

MIRROR IMAGE WISBOY IWVGE



**STARS WITHOUT
NUMBER COMPATIBLE**

CREDITS

WRITING & DESIGN

CODY LEIGH & JASON DUFF

DEVELOPMENT

JASON DUFF

EDITING

JENNIFER WARD-ITO

ILLUSTRATIONS

**ALEX GONTAR, ACHARYA HARGREAVES, TITHI LUADTHONG,
FREEDA MICHAUX, JACKIE NIAM, ZDENEK SASEK, SELIN SERHII,
DEAN SPENCER, DEAN ZANGIROLAMI, LIU ZISHAN**

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**INFO@FIFEGAMES.COM | WWW.FIFEGAMES.COM
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CONTENTS

ADVENTURE OVERVIEW	5
PREFACE SUMMARY	5
SCENE I: WELCOME TO MIRE	6
VORTH VERMIL	7
REWARD	7
SCENE II: DAYTIME AT THE MENAGERIE	8
THE HOTEL.	9
SCENE III: A NIGHT TO REMEMBER	10
THE JANITOR	11
THE POOL	12
THE CASINO	12
THE LOUNGE	13
SCENE IV: THE BASEMENT	14
TRIAL #1	15
TRIAL #2.	16
TRIAL #3.	17
SCENE V: MIRROR IMAGE	18
ROGERIO GOMEZ	19
THE CORRECT QUESTION.	19
HERE YOU ARE.	20
LIKE TEARS IN THE RAIN	21
SCENE VI: A VORTHWHILE VISIT	22
REVENGE.	23
GM SUMMARY	24



YOU SEE THEM LOOKING AT YOU.

**. EYES PIERCING THE THIN VEIL OF SKIN, FLESH AND BONE
SURROUNDING YOUR THOUGHTS.**

THEY'RE PLANNING SOMETHING.

THEY'RE GOING TO KILL YOU.

OR WORSE.

WHAT DO YOU DO ... TO SURVIVE?

ADVENTURE OVERVIEW

Mirror Image is an adventure about choices, and the players will need to make difficult choices that may have a psychological impact on their characters far after this adventure. *Mirror Image* is suitable for 3-6 characters of any level. GMs should place the location of *Mirror Image*, the planet Mire, in any system that is convenient for their story. *Stars Without Numbers: Revised Edition* is required for *Mirror Image* to run without modification, but any science fiction RPG system may be suitable if adapted by the GM. References will be made to the *Stars Without Number: Revised Edition* core rulebook where necessary.

- Scene I: Welcome to Mire introduces the PCs to Mire, their impending job, and the city of Rosha Des.
- Scene II: Daytime at the Menagerie allows the PCs to see the fantastic comforts of their hotel, and perhaps be tricked into a false sense of security.
- Scene III: A Night to Remember is where things start to unravel. The PCs wake up near puddles of blood and find all the hotel staff threatening beyond reason. The PCs are stricken with anxiety as the staff recommend that they go to the basement and make veiled threats against their lives.
- Scene IV: The Basement leads to the ultimate truth of the Menagerie and the fate of the PCs. They must make their way through true horrors in order to finally learn the truth.
- Scene V: *Mirror Image* presents the truth of the PCs situation is made known and decisions about their uncertain future must be made.
- Scene VI: A Worthwhile Visit is an optional scene if the PCs want to track down Vorth after the truth is known. This may be worthwhile for PCs if they want a final resolution to their trip to Mire.

PREFACE SUMMARY

There is a GM Summary at the end of this adventure. This is done to avoid spoilers in previews; spoilers to this adventure will take a great deal of the fun out of *Mirror Image*. Use the Adventure Overview in combination with the GM Summary as a play aid when the adventure is being run and for a synopsis of the adventure itself.

A vibrant, ethereal space scene featuring a large, glowing green and blue nebula that dominates the foreground. The nebula's colors transition from deep emerald green to bright cyan and blue, with wispy, filamentary structures. In the upper right, a small, brownish crescent moon is visible against a dark, star-filled background. The overall atmosphere is mysterious and otherworldly.

SCENE I: WELCOME TO MIRE

The planet Mire appears a paradise from orbit; vibrant shades of green and blue are all too inviting. But while the planet is capable of sustaining life, only the civilized settlements are welcoming of it...

In order to bring the PCs to Mire, GMs are encouraged to draw them in with a very lucrative contract. The planet of Mire needs armed guards and technical experts to assist a surveyor crew planet-side. Mire is an unaligned planet that acts as a free haven for refugees and displaced colonials. The acting government has passed along a private message to the crew of PCs (through a job broker, shipboard comms, etc) to request their aid.

A PC may make a **Know Skill Check (Difficulty 8)** to review their knowledge regarding Mire. Success reveals that the post-tech planet has a few centralized cities that support the citizenry and are heavily overcrowded. Dangerous fauna keeps colonization at bay, and few neighboring planets offer to trade with them as Mire has little to exchange in bulk. However, a large group of roving merchants were recently cornered and grounded by pirates on Mire. These wealthy individuals took it upon themselves to seize economic control of their new surroundings.

VORTH VERMIL

The self-appointed Merchant Governor, Vorth Vermil, will attempt to speak with the PCs directly on arrival. He is the same individual who offered the contract to begin with. Vermil is amicable with the PCs, providing drinks and food if he is met with in person. The meeting point is in the city of Rosh Des, the de-facto capital of Mire. It is a typical major city with all modern conveniences and tech available expected of a post-tech world. The people of the city appear somewhat rustic with the exception of the richly decorated upper districts.

The populace is friendly to the PCs. Many sights, sounds and eateries are available. A PC may make a **Notice** or **Work Skill Check (Difficulty 6)** to observe that the capital is heavily structured around trade and tourism owing to the many craft businesses, and the emphasis on preserving certain natural structures for aesthetic viewing.

At the meeting, Vorth explains that the job is a dangerous one owing to the fearsome fauna and even occasional megafauna that were encountered in previous surveyor missions. However, it is "just the job" for a group of "enterprising individuals" such as the PCs to make a name for themselves with no small amount of money on the side. A total of forty mercenaries will be employed with the PCs forming the core of their escort. Ammo and supplies will be provided by the government.

REWARD

All in all, the job should be an appealing one to the PCs. The contract rate pays 5000 credits (or a rate the GM finds enticing to their players) with numerous incentives for additional earnings. These incentives include the discovery of precious minerals and exotic animal furs as well as mapping of tourism sights and the locations of non-toxic water. Each incentive met provides an additional 500 credits.

Upon the PCs acceptance, they are advised that some preparations are still underway for the expedition and it will take a few more days for it all to be set in motion. They are invited to stay at the Menagerie: a premiere luxury hotel in Rosh Des. Vorth will handle the expenses in return for the PCs accepting the contract. He smiles and tells them to "have a good time, but not too good of a time, eh?"

The PCs may go around the city and explore. Any normal rules on acquiring equipment apply. There are very few weapon stores in the city, so any attempts to buy or find weaponry will be more difficult than usual. GMs are encouraged to create a welcoming, tourism-centric gambit of activities in Rosh Des. The GM may create any unrelated adventures or plots set in Rosh Des as they see fit. Once the PCs are ready, they proceed to *Scene 2: Daytime at the Menagerie*.

SCENE II: DAYTIME AT THE MENAGERIE



Smiling faces beam at welcome guests, as sweat drips past the corners of the curled grins...

The Menagerie is a multi-story hotel. The reception area is wide open with a towering ceiling and crystal chandeliers. Intricately patterned rugs adorn smooth, marbled floors. Several collections of chairs, tables and couches provide a space for respite. The reception counter rests in the center of the room with two smiling attendants in fanciful dress awaiting prospective guests.

Upon being approached, one of the attendants introduces herself as Macy. She offers a half bow to the PCs and welcomes them to The Menagerie, "the pinnacle of satisfaction and entertainment on Rosha Des".

THE HOTEL

The PCs may ask a variety of questions to Macy.

If asked about The Menagerie's history, Macy continues her smiling and lets the PCs know that "they are a part of it." The Menagerie was built in short order over the last five years and still undergoes the occasional "update", but is all and all complete and open for business as of late last year. It was developed by a conglomerate of merchants, including Vorth Vermil, as a means to generate business opportunities planet side. So far, the hotel has provided no small amount of interest in the planet. PCs may make **Notice Skill Checks (Difficulty 6)** to take note of a rather empty lobby area. If asked about this, the attendant shrugs and states "must be a slow week. You should see this place on the weekends! We open up the casino to the public!"

If asked about the layout, Macy shares a brochure and starts to go over the different sections. The Menagerie includes a pool area, a casino, a bar and grill, an arcade and a "fully-functioning gym". As their reservation is already confirmed for two nights, the PCs have "full access to guest amenities during their stay".

PCs are encouraged to visit and enjoy the other sections of the hotel. The gym is on the 2nd floor along with the pool, while the casino, bar and grill, and arcade are all on the 3rd. Floors 4-10 are all room floors for guests. The collection of rooms for the PCs will be set at the 8th floor which offers "a marvelous, safe view of the wilderness around the city". The PCs may stay in the same room or split rooms nearby one another; it is up to them as the reservation is "flexible".

PCs may gamble, game, eat, swim or exercise during the day. NPC staff will be present at each of these locations along with a few guests. At this point, no check will be needed for the PCs to note that the hotel seems under-utilized. There are very few additional guests at the hotel. All of the NPC staff will remain friendly, perhaps overly so. Not a single member of the staff is without a broad smile. Some of the guest NPCs may speak with the PCs, but they tend to keep to themselves. They do note that it seems weird how friendly everyone is here.

PCs are directed to use an elevator while navigating the hotel. The buttons are standard with the exception of a B1 sublevel that has a keycard insert next to it. No information is provided by the attendants on the basement even if they are asked directly, and the cards that the PCs carry are only for their rooms.

Whatever location the PCs visit, or on the way to their rooms if they opt to go directly there, they should encounter a pair of guests. Matilda and Rogerio Gomez, a married couple at the hotel, should welcome them to The Menagerie. The couple will ask the PCs questions about their business on Mire and offer information in return. Matilda owns a startup clothing line and is on Mire to consider franchising on planet, while Rogerio is a genetics researcher for Volgrad, a major research corporation in the pharmaceutical sector. They are friendly with the PCs and hope to see them around the hotel to "share some drinks or something".

After the PCs have concluded their tour of the amenities or made it to their rooms to tuck in for the evening, move onto Scene 3: A Night to Remember.

SCENE III: A NIGHT TO REMEMBER



Everyone hopes for a memorable night staying abroad. People ought to be careful what they wish for...

Darkness closes in from all sides. A single blinding light at the end of a shadowy hallway. Fear bristles on the back of the neck. Run. You have to run. It's coming. Whatever it is, it's coming. It's behind you. You reach the doorway; you bathe in the light. A gloved hand reaches through the illumination and wraps around your face. Darkness.

Each PC shares this dream before waking drenched in sweat. Each of them awakens terribly parched and groggy, more so than they should in the middle of the night. PCs may make a **Know Skill check (Difficulty 10)** to realize that these symptoms are in line with being drugged. If a PC wishes to use Heal instead and have points allotted into the skill, they make the check at Difficulty 8 instead.

If the PCs share a room, they discover puddles of fluid on the floor near the beds. If they have split rooms, these only appear in one of the occupied spaces. Turning on the light reveals several large pools of blood on the floor.

PCs may inspect the blood. A **Notice skill check (Difficulty 8)** may be made to determine that this amount of blood surely points to a casualty.

One, a couple, or all of the PCs should have dried blood on them as well as what look like fresh puncture marks as if they've had blood drawn. These will not impact their HP, but will be clearly visible unless the PCs decide to hide them. For this, have the PC that wants to hide their wounds or wipe away the blood roll a **Sneak Skill check**. Whatever number they roll will act as the Difficulty for anyone attempting to use a **Notice Skill Check** against that PC.

The blood pool trails into the hallway. The PCs may follow the trail. As they exit their rooms, they will notice a janitor cleaning the blood in the hallway with a mop and bucket. A pool of crimson is partially covered by suds as the man whistles a merry tune about his work.

If the PCs decide to hide and observe him, no checks are necessary; the man is focused on his work, and does not seem to mind his surroundings. He goes about his business cleaning the blood and eventually starts moving towards the PCs as he follows the trail. If the PCs decide to sneak up on him, they must roll an **Opposed Stealth Skill Check** versus his **Notice Skill Check**. Utilize the *Peaceful Human Generic NPC (Xenobestiarly - SWN:R)* type as a template for the janitor.

THE JANITOR

If the Janitor notices one of the PCs, he stops whistling and turns to see them. He wears a massive grin on his face, not unlike his fellow attendants during the day. However, PCs see it as more malicious than welcoming. His smile seems too wide, and his teeth too big. His eyes protrude from his skull like a fish. He greets them and notes that it's rather late for people to be out and about at this hour. PCs notice that he has a pair of shears in his belt. The sight of the shears comes across as threatening. Just the look of the janitor increases everyone's System Strain by +1.

The PCs may ask him what he is doing. He laughs deeply and says "Well, my job of course! Seems like someone spilled something on the floor here. No sense, some folks. Wasn't you...was it?" His wide eyes look towards the floor and notice that it trails into the PCs room. "Well, I'll be. You should've told me! Guess I'll have to go cleaning in there!" The janitor then attempts to move towards the PCs room(s).

His steps are quick paced and he maintains a broad smile as he steps purposefully towards the party. They will feel a deep displeasure the closer that he gets to them. His breath smells like spoiled milk, and his body odor makes the PCs wretch. This will cause another +1 to System Strain for all PCs involved.



JANATORIAL VIOLENCE

If they decide to attack, allow combat to proceed in standard order. The smile fades quickly as he is attacked and he looks rather panicked. He attempts to fight back if he does not feel he can escape, but will otherwise attempt to flee.

If the PCs do not attack, he...simply does as he said he would. He cleans the blood stains on all of the carpets and tile before tipping his hat to the PCs and heading back to the elevator. He stops just short and turns to quickly walk back to the PCs. If he is still not attacked, he roots around in his pocket and produces a keycard. "You folks look awfully sick. We have a doctor in the basement. He can fix you right up". The janitor then takes his leave.

The entire involvement with the janitor causes the PCs to feel an overwhelming sense of dread, danger and anger while he works. They get a sense in their head that their very survival is at stake the longer they leave this man alive. A GM may consider having PCs roll a Wisdom Save or feel compelled to attack the man, but it is recommended that verbiage be used to goad them into making that decision themselves rather than forcing any action. If the janitor completes his cleaning in full, the PCs all suffer +1 System Strain from enduring his presence in their rooms.

If the PCs kill the janitor, he falls to the ground dumbstruck. The grin fades. Searching through his body provides a keycard labeled B1. Nothing else of value is on his person. Upon taking possession of the keycard, the PCs will experience what can only be described as a shared memory. An elevator ride. The letter B lit up next to a button. A long hallway and a door with light at the end. Feelings of hope, life. Survival.

PCs may attempt to explore other floors if they wish.



THE POOL

The pool swirls with a deep purplish color in the dead of night upon a visit. A different attendant oversees it; a female lifeguard leans into her chair staring maliciously over the water. Does she have gills? The dark room accentuates the brightness of her eyes and the perfect whiteness of her teeth. She enjoys a bloody steak away from the edge of the pool. She greets the players in a high-pitched voice that grates on their ears. She looks them over and notices "how pale they look." Blood sloshes in her gums as she looks at them strangely. "You look familiar. Do all of you got twins? Coulda sworn I saw you earlier heading into the basement. Maybe you should go back. You look like you're falling apart."

THE CASINO

The Casino rings and rattles as all of the machines carry on with their noises. The nearby bar and grill appears closed, but jolting giggles of laughter and a sound not unlike the sharpening of knives rings into the still air between the bouts of gambling noise. If the PCs investigate, they notice a pair of chefs cleaning a pile of bloody knives. The chefs only smile and nod towards them, sweat pouring from their brows around the curves of their smiles. They sing a nonsense song in unison about chopping up "meat."



THE LOUNGE

Macy and Marius are replaced by a pair of older male and female attendants at the reception hall. One of them spins a sharp pen with practiced ease, while the other loads a staple gun with dangerous, razor-sharp metal staples. They gesture and point menacingly with the office supplies in a manner that makes the PCs skin crawl. They look upon the PCs with confusion before they talk with them. "Checking out? Can't recommend it looking like that. You look like you came down with something terrible. Maybe it's the air? But if you left, well, can't expect you'd make it this far. Better see our doctor...or else."

Each encounter the PCs have with these attendants will largely mirror the day time hours. Many answers to old questions do not change. Questions about their appearances are met with incredulity. Reporting the blood stains will illicit laughs and mentions that "Old Barlow should be able to be up and take care of it. We'll give him a buzz on the radio!"

They are dismissive of the PCs concerns, and every action they give comes across as threatening.

They repeatedly mention going into the basement, and will offer to provide a keycard if the PCs do not already have one. But in no situation do the NPCs initiate violence against the PCs without provocation. However, each different area the PCs head to before going into the basement will cause an additional +1 System Strain. If the PCs see their reflection at any point, they have deep set features and bags under their eyes. Their veins bulge and sweat constantly pumps from their pores. The PCs notice a constant dehydration that seems to be getting worse. Something needs to be fixed. Soon.

If the PCs ignore the recommendations of the staff and decide to leave, they may wander about the city if they wish. They will find no answers, and within hours they begin to literally fall apart – melting into a bio-goo and wake up in the basement.

Proceed to *Scene 4: The Basement* once the PCs decide to take that route.

SCENE IV: THE BASEMENT



Dark work is done in shadowy places; what better shadow than the one provided by an entire building?

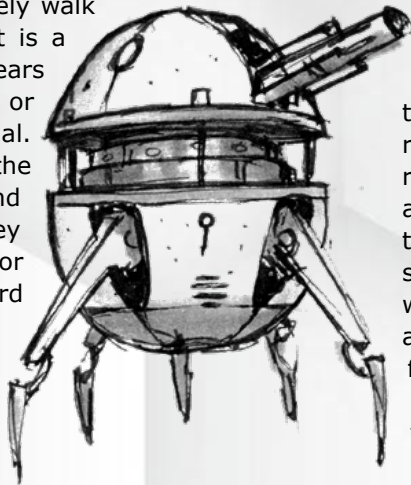
The elevator doors open up into a dark, dank-smelling hallway of concrete walls and floors. A light drip of water from an unseen leaky pipe trickles on the floor. Flickering lights from hallway fixtures provide the bare minimum visibility to see a doorway at the end of the hall. The door is open, but a blinding light shines into the darkness of the hallway.

TRIAL #1

As the PCs move into the lighted room, they notice a large electronic door at the far end of the open space. Several lights shine down on the center of the room where a young woman is enclosed in a glass box. The PCs will recognize her as Macy, the attendant from the day before. A large apparatus is pointed down directly at her from the ceiling of the case. The glass box is large enough that the PCs can only move around the edges of the room. There is no noticeable way to enter or exit the glass box.

PCs may make a **Know Skill Check (Difficulty 8)** regarding the apparatus. On a success, they realize that the apparatus is a mining laser. The average mining laser has enough power to cut through solid rock. A person will be set ablaze and melted even at the lowest setting.

The apparatus is attached to a terminal that the PCs are able to freely walk over and see. In it is a keycard. There appears to be no other port or panel on the terminal. If the PCs observe the door at the far end of the room, they will see that the door requires a keycard in order to gain access.



Once the PCs have observed all aspects of the room, an intercom buzzes to life. A deep, scrambled voice advises the PCs that “in order to advance, you will need to insert the keycard into the slot. You only need to pull the card from the terminal. However, once you do so, the laser will activate. The woman will die. In five minutes, I will activate the laser myself. The woman will die. If you attempt to break the glass and unstrap her, the woman will die. Use your minds. Show me what you can do. Or don’t. Decide your next step. Her fate is in your hands.”

The PCs can pull the keycard from the terminal. The woman does, indeed, die if they choose to do this. She is melted by the laser. Breaking the glass results in the same effect. The PCs suffer a +2 to system strain if she is killed in this manner in front of them.

PCs may make a **Notice Skill Check (Difficulty 8)**. On a success, they will realize that there are some tools around the glass box. A screwdriver, a wedge and several other pieces of equipment they may use to potentially open up a terminal. These tools will allow PCs to attempt a **Fix Skill Check (Difficulty 10)** to open up the laser’s terminal. On a success, the terminal is opened up. They may attempt this three times before the laser goes off. Once the terminal is opened up, they may attempt a **Program Check (Difficulty 8)** to disconnect the wires and shut down the laser. They may only attempt this once. Any further tampering results in the laser going off prematurely. They will also be able to acquire the keycard from the slot without tripping the laser after it is disabled.

If the PCs opt to break the glass after disabling the laser, they may do so without consequence to rescue the captive. She is unconscious and not responsive, but has a steady pulse. PCs may make a **Heal Skill Check (Difficulty 8)** to determine that she has been drugged with a powerful sedative of some kind. It is up to the PCs to decide what to do with her or where to take her. There are always the friendly staff upstairs, but the PCs will feel their condition deteriorating. One or several PCs may even vomit up blood from the exertion of the evening. A lot of it.

If the PCs save the woman, the intercom buzzes to life. The voice offers a single word: "Interesting". The PCs may advance into the next room once they have the keycard. They also recover 2 System Strain as a wave of relief rushes over them from their good deed.

TRIAL #2

The next room contains a similar predicament as the previous one; a man lays on his back on top of what appears to be a slab of concrete. He is, again, encased in a glass box. A large metal press rests overhead of the slab. On the opposite end of where the PCs enter? A door that requires a keycard – of course it does.

On the PCs' side of the glass is a single, circular hole that would allow someone to slide their hand through the glass. Looking inside reveals nothing from the dark. Use of a light source reveals a wide slit that goes across the width of the top and bottom of the hole. There is a large red button resting atop a control panel aligned with the hole. On the right of the hole is a port that is presently empty. Once the PCs have observed the room, the familiar voice over the intercom returns: "A keycard will be ejected through the port nearest the hole in the glass, but only after you have all watched a man crushed to death under the weight of a quarter-ton steel press. You can stop this, and get the keycard all in one. You only need to give up one of your hands. You have five minutes to decide, or I decide for you."

The PCs may simply wait for the press to crush the man. He will awaken as it begins pressing against his skin. His frenzied screaming causes each PC to suffer another +2 to System Strain as he is slowly pulped by the steel press against the concrete. After he is crushed, the keycard will pop out from the port. It may then be used to open the door.

One PC may hit the button to stop the steel press. While their hand is still through the hole, the sound of metal hitting flesh pierces the air. The PC who pressed the button withdraws their arm to find a stump instead of the hand they used.



They immediately suffer wounds equal to half their total and may no longer use the hand. Any actions that require the use of two hands will suffer a -1 penalty permanently unless the PC is able to replace it with a bionic at a later date. The intercom takes notice of the PC who sacrifices their limb. "Rather noble for one so young. It's almost like you were born yesterday." Saving the hostage allows the PCs to recover 2 system strain.

If the PCs attempt the insert anything other than a hand into the hole or try to break the glass, the intercom buzzes again: "Clever, but no." The press will then slam down fast into the unconscious hostage. A loud pop follows as the keycard is ejected for PC use. Every PC receives +2 System Strain if this occurs.

TRIAL #3

After the PCs receive the keycard, they move on to the next room. Again, a glass case. Another keycard port near where the PCs arrive. Another door opposite the room which requires a keycard. A woman is locked in a heavy container that appears to be made of ceramic. She is awake and banging at the door, but appears to be gagged. A length of pipe, made of see-through material, runs up into a large vat of green, bubbling liquid. Several stoppers appear to divide the pipe into sections. Another container is adjacent to the woman and connected through the piping system with stoppers. It is empty, with an open door swung towards the PCs.



A buzz cuts through the dead air of the room. "Now, the ultimate test. The vat contains a highly potent acid. Each stopper will remain closed for one minute. In five minutes, the acid will empty out into one of the containers. You get to decide. Will one of you die? Or will she?"

The PCs may allow the vat of acid to eventually pour over the woman. They wait an agonizing five minutes as her muffled pleas for help grow louder until the time finally arrives. A sickening smell precedes a person being melted before their eyes.

Another +3 System Strain mounts on each PC for witnessing this event. "Not unexpected. Self-sacrifice is overrated." The voice chimes before the keycard extends from the port.

PC may elect to enter the empty container. The door behind them does not lock immediately. The container has a single viewport that they may look out of and a small console inside. A single button is on the console: "To a quick death" is written on a length of tape under the button. The PC may wait the full five minutes if they wish. At five minutes, the door locks. After which, acid will empty into their container, but not the woman's. The PC is melted and dies screaming in horrific pain.

If the PC presses the button, the door locks and the acid is immediately emptied into their container. If this method occurs, however, the surviving PCs suffer only +2 to their System Strain as they do not have to wait the full length of time in agony. "Truly, progress has been achieved. Come...it is time to meet." The voice buzzes over the intercom. The keycard then appears from the port.

Proceed to Scene 5: Mirror Image.

SCENE V: MIRROR IMAGE



It looks like me, but it can't be...can it?

As the PCs pass beyond the acid conundrum, they come into a darkened room. Faint blue light illuminates various areas, but the central focus is a man sitting at a console working furtively. As they study his features, they come to realize that it is Rogerio Gomez, the man they met the day before with his wife.

ROGERIO GOMEZ

He is not hostile to the PCs. He takes note of their appearance, but does not rise from his seat at the computer. He will regard the PCs with a smile before he turns back to his work. He asks them how life suits them. Regardless of the answers, he takes keen note of what the PCs say and in fact appears to be typing it away at his computer.

He will recount their actions up to this point. None of it with condemnation or condonation, just as if he were stating facts. Rogerio will ask questions of the PCs: "Why did you/didn't you kill the janitor? Why would you give your hand for a stranger? Why didn't you decide to leave the hotel?" PCs may make a **Notice Skill Check (Difficulty 8)** to determine that he is asking these questions only to record responses. His interest appears purely scientific and he seems to care little for the moral conundrums he put the PCs through.

If asked about the traps and the staff, he tells the PCs flatly that he wanted to test them with the traps. Understanding and dissecting the "moral development" that would take place in "such a short span of time" is "important data to record." The staff "have not been altered in any way." He smiles. "They are simply as YOU perceive them. I, myself, find them quite friendly if a bit overbearing." If asked about why he is recording their responses, he simply replies "research."

If asked what kind of research, he states "research of you."

THE CORRECT QUESTION

When PCs ask Rogerio why he has done all of this, he replies "that is the correct question." He rises from his chair and begins to pace. "What do your minds tell you of children? What do you think of them? Or do you know what they are at all?" The PCs possess obvious knowledge of children. "Do you...do you remember me? My wife?" The PCs can choose to answer how they wish. They clearly remember him, but even if they lie, he will explain his situation.

Rogerio and his wife have "incompatible" DNA. His two children are suffering from his "ignorance" and desire for love "over proper breeding."

Rogerio takes the console and spins it towards the PC. It shows two health histories, one for 'F. Gomez' and 'A. Gomez'. PCs may make a **Heal Skill Check (Difficulty 6)** to determine that the health histories detail a rare genetic disorder called "Hemopneumo Syndrome". PCs that pass this test realize that this disease causes difficulty with the task of red blood cells carrying air by preventing them from holding suitable amounts. There are several stages and some people live relatively normal lives, but it is clear from the history that this is Stage 4 terminal progression.

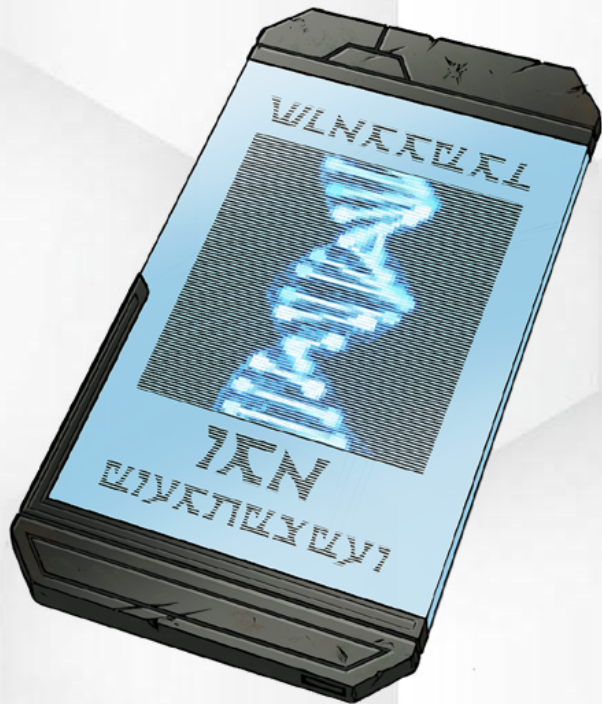
Rogerio's lip trembles but he continues. "I cannot turn back time. I cannot undo my mistake that way. But I thought: what if I don't have to turn back time? What if...what if I can give them life, as they deserve?" He gestures to the ceiling. Rogerio co-funded the hotel and brought in Vorth in order to help make his dream a reality. A "group of ideal" bodies was all that he needed. He convinced Vorth to lure in someone with a certain contract. He used the PCs as a means to advance his research and explains that "they will make his dream a reality."

If at any point the PCs get aggressive with him or threaten him, he remains rather cool in spite of it. But it will push him to reveal the truth more quickly

HERE YOU ARE

Rogerio presses a button on the console and lights turn on behind him. A row of tables with life support machines and heartbeat monitors are revealed. On the tables are the PCs, each of them with a steady biorhythm and looking completely healthy while peacefully asleep.

Rogerio explains that the four PCs that are awake "are clones". He created them to test his theories and perform an experiment to review "social and mental transference" in order to "optimize" his cloning protocol. Rogerio also implanted memories and dreams in their "malleable" conscious to draw them into his experiments. He believes he has received sufficient data to "rebuild" his children after "ironing out the details". But, that leaves the PC clones in a predicament as they were not meant to last "more than a few hours." The cloned PCs are dying, very soon unless he does something. He offers to give them a full life by working in the DNA from their original selves into the cloned copies. This will give the clones a "chance to live", but will cause the originals to "expire." He also offers to take care of the clones until they pass if that is their wish.



The PCs may choose to take the life from their prior selves. Rogerio will pull across another set of tables and define the procedure. Rogerio explains that he will perform the necessary surgeries but "cannot erase the memories of what they have done." If the PCs are still willing to do this, he will strap them into the tables and put them under anesthesia. When the PCs awake in the morning, they feel much more relaxed and like their normal selves, but retain all of the memories of the previous night.

A member of staff will knock on their door. They will recognize the voice as Macy. She brings them news that their stay must be interrupted as Vorth has voided their contract. She suggests they speak with him for more details, but explains that "it would be best if you stay away from the hotel going forward." With a smile, she leaves them to gather their things and depart.

If the PCs refuse Rogerio's offer, then he offers them the opportunity to be cared for until the breakdown happens. "I owe you that much for the hope you have given me. You did not ask for life, and yet I forced it on you all the same. Let me make your last moments comfortable." Rogerio will care for the cloned PCs until their demise. The original PCs will reawaken in their hotel with no memory of what happened. They will, again, experience contact with Macy letting them know that the contract was voided and they must vacate the hotel.

If the PCs decide to assault or kill Rogerio, he attempts to offer resistance. A pair of security robots with the Civilian Security Bot template (Xenobestiary - SWN:R) will spring to life. Rogerio himself has the same template as the staff with the inclusion of a pistol and a +1 to hit with it. If the PCs are able to kill Rogerio, he laments "not taking greater precautions" and mention the names "Alex...Fernandina..." before expiring.

LIKE TEARS IN THE RAIN

The threat of the cloned PCs' looming deaths, however, is not addressed. The cloned PCs may take what actions they wish, but they will die in short order in the laboratory as their genetic code begins to breakdown. And themselves along with it. Should this happen, the original PCs will wake up in the basement with no memory of what happened, but surrounded by the corpses of Rogerio, the robots...and themselves.

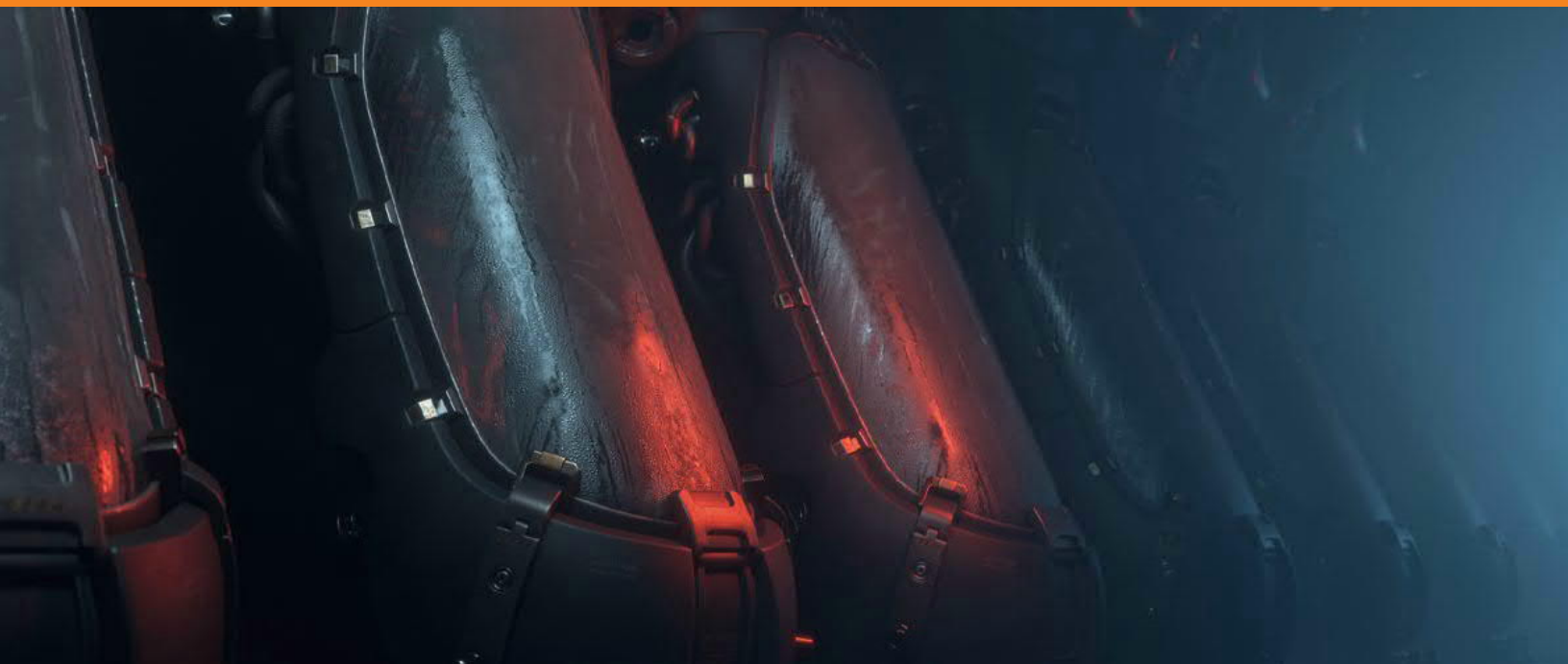
Appropriate investigation can be done with **Notice, Program, and Heal Skill Checks (Difficulty 8)**. The PCs can find out details on who Rogerio was, some of his background and his involvement in building the hotel. But regardless of what they find, it is unlikely the original PCs will ever know the full truth of what happened while they slept. If they seek answers above, the staff have no idea what the PCs are talking about (provided there are any living staff) and attempts to contact local law enforcement will result in much the same. The PCs will be allowed to stay in the hotel (or the jails if they are deemed suitably suspicious from police review of security tapes) until they are allowed to leave in the morning after their "contract is voided." Depending on their actions, they may be "heavily discouraged" from ever returning to Mire.

In the event the clone PCs do not head down into the basement and instead wandered around town until they expired, the original PCs will wake up in the basement instead.

Rogerio will be caring for them. He will explain that the air and bacteria on Mire caused some "issues" with their immune system. Hotel staff noticed some "potentially fatal" symptoms as they slept in the night and they were brought down to an on-site "medical facility". He provided them a booster, but he has passed along their "health concern" to Vorth as he also funded the expedition.

He does not believe the PCs "will adapt in time to survive the wilderness". PCs may make a **Notice Skill Check (Difficulty 12)** to determine he is lying. If they succeed, he will go into his discussion about the true purpose of their being in his basement and the fate of the clones. He explains the research "was a waste" but that Vorth will "compensate you all for coming anyway after he cancels your contract". The PCs may leave and spend the night in their rooms. They may kill Rogerio if they wish. They do not encounter any of the "moral conundrums" presented in the rooms leading up to the research lab.

There is an optional scene remaining if the PCs would like to speak with Vorth about his voiding of their contract. They may also travel about town and seek out things to do, but it appears less welcoming than before without the promise of reward.



A person in a dark, hooded cloak stands in a field of tall, glowing plants, looking out at a vast, colorful, and starry sky with large, curved, translucent shapes.

SCENE VI: A VORTHWHILE VISIT

A bald man behind a desk. An empty head of hair, but a brain full of details...

Vorth welcomes the PCs into his office should they call on him after the events have transpired. He is not alone as he was the first time they met; a group of four security guards flank him two by two on either side. Vorth apologizes for cancelling the contract "as unexpected developments" caused their expedition plans to fall through. He offers to transfer over half of the proposed payment as "condolence" on the condition that "the group of you sign Non-Disclosure Agreements" regarding their dealings on Mire.

In some instances, PCs will be confused what they would need to sign an NDA regarding. He explains that he doesn't want "outside factions" to know about their dealings and prefers "an official gag order" to the "traditional method of silencing". The security guards tense up and place hands on their sidearms to enhance the implication of the threat. If PCs review the NDA, it is rather straightforward; they are not to speak of their dealings with Vorth, the local government or their stay at the hotel in any capacity. If this agreement is ever broken and traced to them, they will be subject to being the focus of an open bounty contract which may be pursued by any hunter with a valid operating license.

If the PCs sign the NDA regardless of their knowledge, they receive their money and may be on their way. "Thank you for visiting Mire, but please, never return."

REVENGE

If the PCs are unaware of what occurred in the hotel with their clones, they may attempt to press Vorth for answers. He is rather unwilling to part with any information and is insistent they either sign the NDA and part on good terms or "get the hell off" of his planet before "these guards earn their pay". If the PCs push the issue, they will end up in a combat with Vorth's security. Generate 4 Martial Humans (*Xenobestiary* – SWN:R) and equip them with pistols.

Vorth will not take aggressive actions and will hide from the PCs through the duration. If an opportunity presents itself, he may escape into his administration building and into the streets. If the PCs press the issue, they will quickly find themselves overwhelmed and likely killed by swarms of police. If they decide to make a quick retreat to their ship, they are able to do so without issue after killing the initial guards.

If the PCs are able to kill Vorth's guards, he starts yelling for help. The PCs may begin to interrogate him. No checks are needed to pry secrets from Vorth's lips; he is a coward and will tell them everything they ask if he has the answers. He is fully aware of Rogerio's plan and how it was executed. He admits complicity in drawing the PCs in. Rogerio promised Vorth "an eternal life through genetic alterations" if his research was successful. Vorth will have differing reactions depending on if the PCs killed Rogerio or if he survived the events of the night. He appears regretful that the clones killed Rogerio if this took place, or swears "an eternal hunt" for Rogerio if he survived as he "fled the planet shortly after the whole bit of nasty business took place". Vorth begs for his life, offering money, things, buildings. PCs can make a **Notice Skill Check (Difficulty 6)** to determine that he intends to make good on none of these promises.

At this point PCs may choose what to do with Vorth. Killing him may provide short-term satisfaction, but long-term consequences may come from killing a notable public official even on a non-affiliated world. Sparing him after learning the truth still allows the PCS to sign the NDA and collect their money, but Vorth is a bitter individual and may one day find the courage to meddle in their affairs from afar for the embarrassment they caused him to suffer.

The PCs may then return to their ship or find similar passage off-world. Each of them can look in the mirror. They see themselves, feel their skin, look into their own eyes. But none who lived through this will ever find comfort in their *MIRROR IMAGE* again...

A futuristic control room with multiple monitors displaying data and a car on a test track. The room is dimly lit with green and blue light from the screens. The ceiling is dark with some circular lights. The overall atmosphere is high-tech and industrial.

GM SUMMARY

GM SUMMARY

This section is for the GM only and provides spoilers for this adventure.

- The PCs are cloned between Scene I and II. The players then play as the clones of their PCs until the end of the adventure, or perhaps beyond.
- The adventure uses System Strain frequently. When a clone's System Strain equals their CON, they deconstruct. The clone melts into a biological-goo and causes +2 System Strain the first time anyone else sees this. It is advised that the GM allow the player to take control of one of the hotel NPCs, who may also be a clone. The player will find their former character's body in the basement with the others.
- The clones have been programmed with some violent tendencies, and reacting to dangerous staff may make them feel better. Whenever a member of the staff is assaulted by the clones, subtract 1 System Strain. If the staff is killed, subtract 2 System Strain instead.
- The clones may believe hotel staff is hostile, but as the doctor indicates, it is only figments of the clones' imagination. Regardless, the staff will always try to usher the clones into the basement so that they can begin their trials.
- The basement is full of 3 horrors that test the clones' willingness to allow callous death befall innocents, or suffer themselves. The choices are difficult and strain the clones' unsteady mental fortitude. The GM may decide that any innocents killed in the basement are clones, and the PCs may see them again after the ordeal is over.
- Combat in this module is not difficult. The GM should present physical challenges as rather simple, but mental horrors should be suffered without Saving throws. This is due to the fact that the PCs are clones and not themselves. GMs may allow Mental Saving throws but they ALWAYS fail, regardless of what is rolled.