

GLITTER NIGHT

A Scenario For STAR LEGION™: The Game of the Space Opera

By Lamar Henderson

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Disclaimer: DEEP 7 and its personnel in no way endorse cavorting in the Red Hour with an alien brain slug calling the shots. It is our opinion that any teen or adult with half a brain SHOULD be able to tell the difference between reality and fiction, tribute and parody.

THE PREMISE: On what should be a peaceful colony world, something is turning citizens into violent marauders. It's the heroes' jobs to stop the mindless marauders while saving as many of the colonists as they can. The big questions, though, are what caused this madness, and are the heroes themselves immune.

THE SETUP: The player characters are serving in the Republic Star Legion at a small recruitment and training station. The staff includes the PC group members and perhaps an equal number of other station personnel, some military, some civilian. Someone in the group should have some medical training, and perhaps serve on the station's medical staff. Equipment available include standard-issue weapons, armor, field gear and so on. There are probably a few ground vehicles for local use. It's unlikely that the station will have anything terribly exotic or destructive.

STANDING AND WATCHING: In war, they also serve those who only stand and watch. The Republic and the Empire are involved in a no-holds-barred interstellar conflict that has ravaged any number of colonies along the frontier between them. There are, however, many colony worlds that are far enough from the action to be perfectly peaceful. The player characters are doing a tour with the Republic Star Legion at a recruitment and training station on this colony world, a nice, quiet change of pace. Few colonists, however, are really interested in the war with the Empire; most don't see how it affects them personally, and there is even a small undercurrent of resentment against the Republic.

IT'S GOING TO BE ONE OF THOSE DAYS: The day starts typically for the group, but things quickly start to get weird. Media reports start to come in about random acts of violence happening throughout the colony. Anyone analyzing the patterns of the events may be able to determine that a good portion of them are directed toward people, institutions and so on that are connected to the Republic. It isn't long before crazed colonists begin attacking the recruitment and training station. The station commander's orders are clear – find out what is going on and a way to stop it. The group members are also ordered to avoid inflicting fatal damage on the colonists if it can be avoided – after all, Star Legion is here to protect these people. An implication on people's minds – something that should be played up whenever possible – is that whatever is affecting the colonists may very well start to affect the Legionnaires, as well.

AND IT JUST KEEPS GETTING WORSE: As the player characters are out and about investigating, it's clear that the violence is growing worse, and more random. Colonists start attacking things at random – vehicles, buildings, other colonists, parking meters – anything at all. Worse, many seem to have developed some sort of oozing pustules all over their bodies. Someone with medical skills, after examining some examples, can learn that the victims have a number of symptoms of Aldoshian Plague. However, the Plague has never been known to cause such psychotic behavior. It is also seldom fatal, and the colonists with advanced cases are dropping like flies, usually covered with oozing pustules far worse than the Plague typically causes. All Republic Star Legionnaires are vaccinated against Aldoshian Plague as part of their regular medical services, which is some relief, and seems to protect them from this new disease. The medical officer, along with any science types, can do some basic research to determine that what is causing the outbreak is a genetically-altered version of the Aldoshian Plague – a deliberately altered version.

MUST... EAT... BRAINS: By the time night falls, the situation has become hellish. Fires burn out of control. Dead bodies lie in the streets. Advanced Plague victims roam the streets, attacking each other and anything else that moves like rabid beasts, their skins covered with oozing, fetid sores. Clear to everyone around sunset, too, is that there seems to be a fine layer of glittery dust covering everything that most people hadn't noticed during the daylight. In the light of dusk and the blaze of the burning colony, it's almost like a snowfall of gold glitter. The medical officer determines that most of the colonists had not been vaccinated for the Plague, and that a concentrated version of the Aldoshian Plague can actually reverse the affects of the genetically-altered Plague in all but the most serious cases. The recruitment station has a good supply of the vaccine, so all the player characters need to do is get to it and find a way to turn it into an aerosol that can be sprayed over the colony. The medical officer estimates that they only have until about dawn, however, to do this, because by then the plague will be advanced enough that no colonists can be saved. Worse, she thinks the altered plague is starting to affect the Legionnaires...

WHAT'S GOING ON: Although there are plenty of colonists who are perfectly willing to believe that the Republic has selected to use them as guinea pigs for a new biological weapon, in fact what has happened is that the Empire has sent in small, stealth-probes to dump the altered plague into the atmosphere over a number of behind-the-lines colonies, hoping that this will distract the Republic from the war on the frontier. It's likely that the Empire has also placed observers on their targeted worlds, as well – totally immune ones, of course. If the characters can get enough of the vaccine concentrate sprayed over the colony – only about a hundred liters should do the trick – by the end of the second day, the situation should be under control. If not, it won't be long before the Legionnaires start to succumb.

