

SERENITY
ROLE PLAYING GAME

LAND
RUSH

A TALE OF
THRILLING HEROICS
IN THREE ACTS



LAND RUSH

WRITTEN BY
MICHAEL CHUMBLER
JAN HENDRIK FRIEDRICH

BASED ON A SCREENPLAY BY
JOSS WHEDON

WWW.CORTEXSYSTEMRPG.ORG
WWW.SERENITYRPG.COM

SERENITY © UNIVERSAL STUDIOS. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

HERE'S HOW IT IS

"Own your own personal piece of the 'Verse. First come, first served." That's what the Wave out of Harvest proclaims. For anyone that's run the Black for more than a day and survived, the offer sounds too good to be true, and you know what they say about offers too good to be true. However, when the Crew looks into the details of the Wave, they find the deal is on the level. Someone with too much money and not enough sense is allowing regular folk an honest to God chance to acquire a plot on the Rim moon of Harvest, so as long as they set up a homestead on the land. That would be the good news. The bad news is living long enough to stake a claim...

GM'S NOTES

Land Rush is a full length adventure designed for Veteran level characters. Presented in three acts of two scenes each, Act One begins with 'You Can't Be Serious' and 'The Real McCoy.' Act Two features 'Herding the Cats' and 'I Saw it First,' before concluding in Act Three with 'Stampede' and 'Never Judge a Book by its Cover.' This scenario can also be run with characters of greater or lesser amounts of experience so long as the GM adjusts difficulties and encounters to provide a satisfactory level of challenge for the PCs and players.

AN HONEST OFFER

Miss Abigail Pennington, an elderly spinster, that just happens to be a scion of one of the richest families on Londinum, has recently discovered that she is dying of an incurable

disease. Always at the forefront of charitable donations, she has vowed to return what fate and hard work has provided her to those most in need of assistance. Pennington began liquidating her vast holdings into tangible assets to provide help where help is needed most. Every company she owned, she sold to the employees. Every one of her stunning mansions, except for her modest vacation home on Londinum where she chose to enjoy the last of her days, were razed and the land turned into public parks. Her billions in credits and stocks were donated to hospitals, schools, and religious institutions throughout the 'Verse. Until the only thing left was a huge half million acre tract of land on the Rim moon of Harvest. Pennington was at first unsure of what to do with this final asset that, while large and valuable, was completely unimproved, pristine, arable land and wilderness. After some thought, she hit upon an idea, why not turn the fertile land into something that would provide some of the less fortunate citizens of the 'Verse with a chance to become part of the bedrock of the Alliance? Her idea, homestead the land. Give landless citizens a vested interest in growing the 'Verse and to create a community that would showcase the best of what the Alliance was meant to be.

While there are many things you could call Miss Abigail Pennington, fool is not one of them. More than aware of human nature, she realized there was a chance greedy individuals might try to sneak onto her land early to grab the choicest plots. In order to keep the land opening as fair and equitable as possible, she needed to hire individuals to

patrol the land and prevent anyone from taking advantage of the offer. Since anyone that takes this job will miss out on the land rush, Pennington set aside a plot for each person she hires that will be theirs once the job is complete. One thing Pennington insists on, as a staunchly pro-Alliance advocate of law and order, is that anyone that works for her must remain within the boundaries of the law, which will be a new experience for a Crew used to running the Black...

ACT ONE

SCENE ONE

YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS!

"You know I get real tired of folk tellin' me times is hard. Hell, tell me when times weren't hard? Life in the Black ain't for them as what ain't got gumption. What with things like nuthin' to eat but protein for weeks on end, rickety boats what break down too much 'cause ya can't afford the parts to keep 'em runnin' right, Reavers what want to gnaw on yer innards, and the beloved Alliance pinchin' whatever coin ya do make with fees, fines, and taxes, it's a small wonder anyone takes to the Black. Now I know yer next question is why does anyone who ain't all leaky in the brainpan does choose such a life and the answer is one simple word...freedom."

– Gus Jacobsen, itinerant spacer as interviewed by the author Jiang Hu Long for his highly successful fictional series 'Verse Stories'

The exact details of how the Crew happens to be on Santo are completely up to the GM as the specifics are not important to the plot. They can be looking for work, just finishing

up a job, completing repairs, or just about anything that fits within the GM's campaign, the only important thing is that the Crew not be on a job already.

Since the prospective employer is strong proponent of the good that the Alliance provides to the citizens of the 'Verse, Miss Pennington has set very specific guidelines to her go betweens on the caliber of person that she wants to represent her.

Due to the guidelines Miss Pennington has mandated, the path the Crew has to take to hear about the job will depend on the nature of their own previous actions and the impact those actions have had on their reputations.

Reputable Crews

While looking for work, if PCs have Good Name or Friends in High Places, they will receive a Wave from a professionally attired dark haired woman in her early 30s identifying herself as Rachel Throckmorton. She simply states that she is looking for temporary employees to provide security for an upcoming event and that if they are interested in such work to come in for an interview for a business opportunity. Throckmorton gives her address, which is in the nicest part of the business district. If the PCs agree to meet, she gives them an appointment in two hours from the current time.

On arriving at the modest, but fashionable suite, they discover that their contact is not only a high priced advocate, but that she is a partner of the firm Jenkins, Throckmorton, and Fong, a very well regarded firm. The PCs

are escorted to her corner office, where she greets them warmly, offers them tea and as soon as hospitality has been met, she begins to speak.

Read aloud:

"It is so nice to finally meet you in person. Since I am working within the constraints of a fairly short deadline, I will get straight to the point. I have been contracted to oversee the security of a business transaction that has the potential to become chaotic. Your reputation for being steadfast in such situations precedes you. My client needs experienced problem solvers that know how to stay within the boundaries of the law. If you can confirm to me right now that you are available immediately and that you clearly understand the non-negotiable requirement to obey the law, I can fill you in on the details."

Assuming the Crew agrees to follow the law, Throckmorton continues:

"Thank you so very much as I was hoping you would agree. The job is quite fascinating really, a once in a lifetime event in fact. My client owns some land and wishes to give that land away. First come, first served, but with one stipulation. Whoever accepts a plot of land must live on that land for no less than five years. The idea is to provide an incentive for landless individuals to stay and improve the land for the benefit of themselves, a new community, and for the Alliance. Giving land away in such a manner may seem

to us as a novel idea, but actually has its roots on Earth-That-Was in a tradition once known as a 'Land Rush'. "However, my client knows that giving away something so valuable as land on a first come, first served basis has the potential to result in confusion and possibly even violence. This is where your Crew will come in. My client is looking to hire what amounts to security officers to patrol the land, which is substantial in size, to prevent fraud or violence.

"Since your background has given some expertise in these matters, I am required by my client to interview any potential employee, so I would like you to give me a run down of your previous experience, a sort of verbal resume if you will, and based on your comments I will be making my decision on whether or not to engage you for this event."

At this point one, and only one, member of the Crew is going to have to provide a reasonable, law-abiding, account of their backgrounds. If they have the trait "Good Name" they will receive the standard skill bonus. If the PCs thought to dress well for the interview, they will not receive any bonus, but if they appear shabby, they will suffer a one-step penalty to skill. Convincing Throckmorton that they are the right Crew for the job is a AVERAGE (7) test of Willpower + Influence / Appropriate Specialty, or a HARD (11) Willpower + Performance / Acting roll to bluff their way through the interview with the experienced advocate. Assuming the PCs are successful. Throckmorton will conclude the interview by

telling them that they have got the job and to expect a Wave that will detail when and where they will have to report for work.

Shades of Gray

Since the basis for getting this job depends on having a good reputation, if the PCs have a less than stellar background, finding out about the opportunity gets progressively more difficult for Crews that have played fast and loose with the law.

If the PCs are not known for their sterling reputation, it is still possible to hear about the job through less savory channels such as Friends in Low Places, but the PC with this Asset will have to spend three Plot Points to be given the name of the go between Rachel Throckmorton. The PCs will have to contact her either by Wave or in person to try and earn an interview. Talking the busy woman into an interview with an unsolicited pitch is an Opposed Roll of Intelligence + Influence / Persuasion by one PC versus Throckmorton's Willpower + Discipline / Mental Resistance, but taking the time to drop by in person will grant a one-step bonus to the PC's skill. If the PC wins, she will set an appointment for the next day. If she wins, the PCs miss out. If the PCs do earn a proper interview, the events unfold as under "Reputable Crews" above, but with less friendly banter from Throckmorton and with all Difficulties to convince her to hire them increased by one level.

Shady Characters

If the Crew has actually managed to earn a Branded, hearing about the job will be much more difficult. Just learning about the job will

require HARD (11) Intelligence + Covert / Streetwise roll, while actually earning the job is even tougher. To successfully convince Throckmorton to even talk to them is an Opposed Roll of Intelligence + Influence / Persuasion by one PC versus Throckmorton's Willpower + Discipline / Mental Resistance with the two-step penalty to skill imposed by their Branded trait and showing up to her office will not earn a bonus, but just sending her a Wave will result in another one-step cumulative penalty.

Assuming the PCs succeed in earning an interview. Persuading Throckmorton to go out on a limb and take the chance on hiring them is a FORMIDABLE (15) test of Willpower + Influence / Appropriate Specialty, or a HEROIC (19) Willpower + Performance / Acting roll to bluff their way into the job.

As obtaining the job is totally dependent on succeeding with this roll, the use of Plot Points is highly encouraged.

If the PCs succeed in getting hired, proceed to the next Scene.

ACT ONE
SCENE TWO
THE REAL McCOY

"What are the benefits of an Alliance? While there are many possible answers to that question, the most obvious one is civilization. Humanity has lived on the planets that have become known as the Core Worlds for a long time, ever since we arrived from Earth-That-Was as a body of refugees looking for a new home. Those who live here in the cradle of the Alliance have done so for so long that they take the amazing benefits of our advanced society for granted. The members of humanity who boldly ventured out to the Border Planets, and now the Rim, know all too well that civilization is not something to be taken for granted and it is an Alliance that will bring this precious commodity to them."

– Alliance Member of Parliament interview comments
May 2506

On being accepted by Throckmorton, the crew is briefed on the specifics of the job, starting with a reiteration that Miss Pennington is a staunch proponent of the law. Since the idea is to bring order to the land being offered, it must be done within the limits of the law. Over reliance on guns and violence runs completely contrary to her vision and will result in the loss of their land grant and that employee being charged with any crimes that they commit. Once that first requirement is repeated, the advocate finally gets into the details of the job.

Read Aloud:

"After seeing first hand the benefits that civilization under the Alliance can bring to a lawless land, Miss Pennington truly believes that when she opens the land on Harvest to settlement it will bring order to an otherwise totally unimproved area. She could easily give the land away or sell it, but that would not guaranty the land would be developed in a useful manner. The idea is, by giving away plots of land with the stipulation that the new owner live on the land for five years will require the owners build the necessary infrastructure that will in turn make the land become a community.

"Your duties will include many things and will begin with escorting the convoy of settlers to a holding area at the edge of Miss Pennington's land on Harvest. Once everyone is properly registered, you will also oversee the start of the event, this is to ensure that all potential settlers will start at the same time and have an equal choice of plot selection. As the registration process will take some time, another of your duties will be to patrol of the land prior to the start of the event to make sure no one sneaks into the area early. Finally, you are to act as company representatives/security to prevent or resolve any disputes.

"Your compensation for this work will be reimbursement of expenses for operating your ship. In addition, each member of the crew will receive an eighty acre plot of land on Harvest that you can not sell for three years. Miss Pennington would hope that after the

land is distributed, that people of your caliber will stay on to help turn that diamond in the rough into a viable society of law abiding citizens. My assistant will send you a Wave with where and when to report, which will be waiting for you by the time you return to your ship. I'd also like to add that I look forward to working with you on this project."

As this point Throckmorton escorts the Crew out of her office and the PCs are free to go and regardless of means of transportation the PCs use, by the time they return to their ship, the promised Wave is waiting for them. They are to arrive at the Mayport Docks no later than 0700 in two days and check in with a Vincent Choi who is Miss Pennington's security chief.

Since the PCs have a couple days, they can use the time to stock up on ammunition, perform maintenance on their ship, or anything else they want to do. The GM can make this time as easy or as difficult as they want to include adding a short sub adventure for them to complete. If the PCs want to buy equipment rated "C" or "R" they will be able to find anything reasonable within a few hours with no skill check Anything rated "I" will be found with an AVERAGE (7) Willpower + Influence / Appropriate Specialty or an Intelligence + Covert / Streetwise roll or the use of a GM determined amount of Plot Points for anything extremely unusual. A Botch results in Throckmorton finding out and earning the PCs a one-step penalty to Social skills.

During the wait time, have all PCs that are off their ship roll their Alertness + Perception / Sight. Anyone that succeeds at an AVERAGE (7) difficulty will notice an elderly gentleman leave a cloth bag on top of his hover car as he climbs in. Before they can react, he pulls away from the curb, but he is driving slowly enough at first that anyone that makes a second roll of the same skill will easily see the vehicle's license plate before it turns the corner. Anyone that fails this roll will be too drawn by the contents revealed when the bag hits the ground to see anything else, Alliance Credits, and a lot of them! There are one hundred credits in the bag to be precise.

The PCs do not know it, but they are being tested by Rachel Throckmorton. If they recover the money and either turn it over to the authorities or trace the license plate themselves, which requires only an AVERAGE (7) Intelligence + Perception / Investigation or Covert / Streetwise roll, they will pass the test. Realizing what is really going on will take having Trustworthy Gut or succeeding in a HARD (11) Intelligence + Perception / Deduction or Intuition roll to realize the timing of this event is a bit too coincidental to actually be a coincidence. Any PC that has Filcher, Greedy, or Stingy is going to be seriously tempted by the money and will have to make HARD (11) Willpower + Willpower roll to agree with turning over the cash. How far this difference of opinion is taken is up to the PCs, but this encounter is meant to be a role playing opportunity and not grounds for outright violence.

If they do the right thing, the elderly gentlemen and Rachel Throckmorton will either arrive to meet the PCs at whatever meeting place they set up or show up at the PC's ship if they returned the money anonymously. Rachel introduces her father Raymond and explains that the money was a test of the Crew's moral compass. Since they proved to be honest, the advocate is thrilled and says they may keep the money as a bonus.

If the PCs keep the money, they will receive a Wave from Rachel Throckmorton and she is not pleased. The only chance the PCs have to save their job is a single PC has to succeed in a test of Willpower + Influence / Persuasion with the difficulty determined by their reputation. A 'Reputable' Crew has an AVERAGE (7) task before them, a 'Shades of Gray' Crew will have a HARD (11) difficulty, while a 'Shady' Crew must face a FORMIDABLE (15) task. If they succeed, Throckmorton will allow them to continue with the job, but all further Influence rolls attempted on her will have a two-step penalty to skill. If the roll fails, she tells them not to bother showing up at Mayport.

If by chance the PCs leave the money where it fell and do not get involved, they will not fail the test, but neither will they pass. Throckmorton will doubt their commitment to the job and will advise Choi about this resulting in a one-step penalty to Influence rolls used on him. Once again, as retaining the job is totally dependent on succeeding with this roll, the use of Plot Points is highly encouraged.

The GM should award 3-6 Plot Points and go to the next scene, but if the PCs have lost the job, they suffer a five point penalty that can not result in a negative number (IE the minimum award is zero points). Even though they have lost the job, the following scenes will include an option for continuing the adventure, but in the role of settlers vying of a section of Harvest rather than as employees of Miss Pennington.

ACT TWO

SCENE ONE

HERDING THE CATS

"Folk are about the most fractious critters in the 'Verse. You think mules and wolverines can be ornery? You just try and get a bunch of folk what don't ken each other to do somethin' at the same time, 'specially if there might be somethin' of value involved. Nope, ain't no critter on no amount of legs that can beat folk for bein' difficult ta work with."

– Pops McMurty itinerant spacer, long time Rim resident

It is possible that due to their own actions during the previous scene that the PCs have lost their job. There are many things the PCs can choose to do, but covering all possibilities is impossible, therefore the rest of this adventure will provide two options to continue under the titles of "On the Job" for the PCs that are still working for Miss Pennington or "A Piece of the Action" if the PCs were fired.

On the job

When the PCs arrive at the Mayport Docks, they find a scene that can best be described

as chaos with dozens of ships taking up every open slip at the port and a mass of humanity that is difficult to comprehend. Finding their supervisor, Vincent Choi, is the PCs first task. Obviously, searching for him among the massive crowd isn't an option, so it takes an AVERAGE (7) Recall roll (Intelligence + Willpower) to remember that Throckmorton's Wave included his ship's contact frequency. Actually breaking through the near endless stream of cross chatter requires an AVERAGE (7) Intelligence + Technical Engineering / Communications roll to get Choi on his ship linked handset. He answers gruffly and says he will meet them near a ship named Abigail's Hope in ten minutes. It turns out that it takes that long to push through the crowd and find the harried security chief standing on the ship's loading ramp and talking with three other men that depart as the PCs arrive.

Read Aloud:

“You got to be the new guys. Okay here's the deal. You can say this job is a victim of its own success in that we got more takers than anyone ever dreamed would show. As of today we've got some twelve thousand folk and forty-six ships here. Most of the settlers are dirt poor and will be transported to Harvest on twenty freighters rigged out as transports packed six hundred to a ship. The other ships are folk what have their own and they run a range of rattle traps from old Fireflies to Wrens and hell there's even a damn Treefrog out there somewhere. If seems as if it can fly, one of them is either already here or will be soon as I'm expectin' up to a dozen

more ships to arrive before the deadline of 2200 hours tonight. We depart at 0500 tomorrow and it can't come soon enough. You'll need to see Barton in logistics *ma shang*¹ to draw your escort's coveralls so the folk will know you are legit security.

“Once you're geared up, I'm gonna need all of you to patrol the Sigma Five section of the port until the deadline, then just a pair will do. Your job is to keep the peace. If you have to knock somebody on their *pi gu*² to maintain order, you do it, just don't go crackin' anybody's skull. As a group, the settlers are actin' pretty good, but you know how some folk can be. Patrol in pairs and stay on your handsets. Anything goes south, you squeal like a stuck pig and help will come bail you out. Oh yeah. No guns! Not much of a brief, but I've got to get movin'. Stay sharp.”

The PCs are left a bit stunned as Choi departs abruptly. Their confusion is such that it's only a few moments before a man in tan coveralls arrives and identifies himself as Barton and leads them to the ship's logistics compartment. Each PC has to sign for two sets of tan coveralls and a security baton. He asks if they have ship linked handsets, if the PCs do not have enough, or any, he issues one per PC. Once everything is issued, the Crew is ready to start their patrol.

Per Choi's instructions, the PCs are to split into pairs for their patrol. If there are an odd number of characters, one of the teams will

¹ Right away

² Bottom

have a third member. The Crew has a long day ahead of them as by the time they are ready to start it is 0800 and they have been assigned a fourteen hour shift.

The PCs will see the gamut of humanity as they patrol the port. Most people are clearly poor, but some seem to come from other backgrounds and every one of them has a story. As Choi stated, for such a large number of people in such close living conditions, the crowd is well behaved, but are showing signs of fatigue and stress. The GM can make this section of the adventure as detailed as they like, but is also free to skip forward to keep the pace going. During the patrol there are many things that can occur from a small boy getting separated from his parents to a runaway cart that endangers another settler.

The only mandated event occurs some eight hours into their shift. The constant walking has worn the PCs down by this time and an AVERAGE (7) Endurance roll (Vitality + Willpower) is needed to avoid a one-step penalty to Athletics based skills due to fatigue. As they move through stacks of crates, have all the PCs roll Alertness + Perception / Hearing. The team that rolls the highest will hear a faint cry for help. Running to the sound, the team has the option of calling for help immediately or waiting until they can investigate. As they round the corner of the corridor created by the crates, they find an older man shielding a woman clutching a child behind him from five younger men. On seeing the PCs one of the men laughs and speaks to the characters.

“Well looky, looky. Some gorram heroes have come to save the day. Tell me Ossifer, you gonna try and hit me with that pretty little stick of yours?” He taunts and laughs again.

The PCs need to roll an AVERAGE (7) Alertness + Perception test to realize that as the leader is talking, two of the other men are trying to flank the PCs. If the PCs fail the roll, the thugs will be able to attack with a one-step bonus to their skill as they and the leader all attack at once. The remaining two men are keeping a watch on the family that called for help and will not attack the PCs in the first round of combat.

If the men are spotted, they hesitate and the leader starts talking again.

“How about that, they ain’t as stupid as they look and I guess that’s good enough to earn ya a break. Walk away now and ya don’t gets pounded.” He growls.

If the PCs attempt to draw their weapons or call for help, all three men attack. Here is where calling for help before reaching the scene comes into play. If the PCs did call, help will arrive within five Combat Turns. If they did not call for help, doing so now is two actions, one to draw the handset and another to call for help. No skill roll is needed, but the actions do count for the Multiple Action penalty. However, the delay in calling means assistance will not arrive for ten Combat Turns. The thugs are not armed and will fight until two of them, or the leader, are unconscious. If the PCs should

lose, they will find everything of value on them has been stolen, to include their shoes. Regardless of how this encounter plays out, the rest of the patrol passes without incident.

Travel to Harvest

Before the PCs turn in, Choi tells them that they will depart to high orbit early, at 0400, with an Arrowhead-Class Courier named the Keen Edge that Choi says will act as the convoy's "Follow Me" and be the point of reference for the convoy to line up on and hopefully get everyone moving in the same direction at the same time.

The convoy's departure from Santo starts surprisingly on time and there are a total of fifty-six ships making the trip to Harvest. However, in addition to the PC's ship, Choi only has five other escorts for the journey. As the convoy reaches high orbit, the Keen Edge signals the PCs that it's time to go and the rear half of the Keen Edge begins to light up with a brilliant multi-colored visual display to get the other pilot's attention and to get the convoy moving. It takes the better part of two hours to get the entire convoy into a rough formation and the gaggle of ships slowly moves out (Speed 2). At the leisurely 'fleet' speed the ragged convoy can maintain, it is a seventeen day trip to Harvest.

Once again the GM can make this trip as involved as they want to as there is no shortage of issues with so many ships in such poor condition that can develop. However, the convoy is on a well marked route and traveling with Alliance approval.

While the Feds did not bother to provide any assistance, there is enough visibility on this project, plus Pennington still has plenty of friends in Parliament that pirates or Reavers will not be a problem during the trip. Nevertheless, minus the pirate or Reaver options, he GM has several plot complications that they can insert to liven up the trip or they can simply rule that the ships arrive safely without incident.

An example of a problem that can occur en route and can happen anytime after the first three days is, the PCs receive a priority Wave from Choi. One of the smaller ships of the convoy has developed a severe mechanical problem that no one on board can fix. The PC's ship is closest and they need to see what they can do to help.

The ship is a Wren-Class transport, aptly named "*Yanyanyixi*³" and it is obviously on its own last run. As the PC's ship closes, they can see the rusted hull and that the ship's attitude controls are not working. Docking requires a HARD (11) Ship's Agility + Piloting roll to safely match the other ship's course. Failing results in a collision with the difficulty becoming an attack roll doing Basic damage to the PC's ship and leaving the Yanyanyixi crippled. Another option is an EVA with an AVERAGE (7) Agility + Survival or a HARD (11) Agility + Athletics / Jumping roll to reach the Yanyanyixi's airlock. GM Note: space suits cause a two-step penalty to Agility.

³ At one's last gasp

Once aboard a PC will have to make a HARD (11) Intelligence + Mechanical Engineering roll to coax the ship's tired, worn engine to reach Harvest. If the PC fails, the ship simply gives up and can not continue. The PC's ship will now have to dock to bring the eight members of the Cruz family who had crammed into the standard cargo container the Yanyanyixi was carrying. However, as the other ship is no longer moving, the task drops to AVERAGE (7). The settlers will have to make room for themselves in the PC's cargo bay, but they are used to hardships and they will be able to transfer enough food from their ship that there won't be any shortage of food.

When the GM is satisfied that this scene has served its usefulness, go to the next scene.

A Piece of the Action

Much of this option is similar to "On the Job", but the PCs arrival at the Mayport Docks is very different. When they arrive, they receive a terse Wave from Vincent Choi that gives them a docking slip along with a departure time and vector. They also receive instructions on how to register as settlers. As soon as Choi thinks they understand his instructions, he ends the message.

Walking about the port, the PCs find the same scene as described earlier, of chaos, cramped docks, and a lot of people. They know there is a deadline of 2200 hours tonight to register and that departure is 0500 tomorrow.

There is a long line at the registration desk and no choice but to wait, which lasts two

hours before they are seen. The harried clerk takes their names, ship name, and explains the settler's contract to them. In detail if needed. The gist of the contract is in exchange for forty acres of land, they agree to live on that land for a term of not less than five years. They are responsible for building their own home and must do so within sixty days of arrival with a home described as a bedroom for each adult or two children, plus a single common/living room, kitchen, and bath for each four adults. When the clerk has notarized their contract, the PCs are free to do whatever they want until their departure time.

If the PCs choose to walk around Mayport, they will see the gamut of humanity huddled around the port. Most people are clearly poor, but some seem to come from other backgrounds and every one of them has a story. Somewhat surprisingly, for such a large number of people in such close living conditions, the crowd is well behaved, but is beginning to show signs of fatigue and stress. The GM can make this section of the adventure as detailed as they like, but is also free to skip forward to keep the pace going. There are many things that can occur during this time from a small boy getting separated from his parents to a runaway cart that endangers another settler.

An example of an event that can occur during the wait to depart is, while walking through stacks of crates, have the PCs roll an AVERAGE (7) Alertness + Perception / Hearing roll and anyone that succeeds will hear a faint cry for help. As they round the corner of the corridor created by the crates,

they find an older man shielding a woman clutching a child behind him from (1.5 times number of PCs) younger men bent on no good. On spotting the PCs one of the men laughs and speaks to the characters.

“Well looky, looky. Some gorram heroes have come to save the day. Tell me slick, you sure you want to get involved in this?” He taunts and laughs again.

The PCs need to roll an AVERAGE (7) Alertness + Perception test to realize that as the leader is talking, two of the other men are trying to flank the PCs. If the PCs fail the roll, the thugs gain a one-step bonus to their skill as they and the leader all attack at once. The other thugs are keeping a watch on the family that called for help and will not attack the PCs in the first round of combat. If the men are spotted, they hesitate and the leader smiles grimly and starts talking again.

“How about that, they ain’t as stupid as they look and I guess that’s good enough to earn ya a break. Walk away now and ya don’t gets pounded.” He growls.

If the PCs attempt to draw weapons, all three men attack. The thugs are not armed and will fight until two of them, or the leader, are unconscious. If the PCs should lose, they will find everything of value on them has been stolen, to include their shoes. Regardless of how this encounter plays out, the rest of the night passes without incident.

Travel to Harvest

Before the PCs turn in, they know their departure time is 0445 and they are

instructed to look for an Arrowhead-Class Courier named the Keen Edge that Choi says will act as the convoy’s “Follow Me” and be the point of reference for the convoy to line up on and hopefully get everyone moving in the same direction at the same time.

The convoy’s departure from Santo starts surprisingly on time and there are a total of fifty-six ships making the trip to Harvest. However, there are only six escorts for the journey. As the PC’s ship lifts, the wake turbulence of so many ships in one place makes for a choppy flight. The pilot will have to make an AVERAGE (7) Ship’s Agility + Piloting roll to stay on course. If this first roll fails, the pilot will have to make the roll again at HARD (11) to avoid a collision. Failing this second roll results in a collision with another ship, with the difficulty becoming an attack roll doing Basic damage to the PC’s ship and leaving the other ship heavily damaged enough that they are forced to return to Santo and will miss out on the land rush. The PCs would be wise to use Plot Points to avoid this fate for their ship.

When the ship reaches high orbit, the rear half of the Keen Edge begins to light up with a brilliant multi-colored visual display to get the other pilot’s attention and to get the convoy moving in the correct direction. It takes the better part of two hours to get the entire convoy into a rough formation and the gaggle of ships slowly moves out (Speed 2). At the leisurely ‘fleet’ speed the ragged convoy can maintain, it is a seventeen day trip to Harvest.

Once again the GM can make this trip as involved as they want to as there is no shortage of issues with so many ships in such poor condition that can develop. However, the convoy is on a well marked route and traveling with Alliance approval. While the Feds did not bother to provide any assistance, there is enough visibility on this project, plus Pennington still has plenty of friends in Parliament that pirates or Reavers will not be a problem during the trip. Nevertheless, minus the pirate or Reaver options, the GM has several plot complications that they can insert to liven up the trip or they can simply rule that the ships arrive safely without incident.

An example of a problem that can occur en route and can happen anytime after the first three days is, en route a ship, a Wren-Class transport that has been aptly named "*Yanyanyixi*" that has been near the PC's ship since departure sends them a frantic message. Their ship has severe mechanical problems that no one on board can fix, and as the PC's ship is closest is there any way you can help?

As the PC's ship closes, they can see the rusted hull and that the ship's attitude controls are not working. Docking requires a HARD (11) Ship's Agility + Piloting roll to safely match the other ship's course. Failing results in a collision with the difficulty becoming an attack roll doing Basic damage to the PC's ship and leaving the *Yanyanyixi* crippled. Another option is an EVA with an AVERAGE (7) Agility + Survival or a HARD (11) Agility + Athletics / Jumping roll to reach the *Yanyanyixi*'s airlock. GM Note:

space suits cause a two-step penalty to Agility.

Once aboard the *Yanyanyixi* a PC will have to make a HARD (11) Intelligence + Mechanical Engineering roll to coax the ship's tired, worn engine to reach Harvest. If the PC fails, the ship simply gives up and can not complete the trip. The PC's ship will now have to dock to bring the eight members of the Cruz family who had crammed into the standard cargo container the *Yanyanyixi* was carrying. However, as the other ship is no longer moving, the task drops to AVERAGE (7). The settlers will have to make room for themselves in the PC's cargo bay, but they are used to hardships and they will be able to transfer enough food from their ship that there won't be any shortage of food.

When the GM is satisfied that this scene has served its usefulness, go to the next scene.

ACT TWO
SCENE TWO
I SAW IT FIRST!

"Equality, like many other 'enlightened' concepts owes its roots to the musing of mystics and not to the practical world. When one casts aside all but the practical, the fact that there are a certain rare gifted few among the rabble that is the bulk of humanity becomes as clear as the finest crystal. It is also clear that these rare few are not equals to the huddled masses that do not yearn to breathe free, as they claim, but to be led by those capable of using those rare gifts as was meant to be, with the barbed lash as the masses secretly crave."

– The annotated collected works of Xian Yu Volume Six, Chapter Six, Celestial Publishing, Tenth Printing, Londinum, 2515

On arriving on Harvest, the true size of the event is finally clear. The Pennington holding covers a half million acres broken down into 12,500 lots of forty acres each. One hundred double lots have been set aside for the fifty man security force leaving 12,300 lots for the registered settlers. The bulk of the settlers, some 12,000, are arriving in the twenty contracted transports with an equal number of lots allocated for them. The remaining three hundred lots are to be divvied up between the settlers arriving on the other thirty-six assorted ships that were in the convoy.

In order to best ensure an equitable share in the land, Throckmorton has devised a specific set of rules for the participants of the land rush. The first rule is, while each of

the settlers on the transports represents their entire family and thus potentially tens of thousands of total immigrants, only the family member aboard the transport can stake a claim. The second rule is, the smaller ships can each bring as many members of a single family as they can carry, but the total number of claims individuals on all of those ships can stake is limited to three hundred.

Making planetfall on Harvest is a bit more complex than the departure from Santo and how the adventure progresses from this point is again divided into whether the PCs are On the Job, or looking for A Piece of the Action.

On the Job

As the convoy reaches its destination, what little discipline the convoy had during the trip begins to break down. While there isn't a problem with the larger contracted ships as they have professional crews and are maintaining their convoy positions, it is the smaller ships darting about as they try to land first that is causing the turmoil, which in turn is beginning to force the transports to break ranks in order to avoid potentially fatal collisions.

As Choi frantically rages at the pilots of two of the smaller ships, two things are glaringly obvious, one, the two ships are clearly not paying any attention to communications. In fact, there is so much chatter on the convoy frequency that even Choi's orders are getting lost in the heavy crosstalk. The second obvious thing is, unless immediate action is taken, there is going to be a catastrophe. Two of the faster freighters, a Space Truck-

Class and a Shire Horse-Class have become so focused on beating the other one to the landing zone that they have lost sight of where they are in relationship to the other ships of the convoy. It takes an AVERAGE (7) Intelligence + Technical Engineering / Scanners or Intelligence + Piloting roll or a HARD (11) Alertness + Perception / Sight roll to realize that the two freighter's current course will take them too close to one of the big Camel-Class contracted transports, which has already noticed their high velocity approach and, in response, the larger ship has started a panicked, lumbering turn that, if the turn is completed, will result in a collision with another transport.

Preventing a collision will require some tricky flying and nerves of steel on the PC pilot's part and takes the form of a FORMIDABLE (15) Ship's Agility + Piloting roll to maneuver their ship into a position that will force the two freighters to have to swerve to avoid a collision of their own with the PC's ship. Failing this roll results in the PC's ship not getting into position quickly enough to distract the freighters and the chain of events plays out with the two large transports colliding. If the PC's should Botch the piloting roll, then things become much worse. They do manage to get in front of the two speeding freighters and save the transports, but fail to do so in such a way that makes the freighters swerve to avoid the PC's ship resulting in a collision with the Shire Horse. This is resolved as the initial difficulty becoming the attack roll doing Basic damage. The other ship is wrecked by the impact, spiraling out of control, and slamming into the planet with a very final and very fatal, for everyone aboard, crash.

After the collision, the PC's hands will be full as they try to avoid the same fate. Exactly how difficult this is going to be is determined by just how badly their ship is damaged. If their ship is destroyed by the crash (IE takes more than twice the ship's Life Points), their only option is an AVERAGE (7) Agility + Survival or a HARD (11) Agility + Athletics roll to reach an escape pod or shuttle in time to escape the doomed ship. If their ship sustains damage equal to full, but less than twice the ship's Life Points, then the ship is crippled. The pilot must succeed with a FORMIDABLE (15) Ship's Agility + Piloting roll, with the two-step penalty to the ship's attributes due to the damage, in order to manage a controlled crash. Failing this second roll ends in a horrific crash that everyone on board has to roll against a HEROIC (19) Endurance (Vitality + Willpower) test to survive. Anyone that fails under goes an Attack Roll using the initial difficulty that does Basic damage. Should their ship suffer more than half, but less than full hit points, the controls are much more responsive and the above rolls are one level easier, but will still have the two-step penalty. Any ship that sustains less than half Life Points, the difficulty of all rolls drops by two levels and there isn't an attribute penalty.

If the two transports collide, the PCs have their work cut out for them. While the transport that swerved to avoid the freighters was bounced upward by the impact and seems to be safe for the moment, the second transport is in trouble. Hit mid-ships her structural integrity has been badly compromised and she can not

survive reentry to land. Worse, her drive has been damaged and she's caught by the moon's gravity. Most of her engineering crew was killed in the crash and now she floats helpless in a slowly decaying orbit.

In order to save the survivors, the PCs will have to roll an AVERAGE (7) Ship's Agility + Piloting to dock with the nearly stationary ship. If the roll fails, the PC's ship collides with the transport doing one point of damage to PC's ship and destroying the transports docking ring. The PCs can continue to try to dock, but there are only three more docking rings left. Should by some bizarre twist of fate the PCs manage to wreck all four docking rings, the ship is doomed and the survivors will escape via shuttles and escape pods. In addition, for such incredibly bad piloting, the Crew is fired for gross incompetency.

Assuming the PCs manage to dock safely, they will have to take over repairs in the engine room in order to save the transport before she spirals into Harvest. The extensive repairs required are a FORMIDABLE (75) Complex Action of Intelligence + Mechanical Engineering with each roll taking ten minutes. The PCs have two hours to succeed or the ship is lost. If they fail, the PCs are considered to have done their best and survivors escape via shuttles or escape pods. If they succeed in saving the Transport, or prevented a collision in the first place by risking their lives and ship, Choi is effusive in his praise and the PCs earn a €500 bonus.

Regardless of outcome, if there was any collision, any survivors of the two freighters are banned from the event. If a collision was avoided, the crews of the two freighters receive a three hour penalty to their departure time from the starting event.

While the PCs have been either struggling to survive a collision or with the rescue of a damaged Transport, Choi has managed to get the rest of the convoy down safely and needs to speak with them about the set up of the starting event.

Last minute preparations

How Choi greets the PC will vary on how the events in orbit played out. If they succeeded in preventing a collision or in saving a transport, he goes out of his way to praise them for their bravery and ingenuity. If they tried and failed to save the transport, he does thank them for giving it their all. If their ship was damaged, he expresses thanks and adds his condolences about the damage to or destruction of their ship.

After greeting the PCs he gets right to the briefing. He again orders the PCs on a patrol of a section of the holding area and with the same instructions as before. The penalty handed out to the two ships that caused/nearly caused the collision has gone a long way toward keeping the settlers in line. In addition Choi makes sure everyone understands the rules of how the land rush is going to proceed from here.

Read aloud:

"In order to give every settler the most equitable opportunity to stake their

claim, Throckmorton has imposed several restrictions on what she has labeled the 'Starting Event'.

"First, the Starting Event takes place at noon on the day after arrival to give everyone a chance to get oriented and to recover from the long trip.

"Second, no settlers will be allowed to fly any vehicle that can reach more than one meter of altitude. The security personnel are the only ones allowed in the air during the distribution. Anyone caught in an atmospheric or space capable vessel will be disqualified.

"Third, every settler will have three options for how they wish to enter Pennington's tract of land. Horseback, wheeled vehicle, or hover vehicle. At great trouble and expense, Throckmorton has ensured that enough horses have been acquired so that every settler who needs one has one. If however, the settlers have wheeled or hover vehicles, they may use them, but they have to be inspected to ensure they haven't been modified to increase speed, have a governor installed to limit their top speed in any case, and have a tracking device installed to monitor speed.

"Fourth, in order to account for the different speeds of the three options, there will be three separate groups, each with a different starting time. Everyone on horseback starts first at noon. An hour later, all wheeled vehicles start, and an hour after that, all hover vehicles start.

"Fifth, the land distribution will last for one week. Any land not claimed by the

end of that time will become publicly owned 'commons' for open grazing. "Finally, every registered entrant will be issued an electronic positional tracker. Pennington's land has been carefully surveyed and in the precise center of every forty acre plot is a coded beacon. When a settler has chosen the plot they want, they insert the tracker into the beacon to stake their claim. Each tracker also has a code embedded within the circuitry and the combined coded signal from the beacon/tracker pairing will update on everyone's positional tracker that the plot is no longer available. However, it is critical to note that each tracker will only work once and once it is triggered, the choice can not be changed."

Part of being on the job will be to keep order and the PCs will have much to do in the hours prior to the Starting Event to meet that goal. Prior to the start time, each PC will have to make a skill test in their assigned tasks to see how alert they are and to keep the settlers in line. Exactly what they are doing is based on the skills they've told Choi about. The security chief is a practical man and assigns his personnel based on what they do best.

Mechanically inclined characters will be assigned to inspect multiple wheeled and hover vehicles to ensure that there haven't been any last minute tampering to the vehicle's governor or tracking device. The inspection of each vehicle, whether wheeled or hover powered, takes thirty minutes and is an AVERAGE (7) roll of Intelligence +

Mechanical Engineering. The GM will secretly roll a d6 for each vehicle the PC inspects with result of 6 indicating tampering. Detecting this is a HARD (11) test of the above skill. If the PC notices the vehicle has been altered, the penalty for this is a one hour delay to the entrant's start time. The owner of the vehicle will approach the PC before they can report his finding and will offer a bribe of one hundred in platinum to look the other way. This is not another of Throckmorton's tests and the PC is welcome to take the bribe if they chose and any PC with Filcher, Greedy, or Stingy will have to succeed with a HARD (11) Willpower + Willpower roll not to take the money. If the PC does choose to turn the entrant in, that settler will receive a two hour start time penalty and will have to ride a horse for cheating and attempted bribery.

As the mechanic is inspecting their assigned vehicles, they must also keep track of the results of each roll as they are totaled as part of a HEROIC (95) Complex Action that will determine when the PC has finished all the vehicles they must personally inspect. The PCs start at 0800 hours with a scheduled completion time of 1600. If they fail to reach the difficulty threshold in time, then some vehicles will not get inspected prior to departure time. If they fail to complete their task, they can inform Choi that some vehicles were not checked, or they can keep this information to themselves and if they have Forked Tongues, will have to succeed with a HARD (11) Willpower + Willpower roll not to lie. If they admit their shortcoming, Choi will be somewhat annoyed, but will just alert the other security

officers to keep an eye on those vehicles. Liars will face the consequences for their actions later in the adventure.

Pilots will, either in their ship or one of their shuttles, maintain a constant aerial patrol over the settlers and Pennington's land. The job is a tedious low level sweep of the entire half million acres that are open to the settlers. Each pilot is assigned a section of land consisting of hundreds of plots to check. Most of the patrol is abstracted by an AVERAGE (7) Intelligence + Ship's Alertness roll. The GM will secretly roll a d6 for each plot the PC inspects with result of 6 indicating a trespasser, also known as a Sooner, who requires a HARD (11) test of the above skill to detect.

If the PC detects a trespasser, the penalty for this is immediate disqualification and the individual will contact the PC before they can report his finding and will offer a bribe of €100 to look the other way. This is not another of Throckmorton's tests and the PC is welcome to take the bribe if they chose and any PC with Filcher, Greedy, or Stingy will have to succeed with a HARD (11) Willpower + Willpower roll not to take the money.

As the pilots are making their sweep, they must also keep track of the results of each roll as they are totaled as part of a HEROIC (95) Complex Action that will determine when the PC has finished their sector. The PCs start at 0800 hours with a scheduled completion time of 1600. If they fail to reach the difficulty threshold in time, then some of the plots of land did not get inspected prior

to departure time. If they fail to complete their task, they can inform Choi that some plots were not checked, or they can keep this information to themselves and if they have Forked Tongues, will have to succeed with a HARD (11) Willpower + Willpower roll not to lie. If they admit their shortcoming, Choi will be somewhat annoyed, but will just alert the other security officers to keep an eye on those plots. Liars will face the consequences for their actions later in the adventure.

All other characters will patrol on foot in pairs among the settlers to keep order among the entrants. Each team is assigned a sector of the holding area to cover, but the details of are abstracted by an AVERAGE (7) Alertness + Perception roll. The GM will secretly roll a d6 for each roll the PC makes with result of 6 indicating a settler committing an act of theft or other such petty crime, which requires a HARD (11) test of the above skill to detect. If the PC detects a settler breaking the law, the penalty for this is a one hour delay to the entrant's start time. The individual will offer a bribe of one hundred in platinum before the PC can report the crime to look the other way. This is not another of Throckmorton's tests and the PC is welcome to take the bribe if they chose and any PC with Filcher, Greedy, or Stingy will have to succeed with a HARD (11) Willpower + Willpower roll not to take the money. If the PC does choose to turn the entrant in, that settler will receive a two hour start time penalty.

While each team patrols, they must also keep track of the results of each roll, which

are totaled as part of a HEROIC (95) Complex Action that will determine when the PC has finished with their sector. The PCs start at 0800 hours with a scheduled completion time of 1600. If they fail to reach the difficulty threshold in time, then some of their sector was not checked prior to departure time. If they fail to complete their task, they can inform Choi that happened, or they can keep this information to themselves and if they have Forked Tongues, will have to succeed with a HARD (11) Willpower + Willpower roll not to lie. If they admit their shortcoming, Choi will be somewhat annoyed and those PCs will suffer a one-step penalty to Influence skills used on him. Liars will face the consequences for their actions later in the adventure.

As before, the GM can make this time as easy or as difficult for the PCs as possible, using the above or previous scenes examples as guidelines for possible complications. Once the GM is read to proceed, award the PCs 4-6 Plot Points and go to the next scene.

A Piece of the Action

When the convoy reaches Harvest, the collapse of convoy discipline occurs just as in On the Job. The PC's ship just so happens to be in the right place at the right time and gets to make the exact same rolls and risks to their ship to prevent a collision or save the damaged transport as before. However, if the PCs prevent the transports from colliding or save a damaged one, Choi is so impressed by their bravery, that on his own authority, he rehires the PCs on the spot

with the same payout and obligations as before.

If by some chance the PCs choose not to get involved, they first, need to check if their Big Damn Hero membership has expired, and then will be assigned a landing berth on Harvest to await the beginning of the land rush. Shortly after landing, Choi makes an 'All Ships' broadwave announcement where he explains the rules of how the land rush is going to proceed from here.

Read aloud:

"In order to give every settler the most equitable opportunity to stake their claim, Throckmorton has imposed several restrictions on what she has labeled the 'Starting Event'.

"First, the Starting Event takes place at noon on the day after arrival to give everyone a chance to get oriented and to recover from the long trip.

"Second, no settlers will be allowed to fly any vehicle that can reach more than one meter of altitude. The security personnel are the only ones allowed in the air during the distribution. Anyone caught in an atmospheric or space capable vessel will be disqualified.

"Third, every settler will have three options for how they wish to enter Pennington's tract of land. Horseback, wheeled vehicle, or hover vehicle. At great trouble and expense, Throckmorton has ensured that enough horses have been acquired so that every settler who needs one has one. If however, the settlers have wheeled or hover vehicles, they may use them, but

they have to be inspected to ensure they haven't been modified to increase speed, have a governor installed to limit their top speed in any case, and have a tracking device installed to monitor speed.

"Fourth, in order to account for the different speeds of the three options, there will be three separate groups, each with a different starting time. Everyone on horseback starts first at noon. An hour later, all wheeled vehicles start, and an hour after that, all hover vehicles start.

"Fifth, the land distribution will last for one week. Any land not claimed by the end of that time will become publicly owned 'commons' for open grazing.

"Finally, every registered entrant will be issued an electronic positional tracker. Pennington's land has been carefully surveyed and in the precise center of every forty acre plot is a coded beacon. When a settler has chosen the plot they want, they insert the tracker into the beacon to stake their claim. Each tracker also has a code embedded within the circuitry and the combined coded signal from the beacon/tracker pairing will update on everyone's positional tracker that the plot is no longer available. However, it is critical to note that each tracker will only work once and once it is triggered, the choice can not be changed."

Not having any other assigned tasks, the PCs will only have to make their personal preparations for the Starting Event. Exactly how they prepare will largely depend on if

they will ride horses or drive a wheeled or hover vehicle.

PCs that will ride on horses will have to make an AVERAGE (7) test of Intelligence + Animal Handling to ensure that their mount is healthy and that it is properly shod. Packing the animal correctly is another test of the same skill. If either roll fails, the horse has some minor problem that will cause the player a one-step penalty to skill when using this animal.

If the PCs have a wheeled or hover vehicle, they will have to succeed an AVERAGE (7) test of Intelligence + Mechanical Engineering to ensure that it is fully operational. If this roll fails, the PCs will have a one-step skill penalty while using this vehicle. If they attempt to tamper with their governor or tracker, it is a HARD (11) test of the same skill to succeed. If caught, this is a one hour time penalty. They can offer a bribe of no less than one hundred in platinum for the inspector to look the other way. Getting the inspector to agree is a HARD (11) roll of Willpower + Influence / Persuasion. If this roll fails, the PCs will get a two hour penalty to their start time and will have to ride a horse.

As before, the GM can make this time as easy or as difficult for the PCs as possible, using the previous scene's example as a guideline for possible encounters. Once the GM is read to proceed, award the PCs 4-6 Plot Points (but with a three point penalty if the PCs refused to get involved during the events concerning the two speeding freighters) and go to the next scene.

ACT THREE

SCENE ONE

STAMPEDE

Sooner – (noun) Origin, derogatory Earth-That-Was slang term for any individual or group of individuals that illegally slipped into and claiming a portion of land in the Oklahoma Territory in the nation state known as the United States prior to that land being opened up for settlement in 1889.

- Cortex linguistics entry dated 2518

All during the early hours before the Starting Event, there is a palpable tension in the air as the clock ticks down to the start time. Among the flurry of last minute activities that occur prior to the start is every settler that needs a horse and tack, signs for one and every participant is issued their tracking units. The entrants are lined up as noon approaches and it is Vincent Choi who fires the flare that announces that the Starting Event has begun. Exactly what the PCs do at this point is again broken down by whether they are On the Job to trying to get A Piece of the Action.

On the Job

The PCs have been busy on the line of settlers, getting everyone ready and as soon as the horse mounted entrants race out, they in turn must race to their own ship in order to keep the settlers under aerial surveillance. The PCs have the choice of using their ship, their shuttle(s), or if they have enough pilots, both, to keep their assigned sector under observation. There are many events that can occur during the stampede of settlers and the following

options are listed as examples that the GM can use to keep this scene interesting.

The Chickens come Home to Roost

A mere hour after the land distribution begins the PCs receives a claim signal from the far side of Pennington's property. An AVERAGE (7) Intelligence + Perception / Deduction roll will realize that there is no way a horse could possibly reach that area in so short a time. This is unusual enough that it peaks the Crew's curiosity. Arriving over the premium plot of land, they are able to touch down safely and find a familiar face. It is Diego Cruz from the Yanyanyixi!

After landing, the PCs confront the patriarch of the family and ask how it is possible that he got here on horseback so quickly?

Diego grins sheepishly and replies:

"Despite our humble ship my family is not stupid. In fact, we were smart enough to use the Cortex to obtain a view of the area from orbit and selected this plot in advance. Pablo, my oldest son, stole a horse, right after landing, long before such a thing would be noticed and rode to the half way point, there he fed and rested the horse. So when I raced there at top speed, I was able to swap out for a fresh horse and get here as quickly as I did. While I was riding here, Pablo is slowly walking the other horse back and will return it to where he stole it, again, with none the wiser due to the confusion of the Start, pretty clever huh?"

Cruz is technically a Sooner and per the rules of the contract he signed, he and his entire family are now disqualified from being able to stake any other claim. Add to the fact that even if their ship did make it to Harvest, it will never leave and that means they will be stranded here with nothing. This leaves the PCs with what maybe a difficult choice. They can either, do their job and turn Cruz in, or they can look the other way.

Doing their job will mean reporting Cruz and escorting him back to the start point, where Choi will void his claim and expel him and his entire family from the event. This will be especially hard if the PCs could not repair the Yanyanyixi and got to know the Cruz family while they were aboard their own ship. The GM will have to let the players talk out what they want to do. However, any PC or NPC in the Crew with Easy Mark will want to let them stay whereas anyone with Greedy or Stingy will want to turn them in. It will take a HARD (11) Willpower + Willpower roll to act in a way not consistent with what their Trait indicates that they should.

There is one final option for the PCs to think of, for anyone who succeeds with an AVERAGE (7) test of Intelligence + Perception / Deduction or a HARD (11) Intelligence + Knowledge. If a PC is not all that interested in settling on Harvest, while they can not sell the land for three years, they can let the Cruz family live there as tenants to work the land in their stead.

If the PCs choose to look the other way, it is several days before they are discovered by the advocates assigned to verify and certify that the land distribution was fair. The PCs will be summoned to Choi's office and find

that Rachel Throckmorton is there as well. Both will be very disappointed in the PCs and say so in no uncertain terms. However, based on their actions to this point, especially if they saved a damaged freighter, after serious consultation with Miss Pennington herself, the Crew will still receive land, but only forty acres that they now must live on for three years in order to obtain the deed.

Claim Jumpers

Even though there is plenty of land available for everyone, human nature, being what it is, means there are going to be disputes over who gets what land, especially given that some plots are better than others. As the PCs are conducting their overhead sweep, a flash of light catches their attention. It only takes an AVERAGE (7) Alertness + Perception / Sight to realize that it was a muzzle flash and gunfire can't be good news.

As the PCs approach the area of the gunshot, a lone, rider-less horse is seen racing out from the heavy underbrush. An AVERAGE (7) Intelligence + Technical Engineering / Scanners or a HARD (11) Intelligence + Piloting roll picks up the plot's beacon which is the only thing that anyone would fight over in such a pristine area, but the undeveloped land doesn't have a clear area large enough for them to land.

An AVERAGE (7) Alertness + Perception roll will spot one man pinned down in some rocks, very close to the beacon, while an Extraordinary Success will spot that several other men are trying get past the lone man

to get to the beacon first. No roll is necessary to realize that this is a claim jumping and that the troublemakers are clearly not shaken by the arrival of security. Stopping the claim jumpers will require the PC's to set down immediately, but as previously mentioned, there isn't a clearing where they can do so. This leaves the Crew with two options: they can either make a Forced Landing or take a Leap of Faith.

In a Forced Landing, the pilot must succeed with a test of Ship's Agility + Piloting with a difficulty of FORMIDABLE (15) if they are in a ship, or HARD (11) if in a shuttle. If the PCs fail the roll, treat the difficulty as an attack roll that will do Basic damage. Regardless of success or not, the following round, any PCs aboard the vessel can exit and assist the lone settler defend his claim. Run the combat with the three claim jumpers as normal, but each PC must make an AVERAGE (7) Recall roll (Intelligence + Willpower) to remember that they must act within the limits of the law. Obviously deadly force is authorized, but excessive force is not. The claim jumpers will fight until two have been killed or rendered unconscious before surrendering.

If the PCs take a Leap of Faith, the pilot will have to succeed with a HARD (11) Ship's Agility + Piloting roll if in a ship or an AVERAGE (7) test if in a shuttle to drop low enough for a PC to jump safely to the ground. If the pilot fails the roll, those jumping receive a one-step penalty to skill and a two-step penalty if the pilot should Botch. However, if an Extraordinary Success is rolled, those jumping gain a one-step

bonus. The jump itself is a HARD (11) test of Agility + Athletics / Gymnastics failing the roll results in treating the difficulty as an attack roll doing Basic damage. Run the fight as above to include the Recall roll regarding excessive force.

We need a Doctor!

Later on in the day, a few hours after the wheeled and hover vehicles have been released, the PCs pick up a feeble Wave asking for medical assistance. Pinpointing the source of the weak signal is a HARD (11) test of Intelligence + Technical Engineering. If the roll fails or is Botched, they still find the source, but it takes longer, which complicates things for them later. Once they track the source to its origin, the overturned wheeled vehicle is clear to see and fortunately, the area near the crash site is clear enough to land with only an EASY (3) Ship's Agility + Piloting roll, where the difficulty becomes an attack roll doing Basic damage if they fail or Botch the roll..

The vehicle is a twisted wreck, with a severely injured man and woman trapped inside. The PC's must get them out without causing further injury. Freeing the woman is a HARD (11) test of Alertness + Athletics with a fail causing Basic damage as an attack roll with the woman already suffering from 8W. Freeing the man is more difficult as he is pinned by the steering wheel, sustaining 12W, and requiring him to be cut free of the wreck. This is a test of the same skill as above, but is a FORMIDABLE (15) task.

Once free of the vehicle, each requires a Complex Action of Intelligence + Medical Expertise / Surgery to save, just how difficult the task for the medic will depend on how long it took the PCs to find the wreck and whether or not any further injury was done to the victims while extracting them. As the woman has sustained 8W, she needs a HARD (55) difficulty to save, but if the PCs caused her further injury or if they failed to locate the wreck promptly, the task becomes FORMIDABLE (75). The man has 12W and saving him starts at an HEROIC (95) difficulty, while further injury or a delay makes this task INCREDIBLE (115). The time increment for these rolls is ten minutes and due to internal bleeding the two only have three hours to live.

If the PCs failed to complete their task from the previous scene (vehicle inspections, aerial surveillance, or foot patrol), and lied about it, this results in a higher than average amount of problems that can easily be traced back to the any PC that failed their task. Choi is livid at being lied to and after long deliberations with Rachel Throckmorton, cuts the size of the land grant to each PC that got caught lying from eighty acres to forty.

The GM is free to add or delete encounters to suit their style of play and the skills of the PCs. When the GM is satisfied go to the final scene.

A Piece of the Action

For PCs that lost the job, the frantic time prior to the Starting Event for them consists mainly of being herded into the right start

point and a lot of waiting. However, the following options are provide as examples.

Claim Jumpers

Even though there is plenty of land available for everyone, human nature, being what it is, means there are going to be disputes over who gets what land, especially given that some plots are better than others. As the PCs are riding through Pennington's property trying to select which plot they want, a flash of light catches their attention. It only takes an AVERAGE (7) Alertness + Perception / Sight to realize that it was a muzzle flash and gunfire can't be good news.

As the PCs approach the area of the gunshot, a lone, rider-less horse is seen racing out from the heavy underbrush. An AVERAGE (7) Intelligence + Technical Engineering or Intelligence + Perception / Deduction roll to either pick up the plot's beacon or figure out that is the only thing that anyone would fight over in such a pristine area.

An AVERAGE (7) Alertness + Perception roll will spot one man pinned down in some rocks, very close to the beacon, while an Extraordinary Success will spot that several other men are trying get past the lone man to get to the beacon first. No roll is necessary to realize that this is a claim jumping and that the troublemakers are not aware of their presence.

Sneaking up on the three claim jumpers is an Opposed Roll of Agility + Covert / Stealth versus Alertness + Perception. If the PCs succeed, they close within fifty feet and get

a free action. If they fail, they are spotted at one hundred feet and must roll Initiative. If a Botch is rolled, one of the claim jumpers gets behind the PCs within fifty feet and he gets a free action.

Run the combat as normal, but each PC must make an AVERAGE (7) Recall roll (Intelligence + Willpower) to remember that, even though they are no longer on the job, they must act within the limits of the law. Obviously deadly force is authorized in a situation like this, but excessive force is not. The three incredibly stubborn claim jumpers will fight until two have been killed or rendered unconscious before surrendering.

We need a Doctor!

Later on in the day, a few hours after the wheeled and hover vehicles have been released the PCs must roll against an AVERAGE (7) Alertness + Perception / Hearing to hear the sounds of an impact. Tracking down the source of the sound is another test of the same skill and difficulty to hear feeble cries for help. If the roll fails or is Botched, they still find the source, but it takes longer, which complicates things for them later. Once they track the sound to its origin, the over turned wheeled vehicle is clear to see.

Inside the twisted wreck are an injured man and woman. The PC's must get them out without causing further injury. Freeing the woman is a HARD (11) test of Alertness + Athletics. A fail causes Basic damage as an attack roll with the woman already suffering from 6W. Freeing the man is more difficult as he is pinned by the steering wheel,

sustaining 8W, which requires a test of the same skills as above, but at a FORMIDABLE (15) difficulty.

Once free of the vehicle, each requires a Complex Action of Intelligence + Medical Expertise / Surgery to save, just how difficult the task for the medic will depend on how long it took the PCs to find the wreck and whether or not any further injury was done to the victims while extracting them. The woman sustained 6W in the crash and needs an AVERAGE (35) difficulty to save, but if the PCs caused her further injury or failed to locate the wreck promptly, the task becomes HARD (55). The man has sustained 8W and starts at HARD (55) difficulty, while further injury or a delay makes this task FORMIDABLE (75). The time increment for these rolls is ten minutes and due to internal bleeding the two only have three hours to live.

As it is highly possible that the PCs do not have the necessary medical equipment to save the two injured settlers, in this case, the GM should treat the Complex Action as a First Aid test to keep the injured stable long enough for medical assistance to arrive. In this case the three hour limit is how long the first aid keeps the two alive until help arrives.

Finally, as the unemployed PCs main focus in this scene is obtaining land, they must roll against a HARD (55) Complex action using Intelligence + Knowledge / Farming or Ranching, or Intelligence + Scientific Expertise / Geology to pick the best plot with a time increment of four hours. GM Note: Do not forget possible penalties to skill due to

problems with the horse or vehicle. The PCs can not roll more than four times (a total of sixteen hours) per day and if they take longer than two days to reach the threshold, they will have to settle for land that isn't as optimal for farming, ranching, or mineral content. The land is still useful, just a lot harder to work than if they had succeeded.

The GM is free to add or delete other encounters to suit their style of play and the skills of the PCs. When the GM is satisfied with the opportunities for role playing have been exhausted go to the final scene.

ACT THREE
SCENE TWO
NEVER JUDGE A BOOK BY
ITS COVER

"While there's no shortage of ways to spot one of them easy marks from the Core from one of the more, shall we say, seasoned members of the Rim is a Core Worlder's belief in the Law. Ya see, most folk what live on them fancified Central Planets ain't never had a want in their lives and most ain't never had to deal with the business end of the law. Truth be told, unlike what gets fed to them Core Folk about how carefully screened advocates, judges, and magistrates are supposed to be, folk on the Rim ken that behind all them purdy titles, those what hand out the law is just people, some good, some not so good. Just make sure ya'll remember if'n ya'll goes to breakin' the law on the Rim."

– Frankie 'Twice Pipe' Whitaker, Information Broker, Persephone

On the last day of the week long land distribution, just at the Crew is starting to relax, the PCs, whether they are on the job or not, receive a Wave from an obviously concerned Vincent Choi. This is unusual to employed PCs as Choi has never sounded so worried before, and this is especially odd for Crews that were fired, that the security chief would contact them considering his current opinion of them.

Read Aloud:

"Ai ya, wo men wan le⁴ and things have gone completely south! Seems like we were so busy getting Alliance permissions and permits, that no one bothered to clear this event with the Harvest Magistrate and it turns out the locals are in a tizzy about having some fifty thousand new inhabitants dumped on this little moon of theirs without anybody askin'. The magistrate is all sorts of fired up and is threatenin' to declare every one of the settlers Sooners and wants to seize all the land on behalf of the concerned citizenry. Seems he's found some ancient law on the books that no one has invoked in two hundred years, but is one hundred percent legit, regardin' the sanctionin' of new settlements on a moon. I don't know what's behind all this, but it's about to get fifteen shades of ugly out there. The locals are squarin' up against the settlers and with neither side willin' to back down or even blink, if we don't do something fast, we are going to have the biggest bloodbath on our hands since Serenity Valley."

At this point, Choi's soliloquy diverges slightly here based on whether the PCs are On the Job or on A Piece of the Action.

On the Job

"Some how or another, your Crew has become my 'go to guys' and I need you to get out to Pontiac City and find out

⁴ We're in big trouble

what is goin' on so Throckmorton knows how to fight this thing."

A Piece of the Action

"Even though things didn't work out, you've still be very useful despite that and with the way things are right now, I really need your help. You get out to the capital, Pontiac City, and find out what is going on so Throckmorton knows how to fight this thing. You come through for me again and I will reinstate you to full payment. We got a deal?"

At this point all Crews are considered to be On the Job with the same goal and their first task is getting to Pontiac City, which is a trivial matter not requiring any skill checks. The capital of Harvest is an unassuming little town of perhaps 12,000 and the idea of 50,000 additional inhabitants being a problem suddenly doesn't seem all that outlandish a position for the long time residents to have taken.

After they land at the modest port that is little more than a large cleared area with simple refueling and repair facilities, as soon as they enter town the one thing the PCs immediately notice is a general hostility from the locals. There doesn't seem to be any overt threat just that, they, as strangers, are certainly not welcome at the moment. This unfriendliness is represented by a two-step penalty to all Social skills that the PCs attempt to use while in town. Anyone with Trustworthy Gut or who succeeds with an AVERAGE (7) Intelligence + Perception / Intuition or Deduction roll will know that while not currently overtly hostile, it

wouldn't take much to turn what is now just a tense situation into imminent violence

Getting to the bottom of the stand off will take some careful investigation by the PCs and that will start with finding someone willing to talk to them. Each PC can roll once against a HARD (11) Willpower + Influence / Appropriate Specialty test in an attempt to find a non-hostile resident of Pontiac City with the results determined on the table below.

Roll	Results
Extraordinary Success	Fully cooperative, no penalty to Social Skills
Success	Partially Cooperative, will talk, but with the two-step penalty
Failure	Uncooperative, refuses to speak with PC beyond "Get Lost!"
Botch	Hostile enough to start a brawl*

*NPC (use Unification War Vet on P 180) starts to brawl with the PC. If fight lasts more than five Combat Turns, d4 additional NPCs join in with none of the NPC using any weapons. In ten Combat Turns, the sheriff arrives and all are arrested with locals being fined €10, but the PCs being handed a €50 fine, it seems justice isn't quite blind on Harvest.

Based on the results on the table above, if the PCs can find someone to talk to them, the first thing they learn is all is not as meets the eye. How much they learn from the person they make contact with, Jasper Fleming depends on if they rolled a simple or Extraordinary Success. On a simple success, the only thing that Fleming tells them is:

"Our beloved Magistrate Thurston ain't his own man in all this ruckus. Ya'll want more than that? Ya'll have to go diggin' for the answer." At that point, Fleming won't say another word and if the PCs press the matter, he'll call for help, which turns into a brawl in the streets as above for a Botch, but starting with 2d4 NPCs and ending with double the fines. It will take a HARD (11) Intelligence + Perception / Deduction or Intuition to read between what Fleming is saying to realize that 'ain't his own man' and 'diggin'' are the key words of his sentence and a clue to what is really going on.

Should the PCs roll an Extraordinary Success, Fleming is a bit more talkative. "Our beloved Magistrate Thurston ain't his own man in all this ruckus, never has been really. I ain't privy to all the details, but it seems like there are others what are interested in what's under that there Pennington land and have been waiting a long time to get it. Ya'll find out who that is and I bet ya'll suss out who is yankin' His Honor's chain and why. Now don't ask me more as I've said too much already to stay on top of the dirt should some one else see me talkin' to ya." Again, at this point Fleming will not say any more and pressing the matter will end up in a fight as above.

Once the PCs figure out that, if Fleming literally means digging, then mining is involved and to find out who could be making the magistrate intervene will require finding out exactly what sort of minerals are involved, which means a trip to the local assayer's office. At the office they find a single occupant that the name plate claims is

Miss Luo Meilun. As soon as she looks up from finishing the entry she was making in a ledger, there is no questioning her open hostility towards the PCs. Getting Miss Luo to even speak to them is a FORMIDABLE (15) test of Willpower + Influence / Appropriate Specialty. A success will only get an antagonistic "What do you want?" response and any requests about local mineral surveys by the PCs ends with being coldly rebuffed with a terse demand to leave. Even an Extraordinary Success only yields that the surveys are proprietary information that she is not at liberty to share. Clearly the nature of Harvest's mineral composition is behind the sudden draconian measures taken by the magistrate.

Near the end of the PC's first day in Pontiac City, the Crew receives an urgent Wave from Rachel Throckmorton. Magistrate Thurston will make a ruling at 0800 tomorrow regarding the legality of the land distribution and the unsanctioned settling of Harvest. Right now, despite consulting with the best advocates on Osiris, she can't find a way to even stall the magistrate let alone stop him declaring the entire event in violation of the law and ordering every one of the settler's to return to Santo.

Choi and the rest of the security force have been assigned to enforcing a buffer zone between the settlers and the Harvest 'militia' that is getting larger by the hour. Throckmorton looks grim and seems a bit shaken that Miss Pennington's altruism seems to be on course toward a violent outcome. She sighs in defeat and closes with an admonition that the Crew needs to be

back on the line by 0600 tomorrow morning as Choi is going to need every person he has to prevent bloodshed. When she signs off, it is clear that she doesn't believe the last part is even possible.

The Crew is now faced with yet another difficult decision. Obtaining the information they need by legal means will obviously take too long, but finding what those surveys contain in time will require that the Crew must resort to other than legal means to get them. Any PC that was in Luo's office saw her nervous glance at the safe beside her desk when the subject of mineral surveys came up. Clearly the information they need is in that safe and there is only one way to get it, a break in.

Despite the current situation, it is very evident that crime is not a major problem in Pontiac City. The sheriff's office is constantly manned, but does not maintain a foot patrol of the city, except near the saloons and only until an hour after the last one closes. After three AM, reaching the assayer's office requires an AVERAGE (7) Agility + Covert / Stealth roll. However, even on a Botch, no one is on the deserted streets to notice, but may give the players a good fright. Entering the office is a HARD (11) Intelligence + Technical Engineering test to bypass the simple alarm system, while picking the lock is a HARD (11) Agility + Covert / Open Locks roll.

Failing on the first roll is serious as it will trip a loud audible alarm that will alert every business owner on the block. The PCs have 2d2 Combat Turns before residents start

appearing in windows and another 2d4 Combat Turns before hastily dressed, and armed, citizens arrive to see what is going on. As engaging in a gun battle is not an option, the PCs have as many Combat Turns as the sum of the two rolls to escape before they will have to fight to escape.

Failing the second roll on anything but a Botch will allow another attempt, but the difficulty is one level higher. On a Botch, the PC's pick breaks off inside the lock and completely jams the mechanism. This will require the door be forced open with a HARD (11) Burst of Strength (Strength + Strength) roll, but regardless of the noise this makes, it still isn't loud enough that someone comes to investigate. The GM is welcome to throw in a couple meaningless rolls to make the players sweat though.

Getting the well-built safe open is much more complicated than getting past the alarm and the door. The safe is bolted to the floor and weighs in excess of three hundred pounds making taking the safe impractical at best. The PCs have the option to use Scrapper's Gel or a Fusion Cutter to open the safe without having to make a skill roll, but if they leave obvious signs of a break in, there will be consequences for being so blatant.

To open the safe, they will have to succeed in a HARD (55) Complex Action of Intelligence + Covert / Open Locks with each roll taking twenty minutes. The PCs have only three hours of darkness to get the safe open and escape before they have to return to the buffer zone as ordered by Throckmorton. Once the safe is open, the PCs can either take the documents or take

captures of the survey so that they leave no sign that a break in occurred.

When the PCs examine the mining survey, they discover two very important facts. First, the land that was given to the settlers has several rich deposits of minerals, nothing obviously valuable like gold, but mica, chromium, cobalt, and tungsten in industrial quantities and worth millions of credits. In fact, there are so many exploitable resources, that only the largest of corporations could benefit from the find. Just which corporation that might be is stamped at the bottom of the survey, as the entity that commissioned the twenty-five year old report in the first place, Corone Mining Consortium. It takes a HARD (11) Alertness + Perception / Sight to see additional faint letters, moving the report to better light reveals that there is more writing below the company name, "Ord-re- by Fran- Thursto-"

The PCs should realize that Frank Thurston is now Magistrate Thurston and a Cortex check with a HARD (11) Intelligence + Technical Engineering / Hacking roll will indeed confirm that the magistrate is an ex-Corone advocate that retired to Harvest fifteen years ago. If the PCs succeed in an AVERAGE (7) Intelligence + Knowledge / Law roll, the PCs will also realize that there is an obvious conflict of interest in Thurston making any ruling that would benefit the Corone Mining Consortium and that, by law, he should have recused himself from this case.

Contacting Throckmorton by Wave with the information about Thurston's conflict of interest stuns her that such an egregious

breach of the law would even be attempted. She clearly has some questions as to how the Crew obtained such a blockbuster discovery, but she chooses not to ask them those questions.

When the PCs land at the buffer zone, it depends on how clumsy they were in breaking into the Luo's office. If they were careful and made sure that they left no trace of burglary at the assayer's, as soon as they land, they are met by Choi, who is up their boarding ramp before it is even fully down.

"You bunch of *zhen de shi tian cai bao bei*⁵! I don't know how you did it and I damn sure ain't gonna ask how you did it, but you DID it! Throckmorton is havin' a field day with Thurston. She's burnin' up the Cortex between here, Osiris and Londinum like there's no tomorrow. Not only has she got Thurston's rulin' held in abeyance, she's managed to call for, and get, a review board to look into the magistrate's behavior. Odds are already five to two that when the board is through with him, it will result in his removal from his position.

"We got a Wave from no less than Miss Pennington herself congratlatin' you for the job you've done. Rachel would have met you, but she's too busy kickin' that *hun dan*⁶ Thurston's sorry hide around to have been able to be here. Both Rachel and Miss Pennington wanted me to tell you, that for your services, you will receive a bonus of

⁵ Absolute genius darlings

⁶ Bastard

€5,000 for a job well done. I also want to add my personal thanks for a job done spectacularly well"

If the PCs left blatant signs of breaking in at the assayer's office, as soon as they land, they are met by Choi with half a dozen of his security officers, who are all up the loading ramp before it before it is even fully down.

"You bunch of *ben tian sheng de yi dui rou*⁷! I don't what you were thinkin' and I damn sure don't need to ask how you did it, but you DID it, because you fools left enough clues for a dead man to follow! Still, thanks to your 'help', Throckmorton has been able to get Thurston's initial rulin' held in abeyance. She's burnin' up the Cortex between here, Osiris and Londinum like there's no tomorrow trying to make sure that Thurston's ruling gets overturned completely. Odds are just about fifty-fifty as to how this will play out, but knowin' Rachel like I do, I think you've given her enough ammo to win, but Thurston's sill gonna be magistrate and you can bet he ain't gonna be a friend of anyone that settled here. "We got a Wave from no less than Miss Pennington herself for what you've done and Rachel would have been here as well, but she's too busy fightin' off Thurston to have been able to be here. Both Rachel and Miss Pennington wanted me to tell you, that you've managed to void your contact and must forfeit your land. That's the bad news.

⁷ Stupid inbred stacks of meat

The good news is thanks to the information you illegally obtained, they went to bat for you and have managed to keep you from bein' bound by law. However, given the fact that Thurston is still magistrate, it would be a good idea for you to get off of Harvest before he can trump somethin' up to put you in a penal colony for the next twenty years. You've got about ten minutes to break atmo before the sheriff of Pontiac City arrives."

Before the stunned PCs can respond, Choi adds with his voice pitched so only the Crew can hear.

"On a personal note, I want to thank you for savin' the settlement. Me and the guys know you did what you had to do, so we took up a collection. Now git before the sheriff gets here!"

He hands them a coin purse and once the PCs are clear from Harvest, the sheriff does not pursue, they find a total of 500 in platinum, probably all the cash that the security officers had.

The PCs are now either well-to-do land owners that may settle in to homestead their land, landlords to the Cruz family, or landless pariahs. Regardless of which one applies, the Crew has got a quite a story to tell.

The GM should now hand out 4-6 Plot Points, less three for leaving clues of a break in and 4-6 Advancement Points.

THE END

NON_PLAYER CHARACTERS

Rachel Throckmorton

Agility: d6, Strength: d6, Vitality: d6, Alertness: d10, Intelligence: d10, Willpower: d10;
Life Points 14, Initiative d6 + d10

Traits: Friends in High Places (minor), Good Name (minor), Highly Educated (minor),
Credo – The Law (Major), Memorable (minor)

Skills: Athletics d4, Discipline d6 / Mental Resistance d10, Influence d6 / Persuasion
d10, Knowledge d6 / Business d8, Law d12 +d4, Performance d6 / Acting d8, Perception
d6 / Deduction d10 / Intuition d12 / Investigation d8

Description: A stunning dark haired woman in her early 30s. While very attractive, the most striking thing about her besides her piercing green eyes is that she stands six feet tall in just her stockings and she's very partial to four inch pumps. A gifted legal mind, she became partner at Jenkins, Throckmorton, and Fong at the unheard of age of 28. However, her belief in the purity in the 'Law', which is always capitalized in her mind, makes her unforgiving of the failings of others in her profession. In her mind, there is the 'Law' and there are criminals.

Vincent Choi

Agility: d8, Strength: d6, Vitality: d10, Alertness: d8, Intelligence: d8, Willpower: d8;
Life Points 18, Initiative d8 + d8

Traits: Fightin' type (Major), Friends in High Places (minor), Steady Calm (minor), Duty
(minor), Loyal (minor), Straight shooter (minor), Things don't go Smooth (minor)

Skills: Athletics d6 / Dodge d8, Discipline d6 / Leadership d8, Guns d6 / Pistols d8,
Influence d6 / Persuasion d8, Knowledge d6, Melee Weapons Combat d6 / Baton d8,
Perception d6 / Deduction d8 / Investigation d12, Unarmed Combat d6 / Judo d8

Description: A top notch security officer, reliable, steady, and talented. Of mixed Eurasian heritage, Choi stands 5'10" and is a solid 180 pounds. While comfortable in any setting, he is most at home doing what he loves best, enforcing the law.

Santo Thugs

Use *Bully Boys*, page 185

Claim Jumpers

Use *Hired Guns*, page 186

Pontiac City Brawlers

Use *Unification Vet*, Page 180

SHIPS

Camel-Class Long-Range Light Freighter

© by unknown wavesintheblack.com member

Dimensions (LxBxH): 311 feet x 83 feet x 180 feet

Tonnage: 9,300 tons

Speed Class: 2 cruise (no hard burn)

Crew Quarters: 5 single, 1 double (120-ton common area)

Minimum Crew: 6

Fuel Capacity: 225 tons/1,125 ton tank (800 hours)

Cargo Capacity: 6,008 tons

Passenger Capacity: 6 first-class, 16-ton common area

Gear: two 20-ton short-range shuttles

Price: €75,360 (20+ years: €19,560, 40+ years: €4,680)

Agility d2, Strength d6, Vitality d10, Alertness d2, Intelligence d2, Willpower d2;

Initiative d2+d2, Life Points 8, Mechanical Engineering d4 Everybody Has One, Fuel

Efficient, Slow Throttle (major), Complexity: Very Low

Maintenance Cost: €7,440/year (20+ years: €11,160/year, 40+ years: €14,880/year)

Notes: Operated by smaller shipping companies, these slow freighters are popular and easy to maintain. They will let you run them into the ground and still come back for more. Aesthetic interiors allow for first-class passengers to travel in comfort, and it's easy to forget that the ship isn't a cruise liner.

Space Truck

© by Lynn LeFey

Dimensions: (LxBxH): 65 feet x 102 feet x 20 feet

Tonnage: 225 tons

Speed Class: 4 cruise/ 6 Hard Burn

Minimum Crew: 2

Fuel Capacity: 6 tons (600 Hours)

Cargo Capacity: 50 tons in 2 standard cargo containers.

Passenger Capacity: 2 or 3 second-class berths.

Price: €3,600 new

Agility d6, Strength d4, Vitality d6, Alertness d4, Intelligence d2, Willpower d4, Initiative d6+d4

Life 8, Pilot d2, Perception d2, Everybody Has One, Complexity: Very Low

Maintenance Cost: €180 credits

Notes: For nearly fifty Years, the Inter-star light starship manufacturers have been making the 18X 'Space Truck', an affordable light transport. The ship's cargo transport capability is in the form of mounts for two standard cargo containers (or four half-size containers), giving the vessel a 50 ton hauling capacity. However, unlike smaller single-container haulers, the Space-truck has reasonable interior crew space, as well as room for paying passengers. If the two crewmembers have separate rooms, two second-class passenger berths are available. If the crew doubles up into one cabin, then three second-class passengers can be accommodated.

Cargo Mounting rails allows the operator to shift cargo containers aft to dock them to cargo handling facilities. Winches allow cargo to be picked up from planet side, or set down without landing the vessel. Designers used the dorsal surface of the cargo rails to add vertical stabilizers, making the Spacetruck a very stable atmospheric flier.

Shire Horse Light Cargo Hauler

© by Darren

Dimensions: (LxBxH): 45 feet x 22 feet x 16 feet

Tonnage: 158.6

Speed Class: 4/6

Fuel Capacity: 12 tons (800 Hours)

Crew Quarters: 1

Cargo Capacity: 80 Ton in two standard Containers, Note they is NO access to the Cargo from inside the Ship.

Passenger Quarters: None

Price: €6,336

Agility: D4, Strength: D4, Vitality: D4, Alertness: D6, Intelligence: D6, Willpower: D2, Initiative D4+D6, Life: Points: 6, D6 Pilot, D6 Perception, Everybody Has One (minor), Fuel Efficient (Minor), Branded (Major), Ugly as Sin (Major), Complexity: Average

Maintenance Cost: €316.8

Notes: So what do you do if you build what may well be the most hated ship model there is? Easy, you build another bigger version. After a few complaints about the earlier Work Horse's limited Cargo space Handson Corp scaled the ship up to haul two standard Containers for a 80 ton cargo capacity. Again the accountants lapped them up despite the fact that you could just about buy and run three Work Horses for the price of one Shire Horse, but then you would have to pay three Pilots to run them. Any bean counter worth their salt will never pay more in wages than they have too. Just like the earlier model, the Shire Horse is hated by most spacers. Perhaps even more so as many of them lost there jobs as Work Horse pilots when there employer upgraded to Shire Horses and needed fewer pilots.

The full write ups with images for the Space Truck and the Shire Horse can be found in Cortex Shipyards Volume 1, compiled by Lynn LeFay and available for download at the website <http://www.cortexsystemrpg.org>.