

SERENITY

ROLE PLAYING GAME

OUT IN THE BLACK

WRITTEN BY

TRACY HICKMAN and LAURA HICKMAN

BASED ON A MOTION PICTURE SCREENPLAY BY

JOSS WHEDON





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THE WAY IT IS

There's things in the dark of the ground what's best left there, despite which the mind of man always seems to be conjuring ways to drag it into the light if the payoff is big enough. Them that do may not have the seemliest of reputations, so far as civilized folk are concerned, and might find themselves staring down the wrong end of the law. If that's the case, could be they find themselves planted right back there in the ground again on a more permanent basis. Guess there's a lot of sins hidden up in the dark and that's likely why the law is there to keep everything where it belongs. Trouble is that the gleam from that shiny badge sometimes blinds one to the blackest of hearts — 'specially in places where no one wants to see the light.

What Is This? My friend, you are holding an adventure for the *Serenity Role Playing Game*. It's a story that you — the Game Master — play with a group of friends. The players can use the crew of *Serenity*, the sample *Aces & Eights* crew, or even characters of their own creation. Study this adventure, do a little prep, and you'll be ready to send your crew *Out in the Black*.

HERE'S THE STORY

This adventure tells the tale of how the lost treasury of the Independents ended up lost in the first place — and perhaps the 'Verse was better for it.

In the independent mining boom-town of Frisco, located on the far side of Regina, there are more shadows than light — a fine place to lose something and let it stay lost. Unfortunately that can also easily include someone's life.

There are four factions in Frisco that have lots to do with the story so might as well tell about them now. One is the Mine Owners — a stubborn group allied with the Mining Guild, they spit in the face of the mighty Corone Mining Consortium. Another is the Miners — workers who have fled the slave-like conditions of the Corone camps for the freedom of the Guilds. Another is the 14 K Triad Tong — a Chinese merchant organization looking to take over the mine, and last but not least the Townsfolk — just regular folk trying to bring civilization to the uncivilized frontier.

All these folk were gettin' along more or less good when a rumor started that has proved as volatile as a shaped-charge in a mine drift. Seems the lost treasury of the Independents ended up here in Frisco and there's not a soul

or group touched by the news that isn't on the hunt — and not above letting you take a bullet if it helps their cause and hinders yours.

I wouldn't trust the new sheriff — most likely he's the one on the other end of the bullet that's headin' someone's way. Above all, keep clear of the local school marm, 'cause her ABC's are Assassination, Backstabbin', and Cheatin'.

Your Story & Your Crew

This here is a story told in the *Serenity* 'Verse and, as Game Master, you'll be the one telling it. It's a story that's told in many different places and, as the way of stories goes, the telling of it changes dependin' on who's doing the telling. That's shiny — it don't matter what *chwen joo* told the story elsewhere or how he told it. This is *your* story and you'll be tellin' it your way.

No one quite remembers who was in the story in the first place, so you and the players in your game will be tellin' it with the crew that you choose. Maybe they're all big, damn heroes or maybe they're all greenhorns just startin' out. (This tale is meant to be told for a Heroic crew, so if you tell this tale with characters of less stellar capabilities, then you'll need to ease up on them a mite — or make things tougher for Big Damn Heroes.)

Making Friends (Relationships)

Funny how people you've known in the past slip your mind for the longest time and then — *jahn!* — you suddenly remember that bar fight on Regina and it all comes back. That sort of thing runs true in the telling of this tale. The crew is going to meet people new to the players, but not necessarily the crew.

Point is that the crew is going to meet people they *have* met before — even if they don't recall doin' so right away. Crew members who have Friends in Low Places (or High Places for that matter!) are going to find themselves face to face with these friends whether they like it or not. Sometimes it's good to have friends — sometimes it ain't.

As the GM for the game, whenever the crew meets an NPC the story says they already know, you should encourage the crew in "story language" to pick up the relationship, letting them know this person is someone they have not seen in a long while, but who obviously knows them well. Have the NPC use phrases like:

• "Oh, sure, you remember me, Mal! Of course, you were pretty drunk at the time..."

- “You always were a kidder, Zoe! As if you’d ever forget your old (pal, war buddy, fiancé)”

- “Oh, you don’t have to pretend on my account, Jayne! I’ve gotten over it! I’ve learned to forgive you for what you did to me.”

- “Somethin’ happen to you, Wash? You’re a little slow on the uptake. Run into a bulkhead one too many times, eh?”

- “Oh, don’t be so modest, Kaylee! Remember the time when you and I... (proceed to tell an embarrassing story about the other person—maybe that foofy pink ball gown...)

Such “long lost acquaintances” will persist in their insistence that the crew member knows them until the crew member just gives into it — and preferably starts telling stories about their “new old friend” as well.

The Tellin’ of the Tale

This story is told in four episodes. Each episode is divided into acts that may be comprised of a single scene or several scenes depending on how the act is played out. The episodes and acts are given in the correct order to make the story work. What takes place inside the acts and especially in sideshow scenes may happen in any kind of order — so it’s important that you keep the whole picture of what is goin’ on in your mind as you tell the tale.

Acts that have only one scene and all scenes and sideshows follow this order:

- **How It Is:** This first part sets up the scene, paints the backdrop, and puts the chairs on the stage, so to speak. It usually starts with boxed text—colorful prose that you can either read to the players or use as a guide for your own words and fancy description.

- **Problems:** Things don’t stay peaceful for long. Every scene has a problem or two for the crew that they are goin’ to have to either get past or get buried. Good or bad, rich or poor, pleasantly helpful or downright ornery — here’s where you’ll also find the most important folks populatin’ the scene the crew is in. Most often as not, you’ll want to keep their stats in front of you.

- **New Way of Things:** Now the crew has to clean up the mess. When they come out the other side of a problem — if they live through it — then some things will have changed. In this part of the scene, the crew examines the results of what they did. Might be the problem is solved or might be the crew now has even bigger problems!

Note: Words in all capitals are either Task Difficulty Levels (like EASY, HARD, FORMIDABLE), or Skills or Abilities (like AGILITY, PILOT, or LEAKY BRAINPAN). Thus, when you read a phrase like: “Pilots find landing in the steep canyon FORMIDABLE... this means that the Task Difficulty Level for the described action is, indeed, Formidable and requires a roll of 15 or higher to succeed. In this way, you will know what’s what about rolling dice without interruptin’ the flow of the tale.

A Footnote on Footnotes

This adventure has a number of footnotes scattered about in it. Some of these are translations of the Chinese words that crop up in conversation from time to time. Others give a little history of Earth-that-Was (ETW). These notes are meant to clue you in on where the *tian di wu yohn* authors got their ideas for names, places, or story elements. It’s the real history behind the myth.

A Word About “Brigit”

There’s a little filly in this story we call “Brigit”. No one really knows her real name, though there’s a lot who know her by other names — and some of them not that kindly. In our story here she’s known as “Elizabeth” or “Brigit” — and even by some as “Saffron.” But no matter what name she’s usin’ at the time, she’s a pretty, smilin’, connivin’ snake that will sidle up to you sweet as cream one minute and leave you naked in the desert the next.

Just to keep the record straight, any time you see a woman’s name appear in quotation marks, you’ll know that no matter what name you’re reading, we’re talking about this same “Brigit” just playing another part and making another mark.

If the crew happens to include someone from the crew from that particular Firefly class ship named *Serenity* then you should know that Capt. Malcolm Reynolds and “Saffron” (as he knows her) have an extra special relationship — they were married on Triumph, although the fact of it escaped the captain’s notice at the time. Since our “Mrs. Reynolds” ended up puttin’ Mal and his crew in a place where they almost ended up dead, getting these two together again should prove volatile.

On the other hand, if the crew is their own, then your crew will have no history regarding “Brigit.” Some things a body just has to learn for himself. Put another way, if “Brigit” don’t kill you, she’ll make you stronger.

The Story and the Town

There are two “books” in this adventure that work together to help you tell this tale: the story book you’re readin’ right now entitled “Saffron’s Star” and the “Frisco Town” setting book.

The “Saffron’s Star” book is where you’ll find everything about the telling of the story proper. The “Frisco Town” book provides descriptions of the town so that the crew can go pretty much everywhere they want—explore the town, get to know the people, and occasionally bump into little mini-adventures (called sideshows) that can happen around the town.

As you’re perusin’ the “Frisco Town” book, you may wonder why the interior of every building, hotel, shack, tent, and cave does not have its own map. We ain’t exactly bothered to give the exact location of every fourteen-inch spittoon. Let’s face it, we don’t even know if there are any spittoons in the whole gorram adventure. This is your story to tell and settin’ up the details of the scene is often going to be up to you. We’ll sketch out the important broad strokes for you—the structure and the basics of what is happenin’, but it is up to you to provide the details that make it come alive. Whenever someone asks what their surroundings look like, use the general description given in this adventure as a guideline and then add the details that you think make sense — including spittoons if you like. Remember, if you describe the details of location to the players, it’s probably a fair bet that they’re going to use what they see somehow, though often not in ways it was intended.

So, what do you do when your player turns to you and asks you if there is a spittoon or a whip or a gun nearby that they can use? My answer is a definite “maybe” — just like maybe he’ll hit someone when he swings a fist or

maybe she’ll manage to duck a blow. Simply assign an Action Difficulty number according to the kind of object requested. If a character is in a bar and asks if there is a bottle nearby he can grab to use for a weapon; that would be an EASY difficulty. If he is in the middle of the desert miles from any town and asks the same thing, that same request will probably be HARD. If he’s floating in the depths of the Black and asking if there is a bottle at hand that would be IMPOSSIBLE. Back in the bar, if he should ask if a gun is just lyin’ around with no owner — that might be FORMIDABLE. Askin’ if there is a pink llama at the bar — well, we’re on to RIDICULOUS.

Finally, remember that the Gamemaster giveth and the Gamemaster taketh away: stuff breaks, so if you manage to give the players something a bit overpowering — it may run out of gas or ammo or get just plain tuckered out.

It’s time to hit the Black, friend!



EPISODE 1

HAULIN' ICE

Wherein a little job pickin' up a load of ice brings its own complications when a group of stranded miners take it into their heads to fly the tai kong out.

ACT I: WHAT'S DONE IS DONE

The story's been hid up for a lot of years — about how Colonel Maddoc of the Independents left the front of the Unification War in a mighty hurry with a secret so important that people have died just to keep it hidden — and all because of a woman.

Seems that old Maddoc was lookin' to depart the field of battle a bit prematurely in a commandeered freighter named the *Lucius Newberry*¹. Maddoc had some cargo with him and his squad of Overlanders loaded the heavy cargo into the hold at the direction of Colonel Maddoc. Not even the two soldiers who went him, Lt. Kombe and Sgt. Hawkes, knew what was actually in the heavy, sealed crates.

Seems, however, that every man has his weak spots and Col. Maddoc's was a girl by the name of "Elizabeth Alcott-Stimpson" — supposedly a refined local debutant caught up in the horrors of the war. In the true way of it, however, 'Elizabeth Alcott-Stimpson' was an operative who sold information to the Alliance. Although Maddoc never divulged the exact nature of the cargo to "Elizabeth", he let slip the secret that his mission was to secure a treasure worth entire worlds. "Elizabeth" passed word that Maddoc was up to somethin' to Major Heaton of the Alliance Intelligence — a man with whom she was on more than friendly terms, and with whom she struck a deal to relieve the Colonel of his secret cargo and keep it for themselves. Their plan was for "Miss Alcott-Stimpson" to board the freighter with the Colonel while Major Heaton set out with a hastily gathered squad of troops to stop them before the freighter could leave atmo.

Fate was not kind to the Major — he was prevented from making his rendezvous when

¹ Earth-that-Was: The first *Lucius Newberry* was a 115-foot passenger boat that went sank in 65 feet of water in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin in 1891 after burning to the waterline.

his ship was blown from the sky by ground fire. Heaton died, forgotten by all except the few who survived the crash. The *Lucius Newberry* departed — with the Colonel promising his men remaining behind that he, Kombe, or Hawkes would come back for them.

Maddoc left atmo and never returned.

Some say the curse got him before he could come back. Some say he was cursed because he didn't come back. It don't matter which is right. What matters is that "Miss Elizabeth's" plans were thwarted, which meant she had to decide on a new plan of action. In order to commandeer the ship, she let slip the secret to the ship's pilot — a man by the name of Benny Xiau, who let it slip to a few others. The crew mutinied, plannin' to get their hands on the treasure. When the smoke cleared, Col. Maddoc was dead and a very angry 'Miss Elizabeth' found that Benny Xiau was no more trustworthy than herself. He was a member of a Tong and he and his fellow Tong members had no intention of sharin' with anyone else. Benny tossed "Elizabeth" in with the rest of the crew to be cast adrift in one of the ship's shuttles.

Captain Melody Josephs, the master of the *Lucius Newberry*, and her chief mechanic named Zebediah Marx joined "Miss Elizabeth," Lt. Kombe, and Sgt. Hawkes in the shuttle. No one aboard the shuttle knew the exact nature of the cargo that had caused their downfall.

The last any of them saw of the *Lucius Newberry* was the glow of her engines as she fled into the Black at the hands of the mutinous pirates. The fate of the *Lucius Newberry* was never known, although there were stories that Benny Xiau survived. As to the fate of "Miss Elizabeth," she has vanished.

The Game Master (GM) should choose one of the following flashback scenes to start the adventure and set up Act II. Each scene indicates an Asset or Liability which makes one of the crew eligible to participate in the scene. Match one scene to a crew member with the Asset or the Liability in order to determine which crew member will become the Main Flashback Character. Where more than one member of the crew may logically be present in the flashback, feel free to include them as well. Other flashback scenes may take place later in the adventure when they are triggered by the mentioning of names or events during the course of the adventure. If and when such flashbacks occur, simply return to the appropriate scene in this act and play the flashback scene.

SCENE 1: RUMORS OF WAR

A scene for those who fought for the Alliance or who have Friends in High Places. Those who were in Serenity Valley say it happened there, but could be it happened elsewhere.

The battle is raging in the valley below. You stare down at the little ant-like people below and you feel strangely detached as your ship flies above the carnage. The cramped compartment of the Alliance ASREV is stifling. Other grunts are jammed in around you, wondering, like you, what the Joo Fuen Chse is goin' on. You were hastily packed into the ship less than half an hour ago. You glance over at Major Heaton who is gazing intently out the front view ports, his hands gripping the headrests of the twin pilot chairs in front of him. His aide stands behind him. Both look excited and eager.

How It Is (Setup):

If the crew fought for the Alliance, then they will be a member of the squad hastily assembled to go on this mission. If the crew has Friends in High Places, then they have been invited to go on this mission by Major Heaton in order to partake in “an opportunity of several lifetimes” — a phrase which the Major will use in trying to reassure everyone on the mission.

Up at the end of the valley, a freighter waits at the top of the arroyo. It's HARD to make out the ship's registry, since the transponder is being blocked, but this freighter is the *Lucius Newberry*. The Major tells everyone that their mission is to stop the ship and board it.

Heaton appears to be very excited — nearly fanatical about the mission. If pressed for details, he will smile cryptically and say something like the following:

“The war's ending, soldier! You know what it's like when something comes to a sudden end? It all falls apart. That's what's happening out there right now — it's all falling apart! And when that happens, fortune can fall with it — right into our pockets. And those who know how to hang onto fortune are the ones who come out ahead.”

Suddenly there is a flash from the ground and a stream of tracer shells heads toward you. A hole in the forward viewport suddenly smashes open. The pilot slumps forward in his seat. The skiff lurches suddenly . . .

Problems:

Groundfire: A large ground flack cannon is firing at the ASREV from the end of the canyon and manages to hit the ASREV. The pilot is killed. Major Heaton is thrown to the deck. He has no piloting skills anyway. It's up to the player(s) to try to fly her in. Whoever

is piloting the ship for the crash should make a Ship's Agility + Pilot Skill roll, then compare the results to the table below.

Alliance
Short Range
Enforcement
Vessel (ASREV)

Dimensions:

83x48x20 feet

Tonnage: 40tons.

Speed Class: 5 cruise / 7 hard-burn

Crew Quarters:

4 seat cockpit, with 2 cramped bunked located behind

Fuel Capacity: 1 ton (500 hours)

Cargo Capacity / Maximum Deck Load:

4-ton bomb bay; 8 tons of external weapons

Passenger Capacity:

14



Agi d10, Str d2, Vit d6, Ale d6, Int d4, Wil d4, Init d10+d6, Life 6. Everybody has one. Aerial transport operations / Gunship d4, Perception/Search d4, Space Transport Operations/Gunship d4. Complexity: average.

Weapons: One 1-pound autocannon with 200 rounds. Usually, p to 8,000 pounds of bombs and 16,000 pounds of missiles. However, load-out for this mission excluded any bombs or missiles as the bay was stripped for the squad.

Major Evan Heaton

Agi d6, Str d6, Vit d8, Ale d6, Int d6, Wil d4, Init d6+d6, Life 12.

Assets: Military Rank [Minor]

Complications: Weak Stomach [Major]

Skills: Athletics d4, Discipline d6, Guns d6 / Pistol d8, Knowledge d6 / Military Regulations d10.

Weapons: Pistol (DMG d6W, RNG 100, ROF 3, MAG 8)

What He Knows: The Major knows nothing about the nature of the treasure being loaded on the *Lucius Newberry* but will just go on and on about how the war is nearly over and how this may be their chance of making it out of the war with something for themselves.

New Way of Things (Results):

This flashback does not end well! Read the following aloud to the players before going to Act II:

The wreck of your ship erupts with a blast of flame, hurling debris around you and searing your flesh. You gaze up, longing for the cold freedom of the Black.

Otherwise, return to the point in the game where the flashback occurred.

SCENE 2: ABANDONED

(A scene for those who fought for the Browncoats or anyone who has Military Rank. Those who were in Serenity Valley say it happened there, but could it could have happened elsewhere.)

*The transport ship flashes sporadically into existence in front of you, its hull appearing and disappearing in the smoke of the explosions taking place in the valley all around you. You can just barely make out the name of the ship on the side of its hull — the *Lucius Newberry*.*

You struggle up the ramp, trying to carry your end of a long, heavy crate — one of many crates — that your squad has been loading into the ship. The crates are stacked nearly to the ceiling of the cargo hold. They are being secured by the ship's crew with Lt. Kombe and Sgt. Hawkes supervising the loading.

TABLE - Piloting the ASREV

You completely FAILED at pilot school, as well as in handling this wounded craft.	The ASREV is screaming as it plummets toward the ground. You hear Major Heaton yelling over the sound of gunfire. "Elizabeth! I'm still going to try to make it—" The ASREV explodes on impact, throwing the PCs clear of the wreck and leaving them pretty mangled. Major Heaton dies in the crash.
Even an AVERAGE pilot can aim for the rocks.	You struggle to control the ASREV, but it flips over, crashing through a pinnacle of rock at the top of a cliff. The ship splits in two, tumbling down a cliff to land in a flaming mass at the base. You survive, but Major Heaton dies in your arms. He babbles, "The <i>Lucius Newberry</i> ! Treasure worth worlds . . ."
It's HARD to crash the ship into the trees.	The ASREV breaks up as it slams into a grove of trees. You survive the crash in the torn cockpit and discover Major Heaton dying. His last words are, "Elizabeth — the wealth of worlds could have been ours!"
It's FORMIDABLE to manage to guide the ship into an open field.	The ASREV pinwheels across the field, plowing up the earth until it finally comes to rest. You are pretty well banged up, and Major Heaton is dying. His last words are, "Get to Elizabeth! She's on the <i>Lucius Newberry</i> ! Tell her the treasure is hers now."
It's HEROIC to skip the ship across the top of a watering pond.	The ASREV hits the surface of the pond — an explosion of white under the light of the stars. The ship settles against the opposite shore and you survive, but Major Heaton is dying. He pulls out his pocket watch and presses it into the hands of one of the PCs, saying: "Get this to Elizabeth! She's on the <i>Lucius Newberry</i> . Tell her I loved her — and that she'll have to buy her own world now." The pocket watch, when opened, contains a picture of the Major and the beautiful "Elizabeth."

How It Is (Setup):

The crew is part of a detail assigned to assist in hauling the cargo from a bunker complex at the top of a ridge in the valley. No one in the detail is armed with anything more than a side-arm pistol.

Problems:

Secret Cargo: None of the squad knows what's in the crates — not even the Lieutenant or the Sergeant — and the Colonel just tells the character to be a good soldier and obey orders without question. If any of the crew has a NOSE FOR TROUBLE, SHARP SENSE or a TRUSTWORTHY GUT, he might couple that with ALERTNESS as they help load these crates aboard the *Lucius Newberry*. If so, they come up with the results listed in the table below.

Left in the Dirt: The Colonel has no intention of taking the squad with him. He orders the squad off the boat — an order which all the NPCs present will obey. He will reassure any who ask him that another ship is waiting for them to clear the landing zone, then it will land and take all of them off world. The Colonel is lying. Some of the crew might suspect he's lying, but he and Lt. Kombe and Sgt. Hawkes are all carrying bigger weapons and they manage to convince everyone it would be safer to stay behind.

Sad to tell, regardless of the actions of the crew, no one will be able to get on this boat. Either they will be left staring at the receding ship or they will be wounded in the fight that they will lose.

Colonel Bufford Maddoc

Agi d8, Str d10, Vit d8, Ale d6, Int d6, Wil d6, Init d8+d6, Life 14.

Assets: Friends in High Places [Minor], Friends in Low Places [Minor]

Complications: Greedy [Minor], Overconfident [Minor]

Skills: Discipline d6, Perception d6, Knowledge d6 / Military Regulations d8, Guns d6 / Pistols d10

Weapons: Pistol (DMG d6W, RNG 100, ROF 3, MAG 8)

Good looking in a blonde, baby-faced way, Colonel Maddoc was a dedicated believer in the Independent Cause — so long as it suited his ambitions. Now, however, “Elizabeth” has convinced him that the Independent movement is lost and every man should look to his own future. The Colonel was assigned to guard the valuable items of the treasury of the Independent Faction. (He does not know the true nature of what he has been asked to guard.) He has refused to tell his beloved “Elizabeth” the nature of the contents. Maddoc plans to arrange a deal with the Alliance Military to hand over the treasure in return for a full pardon and a cushy job at HQ — another fact he has kept from “Elizabeth.”

Lt. Erastus Kombe

Agi d6, Str d8, Vit d8, Ale d6, Int d6, Wil d8, Init d6+d6, Life 16.

Complications: Weak Stomach [Minor]

Skills: Athletics d6, Discipline d6, Guns d6 / SMG d8, Knowledge d6

Weapons: Submachine Gun (DMG d6W, RNG 60, ROF 3SBA, MAG 35)

Erastus is a tall and stocky black man with a steel-eyed look, closely cropped black hair, and a set jaw. He has served on the Colonel's staff for almost his entire military career. Erastus knows they are stealing treasure from the Independents, but he does not know any more than that. He is convinced that his old friend, Colonel Maddoc, will take care of him. He will be sadly disappointed. This is the same Erastus Kombe — albeit much older — who appears in Scene 3: “Confessions”.

TABLE - Observation

You may be a good soldier, but you FAIL at noticing much of anything around you...	You notice that the crates are sealed tightly.
Even an AVERAGE observation would tell you...	In addition to the above, you notice that an attempt has been made to conceal the writing on the crates. It is also obvious to you that there will not be enough room on the boat for your squad and the cargo.
It's HARD, but you manage to make out...	In addition to the above, you notice that you can still read some of the writing. The legible part reads: “...dent Treasury Control #8926...”
Though finding out anything under the baleful gaze of the Sergeant is FORMIDABLE you see...	In addition to the above, you notice that a woman is standing next to the Colonel on a platform near the top of the ship's cargo hold. Though you cannot see her face through the smoke, you can hear her voice. “Just wait a few more minutes! Then it will be just you and me, Buford — and we'll never want for anything again.”

Sgt. Sam Hawkes

Agi d6, Str d6, Vit d6, Ale d8, Int d6, Wil d8, Init d6+d8, Life 14.

Assets: Heavy Tolerance [Minor], Trustworthy Gut [Minor]

Complications: Coward [Minor]

Skills: Athletics d6, Discipline d6, Guns d6 / Shot Gun d8, Knowledge d6, Scientific Expertise d6 / Geology d10

Weapons: Shotgun (DMG d10W, RNG 10, ROF 2, MAG 10)

Gangly and raw-boned, with big brown eyes and a gawky expression, Samuel Hawkes entered the Independent Army at about same time as Erastus. Unlike the lieutenant, the sergeant finds himself increasingly disillusioned about life in the military. His only goal now is to get out of this war alive, which is why he goes along with the Colonel's orders. Samuel and Erastus are good friends, though outsiders may think otherwise, for they incessantly argue over everything. This is the same Sam Hawkes the crew will meet in Act III: The Lullabelle Mine.

New Way of Things (Results):

If this is the flashback that starts the game, then read the following aloud to the players before going to Act II:

You watch as the flames of the Lucius Newberry light the night sky. You realize that the Colonel lied to you — no rescue ship is coming. You have been left here to die.

Otherwise, return to the point in the game where the flashback occurred.

SCENE 3: CONFESSIONS

A scene for those who have Medical Expertise or for Shepherds or those who have Religiosity or any who might be in a position to hear the confessions of a dying man.

Two men stand facing each other on either end of a dusty street. The sun shines hot down on them. One of the men is a tall, broad shouldered man with black skin and close cropped, graying hair. His clothes are threadbare, hanging from his frame. His eyes are bright, but seem to be having trouble focusing due to a prolonged acquaintance with Mudder's Milk. There's no mistaking his past: he

still wears a faded, worn brown coat. He staggers as he stands there. His hands are shaking.

At the other end of the street stands a rail-thin young man with a far steadier hand and a smirk on his face. The townsfolk hang back, watching the fight for lack of anything better to do.

The tall black man slowly begins to raise his shaking hands.

The young man slips his gun from his holder with lightning speed, its hammer releasing the moment the barrel comes up level.

The black man staggers back, then falls heavily to the street.

Mortally wounded, he sees you standing nearby and starts pulling himself painfully across the ground toward you, trailing a dark stain in the dirt behind him.

"Please!" he calls out to you. "Please don't let me die with this curse on me!"

How It Is (Setup):

The crew just stumbled onto this fight — and now that it's over their work has just begun. A dying man who needs some absolution, and the crew are the only ones who can help him.

Problems:

Hearing the Confession: Erastus is dying, but the crew can ease his pain by using MEDICAL EXPERTISE, RELIGIOSITY or persuasive charm. The results will depend on how well the crew takes care of the dying Erastus Kombe. See the table on the following page.

Erastus Kombe

Agi d6, Str d6, Vit d4, Ale d6, Int d6, Wil d6, Init d6+d6, Life 10.

Complications: Weak Stomach [Minor]

Skills: Athletics d4, Discipline d4, Guns d6 / SMG d8, Knowledge d6

Weapons: Pistol (DMG d6W, RNG 100, ROF 3, MAG 8)

This is the same Erastus as in Scene 2, although older and much the worse for wear.

New Way of Things (Results):

If this is the flashback that starts the game, then read the following aloud to the players before going to Act II:

TABLE - Hearing the Confession

Your FAILED attempts at comforting have the soothing effects of a cheap "Get Well Soon" card...	The dying man's muscles relax as though he is giving up. His voice is hollow and tinged with fear. "The curse! The curse of the <i>Lucius Newberry</i> ! Keep the treasure, boys! Don't take me!"
It's HARD to concentrate on the ramblings of this poor, old drunk, but...	You look around for the gunman, but the young man is nowhere to be seen.
It's a FORMIDABLE act to bring comfort to a mortally wounded man and yet...	The dying man's body convulses in agony as he grabs you and pulls you closer. "They took it from us! A treasure worth worlds! They took it and all they left was a curse! There's only Sam Hawkes left now — you gotta warn him! Warn him about the curse!"
	You look for the gunman, but the young man is nowhere to be seen.
	The taut muscles in the dying man's face relax. "You're a good soul — please, take the treasure. Most folk think it's nothin' but a ghost story, but I know where the ghost ship fell ... the back side of Regina. All you gotta do is ask..."
	You look up and see the young gunman. He shakes his head. "Look's like I'm the one taking out the trash." He pulls his hat brim down over his face and walks away.
You are absolutely HEROIC as you bring peace to this dying man and ...	The taut muscles in the dying man's face relax into a look of peace. "Thank you. Please, you gotta ... you gotta find Sam Hawkes and save him, too. He's cursed same as me. Tell him the <i>Lucius Newberry</i> ain't no ghost — I heard it fell somewhere on the backside of Regina. Beware the Triad Tong! Tell him the Triad..."
	You look up and see the young gunman pushing through the crowd. He shakes his head as he looks down. "Pathetic! Hey, old timer; you tell the dead who's taking out the trash now. It's Lucas Pearson sent you to the refuse dump." He pulls his hat brim down and walks away.

You look down to see the empty eyes of a dead man staring back at you. His hand feels as cold as ice to your touch.

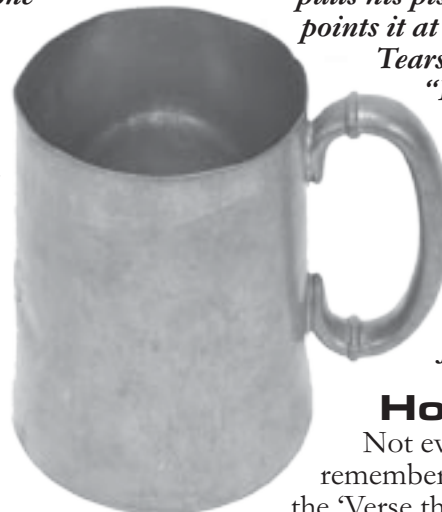
Otherwise, return to the point in the game where the flashback occurred.

SCENE 4: ONE DRINK TOO MANY

A scene for those who have Friends in Low Places — or those who spend too much time in the saloons!

You've been in so many bars, they are all starting to look alike. Each is the same — as though someone just pushed a button on one of the Core worlds and manufactured them one right after the other.

You see that this one pretty much fits the standard bill: one regulation bar, one regulation set of tables and chairs, one regulation bartender, and two regulation waitresses with regulation leering smiles, and the regulation bleary-eyed drunks. You're thinkin' you might join them if your contact doesn't



arrive soon with the details of your next semi-respectable job.

Suddenly, things start to get interestin'. One of the drunks climbs up onto a table in the middle of the room and begins babbling, "I don't want to wake up! I don't want to remember! Give me a drink! I need a drink now!"

Everyone stares at the man, who weaves unsteadily on the table.

"I'm cursed! Gotta get rid of the curse!" he bellows and he turns his unfocused eyes on you. "You! You were there! You know about the curse and the treasure!"

He manages to scramble down off the table and weaves toward you. He pulls his pistol out of his holster ... and points it at his own head.

Tears are streaming down his face.

"Please. I've tried to drink the curse away ... and it don't work. Maybe this be the only way — to blow it clean out of my head." His hand is shaking. You gotta help me. I don't want no treasure. I just want to be free."

How It Is (Setup):

Not even the GM, let alone the crew, remembers in which of the many bars in the Verse this takes place. Doubtful if they even remember the planet. The point is that this

drunk is waving a loaded weapon in a crowded bar and no one is sure just when it might go off.

Problems:

Talking Down the Drunk: The drunken man is Zebidiah Marx, a down-on-his-luck ship's engineer who is one of the few survivors of the flight crew of the *Lucius Newberry*. Players may make two attempts at persuading Zeb to drop the gun, taking the best result of the two attempts. They may try to reason with him or may opt to use physical persuasion as their first of two actions.

If any of the crew try to talk or threaten old Zeb, they might use either ALERTNESS or INTELLIGENCE coupled with an appropriate Trait or Skill such as ALURE, FRIENDS IN LOW PLACES, INTIMIDATING MANNER, STEADY CALM or INFLUENCE in order to get him to drop his gun and offer up some information.

As for physical persuasion, what sort of a low-life snake beats up an old drunk? Physical persuasion modifies other talk or threatening actions above. For every point of physical damage inflicted on Zeb, the GM may add that number to the following non-physical persuasion attempt. Any physical persuasion that results in more than 4 points of any kind of damage, treat the Action Difficulty as a failure on the chart, regardless of any other rolls.

Zebidiah Marx

Agi d6, Str d8, Vit d6, Ale d6, Int d4, Wil d6, Init d6+d6, Life 12.

Assets: Heavy Tolerance [Minor]

Complications: Superstitious [Minor]

Skills: Athletics d4, Guns d6 / Pistol d10, Knowledge d6, Mechanical Engineering d6 / Repairs d12, Technical Engineering d6

Weapons: Pistol (DMG d6W, RNG 100, ROF 3, MAG 8)

Zebidiah is average height, way too thin, shakes all over. He was the ship's engineer aboard the *Lucius Newberry* back during the Unification War. He has not been able to get a regular position since. As one of only two crew member who survived the mutiny of a legendary "cursed" ghost ship, no other ships would carry him, let alone employ him.

New Way of Things (Results):

If the results were anything other than a failure, then read the following aloud to the players before going immediately either to Act II or returning to the point in the adventure where the flashback started:

Zebidiah Marx collapses onto the table, babbling. "I'm cold ... I'm so cold... It's the cold of the Black ... Never leaves your bones ..."

TABLE - Talking Down the Drunk

Your FAILED attempts at persuasion ...	Zeb jumps back from the table, brandishing his gun. "Chui Se, Vultures! You think you'll find the <i>Lucius Newberry</i> and claim the treasure for yourselves! It's cursed, I tell you. And I'm doing you a favor by saving you the pain right now!" Zeb waves his weapon and pulls the trigger. A shot rings out ...
You have an EASY time soothing this old drunk ...	Zeb lowers his gun and collapses into a chair across the table from you. "You don't get it, mate. Me and the Captain and three others were cast adrift in a lifepod. The rest just vanished into the Black and were never heard from again." He starts hiccupping uncontrollably.
Most AVERAGE folk can get Zeb to...	In addition to the EASY response above... Zeb struggles to control himself before continuing to speak, his eyes looking back on a distant time and place. "There we was ... Captain Josephs, two Browncoats, one woman, and myself. The passengers had brought aboard a treasure that I heard tell was worth worlds. The ship's cook turned out to be a Tong <i>Da Gher Da</i> — it was that Lurn Shwen <i>Jab Jwohn</i> who set the crew agin us. They asked me, but I wouldn't have no part in it! It was mutiny, you see." Zeb starts to mumble and eventually passes out.
It's HARD for Zeb to talk about...	In addition to the EASY and AVERAGE responses above... Zeb's eyes suddenly focus. "I thought we were <i>wong dahn</i> in that lifepod; the Sergeant was a fellow named Hawkes — the lieutenant was named Kombe. Both of 'em came aboard with the treasure. That young skirt was with 'em, too ... Miss Elizabeth they called her. She were shiny to look at, but cold to the core, that one." Zeb's eyes water up again as he starts to sway back and forth, mumbling.
You would find it FORMIDABLE to get Zeb to say anything about...	In addition to the EASY, AVERAGE, and HARD responses above... "That treasure is cursed! And it was that Tong cook, Benny Xiau, that done it!"

If the result is a failure, then violence ensues. Things will probably not go well for Zeb in this situation, so perhaps we could take our hats off and say a few kind words about this poor soul before we hastily move to ACT II or, if this isn't the start of the game, back to the point in the game where the flashback occurred.

SCENE 5: FANCY DRESS BALL

A scene for the HIGHLY EDUCATED or those who have a GOOD NAME, or Skills in INFLUENCE. It is not important as to where this ball takes place. Feel free to think of it as taking place anywhere in the 'Verse that's half-civilized.

The music of the fiddles has the crowd dancing. Everyone of importance in the local community is here in the ornately decorated hall. A floating chandelier drifts overhead, illuminating the elegantly dressed people flowing about the dance floor.

The crowd falls suddenly silent, however, as a striking, older woman wearing an Alliance uniform stalks into the room. She is slender, graceful. Her face might once have been lovely, but it is set in hard, rigid lines. People turn their backs on her and begin to whisper to each other. The woman glares about in defiance, as though daring anyone to challenge her right to be here.

"I don't know what she's doing here," you hear a woman say behind you. "She was a gun-runner during the war who flew a cursed ship. They say her crew mutinied on her and set her adrift in the Black."

Another woman adds, "They say no one would give her command of a ship again and that's why she joined up with the Alliance. But I think she's knows where her ship disappeared. And that she's just waiting for the right moment to claim a hold full of platinum!"

"All I know is that no civilized person will speak with her ... let alone dance with her! Cursed treasure ship or not!"

How It Is (Setup):

What a bunch of gorram snobs! Hopefully the crew will teach these folk some manners.

Problems:

Social Etiquette: Captain Melody Josephs was formerly in command of the *Lucius Newberry*, one of the five people cast adrift after the mutiny. Blamed for the mutiny and loss of her ship, she could not get a job on any ship. No commercial carrier will contract with her to captain her ship and she has limited resourced to purchase one of her own. She has since joined the Alliance military in hopes that the military would give her a command. Sadly her story preceded her and she is trapped in a desk job. She attends events as these as part of her duties as adjutant to the local base supply commander, but she takes no pleasure in them, for she is well aware that everyone is talking about her behind her back.

Those crew who want to risk ruining their reputations by having social interaction with the Captain may attempt to do so. Crew may try to engage the Captain in conversation by using either their INTELLIGENCE or ALERTNESS in combination with Traits such as ALLURE, GOOD NAME, HIGHLY EDUCATED, or even the skills of a REGISTERED COMPANION. INFLUENCE would also be most advantageous. (See Table.)

Any character who asks the Captain to dance will get a +1 STEP in his or her favor on the resulting dice roll.

Capt. Melody Josephs

Agi d8, Str d6, Vit d6, Ale d8, Int d8, Wil d6, Init d8+d8, Life 12.

Assets: Military Rank [Minor]

Complications: Loyal [Minor]

Skills: Discipline d6, Influence d4, Perception d6, Survival d6, Pilot d6 / Transport d8

Weapons: none

New Way of Things (Results):

If this is the flashback that starts the game, then read the following aloud to the players before going to Act II:

The captain turns and leaves the room as a servant steps up to you and hands you a glass of something fruity with a little umbrella stuck in an ice cube.

Otherwise, return to the point in the game where the flashback occurred.

TABLE - Social Etiquette

You FAILED completely to engage Captain Josephs...	The Captain looks at you coldly and says, "I know why you are here and what you want to talk about. I have nothing to say to you about the loss of my ship or the cargo aboard. The <i>Lucius Newberry</i> is history and, so far as I'm concerned, the treasure is a myth. Now, if you will excuse me. . ." She walks off.
It's HARD to speak with this woman at all...	The Captain shrugs and smiles. "I think it is admirable of you to talk to me. I appreciate the kindness, but I really don't know anything about this myth of a treasure that was supposed to be on the <i>Lucius Newberry</i> . We were running the blockade on a contract with a Colonel Maddoc from the Independent faction. The crew mutinied and cast five of us out into the Black in a lifepod to fend for ourselves."
She may be FORMIDABLE, but she seems to take a liking to you...	In addition to the HARD items above, she says, "You know, you might learn more from the ship's engineer — a fellow named Zeb Marx. And there were two Browncoats. I don't remember them very well, but one was called Hawkes. There was a girl, too — a pretty little barracuda that called herself "Miss Elizabeth" but I had a feeling that wasn't her true name. The two Browncoats and the woman came aboard with the cargo, so they must have known what they brought aboard."
You have been HEROIC in charming this woman...	In addition to the HARD and FORMIDABLE items above... She sighs. "It's been a long time since I've been able to talk with anyone. I'll tell you something I've never told anyone else. I caught a glimpse of the nav table just before the crew pushed us into that lifepod. It looked like they were heading for Regina. I tried looking for the ship myself — made some inquiries — but she's not anywhere to be found."



ACT II: SNOWBALL FLIGHT

Angel Hair Comet — the bright nimbus of its tail splashes across the path of your ship — a glorious swath gleaming across the Black. The comet reminds you in some ways of a woman you once knew: shiny, beautiful, and inviting. But underneath that beauty, a heart made of ice.

Still, some risks are worth the taking, and one's man's bad hand of

cards can make another man's fortune. Take that old friend of yours — Captain Griffiths — crying in his beer on Beaumonde, for he had word of a sweet job and no way to make it pay. The job called for a quick run to the comet, some meet-and-greet time with the locals, and then a three-day cargo haul to Regina. It pays at least a thousand square. Sadly Griffith's ship, the Royale, was in need of repair. She couldn't make it off the pad, let alone out of atmo. Fortunately, you were there to take the job.

A real shame Griffiths couldn't make it this trip, you think to yourself, as you gaze at the comet. He'd have liked the view.

The Way It Is (Setup):

A reliable ship's captain known to one of the crew has passed on to the crew notice of a job his broken ship can't handle. Seems there's some prospectors on Angel Hair Comet who have need of transport to Regina without a lot of questions asked. Sounds pretty simple, but there's two problems that make this a mite tricky — getting to the prospectors, since they're parked on the core of the comet, and flying into Regina past the blockade ships sent there by the Alliance. (More on that to come.)

The crew's first task is to fly the ship to the comet and then dock it in the miner's camp. The miners are living in a converted Bumblebee class Munroe Wagon clamped to the core. The crew receives a low-power homing beacon identifying the station as "The Lullabelle Mine²

² ETW: Named after the Lulu Mine — a mine near the original Hornsilver Mine.

TABLE - Flying the Ice

Both Succeed	The ship bucks beneath your feet, swooping through the thick jumble of ice tumbling past you. You catch a glimpse of the flash from the other ship's engines as you both continue toward the beacon. [No effect.]
PCs Succeed; Maria Celestia Fail	Your ship does a slick maneuver, spinning past a drifting, jagged ice formation, and accelerates forward through a sudden clearing in the ice. Your opponent is not so fortunate; you see his ship swerve, then attempt to veer away, but too late. Bright light explodes against the darkness as the other ship slams into the ice. The ship continues to fly, but the impact has forced them off course and they're falling behind. [NPC ship takes 1 point physical damage and 1 point stun damage.]
Maria Celestia Succeeds; PCs Fail	A mountain of white looms up in front of you, filling your forward viewport. You try to avoid it, but too late! The ship lurches, tossing you about the cockpit. You can hear a boom on the hull from the impact and you see your opponent's ship surging forward through a clearing in the ice. [PC's ship takes 1 point physical and 1 point stun damage.]
Both Fail	The ice closes around you, preventing you from continuing on course. You twist and turn, hoping to sail through the rapidly closing gap, but it's no good. The hull shakes and your ship is filled with the sound of screeching metal. Your opponent has fared no better. You see him slam into another ice chunk and both of you spin off in different directions. [Both PC and NPC ships take 1 point each of physical and stun damage.]
Docking (Winning): Complex Task with 55 point Threshold Add all flying totals toward the Docking Complex Task. Higher score is ahead of lesser. First to Threshold docks first.	

— Claim Registration 1277640". The crew is heading in when they note another ship named the *Mary Celestia* on the port bow, making a hard burn to beat them to the core of the comet! Seems more than one crew learned of this job.

Problems:

Flying the Ice: If the crew wants the job, they've got to get there first. The crew wins by being the first to dock with the Miner's Camp located on the comet's core ahead of the *Mary Celestia*³; racing the other ship requires a HARD COMPLEX Action (Threshold 55) to stay ahead. To add to the crew's problems, the core of the comet has fragmented, leaving a field of dangerous ice surrounding the central core. Avoiding the larger pieces of the comet tail surrounding the core is HARD. Both actions are resolved using the same rolls. Each round the GM should roll (Ship's Agi+character's PILOT SKILL) against the table. Describe the results dramatically as the crew navigates the ice.

Anyone aboard with a Mechanical Engineering Skill will find it a FORMIDABLE Task to fix the ship while it is racing through the ice field, but can reduce any stun damage to the ship by one point when successful. Ships whose total damage exceed their life points will go dead in space and cannot continue toward the core without either fixing the ship or using shuttles.

³ ETW: The original *Mary Celestia* was a high-speed, side-paddlewheel schooner which acted as a blockade runner for the Confederate States smuggling guns, ammunition and food into Charleston Harbor. The 122 foot ship sank under mysterious circumstances in 1864 after hitting a reef off Bermuda's south shore.

Friendly Competition: The crew's opponent in this race to the core is an ex-blockade runner ship called *Mary Celestia*. She is captained by Fulton 'Fox' Daley and his crew of claim jumpers (See pages 19-20). It's an EASY task to spot the ship if the crew is looking for any other ship in the area. Success means they'll see them coming up fast, doing a hard burn, since they're determined to reach the comet core before the crew does. If somehow the crew misses seeing them, they'll notice the flame of *Mary Celestia*'s wake as she passes them.

Mary Celestia (Griffin Class / Ex-Blockade Runner)

Dimensions: 220xBx47 feet

Tonnage: 2,032tons.

Speed Class: 4 cruise / 6 hard-burn

Crew Quarters: 2 double, 4 single cabins

Fuel Capacity: 70 tons (700 hrs)

Cargo Capacity / Maximum Deck Load: 375 tons in hold #1

Passenger Capacity: four (2 double occupancy cabins)

Agi d8, Str d6, Vit d6, Ale d4, Int d4, Wil d2, Init d8+d4, Life 8.

Complications: Ugly as Sin

New Way of Things (Results):

If the crew beats the *Mary Celestia* to the Miner's Camp, they will meet the Prospectors before the shooting starts. If they come in second, they'll arrive during the gunfight — a distinct disadvantage.

ACT III: THE LULLABELLE MINE

The core of Angel Hair comet is a nasty and inhospitable place: a dirty snowball wrapped around nickel and iron rock. Clamped to its surface is the Lullabelle Mine: a converted Munroe Wagon clinging desperately to the core. The main feature of the mining camp is an 80-foot diameter dome that glows from within. Two docking ports radiate out at the 6 and 9 o'clock positions from the dome. A large wave emitter — source of the beacon — is at the 4 o'clock position, while a set of out buildings are located at the 3 and 2 o'clock positions. These are linked to each other and to the dome by sealed passage tubes. Numerous processors and storage tanks can also be seen scattered around the camp.

The Way It Is (Setup):

Welcome to the Lullabelle Mine — Ryan and Hawkes proprietors.

These enterprising fellers are not mining gold or silver. They're mining comet ice for a town on the far side of Regina. As such, Ryan and Hawkes have a processing and cutting facility. Using the converted Munroe wagon, the heat shield forms the base of a pressurized dome, while other components have been arrayed around it. Everything is clamped down to an outcropping of nickel/iron ore protruding through the frozen surface of the comet core.

A. Docking Coupler #1 & #2: These are extendable docking couplers with universal mounts that allow access through any ship's airlock. They operate automatically, which can be a problem when unwanted company comes along. Each leads to an airlock and through that into the dome itself. The airlock for coupler #1 is at the 9 o'clock position in the dome. The airlock for coupler #2 is at the 6 o'clock position.

B. Ice Processors: These machines convert the ice of the comet into oxygen, hydrogen, water, and methane gas used to power the generators.



C. The Main Dome: It seems the clandestine ice hauling business pays really well, because anyone stepping into the dome finds themselves in one expensive hologram!

You stand under a vast blue sky. Bright sun shines down on a desert landscape that extends to a hazy and distant horizon. Wisps of clouds drift high overhead. The air is hot, but not unpleasant, with a slight desert breeze blowing past you. Several piles of crates stand around a small hill crested by a modest two-story building. Near the base of the hill is a real live garden with honest-to-god vegetables nearly ready for picking. At the corner of the house is a small stand of trees and a shrubbery.

Ryan has gone to great lengths to re-create his childhood home here. The expense of bringing in actual soil — organic and capable of growing anything — testifies to opulent extravagance, as does the incredible hologram landscape that fills the entire dome.

The hologram is reactive, changing its display and effects to react to the situation in the dome. Should a fire break out, storm clouds will gather with incredible speed and it will start to “rain” torrents in order to support fire suppression. If there is a breach in the dome due to gunfire or other damage, winter will suddenly set in. Snow will start falling as the temperature drops and the same sprinkler system will engage against the dome, coating it in a layer of ice in an attempt to seal the breach. The system will maintain winter until the breach is fixed and the system is reset manually. In this case, the vegetables will freeze unless picked quickly!

The dome and its hologram can take 8 points of damage before being breached and 20 points before catastrophic failure. Catastrophic failure means that the suppression and emergency systems cannot keep up with the damage and the dome begins to evacuate its atmosphere into space.

D. Ryan's Garden: Contains a number of different vegetables (carrots, potatoes, tomatoes). It may not be the best garden in the world, but it is Ryan's pride and joy. The garden does provide LIGHT COVER to anyone lookin' for such, but those who damage his garden in any way will incur Ryan's wrath.

E. Shrubby: A lovely spot with a little pond, trees, and shrubs. This can provide

MEDIUM COVER in a fight, but will also call down the displeasure of Ryan.

F. Supply Crates: These stacks of goods, parts, and whatnot's stand around the periphery of the dome and can provide up to HEAVY COVER.

G. Living Quarters: Home to Ryan and Hawkes, this building is two stories tall with a cellar beneath it. The windows are illusion fields and weapons can fire through them. The Living Quarters can provide up to TOTAL COVER.

H. Engineering Control Shed: Accessed from the dome through a short connecting corridor tunnel, this is the control center for the wave antenna, processors and atmosphere.

J. Mule Barn: A pressurized lock containing Ryan and Hawke's mule. The mule has cutting equipment that can be used for segmenting the comet's ice into more easily loadable chunks.

K. Power Plant: Once the engine room of the Munroe wagon, this now contains the generator for the complex.

Problems:

If the crew manage to beat the *Mary Celestia* to the mine, the first problem they will encounter is a pair of twitchy miners barricaded in the shack. When the crew first arrive, they will be shot at one time. Jim Ryan has a nervous trigger finger. Fortunately, he misses.

If the *Mary Celestia* docks first or if an appropriately short period of time has elapsed since the crew entered the Lullabelle Mine, then the claim jumping will begin!

Twitchy Miners: Ryan and Hawkes⁴ have been working this claim. They have a mighty sweet deal goin' and are a mite concerned when (1) the ship that arrives is not Griffith's Royale and (2) two ships show up instead of one. Jim Ryan is feeling a bit twitchy and will fire at the crew once before shouting, “Who the *ai yah tien ah* are you?” The crew will have to convince these miners that they are friends here to help. Some possible ways include charm, persuasion, claiming old friendship, or aiming better. The crew might also prove their allegiance by helping Hawkes and Ryan with the second problem which will arise as soon as the second ship docks.

⁴ ETW: These miners are named after the two prospectors who discovered the original Hornsilver claim in 1874. That claim became the basis of the Hornsilver Mine on which the town of Frisco was built.

Sam Hawkes [Prospector]

Agi d6, Str d6, Vit d6, Ale d8, Int d6, Wil d8, Init d6+d8, Life 14.

Assets: Heavy Tolerance [Minor], Trustworthy Gut [Minor]

Complications: Coward [Minor]

Skills: Athletics d6, Discipline d6, Guns d6 / Shot Gun d8, Knowledge d6, Pilot d6, Scientific Expertise d6 / Geology d10

Weapons: Shotgun (DMG d10W, RNG 10, ROF 2, MAG 10)

Possible Flashback (Act I, Scene 2): If any of the crew fought for the Independents and had Military Rank and this flashback has not been played before, you might consider using it right now. This is the same Sergeant Sam Hawkes who left on the *Lucius Newberry* and failed to return to pick up his brothers-in-arms as the Colonel promised. He is still gangly, still gawky, just a bit older and more weather-beaten.

What Sam Hawkes Knows: Sam loves to reminisce about the old days of the war whenever he comes across someone who fought for the Independents. Hawkes was under the command of Colonel Bufford Maddoc during the war. He and his buddy Kombe were detailed to help load crates aboard the *Lucius Newberry* near the end of the war. There was a woman — a local debutante named “Elizabeth” who was hanging on the Colonel’s arm. She seemed more interested in the crates than in the colonel. Sam remembers the crates as being mighty heavy for their size, but otherwise has no idea what was in them. He figures it must have been important, because the crew mutinied over the crates just two days out of Hera, killing the colonel and putting the few left alive in a lifepod and casting them off. This included Hawkes, Captain Josephs, her mechanic, Lieutenant Kombe and that “Elizabeth” woman. She was plenty irate, too. Sam never knew a woman of such refined upbringing to curse that way. Still, he recalls she was a pretty little thing.

Jim Ryan [Prospector]

Agi d8, Str d8, Vit d6, Ale d10, Int d8, Wil d4, Init d8+d10, Life 10.

Assets: Friends in Low Places [Minor]

Complications: Chip on the Shoulder [Minor], Twitchy [Minor], Greedy [Minor]

Skills: Athletics d6/ Dodge d8 / Running d8, Guns d6 / Rifle d10, Mechanical Engineering d6 / Repairs d8, Perception d6, Survival d6

Weapons: Rifle (DMG d8W, RNG 225, ROF 3, MAG 30), Pistol (DMG d6W, RNG 100, ROF 3, MAG 8)

All the short, tubby, balding Ryan cares about are his vegetables and his claim. He is convinced that anyone who lands on his comet has evil designs on one or the other and the crew will have to work to convince him otherwise. (Though the sight of those fresh vegetables is mighty temptin’ to those who’ve been livin’ off protein out of can for months.)

CLAIM JUMPERS

Fulton “Fox” Daley and his posse, consisting of Evan, Jack, and Mordecai Steadman, as well as a hired gun by the name of Ernest Ludlow, are determined to cut into this little ice-mining scheme by stealing the claim of Ryan and Hawkes. They were let in on this sweet deal by a woman named “Brigit”⁵ on Regina who said she would reward them handsomely if they would bring a load of ice and a fellow by the name of Sam Hawkes to Frisco. She specified that Hawkes must still be breathin’. She didn’t say anything about anyone else breathin’!

Don’t be looking for a great deal of depth from these fellas. They’re as smart as igneous rock and as dependable as a Cappisen 31 engine.

Fulton “Fox” Daley [Claim Jumper]

Agi d12, Str d6, Vit d10, Ale d8, Int d6, Wil d8, Init d12+d4+d8, Life 18.

Assets: Lightnin’ Reflexes [Major]

Complications: Greedy [Minor]

Skills: Athletics d6 / Dodge d10, Covert d6/Streetwise d10/Locks d10, Discipline d6/Intimidation d10, Guns d6/Pistol d12, Perception d6/Sight d8, Pilot d6

Weapons: Pistol (DMG d6W, RNG 100, ROF 3, MAG 8)

Fox has a quick temper and is laboring under the delusion that he is cultured and refined, when instead he is smarmy and boorish. He thinks women find his double chin and goofy smile charming.

What Fox Daley Knows: Fox was lured into this adventure by “Brigit” — a woman he met in Frisco, a town on the back side of Regina. She wants Hawkes all safe and sound and for this consideration will settle for forty percent cut of the ice take. She has convinced Fox that he could run the town if he would just

⁵ As Saffron is known to Fox Daley.

do this little favor for her. As for why she wants Hawkes, she's a bit vague. Everytime he asked, she burst into tears and refused to talk about it.

Evan, Jack and Mordecai Steadman (Bad Brothers)

Each of the Steadman brothers have identical statistics:

Agi d10, Str d8, Vit d8, Ale d6, Int d4, Wil d8, Init d10+d6, Life 16.

Complications: Chip on the Shoulder [Minor]

Skills: Athletics d6 / Dodge d10, Discipline d6, Guns d6 / Pistol d10, Perception d6

Weapons: Pistol (DMG d6W, RNG 100, ROF 3, MAG 8)

The three brothers were born on the wrong side of the law. They have the pasty white complexion of those who have recently spent time in prison and each has long, scraggly hair that hangs over his face and makes it difficult to tell them apart. They fight with each other constantly and are as likely to take a shot at each other as at someone else.

Ernst Ludlow (Hired Gun)

Agi d8, Str d10, Vit d8, Ale d6, Int d6, Wil d6, Init d8+d6, Life 14.

Complications: Loyal [Minor]

Skills: Athletics d6 / Dodge d10 / Run d8, Discipline d6, Guns d6 / Pistol d8, Knowledge d4, Melee Weapon d6 / Knife d12, Perception d6.

Weapons: Pistol (DMG d6W, RNG 100, ROF 3, MAG 8), Combat Knife (DMG d4W)

Grizzled, gray, hard-bitten, Ernst has been paid in advance — and he aims to collect the money he was promised by deliverin' the goods.

New Way of Things (Results):

If the crew throws in with Ryan and Hawkes and defeats the claim jumpers, then Hawkes will explain the nature of the run: the crew is to take a cargohold full of comet ice to the town of Frisco on the far side of Regina. Anyone with Pilot Skills will find it EASY to know that this is a two day trip, plus one day spent doing a careful approach for a landing.

The problem is that Frisco is under a cargo blockade by the Alliance. Fact is that those huen dahn of the Corone Mining Consortium are behind the blockade, hoping to cause the town and the independent mine operating there to go bust, so they can pick up the mines for

themselves. And comet ice is one of the top banned substances on the list!

"Just slip this load of ice past the blockade, contact Balley Sacket, the city engineer. Believe me, he'll be glad to see you," Hawkes says.

If the crew throws in with the 'Fox' Daley gang, Fox will discover that his own ship is too badly damaged to fly back to Regina. He makes a deal with the crew to haul the ice (for a share of the cut). He has his own contacts with a use for the ice. Fox's good friend "Brigit" says she knows just how to make this ice pay well. Oddly enough, she claims to know Sam Hawkes and wants him returned to her unharmed.

Sam does not know a woman by the name of "Brigit" in Frisco and has no idea why this woman would be interested enough to pay someone to haul him back to that town. But if Sam by some chance meets "Elizabeth" he will recognize her at once and he'll be pleased to see her.

Her reaction to him will largely depend on who is around to witness their reunion. (See "Brigit" under "Folks and Rascals" and Episode 2, Act II, Scene 3 for information on which of her five different "faces" she's using at the time.) If Sam confronts her in public, "Brigit" will deny knowing him ("Fox, you moron, this is the wrong man!"). Meanwhile, she will quietly arrange to meet with him and the crew privately in the school house. If no one other than the crew and Sam is around, "Brigit" will revert to being "Elizabeth" and she will try to persuade "her dear friend" Sam to tell her everything he knows about the fate of the *Lucius Newberry*. Unfortunately, Sam knows nothing about what happened to the ship after they were set adrift and can shed no further light on the subject for her.

Sam Hawkes will firmly resist leaving his claim, especially since he has no clue what is going on and doesn't like the situation. He will offer to pay Fox whatever "Brigit" has offered for him — with a little more to sweeten the deal. Fox and his bunch will stay to repair their ship.

The money is now in the ice, a value commodity where the crew is heading. The crew will find it a relatively simple matter to cut up the ice and pack it in the hold of the ship. Note that the crew needs to keep the cargo hold at nearly absolute zero temperature in order to prevent the comet ice from melting — and, as we're about to see, that is very important. It's anything but cold in Frisco.

EPISODE 2

BOOMTOWN

Wherein the crew learns that even the most civilized of folks draw the line on how much civilization they're willing to pay for.

ACT I: ONE FINE RECEPTION!

Wherein the crew discovers the citizens have brought a brass band.

SCENE 1: JUST PASSING THROUGH

The tail of the comet is fading behind the ship and with it go the memories of the miner's camp. Ahead of you is the Black and somewhere a town that apparently has a powerful need for ice.

The Way It Is: (Setup):

The ship is loaded with ice and on its way — hopefully to the town of Frisco⁶. Ice ain't considered a treasured commodity on any other planets, so taking this load somewhere else will most likely result in a considerable amount of laughter at the crew's expense and stories about them cornering the ice market that will be told for years.

However, keeping ice out of Frisco is serious business for the Alliance Patrol Boats in the area and it's no laughin' matter to the Corone Mining Consortium that's trying to squeeze the town dry.

Problems:

Comet Ice: If the crew is lookin' to cool down their drinks, they've got the wrong kind of ice. The ice found in the comet has hydrogen and oxygen, but it also contains other frozen gasses — carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide, and methane. Allowing the ice to warm up past any temperature higher than -296.5° F (-182.5°

⁶ ETW: Frisco was a mining boom town in the western desert of Beaver County, Utah and eventually became the biggest producer of silver in the United States during its glorious — if short — life.

C) will start leaching off methane gasses into the cargo hold. It would be EASY for anyone with INTELLIGENCE to understand the danger this represents! Perhaps the best solution would be to leave the cargo hold open to vacuum for the duration of the trip. The crew needs to make sure everything is securely bolted to the floor and the rest of ship is properly sealed off for this to work! (Otherwise their load of ice is going to go back to bein' a comet!)

Running the Blockade: There are three Alliance Patrol Boats (the *Victorious*, the *Redoubtable*, and the *Renown*) in orbit around Regina. Any transports to that town are challenged, turned away, or boarded. Dropping down into the atmo undetected is a FORMIDABLE pilot's task (Ship's Agi+ Pilot Skill). Of course the crew might try to bluff their way past the Patrol Boats' wave-challenge to their ship. Such approaches are also FORMIDABLE, but if the players have a real good story you might just give them a plot point or two and let them slide.

New Way of Things (Results):

Once clear of the blockade, the crew locates the Frisco Port Authority beacon. The transmission is short — presumably so as not to attract the attention of the Alliance and the station will not respond to further inquiries.

Almost at once, you receive an enthusiastic response via a wave signal that crackles with static. "This is Frisco Port Authority! Gau guhn!" The whole town's turned out to Jah Yoh⁸ you. There's a band and everything! Mr. Blake's hopin' you'll give a speech when you land — you know, to get everyone's spirits up and all. Ta Ma Duh⁹ — you're cleared to land. See you in the world!" The transmission ends.

SCENE 2: RECEPTION COMMITTEE

Desert mountains and valleys glide beneath your ship. As you close on the beacon, you see it's brought you to a desert valley — and a sprawling outpost of civilization crawling across the hard pan landscape. A spur of mountains runs from the east curving back

⁷ Literally, "High Pole" — awesome clever.

⁸ Literally, "Add fuel" — Go!

⁹ Literally, "His mothers..." — Damn

into the length of the mountain range that runs north and south, forming a dry bowl. The towering mountains on the west side are scarred by a prominent mining operation: the hoist house, dump and rail line are clearly visible as you approach. Near it is the town of Frisco. Seen from the air, it looks as though a child had carefully drawn two straight, well planned streets and then suddenly tired of the work and began scribbling roads and trails in all directions. The straight streets contain the more prominent — and permanent — buildings. These streets form a “T” with the shorter avenue at the top bumping up against the hillside below a large industrial installation. The base of the “T” — the longer street — runs from the single intersection of the town all the way south to what is grandiosely called “Frisco Port Authority” — a train station servicing three small landing pads.

As you follow the beacon to the central landing platform, you can clearly see that many of the townsfolk have gathered there and are waving up at the ship. You can also see that they are too close to the landing pad.

The Way It Is: (Setup):

The crew has made it past the blockade — now they just have to get past the reception committee! The crew is likely thinkin’ this is very fine, but, sadly, the brass band is not for them. The crew’s arrival happens to coincide

with the arrival of a visiting mine owner — and the townsfolk have mistaken their ship for his! (By all means, though, encourage the crew to start workin’ on that speech!)

Problems:

Landing with Style: Landing the ship without literally blowing away the townsfolk in the blast from the exhaust is a HARD task. If you fail, on exiting the boat, you’ll find everyone — dignitaries, fine-dressed ladies, and the band — sprawled across the dust, trying to pick themselves up with what dignity they can muster.

And, depending on the configuration of the ship, the moment the crew pressurizes the cargo compartment, the ice will start to melt in the desert heat, leaching off noxious and extremely foul smelling — not to mention dangerous — gasses. Once pressurized, no amount of onboard cooling will stop the melting process — best to get the cargo unloaded while it’s still in solid form!

There is also the possibility that someone in the crowd, catching a whiff of methane, might put two and two together and come up with ice. See: “Ain’t Exactly Legal” in Scene One further on.

The Wrong Man: The crew will probably get as far as the podium set out in front of their ship before anyone realizes the mistake that’s been made. They might even get so



far as deliverin' that fine speech they were asked to prepare. Let the crew revel for a moment in being celebrities, before they notice that everyone in the crowd is glaring at them in disgust and turning away. The band stops playing and begins to wander off. The dignitaries take their ladies by the arm and start walking back into town.

None of the crew are the person everyone was expecting.

Who is expected is the mine owner, J. W. McClarrin, who will be arriving later in the day.

New Way of Things (Results):

Now that the town is ignoring the crew, it's time to find a fence for the ice!

ACT II: WELCOME TO FRISCO, HONEY!

Wherein the crew makes the acquaintance of the town bankers, as well as John and Nora Blake, Balley Sacket, Shakespeare, and A.E. Sherman, who runs the general store. And wherein the crew discovers that this town is one rough place for a visit.

SCENE 1: MAIN STREET

From the Port Authority Depot, a packed dirt road runs straight north up a slight rise into the heart of the town where the taller, more permanent buildings stand. The rest of the dwellings tents, lean-tos, and shacks are built on whatever patch of ground was available at the time. The sound of an occasional gunshot rolls down the sun-baked avenue, along with raucous laughter from the saloons.

Welcome to Frisco.

The Way It Is: (Setup):

Frisco is a wild and independent mining town. Descriptions of its locations can be found in the Book Two, **Frisco Town**. Locations are noted by numbers in parentheses.

Problems:

Frisco Town: Perhaps it's best for the crew to think of the whole *gorram* town as a problem! While they'll be meeting people and going places in the adventure section, events important to them will also be happening in the town.

As the crew make their way around the town, use Book Two to determine who they meet and what they learn outside the main adventure. During this Act, the town is bustling with excitement. The streets are full of people and the saloons are all doing a thriving business. There's probably a barroom brawl going on in one of the saloons, someone's trying the cheat at a Faro game in another saloon, and there's a pretty good chance that someone is just a hair-trigger away from a gunfight out in the street.

There are only two special scenes in this act: Scene 2 takes the place of normal town location 15 the first time you go there and Scene 3 is triggered the first time the crew encounters "Brigit" in town or if they visit the School House (31) for the first time. Otherwise, run the locations as they are listed in Book Two.

Ain't Exactly Legal: It turns out that selling ice — especially comet ice — in this town is a violation of the Alliance embargo. Doesn't matter that the embargo itself is probably illegal. Corone Mining lobbies have convinced the politicians, who have convinced the military, to keep this "embargo" in place in the hopes of squeezing the town (literally) dry. Comet ice is used in the processing plant (5) as an extraction source of water for the town and the assorted gasses that run the town generators and keep the mine in operation.

The point here is that selling ice openly is a crime with a bounty attached to it. Anyone caught trying to openly sell comet ice in Frisco may be turned in to Alliance for a reward of 250 platinum. Nothing will bring an Alliance Patrol Boat and a squad of Alliance goons into atmo faster than a report of an ice merchant in Frisco. In fact, it is the only reason an Alliance boat will drop in and use force in the town. Once the "Ice Merchant" is taken care of — read that as "shot dead" — and the informant is paid off they'll be right back in the black. Of course, the crew will find it **FORMIDABLE** to talk their way out of the charge before they get themselves arrested or shot for resisting arrest — or at least **HARD** to find an Alliance Officer who could be bribed to forget about the unfortunate misunderstanding.

Ain't Exactly Trustworthy Neither: Not only is it illegal to sell comet ice in this town, but the reward is an incentive for any down-on-his-luck local to turn in anyone who might have once touched comet ice.

There are two things that would-be ice merchants should keep in mind:

First, the "public minded citizen" who turns you in is going to have to get a message off to



FACTION POINTS

Townfolk	1													15					20
Mine Owners	1													15					20
Miners	1													15					20
Tongs	1													15					20

the Alliance through the cortex interface at the Transport Station (2) or the Frisco Star Times office (13) and second, if they do get their message off, there have been so many people turning in their neighbors lately that it is HARD for the snitch to convince the Alliance to believe him.

Sideshows: Just like at the fun fair, these are little side adventures the crew can take. A few have something to do with the big adventure the crew is on — many of them don't. Bar fights, strange characters, and dicey propositions can be found in these side shows. They're all listed by location in the **Frisco Town** book. As crew explore the town, they might walk into a sideshow — and maybe not walk back out!

Random Acts: Wandering about the town the crew will run into all kinds of folks and situations. The streets are teeming with people — most of them nondescript townsfolk — but it is not unusual to meet a prominent or notorious citizen on the street. During this Episode, a prominent person has a 1 in 8 chance of appearing within sight of the crew every thirty minutes during the daylight hours and 1 in 10 during the evening.

Faction Points: Sideshows, random acts and the NPCs that populate the town all give the crew a chance to earn Faction Points. Use the Faction Points table to track everything.

Every person in the town is allied with one of the four separate factions and each person has a Faction Point score associated with that person.

Mine Owners — a stubborn group allied with the Mining Guild opposed to the Corone Mining Consortium.

Miners — workers who have fled the slave-like conditions of the Corone camps for the freedom of the Guilds.

Tongs — a Chinese merchant organization hoping to take over the mines themselves.

Townsfolk — just regular folk trying to bring civilization to the uncivilized frontier.

As the GM, you can add these scores to the crew's total if they befriend, impress, or otherwise come to be on good terms with an NPC from one of the factions. On the other hand, if the crew insult, injure, or otherwise get on bad terms with that NPC, feel free to subtract those same points. Keep track of those totals on this tally: note that their scores can never go lower than 1 in any case no matter how badly the crew behaves.

Sideshows each list the points (positive and negative) that affect the crew's Faction Point totals. The completion of a sideshow can affect

scores up or down, depending on its outcome. A single sideshow, for example, might increase the crew's influence with Miners, but decrease their standing with the Townsfolk.

Of course, characters who work in the mines are also Townsfolk, but their allegiance will be to the Miners first, so that is how they are classified.

Though the crew doesn't know it, the objective is to earn enough Influence (15 faction points) with any one faction to receive an invitation to perform a big job.

New Way of Things (Results):

As the crew goes about town, keep track of their Faction Points on this table. Whenever the crew acquires more than 15 faction points in any faction, this triggers Act III.

SCENE 2: OVER THE FENCE (SACKET MEETING)

A scene for crew who enter Town Location 15 for the first time, replacing any encounter in this location found in Book Two.

A balding man with huge shoulders glares at you suspiciously from behind a workbench covered three layers deep with assorted mechanical parts. The walls of the shop and even parts of the ceiling are also cluttered with what looks like an explosion of technological junk.

Also scattered about the room are several local townsfolk, either sitting on wooden kegs or leaning casually against a rare bare space on the wall. The echo of their laughter falls quickly to silence as you enter the room.

"Kin I help you fellers?" the man asks in grim tones.

The Way It Is: (Setup):

This encounter takes place in Sacket's Engineering Shop (15). If the crew asks anyone in town where to find Balley Sacket, they will be directed to this location. He can almost always be found in his shop.

Problems:

Good Old Boys: Also on hand are Tony Kompus (miner), Abner Byram (Processing Plant Operator), and Laurence Stuart (Miners

Guild Representative). These boys have nothing better to do than hang around the shop and chew the fat. The crew might figure it wouldn't exactly be polite to talk about illegal activities here, but if they don't, Balley will let them know that in no uncertain terms.

Balley will cut off anyone who mentions "ice" or "comet" by sternly saying, "Comet Ice is an illegal commodity in this town, fellers — and anyone who so much as talks about selling same will most likely be turned over to the feds for the ree-ward." Then he'll wink at the boys in the shop and add, "On the other hand, if someone were to land with a cargo hold full of 'containers' — not specifying exactly what was in them, mind you — and could tell me just who sent them 'containers' — well, then I reckon I might be in the market."

New Way of Things (Results):

Should the crew manage to make contact with Balley and tell him that they do, indeed, have the "containers" he is looking for, Balley will tell them he'll stop by the ship late that night to pick them up. Payment, however, will have to come from the "school marm", Miss "Brigit Trousdale". The crew will need to see her to make arrangements for their cash. If pressed as to why the "school marm" is the one making payments on an illegal shipment of "containers", Balley will explain that "Brigit" is the fiancé of the mine's owner — the one who is backing this shipment of "containers." "Brigit" can generally be found at the school located on the hill just east of town.

SCENE 3: SCHOOL MARM (SAFFRON)

A scene for anyone entering the School House (31) for the first time OR who encounters "Brigit" (or whoever she's calling herself at the moment) anywhere in town.

You look into the face of a woman who could charm the stars down from the Black. The woman's large sea-green eyes turn toward you. Her auburn hair drifts about her face. Her simple prairie dress is cut to emphasize her voluptuous body. If she had been your teacher, your lessons might have suffered, but you would never have skipped class!

Setup:

There's a good possibility the crew will meet "Brigit" in town while they're wandering about. Maybe she'll be on the arm of J.W. McClarrin, or maybe she'll be talking with Nora Blake or she might be in Pete Lawrence's Saloon, or even in the temple in Dog Town. There's a possibility that one of the crew may have met or seen her before (in Episode 1, Act I, Scene 2). This is dead certain if one of the crew is Malcolm Reynolds or any of the heroes from *Serenity*.

If "Brigit" is recognized, she will continue to act in the role those around her believe her to be. She will take the first opportunity to intimate that the crew should meet her at the school house for an explanation — and the chance of a lifetime!

If the crew does not recognize her and they encounter her in the school house, she will play "Brigit, the School Marm" for them until such time as the crew either confront her about her plans or they start Episode IV. In any event, she will tell the crew that she has a "special project" in mind and that if the crew can gain influence with the town council, the Tongs, or the Miner's Guild, and they are willing to help her in her plans, they will all leave this dust bin richer than kings.

Problems:

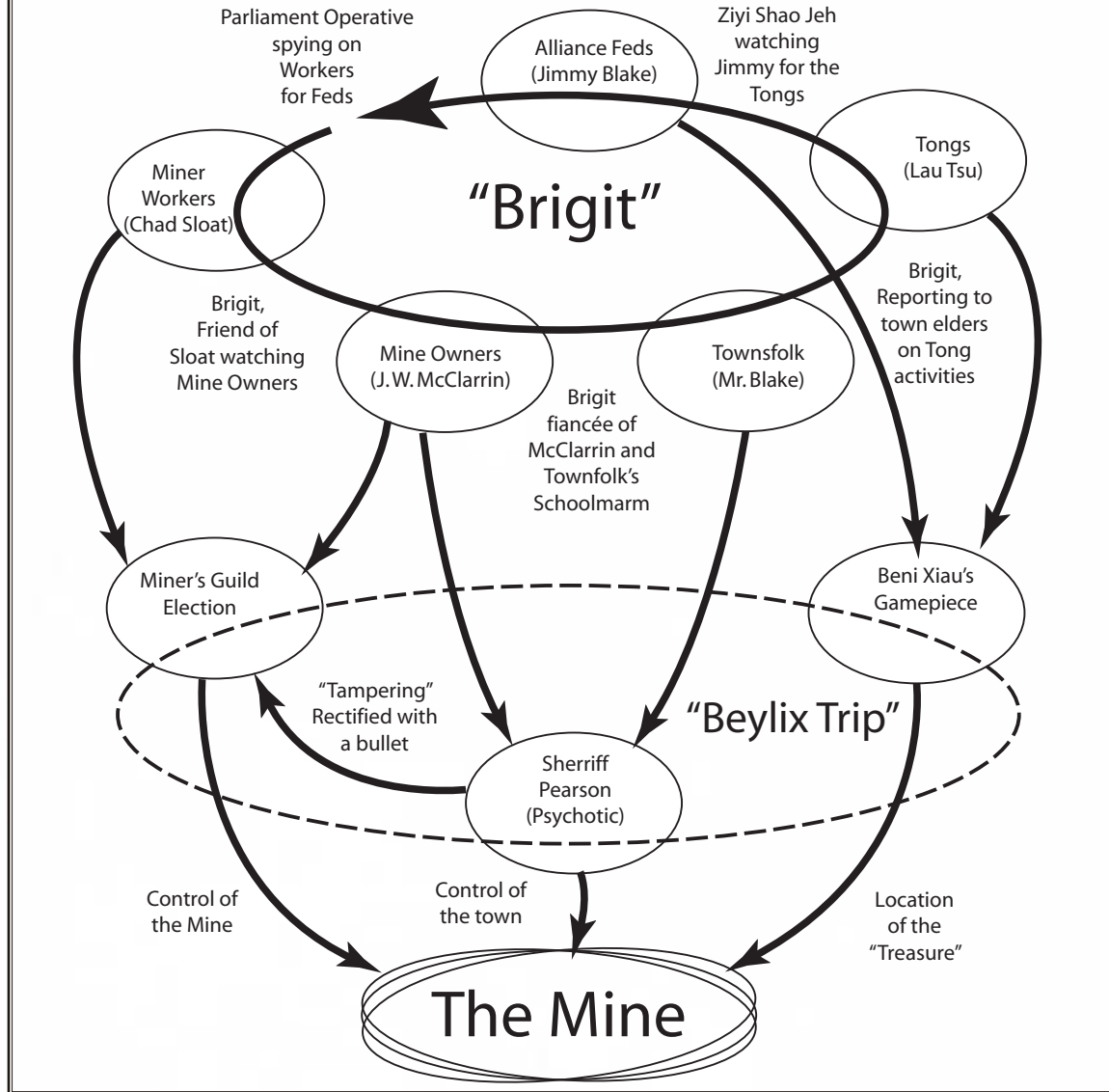
Who's Paying for This?: "Brigit" is supposed to pay the crew for their shipment of comet ice — which she says she'll do just as soon as she can get to the bank. She will avoid paying them in any way possible, including vanishing around a corner or disappearing into a crowd if necessary. If she is confronted about payment, she will claim that it's all a misunderstanding and that she really does want to pay them for the shipment, but the funds haven't been transferred yet or there's a problem at the bank. If paying the crew is absolutely unavoidable (one of the crew has her in a head lock) she will pay 1,000 credits for the shipment — providing a fake account, of course.

Whenever the subject of payment comes up, "Brigit" will try to steer the conversation away from what she owes for the ice toward "a much bigger score." She will start talking about how she needs help to find the lost treasure of the *Lucius Newberry*.

Much bigger fish to fry: Here's how it is: "Brigit" is playing a right complicated game and if you're going to be keeping up in the telling of this tale, then you had best be in on the plan from the start. When it was all said and done, so the story goes, Jayne Cobb turned to

JAYNE'S DIAGRAM

[or Mal's answer to the question "What happened?"]



Malcolm Reynolds and asked, "What the hell just happened?" The only hope the Captain had of explaining it all to Jayne was to make a sketch in the belief that pictures might help.

"Brigit" has discovered that the treasure she lost all those years ago is here in this town somewhere, but she faces a mountain of problems. First off is finding the *gorram* stuff. Second, even if she does find it, she has to get it out of the town without either the Miners (who would take it from her) or the Townsfolk (who would also take it from her) knowing about it. Everyone seems to know something about the treasure, but no one trusts anyone else enough to put all the pieces together.

The only answer, she decides, is to play everyone against each other.

So, she has taken on five different roles — all under the guise of "Brigit, the School Marm."

Now, the crew most likely doesn't know a *gorram* thing at this point in the game and that's all right. What they do in the town will affect what role they play in all this.

"Brigit" is more than willing to accompany the crew around the town should they call on her for assistance, though she will not remain with them for long — she has other webs to weave. Jimmy Blake knows her publicly as "Brigit." The Tong members will be very friendly to her, while the miners will pull her aside to discuss "business." Everyone else in

TABLE - A Lady of Many Names

Mine Owner's Fiancée	MCLARRIN: She is a school marm deeply in love with him and only wants what is best for them both. Sadly, bad people are spreading rumors about her in order to hurt her fiancée.	She is hoping to use McLarrin to institute a Miner's Guild Election during which the Miner's Guild will support a call for a sheriff.
Concerned Citizen	JOHN BLAKE (Town Council): She is a school marm who cares about Frisco. She is the fiancée of the mine's owner. It is true that she has a past connection with the Tongs through a distant relation, but this allows her to keep an eye on them for the town council.	She is planning to persuade the Town Council to hire her man for sheriff so that she can control the town before attempting to move the treasure.
Deal Maker	LAU TSU (Tong Warlord): She is working for Tong and tells them she is manipulating both the town council and the Feds.	She needs information from Lau Tsu in order to find the map to the treasure.
Federal Agent	JIMMY BLAKE : She is a Federal agent sent here to recover stolen treasure from the Independents and to do this she has infiltrated the local Tong. She trusts Jimmy to do whatever she tells him to do.	She mostly needs Jimmy to be dead, since he accidentally found out about the treasure, but in a way that will not call the Alliance down on her. She plans to set him up on the way back from Beylix (Episode III).
Miners Guild Organizer.	TERRENCE SLOAT: (Mine Organizer): As a secret Guild organizer, she assumes many guises in order to get the job done — even that of a school marm — in her gallant efforts too help the working man!	She needs control of the miners — and thereby the mine — in order to smuggle the treasure off this rock without incident.

the town will know her as “Brigit, the school marm.” She will be “Brigit, the mine owner’s fiancée” to the crew — unless, that is, they know her as “Saffron” or “Yolanda” or even “YoSafBrig” from previous encounters.

Wherever “Brigit” goes, she will fall into the role that those around her expect her to. When surrounded entirely by miners, “Brigit” will revert to the tough-talking Miner’s Guild Organizer. She will be the proper school marm if townsfolk are about. She will change personae faster than you can say any of her names — so be prepared to play her that way, too.

New Way of Things (Results):

In order for the crew to get in on “Brigit’s” action, they are going to have to gain influence with one of the town factions (See Faction Points on page 25). Once they have established their influence with a faction, “Brigit” will approach them with the next part of her plan — setting up Episode 3.

ACT III: HERE’S THE DEAL

Wherein one woman is the cause of a whole bunch of trouble.

In Act II, Scene 1, the GM is told to keep track of Faction Points. The crew are here now because they have achieved enough Faction Points so that one of the groups in town likes

the crew well enough to invite them in on a special deal. Select the appropriate scene based on which faction has accumulated the highest number of Faction Points. In the case of a tie, either pick one or, hey, go ahead and run both if you like:

- **Mine Owner Faction (McLarrin)** — Either Scene 1: *Mr. Blake’s Easy Job* or Scene 2: *Guilded Votes*
- **Town Citizens Faction (Blake)** — Scene 1: *Mr. Blake’s Easy Job*
- **Miner’s Faction (Sloat)** — Scene 2: *Guilded Votes*
- **Tong Faction (Lau Tsu)** — Scene 3: *The Monkey Toss*

It is important to note, however, that “Brigit” has arranged that all of the main events take place on the same evening — so keep your appointments straight! The townsfolk’s meeting with Mr. Blake, the Miner’s Guild Vote, and the meeting with Lau Tsu in the Tong Temple all take place simultaneously. That “Brigit” is a wonder, ain’t she?

Once the scene is completed, finish this episode with Scene 4: *Wolf in the Fold*.

SCENE 1:

MR. BLAKE’S EASY JOB

Wherein the town’s leading citizens ask the heroes to bring law and order to the town.

One of the townsfolk steps up to you, his hat in hand. "We can't ... well, well, I can't tell you how much it means to some of us ... what you've done for the good citizens of this town. Anyway, we — the upright citizens that is — would like you to attend a meeting tonight up at in Blake's Hall. The hall's located above the bank. You can't miss the sign. Seven o'clock and please be prompt."

The Way It Is (Setup):

Having proven their worth to the upstanding folk of the Frisco community — and these folk all know who they are, even if the distinction escapes the crew — they have been invited to a little friendly discussion in Blake's Hall (19). This invitation can be extended to the crew by any of the honorable members of the Town Citizen's faction.

When the crew arrive, they find the hosts — John and Nora Blake, Terrance Blake, Balley Sacket, Caesar Charles, C.C. Fiddler, A. E. Sherman, Dennis Chow, Chad Sloat, and, most important, the school marm "Brigit."

Problems:

Frisco is Lawless: What with the gunfights, the Tongs, the unlicensed companions — how's any decent person supposed to raise a family?

The different people at the meeting take different points of view on how to fix this:

- **John & Nora Blake:** They have invested heavily in the future of this town. They believe in a Frisco that will stand for the ages, and honor the memory of those who built the city with their own hands. They need law in the town and they propose petitioning the Alliance for a security squad. They pay taxes. Let the taxpayers pick up the tab. John and Nora are opposed to paying money for a sheriff.

- **Jimmy Blake:** He doesn't care what happens in the town so long as the miners shoot at each other and leave decent folk alone. But if the town really needs a lawman, they should buy one. Jimmy's heard tell of a sheriff for hire on Beylix in a junkyard town called Newhouse. The guy's name is Pearson¹⁰. He's a deputy in Newhouse and he has a lightning draw and the morals of a preacher. (Jimmy got this information from "Brigit," but he wants everyone to think this was his idea.)

- **Balley Sacket:** He's as concerned as anyone about the lawlessness in the town and

¹⁰ ETW: The sheriff that was hired in the real Frisco was a deputized gunslinger out of Pioche, Nevada by the name of Pearson. No one recalls his first name — but you'll be reading more about him in these footnotes.

while things aren't gettin' any better, at least they're not getting' any worse, which would happen if a sheriff came in and started stickin' his nose into what's none of his business. Balley says bringing law into the town would be like kickin' over a hornet's nest.

- **Caesar Charles:** As the town's newsfeed reporter, he knows just how hard the Corone Mining Corporation is working to shut them down. The Alliance is snuggled into bed with Corone, so there's no expecting help from them. An Alliance security squad couldn't be trusted. The townsfolk are on their own on this one. Caesar tends to side with Jimmy Blake.

- **C.C. Fiddler:** If there is law to be bought, then let's buy us some. There's no trade for a hotel owner in a town where there's a 1-in-10 chance a guest will be shot if he ventures out on the street. Bad for business.

- **A. E. Sherman:** How is the town going to pay for this? Every business in town is struggling as it is! How can the townsfolk afford to pay for a sheriff? He's leaning toward the Alliance security squad.

- **Dennis Chow:** The townsfolk should be able to solve their own problems. They don't need to go off world looking for solutions, or even outside the town. Things have been getting better lately. If they just let things run their course, perhaps the problem will take care of itself. (Dennis is not a member of the local Tong, although many in the town believe so.)

- **Chad Sloat:** All of this just sounds like another way to put the screws to the miners. Truth is that without the miners the entire town would dry up and blow away. A proper Guild president — elected by its members — will take care of the problem by getting the miners in line under Guild authority. The election has already taken place (See Sideshow F).

- **"Brigit":** She suggests that since they want to clean up the town they pay the sheriff "by the head."¹¹ That way it won't cost them anything up front and they will be paying the sheriff if he is doing his job. She thinks this deputy on Beylix sounds like exactly what they need. (Especially since she was the one who put the idea into Jimmy's head in the first place!) The election results have to be ratified in Newhouse anyway, why not have our new friends here carry a contingent to Newhouse and do the deal at the same time? "Brigit" will also shoot down any suggestion that the town simply hire the crew as deputies. She will use the argument that, good as the crew are with sidearms, what they need is a real lawman.

¹¹ See Episode III: Act II: Scene 1.

New Way of Things (Results):

The crew find themselves in a strange position — hired to bring law and justice to the town. In the end, however, since they'll be paid for the trip they probably like "Brigit's" idea. The vote is unanimous: John Blake, C. C. Fiddler and A.E. Sherman will travel with the crew to Beylix to hire this Pearson fellow for their new sheriff. (Go to Scene 4.)

SCENE 2: GUILDED VOTES (SLOAT'S DEAL)

Wherein the miners voices can't be heard — until the votes are ratified.

Chad Sloat walks up to you. He grins and says. "I figure you're just the folks we've been lookin' for!"

The Way It Is (Setup):

If the crew have reached this point and not yet participated in Sideshow F: *Election Day*, you might want to run that right ahead of this scene. Otherwise, Chad Sloat pulls the crew into a bar to make his pitch.

Problems:

Ratification: At this point the election has been held for a Guild Representative — but those votes must first be ratified by a branch Guild office on Beylix.

New Way of Things (Results):

Sloan will offer to book passage at one and a half times normal rates (and will be willing to going as high as double the normal rates) if the crew will take him and his votes to Newhouse on Beylix. (Go to Scene 4.)

SCENE 3: THE MONKEY TOSS (LAU'S DEAL)

Wherein the search for untold wealth may well hang on a single game piece.

A young Chinese man bumps up hard against you.

"My deepest apologies," the young man says, bowing, then turning to continue on his way.

You find a folded piece of paper in the palm of your hand.

The Way It Is (Setup):

The note reads: "The Master awaits you where the shadows of evening cross the temple tiles. There shall your fortune be made."

Problems:

It's not about where . . . There is only one temple in this here town and it is in the Chinese section. As friends of the Tong, the crew should have no trouble with Tong thugs who lurk between the buildings in this area, and should be able to reach the temple without being confronted. If they haven't made friends of the Tong, this might be a good time to start behavin' friendly-like.

It's also about when. Should the crew come to the temple prior to sunset, the priest in the temple will tell them that "the time is not yet right" and tell them to return at sunset. Should they come later than sunset, they will find Lau Tsu¹², the Tong Warlord still waiting for them.

The crew has already gained a measure of Lau Tsu's confidence by their actions in the town, but it will be EXTRAORDINARILY FORMIDABLE for the crew to convince him to take them into his complete confidence. Lau Tsu will start his conversation with the crew by asking them

about their philosophy of life and what they hope to achieve with the breath the universe has granted them. Lau Tsu is not so much interested in their philosophy as learning what kind of people they are — whether they are people of conviction or not. As the GM you might want

¹² Lao Tsu the Author of the *Tao Te Ching* was a Contemporary of Confucius and was born around 604 BC making him about 50 years older than Confucius. The *Tao Te Ching* was written in China roughly 2,500 years ago at about the same time when Buddha expounded the Dharma in India and Pythagoras taught in Greece. The *Tao Te Ching* is probably the most influential Chinese book of all times. Its 81 chapters have been translated into English more times than any other Chinese document.



to push the numbers a little bit up or down depending on the responses the crew give: if they are serious and thoughtful, then gaining his full confidence might be **FORMIDABLE**. On the other hand, if the any of the crew are flippant and rude, then obtaining Lau Tsu's full trust might become **EXTRAORDINARILY RIDICULOUS**.

New Way of Things (Results):

Lau Tsu will offer the crew a job. He wants them to travel to Belyix to recover an item that was stolen from him some time ago. The object is an ancient game piece (See "Benny Xiau's Game Piece" under the *New and Used Gear* appendix.) If the crew does not yet have Lau Tsu's full trust he will tell them only that the game piece is an antique that belonged to his ancestors and has little value to others — but Lau Tsu values it and he is willing to pay 750 credits (though he opens with an offer of 500) for its return. The game piece was taken by a man named Benny Xiau who has recently turned up in the town of Newhouse on Belyix.

If the crew somehow manages to gain Lau Tsu's full trust, he will also tell them that the game piece holds the key to a terrible secret he has kept hidden since the Unification War. He must get the piece back safely lest untold horrors be visited on this world.

SCENE 4: WOLF IN THE FOLD ("BRIGIT'S" DEAL)

Wherein all of the pieces of the puzzle start to fit — if you pound on a few of them.

A beautiful woman glides up out of the darkness. It's the local school marm.

The Way It Is (Setup):

Run this scene after the crew have taken on their assignment from the previous scene. "Brigit" will find the crew and take them someplace where they can all be alone.

Problems:

Dealt a Full House: "Brigit" has arranged it so that all three factions want something that is in the town of Newhouse on Belyix. Regardless of which job the crew has accepted, "Brigit" will tell the crew that if they will go along with her, she will cut them in on half of the treasure they find — which ought to be enough for each of them to purchase their own private world.

She will be willing to go along with an even split with all present (mainly because she has no intention of sharing the treasure with anyone!).

• **If the Crew attended the town meeting (Scene 1):** "Brigit" tells the crew that they must also take Chad Sloot to have his election results ratified. And Jimmy Blake is coming along as well to do a "special errand" — all paying customers, of course.

• **If the Crew helped with the Guild Election:** "Brigit" will tell them that she has arranged for three of the town council representatives to go along with them to Newhouse in order to hire a sheriff for the town. Jimmy Blake wants to go along, as well, to run a "special errand". All these folk will pay handsomely for the trip.

• **If the Crew met with Lau Tsu:** "Brigit" will tell them that they will also be taking Chad Sloot to have his election results ratified and three of the town council representatives to hire a sheriff for the town. In addition, Jimmy Blake wants to hitch a ride with them — he's got a little errand to run in Newhouse.

A Little More Ice: "Brigit" now tells the crew that the ice they brought with them has nearly been used up. It is urgent that the crew return to the comet for another load to be delivered within two weeks time. "Brigit" will pay the crew for their previous load of ice (if she has not been convinced to do so before now) and she adds that she'll double their payment for the second load if they can bring it back inside the two week limit.

Also, if the crew did not bring Sam Hawkes back from the Lulabelle Mine during their first trip, "Brigit" will ask that they bring him back this time so she can talk to him. She'll say that Fox feller she hired before botched the job. She believes Hawkes may know something about the location of the treasure that could help them all. Now, we know that Sam doesn't know a *gorram* thing about where the treasure is — but that's for "Brigit" to find out.

Anyone with Piloting skills will find it **EASY** to calculate that it will take the crew two-and-a-half days to fly to Belyix, a day to land, get their job done, turn the ship around and launch, then two-and-a-half days to return — that's six days total plus one more day for the sneaky approach past the patrol boats making seven. Then it's three days to the comet, one day to cut and store the ice, and another three days back — plus another day to sneak around the patrol boats. That's eight more days; and they'll be a day late meeting the deadline.

Unless someone else proposes it, “Brigit” will suggest that the crew can cut a day off the run by sending their returning passengers down to Regina on a shuttle as they pass by. The patrol boats aren’t inspecting shuttles because they don’t carry cargo and even if they do there will be nothing on them except townfolks. John Blake can pilot a shuttle as can both A. E. Sherman and Chad Sloat. The crew can pick up their shuttle when they return with the ice.

Why Take This Job?:

If the crew thinks all this is some sort of sneaky way to get them out of town, they’re right, but they won’t find that out. “Brigit” has ready explanations for why she needs them to take this job.

Treasure? What Treasure? If the crew starts asking “Brigit” about the treasure, she will at first deny ever having heard of any treasure. She just wants to help the crew earn an honest living. If she finds it absolutely necessary to reveal the truth about the treasure in order to motivate the crew to do her bidding, she will own up to just enough of it to get her way. She will tell the crew any of the following mix of truth and lies to convince them that their trip is essential:

Hiring the New Sheriff: The Tongs are protecting the treasure (true). Bringing law and order to this town will keep the Tongs out of our way (maybe, maybe not). She has heard good things of this sheriff (a partial lie, she knows him personally and knows he’s a psychotic killer). She knows he can get the job done, while leaving her and any who offer to help her free to find the treasure.

The Mining Guild: “Brigit” suspects that Chad Sloat has rigged the miner’s guild election in his favor. (A lie — she personally altered the ballots so that the Guild will toss out the election.) She thinks the treasure may be in the mine (true) and she needs to shut down the mine in order to be free to find it (also true). Taking Sloat to Newhouse will expose his crime and cause the miners to strike (sadly true).

Jimmy’s Errand: There’s this game piece that was stolen from Lau Tsu, the local Tong Lord (true). The piece is supposed to have something to do with the treasure (also true).

“Brigit” believes it’s some sort of a map to the treasure’s location. (A lie — she knows the game piece is critical to opening vault door).

More Ice: In order to explore the mine for the treasure, “Brigit” has to get the miners out of it. The easiest way is to have them go on strike (true). She still needs to keep the mine’s machinery operating (also true) and, in a week’s time, the ice the crew brought will be exhausted (true) and the mine equipment will shut down (a lie, since unbeknownst to anyone else in Frisco, “Brigit” has secretly arranged for the blockade of the town to be lifted after the Sheriff arrives). “Brigit” tells the crew that their trip for ice guarantees that nothing will happen to the treasure until they get back (a whopping lie, since the whole purpose of the ice trip is to get rid of the crew for a week). Note here that if the crew happens to end up with the game piece and they keep it with them, “Brigit” will be very put out!

Sam Hawkes: Sam Hawkes, back at the ice mine on the comet, has information “Brigit” needs about the treasure. (She thinks this is true, though, in fact, Sam doesn’t know anything.) Since Fox screwed up the job, she needs to the crew to bring Sam back.

If for some reason the crew still refuses to take the job, they will lose all their faction points. The people in town will be very cool to them. They will be refused service in all the bars and saloons, and shopkeepers will suddenly remember that they’re closed for business if the crew walks in. In addition, an angry Balley will inform the crew that unless they prove a mite friendlier, word about their ice hauling trip will reach the ears of the Alliance.

New Way of Things (Results):

Off to Beylix! The passenger manifest now reads: John Blake, C. C. Fiddler, and A.E. Sherman, or the town committee, as well as Chad Sloat carrying the miner’s election results, and Jimmy Blake, who’s along “to do a little errand.” The crew should now be bound for Newhouse in order to (1) help the town hire a sheriff, (2) have the Guild election ratified and (3) allow Jimmy to take care of his errand.

EPISODE 3

SIDETRACKED

Wherein nothin' goes smooth — and the heroes find that the stakes in the game are higher than expected.

ACT I: BEYLIX ATMO

Wherein our heroes set down on Beylix for a short but eventful stay.

The clock is ticking! The crew has two weeks to do everything. They load up their passengers, provision what they can, and head toward Beylix.

Important Note: This episode is meant to be played quickly — mostly because it's one big *Da Chung Wu Dahn*¹³. There isn't a whole lot of fighting going on in this episode. It's fast talkin', not fast drawin'. The best thing you can do is to get through these scenes pronto. Now that's not to say that you shouldn't take your ease, if everyone is havin' a good time. But there's some folk who get twitchy if they aren't blowin' something up, shootin' at something, or been shot at themselves for a while. Just don't get bogged down here. Get the negotiatin' done and move on with the adventure. *Dohn-ma?*¹⁴

SCENE 1: INTERLUDE

The trip to Beylix takes place without difficulty — it's a simple two-and-a-half day run from Regina and for once nothin' on the boat breaks down.

The thing is, being in the Black has a tendency to make a body talk. Maybe it's cause people feel more alone with the 'Verse spread out before them. Maybe it's the walls of the ship pressing down on them. Whatever the cause, folks get mighty talkative when the ship goes quiet and the stars are shinin' steady and bright through the portholes.

The crew might find themselves talking to the passengers on the way to Beylix — and it would be good time for them to learn something about the folks they are bringin' on the ride. This doesn't have to a long scene, mind you. You may not play it at all, but for those curious about whose sharing the breathable air

¹³ Literally, "big gun, no bullet" meaning a lot of show but not much substance.

¹⁴ "Understand?"

with them, this is a fine chance to set down and learn something of 'em. Chad Sloat will become more and more nervous the closer the ship gets to Beylix, though he will not tell them why. Refer to the character backgrounds provided in the Book Two: *Frisco Town* for what they might discuss.

Otherwise, you reach Beylix by the middle of the third day — time to get down to business.

SCENE 2: NEWHOUSE

The clouds part as you make your approach looks like a target carved in the middle of a vast field of rusted metal and packing crates.

Junk yard of the Core Worlds — treasure trove of the Rim — Beylix is the dumping ground and scavenging center of the 'Verse. Newhouse is home to several licensed scrap and junk dealers, all operating under the authority of United Reclamation. If it's broken, in need of repair, or waiting to be chopped up for parts — you'll find it here in Newhouse.

Newhouse also has the distinction of being the closest Miners Guild House nearest to Regina and the best place for Chad Sloat to have his votes ratified.

The Way It Is (Setup):

We know the crew is in a hurry to get off this rock — most people are — so the locations in this particular town are not nearly as detailed as in Frisco. The crew won't have time to get to know the locals. Hopefully they can get into and out of town without causing too much trouble.

Important Note: This town is quiet. You should make a point of letting the players understand that this community ain't exactly bustling — in fact, the streets seem almost too quiet! Those few folk the crew would normally encounter on the street will avoid contact and will cut short any attempt at conversation.

1. Newhouse Port & Dockyard

Port facilities here have standard rates with AVERAGE availability on parts. The exception is that used parts can generally found at 10 x d4% less than standard prices with EASY availability due to the scavenging from the yards. All such equipment will, however, have a reliability that is d2 steps lower than newer parts of the same make.



Note that any repairs to vessels at this shipyard must be completed in less than a day — extensive repairs would seriously jeopardize the schedule.

2. J. W. McClarrin Avenue

Named after our very own J. W. McClarren from Frisco, honoring the fact that he was one of the first to settle Newhouse shortly after the Unification War.

3. Port Newhouse Tower

Control tower for all ship departures and approaches. There is someone on duty here twenty-four hours a day to help you dock your boat and get her launched again.

4. Newhouse Smelter

What salvage is no longer worth its weight in scrap gets cut up and brought here to be reduced to slabs of metal for shipment off-world to manufacturing plants on the Core Worlds.

5. Chemical Storage Facility

The smelting process and reclamation work of the smelter recovers chemicals and gasses. These are stored in this facility for later shipment off-world.

6. Shanty Town

The poor section of town where most of the scrap and salvage workers live. Homes are constructed primarily out of scrap themselves — a metal and plastic patchwork of shanty dwellings.

7. The Heights

For those who own the scrap and salvage rights life can be pretty good. Most of them live off-world on places like Boros, but they do maintain houses here. These homes are designed and well built — also security heavy. Breaking into them is FORMIDABLE and can easily land you in trouble with the local authorities.

8. Shin-hua Town

Once the province of the Tongs, this area was recently “cleaned up” by the town Deputy, Luke Pearson, who ruthlessly went after the

gangs with the assistance of several squads of Federals. Now the area remains largely deserted, as everyone expects the Tongs to return—with a vengeance.

9. Planetfall Bar

Your typical bar on the Rim. Anyone coming in here asking for Benny Xiau will be directed to Emmet's bar.

10. Edgar's Place (Bar)

Exactly like the Planetfall Bar except dirtier.

11. The Green

A patch of lawn with three shade trees. All the main buildings of the town face this marvelous park which is known lovingly to everyone in the town simply as "the Green".

This little patch of sod is the pride and joy of the town and while it is sometimes used for picnics, it is mostly just a reminder to the folks in the town that there is life out there on the planet somewhere.

12. Emmet's Bar

This is the location for Act II, Scene 3: *Lost Heritage*. If the crew enters this location, go to that scene at once.

13. Fu's Palace (Hotel)

Nice place to stay if you were going to be staying here that long.

14. City Jail

This is the location for Act II, Scene 1: *Sheriff Pearson*. If the crew enters this location, go to that scene at once.

15. Governor's Mansion

A grandiose name for what amounts to nothin' much more than an extra-large house. This is J. W. McClarrin's home on the planet, where he is also governor. It is locked up tight, since the governor is rarely home.

16. Miner's Guild Offices

This is the location for Act II, Scene 2: *Ratification*. If the crew enters this location, go to that scene at once.

17. Ragtime's General Store

Operated by Dallin "Ragtime" Peaches, this is a typical store on the rim. Prices are average, although it is often HARD to find anything you're looking for here.

18. Newhouse Public Works Building

The closest thing people have to a government in Newhouse. This building is closed for two weeks while the directors are on holiday on Boros. They take a lot of holidays.

19-22. Deserted buildings in Shin-hua Town

With the elimination of the Tong, several notable establishments are now abandoned including the Wu Dan Stables (19), the Palace of the Lotus (20), the Joo Koh Bar (21), and a House of Pleasure (22).

Problems:

So Much to Do and So Little Time: The PICs have a single day in which to do their business and get off this rock. Any delay will bring their deadline for the next ice shipment into question.

Upon landing, the passengers will immediately set out to their different locations. John Blake, Fiddler and Sherman will head at once for the City Jail (14) to find Luke Pearson. Sloat will immediately set off for the Mine Guild Offices (16). Jimmy Blake will go at once to the bars, asking where he can find Benny Xiau. He will be directed to Emmet's Bar (12).

Turn this Ship Around: Conditions on Beylix are such that it will take several hours to restock and refuel the crew's ship before they can leave town again. They can ask, plead, prod, or threaten, but there just isn't any way to get it done in less time.

New Way of Things (Results):

The crew is, as always, free to pursue their own course, but following one — or all three — groups heading into town may be the best plan. The moment any character enters location 12, 14 or 16 in town, you should move at once to Act II and the scenes that those locations trigger. If the crew decides to split up between two or even all three of these locations, run each of these scenes as though they are happening simultaneously.

ACT II: NO DUST SETTLING

Wherein the townsfolk hire themselves a genuine hero of the Unification War — so to speak — and our heroes discover that the simplest of jobs can go wrong in more ways than one.

Here are the Newhouse locations and appropriate scenes:

City Jail (Location 14) — Scene 1: *Sheriff Pearson.*

Miner's Guild Offices (Location 16) — Scene 2: *Ratification*

Emmet's Bar (Location 12) — Scene 3: *Lost Heritage*

Each of these scenes may conclude by moving into other scenes or into Act III depending on the actions of the crew.

SCENE 1: SHERIFF PEARSON

The jail has the strong odor of gun oil, sweat, and disinfectant. Two racks of rifles are mounted to the northern wall on your right as you enter through the front door. An iron-barred jail door on the back wall opens onto a hall lined with individually locked cells. To your right is a desk with two lamps that struggle to illuminate a gloomy room that is shadowy even at the brightest times of the day. Leaning forward from his chair, a man with a dark, trimmed goatee examines his hand of cards. Across from him, a tall, gangly man does likewise.

You see at once that both men are wearing badges.

The Way It Is (Setup):

When the crew and any NPCs who come along first enter the room, the sheriff—a tall, rugged looking individual, will not even look up from his cards, but will simply say, “May I help you?” Should the crew ask where they can find Luke Pearson, both the sheriff and his deputy — a skinny guy, the tough and wirey type — will snort and remark in resigned tones, “Don’t worry, stranger, I’m sure he’ll find you.” If the crew persists, the sheriff will glance up at them and ask, “What the hell you fellas want with Pearson?”

Problems:

Take my deputy ... please! If the crew and/or the NPCs tell the sheriff that they want to offer Pearson a job off-planet, both the sheriff and the deputy will become downright friendly and cordial. They’ll offer up their chairs, ask if they can get anything for the crew to drink, maybe a little something to eat — and

do their best to make everyone feel all warm and cozy. To any questions about Luke Pearson, both men will fall all over themselves praising Luke Pearson as the finest lawman on the Rim. Is he fast? Ain’t nobody faster with a gun. Good shot? Unbeatable by anyone with a long rifle! Tough? They don’t come any tougher than Pearson. Dedicated? Couldn’t get him to stop enforcing the law if you tried.

Believe me ... they’ve tried.

What’s behind this hard sell is that they’ve done everything they can think of ‘cept puttin’ a bullet into him (and they’re too scared of him to do that!) to get rid of this *Wu Tob Wu Now*¹⁵ deputy. They both think he’s plumb loco, which he is. Arness and Weaver will do anything — including lie profusely — to get this armed looney off their world and onto someone’s else’s.

Naturally enough, after the glowing reports about Pearson, Blake, Fiddler, and Sherman are eager to hire him.

Conrad ‘Con’ Arness (Newhouse Sheriff)

Agi d6, Str d8, Vit d8, Ale d6, Int d6, Wil d6, Init d6+d6, Life 14.

Assets: Wears a Badge [Minor]

Skills: Athletics d6, Guns d6 / Rifle d10 / Pistol d10, Knowledge d4, Perception d6, Influence d6, Melee Weapon Combat d4

Weapons: Rifle (DMG d8W, RNG 225, ROF 3, MAG 30), Pistol (DMG d6W, RNG 100, ROF 3, MAG 8)

Ken Weaver (Deputy)

Agi d8, Str d6, Vit d8, Ale d6, Int d6, Wil d6, Init d6+d6, Life 14.

Assets: Wears a Badge [Minor]

Skills: Athletics d4, Guns d6 / pistol d10, Influence d2, Perception d4, Melee Weapon Combat d4

Weapons: Pistol (DMG d6W, RNG 100, ROF 3, MAG 8)

Seems like a good deal: At this point, Luke Pearson himself comes through the door. (See *Folks and Rascals* in the Book Two: *Frisco Town*). He is a tall, lean, imposing man with an inscrutable face and bright, piercing eyes.

TABLE - Sheriif's Wages

For every day the town is quiet	5 Platinum
For every fight he has to win to keep the town quiet	10 Platinum
For every bad man he is forced to engage in a gunfight	50 Platinum

¹⁵ Literally, “without a head or a brain.”

Pearson is intrigued with the idea of cleaning up a lawless town and will accept the job on the following conditions: Pearson will be paid in hard cash each week at the rates listed above.

He will point out that this is a good deal for the Frisco citizens since they will have to pay him only if he is doing his job. He will also require that they pay his passage to Frisco. If there is any debate on this subject, Arness and Weaver will both offer to pay for the passage (as high as 200 credits). They're just "helping out a friend".

New Way of Things (Results):

In the end, Blake, Fiddler, and Sherman agree to the terms. Weaver and Arness hastily assemble all of Pearson's gear — a bedroll, his rifle, his guns and a traveling bag — which are all in this office in a corner.

If there are no other characters with scenes left to play at locations 12 or 16, then proceed directly to Act III.

SCENE 2: RATIFICATION

The reception room has finished wood paneling walls with a chair-rail running around the twenty-foot square floor. A tired-looking receptionist behind the counter on the north wall directs you through a door on your left.

There are too many chairs in the crowded space before the massive desk that nearly fills the little office. Behind the desk sits a small, withered old man with glasses. He is flanked by two very large and heavily armed men.

Setup:

Welcome to the Miner's Guild Offices on Belyx. This outpost of the Guild was built here instead of Regina so as not to be so "easily influenced" — (i.e. bombed, burned or bulldozed) — by the Corone Mining Consortium.

Problems:

Looks Like They'll be Hanging Chad:

The Mining Guild official will examine the ballots and then shake his head. The seals on the box had obviously been tampered with and it appears that most of the votes were changed.

Someone has tampered with the votes and it seems suspicious to the official that Chad Sloat is the winner — the very man who delivered the votes to the office.

Murphy will glare at Sloat and tell him that the Guild takes a very dim view of such

shenanigans. Chad Sloat will protest his innocence, but it is soon obvious that neither Patrick Murphy nor his guards, the big, brawny guys, believe him. They intend to keep Chad Sloat "for questioning."

Patrick Murphy (Mining Official)

Agi d6, Str d6, Vit d6, Ale d8, Int d8, Wil d6, Init d6+d8, Life 12.

Assets: Friends in High Places [Minor]

Complications: Loyal [Minor]

Skills: Influence d6 / Negotiation d10, Knowledge d6, Perception d6

Weapons: none

Peter & Paul Thermopolis (Mining Guards)

Agi d6, Str d8, Vit d8, Ale d6, Int d6, Wil d8, Init d6+d6, Life 16.

Complications: Loyal [Minor]

Skills: Athletics d6, Discipline d6 / Intimidation d10, Guns d6 / Rifle d8, Perception d6, Melee Weapon combat d4

Weapons: Rifle (DMG d8W, RNG 225, ROF 3, MAG 30), Combat Knife (DMG d4W)

New Way of Things (Results):

Chad Sloat, in rising panic, will grab the box of votes off of the desk and bolt for the door, dashing out onto the Green.

If there are no other characters with scenes left to play at Locations 12 or 14, then proceed directly to Act III.

SCENE 3: LOST HERITAGE

Emmet's Bar looks larger on the inside than it did from the street — perhaps because there are so few people in it. There are twenty tables, but only three of them are occupied, with a single person sitting at each one.

The Way It Is (Setup):

Jimmy Blake comes here on a special mission given to him by "Brigit". He is looking for a guy named Benny Xiau and has been told that this is Benny's hang-out. He finds Benny—a mean drunk down on his luck.

Benny is looking for someone to buy his game piece. He was given the job of stealing the piece by the Hip Sing Triad Tong on Beylix, found that the piece was connected to the lost treasure. Benny carried out the mission, but when he arrived back on Beylix, he discovered that the Tong members had all been either killed

or deported. Now Benny's stuck with this game piece. He was offered a couple of credits for it at the local pawn shop, but the job cost him a lot more than that. In addition, he's afraid that Pearson will find out he was involved with the Tong, and he'll be a dead man for sure. Benny wants nothing to do with the piece, but it's the only thing he has left of any value and he needs to raise enough money to get off-world, as far from Pearson as he can travel.

Problems:

In Over His Head: Benny isn't Benny at all — his real name is Ethan Nemo and he is the eldest son of the real Benny Xiau, the cook aboard the doomed treasure ship. He took the name in order to make it easier to infiltrate the Tong and find out what happened to the treasure, which he believes is his heritage. He is now stranded in Newhouse, drunk and willing to sell the cursed piece of *fēh wu*¹⁶. He now thinks that the whole legend of a treasure is a *gorram* lie, though he's still savvy enough not to reveal that fact to any potential buyer of the game piece.

Ethan wants 300 credits for the game piece. Successful negotiation — beating his Skill — will bring the price down by 50 credits for the first success and 10 credits for each success thereafter. This negotiation can continue until the crew fails three times — at which point Benny will stick with his price and go no lower.

If Jimmy Blake is here, he will attempt to negotiate for the game piece on behalf of the woman he calls "Brigit", whom he believes to be a Fed agent. He loudly proclaims that he has brought lots of credits and is willing to pay a fair price.

If the crew find themselves bidding against Jimmy, either on behalf of Lau Tsu, who will pay 500 for the game piece, or for themselves, the bidding will start at 100 credits and escalate upward after that. Jimmy has only 500 credits with him and can be topped by any bid over that amount.

It would take an AVERAGE effort for a character with COVERT skills to lift Jimmy's wallet without him noticing. Then the crew could simply stop bidding and demand that Jimmy make good on his own bid. If Jimmy cannot produce his wallet, he cannot pay — and the last bid will be given to the crew, who might feel some remorse over paying for their game piece with Jimmy's money.

Ethan 'Benny Xiau' Nemo (Son of Benny Xiau)

Agi d8, Str d8, Vit d6, Ale d6, Int d6, Wil d8, Init d8+d6, Life 14.

Complications: Hooked [Minor]

Skills: Athletics d6, Discipline d2, Guns d6 / Rifle d8, Influence d6, Perception d6, Melee Weapon combat d4, Unarmed Combat d8

Weapons: Combat Knife (DMG d4W)

Ethan is of obvious Oriental ancestry. He has a bald head, wears a goatee. His face is puffy from too much drink and his eyes are perpetually bloodshot. From his youth, Ethan heard stories of the father who left for the stars to make a new life, but never returned. Ethan became obsessed with the idea of finding his father, only to discover that Benny had left his first family to start a new life on Frisco. Benny started a branch of the Hip-Sing Tong on Frisco and became a powerful man in that community. Ethan and his mother had lived their lives in poverty and when Ethan found out that his father was a powerful, wealthy man, Ethan was furious. Following his mother's death, Ethan decided to avenge himself on his father by destroying everything he had built.

Ethan discovered that the secret to his father's power involved a treasure he had stolen while aboard the *Lucius Newberry*. He further discovered that the key to that treasure was a game piece his father had carved, which was now in the possession of Lau Tsu (Benny Xiau's son by his Frisco wife, though Ethan doesn't know that, though he may suspect it).

Ethan approached the Hip-Sing Triad master in Newhouse with a proposition: if the master would help him overthrow the 14K Tong in Frisco, Ethan would provide the master with the key to the treasure. The bargain was struck and Ethan — under the assumed name of his father — sneaked into Frisco and managed to steal the game piece.

His triumph was short lived. On returning to Newhouse, Ethan found the Tong master dead, killed by the Luke Pearson. The Hip-Sing Tong was eradicated and with them Benny's hopes. Without a credit to his name, he is now stranded in Newhouse.

New Way of Things (Results):

If the negotiation is concluded successfully, the crew will immediately receive Benny Xiau's Game Piece (See the appendix *New and Used Gear* at the end of the book), which is needed to find the treasure. (The crew will not know

this, however!) If they are not successful, then Jimmy will win the piece, which he will take back to “Brigit.” In either case, the moment negotiations are completed, the crew will hear a loud commotion outside the bar on the Green.

If there are no other crew with scenes left to play at locations 14 or 16, then proceed directly to Act III.

ACT III: KILLING ON THE GREEN

Wherein we lose a passenger, but gain some injustice.

The sunlight shines down on the grass and trees of the Green located in the center of town. Suddenly, the peaceful sight is disrupted by a man running out of the Mining Guild Office, clutching a strong box in his arms. He dashes onto the Green, glancing back over his shoulder as he runs.

Two men pursuing him get jammed up in the Guild Office door. One starts shouting, “Stop! Thief! Somebody stop him!”

Luke Pearson — his deputy badge flashing as he steps out of the jail — sees the man running away. Luke drops his valise on the ground and dashes after the man, racing around the south side of the Green. Luke draws his pistol.

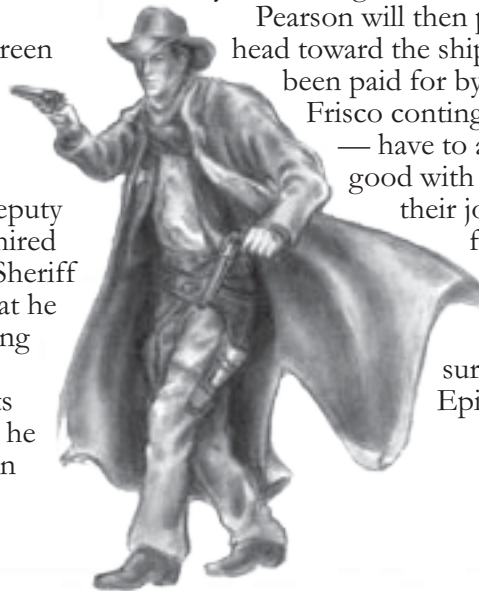
The Way It Is (Setup):

Chad Sloat is running from the Mining Guild Office with the ballot box. He’s been accused of rigging the Miner’s election. Fact is, Chad is innocent, but he’s got to prove it.

Sadly, he does look mighty suspicious running across the Green with a strongbox clutched to his chest.

Problems:

Instant Justice: Deputy Luke Pearson — just hired to become the town Sheriff of Frisco — sees what he figures is robbery taking place and he moves in on Chad Sloat. He plants himself in front Chad before he can make it across the Green and calls out “Halt!”



Chad is panic-stricken. Seeing a law man in front of him, Chad turns and tries to run down a side street.

“I said halt!” shouts Pearson. He does not wait for Chad to obey, but immediately raises his pistol and fires one shot. Chad Sloat drops to the ground, a growing red stain spreading on the grass among the scattered ballots drifting out of the open ballot box.

The crew might be tempted to start throwing a little lead of their own about now — and no one would blame them. However, Arness and Weaver have both seen this too often and know that the fight won’t go well. They will do their best to put an end to any gunplay — including placing themselves between Pearson and the crew or threatening to arrest the crew if they get involved, all the while shouting about how everyone should just calm down a mite before something truly stupid happens here.

Sheriff Arness will do his best to defuse the situation. He will remind the crew that this is his town, his jurisdiction, and the crew has no business getting involved. The Sheriff’s advice will be to let “the law” handle this. He will strongly suggest that the crew get out of town before anyone else gets hurt—and that they take Pearson with them!

New Way of Things (Results):

Pearson’s reaction is telling. He is not interested in what the man was guilty of doing. He only knows that the man was guilty of something and, whatever it was he did, he’s paid for it. Pearson will turn to Mr. Blake and his company, jerk his thumb toward the body lying on the ground, and say, “That one’s on me, boys. No charge.”

Pearson will then pick up his gear and head toward the ship. His passage has been paid for by the Sheriff and the Frisco contingent — while rattled — have to admit that Pearson’s good with a gun and will get their job done. No worries for the crew. They just have to leave atmo with a psycho gunslinger and the surviving passengers for Episode IV.

WHAT IF LUKE PEARSON DIES?

A lot of bad things can happen in the 'Verse and, let's face it, the crew might decide to become Big, Dam Heroes here and let their trigger fingers act faster than their brains. Despite everything that Arness and Weaver do to calm the situation on the Green, there's a possibility that the crew might kill this psychotic deputy whom the law-abiding, justice-seeking citizens of Frisco have just hired to clean up their town.

Not the brightest idea in the 'Verse.

First off, Arness and Weaver aren't gonna take too kindly to strangers killing a law man. A Sheriff can't let that sort of thing happen in his town if he expects to keep the citizenry in line. So he and his deputy and a contingent of honest citizens who witnessed the gunning down of Luke Pearson will arrest the PCs and toss them in their fine jail that is IMPOSSIBLE to break out off. Arness will keep them here for two weeks — until talk in the town about lynching the PCs dies down — and then he will quietly release them late at night with the admonition to get out of the world and stay out.

The passengers will be incensed. They will insist on the crew transporting them back to Frisco free-of-charge, since they're having to pay to stay here while the crew cools their heels in jail. Word of Pearson's death goes out over the Cortex. "Brigit" will be forced to make other arrangements. She will contact — wouldn't you know it — Luke Pearson's older and badder brother, Lawrence. He will immediately travel to Frisco to do his brother's job. He's ten percent meaner, ten percent crazier, and has game statistics that are ten percent higher than his little brother — whose death, by the way, he is intent on avenging.

The crew can still make the ice run, but the town will reduce payment by half. Lawrence takes his brother's place in Episode IV.

EPISODE 4

MINE DRIFT

Wherein our heroes discover that some things are better left buried and forgotten.

ACT I: CHANGE AIN'T ALWAYS GOOD

Wherein even though it's cooled down, all milk will eventually go sour...

Maybe the crew are feeling pretty good about getting off Beylix, which isn't exactly the finest place to put down. Odds are that your recent experiences there weren't all that pleasant. Still, you're out in the Black now, so what could go wrong?

Pretty much about everything...

SCENE 1: SHORT DETOURS

You've settled in aboard ship and left Beylix far behind. The roster of souls on board is a little lighter than expected — seeing as one of your original passengers got shot full of holes while planetside — but since his killer was the same lawman you came to fetch the total numbers remain the same.

Yes, sir, this deal just keeps getting stranger and stranger.

But you've got a job to do. There's credits to be made if you can get the ice back on time.

The Way It Is (Setup):

If the crew decide drop their passengers off at Frisco and then fly out to the ice comet and fly back, there will be trouble.

Problems:

Whining Passengers: The passengers are a skittish bunch. Blake and his friends were pretty rattled over the killing of Chad Sloat and now they just want to get back home with their new Sheriff and be done with it. If the crew suggest that the passengers stay aboard for the trip to the comet, the passengers will get belligerent and become terribly upset. Worse,

Sheriff Pearson will begin eyeing the crew with suspicion, making remarks about how kidnapping is a capital crime as he fingers his gun. He will not be above using it, despite the fact that no one aboard can fly the *gorram* boat. He's psycho, remember?

Increased Blockade: There are now six Alliance Patrol Boats (the *Victorious*, the *Redoubtable*, and the *Renown* are now joined by the *Indomitable*, the *Formidable*, and the *Olympus* — see Chapter Four in the *Serenity Role Playing Game* for statistics) in orbit around Regina. Each is keeping an eye on Frisco to make sure that any cargo transports to that town are challenged, turned away, or boarded. Dropping down the ship into the atmo undetected is now a RIDICULOUS pilot's task (Ship's Agi+ Pilot Skill). Of course the crew might try to bluff their way past the Patrol Boats' wave challenge to their ship. Such an approach will be INCREDIBLE for the Alliance to swallow.

Angry Mob: The comet ice is loaded with useful gasses that keep Frisco running. By this time, the people need that ice inside of seven days. If the crew manage to slip passed the enhanced blockade and land, they will be met by a large group of people eagerly expecting them to be carrying ice. When told that the crew are simply dropping off passengers, this group will turn into an angry mob, furious with the crew for coming all the way back with no ice. "Brigit" will berate the heroes as well, telling them to get their *pi gu*¹⁷ into the Black and bring back that ice. If the crew send a wave planetside with news that they are landing without ice, they will be informed that this time there won't be a brass band to meet them. There will be guns loaded with lead. Not to mention the fact that they won't receive their payment.

Take the Shuttle: All of this unpleasantness can be avoided if the passengers — John Blake, Jimmy Blake, Fiddler, Sherman, and Sheriff Pearson — take one of the ship's shuttles down to the surface. The Alliance Patrol Boats will not challenge the shuttle landing, since shuttles don't carry cargo. They assure the crew that they can pick up the shuttle when they return with the ice.

New Way of Things (Results):

Look, there ain't no two ways about it — the crew has got to make this ice run as promised.

Ice? Who Needs It? If for some reason the crew don't make the run, but decide to remain on the planet, the angry mob will lock the

whole crew in jail (8), throwing them in the cells located on the southern wall to the left. Then the GM might say something along these lines:

For one week, you cool your heels in the jail cell. The routine becomes familiar — breakfast, then supper, sleep and awake. Rain begins to fall in a deluge and does not let up. The days wear on. The temperature drops and snow begins to fall. No one comes to see you. Your meals are delivered on trays that they slide through a slit in the door.

At the conclusion of the week, John Blake will come into the jail and release the crew. Go to Scene 2.

Back to the Comet! If the crew do make the run, things will go smooth for them. If they've been hired by "Brigit" to bring Sam Hawkes back with them, he'll come readily. He hasn't been off this ice heap in months and he'll be happy to make the trip, though he swears he doesn't know any woman named "Brigit". (See "What Sam Hawkes Knows" on page 19.) The GM could say then something like the following:

One week later, your hold is full of ice and you're looking down once more on Regina — only something is very different.

What is different is that all of the Alliance Patrol Boats have departed. The blockade has ended. Unfortunately, all attempts to contact Frisco—either through the Cortex, voice communications or the spaceport approach frequencies—result in an automated message with a dry, official-sounding voice saying: "Frisco Township is under temporary medical quarantine. Do not approach. Contact this station for updates." The message repeats this over and over. The crew, with a shipload of stinking ice, will probably not be minded to pay much attention to this. By now they should know enough about "Brigit" to figure out that she's rigged all this somehow. Bring the ship in to the spaceport and proceed to Scene 2.

SCENE 2: TOO MUCH LAW

The town is blanketed under a thick covering of heavy, wet snow. The streets of the town are filled with mud and a slobby wet mixture of snow and dirt.

¹⁷ Posterior

Everything is quiet, unnaturally quiet. Nothing is moving in the town. No one is on the streets. No vehicles slog through the mud. The sounds of laughter, gunfire, and raucous music have been replaced with profound silence. It is as though Frisco itself has died.

The Way It Is (Setup):

Things are going according to plan — “Brigit’s” plan, that is. While the crew has been otherwise occupied (either gathering ice on some distant comet or locked up in jail), Sheriff Pearson has been cleaning up the town.

In fact, he’s done too good a job of it. When you’re paid by the head, pretty much everyone you see starts to look like a criminal. The townsfolk are now holed up in their houses, terrified to venture out on the streets.

As a result, “Brigit” can move about the town and up to the mine without anyone stopping her — including the Sheriff. Turns out that she and Pearson have a deal to split the grand treasure. Unfortunately for “Brigit” she chose her Sheriff without going into his background. Pearson has a tendency to become obsessed with a woman and then kill her when he decides — imagined or otherwise — that she has betrayed him.

Problems:

Staying Away in Drovers: It’s become so downright dangerous to come to town that the streets, shops, and bars are empty. Everyone is

afraid of the Sheriff’s lightning draw and deadly accurate fire — not to mention the fact that he’ll kill anyone without a lick of remorse or even a second thought.

What this means for the town is that all the locations are open, but there are no people inside any of them and there is no one on the street. Run the town locations as normal, but remove any patrons of establishments. Store owners, shopkeepers, tavern owners and the like will be in their businesses, along with a few employees. All of them are either terrified or frustrated by the impossible situation. The town of Frisco is being held hostage by a lunatic killer.

Everyone will tell some story of a senseless killing by Sheriff Pearson. Be creative in your descriptions, but keep three things in mind: (1) the killing was provoked by the smallest infraction, (2) the victim was killed either without being given a chance to surrender or after the victim had surrendered, (3) Pearson’s demeanor was cold as ice in every case.

As to where the Sheriff might be found, anyone in town with an AVERAGE effort should remember seeing the Sheriff walking with “Brigit” earlier in the day. It would be HARD for someone to have noticed the two walking in the direction of the mine and downright INCREDIBLE if anyone remembered seeing them carrying a large box between them on the way.

As for specific locations in town, see the table below.

TABLE - Too Much Law

2: Transport Station	Closed and locked up. No one here.
3: Magrail	Not operating due to weather
13: Frisco Star Times	Closed and locked up
17: Woodbury Store	Closed and locked up
19: Bank	Closed, but John Blake is inside. Jimmy Blake is with him and he is a nervous wreck. He will spill his guts, tell the PCs that “Brigit” claimed to a Federal Marshall on a secret mission to reclaim the treasure. Jimmy now has his doubts. If Jimmy bought Benny Xiau’s game piece in Episode 3, Act 2, Scene 3 —he will tell the PCs that his mission to Beylix was to obtain that piece for “Brigit” — who has taken it with her to the mine.
21: Mine Office	Closed and locked up
22: Hornsilver Store	Closed and locked up
27: the Temple	Two Tong Guards stand on either side of the locked and barred main door. Any inquiries about Lau Tsu are answered with: “The Master has gone to the mine on business.”
31: Frisco Schoolhouse	“Brigit” is not at this location and her stash of equipment under the school house is now missing.
33: Bunkhouse	Chad Sloat is no longer here — seein’ as he’s dead. The building is filled with miners, who are outraged over the death of Chad Sloat. They are on strike until this entire Guild matter is settled.
34: Mine	The Lift House is abandoned and the guards are nowhere to be seen. GO TO ACT III.

Citizen's Committee: John Blake, C. C. Fiddler and A. E. Sherman — all frightened and upset — will be in their respective establishments (14, 19 and 23). Any of them will tell the crew the story of the Sheriff coming into the town and killing folk on a daily basis. At first, everyone was pleased with the results, but pretty soon the Sheriff started killing people who weren't guilty of a crime. Nobody can stop him. The town fathers tried to talk with Pearson, but the man wouldn't listen. They tried to fire him — politely and with their thanks — but he wouldn't leave. All he will say is that the “job ain't finished yet.” The town fathers figure the job won't be finished until there's no one left in town.

So now Blake wants to hire the crew. He will make them “deputies” for the time being. Their job: “clean up” Sheriff Pearson.

New Way of Things (Results):

The crew have come to the showdown — the Sheriff and “Brigit” have gone up to the mine — and it looks like they've brought a box of tools with them. Maybe they've found the treasure after all.

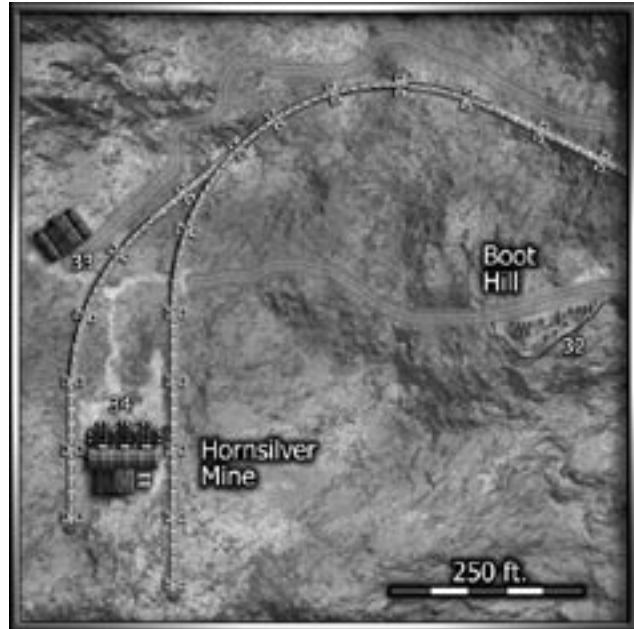
ACT II: DOWN THE GLORY HOLE

If the crew have come for the treasure, they're gonna have to go down into the mine to find it. Been a lot of folks lookin' for this treasure and a lot of folks that died lookin' for it, too. The crew's about to find out which group they're goin' to join.

Before they go droppin' down a mine shaft somewhere, they need to know a thing or two about the mine. The truth about mines is a bit different than you might expect from vids you've watched. So listen for spell while I tell you what you need to know. Refer to the mine map on page 44.

SHAFTS

These are your basic vertical hole in the ground, 'cept their generally square in shape and usually have rails along two sides to guide elevator compartments (lifts) up and down between the various levels. The lifts carry



miners into and out of the mine and also ore from the interior of the mine. Some of these shafts can get pretty deep, but for the purposes of our tale, they go down only 305 feet¹⁸. Still, wherever you see a shaft on the map, know that you're lookin' straight down.

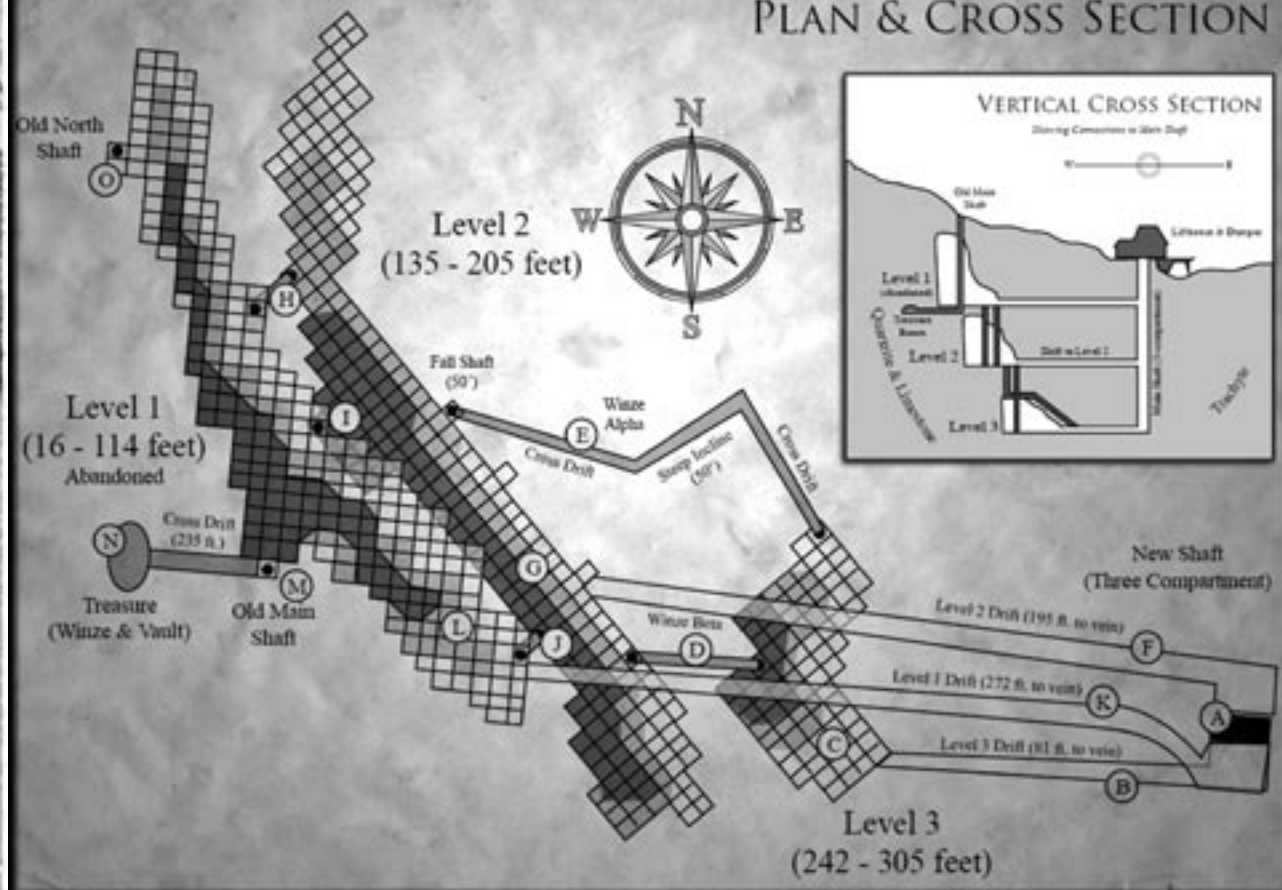
The Hornsilver main shaft (mine location A) is a three compartment shaft — meaning it is a shaft big enough to hold three lift compartments capable of being raised and lowered individually. That shaft was sunk over 100 feet to the east of the main ore body — the area underground where all the valuable minerals are located. Miners would ride the lifts down to one of three levels (mine sections B, K, and F) then walk or ride ore cars into drifts (see below) to reach the work site.

DRIFTS AND WINZES

What most folks watching the vids think of as a mine are actually drifts and winzes. A drift is a horizontal tunnel that generally leads from the main shaft of each level back to the stope (more on those later). Drifts are generally level. Winzes, on the other hand, are incline tunnels that connect one level of the mine to another. Some may have a slight slope (D) while others are so steep as to nearly qualify as a shaft (J). Whether a drift or a winze, the idea is the same: get the miners from the shaft to the stope and the ore from the stope to the shaft.

¹⁸ ETW: The deepest shaft of the Hornsilver Mine was said to have been over 1,600 feet

HORNSILVER MINE PLAN & CROSS SECTION



LEVELS

The Hornsilver mine is divided into levels generally 100 feet apart. Level 1 is at the 114 foot level, Level 2 is at the 205 foot level and Level 3 is at the 305 foot level.¹⁹

Stopes and "The Face"

Once the "body" of ore is located, it is the miner's task to remove it as safely possible. As miners remove ore from the mine, they erect framework scaffolds to support the roof of the stope above them. In effect, the framework is supposed to replace the ore in holding up the mountain. Miners dig upward, let the ore drop down into the cars below, then erect a timber or iron frame in the space above them. Soon, they will expose on the west side of the stope what they call "the face"—a wall of ore over 100 feet long and nearly as high. This is where the rich ore is taken — and more mountain hollowed out.

¹⁹ ETW: The original mine had two additional levels below this one, but those were never worked extensively and, in the 1881 maps, were primarily comprised of exploratory drifts.

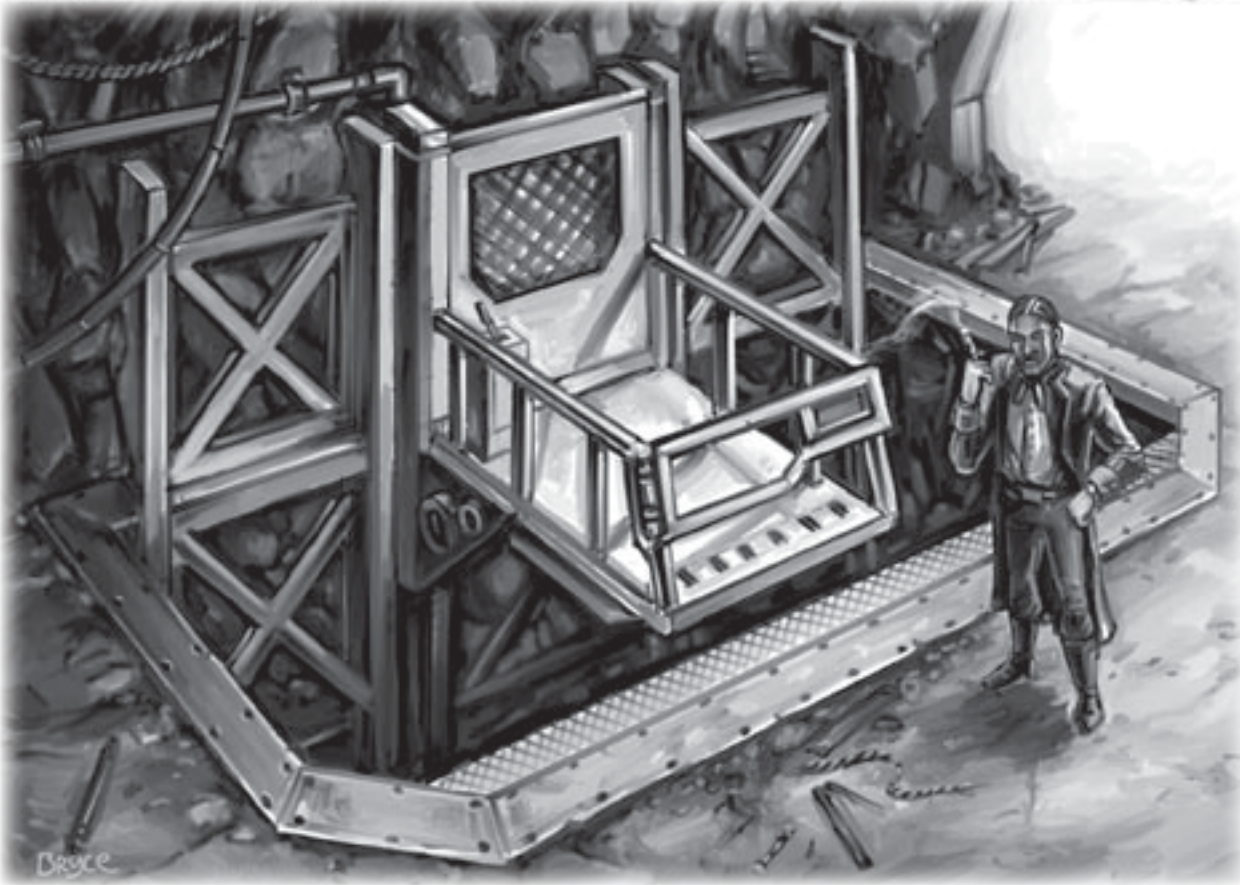
The result, in the case of the Hornsilver Mine, is the formation of tremendous underground stopes on each of the three levels — man-made caverns filled with framing to hold up the mountain overhead.

The general procedure would be for miners to enter the mine through the three-compartment shaft (A), travel to one of the three levels, then take a drift back toward the face (B, K and F). They would then work the face of the stope (C, G, and L) sending ore back on maglev ore cars to the shaft to be carried to the surface. There the ore would be dumped into ore cars on the east side of the lift house and transported across the planet for smelting.

SCENE 1: SHAFTE

(Frisco Town Location 34 and Map Section A)

It should be noted here that if the crew have faction points with the miners, they can ask for a map of the mine and the miners will gladly give them one. Likewise if the crew have befriended any of the miners or shown in some way that they are sympathetic to the miner's



cause (“It made my blood boil to see poor ol’ Chad shot down like a dog!”), they will be able to obtain a map of the mine. Needless to say, it will come in mighty handy!

The Way It Is (Setup):

The lift house is nearly deserted. Matt Cullen is on duty, but since the miners are on strike there really isn’t anything for him to do. The security detail for the mine is not on duty because they’re siding with the miners.

Problems:

Running in Third Place: Matt Cullen will not willing allow anyone into the mine. It’s dangerous under the best of circumstances and now the recent rains and snow have made the upper levels especially unsafe. It would be foolish to enter the mine without knowing what one is doing and downright suicidal to go into Level 1 right now.

Matt is upset because he’s discovered that the lift has been operated several times this evening without his permission. The transit logs reveal that the lifts have been used at least twice within the last hour: once to Level 1 before it came back up to the surface and then the lift went to Level 2.

Three Ways to Get the Shaft: In the control house next to the three-compartment

shaft, the crew will find the equipment that allows the lifts to be called to the surface when they are not otherwise manned. People riding on the lifts can override the lift house controls.

Each of the three large lifts runs on control cables driven by the lift machinery located in the lift house. The motors are temperamental, though. When the lift is rising to the surface, it’s **HARD** to get the lift to work properly. This causes the lift to jolt to a stop occasionally, making it a **FORMIDABLE COMPLEX** problem to get the lift moving again. When descending, the lifts work better and will drop smoothly to any level.

While descending, crew will note that the air on Level 1 is humid and damp, but that the air feels dryer the lower they go.

New Way of Things (Results):

Characters may use this shaft to access the three levels of the mine (B, K and F).

SCENE 2: FROM THE GROUND UP

(Mine Level 3 / Map Sections B, C, D, E)

The air is dry down here. You can feel the gentle breeze of the ventilators pushing air through the darkness around you. The main power in the mine is off — only the flickering emergency lights are operating — but you can see well enough by their fading red light.

Not a sound can be heard — it's as silent as the grave.

You're probably wondering why we're starting at the bottom of the mine and working our way up. That's a fair question. Normal folks would go down level by level until they hit the bottom.

The Way It Is (Setup):

Truth is that sometimes it's easier to go down before going up — and the crew may discover this is one of those times. If they take the drift access to Level 1, they'll find out that it has become a shooting gallery with them as the targets. If they take the access to Level 2, they will come face to face with some angry Tong thugs. We're sure the crew will want a taste of both, but if they get tired of tradin' shots with the psycho Sheriff or gettin' kicked in the gut by the Tong — all the while bein' fairly certain that "Brigit" is about to run off with the treasure — they may look for a quicker, safer route. Turns out it's a far sight easier to go down to Level 3 and work your way up the winzes to Level 1.

The main drift (B) runs 81 feet to the west where it opens onto the main stope (C) of this level. Ten foot square beams support the roof of the cavern which, due to the fact that the emergency lights are all fixed only 8 feet above the floor of the level, is shrouded in inky darkness. A mechanical winze (D) slopes steeply upward from the floor of the Level 3 to the rear floor of the Level 2 stope.

There is also a second cross drift in the northern corner of the stope that leads northwest, turns left into a steep incline rising 50 feet, and angles west again into a second cross drift ending in a fall shaft (a shaft that has only a ladder) that climbs another 50 feet to the floor at the back of Level 2.

Problems:

Just a little noise: The winze at section D uses a mechanical lift with a track on its sloping floor, allowing the crew to ride an ore car stationed at the bottom up to Level 2. This winze is noisy. Its mechanical screeching echoes through the stopes of both Level 2 and Level 3. While everyone on both of these levels would

hear the use of this winze device, the echoes within the mine make it FORMIDABLE for anyone to detect the direction of the noise or pinpoint its location without investigating.

New Way of Things (Results):

This level is completely deserted.

SCENE 3: GETTING THE DRIFT

(Mine Level 2 / Map Sections F, G, H, I, J)

There is a slight dampness to the air. The way ahead is obscured by an impenetrable haze roiling past the flickering emergency lights. Overhead, you can hear the groaning of timbers from the level above. The walls are damp to the touch.

The Way It Is (Setup):

Level 2 is showing more signs of the danger posed by the weight of the water-soaked soil and snow-blanketed ground overhead. But the timbers appear to be holding.

The main drift runs 195 feet westward until it opens onto the main stope. This is by far the longest of the man-made caverns in this mine; over 530 feet along its face at its widest point. The face itself rises almost 100 feet. The remaining space is filled with a latticework of scaffold; timber beams rising up into the misty darkness.

If the crew is interested in what's below, southeast of where the main drift enters the stope they can find the winch mechanism for Winze Beta (D, See Scene 2 about the noise) that leads down to Level 3. There is also the shaft to the northwest that leads downward and it's quieter than using the winze!

If, on the other hand, the crew is interested in going up to Level 1, they will find three places from this stope that will take them there directly (H, I, and J). There are mechanical winzes (H and J), as well as an emergency shaft (I). Both winzes operate relatively quietly.

Problems:

Bite Your Tong: Nine Tong thugs have come into the mine to try to stop "Brigit" and Sheriff Pearson from reaching the treasure room. In fact, they have been ordered by Lau Tsu to keep everyone away from the treasure

room and they will attack the crew if they know they are present.

If the crew have the game piece and if they tell the Tong that they came here to deliver it to Lau Tsu, the Tong will tell the crew that they can give the piece to them and they will deliver it to Lau Tsu. If crew hands over the game piece, the Tong will allow them to leave the mine without harm. If the crew refuses to turn over the game piece, the Tong will attack the crew with the intention of recovering the game piece.

Two of the Tong thugs are guarding the opening into the stope from the Level 2 drift. The other six are at the bottom of the shaft (I) waiting for a signal from Lau Tsu who has climbed up the shaft a few minutes before. Activating the noisy winze (D) will alert them and draw all eight of the remaining Tong thugs to (D).

The Tong thugs will climb up into the cross beams of the support scaffolding where they will hide in the darkness until they are ready to strike. The crew will find it **HEROIC** to see the Tong there before they attack. Furthermore, if the Tong thugs feel it is to their advantage, they will strike and then vanish again into the darkness overhead. Once the crew is aware of this tactic, they will still find it **HARD** to see the Tong thugs, but not nearly as difficult as before. Crew members who are aware of the presence of the Tong thugs will be able to hear them moving overhead, although it will be **HARD** to discern their position just from the noise alone.

New Way of Things (Results):

It may be possible to slip past the Tong thugs without a fight ... or not. Either way the crew now have three back doors up to Level 1.

SCENE 4: CREAKING TIMBERS

(Mine Level 1 / Map Sections K and L)

Water drips from the ceiling, pooling on the floor and running in rivulets down the sides of the walls. The emergency lights have failed and it's darker than a cow's insides in here. The air is oppressive with humidity. You can hear the constant groaning of the timbers straining against the weight of the sodden ground above.

The Way It Is (Setup):

The oldest — and most precarious — of the levels is the stope off Level 1. The old timber framing is starting to go and the weight of the soaked ground overhead isn't helping any. Worse, other than the emergency lights half way into the drift, all the rest of the emergency lights inside the stope have failed. Hope someone thought to bring a flashlight!

One important peculiarity of this level of the mine is found on each of the overhead cross-beams of the stope framing: each cross beam has a letter carved into its face denoting a compass point. A person facing north, standing in the middle of a set of square frames would see a carved "N" in the beam above him. The same person facing west would see a carved "W." This was meant to help the miners keep their bearing in the mine — and was used by Benny Xiau as a means of securing his treasure. (See Scene 5.)

Problems:

Shooting Gallery: Sheriff Pearson is using the long drift (K) from the main shaft to the old stopes — that's 272 feet of unobstructed view—as his own personal shooting gallery.

Pearson is at the west end of the drift barricaded behind an ore cart to what amounts to **TOTAL COVER**. He is armed with several rifles, pistols, and enough ammunition to supply a small army. He's hunkered down for a siege. He and "Brigit" came into the mine earlier with a plan: he will hold off any unwanted company while she searches for the treasure.

Pearson will stay put until someone other than "Brigit" enters the stope. Then he will climb up into the massive framework of cross beams overhead and wait for his victims to come to him. He may be psychotic, but he's smart enough to realize that it is easier on him if his victims finish the job. He'll let the treasure seekers find the treasure and then kill them and confiscate the stolen wealth. Just like any good lawman!

Not Entirely Stable: The timbers of the framing in the stope groan under the increased pressure of the soaked ground. Water drips or runs in rivulets down the square-framed beams, while the wood shifts and creaks.

It is **EASY** for anyone to see that this mine isn't safe. Fortunately, anyone with **ENGINEERING** ability can make an **AVERAGE** observation and see that the mine should remain stable for the time being. They can continue to make this observation for the rest of Scenes 4 and 5. They will be right

— unless the crew take it into their heads to use explosives (See Scene 7) or otherwise try deliberately to bring down the mine. If they do, you might just have to oblige them by skipping to Scene 7 a little early. Remember: foolish players deserve whatever happens to their characters!

New Way of Things (Results):

The crew has an EASY time hearing the dulcet tones of “Brigit” swearin’ up a storm and they can follow the sound that will lead them to the base of the original mine shaft and into Scene 5.

SCENE 5: WALK THE WALK

(Mine Level 1 / Map Section M)

The bottom of the original mine shaft rises above you. You can feel the damp air in the mine drift up the shaft. At the bottom, “Brigit” is sloshin’ around in ankle-deep water beneath where the lift-cage used to stop. She’s swearin’ in both Chinese and English and you’re impressed. She doesn’t repeat herself once! No wonder she’s the school marm!

The Way It Is (Setup):

“Brigit” is sure that the treasure she has searched for over the years is beneath the false bottom of the mine shaft under her feet — a door she can’t figure out how to open.

Problems:

Shafted: “Brigit” — frustrated and angry — can be found at the bottom of the original mine shaft — the top of which is boarded over and no longer used. She’s standing in the depression at the bottom of the shaft ankle deep in water, thrashing about, searching for something. She is looking for some kind of keypad or device she can use to open the vault.

In between swear words, “Brigit” can be heard muttering to herself something to the effect that the key to the vault is the “stupid game piece” of Benny Xiau’s. If the crew happens to have the game piece, then “Brigit” will complain about the idiot Blake not getting it for her. If “Brigit” has the game piece, she will wave it about in frustration, yelling that she has no idea how she’s supposed to open a vault with a brat’s toy.

“Brigit” has also brought with her ten mine demolition charges, but considering the shape of the timbers around her, she has thought better of trying to blow open the vault.

If asked about Sheriff Pearson’s whereabouts, “Brigit” will say that he’s probably on this mine level somewhere, but that where he is or what he’s doing is not as important as opening the treasure room before the mine comes down around them.

Locked out: A metal door lies at the bottom of the shaft. There are no handles, locks, keypads, or other visible means by which to open the door. No matter how hard “Brigit” or anyone else looks for some means to open this door, they won’t find it.

Benny Xiau was clever. He placed sensors in the floor under each square frame section of the stope. Only when one person walks a pre-designated path between the frames of the stope will the vault door open. If the sensors detect more than one person, nothing will happen. The correct sequence of frames to step on in order to open the vault door is engraved on the game piece.

The sensors count only those people walking the path. If there is anyone else in the stope — the crew and/or “Brigit,” the sensors will not count them so long as they keep within 10 feet of the vault door. (Sheriff Pearson is also on this level — but as he is in the framing overhead, so the floor sensors will not count him, either.)

The moment someone is within 10 feet of the vault door, anyone nearby will find it HARD to hear a whirring sound like clock work unwinding, that will end in a thunk. If one person starts at the shaft — ‘The Journey begins where the journey ends and the way is open’ — and walks nine timber frames to the north, then anyone listening for the sound will find it EASY to hear another thunk sound from the vault door under “Brigit’s” feet. If that person then follows this path and does not deviate from it —

9N-2W-3S-6E-5S-3E-2N-7W

— then anyone listening will find it EASY to hear that same “thunk” sound occur simultaneous to each correct step until the last of the vault bolts is withdrawn. At that point, the mechanism will groan loudly and the vault door will lower like an elevator platform to expose a drift that leads back into the treasure room.



If, on the other hand, the person walking the combination makes any mistake — diverts from the path, goes too many frames, makes a wrong turn — then everyone near the vault door will hear a sound like rolling steel followed by a clang as all of the bolts are rammed back into position and the mechanism resets itself. The only way to recover from any such mistake is to return to the beginning and start again.

New Way of Things (Results):

Once the crew manages to open the vault, proceed to Scene 6.

SCENE 6: BEST FORGOTTEN

(Mine Level 1 / Map Section N)

Ladders on both sides of the newly exposed shaft lead down 20 feet to a drift running straight back into the quartzite and limestone face. The walls of the drift are formed of rusting hull plating. Its sides slant slightly inward toward a narrow roof supported by steel-reinforced trapezoidal arches placed every few feet.

The end of the corridor opens onto a large, oval-shaped room with concrete arches supporting a domed ceiling of fitted hull plates. Near the edges of the floor are the remains of three big crates.

The object in the center of the room catches your attention. Three sarcophagi fashioned out of shaped concrete form a triangle in the center of the room. The top of each sarcophagus has been formed so that it looks like human bones. Chinese figures cross each sarcophagus. Each lid has matching seals made of metal.

The Way It Is (Setup):

Well, you've been lookin' for it and now you've found it—the hidden treasure room of Benny Xiau!

It's EASY to see writing on the hull plates that form the walls. This writing includes serial numbers and the like and the locations of access points. "Warning: Exhaust Port", "Avionics Access C", "No Step" and "Ground Power Connect" are typical, as are long serial numbers. An AVERAGE search of the writing will lead the crew to find the following on one of the plates: "Lucius Newberry / ComTrans / Boros." This is all that remains of the lost *Lucius Newberry*.

TABLE - Data Disc

You FAIL to comprehend anything in the cascade of meaningless data...	... other than the fact that the information is tagged "secret".
Even an AVERAGE examination of the data will tell you...	In addition to the above: ... the data comes from someplace called the "Academy" and deals with a project called "Pandora".
It's HARD but you suddenly realize...	In addition to the above: ... that "Pandora" was a bioweapons research experiment
Trying to get detailed information under these circumstances is FORMIDABLE, yet in a flash you comprehend...	In addition to the above: ... "Pandora" was an attempt by the Alliance to incapacitate enemy combatants and render them incapable of fighting without actually killing them (so long as they receive the antidote).
Only HEROIC observation skills will let you observe...	In addition to the above: ... that the project included the impregnation of the biological agents into the Independent Faction currency as a means of spreading the agent.
You make the INCREDIBLE leap of thought and conclude...	In addition to the above: ... that the biological agent may be linked to the increase in Bowden's Malady on Regina in recent years.

The remnants of the crates also have markings which are an EASY read: 'Independence Treasury Control #89264283 / Quarantined Cargo / DO NOT OPEN / Biohazard'.

Problems:

Xiau's Sarcophagi: The sarcophagi in the room were constructed this way for a reason and it would well befit the crew to discover the truth of this treasure before they decide to steal it.

The sarcophagi are built in three layers.

The outer layer is a steel-reinforced, concrete shell with a heavy lid. Moving one of these lids will be FORMIDABLE for anyone without help. The Chinese figures across the lid read: *Xiau Jwei Gai Won Se*²⁰.

The second layer of each sarcophagus is a case made of lead, carefully welded at the seams and sealed to make it impermeable. This lid is ornately carved with hundreds of skulls and the inscription: *Rung Tse Fwo Tzoo Bao Yo Wuo Mubu*²¹. The crew will find it a COMPLEX, but EASY task to pry open the lids.

The crew will discover a huge pile of Alliance platinum coins — 10,000 pieces in each of three sarcophagi (30,000 total)—stacked up inside a sealed glass container. Etched in the glass is a simple saying: *Tze Sh'un Tze Mieb*²². Resting atop the glass case of each of the sarcophagi is a data disc (see table). Breaking the glass is HARD but once the crew does so, they will have direct and unlimited access to the cursed platinum.

A Little Heavy Reading: The data discs — there are three total, one on top of each of the three glass sarcophagi — have no external

markings. Each disc contains different technical data — partial and unorganized. It would be IMPOSSIBLY COMPLEX to understand all the aspects of the information on the discs, but a quick examination of the discs may yield important information. Crew may have the INTELLIGENCE to make a quick evaluation, but they will find it helpful to couple that with PERCEPTION/DEDUCTION and KNOWLEDGE skills as they attempt to understand the information they read on the data disc. Have the character examining the disc determine the level of difficulty they achieve in understanding the information on the disc on the table.

A Treasure that Nobody Wants: Did we mention this treasure was cursed? Lau Tsu hasn't been trying to find this treasure — he's been trying to hide it! These are the only three cases that remain of an Alliance Experiment gone badly wrong. Probably best that you take a hard look at the entry in the "New and Used Gear."

What do you mean it's cursed? Needless to say, "Brigit" doesn't take this well. If the crew finds out that the treasure is contaminated, she flies into a rage, screaming something like: "Ten years of chasin' down this score and you tell me it's contaminated? No! No gorram way! It's a trick. You want this all for yourself, don't you? That bastard Benny Xiau stole it from me before and I'll be damned if I'm gonna let some greenhorn like you steal it from me now! It's mine! I earned it and I'm the only one who'll be walkin' out with it!"

It will be HARD to convince her that the treasure is contaminated, and the crew will undoubtedly have to restrain her to stop her from busting open the glass cases.

²⁰ "Xiau so guilty as to deserve a thousand deaths."

²¹ "Merciful Buddah protect us."

²² "Leave one to his own fate."

Mine Collapse

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	+
Phase 1					Phase 2					Phase 3					Phase 4					

Phases	Effect
1	The timbers of the stope start to creek ominously. Water runs in rivulets down the side of the timbers. You can hear the crack of splintering timbers somewhere in the distance.
2	The groaning of the timbers becomes louder and more pronounced. Pieces of rock and mud fall from the walls and clatter down through the timbers. [Agi d4, DMG d4]
3	Beams pop from their fittings and tumble down through the framing, followed by a barrage of stone. The floor of the mine quivers underfoot. [Agi d6, DMG d6]
4	Beams explode from their fittings, slamming against the walls of the stope. Other beams tumble through the remaining framing and slam against the floor. An avalanche of rock shakes the ground around you. [Agi d10, DMG d8]
5	The roof of the mine collapses! A cascade of rock, mud, and water shatters the timbers and threatens to bury you! [DMG d10W/d10S]

Of course, the crew might not find out the treasure is contaminated or they might decide the hell with it — they want the treasure anyway.

New Way of Things (Results)

If the crew and/or “Brigit” break the glass cases, the agent is released into the mine. It would be INCREDIBLE if the crew remained unaffected by it. (See “New and Used Gear” section for details of Pandora’s effects.) This would be a bad thing.

If the crew and/or “Brigit” determine to take the platinum, remember that they can carry only so much with them — let’s say 1,000 platinum pieces per person. They can always plan to come back, but after Scene 7, that may be all they get — curse included, of course! So, once the crew and “Brigit” exit the treasure room, go to Scene 7.

If the crew don’t want to have anything to do with the cursed treasure, it might occur to someone that the best way to keep it from doing any more harm is to bring the mine down on top of it. If this is the case, go to Scene 7.

SCENE 7: LONG WAY FROM THE LIGHT

A voice shouts at you from the darkness of the water-soaked stopes above.

“I’ll be taking charge of that treasure now ... in the name of the law!”

The Way It Is (Setup):

Some folks just don’t know when to quit ... and it’s especially hard when you not only have a leaky brainpan, but you’re a quart low to begin with. And as if this nut-ball Sheriff wasn’t the crew only trouble, the mine is fixin’ to come down on top of them.

Problems:

Not a Good Place to Be: It is EASY for anyone to see that this mine is no longer safe. After a week of constant rain, plus the weight of the snow, the stope timbers are straining to the breaking point.²³

The mine is about to collapse. Once the collapse begins, there’s no stopping it — the mountain is gonna come down on the crew’s heads. Such a collapse, fortunately, doesn’t happen without warning. Frames buckle, beams pop from their mounts and tumble down to the floor of the stope. The cave-in starts slow, then gains momentum with every passing second. Starting with the beginning of this scene, begin counting down turns until the mine collapses.

23 ETW: The original Hornsilver Mine suffered from this same condition and fate in February 14th, 1882. After weeks of rain and a heavy snowfall, the stope framing of the upper level was struggling against the soaked mountain above it. The swing shift had just come up out of the mine and the graveyard shift was about to enter when ominous sounds came up the shaft. An inspection team was sent into the mine and found everything quiet all the way to the bottom. As they were being hauled up in the cage, however, the sounds grew ... the shaft walls collapsed slightly inward, trapping the lift cage fifty feet below. A rope was lowered and the inspection crew was hauled out one at a time. As the last of the crew was pulled, the upper level of the mine caved in, crushing the stope timbers and creating a ‘glory hole’ in the mountainside above. The sound of the collapse was so great that it shattered windows in a town forty miles away.

You should be a little flexible when it comes to how long a turn is during parley, since it's nice to let the crew try to talk their way out of their problems with Pearson. A turn of urgent conversation may represent several lines of dialogue for everyone involved. A turn of combat is a turn on the table.

The crew can't do anything to stop the cave in, but there's plenty they can do to help it along if they think that's going to make their escape easier. Anyone making even an AVERAGE effort can cause a timber to buckle under the weight of the waterlogged ground. Fortunately the mine is well designed. Even someone with ENGINEERING ability will find it HARD to know which particular timber shifting would accelerate the general collapse. If such a timber is located and the crew knocks it loose, then accelerate the current phase of the mine's collapse to the next phase and begin counting the remaining rounds from that point. The use of explosives in the mine will have the same effect; advancing the collapse to the next phase.

The crew has gotta get out of the mine! There are several exits available: the drift that leads directly to the lift cage of the new shaft, the three winzes leading down to Level 2 (oh, great, going deeper into the collapsing mine) and, notably, the Old Main Shaft above the entrance to the Treasure room. Of course, only one obstacle stands in their way...

The Sheriff's Back: Sheriff Pearson has been waiting for the crew to come out of the treasure hole. Now that they've done his work for him, he will demand — in the name of the law, of course — that the treasure be handed over to him. Any attempt to reason with the Sheriff about the true nature of the treasure will be met with profound skepticism. Pearson believes the crew are liars trying to keep his treasure from him — and, to make matters worse, they're also trying keep him from his "true love."

Now, seeing as the Sheriff is a delusional psychopath, the definition of just who is his "true love" is subject to some rather broad interpretation. Sheriff Pearson will either fixate on one of the female crew as the object of his desire or he will fixate on "Brigit," whichever suits the GM's fancy. (Note: If he does fixate on one of the female crew, he should be attentive to that person from the moment he meets her on Beylix.) Whoever Pearson falls for, he will start calling her "Evelyn" and ramble on about how he'll never leave her and how he loves her so much it hurts. If "Evelyn" does or says anything to "break the mood," such as

trying to convince Pearson she's not Evelyn or otherwise reject his advances, Pearson will turn against "Evelyn" — claiming that she has been "unfaithful" and "playing him for a fool." He will go into a rage, draw his weapon, and start firing at anything that moves.

New Way of Things (Results):

Should the crew somehow survive both Sheriff Pearson and the mine collapse, it is time for the Act III, *A Place Called Home*.

ACT III: A PLACE CALLED HOME

Wherein our heroes come face to face with their destiny.

Well, it's all over but the shouting, as the saying goes. It's time to tally up the butcher's bill and reap the fruits of the crew's labors.

What Happened to the School Marm?

Before we go any further, you probably need to know what to do about "Brigit."

If the crew manages to get her calmed down in the mine and were able to convince her that there was nothing in those boxes but bad, she has had time to do some thinkin' and she is now ready to recoup her losses. If the crew have received a reward, "Brigit" will turn her considerable persuasion on them. Snake oil is mighty slippery stuff.

"Oh, thank the stars you've saved me!"

"Brigit" will throw her arms around the neck of the nearest, most "in-charge" male she can find among the crew. Her voluptuous body molds against his body. Her head rests lightly against his chest. She will burst into tears.

"For ten years I've been a slave to the Tong in Whitefall! They've been holding my dear sister captive until I could find this treasure and bring it to them. Now what do I do? I can't take this treasure to them. They will kill me and my sister. You're certain to get some reward money for your heroics. Whatever it is, I'm sure it will be enough to free her! Let's you and me go to Whitefall together..."

Now, of course, this is all a lie she's trying to sell, though there may be those present who are in a buying mood. If none of the crew are that gullible, "Brigit" is more than willing to bait this same hook for someone who is.

If "Brigit" has taken the treasure, she will be wanting to leave town quickly, before any

Rewards		
Benny Xiau's Treasure is:	Highest Faction Total is:	
Kept safe by keeping the glass cases sealed and not removing any of the treasure.	Mine Owner Faction OR Town Citizen's Faction	Scene 1
	Miner's Faction:	Scene 2
	Tong Faction:	Scene 3
Treasure glass cases are broken into allowing treasure to be taken.		Scene 4

one else can claim a share. Of course, the only available transport is the crew's own ship — and they may or may not be disposed to giving her and the cursed treasure a lift. Then there's J. W. McClarrin, who is still expecting to marry this little gal and who might just insist on going to the altar. A shotgun wedding — with the bride at the wrong end of the gun — could be a nice, romantic way to conclude her tale.

The point is that whatever fate you have in mind for "Saffron," we assume that it includes her continued breathin', schemin', and contains a heavy dose of poetic justice.

One thing you can say about "Saffron" however is that life's misfortunes — and she has had plenty of experience with this — never get her down for long.

Making a Scene: Which scene you play depends on what the crew has accomplished. Choose the situation from the table to determine which scene to play and which reward the crew will receive.

Regardless of the result, after the closing scene is played, conclude with Scene 5: *The Epilogue*.

SCENE 1: TIN STAR (LOCAL'S FRIEND)

"That was mighty fine work you did!" says John Blake, slapping you on the back. "Mighty fine! Got us out of a mess of trouble with that lunatic Sheriff, sure enough!"

Everyone who is anyone in Frisco has turned out to congratulate you on saving them from Sheriff Pearson and to commiserate with you over your hurts. Bad enough to have a mine come down on your head, but now you have to endure one of Blake's speeches!

The crew is in Blake's Hall. "Doc" McGuire is here to tend to the crew as best he can (though they might want to stick with their own doc, if they've got one!). The citizens have all turned out to give them their thanks.

John Blake, on behalf of the Mine Owners and the Citizen's Committee, will mention that

there's an opening for town Sheriff, if they're interested. It's one hundred platinum a month plus all the dinners they can eat at Nora Blake's table.

Whether the crew takes the job or not, they're always welcome in Frisco. The good citizens of the town are so grateful that they'll be happy to overlook whatever indiscretions the crew might have committed while they were here. In other words, they'll be happy to do whatever they can to shield the crew from the Alliance if they need it.

And, the town businesses have taken up a collection to present the crew with a "thank you" present: 5,000 credits.

When all the speeches have been made, proceed to Scene 5.

SCENE 2: DRINKS ON THE HOUSE (MINER'S FRIEND)

"I'll be a gorram goose-chucker!" says one of the miners. "Never thought you'd get out of there alive!"

You're in the Lawrence Saloon surrounded by miners, who are shooting their pistols into the air and holding a general celebration.

Pete Lawrence holds both his hands over his head, asking for silence. "Quiet, friends! I just had a little talk with Mr. McClarrin. He says we only lost the first level of the mine . . ."

"—and that were played out long ago, Pete!" yells a miner.

"Right!" Pete continues. "So you boys will be back at work inside of a week."

The place erupts again in gunfire and shouts.

"Hold on just a minute," Pete shouts. "It seems there's one person who ain't comin' back from the mine, boys."

A hush falls over the crowd. Pete holds his hand over his heart and looks to heaven.

"It seems our Sheriff's cleaned up his last town."

The miners cheer, several shouting for drinks with which to toast the event.

"And who do we have to thank for giving us back our lives?" Pete shouts.

He gestures to you. "The best friends a town like Frisco ever had!"

There's no stopping the celebration this time.

The miners and the saloon owners of the town offer you their friendship and protection. From this point on, any miner and saloon keeper NPCs the crew meets outside of Frisco might find it HARD to recognize their names, but if they do, they will assist them in any way they can. Miners and saloon keepers in Frisco will automatically do so. They have also taken up a collection of their own — partially taken from Pearson's savings — which amounts to 4,000 credits.

When the crew have celebrated enough, proceed to Scene 5.

SCENE 3: THE LEGACY OF BENNY XIAU (TONG FRIEND)

You enter the inner court of the temple.

Lau Tsu is sitting on a high backed chair at one end of the courtyard. He stands up and walks toward you.

"You have safeguarded our secret shame," he says. "We have long pledged ourselves to protect this terrible treasure. We almost failed, but you have saved our honor and rid our town of a menace. We have made certain that the cursed treasure is where it can never more tempt the greedy or harm anyone."

Lau Tsu motions two of his guards forward, each holding an ornate box. He opens one box and displays a set of small ancient coins — each with a square hole in their center, one for each of your crew.

"These will purchase aid for you wherever the 14 K Triad are found," Lau Tsu says as he presents the box to you.

Then he reaches for the second, heavier box and offers it to you. "A token of thanks from the house of Benny Xiau."

You now have the friendship of the Tong in Frisco. This can be a mixed blessing. While in Frisco, any Tong character will assist the crew in any way he can that is not overt. Outside of Frisco, any Tong characters the crew meet will instantly recognize the coins if shown to them. Their reaction will be strong, but not always good, depending if they're members of the 14K Triad or some other Tong, who might be at war with the 14K Triad. Though it is hard, most 14 K Triad Tong will give covert aide to the players. If the person approached is a member of a Tong at war with the 14 K Triad Tong, that person will move at once to thwart the crew's plans or might even attack them.

The second box contains payment in the amount of 4,000 credits.

When the crew has been sufficiently honored, proceed to the Scene 5.

SCENE 4: THE CURSE (CURSED TREASURE)

"Say, has anyone seen the school marm?"

If the crew has raided the lost treasure of the *Lucius Newberry*, then it's likely they've come away with a goodly amount of cash ... and it is certain they are in a boat load of trouble. (See "Pandora: The Cursed Treasure" in the Book Two: *Frisco Town*.)

The collapse of the mine may have effectively buried the bulk of the treasure (Lau Tsu will see to that!), but whatever pieces our crew have brought out with them — plus whatever "Brigit" managed to haul out on her own — will effectively "curse" the crew and "Brigit" until such time as they can rid themselves of it. See "Pandora: The Cursed Treasure" for details of this curse and how it could effect the crew in the future.

SCENE 5: EPILOGUE

When the crew departs, conclude their adventure by reading the following aloud:

The thunder of a spaceship's engines shake the windows of Pat Malloy's saloon as it soars into the sky.

Inside, sitting at his table in the corner, a carefully dressed man in a tattered suit watches his shot glass dance across the table. To the surprise of Pat Malloy and the miners present, the man known as Shakespeare raises his head and, looking skyward, recites:

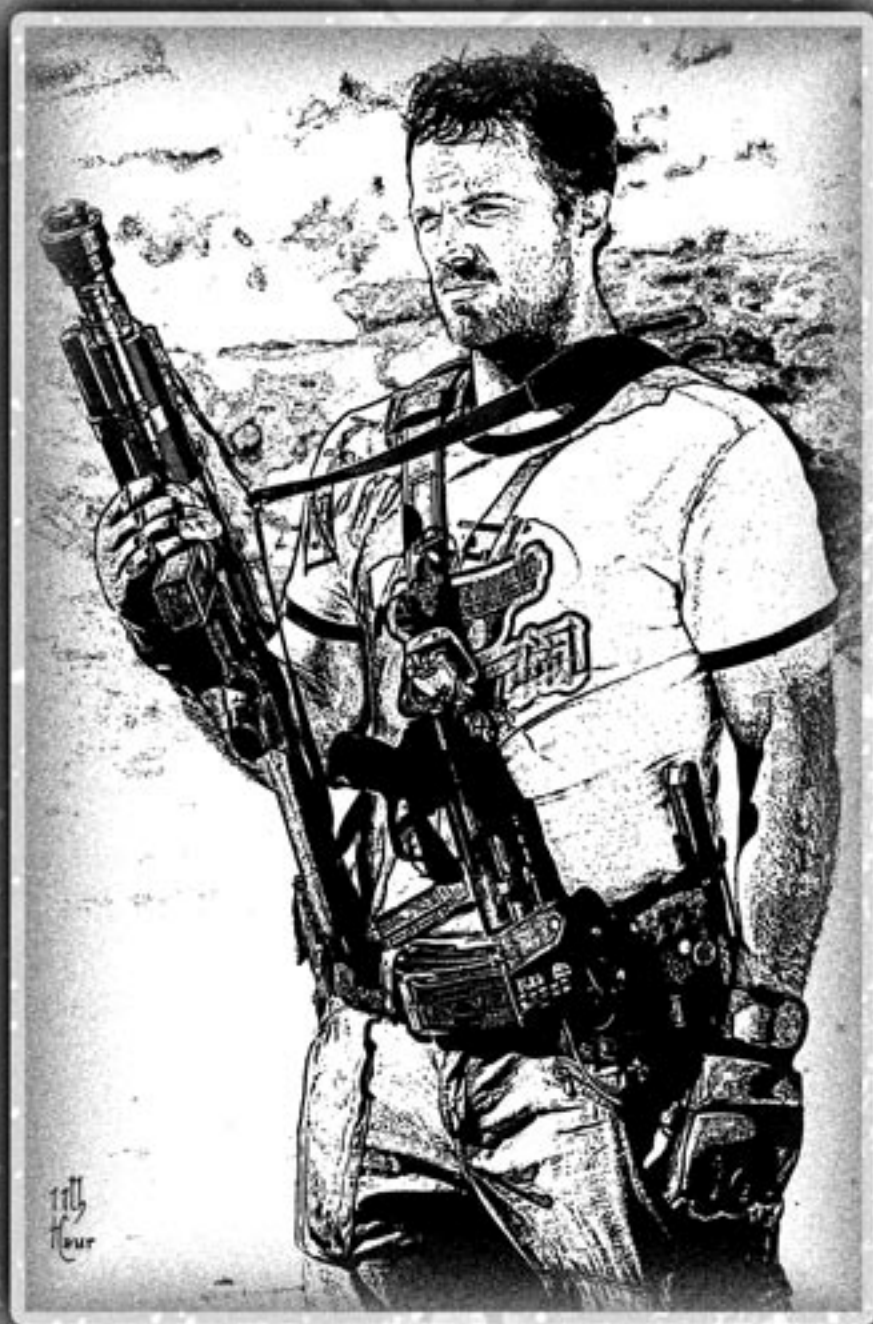
*"Our revels now are ended. These our actors,
As I foretold you, were all spirits, and
Are melted into air, into thin air:
And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,
The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff
As dreams are made on; and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep."²⁴*

With that, he lowers his head to the table, his eyes close, and a strange, sweet smile plays on his lips.

THE END

²⁴ William Shakespeare (the original!), The Tempest, Act 4 scene 1

Book Two



FRISCO TOWN

LAY OF THE LAND

BEYOND THE HORIZON

That's the thing about folk in the 'Verse — they're always thinking about what's just a little further out. Like now, when you're standin' on the streets of Frisco, looking out over the dry, craggy mountains. You're probably wonderin' what's on the other side.

Well, friend — not much.

You can find the tour-book description of Regina in the *Serenity Role Playing Game* book, although its local residents would be the first to tell you that there are no tourists on Regina — nobody comes here to relax in the lush tropical gardens. That's mainly due to the fact that (1) there's not a tropical garden within a four-day haul of this slag-heap and (2) Regina is owned and walled in by the Corone Mining Corporation.

No, sir; if you want to know what's beyond the horizon, 69% of it is rock, which is what you're looking at right now from the landing pad of the Frisco Port. Jagged, dry peaks of rock covered with sage brush and scrubby, tortured little trees. Oceans take up the remaining 29% and the rest are vast mining establishments that look impressive in corporate prospectuses on the Core Worlds, but which actually take up less than 2% of the surface area.

A gravrail that terminates at Frisco runs across the planet to the main processing plants on the far side. The gravrail makes it cheaper and easier to transport goods than sendin' stuff by air. The gravrails carry people, too, though it's hard to tell the passenger cars from those that haul the hogs. Not much in the way of emities, if you get my drift.

ABOUT THE TOWN

Now here's where we tell you about the setting we know as Frisco. Think of this part as showing you the props and the sets on the stage — the place where the action takes place.

On first blush, Frisco looks like a desolate backwater boomtown — remote, lawless and wild. Folks on the wrong side of the law might get it in their heads that this would be a fine place to lay low and they'd be right.

Frisco sits on what the rest of Regina considers the “uncivilized side” of the planet. Just haulin' water here is troublesome and what little weather does blow across the Grampian Range from time to time is nasty and troublesome. The wind never stops and when the storms do come, the torrential rains can turn the town into a mud-soaked mess. Then there's the winter, which is usually dry and freezing cold until that same storm makes a freakish turn and buries you under a heavy, wet blanket of mud-stained snow.

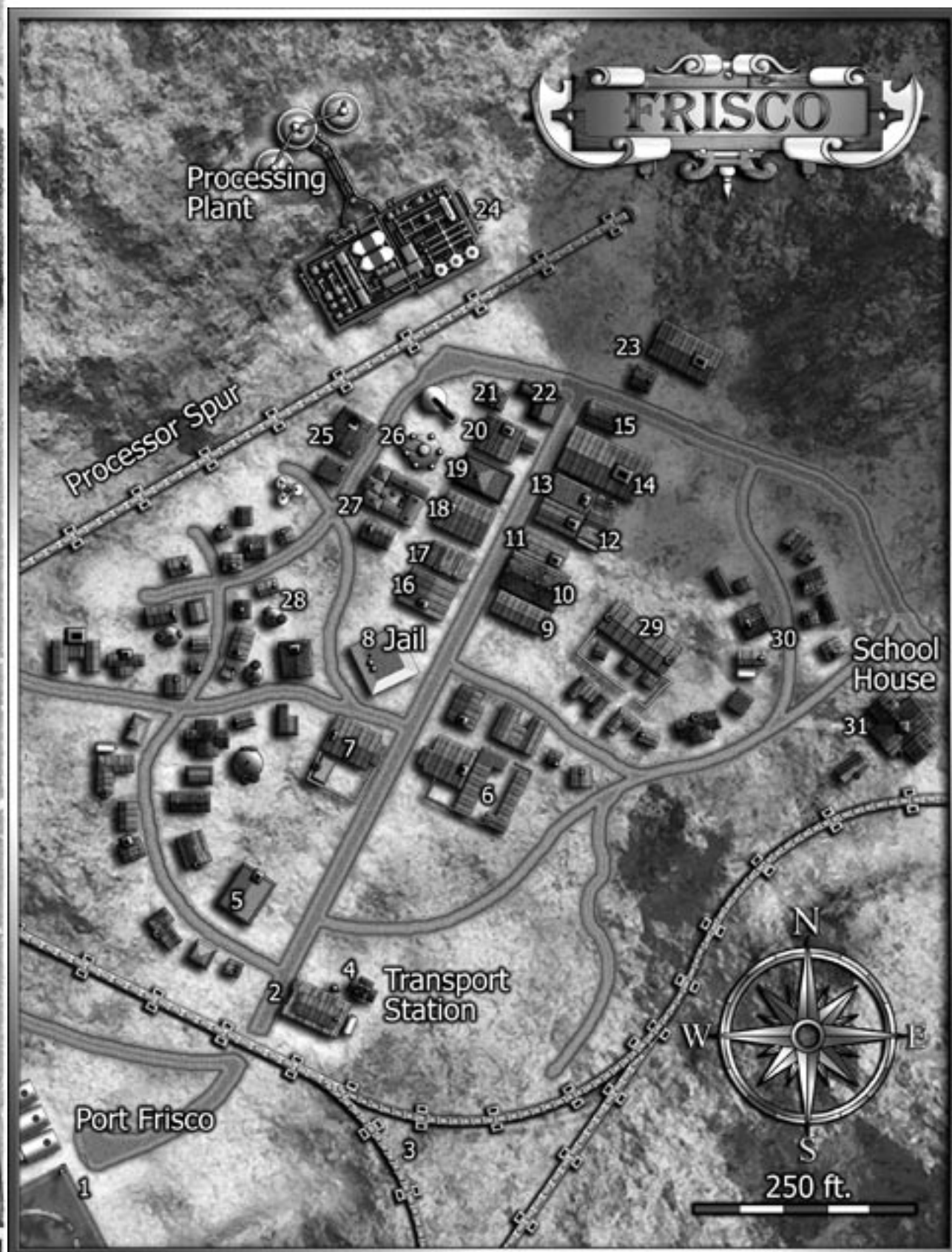
Frisco grew up next to the Hornsilver Mine — a claim originally made by two prospectors who sneaked onto the planet back when it was young and managed to stake their claim before Corone Mining Corporation was a gleam in some lawyer's eye. The prospectors — named Ryan and Hawkes — sank a shaft straight down into what proved to be almost pure silver and lead, only to have their dreams of riches come to a sudden end when they hit what they believed was bedrock.

It was about this time that J.W. McClarrin came along. A charismatic member of the Miners' Guild and an old prospector in his own right, McClarrin could see the Unification War loomin' on the horizon and he knew that there were profits to be made. He approached Ryan and Hawkes one day and purchased the claim for 1,000 credits. The prospectors, thinkin' they had just sold a worthless mine for a pile of coin, left the planet before the ink was dry on the deed.

As J.W. McClarrin had guessed, the “bedrock” turned out to be an outthrust rather than bedrock and with a little effort the silver was practically pouring out of the mine.

The mine continued to operate all through the Unification War, due in no small part to J.W.'s ability to broker deals to both sides of the conflict. At the end of the war, J.W. sold the claim to a company he formed himself — the Hornsilver Mining Corp. — for 250,000 credits — and financed his way into Parliament.

Unfortunately, such a successful independent mine did not sit well with the Corone Mining Consortium. Recently, the Consortium has convinced the Alliance to set up a cargo blockade against Frisco. This has effectively cut off comet ice shipments — the life's blood of



the town — and threatened Frisco's continued existence.

Frisco consists of the town and the mine that sits about a quarter of the way up the side of Grampian Mountain to the west. Both are linked by dirt roads and the gravrail that takes ore shipments to the other side of the planet for processing and transport off-world.

The town locations include:

1. Port Frisco (Frisco Port Authority)

Two large flat patches of blasted earth are separated from the town's small transport station by a gravrail bed. The wooden sign creakin' in the wind above the station platform says "risco." (The "F" is wore off.) To the west rises a tall mountain. You can see a lift house and that means the mine shaft is beneath it. To the north, running up a gentle rise, is the town proper. Or improper, as the case may be.

You will find that there are minimal fueling facilities here — at double standard rates — and absolutely nothing that would even suggest the ability to repair a ship. Those in need of parts will be directed to Balley Sacket shop (15).

2. Transport Station

A wide wooden platform surrounds the central building. Half of the interior is taken up with a waiting room with a freight storage room occupyin' another third of the space. The rest consist of a small office with a magrail communications box that is linked directly to the magrail scheduling office. A line runs to the Port Tower (3) standing next to the station.

You cannot purchase tickets here — it ain't that kind of train, mister! The station is run by Eliza Griffiths.

Eliza Griffiths¹
(Station Mistress)

Agi d8, Str d6, Vit d6, Ale d8, Int d6, Wil d6, Init d8+d8, Life 14.

Assets: Healthy as a Horse [Minor], Tough as Nails [Minor]

Complications: Crude [Minor]

Skills: Discipline d6, Guns d6 / Shotgun d12, Knowledge d4, Survival d6

Weapons: Shotgun (DMG d10W, RNG 10, ROF 2, MAG 10)

Faction Points: Town 0 / Owner 0 / Miners 0 / Tong 0

Eliza has round face, pouty lips, and big, cow eyes. She's friendly enough, but she's a

¹ My grandmother's maiden name was Griffiths.

no-nonsense kind of woman. Though she may look soft, she's as hard as nails when it comes to the rules and is quick to enforce them with a sawed-off shotgun that she carries in a quick-release sheath slung across the back of her tattered gingham dress. (As equally incongruous as the conductor's hat she wears. ("This here hat makes me official!"))

3. Magrail

The magrail line uses gravitic lifters to elevate the train and send it along the track at high speeds. These trains carry almost exclusively freight. They arrive in town at noon, 8:00 PM and 4:00 AM. Once each week, the Sunday noon train brings several cars of passengers and trade goods, but since the "blockade" no passengers have been on the trains.

The magrail line runs from the far side of the planet, past a "Y"-shaped turn just east of the Transport Station and up Grampian Mountain, curving south to the dumpers of the Hornsilver Mine. There ore from the mine is dumped into the rail cars for transport to smelters on the far side of the world. A single siding between the mine and the Transport Station runs northeast to the Processing Plant. In happier times, these trains would carry comet ice for the processors to convert into water and gas used to run the town — but no longer.

4. Port Tower

This twenty-foot tall metal frame tower rises up next to the Transport Station. Access is only via a ladder that runs up the interior of the metal frame to the control tower room at the top. A roof overhead provides shelter from the weather.

The view is a good one. The tower looks down the length of the town and provides a clear line of sight for miles in all other directions. There is also a transmitter here for port traffic control of approaching spaceships, but its range is hampered considerably due to the jamming by the Alliance Patrol Boats.

5. Tom Loughney's Saloon & Oyster Parlor

In the middle of the desert, where else would you find ... an Oyster Parlor?

You can enter Tom Loughney's Saloon and treat yourselves to canned oysters for about 10 silver a cup — dust falling from the roof included at no extra charge.

Tom Loughney's Saloon is actually a dugout — essentially a hole dug straight back into the

dirt hillside. It has a plank, dirt-covered roof. The front wall and door have been cobbled together from whatever wood planks the owner could scrounge. The saloon is relatively cool inside, but it is also dark. The room is divided into the public "Oyster Parlor" in the front, consisting of several barrels with planks laid over them for tables and smaller kegs for stools. The slanting bar — dusty and lusterless — nearly fills the back. A rickety door leads from behind the bar into a storeroom with a hammock that constitutes Tom's living space. There is only one official entrance, although Tom will admit (under extreme pressure) to a crawl space behind his bed that leads out the back and onto the top of the dugout.

Tom Loughney (Oyster Dealer)

Agi d6, Str d10, Vit d8, Ale d6, Int d4, Wil d8, Init d6+d6, Life 18.

Assets: Mean Left Hook [Minor]

Complications: Crude [Minor]

Skills: Athletics d6 / Lifting d8 / Dodge d8, Influence d4, Survival d6, Unarmed Combat d6 / Brawling d10

Weapons: None

Faction Points: Town 0 / Owner 0 / Miners 1 / Tong -1

With his squared-off chin and curly hair and pleasant smile, Tom is trying his best to make his little hole in the dirt look like a palace. To hear him talk about the place, you would think it came right from one of the Core Worlds. He believes that serving oysters from cans gives his place a "touch of elegance you ain't gonna find at them other eateries in town."

6. Livery Stables

These open air stables house between ten and twenty-five horses at any given time. Horses are available for sale or rent from the proprietor, "Honest" Eddie Binder.

"Honest" Eddie Binder (Horse Trader)

Agi d6, Str d4, Vit d6, Ale d8, Int d8, Wil d10, Init d6+d8, Life 16.

Assets: Nose for Trouble [Major]

Complications: Coward [Minor], Forked Tongue [Minor], Superstitious [Minor]

Skills: Animal Handling d6 / Horses d10, Influence d6 / Fast Talk d10, Knowledge d6 / Appraisal d8, Perception d6 / Sight d8

Weapons: Pistol (DMG d6W, RNG 100, ROF 3, MAG 8) (chrome plated)

Faction Points: Town -2 / Owner -1 / Miners 2 / Tong 1

"Honest" Eddie is anything but. A tall and charming man with a day's growth of beard on his ebony black skin, Eddie will make any kind of outrageous claim necessary to part you from your credits or deal himself in on any game being played. That's not to say that he can't be honest: he'll sell you a good mount and he has something of a gift with horses. He'll claim to be one of the greatest gunslingers in the Rim and he wears an oversized revolver — nickel plated and shiny — to prove it. Truth is he barely knows which end of the thing to point.

7. Balley's Barn

Balley Sacket's barn is a relatively large structure, as structures in the town go. It is two stories tall with a hayloft above the stalls. A smith's forge shed is separate from the main building, but still inside the fenced enclosure that surrounds the barn. The barn itself is locked up tight.

Inside the barn are several horse and livestock stalls. There are usually three horses found in the stalls: Cletus, Rosemond, and Edna. All three horses are HARD to manage, since they are spirited creatures of FORMIDABLE speed for their breed.

A well-cared-for standard hover mule is parked in one corner of the barn, with a flatbed wagon connected to it. The more curious minded are almost always drawn to the tarpaulin-covered object sitting in the center of the barn.

Beneath its protective cover stands Balley's Buggy: a bone-white, gleaming, horse-drawn carriage of unsurpassed workmanship. The large spindled wheels are nearly 5 feet high with long, thin, perfectly shaped spokes. The rims are of polished steel. Delicate axles of narrow, tempered steel are set expertly into oak. The wheels are bright yellow with brass fittings at the hub. Two sets of large leaf springs hold the handsome body of the buggy above the axles. Black leather upholstery gleams out from beneath a protective wool blanket.

Balley will show off his buggy with pride, but no one better set a finger on it unless he's wearin' kid gloves.

If you're lookin' for Balley, you'll find him at his shop.

Balley's Buggy

(Including one of Balley's horses)

P d4 M d2, Seats: 4, speed 18 mph

8. Town Jail (new)

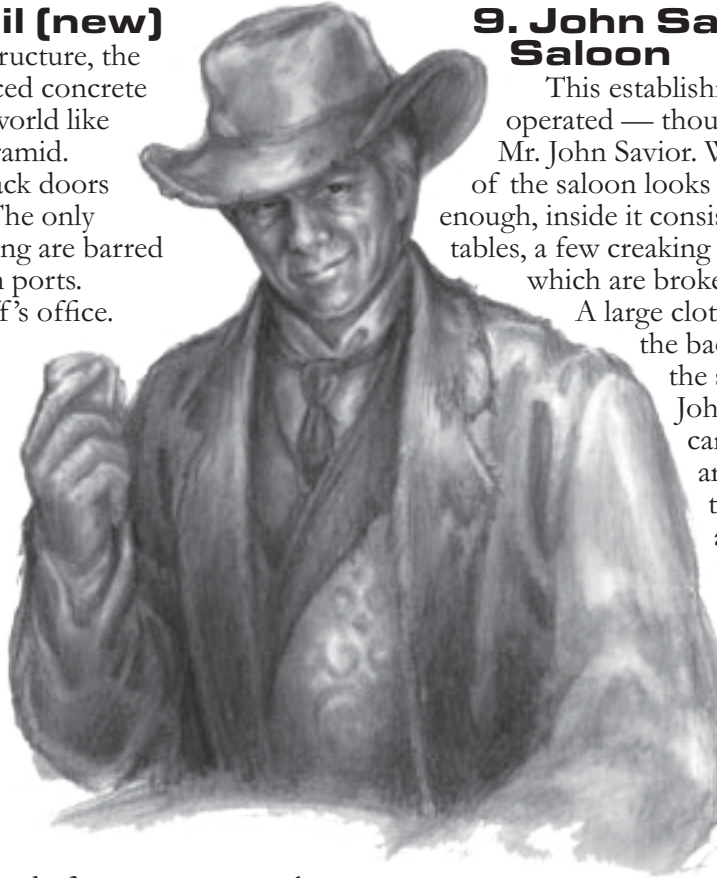
A relatively new structure, the jail is built of reinforced concrete and looks for all the world like a squat, truncated pyramid. Both the front and back doors are reinforced steel. The only windows in the building are barred slits that look like gun ports.

Inside is the sheriff's office. Everything is so new you can still smell the paint. A large room in the front contains the sheriff's desk with a cortex screen, filing cabinets, a few chairs, a "sanitation cabinet," a cot and a weapons locker that is devoid of weapons except when there's a sheriff in town.

Behind the office are two rows of jail cells — three on each side — constructed of cross-woven steel wired for electricity — a fact that would mean something if the FORMIDABLE truth were known that they have not yet been connected to anything. The doors' locking mechanisms do work, however, with the simple metal keys on the ring hanging by the sheriff's desk. The hall between the cells leads to the back door.

Several miners who were contracted by the town to build the jail — fearin' that they might happen to end up in it sometime — decided to dig themselves a secret way out — just in case. Underneath the center cell on the right a trap door can be found under the cot. The door is RIDICULOUS to find unless you know where to look. It leads down into a shallow tunnel that turns north and runs under the floorboards of Wild Bill's Saloon. Pushing up the floor boards brings you into the storeroom of that establishment.

If there is a sheriff in town, he will live here when he's not makin' his rounds. The filing cabinet will contain folders on pretty much everyone in the town — including the crew. The gun cabinet will contain one sniper rifle, three standard rifles, four pistols, ten smoke grenades, and ten fragmentation grenades.



9. John Savior's Saloon

This establishment is owned and operated — though not real well — by Mr. John Savior. While the outside of the saloon looks accommodating enough, inside it consists of several worn tables, a few creaking chairs (several of which are broken), and a worn bar.

A large cloth curtain separates the back of the bar from the store room where John sleeps — when he can sleep. His drinks are the cheapest in town and carry quite a kick to them — if they don't kill you by mistake. John is a religious man and he's glad to offer up the occasional sermon to along with the drinkin'. There are no Faro games played in his saloon.

Both Tong members and miners hang out here. No respectable townsfolk will come near the place.

John Savior (Bar Keeper)

Agi d8, Str d6, Vit d6, Ale d8, Int d8, Wil d6, Init d8+d8, Life 12.

Assets: Sharp Sense / Hearing [Minor], Religiosity [Minor]

Skills: Athletics d4, Discipline d2, Guns d6 / Shotgun d10, Influence d4, Perception d6

Weapons: Shotgun (DMG d10W, RNG 10, ROF 2, MAG 10)

Faction Points: Town -2 / Owner -1 / Miners -1 / Tong 2

John looks more like a preacher than a saloon keeper and views himself as both. He has an accent that once might have been described as coming from a place called "Brooklyn" on Earth-that-Was. His manner is gruff and he has a tendency to launch into sermons— whether his customers are in need of sermonizing or not. He will quote the Bible on any occasion. Unfortunately his quotes rarely come from the good book, but are mostly made up by him to suit the situation. As he puts it if anyone challenges him, "If it ain't in the Good Book, then it oughtta be!"

10. St. Wyatt Hotel

The name is grander than the building itself. The St. Wyatt has a pretty façade, but not much beyond. It is a one story structure. The front doors open into a small lobby with a large desk, a pair of fading parlor chairs, and a shabby Oriental rug on the floor. Off the parlor is a dinning room with a door to the kitchen.

Past the lobby is a single hallway that leads to the eight rooms of the hotel. All guests share a common bathroom at the end of the hall.

Each of the rooms has sparse accommodations: a narrow bed, a single chair, and a hook on the wall. The beds are uncomfortable and make up for that by bein' small. At least if it rains, the water won't come through the roof — much.

Miguel Wyatt (Hotel Manager)

Agi d6, Str d6, Vit d6, Ale d8, Int d8, Wil d6, Init d6+d8, Life 12.

Complications: Twitchy [Minor]

Skills: Influence d4, Knowledge d6 / Local History d12, Perception d6 / News d8, Craft d6

Weapons: None

Faction Points: Town 1 / Owner 0 / Miners 1 / Tong 0

Miguel has black hair, black moustache, warm eyes, and a nervous smile. He will gladly help you with a room and he will provide you with any information about the town that you might care to know. Mostly, however, he “don't want no trouble. This is a respectable establishment!”

Ilsa Wyatt (Hotel Cook)

Agi d6, Str d6, Vit d6, Ale d8, Int d6, Wil d6, Init d6+d8, Life 12.

Assets: Talented (Town Gossip) [Minor]

Skills: Influence d6, Knowledge d6 / Town Gossip d12, Perception d6, Craft d6

Weapons: None

Faction Points: Town -1 / Owner -1 / Miners -1 / Tong -2

Blonde and buxom, Ilsa tells everyone she is a “woman who minds her own business” — but everyone long ago learned that Ilsa's business includes the business of everyone in the town. Ilsa is the town's lead gossip and a repository of knowledge about everything (good or bad — true or false) — that goes on in town. Her information is generally inaccurate, overblown, sensational and most often just plain wrong. She will take a little coaxing, but then will gab on

about anyone in town as long as there is an ear to listen to it.

In addition, Luis Wyatt, their son, (See “Folks & Rascals”) might be encountered here at the Game Master's discretion or on a roll of 2 or less on a d10. Otherwise, he will be somewhere in the streets either running errands for “Brigit” or hiding from chores at the hotel.

11. Forgie's Saloon

If a banner with a dragon hangs from the porch of Tom Forgie's saloon, that means there's a Faro game inside.

Forgie's is one of three saloons — the others bein' Pat Malloy's and Pete Lawrence's — that could be called “legitimate” in Frisco. Forgie's saloon consists mostly of a large room with a high ceiling. Four slowly rotating fans with large blades keep the air moving and provide a welcome breeze during the hotter months. A long bar stands opposite the front door. Windows look out on the street. A framed picture behind the bar flickers as it change from one semi-bawdy scene to the next. The transitions aren't as good as more expensive and modern models, but the subject matter (generally a nude in a languishing pose) is reasonably artistic and provides a welcome distraction from the cheap liquor.

There are two Faro tables set in front of the north wall and Forgie makes sure there's always a dealer on hand for at least one of the tables. (See “Faro: King of Rim Games” for details.)

Forgie tends the bar personally with the help of two girls running bar service to the five tables in the room. The real entertainment in this hall — day or night — is one of its patrons: Shakespeare. (See “Sideshow E”.)

Behind the bar a large space is divided into a storeroom on the south and Forgie's kitchen and bedroom on the north.

Tom Forgie (Saloon Owner)

Agi d8, Str d6, Vit d6, Ale d6, Int d8, Wil d10, Init d8+d6, Life 16.

Assets: Intimidatin' Manner [Minor]

Complications: Ugly as Sin [Minor]

Skills: Athletics d4, Guns d6 / Rifle d10, Influence d6, Knowledge d4, Perception d6

Weapons: Rifle (DMG d8W, RNG 225, ROF 3, MAG 30)

Faction Points: Town -1 / Owner 0 / Miners 1 / Tong 1

Very short, round, with dark hair, Forgie fancies himself a ladies man. He is very proud of his saloon and will say so loudly every

chance he has. He likes to think of his saloon as the “friendly and affordable” place in town where you can come for entertainment and pay a reasonable price for your drink without fallin’ in with the “wrong crowd.” He is never specific about what he means by the “wrong crowd,” but one gets the feeling that this “wrong crowd” is mostly anyone who isn’t in his saloon.

Ezekiel “Zek” Rockman (Faro Dealer)

Agi d8, Str d6, Vit d4, Ale d10, Int d8, Wil d6, Init d8+d10, Life 10.

Complications: Coward [Minor], Twitchy [Minor], Straight Shooter [Major]

Skills: Knowledge d6 / Faro d12+d2

Weapons: His deck of cards

Faction Points: Town 0 / Owner 0 / Miners 1 / Tong 2

Zek is a skinny runt of a guy, a Nervous Nelly, and a completely honest Faro dealer. He is suspicious of everyone, but once you’re on good terms with him, he’ll be very helpful. He’ll teach you the game, if you like, and even deal you a couple of “practice hands” before playing the game for real. His life is the game, however, and he works studiously to ignore anything having to do with the world beyond his Faro table.

Melissa Gump (Saloon Girl)

Agi d6, Str d10, Vit d8, Ale d6, Int d8, Wil d6, Init d6+d6, Life 14.

Assets: Mean Left Hook [Minor]

Complications: Ugly as Sin [Minor]

Skills: Athletics d6 / Mining d10, Perception d6, Unarmed Combat d6 / Brawling d10

Weapons: None

Faction Points: Town 0 / Owner 0 / Miners 2 / Tong 0

Melissa has a broad nose, two or three broad chins, squinty eyes, and thinning hair. She once worked in the mines, but she’s had her fill of slaving underground. She’s on the surly side for a waitress. She’ll ask you what you want with all the warmth of a rattlesnake, but you might want to think twice before stiffen’ her on her tip. She has the muscles of a miner and a mean left hook that can deck a man twice her weight.

Elsie Carp (Saloon Girl)

Agi d8, Str d6, Vit d6, Ale d8, Int d6, Wil d8, Init d8+d8, Life 14.

Complications: Scrawny [Minor]

Skills: Craft d6 / Cooking d10, Influence d6 / Persuasion d10, Melee Weapon Combat d6, Perception d6

Weapons: Large cooking knife (DMG d2W)

Faction Points: Town 2 / Owner 0 / Miners 0 / Tong 0

Tall and excessively thin, with no chin to speak of, Elsie came to Frisco to work in a hotel as a cook. But when she arrived here, she found the job had already been filled. She has taken the job here to earn enough money to leave atmo and move on to better pastures. She’s as pleasant as necessary to get the job done, but will throw herself at anyone who looks remotely like they might be willin’ to take her off this rock — including the crew.

12. Pat Malloy’s Saloon

Pat Malloy’s saloon stands directly across the street from Pete Lawrence’s establishment². Its most prominent feature is a large, shady porch decorated with hand-carved, ornamental pillars. Two objects hang from the rafters in the shade of the porch: a dragon-banner proclaiming a Faro game and a frayed and weathered rope formed into a noose.

Anyone asking about this noose will be told — with some pride — that a feller by the name of Jake Brannon was hanged here by this very rope after killin’ five miners in Malloy’s. Ever since then, Pat’s has been a favorite of both miners and members of the Tong.

Inside, the bar runs along the south side of the room. There are two faro tables against the opposite wall. The rest of the space is taken up by tables for the use of customers. A holographic pool table can be found in the back of the room (east end), though the table is covered with dust and has an “out of order” sign on it that is faded and worn.

Seated at his own table in the north-east corner of the main room is the entertainment — a fellow known by everyone in town as “Shakespeare.” (There’s an opportunity to run “Sideshow E” when the crew pay Pat’s a visit.)

Pat Malloy (Saloon Owner)

Agi d6, Str d8, Vit d8, Ale d6, Int d6, Wil d6, Init d6+d6, Life 14.

Complications: Overconfident [Minor]

Skills: Athletics d6, Guns d6 / Shotgun d8, Influence d6, Knowledge d4

² ETW: The story goes that in the original Frisco a miner could be thrown out of Pete Lawrence’s Saloon and roll across the street into Pat Malloy’s without missing a round.

Weapons: Shotgun (DMG d10W, RNG 10, ROF 2, MAG 10)

Faction Points: Town -1 / Owner -2 / Miners 3 / Tong 3

Slick and smart-dressin', with oiled hair and a trim goatee and mustache, Malloy brags that he runs "the finest place in town" — although he secretly harbors considerable resentment of the Lawrence Saloon across the street. Pat feels as though he's playing second fiddle to Pete, who somehow manages to keep one step ahead of him. Still, Malloy's bar is always crowded. "So long as the place is packed, the drinks flow out and the money flows in," he says. "I've no interest in constantly changing things around like some I could mention."

Yvette Topelmeyer [Saloon Girl]

Agi d10, Str d4, Vit d6, Ale d8, Int d8, Wil d6, Init d10+d8, Life 12.

Assets: Sweet and Cheerful [Minor]

Complications: Greedy [Minor], Filcher [Minor]

Skills: Covert d6 / Pickpocket d10, Influence d6 / Seduction d8, Knowledge d6 / Locals d10

Weapons: None

Faction Points: Town -2 / Owner -2 / Miners 3 / Tong 2

Blonde and perky, Yvette's been serving up drinks at Pat's for so long that people think she came with the place. She's comfortable with everyone, even the villainous and the unsavory, and is perfectly happy to receive financial assistance from anyone — whether they are aware of their generosity or not. Yvette steals only when it's convenient and she never takes so much as to make anyone really angry.

Ernestina May Carter [Saloon Girl]

Agi d8, Str d6, Vit d6, Ale d8, Int d6, Wil d6, Init d12+d8, Life 12.

Assets: Lightnin' Reflexes [Major]

Complications: Overconfident [Minor]

Skills: Athletics d2, Covert d2, Influence d6, Knowledge d6, Performance d2

Weapons: None

Faction Points: Town -2 / Owner -2 / Miners 3 / Tong 2

Cute-as-a-button, with dark curly hair and a cherub's smile, "E-may" as she likes to be called was once a freelancer up at the Bawdy House, but decided that this was not the life she

wanted. She came to Pat's to save up enough credits for passage off this rock. She dreams of working her way to the Core Worlds where she plans to make her mark as an entertainer — despite the fact that she cannot dance and her singing voice is only mediocre. "Someday I'll be the biggest star the Cortex has ever seen," she'll say. "You may want my autograph. It'll be worth somethin' someday."

13. Frisco Star Times

Squeezed in between Pat Malloy's and the Hotel Southern is a narrow building that houses the Frisco Star Times — the local newspaper. Behind the glass windows that are on either side of the front door is the front office. A partition with a swinging gate separates customers from the desk and the central Cortex node. In the back is a large printer for turning out copies of the Star Times.

You might be able to catch the publisher, Caesar Charles, here in the office (1 on d4), though it is more likely you'll be talking to his Assistant, James Doolan-Randolph III.

Access to the Coretex from here is restricted to the "official use of the newspaper" only. It would be a FORMIDABLE task to convince either man to allow someone else to use it.

Caesar Charles [Frisco Star Times Editor]

Agi d6, Str d8, Vit d6, Ale d6, Int d10, Wil d8, Init d6+d6, Life 14.

Assets: Trustworthy Gut [Minor]

Complications: Deadly Enemy [Minor]

Skills: Craft d6 / Writing d10, Guns d6, Influence d6 / Negotiation d8, Perception d6

Weapons: Pistol (DMG d6W, RNG 100, ROF 3, MAG 8)

Faction Points: Town 3 / Owner 2 / Miners -2 / Tong -3

Mr. Charles, as he is known to all but his closest friends, is man of formidable appearance, who seems to be always drinking, but is never really drunk. He is slovenly dressed; his dark hair rarely combed. He has been a champion of the rule of law and the establishment of civilization in this frontier town for years. Recently his editorials have been sharply critical of the politics of the Miners Guild and he has sought from time to time to expose the less savory dealings of the 14KTriad. This has made him unpopular with both groups and wildly popular with the townsfolk. "Sweat-caked incompetents and muscled thugs bent on their own aggrandizement lack the intellect to

understand — let alone appreciate — the future of the Rim,” he expounds. “The brighter path consists of disciplining our baser natures in favor of the good of the main!”

Rodney Doolan-Randolph III (Frisco Star Times Reporter)

Agi d6, Str d4, Vit d4, Ale d8, Int d8, Wil d10, Init d6+d8, Life 14.

Assets: Sweet and Cheerful [Minor], Friends in High Places [Minor]

Complications: Non-fightin’ Type [Minor]

Skills: Craft d6 / Writing d8, Influence d2, Knowledge d6 / History d8, Perception d6

Weapons: None

Faction Points: Town 2 / Owner 1 / Miners -1 / Tong -2

A pretty-boy in looks, everyone calls him “Rod”, though he repeatedly asks them not to. His father, James Doolan-Randolph II, an Alliance General during the Unification War, sent his son here to toughen him up since he couldn’t convince the boy to join the Alliance Army. Jimmy doesn’t like to talk about his family — especially his father — and is trying a little too hard to make it on his own. “Just give me a chance, sir. I’ll get the job done right!”

14. Hotel Southern

The only two story hotel in Frisco, this building features a balcony on the top floor overlooking the street below. It is considered the most respectable hotel in town.

The main floor consists of a reception/sitting room in the front with the hotel’s desk on the south side. A small room just east of the desk holds the office. A stair runs up the north wall to the second story where all the rooms are located. A set of double doors between the desk and the stairs leads back to the dining room and the kitchen beyond.

Upstairs a single hall leads to the rooms. Each room is comfortably, if sparsely, furnished. All rooms share a common bath at the east end of the hall upstairs.

C. C. Fiddler (Owner, Hotel Southern)

Agi d6, Str d6, Vit d6, Ale d10, Int d8, Wil d6, Init d6+d10, Life 12.

Assets: Friends in High Places [Minor]

Skills: Influence d6 / Accounting d10, Knowledge d6 / History d8, Perception d4, Craft d6

Weapons: None

Faction Points: Town 1 / Owner 0 / Miners 1 / Tong 0

C. C. Fiddler is a man contented with his lot in life. He generally always wears a smile and most always means it. A single gentleman, he runs the hotel for a chain out of Ariel. He figures that his hotel is so far away from the central offices in the Core and so small an ink blot on such big company books that the central office probably doesn’t remember they even have a hotel here. Still, he is content to run the business, siphon off a few credits for himself now and then, and try to make the books look legitimate, even if he’s convinced that no one pays any attention to them.

15. Balley Sacket’s

His building looks small on the outside, but holds more than one might assume from first glance. A sign over the door proclaims “Sacket Engineering.”

Inside is a workbench covered three layers deep with assorted mechanical parts. The walls and ceiling rafters hold what appears to be an explosion of technological junk.

During daylight hours, you’ll find several locals here, either sitting on wooden kegs or standing about. Most days you can find Tony Kompus (miner), Abner Byram (Processing Plant Operator), and Laurence Stuart (Miners Guild Representative) all hanging about, chewin’ the fat. The shop is closed at night.

Of course, you’ll almost always find Balley Sacket here. Balley deals in all kinds of technology and will gladly sell you any piece of equipment that you might need. Indeed, his shop is unique in that Balley has the ability to find exactly the piece of equipment you are looking for with a Difficulty a full two steps lower than anywhere else in town. Finding a specialized piece of equipment to fix your ship will be FORMIDABLE anywhere else, but here at Sacket’s it’s just AVERAGE. His prices are the going rate for such devices — though he’ll charge more if he doesn’t like you and less if he does. Engineer Supplies listed as “available everywhere” can be purchased here.

Balley’s living quarters are in the back and consist of a small kitchen, sitting room and bedroom — where he largely keeps to himself in the evenings, reading technical journals.

16. Wild Bill’s Saloon

Conveniently located near the new jail, Wild Bill’s is a rambunctious saloon of the rather “bare-bones” variety: it serves hard drinks,

hard entertainment, and doesn't ask too many questions of its patrons.

"Wild Bill" himself stands behind the large crate that passes for a bar and you can order any kind of drink you like — as long as it's a Neptune Light or a Neptune Dark. A Neptune Dark earns its name from its ability to put a man's lights out; one drink makes it **HARD** for any normal fellow to stay on his feet. Don't think you'll fare any better with the Neptune Light — the latter part of that name refers not to its calorie count but rather to the bright flash most drinkers experience behind their eyes just before crashing to the floor. Retaining consciousness after a Neptune Light is a **FORMIDABLE** challenge for those uninitiated to the ways of strong drink.

Bill doesn't cotton to any "fancy" games such as Faro in his establishment: there are only five forms of entertainment allowed: (1) make the new guy entertain the crowd, (2) bet on how far the new guy can be tossed if he's not entertain', (3) shoot at the feet of the new guy if his entertainment is offensive. (It's **HARD** not to offend someone in the crowd of drunken miners and Tong thugs and downright **FORMIDABLE** to entertain them at all.) Once you've passed this test to Wild Bill's satisfaction, however, you're welcome here anytime. The only other forms of entertainment are (4) "Dead Man's Chess" — a form of the game of chess where pieces may be removed only by making a **HARD** shot with your revolver. (Note that there's a special place for the chess games out back.) If the piece doesn't fly, you can't take the move. And last but not least, (5) the most popular sport: "Gunslinger."

Now, those folk who find themselves challenged to "Gunslinger" in Wild Bill's may have the wrong idea as they square off against an opponent in front of the bar — especially since issuing a challenge to this game usually consists of yelling, "Hey! Gunslinger!" at your intended opponent. Contrary to an off-worlder's first impressions, the object of the game is not to shoot. The object is to catch a thrown gun before it hits the floor. Participants draw their guns — then toss them at each other. First one to drop a gun loses and must buy drinks for the house. In case both players drop the guns, both must buy the drinks. In case both players catch the guns, the one who ends up pointing the gun at his opponent is declared the winner. It's **HARD** to catch your opponent's gun and **HEROIC** to catch it and point it. You'll gain 2 faction points with either miners or the Tong for each of the first three

times you manage to win a game. Of course, as we've said, some people from off world have misinterpreted this game's rules. Shooting an opponent during "Gunslinger" is the quickest way to get everyone in Wild Bill's to point their guns at you.

Hey, some people juggle geese! The truth is that even though Wild Bill's features more gunshots per minute than any other place in town, most are rarely aimed at anyone. Wild Bill simply wouldn't stand for it. (Though there is a risk of getting shot by accident!)

The appropriate method of showing appreciation in Wild Bill's is to fire your weapon into the ceiling. Rumor has it that the roof is so full of lead it can block radio waves and keep out radiation.

Wild Bill stores his liquor in the back room like most saloons and sleeps on a cot with his stock. Sometimes he'll close up the place for days at a time while he goes out hunting for game, but whenever his door is open, you can hear the gunfire and the laughter from just about anywhere in town.

William Adams Hickman³ [Saloon Owner]

Agi d10, Str d8, Vit d8, Ale d6, Int d6, Wil d6, Init d10+d6, Life 16.

Assets: Intimidatin' Manner [Minor], Tough as Nails [Minor], Two-fisted [Major]

Complications: Crude [Minor]

Skills: Athletics d6 / Dodge d10, Discipline d4, Guns d6 / Pistol d12 / Rifle d8, Knowledge d4, Perception d6

Weapons: Pistol (DMG d6W, RNG 100, ROF 3, MAG 8), Rifle (DMG d8W, RNG 225, ROF 3, MAG 30)

Faction Points: Town -2 / Owner -2 / Miners 3 / Tong 3

The half-crazed look in his bright blue eyes gives "Wild" Bill his name. He is known for his odd doin's and also for his well-trimmed beard that hangs down around his gunbelt. Despite his unusual appearance and rough demeanor, Wild Bill is a jovial, congenial fellow who likes to make sure everyone is having a good time and doesn't get hurt in the process. "If the livin' is hard, then so's the fun," he says. "You gotta stoke the boiler if you're gonna let off steam!"

³ William Adams Hickman (a.k.a. Wild Bill Hickman) was a notorious Western character. He was a polygamist, a bodyguard to Mormon Prophet Joseph Smith, a mountain man/adventurer, and rumored to be a Danite Chief for Prophet and Colonizer Brigham Young. There is no record of him ever running a saloon. He was also my great-great-grandfather.

17. Woodbury Store

Woodbury's is a typical store on the Rim. Its walls are lined with shelves filled with goods, barrels cover the floor space, and a counter crowded with stock runs around both side walls and across the back.

This store is run by the Woodbury's — a frontier family just tryin' to make a living here. They own a home in Sweetside (33). Orvil and Amelia spend their evenings at home and that is where their son Monty takes his meals. During store hours, all three can be found here. After hours, Monty sleeps in the back room so he can watch over the store.

The store's limited stock makes it **HARD** to find the items that you would expect to find. It is **EASY** to pay the standard price for any items you do find, the same as other places on the Rim. Orvil blames the scarcity of items on the embargo, while Amelia will tell you with a sniff it's really because there's no law and order in the town. You can purchase any weapons (ranged or for hand-to-hand combat), provided they are in stock (i.e. available), but not explosives and no protective gear. Engineering Supplies for your ship can be obtained only at Balley Sacket's (15).

Orville Woodbury [Merchant]

Agi d6, Str d6, Vit d6, Ale d8, Int d8, Wil d6, Init d6+d8, Life 12.

Assets: Allure [Minor]

Complications: Prejudice (Outlaws) [Minor], Straight Shooter [Minor]

Skills: Guns d6 / Shotgun d8, Influence d6 / Negotiation d8, Knowledge d6, Perception d6

Weapons: Shotgun (DMG d10W, RNG 10, ROF 2, MAG 10)

Faction Points: Town 2 / Owner 2 / Miners 1 / Tong 1

Orville is a good-looking man with olive skin and dark hair and a pencil-thin mustache. He wears a shopkeeper's apron and a genial smile. If you're a law-abidin' citizen, he'll do his best to help you with your needs. He has no patience with outlaws. He's firmly in the camp of the townsfolk and supports efforts to "clean up this town."

Amelia Woodbury [Merchant]

Agi d6, Str d6, Vit d6, Ale d8, Int d8, Wil d6, Init d6+d8, Life 12.

Assets: Sweet and Cheerful [Minor]

Complications: Credo [Major]

Skills: Guns d6 / Pistol d10, Influence d6 / Persuasion d10, Knowledge d6, Perception d6 / Empathy d10

Weapons: Pistol (DMG d6W, RNG 100, ROF 3, MAG 8)

Faction Points: Town 2 / Owner 2 / Miners 1 / Tong 1

Amelia Woodbury is petite, blonde, looks like the motherly type. Beneath her maternal exterior is a steel corset and word around town is that no one should ever cross "Mrs. Woodbury" as she is always known. She goes by a simple creed: "Where we've been shows where we're going". She judges people's future acts by their past acts — and she believes it takes a lot of effort to change course.

Montgomery "Monty" Woodbury [Stockboy]

Agi d6, Str d6, Vit d8, Ale d6, Int d6, Wil d4, Init d6+d6, Life 10.

Complications: Weak Stomach [Minor]

Skills: Athletics d6, Knowledge d4, Influence d4, Perception d6 / Hearing d10

Weapons: None

Faction Points: Town 1 / Owner 1 / Miners 0 / Tong -1

Monty is sixteen and always seems to have a broom in his hand, his job being to keep the store swept clean. He's shy and polite, mama's baby boy —and up 'til now has been an obedient son. He's supposed to sleep in the back room to keep an eye on the store and that's where his parents believe him to be at night. Lately, however, he has been sneaking out late at night to run up to Pete Lawrence's place. Monty is madly in love with Lulu Kovak, a dance hall girl there, although he can't seem to work up the courage to talk to her. He just mostly sits and stares.

18. Ormond & Lovett Store

Situated right next door to Woodbury's is the Ormond & Lovett Store — named after the two brothers who operate the business together when they are not yellin' and cussin' at each other. It isn't so much that they hate each other, as they are brothers who show their affection in the loudest and nastiest way.

Their store is arranged much the same as the Woodbury store, although without quite as much stock. The shelves are neat, but not crowded, and the floor space is mostly bare. A cage to the left of the entrance holds a number

of goslings for sale in units of three or more. It is actually HARD to find common items in this store, but then Ormond and Lovett don't do much business in common items.

Their specialty — available only to clients whom they have come to trust — can be found in the back room. There, beneath a hidden door in the floor, a stair leads into a subterranean vault where they store Protective Gear, Weapons, Explosives, and Covert Ops Gear. Anything of this type that is “available everywhere” can be found in this vault. It might be HARD, but even gear available only in the Core Worlds has been known to show up here from time to time. Of course, the prices are twice the list price but, hey, why argue?

Both Prendergast brothers share a house in Sweetside. They take turns sleeping in the store. Both are here during business hours and when they aren't smilin' at the customers, they are arguin' with each other over the most trivial of things.

Ormond Prendergast [Merchant]

Agi d6, Str d8, Vit d8, Ale d8, Int d6, Wil d6, Init d6+d8, Life 14.

Complications: Overconfident [Minor]

Skills: Athletics d4, Guns d6 / Pistol d8, Influence d6 / Organization d10, Knowledge d6, Perception d6

Weapons: Pistol (DMG d6W, RNG 100, ROF 3, MAG 8)

Faction Points: Town 2 / Owner 2 / Miners -1 / Tong 3

Handsome and charming, Ormond is also brash and overbearing. “Hey, it's tough out here on the frontier,” Ormond likes to say. “A guy has to do what it takes to survive — and all the credits in the world won't matter if you're pushing up weeds, right? Hey! Lovett! You *Tian Di Wu Yohn*⁴! Stop playing with that *Joo Fuen Chse*⁵ and do some work for a change!”

Lovett Prendergast [Merchant]

Agi d6, Str d8, Vit d8, Ale d8, Int d6, Wil d6, Init d6+d8, Life 14.

Complications: Twitchy [Minor]

Skills: Athletics d6 / Running d8, Guns d6 / Shotgun d10, Influence d6 / Negotiation d10, Knowledge d6, Perception d6 / Search d12

Weapons: Shotgun (DMG d10W, RNG 10, ROF 2, MAG 10)

Faction Points: Town 2 / Owner 2 / Miners -1 / Tong 3

Handsome and charming, Lovett is sly and calculating. “I perfectly understand your concern,” Lovett will say to you with a cunning smile. “True — the price is high, but we have to go through so much trouble to import such things, you know. I'll just put this Ballistic Mesh armor back on the shelf. This cloth vest will suit you just fine.” He turns to his brother. “*Mei Yong Ma Dub Tse Gu Yong*⁶! Can't you leave me alone for just one second? I happen to be with a customer, *Dohn-ma*⁷?”

19. Blake's Hall & Bank

This two story building is made of stone and is the most permanent building in all of Frisco. It is the pride and joy of banker, John Blake. He considers his bank the cornerstone of Frisco, both literally and figuratively.

The ground floor of the bank consists of a waiting room/office in the front furnished with a pair of plush, stuffed chairs. The three, barred windows with a locked door on the south side separate the waiting room from the teller cages. To the west beyond the cages John Blake has his office. The large, forged vault is on the south. Only John Blake and his wife know the combination to the safe. Blake does not trust either his son, Jimmy, or his teller/clerk Albert Morgan with such information.

In the second story above the bank, accessed by an outside staircase, is a large open room known as Blake's Hall. The banker and his wife intended this room to be the social center of the town. Dances are held here, speeches and lectures given, and other public functions performed. Since there is no formal government in the town, meetings of the self-appointed town council are held here whenever need arises.

Blake has made it HARD to notice that under his desk is a hidden door. Floor boards designed to match surrounding planks are mounted to a metal-plate door with a built-in FORMIDABLE lock. After the desk is moved and the lock released, the door opens onto a ladder leading down a 10 foot shaft to a tunnel running to the north. This tunnel passes under the Lawrence Saloon to a second shaft and ladder leading up to another hidden door in the locked closet of the Mine Office (Location 21). The existence of this tunnel is known only to

⁴ “Completely Useless”

⁵ “Pool of Pig Droppings”

⁶ “Motherless goat of a motherless goat”

⁷ “Understand?”

John Blake, Albert Morgan, Major Mountebank, and Dennis Chow.

Blake spent his money well. Cracking this particular safe would be a COMPLEX thing to do and an INCREDIBLE feat to attempt. Even if one could get into the vault, the balance in cash and negotiable notes usually only hovers at between 1,000 and 2,000 credits total. The exception is every second Thursday when the gravtrain comes with the mine payroll. The payroll is picked up by Balley Sackett in his wagon accompanied by six mine guards (See "Folks & Rascals: Plain Folk" for statistics.) This group then makes their way up Main Street to the front of the bank where the payroll is unloaded. On payroll night the vault holds

nearly 30,000 credits. Most of it is paid out in wages the following day.

On pay day, Mr. Blake and Albert move Blake's desk out of the way, then Mr. Blake unlocks the trap door. Blake passes down the payroll to Albert, who then carries it through the tunnel and hands it up to Major Mountebank in the Mine Offices (21). Once the entire payroll has been transferred to the mine office, Major Mountebank and Dennis Chow release the money to the Hornsilver Store, where the miners accounts are settled.

Albert Morgan (Bank Teller)

Agi d6, Str d4, Vit d6, Ale d8, Int d10, Wil d4, Init d6+d8, Life 10.

Assets: Math Wiz [Minor]

WHAT IF THE CREW ROBS THE PAYROLL?

Should any of the crew take it into their fool heads that they want to rob the payroll, they can do so. However, they will find themselves with a smal problem – just where do they go with the loot? The crew might try escaping on their own ship, but they'll find that the moment anyone notices the payroll has been stolen, all ships will be locked down by the port authority; that being Balley Sackett. The crew might try to haul the treasure out of town on a Mule (provided they can find one) or by gravtrain – but then where can they go? Balley can have the trains stopped by the station master. Of course, the desperadoes who are plotting to steal the payroll will not take kindly to competition. (See "Sideshow G".) If the crew decides to run off with the payroll, rather than transporting it back to the bank, the desperadoes will chase after them in an effort to resteal the stolen loot.

Wherever the crew decides to go, Balley Sackett will track them down and, at the most unexpected moment, appear among them as though he just materialized out of thin air – and completely unarmed. He'll say, "Well, seems some folks can resist just about anything except temptation. I'm right disappointed in you fellers. Now, you can either follow my instructions, look all heroic-like and save yer skins or you can be ornery and get yerselves lynched. What's it gonna be?"

Balley will explain, if given the chance, that all the miners in Frisco now know he's gone looking for the stolen payroll and they are bound and determined to be in on the finish. They're headin' this way right now. They won't take it well if Balley isn't there– payroll in hand – to greet them.

If the crew decides to take Balley's suggestion, he'll tell them this story as he takes charge of the payroll. "Tell the miners you stole the treasure as part of my ingenious plan to keep it away from the bad guys [the desperadoes of "Sideshow G"]. While you were tryin' your darndest to get back to town, them five bandits got the drop on ya and forced you to strip yerselves of hardware and clothes right down to yer skivvies."

Yep, you heard the man – the crew must strip down to their underwear.

"Jest then," Balley says, "I arrived and saved the day. I managed to recover the payroll during the confusion. When you get to town, that's the story you should stick to. That makes me the big damn hero today, fellers – and keeps yer necks from a bad stretch. *Dohn mah?*"

Balley will take the payroll back to Frisco – along with the crew's clothes and their firearms – leaving the crew to walk back to town in their skivvies.

Now, if the crew refuses to go along with Balley's plan ... about five hundred angry miners will be showing up shortly with a very long rope and a very sad ending to the crew's adventuring days.

Complications: Coward [Minor], Non-Fightin' Type [Minor], Scrawny [Minor]

Skills: Knowledge d6 / Accounting d12, Influence d4, Perception d6

Weapons: None

Faction Points: Town 1 / Owner 1 / Miners 0 / Tongs -1

Albert looks like a clerk. He is small-boned, a very dappy dresser. He feels lucky to have this job. He tells anyone who will listen to him that "Mr. Blake" could have given the job to his son, but chose Albert instead. Albert rents a room from Blake in the Blake home in Sweetaside. The rent is deducted directly from his pay. Even though he could sleep in comfort, Albert prefers to stay right here at the bank. His motto is: "Numbers are no laughing matter."

20. Lawrence Saloon

Six rotating fans hang from the high, copper-tooled ceiling in the largest, most ornate, and cleanest bar in town. Pete Lawrence's Saloon stands above the rest — no matter what Pat Malloy may say. The wood floors are oiled and clean, the brass railings that run around the walls are polished, and the wall paper has a velvet texture.

Three Faro tables line the south wall, but the real showpiece is on the north wall — the ornate and lovingly polished bar that runs the full length of the wall. Behind the bar gleams Pete's pride and joy: a wide mirror with beveled edges. The mirror affords any man at the bar a crystal clear look at whoever might be lurking behind him and, therefore, the mirror has endeared itself to the entire town. When Pete first opened the saloon, a drunk miner took exception to his own reflection and pitched a bottle through the original mirror. The miner was beaten to a pulp and tossed into the street. The patrons took up a collection to have the mirror replaced. Now, the second mirror has become the property of the whole town. (See "Sideshow B: Brawling with Care")

Pete can usually be found standing in the middle of the grand room making sure everything is running right. He leaves the bar tending to Sammy Chow, who has been working with Pete for nearly three years. Pete supervises the three sisters who work the floor, visits with the men at the ever crowded tables, and runs the Faro games on the side (See "Faro: King of Rim Games" for details.). At any given time there are never fewer than forty miners in the bar and sometimes as many as eighty.

Pete Lawrence [Saloon Owner]

Agi d6, Str d6, Vit d6, Ale d10, Int d10, Wil d6, Init d6+d10, Life 12.

Assets: Talented (Negotiation) [Major]

Complications: Greedy [Minor]

Skills: Athletics d4, Influence d6 / Negotiation d12, Knowledge d6, Perception d6, Unarmed Combat d6 / Boxing d8

Weapons: None

Faction Points: Town 3 / Owner 2 / Miners 0 / Tong 0

Pete Lawrence is gaunt, and looks like he was rode hard and put up wet. He has a gravelly voice that makes him sound harsher than he is. He's led a hard life, but he's found his home here in Frisco and now runs the finest saloon this side of Regina. It took a bit of doing to get here, but Pete did what was necessary. "Everybody wants something," he says. "All you gotta do to succeed is figure out what that is and sell it to them for whatever they've got."

Sammy Chow [Barkeeper]

Agi d6, Str d6, Vit d8, Ale d8, Int d6, Wil d6, Init d6+d8, Life 14.

Complications: Loyal (Tong) [Minor], Loyal (Pete) [Minor]

Skills: Athletics d6 / Dodge d8, Guns d6 / Pistol d10, Knowledge d4, Influence d4, Perception d6 / Intuition d10

Weapons: Pistol (DMG d6W, RNG 100, ROF 3, MAG 8)

Faction Points: Town 1 / Owner 1 / Miners 1 / Tong 3

Sammy is Chinese, above average in height, with broad, muscular shoulders. He has been working with Pete for three years and their relationship is a complex one. Sammy is a member of the 14 K Triad and was originally sent here by Lau Tsu to spy on the *Huen Dahn*⁸ miners, supervisors and Pete himself. However, the longer the assignment went on, the more Sammy found he genuinely liked Pete and many of the men he was supposed to be watching. Sammy still reports to Lau Tsu, but worries about the day when he will have to choose between his friends in the bar and his "family" of the Tong.

Linda Kovak [Dance Hall Girl]

Agi d8, Str d8, Vit d6, Ale d8, Int d6, Wil d6, Init d8+d8, Life 12.

⁸ "Rotten egg"

Assets: Allure [Minor], Mean Left Hook [Minor]

Complications: Dead Broke [Minor], Allergy (animal hair) [Minor]

Skills: Influence d6, Performance d6 / Saloon Dancing d10 / Singing d8, Unarmed Combat d6, Melee Weapon d6

Weapons: Combat Knife (DMG d4W)

Faction Points: Town -1 / Owner 0 / Miners 4 / Tong 2

The Kovak Triplets look exactly alike. All of them are tall, slender, graceful women with chocolate brown skin and close-cropped reddish hair. Each has very different personalities and abilities — as anyone who tries to exploit them soon finds out. The three girls will often lie about their names as part of their mutual protection pact, but anyone who gets to know them well might be able to tell them apart.

Linda was the first-born of the three and feels very protective of her “younger” (by seconds) sisters. She is good in unarmed combat and handy with a knife. Her allergy to animals can often give away her identity. “Trouble always comes in threes,” she says with a grin.

Lisa Kovak [Dance Hall Girl]

Agi d8, Str d6, Vit d6, Ale d8, Int d6, Wil d6, Init d8+d8, Life 12.

Assets: Allure [Minor], Born Behind the Wheel [Major]

Complications: Dead Broke [Minor], Combat Paralysis [Minor], Superstitious [Minor]

Skills: Animal Handling d4, Influence d6, Performance d6 / Saloon Dancing d10 / Singing d8, Planetary Vehicles d6

Weapons: None

Faction Points: Town -1 / Owner 0 / Miners 4 / Tong 2

Lisa was the second born of the three and has always felt insecure. She freezes up in combat situations, but put her behind the controls of a ground vehicle and she’s a wonder. She is extremely superstitious and this always gives her identity away. “Superstitions may be hokey, but why break a mirror to find out?” she’ll say, throwing a pinch of salt over her shoulder for luck.

Lulu Kovak [Dance Hall Girl]

Agi d8, Str d6, Vit d6, Ale d8, Int d6, Wil d6, Init d8+d8, Life 12.

Assets: Allure [Minor]

Complications: Dead Broke [Minor], Dull Sense (sight) [Minor]

Skills: Influence d6, Performance d6 / Saloon Dancing d10 / Singing d8, Ranged Weapons d6 / Crossbow d10

Weapons: Crossbow

Faction Points: Town -1 / Owner 0 / Miners 4 / Tong 2

Lulu has DULL SENSE (Sight), which means she has to wear corrective lenses — glasses to see clearly, whether near or far. Down the years she has learned to pass without the glasses, especially in her work place where “guys don’t make passes at girls who wear glasses”. In unfamiliar situations and locations, she incurs a -2 step penalty in any action requiring eyesight unless she is wearing her glasses. With her glasses, she is an excellent markswoman with her crossbow.

21. Mine Office

This small building holds the mining offices of the Hornsilver Mine. The doors open onto a large room. A counter divides the space between a waiting area (no chairs) for visitors and three desks on the other side.

Major H. C. Montebank, the Superintendent of the mine, can usually be found hunched over one of the desks going through a stack of reports. The other desk has a name plate which reads “J.W. McClarrin” and an exceptionally clean blotter.

Dennis Chow, the mine’s assayer, is usually at work here, studying ore samples taken from the mine during the previous shift. Each sample has its location in the mine carefully marked on it, as well as the shift during which it was taken.

Two doors in the back wall lead to a restroom and a locked storage room. It would be FORMIDABLE to break into the storage room without the key, which is kept on Major Mountebank at all times. Were one to get access to that room, he would find a complete and current map of the mine’s levels among the otherwise complicated reports of the mine’s operations. More importantly, the floor in this room has a hidden trap door that opens onto a metal ladder in a ten foot shaft that leads to a tunnel that runs south. This tunnel leads directly under the Lawrence Saloon and to another metal ladder in a shaft that rises to the metal door in the floor of Blake’s Bank (19).

There is one other door in the room — just behind the counter through the north wall. This opens into the Hornsilver Store (just behind the south counter). This door is normally locked

except on pay day every other Friday, when the payroll is passed from the bank through this office to the store on the north for distribution to the miners.

Major H. C. Mountebank
[Superintendent of the Mine]

Agi d6, Str d8, Vit d6, Ale d8, Int d6, Wil d8, Init d6+d8, Life 14.

Assets: Friends in High Places [Minor]

Complications: Prejudice (Miners) [Minor], Portly [Minor]

Skills: Guns d6 / Pistol d8 / Rifle d8, Influence d4, Knowledge d6 / Geology d8

Weapons: Pistol (DMG d6W, RNG 100, ROF 3, MAG 8)

Faction Points: Town 2 / Owner 3 / Miners -4 / Tong -3

A military-type fellow, he sports a full, fluffy white beard that is his pride and joy. The superintendent of the mine prefers to simply be addressed as "Major" — an honorific due him, he will explain, as a veteran of the Unification War. Indeed, if given half a chance, the "Major" will go on and on about how he defeated the Browncoats at such-and-such a battle on this-or-that world, although the precise details escape him at every turn. Still, he is glad that civilian life has granted him a position in mining — albeit in management — so that he can pursue his pastime. He doesn't think much of the Miner's Guild. "If it weren't for those *gorram* miners and their *gorram* union organizing, we could be making twice our output!"

Dennis Chow [Assayer]

Agi d8, Str d8, Vit d6, Ale d10, Int d10, Wil d8, Init d8+d10, Life 14.

Assets: Trustworthy Gut [Minor]

Complications: Loyal [Minor], Straight Shooter [Major]

Skills: Athletics d6 / Dodge d10 / Running d10, Knowledge d6 / Corporate Knowledge d10, Perception d6 / Search d8, Unarmed Combat d6 / Tai Chi d12

Weapons: None

Faction Points: Town 2 / Owner 4 / Miners -1 / Tong 2

Dennis is handsome, with an ingratiating smile. He moves like a cat. He is originally from Osiris and is a secret operative for Blue Sun Corporation. He is a low level op, who has been sent here to learn why the Alliance is really blockading Frisco. He sends reports back every month in code through the Cortex link at the

station. Lau Tsu has been trying to convince Dennis to join the 14K Triad, but without luck thus far.

Dennis considers himself honor-bound to Blue Sun, but his high standard of ethics is catching up with him. He has begun to question Blue Sun's motives and is looking for a way out of his contract with Blue Sun and into a more ethical line of work. He is an expert assayer, but is suspicious of the Corone Mining Corporation. Frisco, it seems, may be just the place for him to "lose himself" if Blue Sun would only leave him alone. He is honest and honorable to a fault. "It would be wrong for me to alter an assay report — I believe that the truth is its own justification."

22. Hornsilver Store

This two story stone building houses the Hornsilver Store — an establishment owned by the mining company to serve the needs of the miners.

The lower story consists of a large, open room. Iron beams hold up the second floor. An open elevator cage in the southwest corner operates between the first and the second floors. Counters stocked with items conceivably found on the Rim run around three sides of the room. Prices run 1d6 x10% higher than usual in this establishment, but miners have one advantage: they can purchase on credit against their pay, which is distributed in this establishment every other Friday. The payroll arrives here after it is delivered from the bank next door. A door in the south wall passes from behind the counter into the area just behind the counter of the mine office to the south.

The second story is used for storage and also has a small apartment for Sean.

Michael "Fist" O'Malley
[Store Manager]

Agi d6, Str d12, Vit d8, Ale d8, Int d8, Wil d6, Life 18.

Assets: Tough as Nails [Major]

Complications: Ugly as Sin [Minor]

Skills: Athletics d6 / Dodge d10, Discipline d6 / Intimidation d10, Guns d4, Melee Weapon Combat d6 / Knives d8 / Clubs d10, Unarmed Combat d6 / Brawling d10, Perception d6

Weapons: Baseball Bat (as club) (DMG d6B)

Faction Points: Town -1 / Owner 6 / Miners -4 / Tong -1

Mike has a bulbous nose, bulging blue eyes, and a bad case of acne. He works for

the company store, ostensibly as the manager. In truth, he is the collection agent. Normally, he's a pleasant if rather simple-minded man who never quite seems to get the joke. Once he decides someone is making a fool of him — either personally or by cheating the store out of its due — Mike's manners take a turn for the worse. Miners who have a problem repaying their store credit have to explain their situation to the satisfaction of Mike — and he generally ain't listenin'. "Can't understand a word you're sayin'! Maybe if you'd stop spittin' out your teeth, I could understand you better. That cussin' you're doin' ain't helpin' neither. Now shut up and listen to the way of things."

23. A. E. Sherman Mercantile

Located around the corner from Balley Sacket's Engineering shop, A.E. Sherman's Mercantile is the place to go if you are in desperate need of something and are willing to pay the price to obtain it.

The store doesn't look like it has much inventory, but all you have to do is ask. Sherm will duck in the back and appear with the item in hand. Most of his stock is either in the back room or in the rather large barn/warehouse just behind it. It is EASY to find most common goods that you would expect to find in this store, although it would be IMPOSSIBLE to find a price the same as other places — most prices are 20% or 50% higher here — primarily because of the embargo, although Sherm will also blame the prices on the fact that there is no law in the town. You can purchase any weapons (ranged or for hand-to-hand combat) that are available everywhere— including mining charges — although no protective gear. Engineering Supplies for your ship can be obtained only at Balley Sacket's (15).

In addition to the store, Sherman runs the official Postal Branch from his store.

Sherm is unmarried and sleeps in a nicely furnished apartment in the back — usually with his fingers wrapped around a loaded shotgun.

A. E. Sherman [Store Owner]

Agi d6, Str d6, Vit d6, Ale d8, Int d6, Wil d8, Init d6+d8, Life 14.

Complications: Greedy [Minor], Memorable [Minor]

Skills: Guns d6, Influence d6 / Negotiation d8, Knowledge d6, Perception d6, Pilot d4

Weapons: Shotgun (DMG d10W, RNG 10, ROF 2, MAG 10)

Faction Points: Town 2 / Owner 2 / Miners 2 / Tong 2

Big all over, including his mouth, Alfonso Eustis Sherman — he prefers to be called A. E. or "Sherm" to his friends — is loud, boistrous, and seems to possess an inexhaustible supply of hot air. He'll yammer on and on and on about any topic you care to bring up. Still, he's always got what you need — so long as you have the credits to pay for it. "How much is it? Well, how much you got? Hah!"

24. Town Processing Plant

Situated on the ridge overlooking the town from the north, the Processing Plant is the source of power and water for the town — both of which are critical for its survival.

The plant is divided into three main areas: (A) the processor/converter which takes the comet ice and breaks it down into its components, (B) the storage tanks where the separated gaseous and liquid elements are stored and (C) the power and pump house where power is generated from the methane and where pumps operate to distribute water into the town. A and C are both located in the same building and are separated by a thick stone wall with steel fire doors. The storage tanks are located to the northwest with pipes running to and from the building.

The generators not only power the main buildings in the town, but transmit power to the hoist house atop the mine (34). The hoists bringing the ore and the miners up from the mine are a major drain on this power: lights dim throughout the town whenever the hoist is operated.

A magrail spur runs from the main line so that ore cars can be brought alongside the processor. In former times, tankers would bring raw materials like water and propane gas for delivery, but that was before the blockade. Minerals extracted from the comet ice are now collected here from a "tailings pile" and carted away by magrail.

Abner Byram [Processing Plant Operator]

Agi d6, Str d6, Vit d8, Ale d6, Int d6, Wil d4, Init d6+d6, Life 12.

Assets: Talented (Mechanical Repairs) [Major]

Complications: Leaky Brain Pan [Minor]

Skills: Guns d6 / Pistol d8, Knowledge d6 / Alliance Navy d10, Influence d4, Mechanical

Engineering d6 / Mechanical Repairs d10, Perception d4

Weapons: Pistol (DMG d6W, RNG 100, ROF 3, MAG 8)

Faction Points: Town 1 / Owner 2 / Miners 2 / Tong -1

The gaunt face and piercing eyes of Abner Byram are so intense as to burn a hole right through you. Abner was once a military man in the Alliance Navy and still runs his processing plant as though it were a cruiser in deep space. If occasionally he gets confused and begins thinking the plant *is* a cruiser in deep space, his workers simply salute and go about their business. Abner takes everything far too seriously and does not see much humor in the world. It's best to play along whenever he has one of his "spells", which tend to occur during tense or stressful moments. At such times, he can be heard shouting, "All ahead full! Let's take her into the Black, boys!"

25. Doc McGuire's

This clean little building houses both the office and the home of Dr. Erastus McGuire, as proclaimed by the shingle out front. Old Doc McGuire chose his office location carefully — it is equally inconvenient to everyone in all parts of the town — thereby showing no favoritism on the Doc's part.

The building consists of an office suite that includes a waiting room, an examination room, and a modular operating theater. A special refrigeration vault (with a FORMIDABLE lock) is located just off the operating theater. Doc keeps his medicines here— including the towns supply of Pasceline-D for the treatment of Bowden's Malady.

The other half of the building, accessed through an adjoining door, leads to the Doc's private apartments.

The Hornsilver Mining Company pays Doc's salary and provides free medical treatment for everyone in town. The Doc's not real busy, though. People have learned that unless you catch him sober, might be safer to handle your sickness on your own.

Doc takes no sides with any of the town's factions. He dislikes everyone equally.

Dr. Erastus ("Doc") McGuire [Town Doctor]

Agi d6, Str d6, Vit d6, Ale d8, Int d10, Wil d8, Init d6+d8, Life 14.

Assets: Steady Calm [Minor]

Complications: Hooked [Major]

Skills: Discipline d4, Knowledge d6 / Medicine d10, Perception d6, Medical Expertise d6 / Physiology d10 / Surgery d10

Weapons: None

Faction Points: Town 4 / Owner 4 / Miners 4 / Tong 2

"Doc" McGuire is gray, grizzled, world-weary. He's been practicing medicine in this town for as long as anyone can remember. He is a gifted surgeon and physician — when he's sober. It's best to catch him between bottles if you can. He flunked bedside manner in medical school. He has no tact and no gentle way of breaking bad news. He'll tell you plain out what's wrong. "Got any next-of-kin you'll be wantin' me to notify, son?"

Doc McGuire has been contracted to administer the Pasceline-D treatments to the miners and anyone else in Frisco who contracts Bowden's Malady, a disease that afflicts those who work in the mines on Regina. (See "Bowden's Malady in Frisco.") For reasons not yet understood, neither the folk who work in the Hornsilver Mine nor the town of Frisco tend to contract the disease as badly as do those on the other side of the world. Doc McGuire "forgets" to mention this to those running the Alliance Supply Depot and they keep sending Pasceline-D in quantities sufficient for the number of miners in the town. As a result, Doc McGuire has been stockpiling this expensive drug just in case the disease should hit here. He quietly sells it to those in need on other parts of the world when supplies run low. He doesn't make a profit; he just asks that his expenses be covered. And he keeps on taking the mining company's payments for the treatments he's not giving. He will deny any of this if asked.

26. Temple

This square building shines with bright paint and gilt trim. Inside is a single large room with a polished floor and an altar to Buddha at the far end. Burning incense fills the room with a spicy fragrance. A priest of this temple can always be found here, either composed in meditation or cleaning.

Temple Priests

Agi d6, Str d4, Vit d4, Ale d8, Int d8, Wil d8, Init d6+d8, Life 12.

Assets: Religiosity [Major]

Complications: Non-Fightin' Type [Minor]

Skills: Craft d4, Discipline d6 / Meditation d10, Knowledge d6 / Buddhism d10, Medical Expertise d4, Perception d6

Weapons: None

Faction Points: Town 0 / Owner -2 / Miners 0 / Tong 6

All the priests have shaved heads and wear long, brown robes with full sleeves.

27. Tong Citadel

The Tong Citadel is built of fitted bricks with no windows on the outside. Two guards stand on either side of the thick, wooden doors that are the only access to the interior. These doors lead into an antechamber devoid of furniture, perhaps to show off the beautiful parquetry wooden floor. A single lantern hangs overhead. It would be EASY to spot the murder holes — slits in one side wall — and the glint from the muzzles of several guns which are aimed at anyone entering unannounced. Another set of doors leads into a small courtyard. The rooms of the house branch off this courtyard. Eight Tong Guards lurk in the shadows. The only sound that can be heard is the trickle of water from a fountain in the center. A single chair of ornately carved wood stands in the center of the courtyard.

Lau Tsu conducts his audiences with visitors from this chair.

Lau Tsu (Tong Lord)

Agi d8, Str d10, Vit d8, Ale d6, Int d10, Wil d10, Init d8+d6, Life 18.

Assets: Friends in Low Places [Minor], Leadership [Major]

Skills: Athletics d6 / Dodge d12, Covert d6 / Streetwise d12 / Stealth d10, Discipline d6 / Interrogation d12 / Negotiation d10 / Intimidation d10 / Meditation d10, Knowledge d6, Melee Weapon Combat d6 / Swords d10 / Knives d10, Perception d6 / Black Market Trends d10, Unarmed Combat d6 / Tai Chi d12.

Weapons: Sword (DMG d6W)

Faction Points: Town -8 / Owner -6 / Miners -4 / Tong 10

“Lau Tsu” is not his name. He took the name from an ancient book in order to help him establish himself as leader of the 14 K Triad.

His original name was Martin Xiau — the only son of Benny Xiau and heir to his father’s terrible legacy. Lau Tsu has guarded the family secret here in Frisco for years. He intended to do so until he died and left the burden to a son of his own.

Unfortunately, the game piece that is the key to keeping the secret was stolen from his house

last week and he is desperate to get it back. His biggest problem at this point is who to trust. He cannot send his own people after the game piece, as they would be recognized. He cannot go after the game piece himself, for he fears this might be a trap. He must find someone else to recover the game piece for him, although he will be careful not to admit to any value beyond “sentiment.” (See “Game Piece” under “New and Used Gear”.) One of Lau Tsu’s favorite sayings is: “A friend is as illusive as smoke — enemies are forever.”

Tong Guards

Agi d6, Str d10, Vit d10, Ale d6, Int d4, Wil d6, Init d6+d6, Life 20.

Assets: Tough as Nails [Major]

Complications: Loyal [Major]

Skills: Athletics d6 / Dodge d10, Covert d6 / Streetwise d12 / Stealth d10, Discipline d6 / Intimidation d8, Melee Weapons d6 / Swords d8 / Knives d8, Unarmed Combat d6 / Tai Chi d8.

Weapons: Sword (DMG d6W)

ARMOR: Ballistic Mesh (1W, converts bullet W to S)

Faction Points: Town -6 / Owner -4 / Miners -6 / Tong 6

The Tong guards look exactly like you’d expect them to look — mean, dedicated, tough, skilled.

28. “Dog Town” (shacks)

A warren of hovels, huts, and lean-to’s spring up from the dusty ground around a labyrinth of narrow roads, paths, and trails. Smoke rises from campfires and meanders out of stovepipe chimneys.

This place is called “Dog Town,” although no self-respecting canine would probably set foot here out of fear of ending up on a spit over one of the cookfires. This is the poor side of Frisco — the part the upstanding folks of the community try to either ignore or forget. Miners and workers who don’t care to bunk in the company workhouse (33) and who lack the finances to lodge in Sweetside (30) end up in these makeshift accommodations.

“Dog Town” is home to a number of characters including: Shakespeare (Sideshow E / Location 12), Tony Kompus (“Folks & Rascals”), “Honest” Eddie Binder (6), Ezekiel Rockman, Melissa Gump and Elsie Carp (11),

Yvette Topelmeyer, Ernestina May Carter (12), and Sammy Chow (20).

29. Blake's Stable

John Blake maintains his own stables consisting of a barn attached to the large corral. The stables house a carriage and four horses along with tack and saddles for each horse. John likes to personally tend to "his four beauties" named Lightning, Thunder, Hailstorm and Buttercup. These are all spirited horses which, while HARD to master, have a 10% better speed and agility than any other animal in town.

30. Sweetside (Residential)

A set of small, but well cared for homes line the gentle curve of the dusty road east of the center of town. Each home has a porch with a rocker or two that rock all by themselves in the desert wind, making it look as if ghosts are taking it easy on the front porches.

Welcome to Sweetside; the good side of town, as anyone who lives in Sweetside will tell you. Each of the houses, though small, is fitted up with many creature comforts — although access to the Cortex is not one of them.

The homes here are occupied by Caesar Charles (13 and "Folks and Rascals"), C.C. Fiddler (14), Orville and Amelia Woodbury and son Monty Woodbury (17), John and Nora Blake and their employee Albert Morgan (19 and "Folks and Rascals"), Linda, Lisa, and Lulu Kovak (20. The sisters live in a home owned by Pete Lawrence, who provides it as part of their pay), Major H. C. Mountebank (21), and Abner Byram (24).

31. Frisco Schoolhouse

On the crest of a small hill stands a brand new, freshly painted, slat-board school house adorned with a steeple. A small, neat cottage stands a few yards away.

The rows of desks, each with a dust-covered teaching screen, face the front of the single, large room. A woman stands with her back to you, working at an old-fashioned chalk board hung on the wall behind a desk. Her hand holds an eraser and moves in smooth circles across the board's surface, erasing a mathematic equation.

The school marm may introduce herself as "Brigit," though some in the crew may know her as "Saffron." (See "Folks and Rascals"). "Brigit" is behind all the sneaky doings going on in the town right now — and she plans to draw the crew into her sticky web.

There are few children in town and the only pupils "Brigit" has in regular attendance include: Luis Wyatt ("Folks and Rascals"), Monty Woodbury (17) Lulu Kovak (20) and Terence Blake ("Folks and Rascals"). The fact that there wasn't any real need for a school didn't stop the town from building it — especially since J.W. McClarrin footed the bill (at the lovely "Brigit's" personal request) with matching funds from the mining company.

At first glance, there is nothing remarkable about the school house or the teacher's cottage. "Brigit" has made it HARD to discover the false panel under her teacher's desk and downright FORMIDABLE to find the activation pad to operate the panel in her desk. Just breaking into this vault of hers would be an INCREDIBLE achievement. However, if the crew could manage it, they would discover an impressive array of weapons and tools (numbers indicate the table in the *Serenity Role Playing Game* on which the item is found): a cutting torch, two grav carts, 'sticky' scrapper's gel (3-16), disguise kit, four fake ident cards ("Brigit," "Yolanda," "Saffron," "Federal Agent"), lock picks (both physical and electronic), eavesdrops, (3-15), a first aide kit, dermal mender, (3-14) a surveyor's box (3-13), grenades (flashbang, smoke, and fragmentation — 6 each), rifle, pistol (3-9), brass knuckles, combat knife (3-8) and a databook (3-12).

The databook is password encrypted and it would take a HEROIC act to break the code and read the contents without "Brigit's" help. The data retrieved, however, will include histories of the Battle of Serenity Valley, copies of inventories and ledgers of the Independent Faction treasury highlighting three crates whose contents are mysteriously missing from the manifest, and a detailed map of the interior of the Hornsilver Mine.

32. Boot Hill

Southwest of the town, this little knoll is surrounded by a wrought iron fence. Within stand the markers of the dead.

This, friend, would be a bad place for someone to end an adventure.

33. Hornsilver Bunkhouse

Perched on the side of the Grampian Mountain, this long, two-story building provides bunks and meals to the miners working the “Horn.” Bunks are shared in shifts — two to a bunk. Keeping a bunk-mate’s hands off your personal stash can be a problem.

The first floor houses a large dining hall, kitchen, and several office and storage rooms that have been taken over by Chad Sloat in his efforts to convince the miners to join the Miner’s Guild. Two creaking staircases lead up to the second story where the bunkhouse proper is located. Rows and rows of three tiered bunks line the floor, with showers and lavatory facilities at both ends. There are normally about two hundred miners asleep in these bunks at any given time and they do not much cotton to being awakened for any reason.

The first floor dining hall doubles as an impromptu meeting hall for the miners. It is here that Chad Sloat has been urging the miners to elect a representative and apply for Guild recognition and membership.

Chad Sloat [Miner Guild Organizer]

Agi d6, Str d8, Vit d6, Ale d6, Int d6, Wil d10, Init d6+d6, Life 16.

Assets: Leadership [Minor]

Skills: Guns d6 / Rifle d8, Influence d6 / Leadership d10, Knowledge d6, Perception d6, Pilot d4, Survival d4

Weapons: Rifle (DMG d8W, RNG 225, ROF 3, MAG 30)

Faction Points: Town 2 / Owner -6 / Miners 8 / Tong 0

Chad has long, shoulder-length hair and a soft beard and mustache. He’s a man dedicated to the cause, who’s been working actively for the Miners Guild in many different camps over the years. Frisco’s Hornsilver is his latest assignment and, so far, has proven the most difficult. It isn’t that he has to hassle with management interference; that just comes with the territory. His problem is the miners themselves. He just can’t get them to congregate in one place to take a proper vote to elect an official. He’s realized that the only place he could guarantee getting a majority of the miners in one place at one time is to hold the election in a saloon. (See “Sideshow F: Election Day.”) He believes that “Brigit” will help make this happen.

34. Hornsilver Mine

The maglev rail curves across the mountain from the north, climbing up the face of the Grampian Mountain past the miner’s bunk house until it splits into two branches: one climbing higher to the west side of the life house the marks the entrance to the mine, the other descending slightly to the east side where mine cars can dump their ore down into maglev ore cars below.

The frame tower stands high above the three-compartment shaft that plunges straight down into the Hornsilver Mine. Adjacent to the frame tower is the large lift house and motor building. Inside, two large rooms are divided by a wall. The first room is the winze room where the operator sits on a chair facing an array of control levers next to three large mechanical winze drums wound with cable. This is where the cage operator sits, watching the call lights on the board in front of him and operating the levers to send down or bring up one of the three cages that service the mine. It takes a man of AVERAGE ability to operate these levers properly and get the mine cages to move as desired. Matt Cullen normally operates the system on most shifts.

The second room is a machine room housing the large electric motors that drive the winzes. These draw power from the town’s Processing Plant (24). There is also a backup generator located in this room when power from town fails. The generator is not intended for long term use and it would be EASY for it to break down after more than an hour’s continuous operation.

This mine has a three-compartment shaft — meaning that three separate mine cages, lined up side-by-side, drop straight down into the darkness under independent control. This is the only access to the mine available to the crew.

In Episode 2, all three shafts are functioning, bringing miners up at the end of their shift and taking them down at the start of the next, and hauling ore out of the mine at all other times. The shafts are constantly busy. Furthermore, these shafts and the motor building next to it are guarded by eight Mine Guards at all times. The guards will prevent the crew from entering the mine as (1) the crew do not have permission and (2) the crew might endanger themselves and the mining operations. If by some RIDICULOUS miracle the crew manage to get past the guards, they will enter the mine, though its doubtful they’ll have any information about what is in it. Use the maps for Episode 4, Act III and enact Episode 4, Act III, with the

following change: the mine is filled with Miners pushing ore cars and Mine Guards — all of whom insist that the crew have no business here and they must leave the mine at once. All are willing to back this up with force if necessary.

Matt Cullen (Mine Operator)

Agi d6, Str d8, Vit d6, Ale d8, Int d6, Wil d10, Init d6+d8, Life 16.

Assets: Intimidatin' Manner [Minor]

Complications: Overconfident [Minor]

Skills: Athletics d4, Influence d6 / Negotiation d8 / Intimidation d10, Knowledge d6, Perception d6

Faction Points: Town 2 / Owner 2 / Miners -3 / Tong 1

Matt is lean, mean, with a cold eye and a hard fist and no sense of humor. He's a company man lookin' to move up. Matt believes that a good job done in this *joo fuen chse*⁹ will be just what is needed to prove his worth to the company officials, who will promote him and move him to the company headquarters in Whitefall. He has little to no respect for the miners. He views them as a lazy bunch, and is not above smacking one or two around when necessary to get the job done. He likes to say that "miner's are like cattle ... sometime's you gotta prod 'em."



9 "Pig-sty"

BOWDEN'S MALADY

Seems when you come to Regina, you gotta deal with Bowden's Malady. There's them that say the wasting disease came about because somethin' went wrong with the terraforming process or maybe it's the ore processors or somethin's in the air or a mix of all three. Most everyone here has an opinion and most all of them aren't worth a forged credit. One thing everyone agrees on is that it will kill you long before your time.

For now all you need to know is that the disease can be arrested by administering continuous treatments of Pasceline-D. These are normally administered in Frisco by Doc McGuire from the office in his home. The Hornsilver Mining Company pays for the treatments to the Doc directly and the shipments come via the magrail line every week — usually. Since the blockade, the shipments have been less frequent.

However, the odd thing is that there hasn't been the bad outbreaks of the disease here in Frisco that there are in Hancock, Paradiso or the other mining camps on the other side of the world. In Frisco, treatments for those afflicted with the malady — mostly those who work in the mine — are only required every month, rather than weekly as in other location on Regina.

There is no known preventative for contracting Bowden's Malady other than to stay out of the mines. It would be a HARD Resistance roll (see *Serenity Role Playing Game*, Chapter Five) to avoid contracting Bowden's after repeated exposure to a mine's interior over a period of time. Pasceline-D does not cure Bowden's; it only makes living with it possible. Once contracted, a character will need the required medicine once each month even while off world or more often — depending on location — on Regina.

Once contracted, it is HARD to resist the progression of the condition if you haven't received treatment. Symptoms include a one-step penalty to all physical attributes (Agility, Strength, Vitality). This is a progressive condition, so effects are cumulative; each treatment cycle that is ignored will result in an additional loss of these same characteristics. Attributes will not be reduced below d2, but once all attributes have reached that level a character begins losing 2 Life Points per treatment period until dead.

Recovery also takes time. Each period in which treatment is received reverses the symptoms by one step. Note that repeated injections of Pasceline-D will have no effect until time for another regular treatment comes around.

FARO: KING OF RIM GAMES¹⁰

The favorite betting game in the saloons in Frisco is called Faro or "Bucking the Dragon." Saloons that feature Faro games often hang a sign outside their establishment displaying a dragon to let patrons know the game is available. Many saloons in Frisco offer the game. The game is run by the house, but even with someone there to referee, the game can be the point of considerable disagreement among players¹¹. Faro can be played with as many as ten players at a time.

¹⁰ ETW: Faro was an authentic betting game played extensively by miners, prospectors, and citizens of the American West throughout the 1800's. The game was referred to as the "King of West Games" and "Bucking the Tiger." Originating in France, the game came to America in the 1700s. Its name was often spelled "pharo" or "pharaoh," derived from French playing cards, whose backs sometimes bore the likeness of an Egyptian ruler. Some early faro cards also displayed a portrait of a Bengal tiger, inspiring such terms as "bucking the tiger" or "twisting the tiger's tail" to describe playing the game. In later years, a framed tiger portrait hanging outside a gaming house announced the presence of a faro game within. The game described here uses the same rules for Faro as were common through the American West at the time. Despite what appears in the movies, the game of Poker (the forerunner of which was called "Brag") was relatively unknown.

¹¹ ETW: In the real Frisco, two men killed each other over a fifty-cent bet in a Faro game.

WHAT YOU NEED TO PLAY:

You will need (a) one set of playing cards (52 card poker deck, no jokers), a "display" (which you can make easily from a second deck of cards), a "cue box", betting markers such as poker chips, and one penny per player. One person (probably the GM) is the "banker" and runs the game.

Setting up the game:

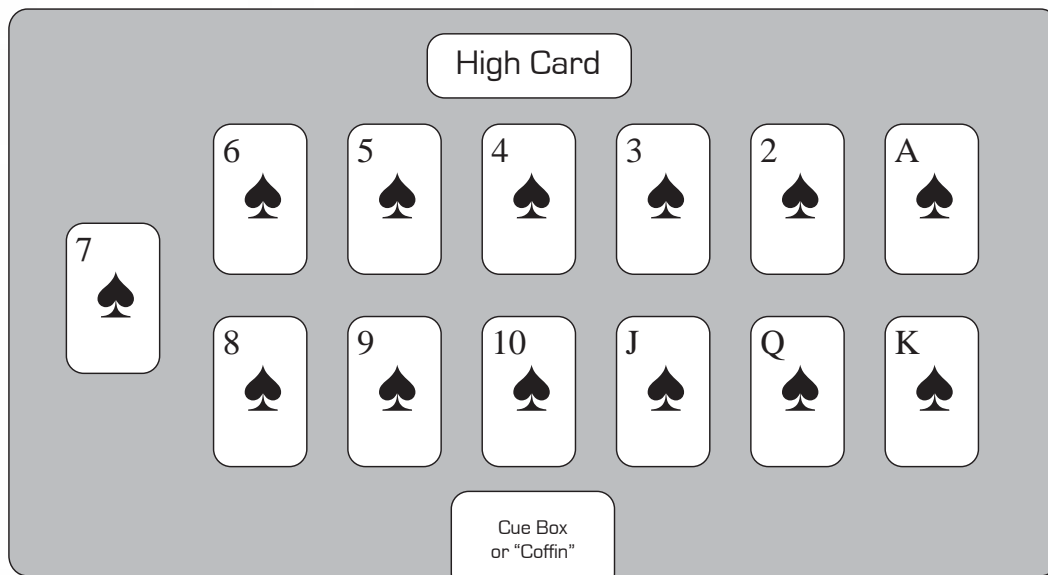
Originally the game used painted Faro boards to form the display (see below), which is made up of cards from Ace through King. (Ace being considered a "1" in Faro.) The display is simply that—a display. The cards have no other significance in the playing of the game. The display is made by laying out the cards in the second deck in the pattern indicated below.

The dealer sits on one side of the table with players on the other and the "cue box" in front of the dealer.

Each player should have a set of tokens unique to that person in order to make life easier on the dealer and a penny for "coppering". (Red chips for one, black chips for another, etc.)

Faro is a "banking" game in which players can play against the dealer or the house, referred to as the "bank." Thus the dealer should have

DEALER



COFFIN DRIVER

tokens to use to pay off the bets. All bets are paid 1:1 with the exception of the last three cards — “calling the turn” — which are paid 4:1. More on that later.

Playing the game:

Faro is not a complicated game. Here's how it goes...

The dealer shuffles the deck of 52 cards. The dealer then pulls the top card, turns it face-up and calls out “soda”. This is a wasted card — discarded as something of an act of good faith.

From this point on, each “turn” consists of two cards being drawn: the first card is the “loser” and the second card is the “winner.” The players place bets on which numbers will come up. The bets are laid down on the “betting board” (in this case, the display). Players can bet as much or as little as they want per “turn.” Rules for the placement of the bets are given below. Suits on the cards are ignored — an Ace is an Ace regardless of its suit. The dealer collects all loses for the house and pays out all winnings.

Winning bets or bets which neither win nor lose remain on the table. The dealer then calls out “Place your bets.” A brief interval follows in which players can put down new bets, take up previously placed bets and either move them to a new bet location or not bet them at all. The dealer runs the next “turn” by drawing two more cards.

The Coffin Driver:

One player should be designated to keep track of which cards have been played on the “cue box.” This person is traditionally called the “coffin driver” because he keeps track of which cards are “dead” — i.e. have already been played in the current deck. The player can do this by laying out the cards so that they can be easily seen by the players. Thus the players know that when the fourth “six” has been drawn, they should no longer bet on that number. Players may also keep notes themselves on the “dead” cards.

The placing of bets and drawing of “loser” then “winner” cards continues through twenty-four rounds of play until there are only three cards left. Then a special bet called “Calling the Turn” is played (see “Calling the Turn,” below). Once “Calling the Turn” is completed, the game ends, the deck is reshuffled, and a new game begins.

Traditionally, Faro was a very fast-paced game: two rounds were often played inside a minute with an entire deck being played through in twelve to fifteen minutes.

Placing Bets:

If there is anything complicated about Faro, it's placing the bets properly. Players may place as many bets as they wish.

Bets are placed by putting your token either on one card directly on the middle of a single card (“flating” the card), between cards (“split” cards, “square” bets and “betting the pot”) or unique combinations (corner bets). Which kind of bet you are placing depends upon where on the display you place your bet.

Flat Bets, Splits, Squares, Corners & Betting the Pot

A flat bet (#1) is where you bet only that one particular card will come up the winner. Split bets wager that one of two cards will come up the winner, either side-by-side (#2 & 3) or cross-corner from each other (#4 & 5). Square bets (#6 & 7) bet that one of the four surrounding cards will be the winner. Betting the pot (#8) is a special bet on the six, seven, and eight card.

Outside Corner bets are a little more tricky: they link two cards by skipping one between. For example, an outside corner bet on the five display (#10) would make for a five-seven split.

“Coppering”

Not only can you bet on a card or cards to win — you can also bet on them to lose. By placing a penny on top of a bet or several bets (“coppering” them) you indicate that the bet is reversed. Thus if you “copper” a bet on a six card and the dealer draws a six as the “loser” — then you win!

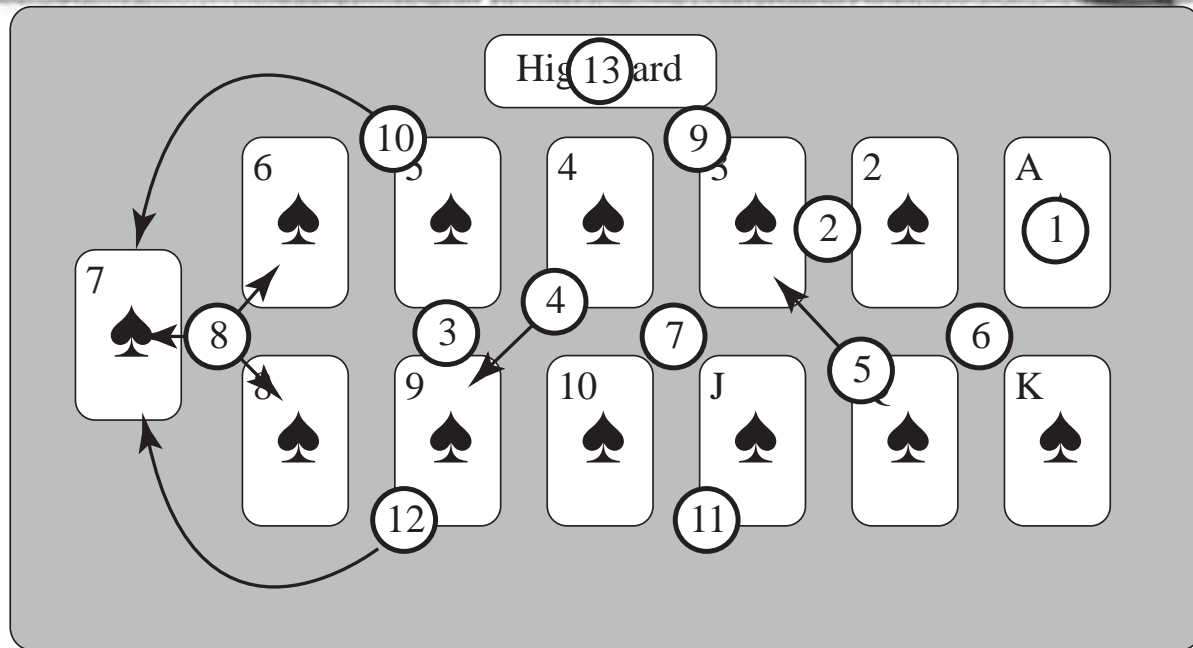
High Card

A high card bet (#13) is a special bet saying that the winning card will be a higher card than the losing card.

Calling the Turn

After twenty-four rounds, only three cards will remain in the deck. If the Coffin Driver has done his job properly, then everyone will know just what those three cards are going to be — but not the order in which they will be drawn.

When only the last three cards remain, it is time for a special bet known as “Calling the Turn.” Players bet on the order in which the final three cards are to be drawn. These cards are drawn one at a time. The first bets laid down are for the “loser” card. The second bets are for the “winner”. The third card is a dead card or “hoc”. These bets are paid out 4:1 and thus often generate the most excitement in the game.



Example: Jayne knows that the last three cards to be played in the game are a 6, a 10, and a jack. Jayne bets that the 10 will be the loser card and the jack will be the “winner”. He “coppers” the 10 to lose and bets on the jack to win. The dealer draws and the 10 comes up as the “loser.” Sadly for Jayne, the “loser” card is the 6, not the jack. Even though he got the first card right, Jayne loses all his money. Zoe has bet the cards in the correct order: 10 to lose, 6 to win, jack is dead. She receives a 4:1 payout.

Barring Bets:

You may have a lot of bets all over the table at once and suddenly decide you want to hold off all your bets for that round. If you can get the dealer’s attention (and acknowledgement) then you can “bar” your bets (make them not count) until such time as you “let it go.” Note that all bets remaining on the table at the “Calling of the Turn” are taken by the house, so if you want out, you had best start pickin’ up your bets between turns.

Payouts

Pretty much the point of the game is to walk away with more credits than you came in with — rare, but that’s the point nevertheless.

Regular Payouts

With the exception of “Calling the Turn”, all payouts are 1:1 — even money for every bet.

Splits

Occasionally, you may find that a single bet is both a winner and a loser: this can happen when both the loser and the winner card are the same (a two of clubs loser and a two of diamonds

winner, for example) or when a split bet contains both cards (having a 2 loser card and a 3 winner card in a 2-3 split bet). In these cases, the rule is that the House takes half of the bet, rounding up in the House’s favor.

Calling the Turn Payout

The exception to the one-for-one payout rule comes during the “Calling the Turn” bet. Anyone who “Calls the Turn” correctly gets a 4:1 payoff — four for every one they bet. The exception is when two of the last three cards are the same: in this case the payoff is 2:1. If by some chance all three cards are the same — there is no “Calling the Turn.”

This Could Get You Shot...

Of course, this is the Rim — and people take their games seriously out here. Disputes in Faro games have been known to be settled with cold steel and hot slugs, so best you should learn a little etiquette.

Dead Card Bets:

If you’re fool enough to place a bet on a card that is no longer in play (i.e. all four of them have already been shown to be winners or losers in previous rounds) then your bet is fair game! Anyone at the table — the House included — can yell out “sleeper!” or “dead card!” and snatch your bet off the table and keep it for their own. While such events in the Core Worlds might earn you a horse laugh for bein’ such a ninny, out on the Rim disputes over whether a card is actually “dead” can often result in a player ending up in the same condition as the card.

Cheating

Now we know that none of the fine, upstanding crew would cheat at Faro, but there have been people — not anyone here personally you understand — who are not so honest. Some “accidentally” shift cards around in the “coffin” so that others at the table lose track of which cards are valid. Some have been known to stack the deck or have a touch more knowledge of which card is going to be drawn next than anyone else at the table. Some have even been able to slyly shift their bets unseen by others after the loser or winner has been played. Such behavior can earn you the guffaws of your fellow players — as they toss your lifeless carcass out into the street.

The Laws of the Game:

The actual laws of Faro are few and are based upon justice and equity. Except for the 12 rules listed below, the remaining rules for the game (given above) are basically guidelines and open to agreement, negotiation, and interpretation. All disputes arising in a game may be settled by referring to these 12 laws:

All bets are to be forfeited and paid out as they lie upon the card except when there is an expressed and agreed understanding to the contrary.

1. The intentions of a player are not to be considered by a dealer. At the time of the draw, it must be assumed all bets have been placed or left on the layout to clearly represent the player's wager.

2. Barring a bet is a courtesy that must be communicated clearly to the dealer by the player. If a dealer allows a bet to be barred, he will respond in acknowledgement and that bet will remain barred until the player says, “it goes” and receives clear acknowledgement from the dealer of same. Any other special exception granted is assumed, in principle, to remain so until the end of the deal (deck), unless the request or exception is expressly withdrawn or revoked by the player or dealer earlier.

3. Should another player or the dealer, banker or lookout alter the bet of another by accident or design, they are responsible to cover the loss, if any.

4. The dealer should take and pay correctly and not make a mistake through design or carelessness, nor should he alter the position of wagers in play on the layout without the player's expressed permission.

5. In all cases, the dealer has the right to the last shuffle and cut; and where he may permit a player to shuffle or cut, it is an extension of courtesy to the player and not a right.

6. The dealer has the right to inspect any item placed upon the layout.

7. If a player is not satisfied with the deck or the shuffle, he may ask to inspect the cards or he may ask the dealer to count out the cards in his view, at the end of the deal (deck). A player is not obligated to place bets and he does not have a right to interrupt the play in the middle of a deal (deck).

8. It is not the dealer's responsibility to keep case (count the cards in play). That is the job of the case keeper.

9. The case keeper is not obligated to cover losses that are based upon his miscounting or mishandling of the case counter or inattention to play. It is each player's responsibility to supervise the proper counting of cards in play or keep his own tabs.

10. The dealer is responsible for covering all bets for which he turns, up to the posted or expressed table limit.

11. The dealer always has the option of turning his box over and closing his game between completed turns, in the middle of the deal (deck), or playing through the end of the deal without giving the option of betting the turn.

12. When the players have broken the bank, the dealer pays “coppered” bets first, then the largest bets next until all of the bank funds are depleted. Players are not obligated to take I.O.U.s or extend credit to the dealer and may recover their winnings, to their satisfaction, by impounding bank equipment.

Serenity and Faro

Faro is the game of choice of most everyone in Frisco. The game is played at Forgie's (11), Pat Malloy's (12), Wild Bill's (16), and the Lawrence (20).

Playing a game inside a game can be fun — especially for role playing. What's more, you might try playing the game for “Plot Points.” A player who can impress people in town with his ability at the Faro table might earn 1 plot point for every 100 credits he wins above his initial bank. Individual games in the various saloons may also have additional benefits to the players by helping them earn Faction Points.

SIDESHOWS

Wherein the story takes a little detour and the hearts of our heroes are tested.

DOING WHAT NEEDS DOING

Frisco's got a lot going on and sometimes things need doin' that may not appear to have much to do with the purposes at hand. But, trust me, they need doin' all the same!

You might think of these "sideshows" as miniature adventures — little stories that branch off from the main story and then take us back either better or worse off than before. Sideshows might also give you ideas for additional adventures in town down the line. And they can be used to include members of the crew who might not be inclined to violence in the adventure. For now, when a sideshow appears — just hang on and enjoy the ride.

SIDESHOW A: BALLEY'S RIDE

Wherein the Town Engineer asks a special favor from the town's most recent visitors — getting Mr. J.W. McClarrin out of the fancy reception and into the bar where he belongs.¹²

The Way It Is (Setup):

This takes place the day after the crew arrives. They are invited to attend the parade by one of the prominent NPCs of the town (Balley Sacket or John Blake) and it's not likely they'd want to offend that person by refusing to be his guest.

It looks as though J.W. McClarrin (See "Folks and Rascals") has finally arrived at the depot! The band is playing. The ladies of Sweetside are all pretty once more and the gentlemen of the town are sweating in their suits.

The town council has planned — under the direction of Nora Blake and her Ladies Celebration Committee — an extensive and prolonged program of events that will keep J. W. busy well into the night. The celebrating starts with a stately parade up the length of Main Street ending at the bank. J. W. will be last

in line, moving at a slow walk in Balley Sacket's incredibly beautiful carriage. Speeches and presentations will then take place in Burke's Hall. These will last well into the evening, ending in a picnic supper in Sweetside and a cotillion dance with ice cream back in Blake's Hall.

Problems:

Problem is that J.W. is not a cotillion kind of guy. In addition, the miners who love and admire him have not been invited to take part in the celebration. So, the miners have cooked up a little "celebration" of their own.

Balley is in on this conspiracy. He knows J.W. well and believes that the man would rather drink bourbon and swap tall tales with the miners in the Lawrence Saloon than be stuck dancin' with Nora Blake at some ice cream social. Balley has agreed to allow John Blake to use his fancy buggy (7) in the parade on the sole condition that Balley is the driver. Balley intends to make a slight detour off the parade route to take J.W. to the saloon.

All is going as planned until one of the horses kicks Balley in a tender spot. He collapses in pain. While he's rolling around on the ground, Balley manages to focus on one of the crew. He yells out that he'll give store credit (how much is up to you) to the character if he/she will drive the buggy to Laurence's Saloon.

Balley tells the crew to wait for J.W. and once he's in the buggy to "bolt for the Lawrence" as fast as the horse will go. Once he's reached the saloon, the miners will haul J.W. inside the Lawrence and take care of him from there.

Sounds like some easy money, don't it? Making the trip, however, will be more difficult than anticipated. Balley's horses are spirited and HARD to manage under the best of circumstances. Moreover, the Frisco Band (made up of twenty miners) has not been informed of the plan and has lined up directly in front of the carriage, along with eight members of an "honor guard" made up of mine guards.

If the crew urges the horses forward, the horses will charge into the crowd, scattering mine guards and miners in all directions. The guards will try to stop the crew, but will only manage to spook the horses — making controlling them downright HEROIC. Unless checked, the horses will bolt through Sweetside, race west down Hornsilver Avenue, careen through Dog Town, and then head back home toward Balley's Barn (7). Holding a turn at such speeds is HARD. Failure results in a crash .

¹² ETW: This incident took place in Frisco with Allen Green Campbell. Balley Sacket stole him from the reception committee and raced him up the main street. The local miners carried A. G. Campbell into the saloon before the townsfolk and their band could catch up. It was probably one of the shortest parades on record.

Throughout all this, John Blake, his wife, and the rest of the townsfolk will be running after the carriage, trying to stop the crew, although at these speeds, it would be FORMIDABLE for them to manage to catch up. If they do, however, they will most likely spook the horses again.

New Way of Things (Results):

Should the crew manage to deliver J.W. to the miners, John and his wife will threaten the crew with incarceration in the new jail. Too bad they don't have a sheriff to escort them there! In the end, J. W.—somewhat shaken by his ride—will calm everyone down. After a few drinks with the miners, he'll submit to the blandishments of the Ladies Celebration Committee. The crew will be left to take the carriage back to Balley's Barn.

Award FACTION POINTS as follows:

- Deliver J.W. to Burke's Hall: Town 2 / Owner 2 / Miners -3 / Tong 0
- Deliver J.W. to Lawrence Saloon: Town -4 / Owner -3 / Miners 8 / Tong 6
- Any other result: Town -6 / Owner -5 / Miners -4 / Tong 2

SIDESHOW B: CAREFUL BRAWLING AT PETE LAWRENCE'S

Wherein our heroes will not need to wait for seven years for bad luck to hit them.

The Way It Is (Setup):

When Pete Lawrence built his saloon, his pride and joy was the wide mirror with the beveled edges. On that first day, as he was showing it off, a drunken miner shot at it – and was beaten to a pulp by the rest of the miners inside of five minutes. The town took up a collection and bought a new mirror. Now everyone in town – including the miners – views the new mirror as their property. Needless to say, they think right highly of it.

Problems:

New in Town: The Lawrence Saloon is a respectable place. Problem is, sometimes the patrons forget that and they get a mite rowdy, 'specially when there's someone new in town. It might be buddies of some of the miners come in to visit or three Alliance Feds assigned

TABLE - Brawl

Roll (d6)	Bully	Victim
1	3 Tin-horn Mining Buddies	1 Mine Guard
2	3 Alliance Federals	1 Tong Thug
3	3 Wannabe Gunslingers	1 Miner
4	6 Tin-horn Mining Buddies	3 Mine Guards
5	6 Alliance Federals	3 Tong Thugs
6	6 Wannabe Gunslingers	1 Minor Character*

to guard the train or some young wannabe gunslingers out to make their mark in the Rim. Whichever it is, they're spoilin' for a fight – and they don't know the rules about "careful brawlin'" in the Lawrence Saloon.

The person who starts the fight (the bully) will push the victim into the brawl. The choice for a target will be based on the table above. If the victim is a minor NPC, then select an appropriate character from the list of Minor Characters in the "Folks and Rascals" section.

It Just Gets Worse: Bar fights tend to escalate; people seem to feel the need to jump in unannounced and uninvited. For every round the fight continues after the first round, one additional miner, mine guard, or Tong thug will join in the fight, the type being determined by the nature of the original victim. If the victim is a minor NPC, no one will come to his/her aide except possibly the crew.

As an action, a character may attempt to keep a lid on any escalating fight, although it would be HARD to do so. If successful, two people who previously joined in the fighting will stop and no additional combatants will enter the fray that round. This will not effect the original bullies and victims, who will continue to duke it out until one side or the other is vanquished.

Don't Break the Mirror! Anyone who participates in the fight using a projectile (whether a ranged weapon, tossed knife, bottle, chair or person) has an increased chance of BOTCHING. In this case, if all the dice thrown in combat come up with any combination showing only ones and twos, the projectile is aimed straight for the mirror. Anyone in the saloon of AVERAGE ability will see this coming and will have one action to affect the outcome. You'll have to judge for yourself if that action is sufficient to prevent catastrophe. Plot points, of course, may directly affect this action.

Mining Buddy

Agi d6, Str d10, Vit d10, Ale d6, Int d4, Wil d6, Init d6+d6, Life 20.

Assets: Tough as Nails [Major]

Skills: Athletics d6, Guns d4, Melee

Weapons d6 / Knives d8 / Clubs d8, Unarmed Combat d6 / Brawling d10

Alliance Fed Squad Member

Agi d6, Str d8, Vit d8, Ale d6, Int d6, Wil d8, Init d6+d6, Life 16.

Complications: Loyal [Minor]

Skills: Athletics d6 / Dodge d8, Discipline d6, Guns d6 / Rifle d10, Perception d6, Melee Weapon combat d4

Weapons: Rifle (DMG d8W, RNG 225, ROF 3, MAG 30), Combat Knife (DMG d4W)

Wannabe Gunslinger

Agi d8, Str d8, Vit d8, Ale d6, Int d6, Wil d6, Init d8+d6, Life 14.

Complications: Overconfident [Minor]

Skills: Athletics d6, Discipline d4, Guns d6 / Pistols d8, Knowledge d4, Perception d4

Weapons: Pistol (DMG d6W, RNG 100, ROF 3, MAG 8)

New Way of Things (Results):

If the projectile hits the mirror despite the best efforts of the crew, the mirror will shatter with a thunderous crash and fall to the floor behind the bar. The crash will be followed by a profound silence. Then everyone in the bar (approximately forty miners) will jump anyone involved in the fight. There's not likely to be any serious damage done, but no one should come out of the melee unscathed.

Faction points are awarded based on the nature of the original victim in the fight.

Award FACTION POINTS as follows:

- Put an end to the fight: Town 2 / Owner 0 / Miners 0 / Tong 0
- Jumped in to save Tong thug: Town 2 / Owner 1 / Miners 0 / Tong 6
- Jumped in to save miner: Town 2 / Owner 4 / Miners 8 / Tong 2
- Jumped in to save mine guard: Town 2 / Owner 4 / Miners 1 / Tong 0
- Saved the mirror: Town 6 / Owner 5 / Miners 5 / Tong 5
- Failed to save the mirror: Town -6 / Owner -5 / Miners -5 / Tong -5
- Saved minor NPC: 3x any positive faction point award for that character.



SIDESHOW C: MADAME ELECTRA¹³

Wherein our heroes have to deal with taming a little lightning!

The Way It Is (Setup):

An itinerant freak show has come to Frisco: "Madame Electra: the Tamer of the Skies." Madame Electra proved to be extremely popular with the miners. Unfortunately, she was injured in her last performance (her hair is mostly burned off), but if she doesn't make her last performance tonight there will be a riot in the town. Can the crew step in to help?

The crew will be invited to help Madame Electra by the nervous owner of the saloon, who is fearful that the rioting miners will wreck the place. Madame Electra will be glad to explain how the trick works. The saloon owner will offer a substantial sum for the help.

13 ETW: Madame Electra was extremely popular in the "freak shows" of the West around the turn of the century. Utilizing the work of Nikola Tesla, the startling effects are portrayed here with reasonable accuracy, although the details of the construction are not. An important note to all would-be illusionists and, for that matter, armchair scientists who happen to have a Tesla Coil on hand: this stunt was and remains EXTREMELY DANGEROUS (as you see by the results in this adventure). Only professionally trained lightning tamers should attempt such a stunt.

Madame Electra generously says that any tips the crew earn they can keep.

Set this in ANY of the saloons you like – the place will be packed. Guests there to see the show include Michael “Fist” O’Malley who has come especially to view this performance tonight.

Madame Electra-cuted: This act is a crowd pleaser! The beautifully dressed woman (if a male member of the crew performs this, he will have to dress in drag) sits down carefully on a table placed near the back of the room. As the lamps are dimmed in the saloon, “Madame” calls on the powers of lightning. There is a whirling sound and then – ZAP! Lightning bolts flash from her fingertips, dancing around her and flaring into rods placed on the walls and ceiling. For her next feat, Madame Electra takes hold of a neon tube, causing it to glow!

The trick is that the character is sitting on a specially prepared table that is connected to a Tesla coil concealed in the back room. The coil pumps out huge amounts of static electricity, causing the arcing around him/her. Since the character is not grounded to the floor, the electricity passes through him/her with relatively little harm. *So long, that is, as no one who is touching the floor touches the character!*

Anyone grounded to the floor who touches the character — or if the character somehow falls off the table before completely discharging — will cause the character and anyone coming in contact with the character to suffer 10 points each of both Stun and Wound damage (divided equally).

Problems:

Drunk on the Town: Michael O’Malley doesn’t get out much, but this is a show he’s decided he just can’t miss. He’s had far too many drinks. He’s sitting in the front row and is the dictionary definition of a loud, mean, and angry drunk.

Half way into the performance, he will stagger to his feet. He is convinced that the “Electric Lady” wants to dance with him. He lurches toward the character, both arms extended, ready to clasp “Madame” to his chest.

New Way of Things (Results):

Award FACTION POINTS as follows:

- Perform in place of Madam Electra: Town 2 / Owner 1 / Miners 6 / Tong 6
- Stop O’Malley without hurting him (much): Town 2 / Owner 2 / Miners -1 / Tong -1

SIDESHOW D: CURBY’S DEAL

Wherein a game of chance ups the ante permanently.

The Way It Is (Setup):

Faro is not a complex game, but there are happenin’s at the table the game rules never anticipate. Such as Middleton Curby deciding that the rules about cheatin’ don’t apply to him — especially when it comes to playing faro with the Tong. Middleton, who has a pretty face and a slimy soul, believes that Lau Tsu wronged him once. Middleton gets his revenge by cheating Tong members at Faro, then managing to fix it up to make it look like it was the Tong member who cheated. The end is predictable: either the Tong ends up in jail (if there’s a sheriff) or the Tong thug gives Curby an excuse to draw his gun.

Problems:

It may be HARD to notice, but crew will be able to spot Curby fixing the game. Once the cards are turned, he will reach down and pick up the Tong’s bet, calling out “Dead Card.” When the Tong Thug protests, Curby will insult him by calling him a cheat and a liar or he will state that the Tong thug is “too stupid” to be able to place a proper bet.

The Tong thug, however, is far smarter than Curby. The Tong thug will refuse to be drawn into a fight for at least three rounds. The crew has this much time to step in and stop the fight before the Tong (see “Folks and Rascals”) lunges and Curby draws his gun.

Middleton Curby (Gunslinger)

Agi d8 / Str d8 / Vit d8 / Ale d6 / Int d6 / Wil d6 / Life 14 / Init d8+d6

Complications: Overconfident [Minor], Chip on The Shoulder [Major]

Skills: Athletics d6, Discipline d4, Guns d6 / Pistol d10, Knowledge d4, Perception d4

Weapons: Pistol (DMG d6W, RNG 100, ROF 3, MAG 8)

New Way of Things (Results):

If the crew stands up to Curby in defense of the Tong, Curby will insult them as well, but he will back down, tossing the bet back at the Tong with a sneer.

Award FACTION POINTS as follows:

- Help the Tong: Town 1 / Owner 0 / Miners 2 / Tongs 6

• Any other action: Town 0 /
Owner 0 / Miners -1 / Tong -2

SIDESHOW E: SHAKESPEARE (PAT MALLOY'S SALOON)

Wherein the heroes encounter a drunken oracle and learn something about their own fates in the process.

In the northwest corner of Pat Malloy's Saloon sits a man wearin' what was once an expensive suit — complete with waistcoat — but which has now seen better days. He can be found in this same chair every night, staring with bleary, watery eyes into the bottom of an empty shot glass. It seems he's waiting for someone to come along and fill it for him.

The Way It Is (Setup):

No one knows anything about this fellow, including his real name. They've been callin' him "Shakespeare" as long as anyone can remember. As to what personal troubles brought him here, no one has a clue, although everyone has a guess.

Problems:

Shakespeare's Oracle: Anyone sitting down at his table or otherwise addressing him will cause him to lift his head and focus on that person. He will repeat the passage from *Julius Caesar* Act I, Scene 2 (see the tables on the following pages) and hold out his empty glass.

If the crew buys him a drink, Shakespeare will gulp it at once and then recite another passage. Roll 1d8 and take the result from either the Episode 2 or Episode 4 tables (on the following pages), depending on the episode you are running. The results of the oracle are applied immediately and will last for twenty-four hours from the time Shakespeare pronounces them. The only exception is the Plot Points, which may be retained for as long as the crew desires.

Shakespeare will provide only three oracles per day. After the third oracle, he will rise from his table, climb up on the broken pool table nearby, and then recite, in his most dramatic

Shakespeare's Oracle – Major Passage Episode

2 All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players;
They have their exits and their entrances;
And one man in his time plays many parts,
His acts being seven ages. At first the infant,
Mewling and puking in the nurse's arms;
And then the whining school-boy, with his satchel
And shining morning face, creeping like snail
Unwillingly to school. And then the lover,
Sighing like furnace, with a woeful ballad
Made to his mistress' eyebrow. Then a soldier,
Full of strange oaths and bearded like the pard,
Jealous in honour, sudden and quick in quarrel,
Seeking the bubble reputation
Even in the cannon's mouth. And then the justice,
In fair round belly with good capon lined,
With eyes severe and beard of formal cut,
Full of wise saws and modern instances;
And so he plays his part. The sixth age shifts
Into the lean and slipper'd pantaloone,
With spectacles on nose and pouch on side,
His youthful hose, well saved, a world too wide
For his shrunk shank; and his big manly voice,
Turning again toward childish treble, pipes
And whistles in his sound. Last scene of all,
That ends this strange eventful history,
Is second childishness and mere oblivion,
Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything.
As You Like It, Act 2 scene 7

4 Clarence, whom I, indeed, have laid in darkness,
I do beweepe to many simple gulls
Namely, to Hastings, Derby, Buckingham;
And say it is the queen and her allies
That stir the king against the duke my brother.
Now, they believe it; and withal whet me
To be revenged on Rivers, Vaughan, Grey:
But then I sigh; and, with a piece of scripture,
Tell them that God bids us do good for evil:
And thus I clothe my naked villainy
With old odd ends, stol'n forth of holy writ;
And seem a saint, when most I play the devil.
King Richard III, Act 1, Scene 3

voice, the Major Passage for the current episode (see above).

Upon the conclusion of the Major Passage, Shakespeare will collapse onto the pool table and pass out. He cannot be revived again today. Miners in the bar will carry him to his shack in Dog Town where he can sleep it off.

Shakespeare¹⁴

Agi d6, Str d6, Vit d4, Ale d8, Int d6, Wil d4,
Init d6+d8, Life 8.

Assets: Total Recall [Major], Reader [Minor]

Complications: Hooked [Major], Leaky Brainpan [Major]

Skills: Knowledge d6 / Shakespeare d12,
Perception d6, Performance d6 / Acting d10

Weapons: None

¹⁴ Earth-That-Was: There actually was a man in Pat Malloy's Saloon everyone called "Shakespeare". He lived very much the way he is portrayed here: a man whose past no one knew and who eventually died with his mysteries unsolved. A tombstone marking his grave stands in Frisco's Boot Hill.

Shakespeare's Oracle

And since you know you cannot see yourself,
so well as by reflection, I, your glass,
will modestly discover to yourself,
that of yourself which you yet know not of.
Julius Caesar, Act 1, Scene 2

Episode 2

1d8	Passage	Consequence
1	There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, Than are dreamt of in your philosophy. <i>Hamlet, Act 1 scene 5</i>	Character will have a +1 skill step bonus on any knowledge result.
2	Neither a borrower nor a lender be; For loan oft loses both itself and friend, And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry. This above all: to thine own self be true, And it must follow, as the night the day, Thou canst not then be false to any man. <i>Hamlet, Act 1 scene 3</i>	So long as the character tells the truth, he will get a +1 skill step on any persuasion results. The moment he lies, he will have a -1 skill step on persuasion results.
3	I know my course. The spirit that I have seen May be the devil: and the devil hath power To assume a pleasing shape; yea, and perhaps Out of my weakness and my melancholy, As he is very potent with such spirits, Abuses me to damn me: I'll have grounds More relative than this: the play's the thing Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king. <i>Hamlet, Act 2 scene 2</i>	Any attempts at disguise or assuming a false identity will get a +1 skill step on any results.
4	What a piece of work is a man! how noble in reason! how infinite in faculty! in form and moving how express and admirable! in action how like an angel! in apprehension how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals! And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust? <i>Hamlet, Act 2 scene 2</i>	The character must suffer a -1 Skill step reduction on any <u>three</u> actions (GM's choice).
5	Cowards die many times before their deaths; The valiant never taste of death but once. Of all the wonders that I yet have heard, It seems to me most strange that men should fear; Seeing that death, a necessary end, Will come when it will come. <i>Julius Caesar, Act 2 scene 2</i>	Cover will have a reduced and INVERTED effect for any combat. Treat no cover as +12, light cover as +8, medium as +4, and Heavy and Total as 0.
6	Once more unto the breach, dear friends, once more, Or close the wall up with our English dead! In peace there's nothing so becomes a man As modest stillness and humility; But when the blast of war blows in our ears, Then imitate the action of the tiger: Stiffen the sinews, summon up the blood. <i>King Henry V, Act 3 scene 1</i>	Character may raise the result of any three combat actions over the next twenty-four hours by +1 Skill step.
7	To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow, Creeps in this petty pace from day to day To the last syllable of recorded time, And all our yesterdays have lighted fools The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle! Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player That struts and frets his hour upon the stage And then is heard no more: it is a tale Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, Signifying nothing. <i>Macbeth, Act 5 scene 5</i>	Character acquires 1 new Plot Point immediately
8	How many ages hence Shall this our lofty scene be acted over In states unborn and accents yet unknown! <i>Julius Caesar, Act 3 scene 1</i>	Character acquires 1 new Plot Point immediately.

Shakespeare's Oracle Episode 4

1d8	Passage	Result
1	Let me have men about me that are fat, Sleek-headed men, and such as sleep o' nights: Yond Cassius has a lean and hungry look; He thinks too much: such men are dangerous. <i>Julius Caesar</i> , Act 1 scene 2	Character has Trustworthy Gut for the next week. If he already has this trait then treat results as +1 Skill step.
2	Is this a dagger which I see before me, The handle toward my hand? Come, let me clutch thee. I have thee not, and yet I see thee still. Art thou not, fatal vision, sensible To feeling as to sight? or art thou but A dagger of the mind, a false creation, Proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain? <i>Macbeth</i> , Act 2 scene 1	Character will have a +1 Skill step bonus on any KNOWLEDGE result.
3	Our doubts are traitors, And make us lose the good we oft might win By fearing to attempt. <i>Measure for Measure</i> , Act 1 scene 4	Cover will have a reduced and INVERTED effect for any combat. Treat no cover as +12, light cover as +8, medium as +4, and Heavy and Total as 0.
4	They say, best men are moulded out of faults, And, for the most, become much more the better For being a little bad. <i>Measure for Measure</i> , Act 5 scene 1	Character acquires 1 new Plot Point immediately.
5	Good name in man and woman, dear my lord, Is the immediate jewel of their souls: Who steals my purse steals trash; 'tis something, nothing; 'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been slave to thousands; But he that filches from me my good name Robs me of that which not enriches him And makes me poor indeed. <i>Othello</i> , Act 3 scene 3	Character acquires 1 new Plot Point immediately
6	And many strokes, though with a little axe, Hew down and fell the hardest-timbered oak. <i>King Henry VI Part III</i> , Act 2 scene 1	Any single result wins a +2 Skill step when it will be most helpful.
7	(PICK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING)	Just babbling — no result.
	He wears his faith but as the fashion of his hat. <i>Much Ado about Nothing</i> , Act 1 scene 1	
8	The devil can cite Scripture for his purpose. <i>The Merchant of Venice</i> , Act 1 scene 3	Just babbling — no result.
	If this were played upon a stage now, I could condemn it as an improbable fiction. <i>Twelfth Night</i> , Act 3 scene 4	
8	By the pricking of my thumbs, Something wicked this way comes. Open, locks, Whoever knocks! <i>Macbeth</i> , Act 4 scene 1	Character has a Trustworthy Gut. If he already has this trait, then treat results as +1 Skill step.

Shakespeare came to Frisco one day wearing fancy dress clothes completely unsuited for life on the Rim. He is broken, down-and-out, yet there is still a handsome man somewhere beneath the wreckage. He looks as though he is about to attend a party on Ariel rather than hang around a mining camp. He has never told anyone his name, so far as anyone can recall. In time he has become as much a fixture of Pat

Malloy's as any of the furniture. The miners like his pretty words and fancy talk — he gives an air of class to the joint — and they have adopted him, calling him “Shakespeare.” Whatever secrets torment Shakespeare, he keeps locked within. He speaks only when someone buys him a drink — and then only in the words of the Bard. Some have started to call him the Oracle,

since the things he says have an uncanny way of coming true.

New Way of Things (Results):

The results of Shakespeare's oracle may be of tremendous help to the crew. How they treat this poor fellow can go a long way toward either helping or hurting them with the various factions in the town.

- If the crew is kind to Shakespeare: Town 5 / Owner -2 / Miners -2 / Tongs 5
- If they are unkind to Shakespeare: Town -3 / Owner 0 / Miners 0 / Tongs -3
- If they try to get Shakespeare to explain himself: Town 2 / Owner 3 / Miners 3 / Tongs 2

(Note that Shakespeare will NOT explain himself, regardless of their attempt.)

SIDESHOW F: ELECTION DAY (MINERS)

Wherein the miners stagger up to be counted – and each miner's vote hangs in the balance.

Several miners grab you and drag you into Pete Lawrence's Saloon, which is filled with drunken, shouting miners all having one gorram good time! Pete Lawrence bustles about behind the bar, barely able to keep up with the drink orders.

The miners push you up to the front and you are hoisted up on a table. A miner's hammer is thrust into your hand by acclamation of the crowd.

Chad Sloat waves at you from the sidelines. "You're running the Guild election," he shouts over the din. "You were the only Huen Dahn¹⁵ the miners figure they can trust! So you get to conduct this Chwen Yee Yan¹⁶!"

The Way It Is (Setup):

For the miners to become members of the Miner's Guild, they have to first hold an election by the proposed membership indicating that all the miners at the mine want to join the guild. As Chad Sloat is on the ballot, he cannot run the election. He doesn't trust anyone else

in the town, figurin' they all have a stake in it. Therefore he must get the crew to do it for him.

Problems:

Disorganized Organization: Getting the miners to vote is a bit like herding cats – the miners are more interested in drinking than they are in the election.

The crew, no doubt, has some idea as to how to get this election organized and you should let them give it a try. According to Guild charter the votes must be taken on paper ballots, marked in pen with the signature and thumbprint of each voting miner, and must then be deposited in a sealed strongbox (Chad Sloat will provide all these items). Note that it is against the Guild Rules for the bar to be open during the actual voting.

Unfortunately, it will be HARD for the miners to actually hear the crew over the noise and FORMIDABLE to get them to follow even simple instructions. Getting Pete Lawrence to close the bar is itself a FORMIDABLE task, since he's making money hand over fist, and it will likewise be FORMIDABLE to convince the miners that they have to stop drinking while they're voting. All of this may take considerable coercion on the part of the crew. Forcing the miners to vote at gunpoint might be a valid solution. As the GM for this adventure, it is your job to make certain the drunken miners misinterpret any instructions the crew gives.

New Way of Things (Results):

Award FACTION POINTS as follows:

- Succeed in completing the election. Town 2 / Owner -2 / Miners 10 / Tong -1
- Physically intimidate a miner. Town 1 / Owner 1 / Miners -2 / Tong 2
- Shoot anyone in the room. Town -1 / Owner 1 / Miners -2 / Tong 2
- Kill a Miner in the room. Town -1 / Owner 0 / Miners -10 / Tong 0

SIDESHOW G: PAYROLL DELIVERY (TOWN & MINERS)

Wherein no good deed goes unpunished – and a simple little job gets complicated.

¹⁵ "Rotten egg"

¹⁶ "Lame charity show."

The Way It Is (Setup):

Balley Sacket has suddenly taken ill (might be he's still sufferin' from that horse kick in "Sideshow A") and can't make the run between the station and the bank to deliver the payroll. Balley has taken a likin' to the crew and wonders if they'd mind doing it for him just this once. Hell, who else in this *gorram* town is he going to trust? Balley will make it worth the crew's time in store credit.

Problems:

Seems like some folk is always trying to make out for themselves at the expense of others. The distance between the train station and the bank isn't far, but don't go tellin' that to the desperadoes plannin' this payroll heist.

There are five of these losers. They've just come together and they know each other only by their first names. Their plan is "snatch and run": snatch the strong box from them that has it (which would be the crew) and run for the hills. These boys aren't the brightest glow worms in the night and they haven't thought through just where they'll go after they get the cash. The only transport out of this desert is either the maglev rail or a spaceship at the port they just robbed.

Jake, Jack, Joe, Jim, and Leslie (Desperados)

Agi d8, Str d6, Vit d8, Ale d6, Int d4, Wil d8, Init d8+d6, Life 16.

Complications: Greedy [Minor]

Skills: Animal Handling d6 / Horses d8, Athletics d6 / Dodge d8 / Running d10, Guns d6 / Pistols d8, Survival d2

Weapons: Pistol (DMG d6W, RNG 100, ROF 3, MAG 8)

All these boys look about as bright as stump water and smell about as bad.

New Way of Things (Results):

Anyone who is caught robbing the payroll will be hanged from Pat Malloy's front porch (12).

Award FACTION POINTS as follows:

- Deliver payroll to bank. Town 4 / Owner 4 / Miners 6 / Tong 2
- Fail to deliver payroll.. Town -2 / Owner -4 / Miners -4 / Tong -2

RANDOM ACTS

It's a chaotic 'Verse out there, friend! It isn't the things you plan on that take you out ... it's what you don't see that knocks you flat every time.

As the crew is moving about the town, odd things are bound to crop up now and then. When that happens, sometimes you catch the bear and sometimes the bear catches you. It often depends on who sees who comin'.

Here in Frisco, the streets are generally crowded with folks going about their business and one never knows when they might cross the crew's path with a Random Act.

Episode 2 Random Acts:

(Occurs with 1 on a d6 / Check each half hour)

D6+d6	Resulting Act
2	"Miss Brigit" speaking briefly with a Tong thug.
3	"Miss Brigit" speaking in hushed tones to Chad Sloat
4	A drunken miner with an itchy trigger finger who claims that the crew cheated him out of 5 platinum in a Faro game. It doesn't make any difference that the crew never played Faro with this guy before.
5	"Miss Brigit" chatting with banker John Blake
6	Luis Wyatt running somewhere in a hurry. He's taking a note from "Miss Brigit" to any of the following (choose one): Lau Tsu (27), Chad Sloat (33), J. W. McClarrin (21), Banker John Blake (19) or Terrance Blake (20).
7	A drunken miner with an itchy trigger finger who has suddenly taken offense at something the crew did - don't much matter what.
8	Choose a Minor NPC to encounter.
9	"Miss Brigit" walking about.
10	A drunken miner staggers down the street tossing (disarmed and stolen) mining charges while shouting "Happy Unification Day!"
11	"Miss Brigit" speaking quietly to Jimmy Blake
12	Just keeps getting better and better... (choose from table on the following page)

Just Keeps Getting Better and Better...

(From Tables Above)

Choose:	Resulting Act
1	<p><i>Bank Robbery:</i> The bank is being robbed by bandits who came to town disguised as replacement miners. There are four in their gang who have sneaked into town at night from their shuttle hidden on the western slope of Grampian Mountain. They have rented horses for their getaway. Use the stats for the claim jumpers from "Episode I, Act III" for this gang. FACTION POINTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stop Robbery: Town 4 / Owner 3 / Miners 2 / Tong -2. • Join Robbery: Town -6 / Owner -5 / Miners -2 / Tong 3. • Ignore Robbery: Town -2 / Owner -1 / Miners 0 / Tong -2.
2	<p><i>Gun-totin' Dandy:</i> A fellow by the name of Charlie Stone has rolled into town. (Use stats for "Barfly" from the Serenity rules book.) His clothes are new and bright and he totes a nickel plated revolver that looks as though it has never been fired. He is trying to look tougher than the greenhorn he so obviously is. He is spoiling for a fight to prove his worth with a gun and one of the crew is his most likely target. This encounter does not generate any faction points except at the GM's discretion.</p>
3	<p><i>Saloon Girl Being Dragged Down the Street:</i> The lady ain't going willingly. One of the saloon girls from Pat Malloy's or the Lawrence Saloon is getting far more attention from a large miner than she intended. (Use Bully Boy stats from the <i>Serenity Role Playing Game</i>, for this miner.) FACTION POINTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free the girl: Town 4 / Owner 1 / Miners 2 / Tong 0. • Kill the miner: Town -2 / Owner -1 / Miners -6 / Tong 4. • Ignore girl and miner: Town -6 / Owner -3 / Miners 0 / Tong -2.
4	<p><i>Shop being ransacked:</i> This will be the shop you're about to walk into or the nearest shop to you. Five Tong thugs are looking to establish a protection racket. (Use "Tong Thug" stats from "Folks and Rascals.") FACTION POINTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stop the Thugs: Town 4 / Owner 3 / Miners 2 / Tong -2. • Help the Thugs: Town -8 / Owner -6 / Miners -2 / Tong 2. • Kill any of the Thugs: Town 4 / Owner 3 / Miners 2 / Tong -4. • Not your problem: Town -6 / Owner -4 / Miners 0 / Tong 2.
5	<p><i>Runaway Beer Wagon:</i> Something has spooked the horses pulling a wagon filled with the weekly delivery of beer! The driver has fallen off and the horses are careening down the street as people leap to get out of their way. FACTION POINTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stop the horses: Town 4 / Owner 3 / Miners 2 / Tong -2. • Harm the horses: Town 4 / Owner 3 / Miners 2 / Tong -2. • Save the beer: Town 4 / Owner 3 / Miners 2 / Tong -2. • Not your problem: Town 4 / Owner 3 / Miners 2 / Tong -2.
6	<p><i>Alliance Visit:</i> A squad of Alliance Military has decided to pay the town a short visit while they refuel at the Depot. (Use stats from <i>Serenity Role Playing Game</i> for one Alliance Officer (Gung-ho) and ten Alliance Grunts.) They will be loud and boastful, making fun of the Townsfolk and their Yi Dwei Da Buen Chuo Roh community. FACTION POINTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take the Insults and Smile: Town 2 / Owner 3 / Miners 1 / Tong 2. • Attack the Alliance Squad: Town -4 / Owner -6 / Miners 2 / Tong 2. • Encourage the Alliance to Leave • Before There's Trouble: Town 4 / Owner 3 / Miners 2 / Tong 2.
7	<p><i>Fire!</i> Nothing can be more catastrophic than a fire in a town built almost entirely out of oiled, dry wood. Putting out the fire is a FORMIDABLE COMPLEX ACTION. FACTION POINTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put out the fire: Town 6 / Owner 4 / Miners 3 / Tongs 3. • Not your problem: Town -4 / Owner -3 / Miners -2 / Tong -2.
8	<p><i>Reaver Scouting Attack!</i> Reavers drop out of the sky from a shuttle no one saw coming on a quick raiding strike. (Use stats from <i>Serenity Role Playing Game</i> for six Reavers.) FACTION POINTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stop the Reavers: Town 8 / Owner 5 / Miners 6 / Tong 6. • Run or hide: Town -4 / Owner -3 / Miners -2 / Tong -2.

FOLKS AND RASCALS

Wherein the players in our tale are described with honest clarity for both good and ill.

MAJOR CHARACTERS

"Brigit" a.k.a. "Saffron" [Rogue Con Artist]

Agi d12, Str d6, Vit d6, Ale d10, Int d10, Wil d12, Init d12+d10, Life 18.

Assets: Allure [Major], Cortex Specter [Minor], Talented (Seduction) [Major]

Complications: Greedy [Minor], Overconfident [Minor]

Skills: Athletics d6 / Dodge d10 / Running d10, Covert d6 / Pickpocket d12 / Forgery d10 / Sabotage d10, Guns d6 / Pistol d10, Influence d6 / Persuasion d10 / Seduction d12 + d6, Knowledge d6 / Poisons d8, Perception d6 / Search d10

Weapons: Pistol (DMG d6W, RNG 100, ROF 3, MAG 8)

Factions Points: Town 2 / Owner 2 / Miners 2 / Tong 2

"Brigit" is a beauty — fiery red hair; big wide eyes, voluptuous figure, creamy skin. No one knows her real name. Fact is she may not remember it her own self. She's gone by "Brigit," "Yolanda," "Elizabeth," and a host of others. If you happen to have heard this story while aboard a Firefly called Serenity, then you'll know her as "Saffron."

The amount we do not know about his woman could fill an encyclopedia. We do know or suspect is that she received formal training in a Companion House, but we have no idea when or where. She has been married — both allegedly and in fact — several times and under numerous different names — including once to Captain Malcolm Reynolds as part of a plan to steal his ship. We also know that she masterminded and was present as "Elizabeth" during the theft of secret items from the Independent Faction Treasury near

the end of the Unification War, only to have that prize stolen from her by a mutinous crew while travelin' the Black.

We do know for certain that "Saffron" will step over anyone's body to get to the prize. Wealth may not be her objective so much as power and proving her superiority over others. She has several sayings. "You're assuming the pay-off's the point ... Everybody plays each other; that's all anybody ever does ... We play parts."

Sheriff Luke Pearson [Lunatic Lawman]

Agi d12, Str d8, Vit d8, Ale d10, Int d6, Wil d10, Init d12 + d4 +d10, Life 18.

Assets: Lightnin' Reflexes [Major]

Complications: Greedy [Minor], Leaky Brain Pan [Major]

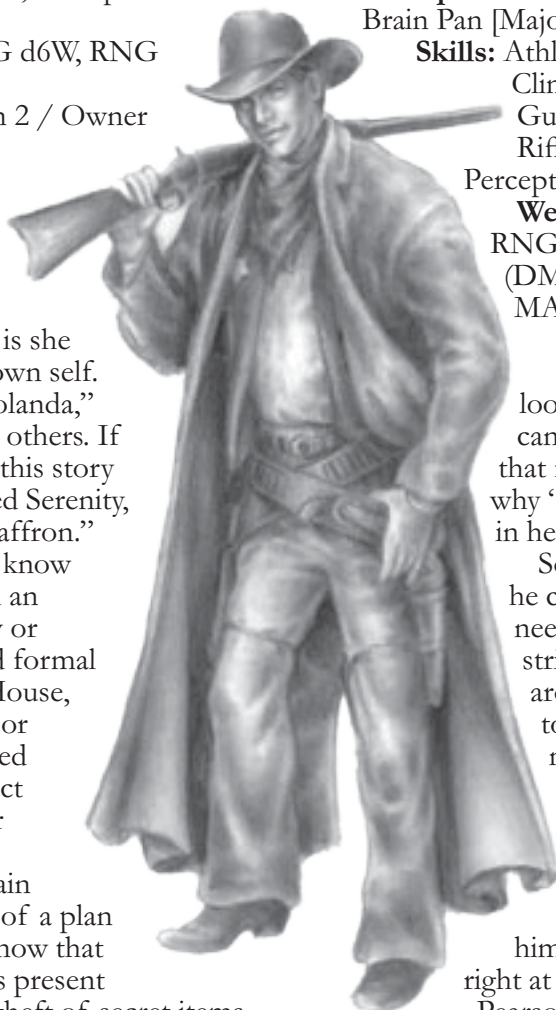
Skills: Athletics d6 / Dodge d8 / Climbing d10, Discipline d4, Guns d6 / pistol d12 + d2 / Rifle d12 + d2, Knowledge d4, Perception d6

Weapons: Pistol (DMG d6W, RNG 100, ROF 3, MAG 8) Rifle (DMG d8W, RNG 225, ROF 3, MAG 30)

On the surface, Luke Pearson looks like a fine, upstandin' candidate for sheriff. But beneath that façade is a nutcase; which is why "Brigit" chose him for his part in her job.

Somewhere back in his youth he came up with the compulsive need to be in charge and impose strict order on everything around. Anyone who stands up to him or challenges his very narrow interpretation of the law must, in his mind, be evil and deserve punishment — swift and final. He kills without remorse or emotion of any kind. He believes himself to be absolutely in the right at all times.

Pearson will be pleasant to those he perceives as his friends — a state-of-mind



that generally don't last long. Sooner or later, he comes to believe everyone is plotting against him. Pearson is psychotic with a tendency to become obsessed with a woman. No matter what the woman does, he will decide after a short time that she has been unfaithful to him. This "betrayal" will send him into a murderous rage.

Pearson will first attempt to arrest someone he perceives to be "a law-breaker", but he will then shoot them dead given the smallest excuse. "I saw his eyelid twitch. Meant he was gonna draw his gun on me."

He will make romantic overtures to females he encounters and will appear polite, even slightly shy. His true aspect will show itself all too soon. "You're under arrest ... now draw!"

MINOR CHARACTERS:

John William¹ "J.W."

McClarrin [Mine Owner]

Agi d6, Str d8, Vit d6, Ale d6, Int d6, Wil d10, Init d6+d6, Life 16.

Assets: Leadership [Minor]

Complications: Crude [Minor], Memorable [Major]

Skills: Guns d6 / Pistol d8, Influence d6 / Leadership d12, Knowledge d6 / Business d12, Perception d6, Survival d4

Weapons: Pistol (DMG d6W, RNG 100, ROF 3, MAG 8) Looks like George C. Scott

Factions Points: Town 5 / Owner 6 / Miners -2 / Tong -3

Square-jawed, square-shouldered, upright and pugnacious, J. W. purchased his mine for next to nothin' back during the Unification War. Now he has a seat in Parliament purchased largely with revenue from this mine. Unlike many politicians, he takes his job seriously and honestly tries to help the folk on the Rim. He is the typical scrappy frontiersman who has made good and now finds himself suddenly all respectable.

None of his newly civilized exterior has smoothed the rough and tough core of the man. He still lives life large — talks loud, laughs louder, and prefers the company of a

few miners, prospectors and "good old boys" to the refined snobs of so-called polite society. "Someday the Rim will all be civilized," he says. "But it will take strong folk to build the road for those dandies to drive their buggies on!"

Luis Wyatt [Hotel Boy]

Agi d6, Str d4, Vit d4, Ale d6, Int d6, Wil d4, Init d6+d6, Life 8.

Skills: Animal Handling (d4), Perception (d4), Craft (d4)

Weapons: None

Factions Points: Town -1 / Owner 0 / Miners 4 / Tong 2

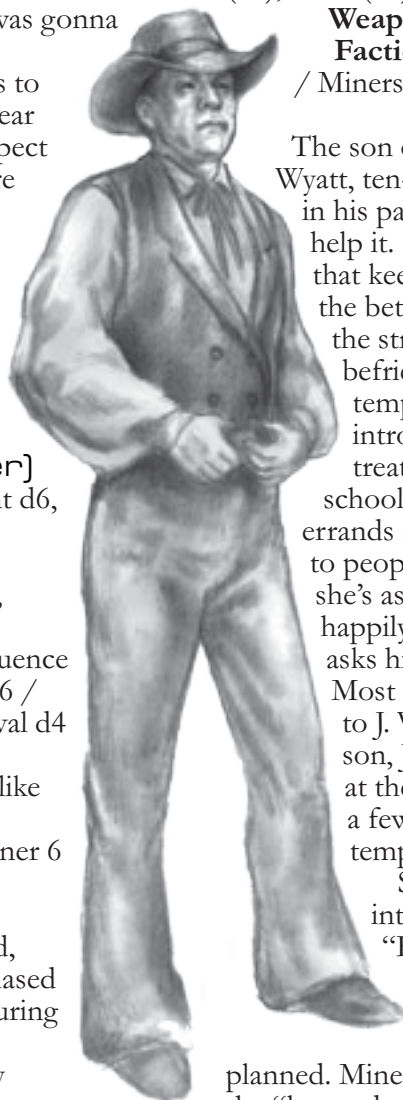
The son of hotel-owners Miguel and Ilsa Wyatt, ten-year-old Luis will not be found in his parent's establishment if he can help it. Skinny, with a mop of dark hair that keeps falling in his eyes, Luis spends the better part of his days roaming the streets of Frisco. Luis has been befriended by "the tall man in the temple" — Lau Tsu — and will gladly introduce the crew to him if they treat Luis well. He has a crush on his school teacher, "Brigit", and often runs errands for her by delivering her messages to people around town. He's proud that she's asked him to help her and he'll happily brag about it to anyone who asks him. He'll even show off the notes! Most of the notes have been delivered to J. W. McClarren, John Blake, his son, Jimmy Blake, and Chad Sloat up at the mine. Luis has even delivered a few notes to the tall man at the temple.

Should the crew attempt to intercept such notes during "Episode II", this is what they might find:

• *J.W. McClarren* - "My darling J.W. Everything going as planned. Miners nearly where we want them and the "law and order" question will be settled by town council soon." Signed - B.

• *John Blake* - "Hon Mr. Blake: May I suggest you hold a town council meeting on the question of law and order? A girl isn't safe to walk about this town alone." Signed - Miss B.

• *Lau Tsu* - "The game piece has moved off the board — but my reach is long. Your insight may help me recover it on your behalf." Signed - "B"



¹ ETW: Named after my uncle, John William Hickman, State Senator from Washington County.

• *Jimmy Blake* - "Jimmy: The eyes of the Feds are upon you as are those of our enemies; make no move without my word." No signature.

• *Chad Sloat* - "Soon, the workers shall unite for justice and respect! Our needs can no longer be ignored. The vote must be soon!" Signed - "Y"

Luis can be found in the hotel only during "Episode IV." He will not leave because he's now terrified of Sheriff Pearson — with good reason.

Balley Sackett (Engineer)

Agi d6, Str d8, Vit d8, Ale d8, Int d10, Wil d6, Init d6+d8, Life 14.

Assets: Born Behind the Wheel [Minor], Good Name [Minor], Mechanical Empathy [Minor]

Complications: Overconfident [Major]

Skills: Animal Handling d6, Mechanical Engineering d6 / Repairs d12 / Create Mechanical Devices d10, Technical Engineering d6

Weapons: None

Factions Points: Town 2 / Owner 2 / Miners 1 / Tong 1

Balley is a handsome, rugged, balding man with broad shoulders, a quick smile, and a glint in his eye. He makes his own way through life with an easy charm, not caring much about the opinion of others and certainly no respecter of social status. He prefers the company of "regular folk" to the high and mighty, although he has a solid friendship with J. W. McClarrin.

Balley set up the deal for the comet ice with "Brigit" and acts as the go-between. He does not trust the "young filly" and would advise others not to trust her if he thought they would listen.

As the town's only engineer, Balley is indispensable and he can thumb his nose at those who think they're better than he is — especially John and Nora Blake. "No, John, I won't sell you that buggy at any price and you can't ruin my credit 'cause I never borrow money and I don't keep my money in banks so free checking won't help me. Now stop askin'."

Tony Kompus (Miner)

Agi d6, Str d10, Vit d10, Ale d6, Int d4, Wil d6, Init d6+d6, Life 20.

Assets: Tough as Nails (Major)

Skills: Athletics d6 / Mining d10, Guns d4, Melee Weapon Combat d6 / Knives d6 / Clubs d8, Unarmed Combat d6 / Brawling d8

Weapons: Pistol (DMG d6W, RNG 100, ROF 3, MAG 8)

Factions Points: Town -1 / Owner -1 / Miners 1 / Tong -1

Tony Kompus² is a swarthy, broad-built man with a handlebar mustache and black, curly hair. Despite his size and obvious strength, Tony is soft spoken when addressing people. He keeps his head bowed and his eyes averted as he nervously fingers the brim of his hat in his hands. If someone speaks to him in friendly fashion, he will flash a broad smile. His is a gentle soul in a powerful body.

Each payday, Tony goes from the Hornsilver Store to the post-office in A. E. Sherman's store and puts a few bills in an envelope. He addresses the bills to a town on Hera and pays for the postage. Then he asks A. E. the same question: "Is any mail for Tony Kompus? K-O-M-P-U-S?" There never is.

John Blake (Town Banker)

Agi d6, Str d6, Vit d6, Ale d8, Int d8, Wil d6, Init d6+d8, Life 12.

Assets: Trustworthy Gut [Minor]

Skills: Influence d6/Negotiation d8, Knowledge d6, Perception d6/Economics d10, Pilot d4

Weapons: None

Factions Points: Town 2 / Owner 2 / Miners 1 / Tong 1

Short, tubby, balding, with a genial smile, John Blake came to Frisco with his wife Nora as a representative of a large bank on Beaumonde. He was supposed to set up a branch office here — until his wife talked him out of it. Instead, he went independent and opened the Frisco Bank. Now all the money in the town flows through his bank, for which services — again at the suggestion of his wife — John insisted the mine compensate him. This arrangement has made John Blake the richest and most respected individual in the town — and his wife along with him. "I am a self-made man of independent means — isn't that right, dear?"

² ETW: There was a Greek miner in Frisco by this name; a man straight from the "old country" who could barely speak English. Each Saturday he would come to the Griffith's store and lean against the counter and ask my great-grandmother, "Is any mail for Tony Kompus?" Then he would always spell his name, "K-O-M-P-U-S." Even though each month he would carefully seal up an envelope with money wrapped in a hand written letter to be sent home, there never was any mail for Tony Kompus.

Nora Blake (Town Socialite)

Agi d8, Str d6, Vit d4, Ale d8, Int d6, Wil d10,
Init d8+d8, Life 14.

Assets: Allure [Minor]

Complications: Combat Paralysis [Minor]

Skills: Influence d6 / Persuasion d10,
Knowledge d6, Performance d6 / Saloon
Dancing d10 / Singing d8

Weapons: None, except possibly her
biting tongue.

Factions Points: Town 4 / Owner 0 /
Miners -2 / Tong -4

Tall and striking, the voluptuous Nora was working in a club on Beaumonde when she met John Blake — an Accounts Receivable Clerk going nowhere in a large, multiworld bank. Still, Nora saw potential in “her little man” and, more importantly, potential in his position at the bank. By means of a few favors carefully and strategically employed and the aide of some of Nora’s acquaintances in urging more rapid repayment of certain outstanding loans, John Blake began moving up in the world and Nora was right there with him.

Relocating to Regina was a calculated move on Nora’s part: she believed that it was better to be a big fish in a small pond than swimming in someone else ocean. Besides, on Regina she would be the respectable “banker’s wife,” not the “dance hall floozy” of Beaumonde.

She is now the leading light of Frisco social life. All the other “respectable” ladies look up to her. Sadly, Nora has forgotten that she started on a low rung of the social ladder. “The saloons in this town are a disgrace! They are a bad influence on our youth and those girls are no better than they should be.”

Jimmy Blake (Son of John and Nora Blake)

Agi d6, Str d6, Vit d6, Ale d8,
Int d6, Wil d8, Init d6+d8, Life 14.

Complications: Greedy
[Minor], Filcher [Minor], Easy
Mark [Major]



Skills: Athletics d4, Covert d4, Influence d6 / Seduction d8 / Fast Talking d8

Weapons: None

Factions Points: Town -2 / Owner -2 / Miners 3 / Tong 2

Jimmy is the twenty-six-year-old son of John and Nora Blake and, as the only son of the town banker, he is spoiled rotten. He frequents all the saloons in town, and spends his time complaining about his parents, even while spending their money. If there's a skirt within view, he'll chase it. If fun can be bought, he'll buy it.

Jimmy has the brains of an abandoned mine shaft. He is an easy mark for con artists, as "Brigit" soon discovered. She has entrusted Jimmy with a special secret: that the woman everyone knows as "Brigit" is actually a Federal agent. She is acting under cover to retrieve a game piece stolen from Lau Tsu. The piece contains "secret Alliance information."

She has assured Jimmy that if he recovers the game piece for "Brigit" he will not only be a hero, but will be richly rewarded. This will show everyone that he is no lazy drone who does nothing but sap his father's bank account and worry his mother half-to-death. Jimmy is infatuated with "Brigit" and means to ask her to marry him when all this is over.

PLAIN FOLKS

Like any good story, there's a lot of folk just hanging about in the background. Sure, they got names and stories of their own – but more than likely you'll never get around to them. They're the "extras," hired to chuck spears and swell a crowd scene and maybe sing a chorus or two.

Such folks can be seen wandering the streets of Frisco, as well as most other streets in the 'Verse. Most of the time they just hang about in the background, rarely calling attention to themselves, and duckin' out of the way at the first sign of trouble.

However, if the crew does feel the need to acquaint themselves on a more personal and intimate level with these folks – don't let them get the drop on you! Just use these general character types as a template, slap a name on them – and help discover this "extra" and turn him or her into a star.

Miner

Agi d6, Str d10, Vit d8, Ale d6, Int d4, Wil d6, Init d6+d6, Life 18.

Assets: Tough as Nails [Major]

Skills: Athletics d6 / Mining d8, Guns d4, Melee Weapon Combat d6 / Knives d6 / Clubs d8, Unarmed Combat d4 / Brawling d8

Weapons: Pistol (DMG d6W, RNG 100, ROF 3, MAG 8)

Factions Points: Town -1 / Owner -1 / Miners 1 / Tong -1

Merchant

Agi d6, Str d6, Vit d6, Ale d8, Int d8, Wil d6, Init d6+d8, Life 12.

Skills: Influence d6 / Negotiation d8, Knowledge d6, Perception d6

Weapons: None

Factions Points: Town 1 / Owner 0 / Miners 0 / Tong 0

Tradesman

Agi d6, Str d6, Vit d6, Ale d8, Int d8, Wil d6, Init d6+d8, Life 12.

Assets: Talented (His Craft) [Minor]

Skills: Craft d6 / (his trade) d8, Influence d6 / Negotiation d8, Knowledge d6, Perception d6

Weapons: None

Factions Points: Town 1 / Owner 0 / Miners 0 / Tong 0

Tong Thug

Agi d6, Str d10, Vit d8, Ale d6, Int d4, Wil d6, Init d6+d6, Life 16.

Assets: Tough as Nails [Minor]

Complications: Loyal [Minor]

Skills: Athletics d6 / Dodge d8, Guns d4, Melee Weapon Combat d6 / Knives d6 / Clubs d8, Unarmed Combat d6 / Brawling d10

Weapons: Baseball Bat (as club)

Factions Points: Town -1 / Owner -1 / Miners -2 / Tong 2

Mine Guard

Agi d6, Str d8, Vit d8, Ale d8, Int d6, Wil d8, Init d6+d8, Life 16.

Complications: Loyal (minor)

Skills: Athletics d6 / Dodge d10, Discipline d4, Guns d6 / Rifle d8, Perception d6, Melee Weapon combat d4

Weapons: Rifle (DMG d8W, RNG 225, ROF 3, MAG 30), Combat Knife (DMG d4W)

Factions Points: Town -1 / Owner 2 / Miners -3 / Tong -4

NEW & USED GEAR

PANDORA: THE CURSED TREASURE

Pandora was a bio-weapons research experiment conducted by the Alliance during the Unification War. Actually, it was viewed as quite “humanitarian”, stemming from an attempt by the Alliance to incapacitate enemy combatants and render them incapable of fighting without actually killing them (so long as they receive the antidote). An engineered viral disease spread among the troops causes weakness, dizziness, vomiting, and body aches on a continuing basis until the antidote is administered. The symptoms of the disease appear to abate slightly after five to seven days, but the symptoms worsen over time — until the antidote is administered. Thus the soldiers would become too sick to fight and would be desperate to receive the antidote before they starting dying off, leaving them no choice but to surrender.

Since the Alliance did not want it known that they were the ones spreading the virus, but wanted to seen as the “rescuers,” they decided to decimate the virus through the use of contaminated platinum coins that were popular with the Browncoats, who had heard rumors that money issued by the Independent governments was going to be worthless. (Much like Confederate money during the American Civil War on Earth-That-Was.) The Alliance never found out if the experiment would work or not, due to the fact that Colonel Maddoc stole the treasure.

These coins appear to be Alliance minted currency similar to those still often traded on the Rim today. Since the Alliance wanted to keep tabs on these coins (judge how effectively this delivery method would work) the coins are recognizable by a slight irregularity — the “i” in the word “Alliance” has no dot over it.

If the crew decides to take the treasure, spending these coins will become increasingly difficult as time goes by. Lau Tsu and the Tong will spread the word that the coins are cursed and will cause a deadly illness. Folks will initially find it INCREDIBLE to think that the coin the crew is handing them are in any way cursed. First folk in Frisco will start falling ill. The disease that will come to be called Xiau’s Malady will spread. After that, the notion that the coins are the cause will get one step easier each week until it is EASY for any merchant to spot the defect on the coin and determine that it is “cursed”. Once identified, no merchant, trader, or go-between will touch a cursed coin in payment. Furthermore, anyone who has previously accepted a cursed coin will suffer a two step penalty in any future dealings with the crew.

The viral agent requires a Heroic Resistance roll (see *Serenity Role Playing Game*, Chapter Five) to resist infection. Once infected, the symptoms begin and a character’s physical attributes (Agility, Strength, Vitality) are reduced by one step per week, though no Attribute goes below d2. Once all physical Attributes have reached d2, the character permanently loses 2 Life Points each week until dead. If the antidote is administered at any point, the symptoms reverse themselves: Life Points are first restored at 2 points a week until back to full, then Attributes raise back up one die step per week until at their original scores.

The Alliance still has the antidote in stock, but finding the warehouse where they stashed it years ago when the experiment was deemed a failure and then either recovering it, stealing it, or otherwise persuading the Alliance to cough it up will be a daunting task that will likely make for another adventure. (Not to mention the fact that the Alliance will immediately suspect the crew as being the ones who stole the treasure in the first place!)



BENNY XIAU'S GAME PIECE

Benny Xiau managed to salvage three crates of the treasure following the crash of the *Lucius Newberry* on Regina. Unfortunately for him, his dreams of wealth disappeared when he discovered the true nature of the treasure. Unlike the dense Colonel Maddoc, Benny Xiau paid attention to the warnings on the crates and did some research before he cracked open the glass.

Once he came to understand the true and terrible nature of the "treasure", Benny Xiau found himself the guardian of a dark secret. Determined to contain the extent of the disaster, he decided to take the cursed money to a place where he could keep an eye on it and keep it well hidden.

The Hornsilver Mine provided a safe repository. Instead of taking treasure out of the mine like most people, Benny decided to hide his treasure in the mine, thereby keep it safe. Since the first level of the Frisco mine had been played out, no one went there anymore. All the activity was taking place on the lower

levels. Benny hid his treasure here, devising an ingenious system of sensors to open the vault door.

He needed a means, however, of remembering the special combination he needed to trigger the hidden vault entrance and thus he devised the game piece.

Made to look like ivory after the art of scrimshaw, the game piece is actually carved plastic. On the reverse side of the octagonal piece is a saying written in Chinese characters which translates as: "The Journey begins where the journey ends and the way is open." The obverse side shows a central figure standing on top of a box. He has one hand pointing upward. (He stands above the sealed treasure chest, which is beneath the ground.) On either side of this main figure, smaller figures walk on top of keys – signifying that unlocking the treasure requires a journey.

More importantly, however, the figure is pointing up to the first in the sequence of steps (read clockwise) that will allow the holder to pass between the sensors in the proper sequence and thereby unlock the door (mine location M) leading to the secret treasure of Benny Xiau (mine location N).



AFTERWORD

Wherein the authors of this adventure reveal the origins of the story and tell how this tale is passed down from generation to generation.

Here's the truth of it: A real mining town called Frisco was located in the western desert country of Beaver County, Utah. The city is now a ghost town but there was — and still is — a Hornsilver Mining Company that operated one of the largest silver mines in American history. The mine was discovered by two prospectors by the names of Ryan and Hawkes, who sold the mine for \$25,000 dollars in February, 1876 to a man named A.G. Campbell. He, in turn, sold it three years later to the Hornsilver Mining Company for \$5,000,000. By 1885, the Hornsilver Mine had produced over \$60,000,000 in zinc, copper, lead, silver, and gold.

In those days, that kind of money caused desperate men to commit desperate acts — and spawned stories as wild as the desert wind.

The stories in this adventure are mainly fancies of my imagination, but they are based on the tales my grandmother told my father and which he in turn told. My great-grandfather on my grandmother's side ran the store just to the east of the top of Main Street in Frisco. I know, because I've walked its empty streets. I stood where the store once was, and peered into the dangerous depths of the mine that is now collapsing, as its stopes give way.

My grandmother's stories of the early boom town days, of the constant gunfights, the numerous saloons, and the larger-than-life characters who walked its streets and mined the silver from the Grampian Range southwest of the town linger in my mind. On spring days we would gather at the family home in Beaver, Utah, pack up our fried chicken lunch and drive west past Milford into the desert. The trunk of my grandfather's Cadillac would be filled with old coffee cans, bent coat-hanger wires and fresh flowers. We would turn off the rarely traveled, two-lane state highway and make our way down the dirt road to Boot Hill — and the graves of relatives. The coffee cans were used to hold the water, the bent coat hangers held the coffee cans upright against the constant dry wind, and the flowers reminded us that people once lived here, worked here, loved here, and died here.

So though the names have changed and the stories have been rearranged to fit in the 'Verse — well, that don't make them any less true. It's part of my hope that even usin' different names under different circumstances, you and your group will bring the old memories to life and have a rousing good time!

— Tracy & Laura Hickman



AFTERWORD

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宁静角色扮演

角色大名

CHARACTER NAME:

綽號

NICKNAME:

玩家名稱

PLAYER NAME:

家界

HOME WORLD:

角色概念

CONCEPT:

命分

LIFE
POINTS

特質

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH

AGILITY

VITALITY

ALERTNESS

INTELLIGENCE

WILLPOWER

轉特徵

DERIVED TRAITS

LIFE POINTS

INITIATIVE

ENDURANCE

RESISTANCE

規則援助

RULE HELPER

MOVEMENT (feet):

ACTIONS 0 = 15 • ACTIONS 1 = 30

ACTIONS 2 = 30 + (Agi + Athletics / Running)

ACTION DIFFICULTY

Action	Diff	Extraordinary
EASY	3	10
AVERAGE	7	14
HARD	11	18
FORMIDABLE	15	22
HEROIC	19	26
INCREDIBLE	23	30
RIDICULOUS	27	34
IMPOSSIBLE	31	38

SKILL COMPETENCY

D2	INCOMPETENT
D4	NOVICE
D6	COMPETENT
D8	EXPERT
D10	PROFESSIONAL
D12	MASTER
D12+	SUPREME

提進

ADVANCEMENT

PLOT POINTS

CHAR GEN PT.

UNUSED
ADV PT.

TOTAL ADV PT.

技能 SKILLS AND SPECIALTIES

ANIMAL HANDLING

MEDICAL EXPERTISE

ARTISTRY

MELEE WEAPON CMPT.

ATHLETICS

PERCEPTION

COVERT

PERFORMANCE

CRAFT

PILOT*

DISCIPLINE

PLANETARY VEHICLES

GUNS

RANGED WEAPONS

HEAVY WEAPONS

SCIENTIFIC EXPERTISE*

INFLUENCE

SURVIVAL

KNOWLEDGE

TECHNICAL ENG.*

MECHANICAL ENG.*

UNARMED COMBAT

LINGUIST*

SERENITY ROLEPLAYING GAME

裝備 EQUIPMENT

麻煩 COMPLICATIONS

長處 ASSETS

☐ MINOR ☐ MAJOR

☐ MINOR ☐ MAJOR

☐ MINOR ☐ MAJOR

☐ MINOR ☐ MAJOR

☐ MINOR ☐ MAJOR

☐ MINOR ☐ MAJOR

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☐ MINOR ☐ MAJOR

☐ MINOR ☐ MAJOR

☐ MINOR ☐ MAJOR

☐ MINOR ☐ MAJOR

☐ MINOR ☐ MAJOR

盔甲 ARMOR

TYPE

AR

COVERS

PENALTY

武器 WEAPONRY

TYPE

DMG

RANGE

ROF

AMMO

TYPE

DMG

RANGE

ROF

AMMO

TYPE

DMG

RANGE

ROF

AMMO

劇分 DICE STEPS AND PLOT POINTS

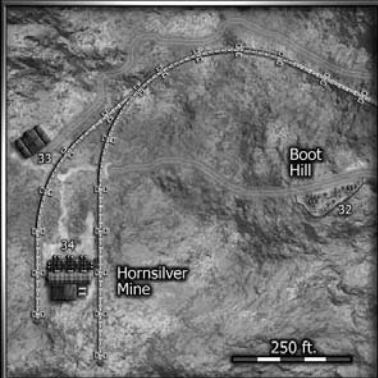
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
D2	D4	D6	D8	D10	D12	D12 +D2	D12 +D4	D12 +D6	D12 +D8	D12 +D10	D12 +D12

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GRAMPIAN
MOUNTAIN

FRISCO
SUMMIT





FRISCO

Processing
Plant

24

Processor Spur

23

21

22

25

26

20

15

27

18

19

13

14

28

17

16

11

10

8 Jail

29

30

School
House

31

7

6

5

2

4

Transport
Station

Port Frisco

1

3



250 ft.

Statistics:

The Lullabelle is a converted Munroe Wagon (Bumblebee Class) Homestead Transport outfitted for prospecting.

Deployed on the Comet Grampian.
Exclusive features after market:

- Holographic projector & atmo-dome.
- Active dirt and plants.

Dimensions (LxBxH): 150x130x80 feet

Tonnage: 1,000 tons

Speed Class: 9 (dismantled)

Crew: 2

Quarters: four double cabins

Fuel Capacity: 400 Tons external

Armament: Armor 1W

Price: C850

AGI D4, STR D4, VIT D6

ALE: D2, INT D4, WIL D6

INIT D4+D12, LIFE 12

Aerial Transport Operations/Transport D4

Space Transport Operations/Transport D4

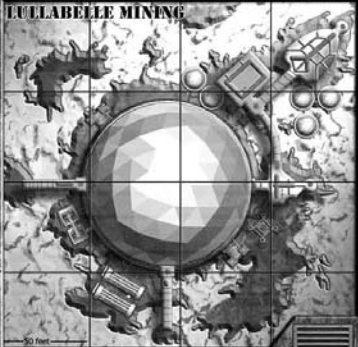
Complexity: very low

No Maintenance Costs

LULLABELLE

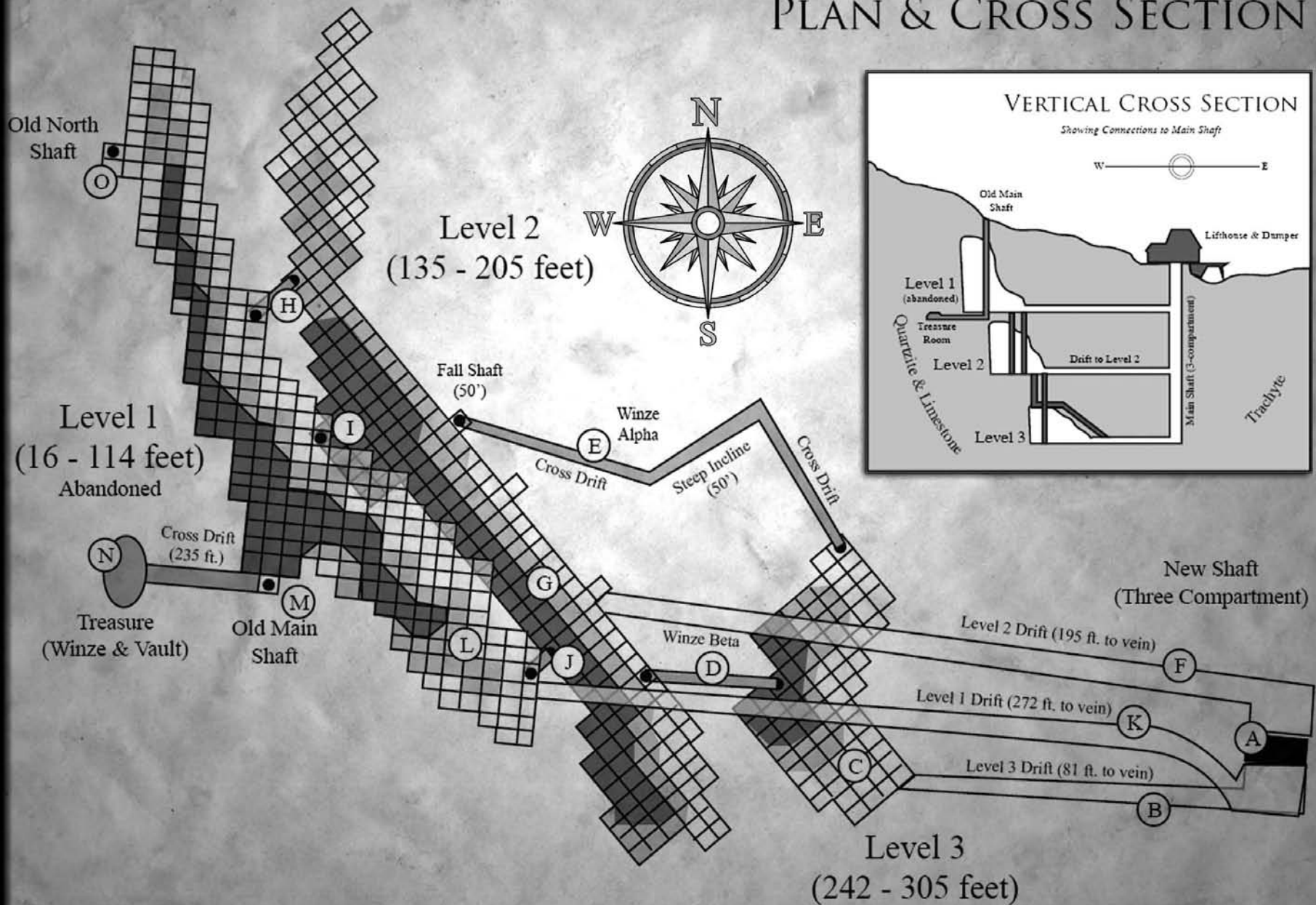


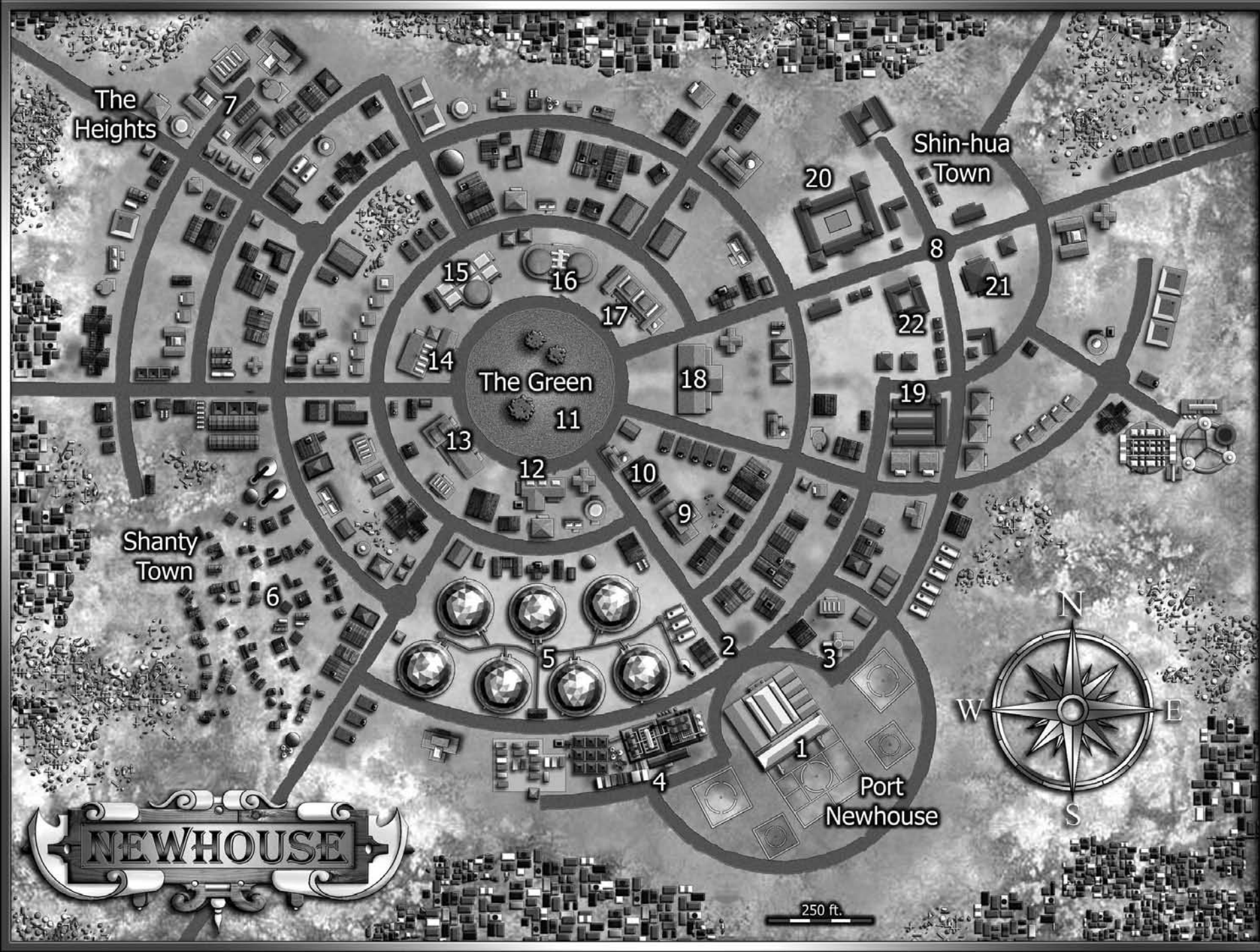
LULLABELLE MINING



HORNSILVER MINE

PLAN & CROSS SECTION





The Heights

7

Shin-hua Town

20

8

21

15

16

17

14

The Green

11

18

22

19

13

12

10

9

Shanty Town

6

2

3

5

1

Port Newhouse

4

NEWHOUSE

250 ft.

GRAMPIAN
MOUNTAIN

FRISCO
SUMMIT



FRISCO

Processing Plant

24

Processor Spur

23

25

8 Jail

School House

Transport Station

Port Frisco



250 ft.

1

3

2

4

7

6

5

28

27

17

16

18

19

20

21

22

15

14

13

11

10

9

29

30

31

Statistics:

The Lullabelle is a converted Munroe Wagon (Bumblebee Class) Homestead Transport outfitted for prospecting.

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Quarters: four double cabins

Fuel Capacity: 400 Tons external

Armament: Armor 1W

Price: C850

AGI D4, STR D4, VIT D6

ALE: D2, INT D4, WIL D6

INIT D4+D12, LIFE 12

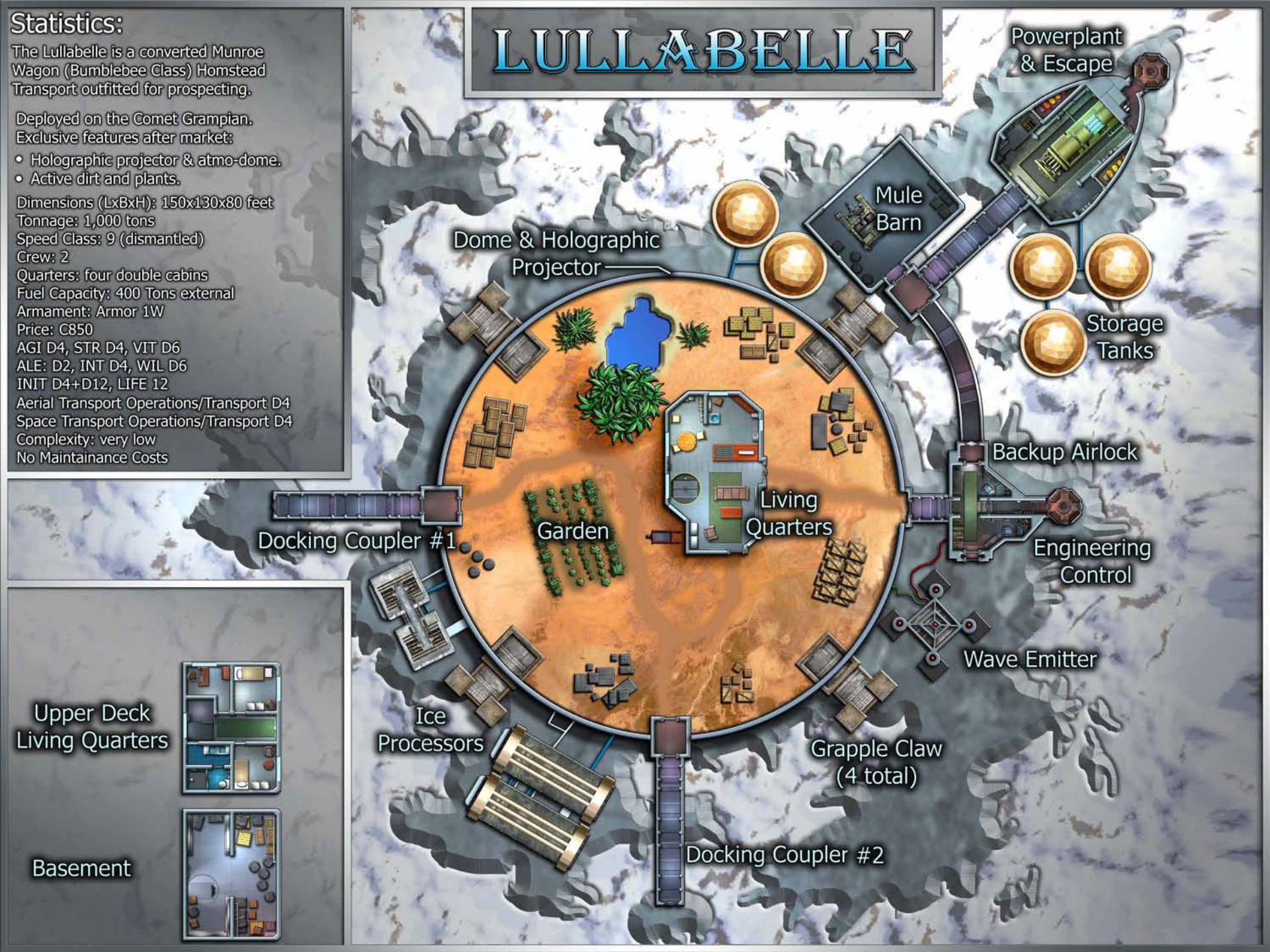
Aerial Transport Operations/Transport D4

Space Transport Operations/Transport D4

Complexity: very low

No Maintenance Costs

LULLABELLE



LULLABELLE MINING



50 feet



Boot
Hill

32

33

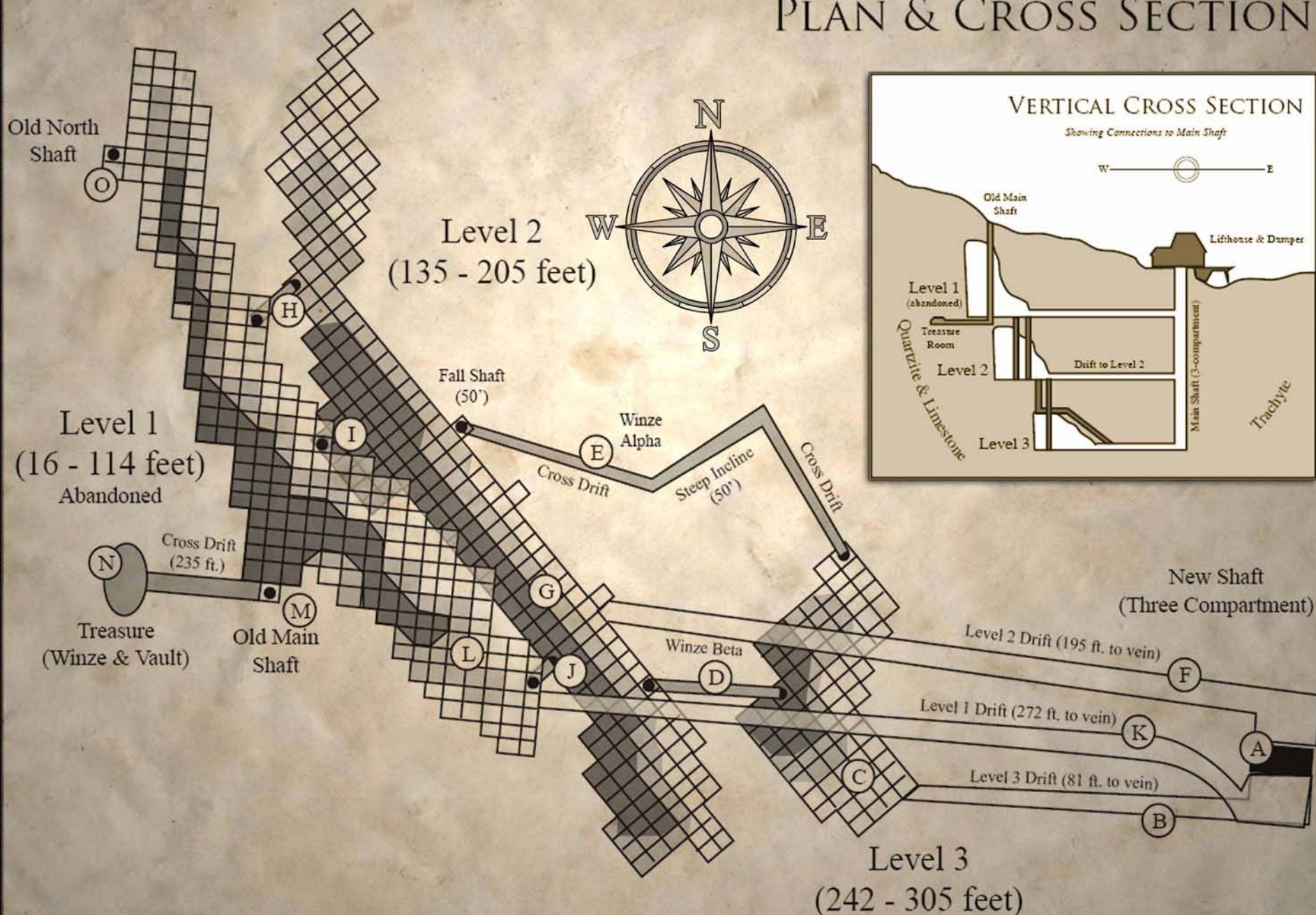
34

Hornsilver
Mine

250 ft.

HORNSILVER MINE

PLAN & CROSS SECTION



The Heights

7

Shin-hua
Town

20

8

21

22

19

The Green

11

15

16

17

14

18

13

12

10

9

Shanty
Town

6

2

3

1

Port
Newhouse

4

5

NEWHOUSE



250 ft.

There are lots of stories about the final days of the Unification War. Some tell about lost treasures of uncountable wealth. Some tell of curses and damnation. Others still tell of mutiny, treachery, and pirates. But only one legend combines all, a story that leads to Frisco — the most dangerous, lawless mining town in the 'Verse. Here it will take fast-thinking, careful diplomacy, and a steady gun hand to walk away breathin'. Everyone in the town has an agenda, even the little red-headed school marm who seems awfully familiar.

Out in the Black is an adventure for the *Serenity Role Playing Game* (sold separately). Authors Tracy & Laura Hickman drew on the actual history, tales and legends of a real silver mining town in the American West — told to Tracy by his father and grandparents from when he was a child — as the foundation for many of the events and locations in this new adventure set in Joss Whedon's incredible 'Verse.

- Includes maps based on the actual maps of the original town and mine.
- Separate "Frisco" town section for use of the town as a campaign setting beyond the adventure.
- Extensive footnotes regarding the historical sources for game events.



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