

# Gatekeeping [DRAFT]

## Initial Brief

*# Incoming Transmission*

*# Source Identifier: Zeitgeist-Aspexx-Botanist Joint Pentagonal Civilisation Research Collaboration Initiative*

*# Destination Identifier: TE3-Firebrand#Her Glorious Command#Starlight Ebbing#Muse IX#Unquiet Journey#\**

*# Subject: Asteroid Research Expedition*

*# Message Begins*

The ZAB-JPC-RCI has now triangulated the position of the gate-bearing asteroid previously reported in Issue #1 of the Initiative's Journal, and we are preparing a ship-borne expedition to the location. We hope this expedition proves an invaluable augmentation to our existing research efforts, especially as gate-borne expeditions have recently proved intractable (see Issue #3 article "Continued Unexpected Aggression of Asteroid Guardians").

In the spirit of open research and collaboration, capable explorers and researchers are invited to join us on what will no doubt be an exciting and profitable expedition. We are particularly seeking combat-capable individuals to spearhead exploration efforts and keep the still-agitated facility defences at bay.

Prospective participants should contact Curious Direction, Elegant Solution, or Ninth Truth for further details and to register interest.

*# Message Ends*

## Characters

- [Budding Leaf](#) - Alex ET
- [Delicate Harmony](#) - Mike
- [Gathering Flow](#) - Phil

## Summary

- Following the events of [Five There Were](#), a shaky alliance of Aspexx, Zeitgeist and the Borderland Botanists set out to investigate the 'asteroid' discovered on the previous mission. Two ships - the *Starlight Ebbing* and the *Unquiet Journey* - transport a variety of interested scientists from all factions, including the Party.
- Budding Leaf brings along their small piece of Hive IV
- After arrival, the party take a brief shuttle trip around the asteroid to see what it looks like from all sides, as well as investigating whether there are any alternative routes in apart from the open-to-space damaged rooms discovered by the Pentagonal Gate, since those currently appear to be full of angry rockwork.

- Sadly, there are not.
- The party do however discover that the 'asteroid' is even more clearly a constructed item, easily spaceship-size, made entirely of rock, in a pentagonal prism shape. At the gate chamber end of the prism there is some damage, leading to the broken open rooms. At the other end of the prism there is what appears to be massive blast damage - while there might once have been openings here too, the rock appears to have been melted and reformed in a huge explosion, leaving no way in.
- While flying around having a look, the party are also given various pieces of equipment deemed necessary - space suits, glow sticks and a summary of all research papers to date published about the Pentagonal Civilisation (over half of which have party members as authors...)
- The party, accompanied by Elegant Solution from Aspexx and Dr East Wind from Zeitgeist, enter the asteroid through the room adjacent to the gate chamber, which had the large metal mural in it - fighting off several waves of rockwork to do so.
- Heading into the undamaged chambers, they find some Crypt Monitors and a Crypt Cleanser attempting to maintain a large room whose walls are full of doors. The rockwork's programming is clearly a little confused, but they continue to do their jobs, spraying nasty spores into the vacuum of space and scanning ERROR whenever they have a chance. The party knock them down and then mostly ignore them thanks to Gathering Flow's Versatile Barrier. With this respite, they are able to investigate the doors on the walls and work out:
  - This appears to have been some kind of cryo chamber
  - The wall capsules contain organic pentapodal bodies, which are not as decayed as one would expect given the likely age of the facility, but which do not appear to be revivable to the party's understanding.
  - The party stare at these for a while, attempt to interface with the cryo maintenance system to understand its status, and consider various inadvisable options, but eventually decide not to further interface with the dead bodies of another species and leave for the next chamber
- Here, they find a variety of statues, and some other curious things.
  - Against two adjacent walls, statues of 5 pentapodal people
    - These have colour coding: one with a purple halo, one orange, one teal, one royal blue, one pink
  - Against the opposing (single) wall, a slightly larger statue of one pentapodal person
    - This one has a black halo
  - In the middle of the room, a spherical metal orb depicting a planet. One of the landmasses on the planet looks a lot like Kylal's northern continent (give or take a little continental drift), but the other one is in a position where Kylal has no southern continent...
  - Two strange piles of what appears to be dormant fungal growth in different positions on the floor
    - Budding Leaf, with their strong interest in flora and ability to communicate with fungi, investigates these. They are able to deduce:
      - These were the bodies of two pentapodes, sprawled on the floor in positions that do not look intentional. The fungus is related to the spores that the Crypt Cleanser was spraying, and has grown all over the bodies and consumed them until there was no nutrition remaining, since when it has been dormant.
  - On the wall behind the black halo statue, a smear of fungal growth across the wall. Budding Leaf surmises it might have grown on blood, smeared on the wall. Comparing the smear with one of the reference papers containing Pentagonal sigil 'translations' from shipheart interpretations during [Beneath The Surface](#), this is growing in a pattern which roughly matches the shape of the sigil meaning 'No Further Advice'.

- Further consulting this research paper, the party find that the sigil above the door of this room means 'Continuation', but they have no translations available for the sigils on the bases of the various statues.
- In the next chamber (sigil-title 'Renavigation'), they find a single, central, large chair carved with swirling patterns (similar to the mural's depiction of space). There is also a black metal circlet with a central black gem, apparently abandoned on the floor near the chair.
  - The party are very cautious around these, particularly the circlet, taking it in turns to consider touching and then deciding not to.
    - Budding Leaf (does anything with Hive IV?)
    - Gathering Flow calls Endeavour and asks it whether it can tell them what the circlet is. It takes one look and says, although it's never seen one in person before, that looks a lot like what it believes people generally refer to as 'ship heart relics.'
    - This does not encourage the party to engage with the circlet
    - Delicate Harmony takes his courage in his hands and, surrounded by so much of their ancient workings, opens his mind to the pathways and workings of the Pentagonal Civilisation, becoming aware of their workings and how to copy their work.
      - From the various knowledge he gains, he shares that the pentagonal civilisation did not create technology through science, but through the efforts of 'Bright Ones' and 'Heroes' who created marvels together. He strongly suspects that 'Bright Ones' were, or were similar to, ship hearts.

## Aftermath

- Bullet points of what characters did in the aftermath of the mission

## Consequences

- Breakdown of consequences for characters - rewards, effects, contacts.
- Also mention any wider consequences for the world

## All Characters

- Consequences

### Character 1

- Consequences

### Character 2

- Consequences

*Be sure to add tags for the characters*

[mission](#), [character 1](#), [character 2](#)

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