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THE STARS OUR DESTINATION

A Scum Swarm Setting for The Roleplaying Game of Transhuman Conspiracy and Horror
The Stars Our Destination is a scum swarm for Eclipse Phase. Gamemasters can use this as a location setting their players may visit, complete with detailed NPCs and plot hooks. Players with characters belonging to the scumborn background or scum faction will find this material useful for ideas on how the scum live and organize.

SCUM SHIPS AND SWARMS

Scum swarms are flotillas of ships that travel together on a nomadic path across the solar system. These fleets are composed of numerous diverse spacecraft, many of them repaired derelicts or pirated conversion jobs. Some are little more than tin can habitat clusters strapped onto a fusion rocket. There is no such thing as a unified look to a swarm flotilla as the scum rarely manufacture their own craft. Most scum are not picky and will take just about anything that has a working propulsion system. Swarms are formed around a handful of larger ships referred to as scum barges—usually repurposed cyclers (pp. 71 and 137, Sunward), personnel carriers, or ships constructed to house refugees during the Fall. Many ships, particularly those not originally built for large crews or passengers, are redesigned to accommodate living modules, work stations, and sometimes additional means of propulsion to tackle the extra mass. The total number of spacecraft in a swarm (not counting drones, which are even more numerous) can range from around twenty to over a thousand.

The swarm will celebrate a new ship joining the fleet with a bacchanalian renaming ceremony that can last for days. Ship names are as varied as the craft themselves but tend towards the irreverent or profane. Many scum derive amusement from the discomfort inner system port authorities have when referring to their ships’ names.

Individual ships are organized and run according to whatever socio-political system the residents desire. There are no captains on most scum ships, however. Instead, decisions are made collectively by each ship’s permanent residents. On ships with large populations, one particular collective, usually composed of the craft’s senior residents, will typically handle day-to-day ship operations, with the entire ship consulted and polled on major decisions. Some ships periodically rotate ship operation duties between resident collectives.

Scum collectives are free associations that make decisions by consensus when possible and exercise directly democratic principles in all other decisions. They are open to any transhuman considered to be in good standing within the swarm. As political entities, collectives tend to be short lived, often collapsing or splitting due to internal differences, the members then reforming into new collectives.

When the swarm itself must make a decision, which is rare, the residents of the entire swarm are polled, with a majority vote determining the course of action. The opinions of individuals with high @-rep and collectives with large amounts of aggregate rep often influence others.
A HISTORY OF THE STARS SWARM

During the political chaos and warfare of the Fall, many space industry corporations pushed their work forces to the limits. Already suffering under extremely poor working conditions, the primarily synth-sleeved and indentured workers of Hindustan Aerospace Limited (HAL), working in the shipyards stationed in Lunar orbit, called a general strike. Aided by the Chinese anarchist human-rights collective Chichi Hêhê Câo (literally “Eat-Drink-Fuck”—named for what they believed every person was entitled without interference), they seized control of most of the production facilities as well as the armory. The workers quickly rounded up management and the security officers who had not joined the strike and put them on a shuttle to HAL’s Lunar surface facilities.

Precipitously, the corporate headquarters of HAL on Earth was overrun by the TITANs shortly afterwards, and the corporation’s other space-based assets were thrown into disarray. No attempt was made to unseat the strikers. As the situation on Earth deteriorated and a full-fledged evacuation was initiated, the strikers voted to retrofit the aerospace manufacturing facilities with more powerful propulsion systems and move the station from Lunar orbit to a high Earth orbit. While some considered the plan to move closer to Earth and the TITANs crazy, the strikers felt a responsibility to attempt to aid refugee craft fleeing the chaos. Many refugees had jumped aboard anything capable of boosting itself into orbit without any consideration of where they would go once they were free of Earth and were being turned away by other habitats that were overcrowded, feared infection, or who simply didn’t want to let “undesirables” on board.

Once above the Earth, the facility’s crew teamed up with a nameless group of scum who had been eking out a living in orbit for decades. During this time, the strikers and anarchists worked feverishly to keep the makeshift HAL facilities in working order while also rescuing thousands and accommodating their new arrivals. Rescued refugees who were able to contribute to the rescue mission were quickly put to work. One rescue operation saved a group of Ukrainian refugees that included Lena Andropov, a nanotech engineering wiz, who led an effort to upgrade the factory facilities and aid the rescue efforts.

Over a period of eight weeks, these efforts saved the lives of thousands who might otherwise have been left to die. Eventually they had no more

A BRIEF NOTE ON ANARCHISM

Ideologically, the scum can be classified as anarchists. When most people hear “anarchism” or “anarchist,” they think of black-clad protesters smashing windows and shouting angry slogans or bomb-throwing nihilists who want to tear everything down and spread chaos. Eclipse Phase anarchists sometimes fall into these stereotypes, but the majority are more akin to the political thinkers of the 19th and early 20th century who believed that individuals were best equipped to make the decisions that affected them and the open society was one where communities made decisions that were best for their members and operated with a maximum of individual liberty. These anarchists (and the ones in Eclipse Phase) believed that institutions like religion or governments often took advantage of people and stripped them of their individual liberties and choices. In a similar vein, they believed that capitalism also distorted interests, pitting members of a community against each other in the interest of personal gain and forcing people to make decisions that had long-term negative consequences.

The scum, as well as many other outer system anarchists in Eclipse Phase, embrace a version of this philosophy that emphasizes community responsibility in exchange for maximum liberty and the provision of all basic needs. This means that anarchists tend to organize in small collectives where most decisions are made by consensus, meaning everyone’s voice is heard and everyone signs off on a decision before it’s made. In the case of disagreements, a compromise is sought to which everyone can agree. Access to all goods is given equally and major items or machinery (like a ship or fabber) tend to be owned collectively.

The scum do differ from other anarchists in that they emphasize temporary forms of organization, such as affinity groups and other ad hoc structures. The scum tend to be critical of the way that formal, static organizations can develop informal hierarchies. Affinity groups that coalesce as needed and disband immediately afterwards are more fitting to the scum nomadic lifestyle.

Practically, many scum are more committed to anarchism as a lifestyle than as an ideology. They are less interested in horizontalism and pursuing egalitarian modes of organization as they are in living their lives with the maximum amount of personal freedom. They sometimes criticize other anarchists as staid and over-organized, preferring themselves to emphasize spontaneity and individual liberty as the keys to freedom.

Many scum do not identify as anarchists per se, though they have no opposition to the way the scum operate. A minority of scum ship crews are run with traditional hierarchies or are based in experimental organization styles. The swarm largely doesn’t care what individual scum crews do “at home,” as long as no one is being oppressed or enslaved.
room for refugees and reluctantly pulled back, avoiding the worst of the TITAN-spawned counter-strikes against orbital defenses. It was during this period that an agreement between the refugees, the anarchists, the scum, and the strikers was reached. In order to preserve their safety from TITAN attacks and corporate attempts to reseize the shipyards, the group decided to go mobile and move away from Earth orbit. Taking everything they could salvage from the factory and every ship at their disposal, they launched a flotilla towards Mars. They sent out a call to other scattered refugees in and around Earth and Luna and invited them to join, dubbing their fleet The Stars Our Destination, after an old science fiction novel.

Since then, the Stars swarm has enjoyed steady growth. Many new ships have been added to the flotilla through a combination of salvage and purchasing older hulls on the cheap and then upgrading them. The various cultural backgrounds of the swarm’s constituents blended together, with differences melting away as the scum’s open-armed embrace of living life to the fullest came to predominate. Unlike others in the inner system, the crews of the ships in the Stars swarm are free to live however they please.

**THE SWARM’S COURSE AND STOPOVERS**

*Stars* is unusual among scum swarms in that they follow a set route schedule that they loop through continuously. This route starts at Venus and runs to Luna, Mars, and then back to Venus. Because the swarm makes sure to visit these stopover points in the same order, their travel time between these places is erratic, given their different paths and speeds around the sun. Usually the swarm makes a complete circuit every nine to eighteen months, including a week-long stay at each stopover point. During these stopovers, the entire swarm will enter a stable orbit and pick up or drop off any new passengers and resupply. Each of these orbits is cause for a minor celebration and is treated as a holiday by members of the swarm.

The swarm also plots its path to pass by other habitats not in orbit around Venus, Luna, or Mars. The route almost always passes through one of the Martian Trojans on the way to or from Mars, and it may also make a fly-by of stations in the Vulcanoids, various inner-system Lagrange points, Earth orbit, and elsewhere. Whenever the flotilla approaches a station, the swarm will usually farcast representatives ahead to make contact and negotiate any exchanges or business deals. For habitats that are less than thrilled to deal with a scum swarm, the reps will often access darknet channels to facilitate any exchanges or business deals. With no questions asked, they find themselves relatively well liked. Characters with their own antisocial elements.

Despite plying the path between inner system strongholds, the swarm maintains relationships with all sorts of people and groups. Because they are a reliable and discreet way of traveling between several highly populated areas with no questions asked, they find themselves relatively well liked. Characters from nearly any background can find themselves traveling with the scum and can expect most of the people to react to them first by their @-rep but also based upon any factional affiliation they may claim.

**THE SWARM’S RELATIONS WITH OTHERS**

The Star’s swarm offers a reliable and discreet way of traveling between several highly populated areas with no questions asked. Characters from nearly any background can find themselves traveling with the scum and can expect most of the people to react to them first by their @-rep but also based upon any factional affiliation they may claim.

**ANARCHISTS**

Since a large number of the Star’s crew are part of anarchist collectives, they tend to get along well with other anarchists. It is not uncommon for an anarchist from the outer system to catch a lift from the flotilla to get from place to place to avoid the bothersome customs inspections that result from egocasting.

**ARGONAUTS**

There are a few argonauts participating in some of the collectives in the swarm. They are typically found running the long-range scanners and operating the media and research facilities on various craft. Argonauts are generally held in high regard and are welcome aboard nearly any ship of the fleet.

**BARSOOMIANS**

Barsoom is typically only a small window of a week or so for such transfers to be economically feasible. Some Consortium and repressive habitats restrict their residents from dealing with the swarm. Most, however, turn a blind eye to what occurs outside their station’s hulls, though they carefully monitor inbound cargo for security threats and whatever passes as contraband in the local legal system. A few habitats actively welcome the swarm, celebrating its arrival with carnivals and parties and hosting events with scum entertainers.

Stopovers and fly-bys aren’t just a chance to pick up fuel and supplies; they are also an opportunity for the swarm to pick up new members and travelers and drop off passengers who opted for the slow boat to their destination. Some habitats use the occasion to exile unwanted members and criminals to the swarm as punishment (and the scum sometimes does the same in reverse with their own antisocial elements).
BRINKERS
Given where they usually travel, the flotilla doesn’t usually chance upon many brinkers. However, their willingness to send at least a shuttle to any outpost, no matter how remote, has earned them a great deal of respect among some brinkers who are grateful for the occasional visits.

CRIMINALS
Operating internally with a gift economy, the scum do not have many problems with criminals, and they do their best to deal with any antisocial elements within their own ranks. Of all of the autonomist factions, the scum are the most tolerant of criminal organizations within their ranks. The Stars swarm is home to a thriving red market, and members of the fleet regularly deal with crime syndicates around the inner system. Aside from the Bahala Na (p. 6), the scum are careful to not allow any other criminal organizations to become too entrenched within the swarm.

EXHUMANS
Unlike most other groups, the scum are relatively accepting of exhumans. They certainly understand the desire to push boundaries and engage in personal experimentation—as well as being considered outcast for these desires. Also, like the exhumans, they are able to see a positive side to the Fall and TITANs though they don’t quite go so far in fetishizing it as many exhumans do. For this reason, the Stars swarm will often offer shelter or asylum to exhumans on the run in the inner system until they can find a more permanent home.

EXTROPIANS
In the swarm’s early years, several ship crews advocated for the fleet to adopt an Extropian economic model. When a serious dispute broke out over fuel supplies one of the Extropian ships was hoarding and not sharing with the swarm, these ships were expelled from the fleet (though the Extropians claim they left voluntarily, of course). Since then, the swarm has held a cool attitude towards Extropians.

HYPERCORPS
The scum of Stars are willing to deal with hypercorps and their representatives, but prefer to do so at a distance. Citizens of Consortium or other hypercorp-controlled habitats are allowed on the flotilla but are carefully watched until they are able to establish trust among the scum community. Hypercorp executives and members of Oversight are generally only allowed aboard the swarm’s craft in exceptional circumstances and are otherwise treated as hostile adversaries.

JOVIANS
Unless they are refugees or rebels, Jovians are not welcome aboard the swarm—nor are most other bioconservatives. This is rarely an issue however, since the Stars fleet does not travel near Jovian space.

LUNARS
Despite their history with some of the Lunar hypercorp interests, the Stars population has managed to patch over much of the past conflict and remains on neutral terms with most Lunar stations.

MERCURIALS
Members of this faction are welcome and many call the Stars their home. It helps that the flotilla stops by, and is willing to supply, many mercurial and uplift habitats in the inner system.

MORNINGSTAR
The Stars swarm has found Morningstar much easier to deal with than many of the Consortium habitats and stations around Venus due to the Constellation’s more relaxed attitude towards morphological freedom and access to nanofabrication. This also benefits Morningstar since they are able to discreetly move some of their people around the inner system.
TRADING WITH OUTSIDERS
The scum do not use money within the swarm, but when dealing with outsiders they often buy and sell with credits. How exchanges of goods and services is handled with external sources is entirely up to individual scum and their collectives. Usually any credit earned by the scum is turned around and spent on new ships, repairs, or rare elements for nanofabrication, as well as black market goods and hand-crafted and bespoke items. Inner system parties that wish to acquire something from the swarm often find themselves owing favors or working on the swarm’s behalf in some way. In this way, the swarm maintains a network of debts and third-party middlemen that allows it to bypass some of the restrictions and red tape they often face when dealing with hypercorp and political authorities.

SCUM
The *Stars* scum gets along well with other scum swarms. It is not unusual for some ship collectives to break away from one swarm in order to join up and travel with another for a while.

SOCIALITES
Of all the groups in the solar system, the scum of *Stars* probably have the least use for socialites. The feeling is, for the most part, mutual, since most socialites see scum as terribly tacky and unrefined. From time to time, however, some daring or stupid socialite decides that slumming along with a scum swarm is the new “in” thing. They are generally tolerated unless they make too big a nuisance of themselves, at which point they can expect to find themselves dropped off at the next habitat the flotilla stops at, whether they wish it or not.

TITANIANS
The *Stars* swarm doesn’t encounter many Titanians on its chosen course. The Commonwealth’s citizens are welcome aboard the flotilla and there are a few members of collectives who are also Titanian citizens.

ULTIMATES
In general, the ultimates are welcome guests as long as they remain guests and don’t try to stick around for too long. The more authoritarian aspects of the ultimate credo and their social Darwinist tendencies cause a lot of tension among the *Stars* scum who take a more relaxed outlook on life. However, both groups are interested in radical self-improvement and ultimate visitors are often willing to exchange new body modification tech in exchange for the newest scum creation.

BAHALA NA
Not quite a collective, the Bahala Na are the swarm’s local crime gang. The original members were part of the Filipino Bahala Na (“Come What May”) gang on Earth who ended up on one of the refugee ships rescued by the strikers during the Fall. The gang members seized control of two small ships through dubious means as the fleet fled Earth. Though originally they made some efforts to run protection rackets and seize control of nanofabbers within the swarm, they were countered by a unified show of force from some of the other collectives and told in no uncertain terms that if they wanted to stay with the swarm, they’d have to put a stop to their predatory anti-social tactics. The gang has since found their niche within the swarm, primarily running contraband for other cartels around the inner system. Their criminal activities within the fleet are largely relegated to blackmail, running swarm cat gambling rings, and-leaning on non-scum traveling with the swarm for protection money. Bahala Na members are identified by a question mark tattoo that is rendered the traditional way: by cutting the design into the skin and rubbing ink into the wound. Other traditional tattoo designs on obvious parts of the body (face, arms, hands) are prevalent on older members, whereas younger members also sport more modern nanotats.
NOTABLE COLLECTIVES OF THE SWARM
While Eat-Drink-Fuck is the oldest of the Stars collectives, it is not the largest and there are several that are more prominent in day-to-day operations and interactions with visitors.

THE DOGONAUTS
The Dogs, as most others refer to them, all take canine names. Composed primarily of younger members with a few older burnouts, this collective manufactures and deals petals and more traditional drugs both within the swarm and with any habitats that have the connections to grab their wares. The Dogonauts are die-hard hedonists who respect those who have experimented with various types of pharmaceuticals and nanodrugs or have otherwise “expanded their perception of reality.” They maintain active contacts with a number of criminal groups around the inner system and make a good connection point for characters originating from outside of the swarm.

EAT-DRINK-FUCK
The Chichi Hēhē Cào collective is the most prestigious of the collectives, having made a name for themselves as wanted radicals on Earth and in orbit before the Fall and continuing on to this day. The collective has evolved and changed many times over the years, from anti-government and anti-corporate organizing to sabotage to vakeworker union support and onward. The collective’s current main activities are operation of the flagship The Stars Our Destination (p. 8), the care and maintenance of the swarm as a whole, and secretly aiding and abetting various anti-Consortium radicals around the inner system. Individual members also tend to have their hands involved in various personal side projects, from a serious scientific study on zero-g adapted neogenic life to running periodic scavenger hunts among the swarm’s ships. EDF members all tend to have high @-rep and are well connected with autonomists around the solar system.

FOOD NOT TITANs
This collective is one of several that prepares and serves food to the other members of the swarm, and is widely regarded as the most talented. They share a converted cargo container with a few other collectives where they grow fresh hydroponic vegetables that they incorporate into their maker-made dishes. A few members of the collective also raise animals, some of them transgenic and heavily modified, for producing authentic organic animal-byproduct foods.

FORMER SOVIET SOCIALIST SCIENTISTS
Originally formed by some of the Ukrainian refugees, including Lena Andropov, this group spends most of their time on the Thoughtcrime, where they run the factory fabricators and work on cracking the nanoschematics of the latest hypercorp designs to produce copies to sell along their way.

NATURE’S REJECTS
Formed of uplifts and allies, this collective maintains excellent ties with mercurial groups across the inner system, providing a safe zone for uplifts on the run. The collective mostly draws its members from uplifts who have grown tired of their second class citizenship in the inner system. Despite their origins, they are not as political as many would think and mostly wish to be treated as just other members of the flotilla. They find that being odd among an entire sea of odd transhumans means they get less attention and discrimination and have greater freedom to do their own thing, which suits them fine. They are also known for letting visitors and other members of the flotilla sleeve into their morphs to “experience how the other side lives.”

THE TENORIOS
The Tenorios are a large polymarriage family unit composed of multiple forks of the same person, Zanni Tenorio, and their spouses and children. The number of Zanni forks in the family numbers in the fifties, all sleeved in various morphs of different sexes, spread throughout the fleet with over two dozen spouses—all of them shared by the forks. The sexual appetites of the Tenorios are legendary, even among the scum. It is rare for Zanni forks to remerge; they prefer to live independent lives, within their family structure. Before joining the swarm, Zanni worked for a decade as an asteroid prospector, and today the Tenorios continue to specialize in mining operations. They operate one of the swarm’s mining tugs, the Disco Inferno (p. 10).

THE VOID DISCIPLES
Considered one of the more extreme collectives in the swarm, the Disciples are all sleeved in heavily altered and sometimes ad-hoc synthetic morphs, many of them little more than partially mobile sensor clusters with an attached cyberbrain. This collective has converted a seriously damaged cargo container on the Abstinence Only into a stellar observation deck, and many of them will sit there for hours each day staring into the depths of space and plumbing it with visual and non-visual scanning devices. Collective members operate many sensor arrays throughout the fleet and are constructing their own supermassive telescope. On several occasions they have provided early warning on incoming threats to the swarm. The data they gather from their observations increases their standing among research groups.
THE SHIPS OF THE SWARM
Though the size of the swarm fluctuates, it typically consists of 70–100 spacecraft of varying age and types. A few of the more notable ships are detailed here.

FLAGSHIP: THE STARS OUR DESTINATION
The crown jewel of the flotilla is The Stars Our Destination, named after the swarm itself. Originally a deep-space scientific analysis craft, her crew was all killed during the Fall when their life support malfunctioned. She was rediscovered six years ago by members of the Eat-Drink-Fuck collective when they found her drifting among the Martian Trojans. This is the third ship to bear the name The Stars Our Destination as the swarm is in the habit of taking the most impressive ship that they can find—and repair—and making it their flagship. In comparison to the rest of the flotilla, the Stars is by far the most luxurious of the craft, mostly due to the work her crew has put into making it so. The Eat-Drink-Fuck collective is responsible for keeping Stars running, but all members of the swarm are welcome there.

THE BARGE SHIPS
The two barges are the most noticeable ships in the swarm due to their immense size and shape and the fact that they are riots of colors, lighting up the depths of space with vibrant reds and yellows and greens. Neither truly qualifies as a ship, since they do not have the means for self-propulsion and must be towed.

DAYUEJIN (GREAT LEAP FORWARD)
Dayuejin was one of the spacecraft under construction at the HAL facility when the strike took over. Originally intended to be an asteroid miner, it was never completed, and the ship’s partial hull was instead transformed into living quarters for refugees from Earth. When the swarm departed from orbit, they took the structure with, pulling it with a mining tug. Since then, the barge’s infrastructure has grown with additional modules bolted on to the outside. Dayuejin is currently towed by Disco Inferno (p. 10).

THREE SHEETS TO THE WIND
Three Sheets to the Wind had a similar illustrious start. The largest surviving segment of a torus destroyed during the Fall, this piece of infrastructure was rescued by scavengers working with the HAL strikers and converted into temporary zero-g living facilities. Like Dayuejin, it was towed from Earth orbit and has remained part of the swarm ever since. Three Sheets to the Wind is currently towed by Angry Pirate (p. 10).

CARGO HAULERS
There are four aging cargo haulers that are part of the swarm. Each follows a standard design of a command module in front and propulsion module in the back, connected by a long spine along which are attached cargo containers of varying sizes. The haulers themselves are very bare bones, lacking all but the most rudimentary of systems, and are usually navigated by beta forks. These craft lack any sort of atmosphere or gravity, although pressure and air can be enabled if needed.

The flotilla’s cargo haulers carry all manner of goods. Sometimes they actually haul bulk goods as they were originally intended, but usually their holds are full of assorted junk and bric-à-brac collected from hundreds of habitats. Many cargo containers have been converted over for use as impromptu saloons, gambling houses, or dens of iniquity. Each cargo container tends to be handled by a separate collective, with decisions regarding use decided on a collective-by-collective basis. Like the main hauler, most of the cargo pods lack breathable atmosphere and pressure, nor are they spun for gravity. Those that run services will often install basic life support, though given the design of the cargo pods gravity is not possible.

ABSTINENCE ONLY
Towing 18 cargo modules, this hauler features several cargo modules dedicated to gambling and vices, as well as one run as an open-entrance non-stop orgy pod.

HULI JING (FOX SPIRIT)
This hauler holds 20 cargo modules. Several of the cargo collectives have ties to inner-system triads, and so they regularly carry contraband.

PINING FOR THE FJORDS
This hauler carries 23 cargo modules. Several have been converted into private living modules and research labs.

SUPERCALIFRAGILISTICEXPIALIDOCIOUS
Among the 17 cargo containers on this hauler are two that serve as theater and performance spaces, with regular circus, art show, and zero-g dancing events. Another serves as the swarm’s premier sports stadium, with an emphasis on micrograv ball sports and combat tournaments.

THE FACTORY SHIP: THOUGHTCRIME
This inelegant hulking mass houses the heart and soul of the Stars swarm: their industrial nanofabrication facilities. The Thoughtcrime contains four cavernous cargo bays that each have a fabricator capable of producing finished goods or components as large as ten meters to a side. Two of these fabricators are housed in a rotating part of the ship, ideal for processes that require gravity.
These fabricators are mostly used to manufacture repair parts for the fleet though they can also produce the autonomous kill vehicles (AKVs) the flotilla uses for defense at the rate of one per week if needed. The Thoughtcrime also constructs cheap cases and other synthetic morphs for members of the fleet who need a shell. Because it is the primary manufacturer of bulk goods for the swarm, all salvage and scrap that the Boytoy and We Come To Probe You! collect is usually dumped into the Thoughtcrime’s bulk bays. This scrap is then sorted into heaps that litter the decks and bulkheads of the ship, leaving visitors with the impression they have arrived aboard a mobile scrap heap.

The Thoughtcrime is the primary hangout of Lena Andropov, the swarm’s chief engineer, and her crew of nanoengineers. Most of the crew favor synthetic shells for their work and for the ease of maintenance these types of bodies afford. While there are nearly two hundred of them aboard the ship, it can often feel empty due to the sheer size of the Thoughtcrime and the amount of junk laying around.

Cases and other synthetic morphs and equipment can be manufactured in a matter of hours, though the demands on the fabricators usually means there is a three day wait or longer. Lena and the other nanoengineers may be willing to bump someone in line if their @-rep or r-rep is significant and they make a convincing argument.

**KILL VEHICLES**

The main defense for the swarm is nearly three dozen autonomous kill vehicles: heavily armed and armored drones that spend most of their time latched on to other ships in the fleet or drifting on the edges of the flotilla looking for threats. Most of the AKVs are piloted by beta forks of various scum personnel that are regularly swapped out to reduce the amount of stress any AKV’s ego accumulates.

The AKVs look like pitted and scarred three and a half meter-long splinters of black metal. They are all sharp angles and armor plates, extruding weapon spars only when engaging an enemy. Unlike the rest of the fleet, the AKVs are not given distinctive markings or splashes of color. Unless a viewer knows what they are looking for, they are very hard to spot among the fleet.

If any ship in the fleet detects a threat, the AKVs will usually investigate in a group of at least six with all weapon systems powered up. In the event of an attack, the AKVs defend the swarm with maximum force, even going so far as to turn themselves into impromptu fusion warheads as a final strike measure.

**Enhancements:** 360-degree Vision, Enhanced Vision, Lidar, Heavy Combat Armor, Neurachem (Level 2), Radar, Radar Absorbent (p. 149, Panopticon), Reduced Signature (p. 149, Panopticon), T-Ray Emitter

**Weapons:** 2 seeker launchers with 8 HEAP missiles, 1 seeker launcher with 2 EMP missiles, 2 automatic rifle railguns with 1,000 AP rounds

**Skills:** Kinetic Weapons 50, Perception 60, Pilot: Spacecraft 50, Seeker Weapons 40

**Notes:** A suicide attack using the fusion reactors inflicts AP –40, DV 15d10 + 100, no blast radius DV reduction for the first 100 meters, and radiation.

**MINING TUGS**

There are three mining tugs in the swarm. Each is capable of maintaining a fully automated mining operation on any sort of asteroid or iceteroid encountered to assist in the resupply of the flotilla’s raw materials. Tug crews tend to be as close as scum get to loners, since they will often be sent on resource gathering away from the rest of the swarm. They maintain a good reputation, however, due to the valuable services they provide the fleet.

The mining tugs are regularly tethered to either of the barges to provide them with necessary acceleration, deceleration, or course alterations. They can also provide this service to any other craft in the swarm that lose propulsion capabilities.

**ANGRY PIRATE**

The Pirate was holed in a skirmish near Mars over a year ago. Rather than make the major repairs at the time, her crew opted to sleeve into vacuum-adapted morphs. They have since managed to repair most of the damage but the tug is still prone to losing pressure, is abysmally cold, and often lacks more than a few hours of breathable oxygen. Angry Pirate is currently assigned to tow Three Sheets to the Wind.

**DISCO INFERNO**

The Disco may be crewed by the most unusual members of the swarm, The Tenorios (p. 7). Individual Zannis and the occasional spouse rotate out for duty on the Disco Inferno, which needs only a nominal crew. This tug is currently assigned to tow Dayuejin.

**EVA RIDERS**

As the swarm is relatively spread out, travel between the ships is usually accomplished by way of EVA riders: small, unarmed, four-person craft that use metallic hydrogen propulsion and magnetic grapples to ferry crew between craft. These are improved versions of standard EVA sleds (p. 345, Eclipse Phase) and are specifically designed for passengers. The riders are little more than a seat and small cargo containers (each capable of holding up to 50 kg of material) on top of a metallic-hydrogen engine. The fleet maintains at least twenty riders and the Thoughtcrime can make additional riders in under a day. Rider operation falls under the Pilot: Spacecraft skill.
The Rig’s internal power plants and life support systems have undergone repeated upgrades to account for the new modules attached to them. Though it looks unsafe, the core infrastructure is sound. However, individual modules and floatways are subject to leaks and blowouts, so most inhabitants wear smart fabric vacsuits or make sure there is something nearby to grab in an emergency.

**SALVAGE VESSELS**

As the swarm travels through the solar system, they often encounter derelict habitats or spacecraft or are called upon to enact a rescue. This is where their salvage vessels shine. Each of the salvage craft has a wide variety of manipulator arms and probes used to pick through wreckage and space debris. They also have the most advanced sensors in the fleet outside of *Stars* and are often used for scanning of unidentified objects.

**BOYTOY**

Boytoy’s crew is composed entirely of former Thai drag queens. Now radical gender liberationists, they all have modified sex switch biomods that allow for a finer degree of control over the various biological aspects of their sex. When...
they aren’t tearing apart wrecks or responding to distress calls, they’re usually busy throwing some of the best parties the swarm has to offer and blowing apart the remaining quaint notions of binary gender.

WE COME TO PROBE YOU!
One of the original scum ships that joined with the strikers, the Probe’s crew features an eclectic mix of backgrounds. Most were vacworkers or hypercorp personnel who went AWOL before the Fall. The crew is heavily invested in morphological modifications. More than one distressed ship has mistaken the Probe crew’s extremely modified biomorphs for exsurges or exhumans when they arrived to assist.

SHUTTLES (SLOTVs)
The flotilla carries with it seven shuttles for when they need to go into atmosphere, such as Mars or Venus, or when larger ships are not permitted too close to a habitat. The shuttles of the fleet are all SLOTVs (p. 349, Eclipse Phase) that use metallic hydrogen for propulsion. All seven of the shuttles are kept in good working condition and carry enough supplies to keep a crew of eight alive for a month, though they are not intended to be away from regular maintenance for that long. Usually two shuttles are docked with The Stars Our Destination, two are docked with the Thoughtcrime, one on each of the barges, one on the Rig, and one in storage on Abstinence Only.

Any member of the swarm can request use of the shuttles as a Moderate favor. However, the shuttles tend to be underused since most members of the fleet have little interest in leaving.

CAST OF CHARACTERS
This section lists game stats and short details on major NPCs in the swarm. Most of them don’t keep weapons on hand, but since the fabbers on the flotilla are not locked, making a weapon on short notice or finding one is easy. Therefore the gamemaster should feel free to arm these characters with whatever weapons are suitable to the situation at hand.

ALICE CHU
Swarm Elder
Alice Chu was one of the founding members of the Eat-Drink-Fuck collective that aided the HAL strikers. Before the Fall, Alice was part of one of the most wanted anarchist cells in China. She spent several years in prison under horrific conditions before being liberated during the conflicts that preceded the Fall. While many of the other old collective members have moved on to pursue other interests, Alice has remained with EDF and the swarm. Along with Singh and Andropov, she has become a respected voice of wisdom in the fleet. She is often delegated the responsibility of dealing with outside authorities on behalf of the fleet—primarily because she is one of the few EDF members who can talk to hypercorp and socialite elites at length without totally losing her shit.

Morph: Bouncer
Motivation: +Responsibility +Discretion –Planetary Consortium

Active Skills: Demolitions 55, Fray 65, Free Fall 55, Freerunning 45, Investigation 65, Kinesics 75, Kinetic Weapons 75, Networking: Autonomists 85, Perception 75, Persuasion 60, Unarmed Combat 55

Knowledge Skills: Interests: Taoism 35, Interests: Political Philosophy 65, Language: Cantonese 70, Language: Hindi 40, Language: Mandarin (Native) 90, Professional: Organizational Logistics 55

Traits: Limber (Level 1), Mental Disorder (PTSD)

Reputation: @-rep 85, g-rep 20, c-rep 30

Implants: Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Grip Pads, Oxygen Reserve, Prehensile Feet, Prehensile Tail

Roleplaying: Despite often being placed in a spokesperson/delegate role, Alice is very concerned about being perceived as a leader. She takes care not to act in any way that hasn’t been authorized by a collective or swarm decision. Given her prominent stature, she tends to excuse herself from much of the EDF’s anti-Consortium subversive activities for better deniability. Her primary concern is the health and safety of the fleet—she is acutely aware of the various threats to the swarm, both internal and external. Alice still occasionally suffers PTSD from her time in prison, though she is quite adept at hiding this from prying eyes.

Appearance: Chu’s bouncer is a genetically modified version of her original body with strong ethnic Han features, close-cropped straight black hair, and a small frame made for navigating narrow corridors. She frequently uses and waves her tail about when talking with non-scum in an attempt to unsettle them.

AMRITA SHAH
Firewall Sentinel, Pornographer
The younger sister of one of the HAL strikers, Amrita found her way to the swarm when her parents did not survive the Fall. A rebellious kid with a knack for computers, she has grown to become a skilled infosec specialist and programmer. Along with a few other hackers in the swarm, she has been involved in various Decepticon (p. 46, Panopticon) projects that aim to seed mesh networks around the inner system with false data.
Through the Decepticon network, Amrita was recruited into Firewall two years ago. Her skills were needed to help cover the tracks of a sentinel team active on Venus. During this time she learned about a potential TITAN threat that lingered in the Venusian cloud layer and has over time been brought up to speed on other affairs, like the exsurgent virus and the existence of asyncs. She combines her extracurricular activities, seeding data via the Decepticons in a way that helps to conceal the existence of things that Firewall would prefer to remain unknown to the public.

Hacking is not Amrita’s only specialty; she also sidelines as a porn XP star and producer. Her attractive four-armed bouncer morph is a common sight in the many porn sims and playback recordings the swarm produces. She peddles the XP she produces around the inner system, using it as currency and bribes to support her hacktivism endeavors.

**Morph:** Bouncer

**Motivation:** +Hacktivism +Sex –Surveillance

**Active Skills:**

**Knowledge Skills:**
- Art: Pornography 55, Language: Cantonese 40, Language: Hindi (Native) 90, Language: English 60, Professional: XP Production 55

**Traits:**
- Limber (Level 1)

**Reputation:** @-rep 25, g-rep 25, i-rep 20

**Implants:** Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Cyberlimbs (2, with Synthetic Mask option), Grip Pads, Oxygen Reserve, Prehensile Feet, Prehensile Tail

**Roleplaying:** Amrita is young and excitable. She is really engaged in her work with the Decepticons, making it a point to spread disinformation at every habitat the swarm visits. The porn biz is more her recreational activity than a side gig—something she enjoys doing and which just happens to support her other projects. She is unsure what to make of Firewall. Though she gets little respect to anyone and often seems only to be half paying attention to anyone speaking to her, likely because she is high. While she’ll readily promise to get any substance for anybody, she often forgets and has started to develop a reputation for being flaky.

**Appearance:** Amrita’s bouncer has an ethnic Indian look with an extra set of arms (cybernetic but masked). Most of her body is covered with intricate mehndi-style nanotattoos.

Barking Dog

**Fixer, Entertainer, Dealer**

Barking Dog is one of the new generation of scum on the flotilla. She joined only three years ago and her ego is only seventeen years old. She was seven when the Fall happened and barely remembers it, sometimes getting annoyed at the others around her who dwell on the event and refuse to move on. While she didn’t grow up in the Stars swarm, she was raised on another scum fleet in the Jupiter system and finds the Stars scum to be a bit more buttoned down and staid than her home flotilla.

Barking Dog has made quite a reputation for herself with the Dogonaughts by using her contacts to score the newest and hottest mind-altering substances from her outer system scum contacts. She often seeks out new faces on the swarm—travelers and tourists—in the hopes of getting them high and hearing their stories. On a couple of occasions, Singh has convinced her to cozy up to outsiders and squeeze information out of them.

**Morph:** Sylph

**Motivation:** +Self-enhancement +Drug Use +Hedonism

**Active Skills:**

**Knowledge Skills:**

**Rep:** @-rep 40, g-rep 30

**Implants:** Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Bioweave Armor (Light), Clean Metabolism, Cortical Stack, Skin Pocket, Tailored Pheromones

**Gear:** Utilitool, assorted drugs and contraband

**Armor:** 4/5 (Light Bioweave + Spray Armor)

**Roleplaying:** Barking Dog seems to have two personality modes. When she’s getting to know someone or trying to get a favor, she is attentive, flirtatious, and sensual. The rest of the time she comes off as a cocky kid who shows little respect to anyone and often seems only to be half paying attention to anyone speaking to her, likely because she is high. While she’ll readily promise to get any substance for anybody, she often forgets and has started to develop a reputation for being flaky.

**Appearance:** Dog is sleeved in a sylph morph she managed to score from someone passing through the swarm. While the morph is undoubtedly beautiful, she has gone out of her way to heavily modify it with nanotats, piercings, and outrageously tacky clothing. Her bioweave armor takes the form of iridescent chitinous plates that she tries to display as much of as possible.
Dr. Boris Simic was a well-off psychosurgeon working for the Serbian government. Specifically employed as a loyalty tester, he gained an incredible amount of insight into the inner thoughts of bureaucrats and career politicos. When TITAN nanoviruses hit Eastern Europe, he was reassigned to help government officials who had contracted mind-altering infections. In the course of his work, Simic fell victim to one of these plagues, suffering from severe mood swings. Considered a liability, he was ineligible for evacuation. Betrayed by his own government, Simic managed to bribe his way on board a refugee shuttle that barely made it into orbit. Rescued by HAL strikers, Simic stayed with the refugees when the swarm departed Earth.

Simic adopted well to the scum lifestyle, engaging in heavy petal use as a way of coping with his traumatic experiences and letting go of many of his former inhibitions. He quickly turned his talents towards experimental procedures and offered his services to anyone desiring a recreational mental alteration. Though his attempts to counter his own neurological damage have failed—and may even have exacerbated his condition—there is no question that he is skilled at shaping minds. Many scum make regular trips to his offices, seeking new mind-sets, new outlooks on life, or just a new type of trip. Over the years, Simic adopted the nickname many of the scum were using for him, and now introduces himself as Dr. Mindfuck to everyone he meets.

In recent years, Dr. Mindfuck has become an outspoken critic of the EDF and Alice Chu. He consistently calls them out as the “hidden leadership” and “secret elites” of the fleet, noting the similarities to the mindsets of the many bureaucrats and politicos he dealt with in the past. Though he has few close friends and is not part of a collective, Dr. Mindfuck has earned some respect and allies for his outspokenness. Some of these supporters see actual wisdom in his critiques, while others just see him as a useful tool in the political dynamics of the fleet.

**Morph:** Remade

**Motivation:** +Recreational Psychosurgery +Drug Use –Informal Hierarchies

**Active Skills:** Deception 70, Fray 40, Free Fall 50, Infosec 40, Interfacing 50, Intimidation 50, Kinesics 65, Medicine: Psychiatry 70, Networking: Autonomists 45, Networking: Criminal 45, Persuasion 50, Protocol 45, Psychosurgery 80

Leclerc was one of the first generation of successful avian uplifts and the first to become a commercial success as a fashion designer. After the Fall, Leclerc obtained a measure of success as an art critic in Elysium for several years. Eventually, however, he grew fed up with the casual dismissal of his criticism due to his uplift status and decided to move to a location where he’d be appreciated. His attempts to secure a travel visa and egocast to Titan were repeatedly rejected, however, so with careful deliberation he undertook a course of action that he was sure would get him kicked out of the Consortium. In a live broadcast, he unleashed a savage, scathing, and personal critique of the sixteen most reputable fashion designers on Mars. Instead of being go into cold storage until another polity accepted his asylum claim or he could go into exile on the scum shuttle that was leaving to return to the Stars that afternoon. He chose exile to the swarm.

To his surprise, Leclerc found that he enjoys the riot of creativity among the scum. Even more importantly, he sees actual appreciation for the critical feedback he offers. Joining up with the Nature’s Rejects collective, he spends most of his time aboard Dayuejin, typically working with numerous artistically-minded peers to shape the creative output of the flotilla. Among the swarm’s uplifts, he is seen as a grandfatherly figure, always ready with a quip and sordid tale to illustrate his life’s lessons.

Morph: Neo-Avian
Motivation: +Art Criticism +Flock (Collective) Loyalty –Martian Fashionistas

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Rep: @-rep 30, f-rep 55
Implants: Basic Biomods, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack
Gear: Light Vacsuit
Armor: 5/5 (Light Vacsuit)
Roleplaying: Despite his reputation as a fierce critic, in person Leclerc comes off as warm and almost grandfatherly, offering gentle suggestions and always coming off as an attentive listener.

Appearance: Anywhere else Leclerc might have come off as a bit ridiculous, but in the flotilla he’s just one more weird sight among many. His morph is a standard African Grey uplift, adorned with a black beret and a red scarf he tosses over one wing.

Jane Erdoes
Simian Surgeon

Liberated from her hypercorp “parents” during the Fall, Dr. Erdoes managed to overcome anti-uplift prejudice and achieve an education and measure of respect as an uplift research scientist within the Consortium. Hired by Provolve, she found herself the unwilling poster child of a PR campaign by the hypercorp to increase their reputation in the uplift community. Unfortunately, she was deeply unhappy at her work since she felt like she was seldom permitted to do any real research and spent most of her time at press events. She was also constantly surveilled by an Oversight handler who made sure she didn’t do or say anything that might portray Provolve or the Consortium in a negative light.

During a press junket on Erato, Jane decided she’d had enough and slipped her handler. Unsure of what to do next, she ran into a group of scum from Stars and blurted out her plight. Sympathetic, they sneaked her aboard the swarm. Over the next few weeks, Jane made herself useful by healing a number of small medical complaints aboard Three Sheets to the Wind and rapidly gained reputation. Recently, she was invited aboard The Stars Our Destination itself and given the codes for the medical and research facilities, since there were few others in the flotilla who could make good use of them.
**KALBIR SINGH**

*Security Ops*

Singh was part of the security team at the original HAL facility. He secretly smuggled XP of the living conditions HAL kept their workers in to a human rights group. When the strike was called and the EDF anarchists revealed themselves, Singh threw in with the strikers, locked down the barracks where most of the security personnel were resting, and opened up the armory to the workers.

After the Fall, Singh stuck with the swarm and helped the fleet organize its militia. To this day, he has a hand in securing the fleet’s defenses, working alongside several weapon system collectives and training new militia volunteers. He also consults with conflict-resolution affinity groups that are formed by the scum on an ad-hoc basis to deal with disputes and antisocial crimes. He also secretly coordinates a counter-intelligence operation against outside groups and factions that meddle in the swarm’s affairs.

**LENA ANDROPOV**

*Engineer Extraordinaire*

Born in Kiev in the Ukraine, Lena Andropov studied nanotechnology and materials engineering, receiving a doctorate in applied nanotechnology. She found to her dismay, however, that working for a Ukrainian university meant also working for the oligarchs who pumped money into the institution to use it as a research facility for their own projects. When the Fall began, those same oligarchs fled the planet using nanoschematics of her design to modify a number of older launch vehicles on the pad for the capacity to reach Luna—but stranding her and the rest of her team. Lena and her colleagues managed to get another craft off planet, but the engines failed before they could reach a stable orbit and they began falling back towards Earth. A team of HAL...
Appearance: Lena's personality can be a bit grating since she spends most of her time with machines and her fellow gear-heads and she is prone to snapping orders at whoever is nearby when something needs to be done. Appearance: Lena spends most of her time clomping around in her arachnoid shell since she likes the functionality it gives her for tackling any engineering tasks or problems that might arise. She's a hands-on type of woman who enjoys solving problems with her own gear-heads or problems that might arise. She's a hands-on type of woman who enjoys solving problems with her own gear-heads or problems that might arise. She's a hands-on type of woman who enjoys solving problems with her own gear-heads or problems that might arise. She's a hands-on type of woman who enjoys solving problems with her own gear-heads or problems that might arise. She's a hands-on type of woman who enjoys solving problems with her own gear-heads or problems that might arise.


Rep: 8/8

Roleplaying: Lena's loyalty is to her friends in the flotilla, and while she personally doesn't consider herself much of an anarchist or even a real scum, she still considers the swarm her home and the people there her family. She maintains good relationships with the argonauts and often does small favors for them at inner system habitats at which the fleet stops over.

Morph: Arachnoid

Motivation: +Efficiency +Information Freedom +Thoughtcrime

Nanofabricators

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Implants: Access Jacks, Basic Mesh Inserts, Cortical Stack, Cyberbrain, Eidetic Memory, Enhanced Vision, Extra Limbs (10 Arms/Legs), Hyper Linguist, Lidar, Math Boost, Mnemonic Augmentation, Multi-Tasking, Pneumatic Limbs, Nanophages, Radar

Gear: Creepy, Fabber, Mobile Lab, Nanodetector, Nanoswarms (Engineer, Guardian), Repair Spray, Servitor, Specimen Container

Armor: 8/8

The swarm departed Earth, her attention has been focused unceasingly on getting the most out of the Thoughtcrime's aging manufactories. Lena's loyalty is to her friends in the flotilla, and while she personally doesn't consider herself much of an anarchist or even a real scum, she still considers the swarm her home and the people there her family. She maintains good relationships with the argonauts and often does small favors for them at inner system habitats at which the fleet stops over.

Plot Hooks

This section details a number of scenario ideas the gamemaster can run with, using the various NPC and setting descriptions included above.

Asylum Seeker

While traveling with the swarm, the PCs take the opportunity to visit a nearby habitat during a fly-by or stopover. In the middle of pursuing their own affairs, they are approached by a desperate figure who begs them for asylum and to sneak them off the station and back to the swarm. The PCs quickly find that their new friend is pursued and getting them off the habitat will not be a simple affair.

Bounty Hunter

A trail of corpses and unusual incidents alerts Singh and some concerned collectives that something is afoot. The PCs are recruited to find out what’s going on. As it turns out, an ego hunter sneaked aboard the swarm and hasn’t been very subtle as they gather information and narrow in on their target. They could be chasing down an escaped uplift indenture, an anarchist radical wanted for sabotage by Lunar authorities, or a member of the Lost generation. In the latter case, the Lost may have come to the swarm themselves in pursuit of a target—one of the scientists from the original Lost experimental project, now in hiding.

Dissident Self

A renegade member of the Pax Familae syndicate defects to the swarm, hoping to hide out from her sister selves. To better camouflage herself, she turns to Dr. Mindfuck for a series of mind edits designed to make it harder for the Pax to identify her. In the course of this psychosurgery, the doctor gets a sense of who he might be dealing with, and so he alerts Singh on the sly. While concerned that assassins may come looking for the renegade, Singh cannot overlook the potential valuable resource that has fallen into the swarm’s hands.

The PCs may be hired by Pax to track down the renegade, or they may be recruited by Singh to watch over her, in case anything happens. If anyone from Pax’s rival syndicates gets word about the renegade, they may send their own people to abduct her and find out what she knows.

Finding Leverage

As the swarm approaches an isolated station, they are denied all requests to dock or trade. Several of the collectives have important business there, however, so the PCs are retained to sneak aboard the habitat and find some way to convince the station’s authorities to reverse this decision. The methods available include finding a way to blackmail key habitat figureheads, sabotaging the station so that it requires assistance from the swarm, or recruiting allies from other factions on the outpost that can exert pressure to reverse the decision.
SET UP
Singh is convinced that Stellar Intelligence has an agent aboard the swarm. He has his suspicions as to who, but in order to verify anything he needs to lure the infiltrators out. He recruits the PCs to act as bait. He wants them to pose as anti-Consortium radicals who are using the swarm as a base to plan a major subversion campaign on Consortium habitats. Singh hopes that by leaking info on the PC’s fake plans through the swarm that the spy will be drawn out. The plan may backfire, however, when the alleged plot draws a larger-than-expected interest from Stellar Intelligence or when the Eat-Drink-Fuck collective hears about the operation and worries that it will interfere or draw too much attention to their actual anti-Consortium agenda.

SILENT SHIP
One of the ships in the fleet goes silent. Its crew no longer responds to messages, and all attempts to mesh with the ship's local network are blocked. Tensions rise when it is realized that the spacecraft recently took on an exhuman passenger. Has the exhuman taken over the ship? Lost control of an experiment? Or is this a sign of someone outside the swarm making a move against the exhuman, either to bring them to justice on a warrant elsewhere or to steal their experimental tech?

SALVAGE SCORE
As the swarm approaches Luna, long-range sensors pick up the sign of a derelict ship. One of the salvage crews investigates, finding a craft that went missing during the Fall, shortly after it escaped Earth. On board, the scavengers find a trove of priceless family heirlooms and Earth artifacts belonging to a well-known inner system oligarch. Even more, they retrieve the cortical stack of a relative, long thought lost during the Fall. The discovery poses several risks to the fleet, especially if word leaks out. Criminals, bounty hunters and others seeking wealth or leverage may seek to steal the hoard, while the oligarch’s own agents are sure to close in on any rumors that it has been found.

SURPRISE CARGO
Something escapes from one of the cargo containers, leaving dismembered bodies in its wake. When the PCs investigate, they find that one of the collectives agreed to ship an unknown cargo for a new client, no questions asked. The PCs will have their hands full tracking the escapee down, whatever they or it is, but they are in for an even bigger surprise when they investigate the cargo container and find that they/it are not the only one.