



Shadows Over Sol

Small Mercy



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Published by
Tab Creations LLC

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Introduction

Contained in this document is a complete investigative horror scenario for *Shadows Over Sol*. It should be enough material to cover somewhere between one and three evenings of play, depending on the pacing provided by the GM and the actions of the players.

Over the course of this scenario, the team will be pitted against corporate conspiracies, trigger-happy mercenaries, crazed cultists and ultimately will come face-to-face with a truly terrifying biological horror.

Synopsis

This scenario begins when the player characters are approached by Mr. Alessio West, a representative of the Investor Relations department of the corp Jenseitech. He knows that shortly Jenseitech troops are going to be sent to Fururi Station, a derelict mining station in the Belt, which Jenseitech has recently purchased. Jenseitech plans to decommission the station and recycle its materials for use elsewhere.

However, a group of squatters has taken up residence on Fururi Station, and despite multiple attempts from Jenseitech to get them to leave, they have thus far rebuked all requests. If Jenseitech is to follow through with their plan to decommission the station, they're going to need to remove the squatters by force.

Unfortunately for the Investor Relations department, Jim Segall, the scion of the powerful Segall family, which

is a major shareholder of Jenseitech, has taken up with the squatters. The Investor Relations department cannot afford for him to be a casualty in an attempt to remove the squatters by force. Thus they are hiring the player characters.

The team is asked to discretely extract Jim Segall so that he can be safely returned to his family. Jenseitech is also aware that the squatters are part of some sort of cult, and believe that Jim Segall may be held at Fururi against his will.

With this knowledge in hand, the team can investigate any leads they have, and then either take their ship or hire a ship to bring them to Fururi Station.

Upon arrival at the station, the PCs discover that Jenseitech troops have already arrived, under the direction of Captain Garinath. These troops do not report to the Investor Relations department, and plan to forcibly decommission the station, regardless of what the team has been hired to do. The players will need to do some quick diplomacy. This increases the pressure, and places the adventure under a strict timeline.

Upon investigating Fururi Station, the team will quickly learn that the squatters are part of the Harbingers of the Divine Form cult, but unknown to Jenseitech, Jim Segall has not been held against his will. He is a full-fledged member of the cult, and even has a wife and child there. Furthermore, the cultists are desperate and see themselves as simply defending their home against Jenseitech. They may try to use the team's own shuttle in a

Ready-Made Heroes

The nine player characters presented in *Shadows Over Sol: Ready-Made Heroes* are ideal for use with *Small Mercy*. Simply print out the character sheets, give them their listed “Investigative Horror” loadouts, and they are good to go!

Alex Pryce has past experience dealing with corps. Albert Astro ought to have some insight into the logistics of the unknown station. Viveka Wadhwa may have some knowledge regarding the bioengineered horror found inside.

kamikaze attack against Captain Garinath and his warship.

Investigation will further reveal that Jim Segall is no longer on Fururi Station. Some time ago the squatters were able to repair the station’s sensors and detected a heretofore unknown asteroid habitat, just a couple days away by shuttle. Taking one of the station’s shuttles, Jim Segall and two other people went to investigate, hoping that it was an old mining outpost in which they might scavenge useful components.

None of them ever returned.

If the team is to claim their payment for the delivery of Jim Segall, they will need to head to this unknown station and follow up themselves.

Arriving at the unknown station, the team will find it eerily vacant. Furthermore, they will quickly discover that it’s not a mining outpost, as it first appeared. Rather, it is a secret corp laboratory. Inside this station they will encounter the walking *thing* that is all that remains of Jim Segall.

Hopefully they can both gain proof of Jim Segall’s fate and escape alive...

Modes of Horror

Small Mercy is written in the Investigative Horror mode of horror in mind (see the *Shadows Over Sol* core rulebook, page 164). Over the course of the adventure the player characters will need to be prepared to investigate corp dealings, trigger-happy mercenaries, creepy cultists and in the end they will come face-to-face with a terrible biological monstrosity. This confrontation should be terrifying.

This adventure could work as a Survival Horror scenario, but be prepared for the very real possibility that the team will all die when they confront Jim Segall at the climax of the investigation. GMs running a survival horror game, who want to leave most of the party alive at the end of the scenario, would be advised to give PCs an easy escape route in this confrontation.

Inversely, the adventure might work as an action horror scenario, but the final confrontation will be less terrifying as a result, and the struggle when the cultists try to hijack the team’s shuttle will be a breeze.



Other Adventures

“Small Mercy” can be used alone or in conjunction with other published *Shadows Over Sol* adventures. Below are some notes on how to combine this adventure with others.

- **Eviction Notice:** As *Eviction Notice* assumes the Action Horror mode of horror, it is best set after the events of *Small Mercy*. Perhaps the team picks up new weapons and armaments as the reward for their job in this scenario. This might also give them the reputation they need to get hired in *Eviction Notice*.
- **Ghost Ship:** Found in the *Shadows Over Sol* core rulebook, the entire *Ghost Ship* adventure could be set during the events of *Small Mercy*, taking place after the team has been hired, but before they arrive on Fururi Station. Alternately, it might be set after they leave the unknown station and before they claim their payment for the job.
- **Memories:** Found in the *Shadows Over Sol: Quick-Start*, “Memories” is written for very specific pregenerated characters. As such, it is difficult to directly integrate with this adventure. Nevertheless, both adventures feature Jenseitech bioengineering projects gone wrong. “Memories” might be used as a flashback or side story, giving the players more insight into the machinations of the corp.



Long Term Plans

This scenario sets in motion events that will be touched on in subsequent *Shadows Over Sol* adventures.

GMs looking to use this scenario as a jumping-off point for a longer campaign should ensure that players can survive their encounter with Jim Segall at the climax of the adventure. This will likely be by providing ample opportunity to escape, as Investigative Horror characters won't likely be equipped to survive a head-on confrontation without fatalities.

Behind the scenes, the unknown station is a secret Jenseitech facility that was researching the Kronos Protein, before the protein escaped containment and infected the station. (For more on this, see the *Fatal Frontier* supplement.) Jim Segall has been infected by this protein, and now the player characters have unknowingly stumbled into the mix.

More will be heard from Jenseitech, the Segal family and the cult in the future...



The Approach

This scenario begins with the players somewhere near the Belt.

Perhaps they have recently finished up a messy job and have taken some time to recuperate on Caikuang Station, attracted no doubt by the external defenses, guaranteed to keep any irritated former employers off their backs. Maybe they are looking forward to relaxing with the most attractive (or affordable) company they can find. Perhaps they have arrived broke, short-tempered and anxious for work.

The specifics aren't really important to the scenario. What's important is that the players are reasonably nearby, are open to doing odd jobs and are looking for work. A reputation as being efficient, discrete and just-violent-enough wouldn't hurt them

either. That's just the sort of team Jenseitech Investor Relations is looking to hire.

The Message

As the players gather together, they should receive a message on their hand terminals. The message is brief, to the point and drenched in Jenseitech imagery. The Jenseitech logo appears on the screen, with the Jenseitech motto down below: "Changing Bodies, Changing Minds, Changing Worlds..." A cool, crisp, machine voice says:

"Looking to hire a small group of individuals to complete a sensitive task. Informed that you may be suitable for such employment. Terms are excellent. Please indicate whether you would be amenable to undertaking said work?"

What If the Players Refuse?

If the players don't take the hook to meet with Jenseitech, the Investor Relations department will make one more attempt to hire the PCs. The corp will use a different approach this time, sending Alessio West to meet with the team in-person to make his case. Not once will he mention Jenseitech until the PCs have agreed to the work. Instead he will pitch the job as a "humanitarian mission," "saving poor Jim Segall so that his loving family can see him again."

If this secondary approach fails, and your players are not adverse to some coercion, Jenseitech could also take an antagonistic approach: "After appraisal, our servers have indicated that you are wanted for several crimes against the corp, associated with previous employment you have undertaken." Use previous adventures and escapades the players have been involved in as leverage—you'll be amazed at how quickly they may fall into line!

If the players still don't bite, it may be time to talk with them about why they're not interested in the scenario, and about what sort of adventure they would be interested in. Good luck!

Jenseitech

For more on the biotech megacorp Jenseitech, see page 55 of the *Shadows Over Sol* core rulebook.

Should the players answer yes, the message will respond:

“Excellent. Please meet with your contact—Mr. Alessio West—at the Glintorn Restaurant, located on the Main Piazza in Traveler Sector.”

Once the players have accepted the request, they may want to equip themselves for the meeting, depending on how cautious they are. If they end up using any weapons or gadgetry at the meeting, things will have gone south very quickly, but anything can happen...

The Glintorn

The Glintorn Restaurant is one of the nicest places on the station, set in a large dome through which the vista of the Sol system is projected. The surroundings are modeled after eighteenth century Venice, with troughs filled with unnaturally blue water, walls designed to look like elegantly dilapidated buildings and tendrils of artful plant life winding through open window-frames.

The restaurant itself is a hangout of well-to-do members of the Former subculture. Anyone familiar with the subculture ought to be able to pick up on this fact. The local AR tags point out the conspicuously high cost of some of the fixtures. The players should have no doubt that whoever they are meeting is relatively high-up in the Jenseitech corporate structure.

Mr. Alessio West

Geneline Celebrity Deluxe, **Subculture** Former

Str 5, **Dex** 5, **Spd** 6, **End** 5, **Int** 6, **Per** 6, **Chr** 8, **Det** 6

Defense 8/17, **DR** 0, **Shock** 11, **Wound** 5, **Wealth** 9, **Lifestyle** 9

Skills: Awareness 1, Bureaucrat 4, Comp-Ops 2, Conspiracy 2, Deception 3, Empathy 3, Lib-Arts 2, Persuade 3, Socialize 3

Light Pistol: +2 (♠12M/♥8M/♦4M/♣2M), Range 10, Shots 10

Gear: AR Implant, Biomonitor, Hand Terminal, Personal Assistant, Workstation

Mr. Alessio West is suave, collected and calm. No matter what happens, he will remain so. He never shouts and is never obviously shaken or surprised. West will never speak poorly of Jenseitech or anyone attached to it; he will always hedge his bets, revealing only as much as he feels is necessary—the classic corp man.

He has dark hair and eyes, but abnormally pale skin. He does not blink often. For a GM who likes to really take on a role, he or she might consider acting ever so slightly robotic—as though Mr West has been upgraded, to show off Jenseitech’s latest products. This is a corp after all, they never stop selling!

Meeting Mr. West

The man they have arranged to meet, Alessio West, is sitting quite casually at a large, circular table. He is wearing fashionable (but not too fashionable) clothing, and is obviously also a part of the Former subculture.

If threatened, West will retain his cool. He will give his most ingratiating smile, complement the player characters on their gall and say that they are just the sort of people he needs for this job. If the players continue to make threats, he will give a verbal warning once, and if they still persist, he will trigger a silent alarm, which will summon eight Jenseitech goons. Meanwhile, Alessio will make a calm retreat.

- For the Jenseitech goons use the Soldier stat block on page 213 of the *Shadows Over Sol* core rulebook.

Job Offer

Alessio West is looking for a discreet team of freelancers who are capable of retrieving a man, using force or guile if necessary. Ideally these will be people with a trustworthy reputation and enough distance from Jenseitech as to provide plausible deniability if something goes horribly wrong. As Mr. West makes his job pitch to the player characters, he will explain the following:

- The job is to find, secure and return with the scion of the Segall family: Jim Segall. The Segalls are a very wealthy family who hold a major stake in Jenseitech.
- Jim Segall is on Fururi Station—a small and derelict mining facility

recently acquired by Jenseitech. The corp intends to dismantle Fururi Station to recycle materials for other developments.

- This plan, however, is being delayed by the presence of squatters on the station, who have refused to leave, despite repeated requests. These squatters are thought to be religious extremists, belonging to some sort of fringe cult. Jenseitech believes that they may be holding Jim Segall there against his will.
- The pay for the job is very good. Mr. West will offer each player character an Income 7 payment. If they successfully negotiate—a Chr/persuade vs Chr/persuade flip—West will still not raise the payment, but he will throw in a ride to Fururi Station if the players do not have their own ship, or some gear worth Cost 7 or less, should the PCs require something specific. He relies on the Jenseitech name to ensure the players will trust in his ability to pay. He is also insistent that payment is made on delivery of Jim Segall.

Answering Questions

Almost certainly, the players will have questions for their patron. Below are answers to the most likely inquiries. Of course, feel free to tweak these, change them completely or come up with your own responses, if you so desire.

- **Regarding Jim Segall:** “Our information tells us that Mr Segall may not wish to remain on the Fururi Station. This may be indication that perhaps the unauthorized inhabitants

are keeping him there under duress. I believe that originally Mr Segall visited the station in order to deliver charity and relief to those living there. Mr Segall is committed to helping those without his wealth and privilege. Indeed, as are all his family.”

- **Regarding the Squatters:** “It is believed that they are members of a small religious movement. A cult, in fact. The precise details of their belief structure are not known to me at this time. This is all I have to tell you on this matter.”
- **Regarding Fururi Station:** “I believe it used to source some rare materials and was at one stage very profitable. The seams failed some time ago and since then it has been abandoned. We at Jenseitech only became involved very recently, as we purchased it less than a year ago. We plan to dismantle the station and recycle its materials for use in newer mining operations elsewhere in the Belt. It is regrettable that we have to move these squatters on, but, unfortunately, this is the nature of progress.”
- **Why Help Jim Segall:** “We appreciate our investors very much and the youngest Mr. Segall is a fine and decent man. We have a corporate responsibility to help however, whenever and wherever we can. People have a confused idea of how corps work. We never forget the individual, especially

when that individual is a major shareholder or their kin.”

If the players probe much beyond this, or ask any uncomfortable questions, West will politely but firmly indicate that the meeting is over and that he has matters to attend to. He gives the players a code which can be used to contact him upon completion of the job.

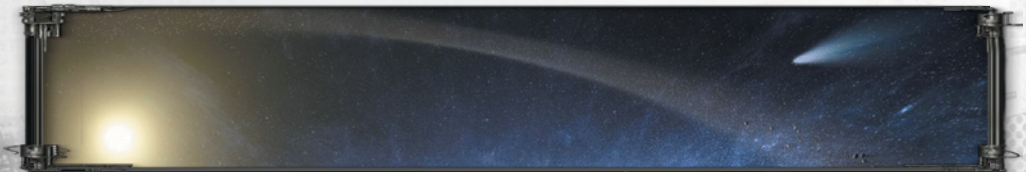
Investigations

If the players decide to conduct some investigations into Jenseitech, the Segall family or Fururi Station, they should find that most of what Alessio West told them checks out, although not every source has the Jenseitech spin on things.

The Segall family are incontinentally wealthy, but beyond some murky business practices in their past, are as legitimate as anyone as rich as they are can hope to be.

Jim Segall is remembered as being something of a staple of the dive bars and brothels of Earth in his younger days, as well as numerous stays in expensive off-world rehab centers. Research into this will find plenty of salacious news-cast stories, but little else. Apparently, the last rehab took and took hard. Segall cleaned up and disappeared. He has barely been seen since.

As to what Jenseitech are doing with Fururi, no one cares to speculate. There is nothing to be found relating to a cult or religious movement on the station, whatsoever.



Making the Trip

The trip to Fururi Station should be fairly uneventful. Assuming the team began the scenario at Caikuang Station, it is a mere three months journey on the average freighter, during which the team will spend most of its time in stasis. Along the way the ship may intercept several strange audio broadcasts apparently emanating from the vicinity of station. These should consist of static bursts with obvious codewords being barked in a panicked voice: “Epsilon, Epsilon, Violation Twelve” and “Verdigris Delta, Violation Twelve.”

These recordings will be awaiting the team upon awakening. Any attempt to trace the broadcasts results only in the most general findings: They were coming from, or near to, Fururi, but have since stopped.

The above suggestion is just one of the ways this adventure can be made more unsettling. If the players begin to become complacent or too comfortable at any point during this adventure, introduce something strange and unexpected. It can be as simple as giving them no warning of when they are arriving at their location or as complex as punctuating your descriptions with unnerving sound effects. This is a horror story, after all. Emphasize that the universe beyond the walls of their ship is unfriendly and unsafe.



No Ship? No Problem!

Ships are expensive and difficult to get ahold of. If your players are not in possession of one, there are a number of ways they can secure reliable transport to Fururi Station.

If the PCs managed to successfully negotiate with Mr. West, Jenseitech might agree to pay for the charter of a ship for the duration of the mission, but will refuse to pay for other expenses beyond this. “The corp is not usually so trusting of contractors...”

Perhaps the team is friendly with a freelance captain or similar person who—for a cut of the pay—might provide a (reasonably) reliable service.

Worst comes to worst, the player characters can charter a ship, though chances are they’ll have to pay up front. This is likely to be a Cost 7 payment, although crafty players might find a way to reduce it to a Cost 6, should they have other goods or services to offer the captain.

Regardless of whether Jenseitech pays to charter a ship or the PCs fork over the credits themselves, on the next page are stats for the Satis—the nearest reliable freighter—as well as its captain. The ship stats presented here use the vehicles system found in the *Shiny New Toys* supplement.

The Satis, Light Freighter

- **Handling** -2, **Defense** 6/13, **DR** 2, **Shock** 14, **Structure** 7, **Cruise** 5
- **Components:** Armor 2, Attach Point (with shuttle attached), Cargo Bay 9, Comms Array, Freighter (Hull), Habitat (10 people), Sensor Array, Smuggler's Hold, Stasis Pods (10 pods), Thorium Reactor (Small, Power)
- **Properties:** Vehicle
- **Laser Comm:** +5 (♠15L/♥10L/♦5L/♣2L), Range 10M (Improvised)

The Satis is an aging freighter, dating back to World War IV. It's obviously seen better days, as its hull shows multiple scars and patches from past repairs, and its reactor is an older style that most modern ships. Nevertheless, the Satis is in reasonable shape for its age, and has a small, but competent crew.

Anthea Kokinos, Captain of the Satis

Geneline Spacer Standard, **Subculture** Ghostman

Str 5, **Dex** 6, **Spd** 5, **End** 6, **Int** 6, **Per** 7, **Chr** 5, **Det** 5

Defense 9/18, **DR** 0, **Shock** 10, **Wound** 5, **Wealth** 5, **Lifestyle** 5

Skills: Awareness 2, Bureaucrat 2, Comp-Ops 2, Engineer 1, Guns 1, Mechanic 2, Melee 2, Ordnance 2, Persuasion 3, Socialize 2, Vehicles 3

Light Pistol: +4 (♠12M/♥8M/♦4M/♣2M), Range 10, Shots 10

Gear: AR Implant, Hand Terminal

Anthea Kokinos has been the captain of the Satis for the last five years, having taken over the position when the last captain retired. She is talkative and blunt, with a crude sense of humor. She doubles as the ship's pilot, and oversees a small crew of three other people. She is willing to take passengers to Fururi, as it is not too far out of the way on her route hauling goods between stations.

Arrival

Arriving at Fururi Station should be sudden and unexpected. The players' ship simply arrives without waking them from stasis until the very last minute.

Immediately upon waking, the ship is confronted by another vessel, which is much bigger and much better armored than theirs. It bristles with weaponry and is ready for battle. This should be played up as shocking and a moment of crisis.

This ship is the Littoral, a formidable destroyer-class warship. It is under the command one Captain Garinath. If the players check their sensors, they should quickly discover that the ship is part of Jenseitech's private fleet.

Emphasize to the players that fighting this ship is likely to be futile. Should they insist on engaging the Littoral, the battle is likely to be brutal and short.

The Littoral, Jenseitech Destroyer

- **Handling** 0, **Defense** 7/15, **DR** 10, **Shock** 23, **Structure** 9, **Cruise** 8
- **Components:** Armor 10, Attach Point 2, Battle Pods (10 crew), Comms Array, Control Room, Destroyer (Hull), Gauss Cannon, Habitat (5 people), Missile Turret 2, Sensor Array, Thorium Reactor (Large, Power)
- **Properties:** Mil, Vehicle
- **Gauss Cannon:** +5 (♠30M/♥20M/♦10M/♣5M), Pierce 20, Range 50M, Reload 5, Shots 1
- **Missiles:** +5 (♠24M/♥16M/♦8M/♣4M), Range 100M

The Littoral is a fairly standard Jenseitech destroyer, and one of several that has recently been sent to the Belt in an effort by Jenseitech to project their corporate power. The ship is of fairly recent manufacture, and has yet to develop the network of scars that mark the hulls of older ships. The outer hull is painted jet black, which makes it appear like a shadow moving against the stars.

Captain Garinath

Geneline Spacer Standard, **Subculture** Neoret

Str 6, **Dex** 6, **Spd** 6, **End** 7, **Int** 6, **Per** 6, **Chr** 6, **Det** 5

Defense 9/18, **DR** 5, **Shock** 17, **Wound** 6, **Wealth** 5, **Lifestyle** 6

Skills: Athletics 3, Awareness 2, Bureaucrat 2, Comp-Ops 2, Engineer 1, Guns 3, Mechanic 2, Melee 3, Ordnance 2, Persuasion 3, Socialize 2, Vehicles 3

Heavy Pistol: +6 (♠15M/♥10M/♦5M/♣2M), Autofire 2, Range 10, Shots 10

Gear: AR Glasses, Hand Terminal, Tactical Suit (DR 5, Bulky 1)

Garinath is short tempered and abrasive, probably as a result of twelve years of fighting Jenseitech's dirtier battles. He is a large man, heavily-muscled, and just starting to fatten. Garinath is ruthless, and negotiating with him isn't easy. He peppers his speech with expletives and spits occasionally.

The Littoral's Mission

The Littoral has been sent by the Jenseitech navy to forcibly decommission Fururi Station. This is an act that has not been coordinated with the Investor Relations department, and one which Mr. West has protested, but ultimately over which he has little say.

The Littoral was redirected to Fururi Station from its previous course almost a

week after the player characters set out on their own voyage to Fururi, and due to a quirk of orbital mechanics, it arrived first.

At the time of the team's arrival, the Littoral has been outside of Fururi Station almost twelve hours. The crew has taken this time to survey the station and prepare their ship for the forced removal of the squatters.



Captain Garinath plans to assault the station within the next twenty-four hours. His strategy will be to send in a strike team to shut down and eject the station's thorium reactor core. From that point forward, the station will be living on borrowed time, as its life support shuts down due to the lack of power. He then plans to sit by and wait for the squatters to either peacefully surrender or suffocate as their air becomes increasingly stale. For all his tough talk about "killing cultists for the good of the system," Garinath would rather avoid a direct confrontation and minimize fatalities.

The plan is that once the squatters surrender, they will be put into stasis and then sold into contracts of indenture. The money raised from these sales will go to pay for the cost of their extraction.

Hailing the Littoral

If the players attempt to hail the Jenseitech warship, a terse angry man—Captain Garinath—stares back from the vid-screen. The Captain is in his mid-40s, experienced and dangerous. He has worked for Jenseitech for many years and, and while he doesn't understand most of what the company does, he does understand that they pay him very well. He cannot be tempted to cross them and he will react very badly to anyone who suggests as much.

Even if the players show Garinath their orders, or otherwise prove that they are under contract with his employer, he is dismissive. He replies:

"My orders don't come from Investor-fucking-Relations. Mine are from the top. And I intend to follow them through, which means Segall, or whoever this guy is, will be dying with everyone else down there. Savvy?"

Persuasion

The players can persuade Garinath to back down, but it should be touch and go. Let the players roleplay this out rather than resorting to a flip. If the players insist on a flip, however, Chr/persuade vs. Det is the likely action.

Garinath might insist they agree to a time limit of 12 hours, for instance. Or he might insist—until the players talk him down—that Jim Segall be brought directly to him once the players have found him, hinting that he just might take Segall for himself and claim their pay as a bonus.

Regardless of what the players say to the Captain, Garinath will not leave the vicinity of Fururi Station, nor will he wait longer than a few days before making his assault. He has a mission to carry out, and he intends to do just that!

What Garinath Knows

If the players are smart, they might quiz Garinath for some knowledge of the squatters within the station, or for some explanation of what is going on. If they do so, Garinath is aware of the following:

- “Damn straight there’s some crazy cult down there! I’ve seen a lot of blood spilled by people like these over the years... I don’t know what they believe and I don’t care. They’re dangerous!

They’re all dangerous! I’m doing this whole damn system a solid.”

- “Why am I attacking this place? Because that’s my damn job. I do what Jenseitech tells me, and if it means bombarding some shit-hole filled with nut-jobs, then guess what? I’m even happier to obey.”
- “Why would anyone tell me what they’re doing with the station? Building a research station? A holiday resort? I don’t know! All I do know is, you better get your boy soon, or both him and you bunch of thieves are going to be less than a dark smear on my starboard monitor. Catch my drift?”
- “Signals? Signals from where? From near here? How in god’s name am I meant to know which lunatic sent you a gibberish message from down there? Ask them yourself.”
- “I thought their sensors were down; that’s what I’ve been told. You are still going, aren’t you?”

Whether the players draw this information out of Garinath or whether to simply drop this into his normal conversation is up to the GM. After any confrontation is resolved, the players can head for the station. If they try to make contact with the station, no one will answer over comms.





Fururi Station

Once Garinath lets the players pass, they should head toward the station and prepare for docking their shuttle. The docking takes place automatically, without any difficulty. The characters are expected and, when they disembark, they are greeted by four inhabitants of the station, each floating in the station's microgravity.

Fururi Station

For more on the derelict Fururi Station, see page 88 of the *Shadows Over Sol* core rulebook.

Greeting Party

All four members of the greeting party are disheveled, exhausted and faintly seedy. They have the look of refugees, knowing that they aren't going to be able to stop in

one place for long, but desperate for some good news. They will jabber questions at the players almost immediately: "What does that ship want to do?" "Why are we being forced out?" "What is going on?" But after a minute or two of this, they will calm down and begin to act in a slightly more rational manner.

Rational is of course a relative term and, while these shouldn't be sack-cloth-and-ashes crazy-eyed cultists, these are people fanatically devoted to a number of strange ideas. Try and keep this apparent. If the players ask how the station knew they were coming, given that the sensors are apparently down, have the leader of the group, Corpustin, explain that the ethereal body of the universe connects all things and that they felt the ripples of the team's coming. (The truth is that the station's sensors are secretly operational, and they detected the incoming shuttle.)

Guns Blazing

It's possible that, rather than asking questions, the team will go in guns blazing, shooting down any cultists they encounter. This approach will significantly change many of the encounters in this chapter.

If the players opt for the guns blazing approach, play up the sinister nature of the cultists. Make sure the team sees some of the more creepy scenes described in the following sections.

For their part, the cultists won't just roll over and surrender. To make up for their lack of firepower, the cult will fall back on their superior knowledge of the station. They'll use darkened corridors to try to set ambushes, then leap out, attempting to wrestle the team's weapons away from them. They'll set traps, seal doors and try to lead the team away from their shuttle. Then, they'll try to seize the shuttle, much as described in the following sections.

■ Stats for the cultists and Corpustin can be found on page 23.

Corpustin

Corpustin is a young man—or at least looks young—somewhere between 20 and 25. He speaks with a dreamy, forgetful air, as though his words aren't necessarily his own but things he is being told by an invisible intelligence. Whether this is the act of a charlatan, or the Corpustin truly believes himself to be in contact with some other force, is left to the GM's discretion.

- For a stat block for Corpustin, see page 23.

Asking About Jim Segall

If the players immediately begin to ask about Jim Segall, Corpustin does not answer. Instead, he smiles, nods and ushers the players along a run-down, musty series of corridors, pushing his way off the walls as he floats away in microgravity. The place smells of unwashed bodies and off-food. Try to strike a balance between sinister and sad.

The cultists on Fururi are not likely to hurt the players, but a feeling of claustrophobia pervades the station. Everything is beginning to come apart. Severed cables spark in empty control rooms. Fururi was clearly impressive a long time ago. Several of the corridors open up into large chambers, once living and beautiful, but now mildewed and desolate. Other things a GM might mention in his description of the base are:

Harbingers of the Divine Form

For more on the Harbingers of the Divine Form cult, see page 66 of the *Shadows Over Sol* core rulebook.

- The base is in microgravity. Objects drift frustratingly just out of reach. Emphasize the disorientation which the players feel—the fact that the things they are seeing might look very different if they could just find the right angle to inspect them from... but then they are gone, as they pass on to a new corridor.
- Terminals, reams of paper and cloth are all inscribed with strange, helical patterns. On a successful Per/bio-sci-10 flip, astute players can identify these as representations of DNA.
- Glimpses of what might be a laboratory: turning centrifuges, racks of test tubes and other, less typical examples of scientific equipment.
- Deposits of smashed glass, steel and what might be organic matter collecting in corners. Nothing too hideous or suspicious, but it should be strange, nevertheless.
- Singing voices, intoning a sequence of unintelligible words in binary code.
- Footprints scrawled in chalk on the station's walls. The footprints are humanoid but svelte, with longer, shapely toes that have clearly been drawn. The footprints are studiously avoided by Corpustin and his associates, who never touch them.

Cult Chambers

Corpustin leads the players onwards, deeper into Fururi until they reach the cult chamber: the center of a congregation of the Harbingers of the Divine Form. This is the largest single room on the station and clearly functioned as some sort of common room in the days when the station was fully operational.

Now, it has something of a Brazilian favela feel to it. Iron sheets, wrenched from wall panels somewhere, have been used to sketch strange images and devotional litanies. Ritualistic paraphernalia bobs in the corners of the room: syringes filled with plasma, perhaps, or odd masks depicting semi-human features. All in all, about twenty people are in the Cult chamber currently, although on a successful Per/investigate-10 flip a player notices that there is evidence of about twice that number inhabiting the room regularly.

Questioning the Cult

Bidding the players explore and discuss what they will with his followers, Corpustin and his bodyguards excuse themselves, leaving the players in a room chiefly filled with the elderly and infirm, along with a few semi-feral children. The GM should take care to spread information around among the various NPCs the players can encounter. Without exception, these people should be weary, malnourished and evasive. When talking about Jim Segall they should all speak deferentially; he was a true believer in the Divine Form and well-liked here.

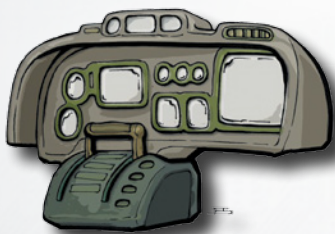
What the players can find out in this location follows:

- “Sure, Jim Segall did live here, but hasn’t been seen for over a month. No one is sure where he is.”
- “Oh yeah, he got married: to Alethy. Sweet girl. Believer like Jim. They had a kid, Gudrun. They’re still around here somewhere.” (The player characters might be shown an AR image of Alethy here. She is an attractive, though emaciated, young woman with mousy blonde hair.)
- “What? Hold him here? We didn’t need to! Jim loved it here. He was Corpustin’s right hand man. No one judged him here or expected things of him, or tried to make do things which weren’t in his nature because they were profitable.”
- “He and Corpustin were talking about something not long before he disappeared, but Corpustin sees things more clearly than the rest of us. He has greater knowledge of the Divine Form. He knows where it will come from when we are shown the truth, the creature we all wish to serve and one day, become...”

The GM may have the Cultists confide other details of Jim Segall’s life onboard Fururi, his relationship with his wife and child, or with Corpustin. However, no matter how hard they press, the players can glean nothing about where Segall is now. It is up to the GM whether the Cultists are deliberately concealing something or whether Corpustin has truly left them ignorant.

Exploring the Station

As they leave the cultist chamber, the players should find themselves suddenly alone. No longer are they being guided. A quick Int-10 flip should determine whether or not they can remember the route back to their ship. If not, the GM might like to pick an item or flip a card on the “Random Sighting” table below, as the players glimpse something strange, pitiful or horrifying, as they wind their way through the filthy corridors.



Return to the Shuttle

When the players approach the port where their shuttle is docked, a successful Per/awareness-10 flip reveals that something is going on beyond the door. The players should hear plenty of activity, shifting of weight and quiet, but penetrative whispers.

Whether the players choose to burst through the doors at this point, or conduct a more subtle investigation, the point is moot. Within the hangar, six cultists, under the guidance of Corpustin are loading an explosive on to the players' shuttle.

Confronting the Cultists

What happens next is up to the players. If they choose to start shooting immediately, the cultists will scatter

| Suit | Random Sighting |
|----------|---|
| Spades | More strange footprints and handprints, this time covering the ceiling and walls of an otherwise empty chamber. |
| Hearts | A series of strange machines and implements, resembling updated versions of mediaeval torture devices—a rack, for instance, but shining white and polished. |
| Diamonds | Test tubes within which sinister, pitiable homunculi float. These are failed genetic experiments. |
| Clubs | Scrap of skin, suspended from the wall by a fine wire. Examination of the skin reveals it to be not quite human... |
| Joker | A mottled, hideous corpse. Dozens of feeding tubes protrude from its flesh, where biological material has been pumped in, attempting to convert it into an avatar of the Divine Form. Examination of the corpse reveals a sign around its neck with the words: “YAMINE. BROTHER AND MARTYR. GAVE HIS LIFE FOR THE REVELATION OF THE DIVINE FORM.” |

and take cover, before trying to engage them in hand-to-hand combat using anything heavy and blunt they can get their hands on.

If the players try and negotiate, most of the cultists are receptive and will at least stop what they are doing to talk with the players.

The cultists' intent is to destroy the Jenseitech destroyer, the Littoral. Knowing that the players have exchanged communications with Captain Garinath and his ship. (At this point, the pretense that the Fururi's sensors are down drops away.) The plan is to use this fact to have Garinath let the players' craft on board. Then the bomb will be detonated.

The players can use any means at their disposal to halt this plan. They might promise to intercede on the cultists' behalf, should they tell them where Jim Segall is. They might lie, offering to sacrifice their ship for the information or attempt to take Corpustin hostage. Any approach is possible, subject to the GM's judgement. Here are a few possible actions:

- Pretending to negotiate with the cultists while stalling for time or getting into an advantageous position requires a successful Chr/deception vs. Per/empathy action. If successful, the players can get surprise on the cultists.
- Taking Corpustin hostage will require first grappling and subduing the cultist. For this use the combat system. Once Corpustin has been subdued, using him as leverage against the remaining cultists requires a successful Chr/persuade vs. Det flip.

- Quietly sabotaging the cultists' explosives while distracting them will require that one team member provides a distraction, while another subtly works the sabotage. The distraction could be any number of actions, but an Int/deception vs. Per flip is a good bet. Performing the sabotage requires a successful Int/thievery vs. Per flip.

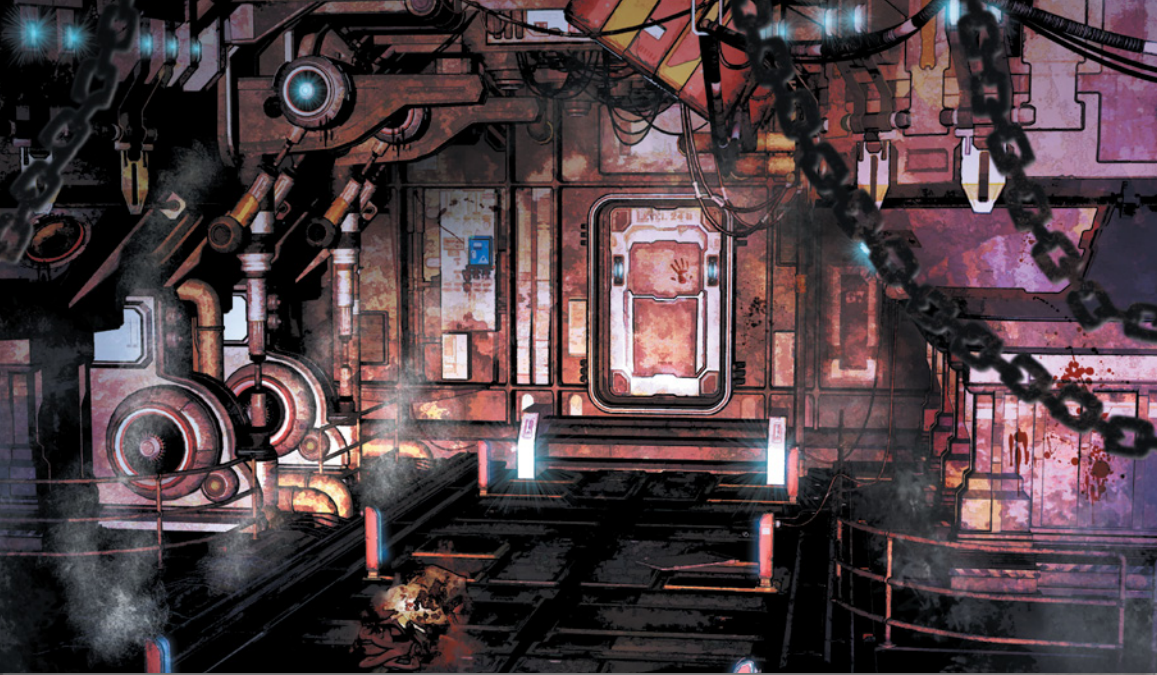
As soon as the players make it plain that they have no intention of allowing their shuttle to be used as a kamikaze Trojan horse, Corpustin will urge his men to attack.

There are six cultists, plus Corpustin. His cultists will fight for him, irrespective of their chances of survival. However, despite his power over his people, Corpustin is not a monster. Once half his cultists have been badly injured or killed, he will order a halt and surrender.

Aftermath

Once the fighting has ended and the players have reclaimed their shuttle, they can force Corpustin into telling them where Jim Segall is. Alternatively, Corpustin might volunteer this information, if he reached a deal with the PCs.

- Segall is not on the station. He went to visit a recently detected asteroid habitat near Fururi Station.
- The sensors on the station were successfully repaired a month ago, although this fact has been concealed to try and ensure that, whatever happened, the cultists had the element of surprise when Jenseitech came for them.



- Shortly after the sensors were restored to working order, Corpustin and Segall intercepted an unusual signal from a small, hitherto unnoticed mining station.
- Knowing that they might have to fight to retain their place on Fururi, Corpustin and Segall agreed that Segall should travel to the site with the aim of finding any resources or technology which might be repurposed.
- Segall has not been in contact since he left, over a month ago. Knowing that he came from wealthy parentage, however, Corpustin assumed that he had either defected or else been captured by Jenseitech's hired goons.

Corpustin will offer this knowledge, and the coordinates of the outpost to which Segall was heading, in return for the players leaving him and his companions in peace. If they cannot secure the station against attack, Corpustin says that he

Failure!

If, by some horrifying fluke of the cards, the players find themselves in danger of losing their confrontation with the cult, the GM shouldn't worry too much. Corpustin won't have the player characters killed. He doesn't wish them any harm, he's just in a desperate situation and trying to save his people.

If the players are all struck down or surrender, cultists will tend to any potentially life-threatening wounds, lug the PCs away from the port and incarcerate them in an old brig somewhere in the station. Once the cultists have enacted their plan to bomb the Littoral, they will be released. Alternatively, the PCs can enact a plan to escape from their confinement.

and his people will likely die here, further Martyrs to the cause of the Divine Form.

Corpustin

Geneline Budget Upgrade, **Subculture** Serv

Str 5, **Dex** 6, **Spd** 5, **End** 5, **Int** 6, **Per** 4, **Chr** 7, **Det** 7

Defense 7/15, **DR** 0, **Shock** 12, **Wound** 5, **Wealth** 2, **Lifestyle** 3

Skills: Awareness 1, Comp-Ops 1, Conspiracy 4, Deception 3, Empathy 4, Guns 2, Lib-Arts 1, Mechanic 3, Melee 3, Persuade 4, Vehicles 1

Knife: +6 (♠15M/♥10M/♦5M/♣2M), Thrown

Gear: Rope

Corpustin believes that the Littoral is here to do nothing less than commit small-scale genocide, exterminating him and his people. He sees the cult as a persecuted religious minority, that wishes to do nothing more than live in peace and work to ascend humanity to its terrifying ultimate form. He had sincerely hoped that the player characters would see the cult's dire straits and good intentions, then side with them against Jenseitech. Unfortunately, Corpustin is too crazed to release just how creepy the cult's activities appear to outsiders.

Harbinger Cultists

Geneline Various, **Subculture** Serv

Str 5, **Dex** 6, **Spd** 5, **End** 5, **Int** 4, **Per** 4, **Chr** 4, **Det** 7

Defense 7/15, **DR** 0, **Shock** 12, **Wound** 5, **Wealth** 2, **Lifestyle** 3

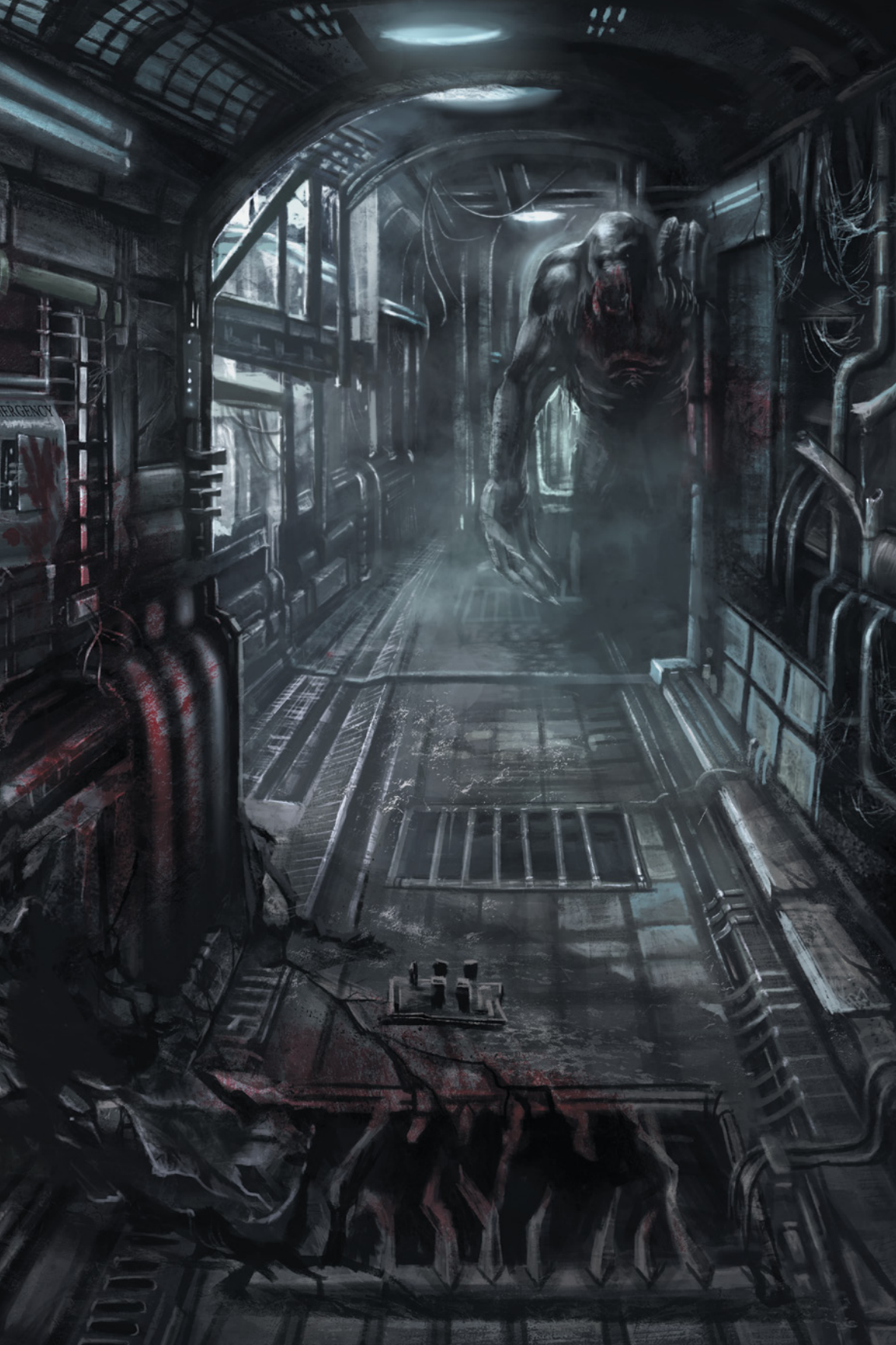
Skills: Awareness 1, Comp-Ops 1, Conspiracy 3, Guns 2, Lib-Arts 1, Mechanic 1, Melee 2

Improvised Junk: +3 (♠15M/♥10M/♦5M/♣2M), Improvised

Gear: Station debris

The Harbinger cultists are starving, scared, a little bit crazed and in their own eyes, fighting for their very survival. They don't even have real weapons, instead attacking the team with loose metal rebar, corroding circuit boards and discarded scrap. They should be sort of pitiable, but still a threat if left unchecked.





EMERGENCY

Unknown Station

After the players have learned that Jim Segall went to explore a heretofore unknown station and never returned, they are likely going to want to head to that station themselves in order to uncover evidence of Jim's fate. If the players are inclined to not do this, it may be good to remind them that if they wish to get paid, they will need more evidence than they currently have.

The team might even be able to convince the cultists to send someone along with them to the station to help out. They will not be able to convince anyone from the Littoral. If they try, they'll simply get the response "that's not our job."

A Traveling Interlude

The journey to the unknown station should take between one and two days—one in a proper space ship or two if taking a shuttle. The GM might like to encourage the players to discuss the information they have managed to assemble at this point, and what they expect to be at the outpost ahead.

Scanning the net for information on the outpost is something of a bust. There are a few veiled references which a particularly skilled hacker might be able to find with a successful Int/comp-ops-14 flip: a designation of the site as a "location of extreme corporate interest," or similar, but no other information is available.

The Outpost

The unknown station is drilled into the side of one of the many asteroids making up the Main Belt. This provides material for construction, provides shielding from the radiation in space and makes the base difficult to detect. To anyone observing from a distance, it would appear little different from the thousands of other objects littering the Belt.

As the players approach the asteroid, their sensors will pick up a shuttle attached to a port on the side of the asteroid. A second, and open, shuttle port is nearby. This shuttle is the vehicle Jim Segall and his two cultist companions took to go explore the station. It remains here, untouched. The other port can be used by the team to dock with the asteroid.

As the team approaches closer, the station increasingly appears deserted. Their shuttle detects no active sensors, tracking their movements. Neither is there any attempt to hail the shuttle. No automated system requests entry protocols or identity. The team can access the open port only by overriding the outpost's system and forcing their way in.

- A successful Int/mechanic-10 flip will physically override the port, opening it for the team to enter. Failure will still open the port, but it will malfunction, preventing the team from locking it again.
- Alternatively, an Int/program-12 flip can be made to override the

port's software, opening the airlock for the team. Failure will still open the port, but it will set off an alarm. This alarm won't truly have any negative repercussions, but it should make the players nervous.

Once the port has been opened, the players can safely enter the station.

Entering the Tunnels

A light on the port will indicate that the interior of the station has full atmospheric pressure and breathable air. Player characters can choose whether to enter wearing a vac suit, or whether to discard any such suits in the airlock.

The station itself is a standard, albeit hidden, asteroid habitat. It consists of a series of tunnels drilled into the rock. These tunnels are in microgravity, and handholds are liberally placed along their length, so that residents can control themselves as they float through the corridors.

As soon as the players enter the tunnels, they should sense the wrongness of the place. Assuming they aren't in sealed vac suits, an unwholesome smell saturates everything—sweet, sickly, rotten. Everything appears still and vacant. Here and there pockets of brown goo dot the walls and floors of the station, with twisting patterns that are reminiscent of spirals or shells.

The GM should aim to build tension, as the players float down tunnels toward the final hideous revelation of the scenario. Tunnels jut off at odd angles,

sometimes scattering in all directions. The zero-gravity of the place makes exploring the station even more confusing. Up and down begin to blur. The entire structure inside is something of a labyrinth. Still, despite its abandonment, its obvious the station is the result of the expenditure of a great deal of money.

Exploring the Outpost

As the players begin to explore the abandoned outpost, they may come across the following:

- Start with faint traces of a sticky red substance—barely discernible at first, but becoming more and more obvious, until finally a sequence of bloody handprints are smeared across a wall.
- Have the lights flicker and die, leaving the players to fall back upon flashlights until the outpost's lighting suddenly flares back up to reveal the eviscerated corpse of a man and a woman, both torn apart, mouths in a screaming rictus, viscera strewn across the floor.
- Have the station-wide communications systems suddenly broadcast a stertorous, rasping series of breaths.

The GM should feel entirely free to improvise here—devising their own tunnel system, depending on how their players react. If they are nervous, checking around every corner, draw out the tension. If they are gung-ho and careless, have them run straight into events without any fanfare and suffer accordingly.

The Testing Facility

Eventually the players should reach what are obviously biological testing facilities at the heart of the station. Beds with straps line the walls, two isolation rooms with broken window-walls are in the back and various instruments of experimental biology are bolted to tables.

A gray-brown substance coats the room, sloughing off the walls like clumps of dead skin, drifting slowly through the air. At various points within the room, human remains can be found. A splayed abdomen is affixed to the farthest wall; when the players enter, its ribs split open like angel's wings. A heart suspended by gore from the spine continues to beat.

A dozen human arms rise from the floor, fingers twitching and spasming, as though beckoning the team to put them out of their misery.

As the players press deeper into the chamber, they should find, encased in thick, semi-translucent slime, the body of a young woman. This is the remains of one of the two cultists who traveled with Jim Segall to raid the unknown station. She is preserved in an apparent state of agony, although there is no obvious sign of external trauma. Should the team attempt to remove her from the slime, she immediately expires in a fit of rapid full-body twitching.



Jim Segall

Str 15, **Dex** 9, **Spd** 9, **End** 15, **Int** 4, **Per** 7, **Chr** 2, **Det** 8

Defense 12/25, **DR** 5, **Shock** 28, **Wound** 15

Skills: Athletics 2, Awareness 3, Empathy 1, Guns 2, Melee 4, Stealth 2

Claws: +8 (♠45M/♥30M/♦15M/♣7M)

Projectile Vomit: +6 (♠45L/♥30L/♦15L/♣7L), Area 3

Backslash: If a melee attack by Jim Segall misses, as a reaction he may spend another AP to make an immediate attack against the same target.

Radio Jamming: Jim Segall blocks radio signals within 100 m.

Enhanced Actions: Jim Segall gains 4 AP per round.

This ooze-covered lumbering monstrosity is all that remains of Jim Segall. Hideously deformed hands have sprouted wicked-looking claws. The jaw hangs slack, with a constant stream of brown drool slowly coming out. Strange swirl patterns have crystalized over his skin, and his veins have darkened, becoming ribbed and almost machine-like. He moves with an almost superhuman speed.

The Fate of Jim Segall

Around this time, have each of the players make a Per/awareness-10 flip. On a success, the character gets the feeling that she is being stalked. The hairs on the back of her neck bristle. Something is behind them, moving quickly and quietly through the thick slime which has immured the entire chamber.

Confrontation

The player characters will eminently encounter what remains of Jim Segall. It will emerge and attack the team as soon as they have examined the corpse of the young cultist. Make this fight as hard and as tense as possible. Have the lights fail again. Explain to the players how Segall shrieks as he attacks, rending at the characters with hideously deformed hands,

which have sprouted claws from raw, suppurating flesh. His head has half-split apart, revealing skull and brain matter. Segall will be unrelenting and brutal. He will kill without hesitation and use any and all advantages he can find.

Unless this mission is intended to be the start of a lengthy campaign, the GM shouldn't be afraid to kill players here. This is the climax of a horror scenario, and it should be horrible.

Flight or Fight!

The fight won't end until either Segall is dead or the player characters flee for their lives. Victorious PCs might want to bring back Segall's body as evidence. Less victorious ones may have to fall back on getting a sample of Segall's DNA and running away. Regardless, Mr. West won't accept that the PCs have accomplished their job unless they bring back some sort of evidence.

Behind the Scenes: Timeline

Much of this adventure is concerned with tracking down the whereabouts of Jim Segall. To keep things consistent during the team's investigation, here is a timeline of Jim Segall's activities, as well as a few other events that are important to the adventure. All dates given are relative to the beginning of the scenario.

- **2 years before:** Jim Segall has a falling out with his family and heads to the Belt in an act of youthful rebellion.
- **18 months before:** Jim meets Alethy, who is already a cult member, falls in love and joins up with the Harbingers of the Divine Form.
- **14 months before:** A group of Harbingers, including Jim Segall, travel to Fururi Station and set up residence there.
- **6 months before:** The Segall family traces Jim to the Harbinger community that moved to Fururi Station.
- **5 months before:** Alethy gives birth to Jim's child.
- **3 months before:** Jenseitech purchases Fururi Station for cheap and plans to decommission the site.
- **1 week before:** The squatters reject Jenseitech's demands to leave the station. Jenseitech plans to forcibly remove the squatters. Investor Relations becomes aware of the situation with Jim Segall.
- **Beginning of Scenario:** The team is hired, and their ship sets out from Caikuang Station (or elsewhere).
- **1 week after:** The Littoral is diverted from its course in the Belt and sent to Fururi Station.
- **1 month after:** The Harbingers on Fururi get the station's sensors online and discover the unknown station.
- **5 weeks after:** Jim leads a scouting party to search the unknown station for useful scrap. The scouting party dies on the station.
- **3 months after:** The Littoral arrives at Fururi Station, begins observation and begins planning.
- **3 months, 1 day after:** The team arrives at Fururi Station.

This accomplished, the team can then flee this ruin. A generous GM might let them find a few pieces of semi-valuable technology, but much of it has been destroyed or rendered useless. The best the scrappers can hope for is enough tech to amount to a single Income 7 payment.





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Aftermath

As the players head away from the scene of slaughter, their ship or shuttle sensors should pick up readings of the Littoral's assault on Fururi Station. This means that Fururi isn't a safe place to return to. Even if the PCs do decide to return there, remember it takes a day or two to get back to the station. By the time they would arrive, the fighting will be over, with the cultists having surrendered and been forced into stasis pods on the Littoral.

Most likely the players will want to return to their station of origin and claim payment for the job. Assuming they have proof of Jim Segall's death, this will be a straightforward affair. If the team is lacking in proof, however, they may find claiming the reward to be more difficult.

Meeting Mr. West

After arriving back at their station of origin, the team can arrange to meet with Mr. Alessio West and claim their payment. West is at his suavest here—friendly and ingratiating. He won't part with a single microcredit, however, unless the team has some proof regarding the fate of Jim Segall. Here's how the meeting is like to proceed:

- He thanks the players for retrieving evidence of Segall's death. "It will be, I think it I fair to say, some comfort to his poor parents. Jenseitech owes them the assurance of their son's peaceful end."
- He offers them payment. "Clearly, Mr. Segall was not safely secured and retrieved. Through, I'm sure, at no

fault of your own. I can offer you the promised sum to secure your discretion and, perhaps, future service. It must be said, however, that any breach of Jenseitech's privacy on this matter will be dealt with quickly and severely."

- He confides few details on the unknown station: "I am unaware of the nature of the outpost Mr. Segall discovered. I assure you, however, that Jenseitech has already taken action to secure the facility."

To Be Continued...?

Although the scenario concludes at this point, there are several potential avenues for the players to follow which might open up new adventures or lead into a broader campaign.

- What happened to Jim Segall in that base? Could the Segall family, wanting to know the real truth of what happened to their child, approach the players to carry out a deeper investigation?
- What could Alessio West employ the team to do next? How deep is the team willing to be in Jenseitech's pocket before they see something so horrifying that no amount of credits can erase the memory?
- What was Corpustin's cult actually doing on Fururi Station? What measures will they devise to prevent their removal, and will the players help or hinder them?

The Sol system is filled with horror, darkness and adventure; just make sure you are brave or foolish enough to face it when it emerges from the shadows!



Shadows Over Sol

The scion of a wealth family is missing, and the team has been hired to bring him home. The trail of his disappearance will lead them across the Main Belt, and pit the team against corporate conspiracies, crazed cultists, trigger-happy mercenaries and bioengineered horrors.

But when the scrappers finally tracks down the wayward scion, will they be able to bring him back? Or will they let him disappear in the vastness of space? Just how far is the team willing to go to claim a paycheck? And what are they willing to become?

Shadows Over Sol: Small Mercy is an adventure supplement for *Shadows Over Sol*. It features a tense investigative horror scenario, and is designed to run anywhere between one and three gaming sessions.



Tab Creations

