

The Man In The Moon

Initial Brief

Incoming Transmission

Source Identifier: Dr Neatly Birch

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

Subject: Expedition to Hive I

Message Begins

For the attention of the Keter System's most daring explorers.

As you are no doubt aware, the Hive V Observation Station is tasked with the ongoing observation and analysis of the assumed anomalous terraforming outcome on Hive IV. However, on occasion the orbital conditions of Hive's moon system permit us limited windows of observation onto Hive I, II, and III. Although these moons are unterraformed, we leverage these opportunities in case they shed any further light on their condemned sibling.

During one such recent opportunity, we have detected an anomalous signature coming from Hive I that warrants further investigation. As the observation window is rapidly closing and the signature shows signs of being mobile, I would like to commission an expedition to the affected area of Hive I in order to gather samples and perform reconnaissance.

Expedition participants should assemble at the Hive V Observation Station for briefing. It goes without saying that this expedition will involve an unquantified but plausibly significant exposure to manifestations of the Decay; I trust all applicants will bear these dangers in mind. Assuming that the expedition returns successfully from Hive I, there may be follow-up tasks depending on the samples gathered.

Thank you for your generous assistance.

Dr Neatly Birch Manager, Hive V Observation Station

Message Ends

Characters

- [Delicate Harmony](#) - Mike
- [Iron Cold](#) - Robin
- [Budding Leaf](#) - Alex

Summary

- The party meets Dr Neatly Birch at the Hive V Observation station for briefing. The plan is to drop the party as close to the detected signature on Hive I as possible and the party to find and

analyse the source of the signature. Once ready, the party are to summon a return pod to pick them up and return to Hive V to discuss their findings. They will need to act quickly when dealing with the drop pod and return pod in order to avoid consequences of the decay. The party are provided with atmo suits, sample containers, and a communicator link to assist them.

- The party land on Hive I in the drop pod, and quickly disembark. As expected, the more advanced parts of the drop pod (engines and such required for safe landing) begin to decay. Rather than stay to fight, the party wisely run away, heading towards the anomalous signature while pursued by decaying creatures.
- As they trek across Hive I, the party are set upon by animate clouds of rusty dust. Evidently a form of decay creature, these clouds seem immune to most attacks. However the party eventually determine that burning them seems to causing their particles to melt, neutralising them. The pursuing 'normal' decay creatures catch up with the party, who flee further.
- Getting closer to the signature, the party come upon a small underground cave with tunnels leading out, which is clearly unnatural. Exploring inside, they find the cave walls to be covered in intricate carvings. The party examine these carvings while fending off smaller animate clouds of decaying dust. The carvings appear to depict assorted humanoid figures in different situations.
- One of the tunnels has recent footprints leading out of it, which the party follow.
- The trail soon leads the party to what seems to be the source of the anomalous signature: a hulking humanoid robot. Despite clearly being advanced technology, this robot does not appear to be decaying, and is in fact readying itself for a fight against the horde of decay creatures that have been following the party.
- The party attempt to communicate with the robot, which appears to understand them but is incapable of vocalising. It does its best to communicate with gestures. The party suggest it returns with them, however the robot seems highly opposed to this. Instead, it digs out and hands to the party a box filled with letters addressed to individuals in the Keter System, and gestures that they should take this away with them.
- With the decay horde approaching (and now containing animate ball bearings formed by melting the dust clouds previously), the party summon their return pod. As they make a fighting retreat to its arrival position - for which they have limited time, as the pod can only spend limited time on the moon before itself decaying - they implore the robot to come with them, but it refuses. The robot marches away, blasting through the decaying creatures. The party make a last ditch attempt to subdue the robot by force to bring back with them, but despite their best efforts the robot escapes and the party are forced to retreat to the return pod.
- The party successfully make it back to the Hive V Observation Station, and debrief Neatly Birch on what happened. The party are aggravated that they were unable to bring back the robot, and a further mission down to Hive I to try again seems unwise. Dr Birch suggests that perhaps the box of letters holds the answer to what this robot is - maybe the individuals the letters are addressed to know more?

OC Note: the mission was abandoned at this stage due to OC inclement weather. Participants still receive XP as normal.

Aftermath

- *No downtimes submitted.*

Consequences

- A box of letters is in the possession of Dr Neatly Birch, which could be delivered in a future mission.
 - (N.B. letter physreps are with the refs)

All Characters

- +2 Clout with Hive V Observation Station

[mission](#), [delicate harmony](#), [iron cold](#), [budding leaf](#)

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Last update: **2023/12/30 19:35**

