

30/10/2012 8:27:32 PM

GM Only Information

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Spoilers!

Secrets, Lies, Hidden Truths, and Stuff You Wish You Didn't Know.

(Referees Only)

This section outlines the secrets of the races of the COS. Spoilers!!

Secrets of the Synth

There are no Synth past age 4 (they all appear to be in their late 20s), they are considered GÇ£ripeGÇ¥ at that time. The Mainframe calls them to the Soylent system where they are processed. The Hizzar are the Mainframe and use it to control their stock, then they sell Synth to the other races for various uses (food, leather, fertilizer, etc). All synth ships have a cargo bay with a mini-mainframe, this device gives them a common luck pool but is also serves as a processing unit. Any critically damaged or killed synth are put in a sick bay or their life support unit, here they are processed by hardwired bots. Heavily injured synth are heavily sedated and put into a special body bag for the Arachne to use in their nests! Other fates are: being processed into fertilizer for Hortifex, made into food wafers, processed into hair products, etc. All this is stored in the cargo area. If a mainframe is damaged, boarding parties will be able to see this gristly mess. If a synth ship is in danger of being destroyed the mainframe will have the crew report to life support/ sickbay and process everyone!!! It will then release a special boarding missile with all of the product for a COS ship to pick up.

Secrets of the Arachne

About 80 earth years ago there was a civil war where the Arachne females overthrew the Democracy that had existed previously. A monarchy was established and male rights were taken away. After a brief conflict (the females had been supported by the Hizzar) the Arachne joined the COS. If a vessel has contact with an Arachne vessel (transporting, shuttle, docking, boarding missile, etc) male arachne will stow away. When brief contact (boarding missile, beaming, returning away team) is made with an arachne vessel roll 2 dice on a 9+ raise that vessels infestation level by one (if a nest is present damaged or not add its size to the die roll). If a UREF vessel is docked with an arachne vessel, starbase, etc automatically raise the infestation level by one each round they are docked. Arachne males brought to UREF will mature into spider lords who will seek to overthrow the Matriarchy and

establish a new Republic. See below for infestation levels. Level 1: The air on the ship is a little stale, probably will go unnoticed. All the rodents, small bugs, and other pests seem to have all vanished. Pets (of any size) are untouched. Level 2: Life support is obviously having trouble but there is no ill effect yet. In addition to the above effect, the ship appears cleaner than usual, messes seem to clean themselves up. If a player is wounded or unconscious, they will receive medical attention at skill 1. Level 3: Slight overstress on life support, all players take d6-2 damage and it is unrecoverable until there is enough life support. It is obvious something is GÇ£living in the cracksGÇ¥ at this point. In addition to the above effects the males will start repairing things at skill 1. Level 4: The males presence requires one whole unit of life support, standard rules for overstress apply. The males try and stay out of sight but can no longer conceal their presence. In addition to the above effects the males will, up to twice per round, spray intruders with their webs, see the arachne racial abilities and give them a skill of 1. Level 5: The colony (there will be some very young females) will require 2 life support, standard rules apply. All the other effects remain, but the skill levels are now 2. The Arachne will now web up to 4 times a round. Lastly, the arachne will follow orders and can operate up to 2 battlestations in the ship. If attacked they will disperse for 2 rounds before they rally and are ready to work again. Eventually the players will go through the mission GÇ£the spiders denGÇ¥ and resolve this issue with the arachne males.

Secrets of the Xeon

The Xeon are a species on the cusp of transcendence. The Xeon truthfully want to help people, which is the reason they joined the COS. Once they joined the Hizzar researched them and figured out what was happening and interfered in their development. The Hizzar seek to alter their path, and hopefully get a servitor race out of it. The players will have the opportunity to determine the final path of the Xeon in the mission GÇ£The Two TemplesGÇ¥. The Xeon are meant to have a lingering presence after the COS campaign concludes in the Gorilla games expansion GÇ£Deep ones in Deep Space.GÇ¥ Obviously they will require further fleshing out once that supplement is released. Their fate at the end of the COS campaign will see them become ethereal angelic type beings or wind up as a creature like the shoggoth (but radioactive) from H.P. Lovecrafts mythos.

Secrets of the Occuli

The Occuli are not real big team players (they are highly suspect of the Hizzar and Hortifex) in the COS. They have a great deal of medical problems and the Verdant Nebula has attracted their attention as a potential pharmacopeia. The Occuli, have in their development, evolved their psi powers and their physical forms have suffered because of it. They are very frail and most of their ships have a sick bay with medical bots, trama center, and emergency medical protocols. Things are that serious for them. They are closing in on a solution since researching in the nebula and they are very hopeful. The Hizzar are of course monitoring the Occulis progress and offer a lot of suggestions. The Hizzar have several plans for the Occuli (warriors, like a D&D beholder; making them larger and using them as ship mounted psi cannon; and developing them into a means of attacking the xeon. (The Occuli will frequently be encountered in the Verdant Nebula, which focuses on non-combat adventures. The OcculiGÇÖs smaller vessels donGÇÖt have any GÇ£regularGÇ¥ weapon modules, but thatGÇÖs not to say they are unarmed. Between the psi focus module and the various tractor beam configurations they can put up a good fight. I understand that the nebula is meant for things other than combat, but the Occuli add some light combat to the mix. Their armaments mess with occ and damage crew mostly. Technically they are unarmedGÇª.)

Secrets of the Flare Crawlers

The Flare Crawlers are somewhat aloof to the other members of the COS. They really only show interest toward the other races when they can assist them with their secret project. The other COS races have deals with the crawlers, providing exotic materials, labor, and psi masters. In exchange they assist the COS as escorts and fighters. The Hizzar have deduced what is going on through some unpleasant means, the black dragonflight is awakening. The Flare crawlers seek to keep their demented cousins imprisoned, The Hizzar see other potential and want to free them.

Secrets of the Hortifex

The Hortifex have gone to great lengths to hide the strife on their worlds from the other members of the COS. A civil war has been raging for some time. The wormwoods and cypress are the leaders of the empire. Rebels are led by the ash, maple, and red; it is a desperate fight and they seek allies to liberate their people. To control their population by fear the empire is building a Dread Moon with the power to destroy a planet. The Hizzar condone this and are very helpful to the Hortifex.

Secrets of the Hizzar

They are manipulating and using all of the COS members to their own ends. Each of the COS secrets has the Hizzar involved in some way with them messing things up. They will destroy the COS in the end, even if the players fail every mission. You will just have a lot of independent hostiles added to the universe. This is the second COS, not that the current members know this. The first COS was composed of freebooters (human pirates and others wanting to leave the UREF behind), the Plod (a race of huge living metal dinosaur like creatures), the Ixie (a race of sentient microbes), the Flots (sentient aquatic plant people), the Hizzar, and the Snatas (a strange extra-dimensional race). The members of the first COS began changing and going extinct. The freebooters were cross cloned and made into the Synth and used as cattle, the Plod were bred and processed into vehicles and ships (that's why the Hizzar ships regenerate), the Ixie were altered and merged with nanites to become various toxins and microscopic tools (see COS equipment), the Flots met a violent end since they figured out what was happening to the others, lastly the Hizzar (despite a valiant attempt to stop the Snatas) were consumed by the Snatas and became their hosts in this universe (how's that for a twist?). Several missions will give the players the opportunity to learn about these events, the greatest opportunity being a rescue mission to save one of the few remaining Flots ships. Through the course of a campaign players will also discover that the Hizzar are making plans for the UREF members. [spamemail](#)

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