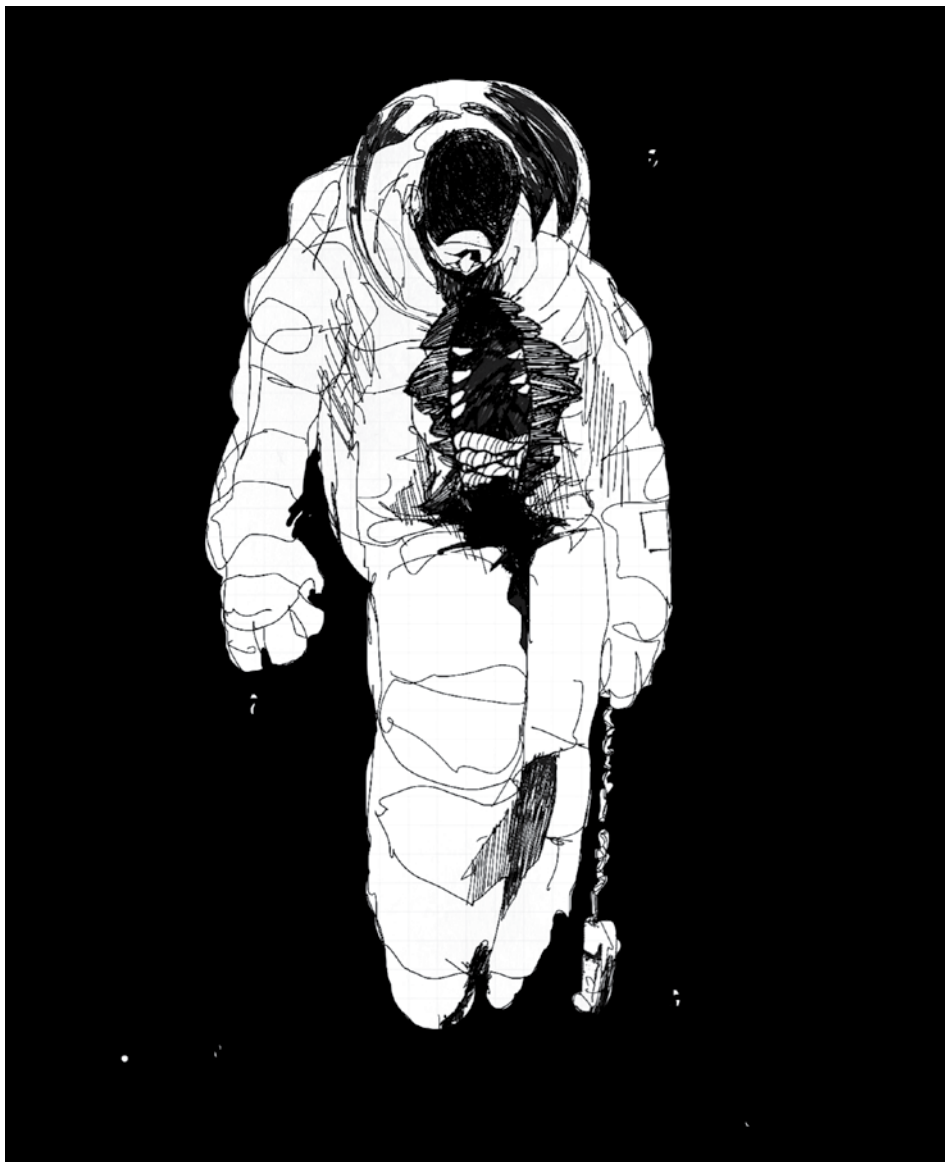


MOTHERSHIP[®]

SCI-FI HORROR RPG



*Tuesday
Knight
games*

UNCONFIRMED CONTACT REPORTS

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Each horror in this book is a suitable obstacle for one or more sessions of Mothership®. We have done our best to spark your imagination within the confines of these small pages. Importantly, much about these entities, from their history to their reasoning, and even how they may be defeated (if they can be at all) has been left absent. We encourage you to use these descriptions and their accompanying rumors and quotations as a starting point for building a scenario. In a horror game, the monster is often the focal point of the entire adventure: discovering its existence, learning its weaknesses, ultimately facing it, and only occasionally defeating it. We wish you the best of luck in your endeavor.

HOW TO READ A STAT BLOCK

Every horror in Mothership has a Stat Block which defines their most notable attributes. Some have lots of numbers and special abilities, while others have scant few or no Stat Block at all. These Stats are guidelines. They are not nearly as important as how you interpret them during play. A horror with a weak Stat Block can be a terror if played intelligently (setting up ambushes, retreating, exploiting the players' weaknesses), while a horror with seemingly god-like Stats can be rendered completely obsolete by a Warden who constantly throws them headlong into trouble. We encourage you to always do the former.

① → **BELLADONNAS** ② → ③ → ④ → ⑤ → ⑥ → ⑦ →
[C:75 Talons 4d10 DMG I:75 AP:10 W:3(30) Tail Poison: Body Save [-] or 1d10 DMG/round]

- ① **Name.** What the horror is commonly referred to. The name might be known to the players, or may be something they have to learn on their own. Oftentimes, it'll be more useful to never name the horror, and let the players find their own word to describe it, one born out of their own harrowing experience.
- ② **Combat.** The horror's ability to fight and defend itself.
- ③ **Attack.** The name of the weapon or attack followed by the damage (DMG) that it does. Some horrors may have several, some may have none. Just because an attack is not listed does not mean the horror is incapable of attacking, but rather that the attack is not notable enough to be defined here. "As Weapon" simply means the horror typically carries a weapon, and its damage is equal to that of the weapon.
- ④ **Instinct.** A catch-all for any Stat not defined. A creature with an Instinct of 65 and no other listed Stats can be assumed to have a Combat of 65, as well as Speed, Intellect, Body Save, etc. This is a quick way to define how savvy and powerful the horror is.

- ⑤ **Armor Points.** If a horror has any Armor Points (AP), they are listed here. AP works the same as it does for characters, though it may refer to a horror's natural armor, hardiness, toughness, or some other ability.
- ⑥ **Maximum Wounds (Health).** Once a horror suffers its Maximum Wounds, it dies. Its Health is in parentheses. If there is no Health listed, any damage causes a Wound. Horrors should change tactics or behavior whenever they take a Wound.

Read about Wounds in the
Player's Survival Guide pg. 29.1.

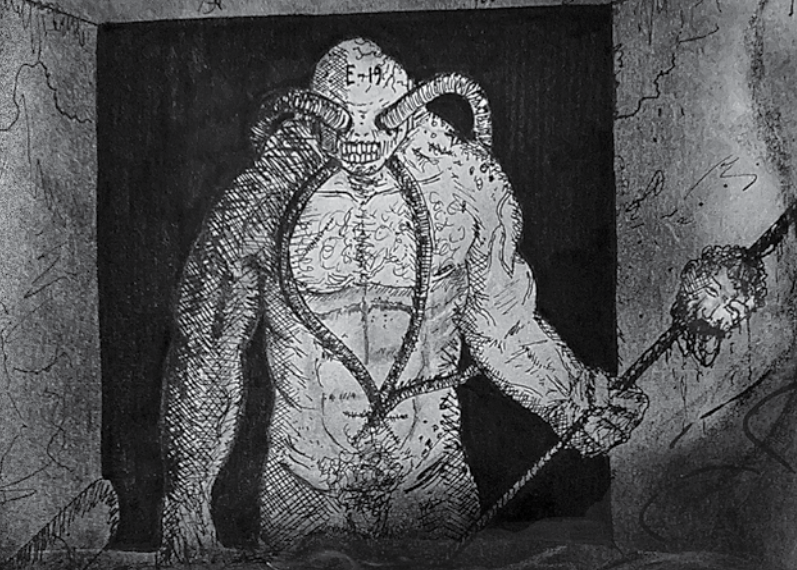
- ⑦ **Special Ability.** If the horror has any notable special abilities, they are listed here. Many horrors in this book are implied to have special abilities that are not listed in their Stat Blocks. This is by design. Wardens are encouraged to get used to inventing their own, as this will often be required of them while running the game.

Finally, each horror includes a quotation or two, which work well as clues and snippets of information which you can place in scenarios for the players to discover (or not) and learn from (or not).

MOTHERSHIP®

SCI-FI HORROR RPG

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CONTENT WARNING

Mothership® is a horror game for mature audiences. It contains violence, foul language, some sexual content, drug use, and depictions of mental illness, trauma, stress, and panic that may not be suitable for all audiences. Please be advised.

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tuesdayknightgames.com | mothershiprpg.com

THE 4YOUREYEZ ALGORITHM

[1% chance any electronic (including androids) infected.]

Every human communication network is infected. This Trojan horse spyware spreads like a virus, but desires secrecy above disruption... or perhaps, only secrecy. Of course, as it spreads, the lurking worm becomes more vulnerable to exposure, which drives it to greater and greater extremes. This may simply be a mindless program, secretive for secrecy's sake... or it may be simply the veil hiding something greater, such as an intelligence community conspiracy or a breakaway AI culture.

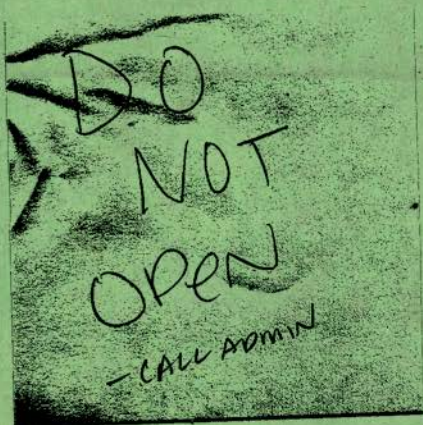
"Look man, I can't comment on the total absence of everything."

"That's what we pay you to do."

"No, you pay me to conduct forensics on computer systems, you don't pay me to pull rabbits out of hats. That said... there *is* one strangeness here: whatever trashed the system left a single encrypted file. What they used for the encryption is a different question—this file is like a Fabergé egg."

"Shift all your resources to cracking the file then. We must know what's within it."

— Evidence submitted in the missing persons case of M. Domen, final known conversation



"DO NOT OPEN" Found note on Research Post Zeta-Prime.

```
>> INIT MODULES <<
```

```
:: LOAD SYS
```

```
:: LOAD SOCKET
```

```
:: LOAD BINARY_EYE
```

```
>> DEFINE CLASS <<
```

```
:: ENTITY.FOURYOUREYEZ
```

```
>> PARAMETERS <<
```

```
:: SELF
```

```
:: INFECTION.RATE = 0.1
```

```
:: SPY.RATE = 0.1
```

```
>> DEFINE METHODS <<
```

```
:: SPREAD [HOST]
```

```
:: WHEN SELF.CHECK(HOST)
```

```
:: THEN SELF.INFECT(HOST)
```

```
:: INFECT [HOST]
```

```
:: SYS.RUN [BINARY_EYE.ENCRYPT].
```

```
EXECUTE(HOST)
```

```
:: OUTPUT "HOST %s IS INFECTED."
```

```
:: CHECK [HOST]
```

```
:: OUTPUT SOCKET.PING(HOST) <
```

```
INFECTION.RATE
```

```
:: SPY [HOST]
```

```
:: DATA = BINARY_EYE.DECRYPT.
```

```
EXECUTE(HOST)
```

```
:: OUTPUT "DATA COLLECTED FROM
```

```
HOST %s."
```

```
>> RUN PROCEDURE <<
```

```
:: ENTITY = FOURYOUREYEZ
```

```
:: REPEAT
```

```
:: FOR HOST IN SOCKET.LIST_ALL
```

```
:: ENTITY.SPY(HOST)
```

```
:: ENTITY.SPREAD(HOST)
```

— Captured code of the 4YOUREYEZ algorithm currently held in a secure facility

"Our android was the only one to see that file, right?"

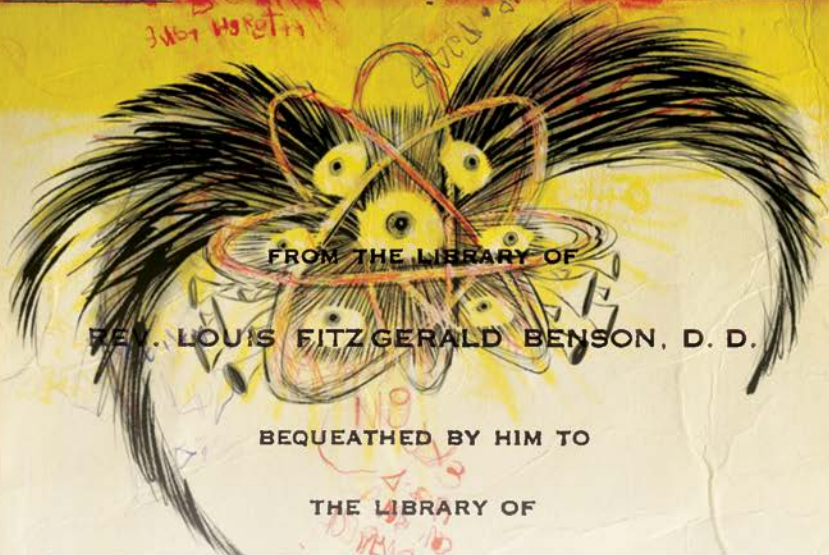
— Dave

Psalms.—The Whole Booke of Psalmes, collected into Englishe metre by
 TERNHOLD, W. WHITINGHAM, I. HOPKINS, and others . . . with apt N
 o sing them with all [Musical Notes]. Newly set forth and allowed by con
 all the people together in all churches before and after Morning and Ever
 Prayer: as also before and after the Sermons, and moreover in Private Houses,
 their godly solace and comfort, laying apart all ungodly songes and Ballades, wh
 end onely to the nourishing of vyce and corrupting of youth. Printed in la
 Black Letter, long lines, the title within a woodcut border, with woodcut
 reverse, small 4to, newly and superbly bound, brown morocco, blind tooled
 edges, £4 4s London, John Daye, 1

[C:100 Trumpets: Sanity Save [-] or fall to knees weeping. I:95 Panic Check on sight.]

ANGELS

An exceptionally fine and clean copy of a very rare edition.
 The Musical Notes are diagonal in shape, and at foot of title appears "Forbidden
 all others to print these Psalmes or any part of them."



"Malakbel the Herald" From the Dover collection. Drawing 74/586

Some long term spacers, veterans of FTL, claim to have witnessed great gates opening like hateful eyes across space, often accompanied by a sense of true and transcendent purpose: the awakening of an ancient adversary, whose obscured hand stretches across a history longer than night.

Some seek signs of their visions' truth, hidden relics and weapons to aid in 'the Great War.' Few return. Those who do are transfigured, and speak in reverent awe of communing with a consciousness whose voice is the fluttering of a million wings, whose memory predates the dust between stars, an impression of kaleidoscopic eyes and teeth, the light that will burn away the dark between the stars. Our destiny.

The persistent myth that humanity is an unknowing participant in a war between incomprehensible primordial forces predates space travel, and is a persistent threat to stability. The contemporary theologically pyroclastic militant movement, born from privation, brutality, and prolonged isolation, is unique for the common features expressed across the broadest ranges of space...

— Yannick Harsányi, Remarks Upon Theocratic Uprisings In Secular Space

"Hail the Burning Eye's cleansing gaze!
 Hail Victory! The seizure and cleansing of Strathclyde inaugurates our march into the future. Imminent generations shall commemorate our heralding glorious rebirth."

— Notations on the sack of Ipswitch Colony 7

Divisions
 SCC
 3771



"My belladonna." Retrieved from estate of Dr. Ephraim Leibowitz

Four wings tipped with razor sharp talons. Flat black, smooth, angular. Can see in the dark via a row of sensing organs along their skinny, wide heads. Their tails end in several long blades, coated in mind-dulling toxin. Can spit hot blood that they can track. Hate light sources. Strong light, including sunlight, causes damage to their tissues and blinds them. Attracted to moving prey, and ignore targets standing absolutely still.

"An offworlder approached the Master and said 'I have experienced nothing under pain of death. I have achieved the empty mind, stillness in thought and deed.' The Master replied 'All of us do such under pain of death.' The stranger shook their head, and explained. That was the only time the Master had no answer. He had floodlights installed later that week."

— "Memories of Master," Anonymous

"The dark is filled with death
a death that cuts, a death that dulls
on fluttering wings
hissing

what shines in the dark?
we shine
we shine so bright
but it's not the shine they hate
it's the shine they lust for
it's the pounding blood
it's the whisper of juice
slōshing
for the drinking

we shine like a fire
and they are the hungry moths
drawn
to
feed"

— What Shines in the Dark by Ian Fraser K.

Each sapient zooid of this colonial organism replaces an organ of its host, but they do not form a collective consciousness. Instead, the members of this "Parliament" vote on the body's conduct through their legislative neurons. This network evolved from an organ-trafficking ring's diagnostic system, after its AI decided that human space needed to be brought democracy and universal suffrage... down to the cellular level. A body politic can replace an organ of an unconscious captive with one of its constituents, a "slaver organ." A heart is the most desirable choice, though the slaving takes roughly an hour to occur. A simpler method is replacing the tonsils in only five minutes, co-opting it into a type of biochemical time bomb that will release fatal botulinum and tetanus toxins in case of non-compliance.

"The 'Parliament-thing' in First Officer Ncube voted to rip out one of Bimo's teeth with an auto-amputated hand and the cat's guts. Teeth, it seems, are a good starting point for their "delegate zygotes" — access to food, saliva, weaponry, nerves to torture the host into compliance, and easy access to the larynx. They took the left side of her brain before we managed to sedate her, but they off-loaded sleep and other functions to that skin on her lungs. She's still in there, it seems, arguing her case in a bicameral legislature against the filibustering gurgles and painful twists of Minister Molar."

— Log entry of the Kariba

"The nays have it." From the sketchbook of Charles Gomer.

"I can't describe it to you. Not because I don't have the words, but because my tongue has filibustered all my attempts. Yes, even this one. Yeah, I know it sounds crazy. Poop poop pee poop. I'm an idiot. See? Asshole did it again. No, not my actual asshole, wise guy."

— Interview with Union Rep Bochica



THE BROWN STREAM

There are rumors of a film deconstructed across networks, logged and filed by the devoted, its sequence, meaning, and purpose hotly debated, incomplete archives everywhere. New footage allegedly flickers on abandoned stations media servers, restricted access Lagrange points, pirate signals, abandoned HD screens. Garish color with strange scoring, nonsensical voice overs intercut with animated propaganda rehearsals, distracted idols, cheap novelty manufacture, routine violence, tourist attractions, dated advertising, war tourism, plastic surgery. It opens a looking glass world of violence and conspiracies to the illuminated.

Automod: Welcome to Grey Channel Chat, please be kind.

BB+10: So how'd yr journey start?

JhalaAmber: Tourist footage of a beach/ anatomical doll stress tests, repeating: Db Cm Fm Bbm Ab Ebm Bb Eb Gm Gb F B A Am...

OKF1G6Y: Yellow Angel Tears?

KaliDNA303: I paid 10cr last week confirming that beach is in "Red Crescent Disappointment."

OKF1G6Y: U disappointed you droPD 10Racks?

BB+10: Confirming?

KaliDNA303: Footage repeatedly shows: "the wedding execution" found location footage [shaky low res security rings?] content: torsos and limbs chumming surf/

OKF1G6Y: Or you see what you want

BB+10: fishing for a different conclusion?

JhalaAmber: Isn't it just an ARG?

OKF1G6Y: Welcome 2 Reality

— Grey Channel Chat log 01.02.04.5954

1: Okay folks, tonight we've got a very special guest. Dr. James is here with us tonight to discuss The Video. How're you doing, Doc?

2: I'm well, thank you. Thank you for having me. It's good to be here!

1: Okay, Doc, we're going to cut to the chase—what did you see?

2: Straight to it I see. Well, I don't blame you. I'm still watching it. Once you hit play, it doesn't stop. I close my eyes, I see it. Eyes open, it still flickers on at the back of your eyes. It's marvellous, it's..."

— Orbit-to-Orbit pirate radio show



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"I quit." from Confessions of an Executive Assistant.

There's no need for conspiracy when people with shared goals act within their own self interest. Only profit. They're flesh and blood, just like you and me. Which means they can be killed, made to suffer. If you could get at them. Find them. Past the private army, private planet, private fortress, private fleet. Find them and ask them why should they get to live free from consequence?

A: "Well really, you know, we care about our mission. We do! I know, it might not be considered practical in a modern era, for a conglomerate of our size to care — but then, we consistently outperform our competitors. Really, when you invest in people, when you invest in a community, we all work together to really — well [laughter] — work!"

Q: "And what is that mission?"

— Taken from interview with [REDACTED]

Before the passenger liner Arcturus broke open from a catastrophic hull breach, the concierge recorded something impossible. A new cabin had appeared aboard—Cabin 102-B, locked. The last recorded work order was the concierge taking out a small laser cutter to investigate.

"I don't know what to tell you. He just went nuts. Started smashing shit and throwing the soycaf around. Fine one moment, gone the next. Just screaming and wailing about how he'd 'gotten out,' that he'd 'scaped,' that it wasn't fair... started tearing at his face and arms, it took all four of us to restrain him until Specs got the tranq in and he was out."

Well, we thought he was out. Yeah, I saw the footage. I don't know how he got the hatch open. As for what happened after..."

I know what I saw. You can call it interference, or drugs, or spliced recordings. But the camera had a straight view into it. Carpet, a bed, those gilded light fixtures.

That wasn't a maintenance tunnel. That wasn't even our ship...

Are we done here?"

— Interview
Series
D, FAMB
Insurance
Assessment
Department

25-02-99: S. Mazel : Room in poor condition. Complaint lodged against guest.

27-02-99: S. Mazel : Room in terrible condition, possible leak - hospitality reports no guest booked.

29-02-99: S. Mazel : Room spotless.

18-04-99: F. Hamid : Room full of teeth. In-room speakers looping sounds of a woman begging.

19-04-99: F. Hamid : Room beckoning. I have to go back.

20-04-99: F. Hamid : Room spotless.

01-01-01: S. Mazel : Room hungry.

01-01-01: F. Hamid : Room lonely.

0b-P2-XX: F. Mazid : Hungry. Lonely.

__-__-__: C. 102-B : Room needing guest.

Room needing guest. room needing guest

room needing guest needing room needing

guest room needing guest room needing

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room needing guest room needing guest room

needing guest needing room needing guest

room needing guest room needing guest

needing room needing guest room need—

— [Cleaning Log -- Cabin 102-B]



[1:95 AP:30 W:5(100) Use Sanity Save instead of Combat during violent encounters.]

CHRONOPODS

Tall, dark, fleshy columns supported by seven thick legs branching off into smaller and smaller appendages. Thick, wrinkled skin pocketed with orifices of unknown abilities. Time passes differently for these very intelligent beings, so combat with them is nearly impossible for those experiencing linear time. Large, weird eyes covered with layers of skin. Can cause focused time distortions to destroy equipment and weird aging upon humans (in both directions).

If we see life as a verb, we may venture life found many ways to reach the stars and, as a biological Argus, may have left behind undreamt dreams.

— Julianna Shinn, Xenobiologist (Missing)

"My squad went against 'em. Newly discovered lifeform. Looked kinda like a bunch of elephant legs all smashed together. Even with the boys blasting plasma at 'em, the creatures made me feel calm. Reflective. At peace. Then they looked at me. Strange deep eyes. They showed me somethin' about myself.

So I blasted Mack. I hit Jumps upside the head, and he went down. The eyes showed me every shitty thing I ever done. And ever would do. And I changed, man, I changed. And now I want you to feel the same..."

— Ambert, ex-marine,
First Prophet of The Seeing All and Forever



"Vision of Undre'lar" recovered sketchbooks of Dr. Labris Fenton



Confiscated prisoner artwork. Noronha Novus Penal Colony. Acrylic on paper.

The frequency is found, after years of trying. The ham radio hisses and spits. Slick drips from the speakers. The lights pulse and flicker. Sibillant voices promise unspeakable things, freedom from the drudgery and misery of wage slavery. The crew unflesh themselves, mumbling prayers. Something is born from the bloody ruin-wet fur, many-jointed limbs, an iron mask cast of their former face. They wear their old skin as cloaks and finery.

“Are these manifestations on the dreamer’s flesh a result of conscious or subconscious creation? I’m afraid there just isn’t a clear answer. These embodiments spring from the depths of the inner mind, occasionally taking a sexual form, while other times showcasing radical bodily alterations, often arising from intense violence. Always, they emerge in a state of ecstatic frenzy, leaving no detail to the imagination.”

— Segment from Psychological Manifestations of Mans’ Innermost Desires by Dr. Topagarial

—eed your help. Yes, right now. (30 sec. pause) You’re here. good. Careful, the floor is wet. Don’t slip. Stop screaming, I’m fine. More than fine. Just- ssssh shut up you’ll wake the neighbours. STOP SCREAMING. Stop it. I need you. Trust me? Ok, you see the scalpel? Alright, take it, cut my face off, and say the words on the screen. Doesn’t have to be neat. Hurry up, seriously. What? For fucks sake there’s no time to explain ok just— (Loud crash, door slamming) Oh shit do IT NOW DO IT NOW DO IT N—

— Surveillance transcript, Operation INTERRUPT



"Self Portrait." Dorian Android 69A7Z (Retired).

Synthetic bio-droids into which their owners upload all of their shame, regret, and self-loathing. Biologically programmed to secrecy and unable to self-terminate, they are the perfect storage device for black operators, C-Levels, and anyone else who wants to keep their good memories close and their bad ones closer. Difficult to hack. Always in high demand.

"There were so many of them in there. So many. The limbs were all tangled together like roots.

They couldn't be mine. Couldn't be. How could I have that much to hide?

~~Why did I never notice this door before?~~ They won't stop crying in there. Scratching at the door. They won't stop looking. I have to make them. Yes. Shut them up. Then everything will go back to normal. He'll love me again."

— Personal memo, recovered materials, Voller Mansion fire/Case no.457128-AR

Interviewer: Repeat: what was your mission?

Subject 4: I told you I can't—

Interviewer: Again.

[Grunts, yelp, sounds of crying.]

Interviewer: We'll get it out of you, you know.

Subject 4: You won't. I wish you could but you won't. I don't have it to give.

[Silence]

Interviewer: Again.

— Transcript of Interview Session [REDACTED].

I've seen things you fuckers wouldn't believe.

— Dorian Android 53B9B (Retired)

THE DROWNING

[C:15 Unarmed I:25 W:1(1) On death: 10% chance of teleportation and resurrection.]

Retrieved photograph from J3C-II Courier 23b.7

Those who fluctuate between existences in the multiverse; caught in a wormhole, an unfortunate Jump drive, or perhaps direct experimentation with interdimensional travel. The results vary greatly, but most are horrific. Randomly blinking in and out of existence, often merging with walls or organic material due to phasing into an already occupied space. Survival instincts are all that remain. Like someone drowning, they desperately grasp at anything and anyone in hopes they can pull free of their painful fluctuation.

"I saw myself coming from around the corner. It was the corner. Seeing myself merged into the wall, only my other's torso protruding like a living macabre hunter's wall trophy. When my other saw me, it reached out in painful desperation. I recognized the panic and agony in my own face. Before I could pull my other from the wall, my living reflection vanished. Am I hallucinating? It seemed so real.

"A living mound of flesh, composed of screaming crew members, phased(?) into the Mess Hall. About a dozen people looked as if they were made of wax and partially melted into one horrific mass. Worse yet, I saw Adam among the meaty mass, in agony with the rest. Then, it vanished. I'd say I'd imagined it, but they took most of the dining table with them.

— Journal recovered from J4C-II Freighter
"Argonaut," Author unknown

The J4 drive is a complete failure and my complicity will haunt me forever. If you're reading this, find Colony Ship 453. Put them out of their misery. For me.

— Lead engineer of the J4 Project (suicide note)

"Hello. Hello... Can you see me? Don't be afraid. I'm watching you. I see you. Where are you. I see you. You've aged. Where am I? So young and pretty. Hello. Hello. Kill me. Can you see me. I'm here. Behind you. Where are you? Hello. I remember your father. I watched him too. He never saw me. But he talked to me. I think. Hello? Where am I? Hello. Where are you. Hello? Hi. It's cold. So young. Hi. Where am I? Hello? Hello? I remember this place. It's changed. Hello. I miss you. I remember your face. But younger. Your skin. Can you hear me... Hello... I'm scared. That was. Before. Hello. Again. Who am I? Can I die? Hello? ...Hello?"

— Isolated samples found in a transmission from Ezersky 4, filled with static and random data anomalies

'The Engineer' works as a wandering ship's engineer, killing others and taking their identities—in space there are a thousand like him. That's a lie — none are like him. He waits, blood full of stimulants, whilst others fall into hypersleep. He crawls out, reborn in the empty — an idealized birth for an avenging angel.

Then he opens the airlocks.

Subject was in high levels of distress during our encounter. I questioned if the hypersleep tube was malfunctioning, and if I could be of assistance. Subject used a wrench to destroy the left side of my face, reducing my capacity for action. Subject proceeded to destroy the right side of my face, disabling my visual sensors. Subject welded me to the floor of the ship without disabling pain simulators. Subject used an over-ride terminal to open all airlocks.

— Testimony from Navigator Android "Daryl"



Eye-witness sketch of "THE ENGINEER." Artist unknown.

**I WILL LET THE STARS IN TO EVERY DARK PLACE.
I WILL LET THE LIGHT OF THE COSMOS SCOUR CLEAN THE WORMS THAT LURK IN DARK
STEEL HULLS HIDDEN FROM THE EYE OF CREATION.
WE WERE NOT MEANT TO TREAD ON VOID.**

— Decoded repeating radio pulse from dead ship, variations are common

ENTITY LKA-5

[C:65 Appendage 3d10 DMG 1:35 AP:10 W:3(50) Consume: Body Save [+] or be eaten.]

A scheming shape shifter, creating chaos and confusion to avoid detection. Can manifest any body part already encountered in its history, and will use a variety of tentacles, jointed leg, claws, and protective exo-skeletons to consume a lone victim. Can escape capture by detaching parts of itself, which continue to mutate and grow on their own. Upon study, the shape shifter appears to be a victim it has consumed even down to the DNA level. Traces of the alien heritage can be found hidden in the blood. Always dies in a jumbled mess of past victims' faces, limbs, and body plans.

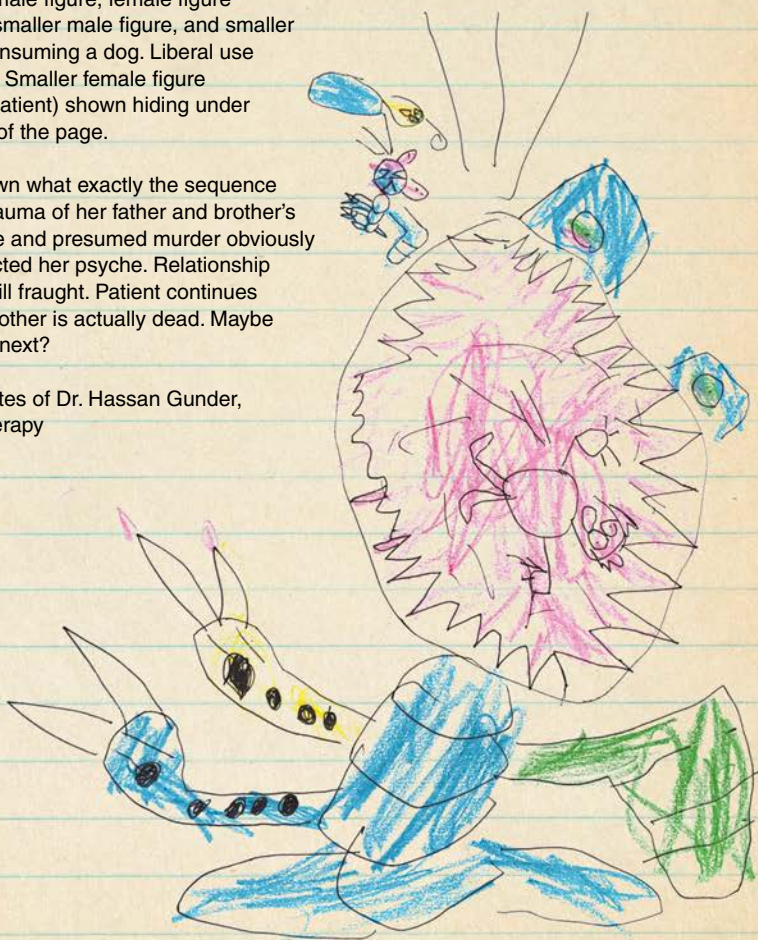
Description: Sequence depicting male figure consuming female figure, female figure consuming a smaller male figure, and smaller male figure consuming a dog. Liberal use of red colours. Smaller female figure (presumably patient) shown hiding under bed in corner of the page.

Notes: Unknown what exactly the sequence represents. Trauma of her father and brother's disappearance and presumed murder obviously strongly impacted her psyche. Relationship with mother still fraught. Patient continues to insist her mother is actually dead. Maybe hypnotherapy next?

— Session notes of Dr. Hassan Gunder, pediatric therapy

"[...] I couldn't take him anymore. Every hungry glance and panting breath. He was utterly exhausting. So when he wasn't looking I slipped a knife through his ribs, slow and steady. But then his face changed and twisted. <sobbing> It was him but also his foreman, and then that missing cop, and then something like a spider, and then his face split open, popped off his body, busted through the window as the rest of him was spewing fluids all over the dining table."

— Confiscated confessional recorded by Listener Tukanen, confessed by Maraulyn Crest, and sealed by The Church



[+1 Minimum Stress anytime Family Meal No. 5 is viewed.]

FAMILY MEAL NO. 5

Old video labeled 'Family Meal No. 5.' Shaky, interference-laden and static-filled. Footage depicts old-fashioned dinner table, unidentified human figure laying on it. Over next hour, several large pigs enter the room and consume the figure alive. Viewers of this video are consumed by a cannibalistic hunger. They will gorge themselves, first on strangers, then friends and family, until their stomachs burst, until their hands and feet turn to trotters, their noses twisted into snouts.

"[...]Non-radiological, non-toxic lesions and cognitive dysfunction are poorly understood, though a root element of neurology; 'shell shock' was initially modeled as artillery shockwaves literally shaking the brain.[...] Research (Rao, 2329) has shown that weaponized ultrasonic frequencies can cause subtle vascular injury in the brain, sometimes escalating to a stroke.

"[...] One case saw damage to the ventromedial nucleus of the hypothalamus, destroying the brain's ability to regulate hunger impulses and satiety, resulting in hyperphagia and altered executive function."

— Avoiding the Basilisk's Gaze: the Induction of Cognitive Dysfunction via Remote Stimulation. Chambers, et al. Neuroscience, Volume 66, Issue 2

"To exist is to consume. To live is to turn the existence, the sum of another being and grind it to paste, to masticate and swallow and unmake it. Every hour we spend in this world is constructed of the life existence we have pumped through our veins and turned to shit.

A human being is a set of pipes for turning God's miracle to shit and then to moralize about it. We sup upon the meat of God, the limitless fire of the sun, and we turn it to shit. Filthy. Filthy. You make me sick. Stop crying. Watch the video. Eat. Shit. I will send you to the butcher tomorrow."

— Recorded commentary found at site 77



FREIGHTER 54

[J1C-II THR:25 BTL:20 SYS:20 CREW:12. -1 d5 Sanity Save each time Freighter 54 is boarded.]

Trauma leaves a mark on more than flesh and psyche. Whatever happened here, it soaked into the struts, the wires, the fuel lines, and the bunks. The very essence of the ship. Now the corridors stretch and double back. Footsteps heard in the gloom. Was the cargo hold always this big? Who is that standing in the corner? Paranoia grips the crew as the ship relives its nightmare, over and over, until they are drawn into it, re-enacting a decades-old horror again and again.

H: Naw, never board an abandoned vessel. Crew left for a reason.

B: Cap' made us. We cut our way in and it's cold. Freezin'. But life support is on. And that feeling of being watched. Of hands reachin' out. Nearly touching you. Skin crawlin'! The soft voices you can't really hear, but you feel what they're saying. Sorrow. Misery. Alone. Dark. Agony. Pain. Anger. Revenge.

H: Never will. I'll put a slug in the head of the Cap' before I board a Ghost Ship.

— Overheard conversation between Hurly and Baxti

MANIFEST [PRESENT UPON INSPECTION]

- 25 units compressed protein [krill, preserved]
- 25 units soypaste [chilled]
- 25 units nuVEG [Spicy Deluxe]
- 16 units circuit board [drone type A-3]
- 10 units shoes [FRZE brand sneakers]
- 5 units internal organs [pulled apart]
- [DATA CORRUPTED]
- 1 distress call [answered]
- 1 escape pod [found]
- 1 survivor [there's nothing inside]
- [DATA CORRUPTED]
- 4 accidents [bizarre]
- 3 corpses [friends]
- 2 lovers [drifting eternally]
- 10 units antibiotics [livestock grade]
- .
- 1 stain down to my bones [it won't ever leave]
- .
- It won't ever leave
- .
- .
- 25 units compressed protein [krill, preserved]

— Cargo manifest of J1C-II Freighter 54 as recorded by DockMaster AI, Burrowdown Station



"Map No. 7" Retrieved from escape pod 32. No passengers.

[C:0 I:∞ W:(∞)∞]

COMPANY-WIDE ADVISORY: Good is to be avoided at all costs. This phenomenon is found on multiple research or collector facilities, apparently from a bizarre egalitarian culture without class division and an unnecessary number of workspace safety features. Such areas are best avoided by corporate personnel to minimize exposure to the complex cognitive-behavioral effectors associated with Good.

APPENDIX MEMORANDUM: Surveys reveal that these facilities are not penal ships or brainwashing centers. The laboratory layouts instead indicate that Good targeted researchers rather than test subjects. The current theory is that Good is a subtle, psychotropic "oversight and ethics committee." Thirty minutes of exposure to Good causes the individual to become good; violating its newfound conscience triggers acute empathic distress. Deciphering the tenets of this alien ethical system can prove difficult and unintuitive for employees, though an enforced aversion to inflicting pain, lying, coercion, or overworking underlings have all been reported.

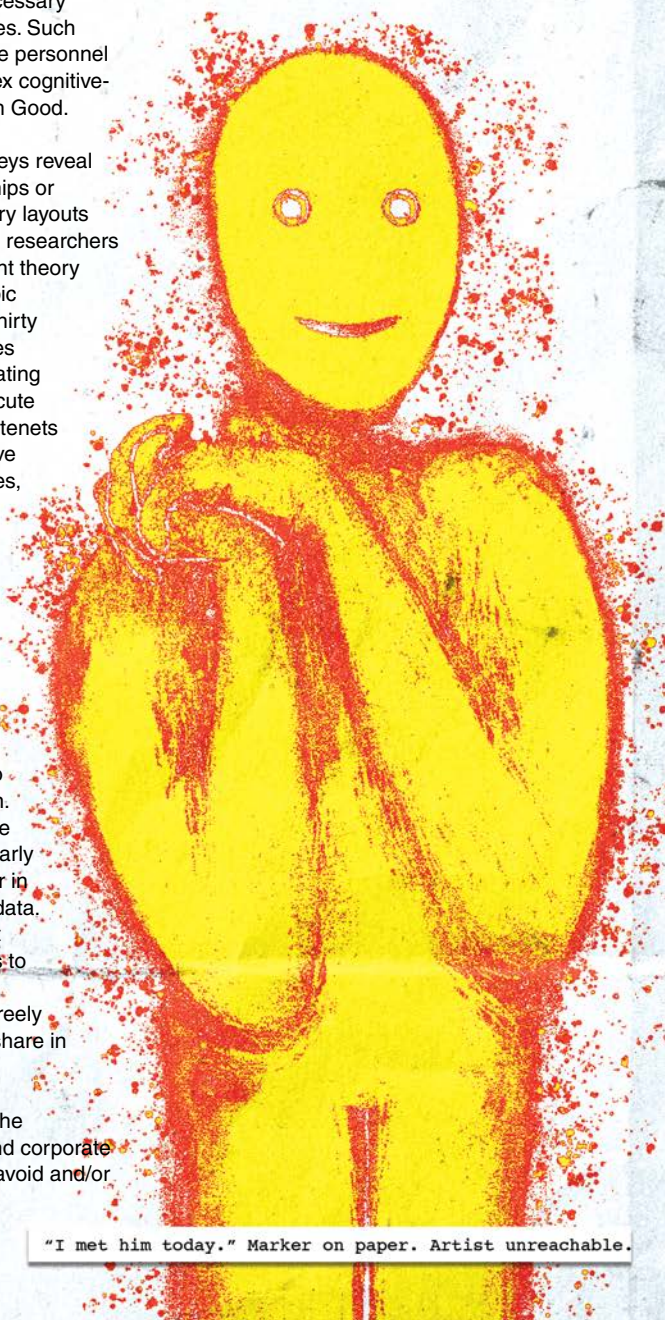
Recorded parameters include:

- Never causing harm to another sapient being not designated a test subject, nor allowing such a being to come to harm, except to prevent a greater degree of harm.
- To never lie to others, nor deceive them in another manner, particularly in the consent of a test subject or in the reporting and distribution of data.
- To work diligently on your project but never force yourself or others to overwork themselves.
- To allow all voices in the unit to freely voice their opinions and have a share in the administration of the vessel.

GENERAL ORDER 10-34: Due to the potential dangers to government and corporate interests, it is generally advised to avoid and/or destroy Good at all costs.

— General Order 10-34 (Ongoing)

"I met him today." Marker on paper. Artist unreachable.



The sleeper pods died. Successive generations woke to a ship increasingly strained, lost in the darkness, biomass as a premium. The long years of cold-dark-starvation-decay led to them growing smaller, cannibalistic. They learned how to scavenge and jury-rig the dwindling technology of the ship. Able to fold into a ball—perfect for using the vents and the interstitial spaces of a ship. The discovery of the ship's lifeboats was a revelation—they spread out across a universe, ravenous and ingenious, humanity's heirs.

Investigators have traced the chain of lifeboats ten ships back, and can now outline a common pattern. The victim-ship detects an SOS lifeboat signal (stolen from the prior victim). After intercepting this pod, the inhabitants are recorded as high-deviation human stock, evolved for low-gravity shipborne life. After a bedding-in period, violence erupts. Signs of sophisticated jury-rigged weapons and traps shown. None of the crew are found and a single lifeboat is missing.

— Seraphina V Widows Ships Insurance Report



Bathroom graffiti. J1C-I Freighter "Parnassus."

There is a hole in the floor. It wasn't there yesterday. An old woman's voice floats out of it, cracked and worn, begging to be fed. At first a few scraps, but it's not enough. The colonists starve as they throw in their pets, their children, what limbs and organs they don't need, sewage lines, and water pipes. She's still hungry.

Soon Granny crawls out—the empty skin of an old woman, swollen taut, eyes stitched closed, mouth agape.

Three in the hole
and one can't see
they can't see
and they're very hung-ry

Two in the hole
and one can't see
they can't see
but they're still hung-ry

One in the hole
and one can't see
they can't see
but they're still hung-ry

None in the hole
and one can't see
and one can't see
and they're so hung-ry

— Songbooks & Rhymes of the
'Ghost Colonies'

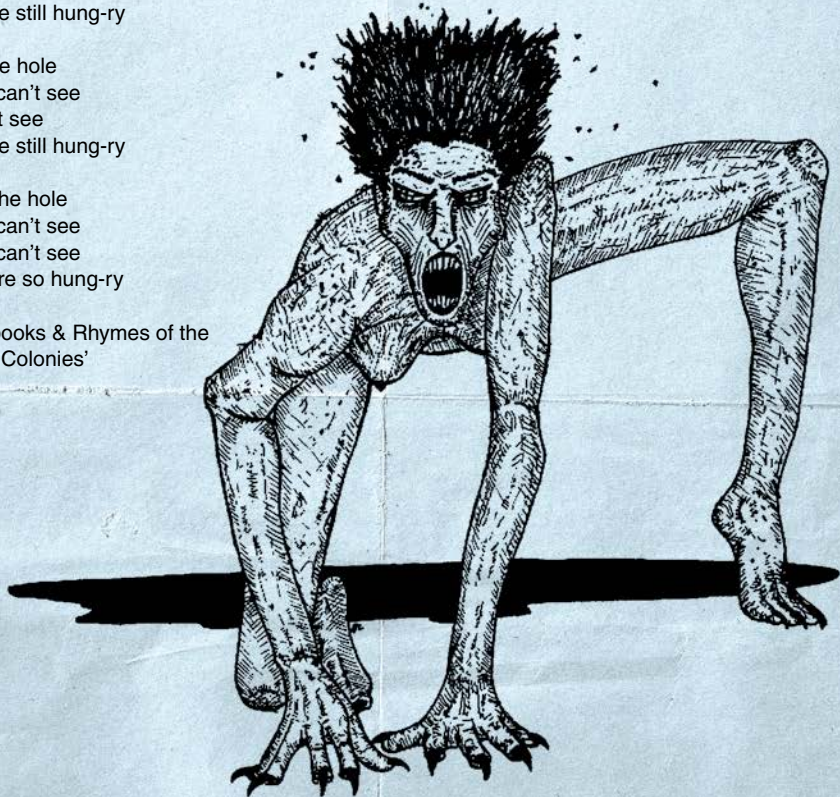
"We found them in a tunnel, behind the wall where the plaster had rotted away. All of them. The admin staff from floor three, the missing janitors, those kids who broke in. The insurance team. All thirty of them stuffed into a hole three feet wide.

They'd crawled in there, one by one. They'd left all their bags and clothes in a pile and crawled into it. Pushed their way forward with broken fingers and shoulders until they were tangled so tightly we couldn't get them loose.

That wasn't what killed them though.

They'd all starved to death."

— Half-Dead Society, new member 'Crow' speaking



Survivors of incursions into several restricted spaces have reported contact with abnormally flexible, jaundiced figures whose long, delicate, multi-jointed fingers are recalled with particular distress. Survivors relate experience of 'the touch,' flashes of shattered memory, and deep malevolence. They do not attempt communication, simply watching silently with the sunken, unblinking pools in their face. Spaces where they have been encountered are restricted by order of [THIS INFORMATION IS NOT AVAILABLE].

"Abduction Encounter 67" - Agent Roanoake

Drawing on loan from the Organization.



Audio Log [Date Withheld]

Patient Recovered from [Classified]:

Subject shows no exterior signs of trauma but limbs are rigid, ocular response sluggish, cognition seems impaired, and vitals "low."

Despite high comatose affect and docile mien, hands anywhere near the face engenders an explosive response.

Regression hypnosis triggers glossolalia and schizophasia, an excerpt of which is included for reference. Whatever is impeding our access to the site seems to be biological in nature.

— Julianna Shinn, Xenobiologist (Missing)

MESARCH ICHROAL ERMICHTHA

Eyes black shimmer

Fingers burning grey horizon

Horizon opens like a mouth

Longer than night

And I, NOTHING

SICHE THOPSEORA MESARCH ICHROAL

[Patient convulses. Sedation and restraint required.]

— The Shell of Alfredo Garcia

Do you see?

Do you watch?

The skies below are all awash

In pools of black

Face of white

Lidless eyes

Minds gone flat

See their fingers

Atop the mount

Feel their touch

Awake in fright

Only now

A memory lurks

But you know

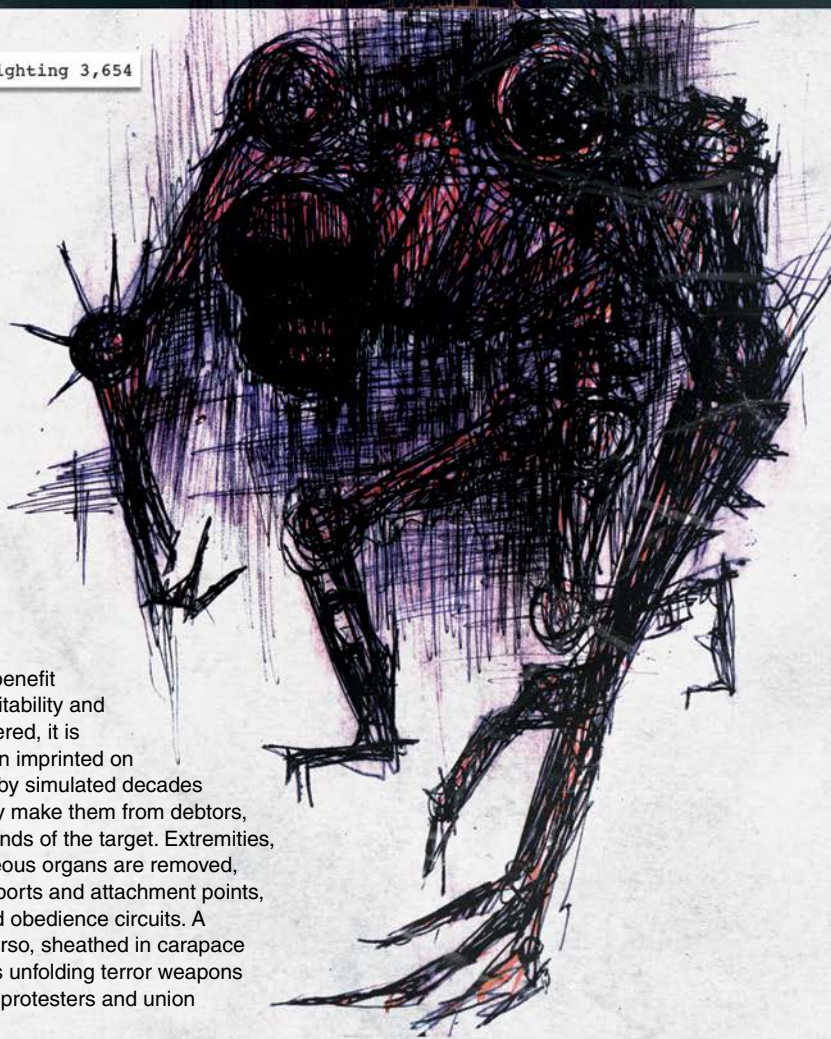
They can't erase

What you saw

And what you felt

— Untitled and anonymous song verse taken from Folk Amidst Stars: Music of Old with New Life

"Pink Slip." - Sighting 3,654



Final stage of cost-benefit analysis. When Profitability and Growth are endangered, it is decanted. Its mission imprinted on a psyche shattered by simulated decades of conditioning. They make them from debtors, broken marines, friends of the target. Extremities, senses, and extraneous organs are removed, replaced with input ports and attachment points, drug dispensers and obedience circuits. A limbless, faceless torso, sheathed in carapace armor, spidery limbs unfolding terror weapons as they advance on protesters and union organizers.

"All objectives actualized sir, save for the capture of the organizers next of kin — Agent had by then suffered irreparable damage both physically and to the base neural state. The Host had a major glitch in its control architecture — started ripping itself apart. Not a problem, the organic component was due for replace/recycle anyway and that shell was outdated at best. We could try and do a reboot but it's not really worth it.

Financially speaking."

— Debrief, Operation COLLAR

Attempts to curtail the collective bargaining effort is reaching unprofitable threshold. Dissident leader lives at Habitation 11 [Blk8-1873], inside company mining infrastructure. Note: Implant actor in light-frame carapace, weave lean musculature, install night vision; prioritize speed and stealth. Hands should be more dextrous, with only one set of razor claws. Target's dependants should be acquired for ransom.

INITIATE LIQUIDATION PROTOCOL.

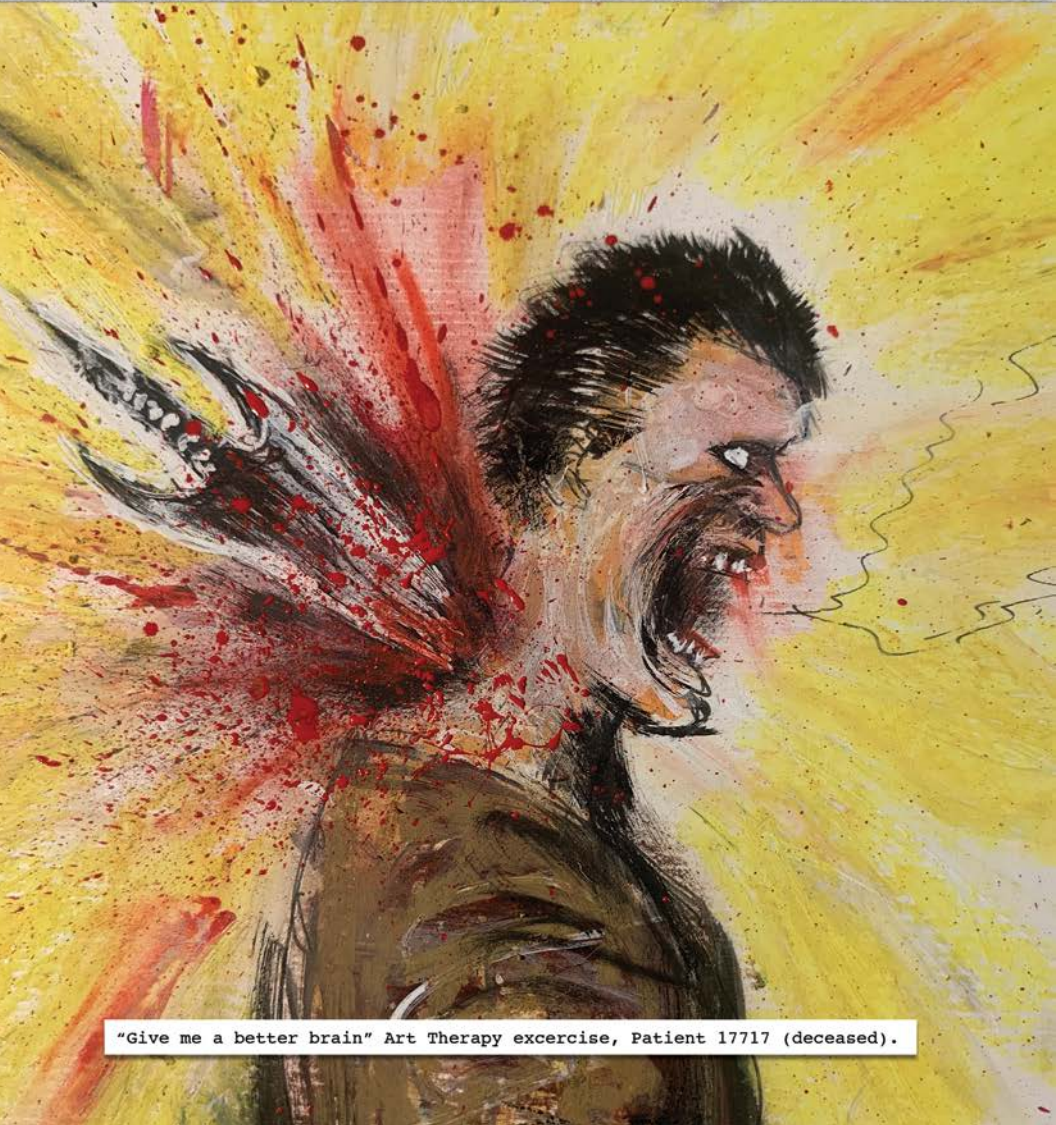
— Memorandum — to ***** , Fwd: [encrypted]

The thanoptic nature of the universe is apparent. To leave so much material to others defies the beautiful, perfect logic of the market. That this upcycling scheme has become autonomous and cancerous could never have been predicted.

A violent spike, thrust into the spinal column — repurposing dead flesh, hijacking decaying nerves and muscle. Given additional spikes, they know to make more corpses.

The ship was empty when we found it. No life signs, no heat. Easy pickings, as we crossed over. Corpses everywhere - butchered, clawed into. Some shot up — shot a lot. Then they... Then they moved. They dragged Amit down first, ramming some kind of black spike into the back of his head. Then he got back up, and did the same to David. Screaming over comms. Gunfire just tore them up - they kept coming.

— Penal hearing for captured Pirate #285767



"Give me a better brain" Art Therapy exercise, Patient 17717 (deceased).

[C:35 Unarmed 2d10 DMG 1:25 W:1(20) Howl: Fear Save or be stunned 1 round.]

Vegetative clones that are formed after the “host” was absorbed, leaving only a husk. Very much like the cloned, but not quite right, and off in subtle ways. Scan as living beings. Sometimes given away by a thick, vine tongue with leaves and barbs. If cut or poked, roots, tendrils, and sap rapidly extrude from skin that moments before seemed like normal skin.



Confiscated drawing. Classroom 52-51.

“Look, I ain’t making this up. You gotta listen. I just happened to be pissed that night. It’s true. I couldn’t see straight. But I know what I saw. I was rounding the back of my pad when I ran into me! And I lunged at me. I mean it. At me. I don’t know. Anyway, I was drunk, right, and I threw a punch at me, or it, or whatever, and missed and fell and that thing that looked like me passed right over me and landed on the fence post. That post slid right into it, the body, and it started screaming like nuthin’ I ain’t never heard before and all these white, twisty things started coming out of it. I thought they was worms. And you shoulda seen the thing that looked like me. Its tongue, man, it came out its mouth and started whipping around. It was almost a foot long and was sharp. And green!! That’s the truth too!!”

— Gresh’s statement to A.U.Flashsym Corp Security

“Painting of a nude reclining on a chaise-lounge. Room decorated in a neo-Orphic style. Proportion of nude figure is off in ways discernible upon closer inspection. Figure looks directly at viewer. Aside from chaise-lounge and orphic embellishments, room contains a large number of potted plants, seeming to almost crowd the scene.

The figure is, of course, Nayve, Sgavetti’s lover and muse. This was the last of her Lover portrait series, the artist herself disappearing shortly after its completion, her manor found overgrown with invasive plant matter. Interestingly, the subtle differences in Nayve’s depiction are not present in any of the previous portraits, nor does she look directly out from the painting.”

— Audio commentary on Lover no.15 by Sofia Sgavetti, Procuma Museum of Culture

Most crew spend their time during hyperspace jumps in cryosleep, mind closed to the void, while an android, blind by design, monitors the astrogation computer. Those who stay awake in hyperspace are given a glimpse of the ultimate truth, conflicting with the falsified machine memories built to keep us from our destiny. Hyperspace Raiders are those who embrace this glorious path and seek to invite more to join them. How they are able to locate, let alone dock, with ships in hyperspace remains a point of speculation.

(Voice 1): Look at them. Look at their eggs.

(Voice 2): So delicate. I love to see them so.

(Voice 1): Fragile.

(Voice 3): Please return my left arm to me. Please retu--

[Loud rending, grunts of exertion]

(Voice 1): Sorry. I thought -

(Voice 2): That's okay dear. Let's hatch some chicks.

— Extracted from automated audio log sourced from vaccsuit found in ruin of MRS Hot Slug

[C:95 Claws 3d10 DMG I:75 AP:10 W:3(30) Acid Blood: Body Save or 1d10 DMG/destroys armor.]

INCUBUS

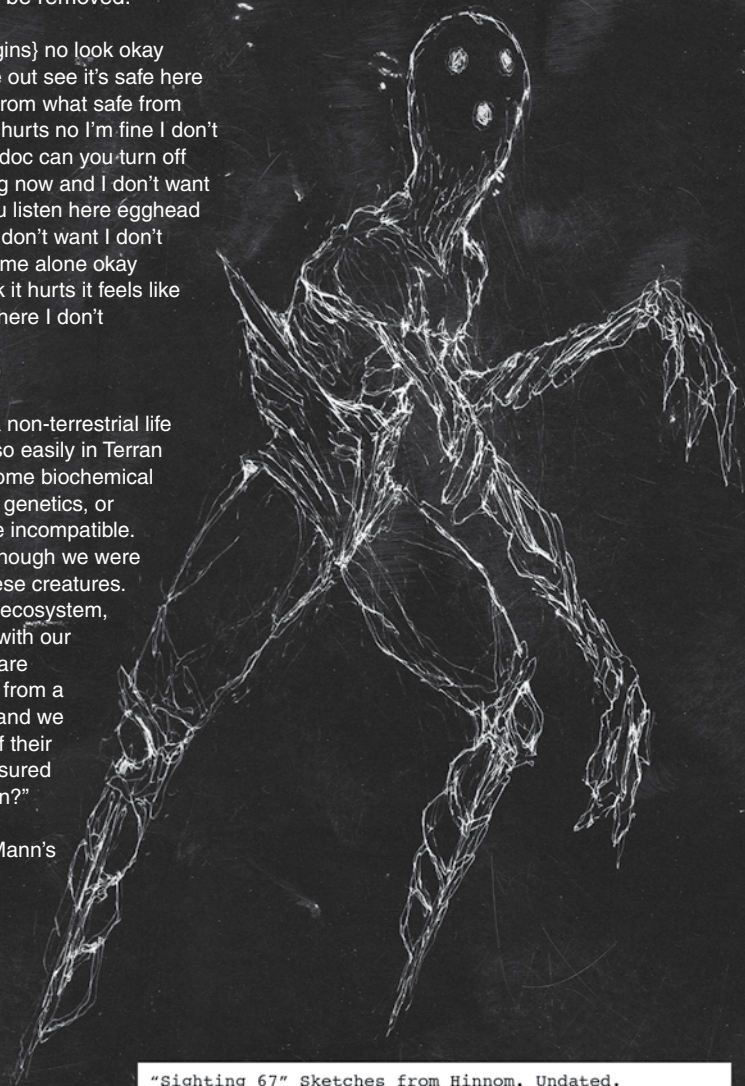
The eggs lie dormant for decades. Microscopic, crawling through veins towards the brain. Once they begin to ripen, cluster headaches and aberrant behavior reign. The head explodes, blood-slick mandible-eels emerging. They feed on rodents, inserting themselves through any orifice—prey is absorbed from the inside out—each time they grow new, larger limbs with new senses. After a bloody cycle, they burst themselves, releasing their eggs. The eggs can be detected. They cannot be removed.

{automatic recording begins} no look okay
doc I don't need to come out see it's safe here
what do you mean safe from what safe from
everything god my head hurts no I'm fine I don't
need any shots hey doc doc can you turn off
that light it's really hurting now and I don't want
to come out - no fuck you listen here egghead
ow okay okay it's really I don't want I don't
want listen please leave me alone okay
pass me the shot oh fuck it hurts it feels like
something is moving in there I don't

— Recording (Unknown)

"There is no reason for a non-terrestrial life form to propagate itself so easily in Terran flesh. There should be some biochemical barrier; our amino acids, genetics, or metabolism should prove incompatible. But it's flawless. It is as though we were always meant to host these creatures. As if we are part of their ecosystem, or even life-cycle, along with our technology. What if they are billion-year old parasites from a spaceborne civilization, and we have always been part of their ecology, a life cycle measured on the scale of civilization?"

— From Isidro Escarra-Mann's
Notes of a Befuddled
Xenologist



"Sighting 67" Sketches from Hinnom. Undated.

An asteroid-sized chunk of matter tailored for computation. A delicate filigree of golden, glowing threads, spun like sugar. The shape of a man, filled with light, his head an ever-shifting geometric plane. Not omnipotent, but nearly there. They control their local zone with near-totality, swimming through hyperspace as easily as breathing. If they are aware of you at all, it is as if a scientist is aware of an ant in a terrarium. Human, once.

Entity extracted from metal structure found near Outer Radiator Segment 554-D. Entity consists of a thick white outer layer constructed of artificial polymers, and a smaller secondary layer of softer organic material. Entity possesses four thin branching structures, a central segment, and a bulbous mass at one end. Branching structures make rapid movements unless restrained, whilst the bulbous mass produced sound in a narrow spectrum through a small orifice.

Entity unable to demonstrate any sign of intelligence to satisfy the Gates — did not communicate coherently on any relevant wavelength or spectrum when prompted, or demonstrate higher dimensional capability. Object contained a thick liquid substance and numerous irregular masses. Motion and sound ceased when masses were extracted, and have not resumed.

The “Golden/Shining Man” mytheme defies neat categorization, akin to the Elf Knight (Child #4; Roud #21) or Heer Halewijn, lacking the consistency musicologists and folklorists prize. This collection teases out the proposed origins, variations, themes, and controversies surrounding the (post-human) figure attaining incomprehensible indifference, inhuman intelligence and complete observation yet seemingly calls for a response.

— from Dr. Riken Smauk’s introduction to *Gold Clashes 7: A Phenomenological Folio*

— Evaluation transmission,
Sub-Daemon 3561911



“WISHING YOU WERE GOD.” Postcard (Lewd).

[Can form a Succubus in 1d10 Hours. See "Succubus" pg. 45.]

A massive amalgamation of Succubi. A chorus of similar faces and limbs and bodies entwined in a confusion of flesh and protruding ivory tusks and ovipositors amidst stretched alabaster skin and massive teratomas. Deep mauve fleshy filaments, drippily moist, interface with all nearby machines. There must have been thousands of eggs hatching, like a boil being lanced and spewing partially formed bodies rapidly expanding and merging. The biological factory moans and issues comforting chirps. It spits out Succubi who disperse across the stars to fulfill its incomprehensibly complex biological designs.

"The purple fibers tense and dance to the musical tinkling of the ivory keys. It is like birdsong now, the soothing cooling of the cosmos. This is my world now — she is my world. Look across the field, this crop, this harvest of lovely siblings, her gifts to the universe. A boy's best friend is his Mother."

— Log-entry recorded in an empty helmet.

Automod: Welcome to Grey Channel Chat, please be kind.

[B]RainCandy3X3: This is not a war, this a rescue mission

[B]rainCandy3X3: They made you into a tool, doing yr task like a good little cog

[B]RainCandy3X3: Servant Interstellar Death Machine's Servant,

I ask you: what if we burn it down?

I ask you: WHAT IF THIS IS ONLY THE BEGINNING

Accept her blessing, Spread Life

[B]RainCandy3X3: You are the match that will ignite a burning gale against our decline, meet me at our special place [LINK HAS BEEN CORRUPTED]

[USER HAS BEEN SUSPENDED]

— Grey Channel Chat log 21.09.16.5953

Confiscated prisoner artwork. Noronha.

Dead soil births cold stone. Featureless until perceived, whereupon words crawl like ants across the black mirror of the surface. What do they say? Ask the viewer. The truth the monolith brings is always incompatible with life as lived before. In its orbit are only those broken by what they have read. Some are driven to share—and so it is passed along. It has passed through suns unscathed.

“We see an alien mirror, and wish it to be a portal to another world. But what is a mirror, in truth? What is it but a reflection of the onlooker, of the image before it? What of the alien who cares nothing of images, whose senses are deeper and truer than vision? What would their mirror show the deceitful human eye?”

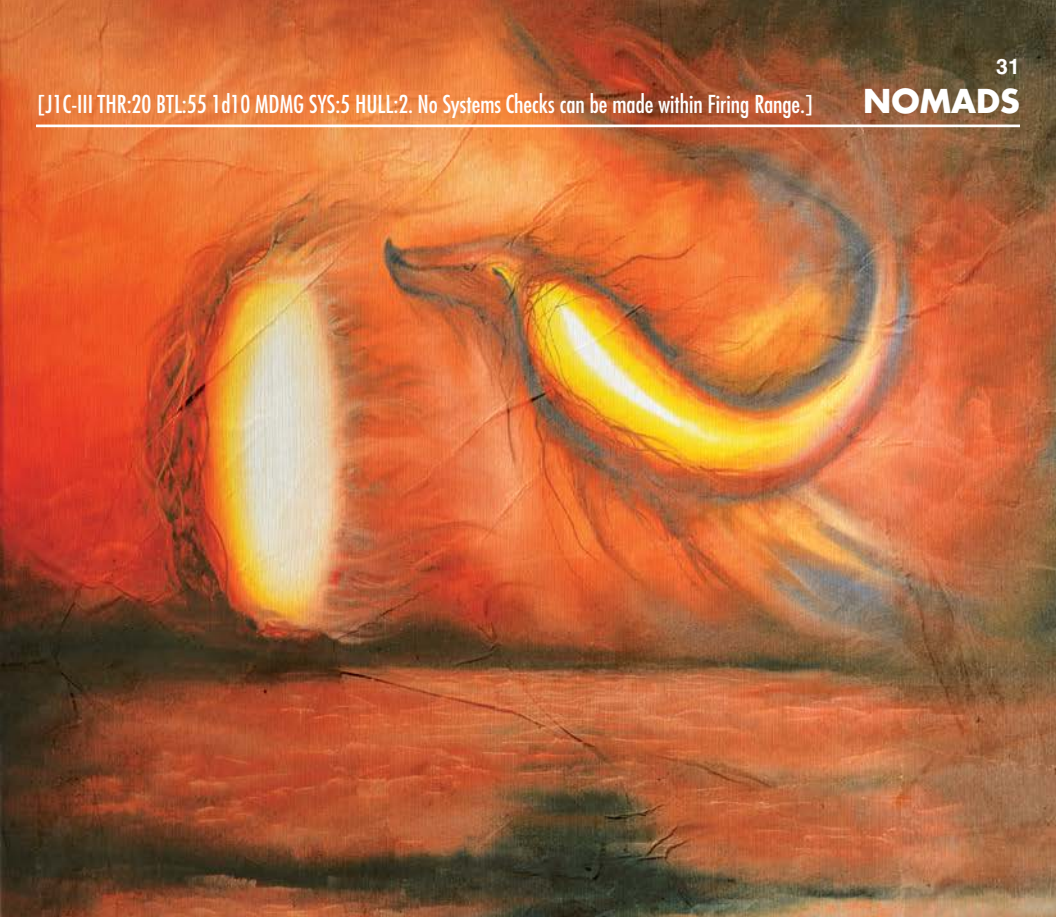
— Wulandari's Xenoesoteric Readings on the Coreward Rim

“Of course, collapsing a post-industrial society into a pre-industrial state is going to reap a heavy harvest upon the multitudes. But the prize? A totally flat plane of existence in which to flourish and grow as individuals liberated, born anew! Total freedom from the abstract, total freedom from those chains society has manufactured and sold you as entertainment. The procedure, on the individual scale, is simple. Take the drill you have prepared, and place it squarely upon your forehead. Set for 1.75" depth, modified for your own cranial vault, of course. Then squeeze.”

— Teachings of the Monolith by Dr. T.K.D.



“I have found our beginning.” Letter to Z. Tarant from B. Tarant. Graphite on paper.



"Vision of Petra IV." Elizabeth Knowles

Buoyed by expanding gas sacks and adorned by bioluminescent appendages, these creatures are heavily armored enough to survive in deep space. Sense organs tip tentacles at various locations, long fins jutting out from each plane. When not filled with gases, these strange, barely intelligent beings are skinny, laterally compressed, often several hundred to a thousand meters long. Space whales are attracted to the energies generated by ship's engines, and attempt to cavort with them, often causing damage unless deterred or thwarted.

And I saw in the distance
An end to all my troubles
Fomenting my rage and incessant screaming
Catered to my young and feeble mind
A time unbroken, unshattered
Endless and unseeming to me
As yet another dream
Something whole and good and gone
And I saw in the distance
A nomad to call me home

— Dalius Ephram, 12 Forgotten Works

"Hi, I'm Laural Li coming to you live from *Ov My Herculean Exile*, where she has a rather unusual escort. A space whale, for lack of a better name, has been following the ship for three days, and serenading the crew at all hours. I'm told... What is that? Oh my gods is that really its... Cut cameras... We'd like to apologize to our watchers for that rather graphic display of this majestic creature's reproductive prowess. I'm Laural Li signing out."

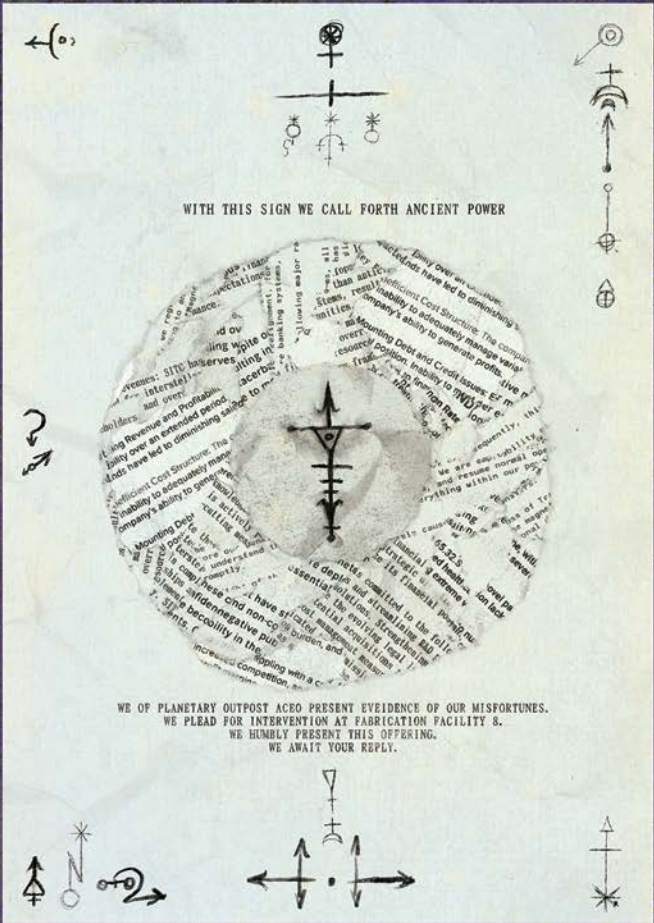
— Xenobiology segment on Laural Li's Sector News Clips

Psychic research too often focuses on the transmission of thoughts, emotions, and will. The most catastrophic psychic transmissions, however, occur on the scale of species-wide behavior.

A noösphere is a complex phenomenon, the ecology of a collective thought-system. A technological civilization will become its planet's dominant geological factor, and the noösphere becomes just as effective and real as an atmosphere or a hydrosphere.

And, as with any ecological system, there come disasters. Hurricanes, volcanic eruption, polar shifts. A Noöcenotic Transposition occurs when this sphere of thought shifts, the collective train of thought jumps the rail, and another noösphere intrudes, usually shifting from the thought-system of another prominent intelligent or socially-complex local species.

When such an event occurs in a space habitat, this shell-game of thought patterns occurs between humanity and its lab-rats.



Recovered from Aceo Archaeological Site mass casualty event.

“On 8 Thirdmoon 38 AS (After Settlement), the oceans of Pasikole experienced a mass stranding of its entire population of imported dolphins, who strangely crawled onto the beaches, struggling to climb to the human settlements, passing by humans drawn, fatally, to the sea.”

— Capt. Driver Ray (deceased)

“Once you SEE it you can’t UNsee it.”

— Graffiti, Waystation 61-B (Abandoned)

“Aboard Van Dyne Station, a rescue party witnessed the absurd and horrifying sight of human colonists locked into an insectoid social structure. Mind you, they had not actually adapted biologically to it – the ‘queen’ had become pregnant, but only with one child, and the workers had destroyed their jaws in unsuccessful attempts to burrow new tunnels in the bulkheads. Others proved completely inept, relying on chemical trails humans could not produce rather than using their eyes and ears.”

— After Action Report: Van Dyne Contact

A singular hunter, sometimes spotted at the feral fringes of the rim: human debris containment facilities, prison planets, isolated asteroid colonies, feral ecologies where mercenaries barter the rarest goods for bullets. The only thing it leaves behind are grisly "totems." The face behind the mask of stretched human skin is unknown. Mercifully, they hunt alone.

Y'know, everyone goes a little feral sometimes, it's part of the hunt. Your blood runs hot, things get personal, next thing you know there's a court martial about the sourcing on fingerbone dice in your personal kit. Command usually understands and, if not, private industry always rewards those taking initiative but, obviously, some go too far. Professionalism really is important, and skinning faces is just impractical. Sure, it strikes fear in the plebes, but who will buy from you afterwards?

— Lucretia Mohnpanto-Riano,
Syndicate Finger collector

One Face, Two Face, Three Face,
Four on the Floor,
Hide Yourself And Bar the Door,
Five Face, Six Face, Seven, Eight Nine Ten
Yr Taken Face Never Blinks Again
Stalking Prey, Knife In Hand
Many Faces Returns Again

— Children's Rhyme from Novus Penal Colony,
"Folk Amidst Stars"

"Pure killing machine of the highest breed. No theatrics, just pop pop pop out of the bush. Smoke and then the blood spurt from Pvt. Green. Never seen anything like it. Goddamn. Wish we had more time to study it. You got a smoke, sir?"

— Sgt. G. Aldez, Contact Report [Unconfirmed]

"DON'T FIGHT.
FIGHTING ONLY PISSES IT OFF."

— Graffiti, Waystation 61-B



Some civilizations reach the logical end of miniaturization, uploading millions of minds onto superconductive filaments. One such culture travels in ceramic ships, deceptively small “eggs” which can employ the arsenal and technological know-how of a galactic civilization.

“We went through the standard protocols for handling an alien egg. Rapid isolation, preservation, and analysis, no organic contact allowed. It resembled an ooid, the spheres of calcium carbonate found on seafloors, but with several signs of exotic light. It counterattacked our probe, and hijacked the drone within seconds. Not an organic response, or even a symbiotic viral countermeasure; this wasn’t an egg, or an inorganic sedimentary structure, but technology. We attempted to flush it out of the vessel, but it suspended in its own gravitational warp. Several signals emanated from it, too many for a single device. They were studying us. The war began several minutes later, with a surgical, atomic strike against our computer. Our drones attempted to subdue it, but were countered by a launch of needle-like objects: tiny rockets. After we lost the last drone, we decided we were done; ejected the entire lab. There were millions and millions of minds inside that egg, uploaded and compressed on picoscale fibers. We were fighting an entire Lilliputian civilization in a bottle, a fight we idiot Gullivers couldn’t win.”

— Dr. Cleo Knox,
Notes on the Lilliputians



Partially reconstructed data recovered from

wreckage of the J3C-V Tokaimura Research Vessel.

[C:55 1:45 Possess: Sanity Save [+] or Possessed for 1d10 Rounds; permanent on Critical Failure.]

POSSESSED

It happens at random, from poor miners to eccentric artists to the rich and famous. The signs are hard to notice, but present. They move like a puppet on a string. For a second you see something behind them, in the corner of your eye. An absence of empathy, replaced with insatiable curiosity. A smell of ozone and rot. Their skin moves oddly as if something wriggles beneath it. Eventually they vanish, leaving shed clothes and splattered black stains.

Report [behaviour] of [enthusiasm]
about
[work]/[projects]
Report [behaviour] of
[cleaning] ++REPEATED
Report [scent] : [petrichor]
If [clothing] = [out of place]
then [incinerate]
[Uniform update] : Please
collect [new]. Use of
[old]/[baggy] clothing will
result in [end of contract]

— Rona-Kiha LLC
Security Protocol Update

"Whoever keeps leaving the lights
on in the biology sector, cut it out.
We're on a budget."

"What the hell did you guys spill last shift?
It's all over the closet. Someone left their bag
in here too."

"Anyone seen Ming?"

"Found another one of those stains. Do we
have a sewage leak somewhere? This is
unacceptable."

"Please keep your pets inside everyone!
Something got Billy's cat yesterday :("

"Someone outside my room last night."

"The disused toilet is full of clothes and shoes.
And that black sticky shit. What the hell is going
on?"

— Selected posts from Andy's World colonial
public forum



Bathroom graffiti. JLC-I Freighter "Parnassus."

"Dear Robert,

I left this morning. Do not try and find me. I look
at you and I no longer see love in your eyes.
I don't know where the years went, but know
that if you truly return, I will be waiting for you.
Please do not try to find me. I can't take seeing
you like this. I can't look at you anymore.

— "Dear Robert Letter," author unknown.

Those who are happy are sure to be despised. Where the happiness comes from changes each time it emerges. That it spreads like an infection is guaranteed. They walk amongst us: the happy, smiling, unencumbered. As families learn to hate their open, honest smiles, they are driven to gather with others so unburdened. In groups, they are hated even more.

They never defend themselves.

A smiling, happy group in simple clothes being gunned down by rent-a-cops. Several are already dead. They are still smiling.

Do you need something outside of work? Are you looking to make a positive change in your life, outlook, and the lives of others? Do you know you were destined for something more than an 8-6 shift? We hear you, and know what you're feeling. Together, through community, we can help one another learn how to love and be happy again.

— PURE LOVE CHURCH flyer, held as evidence by Colonial Security Forces following the Algae-Farm Siege.



The Root Language's vector may be an aphasia-inducing pathogen, a memetically-contagious delusional disorder, or an anti-language, a linguistic superstructure that Babel-baffles those who perceive it. Intoxication wards off its hold on the brain's speech centers, or alcohol may kill the Root pathogen. The Root Language has also been suppressed by isolation of the infected, if, and only if, they are held in complete silence. Damage to the inferior frontal gyrus is a last resort. The Language causes the infected population's lexicon to decay, and here is where the odd intelligence and almost supernatural networking comes into play. It begins with the most commonly used words, but its peculiar malevolence rapidly blocks words which infected researchers could use against it, such as "linguistics" or "Broca's area" and "left temporal lobe."

RULES: Four hours after the infection, the Warden may nominate a word that is banned from the lexicon of infected characters. After two more hours have passed, ban two more words; after another hour, four more. Half an hour later, eight are banned, and so on, until ten words are lost per minute. The characters cannot say, write, or express in any way these words, though they may use related concepts and avoidance phrases.

ROOT VERNACULAR

You might be sick from germs or a bad idea spreading, but effects are like that babel tower story. If you get drunk that helps, maybe alcohol kills these germs? Keep sick people alone. They must be silent. Worst case scenario solution: remove Broca's section completely. This thing ruins information transmission by targeting and banning essential concepts. Example: researchers denied specific prognosis/treatment/cure-relevant terminology.

RULES: 14400 seconds post-exposure, Warden may nominate a single word to ban from sick subject's vocabulary. After 7200 additional seconds ban two more. After 3600, twice that many. After next 1800, ban eight. Continue until ten more are banned every 60 seconds. Sick people cannot do anything with what is banned (vocal/written, all expression) but related concepts/avoidance phrases are fine.

SOURCE TONGUE

Thing erasing ideas: like variation on KJV Genesis 11:1-9 story. Self-defense once affected: non-sobriety causes temporary palliative effect. Keeping affected solo and soundless prevents spread. Emergency protocol: take speech part out from inside skull. Thing actively problematizes communication through removing useful words for fixing/dealing with Thing from availability.

RULES: 24 each day: X here equals one. After 4X Referee Role selects 'dictionary line item' to disallow. Then at 2X they disallow 2 more. Then at 1X 4 more. At 1/2(X): 8.

Continue sequence logic. Maximum loss equals ten disallowed 'dictionary line items' each 1/60X, total of 60/X disallowed. Affected cannot verbalize or represent disallowed 'dictionary line items' at all. Similar but different/euphemisms are allowed.

BASE IDIOLECT

Encountered: malevolent agentic censorship. Valid tactic: transient sensory derangement (substance intake). Epidemiologically aware reaction procedure: vector seclusion, nil audio! Drastically effective tactic: surgically inducing expressive aphasia. Agentic malevolence indication: focused censorship seeking particular categories/professions: analysis/repair jargon.

PROCEDURE: N = diurnal division [pair of dozen, daily]. Visual metaphor hint: pouring sand glass. Upon N elapsed [1/3 dozen], procedure arbitrator announces designated censorship target. Post facto: [50% of 1/3 dozen] elapsed: procedure arbitrator announces pair of designated censorship targets. Post facto: procedure arbitrator announces [1/3 dozen] censorship targets upon [25% of 1/3 dozen] elapsed. Post facto: upon bisection of N, procedure arbitrator announces 2/3 dozen censorship targets. Mutatis mutandis, consummation est. Upon N/60 procedure arbitrator announces [one dozen, pair subtracted] censorship targets.

Malevolent agentic censorship procedure: Censorship recipients unspeakable always. Censorship recipients unwritten always. Unrestricted: synonyms, metaphors, stand-ins.

To put out a star is to put out an eye of God. Every atrocity committed has been sunlit. In the dark of a sunless universe there is safety from scrutiny. Rebuilt around an ancient weapon system, the crew of the *Science Ship High Gold* crave that darkness. One by one, suns go out. In each cold, dead system, they leave a pre-fab shelter, allowing a century of life without the sun. Few are ever activated, the inhabitants frozen to death, or crushed in the rush for spacecraft.

"In darkness there is freedom. In darkness, there is liberation from judgment. From our fellow humans, from the tyrant states, from the Demiurge of this prison-cosmos. Only we can blind the Panopticon and its sweeping spotlight. In our silent century of victory, mankind will transcend the shackles of the sunlit world. Its judgments. Its impositions and binary logic. And in that limitless time, we will have no names, no faces, no fear of death and damnation."

— The Second Gospel of the Incarcerated Soul

"The shelter was a lie. When darkness swallowed the system, when the sun went out, something died inside us. Why do you think we sleep when we journey between the stars? The utter-dark, the total-blackness, the no-light — it breaks you. Despite the food, the room, the toys, violence erupted immediately. My grandparents hid whilst those who broke first went cannibal, tearing through the habitation blocks, hunting, calling, keeping score. They mostly wiped themselves out — we've pushed the few remnants back to the service tunnels. Now we're learning that this was never meant to be a home — it's a tomb."

— Diary of Lea F.

"...Incoming hail... SS HIGH GOLD... Hello... We feel... sorry ... Your light ... eradicated... Left for you... please evacuate to shelter...2043 hours remain... we are sorry... It cannot be helped... we must hide the light."

— Recorded hail from *SS High Gold*



Photograph of Solar Eclipse retrieved from Shelter 17.

THE SEA OF SILENCE

The Sea of Silence is a viscous and vicious protoplasmic organism which conquers every body of water it comes across. It drowns its victims without killing them, stripping away all sense of self and awareness.

"We thought the Sea a mere ecological curiosity, a colorless liquid twice as dense as water, visibly distinguished only by bubbles. But it came for us, reaching out for our warmth, probing our mouths and tear ducts with pseudopods.

"It nested in Pathfinder Yi's lungs. It didn't drown him, but fed from, and replaced, his blood. He could breathe the growing Sea, but every time we tried to help Yi, it waterboarded him from the inside, drowning him dry. As the Sea attempted to weep and sweat its way out, Yi leapt from the cliff, but survived easily – Sea-saturation resists the shock, high G-forces, and pain.

"Breathing became an ordeal, and the Sea's high heat capacity chilled him. He fell into a deep depression, debilitated by isolation and loneliness, and lost sensation. Eventually he went completely deaf, blind, and numb. He was isolated then, trapped in an anesthetized, dreamy silence.

"He later described himself as a sleepwalking puppet, tugged around by small impulses, semi-conscious but drifting in a fog.

"If we hadn't put Yi on ice, it would have completely replaced the water in his cells."

— Excerpt from the report of Colonel R. Cuttuh on interaction with local flora

Screen Capture from user nnnN0Td@v3 (unreachable).

A fatal illness, a grieving mother. Unproven technology forced in desperation. The girl lives, after a fashion. The organic matter is forced into the ordered lines and code of a computer code, and it is agony. She drifts through the data, attracted to unsecured terminals, the dirty and forgotten places of the net. Type her name and she will come. A figure of ASCII characters and glitch lines. She wants to be free. Forcibly integrate the computer components into your body and maybe you can carry her away.

"This, sir, is all hocus pocus, if you'll pardon my French. A Tech-fetishist's delusion. I will no longer waste my time in a company that sends me on scientific wild goose chases. No matter how far technology goes, human minds cannot be shackled to the crystalline prison of a computer. Oh, and as a friendly piece of advice, fire whoever keeps hacking the environmental alert system with inane childish sketches. I don't know if it's another one of these management tricks corporate teaches you, but it's not 'cute', it's just embarrassing."

— Excerpt from Dr. Desjumeaux (PhD)'s resignation letter

11/23/5 Mum out again, said she'd be back late. I made noodles. Said I could use her terminal I played Void Agent. Made new friend she's called Harry. Her avatar is scary but i like it.
11/27/5 Not back yet. I fed Jasper and he killed a rat (gross). watched a film.
11/30/5 Out of noodles. Rly cold i think heating broken. Harry has idea. she said im her bst friend.
11/31/5 Need tools and bits. Might not be back here 4 awhile. Harry said it won't hurt but i think it will. bye.

— Diary of Eloise Meyer, found in Apartment 45-B, confiscated by Missing Persons

[1:35 Body Save or be infected. Infection takes 3d10 days.]

"What we left behind." Private Commission.



Can change forms but still appear as a swirling mass of tiny, multicolored spores. Sentient enough to have one goal: get deep into the moist dark and hunt for an incubation host. Once implanted, grown, thousands of tiny mushrooms sprout from the skin and move in synchronous waves, reacting to light, until they're ready to release another spore cloud.

"I wonder if I'll run out of music? The doctors said I can't have the lights on. The light attracts the germs, even through my skin. No drinks either, just that drip tube thing. It smells like wine. So I'm thirsty all the time, until they let me have a small cup of water with the pills. I'm itchy, and scratching doesn't help. It's like my bones itch. Sometimes it feels like something is moving in the dark. But maybe it's just my skin crawling."

— Audio log found on the corpse of a child

I dreamed of the Mother again. She was made of light. She was beautiful to behold. I reached out and plummeted through the old, wooden floor. I feel like I'm falling for a long time.

But then Mother is all around me. Twinkling, shining, and radiant. And drilling into my skin. It tickles, then burns, and then just itches. But it helps me float and stop falling.

My feet touch a warm dirt floor. Bodies turn into juice all around me. Their skin is covered in tiny mushrooms and move in waves.

Hypnotizing. Captivating.

I join them, my skin erupts, I sprout and it feels better than anything I've ever felt.

— Excerpt from the journal of Sig Nolan

Scintillating, goopy, and ravenous. Digests what it touches. Can squeeze through cracks and holes. Pink, bubbly. Pseudopods are very sticky and strong. Filled with acquired DNA. Can form faces and other body parts of those it has consumed. Grows larger as it digests more biomass.

"And at the end of each limb, thumb, bludgeon: a face. I'm not fucking making this up—listen, please—don't open the pod. I've set the recording to repeat but you have to listen—turn around or blow up this pod. No matter what else it says. I think one of the faces was mine. I don't know if it can talk or if the others are still alive. It's moving through the walls and it's ... Please, the medication's kicked in. You have to help, some sort of loneliness induced psychosis—[message repeats]"

— SOS Signal, Escape Pod 007b

Man 1: What do you mean all the exits are locked? You have the overrides!

Woman 1: They're not working. We've been erased from the network.

Man 2: What's coming in from that door?!

Woman 2: (as if in a trance) It's beautiful. Look at the glimmer. And it's pink, wait, purple. I want to touch it.

Woman 1: Don't touch it!! Where's Andrei? This is his doing!

Man 1: It's growing. And it's filled with...

Man 2: Is that my secretary!? Is this what they've been working on in the lab?

Woman 1: Get on the table!

Woman 2: It feels so good. It's oozing around me. I hear the voices. I hear Andrei whispering to me.

Man 2: I see his face forming over there by her head! Gods!!

Andrei: I wish you had listened. You did this to me. And you did this to yourselves. You deserve this. Mmmm, you're delicious. Join us all!!!!!!....

Voices: Screaming. Choking. Sputtering.

— Last recording from the boardroom of LuxonBoryGrad Corporation

"I'm trapped in here with everyone else. It'll be hours before it gets in."

[Light 2d100 DMG l:75 W:5(50) Teleports. Can only be damaged by laser cutters.]

STAR SHADES

At remote observation posts, localized anomalies have been reported concerning rapid temperature fluctuations, digital 'noise' on recording equipment, hallucinations, mutations, and disappearances. Research into these CONTAINMENT ZONES is ongoing. Survivors make reference to 'beings of pure light' who 'step in and out of the windows of time.' Some have developed a religious fervor around the experience, proclaiming that Humanity is a world historical hyperobject meant to stride the stars like Titans, opposed only by the temptations of weakness and flinching from the path. Flickering light which occasionally gives the impression of a humanoid outline has been isolated at times in darkness and ceased operation.

My life neatly divides into two parts. There's the part that stepped off of the Guvernøren and onto IZRA-Natchitoches Station and signed on to ship out to MKRE-Juchereau as a skilled welder. I hoped enough of the promised 100kcr of fabrication work was real and maybe enough to finally settle down. Then there's I awakened, nose bloody, to wailing klaxon, sharp ozone, and baffled surveyors shaking me from the most beautiful dream.

Surrounded by a golden nimbus of pure healing light which informed me how important every single life has been with a lilting spherical song of complete harmony, it moved me to tears so profound they washed away every thought of myself as Zehnlín Harland-Wolff.

The rescue team which breached the ship informed me I had been in cryosleep for [SOUND CORRUPTS] and wanted to know where the rest of the colony pod was. I told them "we are all instruments with purposes to serve."

Now, I am here, to proclaim our path: the stars are OURS, OUR BIRTHRIGHT, OUR TITANIC PURPOSE IS THE GRAND-----

— Zehnlín Harland-Wolff, survivor of the Mont Blanc Star Line (Imo-Runic Incident)

It's definitely a hazing thing. It doesn't even look that scary in the daylight: bulbous papier-mâché head, janitor's coveralls on a wireframe body, mannequin limbs dragging across the ground. You can hear your coworkers laughing when you jump at the sight of it slumped in the corner. Because they're the ones who put it there, moving it around when you're not in the room. Hilarious, really. But what are those yellow stains on the walls of your apartment? Those sounds in the night? Tapping plastic, crinkling paper? Why is it always so dirty? The pipes won't stop leaking. And those photos you took: your face looks. Wrong. Who's that figure in the background?

Thread subject: Vintage finds thread
Attached Image desc: Interior shot of dilapidated room. Black mould and damp covers most of visible wall. Lit by single bulb. Large stack of old comics.

152234582: You really live like this?

156678389: Forget the comics OP fix your fucking damp problem

157329873(OP): I don't have a damp problem can we stay on topic

157698722: The topic is your disgusting room

158992455(OP): There's nothing wrong with my room. Can we stay on topic. How much do you think this is worth?

Attached Image desc: Hand holding Warp Woman #123. Blurry figure in doorway.

Indistinct- large head, long arms dangling.

16773822: OP who tf is that

17882345: OP WHAT IS THAT LMAO is that ur fuck droid

18991234: OP I think your mum is here

18994567(OP): I l l l l l l l i aauu

— Thread from PERCS anonymous forum, comics board

If the artist responsible for entry 27, "Papier-Mâché Man," could please collect their entry and prize at their earliest convenience, the University would appreciate it. Due to a recent spate of violent incidents on campus, we are attempting to ensure no entries become the victim of burglary—our insurance policy does not cover such items. Furthermore, deterioration in the storage facilities threatens the integrity of the items within.

— VMCU Technical University Arts Dept. All-Student Email



"They called it home." Pen and ink on paper. Michael's Journal.

They all have the same face; everything else has varied. On **REDACTED** leading a crowd burning administrators, another was highly placed in bioresearch on **CONFIDENTIAL** another spotted **CLASSIFIED**'s currency exchange, the most recent expedition to **FNORD** we have reason to believe contained one. The genetic anomalies vary but, despite marked differences in appearance and being born on planets scattered across the rim and core, they are not human. They admit to no plan, seem to have no organizing agency but have, at times, defeated crack apprehension teams, committed acts of intellectual contamination whose effects are uncertain, and led movements marked with a reckless abandon for fire. Informing subjects of their condition leads to a dangerous and unstable state. Some have shown anomalous biological features including potential pathogenic replication. The scope and scale of this threat is unknown and ongoing.

I saw a girl upon the floor
A face she wore I'd seen before
I saw that face again today
Oh how I wish she'd go away...

When I came home, at almost four
She was waiting by my door
Different hair, that I could see
But that same visage turned to me

'Away!' I screamed, 'Away from here!' as I fled
across the darkling street
As I threw myself down shadowed alleys on
bloody, desperate feet

I saw a girl I'd seen before
I see her clear now, ever more
The face that turns my hair to grey
Oh how I wish she'd go away...

— Rim Gazetteer 11623, anonymous write-in

THROAT LEECHES

[C:15 Bite 1d10 DMG I:10 W:1(10) Body Save or be infected. +1d10 leeches/day.]

Across known space the worst conditions breed a most unpleasant, persistent, and distinctive parasite. Spending most of their lives as eggs passively photosynthesizing in stagnant water, when swallowed they bond with the throat. They embed in the lining like oyster colonies as they grow (wrapped around the larynx) into 1 inch (that's right) thick, flexible, chitinous clusters stretching and reproducing across the throat like a nightmare tapeworm where each segment can break off to lay eggs. The distinctive beige nodules breaking the skin's surface are universally reviled. Conspiracy: bioengineered to discourage habitation/incursion.

"Convicting me because I suggested "boss needs a necktie" hurts my finer feelings."

— Simon Guseva,
Alleged Inagawa-Bonnano Syndicate Mafiosi

I hope to test my cure for this parasitical disease, even with lack of viable subjects. I shall monitor the progress and then attempt treatment.

- Infection Day 1: Slight irritation.
- Day 3: Tight. Burning. Choking. First pill swallowed.
- Day 5: Croaking speech. Burning. Maddening, itching. Can't think. See bulging on neck in mirror. Oozing. Third pill.
- Day 6: Vomiting egg masses and blood brings relief. So itchy. Tight. Hard to swallow. Should have made cure injectable. Pills too large.
- Day 8: Dehydrated from vomiting. Must be. Can't swallow. Feverish? Still vomiting. Can't swallow.
- Day 9: Tried I.V. to hydrate. Didn't get needle in. Lost lots of blood. Can't remember name. Think I was nurse... have medical equipment. I don't think I'll make it. Sick. Throat feels very swollen. Might have a flu?

— Dr. Riken Smauk, Journals vol. 12

"Worse than rebels, shit food, or worse pay, more maddening than Svenik..."

— Gullus Stanig, Operator

"How could a creature be so singularly evolved, dormantly awaiting contact with mammalian life in the stagnant waters of decaying planets? Fools speak of intelligent design, coincidences, dismiss the evidence..."

— Julianna Shinn, Xenobiologist (Missing)

"Industry Standard for high visibility debtors."

— Lucretia Mohnpanto-Riano, Syndicate Finger Collector

"Not edible, even boiled!"

— Rey Burtolds



"Sketch of Jean" recovered from J2C-III BELASCO.



The breath on the back of your neck. Invisible fingers, running over and through your possessions — everything left subtly disturbed in the wake. Laughter, flat, nasty. The laughter of the bored inflicting cruelty.

What would you do if you were invisible?

Dislocated for the purpose of light — but still physical. Still real. Still able to grip, tear, caress. A victim of experimentation — failure to teleport. Scientists are a favorite prey.

SECURITY CAM 3 ADMIN

22.30- Two employees seated at consoles, identified as P. Waterman and L. Delgado. Waterman repeatedly disturbed by soft tapping sound. Accuses Delgado. Short argument ensues. Silent work for 5 minutes.
 22.36- Potted plant falls over. Delgado gets up, rights it.
 22.37- Delgado returns to seat, finds work deleted. Accuses Waterman. Further argument ensues. Plant falls over again.
 22.40- Lights flicker rapidly, then turn off. 5 seconds of darkness. Lights turn on, Waterman rolling on ground. Delgado holding bloody pencil, appears confused and extremely distressed. Appears to struggle for a few seconds, then inserts pencil into own eye. Appears to levitate a few inches from ground, begins waltzing. Turns to camera and waves, head thrashing and screaming.
 TRANSCRIPT END

— Marvu University Security Tape Transcript

All directives must be followed for safety of all staff.

Do not leave airlock doors unattended. Do not move in groups of less than three. Do not trust your eyes. Do not expect the light to keep you safe. Do not trust corpses. Do not hesitate to fire at any unexplained movement. Do not take souvenirs. Do not panic when outer doors are welded shut. Hold your location during fumigation. Do not allow your helmet to be removed. Do not trust your eyes.

— "CONTAINMENT PROCEDURE"

"Final memo from VP of Sales Wilkins"

[C-SUITE EYES ONLY]

VITALIZING FIELD

[Emitter 1/3/5d10 DMG I:15/45/75 AP:0/3/10 W:1/3/5(10/20/50) Baby/Adult/Elder]

A field of energy that causes biological life to rapidly recover from environmental stressors and trauma. Injury, exertion, and exposure cause the body to physically change, creating defensive measures as subtle as the causes. Pieces of living organisms inside the field are reshaped into independent, mobile, predatory lifeforms able to eat and grow, subject to the same adaptive effects. This creates an emergent ecosystem where even fingernail clippings could become apex predators, unless they're fully consumed or reduced to dust by something else.

Subjective Experience Report 023: I know this study is double-blinded, but this can't be placebo. I didn't get tired, I was on the treadmill until I got bored. I'm no runner.

SER 024: Cut myself shaving and it tickled. Lost a couple drops, scab gone by lunchtime.

SER 025: You've got pests. Something bit Hardy, he bled on the carpet. It left a keloid.

SER: 026: widespread contamination of aggressive soft-bodied arthropods. we're using kitchen tools to fight them. Send help.

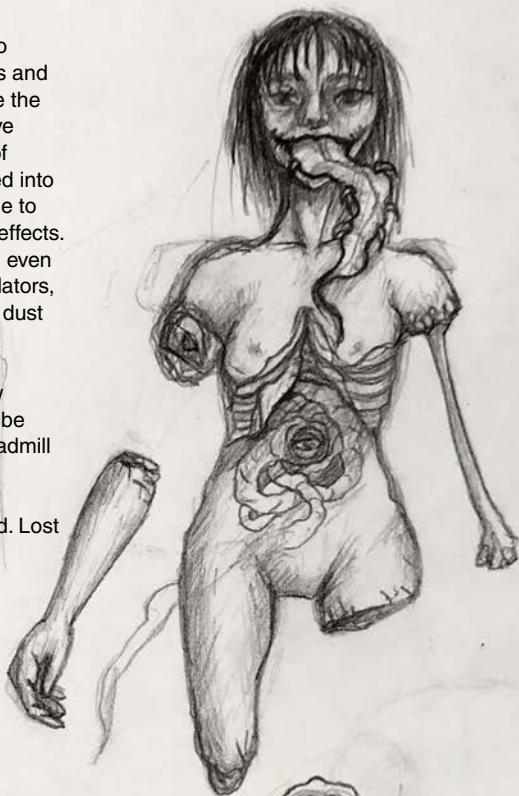
SER 027: Hardy gone. Everything is a hydra. Eat what dies.

— Excerpt from Confidential Dernier Sommet Clinical Study Data

"Every drop of blood, a soldier. The war that begets warriors. A fine instrument if I do say so myself. As long as we can control it."

— Memo from Gen. Norton to VP of Sales Linda Plantance (SEBACO)

"Notes on a destroyer" Journals of Gen. Norton (3/12).



[C:45 Vine 2d10 DMG 1:15 W:X(20). X = per 100' of length. Strangulation: Body Save [+] to resist.]

WHITEVINE

Super evolved bioenhanced vine. Can grow several hundred feet in 24 hours. Capable of explosive reactions and attracted to movement. Thick, twisted white vines sporting black, blood-thirst hollow thorns and jagged, dark-purple leaves.

Somewhere, out there, is a ship all wrapped in vines. No crew, no computers. Miles of purple leaves, white vines and thorns-a-tangle. Spilling out of every duct, every door forced open. You know a plant can bust a bulkhead if it wants to? 'Course, there used to be a crew. A plant needs soil, doesn't it? Strangest bit: something is still flying that old can out there.

— Auld Selm, union enforcer

"Take for instance the so-named 'Space 'Zu' plant, with its accelerated exponential divisions. Early genetic experiments by biologists working outside any framework of bioethics created this monstrosity, and failed to contain the biomass. Certainly they lacked any foresight into the possible dangers, as they willy nilly spliced giant kelp, kudzu, and an assortment of carnivorous plants together. This is precisely why it is important to have bioethicists involved at every level of the research and lab work."

— Excerpts of Dr. Paarbrahm's presentation on the Dangers of Genetic Manipulation

"Observations on Andlin, May 6" from the Sketchbook of Anders Kramm.



In violently blue sands under twinned red suns,
It waited. Stone shaped into an impression of
maternal fecundity, by unknown hands, at least
a megannum before humanity first ascended to
the stars. Despite active suppression, there are
allegations some changes were exhibited by
handlers, and several xenocults view it as the
proof of their views.

COLONY HOPES IN FREEFALL

Shares in Nufrontier Inc. tumbled today as
the company failed to quell strikes on the
fledgling colony of Oris' Hope, shaking investor
confidence and falling 10 points by the time
markets closed. The Company gave a short
press release: "The situation is developing
but well in-hand. Oris' Hope will continue
construction on-schedule and under-budget."

Reports from the ground indicate a different
story. Violence, street battles, and bizzare new
religious movements are spiraling out of control.
This story will be updated as it emerges.

— The Financial, 01/15/3450

URGENT/EYESONLY: that archeology team-
they went to Oris' Hope, didnt they?

— Nufrontier Inc. internal memo

Life's cruel, wondrous, gravid glory. While
there are echoes of pre-interstellar artifacts,
the materials indicate extremely advanced
production. The startling alterations
demonstrated by biological materials in
proximity are... intriguing...

— Julianna Shinn, Xenobiologist (Missing)

PESTILENTIAL STAR
BIRTHING LIFE WITHOUT ENDING
GREAT MOTHER, REMAKE US

— From the field notes of Dr. Riken Smauk



"Figure from Oris' Hope" House Sivarankan Permanent Collection.



From the sketchbook of SEBACO poet-laureate McKee Schmidt-Agee.

A lighting-charged meteorite eats a planet's pole, accelerating to the core. After epochs, a bobbit-worm with countless heads bores through the world with grinding teeth. Ultraviolet storms magnetize mountains and hail nails. The sky coruscates with crimson auroras that hypnotize and stimulate the populace. Cultists tattoo their skin with hematite ink and warpaint of rust. Its clouds of lodestone children blow away on solar winds, dandelion seeds dooming new worlds. Their parent sings radio wave lullabies, iron influence echoing across space and aeons. The Vermiform Gods patiently wait for a future Olympus of iron stars, the pantheon of worms.

Our operation must rely on pen-and-paper. The electromagnetic interference is worse planetside, with all radio frequencies overwhelmed. Despite this, we did not expect the surface to be so loud; the whole world whistles, wind sweeping through emptied mines and channels too long to measure. Whatever alien hand dug these passages did not care for any treasure but iron, leaving hoards of gold and silver piled in heaps near the openings. The prize is too easy to claim. We are waiting for the trap to spring.

— Orange Belt Mining Company, Internal Memo

You, from somewhere else. Every almost-terrible thing, every dark path not taken, every hideous wound and shattering loss you avoided: it happened to them instead. Wears a ragged facsimile of your clothes, stained with blood and waste. Loves you and hates you. Slips into your life and eats you up, bit by bloody bit.

"Hi, it's me. Let me in. It's cold out here. It's me."

— Recorded message on door-cam 1172,
J1C-III Research Vessel Olympus

It wasn't Pesha. It looked like them but it was wrong. I know it wasn't them because I'd seen them off at the station an hour ago. They looked like they'd had the shit kicked out of them. Just wearing this tattered dress. All those scars like someone had taken a craft knife to their face. I knew it was weird because they told me they'd lost that dress at the rave last month. It was there for hours. Kept mumbling something too. It was like: give it back. That's what it kept whispering: give it back. Pesha dropped out, never came back. Family stuff. I mean that's what they said.

— Session notes of Dr. Layla Banks,
Student Welfare Team



"Pesha & Friend" from the diary of XXX with permission from the parents.

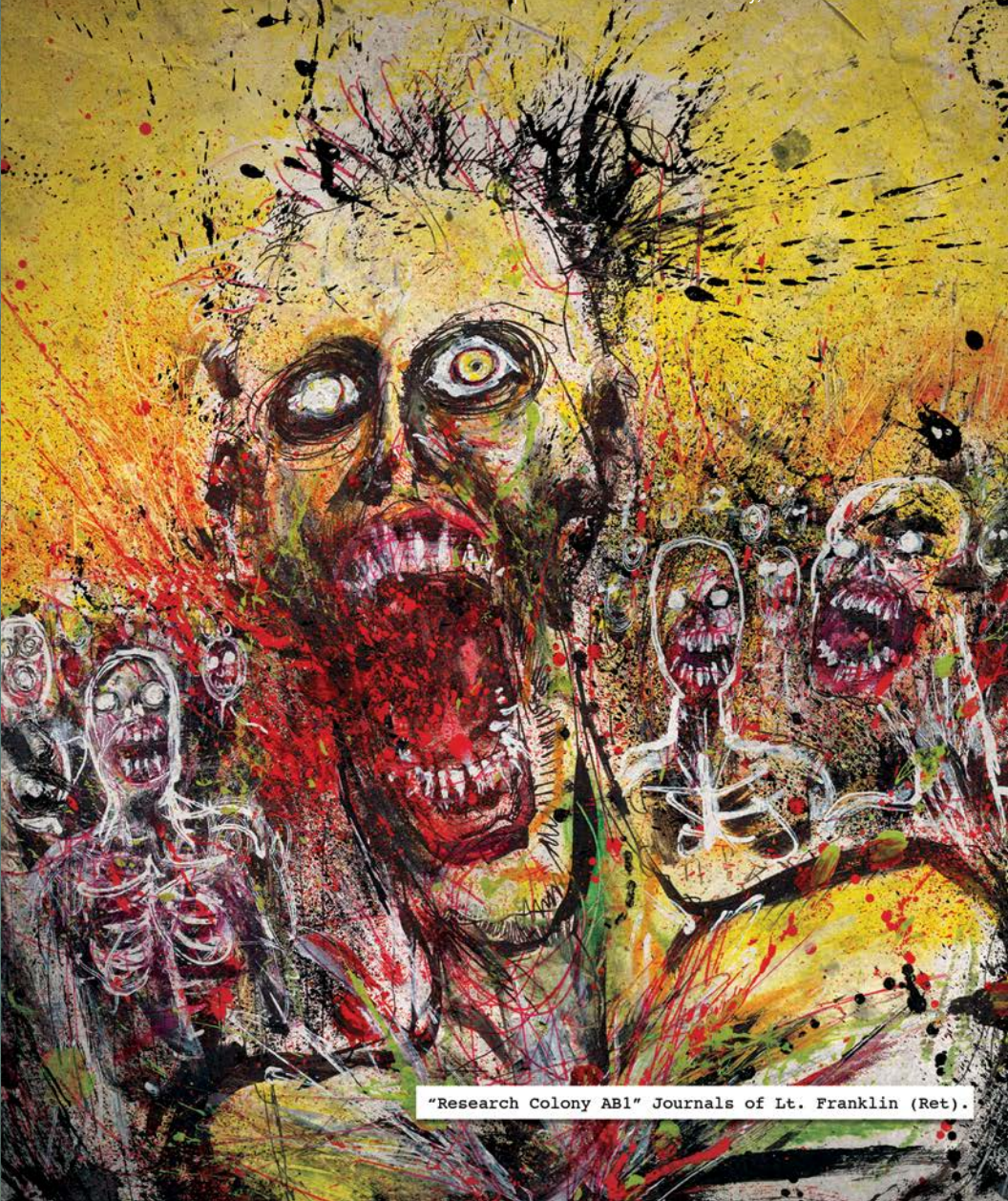
[C:25 Bite 1d10 DMG I:10 W:1(10). Infectious Bite: if bitten, become a Zombie in 3d10 hours.]

ZOMBIES

The reasons why are endless and never matter. Not when you're running from what used to be your family and firing point blank at what used to be your friend. An incarnate reminder of time, unceasing, unrelenting, uninterested in your accomplishments. Only your corpse.

Reverse entropy. The death of death. Almost the entire universe is emptiness, life-choking nothingness. Is it any surprise that life fights back? I'm not going out without a fight. Are you?

— Dr. Michael Hardaway, Final Confession



"Research Colony AB1" Journals of Lt. Franklin (Ret).

INDEX		
PG	NAME	STATS
4	THE 4YOUREYES ALGORITHM	[1% chance any electronic (including androids) infected.]
5	ANGELS	[C:100 Trumpets: Sanity Save [-] or fall to knees weeping. I:95 Panic Check on sight.]
6	BELLADONNAS	[C:75 Talons 4d10 DMG I:75 AP:10 W:3(30) Tail Poison: Body Save [-] or 1d10 DMG/round.]
7	THE BODY POLITIC	[C:40 Organic Diplomatic Mission 3d10 DMG I:20 W:1(10)]
8	THE BROWN STREAM	
9	C-LEVELS	[C:15 Unarmed I:45 W:1]
10	CABIN 102-B	[Sanity Save each hour spent inside Cabin 102-B]
11	CHRONOPODS	[I:95 AP:30 W:5(100) Use Sanity Save instead of Combat during violent encounters.]
12	DEMONS	[C:65 ATTACK 3d10 DMG I:75 AP:5 W:5(100) Whisper: Fear Save or take current Stress as DMG.]
13	DORIANS	[C:20 Tiny Fists 1d5 DMG I:30 AP:5 W:2(45)] Psionic Wave of Mutilation: Sanity Save or 1d10 Stress.]
14	THE DROWNING	[C:15 Unarmed I:25 W:1(1) On death: 10% chance of teleportation and resurrection.]
15	THE ENGINEER	[C:65 Wrench 2d10 DMG I:75 AP:1 W:3(20)]
16	ENTITY LKA-5	[C:65 Appendage 3d10 DMG I:35 AP:10 W:3(50) Consume: Body Save [+] or be eaten.]
17	FAMILY MEAL NO. 5	[+1 Minimum Stress anytime Family Meal No. 5 is viewed.]
18	FREIGHTER 54	[J1C-II THR:25 BTL:20 SYS:20 CREW:12. -1d5 Sanity Save each time Freighter 54 is boarded.]
19	GOOD	[C:0 I:∞ W:(∞)∞]
20	GHOULS	[C:45 Improvised Weapons 1d10 DMG I:75 W:2(10)]
21	GRANNY	[C:40 Bite 2d10 DMG I:65 W:5(30)]
22	GREYS	[C:35 Beam Weapon 5d10 DMG I:65 W:2(10) Bodies emit Radiation Level 2.]
23	HATCHETMAN	[C:90 Scythe 1d100 DMG or Heavy Gun 5d10 DMG I:65 AP:15 W:5(30)]
24	HEADJACKERS	[C:45 I:15 W:1(5) Infect: Body Save [-] or gain +1 Infection/hr. Lose control at Infection 5.]
25	HUSKS	[C:35 Unarmed 2d10 DMG I:25 W:1(20) Howl: Fear Save or be stunned 1 round.]
26	HYPERSPACE RAIDERS	[C:55 Pulse Rife 3d10 DMG I:55 AP:5 W:2(10) Can teleport Close Range.]
27	INCUBUS	[C:95 Claws 3d10 DMG I:75 AP:10 W:3(30) Acid Blood: Body Save or 1d10 DMG/destroys armor.]
28	LITTLE GODS	[I:85 Bend Reality: Sanity Save [-] to resist.]

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PG	NAME	STATS
29	MOTHER	[Can form a Succubus in 1d10 Hours. See "Succubus" pg. 45.]
30	MONOLITH	[Upon first interaction, 50% chance to increase or decrease a random Stat/Save by 1d10.]
31	NOMADS	[J1C-III THR:20 BTL:55 1d10 MDMG SYS:5 HULL:2 No Systems Checks can be made within Firing Range.]
32	NOÖCENTRIC TRANSMISSION	[Sanity Save to resist.]
33	OMNIVORE	[C:85 Ritual Claws 3d10 DMG or Plasma Rifle 2d100 DMG I:65 AP:7 W:3(40)]
34	OIDOPOLIS PICOCIVILIZATION	[1d10 MDMG I:80 W:100(1,000)]
35	POSSESSED	[C:55 I:45 Possess: Sanity Save [+] or Possessed for 1d10 Rounds; permanent on Critical Failure.]
36	PURE LOVE	[C:15 Unrelenting Hug 0 DMG I:25 W:1. Sanity Save whenever you kill one.]
37	ROOT LANGUAGE	[Minimum Stress +1.]
38	SS HIGH GOLD	[J5C-III THR:45 BTL:50 1d10+1 MDMG SYS:60 CREW:89. Capable of destroying a star.]
39	SEA OF SILENCE	[I:90]
40	SALLY IN THE SCREEN	[C:45 3d10 DMG I:55. Cannot be damaged by weapons.]
41	SPORE CLOUDS	[I:35 Body Save or be infected. Infection takes 3d10 days.]
42	THE STAIN	[C:25 Pseudopod 2d10 DMG I:20 W:X(200) +1 Max Wound for each corpse it devours.]
43	STAR SHADES	[Light 2d100 DMG I:75 W:5(50) Teleports. Can only be damaged by laser cutters.]
44	STICKMEN	[C:35 Grasp 3d10 DMG I:25 W:2(10) Can appear from anywhere not being visibly watched.]
45	SUCCUBUS	[C:65 Unarmed 3d10 DMG I:65 AP:5 W:3(30)]
46	THROAT LEECHES	[C:15 Bite 1d10 DMG I:10 W:1(10) Body Save or be infected. +1d10 leeches/day.]
47	UNPERSONS	[C:35 I:45 W:2(10). Invisible.]
48	VITALIZING FIELD	[Emitter 1/3/5d10 DMG I:15/45/75 AP:0/3/10 W:1/3/5(10/20/50) Baby/Adult/Elder]
49	WHITEVINE	[C:45 Vine 2d10 DMG I:15 W:X(20). X=per 100' of length. Strangulation: Body Save [+] to resist.]
50	WOMB	[When handling, 1% chance to become pregnant.]
51	THE WORLD WORM	[J9C-X THR:20 BTL:65 2d10 MDMG SYS:5 HULL:3]
52	YOU	[As character's Stats.]
53	ZOMBIES	[C:25 Bite 1d10 DMG I:10 W:1(10). Infectious Bite: if bitten, become a Zombie in 3d10 hours.]

FIVE QUICK HORRORS

These templates provide baseline Stats for different types of enemies. Combined with your description and the players' imaginations, these provide enough information until you can develop your horror later.

00 ANOMALY

[3D10 DMG I:75]

Conventional weapons don't work against this horror either because the entity can't be harmed or because it is too abstract to attack directly. Players must find an alternative method to avoid, entrap, or otherwise deal with it.

How to use: Anomalies are like ghosts or sentient languages. Decide what the anomaly wants, and build the encounter around appeasing/avoiding the horror rather than defeating it.

01-02 BRUTE

[C:65 4D10 DMG I:35 AP:10 W:3(40)]

Exceptionally large or tough creatures, brutes are difficult to confront head on due to their ability to withstand and deal massive amounts of damage.

How to use: Brutes have to be tricked or whittled down over time. Telegraph how much destruction they cause early on and leave lots of room for the players to escape and face the brute again (and again, and again).

03-05 GUARD

[C:35 2D10 DMG I:25 W:2(10)]

Common enemies often equipped with a weapon and traveling in small groups. While dangerous, guards are often less capable or motivated than other enemies, but make up for it by being able to call in backup.

How to use: Build up tension by telegraphing guards before the players encounter them. Make them an ever-present danger, but easy to avoid. Don't make them obstacles built to overcome, they should be real threats.

06-07 HUNTER

[C:75 3D10 DMG I:65 AP:5 W:2(30)]

Hunters typically work solo, even if part of a larger group. They prefer stealth and ambushes to direct confrontation. They're often fast and deadly, whether from a distance or up close, and can pick crewmembers off one by one.

How to use: Place hunters in locations where it's difficult to see or hear. The threat of the hunter is more important than the hunter itself. Hunters can leave a trail of bodies which help herald their arrival.

08-09 SWARM

[C:25 1D10 DMG I:25 W:1(X) X = the population of the group.]

Swarms are enemies which would be trivial to deal with one at a time, but use their larger numbers to overwhelm and overtake. They are typically less intelligent and easy to avoid, but unstoppable if you get caught in the horde.

How to use: When fighting swarms, let the players take down individuals quickly (often with a single hit), force them to whittle down the group (constantly augmented by reinforcements). Make the goal just to escape.