



WILDFIRE™
Igniting Imagination

THE STYGIAN CYCLE V:
GO TOWARDS THE LIGHT



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



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XX

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(1) Overview	4
(2) Background	8
(3) Go Towards the Light: Act I	10
(4) Go Towards the Light: Act II	16
(5) Go Towards the Light: Act III	29
(6) Seethari	34

Welcome to *Go Towards the Light*, the fifth 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 2 Characters, which are those that have received 11-20 Advances. If your Characters are more or less 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 being called in from drills to investigate the sudden reappearance of a colony on the Saturnine moon, Iapetus. Eden has been gone for decades.

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.

Iapetus

This adventure takes place in and around the colony on Iapetus. The Saturnine moon is 1440 km/895 miles in diameter. Its predominant feature is a high mountainous ridge that separates the walnut-like moon into two unique halves. There's a striking difference between its light and dark sides. The leading edge is composed entirely of darkened matter and the trailing edge reflects brilliant white – giving a kind of yin-yang look.

The moon's rotation is locked in position over Saturn, with an orbit of just over 79 days. People just sync up with the local 24 hour Earth Standard Time, since there isn't much to differentiate day from night.

Gravity

The gravity of Iapetus is .025G, which is considered Zero Gravity, us-

ing the rules found on p. 137-138 of *The Void Core*. Inside the colony, this is managed by energized plates to simulate gravity, as well as a communal gravity ring. Outside, getting around can be difficult without the help of heavy, four-wheeled ATV's or low-grav skimmers.

Environment

The environment of the dark side of the moon is $-143^{\circ}\text{C}/-226^{\circ}\text{F}$, which is considered Super-Cold, and the bright side bounces sunlight, so it gets down to $-173^{\circ}\text{C}/-280^{\circ}\text{F}$. Either of these are considered Super Cold using the rules found on p. 136 of *The Void Core*. This means an exposed person will die pretty quickly. Environment suits combat this.

Atmosphere

Iapetus doesn't have an atmosphere – it's a cold, barren rock. Anyone exposed to the vacuum will suffer from Explosive Decompression, using the rules found on p. 133 of *The Void Core*. Again, this is managed by environment suits.

Surface

The moon is covered with ice and lots of impact craters, with some rocks. There's a giant equatorial ridge, with 20 km/12 mile tall peaks, and squashed-in poles. The craters are hard to navigate, but the rest of Iapetus is pretty smooth.

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 a Character has the necessary resources, simply total up the dice pools from the Attribute + Skill necessary. They gain all the clues from that number of Plot Points on down. Easily gained information requires four Plot Points, information that requires some expertise requires six Plot Points, and information that is difficult to glean requires eight or ten Plot Points.

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://www.reddit.com/r/TheVoidRPG/>.

For example, the Characters wish to search the quarters 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 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 2 Characters, which means they have earned 11-20 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 role-playing 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*.



Apparently, the Characters aren't destined to enjoy time off. After the incident aboard the Princess of Titan, the Wardens are eager to get back on a mission. First, however, they're being run through some routine readiness drills in orbit around Saturn in the shadow of the Umbrella.

Little do they know that the next mission is right under their noses.

BACKGROUND

Thirty-two years ago, a small religious organization established the single colony that has ever graced the surface of the Saturnine moon, Iapetus. One year later, almost to the day, the entire colony vanished. Since then, the moon has been strictly off-limits except for a single military base, Fort Saragossa, established eleven years ago on the opposite side of the moon.

One week ago, a communication from the colony took everyone by surprise. It seemed business as usual, as Colonial Administrator Matisha Dawar requested an update on a supply run that was running behind schedule. Unsurprisingly, the message sparked a frenzy of activity at the highest levels of government. Recon flights confirmed the colony has reappeared and looked exactly as it did before it vanished.

The colony's Administrator has been calling in, requesting updates on the arrival of their resupply. She been getting more and more irritated the longer the silence goes on.

The Wardens have been called in to investigate. The entire moon and surrounding space has been locked down. Even the Fort has been closed to all traffic. The Wardens are tasked with making contact with the colony, determining what happened, why the colonists vanished, and why they're all back. Finally, they are ordered to take whatever actions are deemed necessary to ensure the safety of the Republic of Saturn.

The Moon, Iapetus

The Saturnine moon of Iapetus is perhaps one of the oddest celestial bodies in the solar system. It has very little gravity due to the unusually low density of the moon – it is mostly ice, rather than rock. The poles of the moon are squashed while the equatorial region actually bulges outward. This gives the entire moon a walnut-like appearance in the minds of many.

Iapetus is locked in synchronous rotation with Saturn, so one hemisphere faces the gas giant at all times. The eastern and western hemispheres each have a very distinct coloration which contrast starkly with one another. The eastern half has the white-grey coloration one would expect of a body composed primarily of ice, but the western hemisphere has a distinct dark brown appearance, with an almost vivid white around the poles.

For a long time, the moon was overlooked for any major colonization efforts for a variety of reasons. The lack of exploitable resources was the major one. Thirty-two years ago,

this changed when a religious group requested permission to colonize the dark side of the moon. One year later the colony simply vanished – people, buildings, and infrastructure. There was never any explanation for the loss.

The light side of the moon supports a military base known as Fort Saragossa. This base was established eleven years ago to act as a strategic defensive element for the Saturnine system as a whole. The exact composition and nature of the base are highly classified. Beyond the base itself, the rest of the moon is considered a quarantine zone. Even the troopers that occupy the base are not allowed beyond its well-marked borders.

SUMMARY

Following is a brief summary of the events that will transpire during the adventure.

Act I

While conducting crew efficiency drills aboard their ship, travelling through Saturnine space, the crew is ordered to make themselves available to the Republic of Saturn for investigation into an unusual event. The Wardens find themselves landing near the recently reappeared colony of Eden, tasked with determining what's really happening in the colony.

Once they land, the team finds an irate Colony Administrator who demands to know why their supplies have not been delivered. It soon becomes apparent that no one in the

colony realizes that anything unusual has happened. According to their own internal systems, not a single day has passed since the colony vanished to the rest of the world. Of course, oddities start popping up.

Act II

It soon becomes apparent that there's more to this colony than meets the eye. On the surface, everything appears normal and the people seem to be exactly who they say they are. However, small red flags begin to pile up. As they do, some members of the colony seem to become more distant, less cooperative, and eventually downright hostile. It's at this point the Wardens realize that the colonists are not who they seem to be – at least not in the purest sense. They're clones, and there are literally hundreds of each colonist safely tucked away in a cold storage unit beneath the colony, each with a horrific secret. It's here that the team encounters a Seethari.

Act III

With the discovery of the clones, the Colonial Administrator drops all pretense of cooperation. The Wardens must now find a way to escape the colony, get back to their ship, and call for help. Seethari, in hiding until now, come out of the woodwork, adding to the danger the team faces as they fight for their freedom. Even once they are aboard their ship, they discover that it has already been infested and must clear it before they can lift off – and call in heavier firepower to level the colony.

ACT 1:

A CALL IN THE NIGHT

Goals: To introduce the mysteriously re-appeared Eden colony on Iapetus, to bring the Characters to the colony, and to kick off the investigation there.

Setting: The Characters' Knight's Errant corvette, Greyson Space Station in orbit around Iapetus, the Eden colony.

Cast: Warden Commander Magoro, in charge of the exercises, Colonel Michelle Borges, from the Saturnine Office of Republic Security, Colonial Administrator Matisha Dawar of Eden, Ekene Jalloh, the Administrator's lackey, Jamin Al-Razi and Musa Saleh, Eden colony workers.

During this act, the Characters will be called upon to investigate a colony established by a religious group more than thirty years ago, which has mysteriously re-appeared after having vanished without a trace. They will be pulled out of exercises they have been conducting and told to head to the Saturnine moon of Iapetus, where they are to place their services at the disposal of the Republic of Saturn.

Scene 1:

Exercise Interrupted

The team is holding station in Saturnine space as they conduct a variety of routine drills. Even after everything, it's something Wardens have to do.

Read the following to your players:

The last week has been exhausting. Ever since Warden Commander

Magoro arrived for your annual assessment, he's been putting each of you through the ringer. You've been tested individually and as a team, in a variety of procedural simulations. The only good thing is that there's only a week left before you can get back to dealing with cults, unspeakable creatures, and life or death situations.

Currently, you're in the middle of a sabotage simulation, in which a pair of fanatical cultists have managed to set your ship on a collision course with an inhabited space station. You were asleep, but the alarms changed that. You've gathered your team on the bridge.

The simulation is this – a pair of cultists have infiltrated the Characters' Knight's Errant-class corvette. They've hacked into the navigation computers and locked the ship on a direct intercept with the Curiosity Space Station. Curiosity is a medium-sized orbital structure housing roughly 25,000 people. It's primarily a cargo transfer point for the Saturnine system, but also has light industrial operations.

The Characters know there are two intruders onboard. One has been located in engineering, but the second remains hidden. The cultists have already robbed the armory, so they're armed. The intruders are being simulated by repair drones, which have been modified to carry stun weapons and reprogrammed to be hostile towards anything alive.

The hidden cultist is in the missile launcher access bay, working to hot-

wire a missile to fire on the station. This is the cultists' backup plan, should the Characters regain control over the ship's navigational controls.

This scene is just set-up, so feel free to play it loose and fast. Overriding the navigational lockout requires success at a Hard Cleverness + Computer Test. While doing so, the Characters can discover what the cultist in weapons control is up to. They will have to split up, since either cultist can do serious damage if the other is stopped. The intruders have locked themselves within their respective areas, so locks will need to be bypassed or accesses must be found. Finally, someone needs to notify the station, so that they can take emergency measures in preparation for an attack.

Interrupt the Characters when they are in a tense and dramatic moment, or when the players are getting bored. A priority call comes in, and it's not part of the exercise. The Characters will need to break off the simulation to answer, with no protest from Magoro – real work is always a priority.

The call comes from the Office of Republic Security on Titan, with a short 15 second delay. A woman with dark, curly hair and an olive complexion, somewhere in her mid-thirties, introduces herself as Colonel Michelle Borges. Play out the conversation however works best for you, but she'll communicate the following information.

- The colony of Eden, established a little over three decades ago, vanished down to the founda-

tion almost exactly one year after its founding. The colony was established by a religious splinter group as a way to live in isolation, in a place where no one else was likely to bother them. Its disappearance was never explained and since then, with the exception of Fort Saragossa, Iapetus has been off-limits.

- One day ago, a communication with Saturn Space Control (SSC) originated from Eden. Colony Administrator Matisha Dawar received a request for a standard update on the arrival of a resupply ship. Everything about the communication was normal, though sent using technology from thirty years ago.
- Research has found that there was indeed a resupply run to the colony that was behind schedule before Eden vanished.
- Colony Administrator Matisha Dawar was the leader of the colony at the time, according to records. She's originally from the Middle Eastern region of Earth, as are many of the colonists.
- Recon flights have confirmed that the colony has reappeared. Furthermore, all transponders and signals match the patterns used at the time, and timestamps make it appear that, from the colonists' perspectives, no time has passed since Eden disappeared.
- The Republic of Saturn formally requests that the Wardens inves-

tigate the matter. This Characters are the closest unassigned team.

At this point, the Characters will need to head for the Greyson Station, where they meet up with Colonel Borges for a final briefing before heading Eden. There are landing facilities near the colony that will support the team's ship.

The Warden Commander

Warden Commander Magoro is a physically imposing man of South African heritage. His skin is unusually dark, given the racial mixing that has occurred in the last few decades. Ultimately, his role in this adventure is die a rather gruesome death. Magoro will travel to speak directly with the colony's leadership, while the Characters investigate the rest of the facility. He will not participate in direct confrontations and can be considered to be 'off-screen' until his moment arrives.

Fort Saragossa

Since the reappearance of the colony, the base has been on lockdown. Saturn would rather leave the investigation to the Wardens, leaving Saturnine military forces out of it, if possible. However, should the need arise, support from Fort Saragossa can and will be dispatched. However, the threat needs to be proven dire for this to happen. The Characters should not count on support from the base, unless things really go downhill.

Scene 2:

Greyson & Eden

The Characters' arrival at Greyson Station is uneventful. They board and meet with SSC and ORS officials for a final briefing before heading down to the colony. Colonel Borges leads the briefing.

Read the following to your players:

After a quick meeting at the airlock, you are led to a small briefing room near the docking area. It consists of a small round table, upon which are four monitors. As you take seats with the Colonel, Magoro, and several Saturnine officials, the monitors come alive.

The monitors display real-time telemetry of the colony. It's a quiet, serene scene, with structures that appear to be from several decades ago. A landing pad, currently empty, sits near a small dome, which is connected to a larger dome via tunnel. Several utility buildings surround the colony, including the old-style nuclear reactor that provides power.

The images are replaced by a list of known personnel. Nothing, beyond their orthodox religious beliefs, stands out. The mix of colonists is typical of a small settlement, with engineers, teachers, doctors, and similarly essential personnel. There are also about two dozen children.

This is mostly a review of the information already transmitted in the initial request for help, but Colonel Borg-

es notes that they have maintained a media clamp around the reappearance of the colony. He also tells your team that communications with the colony have been kept to a minimum as well. However, the colonists have been informed that they've been missing for 30 years and that a team is on the way. They've been told this to ensure that the colonists are healthy and otherwise unharmed, and that fresh food and fuel will be a part of the deal.

As a final note, the Colonel tells the team that the troops at Fort Saragossa are on stand-by, should they be needed. However, there's currently no real evidence to indicate the need for such force.

On the way back to the ship, Magoro quietly says, "I'll be heading down with you. I'll run interference with the colony's leadership so that you can do your job – and to keep their eyes off your backs."

Then, the team will head to Eden. As they approach, a representative from the colony will contact the team to authorize landing. The Eden rep will also inform the team that they have people standing by to help off-load the supplies they brought.

The landing pad is very basic and out on the surface of the planet. As the Knight's Errant lands, a pair of environmental suit-clad colonists will emerge from a nearby building, which connects to the main dome via a short tunnel. They have a powered lift and cargo sled to take the supplies to the colony.

The two men, are friendly, unarmed, and non-threatening. They're just a couple of random colonists who have been assigned to off-load the cargo (see below). They'll do this by themselves if left to it, but will not feel slighted if someone opts to help or supervise.

The workers are Jamin and Musa. Jamin Al-Razi is a thirty-something with a friendly disposition. He sports dark skin, with a thick beard, but thinning hair. He's fairly non-descript otherwise. Musa Saleh is a tall, powerfully-built man, with a thick beard and hair that is streaked through with grey. He's north of fifty, but still in good shape. Musa is relatively quiet, but will answer question.

The pair have heard the rumors that they've been 'missing' for thirty years but, from their perspective, they haven't been and are amused by all the hubbub that has suddenly erupted around them. They don't have much in the way of useful information and, if pressed too hard, will recommend the team talk to Colonial Administrator Dawar. If questioned, they'll mostly just shake their heads in disbelief and mutter things about this being why they moved all the way out here.

The Warden Commander will limit the team to sidearms at this point. The situation is likely to be tense enough and, at least according to records, the colony itself has no weapons more threatening than a kitchen knife.

Scene 3: Meet & Greet

Inside the colony, the Characters will be confronted by Matisha Dawar, the colony's Administrator, and Ekene Jalloh, her lackey.

Matisha is a stocky, olive-skinned woman with features that seem to fall somewhere between feminine and masculine. Her voice is deep for a woman's. Matisha took control of the colony a few month after it was founded, following the accidental death of the previous leader. She's aloof and finds this investigation to be an unnecessary intrusion upon the colony.

Ekene Jalloh is dark-skinned, short, and skinny. His expression is one of perpetual surprise, and his buggy eyes almost glow against his skin. He's filled with nervous energy and is always moving some part of his body. He defers to the Administrator whenever she is present and generally doesn't answer questions in her presence.

In this scene Warden Commander Magoro will initiate the conversation, but will leave it to the team to introduce themselves.

Read the following to your players:

As the airlock cycles and the inner door opens, a pair of colonists await your arrival. You recognize Administrator Dawar immediately. Next to her stands a short, ebony-skinned man who bounces on his toes with nervous energy.

"When can we expect the balance of our supplies?" are the first words

out of the Administrator's mouth. Her words are clipped and her tone one of growing impatience.

Magoro holds a hand out towards her, a political smile hanging on his face, "Administrator Dawar, we've brought enough supplies to support this colony for the next month."

This doesn't go over well. "We ordered a year's worth. I don't care if we have been gone for thirty years. I'm responsible for the well-being of my people and those supplies were paid for, in full, and it appears the company is still in business. I see no reason for any delay."

Magoro replies with the practiced calm of a diplomat. "And you will get your supplies immediately following this investigation. Your goods are being assembled as we speak, though we've had to make a few substitutions. Some of the things on your list aren't around anymore. It's been a long time."

Her gaze turns to your team, giving each of you an appraising look.

"And this is the team who will be investigating us?" she asks, though it seems more of a rhetorical question.

"Yes," replies Magoro.

"I'm not really certain why we need an investigation," says the Administrator. She holds up a hand, dismissing any interruptions. "Yes, I know that our apparent disappear-

ance is odd. I assure you, however, that my people are just fine. We settled here to get away from this kind of fascism and now you're forcing yourselves on us."

Magoro is about to say something that you hope is genius, but the Administrator arrogantly shushes him.

"It doesn't matter. Governments will be governments and they're never happy if they're not intruding in honest people's lives. Moreso if those honest people just want live apart from the rest."

She gestures to the man standing next to her. "This is Ekene Jalloh. He will assist you in your investigations. Please try to keep you activities as non-invasive as you can. My people are already a bit on edge, as you might suspect."

At this point the team should feel free to float any initial questions they have to the Administrator. Once any questions have been fielded she and the Warden Commander will depart leaving the team and Ekene alone in the small room.

The following information can be gleaned here if asked about:

- Until informed by authorities, no one in the colony had reason to believe anything was amiss, as far as Matisha and Ekene are aware.

- The Administrator seems very concerned about the supplies, but unconcerned at apparently being lost for decades. If asked, Matisha will simply say that God must have felt they were needed more in this time than their own.
- If asked what God wants them for, the Administrator will shrug her shoulders and say, "All will be revealed when He decides."
- The colony was formed to remove the faithful from the sins of the modern age, to live as simple an existence as possible. The moon was chosen for its isolation and lack of corporate interest.

Once questions have been aired, the Warden Commander and the Colony Administrator will depart for Matsha's office. Ostensibly, they'll work on getting the colony re-integrated into the solar system and Magoro will update her on changes over the last thirty years.

ACT 2:

REALLY ODD ENDS

Goals: To investigate the colony and colonists first-hand, to escort several colonists off-planet, to end Magoro's life in an ugly but telling way, to dig deeper into the colony's irregularities away from prying eyes, and to reveal the secret cloning lab.

Setting: In and around the Eden colony

Cast: Warden Commander Magoro, Colonel Michelle Borges, Colonial Administrator Matisha Dawar of Eden, Ekene Jalloh, regular colonists of all shapes and sizes, two colonists who want out

The investigation begins normally enough, but it doesn't take long for oddities to start popping up. At first, the colonists are very helpful. However, as the investigation progresses, they become less so. Eventually, the team uncovers evidence of the occult here. Perhaps more disturbingly, they also discover that the colonists are clones and that there's a whole host of them hidden away. Things really take a turn when Warden Commander Magoro becomes... ill.

Scene 4:

The Investigation Begins

With the Warden Commander off to debrief the Colony Administrator, the team is left to begin their own investigations. There are a number of directions this could take, several of which can be conducted simultaneously. It is not unreasonable, at this stage of

things, for various experts on the team to head off in different directions. Below are some of the possible avenues of investigation, including what may be discovered in each.

If the team does opt to split up, Ekene will be less than happy – part of his role is to keep an eye on the Wardens. However, he won't stop them. Instead, Ekene will insist on providing Characters with an escort, to guide them and liaise with the colonists. This is non-negotiable and Ekene will eventually lose his temper if pushed. No one goes into the colony alone.

In general, the colonists will be less than helpful. They'll be looking over the Wardens' shoulders, following them around, and throwing up roadblocks if the Wardens get too close to things better left secret. A common tactic is for colonists to demand that a Character stops what he's doing until the local can get guidance from a higher authority. Such guidance will be slow going. It all funnels up to the Administrator, and she thinks everything needs significant consideration.

Avenue 1: Interview the Colonists

Talking to the colonists is likely to be one of the first things the Characters do. They won't be able to talk to everyone, but they'll meet enough colonists to get a basic sense of things.

Roleplay this how you want, but we recommend playing out small snippets of a bunch of interviews.

While there aren't any specific NPCs in this investigation, most colonists

will be in one of four mental states. Each of these mental states requires success at the listed Skills in order to get information, generally at an Average Difficulty.

Angry

Skill: Intimidate or Persuade

The colonist is irritated by the way the Wardens are intruding. Yes, it's odd that the colony disappeared, but they're fine and just want to live their lives.

Confused

Skill: Insight or Persuade

The colonist wants as many answers as the Wardens do. Did the colony really just vanish? Who's the governing body? What's a Warden? How could a colony just vanish?

Friendly

Skill: Fraternize or Insight

The colonist is perfectly happy talking with the Wardens. While he'd like the investigation to end as quickly as possible, it's a perfectly valid response from the authorities.

Reserved

Skill: Fraternize or Savoir Faire

Getting information out of the colonist will be a challenge. He just wants to be left alone, but is a little more understanding of the need for an investigation.

It will take up to three days to get enough interviews in for any interesting information to come to light.

Investigation: Colonist Interviews **Plot Points Earned By:**

- Awareness + Insight
 - 2 Plot Points – The colonists are nervous. The sudden appearance of the Wardens have many of them on edge. Most do not seem to question the fact that their colony vanished for 30 years.
 - 4 Plot Points – Some of the responses feel rehearsed, with too much consistency in the answers. In some cases, it almost seems as though the colonist expected the question to be asked.
 - 6 Plot Points – There's a distinct lack of variation in speech mannerisms, which one would expect in such a young (by its own reckoning) colony. The accents of the various colonists are almost identical, as though they've lived together for many years, not just a couple.
 - 8 Plot Points – The team gets the feeling that there's a lot not being said. Any unwanted probes are expertly deflected. They're trained, which is unusual. This definitely speaks to a cult vibe.
- There is some information that the Characters will glean for free.
- There have been no deaths or accidents in the history of the colony.
 - A number of the colonists have extensive backgrounds in mining operations, though there's no mine near the colony.

- Some of the colonists want to leave the colony as soon as they can. They're freaked out by the news that the colony had vanished and consider it an ill-omen.
- The Characters notice no religious icons of any kind on any colonists. There are no crosses, stars, or similar symbols that one expects from a deeply religious person.
- 8 *Plot Points* – Some parts of the system are black-boxed and locked off of the network. The technicians have no idea what's in them. Only the highest-level administrators have access.

Investigation: Computer Systems
Plot Points Earned By:

- Cleverness + Computers

Avenue 2: Check the Computers

Going through the colony's computers is something the Character's will want to do. They at least need to confirm if the computer's agree that the colony vanished.

They can interview the colony technicians, check the computer systems directly, and check the hardware.

Investigation: Technician Interviews
Plot Points Earned By:

- Awareness + Insight
- Demeanor + Savoir-Faire
- 2 *Plot Points* – The computers were installed by the contractors who built the facility, before the colonists arrived. The Characters gain insight into the general structure of their databases, security procedures, maintenance histories, and so forth.
- 4 *Plot Points* – The system records any access via user IDs, biometric data, and passwords for even the most trivial task – like playing solitaire. All activity is linked to a particular user.
- 6 *Plot Points* – The colony has no backup systems. The colonists didn't have the money.
- Hour 1: 2 *Plot Points* – The time-stamps on the system clocks are behind the solar standard time by the expected amount, given the absence of the colony if the shift in time were instantaneous from their perspective. In short, the computer thinks it's still in the past.
- Hour 2: 4 *Plot Points* – Personnel records appear to be consistent with the governmental records of the colonists when Eden was initially established. In short, the people check out.
- Hour 3: 6 *Plot Points* – A single record for Khai Massri shows he died shortly after the colony's founding. However, no deaths were reported by the colony. The record was found in a disused backup.
- Hour 4: 8 *Plot Points* – There are some ghost links behind each personnel record. They're shielded behind heavy security and seem to link to a hidden database. The

only computer with any sort of access is the Administrator's.

- *Hour 6: 10 Plot Points* – The Character gets a glimpse of the hidden database. It links to a backup personnel database, with additional encrypted entries. Furthermore, there's another network isolated from the main system, except for a single networked connection that runs through only one computer in the colony.

Investigation: Checking Hardware
Plot Points Earned By:

- Awareness + Notice
- *2 Plot Points* – Nothing unusual. The computers seem to be well-maintained, if out-dated.
- *4 Plot Points* – Some of the cables appear to be unusually old.
- *6 Plot Points* – Based on dust patterns, every computer in the colony appears to have been recently moved. The hardware also has less wear-and-tear than the rest of the equipment in the colony.

Avenue 3: Mechanical Systems

The Characters will also likely want to physically inspect the colony, checking out structures, conduit, power plant, and the other machinery that keeps the colony ticking.

Investigation: Interior Survey
Plot Points Earned By:

- Cleverness + Mechanics
- *2 Plot Points* – There seems to be nothing amiss. The physical structures are in good repair, as is the rest of the colony's equipment and vehicles.

- *4 Plot Points* – There are signs of unusual wear and tear on the physical structures, more than is usual for a young colony. It's mostly small things, like worn-out chairs, stained walkways, and so forth. If the colony purchased mostly used equipment, that could explain most of it.
- *6 Plot Points* – The more the survey moves forward, the more the buildings look as though they've been in use for decades – not just a couple of years. In fact, there are signs of recently completed maintenance work throughout the colony.
- *8 Plot Points* – Nearly every valve, seal, or similar system that is rated to last for decades show signs of having recently been replaced. It would be interesting to take a look at the originals.

Investigation: Exterior Survey
Plot Points Earned By:

- Cleverness + Mechanics
- *2 Plot Points* – The exterior is well-maintained. There are no signs of potential problems.
- *4 Plot Points* – Several locations have recently been painted, though there's no obvious reason behind the effort.
- *6 Plot Points* – There are a number of buildings that show signs of being refurbished. In addition, some of the grounds around the colony have been recently smoothed. There are also unusual mounds of dirt that seem out of place.
- *8 Plot Points* – The Characters discover a meteor, embedded in the

side of one of vehicle garages. The garage itself is unpressurized, so it's likely no one realized it had been hit – no out-gassing would have occurred. If the Characters think to check it out, they'll find that a meteor storm hit this region of the moon about a decade ago. If the building wasn't here, it couldn't have been hit by falling meteors.

Investigation: Power Grid Survey
Plot Points Earned By:

- Cleverness + Engineering: Electrical
- *2 Plot Points* – The power grid is operating as expected.
 - *4 Plot Points* – The reactor output seems to be running at a consistently higher level than called for, given the size of the colony. Nothing unsafe, just unusual.
 - *6 Plot Points* – A closer look at the grid power usage logs shows that power levels within the colony are what one would expect. This gives rise to the question of where the excess power being generated by the reactor is going.
 - *8 Plot Points* – There are signs of a secondary grid being powered by the reactor. The Characters notice that the reactor has been briefly spiking from time to time, but with no sign of an extra load on the main power grid. That has to mean there's another grid feeding off the same reactor.

Investigation: Power Plant Survey
Plot Points Earned By:

- Cleverness + Mechanics and Engineering: Electrical required
- *2 Plot Points* – The plant is well-maintained, though appears to be previously owned, given the apparent wear and tear.
 - *4 Plot Points* – A large number of essential components appear to have been recently replaced. Each involves a component with an expected lifespan of twenty years or more. There are no signs of the replaced twin.
 - *6 Plot Points* – An investigation of the plant's exterior reveals two distinct power feeds. One powers the colony, while the other is buried.
 - *8 Plot Points* – There's definitely a second facility somewhere feeding off the reactor. It's apparent that the secondary feeds were installed after the initial certifications were awarded to the colony. It's not illegal, but it's unusual.

Investigation: Life Support
Plot Points Earned By:

- Cleverness + Engineering: Life Support
- *2 Plot Points* – The colony's life support systems are in good working order, and there are plenty of spare scrubbers in inventory.
 - *4 Plot Points* – The colonists obviously planned for expansion, as the life support plant is sufficient for about four-times the colony's population. It's unusual, but not unheard of. Normally, these plants are expanded over time, as larger

facilities are more expensive to operate.

- **6 Plot Points** – Taking a look at inventory levels, the Characters find it odd that the colony requested even more scrubbers as part of their resupply. They have plenty given their current population and no use for extra inventory.
- **8 Plot Points** – The Characters take a closer look at the scrubbers in inventory. They discover that many of the storage cases are actually empty – the cylindrical scrubbers removed. There are no obvious signs of the missing scrubbers.

The Warden's Shepherds

One thing to keep in mind is that the Characters will never be left alone during all this. Someone will always be looking over their shoulders. While the colonists won't directly interfere, they will attempt to distract and divert. They certainly won't answer any questions about the irregularities the Characters find. They'll either lie, or deflect upwards – which will reach the ears of the Administrator.

Simultaneous Events

Most of these investigations can happen concurrently and the entire process will eat up about three days. There's no reason to rush, at least as far as the Characters know. The colonists will be happy to politely draw the surveys, interviews, and investigations. While there may be some tension, they're not likely to be outright hostile. This is how Dawar wants them to react.

To keep things interesting, try to switch back and forth between dif-

ferent aspects of the investigation, so that everyone stays involved. Also keep in mind that different teams of Characters will likely conduct different investigations at different times.

The Warden Commander will have his hands full with the Administrator during most of this time. What exactly happens, the content of the conversations between them and so forth, are both kept close to the vest by the Administrator and fortunately not relevant to the rest of this adventure. The team will likely see Magoro at meals, where he'll ask for updates, otherwise staying out of their business. Not only is it necessary, this situation is a better test of the Characters' capabilities than any training drill.

Scene 4:

We Want to Leave

At some point, when it's convenient, Warden Commander Magoro will summon one of the Characters with the Pilot: Spacecraft Skill – most likely the de facto pilot of the crew.

Read the following to your players:

As you enter the room, the Warden Commander, Administrator Dawar, and two other people you don't recognize turn towards you. The Administrator looks agitated, while the two unknown colonists cast constant worried glances toward Dawar. Warden Magoro smiles and approaches. His smile seems a little strained to you.

"I'm glad you got here so quickly. It seems that the news of the colo-

ny's vanishing act has caused a couple of the colonists to question their presence here. They have requested to be taken off the moon, so they can consider their future without any undue pressure."

Dawar interrupts him. "There would be no undue pressure, Sir. These two should stay so that they can heal among familiar faces." She turns towards the pair, a middle-age couple. "Please. You should stay. If, after reflection, you wish to leave, you can go. I fear if you leave now you may later regret it." She sounds genuinely concerned.

The Commander speaks up. "I want you to escort these two to the ship and transport them to the station. Someone will be waiting for you when you dock. There and back, Warden, and as quickly as you can."

Knight's Errant-class ships are automated enough that a short hop from the surface to an orbiting station is something a single Character can accomplish safely. Once the ship docks, a SCC employee takes the pair into custody. Overall, this takes about two hours.

Have the Character make a Hard Insight Test as the group leaves. If successful, he'll notice that the couple relaxes upon seeing the SCC representative. If the Character succeeds agains a Very Hard Difficulty, he'll notice that the rep and the colonist exchange looks – like they're old friends relieved to see each other. It happens in an instant. If questioned, the colonists

will just say they're glad to be off the moon.

Scene 5:

Uninvited Dinner Guest

This scene occurs shortly after the Characters complete their investigations. They're having a private dinner with the Warden Commander to discuss what their findings, and to determine the next step. To ensure privacy, the dinner is on the Characters' ship.

Read the following to your players:

The sound of the food processor dispensing meals and drinks is a welcome familiar one after several days of grueling surveys and inspections. Being back aboard ship, away from the ever-present eyes of suspicious colonists, is a welcome break, even if only a fleeting one.

As dinner progresses, have the Characters brief the Warden Commander on their findings. At some point, however, this rather mundane state of affairs takes a turn for the worse.

Magoro suddenly bolts upright, an ugly look on his face that's unreadable, sweat beading on his forehead. Just as suddenly, he collapses into a ball on the floor. Eyes wide in terror, he grabs at his gut and screams in pain. Tears stream down his face. As you try to help, the Commander's body seizes him straight, and he lets out a wail unlike any you have ever heard before.

"Dear God! What....," he groans, then screams, "Help me!"

Give the Characters a moment to react. They can try to drag him to the ship's med bay, this will be over before they can get there. It's pretty unlikely they'll be able to save him.

The Commander screams – an bestial sound that no human should make. He spits up blood as his body spasms violently. There's a sharp crack as his hips break.

If the Characters are trying to drag the Commander to med bay, they need to succeed at an Average Physique + Athletics: Brawn Test. If they fail, they lose their grip as Magoro spasms violently.

The wet, tearing sound of flesh stretched too far precedes another horrifying scream of agony. Magoro's pants are soaked in a growing pool of blood, flowing from his backside. The smell is awful, but the look on the dying Commander's face is worse.

The Commander dies a moment later. If the Characters succeed at an Average Awareness + Notice Test, they notice something jerking around in the back of his pants. Then, it stops. It won't take the Characters long to discover the slug-like thing that's hanging partly-descended from Magoro's digestive system.

Given everything, it's time for the Characters to make a Hard Horror Test.

If one of the Characters can succeed at an Average Cleverness + Occult Test, they'll realize that the slug is the young of a Seethari. If he can succeed against

a Hard Difficulty, the Character will think that this slug looks premature, compared to captured specimens.

If one of the Characters can succeed at a Hard Cleverness + Medicine: Physical Test, he'll learn that the Seethari young appears to be malformed. It has some kind of defect.

At this point, the Characters may be ready to charge into the colony, guns blazing. There are several compelling reasons not to do this, which they should consider.

- There's no evidence that the colonists were responsible.
- If the colonists were responsible, then the Wardens need to deepen their investigation. There are plenty of suspicious things around here. It seems this 'event' occurred earlier than intended, so the colonists will have no reason to suspect the Characters are really on to them.

If the Characters' investigations went poorly, the players may have no idea where to go from here.

- They may try to call in troops from Fort Saragossa – see p. XX for their response.
- may enter the base with guns drawn and force explanations. If they go for the guns drawn option jump to the appropriate scene later in this adventure.
- They may try to 'nuke the colony from orbit' or If they opt for the

'nuke from orbit' option they will be contacted by Saturn authorities as they take position to fire. The authorities will demand the team stand down and will instead send in troops from the fort. The Characters don't need to listen, but such an action will bring unwanted investigation and likely negatively impact the Wardens' standing – they haven't secured any real proof yet.

Scene 6: The Call

This should occur as the Characters are arriving at a decision on what to do next. Hopefully, it will help provide inspiration if the Wardens are stuck.

The communication panel buzzes with a priority message. When the team answers, read the following to your players:

The link connects and Colonel Borges of the ORS appears. Her expression seems neutral enough, but her eyes hide a worried shadow.

"May I speak with the Warden Commander?" she asks.

Give the players a chance to respond. They may choose to lie, coming up with a good story about how Magoro isn't available. They may choose to tell her that Magoro is dead, but not reveal the cause. If they share, Borges will want to know more – and whether or not they think the colonists were somehow involved.

Once that's done, Borges has news. Read the following to your players:

I wanted to inform you that the two colonists you brought up to the station are gone. We've got the station locked down, but it's entirely possible they were away before anyone realized they'd disappeared. We... I didn't consider them a major risk after my initial interview, so I left them only a light guard. It seems that was a mistake."

The Colonel will go on to recommend that the Wardens investigate the irregularities, this time without colonists supervision. She'll recommend some kind of diversion that will keep the Administrators focused on one or two members of the team, while the others sneak off to do more thorough digging. The players may have their own ideas as well, and they may be able to use Magoro's death to some kind of advantage.

If the Characters need some help, here are some important clues they may have picked up during their initial investigation.

The Black Computer Network

The team may have noticed a hidden computer network behind some serious security. There are two possible routes to shed more light on this.

The Characters could attempt to hack into the system from the ship, by hitchhiking on an open comm channel. This requires the Wardens to contact the colony, to open said channel.

The Characters could also try to infiltrate the Administrator's office, to go through her terminal directly. This makes the hacking easier, but is riskier.

Find the Replaced Components

The Characters may have discovered that some of the colony's mechanical components have been recently replaced. This is odd, because many of those components should have lasted a decade or more before needing replacement.

Inspection of Damaged Exterior

The Characters may have discovered unexplained damage to the colony's exterior. If they've not already discovered the meteor embedded in one of the buildings, a more detailed and unsupervised investigation will most likely turn it up. That in turn could lead to an explanation for the rest of the exterior damage – it will start to look like the colony never went anywhere.

Investigate the Unusual Power Feeds

The Characters may have discovered the extra power feeds leading to someplace not in the colony. With another unsupervised, they may discover where those feeds lead.

Details on each of these options appear in the next scene.

Scene 7: A Closer Look

It's likely you'll play this scene out on multiple fronts, in a manner similar to the first investigation. This time, however, at least one of the Characters will need to keep the colonists focused on him, while others dig deeper.

Front 1: The Distraction

The Characters will need to devise a way to keep the colonists, most especially Dawar and Ekene, distracted. There are lots of ways to do this.

One obvious way is to confront the Administrators about the Warden Commander's death. The Characters could demand medical evaluations for all of the colonists, to make sure no one else is infected. However, any confrontation will take place in a common or meeting room, as the Administrator doesn't want Wardens in her office.

Some methods of distraction will involve Social Combat – the colonists all have an Unfriendly Attitude at this point. In nearly every case, it's likely that the Characters will need an excuse as to where the rest of their team has gone.

Front 2: The Administrator's Office

This investigation involves the Characters sneaking into the Administrator's private office, to gain direct access to her computer. Once a distraction is underway, the Characters need to succeed at one Average Awareness + Notice Test and one Average Grace + Stealth Test in order to avoid random colonists in their routine. They're not expecting subterfuge at this point.

One colonist stands guard in from of the office. There's not really enough justification yet to terminate him, so the Characters may want to fall back on non-lethal weapons. Any of the Wardens with the Medicine: Physical Skill can concoct some kind of tranquilizer from the ship's supplies, and you can assume that their armory contains some kind of tranquilizer gun or stun weapon. For simplicity's sake, the guard has four dice to resist, against a Hard Perseverance Test. Failure means he's out. Success means he functions at a -2 die penalty until he's out.

The Administrator's office is plain and undecorated, except for a glass case atop a wooden pedestal. Inside are three things. The first is a partially unrolled very old papyrus scroll. A round leather tube that seems to be the scroll's case sits next to it. The third item is a raw crystal that sits on a small stand. There are dozens of tiny black imperfection in the crystal, and a tiny hole has been bored into it.

- Success at an Average Cleverness + Occult Test reveals that the writing on the scroll appears to be some sort of ancient ritual. Not much of the ritual is visible, so success against a Very Hard Difficulty reveals that the ritual seems to focus on moving or hiding something.
- Success at a Hard Cleverness + Medicine: Physical Test reveals that the scroll is made from human skin.
- An average Science: Earth reveals that the crystal is most likely some sort of amber. It will require a lab to determine what the imperfections are.

These Tests assume that the Characters are inspecting the items while they're still in the glass case. If the Characters remove the items, the Difficulties are one lower, but they run the risk of triggering the alarm.

Naturally, the glass case is secure and an alarm will trigger if anyone tries to mess with it. The security system was wired by someone who knew what he was doing – it requires suc-

cess at a Very Hard Cleverness + Crime: Low in order to disable it. Failure sets off the alarm immediately – jump to Act III.

Investigation: Dawar's Computer
Plot Points Earned By:

- Cleverness + Computers
- *4 Plot Points* – The Characters find the secret personnel database contains multiple entries for each colonist. Each entry is given a unique identifier, that consists of a two-digit number followed by a dash and a single letter. They also discover a power diagram that shows the mysterious secondary power feed. It goes to some sort of hidden facility, though there are no details about it. It also shows about a dozen tertiary feeds, which brand off an lead around the colony – though not to any known structures.
- *6 Plot Points* – The Characters discover an entire protected directory that's in a bizarre language. Success at a Hard Occult Test reveals that this file is an obfuscation ritual of some sort. It can theoretically hide something from the eyes of those not meant to see it.
- *8 Plot Points* – The Characters uncover a blueprint that reveals an underground complex, located not far outside the main colony. The mysterious secondary power feeds lead to the entrance to this facility. In addition, the Characters discover an archive of another personnel database, with colonists that don't appear elsewhere. They can transmit this to the au-

thorities for comparison against the historical copies on file. What they learn is discussed in the Epilogue of this adventure.

Front 3: The Missing Components

Though a legitimate investigation, the missing components have been destroyed. There's nothing to find.

Front 4: Secondary Power Feeds

The Characters can take another look around the exterior of the colony to see where the mysterious power feeds lead from the reactor. Though the Characters won't have to worry about colonist supervision, there will be other surprises.

Any type of device that can sense EM fields will allow the Characters to follow the underground leads – they're carrying some serious current.

However, to keep things interesting, the Characters will have to avoid being spotted by colonists out doing routine work. Again, success at an Average Awareness + Notice Test and an Average Grace + Stealth Test will cover this.

Following the power lines, have the Characters make either a Hard Awareness + Notice or Survival Test. Success means they notice that the sand has been smoothed. It 'runs' in the same general direction as the power lines, indicating that someone has tried to cover his tracks.

The tertiary feeds branching off the hidden lines are disused at the moment, so it will require the Characters to succeed at a Hard Cleverness + Engineering: Electrical in order to follow.

They lead to a point about 500 y/m outside the colony, terminating somewhere underground. It would take serious effort to dig down, but the tertiary feeds seem to form a perimeter around the colony.

The power lines eventually lead to the hidden structure. However, it is hidden away from prying eyes, even on the surface. A hatch is embedded in a rough-looking natural formation, hidden underneath an overhang, invisible from the side or above. It requires success at a Hard Awareness + Notice Test to find. However, once found, the hatch is unsecured – the colonists never expected anyone to get this close.

The hatch leads to an airlock. When the Characters enter the inner airlock, read the following to your players:

A narrow, dimly lit corridor extends a long way into the distance. Conduits run along the low ceiling and down one of the walls. Your suit readouts confirm that the hall is pressurized.

If a Character removes his helmet, read the following:

The air is fresh and well-circulated, a contrast to the rough-hewn nature of the walls and the dungeon-like feel of the corridor. There's also an antiseptic smell, like you'd expect in a hospital. It's quiet, but every so often you think you hear a soft beep in the distance. It could very well just be your imagination, but you're not leaving it to chance.

If the Characters move deeper into the structure, read the following:

As you move deeper into the mysterious structure, the beep becomes more distinct. Though soft, it's regular in its timing, but it's difficult to determine if there's a real pattern to it.

Then, you hear something else. The sound of someone dragging something heavy over the stone, followed by an almost snake-like hiss that raises the hair on the back of your neck.

At this point, the Characters should make a Scary (Average) Horror Test. Something threatens to set off their instinctual flight-or-fight reaction. Anyone failing this will not progress further until the Horror Effect has ended and they have the support of the rest of the team.

If they pass, or have all recovered, read the following:

The corridor eventually ends, opening into a cavernous room carved out of the moon's rock. Steel stairs run down 10 y/m to a flat floor. Almost a dozen rows of equipment paired with hundreds of steel caskets run the length of the room. Here is the source of the beeps.

The Characters have time to descend the stairs and investigate. Each of the caskets contains a person – anyone with the Computer or Medicine: Physical can find the attending computers. Each casket has a display that shows the occupant's name, a

two-digit numerical code, and a single letter. If the team has hacked the Administrator's computer, they'll quickly find that the names here match the existing colonists. These caskets are filled with clones.

The most notable entry is entitled: Gestation Time from Awakening. Each shows a number of days, ranging from 30 to 120. The Characters should be able to guess that this has to do with seethari implantation, most likely indicating the amount of time it will require for the embryo to gestate once the clone is awakened.

Characters who succeed at a Hard Cleverness + Occult Test know that seethari normally gestate within three to five days, so something must be slowing the process.

As the Characters make this discovery, the hair on the back of their neck stands straight up. A shadow looms over them.

Read the following to your players:

Suddenly, a looming shadow causes you to look up. A black, chitinous monstrosity clings to the ceiling. Its head sits atop a long neck, leading into a powerful six-limbed body, it's talon-tipped tail lashing out behind it. The creature hisses, loud and long, as its head weaves back and forth.

All hell is about to break loose.

ACT 3:

ZEALOTS & HERETICS

Goals: For all hell to break loose, for the Characters to flee both oncoming seethari and suicidal cultists, to get back to the Knight's Errant and deal with Eden once and for all.

Setting: The the Eden colony, the Characters' Knight's Errant corvette

Cast: Colonial Administrator Matisha Dawar of Eden, Ekene Jalloh, the Administrator's lackey, a bunch of crazed cultists, a mess of angry seethari

In this final Act, things pretty much fall apart. There's no one way for this to play out, as it depends on the Characters' mindsets after everything they've discovered.

Scene 8: Seethari Swarm

During this scene, the seethari reveal themselves. However, how this plays out depends on where the Characters are at this point. They may be all together in the cloning lab or they may be spread out, dealing with the Administrator or other investigations. Here are some guidelines to help you manage the scene.

It's possible that this scene may be triggered by the alarm in Dawar's office. If so, the Characters will most likely not have discovered the cloning lab, and won't know anything about it until the end.

A couple things to keep in mind during this scene:

- Success at an Average Cleverness + Occult Test lets the Characters know that seethari hibernate in a vacuum. The Wardens could use their environmental suits to go outside and escape the swarm.
- The colonists don't really have any weapons, other than knives and improvised ones. However, they will throw themselves at the Wardens, willingly sacrificing themselves to hide their ugly secrets.

Once the seethari are revealed, Administrator Dawar will remotely activate a communications jammer. This prevents the Characters from calling for help – until they can get to their ship and get out of jamming range. It also means that the Wardens can't rely on personal communicators if they're separated. Procedure dictates that they'd have a pre-arranged safe meeting place, and here that would be their corvette.

Together in the Cloning Lab

As the first seethari drops on the Characters, more will come out of the secret passages that have been disguised as venting ducts. Some will drop down to block the tunnel leading back to the surface, while others swarm out from the ceiling.

Seethari are mean. It's likely that each seethari will take out, or severely wound, one Character during the first Turn of each combat – leaping and grappling. The Characters are in a genuinely deadly situation here. If they don't play smart, they'll need to burn Fate Points in order to survive. Knowing that, there should probably

be fewer seethari than Characters, though you'll be able to judge based on their combat ability and firepower. Running is a very good option, meaning that the Characters may only have to deal with the seethari blocking their exit.

If you really want to scare your players, have one of the Characters implanted by the seethari in combat. They know what's going on, so they can plan for the surgery that will save the Character – as long as someone on the team is good with the Medicine: Physical Skill. It isn't about killing Characters. It's about giving them something to remember.

Split Up

If the Characters are split up when things go sideways, they'll each have their own encounters. When Dawar fires up the jammer, an alarm sounds to tell the colonists to silence the heretics. It also opens passages that give the seethari access to the colony proper. The bugs are loose.

Characters not in the cloning lab will first be attacked by colonists. While they're not much of a threat individually, they have the advantage of numbers and threaten to over-run the Wardens.

Characters who are also outside will have to deal with fewer colonists, and will be able to meet up as they head towards the airlock.

As the scene plays out, have one or more seethari arrive at an inconvenient moment. You can herald it by the scream of a colonist, as the creature

rips him apart – the colonists' reverence for the seethari doesn't go both ways. Feel free to drop one on an isolated Character. Give him time to escape, if he's willing to throw colonists in the way.

This isn't a fight they can win, though they can survive. The best thing the Characters can do is to run away and rally at the ship.

Key stats for both the Seethari and colonists are provided below.

This scene ends once all the Characters are outside, heading back to the ship.

Average Colonist

Attributes:

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

Statistics: Health 8, Speed 10 mph/16 kph

Skills: Defense 1, Reaction 2, Any Weapon Skill 2, Unarmed Combat 2

Equipment: ACC-62 'Bandit' Semi-Auto Pistol with 2 clips of ammunition, Boarding Axe (3d6), or Improvised Weapon (2d6)

Armor: None or Flak Jacket (5)

Seethari

Attributes:

Awareness 5	Grace 5
Cleverness 3	Perseverance 7
Demeanor 2	Physique 4

Statistics: Health 15, Speed 16 mph/26 kph

Skills: Athletics: Coordination 3, Defense 3, Freefall 3, Natural Weapons 5, Notice 3, Reaction 4, Stealth 4, Survival 2

Weapons: Bite (5d6 total), Claws (3d6 total), Tail (4d6 total + Entangle), Tongue (3d6 total + Implantation)

Armor: Chitin-Like Hide (10/5)

Horror Factor: Average

Special Abilities:

- *Climber (x1)* – Seethari can climb as fast as they can run.
- *Embryonic Implantation* – When stung by a Seethari's tongue, a Character must succeed at a Very Hard Perseverance Test. Failure means the embryo enters the Character's body and moves to his digestive tract.
- *Entangling Attack* – Seethari can use their tails to entangle opponents.
- *Feel No Pain* – Seethari do not suffer penalties due to Wound Levels.
- *Jumper (x3)* – Seethari can jump 12 yd/m horizontally and 4 y/m vertically.
- *Infrared Senses* – Seethari can see in the dark.

Scene Notes

This scene is designed to create a sense of desperation in the players. Colonists suicidally throw themselves at the Character, even as more seethari crawl out of dark, scary places. It's a tide the Wardens can't currently stem.

There are only two people that seem safe from the seethari – Administrator Dawar and Ekene. If the Characters manage to capture or terminate either of them, and have the time to search them, the Wardens will find a custom transmitter on each. It doesn't seem useful on casual inspection, but playing with it will quickly reveal that it emits a ultra-sonic tone that the seethari dislike. So long as the person holding the device doesn't take any

aggressive action against the bugs, they'll leave him alone. The deterrent is very short ranged, and only works for the person holding it. They would be very good things to bring back to Warden R&D.

Scene 10:

Clean Up in Aisle Eden

Once the Characters have retreated to their ship, it's time to wrap this mess up. There isn't much the colonists or the seethari can do once they're aboard.

There are two obvious options – level the colony themselves or call in the troops.

The Characters may want to level the colony themselves, just for the sense of personal satisfaction. The rail guns and missiles on their Knight's Errant will do the trick. However, their weapons aren't designed to penetrate underground, so there's little they can do about the secret facility. Saturnine authorities will be fine with this course of action, once the reasons are explained.

The Character could call in the troops from Fort Saragossa, who can easily clean up the situation. They can do a thorough sweep of the underground facility, to make sure the seethari are all dead. They may even be able to capture colonists for interrogation. This will also leave most colony records intact, so that this mess can be more easily clarified.

However, there's a catch – the troops from Fort Saragossa are going to need

to be briefed on seethari. They're going to be exposed to things that the Wardens would rather keep quiet. If the Characters can come up with a convincing way to slap a gag order on them, that might work. Otherwise, they'll have a potential leak on their hands.

Epilogue

Once the Characters have dealt with the immediate threat, they can either stick around and sift through the ashes or wait for a support team to give them the details. Play this out however works best for your players. Here's what they learn.

The Seethari

The cult masquerading as the colony is a new one, believing that the seethari are terrible gods returning to claim what's theirs. The cultists have been taught that the only way for their souls to survive the coming change was to use their own bodies as wombs for seethari.

The cultists did this one better. They started to clone themselves, infecting each with a seethari embryo. Dawar discovered a way to delay an embryo's gestation, so that the infected clones could spread out into the solar system before the creatures were born. They were making an army of living time bombs, spreading what could easily become a plague.

The Disappearance

The Wardens discover the largest ritual circle ever created around the perimeter of the colony. It utilizes natural crystalline formations under the surface of the moon and is powered by the colony's reactor at focal points.

According to the scroll in the Administrator's office, this was the foundation of a ritual called *Conscientia Autem Subiectum Nisi Quod* – essentially Beyond Conscious Awareness in Latin. This was how the cult cloaked

the colony from the rest of the world until it was time to unleash their gods.

The Missing Cultists

If the Characters escorted the two colonists off-planet, they've vanished. Both the Wardens and the authorities of Saturn are trying to hunt them down.

Admittedly, they did undergo a basic medical scan on the station, but cultists may have also infiltrated there. Furthermore, seethari embryos are hard to find when they're very young and someone doesn't know what he's looking for. It's likely they're out there, getting ready to pop somewhere civilized – maybe with other cultist friends.

This is a prime seed for further adventures, if the Characters want to wrap this one up tight.

SEETHARI

SEETHARI

The emergency lights flash off of its black, almost bio-mechanical skin. It's as big as you, without the lashing tail whipping through the air behind it. It is clearly a creature of death, with sharp claws at the end of every digit, the blade tipping its tail, and the mouth filled with rows of teeth. You can't tell if it should move on two or four legs – it seems to be both – as it crouches and leaps an impossible distance towards you. Its jaws open, dripping thick ooze, and it hisses. Suddenly, a stinger-like tongue lashes out and stabs you in the belly. The pain isn't as bad as the sensation that something was just pumped into your innards. God only knows what...

Seethari are horrible creatures that are capable of hibernating for centuries in the cold vacuum. They are usually brought aboard ships or stations as part of salvage or mining, whereupon they awaken with two urges – to eat and to procreate. They, in fact, seem to have no other reason for being – other than to bring horror in their wake.

Seethari reproduce in a disturbing manner. Each is asexual and seeks to implant a tiny embryo into a living host using its stinging tongue. Once implanted under the skin, it makes its way to the digestive tract. There, it feeds on what the host eats (who seems to be hungry all the time), for

the next three to five days. Then, properly gestated, it starts to move its way down the digestive tract, ultimately ripping its way out of the victim's colon and anus. The victim usually dies, while the baby skitters out into the world. However, this can

be stopped, but only while the baby is painfully moving to be born – while gestating, it will kill the host if removed. This brief ten minute window is all there is to remove the angry baby seethari and save the host.



Seethari (Adult) Game Statistics

Threat: 7

Size: Medium 4' - 5' tall, 120 lbs.
1.2 - 1.5 m tall, 55 kg

Habitat: Any Atmosphere

Average Attributes:

Awareness	5	Grace	5
Cleverness	3	Perseverance	7
Demeanor	2	Physique	4

Average Statistics:

Health	15	(15/30/45/60)
Speed	16 mph/26 kph	

Skills: Athletics: Coordination 3, Defense 3, Freefall 3, Natural Weapons 5, Notice 3, Reaction 4, Stealth 4, Survival 2

Weapons: Bite (3d6 + 2d6 for Physique)
Claws (1d6 + 2d6 for Physique)
Tail (2d6 + 2d6 for Physique + Entangle)
Tongue (1d6 + 2d6 for Physique + Implantation)

Armor: Chitin-Like Hide (10/5)

Horror Factor: Average

Special Abilities:

- *Climber (x1)* – Seethari can climb as fast as they can run.
- *Embryonic Implantation* – When stung by a Seethari's tongue, a Character must succeed at a Very Hard Perseverance Test. Failure means the embryo enters the Character's body and moves to his digestive tract. Within three to five days, the embryo will mature and begin to move down the digestive tract. This is the only time it may be removed. This can be done once every 48 hours, if the creature is eating properly.
- *Entangling Attack* – Seethari can use their tails to entangle opponents.
- *Feel No Pain* – Seethari do not suffer penalties due to Wound Levels.
- *Jumper (x3)* – Seethari can jump three times as far as a comparable human. (12 yd/m horizontal, 12 ft/3.7 m vertical)
- *Infrared Senses* – Seethari can see in the dark.



TM

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