

The Hunt For Crease's Bulk

Initial Brief

A message has been posted on a wide range of semi-official message boards (both physical and digital) relating to Craruan mechs, Scourges, hunting, and adventuring, as well as conspiracy sites, ghost- and folklore story zines and newspapers, etc, as well as discussed in the usual pubs and bars throughout the system. It reads as follows:

Crease's Bulk is REAL! You all thought it was just a folk tale, but it is real and it is out there! Riches beyond your wildest dreams, a chance to hunt a creature only seen every 100 years, a chance to get in - or back in - with the CDF, to collect the bounty on a notorious Scourge, you name it, this hunt has it.

Want to know more? Come to the Rocket Punch Tavern in North Ridge, Crarua! – For whatever reason, you've decided to follow up on this mysterious message, and you arrive at the Rocket Punch Tavern.

Characters

- [Languid_Relaxation](#) - Mike
- [Heightened_Serendipity](#) - Tamsin
- [Faulty_Banks](#) - Robin

Summary

- The party went to the Rocket Punch Tavern to follow up on rumours, meeting some of the locals. Serendipity left with a decent sized flask of Rocket Punch, which appeared to be mostly raw ethanol with a relatively small amount of fruit juice.
- They trekked to the Craruan border, being marginally impinged by crabs, and later very impinged by the Modular Enforcement Network Instances guarding the border from Scourge incursions. Having eventually defeated the Instance (at the cost of a Severe Injury to Faulty Banks) Serendipity hacked into it and left an angry comment in the code for the operators about their failsafes. The party also noted a drone going off to the west.
- They then arrived in an unnamed oceanside settlement, little more than a wharf and some warehouses really, where Relaxation talked his way onto the quite posh, quite new, quite well-armed boat of someone who was hunting the Bulk as well, and agreed to make Relaxation the first mate, given Relaxation's evident experience with this kind of thing.
- Setting sail on their newly-acquired ship they continued north out of Craruan territory into the wilds of Siruta, and were assaulted by Squeeple, who proved a tough but eventually winnable fight. Serendipity condensed some of the Squeeple's blood into a serum allowing two people to interconnect and heal one another.
- Reaching a substantial island to the north, they sailed along the coast until they found a wrecked ship. Their host planned to land, so they landed as well, and went their separate ways on their separate hunts. Investigating the ship, they found that it looked like a broadly spherical scoop had been taken out of the hundred-plus-year-old wreck, which was rotten but not Decayed, but

weirdly, it looked to have been carved away by people with tools. They also noted odd moving rocks which exploded at the slightest provocation, a trail of which led deeper inland. Serendipity used the remaining Rocket Punch to blow up the sandshark nest, and this triggered the brief appearance of an absolutely enormous sandshark, briefly.

- They next came across the Decayed remnants of a mechanoid of some sort, a slow, crawling hulk with two long, tentacled arms tipped with vicious claws. The Decayed entity managed to take down Banks, who found himself feeling a little weird once got back up, but with persistence they were able to defeat the creature and its annoying minion. Continuing to follow the trail of exploding rocks, they were able to knock one out, and identify it as a dog-sized, crab-like creature, but didn't poke it any further.
- Continuing inland they found a large, open area positively filled with weird glowing rocks, some of which turned out to be exploding creatures. There was also a huge, horse-to-elephant-sized glowing crablike creature, with huge glowing pustules on its back. Eventually taking the beast down, Banks was able to Scan it, and discovered as a result that it was a Scourgeling. Relaxation made an exploding sword from its remains at the cost of only most of his hair and a good chunk of his clothing catching fire.
- Then a concerned local, an Independent captain named Sunward Sail, hove into view with a small complement of his crew, including someone who the PCs recognised from North Ridge. Sail was definitely just checking up on the PCs having heard the big explosion from the larger Scourgeling dying. Definitely. But suitably persuaded that the PCs were fine, thank you, and that they hadn't encountered the Bulk yet, they left.
- Finally, the PCs tracked down the Bulk and after a long and difficult fight, were able to finally kill it - or just trigger it to explode? Maybe? Serendipity certainly saw a remnant of it, which drone footage suggested looked like its great, heavily-mandibled head, rocketing away on a ballistic trajectory, tens of miles or more to the north. The explosion left behind a huge crater of crystallised Scourge blood (crystal scrum), and attracted a range of local wildlife, as well as knocking Banks unconscious whilst embedding crystal scrum into them.
- Serendipity and Relaxation gathered what crystal scrum they could carry and watched on whilst Banks was assimilated by the Squeeple, before leaving, passing the pirates who were waiting in ambush by using Warp. Confronted by the horrifying sight leaving the crater behind them, Sunward Sail also sacrificed his crewman to flee.
- Both non-squeeplised PCs holed up in separate caves nearby, and each sent their drone back to the crater to harvest more crystal scrum. Relaxation focussed on speed, and arrived back at the ship early, but chased, and his drone got slightly squiddified, whilst Serendipity focussed on stealth and was slower, but safer. Fortunately, she was able to communicate with the ship to prevent Relaxation leaving without her.
- Holding off the Squeeple with the ship's guns, Relaxation waited for Serendipity to return before they both departed, leaving Banks to the Squeeple.

Aftermath

- Serendipity spends a little time trying to search for the Scourge head, and is able to use maps and ships in orbit to get a rough idea - to within ten miles or so - of where the head landed, but little more than that at this point (more would be a sequel or a player request adventure).
- She also visits the Aspexx experimental pharmaceuticals laboratory to request help with making more Scrum+. The Aspexx employees there are absolutely fascinated with the substance and more than willing to experiment on ~~her~~ with it.
- Both Serendipity and Relaxation report to the CDF and assorted others about the Squeeple horde assimilating people in the wilds north of Crarua, and about the giant sandshark.

- Relaxation uses his Altairian contacts to spread a mixture of truth and lies about the events, and is able to mostly pin the blame for the emerging Squeeple horde on Sunward Sail and his crew.
- Banks eventually crawls back to civilisation having passed through many miles of the Craruan wilds, and whilst they have a distinct squiddity to them, they claim that it is purely down to how many Squeeple they had to Harvest to survive.

Consequences

- You all get different stuff for this one!
- The Squintessence has had a taste of some surface goodies and it's stirring...

Languid Relaxation

- 5 Clout's worth of Crystal Scrum. This can be sold 1:1 for Clout with any faction, or kept if you want, but if you've not done Something with it - be it selling it or making something out of it - within the next three downtimes it will degrade into unusability.
- Mk2 to remain First Mate on the unnamed Scourge-hunting ship. Feel free to name both ship and captain, the ship is of good quality, and has a couple of cannons.
- Squidrone: your drone got a little infected by the Squintessence. When heading on a Mission, tell the GM that the Squintessence is aware of anything that the Drone sees... Functionally this is most important for flagging information for Katie but other GMs may wish to do things with it.

Heightened Serendipity

- 3 Clout with Aspexx and 5 clout specifically with Aspexx Experimental Pharmeceuticals and Weapons Lab for giving the Crystal Scrum to said lab. The lab is able to refine Scrum+ to make it more powerful, but also more addictive.
- You gain 2 vials of New Improved Scrum+
 - You may spend 5s consuming New Improved Scrum+ to gain for the rest of the Mission a use of MISS that you can recharge with 5s of meditation (sitting on the ground out of combat, no weapons in hand). There is no stacked bonus to this from consuming multiple vials.
 - Once per vial of Scrum+ you may call MASS SLOW as you move incredibly fast for 10s.
 - Once you consume your third vial of Scrum+ or New Improved Scrum+ you will gain the following effects:
 - Psychic Power - you may call YOU: PUSH once per Encounter and always have a use of MISS that recharges with 5s of meditation; OR you may choose the ability to communicate silently with your allies (put two fingers in the air when talking to them).
 - Reliance - you NEED more Scrum+. If you are unable to access Scrum+ during a Mission then you will lose 2 maximum body hits.
 - Once you consume your first vial of New Improved Scrum+ you will gain the following effects:
 - Fire In Your Veins - When you have a MASS SLOW stored from New Improved Scrum+, you take BURN at a 3s shorter duration.
 - Dependence - for every Encounter where you do not have a MASS SLOW from New Improved Scrum+ stored, you take BURN at a 5s longer duration.

- If you start taking Scrum+ and then stop before taking a third vial, you will gain the following effect:
 - Withdrawal - you have a stonking headache for the duration of your next Mission.
- Mk2: the Squintessence essence allows you to sacrifice your Drone for the rest of the encounter (i.e. lock out and Drone related abilities for that encounter) to give yourself a HEAL 3, which can be used even if you are downed.

Faulty Banks

- Severe Injury: kill tagged by the MENI - you always PING to SCAN calls. If you want to take any of the Various things that mess with how you respond to SCAN, talk to the refs.
- Curse: Decay: the next time you take a Severe Injury, it will be Decay related in some way.
- Curse: Squassimilation into the Squintessence: congratulations you're now a Squeeper agent. You gain access to the Squeeper Agent Experimental Tree, and may take a single Skill from it at this point. Future Skills must be earned as the tree indicates.
- 3 Clout with a faction of your choice.

[mission](#), [languid relaxation](#), [heightened serendipity](#), [faulty banks](#)

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