

BEGIN

- Kill Morphs
- Get to Huddletown
- Find out about what's going on/'solve' problem

The characters (before they get to buy anything) need to roll their Spirit. The one that beats it the best (most raises) wakes up first.

You are lying on your back. It is dark and cold.

If player tries to move, they will find that they are wrapped in a mylar bag wrapped around their body. They must beat an Agility roll to find the zipper and unzip themselves. Other players can also wake up and try to extract themselves.

When they wake up, they find themselves in the midst of a blizzard next to other body bags with the other players in them. The ones that have failed to unzip themselves are struggling; the others are asleep. Although it is very cold they can smell something like a sewer.

Check their Vigor; fail means they need to be carried, success means they can be assisted, raise means they can walk. There is a small box with a couple of lights on it attached to them.

Smarts roll: this is a beacon.

Lights are coming towards them; it looks like flashlights and vehicle lights.

They are found by a search party. The medical staff checks out the patients. "Jimmers" says to them, "Same thing happened to me. Don't give him your money, and try to get out of here!"

They may be loaded onto four-wheelers, carried, or walk to the facility, where the injured can be taken to the medical center.

BLUE VECTOR 12 MINING FACILITY

The facility is labeled BV-12 MF (Blue Vector 12 Mining facility). There is a logo of a circle with a blue V 'checking' around it.

They are eventually greeted by LaPierre, who is the administrator of the mining facility. He has a huge gash of a scar on his left cheek, is of solid build, about 6', wears a tight coat with a high collar and has coarse black hair slicked back (think Snape). He jokes how it seems every time they lose a few guys they always get a few back.

He has a shot gun lying across his desk.

The facility is located at the 75th latitude of Cryolapse, in the Second Periphery. It is orbited by two moons: Cryolapse alpha, better known as Blue Jewel, a well-terraformed tropical moon 1000 miles in perimeter, and Cryolapse beta, a dead rock about 800 miles in perimeter.

The facility was founded about six years ago and primarily mines Halcitite-7.

The facility occasionally loses people to accidents and other incidents. Some get lost or go crazy. The crazies are shipped off to Ice Station 9, better known as Huddleton.

Cryolapse was a partly failed terraforming effort. For 25 years it was known as Red Jewel, and was heavily populated; then a series of terraformer malfunctions and other events caused a temperature reversion; in less than three years 90% of the planet's surface was covered in ice.

Most settlements were caught by surprise and were overcome by the cold before they could be evacuated. Within a year Blue Vector moved in to establish mining rights due to lost restrictions

on emissions.

The facility was created in three days by Blue Vector Tech Mechs.

“Blue Vector” is a term used by interplanetary pilots: “Red Vector” is the vector limit that will bring the ship to the planet safely without crashing (least margin for error); “Green Vector” is the safest vector that will bring the ship to the planet’s orbit (largest margin for error), and “Blue Vector” is the most optimal vector for reaching orbit quickly without too much or too little margin for error.

He says “Got any money? Better leave it with me.” He is upset if not...”Have it your way.”

He seems very concerned about the group and goes to the control room and asks an operator to look through the flight logs and radar tracks to see if anything has come by. Players roll

Smarts: Fail: nothing, Success: something fishy, Raise: obviously not looking at radar tracks and flight logs.

LaPierre says he’ll give them a way to pay for their board...he has a task for them. But he’ll see them in the morning when others are assembling for the first shift. This gives people time to heal, etc.

Pay is \$10/day for 10 hours of work, 7 days a week. Paid every 10 days. (d10 to see when next pay day is.) Room & Board is \$6/day.

Work details:

- Mining
- KP
- Janitorial/Warehouse
- Transport
- Medical Support

Air Transport to the Green Belt cities (only direct way) is \$240/person one way.

Ground transport to Huddleton is \$80/person one way.

Air transport to the Green Belt cities is \$200/person one way.

Transports:

1. Arctic Mineral Hauler (use Semi as template)
 - 1 driver, 3 pass (40 slots)
2. Arctic Heavy Utility Vehicle (use M4 Sherman as template)
 - 2x25mm guns, 1 driver, 3 pass, 2 gunners (2 extra slots)
3. Versatile Air Transport (Helicopter as template)
 - No armament, 1 pilot (dual controls), 5 passenger/cargo

Characters around the place:

Rigger: Met at Dinner. Transport duty. Moved here 6 months ago when evicted from his greenbelt house. Former tour guide at the former preserves...they all went away and so did his job. “Rigger” because his last name is Dan R’gramsczy (rig-RAM-shee). He believes that the

planet will be beautiful in about 5000 years after the glaciers have carved down the surface a bit. If pushed about LaPierre's plans, says he knows they talk about a guy named 'Baxter'...overheard it in a conversation while transporting LaPierre and Dale.

Hop: Met at Dinner. Mining. Strong guy, but agile. Evasive about past. Rock climber. "Lost himself" here 4 years ago. "Hop" doesn't say why he's called that. Convinced there's a monster in the caves. Has an 'inner' accent. (he's a planet hopper...one job then 'hops' to another planet.) Knows about Spyder. Spyder disappeared 2 years ago.

Deuce: Spotted the group. Transport security. Former military. Recon. Washed out after getting most of leg fragged in action. Been here 3 years. "Deuce" due to a double-headshot on an early operation.

Jimmers: Helped medically with the group. Medical support. Small guy, basic fixit guy. 'Found' here 16 months ago. Can't really remember much about how he knows all this stuff about fixing things. Has no medical credentials or identification. Called "Jimmers" because when they asked him his name, he said: "J...J...Jimmers."

Blade: Jimmers knows her to be 'Found' like they were. Warehouse duty. 'Found' two years ago. Won't talk or can't talk about past. Cut up a guy who asked too many questions on her first week, got the nickname. Gave LaPierre a small cut on his cheek as a warning, with her nails. Knows about Spyder. Spyder disappeared 2 years ago.

NEXT DAY

After breakfast the next day he will ask them if they want to do something special for him. He wants them to investigate a mine shaft, 6A-115, that has been having some problems. Basically, people haven't really come back from that shaft for a couple of days. One guy who came back, he doesn't really seem to be able to see reality anymore. So if we could go and check that out, maybe then he could see what sort of mercenary work the group is up for.

If they go, they are told they will be presented arms at the shaft. They take the tram to the shaft, and can see the 'off limits' door. They are 'greeted' at the shaft by two mercenaries with semiautomatic weapons and riot gear who control the door, which has a blast window and controls a light within. They will open the shaft, inside is a bag with the weapons. They must go inside to get the weapons, and when they return they are to place the weapons back within the bag.

He will supply them with a temporary set of arms: 1 shotgun (pump action, 20 rounds), 3 revolvers (colt 1911, 80 rounds total), 1 submachinegun (tommygun, 50 rounds), mining/safety garb, 6 flares, 6 flashlights, food, emergency locator beacon, 4 billy clubs, 2 survival knives, 3 pineapple grenades (area effect attacks, p79), 50' rope, 1 medkit.

The first room is empty except for some electrical cables (torn), 2 4-wheelers with tires shredded

(but gas and battery), and 8 oxygen canisters. Oxygen canisters, if shot, will either explode a medium area burst at 3d6, or will carreen for 5 turns using d12 clock at d6", doing ½ distance d4 damage (1d4,2d4,3d4).

As they continue along the mineshaft (Notice) they hear groans and wails. As they proceed down past the ledge they will hear a wild cry and will eventually meet up with 12-16 Morphs. The morphs are humanoid but have ripped clothing and engorged muscles, oozing with pus and having gaping wounds and moaning/screaming. The players must all roll Fear/Nausea checks (p97) (suffer shaken and fatigue if fail Spirit roll, -1 trait checks). Fight ensues. (called shots p81). One of the morphs (Wild Card) has a spiderweb tattoo on what is left of his face. (Morphs are immune to fear/intim, +2 toughness, +2 to recover from being shaken, head shots +2 damage, but -4 to hit).

There is a puddle on the west end of the cavern filled with a foul-smelling substance (formaldehyde scent). If they consume it they must roll vigor or become a morph. If they touch it (Vigor): rash : d6 damage.

Players can explore around and find nothing more.

===== BEGIN SESSION 2 =====

When they talk to LaPierre, he says that most likely they were victims of a gas explosion that got head trauma went crazy.

After succeeding, he will pay them a day's work and then charge them for the board, then tells them that they will be given a new assignment tomorrow.

The crazy geezer asks HOG if he'd like to play a game of Gammaraean Roulette...he's heard he's the Hand of God and feels that he'd rather leave his fate to the hand of god. It's a nice black mother-of-pearl-handled revolver.

OUTSIDE

Outside, it is -20F most of the time. (see Cold, p. 99)

MINES

At the mines, the tram leads to a series of shafts. The end of the tram line is blocked by a set of interlocking bars on which is painted "NO ENTRY". The mines are dark and hazardous. Miners have a flak-jacket-quality garb that they use.

BUNKERS

Bunkers are quonset huts with a few dividers for bathrooms. Showers are located in the tram house. No one showers in the morning.

MAIN FACILITY

The main facility is clean and well-maintained. The upstairs contains the cafeteria and kitchen. The miners meet in the warehouse at the beginning of each shift and are given the daily tasks and head count is performed. They are then fed, then taken to the mines via the tram, where there is another head count (about 1 hour later).

30 hour day (add 10 hours for second shift and 20 for third shift)

00:00 - Report to Warehouse

00:10 - Chow Time

00:45 - Take Trams

01:00 - Head count & disperse to mines

11:00 - Head count & return via trams

11:15 - Chow Time

11:50 - Debrief, head count and release

ROAD TO HUDDLETON

The next day LaPierre gathers the group and says he has another task. He needs to deliver a

shipment of Halcitie to a guy in Huddleton, the big city. They will take an Arctic Heavy Utility Vehicle (A-HUV), which will take about 6 hours by ridge (42 miles) or 7 hours by river path (about 70 miles) (12 mph normal, 7mph ridge/10mph river).

If the A-HUV gets stuck, do a cooperative Strength roll to move it over (p71) (beat 16).

Crew takes a Going shortcut over ridge will require at least 2 Driving successes (one to climb up ridge and one to climb down), longer route along bottom of canyon will not (but see avalanche). Deuce will shoot at ridges and shoot at boulders that fall down (25mm has 3 rof) challenges to see if others can beat him (most in a round) (short/med/long - how fast to hit 3 largest)...to destroy, rocks are toughness 8.

If they go the river road, roll Notice...there is a cannon sticking out from a cave in the bluffs off to the right of the road...It fires and there will be an avalanche. Driving success can avoid getting stuck (+2 if the noticer notifies the driver). No radio at bottom of canyon -- line-of-sight. 6 Ice Bandits will try to raid the vehicle. They will not shoot the cargo trawler. A bear will come by if things get complicated.

4 have to work the cannon, which takes an entire turn to load after each fire. The road is 16" from the bottom of the cliff wall, and there is a backswitch path that has a set of 8" paths that lead to a 4"x6" cave. The bandits have various weapons: 1 Tommy Gun (100 rds), 2 survival knives, 2 billy clubs, 2 revolvers (50 ammo), cannon, 3 grenades. Heavy locked box (\$1,200, illicit drugs, guard rotation information).

If they go the top route and make a Notice roll then they will notice tracks going off the road. The tracks lead to a broken vehicle with four individuals: driver, security, and 2 techs. Their truck is broken. They were called out to the radar/antenna array on the ridge to troubleshoot a problem they had. The trawler can be repaired (Repair). If the team takes too long, a bear will come along.

If they can successfully troubleshoot the tower (Investigate or Repair), it seems that someone put an interrupter on the primary power for the array. The interrupter is triggered by a signal on the 191.85 frequency. The team can decide what to do about it, if anything.

HUDDLETON

Huddleton is the closest thing the high latitudes have to a large city. It holds about 15,000 people and has standard facilities (hospital, housing, police, transportation, shops). Huddleton is unofficially presided over by J. P. Huddle, marshall for the province, a law man from times before the planet was fully habitable. He had to fight off claim jumpers, poachers, vandals, bandits, and anything else that threatened the blossoming of the new planet. Huddle is considered to be a tough but honest individual, still sharp going on 70. Huddle is basically like Clint Eastwood.

The group is approached by four large men, 3 wearing dusters and ten-gallon hats prominently displaying deputy badges, armed with shotguns and revolvers; the other is dressed in an arctic ghillie suit. They would like for the team to come with them...please. Request of marshall JP Huddle.

The one speaking for the group is deputy Lamar, but they can call him Stacy.

The deputies bring the group to JP Huddle's office, which is in a three-story brick building at the center of the town. There Huddle tells them he'd like to hire them to a mission if they're up to it. He'd like for them to find out what is going on at BV-12MF. He knows that LaPierre is up to no good, and he wants none of it. He has heard only of one thing, 'Baxter.' He doesn't know what it means.

If pressed he will admit that he has a relative who lost his son there, and he wants justice done.

If the group can 'fix' this problem, then maybe he can get them down to the green belt.

Huddle sent out a group to fix the radar array on the plateau. It has been 'acting up' lately. He expected the repair team back by yesterday evening but they have not returned.

ROAD BACK TO BV-12MF

If the group hasn't run into the repair crew, they can look for them on the way back. They will need to Notice the tracks, or alternately drive off to the Tower, which is near the point of the ridge. If they spot the trawler, they must Notice to see if there is an Arctic Bear nearby. If they fire the heavy guns as warning the bear will wander off.

The bear got two of the guys, the driver and the gunner; the two techs remain, wrapped in thermal blankets. They were hoping for 'daylight' to repair the truck, but the bear was still hanging out.

BACK AT BV-12MF

Blade knows about Baxter...it's a note in the janitorial log for the shaft vents--next to the entry for shaft 37 (there are 82). It doesn't say anything else...just 'Baxter.'

If the team decides to go down the shaft, they will need to make sure they endure the vent rush (Spirit). There is a vent grate at the bottom that must be removed; to do so will require a Vigor to withstand the blast, and Strength to rip it open.

If the team decides to try to enter the main way, there is a keypad near the gate, with a camera in it, and they will need to get the code (999) and make it past the checkpoint (bulletproof glass with a scientist behind). 2 people can be hidden in the cart. They cannot use Intimidate, but

may be able to use other means to confuse the scientist. If they don't successfully confuse the scientist, he will pull the alarm, which will freeze the tram. Two armed guards will 'greet' the tram as it is directed to the landing.

SECRET LAB

If they gain entrance to the lab, they can attempt to be stealthy (best if one goes ahead). There are some rooms that are locked where they hear groaning emanating from within.

At the lab they will meet Dr. Fenner*, a tall woman with short dark hair, thick glasses and a lab coat. She will try to look like the other 'frightened' scientists but will a) trip an alarm and/or b) try to deceive the group if she has the opportunity. At some point she will 'crack' and turn on the guards and force a loyalty check on all her comrades (Roll individual opposing Spirit, +1 for her). She will shoot anyone that doesn't join her.

If the group starts to hurt her, she will pull a syringe from a pocket and inject herself. The other scientists scream 'don't do it!!!' Her muscles bulge and her joints are partly pulled apart in the process, and in two turns she will transform into a huge 'morph'. Players must all roll their Spirit or suffer Fear/Nausea (p97). She will use either her raw strength or various objects as melee or throwable weapons.

BACK AT THE FACILITY

If the team goes back to the facility LaPierre will be running up the stairs to the second floor. His goal will be to escape, but he will fire a shot or two to give the team members pause. He will usually run. If possible, he will get to the roof where the air transport is hovering, waiting for him. He can jump in (1 round) and they will take off (toughness: 11)

HUDDLE'S MISSION: RECLAIM THE TERRAFORMER

Huddle tells the team that he has a mission for them if they're interested in getting out of the cold. One thing, though, is that this is a covert mission...out of his jurisdiction. It seems that one of the equatorial terraformers has been co-opted by a band of rebels...a group known as The Unified People's Power Group. They have a charismatic leader, General ?. From what Huddle can tell, the group is using the TERRAFORMER as a power source for their camp. It is suspected that in of their followers is a hacker who hacked the computer so that it reports the proper terraforming data even though they're sucking power out. Terraformers are immense platforms over a quarter of a mile high with 500' sides, with large power generators.

He figures that the Marshall for the region is either corrupt or sits in his office all day getting foot rubs and pedicures. Either way he wants those rebels out, and will support the mission under the table. The team can take an equal number of extras with them, their choice.

There is some satellite surveillance that shows some possible layout for activity at the location...a suspected camp and surrounding outposts. One concern is that the terraformer's security system is still intact but now at the control of the hacker. There is a hacker from the university that can assist the team in this venture. So the team needs to:

- Gain entrance to the area
- Neutralize the system's defenses
- Defeat the General
- Re-establish control of the terraformer

There is also a town not far from the area. Perhaps the team can go there to get some information...but if they do so they must be discreet...the town may be under the control of the UPPG.

He will provide two personnel flyers, either with the team dropped off or leaving the flyers safely nearby.

Stacy, Sneak, Bree, and Sketch are available to go on the mission (one per player). Sneak has an enemy...an escaped convict whose brother Sneak hunted down and killed a couple years ago. Both were wanted for murder; Sneak shot the one and the other Bradley 'Mayhem' Mayton. Bree is a young computer genius who is studying at the college in Huddleton--no real fighting skills. Sketch is the primary detective of the crew and is good at extracting information.

TERRAFORMER

The terraformer in question is about 1/4 of a mile high (1250 feet) and 500 feet long on each side, towering over the jungle below. It is light gray and doesn't really have walls; so the structural supports, piping and ductwork is exposed. A large, grey, billowing cloud rises from the top. It is segmented into about 40 open platform levels that are separated from each other by about 30 feet. Several defenses are visible: surface-to-air platforms, radar arrays and sensors are placed near the top; several gun turrets are placed on corners every 10 floors. It's located about 80 miles south of the glacial washout and 120 miles south of the glacial encroachment. It's on the NW side of Snake Canyon, and the small village of Palmaica is about 20 miles to the west.

Two elevators service each level...3"x7".

Levels 1: Medical & Human Services

Levels 2-9: Mineral and Water Storage

Level 10: Defense and Armory #1

Levels 11-19: Pumping and thermal systems

Level 20: Defense and Armory #2

Levels 21-29: Exhaust Additive System

Level 30: Defense and Armory #3

Levels 31: Logic Control Center

Levels 32-38: Sensor and Exhaust Control

Level 39: Armory, Medical & Human Services

Level 40: Defense #4, Additional Radar/Sensors, Exhaust Vent, Air Transport Pads

There are no guard rails on any of the levels. There are large support pillars every 18 feet (3"). Braced girders hang 6 feet below each ceiling.

On level 31 is the computer center for the facility. You will find the group's hacker there and will be able to shut off the defenses.

On level 39 the Generalissimo and his master-at-arms (Bradley Mayhem) will confront the team.

INTRUDER EXCLUSION ZONE

Once the team is within the intruder exclusion zone, they can travel at 1 mile per hour. Every mile moving or each hour of rest there is a 1/8 chance that a Scout will come across the group. Notice vs. Stealth roll to see who notices whom. 1/20 chance that the team runs into a Sniper, same Notice/Stealth roll. Make up a situation regarding the encounter. If team moves together, the opposition gets +4 to Notice roll (or +1 for every 2 people). Roll Smarts for bad guy to see if they call in the sighting first and call in support, otherwise they will try to oppose the group without support. If they call support, then a group of 1 scout, 1 leader and 2 grunts will try to locate the group as fast as they can get from the terraformer base, using a jeep.

Auto-defenses (3"x3" - 18' per side) will guard the SAM launchers: +2 to Notice (thermal vision) within 10". SMG weapon [minigun?], 1 on a turret, rotates 360 degrees, fires automatic w/ no recoil penalty (3 targets w/i 45 degrees), Shooting d10. SAM weapon is housed in a turret with a hardness of 12 with 2 armor. Takes 1 turn to rotate 180 degrees. The auto-defenses may be hacked if the hacker can climb up the ladder on the back panel up 12 feet to the control console.

Terraformer is manually guarded; auto-defenses are off. Each corner has a bamboo tower 20' away from the corner of the terraformer. One Lookout is atop each, and two Grunts patrol below. The 13" (75 foot) radius around the tower base is mowed.

TRANSPORT CENTER

On the west side of the terraformer is a transport center. The transport center has 3 500-gallon gasoline tanks, 6 transport trucks, 4 jeeps, and 4 motorcycles. There are two grunts patrolling this area.

BARRACKS

The barracks are on the south side of the terraformer. There are 4 bamboo bunkers each

capable of housing 50 persons each. There are 5 grunts and 1 leader in each of the various bunkers at any given time.

PALMAICA

The village of Palmaica is about 300 people...everyone knows everyone. It's a largely agrarian community, about 80 miles from any other city...remnants of some of the first laborers on the terraformer. The people here stay clear of the terraformer due to its defenses...for the most part. They have seen increased activity on the roads at night...starting about five months ago. Mostly army-style cargo transport trucks.

The most prominent buildings are the bar and the church.

At the church Father Pescatore knows of a woman who has knowledge of the terraformer's defenses. Malitra's land abuts the secured zone, and her disputes with the boundary have caused her to learn about its defenses. Malitra is closely associated with the local church.

If the group is too obvious an informant, Natalya, who runs the bar, will call in to the rebels.

If the group isn't careful, the town will have a big hospitality party in their honor, which will draw attention of the UPPG.

SNAKE CANYON

Snake Canyon winds around the southeast side of the terraformer area. Its cliffs are up to 500' tall. The river is flowing pretty rapidly and there are few places to put down even a small craft in the narrow bends.

DAM

The dam is protected by automated security turrets. It is 1000 feet across. You can drive a standard transport vehicle across the dam is permitted.

FEEDER LAKE

Feeder lake is not the name but the function; it is the lake formed by the dam and feeds water to the terraformer. The water is not too choppy in the morning, but a typhoon might brew up in the afternoon.

JUNGLE

The jungle is quite dense and there are few places to safely put down the flyers. There are a few open swamps, inhabited of course by crocodiles.

=== MISSION 3 =====

To fix the terraformer, Knowledge (Computers) must fix the following in order in 10 tries...each success and then raise will clear one of the following; Club will cause a complication (p97):

- 1) Vent the exhaust buildup (noxious gases, Vigor)
- 2) Regain control of the SAM batteries
- 3) Shut down the exhaust ignition (huge bomb destroying terraformer)
- 4) Return terraformer control to main computer
- 5) Break power feedback buildup (major fire and electrical hazards)

While the group was at the terraformer, Huddle had a team fix a 'problem' with the radio and radar tower up on the plateau. The problem was that LaPierre had put a remote-controlled interrupter on it and was disrupting the radar and sending secret communications. The first one they picked up was "Send a Medic." This was only strong enough to be reliably picked up by a receiver on the moon (or at least that is what LaPierre suspects).

Huddle sent his deputies out to investigate the mining facility, but somehow word had got out that the posse was on the way. LaPierre prepared for an escape, but as he did so some sort of large creature, much like what the group had seen, stormed the facility, and as LaPierre tried to escape via flyer on the roof, the monster lifted a radio dish and hurled it at the flyer, causing it to wreck. (Sneak saw this from his recon position.) LaPierre and the pilot died. The deputy director, Staller, was also killed in a way Huddle doesn't even want to describe.

The monster somehow got away and hasn't been seen since.

Amid the chaos, many of the workers fled the facility in whatever transportation they could find. In the aftermath, the deputies were able to discover a secret research facility of some sort. Seemed like a biological research of some sort, although the records were destroyed. Only information they could glean was from maintenance records, which frequently referred to a 'Baxter.' All of the researchers were dead or unaccounted for. None of the workers at the base seemed to know anything about the research facility.

In the chaos of the workers leaving the facility for Huddleton, most were held for questioning, but some may have got away.

A few hours after the ruckus at the mining facility, the fixed radar tracked a small transport incoming from orbit--a transport only capable of having come from the moon. It landed just a quarter of a mile from the mines, and Huddle's boys intercepted it. Found they were 'delivering' a body bag with a live body in it.

It seems that the key to what was going on, or at least the next link, is up at the moon.

"Cryolapse alpha, better known as Blue Jewel, a well-terraformed tropical moon 1000 miles in

perimeter, and Cryolapse beta, a dead rock about 800 miles in perimeter”

Though there are two moons, there is little to no activity at C-beta. Though it's not beyond reason that something was happening there, it is patrolled for traffic, and nothing unusual has been spotted there recently.

C-alpha, Blue Jewel, is a moon-sized spa planet. It's a major destination for the super-wealthy. Its lower gravity is said to have positive effects on the body, and its dramatic and lush landscapes are a large draw for those with money to burn. And where there is money, there are those who prey off its improper gain. It's also a little 'touchy-feely' for Huddle; lots of money allows people to indulge all sorts of pursuits and personality quirks that common folk cannot afford.

The team has a few days of rest before they can get a shuttle up to the moon.

The mission is to:

- Pay respects to the Generalissimo's mother
- Identify the recipient of the transmissions
- Determine the m.o. of this organization (human trafficking, etc.)
- Consult with Huddle if possible before taking action against the group
 - If action is necessary, then perform necessary actions

THE SHUTTLE

The team has reservations aboard the moon shuttle, named 'Very Unique II.' The trip will take about 20 hours, and leaves at about 8 pm. The crew must abandon all their weapons to luggage; they may take airport-style carry-on. Each member may choose a Window, Middle, or Aisle seat. As they are taking off, Captain Nimeaux calls out over the intercom. "Good evening and welcome aboard the shuttle, the Very Unique II. My name is captain Nimeaux, spelled NIMEAUX, and I'll be your captain for the first leg of the trip. We'll be taking off in a few minutes, so please follow the directions of your flight attendants. This is a pressurized cabin, so please, no blasting of the hull...heh heh. At the stern of the ship is our flight bar, open all hours, and the observation deck is aft. After we achieve our first orbit you might want to take a good gander at the beautiful planet below...this is after all the best way to view Cryolapse...from far away. Anyway, I will be taking rest at the crew shift and our secondary captain is...captain...Blank it seems. So I'm sure he'll take good care of you. We know that as a monopoly on moon shuttle services, we are your only choice. So thanks for choosing us. And enjoy your flight!"

By 9:30 the ship has achieved its first orbit and the passengers may move about the cabin. The ship positions itself upside-down so that those on the observation deck or the bar see Cryolapse glowing above them...a huge white ball with a thin strip of green around the middle.

At 11:00 the lights are turned low.

At 12:00 the crew changes. If anyone talks to the flight attendant after this point, he will have a shirt labeled 'Elaine' if they Notice it.

At 12:30 the seatbelt light comes on and a computerized voice says 'the captain has turned on the seatbelt light due to the likelihood of turbulence. Please return to your seats when possible.'

At 12:45 anyone at the windows may Notice that all the escape pods on their side have been launched/jettisoned.

At 12:50 a gas enters the main cabin. Notice at -2 to observe this. In five minutes everyone exposed must roll Vigor to keep from being knocked out by the gas. Anyone trying to leave the room must fight past the attendant.

If the team cannot escape, then they will be held hostage by who they later find is the UPPG.

After their defeat at the terraformer, a faction turned to piracy in the hopes of raising funds, and possibly in establishing a freehold on the dead rock moon, or somewhere on Blue Jewel.

There are 6 grunts, 2 scouts, 1 sniper, and Captain Blank. They are using headset radio equipment to talk to each other.

===== Mission 4 =====

BLUE JEWEL

At the spaceport at Blue Jewel, the bulk of transports are larger personal flyers. The low gravity allows for large foliage and the landscape is punctuated by many sheer vertical basalt columns. There are terraces, outcroppings, and high perches on each of these, each covered in lush greenery. The atmosphere is thin and as the group lands they are given the option to rent oxygen tanks (\$50) or in-mouth oxygenators (\$120). If you don't use the oxygen supplements, then for the first two days on the moon you must make Vigor rolls to keep from receiving a -2 to all trait rolls within a 2-hour period.

At the Generalissimo's mother's house, really a palace, they land at the front of a large palazzo with an ornamental pond in front. **A woman in her 20s (Aguila Perennes)** is chasing birds much like peacocks around the grounds, calling to them and throwing food at them. If they talk to her, they find out she is in fact the mother. She explains this by the fact that she has had many 'cosmetic augmentations' at her time on Blue Jewel. She is saddened to hear of her son's loss, but she takes it well and felt that he was living a bit dangerous lately. She knows nothing of project Baxter. She says that she has a gala to go to this evening at 8 pm, and asks if one of the gentlemen would be good enough to escort her.

The team can follow up in the flyer's registration. It is registered to a moving company that is based near the spaceport. The owner of the moving company is upset because he hasn't heard anything from one of his employees in several days: B-dog. B-dog was one of the movers and had last taken the flyer down to Huddletown. Was supposed to just do a drop-off and come back...that was 5 days ago. Called cops and all they said was that he was in custody at the Huddleton marshall's office with charges pending. Hasn't got the flyer back yet.

B-Dog's apartment is painted entirely black, and is filled with all sorts of junk. Notice, he has two tickets to an event called 'BRAINPIERCE' featuring a band called 'MEGATON BOMB SQUAD.' The show is tonight at 9 pm at the 4th subfloor of an abandoned fertilizer factory in the warehouse district.

GALA

The gala event is a fundraiser for the Blue Jewel Advanced Research Institute Humanitarian Scientist of the Year, and is honoring **a researcher (Dr. Janus Arcc)** at the university who has made huge contributions to the development of growth hormones to assist developmentally challenged individuals, particularly fallout children from the planet Draco. It's located at the Museum of Nature and Science, a large facility with a variety of displays. There is a silent auction for the following items:

- A double-barreled revolver, one-of-a-kind (2400) (2 shots each, +2 to hit +2 dam)
- An arm shotgun, a medical oddity allegedly from a notorious gangster (1200)

- A 3x5' oil painting of the sunset over Cryolapse, seen from Blue Jewel (1000)
- A vintage medkit over 100 years old (200)
- A chair used by the honorable H M Pinkus (400)
- A jar of 800 hue-changing jellybeans (75)
- Keys to an interstellar ship, lightly used (250,000)
- Halcitite-Cerulite earrings - like a holographic star cluster 'Pleiades' (3500 - Aguila)
- 20 years of age reduction from Salon d'Blu (200,000)

Aguila will buy up to 3000 of items for her escort.

At the dinner table **Colonel Crutsch** of the Interplanetary Zone Control (think state troopers/marines) for zone 7, if he hears about your exploits, he gives you his card and says to give him a call if you want work. He is looking for a small team to do something special for him, but he doesn't like to discuss work much over dinner.

BRAINPIERCE

The bouncer looks at the 'couple' a little oddly and lets them in. Depending on how they are dressed, he may react negatively. He has an earpiece and will call for backup if there is trouble. They go down a slightly moldy staircase toward the epicenter of throbbing music...a combination of a steady low beat, and high screeching that is akin to scratching fingers on a chalkboard. Roll Spirit to keep from having your trait rolls at -1. Most of the attendees are in their mid-twenties or less. The air is also thick with 'special' smoke--roll Vigor to avoid rolls at -1 (cumulative with above). Applies to others as well. There are about 200 people packed into the square room. There are catwalks up above that are reachable by ladders, and many of the participants are jockeying for position on the catwalks. In the center of the room is the band. They are playing electronic instruments that seem to be driven by electronics--van de graff generators, feedback, theremin-like devices. Most of the partiers are wearing either incredibly skimpy clothing (men and women) or are wearing outlandish costumes made of industrial detritus: styrofoam peanuts, cardboard, bubble wrap, assorted lampshades, tires. Notice that some of the guys have earpieces in their ears, they look a little bulkier. If you take your time to scout them out, there are eight of them.

Notice: **one guy (Astral)** is not really dancing. He is thin and wearing a suit and skinny tie with high shoulder pads, curly hair with too much gel in it. He is surveying the audience, like he's looking for someone. He has an earpiece too, and some sort of keypad-like device that is extending from his right sleeve that he occasionally looks at and touches. If you look he has what looks like a flare gun in a large holster. Roll Stealth to avoid been seen as looking at him/to blend into the crowd.

If he feels suspicious he climbs a ladder up to the catwalk and darts out a door. If the part tries to chase they can enter a flyer chaser. This can take them through:

1) The streets of the warehouse district.

- 2) Through the spaceport (cops will enter chase?)
- 3) Through the industrial center
- 4) Down a river canyon
- 5) Through a high-rise residential neighborhood

(cut back to the auction?)

- 6) Around an amusement park
- 7) Past some radio towers
- 8) Through a tunnel
- 9) Around the downtown
- 10) To the city park and museum

Astral goes to the museum to warn Arcc of the fact that mercenaries (the team) is on his heels. As they reach the museum, Arcc is starting to address the audience. A tall blond woman in a spandex suit strides up to the podium, then pulls off a wig and dark glasses to reveal herself. "Dr. Fenner...what? How?" Arcc stammers. Dr. Jill Fenner confronts him at the podium. She says he stole all her work, and she can prove it. She didn't work all those years down at the mine shaft on Cryolapse for nothing. Astral shouts 'she's going to give away the whole thing!' She tells of how the research wasn't to help babies at all; it was to engineer super-strong grunts out of normal humans, to make them more productive in hostile environments and battlefields. Arcc just took the 'good' side of her research and got recognition for it. Astral takes a pot-shot at her. She begins to tell the story of how she broke out of the shaft when the deputies arrived, and of the people she killed, but she doesn't mention being a morph. When he says that she is a liar and has nothing to prove, she whips out a syringe and injects herself. In about 20 seconds she morphs into a 7-foot creature with bulging muscles. All characters in the room must roll Spirit vs. Fear (p 79). About $\frac{1}{3}$ will be incapacitated by revulsion and vomiting. FennerBeast then goes on a rampage, starting with Arcc, but then proceeding to fend off any that are in her way.

Astral will try to make a run for it.

FennerBeast will go until the body cannot hold any more, then it will collapse entirely.

===== Mission 5 =====

CRUTSCH'S CREW

Huddle calls up the crew and says he can no longer provide any work for them; they will need to fend for themselves. Their run-in with law enforcement has caused him to strain his credibility already, and warns the team that if they ever pull anything like that again, he'll come after them personally with everything he has, and will be happy to pull the trigger. That said, he'd be happy to have them back at Cryolapse if ever he needs a deadly team. Blade is now working for him.

Arcc is recovering, in traction, and basically admits his work was derived from Dr. Fenner's. Project Baxter involves biological augmentation experiments, and he had been a mentor for Fenner back in her university years and he figured he could take some of her work and use it to get funding from more legitimate sources.

Astral is recovering but now suffers the Lamé hindrance (right leg bad). He owes his connection Shade a lot of money (\$20k) and the only way he can settle the score is to make it himself to the trade planet of Crossroads and try to work something out in person. Problem is, transport to Crossroads is \$5,500 a head. But if the team can make it there somehow, they'll have to take him along to get in touch with Shade...if they can also protect him as part of the deal.

Crutsch calls the team and shuttles them up to his ship. They are escorted by Private Jayeh, a kid named JJ who is very pleasant.

Crutsch has a spartan office in his ship, the Superior, with a few photographs of him and his men, and a small statuette on his desk of a hand pointing skyward. The Superior is a nuclear-armed ship with a crew of 150. He is running short of good troopers due to many of them being relocated to Cryolapse to fill some new vacancies. He will pay the crew 1200 each for a mission to Draco (600 up front and 600 when complete), and on top of that he'll take the team to Crossroads. Draco is a large planet that was home to a large, cosmopolitan population. But religious and cultural clashes caused huge rifts in the populace and the planet was embroiled in a total world war that climaxed in a nuclear holocaust three years ago. There is not a lot left. That said, now that the dust has settled somewhat there are plans to both salvage and rebuild areas. However, there are some automated planetary air defenses that make it impossible for large ships to operate, so these plans cannot continue until the defenses are neutralized. In the ruins of one of the larger cities, Polydeus, is the primary air defense system. A ground assault by a small team airlifted nearby should be able to eliminate the target. There are some hardy residual forces on the ground that may put up a defense; they are to be neutralized if they are an obstacle to the mission. The air defenses may be terminated by using a small charge of explosives on the primary control unit (PCU). The team is given two such explosives.

The team will be dropped into a nearby suburb, New Hope, 20 miles away, where there is a

tram/subway that they believe can be activated and used to transport the team to a station very close to the target defense system. From there the team must proceed to the target and destroy the PCU. A drone had scouted the subway system about 3 months ago and found several possible paths.

TRIP TO DRACO

The team is assigned guest quarters on the ship. The team must stow all but their knives in their lockers except when otherwise told. The trip to the planet is about 5 days. In this time the team can get to know the other crew members. One they meet is **JJ**, a young radio operator (19 years old, a private) and dispatcher who will act as the dispatcher between the team and command while they are on their mission. He likes the team and warms up to them. **Macho** is basically a 1970s mustachioed (Fu Manchu) guy with a variety of skills but is a big mouth; **Granola** is a 'natural' kind of guy who is good at fixing or improvising things but gets a little curious and off-focus; **Heavy** is a heavy gunner who is a little deaf; **Stitch** is an ambidextrous lock picker, knife thrower, and medic who likes to show off and try the impossible.

They find Stitch at the sick bay caring for Macho, who turns out to be the cop that Hog shot. They seem to be getting along quite well...she is performing some sort of procedure on him that is not entirely medical. Macho will tempt to grab Rynna's ass when possible; opposed Agility to prevent/thwart.

Heavy and Granola are in the training room sparring. Granola is using some sort of phoney martial art and Heavy is grappling. Granola keeps calling Heavy names but Heavy can't quite hear.

If the team goes to a dining hall the grunts will mostly shy away from Damien because they've heard stories.

On the trip JJ picks up a distress call; he can't make out anything but something about needing to be saved. Crutsch warns the crew to be at the airlock to investigate. As they open it up, there are two well-dressed guys who look perfectly ok and say: "Do you need to be saved? There is only one god and he will save you! Those that believe in false gods shall forever be damned. Would you like to buy a book about our one true guide?" The books are \$5 each.

The team will be given light combat suits, 7 days of iodine supplements each to minimize radiation poisoning (+2 to radiation rolls), 20 grams (2 small charges) of plastique, a 30' (5") harpoon zip line, a power supply to operate the tram, medkits, basic survival gear, 2 night vision goggles, and a transmitting video camera.

JJ will be patched into the team via their tactical headsets via a relay at the drop zone. The headsets should continue to operate for at least 24 hours.

DRACO

Draco is an earth-sized planet; there are blue seas but the rest of the surface is brown. As they near the surface they see the charred remains of vast cities, with towering buildings rendered hollow. Dust storms plague the surface. As they near the landing zone, a dust storm rolls back and they see many deserted and destroyed space vehicles, and Notice to see Rynna's ship. It looks largely intact, but it seems that it may have been stripped somewhat.

They land in a dust storm. Pilot rolls Piloting to land safely. If not the craft is out of control low to the surface and the team must brave the storm to get to the subway entrance.

Everyone rolls a d8. Of those that are 'found,' 1s will experience a small shock in the back of their neck within the next couple hours; 2s with 24/during nuke. When the chip pops, roll Vigor to see how bad the response is. No one else will feel anything.

They exit at the landing zone. There is a park that is across the street from the subway entrance and there is a sculpture that was of three hands pointing up, but two have been knocked down and broken. The team makes their way underground, 40' down (dark). 2 people must both roll Strength to haul the 200+ lb power supply (a huge battery essentially) to the tracks (2 can be 2 of 4, or just 2); one must roll Smarts to get the generator set up. They notice that the power is working properly but it's sucking more power than expected; there is only about 1 hour of power instead of the expected 4. Something is sucking the power.

There are 3 routes to take:

1. Go the RED line, which goes deeper and passes through an old power relay. (35 min)
2. Go the GREEN line, which is a straight shot but the drone reported some cracking in the tunnel (25 min)
3. Go the YELLOW line, which diverts to an outer-ring station, then into the downtown. (45 min)

Driving to get started, and later halfway through to avoid basic problems. The tram goes 55 mph at normal speed and tops at 70.

The RED line is flooded at the power relay station...about 100 feet of track is underground. The power controls are dead smack along in the middle of the flooded area. The water is sapping power from the track. If the team can pump water out, they can continue just fine and restore up to 2.5 hours total of power. There are lighting controls, power controls, and pump controls. If the team disables the power they can try to push the tram through the water to the other side. The pump is powered so you must restore power to activate the pump. It takes about 10 minutes to clear the water.

The GREEN line is OK but an additional Driving is needed to avoid getting derailed at a crack in the tube. On the way back, this crack will expand and driving must be rolled at -2.

The YELLOW line goes to the outer station, where two 8-year-old children are playing, attracted by the tunnel lighting. They are playing hopscotch but Notice to see that their chalk counts 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,"dog",10.

When they get there, there are 2 feral dogs.

When they exit the station, they are 8 blocks from the air defense facility (1/3 mile, 6 minutes walking, 2 minutes running Agility, lame characters: 10 minutes walking, 5 minutes running Agility). It's up on an artificial hill and at the top is a set of large radar dishes, radio towers, etc. Most of the sides are sheer metal up about 120 feet but there is a sloping path cut into the south side about 300 feet wide going up, leading to the entrance to the defense system base though about 400 feet. This approach looks fortified with a fence at the base, and two large machine gun stations at the top. There are poles with lights, cameras, and defense turrets throughout the approach. A group of men is playing a game like basketball at the top; no one is manning the machine gun placement.

Metal poles/turrets have a toughness of 5 but are 'called shot' -2 to hit. -4 to hit gun with a toughness of 8.

There are ten people including the leader, who has 8 fingers. The leader of the men is very bold except for the fact that he is afraid of the number nine. If there are nine of his crew alive he will shoot one of them just so there can be eight. If confronted with something that numbers nine for more than one turn, he will operate at -1 to all trait rolls. He developed this tic when he was tortured by Col. Crutsch who cut off one of his fingers and asked how many fingers he had...he refused to admit he had nine. When he escaped he cut off another finger just so he'd have only 8.

After they reach the top, they may enter the control room where a few techs are sitting in shock; Crutsch wants a visual of the blown PCU transmitted from the video camera. After they report back to JJ he tells them to hold their position for an airlift to come back down.

If the team doesn't want to blow the PCU, Crutsch has implanted a bomb in one of the crew members that will go off when appropriate (unless cut out by the radiation).

After a few minutes JJ calls back all nervous. "guys...uh...I'm not supposed to tell you this, but...uh...apparently Col. Crutsch has launched a nuke and you are ground zero. ETA is 20 minutes...there's no way for it to deactivate. It'll blow just about everything for a 5 to 10 mile radius....a physical blast radius of 20 miles." Apparently he wants to wipe out the residual forces in the town expediently now that the air defenses are gone. JJ doesn't know what to say.

===== Mission 6: CRUTCH'S BETRAYAL=====

6:00 am: Dawn breaks.

A man comes out of the control facility...he was hiding in a broom closet. "Lectro" says "Are you guys happy? Now we're defenseless! They're gonna come soon in troop ships to try to take us all out!" Lectro is an electrical engineer. If the team tells him about the bomb, he'll know that he has to make it to the subways. Spirit to keep from spiritual Fatigue at -1. Smarts to think to pull the air raid siren. Smarts to get a motorcycle, otherwise he runs.

They are 8 blocks from the air defense facility (1/3 mile, 6 minutes walking, 2 minutes running Agility, lame characters: 10 minutes walking, 4 minutes running Agility).

At the subway there is a power coil in a locked electrical closet that can power the subway, although it will fail once there's a blast. Lectro says it was salvaged from a ship that came down several months ago. He'll tell more later. (Lockpicking to open the closet) Smarts to get it going. (1 minute) If the team wants to move it, they must make a combined strength roll of 20 to move it into a tram, then smarts to set it up. (2 minutes).

JJ will keep in touch with the team but he gives them another frequency to use that isn't monitored.

Things to keep in mind:

- Fuel in the vehicles
- Running - Roll Agility to keep from tripping &c.
- Depth of the tunnel
- Sturdiness of the tunnel
- Time

Driving if at top speed to keep from going out of control. Top speed will shorten the ride by 5 minutes. If the team is above ground at the time of the blast they must be > 5 miles away to avoid complete annihilation, > 10 to avoid potentially deadly burns (vigor/fire), > 20 to be out of 2d6 blast range (plus vigor to avoid fatigue). Half those distances for underground.

If they only make it part way by the time of the blast, and the power coil is at the station, the tram will stop, the lights will go out...either way a concussive blast of 2d(d12) will strike the tram. The tram absorbs 8 damage, but if above 8 the glass shatters, causing 2d4 damage to each person in the tram. Roll damage for the power coil separately...if damage is over 6 then the power coil is temporarily damaged but may be fixed by a Repair roll. If the power coil is onboard and functional then the tram continues.

Once at New Hope, Lectro will lead them above ground. There is a city park across the street from the subway station, with a statue of three hands pointing up; two have been knocked down and there is a small drone next to them. Lectro says that is 100% Crutsch: trying to make a

point. He takes them to an underground cathedral, a mostly circular room with a set of spires whose tips glow like stars.

They meet several members of the Draco rebels including their commander, **Dena**. Dena is in her mid-thirties, a soldier's build, sun-baked skin and a closely-shaved head. She is quiet and troubled, but when she speaks she does so with great serenity. She tells of his vow against *Major* Crutsch (did not know he was now a colonel) and ponders how she will fight against him. She figures Crutsch will wait at least a day for the radiation to subside a little, then send in teams with "rad" suits to round up the survivors.

Dena reasons that she will ponder the next move, and in the meantime they must rest well, then prepare for defending from the imminent ground assault. In the interim, she will tell them of the Draconians and their plight.

Crutsch had detained her brother and had cut off one of his fingers. He would demand that he tell him how many fingers he had, and her brother would say "eight" or "ten." When he was released he actually cut off another finger so he would not have 9 fingers, and had a phobia of the number nine ever since.

Dena asks if the group knows of the Guides. She will tell them of their beliefs. The spires are representative of the guides' leading stars...the novae that appeared within the space of 6 months, the last of which was an Einstein ring around the sun of the star system to which the great exodus led.

The belief of the Polytheistic Draconians is that stars are living gods; they are the basis for all our existence. The elements are all forged in stars' hearts. They form planets and provide them with energy, they change and they eventually die. The supernovae stars gave their lives to guide humans to their next promised land.

Lectro tells of the power coils salvaged from the ship. Several months ago, the IZC tried to keep large supply ships from aiding the Draconians. The supply ships were mostly operated by underworld supporters of the rebels, and were hired at a high rate due to the illicit nature of their destination. Due to the size of the ships, the rebels would have to lower the entire defenses to let the ships through. One such ship was coming in and Crutsch's troopers had a fleet of heavy bombers lay in wait and tried to chase in with the cargo ship to get past the air defenses. The ground operators had no choice but to raise the defenses, even though it meant certainly destroying the supply ship too. But the cargo ship not only fought off the bombers as they began to be decimated by the defense barrage; the ship dodged and turned from every blast and missile and crash-landed outside of New Hope. As the cheering rebels reached the ship, a small planetary pod launched from the great ship and shot into the sky. The soldiers went aboard and found no crew--only a necklace in the pilot's seat. They thank the guides and consider the pilot an unknown saint, to whom they have dedicated a small shrine in the cathedral. The shrine has a necklace that Rynna recognizes as her own...it has three blue diamonds in a line set on a

background of iridescent shell, one haloed by Halcitite.

The power coils were salvaged, one ran the hospital in Polydeus, certainly destroyed. One was used for the subway. One was severely damaged and was scrapped for parts. The last was stolen by another faction just a few days ago...it had been used to power the sanctuary in New Hope. The main guns were stripped and integrated with the various fortifications through the web of remaining cities. The computer was not stripped since ship computers offer little value to them.

The faction that stole the power coil is led by a man, **Yonn**, who believes that he has seen signs from the Guides for another exodus. Yonn is revered by his followers but reviled as a disloyal coward by Dena and her followers. Yonn's clan calls themselves the Tribe of Sagitta. Dena and Yonn despise each other to a point that Yonn will not bear to see Dena, but perhaps he will talk to outsiders...or maybe he won't.

Dena has decided that their next move must be to recapture the stolen power coil; without it the group cannot sustain themselves at New Hope. He is not sure how they will be received, and he suggests trying to get some hours of sleep before hand. He tells them to take their iodine supplements.

[someone has dreams of their hidden past...all roll Spirit and highest has the dream]

Hog will imagine going up in a fancy elevator to the 103rd floor. Door opens and a pixie-like woman in her 20s with short spiky brown hair, nerdy glasses, a boarding school crested jacket over a band t-shirt, pink leggings and saddle shoes is standing in front of the door. A voice in his head says: "Astrid." She leads him to a luxurious hotel room filled with heavy equipment luggage. She walks to the window and tells him he has a perfect view from here, picks up a long case and cracks it open for him with a smile.

Gil remembers being in a dark room being handed a pair of surgical gloves that are too small. He's given a dull scalpel and someone throws a lobster bib over him as a surgical smock. "Save him" says an elderly man's voice behind him. He's rushed down a wood-paneled corridor past exotic art, into an office where a man in his seventies is lying motionless in a chair. "Hurry" the voice behind him says, but already he knows: the patient is dead.

Rynna is in her ship, holding onto a pendant as the dusty ground below rises up. Her ship impacts...a horrible jarring thud. A voice on the intercom says "Leave." Her pendant swings from her neck as she turns, catches on the seat harness, rips and falls into the chair, she wants to turn back but just...can't. The voice says "Leave" again. Running instinctively through smoke she finds the escape pod and hits the ignition...and as she races for the skies she is clutching for the pendant that is no longer there.

Damien is in a bar late at night, above a dark red dwarf. Hardly anyone is around, even the

bartender is gone. Watching the television lazily, she sees a bulletin about a bombing at an orbital hospital and the suspect's face is shown. He takes the butt of his rifle and smashes the screen, then walks out. A store next door has dozens of screens playing the same bulletin in their display window. Damien opens full-auto fire with his SAW...making a dazzling shatter of glass...a crackling voice from a dead TV says: "Look." and looking at his reflection in a shard he realizes that the face in the bulletin was his.

Each team member must roll Vigor to see if they suffer from radiation (+2 on the roll due to iodine pills).

The trip to the Tribe of Saggita is approximately 50 miles. Dena takes up to 3 Draco Fighters. The team can take an old C-130-style prop plane (16 toughness, 3x.50cal MG 2d10 AP4 3 ROF autofire -1 due to housing, 2 armor, guns top, rear, nose) that is in an underground bunker adjoining the cathedral. The hangar doors open onto what appears to be a street, but what is used as a runway. Piloting to get it off the ground OK.

Soon after they take off, 3 drones will pick up the target and they will enter a 5-turn chase. The drone has 2d8 guns, shooting of 8, toughness of 10 (1 armor) piloting 8. They can shoot full auto for 3 turns max, or fire a missile (1 sidewinder missile, 4d8 each...opposed pilot roll, including range modifiers). If the chase ends without a victor, the drones will retreat back to New Hope.

The tribe has a compound based out of an old missile silo that straddles a canyon cliff. It is enclosed by a 12' high electrified/barbed wire fence (light shock barbed wire, Vigor fail causes 1 hit of fatigue). Many of the building have the Blue Vector logo and name on them, but they have been covered over by images of arrows pointing up.

Yonn is a chiseled man in his 50s wearing a bear skin. When he speaks his troops look to him with reverence. Rynna checks Notice to see that Yonn looks at her with a hint of familiarity. He might slip up and mention that she's a pilot without being first told so. Yonn says that he lived his life in the canyon and came out of it after he had a vision, days before the devastation. He saw an arrow streak across the sky pointing to the place he knows is the promised land, where none die and you can again see and speak with the truly faithful that have passed on. He took residence at the missile silo and has even since tried to follow the guides to the stars. He says he knows the destination in his head but that he can only speak of it when he has left the gravitational pull of Draco...to keep it secret from non-believers. He had encountered non-believers at the missile silo and they tried to kill him, so he pointed his finger to the sky and a rain of arrows shot down from the heavens and killed them all. He made his home there and journeyed to New Hope and Polydeus to gather disciples. He has about 20 men gathered.

Yonn wants to launch the missile in the silo, with a modified payload bay to hold 15 humans. The missile will only get the missile sub-orbital, so the power coil will get the habitation pod out of orbit and projected to Crossroads. From there he will get the rest of the group loaded.

Backstory: Yonn is a billionaire (John Torch) with no religious interest, but who recently had got under-the-table contracts on building some missile silos for Blue Vector just before the break of war on Draco and became stranded on the surface during the war. He is Wanted due to his connection to some bombings on Icarus and thus could not just be picked up by the IZC. He devised the Tribe as a way of getting people interested in leaving the planet. After having trouble building a sufficient rocket, he planned an elaborate and risky maneuver to get a cargo ship to the surface so he could hitch an interplanetary ride (along with all his stuff). When the plan went sour, he plotted to steal the power coils and put together a small ship that would get him to Crossroads.

At some inconvenient point in the discussions, an IZC drop ship will come by and offer to take any who lay down their arms and board the ship...otherwise they will lay waste to the rebels below, regardless of whose side they are on. They will use tear gas (Vigor or Fatigue) at first (-2 to visual activities in the cloud, shooting -2 if shooting in or out of the area unless doing suppressive fire into it). When appropriate, the drop ship will open fire or drop troops. It will also land and deposit a bulldozer to knock down the fence.

Crutsch is in the drop ship and will taunt the Draconians. He intercepted JJ's communications and tracked the team's transmissions via their tactical headsets. He will fire a gun from the side of the drop ship, or engage in melee if so provoked. Smarts to recognize Yonn...he may do so slowly. Dena will instruct Gil to videotape the proceedings (?). Dena will rush him and try to avenge her brother's death...she will try kill him, and when he's almost done she will cut off one of his fingers.

Yonn is not very courageous and will try to seek refuge in the silo, and/or try to launch the ship even without his full crew. He may challenge Crutsch legally if possible, and might suggest the team videotape Crutsch's actions. If the team can capture Crutsch's rage on video, they will reduce the chance that they will be Wanted. Macho is manning the side gun and Heavy leads the grunts on the ground. Both may have qualms about laying fire on their former friends once they recognize them...Persuasion rolls or opposed Spirit that may be reduced by various pleas and methods. Yonn may try to take off with a small crew (he needs at least 3 of his men/2 on ground and 8 turns in the ship). Piloting is required for a positive transition from ballistic to power coil power (may be combined).

In terms of raising Rynna's ship, they must use two power coils to do so. They will need to either take Yonn's power coil or convince him to contribute/come along and take his followers with them to their promised land, via Crossroads. They may be able to use power coils from the drop ship as well; using the power coil from it will be the same as using one of the power coils. Dena will not need a power coil if Crutsch is defeated and there is some guarantee of safety.

The crew of the Superior is largely composed of support staff. Any guards must roll spirit, -2

due to Damien's charisma, to stand their ground, if the team presents itself boldly. If the team presents evidence of Crutsch's crimes and bias, then they will be afforded liberties that way as well.

Astral will still be in the brig with JJ.

=====

Dena thanks the team for their work and offers Rynna, as a living saint of her people, two of the engines (either rocket or power-coil). Heavy notes that though the team members are "off the books" because they were never official members of the Superior crew, word will probably get out about them (unless the men who saw it can be intimidated or otherwise). He and Granola may help the group figure out how to keep from being locked up by the IZC.

Dena offers each of the team members Warmstone Necklaces, said to be made of the oldest rocks on the planet, and thus closest to their godly star origin. In daylight they look like dark shards of ore, but in darkness they glow a very dim fiery red. They do not feel warm to the touch, but in great cold they exude a constant heat, enough to keep one's hands from freezing. (+1 vs. Cold)

The team must decide how they are going to:

- deal with the Superior, which is missing a drop ship and comes with Crutsch
- deal with the IZC, who might have some problems with Crutsch's approach to his 'humanitarian' effort or might have the team Wanted for questioning.
- deal with the downed drop ship
- deal with Astral/JJ

Lectro and Dena and her crew will stay on Draco (long-term at least).

The team has various options:

- use the missile w/ engine as a makeshift spaceship
- Hook both engines up to Rynna's ship
- Take an engine from the downed drop ship

If they go to the Superior: If the Superior knows of Crutsch's death and doesn't have a good explanation, they may open fire, or demand they enter without weapons...they will enforce that by having all occupant exit the ship in the airlock in sight of the troops. They will turn over Astral and also JJ (who was officially discharged), both of whom have bright orange "prisoner" jumpsuits.

If they fix Rynna's ship, it will take about 5 days, requiring a Repair roll for each mechanism, else it takes a day longer (raises are each a day shorter).

If they go after the downed drop ship, they need to confront the pilot and/or disable communications to keep him from relaying information. Spirit roll for the pilot or he will surrender immediately.

On the way to Crossroads (actually each time they sleep), another team member has a dream.

CROSSROADS

Crossroads is a heavily populated trade city, and its large cities are filled with a combination of large corporate towers and slums. Basically, think of China.

If Astral is with the group, he can contact Astrid to try to set up some sort of meeting with Shade. She says that they should all come without their weapons.

Shade's office is in a part of town associated with a large monastery. He is in a large compound in a quiet district of the town, with a modest wall around the plot. As the team draws nearer, what looks like a typical ivy-covered brick house is in fact a bunker: the walls are over two feet thick; the glass is all bulletproof, shatter-resistant glass, and disguised as swallow nests are several security cameras, and downspouts with machine-gun nozzles nested in them. Two large guards stand about. They will challenge any comers, and are immune to any Spirit or Smarts tricks. If they let the team by, they will examine the back of their necks politely. They also strip the guests of any weapons.

The team is led into a large, airy room with large ceiling fans, where Shade is sitting behind a large oak desk piled with papers and several glass-opaque monitors. He is talking with people on the screens but cuts off his conversation politely as the team enters.

Shade is a man with a million ideas. He is small and somewhat pale, balding and a little slender, seemingly in his late forties but only in his early thirties. He says if he made himself look younger no one would take him seriously. He is a fast talker and shrewd. He is surprised that the team found him, but is thinking that perhaps they can help him with a 'job.' He is pleased that they are 'unchipped' as he might have some misgivings otherwise.

He did not 'chip' the team, but bought them as 'used' goods and simply sold them to the highest bidder. They had been used for 'special' jobs prior to him. 'Chipped' individuals can run in 'regular' (controlled) or 'free' (uncontrolled) modes. To switch modes you need a controller and an electronic key code. He doesn't possess the key codes, and to his knowledge there is no way to disable the chips' self-defense mechanism, which cuts off all neural processing in the host. To his knowledge, you cannot control the chips at a long distance. LaPierre of the mining facility on Cryolapse was buying skilled people because he couldn't possibly induce people to work there for proper wages; once they were there he made it very hard for them to leave. As a result he got work done that he couldn't otherwise, whether it was security, medics, pilots.

Astrid walks in. She is wearing a yellow romper underneath a chain-link corset, with f-me boots covered in skull and kitten decals, has a bandolier of \$1000-a-bottle champagne corks, and pigtails just behind her ears. Around her waist is a loosely-hung holster with a small flechette pistol. She is happy to see her brother and acknowledges HOG. She might admit that he was “more fun when he had the chip in him.” She asks Shade if she can have more halcitate dust.

He knows nothing about what project Baxter is except that it seems to stand for Biological Augmentation Experimentation something. His role in Baxter was to pass the money from seemingly legitimate channels from its primary contributor down to the recipients in a discreet fashion.

It was a contact at Blue Vector that provided him the ‘chipped’ bodies. Project Baxter is run by a wing of the Blue Vector corporation that typically focuses on new ventures.

It seems that Project Baxter has reached a phase where he is not needed any longer; a couple of attempts were made on his life this week already, and his contact seems more distant in his calls, if they are ever returned. He usually has about 5 attempts on his life a week, but the two last week were much more professional and sinister.

Shade wants to turn the tables on his masters. It’s a kind of do-or-die move on his part. There is a swanky party being thrown at the Blue Vector VIP Accommodation Center tomorrow; it is host to all the leaders of Blue Vector in this planetary system. He doesn’t want to hurt anyone, he just wants to learn about what Blue Vector is doing...right now he knows just enough to be dangerous to himself...maybe getting some more information will give him some leverage. He wants to perform an elaborate heist to gain access to some project information.

He learned through extensive investigation that in the headquarters building resides the mainframe that contains all information regarding their most secret projects. Project Baxter is one; but he is curious what else they have brewing. Something so large as to make Baxter seem but nothing.

His plan is to infiltrate the party by supplying the team members as “the help.” Valets, wait staff, bartenders, attendants, escorts. Blue Vector apparently doesn’t know that Shade owns the company that provides these services...or he owns the holding companies that control the majority share of the companies that make up the holdings of the directors of a trust for an individual who owns a third share of a company, another third of which is ‘operated’ in a similar way. Easier to say, he can pull the strings to make things happen.

Only 2 individuals can do any non-help actions during a 15 minute period. Try to do other interactions with other characters. Any room has a 1 in 8 chance of being occupied during a 5-minute period. In a 5 minute period, a person may try picking a lock or covertly entering a room. If they do encounter someone, they may be questioned or otherwise interacted with, which takes 5 minutes.

To hack the mainframe, the team must:

- Find the **power** junction and attach a power control jumper to it (red to red, else you're dead). When they attach the power jumper the power for the whole facility will go out (unless a raise on Agility). A fail on Agility causes a Vigor roll, which, if failed, causes electric shock/fatigue. More than two failures will cause a Security Check.
- Find the **network** hub and attach a route blocker onto it. Use Smarts to do so flawlessly. Same as above, except instead of a Vigor roll, do an Agility roll to keep from getting tangled in the network and causing a network outage (doing so will cause an immediate Security Check).
- The team must get physical access to the room with the **mainframe**. Then they must go to the mainframe console and hack the security locks. Smarts -2 to hack the system unless they have Knowledge (Computers or Electronics). Failure 3 times will trigger a Security Check. (or Dramatic Task rules? p. 96)

A Security Check involves a quiet lockdown of all doors and inspection by one of the unarmed guards of the area(s) in question. Notice to notice problems (like the power jumper or route blocker). A help member (except Escorts) not back within the time frame triggers a Security Check.

Once they have access to the terminal by completing the above steps, there is a way to block the intrusion detection system for sixty seconds. In that time they can covertly download probably three or so files. They must decide which files to download, and coordinate the transfer so that they can download the files they want before the intrusion detection system sees anything. Shade will review the information with the group if they successfully delete his file. He will know because the shadows that are watching him will lift immediately. (Smarts to search once the system is hacked.)

Jobs (can be rotated exc. for escort, all others are \$100/hr with occasional \$200 tip)

- Escort (500/hr) (\$1000)
- Wait Staff/Valet/Attendant 4
- Bartender 1
- Game runner?

Shade does NOT control the guards; they are run by Blue Vector. No (detectable) weapons will be allowed. Astrid insists on going. She throws a fit if anyone says she shouldn't.

The team can use their tactical headsets (if they clean them up) because all help are expected to fairly silently coordinate. Shade will provide the standard black garb used by help.

They should probably prepare a "plan b" if they need to get out quickly.

He hopes to allow the assassin in using either a fire hose, or a hook shot/grapple, or he can try

just climbing.

PREPARATIONS

Astrid has a serious makeup and fashion makeover; she is wearing a little black dress and black strap shoes, and her hair is dyed black and coiffed into a slightly spiky but attractive cut with a few select bangs. This gives her a Charisma of 2 for the evening. Shade refuses to say how much he spent on her to make her this way, but it's "more than I ever made off you guys."

BLUE VECTOR VIP ACCOMMODATIONS

The escorts are chosen first, by those needing escort: Opposed Spirit roll with Charisma modifiers applied for the candidate escorts. Best difference of those present is given the job. The 'regular' help takes an elevator to the 85th floor of the 86-floor building. They are taken one-by-one into a screening room with bulletproof glass walls manned by an unarmed guard (as an armed guard watches from the security room. The kitchen is off to the right and all help is herded in there. If anyone tries to take something, they must use usual notice/stealth, or use Smarts to explain away, etc.

In the kitchen they meet the cook, Gerard, and another man there with a prosthetic face helping him named Fletcher. Notice at -2 (any character from Cryolapse mines) to feel that he is familiar, raise to notice he is LaPierre's assistant Dale Staller, the first guy to meet them when they were brought back by Jimmers. If found out, he says he ran away after the Fenner Beast rampaged through the facility, and returned to Crossroads because he had some family on the planet.

Guests have primary traits that interest them (listed below, same for spouses/partners). You can use opposed rolls on those characteristics to get information from them. Failure may have various dire consequences. Success will reveal information (about their rooms or about projects).

Guest activities that they might indulge help with:

- cigars (vigor to keep from choking and getting Fatigue -1) (vigor)
- pool (can play for money) (agility)
- bartending/casual chatter (smarts)
- darts (agility)
- antiques (smarts), e.g. spirit head from the Lord Nelson (East India Company)
- meditation (spirit)
- old fencing swords (strength)

Guests:

1. Diane Moon, fiancée of Gerald Foster; only one from the Inner Core planets. Lived on Icarus until 2 months ago. May recognize Damien. (Smarts)

2. Jenny J.: Bored Teen: can't take her teleputer with her. Will scrounge around for team. (Spirit)
3. Jeremiah J. Johnson (Clementine), resource exploitation (Vigor)
4. Wayne X. Birch (Wanda), logistics/transport specialist (Agility)
5. Adele Cook (needs male escort) 50s, secretive about speciality (Spirit)
6. Drake Havasham: (needs female escort but only out of convention) Bree's older brother, computer genius. Slips up about something to do with computer room. May know how to operate the 3D walls. He likes men with dark eyes (Gil). (Smarts)
7. Frederic LaSalle, President of exploratory operations; outer systems. (Carla) (Strength)

LaSalle calls everyone together for a presentation at 8:30; he will make a joke about having to kill the help if anyone slips up and tells them anything. All the walls are transformed to 3D screens that make it seem as though they are transported to various planets, as he describes the breadth of the work they've been doing. He then talks about what a crazy year it's been and how they are looking forward to big things coming up soon, and how they're going to have to push their staff really hard in the next months and years. But the rewards, the rewards and the unparalleled success.

One of the guests' wives (Diane Moon) will blanch at the sight of Damien. She remembers his face. Smarts (d6) to recognize the face and get -4 charisma, raise to remember exactly what Damien is wanted for: bombing a hospital in Icarus, a colonial ring around the red dwarf Kap. Spirit to keep from screaming in terror; Vigor if failed and either throws up or passes out if that is failed.

Guests will slip up a little and mention something about one of the following projects (1d6 to determine which) during various encounters.

Time	Actions	Plot points
7:30 pm	Escorts are chosen; Help is scanned and taken in; only access kitchen at this time.	
8:00 pm	Guests arrive, hors d'oeuvres served	Find power controls, scout around, find network cabling, find mainframe. A hint about a project is revealed.
8:15 pm		An upstairs room location is revealed
8:30 pm	Presentation; lights dimmed, guests focused;	hints about a project may be revealed
8:45 pm		Another room location is

		revealed
9:00 pm	Food is served; LaSalle poisoned (Vigor and supportive care to survive, see Venomous Poison); Security Check: all help is accounted for including escorts.	hints about a project may be revealed
9:15 pm		Another room location is revealed
9:30 pm	Various after-dinner games and amusements	
9:45 pm		
10:00 pm	Evening ends; help is dismissed (except for escorts)	

1 Project Diamond Screen - Development of a mind-control chip

- makes subject 100% suggestible when key code is transmitted
- subject has no memory of events
- durable chip, shuts down neural impulses if 'cracked' or removed
- 100% complete

2 Project Dark Mirror - Development of a non-lethal DNA-targetable airborne virus and its cure

- Symptoms for 2-3 weeks
- < 5% mortality, < 0.5% mortality on DNA targets
- 80% complete; est. completion 3-6 months

3 Project Baxter - Biological Augmentation Experimentation of humans and other animals

- Subjects must increase strength by 200%
- Subjects must be capable of living for at least 2 years or 4 months when continuously used (no sleep)
- Minor setback; 95% complete; est. completion 1 month

4 Project Crystal Dome - Invasion of the Deep Well system

- Commences once Projects Diamond Screen, Baxter, and Dark Mirror are complete
- Create outbreaks in appropriately remote areas (1 million people infected)
- Have Blue Vector medical services 'help' participants
- Take 5% of the viable infected for chipping and augmentation as grunts (50,000 total)
- Train grunt armies on Cryolapse, Draco, and Verde for 6 months
- DNA-Target political leaders with virus and chip them
- Steps:
 - Launch invasion.
 - ???
 - Profit!

5 Project Clown Shoe

- Fake project, sets off Security Check when opened

6 Project Finder's Keeper's - The covert clearing of Cryolapse and Draco for re-districting and re-development within the Blue Vector contract period of 15 years.

- Official designation of Planet Uninhabited erases all existing land rights
- Blue Vector will buy up large, cheap tracts of lands and mineral leases
- Redevelopment will be done using Blue Vector services and establishing BV utilities
- Cryolapse: 50%, completion within 5 years. Primary tactic: terraforming failure.
- Draco: 99%, ready once air defenses removed. Primary Tactic: nuclear war.
- Even if official dehabitation is not obtained, lower land costs will benefit Blue Vector

The team is paid if they complete the evening's work. Either way the team needs to successfully escape the facility.

Shade reveals that Damien is Wanted for the bombing of a hospital in Icarus, and suggests that they need to go there to clear his name. He quotes his favorite Bible verse: "If a problem doth come around, thou shalt whip it; yea, and thou shalt it *goodly* whip!"

Things to wrap up:

- pay everyone
- load up ship
- send off to inner core system: Icarus