

## **Scrivner's Star**

by John W. S. Marvin

## Background

This is an adventure for acolytes in their second to fourth ranks in their careers. It is a horror scenario, and is meant to be difficult. Players will almost certainly Burn Fate Points, but successful play may be rewarded with a fate point, if the GM deems the players have deserved it. The scenario should take about two gaming sessions to complete.

This adventure uses two heresies and some Imperial discord from Disciples of the Dark Gods.

The setting is Prol I, an Administratum run planetoid in conflict. The Administratum has run out of room in its data vaults on Prol I through IX. Prol X is proscribed. The Centurists wish to use Prol X, proscription be damned. The Pyrats seek to burn the old and unused records on Prol I, the setting for this adventure. Recently the Pyrats have secretly moved in people and are preparing for the "Great Burning." While the population is listed as 400 caretakers, the real population is ten times that. See The War of Words, Disciples of the Dark Gods, page 166 for more information.

Ateanism is a heresy spread by reading a book that teaches methods for finding the commonality between all works of art and beauty. The readers lose their minds, and possibly their lives, but often only after they have copied the book and passed it around to their friends. On Prol I, Philologia Moror, a Centurist, was caught with the book, and the Inquisition was called in. As if that weren't bad enough for Philologia, her unstable mind caught the attention of the Vile Savants, who made her Subject Zero for a zombie plague. For more on Ateanism, see Disciples of the Dark Gods, page 132.

While the acolytes will prepare themselves to arrest and look for clues dealing with an Ateanist, the real adventure will be dealing with a zombie plague brought on by the Vile Savants. The subject they are to arrest has already spread the disease by the time the acolytes arrive, and they themselves may well become infected. The acolytes may attempt to save the uninfected, or just save themselves. Either will be no easy task. For more on the Vile Savants, see Disciples of the Dark Gods, page 145.

Philologia Moror, an adept on Prol I, has been discovered by local Frag Frak, the local Arbitator with a copy of the banned Eris Transform. She has been detained and questioned, but so far has not revealed where she found the forbidden material, or what use she has made of it. Prol I has a small population, a few hundred at most, and an investigative team should have no problem ferreting out any accomplices.

The investigators are to go to Prol I, question Philologia, take testimony, arrest and question any conspirators, and return to Bastion Serpentis with the book and any other evidence. It is possible the book was discovered in the archives of Prol I.

There is a constant stream of data from security cameras which can be accessed by an acolyte's data pad. A Tech Use Test is required to find the security feed; any data pad provided by the inquisition will automatically pass the security check once the feed is found. Otherwise a Security Test is required. Local enforcers, the Arbitrator, and the Assistant Administrator can provide the key. The Administrator could, but won't without being Intimidated first.

There are security cameras on enforcer uniforms. When enforcers become zombies, sharp acolytes can track their movements by watching these feeds.

The number of acolytes is represented by the letter "N." So when the text reads "there are 2N zombies" that means there are twice as many zombies as there are acolytes.

## Mission Briefing

The acolyte's Inquisitor looks uncharacteristically happy. He or she smiles and asks them to sit. The setting can be wherever makes sense for your campaign. Your Inquisitor's office in the Bastion Serpentis on Scintilla's moon Lachesis would do fine.

"Welcome. Who among you can tell me anything about the heresy of Ateanism?"

Allow players to attempt Forbidden Lore (Cults or Daemonology) and refer to Table 4-6 on page 134 of Disciples of the Dark Gods. A player who makes it can show off by sharing their knowledge. Such players will find a little gift from their Inquisitor in their quarters aboard the Withered Claw, the starship that takes them to Prol I. Personalize it by your Inquisitor. It could be a book by the Inquisitor, a bottle of fine wine, a picture of the Inquisitor, a new data-slate that contains reference materials on topics your Inquisitor finds fascinating, and so on.

Should one or more players reveal something; the Inquisitor will nod, smiling.

Should no one have a clue, they will get a condescending smile. "Well, you are still new to the game. It's to be expected. Ateanism is a proscribed school of intellectualism that focuses on the nature of truth and beauty. It is based on an evil book, known as the Eris Transform, which warps minds and fosters heresy."

"It is our good fortune that the local authorities on Prol I, out in the Markayn Marches, have arrested a scribe with the book. I want you to bring back the scribe and the book. Interrogate the heretic, and find out who they shared the book with, where they found the book, and who knew about this and did not report the heresy.

"Prol I is a small planetoid run by the Administratum. Search the areas the heretic was known to frequent and record everything on your data-slates. The place is crammed full of old records, as are the other planetoids, and the adepts are going crazy trying to find more space for more data crypts. The ruling class is known as the Decatalogues, who delight in hiding information and then blaming each other when someone like us actually wants access and it can't be found.

"Any Questions?"

Q: Who is the Scribe? "Philologia Moror, a Decatalogue." The Inquisitor shares an image of a painfully thin albino woman with close cropped white hair and red eyes.

Q: Why not just ship her here? "There may be clues where she worked. She may have found a copy of the book in one of the data crypts. Or hidden more copies there."

Q: Do we need her alive? "Yes. Don't tell me you can't handle one scribe!"

Q: Any other recent heresies on Prol I? "No, but Prol IX, where most of the people live, is teeming with resentments and petty insurrections. Ateanism tends to be a heresy of the individual, not a cult."

Q: Can we have any special equipment? They get a pair of restraints, a metal lock box for the book, a data slate with the background and images of the heretic and maps of Prol I, and an Excruciator Kit. Should they not ask for equipment, they find all of this waiting for them on the starship the Withered Claw. Should they whine for more, they are sent away with a lecture about "wasting the Emperor's resources."

## Arrival

The Withered Claw arrives in system ahead of schedule. The investigators are greeted with a message from Prol I:

Oh! You are early!

Greetings honored members of the Inquisition. There is no need to visit Prol I, it is very desolate here. We can transfer the prisoner to Prol IX where we have more up to date facilities. Please change course for Prol IX.

Should the acolytes actually fall for this ruse to keep them away from Prol I, the authorities on Prol IX will attempt to set them straight. No one wants to host the inquisition if they can help it. "Don't listen to those jackals on Prol I. They must be hiding something."

This adventure assumes the acolytes go to Prol I. Should they insist on Prol IX, the GM can either wing it, or have the Withered Claw's captain follow the Inquisitors orders, not the idiot acolytes'. Should the plague occur on Prol IX, multiply all

casualties by 10,000,000. There are no nice rewards should the acolytes insist on bringing Subject Zero to Prol IX and survive to tell about it.

## Prol I

On the way in the Arvus Lander displays the onrushing world of Prol I. It is a cratered and airless world, mostly gray with some stains of faded bronze and rust in the ejecta of impact craters. A big orbital facility zooms by, helpfully identified as **Failing Light Orbital Facility (Decommissioned)** for those who can read.

Prol I has Low Gravity. Low Gravity rules can be found in the Dark Heresy Core Rulebook page 213. Inform the inquisitors of their new movement rates and let them know about the other effects of low gravity. Half the distance when calculating falling damage due to the low gravity.

## Prison Visit; Stage 1

They are offered VIP quarters, and can go visit the prisoner at any time.

Millicent Novia is **Subject Zero** for the plague, but shows little symptoms besides a bit of a scratchy throat, which she clears from time to time. Guards have already spread the disease to their families and friends, but it hasn't manifested itself yet. There is no reason for the players to do anything but follow up on the heresy of Ateanism.

Inquisitors hurry up and wait to speak with Philologia, and run into a few clues.

A beeping data slate left on a table while the guards are busy with a (false) alarm is encrypted with Adept Cypher. It has instructions for "keeping our visitors busy with Philologia, and away from cellblock 5." That is where the Centurists who have noticed the swelling population of Pyrats are held until "The Great Burning."

A guard walks through, excuses himself, and slips a message into the hands of an inquisitor "The New Administrator is hiding prisoners from you."

**Philologia**, an albino, is Subject Zero of the Vile Savants corruption. She knows nothing of this, but can be broken and waxes poetic about how wonderful truth and beauty really are.

"You must see the hidden beauty behind it all. I was soaring through skies of bliss. Nothing could remain hidden from me."

Given motivation she reveals the nasty parts. "Everything was become so clear, so beautiful. And then I could smell it. Like a dark musk, and the carvings on the walls all started to weep tears of blood. I thought I would go mad." She clears her throat a few times, as she's just gotten over a cold.

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If physically abused, she spits on her interrogators. She will bite anyone she can if she is tortured. Regardless, she will also sneeze on anyone who gets close. This gives a 5% to 50% chance of infection. See Disciples of the Dark Gods, page 146 for the chances of exposure.

## Prison Layout

The prison is full of 3m wide, 2.5 m high corridors, so a prisoner can be escorted between two guards. Cells are 2m x 3m. The visiting room where they will probably interrogate Philologia is 5m square with a restraint chair in the center of the back wall and tables and chairs for the "visitors."

## Prison Dramatis Personae

**Guards** use Enforcers from the Dark Heresy Core Rulebook.

Guard Rumors

- Old, mothballed, prison blocks have come on line as the prison has been overflowing.
- The Administrator has ordered the arrest of 222 of people out of a population of 400.
- The planet sure seems more crowded these days, despite the mass arrests.

**Centurist Prisoners** use Scribes from the Dark Heresy Core Rulebook.

Centurist Prisoner Rumors

- They were arrested for their Centurist political views by the foul Pyratiks
- Administrator Ignace Severus is the leader of the Pyratiks on Prol I.
- "Supply ships" full of "undocumented" personnel have been whisked away to habs that have been closed for centuries. No one knows how many, but the population is much larger than the 300 caretakers given.

**Criminal Prisoners** use Scum from the Dark Heresy Core Rulebook. They have no relevant information, save that the class of prisoner has really gone downhill recently. "Total gits."

## Administrator's Dinner, Cough, Cough; Stage 2

The Acolytes are all invited to dinner with the Administrator by flying skull servitor. At this point the contagion is starting to spread from the prison outward. The Administrator is infected, and some of the acolytes may be. Characters without Fate

Points to burn that become infected are doomed. Alas, the Administrator has no Fate Points.

Administrator Ignace Severus introduces his assistant Millicent Novia, the lone arbitrator Frag Frak, and the head medicae Doctor Morvin.

"I have talked to the heretic myself," says the Administrator about Philologia Moror. "Wild eyes and demented claims. I don't know why we weren't permitted to just execute her. You've taken a long journey to pick up one madwoman."

Servitors bring dishes and the main course is "fresh" grox steak. "We have our own little herd, quite by accident. We ordered steaks, and got a cattle ship," says Ignace.

### Small talk

All of the guests are Pyratcs, and avoid any mention of the "Great Burning to come" if they can. They try to steer the conversation back to Ateanism, asking questions about it.

- Millicent Novia wants to help the acolytes any way she can. "Do you have everything you need? We can have all of Philologia Moror's effect sent to you."
- Frag Frak has put "the stinking heretic book in a box." He can have it sent by servitor anytime.
- Doctor Morvin plays with his food, and stares into space. If questioned he says "Sorry. I was just thinking about skin rashes."
- Administrator Ignace Severus waxes and wanes between overtly hostile and obscenely groveling. He is so worried by the Inquisition that he can't stop himself. He is over his depth. "You about finished here? This dinner expensive enough for you? Ready to leave?" then "Oh god, please spare me. Kill the rest, but spare me!"

Should the acolytes force the conversation to Pyratc vs. Centurist, they will defend the Pyratc way. Prol X is a proscribed planetoid, and to move there would be folly. "No one has accessed the records here for centuries."

### Administrators Dining Hall Layout

A long room, 4m x 10m with a 2m x 6m table. Flying servitors use 4m deep shafts as dumbwaiters to bring food up from the kitchen. Doors lead out to corridors linking offices, living space, and machinery. Most corridors in the area are 2m wide, but the main ones are 4m.

## Sick Time

Ignace starts coughing. Have all acolytes who were exposed in the Prison make a Hard (-10) Toughness Test or they fall ill themselves. See the Fydae Strain Zombie Plague in *Disciples of the Dark Gods*, page 146, for further symptoms. Regrettably, the sickness spirals inevitably to death in one hour. Burning Fate Points is the only way to survive.

The doctor, Millicent, and Frag are not yet infected.

"Quick, to the Medicae Center," says Dr. Morwin.

Millicent grabs a vox and calls ahead to the Medicae Center. If none of the acolytes are infected, she says to them. "If you don't mind following me to the medicae center, I can see you to your quarters once I get the Administrator checked in."

Ignace breaks out in a sweat as green marks blossom on his flesh. In ten minutes his skin spots start to fall off leaving raw ulcers beneath and he begins to vomit foul blood.

Through the rest of the adventure, acolytes need to roll on this special table for **Burning a Fate Point** to Avoid Death from the disease. They live, yet a piece of their body dissolves into green goo before they recover. Recovering gives the acolyte a +30 to resist an future infections of the plague.

d 10Roll	Dissolved Body Part ( <i>Dark Heresy Core Rulebook</i> , page 201)
1	Left Hand: -20 to all Skill and Characteristic Tests that rely on using two hands. A two handed weapon may not be used. If the primary hand is lost, take a -20 on Weapon Skill.
2	Right Hand: -20 to all Skill and Characteristic Tests that rely on using two hands. A two handed weapon may not be used. If the primary hand is lost, take a -20 on Weapon Skill.
3	Left Arm: As a lost hand, but you can't strap a shield onto the non-existent arm.
4	Right Arm: As a lost hand, but you can't strap a shield onto the non-existent arm
5	Left Eye: -10 to Ballistic Skill. -20 on all Skill and Characteristic Tests that rely on sight.
6	Right Eye: -10 to Ballistic Skill. -20 on all Skill and Characteristic Tests that rely on sight.
7	Left Foot: Reduce all movement by half (round up). -20 on Skill and Characteristic Tests that rely on mobility, such as Dodge.
8	Right Foot: Reduce all movement by half (round up). -20 on Skill and Characteristic Tests that rely on mobility, such as Dodge.
9	Left Leg: As a lost foot, but you cannot use the Dodge skill.
10	Right Leg: As a lost foot, but you cannot use the Dodge skill.

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See the conclusion for how acolytes can get replacements for their missing body parts.

Sickness breaks out all over Prol I. Fever, green marks, vomiting foul blood are everywhere. The Medicae Center is swamped. Dr. Morvin rushes about, clearly having the time of his life.

"Come on in, there's room on the floor over there," says the good Doctor.

Servitors come in and report casualty numbers in the thousands. Habs that aren't supposed to be manned are reporting massive numbers of deaths. Unfortunately, the Pyraties did not bring in new medicae personnel with their "Cleansing Teams." The prison area is highly infected.

As servitors become infected, they fall down, their organic parts rotted out.

### And the Dead Shall Rise; Stage 3

In this stage the dead rise as Fydae Strain Plague Zombies. They are as described in Disciples of the Dark Gods, page 149, with one exception. In the Low Gravity of Prol I, their movement is 3/6/9/-.

Administrator Ignace dies in the Medicae center. A medicae-tech looks up at Dr. Morvin "He's dead. And I don't feel so good myself."

"I'm in charge of this planetoid now," says Frag Frak, who pulls out his combat shotgun.

"I don't think so," says Millicent Novia. "I am now acting Administrator. Stand down or I'll have you arrested." Millicent gets on the security vox and orders a "Class 12 Quarantine."

"Back off, Scribe!" Frag takes his shotgun and jams it up under Millicent's chin.

The acolytes can intervene any time. Both Millicent and Frag will back down from a confrontation with them. If the acolytes do nothing, two Enforcers rush in, look at each other, and say "What do we do?"

Should the acolytes stay out of it, the enforcers make a choice. Roll a d10. 1 - 5, they choose Frag. 6 - 10, they choose Millicent. Either will back down if the Enforcers turn against them.

### Frag Time

About 4,000 civilians will die with Frag in command, and only a few scattered survivors will be left to tell the story.

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If Frag is in charge, he will get all the Enforcers to protect him and make a beeline to the spaceport. If the acolytes join him, he lives and tells his tale of shame, implicating them. If he goes off by himself with the Enforcers, they all die and come back as Zombies. Millicent may end up with Father Prion, tag along with the acolytes, or just find an early death at the GM's discretion.

### Millicent On Deck

With Millicent in charge, 2,000 will still die, but the Pyraties will use their blast charges they had been stockpiling for the "Great Burning" to dispose of the dead, the Zombies and the sick. Should the acolytes take a hand in organizing and protecting the civilians, the death toll can be kept down to only 1,000.

See the Spaceport section for ideas on getting the uninfected off world.

### Acolytes Seize Planetoid

If the acolytes take charge of the planetoid themselves, Millicent will offer to assist them with the same effect as if they were assisting her.

If Frag is not in charge, he will flee only to turn up again later as a zombie.

Panicked reports stream in from the morgue, the prison, and the secret habs. "I'm releasing the prisoners," says a prison guard, the same one who passed the investigators the note. Philologia walks, and can be seen for the rest of the adventure walking past security cameras in a frightened daze.

### Fear of Zombies

In Stage 3, the GM can hold off on Fear roles until the zombies show their true colors. The zombies appear to be gaunt, dead-eyed plague victims in soiled and blood spattered clothing. When they keep coming after getting shot, hacked, and having limbs blown off, then call for a Fear test. After the first encounter, the acolytes get accustomed to their new friends, so give everyone a +10% on Fear and Recovery tests vs. the zombies.

However, since they know what the zombies can do, they should make the fear test as soon as they see the zombies for the second time. After the second contact, award a +20%, and after the third, a +30%. The bonus never moves over +30%.

### Medicae Center 86

The center has N-1 containment suits. Dr. Morvin is there, and takes care of patients in a distracted way, marveling over the "Amazing abilities of this virus. Very impressive."

**Containment Suit:** Light green suit with helmet. Blocks pathogens, has its own air supply. Armor 2 (All). However, it balloons out in a vacuum, halving movement rates

and giving a -20% to Ballistic Skills and Agility based tests. The containments suits are split between the two Storage Lockers.

If the investigators are not in the medicae center when the dead start rising, they are called there by the Doctor Morvin. "We need assistance."

The Lift from the morgue opens up in the Medicae Center, spilling zombies everywhere. (See Disciples of the Dark Gods, page 149: Roll Fear when they keep coming after having limbs shot off, etc.)

Should the investigators go to find Philologia, they find zombies instead. They notice packs of zombies lurching their way to the medicae center.

Zombies attack the players no matter where they have gone. N + 2, in the first wave, then again with N + 4 after a short break, followed by a 20 minute break where the acolytes and/or Millicent can rally the survivors over the vox. Then N + 6, with 1d5 new zombies entering every round. It's time to flee.

## The Great Burning

If the acolytes are allied with Millicent, she can tell them about a nearby cache of Fire Bombs waiting for "The Great Burning." Otherwise, if they have broken into the security system they can find them with a Tech Use Test if they are looking for weapons to use against the zombies.

The bombs are 5 minutes away, with one run in with 1d5 zombies. There are 100 Fire Bombs there, and with the low gravity, the weight is not the issue, bulk is. Each acolyte can carry 10 Fire Bombs with no worries.

**Fire Bomb:** Thrown (Grenade). Range SBx6 (half that in normal gravity), 1d10+3 Energy damage, Penetration: 6, Blast (3).

## Shrine of St. Balthazar

The com links call for help all over, and images flood in of the zombie attacks and people running in fear, some obviously wounded and infected. The only nearby area where the people are rallying is the Shrine of St. Balthazar.

**Father Prion** can be seen on monitors and datapads taking security feeds. The fringe of hair around his bald pate flies wildly as he hacks at zombies while calling down for the retribution of the emperor. He is wielding the Holy Axe of St. Balthazar, a Mono Sanctified weapon. He is surrounded by armed civilians, a nun, and an enforcer. They are protecting unarmed civilians, including three children. Down a corridor, behind a group of zombies stands a wild eyed Philologia who shrieks and runs away.

**Holy Axe of St. Balthazar:** Melee, 1d10+1+SB, Rending, Penetration: 2, 4kg, Special: Unbalanced, Mono, and Sanctified (does Holy damage).

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Sister Eubeena is using an emergency vox, calling for aid on the security channel.

The clerics and their charges are being forced out of the shrine and into the corridors by zombies coming up from the shrine's lower levels.

If the acolytes tell Sister Eubeena to make for the medicae center her group runs into a wall of zombies trying to get in. "Get out of there, there are hundreds coming for you!"

If the acolytes make it to the civilian's position, they must fight their way through 2N zombies. More zombies keep coming, but are more interested in breaking into the shrine and medicae center than chasing fleeing acolytes.

If asked, Father Prion will give up his holy axe to a member of the inquisition after he sees some ID on a datapad. If he is not asked for it, he will die in the next encounter, and his axe will slide across the floor under some zombie's feet. The zombies stumble to avoid touching it.

## Flight to the Spaceport, or Meet the Vile Savant, Stage 4

We reach Stage four of the contagion, as described in Disciples of the Dark Gods, page 149. The zombies decay horrifically, and a Vile Savant comes in to watch the world end. That's what they do.

If the acolytes don't get the idea to hit the spaceport themselves, have reports come in of other groups of survivors lifting off world.

## Fear, Again

The zombies quickly decay into horrific rotting husks of putrescent flesh, and the Fear bonuses caused by familiarity vanish until the acolytes become used to the new look. Once again the acolytes gain a +10% to Fear and Recovery tests after each horrific zombie encounter until they reach +30%.

The acolytes never become used to the Vile Savant, and so never get any bonuses for Fear Tests against it.

## Media Savy

The acolytes get to see something interesting on their data-slates, or if they haven't hooked up to the security cams, they notice it on a screen as they pass an empty guard station. There is only visual, no sound.

A frightened woman, stumbles across the field of view moving from left to right. Perception +30% to recognize her as Philologia Moror. She runs right into a man being chased by five zombies, and while they untangle themselves, the zombies reach the man and begin biting. She says something to him, and looks behind and silently screams. A successful Lip-reading Test (+0) reveals she told him "Sorry."

All the zombies stop feasting, and go down on one knee, bowing to someone or something off screen on the left. Philologia sprints off camera. The colors bleed out of the image as things are go to shades of gray. The paint on the walls starts to blister and pop. The metal underneath rusts. The face of the man who fell to the zombies blossoms with green spots that fall away leaving holes in his face. The flesh of all the zombie shrivels, falls away in patches as a few months of decomposition occurs in moments.

A figure clad in a containment suit slick with filth and beads of moisture walks in from the left. The face is obscured by a black faceplate. The figure motions to the kneeling zombies, who now include the man Philologia ran into, and they stand as one. The image dissolves into static, and the feed cannot be recovered. The presence of the vile savant has rusted out the security system's inner workings.

Viewing this calls for a non-combat Disturbing Fear (1) test. Anyone who fails has a -10% on any Skill or Test that requires concentration on their part for the next five minutes. If the Fear Test is failed by 30 or more, the character also gains +1d5 Insanity Points.

## Over Hill

Prol I has no atmosphere, so the acolytes are going to have to find void suits if they want to avoid the zombie filled corridors and travel on the surface. What is nice is that they can be found in marked lockers adjacent to the airlocks leading to the surface. What is less nice is that many were already taken in the early bits of stage 2, by people who wanted to isolate themselves from the virus. And what is interesting is that some put on their suits too late, and now there are zombies inside the suits.

A Search Test (+30) of a locker will find a void suit, with an additional suit for every degree of success. The group can make only one test at each airlock. The way to the next suit locker is blocked by 1d5N zombies.

At the first airlock the acolytes head to, they find a void suited figure thrashing about. It is a zombie who is trying to break open the faceplate and tear off the gloves so it can join in the fun. Shooting the figure will only help. Any arm or head hit will expose a hand or face and then the zombie is in business. If Frag has fled, this is Frag.

If the acolytes are shepparding civilians, there are not enough void suits (containment suits from the medicae will do in a pinch, see their description in the medicae center above). A better plan would be for the civilians to hold up and let the players get a ship to ferry them away.

## Welcoming Committee

When the outer door opens onto the vacuum, the acolytes are greeted by N+1d5 zombies, who hang out there picking off people who come out in ones and twos. Half of the zombies wear ripped up void suits.

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In the distance they can see a three suited people moving slow because they are in medicae containment suits. These people are pursued by N zombies without suits. Both groups are hopping to move fast over the airless surface. A suited figure falls, and the zombies converge, the other two hopping on toward the spaceport.

The group of zombies are 100m away when they stop to feed. Every time one of them still feeding is hit by ranged fire, 1d5 of them break off to hop toward the party.

A 2km long, 100m deep fissure crosses the path of the acolytes. It is 6m wide at the narrowest. Remember to use Low Gravity rules for jumping and falling.

## Under Dale

A warren of tunnels reaches toward the spaceport. The acolytes can fight their way through 1d5+N zombies to the tram. It is a short ride to the spaceport station, but a messy stop, as the tunnel is full of over 100 zombies. A maintenance catwalk lies 5m above. Remember to use Low Gravity Rules for Jumping.

5N zombies lurch toward the party one round after the subway has stopped and opened its doors. In five rounds the subway will turn around and go back toward the Medicae Center.

Up on the catwalk they must fight a single zombie. If Frag has fled, it is him.

From the catwalk the acolytes can make their way to the main entrance of the spaceport's hanger. Outside, there is an airlock to the spaceport. A lone zombie is found in their way in either case.

## Spaceport Surprise – It's Grox!

No matter what entrance they choose, the acolytes see a door marked Storage as they enter. Other storage bins are dotted across the hanger deck.

**About the Grox** Trying to feed a few thousand Pyraties who aren't supposed to be on the planetoid took some deceptive procurement orders, not all of which worked as planned. An intended order for grox steaks was interpreted as an order for a grox herd. The cattleship (a modified Cargo Carrier) is still docked in the spaceport, and the crew and the grox became infected before anyone thought to seal off the ship. Now zombie grox roam the spaceport area, looking for uninfected people to bite.

**Zombie Grox:** WS: 25, BS: 0, S:62, T:65 (12), Ag:10, Int: 06, Per: 15, WP 20, Fel 01. Move: 3/6/9/- **Wounds:** 22.

**Skills** None. **Traits:** Bestial, Dark Sight, Diseased (Fydae Strain), Fear 2, From Beyond, Size (Hulking), Natural Armor 2 (Legs), Natural Armor 4 (Body, Head), Natural Weapon (Clawed Hooves), Quadruped, Unhallowed\*, Unnatural Toughness (2x), Walking Dead\*

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\*See Disciples of the Dark Gods, Fyrdae Strain Plague Zombies for these traits.

**Armor:** Natural (Head 4, Body 4, Legs 2). **Weapon:** Clawed hooves (1d10+6 I)

The **spaceport hanger** is a big bubble dome, and after ships land outside, they are towed into the hanger. To leave Prol I, the acolytes have to get to a ship, power it up, move or tow it to one of the massive, ship sized, airlocks, cycle the 'lock, and fly away.

Explosives, such as firebombs, could open the airlock doors or the top of the dome and allow the players to fly away. Explosive decompression will create a fine mess of things.

If none of the acolytes has the Pilot(Spacecraft, Civilian, or Military) skill, Millicent Novia has Pilot(Spacecraft). Should she not be present, a group of void suited survivors is holed up in the lady's bathroom on the far side of the hanger that the players enter. This group includes two trained pilots. A group of 2N zombies is busy banging on the door.

Other uninfected have come here to flee, and where the uninfected go, the zombies follow. The hanger has 30N zombies and a 3N zombie grox. A safer way to navigate the hanger is by the 1m wide catwalks that crisscross the dome's inner surface.

The zombie's slower movement means that acolytes could try to dash about the hanger, but the zombies will close in from all sides.

The catwalk has its own issues. 1d5 zombies will block the acolyte's way as they try to get over the spacecraft. Once over, they have to get down. The catwalks are 30m over the Cargo Handlers and 40m over the smaller Aquila Lander.

## Spaceport Gear

Cables can be found to rappel down in storage lockers around the spaceport. A Tech Use Test + 20 on a data-slate tied into the spaceport's network could locate cable and other useful items that the players might think of. A Search Test in storage lockers turns up all sorts of odds and ends.

Storage bin contents:

- 50% chance of 400m of cable and a power winch
- 70% 1d10 void suits
- 50% 1d5 Selenite Void Suit with Impellor Units. For more information see The Inquisitor's Handbook p. 165. The Impellor Units allow them to fly over the zombie's heads.
- 90% 1d5 Emergency Kits. For more information see The Inquisitor's Handbook p. 164.

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- 30% Weapons locker

A Weapons Locker contains

- 30% 1d5 Stingrays: Basic(Flamer), range: 5m, RoF: S/-/-, Dam: 1d10+3 E, Pen: 2, Clip: 4, Rld: Full, Special: Flame. For more information see The Inquisitor's Handbook p. 161
- 30% 1d10 Shotgun Pistols: Pistol(SP), range: 10m, RoF: S/-/-, Dam: 1d10+4 I, Pen: 0, Clip 1, Rld: Full, Special: Reliable, Scatter. For more information see The Inquisitor's Handbook p. 161
- 90% 2d10 Boarding Pikes: Melee(Primitive), Dam: 1d10+3 X, Pen: 2, Special: Primitive, Two Hander. For more information see The Inquisitor's Handbook p. 163
- 90% 1d10 Navel Shields: Melee(Primitive), Dam: 1d5+2 I, Pen: 0, Special: Defensive, Primitive. For more information see The Inquisitor's Handbook p. 162
- 30% 1d5 Officer's Cutlasses. Melee(Shock), Damage 1d10 R, Pen: 0, Special: Shocking. For more information see The Inquisitor's Handbook p. 162.

## Spacecraft

**Cargo Handlers** The hanger contains five Cargo Handlers, big and ugly bricks of metal capable of carrying hundreds into orbit around Prol I. One contains N Zombie Grox and amid the stalls in its hold. Roll d10, on a 9 or a 10 they have found the cattle-ship. The cargo handlers could be used to evacuate survivors to orbit where they could be quarantined in the mothballed orbiting facility **Failing Light**.

Of course, those infected would have to be destroyed. Throwing them out the airlock would not be enough.

Each Cargo Handler contains 2d10 zombies and 1d5 hiding survivors. Each survivor has a 50% chance to be infected.

Cargo Handlers can be flown with Pilot(Spacecraft) or Pilot(Civilian Craft).

**Aquila Lander:** One lander sits waiting for Administrator Ignace Severus. Should Frak still be at large, Frak the Zombie will be waiting in the Aquila Lander. The insides are plush and full of creature comforts.

The Aquila Lander can be flown with Pilot(Spacecraft) or Pilot(Military Craft).

The hulls of the spacecraft are impervious to zombie attack.

**Tow Tractor:** Drive(Ground Vehicle) can be used to tow one of the spacecraft to an enormous airlock. The tractor moves no faster than a charging zombie, but they get caught up in the treads if the driver makes a Drive(Ground Vehicle) + 30. Otherwise they take two minutes to break into the cabin then attack the driver. The GM should time it so they break in just as the spacecraft is towed into takeoff position.

**Philologia Moror** runs screaming across the hanger just as the acolytes make it to a spacecraft. If called, she will come to them. A spare airlock is a good place for her to stay without infecting the ship.

## Vile Savant

The Vile Savant pays the character's a visit as they enter the spacecraft of their choice. A zombie the acolytes haven't dealt with yet opens a hatch and the Vile Savant steps in. If they are at the controls of the Aquila or on the bridge of a Cargo Handler, a red light winks on saying auxiliary airlock 2 cycling. The hatches should be closed before entering a vacuum.

The Vile Savant endeavors to meet the acolytes up close and personal, as it has little power at long range. Any remaining zombies on board the craft are under its control, and will attack to distract the players by coming up the hatches while the savant positions himself for a dramatic entrance.

The acolytes should feel its **Daemonic Presence** before they meet the thing. Dr. Morvin, if he is there, shouts "I know what to do, and rushes it with a medicae kit. He dies.

Should the Vile Savant be defeated, its suit will rip apart and it will be replaced by a **Plague Swarm**. The swarm will billow out of the suit, and give the acolytes one round to prepare. Since the Vile Savant is no longer on the scene, those who failed Fear Tests to it should revive, but only to join with everyone else in attempting a Fear 2 (Frightening Check) for the Plague Swarm.

Those who pass a **Perception Test (+10)** will notice three **Gas Torches** on a nearby rack. A half round Move Action to get to the rack, a Half Action to ready the Torch.

**Gas Torch** Flame(Basic), Range 5m, RoF S/-/-, Dam: 1d10+1 E, Pen: 2, Clip: 5, Special: Flame. These torches are fueled from big backpacks. If the user is wounded from behind, there is a 50% of an explosion in a 4m blast, causing 2d10 E Damage. The wearer takes double rolled Damage and catches fire. For more information, see The Inquisitor's Handbook page 111.

Descriptions of the Vile Savant and the Plague Swarm can be found in Disciples of the Dark Gods, pages 150, 151. In the Light Gravity, the Vile Savant has Move: 5/10/15/20. The Plague Swarm has a Move: 6/12/18/36.

## Conclusion

Once they have a spacecraft, they can pick up survivors or just high tail it to orbit.

Once the plague is over, there is a possibility of using inquisitional authority to demand cybernetic replacements for lost body parts. However, this is not possible during the outbreak, but the grateful Centurists or cowed Pyratrics might be willing to cover the expenses, especially if the investigators do a good job of containing the outbreak.

## Philologia Moror

If the acolytes capture her, she continues to produce the contagion. She would have to be kept in strict quarantine or the madness would start again. Capturing her for study by the Ordos would yield a handsome bonus: Any of the rare or scarce weapons in use by the Holy Ordos, see the Inquisitor's Handbook, pages 187–188. One for each acolyte. Philologia found the book in data vault 777–509. The copy Frag found was a copy she made, the original is back in the vault.

## Rewards

Particularly impressive accomplishments may be rewarded with bionics and implants of good quality. Lackluster performance may result in poor quality equipment. Good role playing and use of Fellowship skills can help at the GM's discretion .

Organizing an evacuation to Failing Light or otherwise seeing to survival of thousands who would otherwise perish may well grant a Fate Point, at the GM's discretion, as well as good quality bionic replacements for lost body parts.

This adventure is designed to be completed in two sessions, but there is room for creative GMs to expand play as long as players are having fun. Each session should be worth about 200 xp per player. The final session can be worth as much as 300 xp if the acolytes perform well.

## Failing Light

Failing Light is a mothballed orbital Facility around Prol I that could be used to quarantine survivors.

## Prol X

If the acolytes fly to Prol X, they find the planetoid covered in craters. The craters are all 5 km wide, and are all spaced 6 km from center to center in a regular pattern that tightens up then drops craters as the pattern nears the poles. This is consistent with Exterminatus by orbital bombardment.

If they land or cruise at low altitudes, for every hour they spend under 500 m. above the cratered surface, they must make a Toughness Test or gain 1d5 Insanity Points and 1d5 Corruption Points. They also find themselves dreaming of the planetoid, drawn to return there. When they wake up in terror, they find they have been sleep walking. This ends after a few weeks, or continues, at the GM's option.

What further evils await below is left as an exercise for the GM. Perhaps there was once a terrible bio-war accident there, and the Vile Savants are trying to force the Administratum away from Prol I and onto Prol X.

## Cast of Characters

**Ignace Severus:** Administrator, pompous, and so scared of the Acolytes he panics and becomes aggressive and blustering. When he realizes who he is talking to, he apologizes, and then does it again. He is the leader of the Pyraties who are preparing for the "Great Burning."

Use the Scribe stats from Dark Heresy Core Rulebook, page 343 for Ignace Severus, with the addition of Skills Secret Tongue (Administratum), Common Lore (Administratum) + 20 and Blather + 20, Carouse +20, and the Talent Decadence.

**Frag Frak:** Arbitrator - Lazy, corrupt. Bribed to hide the Pyratie plan from the acolytes, but willing to sell them out for more Thrones. He should die a messy death after the players get a chance to know and love him.

Use the Arbitrator stats from Dark Heresy Core Rulebook, page 336 for Frag Frak.

**Millicent Novia:** Assistant Administrator - Dynamic, resourceful. A slight and mousy woman with short gray hair, she takes charge and helps the acolytes any way she can, while protecting as many civilians as she can. She peppers her speech with sexual innuendos. "By the Emperor! That zombie is old Titus. He was hung like a grox, what a waste...."

Use the Scribe stats from Dark Heresy Core Rulebook, page 343 for Millicent Novia, with the addition of Skills Common Lore (All) + 20, Pilot (Spacecraft), Secret Tongue (Administratum), Scholastic Lore (All), and Command.

**Dr. Morvin:** Senior Medicae - Fascinated, foolhardy (and doomed). Thin with a really big bald head and curly white hair. "We need to get some blood samples from these creatures. Assuming they have any blood...."

Use the Scribe stats from Dark Heresy Core Rulebook, page 343 for Dr. Morvin with the addition of the Skill Medicae +20 and the Talent Talented (Medicae).

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**Father Prion** of the Shrine of St. Balthazar. A robust middle aged man with a fringe of wild black hair surrounding a bald pate. He is dressed in clerical garments and when first met carries the Holy Axe of St. Balthazar.

Use the Ministorum Preacher stats from Dark Heresy Core Rulebook, page 342 for Father Prion.

**Philologia Moror** would be a plain woman if she wasn't an albino. Her white skin and red eyes set her apart. Void born, she is tall and gaunt. She has read the Eris Transform and can quote at length from it. She knows nothing of the Vile Savants, but she will. She is Subject Zero. As such, if she could be captured alive, and in bio containment, she would be of great interest to the inquisition.

Use the Scribe stats from Dark Heresy Core Rulebook, page 343 for Philologia Moror, with the addition of 25 Insanity Points and the Mental Disorder Fear of the Dead. Oh dear.

## Optional Rules

Fear, especially in the last fight against the Vile Savant and Plague Swarm, may incapacitate the entire party. For some GMs, this is just part of the fun. Others ignore the Fear rules entirely. Here are some optional rules that keep the Fear Tests, but allow players a greater chance to stay in the game.

### Fear and the Imperial Creed

**Prayers before Battle.** If an acolyte skilled in Common Lore (Imperial Creed) takes a full action and succeeds in Orate or Singer, this gives everyone in earshot a +10% on Fear tests for the next encounter. The encounter must be within the next hour.

Other group members can assist with Common Lore (Imperial Creed) rolls.

**Prayers in Battle.** Once per encounter, acolytes may attempt to pray in battle as a free action by making a Common Lore (Imperial Creed) roll. If they have already failed a fear test, they must make a Willpower check first to being praying reflexively. This gives all acolytes within earshot an immediate extra recovery roll even regardless if their fear effect allows recovery or not.

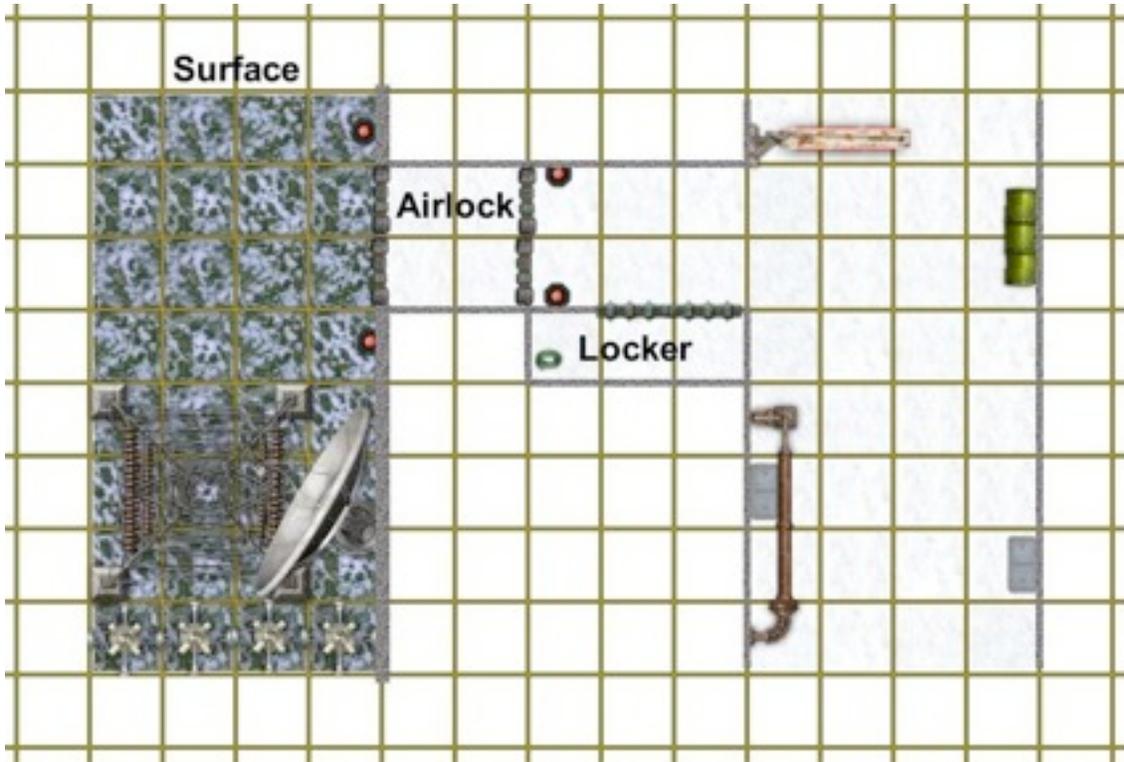
They may continue to pray out loud each round for the same benefit as long as they make their Common Lore (Imperial Creed). They gain a + 5 cumulative bonus to this roll as they become filled with the spirit of the Emperor.

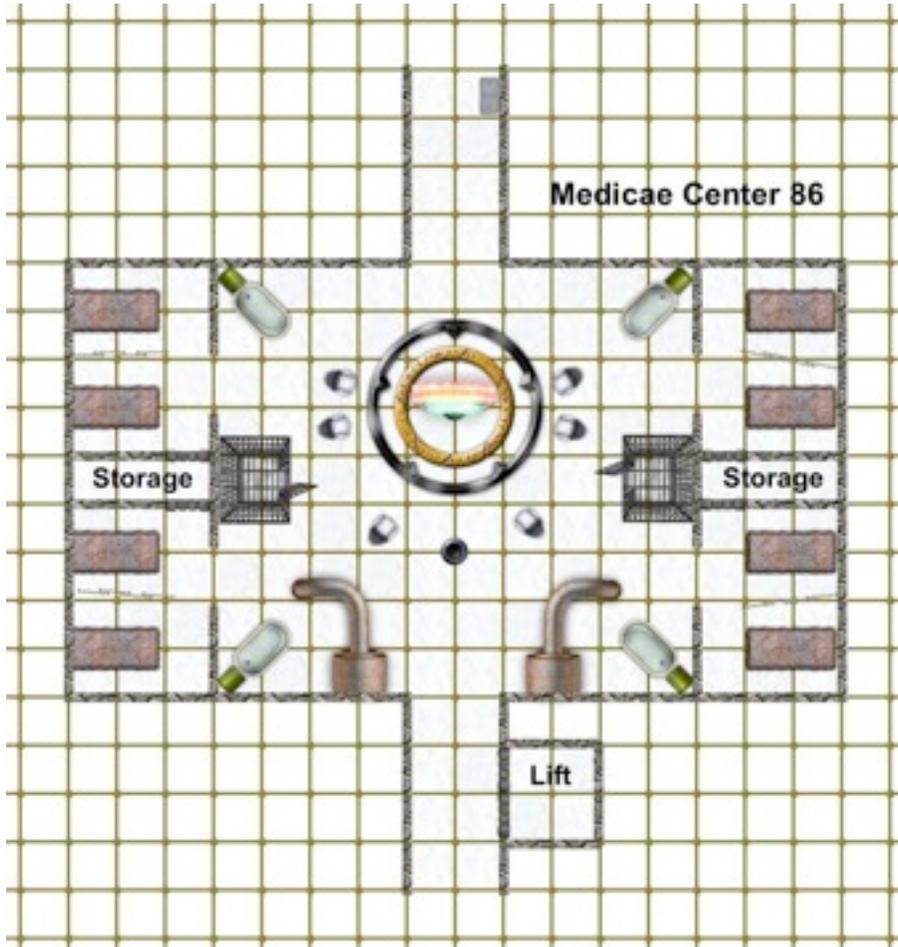
Other group members can assist with Common Lore (Imperial Creed) rolls.

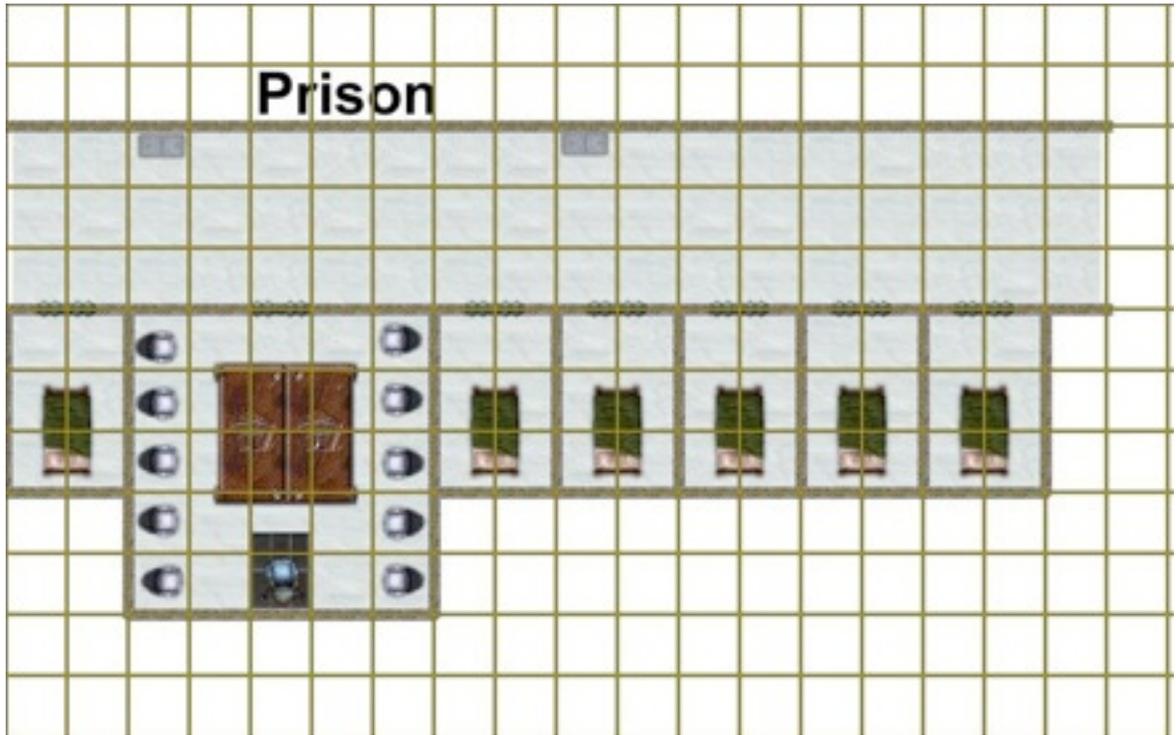
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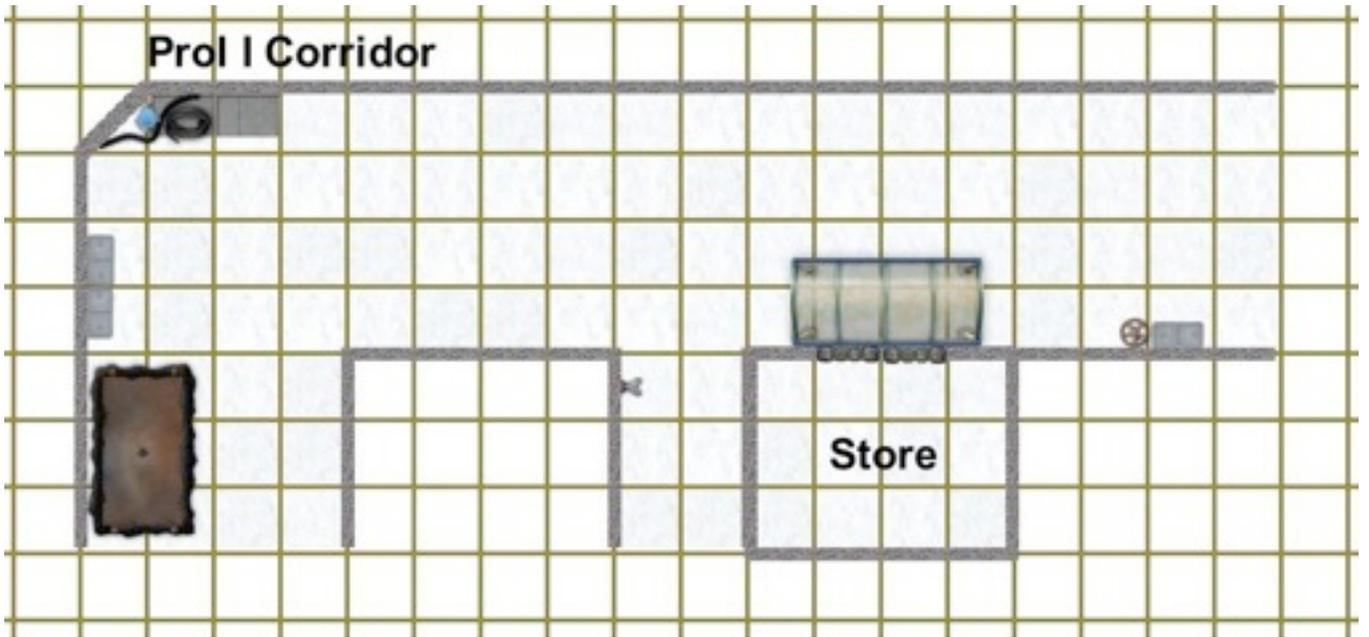
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# Spacecraft Interior

Vile Savant

Bridge with hatches to below

