonate (if it's empty), or if the team members are already inside the shuttle, he has placed smaller charges on the thrusters, forcing the team to make an emergency landing on one of the installation rigs. Yorûg will try to do this discreetly, but if forced, he will activate it in everyone's plain view:

–"*We have to accept our fates. We are one with the Icons, and our sacrifice will open their eyes to the Horizon! I'm sorry my friends, but I have to do this...*"

Cost: 0 DP

END OF ACT 2

There are three scenarios for shifting over to Act 3. As a GM you get to decide where a dramatically correct transition should take place.

- **Complete the Mission:** The research team has repaired the two installations and has a still-functional shuttle to take them to quadrant 4 for the final sensor readout. They leave with some hope of success.
- **Conflicting Desires:** They end up in a dire conflict within the team – either through a verbal stalemate, or physical trauma and bloodshed.
- **Stranded:** The shuttle has broken down (or been sabotaged), and they are stranded on one of the installation platforms, unable to return home. They have either accepted their fate and now welcome death, or still believe they can withstand the storm and survive until it dissipates.

THE ARRIVAL

ACT 3

Through the barrel of the gun, she could see the fear in their eyes. What was once a mutual understanding of trust and respect, was now gone – replaced with fear, doubt, and anger. Her colleagues feared her, but were still uncertain. The only way forward is to reinforce her threat. To make them listen – squeeze the trigger and make them listen through the act of bloodshed. But, she can't. Her arm suddenly numb, a voice burrowing into her mind – a whisper, yet a gospel sung from the stars: –*"Be calm. Be at peace. You can rest now."* The weapon clattering to the ground as a sensation of terror flows through her body. The voice is sharp in her mind now. Sight is lost. The world fades away as she is locked away deep inside her own body. Only the voice remains: –*"Rest assured that you shall leave this world as a herald of the new Horizon. I will carry your burden. You are me, and I am the Emissary."*

IN ACT 3, the Emissaries arrive. As the stabilized installations shift Xene's magnetic field to match the *Jarouma Pattern* from Izar, the Symmetry mystics from the Second Horizon are able to establish the portal link required to transfer their minds. One by one, the expedition members are taken over.

THE LAST INSTALLATION

The players can be in multiple situations, either in conflict, stranded, or on their way to the last part of their mission. The final installation in quadrant 4 is the last one to visit. Its readouts obscured by the electromagnetic storm, going there in person is the only way to get a complete readout.

EVENTS

In the final Act, the events all move things toward the arrival of the Emissaries. These beings are the Santulans – leaders of the Second Horizon's ruling body, the Symmetry. They are looking for a way to transfer their minds into new bodies. To traverse the dark void without the use of physical portals, and position themselves for the ongoing war with the First Horizon's agents. The most important event in this Act is the last one: the Emissaries (see page 226). The other events are only ways to get to that point, hopefully by defusing an ongoing conflict.

THE LAST QUADRANT

The final installation is below Xene's belt of debris. Quadrant 4 has been blocked out by the electromagnetic disturbances, but is unharmed in other regards. On their way in, the shuttle rocks back and forth from the turbulence. Its hull is being battered by the particles bombarding it. Systems are barely holding together. For 1 DP, the GM can force a **PILOT** roll where failure means 2 points of Hull damage and a potential emergency landing.



- **The Platform:** Once they land on the platform, they realize the rig is floating right in the eye of the storm. A calm oasis surrounded by swirling walls of solid, yellow clouds, crackling with lightning. The chance of getting out again looks bleak, unless the storm dissipates.
- **The Pattern:** Checking the sensor data and the pattern brings good news. The pattern in Xene's current magnetic field is almost the same as the *Jarouma Pattern* detected from the *Web of Izar* in the Erequ system nearly two Coriolis Cycles ago.
- **Bad News:** However, looking at the weather station readouts (**DATA DJINN** or **SCIENCE**), the team realizes that there is a problem. Leaving through the storm will be almost impossible, and the weather prognosis indicates that the storm will not dissipate for many segments, maybe even a whole cycle. The atmosphere on Xene has somehow permanently been changed by the experiment.
- **Panic:** As this news spreads among the team, everyone risks taking 3 Mind Points of damage unless they succeed with a Wits roll. Each success removes one MP of the damage. If anyone becomes broken by this, the GM can use 1 DP to add an additional Mind Point of damage to all team members. Dread and panic arise!

  The purpose here is to put the team in a position of doubt, anger, blame, and fear of death.

Cost: 0, 1–2 DP (Mandatory if team hasn't panicked yet)

⚙ RISE FROM THE DEAD

Mid-argument, or on their way to the next installation, a person believed to be dead or dying suddenly comes to life. With a spasmodic jerk and a terrifying scream, the team member tumbles onto the floor. Then, equally suddenly, they stop spasming, and stand up slowly. Looking around, they nod and blink, confused. They look like they are uncertain of their whereabouts (the person has been taken over by an Emissary.)

- **Dread:** As this happens, everyone risks taking 1 Mind Point of damage unless they succeed with a Wits roll. If anyone becomes broken by this, the GM can use 1 DP to add an additional Mind Point of damage to all team members.

Cost: 0, 1 DP

⚙ THE EMISSARIES

When the time is right, in conflict, mid-drama, one by one the team members are taken over by the Symmetry. The mystics' minds travel across the void and enter the bodies of the Xene expedition. Performing any action, once the process has started,

requires a successful EMPATHY roll. Failure results in the victim taking 1 Mind Point of stress. Being taken over is a terrifying process, and once the Mind Points of a victim reach 0, their body and mind are completely taken over. Rolls for EMPATHY can only prolong the process, buying time to talk, or act. Let the Emissaries arrive one by one. Take over characters who are the most threatening, either to themselves or to others. Break up conflicts.

Cost: 0 DP (mandatory)

THE TAKEN

Following the lore of the Mercy of the Icons campaign, these are the Symmetry mystics who take over the expedition's team members:

- **FAISAL KHAM, ICON:** The Merchant, Symmetry mystic: Hiam en-Lamra
- **LEILA HATAMI, ICON:** The Faceless, Symmetry mystic: Chera en-Megrina
- **YORÛG OM-KHALIT, ICON:** The Judge, Symmetry mystic: Tam en-Daneer
- **ALAM DANIA, ICON:** The Messenger, Symmetry mystic: Urni en-Argonnas
- **HARISH VERMA, ICON:** The Dancer, Symmetry mystic: Aisha en-Barka

END OF ACT 3

As the last member of the research team is taken over, the scenario ends. Each one has their mind locked away deep inside their bodies, discarded by the new entity that has taken its place. The expedition is lost, and now only the future remains:

Xene's yellow clouds part as the shuttle breaks out of the atmosphere. On the orbital station FS-7, Chief Scientist Jarouma Had Peleter waits with anticipation. The docking clamps lock the ship into place, the airlock opening. Lights in the main corridor flicker as five tall silhouettes step out of the shuttle in unison. One of them, the researcher once known as Alam, raises a hand in greeting: –*"Friends. We have arrived. We are the answer to your prayers. When the night is closing in, we are the light of peace. We are the Emissaries."*

MORE ABOUT THE SYMMETRY

The Santulans are the Symmetry's most knowledgable mystics. They have let their minds wander between the stars across the great expanse – from the Second Horizon to new host bodies among the expedition members at Xene – thus turning them into the Emissaries. Read more about them on page 185, 191 and 193, as well as in the *Atlas Compendium*, page 24.

MERCY OF THE ICONS

These are the prominent steps of the mind intrusion:

1. **ENTER: Suddenly a sharp pain is felt as the mystic's presence enters the victim's mind. Take 1 HP and 1 MP of damage.**
2. **DISCONNECT: The victim loses control over their arms and legs, falling to the ground. Take 1 MP of damage.**
3. **ADJUST: Senses begin fading, and become unfocused, as a bright light and high-pitched sounds take over. The victim takes 2 MP of damage.**
4. **CONTROL: The body can no longer be controlled. It behaves of its own accord. Someone else has it standing up, speaking calming words to the rest of the party. Take 1 MP of damage. As long as the character isn't broken she can still hear and see what is going on.**
5. **BROKEN: After this, the victim takes 1 MP per minute, until they are broken. When that happens, their mind becomes lost and locked away in darkness.**

TURNED VICTIM: Other team members can now see wounds closing up, scars disappearing. The victim is healed from all physical damage and critical injury. Everyone seeing this has to succeed with a roll for Wits or lose 1 MP from the sheer terror of what they are witnessing.

A SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR BACKERS

ICON

Adam Woogie Woloshuk, Alexander Herring Orby, Ben Fabian, Bryan Considine, Cooper Sulma, Gregory Hammond, Jake Hoskovec, Jason Chen, Jeff Robinson, Jonathan Hatch, Justin Crowther, Krzysztof Piwowarski, Lukas Sommerauer, Mad Jay, Mark Solino, Markus Kollas, Montes Rosa, Edgardo A., Rickard Malm, Sascha Tanner, Thomas Caspersen

EMISSARY

Aaron Bruns, Adam "Kraetyz" Kratz, Aeonhart, AetherealFlux, Alexander Milgrom, Andreas "Degis" Andersson Rydfjäll, Andrew Hurley, Andy "Jhandar" White, Angelborn, Anna i Grzegorz Bereza, Armin Kessner, Ashra Black, B. Stenoien, Bartosz "Stoperssonn" Stopczyk, Ben "Kael" Gunderson, Ben Sutter, Bill Charleroy, Birger Hanning, Birk Hauke Wildhirt, Blaine Salzman, Brian J. Burke, Brian Jackson, Byron Aytoun, C I S C O aka Schrodinstein, Cato Vandrare, Charles Hammond, Charlie Pugsley, Chris Iverach-Brereton, Christer Malmberg, Christopher P. Crossley, Christopher Pearson, Claude Féry, Compromise and Conceit, Craig Cousins, Daniel Carlsson, Daniel L Hughes, Darryll smith-walker, Dawid "Dievas" Wojcieszynski, David Andrews, David Hagman, David Hummel, David Voderberg, Dillon Burke, DissonantOne, Dok G, Eis Annavini, Eric Brooke, Erug, Fabrice Gatille, Felix Egner, Fen, Filipe Cunha, Fletard, Futó Antal, Haakon Danzig, i<3schnett, J.M. Sunden, Jacob Rotschield, James Bastone, James R. Crowder II, James "The Great Old One" Burke, Jamie Law, Janus Al-Malik, Jason "Atomics" Unck, Jason Bell, Jason Epstein, JBazar, Jerry "LordJerith" Prochazka, Joel Mattson, John "Blizzard" Morrison, John T. Lacy, Jonas Hällström, Jonathan Stephenson, Jonne Ilari Kuokkanen A.K.A. Blake "The Janitor" B-07, Joshua Binder, Joshua SA-Elf Kanapkey, Juan M. García López, Justas Tomkus, Justin L. Fredette, Karl A. Schmidt, Karl Vollan, Kyle Bounds, Kyle J Douglas, Kyle Swank, Lane DAlessandro, Logoth, Maniac von Hannover spielt!, Marc Oliver Schneeberger, Marcus Elmer, Mark Threlfall, Marko Niskanen, Martin Legg, Matt Cockburn, Matt Pearce, Matthew "J Wall" Wallace, Mattias From, Mattiaz Fredriksson, Michael Arnot, Michael Dinos, Michael Hudson, Michael Spinks, Mike Clayton (Yvos), Mike Wightman, Minanonn, Moazzam Ullah, Mulberry, Nicholas Whaling, Norman Canestorp, Oliver Kempf, Pedro(Te), Per Karlsson, Pete Tracy, Petolomeus Fox, Phil Stepp, Phillip Bailey, Pieta Delaney, Pontus Amberg, Queitus, Radgar Stormlight, Randall W. Crockett, Red Skullkey, Redfuji6, René Schultze, Reto M. Kiefer, Rev. Thomas Powell, Richard J Powell, Robert Hausch, Robert Myers, Ronsley Gardner, Ryan Williams, Sandor (and my beautiful wife, Edit), Saxywolf, Scott Bates, Sean Wilcox, Servo, Shad Scarboro, Shawn P, Simon Cotterill, Simon Kopljar, Simon Roe, Simone Colombo, Stefan Glueck, Stephen White, Stevan Allen, Steven Humphries, The Freelancing Roleplayer, Thomas Beland, Thorsten "Khazragore" Wolk, Todd Stephens, Tony "Angelicus" Liell, Tony J, Trevor P. Marshall, Trivani, TSJ, Tuomas Ristimäki, Ulf H., Ulrik ConDoin, W. L. Munn, Zachary Guenther

AMBASSADOR

Aaron Gibby, Aaron Pothecary, Aaron Silverman, Aaron Smithies, Abhishek Ray, Abraham Warnock, Abraxas d'Ruckus, Ace Fortune, Achab, Adam Canning, Adam Connolly, Adam Costello, Adam Dork, Adam Grancell, Adam Grzegorczyk, Adam Mbhulo Mayes, Adam Sieradzan, Adrian Coombs-Hoar, Adrian Powici, Adrian Price, Aghork, Alain Sarti, Alan Precourt, Alastair Stewart, Alejandro González, Alex De Quintana, Alex Huyer, Alex J Pepper, Alex Stone-Tharp, Alexander Chang, Alexander Desmond Rodatos, Alexander Gent, Alexander Leavitt, Alfons Armbruster, Alfster, Aliaksandr Yakauleu, Alistair Collins, Almoni, Alton Capps, Altorinne, Ambika Kirkland, Amninder Pandher, Anders Bergvall, Anders Garmo, Anders Gustafsson, Anders Hermann Pedersen, Anders Lang, André Schäfer, Andrea "Cioffaz" Cioffarelli, Andrea "Maug" Maugeri, Andrea Migone, Andreas Reck, Andreas Starrsjö, Andres Arias, Andrew C. Cole, Andrew Dacey, Andrew McColl, Andrew P. Moore, Andrew Rout, Andrew Wagg, Andrew Walker, Andrew Vikinger Gill, Andrew Williams, Andrew Womack, Andrija Popovic, Andrzej Krakowian, Andrzej Miszkurka, Andy Bridgwater, Andy Platts, Angel Garcia, Angelo de Stephano, Angus Abranson, Anon, Anthony Foderaro, Anthony Martin, Anthony Robinson, Anthony Underwood, Antoine Polignone, Antonio Trapero, Aoren, Are Bøe Pedersen, Arnaud "Khentar" Martin, Arne Röcke, Arrahnuuk, Arthur Young, Asadrakian, Atom Fenrir, Audun Løvlie, Axel Tölke, Bane Root, Bart Gelens, Bartłomiej Bartczak, BeholdHer Gaming, LLC., Ben Allen, Ben Meiklejohn, Ben Quant, Ben Raynes, Benedikt Hensel, Benjamin "Myrddin" Busseniers, Benjamin A Hoyt, Benjamin Adelman, Benjamin Rogers, Benjamin Rushton, Benoît Philibert, Berke Canatar, Bernardo Martínez Garrido, Big Al, Bill Best, Bill Copeland, Bithir, Björn Boots, BluntForce Krma, Bob Lukic, Bob the Jedi, Brad Crawford, Brad D. Kane, Bradley Sudkamp, Brandon Robertson, Brandon T Harvey, Brandon Tack, Brandon Wu, Brian Ashford, Brian Hunt, Brian Kirchhoff, Brian Koonce, Brian Smith, Bruce G. Anderson, Bruceovski, Bruno C. Buss, Buddha Meeple, Bunny Wigglesworth, Buster Hills-Hughes, C David

Ross, C Thorne, Caitlin Eckert, Caliburex, Camille Haller, Cang Ling Yee, Captain Francis Moira Crozier, Carl Harrison, Carl-Alex Nelder, Carlos Daniel Muñoz Diaz, Carlos E Restrepo, Carlos García “Phlegm”, Carlos Valdes, Carsten Chalk, Carsten Damm, Catherine & Liz Evans-Gist, Chance Dickson, Charles Phillips, Charlie Dunwoody, Cherie C., Chiky Scares You, Chris Bekofske, Chris Callicoat, Chris Gardiner, Chris Green, Chris Heath, Chris Lee, Chris W. Harvey, Christian Lacerte, Christian Mejstrik, Christian T, Christian Thier, Christian Widmer, Christoph Kaleschke, Christopher Anderson, Christopher Bjuland, Christopher C. Tomlinson, Christopher Cecil, Christopher Dubuque, Christopher Eric Eliasen, Christopher Harlan, Civ Light, Clement “Duncan” Jauvion, CobaltGray, Cody Swatek, Colin “Vindexus” Kierans, Colin Aspen, Colm Doyle, Conan McKegg, Cordolin, Corsic’Anar, Craig “Stevo” Stephenson, Craig Atkins, Craig Bishell, Craig Bunce, Craig Gaddis, Craig Lewin, Craig Millard, Dale Andrade, Damien Laing, Dan Moran, Dan Rogart, Dan Svensson, Daniel C. C., Daniel Enoch Tobin, Daniel Gregory, Daniel Johnson, Daniel Kraemer, Daniel Norton, Daniel, Max, and Mason, Dany Leclerc, Dao Deos Karim, Darren Burrows, Darren Kramble, Dave “Wintergreen” Harrison, Dave Semark, David “Hajar Almighnatis” Smucker, David A., David Brown, David Dierks, David E. Dalton, David Folsom, David Gallo, David Harrison, David Hixon, David Junghans, David Karoski, David Lai, David Lyons, David Paul Guzmán, David S. Robinson, David Sibley, David Wilkinson, Declan Lowry, Dee Hendrikx, Denis Crucifix, Dennis Matheson, Derek Carnell, Derek Dahmes, Derek Mayne, Dina Wilkens, Dirk Schlobinski, Dirtninja, Doc ”Tabib” Dandy, Doktor Oster, Dom Mooney, Doug Grimes, Douglas Jessup, Douglas Mawhinney, Douglas Mota, Douglas Shute, Duccio Tassini, Dustin Headen, Dylan Vincent Distasio, Ed Kowalczewski, Ed RandomOne Sagritalo, Edd Glasper, Edward MacGregor, Edward Saxton, EJ Kong, Elgin Adam Scott III, Elijah Edmunds, Elizabeth Jaye, Elmar Rutsch, Enrico “Irish” Magnani, Eric Coates, Eric McCommon, Eric Olson, Eric Smith, Erich McNaughton, Erick Christgau, Erik Harring, Erik Renberg, Ermes Cellot, Ethan Popowitz, Etienne Guerry, Eugenia Medina Sobrino, Evan Frayne, Evan W.J. Parson, Eversong, Fabrizio Vecoli, Farkas Tivadar, Fearchar Battlechaser, Federico Ackseth Tempesti, Felix Shafir, FeralGamersInc, Fernando De la Guardia, Filthy Monkey, Florian Zeiter, Fluffy Unicorn, Francesco Maria Grotti, François R, Frank “Cernusos” Nauerz, Frank C. Carr, Frank Van Camp, Fraser Simons, Frederik Vogel, Frits Kuijlman, G J Wilson, G.Grimalt, Gabriel I Garcia, Gabriel Ma, Gaiska Gómez, Gareth Clark, Gareth Hodges, Gary London, Gauthier Descamps, Gawayn, Gavin Warner, Ged Trias, Geoff Kottmeier, Geoffrey Laramee, George Cummings, George Shanahan, Gert-Jan van der Krogt, Gianna Masetti, Gil Cruz, Gilles Cherrier, Gina Ricker, Giulio Cesare Giorgini, Giuseppe “SerPe” Zeuli, Gordon Clayton, Graham Spearing, Greg Conant, Greg L Moss, Gregory H Connell, Grégory 'loulou' Baudoux, Griffin Brunk, Guido Kissenbeck, Gunnar Pétursson, Gunter Raffelsbauer, Gustav Lunner, Guy Zvi Alter, Haley and LJ Yerelian, Hanno Sternberg, Hans Kishel, Hans-Henning Wenkel, Harry C Bradley, Hauke von Bremen, Helder Lavigne, Hendrik Neumann, Henning Wollny, Henrique Cesar Jucá, Henry Oliver Castle, Herbatkie, Hjalti Nönnuson, Hroth’ger, Hugo A, Humano, Iain MacDonald, Ian D Ward, Ian Date, Ian Saxby, Ian Stewart, Ian Woodley, Ilkka Niemi, Ilmari, Ingo Beyer, Ingo Jakobs, Irfon-Kim Ahmad, Ivan Orsi, J J Garcia-Rosa, J.T. Dimino, Jacanen, Jack Cregan Kelly, Jack Holcomb, Jack Norris, Jacob berg, Jacques DuRand, Jaime T. Matthew, Jake Miracle, James Diffin, James Dillane, James Dyer, James E Goodrich, James Gavin, Jamie, Jamie Wheeler, Jan, Jan Arkebauer, Jan Niklas Dernbach, Jan Severin, Janherbergh, Jarl U. C. Persson, Jarle Waage, Jarno Harmaala, Jarno Yliluoma, Jarrod Varty, Jase Duncum, Jason Dickerson, Jason Durall, Jason Italiano, Jason “Jaynay” Hewett, Jason Jordaan, Jason March, Jason Miller, Jason Neff, Jason Turner, Javier “Intkhiladi” Escajedo, Javier González de Bodas, Javier Soto, Jay Peters, Jay Watson, JB Joyner, Jean-Baptiste Perrin, Jean-Christophe Rannou, Jean-Francois Juneau, Jeannette Speicher, Jedediah Callen, Jeff Mindlin, Jeff Steinburgh, Jeffrey Scott Hessell, Jens Thorup Rasmussen, Jeremy Burford, Jeremy Hendrix, Jeremy Mettler, Jerry Buhle, Jerry Weiler, Jesper Cockx, Jesper Danielsen, Jesper Svensson, Jesse james, Jim Davies, Jim Meerbergen, Joachim A. Hagen, Joachim Schulz, Joan Lonsan, João Mariano, Joe Andrews, Joe Hill, Joe Johnson, Joe McLean, Joe 'Union Jackal' Hill, Joerg Mosthaf, Johan Andersson, Johanne Skjerven, Johannes Monkenbusch, Johannes Petersen, John “Millionwordman” Dodd, John Ball, John Bogart, John Bruins, John F. Zmrotchek, John “johnkzin” Rudd, John M. Kahane, John Truong, JohnnyVoodoo, “Jolly” JC Locke, Jon Allen, Jon Dailey, Jon Geraghty, Jon Meerdink, Jonas Falsen, Jonas Halverscheid, Jonathan Breese, Jonathan Carl Robb, Jonathan Fish, Jonathan Sharp, Jonathan Veilleux, Jordan King, Jordan Sanderson, Jordi Aldeguer, Jorge Carrero, Joris Van der Vorst, Jort Feenstra, Jose A Garcia Guzman, Jose Palma Gil, José Sku García, Josema "Yrdin" Romeo, Joseph Begay, Joseph Pacelli, Joseph Wells, Josh Rasey, Joshua Nall, JOY-TO-ALL!, Juan Luis Loi, Juan Manuel González, Julian Chan, Julien Corroyer, Julien D, Jupe Rantalainen, Justin Eyre, Kaeam, Kako, Kaleb Barker, Kane Cathain, Karl A. Rodriguez, Karl A. Stevens, Karl Bond, Karsten Klier, Keith Hooper, Kelvin Saggers, Ken Foster, Ken Robinson, Ken Trench, Kevin Grubb, Kim Houtmeyers, Klaus & Katharina Schrempf, Klaus Neuwirth, Knut Hamscher, kolarius, Kozki, Kriggo, Kristian A. Bjørkelo, Kristian Axelsund, Krofinn, Krzysztof Bender, Kyle Simons, Kyle Thompson, Landon Barnickle, Larry Bernloehr, Lars Backstrom, Lee Moneta-Koehler, Liam Murray, Liam Stevens, Lin Wyeth, Lloyd Rasmussen, Londemonium, Luc Brassé, Luc Phaneuf, Luc Teunen, Lucas Skrdlant, Ludo Bermejo, Lukasz Koczocik, Luke Perrin, Luke Stackpole, Luke Walker, Luke&Marty Babbi, Mac Dara Mac Donnacha, Magdelenat Philippe, Magnus Fredlundh, Manoël <Godzil> Trapier, Manuel J. Deutsch, Marc Bevan, Marc Laliberté, Marc Pantel, Marcel Basmer, Marcel Jordan Gaßen, Marcin Michalak, Marie-Pier Bisson, Mario Lapointe, Mario Milioti, Mariusz Kutek, Mark Buckley, Mark D. Taylor, Mark Giles, Mark Harding, Mark S, Mark Thompson, Marko Soikkeli, Markus Hicks, Markus Wagner, Martin Ashton, Martin Burnham, Martin Campbell, Martin Glöckner, Martin Jäger, Martin Monrad, Martin Walter, Marvin Langenberg, Mary McMurtrey, Masaki Yamazaki, Masruth El-Markut, Mateen Greenway, Mathias Betge, Mathieu Brunet, Mathieu Lapierre, Mats Persson, Matt "9littlebees" Kay, Matt Drake, Matt Wallace, Matteo “Screetch” Tirelli, Matthew Jorgenson, Matthew Mifsud, Matthew Truesdale, Matthew Tyler-Jones, Matthew Wasiak, Matthias Weeks, Matthieu Rider, Maurice Strubel, Maurizio Locusti, Maximilian Georg, Maximilien Leclercq, Maya Mary Kennon, Mayke Schueng, Mehmet Gökhan Gülel, Merazaander, Michael & Sandy Schumann, Michael Baker, Michael Bedggood, Michael Bowman, Michael Deery, Michael Ermisch, Michael Gerstbrein, Michael Grasegger, Michael Hull, Michaël Jourdant, Michael L Anderson, Michael Parker, Michael Parker, Michael Ryan, Michael Weiss, Michal Soltysiak, Mikael Dahl, Mikael Nilsson, Mike McMullan, Mike Thorn, Mikor!, Milan Janosik, Morgan Weeks, Morten Greis Fakkelskov, Moxou, Mr. Jeffrey Speer, Mumphry999, N.F.Y.Herres, Natalie Wrathall, Nathan Enns-Kavanagh, Nathan Raj, Nathaniel, Nathaniel Mitchell, Neil Mason, Nevym, Nia Jones, Nichol Murray, Nicholas Allen, Nicholas Guidotti, Nicholas J. Ashford, Nicholas Rasmussen-Cairns, Nick Jackson, Nick lamirand, Nick Simpson, Nick Stewart, Nick Stinchcombe, Nico Nußbaum, Nicolas Heitz, Nina Gronewold, Nullpunkt, OgamiTringle, Ole Aleksander Wallberg, Ole Morten Eriksen, Oliver Kasteleiner, Oliver Sieger, Oscar Haglund, Pablo “Hersho” Dominguez, Pablo Saldaña, Paladin von Korff, Pangur Bán, Patrick & Sarah Pilgrim, Patrick Foster, Patrick Healey, Patrick Kiefer, Patrick Ogenstad, Patrick Wallen, Patryk Adamski “Ruemere”, Paul & Luke Hobaica, Paul B.

Currie, Paul Fisher Davies, Paul Goldenstein, Paul Granich, Paul K, Paul Lukianchuk, Paul Rivers, Paul Thompson, Paul Ward, Paul Watson, Paul Webster, Paul Venner, Paul Woodward, Paulo Roberto "Oculto" Alves de Oliveira Jr, Pawel Seczkowski, Pedro Alfaro, Pedro Oliveira Obliziner, Peter Bogdasarian, Peter Engebos, Peter Peretti, Petri Wessman, Petros Katsikadakos, Peyman Torabi, Philip Eisner, Philip Hindley, Philipp Pirnbaum, Pierrick Boyer, Piotr "Wierzba" Kraciuk, Polla con Alas, Polykrates, Pontus Johansson, Prometheus, Quail & Sun, R. Dylan Stewart, Rafa Cerrato, Ralph Mazza, Ramin Taheri Elias, Randy P. Belanger, Raphaël Lallement, Raphael Reitzig, Raphael Sudrot, Ravi Aerel Grossi, Ray Buhr, Rebecca H., Reece Colton-Lee Riggs, Reg Stuart, Relen Gedion, Remi Fayomi a.k.a. Negromaestro, Revari, Rhonin, Ricardo Fuente, Rich Bailey, Rich Palij, Rich Winslow, Richard, Richard deMorris, Richard Edward Trub, Jr., Richard Ferris, Richard Huffman, Richard Hunt, Richard Marshall, Richard Mundy, Richard W. Sorden, Richard "Vidiian" Greene, Rick Crabtree, Rikard Stranne, Riley Bushma, Rob "Snydley" Klug, Rob Butler, Rob McKavanagh, Rob Nadeau, Robel Dam, Robert Calpo, Robert Esch, Robert Koch, Robert M. Taylor, Robert Pfaff, Roberto Hoyle, Robin "Shids" Langholm, Rocky Wilson, Rolf Böhm, Ron Crawford, Ron Rhyno, Ronald van Beneden, Royden Clark, Rune Astrup Lien, Rune Ødegaard, Russ Cox, RVH, Ryan "AP" Forbes, Ryan deGroot, Ryan Drury, S.R.Davey, Salwa Azar, Salvador Gimeno, Sam Benke, Samuel Topping, Scot Gowers, Scott Ephriam Vigil, Sean Anderson, Sean Bell, Seana McGuinness, Sebastian D., Sebastian Dietz, Sebastian Kehrle, Sebastian Reichert, Sebastien Hauguel, Sébastien Yorgand, Selina Haritz, Semen "Galod" Nosnitsyn, Serge, Seth Tupper, Shane B. Bauer, Shane Mclean, Shane Robillard, Shane Jackson, Shannon Maclean, Shaun D. Burton, Shen Hung-Yang, Signius, Simon Brunning, Simon Chadwick, Simon Morgan, Simon Stroud, Skanah, Sneaksyboy, Sonata, SSGHoffa, Stacie Winters, Steelwraith, Stefan "The Moth" Ristic, Stefan Matthias Aust, Stefan Wertheimer, Stephen Bond, Stephen Smith, Steve "Nobusama" Sibilia, Steve Bartell, Steve Beer, Steve Blodgett, Steve Howells, Steve Knittel, Steve Thompson, Steven Fisk, Steven Vocke, Stolby, Stuart McIntosh, Stuart Sharp, Sunkgida, Sven Breiter, Sven Liepertz, Sverre B. Midthjell, Sylvia Kleemann, Tarkil, Tempus Fidget, TGabor, Thalji, The Nibelung, TheAvianLord, Thomas "Kyorou" Vanstraelen, Thomas Delplace, Thomas Hume, Thomas Mattner, Thomas Maund, Thomas Walmsley, Thomas Verschueren, Thorsten "Thor" Schramm, Tiago Panaro de Oliveira, Tim Charzinski, Tim Ellis, Tim Mckee, Tim Rudloff, Tim Rudolph, Tim Struck, Timothy Mushel, Tobias Dworschak, Tobias Niemitz, Todd Banister, Tom "the Monster" Hoefle, Tomas Thales Pribyl, Tomasz "noInejm" Rutkowski, Tomasz "Sting" Chmielik, Tomi "myrpg" Suuronen, Tommaso Gollini, Tommy Heinig, Tommy Tramantano, Tony Alvarsson, Tony Boland, Tor Karlsson, Torsten Maibohm, Torsten Rahm, Toschy, Travis Bryant, Travis Pina, Trent Peterson, Trevor Gere, Trevor Olson, Tristan Marshall, Tubal Lara, Turan, Tyler Warburton, Ulf Henriksson, Ulrich Drees, Umberto Octo, Unai Mujika, unMadeGaming, W Ryan Carden, Wade Gregory Tripp, Vasily Demin, Wawoozle, Weltengeist, Vendevogel Alain, Werner H. Hartmann, Veronika Sophie Temml, Veronikis Spyros, Wes Baker, Wheler Antoine Derycke, Vicente Cartas Espinel, Victor <Freaktor> Perez, Viktor Lindqvist, Vilis Pavulans, William Cuthbertson, William T. Carmichael, William Walters, Vincent Henrotte, Vincent Lecoanet, Vincent Pellerin, Volodymyr Yatsenko, Wouter Palsterman, Xose Oscar Lopez Rascado, Yasue Bin Lurns, Yuri "Abgemacht" Lukach

STARTER PACK

A. G. Leong, Aaron Mulder, Adam Moran, Alex Goodman, Andreas Monitzer, Arnaldo Lefebre Piñeiro, Aurora & Liam Bussell, Bealze Tsarock, Ben Gable, Ben Hansen, Ben Lewis-Evans, Benjamin smith, Billy Cosman, Blair Giles, Breaze, Brendon "Plarzoid" Caulkins, Brian A Jacobs, Brian Bremer, Brian Manula, Callum Anderson, Captain Adam "Shadowfox" Tullett, Carl Lott, Carles Fornes, Casey Rothbauer, Chris C, Chris Chambers, Christian Torstensson, Christopher Hefferin, Colja, Conor Pender, Dan Dineen, Dan "Solo" Hope, Daniel Holbrook, Dave B, David Bauer, David Esbrí, Delarue - Lassuyt, Dinky Marie Obermeyer, Dominic, Dreamdealer & Eliane, Drew Fox, Dwayne Marlowe, Dylan Stup, Eliza Ashbrand, Erich Lichnock, Erik-Jens Burlefinger, Ernie Sawyer, Evan Hawker, FlamNight, Frank Zorde Nielsen, Gangrelcat, Geist, Georg Hofmann, Håkan Berglund, Ian A. Richmond, Ivan Jalencas, J Hunnings, J. Boone Dryden, Jack Simutis, Jacques Patin, Jameson Cunningham, Jason Clor, Jason Scott, Jeff Sinclair and Beebee, Jesse "UndeadDomain" Aponte, Jesse Fowler, Jin Sane, Joan-Albert "Aelwe" Fontàs, John C. Lemay, John Doyle, Johnathan Molok Visani, Jonas Lundgren, Jordan Shiveley, Jorg Rødsjø, Jørgen Søreide, Ken Boone, Kevin Kenan, Kevin Lemke, Kevin Shillling, Kevin Wine, Klaus Ole Kristiansen, Kyle Ayres, Leonardo Pucino, Luke Spry, M3rauer, Mark Calsita, Mark Lewis, Martin Schramm, Matt "Catapult" Wang, Matt Jowett, Matthew Taylor, mcfadds1, Michael "Bee" Berthiaume, Michael Douglas, Michael G. Palmer, Mike Westley, Muttonchips, Nick Herrmann, Nicolas Martin, Nicolas Taylor, Nicolò Zamperlin, Ownagepants, Pablo Hernández, Patrick S, Paul Matthias, Philipp Croon, Phillip Adams, Rasmus Nicolaj West, Rasmus Nord Jørgensen, RexCelestis, Rick Henry, Samuel Larsén, Sarah Doombringer, Scott C Giesbrecht, Sean Miller, Sean Werner, Sombracier, Steffen W., Stephanie McAlea, Stoo, Taneli Taira, Terry L Pike, Thomas Franz, Tim Lewis, Tim Pinington, Tim Van Acolyen, Tony William Seay II, Typhrous, Udo Böhm-Dores, WP, Yuna Ulc, Zach Pettichord, ZahanMara

MARTYR

Achim Seeburger, Adam & Loqie Krump, AikiGhost, akaAelius, Andrea Sala, Andreas Måneskiöld, Anthony Whitley, Bruce Turner, Bryan Korn, C. Kettering, Cameron S. McFarland, Carl James Black, Chris Spiller, Christopher Gunning, Cole Doggett, Dan Derby, Darek Masiejczyk, Darien Liddell, David Della Bitta, David South, David Waldron, Derek Guder, Devin Croak, Donovan Hurter, Eric Bonnet, Espen Kulseth, FooBot, Frederic Menage, Gareth Clifford, Gaspard Levavasseur, Greg Curley, Henry Vogel, Jack Gulick, Jack Krause, Jacob E. Alexandrowiz, James Marcucci, Jamie Swaffer, Jason "Ludanto" Smith, Jens Andreasson, John A W Phillips, John Lucania, John M. Portley, John Marron, John Souders, Jon Boylan, Jonathan Hyde, Jonathon Dyer, Joshua Ayakatubby, Joshua Gilley, JPD, Juan Fernández, Laser Needs, Mark Fielding, Martin Greening, Mathieu Ikit Robitaille, Matthew Hayward, Michael "Anonymous Rhinoceros" Brown, Michael Hjerppe, Miguel Rivera, Mike "Woodchuck" Williams, Nicholas Zakhar, Oliver Morris, Osian (Ozy) ap Glyn, Patrick Knowles & Tyler Lominack, Phil Bales, Phil McGregor, Philippe Marcil, Randy Hightower, Reuven Gritters, Rich Kummer, Richard August, Richard Francis, Richard Tighe, Rod Meek, Ryan, S.R.Martin, Sára Zoltán, Seth Hartley, Shakes-Fist-At-Sky, Simone Matzanke, Stéphane Paquay, Stephen Bourne, Steven "AE" Bakker, Tanderossa Bob, Ruler of Riches, The Rangdo of Arg, Tim Fowler, Tobias Wolter, Toby Williamson, Troy Ellis, Victoria Chudinov, Zachary Knippel, Zanatoss, Ziggy Ramone