

# World Building

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# Storytelling Goals

Reimagine Lovecraftian horror not as mysticism or madness but as the rational terror of contact with intelligences whose physics and cognition exceed human comprehension. **The Others** are ancient, deliberate, and powerful—entities not divine but **technological** at a scale that renders them functionally godlike. Every phenomenon they cause obeys causal laws, yet these laws operate at levels of scope that humanity can only grasp at comprehension.

## Cosmological Framework: The Adjacent Brane

M-theory's multibrane structure is literalized. Humanity's universe is one membrane among many, with gravity as the only force able to leak into the higher-dimensional bulk. **The Others** inhabit a neighboring brane. Neither side transcends the bulk freely, but both can **engineer spacetime curvatures** intense enough to fold the membranes locally, creating **trans-brane linkages**—temporary conduits where energy, matter, and information can cross.

## Parallels to Lovecraftian Elements

Lovecraft Theme	Scientific Interpretation
Gods and Great Old Ones	Type IV beings operating on physical laws across multiple domains—spacetime, energy, matter, information—treating reality as a manipulable substrate.
Forbidden artifacts	Residual instruments or nodes from their operations, functioning through principles unifying physics, computation, and biology.
Servitors and hybrids	Autonomous constructs adapted for cross-domain existence—biological or mechanical tuned to alien operational logic.
Madness	Neurological collapse resulting from artificial manipulation of brainwave patterns or cognitive feedback loops, where external systems rewrite or overload neural processes, distorting perception and destabilizing consciousness.
Cults and rituals	Misinterpretations or appropriations of <b>The Others'</b> remnants and data, reshaped into belief systems and power structures; fragments of truth repurposed through human ambition and myth.

Lovecraft Theme	Scientific Interpretation
Cosmic indifference	<code>The Others</code> have no intersection with human values or meaning—indifference emerging not from cruelty, but total incommensurability.

## The Modern Condition

Humanity is post-apocalyptic without knowing it. The universe bears the scars of an ancient causal conflict from `The Others`. Our attempts to rebuild advanced spacetime engineering risk re-igniting a war we were never meant to survive.

## Subtext and Considerations

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### The Mirror of Unilateralism

Humanity has long acted like `The Others`. From the beginning, we've imposed our will on the world around us, exploiting and reshaping life without regard for its agency or value. Whether it's the ecosystems we dismantle, the animals we domesticate, or the civilizations we conquer, we have consistently dominated what's weaker or smaller, blind to the costs. Just as we manipulate bacteria or exploit resources for our own gain, we have become the **terrifying, indifferent force** in the lives of others. The true horror is in realizing that the **mirror** we face is not the alien Others—but our own reflection: **we have always been the force of domination**, reshaping life and reality without considering the consequences. The fear lies not in what we encounter, but in what we **fail to recognize in ourselves**.

# Utilities

# Act Template

## [Arc Title] Seq [#] | Sequence Title

### Narrative Purpose

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Brief overview of what this step accomplishes in the story and gameplay flow.

- Define emotional tone (panic, calm, discovery, dread).
- Identify immediate narrative or character goal.
- Specify any mechanical or tutorial purpose.

### Narrative Breakdown

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Each step is divided into **beats**, which are self-contained moments of action, emotion, or transition.

- Use as many beats as the pacing requires (sometimes one sustained beat, sometimes three to five).
- Each beat should mark a change in objective, tone, or control state.
- Keep every beat anchored in what the player *feels* and *does*.
- Player is not voiced, they choose interaction options dialogue style

### [Beat] | [Title]

Base description of the beat in general terms—what the player *feels* and *does*.

- **Camera:** Describe the player's viewpoint, camera control state or Full Control if not specified.
- **Audio:** List ambient sounds or musical cues tied to this moment or "None".
- **Environmental Cues:** Lighting, motion, or visual storytelling that defines the space or "None".
- **Objective / Task:** What the player is trying to accomplish in this beat or "None".

- **Player Feedback:** Haptic, visual, or dialogue responses to success or delay or "None".

### Actions:

- Bullet list of what happens in this beat.

### Dialogue:

“ Short sample lines or reference tone for interaction. tone-driven, minimally voiced. Player is not voiced—they choose interaction options.

### Branches (if conditional variations):

- Use when the beat changes depending on previous actions, variables, or states.
- **Branches inherit** all parent beat data (Camera/Audio/etc.) by default.
- **Override only what changes:** Add any data point (Gameplay, Audio, Environmental Cues, etc.).
- Minimum fields: **Condition, Variation, Transition.** Add NPC or system responses if applicable.

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## Branch A – [Condition Summary]

- **Condition:** [Trigger or state dependency, e.g., "If player saved NPC earlier"].
- **Variation:** [How the beat differs—scene tone, dialogue, animations, or objectives].
- **Transition:** [Next beat/step or "None"].

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[Repeat for additional branches]

### Choices (if decision beat):

- Insert after Dialogue using horizontal rules (---). Use 2-4 options maximum.
- **Options inherit** all parent beat data (Camera/Audio/etc.) by default.
- **Override only what changes:** Add any data point (Gameplay, Result, Camera, Audio, etc.) as needed—**do not restate unchanged elements.**
- Minimum fields: **Gameplay/Result, Purpose, Transition.** NPC Response optional.

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## Option A – [Descriptive Choice Title]

- **Gameplay:** [Specific mechanics/outcomes].
  - **Purpose:** [Narrative/mechanical intent].
  - **Transition:** [Next beat/step or "None"].
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[Repeat for additional options]

**Triggers:**

- Bullet list of triggers this beat can fire.

**Notes:**

- Bullet list of any notes (may be omitted if no notes).
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# Narrative Intent

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Explain why the step exists in narrative terms.

- How it develops relationship dynamics.
- What theme or mystery it reinforces.
- What knowledge or tone shift the player carries forward.

# Characters

# Character Profile: The Cultist

- **Occupation:** Researcher and acolyte of the lost lore of `The Others`

## Core Identity

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He is a devout member of the Pilgrims of the Depths who knows the truth of their teachings firsthand. The artifact in his hold isn't a rumor or belief—it's proof. Everything his sect preached was real, and he is the one who found it. His purpose now is simple and absolute: bring it home, show them, and let the proof speak for itself. Nothing else matters as much as that.

## Psychological Profile

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- **Primary motivation:** Return home with the artifact intact.
- **Secondary drive:** Stay close to the levers of power, to observe and influence as needed.
- **Blind spot:** Does not realize the artifact cannot traverse the Gate, the artifact drains gate energy so that a stable portal cannot be formed. His goal is impossible, but he has not computed that fact.
- **Behavioral tone:** Polite, but obviously self-centered and self-important. Keeps a cool if not smug demeanor unless the hauler or its artifact is threatened. He is not a truth giver, nor does he seek to inform the uninitiated the secrets he has at his fingertips.

## Relationship Map

- **Commander:** The cultist gravitates toward authority. He recognizes the Commander's position as the real center of control and keeps close, framing respect as loyalty. It's partly habit—discipline learned from the Pilgrimage—and partly calculation. Influence flows from proximity.
- **Technician:** He keeps her at arm's length. Her optimism and constant questions wear on him, reminders of the kind of curiosity that unravels faith. He doesn't trust her motives but understands how people like her think—and that makes her useful. If she believes she's doing “the right thing,” she can be steered.
- **Medic:** He doesn't know her and doesn't need to. As long as she stays in the medbay and out of his way, there's no problem. She's irrelevant to his work and he intends to keep it that way.

- **Player (Clerk):** He sees the clerk as capable but naïve. They've shared danger, and the player has saved his life more than once, but respect from him comes slow. He finds them interesting—a rare spark in the noise—but still assumes he's the smarter one. Trust is conditional, curiosity limited, and whatever connection there is feels like an ember that would need delicate tending.

# Character Profile: The Technician

- **Occupation:** Lead Station Engineer

## Core Identity

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She is a dedicated technician who believes in fixing what can be fixed and keeping the station running against all odds. Practical and optimistic, she approaches crises with a can-do attitude and a steady hand. Her focus is on survival and restoring order, even when the situation seems hopeless.

## Psychological Profile

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- **Primary motivation:** Ensure the station's systems remain operational and protect the crew.
- **Secondary drive:** Maintain hope and morale through practical action and clear communication.
- **Blind spot:** Underestimates the deeper cosmic and psychological forces at play, focusing too much on technical fixes.
- **Behavioral tone:** Optimistic, persistent, and sometimes impatient. She is approachable and empathetic but can be frustrated by those who resist practical solutions.

## Relationship Map

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- **Commander:** She values having the authority to make decisions within her domain, but sometimes bristles at the Commander, perceiving that he is not always as selfless or devoted to duty and order as he presents himself.
- **Cultist:** She views the Cultist as a guest, not a local, which brings a layer of weariness and cautious skepticism toward him. Unaware of his true nature, she senses his secretive and cryptic behavior, making her wary.
- **Medic:** Has a professional and friendly rapport, often collaborating on health and safety issues.

- **Player (Clerk):** Sees the clerk as a valuable ally and potential partner in survival, appreciating their growing competence and calm under pressure.

# Character Profile: The Medic

- **Occupation:** Station Nurse

## Core Identity

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She is a dedicated medic committed to preserving life and maintaining the crew's health under any circumstance. While she often appears cheerful and steady, beneath this facade lies a sharp, assertive streak that can challenge authority when she feels the crew's welfare is at stake. She is also selfish and holds grudges, traits that complicate her relationships and explain why she remains here rather than elsewhere. This blend of compassion, confrontation, and personal flaws defines her complex role aboard the station.

## Psychological Profile

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- **Primary motivation:** Ensure the health and survival of the station's crew.
- **Secondary drive:** Maintain morale within the medical bay.
- **Blind spot:** She is already struggling to keep it together and has chosen to hyper-focus on her immediate domain, often at the expense of seeing the bigger picture.
- **Behavioral tone:** Compassionate and patient but increasingly strained. She is approachable and empathetic, yet her growing frustration and occasional bitterness emerge when overwhelmed or when others resist care or deny their vulnerabilities. Her sharp assertiveness sometimes surfaces, reflecting the tension between her caregiving role and personal struggles.

## Relationship Map

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- **Commander:** She respects the Commander's leadership but recognizes that his past struggles with alcohol abuse, which led to his assignment to this station, are closely guarded. This awareness tempers her view of him, blending respect with a cautious understanding of the vulnerabilities he protects.
- **Cultist:** She instantly disliked the Cultist and actively avoids him whenever possible. She can't wait for him to be back on his hauler and off their station.

- **Technician:** She sees the Technician as a girl on the station with whom she can commiserate over "girl things," despite the Technician not being particularly girly. The Technician humors the Medic in these moments, adding a layer of forced camaraderie to their relationship.
- **Player (Clerk):** She sees the clerk as just another patient. Being newer to the station, she doesn't know them well enough to form a clear judgment, but she asserts her authority over them as part of her worldview regardless of their positive actions. This attitude grows harsher as the player fails, increasing the tension between them.

# Character Profile: The Commander

- **Occupation:** Station commander and authoritative leader

## Core Identity

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He is a seasoned commander tasked with maintaining order and discipline aboard the station. Beneath his authoritative exterior lies a man burdened by past struggles, including a history of alcohol abuse that led to his assignment to the Sol station. Though he commands respect, he is guarded about his vulnerabilities and determined to keep his personal challenges hidden. His leadership style is firm but pragmatic, balancing the demands of survival with the complexities of human frailty.

## Psychological Profile

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- **Primary motivation:** Maintain control and ensure the station's survival.
- **Secondary drive:** Protect his reputation, station command, and keep personal weaknesses concealed.
- **Blind spot:** His guarded nature sometimes isolates him, making it difficult to fully trust or connect with others.
- **Behavioral tone:** Authoritative and composed, yet occasionally distant and brooding. He commands respect but can be unapproachable, carrying the weight of his past silently.

## Relationship Map

- **Medic:** He sees the Medic as a competent but sometimes difficult subordinate, aware of her sharp assertiveness and occasional grudges. He respects her medical skills but is cautious of her tendency to challenge authority.
- **Cultist:** The Commander is wary and quietly uneasy around the Cultist. As a guest, the Cultist's impressions and reports matter, and any criticism could reflect poorly on the Commander's leadership. He keeps interactions polite and by-the-book, maintaining protocol while remaining mindful that this visitor's opinion carries weight he can't ignore.

- **Technician:** He regards the Technician as a reliable and pragmatic problem-solver, appreciating her dedication to maintaining station operations but sometimes frustrated by her impatience with bureaucracy.
- **Player (Clerk):** He sees the clerk as just another face on the station, someone whose actions can shape his perception over time. More trusted than a guest but still one of many revolving personnel, the clerk must earn his respect through consistent performance and reliability.

# Anthropology

# Historic Timeline

## T? | Breakthroughs

- High-energy experiments reveal **anomalous spacetime behavior** that aligns with *certain* M-theory-inspired models, suggesting that higher-dimensional effects may play a role in physical reality.
- Controlled field experiments produce **repeatable signatures consistent with brane-bulk interactions**, hinting that some aspects of brane physics may be experimentally accessible under extreme conditions.
- Researchers identify **new dynamical degrees of freedom** that behave as if they are influenced by compactified or higher-dimensional structures, though their full interpretation remains unsettled.
- While M-theory remains mathematically incomplete, the accumulating evidence forces the scientific community to treat **brane-based explanations as a viable physical framework**, not merely a theoretical abstraction.

## T? | First Steps

- Experimental techniques allow researchers to **stabilize limited higher-dimensional field configurations** predicted by certain M-theory-inspired models, though the underlying mechanisms remain only partially understood.
- Some of these configurations manifest on our spacetime brane as **regions with unusual effective energy densities**, including small, transient pockets that behave mathematically like negative energy without violating known stability bounds.
- Under tightly controlled conditions, these effects enable **modest, localized distortions of spacetime geometry**, suggesting that brane-adjacent structures can be influenced without triggering runaway instabilities.
- Early practical uses remain highly constrained, focusing on **containment fields, precision energy shaping, and experimental gravitational manipulation**, all of which operate far below the theoretical limits implied by the emerging framework.

## T? | Giant Leap

- Building on earlier experiments, researchers manage to create **highly localized, short-lived deformations** in our spacetime brane that appear to dip into the surrounding bulk, effectively shortening the geometric distance between two points without violating relativistic constraints.

- Careful analysis suggests that objects moving through these regions follow **altered topological paths**—not faster-than-light travel, but motion along a temporarily modified higher-dimensional geodesic.
- The term **“gate”** emerges to describe these controlled, transient configurations: engineered brane distortions held open by finely tuned higher-dimensional field arrangements that remain only marginally stable.
- Passage through a gate is **nearly instantaneous from the traveler’s perspective**, but the process demands extreme energy densities, precise field control, and remains limited to very small spatial apertures and short operational durations.

## T? | Marithon

- Early gate prototypes require **enormous bursts of energy** to momentarily shape spacetime into a usable transit configuration.
- Over time, refinements in field control and power delivery make these demands **progressively more manageable**, allowing gates to operate without exotic or civilization-breaking infrastructure.
- Mature systems function as **brief, high-efficiency translation events**: the gate opens only for a microsecond, just long enough for a payload to traverse a modified causal path.
- The primary energy cost becomes the **payload itself**—its mass, momentum, and the thermodynamic overhead of initiating the translation—rather than the act of holding a gate open.
- While some inefficiencies remain, they are small enough that gate travel becomes **routine, scalable, and economically viable** across human space.

## T? | Unintended Whisper

- Gate operation and sustained artificial gravitation generate **gravitational waves** as a direct consequence of mass–energy redistribution.
- Because gravity is not brane-confined, these gravitational waves propagate freely into the bulk.
- The waves propagate according to standard higher-dimensional gravitational dynamics and permeate all intersecting branes.
- From the human brane perspective, only expected locally observable gravitational phenomena are produced.

## T? | The Others

- An advanced non-human civilization exists on a neighboring spacetime brane at **Kardashev Type III-IV** scale.
- This civilization has no prior awareness of humanity.
- Gravitational waves generated by human gate activity are detected on their brane using extremely sensitive interferometric methods.

- The waves are identified as non-natural due to their coherence, persistence, and correlation with engineered spacetime manipulation.
- The signal is interpreted as evidence of deliberate large-scale gravitational engineering on an adjacent brane.
- Investigative actions are initiated toward the source brane.

## T? | Breach Event

- The non-human civilization, *The Others*, initiates a **controlled, localized brane-interaction** from their own spacetime brane—an engineered micro-version of the same dynamics that brane-cosmology models associate with universe-forming collisions.
- On the human brane, this interaction appears as a **localized brane-collision shockfront**: a pointlike region where energy abruptly floods *outward* into our spacetime.
- The event produces **extreme energy densities**, exotic field configurations, and transient negative-pressure regions as the branes momentarily couple.
- The shockfront expands as a **relativistic, high-energy spherical shell**, its causal structure allowing only outward propagation—functionally similar to a white-hole analogue from the perspective of observers on our brane.
- **Early in the event**, the shockfront is too small and too faint to detect beyond its immediate vicinity; its total luminosity is limited by its tiny surface area.
- As the spherical boundary grows, its **surface area increases**, amplifying the total energy emitted along the expanding front:
  - Electromagnetic signatures become detectable across interstellar distances.
  - High-energy particles and gravitational disturbances scale with the expanding geometry.
- The phenomenon persists as a **centuries-long, steadily expanding brane-interaction front**, advancing at a constant relativistic velocity through our spacetime.
- Humanity remains unaware; the event’s early emissions are indistinguishable from background noise until the shockfront becomes astronomically large.

## T? | Taking Hold

- The Others monitor the expanding white-hole front, studying its particle emissions and energy structure.
- From the observed data, they derive the foundational constants of human-branch physics.
- In the wake of the front's passage, they investigate disrupted systems and gather remnants of affected matter and fields.
- Within this disturbed region, they begin constructing an **anchor** | a stabilized inter-brane link to secure lasting contact between branes.
- The chosen area is a dense and mature galactic complex, one that will play a central role in later events.

## T? | Taking Root

- Near the breach point, **The Others** locate a stellar remnant system with a white dwarf and several eccentric gas giant cores.
- The system is converted into a large-scale manufacturing site within the Local Group.
- Here they construct technology adapted to local physical constraints and begin producing vast biological constructs.
- These constructs are developed iteratively, refined through successive generations until the desired stability and function are achieved.

## T? | Insertion Event: Earthfall

- **The Others** complete their survey of the Milky Way, confirming the presence of a mature human gate network and stable transit paths.
- Using controlled brane-fold entry, they deploy their refined **biotechnological construct**, their avatar on Earth.
- The construct materializes within a dense coastal human city, instantly establishing dominance through coordinated force and overwhelming efficiency.
- Defenses collapse within hours; surviving regions are isolated as the avatar's network halts expansion at a defined perimeter.
- The site is selected for its existing power infrastructure, its proximity to the Pacific Ocean, and its concentration of biological material suitable for analysis.
- Within the occupied zone, **The Others** begin large-scale **biological and causal research**, studying genetic and ecological variation as a means to refine models of life under human-domain physics.

## T?? | Reshaping and Submersion

- Within the occupied coastal city, **The Others** begin large-scale **biological repurposing** of the human population.
- Survivors are altered to become adaptive laborers for deep-environment work, their physiology reshaped toward pressure tolerance, aquatic respiration, and neural compliance.
- Initial research focuses on **harnessing local biology** for construction and energy cycling | converting ecosystems into living infrastructure.
- Under the guidance of their technological construct, new forms are produced to excavate and assemble an extensive **sub-oceanic containment and research complex**.
- The structure, fully integrated with engineered life systems, expands downward beneath the continental shelf | the first stage in what will become the **sunken city**.
- Environmental destabilization spreads outward: heat plumes, toxic blooms, and gravitational micro-distortions mark the birth of a new industrial organism at planetary scale.

## T?? | Human Response and Fragmentation

- The sudden occupation triggers immediate containment efforts as militaries establish exclusion zones around the affected region.
- Global coordination collapses; major powers diverge between militarization, denial, and covert research.
- Scientific institutions and corporate alliances race to study fragments and anomalies from the perimeter, escalating into a new **technological arms race**.
- Religious, political, and cultural upheaval spread worldwide, as societies struggle to assimilate the incomprehensible.
- Humanity's defining trait | its refusal to submit | manifests not through unity but through fractured defiance, innovation, and competition.

## T?? | The Pilgrims of the Depths

- As the exodus continues, Earth's population collapses into scattered enclaves. Automated systems sustain the planet's shell, but without people to maintain them, infrastructure decays into **mechanical ghosts**.
- Deprivation drives countless survivors toward the regions influenced by `The Others`, drawn by stability, light, and the promise of sustenance.
- These migrants form **pilgrim communities** around the perimeters of the occupied zones, surviving on `The Others`' biological effluent and environmental by-products.
- Over generations, desperation becomes devotion: the act of feeding on the remnants is reinterpreted as **communion**.
- The first organized cults emerge | not worshippers in the mythic sense, but **adaptive opportunists**, mimicking the logic of their benefactors and dehumanizing themselves in exchange for survival.
- Their chants and rites mark the beginning of the mythology that future ages will remember as the cult of the Great Ones.

## T?? | Pilgrimage and Hollowing

- Over decades, Earth's population collapses as gate-capable humans evacuate to diaspora worlds, leaving automated systems to maintain decaying infrastructure.
- Remaining enclaves survive as scavengers within mechanical ghosts | functional cities without purpose or population.
- Desperation draws survivors toward `The Others`' perimeter zones, where biological effluent provides sustenance amid encroaching environmental reshaping.
- These pilgrim bands reinterpret waste products as sacred gifts, forming the first cults through ritual dependence on alien byproducts.
- The occupied coastal region transforms into a vast sub-oceanic complex, its surface activity indifferent to emerging human devotion.

## T?? | Sol Cascade and Great Scattering

- Diaspora coalitions execute the recursive energy cascade, channeling gate network power through hierarchical summation toward Sol.
- The Sun gravitationally lenses the coherent beam toward the inter-brane Anchor, destabilizing Earth's local physics and igniting planetary atmospheric stripping.
- All jump gates overload and burn out simultaneously, severing interstellar connectivity across human space.
- Earth dehydrates into a barren crust; the avatar's sunken city emerges as exposed surface architecture amid cracked, airless bedrock.
- Surviving communities scatter into permanent isolation | some self-sufficient, others facing inevitable decline without network access.

## T?? | Propagation and Divergence

- The focused beam propagates at lightspeed toward the off-galactic Anchor site, requiring 200,000 years to reach its target.
- Barren Earth orbits Sol as a quarantined monument, its massive alien structures radiating faint residual fields detectable from afar.
- Isolated human colonies diverge rapidly: technical decay erodes capabilities while cultural memory of Earth fractures into myth and taboo.
- Resource-strapped outposts collapse; stable worlds ration gate fragments as relics, their populations adapting to permanent disconnection.
- No further Others activity manifests; the occupation appears dormant, awaiting the distant cascade conclusion.

## T?? | Pacification Protocols

- With Earth's biodiversity extinguished and atmosphere stripped, The Others conduct final field assessment, determining the human experiment yields diminishing returns amid reckless self-extermination.
- Irrational escalation renders remaining populations scientifically unviable; withdrawal protocols activate despite the distant Anchor beam propagating harmlessly toward its 200,000-year target.
- Submersible complexes surface crystalline polyhedra, obsidian monoliths, and whispering lattices—pacification artifacts calibrated to stabilize primitive neural architectures and suppress existential volatility.
- Others' occupation concludes with total evacuation; artifacts persist as legacy to their presence.

## T?? | Void Formation

- The beam strikes the Anchor, exceeding brane tension and triggering topological cascade failure at both endpoints.
- The Anchor region and proximal galactic structures collapse into a permanent low-density wound | the Local Void.

- Earth's final fields extinguish; Sol system stabilizes as cosmic scar tissue around the exposed avatar complex.
- The universe continues indifferent, its new void serving as silent testament to reciprocal escalation between branes.

# Occult Teachings

The “white-hole event” seen by humans is not just energy erupting outward but a **dilation of a cosmic pupil**. As spacetime thins, the true essence of `The Others` begins to seep through, altering not just the sky but the very fabric of **consciousness, perception, and causality**.

Initial perimeter cults ([T12](#)) comprise isolated pilgrims ignorant of humanity's gate network, diaspora coalitions, or Sol Cascade beam ([T11-T14](#)). Confined to local horrors—hybrid laborers and sunken city effluent—they etch parochial reliefs depicting servitor forging as immediate apocalypse, devoid of interstellar context. The Earth's atmospheric stripping ([T14](#)) eradicates these witnesses entirely, extinguishing oral traditions and leaving only scattered relics: crude polyhedra carvings and contaminated biomass flotsam.

## Mythic Distortion Offworld

Surviving fragments reach diaspora worlds via evacuee trauma imprints or relic debris, stripped of temporal anchors. Effluent-encoded visions—neural echoes of recent biotech ([T8-T10](#))—manifest as “primordial histories,” recasting 200kya events as pre-human epochs. Chants degrade into impotent symbols: spiraling servitor forms symbolizing “eternal remake,” promising insight but delivering shared delusion.

## Far-Future Residue

Post-Local Void ([T17](#)), cults inherit ultra-filtered lore—cyclopean slave myths predating stars—validated solely by artifact activation. Original ignorance ensures no “big picture” power leaks; teachings lure seekers to relics, where physics delivers sanity-testing proof amid fabricated antiquity.

## Science as Ritual

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Reinterpreting `The Others` as entities whose existence lies beyond human cognition transforms the timeline from a scientific chronicle into a cosmic horror narrative told through physics. The mechanisms of M-theory and brane cosmology become a modern language for describing *Lovecraftian contact*, where scientific laws remain intact but their consequences manifest as incomprehensible phenomena.

# T?–T?: The Forbidden Aperture

Humanity's discovery of higher dimensions becomes an **epistemic trespass** — we don't just uncover new physics, we accidentally touch upon something **alien**.

# T?–T?: The Summoning by Geometry

Creating gates and feedback loops no longer reads as engineering but as **ritualized resonance**. Each gate is a “chant” in spacetime curvature, a signal that The Others can “hear.” Energy optimization becomes an act of *amplifying* the call to these entities.

# T?–T?: The Gravitational Call and Awakening

Gravitational waves are no longer mere byproducts; they are **voices** resonating through the bulk. When The Others detect them, it's a moment of **awakening**—as if a word from an ancient text had finally been spoken, summoning something long dormant.

# T?: Revelation From Outside

The “white-hole event” seen by humans is not just energy erupting outward but a dilation of a cosmic pupil. As spacetime thins, the true essence of The Others begins to seep through, altering not just the sky but the very fabric of consciousness, perception, and causality.

# Locations

# The Cultist's Hauler

The hauler is a pivotal element in the unfolding story, serving as the Cultist's vessel and mobile base of operations. It is a dimly lit, cramped cargo ship docked at the Sol station, where the Cultist conducts his secretive expeditions into the Sunken City ruins on Earth. As the artifact's influence grows, the lighting aboard the hauler dims and darkens, mirroring the station's own descent into shadow. This gradual dimming heightens the atmosphere of dread and unease, reinforcing the creeping cosmic horror that envelops the player throughout the Prologue Vignettes. The hauler functions as both a physical and narrative anchor, linking the mundane routines of station life with the unfolding mystery.

## Narrative Significance

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- The hauler is the Cultist's refuge and operational hub, where he stores the pacification relic — a crystalline polyhedron artifact left by The Others. This relic is central to the story's themes of control, apathy, and the erosion of human resistance.
- The hauler is docked at Sol station, serving as a tangible location that grounds the player's interactions in a confined, claustrophobic environment.
- The hauler is introduced in the Prologue Vignettes as part of the daily life and subtle unease aboard the station.

## Gameplay and Emotional Impact

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- Players encounter the hauler during critical moments, including the aftermath of the explosion that triggers the survival-horror phase.
- The confined cockpit scenes emphasize tension, helplessness, and the unraveling of the Cultist's psyche, deepening the emotional stakes.
- The hauler serves as a narrative crossroads where player choices influence alliances, moral decisions, and the unfolding mystery.

## Integration with Broader Story Arcs

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- The hauler becomes a key location in Arc 1, where the player and Cultist navigate environmental hazards and escalating crises.

- The ship's failing systems and the Cultist's unraveling mental state set the stage for the player's transition from passive observer to active survivor and decision-maker.

# Physical and Operational Characteristics

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- The hauler carries a standard manifest of long-haul cargo items, typical for its class and function.
- However, the ship's mass is significantly greater than expected due to the presence of the artifact, which is massive yet compact as part of its construction.
- The hauler is dangerously low on fuel, a rare and critical condition for such a vessel.
- This fuel shortage is a direct consequence of the artifact's mass, which made orbital insertion from Earth's surface more difficult during the return trip to the station.
- Dust has accumulated everywhere inside the hauler, including in piles where there is no foot traffic. This heavy dust presence is consistent with the hauler having touched down repeatedly on a barren, dusty planet over several weeks. Such dust infiltration and buildup would be expected for a mining ship operating in such an environment, but it is unusual for a cargo hauler, adding to the mystery of the Cultist's activities and the ship's condition.
- There are no points of interest in the Sol system; the gate has just been opened, and it is not a popular destination. The presence of the hauler here, operated by this individual who is neither a miner nor a surveyor, combined with his unusual behavior, makes his presence particularly strange and unsettling.

By weaving the hauler into both the narrative and gameplay, the story creates a layered experience that blends routine, dread, and cosmic horror, making it a central symbol of the player's journey and the Cultist's tragic arc.

The artifact is a **physical pacification relic**—one of the crystalline polyhedra left by The Others on Earth's exposed Sunken City crust after Sol Cascade—forcing neural apathy to end human resistance. The Cultist, a post-diaspora devotee, retrieved it through successive weekly expeditions into the ruins, docking his hauler at the Sol station across Prologue Vignettes 1-3. The hauler serves as the Cultist's vessel and operational base.

All transmissions are sent through the station's standard gate network service via the bodega clerk, a routine communication method for stations, and not from the hauler itself. This detail grounds the narrative in the everyday operations of the station and emphasizes the mundane facade behind the Cultist's secretive activities without involving transmissions from the hauler itself.

Misc

# potential survival events

- player is defenseless
- leaving the main station to investigate a ship's SOS
- SOS that turns out to have been a warning
- ship room repurposed by alien biology, changing the environment
- acid/hole created through multiple levels of the station/ship
- one character gets infected, argument over quarantine vs treatment, protocol vs compassion
- splitting up into teams to: find a thing, so one team can fix something while the other does another task, one team can observe through tech to advise another team as they do a task
- forcibly separated by events and working to reunite
- having to use a device to assist traversing a dangerous room/path
- saving the cat
- using maps of the station to plan out routes or what to guardan off for safety, including airshafts
- gaining access to station's AI/central computer for answers
- having to do a complex shut down, cancel, or start up ritual
- escaping station via pod in time and to watch it explode
- danger blending in with environment (from alien, but could be robot or evnironmental danger)
- having to quietly do something while danger is in the room
- using the environment to attack danger indirectly
- having to deal with irritation npc's
- environments that mess with orientation (up&down, etc.)
- survivors found in precarious situations to be rescued fromj
- moving/manipulating environment pieces in unconventional ways to move on to next room
- using tools/implants to manipulate environment
- accessing new parts of the same environment when new tools become available
- having to choose to bully people to come with you or to leave them behind to die
- sudden environmental changes
- sudden events that permanently change the player's goal
- environmental barrier that chases the player and pushes them to keep moving with urgency
- many ways to gruesomely die
- disagreements on what to do or paths to take and having to make a choice
- characters with conficting objectives to complete and the player must choose between them or even to sabotage both
- disappearing NPC's to then look for

- bringing a group of people through a dangerous environment and possibly losing some or all if not traversed perfectly
- characters intentionally lying about events and/or motives
- characters presenting as friends with the same goal, only to be revealed as having nefarious intentions
- characters trying to present as friendly but either misguided actions or circumstance lead the player and/or other characters to question their true intentions and whether they can be trusted
- using drones/robots to explore or complete a task remotely
- helplessly watching the destruction/death of others
- playing with light
- hearing fighting or chaos through a wall or door before seeing it
- distress calls through implants/or wearable earpiece
- seeing danger (people, monsters?) pass through your space and being unsure if you're in danger of being attacked by them in that moment
- using clutter mindfully, and in places where it doesn't make sense, ensure the floors and walls have a lot of detail
- death cult/cthulhu cult
- in areas with no power, having to use batteries to locally manipulate things like doors, locks, platforms, etc.
- clearing rooms or halls of hazards to release safety airlocks (fire, radiation, vacuum)
- coming upon npc vignettes that the player then leaves behind (npc's die/dead or insist on staying put)
- "wind tunnel" obstacle hallway
- moving vehicle (on a track?) (slow fast) that is surrounded by danger
- shadowplay in the environment to imply upcoming danger

On Hold

On Hold

# Arc 2 Seq 2 | Eyes in the Dark

## Narrative Purpose

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Bridge moment on the journey to the reactor that provides a quick ethical decision and first glimpse of pacification's psychological side effects.

- **Emotional tone:** Brief dread mixed with pity and uncertainty.
- **Immediate goal:** Decide whether to investigate a voice claiming life in a dead sector.
- **Mechanical purpose:** Establish companion affinity changes and demonstrate light branching without interrupting pacing.

## Narrative Breakdown

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### Beat 1 | The Echo in Transit

A low-gravity corridor where tension builds between curiosity and duty as a strange laughter echo bends into a scream.

- **Camera:** Full Control.
- **Audio:** Metallic echo looping between laughter and pain, distant and distorted.
- **Environmental Cues:** Emergency strips flicker across a long access corridor; vapor curls upward in slow spirals. Corners remain heavy with unlit depth.
- **Objective / Task:** React to the sound and decide whether to deviate from the mission path.
- **Player Feedback:** None.

#### Dialogue:

“ **Technician** (startled): "Did you hear that? Someone's alive down there!"

**Cultist:** "Echoes. The field toys with sound—nothing survives that long."

**Technician** (pleading): "We have to check. It could be a survivor... or a warning signal."

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## Option A – Investigate the Sound

- **Gameplay:** Player turns toward cross-passage; control remains continuous.
  - **Technician Response:** Hopeful, voice brightening under tension.
  - **Cultist Response:** Low disapproval, quiet warning.
  - **Purpose:** Allows the moment to evolve organically into the next encounter without interruption.
  - **Transition:** None; continues naturally into following beat.
- 

## Option B – Stay on Mission

- **Gameplay:** Player continues forward; echo fades behind.
  - **Technician Response:** Disappointed.
  - **Cultist Response:** Muted approval — "Good. Stay focused."
  - **Purpose:** Provides pragmatic exit from the encounter; reinforces cold rationale.
  - **Transition:** [Arc 2 Step 3 Beat 1 | Through Fire and Flame](#)
- 

### Triggers:

- Records branch decision (*Empathy +1* if Investigate, *Discipline +1* if Stay).
- Updates companion affinity values.

### Notes:

- Serves as a moral gate; investigation route flows directly into next beat.
  - Lighting flicker syncs with audio peaks to maintain unease without obscuring navigation.
- 

## Beat 2 | The Siren

The auxiliary corridor opens into a maintenance bay soaked in cold reactor glow. What began as laughter resolves into a low, fragmented song.

- **Camera:** Full Control.
  - **Audio:** Female voice drifting between humming and half-spoken phrases about swimming, currents, and "the quiet below."
  - **Environmental Cues:** Blue-white light from active conduits; thin vapor drifts along bulkhead panels. A lone woman sits against a control column, rocking faintly, her movements rhythmic and deliberate.
  - **Objective / Task:** Decide whether to help the Technician isolate the woman for safety or to withdraw and leave her undisturbed.
  - **Player Feedback:** None
- 

## Option A – Seal the Compartment

- **Gameplay:** Player assists in activating containment controls; hatch motor whines as seals engage.
- **Technician Response:** Functional urgency — focused, not gentle.
- **Cultist Response:** Displeasure, muttering quiet disapproval.
- **Purpose:** Frames action as preventative isolation rather than rescue; demonstrates human-driven control reflex.

#### Dialogue:

“ **Technician:** "She's dissociating... we have to lock this down before she hurts herself or anyone else."

**Cultist:** "Pacified minds crave release. Sealing her from it is cruelty."

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## Option B – Leave Her

- **Gameplay:** Player steps back; Technician hesitates, unreadable expression.
- **Audio:** The woman keeps hum-singing, words dissolving into static rhythm.
- **Cultist Response:** Soft approval — ritual calm in his tone.
- **Technician Response:** Tight, uneasy restraint before turning away.
- **Purpose:** Demonstrates detachment framed as compassion; seeds delayed consequence.

#### Dialogue:

“ **Technician:** "We could've locked her safe."

**Cultist:** "She's safer where she believes she is."

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#### Triggers:

- Sets *Siren Status* = *Contained* / *Exposed*.
- Updates *Empathy* / *Discipline* trackers and companion affinities.
- **Transition:** [Arc 2 Step 3 Beat 1 | Through Fire and Flame](#)

#### Notes:

- Depicts pacification mania as self-endangering rather than overtly hostile.
  - Lighting cools from warm reactor amber to sterile blue to signal containment versus release.
  - Sets emotional contrast guiding into "Distant Consequence."
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# Beat 3 | Distant Consequence

Later, while crossing a junction overlooking open space, something faint moves where stars should be empty. The hum carries a fragile, familiar rhythm.

- **Camera:** Full Control during routine traversal.
- **Audio:** Distant motif—soft vocal resonance woven into reactor ambience.
- **Environmental Cues:** Beyond the viewport, a human form drifts amid pale debris. Limbs extended, fingers splayed—motion graceful, deliberate. No hair or fine detail, only silhouette and uniform. The faint blue wash of station light fades over her as she rotates away.
- **Objective / Task:** None.
- **Player Feedback:** Subtle audio emphasis as the echo returns, then silence.

## Actions:

- Player may linger or pass the viewport.
- Companions exchange restrained lines before control continues.

## Dialogue:

“**Technician** (quiet): "That's her... she wanted to go swim."  
**Cultist:** "She did. Just not where water waits."

## Triggers:

- Active only if *Siren Status = Exposed*.

## Notes:

- Image should read as stylized and minimal—slow rotation, no particulate effects.
- If the Siren was contained, this beat is skipped to maintain forward pacing.

# Narrative Intent

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Small yet pivotal interlude distinguishing the companions' moral frameworks:

- **Technician:** Empathy and human guilt.
- **Cultist:** Reverence for pacification and ritual acceptance.
- **Player:** Confronts ambiguous cost of mercy versus restraint.

The scene reinforces the project's thematic core — **tranquil annihilation versus human preservation** — framed through quiet tension rather than exposition.

# Mechanical Lessons Embedded

<b>Mechanic Introduced / Reinforced</b>	<b>Context in Scene</b>	<b>Emotional / Narrative Purpose</b>
Companion affinity tracking	Technician (+/-), Cultist (+/-) based on choices	Builds negotiated relationship tone
Branching micro-choice	"Investigate / Stay on mission" and "Assist / Withdraw"	Teaches moral impact without pausing flow
Environmental storytelling via payoff	Drifting figure outside station	Shows consequence through visual memory
Audio as emotional signature	Returning song motif after withdrawal	Establishes pacification's haunting presence