

THE STYGIAN CYCLE IV: TURBULENCE



1.

SERIOUSLY? FREE-TO-PLAY?

Imagination is powerful. To quote Albert Einstein, "Imagination is more important than knowledge. For knowledge is limited to all we now know and understand, while imagination embraces the entire world, and all there ever will be to know and understand." Well said.

We believe in the power of imagination and how it creates wonder and inspiration. Roleplaying games are one of the few things that can do what they do. Some might say they are the last frontier for wild imagination and creativity. We certainly believe so. That's why we make roleplaying games – to help make that possible.

Making roleplaying games the way we have hasn't helped us spark imagination the way we'd hoped. We want to try something different.

First, we're adopting the Creative Commons license, so that you can contribute to the game in a meaningful way. That way, we can support you in your awesome ideas and help you get them out to your fellow players.

Then, we're going to give away electronic copies of the core book for free. We've all bought games that didn't end up working out for us. That's why we're giving this to you for free – so that you can figure out if you like the game before you decide to spend money on it.

If you like The Void and you play it, we're going to put out a bunch of cool material at very reasonable prices. We're going to do it buffet-style, so you can pick and choose what works best for you and your group. Buying these supplements supports us making more cool material, along with the rest of your fellow players.

After all, life's too short to waste time and money on games you don't like.

- The Staff of WildFire



CREDITS

Created By

Written By

Page Design

Cover Art

christopher DORN robert GLASS matthew GRAU fraser MCKAY mike VAILLANCOURT

christopher DORN

IP/Line Developer matthew GRAU

mike VAILLANCOURT

trevor CLAXTON

Interior Illustration mike VAILLANCOURT

Production

matthew GRAU

Thanks To

The WildFire Crew – Dr. Bob Arens, Steve Pitcher, Travis Wickline, Chris & Laurel Dorn

http://infrno.net – the place to play (and playtest) roleplaying games on the internet.

http://fearthevoid.com Forums, Information, Downloads

WildFire LLC 23321 SE 291st St. Black Diamond, WA 98010 www.wildfirellc.com

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Welcome to *Turbulence*, the fourth adventure in the epic story of *The Stygian Cycle*. This is a ready-to-run adventure that can be part of Organized Play.

This adventure is for Level 1 Characters, which are those that have received 10 Advances or less. If your Characters are more advanced than that, you will need to adjust things to be appropriately challenging.

This adventure is self-contained, though it is designed to set Characters up for the next adventure in *The Stygian Cycle*. It involves the Characters taking R&R aboard a pleasure cruise, which becomes a target for a bloody cult sacrifice.

Naturally, these adventures are intended for Gamemasters. However, as a player, you may find the way the setting of *The Void* is brought to life in these adventures useful for your visualization of your Character and game. You probably don't want to memorize the adventures if you plan to play them – it'll only ruin your enjoyment.

This adventure assumes that your group is composed of Wardens. If it isn't, the adventure can still work, but requires some adjustments before you run it.

The Stygian Cycle The Void Organized Play adventures will take you through the most significant events in the solar system, as designed. This doesn't mean that you won't come up with awesome and significant adventures on your own, but these are the ones we designed to hit the high points based on what we've created.

Soundtrack

We've created a soundtrack for *The Void* on the popular *Spotify* platform. It is composed of dark ambient music, designed to provide an eerie background for your game. We will be updating over time, to expand the repertoire of music and moods. If you're interested, check our Facebook page for links – facebook.com/TheVoidCalls.

Open Space

This adventure takes place entirely onboard a pleasure cruise. The Characters will be in a simulated 1G environment, due to energized deck plating. If for some reason the artificial gravity is turned off, the Characters will be operting in 0G – the Freefall Skill will be necessary.

Plot Points

In this adventure, you'll have a chain of related evidence that will be the subject of investigation by the players, the bulk of which together will unravel the mystery for the Characters and put them on the path of resolution. Each piece of this chain can be learned through Plot Points.

Once in the appropriate place to earn Plot Points, the Characters must simply have the resources necessary to gain them and they do. They don't have to make a series of Tests, hoping to succeed at all of the Tests in order to glean the clues or information. To determine if the Characters have the necessary resources, simply total up the requisite dice pools from the Skills + Attributes necessary. If it is equal to or greater than the Plot Point score, they succeed. Easily gained information requires four or five Plot Points, information that requires some expertise requires six or seven Plot Points, and information that is difficult to glean requires nine or ten Plot Points.

For example, the Characters wish to search the guarters of a missing computer technician in Salacia. The key information they need to learn there is that the place has been completely wiped clean (sterilized) and that the hard drive in the dwelling's computer hasn't just been erased, it has been replaced. This requires the Investigate and Computer Skills, but not particularly high levels of either. The GM determines that the Investigate portion rates a four, as does the Computer portion. If the players enter the scene, spend the time, and have a total pool of points from their Investigate + Awareness and Computer + Cleverness ratings that each equals or exceeds four, together they glean all the information there is to gain.

Sometimes players won't have the necessary resources at hand. In many cases, they'll know that they've come to an important juncture and be aware of the resources they are missing. They can simply go away, gather those resources, and return. If they cannot and

Got Feedback?

We're all roleplayers here. When you're playing *The Void*, you're going to have feedback – whether it be questions, comments, or the awesome stuff you came up with while you're playing. We want to hear it. You've got two options. You can just fire off an e-mail to feedback@ fearthevoid.com. Alternatively, you can jump into the pool on our forums and engage in conversation with both us and other players. Find them at *http:// wildfire-community.com/forums*. it's important they gain the information, have them make Tests using the appropriate Skill at whatever Difficulty seems sensible. If they succeed, they get the information. If not, they'll miss it – or just have them spend 2 Tension Points to Get a Clue.

Rules for Organized Play

The great advantage of Organized Play is that players (and GMs) have the flexibility to use their Characters in different groups. Perhaps they're playing an event at a local hobby store or at a convention, they're playing in two groups, or their group dissolves or moves on to another game and they want to keep playing.

Using the guidelines here, players can keep their treasured Characters going through *The Stygian Cycle* without restriction.

Level 1 Characters

This adventure is designed for Level 1 Characters, which means they have earned up to 10 Advances.

If players have been playing *The Void* outside of *The Stygian Cycle*, they may have enough Advances to be considered a higher Level. If this is the case, you'll need to bump up the difficulty and foes in this adventure in order to make it appropriately challenging.

Adventure Rewards

Characters completing this adventure should receive 3 Advances. You can give these out over sessions, or you can give them all out at the end.

Verification

Since players can travel between groups within the Organized Play of *The Stygian Cycle*, any kind of Character advancement needs to be tracked and verified by the GM. This is to make sure that everyone stays honest from group to group.

The simplest method of verification is to note on the back of their Character Sheet the number of Advances awarded, any special gear the Character acquired, as well as the name of the adventure and date or dates played. Please include your name and write in your own handwriting – don't let the players do this themselves. If you're comfortable with it, you may also include your e-mail address.

Since mobile devices are commonplace, an even more formal way to verify advancement is to post the above details to the player's *Facebook* Wall. This creates a digital record that is less easily disputed, if it ever comes to that.

Character Death

If a Character dies, the player shouldn't be handicapped in terms of playing in *The Stygian Cycle*. As per the rules found on p. 225 of *The Void Core*, have the player create a new Character with the same number of Advances as the Character who has passed on.

However, have that player keep the deceased Character with the new one, so that all Advances have been tracked and verified for purposed of Organized Play.

Suspected Cheating

Cheating is poor sportsmanship, most especially in roleplaying games. Most people simply don't, since roleplaying games are about the story.

If you encounter a player who you suspect has cheated, ask them to be more detailed about how they received their Advancements or gear. If they can recount the events of their adventure and they make sense, you may choose to let them participate.

However, if a Character has extremely unusual advancements – most especially in terms of gear – or cannot satisfactorily recount where they received them, then you have several choices. You can let them play as is, and adapt the challenges for that Character to make them more difficult. You can also ask them if they will play without the suspect advancement for the duration of your game. Finally, you can simply not allow them into your game.

Unverified advancement can be suspect, but groups can often be too excited at the end of a session to properly record things.

In any event, make the judgment call that works best for your group.

Playing Outside the OP

Enthusiastic players may wish to play adventures that are not part of *The Stygian Cycle* in between Organized Play adventures. That's awesome and no one should be penalized for that.

However, if anyone wants to bring in such a Character, they should have all outside advancement verified by their GM, just as if they were playing within *The Stygian Cycle*. The Characters are being sent on a new vacation, since the last one turned out so badly. They are booked for a pleasure cruise aboard the Aristocracy-class yacht, the Princess of Titan, along with nine other passengers, plus the crew.

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While they expect a luxurious trip, there are cultists on board who have a different plan.

Adventure Synopsis Turbulence has three distinct Acts, as the Characters try to regain some control of the ship, expose cultists, and try to prevent further murders of the passengers – and possibly themselves.

Act I

In this first Act, the Characters begin their pleasure cruise. However, when awakened from A/D Stasis, they discover that the crew has been murdered and most critical doors on the ship have been welded shut. Furthermore, they are way off course and out of any lane that might have other ships traveling through it. They are trapped and the worst is yet to come.

Act II

The Characters begin to explore the ship and must deal with multiple murders, as well as the interpersonal conflicts of the freaked out passengers. They discover that magic is afoot, as one of the passengers' head explodes all over them. The Characters labor to discover the cultists among them. Finally, an inbound ship is discovered – though it is of cultist origin.

Act III

The cultists continue to murder passengers as the ship arrives. The players must find a way to rally the paranoid passengers to defend against the arriving cultists and find a way to get back to civilization. Further magic hounds them, as more begin to die in a gruesome fashion.

ACT 1: RUDE AWAKENING

Goals: To introduce the Characters to their luxury cruise, to awaken them from A/D Stasis to the crisis at hand, and to have them find the sigils painted on all the grav couches.

Setting: The Princess of Titan, a luxury cruise liner

Cast: See NPCs, on p. 22.

The adventure presumes that the Characters have left Ganymede after the events in *The House Always Wins*. If they saved the tourists on Ganymede, then this is the Warden's way of getting them a new vacation after the last one was interrupted. If they let the tourists die, they've been forced to take a vacation. In any event, they've been treated to an all-expenses paid five-day cruise through Saturnine space aboard a luxury liner.

However, the Characters can end up on the cruise from anywhere. Just tailor it to their last location and have reason for them to take a vacation together. Given the nature of the cruise, the Characters will not be allowed to pack any serious armaments. Pistols and combat knives are about it, and they must be secured in the cargo bay during acceleration and deceleration. During the rest of the time, the Characters are expected to keep their weapons safely locked up in their staterooms.

The cruise will take a while. It will take 50 days for the ship to reach Saturn. The first ten days will be spent in stasis, though the crew will awaken after seven and prep the ship. The passengers will then enjoy three weeks cruising through Saturnine space, before doing the reverse to go home. They'll awaken after ten days to instead discover a crisis.

In any event, this is supposed to be personal time for the Characters. After all, what could possibly go wrong with a simple pleasure cruise?

Scene l: Broken Alarm Clock

What no one knows is that a vicious cult has targeted the ship. The Children of the Void plan to sacrifice the passengers to their dark space god – for more on S'shlosuuma and its cult, see Secrets of the Void. If one of the Characters has the Darkness Magnet Disadvantage, blame it on them. The cultists make their first move while the Characters are blissfully in stasis.

Prior to embarking, one of the cultists slipped on board the ship and marked the grav couches with an arcane sigil. These determine the order in which the passengers will die.

The infiltrator also hacked the A/D Stasis system, awakening the cultists before everyone else. They destroyed the Crew's grav couches and killed them. Then, the cultists took the vessel out of shipping lanes and planetary orbital paths. Worse yet, communications and both drives have been sabotaged, and the engineering and cargo bays have been sealed. The Characters are totally isolated.

The cultists have since climbed back into their grav couches to wake up with the rest of the passengers, concealing their identities.

The cultists plan to murder each remaining passenger in such a gruesome way that the deaths instill terror in the survivors. Their sacrifices power a ritual that will eventually begin to snuff out those next in line. This will be especially tough if one of the Character's number comes up.

Read the following to your players:

Suddenly, you can't breathe! Wait. Goo? Right. Waking from A/D Stasis is rarely easy. As the grav couch drains, you feel like something isn't right. When the door opens, you find all the other passengers in the same boat as you. It's the smell that tips you off. Acrid, like electronics on fire. Down, at the end of the couches, the crew couches have been melted somehow. There's no way they survived, if they were in there. But what's really strange is that the couches around them are untouched, and there's no sign of a fire.

The Characters are now wet, unarmed, and standing in their underwear. Some might check out the melted grav couches and some will be more interested in getting their bearings. They'll probably do both.

Scene 2: Grav Couches

The destroyed crew couches are definitely a point of interest.

Read the following to your players:

The crew couches are mounted near the door that leads to the bridge. The polymer windows are nearly melted away, as are the steel and ceramic support structures. The grav couch is a twisted wreck with burned edges. There's a foul smell coming from the couches, which grows more intense the closer you get.

Investigation: The Smell Plot Points Earned By:

Cleverness + Science: Life

Characters who know something about chemistry might notice something distinct about the smell.

 4 Plot Points – The smell is familiar to you. It is similar to a new form of acid that is being developed.

....

6 Plot Points – The effects seen here are not consistent with the effects of that new acid.

Investigation: The Couches Plot Points Earned By: • Awareness + Investigate

Characters will want to check out the melted grav couches.

- 4 Plot Points The crew couches all have a crudely drawn symbol etched into their bases. The symbols have been damaged by whatever melted them. Each of the symbols on the crew couches is slightly different.
- 6 Plot Points All of the other grav couches, including theirs, has likewise been marked. Again, each symbol is slightly different from the others.

Investigation: The Couches Plot Points Earned By: • Cleverness + Occult

Once discovered, Characters with the Occult Skill may want to check out the symbols.

 6 Plot Points – A wave of nausea hits as you inspect a grav couch near the back. The mark there hurts to look at.

Scene 3: Bearings

Getting their bearings is something most players will immediately do. Read the following to your players:

Only the emergency lights are on, leading you to believe something

has damaged the ship. Strangely, no alarms sound.

There are nine other passengers, not including the crew. You got a sense of them as you were boarding.

Saltzman is a union dock worker. The Nguyen's, Amelia and Warren, are recently married and on their honeymoon. Dr. Mander is from Saturn space.

The latin one in the back's name is Fabricio, if you heard correctly. Sancho Reyes was the one that kept blathering about server loads and video games until he was put under.

Finally are Natalie and Roxy. Roxy is an entertainer and, for the right price, you suspect she'll entertain you in a special way. Natalie, on the other hand, is woman who has seen the the great message from beyond and has taken it upon herself to become the prophet of the new dawn.

You may want to pause here to give the Characters a chance to check in with the other passengers. They don't know anything, and are probably more freaked out than the Characters.

In reference to the map of the ship, they awaken in the grav couch berths which are located in the room just above the stage (Area 5), and also built into the wall of the starboard crew hallway (Area 3).

When they're done, or when someone is hot to get back to their sidearm, read the following to your players: Leaving the couch bays, you step into the hallway that runs through the first bank of crew quarters to the bridge. The ship seems too quiet. The engines aren't thrumming like they would at transit speed, and you don't feel like you're moving.

On the opposite walls are the crew's quarters, undisturbed and locked. Towards the end of the hall is a small cargo area, which sports three new sloppy spot welds. It's been intentionally sealed.

Next to your grav couches are the small lockers in which you stored your clothes and personal items before acceleration. As you get dressed, you notice that only your clothes remain, though the lock doesn't look like it's been damaged.

The Children of the Void have stolen any and all personal effects. If the Characters stowed weapons or ID's, the cultists will be wise to federal agents being on board, and are now better armed.

If the Characters check, they discover that the crew quarters have also been welded shut, though not as obviously. They don't have any tools that will allow them to force the doors right now. Otherwise, the hall looks identical to when they embarked.

ACT |2:

UNWELCOME PASSENGERS

Goals: To have the Characters discover the remains of the crew, to heighten

interpersonal tension, to reveal the power of the sigils, to murder more passengers, to reveal the approaching cultist ship, and to give the Characters a chance to unmask the cultists.

Setting: The Princess of Titan, a luxury cruise liner

Cast: See NPCs, on p. 22.

Scene 'H: The Bridge Since the bridge is on the way to any other part of the ship, it is likely the players will want to check it out. Also, it is the first major door they've found that isn't welded shut.

Read the following to your players:

Opening the bulkhead door to the bridge, your fears are realized. The crew is here, unmoving. Blood runs from their eyes, dried like dark tears, as they sit or slump over their work stations.

Seeing this requires an Average Horror Check. Assume that at least one of the passengers freaks out, probably Amelia, and choose a Horror Effect for her. If the Characters don't react at all, some of the passengers will pick up in it and become suspicious.

Running for Gear

Most players are going to want to run straight for their guns. This adventure has been designed for them to test their ability to cooperate and survive without the benefit of their Character's weapons and equipment. Prior to entering their grav couches, the passengers had to stow their gear in the secure cargo hold – it's standard operation procedure for safey during acceleration. The Children of Chaos have sealed both the cargo hold and the cargo hold (Area 13) and engineering (Area 16), in order to confine the passengers to the more pedestrian areas of the ship.

In short, the players are going to have to be creative, however frustrating that may be. If your players are getting heated over this fact, you may allow them to execute a clever plan to reacquire this gear, but later when things get really bad.

Investigation: Inspecting the Crew *Plot Points Earned By:*

Cleverness + Medical: Physical

Inspecting the crew, there is no obvious cause of death other than the bleeding eyes.

 4 Plot Points – Each of the dead crew members displays a slight discoloration of the fingernails and tongue. They have been poisoned by an unknown agent, and it is unlikely that it is the cause of the crew's deaths – there are no other hemorrhagic symptoms other than the bleeding eyes.

6 Plot Points – The food is poisoned. There may be a chance that other food on board has been poisoned as well.

Investigation: Internal Cameras Plot Points Earned By:

Cleverness + Computers

Like all ships, this liner is equipped with a basic bank of security video cameras. The players will likely want to check the footage, to see if it holds any clues. However, the camera systems have been sabotaged, but there is a chance the Characters can retrieve already stored information.

- 6 Plot Points The most recent recording is from the night prior to launch. An indistinct figure enters the ship alone, doing something to the bases of the grav couches.
- 8 Plot Points While they can't get a clear image of the perpetrator, they can resolve the resolution enough to get a bead on a solid build and gender. The perpetrator is male, and has the same basic build as Warren, Fabricio, and Sancho. If any of the Characters matches this, include that information as well.

Investigation: Ship Systems Plot Points Earned By:

- Cleverness + Computers
- Cleverness + Engineer (any)

Investigating the remaining ship's systems will yield the following:

- 4 Plot Points The only major system still on-line is life support. The controls show that engines and communications are off-line, and that the ship is adrift. Astrogation is likewise off-line, so they have no way to determine where they are.
- 8 Plot Points While incoming communications are completely fried, someone with the right skills might be able to repair outgoing communications. This requires

success at a Hard Cleverness + Engineering: Electrical. Even if they get a message out, they won't be able to direct it, nor will they hear if they get a reply. However, it's better than nothing.

Investigation: Inspecting the Area *Plot Points Earned By:*

- Awareness + Notice
- Awareness + Investigate
- 8 Plot Points There are scratches on the grate of a duct near the floor. The welder used by the Children of the Void is shoved 10 yd/m down this air duct.

The welder is very low on fuel and will need to be used sparingly. It can burn through 4 welds before emptying.

Scene 5: The Ship

Gathering everything they can from the bridge, the Characters will want to take stock of the ship.

The doors to engineering and the cargo hold, along with the shuttle bay, have been thoroughly welded shut.

Otherwise, they have access to the rest of the ship. The Character's berths are all in the high-class rooms (Area 11). Nothing appears out of place, though, except that all the passengers' possessions are locked in the hold – except for one of Fabricio's stashes, which he won't advertise. The Character can gather gear, however, from the galley or the theater (which doubles as an emergency med bay). If the players come up with some good ideas for

scavenging gear, reward them for it – or make them spend Tension Points.

Since someone will likely think of it, all the environmental suits are locked up in either engineering or the cargo hold.

Investigation: Engineering Plot Points Earned By:

- Awareness + Notice
- Awareness + Investigate

Due to the thorough welding job, it's going to take some serious work to get into engineering. The air ducts are too small to climb through, so that's not an option.

The only operational welder outside engineering or the cargo bay can be found in the air duct on the bridge. If used, it will cut through into engineering – if someone knows how to use it. This requires success at a Hard Cleverness + Engineering (any) or Mechanic Test. However, it's going to make a lot of noise and take at least 4 hours to cut through – and will use up the welder's remaining fuel.

The engines are repairable, if someone can get in. In fact, this may be one of the only ways to ultimately survive this adventure. Don't be afraid to reward clever plans.

Investigation: The Sigils, Pt II Plot Points Earned By:

Cleverness + Occult

Once the Characters have a better idea of their situation, along with some tools, they may want to go back and mess around with the sigils once again.

 6 Plot Points – The sigils appear to be in some kind of order, probably numerically.

These symbols are numerical, sequenced according to the order in which the passengers and Characters are slated to die.

Investigation: Disturbing the Sigils

Disturbing the sigils is not a good idea, but the players won't know that until they've tried. They now have some kinds of tools, so they can attempt this however they choose.

Each sigil is tuned to the person who occupied the grav couch on which it is inscribed. Damaging or removing the sigil will immediately affect that person, and it won't be subtle. While the process is unpleasant and painful, it is a way to save oneself from the magics afoot.

25% Damaged or Less

The victim will become dizzy and disoriented. For the rest of the adventure, the person will always have an Initiative result of 0 Successes, and does not need to Test Reaction.

26% to 50% Damaged

In addition to the effects above, the victim will have difficulties with balance, tripping and falling down a lot. He suffers a -2 Die Penalty to any Tests that use Grace. He also begins to bleed a little from his eyes and ears.

51% to 75% Damaged

In addition to the effect above, the victim will begin to suffer excruciating abdominal pain. He suffers a -4 Die Penalty to all Tests, and begins to suffer from hallucinations and delusions.

76% to 100% Damaged

Once the sigil is mostly or completely destroyed, the victim will immediately drop into a coma, bleeding from the eyes. No amount of treatment can help this. When he awakens after about a half hour, he gains one Madness Level and any accompanying disorders. This is unavoidable. However, he can longer be affected by the cult's magic.

Scene 6: Later

All that's left now is to explore and eventually get some shut eye. The Characters may choose to let the passengers wander on their own, or try to keep everyone together.

As You Will

It will be very difficult to keep everyone together without physically wrangling them. People will wander off, as they always do. After all, there doesn't appear to be any other immediate threat than the damage to the ship.

This is a great opportunity for the Characters to interact with the other passengers and get know who is who. It is also an ideal time to start figuring out who is suspicious, as well as to bring to light the personality conflicts that may already exist.

Secretly, Adam Saltzman will lead Warren Nguyen to a secluded part of the ship and murder him quietly. He slits Warren's throat, using the arterial spray to paint a crude version of the Sigil on the wall of the killing room. Adam will also collect a hidden bag of his own blood, spattering it on the walls and pooling it on the floor amidst Warren's blood.

Finally, he will draw a small sigil in his blood, which will trigger Warren's grav couch to burn.

It's up to you to choose the best place for this to happen, depending upon what your players are doing. This needs to happen out of sight, somewhere where the murder won't be immediately noticed – Adam has to go clean himself up. The fuel processing station is a good place (Area 15), as long as no one is trying to cut into engineering, or deep in the luxury suites (Area 12).

Late into the night, one of the passengers will discover the bloody scene and cry out in alarm.

Read the following to your players:

Someone just screamed. On your feet in an instant, you run down the passages collecting the others. The scream came from the back of the ship (or the suites). Right away, you see a bloody trail leading into the room. Splayed out in an unnatural pose, blood everywhere, Warren Nguyen lies dead. His throat has clearly been slit.

The walls are covered with spatters of blood, and the floor is

drenched in it. Even without an examination, there's too much blood here for just one person. It appears as if someone used Warren's arterial spray to paint an X with a line through it on one of the walls.

This requires an Average Horror Test. Amelia will completely lose it and need to be restrained. The rest of the passengers are now freaked out, because someone is still here and has killed again.

Circling the Wagons

It will be hard to use authority to keep the group together, as the Characters official identification is missing. However, the logic of safety in numbers may not be lost on the passengers. Don't push for this option – let your players work for it, if they can convince the problem passengers, such as Fabricio and Blessing, to stay put.

This is a great opportunity for the Characters to interact with the other passengers and get know who is who. It is also an ideal time to start figuring out who is suspicious, as well as to bring to light the personality conflicts that may already exist.

Since the cultists can't isolate anyone for sacrifice, they will begin to activate the sigils. Late in the night, Warren Nguyen will meet a gruesome end – in front of everyone.

Late in the night, when things have settled down, read the following to your players:

Gathered in the dining hall, the mood is getting ugly and people

are turning on each other. It could be from fear, or from a need to vindicate themselves from being responsible for all this. Social groups have started to form, with unsubtle glances of suspicion exchanged between them.

Suddenly, you hear a crash. Fabricio, Natalie, and Amelia rush to try to help Warren. He's on the ground, convulsing, blood trickling from his mouth. He may have bitten his tongue in his seizure.

The social groups in question are:

- the Characters
- Warren and Emelia
- Fabricio, Blessing, and Sancho
- Natalie, Roxy, Adam, and Kashi

The Characters have time to rush to Warren's aid. They can also enlist Dr. Mander to help, if they know she's a doctor. The first person to touch Warren will notice that his temperature is extremely high.

Let the tension build for a second before reading this to your players:

Warren is very hot to the touch, and you swear you see steam rising from his profusely sweating body. Sudden, his convulsions stop. Warren sits up, blood streaming out of his red eyes – and boiling away on his cheeks. He tries to scream, but nothing but more blood sprays out. He reaches out desperately for his wife...

... and then his head explodes like an overripe melon. Hot blood and

chunks of skull and brains spray across the room, missing no one.

A Hard Horror Test will now be required. Amelia is already out of commission, but the others run the risk of losing it.

People will also now most likely be hurt – see They Pop When You Cook 'Em below. Bandages and medical attention will be required.

They Pop When You Cook 'Em

When the cultists activate a sigil, the effects are immediate, gruesome, and fatal.

The victim will begin to sweat, complaining of the heat. That sweat will quickly soak through his clothes and he will become short of breath. Soon after, his body temperature will rise so high that steam appears to be coming off his body. Blood will begin to boil from their eyes, ears, and mouth. The blood hisses with heat, burning anything it touches – touching the victim will result in third degree burns at this point (2d6 damage, armor cannot reduce).

Finally, his head will explode like a watermelon hit with a sledgehammer, spraying hot blood and brain matter in a 3 yd/m radius. Anyone hit by the remains must succeed at a Hard Horror Test in order to remain composed. Additionally, those hit will suffer second degree burns – 2d6 to 4d6 damage, varies according to quantity, armor does not reduce.

Scene 7:

And Another One Gone If Warren Hardy is quietly killed by Adam, use this scene to show the effects of the murderous cultist magic. If Warren exploded in the dining hall instead, you can can skip this scene.

Late in the night, when things have settled down after finding Warren's body, read the following to your players:

Gathered in the dining hall, the mood is getting ugly and people are turning on each other. It could be from fear, or from a need to vindicate themselves from being responsible for all this. Social groups have started to form, with unsubtled glances of suspicion exchanged between them.

Suddenly, you hear a crash. Natalie rushes to try to help Roxy. She's on the ground, convulsing, blood trickling from her mouth. She may have bitten her tongue in her seizure.

Again, the social groups in question are:

- the Characters
- Warren and Emelia
- Fabricio, Blessing, and Sancho
- Natalie, Roxy, Adam, and Kashi

The Characters have time to rush to Roxy's aid. They can also enlist Dr. Mander to help, if they know she's a doctor. The first person to touch Rachael will notice that her temperature is extremely high. Let the tension build for a second before reading this to your players:

Roxy is very hot to the touch, and you swear you see steam rising from her profusely sweating body. Sudden, her convulsions stop. Rachael sits up, blood streaming out of her red eyes – and boiling away on her cheeks. She tries to scream, but nothing but more blood sprays out. She reaches out desperately for her sister...

...and then her head explodes like an overripe melon. Hot blood and chunks of skull and brains spray across the room, missing no one.

A Hard Horror Test will now be required. Natalie is already out of commission, but the others run the risk of losing it.

People will also now most likely be hurt – see They Pop When You Cook 'Em above. Bandages and medical attention will be required.

Scene 8: The Cultists' Ship

When the Characters get everyone to settle down again, they'll need to move away from the horrifying dining hall. The theater/med bay (Area 9) is a logical choice. Feel free to modify if your players move elsewhere.

Now is a great time to bring out more of those NPC personality conflicts. Some of them may be in conflict with the Characters. Everyone is frayed and scared, so it'll be impossible to keep the lid on the interpersonal tension. The Characters may even think they're facing down a mutiny.

Then, read the following to your players:

No one wants to go anywhere near the dining hall now, so you've moved to the theater. The sound dampening in the room provides a much needed moment of peace.

Just as you have a chance to collect your thoughts, you hear a soft ping in the distance. It's coming from the bridge.

It's likely the Characters will head out to find what's going on. When they do, read the following to your players:

The alert is indeed coming from the bridge. Proximity detectors, which miraculously survived, have detected an incoming ship.

If the Characters have already repaired communications and sent a signal, they may believe that help is coming. However, if they haven't, they may suspect something is amiss.

If the Characters choose to share this with the rest of the passengers, most will be relieved as they believe rescue will soon be here.

Regardless, the rest of this scene is likely to involve the Characters taking security measures. They may be facing a hostile boarding action, and the Characters will need to enlist the passengers to carry out any kind of real plan. Passengers will be more or less enthusiastic based on the relationships they've developed with the Characters so far.

ACT 3: OUT OF THE FRYING PAN

Goals: To have the cultists complete a final sacrifice, potentially to activate the remaining sigils, to deal with the approaching cultist transport, and to find a way back to safety.

Setting: The Princess of Titan, a luxury cruise liner, possibly the cultist transport

Cast: See NPCs, on p. 22.

Scene 9: More Death If the players have somehow determined the identities of all the cultists, you can skip this scene – unless somehow one of those cultists is still at large.

Because one of the previous deaths, either Warren or Roxy, was not physically performed, there is greater pressure to make the next killing more terrifying for the victim. The cultists need to carve someone up personally.

Plan in place, you wait nervously as the ship prepares to begin docking procedures. It's flying without lights, so only a blacked out area in the stars gives you any indication it's there.

The first thump of the docking clamp sounds and everyone jumps. Then Fabricio asks, "Where's Amelia?" You look around to discover she's gone, and she's not alone. Kashi and Sancho are also missing.

Let the players decide what they want to do here. If they sit tight, Amelia will be killed and the remaining sigils activated. If they choose to search for Amelia, read the following to your players:

You head out into the ship, no idea where the missing passengers might be. You head back towards the galley, and see Sancho standing in the doorway. You're about to ask him what's going on when he turns, ritual dagger in hand.

If the players try to speak to Sancho, or wait to see what he does next, Sancho will say nothing. He shakily holds the dagger, as a woman's scream erupts from the room behind him.

If the players can succeed at a Hard Awareness + Notice Test, they'll see Fabricio at the last minute. They can try to stop him, or they can let Fabricio barrel into Sancho as intended – apparently the man is a hero after all.

If the players choose to act in a more physical way, roll Initiative for everyone, including Fabricio. Players can make the same Test to notice Fabricio as above. On his turn, he'll barrel into Sancho as intended, unless stopped.

Once Sancho is dealt with, read the following to your players:

Rushing through the door, you see Amelia held down on a table by

Kashi. She's trying to stab her with another ritual dagger, but Amelia is fighting her off for the moment.

If the Characters want to make this physical, which they likely will, have everyone make an Initiative Test. If Kashi beats both Amelia and the Characters, she will stab Amelia and do an appropriate amount of damage – this may not kill her.

Otherwise, Kashi is likely outnumbered, but will fight to the death.

If the Characters have somehow acquired firearms, they'll be shooting into close quarters and have a chance of hitting Amelia in the process. See Guns in Close Quarters, *The Void* Core, p. 125.

Though time is tight, the Characters may want to ask Amelia what happened. Kashi suggested that she help the doctor gather some medical supplies, in case the passengers were hurt. She was acting oddly, so Amelia was able to duck Kashi's first attempt to stab her. Shortly thereafter, the Characters arrived.

Activated Sigils

If the Characters don't prevent Amelia's death, the murder will be enough to activate the remaining sigils. Determine the order of death between the passengers and the Characters at random.

Every half hour after Amelia's death, one of the sigils will activate and kill the next person in line. See the section They Pop When You Cook 'Em on p. 17. If one of the Characters is set to suffer this fate, have them spend a Fate Point to survive. He just gets lucky, though he does heat up and take 2d6 damage (armor won't reduce).

There are two ways to survive the cascading series of deaths that will claim both the Characters and passengers. The first is to destroy the sigils on the remaining grav couches. This will take both time and effort, and people will get sick and pass out in the process. Both are a problem. The second is to leave the ship. The vessel is the ritual space for the spell, and the magic won't work outside its confines.

Scene 10: Finish

Once the attempted murder of Amelia is taken care of, read the following to your players:

You feel another thunk ripple through the ship. The unknown vessel has nearly formed hard-lock.

The unknown ship is about to dock and who knows what's going to walk through that airlock. The Character's ship is in pretty bad shape, so they don't have a lot of options.

We've presented three possible options here, but your players may come up with others. Use your best judgment on how these surprises might play out.

If there are still cultists unidentified, then play up the paranoia. The passengers are going to have a hard time trusting each other and this will present a serious problem. They may even attempt to harm each other.

Repel Boarders

If the Characters did not repair outgoing communications, there is no way for the cultists to warn their arriving pals. It is entirely possible for the Characters to ambush the arriving cultists.

However, if they did repair outgoing communications to send a distress call, the cultists (unless all dead) can warn their pals about the ambush. The cultists will step out of the airlock ready for trouble.

If the players choose to interrogate Sancho, they may be able to learn whether or not a transmission was sent, as well as what they expect from the arriving ship.

There are a number of cultists equal to one per player, plus one for every two surviving passenger. Unfortunately, they have guns and it's likely the Characters don't.

If the Characters can successfully ambush the cultists, they automatically gain Initiative and attack from surprise for the first turn of combat. The combat will play out normally after that.

If the Characters survive, they'll be able to commandeer the cultist transport and can head back to the Umbrella under their own steam.

Fix the Engines

If the Characters started cutting through to engineering early in this adventure, they'll break through before the cultist ship is detected. They can attempt to repair the engines. However, the damage is extensive and any engineer will basically be jury-rigging the whole system. This requires success at a Hard Engineer: Basic Drive Test. The ship will then limp along at half speed, and the engine will fail every 45-60 minutes.

Unfortunately, the Characters don't know where they're going, but at least they aren't sitting ducks. A couple days later, an engineer can repair astrogation and they can limp back towards a shipping lane and wait for help.

Along the way, however, the Characters can meet with multiple challenges. The engine failures mean that the cultist ship can catch up and attempt to board. Prisoners, if any, can escape.

It isn't a pretty ending, but it gets the job done.

Help Arrives

If the Characters have restored outgoing communications somewhere along the way, a distress call can be sent out. At this point, the players can choose to spend two Tension Points to get Help From An Ally. A Warden vessel will arrive just in the nick of time.

Upon detecting the Knight's Errant, the cultists will abort the docking procedure and attempt to flee. After a period of quiet, the Knight's Errant will open up on the cultists' ship with its railguns and disable it. Since there's no sound in space, the players will only know this if they're looking out a porthole.

The Wardens aboard will then dock and rescue the crew, tending to people's wounds as needed. The Characters and the passengers will be taken to the Umbrella. The passengers will be debriefed and then taken home, while the Characters will need to file their reports and be cleared for duty.

This is probably the least satisfying ending, as it requires few desperate actions on the part of the players, but it will help the Characters survive if things have gone poorly for them.

NPC'S

Presented here are the key NPCs for this adventure. There are secrets and interpersonal conflicts built into each of the NPCs, so that they can more easily play their part in this murder mystery. Any could be suspect at different times, for different reasons.

Remember to point the finger at the Characters from time to time. The heat shouldn't always be on the NPCs, even if the Characters trust each other.

The information in each NPC bio can be obtained in multiple ways, and the Characters will have to be clever in order to get the more sensitive stuff. The events in the adventure narrative will keep the plot advancing, but conversations with the NPCs are going to the thing that fills in the gaps.

For reference, the Children of the Void are Adam Saltzman, Kashi Mander, and Sancho Reyes.

Adam Saltzman

Dockyard Engineer & Cultist

Adam looks like your average joe. He's in his late-30's, and gray is starting to creep into his closely cropped dark hair. He dresses in casual clothes, with a flair for band T-shirts.

In general, Adam is quiet, but friendly. He can be quite a conversationalist when the right time comes. There's something about Adam that people naturally trust.

Adam was recently hired to work on Veronica Station, and is taking a vaca-

tion before he starts his new job. He specializes in Basic and Transit Drive maintenance. If you ask him, he'll tell you he's just a glorified mechanic.

However, that's all his cover. Adam is really the leader of this cell of the Children of the Void. As a cultist, Adam is charismatic and strong-willed. He rules through strong-arm tactics and manipulation. His faith is unshakable and he will do whatever it takes to see this through to the end. Adam is a gifted liar and will hold true to his cover under even the best interrogation.

Though a true believer, Adam isn't ready to die for his faith. He is perfectly fine with letting others give their lives for the cause.

Adam is Kashi's boyfriend, and Sancho's savior. In public, they stick to their cover stories. Just to not be too innocuous, Adam has decided that he doesn't like Fabricio, calling him "New Money."

Attributes:

Awareness 3	Grace 2
Cleverness 4	Perseverance 3
Demeanor 4	Physique 3

Statistics: Health 8, Speed 10 mph/16 kph
 Skills: Deception 5, Defense 2, Engineer: Basic Drive 3, Engineer: Transit
 Drive 3, Hand Weapons: Blades 4,

Insight 3, Medicine: Physical 3, Reaction 2

Equipment: Ritual Dagger (1d6 + 2d6 from Physique) *Armor:* None

Kashi Mander

Physician & Cultist

In her mid-30's, Kashi is an accomplished professional. She is a celebrated surgeon in Cassini on Titan. Kashi is surprisingly warm and outgoing for her line of work, and is usually a bright soul to have around. She can be a little too nosy, which is the only thing that puts people off.

Of Indian descent, Kashi has been Adam's girlfriend for the last several years. They're going to give it a go long-distance, with her on Titan and him on Uranus. She's optimistic.

This is all her cover. She's a dyed in the wool cultist, though she is really Adam's girlfriend. The part Kashi likes best about being a cultist is her opportunity to practice her craft on unwilling subjects. She is a fiendish torturer, inflicting terrible surgical horrors on her victims. Normally, this is done under a paralytic, because the screaming and thrashing would just get in the way. The look of suffering in her victim's eyes is enough.

If the Characters get lucky, they might be able to get Kashi to slip up. At one point, she'll say that she's never been to Mars. At another, Kashi will say that she did her residency on Mars.

Kashi will try to get close to Amelia, even moreso after Warren dies. While it is under the guise of helping with suspected emotional abuse, Kashi is really trying to gain Amelia's trust so it will be easier to kill her if the time comes.

Attributes:

Awareness 3 Grace 5 Cleverness 5 Perseverance 4 Demeanor 3 Physique 3 Statistics: Health 12, Speed 16 mph/26 kph Skills: Deception 3, Defense 2, Guns: Handguns 3, Hand Weapons: Blades 3, Insight 3, Medicine: Physical 4, Reaction 3 Equipment: Ritual Dagger (1d6 + 2d6 from Physique) Armor: None

Warren Nguyen

Newlywed Security Consultant

Warren carries himself with the bearing and dress of someone who is exmilitary. He served in the Martian army as a soldier. In his mid-20's, Warren is polite, direct, and efficient. He handles corporate security for a company on Mars. This is the first phase of Warren's honeymoon with Amelia.

Of Vietnamese descent, Warren is very traditional in his marriage. He can be very domineering with his new wife. While Warren would never strike Anna, he can be emotionally abusive. This only happens in private.

Warren will seem like he'll be a good ally in the situation at hand, only to be the first to die.

Attributes:

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Awareness 4 Grace 3 Cleverness 4 Perseverance 3 Demeanor 4 Physique 3 Statistics: Health 9, Speed 12 mph/19 kph Skills: Defense 2, Guns: Handguns 3, Guns: Assault Rifles 3, Reaction 3, Tactics: Military 1

Amelia Nguyen

Newlywed Teacher

Amelia tries to be the perfect young woman. She teaches at a middleschool on Mars. She appears to be annoyingly in love with her new husband, and caters to his every wish. Overall, she is a very pleasant person. Like her husband, she is of Vietnamese descent.

Amelia met Warren in a bar on Troy. He struck up a conversation while she was sitting to watch Jupiter rise from the skylights of the casino dome. She knows very little about Warren's life before three months ago – they've had an accelerated courtship, and Amelia will get agitated if pressed for details. However, this can cast some suspicion on Warren while he's alive.

Warren has become more domineering over the last month, which Amelia doesn't particularly like. However, she's afraid of him, so she obeys. When Warren is killed, she'll recover more quickly than would be expected.

Amelia is fragile. She'll not handle the dead bodies well. She'll freak out over pretty much everything that happens. While Warren is alive, he will intimidate her into being calm. Once he's dead, it's up to the Characters.

Attributes:

- Awareness 2 Grace 2
- Cleverness 3 Perseverance 3
- Demeanor 4 Physique 2
- Statistics: Health 7, Speed 8 mph/13 kph
- *Skills:* Communications 1, Liberal Arts 4, Occult 1, Persuade 2, Reaction 1

Natalya (Natalie) Starr

Spiritual Advisor & Con Artist

Natalya looks and dresses like a pretty new-ager. Her bleach blonde hair is cut into a bob, and she wears earthy make-up. There's a passion in her eyes and she'll preach to anyone who will listen.

Natalya runs her own church and is a religious cult-figure. The religion is a new-age cosmic melange, and she claims she wants to preach the word, to help save the spirits of as many as she can.

Natalya is enjoying a retreat with her sister, Roxy Eve, before traveling into Uranian space to expand her flock.

If the Characters talk to her for any length of time, they'll get a cultist vibe off of her. However, Natalya is not a cultist. She's just a con artist who is using religion to fund her tax-free church and line her pockets. She will only admit this if the situation is dire.

Attributes:

Awareness 3 Grace 2 Cleverness 5 Perseverance 3 Demeanor 5 Physique 2 Statistics: Health 7, Speed 8 mph/13 kph

Skills: Art: Oratory 3, Insight 3, Persuade 3, Reaction 1, Streetwise 3

Oksana (Roxy) Eve

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Entertainer & Madame

Roxy oozes sex. She's a statuesque young woman of Russian descent. She has long black hair, blue eyes, and a figure she is unafraid to show off. While she claims she is an entertainer on Ganymede, it shouldn't be surprising to discover that she is both and escort and a madame, running her own brothel in Troy.

This cruise is a nice vacation for her and her sister, Natalie Starr. Roxy is completely aware of her sister's scam and is actually a little envious. Also, she figured she might make some money servicing some of the crew or passengers.

Roxy will use her sex appeal in order to get the protection she wants during this crisis. It wouldn't be weird for her to latch onto one of the male Characters, and use her feminine wiles to stay close and under his protection.

If pushed or backed into a corner, Roxy will share that she has a regular client who is a highly-placed Warden. She will not mention names, but will be happy to use this as leverage.

Attributes:

Awareness 3	Grace 4
Cleverness 4	Perseverance 3
Demeanor 5	Physique 2
Statistics: Health 9,	Speed 12 mph/19 kph
Skills: Deception	3, Defense 2, Hand
Weapons: Blac	les 1, Insight 3, Reac-
tion 2, Seducti	on 5

Fabricio Veiga

Tech Millionaire

Fabricio has already made more money than he'll ever spend, all before the age of 40. He's very smart, and will happily discuss his tech empire with anyone who might understand what he's talking about. Fabricio is a charming Brazilian man of leisure these days. He works out, visits the spa regularly, and has a personal tailor. He's quite dashing.

He also has the whole latin lover thing going for him. While Fabricio may be traveling with Blessing, she is merely his latest conquest. Fabricio has developed a thing for Amelia Nguyen. She just so cute, polite, and submissive. Plus, she's a challenge.

Fabricio also seems to get along with Sancho. He doesn't particularly care for anyone who tries to take charge – he's used to being that guy. He also doesn't not like Warren and is vocal about it.

However, Fabricio has a drug habit. He abuses both presciption highgrade painkillers and muscle relaxers. Fabricio always has a stash on him or nearby. If he can't get to them, he will eventually fall victim to an ugly withdrawal.

Attributes:

Awareness 2 Grace 3

Cleverness 4 Perseverance 4 Demeanor 4 Physique 4

Statistics: Health 12, Speed 16 mph/26 kph Skills: Computers 5, Defense 2, Persuade 4, Insight 3, Reaction 3, Seduction 4

Blessing

Fashion Model

The woman known only as Blessing, her real first name, is a beautiful woman of African descent. She's nearly unapproachable in her grace and poise, and she dresses the part. Unfortunately, Blessing doesn't have much else going on. She's always been able to trade on her looks, so she's not very smart, not very useful, and not very friendly. Blessing is Fabricio's latest conquest, and who was she to turn down a free first-class vacation?

Blessing is immediately unfriendly to any women onboard, including female Characters. She views them all as threats to her supremacy. She will get furiously jealous if Fabricio hits on another woman, or even if women simply spend time in his company.

While she likes Fabricio's stash of drugs, Blessing is not an addict.

Blessing with not handle any hardship well, most especially the crisis at hand. She will bitch and moan her way through any situation, and will probably lose it when things get really bad.

Attributes:

Awareness 2 Grace 4 Cleverness 2 Perseverance 2 Demeanor 4 Physique 3 Statistics: Health 9, Speed 14 mph/22.5 kph Skills: Performance: Modeling 5, Seduction 5

Sancho Reyes

IT Manager & Cultist

Sancho is middle-aged, single, and a computer geek. He'll talk all about internet memes and computer games. For work, he's in charge of purchasing for an IT department at Cassini University.

Sancho is on this trip by himself. He's just one of those guys who does that. Fabricio and Sancho will seem to get along, because they speak the same language – though Fabricio is far cooler.

Underneath this cover, Sancho is new to the Children of the Void. This is only his second mission with his fellow cultists. Sancho lost his wife and daughter in a car accident three years ago, and he fell into deep depression. Seeking something, Sancho was found by Adam and indoctrinated into the cult. He has become blindly devoted to the man he believes saved him.

However, Sancho doesn't really have the stomach for this kind of thing. If there's a weak link in the cultist chain, it's him.

Attributes:

Awareness 3 Grace 4 Cleverness 5 Perseverance 3 Demeanor 3 Physique 2 Statistics: Health 9, Speed 12 mph/19 kph Skills: Computers 3, Deception 3, Defense 2, Hand Weapons: Blades 2, Insight 3, Occult 3, Reaction 3 Equipment: Ritual Dagger (1d6 + 1d6 from Physique) Armor: None



Where there is money, there will always be those that have more wealth than common sense. This is the type of person the Aristocracy, and similar designs, are marketed towards. While, at their core, these ships are essentially just people movers, it's the style in which they do this that make them stand apart. With its displacement, one would expect a ship like this to have berths for over 100 passengers. However, it actually is designed to accommodate only 14, plus crew. Every inch of these ships oozes luxury and privilege. The

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Aristocracy Class Yacht

large cargo hold is pressurized and modular, and it is often converted into large ball rooms, shooting ranges, or whatever the owner wishes. With large suites for each passenger, sculpted hydroponic gardens, recreation centers with the latest technology available, and more, these ships are the envy of nearly every traveler in the system. However, one must be connected or seriously wealthy to even consider setting foot on one. It is said that some even serve as permanent residences for their owners.

Characteristics	Value
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Length	
Crew	
Endurance	

Attributes	Rating
Structural Integrity	2
Maneuvering	3
Electronics	3
Size	2
Reactor	2
Statistics	Rating
Hull Points	20
Speed	7

Systems

Hydroponic Garden: Sculpted
Launch: Sprint Shuttle (2)
Luxury Accommodations
Medical Bay: Standard
Theater: Tri-V
Transit Drive: Micro

Traits
Atmospheric Capable
Prestigious Boon
Modules
Modules Built-On Cargo Pod

High Security Hold

Aristocracy Class Yacht



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- 1. Bridge
- 2. Storage
- 3. Crew Rooms
- 4. Galley
- 5. Stage
- 6. Crew Mess Hall
- 7. Dining Hall
- 8. Crew Lounge
- 9. Theater
- 10. Passenger Lounge
- 11. High Class Rooms
- 12. Luxury Suites
- 13. Cargo Hold
- 14. Shuttle Bay
- 15. Fuel Processor Station

24

16. Engineering

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