

Package Management

Initial Brief

Incoming Transmission

Source Identifier: Robust and Optimal Mainframe # Unquiet Journey

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

Subject: Troubleshooters Sought

Message Begins

The Various aboard the *Unquiet Journey* and/or Fleet 18 more broadly would appreciate the assistance of skilled troubleshooters. The problem is technological and/or biological in nature, and concerns the operation of our Various Forge. Little else is currently understood; skills in investigation, engineering, and/or combat would be of use.

Please assemble at the residential accommodation block aboard *Unquiet Journey* and ask for Optimal and/or Robust Mainframe.

Message Ends

Characters

- [Manifold Ghosts](#) - Phil
- [Delicate Harmony](#) - Mike

Summary

- The party take a shuttle to the *Unquiet Journey*, only to find the ship in total lockdown.
- Squeezing through a vent to bypass the locked bulkhead, they meet Robust Mainframe and Optimal Mainframe. They explain that what started as an increasing number of isolated faults has, since putting out their call for help, rapidly escalated into widespread faults across the ship. In particular, the forging machines have been seriously malfunctioning, and the Captain has put the whole ship on lockdown in an attempt to contain whatever the problem is. The one sliver of hope is that the increased number of faults has made a point of origin clear: a storage area in the maintenance section of the ship.
- Using an access card provided by the Mainframes to get through bulkheads, the party make their way through the forging rooms and the malfunctioning machines within. It quickly becomes apparent that an infestation of Mytenean Cave Slugs is the culprit - these have been getting into the machines and damaging them from the inside.
- In one of the rooms, a large number of slugs have got into the augmentation chambers of one of the machines, which churns out an endless number of slugs with Various augmentations until the party destroy the machine.
- Banging from the other side of this room's bulkhead prompts the party to cautiously open it, and a large creature shambles through. It appears to be a large conglomeration of slug

biomass, though is not hostile to the party. After defeating the heavily augmented granddaddy cave slug that was chasing it, the party inspect the creature and realise it is a Various who was inside an augmentation machine when slugs infested it, with the result that many slugs have been grafted onto it. The party attempt to help the creature by giving it slugs to harvest, but conclude that helping this person is beyond their ability.

- Delicate Harmony attempts to repair the destroyed forging machine as part of the attempt to help, but fails catastrophically - reducing the machine to dust and then inhaling a large amount of the dust.
- The party arrive at the storage room at the centre of the problems. Hundreds of crates are stored here, containing supplies delivered to the *Unquiet Journey*. Both Manifold Ghosts and Delicate Harmony interface with the computer terminal here, which records the supply deliveries as well as hooks into other systems on the ship. Between them they learn that a large proportion of the supplies are sourced from Mytene, and almost all deliveries from Mytene are routed through the Mytene Primary Spaceport. Those crates, upon inspection, contain mini cave slugs; crates that did not pass through the Spaceport do not.
- While most supplies are commonly-known consumables, the party are intrigued by a substance simply labelled 'The Extract'. Examining a crate containing it, they find it to be some kind of esoteric and highly effective bonding agent that is a crucial component of all Various forging. Manifold Ghost accidentally sticks their fingers together with it, but is able to carefully undo some of the damage with only moderate pain. Both Various pocket a container of Extract.
- Comparing the information learned to their existing considerations about how to complete the Mytenean Various Forge, Manifold Ghosts concludes that while the Extract is one piece of the puzzle solved, the big remaining question is what the core component of a Various Forge is that ties the whole thing together. The computer indicates where this could be found onboard the *Unquiet Journey*. The party choose to head there in order to check it has not been infested by slugs, and hopefully to understand more about what it is.
- The journey to the core indicates that the security surrounding it is watertight. The party meet with the Mainframe Twins and Captain Reassuring Heresy nearby, who confirm that the core has not suffered. The party explain their findings so far - in the process the Extract that they have pilfered is confiscated. The *Unquiet Journey* crew make it clear that no-one has ever been inside the core, nor does anyone know what it actually is - this thing dates from The Last Interstellar War. However, the Captain is able to provide Manifold Ghosts with the names of the four core components that the ship systems list.
- The crew impress upon the party that they need to deal with whatever the source of the slugs is - once new slugs stop arriving, the crew can deal with the existing infestation themselves. But without supplies from Mytene, the *Unquiet Journey* will not be able to function. The party make their way back to their shuttle.
- Unfortunately, their shuttle has a number of augmented slugs on the outside. Manifold Ghosts tinkers with a spacesuit to improve their natural ability to be in space - this only partially succeeds, so they ultimately choose to just wear a space suit. In the ensuing fight against the augmented slugs, one of the slugs is flung out into space. As it leaves ship heart range, the party observe that the augmented parts of the slug start to decay and fall off the slug - seeming to indicate that despite the slugs receiving Various augments, this alone does not seem to have made the slugs into Various. Or at least, not enough to make their augments resistant against the decay.
- With the slugs cleared, the party take the shuttle to Mytene Primary Spaceport. Leaving the shuttle, they are surrounded by panicked security forces, who have heard that the *Unquiet Journey* is under serious lockdown but not the cause. After tense negotiations and repeated medical scans for disease, decay, zombification, and more, the party are allowed to proceed to

the station's postal centre.

- The postal centre is staffed by a single overworked and stressed postmaster - Sympathetic Pat, a black and white Vyixian - who has a long queue of customers and little time or patience for the party's insistence that they have a slug problem. The party can't figure out a way past the security door into the post processing rooms, but eventually the door is opened from the other side, and a small child emerges. Manifold Ghosts takes the opportunity to hold open the door and talk to the child, quickly discovering that they are the postmaster's child, their name is Box, and they are *absolutely obsessed* with slugs.
- Box takes Manifold Ghosts to see their slug collection. This turns out to be a supply closet that is absolutely stuffed with hundreds of mini and midi cave slugs. Box wants to share their obsession with everyone, and so has been secretly stashing the slugs in all the post passing through the station!
- Manifold Ghosts takes Box back to Sympathetic Pat to finally prove that they have a slug infestation. While Box is distracted being scolded by Pat outside, Ghosts and Harmony take a flamethrower to the supply closet, and incinerate the slug farm. Box is absolutely, unconsolably distraught by this, being left with only a single slug in a party hat.

Aftermath

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

Consequences

The World

Knowledge about Various Forges and Various

The following would already have been known IC by all Various (and any non-Variou who had visited a Various Forge or otherwise had serious interest in the Various), but was not OC knowledge until this mission:

- No-one in the Keter Borderlands has complete knowledge of how to construct a Various Forge from scratch. (Or at least no-one has come forward as having that knowledge.)
- The augmentation machines in Various Forges are constructed from a mixture of mechanical and biological components - metal and plastic alongside flesh and bone. However, the machines themselves are not Various.
- The bio-mechanical nature of the augmentation machines is generally assumed to be a key part of what makes the Various 'work', and what makes them different from simple cybernetics. Although like most such things the reasons why are not well understood and are simply taken as rote knowledge.

The following is not widely known IC, but is known to this party and to anyone else who has ever done the experiment themselves:

- Sapience appears to be a pre-requisite for being Various. Grafting Various augmentations to a non-sapient creature will grant the creature use of those augmentations, but will not be decay-proof.

The following is not widely known IC, but is known to the highest-ranking crew of the *Unquiet Journey* and is now known to this party:

- A functioning Various Forge consists of:
 - Forge Core - special individual components required to bring the whole forge together, though exactly what most of these are is unknown
 - 'Sacrifice' - ???
 - 'THiNK' - ???
 - 'MedPod' - this might be a kind of highly advanced medical restoration chamber only afforded by the wealthy and powerful; if any exist in the Keter System there are unlikely to be many
 - 'Terraforming Residue' - ???
 - Forge Tech - by mass these are the vast majority of what is in a forge, and the part that users of the forge would see and be familiar with
 - Augmentation Machines - assorted biomechanical machines that build and install Various augmentations
 - Forge Consumables - materials used in the forging process
 - Mundane consumables such as oil, distilled water, polymers, etc
 - 'The Extract' - an esoteric liquid compound that is some manner of bonding agent used in the installation of all Various augmentations; the *Unquiet Journey* forge uses around 10 litres per day

Slug Infestations

- Any world or ship that has received postal shipments from Mytene in recent weeks has most likely also received Mytenean Mini Cave Slugs in their deliveries. (Strictly speaking this is only deliveries that have gone through Mytene Primary Spaceport - this is the vast majority of off-world post from Mytene, however bespoke couriers and other means of delivery also exist.)
- The infestation is unlikely to be problematic unless the destination has received an especially large quantity of deliveries in this time.
- The *Unquiet Journey* has entirely cleared their slug infestation.
- Whether cave slugs feature in other locations on future missions is left to GM discretion as to whether this is fun. The problem will likely deal with itself in a few weeks / months without further intervention, so no further action is required.

All Characters

- Consequences

Character 1

- Consequences

Character 2

- Consequences

[mission, manifold ghosts, delicate harmony](#)

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