

GHOSTS IN THE MACHINE

Thousands of years ago, as a now-forgotten war raged across the subsector, an insidious alien war machine called a “suppression pod” spun off-course and crashed into a moon’s ice-locked surface. Knocked offline by the impact and flash-frozen in seconds, the pod lay dormant for millennia. Reactivated by recent mining activity, the device resumed its original programming! JumpCorp sends a rapid-response team to nullify the threat by any means necessary.

If you’re using the *Eris Beta-V* setting, this mission is best located on Ponos. In a system or subsector of your own design, any isolated, frigid locale is a good fit.

PERIL AT STATION P-06

A few days ago, surface miners on a remote moon unearthed an extraordinarily old piece of alien tech, and tripped the colony’s distress beacon when it reactivated. Upon arrival at Mining Station P-06—a tiny colony of 12 miners—rescuers are unable to make radio contact with the station.

On the surface, they find local administrator Charl Oeuss—a leafy, orange-and-yellow Floran—and eight miners locked inside a large steel storage container (Toughness 12) just outside the base. The container is locked from inside. With success on a Persuasion roll or Test of Will, heroes convince the miners to open up.

Charl Oeuss: Use the Miner profile in the *Science Fiction Companion*, adding the Floran Racial Abilities. She also has Smarts d12, Knowledge (Linguistics) d12, and the Loyal Hindrance.

Miners (8): Use the Miner profile in the *Science Fiction Companion*, adding alien Racial Abilities as desired.

RECLAMATION PROJECT

Introductions all around. Administrator Oeuss recounts what happened:

“We dug something up—something big—deep in the platinum mine. It killed Jannries and DeMarco before they could get clear. We ran...and activated the safety lockdown. Now it’s trapped down there, in the mine’s lowest level. But it’s not dead. It’s doing something...reconfiguring the entire base. We’ve been hiding out here where it can’t reach us.”

The spooked and reluctant witnesses say little more. No one got a clear view of the threat, and none are willing to re-enter the base (although success on a Persuasion roll convinces 1d4 miners to join as allied Extras). The spacers may wish to evacuate the planet immediately; doing so takes time, as there are seven other mining stations scattered across its surface.

‘BOTS GONE WILD

When the heroes are ready, Oeuss points them toward the base entrance, about 20 yards away through blowing snow and ice. The base entrance is a reinforced door (Toughness 15) in a heavy bulkhead; success on a Lockpicking or Repair roll opens it.

Inside, the base is a hive of activity. Repair bots roll every which way, tearing down metal plates and ripping out wires. Sometimes they rebuild the objects they destroy into unfamiliar new configurations; other times they carry away full loads of steel plating and tangled wires. The bots take no notice of the heroes unless they attempt to interfere, in which case the bots suddenly turn hostile.

Repair Bots (1 per hero): See the *Science Fiction Companion*. These bots are loyal to the suppression pod (see below), but are restored by 1d6 hours’ work and success on a Repair roll. A raise on the Repair check halves the necessary time.

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A SAVAGE WORLDS ONE SHEET BY MATTHEW CUTTER WITH ART BY IGOR VITKOVSKIY



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WHAT LIVES BENEATH

Following the busy bots leads to the large, industrial lift that provides access to the lower levels, then into the dark, mazelike mines, and finally to the suppression pod. The alien construct was trapped in the ice when its probe crashed here. Now, it's clear to anyone who succeeds on a Repair or Smarts (-2) roll that the machine is building a craft around itself that can blast free of the ice and rock. With a raise, a techie's fairly certain the suppression pod will complete its work in roughly 12 hours—unless it's stopped!

Most of the mine's devices and raw materials have already been incorporated into the alien craft, but at the GM's discretion some piece of mining gear or explosives may remain. It doesn't bother with tech in a character's possession, but anything left unattended is fair game. If the team leaves a spacecraft near the mining station, the pod disables and begins to reconfigure it in 1d6 hours.

Contrary to the miners' reports, their colleagues Jannries and DeMarco weren't killed. The pod incapacitated and reprogrammed them to help kill interlopers. If it is threatened, the pod summons any remaining repair bots to defend it as well.

Jannries, DeMarco: Use the Zombie profile in the *Science Fiction Companion*. They're utterly subservient to the pod.

★ SUPPRESSION POD

The suppression pod is a biomechanical hybrid created by a now-extinct race. It's primary goal is to re-purpose the facility, its personnel, and its robots to serve the pod's long-extinct masters. Then it builds a small spacecraft to fly to the closest mining station to begin again. When all are suppressed, it flies to the next moon—and so on. The pod cannot be reasoned with.

The machine looks like a black and silver pylon nearly 15 feet tall, topped by a vaguely humanoid head with glowing blue sensors. Numerous pipes and conduits extend into the surrounding rock, reaching all the way into the base above, and sparks fly as it constructs its vehicle. It can't move, but it defends itself with long, black tendrils.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d8, Spirit d10, Strength d12+2, Vigor d12

Skills: Fighting d12, Notice d10, Repair d12+2

Pace: 0; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 15 (4)

Special Abilities

- **Armor +4:** The pod is well-armed.
- **Construct:** The machine adds +2 to attempts to recover from Shaken, suffers no additional damage for Called Shots, never suffers Wound modifiers, and is immune to disease and poison
- **Fearless:** The pod is unaffected by Fear or Intimidation
- **Regeneration (Slow):** The pod is constantly repaired by nanomachines. It rolls for Natural Healing once per day
- **Reprogram:** The machine can "reprogram" biological and mechanical targets with bioelectric shocks. When an enemy or robot is Incapacitated, the pod's tentacles must maintain contact for 1d6 rounds, after which the character or 'bot is under the pod's complete control. It's up to the GM whether a living character can be restored after this process is complete.
- **Size +3:** The machine is much bigger than a human.
- **Tentacles (4):** Str+d8, Reach 4. With a raise on a Fighting roll, the pod entangles the target and begins to constrict. The round it entangles and each round thereafter, the suppression pod causes Str+d6 damage to its prey. The prey may attempt to escape on his action by scoring a raise on an opposed Strength roll.

