

To the Gates of Hell

By James L.

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS:

The characters will be hired through REBCO SAR for a courier mission from wherever the characters start (preferably at Gateway, Sol) to the Nyotekundu system. The characters will be booked as passengers on a small freighter. They will be carrying a small briefcase for a prospecting/mining firm operating on Inferno in the Nyotekundu system, which is locked and which contains computer storage chips and documents.

During the 11 day journey to the outpost world, a group of pirates working for a competing mining firm (a subsidiary of Americo) will attempt to take control of the vessel. If successful the pirates will meet with a carry ship in the outer Nyotekundu system and offload the cargo of the freighter, along with the briefcase being transported by the characters.

SCENE ONE: Hiring on

In some way (perhaps through previous contact) the characters will be contacted through REBCO SAR with a job prospect. An Irish mining firm - Shamrock Interstellar Materials (SIM) needs to hire a small team of troubleshooters for a courier mission. The mission is to carry sensitive company computer information and documents from Gateway to the SIM company office Portes D' Enfer on Inferno in the Nyotekundu system. The characters will have a meeting time at the REBCO SAR office.

At the REBCO office the characters will be met by REBCO mission coordinator Ding Rodriguez. Ding is approximately 37 years of age and is dressed in a fashionable mid-quality suit. He speaks English with a Spanish accent. He will greet the characters and tell them the basic parameters of the mission:

- Pay: Lv 50 per day per team member.
- Completion Bonus: Lv 1000 per team member.
- Other: Transportation to and from Inferno (return trip is in the form of a ticket voucher which the characters will be able to cash at the REBCO office on Inferno).
- Equipment: The characters will be issued Brandt Audionque hand sonic stunners for which they will be provided REBCO SAR corporate bond carry permits (the value on the return ticket is Lv 1000 for scramjet service from

Inferno to orbit and Lv 800 for business class accommodations from Inferno to Gateway.

If the characters wish to barter for higher pay it is a task:

TASK: To barter for higher pay. Eloquence, barter, renown.

Routine success: +lv50/day, Difficult success: +lv100/day, Formidable success: +lv100/day +lv750 completion bonus per character.

RULE MODIFICATION: Sonic Stunners: Stunners cause temporary stun damage points that cannot be upped to wound damage. Sonic restraint handguns do 1D8 stun damage at short range (5m), 1D6 at effective range (20m) and 1D4 at long range (40m). Sonic stunner carbines do 1D10 stun damage at short range (25m), 1D8 stun damage at effective range (100m) and 1D6 damage at long range (200m). Armor values are doubled against sonic stunners.

The characters will be told that if they accept the mission it starts in two days when they will meet Kelly O'Bern when he arrives at Gateway.

SCENE TWO: Meeting Kelly.

The characters will meet Ding Rodriguez at the Rebcos office and will be taken into a meeting room. In the meeting room will be Kelly O'Bern. O'Bern will identify himself as a senior partner in the mining firm Shamrock Interstellar Materials (SIM). O'Bern will explain that his company has a mining operation on Inferno that supplies metal ores to the French government operated refining facilities on Inferno. He tells the characters that he needs them to transport a briefcase containing computer data storage chips and some documents to Sean Murphy at the REBCO office at Portes D' Enfer on Inferno in the Nyotekundu system without anyone other than the characters having access to the data (other than normal customs inspections).

O'Bern is reluctant to give up any more information. The characters may try to get more information. This is a task:

TASK: To get O'Bern to give up more info: Routine. Eloquence, psychology, interviewing.

If successful O'Bern explains that Inferno is a highly competitive environment for Wildcat operations and that over that last year SIM operations on Inferno have been suffering from a serious downturn. O'Bern explains that it appears that one of his competitors, Inferno Materials, run by Claud-Dunham, has developed a source inside of SIM

that is providing him with data. O'Bern says that the only SIM employee that he explicitly trusts on Inferno is Sean Murphy. O'Bern says that he does not want to send sensitive company data through normal digital mail at this time because too many SIM employees would have access to it. O'Bern also reports that he does not want the suspected mole in SIM on Inferno to know that he is suspected and that sensitive data is coming through other channels. O'Bern also reports that four months ago, a SIM employee carrying sensitive company data was mugged on Gateway and the data was stolen.

At the end of the meeting the characters will be given a black polymer brief case and tickets for passage aboard the "Star of Novoa Kiyev", a small freighter scheduled to leave for Inferno in six hours.

SCENE THREE: Aboard the Novoa Kiyev.

The characters will travel to the docking bay containing the "Star" where they will be greeted by the ship's crew: Yuri Koberov, the vessel's captain, Tasha Koberov the steward/medic (and the attractive daughter of Yuri), and Albert Cook, the ship's engineer.

When the characters arrive they will be taken to the side by Yuri. Yuri is a large and burly man with pock-marked complexion and great bear-like hands. He, along with the rest of his crew, is wearing dark blue jumpsuits with the Ukrainian flag on the chest with a mourning bar across it. Yuri will be very gruff with the characters, telling them that he is not very comfortable with them carrying sonic weapons aboard his vessel. He tells them that the only reason he is allowing it is that REBCO is paying him extra to do so and that he is trying to get more REBCO business. He tells them that he and the crew will be watching them and warns them that he has weapons of his own on board.

As the characters are talking to Yuri they will see four other passengers arrive, all four are men in their late 20's to mid 30's, two are Asian and two are Caucasians, all in casual dress.

The characters will then board the vessel and will be assigned staterooms 33 and 34. (if there are more than two player characters the NPC passengers will double bunk if necessary).

After the characters board and settle in, they will be called to the passenger lounge and be given a safety briefing and meal schedule by Tasha. Albert Cook will also be present. The characters will have a chance to pick up some unusual glances between Cook and the two Caucasian passengers.

TASK: To pick up on non-verbal communication between Cook and the passengers. Difficult, psychology or unskilled.

Each of the characters staterooms is equipped with an Tri-Vid entertainment console. There is a well appointed passenger lounge area with a wall size tri-vid unit, a card table and a billiards table. Meals will be prepared by Tasha and served in the galley of this area.

Over the course of the journey the characters will meet the other passengers. They are detailed with the crew members in the section below. During the journey the characters, depending on the characters actions, they may observe meetings between Albert, Mike and Tony during night cycles when everyone else is asleep.

If they report what they have seen to the Captain, it is possible that he will arm them with heavier weapons than their sonic stunners, or that they will be alerted to the hijacking attempt by gunshots when Nicoli resists.

Yuri Koberov: Veteran Ship Crew NPC. Nationality: Ukraine.

Weapons: The ships locker contains 4 three DunArmCo CAG's, and six TM-57 auto pistols.

Personality: 7 hearts: Strong sense of loyalty to group, 2 Diamonds: Cost conscious and interested in making money.

Appearance: Yuri is a large and burly man with pock marked complexion and great bear like hands. 50 years of age.

Background: Born in the Ukraine to an extended merchant family. Served in the Ukrainian space navy. After getting out of the space Navy the family corporation invested in a space freighter at the same time a number of family members emigrated to Novoa Kiev on Aurora, where the family ran a general goods and outfitting business. Goods sold at this business were transported to Novoa Kiev by the family freighter. There has been no contact with the family members, to include Yuri's wife, on Novoa Kiev since the Kafer invasion. Yuri is currently purchasing weapons in the core and transporting them to Aurora for sale. From each shipment he keeps a number of weapons which he supplies to a ex-patriot Ukrainian group that is planning an expedition to the Kafer occupied Ukrainian colony on Aurora.

Nicoli Ubinov: Experience Ship Crew NPC. Nationality: Ukraine.

Weapons: see Yuri above.

Personality: 10 hearts: strong commitment to fairness, hates injustice, 9 clubs: loves a good fight.

Appearance: 5-9, 170 lbs, wiry and sullen. About 25 years of age.

Background: First officer of the ship, and Yuri's nephew. Both of his parents and his two brothers are on Novoa Kiev. Nicoli does not mix with the passengers.

Tasha Koberov: Experienced Ship Crew NPC. Nationality: Ukraine.

Weapons: see father above.

Personality: 7 hearts: Strong sense of loyalty to group, Queen of Clubs: Stubborn.

Appearance: Tall, thin and blonde. Attractive. Wears her hair up and is always in uniform aboard ship. 22 years of age.

Background: Tasha has essentially grown up on the ship. What time she has spent dirt side has been on Novoa Kiev. She is very concerned about the fate of her family members there, and her father's state of mind because of the Kafer invasion and the probable loss of his wife.

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Albert Cook: Experienced smuggler/pirate NPC. Nationality: Australia.

Weapons: has found out the security code to the ships weapons locker, and knows how to override the ships counter-hijacking program.

Appearance: Cook is a thin man with thin, un-kept dirty blonde hair. He does not clean up much and his uniform is usually spotted with some sort of liquid.

Personality: King of Diamonds: obsessed with money and will do anything if the price is right. King of Spades: He is a liar and a traitor.

Background: After a short term in the Australian Space Forces, from which he was discharged after being prosecuted for theft, Cook became a space hand on an Americo connected space freighter and was recruited by an Americo connected piracy-smuggling group. Since that time he has been a freelance space hand, when not serving on ships belonging to the smuggling group. When serving as a free-lance space hand (his is a skilled engineer), he learns about the vessel that he is serving on and sets it up to be taken down by the smuggling group. He has been working on the Star for six months after the previous engineer was seriously injured in a dock accident. He will spend much of his free time in the passenger lounge playing cards with the other men listed below. He frequently hits on Tasha when her father is not around, but she does not like or trust him.

Mike Rush: Veteran smuggler/pirate NPC (melee 3). Nationality: USA (L-5).

Weapons: Weapons will be provided to Rush by Cook when the time is right, see below.

Appearance: 6-4, 200 lbs with a crooked nose. Unattractive. Wears casual clothing. 33 years of age.

Personality: 7 Clubs: Sees violence as a means to solve problems. 7 Diamonds: Money is his first consideration. . Friendly unless it involves money or getting in the way of his ham handed advances on women.

Background: Rush grew up in a smuggler family from L-5 (not uncommon). He has been operating with his present smuggling group for 5 years. His cover is that he has been hired by a small prospecting concern on Inferno to repair mining machinery.

He will spend quite a bit of his time in the crew lounge with the other passengers playing and betting on cards and billiards. He will aggressively hit on Tahsa and is prone to violence with anyone that interferes with him. Rush knows what the PC's are carrying and will get his hands on it the first chance he gets.

Tony Vincetti: Green smuggler/pirate NPC. Nationality: Italy.

Weapons: Weapons will be provided to Rush by Cook when the time is right, see below.

Appearance: 5-7, 145 lbs with a dark complexion and dark eyes and short dark hair 26 years of age.

Personality: 7 Clubs: Sees violence as a means to solve problems. 7 Diamonds: Money is his first consideration. Quiet and mean.

Background: Vincetti also grew up in a smuggler family. He has been with his present group for 1 year and is basically under Rush's command. He is cruel when not opposed and will show this if given a chance. His cover story is that he has been hired by the same mining concern as Rush as a P-Suit repair mechanic and electrician.

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Ting Sonsong: Green colonist NPC. Nationality: Indochinese.

Appearance: 5-5, 140, sharp oriental features. Low quality clothing.

Personality: 2 hearts: amiable and cooperative. 5 Spades: seeking a position of responsibility.

Background: Grew up in Saigon. His brother owns a small oriental restaurant on Inferno and has paid for Ting and his brother So, to come to Inferno to make some money to support the family at home. Ting and So share a stateroom. They will lose what little money they have playing cards in the first three days.

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So Sonsong: 7 Hearts: high loyalty to his group (family), Jack of Diamonds: coward.

Appearance: 5-4, 130, sharp oriental features. Pointy ears. Low quality clothing.

Personality: 2 hearts: amiable and cooperative. 5 Spades: seeking a position of responsibility.

Background: Grew up in Saigon. His brother owns a small oriental restaurant on Inferno and has paid for So and his brother Ting, to come to Inferno to make some money to support the family at home. Ting and So share a stateroom. They will lose what little money they have playing cards in the first three days.

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SCENE FOUR: The attempt.

When the ship is in a night cycle two days out from the destination system, Cook will ambush and knock Yuri unconscious. He will then tie him up and gain access to the weapons locker. He will then let Mike and Tony into the crew compartment of the ship where they will also arm themselves. They will then take Tasha at gunpoint, which will require them slapping her around a little. They will then move to take the characters as prisoners.

Mike will arm himself with a shotgun as will Tony. Albert will be armed with a pistol. They will move to the passenger lounge with Tasha. Al will cover the door to the Ting and So's room while Tony and Mike cover the characters stateroom doors. They will then send Tasha to the doors of the characters cabins and she will tell them that she needs to speak to them and for them to come to the door. Her voice will be strained and the PC's have a chance of detecting that something is wrong. The GM will make this roll in secret:

TASK: To determine that something is wrong from a persons voice when that person is under stress. Routine. Unskilled, psychology, interview.

If the characters fight it out and loose, well, they loose.

If the characters give up without a fight they will be tied up and beaten up a little by Tony. They will then be untied and welded into a stateroom with food, water and a bucket for a toilet, after the briefcase has been removed.

If the characters loose or are captured the pirates will revive the four comrades that are in the low berths (this will take 8 hours). They will then meet with a carry ship on the outskirts of the system. The pirates will move the cargo to the carry ship and the pirates will leave with the carry ship as well after activating the Star's emergency beacon. If this happens the characters will be let out of their stateroom after a rescue crew arrives from the OMS Carnegie. The characters will be transported to Inferno where they will be debriefed by law enforcement, to include SAMN agents, and by REBCO. They will be paid only their daily rate and the return ticket.

If the characters have noted the strange behavior between AI and Mike and Tony, and have reported it to the crew they will be warned that something is going on when they hear gunshots as Nicoli resists being taken in his stateroom. He will be seriously wounded, and will retreat into his stateroom, where he will die if not helped, but he will kill AI. AI will have disabled the anti-hijacking program and all of the hatches in the ship will be unlocked. When they hear the gunshots Ting and So will come out of their staterooms, but as soon as So sees anyone with a gun that looks threatening he will retreat into his stateroom.

If the characters are successful in keeping the pirates from taking the ship the crew will be very grateful and the vodka will come out. Yuri will promise that they will have free passage on the "Star" anytime that they want. When this ship comes to port it will be met by SAMN agents who will interview the characters and take any captured pirates into custody. The characters will be paid Lv5000 in reward money for Mike, who is wanted under four different names.

THE PIRATES:

MIKE: Veteran smuggler/pirate NPC. HPA 8, Skills: 3/1, Stats 3/2, CUF 4

Weapons: DunArmCo CAG

Armor: None (hostile environment suit)

0 1 2 3 4

5 6 7 8 9

TONY: Green smuggler/pirate NPC. HPA 6, Skills: 1/-, Stats 3/2, CUF 2.

Weapons: DuArmCo CAG

Armor: None (hostile environment Suit)

0 1 2 3 4

5 6 7 8 9

AL: Experienced smuggler pirate NPC. HPA 6, Skills: 2/0, Stats 2/3, CUF 3

Weapons: TM-57 pistol

Armor: None (hostile environment suit)

0 1 2 3 4

5 6 7 8 9