NEXEARTH SETTING PREVIEW

NexEarth is an upcoming setting for the Exodus System RPG. It details the adventures, trials and triumphs of the descendents of the survivors of a crashed colony ship. The Exodus System SRD is available from Thunderegg Productions at DrivethruRPG.com.

The Long Journey

NexEarth is a paradisaic world far from Terra. By the mid 24th century mankind had exhaused the resources of their homeworld and polluted the planet to the point that a biosphere was no longer viable.

Many scientists, engineers and leaders made a valiant struggle to save the Earth, but their efforts came too late. Humanity's last hope came in the form of the Venture, an enormous colony ship designed to carry several million of the the most skilled and capable people in human society to a new world for a fresh start.

The Venture carried more than people. Its Ark section stored genetic profiles of virtually all known species of plants and animals, including some of those that were preserved in the fossil record. Several bays of nano fabrication plants were programmed to create the basic necessities for a new, eco-friendly infrastructure once the ship arrived. The plan was to nad the vessel in sections, each one becoming a sealed city, while the miraculous terraforming defices went to work.

While this equipment was not up to the task to save the too-far-gone Earth, it could set up a virgin planet with a new start for humanity. That was the plan, at least. Halfway through the journey the Venture passed through a radiation cloud that through off its navigational and sensor instruments. For another 50 years the ship drifted aimlessly before getting pulled into the gravity well of an uncharted world.

Plantetfall

The pre-fab city modules failed to detach from their moorings, so the passengers had to make desperate scrambles for the escape pods. THe Venture broke up into several sections as it crashed down.

The original Venture development team prepared for this outcome and made sure to stock the escape pods with food and material. The survivors found their closes neighbors and eventually settled into many different city states, using the limited technology that they had on hand combined with their own scientific knowledge.

During the journey the survivors of Earth experienced a cultural shift. Most of them blamed modern societies for the excesses that led to their eventual exodus. While they traveled the stars the people became interested in adopting the ways of older cultures.

This shift continued as new societies set themselves up on the planet. Folks began to assimilate and blend so that the new states resembled hodge podges of ancient human kingdoms. This new paradigm did not resemble Earth exactly, as the more enlightened citizens rejected such concepts as racial and gender discrimination and slavery. Many Earth cultures practiced terrible abuses of human rights, and each of the new cities independently enacted

charters renouncing the brutal aspects of history and vowing to respect all human life.

Rebirth

Three centuries have passed since Planetfall. Early explorers discovered that this world, colloquially called NexEarth, held far more opportunities to than Terra had ever given them. While much of the terrain outside of the pod landing sites remained uninhabitable, the discovery of the Shards made future development possible.

Shards are enormous crystalline prisms that dot the landscape at distant intervals. These anomalies radiate a form of energy that provides wireless power to new developments. Shards are incompatible with technology that comes from components recovered from the Venture, but it provides an animating force to items made from NexEarth.

Most of the escape pod cities are now abandoned in favor of settlements built around large shards. These structures allow for wireless transmission of data within a limited radius, powering various automata and the near-magical effects of the Scholar class.

Besides the large Shards, scavengers sometimes find smaller pieces that a person can carry with them. Scholars use these miniature shards to power their own "magical" abilities even when they're outside the reach of their city's central Shard.

Hazards of NexEarth

Right now there is a conflict between the "native" NexEarthers who want to destroy all vestiges of old technology and those who feel that NexEarth is just another resource and that if they ruin it there are still infinite planets to settle. This conflict is exacerbated by the fact that Venture technology and Shards are incompatible. When two pieces of opposing technolgy are close to one another they produce interference that makes both harder to use.

The Venture partially ran on solar power, and since Planetfall some of its components came back online. These machines shudder to life unexpectedly, rise from beneath the ground and begin to terraform the NexEarth terrain into a more Earthlike habitat. The surface of the world is now a patchwork of forests, deserts, jungles and exotic alien biomes.

Other Venture machines use nanofabrication to cause new cities to spring into existence. These complexes are coveted by the various nations, even those vehemently opposed to Venture tech, as they offer easy opportunities for expansion.

Claiming a nano city is usually no easy task. The same nanofabricators also function as genetic looms, using the data stored in the Ark systems to create new life, or to mutate local species. Usually the corrupted databanks create genetic chimeras that resemble creatures of ancient Earth legends. These creatures consider the nano cities as their own territory and do not cede it willingly to human squatters.

The Proclaimers

Among the smaller shards that explorers occasionally find are artifacts known as Proclaimer Columns. These polyhedral structures stand about the size of a man. They run on some internal energy source that is almost certainly the same force that emanates from shards. The Columns discovered so far all contain a wealth of information.

Proclaimer Column respond to verbal queries and answer questions asked of them. Sometimes the response is a simple "That is not for you to know", but they never remain silent. Nobody has ever

cracked one open to examine what lies inside. Proclaimer Obelisks have an internal defense system that manifests as energy tendrils. Those who attempt to open the casing get neutralized, or if they persist, met with lethal force.

Whenever a Proclaimer Column gets discovered it emits a wide-ranging signal. Within a few days a group of strangers arrives, each traveling from a different direction. They politely ask that any "outsiders" present leave. THey take no action until that anyone who was at the site before their arrival leaves. In one case the original explorers stayed for days until the strangers simply died of thirst after maintaining a motionless, silent vigil.

The Column allows the strangers to touch it, and they walk with it as it hovers towards the nearest city. The strangers pool any money that they have on themselves to purchase property in the new city, unless one of them was already a city resident. In that case they simply move the Column into the resident's house.

These buildings become places of interest. The strangers, now calling themselves Proclaimers, wear diamond-shaped masks that resemble two side of the Column. They never remove them and any visitors to their residences don't see the Proclaimers' true faces.

Visitors supplicate the Columns for advice, which usually comes in a cryptic or riddle-like form. The Proclaimers themselves require favors or boons in trade for consultations. One or more of the Proclaimers usually find a place at the city ruler's court, and others gain positions with guilds, schools or armies.

Proclaimers don't talk about their personal lives, but rather seem to focus on "big picture" ideas. These people gain tremendous power from their new position, which manifests in the words that they speak. No one can simply apply to become a Proclaimer, they are selected, apparently by the Columns.

Proclaimer Flavor

Use this Flavor to simulate the abilities that Proclaimer Columns bestow on their caretakers and agents. As a Proclaimer you may not remove your mask in the presence of anyone else, even the other PCs.

Command Word: You bring an enemy to their knees by making an attack using Intelligence against their Wisdom. The target cannot move until they defeat your Intelligence roll with their Wisdom. While you maintain focus your opponent has Disadvantage on their roll. This power has an initial range of 4 hexes. If you move out of range the target remains stuck until they make a Wisdom roll, but they take no penalty for you maintaining focus. If you move out of sight of your target this effect ends. Taking the ability multiple times increases the initial range by 1 hex per selection.

Connection Word: You can interface with computers, robots or other devices as if you were standing next to them from a range of 5 hexes. Each time you take this ability it increases the range by 1 hex.

Edict: You may have one extra target per use of this Flavor's abilities for each time that you select this ability.

Killing Word: You shout a single penetrating word while you point at an opponent. This is an attack that uses Charisma as the offensive Attribute. Targets defend with their Wisdom. The attack has a range of 3 hexes and does damage equal to your class' Armed rating. Each time you take this ability it increases the hex range by 1.

Power Word: You can affect inanimate objects within 2 hexes as if your Intelligence was your Strength. For each time you take this ability you increase the range by 1 hex.

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