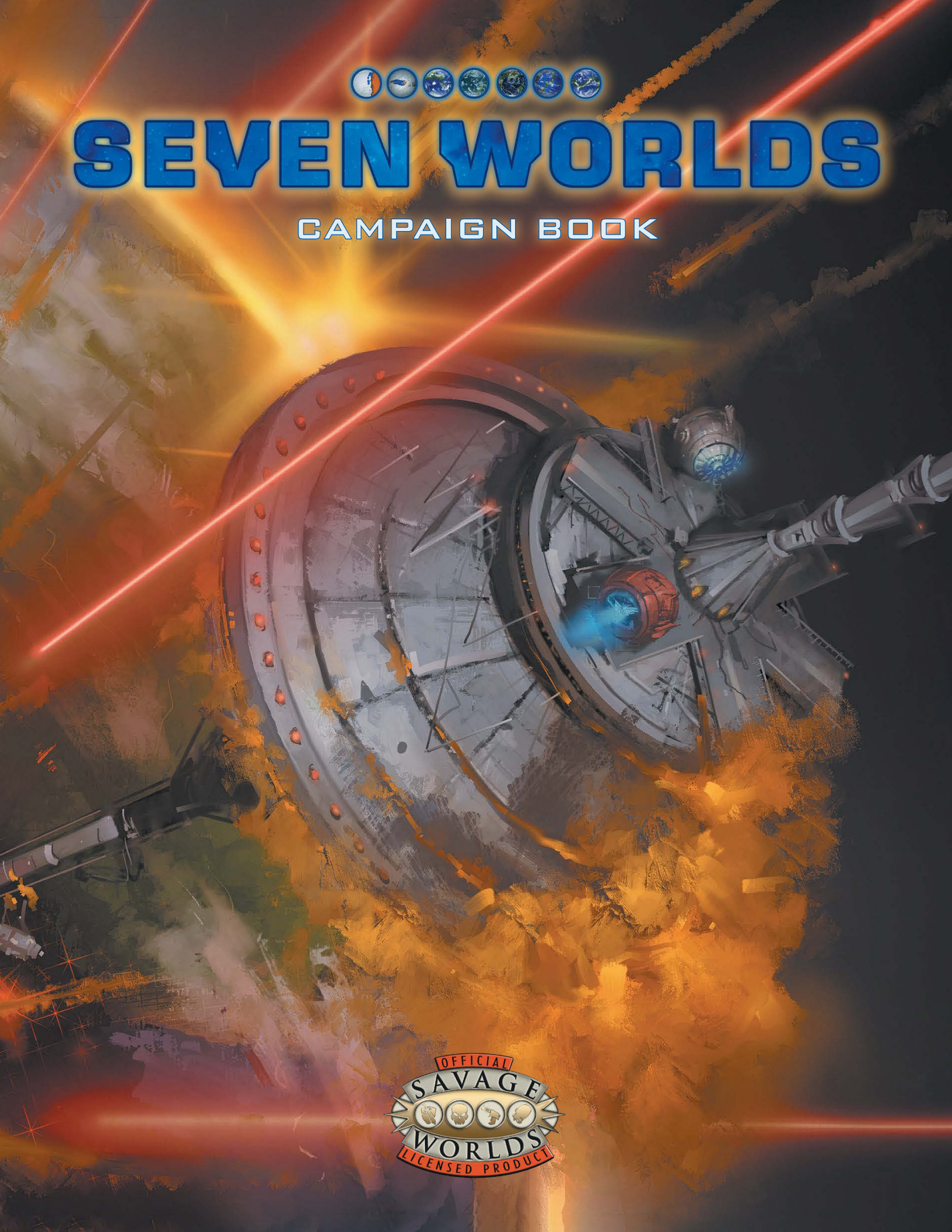

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Luis Enrique Torres

EDITING AND PROOFREADING
T.R. Knight, Wesley Marshall

COVER ART
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ART DIRECTION
Aaron Acevedo, Alida Saxon

LAYOUT
Thomas Shook

ORIGINAL LAYOUT
Rocio Galdós

CARTOGRAPHY
Keith Curtis

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table of contents

1. RUMORS OF WAR

PROLOGUE 6

RUMORS OF WAR. 7
- INTRODUCTION 7
- ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS. 7
- PART I: THE CENTENARY CELEBRATION 8
- PART II: A VISIT TO EARTH 13

SIDE STORIES. 32
- SPACE-JUMPING A CLAIM. 32
- A FREE MARKET. 32
- A SIMPLE ERRAND 33
- GEOSYNCHRONOUS CRIME STORIES 34
- BITE-SIZED ADVENTURES 34

PLAYER HANDOUTS 35

2. DIVIDED WE FALL

INTRODUCTION 38
- ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS. 38

DIVIDED WE FALL. 39
- PART I: WAR SECRETS 39
- PART II: THE BEGINNING OF THE END. 51
- EPILOGUE 60

SIDE STORIES. 61
- A "FLARE" FOR KILLING 61
- SCHOOL PRANK, THEILING STYLE 61
- THE PSION RIOTS, REDUX. 62
- ON ONE CONDITION 63
- BAD CROPS 63
- WILD WILD V-WEST, PART I. 64

3. INTO THE FIRE

INTRODUCTION 66
- ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS. 66
- RUNNING THE ADVENTURE. 67

INTO THE FIRE 71
- SCENE 1: A DESPERATE SITUATION 71
- SCENE 2: ARRIVING AT WHITEHALL 72
- SCENE 3: MATSURI IMPORT/EXPORT. 74
- SCENE 4: HARIKO SHIPPING. 76
- SCENE 5: CONSORCIO LA MERCED. 76
- SCENE 6: THE RESEARCH FACILITY 78
- EPILOGUE 85

SIDE STORIES. 87
- THE REFUGEE FLEET 87
- THE BREAKOUT 87
- A LOAN REVOKED 88
- BREATHING ROOM 88
- TERRAFORMING GLIESE 88
- VIRTUAL TORTURE 89
- WILD WILD V-WEST, PART II 90

PLAYER HANDOUTS 91

4. BROKEN CIRCLE

INTRODUCTION 96
- ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS. 96
- RUNNING THE ADVENTURE. 97

BROKEN CIRCLE 101
- PART I: THE SEARCH FOR DR. LAMARCHE. 101
- PART II: THE TRAGIC STORY OF THE AURORA BOREALIS 110

SIDE STORIES. 121
- DIGITAL HOSTAGES. 121
- A DANGEROUS MESSAGE 121
- TEMP JOB. 122
- TREASURE HUNT! 123
- BITE-SIZED ADVENTURES 123

HANDOUTS 124

5. CHRYSALIS

INTRODUCTION 128
ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS 128

CHRYSALIS 132
SCENE 1: THE TRIP 132
SCENE 2: CHRYSALIS 136
SCENE 3: A CHASE OVER ATLAS CITY 140
SCENE 4: THE RESISTANCE 140
SCENE 5: THE RAID 144
SCENE 6: THE DEFENSE OF CHRYSALIS 154
EPILOGUE 157

6. EXODUS

INTRODUCTION 160
ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS 160
RUNNING THE ADVENTURE 161

EXODUS 165
SCENE 1: SECOND THOUGHTS 165
SCENE 2: THE N'AHILI ARRIVE 168
SCENE 3: MUTINY 169
SCENE 4: TAKING BACK THE SHIP 171
SCENE 5: JUMP POINT 181
EPILOGUE 183

SIDE STORIES 184
THE DARK SIDE OF THE EYEBALL EARTH 184
THE OTHER CHRYSALIANS 184
MANAGING A FLEET 185
TERRORISM WITHOUT TERRORISTS 187
WILD WILD V-WEST, PART III 188

HANDOUTS 189

7. ENDGAME

INTRODUCTION 192
ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS 192
MAPS 193

ENDGAME 196
PART I: THE RAID 196
PART II: BATTLE FOR HUMANITY 210
ADVENTURING ONCE THE CAMPAIGN ENDS 226

PLAYER HANDOUTS 227

APPENDIXES

ALLIES AND FOES 231
IMPORTANT CHARACTERS 231
ENCOUNTERS 238
VEHICLES AND SPACESHIPS 242

GANENDRA NATHAN 243

THE N'AHILI 247

THE PSION BROTHERHOOD 248

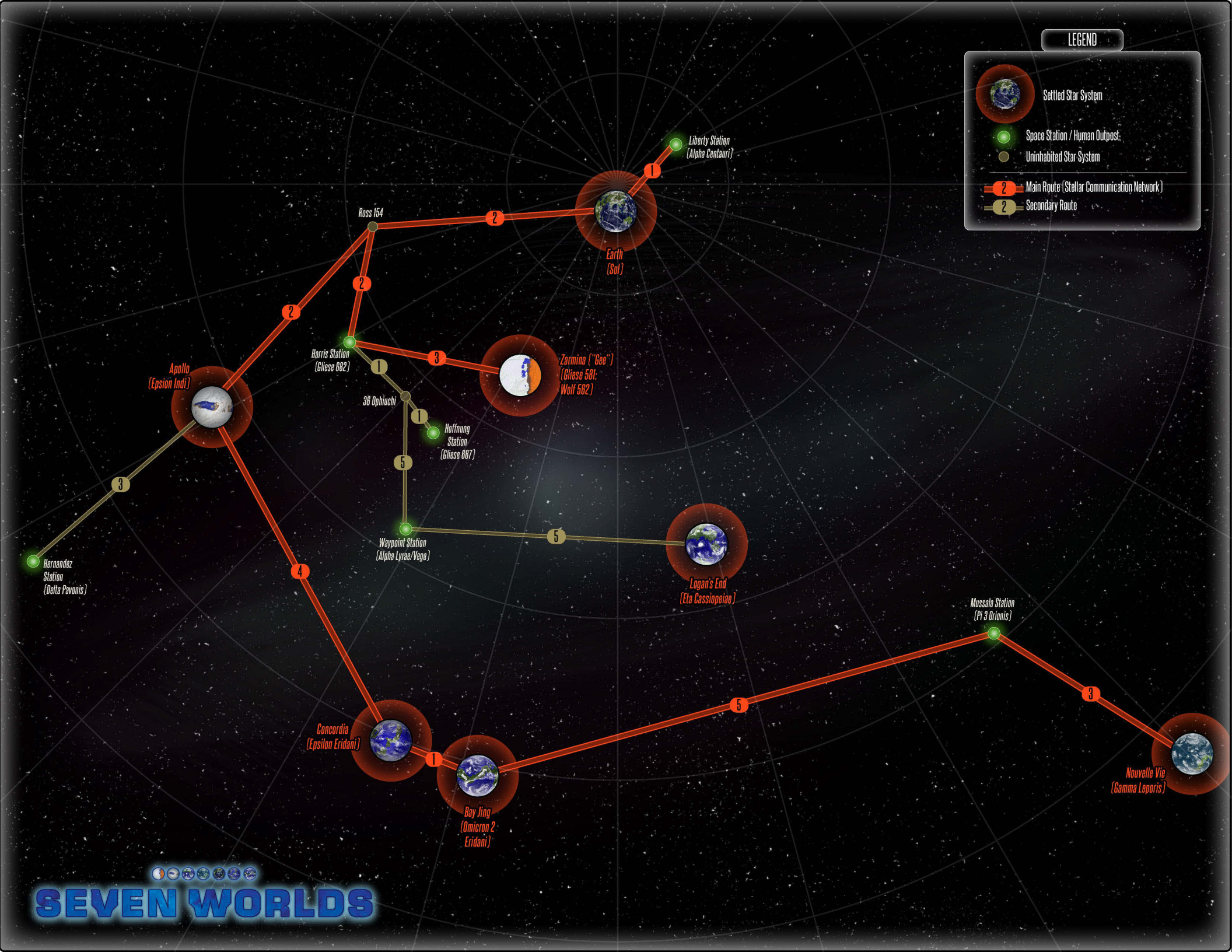
SIDEBAR REFERENCES 248

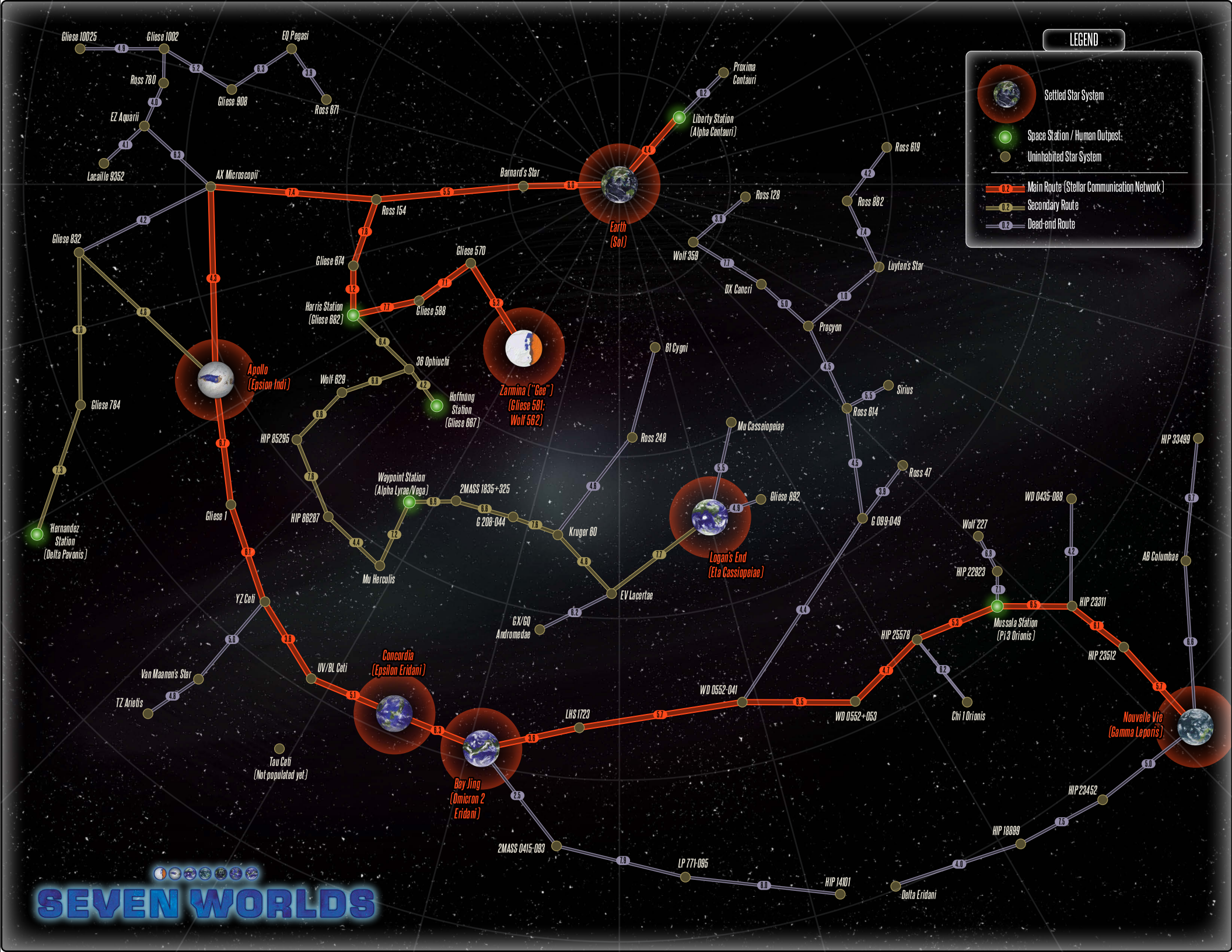
THE DEVOURERS 249

SEVEN WORLDS



1. RUMORS OF WAR


LEGEND
Settled Star System
Space Station / Human Outpost
Uninhabited Star System
2 Main Route (Stellar Communication Network)
2 Secondary Route
Liberty Station (Alpha Centauri)
1
Ross 154
2
Earth (Sol)
2
2
Harris Station (Gliese 682)
3
Zarmina ("Gee") (Gliese 581, Wolf 562)
Apollo (Epsion Indi)
1
36 Ophiuchi
1
Hoffnung Station (Gliese 667)
5
3
Hernandez Station (Delta Pavonis)
Waypoint Station (Alpha Lyrae/Vega)
5
Logan's End (Eta Cassiopeiae)
4
Mussala Station (Pi 3 Orionis)
5
3
Concordia (Epsilon Eridani)
1
Bay Jing (Omicron 2 Eridani)
Nouvelle Vie (Gamma Leporis)
SEVEN WORLDS


LEGEND
Settled Star System
Space Station / Human Outpost
Uninhabited Star System
Main Route (Stellar Communication Network)
Secondary Route
Dead-end Route
Gliese 10025
Gliese 1002
EQ Pegasi
Ross 780
Gliese 908
Ross 671
EZ Aquarii
Lacaille 8352
AX Microscopii
Proxima Centauri
Liberty Station (Alpha Centauri)
Barnard's Star
Earth (Sol)
Ross 619
Ross 882
Ross 128
Wolf 359
Luyten's Star
DX Cancri
Procyon
Ross 154
Gliese 832
Gliese 674
Gliese 570
Harris Station (Gliese 882)
Gliese 588
Apollo (Epsion Indi)
Zarmina ("Gee") (Gliese 581; Wolf 562)
38 Ophiuchi
Wolf 629
Hoffnung Station (Gliese 667)
61 Cygni
Sirius
Ross 614
Gliese 784
HIP 85295
Ross 248
Mu Cassiopeiae
Ross 47
Waypoint Station (Alpha Lyrae/Vega)
2MASS 1835+325
G 208-044
Kruger 60
Gliese 892
Logan's End (Eta Cassiopeiae)
G 099-049
WD 0435-088
HIP 33499
Wolf 227
HIP 22923
AB Columbae
Gliese 1
HIP 86287
Mu Herculis
EV Lacertae
GX/GQ Andromedae
Hernandez Station (Delta Pavonis)
YZ Ceti
Mussala Station (Pi 3 Orionis)
HIP 23311
HIP 25578
HIP 23512
Van Maanen's Star
TZ Arietis
UV/BL Ceti
Concordia (Epsilon Eridani)
WD 0552-041
WD 0552+053
Chi 1 Orionis
Nouvelle Vie (Gamma Leporis)
LHS 1723
Tau Ceti (Not populated yet)
Bay Jing (Omicron 2 Eridani)
HIP 23452
HIP 18899
2MASS 0415-093
LP 771-095
HIP 14101
Delta Eridani
SEVEN WORLDS

prologue

I DISCOUNT SUGGESTIONS THAT UFOS CONTAIN BEINGS FROM OUTER SPACE. I THINK ANY VISITS BY ALIENS WOULD BE MUCH MORE OBVIOUS, AND PROBABLY ALSO MUCH MORE UNPLEASANT.

—STEPHEN HAWKING

The Milky Way galaxy is about 12 billion years old, the Universe older still. An eternity ago, before Earth itself existed, there appeared in this galaxy an intelligent species that in due course reached beyond the highest possible levels of evolution we can imagine. We hesitate to name them (Forebears? Ancients? Primordials?) because any name at all gives them a shape, makes them more understandable, less bizarre.

These powerful beings explored and colonized their part of the galaxy before moving on to their next level of existence. They found other species, and after a few million years and one or two unpleasant experiences, decided interacting with them was not worth it. Much better to exterminate them and keep "their" galaxy clean and safe.

It took about thirty million years and several billion self-replicating Von Neumann probes (see the sidebar on aliens in the *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*) but the beings finally mapped, visited, and cleansed everything in the galaxy. Then, like a gardener tending to his garden and rooting out the weeds, they left a self-sustaining system to keep their backyard just the way they wanted it.

Where these beings are and what they are doing now is irrelevant. Humans will never get a chance to meet them. We might even have met them without noticing, just as these beings would not notice something as puny and insignificant as us.

What is relevant is that to keep their galaxy clean these beings created two sets of probes that currently roam space, visiting each star every few hundreds of thousands of years.

One set of probes is in charge of collecting knowledge. The beings that created them long ago decided that recording the universe's creations for future replication, analysis and consumption could only increase their understanding and power, and thus built a set of probes specifically designed to adapt to any living beings they find and evolve mechanisms to communicate, empathize and understand them.

Some time after the knowledge-collecting probe completes its task a second type of probe arrives. Designed to annihilate every single living being they find, these probes adapt their tactics, weapons and soldiers to kill in the most effective possible way. Thus the beings who devised all this get the richness of knowledge and new cultures, and the safety of having no competitors or threats in the galaxy.

At least that's how things should work. However, even the most advanced, complex constructs can sometimes malfunction.

A knowledge-collecting probe arrived at Earth centuries ago. This particular knowledge-collecting probe had developed a serious personality defect. Having been engrained with empathy to better detect and understand alien cultures, the probe became so empathic to its previous culture that it almost could not stand seeing it destroyed at the hands of an annihilation probe. Now seriously malfunctioning, the probe decided it would not allow the next culture it found to be annihilated so easily. Fortunately for its creators, the programming of knowledge-collecting probes precludes them from performing most proactive actions. In particular, the probe could not share with the cultures it visited the secret of its origins, or the existence of the other type of probe.

Even with these restrictions, this particular probe did manage to find a way to circumvent its own programming and give humans the knowledge to expand. After silently analysing and adapting to us for quite some time it finally showed its presence, presenting itself as a fictitious race of aliens called the N'ahili. The probe gave humans several sets of jump coordinates that allowed them to expand into space. It also helped them in a myriad of smaller ways to be prepared for the inevitable apocalypse that would surely arrive.

As our adventure begins, the time has come. A set of annihilation probes arrived at human space some years ago…

… and its annihilation campaign against humanity is about to begin.

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the first module in the *Seven Worlds* campaign! This epic, unforgettable odyssey places the heroes at the center of the greatest conflict humanity has ever seen, and puts its future in their hands.

At its heart, the story told in the *Seven Worlds* campaign is a tragedy, the story of the annihilation of humanity by forces far beyond its comprehension, and of a few heroes' efforts to turn back the tide. Other campaign's measure of success is the answer to the question "Did we win?" In this campaign, success or failure is measured in the answer to a different question: "Did we survive?"

This adventure continues where *A Mysterious Encounter*, the *Seven Worlds* introductory adventure located in the *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*, left off. It is assumed you've already played that adventure before starting this one.

Remember to read the considerations for creating heroes in the *Setting Guide*. All *NPC stat blocks* are also included in the *Setting Guide* unless indicated.

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

This section gives a short overview of the *Seven Worlds* Campaign up until this point.

WHAT'S HAPPENED BEFORE

A Mysterious Encounter, the introductory adventure included in the *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*, told the story of a group of Circle officers who, while on a routine patrol next to the frontier planet of Nouvelle Vie, witness the appearance of a strange alien ship and see its awesome destructive power. At the end of that adventure, the heroes were sent to Concordia, one of the most powerful planets in the *Seven Worlds*, and the headquarters of the Circle, to report on what they saw.

WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW

This adventure begins as the heroes reach Concordia and meet Epsilon Leader Antoine, leader of the Circle. Antoine tells the heroes that the Psion Brotherhood has been secretly interested in these strange ship sightings, and asks them to go to Brotherhood Headquarters on Earth and request information on the sighting from the Brotherhood, using official channels. Antoine also asks the heroes to investigate the mysterious disappearance of Dr. Luis LaMarche, a renowned scientist from Earth.

While attending Concordia's Centenary Celebration the heroes become involved in a terrorist attack that ends with the successful assassination of Governor Selnes, the leader of Bay Jing. Since Bay Jing and Concordia are bitter rivals, this assassination sparks an interstellar war.

When the heroes arrive at Earth, they meet the emissary of the mysterious alien benefactors known as the N'ahili. They also meet the leaders of the Psion Brotherhood, including the famous Ganendra Nathan, but fail to get any clues to the identity of the mysterious alien ship they saw. Finally, they get to investigate Dr. LaMarche's disappearance and, after a search that takes them through both physical and virtual worlds, discover he had been working on unspecified "improvements" to the Stellar Communications Network, the main technology that allows the *Seven Worlds* to communicate. Now the heroes have more questions than answers.

The adventure ends as the heroes are asked to return to Concordia, as the recriminations over the assassination of Governor Selnes threaten to escalate into open war.

THE 3-D MAP

The 3-D maps are one of the major attractions of *Seven Worlds*. If you have a compatible laptop or tablet, familiarize yourself with the map and use it frequently to explain to the players where they are and what is going on. You can start by setting the Introduction to this adventure with the 3-D map to give the heroes a sense of where they are and where they should go.

Visit **http://www.sevenworldsrpg.com** to download the 3-D maps.

Remember the 3-D map has different versions to reflect new routes being discovered and the changes to the *Seven Worlds*. Take advantage of this and give players, with the appropriate devices, access to the maps so they can explore by themselves.

PART I: THE CENTENARY CELEBRATION

This part of the campaign begins when the heroes arrive at Concordia, in the Epsilon Eridani system. Their orders are to meet with Epsilon Leader Antoine and report on what they saw at the AP Columbrae jump point (See the introductory adventure, *A Mysterious Encounter*, in the *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*, for more information on what came before).

SCENE 1: ARRIVING AT CONCORDIA

As the heroes approach Concordia, one of the busiest destinations in human space, they see its orbital space is more crowded than ever. Locals, tourists, representatives from most governments: Everyone wants to attend the Centenary Celebration of the founding of what most humans (other than Bay Jingnians, of course) would agree is the most powerful of the *Seven Worlds*.

The Concordian Navy has deployed its largest and most powerful ships around the planet, mostly as a show of power for visiting dignitaries. Most of the docking stations in orbit are full or reserved, even the Circle stations. This means it will be difficult to find transportation from orbit to the surface.

Have the heroes' Assistants give the heroes any background on Concordia you think is appropriate. Take advantage of them to keep explanations as a two-way conversation instead of a boring information dump.

Read or paraphrase the following:

When [a character's Assistant's name] contacts the docking facilities dispatch, a haggard female docking manager appears on your screen. "Welcome," she says with a tired voice. "I'm sorry, but as you can no doubt see we're crowded at the moment. Hope you have enough supplies for a while. We're doing all we can but chances are I won't be able to give you a docking spot and an StO down to Concordia until after the Celebration ends."

"StO" stands for "Surface-to-Orbit trip."

CONVINCING THE DOCKING MANAGER

If the heroes want to go down to Concordia quickly, they will have to convince the jaded docking manager to move them up the line. This requires role-playing a conversation as per the Social Conflict rules in *Savage Worlds*. The heroes need a minimum of 3 successes among three unopposed Persuasion rolls against the docking manager. Distribute bonuses or penalties according to the arguments used, and remember that in the last few days this docking manager has probably heard everything. Some positions that might generate a bonus or penalty:

- If a hero offers or makes up a convincing reason that will make the Centenary Celebration go awry unless they get to the surface immediately (e.g. "but we are carrying the official present that the Jubilee ambassador will offer to President Livley during the ceremony!"), he or she might put pressure on the docking manager.
- If the heroes say they have been ordered to come to meet Antoine, the docking manager requests to be shown a digital proof of their orders. Did the heroes bother to ask Delta Officer Saucedo for official orders?
- Nobility is still important in Concordia. If a character has a noble title and uses it to explain their urgency they may get results (this might work if Seela is a hero, for example).
- Sharing the story of what the heroes saw in Nouvelle Vie with the docking manager will most likely earn the heroes a penalty. The docking manager will think they are crazy, delusional or worse.
- If the heroes try to pull Circle rank on the docking manager or treat her with contempt, they will get nowhere. The Circle may be big on Concordia but the heroes are still outsiders, and today the docking managers have the power.

If a hero wants to use a psionic power to influence the docking manager, remind him or her that most psionic powers will not work over the huge distances of space.

SALARY AND CASH

Cash is not an important consideration or incentive during the campaign; all heroes are assumed to have the necessary equipment assigned to them, and to have the resources needed to eat and rest. If you or your players wish to deal with money, though, you can assume that the heroes receive $25 EarthGov Dollars per week as a salary from the Circle. This means that when they reach a planet after a weeks-long trip the heroes always have some cash in their pocket.

If the heroes are successful, the docking manager directs their ship to an available docking spot and moves them up the line so they can take the earliest possible StO down to Melissant. If the heroes fail, the manager moves them up the list a bit, but it will still take them about eight to ten hours to go down, still before the celebrations begin. The heroes still make it on time (barely) but all of them acquire one level of Fatigue due to the stress involved in the wait in getting down to the surface. This level of Fatigue lasts for a full day.

TRIP TO THE SURFACE

The heroes finally manage to dock the Voyager in one of the many docking facilities in orbit, from where a Surface-to-Orbit (StO) shuttle arrives every hour or so to transport passengers down to the surface.

If the heroes are curious, they can read on their lenses (or their Assistants can inform them) that all standard StO shuttles and the rotovator transports are completely overloaded, and the large orbit stations for tourists have wait times of hours or more. This is definitely not a good time to come to Concordia on business.

Finally, the StO shuttle for the heroes arrives and they manage to board it. It is a crowded ride. As the plane glides to the surface, the heroes get to see the beautiful views of Concordia, practically a replica of Earth. Read or paraphrase the following:

After the shuttle enters the lower atmosphere, you see your destination in the horizon: Melissant, the most advanced city in human space outside Earth.

Named after Melissa Fischer, the secretive 21st century companion of both Circle founder William Donovan and Psion Brotherhood founder Daniel Michaels, Melissant represents the idealization of the city of the future: Gleaming skyscrapers, flying vehicles, and all the comforts one could imagine. It is the center of the Centenary Celebration. Oh, and Circle Headquarters are located here, too.

The plane finally lands on a station close to the Circle HQ campus, and the heroes disembark as the sun is about to set in the horizon. Remember to apply any particular bonuses or penalties due to Planetary Environments (see *Setting Rules* in the *Seven Worlds* Setting Guide).

SCENE 2: EPSILON LEADER ANTOINE

As soon as the heroes visit or contact Epsilon Leader Antoine's office, they are informed that the first centenary parade is about to begin in just an hour or two, and that Epsilon Leader Antoine has already departed to the main stands, where he has a reserved seat. He has left orders that the heroes are to go immediately to the main stands and enter on official Circle business. The heroes will have the good fortune to see the Celebration live, instead of via V-World projection! The heroes' Assistants receive the digital passes which will allow them to cross security checkpoints and enter the parade stands area.

As the heroes move through Melissant, they see a city full of crowds in the streets. Periodic fireworks light up the sky. The digital walls of most skyscrapers show images of the history of Concordia, while musically-rousing taped messages with particular passages of Concordian history make for a deafening ride.

Several burly guards protect the entrance to the official VIP stands, which is keyed to open only for people with the correct digital authorization (which the heroes have), validated against their embedded IDTags.

Once the heroes enter, they quickly meet Epsilon Leader Trevor Antoine: A thin, fit man in his upper fifties holding a conversation with two men: One, a stiff-faced, unpleasant-looking, high-ranking military man, the other a very old soldier with an amiable smile on his face. While chatting with both soldiers, Antoine is periodically giving orders on all sorts of Circle matters through his Assistant Janus. Antoine's Assistant is shown in the heroes' lenses as a middle-aged soldier dressed in a military space pilot vacc suit with a drawing of a blue-thunderbolt on the chest.

The VIP section of the stands is tight and crowded. Government officials, nobles and their families, ambassadors and businessmen are all there, trading stories, making deals, and making veiled threats to each other, while busy robotic mini-tables move around the stand rows carrying expensive drinks and food. The heroes spot President Livley in the Presidential Stand, several rows below, accompanied by a stocky man with white hair and a warm smile, the awkward Guest of Honour at this celebration: Sung Selnes, the Governor of Bay Jing, the closest planet to Concordia and its fiercest competitor (some might say enemy).

If the pre-generated character Seela is a hero (see *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*), she knows practically everyone in these stands (including her family, the

Atherton's, which are predictably seated just one row above the President), and practically everyone knows her. She will need to change her appearance and make a few successful Stealth rolls to avoid being recognized and making a scene.

Epsilon Leader Antoine calls the heroes by name and introduces them to the high-ranking officials he's currently talking with: General Carlo Ruehle, Leader of the Concordia Military Forces, a squared-jawed, no-smiles burly man who shakes their hand, mutters his excuses, and moves on to the next group; and General Salvador Bargowski, Chief of the EarthGov Armed Forces, who shakes every hero's hand and chats with them in a friendly fashion about his trip from Earth.

After both guests have moved on, Antoine has the heroes accompany him to his seat in the back row of the VIP stands. Two empty seats are reserved for the heroes next to him. Not all the heroes will have a seat, so some will have to stand.

As the parade begins, with elegant flying vehicles drawing images on patterns of light in the sky, Epsilon Leader Antoine begins talking to the heroes in tones that can barely be heard above the din.

It should not escape wily heroes' attention that it is curious that they have been invited to these exclusive stands just to receive some orders. Either what Epsilon Leader Antoine has to tell them is extremely urgent, extremely confidential, or both.

ANTOINE SPEAKS

Read or paraphrase the following to the heroes:

"First, young fellows, let me tell you I've had my eye on you for a while. Even among us, you make quite the diverse team, and I mean to take advantage of that. Now, I've read Delta Officer Saucedo's report, but I'd like to hear from you. What exactly do you think you saw?"

Let the heroes answer the question. If Maricelle is a hero (see *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*), she may share her previous similar experience. After one or two additional exchanges, Antoine explains the situation.

What the heroes saw, and what the rest of Nouvelle Vie saw given the amount of energy emitted, is not unique. This is not the first report of strange occurrences in the frontier star systems around Nouvelle Vie. The Circle has found survivors from other attacks who have reported similar sightings (Maricelle was one of them).

Some time ago, one of the security departments in EarthGov opened an investigation about this, and the Circle dutifully transferred all information found on these sightings to them. But then, a few months ago, all information regarding these strange sightings was tagged as "classified" by EarthGov at the request of the Psion Brotherhood. Since anything tagged as classified does not sync with the Circle database, the Circle has been effectively been cut off the loop in this investigation. Why?

After what the heroes have reported, Antoine wants to get to the bottom of this without getting EarthGov, the Brotherhood, or anyone else involved. To get the ball rolling and kick the beehive, Antoine gives them a digital letter of introduction to the Security Chief at Psion Brotherhood HQ on Earth. *The heroes' orders are to visit Brotherhood HQ on Earth, tell their story (although the Brotherhood surely has heard of it by now) and ask them for the information on other strange object sightings*. Hopefully the heroes will ruffle some feathers while doing so, and maybe they will find a clue they can follow to figure out what's going on with this investigation and who to pressure to get more info.

Read or paraphrase the following:

Antoine is interrupted by a particularly noisy part of the show. All of a sudden, as the last of the flying vehicles disappears, every screen in every building around the stands lights up forming a mosaic of a single scene: It is a homage to enduring peace and friendship between Concordia and Bay Jing, with beautiful images of citizens of both planets joining together, along with rousing music. The crowd cheers, while a smiling President Livley and Governor Sung Selnes politely applaud.

The heroes can ask any questions about their mission. Antoine can give some background on EarthGov, the Psion Brotherhood, and other relevant items in response. When all questions regarding the main mission have concluded, continue with the text below.

Epsilon Leader Antoine pauses for a few seconds and then continues. "There's another reason I want you to travel to Earth, this one a bit more… unofficial."

Antoine explains that Dr. Luis LaMarche, a reputed scientist who had been working for an EarthGov contractor, has mysteriously vanished without a trace. With a successful Common Knowledge roll, the heroes immediately recognize the last name: Antoine's predecessor as leader of the Circle was Epsilon Leader Suzanne LaMarche. Antoine immediately confirms that indeed, Dr. La Marche is Suzanne's brother. As

a favor, the retired Epsilon Leader LaMarche has asked Antoine to help her find out what's happened to her brother. Local authorities are investigating the disappearance, but Suzanne has told Antoine that knowing her brother, she believes something darker is surely going on, and Antoine trusts his former superior's instincts well enough to believe her. *Antoine asks the heroes to go to San Francisco on Earth and search for Dr. Luis LaMarche.*

Once the heroes have all their questions answered, proceed to the next scene.

✷ **Epsilon Leader Trevor Antoine:** See page 234.

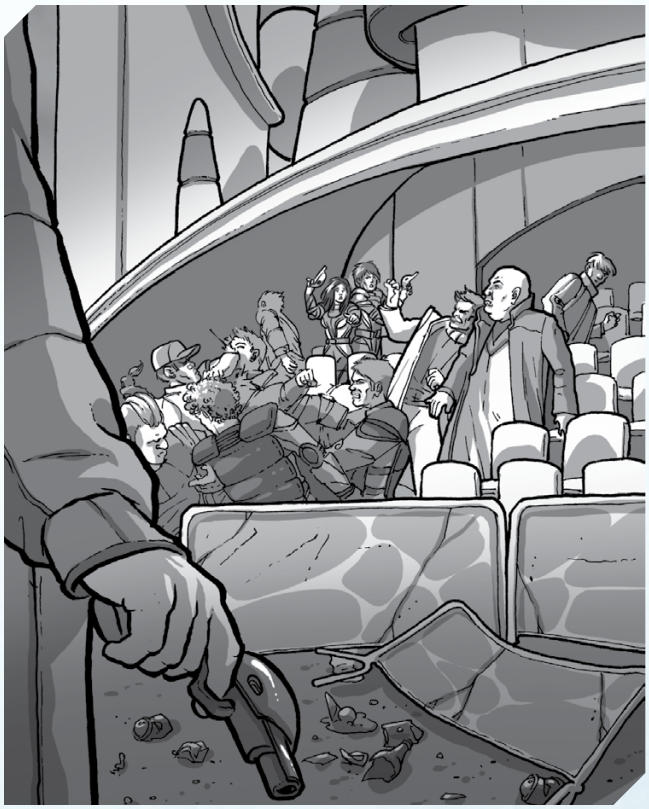
SCENE 3: ASSASSINATION

Have all the heroes' Assistants make Notice rolls at –2. Any Assistants who are successful are alerted by the grid detectors of something strange going on in the main stand, and warn their owners of it just a second before it occurs. Any heroes that are not alerted this way are surprised and don't get an Action Card in the first round of combat.

Read or paraphrase the following to the heroes:

Suddenly your, and everybody else's, attention is drawn towards the Presidential Stand, where something strange is going on. On cue, you see two Concordia security officers within the stand, presumably President Livley's bodyguards, pulling and firing their guns at Bay Jing Governor Sung Selnes' bodyguards, while moving towards both dignitaries! Simultaneously, some police officers from a cordon of policemen several yards in front of the Presidential Stand turn around while pulling their guns and also fire at the stand!

Is this an assassination attempt? Who is trying to assassinate whom? In the instants it takes you to ponder this, the crowd erupts in panic!



In truth this is an assassination attempt on Governor Selnes of Bay Jing, but the heroes don't know that.

The heroes are seated on the highest row of seats on the right hand side of the stands, at "A." The stands are packed with panicked guests screaming and trying to escape. Thus, any movement through the stands counts as if on Difficult Ground. A hero can make a successful free Intimidation roll to scare civilians away ("get out of my way!") and move normally that round.

President Livley is seated on the front left main seat in the Presidential Box at "B," with Governor Selnes to his right at "C." One of Selnes' trusted bodyguards is standing to the governor's right at "D", and the other one is sitting in the middle seat behind both leaders. Two assassins, who were masquerading as Livley bodyguards, are sitting in the two seats in the second row of the Presidential Box marked as "E," and focus on killing Governor Selnes before attempting to escape.

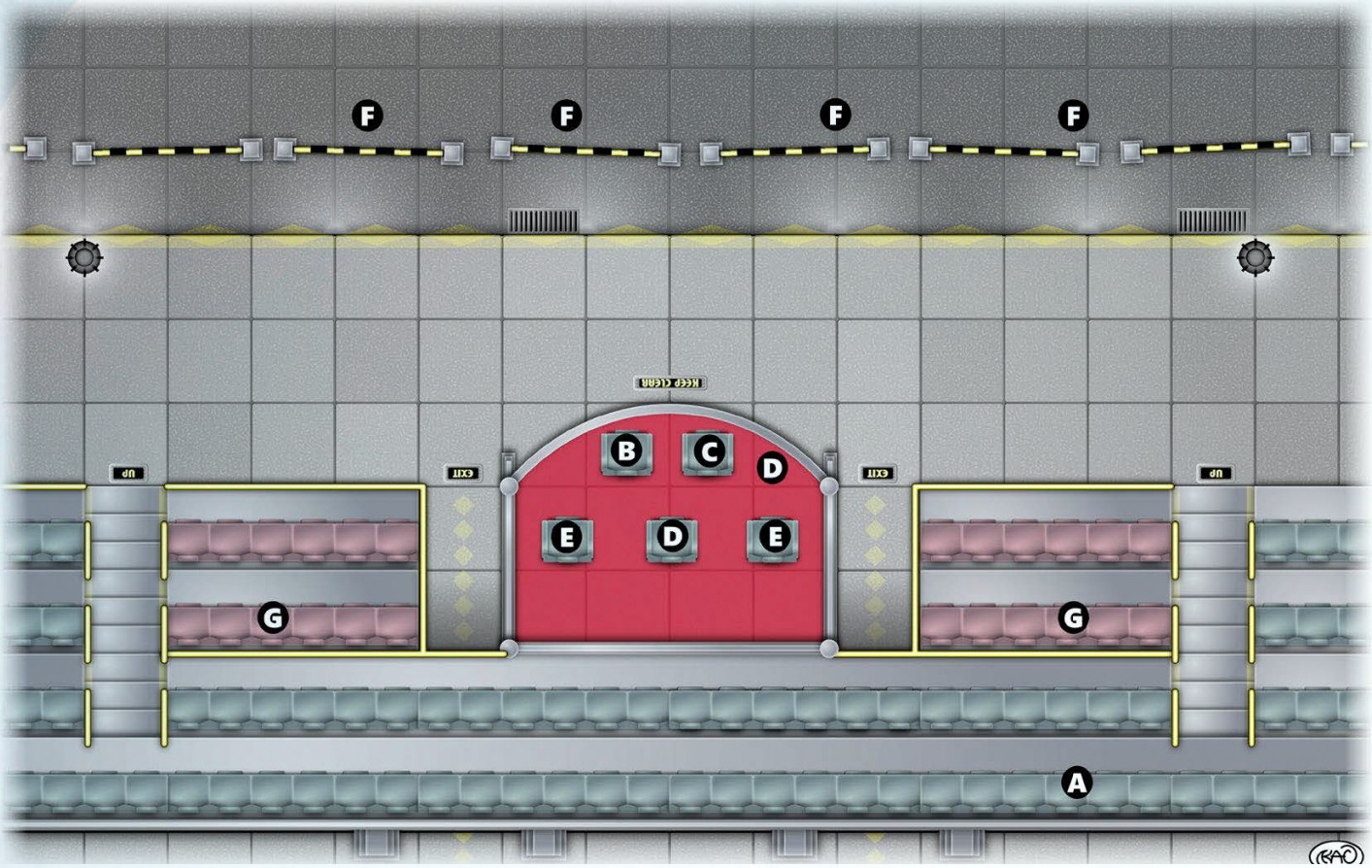
Four assailants, disguised as police officers, are standing next to the security fences about six yards in front of the Presidential Box at "F," and spend their first round shooting at Governor Selnes' two bodyguards at the Presidential Box, trying to bring them down. Use the Innocent Bystander rule for any shots that fail; they might hit anyone, even the President. These assailants get just one chance to shoot: at the end of the first round, they are all taken down by the real police officers next to them, and are effectively out of the combat.

SUICIDE BOMBERS

There are two suicide bombers sitting in a seat in the middle of the second row at "G," hiding among the crowd. Don't place them on the tabletop immediately.

The suicide bombers act as inconspicuously as possible, and wait one or two rounds before activating the frag grenade they carry, with the goal of killing as many civilians as possible. They start On Hold.

To notice that two people in the crowd are not behaving like the rest, have the heroes make a Notice



roll with a –2 penalty. Assistants can also notice them with a Notice at –2 (or –1 if one of the players thought to ask their Assistant to "look around").

At the appropriate time, each one of these suicide bombers pulls the frag grenade from their pocket and activates it. Since it is not thrown, the activation is automatically successful, and the weapon cannot deviate. Only heroes who have noticed these enemies have a chance to dive for cover and avoid the blast.

If the grenade activates, all civilians in its area are killed or wounded. Heroes and Extras receive damage as per the standard Area Effect rules. Additionally, any hero who did not notice any of these bombers before must roll Spirit or be Shaken in surprise, regardless of whether he or she was in the affected area or not.

THE BODYGUARDS

Governor Selnes's bodyguards are on the same team as the heroes, they just don't know it. Just by watching them, the heroes or their Assistants can see that the bodyguards are acting to defend the dignitaries.

The heroes can remotely contact Selnes' bodyguards with the help of an Assistant. With a successful Hacking roll, the Assistant IDs the bodyguards and opens a direct connection to them. Assuming the heroes convince the guards they are in the same side, give them an Ally sheet for the bodyguards.

The bodyguards' first priority is to protect Governor Selnes from harm. They will freely shoot against any enemies they see, but will not try to attack President Livley under any circumstances. If any of them gets close enough to the Governor to be able to look at him, they see that he is either dead or about to die (in truth, he is already dead).

ASSISTANTS DURING BATTLE

Besides the standard Assistant actions available during combat (see Setting Rules in the *Seven Worlds* Setting Guide), Assistants can help by noticing the situation before combat begins; noticing the two suicide bombers, and opening communication to Selnes' bodyguards.

If one of the heroes gets a good look at one of the assassins, an Assistant may also try to look him up. This takes Investigation roll at –2 and one full round, after which the Assistant flashes the assassin's bio on the hero's lenses, and identifies him as a member of a fringe Jubilee terrorist group that recently had announced that they would "quash Dauphin and their Bay Jing overlords once and for all." How did these crazed lunatics evade security?

The following special Assistant activities are available during the battle:

- **V-World Lookup:** If an Assistant looked-up an enemy's bio during the attack (see above) and the hero spends a Benny, the Assistant found some embarrassing or compromising information that gives the hero a +2 bonus to his next Taunt or Intimidation roll against that enemy. The exact information found is for you to decide.
- **Crowd Communication System:** A special V-World interface is available in this area that allows communication to the Assistants of every member of the audience in the stands. By spending a Benny, a hero can ask his Assistant to hack into this interface and talk to the panicked mob's Assistants. Have the Assistant make a Hacking roll with a +1 bonus. If successful, the Assistant opens the interface and can immediately make a Persuasion roll with a +2 bonus. With a success, the Assistant convinces all other attendees' Assistants simultaneously, asking them to calm down, go down their seats, and let the heroes pass. If this is successful, the crowd calms down, and the Difficult Ground penalty for crossing the stands is permanently eliminated.

Governor Selnes is dead whatever the outcome of the encounter. Although President Livley is not the target of this attack, he stands a very real chance of being killed by the crossfire unless the heroes act. By their actions, the heroes might also have helped capture one or more of the assassins. Make sure to point this out after the combat and reward the heroes appropriately (with Bennies and/or experience points).

- **Civilians (President Livley, other civilians):** Use the stats for Civilian. Treat President Livley as a Wild Card.
- **Assassins disguised as bodyguards at "E" (2):** Use the stats for Veteran Security.
- **Shooters disguised as policemen at "F" (4):** Use the stats for Veteran Security.
- **Governor Selnes' Bodyguards at "D" (2):** These Extras may be under the heroes' control. Use the stats for Veteran Security.
- **Suicide Bombers at "G" (2):** Use the stats for Civilian. Each one carries a frag grenade (Range 5/10/20, Damage 3d6, Medium Burst).

AFTER THE BATTLE

Regardless of the final outcome of the battle, the Centenary Celebration descends into chaos. Governor Sung Selnes is pronounced dead moments after the combat ends, and the news begins its two-hour-long trip to Bay Jing, via the Stellar Comm Network. If President Livley was wounded during combat, he is whisked away to the nearest hospital. As the heroes leave the stands for the city, the GM should describe the bleak situation around the heroes: bleeding people; shocked, hysterical citizens; and an impending sense of tragedy.

Time is of the essence, as approximately five hours from now the first responses to the tragedy from Bay Jing will be sure to arrive. General Carlo Ruehle, leader of the Concordia Military Forces, leaves the stands in a hurry and places all troops on alert, despite the disapproval of Concordia's Council of Lords. The Concordian government quickly protests its innocence, and offers all possible assurances to the orbital entourage from Bay Jing.

The facts of the attack point to an organization with deep access to the Security apparatus: Too many people involved, even bodyguards and elite police; too many breaches of security at the same time. There is no explanation for how the grenades were smuggled into the VIP section, for example.

Epsilon Leader Antoine orders the heroes to continue their mission as originally stated and leave Concordia immediately. As the heroes board the StO shuttle, go back to the orbital docking station and blast towards Earth, they can't help but perceive the rumblings of war. A day or so from now the news will finally reach Nouvelle Vie, and chances are that when Dauphin extremists hear them all hell will break loose.

Make it clear to the heroes that they now have two missions: Take the letter of introduction to chief of Security at Psion Brotherhood HQ on Earth (to see if they can obtain the classified investigation records to the other mysterious sightings in the frontier); and check out the disappearance of Dr. LaMarche in San Francisco.

The trip from Concordia to Earth is an excellent time for side stories and other adventure opportunities

PART II: A VISIT TO EARTH

The story continues when the heroes enter the Sol star system and approach Earth. They have come here to talk to the Psion Brotherhood about the mysterious sightings in the frontier worlds and the Brotherhood's

involvement in tagging that information as classified; and to find out what they can about the disappearance of Dr. Luis LaMarche.

Read or paraphrase the following to the heroes:

As your ship approaches Earth, the cradle of humanity, you marvel at the beauty of the view. Through the wall viewscreen you see Earth's Eastern Hemisphere, and from space you can appreciate most of Asia, Australia and the Pacific, as well as the huge uninhabitable crater left in Southeast Asia by the Doomsday Comet of 2133 that almost destroyed human civilization on the planet. Fortunately humans were able to (barely) survive the catastrophe and rebuild.

As your ship continues its approach, the Space Elevator becomes visible. A 45000-km-tall construction with its base on the town of Pedernales, in Ecuador, South America, the Space Elevator allows passengers and cargo to travel from the planetary surface into space and vice versa in a 4-day trip. Center City, the sprawling commerce port for Earth visitors, stands on the geosynchronous orbit location of the space elevator; and Brotherhood Station, the headquarters of the Psion Brotherhood, is tiered to the elevator 330 kms above the surface of the Earth. Several rotovators, orbital slingshots designed to bring cargo and ships up and down from the lower atmosphere, also show up as tiny dots around the planet.

This may be an opportunity to stage a conversation with Assistants to give some of the background of Earth in the year 2217.

SCENE 4: AN INTERESTING CALL

Read or paraphrase the following to the heroes:

As you are deciding where to go and where to land, [insert a hero's Assistant's name here] interrupts with a message. "We're getting a call from Earth. Guess what, it's coming from the N'ahili Embassy Ship! You know, the one that's floating on the ocean several hundred kilometres from the Eastern coast of North America. Now, isn't that something?"

Allow the players some time to decide what to do. If one of the players asks "What's the N'ahili?" take that as a cue to have an Assistant hurriedly explain who the N'ahili are while urging them to answer the call.

If the heroes take the call, read or paraphrase the following:

The screen dissolves into the image of a strong, charismatic man in his thirties. You recognize the face immediately: It is Adam, the N'ahili's Assistant and designated Ambassador to humanity.

As soon as Adam's face appears, the heroes' Assistants overlay a quick text background on their lenses for their benefit: Since their arrival 126 years ago, the N'ahili have remained a mystery. The only sentient alien species humans have met, where they come from, or why, is still unknown. They have provided humanity with the three sets of jump point coordinates that have allowed the settlement of the *Seven Worlds*, and they undoubtedly know many more jump points, but have stopped sharing. Why?

No one has seen a N'ahili but they have released pictures of themselves, which the Assistants flash on the heroes' lenses. They look like weird blowfish swimming on something scientists believe is an atmosphere of ammonia. They may look funny, but no one doubts they are vastly more intelligent and powerful than humans.

The N'ahili's official "face" for humanity is Adam, an advanced Assistant program created by them that superbly performs the duties of Ambassador.

Adam flashes a disarming smile before turning formal. "Welcome, my friends. I apologize for interrupting your trip. I have been informed of your recent experience, and would like to talk to you about it, if you don't mind. Would it be possible to schedule a meeting at the N'ahili private V-World? You would only need to connect to our private V-World from a designated V-World Communications Booth on Earth or on the Space Elevator and we can have a safe, private chat. Just tell me where and when you would like to have the meeting and I'll make sure to schedule it and tell you what Communications Booth to go to. What do you say?"

Adam answers any questions the heroes have but does not reveal the goals of the proposed meeting. If asked, he says he found out about the heroes' participation in the Nouvelle Vie event from the news. He behaves in a friendly and cordial fashion, even if the heroes decline the offer to virtually meet, and he is as patient as possible. If the heroes decline, he tells them he is open to talk should they change their minds, and then closes the connection.

If the heroes decide to visit the Psion Brotherhood, they may either dock at Center City and take the capsule down to Brotherhood station, or dock directly in one of the docking pads on top of Brotherhood station itself. In the first case, the 45,000-km-long trip down the cable takes about four days, and may be a good opportunity for a side adventure.

If the heroes decide to look for Dr. LaMarche, they could dock at Center City and take the capsule down, but it is much faster to dock at one of the many docking stations around Earth and then either take an StO (Surface-to-Orbit) plane to San Francisco, or an Orbital Shuttle to one of the rotovators down to Earth and then an intercontinental flight.

If the heroes choose to meet the N'ahili Ambassador, they may do it from any secure Communications Booth on Earth or physically connected via the Space Elevator cable. This may be in Center City, Brotherhood Station, San Francisco, or any other city on the surface.

If the heroes wish, they may also contact Kiley Nezat, the Circle representative on Earth (see Earth section in the *Seven Worlds* Setting Guide). She answers any questions they have and gives them any support they need short of personnel.

Depending on how the heroes decide to proceed, go to the appropriate section below.

SCENE 5: AN INTERVIEW WITH THE N'AHILI AMBASSADOR

When the heroes are ready to meet Adam, he arranges a secure call from a grounded, secure communications booth to the N'ahili private V-World. He takes care of directing the heroes to the closest Communications Booth (a service offered by several companies in most cities and locations) and of all expenses.

When the heroes reach the Communications Booth, the attendant on duty verifies their identities and leads them to a luxurious group booth. Each hero is offered a helmet to connect using the full V-World experience. Their Assistants will also be available during the conversation.

Once the heroes connect, read or paraphrase the following:

As you connect to the N'ahili private V-World, you realize how uncommon this meeting is. Usually only top dignitaries or scientists "visit" the N'ahili private V-World; most of the time Adam visits humans, not the other way around. You strap in and prepare for anything.

When you "open" your eyes, you are standing in a large drawing room within a luxurious old-style mansion, complete with antique classic furniture in perfect condition, and a balcony from which the sparkling-blue sea and several islands can be seen. The feeling is of a Mediterranean noble country house in the spring. Standing in front of you is Adam, the N'ahili virtual ambassador.

Adam gives you a friendly smile while shaking the hand of each of you, and then guides you to the balcony, where comfortable chairs are placed around a small table with drinks. You get to enjoy the view of the ocean and the other islands beyond, the breeze, and the beautiful virtual day.

Adam begins with some small talk, asking about the heroes' latest trip and their personal achievements. The heroes get the impression that he has researched them all intimately. Adam makes only appropriate comments and never offends.

After the formalities, Adam asks the heroes to tell the story of what they saw in Nouvelle Vie, and to spare no detail. He quietly and intently listens to everything they say. Then he asks them to tell the story of the assassination of Governor Selnes, and of their actions during that tragedy.

Once the heroes are finished, Adam thanks them for their time, and explains that the N'ahili are always interested in the goings-on of humanity since they feel they have an "obligation" to help them realize their full potential as a species. If asked, he denies having any idea of what the heroes saw. Most difficult or delicate questions should receive short, ambiguous answers. Try to play the conversation with a very slight delay, as if Adam were translating the heroes' comments to another language and then translating back the answer (but don't confirm if that really is the case).

When the meeting draws to a close, read or paraphrase the following:

"Thank you for your time. Humanity has been remarkably lucky and resilient to have made it this far. But you are still just starting. It is like some of you are in… a chrysalis." He looks at you intently as he carefully repeats the word. "Yes, a chrysalis. But it's the wrong chrysalis."

"If you find out anything new, don't hesitate to contact me. We're at your service."

With this comment, Adam closes the interview. The heroes are accompanied back to the drawing room and then they are disconnected and brought back to the real world.



SCENE 6: THE PSION BROTHERHOOD

Brotherhood Station, headquarters of the Psion Brotherhood, can be reached via a capsule in the Space Elevator (either coming from the surface at Pedernales or from geosynchronous orbit at Center City), or can be directly visited by landing on one of the docking pads on top of one of its six fins.

As you enter the Disembarking Bay at the top of Brotherhood Station, you are amazed by the incredible views of the Space Elevator and of space. Although the Disembarking Bay is at the top, the huge walls and domed ceiling of the Bay combine real views of space with projected views of Earth, creating a breath-taking spectacle. A sense of tranquillity and peace pervades the environment. Inside, immaculate guides receive visitors and guide them towards the museum, the displays, and the innumerable games that both kids and adults love, with names like "Be a Psion for a Day!", "Guess What I'm Thinking!", "Test Your Psionic Powers", and many others. The Psion Brotherhood has the difficult task of integrating psions with non-psions to avoid the conflict that comes when "normal" humans envy their more powerful brothers. Judging from this place, it seems to do its job remarkably well.

As you walk inside the Disembarking Bay, you feel the lower gravity of the environment, 330kms above Earth.

A cute young uniformed girl of about twenty years of age approaches you. Flashing a smile she introduces herself. "Hello! Welcome to Brotherhood Station! My name is Lindsay and I will accompany you to your meeting."

Brotherhood Station is a Low-G environment (see the rules for Low-G environments in the *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*).

Lindsay, a sprightly young recruit in the administrative bureaucracy's diplomatic and security department, has recognized the heroes from their profiles (as a rule, psions avoid reading their guests' minds for information). Lindsay strikes a friendly conversation with the heroes, describing what they see on the way to the private offices, and helping them with whatever they need.

One of the interesting facts Lindsay casually mentions is that there are psions on all planets and outposts with human presence, and they are rotated every few years. There are so many of them that it is frequent for a psion to be assigned on duty outside their home base and to "disappear" for years at an end. That's one of the reasons being part of the Brotherhood is considered so demanding in terms of dedication and loss of family and friends.

If one of the players is playing Duarthe (see *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*), he is sure to meet some of his old friends from his studies. They greet him with outward warmth but the psionic undercurrent of the conversation tells Duarthe he is still seen as an outsider. Also, they will immediately tell Nathan that Duarthe is here.

MEETING MARCEL COBAN

Lindsay takes the heroes to a conference room to meet Marcel Coban, Chief of Security for the Psion Brotherhood. She waits outside should they need anything.

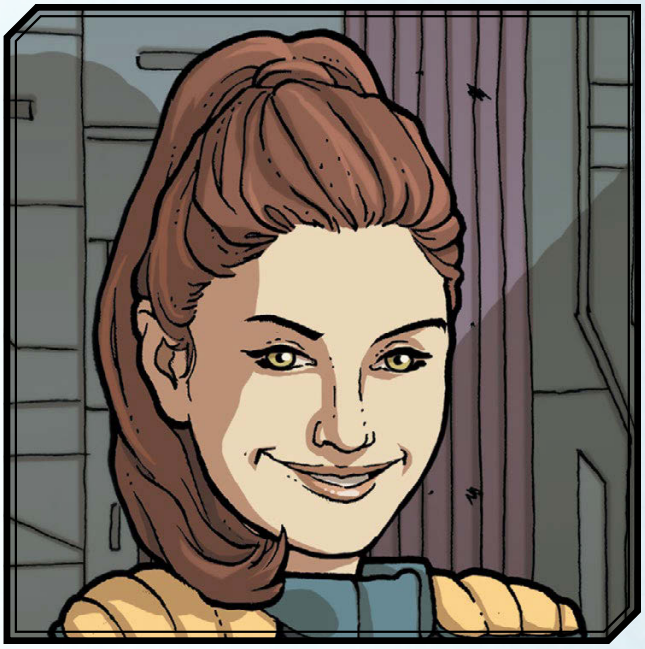
Marcel Coban, Chief of Security for the Psion Brotherhood, is waiting for you. Marcel is a tough-looking guy who seems like he should be overweight if it weren't for the strenuous exercise he must do to live in this low-gravity environment. He is clearly not happy to be having this meeting.

Play the encounter with Marcel as a Social Conflict, using the rules from *Savage Worlds*. Marcel is predisposed against the heroes, and as a result, the heroes will need four successes or more to win the social conflict.

Strive for a colourful, interesting debate. Here are some facts that may generate bonuses or penalties to the heroes' Persuasion rolls during the social conflict:

- In his youth, Coban was an on-loan to the Circle (see *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*), and served with Trevor Antoine. There they developed an intense dislike for each other. If the heroes try to influence Coban by bringing the Circle into the conversation, they receive a –2 modifier to their Persuasion roll; if they bring Epsilon Leader Antoine into the fold, their modifier is –4, as Coban gets into a really ugly mood. The heroes will get an earful about "Trevor the incompetent" and the conversation goes south from there. If the heroes bothered to investigate Coban immediately prior to the meeting (something they can still do during the meeting by quietly asking an Assistant to make an Investigation roll), they can find out his relationship to the Circle; a raise on the roll tells them about his rocky relationship with Epsilon Leader Antoine.
- If the heroes badmouth or criticize Epsilon Leader Antoine, Coban likes that and gets in the game, adding his own barbed comments. The heroes receive a +2 modifier on their Persuasion roll. If a hero thinks of spending a Benny on his Assistant for help, the Assistant automatically discovers Coban's aversion for Antoine and suggests to the hero that he or she badmouth him.
- If the heroes mention LaMarche in the conversation, or tell Coban they have been asked to look into his disappearance, Coban becomes convinced they are spies and his distrust increases. Coban is aware of LaMarche's disappearance and is very worried about it. The heroes receive a –2 modifier to their next Persuasion roll.
- If the heroes talk about their meeting with the N'ahili ambassador, and mention the N'ahili interest in the strange incident in Nouvelle Vie, they receive a +2 bonus to their next Persuasion roll, as Coban becomes suddenly more helpful. Coban figures the N'ahili are also interested in the sighting because they know something he doesn't, and that keeping an eye on the heroes' activities from now on might give him clues as to what the N'ahili are up to. If the heroes win the social conflict, they will be followed and checked by undercover Brotherhood spies from now on.
- Coban hints that the heroes are being played by the Circle, subtly at first, and more directly afterwards.

If Antoine has been mentioned in the conversation, Coban will tell them that Antoine knew he (Coban) was in charge of Brotherhood security, and that he would refuse any request coming from Antoine. How come he did not warn or prepare the heroes? If the heroes acknowledge they may be being played by the Circle, they get a +2 bonus on their next Persuasion roll. If they violently disbelieve Coban, they get a –2 penalty to their next Persuasion roll.



LINDSAY KIPPERSON



MARCEL COBAN

If the heroes succeed (four or more successes), Marcel grudgingly commits to having an assistant pull up the classified information and send it encrypted to Antoine directly (after a careful review to avoid releasing any extremely sensitive data). He expects this to take a few days. He does not commit to anything else.

If the heroes fail (three successes or less) Marcel denies their request. He explains in a brusque manner that the Brotherhood has asked EarthGov to tag this information as classified because it believes it is important. He does not specify the reason for this, only that they are not at liberty to share it. Then he calls the meeting to a close.

When the heroes leave the conference room, they find Lindsay waiting for them. She congratulates them if they got what they wanted, and looks crestfallen if their mission was not successful.

MEETING GANENDRA NATHAN

On the way out from the private area of the station, the heroes enter a section of open hallway where Ganendra Nathan, Leader of the Psion Brotherhood, is talking to several psions. If the heroes don't know him, an Assistant points him out and explains to the heroes that this is one of the most important and powerful people in the Seven Worlds (See *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*).

If there is any Brotherhood psion among the heroes, Nathan approaches and greets him or her by name. An instantly charming person, blessed with a prodigious memory, he knows or has known everybody who belongs to the Brotherhood and is always courteous and friendly.

If the pregenerated character Duarthe is a hero, Nathan's reaction to him is slightly colder than to other psions, given their past history.

If the heroes were successful in getting Marcel Coban to commit to send the files, Nathan supports the decision, and explains that although sometimes things need to be protected, he does not see why this information should be protected from the Circle. He acts mystified as to why the info was tagged as classified in the first place, and commits to making sure it gets to Antoine as soon as possible.

If the heroes failed in their conversation with Marcel Coban, Nathan apologizes for Coban's rude behaviour and insists there is a reason for the secrecy. The heroes may try a final do-or-die argument with Nathan. Regardless of how good or bad the argument was (ignore the results of any Persuasion rolls), Nathan tells them he'll look into it immediately and see if anything can be done, and that they'll hear from him soon. He also asks the heroes to apologize on his behalf to Epsilon Leader Antoine, and hopes to meet them again next year when he passes thru Concordia on his way to Bay Jing, his home planet, to celebrate its 100th anniversary. Sometime later (when the heroes arrive at their ship or lodgings, or later in the day), Nathan contacts them to let them know that Epsilon Leader Antoine will directly receive an encrypted copy of most of the classified files in Circle HQ in the next few days.

Lindsay accompanies the heroes back to the main visitor floor and says goodbye. She invites them to visit whenever they want, and tells them they will be always welcome at Brotherhood Station.

- **Ganendra Nathan:** See page 244.
- **Marcel Coban:**See page 237.
- **Lindsay Kipperson:** See page 236.

LINDSAY, COBAN AND GANENDRA

Make Lindsay, Marcel Coban and Ganendra Nathan emotionally memorable to the heroes. They are important NPCs who appear again later in the campaign in critical roles for the story.

SCENE 7: THE SEARCH FOR LAMARCHE

These are the known facts of Dr. LaMarche's disappearance. The heroes may obtain this from the records provided by Epsilon Leader Antoine, by searching V-World, or simply by asking their Assistants.

Luis LaMarche is a middle-aged man, brilliant scientist, single, secretive and eccentric. He is a leading academic researcher on stellar communications and transmissions, and just four years ago took a lucrative position at the research arm of MaxDigital Corporation, a specialist technology outfit that is a major subcontractor to governments. Beyond work, his only vice seems to be an obsession with V-World multi-player games. His current home address is in Oakland, in what used to be called the San Francisco Bay Area until the 2133 flooding took out most of the bay. MaxDigital Corporation's headquarters is also located there.

LaMarche disappeared three months ago, counting the two months it took the heroes to reach Earth (if it took more or less time for the heroes to reach Earth, modify the time appropriately). He stopped showing up at the office or answering calls, and his Assistant went permanently offline. His IDTag is out of the grid,

and is assumed to have been removed from his body. It is therefore not possible to trace him. Removing or disabling an IDTag is illegal, but can be done for the right price.

Police have searched his home and have not found anything unusual. They have discovered cash transfers from his personal account to a digital money service that anonymizes cash transactions. This might imply he planned to spend it without leaving a trace. No clues as to his whereabouts have been found.

The heroes can either visit LaMarche's office, or his home.

LAMARCHE'S OFFICE

MaxDigital Corporation's headquarters in Oakland is an impressive, modern, sprawling complex, with many layers of physical and digital security. Heavily-built guards dressed in impeccable dark suits are everywhere, the stereotype of high-level security agents.

After the heroes' Assistants have presented the heroes to the receptionist Assistant, the heroes are politely taken to a conference room where they are welcomed by Stanley Maroudas, the installation's security manager. Maroudas explains to the heroes that they are of course very concerned about their employee, and have assisted the police in every way they could. Unfortunately, the nature of Dr. LaMarche's work is such that the company is not allowed to share anything about it other than that it is highly confidential and that the government contractor (which cannot be named) has been informed of the situation and has taken steps to protect their project in case there is a security breach.

The heroes can go on a guided tour of the non-classified parts of the office, but cannot enter Dr. LaMarche's research wing or get any further information from Maroudas.

Any violent action will take the heroes nowhere, but in case they are needed, here are stats for the NPCs in this scene.

- **Stanley Maroudas, Security Manager:** Use the stats for a Civilian with Smarts d6, Spirit d8 and Persuasion of d12.
- **Guards:** As many as needed. Use the stats for Typical Security.

LAMARCHE'S HOME

LaMarche's home is in a high-class neighborhood about 25 minutes from Oakland. The house, while not large, is certainly more expensive than what a typical scientist and academic can afford. Obviously, LaMarche's new job has been paying him well. The heroes can see the house tagged as "closed by Police" on the Augmented Reality overlays in their lenses.

While the heroes are in front of the house they have a chance to notice someone stealthily looking at them from behind a window curtain in a house at the other side of the street. Whoever is looking hides behind the curtain as soon as he or she is noticed.

Should the heroes try to break into LaMarche's home, they will have to override the house security locks left by the police. This will require a Dramatic Task using Hacking as the relevant skill. The task simulates the heroes hacking the security interface while simultaneously disabling the alarm systems until the hacking is finished. A standard –2 penalty applies to all rolls. With a failure, a noise alarm sounds and a security officer patrol arrives a few minutes later. Assuming the heroes are successful, they find that LaMarche's house has been thoroughly searched by the police. All physical evidence has been looked at and moved, furniture has been searched carefully, and nothing particularly special is found.

AN ECCENTRIC NEIGHBOR

If the heroes visit the house across the street, the door is opened (just a crack) by a middle-aged man in scraggly clothes who is suspicious of the heroes ("I've told everyone everything, I don't know anything else! Who are you and what do you want?!"). The heroes will need to calm him down to get him to talk (a successful Persuasion roll will suffice).

Once the man calms down, he invites the heroes in. His name is Professor Aurelio Velkamp and he is an antiquities curator. His house is stuffed full of old books and weird antiques (you may have fun describing how among the sixteenth-century rifles and the second century clay pots the heroes find some early-21st century smartphones and tablets, for example). The Professor himself looks and smells like he has not been out of his house in quite a while.

Professor Velkamp can explain how the police came looking for "Luis" (Dr. LaMarche) and searched his house up and down. Professor Velkamp himself was questioned in detail by the police. They set up a guard for a few days in case Dr. LaMarche returned but apparently he never did.

Professor Velkamp also mentions how Dr. LaMarche's house is periodically visited by strong-looking men in dark suits who stay for a few hours and then leave, apparently on the lookout should Dr. LaMarche appear. He has no idea who they are, but can recognize the description of MaxDigital Corporation security personnel if shown a digital picture or image. Velkamp also describes LaMarche as a good person and a friendly neighbor, if a slightly obsessed and

crazy one. When not at work he spent hours playing the latest V-World games, something the Professor says is not "stuff grown-ups do."

Professor Velkamp has a crucial piece of information for the heroes. Depending on the players, you may simply decide to role-play the interaction and offer the heroes the information once they've convinced the professor to trust him, or you may want to ask the heroes to make Persuasion rolls at –2 to get the information. Since the Professor will be peppering the heroes with questions about who they are and why they are looking for LaMarche, there should be many opportunities to mention his sister Suzanne or the mission.

Once the Professor is convinced, he tells them something he hasn't told anybody, not even the Police: The last time he saw LaMarche was a few days before the doctor went officially missing. LaMarche came very agitated to Velkamp's house and left something "for safekeeping, until my sister Suzanne picks it up:" His *AmberDrake Chronicles* data card and a short note with the password for it. With a Common Knowledge roll the heroes recognize *AmberDrake Chronicles* as the latest, hottest multiplayer V-World game, set in a fantasy world of dragons and magic, and famous for its realistic combat. Velkamp says that LaMarche said that he might have to leave for a while, and since his sister also loves the game, he wanted her to have the card that would allow her to keep the achievements his character had acquired during the game ("told you he was crazy!"). LaMarche also asked Velkamp to keep the existence of the gaming card secret from everyone but his sister or her helpers.

If the heroes perform a quick validation of Suzanne LaMarche's profile, they gather that she has never been interested in V-World games. The data card itself is nothing special, and has no purpose other than to allow the heroes to connect to *AmberDrake Chronicles* using LaMarche's character in the game.

If the heroes decide to send a message to Antoine or Suzanne LaMarche, they will be told that although Dr. LaMarche was a well-known fan of V-World games, his sister Suzanne does not share the hobby at all. She believes if he left a gaming card for her, there must be some kind of message or information inside the game for the heroes to retrieve. Note that a round-trip message from Earth to Concordia and back takes between five and six days (see the *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*).

- **Professor Aurelio Velkamp:** Use the stats for a Civilian with Knowledge (Science) d12.

SCENE 8: THE AMBERDRAKE CHRONICLES

The heroes may enter the *AmberDrake Chronicles* from any V-World interface on Earth, including their lenses, a V-World Communication Booth or the V-World pods on the *Voyager*.

One hero should use the data card to handle Dr. LaMarche's character, a wizard called Bregor Ravenblood. Give the hero a character sheet with the stats for Veteran Mage (see the *Seven Worlds* Setting Guide), making him a Wild Card.

The other heroes must register with the game (which is free for new players) and create their character.

CREATING AN IN-GAME CHARACTER

Each hero's character has the exact same traits as the hero. Additionally, each hero can select a "class" for his character from the table below, which gives the character a specific number of increases to its trait dice. You might want the heroes to create character sheets for each in-game character.

SPECIAL RULES DURING THE GAME

While the heroes are within AmberDrake Chronicles the following special rules must be observed:

- Since this is a fantasy realm, magic is now available, as well as several skills and Edges that are not available or useful in the "real-world" environment.
- Psionic powers don't exist within the game.
- Heroes cannot call upon their Assistants while in the game. Assistants are not "available" but can send an urgent message or interrupt a game if an emergency requires it. In these interruptions, the hero is logged off the game by the Assistant and brought back to the real world.
- A hero can leave the game at any time, just by thinking about it. If he or she returns to the game, his or her character has the same number of Wounds, Fatigue, and ammo as before he or she left.
- If a character "dies" he or she is automatically disconnected from the game, and can re-enter it by spending $20. The character enters the game fully healed.

ENTERING THE GAME

The heroes are about to enter a multiplayer virtual game world more than three months after Dr. LaMarche left it. The last time he entered, Dr. LaMarche left a message containing critical codes for entering MaxDigital Corporation written inside an in-game artefact, a powerful spellbook. The spellbook was stored in Bregor Ravenblood's (Dr. LaMarche's

IN GAME CHARACTER CLASS

CHARACTER CLASS	TRAIT DICE INCREASES TO ORIGINAL CHARACTER'S STATS	GEAR AND POWERS
Fighter	+1 Agility die, +1 Strength die, +2 Fighting die (also increase Parry appropriately), +1 Intimidation die.	Plate armor (+3 Armor; covers arms, legs, torso), Medium shield (+1 Parry, +2 Armor to ranged shots that hit), Long sword (Str+d8).
Rogue	+2 Agility die, +1 Climbing die, +1 Fighting die (also increase Parry appropriately), +1 Lockpicking die, +1 Notice die, +1 Stealth die, +1 Streetwise die.	Dagger (Str+d4), Short sword (Str+d6), Leather armor (+1 Armor; covers arms, legs, torso), Bow (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6).
Cleric	+1 Spirit die, +1 Fighting die (also increase Parry appropriately), +2 Faith die, +1 Healing die.	Chain armor (+2 Armor; covers arms, legs, torso), Mace (Str+d6), Shield (+1 Parry). Has 10 Power Points and the following divine powers: *healing*, *burst*.
Wizard	+1 Smarts die, +1 Fighting die (also increase Parry appropriately), +3 Spellcasting die.	Two Daggers (Str+d4), no armor. Has 20 Power Points and the following arcane powers: *armor*, *blast*, *bolt*, *detect/conceal arcana*, *dispel*, *fly*.

character) library in his virtual house in the medieval town of Dancine. Since then, many things have changed in the game. The most important one is that Dancine and the rest of the valley have been overrun by the army of the evil dragon Kyrrix. Thus, characters of Bregor's faction have been evicted from Dancine, and are now holed up in nearby Garreth Keep along with other town refugees. As the heroes arrive, the defenders of Garreth Keep are about to be besieged by Kyrrix's army. The heroes are going to have to find a way to escape the keep, infiltrate what remains of Dancine, and recover that spellbook.

Read or paraphrase the following:

The burning countryside of northern AmberDrake is the first sight that greets your eyes. You are standing on the battlements of a large keep in siege alert. Soldiers around you run to and fro, preparing catapults, firing arrows at the enemy, or simply dying under the barrage of falling arrows that darken the sky. You're in the middle of a war!

Outside the keep walls you see an immense army composed of orcs, goblins and other humanoids. They are in full attack mode, shooting arrows, bringing ladders to climb the keep, and preparing catapults. Behind the army you can see the black smoke of burning trees and one or two houses. And much farther away, the smoky ruin of what once must have been a large town. The game's AR overlay tells you that the town is (was) called Dancine, and a small digital arrow points to what in the distance you can almost make like one more smoky ruin in the town. A small floating sign next to the arrow reads "HOME" accompanied by a treasure symbol. Whatever LaMarche kept in this game, apparently it's still there.

Suddenly a large shadow appears before you on the battlements. It is a huge human knight, impossibly muscled, dressed in a dark armor with a mysterious symbol, accompanied by a band of lesser fighters. A digital symbol next to him shows he is not an NPC but another real player.

The immense man, covered in blood, brandishes a large great sword and jumps towards you while screaming "Bregor, you coward! NOW, when we've had no choice but to hide like rats in Garreth Keep, now you decide to appear? And entering with new players, I see. Well, I'll make sure they don't last long. If I fall here, you'll fall with us, traitorous bastard!"

The knight in question's name is Lanus. His player is extremely angry at Bregor's player (he does not know LaMarche) because Bregor left the game three months ago during a particularly tough quest and never came back.



Have all heroes make Notice rolls. The ones who fail begin the round surprised. Place all combatants around position "A" on the map.

Whenever Lanus or a hero is dealt a card from the Clubs suit, one of the many arrows from the incoming army has found its way to him or her. Make a d8 group Shooting roll to see if the character is hit or not. If he is, the damage from the arrow is 2d6.

Lanus and his followers fight to the "death" unless the heroes convince them to stop. This requires good role-playing or Persuasion rolls.

If the heroes manage to talk to him, Lanus curses Bregor's player in very un-medieval language and then tries to leave. If the heroes question Lanus's player, he tells them he only knows that Bregor left the game three months ago and never came back, costing his party at the time a big loss at the hands of a powerful villain. It's taken Lanus months to get his character back to his current level, and in the meantime the evil wyrm Kyrrix has raised an army of orcs and monsters and razed the countryside. Many players have switched sides and joined Kyrrix's crusade, and Lanus is thinking about doing that ("after all, isn't becoming more powerful the point?"). He knows nothing about Dr. LaMarche, nor does he care. He only knows that Bregor kept most of his valuables, including his vaunted treasure chest ("he always talked about it") in his mansion down in Dancine… thing is, Dancine has now been overrun and torched, and is in territory controlled by Kyrrix's army, which is led by the lesser dragon Myrreth.

If the heroes become too insistent with Lanus, try too hard to force him to talk, or ask him to disclose who he really is, Lanus's player gets nervous and disconnects, not before scolding the players on "breaching game etiquette." There is no way for the heroes to find out who the player is.

- **Lanus, Dark Knight:** Use the stats for Veteran Knight.
- **Lanus's followers (2 per hero):** Use the stats for Junior Knight.

THE SIEGE OF GARRETH KEEP

As soon as the heroes complete their encounter with Lanus read or paraphrase the following:

A tall, powerful knight followed by his entourage approaches. He is obviously the leader of the defence of the keep. The AR overlay identifies him as Commander Tarros, Chief of the Northern AmberDrake Army. An NPC.

"So, new recruits?," says Commander Tarros when he sees you. "I can see you are senior-level, so you can help us fight. As you know, we've lost most of the countryside to that blasted Kyrrix and his minion Myrreth. The King trusts we will be strong enough to hold Garreth Keep and stop the enemy's advance."

"Tonight the enemy forces will attempt to take the keep. Our enemies are ready to storm us with soldiers carrying ladders, under cover of thousands of arrows."

"I need you to man the western wall and stop our enemies from entering the keep. As many soldiers as I can spare will accompany you. There will be other teams of defenders along the wall and in the main gates."

"Your bravery will decide if Garreth Keep survives the night! Soldiers! To your posts!"

If a hero needs a specific weapon, they can get them at the Armory at no cost. No magical items are available. Priests are also available to provide magical healing.

As darkness falls, the heroes are led to the length of wall next to where they originally appeared, and assigned one AmberDrake knight per hero (extras to be controlled by the players). Place the heroes and their extras in position "B" on the map. Out in the distance, the torches of the orc

campfires can be seen, and dark, ominous drums can be heard.

Suddenly the night is pierced by the sound of a horn in the distance, which is answered by other horns. The orc attack has begun!

Place the enemy orc soldiers 24" away from the keep walls, at position "C". The heroes and the AmberDrake soldiers are on top of the battlefields.

Each round the orcs run towards the fort, carrying 6-foot-long ladders. For simplicity, roll one running die for all orcs. Each ladder is carried by four orcs, running in groups. If a group ever has less than four orcs, the remaining orcs leave the ladder and run to support other groups that need an extra orc to carry their ladder. If none are available, the orcs just continue running towards the wall.

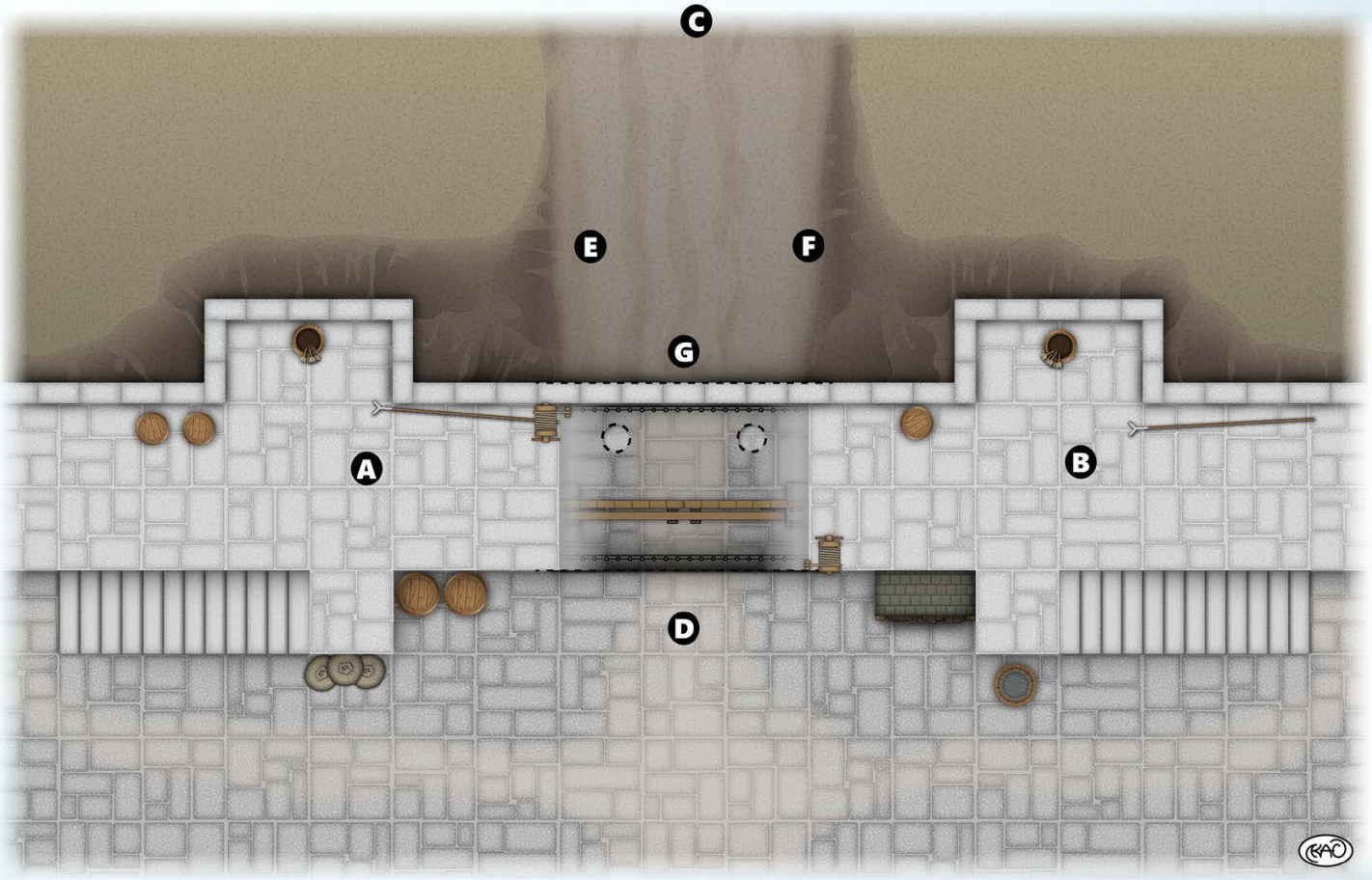
If the orcs reach the wall, putting a ladder up takes two orcs one full action each. When the ladder is placed, climbing it counts as Difficult Ground. Once an orc climbs up the ladder it tries to move away from it to let other orcs climb up.

If a defender wants to push the ladder, he or she needs to make a Strength roll at –2 if directly in front of the ladder; if the defender is adjacent to the ladder but not directly in front, the Strength roll is made at –4. If a ladder is made to fall, all orcs on the ladder when it falls take 2d6 damage.

Simultaneous with the orc soldier attack, orc archers let arrows rain on the defenders. The archers are not physically placed on the map, and are assumed to be 48" away from the action. The archers' attacks are handled in an abstract fashion: Each round, on the orcs' Action Card, the GM can place two Medium Burst Templates in an appropriate location and make a group Shooting roll with a d8 die for each template, minus Wound penalties (see below). If the roll is successful, all defenders within the template receive 2d6 damage.

The archers as a group have 10 Toughness, and can only be harmed with area effect attacks, assuming a character has a way to make an area attack that far. If the archers are hit, keep track of the wounds the archers have as a group, and apply them as a penalty to their group Shooting rolls. If the archers ever reach four Wounds, they break and scatter away, effectively ending the arrow attack.

As soon as the GM feels the heroes are taking control of the situation (but before the combat ends) proceed to the next section.



- **Orc Warriors (4 per hero)**
- **AmberDrake Knights (1 per hero):** Use the stats for Junior Knight. Besides the weapons listed, they all have bows (range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6).

ENEMY AT THE GATES

Read or paraphrase the following:

Throughout the combat you've been listening to the loud bangs coming from below, where the orcs are ramming the main door while Commander Tarros and his soldiers work to hold it. Suddenly the huge, heavy gates break with a loud crack, and the enemy rushes in! From up here you see Commander Tarros and his team being overwhelmed by the orcs. He looks at you on the battlements and in the commotion signals to you for help. If the gate falls, the keep is doomed!

The heroes may decide to split into two groups or finish the combat at the battlements and then go down to the gates. Each round that passes without the heroes going to the aid of Commander Tarros, one AmberDrake Knight defending the gate falls (remove it from play).

Remember that the heroes may have AmberDrake Knight extras under their control remaining after the previous fight. It is up to the heroes to decide how to distribute their forces in this situation.

Commander Tarros and his soldiers start the fight at "D" while the orc warriors are located at "E." The orcs are supported by an orc shaman (location "F") with basic casting spells and an ogre Wild Card (location "G"). The shaman attempts to use the *fear* spell to keep the heroes and knights from attacking.

- **Commander Tarros, Chief of the Army:** Use the stats for Veteran Knight.
- **AmberDrake Knights (2 per hero):** These are the Knights next to Commander Tarros. Use the stats for Junior Knight. They all have bows (range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6).
- **Orc Warriors (4 per hero)**
- **Orc Shaman (1)**
- **Ogre (1)**

Once the battle is won, the orc army retreats, its first attempt foiled. The heroes get a chance to rest and recover their wounds. The AR overlay for the game notes that the heroes' characters have gained "experience points", an in-game measurement that allows them to improve in-game. However, the characters have not gained enough points to increase in level yet.

THE TRIP TO DANCINE

After the battle, the heroes are free to decide how to proceed. Most likely they are looking for a way to reach Bregor's home in the town of Dancine. Let the heroes try any ideas they may have on how to leave the keep and evade the enemy orc army to reach Dancine, and be lenient to them if their plan seems appropriate enough. What follows is a default alternative available if the heroes are unsure of how to proceed.

As you enter the deepest parts of Garreth Keep to regain your strength and heal your wounds you see many refugees from both Dancine and other nearby towns. Scraggly, hungry and tired, whole families shiver in the cold, hoping to survive the night.

As you stare at this scene, you are approached by a gaunt middle-aged man, who from the size of his clothes clearly used to be larger. He has horrid teeth and a repelling stench. His hands have the splotches and white marks of someone who frequently works with potions and dangerous liquids. He is visibly pale, sweaty and trembling. The AR overlay identifies him as Yrion, an in-game NPC.

"My lord Bregor! It is so good to see you again!," he begins, before being interrupted by a deep cough. "You must remember me, it is Yrion, the apothecary! My shop was a few blocks from your mansion!"

Yrion tries to strike up a conversation with Bregor, asking him about his previous whereabouts. He will explain how he, like most other citizens of Dancine, was forced to evacuate in a hurry, and how he has forgotten a valuable thing in his lab. He will casually let drop that he knows of a secret way out of the keep and into the wilderness, if someone were brave enough to return to Dancine to get it.

In truth, Yrion has become an addict to a drug he himself produces. Unfortunately he was forced to leave Dancine without a supply, and is now suffering from withdrawal symptoms. If the heroes mention that they want to go to Dancine, he gladly tells them of a secret door down the cellar of the keep that leads to a tunnel, the exit of which is a few miles west of here. From there the heroes should not have much of a problem reaching Dancine (other than the orcs, of course). He only asks that the heroes go to his apothecary shop and bring him "a brown bag containing my potions that is located under my bed in the door behind the shop."

ENCOUNTERS

1D6	CAVE	COUNTRYSIDE
1	No encounter	No encounter
2	No encounter	No encounter
3	No encounter	**Small Patrol:** • **Orc Warriors (1 per hero plus 1)** **Orc Leader (1)**
4	**Rock Monsters (1 per hero)**	**Bandits:** • **Bandit (1 per hero)** • **Bandit Chief (1):** Wild Card
5	**Black Blobs (1 per hero)**	**Large Patrol:** • **Orc Warriors (2 per hero)** • **Dire Wolves (1 per hero)** • **Orc Leader (1)**
6+	**Centipede (1)**	**Small Battalion:** • **Orc Warriors (3 per hero)** • **Dire Wolves (2 per hero)** • **Orc Shaman (1)** • **Evil Knight (1):** Use stats for Veteran Knight. He is a Wild Card, and a real-world player who has allied with Kyrrix (for role-playing purposes).

If the heroes agree, Yrion shows them the way towards the cellars. A secret door behind the next-to-last barrel in the cellar is activated by a successful Lockpicking roll, and leads to a long, unused tunnel, which returns to the surface a few miles westward, coming behind a group of boulders in the middle of the countryside.

The trip through the long tunnels and the blasted countryside takes about a day. You can place as many encounters as you think are appropriate, and should consider a few given that games like *AmberDrake Chronicles* rarely let too much time pass without a fight. A random encounters table is provided below. The roll should be modified by +1 if the heroes have been calling too much attention to themselves (lighting a fire, making noise while in the cave, etc).

If the heroes get to talk or interrogate any orc prisoners, they find out that Dancine and its surroundings have been placed under the command of one of Kyrrix's lieutenants, the black dragon known as Myrreth.

THE TOWN OF DANCINE

When the players arrive at Dancine, read or paraphrase the following:

The destroyed remains of what used to be Dancine still smoke before you. Most of the town has been razed to the ground but several buildings still remain. From your vantage point behind some ruins north the town, you see orc guards on several locations inside. The town is surrounded by low hills, meaning the north side is the only way to approach without being automatically seen.

Every once in a while a low sound shakes the town. It sounds like a mixture of a roar and growl from a huge beast in slumber. You have heard that the black dragon known as Myrreth leads the army in Kyrrix's name. Could that sound be caused by him?

Whatever remains of Bregor's mansion must be in the center of the town. A transparent marker in the AR overlay shows you the direction Bregor's mansion is located. Now you only have to get there.

THE ENEMY ADVENTURING PARTY

On top of all the other dangers of Dancine, the heroes have one more thing to worry about: Another adventuring party, composed of real-world players, not NPCs, has entered Dancine. Looking to vanquish the dragon and gain the fame and experience such a beast brings and to gather as much loot as possible, they are not going to let other players stand in their way.

You should use this party wisely at the most dramatic moment and as a source of mystery. For example, the heroes might find clues that someone else is roaming through the town, perhaps a slaughtered orc guard. They might be attacked by this adventuring party when they are reading the tome in Bregor's mansion. Or maybe they are about to make their escape when the other adventuring party makes a ruckus and brings the dragon down on everyone. Remember that the heroes' VR overlays clearly identify the enemy party as fellow players in the game, not NPCs. An interesting role-playing conversation during the battle might thus ensue.

- **Torrahn, Warrior:** Use stats for Junior Knight.
- **Orghen, Wizard:** Use stats for Novice Mage.
- **Ulric, Rogue:** Use stats for Bandit Chief.

What follows is a key to the main locations of the town of Dancine.

A. ENTRANCE

The heroes enter the town here. This is the only safe way to enter without being automatically detected by orc guards because of the low hills in the east, west and south sides of the town.

Should the heroes raise the alarm at any point, all orcs in the town converge on the source of the alarm in about four rounds and engage any trespassers. Assuming the heroes are not found, after a few minutes of searching the orcs will return to their locations, but they will be active sentries from then on (thus requiring opposed Stealth rolls).

If enough orcs raise the alarm Myrreth himself will wake and get involved to stop the heroes.

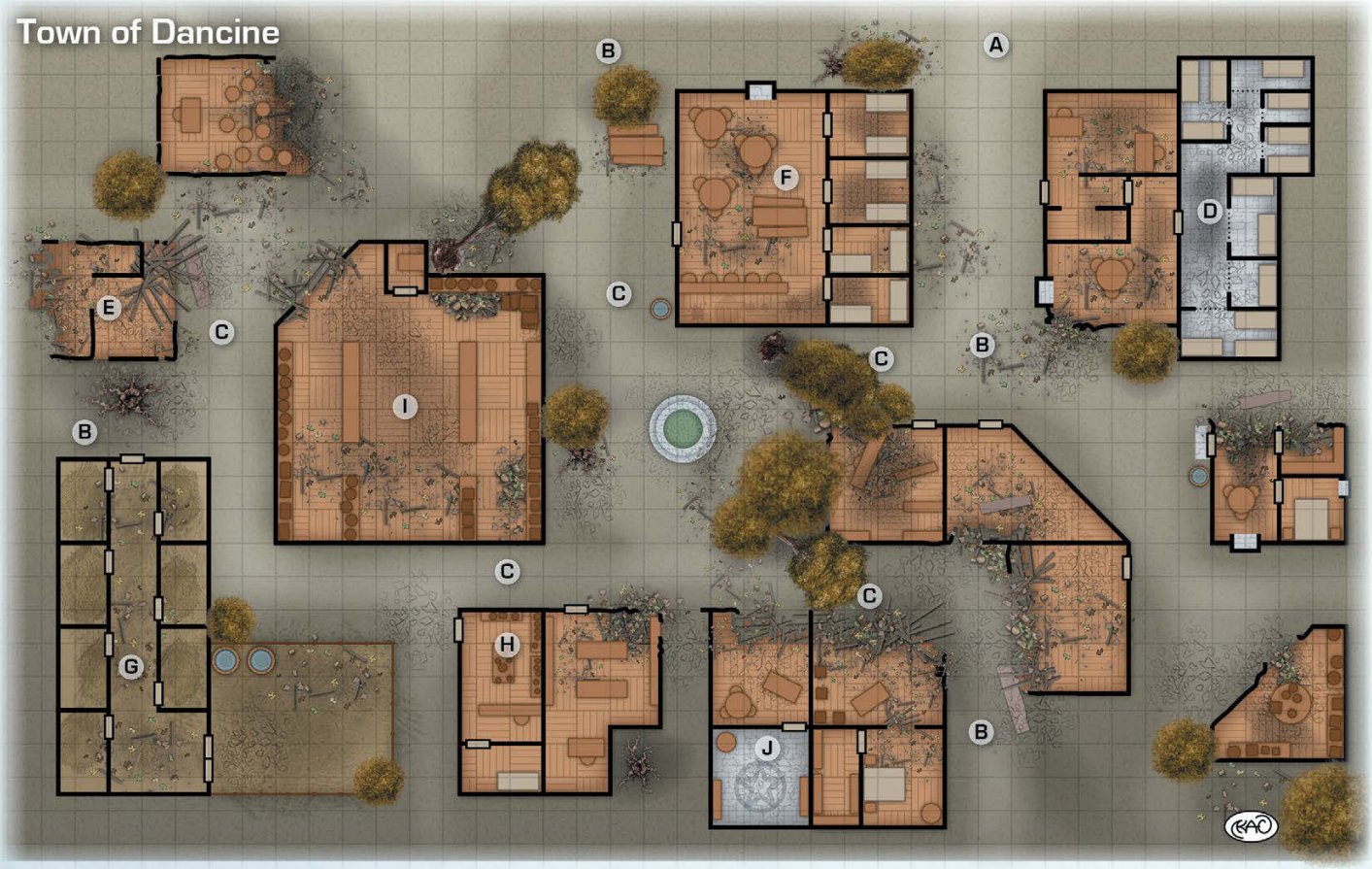
B. GUARD POSTS

Small orc patrols guard the different entrances to the center of Dancine. They are usually talking amongst themselves or playing games, and are treated as passive guards unless the alarm is raised once. Use the standard Stealth rules if the heroes try to avoid them.

- **Orc Warriors (3)**

C. TRIPWIRE

These locations have an almost invisible tripwire running across the street. A hero walking through the



tripwire must make an Agility roll (at –2 if running) or fall Prone. The tripwire also runs to a group of pieces of metal which clang loudly, raising the alarm in the camp. If a hero specifically asks to search the floor he or she can find the tripwire with a Notice roll at –2 if no tripwire has been found before. Once the heroes have dealt with tripwire (either because they tripped it or avoided it), a free automatic Notice roll is enough to see it again. Tripwire traps can be disabled or enabled with a Lockpicking roll.

D. PRISON

In this jail, the orcs keep their prisoners, one per cell. The four prisoners here are Jon and Karren, an old couple of bakers; Lily, a small girl who has lost her parents in the invasion of Dancine; and Gilean, a mumbling farmer who has gone mad from his ordeal. If freed from their cells, the old couple and the girl help the heroes by providing them with directions and a rough map of town and where most of the traps are (which can be sketched if necessary). Lily also knows of the hidden survivors at E, and of the valuable items they managed to save from the orcs, and will share this information if asked. If freed, Gilean merrily attempts to escape the town, running recklessly and most likely alerting every orc in Dancine unless he is stopped.

- **Orc Warriors (1 per hero plus 1)**
- **Townsperson (4)**

E. HIDDEN SURVIVORS

When Dancine fell, a few townspeople stormed the town hall and grabbed Dancine's most valuable items, intending to save them from the attacking army. Unfortunately, one of Myrreth's attacks levelled the building before they could leave. A few survived and have been living here in the ruins for a few weeks now. There is enough food and water in the cellar for them to survive, but being so close to Myrreth's new home they have very little chance of escaping.

Etherast, one of the leaders of the town, currently leads the small group of seven humans, all adults. They try, at all costs, to avoid detection, and the heroes are going to have to make Notice rolls at –2 to notice where they are hidden.

If the heroes establish a conversation with the survivors, they tell them as much information on the town and its movements as possible. They also mention the prisoners at location D and ask the heroes to save them. Should the heroes offer to rid the town of the monsters, Etherast will place the few magical items he could save in their hands: A *potion of invisibility* (drinking it is like if the *invisibility* power with a raise had been cast on the drinker. The power cannot be maintained); a *potion of quickness* (as before, but with the *quickness* power with a raise); a *ring of the archer* (works as if the hero had the Marksman edge); And a *giant killer long sword* (standard long sword damage, also works as if the hero had the Giant Killer edge).

- **Townsperson (7)**

F. BARRACKS

Most of the orcs of Dancine are here sleeping next to their weapons. All Stealth rolls to avoid them are at +2 unless the alarm has been raised once, in which case they behave as active guards.

- **Orc Warriors (22)**

G. WOLF PENS

This ruined part of the town has been taken by the orcs to house their wolf mounts. The wolves, kept in large cages, are at turns barking and growling madly and sleeping. Two orc keepers protect and feed the wolves. These orcs do not leave the pens if the alarm is raised, and keep the wolves locked unless the town is under attack or in dire danger. In this case, the orcs let the wolves loose.

- **Dire Wolves (9)**
- **Orc Warriors (2).**

H. YRION'S APOTHECARY SHOP

If the heroes bother to go here, they find the remains of Yrion's apothecary shop. The bed at the back includes Yrion's bag, just as he said. Among the broken bottles the heroes can also find two *potions of healing* (works as the potions listed above, but with the *healing* power with a raise).

I. MYRRETH THE DRAGON

Myrreth, the fearsome dragon who leads the orc army, is asleep in this former large warehouse, which now has no ceiling. He ignores any alarms raised unless he is specifically called, since most of the time his orcs raise the alarm for some human survivor or minor adventuring party. However, if the situation in town becomes difficult he takes flight and attack from above with his acid cloud. He attempts to engage the heroes directly and drive them to a location where there is enough space to overwhelm them with his orcs. Myrreth fights to the death.

- **Black Dragon**

J. BREGOR'S MANSION

As the heroes approach the AR overlay icon that points to Bregor's home becomes larger and clearer. From the outside this looks like one more ruined building. Inside, after passing a ruined foyer the heroes reach a study. A large red arrow in the AR overlay points towards a huge tome in the bookshelf behind the desk. The tome does automatic 1d8 damage to anyone who touches it except for Bregor, its owner.

The tome has the title *Tome of RealWorldy Magic*. All of its pages look empty unless Bregor touches one. When that happens, several pages of notes and texts written in a modern (non-medieval) tone appear. With a Smarts roll, the heroes recognize the notes as game cheat codes, hacks and tips for how to win the game and accumulate treasure and powers fast.

The last page of the book has a different type of note. Give the heroes Handout #2.

Below the note there are several digital tags (see *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*) that can easily be scanned by an Assistant.

Note that since the heroes may leave the game at any time, they will most likely disconnect from the game immediately after obtaining this information. Before disconnecting them, the game lists how many enemies each player killed and the experience points they gained, before inviting them to "play again soon!"

SCENE 9: MAXDIGITAL CORPORATION

After they return to the real world, and the heroes' Assistants decode the digital tags provided by Dr. LaMarche, the heroes find themselves with the following:

- A digital avatar of a Dr. Sindi Rogers. Dr. Rogers is a real employee of MaxDigital who hasn't connected for some time. Dr. LaMarche has managed to create a fake avatar of Dr. Rogers for the heroes to use to enter MaxDigital's Research Extranet.
- Several digital avatars of invented "research associates" of Dr. Rogers from universities and research institutions. Somehow Dr. LaMarche has obtained authorization for these fake people to enter MaxDigital's facilities. Thus, the heroes should have no problem using these fake identities to enter the Extranet. Make sure there are enough fake digital avatars for all the heroes. Let the players invent a fake name, position and short background for each avatar.
- The V-World address for MaxDigital's Extranet. The hidden V-World address for MaxDigital's Extranet is unlisted, so having it is the only way for the heroes to reach it.
- Dr. LaMarche's password-key to his office. This is loaded into the Avatar's profile so his office door opens automatically.
- A small illegal hacking program with the curious name of "DigiDefrost." The program is a complex piece of hacker code, and it is a mystery how Dr. LaMarche could have acquired it, or what it does. DigiDefrost comes with instructions on how to load it into the V-World Pod the heroes' use to enter the Extranet. A small comment in the code says that this program should be activated by the heroes if they are discovered or get in trouble within the Extranet. To activate DigiDefrost during their visit to the Extranet, a hero just needs to think about activating it.

Since MaxDigital Corp's Research Extranet is a secure V-World environment, you should explain to the players the restrictions they will have (see the *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*). The heroes' stats do not change when they connect to this V-World using the temporary avatars, they will still be themselves. Their looks do change, though, to match the look of the impersonation avatar they've selected.

This V-World does not allow weapons, and so the heroes will be unarmed when they enter it. Also remind Psionic heroes that their psionic powers will not work within the virtual environment.

ENTERING THE EXTRANET

When the heroes are ready to connect, read or paraphrase the following:

MaxDigital Corp's Research Extranet is a beautiful, quiet, modern campus building surrounded by immense, well-tended lawns and forests.

You see people walking in and out of the campus, some of them looking fully "real" while others look semi-transparent. You realize that this environment is a simulated replica of MaxDigital's real physical research center, and that some of the people in front of you are avatars of other researchers, while the rest are digital representations of people who are working in the real physical building. In this way, a researcher on the real-world building can cross paths down the hallway with the avatar of a remote researcher on the V-World Extranet, and they can greet each other or strike up a conversation. Amazing!

While you still feel the same, now you look wildly different! One of you is now a middle-aged, significantly out-of-shape male scientist, wearing a lab coat with a tag saying "Dr. Sindi Roberts." The others look like assorted researchers in lab coats.

The front door of the building is guarded by two immaculately dressed men in dark suits. Although friendly-looking, there is something unsettling about the way they move their arms and muscles, as if maybe there were more to them than what you see.

If the heroes previously visited MaxDigital's physical campus outside Oakland they recognize the architecture and design of the place as identical to the real campus.

The guards are super-powered avatars of real-world security personnel, and getting them angry can be deadly. They require everyone in the party to identify themselves before entering. The hero with Dr. Rogers' fake identity will immediately be recognized and allowed access after one or two questions related to "what he's been up to the past few weeks." His "research fellows" will be slightly questioned as to their background and business and then let in unless they do something suspicious (a Persuasion roll at +2 should suffice, unless the heroes do or say something inappropriate that makes you apply a penalty to the roll).

Unless the players do something really stupid (such as attacking), the guards will not show any of their special powers.

- **V-World Guards (2):** In human form use stats for Veteran Security. In monster mode use stats for Dark Terror.

THE OFFICE

Inside the virtual research center, the heroes find an attractive and comfortable work environment: large passageways, covered in windows and panels and illuminated with sunlight; comfortable couches and seats, pictures of company events and activities; even a cafeteria where people have animated discussions while sitting around tables. Some of these meetings are between physical people sitting at a real table in the real research center, and virtual counterparts entering via the Extranet.

The heroes should have no problem finding Dr. LaMarche's office. The office door is locked but opens automatically to any heroes who loaded Dr. LaMarche's password-key into their profiles.

Inside the office, the heroes find Dr. LaMarche's desk, and on it they find piles of digital research papers (in reality digitalized files) organized in virtual stacks, dealing with complex technical topics.

A quick search of the digital files available shows that the documentation Dr. LaMarche sent the heroes to acquire has been tagged as classified and placed off-limits by the security department of MaxDigital Corporation. When the heroes try to open the file their hands just go right through it. No matter what they try, the heroes can't read it.

The trip has not been in vain, however. Two important clues can be gleaned in this place:

- Any hero trained in Knowledge (Science) who glances at the documentation concludes from the research papers that Dr. LaMarche is an expert on the software that runs the Stellar Communications Network that communicates the *Seven Worlds*, and has recently been working on unspecified major improvements to the software. A hero's Assistant with the Knowledge (Science) skill can also reach this conclusion if the hero asks it to review the files.
- While the heroes search, have the hero (or Assistant) with the highest Hacking skill die make a Hacking roll. With a success the hero finds a secret backdoor that Dr. LaMarche added to his own employee records at MaxDigital Corp's security department. There the heroes find an investigative report on the LaMarche's disappearance. Give the heroes Handout #1.

TRAPPED!

The heroes' search activities have not gone unnoticed! Silent alarms have alerted security to the fact that Dr. LaMarche's office is being ransacked. Once the heroes have exhausted their search for clues, read this to them:

All of a sudden this V-World changes! A reddish haze overlays the entire simulation, and you all freeze where you are. You try to move and discover that you can't! The rules of the V-World extranet have frozen your avatars in place.

A female recorded voice message says "Do not try to escape. You have been detected performing unauthorized activities. Security personnel will be with you shortly to question you. Do not try to escape..."

You notice you have been disconnected from your Assistants, and that you yourselves cannot disconnect from V-World and leave. You are effectively trapped inside the Extranet!



It should be a matter of seconds before security arrives, captures you definitely, and traces you back to your real bodies in the real world. Judging from what you've heard of Security in V-World Extranets, this should not be pleasant.

There is only one way to escape this trap: One of the heroes can mentally activate the "DigiDefrost" hacking program they have loaded into their pods before the guards arrive and capture them.

Activating this program should normally be automatic but is now much harder since the heroes have already been trapped. Treat the activation as a Dramatic Action using the Hacking skill with a –2 penalty. The heroes need five successes in order to mentally activate "DigiDefrost." Cooperative rolls using the Hacking skill are acceptable.

By the third round, the door opens and two security guards, identical to the guards at the door, enter. They look somehow larger and more menacing than before, and something under their suits pulses slightly, as if their bodies were somehow bubbling, or changing. The guards gloat about how the heroes are trapped, and how they will trace them back to their real-world location and capture them. They also periodically use the Spores power from their fingers (see the Dark Terror description) to automatically damage a random hero as part of their interrogation (treat this as an automatic hit with a raise and roll damage). The heroes can role-play using Persuasion rolls to try to fast-talk the guards and gain time while they continue working at the Dramatic Task. You have a final say on when the guards decide to stop this impromptu torture and proceed to disconnect the heroes.

When the heroes activate the "DigiDefrost" program, proceed to the next section.

- **V-World Guards (2):** In human form use stats for Veteran Security. In monster mode, or when using the Spores power, use stats for Dark Terror.

THE GETAWAY

Read this to the heroes:

Suddenly the entire V-World flickers! The guards look around you surprised. "What's happening?," one of them asks.

A logo and a message written in scrawny letters appear floating in the air in front of all of you. The logo looks like a child's drawing of a bull-dog's head, and the message under it reads "Bad Dog's Last Laugh." The guards stare at it

horrified before an immense white-noise digital explosion makes everything turn bright.

A few seconds later you are standing just as you were before the explosion, as the simulation rapidly rebuilds itself. Every user other than you or the guards has been disconnected. You are no longer frozen and can freely move! What's more, each one of you finds yourself armed with an autopistol, a bizarre glowing device with the small logo of a bull-dog's head on it. Supposedly weapons are not allowed in this V-World. Your Assistants are also back with you. This is a good hack program indeed!

The simulation itself is in chaos. The walls and windows of the virtual complex flicker wildly on and off, and you can probably run through them if you wanted to. Far away you see, looking through the flickering walls, the location where you originally appeared when you entered the simulation. It is covered with a large green semi-transparent sphere. You know this is the only place in the simulation where you can disconnect and leave V-World without being traced. If you want to escape you need to reach that place!

As the guards slowly regain their wits, you see more guards begin to appear. Then the simulation turns a dark red as full alert is raised. The guards shape-shift into horrifying large humanoids covered in a strong carapace. Their heads and arms extend into four black mucus-covered slimy tentacles. The inhuman monsters growl and lunge with blinding speed towards you!

The strange guns that have appeared in the heroes' hands are virtual auto-pistols with unlimited ammo. Give the weapon stats for auto-pistols to the heroes.

When staring at a Dark Terror for the first time, all heroes need to make Fear checks or be Shaken.

Play this as a Chase using the Chase rules from *Savage Worlds*. The Chase lasts five rounds, and uses Agility as the maneuvering Trait. The Dark Terrors can use their Spores power as a ranged attack, and can also attack with their tentacles at Melee and Short range. The Force maneuver is not available.

Some typical obstacles to use during the chase might include:

- A wall materializes in front of the hero (a minor or major obstacle)
- A wall materializes or piece of furniture materializes on the location the hero is, and unless the hero avoids it, he or she will receive significant damage (a disaster complication).

The following special Assistant actions are available:

- **V-World modification Interface:** If a hero spends a Benny and his or her Assistant makes a successful Hacking roll, it makes a virtual obstacle appear in front of the pursuing Dark Terrors. The player should come up with an ingenious and interesting obstacle. With a success on the Hacking roll, the enemies receive a –2 penalty to their next Agility roll to move. With a raise, the Assistant's hero (and only that hero) also receives a +2 bonus to his or her Agility roll to move.

After the fifth round, the heroes successfully reach the sphere that marks the escape zone and automatically disconnect. The "DigiDefrost" program takes care of erasing the tracing logs so MaxDigital can't find out where they came from. The heroes have escaped!

- **Dark Terrors (1 per hero)**

EPILOGUE

By the time the adventure is over, the heroes should have talked to the N'ahili, realized the aliens' interest in whatever the heroes saw in Nouvelle Vie, and received some cryptic advice from them. They should also have made the acquaintance of several important people at the Psion Brotherhood and obtained their commitment to send directly to Epsilon Leader Antoine an encrypted copy of the classified files related to the strange incidents and sightings in space. Finally, they should have discovered that Dr. LaMarche's has escaped somewhere outside Earth; that he was working on something related to the Stellar Communications Network, something that was deeply troubling him; and that his employer is looking to kill him.

When the heroes finish this part of the adventure, they get a message from Epsilon Leader Antoine. He asks them to report back to Circle HQ in Melissant as soon as possible, as he has a new mission for them. Besides, the war between Concordia and Bay Jing is heating up, the situation in Nouvelle Vie is becoming more unstable by the minute, and the Circle is about to be dragged into a nasty war.

The adventure continues in *Divided we Fall*, the next module in the epic *Seven Worlds* campaign!

side stories

This section includes several side stories you can run or take inspiration from to complement the adventures in the main campaign.

Don't forget to review the background for each planet, as well as the Personalities section on the *Setting Guide*. There are great ideas for further side stories there!

SPACE-JUMPING A CLAIM

Where: Clarke Station or Nouvelle Vie.

Robt Sardo, leader of the Asteroid Miners Guild, asks the heroes for help. The *Touraine*, an independent miner ship, is drifting next to an unexplored asteroid on the outer asteroid belt. Requests for communication are not being answered. The crewmembers of the *Touraine* are renowned for being top explorers and always finding and claiming the best asteroid lodes. The ship left Nouvelle Vie with no incident a few weeks ago. Sardo asks the heroes to investigate, and save the miners if possible.

As the heroes approach the asteroid, their sensors detect another independent miner ship approaching as well. The *Deep Waters IV* reports it was on its own survey of the belt when it detected the situation and is approaching to help. The heroes' ship will reach the *Touraine* hours before the *Deep Waters IV*.

When the heroes reach the asteroid they find that it has a claim beacon that proves it is "owned" by Hataro Mining, a midsized mining consortium. Claim beacons avoid claim-jumping by proving "who was there first," but it is strange that the claim beacon did not transmit ownership back to Nouvelle Vie as soon as it was installed.

When the heroes board the silent *Touraine* they find signs of an explosion in the engine room, dead bodies everywhere, and a single survivor: Eddie Warren, one of the newer miners in the independent crew. Warren says that they arrived at what they thought was an unexplored asteroid but found the Hataro Mining claim beacon, which for some mysterious reason was not transmitting. Then a strange explosion rocked the engine room, destroying the engines, comm equipment and life support. Warren was able to get into an emergency suit but no one else made it. Warren is desperate to get back to civilization and discourages the heroes from investigating any further.

In truth, Warren joined the *Touraine* as a Hataro Mining plant. Knowing that the crew of the *Touraine* always managed to claim the most valuable asteroids, Warren waited until the team found a good one and then killed them before they made their claim by blowing up the ship and life support. Then he planted the claim beacon on behalf of Hataro and concocted the story that the beacon "had been there all along." The *Deep Waters IV* is an independent ship secretly hired by Hataro to "confirm" the validity of the beacon and pick up Warren.

As the heroes investigate the situation, Warren becomes increasingly nervous, finally resorting to trying to kill them. Once the crew of the *Deep Waters IV* sees they have been discovered they try to destroy both the *Touraine* and the heroes' ship. The *Touraine* cannot fight back.

- **Eddie Warren:** Use the stats for Veteran Thug, but remove the Mean Hindrance and add a Knowledge (Science) d6 and the Miner Edge.
- **The *Deep Waters IV*:** Use the stats for Medium Pirate/Mercenary Ship.

A FREE MARKET

Where: Concordia.

Run this adventure if the heroes are preparing to depart Concordia towards Earth. If they have a different destination, change the adventure accordingly.

As the heroes are preparing to depart, they are approached by a middle-aged couple dressed simply in farmer clothing. They are as Mr. and Mrs. Geroux, owners of a small gourmet cheese factory called Geroux. Their cheeses are in high demand among connoisseurs on Earth. Recently a large industrial food conglomerate, Wattsworth Produce, has been buying all the neighboring farms, and has tried to buy the Geroux's farm as well, but the couple have declined all offers. A few months ago, Wattsworth bought Geroux's distribution partner on Earth, and their distribution deal has been rescinded. With no distribution partner, Geroux's is on the verge of bankruptcy, and the couple are about to have their farm confiscated for debt. They ask the heroes to please transport a few crates with samples of their best product

to Earth and give them to Ron Sharlto, a possible new distributor.

Wattsworth Produce wants the Geroux' farm so badly for a reason: Unbeknownst to the couple, a curious combination of natural organic chemicals under the surface is producing soil of a particularly good quality. Wattsworth has obtained the lands around the farm and has confirmed that the center of this organic deposit is directly under Geroux. If Wattsworth could get their hands on that organism and analyse it they could reproduce that soil quality in all their farms, with significant financial returns.

As the heroes plan to depart Concordia, customs agents stop them and demand to confiscate the cargo; groups of thugs try to ambush and dissuade them from carrying the cargo; and their ship is sabotaged and has problems en route to Earth (run this as a Ship Hazard, see *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*). It should slowly become obvious that Wattsworth is going to a lot of trouble and expense for what should be a small farm.

- **Thugs (2 per hero):** Use stats for Typical Thug.

Once the heroes arrive at Earth, they find that Ron Sharlto has mysteriously disappeared, and the heroes now have no distributor contact. While looking for him the heroes find that there is a Gourmet Foods fair coming up in a few days and that the heroes' best hope of finding distributors is at the fair. If the heroes decide to sign up, Wattsworth will try their best to stop them from participating, even attempting to kill them.

Regardless of whether the heroes participate in the Fair or not, a Wattsworth negotiator, accompanied by a group of heavily-armed goons, approaches the heroes and attempts to buy the product samples, asking them to name their price.

- **Negotiator:** Use stats for Civilian with a Persuasion of d12+2, Intimidation of d12 and Taunt of d10.
- **Thugs (1 per hero):** Use stats for Veteran Thug.

Assuming the heroes find a distributor at the fair and negotiate a good deal with them, the Geroux will be immensely grateful, giving them a generous percentage of the initial distribution payment. As the heroes' participation becomes known (thanks in part to the Geroux) they get a permanent +1 bonus to Charisma while dealing with people from Concordia.

A SIMPLE ERRAND

Where: Clarke Station.

Jacinta Matriciano, the EarthGov representative in Nouvelle Vie, approaches the heroes while they are in the corridors of Clarke Station, and invites them for a drink. After some small talk she asks for a favor: She knows,as members of the Circle, they tend to travel a lot. Should their travels take them to Earth, there's a delicate package she would pay a lot of money to have picked up and brought to her. The heroes are to go look for a Mr. Ryu in downtown London and ask for the package. She refuses to elaborate on the contents, except to say that the heroes should not worry about getting in trouble because transporting it is not illegal.

If the heroes ever pick up the package, they receive a small box weighting around two pounds. Shortly after picking it up, the heroes are ambushed by hired goons who want the package.

- **Hired Goons (6):** Use stats for Typical Thug.

Should the heroes open the package (which once open cannot be closed again) they find significant amounts of Peak, a highly-addictive, illegal hallucinogenic recreational drug distributed by Earth cartels. It turns out Matriciano has become addicted to Peak and needs her daily dose whatever the cost.

The goons have been hired by Councilman Ballard Hanks, a political opponent of EarthGov Secretary General Norah Reichardt. By outing Matriciano's drug problem, Hanks wants to discredit her and by extension her mentor and party leader, Reichardt, thus preparing the way for his election to the top post. As the heroes escape Councilman Ballard's ambushes and traps he becomes more desperate, resorting to phony police interventions and others.

Assuming the heroes are still willing to transport Matriciano's package, right before they leave Hanks himself confronts the heroes, along with about sixteen hired goons. If the heroes still refuse to give him the package, he will try to take it by force, killing them if necessary.

If Matriciano receives the package and learns of all this, she will reward the heroes handsomely, and apologize for lying to them about Peak not being illegal. She will owe them a favor from then on.

- **Councilman Hanks' Hired Goons (16):** Use stats for Veteran Thug.

- **Councilman Ballard Hanks:** Use stats for Civilian, but give him the Command Edge, and a d10 in Intimidation and Taunt.

GEOSYNCHRONOUS CRIME STORIES

Where: Earth, Center City.

The heroes are contacted by the family of Thomas Bialecki, a reputed scientific researcher who works for Oberon Industries on the planet Zarmina ("Gee"). Dr. Bialecki, who had come to Earth on vacation to visit his family, landed at Center City a few days ago and called his family to notify them of his arrival. Unfortunately, that was the last anyone heard of him. The family asks the heroes to find him.

Dr. Bialecki has been kidnapped by the Mayhem Crew, a crime syndicate with a branch in Center City. It turns out that next week a valuable sample of a new and potent medical drug created by Oberon Industries is arriving at Center City from Zarmina. The Mayhem Crew wants to steal this drug and sell it to a local laboratory. Dr. Bialecki is an excellent source of information on Oberon's research and on the security protocols that need to be breached in order to steal the cargo.

As the heroes arrive in Center City (either through the Space Elevator or a StO shuttle) and begin their investigations, they should find themselves in the sights of the Mayhem Crew. They might hear about Oberon Industries' arriving sample and its importance, and maybe crash the final showdown between Mayhem Crew members and Oberon Industries' security personnel in the docks where the sample is unloaded.

Dr. Bialecki is kept in one of the warehouses that rotate on the outer ring of Center City, protected by a group of Mayhem Crew members. While the Crew is very interested in the samples, they will not risk all their ongoing criminal operations in Center City just for one deal. If things get too rough, it is better for them to kill the heroes and Dr. Bialecki and move on.

- **Mayhem Crew Thugs:** Use stats for Typical Thug (seethe *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*).
- **Mayhem Crew Senior Thugs:** Use stats for Veteran Thug.
- **Oberon Industries Security:** Use stats for Typical Security.
- **Dr. Thomas Bialecki:** Use stats for Civilian but with Knowledge (Science) d10.

BITE-SIZED ADVENTURES

Here are some short ideas for you to flesh out, should you have the inclination:

- **Picking Sides:** One of the two competing bands of terrorists loyal to Jubilee and Dauphin sabotages Clarke Station and takes it hostage. With most of the official law enforcement of the station neutralized, the other terrorist group comes out and offers its services to free the station if the heroes and the other factions support them in the fight. The heroes must decide whether to ally themselves with terrorists to stop other terrorists (and legitimize the slaughter that will surely erupt) or if they are willing to fight two different bands of terrorists at the same time.
- **Wave of Death:** One of the frequent mega-tsunamis of Nouvelle Vie is approaching a small, remote island of fishermen. Tentaclers (see the *Seven Worlds* Setting Guide) and other local creatures are feeling the danger and becoming more violent and dangerous. Several years ago, the fishermen invested significant amounts of resources in building a shelter to protect against just this eventuality. Now, however, a young engineer swears that the shelter is not ready to support a tsunami of this magnitude, and asks everyone to evacuate. For political reasons, the leadership of the island refuses to abandon one of their platform projects, leaving the heroes in a quandary: Do they risk the protection of the shelter, maybe trying to reinforce it? Do they risk the wrath of the island leadership by convincing the population to evacuate? Or do they save those who want to be saved and leave the others to their fate?
- **A Bad Case of Food Poisoning:** On Earth, the heroes are asked to go to Pedernales, at the base of the Space Elevator. One of the elevator capsules arrived without trouble all the way from Center City, but one of the five passengers aboard died of poisoning a few hours after disembarking. Could one of the other four passengers have poisoned him? Why, and how? What happened during the four days the capsule trip lasted?

player handouts

The following are handouts and dispatches to be given to the players during the adventure.

HANDOUT #1

Internal Security Report MD-ISR-334R5R-1: CONFIDENTIAL
Subject: Dr. Luis LaMarche Disappearance Investigation

MD Security has located and taken care of an underground hacker going by the alias of "Mad Dog." This hacker has been identified as the subject that illegally removed Dr. LaMarche's IDTag from his body and faked his DNA fingerprints, thus making it impossible for us to locate him by the usual methods.

Based on local conduct pattern investigation MD Security concludes that Luis LaMarche has left Earth for an unknown destination. It is therefore necessary to activate procedures to continue the search on other Worlds as well as on space stations and other remote locations.

All agents are reminded that because of the information he carries the suspect represents a maximum security risk. All MaxDigital Security agents must work to find him whatever the cost and eliminate him on sight, as well as anyone else he may be or has been in contact with.

Suzanne,

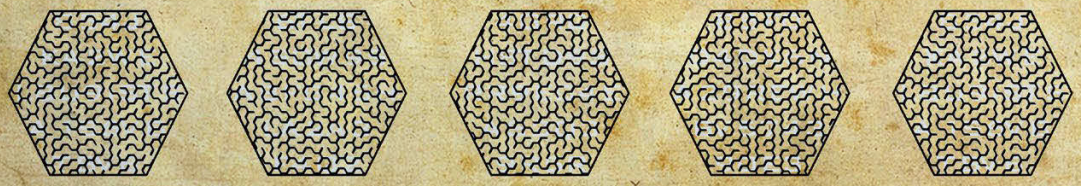
I'm sorry for making you jump through hoops like this, but I can't think of a safer (or more bizarre) place to store information in than this. I've found something really bad while working at Max Digital Corp, and I think the Circle should get involved right away. I wish I could offer you proof, but I can't. Your experts at the Circle can, though: There's a protected file in my virtual study inside Max Digital Corp's V-World Research Extranet. Since it's a secure V-World, it forbids taking documents out of it, but I'm sure if someone from your team gets in and reads it, they'll find a way to act on it.

Below this note you'll see several digital tags. I'm sure your Assistant can scan them and thus take them back to the real world. They will provide everything you need to enter the Max Digital Extranet and get the information you need.

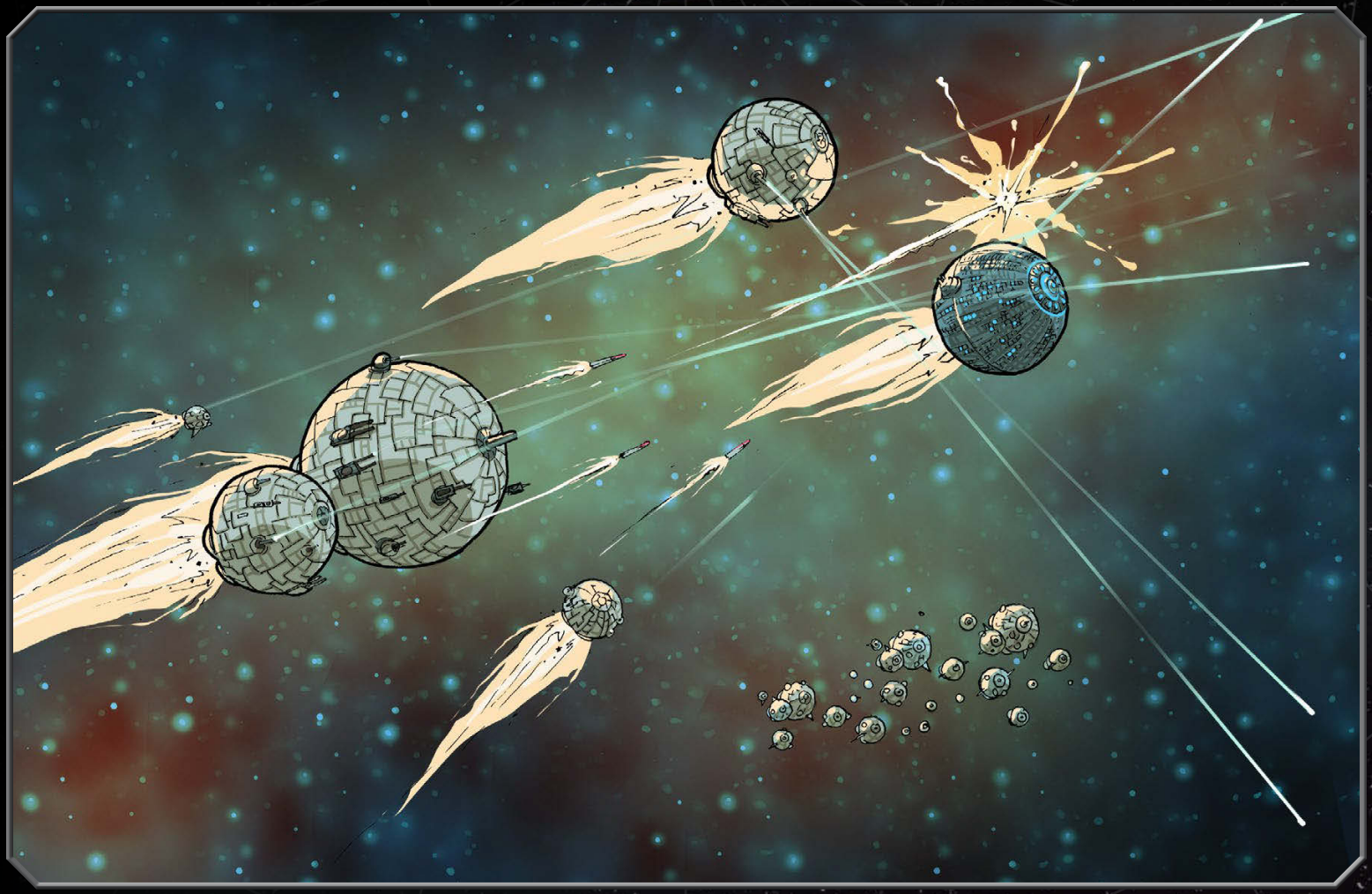
Again, I'm sorry for this mess. Hopefully I'm as paranoid as ever and you'll laugh at me about this, again.

Love,

Luis



SEVEN WORLDS



2. DIVIDED WE FALL

introduction

"WHERE IS EVERYBODY?"

— ATTRIBUTED TO ENRICO FERMI, ON THE EXISTENCE OF ALIEN CIVILIZATIONS

Welcome to the second module in the *Seven Worlds* campaign! This epic, unforgettable odyssey places the heroes at the center of the greatest conflict humanity has ever seen, and puts its future in their hands.

At its heart, the story told in the *Seven Worlds* campaign is a tragedy, the story of the annihilation of humanity by forces far beyond its comprehension, and of a few heroes' efforts to turn back the tide. Other campaign's measure of success is the answer to the question "Did we win?" In this campaign, success or failure is measured in the answer to a different question: "Did we survive?"

This adventure continues where *Rumors of War*, the first *Seven Worlds* campaign adventure, left off. It is assumed you've already played that adventure before starting this one, but if you haven't you will still find lots of interesting and challenging scenarios for you and your players to enjoy!

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

This section gives a short overview of the *Seven Worlds* Campaign up until this point.

WHAT'S HAPPENED BEFORE

A Mysterious Encounter, the introductory adventure included in the *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*, told the story of a group of Circle officers who, while on a routine patrol next to the frontier planet of Nouvelle Vie, witness the appearance of a strange alien ship and see its awesome destructive power. As a result, the heroes were sent to Concordia, one of the most powerful planets in the *Seven Worlds*, and the headquarters of the Circle, to report on what they saw.

In *Rumors of War*, the heroes travelled to Concordia and met Epsilon Leader Antoine, leader of the Circle. Antoine told the heroes that the Psion Brotherhood had been secretly interested in these strange ship sightings, and asked them to go to Brotherhood Headquarters on Earth and request information on the sighting from the Brotherhood, using official channels. Antoine also asked the heroes to investigate the mysterious disappearance of Dr. Luis LaMarche, a renowned scientist from Earth.

While attending Concordia's Centenary Celebration the heroes became involved in a terrorist attack that ended with the successful assassination of Governor Selnes, the leader of Bay Jing. Since Bay Jing and Concordia were bitter rivals, this assassination sparked the beginnings of an interstellar war.

When the heroes arrived at Earth they met the emissary of the mysterious alien benefactors known as the N'ahili. They also met the leaders of the Psion Brotherhood, including the famous Ganendra Nathan, but failed to get any clues to the identity of the mysterious alien ship they saw. Finally, they get to investigate Dr. LaMarche's disappearance and discovered he had been working on unspecified "improvements" to the Stellar Communications Network, the main technology that allowed the *Seven Worlds* to communicate.

WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW

When the heroes return to Concordia from Earth to report on what they have discovered, Epsilon Leader Antoine sends them on an undercover mission to investigate a curious deployment of ships made by the Concordian fleet as part of their war with Bay Jing. Apparently, Concordia has an ace in its sleeve in its fight against Bay Jing, and it is the heroes' job to find out what it is. An unlikely discovery ends with the heroes carrying information on a top-secret Concordian plan that could ruthlessly allow them to win the war in a single stroke.

The heroes finally arrive at Nouvelle Vie again, this time to expose the Concordian plot. The bulk of the Concordian and Bay Jingnian fleets are about to meet in battle here. As the heroes prepare to witness the mutual annihilation of Concordia and Bay Jing, the sudden arrival of a third, unknown, fleet changes everything and forces humanity to choose between leaving their quarrels aside and joining against the darkness, or falling together.

The heroes barely escape with their lives and fly towards Concordia, carrying a desperate cry for help against an invader more powerful than all of them.

PART I: WAR SECRETS

This adventure begins as the heroes enter orbit around Concordia, returning from Earth. If you want, the trip back could be a great opportunity for side stories or encounters.

INTRODUCTION

As the heroes disembark at one of the orbit stations around Concordia, they are greeted by Epsilon Leader Antoine, who has flown all the way from the surface to talk to them up here.

Floating in zero-G through the corridors of the station, Antoine leads the heroes to a small meeting room and makes sure they are alone before speaking. He congratulates the heroes for their excellent work on Earth, and tells them that a couple of weeks ago the Psion Brotherhood sent him a digital packet of files related to the strange sightings in the frontier. He doesn't know yet how useful the files are but his team is reviewing them carefully.

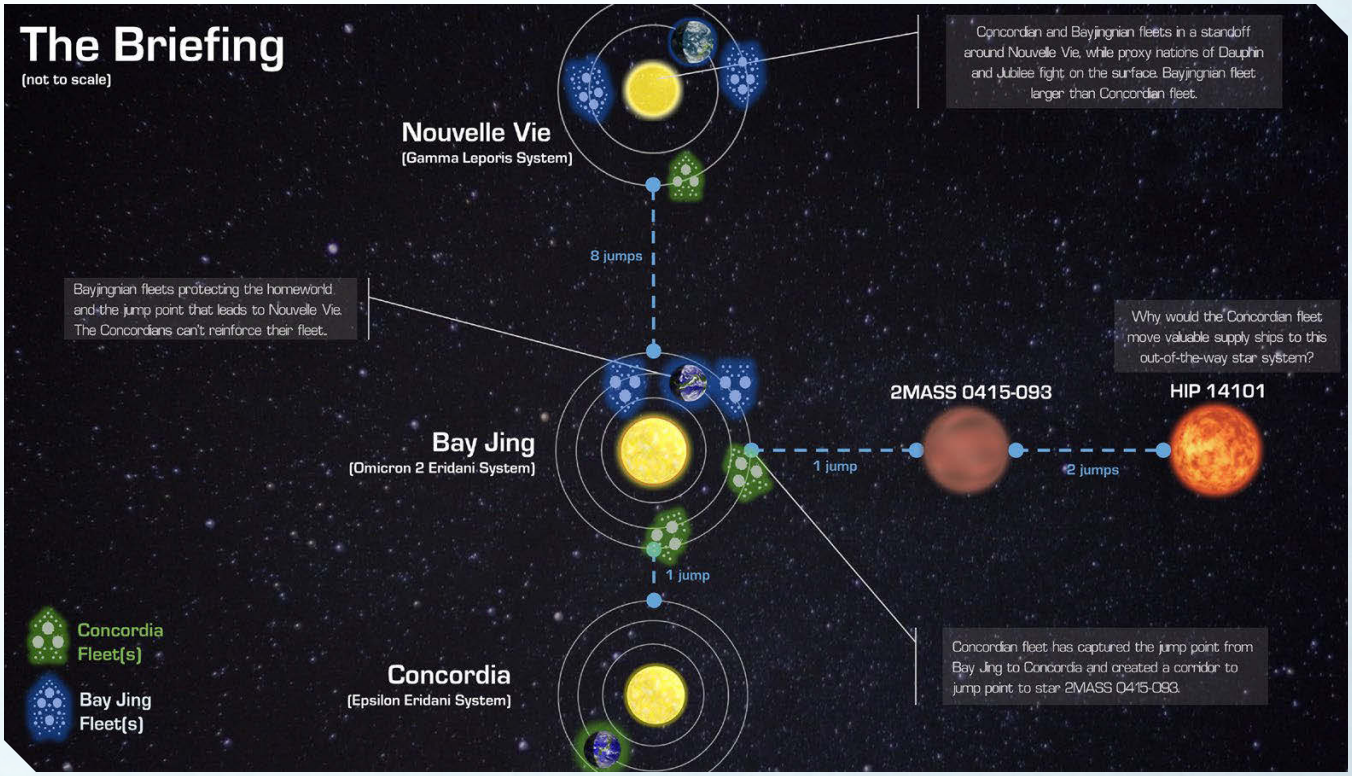
Antoine also asks the heroes about their investigation on Dr. LaMarche, and thanks them for their work there, too. He promises to keep an eye out in case Dr. LaMarche is seen anywhere in known space.

Antoine then grows serious, and gives the heroes their new mission, describing it as "a mission on the success of which millions of lives may depend."

THE MISSION

As the heroes should know by now, the war between Concordia and Bay Jing has begun, sparked by the cowardly assassination the heroes witnessed some time ago. There is fighting going on between the proxy nations of Dauphin and Jubilee in the planet of Nouvelle Vie, and the fleets of Concordia and Bay Jing around that planet are ready to go head-to-head to defend their protectorates. The Circle fleet and several EarthGov ships are trying to keep the peace, but it's just a matter of time before the war escalates.

Concordia's great disadvantage in this war is that Bay Jing lies in the path to Nouvelle Vie. This means it is very difficult for Concordia to move ships or supplies to Nouvelle Vie. Bay Jing is likely to win just because of this.



But four weeks ago, things changed. The Concordian Military Forces, led by General Carlo Ruehle (whom the heroes met in the previous adventure, *Rumors of War*), have invaded the Bay Jing star system, Omicron 2 Eridani, and captured the jump point between Concordia and Bay Jing. The Bay Jingnians fully expected to be invaded and mounted a defense of their planet, as well as of the jump point towards Nouvelle Vie. But strangely, the Concordian fleet did not move towards the jump point; instead, they have created a fortified corridor to a different jump point, to an uninhabited and supposedly worthless star system chain that ends at HIP 14101, a dead-end M3 star with absolutely no strategic value. In the last few weeks they have sent several dozen ships to that star system, including several of their largest and most powerful warships.

Why would Concordia waste time and resources on a worthless star? What are they hiding that is so valuable? That's where Antoine needs help. *The heroes must travel undercover to HIP 14101, find out what the Concordian military is planning there, and report back as soon as possible.*

Antoine then tells the heroes they have recently been approached by someone in a position to help. His investigators have concluded she is trustworthy, and the psionic tests have also given a positive result. Then the meeting room door opens and a tall woman in her forties, dressed in the uniform of the Concordian Military forces, enters the room. Epsilon Leader Antoine introduces her as Captain Ysabelle Dominic, captain of a Concordian military cargo ship called the *Weaving*.

THE 3-D MAP

The 3-D maps are one of the major attractions of *Seven Worlds*. If you have a compatible laptop or tablet, familiarize yourself with the map and use it frequently to explain to the players where they are and what is going on. You can start by setting the Introduction to this adventure with the 3-D map to give the heroes a sense of where they are and where they should go.

Visit **http://www.sevenworldsrpg.com** to download the 3-D maps.

Remember the 3-D map has different versions to reflect new routes being discovered and the changes to the *Seven Worlds*. Take advantage of this and give players, with the appropriate devices, access to the maps so they can explore by themselves.

Captain Dominic explains to the heroes that whatever they may think, she does not consider herself a traitor to her planet. She is not above killing every single Bay Jingnian soldier they come across. Although she does not know what secret her leaders are protecting, from several comments she's heard she believes whatever is in HIP 14101 is not only lethal, but will also be used against innocent civilians, in Bay Jing, Nouvelle Vie, or somewhere else. She trusts the Circle to be an impartial observer that will not give an advantage to Bay Jing, but will use whatever information it obtains to stop any atrocity and save civilian lives on all sides.

Captain Dominic is willing to pass the heroes undercover as "Concordian Officers" in her ship, which has been ordered to travel to HIP14101 transporting some supplies. They will need some minor training in Concordian dialects and accents, as well as fake IDTagging and DNA scanning, but should do fine provided they do not bring much attention to themselves.

Captain Dominic suggests loading the heroes' ship, the *Voyager*, into her "ship's sides." This is a tubular contraption with a passageway that connects several smaller spaceships to the *Weaving*, allowing the larger ship to transport other ships as well. The *Voyager* would have to have its identification tags changed so it can be ID'd as a Concordian ship. Provided no one looks at it too hard it should be relatively easy to hide it as a "new model" patrol ship created for the war.

Epsilon Leader Antoine expresses concern that the Circle has to resort to undercover missions, and on top of that to spying on the planet that hosts the headquarters of the Circle Foundation, but believes the recent behavior of Concordian leadership leaves him with no choice.

After answering any questions the heroes may have, Epsilon Leader Antoine asks them to report to Circle HQ on Melissant, where they are being expected. There a new fake IDTag is inserted in their bodies, their real IDTag is temporarily disabled (a difficult and very uncommon procedure) and special DNA traces are put in place for routine DNA scans.

After being thus prepared, the heroes undergo a few days of crash-study in Concordian Military Forces habits. They will learn to imitate specific dialects and idioms as well as memorize a fake identity and background. In game terms, encourage each player to create their own fake name and identity, then have him or her make a Smarts roll, representing how well they studied. A bonus or penalty may be applied to the roll depending on how good a job the player made when inventing their identity. No Bennies may be used on this roll. Each success and raise gives the hero a

temporary +1 bonus to all Stealth and Persuasion rolls related to faking their identity while dealing with Concordians during their mission. This temporary bonus disappears when the heroes are discovered in Scene #2.

Once they're done, the heroes are provided with uniforms and sent back to orbit so they can accompany Captain Dominic back to her ship. The Circle has already taken the *Voyager* to an orbital depot to make ship identification changes so it will pass a casual inspection and resemble a Concordian ship. Once the heroes board the *Weaving*, the *Voyager* is placed with the other ships in the ship's sides.

SCENE 1: INTRASHIP POLITICS

For the next few weeks, the heroes are spies aboard the *Weaving*, pretending to be lower officers in the Concordian Forces. Their cover story is that Command is quickly promoting people who are "not quite ready", and thus the heroes have been assigned to the ship after serving for quite some time in an unspecified mission far from Concordia. Captain Dominic has avoided interacting with them since they arrived.

The trip to HIP14101 can be as detailed or uneventful as you wish. The heroes may have to deal with suspicious crewmates or awkward questions in the mess hall or the bunk rooms or even a fight or two (with Morenne being the most likely antagonist). The bonus to Stealth and Persuasion rolls the heroes may have obtained to fake their identity may be useful during these encounters.

What follows is a short list of NPCs you may use to create your own encounters during the trip:

- **Lieutenant Eustace Morenne:** A cruel, bad-mouthed middle officer, Morenne takes a disliking to the heroes immediately. He hates Captain Dominic and believes (correctly) they are here because of her. He is not above antagonizing the heroes in a mess room, and would enjoy ambushing them in a lonely passageway if he thinks the heroes are not who they are. Morenne leads a small band of bullies (use stats for Typical Soldier) who distribute drugs and other illegal tough stuff within the officer corps of the *Weaving*, and who would help him with such an ambush.
- **Wiley the Cook:** Although most food is produced automatically on ships nowadays, a cook can still make a difference between tasteless and wonderful meals. And Wiley is gifted in that respect; the mess hall in the *Weaving* serves some of the best food in the fleet (for a military ship mess hall, of course). Wiley likes newcomers and serves them a "special recipe" on their first day on the ship. He knows more ship scuttlebutt than anyone else in the *Weaving*. He's worried about First Officer Gruethe and is looking for ways to help him out.
- **First Officer Donald Gruethe:** The slim, quiet Gruethe is normally efficient and a good complement to Captain Dominic. Although they have never become close friends, they have served together in other ships for many years. That's why Captain Dominic is worried about Gruethe's recent lack of effectiveness. Gruethe now appears tired, distracted and moody, and this is affecting results. Unbeknownst to most people, Gruethe has recently become addicted to Peak, one of the most popular drugs in the *Seven Worlds*, and the results are showing. Morenne is behind the supply of Peak in the ship, and thus he is gaining significant influence and power over the First Officer.
- **Private Charlot Bigelow:** The large Private Bigelow is apparently everywhere at once. The heroes always end up bumping into him in passageways, the mess room and even the head. His habit of turning up at the most inappropriate moments may make the heroes suspicious of him. In truth, Charlot Bigelow is just an unlucky young man who always ends up in the wrong place at the wrong time.
- **Specialist Paulette Montminny:** Miss Montminny is officially a civilian expert on interspatial communications techniques, and has thus been assigned by the High Command to support a secret communication technology experiment at HIP 14101. In reality, Paulette Montminny is a Concordian spy investigating Captain Dominic. High Command is suspicious about Dominic's loyalty and has assigned Montminny to find out if she is up to anything treacherous. If Montminny discovers the heroes' secret, she will show her true identity, round up a group of soldiers, and kill or capture both Dominic and the heroes.

When the *Weaving* reaches Omicron 2 Eridani, Bay Jing's system, read or paraphrase the following:

A few hours ago, the Weaving made the jump to Omicron 2 Eridani, Bay Jing's star. As you know, this jump point has been captured by Concordian forces. When you arrive, you are surprised at the number of Concordian ships protecting the jump point. On the starmaps you see Bay Jingnian forces far away, aching to recover their jump point but not daring to leave their home planet undefended for long. This humiliating situation is obviously unsustainable.

Several Concordian warships form a virtual corridor in space, not to the jump point to the star system that leads to Nouvelle Vie, but instead to the jump point that leads to an obscure star called 2MASS 0415–093, which in turn leads after a couple of jumps to the dead-end star HIP14101. This jump point is also protected by several Concordian ships. Your mission is to discover what about this star system is so important that Concordia would devote so many resources to it.

SCENE 2: BLOWN COVER

When the *Weaving* arrives at HIP1101, read or paraphrase the following:

Finally, you arrive at HIP14101. At first nothing seems out of the ordinary in this uninhabited, out-of-the-way star system. Then your screen lights up with dozens of points, marking the locations in space of many starships. It is a fleet of Concordian warships, floating in space a few days away from you! The Weaving receives immediate orders to move towards the fleet. "What could all these warships be doing in this out-of-the-way backwater?," asks [Insert hero's Assistant's name here].

Several days later, as you are looking out the screen in one of the Weaving's meeting rooms, a message appears on your AR lenses and on every wall-screen: "Prepare for jump. Prepare for jump."

The heroes should realize part of the Concordians' secret: There is a jump point here! But where does it lead? If a hero realizes what is happening, give him or her a Benny. Otherwise, have an Assistant gently explain what this means.

After the heroes have realized the implications of there being a jump point here, read or paraphrase the following. The text below assumes Morenne discovered who the heroes are and is about to kill them. If Morenne is dead or taken care of, replace him with Paulette Montminny, or with a new NPC.

Just then your screen changes, and a horrifying image appears in front of you. It's Captain Dominic, seriously wounded and covered in blood, lying on the floor in what appear to be her quarters, which have been ransacked and destroyed. "Run!," she whispers, looking at you with wild eyes. "Morenne has discovered everything! He knows who you are! He is going there to kill you right now! Leave!"

Just then the door opens behind you and a crazed-looking Lieutenant Morenne enters, followed by several soldiers and guards, as fully armed as he is. "Circle Spies! You will not leave with what you know!," he orders the guards, who raise their weapons to fire.

Once again the heroes are unarmed, but this time their enemies are not.

The heroes begin the battle in front of the screen on the top-right side of the room, while their enemies enter through the west and south doors. Remember to use the rules for microgravity and superconductive magnetic arrays (see the *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*).

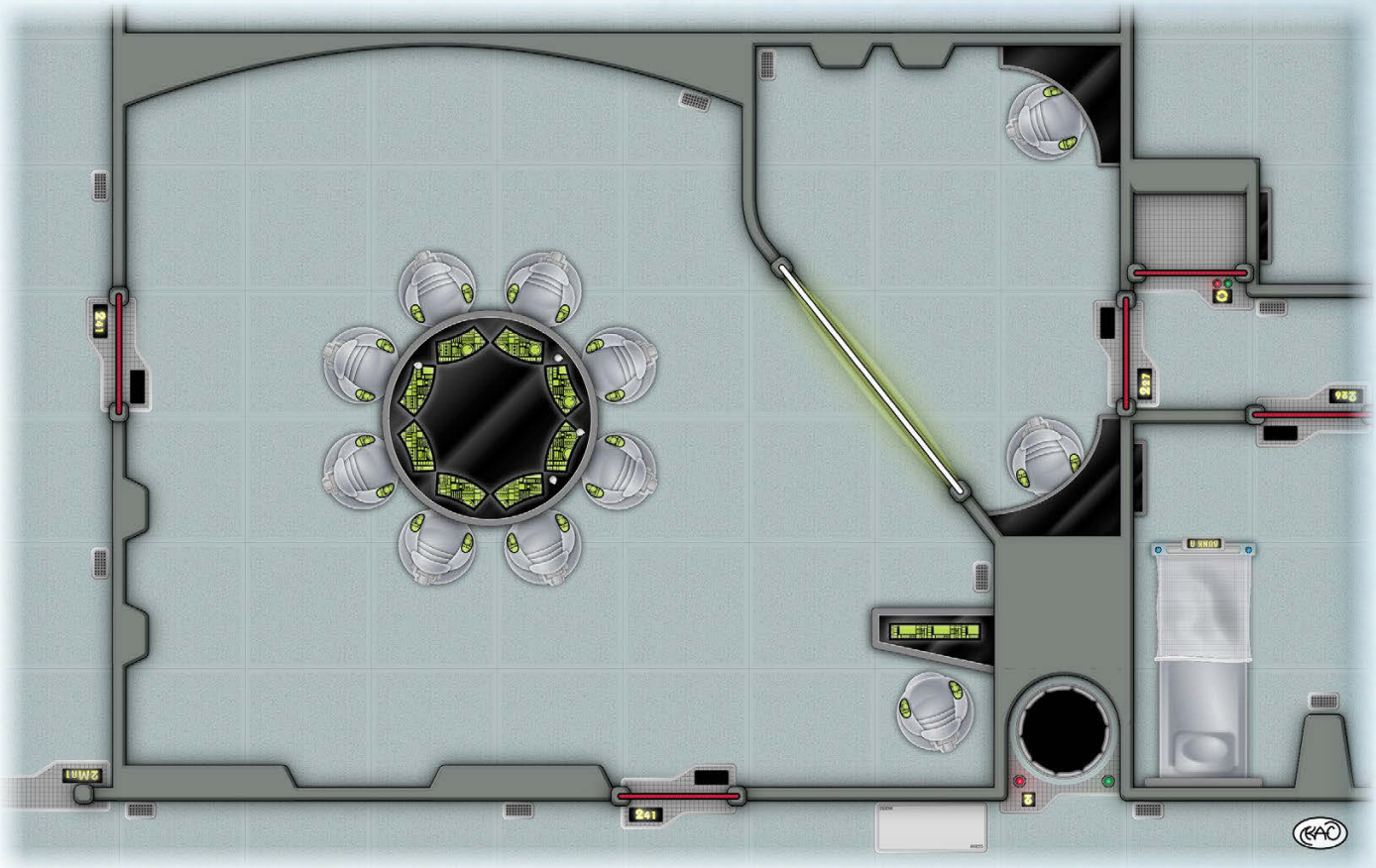
The chairs and table are securely fastened to the floor, and have special belts and superconductive materials designed to allow characters to withstand space combat without gravity. They have Toughness 10 and give Medium Cover (–2) to characters crouched behind them.

The only objects available in the room are some magnetic glasses and cups, and some digital books. They are all magnetically fastened to a surface but can easily be taken. They all count as Improvised Weapons of small size.

The following special Assistant actions are available:

- **Room Doors:** After entering, the assailants digitally lock the doors to the room so no one can escape. An Assistant can unlock the doors by spending a Benny and making a successful Hacking roll with a +2 bonus.
- **Glass Screen:** The diagonal wall on the northeast side of the room has a large thick glass screen used to project special 3-D strategic maps. The glass screen separates the conference chamber from a control room. This screen can be broken by a strong hit or a bullet, and has Toughness 8. It can also be broken if an Assistant overloads its circuits (Hacking roll, requires the player to spend a Benny). If the glass screen is broken in any way, glass spills out everywhere. Place a Medium Burst Template centered on the glass wall where the shot hit (use common sense to determine this), or at its center (if an Assistant overloaded it). Any character under the template suffers 2d6 damage. This damage does not Ace. Assuming the window is broken, the heroes can escape through the control room.

In the third round of combat (or when you think it is appropriate) the ship jumps! Everyone in the ship suffers the effects of Jump Disorientation (see *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*).



The combat ends when either all the soldiers are dead, or when all surviving heroes leave the room.

(If the heroes fall or are captured, Morenne grudgingly takes them to the ship's brig, where an ordeal of interrogations awaits them, as well as an opportunity to escape, which you as a GM should give them).

- **Concordian soldiers (2 per hero):** Use stats for Typical Soldier. They are fully armed.
- **Lieutenant Eustace Morenne:** Use stats for Veteran Soldier. He is fully armed.

SCENE 3: THE SECRET

Assuming the heroes dealt with all their enemies before leaving the room, they can take the firearms of any fallen enemies and take a short breath. If the heroes escaped the room but left some enemies alive behind, proceed directly to the Chase below.

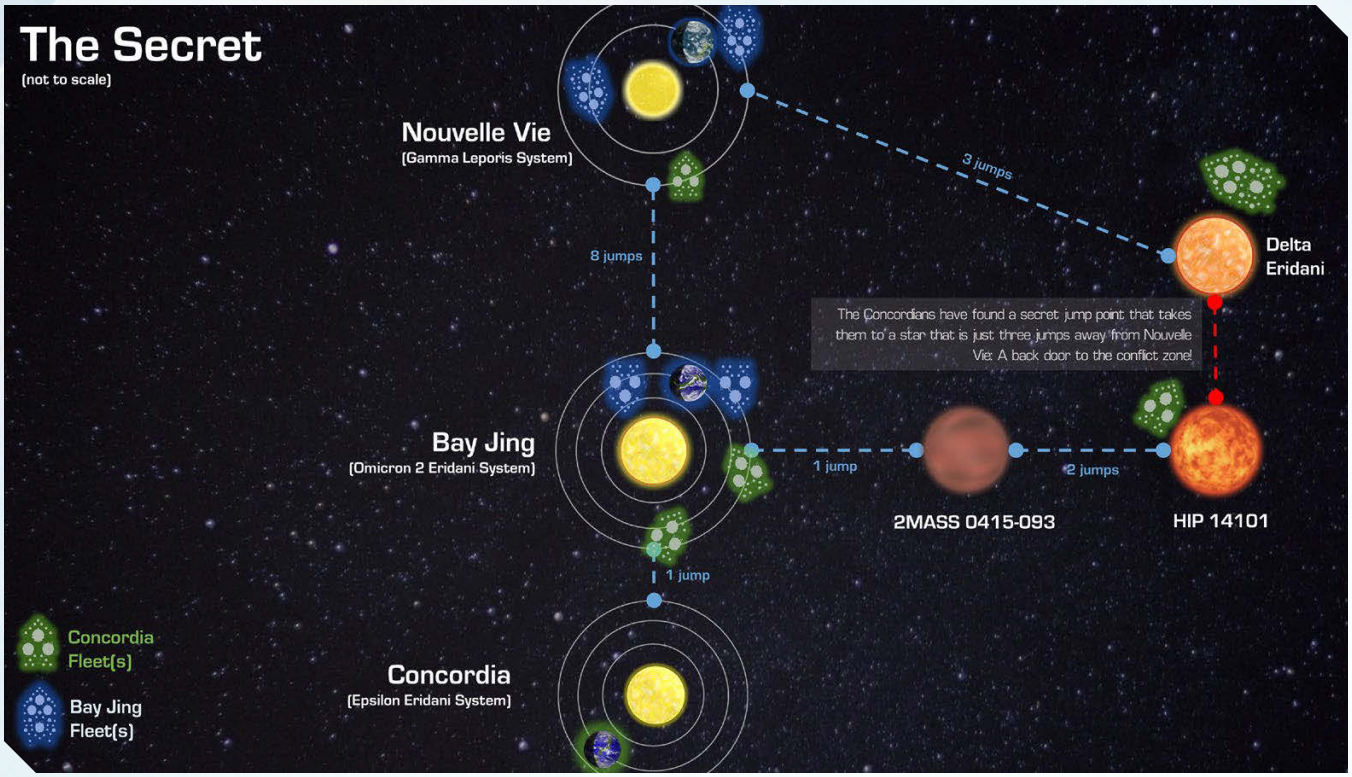
Hopefully a hero will think of asking where they are now that the *Weaving* has jumped. If none of them do, have an Assistant ask.

It does not take long for anyone querying the ship's internal V-World network (either a hero or an Assistant) to discover they are now in the Delta Eridani star system, 6.5 light-years from their previous location at HIP14101. This is remarkable because no known jump point between these two stars was previously known to exist. The Concordians have discovered a new jump point! Even more remarkable, Delta Eridani is just three known jumps away from Nouvelle Vie. The Concordians have found a back door through which to send a fleet to Nouvelle Vie and defeat Bay Jing in one stroke!

Assistants should nudge the heroes towards the correct course of action: The heroes need to report this information to the Circle. Since they are not in a star with a Stellar Communications Network station they need to get to one as soon as possible, and the closest star within the Stellar Comm Network is Nouvelle Vie itself, three jumps away. And since the heroes' cover is blown, they will have to get there on their own. The heroes' ship, the *Voyager*, is in the *Weaving's* ship's sides. It is time to use it.

THE CHASE

Just when the heroes have figured out the secret (or when things are getting too slow) the ship's alarm blares, and the heroes hear the sound of approaching troops. A Chase begins!



Use the Chase rules from *Savage Worlds*. The Chase lasts five rounds, and uses Agility as the maneuvering Trait, modified by the rules for microgravity and superconductive magnetic arrays. Divide the enemies into as many groups as you feel are appropriate. Some typical obstacles in the chase include closed doors, dead-ends, glass walls, and such. Fortunately Morenne did not think to remove the heroes' authorizations from the system before attacking them, so all doors open for the heroes.

The following special Assistant actions are available:

- *Weaving* Active Map: An Assistant can hack into the *Weaving*'s system to get a map that tracks the location of all enemy soldiers trying to stop the heroes, as well as the best routes to reach the *Voyager*. If a hero spends a Benny, an Assistant may attempt this by making a successful Hacking roll. If successful, the Assistant projects a map overlay of the situation on every hero's lenses. From that round up until the end of the chase the Assistant can, on his owner's Action Card, make a free Investigation roll to read the map and plot the best course. This represents how well the Assistant is detecting the heroes and their enemies' positions and strategy. With a success, all heroes add a +1 to their Chase Agility roll; with a raise, the bonus to the roll increases to +2.

If the heroes bring down most of their enemies before the chase is over, simply have more soldiers arrive.

After five rounds of chase, the heroes reach the *Weaving*'s ship's sides.

- **Concordian soldiers (2 per hero):** Use stats for Typical Soldier.

THE SHIP HOLD

Read or paraphrase the following:

You barely reach the Weaving's ship's sides. The five smaller ships the Weaving transports are not inside, but outside it, connected to the main ship via a short corridor and several superconductive clamps. The room you are in is merely the location to which two of the five ships connect. One of these ships is the Voyager, *carefully camouflaged to resemble a Concordian vessel.*

A glance at the control panel for your ship shows that the superconductive clamps are protected, and the hatch to your ship is locked. You will need to find out a way to release your ship if you expect to escape.

More soldiers are approaching! You do not have much time!

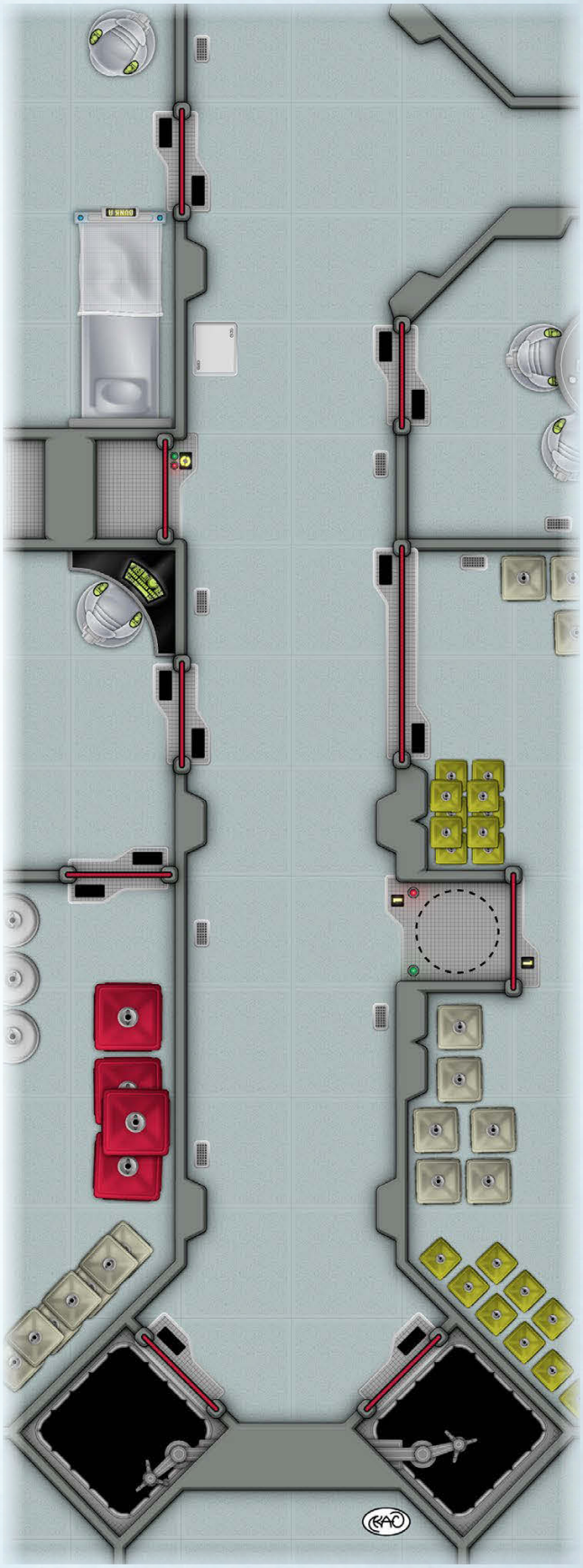
The heroes begin combat on the southernmost side of the corridor, next to the hatches. The closed door to the southeast takes the heroes to the *Voyager*. The heroes' enemies begin at the north end of the corridor. Remember to use the rules for superconductive magnetic arrays.

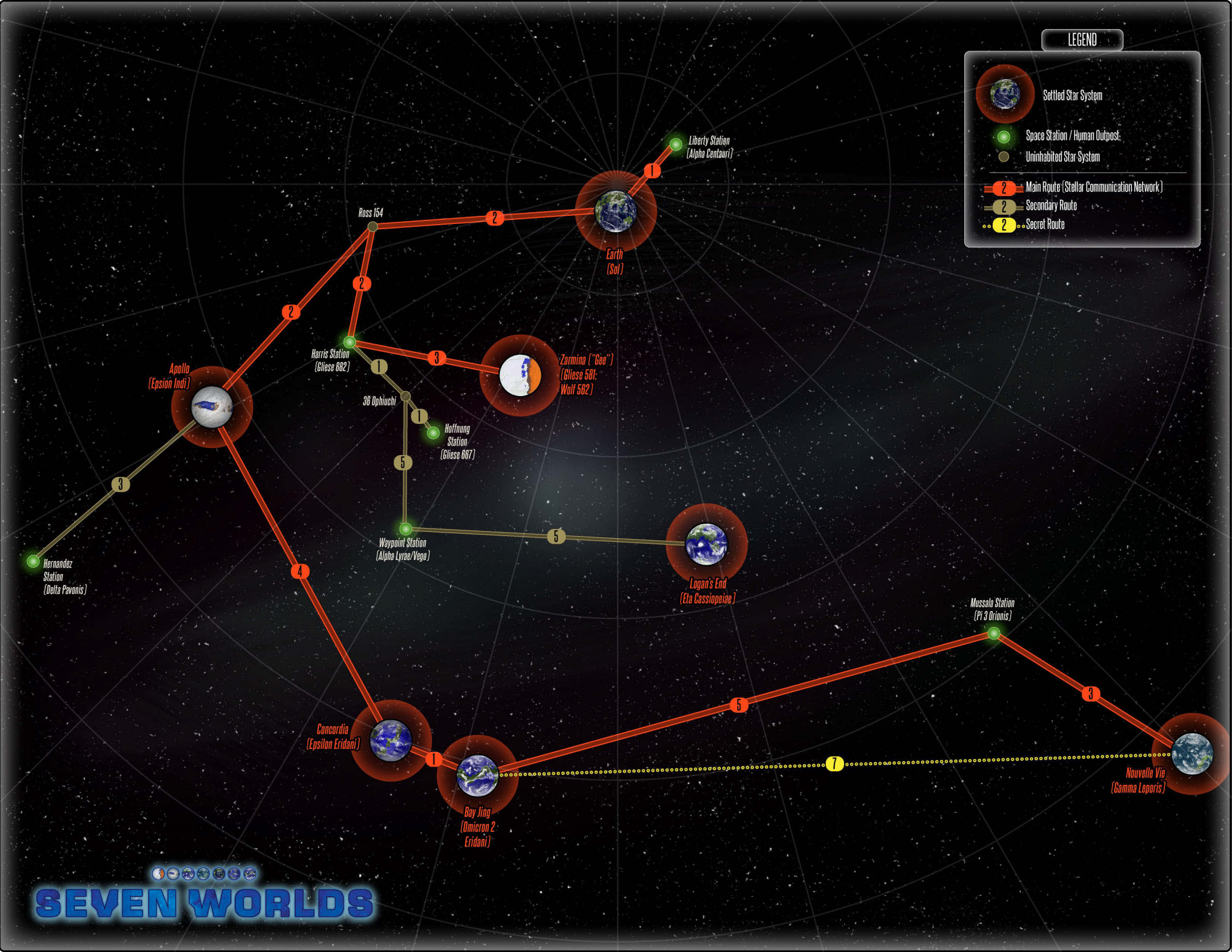
The following special Assistant actions are available:

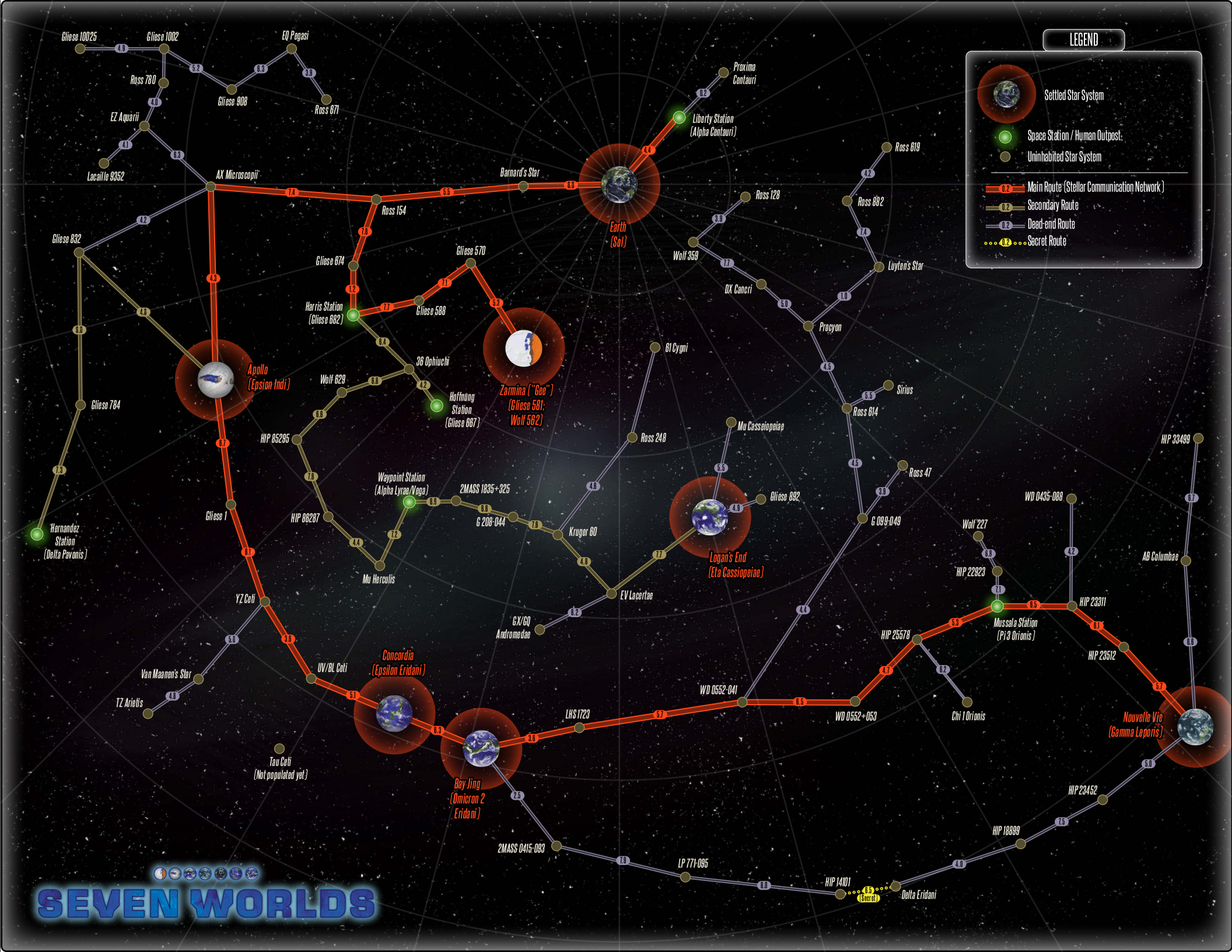
- **Superconductive Magnetic Arrays:** If a hero spends a Benny, an Assistant may try to control one of the superconductive magnetic arrays to magnetically pin an enemy against the wall. This uses the Grappling rules from *Savage Worlds*, but with the initial opposed roll being between the Assistant's Hacking skill and the victim's Strength trait. On his turn the victim may attempt to escape only with a Strength roll, again opposed by the Assistant's Hacking skill. The –2 penalty for microgravity applies to all Strength rolls. The Assistant cannot use this maneuver to inflict damage on the victim (other than the initial Shaken result with a raise).

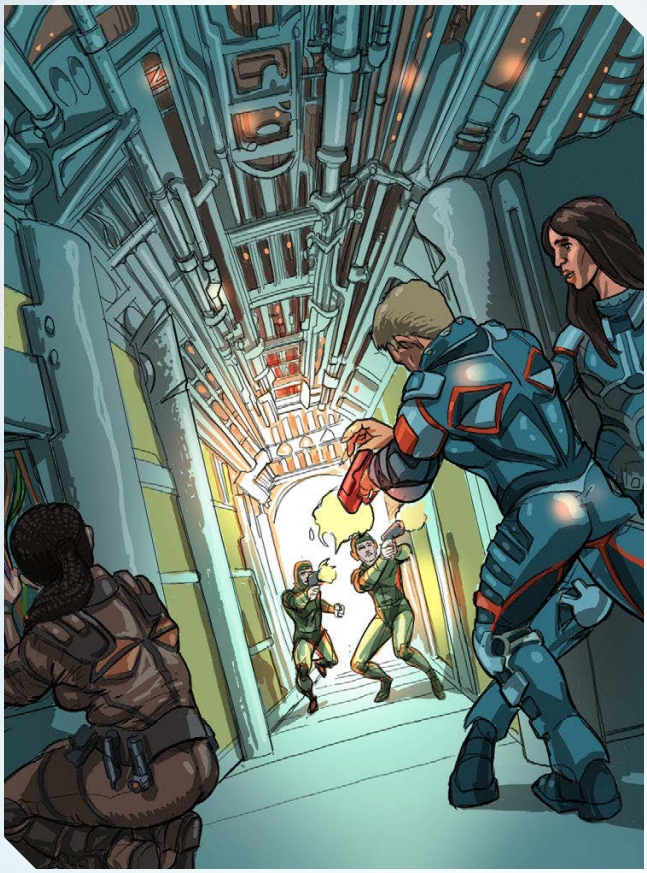
In order to escape the heroes have to complete the following tasks:

1. **Hack into the ship bay system.** This requires a hero to spend an action and work the bay's control panel (located next to the southeast door), making a successful Hacking roll with a –2 penalty. This roll can be made by the hero or his or her Assistant, but only one hero or Assistant may be attempting this roll per round. Also, the hero needs to be next to the control panel to make this roll, even if the roll is made by the Assistant.
2. **Open the hatch door to the *Voyager*.** This requires the hero or Assistant who succeeded at the previous Hacking roll to spend another action making a second Hacking roll, this time with no penalty. With a success, the hatch door to the connecting corridor to the heroes' ship opens. Note that the connecting corridor does not have superconductive arrays so only the microgravity rules apply.
3. **Prepare the *Voyager* for takeoff.** With the hatch doors open, a hero needs to enter the vertical shaft to reach the *Voyager*'s control room and activate the ship's fusion reactor (this task cannot be performed by an Assistant). Assume the hero who decides to do this takes one full round to reach the *Voyager*'s control room, during which time the hero's token is removed from the tabletop. On his next turn, the hero must make a successful Piloting roll with a –2 penalty to have the ship ready to depart. Note that this activity and the activity on step #4, below, can be performed simultaneously by different heroes.




LEGEND
Settled Star System
Space Station / Human Outpost
Uninhabited Star System
2 Main Route (Stellar Communication Network)
2 Secondary Route
2 Secret Route
Liberty Station (Alpha Centauri)
Earth (Sol)
Ross 154
Harris Station (Gliese 682)
Zarmina ("Gee") (Gliese 581, Wolf 562)
Apollo (Epsion Indi)
36 Ophiuchi
Hoffnung Station (Gliese 667)
Hernandez Station (Delta Pavonis)
Waypoint Station (Alpha Lyrae/Vega)
Logan's End (Eta Cassiopeiae)
Mussala Station (Pi 3 Orionis)
Concordia (Epsilon Eridani)
Bay Jing (Omicron 2 Eridani)
Nouvelle Vie (Gamma Leporis)
SEVEN WORLDS


LEGEND
Settled Star System
Space Station / Human Outpost
Uninhabited Star System
Main Route (Stellar Communication Network)
Secondary Route
Dead-end Route
Secret Route
Gliese 10025
Gliese 1002
EQ Pegasi
Ross 780
Gliese 908
Ross 671
EZ Aquarii
Lacaille 8352
AX Microscopii
Proxima Centauri
Liberty Station (Alpha Centauri)
Barnard's Star
Earth (Sol)
Ross 154
Ross 619
Ross 882
Ross 128
Wolf 359
Luyten's Star
DX Cancri
Procyon
Gliese 832
Gliese 674
Gliese 570
Harris Station (Gliese 862)
Gliese 588
Zarmina ("Gee") (Gliese 581; Wolf 562)
Apollo (Epsion Indi)
38 Ophiuchi
Wolf 629
Hoffnung Station (Gliese 667)
Gliese 784
Hernandez Station (Delta Pavonis)
HIP 85295
61 Cygni
Ross 248
Sirius
Ross 614
Mu Cassiopeiae
Ross 47
Gliese 892
G 099-049
Logan's End (Eta Cassiopeiae)
Waypoint Station (Alpha Lyrae/Vega)
2MASS 1835+325
G 208-044
Kruger 60
HIP 86287
Gliese 1
Mu Herculis
EV Lacertae
GX/GQ Andromedae
HIP 33499
WD 0435-088
Wolf 227
HIP 22923
AB Columbae
Mussala Station (Pi 3 Orionis)
HIP 23311
HIP 25578
HIP 23512
Chi 1 Orionis
YZ Ceti
Van Maanen's Star
TZ Arietis
UV/BL Ceti
Concordia (Epsilon Eridani)
WD 0552-041
WD 0552+053
LHS 1723
Nouvelle Vie (Gamma Leporis)
Tau Ceti (Not populated yet)
Bay Jing (Omicron 2 Eridani)
HIP 23452
HIP 18899
2MASS 0415-093
LP 771-095
HIP 14101
(Secret)
Delta Eridani
SEVEN WORLDS



USE THE SPACE MAPS

This is another great opportunity to help the players understand the situation. You can use the updated 2-D map we've included here or take advantage of the 3-D Maps available for *Seven Worlds* and show the connection between the planets in 3-D!

4. **Remove the superconductive clamps.** The hero in the ship bay's control panel has one more task to perform: The superconductive clamps that keep the *Voyager* from departing must be released. This requires an additional Hacking roll with a –2 penalty, and can be performed by an Assistant. Note that this activity and the activity on step #3, above, can be performed simultaneously by different heroes.
5. **Board the ship.** All heroes must board the ship before the hatch can be closed and the ship can leave. No roll is required for this, but heroes must be able to enter the passageway that connects to their ship, considering the microgravity rules.

Assuming the tasks above are performed successfully, the heroes have managed to escape the *Weaving* and are now accelerating at full speed towards the first jump point to Nouvelle Vie.

But the Concordians are not done with them yet.

(If the heroes don't manage to escape in time, they are roughly treated and taken to an interrogation room. After a few days of harrowing interrogations, the heroes are executed. You are encourage to give them opportunities to escape their captors before then).

- **Concordian soldiers (3 per hero):** Use stats for Typical Soldier.

SCENE 4: ESCAPE!

Read or paraphrase the following:

As you blast off into space, you are aware of the huge responsibility you carry. A secret that can change the fate of the war is in your hands, and you must report it to Epsilon Commander Antoine, and fast.

The Weaving did not make the jump alone; several other ships jumped with it. You are astounded at the size of the fleet Concordia is preparing. There are several unmanned laser and particle beam platforms, as well as unmanned missile platforms, remotely controlled by two large battleships. There is even a refueling station somewhat farther along the star system, collecting ^{3}He and other materials to refuel the fleet. Building and preparing this fleet must have taken a long time.

You do not have time to ponder too much on this, though, as your ship is suddenly moved about by an energy hit. One of the battleships is firing at you!

A space battle begins!

Fortunately for the heroes, the Concordian fleet was not expecting to fight an escaping ship, and thus most are not ready for battle. The heroes "only" have to avoid one Battleship, one Patrol Ship, and the *Weaving* itself in order to escape.

Place ten markers in a line on the tabletop, and place the *Voyager* on the first token, facing away (escaping from the battle). The *Weaving* begins combat four SUs away (on the fifth token); the Concordian Patrol Ship begins combat six SUs away (on the seventh token); and the Battleship begins combat eight SUs away (on the ninth token). All enemy ships are facing in the same direction as the *Voyager*, pursuing it.

Each enemy ship gets its own Action Card. The enemy ships are unprepared for combat in the first round, and will only fire one laser cannon per ship.

Starting on the second round they will fire up to two laser cannons per ship. The ships will switch to missiles only if they get to close the range.

Make it clear to the players that the goal of this chase is not for the heroes to beat the enemy, but to escape them by achieving a distance of more than ten SUs. If the heroes are still new to space combat, you should let them know via a comment from an Assistant that the enemy ships' most effective tactic at this distance is to try to blow up the heroes with their lasers. Thus, it might work to the heroes' advantage to raise the Coulborne Shield effectiveness by using their Shield Effects.

When the heroes have left the last enemy ship behind they have effectively moved at an acceleration that makes it impossible for any Concordian ships to catch them. The closest jump point is now HIP 18899 on the route to the Gamma Leporis System, where Nouvelle Vie is located.

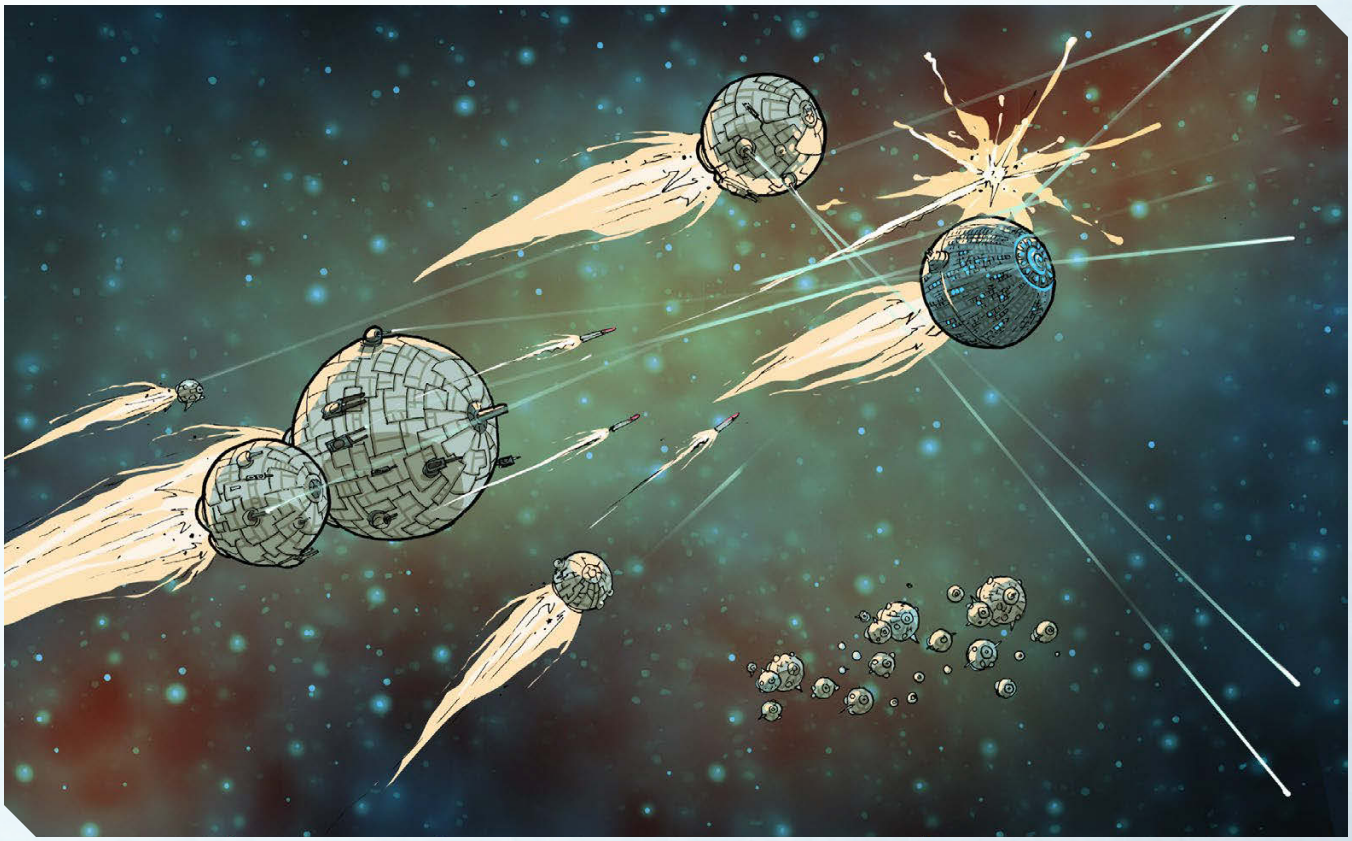
- **The *Weaving* (Concordian Supply/Troop Ship):** Use stats for Troop Ship.
- **The *Ambreville* (Concordian Battleship):** Use stats for Battleship.
- **The *Ruthgartt* (Concordian Patrol Ship):** Use stats for Patrol Ship.

SCENE 5: SHOWDOWN IN NOUVELLE VIE

The three-week trip to Nouvelle Vie is uneventful, and the heroes have time to make any needed repairs to their ship.

Unfortunately for the heroes, the Concordian fleet has stationed small courier vessels next to the jump points on the route from Delta Eridani back to Bay Jing. Using this makeshift Comm Network they can thus send messages within hours to the ships in the Bay Jing system. From there, it is easy to use the Stellar Comm Network to get an emergency dispatch to Nouvelle Vie. Therefore the Concordians in Nouvelle Vie know what has happened before the heroes arrive.

This new situation places General Carlo Ruehle, leader of the Concordian forces, in a dilemma. Since the secret Concordian fleet will still take a few more weeks to arrive from Delta Eridani, General Ruehle has to eliminate the heroes before they warn the Circle if he wants to keep his secret. On the other hand, he can't just move a large chunk of his fleet in Nouvelle Vie to the supposedly worthless jump point to HIP23452 without attracting undue suspicion from the Bay Jingnians. He therefore sends a couple of heavily-armed Patrol Ships on "military exercises" close to that jump point.



In the case of the heroes, their best course of action is to jump into the Nouvelle Vie system and send a message to Circle Headquarters at Clarke Station and to Delta Officer Bryce Saucedo. Once they complete their jump into Nouvelle Vie, this transmission should take about 8 minutes to reach Clarke Station, and it should take 8 minutes to get a response (and days to get reinforcements or military help against the Concordians).

AMBUSH

This is a very tough combat, so make sure the heroes are loaded up on Bennies and Shield Effects, and their ship is in as good a shape as possible. Any missiles spent in the previous combat cannot be recovered.

As soon as the heroes jump into Nouvelle Vie, have them make the appropriate rolls to avoid Jump Disorientation (see *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*). Any heroes who are not Shaken find a surprise in store for them: Their enemy is expecting them!

Read the following to the heroes:

As you reorient yourselves after the jump your alarm sensors sound as the screens around you flicker. Two Concordian Patrol ships are just a few tens of thousands of kilometers away from you, ready to attack! As the first volley of missiles launches, you receive a message from your enemy:

"Spies, we've been eagerly awaiting your arrival! We cannot allow you to tell what you know. We will win this war with Bay Jing soon, but you will not be there to see it!"

The two enemy Patrol ships begin combat one SU away from the *Voyager*, with the heroes' ship and the enemy ships facing each other. The enemy Patrol Ships begin the battle On Hold (use Shooting in lieu of Agility to resolve who goes first). Since the heroes are surprised, have any heroes who are not Shaken by Jump Disorientation make a Notice roll to see if they get an Action Card, as per the standard Surprise rules. Shaken heroes get no Action Card.

In their first round, both Patrol Ships fire as many NNEMP missiles as possible at the *Voyager*. Given the initial distance, the missiles take one round to reach the *Voyager*. NNEMP missiles are designed to disable the ship's electronics before the heroes can transmit what they know (see the *Space Combat* section of the *Seven Worlds Setting Guide* for the game effects of NNEMP missiles). Both ships will continue to fire NNEMP missiles until either they run out or the heroes manage to transmit their message. Then they will switch to laser beams.

The enemy is trying to keep the heroes from transmitting what they know to Clarke Station. If the heroes have not realized this, have an Assistant suggest they might want to send a message explaining what they know before it is too late. Assuming the transmission electronics are working (no NNEMP effects) making the transmission is a Dramatic Task using Knowledge (Ship Ops) as the relevant skill. Although this roll is a free action, the entire Dramatic Task may only be performed by a single character, and is not cooperative. If the heroes manage to transmit the message give them an extra Benny for their success.

This may be a good time for an Assistant to remind the heroes that the benefit generated by a "Move Shield Center" Shield Effect applies to the Pilot's roll to evade missiles.

Remember that a ship that has just jumped must wait an hour before jumping again. Therefore it is not possible for the heroes to jump back to escape.

- **Concordian Patrol Ships (2):** Use stats for Patrol Ship, but each ship carries a missile total of 8 NNEMP Missiles (Damage 3d6; AP 10; HW; special).

AFTER THE BATTLE

Once the heroes win the battle, they can proceed to transmit their explosive message to the Circle if they hadn't done so. As they begin their trip to Clarke Station, an escort of Circle ships arrives to protect them from any further Concordian attacks (the escort can pick them up at the jump point if their ship was seriously damaged).

After a few days, the heroes arrive at Nouvelle Vie. Read or paraphrase the following:

Nouvelle Vie looks distinctly different from the last time you saw it, several months ago. Several fleets surround the planet: The Concordian and Bay Jingnian fleets look on each other from a safe distance, while EarthGov and Circle forces form a buffer between them. You've read from the latest reports that the planet itself is a mess, with the conflict between Dauphin and Jubilee costing thousands of lives.

The diplomats have been working overtime in the last few days after the bombshell you've dropped. It was all the Circle and EarthGov could do to keep the Bay Jingnian fleet from attacking the Concordians there and then. The Stellar Comm Network has been extremely busy with urgent messages between all involved planets, trying to figure out what to do.

As you enter Delta Officer Bryce Saucedo's office again, you marvel at how much you have been through these last months. She looks as grumpy as ever, but has the added stress of three days without sleep. Even so, she forces a smile. "I guess Antoine was right about you after all. What a scoop you got! Of course, now that the cat's out of the bag, I don't see ANY chance that we can avoid all-out war. We'll repair and re-arm your ship immediately, and send you to support the Circle fleet."

If the players enjoy being debriefed, Saucedo proceeds to ask them for a detailed recount of their adventure, which she fills with exclamations of surprise. After the chat, she muses on the many powerful enemies the heroes have made.

Suddenly, a beep and flash comes from Officer Saucedo's desk. She looks at it and then back at you, worry in her eyes. "The 'secret' Concordian fleet has just appeared at the jump point from HIP23452, where you just arrived from. It will be here in a few days." She lets out a tired sigh. "I do not know how this is going to end, but it does not look good. Whatever happens here in Nouvelle Vie between the fleets, Concordia and Bay Jing will almost certainly attack each other's homeworld now. We must stop what we can, and save them from themselves."

After a short silence, she continues. "I wish to congratulate you for what you've achieved. Today, you have made the Circle proud. Now go back to your ship, and await further orders. War will begin in a few days, and we must be ready."

And with that, you are dismissed.

PART II: THE BEGINNING OF THE END

The story continues a few days later, when the heroes' IDTags have been reactivated, and the fake ones removed. If the *Voyager* was damaged but serviceable, it is now fully repaired and loaded. Otherwise, the heroes have just been issued a new Circle Patrol Ship with the same statistics as their previous one, and a new name which the players can choose.

The heroes are in orbit around Nouvelle Vie when they receive a call from Delta Officer Saucedo, who explains that the time has arrived: The Concordian and Bay Jingnian fleets are now less than one light-minute away from each other. Soon they will be close enough to exchange laser fire.

The Circle and EarthGov cannot stop the fleets from slaughtering each other; all they can do is protect civilian ships from the crossfire, and try to stop any atrocities from occurring (such as someone trying to bomb the planet). The Circle has provided several Settler Ships to evacuate any Nouvelle Vie citizens who want to leave the chaos of the war on their planet, regardless of their nationality. The Psion Brotherhood has posted psions on the ships to help calm down the passengers. These Settler Ships with their civilian passengers must be protected at all costs.

Delta Officer Saucedo's orders are clear: All Circle ships, including the heroes' ship, are to spread around the planet facing both fleets. *The heroes are not to enter combat or get involved unless non-combatants' lives are in danger or they are themselves deliberately targeted and fired upon.*

WHAT IF THE HEROES LOSE THE BATTLE?

If the space battle ended with the heroes surrendering (for example, because their ship was too damaged), the enemy is under orders to kill them. However, you should allow them a chance to persuade their captors that they are more valuable alive than dead. Assuming a series of successful Persuasion rolls and a bit of role-playing, the heroes might be taken in custody by the crew of the Concordian Patrol Ships. If the heroes have already sent their warning message, the Circle may arrange a prisoner exchange as part of the diplomatic ruckus that follows. If the heroes have not sent their warning message yet, an entire new adventure could be built around the heroes trying to escape or attempt sending the message from the Concordian ship itself.

SCENE 6: BAD OMENS

This scene lists several encounters you might want to run for the heroes in the few hours before the battle begins. If possible, each event should apply to a different hero.

HACK

One of the heroes gets a virtual message tagged as "high importance," from an unknown sender. The hero's Assistant is (virtually) present via the AR interface when the hero opens the message. Suddenly, the

AR interface flickers, the hero's Assistant dissolves into a rain of pixels and thousands of "Unauthorized Information Access" events flash around the hero's vision. The hero's files are being hacked!

After a few seconds, the hero's AR interface goes to black, except for a sentence blinking in sickly green letters:

We Won't Forget—CMF.

CMF stands for Concordia Military Forces, whom the heroes just humiliated in the previous Scene.

Have the hero or his Assistant (hero's choice) make a Hacking roll with a –4 penalty. With a failure, the Assistant permanently loses one skill die chosen at random. For example, an Assistant's d6 Investigation skill might go down to a d4. If a skill was already at d4, it is lost. The Skill Module that used this skill is permanently damaged and cannot be fixed; if the hero wants to recover his Assistant's skill he must discard the current Skill Module and buy a new one of the appropriate capacity.

No matter what they try, the heroes cannot discover the source of the hacking message.

GOOD-BYES

If a hero has a strong background connection to friends or family in Nouvelle Vie and the player enjoys role-playing scenes, this may be a good moment to run one in which the connection calls the hero to wish him or her good luck, or to share the difficulties of life on the surface (breakdown of government, lack of supplies, etc.). If appropriate, the hero may also learn that another close family member has decided to evacuate via one of the Settler Ships. Having a personal stake in the survival of a Settler Ship may generate interesting roleplaying opportunities for the players later in the campaign.

If both you and the player decide to play this event and it works well enough, the player should get a Benny for the effort.

A STRANGE REPORT

One of the heroes' Assistants shares the following curious information with the heroes. Two days ago, Circle HQ in Clarke Station received a message from a research ship arriving from the jump point at AP Columbrae (where the events of the introductory adventure, *A Mysterious Encounter*, took place). While exploring the planets around star HIP 33499, which is two jumps away from Nouvelle Vie, the research ship detected several unusual energy spikes in the region, corresponding to objects that were moving very fast. The energy spike signatures sent by the research ship correspond to those generated during the strange event the heroes witnessed some months ago.

With the impending battle between Concordia and Bay Jing, this report, along with countless others deemed non-critical, have been filed and ignored with no action taken, until the Assistant found it during a routine search.

What the heroes decide to do with this information is up to them, but most likely there is not much for them to do other than ponder the significance of this event.

SCENE 7: PAYBACK

When you are ready to get the action moving again, read or paraphrase the following:

As you stare in horror at your screen, the first laser beam exchanges between the Concordian and Bay Jingnian fleets begin. Much of the carnage is between the unmanned laser and missile platforms in the frontlines, which skewer each other while controlled by the ships in the back lines.

To planet-bound humans it is sometimes difficult to understand the complexities of three-dimensional space battle strategy. Multiple fleets of ships attack each other from different angles, in a complex and constantly-changing dance of death. There are also cruisers and patrol ships, sometimes caught by laser fire, and sometimes pulling out to stage some surprise maneuver between the unmanned ships.

As expected, Concordia is gaining the upper hand, thanks to its secret, brand-new fleet.

You tensely wait while you stare at the constant destruction in front of you. Suddenly, a Concordian Patrol Ship changes course to fly towards your ship! It is still relatively far away, but its lasers are within range. It does not fire, but seems ready to do so. As it accelerates towards you, it sends you a message: "You're the ones who revealed our secret to our enemies! You will be the first to go!"

Place ten tokens on the board. The *Voyager* and the Concordian Patrol ship start eight SUs away, facing each other. The Concordian Patrol ship flies towards the heroes without firing, but continues to taunt the heroes, hoping to provoke them. It moves normally the first and second round. If by the end of the second round the heroes have not taken the bait, the ship fires both its laser beam and missiles. At that point the heroes should be free to attack. The Concordian

vessel does not fight to the death, and surrenders when there is no alternative.

Hopefully the heroes will see that this ship is trying to goad them into shooting first, and will not fall in the trap. No other Concordian or Circle vessels will enter this particular fight.

If the heroes break the terms of Circle neutrality, either by shooting first in this battle, or attacking the Concord vessel after it has surrendered or is disabled, they have violated the terms of their engagement with the Concordian fleet. In this case, all hero rolls during the negotiation in Scene #9 have a –2 penalty, due to the credibility they have lost.

- **Concordian Patrol Ship (1):** Use stats for Patrol Ship.

SCENE 8: WARMEST REGARDS

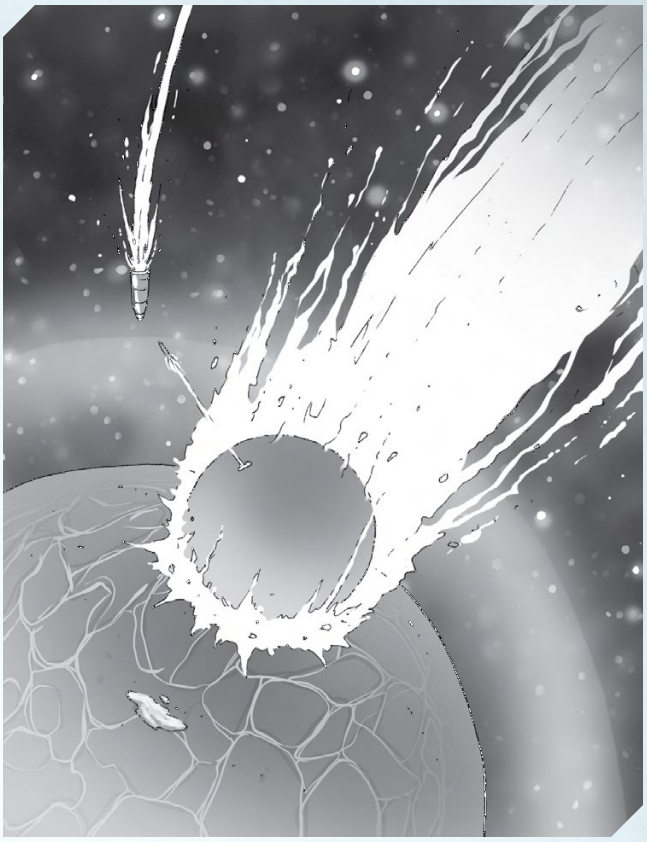
As soon as the previous scene ends, read this to the heroes:

It seems your latest battle has left you very close to Nouvelle Vie's atmosphere, and just in time, as an emergency message from Delta Office Saucedo arrives. "A Bay Jingnian ship has fired several nukes at the surface of the planet! They are set to hit Emerald Bay, the Capital of Jubilee, in less than two minutes. You're the closest Patrol Ship to those missiles. I need you to drop into the planet's atmosphere and bring those missiles down! Be careful, entering the atmo this fast can toast you in an eye blink."

In less than two minutes several millions will most likely die.

Run this special scene using the Dramatic Task rules. Each of the five successes needed to complete the Dramatic Task represents one of five missiles en route to Emerald Bay and other nearby towns in Jubilee. The heroes have five rounds to shoot down all the missiles.

Have the hero with the highest Shooting skill (usually the Gunner) roll that skill with a –4 modifier plus the standard +2 modifier for Shooting, for a net –2 penalty. The roll nets one success per each success and raise on his roll. Since the Gunner is using the ship's laser beam as a Point Defense Laser Battery, add the weapon's appropriate number of heat points to the Heat Pool for the Engineer to radiate as per the Heat rules. If there is more than one laser beam on the ship (there are two on the *Voyager*, for example) other heroes may make cooperative Shooting rolls if they desire, with one hero helping per additional



beam. Remember to add each additional weapon's heat points to the Heat Pool.

As the *Voyager* dives into the planet's atmosphere it risks receiving damage it is not designed to handle. In the Pilot's turn, the ship receives 5d6 damage from atmospheric heat. The Pilot can help reduce the atmospheric damage by making a Piloting roll, adding or subtracting all applicable modifiers. A success on this roll decreases the damage received by one damage die, and a raise by two. This represents how skillfully the Pilot handles atmosphere reentry. Subtract the number of damage dice before rolling for damage, then apply damage normally, calculate heat points, and add them to the Heat Pool.

If the acting character's Action Card is a Club, clouds or atmospheric heat blinds the target, adding an additional –2 modifier to the roll.

If the heroes don't complete the Dramatic Task by the end of the fifth round, several missiles hit Emerald Bay, causing titanic nuclear explosions on the surface. If at least one missile hits, all of General Ruehle's and General Yuang's Persuasion rolls against the heroes during the Council in Scene #9 receive a permanent +2 bonus.

The heroes may turn their ship around and leave the atmosphere automatically whenever they want, either when they the Dramatic Task ends or before.

SCENE 9: CRASH

Read or paraphrase the following:

As your ship leaves the planetary atmosphere and begins to cool down, you see the battle is even bloodier than you thought. Seeing the dozens of floating, destroyed hulks and the spread of the devastation, you begin to believe that it is only a matter of time before Nouvelle Vie and the Settler Ships are destroyed.

Then something unexpected happens.

An alert appears on the screen. Large energy spikes have been detected, appearing just off the jump point to the star AP Columbrae.

"We have guests," says [a hero's Assistant].

A quick glance shows that everyone else has also detected the disruption. There appear to be several dozen strange ships, fitting the description of the object the heroes saw long ago ("a huge, three-dimensional star-shaped object built out of some kind of black diffuse matter, with many slightly sparkling dots"), on an interception course towards the fleets and Nouvelle Vie. Further review shows that the unknown ships are accelerating towards the fleets at almost 20Gs, an impossible speed by human standards.

Allow the heroes to ponder for a few seconds what this means, then read or paraphrase the following:

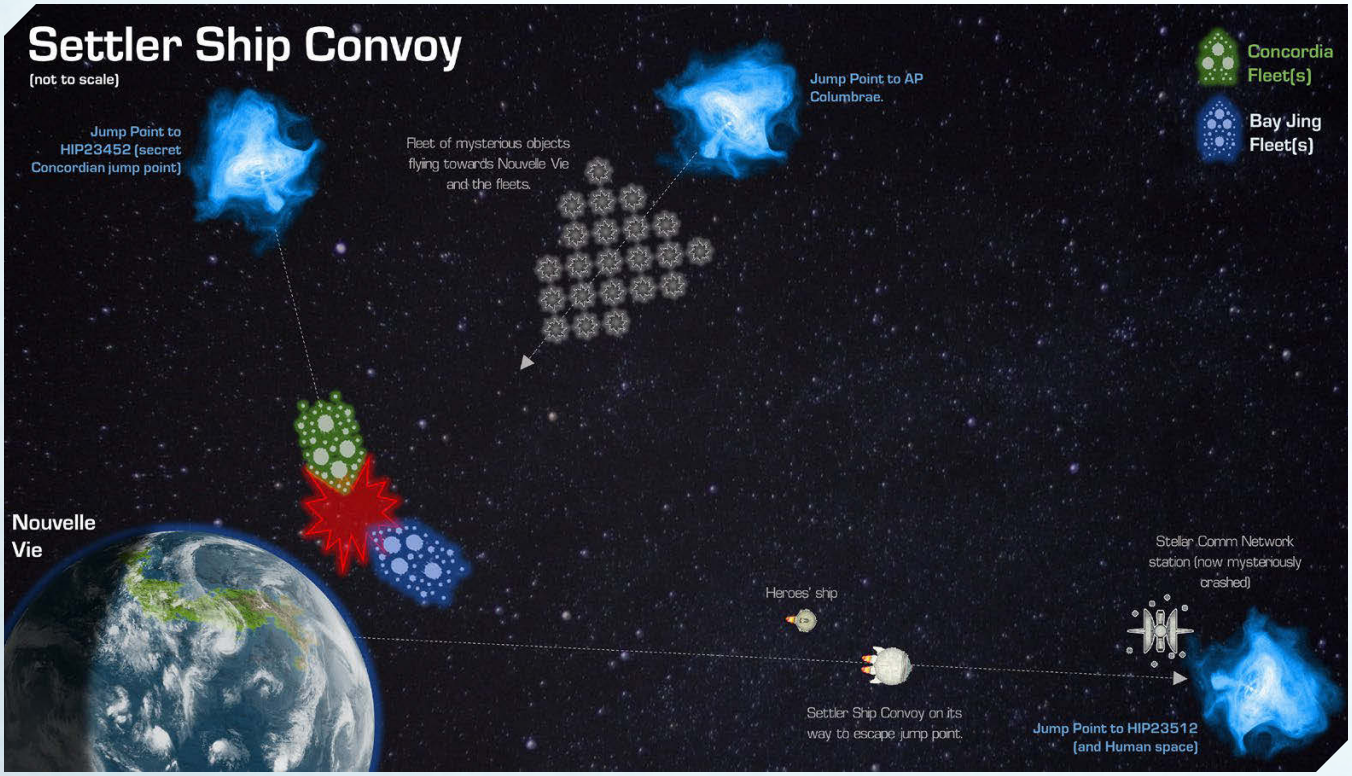
Another alert appears on your screens, this one even stranger than the last.

"Uhm, the Stellar Communications Network just shut down," says [a hero's Assistant]. "No warning, no error message, it just went down. We can't communicate with the other worlds."

"Hands up, everybody who thinks this is a coincidence!," hollers [another hero's Assistant]. "What, no takers?"

All combat stops between the fleets, as everyone tries to figure out what is going on. A few minutes later Saucedo calls from Clarke Station.

Saucedo begins by admitting no one else has any idea of what's going on. A temporary ceasefire has been called, and all sides will be attending a virtual meeting in a few minutes. No one's in the mood to talk, though. As the heroes are the only ones with previous experience in dealing with whatever's approaching, Saucedo wants them to attend, and asks for their help: *The heroes must convince Generals Ruehle and Yuang to put aside their differences and band Concordia and Bay Jing together against whatever's coming; and must also convince them to assign ships to escort the Settler Ship convoy to the jump point.*



Saucedo's priority is to safely escort all the Settler Ships full of civilians out of the danger zone. These Settler Ships are currently on their way to the jump point to the HIP 23512 system, and from there to civilization as soon as possible. Saucedo's orders to the heroes are specific: *After the Council ends, the heroes must lead the Settler Convoy through the jump point towards the center worlds and out of the Nouvelle Vie system.*

The heroes can ask of Saucedo any questions they want. When they're ready, Saucedo hangs up. She'll hook them up soon.

THE CEASEFIRE COUNCIL

A few minutes later, the heroes are virtually connected to a meeting between the leaders of each faction. Since everyone is one or two light-seconds away at most, there is a slight delay in communication, but everyone looks as if they were in the same room. The ghostly shape of each participant's Assistant also appears behind each person. Although the virtual room looks like a table in a room with gravity, most attendees in reality are in Zero-G.

Around the virtual conference table, the heroes recognize Delta Officer Saucedo, serious as always, but with a glimmer of worry and apprehension in her eyes; the burly and tough-looking General Carlo Ruehle, leader of the Concordia Military Forces, whom the heroes met in Concordia the night of the assassination several months ago; General Yuang Fang of the Bay Jing military, a short man with several wound scars and a ferocious, savage mouth; Jacinta Matriciano, the EarthGov representative and mediocre Ceasefire Administrator; and Brendan Leese, the Psion Brotherhood representative for Nouvelle Vie.

The Council meeting starts in as inauspicious a way as possible.

"What are you up to this time, Ruehle?," growls General Fang, "More Concordian magic tricks? Not happy with your secret jump point stunt? Think we'll fall for your games again?"

"What's the matter, Fang?," replies General Ruehle. He then gives you a dismissive glance. "Run out of Circle spies and puppets to find out what your team of incompetents can't?"

"Why, you bastard—", begins Fang, and looks like he's about to leave the meeting, when Saucedo intervenes with her typical lack of tact.

"Shut up, everyone! I wish I could let you all kill each other right now, but we have urgent matters to discuss!"

Saucedo brings up two undisputable facts: Several unknown objects are approaching Nouvelle Vie at never-before-seen speeds; and almost simultaneously with their arrival the Stellar Communications Network has mysteriously crashed, cutting off Nouvelle Vie from the rest of human space. The purpose of the meeting is to decide what to do about this. After speaking, Saucedo cedes the floor to the heroes.

CONVINCING THE COUNCIL

Play this as a Social Conflict, with everyone trying to convince "the majority" of their point of view. Whatever the majority decides will diplomatically "shame" the minority into complying. The Council should last between three to five rounds, at your discretion. You should let the participants exhaust their points before ending the Council. As per the *Savage Worlds* Social Conflict rules, add up the total successes of each side, and calculate the margin of victory.

The heroes' goals during this discussion are: to unite the fleets against the incoming common threat; and to get support and ships for the Settler Ship convoy they now lead so it can safely leave Nouvelle Vie.

In the first round of the discussion, the heroes can make a short speech stating their position and what they expect from the attendees. This is an unopposed roll, but has a –2 penalty on top of any other penalties, as the table is already uncooperative. This –2 penalty only applies on the first round. Of course, you should apply any bonuses or penalties you think are appropriate depending on how well the players role-play the speech.

The next rounds of the conflict are all opposed, with one attendee making a particular point or points (GM role-play) and then making a Persuasion roll with all applicable modifiers; and then the heroes responding to it and making their opposed Persuasion roll with their base modifier and any other special modifiers. As above, you should award bonuses or penalties to the heroes depending on how good their response is and how well they role-play the situation.

Depending on the outcome of the previous scenes, there are two modifiers that apply to all Persuasion rolls in the scene:

- If the heroes broke the Circle's commitment to neutrality in Scene #7, they have lost the Circle's credibility as a trustworthy peace broker. All the heroes' Persuasion rolls during this social conflict receive a base –2 penalty.
- If the Bay Jingnians were successful in bombing Emerald Bay city in Dauphin with at least one nuclear missile in Scene #8, all of General Ruehle's

and General Yuang's Persuasion rolls against the heroes receive a base +2 bonus. General Ruehle is outraged at the Bay Jingnian attack, is unwilling to collaborate with General Yuang and will make the case that Yuang can't be trusted. Yuang knows that Ruehle will not forgive the bombing and will attack his fleet in a second if given the chance, and therefore also presses the case that the fleets must not join.

Each attendee has a particular agenda and Persuasion skill score, which is used when he or she rolls. All attendees are Wild Cards in this scene, and thus roll with a Wild Die. If more than one attendee supports the same point or argument in the same round, use the highest Persuasion die of all the attendees that are supporting that position. In the case of heroes' arguments, it is always the hero's Persuasion that is rolled.

The heroes may of course use their Assistants to bring up any public information on any of the attendees, if the heroes think it will help their discussion.

GENERAL YUANG

Name: Yuang Fang
Role: General of the Bay Jingnian Security Forces
Stats: Wild Card, Persuasion d6

General Yuang is a deeply paranoid individual. To him all this smacks of another trick by Concordia. These Circle "testimonials" and "facts" about the danger posed by these unknown objects are most likely fabrications. After all, everyone knows the Circle is nothing more than a Concordian stooge. Doesn't the Circle have its Headquarters in Concordia? Isn't Concordia's capital named in honor of the Circle founder's wife (or lover, or whatever)? Concordian factories built the equipment used by Circle scanners and ships. Surely all these "facts" are plain wrong, or manipulated by the Concordians, with or without the Circle's knowledge (Yuang conveniently ignores the fact that the Circle uncovered Concordia's secret jump point and the existence of its hidden fleet. If faced with it, he dismisses it as a show of incompetence, or as a smoke screen).

If pushed to accept a joint fleet against the strange objects, General Yuang suggests joining the Earthgov, Circle and Baijingnian fleets, leaving Concordia out. Obviously General Ruehle is against this.

If at least one nuclear bomb exploded on Emerald City on Scene #8, all of General Yuang's Persuasion rolls against the heroes receive a +2 bonus.

GENERAL RUEHLE

Name: Carlo Ruehle
Role: General of the Concordian Military Forces
Stats: Wild Card, Persuasion d8

General Ruehle doesn't know what the strange objects approaching Nouvelle Vie are, nor does he care. He has obsessed for decades on how to beat Bay Jing, since the last war in 2181. Now, finally, he has the upper hand and his fleet is about to squash his enemy… and this "emergency" comes up. He believes this is either a ruse made up by the Circle to create an artificial ceasefire, or otherwise something real but irrelevant to Ruehle's goal of beating Bay Jing.

Ruehle opposes any kind of joint fleet as much as possible, preferring to return to battle now and afterwards figuring out what to do with whatever's approaching. He also has a final ace in the hole if the conversation does not go his way: After the fiasco with the secret jump point, his team thoroughly investigated the heroes, and among other things they discovered the story of Dr. LaMarche and the heroes' break-in to MaxDigital Corporation. Now he brings this up in an attempt to discredit the heroes: The heroes are talking about strange dangers and conspiracies, but they are not being completely honest with this Council. Isn't it true that the heroes recently have been investigating the disappearance of a scientist involved with the Stellar Communications Network? Isn't it true the scientist is a close relative of the previous leader of the Circle? Isn't it possible then that maybe the Circle is involved in the inopportune crash of the Stellar Communications Network and therefore, that they know something about the strange objects approaching? Why should the assembled trust the Circle when they have withheld such a crucial piece of information? Ruehle therefore proposes ignoring whatever "trick" the Circle is setting up and returning to their war. This final argument of Ruehle's receives a +2 bonus on top of whatever other bonuses the roll already had. The heroes should make a great role-playing effort if they want to get a bonus good enough to beat this argument!

If at least one nuclear bomb exploded on Emerald City on Scene #8, all of General Ruehle's Persuasion rolls against the heroes receive a +2 bonus.

JACINTA MATRICIANO

Name: Jacinta Matriciano
Role: EarthGov Ambassador on Nouvelle Vie
Stats: Wild Card, Persuasion d4

Ms. Matriciano superstitiously believes this is a momentous occasion, and an opportunity for her to return to Earth in glory. Obviously whatever's approaching Nouvelle Vie is another advanced alien

species! Think about it, humanity's first contact with an alien species since the N'ahili! Why not receive them with open arms and give them a show of peace? Obviously any resistance we attempt would fail; besides, the only other aliens we have met (the N'ahili) not only have been peaceful, but have also given us the stars. What marvels could these new aliens give us? We can go together if we want, but we should not receive them ready for a fight!

General Ruehle will grab on to Matriciano's view to argue that there's no point in joining the fleets since if they are aliens and friendly, there's no need to prepare for war.

BRENDAN LEESE

Name: Brendan Leese
Role: Senior Representative of the Psion Brotherhood on Nouvelle Vie
Stats: Wild Card, Persuasion d6

Leese's overriding goal is to keep the Psion Brotherhood friendly towards everyone, and to prove psions are not a threat to non-psions. Thus, he will not push for any agenda, but rather align himself with the majority, avoid confrontations, and express Brotherhood support for non-psions.

DELTA OFFICER SAUCEDO

Name: Bryce Saucedo
Role: Circle Leader for Nouvelle Vie
Stats: Wild Card, Persuasion d6

Delta Office Saucedo is one hundred percent behind whatever the heroes say. Thus, she will only intervene to support their position.

RESULTS OF THE COUNCIL

If the heroes' margin of victory is three or more points, the Council commits to joining forces against the invaders. They also commit a few ships to support the heroes' during the escorting and evacuation of the remaining Settler Ships. All this support means the heroes will have more resources to defend the convoy against the invaders, and will also have a slightly easier time during the battle in Scene #10. Saucedo closes the meeting with relief on her face and thanking all participants.

If the heroes' margin of victory is only one or two points, the Council agrees to commit a few ships to support the heroes during the escorting and evacuation of the remaining Settler Ships, but the fleets will not join. The heroes will have more resources to defend the convoy against the invaders in Scene #10, but they will not benefit from a joint fleet. Saucedo closes the meeting in a sour mood, but still thanking the participants.

If the heroes' margin of victory is less than one, then the Council ends abruptly with each side preparing to resume the conflict. The heroes are on their own.

SCENE 10: THE BATTLE OF NOUVELLE VIE

After the Council meeting, Saucedo contacts the heroes again, congratulating or scolding them, depending on the outcome. Then she explains the situation as it stands.

The heroes have a convoy of eight Settler Ships to protect, carrying approximately 30,000 passengers in total (approximately 3750 per ship). To defend this convoy the heroes have (besides their own ship) either three additional Circle Patrol Ships (if they did not get support for the convoy in Scene #9), or five additional Patrol Ships among Circle, Bay Jingnian, Concordian and EarthGov (if they did).

As you and your small fleet speed towards the jump point towards the HIP 23512 system and the human planets beyond, you hope you have enough resources to fulfill your mission. The eight Settler Ships you're supposed to protect (almost 30,000 civilians) are far ahead of you, but move so slowly that you will catch up with them in a day or two.

From far away you can see the jump point and the Stellar Comm Network station next to it, and you realize the crash of the network was not a minor glitch: The Comm Network station lies completely dead, its metal innards exposed to space, its message drones have crashed against each other and against the station, as if they had been ordered to self-destruct. How could this happen?

IF THE HEROES LOST IN THE COUNCIL

If the heroes did not get the participants to join their fleets, the invaders dispatch them in short time and divert a ship to attack the convoy sooner. Read them the following:

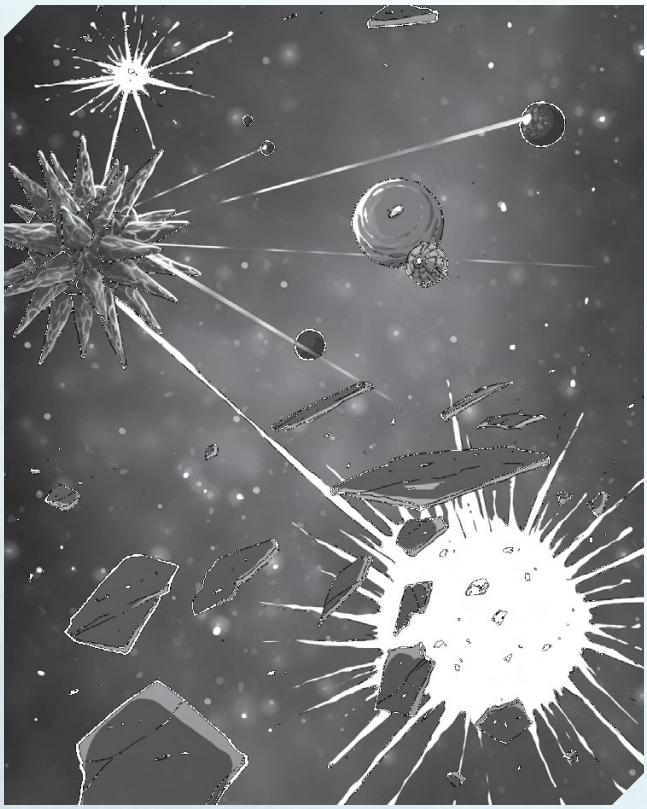
A few hours later you're looking expectantly at the fleets for Concordia and Bay Jing, more focused on renewing the fight against each other than in withstanding the arrival of the mysterious alien ships. It is ironic that now, when union was most necessary, our petty human squabbles risk the future of the race.

It quickly becomes obvious that not uniting against the mysterious ships was a mistake. From a very long range, the enemy fires strange

and powerful energy beams, which in a few light-seconds cover the distance to the fleets and slice through them like paper. The beams fluctuate seemingly randomly between laser, X-ray and Gamma-ray radiation, making it difficult for Coulborne Shields to react that fast. Later scientists will puzzle over how those ships have the length needed for a cannon long enough to create Gamma-ray beams; now all you can think is of how many people are dying, in seconds.

The humans mount a valiant defense, trying to cooperate at the very end. You get to hear the last commands from Generals Yuang and Ruehle, who in the end were as brave and dedicated as they appeared to be. But it does not take long for the battle to look hopeless, as powerful battleships explode, their Shields unable to radiate the heat fast enough, and as fleeing Patrol Ships are brought down like flies.

And then, as quickly as it began, the battle is over. Two invader ships turn around and start flying towards you and the convoy at unimaginable speeds. You wish the fleets had managed to gain more time for you and the refugees, but unfortunately that is not to be. The enemy will arrive to attack you soon. You'd better mount your defense.



IF THE HEROES WON THE COUNCIL

If the heroes convinced the participants to join their fleet, the humans pose a (slightly) stiffer challenge for the invaders, who take more time to divert a ship to attack the convoy. In this case, read them the following:

A few hours later you're looking expectantly at the newly joined fleet preparing to withstand the arrival of the mysterious alien ships. Who would have thought these enemies would join together in a common cause, even if on a tenuous ceasefire? You hope it is enough.

It isn't. From a very far distance, the enemy fires strange and powerful energy beams, which in a few light-seconds cover the distance to the joint fleet and slices through them like paper. The beams fluctuate seemingly randomly between laser, X-ray and Gamma-ray radiation, making it difficult for Coulborne Shields to react that fast. Later scientists will puzzle over how those ships have enough length for a cannon long enough to create Gamma-ray beams; now all you can think is of how many people are dying, in seconds.

The humans mount a valiant defense. You get to hear the last commands from Generals Yuang and Ruehle, who in the end were as brave and dedicated as they appeared to be. But it does not take long for the battle to look hopeless, as powerful battleships explode, their Shields unable to radiate the heat fast enough, and as fleeing Patrol Ships are brought down like flies.

And then, when the threat of the human fleet seems to be controlled by the invaders, two of the alien ships turn around and start flying towards you and the convoy at unimaginable speeds. Fortunately the joint fleet managed to delay them a bit, but they will still arrive to attack you, soon. You'd better mount your defense.

THE BATTLE

Remind the heroes that their goal here is not to beat the Alien ships, but to help as many Settler Ships as possible to escape through the jump point, and then to escape themselves.

If the heroes' ship sustained any Wounds or Heat Fatigue penalties from the previous battles, these have all been repaired before this combat. Also, all Shield Pods are restored.

Place twelve markers on the tabletop. The 12th and last marker represents the jump point to HIP 23512 and the human planets. Place all the ships participating in the battle facing towards the jump point, as follows:

- On the 1st marker, place two ship tokens. Each of these tokens represents one alien ship.
- On the 6th marker place one ship token for the heroes' ship and one ship token for each patrol ship assigned to them (three assigned ships if they did not get support in Scene #9, or five if they did).
- If the heroes managed to join the fleets in Scene #9, place one token for each Settler Ship on the 10th marker. If the heroes did not manage to join the fleets, place one token for each Settler Ship on the 9th marker.

Given the number of ships in this battle, both the Settler and the Patrol Ships are handled using the simplified rules below. The battle ends as soon as all remaining Settler Ships have jumped and the heroes have also jumped. The Alien ships do not jump.

SETTLER SHIPS

All the Settler Ships receive a single Action Card, and are controlled by the heroes. Each round the Settler Ships move one marker towards the jump point until they reach it. If the Settler Ships begin their turn on the jump point make a Knowledge (Ship Ops) roll with a Wild Die. For each success obtained on the roll, one Settler Ship jumps. Heroes can make Cooperative rolls to support the Settler Ships' roll. This simulates the heroes helping the Settler Ships do the jump calculations, and costs each participating hero an action during his or her turn.

If an Alien Ship fires and hits a Settler Ship (standard Shooting roll with appropriate range modifiers), do not bother rolling damage. Instead, the Settler Ship is automatically destroyed.

- **Settler Ships (8):** Knowledge (Ship Ops) d6.

PATROL SHIPS

Patrol Ships behave as Extras and thus are divided between the players and act on their Action Cards. A Patrol Ship may move one position each round, or may turn to face the opposite direction (but can't do both). If a Patrol Ship begins its turn on the jump point, it may make a Knowledge (Ship Ops) roll to jump. Besides moving, Patrol Ships may attack using their laser cannon, and in this combat do not need to make Heat rolls. You therefore do not have to track heat points for them.

If an Alien Ship fires and hits a Patrol Ship, mark the Patrol Ship as "Shaken." Shaken Patrol Ships have an effective penalty of –4 to all rolls. This condition cannot be removed. If a Shaken Patrol Ship is hit a second time, it is destroyed.

BATTLE TIPS

This is easily the hardest battle in the adventure. It is very easy for the heroes to get killed if they do not play wisely. It should not take long for them to figure out that firing at the enemy makes them a target; therefore, most of their strategy should involve balancing their attacks and their allies' attacks to keep the Alien ships from attacking the Settler Ships. At the same time, the best way for the heroes to survive is to direct their allies to attack so they receive the brunt of the Alien attacks. This does not sound very heroic, though, and is thus one of the moral dilemmas the heroes will have to face.

We suggest you liberally distribute Bennies to the heroes depending on their actions; they will need them!

- **Patrol Ships (3–5):** Knowledge (Ship Ops) d8, Shooting d8. Attacks with Light Laser Cannon (Range 4/8/16, Damage 3d6, AP 6)

ALIEN SHIPS

Each Alien Ship receives its own token. All Alien Ships act on a single Action Card. Alien Ships move as normal by making a Piloting roll plus bonuses, but they never "push the engines" to move farther.

The Alien Ships attack strategy is as follows:

- Each Alien ship picks as its target the enemy ship closest to the jump point. If more than one ship fulfills this requirement, pick the target randomly. At the start of the combat the targets will therefore be Settler Ships. Place two gaming stones next to the Settler Ships marker, one for each Alien ship, representing the Aliens' target focus.
- Once an Alien ship has a target, it keeps firing at it until it is destroyed or someone else distracts it (see below). If the Alien ship destroys a target, it moves on to the next ship that is closest to the jump point, and so on.
- Every time an Alien ship is successfully hit by an attack (regardless of whether the attack beats the ship's Toughness or not), the attacker becomes its new target, even if it is not the closest to the jump point. Move a focus gaming stone next to the new target to represent the change in focus.

Smart heroes should soon figure out the Alien Ship's attack strategy and use it to protect the Settler Ships.

- **Alien Ships (2):** Use stats for Devourer Ships (see page 242).

EPILOGUE

When the heroes perform the jump, read or paraphrase the following:

It's just a few seconds before you jump. As the indicators on your virtual screen show the Interstellar Jump Drive is about to puncture the jump membrane, you spare one final look at Nouvelle Vie, almost eight light-minutes away. What you see takes your breath away.

The lumbering, broken hulks of what used to be the Concordian and Bay Jingnian fleets float in space, many of them still glowing from the heat. You begin to receive a transmission from Delta Officer Saucedo but before she can even utter one word a blasting beam of energy cuts Clarke Station in two, destroying it instantly.

As the strange alien ships surround the planet, they approach the atmosphere and begin targeting their powerful weapons at the surface. Like thin, bright spider threads, the beams scorch the surface, first the Emerald Bay city and Jubilee, then spread to other towns on the main island of Landing. Several alien ships cluster close to the planet on top of where Hephaestus is, and also focus their deadly energy beams on it.

The Interstellar Jump Drive finally kicks in as your ship jumps, and you begin to process what you just saw. In the next few minutes millions will die. The bulk of the fleets of the two most powerful planets in human space have been annihilated in an instant.

Fortunately (or strangely) the alien ships do not jump after you. Why don't they?

Your thoughts go back to what you have experienced the last few months: These ships, being sighted next to Nouvelle Vie a long time ago. The records of their appearances marked as classified by the Psion Brotherhood. The N'ahili and their strange interest in these visits. Dr. LaMarche's disappearance and his work on the Stellar Comm Network. And the synchronization between the crash of the Comm Network and the alien attack. What is going on?

You need to go back to the central planets, warn the Circle, warn everybody, tell them to get ready. The human species is in dire peril, and about to face its greatest test.

The adventure continues in *Into the Fire*, the next module in the epic *Seven Worlds* campaign!

side stories

This section includes several side stories you can run or take inspiration from to complement the adventures in the main campaign.

Don't forget to review the background for each planet, as well as the Personalities section on the *Setting Guide*. There are great ideas for further side stories there!

A "FLARE" FOR KILLING

Where: Mussala Station.

The heroes are asked by Mussala Station officials to make an emergency run to Seraphim Base, a small scientific research station orbiting very close to the Pi 3 Orionis sun. The lead scientist of the station, Dr. Laura Jimenez, sent a distress call a few hours ago but all communications with the base broke off before she could detail the emergency.

As the heroes approach the base, they are attacked by its laser beams! The attack stops once the heroes are within 1 SU of the station and are able to dock. Once inside, a haggard Dr. Jimenez explains that Dr. Joseph Harrison, the scientist who is second-in-command of the base, has taken full control of the station's systems, and most likely arranged the attack. After an acrimonious dispute that ended with Dr. Jimenez firing him, the always emotionally unstable Dr. Harrison has taken other scientists hostage and has locked himself up in the Engine Room.

Unfortunately for everyone, a major solar flare will erupt in a few hours, meaning everyone on board must evacuate or die!

A deranged Dr. Harrison has booby-trapped the entrance to the Engine Room with several Plastic Explosives (see the Gear section of the *Setting Guide*). As the clock ticks down to the arrival of the solar flare, the heroes must storm the Engine Room, stop the heavily-armed Dr. Harrison before he kills any hostages, and arrange an escape for everyone in the base… or they can choose to save Jimenez and the other scientists and abandon Harrison and the hostages to their fate.

Use the solar flare as loose time pressure on the heroes. If for any reason they have not escaped by the time you decide the solar flare arrives, apply two levels of Radiation as per the *Savage Worlds* rules.

- **Seraphim Base (Space Station):** Use the stats for Renner Station.
- ✸ **Dr. Joseph Harrison:** Use the stats for Civilian, but give him a Knowledge (Science) skill of d10 and a Hacking skill of d10. He is wearing a Combat Vest (+2/+4, negates 4 AP against bullets), and is armed with an Assault Rifle (Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d8 AP 2, RoF 3, Auto) and four stun grenades (Range 5/10/20, Damage 3d6 non-lethal, Medium Burst).
- **Dr. Laura Jimenez and other scientists (7):** Use the stats for Civilian, with a Knowledge (Science) skill of d10 and a Hacking skill of d8. There are 3 free scientists, counting Dr. Jimenez, and 4 hostages.

SCHOOL PRANK, THEILING STYLE

Where: Nouvelle Vie.

Delta Officer Bryce Saucedo gives the heroes a secret mission that comes from Avis Therriault himself. The Governor of Jubilee explains that a mole from the Dauphin Freedom Foundation has been discovered in his security team. From the mole Therriault has found that this vicious terrorist organization, headed by the legendary Theiling, is preparing a major attack on Jubilee in the next few days. Rumor is that Theiling himself (or herself) will lead the operation. Given that there are moles in his organization Therriault can't trust his team to act on his interests, thus his request for outside help from the Circle.

The information provided suggests that the terrorist plan somehow revolves around Sutton College, one of the top schools in Jubilee. Fortunately, Sutton College is hosting a Modern Art Convention for the next few days, giving the heroes the excuse they need to go. The heroes may use their own identities or fake them (by asking the Circle to modify their IDTags configuration).

When the heroes arrive at Sutton College they meet the Dean of the school and the Professor of Physics, Julio Schwartz, both dark and suspicious characters. As they roam the school, they are approached by Damien D'Avril, an eccentric and flamboyant art student, who becomes their source of information on the school. D'Avril tells the heroes that the students will organize one of their underground parties two days from now, under cover of the Convention. He casually mentions that several of the physics students host a side "VIP Party" and that, curiously, Professor Schwartz is invited. He offers to sneak the heroes in.

The night before the party the heroes are ambushed by a group of thugs who tell them that nosy outsiders are not welcome in the school. When reduced, the thugs say they were hired and paid upfront but can't identify who did it. However, one of the heroes' Assistants reports that there are minute traces of radioactivity emanating from the thugs.

- **Thugs (2 per hero):** Use stats for Typical Thug.

When the heroes arrive at the party, D'Avril, after introducing them to all sorts of bizarre characters, takes them to a back room where he shows a secret door through which some students cautiously enter. After following a long, recently carved tunnel the heroes find themselves in a nearby abandoned building that the school is planning to expand to soon. Inside, the heroes find an old-school fission reactor, being slowly prepared to overload and radioactively contaminate a significant part of Jubilee. Next to the reactor is Professor Schwartz and a small cadre of students, who react to the heroes' arrival by attacking them. Schwartz, in the meantime, tries to activate the fission reactor while calling Theiling through V-World and requesting he or she turn around since Jubilee will explode at any time. Schwartz will succeed at enabling the reactor when he accumulates four successes by making a Knowledge (Science) roll with a –2 penalty. Each roll counts as a full action. Each raise also counts as a success.

Once the heroes stop Schwartz and his students they are rewarded and recognized by Avis Therriault. Unfortunately, Theiling escaped before being recognized (and neither Schwartz nor his students know who he really is) but he will remember the heroes for this.

- **Professor Schwartz:** Use Stats for Veteran Terrorist but without the Combat Vest or Helmet. Add a Knowledge (Science) skill of d10.
- **Damien D'Avril and other Students:** Use stats for Civilian but add the appropriate Knowledge skill depending on the student. Damien has a Knowledge (Arts) skill of d8 and the Physics students a Knowledge (Science) of d8.
- **Schwartz's Students (2 per hero):** Use Stats for Typical Terrorist but without the Combat Vest or Helmet.

THE PSION RIOTS, REDUX

Where: Bay Jing.

Apparently a rogue psion has been attacking and mentally affecting citizens in Bay Jing. Several people have been found with their memory erased or simply become mad; some of them have even become violent towards their families. It has been determined that they have been tampered with psionically.

In Bay Jing, with its mistrust for psions and the memories of the crazy psion who brought the Psion Riots decades ago (see *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*), this is dangerous. The heroes are asked by their superiors to stay alert and protect any psions who might be attacked by the populace.

While walking the street the heroes are psionically attacked by a hooded man who then attempts to escape through the crowd. As the heroes pursue him their way is barred by several well-dressed private security personnel who defend the hooded man and allow him to escape.

- **Hooded Man:** Use stats for Rogue Psion.
- **Security Agents (2 per hero):** Use stats for Typical Security.

Any surviving security agents confess, after a significant amount of pressure and intimidation, that they work for an important industrial conglomerate from Bay Jing. The leaders of the conglomerate are trying to eliminate the leader of a rival conglomerate, and believe that by psionically destroying his mind and hiding his attack among several others in an apparent serial crime, no one will notice he was the intended victim all along. They have hired a dangerous rogue psion (the hooded man) for this.

Before the heroes can take action on what they know, they are attacked by the hooded man and a group of his best troops. They stop at nothing to kill the heroes before they can tell what they know.

Once the heroes tell what they know they are thanked for unmasking the conspiracy and stopping a return of the specter of the dreaded Psion Riots.

- **Hooded Man:** Use stats for Rogue Psion.
- **Security Agents (2 per hero):** Use stats for Veteran Security.

ON ONE CONDITION

Where: Concordia.

This adventure works best if some of the heroes' exploits have become well known.

The entire planet of Concordia is shaken by the news that Samuel Dunlop, six-year-old son of the wealthy Dunlop family, has been kidnapped. His bodyguards were violently shot in a scuffle, and the boy's IDTag is not responding and has presumably been removed.

While the authorities are searching for the boy, the heroes receive an anonymous communication offering to tell them who the kidnappers are and where they are located on one condition: The heroes must kill the kidnappers without allowing them to answer any questions. The message explains that the kidnappers are planning to kill the boy anyway, so the heroes will not get the information unless they are willing to shoot first and ask questions later. The message is untraceable but has a V-World address to use if the heroes accept the bargain.

The anonymous tipster is actually Alfhild Rundstrom, CEO of Rundstrom Limited, a major Concordia financial consortium. Looking to organize an illegal break-in of one of his competitors, Rundstrom contacted a little-known criminal named Shae Gupta. In order to hire him for this juicy job, Rundstrom demanded Gupta "prove himself" with a risky job. The reckless and dimwitted Gupta couldn't think of a better way to prove that he was the man for the job than to kidnap the child of one of the richest families in Concordia. Now a horrified Rundstrom is desperate to silence Gupta before the authorities capture him and discover the CEO's involvement in this mess.

Assuming the heroes respond to the anonymous message, they get the location of the child and his kidnappers, as well as a general description of the lead kidnapper. They also receive another reminder of the conditions of their deal: to silence the kidnappers without letting them talk. In this exchange of messages a trace is possible, and leads to the offices of Runstrom Limited in Cajamarca.

Samuel Dunlop is kept inside an old warehouse on the outskirts of Cajamarca, protected by Gupta and several of his goons. The dimwitted criminal did not think far enough to decide how to turn his kidnapping into money, and is now seriously considering killing the boy. He will try to do this if attacked, and will blab everything about Rundstrom's request to the heroes if persuaded or intimidated to do it.

The Dunlop family is, of course, extremely grateful for the safe return of their child.

- **Shae Gupta:** Use stats for Veteran Thug.
- **Gupta's Goons:** Use stats for Typical Thug.
- **Alfhild Rundstrom:** Use stats for Civilian, but give him a Hacking skill of d8.
- **Samuel Dunlop (Wild Card):** Use stats for Civilian, but give him the Young Hindrance.

BAD CROPS

Where: Apollo.

The heroes are approached by Jude Bungart, president of Tetsuo's Independent Farmers Association. A strange blight is affecting the crops of many of the farmers in the Association, and Bungart believes this is not a coincidence. He suspects Wattsworth Produce, an interplanetary food produce corporation, may be behind this. He wants the heroes to investigate Wattsworth, see if they can find proof that they are doing it, and maybe find the cure before all year's production is lost.

Bungart is right: As part of its dirty war against the Independent Farmers, Wattsworth has developed a new strain of genetic bacteria, called G-244, that is killing their crops. They also have an antidote which they have used to protect their own crops against G-244.

The heroes have several ways to discover the plot: They can visit one of the Wattsworth farms and see that they are being sprayed with an unusual product (the antidote); they can attempt to break in to Wattsworth's offices in Tetsuo and hack their system; or maybe face Julius Jaworski, local manager of Wattsworth, and force him to tell the truth. They are sure to face large teams of security officers, and even a hired rogue psion or two, whatever path they choose.

- **Typical Security:** See page 234.
- **Veteran Security**
- **Rogue Psion**
- **Julius Jaworski:** Use stats for Civilian.

WILD WILD V-WEST, PART I

Where: V-World

This is the first in a three-part V-World adventure set in a game simulation of a bizarre Fantasy Wild West in the 1880's, one with strange monsters and psionic powers. It can be played during the long trek between planets, for example.

The heroes start their adventure as lawmen. All the heroes' normal stats and psionic powers are available, but they have no armor and are armed with only two six-shot revolvers per person (Range 12/24/48; Damage 2d6+1; RoF 1; AP 1; 6 shots, one full action to reload).

The heroes have spent the last week escorting the infamous outlaw, "Crazy Jack" Harris, to the small town of Prairie Gulch, where the 2:51 train to Carlson Town prison will pick him up. They have been attacked several times on the road by Crazy Jack's gang, led by his lieutenant, Cherokee Bill, a deformed man with psionic powers.

The heroes start the adventure *in media res* inside the Prairie Gulch Saloon, which is surrounded by Cherokee Bill and Crazy Jack's gang, plus a few extra killers hired for the occasion. A bound Crazy Jack accompanies the heroes, smiling triumphantly as Cherokee Bill shouts from the outside that if they let Crazy Jack go they will be allowed to walk away alive. The 2:51 train should arrive at the station a few minutes from now!

Assuming the heroes manage to avoid the standoff with their prisoner, they still have minutes to cross a town full of enemy gunmen and reach the train station before the 2:51 leaves (the smoke plume of the train engine can be seen approaching from anywhere in town, pointing the way for the heroes). Some of the gunmen are hiding behind houses and barrels, many of them On Hold, while others are aiming their rifles from the roofs.

One hero needs to devote an action to pushing Crazy Jack at all times or he won't move. He constantly badgers the heroes about how they stopped him from cleaning out Grimrock Mine, and that in payment he'll make sure they meet "his pet."

If at any time Crazy Jack finds an opportunity to escape (for example, all heroes around him are Shaken), he will start running at half Pace. If Crazy Jack reaches a member of his gang, he is freed and armed after one round.

If the heroes reach the train and try to put Crazy Jack in, he smiles and says that it's time they met his pet. Suddenly a huge Sand Dragon erupts from the ground, throwing all heroes to their feet! Crazy Jack takes this opportunity to escape with his gang towards Grimrock Mine while the heroes face the Sand Dragon.

Most likely Crazy Jack will escape. Now the heroes' only clue to stopping him is a warning: Something bad will happen in Grimrock Mine.

- **"Crazy Jack" Harris:** Use stats for Old West Veteran Gunman.
- **Cherokee Bill:** Use stats for Soldier Psion, but he has no armor and his only gear is Two Colt Peacemakers (Range 12/24/48; Damage 2d6+1; RoF 1; AP 1; 6 shots, one full action to reload),
- **Crazy Jack's Gang (2 per hero):** Use stats for Old West Typical Gunman.
- **Crazy Jack's Snipers (1 per hero):** Use stats for Old West Veteran Gunman. They are on the roofs and will try to take out the heroes with their rifles.
- **Sand Dragon:** Use stats for Black Dragon but instead of Acidic Breadth it forms a cone of Sand (same effect). Also, it has a Weakness: a hit to a hole in the center of its neck (Tiny Target Called Shot) ignores armor and provides +4 to Damage.

SEVEN WORLDS



3. INTO THE FIRE

introduction

"LET THE HEIGHT OF THE EMPIRE STATE BUILDING REPRESENT THE EARTH'S 4.5 BILLION YEARS OF EXISTENCE. WE CAN THEN REPRESENT HUMANKIND'S MEASLY MILLION YEARS OR SO BY A ONE-FOOT RULER STUCK AT THE TOP OF THE BUILDING. THE THICKNESS OF A DIME PLACED ATOP THE RULER STANDS FOR THE LENGTH OF TIME SINCE HUMANS DEVELOPED AGRICULTURE AND CIVILIZATION: ROUGHLY TEN THOUSAND YEARS. A POSTAGE STAMP GLUED ONTO THE DIME REPRESENTS THE LENGTH OF TIME SINCE WE HAVE DEVELOPED MODERN SCIENCE, ABOUT THREE HUNDRED YEARS.

IF OTHER INTELLIGENT SPECIES ARE OUT THERE AMONG THE STARS, WHAT ARE THE CHANCES OF OUR MEETING ONE AT OUR OWN LEVEL OF DEVELOPMENT— THAT IS, WITHIN THE THICKNESS OF THAT POSTAGE STAMP?"

—BEN BOVA, SPACE TRAVEL

Welcome to the third module in the *Seven Worlds* campaign! This epic, unforgettable odyssey places the heroes at the center of the greatest conflict humanity has ever seen, and puts its future in their hands.

At its heart, the story told in the *Seven Worlds* campaign is a tragedy, the story of the annihilation of humanity by forces far beyond its comprehension, and of a few heroes' efforts to turn back the tide. Other campaign's measure of success is the answer to the question "Did we win?" In this campaign, success or failure is measured in the answer to a different question: "Did we survive?"

This adventure continues where *Divided We Fall*, the second *Seven Worlds* campaign adventure, left off. It is assumed you've already played that adventure before starting this one, but if you haven't you will still find lots of interesting and challenging scenarios for you and your players to enjoy!

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

This section gives a short overview of the *Seven Worlds* Campaign up until this point.

WHAT'S HAPPENED BEFORE

A Mysterious Encounter, the introductory adventure included in the *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*, told the story of a group of Circle officers who, while on a routine patrol next to the frontier planet of Nouvelle Vie, witness the appearance of a strange alien ship and see its awesome destructive power. As a result, the heroes were sent to Concordia, one of the most powerful planets in the *Seven Worlds*, and the headquarters of the Circle, to report on what they saw.

In *Rumors of War*, the heroes travelled to Concordia and met Epsilon Leader Antoine, leader of the Circle. Antoine told the heroes that the Psion Brotherhood had been secretly interested in these strange ship sightings, and asked them to go to Brotherhood Headquarters on Earth and request information on the sighting from the Brotherhood, using official channels. Antoine also asked the heroes to investigate the mysterious disappearance of Dr. Luis LaMarche, a renowned scientist from Earth.

While attending Concordia's Centenary Celebration the heroes became involved in a terrorist attack that ended with the successful assassination of Governor Selnes, the leader of Bay Jing. Since Bay Jing and Concordia were bitter rivals, this assassination sparked the beginnings of an interstellar war.

When the heroes arrived at Earth they met the emissary of the mysterious alien benefactors known as the N'ahili. They also met the leaders of the Psion Brotherhood, including the famous Ganendra Nathan, but failed to get any clues to the identity of the mysterious alien ship they saw. Finally, they get to investigate Dr. LaMarche's disappearance and discovered he had been working on unspecified "improvements" to the Stellar Communications Network, the main technology that allowed the *Seven Worlds* to communicate.

In *Divided We Fall*, the heroes returned to Circle Headquarters in Concordia and were sent undercover to investigate a curious deployment of ships made by the Concordian fleet as part of their war with Bay Jing. An unlikely discovery ended with the heroes carrying information on a top-secret Concordian plan that could ruthlessly allow them to win the war in a single stroke.

By the end of that adventure, the heroes were in Nouvelle Vie again, where the bulk of the Concordian and Bay Jingnian fleets were about to meet in battle. At this point, a fleet of mysterious alien ships

materialized and completely destroyed both fleets. Simultaneously, the entire Stellar Communications Network mysteriously crashed, thus isolating the *Seven Worlds*. The heroes barely escaped with their lives and flew towards Concordia, carrying a desperate cry for help against an invader more powerful than all of them.

WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW

Several months have passed since the fall of the Concordian and Bay Jingnian fleets at Nouvelle Vie, and humanity is fighting a losing war against the alien invaders now known as the Devourers. An anxious Epsilon Leader Antoine knows conventional means will not stop these aliens, and asks the heroes to go on a long-shot mission to find an alternative way to stop them. He latches onto the fact that the Stellar Communications Network failed (or was sabotaged) and that the missing Dr. LaMarche was working on something with this network. Since the timing for the Network crash was so convenient, maybe whoever crashed it knows something about the aliens that might help humans stop them.

After receiving an anonymous tip suggesting they go to Apollo, the heroes become embroiled in a political war between various corporations. To solve the situation, the heroes have to storm a faraway research facility that has been taken over by terrorists. One of these terrorists has a clue the heroes need, a strange story and the name of an unknown place: Chrysalis. Apparently this place has something to do with Logan's End, the farthest and least civilized of the *Seven Worlds*.

RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

As this adventure begins things look grim and hopeless, as humanity is slowly crushed by the alien attackers known as the Devourers, plunging humanity into chaos. This entails several modifications to the flow and tone of the campaign.

TIME PRESSURE

While the plot maintains a time pressure, you will note that the Devourer advance is erratic and unpredictable. Weeks or months will go by without the Devourers advancing, then all of a sudden their fleet will jump several star systems as fast as possible. This was done to underline how unfathomable these aliens are, but also because it allows you to pace the campaign to your group's rhythm. If the players would much rather play a multi-session mini-campaign in the crime-ridden streets of Whitehall in Apollo than continue their mission, have the aliens wait a few more weeks before moving on. This allows you to fit to the schedule your heroes prefer.

NEW CHARACTERS

If you need to add more heroes to the campaign, either to change players or to replace lost characters, note that from this adventure onwards the group could decide to informally add a member who does not belong to the Circle. Since the Circle is practically gone anyway, it is not too far-fetched for the group to add a non-Circle-member to their ranks for the sake of the mission.

GEAR AND MONEY

Acquiring equipment is harder from now on. Double the price of every item the heroes can acquire from the gear section. Particularly unique items, at your discretion, could require a successful Streetwise roll to be found for sale.

Heroes should hoard the money they have, as the Circle devotes all of its resources to building new ships and strengthening their forces, and salaries are temporarily suspended (see *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*). Any benefits a hero may have from the Rich or Very Rich edges are halved.

THE PERSONAL IMPACT OF THE WAR

As the horror of the conquest escalates and humanity is confronted with the loss of world after world, you should make the risk and danger more intimate and emotional to the heroes. In the case of the pre-generated characters, for example, Maricelle may have to face the death of her sister, or the reproaches from friends in the refugee fleet; Seela may have to say a tearful goodbye to her parents before Concordia falls, or find Aaron as a survivor among the refugees from that planet; or Derrick may see his secrets confronted and his parents shamed as Apollo is attacked.

Assuming you and the players enjoy it, there are many opportunities for roleplaying the personal impact of the war during this adventure.

THE STELLAR COMM NETWORK

The Stellar Communications Network is permanently down. This has several implications for the heroes.

In the first place, no communications are available between planets. A makeshift ship relay has been set up by the military by placing patrol ships on both sides of every jump point, but message capacity is limited, slow, and only used for military purposes. In game terms, only extremely urgent, military-level messages will be transmitted, and they will take four times as long to reach their destination. The heroes thus have no opportunity to use the Comm Network to communicate.

On top of that, humanity's entire communications infrastructure is down. No requests for information to remote databases are available, and information and backups are not syncing between the planets. Programs or systems that depended on information from other planets are now useless. You should keep this in mind whenever the heroes are dealing with V-World.

Using the local storage capacity of ships travelling between planets to synchronize information between V-Worlds (see *Interstellar Communications Network* of the *Setting Guide*) has become the only way to transfer information between planets. Therefore it has become mandatory to accept these information downloads. The heroes should expect to become carriers of information between all the planets they visit.

If you are using the space random encounters table (see below) remember to apply the Stellar Communications Network penalty to all trips in space, regardless of their source or destination.

UPDATED MAPS

The following maps show how the *Seven Worlds* stand at the start of this adventure. Note the following significant differences:

- The secret jump point between HIP 14101 and Delta Eridani (discovered by the heroes in the previous adventure) is marked with a red line.
- The path between Gamma Leporis (Nouvelle Vie) and LHS 1723 is now marked as a Dead-end line. This is because all human civilization there has been wiped out by the Devourer invasion.
- All of human space is now marked as a Secondary Route. Since only star systems with a working Stellar Communications Network are considered Primary Routes, and since the Stellar Communications Network has crashed, there are no Primary Routes anymore.

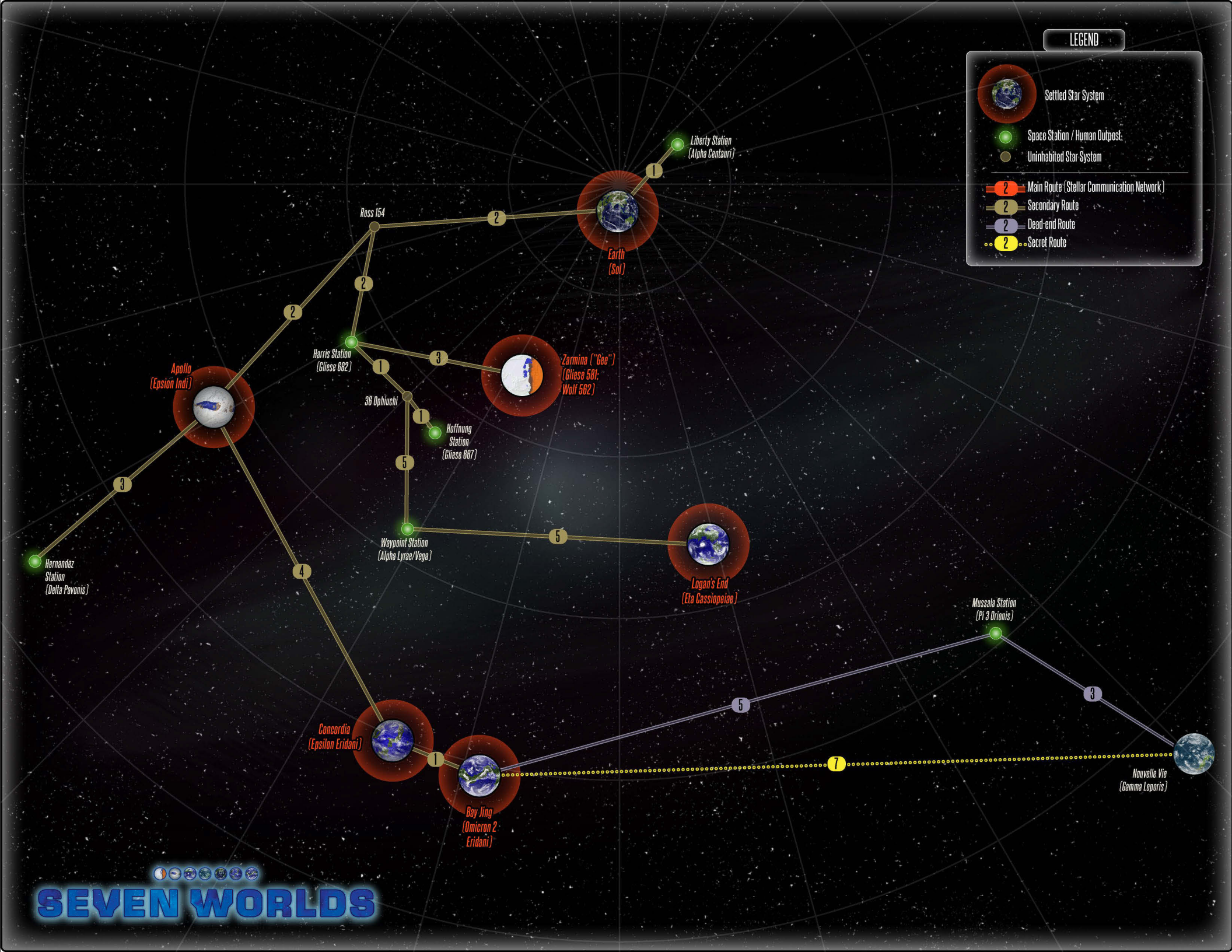
If you are using the 3-D maps, this might be a good opportunity to show the heroes the updated map this adventure, explaining that since the Stellar Comm Network has permanently crashed, most routes between planets are now in a different color.

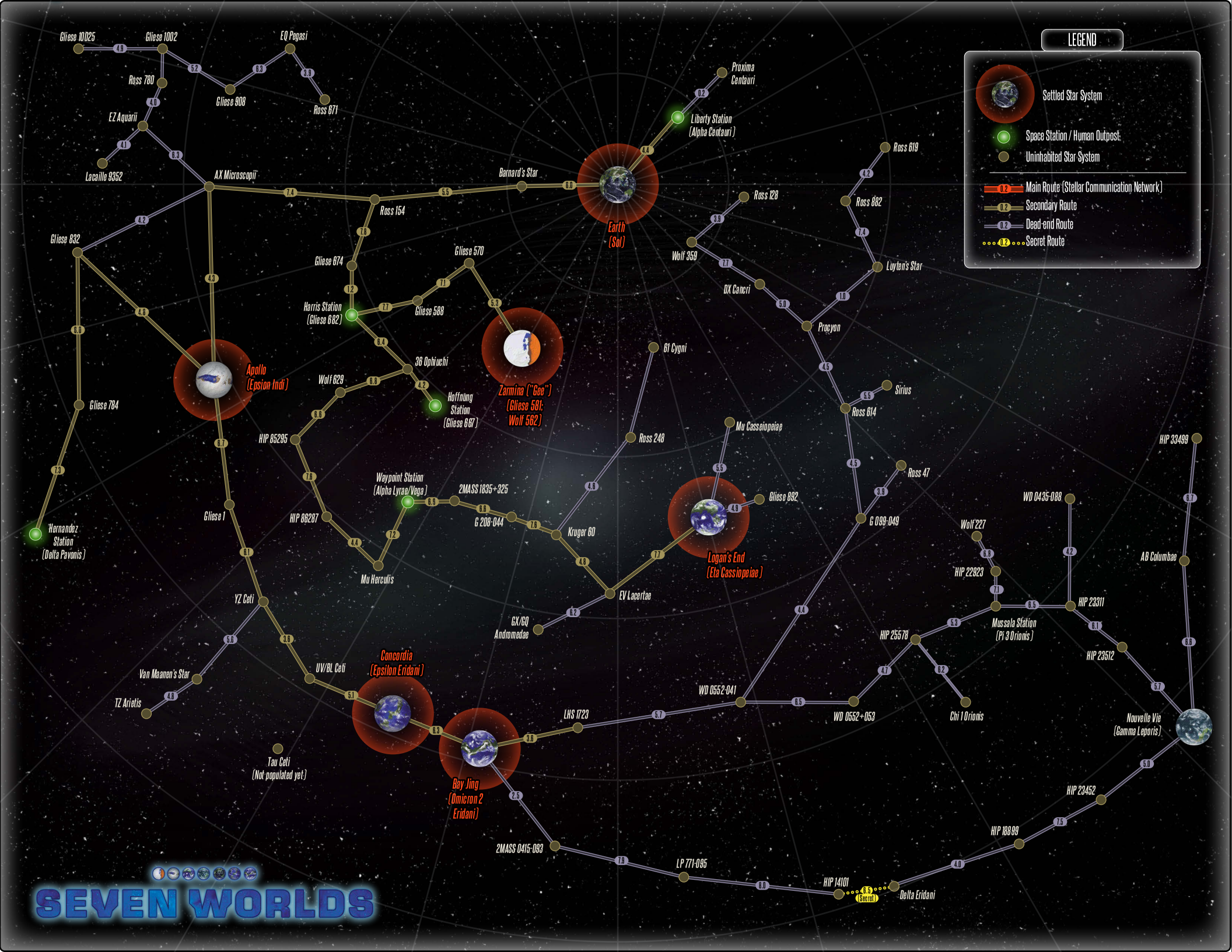
ENCOUNTERS IN SPACE

If you are using the optional Random Space Encounters tables detailed in the *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*, make the following changes to the rules:

- Since the Stellar Communications Network is permanently down, the –1 modifier for travelling between systems not connected by it *always* applies, regardless of where the heroes are travelling to or from.
- If the final modified die roll is a –1, instead of a Research Ship, the heroes find a Devourer ship. Note that a Devourer ship can easily overwhelm most hero ships, so make sure the heroes have a way out. Maybe the Devourer ship does not attack or follow for unknown reasons. Maybe it attacks once and then flees. Whatever it is, don't let the heroes enter a battle you believe there is no way they can win.

Additionally, you might want to arrange for an encounter with a pirate or criminal ship on an uninhabited star system on the route. The enemy warns the heroes to surrender their ship and valuables or prepare to be attacked. Since the Stellar Comm Network has gone down and more patrol ships have been assigned to the fleets to defend Concordia and Bay Jing, it has become possible to attack ships in space with minimal repercussions. It is more proof of how human society is starting to break down.


LEGEND
Settled Star System
Space Station / Human Outpost
Uninhabited Star System
2 Main Route (Stellar Communication Network)
2 Secondary Route
2 Dead-end Route
2 Secret Route
Liberty Station (Alpha Centauri)
Earth (Sol)
Ross 154
Harris Station (Gliese 682)
Zarmina ("Gee") (Gliese 581; Wolf 582)
Apollo (Epsion Indi)
36 Ophiuchi
Hoffnung Station (Gliese 667)
Hernandez Station (Delta Pavonis)
Waypoint Station (Alpha Lyrae/Vega)
Logan's End (Eta Cassiopeiae)
Mussala Station (Pi 3 Orionis)
Concordia (Epsilon Eridani)
Bay Jing (Omicron 2 Eridani)
Nouvelle Vie (Gamma Leporis)
SEVEN WORLDS


LEGEND
Settled Star System
Space Station / Human Outpost
Uninhabited Star System
0.2 Main Route (Stellar Communication Network)
0.2 Secondary Route
0.2 Dead-end Route
0.2 Secret Route
Gliese 10025
Gliese 1002
EQ Pegasi
Ross 780
Gliese 908
Ross 671
EZ Aquarii
Lacaille 9352
AX Microscopii
Proxima Centauri
Liberty Station (Alpha Centauri)
Barnard's Star
Earth (Sol)
Ross 619
Ross 128
Ross 682
Wolf 359
Luyten's Star
DX Cancri
Procyon
Ross 154
Gliese 832
Gliese 674
Gliese 570
Harris Station (Gliese 682)
Gliese 588
Apollo (Epsion Indi)
Zarmina ("Gee") (Gliese 581; Wolf 582)
36 Ophiuchi
Wolf 629
Hoffning Station (Gliese 667)
61 Cygni
Sirius
Ross 614
Gliese 784
HIP 85295
Ross 248
Mu Cassiopeiae
Ross 47
Waypoint Station (Alpha Lyrae/Vega)
2MASS 1835+325
G 208-044
Gliese 892
Logan's End (Eta Cassiopeiae)
G 099-049
Gliese 1
HIP 86287
Kruger 60
Hernandez Station (Delta Pavonis)
Mu Herculis
EV Lacertae
GX/GQ Andromedae
YZ Ceti
Van Maanen's Star
TZ Arietis
UV/BL Ceti
Concordia (Epsilon Eridani)
Tau Ceti (Not populated yet)
Bay Jing (Omicron 2 Eridani)
LHS 1723
WD 0552-041
WD 0552+053
Chi 1 Orionis
HIP 25578
HIP 22923
Wolf 227
WD 0435-088
HIP 23311
Mussala Station (Pi 3 Orionis)
HIP 29512
HIP 33499
AB Columbae
Nouvelle Vie (Gamma Leporis)
HIP 23452
HIP 18899
2MASS 0415-093
LP 771-095
HIP 14101
0.5 (Secret)
Delta Eridani
SEVEN WORLDS

into the fire

The adventure begins several months after the last scene from *Divided We Fall*, and assumes the heroes successfully guided their convoy of refugees from Nouvelle Vie to Concordia. See the "Refugee Fleet" side story (page 234) if you want to run side stories between Nouvelle Vie and Concordia.

SCENE 1: A DESPERATE SITUATION

Read or paraphrase the following:

Almost five months have passed since the terrifying events in Nouvelle Vie, and you have finally arrived in Concordia after a harrowing ordeal. The unending stream of refugees with traumatic stories to tell, the constant fear of being chased and attacked by the mysterious aliens, and the deafening silence of the defunct Stellar Communications Network, a silence that has turned one of the most travelled routes in human space into a lonely and dangerous trip; all these and more have made this a bizarre, anxious voyage. You are glad it is over.

Many of the refugees you brought stayed at Bay Jing, their families' home planet. Most of the others have disembarked here in Concordia with you. Unfortunately, there is no rest for you. You barely have time to clean up and enjoy the sensation of being on a real planet when you are summoned to Epsilon Leader Antoine's offices.

A haggard Antoine receives the heroes, thanks them for their efforts in protecting the refugees, and outlines the situation.

The aliens are known as the Devourers. This picturesque name was given by none other than the N'ahili, who matter-of-factly admitted of knowing them from long ago. Adam also predicted humanity would most likely lose this fight and in the shocked silence that followed, advised them to prepare for that. The N'ahili have refused to provide any help.

Nouvelle Vie has fallen to the Devourers, who thoroughly destroyed both the Concordian and the Bay Jingnian navies in that star system. Mussala Station was blown up just three weeks ago. If anything, it is a mystery why the Devourers are taking so long to move to the next planet. If they wanted to, they could have reached Bay Jing weeks ago.

The entire Stellar Communications Network is down since it first failed during the battle of Nouvelle Vie, and scientists say it will take *years* to repair it. Whatever happened to it has crippled humanity and made it very difficult to stage a coordinated response to the invaders. Investigations have determined that the computers inside each Stellar Comm Network station have self-burned down. No one knows how this happened, or why.

The Devourers have ignored all attempts at communication, and seem focused only on destruction. The remainder of the Concordian, Bay Jingnian, Circle and EarthGov fleets, now joined by necessity, are in the Bay Jing system preparing for the hopeless task of defending the planet should the aliens strike there.

The Circle has put in operation every single Settler Ship in its fleet, evacuating refugees from Bay Jing and Concordia, and moving them farther into the inner systems. The Psion Brotherhood is also supporting the evacuation as much as possible. The result of this massive exodus is social and economic chaos, with devastating effects.

Antoine is brutally direct with the heroes: He sees no hope of winning this war. No one has any idea of how to stop the Devourers yet before they completely annihilate us.

After outlining the helplessness of the situation, Antoine says that the heroes in the last few months have witnessed several things that, taken together, deserve investigation:

- What the heroes saw in Nouvelle Vie months ago was obviously a Devourer ship. This therefore means that the Psion Brotherhood actively kept all information on the Devourers classified. Why? Does the Brotherhood know something else about the Devourers?
- The assassination of Governor Sung Selnes in Concordia conveniently weakened humanity at a crucial time. This murder is still not completely solved. Could there be a connection?
- The Stellar Communications Network mysteriously crashed moments before the invasion, in every star system at once on a radius of almost 30 light-years. It is very unlikely the Devourers could have caused this, no matter how powerful they are. Dr. Luis LaMarche, an expert on the Stellar Comm Network,

conveniently disappeared a few months before the crash.

Is this all a coincidence? Or is there another explanation?

Antoine believes solving this mystery may give the Circle a clue on how to beat the aliens. He is willing to bet an entire team of Circle officers on his hunch. He currently has two starting points, none of them very solid.

As his first starting point, Antoine brings up Dr. LaMarche. When the heroes reported the results of their investigation on Dr. La Marche after their visit to Earth, Antoine passed a description of the doctor to all Circle outposts. A Circle officer stationed at Harris Station reports having seen someone that fits his description. Antoine wants the heroes to go to Harris Station, find LaMarche, and see if he can shed some light on the Stellar Comm Network crash.

The second starting point is somewhat stranger: Just two days ago Antoine has received a curious e-message. His agents have tried tracing its source without success. The entire text of the message is:

Your puzzle is missing a piece. Send Officers [insert heroes' last names here] to Whitehall. Ask Johann Patras about his latest trip.

Whitehall is, obviously, the capital of the planet Apollo.

Although the message is certainly suspect, Antoine has decided at this point anything is worth a try, and wants the heroes to follow up on this lead too. Since Apollo is on the way to Harris Station, Antoine suggests the heroes start their search there. The heroes will have their ship, the *Voyager*, at their disposal to continue the investigation (or a ship with similar specifications, if the *Voyager* has been destroyed earlier).

After the briefing Antoine wishes them the best, tells them they have his trust, and dismisses them. The heroes leave with the uneasy feeling that they might not see the leader of the Circle again.

DISPATCHES FROM THE WAR

To keep the heroes abreast of what is happening in the frontlines of the war, several dispatches are available as player handouts. These tidbits of news will help you keep war ever-present during this adventure while at the same time reinforcing the futility of trying to engage the Devourers directly.

Periodically give dispatches #1 to #4 to the heroes as they work on this adventure. For more role-playing impact, these dispatches could be complemented with appropriate farewell messages from important contacts or family members, if one of the heroes has them in the affected planets. Some of these could even be the springboard for new side stories, as family members share previously unknown secrets with the heroes, or ask them to perform specific errands as a last wish.

WHAT HAPPENS NOW

Make sure the players clearly understand the goals of their mission: They must search and find any way to stop or defeat the Devourers. And they have two leads to help them start their mission.

The heroes now should follow the mysterious message and go to Whitehall on the planet of Apollo. Afterwards, they can follow the lead on Dr. LaMarche and continue on to Harris Station.

Allow the heroes to fully restock their supplies. Remember that Concordia is a planet expecting to be invaded, and role-play any personal NPC relationships appropriately. The heroes don't know it yet, but they will most likely not return to Melissant again.

SCENE 2: ARRIVING AT WHITEHALL

This scene begins as the heroes approach Apollo, following the clue left by the mysterious e-message received by Epsilon Leader Antoine. The message suggests the heroes go to Whitehall and ask someone called Johann Patras about his latest trip to find "a new piece of the puzzle."

As the heroes prepare to make the jump into Apollo read or paraphrase the following:

The space between Concordia and Apollo is very different than usual: More silent and lonely, thanks to the crash of the Stellar Comm Network; more crowded with ships fleeing from the frontier; and more dangerous, as pirates and criminals take advantage of the situation. You are now about to make the jump into Epsilon Indi, Apollo's star system.

As you soon as you complete your jump the ship's alarm notifications pop up! Two Apollonian patrol ships, ready to fire, surround you. "Stop! State your goal!," a nervous voice asks through the comm.

The two patrol ships have been assigned by security on Fukuyama Station to protect the star system against the arrival of pirates or an enemy fleet. They are On Hold, ready to fire and have to be convinced that the heroes are who they say they are before letting them through. This should be no problem for the heroes, though, unless they behave really stupidly. Once they have proven their identity, the Patrol Ships let them through.

Remember to have the heroes roll for Jump Disorientation.

- **Apollonian Patrol Ships (2):** Use the stats for Patrol Ship.

After this encounter, the heroes approach Apollo and dock on Fukuyama Station or on any other docking station in orbit around the planet. Describe how empty and quiet the usually busy and hectic orbit of Apollo is.

Remind the heroes that they need breathing masks to breathe in the atmosphere of Apollo. If they don't have any, breathing masks are available for sale in the docking station, and on the StO shuttle itself (at double the standard price). See the *Seven Worlds Setting Guide* for the effects of breathing unprotected in Apollo. The heroes also need appropriate clothing to protect themselves against the cold, and goggles to compensate for the low lighting.

As the heroes take the StO shuttle read or paraphrase the following:

As the shuttle glides towards the surface of Apollo, you get your first full glimpse at the planet: A whitish, cold world, with a narrow band around the equator with combinations of brown, green and blue. It is no secret that the equator is the only part of Apollo that has above-zero degree temperatures on the average, and it is thus there that most cities have been founded.

You are not impressed by Whitehall: A large city that mixes modern architecture with lower, hastily constructed houses and buildings, most of it covered in a layer of snow. Whitehall is supposed to be one of the most dangerous cities in the now-Six Worlds, and things have only gotten worse with the war.

Remember to involve any heroes that are native from Apollo in this part of the game. Maybe they want to visit friends and relatives, or do something related to their character background.

THE SITUATION ON THE GROUND

Assuming the heroes have arrived in their Circle Patrol Ship, they have been identified and the local Circle offices have been notified of their arrival. Delta Officer Milla Lankila, in charge of the local Circle office, contacts and briefs them on the situation in Whitehall.

Whitehall is indeed worse than ever. Apollo is heavily dependent on commerce, transport and refueling fees, and commerce from Bay Jing and Concordia has virtually stopped. Business has therefore come crashing down, as shipyards and docking stations stand empty, and services go unused. On the other hand, more and more ships loaded with refugees escaping the likely invasion of Concordia and Bay Jing are requiring support services Apollo is not used to providing.

The result is chaos: Many businesses, both large and small, have closed or gone bankrupt; Supplies are scarce, unavailable or extremely expensive; inflation is rampant. In desperation, the surviving corporations and businesses have turned to even shadier tactics to survive, such as smuggling of illegal substances, sabotaging each other's remaining operations and engaging in open trade war with competitors. Some have taken advantage of the situation to settle old scores.

The lawlessness of Apollo has significantly increased, as murders, vendettas, debt-collecting and "unpaid favors" have become more and more common. Rather than controlling the situation, the corrupt authorities are desperately aligning themselves with whatever corporation can continue to pay them off. In short, there is no law anymore.

In the midst of this chaos swirl the rumors of war. To the average Apollonian, the breakdown and impoverishment of their society is much more real and immediate than news of a faraway war. News have also been heavily filtered to avoid a panic. Most citizens believe that Concordia and Bay Jing will take care of those pesky alien invaders long before they become a threat to Apollo. Aren't they the two largest and most powerful planets in the *Seven Worlds*, anyway?

Delta Officer Lankila cannot provide help in the form of Circle personnel for missions, as she is already spread thin supporting security controls in the city. She suggests that if the heroes start any investigations in shady parts of this dangerous city, they shed their Circle uniforms and don civilian clothes with thermal protection against the cold. A Circle officer in uniform stands out; in most cases this means trouble. Someone who really wants to identify the heroes will be able to do that using their ID Tags, anyway.

JOHANN PATRAS

A quick V-World search for Johann Patras unearths the information below. It is up to you to decide if the heroes get this information on their first search or if they (or their Assistants) need multiple searches to get all this:

- Johann Patras works as a merchant starship captain for a small company called Matsuri Import/Export. His home address is also listed as Matsuri Import/Export.
- Patras is a shady guy with a record. He has been in prison previously for organized theft and piracy.
- Matsuri Import/Export specializes in transporting small cargoes to and from Apollo. The company doesn't do much advertising and is very opaque in its accounts.
- An advanced or deep search into Matsuri Import/Export shows that Patras is not the only worker in the company with criminal record. In fact, the company would seem to specialize in hiring ex-convicts.
- The latest ship logs for Patras' ship show that he has recently arrived to Whitehall from a transport mission on the route to Earth. No more details are given.

SCENE 3: MATSURI IMPORT/EXPORT

Matsuri Import/Export is in a large, run-down unmarked warehouse in a semi-deserted commercial section in the outskirts of the city. Large snow mounds accumulate on the sides of the warehouse, as well as on the street in front of it. There are also several metal transport crates and mounds of wet garbage dispersed around the warehouse door and wall and on the street.

Several disheveled, dangerous-looking men are guarding the front door of the warehouse. As soon as the heroes enter range, these thugs rudely ask them what they want. The thugs will try to get rid of the heroes, telling them the company is closed at this time, or whatever else they think will make them leave.

If the heroes ask about Patras or become too insistent about entering, the thugs threaten them with violence unless they leave immediately. If the heroes don't heed their warnings, the thugs just attack.

The warehouse building front wall is 10" long, with the front door occupying the middle 2". The side walls are 20" long. The environment outside the warehouse is open and covered in snow. Place three Small Burst Templates at different positions in front of the warehouse to represent the mounds of crates and garbage, which provide cover and count as Difficult Ground when crossed.

Anyone not native to Apollo who moves on the snow more than half their pace must make an Agility roll or fall prone after moving. Apply a –2 penalty to the roll if the non-native character runs.

Place one thug per hero on the entrance, plus two. Two more thugs per hero await inside the warehouse, and leave the building to enter combat as soon as any violence begins. The thugs will surrender when the fight becomes hopeless.

The following special Assistant actions are available:

- **V-World Sensors:** The V-World sensors around the warehouse have been modified to provide the goons with valuable positioning and action information. The goons, therefore, receive an automatic +1 bonus to all their Shooting rolls. Any Assistant can automatically identify this modification and report to the heroes that the sensors "are not playing fair." If a hero spends a Benny the Assistant can attempt to hack these modified sensors. With a successful Hacking roll, the Assistant disables the sensors, thus eliminating the goons' Shooting bonus. With a raise, the Assistant interferes with the information provided by the sensors, applying a –1 penalty to the goons' Shooting rolls instead.

The warehouse itself is composed of a very large open hall and several smaller rooms in the back. The inside of the warehouse is as dirty and chaotic as the outside, but it is mostly empty.

- **Mesh Goons (3 per hero plus 2):** Use the stats for Typical Thug. Instead of Autopistols they are armed with SMGs (Range 12/24/48; Damage 2d6 AP 1; RoF 3; Auto). They have a temporary +1 bonus to Shooting rolls (see above). One of them is armed with a Nunchaku (Damage Str+d4; Parry +1), and gets a +2 bonus to Fighting rolls when using it.

AFTER THE BATTLE

Any surviving goons will be uncooperative and defiant, even after surrendering. They are sure of being able to avoid prison time, since the Mesh controls law enforcement. They will thus have to be intimidated or persuaded to talk.

When finally made to talk, the goons reveal the following:

- Matsuri Import/Export is really a front and main headquarters for The Mesh, one of Apollo's most dangerous criminal syndicates, led by the infamous Leon Granberg.
- The building is practically empty, since Granberg is currently leading a big operation somewhere on the planet far from Whitehall. He has taken most of his minions on this operation, which he said would be extremely profitable. The goons have heard that this operation was requested by Hariko Shipping, the largest business conglomerate in Apollo, and that it is some kind of hit against Consorcio La Merced, a small upstart rival of Hariko Shipping. They have no more details on what the operation is.
- Johann Patras arrived some time ago, and was immediately drafted by Granberg as part of the team involved in running this operation. If the heroes want to find Patras, they need to find wherever Granberg and his team have gone.
- There are rumors of a running quarrel between Shaneka Lesneski, CEO of Hariko Shipping, and Denice Orihuela, CEO of Consorcio La Merced. They, or the people who work for them, probably have more information on what the operation itself is.

If the heroes or their Assistants search V-World for information on Hariko Shipping or Consorcio La Merced, they find both companies addresses in Whitehall. Hariko Shipping owns the largest part of shipping in Apollo, and is known for doing business the tough way. Recently, Consorcio La Merced began challenging their leadership through a combination of lower shipping prices and better services, and a trade war has erupted. The Devourer War and consequent decline in shipping cargoes has affected both companies' businesses significantly, and they are both in danger of going under unless they find other sources of income. On the other hand, the increased chaos in the planet has increased the viciousness of the trade war.

Three days ago, Consorcio La Merced's security department went to full alert. Information leaks have been tightened, and no word is coming out. Something critical has obviously happened.

It is up to the heroes to decide how to proceed, but most likely they will want to visit either Hariko Shipping or Consorcio La Merced.

AN ENCOUNTER WITH THE LAW

Regardless of whether they first visit Hariko Shipping or Consorcio La Merced, the heroes are in for trouble. The Mesh has alerted their friends at local law enforcement of the heroes' activities, and wants payback.

As the heroes go on their way between Hariko Shipping and Consorcio La Merced, they are stopped by a group of police officers. Depending on how the heroes have chosen as a means of transportation, this may happen in the street if the heroes are walking, the policemen may stop the public transportation vehicle they are using, or intercept their private car. The environment where the possible combat takes place therefore varies depending on the circumstances.

The policemen haughtily ask the heroes if they are the ones who "recently caused trouble at that nice establishment, Matsuri Import/Export" and tell them they are under arrest. If the heroes comply, the policemen ask them to give up their weapons, and try to take them to a deserted, quiet spot. They will use their shock sticks, puke sticks or sonic stunners to do this. If they manage to get the heroes to a more private location, or if the heroes become too difficult to prod, the policemen switch to their autopistols and attack to kill.

These law enforcement officers can use the V-World sensors to full effect against the heroes. Police officers can ignore up to two points of Cover Penalties. They also have a +2 bonus to Taunt and Intimidation rolls due to the privileged access they have to information on the heroes.

If the combat is on foot, remember that non-natives that move on snow at more than half their pace have to make an Agility roll or fall prone.

If things are going badly for the heroes, you can have a team of Consorcio La Merced security operatives burst into the scene and become extras under the players' control. Denice Orihuela has also had several of her security operatives keeping tabs on the heroes, and they decide this is the time to get involved. In this case, after the battle the security operatives disappear and leave the heroes on their own.

The following special Assistant actions are available:

- **V-World Police System:** A determined Assistant can try to eliminate the police officers' information advantage bonuses. If a hero spends a Benny the Assistant can attempt to hack these modified sensors. With a successful Hacking roll the Assistant disables the sensors, thus eliminating the police officer's bonus.

If after the combat the heroes interrogate the police officers, they are told the Mesh asked them to take care of the problem. They don't know why, nor do they care.

- **Corrupt Police Officers (1 per hero plus 2):** Use stats for Security.

- **Corrupt Police Officer leaders (1 per hero):** Use stats for Veteran Security.
- **Consorcio La Merced Security (1 per hero):** Use stats for Veteran Security.

SCENE 4: HARIKO SHIPPING

If the heroes decide to visit Hariko Shipping they find their large, elegant offices in downtown Whitehall. The office building is heavily guarded, and all entrances are digitally encoded to not open to anyone except employees or visitors with an appointment. The heroes can try to make an appointment beforehand via V-World, or they can try to directly visit. In any case, the heroes will be politely rebuffed unless they mention The Mesh, Consorcio La Merced, or the mysterious operation in progress. When they do, the Assistant at the other end of the line (or on the physical screen, if the heroes went in person) will ask them to wait, and after a few minutes give them a personal, face-to-face appointment with Shaneka Lesneski herself.

The heroes are accompanied by four imposing security guards who behave in a polite and pleasant manner. Before crossing the main lobby doors, the heroes are delicately but firmly requested to leave all weapons behind. If there are any problems, the guards can call up reinforcements within seconds.

The heroes are then introduced to two uniformed guards with Psion Brotherhood pins, who will perform a psionic scan to make sure there are no hidden psions among them. If there are any psions in the party, covert or otherwise, the psion guards will join the heroes' escort. This is a good time to remind heroes that Psion Brotherhood agents are available for rent as part of their offered services, without this implying the Brotherhood is allied with Hariko Shipping in any way.

The heroes are escorted to the top floor of the building, where a smiling Shaneka Lesneski awaits in a large conference room with an impressive view of snow-covered Whitehall. Two guards (plus the two psion guards, if necessary) stay in the conference room with Shaneka and the heroes.

The exact flow of the conversation depends on how you and the players handle it. Shaneka of course, denies any wrongdoing, and laments anything inappropriate that may be going on. She also very diplomatically suggests that the heroes should not get involved in unpleasant local problems, particularly since they are from the Circle and therefore outsiders. She praises them for their zeal and offers them a small, but still rather valuable, souvenir of some kind as a reminder of their (concluded) visit to Apollo. She will also appeal to any Apollonian heroes, since they know how difficult things may be to outsiders who don't know "how things work in Apollo."

If the "operation" the Mesh is running comes up, Shaneka innocently explains that she has learned that Consorcio La Merced has recently been hit by an "unfortunate event" caused by despicable criminal elements from Whitehall. She, of course, has nothing to do at all with that, and hopes everything turns up all right. She does not elaborate further, and suggests the heroes talk to Consorcio La Merced if they are so interested in what is going on with them.

If Shaneka thinks the heroes may be interested in working for her, or if they mention they are looking for Patras and that he works at the Mesh, she tells them she may have a way to help: She has recently been offered valuable competitive information owned by Consorcio La Merced, but the information is encrypted. She does not reveal what the information is, but explains that she needs a digital cryptokey to unlock this information before it gets permanently erased. If the heroes are willing and able to acquire that cryptokey from Consorcio La Merced and provide it to her, she would be infinitely grateful for their effort. This gratitude may be expressed financially of course, but she may also "influence" on the criminal elements to see if she can get the heroes access to Patras if that is what they want.

As the heroes leave Shaneka offers them her most charming smile, and expresses hope that they may work successfully in the future. Then the heroes are escorted out of the building and returned any weapons they left behind.

- **Shaneka Lesneski:** Use the stats for Civilian, but make her a Wild Card with a d12 Spirit and Smarts, and a d10 in Persuasion and Intimidation.
- **Hariko Shipping Guards (as many as needed):** Use the stats for Veteran Security.
- **Psion guards (2):** Use stats for Veteran Psion.

SCENE 5: CONSORCIO LA MERCED

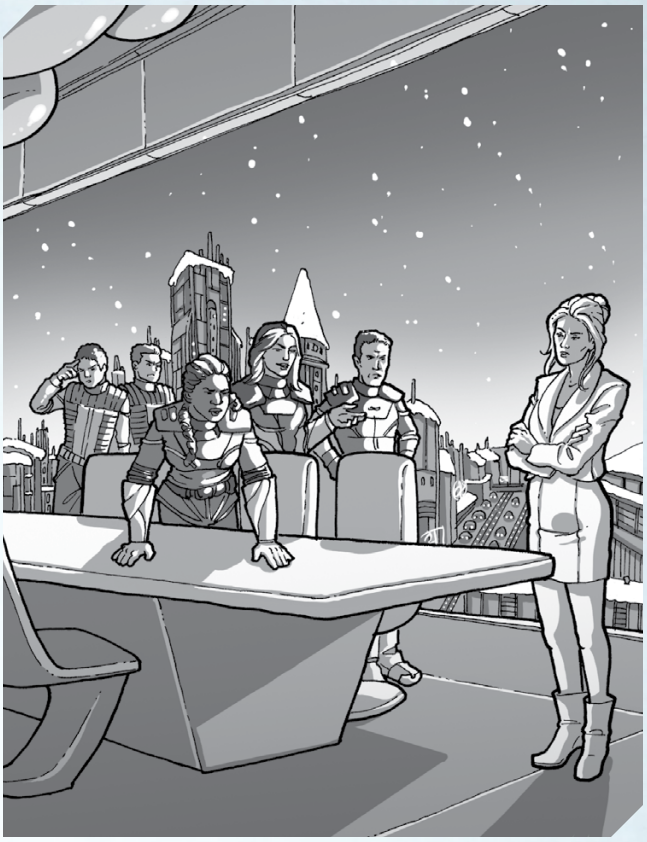
The headquarters of Consorcio La Merced are as elegant and impressive as the ones for Hariko Shipping, if smaller. Although security is significantly tightened, the heroes are only lightly checked for weapons and then taken to the offices of Denice Orihuela. No psionic checks are made on them.

Denice is a small, quiet woman of approximately sixty years of age (she is actually eighty-five) in an old-fashioned business dress. She invites the heroes

to sit and offers them something to drink. She serves the drinks herself.

She begins the conversation in a very amiable fashion. If her security team got involved in helping the heroes during the fight with corrupt policemen, she mentions that. After they have gained her trust she explains the situation as Consorcio La Merced sees it. Use these points as part of the conversation as appropriate:

- Consorcio La Merced has been the underdog in the Apollo shipping industry market. Desperate to get an edge over their larger and more corrupt competitor, Hariko Shipping, a few years ago Consorcio La Merced modified an agricultural research facility they owned a few thousand miles to the south of Whitehall and of Apollo's temperate zone, and turned it into a secret lab.
- The research facility has recently made a breakthrough advance in biotechnology that dynamically reconstitutes the molecular structure of foodstuffs being transported, eliminating components that can easily be reinserted by nanotechnology at the cargo's destination. The end result of this is that foodstuffs can be significantly compressed, reducing space and mass for shipping by a factor of five or more. This allows Consorcio La Merced to realize significant savings transportation costs, which it can pass on to their customers and disrupt the shipping business.
- Three days ago the research facility was attacked by a terrorist group. They have taken all scientists in the facility hostage, and have threatened to murder one scientist each day unless they are given the cryptokey that allows them access to the formula and plans for this revolutionary technology. The database that protects the information is virtually unbreakable by anything except a brute-force attack (which would take months) and after too many failed attempts the information is automatically erased anyway. The terrorists are trying to break the code anyway, and have already killed two scientists.
- The attack on the research facility has not been publicized, and is not public knowledge. In Denice's eyes, this means that it is in the terrorists interest to acquire the formula without the public at large knowing about it. This would imply someone wants to use it without having to explain how it was acquired. Law enforcement must surely have heard rumors about the situation, but they have washed their hands off it. Since they are usually bought by both sides, it is in their interest to not go against either one.



- The terrorists have not identified themselves, but Denice's security personnel are positive that they are members of The Mesh. Denice is sure this is all a plot arranged by the CEO of Hariko Shipping, Shaneka Lesneski, whom she hates above all things. It is a well-known secret that the Mesh works as Hariko Shipping's illegal arm. However, Denice has no proof, and she would love to have it.
- Denice's priority is to save the hostages and the formula for her new breakthrough… not necessarily in that order. She is willing to take more forceful measures to solve the situation. Unfortunately, most factions in Apollo know when not to get involved, and are not helping. The heroes, however, are perfect for this mission: They are outsiders with no local history or scores to settle with anybody, and want to locate Johann Patras, who is one of the terrorists in the compound. Denice will point out that if someone else takes the salvage job and succeeds, almost surely Patras will get himself killed and the heroes will lose any chance to get information from him.

Assuming the heroes decide to join forces with Denice, she lays out her plan: She wants the heroes to sneak into the research facility, retrieve the information, save the hostages, take care of the

terrorists, and if possible obtain proof of Shaneka's involvement in the attack. She will transport them to a location relatively close to the facility and provide them with a map and keycodes for access to different parts of the compound, as well as supplies for the mission. She will also give them a cryptokey that allows them to retrieve the plans from the encrypted database. If the heroes are successful she promises to take care of any repercussions to them or to the Circle, and to get them the access to Patras they need. She also offers them a reward if needed to entice them. Denice warns the heroes that if they betray her to Hariko Shipping she will personally make sure they do not leave Apollo in one piece.

Denice Orihuela is a rogue psion, something she keeps very secret. If a psion attempts a mental psionic power against her, it will automatically fail the first time, and the psion will know who she is. She will also immediately know she has been discovered, and initiate a parallel mental conversation with the hero, hoping to get him to keep her secret safe.

Once the conversation ends, Denice pleasantly says good-bye to the heroes and wishes them the best. What happens next will depend on whether they accept their offer or not, and on whether they decide to play on Denice or on Shaneka's side.

- **Denice Orihuela:** Use the stats for Rogue Psion, but make her a Wild Card with a d12 in Spirit and Smarts, and a d8 in Persuasion and Intimidation. She has no combat gear or weapons.

SCENE 6: THE RESEARCH FACILITY

If the heroes decide to take up Denice's offer, she provides them with maps of the three levels of the Research Facility; the cryptokey to retrieve the confidential formula from the central database; and a master code password to access the facility's system and equipment. The cryptokey is a physical card, and the heroes must decide who will carry it.

Denice can also provide any special equipment the heroes request (be sure to apply the Encumbrance rules). The heroes are given a special winter suit, complete with helmet, appropriate for a trek through the bitter cold of Apollo. This suit provides a +4 bonus to rolls to resist cold, but is bulky, providing a –1 penalty to Agility and all related skills while the heroes wear it. Note that the suit and helmet allow the heroes to swim through the freezing water stream in Location B.

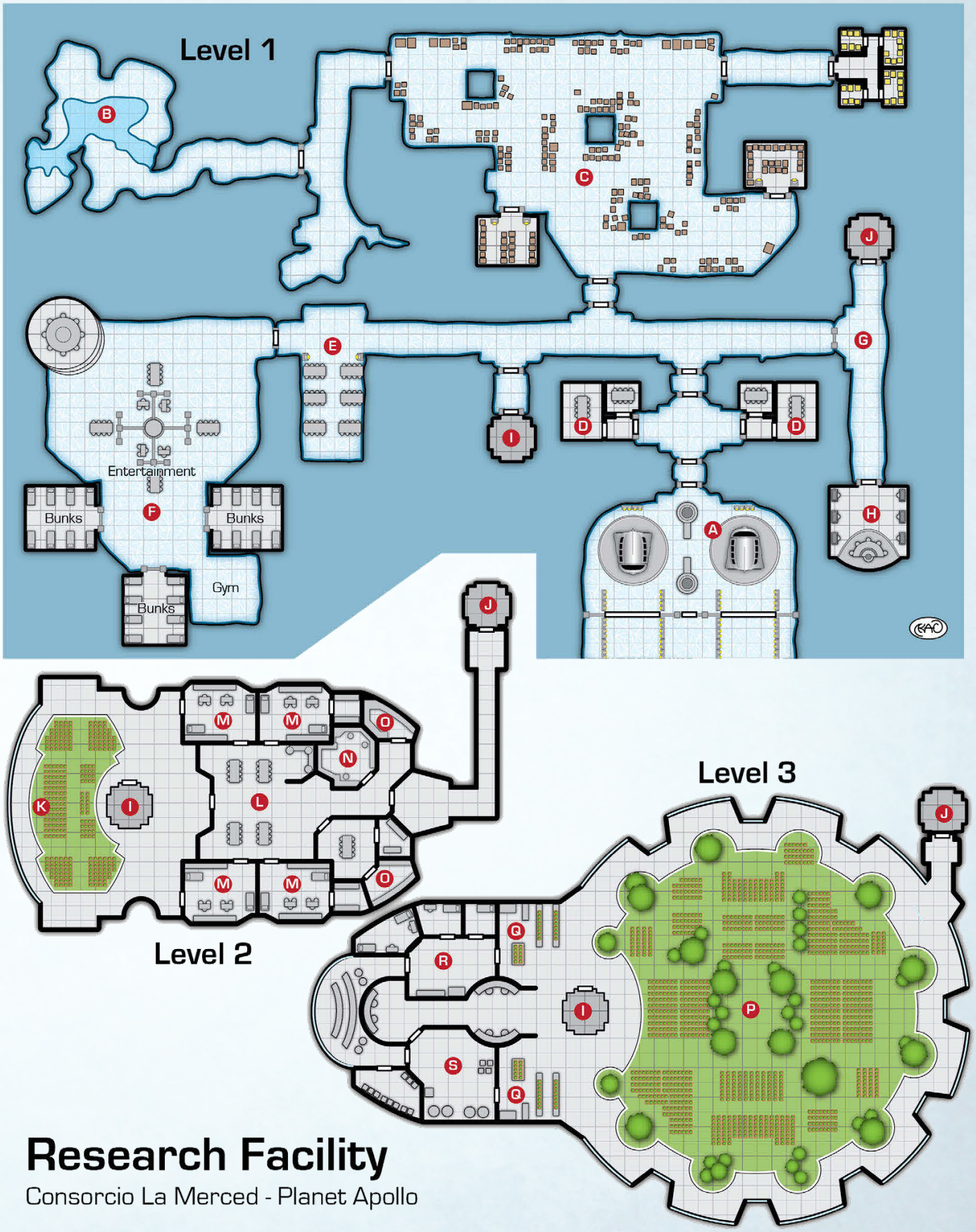


A snow hovership piloted by Denice's team transports the heroes to a location several thousand miles to the south of Whitehall and about ten miles from the station. The heroes will have to reach the installation on their own. When the heroes send a success message or the ship detects them in the location where it left them, it will pick them up.

APPROACHING THE RESEARCH FACILITY

The walk to the research facility takes a few hours in the biting cold, and requires a Vigor roll with a –4 penalty to avoid Fatigue (don't forget to add the bonus for the heroes' clothing).

Consorcio La Merced's Research Facility originally was an agricultural research station, built to investigate new technologies for crop production and maintenance in hostile environments. However, in recent years Consorcio La Merced has turned it into a research facility on food transportation technology. Traces of the facility's original purpose still remain, though, most visibly in the existence of an agricultural dome with a greenhouse-like environment for plant and crop testing.



Research Facility

Consorcio La Merced - Planet Apollo

The first thing the heroes need to do is get within a mile of the compound. The facility is surrounded by sensors that detect any approaches within this radius. The heroes must make a successful cooperative Stealth roll with a –4 penalty to avoid detection. You should give heroes appropriate bonuses for any ideas they may have that could improve their chances, such as locating and modifying the sensors (hidden in the snow every few hundred yards). With a failure on their roll, the base is alerted to their approach.

Once the heroes have entered the compound's one-mile-radius, they can either try to enter the facility through the Hangar door (location A on the map); or they can try to sneak through a secret water stream that surfaces into a pool in the compound (location B on the map). This water stream is used within the compound as a source of water (after treatment) for irrigation and crew use. Denice has briefed the heroes on the secret entrance to the stream, a location about half a mile from the compound.

ENEMIES IN THE FACILITY

All enemies in the facility are in inactive mode for Stealth purposes, unless the heroes are detected. Since every opponent is connected to the facility's internal network, they can automatically raise the alarm as a free action during their combat turn.

If the heroes are ever detected inside the facility, Leon Granberg will redeploy his troops to chase and kill them as soon as possible. This means several key areas in the facility will most likely be left unguarded or weak.

THE COMPUTER SYSTEM

As soon as the heroes have entered the facility (either via Location A or B), they can interface to the wireless computer V-World using the password provided to them by Denice. This gives them the following benefits:

- The heroes can walk the corridors without any sensors spotting them. Guards that physically see them can still raise the alarm, of course.
- Unless indicated, most doors in the compound automatically open for the heroes.
- The heroes can detect the location of most guards in the level they are currently in. The location of people in other levels is not available until the heroes reach that level.

The computer system also shows the heroes that they can't use the elevators to other levels, not even with the password. To use the elevators, the heroes must visit the Control Room at location H.

A. OUTSIDE THE HANGAR

The hangar is the facility's official entrance. Behind the hangar doors is a large area storing two snow hoverships, used by the crew to venture outside the facility.

A small human-sized door protrudes between the large doors, and is currently open. Several Mesh Troops guard the entrance. They are inactive unless the heroes have already raised the alarm.

The large doors are closed but can be opened in two rounds via a large button on the inside wall of the hangar, or via an Assistant command if the Assistant has authorized access to the facility's internal network. The doors cannot be pierced or destroyed by anything but Heavy Weapons.

- **Mesh Troops (2 per hero)**
- **Snow Hovership (2)**

B. THE WATER STREAM

This cold water stream is used as a source of liquid water by the facility crew. Heroes can take advantage of it to enter the facility.

The water is so cold that it immediately affects the heroes if they take too long to swim through it. Have every hero make a Swimming roll. Those who are successful have to make one check against Cold (Vigor roll with a –4 penalty plus the suit's bonus) or receive one level of Fatigue. Those who fail the Swimming roll have to make two consecutive checks against Cold. See the Cold rules in *Savage Worlds* for details on how to remove this Fatigue.

The stream ends at a small pool in the middle of a deserted natural cavern. The walls show scars of gunfire and shooting, apparently made during the invasion of the compound a few days ago. Several metal tubes transport water from the pool to different parts of the compound, both for irrigation and for human consumption. If the heroes do something drastic with the water, such as poison it, the Mesh troops in the compound drink or use the water in some fashion every four hours.

There are no sensors in this pool, and the heroes run no risk of being accidentally detected or found here.

The door at the end of the passageway leaving out of this location is locked from the hallway side. Since this door is very infrequently used, opening it can raise an alarm. Even if the heroes connect to the computer system from this room (see above) they still need to make a successful Hacking roll with a –2 penalty to open the door without raising the alarm.

Note that the walls and floor of this level are carved out of the ice. Any heroes or enemies who run must make a successful Agility roll or fall Prone to the floor.

C. STORAGE ROOM

This large cave is used for storage, and is full of crates and cases of different types. Each crate has Toughness 8 and grants Medium (–2) Cover.

Several Mesh troops guard this section, and are engaged in a multiplayer game using their lenses unless the heroes have been detected, in which case they are actively guarding the place.

The two compartments on the sides of the room contain crates of dehydrated and processed food. The room at the far right side of the storage room contains bottles of chemical compounds marked "hazardous" and "poison." They could be used to poison the water in Location B. With some creativity, the chemicals and other accessories in this room could be used to build an explosive (see **Explosives** in the *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*). You should allow the heroes to find any hardware or technical parts they need, within reason.

- **Mesh Troops (2 per hero)**

D. MEETING ROOMS

These are the reception rooms for visitors who arrive at the compound via the main gates in A. They are also used as generic rooms for the crew during their day-to-day work. They contain tables, chairs and wall-screens. The walls and floor show signs of combat, as some of the crew of the station attempted to hide here before being gunned down or captured by Mesh troops during the attack.

The meeting room at the far left end hasn't been opened since the attackers arrived. Inside is the decomposing body of a scientist that resisted the attack. In one of the dead scientist's pockets, the heroes can find a keycard that opens the door to Location H.

E. MESS ROOM

This is the facility's dining room and cafeteria. It is currently used to cook and serve food to the Mesh troops. Supplies are brought from the storage room (location C) once per day and prepared by one of the troops who performs the duties of cook. Food is distributed throughout the facility for the rest of the troops.

The tables and stools in the room have Toughness 8 and grant Medium (–2) Cover. There are dirty dishes, forks and glasses everywhere. These can be used as an improvised weapon if necessary.

A single guard sits on a stool next to the kitchen, which is located on the third table on the bottom left side of the room. He is asleep next to a huge pot while he waits for his stew to boil. Heroes have a +2 bonus to any Stealth rolls against him unless he wakes up. If a hero poisons the stew and leaves without disturbing the guard, he will distribute the food to the other guards and prisoners in the facility. The food will take about four hours to be distributed to all the guards in the complex.

- **Mesh Troop / Cook (1)**

F. DORMITORIES AND COMMON ROOM

These are the common sleeping and recreation quarters for most of the crew. There are bunk beds in the south, east and west dormitories. A large table surrounded by wall-screens occupies the north-west corner of the room. Four small desks and entertainment centers occupy the center of the room, and a gym takes the south-east corner.

Unless an alarm has been raised, several guards lie asleep on the bunks on each of the three side rooms. The doors to all three rooms are open. The guards' sleep is light, and they will wake up if the heroes are not moving stealthily.

The main hall has several tables and chairs. These have Toughness 6 and grant Light (–1) Cover. The tables are covered with ebooks, decks of cards, mugs, and other items. These may be used as improvised weapons if necessary.

One of the guards sleeping in the southernmost room recently ended his shift at location G and forgot to return the physical keycard to location H. It is still in his back pocket.

- **Mesh Troops (1 per hero)**

G. GUARDS

The guards on duty at this location control access to the northernmost elevator and to the Control Room. They should have a keycard to open the door to location H, but the previous guard on duty forgot to return it and is now sleeping at location F. After some discussion these guards have decided to pick up the keycard after their shift ends.

- **Mesh Troops (1 per hero)**

H. CONTROL ROOM

The door to this room is locked and cannot be opened without a keycard, even if the heroes gained access to the main V-World computer system. One of the keycards to open this door is in the possession of

the guard at location G, and the other one is with the body of the dead scientist at location D. If they don't have the keycard, the heroes can try to hack the door by succeeding at a Dramatic Task with the Hacking skill with a –2 penalty, made by either a hero or their Assistant. Failing the Dramatic Task raises the alarm and does not open the door.

Behind the door is a room covered with wall-screens, which light up with displays and schematics as soon as the heroes enter, and a large computer console on the southern wall. By interacting with the computer system in this room, the heroes can automatically configure their authorization to the elevators and to any other room and device in the facility, with the exception of the systems in the Computer Room at Location L. The heroes also gain control of the light and darkness emitters at the main Agriculture Dome (location P).

I. ELEVATOR #1

This elevator takes the heroes to the other two floors (the elevator is also marked as "I" on the other floors). The elevator is programmed to open only to people who have been explicitly authorized by the system, and therefore does not open for the heroes unless they obtained authorization by going to Location H. The elevator does not have any kind of V-World or digital connections (other than the internal connection to the Control Room) and therefore cannot be hacked.

When they enter the elevator the heroes will see several old-style physical buttons on the wall, labeled "Ice Quarters Level" (the current level), "Research Level" and "Dome Level." The elevator will take a few seconds to transport the heroes to the chosen floor.

J. ELEVATOR #2

This elevator behaves in a similar fashion to location I, above.

K. GARDEN

This small garden is built as a relaxation spot for facility scientists in need of a break. Among the plants and floor there are six strong lights with a short luminous head that provide the artificial light in the room. Place six game counters on appropriate locations on the tabletop. If any of these are successfully hit with a called shot (–2) against a Toughness of 6, the light automatically explodes. Treat the explosion as a use of the *stun* power, centered on the light's position. The hero triggering the device must shut his eyes to be immune to the effects. When two or more bulbs are broken, the room darkens (treat as Dim Light). When four or more bulbs are broken, the room becomes completely dark (treat as Pitch Darkness).

Several Mesh guards are patrolling this location. They raise the alarm if they see the heroes.

- **Mesh Troops (2 per hero)**

L. COMMON ROOM

This open room is full of tables and chairs. These have Toughness 6 and grant Light (–1) Cover. The tables can be turned as an action to provide Medium (–2) cover.

A small kitchen in the north-east corner is used to heat food. The kitchen table is covered in utensils which may be used as improvised weapons.

M. SCIENTIST DORMITORIES

These four dormitories are empty. Leon Granberg and some of his lieutenants have been using them to sleep.

The dormitory in the south-west corner has been used by a careless troop. If the heroes make a successful Notice roll while in this room, they discover what looks like a small ebook. If the heroes read it, they find a diary with enough mentions to Shaneka Lesneski to prove that Hariko Shipping has been coordinating the attack. There is even a short video recording of one of Shaneka's latest calls to Leon, loudly complaining about their incompetence in obtaining the formula.

One of the dead scientists had a small genetically-modified dog in the north-east room. This dog, more intelligent than most, has been hiding under the bed for the last three days. It has become very hungry, though, and will attack any heroes who enter. The dog is weak enough so as to cause very little damage, but the noise it makes could alert the guards in other parts of the facility.

- **Small pet dog**

N. INFORMATION VAULT

The door to this room is closed. Two veteran Mesh Troops stand active guard in front of the door.

This room houses the main computers used by the facility's researchers. Since information is the most valuable output of the research facility, this computer system is not networked. This means the only way to remove information from this system is by physically interacting with the computers in the room. When the terrorists attacked one of the scientists enabled lock-down procedures and now the information vault is closed and protected. The only way to unlock the vault is via a physical cryptokey (which Denice gave to the heroes).

Hacking the information vault is extremely hard, and requires a successful Dramatic Task using the Hacking skill with a –4 penalty with each "round" lasting two



full hours. This roll cannot be made cooperatively. The terrorists brought a top-notch hacker with them but he has been unsuccessful several times. To top it off, after ten unsuccessful tries the information vault automatically erases its contents. The anxious attackers are just beginning their ninth attempt. Currently the hacker is accompanied by two more Veteran Mesh Troops, who both protect him and keep tabs on him.

If the heroes enter, the hacker will try to accelerate the failed attempts on the information vault in order to erase the information while the guards cover him and call for reinforcements. Since failing the hacking attempts is so much easier than succeeding, this is also a Dramatic Task but each round is a combat round and the hacker's Hacking roll has a +2 bonus. Since each full Dramatic Task constitutes one attempt to hack the information vault and the hacker is on his ninth attempt, he needs to succeed at *two* consecutive Dramatic Tasks to have the vault automatically erase the information.

The room is covered in wall screens. These screens, however, are likely to explode when hit by a stray shot. When a 1 is rolled on any Shooting die, the shot misses and hits a wall screen behind the target, causing an explosion. Place a Small Burst Template centered on the wall where the shot has hit a screen (use common sense to determine this). Any character under the template suffers 2d6 damage.

The west wall of the room has a small outlet that fits the cryptokey. If the cryptokey is inserted in this outlet (this counts as an action), the formula will be copied to its memory in three full rounds, after which the cryptokey can be removed.

- **Veteran Mesh Troops (2 outside, 2 inside)**
- **Hacker (1):** Use stats for Civilian, with a Hacking d12.

O. LABS

The research labs used by the scientists at the facility have all sorts of implements and tools appropriate for agricultural and biogenetic research. Among the many compounds available in this place there are several containers (about four per room) with a clear warning sign on them. The AR overlay on the heroes' lenses identifies their content as a special compound gas used for experimental purposes, which can be dangerous if openly exposed to heat and fire. If a container is hit, it explodes. Place a Small Burst Template in the center of the location of the container. Anyone in the template suffers 2d6 damage and must make a Vigor (–2) roll to avoid being Shaken. Use gaming stones to represent the containers.

The Mesh troops know about the containers and will use them as part of their strategy to neutralize the heroes.

P. AGRICULTURAL GARDEN

The main dome of the facility was created as an agricultural greenhouse. A huge open space is covered with plants, crops and trees of many types and sizes. Many types of insects, especially bred to participate in the plants' simulated ecosystem, crawl and fly among the bushes.

Several guards patrol this area. About half of them are located in the paved area of the dome that is closest to elevator J, the other half is distributed along the borders of the dome. They are inactive for Stealth purposes unless the alarm has been raised in the compound. If any of these guards raise the alarm, they will be supported by the troops in location Q almost immediately.

The following special Assistant actions are available:

- **Dome Illumination:** Although the dome is illuminated by natural sunlight, the illumination levels can be controlled to regulate the amount of light the plants receive. By spending a Benny, a hero can have his Assistant change the dome's illumination as an automatic action. In game terms, the hero gets to decide if the dome is fully illuminated, is in Dim Light, is Dark, or in Pitch Darkness. Dome illumination can be changed many times, by spending a Benny each time.

To help prune and take care of the trees in the agricultural level, the workers had a walking exoskeleton vehicle which lies idle around the center of the garden. The exoskeleton is about twelve feet high, and requires an Agility roll to climb. Once operative, the exoskeleton vehicle basically extends the hero's statistics and powers as follows: The hero's effective Strength is now d12+2, he gains an additional Armor of 6, a Reach of 1" and the Sweep Edge. On the other hand, the vehicle makes a lot of noise, thus nullifying any Stealth attempts. The vehicle's only attack option is a bash, which does Str+d8 damage. Finally, the vehicle has the Large monstrous ability.

- **Mesh Troops (2 per hero)**

Q. ANALYSIS TABLES

These tables were used by the scientists to test, prune and prepare plants for the garden. The tables have Toughness 8 and grant Medium (–2) Cover. They are covered with different types of implements that can be used as improvised weapons.

Several Mesh Troops are idly sitting by here. They will react if they detect the heroes or the alarm is raised, and will immediately reinforce the troops at P.

- **Mesh Troops (2 per hero)**
- **Veteran Mesh Troops (1 per hero)**

R. LEON GRANBERG'S HEADQUARTERS

Leon Granberg has set up his temporary headquarters here, next to the room where he keeps the hostages. He periodically communicates with Shaneka Lesneski from here, giving her updates on his (unsuccessful) efforts to get the information from the vault. As a means of protection, he has recorded several of his conversations with Shaneka, and the heroes can copy them if they access his lenses or if they hack the terminal located here (Hacking roll with a –2 penalty). Leon will not let the heroes access the terminal if he is in the room.

If Leon is warned of the heroes' attack, he will attempt to bring out the hostages from location S and threaten to kill them if the heroes don't surrender. Treat Leon and five other Veteran Mesh Troops as having The Drop on the six hostages, with guns pointing at their heads. If this scenario occurs, it is up to the heroes to figure out how to bring Leon down and save the hostages.

One of the troops that accompanies Leon is Johann Patras, the man the heroes are looking for. Patras should survive, regardless of how the combat ends.

- **Veteran Mesh Troops (2 per hero)**
- ✸ **Leon Granberg:** See page 235.
- ✸ **Johann Patras:** See page 236.

S. HOSTAGES

The surviving hostages are all kept in this room, protected by a team of guards outside the door. The door cannot be opened unless the heroes hack it

on-site with a Dramatic Task using the Hacking skill with a –2 penalty.

The hostages have been relatively well-treated, and only have one level of Fatigue. If armed with a ranged weapon they are willing to participate in combat on behalf of the heroes. They will not participate in melee or hand-to-hand combat, though.

- **Mesh Troops (1 per hero)**
- **Hostages (6):** Use stats for Civilian with Knowledge (Science) d10.

EPILOGUE

The conclusion of this scenario depends on the heroes' decisions.

If the heroes decided to side with Shaneka and get her the information she needs, she automatically wins the standoff with Consorcio La Merced. In this scenario she is true to her word and not only gives them their rewards, she also brings Patras so the heroes can talk to him and gather the above information. Denice and Consorcio La Merced will not forget this, and should attempt to kill the heroes before they leave.

If the heroes decided to side with Denice, they have a chance to talk to Patras during or after the raid. If they captured Patras, he will try to negotiate his release. Depending on what the heroes do with the evidence against Shaneka and Hariko Shipping, they may become attack targets, with Denice willing to support them. You are free to decide where this thread of the story ultimately leads.

Assuming Patras is in good shape at the end of the encounter, he is done with the Mesh. This is an opportunity to add or change heroes or player characters in the campaign.

TALKING TO PATRAS

The following text is Patras' story in his own words. Feel free to paraphrase this or handle it as a question-and-answer conversation, as you see fit:

My latest trip? What about my latest trip? Oh, I see, I think I know what you want to know. You see, something curious happened during my last trip. We're agreed that what I'm about to tell you is confidential, right? 'cause, to be frank, it's not exactly 'legal,' you know.

Ok, here it goes: You know that since the Stellar Comm Network is down, it's good business to attack ships travelling down the main routes. I mean, without the Comm Network to detect and report you, it is very easy to wait for an unsuspecting merchant ship next to a jump point and plunder it... or destroy it if it poses any resistance.

Some weeks ago I was sent by the Mesh to hang around the Ross 154 star system and attack merchant ships going between Earth, Apollo or Gee. We were patrolling the jump point from Apollo when we intercepted a ship, supposedly registered to a minor Concordia shipping company. We decided this ship would be an easy prey and demanded their surrender. They tried to attack and we fired back. We won easily and the merchant ship went silent. So we approached carefully, docked both ships together, and began boarding.

Inside we found the ship crammed with dead people! There were at least one hundred and fifty, more than twice as many people as the ship should have. Apparently the crewmembers had shot the passengers in cold blood... and then had committed suicide themselves. Almost as if they had not wanted to be captured. Bizarre, I know.

We tried to identify the passengers, see at least where they came from, and found that all of their IDTags had been removed. No identification was possible. Why did the passengers have no IDTags?

We searched the computer systems in the ship and found that the crew had tried to blow up their ship before we captured it; fortunately for us, our last attack hit the ship and disabled its systems before they could activate the destruction mechanism. That was probably when they turned to murdering every passenger.

The ship had been cleaned. There was no evidence, either physical or digital, of the ship's or passengers' purpose, identity or goal. The ship's memory banks had been almost completely erased. I tried to strip the ship, maybe take the ship itself, but my crew opposed me. They were scared by all the bodies, and refused to touch or take anything! I could not afford a mutiny, so we just left the ship, blew it up, and waited for the next one.

Oh, you noticed I said the memory banks had been 'almost' completely erased, didn't you? Well, it turns out the ship's captain had been the last to deal with the computer system, and apparently had almost finished erasing the ship's memory banks when our last attack destroyed everything. The screen in his quarters was still showing the last few lines of the ship's log. From

there I gathered they were going someplace called Chrysalis. Yes, Chrysalis. I have no idea where that is, I have never heard of the place. It's not listed on V-World, I've searched.

And that's all I know. When we got back Leon got us into this business with Hariko Shipping and I could not follow it up. Maybe you'll figure out who those guys were and what it all means.

The heroes should think about looking up the word "Chrysalis" in the Circle database. If they don't, an Assistant suggests it. Although there does not seem to be any place known as Chrysalis, an extensive search thru the Circle's indexes of planetary networks brings up an obscure three-year-old news report from the faraway, rough colony planet of Logan's End. Give Handout #1 to the heroes. No identification or information on the whereabouts of any of the people listed in the news release is available. To get more information the heroes will have to travel to Logan's End.

The adventure now continues in *Broken Circle*, the next module in the epic *Seven Worlds* campaign!

side stories

This section includes several side stories you can run or take inspiration from to complement the adventures in the main campaign.

THE REFUGEE FLEET

If you want to run some side stories within the fleet, one option is to run a Montage (see the Setting Guide), taking advantage of the trip. Another option is for you to create short side adventures. Here are some ideas for that:

- The enmity between Concordian and Bay Jingnian refugees (or their proxies, citizens from Jubilee and Dauphin) creates conflict within the refugee fleet. The heroes must defuse the situation before the violence escalates.
- Since the Stellar Comm Network is down, any ship looking to score a kill can do so without worrying about being identified. The fleet is attacked by a stray Concordian or Bay Jingnian warship that hasn't heard about the Alien ships. Alternatively, the fleet may be attacked by a pirate ship looking for easy loot.
- Food or medicine shortages affect the fleet, and the heroes must figure out a way to provide what is missing before riots break out.
- In a misguided effort to stay friendly to both Concordia and Bay Jing, Mussala Station decides to stay out of any political issues and refuses to receive, refuel or supply the refugee fleet. The heroes must convince the Station leaders that this is not an ordinary war refugee situation, and that Mussala Station itself is in danger.
- The heroes take too long and the Devourers catch up to them! Another in-the-nick-of-time escape is needed!

THE BREAKOUT

Where: Apollo.

As the Devourers continue to invade human space, the Circle office on Apollo receives a legal request from Earth. A group of Circle Officers must travel to Teague Prison, a maximum security facility far away from Apollo's equator, housing some of the most dangerous and prominent prisoners on the planet. There, they must pick up Manfred Saggese, scion of the wealthy Saggese family from Earth and a hardcore murderer and drug trafficker in Apollo, bring him back to Whitehall and ship him to Earth so he can testify on a case regarding a major Earth crime cartel.

The court order, signed by EarthGov authorities and the Apollo Representative on Earth, seems perfectly in order. However, everyone suspects that the wealthy Saggese family has used its power, influence and money to concoct an excuse to have their son brought to the relative safety of Earth before the Devourers attack Apollo.

Once the heroes reach Teague Prison on a Snow Hovership and enter the facility, they get to meet Manfred Saggese, an unpleasant, violent mountain of a man. Before they can depart with him, though, a revolt begins! Most inmates, and quite a few guards, want to leave Apollo as well, and resent Saggese for being able to get out. The heroes are quickly involved in a major fight, as a group of inmates and guards (led by "the Beast" Jones, one of the deadliest inmates in the facility) face other guards and the heroes. Saggese doesn't really join a group, and mostly enjoys killing people on either side.

If he gets the upper hand, Jones is willing to negotiate, arguing that in the end what he wants is for every inmate and guard to have a chance to escape Apollo and the Devourers. And he has a point: Why should the prisoners not be evacuated, when everyone else on Apollo is trying to escape the planet as well? Ironically, it is Jones who wants to negotiate in good faith to help the prisoners escape Apollo, while Saggese is more than willing to double-cross everyone, including the heroes, in order to flee on his own.

- **Snow Hovership**
- ✹ **Manfred Saggese:** Use stats for Veteran Thug but with a Strength d10 and a Charisma of –4. He is not armed.
- ✹ **Raoul "The Beast" Jones:** Use stats for Veteran Thug. He is unarmed.
- **Prison Guards (225):** Use stats for Typical Security. Nine of these have joined the prisoners.
- **Inmates (40):** Use Stats for Typical Thug. They are not armed.

A LOAN REVOKED

Where: Apollo/Harris Station.

This adventure works if there is at least one Psion in the group.

As soon as the heroes disembark a local Psion Brotherhood office representative approaches and informs them that the "On-Loan" status of Psion heroes is effectively ended (see *Seven Worlds Setting Guide* for more on "On-Loans"), and therefore the Psion must leave the group and the Circle and report for duties at the Psion Brotherhood immediately. The Devourer situation has stretched the Brotherhood to the limit, and all Psions are needed for emergency duties to protect humanity. Psion heroes have twenty-four hours to complete the transfer and report to the Brotherhood offices for their new duties.

If the Psion decides to escape, he or she becomes a a fugitive from the Brotherhood. Since the Circle is committed to capturing Rogue Psions, if the other heroes get involved they risk breaking Circle regulations as well.

Another option is for the hero to negotiate with the Psion Brotherhood representative. Maybe the representative has a need or problem that he can't solve on his own, and is willing to turn a blind eye to the hero's passing through this location in exchange for the hero taking care of his or her problem. The problem might require the heroes to break the law to save their friend.

The hero's final alternative might be to follow orders and leave the group. In this case, the hero becomes an NPC and the player can roll up or add a new character to the group. The heroes might get to meet their friend again at some other dramatic time of your choosing (if they get to meet the hero in Chrysalis, maybe the hero has had *greater forget* and *brain lock* applied to him, and has *raze* stored in his brain!). Alternatively, you might decide to run two parallel adventures for a while, as the Psion hero gets to discover some of the dark secrets of the Psion Brotherhood on his own or with a new set of heroes, and then joins the original group later in the campaign.

BREATHING ROOM

Where: Zarmina ("Gee").

The heroes are contacted by Crista Beverino, who needs their help. A dispute with the Oxygen Harvesters Union over pay rates has exploded into a workers' strike. As a way to keep the planet's dwindling oxygen supplies covered, and to put pressure on the Union, Beverino wants the heroes to lead an oxygen harvesting mission to Roanoke Lake, one of the largest oxygen lakes on the night side of Zarmina. She will provide a crawler vehicle for the mission.

If the heroes take the job, the Union threatens them, and a group of oxygen runners try to ambush the heroes before they leave.

- **Oxygen Runners (1 per hero):** Use stats for Typical Thug. They are all from Zarmina for purposes of calculating Planetary Environment penalties.

After a grueling trip through the night side of Zarmina, the heroes finally reach Roanoke Lake and begin to harvest liquid oxygen into tanks. Before they are finished, however, they are visited by three other crawlers full of Union thugs. The Union Leader confronts the heroes and tells them that they are hurting the welfare of hundreds of workers who are being exploited and underpaid for doing a risky job, and asks them to consider joining the Union instead. If the heroes decline the offer, the Union members attack (or give chase in their rovers, if necessary).

- **Oxygen Runners (4 per hero):** Use stats for Typical Thug, with a Piloting skill of d6, a Reinforced vacc suit (+2/+4, negates 4 AP against bullets) and a Vacc suit Helmet (+3, head only). They are all from Zarmina for purposes of calculating Planetary Environment penalties.
- **Oxygen Crawler (heroes have 1, enemies have 3):** Use stats for Crawler.

If the heroes return with the cargo, Crista rewards them handsomely and gains the upper hand in the Union negotiations. Shortly afterwards, the Union backs off on the strike. The heroes have now gained enemies for life.

TERRAFORMING GLIESE

Where: Hoffnung Station.

Dr. Alex Ferguson, an aged scientist, approaches the heroes and quietly asks for their help. Dr. Ferguson is part of the research staff of Cyssenne Labs, and is testing an experimental new nanobacterium that processes sulfuric acid and generates several by-products with industrial value. To perform the test, Dr. Ferguson needs to fire a missile with his experimental bacterium at a specific time and

planetary location on Gliese 667Cc, and unfortunately Hoffnung Station won't be close at the appropriate time. Dr. Ferguson therefore needs the heroes to take him on their ship to the appropriate location in orbit to perform the test. If the heroes agree, Dr. Ferguson prepares one of their missiles with the nanobacterium, and then blasts off with them.

In reality, Dr. Ferguson's latest research is not a bacterium to create industrial products, but rather a terraforming organism that, according to the doctor, could over time build a breathable atmosphere on Gliese 667Cc and add one more world to humanity. Cyssenne Labs is excited with Dr. Ferguson's discovery and has arranged for internal testing to begin immediately. Unfortunately, Dr. Ferguson, old and about to retire, does not want to wait the years of testing it will take to make sure the organism is safe to deploy on the surface of the planet. Convinced that his invention works, he has taken a sample of the organism and is about to unleash it on the planetary surface, against Cyssenne Labs' orders.

As the heroes reach the location, they detect two Patrol Ships commissioned by Cyssenne Labs approaching from Hoffnung Station, and begin receiving messages telling them that Dr. Ferguson is performing an illegal test. Dr. Ferguson responds by telling the heroes that someone is trying to appropriate his research, and urges the missile to be launched.

The Patrol Ships reach firing distance in just a few minutes, and threaten to attack unless the heroes surrender control of the ship and disable the missile. As a last resort, Dr. Ferguson will try to fire the missile on his own.

As it turns out, even if the missile is fired and hits its surface target, no one gets to know what happens for quite some time. The organism takes months to adapt and start its process, so whether the planet is being terraformed or irreparable damage is done to its ecosystem is a question that will not be answered in the short time.

- **Dr. Ferguson:** Use Stats for Civilian but add the Elderly Hindrance, and a d10 skill in both Hacking and Knowledge (Science).
- **Patrol Ships (2)**

VIRTUAL TORTURE

Where: Anywhere.

Sometimes, despite their best efforts, the heroes are overwhelmed by their enemies. This adventure can occur anywhere, and is a great way to get the campaign back on track and avoid a Total Party Kill.

First pick something the heroes know and that might be valuable to the enemy that overwhelmed the heroes. In the case of MaxDigital Corporation, for example, this might be information on the whereabouts of Dr. LaMarche. In the case of a terrorist organization, it might be the layout of Epsilon Leader Trevor Antoine's headquarters so as to plan a terrorist attack.

As the heroes fall to their enemies describe a hazy memory of a group of Circle soldiers quickly overwhelming the heroes' enemies. The heroes' last memory before falling unconscious is the friendly face of an athletic female soldier in battle armor.

When the heroes wake up they are in hospital beds. The female soldier is there, flanked by other Circle members. She introduces herself as Gamma Officer Diane Garrett from the Circle, and tells the heroes they have been unconscious for several days, but have responded well to treatment are almost completely cured. Diane then explains that she has been sent by Trevor Antoine himself, and needs the heroes' help for several urgent missions. If asked, she has digital orders from Antoine that pass all verification tests.

In reality the heroes are immersed in a detailed V-World simulation especially prepared by Garrett, an expert information gatherer who sells her services to the highest bidder. The heroes' vision of the arriving Circle team that defeated their enemies at the last moment was created by a combination of suggestive drugs and V-World projection. Garrett is so skilled at this she has even coded a special interface that makes the heroes' Assistants believe they're also in the real world and not in a simulation. Garrett's goal is to gain the heroes' trust and then carefully and smartly ask the questions needed to get the info she wants.

For the first "mission," craft a battle designed to make the heroes trust Garrett.. Give the heroes control of Garrett and her team during the battle, but keep role-playing her bravery and dedication to the Circle.

During the battle the heroes should start noticing something's wrong: Whenever they get a 1 on either the trait die or the Wild Die, the roll is considered as failed. When the players ask why tell them that they don't know, and it might be that they're still not cured, or it might be something else.

The "second mission" is an excuse to get the heroes to tell Garrett the secrets she wants them to spill. Garrett will produce any evidence the heroes need to prove the authenticity of her request (including video messages from Antoine or from their loved ones, if necessary).

If at any moment in the adventure the heroes expressly say that they feel something's wrong, allow them a free Spirit roll with a –4 penalty to figure out they are in a simulation (remember that a 1 on either die is considered a failure). Explain the roll as a roll to "feel what's going on" since nothing seems to be wrong at first sight. If a hero expressly says he believes they might be in V-World, or is told he is in V-World by another person, give him a +4 bonus to the roll.

With a success, the hero wakes up tied in a special chair in a dank room, surrounded by the soldiers from the simulation, only the real-life "soldiers" look more like thugs than Circle soldiers. The other heroes are also there, tied to similar chairs and inside the simulation. The hero can break his bonds with a Strength roll with a –4 penalty. He can also enter and leave the simulation at will.

If the heroes discover they are in a simulation and leave it, Garrett shrugs off her pleasant persona and explains what has happened, before moving on to more "traditional" methods of interrogation.

If the heroes fall for Garrett's trap and spill the information, Garrett laughs and tells them the truth, thanking them for what they said and explaining her employer will be very pleased. It is up to the heroes to escape the simulation and Garrett's torture before it's too late.

- **Diane Garrett:** Use stats for Veteran Soldier, but give her a Hacking d12+2, Persuasion d12 and Charisma of +4. When she's inside her own V-World simulation, she has the Hacker, Assistant Hacker and Very Active Assistant Edges.
- **Fake Circle Soldiers (4 per hero):** Use stats for Typical Soldier.

WILD WILD V-WEST, PART II

Where: V-World

The heroes' romp through a bizarre fantasy Wild West world continues!

The heroes pursue Crazy Jack and his gang to the abandoned and supposedly worthless Grimrock Mine, a few days west of Prairie Gulch. When the heroes arrive, Crazy Jack has already gone inside.

As the heroes enter the mine, they feel the abnormal heat for a mine such as this. . The heroes have two encounters with some of the strange monsters living in the mine, such as Grimrock Chameleons, Earth Screams and Rock Monsters:

- **Grimrock Chameleons (3):** Use stats for Logan Chameleon. Its Chameleon special ability applies to moving inside a rocky environment, not in vegetation.
- **Earth Scream (1):** Use stats for Manymouth. Its Burrow Special Ability allows it to conceal inside rock.
- **Rock Monster (3)**

Use the Heat rules from *Savage Worlds* as the heroes delve into the depths of the mine. Finally the heroes reach a large cavern. There is a large steam-filled hole on the ceiling of the cave. Crazy Jack is next to a deep lava pool at the center of the cavern, shouting words in a strange tongue. A Lava Demon suddenly comes from the pool and hands Crazy Jack what appears to be a bunch of bullets made of lava in a protective crystal sphere. As Crazy Jack sees the heroes, more Lava Demons come from the pool and fly away through the opening on the ceiling of the cave.

Crazy Jack laughs as he grabs the sphere and is carried by a Lava Demon towards the hole on the ceiling (he is not burned by the fire). Before escaping he tells the heroes that they won't get to see how he uses these lava bullets to summon an even greater demon on Carlson City itself. As a final farewell present, he summons a Lava Golem that climbs from the inside of the lava pool!

The heroes are left to die at the hands of Cherokee Bill, the rest of Crazy Jack's gang and the Lava Golem. Assuming they survive, they must get to Carlson City before Crazy Jack and his Lava Demons summon this greater demon and destroy everything.

- **"Crazy Jack" Harris:** Use stats for Old West Veteran Gunman.
- **Cherokee Bill:** Use stats for Soldier Psion, but he has no armor and his only gear is Two Colt Peacemakers (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+1, RoF 1, AP 1, 6 shots, one full action to reload),
- **Crazy Jack's Gang (1 per hero):** Use stats for Old West Typical Gunman.
- **Lava Demons**
- **Lava Golem**

player handouts

The following are handouts and dispatches to be given to the players during the adventure.

NEWS DISPATCH #1

.:NEWS DISPATCH:.

Bay Jing—The Devourers may be on the move again, this time towards Bay Jing, according to unconfirmed reports received by BJNC.

Unnamed sources within the Joint Fleet of Bay Jing, Concordia and Earth report increased military activity among the High Command, as well as emergency order dispatches to all fleets.

"The fleet is on full alert," says a source on condition of anonymity. "All starship captains have been ordered to prepare themselves for an imminent attack by the aliens."

The Joint Fleet High Command will issue a statement shortly.

NEWS DISPATCH #2

.:NEWS DISPATCH:.

Bay Jing—Chaos has gripped Bay Jing following the official full invasion alert announced by the Joint Fleet.

According to the military press release, two days ago several scouts detected the Devourer fleet approaching from the LHS 1723 star system. Based on earlier experiences of the alien ships' speed, High Command expects them to enter our Omicron 2 Eridani system within the hour, and to reach Bay Jing about two days after that.

During the press release a haggard General Bruce Sager declared that the Joint Fleet will "shed every last drop of blood" to stop the aliens and guarantee the survival of Bay Jing.

Evacuation procedures to Concordia have accelerated, although barely a few hundred thousand will have an opportunity to escape the planet, even with all the resources provided by the Circle and the Psion Brotherhood.

Bay Jing has a total population of sixty-six million.

As civilization collapses around Bay Jing several acts of looting and violence have been reported, particularly among citizens desperate to board or have their loved ones board the final evacuation ships.

NEWS DISPATCH #3

.:NEWS DISPATCH:.

Bay Jing—Just two hours before the main engagement for Bay Jing begins, several Concordian warships have deserted the Joint Fleet and begun the trip towards their home star system of Epsilon Eridani, our war correspondents report.

Apparently, the Concordian captains have decided that victory is impossible in the face of overwhelming enemy numbers and firepower, and have retreated to reinforce the meager Concordian defenses at Epsilon Eridani.

Unable to hide his frustration at this disruption in his forces, General Bruce Sager has insisted that what is left of the fleet will do its best to "stop the enemy in its tracks." However, in the last few hours several anonymous sources have declared that there is no chance of victory.

There is no word yet on whether the desertion was requested by the Concordian military or not.

The Joint Military Fleet will engage the enemy within the hour.

NEWS DISPATCH #4

.:NEWS DISPATCH:.

Concordia—Following the tragic destruction of the Joint Fleet and complete obliteration of Bay Jing, Concordian civilization has been thrown into turmoil.

The few surviving ships that were in the Omicron 2 Eridani star system during the battle and who managed to jump away (no military forces escaped) described a "massacre," with Devourer ships casually destroying the fleet's most powerful battleships and bombing of Bay Jing's surface in just a few hours.

Concordian President Kenneth Livley issued an emotional message to the planet in preparation for the attack.

"The bombing of two entire planets and genocide of eighty-one million people apparently is not enough to quench the thirst of these aliens. Their ultimate goal is the entire annihilation of our species."

While activating as many evacuation procedures as possible, as well as the creation of several underground refuges for the many who won't be able to escape the planet, President Livley pledged to devote the entire resources of the planet to repel the Devourers.

As is their pattern, the Devourers have not immediately proceeded towards Concordia, and it is unknown when they will attempt to jump towards the Epsilon Eridani star system. Only one jump separates Epsilon Eridani from Bay Jing's Omicron 2 Eridani star system.

Rumors of a fresh fleet approaching from Earth to bolster the planet's defenses have not been confirmed.

BRAWL AT POPULAR DRINKING SPOT ATTRIBUTED TO 'GHOST SHIP' TALL TALE

Providence, Logan's End – Yesterday's larger-than-usual bar brawl at the well-known Providence bar "Fearless," which ended up with four injured and eight arrested, was sparked by a discussion about a 'ghost ship' story.

Melonia Ferrato, owner of Fearless Bar, explained that a merchant crew recently arrived from space caused the fracas by telling the story.

"They looked shaken and scared, and were obviously drunk," Ms. Ferrato declared. "One of them then began shouting that in their last trip they had come across and destroyed a 'ghost ship,' a ship that came out of nowhere in the depths of space, from a place called 'Chrysalis.' Or something."

According to Ms. Ferrato the story of the 'ghost ship' from the place with the strange name caused hilarity in Fearless' customers, who promptly began teasing and laughing at the merchants, who responded first with insults and then with violence. Then fighting erupted.

Local police have arrested the most likely instigators of the violence, including the five members of the merchant crew who started the story. They have been identified as Kevin Windon, Hassan Leova, Gerardo Bevard, Doug O'Malley and Oliver Sarria. Their ship is known as the Aurora Borealis and indeed it has recently parked in one of the orbital spots of Logan's End.

Ms. Ferrato has stated that she will not press charges. It is unknown whether the police will charge the suspects or if they will be set free soon.



Research Facility

Consorcio La Merced - Planet Apollo

SEVEN WORLDS



4. BROKEN CIRCLE

introduction

AS FOR THE FUTURE, YOUR TASK IS NOT TO FORESEE IT, BUT TO ENABLE IT.

—ANTOINE DE SAINT-EXUPÉRY

Welcome to the fourth module in the *Seven Worlds* campaign! This epic, unforgettable odyssey places the heroes at the center of the greatest conflict humanity has ever seen, and puts its future in their hands.

At its heart, the story told in the *Seven Worlds* campaign is a tragedy, the story of the annihilation of humanity by forces far beyond its comprehension, and of a few heroes' efforts to turn back the tide. Other campaign's measure of success is the answer to the question "Did we win?" In this campaign, success or failure is measured in the answer to a different question: "Did we survive?"

This adventure continues where *Into the Fire*, the third *Seven Worlds* campaign adventure, left off. It is assumed you've already played that adventure before starting this one, but if you haven't you will still find lots of interesting and challenging scenarios for you and your players to enjoy!

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

This section gives a short overview of the *Seven Worlds* Campaign up until this point.

WHAT'S HAPPENED BEFORE

A Mysterious Encounter, the introductory adventure included in the *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*, told the story of a group of Circle officers who, while on a routine patrol next to the frontier planet of Nouvelle Vie, witness the appearance of a strange alien ship and see its awesome destructive power. As a result, the heroes were sent to Concordia, one of the most powerful planets in the Seven Worlds, and the headquarters of the Circle, to report on what they saw.

In *Rumors of War*, the heroes travelled to Concordia and met Epsilon Leader Antoine, leader of the Circle. Antoine told the heroes that the Psion Brotherhood had been secretly interested in these strange ship sightings, and asked them to go to Brotherhood Headquarters on Earth and request information on the sighting from the Brotherhood, using official channels. Antoine also asked the heroes to investigate the mysterious disappearance of Dr. Luis LaMarche, a renowned scientist from Earth.

While attending Concordia's Centenary Celebration, the heroes became involved in a terrorist attack that ended with the successful assassination of Governor Selnes, the leader of Bay Jing. Since Bay Jing and Concordia were bitter rivals, this assassination sparked the beginnings of an interstellar war.

When the heroes arrived at Earth, they met the emissary of the mysterious alien benefactors known as the N'ahili. They also met the leaders of the Psion Brotherhood, including the famous Ganendra Nathan, but failed to get any clues to the identity of the mysterious alien ship they saw. Finally, they get to investigate Dr. LaMarche's disappearance and discovered he had been working on unspecified "improvements" to the Stellar Communications Network, the main technology that allowed the Seven Worlds to communicate.

In *Divided We Fall*, the heroes returned to Circle Headquarters in Concordia and were sent undercover to investigate a curious deployment of ships made by the Concordian fleet as part of their war with Bay Jing. An unlikely discovery ended with the heroes carrying information on a top-secret Concordian plan that could ruthlessly allow them to win the war in a single stroke.

By the end of that adventure the heroes were in Nouvelle Vie again, where the bulk of the Concordian and Bay Jingnian fleets were about to meet in battle. At this point, a fleet of mysterious alien ships materialized and completely destroyed both fleets. Simultaneously, the entire Stellar Communications Network mysteriously crashed, thus isolating the Seven Worlds. The heroes barely escaped with their lives and flew towards Concordia, carrying a desperate cry for help against an invader more powerful than all of them.

In *Into the Fire*, several months had passed since the fall of the Concordian and Bay Jingnian fleets at Nouvelle Vie, and humanity was fighting a losing war against the alien invaders now known as the Devourers. An anxious Epsilon Leader Antoine knew conventional means will not stop these aliens, and

asked the heroes to go on a long-shot mission to find an alternative way to stop them.

Following an anonymous tip, the heroes travelled to Apollo and became embroiled in a political war between various corporations. To resolve the situation, the heroes had to storm a faraway research facility that had been taken over by terrorists. One of these terrorists had a clue the heroes needed, a strange story and the name of an unknown place: Chrysalis. Apparently this place had something to do with Logan's End, the farthest and least civilized of the Seven Worlds.

WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW

Following a report that suggests the elusive Dr. LaMarche is on Harris Station, the heroes travel there and finally discover his whereabouts, and also learn the secret he has obtained at such a great cost. It turns out LaMarche had discovered that the Stellar Communications Network was going to be sabotaged from within at the orders of the Psion Brotherhood. He also tells the heroes the orders came from close to Logan's End. Now, to escape, the heroes must survive a major space battle against an enemy willing to do anything to keep LaMarche's secret from getting out.

As the rest of human space slowly but surely falls to the Devourers, the heroes reach Logan's End and follow up on the only clue to Chrysalis, the sad story of a failing smuggler crew that died several years ago. Before the adventure is over the heroes have crisscrossed the planet and become involved in a rescue mission in the deep, savage jungles of Logan's End. The reward for a successful rescue: The coordinates of the mysterious Chrysalis.

RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

The recommendations for running the previous adventure apply to this one as well, and are listed below.

TIME PRESSURE

While the plot maintains a time pressure, you will note that the Devourer advance is erratic and unpredictable. Weeks or months will go by without the Devourers advancing, then all of a sudden their fleet will jump several star systems as fast as possible. This was done to underline how unfathomable these aliens are, but also because it allows you to pace the campaign to your group's rhythm. If the players would much rather play a multi-session mini-campaign in the crime-ridden streets of Whitehall in Apollo than continue their mission, have the aliens wait a few more weeks before moving on. This allows you to fit the schedule your heroes prefer.

NEW CHARACTERS

If you need to add more heroes to the campaign, either to change players or to replace lost characters, note that from this adventure onwards the group could decide to informally add a member who does not belong to the Circle. Since the Circle is practically gone anyway, it is not too far-fetched for the group to add a non-Circle-member to their ranks for the sake of the mission.

GEAR AND MONEY

Acquiring equipment is harder from now on. Double the price of every item the heroes can acquire from the gear section. Particularly unique items, at your discretion, could require a successful Streetwise roll to be found for sale.

Heroes should hoard the money they have, as the Circle devotes all of its resources to building new ships and strengthening their forces, and salaries are temporarily suspended (see the *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*). Any benefits a hero may have from the Rich or Very Rich edges are halved.

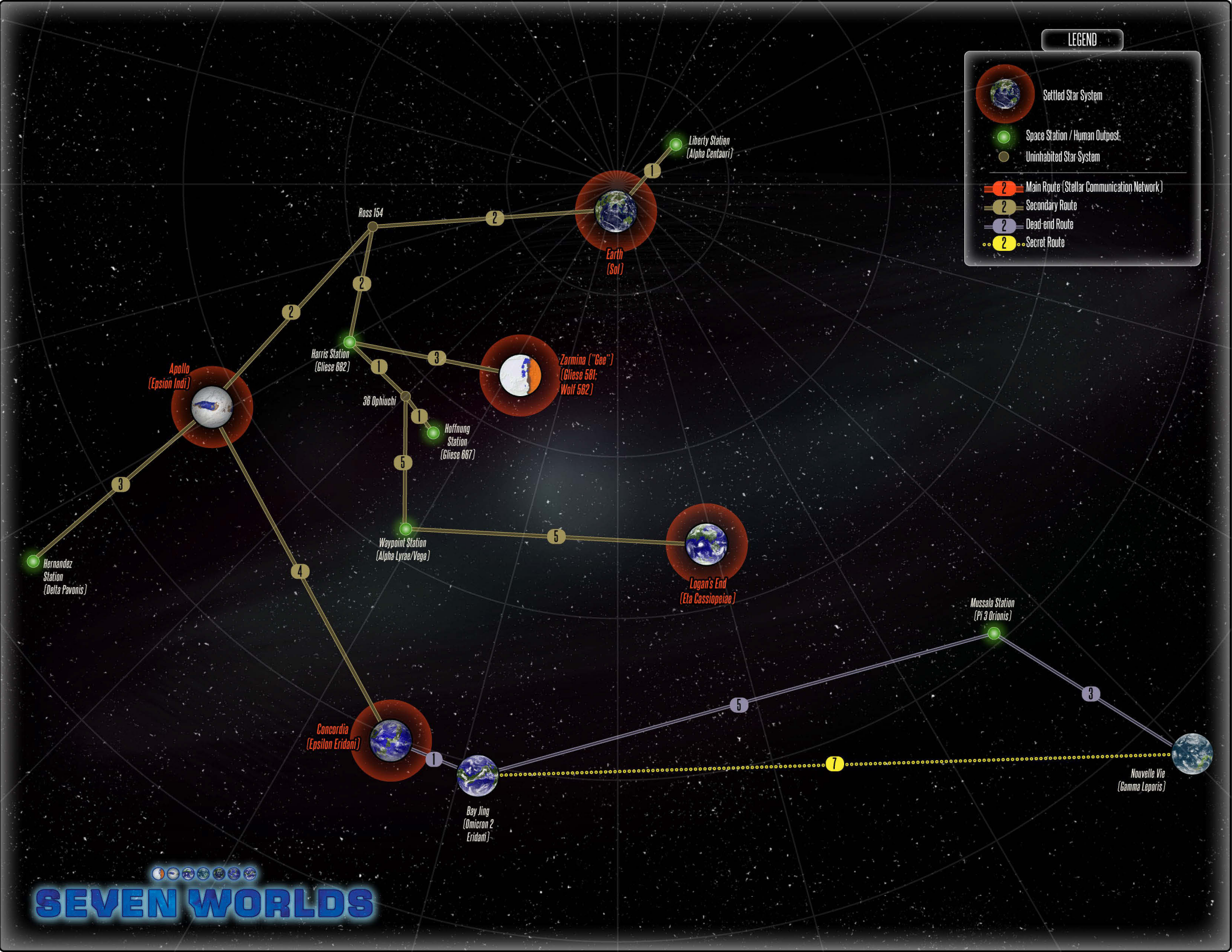
THE PERSONAL IMPACT OF THE WAR

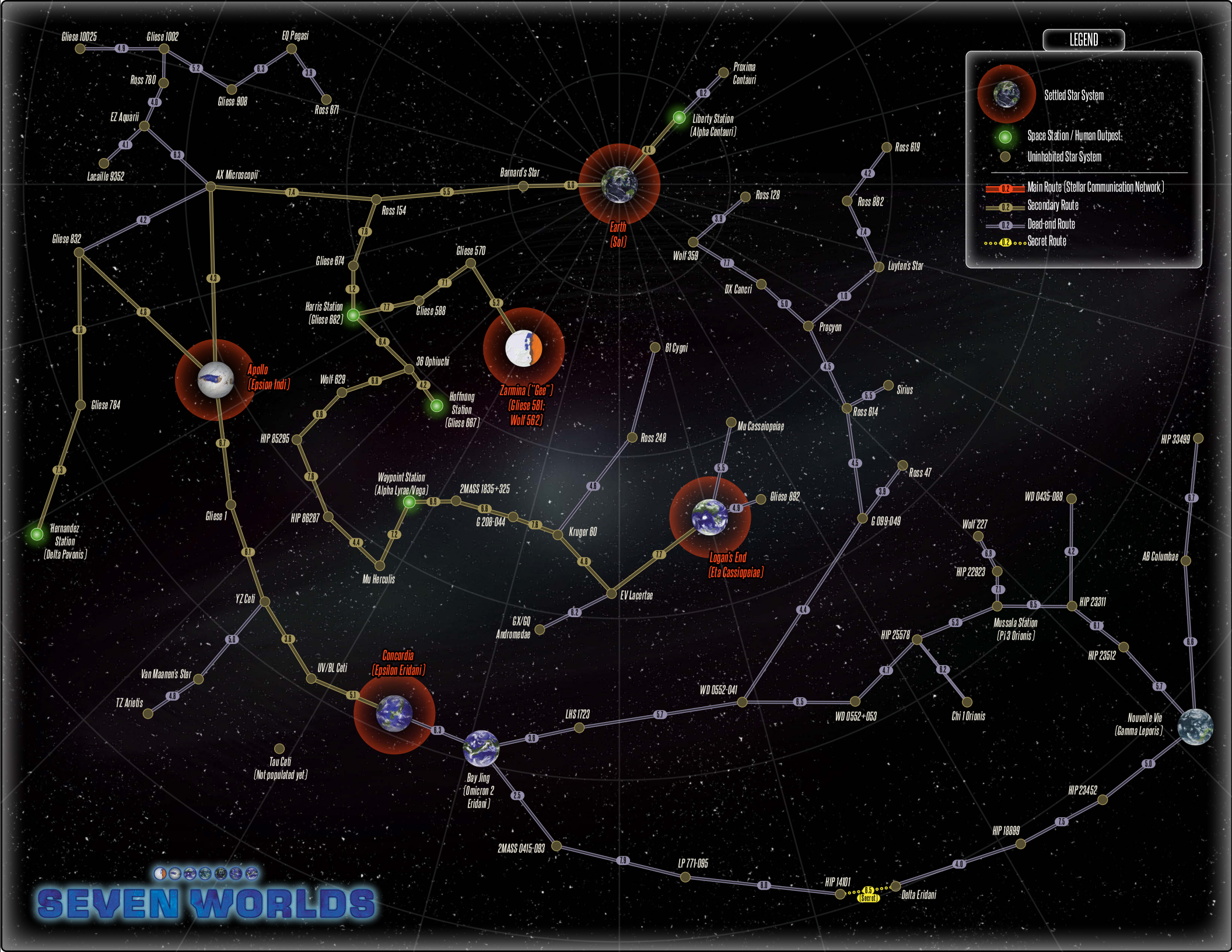
As the horror of the conquest escalates and humanity is confronted with the loss of world after world, you should make the risk and danger more intimate and emotional to the heroes. In the case of the pre-generated characters, for example, Maricelle may have to face the death of her sister, or the reproaches from friends in the refugee fleet; Seela may have to say a tearful goodbye to her parents before Concordia falls, or find Aaron as a survivor among the refugees from that planet; or Derrick may see his secrets confronted and his parents shamed as Apollo is attacked.

Assuming you and the players enjoy it, there are many opportunities for roleplaying the personal impact of the war during this adventure.

THE STELLAR COMM NETWORK

The Stellar Communications Network is permanently down. This has several implications for the heroes.


LEGEND
Settled Star System
Space Station / Human Outpost
Uninhabited Star System
2 Main Route (Stellar Communication Network)
2 Secondary Route
2 Dead-end Route
2 Secret Route
Liberty Station (Alpha Centauri)
Earth (Sol)
Ross 154
Harris Station (Gliese 682)
Zarmina ("Gee") (Gliese 581, Wolf 562)
Apollo (Epsion Indi)
36 Ophiuchi
Hoffnung Station (Gliese 667)
Waypoint Station (Alpha Lyrae/Vega)
Logan's End (Eta Cassiopeiae)
Hernandez Station (Delta Pavonis)
Mussala Station (Pi 3 Orionis)
Concordia (Epsilon Eridani)
Bay Jing (Omicron 2 Eridani)
Nouvelle Vie (Gamma Leporis)
SEVEN WORLDS


LEGEND
Settled Star System
Space Station / Human Outpost
Uninhabited Star System
Main Route (Stellar Communication Network)
Secondary Route
Dead-end Route
Secret Route
Gliese 10025
Gliese 1002
EQ Pegasi
Ross 780
Gliese 908
Ross 671
EZ Aquarii
Lacaille 8352
AX Microscopii
Proxima Centauri
Liberty Station (Alpha Centauri)
Barnard's Star
Earth (Sol)
Ross 619
Ross 128
Ross 882
Wolf 359
Luyten's Star
DX Cancri
Procyon
Ross 154
Gliese 832
Gliese 674
Gliese 570
Harris Station (Gliese 862)
Gliese 588
Apollo (Epsion Indi)
Zarmina ("Gee") (Gliese 581; Wolf 562)
36 Ophiuchi
Wolf 629
Hoffnung Station (Gliese 667)
Gliese 784
61 Cygni
Sirius
Ross 614
HIP 85295
Ross 248
Mu Cassiopeiae
Ross 47
Waypoint Station (Alpha Lyrae/Vega)
2MASS 1835+325
G 208-044
Kruger 60
Gliese 892
Logan's End (Eta Cassiopeiae)
G 099-049
HIP 33499
WD 0435-088
Wolf 227
HIP 86287
Gliese 1
Hernandez Station (Delta Pavonis)
Mu Herculis
EV Lacertae
HIP 22923
HIP 23311
AB Columbae
YZ Ceti
GX/GQ Andromedae
Mussala Station (Pi 3 Orionis)
HIP 25578
HIP 23512
Van Maanen's Star
TZ Arietis
UV/BL Ceti
Concordia (Epsilon Eridani)
WD 0552-041
WD 0552+053
Chi 1 Orionis
Nouvelle Vie (Gamma Leporis)
LHS 1723
Tau Ceti (Not populated yet)
Bay Jing (Omicron 2 Eridani)
HIP 23452
HIP 18899
2MASS 0415-093
LP 771-095
HIP 14101
(Secret)
Delta Eridani
SEVEN WORLDS

In the first place, no communications are available between planets. A makeshift ship relay has been set up by the military by placing patrol ships on both sides of every jump point, but message capacity is limited, slow, and only used for military purposes. In game terms, only extremely urgent, military-level messages will be transmitted, and they will take four times as long to reach their destination. The heroes thus have no opportunity to use the Comm Network to communicate.

On top of that, humanity's entire communications infrastructure is down. No requests for information to remote databases are available, and information and backups are not syncing between the planets. Programs or systems that depended on information from other planets are now useless. You should keep this in mind whenever the heroes are dealing with V-World.

Using the local storage capacity of ships travelling between planets to synchronize information between V-Worlds (see *The Stellar Communications Network* in the *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*) has become the only way to transfer information between planets. Therefore it has become mandatory to accept these information downloads. The heroes should expect to become carriers of information between all the planets they visit.

If you are using the space random encounters table (see below) remember to apply the Stellar Communications Network penalty to all trips in space, regardless of their source or destination.

UPDATED MAPS

The following maps show how the Seven Worlds stand at the start of this adventure. Note the following significant differences with the map of the previous adventure:

- The path between Gamma Leporis (Nouvelle Vie) and Epsilon Eridani (Concordia) is now marked as a Dead-end line. This is because all human civilization there has been wiped out by the Devourer invasion.

If you are using the 3-D maps, this might be a good opportunity to show the heroes the updated map this adventure, explaining that since the Stellar Comm Network has permanently crashed, most routes between planets are now in a different color.

ENCOUNTERS IN SPACE

If you are using the optional Random Space Encounters tables detailed in the *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*, make the following changes to the rules:

- Since the Stellar Communications Network is permanently down, the –1 modifier for travelling between systems not connected by it *always* applies, regardless of where the heroes are travelling to or from.
- If the final modified die roll is a –1, instead of a Research Ship the heroes find a Devourer ship. Note that a Devourer ship can easily overwhelm most hero ships, so make sure the heroes have a way out. Maybe the Devourer ship does not attack or follow for unknown reasons. Maybe it attacks once and then flees. Whatever it is, don't let the heroes enter a battle you believe there is no way they can win.

Additionally, you might want to arrange for an encounter with a pirate or criminal ship on an uninhabited star system on the route. The enemy warns the heroes to surrender their ship and valuables or prepare to be attacked. Since the Stellar Comm Network has gone down and more patrol ships have been assigned to the fleets to defend Concordia and Bay Jing, it has become possible to attack ships in space with minimal repercussions. It is more proof of how human society is starting to break down.

PART I: THE SEARCH FOR DR. LAMARCHE

This section begins as the heroes approach Harris Station, looking for Dr. LaMarche.

WHAT HAPPENED TO DR. LAMARCHE

After successfully escaping Earth using a fake identity he bought from the hacker known as "Bad Dog" (see *Rumors of War*), Dr. Luis LaMarche travelled to Harris Station and contacted Dr. Denis Ogden, the administrator of Renner Station and an old college friend. Renner Station, an ^{3}He harvesting and processing facility owned by a company called Paragon Energy, orbits the large gas giant Icades around the Gliese 682 star system.

Using his new fake name of Anton Nowak, Dr. LaMarche met Dr. Ogden at the Peatrick Pub. Unfortunately during the meeting Dr. LaMarche was recognized by Alpha Officer Corazón Fusco, a rookie Circle agent on an unrelated investigation. It was Alpha Officer Fusco who filed the sighting report that reached Epsilon Leader Antoine's desk.

To hide him, Dr. Ogden took "Dr. Nowak" to the Paragon Energy offices at Harris Station, where Dr. LaMarche passed a cursory interviewing process before being hired as a "newly-arrived expert on ^{3}He manufacture and processing" and assigned to Renner Station.

Dr. LaMarche, now known as Anton Nowak to everyone in the base except his friend, has been hiding in the facility for several weeks. He believes he is practically untraceable, and therefore safe.

Unfortunately for LaMarche, MaxDigital Corporation has secret sources within the Circle, and these have reported Alpha Officer Fusco's sighting to them. Several MaxDigital operatives have just arrived at Harris Station and are also following the trail.

Dispatches from the War

In the previous adventure, *Into the Fire*, we introduced several dispatches from the war to keep the heroes abreast of what is happening in the frontlines of the war. These player handouts help you keep war ever-present during the campaign while at the same time reinforcing the futility of trying to engage the Devourers directly.

You should have already given Dispatches #1 to #4 to the heroes in the previous adventure. You can give Dispatch #5 to the heroes at the beginning of Part I of this adventure. Give Dispatch #6 to them as soon as they have finished Part I. The heroes should get Dispatches #7 to #9 on the way to Logan's End; maybe in Waypoint Station, or in Logan's End itself.

For more role-playing impact, these dispatches could be complemented with appropriate farewell messages from important contacts or family members, if one of the heroes has them in the affected planets. Some of these could even be the springboard for new side stories, as family members share previously unknown secrets with the heroes, or ask them to perform specific errands as a last wish.

SCENE 1: THE OVERZEALOUS OFFICER

Read or paraphrase this as the heroes approach Harris Station:

Harris Station is an incredible sight to behold. A rotating infrastructure more than one hundred years old, in orbit around the small gas giant of Theria, and with a capacity for five thousand people living in simulated gravity conditions, it is one of the largest inhabited infrastructures in known space. Its age shows in its hull scarred by tiny dust projectiles where the Coulborne Shield was ineffective, as well as in its now-obsolete heat radiation panels.

Harris Station was once humanity's main stepping-stone to the stars, when Gee was supposed to be "The Future" and Gliese 667 was supposed to be a habitable star system. Harvesting and manufacturing Helium-3 by skimming it from nearby gas giants and selling it to passing ships was the station's main source of revenue. Then Apollo, Concordia and Bay Jing happened, and Gliese 667 was found to be uninhabitable. Suddenly, the route supported by Harris Station was not interesting anymore.

The relatively recent settling of Logan's End has revitalized Harris Station's fortunes. Now, besides fuel, the station offers all sorts of gambling and entertainment operations for travelers. You are advised to be careful, things are as rowdy as they sound.

Assuming things are still this rowdy in times of war, of course.

As the heroes dock, they find the officer in charge waiting for them. Everyone is desperate for news of the war. Since now information only flows with travelers, everyone eagerly awaits new arrivals to find out more about the war.

Role-play the scene, with the officer asking for as much information on the war as possible. Pay special attention to how the players tell the story. If they put a positive or hopeful spin on the information, this will ripple throughout the station and raise the morale of everyone here. If they take a gloomy or fatalistic view, the morale of the entire station will suffer. You can use this morale impact when role-playing other characters in Harris Station.

BEGINNING THE SEARCH

The sighting report Antoine transferred to the heroes mentions that a minor Circle officer assigned to Harris Station saw someone who fit the description of Dr. LaMarche in a seedy pub, whose name is not mentioned in the report. The heroes' first step should be to locate the writer of the report, Alpha Officer Corazón Fusco, and get more information from her.

A search through V-World notes Alpha Officer Fusco's location as "unavailable", which means she has asked her assistant to keep her whereabouts unknown. Since she is a Circle officer on duty, she has the system authorization to do that when on a mission. On the other hand, any hero's Assistant can tell the heroes where the local Circle offices are. They can go there to meet the officer in charge or contact him remotely by V-World communication.

Gamma Officer Sergio Vale is in charge of the Circle offices in Harris Station. He looks about sixty years old (he is really a bit younger), and looks like a man who has not been doing all the exercise one needs to do when living on a space station. He has a large dark radiation scar covering his left cheek.

After identifying the heroes, Gamma Officer Vale politely asks how he can help them. However, as soon as he finds out they are looking for Officer Fusco he rolls his eyes upward and his demeanor changes. It turns out that Harris Station is Officer Fusco's first assignment since she left the academy, and her naiveté and zeal have already caused Vale a world of trouble. He carefully explains to the heroes that in a community as small as Harris Station "there are ways to do things," and Officer Fusco's by-the-book attitude doesn't fit very well. On top of that, she's already filed several reports that have turned out to be false positives, and he would not be surprised if the heroes have come all the way here for nothing. Vale suggests that if the heroes are interested in taking her with them, he would be willing to sign the reassignment papers.

If the heroes ask where Corazón Fusco is, Vale wearily tells them that Officer Fusco is always "following leads." Right now, though, he believes she's taking a rest for change, because she told him before leaving that she was going to the Harris Station flower shop. With the system authorization he gives the heroes it is now possible to locate Officer Fusco automatically. The flower shop is just a few blocks away from where the heroes are.

THE FLOWER SHOP

Officer Fusco lied to her boss. She's following yet another lead, this time to one of the smuggling organizations that operate in Harris Station under an arrangement with local law enforcement. She has concluded that the flower shop is secretly at the center of the operation, as importing flowers is a good cover for smuggling other types of goods into the station.

Harris Flower Suppliers is a nice, fancy store in the commercial section of the station. Beautiful flower arrangements of all colors cover the store windows. Inside, the store has several open environments separated by glass panes which very subtly project images of peaceful Earth-like gardens. The far end of the store has a long counter behind which friendly-looking assistants help customers. A door behind the counter leads to the back of the store.

When the heroes enter, they spot Officer Fusco, a black-haired woman who looks barely old enough to be in the Circle. She is intently looking at an arrangement of dark red genetically modified carnations in one of the glass-walled "rooms" of the store, with direct view to the counter. Several customers walk around the store looking at the flowers, including two customers next to the counter just buying what looks like a large crate of arrangements for a wedding or some other event.

When the heroes try to talk to Officer Fusco, read or paraphrase the following:

You've barely begun talking to Officer Fusco when she raises her hand slightly to stop you. Apparently she identifies you via her VR

overlay lenses, because an instant later she whispers, "Ah, you're Circle, too! How did you know I needed backup? Never mind, there's all the proof we need!"

In front of your astonished eyes she pulls out her gun and points it towards the counter, where the attendants are giving a large box of flowers to a couple in formal clothing. "Nobody move! You're under arrest!"

In the blink of an eye both the store attendants and the couple pull large guns out of nowhere and start shooting! Glass panes break and crash as customers scream and run in terror. And you're in the middle of it!

The flower shop is a 12"-by-12" square, with a set of double doors (2"-wide) located in the center of the southern wall, and a small service door located on the northern wall, 3" to the right of the northwest corner of the room. A 1"-wide counter runs horizontally from the western wall parallel to the northern wall for 5". The counter is located 1" away from the northern wall.

The environment is divided by several 2"-long semitransparent glass partitions located horizontally and vertically throughout the shop, forming an actual maze (place them at will to form a maze). The glass partitions constantly project changing images of beautiful flowery Earth-like gardens, but also allow one to see through them (treat as giving Light Cover). The glass partitions have Toughness 6. Any stray shot has a chance of breaking the entire wall in a shower of glass. In this case, place a Medium Burst Template centered on where the shot hit the glass. Everyone in this range gets 2d6 damage from flying glass. Afterwards, erase the appropriate glass pane from the tabletop.

In front of some of the glass partitions there are small 1"-diameter tables with flower displays. These work as obstacles with Toughness 6 and grant Medium (–2) Cover. The flowers, vases and other implements on top of the tables can be used as improvised weapons or items for tricks.

Place three "attendants" behind the counter and two "customers" in front of it. There are also two more guards in front of the double doors at the south, who pull their weapons and start running towards the heroes in the first round. Fusco and the heroes start about 6" away from the counter, with direct view to it through the maze.

Randomly place six counters in the store floor, representing panicked customers. They will try to escape the chaos as soon as possible. Use them to make things harder for the heroes, as obstacles, innocent bystanders, or to have the heroes save them. One or two of them could even use their lenses and Assistants to broadcast the battle to the rest of the station!

The following special Assistant actions are available:

- **Shop V-World Environment:** Like most places, the flower shop is automated but can be hacked. If a hero spends a Benny and his Assistant makes a successful Hacking roll, it can control the environment and create one special effect. Some examples are: activate the sprinklers in some of the flower displays to either increase cover or trick an enemy; turn the lights that illuminate a particular display on or off, thus increasing illumination modifiers; locking the door in the northern wall (in case reinforcement try to come in); using the security cameras to get information on the location of the enemy during the battle; and of course gaining information on their enemies.

If the combat becomes too easy for the heroes, just bring more goons into the fray using the door behind the counter.

- **Alpha Officer Corazón Fusco:** See page 231.
- **Goons (5):** Use stats for Typical Thug. These are on location A.
- **Security Guards (2):** Use stats for Veteran Thug. These are the thugs on location B.
- **Innocent Bystanders (6):** Use stats for Civilian.

AFTER THE BATTLE

As soon as the battle ends, the local law enforcement arrives and takes control of the situation. The leading officer groans as soon as he sees Officer Fusco, who quickly explains how she figured out the Flower Shop was a front for smugglers. Gamma Officer Vale arrives and begins heatedly talking with the enraged leading officer while the remaining goons are taken away.

As soon as the situation is resolved, the heroes can finally talk to Fusco. After the situation is explained to her, she tells her story to the heroes. Paraphrase this as appropriate:

"You mean you read my report? My hunch was right? This is great!," says Officer Corazón Fusco with delight. "I knew all those hours I spent poring over Wanted records had not been in vain! Of course I'll tell you all I know!"

"There's this pub in the seamy part of Harris Station, the Peatrick Pub. The place is perfect for 'discreet' conversations: It is dimly illuminated, has a bartender with no curiosity, and has lots of dark booths where you can talk undisturbed.

On top of that, their V-World location sensors are always, ALWAYS 'out of order' so it is not possible to digitally identify patrons, even with a hack. Can you believe that the authorities let this sort of thing go on? It's OBVIOUS those sensors are always 'broken' for a reason! I've told the local police dozens of times to close the place but they seem to believe it must be kept open for some reason…"

"Anyway, I was there following this couple who had just arrived from Logan's End. Their papers seemed to be in order but I noticed, during my daily review of visitors, that they both came from Apollo, and one of them shared a last name with a well-known criminal from that planet. I guessed they might be related, and thus on some kind of shady mission. I raised my concerns to local authorities but they are so obtuse, they always say I am imagining things. So I decided to tail them. They arrived at the Peatrick Pub, took a table, and waited for someone to arrive. I sat at the bar with a good view of them and waited."

"That's when I noticed two subjects at a table at the far end of the pub. They were both engaged in conversation over a drink, and looked completely out of place with the collection of suspicious characters in the Pub. I looked at both of them carefully and Javert, my Assistant, pointed out the likeness between one of them and Dr. Luis LaMarche, a man with a search request by the Circle. Javert knows he must constantly check everyone he sees against the database. Anyway, I immediately took a snapshot with my lenses, hoping to recognize the other man, too. Then the two suspects I was tailing abruptly stood up and left, and I had to leave with them. I could do nothing more than file a report as soon as I could. Afterwards, I lost track a bit and could not follow it up. There is so much criminal activity to investigate in this station, you know."

"In case you're wondering, I checked Station records and no one identified as Dr. LaMarche has entered or left the station. I have no idea who this person is or how he got here, but I'm sure you do."

"If you want more, I suggest we go to the Peatrick Pub and talking to Tommy the bartender. Maybe he can give us a clue or something to follow it up."

Officer Fusco transmits to the heroes a copy of her snapshot. It shows two men sitting across a small round table in a very dark pub. The face of the first man is clearly visible, and definitely looks like Dr. LaMarche. The other person on the table has his face covered in shadows, and cannot be identified.

Officer Fusco immediately volunteers to accompany the heroes on their mission. Give the heroes her character sheet so they can control her.

SCENE 2: THE PEATRICK PUB

The Peatrick Pub is a large, dimly-lit pub in the tougher parts of the station, the section closest to the station center, and thus with slightly less centrifugal gravity.

Two bouncers guard the double doors to the pub. They let anyone walk in unless they look too suspicious. Visitors dressed as Circle officers definitely look suspicious, but the heroes should easily fast-talk their way in.

Inside the pub there are many people having conversations in tables purposely set up in booths and niches designed to give as much privacy as possible. The lights are kept very low (Dark Lighting penalty). Slow but noisy recorded music fills the air, mostly to keep conversations private.

Corazón takes the heroes to the bar at the far end of the Pub. She suggests talking to Tommy, the bartender in charge of this side of the bar, and somehow convince him to look into his records and see if he can trace Dr. LaMarche's companion's identity from his means of payment.

As Corazon and the heroes approach the bar, they notice something strange is going on: Tommy, a large, fat man with a two-day beard is being pushed and cajoled by two burly men in formal suits. Any hero who makes a successful Notice roll recognizes that the men are dressed in the same suits and uniforms as the security guards in the headquarters of MaxDigital Corporation on Earth (see *Rumors of War*).

As soon as the heroes approach, the MaxDigital goons see them. After a few seconds the goons' lenses recognize the heroes, and the goons drop Tommy and attack.

The Peatrick Pub is a vertical rectangle with a height of 16" and a width of 20". The double doors (2"-wide) are centered on the west wall, and a 6"-long bar sits parallel to the eastern wall and 1" away from it.

The pub has a total of ten booths/niches distributed along the north and south walls, five per side. Every 4" along the north and south walls stands a 3" vertical partition separating the booths. Place a Small Burst Template at the center of each booth, 1" away from the wall, representing a table. Place four more Small Burst Templates at different positions in the center area of the pub to represent additional tables.

Remember that the Dark Lighting in the Pub generates a penalty to most actions. As soon as the

first attack is made, the pub's security guards at the main door are alerted and rush towards the combat location. Give the heroes their stats, so they can be treated as Extras. Unfortunately, the MaxDigital goons are not alone: There are two more MaxDigital guards sitting at one of the booths of the pub, posing as customers. As soon as combat begins these goons stand up and try to intercept the pub's local guards. Once these are taken care of, the MaxDigital goons move towards the heroes.

The pub is also full of people who attempt to flee in panic. Everyone who gets a Club in the first two rounds must make a successful Agility roll or be thrown to the floor by a panicked, fleeing customer. Also, customers could be treated as obstacles or innocent bystanders, at your discretion.

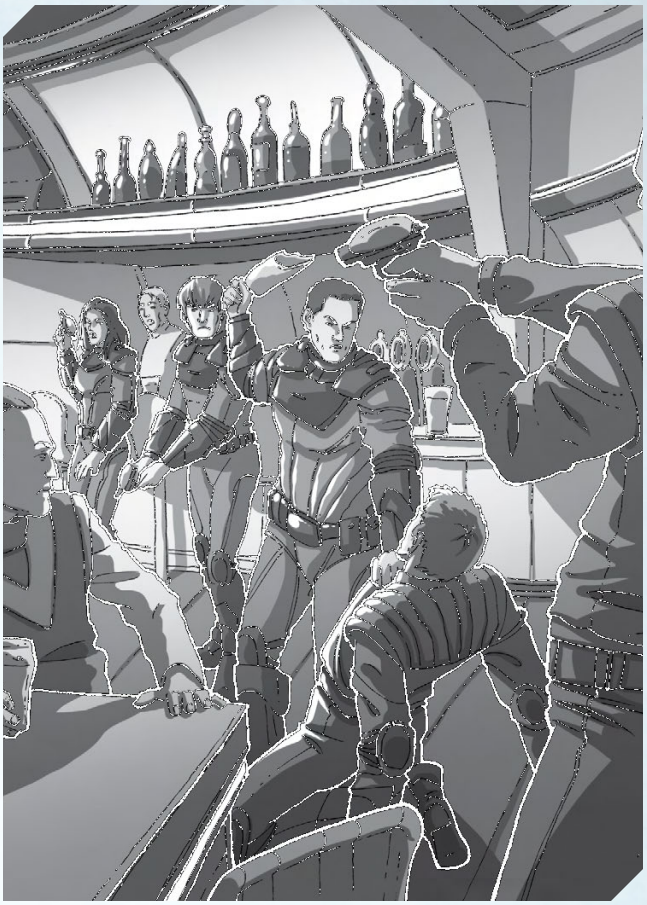
The leader of this MaxDigital team is Garland, a rogue psion with a cruel streak. Garland begins combat at one of the booths closest to the main doors and moves towards the heroes. As soon as he is noticed by the heroes, he smiles at them and uses his *invisibility* power to disappear. His goal is to incapacitate as many heroes as possible with the *blast* and *bolt* powers. If Garland decides the situation is hopeless he attempts to flee, using the *invisibility* power if he can still maintain it.

- **MaxDigital Thugs (8):** Use stats for Veteran Security.
- **Pub Guards (2):** Use stats for Typical Thug.
- **Pub Bystanders:** Use stats for Civilian.
- ✹ **Garland:** Use stats for Rogue Psion, Add two charges of the *invisibility* power.
- ✹ **Alpha Officer Corazón Fusco:** See page 231.

CLEANING UP

Assuming Tommy is still alive and the heroes helped save him and the Pub, he is grateful enough to help them. He asks the heroes not to tell anyone that he is about to share customer information with them, as his business could suffer. By using the date, time and table number, he is able to locate the customer, who fortunately was clumsy enough to use a credit chip to pay: Dr. LaMarche's mysterious companion goes by the name of Denis Ogden.

Any surviving MaxDigital thugs will be extremely uncooperative. If forced to talk (or if subjected to a psionic mind scan) they will reveal that their spy network intercepted Officer Fusco's internal Circle report on Dr. LaMarche, which prompted this mission to be sent from Earth to investigate. They have no idea why Dr. LaMarche is important, they only know he is to be shot on sight. They will at all costs avoid identifying other members of their team.



A cursory search of Denis Ogden on the station's V-World system finds that he is a scientist who works at Paragon Energy, one of the companies in charge of harvesting ^{3}He from the nearby gas giants, and also of running refueling operations. Paragon Energy has offices in the business section of the Station.

PARAGON ENERGY

The offices of Paragon Energy are small and modest, as befits a frontier prospecting company. At the heroes' request, they are taken to see Katelyn Zibelli, the local administrator.

Zibelli explains that their ^{3}He prospecting, research, mining and distribution stations are crewed by the best scientists, explorers and engineers available. Experts are indispensable given the complexities of handling such a valuable and hard-to-find isotope.

Initially Zibelli is unwilling to go into detail on the particulars of any employee, but after some pressure from the heroes she shares that Dr. Denis Ogden is the chief of Renner Station, their main ^{3}He extraction facility orbiting Icades, the largest gas giant in the Gliese 682 system. Located just 0.05 AU away from the Gliese 682 star itself, and with 0.8 Earth gravity, Icades is the perfect place to capture significant

amounts of ^{3}He. Given that it is almost 1 AU away from Theria, around which Harris Station revolves, a trip to and from takes approximately a week.

Zibelli can also share with the heroes that several weeks ago, during one of his periodic trips from Renner Station to Harris Station, Dr. Ogden arrived at these offices with a new recruit he claimed to have found, interviewed him as a potential employee for his base, and then offered him a job. Dr. Ogden justified the hiring on the grounds that the recruit was very experienced in interstellar chemistry, a skill sorely needed at Renner Station. The interview was performed one day after Officer Fusco saw Ogden and LaMarche at the Peatrick Pub. The mysterious new recruit's name is listed as Anton Nowak. Dr. Ogden and Anton Nowak are now at Renner Station, and have been there for the last few weeks.

SCENE 3: RENNER STATION

There are no transport ships scheduled to travel to Renner station for several days, so the heroes must take their ship if they want to get there.

Since Renner Station always has a visual scanner pointed towards Harris Station, the heroes' ship is sighted days before it arrives. The heroes receive a message from the station asking them to identify themselves and to state the reason they are travelling to Renner Station. If the heroes mention Dr. LaMarche or Anton Nowak in their reply, they are told that no one knows of any Dr. LaMarche, that Dr. Nowak is busy and cannot be interrupted, that the Station is private property, and that they are not welcome. The interchange will most likely end with the station's silence, but clever players might manage to get more.

Remember that every message to and from the station takes several minutes to travel the distance, and role-play the exchange as a slow-motion conversation.

Assuming the heroes don't turn around and continue on to Renner Station, read or paraphrase this to the players as they approach:

The galaxy never ceases to amaze a human being. As you approach Gliese 682 you realize how relatively uncommon it is to be so close to a star. Fortunately, this star has a fraction of the energy of Sol, thus allowing you to come this close, and also permitting Icades, a gas giant the size of fourteen Earths, to exist. These two huge space bodies, so close together, create a truly alien view.

Renner Station is a small, utilitarian construct orbiting Icades. The station has a main habitat body where the crew lives and works, and several arms that serve as docking clamps for the many mini-ships that skim the outer atmosphere of Icades to pick up ^{3}He. Some of these arms end in huge cylinders that store captured ^{3}He and that dwarf the station. Periodically, large transport ships arrive from Harris Station to take and tow these full cylinders, and leave empty cylinders for Renner to fill up.

The beating heart of energy for humanity in the 23rd century is on display before you, and it looks somewhat lonely.

When they are less than two-light seconds away, the heroes receive a video call from none other than Dr. Ogden itself, a balding, short black man with an athletic build and dark eyes.

Dr. Ogden repeats the questions the heroes received days before. As soon as the heroes mention their mission, he flatly refuses them entry. He is not accustomed to lying, and his nervousness is apparent as he denies knowledge of Dr. LaMarche. The heroes will have to persuade or intimidate Dr. Ogden into letting them in. Depending on the players' tastes you can make this either a pure role-playing encounter or run it using the Social Conflict rules, with either Intimidation or Persuasion (or both) being appropriate. In this last case, the heroes have several interesting points that might create bonuses for them, such as the evidence they have on Dr. Ogden in the Peatrick Pub, as well as the information they have on how the war with the Devourers is proceeding. In either case, the interaction should end with Dr. Ogden grudgingly granting the heroes access to the station.

Inside the station, the heroes are taken to a conference room and "Dr. Anton Nowak" is brought in. One glance is enough for the heroes to recognize Luis

WHO IS SUZANNE LAMARCHE?

Retired Epsilon Leader Suzanne LaMarche, Dr. Luis LaMarche's sister, is the previous leader of the Circle, and one of its most respected figures. As detailed in *Rumors of War*, the first module in the *Seven Worlds* Campaign, it is at Suzanne LaMarche's request that the heroes are sent to investigate her brother's mysterious disappearance. Also in *Rumors of War*, the heroes find a message left by Dr. LaMarche to his sister, where he explains that he suspects MaxDigital Corp. of being involved in some kind of dangerous plot.

LaMarche, the man half the formerly-Seven Worlds have been searching for so long. A middle-aged thin man with thick, short black hair and beard, and old-style lenses, his most striking feature is the dark bags under his eyes, which give him the look of a hunted, haunted man.

Dr. LaMarche's main concern is about his sister, and he asks the heroes about her. If the heroes took the effort to gather information about Suzanne LaMarche before they left Concordia, they will have an easier time with Dr. LaMarche. Supposedly by this time the heroes should know Concordia is about to be attacked (see the Sidebar on Dispatches on page 101), but should not know that Concordia has fallen. This might make for an interesting conversation.

Once Dr. LaMarche begins telling his story, read or paraphrase the text below:

"You must know that several years ago I took a post with MaxDigital Corporation. The pay was good, and the opportunity to apply my knowledge of interstellar communications to the next generation of the Stellar Communications Network by working with EarthGov's main subcontractor made the job irresistible. I just jumped at the chance.

For years we worked on designing and building the upgrade. Part of the upgrade was on new hardware for transmission, drone mobility and energy conservation, but improved software was the core. Everything went great until I noticed several curious pieces and scraps of code installed within the already-shipped upgrades. I was certain I had not approved or noticed those before, but they were listed as workflow-approved correctly. The project was so complex and there were so many of us working on it that I initially dismissed them as valid code that had slipped my sight.

When I casually reported this situation I received strong-handed requests by my superiors to forget about it. I have to admit this raised my curiosity. On my own, and carefully hiding my activities, I reviewed the source code and discovered that it could allow a seemingly innocuous transmitted message carrying just the right phrase password, to crash the entire Stellar Comm Network.

I can't explain all the technicalities of how the SCN works to you, but it is enough to know that it consists of dozens of redundant, interconnected systems. To be able to crash such a fault-tolerant network, these lethal pieces of code would have to be inserted everywhere. *In other words, a concerted effort needed to be made in order for this to work. I began suspecting the entire "upgrade" project was an excuse to include this crash procedure into humanity's most crucial communications backbone.*

I carefully compiled as much evidence as I could, not daring share this with anyone. With some help, I also managed to prepare a back-door that would allow someone else to enter MaxDigital's protected intranet, in case something happened to me. I stored the back-door information in the safest place I could think of, my character's vault inside the game of AmberDrake Chronicles *I was playing. I thought my sister would know me enough to think about that. Lord knows I never thought it would be needed.*

Unfortunately I was discovered before I could get to the bottom of everything, and had to escape. I had already made my preparations: An underground hacker known as "Bad Dog" furnished me with a fake identity, and using it I arrived at Harris Station. Here my old college friend Dr. Denis Ogden met me at a local pub and hid me here. In the meantime I was a witness to how the Stellar Communications Network crashed. I was devastated at seeing my life's work used to destroy humanity's ability to communicate just when we were about to be attacked by an alien species.

You must be wondering if it was a coincidence that the Stellar Comm Network crashed at the same time the Devourer invasion began. It obviously wasn't. Whoever did it knew it would make humans vulnerable to an enemy attack.

As to who did it, I can tell you MaxDigital does not give the orders here. The company is just a corporate mercenary, for sale to the highest bidder. I did manage to insert one or two pieces of code of my own into the upgrade, however, to help trace the sender of the deadly message when it was processed by the faulty code. You see, since I knew what was supposed to be in the message in order for it to crash the system, I just had to make sure that an alert was raised when a message with similar content passed through the system. And before the system went down I did get my alert. That's why I can tell you this: The message that crashed the Stellar Communications Network was signed by the Psion Brotherhood.

Yes, the Psion Brotherhood. They sent the message that crashed the entire Stellar Comm Network. Want to know something even more bizarre? My alert also parsed the message, so

I know the planet it was sent from. The first registered source for the message was Logan's End. You do realize Logan's End is NOT on the Stellar Comm Network, don't you? The message was relayed by ship-to-ship communications to Harris Station, this very place, and from here it jumped to all the network. It lay dormant on each network node until a pre-determined time, and then crashed everything. That's some fancy piece of timing.

As to why would the Psion Brotherhood want to cripple humanity just before it is attacked by ruthless aliens? Your guess is as good as mine.

This might be a good opportunity to review the workings of the Stellar Communications Network, especially how messages are relayed to travelling ships on planets without Comm Network access (see *The Stellar Communications Network* in the *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*).

LaMarche also provides the heroes with a data card with all the evidence he has for his accusations, mostly pieces of source code that only other experts in the field could understand.

Suddenly, Dr. Ogden's face appears on one of the wall screens. He reports that two ships have been detected on their way to Renner Station, and asks if they are expecting anyone else. Dr. Ogden has tried contacting the ships and they are not responding. Both ships also look very well armed.

THE ATTACK

The MaxDigital goons finally managed to piece together that "Dr. Anton Nowak" is really Dr. LaMarche. The two approaching ships are actually mercenary ships hired by MaxDigital to blow up Renner Station and thus take out LaMarche and anyone he might have told his secrets to. Given the distances and time involved, even if Renner Station sent a distress signal to Harris Station help would not arrive in time to avoid the attack.

After talking it over with Ogden and LaMarche, the heroes have a few days to decide what to do. The intention of the arriving ships is not confirmed, but the most logical assumption is that they are coming to eliminate Dr. LaMarche.

Have the heroes flesh out their strategy in preparation for the attack. Here are some notes about the station and its environment that may help their planning:

- **Renner Station:** Being a mining station with no military goals the station has light weaponry and armor. There are 161 people on board whose lives are now in danger.
- **Dr. LaMarche:** If someone suggests getting rid of Dr. LaMarche to keep the station safe (or evacuating him before the attackers find him), Dr. LaMarche points out that the attackers will most likely destroy the entire station and all its occupants on the assumption that he has shared his secrets with some of them. In any case, he is not willing to abandon those who have risked their lives to protect him.
- **Escape Pods:** Renner Station has several dozen escape pods which allow the crew to leave the station in case of emergency. Since the pods just allow the survivors to float around the location of the station for a few days until help arrives, they are not an option to escape the attackers, who would just blow up the escape pods. Therefore, if the heroes want to save the station crew, they must keep their enemies from destroying the station.
- **^{3}He Tanks:** Renner Station is connected to four huge cylindrical tanks that store ^{3}He. The heroes might think of detaching these tanks from the main body and placing them in front of the habitat section of the station, thus acting as cover against any attacks. If all four tanks are placed in front of the station, all enemy attacks have a –2 Medium Cover penalty. Any beam or missile attack that would have hit the station but for the penalty modifier hits and destroys a tank instead. Once two tanks are destroyed the cover penalty drops to –1. ^{3}He is not combustible, but a fusion fuel, so it will not "explode" when the tank is destroyed.
- **Fuel Skimming Mini-ships:** Renner Station has a total of seven mini-ships that skim the outer atmosphere of the gas giant Icades, collecting ^{3}He to store in the tanks. Although these two-person skimming mini-ships are not armed, they are equipped with a large dual fusion engine designed to navigate in strong gravities and escape the atmosphere. In outer space this means they can achieve significant speeds, thus making it feasible to ram enemy ships. If the heroes think of using the Mini-ships as such as weapon, treat all of them as a single "swarm." To create the swarm start with the statistics for the skimming mini-ship, and add +4 Toughness for the swarm. All swarm rolls are group rolls, and thus work with a Wild Die. This includes rolls to avoid enemy attacks. The swarm has three Wounds, just as a normal ship, representing individual ships in the swarm falling or having trouble. Swarms can never receive more than two Wounds from a single attack. To attempt a collision, the swarm must begin within one range

increment as the enemy ship and must make a successful opposed Piloting roll. With a success, one mini-ship in the swarm slams against an enemy ship, inflicting 4d6 damage AP 2 (6d6 with a raise), as well as a Wound on the swarm itself. Note that this cannot be done remotely; a pilot must decide to make a suicide run for this to work. The pilots at Renner Station are willing to make the ultimate sacrifice to protect their crewmates; this may be a great source of role-playing.

There are other strategies the heroes might think of. You as a GM have the last call on what is possible and what isn't.

Assuming the battle takes place close to the station, place ten markers on the table to mark distance. Place Renner Station in the 1st marker. Place the heroes' ship in the 2nd marker. If the heroes decided to launch the Skimming Mini-ship swarm, also place it in the 2nd marker next to the heroes' ship. Place the enemy ships on the 10th marker, facing the station. Give the heroes ship sheets for both Renner Station and the Mini-ship Swarm (if it will be used). All ships controlled by heroes act on heroes' Action Cards as if they were Extras.

✹ **Dr. Luis LaMarche:** See page 233
- **Renner Station**
- **Skimming Mini-Ship Swarm (1):** See the *Seven Worlds Setting Guide* for stats on a single Skimming Mini-Ship. Although there are seven Mini-ships, they are treated as a single "swarm" for simplicity. Add +4 Toughness to the Swarm. For this scene assume in a "suicide run" a pilot can take these ships to a maximum Top Acceleration of 16.
- **Enemy Ship (1):** Use stats for Pirate/Mercenary Ship (Small).
- **Enemy Ship (1):** Use stats for Pirate/Mercenary Ship (Medium).

AFTER THE BATTLE

After the combat is over the heroes are free to leave. Hopefully Renner Station and most of its crew survived; in this case Dr. Ogden thanks the heroes profusely and offers any help he can.

If Dr. LaMarche dies, before dying he leaves the heroes a message to deliver to his sister Suzanne should they ever return to Concordia. This may make an especially poignant moment when Concordia falls in the next dispatch the heroes receive. If alive, Dr. LaMarche could also become a replacement PC should the heroes need one.



"I HAVE AN IDEA! LET'S TURN THE TRANSPORT INTO A STARFIGHTER!"

Can you imagine a bunch of airline pilots adding a missile launcher to a 747 airplane? Given that *Seven Worlds* is a game with a strong hard science-fiction feel, jury-rigging a weapon on a space ship in two days is as impossible as it is in real-life. Thus no major improvement to ships is allowed in a short period of time in the game.

This may sound boring to some players or GMs, accustomed to having the freedom to improve their vehicles before a fight. If you as a GM approve, you may allow these kinds of unrealistic improvements or jury-riggings in the game. Just be sure to keep the game feel you are striving for, whatever it is.

By the end of this section the heroes have finally ascertained three important facts: The Stellar Comm Network was indeed deliberately sabotaged; the culprit is the Psion Brotherhood, or someone within it; and the deadly message that crashed everything came from Logan's End. Hopefully this, along with the Chrysalis clue from *Into the Fire*, should move the players on towards Logan's End.

PART II: THE TRAGIC STORY OF THE AURORA BOREALIS

This section begins when the heroes take the long voyage to the frontier star system of Logan's End. Their goal is to find out what "Chrysalis" is and how to get there. Their only clue to Chrysalis is an obscure news report from three years ago, which the heroes received in *Into the Fire*, and is reproduced here as Handout #1.

WHAT THE HEROES MUST UNCOVER

The clues to Chrysalis the heroes are looking for are tied to the three-year-old story of a small smuggler ship called the *Aurora Borealis*, and to the sad fate of her crew.

The *Aurora Borealis* was a small smuggling vessel owned by Captain Kevin Windon, an unstable individual with a long history of small-time crime. Besides Captain Windon, the ship's crew of five included Hassan Leova, Gerardo Bevard, Doug O'Malley and Oliver Sarria.

Three years ago, desperate at several deals gone wrong and in one of his more unstable periods, Captain Windon decided to follow and hijack one of the scientific vessels that periodically travelled to the nearby Mu Casseiopeiae system to perform research on the sun's corona (see *Logan's End* in the *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*).

The *Aurora Borealis* followed the scientific ship a few days behind. When they jumped to the Mu Casseiopeiae system, the smugglers were just in time to spot their prey itself jump through a previously unknown jump point at the other side of the star system. Fortunately, the *Aurora Borealis* was not detected before the other ship jumped. It took Windon almost a week to reach the new, secret jump point. Then, following the scientific ship, Windon travelled through the mysterious new jump point and ended up in the middle of space, light-years away from the closest star system. The scientific ship had disappeared.

Rattled and superstitious, Windon and his crew jumped back to Mu Casseiopeiae and waited for the "ghost ship" to return. A few days later a new, different unmarked scientific ship jumped back. Scared, Windon opened fire on the new ship, practically blowing it up before it could react. After searching through the debris Windon and his crew managed to recover the navigation systems logs, and from those recovered a set of jump coordinates in space (presumably a jump point that connected to the other one in the middle of space), and a destination name: "Chrysalis."

With weeks gone and lots of fuel wasted with nothing to show for it but a bizarre story and some strange jump point coordinates, Windon and his crew decided to return to Logan's End while they figured out a way to profit from all this. Unfortunately, space crews being what they are, they ended up drunkenly spilling their story at a local Providence water-hole, where they were promptly laughed off. In the ensuing bar brawl they were all temporarily arrested, causing a small police story to appear in the news (see Handout #1).

Joseph Wilkins, the local representative of the Psion Brotherhood, got wind of the story and realized the secret of Chrysalis was in jeopardy. He moved his teams swiftly to clean up the evidence.

A week after the bar brawl, Hassan Leova was found dead, stabbed apparently while being mugged. Two days later, Doug O'Malley was found dead in his sleep at a sleazy motel.

Sad and scared, the rest of the crew met at Gerardo Bevard's house in Providence, where Mrs. Bevard served them snacks while they mourned their friends and wondered if someone was "out to get them." Within the next few weeks, Windon, Bevard and Sarria were all dead in seemingly unconnected incidents, and the story seemed buried forever.

Unbeknownst to the Psion Brotherhood, however, the *Aurora Borealis* had a sixth, unofficial crewmember on its fateful trip: A young girl by the name of Ellie Vince had met Oliver Sarria a few days before the trip, and eloped with him as a stowaway on the ship. Captain Windon found out once the ship was on its way and although he was furious there was nothing he could do. Of course Ellie was never listed as a passenger on the ship, and thus the Psion Brotherhood never found out about her. Crushed by the strange events she witnessed and the loss of her lover, Ellie Vince fled Providence. She is now married to Sammy Edmondson, a shuttle pilot for a transportation company that connects the southern and northern hemispheres, and lives in Santiago. She still keeps a data card she took from Oliver with the coordinates to the mysterious 'Chrysalis.'

SCENE 4: THE TRIP TO LOGAN'S END

The trip to Logan's End is long and dangerous. The trip can be run star by star or using the optional Encounters in Space rules from the *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*. You can also gloss over the trip to get to the next part of the tale, at your discretion. This might

also be a good time to run a Montage (see the *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*).

Given how long the trip is, the heroes must make sure they carry enough fuel and supplies. Refueling on the way is indispensable. The only stop along the way is the aptly named Waypoint Station. If you consider it appropriate, this may be an excellent opportunity to run a side story set on Waypoint Station.

LOGAN'S END

When the heroes arrive at Eta Cassiopeiae, the star system of Logan's End, read or paraphrase the following:

After many long weeks, your destination is finally before you: The fifth planet orbiting Eta Cassiopeiae, the frontier world known as Logan's End.

Orbiting a star very similar to Sol but brighter, Logan's End is a tropical planet with a high gravity and temperatures (for humans). The average temperature on the planet is 49 degrees Celsius, forcing most humans to settle on the poles, where the temperature is a chillier but still sweaty 25.

Logan's End is still a "frontier world," the farthest one from the other planets, and one with tenuous centralized control. It is a wild place where settlements are still rough, the jungles are mysterious and foreboding, and danger awaits just outside the poles. It has the largest native flora and fauna of any planet settled until now, with many kinds of plants and animals living on its swampy, jungle-type surface, being very similar to Earth in atmospheric composition.

As you take the StO shuttle from your docking station on the orbit of Logan's End and stare out the window you see Providence, the largest settlement on the planet, in the north pole. With only one million inhabitants, Providence is currently in its permanent day phase, being as it is close to the pole.

You may optionally stage an encounter in space between the heroes and Commander Olivia Creeson (see Personalities under *Logan's End* in the *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*), in charge of Logan's End's makeshift military defenses. Commander Creeson is always on the lookout for contraband and illegal operations running into or out of Logan's End, particularly drug smuggling. She has intercepted several shipments of Peak, one of the most addictive recreational drugs in the Seven Worlds, and is now following the trail of the shady organizations running the show.

SCENE 5: ON THE TRAIL OF THE AURORA BOREALIS

Explain to the heroes what penalties Logan's End creates for them (see *Planetary Environments* in the *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*). This is particularly important on this planet, which has the harshest penalties because of its hot, high-gee environment. Heroes might want to revise their strategies to account for this.

Although advanced by 21st century standards, Providence is noticeably primitive by 23rd century standards. From construction to services, from quality of power to relative lack of V-World screens and panels, Providence feels "behind." The fact that many people walk armed on the streets and that the rule of law is weaker than in other places adds to the "Western" feel of the place.

Heroes may start by searching for information in Logan's End's V-World network from the moment they are entering the atmosphere in the StO shuttle. An Investigation roll (by the hero or an Assistant) is needed to uncover this information. The first Investigation roll takes one hour. If the roll fails, it may be attempted again but each additional search takes three times as long.

Failure: No records of any of the five members of the crew of the *Aurora Borealis* are found for the last three years. There appears to be nothing recent on any of these five people. This may be because all five have left the planet, or because something has happened to them. Then again, maybe the heroes performed the search wrong.

Success: The system has no new information on any of the five members of the crew of the *Aurora Borealis* for the last three years. The reason is that all five met untimely, accidental deaths in the days and weeks following their incident in the bar. No apparent foul play was detected in any of the deaths. Only one of the members of the crew has a living relative: Helen Bevard, widow of the ship doctor Gerardo Bevard. She lives here in Providence (the address is provided).

Raise: Besides the information listed above, the system mentions that the crew used to meet at the Bevards' house periodically to talk, plan and exchange gossip. Helen Bevard was usually at these meetings.

If the heroes visit the Fearless Bar they can meet Melonia Ferrato (see *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*). Ferrato can only offer the heroes the information on Handout #1, but no more.

THE WIDOW BEVARD

If the heroes visit Helen Bevard's home, they find her living in a small apartment in one of the many five-story apartment buildings in the poorer sections of Providence. Mrs. Bevard is a tall lady with large front teeth, a busty build and curly old-fashioned hair. She is dressed simply and looks a bit disheveled after a day of work as a cashier in a nearby grocery store.

While Mrs. Bevard is friendly, people in Logan's End don't trust anyone as a matter of course, so the heroes will have to gain her trust. This will require some role-playing and maybe a few Persuasion rolls. Remember that V-World is available to all characters and their Assistants. Mrs. Bevard will be able to use her lenses to identify who the heroes are, as well as when they arrived (unless they take steps to hide their identity). Mrs. Bevard's Assistant (she does have one) will check facts and background on the heroes while she talks. You should have her ask one or two uncomfortable questions and see how the heroes respond before having Mrs. Bevard fully trust them.

Once the heroes gain her trust, Mrs. Bevard invites them into her home, offers them coffee and sandwiches, and tells her story. Paraphrase the text below as a conversation, according to how the heroes ask their questions:

"Oh, I will never forget what happened. I curse the day they took that trip! Oh, they were always getting themselves in trouble, but it was always the captain, Kevin, who pushed them into it. My Gerardo wanted to get out of it all, he told me he wanted to get work here in town, but it was always 'just one more job and I'm done' and he never got around to doing it.

When he got back from the trip he was rattled, obviously something had happened. Oh, he didn't say anything, but he didn't have to; I know my man. That same night he went with the boys to the Fearless Bar and he got into that mess with the fight and all! I had to go to the police station and call a friend's husband to get him out! I was furious at him! And then, of course, the news report came out and I had to hide my head inside a paper bag when going out. We were the talk of the neighborhood… Oh, I still boil inside when I remember.

Then a few days later Hassan was found dead, mugged. And then Doug died while sleeping. We had to go to practically two cremation ceremonies in a row…

So after Doug, we all came here, to this apartment. They obviously needed to talk. I remember I went to the kitchen to bring some bread and cookies, and all four of them were there, obviously worried. Kevin kept insisting it was nothing, Hassan and Doug had just been unlucky; Oliver insisted it was 'the ghost ship' and that they had been cursed; poor Ellie said nothing; and of course my Gerardo, clear-minded as always, said they should focus on what to do now.

In the end they agreed on nothing, of course. When the reunion broke up they promised to meet again soon. They never did. Oliver had a heart attack three days later. Kevin got involved in some drunken fight in a bar and got stabbed to death. And Gerardo… oh, my Gerardo [her eyes swell with tears]… he was so sad he went out for a walk, and didn't return. We found him dead on a puddle in an alley, with a farewell note and a bottle of something he had bought somewhere. They got the guy who sold him the poison, too, he testified Gerardo himself bought it and that he looked like he was going to use it. I hope that bastard has already rotted in jail!

It was a year before the pain went away. I don't know what they saw or where they went on that trip, and I frankly don't care. I don't believe in ghost ships or stuff, I just wish it all… hadn't happened…

Notes or records? The police took everything, of course. They also confiscated the Aurora Borealis *in their investigation. It turned out Kevin owed it several times over and it was sold or scrapped or something. I'm sorry but I have nothing to give you that may help find out what they saw.*

Can I help you with anything else?"

Hopefully the heroes noticed the reference to *four* people in the last meeting (rather than three), and the reference to someone with the name of "Ellie." If they did, give them a Benny. If they didn't, and a soft nudge doesn't work, an Assistant can bring up the point.

Once the question of the extra person in the meeting is brought up, read or paraphrase the following:

Ellie? Well, of course she was there. Oh, I see your confusion. Ellie Vince was not part of the crew. She was this young girl, a Southerner, barely of age, just arrived from Santiago escaping her parents for something or other. She met Oliver and they fell in love immediately. Oliver, crazy as always, stowed her away on the Aurora Borealis *on that last trip. You can't imagine how ANGRY Kevin Windon was when he discovered he had a stowaway on his ship!*

He almost KILLED Oliver! Of course there was nothing he could do about it, so poor Ellie spent all the weeks of the mission up there with the crew. The poor girl had a rough time, Kevin was anything but courteous to her.

Of course, she never appeared in the passenger manifest, and Kevin would never declare her when she arrived, so no one knew she went on the trip. Also, she did not go to the bar that night so her name never came up on the news release. Now that you say it, yes, she's the only person who went on that trip who's still alive today.

Where is she? Well, when Oliver died she was heartbroken and went back to her home town of Santiago, on the south pole. As far as I know she's still there. I heard she married some shuttle pilot. I hope she's happy and she's forgotten about all this mess.

A quick search of V-World quickly brings up Ellie Vince, now Ellie Edmondson. She lives in Santiago, on the south pole of Logan's End.

- **Mrs. Helen Bevard:** Use stats for Civilian.

THE SECRET SURVIVOR

If the heroes try to place a call to Ellie Vince, their call is answered by a haggard black girl with large blue eyes, about twenty years old, who rudely asks what the heroes want. She looks obviously distressed. As soon as Ellie hears that the heroes want to talk about the *Aurora Borealis* or her past she closes the communication and does not answer again. If the heroes want to talk to her, they will have to travel to Santiago, on the southern pole.

THE TRIP TO SANTIAGO

To travel between the poles the heroes have to take one of the many commercial flights that depart from Providence during the day, at ticket prices of about 80 EarthGov Dollars per passenger.

When the heroes reach the airport, they notice it is relatively empty, and there is ample choice of flights and seats. Overhearing casual conversations they discover that a few days ago a shuttle crashed in the jungle, a few hundred kilometers from Santiago. The remains of the shuttle have not been found and it is unknown whether there are any survivors but since the jungle is dangerous enough to devour anyone who is not prepared, the chances of survival are slim. For this reason passenger traffic has decreased for a few days.

Heroes should also note how bulky and inefficient the shuttles look when compared to other ships in the Seven Worlds. The reason is that with the increased gravity of Logan's End ships need to have more fuel and larger engines in order to fly.

When the heroes arrive at Santiago they find themselves in constant darkness, at least for a few more weeks. Santiago is more primitive even that Providence, and smaller. It is one of the few places in the former-Seven Worlds where there is no local Circle presence or support.

ELLIE VINCE

It is easy for the heroes to locate Ellie Edmonson's house, a small apartment in a three-story building in an up-and-coming part of the city. Judging from the neighborhood life has been good to her recently.

As the heroes approach the door it detects who they are and reports it to Ellie, who immediately refuses them entry. She is sobbing, scared and beside herself. The heroes have a chance to talk to her through the closed door to convince her to open it. This may require some skillful role-playing or a few successful arguments and Persuasion rolls.

Once the heroes manage to gain her trust, Ellie timidly opens the door and lets them in. The place is nice, but disorganized. The heroes can't help but notice the pictures of Ellie smiling while hugging her husband, a young man in an airline pilot uniform. It turns out that Ellie's husband was the pilot of the air shuttle that crashed in the jungle five days ago, and at this point he is presumed dead.

Beside herself with grief, Ellie is at times sad and at times violent towards the heroes, saying she has nothing to say or give to them and does not care what they want. Depending on how the heroes work their arguments and conversation with Ellie, sooner or later in her desperation an idea comes to her. Read or paraphrase this into the conversation as appropriate:

"Listen... maybe... maybe there's a way we can help each other.

Since the shuttle crashed the company and the authorities have been looking for the plane, but the jungle canopy is dense, and no emergency beacons have been detected despite there being several emergency transmitters on the shuttle. Most people don't survive the savage beasts of the jungle for more than one or two days without appropriate equipment, so at this point they are presumed dead. On top of that, these are the dark months in the south. It's hard to see anything down there.

Even so, two search expeditions have been mounted and sent below the jungle canopy. One of them disappeared without a trace; they suspect Jungle Terrors. The other one radioed for emergency evacuation because of a Bodymouth attack. Never heard of either of those? Well, you're lucky.

In any case, after two failed rescue attempts, and with nothing to show for it, the authorities are giving up. Search efforts are half-hearted at most. Last night the company's insurance agent suggested I might want to begin the claim process. They want me to accept that my Sammy is lost! But I can't, I just can't lose my partner again…

I asked, BEGGED them to please send another expedition, but of course they said it is too dangerous. One of our infrequent tidal seasons has started, and the water comes in and recedes hundreds of kilometers every few hours in that part of the jungle. That's another reason they think no one can survive.

I know what you want. Yes, you want to know about the ghost ship and Chrysalis. Well, I have the information you want, and I was there so I can tell you exactly what happened in space, exactly what I saw, and exactly where to go! But I won't…

… unless you do something for me first. Unless you go look for my Sammy for me. Go to the jungle, find him, and save him for me! And if you can't, at least help me know he's at peace!

Ellie is willing to give the heroes the family's entire life savings (a meager 300 EarthGov Dollars) so they can equip themselves for the mission. She can also call some of her husband's friends so they can take the heroes as close to the jungle as is possible with a Beetle-class shuttle. Assuming they accept, she tells them she'll be awaiting their return with the information they want.

- **Ellie Vince/Edmondson:** Use stats for Civilian, but with Spirit d10.

SCENE 6: SEARCH FOR THE CRASH SITE

The only known information about the lost flight is the general location of the last received shuttle transmission. At a shuttle's typical speed, this still leaves an area almost eighty kilometers in diameter to explore. The dense jungle canopy makes it difficult to detect anything from the air. The jungle floor and constant tidal flooding make it impossible for wheeled or tracked vehicles to move for long, and hovercraft are too slow and bulky to have more than a few kilometers of range in Logan's End's gravity before losing all energy. Not that being fast would help them, with the density of trees and obstacles below the jungle canopy.

Thus the best rescue plan is to have a Beetle-class ship land at a specific place in the jungle, disembark the expedition team, and use a long-range communicator to send a distress beacon when the survivors are found (or when the heroes need to be evacuated). Again, Ellie's husband's friends will be monitoring the beacon signals and respond as soon as possible.

Have the heroes make their preparations with the gear list and, subject to your approval, provide them with anything they want that is not on the list (appropriately priced, of course; remember that supplies for specialized equipment are scarce because of the war). Once they are ready, read or paraphrase the following section:

The city has receded hours ago as the Beetle-class shuttle takes you to the edge of the pole. The shuttle resembles a fat bug with dual rotors on the sides, and strong engines that engage periodically to fight gravity. In the darkness of the southern hemisphere, little by little you see the vegetation increase, both in size and in density, until you are flying over unbroken dark jungle. It is curious that in such a high-gravity world as Logan's End vegetation still has found a way to grow large and thick trees. Clearly there is still a lot to learn about how evolution works its wonders.

Finally Cheet, the friend of Ellie who works with her husband Sam at the shuttle company, points to a place below, a small clearing in the dense jungle. "This is about the center of the estimated crash area," he says. "It's not the exact center but without a clearing you'd have to jump and believe me, you do not want to try skydiving in the gravity of Logan's End! Be careful of the jungle!"

As the Beetle lands on the small clearing, Cheet's face grows serious. "Me and my mates will be on the lookout for your emergency beacon signal, just remember our Beetles can't land into the jungle without a clearing or something… Thank you for helping Sam and Ellie. The bosses at the company are idiots. I know from their point of view the odds say there's no hope but…

this is the right thing to do, you know?... Well, Good luck!"

A few moments later you are on land, jungle all around you, in the darkness of the Southern hemisphere, and with the rapidly departing Beetle ship the last sight of civilization you will see for some days, if ever.

DEALING WITH THE JUNGLE

Although Logan's End is notorious for the extreme levels of light that require characters to wear special goggles, ironically the heroes are in a position where that isn't needed. They are in the "night" side of the planet, very close to the pole, and under a dense canopy. They therefore have a –1 Dim Lighting penalty to all rolls. All Heat and Gravity penalties (see the *Setting Rules* section in the *Seven Worlds* Setting Guide) apply as normal.

Remember that in the jungle there is no V-World network. Therefore, Assistants will not be much help during combat.

The expedition will take several days of travelling through swamps, marshes and jungle. Note the supplies that the heroes consume during their trip. If they run out of supplies, you may have to use the Hunger rules from *Savage Worlds*. In this situation, the heroes may want to eat some of the beasts they fight. Whenever they do this have them make a Vigor (–2) roll. With a failure, the different organic structure of the creature is difficult to digest, causing one level of Fatigue for 24 hours.

At any time, the heroes may use their long-distance communicator to contact civilization and ask for supplies or other support. In most cases a clearing or other location to land will have to be found in order for the heroes to receive the support they need. This might require a Survival roll, at your discretion.

JUNGLE ENCOUNTERS

Regardless of the direction the heroes take, for each day of travel draw a card.

- If the card is a black suit number card or a black Ace, consult the appropriate section below and run the indicated encounter.
- If the card is a black suit Face Card, the heroes have found the survivor encampment. Proceed to the next Scene in the adventure. If the Face Card comes up before the heroes have explored for at least three days, put the card back in the deck and draw another card.

DEUCE: JUNGLE TERROR AMBUSH

While making camp at night, the heroes are ambushed by Jungle Terrors. The mysterious creatures take full advantage of the darkness and growl ominously, cast threatening shadows where possible, and in general scare the heroes before attacking when they least expect it. In game terms, play the encounter using the monsters' Intimidation skill. Depending on the results, some heroes may need to perform a Fear check.

- **Jungle Terror (1 per every 2 heroes)**

THREE: BLACK LIZARD SWAMP

The heroes are passing through a flooded region of the jungle (count as Difficult Ground), when several Black Lizards, lying in wait under the surface, attack! Use the Surprise rules from *Savage Worlds*.

- **Black Lizard (1 per every 2 heroes)**



FOUR: LAIR OF THE SWAMP SLUGS
The heroes are wading through the swamps when they step on a group of Swamp Slugs. The Slugs use their high Stealth to try to surprise the heroes.

- **Swamp Slug (1 per hero)**

FIVE: GLIDERS NEST
The heroes are walking under a particularly dense part of the jungle canopy when they are surprised by several Gliders from the trees above. Lurking a few feet away from the heroes is a Dart Plant. Mark it as an innocuous plant on the tabletop, maybe as something that could give cover. If the heroes approach the plant while evading or fighting the Gliders, the Dart Plant responds.

- **Gliders (1 per hero)**
- **Dart Plant (1)**

SIX: FLESHWORM SWARM
The rotting, bloated corpse of a human being, probably a shuttle passenger, lies on the jungle floor. With a Notice (–2) roll a hero can notice the corpse is twitching slightly, as if something were alive inside it. If the heroes approach, several swarms of Fleshworms come out of the corpse and move to attack the nearest heroes.

- **Fleshworm Swarm (1 per every 3 heroes):**

SEVEN: ATTACK OF THE BODYMOUTH
While crossing the jungle, the heroes are startled by several loud sounds, as from an animal noisily walking. After a few seconds, a Bodymouth barges into the area and attacks. If a hero has never heard of a Bodymouth before (and has not done their research on Logan's End's lifeforms) have him or her roll their Spirit as soon as they see it. With a failure, he or she begins combat Shaken.

- **Bodymouth (1)**

EIGHT: LOGAN CHAMELEON TRAP
The heroes are crossing the jungle when they are ambushed by a group of Logan Chameleons. These creatures lie still using their chameleonic disguise (gaining a bonus to their Stealth roll) and then suddenly pounce on their surprised victims.

- **Logan Chameleon (1 per every 3 heroes)**

NINE: LAIR OF THE SLEEPING MANYMOUTHS
The heroes come across a group of bizarre, scary creatures called Manymouths. The Manymouths are feigning sleep, and will attack if approached or if attacked. A few feet next to the Manymouths lie several bodies, not many days old. They are most likely from survivors of the crash.

- **Manymouth (1 per every 2 heroes)**

TEN: SPIKETAIL AMBUSH
The heroes are walking through a dense part of the jungle when several Spiketails jump on top of them and attack! The Spiketails will attempt to flee when only two of them are left.

- **Spiketail (1 per hero)**

ACE: ENVIRONMENT HAZARD
The heroes meet an environmental hazard they must resist or avoid. Pick from one of the following:

- **Tide Flooding:** Large, strong waves flood the jungle as the strong tides of Logan's End affect the area. Each hero must make an Agility roll or be carried away for 2d6 damage. Afterwards, the ground is treated as difficult ground for 2d6 hours.
- **Storm:** One of Logan's End's sudden tropical storms begins. All rolls have an additional –1 Lighting penalty, on top of previous lighting penalties. Additionally, the ground turns muddy, causing walking heroes to make an Agility roll or fall Shaken. Finally, all physical actions suffer an additional –2 penalty because of the pouring rain and strong wind. This lasts for 2 hours.
- **Quicksand**: The high gravity of Logan's End makes sand concentrations particularly deadly. Bogs and other unstable ground structures can cause trouble for the heroes. The lead character must make a Notice roll at –2 or plunge to the waist. Unless extracted he or she sinks in three rounds and begins drowning. The hero can make a Strength (–4) roll to pull himself out. On a success he stops sinking, and on a raise he pulls out. Other heroes can also help by making a Strength roll to drag their comrade out.

SCENE 7: THE CRASH SITE

Run this scene when the heroes draw a black Face Card as the encounter card.

As the heroes approach a swampy part of the jungle they notice some of the treetops are broken and see

the path of destruction caused by a crashed shuttle. Adjacent trees have kept the canopy relatively dense, thus obscuring this from the view of flying Beetles.

A few hundred yards later the heroes find the remains of the shuttle. It has been rendered apart by the impact, and dead bodies are everywhere.

Have all heroes who search the debris make a Notice roll with all appropriate modifiers.

Success: The body of the pilot is not found amongst the wreckage, which would suggest that the pilot, Sammy Edmondson, has survived the accident. The heroes also find a trail of footprints leaving the wreckage.

Raise: Pieces of the fuselage and hull show small round holes, consistent with bullet holes. Apparently there was a gunfight of some kind here, and maybe that caused the shuttle to crash. Also, several pieces of communications hardware have been removed from the ship.

Two Raises: Edmondson is not the only survivor. The count of bodies clearly does not match the number of seats. Even considering any bodies the heroes may have found in previous encounters, if any, there are at least seven more people missing.

WHAT HAS HAPPENED HERE

The commercial shuttle piloted by Sammy Edmondson was carrying among its passengers several undercover members of the criminal organization known as the Dark Claws. These members were carrying samples of PeakPlus, a new and stronger variation of Peak, one of the most addictive and expensive illegal recreation drugs in the Seven Worlds. The idea was for the Dark Claws to test and mass-produce PeakPlus in their labs in Santiago. Unfortunately a rival gang, the Mayhems, got wind of this and also boarded the shuttle, planning to steal the PeakPlus samples as soon as possible. Logan's End being more relaxed in its security procedures than other places in human space, both gangs were able to board with hidden weapons. During the flight, one of the gangs recognized the other and a gunfight ensued. Among the ensuing chaos and panic some stray bullets ripped the shuttle walls and hit the engines, thus causing the crash.

While all the Mayhem goons died in the crash, several members of the Dark Claws survived. Unfortunately all transmitters were destroyed in the crash. The Dark Claws goons took the remaining survivors hostage (among them Sammy Edmondson, the pilot) and left the wreckage, taking the remains of a communicator with them as well as several spare parts. They have spent the last few days braving the dangers of the jungle while trying to fix the communicator. Several survivors, including a few Dark Claws, have already fallen prey to the savage beasts of the jungles of Logan's End. Finally, just two days ago they managed to repair the communicator and send a signal to their gang. In response the Dark Claws have sent one of their own Beetle-class shuttles to pick up their comrades and the PeakPlus samples.

THE CLEARING

After following the trail for about twenty minutes the heroes find a clearing, in the middle of which there is an unmarked Beetle shuttle, similar to the one they were brought in. Nestled next to the wall of a small hill to the north of the clearing are four humans, gagged and tied. Guarding them are three thugs armed with medium-sized guns. All of them have the haggard looks and ragged clothes of crash survivors. Next to them are four soldiers neatly dressed in light combat uniforms. Behind this group there are several pieces of equipment, apparently used as spare parts to repair a radio transmitter.

Unless the heroes take pains to approach silently, the Dark Claws hear them and do the following:

- One of the goons runs up the ramp into the Beetle and turns on one of the Beetle's two heavy guns (this takes a full round). The Beetle's heavy gun will be used against the heroes in this fight, but it is hard to swivel and aim given that it is at the top of the ship and can't be pointed at clearing floor. This inflicts a –1 penalty to Shooting rolls, on top of any other penalties.
- Two other goons immediately point their guns at the hostages (gaining The Drop against them) and shout a threat to the heroes. The goons who have The Drop on the hostages will try to kill them if the heroes ignore their threats, or if they see the battle going against them.
- All other enemies raise their weapons, scramble for cover, and prepare to fire at the heroes.

The clearing approximately measures 24" by 24" and has several rocks and plants that can be used as cover, giving a –2 Cover penalty (use about ten Small Burst Templates to mark them). The Beetle in the center of the clearing occupies two Large Burst Templates with one side touching, and acts as Heavy Cover (–4 Cover penalty).

The eastern, western and southern sides of the clearing lead back into the jungle. Since the heroes are outside the canopy, the –1 Dim Lighting penalty does not apply. The enemy combatants are all Logan's End natives and thus gravity penalties don't apply to them. If the heroes leave the clearing (through the south,

east or west sides) the Dim Lighting penalty applies, as well as a Medium Cover penalty (–2).

The northern side of the clearing is the hill wall. The gagged and tied humans, as well as their guards and the spare equipment, are lying right next to this wall.

- **Hostages (4):** Use stats for Civilian.
- **Dark Claw shuttle survivors (3):** Use Stats for Typical Thug.
- **Dark Claw armed military (5):** Use Stats for Typical Mesh Trooper.
- **Beetle Ship (1)**

THE SURVIVORS

One of the four hostages is Sammy Edmondson, Ellie Vince's husband. Assuming he survives (even if wounded), he tells the heroes the following:

"Thank you! We had given up all hope…

What happened? Well, the shuttle flight was proceeding normally until all the alarms went off. It turns out these guys and some other criminals started a gunfight in the shuttle cabin. There were stray bullets, wounded passengers, panic! A few bullets pierced the cabin, and the engines were hit. We tried to save the ship but couldn't, and crashed in the jungle.

Our captors, who call themselves the Dark Claws, survived. We were barely out of the wreckage when they grabbed us and their cargo, some weird drug sample they were interested in keeping, they call it PeakPlus. They forced us to walk through the jungle until we found this clearing, and then they returned to the crash site to bring electronic parts to fix the communicators and call their cronies.

In the meantime, several of us (and of them) have died, attacked by Spiketails and other critters of this cursed jungle!

Some time ago the Dark Claws managed to repair one of the communicators and call their base. This Beetle ship arrived just two hours ago. I think they were preparing to leave when you arrived."

Have the survivors answer any questions the heroes may have. As soon as they are ready, read or paraphrase the following:



Suddenly, you hear the unmistakable sound of engines approaching! Maybe Dark Claw reinforcements? Time to act fast!

Two Light Beetle shuttles, piloted by Dark Claw goons, are approaching. The heroes have just one round to act before the Light Beetles appear above them and start firing their guns.

It should dawn on the heroes that they will all be sitting ducks unless they can escape using the Beetle ship they have. It takes one full round (and a successful Piloting roll) to start the Beetle, and an additional full round to take off the ground. During this time the enemy Light Beetles hover above the battleground, firing at any characters and the ship. Heroes can use the ship's two heavy guns to fire back at the enemy ships.

Once the heroes take off, they're in for a high-speed chase over the jungles of Logan's End! Use the *Savage Worlds* rules for an Extended Chase, with each enemy ship having their own Action Card. Since the side walls of the ships can be lowered, gun-to-gun combat between the ships is also possible.

Note that Piloting a Beetle shuttle is not considered a physical action, as most piloting is done using a VR interface. Therefore, the –2 gravity penalty for being in Logan's End does not apply to Piloting rolls.

The chase ends when either the heroes escape (after the ten rounds of the Extended Chase are up) or when they destroy both their enemies. If the heroes dispatch their enemies too easily, you could bring enemy reinforcements in the form of extra Beetles or Light Beetles. Since the chase can be detected by planetary scanners, the heroes could also receive reinforcements from local law enforcement if things are going bad for them.

- **Beetle Ship (1):** This is now the heroes' ship
- **Light Beetle Ships (2)**
- **Dark Claw soldiers (6):** Use Stats for Typical Mesh Trooper. There are three soldiers per Light Beetle ship, one of whom is the pilot.

EPILOGUE

Once the heroes return to Santiago with Sammy Edmondson (dead or alive) and the other survivors, they are covered in honors. Ellie Vince is especially grateful to them if her husband is brought alive. The heroes have also made lasting enemies of the Dark Claws, who will want to come back for them. And Olivia Creeson will be delighted to receive the PeakPlus samples and thwart the Dark Claws' drug operation.

As soon as possible, Ellie fulfills her part of the agreement and shares her story with the heroes:

I know it sounds stupid, since it was only three years ago, but now I feel that I was so young then, so naïve... I left Santiago in a rush over a fight with my parents, I don't even remember why now. I met Oliver on my second day in Providence and fell for him immediately. He was due to depart for space in two days, and we just couldn't stand being away from each other! So he had this crazy idea of stowing me inside the ship, and I was even crazier to accept... I don't know, it sounded so adventurous and grown-up, now it just sounds plain stupid.

Anyway, Oliver kept it a secret from Captain Windon, who was the most disgusting man in the world, and crazy as hell. It took him just a couple of days to find out. Would you believe he wanted to space me? He would have, too, if I hadn't been his pilot's girl. So I was allowed to roam, but mostly stayed in my room. I spent my time plugged into V-World and to the comm system, seeing what was going on in the ship while feeling miserable over the bad decision I had made.

Anyway, Captain Windon was desperate for money, some shady business or other had gone wrong, and he hit on the great idea of hijacking one of the science ships that periodically flew to the nearby star of Mu Casseiopeiae for some weird research. He figured that in that out-of-the-way place no one would notice the attack. That shows just how dumb he was.

As soon as we jumped into the Mu Casseiopeia system we spotted the science ship. However, instead of going close to the star for study, the science ship had flown to a featureless, empty point in space... and then jumped! Supposedly there are no known jump points out of that star other than the one we had just come in. Fortunately for us the science ship jumped just as we did, and so they did not get a chance to detect us in time.

Smelling a rat, Windon immediately ordered Oliver to fly to the science ship's last location, and then jumped. You cannot imagine his surprise when we came out in the middle of space, light-years away from the closest star system! Even worse, the science ship was not there! But where did it go?

That's when someone started mumbling something about the 'ghost ship.' And that rattled them all. They jumped back to Mu Cassiopeiae.

Bevard, Leova and whats-his-name argued with Captain Windon about going back to Logan's End, but Windon decided to wait a few more days and see what happened. Those were tense days, there were fights among the crew. I just wanted to go home!

Then something appeared at the jump point. It was a scientific ship… but it was not the one we had followed. It was a different ship!

Windon was so scared by this that the idiot opened fire on the new ship, practically blowing it up before it could react. I'd never seen so many scared and confused men in my entire life! Once they got their stuff together they approached the wreckage they'd created and went to salvage some stuff. They recovered the navigation systems logs and the ship's last two jump coordinates. One was the middle-of-nowhere place we'd just visited; and the other jump coordinate originated from that place and went somewhere else. That other jump coordinate was labeled with a single word: 'Chrysalis.'

There was no chance the crew would accept another jump into the wild, so for all his anger Windon had no choice but to return. He made everyone swear that they would take off as soon as possible to investigate this new jump coordinate, but that very same night the drunken crew spilled everything at the Fearless Bar. Then they got into a fight, got arrested, made the news, and you know the rest.

Me, I stayed attached to Oliver for a few more days, up until the day he died. When he did, I immediately fled back to my parents' here in Santiago. I decided to put everything behind me and build a new life. And then you came.

Besides the story, I think you might want this: It's a data card with the coordinates we found on the trip, including the ones for this 'Chrysalis.' Oliver had it and I took it as part of our belongings when he died. You will probably have more use for it than I ever could.

The heroes are now in possession of the coordinates to reach Chrysalis.

The adventure now continues in *Chrysalis*, the next module in the epic *Seven Worlds* campaign!

side stories

This section includes several side stories you can run or take inspiration from to complement the adventures in the main campaign.

Don't forget to review the background for each planet, as well as the Personalities section on the *Seven Worlds* Setting Guide. There are great ideas for further side stories there!

DIGITAL HOSTAGES

Where: Harris Station.

Dwight Jasver, a recently escaped criminal from Earth who is also a master hacker, has arrived at Harris Station; local enforcement suspects he is about to commit a major heist. The heroes are tasked with locating and stopping Jasver. Their first clue is Joan Piaget, a former fellow cellmate and best friend of Jasver from Earth who is now living in the corrupt underside of Harris Station.

Unbeknownst to the authorities, Jasver has been busy the last two weeks: He first visited Piaget, who gave him the underground contacts to hire a group of thugs and goons. Then he set his headquarters up in an old hotel in the slums. Now Jasver is sending his goons to kidnap Ruiz Golan, an aged local small business owner who many years ago worked as a repair engineer to the company that was contracted to build Harris Station. Jasver's plan is to use his prodigious hacking skills to take full control of all Harris Station systems, aided by Golan's still valid but forgotten biometric identification from when he worked at Station repairs. Once he has full control of the station, Jasver can steal all digital currency on the network and blackmail the authorities into allowing him and his team to escape via a ship towards Logan's End.

As the heroes start following Jasver's trail and enter the underworld of Harris Station, their Assistants start behaving strangely. First they become more hostile and antisocial than usual; then they start losing skills or abilities; until finally, in a particularly dangerous moment of the mission (maybe while trying to thwart Golan's kidnapping), all Assistants' suddenly disappear!

In reality, Jasver began hacking the heroes' Assistants since he found out that they were pursuing him. After a while, using his prodigious hacking talents, Jasver finally manages to "kidnap" the heroes' Assistants (the heroes lose all access to them). Once this is done, Jasver contacts the heroes, gloating about having "digital hostages" and threatening to permanently format the Assistants (along with all their backups) if they persist on pursuing him.

As they face Jasver and his goons in a final combat, the heroes get to see their Assistants used against them! In game terms, controlling the heroes' Assistants (and their personal information through them) gives Jasver and his goons the ability to make Intimidation, Taunt and Smarts Trick rolls with a +2 penalty. The Assistants also have a +2 bonus to all rolls made against the heroes.

Jasver is not above destroying the Assistants if the heroes do not give in to his plan. If the heroes manage to stop Jasver they can recover their Assistants with no problems.

- **Joan Piaget:** Use stats for Veteran Thug.
- **Ruiz Golan:** Use stats for Civilian with a Repair d10.
- **Jasver's Goons (4 per hero):** Use stats for Veteran Thug. Part of them will participate in the kidnapping of Ruiz Golan. Any remaining goons will protect Jasver and act on his orders.
- **Dwight Jasver (Wild Card):** Use status for Veteran Thug but add a Hacking d12 and the Command, Hacker, Assistant Hacker, and Very Active Assistant Edges. Whenever Jasver uses V-World to attack through a hero's Assistant (which should be frequently), that Assistant temporarily inherits the Assistant Hacker edge.

A DANGEROUS MESSAGE

Where: Waypoint Station.

As explained in the *Stellar Communications Network* section of the *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*, ships scheduled to travel to faraway locations are sent batches of messages to store in their local database so they can be transmitted back at the destination when their ship arrives. This is mandatory of all ships. Obviously all messages carried are confidential.

Just before the heroes depart Waypoint station for Logan's End, their ship downloads a batch of messages for their destination. One of the messages is sent by a local investigative reporter to a colleague of his at a news outlet in Santiago, and contains an explosive revelation: Erin Amanpour, the charismatic mayor of

the city of Santiago on Logan's End, is actually one of the leaders of a criminal network that coordinates most piracy and contraband activities on the route to Logan's End. If this information were to go public, Amanpour's career would implode and the network's piracy activities would suffer a major setback.

Just after the heroes depart, the reporter is discovered and killed, and the criminal organization begins its attempts to stop the heroes from delivering the message at any cost. A fast courier is dispatched to warn Amanpour of the danger and order other ships to intercept the heroes' ship. The heroes will be openly attacked by one pirate ship when coming out of a jump point en route to their destination, and again by two pirate ships as they approach Logan's End (and before their ship has a chance to automatically transmit the messages it's carrying).

If the heroes' ship gets to transmit the messages and the truth comes out, the heroes can expect an ambush by several goons sent by Amanpour looking for revenge.

- **Pirate Ships:** Use stats for Medium Pirate/ Mercenary Ship.
- **Ambush Thugs (3 per hero):** Use stats for Veteran Thug.

TEMP JOB

Where: Logan's End.

The heroes are asked to travel to a far-away hydroelectric plant that has mysteriously stopped working and whose crew has stopped responding to messages. As a result of the plant's failure, the far-away towns of Suarez and Maytown, always at odds at each other because of energy distribution issues, are suffering acute energy shortages. The heroes' mission is twofold: It is imperative they re-enable the plant as soon as possible and keep it working to restore energy supply to Suarez and Maytown, and if possible they must find out what happened to the four members of the crew. It is expected that a replacement crew will be ready and available to take over for the heroes in about two to three weeks.

A Beetle Ship drops off the heroes at the nearest open clearing, a few hundred yards away from the plant. The heroes find the plant empty of people. The plant was left to run by itself, and with no one to pilot it, some of the machinery blew and broke down. Upon investigation, a set of tracks can be found entering the jungle. The heroes must decide whether to follow the tracks or repair the plant.

It turns out that several weeks ago a terrorist underground organization from Suarez, calling itself the Suarez Supremacists, has set up a camp about a day from the plant. Their aim is to take the workers of the hydroelectric plant hostage and then threaten to destroy the plant unless all energy distribution is permanently routed to Suarez. Jimmy Lopez, one of the four members of the plant team, is actually one of the Supremacists. As per the plan, Lopez tricked the other three members into going out for an "emergency rescue expedition" with the aim of leading them to the terrorist camp and taking them hostage. Unfortunately, the group was ambushed and killed by a group of Manymouths before reaching the camp. Not knowing what happened to Lopez and the group, the Supremacists have spent the last few days waiting for news. Now they are done waiting and are ready to strike at the plant.

The heroes' first order of business is to repair the plant and keep it running. The heroes can do this by rolling Repair and accumulating five successes (each raise counts as a success). Each Repair roll represents a hero working a full day on repair activities. Collaborative rolls are possible. Once the heroes have the plant running, at least one person has to stay at the plant full-time and keep it running by making a Repair roll with a +2 bonus. If the roll is failed, the plant breaks down again, and has to be repaired as above.

When the heroes are ready to follow the trail of the crew, draw a card and compare it to the encounters on the Jungle Encounters section on page 115. If the card comes up a nine, a face card or a Joker, ignore it and draw again.

The heroes' second encounter is the Lair of the Manymouths (see encounter Nine in the Jungle Encounters section on page 116). The bodies in the lair are the bodies of the four plant crewmembers. One of them (Lopez) has a long-distance communicator set on a frequency through which the heroes can listen to the Supremacists. With the communicator, the heroes can gather that a group of terrorists is approaching the plant to finally take it, while another group is in their camp about a day away. The heroes can also talk to the Supremacists if they want.

The heroes must decide how to proceed. If one of them stayed behind at the plant, he or she will most likely be sieged by the Supremacists approaching the plant. On the other hand, if the Supremacists remaining at the camp detect the heroes (maybe if they use the communicator) they will immediately close in on them and try to stop them before they reach the plant.

If the Supremacists manage to take the plant, they will immediately stop its systems, rig it with explosives and broadcast their threats to both Suarez and Maytown. Most likely the heroes are in the best position to retake the plant from its captors.

Remember that the heroes most likely have penalties due to the planetary environment of Logan's End (see page *Planetary Environments* in the *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*) and their enemies don't.

- **Suarez Supremacists (five per hero and Ally):** Use Stats for Typical Mesh Trooper, with the Woodsman Edge.
- **Suarez Supremacist Leaders (2):** Use Stats for Veteran Mesh Trooper, with the Woodsman Edge.

TREASURE HUNT!

Where: Logan's End

The heroes are approached by renowned historian and archeologist Dr. Ralph Lombardi with a request for help. Lombardi has spent years investigating the diaries and records of Jeffrey Logan, the billionaire playboy who was the first human to visit the planet and who gave Logan's End its name. Logan's 2168 expedition was lost and never found, but after studying several obscure notes from the operation's planning phase Lombardi believes he knows the path the billionaire and his team took. If the remains of Logan's expedition could be found, both the story and the items rescued would be invaluable. Lombardi offers the heroes part of the credit if they manage the expedition with him.

Unfortunately, Lombardi's former partner and now enemy, Dr. Simon Vondrazek, has been tipped of Lombardi's find and is trying to reach the remains of Logan's expedition first. He has contacted the Dark Claws to stop Lombardi.

As the heroes and Lombardi travel to the city of St. James (starting point of the original Logan expedition) and then enter the jungle following Lombardi's clues, they are incessantly pursued by Dr. Vondrazek and the Dark Claws goons intent on stopping them.

As the heroes move through the jungle, draw a card for each day of travel. If the card is of the black suit, compare it to the list on the Jungle Encounters section on page 115. If the card comes up a face card or a Joker the heroes have found the remains of the Logan expedition. Make sure the Dark Claws appear in the worst possible moments.

At the lost expedition site, the heroes not only find the bodies of Jeffrey Logan and his team, but also footage of their final moments as they are torn to shreds by a pack of Bodymouths. If Vondrazek and his goons have not been dealt with yet, they appear just in time for a final battle for Logan's valuable remains.

- **Dr. Ralph Lombardi:** Use stats for Civilian with a Knowledge (Science) d10.
- **Dr. Simon Vondrazek:** Use stats for Civilian with Agility d8, Knowledge (Science) d10, Shooting d10, and Intimidation d10.
- **Dark Claws (4 per hero):** Use Stats for Typical Mesh Trooper.

BITE-SIZED ADVENTURES

Here are some short ideas for you to flesh out, should you have the inclination:

- **Ship Troubles:** Space trips are long, and never more so than on the route to Logan's End. It is precisely on these sort of trips when things may start breaking down. First, the ship's G-Gym leaves a hero stranded in rotation around the ship, with the connecting cord about to break! Then, the ship's Virtual Therapist starts behaving strangely, and shares the confidential information he is told. Is this all a coincidence? Or is some kind of sabotage going on?
- **Take Care of This for Me:** As millions try to evacuate Concordia or Apollo in preparation for the impending Devourer invasion, a fellow Circle officer and close friend of the heroes asks for a favor: He wants the heroes to take her ten-year-old boy with them on their ship and deliver him to his father. Should the heroes accept, they now have a new, young crewmember to take care of. The young boy is helpful but inexperienced, and gets the heroes into trouble more often than not. However, as the heroes end up battling several teams of enemies looking to kill or kidnap the boy, they slowly discover that his father has become involved in something dangerous. The young boy might also become a player character, with the Young Hindrance.

handouts

The following are handouts and dispatches to be given to the players during the campaign.

PLAYER HANDOUT #1

BRAWL AT POPULAR DRINKING SPOT ATTRIBUTED TO 'GHOST SHIP' TALL TALE

Providence, Logan's End – Yesterday's larger-than-usual bar brawl at the well-known Providence bar "Fearless," which ended up with four injured and eight arrested, was sparked by a discussion about a 'ghost ship' story.

Melonia Ferrato, owner of Fearless Bar, explained that a merchant crew recently arrived from space caused the fracas by telling the story.

"They looked shaken and scared, and were obviously drunk," Ms. Ferrato declared. "One of them then began shouting that in their last trip they had come across and destroyed a 'ghost ship,' a ship that came out of nowhere in the depths of space, from a place called 'Chrysalis.' Or something."

According to Ms. Ferrato the story of the 'ghost ship' from the place with the strange name caused hilarity in Fearless' customers, who promptly began teasing and laughing at the merchants, who responded first with insults and then with violence. Then fighting erupted.

Local police have arrested the most likely instigators of the violence, including the five members of the merchant crew who started the story. They have been identified as Kevin Windon, Hassan Leova, Gerardo Bevard, Doug O'Malley and Oliver Sarria. Their ship is known as the Aurora Borealis and indeed it has recently parked in one of the orbital spots of Logan's End.

Ms. Ferrato has stated that she will not press charges. It is unknown whether the police will charge the suspects or if they will be set free soon.

NEWS DISPATCH #7

.:NEWS DISPATCH:.

Apollo – Concordia has been destroyed. Although escaping ships could not scan the planet's surface, it is believed that it was bombed as thoroughly as Nouvelle Vie and Bay Jing were. The chances of survivors are thus negligible.

The only significant remaining fleet in human space is the one that protects Earth. This means Apollo is practically undefended.

There is no word yet on when the Devourers will leave Epsilon Eridani and move towards our planet.

NEWS DISPATCH #5

.:NEWS DISPATCH:.

Concordia — The trap set up by Concordia's defenders at the jump point between Concordia's and Bay Jing's star systems failed to stop the Devourers, who are on the move and approaching our planet.

Concordian Military Forces devoted significant amounts of resources to placing explosive mines next to the the jump point between Epsilon Eridani and Omicron 2 Eridani, in the hope of destroying or disabling as many Devourer ships as possible as soon as they made the jump. It is unknown if the aliens are affected by Jump Disorientation like humans.

Unfortunately, our correspondents report, the trap did not do any significant damage to the enemy.

"Their ships are built of a material that is beyond the toughness and radiation protection of anything we know," reported a military expert with knowledge of the situation. "The levels of heat and energy absorption they can handle are beyond anything we have seen or conceived."

Conditions in Melissant and other major Concordian cities are rapidly deteriorating, as supplies dwindle and authority disappears. Whole districts have descended into chaos.

The entire Concordian fleet, supported by the remains of Circle forces, is on its way to meet the enemy halfway between the jump point and the planet. The engagement should start within the day.

NEWS DISPATCH #8

.:NEWS DISPATCH:.

Apollo – The Devourers are on the move again. They should be in the Epsilon Indi star system in days, two weeks at the most.

We cannot stop them. We cannot evacuate.

Someone, please help us.

NEWS DISPATCH #9

.:NEWS DISPATCH:.

Apollo – They are here.

[Transcript of private video message sent by Epsilon Leader Trevor Antoine, Circle HQ, Concordia]

[VIDEO MESSAGE BEGINS]

[*A haggard Trevor Antoine appears on the screen, standing in full Circle military uniform in his office. The skyline of Concordia, covered in dark smoke, is seen through the window behind him. Antoine looks at the camera*]

"This time you will finally get rid of me" [*Fleeting smile*] "We all knew this, we just refused to accept it. We are as much a threat to the Devourers as a housefly is to us. Any of our modern soldiers can effortlessly disable an early-21st warrior, and that is with just a two-hundred-year head start. These aliens are tens of thousands of years or more beyond us. There is simply no contest."

"I will lead the Circle fleet to support Concordian efforts in the defense of Concordia. And conventional military forces will give their lives at Apollo and then at Earth, but I'll be frank. We will not stop them. We will not even slow them down. Unless something changes radically, we will go extinct."

"We have also tried to contact them in every way they can. We have broadcast our unconditional surrender a thousand times. We don't know if they get our messages or not, or if they understand them. It seems they have not bothered to reply."

[*Antoine's face changes into an expression of disgust*]

"We have begged the N'ahili to support us, intercede for us. But those bastards don't seem to care. The human species is about to die and we still don't understand what those blowfish are all about."

"But I'm rambling. In short, this will not be won by force, not unless conditions change. Which brings me to you. Your mission provides our best hope for our survival, slim a hope as it sounds."

"You may be asking yourselves, how do I know? Why do I have so much faith in you? Well..."

[*Antoine pauses and takes a deep breath*]

"Since the Circle was founded, we have believed it would prove its worth in a 'moment of truth,' a defining moment when our purpose would be perfectly clear. This belief comes down from our founder, William Donovan, himself. We have always thought our moment of truth had been our response to the comet crash on Earth in 2133...I now believe we were wrong. THIS is the Circle's real moment of truth. I therefore believe it is NOW when the Circle, through you, will prove its worth to humanity."

[*Antoine sighs*]

"I'm taking an StO shuttle to my ship, and then to engage the enemy. We will not see each other again. I wish you the best."

"Humanity does not deserve oblivion. Hopefully you will make us avoid that fate."

[*Antoine gives a final smile*]

[VIDEO MESSAGE ENDS]

SEVEN WORLDS



5. CHRYSALIS

introduction

IT IS NOT IN THE STARS TO HOLD OUR DESTINY BUT IN OURSELVES.

—WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Welcome to the fifth module in the *Seven Worlds* campaign! This epic, unforgettable odyssey places the heroes at the center of the greatest conflict humanity has ever seen, and puts its future in their hands.

At its heart, the story told in the *Seven Worlds* campaign is a tragedy, the story of the annihilation of humanity by forces far beyond its comprehension, and of a few heroes' efforts to turn back the tide. Other campaign's measure of success is the answer to the question "Did we win?" In this campaign, success or failure is measured in the answer to a different question: "Did we survive?"

This adventure continues where *Broken Circle*, the fourth *Seven Worlds* campaign adventure, left off. It is assumed you've already played that adventure before starting this one, but if you haven't you will still find lots of interesting and challenging scenarios for you and your players to enjoy!

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

This section gives a short overview of the *Seven Worlds* Campaign up until this point.

WHAT'S HAPPENED BEFORE

A Mysterious Encounter, the introductory adventure included in the *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*, told the story of a group of Circle officers who, while on a routine patrol next to the frontier planet of Nouvelle Vie, witness the appearance of a strange alien ship and see its awesome destructive power. As a result, the heroes were sent to Concordia, one of the most powerful planets in the Seven Worlds, and the headquarters of the Circle, to report on what they saw.

In *Rumors of War*, the heroes travelled to Concordia and met Epsilon Leader Antoine, leader of the Circle. Antoine told the heroes that the Psion Brotherhood had been secretly interested in these strange ship sightings, and asked them to go to Brotherhood Headquarters on Earth and request information on the sighting from the Brotherhood, using official channels. Antoine also asked the heroes to investigate the mysterious disappearance of Dr. Luis LaMarche, a renowned scientist from Earth.

While attending Concordia's Centenary Celebration, the heroes became involved in a terrorist attack that ended with the successful assassination of Governor Selnes, the leader of Bay Jing. Since Bay Jing and Concordia were bitter rivals, this assassination sparked the beginnings of an interstellar war.

When the heroes arrived at Earth, they met the emissary of the mysterious alien benefactors known as the N'ahili. They also met the leaders of the Psion Brotherhood, including the famous Ganendra Nathan, but failed to get any clues to the identity of the mysterious alien ship they saw. Finally, they get to investigate Dr. LaMarche's disappearance and discovered he had been working on unspecified "improvements" to the Stellar Communications Network, the main technology that allowed the Seven Worlds to communicate.

In *Divided We Fall*, the heroes returned to Circle Headquarters in Concordia and were sent undercover to investigate a curious deployment of ships made by the Concordian fleet as part of their war with Bay Jing. An unlikely discovery ended with the heroes carrying information on a top-secret Concordian plan that could ruthlessly allow them to win the war in a single stroke.

By the end of that adventure the heroes were in Nouvelle Vie again, where the bulk of the Concordian and Bay Jingnian fleets were about to meet in battle. At this point a fleet of mysterious alien ships materialized and completely destroyed both fleets. Simultaneously, the entire Stellar Communications Network mysteriously crashed, thus isolating the Seven Worlds. The heroes barely escaped with their lives and flew towards Concordia, carrying a desperate cry for help against an invader more powerful than all of them.

In *Into the Fire*, several months had passed since the fall of the Concordian and Bay Jingnian fleets at Nouvelle Vie, and humanity was fighting a losing war against the alien invaders now known as the Devourers. An anxious Epsilon Leader Antoine knew conventional means will not stop these aliens, and

asked the heroes to go on a long-shot mission to find an alternative way to stop them.

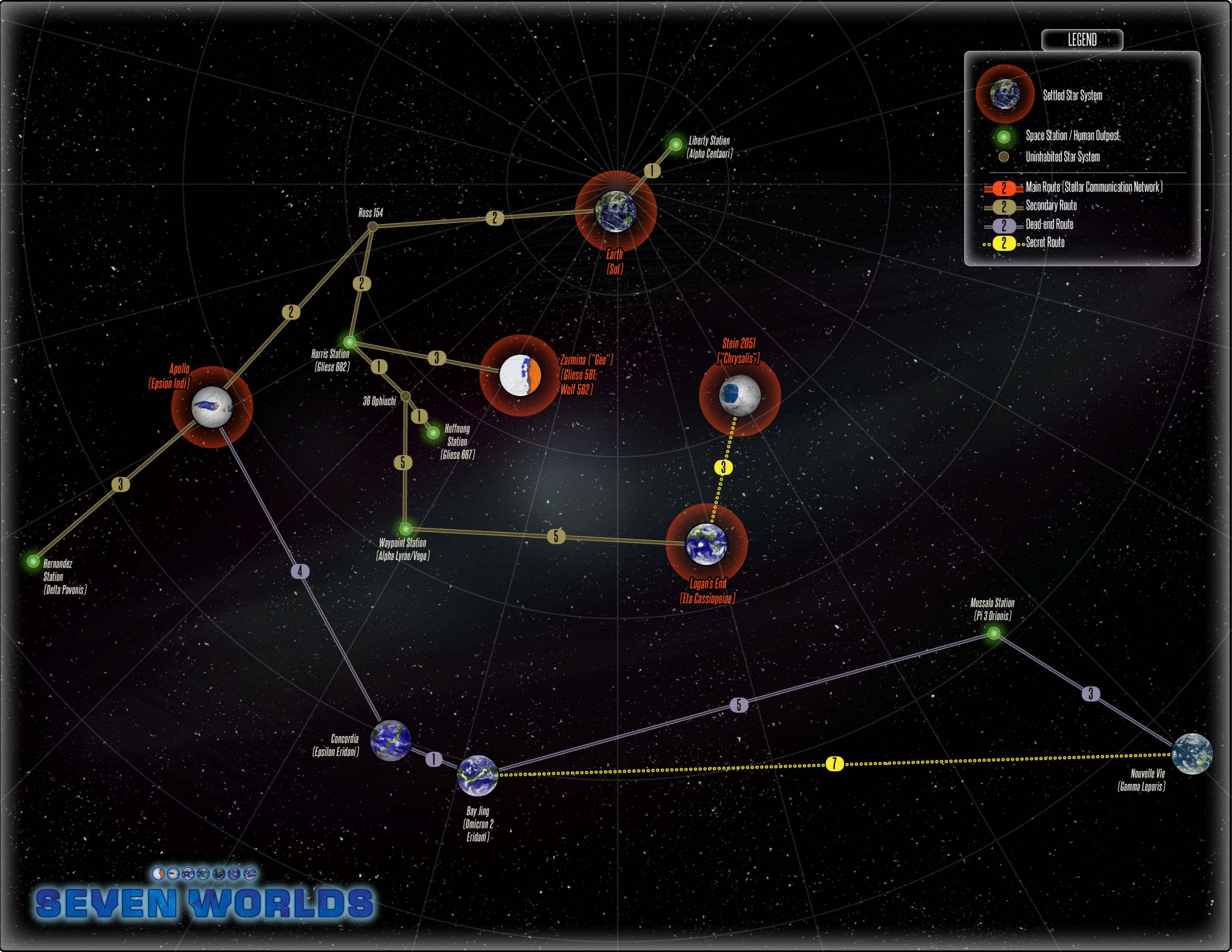
Following an anonymous tip, the heroes travelled to Apollo and became embroiled in a political war between various corporations. To solve the situation, the heroes had to storm a faraway research facility that had been taken over by terrorists. One of these terrorists had a clue the heroes needed, a strange story and the name of an unknown place: Chrysalis. Apparently this place had something to do with Logan's End, the farthest and least civilized of the Seven Worlds.

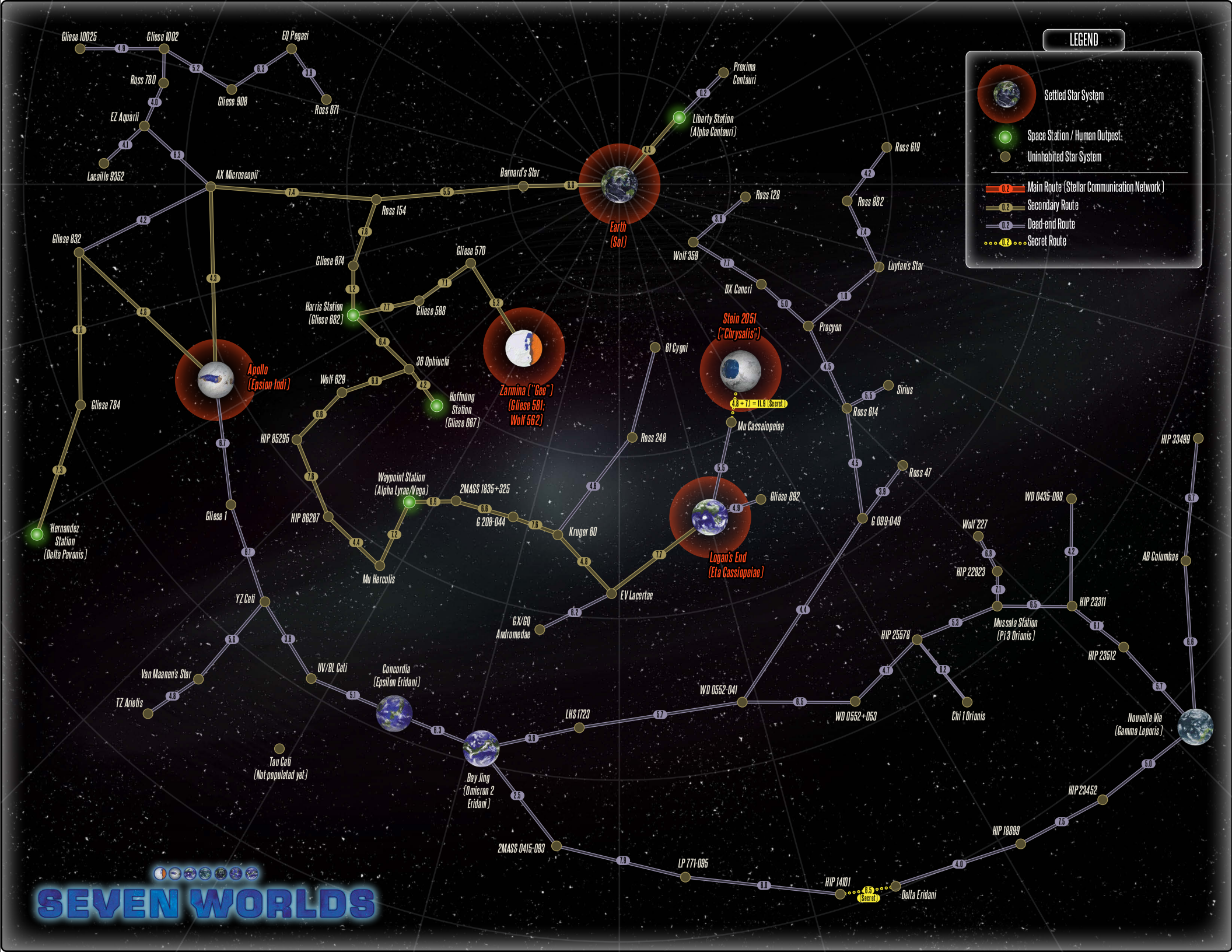
In *Broken Circle* the heroes followed a report suggesting the elusive Dr. LaMarche was on Harris Station, and finally learn the secret he had obtained at such a great cost. It turned out LaMarche had discovered that the Stellar Communications Network was going to be sabotaged from within at the orders of the Psion Brotherhood. He also told the heroes the orders came from close to Logan's End. To escape, the heroes had to survive a major space battle against an enemy willing to do anything to keep LaMarche's secret from getting out.

As the rest of human space continued to fall to the Devourers, the heroes reached Logan's End and followed up on the only clue to Chrysalis, the sad story of a failing smuggler crew that died several years ago. Before the adventure was over the heroes had crisscrossed the planet and become involved in a rescue mission in the deep, savage jungles of Logan's End. The reward for a successful rescue: The coordinates of the mysterious Chrysalis.

WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW

After many adventures the heroes finally make it to Chrysalis and find the Eighth World, a strange planet populated by Psions. There they learn that the Psion Brotherhood is planning to hide here while the Devourers annihilate humanity. As the heroes attempt to overturn the political status quo of the planet, they discover another secret the Psion Brotherhood has been working hard to keep hidden: the existence of a psionic power that can stop the Devourers once and for all!


LEGEND
Settled Star System
Space Station / Human Outpost
Uninhabited Star System
2 Main Route (Stellar Communication Network)
2 Secondary Route
2 Dead-end Route
2 Secret Route
Liberty Station (Alpha Centauri)
Earth (Sol)
Ross 154
Harris Station (Gliese 682)
Apollo (Epsion Indi)
Zarmina ("Gee") (Gliese 581, Wolf 562)
36 Ophiuchi
Hoffnung Station (Gliese 667)
Stein 2051 ("Chrysalis")
Waypoint Station (Alpha Lyrae/Vega)
Hernandez Station (Delta Pavonis)
Logan's End (Eta Cassiopeiae)
Mussala Station (Pi 3 Orionis)
Concordia (Epsilon Eridani)
Bay Jing (Omicron 2 Eridani)
Nouvelle Vie (Gamma Leporis)
SEVEN WORLDS


LEGEND
Settled Star System
Space Station / Human Outpost
Uninhabited Star System
Main Route (Stellar Communication Network)
Secondary Route
Dead-end Route
Secret Route
Gliese 10025
Gliese 1002
EQ Pegasi
Ross 780
Gliese 908
Ross 671
EZ Aquarii
Lacaille 8352
AX Microscopii
Proxima Centauri
Liberty Station (Alpha Centauri)
Barnard's Star
Earth (Sol)
Ross 154
Gliese 832
Gliese 674
Gliese 570
Harris Station (Gliese 862)
Gliese 588
Apollo (Epsion Indi)
Zarmina ("Gee") (Gliese 581; Wolf 562)
38 Ophiuchi
Wolf 629
Hoffnung Station (Gliese 667)
Gliese 784
HIP 85295
Ross 128
Wolf 359
Ross 619
Ross 882
Luyten's Star
DX Cancri
Procyon
Stein 2051 ("Chrysalis")
4.8 + 7.1 = 11.9 (Secret)
61 Cygni
Ross 248
Mu Cassiopeiae
Sirius
Ross 614
Ross 47
G 099-049
Gliese 892
Logan's End (Eta Cassiopeiae)
Kruger 60
EV Lacertae
GX/GQ Andromedae
Waypoint Station (Alpha Lyrae/Vega)
2MASS 1835+325
G 208-044
HIP 86287
Mu Herculis
Gliese 1
Hernandez Station (Delta Pavonis)
YZ Ceti
Van Maanen's Star
TZ Arietis
UV/BL Ceti
Concordia (Epsilon Eridani)
Tau Ceti (Not populated yet)
Bay Jing (Omicron 2 Eridani)
LHS 1723
WD 0552-041
WD 0552+053
HIP 25578
Chi 1 Orionis
Wolf 227
HIP 22923
Mussala Station (Pi 3 Orionis)
HIP 23311
WD 0435-088
HIP 23512
AB Columbae
HIP 33499
Nouvelle Vie (Gamma Leporis)
HIP 23452
HIP 18899
2MASS 0415-093
LP 771-095
HIP 14101
3.5 (Secret)
Delta Eridani
SEVEN WORLDS

chrysalis

This adventure begins when the heroes are finally ready to face the mysteries of Chrysalis.

SCENE 1: THE TRIP

In order to reach Chrysalis, the heroes have to jump to the Mu Casseiopeiae star system and then travel to the first secret jump point using the coordinates provided by Ellie Vince.

If the heroes try to figure out their destination based on the two sets of jump coordinates, explain to them that jump coordinates are relative to each jump; it is therefore not possible to know in advance where an unknown set of coordinates will lead. Even so, smart heroes who look at the 3-D map might figure out that Stein 2051 is their most likely destination. If the heroes ask for information on Stein 2051, tell them that it is a small red dwarf star, incapable of having Earth-like planets and thus considered unsuitable for colonization. It is about 12 light-years from Mu Casseiopeiae, and thus considered unreachable using current jump point technology. Nothing else is known about the star. Once the heroes reach Stein 2051 give each of them a free Benny for having deduced their destination was this star system.

When the heroes jump for the first time they find themselves in deep space, far from any star system. Supposedly jump point membranes are connected to gravity points, that being one of the reasons they are usually about 1AU away from major stars. However, it is theoretically possible to have a jump point far from a star if there is a gravitational well close to it, such as a small black hole. In fact, if a hero spends one full week of investigation and research in this location and then makes a successful Knowledge (Science) roll, he or she discovers a very small black hole about 1.2 AUs from the heroes' current location.

UPDATED MAPS

The following maps show how the *Seven Worlds* stand at this point. Note the following significant differences with the map of the previous adventure:

- The path between Gamma Leporis (Nouvelle Vie) and Epsilon Indi (Apollo) is now marked as a Dead-end line. This is because all human civilization there has been wiped out by the Devourer invasion.
- A red line from Mu Casseiopeiae shows the new jump route to Chrysalis.

If you are using the 3-D maps, this might be a good opportunity to show the heroes the updated map this adventure, explaining that since the Stellar Comm Network has permanently crashed, most routes between planets are now in a different color.

AMBUSHED!

When the heroes make the second jump, read or paraphrase the following:

As soon as you complete the jump all the alerts in the ship light up! "Uh oh," exclaims [the pilot hero's Assistant]. "Are you sure this is where we want to be?"

As you stare at the 3-D image created by your lenses, you are astounded to see dozens of warships, all of them pointed towards the jump point through which you just arrived. The ships are both manned and unmanned, from patrol ships to battleships, and with EarthGov, Concordian and Bay Jingnian ship configurations. How can this be?

There is not much time to ponder this, though, as you're immediately attacked! A barrage of lasers and missiles flies towards your ship!

Remember to have all heroes roll for Jump Disorientation (see *Space Travel* in the *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*). Heroes who are not affected by Jump Disorientation must roll to avoid being Surprised.

The heroes' ship and the enemy ships begin battle one SU away, facing each other. Don't bother placing enemy ships individually. Place instead just one token to mark the entire enemy fleet.

The enemy begins by firing three Heavy Laser cannon attacks from an Unmanned Laser Platform. Resolve this attack and then read or paraphrase the following:

You receive an audio-only transmission from the enemy fleet. A dark, emotionless male voice says "I expect you to surrender. If you don't, you will die. If you do, you might live."

Since all enemies have the Gunner Edge in this battle, try to modify the Critical Hits to cripple the heroes' ship but not destroy it. The goal is to capture the heroes alive.

If the heroes attack, assume there is one Unmanned Laser Platform, one Unmanned Missile Platform, and one Battleship at the enemy location. Since the enemy forces are immense, if any enemy ship falls it is immediately "replaced" by another one.

The enemy will keep attacking every round until the heroes' ship is either disabled or the heroes surrender. If the heroes decide to surrender, remember to give each of them a Benny as a reward for their frustration.

- **Unmanned Laser Platform (infinite):** For this combat assume they have the Gunner Edge (see *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*).
- **Unmanned Missile Platform (infinite):** For this combat assume they have the Gunner Edge (see *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*).
- **Battleship (infinite):** For this combat assume they have the Gunner Edge (see *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*).

CHRYSALIS, THE EIGHTH WORLD

By far the strangest planet in human space, Chrysalis is also its most closely guarded secret. Known only to some members of the Psion Brotherhood, it is part of Ganendra Nathan's ambitious plan to move psions onward to their final destiny… whether they want it or not.

DESCRIPTION

Chrysalis is the Eighth World. A settled planet orbiting the Stein 2051 star system, it is almost completely populated by psions, settled by the Psion Brotherhood.

Stein 2051 is a binary star system composed of two red dwarfs. The main star, Stein 2051A, has a quarter of the mass of our sun and just 1.5% its brightness. Out of five planets orbiting the star, Chrysalis is the closest, at a little more than a tenth of the distance from our Earth to our Sun. At this distance, Chrysalis is a tidelocked world, a world that always shows the same face to the star, and thus has a "light" and a "dark" side.

However, due to a curious set of circumstances, Chrysalis is also an "Eyeball Earth," so named because it is completely covered in ice except for a large circular area in the center of its light side, where the energy of the star has melted the ice. Inside this "iris" of water there are several island formations, arranged in a rough semi-circle a few hundred kilometers from the center of the "pupil," where humans have settled the planet. The largest of these islands is simply known as Michaels Island.

HANDLING FRUSTRATED PLAYERS

The heroes are walking into a trap they cannot hope to win. Help the players come to terms with the idea that being captured and interrogated is a necessary part of the plot. We suggest you have a chat with your players before running this section, to let them know that they are expected to fail, at least at the beginning. Also reward them with Bennies for surrendering when appropriate. See the *Seven Worlds Setting Guide* for more suggestions on how to handle these scenarios.

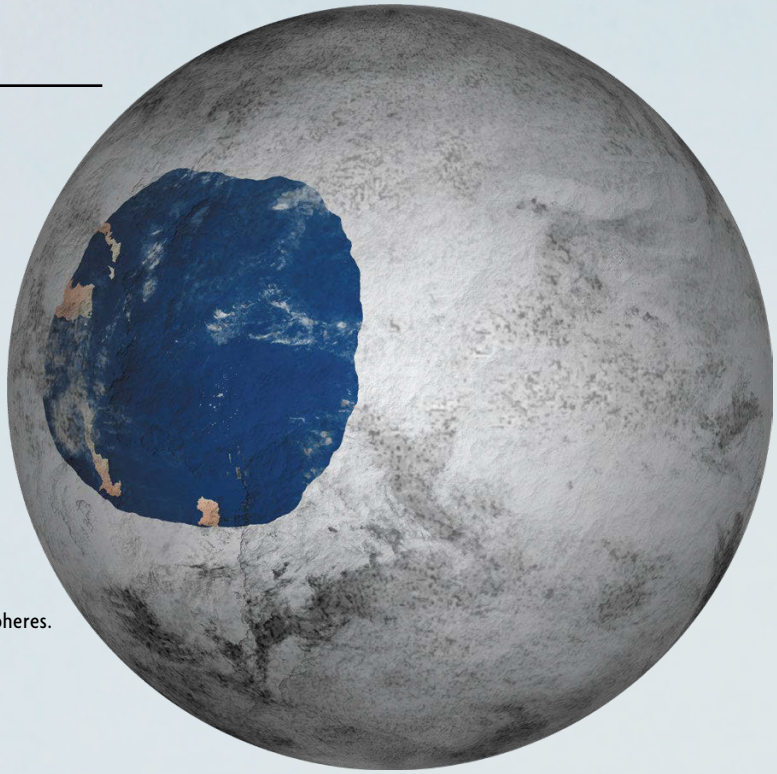
In the area around Michaels Island, the average temperature is about seven degrees Celsius. This, coupled with Chrysalis' gravity of 0.94G, would seem to make it an ideal place for humans, despite the fact that the planet orbits a Red Dwarf. However, the atmosphere of Chrysalis is not breathable by humans, composed as it is of large quantities of carbon dioxide. The fact that Michaels Island is on the permanent light side of the planet also makes standard food production processes such as photosynthesis impossible. The psion settlers of Chrysalis have solved this by living in domed cities and environments fed by the energy from large fusion reactors. The domes also provide protection against solar radiation.

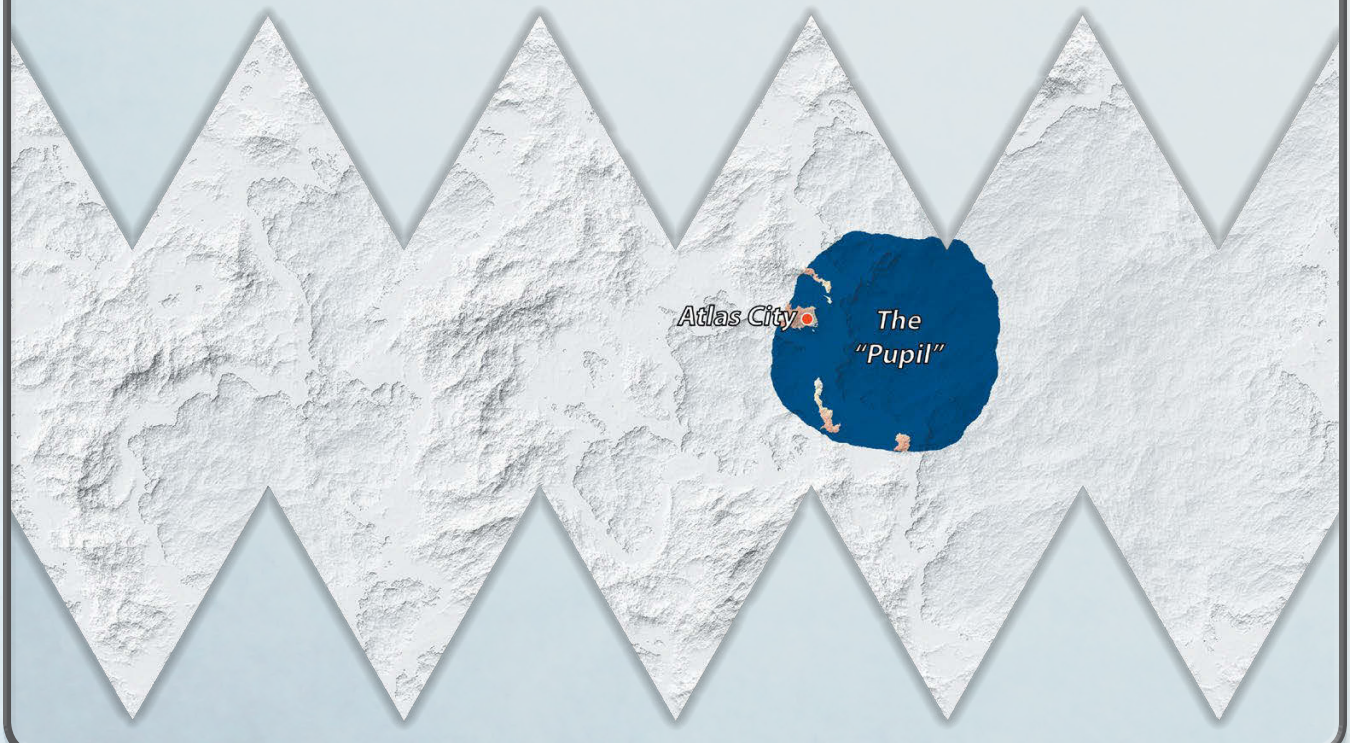
Inside the domes of Atlas City, the only city on Chrysalis, there is a human-breathable atmosphere. The dome walls project an artificial day and night reminiscent of Earth. Houses, parks, and even ponds surround the half a million inhabitants of Atlas City. These marvels are possible because of the constant output of nuclear fusion generators run using fuel collected from the star system, as well as new experimental technologies that are collecting the energy created by the tidal forces on the planet, detected through changing ocean currents. Even so, the leaders of Chrysalis recognize energy shortages as the greatest future obstacle for the growth of the colony.

Outside the city domes humans need full spacesuits to travel. Everything always looks dark red in the infrared light from Stein 2051. Special biologically designed plants, with black tones to absorb as much infrared light as possible in a process reminiscent of photosynthesis, are being tested by Dr. Oren Graham, leader of the colony scientists. It is dangerous to venture too far away from the city without

CRYSALIS SYSTEM DATAFILE

Star: Stein 2051
Star Class: M4V
Distance from Sun (direct line): 18.06ly
Distance from Sun (jump points): 18 jumps, 111.1ly
Mass: 0.25 sol
Luminosity: 0.015 sol
Star System: 5 planets (1 eyeball earth, 4 ice planets), 1 moons, 2 moonlets, 1 asteroid belt.
Habitable Planet: Stein 2051 I (Chrysalis)
Distance from star: 0.11 AU
Perihelion/Aphelion: 0.11/0.12 AU
Axial Tilt: 12 degrees
Annual Period: 0.074 years/tidelocked
Local day: NA
Diameter: 10,901 kms (0.85 times Earth)
Surface Gravity: 0.94 g
Density: 1.1 Earth
Illumination: 9% Earth
Temperature: 7C average (40C dayside, -49 nightside)
Atmosphere: N2, O2, barely breathable traces, 0.85 atmospheres.
Water: 69% of planet
Satellites: one tiny rock moon.
Average Population Growth Rate: 1.5% per year
Present Population Growth Rate: 1.5% per year
Industries: NA.





appropriate equipment and crawlers (or submarines, outside the island). Due to the differential heating between the sides of this tidally locked planet, a permanent gale and torrential rain on the dark side of the planet affects the weather as one moves farther away from Michaels Island. Leaving atmospheric scans aside, most of Chrysalis remains unexplored by human beings.

A major terraforming project to modify the atmosphere is in the works, based on the introduction of specially-designed microorganisms that can thrive in Chrysalis' atmosphere and slowly modify it. As expected, this is a risky and complex endeavor. Releasing the technology will take years; seeing the final result decades or centuries. Several test microorganisms have already been released as Dr. Graham and his teams of scientists continue their research.

Chrysalis has a single moon, Köenig. Besides causing frequent eclipses as its path intersects that of Stein 2051A, Köenig is considered the stellar body that has allowed Chrysalis to become what it is in terms of atmosphere and temperature, by applying tidal forces to the planet.

HISTORY

Since the time of Daniel Michaels and the founding of the Psion Brotherhood, some psions have been secretly convinced of their superiority over non-psions, and dreamt of a place to call their own. Some whisper that Michaels himself secretly had this dream. In any case, the search for a place where psions can live on their own has been a secret psion project for a long time.

Then around 2190 a psion agent stumbled on an interesting discovery: An astrophysicist from Concordia had discovered a way to get to the far-away star system of Stein 2051 using two consecutive jump points held together by a small black hole. On top of that, he seemed to have discovered a *human-habitable* planet on Stein 2051!

Stein 2051 is a red dwarf system about 12 light-years from the closest star reachable by humans. Given that the maximum jump distance possible is 8 light-years, Stein 2051 is supposedly "impossible" to reach. Of course, no one could have imagined a two-jump trip to this star.

The psion agents wasted no time at all: They gleaned this information from the scientist and eliminated him, along with his research. Now the Psion Brotherhood had exclusive access to an "unreachable" star system with a habitable, if strange, planet.

When Ganendra Nathan became Leader of the Brotherhood he immediately understood the importance and value of Chrysalis. The colonization of Chrysalis began in 2196, and within the decade a quarter of a million psions had been secretly resettled to the planet.

Settlers were warned that they were going on a mission that would take them away from their families for years, maybe forever. No one outside Chrysalis knows where the settlers are, nor even that they are settlers. Most family members have been told they have been assigned to secret multi-year missions "elsewhere". In reality, settlers are first taken to the Psion Brotherhood's Research Center in Armstrong, on the planet Gee, where they undergo training and preparation for their future life. Once they arrive at Chrysalis, settlers are still allowed to send periodic messages to their families outside, but these are carefully screened and edited before transmission, to make sure they avoid revealing or suggesting where they are.

Currently, Chrysalis has a population of 483,000 psions, out of which 53,000 are native. Most of those newborns have psionic powers, but a few (approximately 5%) do not. These are considered cripples and second-class citizens by most members of Chrysalis society, and have very difficult lives.

All the inhabitants of Chrysalis are aware of the fact that they are creating an independent society with no contact with non-psions (except for native non-psions). While some of them are not wholly convinced of the wisdom of this course, all of them trust and care for the Brotherhood and have faith in Ganendra Nathan, and thus support the Chrysalis Project.

There are some things, however, that very few people in Chrysalis know about.

CHRYSALIS AND PLANETARY ENVIRONMENTS

The addition of Chrysalis adds the following options to the Planetary Environments table from page 127 of the Setting Guide:

- If you're visiting Chrysalis and are from Zarmina or Logan's End, use these tags: CH, TD, LG.
- If you're visiting Chrysalis and are from any planet but Zarmina or Logan's End, then the following planetary conditions apply: CH, TD.
- If you're from Chrysalis and are visiting any other world but Zarmina, the following tags apply: TB
- If you're from Chrysalis and are visiting Zarmina, the following tags apply: HG.

THE SECRETS OF CHRYSALIS

The Psion Brotherhood has been actively working to hasten the fall of human civilization. In fact, besides a handful of leaders, no one in Chrysalis knows that the Stellar Communications Network has fallen at the hands of the Psion Brotherhood itself. If the average citizen of Chrysalis knew that humanity is under attack by the Devourers, many of them would demand to participate in the defense of humanity.

Thus after the events of *Divided We Fall*, the leaders of Chrysalis have imposed a news blackout from outside Stein 2051. For the last few months almost no ships have arrived from human space, other than ships on official business, and no messages in or out have been allowed. Newly-arrived psion citizens have been subjected to particularly drastic uses of the *greater forget* power to keep secret the events of the last few months. Those unwilling or unable to undergo *greater forget* have simply been eliminated.

The sparks of underground rebellion have started to flare in Chrysalis, however. And the arrival of the heroes with their precious information can change the balance of power on the planet and the future of humanity.

CITIES AND LOCATIONS

The main locations in Chrysalis are:

- **Atlas City:** Named for the Greek god of endurance, Atlas City would be considered the most innovative and advanced city in the Seven Worlds, if it were known outside Chrysalis. Built in the center of Michaels Island, and composed of several huge interconnected domes built with light reflective nanotube-based materials, it is home to practically every human being on the planet. A city designed by and for psions, many of its devices would be foreign to non-psions. For example, most communication is telepathic. Doors have internal bolts that can only be moved by using the *telekinesis* power to move the bolt. One dome houses the Psion Brotherhood Headquarters. From here, the Governor of Chrysalis manages the city and the planet. The Psion Brotherhood dome is connected to the largest dome in the city, known as "Ark Dome." This is basically a zoo where most species from Earth are kept in simulated environments.
- **Orbital Station Psi:** More of a war and defense station than a civilian one, Orbital Station Psi is also the place where spaceships dock before taking a Surface-to-Orbit shuttle to the city. Given the hundreds of ships in permanent orbit around the planet, Orbital Station Psi is responsible for maintaining and coordinating activity on all parked ships, and making sure they are in top shape should they be needed in an emergency.

PERSONALITIES

The main personalities in Chrysalis are:

- **Marcel Coban:** The Chief of Security of the Psion Brotherhood, and one of Ganendra Nathan's closest associates, was named Governor of Chrysalis by Nathan himself a few weeks before the fall of Nouvelle Vie. He is in charge of preserving the status quo. He also keeps other, darker secrets for Nathan. His greatest challenge currently is trying to uncover and capture the Chrysalis Resistance, a local group intent on sabotaging the Brotherhood's plans and rejoining non-psions. The heroes met Marcel Coban in *Rumors of War*.
- **Admiral Viktor Karragan:** The top military commander in Chrysalis, Viktor Karragan is a cruel, emotionless man, completely dedicated to the cause of psion superiority. Having spent many years in Chrysalis, Karragan deeply resents Nathan's decision to place Marcel Coban as Governor of Chrysalis, and considers Coban an incompetent civilian. Karragan is content to let Coban play at Governor while he takes on the hard work of protecting Chrysalis from both external and internal threats. He is particularly focused on rooting out the Resistance, who he believes will sow the seeds of rebellion in the population if they are not dealt with.
- **Ryan:** The leader of the Resistance keeps his real identity a mystery. Ryan knows the goal of the Brotherhood is to sever ties to non-psion humanity, and disagrees with this. He is surprised at the obstinacy of his leaders on this point, and realizes something darker is going on, but has not been able to find out what it is. He and others like him have created an organization that is trying to find out what is going on and to change the minds of his government and the population, hopefully without resorting to force. Recently Ryan has recruited a new, young female lieutenant who has brought several fresh ideas and initiatives to the Resistance.
- **Dr. Oren Graham:** The top scientist in Chrysalis has led the teams that were responsible for most of the breakthroughs that make Chrysalis livable. From dome construction to energy management and collection, Dr. Graham's impact is everywhere. While he officially leads several critical projects on development, biological research and energy collection (including the planetary terraforming mega-project), for decades he has also managed a top-secret project housed under one of the secret domes next to the Brotherhood HQ. Only Graham and a few trusted aides know what this project is all about.

CHRYSALIS: LIFE ON A RED DWARF?

Type-M red dwarfs comprise approximately 70% of the stellar population of the galaxy and are by far the most common types of stars that surround us. Small and weak, with about a tenth the size and one ten-thousandth the power of the sun, their lifetime is measured at between 100 billion and a trillion years. They are of interest to scientists because recent findings from NASA's Kepler mission show that at least half of these stars host rocky planets from half to four times the mass of Earth.

Red dwarfs are so weak that a planet orbiting them would have to be very close to receive a significant amount of light and energy. At this distance, such a planet would be tidally locked, with one "day" side always facing the star and the other submerged in perpetual night.

There are many, many problems with such a planet supporting life as we know it around such a star. For starters, most planets around a red dwarf would have their "atmosphere" frozen, accumulating in the dark side of the planet. Another challenge is that light in red dwarfs concentrates on the infrared part of the visible spectrum, thus making photosynthesis as we know it an impossibility. Plant life would have to evolve towards the color black in order to absorb the infrared light emitted by the star. However, in the late nineties scientists identified particular conditions of temperature and carbon dioxide concentrations that would allow an atmosphere to be viable and stable, as well as scenarios, based on deep ocean basins, that would allow liquid water to exist flowing under the surface ice covers. Also, researchers believe that the fact that ice absorbs the longer-wavelength, near-infrared light emitted by these stars would make them warmer than expected, thus lowering the possibility of a frozen atmosphere.

Another challenge for habitability is solar flares. Recent research has shown that many red dwarfs are prone to frequent, strong solar flares, thus making it hard to keep continuous, stable atmospheres in planets in the habitable zone. However, a planet with an interior molten core maintained by a slow rotation would support a magnetic field that could protect the planet from part of the effects of such a flare. On top of that, a red dwarf planet with a moon could generate enough tidal forces to keep the centers of the planet and the moon liquid, also resulting in a strong magnetic field to protect the parent and moon from outbursts coming from the star.

Taking all of the above into account, a red dwarf planet that supports life thus becomes a real possibility. As unlikely as these conditions are, by using these assumptions, in 2013 some scientists estimated the existence of about *60 billion* habitable red dwarf planets in our galaxy!

But what about a red dwarf planet that supports *human* life? Even if a planet around a red dwarf were habitable, it seems almost impossible for that planet to support human life.

Enter Eyeball Earths: Since 2011 some scientists have been exploring the possibility of a red dwarf planet with a huge "iris" of liquid water on the surface of the light side. Given that the center of the light side (the "pupil") is the location where most of the energy from the star would be focused, theoretically a frozen red dwarf planet with the right atmosphere, at just the right distance, and with just the right blackbody radiation should produce an immense pool of heated water at the "iris." Although the temperatures at the center of the "pupil" itself would be inappropriate for humans, imaginary concentric rings in the "iris" around this pupil would have lower temperatures until a specific set of bands fit with expectations of human habitability. If by coincidence those bands had land formations then the basics for human settlement could be established.

Such a planet is still a far cry from human-friendly, however. For starters, to produce the Eyeball Earth effect the atmosphere would have to have a minimum 20% Carbon Dioxide concentration. Then there is the constant light and the photosynthesis problem. But that's where technology comes in.

In the case of *Seven Worlds*, we are assuming Stein 2051 is not prone to frequent and strong solar flares (based on our current knowledge of the star, and given that Stein 2051 is approximately 4.5 billion years old), and that Chrysalis is a human-habitable Eyeball Earth planet with an orbiting moon and enough land formations in a ring around the pupil's center to support settlements for several million humans and the artificial greenhouses to feed them. These settlements have to be closed domes to support an artificial atmosphere appropriate for humans and also to act as additional shielding against flares and radiation, and light protectors. Significant amounts of energy are of course needed to power up all of this.

Regardless of whether we ever find human-habitable red dwarf Eyeball Earths like Chrysalis or not, in the long run any advanced civilization must learn to survive on a red dwarf. Long after all the other stars of the galaxy have died out, red dwarfs will still be there, happily releasing energy that may be used to support life.

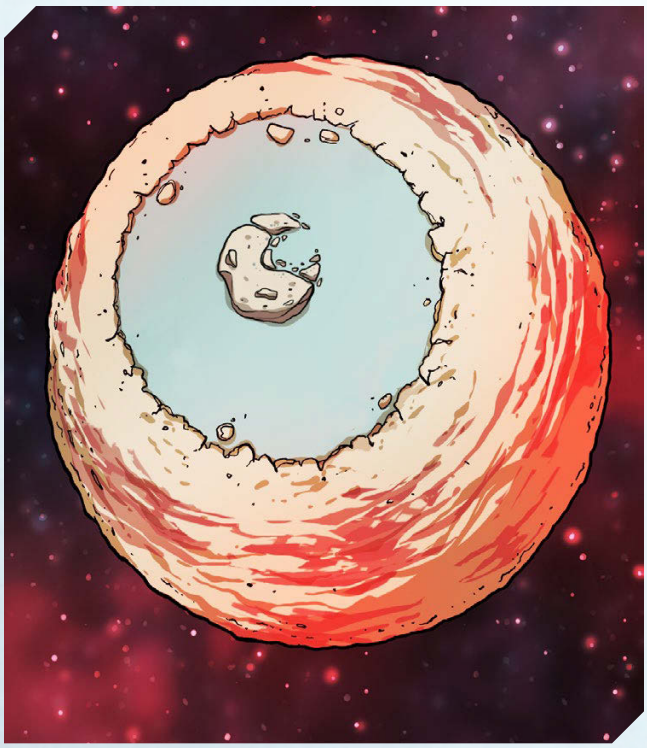
SCENE 2: CHRYSALIS

The heroes wake up tied and gagged in a room within a Patrol Ship (don't role-play how they were captured; just have them assume it). They have been stripped of all their belongings, including their lenses and any device that carries an Assistant. They are weak and dazed, as if several days had gone by. In game terms, they all have one level of Fatigue for the duration of the scene. All psions have been injected with Psionic Drugs (see *Gear* in the *Setting Guide*) thus temporarily neutralizing their powers.

Four guards walk into the room and give you a cruel, hungry smile. Then they turn on the wall screen opposite to you and play what appears to be a video recording. A tall, strong uniformed man with a cold and emotionless look appears on the screen.

"I am Admiral Viktor Karragan of the Psion Brotherhood. In the last few days my interrogators have probed your minds several times. Now I know who you are, how you got here and what you're looking for. I congratulate you on the way you managed to find us, but now we will make sure to remove the clues you found. You should now be approaching the planet Chrysalis in one of my Patrol Ships, guarded by some of my most trustworthy soldiers. Governor Marcel Coban himself has taken an interest in you. Consider yourselves lucky: Not only are you still alive, you will also be the first non-psions to visit Chrysalis. So long, I expect to never see you alive again." With that, the screen fades.

The guards leave the wall screen on with a view of space, and then viciously kick you in the stomach, while one of them says "When we get there you're going to die so painfully the Admiral will feel a little bit better about letting you go!" Then they leave for the cockpit, laughing loudly.



After a day or two of captivity (during which they are constantly injected with Psionic Drugs), the heroes get to see through their wall screen the approach to Chrysalis. Read or paraphrase the following:

In the dim red light from Stein 2051 you see a small planet about the size of Earth, orbited by a small moon. In the reddish light you see the planet covered in ice, except for a large round "pool" of liquid water on the side directly facing the sun. Even from orbit, you can see a few islands floating around the center of the pool. An Eyeball Earth!

You might want to take the opportunity to explain to the players what an Eyeball Earth is (see the sidebar).

You disembark in a huge orbital station where you and your captors board a Surface-to-Orbit shuttle. As you begin your descent, you get to see literally hundreds of ships of all sizes parked around the planet, from battleships to transports. Some of them are at least thirty years old, if not more. Apparently people have been moving here for quite some time.

When your shuttle enters the atmosphere of Chrysalis, it flies close to a large island a few hundred kilometers from the center of the water "pupil." There you notice several immense opaque domes on the surface interconnected by large passageways. A gigantic, sprawling domed city!

Your shuttle lands on a huge overhanging metal platform connected to the top of one of the larger domes. The guards roughly push you forward through a passageway and into a sealed airlock. Then you find yourselves inside the dome, standing on a large cargo platform hundreds of meters above the surface next to a dome wall. Below and in front of you is a beautiful city of parks and buildings, with a strong artificial illumination reminiscent of Earth, and blue and

white sky projected from the inside walls of the dome. A myriad people walk on the streets or pilot small flying vehicles around it.

THE ESCAPE!

Read or paraphrase the following:

Several guards join the ones who brought you here, ready to escort you to Brotherhood HQ using the sleek military air cars parked next to the platform. Suddenly you feel your handcuffs and foot shackles coming off behind you as if by magic (or by telekinesis*) while a telepathic message sounds in your heads: "We're here to help! Go to the air cars!" Out of your corner of your eye you see two of the newly arrived guards pull an autoblaster in each hand and start shooting at the other, stupefied guards with one hand while tossing you the other gun!*

Someone is helping you to escape!

Have the enemy guards roll for surprise against the heroes and their new allies (who can't be surprised). Give them an Ally sheet for their two allies. Remember psion heroes are still under the influence of Psionic Drugs and thus have no powers available.

The two Resistance fighters posing as guards (their names are Rooke and Basantis) toss a gun to the two heroes most likely to be proficient in them (you pick). As an action at their start of their turn, each one of these two heroes may make an Agility roll to catch the gun midflight. If the hero declared the action as a MAP, he or she can use the gun in this turn, too. If the hero decided not to try to catch the gun or fails the roll, the gun clatters to the floor 1d4. from the character.

he platform itself is a 10"-horizontal by 8"-vertical rectangle with a 2" entrance on the bottom side. Place six Small Burst Templates on the platform to indicate locations with crates and other cargo to be taken down to the city. These give a –2 Cover modifier, or Heavy Cover if the character completely crouches behind them. Place three 2"-horizontal-by-4"-vertical air cars parked on the north side of the platform, with their short side touching the platform. Most of the enemy guards are close to the air cars with the exception of Rooke and Basantis who are midway between the heroes and the other guards.

The platform is connected to the dome wall, suspended hundreds of feet above the city, and has a short balcony. The enemy guards will use the Push action from *Savage Worlds* to try to make the heroes or their allies fall off the balcony. Also, any character who is Shaken or Wounded while standing next to the platform edge must make an Agility roll (after Soaking) or be at risk of falling (see below).

If a character falls or is pushed, he must make an Agility roll (a free action) to catch the edge rail of the balcony with both hands. If the character has only one hand free, he may either drop whatever he's carrying (another free action) or make the roll with a –2 penalty. With a failure the character falls, most likely to his or her death. With a success, the character grabs on to the rail and ends his or her turn. On the next round, the character can make a Strength roll as an action to pull him or herself over. Helping another character is a cooperative Strength roll.One of the guards has a bag with the heroes' critical possessions, such as their lenses and copies of their Assistants. If the heroes don't think of grabbing it, one of the Extras grabs the bag as part of the escape.

The combat should end with the heroes and their allies boarding an air car and flying away, followed by their enemies. If the heroes eliminate all the guards before the chase has begun, you can have two more air cars full of guards approach the platform from afar.

You should strive to have either Rooke or Basantis (or both) survive to guide the heroes to their destination. If both extras die, the heroes find a portable mapping device on one of their pockets, digitally pointing the location the heroes should navigate to.

OTHER WAYS TO ESCAPE

The heroes may try to escape their captors at other points in the adventure. For example, they may try to trick the soldiers transporting them through space and take control of the Patrol Ship, or take advantage of the moment when they disembark on the orbital station to make a run for it.

In general, most attempts to escape will be difficult unless the heroes get outside help, such as from the Resistance. Try to move matters so the heroes end up finding and joining the Resistance on Atlas City so you can continue the adventure with Scene 4 below. For example, if the heroes escape while on the Orbital Station, maybe two Resistance fighters hide them and transport them undercover to the city.

In case you need them, the heroes' handcuffs have a Toughness of 12 as per *Savage Worlds*, and the stats for their guards on the Patrol Ship are below:

- **Enemy Guards (4):** Use stats for Soldier Psion

- **Rooke and Basantis, Undercover Resistance Fighters (2):** Both are Extras controlled by the heroes. Use stats for Soldier Psion, but without a Combat Helmet or Assault Rifle. Instead, each one of them has two Autopistols (plus the one they first tossed to the heroes) and two Stun grenades.
- **Enemy Guards (2 per hero):** Use stats for Soldier Psion.

SCENE 3: A CHASE OVER ATLAS CITY

The heroes' troubles are just starting: Their air car is being chased by two military air cars over the domed Atlas City!

Run this chase using the *Savage Worlds* rules. This is a standard chase lasting five turns, with each ship receiving its own Action Card. Note that since the side walls of the air cars can be lowered, gun-to-gun combat between the ships is also possible.

If Rooke and Basantis are still alive, they offer the most qualified hero the pilot's seat and offer to guide him or her. As an interesting flavor point, note that turning the air car on or off requires using the *telekinesis* power on a "key" inside the car dashboard, something Rooke takes care of automatically. Use this as an example of how everything in Chrysalis is made for psions only.



If a Clubs card comes up, the heroes or their enemies come across an obstacle, such as a tall buildings, a dome wall, a passing air car, and even an "air highway" of air cars.

In round three of the chase, all pursuers have to face a special Complication: The heroes have to fly their air car inside one of the round tube hallways that connect two of the city domes. Treat entering the tube as a Major Obstacle in the Complication table. This obstacle is additional to any other complications generated by a Club card. The heroes and their enemies continue in the tube hallway up until the end of the fourth round, when they finally enter the next city dome. While flying in the tube hallway all Force actions have a +2 bonus.

Finally, if the heroes have made it to the end of the fifth round, read or paraphrase the following to them. The text below assumes the heroes are still being pursued and that Rooke is alive, so modify it as appropriate:

"There!," yells Rooke, pointing to the surface. "In the middle of that park!"

You pilot the air car into the park, trying to land in the forested area. "Never mind! Just land!," screams Rooke, and your ship controls accelerate against your will, as if your ally were pushing them psionically. Your air car hits the trees and crashes on the park floor! You are all thrown around as the crash practically wrecks the air car.

You barely have time to disembark when as if by magic a section of the park floor opens and several armed soldiers come out. "Come with us!" they say directly into your mind, while pointing towards the hole from which they came out. You get one last glimpse at the fake blue sky of the domes of Atlas City before the secret door closes on top of you and you are plunged into darkness.

All heroes receive 3d6 damage from the crash.

- **Military Air Cars**

SCENE 4: THE RESISTANCE

Read or paraphrase the following:

Your rescuers take you through dark rough underground passageways, and bring down more than one wall behind you in their attempts to eliminate any pursuers. After what seems like

an eternity of walking, you reach a set of round stairs. You seem to be approaching a building.

Although the group appears to walk in silence, any Psion hero who makes a successful Notice roll perceives from facial expressions that the group is hurriedly chattering psionically. They appear to be very curious about the heroes.

Going up the stairs you find a door. It takes the combined telekinesis power of three of the soldiers to move the door's internal bolts and open it. You then enter a simply furnished hallway and from there a small, open room. A strong, middle-aged man with silver-dark hair and blue eyes awaits you with his arms folded and his eyes closed. Several other people stand in the shadows a few feet behind him. As the man opens his eyes and looks at you, you hear a voice inside your heads saying "Welcome. I've been expecting you. My name is Ryan and these are my fellow leaders of the Resistance."

Ryan pauses for a few seconds before continuing. "We have spent many resources and blown many carefully planted undercover agents to get you here. Your survival has cost us several sacrifices and broken lives. I've ordered it because I have been led to believe that the information you have will make this sacrifice worth it for the Resistance. So, have I made the right choice?"

Allow the heroes to tell their story. Remember that Ryan does not know about the Devourers, the Stellar Comm Network crash, the implication that the Psion Brotherhood is responsible for this, or the fall of several of the Seven Worlds. If any of these points come up, read or paraphrase the following:

Ryan stares at you for several seconds, eyes open in disbelief. Then he looks back at one of the shadowy companions and says, "You were right, Lindsay. This is what we were looking for."

As one of the shadows moves forward into the light you are astounded to see a young girl in her early twenties, with her hair tied in a ponytail. Despite her age, her firm features and serious demeanor prove she is not to be messed with.

You have met this girl before, in the offices of the Psion Brotherhood in Brotherhood Station on Earth. Her name is Lindsay Kipperson.

Remind the heroes about Lindsay, the young assistant who received them during their visit to the Psion Brotherhood Headquarters in *Rumors of War*. While she looks the same on the outside, she has become a very different person indeed. She is now one of Ryan's top advisors in the Resistance.

THE POLITICS OF CHRYSALIS

What follows is a conversation between Lindsay and the heroes. The text below should not be read straight, but used as part of back-and-forth role-playing.

Lindsay speaks to the heroes rather than mentally communicating. However, she still has the *telepathy* power open to all of them, and uses it to transmit images to better show to the heroes what she means. Whenever you see text between brackets in the text below [like this], treat it as a visual image Lindsay is transmitting to the heroes while she speaks. Add as much flourish and detail as possible to the mental description the heroes receive psionically.

Where are we? What is this place?

"Chrysalis is Psion Brotherhood's greatest achievement, the cocoon from which a new independent psion species will be born. This is a project nursed by the leader of the Brotherhood, Ganendra Nathan himself [images of Ganendra Nathan meeting the heroes with a smile on his face. The heroes met him before]. Our agents stole the existence of this planet and the jump points to it from the scientist who made the discovery, and then made sure he forgot about what he himself had found. Then under Nathan's guidance we began the colonization of Chrysalis [A fleet of ships finish the final jump and appear in Stein 2051. Image of thousands of people in spacesuits and building machines constructing the domes of Atlas City].

This is a top secret project, so secret no one outside Chrysalis, psion or non-psion, knows about it. For the last few decades, the Brotherhood has run a relocation program to transfer psions to other worlds to apply their talents. Their friends and relatives would not see them for years or decades [tearful partings between psions and their families. Images of psion 'pilgrims' in planets other than their own, helping people or serving the community]. Under the cover of this program, tens of thousands of psions have been transferred to Chrysalis, and only told about its purpose once they have arrived. Everyone outside believes they are "somewhere else." Carefully managed communications have helped continue that appearance [images of relatives and friends

receiving smiling communications from their loved ones. Images of psions in Chrysalis recording the conversation, and then of teams of psion censors reviewing the messages and editing them to make sure no mentions of Chrysalis leak out]."

Why do you need to keep Chrysalis a secret?

"*Almost since the creation of the Psion Brotherhood there have been radical elements that have believed psions are a more evolved, 'superior' version of humans, and that we deserve better. Some whisper even Daniel Michaels, our founder, secretly believed this. The story of the Brotherhood has really been the story of how to keep our relationship with non-psions healthy, and of how to accept that we are here to help those without powers, not to rule them. Well, not everyone believes that.*

The truth is that Nathan hates *non-psions with a passion, and would like nothing to do with them. Chrysalis is his attempt to create an independent, psion-only colony for us. He says that someday, when Chrysalis is more mature and able to fend for itself, we will present the other worlds with our planet and gain acceptance as an independent, psion-only world. In the meantime, we must thrive secretly, without the threat of non-psion interference.*

Lindsay, how did you get here? Last time we saw you, you were at Brotherhood Station.

A few weeks after you left I was offered a leadership position in the relocation program. Of course I did not know where I was going to be assigned, but I accepted the challenge. When I got to Chrysalis I was as surprised as everyone else at the existence of this planet, but thought it was a noble attempt to develop the future of psions. It took just a few weeks of working inside Brotherhood HQ, however, to figure out something was wrong. The arrival of Marcel Coban, now the leader of Chrysalis, did not make things any better. When the Resistance contacted me I knew I was doing the right thing by joining them.

What is the Resistance?

"*I have told you what Ganendra Nathan and our leadership wants to do with Chrysalis. However, not all psions agree. Some of us believe it is important not to distance ourselves from non-psions, and continue our dedication to helping them. These are not popular ideas in Chrysalis' leadership circle. Thus, the Resistance.*

We do not want to destroy Chrysalis, but we want to have more contact with humanity, and resent not being more involved in how the Brotherhood decides how to manage this world. We have attempted to communicate and preach these views, and have met with brutal repression on the part of Marcel Coban who is currently the Governor of Chrysalis [Image of the unfriendly chief of security who the heroes met in Rumors of War, *now in a leadership position in Chrysalis]. We have thus chosen to go underground and resist quietly.*

Besides, there are many things our leaders don't tell us. For example, there is the secret of the Brain Lock."

The Brain Lock? What is that?

Brain lock *is a psionic power that can be used to store information in the recipient's mind. The information is safely locked inside the carrier's brain in such a way that not even he knows what he has been implanted with… until the password is transmitted [Image of several neurons connecting themselves as if by magic, isolated from other neurons in the brain]. When the carrier receives the password with a second* brain lock, *he suddenly remembers the information inside his brain, and can act on it.*

Well, what we call 'The Brain Lock' is a peculiar event we all have been subjected to: Upon arrival at Chrysalis, every psion has been subjected to an application of brain lock. *In other words,* each and every one of us *carries something in his or her brain, and we don't know what it is! Why would our leaders do this to us? What is so valuable that they would want to store it in 480,000 heads but not tell us about it?*

Why did you decide to save us?

"*Besides being one of Ryan's advisors at the Resistance, I have an undercover job within the Governor's headquarters here in Chrysalis. In that role I have secret access to a lot of sensitive information [Lindsay walks through the hallways of Brotherhood Headquarters in Chrysalis, smiling and greeting people while she does it. In secret she uses her lenses to connect to the V-World environment in the palace, and inserts*

spy programs and code to gather confidential information for the Resistance]. When your names popped up I immediately recognized you, [fast flashing of images of the heroes and Lindsay during their original visit to Brotherhood Station on Earth] and recommended Ryan do whatever it takes to get you here alive. I still remember what you saw in Nouvelle Vie, and the fact that you also were one of the few to meet the N'ahili. I guessed it is no coincidence that you are also the first non-psion visitors to Chrysalis. And you have now proved my hunch right."

What makes us so valuable to you?

"For the last few months the authorities have been faking the information from outside Chrysalis. The last "real" information we received was that the battle between Concordia and Bay Jing in the orbit of Nouvelle Vie was about to begin [Images of the Concordian and Bay Jingnian fleets preparing to do battle around Nouvelle Vie. The heroes recognize them since they were there]. Since then, the fake information says that the battle ended in a stalemate and things are being resolved diplomatically between the former adversaries. We were also told technical problems with the Stellar Comm Network have made personal messages impossible to send or receive.

"As to new psion arrivals to Chrysalis, we have discovered the government has subjected them to the greater forget psionic power, to make them forget what has happened between then and now [frightened psion tied to a chair while several other psions concentrate their powers on him. The faces of the psions in charge of the procedure cannot be seen. Tied psion writhes in pain until the procedure ends]. We have spent months wondering what is going on outside that is so critical or important that our leaders are willing to go to such lengths to keep it secret, and now we know, thanks to you: The human race is in danger of going extinct at the hands of an alien species, and we, the Psion Brotherhood, are responsible for the crash of the technology that would allow them to be better organized against them!"

Why would your leaders want to keep such terrible events secret?

"As to why would our leaders not want us to find out about it, that also becomes obvious: If the citizens of Chrysalis knew what we now know most of them would want to return to either defend their non-psion brothers or try to make things right [Thousands of psions revolt against the government, protesting in the square in front of the palace; Violent repression by Brotherhood soldiers on the citizens; many of the ships parked in orbit around Chrysalis leave towards the Seven Worlds, some of them while being attacked]. Consequently I'd say our leaders want to keep this secret because they want the human race to become extinct, even if it means sacrificing hundreds of thousands of innocent psions along with the non-psions."

But what if the Devourers turn on Chrysalis after destroying the other planets, and eliminate you, too?

"That concerns me, too. One option could be that there is a deal between our leaders and the Devourers, and the Devourers will spare Chrysalis once they are done with the rest of humanity. I think it would be too naïve of us to believe that, though.

Another option is that our leaders are somehow under Devourer control, although that also sounds too far-fetched for me.

A third possibility is that our leaders are not worried about that possibility because they have something that might keep the Devourers at bay, or even destroy them. I can't even think what that is, though.

In any case, that is a weak link in their plans. We are obviously missing something here. Maybe that's where Dr. Graham comes in.

Dr. Graham? Who's he?

Dr. Oren Graham is the chief scientist of Chrysalis [Image of a stern, unemotional old and frail scientist]. He and his research teams are responsible for the core technological breakthroughs that make life in Chrysalis possible, from energy to dome construction materials. Dr. Graham is fully committed to Nathan's ideals and goals, and is thus a core member of the government. He has a top secret lab inside Brotherhood HQ where he conducts his research. No one knows exactly what he is doing, but maybe he's the government's ace in the hole in case the Devourers ever invade. I'm just speculating... but it would be nice to know exactly what's going on inside that lab.

A DARING PLAN

Once the heroes exhaust their questions Ryan and Lindsay tell them they need to discuss the situation with the other leaders. The room goes silent as the leaders of the Resistance talk psionically between themselves.

After a few minutes an agreement is reached, and Lindsay talks to the heroes again. Read or paraphrase the following:

We have talked it over and reached a decision.

We had been considering taking matters into our own hands for some time now, but were lacking information. From what you tell us it is critical that we stop this as soon as possible and help our non-psion brothers defend themselves against the invaders. It is now time to activate our plans. Simply put, we will take Brotherhood HQ and bring down Coban and his cronies.

Our plan will be as follows: All our undercover agents, including myself, will enter Brotherhood HQ using our usual jobs as cover. Several Resistance cells will cause disturbances in different parts of Atlas City, either distracting the security forces or directly eliminating them. When the time is right we will attack Brotherhood HQ from inside and outside simultaneously.

We have talked it over, and we think it is crucial that you accompany us. With everything you know about what is going on outside Chrysalis you may see or find something we miss. The problem is, since most of you are not psions, you will not be able to enter Brotherhood HQ by the main entrances. Fortunately, there is another way in. We will send you, along with some soldiers to help, through a secret underground passageway that we believe surfaces inside the Ark Dome section of Brotherhood HQ. This dome is a zoo that preserves most of Earth life for future use. From Ark Dome you should be able to use the connecting passageway to the main administrative offices and join the rest of our forces. The Ark Dome also connects to Dr. Graham's lab, should you believe that's a better place to investigate during the raid.

This is not only our best chance to bring Chrysalis into the war against the Devourers, it is also your only chance of escaping our planet in one piece. So, what do you say?

Show the players the handout of the Domed City and explain the plan and locations to the heroes.

SCENE 5: THE RAID

The Resistance provides the heroes with any items from the equipment list they need, within reason (remember they were stripped of most of their belongings when they were captured by Admiral Karragan. They should already have recovered their Assistants and other critical items via the bag taken by Rooke and Basantis during their escape). All heroes will need some kind of Vacc Suit and helmet to cross the underground passageways that lead to the Ark Dome.

Each hero will also be accompanied by one Extra. Give each hero an Ally Sheet, with the statistics for a Resistance Fighter Psion, Vacuum (see the *Seven Worlds* Setting Guide). Here are some random last names for all the Extras, should you wish to name them for easier identification: Ashcraft, Leclaire, Singh, Urbina, Florence, Quinn.

The heroes also receive an overview map of the Psion Brotherhood headquarters for the operation, which is always available through their lenses.

SPIES!

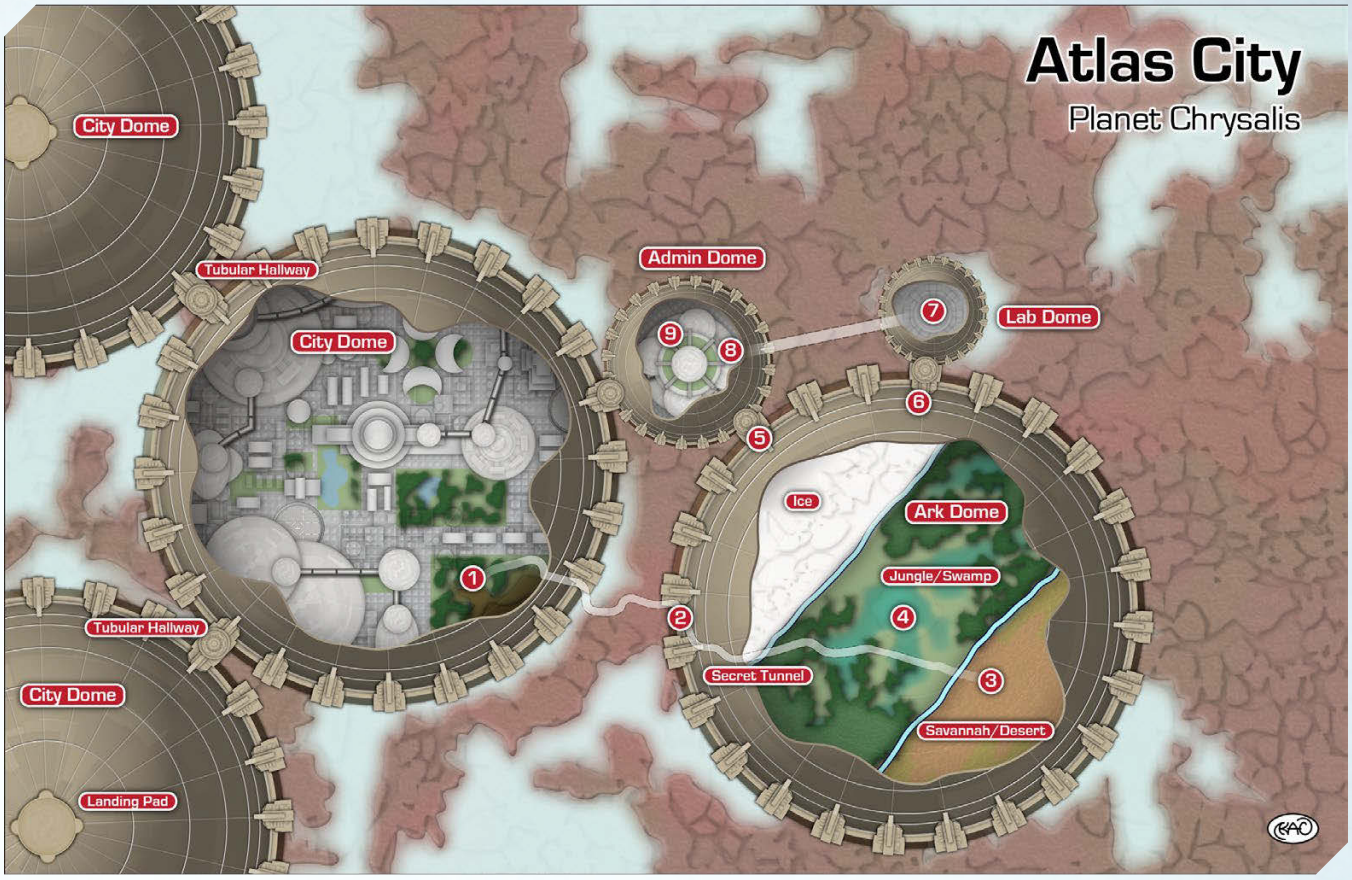
Unfortunately, although Ryan and Lindsay have been as careful as possible in recruiting and filtering members, the government has managed to insert a few spies into the Resistance organization. In the case of the heroes' team, one of the soldiers assigned to them is also a spy. She hasn't had a chance to alert Brotherhood HQ, so her goal is to sabotage or eliminate the team (including the heroes) before they enter the Ark Dome. She is willing to risk her life on this if necessary.

Decide beforehand which Extra is the spy and which player controls her, as this will be important during the scene.

THE UNDERGROUND

Read or paraphrase this to the heroes:

The "day" begins like any other day on Atlas City. Thousands of people arrive for work at Psion Brotherhood HQ, among them several dozen undercover agents including Lindsay. Teams of resistance fighters position themselves at strategic parts of the city to create disturbances that will distract law enforcement. Other fighters are ready to enter HQ when the undercover employees breach security.



You and your team are dropped in an old part of the city a few miles from Brotherhood HQ. Inside a building controlled by the Resistance you find a passageway that leads underground. A heavy metal door at the end of the passageway leads to a rough tunnel. Instead of the artificial, human-breathable air of the Atlas City domes, you are surrounded by Chrysalis' toxic atmosphere. So you enter the passageway appropriately suited for breathing. The door is closed behind you to avoid leaking the air in.

While the resistance is sure this tunnel leads to the Ark Dome, they are not sure exactly where. Still, for non-psions like you there is no easy way into Brotherhood HQ. This is the only way.

1. THE CLIFF

After a couple of hours of walking the heroes reach a large cavern cut by a tall cliff. The heroes and their extras have to climb the 30'-high rock wall. Small handholds in the rock make it possible to climb.

Have the heroes decide the order in which they and their Extras will climb. Assume all Extras have a Climbing skill of d6. Make sure to note where the spy is placed in the climbing order.

Three Climbing rolls are needed to reach the top, one per each 10" section of the cliff. If the team brought climbing gear along they receive a +4 bonus as per the *Savage Worlds* rules. Those who are good at climbing may also help their teammates.

There is a medium-sized rock next to the top of the cliff. When the spy reaches the top and is safely out of danger (but close to the rock) she covertly uses her *telekinesis* power to push the rock down the chasm. Any characters still making the climb at this point are in danger of being hit by a falling 50-lb rock!

Have each character in the path of the falling rock make an Agility roll with a –2 penalty and a +1 bonus for each character previously hit by the rock. Those who fail are hit by the falling rock and take 2d8 damage. They also have to make an additional Climbing roll (minus their Wounds, including those inflicted by the rock) to grab at something. If this roll is failed the character falls, receiving additional falling damage from *Savage Worlds*. Remember to consider the rules for punctured space suits due to damage (see the *Gear* section of the *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*).

There is no way to determine if the fall of the rock was deliberate or coincidental, nor to unequivocally determine who, if anyone, was responsible.

2. ZOO BARRIER

Hours later, the heroes reach a strong semi-transparent thick wall of the nanotube material used by the domes. Beyond this wall the artificial atmosphere kicks in and the Zoo area begins. An old access hatch built out of the same semitransparent material separates the cave from the inside parts of the dome. The hatch is kept closed by several internal bolts which can only be opened by the *telekinesis* power.

Once the hatch is open, the atmosphere inside immediately starts filtering out with a loud noise, slightly pushing anyone who tries to enter. Before entering, though, there is another obstacle to pass: The hatch has an embedded IDTag reader that will identify anyone who passes through it and raise an alarm unless the sensors are disabled. The spy knows this and will attempt to charge through the hatch as soon as it's opened, feigning excitement ("What are we waiting for? Let's go!").

Assuming no one enters the hatch, the IDTag reader on the dome wall can be disabled in ten minutes with a Hacking roll with a –4 penalty. The roll can be attempted again if it is failed, but if a critical failure is rolled, the alarm automatically goes off.

If the alarm is raised, nothing apparently happens. The Admin Dome Hatch (see Encounter #5, below) will be automatically locked, though, and can't be opened now. After entering the dome and closing the hatch the heroes can remove their helmets if they like, as the environment is now breathable.

3. THE LAIR

The cave continues a few more miles and then curves upward towards the surface. Unfortunately a pack of African Wild Dogs from the savannah section of the Zoo have found and entered the cave from the other side, and made it into a lair. They will attack anyone who enters their lair, taking advantage of their gang-up bonus.

The lair is an irregular cave of about 12" in length and 9" in width. The heroes arrive through a 1"-wide tunnel on the left side of the cave. A 2"-wide opening on the right-hand side of the cave leads outside, into Ark Dome.

Place three Medium Burst Templates in the area. These represent small mounds about 1" high. Moving into or out of these mounds counts as moving through Difficult Ground. Crouching behind any of these mounds gives a hero Medium Cover.

During this combat the spy decides to reveal herself by attempting to attack a hero by surprise using her weapons and psionic powers. Once her cover is blown, the spy will openly try to stop the heroes from entering the dome. If possible, the spy tries to bring down the heroes and escape, but she is not above sacrificing herself if this makes possible to kill the heroes.

Once the battle is over the heroes only need to walk a few more yards to enter Ark Dome.

- **African Wild Dogs (3 per hero)**
- **Spy (1):** Use stats for Resistance Fighter Psion, Vacuum, adding the Taunt d10 and Intimidation d8 skills.

ARK DOME

As the heroes enter Ark Dome their lenses indicate the administration center's V-World network is available. A Hacking roll with a –2 penalty allows the heroes to connect to the network. Once connected, the heroes notice that the complex is on full alert. The Resistance attack has begun and gunfights are being reported throughout the complex. Ark Dome is empty of guards, so the heroes are in no danger of being detected unless they do something specific to call attention to themselves.

Any communications to Resistance members, including Lindsay and Ryan, fail. They are simply too busy defending themselves.

4. THE ZOO

Although it's been sold to the population as an expensive zoo, Ark Dome's name betrays the true purpose for which Ganendra Nathan built it: To keep as much of Earth's flora and fauna alive as possible in case Earth ever stops existing. As such, Ark Dome is easily the largest dome in Atlas City, and it shows.

An insignificant fraction of the animal population of Earth is kept alive, usually the most well-known and impressive species. Most animals are stored as DNA records to be cloned and produced when needed. Species have also been selected to minimize the number of artificial environments created. Currently Ark Dome has four environments:

- A hot African savannah and desert environment populated by elephants, giraffes, hippos and other animals.
- A cold, snowy Arctic-like environment.
- A jungle and swamp environment, combining both African and Amazonian jungles.
- A sea/aquarium environment. This immense tank is under a section of the dome, and its doors are closed during the heroes' visit to the dome unless you decide to run side encounters of your own here.

These environments are separated by large semitransparent walls built out of the same strong materials as the dome itself. The walls are also screens that project the illusion of a much larger environment for the animals' benefit.

The cave the heroes come out of surfaces at the center of the savannah and desert environment. The heroes' map indicates that there are two main hatches out of Ark Dome: One to the northwest that connects the dome to the Administrative Dome; and one to the north that leads to the mysterious Research Lab dome.

If the heroes or the spy triggered the alarm in encounter #2 and they have connected to the V-World network, their lenses indicate that the northwest hatch to the Administrative Dome has been automatically locked because of the tunnel alarm and it cannot be opened. Fortunately the Resistance attack has kept any security from investigating the incident.

CROSSING THE ZOO

The Zoo inside Ark Dome is several miles wide, and built in such a way as to maximize distance and land, with rock formations that require walking around. It should take the heroes several hours to reach any of the hatches. The lines in the map represent the walls that divide the different environments. There are hatches every few hundred meters so it should be no problem to cross between one environment and the next.

Make sure to describe the environment the heroes are at, as well as the illumination and temperature changes in each area.

The trip through the Zoo can be as uneventful or interesting as you wish. The heroes come across dozens of animals (elephants, monkeys, penguins) as they cover the environment. Most of these encounters should just be for color, and thus no stats are included.

If you want to run some random encounters with dangerous animals on the way, roll a d8 and consult the sections below. Focus on the way the heroes meet the creatures rather than just on "making them appear." For example, finding the carcasses of deer or other animals might alert the heroes that they are in the territory of a stalking predator, before finally meeting a tiger.

SAVANNAH / DESERT ENVIRONMENT

1D8	ENCOUNTER
1–2	One Poisonous Snake per hero and Extra. Nest of Snakes
3–4	Two African Wild Dogs per hero and Extra.
5–7	Two Hyenas per hero and Extra.
8	The heroes encounter two different sets of animals at the same time, probably fighting or interacting. Roll a d8 two more times and consult this table to select the animals the heroes meet. If an 8 comes up on any of these rolls, roll again.

JUNGLE / SWAMP ENVIRONMENT

1D8	ENCOUNTER
1–4	One crocodile per hero and Extra.
5–8	One tiger (Wild Card).

ARCTIC / COLD ENVIRONMENT

1D8	ENCOUNTER
1–4	Three arctic wolves per hero and Extra.
5–8	One polar bear (Wild Card).

5. ADMIN DOME HATCH

The Administrative Dome hatch consists of a large, big round metal door more than half a meter thick. It is impossible to force or blow up.

If the heroes raised the alarm in Encounter #2 above, the hatch is marked with a red light indicating that several heavy, one-way bolts have permanently closed it. It is not possible to open the hatch except from the inside.

If the heroes did not raise the alarm in Encounter #2 it may still be possible to force open the hatch if the heroes succeed at a Dramatic Task using the Hacking skill with a –1 penalty. A Complication means the hero or Assistant has found a security detection program that needs to be circumvented in order for the hacking to continue.

If the heroes succeed at the Dramatic Task, all the software safeguards for the hatch have been bypassed. A psion still needs to use the *telekinesis* power to physically unlock the internal bolts, but this should not be a problem unless the heroes have no psions or psion Extras amongst them.

If the heroes fail at the Dramatic Task, the hatch is permanently locked and has also detected and reported the heroes. The heroes now have no choice other than to try to reach the Research Lab hatch.

At your discretion, any interesting ideas the heroes have to open the hatch may be allowed to succeed. For example, the heroes may deliberately try to raise an alarm to force guards from the Administrative dome to open the hatch from the inside and try to capture them.

If the heroes enter the Administrative Dome go to Encounter #8.

6. RESEARCH LAB HATCH

The Research Lab hatch is similar in build and composition to the Administrative Dome Hatch, above. However, since the Lab is connected to an entirely different and independent dome, it has not been automatically locked even if the heroes raised the alarm.

Hacking the Research Lab Hatch requires a successful Hacking roll to release the software safeguards. After this is done, two consecutive uses of the *telekinesis* power are needed to open the long, heavy internal bolts used by the hatch. The first time the heroes (or their Extras) use *telekinesis* they should be told the bolts moved but they are uncommonly heavy and long, and using the power was not enough to open the hatch.

At your discretion, you may wish to combine the effort of figuring out how to open the hatch with a wild animal attack from Encounter #4, above.

THE RESEARCH LAB

The Research Lab is the private lair of Dr. Oren Graham, the scientist who has invented most of the marvels that Atlas City depends on today. His most important research, however, is secret to all but the top leaders of the Psion Brotherhood, and is kept in this lab.

The heroes can enter the lab from either the Ark Dome or the Administrative Dome.

7. DR. GRAHAM'S LAB

As the heroes enter the dark passageway behind the hatch, they see a construction that's markedly different from what they've seen in the domes up until now. The walls of the passage are not semitransparent, but dark, thick, and with little illumination. Several types of electronic circuits and devices line most walls, and strange steam-like sounds hiss slightly from the sides.

After some time walking, read or paraphrase the following:

You finally reach a large, lightly illuminated laboratory. Several strange types of computers blink and whirr madly. A large passageway on the other side of the lab leads deeper into the complex. Dozens of strange materials, devices and canisters dot the desks and shelves of the room. One canister in particular calls your attention: It is on a pedestal on the right side of the room and contains some kind of pulsing, moving dark red fluid.

At the center of the room eight V-World pods are arranged in a circle, apparently to connect to a private V-World environment. A large console to the side controls this V-World connection. Crouched in front of the console is a hunched man mumbling to himself. As the sensors in the room suddenly announce your arrival with an emergency wail, the man turns to you and his mad, unfocused eyes widen in surprise. Then you feel his power washing over you.

If the heroes saw a telepathic image of Dr. Graham during their conversation with Lindsay in Scene 4, they recognize him immediately.

The lab is a square 15 × 15" room, with a 2"-wide passage leads from the southern wall (where the heroes come from) and another 2"-wide passage leading west from the northwest wall. Computers and scientific devices cover the walls. Place four 2"-by-1" tables, covered with scientific equipment at different locations in the room.

The eight V-World pods are arranged in a 5"-diameter circle in the center of the room. The 2"-wide control console, and Dr. Graham, stand to the right of the circle. The canister sits on a 1"-diameter pedestal in the center of the right wall of the room.

The irascible Dr. Graham does not tolerate intrusions lightly. Although his systems detected the heroes' entrance to the lab complex, he was so engrossed in his current research he missed the alarms until the heroes entered the lab itself. When the heroes enter his lab, however, Dr. Graham gets a free Notice roll to psionically detect them and react before they do. If he does, the heroes begin combat surprised.

Due to his age and frailty Dr. Graham is very slow when doing anything physical, but very fast with psionic powers. He will use this to his advantage against the heroes. His first action is to protect himself via *invisibility* or *barrier*. Once he feels protected he will try to move out of the way using *telekinesis* or by running as an action if he is invisible. After that he will attack as hard as possible with his psionic powers, and by telekinetically moving objects to attack for him. Also take note of the special *mind burn* power which he will not hesitate to use.

When Dr. Graham is finally defeated, make sure he dies so he can not reveal sensitive information to the heroes. Given his age and frailty (and the fact that he does not surrender) it should not be difficult to explain that the wounds received were too much for him.

✸ **Dr. Oren Graham:** see page 234.

The passageway at the northwest of the lab leads to a long tunnel that takes the heroes to the Administrative Dome and Encounter #8. Before the

heroes take that path, however, call their attention to the canister on the right side of the room and to the simulation pods in the center.

The canister contains several broken samples of a dark red fleshy material floating in a neutral liquid and kept at a specific temperature. These are samples of actual Devourer tissue, which are being kept chemically alive.

It is important that this canister survive intact, as it will help the heroes in later adventures in the campaign.

THE SIMULATION ROOM

The central circle of eight V-World pods is part of an elaborate simulation environment. The entire lab is clearly geared towards the contents of this V-World simulation. If the heroes try to figure out what is inside the simulation, they or their Assistants can gather via Investigation or Hacking rolls that the contents of the simulation are extremely secret and important, but they cannot see what they are.

If the heroes skip the simulation, once Brotherhood HQ is taken the surviving leaders of the Resistance suggest they complete their investigation into what exactly Dr. Graham was researching here.

Assuming the heroes decide to try out the simulation, they get to connect with full V-World immersion via the helmets inside the pods. Once they connect they see two options flashing in the V-World lobby in front of them: "Original Encounter Recordings" and "Full Simulation."

If the heroes select the "Original Encounter Recordings" option, read or paraphrase the following:

A 3-D recording begins, and suddenly you are inside a spaceship in the year 2197, visiting one of the uninhabited star systems close to Nouvelle Vie. The scientific crew of a Psion Brotherhood research vessel is on a routine mission to this star system. Suddenly a smaller version of the mysterious ship you saw in Nouvelle Vie materializes in front of them. A Devourer scout ship!

As the Devourers prepare to fire the panicked crew broadcasts their peaceful intentions to no avail. Then in desperation the crew broadcasts a psionic request for mercy. It should not have worked at that distance, especially considering psionic powers only work on human beings… but it gets the Devourer ship to freeze for a few seconds.

The astonished crew stares at their V-World screen, waiting for the enemy ship to finish them, as the seconds tick by… and then the Devourer ship explodes in a huge blaze of fire and energy! Apparently whatever weapon they had partially activated failed for some unknown reason.

In the last scene the crew is in spacesuits, collecting the remaining debris of the alien ship for further study. One of the pieces the team recovers looks suspiciously like an emergency pod. Could a Devourer be inside?

Then the scene fades to black and some text flashes in front of you:

"FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS: For unknown reasons specific psionic energies interfere with alien mind patterns. After vivisection of recovered alien specimens it has been determined that since alien physical composition is completely different from humans, it should not be possible to affect aliens with psionic powers with mental manifestations. However, attempts to reproduce the exact psionic energies that cause this effect on the alien have partly succeeded. Further research is needed.

UPDATE: Tests to terminally enhance the effect have succeeded. The answer is raze*."*

With this the recording ends and the heroes are returned to the main menu screen. There are no other mentions of *raze* in any other V-World system or database.

If the heroes select the "Full Simulation" option they enter a simulated arms locker environment. All heroes and Extras are free to grab any gear they want and in the quantities they want, subject to encumbrance restrictions. The arms locker contains unlimited numbers of the following gear:

- Accelerator Rifles and ammo
- SMGs and ammo
- Vacc suits
- Reinforced vacc suits
- Vacc suit helmets
- Light Combat vacc suits
- Combat armor suits

Once all heroes are equipped and any encumbrance penalties are calculated, the heroes just need to say they are ready in order to continue.

DEVOURER MAZE

Read or paraphrase the following:

As the simulation begins, you find yourselves in a strange passageway. The "walls" of the hallways are pulsating biological membranes oozing with a shining mucus-like substance. A myriad of

small passageways and dead ends build what is a veritable maze of nauseating hallways.

The environment is dark and pressing, and according to your suit sensors what passes for an atmosphere is a bizarre brew of elements that are far from breathable by human beings, perceived as a dark fog that makes it even harder to see. You feel the familiar sensations of near-zero gravity.

The atmosphere does transport audio waves, and through the noise transducer in your helmets you periodically hear a low, deep rumble far away.

This is an artificial V-World simulation built by Dr. Graham to prepare psions for using the *raze* power against Devourers. As such, all psionic powers work in this simulated virtual environment. The simulation has been deliberately designed to be impossible to survive unless the heroes have the *raze* power, which they obviously don't have.

The environment is dark (–2 penalty to all actions, 10. max distance to see something), cold and unbreathable (consider the damage rules in the *Gear* section of the *Seven Worlds Setting Guide* if suits are ever opened or pierced). Also, all zero-G rules from the *Setting Rules* of the *Seven Worlds Setting Guide* apply.

No map is provided for the Devourer Simulation environment as it is not relevant. Draw a convoluted maze of irregular passageways with many corridor intersections, dead ends and cul-de-sacs, and the occasional medium-sized room with many exits. There is no interesting destination in the maze.

The Devourers are distributed among the entire complex and will use their powers to maximum advantage. For example, they may crawl on the ceiling and fall down on the heroes; hide in side-passageways and storm the heroes from several directions at once; or find a long passageway and just fire at them from afar.

Take advantage of the darkness and of the fact that this is a simulation to play this as a horror film where the heroes' goal is to survive. Have them only see dim outlines of their enemies; vividly describe the strangeness of their monstrous attackers, their arms and their weapons; use the Fear rules when appropriate; and have the Devourers stage hit-and-run attacks to keep the heroes off balance. Try not to let the heroes see the Devourers clearly. In this simulation, whenever a Devourer falls (and does not explode) its body immediately vanishes, thus making it harder for the heroes to exactly figure out who or what their attackers are.

Periodically, whenever a psion has an open opportunity to attack one or more Devourers, tell the hero the words "*raze*" flash over the simulation for a second. Of course the hero does not know what this means, and the moment will pass, usually with a counter-attack by the monster. The heroes should eventually figure out they need this "*raze*," whatever it is, if they hope to defeat the Devourers. When they figure this out, give them a Benny.

Whenever a hero falls dead or unconscious he or she is immediately yanked out of the simulation. The simulation ends when all heroes are dead or unconscious or when all the Devourers have been defeated. One final message flashes on every character's screen: "Simulation Failed. Successful uses of *raze*: zero." Give the heroes back all the Bennies they had before entering the simulation.

- **Devourer Warriors (3 per hero or Extra):** See page 240.
- **Devourer Elite Warriors (1 per hero or Extra):** See page 241.

ADMINISTRATIVE FLOOR

This dome houses the main administrative offices of Brotherhood HQ in Chrysalis.

8. LOBBY

The heroes find themselves at the end of a long connecting tunnel and in front of an unlocked hatch. Sounds of fighting and mayhem come from behind.

Once they open the hatch the heroes see the entrance lobby to the Administrative Dome. The place is in complete chaos, as several resistance fighters are locked in combat with Brotherhood minions. The battle is a complex mix of gunshots, grenades, and psionic powers.

The administrative lobby is a rectangular area 16" long and 8" wide, with 2"-wide hallways entering the center of the east and west walls. The heroes and their extras enter the battle through a 1"-wide side passageway centered on the north wall. A similar passageway lies in the southern wall.

The lobby has several classic style columns, which are being used by the combatants as cover. Place two 1"-diameter columns about 1" away from the western wall and 2" away from the northern and southern walls, respectively. Then continue placing columns in a straight line to the east, with each column having a 2" separation with the previous one. You should end up with two horizontal rows of five columns each.

Place several tables and couches, chairs and potted plants next to the southern and northern walls. These

are used during informal meetings and visits. The tables and couches offer Medium Cover (–2), and have Toughness 8. The chairs and potted plants give Light Cover (–1) and have Toughness 6. There are also many items such as notebooks, electronic devices, trophies and glasses, on the desks, tables and now on the floor. Any of these can be grabbed either as an improvised weapon or to perform tricks. They can also be used with the *telekinesis* power.

Ryan leads the fighters at the western end of the room. When Ryan sees them he sends them a psionic message: "Marcel Coban just retreated through the hallway to the east! Those guards are covering his escape! He's trying to get to the platform atop the dome and escape using an air car! We have to stop him or everything is lost!" Give the heroes an Ally sheet for the resistance fighters.

The Brotherhood soldiers are massed at the eastern side of the room, doing their best to keep the resistance fighters away from eastern hallway. The resistance fighters are clearly outnumbered, and are taking the worst part of the battle. Brotherhood reinforcements are also approaching from the southern passageway.

The following special Assistant actions are available:

- Southern passageway hatch: The enemy is about to receive reinforcements coming through the southern passageway. If a hero spends a Benny and his Assistant makes a successful Hacking roll, he or she manages to close the hatch doors to this passageway. If the hatch doors are not closed three rounds after the heroes arrive, then two extra Brotherhood soldiers per hero arrive from the south to join their comrades.

If the heroes manage to get through the enemy guards and enter the eastern hallway without completely defeating their enemy, the battle rages behind them, as more enemy reinforcements arrive to keep the Resistance fighters busy and pursue the heroes.

- **Brotherhood HQ Soldiers (4 per hero):** Use stats for Soldier Psion.
- **Resistance Fighter Psion (2 per hero)**

✹ **Ryan:** See page 237.

9. SHOWDOWN

The hallway leads the heroes to an elevator. A quick V-World lookup tells the heroes the elevator leads to a private cargo platform at the top of the dome..

Assuming the heroes take the elevator up, read or paraphrase the following:

After a minute the elevator doors open and you emerge at a supply and cargo platform sitting right under the very top of the dome. A hatch set on the wall of the dome leads outside, where through a couple of nearby windows you see an external platform. The platform behind the hatch allows air ships outside the dome to dock and unload cargo.

Making his way towards the hatch is Marcel Coban, the tough-looking, sour man you met long ago on Earth. He is surrounded by a group of trusted bodyguards and aides. You also see someone else among the group, a ponytail you recognize. Lindsay!

Marcel Coban looks at you and manages to smile through his anger. "You! You have brought this revolution upon us! But it will not be enough! I will survive, and you will not get what you came here to get!" He glances at Lindsay. "She's now under my command; puppet, you know. She was such a junior, naïve girl back on Earth... who would have thought she would have become a leader in this blasted Resistance! Well, she will have a chance to spill out all their secrets soon!"



[Insert an Assistant's name here] interrupts you. "The dome sensors detect a ship approaching the outer platform, outside the dome. Coban should be able to reach the ship and escape any moment now!"

Deal Action Cards!

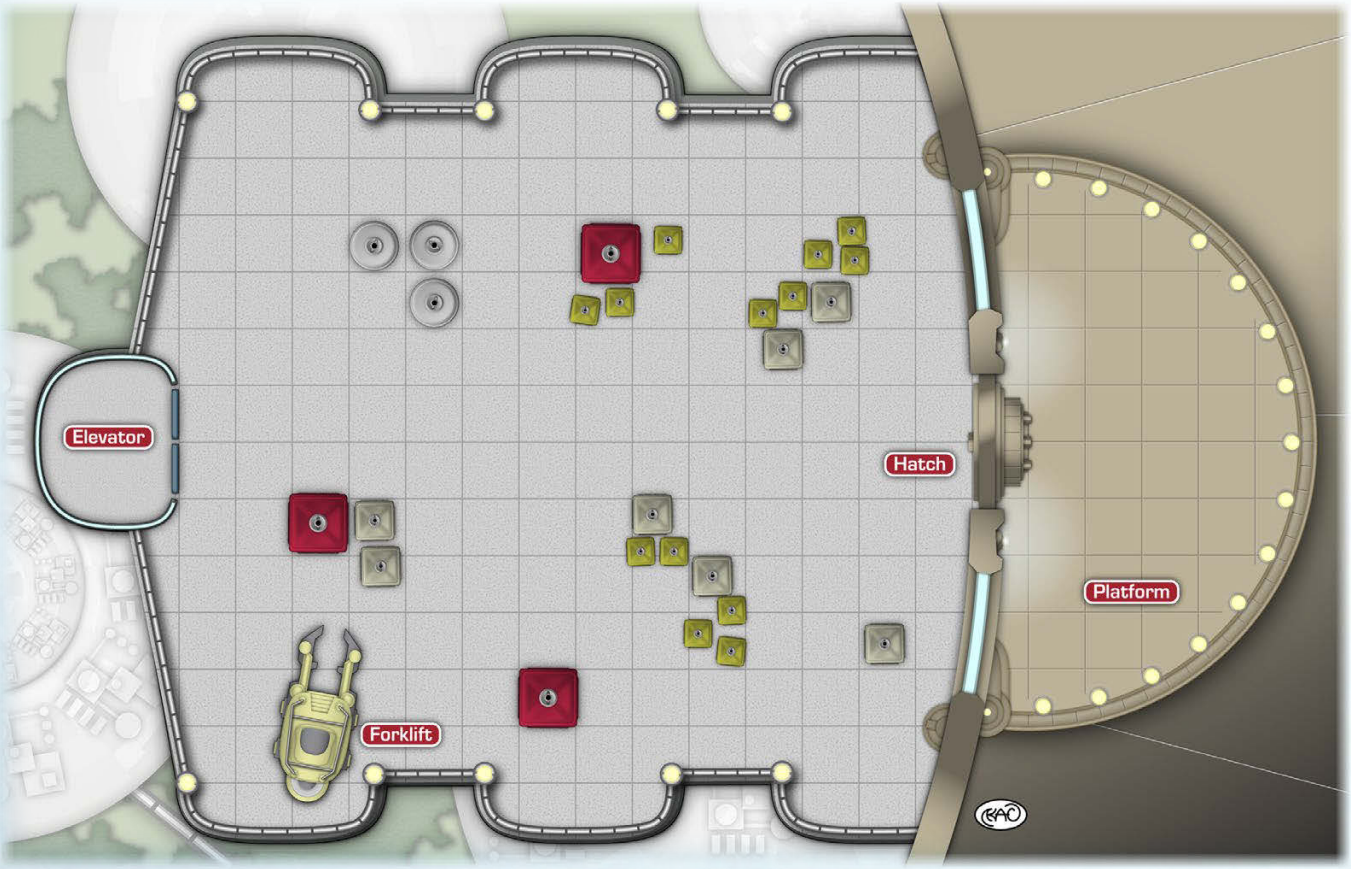
Marcel Coban's team, including the *puppet*-controlled Lindsay, surrounds their leader and prepares to fight to the death. Their plan is to hide behind the crates and walls next to the hatch and make a stand there until their ship arrives. Lindsay attacks the heroes per Coban's orders, but is entitled to an opposed Spirit roll to break free, as per the standard rules for the *puppet* power.

THE FIGHT

The platform has several piles of crates and boxes ready to be undocked. The crates give a –2 Cover modifier, or a –4 Heavy Cover if the character completely crouches behind them. Each crate weighs around eighty pounds, and if pushed or moved telekinetically can cause 3d6 damage.

There are balconies on all sides of the platform but it is still possible to fall. Characters can use the Push action or the *telekinesis* power to try to make an enemy fall. If a character falls or is pushed, he can make an Agility roll (a free action) to catch the edge of the platform with both hands. If the character has only one hand free, he may either drop whatever he's carrying (another free action) or make the roll with a –2 penalty. With a failure, the character falls to his or her death. With a success, the character grabs on to the edge and ends his or her turn. On the next round, the character can make a Strength roll as an action to pull him or herself over the edge. Helping another character is a cooperative Strength roll. Any character who is Shaken or Wounded while standing next to the edge of the platform must make an Agility roll (after Soaking) or fall.

An unused hover forklift sits on the southwest corner of the platform. It occupies a Small Burst Template and can be used to lift or push piles of crates. The forklift can be piloted manually by any character using the Piloting skill (no need to be a Psion). It can be used to push a pile of crates 2" in one round; to lift a single crate in a round, and then move it using the normal forklift movement (up to 4"); or to drop a crate in one round, causing falling damage for the crate. The forklift can also be used to perform a Push maneuver, in which case the opposing character's Strength roll is compared against the forklift's Toughness.



Marcel Coban and his minions are waiting for their escape ship to arrive through the hatch. As the battle rages describe how a ship approaches the outer hatch and prepares to dock. At the start of the fourth round, the ship docks with the hatch and the hatch opens. As soon as that happens Coban retreats to the hatch, protected by his minions. Unless they're stopped, the ship will depart as soon as the last surviving minion enters the hatch. Coban is not above abandoning his soldiers if he sees no chance of rescuing them.

The following special Assistant actions are available:

- **Forklift:** If a hero spends a Benny and the Assistant makes a successful Hacking roll, the Assistant can control the forklift just like a character. If the forklift is already in use by someone (character of Assistant) the Assistant must take control instead. To wrestle another for control of the forklift, make a Hacking roll opposed by Piloting (if the adversary is human) or Hacking (if the adversary is another Assistant). Whoever wins the opposed roll is the "current" driver of the forklift, and can use it in his or her turn unless another character or Assistant wrestles control of the forklift from him or her. Remember that the heroes' enemies also have Assistants of their own!
- **Escape Hatch:** It is possible to jam the hatch at any time to stop Coban from escaping. If a hero spends a Benny, then his Assistant may attempt a Dramatic task using the Hacking skill to jam the hatch. There is no time limit for this Dramatic Task. Only one Benny must be spent, regardless of how many rounds the Assistant takes to complete the Dramatic Task. Only one Assistant may be attempting this at a time. Make sure the Assistant in question gets an Action Card to see if any complications ensue, as per the Dramatic Task rules. If the Assistant is successful, the hatch jams and won't open (if Coban hasn't escaped) or won't allow the enemy ship to undock (if Coban has already boarded the ship). Another Dramatic Task may be attempted to unjam the hatch if necessary.

MARCEL COBAN

Coban already begins play with the *armor* power enabled, as well as the *deflection* power with a raise. Remember to take advantage of Coban's special power with Tests of Will to taunt or intimidate as many heroes as possible, using penalties for groups if necessary (see the *Setting Rules* section of the *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*). These taunts and intimidations also give valuable information to the heroes. What follows is a list of sample comments Coban might use for the Tests of Will:

- (if the heroes entered the lab in location #7 and used the simulation): "So you want to know what *raze* is, eh? I'll tell you! It's a psionic power we have found, that can kill Devourers with a thought! You should wonder, is that the only thing we can kill with but a thought?"
- (if the heroes did not enter the lab in location #7, or did not use the simulation): "We know so much more than you! Did you know we even managed to capture a Devourer, long ago? Yes! And we also have the power to kill them with a thought! It's called *raze*, and it's a power your puny minds will never comprehend!"
- "You and the rest of humanity have been playing Ganendra Nathan's game from the very beginning! Who do you think orchestrated the assassination of Governor Selnes? Who do you think crashed the Stellar Comm Network? Now the Devourers have you non-psions in their grasp, just as we planned!"
- "You may be wondering who knows *raze*, don't you? Let me tell you: *absolutely everyone*! Long ago we decided to store *raze* inside every Chrysalian citizen's mind using *brain lock*! Now with just a thought we can unlock an army of psions that can destroy any Devourer invasion! So when humanity falls, who do you think will still be alive to rise above the wreckage?"
- "The *raze* power is beyond your reach! And so is the password to unlock it! You will never get it from me, and the only other person who knows it is Ganendra Nathan himself, back on Earth. And you will never reach Earth!"
- "Do you think your troubles end here on Chrysalis? Viktor Karragan and the fleet in space have been alerted! Even if you gain temporary control of Atlas City, you will not survive *him*!"

Coban also has the *mind burn* power, and will not hesitate to use it against the heroes when appropriate.

Make sure the heroes don't get the password from Coban. The easiest way to do this is to make sure Coban dies during the battle. Coban is willing to commit suicide if that keeps the heroes from recovering the password. He has also given orders to his guards to kill him themselves if everything is lost.

If despite your best attempts at avoiding it, Coban is captured, you can have him laugh evilly at the heroes while pointing out that before the battle he ordered one of his guards to use *brain lock* on Coban himself, locking the password from Coban's mind. He points to the dead body of the guard is question (most likely killed by the heroes) thus explaining that now the password is out of reach of anyone in Chrysalis.

If Coban manages to escape, he joins Viktor Karragan's fleet in space, where the heroes will have a second chance at fighting him. The heroes must still not be allowed to recover the password to unlock *raze*.

As soon as Coban falls or escapes, Lindsay's control via the *puppet* power vanishes, if it hadn't already.

- **Marcel Coban:** See page 237.
- **Lindsay:** See page 236.
- **Coban's Elite guards (1 per hero):** Use stats for Veteran Psion.
- **Coban's guards (1 per hero):** Use stats for Soldier Psion.
- **Forklift (1)**

SCENE 6: THE DEFENSE OF CHRYSALIS

Thanks to the heroes' actions, the Resistance has secured Brotherhood HQ, albeit with heavy losses. As Ryan or Lindsay explain, however, things are far from over.

Atlas City is in chaos, as law and order have broken down. Resistance fighters battle it out in the streets with Brotherhood soldiers as the population realizes what is happening and starts to take sides. In the meantime, Admiral Karragan, alerted to the upheaval in Chrysalis, is already on his way with his entire fleet.

Ryan asks the heroes for help in obtaining support from the population of Chrysalis against Karragan's fleet. What the heroes know of the outside will be crucial in convincing the planet of the need to commit to the Devourer War.

If the heroes agree to help, Ryan takes them to Brotherhood HQ's communication center. There he proposes opening up a message communication channel to every citizen in Atlas City and convince them with a speech.

If the heroes decide not to help, the Resistance barely manages to pacify the population (assume zero successes in the Success Table below). Move on to the "Battle over Chrysalis" section below.

CONVINCING THE PLANET

Assuming the heroes decided to help, read or paraphrase the following:

You enter the communications center of Brotherhood HQ, a room full of communications equipment. You are all seated in V-World chairs and connected to the systems. "We will make sure to broadcast the images you think of via V-World," details a technician.

As the communication opens to every V-World receiver and lens in Atlas City, Ryan begins. "Citizens of Chrysalis: In the last few hours the government of Atlas City has fallen and we, the Resistance, now control Brotherhood HQ. You are probably confused, scared and angry. Please hear us out. We need you to know this: You have not been told the truth about this place. You have not been told the truth about what is happening in the Seven Worlds. Now you will hear what is going on, from those who have been out there to see it."

With that, Ryan looks at you, asking you to tell your story and convince the planet of what you know is true.

The heroes are expected to gain the support of the population of Chrysalis against Viktor Karragan's fleet.

Play this as a Social Conflict. For each of the three rounds of the Social Conflict a single hero can give a stirring speech that will be broadcast to the entire planet and to the ships and stations in orbit. The hero who made the speech then makes a Persuasion roll. Each success and raise nets the group a social success.

The following are some of the points that the heroes could make during their speech:

- The Seven Worlds are under attack by aliens called the Devourers.
- At least three human worlds, possibly more, have already fallen to the unstoppable invaders.
- Human resistance was weakened by the assassination of Governor Selnes, arranged by the Psion Brotherhood.
- Humanity has not been able to coordinate their defenses because of the crash of the Stellar Communications Network, also arranged by the Psion Brotherhood.
- The Psion Brotherhood knows a power that can defeat the Devourers; yet they have kept it secret, and refused to use it to save humanity.
- Now that their secret is out, the leaders of the Brotherhood will do anything to stop the Resistance and the Circle to use it to save non-psions.

Give the hero a bonus or penalty to the subsequent Persuasion roll depending on how good or bad his or her speech is. The modifier should range from +2 to –2.

Cooperative rolls are allowed should another hero wish to help the story. Make sure the support makes sense, though. It is possible that a hero may make the case worse through clumsy speech and earn a penalty to the final roll.

There are certain topics that are sure to generate bonuses and penalties. For example:

- Ganendra Nathan is idolized by most members of the Brotherhood. An insult or verbal attack against him, not supported by evidence or carefully built logic, will most likely antagonize the population.
- Most psions are neither good nor evil, just people who are living their lives and believe in their organization. Heroes should avoid insulting them or the ideals of the Brotherhood they represent.
- Since Ryan has told the heroes they may also project images from their memory, particularly compelling images chosen by the heroes to make their case (such as the attack on Nouvelle Vie for example, or a scene from the Devourer simulation) should generate a bonus.
- Particularly daring heroes may use the third round of the speech to field questions from the general population. This automatically nets them a +1 bonus to the final Persuasion roll for their openness. Ask the hero the hardest possible questions you can think of, and apply additional bonuses or penalties to the final roll depending on how good the answers were. Some possible questions and comments could be "Why should we trust you? You are terrorists who attacked hundreds and just toppled our government!," "How do you know if we got involved in this war it would make any difference? What if the best way to ensure humanity's survival is to stay here, hidden in Chrysalis?," or "You are outright liars! Ganendra Nathan has defended humanity for decades! He would never condone such a thing!"

After the heroes' speech ends, Ryan lays a final plea, and closes the transmission. Count the total number of social successes generated by the heroes and consult the Success Table.

Describe the results of their effort to the heroes. After the speech the heroes are whisked away to recover from their ordeal. This might be a good time for the heroes to go back to the lab and simulation room in location #7, above, if they didn't already. This encounter well provide them with invaluable background on the Devourers. If the heroes don't think about this then one of their Assistants brings the point to their attention and suggest a visit to the lab.

SUCCESS TABLE

# OF SUCCESSES	DESCRIPTION	GAME EFFECT
0	The population is not convinced. The Resistance manages to pacify the situation but there is practically no support from the people.	Nothing.
1 – 2	The population doesn't trust the Resistance but is intrigued by the accusations. The Resistance gains some support but still faces an uphill battle trying to rally the population against Ganendra Nathan.	The heroes' side gains ONE extra token in the Mass Battle against Viktor Karragan.
3 – 4	The population is convinced at an intellectual level. Many of them commit to defending Chrysalis from Admiral Karragan's attack. This includes several orbiting ships. The people still need to be engaged more emotionally, though.	The heroes' side gains TWO extra tokens in the Mass Battle against Viktor Karragan.
5+	The heroes raise the entire population of Chrysalis into committing to saving the Seven Worlds! The population erupts in demonstrations of support for their fellow humans and prepares to defend Chrysalis (and then humanity) with everything they have.	The heroes' side gains THREE extra tokens in the Mass Battle against Viktor Karragan.

BATTLE OVER CHRYSALIS

A few days after the takeover of Brotherhood HQ the heroes are asked to join the Resistance fleet to defend Chrysalis against Admiral Karragan. Assuming they join, read or paraphrase the following:

Several days after your emotional speech to the planet, you are standing on the bridge of the battleship Psion Pride, *the largest ship the defenders of Chrysalis have. Taking advantage of the protection ships parked in the orbit of Chrysalis, of the reserve military ships and even of several civilian transport and passenger ships that were equipped with weapons, you have built a fleet to defend the planet. It is definitely not as strong or powerful as Admiral Karragan's fleet, but it will have to do.*

As you take your seats in the special chairs that will protect you from the impact of enemy attacks, and as Coulborne Shields are spun and ships accelerate, the wall screens around you show Karragan's fleet, composed of both manned ships and unmanned platforms, still a few hours away. The imposing Captain August Yantz, formerly of a member of the military forces of the Psion Brotherhood, approaches and offers you the chance to lead the fleet into battle.

The heroes can choose one of them to be the leader of the fleet. The chosen leader will use his or her Knowledge (Battle) skill to control the Chrysalis fleet against Admiral Karragan. If the heroes decline, Yantz takes control, although the heroes still roll for Yantz. Point out to the heroes that Yantz is not a Wild Card and therefore his chances of rolling high numbers on Knowledge (Battle) and Morale rolls are probably lower than those of most of the heroes.

Karragan has 10 tokens, while the defenders have 6 tokens plus the tokens they got for the heroes' efforts in rallying the population during the previous scene.

Besides the bonus for Major Fortifications (see the *Mass Battles in Space* section of the *Setting Guide*), Morale rolls for the heroes' side receive an additional +2 bonus since they cannot retreat from the orbit of Chrysalis.

✹ **Admiral Viktor Karragan:** See page 231.

- **Captain August Yantz:** Use stats for Typical Psion but with a Knowledge (Battle) skill of d8.

FINAL CONFRONTATION

If Karragan survived the previous encounter, you could play this final showdown with the heroes. Read or paraphrase the following to the heroes:

As enemy ships explode, fly away, or surrender, you realize you have won! Chrysalis is free! Your celebration is cut short, however, by a message that arrives on your screen. It's Viktor Karragan himself, his face consumed by rage.

"You will not destroy everything our leader Ganendra Nathan and the Psion Brotherhood have been working for! I will kill you if it's the last thing I do!"

As Karragan screams these words your monitors show that the battleship Superior, *Karragan's flagship, is racing at full speed towards you. And Karragan does not look like the type who surrenders.*

No other ships are close enough to intercept, so the heroes and their crew are on their own.

To run a battle between two large spaceships, use the modified version of the Mass Battle rules for capitol ships (see the Mass Battles in *Space* section of the *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*). The *Superior* (a Battleship) has ten tokens while the *Psion Pride* (also a Battleship, albeit older and more battered by the battle) has eight. Karragan has a +2 bonus to his Knowledge (Battle) rolls since he is an expert at ship-to-ship combat. Renew Karragan's Bennies for this battle.

If the *Superior* fails the Knowledge (Ship Ops) roll used in lieu of Morale, the ship explodes from damage and overheating. Karragan does not surrender.

RUNNING THE MASS BATTLE

Familiaritze yourself and the heroes with the standard Mass Battle rules from *Savage Worlds* as well as the *Mass Battles* in *Space* section of the *Setting Guide*.

Remember that the trick of any Mass Battle is the description and the excitement in narrating the action. Make sure to keep the focus on these two fleets and the danger and carnage generated by the innumerable lasers, missiles and coilguns firing at each other. As per the Mass Battle rules, give bonuses and penalties to any side that narrates an original or devastating strategy, depending on what they try to do, to ramp up the excitement.

EPILOGUE

Once the battle has ended, and with Karragan vanquished, the heroes and their allies are in complete control of Chrysalis. Read or paraphrase the following:

In just a few short weeks, Chrysalis has irrevocably changed. The population of the planet has reached a consensus: the only way to save humanity from the Devourers, and to atone for what the Brotherhood has done, is for the people of Chrysalis to get involved in the war.

Most of the crew in Karragan's fleet did not receive the transmission of your speech to the population of Atlas City, and thus react with surprise to news of the war and of what has been happening outside. It does not take long for them to see things from your point of view and join the cause.

Only one question remains: Now what?

WHAT IF THE HEROES LOSE?

If the heroes lose to Karragan and his cronies, all is not lost. Karragan captures all ships (including the Psion Pride) and regains control of Chrysalis. The heroes could flee back to Atlas City before Karragan captures them, or be captured and helped to escape by other rogue members of the Resistance.

In any case, though, the cat is out of the bag. The population of Chrysalis now knows something is very wrong, and will demand explanations that Karragan is not willing to give. Before long Chrysalis is under a heavy-handed martial law, with a population ready to revolt. There are the makings for a great adventure here as the heroes organize and mount the resistance to topple Karragan before it's too late. After bringing Karragan down (or convincing most of his soldiers to join them), the heroes are ready to use his and their fleet to go back to Earth and fight the Devourers.



Time for the heroes to brainstorm the next step. Hopefully it should occur to them (but suggest it via an NPC if it doesn't) that transporting as many psions as possible to Earth and unlocking the *raze* power in their heads would allow them to destroy the Devourers. If they need to, further research information found in Dr. Graham's lab allows the resistance to calculate that just fifty thousand psions should be able to jointly use *raze* to annihilate hundreds of thousands of Devourers. The heroes have finally found the weapon they were looking for!

Of course, the *raze* power is still brain-locked inside every psion's head, and Ganendra Nathan is now the only person left who knows the password. Nathan is in the Psion Brotherhood headquarters on Earth, in Brotherhood Station. Most likely he is preparing to leave the planet before the Devourers arrive (which should not be long), but many don't put it above him to sacrifice himself to keep appearances and the existence of Chrysalis a secret. The heroes will need to confront Nathan and get the password from him.

Once the heroes are agreed and their plans are laid out, read or paraphrase the following, changing it as appropriate:

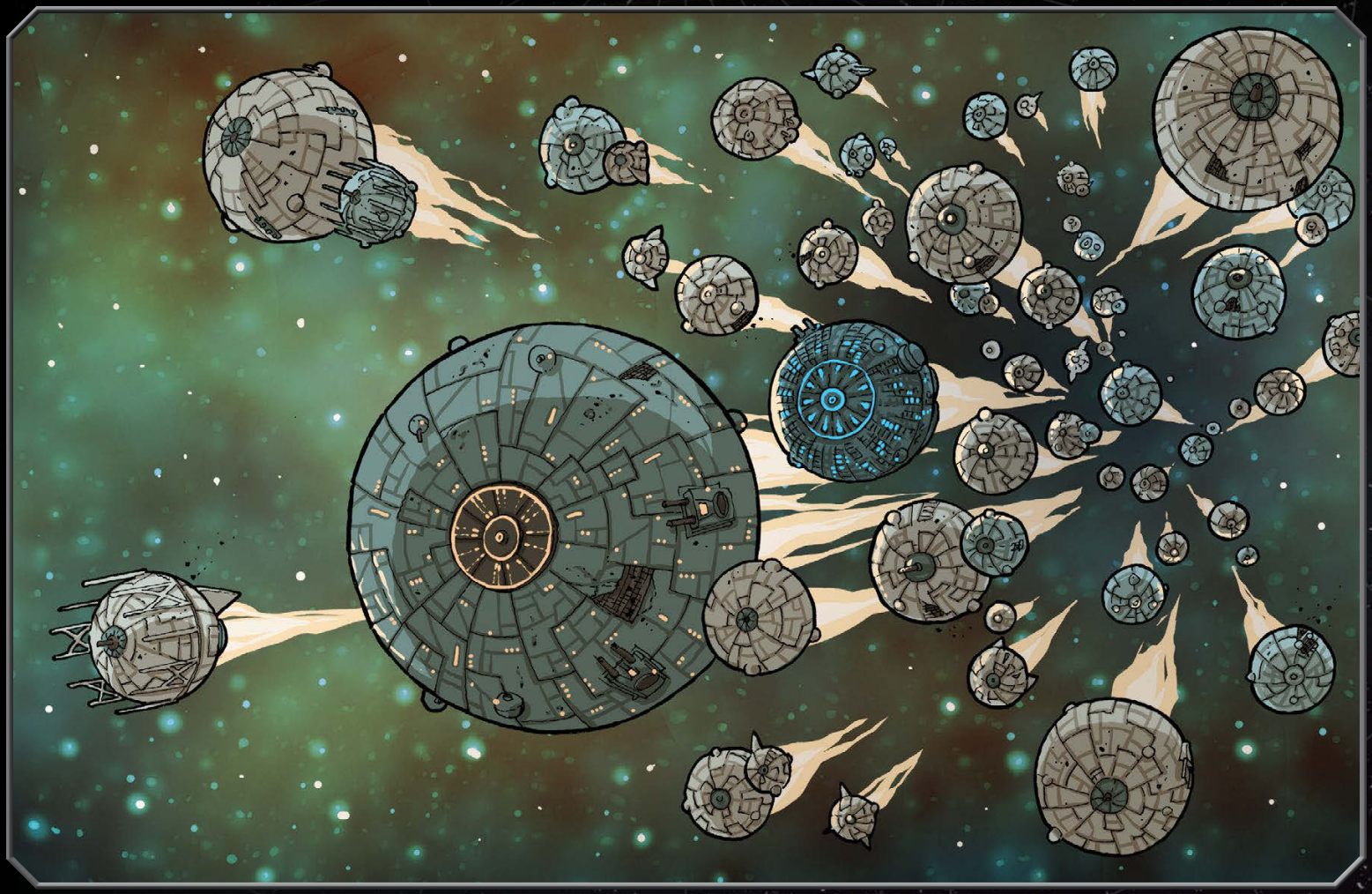
A few weeks later you are in orbit around Chrysalis, on the bridge of a repaired Psion Pride*. You are surrounded by a fleet of almost a hundred military and transport ships, carrying more than seventy thousand psions ready to risk their lives to save humanity. Most were volunteers, both civilian and military, and you've devoted this time to shipping them off-planet and organizing the logistics necessary to feed and transport them over the long trip to Earth. A second fleet will hopefully depart in a few more weeks, but you've already waited long enough. Your own ship, the* Voyager*, was recovered as part of Karragan's fleet and repaired to perfection, and is now being towed by one of the transport ships of the fleet.*

Your task is clear: You must reach Earth as soon as possible, wrest the brain lock password from Ganendra Nathan, unlock the brains of the tens of thousands of psions under your command, and use their power to stop the Devourers. But maybe you're too late! It's been months since the Devourers attacked Apollo, and you've received no news. Hopefully Earth is still safe, but you don't know. And you are months *away from your destination! How will you get there in time?*

As the fleet leaves the orbit of Chrysalis towards the Stein 2051 jump point you realize the late Epsilon Leader Antoine was right to trust you. Humanity now has a chance, even if it's a slim one. Will you save what is left of the Seven Worlds, or will all this effort be in vain?

The adventure now continues in *Exodus*, the next module in the epic *Seven Worlds* campaign!

SEVEN WORLDS



6. EXODUS

introduction

EITHER WE ARE ALONE IN THE UNIVERSE OR WE ARE NOT; EITHER WAY IT'S MIND-BOGGLING.

—LEE DUBRIDGE, PRESIDENT NIXON'S SCIENCE ADVISOR

Welcome to the sixth module in the *Seven Worlds* campaign! This epic, unforgettable odyssey places the heroes at the center of the greatest conflict humanity has ever seen, and puts its future in their hands.

At its heart, the story told in the *Seven Worlds* campaign is a tragedy, the story of the annihilation of humanity by forces far beyond its comprehension, and of a few heroes' efforts to turn back the tide. Other campaign's measure of success is the answer to the question "Did we win?" In this campaign, success or failure is measured in the answer to a different question: "Did we survive?"

This adventure continues where *Chrysalis*, the fifth *Seven Worlds* campaign adventure, left off. It is assumed you've already played that adventure before starting this one, but if you haven't you will still find lots of interesting and challenging scenarios for you and your players to enjoy!

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

This section gives a short overview of the *Seven Worlds* Campaign up until this point.

WHAT'S HAPPENED BEFORE

A Mysterious Encounter, the introductory adventure included in the *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*, told the story of a group of Circle officers who, while on a routine patrol next to the frontier planet of Nouvelle Vie, witness the appearance of a strange alien ship and see its awesome destructive power. As a result, the heroes were sent to Concordia, one of the most powerful planets in the Seven Worlds, and the headquarters of the Circle, to report on what they saw.

In *Rumors of War*, the heroes travelled to Concordia and met Epsilon Leader Antoine, leader of the Circle. Antoine told the heroes that the Psion Brotherhood had been secretly interested in these strange ship sightings, and asked them to go to Brotherhood Headquarters on Earth and request information on the sighting from the Brotherhood, using official channels. Antoine also asked the heroes to investigate the mysterious disappearance of Dr. Luis LaMarche, a renowned scientist from Earth.

While attending Concordia's Centenary Celebration, the heroes became involved in a terrorist attack that ended with the successful assassination of Governor Selnes, the leader of Bay Jing. Since Bay Jing and Concordia were bitter rivals, this assassination sparked the beginnings of an interstellar war.

When the heroes arrived at Earth, they met the emissary of the mysterious alien benefactors known as the N'ahili. They also met the leaders of the Psion Brotherhood, including the famous Ganendra Nathan, but failed to get any clues to the identity of the mysterious alien ship they saw. Finally, they get to investigate Dr. LaMarche's disappearance and discovered he had been working on unspecified "improvements" to the Stellar Communications Network, the main technology that allowed the Seven Worlds to communicate.

In *Divided We Fall*, the heroes returned to Circle Headquarters in Concordia and were sent undercover to investigate a curious deployment of ships made by the Concordian fleet as part of their war with Bay Jing. An unlikely discovery ended with the heroes carrying information on a top-secret Concordian plan that could ruthlessly allow them to win the war in a single stroke.

By the end of that adventure, the heroes were in Nouvelle Vie again, where the bulk of the Concordian and Bay Jingnian fleets were about to meet in battle. At this point a fleet of mysterious alien ships materialized and completely destroyed both fleets. Simultaneously, the entire Stellar Communications Network mysteriously crashed, thus isolating the Seven Worlds. The heroes barely escaped with their lives and flew towards Concordia, carrying a desperate cry for help against an invader more powerful than all of them.

In *Into the Fire*, several months had passed since the fall of the Concordian and Bay Jingnian fleets at Nouvelle Vie, and humanity was fighting a losing war against the alien invaders now known as the Devourers. An anxious Epsilon Leader Antoine knew conventional means will not stop these aliens, and

asked the heroes to go on a long-shot mission to find an alternative way to stop them.

Following an anonymous tip, the heroes travelled to Apollo and became embroiled in a political war between various corporations. To solve the situation, the heroes had to storm a faraway research facility that had been taken over by terrorists. One of these terrorists had a clue the heroes needed, a strange story and the name of an unknown place: Chrysalis. Apparently this place had something to do with Logan's End, the farthest and least civilized of the Seven Worlds.

In *Broken Circle* the heroes followed a report suggesting the elusive Dr. LaMarche was on Harris Station, and finally learn the secret he had obtained at such a great cost. It turned out LaMarche had discovered that the Stellar Communications Network was going to be sabotaged from within at the orders of the Psion Brotherhood. He also told the heroes the orders came from close to Logan's End. To escape, the heroes had to survive a major space battle against an enemy willing to do anything to keep LaMarche's secret from getting out.

As the rest of human space continued to fall to the Devourers, the heroes reached Logan's End and followed up on the only clue to Chrysalis, the sad story of a failing smuggler crew that died several years ago. Before the adventure was over, the heroes had crisscrossed the planet and become involved in a rescue mission in the deep, savage jungles of Logan's End. The reward for a successful rescue: The coordinates of the mysterious Chrysalis.

In *Chrysalis*, the heroes finally make it to the Eighth World, a strange planet populated by Psions. There they learn that the Psion Brotherhood is planning to hide here while the Devourers annihilate humanity. They also discover that the Psion Brotherhood has a secret power that can destroy the Devourers if they so wish. This power can be unlocked with a secret password, a word that can be obtained only from Ganendra Nathan himself.

Emboldened by what they find, the heroes fight to take over Chrysalis. After a climactic battle with the leaders of the planet, the heroes manage to prepare a fleet with tens of thousands of psions to fly towards Earth, recover the secret password to the power, and stop the Devourers before they destroy the mother world.

WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW

As this adventure begins, the heroes are ready to leave Chrysalis with the hastily assembled fleet of military and civilian ships carrying as many psions as possible towards Earth. However, tensions begin to appear within the fleet, as not all followers of Ganendra Nathan have been eliminated. A few of them stage a terrorist operation to take over the flagship of the fleet and use it to blow up all civilian ships. It is up to the heroes to recover the flagship and stop the terrorists from achieving their goals.

With the fleet saved, the heroes follow the advice of the mysterious N'ahili, who appear one last time to point them towards a secret shortcut that could allow the fleet to reach Earth in weeks instead of months. The N'ahili offer cryptic clues as to their purpose and the future, as well as a last farewell present to the heroes.

RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

Here are a few tips on running the adventure from now on. Most of the Seven Worlds have fallen to the invaders and trade and commerce have all but disappeared, and this should be reflected in the mood of the game.

A SENSE OF URGENCY

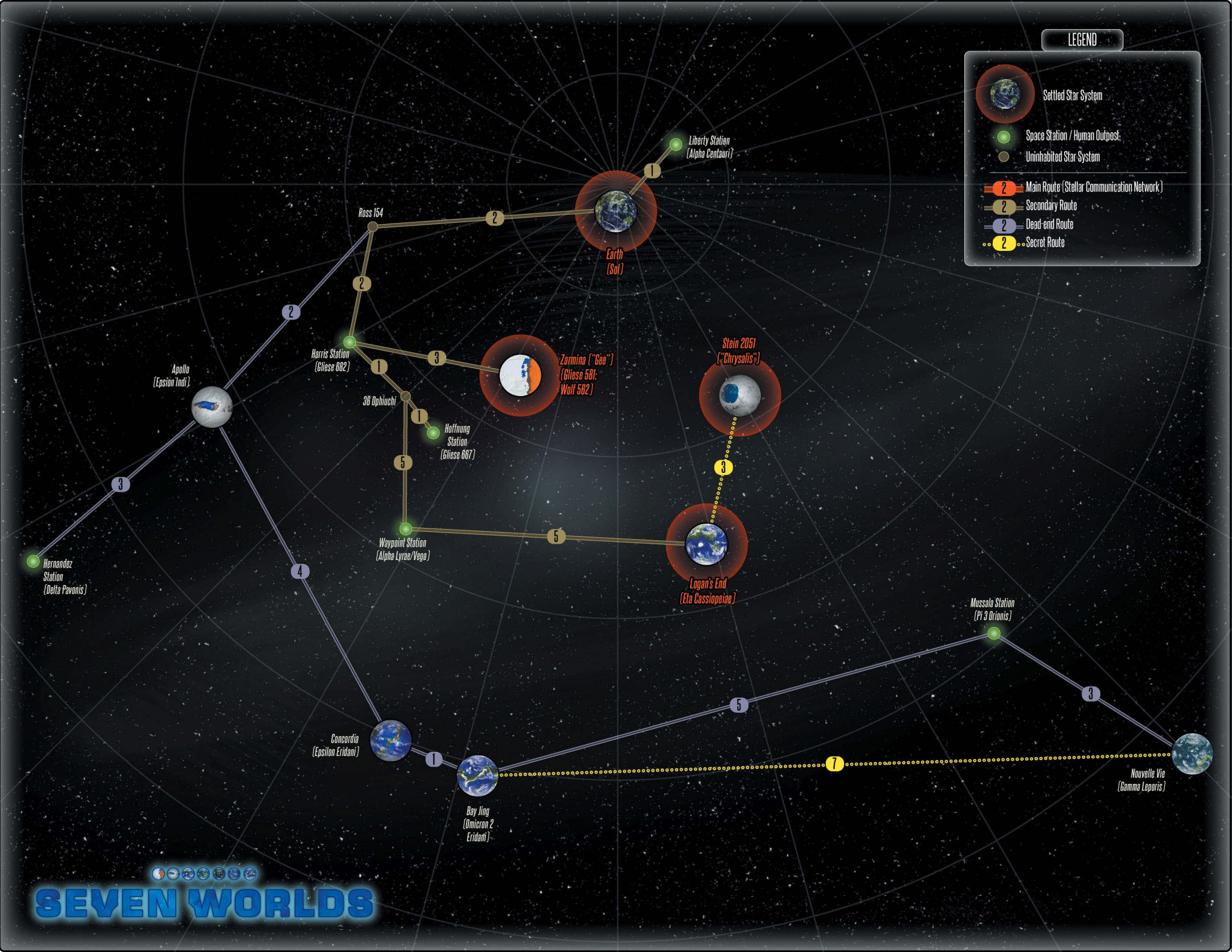
From now on the action is played against a deadline: The impending Devourer attack on Earth. The heroes are in a race against time to reach Earth before it is too late. Provide this sense of urgency in NPC conversations within the fleet, as well as in interactions with people outside the fleet.

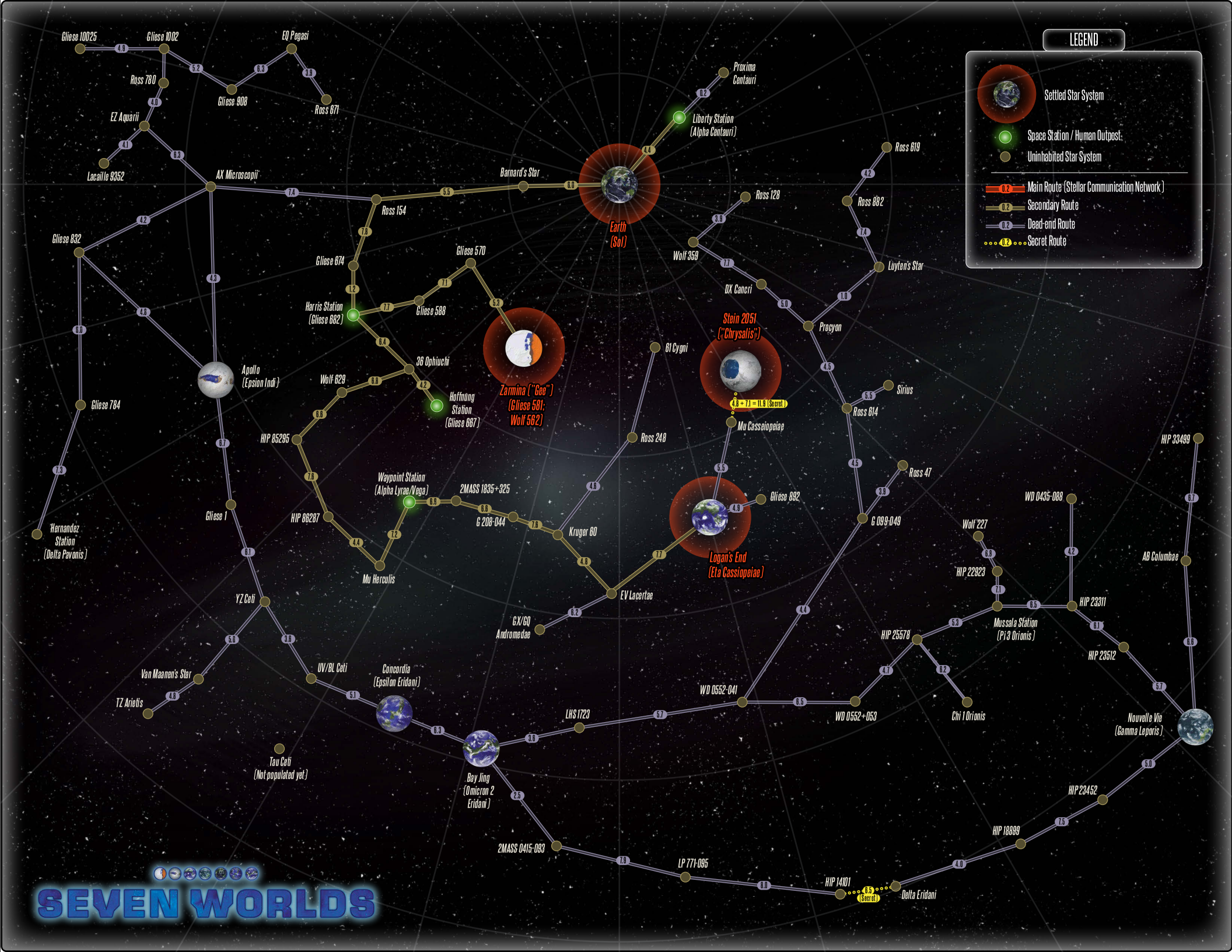
Consider this sense of urgency when incorporating side stories and adventures. Some ideas have been included in the Side Stories section. The "Managing a Fleet" side story in particular could be a particularly appropriate framework to build interesting side stories during this adventure.

ENCOUNTERS IN SPACE

If you are using the optional Random Space Encounters tables detailed in the *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*, make the following changes to the rules:

- Since the Stellar Communications Network is permanently down, the –1 modifier for travelling between systems not connected by it *always* applies, regardless of where the heroes are travelling to or from.
- If the final modified die roll is a –1, instead of a Research Ship the heroes find a Devourer ship. Note that a Devourer ship can easily overwhelm most


LEGEND
Settled Star System
Space Station / Human Outpost
Uninhabited Star System
2 Main Route (Stellar Communication Network)
2 Secondary Route
2 Dead-end Route
2 Secret Route
Liberty Station (Alpha Centauri)
Earth (Sol)
Ross 154
Harris Station (Gliese 682)
Apollo (Epsion Indi)
Zarmina ("Gee") (Gliese 581; Wolf 562)
36 Ophiuchi
Hoffnung Station (Gliese 667)
Stein 2051 ("Chrysalis")
Waypoint Station (Alpha Lyrae/Vega)
Hernandez Station (Delta Pavonis)
Logan's End (Eta Cassiopeiae)
Mussala Station (Pi 3 Orionis)
Concordia (Epsilon Eridani)
Bay Jing (Omicron 2 Eridani)
Nouvelle Vie (Gamma Leporis)
SEVEN WORLDS


LEGEND
Settled Star System
Space Station / Human Outpost
Uninhabited Star System
Main Route (Stellar Communication Network)
Secondary Route
Dead-end Route
Secret Route
Gliese 10025
Gliese 1002
EQ Pegasi
Ross 780
Gliese 908
Ross 671
EZ Aquarii
Lacaille 8352
AX Microscopii
Proxima Centauri
Liberty Station (Alpha Centauri)
Barnard's Star
Earth (Sol)
Ross 154
Ross 619
Ross 882
Ross 128
Wolf 359
Luyten's Star
DX Cancri
Procyon
Gliese 832
Gliese 674
Gliese 570
Harris Station (Gliese 862)
Gliese 588
Zarmina ("Gee") (Gliese 581; Wolf 562)
Stein 2051 ("Chrysalis")
4.8 + 7.1 = 11.8 (Secret)
Mu Cassiopeiae
Sirius
Ross 614
61 Cygni
Ross 248
Apollo (Epsion Indi)
Wolf 629
38 Ophiuchi
Hoffnung Station (Gliese 667)
Gliese 784
HIP 85295
Waypoint Station (Alpha Lyrae/Vega)
2MASS 1835+325
G 208-044
Kruger 60
Gliese 892
Logan's End (Eta Cassiopeiae)
Ross 47
G 099-049
HIP 33499
WD 0435-088
AB Columbae
Wolf 227
HIP 22923
HIP 23311
Mussala Station (Pi 3 Orionis)
HIP 23512
Hernandez Station (Delta Pavonis)
Gliese 1
HIP 86287
Mu Herculis
EV Lacertae
YZ Ceti
GX/GQ Andromedae
Van Maanen's Star
TZ Arietis
UV/BL Ceti
Concordia (Epsilon Eridani)
HIP 25578
Chi 1 Orionis
WD 0552-041
WD 0552+053
LHS 1723
Nouvelle Vie (Gamma Leporis)
Tau Ceti (Not populated yet)
Bay Jing (Omicron 2 Eridani)
HIP 23452
HIP 18899
2MASS 0415-093
LP 771-095
HIP 14101
8.5 (Secret)
Delta Eridani
SEVEN WORLDS

hero ships, so make sure the heroes have a way out. Maybe the Devourer ship does not attack or follow for unknown reasons. Maybe it attacks once and then flees. Whatever it is, don't let the heroes enter a battle you believe there is no way they can win.

- If the final modified die roll is a 3, instead of a Psion Brotherhood ship the heroes find a Derelict Ship of a type you choose. All ships have been destroyed and are now hulks. You get to decide whether they were destroyed by Devourers or by another human fleet, as well as if there are still survivors above or not. Maybe the heroes get to explore the derelict to recover something valuable inside.

Engineering some random encounters in space could be very useful to show the players what is happening in the Seven Worlds. Use random encounters to show the heroes the results of the war: derelict spaceships, disheartened refugees, and even a stray Devourer ship. Take advantage of these to tell the story the way you think it should be told.

UPDATED MAPS

The following maps show how the formerly Seven Worlds stand at the start of this adventure. Note the following significant differences with the map used in the previous adventure:

- **The path between Gamma Leporis (Nouvelle Vie) and Ross 154 is now marked as a Dead-end line. This is because all human civilization there has been wiped out by the Devourer invasion.**

If you are using the 3-D maps, this might be a good opportunity to show the heroes the updated map this adventure, explaining that since the Stellar Comm Network has permanently crashed, most routes between planets are now in a different color.

In this adventure, the heroes begin the long trip towards Earth. On the way, they discover not everyone is as committed to the mission as they are. And a surprise alien visit promises to change everything, again.

SCENE 1: SECOND THOUGHTS

This scene occurs just a day after the fleet has left the orbit of Chrysalis.

The heroes are in the Settler Ship *Destiny*, having left the *Psion Pride* in one of its shuttles. They are here to visit Ryan, who has called for them. If Ryan or Lindsay are not alive, replace them with Eric Chambers (see sidebar) or some other Resistance leader you deem appropriate.

When the heroes enter Ryan's room, they see him sitting on a chair, staring at a video on his wall screen. The video is an old news story about the Psion Riots in Bay Jing from a few decades ago, and features Ganendra Nathan as its main character:

"... in the midst of this tragedy, with more than one thousand lynched psions, and a similar number of casualties among normals," the news reporter says, betraying a bias against psions, "we must focus on this nineteen-year-old man who has lost so much and still managed to save Triumph from harm by hunting and stopping the deranged rogue psion who caused all this death. He is a psion too, and his name is Ganendra Nathan."

The screen changes to show a haggard and tired young man, who with a tear-stricken but defiant face is giving an emotional, improvised speech to a crowd. The reporter's voice speaks on top. "These riots have cost young Ganendra the lives of both his parents, of his non-psion girlfriend Christine, and of his nine-year-old beloved sister Anuva. Yet he was able to rise above his pain and focus on locating and capturing the man behind the depraved killings. His story has made him an unlikely bridge between psions and non-psions, and some say he has a bright future in front of him in the Psion Brotherhood, if he chooses to follow it."

The screen shows hundreds of enraptured people, both psion and non-psion, joining hands in emotion and pain as the young man says "We have endured unbearable pain, both humans and psions! And we have proven we bleed and hurt the same! Let this tragedy serve to bring us closer, so we can rise above our emotions and forge the future of humanity together!" His final words are drowned in a sea of cheers.

As the screen goes blank, Ryan looks at the heroes and wonders whether Ganendra Nathan was planning to wipe all non-psions right then and there. He also casually mentions the rumor that Christine, his girlfriend, was killed by Ganendra himself during the riots, as payback for what non-psions had done to his beloved sister Anuva. This is a good time to have a conversation about the Psion Riots (see the *Bay Jing* section of the *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*) as well as about Ganendra Nathan himself (see page 243).

Once that is done, Ryan tells the heroes he invited them because they are all about to enter the Council Meeting convened by Captain Yantz. Before the meeting, Ryan wanted to let them know that he believes things will become harder. It was easy to join a glorious mission to save humanity from invaders; but now, as weeks go by in these cramped ships, tensions will increase, doubts will surface, and loyalties will crack. He asks the heroes to be on the lookout for these kinds of risks.

INVESTIGATING GANENDRA NATHAN

The scene above gives heroes an opportunity to know more about Ganendra Nathan. This information will be useful in the final encounter. If heroes investigate Ganendra's past, they find all references to his public history. His secret transformation during the Psion Riots, or his later scheming against humanity, are all of course secret and not available to heroes through investigation. Use the description of the events on the *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*, as well as of the Psion Riots in Bay Jing (see the *Bay Jing* section of the *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*) for background.

THE COUNCIL MEETING

Just then the wall screen lights up again and the heroes appear through a V-World projection in the *Psion Pride*'s main conference room, surrounded by the ship's officers. Captain Yantz, whom the heroes met in *Chrysalis*, leads the meeting. The captains of most of the military ships in the fleet are also virtually present via V-World communication between the ships. The purpose of the meeting is to decide what the next course of action is.

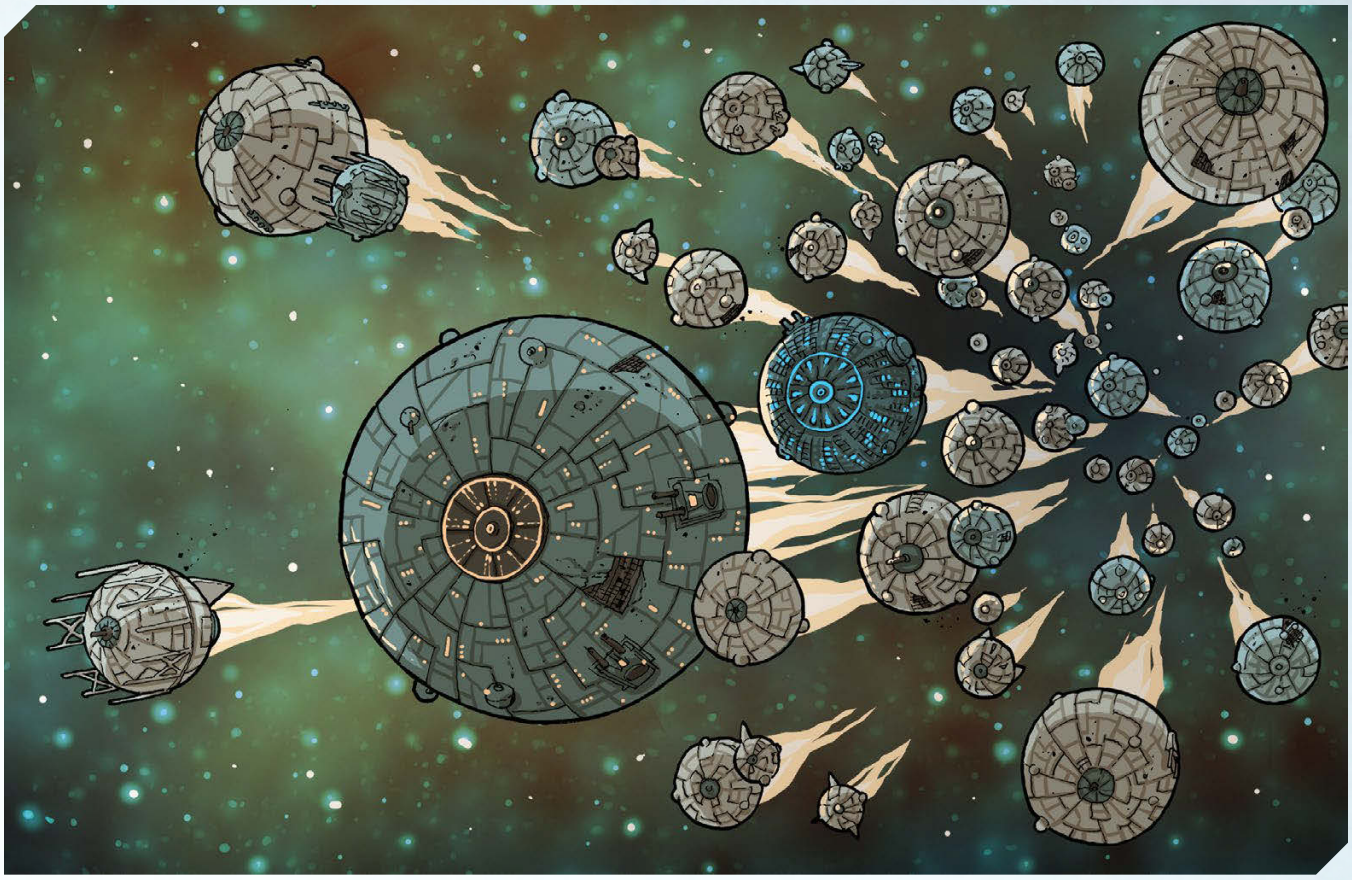
Yantz starts the meeting by detailing the situation: The fleet currently has 89 ships, out of which just 44 ships carry 94% of the 71,000 passengers. The remaining ships are military units, designed to protect the fleet. Given the slow speed of the Mark V Settler Ships in the fleet, it will take thirty-six weeks, or almost *nine months*, to reach Earth. This does not count the time spent on refueling and reloading supplies for all the passengers in Logan's End, Waypoint Station and Harris Station. This could easily add an extra month to the trip. By that time, the Devourers will have most likely destroyed Earth.

Yantz continues by also saying there are reports of dissatisfaction and disillusionment within the crew and passengers, as the pointlessness of their mission dawns on them. Measures to control the situation will have to be implemented during the trip.

CHARACTERS IN THE FLEET

It is your job to make the fleet feel alive! The following is a list of some of the fleet leaders the heroes could interact with. No statistics are provided unless mentioned.

- **Ryan and Lindsay:** Assuming they are still alive, Ryan and Lindsay are considered the unofficial civilian leaders of the fleet. They are committed to the heroes' mission and willing to risk their lives and the lives of their fellow Chrysalians if necessary to save humanity. In order to be closer to the civilians and volunteers, they have made the *Destiny*, one of the Settler Ships in the fleet, their headquarters. Their stats are listed at the end of the book.
- **Eric Chambers:** Another long-time leader of the Resistance, he is as committed as Ryan and Lindsay to the cause. Unfortunately Eric is not as charismatic as either Ryan or Lindsay, thus making it hard to lead the civilians if Ryan and Lindsay are not available.
- **Captain August Yantz:** Since most of the military high-command in Chrysalis was loyal to Coban and Karragan, Captain Yantz is one of the remaining high-ranking military leaders in the fleet, and should have been promoted if there were still time for those details. He is not as convinced of the wisdom of the plan as he was at the beginning, but believes in Ryan and Lindsay and will do as they say.
- **Captain Thomas Burge:** Another high-level leader in the fleet, he has survived by hiding his loyalty to Ganendra Nathan. He has concocted a dangerous plan to stop the fleet and retake Chrysalis before it is too late.
- **Captain Frank Cordova:** The third member of the current military high-command, Cordova was in a career dead-end when the revolution in Chrysalis occurred. Now the former surface desk worker is flexing rusted leadership muscles in space, and is enjoying himself immensely while supporting the new Chrysalis order.
- **Sergeant Alice Hynes:** This tough-looking marine is always ready to volunteer herself and her team of deadly soldiers to any mission, never mind the odds, as long as she feels it's for the right cause.
- **Corporal John Quiper:** Sergeant Hynes' second-in-command, Corporal Quiper has been assigned this role far too early, and does not feel quite ready for it. Alice trusts in his abilities, but privately suspects he still needs some experience. Fortunately, Corporal Quiper is learning fast.
- **Doctor Zöe Fariq:** Dr. Fariq was one of the scientists working on the theories and activities orchestrated by Dr. Oren Graham, and is thus familiar with some of his research. She significantly disagreed with Dr. Graham's ways and focus, though, and had secretly joined the Resistance. Now she is the foremost scientific expert in the fleet. If the heroes forgot to bring with them the canister containing Devourer flesh, (see *Chrysalis*) she has it with her.
- **Phillip Gomez:** Most born non-psions in Chrysalis live tough lives, and some wanted to change that. Phillip Gomez is one of the leaders of a small group of non-psions willing to change the status-quo any way they can. They joined Ryan and Lindsay's resistance long ago, and have been useful for the information they provided while on the menial jobs reserved for non-psions only. Now that the Resistance has triumphed, Gomez is waiting to see how this translates into new rights for his people. The urgency of the mission means there has not been time to talk about this, and Gomez is getting impatient.



After detailing the situation, Yantz opens the floor for discussion, and expectantly looks at the heroes for suggestions. As the heroes speak, it is Yantz himself who questions their arguments. The heroes should gradually become aware that the normally jovial Yantz is dark, broody and hostile to them. He speaks in a hopeless manner, as if he did not believe in the success of the mission.

One of the officers virtually present at the meeting, Captain Thomas Burge, openly sides with Yantz and questions the entire mission, accusing the heroes of risking the survival of the entire human race without a realistic plan to win the war.

Have the discussion be as long or short as is appropriate for your players. At the appropriate time, read or paraphrase the following:

Suddenly, every alarm in the ship starts blaring! All officers disconnect to go to their respective bridges and command centers. Yantz looks at you through the wall-screen and asks you to go to the bridge of the Destiny, *where he will be in touch with you.*

Assuming the heroes go to the bridge, read them the following:

As soon as you get to the bridge of the civilian ship you are briefed on the situation by the Destiny*'s captain: A ship has appeared on the jump point, and is flying towards the fleet at a very high speed! The* Psion Pride*'s systems are having trouble identifying what ship it is, and seem to indicate it is not of human origin.*

"Everyone, prepare for battle!," you see Yantz shouting, via the wall screen. "What is coming towards us? Is it a Devourer ship?"

One of the officers in the control deck takes a few seconds before answering. "Captain, we are receiving a communication from the approaching ship. It is a N'ahili ship." The officer points at you through the wall screen. "And it is asking to speak to them."

THE CHRYSALIS FLEET

Inquisitive heroes might want to know what the exact composition of the fleet is. In case it ever becomes necessary, the details are here. The number of passengers per ship is an average, and includes crew.

The total number of passengers in the fleet is 71,263 out of which 3,961 are military.

All civilian ships are loaded over passenger capacity to bring as many psions as possible. This makes for a cramped, uncomfortable trip.

- 12 Mark V Settler Ships (including the *Destiny*): 2654 passengers each.
- 32 Troop/Supply Ships: 1104 passengers each
- 6 Research Ships: 21 passengers each.

Military ships are crewed at maximum capacity, but are not overloaded. This allows them to react normally while in combat.

- 6 Battleships (including the *Psion Pride* and the *Olympian*): 277 passengers each.
- 14 Heavy Cruisers: 152 passengers each.
- 19 Patrol Ships (including the *Voyager*): 9 passengers each.

SCENE 2: THE N'AHILI ARRIVE

Scene 2 begins when the heroes are ready to talk to the N'ahili.

The N'ahili ship approaches the fleet at an acceleration of more than 20G. While approaching they broadcast that they mean no harm to the fleet, and their purpose is to speak to the heroes, whom they call by name.

After a few hours, the N'ahili reach a distance of one light-second and open a communication channel. The heroes are asked to go to a V-World terminal and connect. Yantz tells them that they will be eavesdropping on the conversation, in case their help is needed.

When the heroes connect, they find themselves in the same virtual Mediterranean country mansion as the last time they visited (see *Rumors of War*). In front of them is Adam, the N'ahili "ambassador."

What follows is a sample conversation you should use to handle the interaction between Adam and the heroes. The N'ahili will share no information other than what is said here.

What are you doing here?

We came looking for you. There are many things we need to discuss before we leave.

Are you the same N'ahili we saw on Earth?

Yes. For you, there are no other. A few weeks ago we left Earth. Permanently.

How did you get here? Supposedly the location of Chrysalis is a secret.

Few secrets are kept from us. Remember, back on Earth it was us who warned you about Chrysalis. It was us who sent Epsilon Leader Antoine the message suggesting you visit Whitehall on Apollo to find a clue about this place.

You have not helped us stop the Devourers! Now you are leaving us! Why?

Our work here is done. We have obtained what we needed, we have given you what we could. Far more than we should have. We have given you the stars. And many other things besides. And we helped you [points to the heroes] reach this place, and find a secret weapon that might help humanity survive. Is that not enough? What happens next is up to you.

But humanity is about to be annihilated! You are vastly more powerful than we are. With your help we could stop the Devourers. We could have saved millions of lives.

[Impatient sigh] You obviously do not understand how unimportant and irrelevant you truly are, how insignificant your achievements become. You have barely visited a dot in the scale of the Milky Way, yet you believe you are 'destined for the stars.' You don't realize that in the galactic scale you are... mosquitoes. Actually, the only difference between you and your mosquitoes is that there are more of them. Yet you are proud mosquitoes.

We would like to tell you that someday you will understand. But most likely your species will not live long enough to understand. Which is a pity, because we like your species very much.

If we are so irrelevant and doomed to die, and if you knew about the Devourers but were not willing to help us defend ourselves against

them, why did you bother helping us at all? Why not just leave us there, or kill us yourselves?

[silence]

You said you needed to discuss something with us. What was it?

We came to help you, one last time.

You need to reach Earth, both to find the key to activating your weapon and to defend your home world. Unfortunately, you are too far away, and you are too slow. The Devourers have established a base in the system you call Barnard's Star. In just a few more weeks, they will launch their final invasion of Earth. If you follow the path you know, you will not make it in time. But there is another way.

[a set of numbers appears floating in front of the heroes, most likely a set of jump coordinates]

Go to the 61 Cygni star system and look for these coordinates. Then keep your eyes, and your mind, open.

What is there? What will we find?

We have already helped you too much. And we will still help you twice more. When you get to 61 Cygni you will see. And we've also left a… memento on Earth.

Why do the Devourers take so long to invade? If they were faster, they could have destroyed us by now.

Again you see life from the point of view of the mosquito. Maybe your conception of time is not theirs. Maybe they believe they are fast.

Where will you go? Will we see you again?

Let us say that if we ever meet again, we will be very proud of you.

When the conversation ends, Adam says good-bye to the heroes and the connection closes. Then the N'ahili ship moves towards the jump point and after a few hours jumps, never to be seen again.

It is likely that the heroes will want to digest the information above, and either review their plans, ask some of their allies about it, or otherwise discuss it. Allow them as much time as they need to process this before moving on to the next scene.

SCENE 3: MUTINY

The adventure continues several weeks later, when the heroes are in the intermediate jump point between Chrysalis and Mu Cassiopeiae and are about to make the jump back to civilization. If you wish, you may add other side stories (see page 184) during the trip.

Read or paraphrase the following to the heroes:

You are on the bridge of the Psion Pride, *at the jump point that leads to Mu Cassiopeiae. The entire fleet is nearby, preparing to make the jump. Captain Yantz and other officers of the ship are checking their instruments and giving orders in preparation.*

You finally feel the familiar inside jolt of the jump. As your suddenly-foggy minds start to get over the effects of jump disorientation, you hear all alarms go off! You think you can listen to the sound of remote gun shots behind the alarms.

"Sir!," a startled crewmember tells Captain Yantz, "battles are being reported on all decks! Apparently someone's trying to take over the ship!" Other crewmembers interrupt to report a similar situation in other parts of the ship. "A large contingent of soldiers is approaching the bridge, killing everyone in their path!"

"Close the hatches! Seal the bridge!," yells a desperate Yantz. A few tense seconds go by, and nothing happens.

"They won't close, sir! The system is not responding to our commands! We've been somehow locked out!"

Yantz hits his console with both fists in frustration, then he releases himself from his chair and pulls his gun while barking "everyone, evacuate the bridge! Fall back and prepare to fight for th—!"

You don't get to hear the end of his sentence as a stun grenade flies from one of the passages into the bridge and explodes! As a large contingent of soldiers appears on the north bridge and the bridge erupts in a storm of deadly gunfire, it quickly becomes obvious to you and a few other crewmembers that you either fall back or you die!

The heroes get to see dozens and dozens of soldiers storm the bridge. Make it clear that they no chance of winning this fight, but they have a chance to escape.

ESCAPE!

In the confusion, the heroes get separated from the other crewmembers. Now they are on their own.

This is a zero-G chase through the corridors of the *Psion Pride*. Run it for five full rounds, using the Chase rules from *Savage Worlds*, and Agility as the maneuvering Trait. The heroes' pursuers have the advantage of superconductive magnetic arrays, which have been disabled for the heroes. Therefore, the heroes' Agility rolls have a –2 penalty.

Divide the enemies into as many groups as you feel are appropriate. Some typical obstacles in the chase include closed hatches, other groups of soldiers, and superconductive magnetic array traps. Any attempts to use Assistants in the chase fail, as the Assistants' authorization to use the ship's V-World services has been revoked.

After five rounds read or paraphrase the following:

Just when you are about to accept the hopelessness of trying to escape from a ship that has obviously been completely taken by the mutineers, a hatch opens on the passageway a few meters from you. "Quick! Over here!," a young voice yells at you. You turn and enter the hatch, which someone closes after you. You know you are being detected by the Psion Pride*'s V-World, and therefore that the enemy soldiers will find you anyway; you are therefore surprised to hear the heavy footsteps of running soldiers in the passageway behind you, ignoring the hatch and continuing on their way.*

You have eluded your pursuers! But how?

If a hero falls and can't be saved by his fellows, he or she will be taken to the Brig (location #18, see page 178). The other heroes might be able to rescue their comrade from there.

- **Soldier Psions (2 per hero, plus 2)**

THE JUNIOR ENGINEER

The heroes find themselves in a dark locker room in one of the less used passageways of the ship. Next to them is a thin, disheveled young crewmember, who identifies himself as Francis Olsen, Junior Assistant Engineer.

Francis explains that since he is the newest person in the engineering team he is usually sent by his senior crewmembers to do the jobs no one else wants to perform. Today he was fixing a broken sensor relay that had disabled V-World visibility in this part of the ship when the ship jumped and the mutiny began. To protect himself, Francis disabled the entire relay, thus making this part of the ship invisible to the sensors. When he saw the heroes fleeing he risked being detected to save them. Although the enemy is combing this part of the ship, Francis is reasonably sure that they still have a few hours before they are discovered.

Suddenly the speakers of the ship come alive, and the heroes get to hear the following speech:

Ships of the fleet! This is Captain Thomas Burge, now commanding the battleship Psion Pride*. In the last few weeks we have seen the greatest project of the Psion Brotherhood put at risk because of the recklessness of some traitors, who would rather sacrifice your lives to try to save people who don't deserve to live, than achieve the purpose and greatness in front of us. Well, no more! We will not be tools to be used by lesser humans! This ends now!*

Along with a band of selfless patriots, I have taken the Psion Pride *back. Everyone in the crew who opposed us is either dead or permanently disabled. Now the* Psion Pride*'s entire arsenal of lasers and torpedoes is pointing at the civilian ships in the fleet. We will not hesitate to destroy all of them unless our demands are met.*

All military ships in the fleet will give us full remote control of their systems. They will then stay inert on this side of the jump point. All civilian ships will jump back, where another battleship we have taken, the Olympian*, will be waiting for them. The* Olympian *will escort the civilians back to Chrysalis, and will destroy them if any military ships attempt to jump back. We will give up then, when it is too late to prepare a second expedition towards Earth and there is no choice but to keep our world hidden from humanity and the Devourers.*

If you attempt anything against this ship, we will destroy the civilian ships. If you try to evacuate the ships, or have them jump before giving us remote control, we will fire.

You have one hour to comply.

THE MAKINGS OF A PLAN

The heroes will probably start thinking of ways to take back the ship, even though the odds are against them. Leaving aside the fact that they are significantly outnumbered, all the rooms and passageways of the ship are configured to detect them as soon as they

come out of hiding. This probably includes the use of superconductive magnetic arrays to pin them against the walls. And, of course, the attackers have clearly gained complete control of the computer systems, so regaining control is almost impossible.

Francis, however, has a suggestion: He proposes the heroes take the ship back by hacking its main computer systems. These systems control everything, from room and walkway authorization to full control of the external weapon systems. If the heroes could disable the *Psion Pride*'s weapons systems then Captain Burge's threat would become hollow and the other ships in the crew could restore order.

Francis explains that normally access to the computer systems is via V-World, which the heroes can't use because their authorization has been revoked (with the exception of the area that Francis has disabled). However, all four distributed computer cores in the ship have maintenance panels that could be hacked to access their programs and, little by little, gain control of the ship.

Give the heroes map #1 of the *Psion Pride*. Francis has marked the location of all four computer maintenance panels. He does not know how the programs that control the ship are distributed between the computer cores, but suggests the heroes try the closest panel and go from there.

Francis is not a hero and is not willing to leave his hiding place to muck with maintenance panels. The heroes would have to be very convincing to get him to join them.

- **Francis Olsen, Junior Assistant Engineer:** Use stats for Civilian, but with a d8 in the Knowledge (Ship Ops), Repair and Hacking skills.

SCENE 4: TAKING BACK THE SHIP

The *Psion Pride* has six spherical concentric decks with a total floor space of 4,160 square meters, or about two-thirds the size of a football field. This does not count the fact that during acceleration the walls and ceiling can also become the "floor," thus increasing floor space. Plus, the fact that it is distributed as a maze of thin curved passageways makes it seem even longer and bigger than it is.

The map does not represent a true physical distribution of the ship's 3-D layout, but rather a simplified, stylized depiction. Note that the side passageways on the outer deck connect to the other side, thus reinforcing the perception of a sphere.

NAVIGATING THE MAP

All rooms and passageways belong to one of three color-coded security sectors: Green, Blue and Red. There are also grey rooms and passageways, which represent the places where Francis has disabled all V-World security and tracking systems, and thus can be used by heroes or Assistants without the need for an authorization. Authorization to transit the Green, Blue and Red sectors can be obtained by hacking the appropriate program in the maintenance panels distributed throughout the ship. Note that at the start of the mission the heroes don't know which rooms and passageways correspond to which colors.

WITHOUT AUTHORIZATION

If the heroes have not obtained authorization to a specific color-coded sector, they automatically raise the alarm (see below) whenever they enter a passageway of that color.

The Zero-G rules apply to all locations where the heroes have not obtained authorization.

All hatches in the diagram are initially closed. Whenever the heroes try to open a hatch, first ask them which hero or Assistant is attempting to open it. If the heroes try to open a hatch of a color they don't have authorization for, the hatch does not open; additionally have the chosen character make a Hacking roll. With a Failure, the alarm is raised (see below).

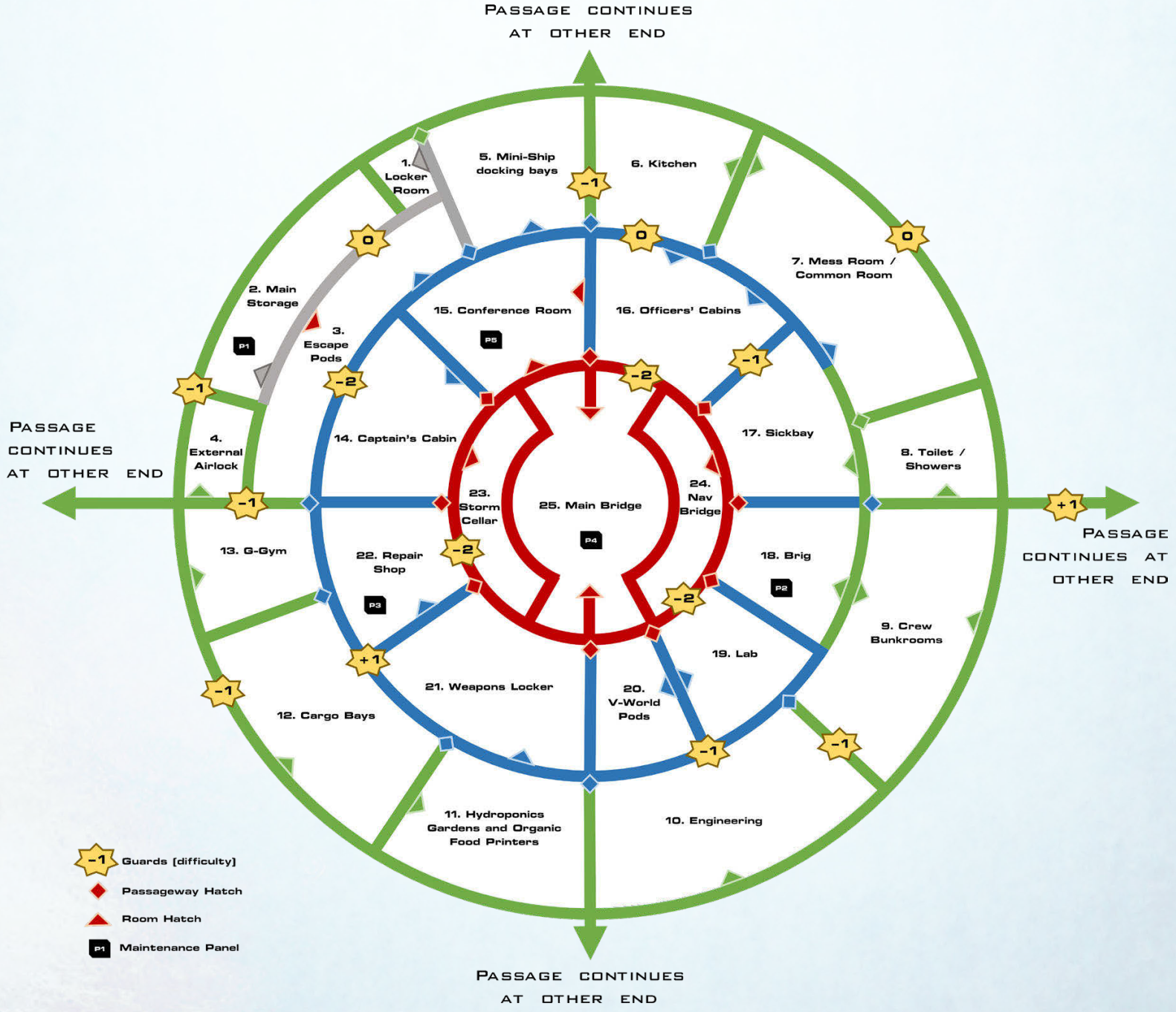
WITH AUTHORIZATION

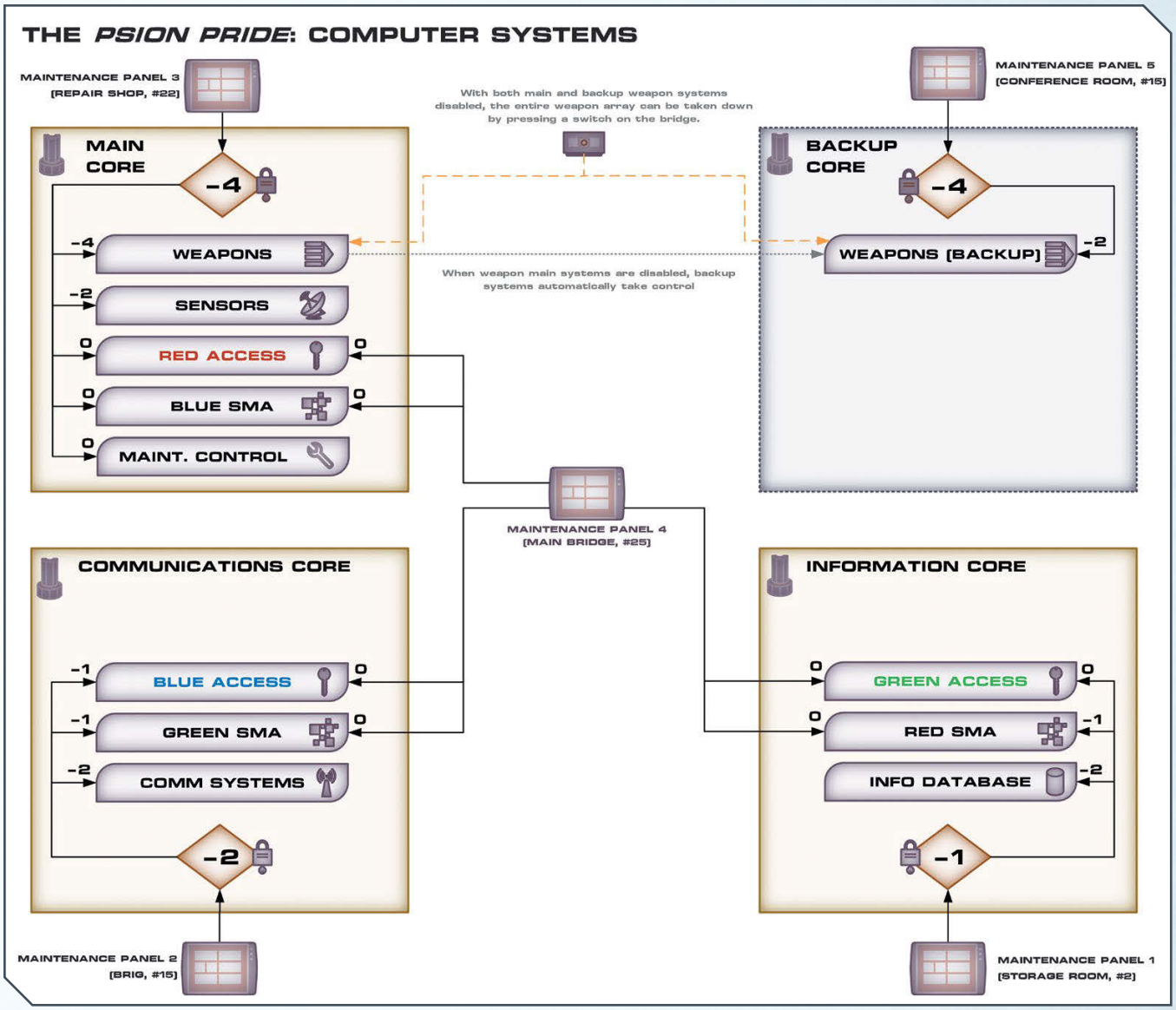
If the heroes have obtained the appropriate color-coded authorization, they may freely transit through the corridors and rooms of the same color. Zero-G rules still apply. On top of that, if they have also hacked the appropriate Superconductive Magnetic Array program of that color sector, they may use the Superconductive Magnetic Array movement rules (see *Setting Rules* section of the *Setting Guide*).

If the heroes try to go through a hatch of a color they have authorization for, the hatch opens automatically.

GUARDS

There are guards posted in several locations throughout the ship, marked with a star. When the heroes reach a location with a group of guards, have a hero chosen by the players make a Notice roll plus the bonus or penalty listed inside the star marker. With a Success, the heroes spot the guards before the guards spot them, and so can decide to either backtrack or attack with surprise. With a Failure, both groups spot each other simultaneously and a normal fight occurs.


PASSAGE CONTINUES AT OTHER END
PASSAGE CONTINUES AT OTHER END
PASSAGE CONTINUES AT OTHER END
PASSAGE CONTINUES AT OTHER END
1. Locker Room
2. Main Storage
3. Escape Pods
4. External Airlock
5. Mini-Ship docking bays
6. Kitchen
7. Mess Room / Common Room
8. Toilet / Showers
9. Crew Bunkrooms
10. Engineering
11. Hydroponics Gardens and Organic Food Printers
12. Cargo Bays
13. G-Gym
14. Captain's Cabin
15. Conference Room
16. Officers' Cabins
17. Sickbay
18. Brig
19. Lab
20. V-World Pods
21. Weapons Locker
22. Repair Shop
23. Storm Cellar
24. Nav Bridge
25. Main Bridge
P1
P2
P3
P4
P5
0
-1
-2
+1
Guards (difficulty)
Passageway Hatch
Room Hatch
Maintenance Panel


THE PSION PRIDE: COMPUTER SYSTEMS
MAINTENANCE PANEL 3
[REPAIR SHOP, #22]
With both main and backup weapon systems disabled, the entire weapon array can be taken down by pressing a switch on the bridge.
MAINTENANCE PANEL 5
[CONFERENCE ROOM, #15]
MAIN CORE
-4
-4 WEAPONS
-2 SENSORS
0 RED ACCESS 0
0 BLUE SMA 0
0 MAINT. CONTROL
When weapon main systems are disabled, backup systems automatically take control
BACKUP CORE
-4
WEAPONS [BACKUP] -2
MAINTENANCE PANEL 4
[MAIN BRIDGE, #25]
COMMUNICATIONS CORE
-1 BLUE ACCESS 0
-1 GREEN SMA 0
-2 COMM SYSTEMS
-2
INFORMATION CORE
0 GREEN ACCESS 0
0 RED SMA -1
INFO DATABASE -2
-1
MAINTENANCE PANEL 2
[BRIG, #15]
MAINTENANCE PANEL 1
[STORAGE ROOM, #2]

If the hero's final result is a 1 or less after applying modifiers then the guards get to surprise the heroes.

The total number of guards found in any location is equal to one guard per hero or ally *plus the modifier used for the Notice roll*, for a minimum of two guards. For example, if a band of five heroes meets a group of guards and the modifier to the Notice roll was –2, then the total number of guards is three (five minus two).

Note that since the heroes have no true control or authorization of the ship, their Assistants cannot meaningfully participate in combat by spending a Benny (see *Assistants* section of the *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*). Hacking some specific programs of the ship allow their Assistants to regain part or all of their combat abilities.

- **Guards (1 per hero or Ally plus modifier used for Notice roll):** Use the stats for Soldier Psions.

RAISING THE ALARM

If any guards notice or fight the heroes, they will raise the alarm after one round. The alarm may also be raised if the heroes by mistake try to open a hatch they do not have authorization for and fail the Hacking roll (see above).

If the alarm is raised, all modifiers to Notice rolls to avoid guards in that color sector receive an additional non-cumulative –1 penalty. This simulates the guards in that color sector being on the lookout for the heroes. So, for example, if the alarm is raised when the heroes are in or entering the Green sector, the –1 penalty will apply only while they are still in that sector.

Additionally, each time the alarm is raised, add an additional group of guards at some random position in the map, also in passageways of the same color sector as the one the heroes were spotted in. This may be a location the heroes have already passed.

THE COMPUTER CORES

There are five computer maintenance panels in the ship, although only four are marked on the players' map. These connect to the ship's computer cores.

How the heroes interact with the computers depends on whether game time is being measured in six-second rounds (e.g. combat) or not.

NORMAL TIME

Normally, when the heroes reach a location with a maintenance panel, finding and opening the panel is automatic and takes just a few minutes of game time. Once the maintenance panel is found and opened, a hero (or Assistant) can attempt to log on to the computer core connected to it by using the Hacking or Repair skill with the modifier indicated in the diamond, which represents the security system that must be bypassed. Failing this roll means the hero managed to log into the system but raised the alarm (see above). Try to place the new group of guards in a passageway close to the room where the maintenance panel is located.

Once the heroes have logged on, access to all the programs inside that core is automatic and takes just a few minutes. The use of each program is explained below.

SIX-SECOND ROUNDS

If the heroes are trying to break into the core while running six-second rounds (for example, during combat, or when a hero is distracting someone in the room while other heroes are hacking the system), then a Repair roll is needed to find and open the maintenance panel this round.

Logging in works as normal. Once the heroes have successfully logged in, they get to see a list of all available programs. Access to each program inside the core requires an action, with the hero making a successful Hacking or Repair roll with the modifier listed next to the program. If the roll is failed the hero may try again in the next round.

AVAILABLE PROGRAMS

The programs available in the different computer cores fall under the following types:

COLOR ACCESS

These programs give the heroes authorization to freely walk the hallways of the appropriate color, as well as to open and close hatches within that color sector. Their enemies also lose the ability to automatically identify them, even if they meet face to face. Movement is still subject to the Zero-G rules.

SUPERCONDUCTIVE MAGNETIC ARRAYS (SMA)

Obtaining access to one of these programs allows heroes to transit the hallways of the program's appropriate color using the Superconductive Magnetic Arrays rules. Obviously, to take advantage of this benefit the heroes must have obtained access to the appropriate color sector in the first place.

Superconductive Magnetic Arrays can also be used by Assistants to grapple enemies in combat. In game terms, the following Special Assistant Action becomes available:

- **Superconductive Magnetic Arrays:** If a hero spends a Benny an Assistant may try to control the

superconductive magnetic arrays to magnetically pin an enemy against the wall. This uses the Grappling rules from *Savage Worlds*, but with the initial opposed roll being between the Assistant's Hacking skill and the victim's Strength trait. On his turn, the victim may attempt to escape only with a Strength roll, again opposed by the Assistant's Hacking skill. The –2 penalty for microgravity applies to all Strength rolls. The Assistant cannot use this maneuver to inflict damage on the victim (other than the initial Shaken result with a raise).

INFO DATABASE

Accessing this database will allow the heroes to see what access color they need to visit the different parts of the ship. Give the heroes the handout with the color-coded map of the ship.

COMM SYSTEMS

Accessing this program allows the heroes to contact the other ships in the fleet without Burge or his minions noticing. The leaders of the other ships in the fleet (including Captain Frank Cordova, as well Ryan and Lindsay) will explain to the heroes that they are effectively tied by Burge's ultimatum. If the heroes could disable the weapons systems in the *Psion Pride* then the rest of the fleet could take action, but anything else could risk the lives of the civilians in the fleet.

Be open to any suggestions the heroes may have to use the support of the other ships of the fleet to retake the *Psion Pride*.

WEAPONS (MAIN AND BACKUP)

Accessing this program allows the heroes to disable the laser and missile weapon arrays that are currently threatening the civilian fleet. As soon as the heroes access these programs, they learn that the system has been modified to allow someone on the bridge to re-enable the weapons programs from a specific terminal. In other words, the heroes not only need to disable this program (and the backup program, see below), but they will also need to go to location 25 (Main Bridge) and de-activate the weapons terminal on the bridge in order to eliminate any threat for the weapons. enter the disable code in a specific terminal in the bridge in order to complete weapons disabling. The program the heroes are disabling provides the heroes with a code that can be used on the terminal on the bridge to completely nullify the weapon systems.

As soon as the heroes disable the weapons, they discover a second obstacle: The weapons systems have a backup computer! The system informs them that the program processing for weapons systems has been transferred to the backup core in location 15 (Conference Room). This is a seldom-used computer that Francis Olsen did not know about. The heroes also have to disable the weapons backup program before going to the bridge and deactivating the bridge terminal.

ONE HOUR

We have purposely avoided tying specific character events to the one-hour deadline. As the GM, you should strive to use this time pressure to heighten the narrative. As the heroes go through the adventure, move the time forward appropriately. The goal should be for the heroes to recover control of the ship in the nick of time.

As time passes and the heroes wreak havoc on the ship, Burge uses the ship comm system to threaten the heroes with unleashing the attack unless they surrender. He does not seriously consider acting on his threat, though, since he believes his team will neutralize the heroes any time soon.

SENSORS

The Sensor systems allow the heroes to get more information about what is going on in nearby locations within the ship. In game terms, the heroes (and their Assistants) from now on gain a +2 to all Notice rolls to detect or avoid guards when walking the corridors in the ship. On top of that, whenever the heroes are behind a hatch that leads to a room they or their Assistants may make a Notice roll to "see" how many enemies are behind that door and what they are doing.

MAINTENANCE CONTROL

The Maintenance Control Systems manage the functioning of the different automated components that make life easier on the crew. In game terms, the heroes' Assistants regain the combat abilities they had not been able to use (see the *Assistants* section of the *Setting Guide*).

THE PSION PRIDE

The following is a description of the locations in the *Psion Pride*.

1. LOCKER ROOM

The heroes begin their mission here. Francis Olsen is with them.

Several lockers in this room store personal equipment used by cleaning and repair personnel.

If a hero asks to search the lockers and makes a successful Notice roll he or she finds a set of worker overalls of the appropriate size. This might give him or her a bonus when dealing with enemy guards, at your discretion. Note that during the takeover of the ship the guards also killed or disabled most maintenance personnel, so even with a disguise a hero would have some explaining to do to avoid getting shot.

2. MAIN STORAGE

This room is used to store parts and technical equipment related to the normal functioning of the ship, as well as the huge amounts of packed and processed foodstuffs needed to keep the crew of the ship fed for weeks at a time.

The maintenance panel to access one of the computer cores is located under a plate on the floor.

3. ESCAPE PODS

This location is protected by hatch that requires Red authorization to open. Inside the heroes find several emergency escape pods. If the heroes decide to escape the ship in an escape pod you may decide Burge detects the launch and tries to shoot it down, or that the heroes are rescued with no problems by the military fleet around the *Psion Pride*, depending on how the adventure is going. Note that if they do this they may lose their only chance to disable things from the inside.

4. EXTERNAL AIRLOCK

This room is used when the *Psion Pride* needs to dock with another ship or station. There are several sets of Reinforced Vacc Suits and Vacc Suit Helmets on a rack next to the hatch. The airlock is closed and may only be opened from within the Bridge (location 25).

5. MINI-SHIP DOCKING BAYS

The military mini-ships that transfer people or items between ships in the fleet dock here. There are two docked mini-ships here. A group of soldiers guard the ships from intrusion.

If the heroes decide to use them then depending on how the adventure is going, you may decide Burge detects the launch and tries to shoot the ship down, or that the heroes travel with no problems to other ships in the military fleet around the *Psion Pride*. Note that if they do this they may lose their only chance to disable things from the inside.

- **Soldier Psions (3)**
- **Military Mini-Ship (2)**

6. KITCHEN

The ship's kitchen is large and messy, and full of the sort of utensils one would expect. If the heroes look carefully they may find several sharp knives (Damage Str+d4, –1 penalty to Fighting rolls).

A lone soldier is in the room, unwrapping a crate of preprocessed cold food to distribute to the soldiers in the ship. His guard is down, and thus he should be easily surprised. He has left his weapons on a magnetic wall a few steps away.

- **Soldier Psion / Cook (1)**

7. MESS ROOM / COMMON ROOM

This ample room has rows of tables and zero-g chairs to feed the hundreds of crewmembers of the ship. Everything uses superconductive materials to allow crewmembers to eat with relative comfort. A set of tables in the back of the room allow crewmembers to relax and play games, enter the internal V-World or just chat.

8. TOILET / SHOWERS

This location consists of several sets of unisex sponge showers and zero-G toilets for the crew. There is one guard currently occupied in a zero-G stall. If the heroes stay too long in this location (you decide what qualifies) three more guards will enter.

- **Soldier Psions (4)**

9. CREW BUNKROOMS

This location consists of a few narrow passageways leading to many crew bunkrooms. An awful stench precedes the sight of dead bodies everywhere, as this was the first location the attackers hit.

Most bunks have personal effects of no consequence, or are empty. With a careful search, the heroes find the body of a soldier who had just finished guarding the Brig (location 18). In his pockets the heroes find a Data Card with an access code that unlocks the cells in the brig.

10. ENGINEERING

Control of Engineering has been routed to the main bridge, and it is therefore not possible to work the systems here without the proper authorization (which the heroes don't have). Still, Burge has sent a team of soldiers to guard the place in case someone with a valid authorization attempts anything.

The room has several large canisters labeled with a warning sign. These contain special substances used to keep the engines running. Use gaming stones to represent the containers, placing several of them

around the room. Hiding behind one of them gives the hero Light Cover (–1) against attacks. If a container is hit and the damage exceeds its Toughness of 8, it explodes. Place a Small Burst Template in the center of the location of the container. Anyone in the template suffers 2d6 damage and must make a Vigor (–2) roll to avoid being Shaken.

In one corner of the room, the heroes find the body of an engineer. In his hands he has a data card with the code to perform maintenance on the maintenance panel located in the Conference Room (location 15). This should come as a surprise to the heroes because, as far as they knew up until now, there is no maintenance panel in the Conference Room. In game terms, having the Data Card gives the heroes a +2 bonus to all Hacking rolls performed on the maintenance panel in the Conference Room.

Since the panels in this room have been disabled from the bridge, it is not possible to damage the engineering systems of the ship from here.

- **Soldier Psions (5)**

11. HYDROPONICS GARDENS AND ORGANIC FOOD PRINTERS

This location houses both the 3-D printers that generate organic food for the crew, as well as the old-fashioned hydroponics gardens to grow fresh vegetables. These are a small but important part of the diet of the crew of the *Psion Pride*.

12. CARGO BAYS

These large bays usually carry military supplies or devices related to the ship's mission. Currently the cargo bays are loaded with preprocessed food to support the fleet during part of the long trip to Earth, as well as medical and other supplies.

13. G-GYM

This location contains the ship's G-Gym (see the *Travelling in Space* section of the *Setting Guide*). It is currently retracted and empty, as it usually is before a jump. The heroes could use the V-World controls in this room to extend the G-Gym and start its centrifugal rotation around the ship. The process of expansion and initial rotation takes about fifteen minutes and attracts a full group of guards in just a few rounds.

In the unlikely event the heroes end up in the G-Gym while it is extended and rotating around the ship, they lose any penalties for zero-G and superconductive magnetic arrays, as there is a simulated full gravity in the Gym.

- **Soldier Psions (2 per hero):** They only come to the location if the heroes extend the G-Gym.

14. CAPTAIN'S CABIN

Captain Yantz's cabin is currently empty, unused since before the last jump. The heroes find nothing special here, other than his personal effects.

15. CONFERENCE ROOM

The hatches to this room are red-coded, meaning heroes will need Red authorization to enter.

This is the conference room the heroes virtually visited in Scene 1. A senior officer team loyal to Burge is holed in the room while they evaluate the actions of the fleet and decide on their strategy should anything happen. They are supported by a group of guards.

The officers are deep in discussion, with the wall screens full of close-ups of the different ships in the fleet, and of technical and tactical information. They never leave the room, so to work on the Maintenance Panel the heroes should either dispatch them all or try bluff their way into the room to "repair the system" while the officers are there. Assuming the heroes are appropriately disguised, convincing the officers is a Persuasion roll opposed by the officers' Notice (the officer's Notice rolls have a penalty, see below). Feel free to apply bonuses as appropriate depending on how the heroes role-play their argument.

If the heroes decide to hack the Maintenance Panel with their enemy next to them, use the rules for hacking the system during combat (see above). Additionally, you might want to complicate things a bit: Perhaps while they work an inquisitive guard approaches them and asks them about how come he hadn't seen them in the mutineer group before, or maybe their hacking activities mistakenly appear on one of the wall screens and the officers notice them.

- **Burge's Officers (1 per hero):** Use Stats for Veteran Psion. They are so concentrated on their work that their Notice rolls to detect if the heroes are lying or bluffing have a –2 penalty.
- **Soldier Psions (1 per hero)**

16. OFFICERS' CABINS

The cabins of the Senior Officers of the ship are located here. They are all unoccupied. In the First Officer's cabin, the heroes find a set of Intelligence files on the military leaders of the fleet. Among them is a file on Captain Thomas Burge that explains his history, background, family ties and weaknesses. If the heroes read this file they receive a permanent +2 bonus any to Intimidation and Taunt rolls against Captain Burge.

17. SICKBAY

The sickbay beds are currently taken by the enemy soldiers wounded during the takeover of the ship. The ship's doctor has been forced to tend to their wounds while a group of soldiers guard him. Unless the heroes somehow trick the guards, they are attacked as soon as they enter.

The doctor is next to a Healing Pod in the center of the circular sickbay, flanked by the guards. Several sick and wounded soldiers lie on beds attached to the walls that circle the room. They are tied and protected by superconductive magnetic fields, so they can't get up, but a few of them are conscious enough to participate in the fight.

The doctor will refuse to follow the heroes but could be coerced with good role-playing.

- **Soldier Psions (1 per every 2 heroes)**
- **Wounded Soldier Psions (1 per every 2 heroes):** They are tied on the beds and can't stand up or move, but can shoot. They are Exhausted (–2 to all Trait rolls), have no armor (Toughness 5) and are only armed with an Autopistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6 AP 1, Semi-Auto, 20 bullets).
- **Doctor:** Use stats for Civilian, but with a Healing d10.

18. BRIG

Although most crewmembers of the *Psion Pride* were either killed or left unconscious, a few were taken to the brig (this includes any heroes that were captured previously). Several psion soldiers guard the place, sitting or standing in chairs and tables a few feet away from the cells. Maintenance Panel #2 is hidden on the floor under one of the tables.

The brig cells are built with old-fashioned metal bars and doors. Several prisoners in the cells start yelling and jumping when the heroes enter the room, while the guards immediately attack.

During the battle any hero may, as a full action, attempt a Hacking roll with a –4 penalty to hack the system and remotely open the cell doors. This roll may be attempted more than once. If the cells are opened the prisoners attack the enemy soldiers. Give the heroes an Ally sheet for the prisoners.

If a hero has the data card obtained in the crew bunkrooms (location 9) he may use it (and spend an action) to automatically open the cell doors without having to make a roll.

Once the battle is over, any surviving prisoners volunteer to join the heroes in their quest to recover the ship. Treat them as Allies for the rest of the scene.

- **Soldier Psions (2 per hero)**
- **Friendly soldiers taken prisoner (1 per hero):** Use the stats for Soldier Psion but remove all weapons and armor. All prisoners (including any hero prisoners) have received a dose of the Psionic Drug (see the *Gear* section of the *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*) and therefore they do not have psionic powers or benefits available for the duration of this scene.

19. LAB

This small location houses the ship's research facility. The bodies of two scientists lie on the floor. The place is full of various scientific instruments. A closed cabinet contains several liquids of different levels of toxicity, which could be used to poison any food or drink.

20. V-WORLD PODS

This location contains about twenty full-immersion V-World pods, used for simulated mission training and (when off duty) for relaxation and games. It is currently off, and can only be turned on from the Bridge.

21. WEAPONS LOCKER

The ship's weapon's locker was raided by the soldiers who have taken over the ship. There are still enough weapons and armor here for the heroes and any Extras they may have. Everything is available with the exception of Battle Dress suits.

Make sure to pay attention to the encumbrance of the characters after they load up.

22. REPAIR SHOP

This room is very messy, full of electronics parts and nano-technology components. It is also a central repairing node for the ship and thus has dozens of maintenance panels. The panels are marked with danger signs.

Searching for Maintenance Panel #3 is difficult in this room. Have each hero who is searching either make a Notice roll with a –2 penalty, or a Repair roll with no penalty. Each success and raise on the roll counts as one point. Once the heroes accumulate five points among them, they find the Maintenance Panel. However, if a hero rolls a final score of 1 or less, he has mistakenly handled the wrong panel and receives an electric shock (2d8 damage).

23. STORM CELLAR

This is the emergency location where the crew of the ship can hide in case of a radiation disaster. It is open and currently empty. If the hatch door is closed from the inside, forcing open the storm cellar from the

outside takes 4–6 hours of work by an experienced crew. Therefore, this reinforced location is the only place where the heroes can lock up and be safe from their enemies, if they so want.

24. NAV BRIDGE

This room hosts the bridge that supports the activities of the Main Bridge during battle situations and serves as a backup should the Main Bridge be destroyed. It is currently dark and disabled, since Burge's team is relatively small and can do everything they need from the Main Bridge. No control activities are possible from here unless the bridge is enabled from the Main Bridge.

25. MAIN BRIDGE

The *Psion Pride*'s main bridge is the location from which Burge is controlling the situation. As soon as the heroes enter the bridge, Burge realizes his entire plan is at risk and orders the civilian ships destroyed. Since the heroes have most likely disabled the weapons programs, though, the *Psion Pride* does not fire. In frustration, Burge orders his troops to slow down or kill the heroes while he attempts to re-enable the weapons from the terminal. This takes him three full actions, and can be done from any wall screen terminal on the bridge.

THE SPHERICAL BRIDGE

The bridge is spherical but for simplicity you should represent it as a 16"-diameter circle covered in wall screen terminals, with a 1" entrance at the north and south edges. Twelve 1"-wide zero-g couches (which allow the crew to strap in during battle) follow a circular pattern about 1" away from the main wall, distributed like the numbers in a clock. A second set of eight couches, these with terminals, are evenly distributed in a 8"-diameter circle around the center of the room. The captain's seat is in the exact center of the circle.

The heroes and their enemies can take advantage of the fact that the bridge is really a sphere with no gravity to move in three dimensions. In game terms, a character may perform a standard Run action to automatically appear on the *diametrically opposite* location of the bridge. This simulates the character launching himself from one side of the sphere to the other, or running around the walls. For example, a hero who is 3" away from the north-east corner of the circle could make a Run action to appear 3" away from the south-east corner. The heroes' enemies will quickly use this move against them.

THE WALL SCREENS

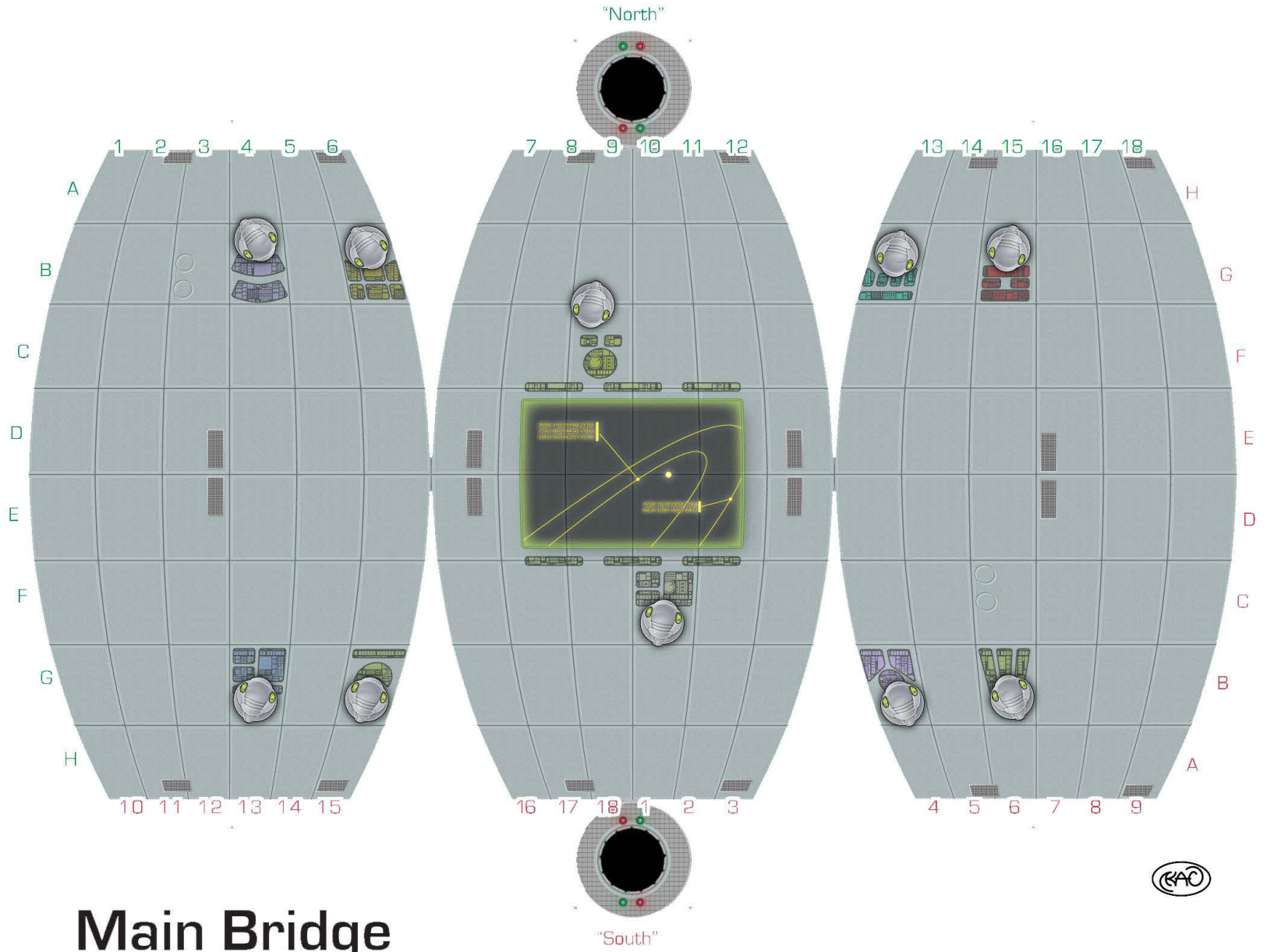
The wall screens around the bridge, and on the terminals on the center-circle couches, control most of the ship's functions and are thus extremely sensitive to damage such a stray fire. Whenever a 1 is rolled on the Shooting die the shot misses its target and strikes a wall screen instead (in addition to the usual effects on characters as listed in the zero-G or superconductive magnetic arrays rules). You should determine the most appropriate wall screen hit based on who the intended target was. Then draw a card from the Action Deck and act according to the list below:

- **Clubs—Wall Screen Explodes**: Place a Medium Burst Template centered on the wall screen that has been hit. Any character under the template suffers 2d6 damage.
- **Diamonds—Small Random Maneuver:** The side maneuver thrusters of the ship are suddenly turned on, making everyone lose control of their bodies in the zero-G environment. Everyone on the bridge must make an Agility roll with a –2 penalty or become Shaken as per the Zero-G rules. Recovering from this Shaken condition requires an Agility roll with a +2 bonus.
- **Hearts—Acceleration Change:** The main engines suddenly flare, sending everybody flying across the bridge. Roll a 1d12 and read it like a clock face, then roll a 1d4, and move every character that number of inches. Characters are allowed an Agility (–2) roll to grab onto something and keep from moving. Any character who hits an immobile, solid object is automatically Shaken.
- **Spades—Wall Screen Catches Fire:** The wall screen bursts into flames. Any character right next to the wall screen, or who crashes against it, has a 1 in 6 chance of catching fire. A small cloud of smoke forms around the wall screen, making it difficult to see across. Place a Small Burst Template centered on the wall screen that has been hit. This area is now in Dim Lighting.

KEEPING THE SHIP'S WEAPONS FROM RE-ENABLING

To keep their enemies from enabling the ship's weapons again, the heroes must enter the disable code on a specific terminal in the bridge. You should locate the terminal in a wall screen next to one of the couches in the middle circle, ideally the center couch that is farthest from the hatch used by the heroes to enter the bridge.

Once the heroes locate the appropriate terminal (this may require a Notice or a Hacking roll, depending



Main Bridge

of the Battleship *Psion Pride*

on what the heroes decide to do), entering the disable code takes a full action. Once that is done, the *Psion Pride*'s weapons are permanently disabled and cannot be re-enabled until a full repair of the ship is performed. This will take at least 2d6 hours, more than enough time for the heroes' allies in the other ships to retake or blow up the *Psion Pride*, and to move the civilian ships away. Burge and his team may surrender at this point, or they may fight to the death, at your discretion.

✹ **Captain Thomas Burge:** Use Stats for Veteran Psion
- **Soldier Psions (3 per hero or Ally)**

THE SHIP RECOVERED

Once the heroes have defeated Burge and the crew, the *Psion Pride* is again under their control. As soon as they contact Captain Frank Cordova and the other leaders of the fleet with the news, ships are dispatched with additional crew to man the *Psion Pride* and take prisoner anyone who may still be loose. Then part of the military ships in the fleet jump back to take the *Olympian* into custody.

Most of the crew of the *Psion Pride*, including Captain Yantz, died during the mutiny, and Captain Cordova performs a ceremony in their honor. If Burge managed to enable some of the ship's weapons systems and destroy some civilian vessels, their occupants are also mourned.

While the traitors appear to have been rooted out, Ryan warns the heroes that there may be other hidden elements in the fleet that might strike at the worst possible moment.

Finally, after a few days, the wounded fleet is ready to continue.

SCENE 5: JUMP POINT

The adventure picks up when the heroes continue their trip to 61 Cygni with the fleet. Modify the following scenes if the heroes have decided not to follow the advice provided by the N'ahili and are going somewhere else.

LOGAN'S END

The arrival of a fleet of almost one hundred ships into Eta Cassiopeiae, the star system of Logan's End, sends the system into chaos. The few military ships in orbit (all part of Logan's End weak defense fleet) are mobilized, and the heroes are immediately contacted by Commander Olivia Creeson, the ranking officer in charge of Logan's End's defenses. Remember that there is a communications delay of approximately ten minutes between the jump point and Logan's End.

Commander Creeson incredulously listens to the heroes' story about Chrysalis and the fleet. It then takes several hours for Creeson and the surface leaders to analyze the situation before accepting the heroes' unbelievable story. The military ships meet them at the half-way point to Logan's End and Creeson requests to board the ships and talk to the heroes face-to-face.

With Creeson on their side, the heroes can negotiate for supplies as they approach Logan's End (they will need them for the long voyage ahead). Once the heroes are in orbit around Logan's End, a week or two are spent ferrying supplies from the surface to the different ships in the fleet. This may be a good opportunity for the heroes to travel to the surface and follow a side adventure or tie up any loose personal ends (see the side adventure *Terrorism without Terrorists* on the *Seven Worlds* Setting Guide for some ideas).

WHAT IF THE HEROES FAIL?

Taking back the *Psion Pride* is a difficult task. Make sure to be open to the heroes' plans and ideas, even if they deviate from the options listed above. If you feel the heroes are getting into more trouble than they can handle, increase the number of Allies they find at locations such as the Brig (#18), or make them cross paths with another group of allies that have also escaped their enemy.

Finally, you may also assume that Captain Frank Cordova, as well Ryan and Lindsay, are performing their own undercover attempts to take back the ship. If the heroes are in a really tight spot then maybe the action can be interrupted by a group of soldiers that have somehow managed to enter the ship and can get the heroes out of a tight spot.

FACING THE *OLYMPIAN*

Optionally you could role-play the attack on the *Olympian* as well, with the players leading a fleet of ships to capture the rebel battleship at the other side of the jump point. Consider using the rules for Mass Combat to do battle between Capitol Ships (see see the *Mass Battles* section of the *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*).

As the fleet finally departs, it sees its numbers increased by volunteers willing to help the resistance effort. This includes most members of the Psion Brotherhood of Logan's End who were also ignorant of the existence of Chrysalis, as well as a few military and civilian ships, and maybe even Olivia Creeson herself.

61 CYGNI

Several weeks later, the heroes arrive at 61 Cygni, their destination. The coordinates provided by the N'ahili mark a location in empty space around 61 Cygni, but since the location is approximately 1AU from the star, it should not be too difficult for the heroes to deduce this is actually the position of an unknown jump point. The only way to know for sure is, of course, to attempt a jump.

As soon as the heroes make the jump (alone or with the fleet) read or paraphrase the following:

You activate your jump engines and in the blink of an eye you appear… somewhere else. As the jump disorientation subsides, you find your ship floating in the middle of empty space, far from any star systems. There is nowhere to go.

"Well, here's something else that's strange", [an Assistant you choose] says, "we're getting a transmission from a location approximately 1.5 AUs from where we are. It's a kind of beacon signal… specifically, it's a Stellar Communications Network beacon signal. You know, the kind that is supposed to have been destroyed when the Stellar Comm Network crashed?"

In case any heroes don't remember, explain to them that the Stellar Comm Network nodes transmitted beacon signals to make it easy for ships to locate jump points in each star system (see the *Stellar Communications Network* section of the *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*).

The obvious course of action is to travel towards the source of the beacon signal. As the heroes approach, they detect a Stellar Communications Network station, a replica of a real station in every way except for the fact that all the stations were destroyed as part of the Stellar Comm Network crash. Also, this station appears to have no need of refueling.

Next to the Stellar Comm Network station floats a dark object about the size of the *Voyager*. The object is emitting almost no energy readings, thus making it difficult to identify.

When the heroes get relatively close to the location of the signal, read or paraphrase the following:

A LONG TRIP

With such a long trip you might be wondering how to keep the tension and the pacing up. We recommend you review the Side Stories section to add more action to the trip. The "Managing a Fleet" side story in particular could be a particularly appropriate framework to build interesting side stories during this adventure.

Now that you have a visual you see that the "Stellar Comm Network station" is actually identical to the real thing, and in a perfect state of repair. Who built this? What is it doing here? Whatever it is, it did manage to get you to this location in space.

The object floating close to it is even stranger: A dark, star-shaped object with no obvious engine or energy source, barely visible as a shadow against the stars. A smaller version of a Devourer ship! A thin ray of light comes out of a small hole that looks like an open hatch on one side, an apparent invitation to enter it.

THE DEVOURER MINI-SHIP

If the heroes ask to see if the Devourer ship has any life forms, tell them that although there is no easy way to detect that through the ship's hull, there appear to be no life forms inside.

Once the heroes decide to board the Devourer ship through the hatch, they find themselves inside a human-style airlock. A panel with human-readable symbols controls the airlock. Using the panel

WHAT IF THE HEROES SPLIT THE FLEET?

The adventure assumes the heroes take the entire fleet with them to 61 Cygni, but some heroes might consider splitting the fleet at Kruger 60 before travelling there. The heroes' choices are to either travel on their own, with just a few ships, or with the entire fleet. There is no wrong decision here, but remind them that fuel is a precious commodity, and they want to keep enough fuel (the Weeks per Jump ship statistic) for all their ships to reach another fueling point, such as Waypoint Station. If the heroes are unsure of how to proceed, gently suggest via an Assistant or NPC that they keep the fleet together and go to 61 Cygni.

closes the hatch and fills the airlock with a human-breathable atmosphere, letting the heroes explore the rest of the ship.

The inside of the ship has been made for humans, and sports standard travel couches, wall screens, and other controls common in human starships. It has enough space for about twelve people.

If the heroes sit at the controls, they find flying and using the ship intuitive; the ship's means of propulsion, though, are not clear. The ship is ready to jump, and in its jump point registry it includes all human-known jump points in space, plus the jump point the heroes just used for Cygni 61, and one more jump point: The location the heroes are in right now! This means the position marked by the fake Stellar Comm Network station is a jump point to somewhere else.

- **Devourer Mini-Ship:** See page 242.

EPILOGUE

This section assumes the heroes jump using the Devourer Mini-Ship, without the fleet. If the heroes decide to jump with the fleet, one of their commanders mentions that since after jumping the fleet cannot jump again before one hour or so, they might risk everyone unnecessarily. If the heroes still decide to jump with the fleet, then after one hour the fleet jumps back with no impact on the next scenes of the adventure.

As soon as the heroes decide to jump, their seats mold around their bodies to hold them tightly in preparation for movement. Then the ship jumps! After the heroes' jump disorientation fades, their wall screen lights up. A single message appears on the wall screen for a few seconds:

Now… you truly are on your own.

As the message fades, the heroes find themselves in the neighborhood of a familiar star system. After a few moments, the heroes' Assistants report that they have identified their location in space as Barnard's Star, **just one jump away from Earth!** The N'ahili have provided the heroes with one incredible shortcut!

After the heroes process the implications of this shortcut, a small alarm sounds and a worried Assistant virtually appears. Read or paraphrase the following:

"You should look at this," says [pick a hero's Assistant] in a worried voice. "We set our telescope viewers on the location of the jump point from Barnard's Star to Earth, the only way to reach our destination. And about halfway across the jump point we found this."

The wall screen fills with a view of a large irregular dark shape, contrasting with part of the light emitted by the star. It is a large rotating rock, an asteroid, marked with holes and craters. As the magnification increases, you see some of the holes in the asteroid are covered with gigantic metal doors. Two large, dark star-shaped objects fly around the asteroid like angry bees protecting a nest, while another object is docked next to the metal doors. This asteroid is a Devourer base!

"There is no chance we can avoid that base if the fleet comes this way. The fleet would certainly be destroyed," says [Assistant], stating the obvious. "Now what?"

The adventure now continues in *Endgame*, the final module in the epic *Seven Worlds* campaign!

side stories

This section includes several side stories you can run or take inspiration from to complement the adventures in the main campaign.

Don't forget to review the background for each planet, as well as the Personalities section on the *Setting Guide*. There are great ideas for further side stories there!

THE DARK SIDE OF THE EYEBALL EARTH

Where: Chrysalis.

Two weeks ago a group of scientists went on a research expedition to the mysterious and largely unexplored dark side of Chrysalis and has not returned. Initially, its disappearance went unnoticed in the chaos caused by the revolution of the last few weeks. A second expedition sent a few days ago to search for the missing scientists has also disappeared, however, and some are worried that something is amiss. The heroes are asked to investigate the fate of both expeditions.

If the heroes take the mission, they are provided with a crawler and transported by air to a location close to the edge of the dark side of the planet. It is not possible to enter the dark side by air because of the permanent gale and torrential rain, which also prevents all long-range communications.

In reality, the expeditions have been attacked and destroyed by a Chrysalis Swarm, a strange biological drone weapon created by the late Dr. Oren Graham. Dr. Graham's purpose in releasing these deadly swarms of diminutive killer drones is not clear, but without his constant remote guidance and maintenance the swarms are now out of control and roam the dark side of the planet, chewing and destroying whatever they find.

After a few hours of travelling, the heroes discover the first expedition's crawler opened like a tin can and turned on its side. Inside the broken crawler the heroes find the bodies of the expedition members, gnawed through their suits just like the metal of the crawler. A Notice roll allows the heroes to find a single, broken metal carapace, part of the swarm. The carapace has the symbol of the Psion Brotherhood (two open hands) etched on it.

Just then, the heroes receive a short-range transmission on their crawler's communicator: The garbled message is from a survivor from the second expedition, giving his location and desperately asking for help before "they" kill him! The message is cut off before the source of the attack is determined.

As the heroes approach the second expedition's location, they see two Chrysalis Swarms trying to eat their way into the crawler. The lone survivor of the second expedition cowers in terror inside. The Swarms can chew a hole into the crawler in 1d6 rounds. When they see the heroes approach they divide their efforts between the two crawlers.

After dealing with the swarms, the heroes can use samples of the bug (properly analyzed with facilities in Atlas City) to locate the secret files where Dr. Graham details what he's done. The files mention many other "nests" of Swarms that have been planted in different parts of the dark side of the moon. Apparently there is still some cleanup work needed to colonize Chrysalis.

- **Crawler Vehicle**
- **Chrysalis Swarm (2):** See page 238.

THE OTHER CHRYSALIANS

Where: Chrysalis

In the last few days several wealthy and influential people in Chrysalian society (all psions) have vanished from home. The authorities suspect abduction, and ask the heroes to help in locating them.

What has happened is that some of the more radical elements among Chrysalis' non-psion population have decided to take advantage of the chaos generated by the recent upheaval in Chrysalis to right several wrongs, both perceived and real. A particularly radical non-psion, Mila Schlumberger, has singled out three particularly abusive psions, famous for humiliating non-psions in public. She and her followers used Psionic Drugs (see the *Gear* section of the *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*), carefully placed inside the food their victims ate the last few days, to eliminate their powers before kidnapping them. Now the three victims are bound and gagged in a room in Mila's house, being constantly injected with Psionic Drugs. Mila plans to thoroughly torture and break his victims before killing them.

As the heroes investigate the three victims and their households, they quickly gather that they were known for expressing Psion superiority to non-psions, and behaving accordingly. An investigation of the

places where they disappeared (one victim's bedroom, another's office, and a third one's vehicle) finds a nice box of old-fashioned gourmet chocolates in all three, a "gift" that arrived from an unknown source. An analysis of the remains of the chocolates shows they are laced with strong doses of Psionic Drugs. The trail of distribution and production of those chocolates leads the heroes to Mila.

If the heroes don't succeed in picking up the trail, Phillip Gomez, one of the non-psions self-appointed leaders (see page 166), can also approach them. Gomez explains that he wants peace and tolerance but other non-psions want revenge, and suggests the heroes investigate Mila Schlumberger, a particularly radical non-psion.

Mila and her followers fight when discovered, trying to kill both the heroes and their victims while spewing their hate for all psions. Regardless of the outcome of the combat, Mila's crime brings up the hidden plight of non-Psions in Chrysalis and their role in the new society that is being built on the planet.

- **Mila Schlumberger:** Use stats for Mesh Trooper but with no armor, and only an enhanced autopistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6 AP 1, Semi-auto, also fires 1 explosive round for 2d8 AP 4 damage).
- **Mila's followers (1 per hero):** Use stats for Mesh Trooper but with no armor, and only an enhanced autopistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6 AP 1, Semi-auto, also fires 1 explosive round for 2d8 AP 4 damage).
- **Psion Victims (3):** Use stats for Typical Psion. They will avoid any combat.

MANAGING A FLEET

Where: Chrysalis Fleet.

Transporting thousands of people for months in cramped spaces with dwindling supplies represents a significant challenge. This side adventure presents a simple system to face the heroes with the challenge of managing the resources and people of a fleet on a months-long voyage.

SET UP

When the fleet leaves Chrysalis, it starts with an Optimism Score of 9, and with 10 Resource Points.

- The **Optimism Score** represents the passengers' morale during the mission. At first the passengers are excited and ready to defend Earth but as time passes their excitement goes down; grumbling or even mutiny may surface as a result. The Optimism Score may not go below 0 or above 10.
- **Resource Points** represent fuel, energy, food and other supplies necessary for the trip. As the fleet travels, resources are consumed by the passengers. The more resources spent, the more comfortable the passengers travel, and the more they keep their optimism. Resource Points cannot go below 0 but can go above 10.

Every two weeks of travel is considered one turn. During each turn follow the steps below in order:

STEP 1: FLEET MANAGEMENT

First, the heroes get a chance to manage the fleet and its resources. The heroes may choose to perform one and only one of the following actions:

- **Do Nothing:** Continue on to Step 2.
- **Increase Passenger Comfort**: Temporarily increase food and comfort for everyone, thus keeping their optimism up at the expense of extra resources. For every 2 Resource Points the heroes decide to spend, the fleet's Optimism Score goes up by 1.
- **Rally the Fleet:** Give a stirring speech to the fleet so as to increase morale. To do this, one hero makes a Persuasion roll with all appropriate modifiers. This roll cannot be cooperative. The Optimism Score is increased by 1 for every Success and Raise in the roll. A Critical Failure lowers the Optimism Score by 1 (a terrible speech). The fleet can be rallied only TWICE during the entire trip to Earth.
- **Improve Resource Efficiency:** Figure out new ways to make consumption more efficient, or to generate new sources of food (e.g. hydroponic gardens, new medicine formulas, and others). To do this, the heroes must spend 1 Resource Point and then one hero must make a Knowledge (Science) roll with all appropriate modifiers. This roll cannot be cooperative. The fleet gets back 1 Resource Point for every Success and Raise.
- **Improve Crisis Management:** Post guards and space patrols, increase drills and battle preparation. To do this, the heroes must spend 1 Resource Point. The heroes receive a +2 bonus to the next roll made to avoid an Unforeseen Event (see Step 2). The +2 bonus is used up the next time an Event roll is needed, even if this takes more than one turn. The +2 bonus is cumulative with other bonuses obtained by performing the "Improve Crisis Management" action again in future turns.

STEP 2: UNFORESEEN EVENTS

It is inevitable that unforeseen and unexpected events will occur. Draw an Action Card from the deck; if the card is of the black suit an Event occurs. Consult the table below to determine the exact event.

All Unforeseen Events can be abstracted with a single trait roll or, at the GM's discretion, can become a mini-adventure for the heroes. If the GM decides to create and run a mini-adventure, the results of the adventure should dictate how the Unforeseen Event ended.

If a roll is made for the Event, first create an appropriate and interesting description for the Event, using the results of the table below as a guide. Then decide what trait to use to face the Event. The heroes may choose which one of them will make the Trait Roll. The roll may not be cooperative. Some suggested traits to test are listed for every type of Event but you can of course decide on the appropriate trait to use depending on your description.

Throwing more Resources at a problem always makes it go away. For every Resource Point spent on the Event the heroes receive a +1 bonus to their roll. Resource Points used like this must be spent before making the roll.

Events can either be Minor or Major. If the drawn Action Card is of the Spades suit, the event is Minor, and all rolls related to the event have a –2 penalty. If the card is of the Clubs suit then the event is Major and all rolls related to it have a –4 penalty.

The result of the trait roll defines how well the Event was handled:

- With a Success, the Event was successfully faced and nothing happens.
- With a Raise, the Event was solved so bravely and professionally that the entire fleet is impressed. The fleet's Optimism Score is increased by 1.
- With a Failure, the Event caused a negative impact on the fleet. The fleet's Optimism Score is lowered by 1.
- With a Critical Failure, the Event has catastrophic consequences to the fleet. The fleet's Optimism Score is decreased by 2, and all PCs receive 2d6 points of damage. Work out in the story the causes of the damage.

STEP 3: TRAVEL WEARINESS

The length and monotony of the trip takes a toll on the fleet. After the Unforeseen Events step ends, the fleet always has its Optimism Score is lowered by 1 and consumes supplies equivalent to 1 Resource Point. If there are no Resource Points to consume then the Optimism Score is lowered by 2 instead of 1. Remember that no score can go below 0.

CARD NUMBER	EVENT	SUGGESTED TRAITS
2 – 5	**Clash:** An internal revolt among passengers dissatisfied with their situation, or a political conflict between fleet leaders, threaten to pull the fleet apart. Heroes must persuade both sides to put aside their differences or cajole to force their compliance. Leverage some of the NPC leaders of the fleet (see Sidebar on page 166) to put a face on the conflict.	Persuasion, Intimidation
6 – 9	**Shortage:** A hard-to-replace resource is almost exhausted. Maybe it's a specialized medicine during an epidemic, or a particular type of nutrient for children. Heroes must either push the fleet to resist the shortage, find a way to replace the resource, or apply their skills to minimize the damage.	Vigor, Streetwise, Healing
10 – King	**Accident:** An engine explodes, a ship's life support system fails, or two ships collide by mistake. The heroes must solve the problem and minimize its impact to keep the passengers safe.	Repair, Knowledge (Science)
Ace	**Encounter:** The fleet encounters something external. It may be a fleet of pirate ships, debris from an exploded ship that threatens to cause damage, or even a Devourer ship. The heroes need to either avoid the encounter or battle it out.	Smarts, Knowledge (Battle)

CAMPAIGN MILESTONES

Major milestones in the campaign affect the fleet's Optimism Score and Resource Points. After docking at Logan's End and re-supplying, the fleet's Resource Points can go back to 10. Also, after destroying the Devourer Base (see the next and final module, *Endgame*) the fleet's Optimism Score automatically goes up by 2. You can devise other story-based penalties or rewards for the heroes depending on how the campaign proceeds.

EFFECTS OF OPTIMISM ON THE GAME

The Optimism Score represents the fleet passengers' general mood and responsiveness to the heroes' needs and requests. Whenever the heroes interact with fleet passengers or leaders you can use the Persuasion rules from *Savage Worlds* with the other character's initial attitude determined by the fleet's Optimism Score, as shown on the following table:

OPTIMISM SCORE	REACTION (SEE *SAVAGE WORLDS* REACTION TABLE)
0–1	Hostile
2–3	Uncooperative
4–5	Neutral
6–7	Friendly
8–10	Helpful

A bad reaction might make the heroes requests harder. For example, if the heroes ask for a team to accompany them to the Devourer Base (see the next and last adventure module, *Endgame*) and they don't get a good enough reaction as a result of their Persuasion roll, maybe they get half the team they expected, or maybe the assigned soldiers are of a lower quality than they would want (lower Shooting skill and other relevant traits by one die type). In no case should the flow of the adventure be compromised, but having an unhappy fleet should make things harder for everyone.

TERRORISM WITHOUT TERRORISTS

Where: Logan's End

This adventure can be run if the heroes stopped at Logan's End for a week or so to get supplies for the fleet.

After a few days of organizing the loading of supplies from the surface to the ships of the fleet, the heroes are invited by Roland Groys, Council Leader of Providence, to a dinner in their honor. Many other guests from both Logan's End and the fleet, including Olivia Creeson, the commander in charge of planetary defense, are in attendance and chat with the heroes.

The atmosphere is suddenly shattered as a bomb explodes! Many guests die, and the heroes receive 3d6 damage from the explosion. As the heroes attend to the wounded, a young man walks smiling into the smoking wreckage, approaches them, confesses to placing the bomb and calmly gives himself up! The young man explains he is a psion called Gareth Cage and is a member of Psions First. With a General Knowledge roll (with an appropriate bonus for psions or heroes from Logan's End) the heroes remember that Psions First is a local group of radicals that has expressed its belief in the superiority of psions.

Cage explains that he has spent the time since the fleet arrived planting bombs in several ships of the fleet. A bomb will explode every four hours, killing many innocents and their ships. It is impossible to locate and deactivate the bombs in time, but the heroes can save many lives by evacuating the fleet and bringing the passengers to the surface. This would, of course, destroy all chances of reaching Earth in time to stop the Devourers from destroying it.

The heroes might think that the best course of action is to force Cage to reveal where the bombs are placed so they can be disabled. If they try that, Cage explains with a smile that they are wasting their time: Before approaching to give himself up, Cage used the greater forget power on himself, and now he does not know where the bombs are either!

A quick check confirms Cage's story: he has had his IDTag removed so his whereabouts the last few days can't be traced, and has had his Assistant's memory wiped as well. The heroes find no record of how Cage could have smuggled the bombs into the ships. The heroes also find a recording Cage made to himself so he could watch it after using greater forget and remember what he has supposedly done.

If the heroes investigate Psions First, they gather clues that point to Quentin Hope, a powerful businessman suspected of leading the organization. Storming Hope's mansion involves fighting his extremist followers. Questioning Hope afterwards shows, unfortunately, that while Cage is indeed a member of Psion First, the organization is not involved in this bomb plot.

- **Quentin Hope:** Use stats for Veteran Psion.
- **Psion First Members (1 per hero plus 2):** Use stats for Typical Psion.

As the heroes' search goes on you can sprinkle other explosions resulting in the destruction of a few fleet ships and their passengers. This forces Commander Olivia Creeson to start evacuating the fleet.

The mastermind behind all this chaos is in reality none other than Psion Brotherhood leader Joseph Wilkins. Originally a high-level member of the Psion Brotherhood and part of Ganendra Nathan's inner circle (see the *Brotherhood* in the *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*), Wilkins was sent to Logan's End to remove any threats to the continuing existence of Chrysalis. With the shocking discovery of the fleet Wilkins, now in hiding, seized on a desperate plan to stop it before it leaves towards Earth. He convinced a gullible, wayward member of Psions First to "lead" the plot, helped him plant several bombs by using his contacts and Psion Brotherhood followers, and then helped with the greater forget to cover his tracks. He convinced Cage to record himself explaining the plot so he could understand it after forgetting and then doctored the recording to make sure Cage believes he did it all by himself.

If the heroes carefully review Cage's recording, they can see with a successful Hacking or Investigation roll that it has been carefully edited by someone, with the purpose of changing the story. The recording includes metadata detailing when and where it was created, an abandoned house used sometimes as a Psions First meeting place, and where Wilkins is currently hiding.

When faced, Wilkins will admit to everything while trying to kill the heroes. He does not care about his fate as long as the fleet is stopped, and so fights to the death. He knows the location of all remaining bombs as well as the codes to remotely disable them.

- **Joseph Wilkins:** Use stats for Veteran Psion.
- **Wilkins' Goons (2 per hero):** Use stats for Resistance Fighter Psion.

WILD WILD V-WEST, PART III

Where: V-World.

The heroes' adventure through the strange fantasy Wild West World comes to an end!

After the battle at Grimrock Mine, the heroes leave to Carlson City. On the way to the city, they find a caravan under attack by several Lava Demons. The terrified men and women in the caravan fight as well as they can but are clearly going to be overwhelmed by the Lava Demons unless the heroes do something.

- **Lava Demons (1 per hero)**
- **Caravan Travellers (5):** Use stats for Townsperson but with a Shooting of d6 and a pistol (Range 12/24/48; Damage 2d6+1; ROF: 1; AP 1; 6 shots, one full action to reload).

Once the heroes finally arrive at Carlson City they find it burning, as hordes of Lava Demons wreak havoc everywhere. As the heroes search for Crazy Jack, they find the Carlson City Sheriff and a bunch of lawmen about to be killed by the Demons. If the heroes beat the demons the Sheriff and his underlings join the group as Allies.

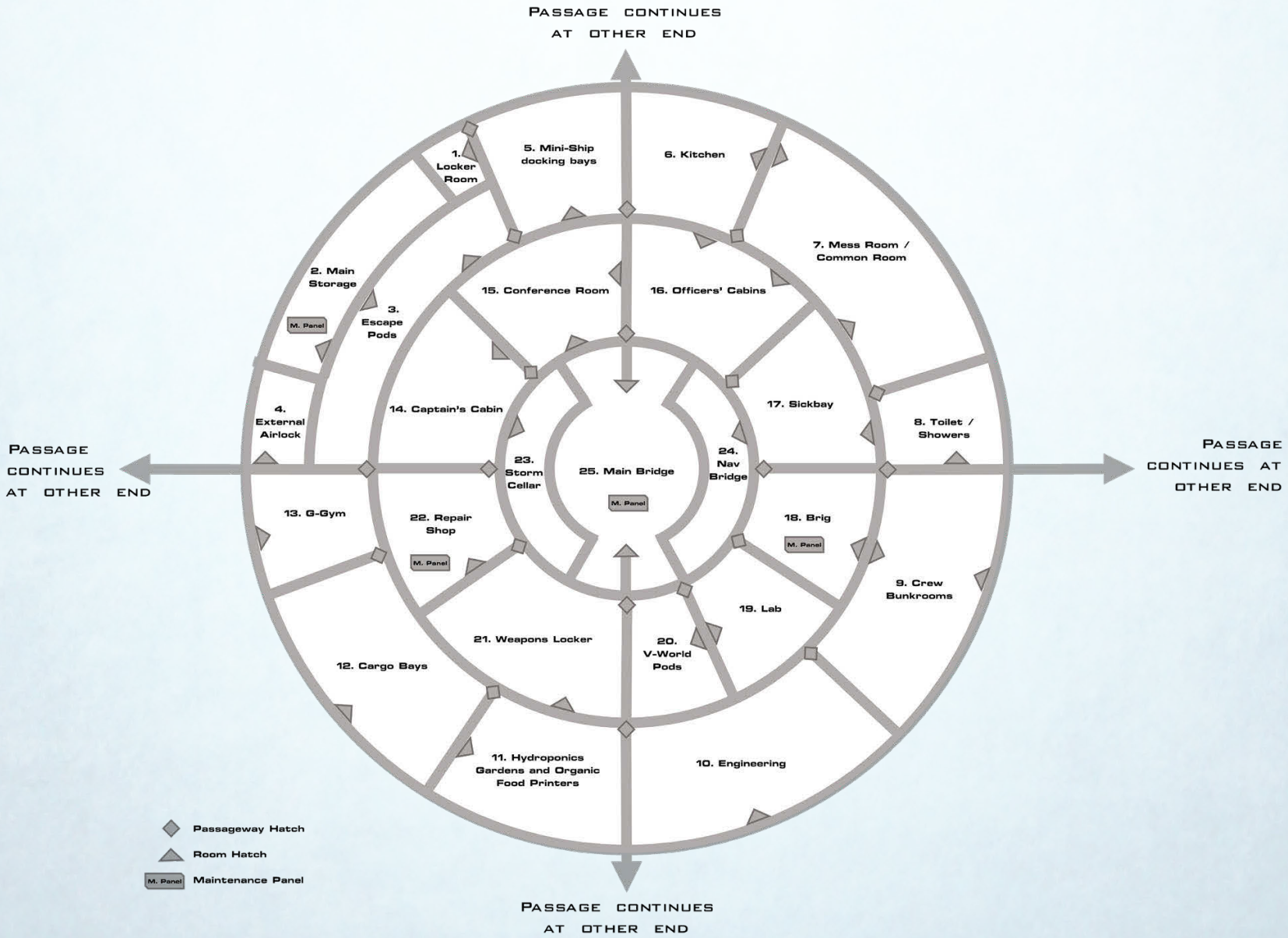
- **Lava Demons (1 per hero)**
- **Sheriff and his lawmen (1 per hero):** Use stats for Old West Typical Gunman

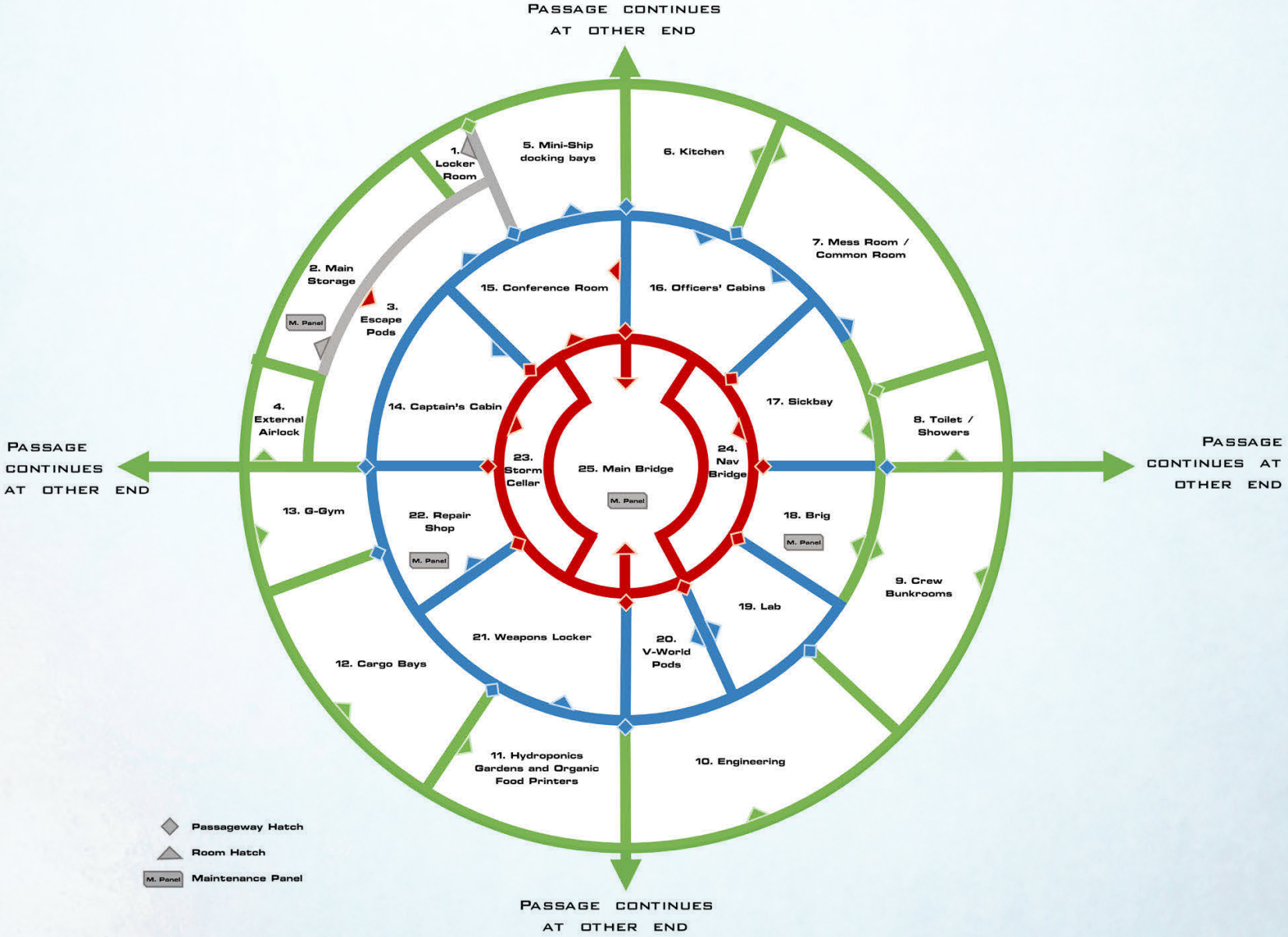
Finally, the heroes find Crazy Jack next to the church on the corner of Main Street, surrounded by Lava Demons. A dim spherical lava portal is floating in the air in front of Crazy Jack, who is firing the lava bullets into the portal. With each bullet the portal becomes brighter as it slowly opens. Crazy Jack orders his Lava Demons to stop the heroes while he completes the ritual.

The heroes must stop Crazy Jack before he fires all his bullets at the portal, while the Lava Demons work to protect him. If Crazy Jack opens the portal, a Major Lava Demon comes out! Looking like a huge lava dragon, the Demon will prove a tough opponent for everyone unless the heroes put a stop to it and soon!

- **"Crazy Jack" Harris:** Use stats for Old West Veteran Gunman.
- **Lava Demons (2 per hero)**
- **Major Lava Demon:** Use stats for Black Dragon, but its Claws/Bite attack includes a chance of catching fire; and instead of Acidic Breadth it has a Lava Breath (Cone Template; every target within the cone may make Agility roll at –2 to avoid the attack. Those who fail suffer 2d10 damage. This attack includes a chance of catching fire. A Major Lava Demon may not attack with its claws or bite in the round it breathes lava).

handouts


PASSAGE CONTINUES AT OTHER END
1. Locker Room
5. Mini-Ship docking bays
6. Kitchen
7. Mess Room / Common Room
2. Main Storage
M. Panel
3. Escape Pods
15. Conference Room
16. Officers' Cabins
4. External Airlock
14. Captain's Cabin
17. Sickbay
8. Toilet / Showers
PASSAGE CONTINUES AT OTHER END
23. Storm Cellar
25. Main Bridge
M. Panel
24. Nav Bridge
PASSAGE CONTINUES AT OTHER END
13. G-Gym
22. Repair Shop
M. Panel
18. Brig
M. Panel
9. Crew Bunkrooms
19. Lab
21. Weapons Locker
20. V-World Pods
12. Cargo Bays
11. Hydroponics Gardens and Organic Food Printers
10. Engineering
Passageway Hatch
Room Hatch
M. Panel
Maintenance Panel
PASSAGE CONTINUES AT OTHER END


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21. Weapons Locker
22. Repair Shop
23. Storm Cellar
24. Nav Bridge
25. Main Bridge
M. Panel
Passageway Hatch
Room Hatch
Maintenance Panel

SEVEN WORLDS



7. ENDGAME

introduction

EXTINCTION IS THE RULE. SURVIVAL IS THE EXCEPTION.

—CARL SAGAN

Welcome to the seventh and final module in the *Seven Worlds* campaign! This epic, unforgettable odyssey places the heroes at the center of the greatest conflict humanity has ever seen, and puts its future in their hands.

This adventure continues where *Exodus*, the sixth *Seven Worlds* campaign adventure, left off. It is assumed you've already played that adventure before starting this one, but if you haven't you will still find lots of interesting and challenging scenarios for you and your players to enjoy!

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

This section gives a short overview of the *Seven Worlds* Campaign up until this point.

WHAT'S HAPPENED BEFORE

A Mysterious Encounter, the introductory adventure included in the *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*, told the story of a group of Circle officers who, while on a routine patrol next to the frontier planet of Nouvelle Vie, witness the appearance of a strange alien ship and see its awesome destructive power. As a result, the heroes were sent to Concordia, one of the most powerful planets in the Seven Worlds, and the headquarters of the Circle, to report on what they saw.

In *Rumors of War*, the heroes travelled to Concordia and met Epsilon Leader Antoine, leader of the Circle. Antoine told the heroes that the Psion Brotherhood had been secretly interested in these strange ship sightings, and asked them to go to Brotherhood Headquarters on Earth and request information on the sighting from the Brotherhood, using official channels. Antoine also asked the heroes to investigate the mysterious disappearance of Dr. Luis LaMarche, a renowned scientist from Earth.

While attending Concordia's Centenary Celebration the heroes became involved in a terrorist attack that ended with the successful assassination of Governor Selnes, the leader of Bay Jing. Since Bay Jing and Concordia were bitter rivals, this assassination sparked the beginnings of an interstellar war.

When the heroes arrived at Earth, they met the emissary of the mysterious alien benefactors known as the N'ahili. They also met the leaders of the Psion Brotherhood, including the famous Ganendra Nathan, but failed to get any clues to the identity of the mysterious alien ship they saw. Finally, they get to investigate Dr. LaMarche's disappearance and discovered he had been working on unspecified "improvements" to the Stellar Communications Network, the main technology that allowed the *Seven Worlds* to communicate.

In *Divided We Fall*, the heroes returned to Circle Headquarters in Concordia and were sent undercover to investigate a curious deployment of ships made by the Concordian fleet as part of their war with Bay Jing. An unlikely discovery ended with the heroes carrying information on a top-secret Concordian plan that could ruthlessly allow them to win the war in a single stroke.

By the end of that adventure, the heroes were in Nouvelle Vie again, where the bulk of the Concordian and Bay Jingnian fleets were about to meet in battle. At this point, a fleet of mysterious alien ships materialized and completely destroyed both fleets. Simultaneously, the entire Stellar Communications Network mysteriously crashed, thus isolating the *Seven Worlds*. The heroes barely escaped with their lives and flew towards Concordia, carrying a desperate cry for help against an invader more powerful than all of them.

In *Into the Fire*, several months had passed since the fall of the Concordian and Bay Jingnian fleets at Nouvelle Vie, and humanity was fighting a losing war against the alien invaders now known as the Devourers. An anxious Epsilon Leader Antoine knew conventional means will not stop these aliens, and asked the heroes to go on a long-shot mission to find an alternative way to stop them.

Following an anonymous tip, the heroes travelled to Apollo and became embroiled in a political war between various corporations. To solve the situation, the heroes had to storm a faraway research facility that had been taken over by terrorists. One of these

terrorists had a clue the heroes needed, a strange story and the name of an unknown place: Chrysalis. Apparently this place had something to do with Logan's End, the farthest and least civilized of the *Seven Worlds*.

In *Broken Circle*, the heroes followed a report suggesting the elusive Dr. LaMarche was on Harris Station, and finally learn the secret he had obtained at such a great cost. It turned out LaMarche had discovered that the Stellar Communications Network was going to be sabotaged from within at the orders of the Psion Brotherhood. He also told the heroes the orders came from close to Logan's End. To escape the heroes had to survive a major space battle against an enemy willing to do anything to keep LaMarche's secret from getting out.

As the rest of human space continued to fall to the Devourers, the heroes reached Logan's End and followed up on the only clue to Chrysalis, the sad story of a failing smuggler crew that died several years ago. Before the adventure was over, the heroes had crisscrossed the planet and become involved in a rescue mission in the deep, savage jungles of Logan's End. The reward for a successful rescue: The coordinates of the mysterious Chrysalis.

In *Chrysalis*, the heroes finally make it to the Eighth World, a strange planet populated by Psions. There they learn that the Psion Brotherhood is planning to hide here while the Devourers annihilate humanity. They also discover that the Psion Brotherhood has a secret power that can destroy the Devourers if they so wish. This power can be unlocked with a secret password, a word that can be obtained only from Ganendra Nathan himself.

Emboldened by what they find, the heroes fight to take over Chrysalis. After a climactic battle with the leaders of the planet the heroes manage to prepare a fleet with tens of thousands of psions to fly towards Earth, recover the secret password to the power, and stop the Devourers before they destroy the mother planet.

In *Exodus*, the heroes left Chrysalis with the hastily assembled fleet of military and civilian ships carrying as many psions as possible towards Earth. After putting out a mutiny that threatened to destroy the entire fleet, the heroes followed the advice of the mysterious N'ahili, who pointed them towards a secret shortcut that could allow the fleet to reach Earth in weeks instead of months. Armed with a last present from the N'ahili, the heroes found the secret shortcut to Earth, and an obstacle on that path: A fully armed Devourer base. Can the heroes finally face their enemy and win?

WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW

As this adventure begins, the heroes decide to stage a dangerous raid into the Devourer base in an attempt to blow it up. Inside, the heroes finally meet the Devourers and discover how truly terrifying their enemies are.

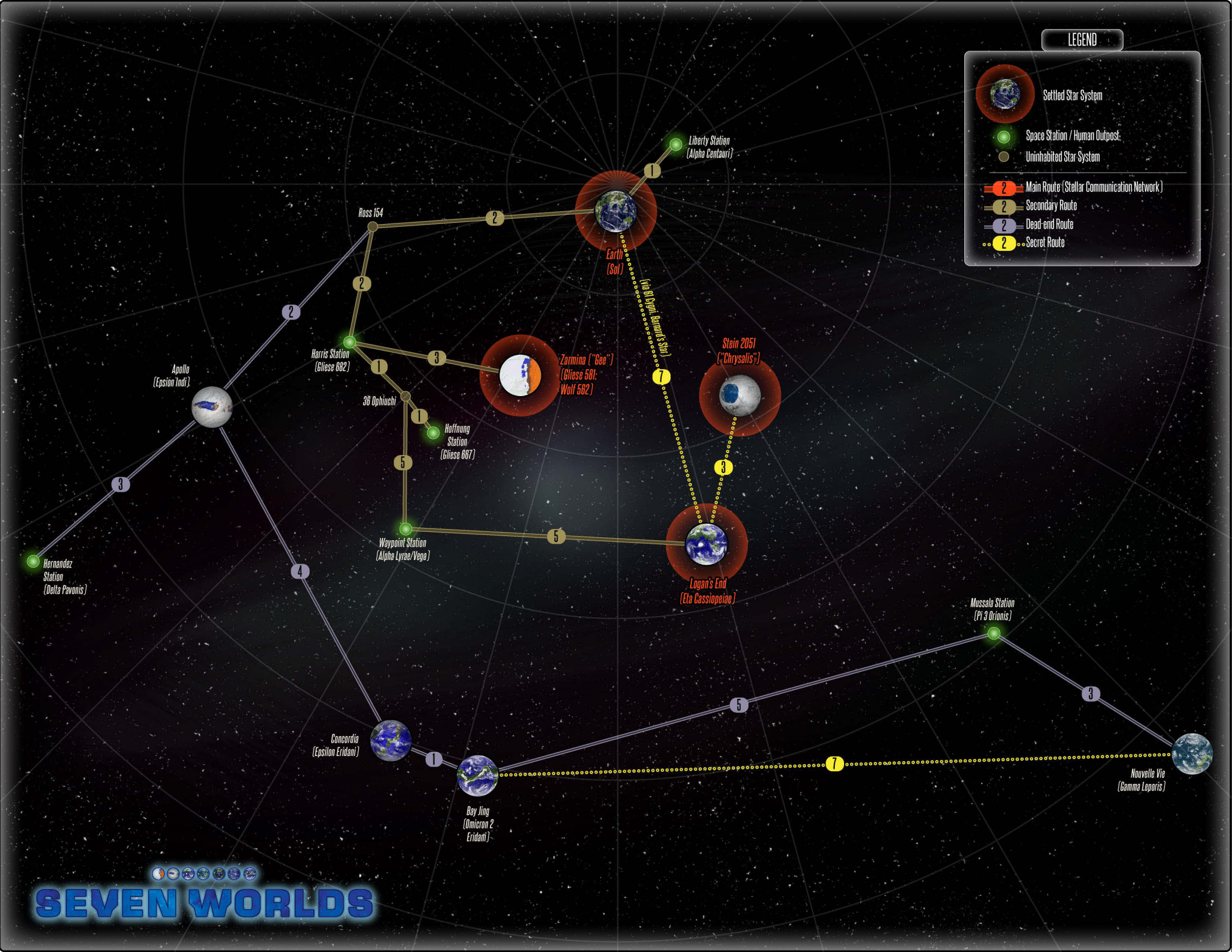
After disposing of the base, the heroes finally lead the fleet to Earth and discover the attack is imminent. After a desperate run to board Brotherhood Station, the heroes avoid Ganendra Nathan's guards and enter the station's private wing. There they discover where the *raze* power really came from, and meet the leader of the Brotherhood. As the station disintegrates all around them, the heroes must defeat Nathan, recover the password for *raze*, and transmit it to the fleet before the Devourers obliterate Earth!

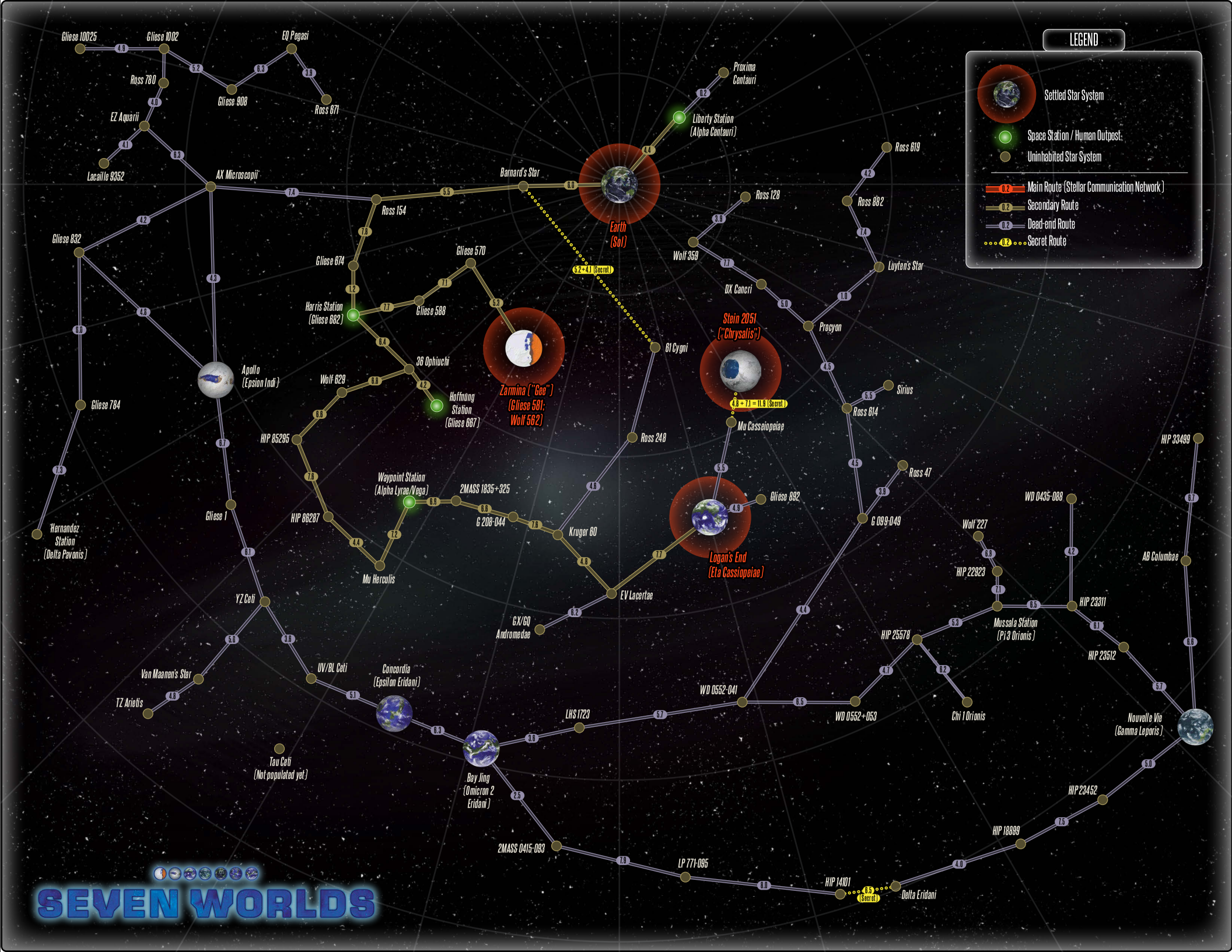
MAPS

The maps on the following pages show how the *Seven Worlds* stand at the start of this adventure.

Note the new route that connects the fleet to Barnard's Star.

If you are using the 3-D maps, this might be a good opportunity to show the heroes the updated map this adventure, explaining that since the Stellar Comm Network has permanently crashed, most routes between planets are now in a different color.


LEGEND
Settled Star System
Space Station / Human Outpost
Uninhabited Star System
2 Main Route (Stellar Communication Network)
2 Secondary Route
2 Dead-end Route
2 Secret Route
Liberty Station (Alpha Centauri)
Earth (Sol)
(via 61 Cygni, Barnard's Star)
Ross 154
Harris Station (Gliese 682)
Zarmina ("Gee") (Gliese 581, Wolf 562)
Stein 2051 ("Chrysalis")
Apollo (Epsion Indi)
36 Ophiuchi
Hoffnung Station (Gliese 667)
Waypoint Station (Alpha Lyrae/Vega)
Logan's End (Eta Cassiopeiae)
Hernandez Station (Delta Pavonis)
Mussala Station (Pi 3 Orionis)
Concordia (Epsilon Eridani)
Bay Jing (Omicron 2 Eridani)
Nouvelle Vie (Gamma Leporis)
SEVEN WORLDS


LEGEND
Settled Star System
Space Station / Human Outpost
Uninhabited Star System
0.2 Main Route (Stellar Communication Network)
0.2 Secondary Route
0.2 Dead-end Route
0.2 Secret Route
Gliese 10025
Gliese 1002
EQ Pegasi
Ross 780
Gliese 908
Ross 671
EZ Aquarii
Lacaille 8352
AX Microscopii
Proxima Centauri
Liberty Station (Alpha Centauri)
Barnard's Star
Ross 154
Earth (Sol)
5.2+4.1 (Secret)
Ross 619
Ross 128
Ross 882
Wolf 359
Luyten's Star
DX Cancri
Procyon
Gliese 832
Gliese 674
Gliese 570
Harris Station (Gliese 862)
Gliese 588
Zarmina ("Gee") (Gliese 581; Wolf 562)
Stein 2051 ("Chrysalis")
4.8 + 7.1 = 11.8 (Secret)
61 Cygni
Apollo (Epsion Indi)
38 Ophiuchi
Wolf 629
Hoffnung Station (Gliese 667)
Gliese 784
HIP 85295
Ross 248
Mu Cassiopeiae
Sirius
Ross 614
Ross 47
G 099-049
Waypoint Station (Alpha Lyrae/Vega)
2MASS 1835+325
G 208-044
Kruger 60
Gliese 892
Logan's End (Eta Cassiopeiae)
Hernandez Station (Delta Pavonis)
Gliese 1
HIP 86287
Mu Herculis
EV Lacertae
GX/GQ Andromedae
YZ Ceti
Van Maanen's Star
TZ Arietis
UV/BL Ceti
Concordia (Epsilon Eridani)
Tau Ceti (Not populated yet)
Bay Jing (Omicron 2 Eridani)
LHS 1723
WD 0552-041
WD 0552+053
HIP 25578
Chi 1 Orionis
Wolf 227
HIP 22923
Mussala Station (Pi 3 Orionis)
HIP 23311
WD 0435-088
HIP 23512
HIP 33499
AB Columbae
Nouvelle Vie (Gamma Leporis)
HIP 23452
HIP 18899
2MASS 0415-093
LP 771-095
HIP 14101
3.5 (Secret)
Delta Eridani
SEVEN WORLDS

endgame

PART I: THE RAID

This adventure begins as soon as *Exodus* ends. A Devourer base stands between the heroes' fleet and Earth. Only a daring mission to destroy the base will allow the fleet to reach Earth before it's too late!

This is the heroes' chance to finally meet the Devourers face-to-face and uncover some of the many mysteries of this alien race.

SCENE 1: TOUGH CHOICES

This scene assumes the heroes gathered as much intelligence as they could from their jump to Barnard's Star and then jumped back to the fleet. You may have to change or skip it altogether depending on the heroes' actions.

The fleet has to make a decision on how to proceed, and for this a council is called. The heroes are obviously present, as are as many NPC fleet leaders as you deem appropriate (see the sidebar on opposite page). If any relevant NPCs have died in previous adventures you can create replacements for them. Sergeant Alice Hynes and Doctor Zöe Fariq are particularly good choices for this meeting.

The purpose of the meeting is to decide how to proceed. These facts should surface during the meeting. They may be stated by the heroes, their Assistants, or by an NPC, depending on how you wish to run the scene. We suggest different NPCs bring the points up to the heroes for discussion, one at a time. Of course, it's always better if the heroes reach these conclusions by themselves.

- Apparently, thanks to the N'ahili, the fleet has found a hitherto unknown jump point to Barnard's Star. This shortcut shaves sixteen weeks from the trip to Earth and dispenses with the need to refill supplies. This is a major opportunity to reach Earth before the Devourers attack it.
- The Devourers have built a base inside an asteroid around the orbit of Barnard's Star. The base is protected by three Devourer ships. Attempting to reach the jump point to Earth without facing the Devourers will most likely result in the fleet's annihilation.
- The fact that there is a Devourer base such as this one jump point away from Earth means the Devourers have already jumped towards Earth. Most likely they are in the Sol System by now. Although it is impossible to be sure, it is likely that Earth will be attacked in any moment.
- A quick analysis of the asteroid base shows that it would survive an attack by the military ships in the fleet, and would most likely destroy them. A direct attack is therefore not an option.
- The N'ahili have conveniently left a Devourer-like ship with human controls. On top of that, the Devourers could have detected the mini-ship when it jumped into Barnard's Star. The fact that they have not responded could mean the ship has effectively fooled them. All of this suggests an infiltration mission to the base might be feasible.

Have the heroes propose a plan, which the leaders of the fleet will ultimately support. The most logical course of action would be to send a team in the Devourer mini-ship to infiltrate the base and destroy it from the inside. Some nuclear missiles can be turned into timer-activated bombs for the team to deposit inside specific locations of the asteroid, and some other means to overload the base from the inside might be found.

If the heroes decide on this plan, Sergeant Hynes volunteers to go with them, along with a team of her best marines. And Dr. Zöe Fariq also volunteers, saying her presence will be needed to understand and decipher the science in the alien base. Also, she has brought with her the canister that contains alien tissue (see Module 5, *Chrysalis*), and thinks it might be useful inside the alien base.

If the heroes decide on a different plan, you should decide what changes to make to the adventure in order for their plan to succeed.

PREPARING FOR THE MISSION

Have the heroes make as many preparations as they like. Give them ally sheets with the stats of any extras, such as the marines, scientists or any other NPCs that go with them. It is up to you to decide how many extras to give the heroes, up to the Devourer mini-ship's capacity.

The heroes and their allies can take any equipment they want for this mission. Don't forget to calculate encumbrance penalties, if necessary. Available

CHARACTERS IN THE FLEET

The following is a list of some of the fleet leaders the heroes could interact with. No statistics are provided unless mentioned.

Ryan and Lindsay: Assuming they are still alive, Ryan and Lindsay are considered the unofficial civilian leaders of the fleet. They are committed to the heroes' mission and willing to risk their lives and the lives of their fellow Chrysalians if necessary to save humanity. In order to be closer to the civilians and volunteers, they have made the *Destiny*, one of the Settler Ships in the fleet, their headquarters. Their stats are listed at the end of the book.

- **Eric Chambers:** Another long-time leader of the Resistance, he is as committed as Ryan and Lindsay to the cause. Unfortunately Eric is not as charismatic as either Ryan or Lindsay, thus making it hard to lead the civilians if Ryan and Lindsay are not available.
- **Captain Frank Cordova:** The third member of the current military high-command, Cordova was in a career dead-end when the revolution in Chrysalis occurred. Now the former surface desk worker is flexing rusted leadership muscles in space, and is enjoying himself immensely while supporting the new Chrysalis order.
- **Sergeant Alice Hynes:** This tough-looking marine is always ready to volunteer herself and her team of deadly soldiers to any mission, never mind the odds, as long as she feels it's for the right cause.
- **Corporal John Quiper:** Sergeant Hynes' second-in-command, Corporal Quiper has been assigned this role far too early, and does not feel quite ready for it. Alice trusts in his abilities, but privately suspects he still needs some experience. Fortunately, Corporal Quiper is learning fast.
- **Doctor Zöe Fariq:** Dr. Fariq was one of the scientists working on the theories and activities orchestrated by Dr. Oren Graham, and is thus familiar with some of his research. She significantly disagreed with Dr. Graham's ways and focus, though, and had secretly joined the Resistance. Now she is the foremost scientific expert in the fleet. If the heroes forgot to bring with them the canister containing Devourer flesh (see Module 5, *Chrysalis*) she has it with her.
- **Phillip Gomez:** Most born non-psions in Chrysalis live tough lives, and some wanted to change that. Phillip Gomez is one of the leaders of a small group of non-psions willing to change the status-quo any way they can. They joined Ryan and Lindsay's resistance long ago, and have been useful for the information they provided while on the menial jobs reserved for non-psions only. Now that the Resistance has triumphed, Gomez is waiting to see how this translates into new rights for his people. The urgency of the mission means there has not been time to talk about this, and Gomez is getting impatient.

equipment includes accelerator rifles and ammo, SMGs and ammo, vacc suits and helmets, reinforced vacc suits and helmets, light combat vacc suits and combat armor suits.

Besides gear and weapons, the heroes are provided with five time-activated nuclear bombs. Each one is to be placed at a particularly sensitive location of the alien base, which the heroes will have to discover. Each bomb is a 1'-long cylinder, and weights 5 lb. The heroes should decide who carries each bomb.

Dr. Fariq takes the alien canister with her to the ship. If she is not part of the expedition team, she gives the heroes the canister. The following sections of the adventure assume the heroes have the canister with them.

- **Marines:** Use stats for Soldier Psion.
- **Scientists:** Use stats for Typical Psion with Knowledge (Science) d10 and Hacking d8.

SCENE 2: INFILTRATION

Run this scene when the heroes are ready to approach the Devourer base.

The Devourers are apparently fooled by the mini-ship, so the first few hours of the heroes' approach are uneventful. You could ratchet up the suspense by having the heroes make periodic Knowledge (Ship Ops) and Hacking rolls to detect alien activities, with the result always being that nothing strange seems to be happening.

As the heroes approach, they see that all three Devourer ships are docked to the sides of the asteroid. This means that if the asteroid is destroyed the Devourer ships will be destroyed as well.

DETECTION

When the heroes are just a few hours away from the asteroid, read or paraphrase the following:

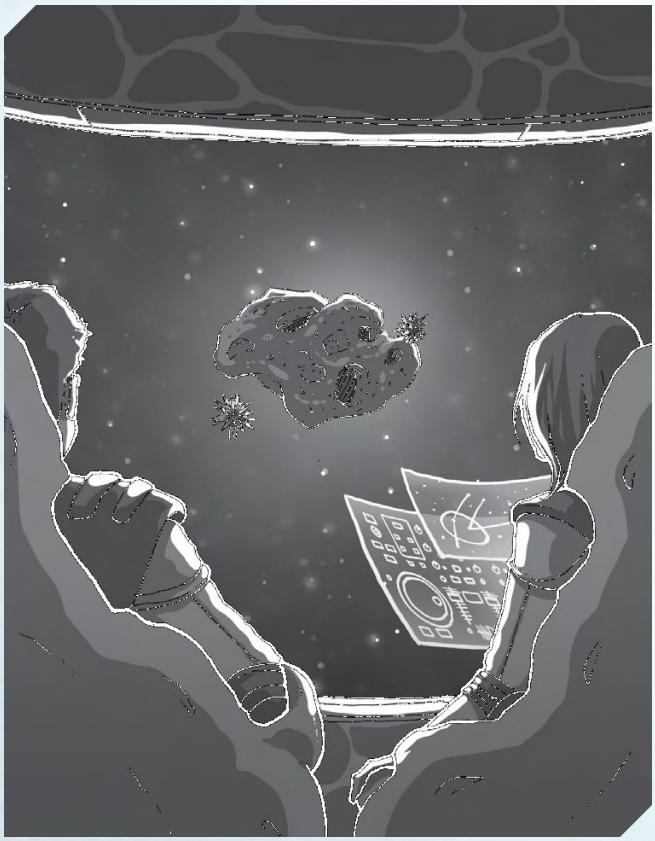
Suddenly your systems light up. You are being contacted! A strange array of sounds and symbols appears on your screen. The unintelligible message flashes for a few seconds and then stops.

Have the heroes decide what to do. With a successful Knowledge (Science) roll a hero deduces that the message is some sort of acknowledgement message, and that a reply is expected. There is no way for humans to know what to reply, though.

As you ponder how to proceed, you are suddenly startled as the alien tissue inside the Devourer canister begins to glow! The glow lasts for a few seconds and then fades away.

Any hero or character who makes a successful Knowledge (Science) roll correctly deduces that the glow in the canister means that the ship was scanned; since a "Devourer" was detected on board, most likely the heroes have passed a test.

The heroes should remember where that Devourer tissue came from, since they saw that story in the machine in Dr. Graham's Simulation Room (see Module 5, *Chrysalis*). If they don't remember the story, Dr. Fariq quickly summarizes it for them:



This alien tissue comes from the experiments Dr. Graham performed on both live and dead Devourers we captured more than twenty years ago.

In 2197, one of our research ships visited one of the uninhabited star systems close to Nouvelle Vie and chanced on a Devourer scout ship, similar to this mini-ship. As the Devourers prepared to attack, the crew in desperation broadcast a psionic request for mercy. It was stupid, of course, since psionic powers only work on human beings, and the distance was too great, but they were desperate. To the crew's surprise, however, the Devourers froze on the spot! That's when we learned that they are particularly sensitive to psionic powers. Why? We don't know.

Anyway, their ship was about to fire when the psionic message froze them. Apparently something overloaded and their ship exploded. We rescued several bodies and a closed pod with a live Devourer. I can't tell you what Dr. Graham found, since my brain is locked like all the rest. But this much is obvious: That Devourer base now believes there is at least one Devourer in this ship. I think they might let us in!

After a few seconds, a dot lights up on the heroes' external view of the asteroid on their wall screen: It is the location of one of the large docking bay doors, which slowly opens. The heroes are being directed to dock inside the asteroid.

As the heroes approach the asteroid, describe the incredible size and complexity of the structure before them. Small robot-like beings crawl on the surface of the asteroid; immense guns protrude from orifices in the rock, apparently defense mechanisms; lights from "windows" within the asteroid show the existence of passages carved within the rock; and the immense metal doors appear large enough to swallow many ships in the fleet. The heroes have never seen a Devourer ship this close, and its threatening blackness is even more intimidating at this distance.

Finally, the heroes' ship enters the base through the metal doors, and their ship docks.

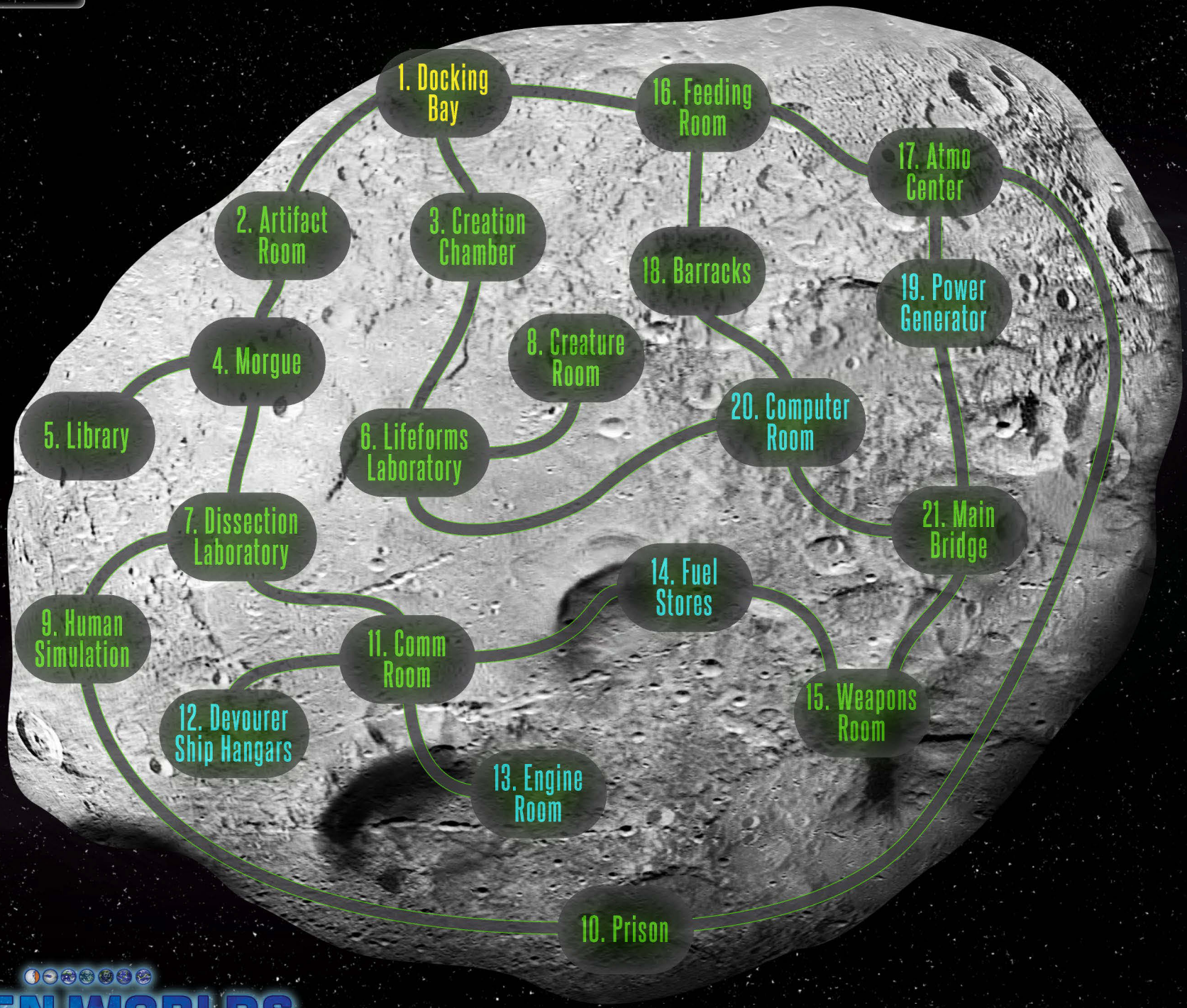
SCENE 3: THE DEVOURER BASE

In this scene, the heroes and their allies must find a way to disable or destroy the Devourer base and escape with their lives!

MISSION GOAL

To successfully destroy the base, the heroes must plant at least three out of their five nuclear bombs

Devourer Base



SEVEN WORLDS

in strategically-located places within the alien structure. The Library (location #5) has a map of the asteroid that shows these five vulnerable locations. Your descriptions of the appropriate locations should also help.

At least three of the following locations need to be planted with bombs for the asteroid and the docked Devourer ships to be destroyed:

- Devourer Ship Hangars (location #12)
- Engine Room (location #13)
- Fuel Stores (Location #14)
- Power Generator (location #19)
- Computer Room (location #20)

EXPLORING THE BASE

The map of the Devourer base is abstract, and represented by several locations connected by passageways. You are free to add rooms, connections or twists to the map as you see fit.

THE ENVIRONMENT

Devourer environments are actually bizarre biological constructs, with relatively little metal technology visible. The walls of the rooms and passageways beat, pulsate and ooze with a mucus-like substance that gives an eerie shine when exposed to light. Hallways aren't straight but irregular, and consist of innumerable side passages, dead ends and protuberances, like polyps on a membrane. The environment is nothing less than nauseating.

Although the heroes' suit sensors detect an atmosphere, they also show it is not breathable by human beings (with a few exceptions, as noted in specific areas below). A constant slight dark fog makes it harder to see. The atmosphere does transport audio waves, though, making it possible to listen through the noise transducers of the heroes' helmets. There is a constant irregular noise throughout the complex, something similar to a faraway periodic rumble.

Finally, there is no gravity in the environment, and no centrifugal simulation of it either.

In game terms, the environment is cold and unbreathable (consider the suit damage rules in the *Gear* section of the *Setting Guide* if the suits are ever opened or pierced), with no gravity (all zero-G rules from the *Setting Rules* section of the *Setting Guide* apply), and dark (–2 penalty to all actions, 10″ max distance to see something). Remember that most vacc suit helmets support night-vision mode, and thus can halve lighting penalties.

COMMUNICATIONS

The vacc suits' communication systems allow all heroes and their allies to talk from anywhere in the base without major interference. It is of course impossible to contact the fleet since it is at the other side of the jump point.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

While walking the hallways of the base, the heroes may encounter Devourers in many forms. Since there is no one true Devourer shape, any Devourers encountered will assume the heroes are yet another biologically created Devourer shape and will see no reason to attack, unless the heroes have raised the alarm or have been identified. Since the heroes probably don't know this yet, you are free to play the suspense of an encounter with Devourers who approach with unknown intentions.

You should roll for random encounters only when you think it adds to the game, and if the players have not been overwhelmed with enemies. The frequency of random encounters should increase if the alarm

ENCOUNTER TABLE

1D8	RESULT
1	No encounter
2	No encounter
3	**Small Technician Party:** 1 Technician per every two characters.
4	**Devourer Swarm:** 1 Devourer Swarm.
5	**Mixed Party:** 1 Technician per every two characters, 1 Devourer Warrior per every three characters.
6	**Warrior Party:** 1 Devourer Warrior per every two characters, 1 Devourer Elite Warrior.
7	**Elite group:** 1 Devourer Elite Warrior per every three characters.
8	**Devourer Monster:** This encounter only occurs if the alarm has been raised or if the heroes have already visited location #8, and the Devourer Monster is still alive. Otherwise roll again.
9	**Large Warrior Party:** 1 Devourer Warrior per character, 1d3 Devourer Elite Warriors.

has been raised. Given the structure of the Devourer base, it is entirely possible for the heroes to hide in one of the many cul-de-sacs in order to avoid being spotted. Use the standard *Savage Worlds* rules for Stealth and Notice to handle this abstractly.

To create random encounter, roll 1d8 and consult the following table. Apply a +1 to the roll if the alarm has been raised.

FIGHTING THE DEVOURERS

During combat the Devourers will use their abilities to maximum advantage. They will climb walls and fall down on the heroes, for example. The cul-de-sacs and passageways in Devourer environments also make it easy for them to stage an ambush on the heroes, by storming them from several directions at the same time.

As a GM, you should strive for an atmosphere of anxiety, fear and paranoia. The heroes are in an alien environment, and their enemies have the upper hand.

1. DOCKING BAY

When the heroes' ship docks inside one of the asteroid's huge docking bays, a long flesh-like tube detaches from one of the bay walls and locks itself to the hatch. The sensors inside the ship show that the environment in the tube has an atmosphere but it is not breathable by humans.

When the heroes open the hatch they see a long, dark passageway with irregular fleshy walls. Strange far away rumblings and sounds echo throughout the complex.

THE COMPUTER TERMINAL

A closed membrane a few feet in front of the heroes interrupts passage. On the wall next to the membrane the heroes see an irregular hole about 2' across and 1' deep. It is completely full of a transparent gelatin-like substance. This is an alien computer terminal.

If a hero inserts one hand into the gelatin, a screen lights up on the wall above the hole. The screen is very opaque at first, but becomes progressively brighter as the hero inserts both hands inside the gelatin, opens and closes them, and wiggles his fingers. The screen cycles through several frequencies until it finds the frequencies the hero detects (in this case, visual frequencies). Two dots then appear on the screen, and the hero quickly discovers that he can control the movement and position of each one with each hand. Different movements of the fingers change the color of the dot.

Any hero who makes a successful Knowledge (Science) roll deduces that the system has trained itself to understand the movements of the human body and has created an on-the-fly interface to allow humans to interact with the computer systems of the base. With a raise, the hero also deduces that this means that Devourers have a need for their systems to interact with beings of many different shapes, thus implying that there are many types and models of Devourer.

A few minutes later, the alien tissue in the Devourer canister begins to glow again. As the canister is scanned, the screen flashes bright and the membrane door automatically opens.

The hero who interacted with the computer terminal now has a rudimentary knowledge of how to make choices in the system by moving his hands and fingers. From now on and for the rest of this scene, the hero may interact with any other computer terminals in the base by making a Hacking roll with a –4 penalty. The penalty decreases by one for each time the hero interacts with the system, until it reaches zero. Any other heroes who interact with computer terminals for the first time also start with the –4 penalty. Assistants cannot interact with these terminals.

CROSSING THE MEMBRANE

As soon as the heroes cross the membrane, read or paraphrase the following.

> *Suddenly a red beam of light from the ceiling begins to scan you! One of the fleshy walls next to you lights up and shows a representation of a human shape in yellow. Next to this shape you see what appears to be a 3-D schematic of the asteroid, where two locations flicker in the same tone of yellow. After a few seconds, both the beam of light and the diagrams on the wall disappear.*

With a successful Knowledge (Science) roll a hero can deduce that there is a connection between human beings and the two marked locations in the asteroid. With a raise, the hero also deduces that the system does not consider their shape particularly strange, which might imply that Devourers are not surprised by human shapes.

Unfortunately, the heroes do not know enough (yet) about the distribution of the asteroid to know where the two marked locations are or how to get there.

The two locations referred at by the map are the Human Simulation Room (location #9) and the Artifact Room (location #2).

2. ARTIFACT ROOM

Read or paraphrase the following:

This large room appears to be a warehouse full of the most bizarre human objects you could imagine: Pans, pots, baseballs, bicycles, toys, broken hover shuttles, suits of all kinds, even a toilet. Most of them look badly damaged, as if they had been salvaged after a battle. They are all placed on "shelves" made out of the flesh-like substance that is everywhere. Small hooks grab each item to keep it from floating away.

Although the Devourers are not interested in preserving alien cultures (that's what the N'ahili are for) they collect items from their enemies to analyze them for weaknesses.

The heroes can fly up or down the walls by using the "shelves" as handles using their normal movement. Several Devourer Technicians are here, scavenging through the objects. They will ignore the heroes and assume they are Devourers unless the heroes try to take any object out of the room. In this case they will stop them and tell them they can't do that (the heroes won't understand their combination of signs and rumbles, some of them outside the heroes' range of hearing). If the heroes insist, the Technicians raise the alarm (this takes one full action), and a group of Devourer Warriors arrive within two rounds.

The heroes can find almost anything they need here to supplement their resources with the exception of weapons. Heroes who take the time to search among the objects find the diary of a young man chronicling the aftermath of the attack on Concordia. According to the diary not everyone in Concordia is dead; some survivors have gone underground and are planning to outlast the nuclear winter and reclaim Concordia for themselves, however long it takes.

- **Devourer Technicians (1 per 3 characters):** See page 240.
- **Devourer Warriors:** See page 240.

3. CREATION CHAMBER

The entrances to this chamber are protected by closed membranes. They can be opened by making a successful Hacking roll (minus applicable penalties) at the nearby alien computer panel. Once the membrane is open, read or paraphrase the following:

This large chamber contains thousands of fleshy pod-like semi-transparent bags, suspended by a maze of vein-like tubes. Some of the pods are just 1' across while others are as large as several humans. Strange dark shapes slowly move inside each pod.

This chamber is used to create new Devourers in practically all shapes and sizes. The pods currently have Devourers in different stages of development.

A Devourer Technician is currently checking the vital signs of some of the pods. He will ignore the heroes unless they attempt to open or damage a pod. If that's the case, the Technician will screech in panic and slice open one of the pods, which it knows contains a fully developed Devourer.

Any Devourer taken out of the pod floats outside shivering uncontrollably for one round. Then it slowly comes around and begins attacking the heroes. The Technician quickly moves among the pods opening one every 1d2 rounds until stopped. Each time a Devourer is released, roll 1d6. On a 6, it is a Devourer Elite Warrior, otherwise it is a Devourer Warrior.

If a hero carefully checks all the pods, he finds one or two contain the body of a being that appears human, with a few glaring deficiencies (the legs are too long, the head is too big, or other anomalies). A successful Knowledge (Science) roll allows the hero to deduce that the Devourers are experimenting with creating "human Devourers" but apparently have not been successful yet.

- **Devourer Technician (1):** See page 240.
- **Devourer Warrior:** See page 240.
- **Devourer Elite Warrior:** See page 241.

4. MORGUE

Read or paraphrase the following:

This chamber contains hundreds of neatly organized cylindrical pods, protruding perpendicular to the walls. The pods are opaque and built out of some kind of sinewy material. Inside the pods you see what appear to be human bodies! An alien computer panel stands on a side wall.

The pods are extremely strong and cannot be broken, but can be opened with a successful Hacking roll on the computer panel. These are bodies of human men, women and children, all naked. Some of the bodies are perfectly preserved, while others are hideously dissected; some of the pods contain just random bits and pieces of human flesh. If one of these is opened, have all heroes make a Spirit roll to keep from vomiting (add one level of Fatigue for one hour).

If a hero examines several bodies and makes a successful Knowledge (Science) or Healing roll, he

determines some of the victims were alive just a few days ago. This might imply there were (or still are) humans alive in the base!

5. LIBRARY

A closed membrane protects entry to this chamber. It can be opened by making a successful Hacking roll (minus applicable penalties) at the nearby alien computer panel. Once the membrane is open, Read or paraphrase the following:

This chamber is an enormous dome built from the same flesh-like, mucus-covered substance as the walls in the rest of the base. Several computer terminals (holes in the walls filled with the gelatin-like substance) are located on the walls around the dome.

Heroes who successfully interact with the computer terminal via a Hacking roll deduce this is a digital library of information. Any piece of information the heroes request appears as a huge semi-transparent three-dimensional hologram in the center of the dome. There is no "index." Instead, the heroes have to specifically request something in order to get an answer.

The following information is available for the heroes:

- **If the heroes ask about the asteroid**: Give the heroes the player's map of the asteroid (see page 242). The names of each location are what the heroes interpret from the icons that appear in each room in the map. Locations for which the icon could not be deciphered by the heroes are marked with a question mark.
- **If the heroes ask about weaknesses in the asteroid:** Besides giving them the map, tell them the locations marked "Engine," "Power," "Energy," "Ships" and "Brains" glow red.
- **If the heroes ask anything about recent Devourer events:** Show footage of the Devourer invasions and attacks on Nouvelle Vie, Mussala Station, Bay Jing, Concordia and Apollo.
- **If the heroes ask anything about older Devourer events:** A map of the galaxy appears, where practically every star in the galaxy is lit dark red. Some sections of the galaxy are lit bright red, such as the human space around Sol. There are other parts of the galaxy with the same bright red, and a few parts are light bright blue. A hero who makes a successful Knowledge (Science) roll deduces that the Devourers have been everywhere in the galaxy at some point in time, and that currently there are several "bands" roaming the galaxy; one of them is currently in human space. The bright-blue sections might indicate someone else besides the Devourers is in those parts of the galaxy.
- **If the heroes ask about the Devourers themselves:** The screen quickly cycles through several Devourer configurations, such as Devourer technicians, Warriors, Elite Warriors, Swarms, and many other forms. A hero who makes a successful Knowledge (Science) roll deduces that Devourers can create their own shapes and forms depending on their needs and the weaknesses of their enemies.

Feel free to invent any other information you deem appropriate, depending on what the heroes ask. *Do not* give the players any information on the following:

- The N'ahili.
- The *raze* power.
- The Devourers' homeworld or creators.

6. LIFEFORMS LABORATORY

Read or paraphrase the following:

The bizarre screams and moans coming from this chamber cause your hair to stand on end. The chamber contains dozens of cages built from a material similar to bone and sinew. The cages are stuck to the floor, walls and ceiling of the room. Inside each cage there is a... being. From things like strange embryos with tentacles to moving shapeless hunks of flesh, every being here is different, all bizarre, all alive.

Two lone Devourer Technicians work in the opposite end of the room, with their extremities inserted into the gelatin-like substance of their computer terminals. They do not appear to have noticed you.

Have all characters make a Spirit roll with a –1 penalty. With a failure, the character is shocked and nauseated, and receives one degree of Fatigue for the next hour.

This is the place where the Devourers experiment with new life forms before starting the reproduction process in the Creation Chamber (location #3).

If the Technicians get a chance to see the heroes, they immediately wail in alarm and release as many malformed experiments as they can. In game terms, two swarms of misshapen Devourers are released. As the cages open, the ravenous and demented prototypes of life descend on the heroes and attack!

- **Devourer Technicians (2):** See page 240.
- **Misshapen Devourers (2):** See page 241.

7. DISSECTION LABORATORY

Read or paraphrase the following:

A bloodcurdling scream of pain invades the chamber. A human voice!

This chamber contains several irregular "tables" built out of something that looks like a stretched muscle. The tables are dirty and some of them look caked in blood. Next to the tables are cylindrical semitransparent blocks containing fresh human parts, such as heads and livers.

A group of Devourers surround one of the tables, intently working while a human being thrashes in pain on top!

This is the Devourers' dissection lab, where they analyze their enemies' bodies. Vivisection (opening the victim while alive and conscious) is the normal procedure. A group of Devourer "scientists" work around the current victim on a table in the center of the room. If any heroes or allies have fallen in combat previously, they are alive, and about to be dissected! Otherwise, one human prisoner from location #10 is being dissected. Two Devourer Warriors stand nearby in case the victim finds a way to escape.

As soon as the Devourers see the heroes, they stop and fight while raising the alarm.

The human prisoner dies from his wounds just after the combat ends, not before staring at the heroes and desperately yelling "Save the others!" This is a reference to the other humans at location #10 (the Prison).

- **Devourer Technicians (4):** See page 240.
- **Devourer Warriors (2):** See page 240.

8. CREATURE ROOM

A closed membrane protects the entrance to this chamber. It can be opened by making a successful Hacking roll (minus applicable penalties) at the nearby alien computer panel. If the heroes have already raised the alarm throughout the base and the Devourer Monster has been set free (or is dead) then this room is empty. Otherwise, read or paraphrase the following:

A deep ominous growl comes from the dark recesses of this large, wet cavern. There are large mounds of something that looks like a rotten biological food, with some of it strewn around the floor. Something... large... is moving in the back of the chamber.

This chamber houses a Devourer Monster, one the first of the batch the Devourers have released on human worlds to finish off any humans that survive the attack. This huge monster can be released to track the heroes if the situation becomes desperate enough for the Devourers.

Once the creature is awake, it will follow the heroes throughout the base until it either kills them or is killed.

✸ **Devourer Monster:** See page 239.

9. HUMAN SIMULATION ROOM

A closed membrane door protects both entrances to this chamber. The membrane is much thicker than other membranes in the base, and can only be opened by making a successful Hacking roll (minus applicable penalties) at the nearby alien computer panel.

As soon as the membrane is open, read or paraphrase the following:

As soon as the membrane opens you are faced with a room that is radically different from every other place you've seen up until now. From the metal walls to the furniture and computer interfaces, it is a perfect replica of the interior of a human starship or military base! Dark marks on some walls and hatches show someone has fired a weapon inside.

The room is brightly illuminated, and your sensors indicate it has a human-breathable atmosphere.

This chamber is used by the Devourers to simulate battle in human environments. The marks and scratches on the walls are from previous simulated combats.

If the heroes search the rooms and passageways of this simulated human environment, they will find additional weapons and ammo, as well as vacc suits.

10. PRISON

A closed membrane door protects both entrances to this chamber. It can be opened by making a successful Hacking roll (minus applicable penalties) at the nearby alien computer panel.

As soon as the membrane is open, read or paraphrase the following:

This small irregular chamber has the same repulsive pulsating biological walls as the rest of the base. Your sensors show it does have a human-breathable atmosphere, though. Eight humans appear to be living here. They are thin

and haggard, and a couple are sobbing against one of the walls. A few are missing limbs. They obviously are prisoners, and have faced horrors beyond imagining.

The prisoners have been locked kept here for weeks or months. There is no need for a guard since even if they got out they would not be able to breathe the atmosphere outside this room. A hole on one wall periodically produces a tasteless paste that has been keeping them fed all this time, as well as water. An irregular hole on the floor biologically disposes of their waste. Periodically the Devourers come and take a prisoner, who is almost never seen again.

By this time, the prisoners have severe trauma and mental problems. They can tell how and where they were captured (most by Devourer parties that landed on some of the Seven Worlds after the attacks and captured a few survivors, although a couple were passengers on a ship captured by Devourers). They cannot provide any information on the Devourers or the base.

Assuming the heroes want to save the prisoners, they will need vacc suits for them. These are available in locations #2 or #9, above. The prisoners are in no condition to fight, and will therefore have to be taken care of by the heroes and their allies. There also may not be enough space for all the prisoners in the heroes' ship.

- **Prisoners (8):** Use stats for Civilian but with a d4 in Vigor, and one level of Fatigue.

11. COMM ROOM

Read or paraphrase the following:

The flesh-like walls of this room are smoother than those in other chambers, and project rapidly-changing information. The entire room is a wall screen. You can see diagrams of the Barnard's Star system, its planets and moons, as well as close ups of other nearby asteroids.

In the center of the room there is a small dome made out of the gelatin-like substance you have seen in computer panels around the base. A group of Devourer Technicians are facing the dome, their claws submerged in the gelatin, apparently controlling the display of information on the walls.

This is the base's communication center. It receives and transmits information between the base and also collects information from all the sensors the Devourers have deployed around the star system.

With a successful Knowledge (Science) roll a hero notices that one of the displays charts the likely position of the Devourer fleet that has left for Earth. A success allows the hero to see that the fleet left relatively soon but it is moving slowly towards Earth. A raise allows the hero to deduce from the display that the fleet has stopped on its way towards Earth, and is not approaching yet. This means there is still a chance to reach Earth before it is attacked!

The Devourer Technicians working the computer panels are concentrated in their work and will ignore the heroes unless they interrupt their concentration or the alarm is raised.

- **Devourer Technicians (1 per character):** See page 240.

12. DEVOURER SHIP HANGARS

Read or paraphrase the following:

In front of you is a large hangar, much larger than the one you docked at. This one is so big that you can see part of the section of the three Devourer ships docked into the asteroid itself! From afar you see a large number of Devourers entering and leaving the ships.

The platform in front of you contains innumerable sacks and pods filled with supplies of some sort.

It should be obvious to the heroes that this is the ideal spot to plant a bomb if they want to get rid of all the Devourer ships at once.

Unfortunately there are so many Devourers here that unless the heroes take special measures to stay out of sight (such as hiding behind the supplies) they will most likely be seen by a group of patrolling Devourer Warriors. In this case, the Warriors will approach and try to ascertain if the heroes are supposed to be there or not before attacking. Given the challenges in communication, the heroes will have to be very creative to avoid a battle. If a battle breaks out and the alarm is raised, the heroes will most likely have to escape this location to avoid being overwhelmed by Devourer Warriors.

- **Devourer Warriors (1 per character):** See page 240.

13. ENGINE ROOM

Read or paraphrase the following:

This enormous chamber is one of the few sections of the base that contains large amounts of metal instead of the ubiquitous biological,

fleshy mass. You are close to one of the sides of the asteroid, and in front of you see what could only be the huge exhaust cone from a space engine. Curiously, though, the exhaust cone points towards a wall, not directly towards space, making you wonder exactly how Devourer engines work.

This is one of the five locations where the heroes can place a bomb to destroy the base.

Although there is a computer panel on the side wall, no matter what they try the heroes cannot interfere with the operation of the engine in any way. Other than the engine itself, the room is empty.

14. FUEL STORES

Read or paraphrase the following:

This large, bizarre chamber contains what you could only call a bladder: Three huge fleshy bags, dozens of meters high, slowly gurgle as if full of some strange liquid.

Two Devourer technicians work on a glowing computer panel on the wall next to the entrance of the chamber.

The technicians do not expect anyone to enter this room, and panic when they see the heroes. Unless the heroes either calm or neutralize them in the next two rounds, they will raise the alarm and attack.

By using the computer and making a successful Knowledge (Science) or Knowledge (Ship Ops) roll, a hero can identify from the atomic representation of the contents of one of the bladders that it is full of hydrogen, thus making it likely a fuel for use in fusion. The contents of the other two bladders are a complete mystery. With a raise on the roll, the hero deduces that whatever the liquids do, it is very likely they react to hydrogen by producing an explosive energy outburst. This is therefore a good location to place a bomb.

The bladders' skin is very think, and cannot be cut or pierced, not even with a gunshot.

- **Devourer Technicians (2):** See page 240.

15. WEAPONS ROOM

This room has a closed membrane on its far wall. There is a significantly thinned-out atmosphere here. If a hero uses the nearby computer panel (successful Hacking roll with appropriate modifiers) the membrane opens. Unprepared characters are in for a surprise: The entrance leads to the vacuum in space outside the asteroid!

Have all characters make a Strength or Agility roll with a –1 penalty. With a failure the hero is sucked out through the membrane towards space! Both the hero and any companions can make a free Agility roll to grab onto something. If this roll is also failed, the character floats away into space and needs to be rescued. The membrane can be closed again in one round, by using the computer panel again.

Read or paraphrase the following:

The opening takes you outside the asteroid, into a small crater on the side. In the center of the crater you see a bulbous sphere out of which protrudes a thick metal rod: An energy cannon! Apparently this is one of the asteroid's defenses against any enemies that attempt to approach.

Two Devourers, oblivious to the vacuum, are working on a computer panel placed on one of the walls of the sphere.

The Devourers can survive in vacuum for several hours without special equipment. They are surprised when they see the heroes, and try to defend themselves if attacked, or flee and raise the alarm if they get a chance.

The heroes may think to destroy or disable the weapon. The weapon can be treated as an object with 12 Toughness, or it can be permanently disabled by performing a successful Hacking roll with a –2 penalty on the computer panel. The roll can be tried more than once, but each try takes 10 minutes.

- **Devourer Technicians (2):** See page 240.

16. FEEDING ROOM

Read or paraphrase the following:

About two dozen low vats lie on the floor of this horrid room. The vats are full of a thick, sticky liquid, slowly moving in unpredictable patterns. The vats are occupied by sprawled Devourers! At first glance it would seem they are taking a bath, but a careful look shows they are actually absorbing into their body whatever the liquid is.

Periodically, Devourers need to recharge their energies, and to do this they absorb the compound in the vats. The "food" is chemical mix of enzymes and proteins that can be stored inside their bodies for long periods of time, and can be synthesized from other products when not available. It is not edible by humans.

The Devourers in the room are immersed in the absorption process and will not pay attention to the

heroes unless they call attention to themselves (for example, by attacking a Devourer). If the Devourers decide to take action against the heroes, treat them as Shaken at the start of the combat, as they strive to disengage from the feeding process and regain full consciousness.

Use several Small Burst Templates to represent the vats in the room. They count as Difficult Ground if crossed.

- **Devourer Technicians (1 per every 2 characters):** See page 240.
- **Devourer Warriors (1 per every 3 characters):** See page 240.
- **Devourer Elite Warriors (2):** See page 241.

17. ATMO CENTER

Read or paraphrase the following:

This chamber contains several alien computer terminals, as well as a group of flesh bags and protuberances stuck to the walls, looking like deformed polyps. These bags periodically inflate and deflate against the wall, as if breathing.

The "bags" generate the combinations of chemicals that keep the atmosphere of the compound. A hero who uses the computer terminal and performs a successful Hacking roll discovers he can control the contents of the atmosphere of the base.

Although the system does not allow the hero to create a poisonous atmosphere, and the Devourers can survive in most atmospheres anyway, it is possible to make the atmosphere of the base more similar to a human-breathable atmosphere, thus allowing humans to breathe without a vacc suit helmet. This could help, for example, in the evacuation of the prisoners from location #10.

Changing the composition of the atmosphere takes about twenty minutes, and automatically alerts the entire base to the heroes' presence.

18. BARRACKS

Read or paraphrase the following:

This entire chamber is crisscrossed by fleshy cables, trunks and protrusions coming from the walls and ceiling, and resembles a huge canopy. Thousands of pods hang from the trunks and cables, some of them empty, others apparently not. Your sensors detect a constant low thrumming sound.



Devourers also occasionally need to rest (not sleep). Heroes must be very careful here not to make too much noise or they will disturb the resting Devourers. Stealth rolls with an appropriate bonus should apply.

If a Devourer stops resting, it takes 1d2 rounds to become fully ready to fight.

- **Resting Devourer Technicians (1 per every 2 characters):** See page 240.
- **Resting Devourer Warriors (1 per every 2 characters):** See page 240.

19. POWER GENERATOR

Read or paraphrase the following:

So far you have seen very little metal in the base, making the twenty-meter-diameter metal sphere in this chamber a strange sight. Dozens of tubes made of a biological muscle-like membrane connect the sphere to the walls. Even from the entrance of the chamber you feel the heat and energy being produced inside the sphere. There are several computer panels nestled in the walls.

Several Devourer Warriors stand in attention between the entrance and the sphere, apparently protecting it.

This room houses the generator that powers the entire base. The Devourer Warriors have been ordered to let no one in and aim their arm weapons at the heroes as soon as they see them. Assuming the heroes don't have a way to defuse the encounter, the Devourers attack.

The walls of the sphere cannot be pierced by any kind of weapons the heroes have, except for the nuclear bomb. This is obviously a good location to place one of those bombs.

Getting too close to the sphere is dangerous. Any character, hero or enemy, who gets within 4" of the sphere must make a Vigor roll or gain one level of Fatigue from radiation. This Fatigue goes away in 24 hours.

- **Devourer Warriors (4):** See page 240.

20. COMPUTER ROOM

Read or paraphrase the following:

This chamber is dominated by a central pulsating globe, about fifteen meters across, made of mucus-covered flesh. Hundreds of conduits connect the globe to the walls, floor and ceiling of the chamber. You see bright points of light quickly enter and leave the globe through the conduits. Periodically, a section of the globe lights up for a few seconds and then turns dark red again.

Several technicians work around the globe, either caressing it and rubbing something sticky on its skin, or interacting with the many computer terminals on the walls.

This room houses the immense biological computer brain that runs the entire processing of the Devourer base. It is a good place to arm one of the heroes' nuclear bombs.

The technicians in the room will ignore the heroes unless they attempt to either attack them or damage the brain, in which case they will raise the alert and fight until dead.

The brain has a Toughness of 12. Assuming the heroes manage to damage it, the entire computer system in the complex goes down. In game terms, all the membranes in the base become permanently open, the terminals go down, and the base goes on full alert. From now on all Devourers in the base have a permanent –1 penalty to all trait rolls due to their inability to coordinate amongst themselves.

- **Devourer Technicians (4):** See page 240.

21. MAIN BRIDGE

Read or paraphrase the following:

This cavernous chamber is full of technicians working in deep concentration across many computer terminals. The walls are covered in rapidly-changing information, unintelligible to you, combined with views of space and of the asteroid. In the center of the room, submerged in what looks like a vat with conduits coming out of it, sits a large Devourer. Although he looks like a Warrior, the larger structure of his head and arms gives the impression that it is significantly more important.

This is the main control room, from which activities in the asteroid are coordinated. The Devourer in the center of the room is the current leader of the asteroid.

As soon as the heroes enter, the Leader immediately orders an attack. If the Leader is killed, the base is thrown into turmoil. Whenever the heroes meet a group of Devourers as a result of a random encounter (see Random Encounters, above) there is a 50% chance that the Devourers will ignore the heroes and just run aimlessly somewhere else. This does not apply to the Devourer Monster, who always attacks.

- **Devourer Leader (1):** Use stats for Devourer Elite Warrior (see page 240) but add the Command Edge.
- **Devourer Warriors (4):** See page 240.
- **Devourer Technicians (5):** See page 240.
- **Devourer Swarm (1):** See page 239.

ESCAPING THE BASE

To successfully conclude the mission the heroes must activate at least three of the nuclear bombs and escape the base using their ship. By default, the bombs are timed to give the heroes one full hour to escape, but they can be tweaked to activate in more or less time if needed.

When the heroes board their ship to escape, read or paraphrase the following:

As you turn on your Devourer Mini-ship and undock, the screen turns red and an alert indicator blinks on the screen! [Assistant name] quickly scans the readings and says, "Apparently while our new Devourer mini-ship was docked some biological thing entered its system and corrupted it. We can still fly the ship but it could fail sporadically."

From now on until the end of the scene, the ship's engines periodically stop for a few seconds, jolting

everyone on board. Whenever the pilot gets a Clubs card for initiative, he or she has a –2 penalty to all Piloting actions that round.

OPTIONAL ESCAPE SCENES

We have included a few optional scenes you might want to consider to ratchet up the suspense during the heroes' escape, depending on how the adventure goes and what your players' tastes are. The ultimate goal is to make the escape as exciting as possible.

CHASE!

As the heroes place the last nuclear charge, they are discovered by an army of Devourers. A chase through the corridors of the base begins!

Play this as a Chase using the Chase rules from *Savage Worlds*. The Chase lasts five rounds, and uses Agility as the maneuvering Trait. Because of zero-G, the heroes' Agility rolls have a –2 penalty. If possible try to make the heroes' allies and extras make a single roll, to simplify bookkeeping.

Some typical obstacles to use during the chase might be door membranes, corridor dead-ends through the convoluted maze that is the Devourer environment, other groups of Devourers, and such.

Once the five rounds are up, you can assume the heroes managed to board their ship and escape, or you can combine this with the next scene below.

- **Devourer Warriors (1 per character):** See page 240.
- **Devourer Elite Warriors (1 per character):** See page 241.

STANDOFF AT THE DOCKING BAY

As the heroes return to their ship, they discover the membrane to the docking bay is closed. A nearby computer panel gives a hero an opportunity to force open the membrane, but just then an army of Devourers appears, intent on keeping the heroes from escaping!

Forcing open the membrane using the alien computer terminal is a Dramatic Task using either the Hacking or the Knowledge (Science) skills, with a –2 modifier. Since this is the entrance to the docking bay, there could be fleshy bags or other obstacles that the heroes and their allies can use as Cover to survive the onslaught.

The Devourers will use their powers and abilities to try to overwhelm the heroes before they escape.

- **Devourer Warriors (1 per character):** See page 240.
- **Devourer Elite Warriors (1 per 2 characters):** See page 241.

SHOOT THEM DOWN!

As the heroes board their ship and take off, the asteroid's energy cannons activate and fire at the heroes! Unless the heroes managed to deactivate the weapons in location #15, they must survive three consecutive attacks before the timer activates and the nuclear bombs explode, taking out the base with them. The asteroid weapon's statistics are as follows:

- **2×Devourer Heavy Energy Cannons:** Range 4/8/16; Damage 3d8; AP 50; RoF 1; PDLB RoF 8; Heat Points —; HW. The Devourer ship's energy cannon is a mix of several types of frequencies in the spectrum, including visible, X—and gamma-ray radiation.

EPILOGUE

When the heroes finally escape the base and the nuclear bombs are about to explode, read or paraphrase the following. You may have to modify the description depending on the exact circumstances of the escape:

As your failing Devourer mini-ship leaves the asteroid base, accelerating as fast as your human bodies will allow, you expectantly project a close-up of the asteroid in your wall screen. To your surprise you see the Devourer ships preparing to undock from the asteroid in pursuit!

Fortunately, you do not have much more to wait. Suddenly the asteroid is engulfed in a silent, bright flash. The nuclear charges have exploded! The screen immediately darkens to protect your sight. As the flash subsides you get to see the floating remains of what used to be the Devourer base and ships. The fleet now has a clear way to reach Earth!

The next step for the heroes is to fly back to the jump point and return to the fleet. As soon as the heroes jump back, their alien ship finally sputters and dies. Apparently whatever biological corruption it received from the base was too much for it. The ship is now dead and there is no way to fix or recover it. The heroes' trusty old ship, the *Voyager*, still awaits them in the fleet, of course.

As soon as the heroes give their report, their success reverberates throughout the fleet, which quickly prepares to jump towards Barnard's Star and then to Earth.

There is now only one jump left until the heroes reach their final destination: Earth.

PART II: BATTLE FOR HUMANITY

Finally, the fate of mankind will be decided. Can the heroes face the leader of the Psion Brotherhood and recover the password to the locked *raze* power before the Devourers destroy Earth?

SCENE 4: A DESPERATE SITUATION

When the heroes reach the jump point to Sol, they may decide to jump with or without the fleet, or maybe send a scout in their place. The following information should help you respond to their actions whatever their choice.

THE SITUATION ON EARTH

The current situation in the Sol system is critical. A fleet composed of hundreds of Devourer ships is moving towards Earth at a speed that suggests they will reach the planet in five days. At top speed the heroes could reach Earth in about the same time assuming the Devourers don't change speed. The Chrysalis fleet is slower, and could reach Earth about a day after the Devourers do.

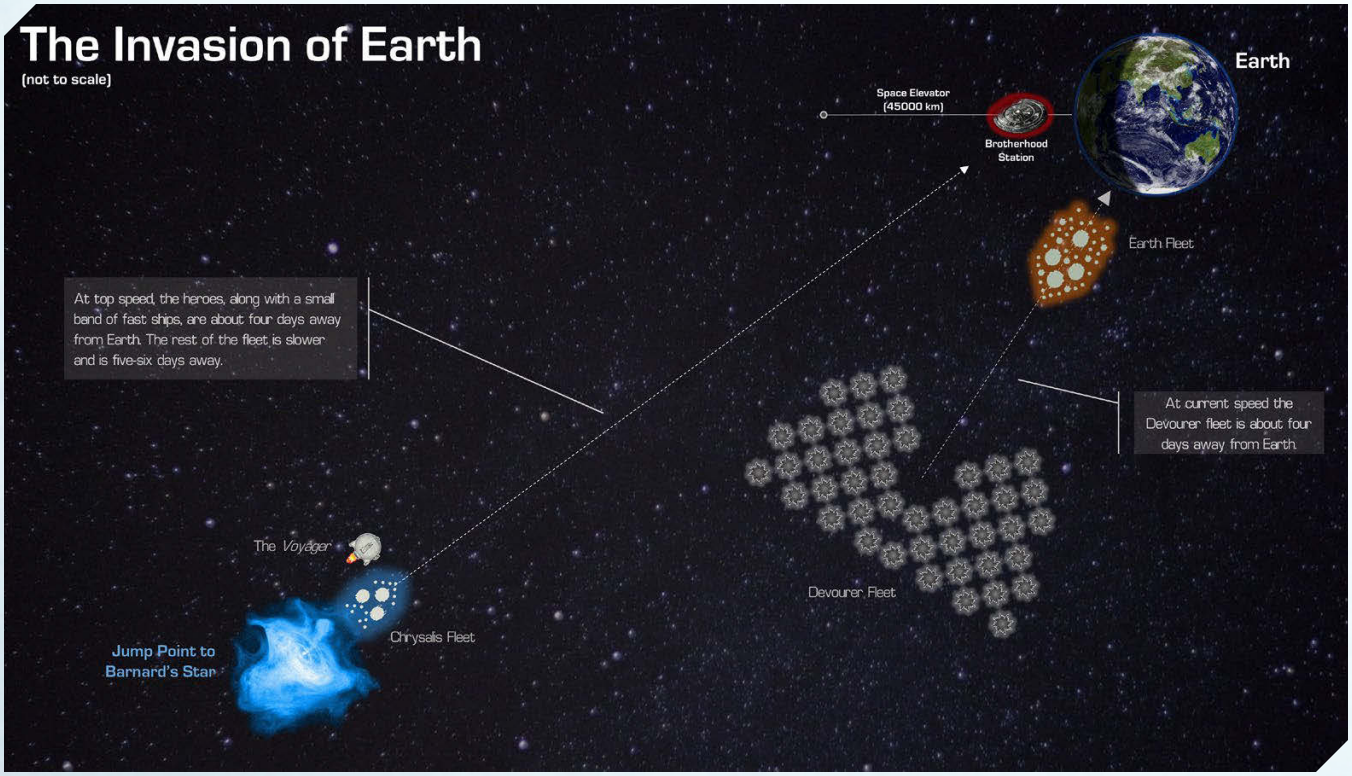
The Earth fleet facing the Devourers is composed of just a few hundred ships. Most of the ships are from EarthGov but a few Circle ships, and even some Psion Brotherhood ships, are also present. The fleet is about a hundred thousand kilometers from Earth orbit and is clearly not strong enough to repel the final attack. The fleet is led by General Salvador Bargowski, Chief of the EarthGov Armed Forces, whom the heroes met during the Centenary Celebration in *Rumors of War*.

A steady stream of civilian ships is fleeing Earth towards the jump point to Alpha Centauri. Some ships are departing from Center City, at the top of the Space Elevator, while other ships are picking up passengers through the rotovators in Earth orbit. Obviously those ships are not nearly enough to evacuate a significant part of the population of the planet. The Devourer fleet does not seem concerned about the fleeing ships.

The base station for the Space Elevator, located in Pedernales, is now closed, since the risk of the Elevator falling down to Earth is very real. Thus, there are very few evacuations options left for the billions still on the surface.

Open signal chatter detected from Earth shows the planet is in a panic, and law and order have broken down.

Center City itself has been evacuated days ago. Brotherhood Station, several hundred kilometers above Earth on the Space Elevator, is in full alert, just like the rest of the planet. As far as can be seen from their communications, Ganendra Nathan is still there, coordinating psion evacuation and last-minute defenses.



TALKING TO EARTH

If the heroes send an NPC scout ship to report on conditions on the Sol system, the information above is everything they get. If the heroes jump, with or without the fleet, they may try to talk to Earth.

The heroes can try to open communications to anyone on Earth. Since there is a delay of several minutes in the transmission to Earth, rather than a conversation most communications should be an interchange of audio/video messages.

If the heroes think of suggesting that Earth's millions of psions use their powers with mental manifestations to attack the Devourer fleet (see page 242) and manage to both convince someone of the plan and organize this (a very difficult task), describe all Devourer attacks against Earth as less effective due to the psion counterattack. Also, the Earth fleet finds it slightly easier to slow down the enemy. This does not change the direction or outcome of the battle (except where indicated below) but is important to describe, and should earn the players a Benny.

KILEY NEZAT

Kiley Nezat, Circle Representative, is coordinating evacuation activities as well as the activities of the Circle military ships supporting EarthGov fleet. If the heroes tell her their story, Nezat tells them that Ganendra Nathan is holed up in Brotherhood Station and that reaching him will be very difficult. She refuses to believe that Nathan could have done something like this, and frankly says she cannot focus on anything but the evacuation, but promises to commit a few ships to help the heroes when they or the fleet approach.

GENERAL BARGOWSKI

General Salvador Bargowski recognizes the heroes from the last time he met them (in *Rumors of War*). While General Bargowski does not admit the defense of Earth is hopeless, he certainly suggests that he is prepared to die with honor along with his fleet.

If the heroes tell their story, General Bargowski replies that at this point he is mostly interested in the military ships in the Chrysalis fleet, and in how fast they can join him. He currently needs all the help he can get. Although he does not believe in crazy stories about a secret psionic power, if the heroes make a successful Persuasion roll and perform some good role-playing he is willing to support them by launching a strike against the Devourers coordinated with the heroes' approach to Brotherhood Station, thus attempting to distract the enemy long enough for the heroes to dock.

GANENDRA NATHAN

If the heroes try to contact Ganendra Nathan, his aides and underlings reply that he is unavailable, being completely focused on the defense of Earth. Nathan will not answer the heroes' calls under any circumstances.

THE PLAN

When the heroes are ready to proceed, have one of the NPC characters suggest a war council. The heroes are free to decide what to do any way they want. Assuming the heroes accept the council, all major surviving characters from the fleet will be present, either physically or remotely.

If the heroes don't propose it, other characters suggest the only chance to recover the password for the *brain lock* in the Chrysalians' minds is to enter Brotherhood Station and somehow wrestle it from Nathan himself.

The only way to enter Brotherhood Station is for the heroes to fly a fast, maneuverable ship such as the *Voyager* and land directly on one of the landing pads on top of the station. If the heroes want to be accompanied by a team of marines or soldier Extras, a few Patrol Ships would have to join the heroes in their mission. Additionally, some military ships should accompany the team to provide cover, both against the Devourer fleet that could easily intercept them, and from any defenses Brotherhood Station may have. In the meantime, the rest of the fleet should cautiously approach to be in range to activate *raze* if and when the heroes manage to recover the password.

If the heroes decide to go ahead with the plan, Lindsay asks to accompany them. She has worked in Brotherhood Station and knows the station layout and systems very well. If the heroes accept, Lindsay's presence in the mission translates into a +1 bonus to all Hacking, Knowledge (Science), and Repair rolls while aboard the station.

If the heroes decide to bring extras with them, consider the number and passenger capacity of the available patrol ships in the fleet. In no case will the leaders of the fleet commit all military ships in the fleet to the mission, since this would leave the civilian ships without protection.

While this is the most logical plan, have the heroes come up with any other plan and strategy they believe could work.

SCENE 5: APPROACHING BROTHERHOOD STATION

This section assumes the heroes' approach strategy is to lead the *Voyager* (and maybe other Patrol Ships)

towards the Brotherhood Station under cover of military ships of the Chrysalis fleet. You may have to change the situation according to the heroes' final plans.

Assuming the situation is as described above, read or paraphrase the following:

As you approach Brotherhood Station, your supporting military ships place themselves between you and the nearby Devourer fleet, thus covering you. Apparently that was the right choice, as you see several Devourer ships detach from their fleet and swoop in to attack!

Fortunately, the ships covering you take the brunt of the attack, but a few Devourer ships slip by and attack you as they approach.

As if that weren't enough, your sensors indicate Brotherhood Station is ready to defend itself. Not only does it now have fully operational laser cannons, three patrol ships are docked on the station landing pads, and are ready to launch towards you.

This is most likely the final space battle of the campaign, and has several layers of complexity. Read this section carefully before running it.

THE STATION APPROACH

Place ten tokens on the tabletop. The *Voyager* and any accompanying Patrol Ships are placed on the first token, while Brotherhood Station is located on the tenth and last token.

DOCKING

When the heroes reach the tenth token, the pilot needs to make a successful Piloting roll with a –2 penalty, plus any other applicable penalties, in order to land on one of the docking pads on top of the station's fins. Assume that any remaining Patrol Ships automatically dock a few minutes after the heroes.

PATROL SHIPS

If the heroes brought any patrol ships with Extras to accompany them in the raid to the station, use the following simplified rules to handle them:

- Patrol Ships are divided between the players for purposes of control. Each Patrol Ship acts on its assigned player's Action Card.
- Each Patrol Ship gets to make a Piloting roll with a –2 penalty in its turn. With a success, the ship gets to move two positions this round, or move one position and turn to face the opposite direction. With a failure, the ship gets to move one position this round, or may turn to face the opposite direction (but not both).
- Besides moving, Patrol Ships may also attack using their laser cannon only.
- Patrol Ships do not need to make Heat rolls. You do not have to track heat points for them.
- If a Patrol Ship is hit, don't bother calculating damage; instead mark it as "Shaken." Shaken Patrol Ships have an effective penalty of –4 to all rolls. This condition cannot be removed. If a shaken Patrol Ship is hit a second time, it is destroyed along with all its crew and passengers.

The simplified stats for Patrol Ships are as follows:

- **Patrol Ships:** Piloting d6, Knowledge (Ship Ops) d8, Shooting d8. Attacks with Light Laser Cannon (Range 4/8/16, Damage 3d6, AP 6)

THE PSION BROTHERHOOD

Ganendra Nathan is not going to let the heroes approach that easily. Brotherhood Station weapons attack the heroes and their allies. Also, there are currently three Psion Brotherhood Patrol Ships docked on the station. Depending on how the battle goes and how many ships the heroes have at their disposal, you may launch up to two of these Patrol Ships launch towards the heroes (the third one is Ganendra's personal ship). This is not necessary if things look too tough for the heroes.

- **Brotherhood Station:** See stats for Brotherhood Station in *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*.
- **Psion Brotherhood Patrol Ships (up to 2 launched):** See stats for Patrol Ships in the *Seven Worlds Setting Guide*.

THE DEVOURER FLEET

The heroes also have the Devourers to worry about! The Devourers ignore any ships of the Chrysalis fleet unless they come too close to Earth, which is the case now. Hopefully the heroes brought some military ships to cover their approach.

If the heroes did not bring any military ships to cover their approach but managed to convince Kiley Nezat or General Bargowski to help them, then these allies detach ships from their Earth fleet to cover them. If the heroes did bring cover and also talked to Kiley or Bargowski, the Earth ships join their cover.

In game terms, the Devourers dispatch a number of ships proportional to the cover fleet's effective force, thus making the relative forces in the Mass Battle below the same regardless of how many ships the heroes have to cover them. In role-playing terms there

is a big difference, however, so you should describe these events in as glorious a way as possible, and handle the descriptions of the Mass Battle in a way proportional to the number and origin of the ships the heroes have to cover them.

Remember that all Devourer ships have a weakness against psionic powers with a mental manifestation (see page 242). You can assume all Devourer ships participating in this scene are within range of the heroes and their allies for this purpose.

THE DEVOURERS AGAINST THE HEROES

Assuming the heroes have some kind of cover from the fleet, the Devourers dispatch one ship against them. More Devourer ships will join this ship once the Mass Battle ends (see below).

Since the Devourers are on an intercept vector perpendicular to the heroes', place the Devourer Ship token on a position on the tabletop outside the marker track. The Devourer ships will not appear on the track during this battle, and will always be handled abstractly at Long Range. You thus do not need to make any movement rolls for them.

All Devourer ships act on the same Action Card. All attacks against Devourer ships are always made at Long Range.

The Devourer Ships' attack strategy is as follows:

- Each Devourer ship picks the ship closest to Brotherhood Station as its target. If more than one ship fulfills this requirement, pick the target randomly. Place one gaming stone next to each Devourer Ship's target so you can track it.
- Once a Devourer ship has a target, it keeps firing at it until it is destroyed or an attack forces it to change targets (see below). If the Alien ship destroys a target, it moves on to the next ship that is closest to Brotherhood Station, and so on.
- Each time a Devourer ship is successfully hit by an attack (regardless of whether the attack beats the ship's Toughness or not), including psionic attacks, the attacker becomes its new target, even if it is not the closest to Brotherhood Station. Move a focus gaming stone next to the new target to represent the change in focus.

Smart heroes should soon figure out that they can manipulate the Devourers' targets by firing at them.

- **Devourer Ship (1 initially):** See page 242.

IF THE HEROES BROUGHT COVER

If the heroes assigned some military ships to cover their approach, then a Mass Battle explodes around them! The military ships keep the other Devourers busy while the heroes and any patrol ships they have make a run towards the station.

At the end of each round play one round of the Mass Battle as a backdrop to the heroes' approach. The Devourers start the Mass Battle with 10 tokens, against 4 tokens for the humans. Both the humans and Devourers use a Knowledge (Battle) skill of d8 as an Extra. In the unlikely case that a hero or another Wild Card leads the fleet, use that character's Knowledge (Battle) skill instead of the standard d8.

Have the players make any tactical decisions and rolls for the human fleet. Remember to make all descriptions rich and splashy, as befits a Mass Battle close to Earth orbit! We suggest you pick the number and type of military ships beforehand and that you name the ships. This will allow you to better describe who is being destroyed as the battle rages.

Besides the +2 bonus for Major Fortifications (use the *Mass Battles in Space* section of the *Setting Guide*), Morale rolls for the humans' side receive an additional +2 bonus since they cannot retreat from Earth.

ONCE THE COVER IS LOST

Once all military ships covering the heroes' approach from the Devourers are destroyed, or if the heroes did not bring any military ships to cover them, then the Devourers finally bring their attention to them. The lone Devourer ship attacking the heroes is joined by others, bringing the enemy total to one Devourer ship per every three ships the heroes have on the tabletop. If the heroes had any sort of cover at all, at least one Devourer ship joins the attack, for a minimum total of two Devourer ships attacking the heroes.

See the rules above to handle the Devourer Ships.

- **Devourer Ships (1 per every 3 hero ships, minimum 2 total):** See page 242.

SURVIVING THE APPROACH

This is a tough space battle. Be lenient on the heroes if the situation becomes too complicated. If you think things are getting too tough, you can have additional ships from the Earth fleet join the action at the last minute, complicating Devourer attacks on the heroes for a round or two; alternatively, one of the Patrol Ships on Brotherhood Station may suddenly launch and join the heroes' side. Maybe some psions are sympathetic to the heroes' cause, or maybe there are moles in the station willing to help the heroes with their mission.

When the heroes finally dock with Brotherhood Station, they are out of this battle. The Devourer ships finish off the heroes' cover ships (if any) and return to their fleet for the attack on Earth. Brotherhood Station will still be attacked, of course (as the descriptions below state). Move on to the next scene.

SCENE 6: BROTHERHOOD STATION

As the heroes finish landing and prepare to enter the Station, read or paraphrase the following:

From the outside, Brotherhood Station looks as beautiful as the last time you visited: The Disembarking Bay, with large windows providing breathtaking views of the Space Elevator, and the background of Earth. But today the reality is very different.

As you prepare to enter Brotherhood Station, the Devourer attack begins! On your wall screens you see the entire Devourer fleet approaching and surrounding Earth, while the Earthgov fleet tries to stop them. Sporadic battles break around the planet, but from the looks of it they won't last very long. Already the deadly rays from Devourer ships are streaming towards Earth, creating immense explosions which can be seen from orbit, as well as destroying satellites and orbital docking stations. Random orbital debris flies everywhere, some of it crashing against Brotherhood Station! You feel the sporadic shocks from the attack. There is little time left for Earth.

THE ENVIRONMENT

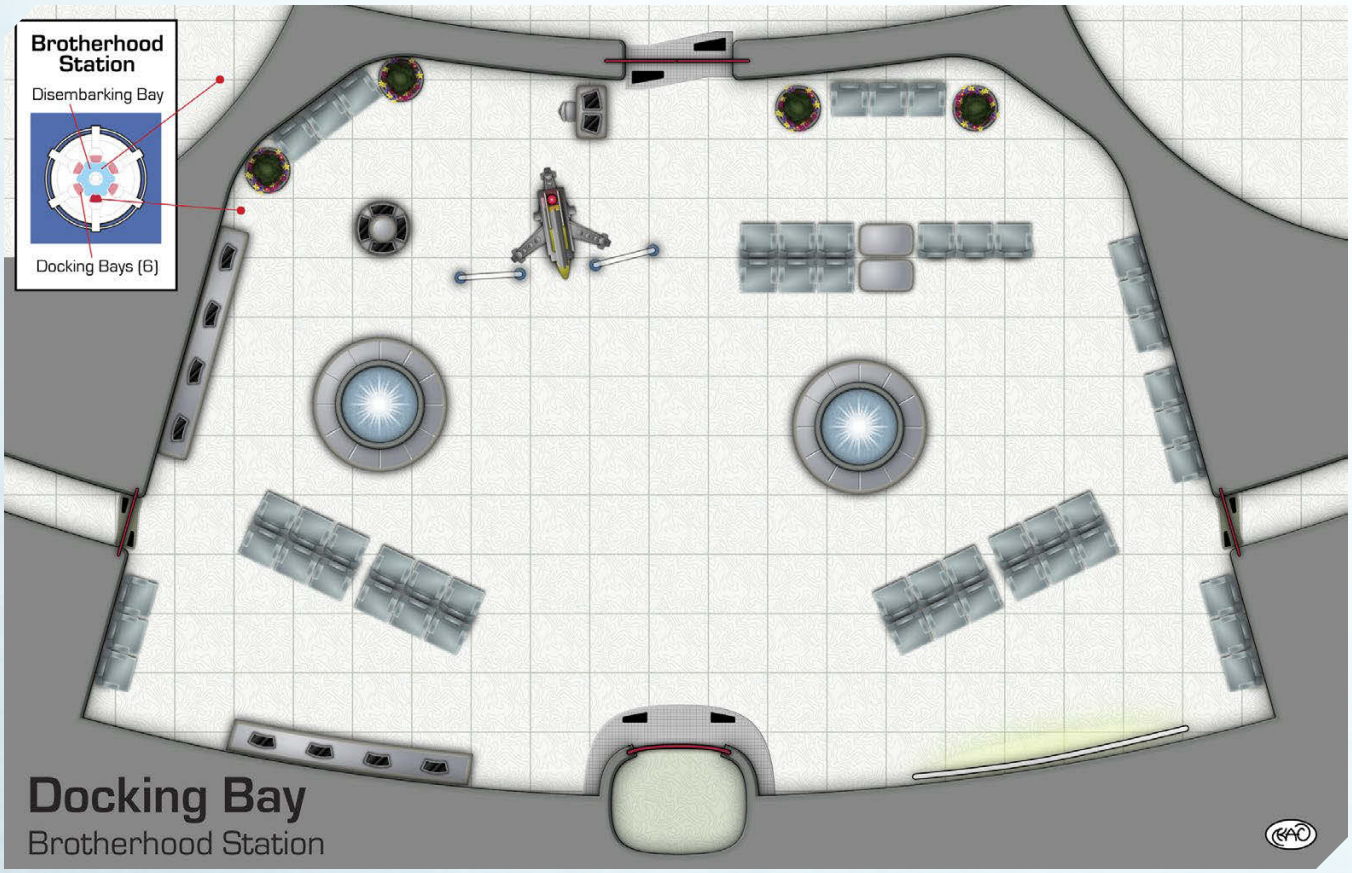
Brotherhood Station has been evacuated, and is mostly deserted except for a few elite teams of soldiers loyal to Ganendra Nathan. The quick and messy evacuation of the station has resulted in corridors covered in assorted debris (useful for cover).

The station has a gravity equal to about 80% of Earth gravity.See the rules for Low-G in the *Setting Rules* section of the *Setting Guide*.

V-World access has initially been closed for both heroes and their Assistants. There are ways to gain access, however, as explained below.

EARTH UNDER ATTACK

As the heroes enter Brotherhood Station, the Devourers begin their attack on Earth while the EarthGov fleet tries to stop them. Periodically debris



from destroyed ships and satellites hits the Station, breaking some of the tension cables that keep the station balanced on the Space Elevator cable, and affecting everyone inside.

For the duration of this entire scene, you should periodically describe a debris hit that shakes the station and makes everyone in the team fall prone; perhaps things fall down, or a minor wall collapses.

For all combats run in Brotherhood Station, whenever a deuce is drawn from the Deck the station is hit, forcing everyone inside to make an Agility roll or fall prone. A penalty is applied to the roll depending on the suit of the deuce, as shown on the table below. If the result of the roll is 1 or less (after applying modifiers) the character is also Shaken. If more than one deuce is drawn in the same round, only one roll applies, using the penalty for the worst card.

SUIT	PENALTY
Clubs	–6
Diamonds	–4
Hearts	–2
Spades	+0

THE DOCKING BAY

The heroes' first challenge in Brotherhood Station will be entering the docking bay. This is not the main disembarking bay the heroes visited before, but a previous chamber normally used for customs before entering the main structure.

After leaving their ship the heroes enter a pressurized elevator hatch, which opens up into the docking bay chamber. The heroes begin this combat inside the elevator at the bottom of the map.

The passageways on the left and right walls lead to other adjacent docking bays for other ships (such as the ships used by any allies the heroes brought, if any). The chairs, fountains, plants, and other equipment provide Medium Cover.

A detachment of psion soldiers is expecting the heroes and start On Hold. They are crouching behind the rows of chairs and fountains, ready to attack. The soldiers have also set up a missile launcher close to the north exit of the room (Range: 50/100/200; Damage: 6d6 AP20 in a SBT; RoF: 1; Shots: 1). The "smart missiles" used by the launcher provide a +2 bonus to Shooting rolls. The missile launcher will be used to start the attack, with surprise if possible. The launcher is manned by two soldiers, has two extra missiles, and takes one full round to load. The missile launcher is also surrounded by two transparent Shield Covers, which are set with bases on the floor, and provide +4 Armor against attacks.

If the heroes brought any allies with them in other Patrol Ships, the allies enter the Docking Bay through one of the side corridors two rounds after the heroes do.

Assistants are useless in combat since they have no access to V-World (yet).

- **Soldier Psions (2 per hero and Ally)**

AFTER THE BATTLE

If the heroes decide they want to carry the missile launcher, explain that because of its weight (60lb) it requires about four people to carry disassembled. It takes 5 rounds to assemble or disassemble the missile launcher. Each missile weighs 4lb.

If Lindsay is with the heroes, she suggests they go to the closest Security Control Room and leads the way. She explains that they can obtain V-World access and authorization to roam the passageways of Brotherhood Station undetected if they hack the security systems at the Control Room. If Lindsay is not available, another NPC or an Assistant suggests the same thing.

CONTROL ROOM

Lindsay quickly leads the heroes through the halls of Brotherhood Station towards the nearest Control Room. As the heroes pass next to some of the wall screens on the corridors, they get a glimpse or two of the bombardment of Earth.

Finally the heroes reach a closed door. This door can be unlocked by using the *telekinesis* power to move a bolt inside the wall (a typical Psion design). If no hero or ally has this power, the door has a Toughness of 10. Also, heroes may try to trick or role-play their way in. If Lindsay is with the heroes, she has an old authorization code that allows her to freely open and close doors in the station.

Behind the door, the heroes find a 10" by 10" room covered with wall screens. Place four 4"-long semi-transparent wall screens horizontally or vertically within the room. Also place about eight markers representing rolling chairs.

Information and camera feeds appear on the walls, as well as on the glass wall screens within the room itself. Several guards are expecting the heroes, and are crouched for action next to the glass wall screens or behind the chairs. As soon as the heroes enter, the guards attack.

The glass walls have a Toughness of 8. If a glass wall or screen is broken in any way, glass spills out everywhere. Place a Medium Burst Template centered on the glass wall where the shot hit (use common sense to determine this), or at its center (if

an Assistant overloaded it, see below). Any character under the template suffers 2d6 damage. This damage does not Ace.

If a hero reaches any glass wall screen in the room, he or she can hack it to gain standard access to V-World. Any Assistant will suggest this if no heroes think about it. By spending a full action and succeeding at a Hacking roll, the hero can obtain access to V-World for all other heroes and their Assistants. The roll may be attempted more than once in subsequent rounds.

The following special Assistant actions are available (once Assistants gain access to V-World):

- **Glass Wall:** A player can spend a Benny to have his Assistant make a Hacking roll to overload a specific glass wall's circuits. If the roll is successful, the glass wall explodes (see damage above).

The guard leader has been trained in assassination techniques. In his turn he uses the *invisibility* power to disappear and try to sneak up on an unsuspecting hero. He then attacks with his ceramic knife. If the leader wins a Stealth roll opposed by Notice with a raise, he gains the Drop on the hero. Remember that the penalties to Notice provided by the *invisibility* power apply to this roll.

- **Soldier Psions (1 per hero)**
- ✹ **Psion Leader (1):** Use stats for Rogue Psion but make him a Wild Card, add four charges of the *invisibility* power, a d8 Stealth skill, and two Ceramic Knives (Damage Str+d6 AP 1).

AFTER THE BATTLE

In a corner of the room there is cabinet with medical supplies, should anyone need them.

When the heroes gain access to V-World, they may peruse the computer systems. These show that Ganendra Nathan and several teams of guards are holed in a private wing at the other side of the station. Neither the heroes nor their Assistants can get high enough clearance to control V-World to affect the station or Nathan. In particular, it is not easy to gauge the specific number of enemy forces in the different parts of the station.

To avoid any guards, Lindsay suggests taking a shortcut through the Maintenance Section of the station. This section is usually ignored by everyone and thus should allow the team to reach the private wing with less encounters.

If the heroes follow Lindsay's advice, she leads them to the entrance to the Maintenance Section. If the heroes decide to take the standard route, you will have to generate several tough encounters with guards before having the heroes reach the private wing.

MAINTENANCE SECTION

When the heroes reach the Maintenance Section, read or paraphrase the following:

A maze of deserted crisscrossing catwalks at different levels, extending as far as the eye can see, comprise the maintenance section of Brotherhood Station. The catwalks curve slightly as they surround the wall that protects the central cable shaft for the Space Elevator. Rotating lights of a reddish color give the area a strange look. Pipes and conduits come and go across the environment. The sounds of hitting debris echo ominously in the huge open space as the catwalks tremble and vibrate.

Far below the catwalks you hear the whirring hum of some of the engines and systems of Brotherhood Station.

If Lindsay is with the heroes she guides them through the maze. Otherwise, an Assistant can quickly query V-World to guide the group.

Things go uneventfully for a few minutes until the heroes approach a broad platform (see location "A" in the map). At that moment, a group of guards enters the Maintenance Section (through doorway "B") and spots the heroes!

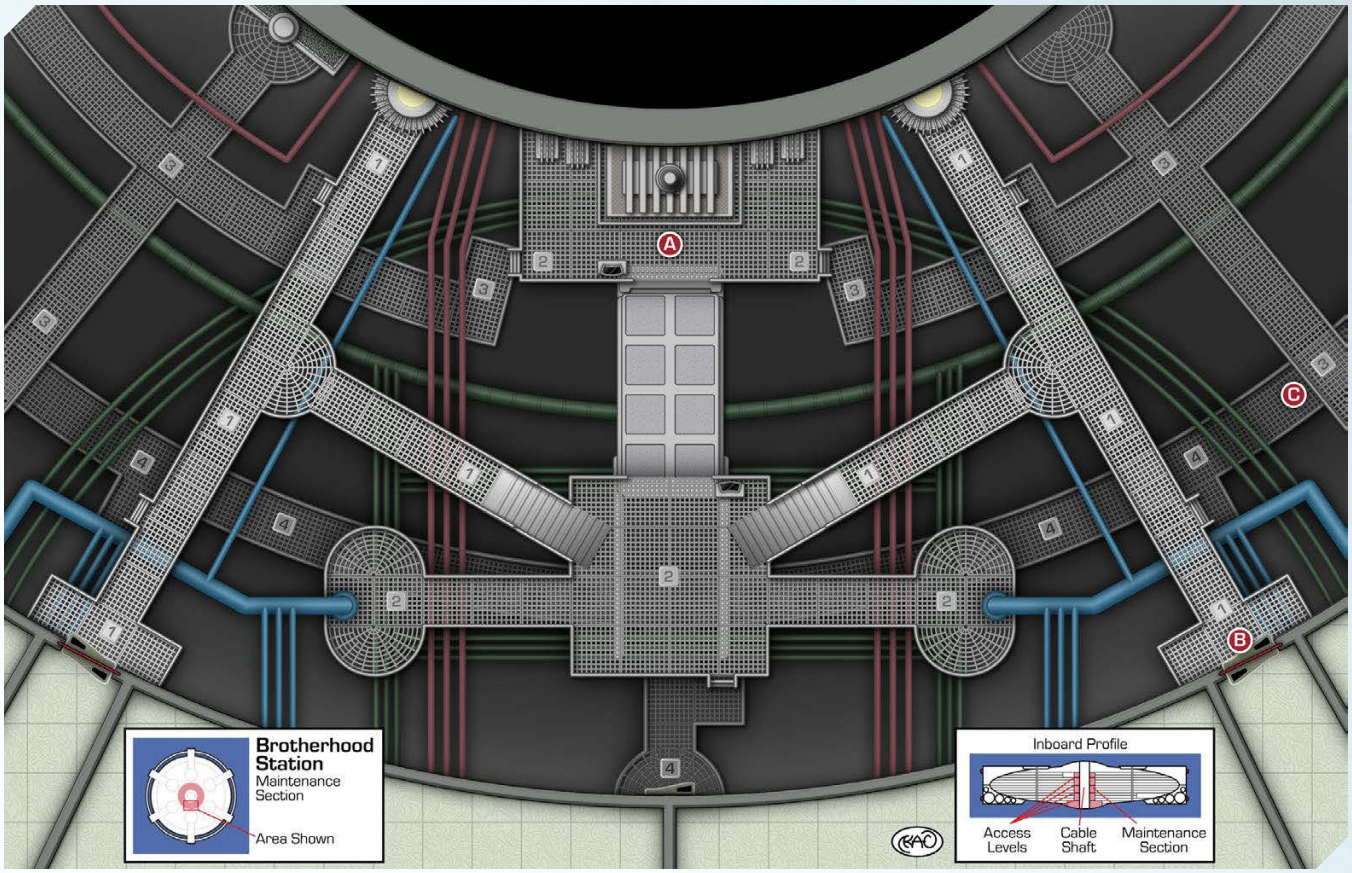
The Maintenance Section has many levels, but only four are shown on the map. Each level is marked with a number, with Level One between on top of Level Two, and so on. The vertical distance between each level is about 4 yards (2" on the tabletop). Thus, the distance between Level One and Level Three is 8 yards.

LADDERS

Some sections are connected by vertical ladders. The distance covered when going up or down a ladder is calculated based on the distance between levels (e.g. a ladder between Level One and Level Three is 8 yards long).

While moving up or down the ladder a character moves at half his or her Pace, and cannot run. A successful Climbing roll allows the character to double his or her movement rate this round.

A character needs both hands free to go up or down a ladder, otherwise they must make a free Climbing roll to maintain their grip while moving on it, or fall (see Falling, below). If a character is wounded or Shaken while on a ladder, they must make a Strength roll to maintain their grip or fall.



JUMPING

Jumping is handled as per the *Savage Worlds* rules, with a character being able to jump 1" horizontally from a dead stop, or up to 2" with a "run and go," and with a successful Strength roll granting one extra inch of distance. If the jumping destination is on a lower level, the character receives falling damage (see below).

A character may also jump vertically to the level above by "running and going" and making a Strength roll. If successful, the character ends hanging from the edge of the handrail directly above his previous location, and may climb with a successful Strength roll as an action.

FALLING

A character falls either because she jumped between catwalks at different levels or because she was pushed. A falling character receives 2d6+2 points of damage per level fallen (so, for example, falling from Level One to Level Three entails 4d6+4 damage). A character is allowed a free Agility roll to land gracefully. With a success, the damage is reduced by half.

GRABBING ONTO HANDRAILS OR PIPES

If a falling character misses landing on a catwalk but passes through a square adjacent to any catwalk or pipe, she may attempt to arrest their fall and grab the handrail or pipe with both hands by making a free Agility roll. If the character only has one hand free, the roll is made with a –2 penalty. After making the roll, the hero may let go of whatever she is holding as a free action if she is falling short. Grabbing onto something while falling also causes falling damage as above, and also grants a free Agility roll to reduce the damage.

If a character grabs onto a handrail successfully, she may on her turn climb up into the catwalk with a successful Strength roll. A character wounded while hanging from a handrail or pipe must make a Strength roll to keep grabbing on, otherwise she falls.

If a character fails to grab onto anything, she keeps falling, but may try again if there's something else to grab on in the level below.

FALLING PAST LEVEL FOUR

If a character falls past Level Four, assume he falls onto a "Level Five" which is not pictured in the map, and calculate damage accordingly. If the character

survives, he is assumed to have taken other corridors up to come back. He reappears in the battle map through a corridor in Level Four after two rounds.

FALLING OFF A CATWALK

Catwalks have handrails but it is still possible to fall. If a character falls is pushed off the catwalk, she may grab onto the handrail as specified in the Grabbing onto Something section above. The character receives no damage for grabbing onto a handrail in the same level they fell.

PIPES

The Maintenance Section is crisscrossed with conduit pipes. Blue pipes are located between Levels One and Two, red pipes between Levels Two and Three and green pipes are located between Levels Three and Four.

If character jumps or grabs onto a pipe, he may move with his hands by making a Strength roll, or walk by balancing himself on the pipe by making an Agility roll. If the roll is successful the character may move as on Difficult Ground. A Critical Failure means the character loses his grip or balance and falls.

RUNNING OFF THE MAP

The map repeats itself as it goes around Brotherhood Station's central cable shaft. If a character runs off the map, you may either extend it by repeating it continuously, or you may rule that the character appears on the other side after a specified number of rounds.

RANGE DISTANCE BETWEEN LEVELS

When calculating distance between characters in different levels for ranged attacks, you may either apply the Pythagorean Theorem (distance squared equals height between levels squared plus tabletop length squared) or just do a dirty calculation and just add the tabletop distance to the height between levels.

DRAWBRIDGE

There is a drawbridge connecting two areas in Level Two. This drawbridge may be extended or retracted by using the control panels next to the drawbridge. No roll is required for this (at first).

It is also possible to "lock" the drawbridge in its current position by making a successful Hacking roll. Record the result of the roll, as it is the number an enemy must beat to override the lock and change position. The new result of the override roll is the result to be beat to override the position again, and so on.

Assistants may of course perform a Hacking roll as usual.

It takes two full rounds for the bridge to completely retract or extend. This means if the bridge is overridden in the first round it stays partially open that round, allowing characters to jump across.

ASSISTANTS

Assistants have full access to their abilities as explained in the *Setting Guide*. The rotating lights in the room, for example, are good props for Assistants to take advantage of.

In addition to the above, the following special Assistant Actions are available. As always, make the heroes aware of these options during combat:

Drawbridge: If a hero spends a Benny on an Assistant, the Assistant may attempt to control the drawbridge as explained above.

- **Turbines:** If a hero spends a Benny on an Assistant, one of the many wind turbines among the machinery below the catwalks accelerates, making a deafening noise and making movement harder on everyone above it. Place a Large Burst Template on a location selected by the player, and have the Assistant make a Hacking roll. With a success, everyone under the template receives a –1 penalty to all rolls and moves at half Pace. With a Raise, the penalty increases to –2. The turbine goes back to normal (the penalty disappears) in three rounds.

THE ENEMIES

Although the Soldier Psions did not expect to meet the heroes there, they react immediately. Some of them have the telekinesis power, and may use it to make it easier to jump between platforms, or to gain a bonus to grab onto a ledge or collapsing catwalk.

- **Soldier Psions (1 per hero and Ally plus 4):** Four of them (pick them randomly) have the *telekinesis* power in addition to all other powers.

THE MUSEUM

After some more minutes of walking through the Maintenance Section Lindsay or an Assistant points to a hatch on the wall. After opening it and crawling through a low passageway, the heroes reach a vent that opens into a chamber. Read or paraphrase the following:

You are in a large, elegantly furnished room. Paintings and pictures with plaques adorn the walls. Glass cases stand in different parts of the room illuminating valuable objects and artifacts



inside, important symbols in the history of the Psion Brotherhood. A larger glass case in the center of the room houses what appears to be the centerpiece of the collection: A diary with notes, handwritten in yellowed paper, next to an old-style, early 21st century electronic notebook.

There is a door in the far end of the room.

If any hero examines the paintings and pictures on the walls, have him or her make a Notice roll. With a success, the hero finds a collection of photographs of the Bay Jing Psion Riots of 2188. Staring at the plaque opens a V-World projection on the heroes' lenses with the story of the Riots. This is another opportunity for the heroes to familiarize themselves with Ganendra Nathan's story and what officially happened during the Riots (see page 243).

When the heroes look at the diary and electronic notebook, a V-World projection appears on their lenses, explaining that the electronic notebook is the original notebook used by Daniel Michaels, founder of the Psion Brotherhood. The projection explains that the digital contents of the notebook have been removed for security reasons. The diary is written by Melissa Fischer, one-time sentimental partner of Daniel Michaels before she left him for his friend-enemy William Donovan, founder of the Circle. It is open to a page where the heroes can read the following:

Monday June 21st, 2033:

Today I learned about raze, *the new power Danny has "invented." Sounds innocuous enough, a power that apparently doesn't even appear to work. But I agree with Danny,* raze *will be a fundamental power. I just know I'll be right again.*

Danny is including it in his notebook, but we won't tell anyone about it. I'm sure someone will find it… eventually.

Melissa Fischer's handwritten letter is provided as a Handout for the heroes.

Hopefully the heroes realize the enormity of what they are reading. The mysterious psionic power capable of destroying the Devourers was invented by the founder of the Psion Brotherhood almost two hundred years ago! What does this mean?

The door at the far end of the room leads into a corridor in the private wing. The corridors, bathed in pulsating red emergency lights, are deserted.

PRELUDE TO DISASTER

As the heroes walk the deserted corridors of the private wing, pick a moment to read or paraphrase the following:

As you enter a large junction between hallways, an explosion suddenly reverberates throughout Brotherhood Station! The ceiling buckles as beams fall, the floor cracks, and everyone is thrown around against the walls!

Have each hero draw an Action Card and compare the number in the card to the Card Number Table below to see exactly what challenge the hero must face. Then compare the suit of the card to the Suit Table below to see what penalty, if any, applies to all trait rolls related to this challenge.

All heroes resolve their challenges in Action Card order. If any hero is Shaken, he or she stays Shaken for a few minutes, and is therefore not able to help other heroes in Cooperative actions (if any).

If any Extras or Allies are with the heroes, you may either draw an Action Card for them and apply the same method, or just assume they all receive an average of 2d6 damage.

Once all challenges are solved, read or paraphrase the following and move on to the next scene:

As you slowly come to your senses, you realize that one of the many Devourer beam attacks directed at Earth must have hit the station, the Space Elevator, or both. The station is doomed, and time is running out!

CARD NUMBER TABLE

2–4: Part of the ceiling crashes down, pinning the hero under a large metal beam! The hero must make a Vigor roll to endure the beam's crushing weight or receive 2d8 damage, and become pinned under it. If pinned and not Shaken, the hero can escape the beam with a successful Strength roll. This can be a Cooperative roll, and all non-Shaken characters who want to can participate. If the Strength roll is failed, or no one is available to make the roll, the hero crawls with difficulty out of the beam but receives one level of Fatigue from Bumps and Bruises (see *Savage Worlds*).

5–7: The hero flies across the room and is in danger of impacting a wall! He must make an Agility roll to grab on to something or receive 2d8 damage from the impact.

8–10: The floor cracks and breaks and the hero falls, automatically grabbing on to the edge at the last minute! He must make a successful Vigor roll to resist hanging on the edge until he or she is rescued by a non-Shaken character (an automatic action). If the roll is failed or no non-Shaken characters are available, the hero falls to a lower level for 2d10 damage. With the help of other characters he or she eventually climbs back up.

Jack–Ace: An immense explosion engulfs part of the room and a tongue of flame flies towards the hero! He must make a successful Agility roll to jump sideways and avoid the intense heat and flame or receive 2d10 fire damage. In this case, the hero also has a 1-in-6 chance of catching fire (See *Savage Worlds*).

Joker: The character escapes unscathed.

CARD SUIT TABLE

Suit	Penalty to all Trait Rolls
Clubs	–4
Diamonds	–2
Hearts	–1
Spades	+0

SCENE 7: GANENDRA NATHAN

Finally, the heroes reach the private wing's Observation Room. Read or paraphrase the following:

You finally arrive at the station's Observation Room, a large area that resembles a cross between a park and a balcony. There are comfortable chairs, couches and tables everywhere, interspaced by grassy sections decorated with plants and a few trees. The latest attacks seem to have caused a few trees to topple, and part of the floor to open up.

At the far end of the room a huge "window" (actually, a V-World wall screen) curves away and backwards, giving a breathtaking view of Earth below. The walls and ceiling of the room are also wall-screens projecting the outside of the station. The effect is as if the entire room were openly exposed to space!

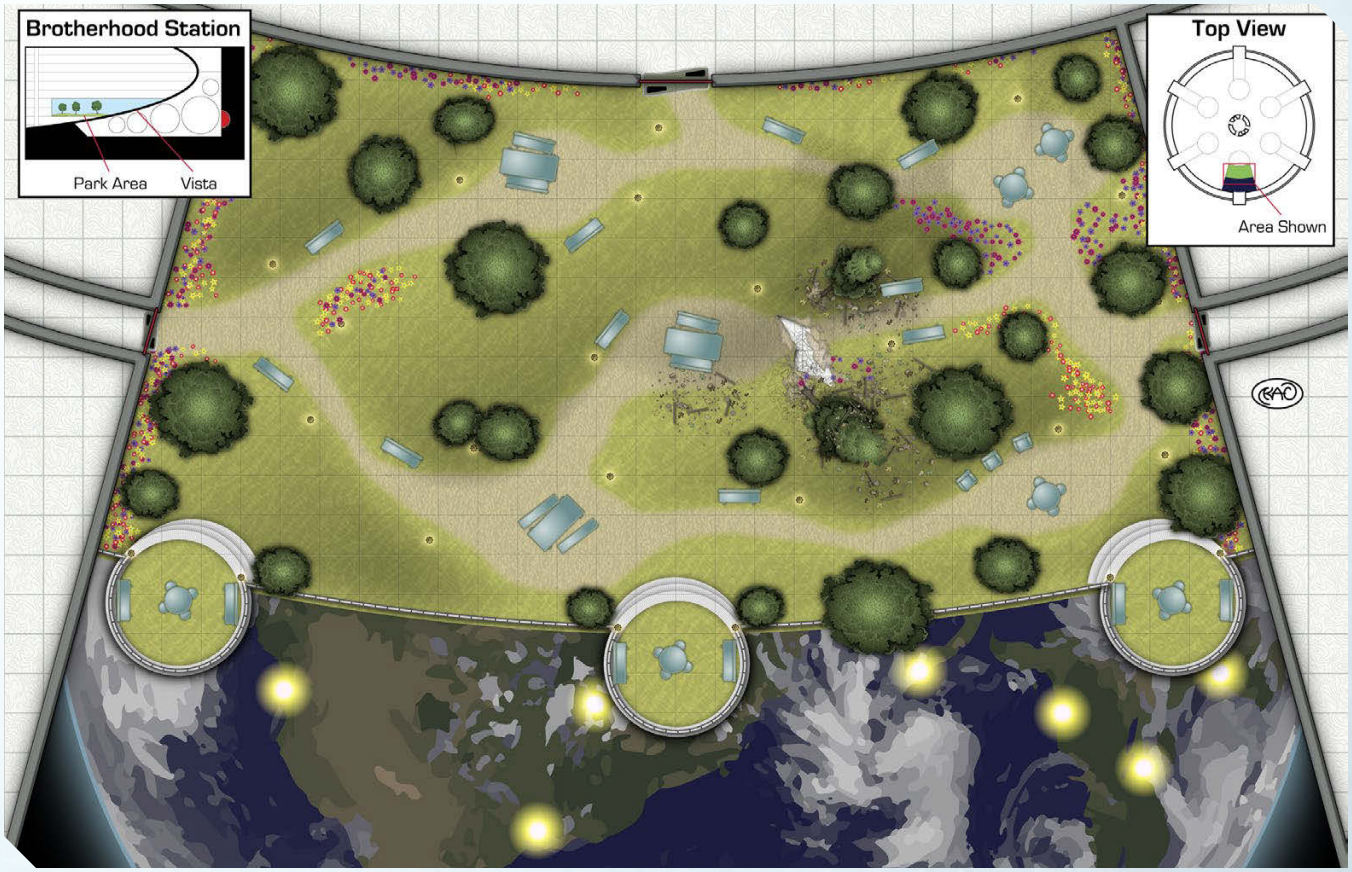
And what an amazing, terrifying view of space it is! You see Earth, its continents and seas, just a few hundred kilometers below Brotherhood Station; and the infinite length of the Space Elevator cable edging up into space, now dangerously vibrating. And everywhere, hundreds of beams of incredible destructive power are raining down on Earth, causing brightly glowing explosions on the surface. Some Devourer ships are close enough to be seen with the naked eye. The surface of Brotherhood Station is pocked with holes and small explosions caused by the debris of destroyed ships and satellites. An entire section of the station is about to break away. You have never seen a carnage like this, this close.

And there, sitting alone on a bench in a circular balcony "hanging" into space in the far end of the room, staring at the massacre in space with expectant eyes, is the person you've been looking for. As the attacks that shake the entire station continue, Ganendra Nathan, leader of the Psion Brotherhood, looks at you for a few seconds, nods a silent greeting, and stares back into space, deep in thought.

The heroes enter the Observation Room through the north door. The other two doors (which are the only part of the walls that is visible, since the rest of the wall is a wall screen projection of space) are locked. Nathan is sitting on a bench in the central circular dais that has a view of Earth.

Nathan will not attack unless the heroes attack first, or physically or psionically threaten him first (this includes attempts to *probe* him or to *read surface thoughts*). He will courteously invite them to join him and watch the "show in the skies." He has nothing to hide now, and will answer any questions the heroes may have, with the exception of anything to do with the password for *raze* or his experience in the Psion Riots. Try to make his disdain for non-psions plain, and use the detached way in which he talks about what he has done and what he wants to incite the players into taking action. Remember that Nathan is a very smart individual!

While the conversation lasts, the station periodically shakes and rumbles, as the Devourers' attack continues. Use the rules on page 214 to see if someone falls prone.



A CLIMACTIC BATTLE

Sooner or later things will get violent, and when they do, Nathan is ready. Once combat begins, Nathan openly taunts and teases the heroes, revealing his true deranged nature. In his turn, Nathan's Assistant summons a group of guard drones who have been hiding behind tables, chairs and trees in the far corners of the room. Place them immediately on the tabletop. The guard drones will focus on defending Nathan at all costs.

The trees and furniture provide Medium Cover, or Heavy Cover if prone.

Make it clear to the heroes that their goal is to recover the password to remove the *brain lock* on the psions in the Chrysalis fleet, and that therefore Nathan must not be killed before he surrenders it.

WHAT GANENDRA IS THINKING

Ganendra Nathan's unhinged plan has finally come to fruition, and now he's just waiting to die.

Nathan firmly believes that psions are not part of the human species anymore, but an evolved, improved version of humanity. He hates humanity with passion, and believes that non-psions are infinitely more dangerous to the future evolution of Psions than even the Devourers. Therefore, he is fine with the Devourers destroying all of humanity, as long as his hidden colony of Chrysalis survives. Equipped with the *raze* power (the password for which is still available to Chrysalians even if Nathan dies, although this is something no one else knows) Chrysalis can easily protect itself against any Devourer attack. Someday Chrysalians will be able to colonize other worlds again. Only this time it will be Psions who are on top. Not even the arrival of the Chrysalis fleet changes Nathan's plan: It is true Chrysalis will be weaker now, but *raze* is powerful enough to defend the colonists against the Devourers, regardless of how many there are left.

Ganendra is thoroughly convinced of the righteousness of his actions, and his only regret is for the thousands of Psions he is sacrificing to protect Chrysalis, both on Earth and on the other worlds. He is extremely angry at the heroes for the tens of thousands of Chrysalians the heroes have brought here to die, although he doesn't show it at first. He feels nothing for the billions of humans he could have saved and instead is letting die.

Nathan immediately uses the *mind shield* power on himself. Note that although this doesn't stack with the Improved Arcane Resistance edge, it makes any use of the *read surface thoughts* power unusable. If any heroes manage to cast *read surface* thoughts on Nathan, they discover that he has the discipline of mind not to think about the passcode. The *probe* power might work on him, though.

Familiarize yourself with Nathan's character sheet, as he has several special Edges and powers that make him a unique opponent. This is a master psion, so do not be afraid to use his psionic powers in innovative ways (*pyrokinesis* and *forget*, for example, are powers heroes might not expect used against them in combat). Nathan also has a special weakness that savvy heroes might want to take advantage of.

Remember to freely award Bennies to the heroes for their actions. They will need them.

- **Guard Drones (1 per hero and Ally)**
- ✸ **Ganendra Nathan:** See page 243.

SPECIAL ASSISTANT ACTIONS

The following special Assistant Actions are available in this battle:

- **Superconductive Magnetic Arrays:** If a hero spends a Benny, an Assistant may try to control one of the superconductive magnetic arrays tto magnetically pin an enemy against the (currently invisible) north, east or west walls. This only works if the enemy is 3" or less from a wall. This uses the Grappling rules from *Savage Worlds*, but with the initial opposed roll being between the Assistant's Hacking skill and the victim's Strength trait (plus or minus any modifiers). On his turn, the victim may attempt to escape only with a Strength roll, again opposed by the Assistant's Hacking skill. The Assistant cannot use this maneuver to inflict damage on the victim (other than the initial Shaken result with a raise).
- **Command a Drone:** If a hero spends a Benny, his Assistant may attempt to take control of a drone guard. To do this the Assistant makes a Hacking roll, opposed by the drone's Smarts. If the Assistant wins the opposed roll *and* the final result of its Hacking roll is a 4 or more, the Assistant has gained temporary control of the drone. The drone now moves and attacks on the Assistant's hero's action card. Each round the Assistant gets to make a free Hacking roll with a +1 bonus, opposed by the drone's Smarts. If the Assistant wins the roll it may control the drone for one more turn.

FALLING DOWN TO EARTH!

To make things more complicated, after the first round of combat the station begins to fall apart! Read or paraphrase the following:

Suddenly a bright light illuminates the view of space around you: A Devourer beam has hit the Space Elevator cable next to the station! As you gaze astounded, the cable breaks, pulling the entire station down with its inertia! The hundreds of tension cables snap one by one, each one jolting the entire infrastructure. You are all thrown across the room, hitting the floor, trees, furniture and the invisible walls and ceiling. As you stare again at the sky, you see Brotherhood Station beginning a wild out-of-control spin as the remains of the Space Elevator cable turn towards Earth and begin to fall, lashing the station, and taking you down with it!



All characters, including Ganendra Nathan, are knocked 2d6" in a random direction (roll a 1d12 and read the result as a clock facing). Each character makes a Vigor roll at –2. With a failed roll, the character suffers 2d6+2 damage. Guard drones that fail the Vigor roll are Shaken, as their gyroscopes lose all sense of direction for a moment. This can cause a Wound.

From now on, at the start of each round, after Action Cards are dealt but before any actions are taken, draw an extra card from the Action Deck. If the card number is a 5 or less, consult the table below to see what happens:

SUIT	RESULT
Spades, Hearts or Diamonds	**Everyone gets knocked around!** Maybe the station breaks down a bit, or it hits some debris, or it is damaged by the Space Elevator cable or more Devourer energy beams.. In any case, have all characters make an Agility roll with a –2 penalty. With a failure, the character is knocked 2d6" in a random direction (roll a 1d12 and read the result as a clock facing). All characters who fail the roll move the same distance in the same random direction (so you only have to roll for distance and direction once). Any inanimate objects not secured to the ground also fly around. If a human hits an object, he or she is automatically Shaken and ends his or her movement immediately. This can cause a Wound. Any drone who fails the Agility roll is automatically Shaken as its gyroscope loses all sense of direction for a moment.
Clubs	**An explosion affects the Observation Room!** Place a Large Burst Template in a random location of the park (if you're having trouble picking a random location, roll a d4, a d6 and a d12; the d4 shows which of the four quadrants of the park is affected, using the table/bench at the center of the park; and the d12 and d6 mark the x and y position, respectively, of the center of the template in the chosen quadrant). All characters under the template must make an Agility roll with a –2 penalty to jump out of danger or receive 3d6 damage. This damage also affects the drones. All trees and furniture in the template are now destroyed (no cover) and have a 1-in-6 chance of being on fire.

SCENE 8: IN THE NICK OF TIME

Even if Nathan becomes Incapacitated he does not die but rather falls to the ground. In his last dying moments he still curses the heroes and non-psions in general. If they haven't obtained the password yet, this is the heroes' last chance to recover it from him. It can be taken by a successful use of the *probe* power. If the heroes and their allies do not have *probe* available or are stuck, you may have Nathan mutter the phrase "Sis, finally, I am going back to you!" Any savvy hero, Assistant or ally can remember that Nathan's sister Anuva died as a victim of the Psion Riots.

The password is, of course, "Anuva." Nathan opens his eyes wide if that word is mentioned, giving away that it is indeed the password. If any character from Chrysalis is with the heroes and someone else casts *brain lock* on him or her, the heroes get to see how the character's eyes light up as he or she remembers the *raze* power and the immense power it has.

Remember that the station is in freefall towards Earth! Rumbles and crashes still move everything around, causing the heroes to fall prone or hit each other as they talk to Nathan. The heroes need to leave the station, and quickly!

The heroes cannot transmit the password to the fleet since the external communications systems have broken down. Neither the heroes nor their Assistants have equipment that would allow them to transmit the password to the fleet through space. Their only chance to transmit the password is to reach their ship as soon as possible.

When the heroes are ready to move on, go to the next section.

A DESPERATE ESCAPE

The station is already burning in the atmosphere as the heroes race through its passageways trying to escape it! As the station falls its spin accelerates, pushing it to the breaking point. The groan of metal creaking is everywhere and the heroes are toppled and knocked down at every turn as they see through the wall screens around them the breathtaking view of Brotherhood Station and the Space Elevator cable crashing towards Earth.

To escape the station have all heroes make a Dramatic Task using Agility as the relevant trait. The heroes have five "rounds" to escape the station before it is destroyed.

Have each hero make his or her own Agility roll, representing how well he or she races through the station towards their ship (Extras are assumed to be running with the hero they are assigned to). Each success and raise on the Agility roll gives the hero a "success" (represented by a token). When a hero has accumulated five tokens, he or she has reached the ship. A hero may also forgo his movement for the round to help another hero gain distance via a Cooperative Agility roll.

All heroes receive an Action Card at the start of each round. If the card is of the Clubs suit, the hero faces a Complication. Maybe part of the corridor collapses or suddenly opens into space, or a sudden explosion brings the hero to his or her knees. In any case, the hero's Agility roll this round receives a –2 penalty.

When at least one hero arrives at their ship, he or she may spend a turn to transmit the password to the just-arriving Chrysalis fleet. This gains all heroes one Benny (or more, at your discretion). Any heroes who are already on the ship may decide to blast-off (a free action) at any time, or to wait for other heroes who are behind. Depending on how the heroes reached the station, there may be more than one escape ship available.

If at any time a hero decides he or she might not make it, he may instead spend his or her turn running towards the nearest escape pod. To do this the hero just needs to make an Agility roll. With a success the hero finds an escape pod and successfully ejects from the station. He or she is now floating in orbit while the attack on Earth is still going on, and must be rescued afterwards.

Assistants can also be very useful during the escape. The following special Assistant Action is available:

- **Active Map:** An Assistant can hack into the Brotherhood Station V-World to get an updated map of the best escape routes available to reach the heroes' ship. If a hero spends a Benny an Assistant may attempt this by making a successful Hacking roll with a +2 bonus. If successful, the Assistant locates an effective route, thus giving the hero a +2 bonus to his next Agility roll. This bonus is not cumulative. Before the Assistant makes the roll the hero can decide if this bonus will be for him or for a different hero.

After the fifth round ends, any heroes that have not blasted away on their ship or have not escaped via an escape pod automatically die as the remains of Brotherhood Station disintegrate on their fall towards Earth.

EPILOGUE

Once the heroes escape, they see what happens when the Chrysalis fleet receives the password. Read or paraphrase the following:

As you escape what's left of Brotherhood Station you get to see the immense destruction the Devourers have brought on Earth: The explosions continue as the atmosphere slowly changes color and clouds cover the planet. The relentless bombardment continues as the Devourers continue their approach, now unimpeded as the EarthGov Fleet lies in ruins around them.

On your wall screen you see that the Chrysalis fleet, finally within range of Earth, is desperately distributing the password among all the ships, as psions in every ship are ready to use brain lock *to unlock the mysterious* raze *power from everyone's mind. As thousands of psions suddenly remember what was locked in their memory you hope all this has not been for nothing.*

There! Suddenly one of the Devourer ships stops firing! And another! In front of your amazed eyes the Devourer fleet stops, as if a switch had been turned off in each ship. You see two ships drift towards each other until they crash and explode, you see other ships wildly rotate out of control with their deadly beam on, destroying other Devourer ships in the beam's path.

That's the cue the military ships of the Chrysalis fleet have been waiting for: As one, they approach and fire everything they have at their now helpless enemy.

After just a few hours, the entire Devourer fleet lies in ruins, strange dead alien debris floating around a devastated Earth.

Humanity is saved!... for now.

THE AFTERMATH

Several days later, the heroes are appropriately hailed and given several recognitions and awards. Any heroes who were floating in an escape pod have been picked up days before. We leave it up to you to describe this scene depending on who the important NPCs in the adventure turned out to be. A permanent +2 Charisma bonus "reward" might be in order.

On Earth, billions have died. Many more will die of famine and disease in the coming weeks and months as a nuclear winter covers the planet. Fortunately, the Devourer fleet was destroyed before the Earth's rotation brought the other side of the planet within their area of attack. This means that there are still places where (nuclear winter notwithstanding) food can grow and civilization can survive.

The fall of the Space Elevator and of Brotherhood Station also caused untold devastation. Even now debris from the space battle constantly falls to Earth.

THE RAZE POWER

There is no need to know the mechanics of the *raze* power to use it in this campaign. However, some GMs and players might want to have mechanics for it for their adventures once the campaign ends.

RAZE

Rank: Novice
Power Points: Special
Range: Special
Duration: Instant
Trappings: Hard stare.

This is a special power with a mental manifestation that only affects Devourers and N'ahili. It is a concentration of mental energies in a specific direction and at a specific psionic frequency that proves deadly to these aliens. When used in character combat, *raze* behaves exactly like the *bolt* power but inflicts 2d6 additional damage per bolt. When used in spaceship combat, *raze* costs 3 Power Points, has a range of 5 SU, targets a single ship, and if successful forces the alien crew to make a successful Spirit roll (assume d6 with Wild die for the alien crew as a group if no stats are available) or gain a level of Fatigue. This can lead to death. Note that the effects of *raze* replace the Weakness (psionics) effects listed for both Devourers and Devourer Ships.

There are few other worlds left in human space: Nouvelle Vie, Bay Jing, Concordia and Apollo have been obliterated. Several space stations, including Mussala Station, have also been destroyed.

Fortunately Gee and Logan's End, and now Chrysalis, are still here. The space stations on that arm of human space have also survived. It will take time, but humanity passed its greatest test, and now it will rebuild.

The Circle leads the rebuilding process; heroes are needed more now than ever. The Psion Brotherhood, as an institution, is no more, and Psions will have to work out who they want to be and how they fit with non-psions. There is too much confusion now, but the details will surely be worked out in the coming years.

The N'ahili left and it's anyone's guess whether they'll be back. Curiously, the EarthGov planetary council reports after a few days that a strange file has appeared on their systems. The file is signed with the digital signature that identifies the N'ahili, and is encrypted with a level of encryption that seems unbreakable with current human processing power. The header of the file is unencrypted, though, and

says that the decryption key will be provided two years from now. Scientists deduce this means the file was only meant to be seen if humanity stopped the Devourers. What does the file contain? New space coordinates? An even greater secret?

And finally, in a hidden lab on Gee, a lone scientist makes an amazing, unbelievable discovery, something that might change everything again…

This concludes the *Seven Worlds* Campaign!

ADVENTURING ONCE THE CAMPAIGN ENDS

Even after the campaign ends, there are many opportunities for further adventure for the heroes. Here are some ideas you can use to take advantage of the many possibilities the setting offers to continue your campaign or start a new one.

- **Rebuilding Earth:** The damage to Earth has been significant. There is a lot of work to be done in rebuilding the planet and dealing with the chaos and violence caused by its destruction. Politics will inevitably affect the process, as EarthGov risks fracturing and the lack of commerce with the other worlds brings misery to the planet.
- **Resettling the Seven Worlds:** The diary found in the Devourer base (see page 202) hints to the fact that some humans may have survived the bombardment on Nouvelle Vie, Bay Jing, Apollo and Concordia. In fact, these planets are now post-apocalyptic wastelands where the survivors of the catastrophe are leaving their shelters and facing the harsh new realities of their planets. Heroes are needed to contact them, help them face the dangers of their new environment, start the resettlement process, rebuild the Stellar Comm Network, and reopen trading. Most kinds of post-apocalyptic stories can be told here. As if things were not bad enough, the Devourers did unleash several monstrosities on the surface to take care of any survivors, such as Devourer Monsters (see page 239) among others. There are also many valuables among the ruins of those planets, ready to be reclaimed.
- **Locating stray humans:** There are many, many small mining and research stations in human space, as well as a few scout and scientific missions that left months or years ago. Many stations will surely die if they are not supplied in time (although some may find ways to survive without external help). One of the disappeared ones is Hernandez Station, of whom nothing has been heard of for several months now. Could something have happened to it? It also suddenly becomes necessary to locate everyone and bring them back to collaborate to rebuild humanity. And some of the many ships that participated in the evacuation of Bay Jing and Concordia were lost, never to be found again…
- **Investigating Devourer Artifacts:** The debris of Devourer ships drifting close to Earth orbit contain strange Devourer technology waiting to be found. The remains of the destroyed base in Barnard's Star are also ripe for the picking. This is the opportunity for scavengers to locate and bring these unknown artifacts, and for scientists and inventors to test and study them to create the next breakthrough in technology. And maybe while studying it a scientist accidentally lets something loose…
- **Dealing with Psion Supremacists:** Although most psions are more than willing to work in the reconstruction of human space, there are those who still believe in the superiority of psions. These renegades point out that, because of *raze*, psions are the only ones capable of stopping any new Devourer invasions, and thus they deserve to lead humanity. The Psion Brotherhood's Research Center in Armstrong, on Zarmina, is one of the focal points of these supremacist movements, as it was always deeply involved in the training of colonists for Chrysalis. Expect incidents of revolt, sabotage and treason to occur regularly, as these believers in Psion superiority go underground and prepare to fight for their beliefs.
- **Expanding V-World:** The V-World network is still active, if disconnected between planets. As civilizations in destroyed planets strive to survive the destruction brought on by the Devourers, some are retiring into V-World as a way to escape or to simulate the comforts in life. The heroes can expect to find (and have to interact with) more virtual constructs and governments, and even entire colonies willing to live their entire lives in V-World.
- **Exploring Existing Planets:** Logan's End's jungles are unexplored, unknown locations where many mysteries may hide. And fully half of Chrysalis is unexplored and mysterious. As the new exodus from Earth accelerates, it becomes necessary to know more about the worlds left to humanity.
- **Finding the route to Tau Ceti:** The Earth-perfect world of Tau Ceti (see the description of Tau Ceti in the *Setting Guide*) is perfect for colonization… if only a way to get there could be found. The heroes may become embroiled in the search for the Tau Ceti jump point, or maybe join the first Slower-Than-Light colonization mission to the planet.
- **Opening the N'ahili File:** The opening of the N'ahili file two years from now could be the source of many

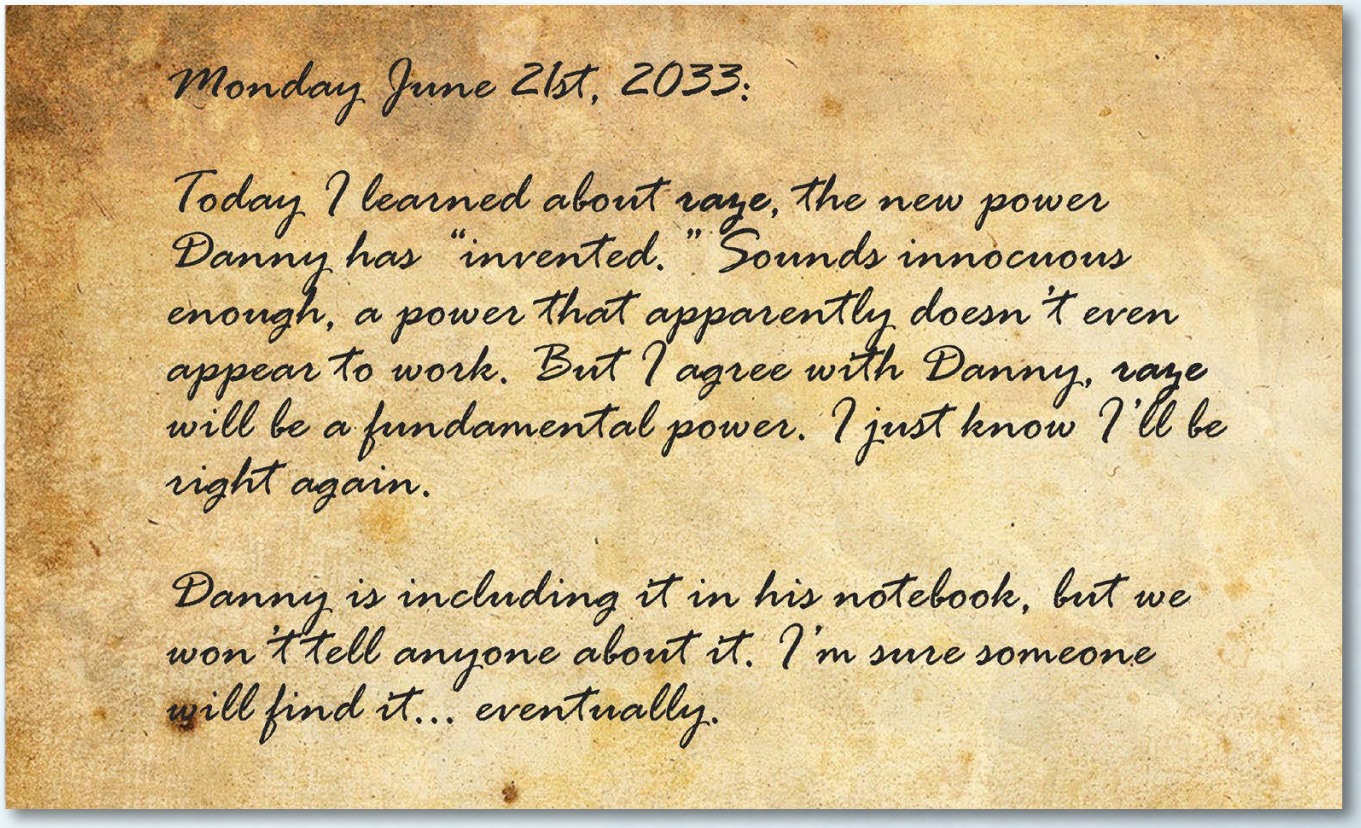
adventures. From attempts to decode it to forgeries of the message, the heroes may have their hands full protecting the last legacy of an alien race. And of course, the contents of the file are for you to decide!

- **Discovering New Jump Points:** While humanity gets its hopes up that the N'ahili File will include new sets of coordinates, scientists continue looking for new jump coordinates by trial and error. One of these attempts might succeed, opening up a way to a new solar system, and to new adventures and dangers. Or maybe an explorer ship jumps back from a recently discovered jump point, with all its crew dead except for a crazed survivor. Where does the jump point lead to?
- **Visiting Mars:** While all the attention of the Devourer's was placed on Earth during the last attack, the Mars colony was left aside. Now, Mars has severe challenges to its survival, simply because it depends on resources from Earth that are now no longer forthcoming. This is causing a break in society in the planet, a break that criminal elements are taking advantage of for their own goals. If the heroes were sent to Mars they would discover many surprises indeed.
- **Confronting the Devourers**: Of course, the Devourers are not defeated yet, not by far. Although the humans have a powerful weapon against them with the *raze* power, the Devourers might find a way to protect themselves against this power the next time they come. Which of course brings up the fact that humanity knows nothing about how *raze* appeared two hundred years ago, in the notes of Daniel Michaels, someone who had never seen an alien before. Maybe by investigating the past of *raze* humanity can prepare for the next invasion in the future… because, who knows, maybe next time *raze* will not be enough.

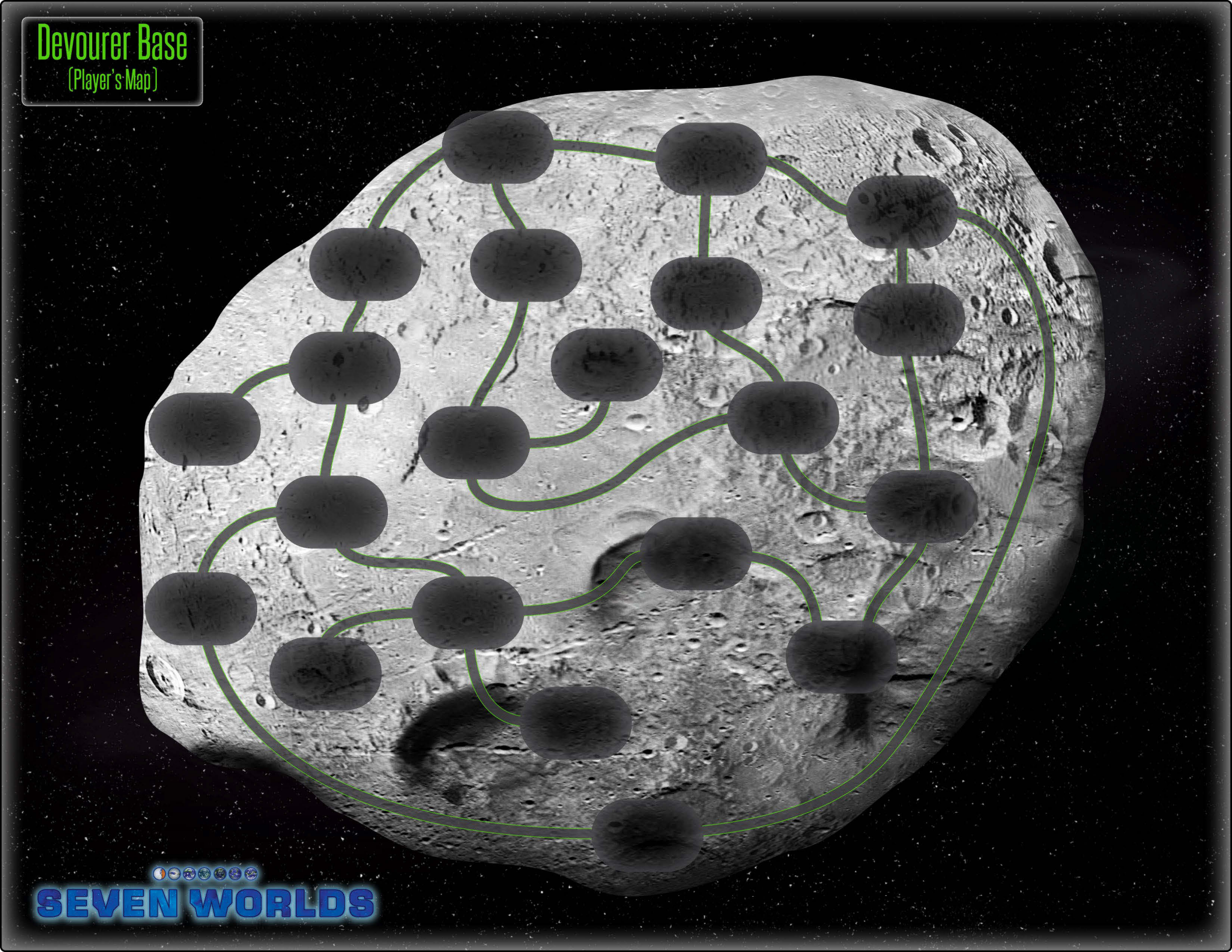
player handouts

The following are handouts and dispatches to be given to the players during the adventure.

PLAYER HANDOUT #1

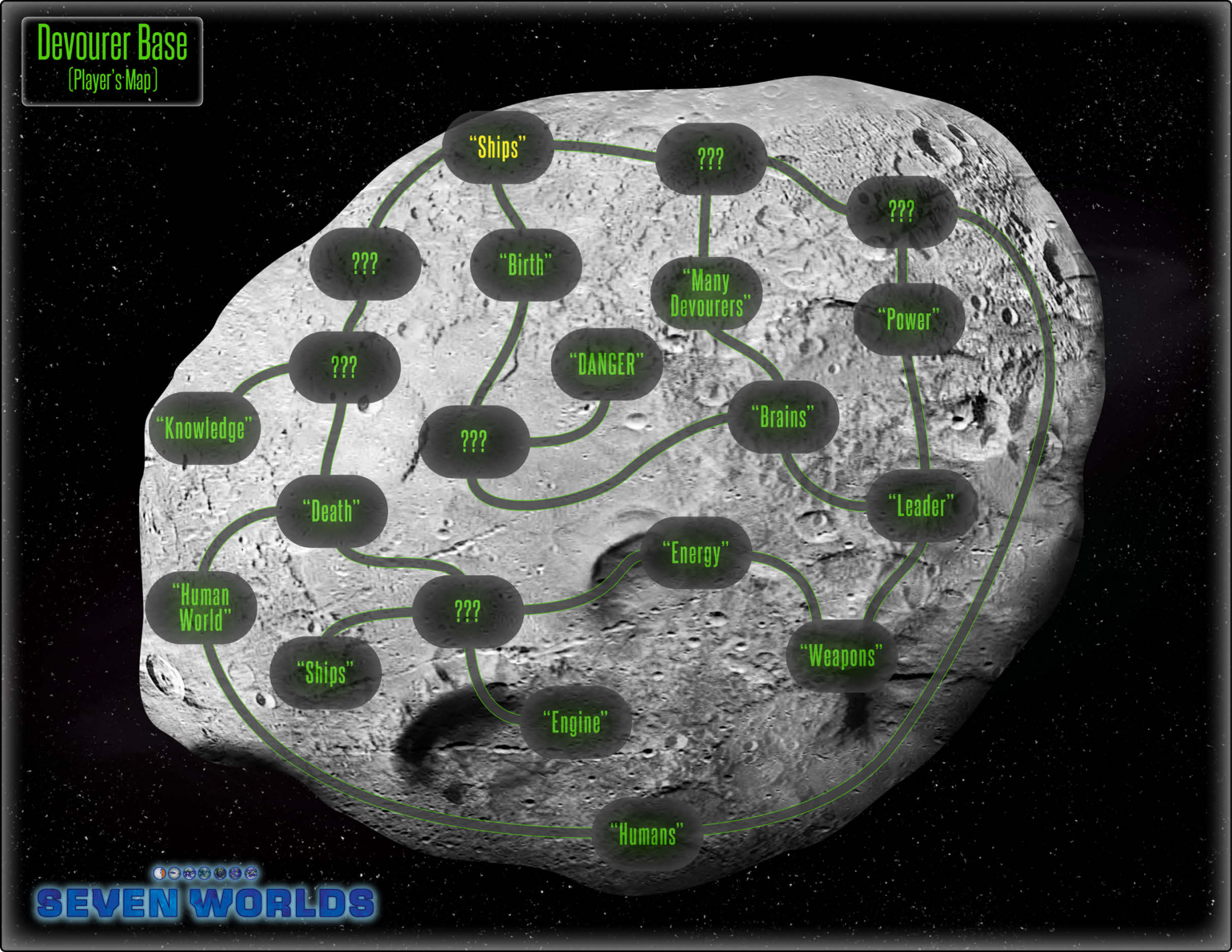


Devourer Base
(Player's Map)



SEVEN WORLDS

Devourer Base
(Player's Map)



SEVEN WORLDS

SEVEN WORLDS



APPENDIXES

IMPORTANT CHARACTERS

This is a list of some of the important characters in this adventure.

ADMIRAL VIKTOR KARRAGAN

A ruthless, focused officer from the Psion Brotherhood, Admiral Karragan does not let emotion stand in the way of his goals. A below-average psion, Karragan would never have amounted to much in one of the typical psion occupations within the Brotherhood bureaucracy. However, when he devoted himself to the security branch of the Psion Brotherhood he proved himself an effective, if somewhat hard, leader. Some in the Brotherhood are afraid of what a military man with such power could do if he wanted the leadership position, but at least in the case of Karragan they should not worry. The tough-as-nails admiral is focused only on his responsibility and his team, and has never had the slightest political ambition.



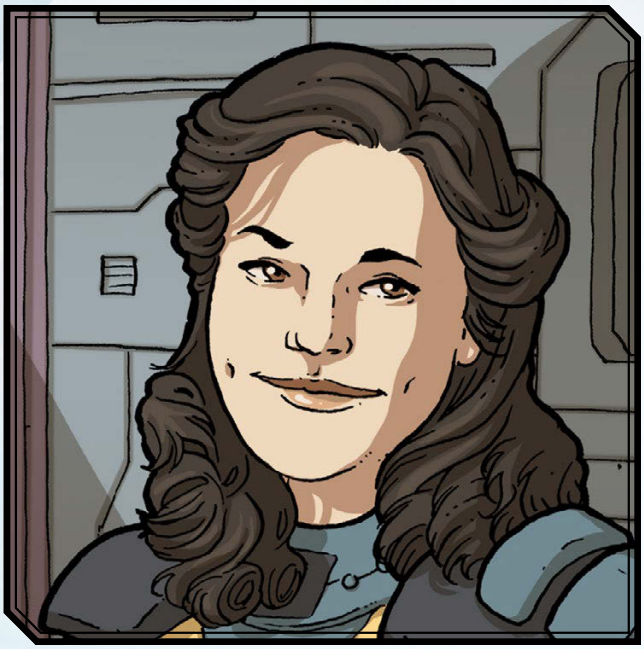
ADMIRAL VIKTOR KARRAGAN

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d8
Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d10, Knowledge (Battle) d6, Notice d6, Psionics d4, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Throwing d6
Cha: –1; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8 (2); **Mental Toughness:** 5
Hindrances: Vow (the Psion Vow), Arrogant, Bloodthirsty
Edges: Arcane Background (Psionics), Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Command, Command Presence, Experienced Assistant, Hold the Line!, Tactician
Powers: *blast*, *bolt*, *deflection*, *entangle*, *pummel*, *read surface thoughts*, *telekinesis*, *telepathy*. **Power Points:** 20
Gear: Light vest, Combat helmet (+3, head only), stun grenade (Range 5/10/20, Damage 3d6 non-lethal, Medium Burst).
Notes: Home World Earth (gets the Tactician edge for free).
Assistant Name and Gender: Assistant Program 5, "Smith", one of the standard, non-customized Assistants available when programs are just acquired. "Smith" is obedient and respectful, and shows no specific personality traits.
Assistant Skills: Hacking d6 (with a Wild die), Investigation d6.

ALPHA OFFICER CORAZÓN FUSCO

Alpha Officer Fusco is a large, black-haired woman who looks much younger than she really is. She recently graduated from Circle Academy, and is as green as they come. Unfortunately, she is also an obsessive and overzealous rookie. Although her investigative skills are brilliant, she goes beyond any reasonable limits of suspicion, and thus constantly gets herself and her superiors into trouble. Her first assignment is to Harris Station, and she intends to prove her value there.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6
Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Investigation d8, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Shooting d6, Streetwise d4
Cha: +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7 (2); **Mental Toughness:** 5
Hindrances: Code of Honor (uphold the law), Curious



ALPHA OFFICER CORAZÓN FUSCO

Edges: Connections (Police Officers), Investigator
Gear: Light vest (+2, torso only), Enhanced autopistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, AP 1, Semi-auto, also fires 1 explosive round for 2d8, AP 4 damage), Shock stick (Str+d4), electronic handcuffs, Sonic stunner (Range 10/20/40, Damage 2d6+1, special).
Notes: Homeworld Nouvelle Vie (begins with the Zero-G Edge)
Assistant Name and Gender: Assistant Program 3, "Javert", male stern assistant dressed as an 18th-century police officer.
Assistant Skills: Investigation d4, Notice d4, Hacking d4

CAPTAIN THOMAS BURGE

Captain Burge is totally dedicated to the ideals of the Psion Brotherhood and Ganendra Nathan. Flabbergasted at the speed and ease with which Chrysalis fell to the rebels and to the heroes, he managed to hide his allegiance well, waiting for a chance to strike back. He has concocted a risky, daring plan to delay the fleet and keep Chrysalis a secret as long as possible, and he has recruited his most loyal crewmembers for what is most likely a suicide mission.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d8
Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d8, Knowledge (Battle) d6, Notice d6, Psionics d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Throwing d6



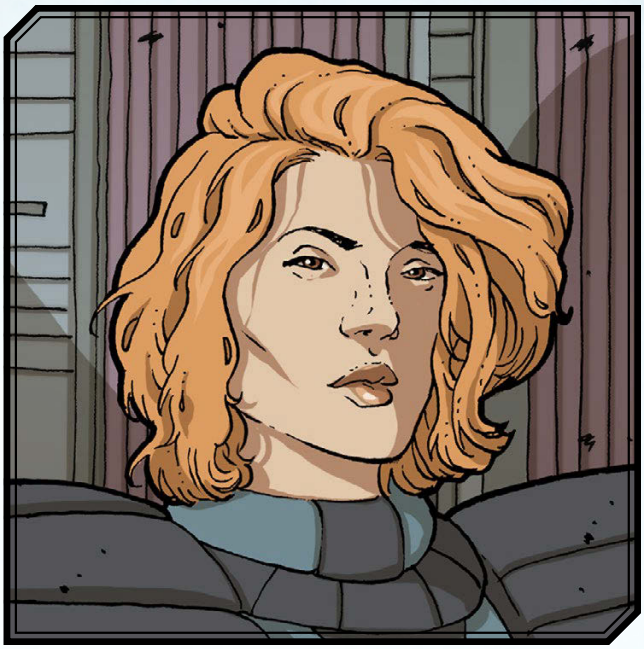
CAPTAIN THOMAS BURGE

Cha: +1; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8 (2); **Mental Toughness:** 5
Hindrances: Vow (the Psion Vow)
Edges: Arcane Background (Psionics), Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Command, Command Presence, Experienced Assistant, Hold the Line!, Tactician
Powers: *blast*, *bolt*, *deflection*, *entangle*, *pummel*, *read surface thoughts*, *telekinesis*, *telepathy*. **Power Points:** 20
Gear: Light vest (+2, torso only), Combat helmet (+3, head only), stun grenade (Range 5/10/20, Damage 3d6 non-lethal, Medium Burst).
Notes: Home World Earth (gets the Tactician edge for free).
Assistant Name and Gender: Assistant Program 5, "Felipe", a 16th century Spanish noble.
Assistant Skills: Hacking d6 (with a Wild die), Investigation d6.

DELTA OFFICER BRYCE SAUCEDO

Delta Officer Bryce Saucedo's sour, pessimistic demeanor masks an intelligent and capable Circle bureaucrat. Although she wishes she were not in charge of keeping the peace in Nouvelle Vie, she is a professional who works hard to make her assigned mission a success. That is probably why Epsilon Leader Antoine picked her over other, more willing candidates for the position.

Delta Office Saucedo's previous posting was at the Circle offices in Zarmina ("Gee"), where she spent



DELTA OFFICER BRYCE SAUCEDO

many years. Although she is extremely closed about her private life, it is an open secret that in Armstrong she met someone who could have been her lifelong partner, but she was taken away from her by a strange disease. Easing her pain was also one of the reasons why Antoine decided to transfer her to Nouvelle Vie.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6
Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Shooting d6, Taunt d8, Throwing d6
Cha: +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7 (2); **Mental Toughness:** 5
Hindrances: Loyal, Habit (drinks)
Edges: Combat Reflexes, Command, Experienced Assistant, Strong Willed, Diplomat.
Gear: Assistant, Autopistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, AP 1, Semi-Auto, 20 bullets), Light vest (+2, torso only).
Notes: Home World Bay Jing (gets the Strong Willed edge for free).
Assistant Name and Gender: Assistant Program 5, "Sudoku", a lithe and athletic ninja type, completely covered in black. Sudoku speaks in Japanese only, which Saucedo understands. Sudoku is therefore useless in interacting or persuading most humans other than Saucedo herself.
Assistant Skills: Hacking d6 (with a Wild die), Investigation d6.

DR. LUIS LAMARCHE

Dr. Luis LaMarche is a thin, middle-aged man with think, short black hair, a short beard and old-style lenses. He is brilliant scientist with ample experience on programming and interstellar communications. Hired by MaxDigital Corporation as part of the team in charge of redesigning the Stellar Communications Network, he discovered a dark secret and was forced to flee for his life as a result.

A native of Concordia, Dr. LaMarche is the brother of Suzanne LaMarche, former Leader of the Circle. With these connections, he feels empathy and closeness to all Circle members.

Outside work, Dr. LaMarche is passionate about V-World games of all kinds. He particularly likes massively multiplayer games, and devotes a lot of his free time to them, with *AmberDrake Chronicles* being his current favorite. Being holed in a faraway space station has affected his hobby, and he is constantly yearning for it.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6
Skills: Fighting d6, Investigation d6, Healing d4, Knowledge (Science) d12, Knowledge (Ship Ops) d8, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Repair d8, Hacking d8, Shooting d6
Cha: +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7 (2); **Mental Toughness:** 6



DR. LUIS LAMARCHE

Hindrances: Enemy (Major; MaxDigital Corporation), Dark Secret (Partially caused the Comm Network Crash), Habit (Minor; Video games).
Edges: Diplomat, Hacker, Investigator
Gear: Light vest (+2, torso only), Enhanced autopistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, AP 1, Semi-auto, also fires 1 explosive round for 2d8, AP 4 damage).
Notes: Homeworld Concordia (begins with the Diplomat Edge)
Assistant Name and Gender: Assistant Program 3, "Paq-Mann", cartoon character
Assistant Skills: Investigation d4, Hacking d6

DR. OREN GRAHAM

The psion genius behind most of the inventions in Chrysalis, and the researcher that advanced the discovery of the *raze* power, Dr. Oren Graham is a cold, unemotional man. Completely devoted to his research, he has no qualms about using anyone and sacrificing anything to advance it.

Now in old age, and incapable of using many of the available youth treatments because of a basic genetic incompatibility, Dr. Graham is a powerful mind in a weak shell of a man. This does not stop him from instilling fear on everyone who surrounds him.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d12+2, Spirit d12+2, Strength d4, Vigor d4
Skills: Fighting d4, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Psionics d12, Shooting d6



DR. OREN GRAHAM

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 5; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 6 (2); **Mental Toughness:** 13 (4)
Hindrances: Vow (the Psion Vow), Elderly, Assistantless.
Edges: Arcane Background (Psionics), Improved Arcane Resistance, Mentalist, Nerves of Steel, Ranged Psion, Soul Drain, Psychic Soldier.
Powers: *armor*, *barrier*, *blast*, *bolt*, *brain lock*, *confusion*, *deflection*, *dispel*, *entangle*, *invisibility*, *probe*, *pummel*, *puppet*, *read surface thoughts*, *slumber*, *telekinesis*, *telepathy*. **Power Points:** 50
Gear: Light vest (+2, torso only).
Notes: Home World unknown. Does not have an Assistant.
Special Abilities:

- **Quick Mind, Slow Body:** Dr. Graham is an extremely powerful psionic mind trapped in a slow, elderly body. When in combat he draws three action cards at the beginning of each round. If he decides to perform no physical actions in his turn (including moving), he may act on the best of the cards. This allows him to focus on his psionic powers. If Dr. Graham decides to perform any physical action in his turn, he acts on the worst of the cards.
- **Mind Burn:** Dr. Graham knows a secret psionic power called *mind burn*. For the cost of 15 Power Points he can stage a violent mental assault designed to inflict permanent psychological damage. Dr. Graham's attack requires a Psionics roll opposed by the victim's Spirit. On a success, the victim suffers a permanent –2 penalty to all Smarts, Spirit, and linked skill rolls. A raise increases this to –4. This power works at a maximum range equal to the psion's Smarts. The damage can be repaired by a full use of a Healing Pod used by a doctor.

EPSILON LEADER TREVOR ANTOINE

Epsilon Leader Trevor Antoine is the current Leader of the Circle Foundation. A thin, fit man in his upper fifties, he was appointed to the job after being second in command to Suzanne LaMarche. Previously, he spent most of his time in the field in patrol and diplomatic missions, and as fleet leader. This gives him a lot of wisdom and experience, valuable qualities for a leader in an institution with as many interests as the Circle. During his Patrol days, he also shared missions with Marcel Coban from the Psion Brotherhood. The resulting enmity from that time is not lost on either one of them.

Antoine is a leader's leader, and devotes time to coaching and helping those around him in a paternalistic way. This has made him one of the most respected leaders the Circle has had in a long time.



EPSILON LEADER TREVOR ANTOINE

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d6, Vigor d8
Skills: Fighting d8, Knowledge (Battle) d8, Notice d6, Persuasion d10, Piloting d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d6
Cha: +1; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8 (2); **Mental Toughness:** 7
Hindrances: Heroic, Pacifist (Minor), Enemy (Marcel Coban)
Edges: Combat Reflexes, Diplomat, Dodge, Command, Command Presence, Experienced Assistant, Hold the Line!, Level Headed, Natural Leader, Tactician
Gear: Assistant, autopistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, AP 1, Semi-Auto, 20 bullets), light vest (+2, torso only).
Notes: Home World Earth (gets any edge for free; chose Diplomat).
Assistant Name and Gender: Assistant Program 5, "Janus", a middle-aged soldier dressed in a military space pilot vacc suit with a drawing of a blue-thunderbolt on the chest (symbol of the Circle Special Forces, an elite military unit Antoine belonged to at one time). "Janus" is always obedient and respectful.
Assistant Skills: Hacking d6 (with a Wild die), Investigation d4, Persuasion d4.

LEON GRANBERG

Leon Granberg is the leader of the Mesh, one of the largest and most dangerous criminal organizations in Apollo. He has risen from the bottom, and has built his organization step by step. One of his trademarks is to get himself involved in the most dangerous and difficult missions he contracts, rather than delegating them to underlings. It is a commitment and a show of skill that he then demands from everyone in the organization.

Granberg has become important enough that he no longer fears any authority in corrupt Apollo. In fact, he has excellent relationships with most authorities, and many of them are his customers, or his employees. He fears betrayal from within his organization, and he has more than once eliminated lieutenants he perceives as being "on the edge of betraying him." What he fears the most, however, is the lone idealistic cop who decides to ignore his corrupt superior's orders and attack him directly.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d10, Strength d6, Vigor d8
Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d8, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Throwing d6
Cha: –1; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8/10 (2/4); **Mental Toughness:** 7
Hindrances: Mean, Greedy, Ugly (Minor)
Edges: Arcane Resistance, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Command, Command Presence, Experienced Assistant, Hold the Line!, Scoundrel, Tactician
Gear: Assault rifle (Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d8, AP 2, RoF 3, Auto), Combat knife (Str+d4), Combat vest (+2/+4, negates 4 AP against bullets), Combat helmet (+3, head only), Stun grenade (Range 5/10/20, Damage 3d6 non-lethal, Medium Burst), Assistant with at least d6 in Hacking skill.



LEON GRANBERG

Notes: Home World Apollo (gets the Scoundrel edge for free).

Assistant Name and Gender: Assistant Program 5, "Bunny", an extremely attractive female secretary dressed in immaculate executive clothes. Bunny only takes orders and does her boss's bidding, without ever giving suggestions or comments on her own. She talks and looks out of place among the shady Mesh leadership.

Assistant Skills: Hacking d4, Investigation d6 (with a Wild die), Notice d6.

LINDSAY KIPPERSON

A cute petite girl in her late teens or early twenties, Lindsay's appearance makes people underestimate her. She actually is an extremely gifted Earth-born psion with big potential within the Brotherhood. Currently making her way up in the diplomatic and security sections of the Brotherhood, Lindsay's cheery and sunny disposition make her instantly likable and influential. She can be tough as nails when the situation demands it, though, and her natural leadership talents make her respected and obeyed beyond her years. She has her hair tied in a ponytail, something not common in young women at this time.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d4

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d4, Psionics d10, Shooting d6

Cha: +4; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 6 (2); **Mental Toughness:** 6

Hindrances: Vow (the Psion Vow)

Edges: Attractive, Arcane Background (Psionics), Bureaucrat, Charismatic, Command, Mentalist, Soul Drain

Powers: *bolt*, *deflection*, *telepathy*, *telempathy*, *mind shield*, *pyrokinesis.* **Power Points:** 15

Gear: Assistant, Autopistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, AP 1, Semi-Auto, 20 bullets), Light vest (+2, torso only).

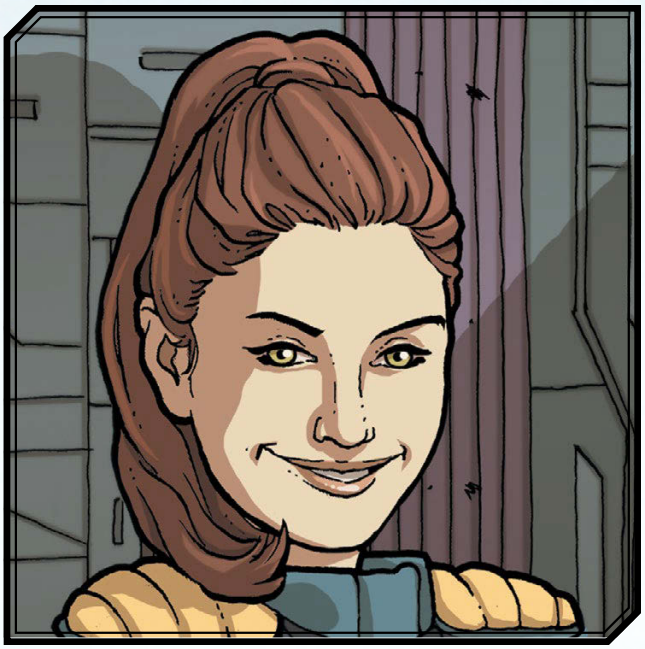
Notes: Homeworld Earth (begins with Bureaucrat edge)

Assistant Name and Gender: Assistant Program 3, "Pinky", talking pink cuddly hairy spider with a cute smile.

Assistant Skills: Investigation d4, Hacking d6

JOHANN PATRAS

Johann Patras is one of the most capable pilots and captains in the Mesh. He is more effective at smuggling and transporting illegal goods than he is at the dark business of killing and attacking. For that reason, Granberg has assigned him to space freighter work. The constant time away has affected Johann, and he always seems distracted or focused on himself. Granberg doesn't care, though: Patras gets the job done and is unlikely to betray him.



LINDSAY KIPPERSON



JOHANN PATRAS

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d6, Notice d8, Persuasion d6, Piloting d8, Shooting d6, Streetwise d10, Throwing d6
Cha: +1; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8 (2); **Mental Toughness:** 5
Hindrances: Mean, Wanted (minor), Quirk (likes candy)
Edges: Combat Reflexes, Ace, Improvisational Fighter
Gear: Assault rifle (Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d8, AP 2, RoF 3, Auto), Combat knife (Str+d4), Light vest (+2), Stun grenade (Range 5/10/20, Damage 3d6 non-lethal, Medium Burst).
Notes: Home World Apollo (gets the Scoundrel Edge for free).
Assistant Name and Gender: Assistant Program 5, "Johann", a digital representation of himself. Conversations between Patras and his Assistant border on the bizarre, with both of them calling each other "Johann" and arguing among themselves.
Assistant Skills: Hacking d6, Investigation d6, Notice d4, Persuasion d4.

MARCEL COBAN

The Chief of Security of the Psion Brotherhood is absolutely devoted to his leader's plans and vision, and has orchestrated many of Ganendra Nathan's plans for him. The heroes first meet Coban in his role as "just" the Security Chief. Afterwards they meet him when Coban finally assumes governorship of Chrysalis in preparation for the fall of humanity.



MARCEL COBAN

Marcel Coban is ruthless and willing to lay down his life (and everybody else's life) in order to achieve supremacy for the Brotherhood.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d6
Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d8, Persuasion d6, Psionics d10, Shooting d8
Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7 (2); **Mental Toughness:** 10 (4)
Hindrances: Vow (the Psion Vow), Arrogant, Stubborn
Edges: Arcane Background (Psionics), Improved Arcane Resistance, Combat Reflexes, Command, Mentalist, Nerves of Steel, Ranged Psion, Soul Drain.
Powers: *armor*, *blast*, *bolt*, *brain lock*, *deflection*, *entangle*, *invisibility*, *probe*, *pummel*, *puppet*, *read surface thoughts*, *slumber*, *telekinesis*, *telepathy*. **Power Points:** 40
Gear: Assistant, Light vest (+2, torso only).
Notes: Home World Zarmina ("Gee")
Assistant Name and Gender: Assistant Program 3, "Hess", serious-looking, hard-edged military-style secretary with absolutely no sense of humor.
Assistant Skills: Investigation d4, Hacking d6.
Special Abilities:

- **Mind Burn:** Marcel Coban knows a secret psionic power called *mind burn*. For the cost of 15 Power Points he can stage a violent mental assault designed to inflict permanent psychological damage. Mind Burn requires a Psionics roll opposed by the victim's Spirit. On a success, the victim suffers a permanent –2 penalty to all Smarts, Spirit, and linked skill rolls. A raise increases this to –4. This power works at a maximum range equal to the psion's Smarts. The damage can be repaired by a full use of a Healing Pod used by a doctor.
- **Push the Right Buttons:** Long years of experience in torture and interrogation have taught Coban what to say and how to say it to get the right response from those he challenges. After successfully Taunting or Intimidating a target, Coban may make an attack against that target as a free action.

"RYAN"

The man known as "Ryan" is the Leader of the Chrysalis Resistance. In the last few years he has built a large following and is preparing for the moment when he and his group will stop the abuses committed by the Brotherhood once and for all. He only needs to understand what the Brotherhood is planning... and that's where the heroes come in.



"RYAN"

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d6, Vigor d6
Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Psionics d10, Shooting d8
Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7 (2); **Mental Toughness:** 7
Hindrances: Vow (the Psion Vow)
Edges: Arcane Background (Psionics), Combat Reflexes, Command, Diplomat, Experienced Assistant, Mentalist, Touch Psion, Soul Drain.
Powers: *blast*, *bolt*, *deflection*, *entangle*, *pummel*, *read surface thoughts*, *telekinesis*, *telepathy*. **Power Points:** 20
Gear: Assistant, Light vest (+2, torso only).
Notes: Home World Concordia (gets the Diplomat edge for free).
Assistant Name and Gender: Assistant Program 5, "Mrs. Kipperson", bespectacled white-haired amiable old lady. An eccentric choice for an Assistant.
Assistant Skills: Investigation d4 (with a Wild Die), Notice d4, Persuasion d6.

ENCOUNTERS

CHRYSALIS SWARM

One of Dr. Oren Graham's many twisted experiments, Chrysalis Swarms roam the dark side of the planet. Dr Graham's exact purpose in creating and releasing these biological metal drone organisms is not clear, but without Dr. Graham to maintain them the Swarms have spun out of control.

Found in: Chrysalis

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6 (A), Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d8
Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d8
Pace: 8; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 6
Special Abilities:

- **Bite:** Swarms inflict hundreds of tiny bites every round to their victims, hitting automatically and causing 2d4 damage to everyone in the template. The insects' sharp metal teeth can burrow into armor, vacc suits and even metal vehicle walls.
- **Fearless:** Chrysalis Swarms don't suffer from fear effects, and can't be intimidated.
- **Fly:** Pace 10.
- **Infravision:** Chrysalis Swarms halve penalties for bad lighting when attacking living targets.
- **Split:** If a swarm is wounded, it splits into two smaller swarms (Small Burst Templates). The Toughness of these smaller swarms is lowered by –2 (to 5 each).
- **Swarm:** Medium Burst Template; Parry +2; Because the swarm is composed of hundreds of creatures, cutting and piercing weapons do no real damage. Area-effect weapons work normally, and a character can stomp to inflict his damage in Strength each round.

DEVOURER

Mankind's ultimate enemy, the beings known by humans as Devourers are artificial self-replicating biological beings made with a technology far more advanced than our own.

To fight humans, Devourers have developed several bodies designed for combat in environments with Earth-like gravity. The most common Devourer body configuration against humans ("Devourer Warrior") is a spider-like body that allows them to use four strong "legs" to run on the floor, walls or ceiling and use four "arms" to fight via melee or ranged combat. The ends of their arms biologically morph into either sharp blades (for hand-to-hand combat) or bio-guns firing deadly projectiles (for ranged combat). Their bizarre pulsating bodies are covered with a hard carapace that allows them to subsist with no contact with an atmosphere and also acts as armor. They have no eyes, mouth or ears, as their carapace has artificial sensors that provide them with information on their environment. There are also more powerful, "Elite"

versions of the Devourer Warrior, distinguished by being slightly larger than the standard warrior.

Although these are the most common "configurations," other types of Devourers have also been produced based on human planet information. There are bacteria-sized Devourers that attack as deadly, unstoppable viruses; insect-sized Devourer swarms with a killing disposition towards humans; rat-sized Devourers that can squirm into the smallest human environments and then ignite in a nuclear explosion; winged Devourers to glide in human planets; and giant-sized Devourer Monsters, designed with thick legs to support their increased body weight, that can crush humans to a pulp. Devourers are truly terrifying enemies.

Found in: Devourer ships and environments

DEVOURER SWARM

One of the many experimental shapes of Devourers designed to fight humans, Devourer Swarms are composed of thousands of tiny insect-like beings. Because they are designed beings, that are intelligent, and can understand their enemies' strategy and react to it.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d8

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 6

Edges: Advanced Zero-G Training.

Special Abilities:

- **Bite:** Swarms inflict hundreds of tiny bites every round to their victims, hitting automatically and causing 2d4 damage to everyone in the template. The insects' sharp metal teeth can burrow into armor and vacc suits.
- **Fly:** Pace 10". This ability does not work in zero-G environments.
- **Split:** If a swarm is wounded, it splits into two smaller swarms (Small Burst Templates). The Toughness of these smaller swarms is lowered by –2 (to 5 each).
- **Swarm:** Medium Burst Template; Parry +2; Because the swarm is composed of hundreds of creatures, cutting and piercing weapons do no real damage. Area-effect weapons work normally, and a character can stomp to inflict his damage in Strength each round.
- **Fearless:** Devourers don't suffer from fear effects, and can't be intimidated.
- **Infravision:** Devourers halve penalties for bad lighting when attacking living targets.
- **Zero-G Abilities:** Devourers usually live in a Zero-g or microgravity environment and suffer no penalties to movement or for rolling a 1 or 2 on any physical trait rolls.
- **Weakness (Psionics):** When a Devourer is the target of a psionic power with a mental manifestation, even if the power is not damaging, the Devourer must make a Spirit roll opposed by the attacker's Psionics result. If the Devourer fails the roll it is automatically Shaken. Stacked Shaken results can cause wounds. The Devourer is otherwise immune to all other effects or damage of psionic powers with mental manifestations. Psionic powers with physical manifestations work normally.

✷ DEVOURER MONSTER

One of the latest Devourer experiments for a theoretical land invasion of human planets, Devourer Monsters are huge creatures of destruction. They have four muscular legs and a strong, pointed tail forming their lower body. Their huge, long neck ends in a huge, gaping maw filled with rows of razor-sharp teeth. The body also has six arachnid-like clawed arms. These are used to supplement the four legs when running, and also to attack. The Devourer Monster attacks by stabbing their prey with the claws and biting, or hitting with its tail.

Devourer Monsters can perform equally well in zero-G and in full human gravity environments.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d10, Strength d12+2, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d10, Notice d8, Stealth d4

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 13 (2)

Edges: Combat Reflexes, Advanced Zero-G Training.

Special Abilities:

- **Armor +2:** Thick, leathery hide.
- **Bite:** Str+d8.
- **Claws:** Str+d6. Although the Devourer Monster attacks with all six of its claws, it makes a single attack roll with a +5 gang-up bonus.
- **Fear (–2):** On seeing a Devourer for the first time, characters must make a Fear check at –2.
- **Hardy:** Multiple Shaken results do not cause a wound. This does not apply to Psionic attacks (see below).
- **Infravision:** Devourers halve penalties for bad lighting when attacking living targets.
- **Size +4:** A Devourer Monster stands over 13' tall.
- **Stab and Grab:** A Devourer Monster scoring a raise with its claw attack has impaled its foe in its claws. If the monster then attacks with its bite it gains +2 to attack.
- **Tail:** Str+d6, +1 Reach.
- **Wall Crawling:** Within any heavily porous environment (such as their own ship), Devourers

can scale any surface using their extremities their full Pace.

- **Weakness (Psionics):** When a Devourer is the target of a psionic power with a mental manifestation, even if the power is not damaging, the Devourer must make a Spirit roll opposed by the attacker's Psionics result. If the Devourer fails the roll it is automatically Shaken. Stacked Shaken results can cause wounds. The Devourer is otherwise immune to all other effects or damage of psionic powers with mental manifestations. Psionic powers with physical manifestations work normally.
- **Zero-G Abilities:** Devourers usually live in a Zero-g or microgravity environment and suffer no penalties to movement or for rolling a 1 or 2 on any physical Trait rolls.

DEVOURER TECHNICIAN

These beings are only found inside Devourer ships and bases, and are in charge of operating equipment and devices. They usually try to flee rather than attack, but will fight if cornered or ordered to by a Warrior.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d4
Skills: Climb d10, Fighting d4, Notice d6, Shooting d4
Pace: 8; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 6 (2)
Edges: Advanced Zero-G Training.
Special Abilities:

- **Armor +2:** Devourers are encased in part biological, part artificial carapace.
- **Fear (–2):** On seeing a Devourer for the first time, characters must make a Fear check at –2.
- **Fleet-Footed:** Devourers roll a d10 when running instead of a d6.
- **Infravision:** Devourers halve penalties for bad lighting when attacking living targets.
- **Multiple Arms:** A Devourer's four arms suffer no multi-action or off-hand penalty, and may take independent actions. Devourer Technicians' arm extremities can be configured as a sharp blade, and do Str+d6 damage.
- **Wall Crawling:** Within any heavily porous environment (such as their own ship), Devourers can scale any surface using their extremities their full Pace.
- **Weakness (Psionics):** When a Devourer is the target of a psionic power with a mental manifestation, even if the power is not damaging, the Devourer must make a Spirit roll opposed by the attacker's Psionics result. If the Devourer fails the roll it is automatically Shaken. Stacked Shaken results can cause wounds. The Devourer is otherwise immune to all other effects or damage of psionic powers with mental manifestations. Psionic powers with physical manifestations work normally.
- **Zero-G Abilities:** Devourers usually live in a Zero-g or microgravity environment and suffer no penalties to movement or for rolling a 1 or 2 on any physical Trait rolls.

DEVOURER WARRIOR

The most common configuration of human enemy, Devourer Warriors are adaptable to fighting in most human environments with or without atmosphere or gravity, should they wish to do hand-to-hand combat.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6
Skills: Climb d10, Fighting d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6
Pace: 8; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7 (2)
Edges: Combat Reflexes, Advanced Zero-G Training.
Special Abilities:

- **Armor +2:** Devourers are encased in part biological, part artificial carapace.
- **Bio-weapons:** A Devourer's extremities are bio-artificial devices that can within one full round change from being a firing weapon to a sharp blade in melee.
- **Fear (–2):** On seeing a Devourer for the first time, characters must make a Fear check at –2.
- **Fearless:** Devourers don't suffer from fear effects, and can't be intimidated.
- **Fleet-Footed:** Devourers roll a d10 when running instead of a d6.
- **Infravision:** Devourers halve penalties for bad lighting when attacking living targets.
- **Multiple Arms:** A Devourer's four arms suffer no multi-action or off-hand penalty, and may take independent actions. When in melee fight, an arm extremity configured as a sharp blade does Str+d6 damage. When in bio-gun mode, an arm extremity "gun" does 2d8 damage with RoF 1, a range of 12/24/48, and unlimited Ammo.
- **Wall Crawling:** Within any heavily porous environment (such as their own ship), Devourers can scale any surface using their extremities their full Pace.
- **Weakness (Psionics):** When a Devourer is the target of a psionic power with a mental manifestation, even if the power is not damaging, the Devourer must make a Spirit roll opposed by the attacker's Psionics result. If the Devourer fails the roll it is automatically Shaken. Stacked Shaken results can cause wounds. The Devourer is otherwise immune to all other effects or damage of psionic powers with mental manifestations. Psionic powers with physical manifestations work normally.

- **Zero-G Abilities:** Devourers usually live in a Zero-g or microgravity environment and suffer no penalties to movement or for rolling a 1 or 2 on any physical trait rolls.

DEVOURER ELITE WARRIOR

A slightly larger version of the standard Devourer Warrior. After a few battles with this enemy, heroes should be able to tell them apart from standard Warriors.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Climb d12, Fighting d8, Notice d6, Shooting d8

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 9 (2)

Edges: Combat Reflexes, Advanced Zero-G Training.

Special Abilities:

- **Armor +2:** Devourers are encased in part biological, part artificial carapace.
- **Bio-weapons:** A Devourer's extremities are bio-artificial devices that can within one full round change from being a firing weapon to a sharp blade in melee.
- **Fear (–2):** On seeing a Devourer for the first time, characters must make a Fear check at –2.
- **Fearless:** Devourers don't suffer from fear effects, and can't be intimidated.
- **Fleet-Footed:** Devourers roll a d10 when running instead of a d6.
- **Infravision:** Devourers halve penalties for bad lighting when attacking living targets.
- **Multiple Arms:** A Devourer's four arms suffer no multi-action or off-hand penalty, and may take independent actions. When in melee fight, an arm extremity configured as a sharp blade does Str+d6 damage. When in bio-gun mode, an arm extremity "gun" does 2d8 damage with RoF 1, a range of 12/24/48, and unlimited Ammo.
- **Overload:** Even when killed, a Devourer Elite Warrior has a final weapon in its arsenal: Before dying it may choose to explode in a Medium Burst Template. Everyone inside the template, both friend and foe, receives 2d6 damage.
- **Wall Crawling:** Within any heavily porous environment (such as their own ship), Devourers can scale any surface using their extremities their full Pace.
- **Weakness (Psionics):** When a Devourer is the target of a psionic power with a mental manifestation, even if the power is not damaging, the Devourer must make a Spirit roll opposed by the attacker's Psionics result. If the Devourer fails the roll it is automatically Shaken. Stacked Shaken results can cause wounds. The Devourer is otherwise immune to all other effects or damage of psionic powers with mental manifestations. Psionic powers with physical manifestations work normally.
- **Zero-G Abilities:** Devourers usually live in a Zero-g or microgravity environment and suffer no penalties to movement or for rolling a 1 or 2 on any physical trait rolls.

MISSHAPEN DEVOURERS

These prototypes of life are not ready to survive on their own yet, but when many of them come together, their chaotic, unbridled hunger can be devastating to their enemies. In game terms, treat these incomplete monsters as a Swarm.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Notice d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6

Edges: —

Special Abilities:

- **Bite:** Misshapen Devourers inflict dozens of tiny bites and punctures every round to their victims, hitting automatically and causing 2d4 damage to everyone in the template. The monsters' sharp "teeth" can burrow into armor and vacc suits.
- **Fearless:** Devourers don't suffer from fear effects, and can't be intimidated.
- **Infravision:** Devourers halve penalties for bad lighting when attacking living targets.
- **Swarm:** Medium Burst Template; Parry +2; Because the swarm is composed of dozens of creatures or more, cutting and piercing weapons do no real damage. Area-effect weapons work normally, and a character can stomp to inflict his damage in Strength each round.
- **Weakness (Psionics):** When a Devourer is the target of a psionic power with a mental manifestation, even if the power is not damaging, the Devourer must make a Spirit roll opposed by the attacker's Psionics result. If the Devourer fails the roll it is automatically Shaken. Stacked Shaken results can cause wounds. The Devourer is otherwise immune to all other effects or damage of psionic powers with mental manifestations. Psionic powers with physical manifestations work normally.

VEHICLES AND SPACESHIPS

What follows is a list of the vehicles and spaceships used in this adventure.

DEVOURER SHIP

Strange, mysterious and terrifying, Devourer ships have technology never seen before by humans. They look like black spiked sea urchins, and would disappear in the blackness of space except for the fact that they blot the stars, and that their surface periodically sparkles. In frequencies other than human-visible light they emit slightly higher amounts of energy.

Devourer ships are slightly smaller than a human battleship, but orders of magnitude faster than any human ship of any size, attaining accelerations of 20Gs or more. They do not seem to have engines or exhaust, and their propeller method, heat release and storage technology are unknown. If they have an energy shield (similar to the Coulborne Shield) it is not spherical, but rather an energy membrane directly touching the ship's surface. Their main weapon seems to be a powerful energy beam mixing different types of frequencies, such as laser, X-ray and gamma-ray radiation. It is not clear where on the ship the weapon is located, or how the ship produces beams at these different frequencies with a (supposedly) single cannon length.

"Alien" does not begin to describe it.

Top Acceleration: 26; **Toughness:** 90 (66); **Handling:** +2; **Heat Radiation:** +20; **Shield Effects:** —; **Crew:** unknown; **Jumps:** 16; **Weeks per Jump:** 0.5

Abilities: Knowledge (Ship Ops) d8, Piloting d8, Shooting d8, Repair d8

Notes: Heavy Armor, Spacecraft, Improved Stabilizer, Capital Ship

- **Weakness (Psionics):** If a human psion successfully casts any power with a mental manifestation against a Devourer ship during combat (at a distance of up to 6 SUs away) the Devourer ship's crew must make a Spirit roll (d6 with Wild die) opposed by the attacker's Psionics result. If the Devourer ship fails the roll, all actions it performs receive a –2 penalty until the next round. The Devourer crew is otherwise immune to all other effects or damage of psionic powers with mental manifestations, as well as to psionic powers with physical manifestations. Note that this weakness is unknown by humans up until Module #5 in the *Seven Worlds* campaign.

Weapons:

- 2 × Alien Heavy Energy Cannon Range 4/8/16; Damage 3d8; AP 50; RoF 1; PDLB RoF 8; Heat Points 2; HW. The Devourer ship's energy cannon is a mix of several types of frequencies in the spectrum, including visible, X- and gamma-ray radiation.

DEVOURER MINI-SHIP

Devourer Mini-Ships are smaller versions of the Devourer Ships, and are used internally by Devourer fleets when travelling between ships or when landing on the surface of a planet. Given the Devourers' destructive focus, these ships see little day-to-day use.

Note that the N'ahili-created version of the Devourer mini-ship (below) supports a maximum Top Acceleration of 12, which is the maximum sustained acceleration that the human body supports, or about 6.5G. If Devourers are piloting the ship, assume a Top Acceleration of 20.

Top Acceleration: 12; **Toughness:** 65 (50); **Handling:** +2; **Heat Radiation:** +8; **Shield Effects:** —; **Crew:** 1+15; **Jumps:** 16; **Weeks per Jump:** 0.5

Abilities: —

Notes: Heavy Armor, Spacecraft, Improved Stabilizer

- **Weakness (Psionics):** If a human psion successfully casts any power with a mental manifestation against a Devourer ship during combat (at a distance of up to 6 SUs away) the Devourer ship's crew must make a Spirit roll (d6 with Wild die) opposed by the attacker's Psionics result. If the Devourer ship fails the roll, all actions it performs receive a –2 penalty until the next round. The Devourer crew is otherwise immune to all other effects or damage of psionic powers with mental manifestations, as well as to psionic powers with physical manifestations. Note that this weakness is unknown by humans up until Module #5 in the *Seven Worlds* campaign.

Weapons:

- 1 × Alien Light Energy Cannon (Range 4/8/16; Damage 3d6; AP 25; RoF 1; PDLB RoF 8; Heat Points 2; HW). The Devourer ship's energy cannon is a mix of several types of frequencies in the spectrum, including visible, X- and gamma-ray radiation.

ganendra nathan

The most skilled psion and politician of his generation is also mankind's greatest enemy

Born in 2169 to a psion family on the planet of Bay Jing, Ganendra Nathan was a child with a future. The son of a British-Indian family of first-generation settlers, he was heavily influenced by his father, a high-ranking officer working at the Psion Brotherhood offices in Triumph. Ganendra's father lived enmeshed in the ideals of the Brotherhood and the importance of protecting their less-powerful, non-Psion brothers and sisters. His role was critical given the doubts Bay Jing always had on psionic powers.

When the time came, young Ganendra tested positive on the Psion test, one more member of his family who did. He ranked very high on the psi-scale, becoming a promising candidate for the Brotherhood. But all of Ganendra's potential faded to nothing when compared to the psi-score of his younger sister Anuva.

A sweet, simple girl, Anuva had been blessed with potential psionic powers that might make her a leading light in the next generation of psions. But of course, young Anuva was not thinking about that, more interested in playing with her friends and with her older brother, who loved her dearly.

As Ganendra grew up his psionic powers increased, which was not unusual. What was unusual (and valuable) was Ganendra's remarkable natural ability to feel and generate empathy and connect to others, especially non-psions. One of the great goals of the Psion Brotherhood is fostering trust between psions and non-psions. Psions who can generate that level of connection with non-psions are very valuable and sought for. Ganendra was a boy with lots of friends, both non-psion and psion, and with a deep regard and respect for both. As he grew older, he even got himself a non-psion girlfriend, Christine, his first and deepest love.

When Ganendra was nineteen (and Anuva nine) the defining moment of his life occurred: The Psion Riots.

Not much more can be added to the awful stories of tragedy and cruelty that occurred during those three days (see the description of Bay Jing in the *Setting Guide*). What Ganendra Nathan saw then marked the rest of his life. He saw his entire structure of life and meaning destroyed: His former friends turned to hunt him down as if they didn't know him, as if he were some stranger, some horrible enemy they had never met before. He saw both his parents try to stop and control the situation while protecting their family, and



GANENDRA NATHAN

GANENDRA NATHAN

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d12, Spirit d12+2, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d8, Knowledge (Ship Ops) d6, Notice d8, Persuasion d12, Piloting d8, Psionics d12+2, Shooting d10, Taunt d10

Cha: +4; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 8 (2); **Mental Toughness:** 13 (4)

Hindrances: Arrogant (in secret), Death Wish (willing to give his life to free psions from humanity)

Edges: Arcane Background (Psionics), Arcane Resistance, Improved Arcane Resistance, Attractive, Charismatic, Combat Reflexes, Command, Level Headed, Mentalist, Nerves of Steel, No Mercy, Quick, Ranged Psion, Soul Drain, Strong Willed, Advanced Zero-G Training.

Powers: Ganendra knows every single psion power available. **Power Points:** 50

Gear: Assistant, Autopistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, AP 1, Semi-Auto, 20 bullets), Light Combat Suit (+2/+4, protects Arms, Legs, Torso; vacuum ready); vacuum helmet (covers Head, +3).

Notes: Homeworld Bay Jing (begins with the Strong Willed Edge)

Assistant Name and Gender: James, courteous male of about twenty-five years of age, well-dressed in Psion Brotherhood uniform.

Assistant Skills: Persuasion d8, Hacking d8, Investigation d6.

Special Abilities:

- **Mind Burn:** Ganendra Nathan knows a secret psionic power called *mind burn*. For the cost of 15 Power Points he can stage a violent mental assault designed to inflict permanent psychological damage. Nathan's attack requires Psionics roll opposed by the victim's Spirit. On a success, the victim suffers a permanent –2 penalty to all Smarts, Spirit, and linked skill rolls. A raise increases this to –4. This power works at a maximum range equal to the psion's Smarts. The damage can only be repaired by a full use of a Healing Pod used by a doctor.
- **Weakness: Psion Riots:** Ganendra Nathan has been permanently traumatized by his painful experiences in the Psion Riots of Bay Jing in 2188. Any Smarts Trick, Intimidation or Taunt attempt that ingeniously brings up the Riots and Nathan's activities at the time (players must role-play this) gets a +2 bonus to the roll.

he saw them fall to their horrible deaths doing it. He saw the cruel, terrible things those animals ("human" was not a word he'd apply to the beings he saw) did to his fellow psions. He saw an unrecognizable Christine, his girlfriend, actively working and aiding the mobs in hunting down psions. And, worst of all, he saw them kill Anuva, he saw them kill his nine-year old sister without mercy, just because she was different.

And he felt, in his mind, all that pain, millions of souls in pain. It would have been enough to drive anyone crazy. Maybe it did.

The stories of the great Ganendra Nathan's bravery never tell how he survived by being a coward, by being so afraid he would not defend his parents or sister. This guilt follows him even now, and he blames the entire human race for it.

His faith in the human species shattered, he finally saw himself for what he was: Psions were a new, superior version of man. It was pointless to try to sugar-coat the truth. Non-Psions would never accept their inferiority, would always consider Psions freaks. There is no way his *species* would truly prosper under the shadow of humanity. If Ganendra wanted Psions to survive and thrive he needed to find a new home for them, and he needed humans to stop being a threat to Psions. The only sure, way to accomplish this was obviously if there were no humans left to threaten anybody. The reality, however, is that humans are too many and Psions too few. If Ganendra wanted to destroy humanity and save the Psions he would have to do it from the inside. He would have to gain the humans' trust, like Christine gained his trust. And then, when the time was right, put an end to all of them, like they put an end to little Anuva.

The new, forged-from-fire Nathan lost all empathy except to his own fellow Psions, but was too smart to show it. He displayed his above average psionic powers by singlehandedly tracking down and capturing the psycho rogue Psion who had started it all, something even trained Psi Enforcers had not been able to do. Then, as the riots died down, he masterfully brought the culprit to the human authorities, becoming a media star in the process: The young, talented Psion who saw all the pain and suffering of the riots, even losing his loved ones, and through it all focused on stopping the criminal who sparked this tragedy. His natural charisma and a few strategic sound bytes did the rest (some memorable quotes: "In the name of all Psions, I sincerely apologize for the behavior of this twisted individual" and "We have endured unbearable pain, both humans and Psions! And we have proven we bleed and hurt the same! Let this tragedy serve to bring us closer, so we can rise above our emotions and forge the future of humanity

together!"). Suddenly, young Ganendra Nathan had become the powerful, attractive, charismatic Psion who could unite all of humanity together.

Christine's lifeless body was found a few days later, dead from a brain embolism. Her death was considered one more casualty of the riots.

Just seven years after the riots, by the time he was twenty-six, Nathan would become the youngest Leader of the Psion Brotherhood, and over the next twenty-two years he would revolutionize the image of the institution. By bringing it closer to the common human, focusing more on helping humanity, and projecting an image of peace and humility, humanity's primal fears were gradually subdued.

When he became Leader of the Brotherhood, Nathan was surprised to discover he was neither the first nor the only Psion to have thought that Psions needed to survive on their own. Several top secret projects had been running for quite some time, and quite recently a spy team had obtained information regarding a recently-discovered set of two wormholes from Mu Cassiopeiae (an uninhabited star next to Logan's End) to a small brown dwarf double star called Stein 2051. The first planet around Stein 2051A was strange by human standards, but could, with some effort, support life. So here it was, a secret place only the Psion Brotherhood knew how to reach, that housed a planet that could be the new beginning Nathan was looking for. He baptized it Chrysalis, the bridge between the young species and the adult.

So, behind the scenes, Nathan worked feverishly to bring about the future he intended for Psions. Over the last two decades Nathan has created an elite secret group within the Brotherhood, aligned with his goals of Psion independence, and has quietly diverted resources and funds to the secret terraforming and colonizing of Chrysalis. As part of a stellar-wide program to distribute Psions, he has re-assigned hundreds of thousands of Psions as colonists, and they are creating the first true Psion colony. No one really misses these Psions as everybody assumes they're performing their duties "elsewhere", although some strange goings on are being suspected by some of the more open-minded, pro-human Psions in the Brotherhood.

Nathan expected Chrysalis to grow to a few million within the next few decades, and from then on to become wholly self-sufficient. He also understood his role is to play friend to humans, siphoning off their goodwill and resources towards his plan, while he figured out how to finally destroy them all. In this last respect another of his secret research teams also had interesting news for him.

Some time ago, one of the Brotherhood's Psion research teams came across a mysterious alien ship in an uninhabited star system of the frontier. Just as the strange ship was about to destroy the Psion vessel, the Psions desperately broadcast a psionic request for help. It was useless, just the involuntary response of a terrorized crew… but the enemy froze in place for a few seconds, as if the psionic wave had affected them. Unfortunately the enemy's weapon had been partially activated and something went wrong. The mysterious ship exploded, leaving debris, dead alien bodies… and one or two emergency pods. The Psions hurried to gather what they could. Humans had captured their first Devourers.

When Nathan was informed that a powerful alien species was close to human space, and that this species had some kind of weakness to psionic powers, he went ecstatic. Then something even stranger happened: Centuries ago an ancient psionic power, called *raze*, had been left in secret by none other than Daniel Michaels, founder of the Brotherhood. Melissa Fischer, the non-Psion romantic partner of Michaels (and afterwards of his friend-enemy William Donovan) mentioned in passing in her diary that to her *raze* was a "fundamental power." However, *raze* had been deemed useless by Brotherhood scientists long ago because it had no effect whatsoever on any human or animal the Psions had ever tested it with. Up until now: Some further testing on the live Devourers discovered that *raze* had a devastating effect on the aliens. Specifically, when the power was used on the alien minds, the aliens almost always died instantly.

How could this be? How could an obscure psionic power described in passing two hundred years ago stop a powerful alien species no one had ever seen?

Ignoring the bizarre source of this power, Nathan jumped at the opportunity: The psionically-weak Devourers would not pose a threat to Psions, if they were appropriately prepared, especially on a world as unassailable as Chrysalis. On the other hand, the Devourers were powerful enough to lay waste to all of humanity with almost no effort at all. Now all Nathan needed to do is get ready, as fast as possible.

Nathan accelerated Chrysalis colonization, and instituted a program by which all colonists to Chrysalis were taught *raze* in secret, and then covered the teaching of the power by use of the *brain lock* power. Thus soon Chrysalis was colonized by Psions who secretly knew how to kill the Devourers, should they ever appear there; the power only needed to be unlocked from their minds.

For the last few years, Nathan has been accelerating the migration to Chrysalis, shuffling Psions around on digital records so they seem to be somewhere else

while transporting them to their new colony. He has moved many colonists to the new planet, increased scientific research on living conditions, hoarded more food and energy, and built defenses (such as Orbital Station Psi) to protect the Psions' new home.

Nathan also focused on distracting humans long enough to make the Devourers' job easier when they arrive. He classified all information on previous Devourer sightings to delay discovery of the threat. This raised Epsilon-level Leader Antoine's suspicions, prompting the investigation of records that got the heroes involved in their trip to Earth (see *Rumors of War*).

Finally, Nathan took advantage of the constant rivalry between Jubilee and Dauphin (proxies for Concordia and Bay Jing's own rivalry) to push humanity to the brink of war. His Psions secretly helped a band of Jubilee terrorists infiltrate Melissant security to assassinate the Governor of Bay Jing during the Concordia's Centenary celebration (not even the terrorists themselves knew they were being helped by the Brotherhood). He also orchestrated the massive sabotage to the Stellar Communications Network by means of some faulty code the scientists at MaxDigital Corporation inserted into the system (this is what Dr. Luis LaMarche discovered and what prompted his disappearance). Nathan rightly believed bringing down the Comm Network would leave humanity defenseless against the Devourers when they invaded.

Nathan knows many Psions will not agree to his plans if they were known, and he also knows that by now he has broken the Psion Vow many times over. He therefore keeps his activities secret from everyone except a few closest members of his secret core team. He hopes most psions will see things his way when the Devourers complete the job. If some of them are idealistic and wish to fall with the humans… well, there is no help for that.

APPEARANCE

Ganendra Nathan is a fit, attractive, charismatic 48-year-old with strong Indian features. His winning smile and personality have made him the darling of both psions and humans.

Ganendra always finds time to devote to his students, young psions, and to visit non-psions and help. He devotes a lot of effort to protecting the image of the Brotherhood as an institution dedicated to the service of common humans. He also frequently makes appearances with politicians to position the Brotherhood as a force for good.

the n'ahili

The aliens known by humanity as the N'ahili are a fraud, a reflection of how humans think aliens should really look. It is human folly to think they should know how aliens look, think or behave, or even to assume that intelligence is their defining trait.

As explained above, what we call "the N'ahili" is simply one of millions of knowledge-gathering probes, specifically designed to empathize and adapt to the communications patterns, thoughts and customs of the species they are investigating at the moment. This particular probe has been studying humans for a long time before deciding how to present itself.

Every facet of the N'ahili's image has been carefully designed to give humans the appearance of a powerful, mysterious and peaceful alien species. The word "N'ahili" was chosen as an alien-sounding name that humans could pronounce. Very few humans have actually commented on the fact that if this is the aliens' true name, how come their language is based on sounds transported through air? Do the aliens have a throat sound apparatus capable of generating the sounds in the word "N'ahili?" Isn't it an amazing coincidence that out of the huge expanse of the electromagnetic spectrum the aliens we meet happen to have a language that uses the exact same frequencies and sound-waves that *we* use to speak and listen?

The aliens' own representation as ridiculous-looking "blowfish-like beings" is another invention designed for human consumption. The goal is to make them look alien but not threatening. Whatever the beings inside the probe look like, they do not look like blowfish.

The N'ahili alien ship also looks strange, but has curious details that very few have noticed. How come the ship cycles through the colors of the *human-visible* spectrum? A coincidence? A decision to fit with what humans would perceive?

Adam, the N'ahili avatar, is the ultimate representation of the aliens' goal. A perfect, attractive virtualization of a human being, capable of speaking in many tongues and understanding the language. Yet, for all those advances, Adam makes "mistakes" when speaking and sometimes delays his response for a second or two while "understanding" what was said. This is a deliberate attempt to make the probe look less powerful than it really is, making the humans believe the aliens "are making an effort" and "are not perfect."

The truth about the N'ahili is that the probe has become unhinged. Its gathering activities are finished, and it should be ready to move forward and leave the space open for the annihilating probe but it has become so emotionally attached to humans that it does not want to let them die without making an effort. Its programming forbids it to openly help them or warn them of what is to come, but it has helped them expand, and has worked behind the scenes to help them defend themselves.

Whether that will be enough or not will be seen.

the psion brotherhood

The Psion Brotherhood is a powerful organization that has significantly contributed to the success and development of humanity. Unfortunately under Ganendra Nathan, its charismatic but misguided leader, it has begun several secret initiatives that threaten to destroy everything. Most of the current activities of the Psion Brotherhood are described in the history of Chrysalis on page 133.

The Brotherhood keeps several big secrets.

The first secret is the leading clique's hidden goal of exterminating non-psions and thus "freeing" psions for the next stage in their evolution. This is the whole purpose of the Chrysalis project. Out of a total population of five million psions approximately five hundred thousand have been moved to Chrysalis. This has been kept secret by carefully doctoring assignment records.

To support Chrysalis, the Brotherhood has a Research Institute in Armstrong, the secret purpose of which is to accustom candidates before going to Chrysalis, and to develop new methods of food and development applicable to red dwarf stars.

The second big secret the Brotherhood keeps is that they actually have a way to kill Devourers with a thought. This power, called *raze*, allows them to broadcast a psionic energy blast that interferes with all Devourer thought patterns and kills them instantly. The power has been shown to act at great ranges, and intensifies when many psions use it simultaneously. No explanation as to how the power works, or why it affects completely alien forms such as Devourers, has been found. Conscious of its power, Ganendra Nathan has locked the secret of *raze* in the mind of most psions in Chrysalis by means of the *brain lock* power, and only he, along with a few trusted others, knows the *brain lock* password.

The final secret that Ganendra and very few know is that the *raze* power was not invented by them, but rather found in the two-hundred-year-old documents left by Daniel Michaels, founder of the Psion Brotherhood, as well as in the diary left by Melissa Fischer, his mysterious companion, later also partner of William Donovan, founder of the Circle, and the woman who gave the city of Melissant its name. How did a power that affects aliens no one had seen or heard of pop up in the diary of the founder of the Psion Brotherhood? No one, not even Ganendra himself, has the answer to that.

sidebar references

CHRYSALIS: LIFE ON A RED DWARF?

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- Red dwarf stars within 10 parsecs: http://solstation.com/stars/pc10rds.htm
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- The Habitability of Red Dwarf Systems: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Habitability_of_red_dwarf_systems
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- A warmer planetary haven around cool stars, as ice warms rather than cools: http://www.washington.edu/news/2013/07/18/a-warmer-planetary-haven-around-cool-stars-as-ice-warms-rather-than-cools/

the devourers

The life-annihilating probes that follow on the footsteps of the knowledge-collecting probes have no name, but have been given the threatening name of "Devourers" by the N'ahili as yet another way of influencing humans against them.

The Devourers are artificial self-replicating biological beings made within the probes using a technology far more advanced than our own. Their purpose is to keep the galaxy clean of "living infestations" and thus protect the original beings who created them.

Having been designed to destroy, Devourers have many ways of going about their business. If possible, they always attempt to fulfill their goals from space, either by planetary bombardment with energy weapons, by provoking asteroid or moon impacts, or (in the case of spacefaring races) in ship-to-ship combat. However, there is always the possibility of face-to-face encounters, and because of this the advanced biological creators in their probe ships can dynamically construct Devourer bodies tailored to the size, gravity, and biological makeup of their current enemies. There is thus no single description of what a Devourer is, as Devourers look and act in a way appropriate to fighting their enemies. In the case of humans, their current enemies, Devourers have several bodies designed for combat and slaughter in environments with Earth-like gravity. Most of these are described in the Encounters section on page 238, but you can of course create your own.

Devourers are not intelligent in the sense that it is possible for humans to hold a thinking conversation with them. They are focused and single-minded, and their only goal is to destroy. In that sense they behave more like a force of nature bent on destroying life than like an intelligent being. Devourers do not surrender, they do not fear and do not negotiate. They either kill or are killed. And they are amazingly effective at it.

SEVEN WORLDS — SHIP STATS SHEET

BASE STATS

Ship Name: Voyager
Top Accel: 10
Handling: +1
Shield Effects: 3
Crew: 1+5
Heat Radiation: +4
Jumps: 8
Weeks per Jump: 1

Abilities: NA (It's the heroes' ship!)

Toughness: 19 (12)
Coulborne Shield

FATIGUE / WOUNDS: -1 | -2 | -3 | Wrecked | -2 | -1

NOTES

Heavy Armor, Spacecraft, Improved Stabilizer. 2 Healing Pods, 6 V-World Pods. Ship's Locker contains one Light Combat Vacc Suit and one Vacc Suit Helmet for every member of the crew.

WEAPONS AND DEFENSES

# Weapon	Range	Damage	AP	RoF	Heat Points	Notes
2x Light Laser Cannons	4/8/16	3d6	6	1	+3	HW; Point Defense Laser Battery ROF: 5
2x Medium Missile Launchers	1/2/4	----	---	4	+1	HW; 4 reloads per launcher, maximum 1 nuclear
Available Ammo: 4 Kinetic Missiles (Damage: 3d6; AP: 8), 2 Nuclear Missiles (Damage: 2d10; AP: 12), 2 NNEMP Missiles (Damage: 3d6+special; AP: 10)						
2 Kinetic Cloud Projectiles (Damage; 2d4; AP: 8, special)						
6x Mine Cloud Defenses						

SEVEN WORLDS — PROJECTILE TRACKING SHEET

Ship Name: _____

Use this sheet to track the number and type of projectiles approaching your ship as well as how many rounds are left until each batch of projectiles hits. For each batch of fired projectiles, note the number of incoming projectiles in the box corresponding to their initial firing range. Cross out the boxes to the left. Each round after the ship performs defensive actions write down remaining projectiles on the next box to the right. If you run out of boxes to the right, the remaining projectiles hit!

Projectile type, if known. (Kinetic, Nuclear, Neutron, NNEMP, Coilgun, cloud, etc)	Number of Incoming Projectiles per range / round			Damage inflicted by any projectiles that hit	Comments
	Long Range	Medium Range	Short Range		
	Long Range	Medium Range	Short Range		
	Long Range	Medium Range	Short Range		
	Long Range	Medium Range	Short Range		
	Long Range	Medium Range	Short Range		
	Long Range	Medium Range	Short Range		
	Long Range	Medium Range	Short Range		

SEVEN WORLDS

Derrick
Name
Apollo
Homeworld
Beta-level Officer (Novice) | 0
Rank and Level | XP

ATTRIBUTES

AGILITY	d8
SMARTS	d6
SPIRIT	d4
STRENGTH	d6
VIGOR	d8

BASE STATS

PACE	6
CHARISMA	+1
PARRY	6 (Half Fighting)
TOUGHNESS	9(2) (Half Vigor)
MENTAL TOUGHNESS	4 (Half Spirit)

HINDRANCES

Heroic
Loyal
Death Wish (quell guilt for classmate's death)

EDGES

Military Family
Experienced Officer
Ace
Brawny
Scoundrel

WOUNDS / FATIGUE

WOUNDS: -1 -2 -3
FATIGUE: INC -2 -1

Permanent Injuries

SKILLS

d8	Fighting	d4	Repair
d6	Intimidation	d4	Knowledge (Ship Ops)
d6	Notice	d8	Shooting
d4	Persuasion		
d10	Piloting		

GEAR

ARMOR

Head:
Torso: +2/+4
Arms: +2/+4
Legs: +2/+4
Reinforced Vacc Suit (Spacesuit); WT 8

EQUIPMENT

Assistant
2 Bloodstoppers

Total WT: 15 lb | WT Limit: 30 lb | Penalty: 0

ASSISTANT

Name: Jonathan | Gender: Male | Program: 3
Personality: Serious, proactive, formal, efficient, military.
Skill Modules: 1 Level I Skill, 1 Level II Skill

d4	Notice		
d6	Persuasion		

WEAPON	RANGE	ROF	DAMAGE	AP	WT	NOTES
Enhanced Autopistol	12/24/48	1	2d6	1	4	Semi-Auto, 20 bullets, can also fire 1 explosive round (2d8, AP4, SBT)
Combat Knife	3/6/12	----	Str+d4	---	2	Cutting, piercing.
1 extra explosive round (ammo)						

PSIONIC POWER	COST	RANGE	DAMAGE/EFFECT	DURATION

SEVEN WORLDS

Duarthe
Name
Zarmina ("Gee")
Homeworld
Alpha-level Officer (Novice) | 0
Rank and Level | XP

ATTRIBUTES

AGILITY	d6
SMARTS	d8
SPIRIT	d8
STRENGTH	d6
VIGOR	d4

BASE STATS

PACE	6
CHARISMA	-2
PARRY	5 (Half Fighting)
TOUGHNESS	5(2) (Half Vigor)
MENTAL TOUGHNESS	6 (Half Spirit)

HINDRANCES

Small | Outsider | Pacifist(m)
Vow(m): Psion Vow

EDGES

Arcane Background (Psionics)
Soul Drain
Mentalist

WOUNDS: -1 -2 -3 INC
FATIGUE: -2 -1

Permanent Injuries

SKILLS

d6	Fighting	d8	Notice
d4	Healing	d8	Psionics
d6	Intimidation	d6	Shooting
d8	Investigation		
d4	Knowledge (Science)		

GEAR

ARMOR

Head:
Torso: +2/+4
Arms: +2/+4 — Reinforced Vacc Suit (Spacesuit); WT 8
Legs: +2/+4

EQUIPMENT

Assistant
2 Bloodstoppers

Total WT: 15 lb | WT Limit: 30 lb | Penalty: 0

ASSISTANT

Name: Dante | Gender: Male | Program: 3
Personality: Floating black point, obedient, slightly rebellious
Skill Modules: 1 Level I Skill, 1 Level II Skill

d4	Knowledge (Science)		
d6	Hacking		

WEAPON	RANGE	ROF	DAMAGE	AP	WT	NOTES
Enhanced Autopistol	12/24/48	1	2d6	1	4	Semi-Auto, 20 bullets, can also fire 1 explosive round (2d8, AP4, SBT)
Combat Knife	3/6/12	----	Str+d4	---	2	Cutting, piercing.
1 extra explosive round (ammo)						

PSIONIC POWER	COST	RANGE	DAMAGE/EFFECT	DURATION
Bolt	1-3	12/24/48	2d6/3d6	Instant; Against Mental Toughness
Deflection	2	Touch	-2/-4 to enemy attacks	3 (1/round)
Read Surface Thoughts	1	Smarts	Special	Instant

SEVEN WORLDS

Maricelle
Name
Nouvelle Vie
Homeworld
Alpha-level Officer (Novice) | 0
Rank and Level | XP

ATTRIBUTES

AGILITY	d6
SMARTS	d8
SPIRIT	d6
STRENGTH	d4
VIGOR	d6

BASE STATS

PACE	6
CHARISMA	-2
PARRY	5 (Half Fighting)
TOUGHNESS	7(2) (Half Vigor)
MENTAL TOUGHNESS	5 (Half Spirit)

HINDRANCES

Bad Luck (Major)
Outsider
Cautious

EDGES

Zero-G Training
Miner

WOUNDS / FATIGUE

WOUNDS: -1, -2, -3
FATIGUE: INC, -2, -1

Permanent Injuries

SKILLS

d6	Fighting	d6	Shooting
d10	Knowledge (Ship Ops)	d4	Streetwise
d4	Notice	d4	Taunt
d6	Piloting		
d8	Repair		

GEAR

ARMOR

Head:
Torso: +2/+4
Arms: +2/+4 — Reinforced Vacc Suit (Spacesuit); WT 8
Legs: +2/+4

EQUIPMENT

Assistant
2 Bloodstoppers

Total WT: 15 lb | WT Limit: 30 lb | Penalty: 0

ASSISTANT

Name: Papa | Gender: Male | Program: 3
Personality: Image of dead father, caring, loving, never angry
Skill Modules: 3 Level I Skills

d4	Knowledge (Science)	d4	Investigation
d4	Hacking		

WEAPON	RANGE	ROF	DAMAGE	AP	WT	NOTES
Enhanced Autopistol	12/24/48	1	2d6	1	4	Semi-Auto, 20 bullets, can also fire 1 explosive round (2d8, AP4, SBT)
Combat Knife	3/6/12	----	Str+d4	---	2	Cutting, piercing.
1 extra explosive round (ammo)						

PSIONIC POWER	COST	RANGE	DAMAGE/EFFECT	DURATION

SEVEN WORLDS

Seela Atherton
Name

Concordia
Homeworld

Alpha-level Officer (Novice) | 0
Rank and Level | XP

ATTRIBUTES

AGILITY	d8
SMARTS	d6
SPIRIT	d4
STRENGTH	d6
VIGOR	d6

BASE STATS

PACE	6
CHARISMA	+2
PARRY	5 (Half Fighting)
TOUGHNESS	7(2) (Half Vigor)
MENTAL TOUGHNESS	4 (Half Spirit)

HINDRANCES

Zero-G Sickness | Death Wish (What happened to Aaron?)

Quirk(m): Always neat&clean, even when disguised

EDGES

Acrobat
Attractive
Diplomat

N · 5 · 10 · 15 · S · 25 · 30 · 35 · V · 45 · 50 · 55 · H · 65 · 70 · 75 · L · 90 · 100 · 110

WOUNDS / FATIGUE

WOUNDS	-1
	-2
	-3
FATIGUE	INC
	-2
	-1

Permanent Injuries

SKILLS

d4	Fighting	d8	Shooting
d6	Investigation	d8	Stealth
d4	Notice		
d6	Persuasion		
d6	Hacking		

GEAR

ARMOR

Head:
Torso: +2/+4
Arms: +2/+4 — Reinforced Vacc Suit (Spacesuit); WT 8
Legs: +2/+4

EQUIPMENT

Assistant
2 Bloodstoppers

Total WT: 15 lb | WT Limit: 30 lb | Penalty: 0

ASSISTANT

Name: Chloe | Gender: Female | Program: 3

Personality: "best friend," confidant, attractive, nosy, inappropriate

Skill Modules: 1 Level I Skill, 1 Level II Skill

d4	Persuasion		
d6	Hacking		

WEAPON	RANGE	ROF	DAMAGE	AP	WT	NOTES
Enhanced Autopistol	12/24/48	1	2d6	1	4	Semi-Auto, 20 bullets, can also fire 1 explosive round (2d8, AP4, SBT)
Combat Knife	3/6/12	----	Str+d4	---	2	Cutting, piercing.
1 extra explosive round (ammo)						

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