

THE DANGERS OF IPHUS IV

An Ace Tale™ for Savage Worlds by “Weird Dave” Olson.

A MISSION FOR DARING TALES OF THE SPACE LANES

BACKGROUND

If it weren't for the spectacular ruins buried beneath the ice and rock, nobody would give the small planet Iphus IV a second thought.

Its distance from the system's star coupled with a naturally thin atmosphere combine to create a planet that is frozen all year round, of little interest to anyone but small mining outfits.

All that changed five years ago when an archeological team sponsored by the Tigris Corporation arrived and discovered a series of ancient ruins buried underneath the snow all across the surface.

The corp setup shop and has worked to put the small mining operations out of business in the staport of Fria so that they can claim the entire planet as their own. Fed up, grizzled miner Spencer has decided to put out a call to a group of freelancers to help deal with the situation.

ARRIVING IN FRIA

The scenario begins with the heroes answering Spencer's discreet message, arriving at his office in Fria. The first thing the heroes notice is that Iphus IV is cold. Fria is located in a sheltered valley surrounded by high ice cliffs, but it does little to keep out the howling wind that continually whips across the surface.

Iphus Prime, the system's star, shines high in the perpetually twilight sky, providing no warmth and little illumination. It's an eerily beautiful sight, with the skyline punctured by rows of jagged mountains reaching towards the blue velvet heavens.

A COLD DISH NAMED REVENGE

Spencer is an old man, weathered by forty years on Iphus IV's harsh surface, and he takes no guff.

He explains to the heroes that Tigris moved in about five years ago after a series of unexplained ruins were uncovered around the mountain. Since then the corp has bullied and bought out most of the mining operations in the area;

Spencer owns and runs one of the last. A new set of taxes has been the straw that broke the proverbial camel's back and now the grizzled miner wants to hit Tigris back.

Spencer wants the heroes to travel discreetly to the main research facility, located about two hundred

miles to the east on the high slopes of Mount Veross.

The heroes must completely destroy the place, which can be done with a supply of thermite explosives Spencer has available. He chose now as the time as most of the company men are off planet; there should be minimal security at the facility itself.

He can provide the heroes access to a few snow speeders, enough for one per character. They are quickest way to move around on Iphus IV without attracting too much attention. The Mount Veross facility is about 8 hours away, and Spencer also tells them how best to avoid the dreaded ice rays that plague the frozen landscape – huge flying creatures that follow the wind currents and prey on unsuspecting travelers.

BRAVING THE WIND AND COLD

With a set of snow speeders at their disposal the heroes waste no time in heading out into the harsh surface world of Iphus IV. The faded light of Iphus Prime in the sky means the planet's surface is considered Dim Illumination (-1 penalty).

The wind proves much harsher, and the heroes need to succeed at two Driving checks as they skid across the surface, one per four hours. Anyone that fails must make an Agility check to avoid a Wound from flipping the snow speeder in the treacherous weather. In addition, every four hours the heroes must make Vigor checks from the cold.

Unfortunately after six hours of traveling as the terrain gets rocky the heroes attract the attention of a group of ice rays. There is one ice ray plus one per two heroes. They appear as large sting rays, 20 feet wide with fang-filled mouths.

The heroes decide whether to run or fight. If they run conduct a chase as normal, with the ice rays starting out three range increments away.



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MOUNT VEROSS FACILITY

After seven hours of riding in the snow speeders the heroes reach Mount Veross and start ascending the slope. A building is visible further up the rocky side, with a well traveled road leading up and no one visible outside. There is a set of hangar doors in the front, currently closed, and several side doors.

The doors are electronically locked, so getting in requires a Lockpicking check at -2 (or a Strength roll at -2 to bust down).

Inside is a barren research facility dedicated to examining artifacts pulled up from the ice. Silent red lights blink eerily in the desolate halls, the only sound coming from the howling of the wind outside.

Have the heroes make Stealth rolls as they walk around with a +2 bonus. If they are successful they catch the only current resident of the Mount Veross facility by surprise. The young scientist is listening to some music on a set of electro-phones working at a computer terminal.

Harold, his name, is unarmed and explains that he was left at the facility a few days ago when a major discovery was made out on the ice. He doesn't know exactly what it was, but it looked like a large egg.

Suddenly the whole building shakes as something smashes into the front hangar doors!

DEALING WITH AN ANGRY GRIZZLER

The thing that got Tigris excited was what appeared to be a huge frozen egg, the embryo still inside. They had thought they found some extinct creature from eons ago, frozen in the ice, but they were wrong. It was the gestating offspring of a terrible creature known as a grizzler, a huge white bear-like creature with six hairy insectoid legs ending in razor-sharp claws. The mother grizzler has been tracking her egg for several days, leading her to Mount Veross.

The mother grizzler is fifty feet tall and massively strong. How the heroes deal with it is up to them but reasoning with the creature is impossible.

If they head to the hangar bay to see what's happening the grizzler bursts

through at that moment, roaring in anger and smashing landing vehicles left and right.

The heroes have several options in dealing with the grizzler. They still have the thermite charges, but they are meant for stationary deployment and remote triggering. It takes two minutes to set one of the charges, there are ten charges, and each charge deals 4d10 points of damage. A hero can try to set the charge quicker with a Smarts roll, but if he busts it blows up in his face for the full damage. A raise on the Smarts roll halves the set time.

If anyone asks Harold the scientist he explains that the thing that was found had an adverse reaction to bursts of non-toxic radiation, the harmless byproduct of the snow speeders. Driving in circles around the grizzler is the quickest way to harness this, and a successful Driving roll forces the grizzler to make a Vigor roll at -2 or be Shaken, or -4 with a raise on the Driving roll.

Assuming the building is destroyed Spencer pays the heroes the brokered amount. But the Tigris Corporation is not one to forget about these kind of things quickly.

SNOW SPEEDERS

Acc/TS: 20/36; **Toughness:** 8 (2); **Crew:** 1+1; **Notes:** Hovering ignores terrain penalties

ICE RAYS

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d6 (A), Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d10, Guts d8, Notice d8

Pace: 0; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 11

Special Abilities:

- * **Bite:** Str+d8
- * **Flight:** Flying Pace 24", Climb 6"
- * **Large:** Attackers add +2 to their attack rolls against an ice ray
- * **Tail Lash:** An ice ray can sweep all opponents in its rear ray facing in a 3" long by 6" wide rectangle. This is a standard Fighting attack, and damage is equal to the creature's Strength -2.



GRIZZLER

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6 (A), Spirit d8, Strength d12+6, Vigor d12

Skills: Climbing d8, Fighting d8, Guts d10,

Notice d8

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 18 (2)

Special Abilities:

- * **Claws:** Str+d6
- * **Armor +2:** Thick hide
- * **Huge:** Attackers add +4 to their attack rolls against the grizzler.
- * **Size +8:** The grizzler is forty feet tall.

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