



The Dungeons & Destiny Project
Origin Stories

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RESURRECTION

In the universe of *Destiny*, all Guardians share the experience of a first resurrection, when a Ghost found their dead remains and reconstituted them into a living Lightbearer. This module provides settings and encounters for you to create this experience of first resurrection and role-play the origin story for each of the players in your *Dungeons & Destiny* campaign. It essentially functions as a one-shot, and you may use it to begin a larger campaign, or conduct it as a separate aside to revisit the first steps of your players' existing characters, like a sort of flashback. For new players, it should provide a suitable introduction to the *Destiny* setting as well as the *Dungeons & Destiny* system.

The module is designed to be played individually between a single player and you, the Architect. It assumes you will role-play as the Guardian's Ghost.

BE READY FOR IMPROV

While we try to provide a solid structure and series of events for you to work with, like always, there is no telling what your player may choose to do. You should be ready to adjust content on the fly.

However, if you are uncomfortable with improvising or it's just not how you'd like to proceed, make sure you communicate to your player ahead of time that you would prefer to follow the structure in the module. Even so, there are some situations where you will need to adjust or account for variations in the content based on prior player actions, such as an enemy still being alive in one scene because the player chose not to kill them in a previous scene.

Like always, **read through the content in its entirety before starting your session.**

TEXT SUGGESTIONS

All text in flavor boxes should be read aloud to your player when applicable. You may have to make adjustments to this text based on the particular situation. In some cases we suggest possible variations within square brackets.

YOU ARE THE ARCHITECT

Feel free to adapt the module however you see fit to accommodate the needs of your players and your campaign. If you want your player characters to meet each other in the course of their respective origin stories, you can arrange to bring them together at any point in the module—we even suggest some points suitable for doing so. If your players wish to have a shared origin story for some reason (perhaps their Guardians were all found by a group of questing Ghosts that traveled together), you can use the module for that with moderate adjustment.

You can also decide to have the player role-play their own Ghost, or to bring in a second player who exclusively role-plays as the Ghost. Either way, because the module assumes *you* will be the Ghost, you will need to make adjustments and communicate with whoever is playing the Ghost ahead of time. You may even want the person playing as the Ghost to read the module themselves, if they are not also playing the Guardian.

Whatever changes you decide to make, *go for it!* You are the Architect of the campaign.

THIS IS NOT A SESSION ZERO

Session zero is an informal term for a planning or prep session common among TTRPG groups. In a session zero, players and Architect come together to discuss the kind of game they want to play, which rule system they will use, the setting, any homebrew rules that come into effect, what characters they will make, and what expectations exist for both the players and the Architect, among other topics.

The content in these modules is not a substitute for a session zero. Even though this is meant to be introductory content, you will still want to discuss things ahead of time with your player.

STARTING LOCATION

Your player's new life as a Risen Lightbearer—a Guardian—begins when their Ghost discovers their remains. Ask where your player's character died before being found by their Ghost, and choose one of the following locations. Their choice of location determines where they start out, and the sort of difficulties they may encounter in attempting to reach the Last City and the Tower.

- Earth—Cosmodrome, Old Russia
- Earth—European Dead Zone
- The Moon—Ocean of Storms
- Mars—Meridian Bay

THE GUARDIAN'S GHOST

The Traveler created a Ghost with a mysterious instinct to search for you and you alone among all the dead of humanity, despite not knowing who you were or where to find your remains. Your Ghost is not merely an autonomous drone carrying the gift of the Traveler's Light, but a sentient intelligence with as much personality and depth of feeling as any human.

Ask your player to select their Ghost's pronouns and general persona. A Ghost Persona table is provided below to help uncertain players get started, or to help spark ideas. If the player prefers it, you may select Ghost Persona options for your player, or choose randomly.

GHOST PERSONA

d6 Core Personality Trait	d6 Defining Ideal	d6 Flaw
1 I idolize another famous Guardian, and constantly desire my Guardian to live up to those expectations.	1 Independence. I go where I want, when I want. I'm confident I can handle whatever challenges I'm presented with.	1 I have very unrealistic expectations of everyone, even myself.
2 I am intolerant of anyone who disrespects the Vanguard or the Traveler.	2 Hope. Humanity isn't lost. If we work together, we can push back the Darkness once and for all.	2 I absolutely refuse to hold items for my Guardian. I'm not a mule!
3 I hate being in my pocket backpack.	3 Respect. We should always be polite to each other. Nobody deserves to be treated with disgrace.	3 I am very bad at math, and I don't like to admit it.
4 I often get distracted by my surroundings and love to wander.	4 Logic. Emotions should not get in the way of our decision-making.	4 I believe my Guardian is the best Guardian and can never do anything wrong.
5 As much as I desire to find my Guardian, I am scared about what they may be like.	5 Greed. Everyone is out for themselves, and so am I.	5 I often wander away from my Guardian without telling them.
6 I love to gamble.	6 Honor. If I dishonor myself, I dishonor all Ghosts.	6 I don't like other people and will try to keep my Guardian from joining a fireteam however I can.

DEATH COMES

If at any time the player's Guardian dies, proceed directly to *Death is Temporary*.

THE COSMODROME

The Cosmodrome in Old Russia is a vast industrial ruin, a rusted reminder of the lofty aspirations of humanity's Golden Age. Its walled expanse contains the remains of an enormous spaceport complex, which most notably served to launch the towering colony ships of the Exodus program. The upright derelicts of Exodus ships that never lifted off stand like grim sentinels overlooking the Cosmodrome's many bunkers, hangars, control towers, and service roads spread over a large region of Russian steppe.

Guardians may be resurrected in the Cosmodrome without restriction at any point after the Collapse, up to the period following the SIVA Crisis. At that time, the entire Cosmodrome was quarantined by the Vanguard. New resurrections may still occur there at later times, but you may wish to take into account the fact of the quarantine, the possibility of SIVA's lingering presence, and the large-scale withdrawal of the Fallen from the area in the months preceding the Red War.

EYES UP

This is where you have the opportunity to introduce your player's Ghost to them, and the player can roleplay as their Guardian, taking their very first steps and forming their very first thoughts in this second life. Read the text in the box below to your player(s) when you're ready to begin. After, allow the player's Guardian to ask up to three questions that the Ghost can then answer. Some common questions and possible answers are provided below, but be prepared to come up with your own answers to unique questions, or to modify answers to fit the personality of the Ghost.

You awaken, absolutely disoriented, and sit up as your vision clears. You don't remember how you got here—wherever here is. Looking around, you behold a desolate plain, dotted with pines and dusted with snow, the horizon obscured by a titanic dilapidated wall. A vast sea of rusted metal surrounds you: the overgrown chassis of abandoned cars, the angular bones of crumbling infrastructure, and the towering corpses of immense colony ships gone to rot on their launchpads. Before you can even begin to get your bearings, you hear a voice.

"What are you?"

- Ghost Answer: "I'm a Ghost—well, now that I've found you, I'm *your* Ghost. The Traveler made me to find you, and bring you its Light."

"Who am I?"

- Ghost Answer: "You've been dead, and your old life died with you. You're a new person now—and a Guardian."

"Where am I?"

- Ghost Answer: "This is Earth, part of Old Russia. Looks like it was a huge spaceport."

ENCOUNTER'S END

Once the Guardian has asked any three questions, the Ghost will need to interrupt or otherwise prevent the Guardian from asking any more, saying that further explanation can wait till later. Right now they need to get out of the open and find some shelter, as night is approaching.

The Ghost offers two options for the Guardian: either head toward the huge Cosmodrome wall, or head into the nearby woods. Alternatively, the Ghost might simply tell the Guardian which way to go.

If the Guardian goes toward the wall, proceed to *Shelter in the Wall*. If the Guardian goes toward the woods, proceed to *Shelter in the Woods*.

Whichever direction the Guardian chooses, ask the player if their Guardian will sneak or move normally. If they are sneaking, they arrive at the scenario for their shelter well after sunset. If they are moving normally, they arrive during sunset.

SHELTER IN THE WALL

Spurred on by your Ghost, you get on your feet, and find yourself less shaky than you'd have thought. With the first deep breath of your new life, you start walking toward the distant mass of the gargantuan wall that seems to pen in the entire Cosmodrome. You expected your mind to overflow with more questions, but once you get moving toward your goal, a quiet focus settles over you. Your Ghost floats along beside you sometimes, or occasionally darts ahead or to the side to examine bits of rubble, but mostly it stays vanished from view—though somehow you can still feel its presence.

Hours creep by as you make your way toward the wall. By the time you approach its base, the sunlight [is dwindling/has dwindled away], [casting/deepening] looming shadows of the wall's silent bulk. You spot an open hatchway and slip through into the wall.

You squeeze through the narrow entry corridor, following the dim flicker of ancient lighting somehow still connected to regenerative batteries, until you emerge into the wall's yawning interior space. Inside, the wall is like a cloistered industrial city, seeming to run on forever into its own darkness. Though dead and still now, it echoes with the tentative calls of night animals and the whistle of wind through its cracked conduits and broken gratings.

Scrabbling peripheral motion interrupts your survey, and instinctively you drop into a crouch. Turning your full attention toward the movement that caught your eye, you behold something truly strange: a lithe, lanky figure, draped in a tattered cloak of rusty, dried-blood red. Two pairs of arms reach out probingly, and in its three-fingered hands it gingerly cradles and picks at a dust-caked rifle.

Your Ghost blinks into being beside your head, looking on with you. "Fallen," it whispers. "A vandal. Decidedly hostile."

The Guardian can deal with this enemy however they see fit. Perhaps they try to fight the vandal, or perhaps they wait until the vandal leaves. The Ghost might even have some strong opinions on how the Guardian should handle things.

Approached Stealthily. If the Guardian sneaked into the wall, the Guardian will get a surprise round if they decide to attack the vandal. They will also get advantage on the first Dexterity (Stealth) roll they make in the encounter, regardless of the reason for the roll (hiding, stealing, moving around, etc.).

Moved at a Normal Pace. If the Guardian made their way normally to the wall, they or their Ghost will notice that a beam of sunlight is coming through at just the right angle that if the Guardian were to adjust a piece of bent, reflective material in the nearby wreckage, the sunlight would go directly into the vandal's eyes, causing the vandal to become Blinded.

VANDAL'S LOOT

The items the vandal carries are listed below. The Guardian and/or the Ghost may be able to identify these items before engaging with the vandal; use your best judgement.

- 1 simple firearm, either an auto rifle, pulse rifle, or scout rifle (Architect's choice or select at random)
- 1 tiny cube of glimmer (13 bits, approx. 1" cube)
- 1 empty ether canister
- 1 House of Devils banner cloak

ENCOUNTER'S END

After the Guardian defeats or slips past the vandal, proceed to *Alone in the Wilds*.

SHELTER IN THE WOODS

Spurred on by your Ghost, you get on your feet, and find yourself less shaky than you'd have thought. With the first deep breath of your new life, you start walking toward the sparse forest that encroaches upon the Cosmodrome's edge. You expected your mind to overflow with more questions, but once you get moving toward your goal, a quiet focus settles over you. Your Ghost floats along beside you sometimes, or occasionally darts ahead or to the side to examine bits of rubble, but mostly it stays vanished from view—though somehow you can still feel its presence. Hours creep by as you make your way into the woods. By the time you're deep enough that the thin trees offer any real cover, the sunlight [is dwindling/has dwindled away], [casting/deepening] cracked shadows stretching between the trees.

Scrabbling noises catch your ears, and instinctively you drop into a crouch. Turning your full attention in the direction of the sound, you behold something truly strange: two hunched, emaciated figures crouched over a sputtered-out attempt at a campfire, their spare, worn armor daubed with rusty, dried-blood red. One is turned in your direction, revealing a face with two pairs of gleaming eyes above a mouth dense with small, pointed teeth. The other dejectedly pokes at the dirt between them with a dessicated stick.

Your Ghost blinks into being beside your head, looking on with you. "Dregs," it whispers. "The weakest of the Fallen, but still decidedly hostile."

The Guardian can deal with these dregs however they want. They could try attacking directly, or maybe luring one away and picking off each one separately. The Ghost might even have suggestions on how the Guardian could handle things.

Approached Stealthily. If the Guardian moved stealthily into the woods, they can catch the dregs in the middle of a conversation that they could eavesdrop on (see below). The Guardian will also get a surprise round if they decide to attack the dregs, and advantage on the first Dexterity (Stealth) roll they make in the encounter, regardless of the reason for the roll (hiding, stealing, moving around, etc.).

Moved At a Normal Pace. If the Guardian walked normally into the woods, the dregs will notice as soon as the Guardian is nearby. They will immediately begin cowering, completely unprepared for a fight against a Lightbearer. The Guardian gets advantage on their first Charisma (Intimidation) roll, such as if they decide to try to scare the dregs off, and the Guardian can get a surprise round if they decide to immediately launch into a fight instead.

DREGS' LOOT

The items the dregs have with them are listed below. The Guardian and/or the Ghost may be able to identify these items before engaging with the dregs; use your best judgement.

- 1 tiny cube of glimmer (13 bits, approx. 1" cube)
- 1 empty ether canister
- 1 carved amethyst bead

EAVESDROPPING

If the Guardian is able to eavesdrop on the dregs, read them the text below.

From your hidden vantage close by, you can clearly make out the clicks and guttural trills of the two dregs' conversation. You don't understand their alien language, but your Ghost offers to translate. Hovering next to your ear, it quietly tells you what they're saying:

"Riksis' great glory is not shared with us, but hoarded up like the ether in his servitors."

"Glory and ether are for archons to hoard, and us only to scabble and fight over."

"We fight. We kill. We survive... Yet no betterment for us. All we win, we tithe."

"Some bright day will see our limbs grown back. For that we survive."

"The captains must feed Riksis' hungry will. They spare no thought for our redemption. Not enough to spare."

The dregs fall silent, and the one with the stick resumes dejectedly poking the dirt.

ENCOUNTER'S END

After the Guardian defeats, frightens away, or slips past the dregs, proceed to *Alone in the Wilds*.

ALONE IN THE WILDS

After the run-in with the House of Devils Fallen, the Guardian finds shelter for the night. They can now choose to roleplay with their Ghost again, asking additional questions, including anything new brought up by the encounter they had. Or they can just quietly bed down for the night.

Before going to sleep, the Ghost will either decide for the Guardian, or will ask the Guardian, what they want to do in the morning: search for a salvageable jumpship, or try to locate other Guardians that the Ghost encountered earlier. Their choice determines which encounter they go to next.

FIND A JUMPSHIP

If the Guardian is going to search for a jumpship, and also took shelter in the Cosmodrome wall, proceed directly to *Up and Away*.

However, if the Guardian is going to search for a jumpship but headed into the woods, they must complete an additional encounter before proceeding to *Up and Away*. Go to the Additional Encounters section, choose an encounter, resolve it, and then proceed to *Up and Away*.

SEEK OTHER GUARDIANS

If the Guardian is going to seek other Guardians, and they took shelter in the woods, proceed directly to *Friends You Haven't Met Yet*.

If the Guardian is going to seek other Guardians, but ventured into the Cosmodrome wall, they must complete an additional encounter before proceeding to *Friends You Haven't Met Yet*. Go to the Additional Encounters section, choose an encounter, resolve it, and then proceed to *Friends You Haven't Met Yet*.

UP AND AWAY

After what seems like days clambering through the rusted shadows of the Cosmodrome wall, you finally come to the end of your Ghost's lead: the door to the rear of a hangar abutting the base of the wall. Your Ghost confirms the presence of a workable jumpship drive on the other side. Corrosion has fused the door in place, but it looks like you can work it loose—or just break through. As you consider how to proceed, your Ghost cautions you about attracting the Devils with loud noise.

A small House of Devils pirate crew (1 vandal, 1 dreg, and a welder shank) waits inside the hangar, working to salvage the same jumpship the Guardian hopes to claim. It will be impossible to get inside and have Ghost repair the jumpship without a fight, but how the Guardian chooses to proceed will affect the situation. The DC for any skill checks the Guardian makes in this situation should be 13.

Breaking Down the Door. If the Guardian chooses to break down the door, or simply makes too much noise trying to get through, the Fallen detect their presence and the fight begins immediately.

Getting Inside Stealthily. If the Guardian succeeds in opening the door without alerting the Fallen, they have an opportunity to survey the hangar interior before beginning the fight. They can also try to sneak into the hangar to reach a more advantageous position behind cover, to surprise the Fallen, or to collect a martial weapon that they or their Ghost will notice nearby. What type of martial weapon it is, exactly, is for you to decide.

Approaching the Jumpship. If the Guardian succeeds in getting close enough to the jumpship, their Ghost will notice its weapons are operable. The Guardian may then attempt to sneak into the cockpit so the Ghost can bring the weapons online, allowing the Guardian to obliterate the pirate crew.

ENCOUNTER'S END

Once the Guardian has defeated the Fallen, their Ghost will be able to safely restore the jumpship's flight capability. However, it will still be in need of repairs, and Ghost will recommend flying to the Last City to seek assistance in the Tower hangar. They should have just enough fuel to do so. This ends both the encounter and this origin story.

FRIENDS YOU HAVEN'T MET YET

Eerie silence lingers between the trees. Though the forest seems empty, you move as quietly as you can and try to keep in cover as you wend your way forward—whatever 'forward' means in this bizarre situation. Your Ghost says a

fireteam of Guardians passed by not far from the other edge of the woods a few days before your resurrection. You hope you can catch up to them, even as you wonder what kind of people they are.

A small House of Devils scouting party (2 dregs, 2 shanks) lurks in the woods, hiding from the fireteam the Guardian's Ghost spotted earlier. They are eager to revenge themselves upon a weak, lost Risen, and hope to claim the Guardian's Ghost, a prize most rich. The DC for any skill check the Guardian makes in this encounter should be 13.

Detecting the Fallen. If the Guardian detects the presence of the Fallen and proceeds cautiously, it may be possible to avoid being spotted and evade combat entirely. If they can clear the woods without being seen or overtaken by the Fallen, the fireteam's camp will be visible from the treeline, and the way will be clear.

Failing to Detect the Fallen. If the Guardian does not notice the Fallen, they will attack in an ambush. The sound of weapons fire will attract the attention of the nearby fireteam, but the Guardian must survive until they arrive to assist. The friendly fireteam arrives on initiative 0, losing all ties.

ENCOUNTER'S END

Once the Guardian has made contact with the fireteam, they will offer help and invite the Guardian to join them. Depending on the framing of your campaign's story, these Risen can be NPCs who simply escort the Guardian to the Tower, or the Guardian's backstory can include traveling with this fireteam for some time. You may even coordinate your players' characters backstories such that this fireteam includes other player characters in your campaign. This ends both the encounter and this origin story.

EUROPEAN DEAD ZONE

The European Dead Zone, or EDZ, is a large swath of western European countryside dotted with ruined urban and industrial areas. During the cataclysmic events of the Collapse, a massive fragment of the Traveler broke off and fell here. Over time, the shard's paracausal energies exerted strange effects on the land, giving rise to an unearthly dark forest that grew densely around it. The titanic, cracked half-dome of the shard dominates the horizon from every vantage in the EDZ, and lightning-wracked storms constantly swirl around it. It is regarded with a mix of reverence and wariness.

Guardians may be resurrected in the EDZ without restriction at any time after the Collapse. Bear in mind that as a dead zone, the Vanguard maintained a sanction against most operations in the area which lasted until the time of the Red War.

EYES UP

This is where you have the opportunity to introduce your player's Ghost to them, and the player can roleplay as their Guardian, taking their very first steps and forming their very first thoughts in this second life. Read the text in the box below to your player(s) when you're ready to begin. After, allow the player's Guardian to ask up to three questions that the Ghost can then answer. Some common questions and possible answers are provided below, but be prepared to come up with your own answers to unique questions, or to modify answers to fit the personality of the Ghost.

You awaken, absolutely disoriented, and sit up as your vision clears. You don't remember how you got here—wherever here is. Looking around, you behold a quiet, damp woodland, an ancient forest here and there interrupted by fragments of crumbling walls and the remnants of rusted wreckage—the only indications this used to be anything other than woods. Before you can even begin to get your bearings, you hear a voice.

"What are you?"

- Ghost Answer: "I'm a Ghost—well, now that I've found you, I'm *your* Ghost. The Traveler made me to find you, and bring you its Light."

"Who am I?"

- Ghost Answer: "You've been dead, and your old life died with you. You're a new person now—and a Guardian."

"Where am I?"

- Ghost Answer: "This is Earth, somewhere in what used to be Germanophone Europe. It's all a big dead zone now."

MOVING ON

Once the Guardian has asked any three questions, the Ghost will need to interrupt or otherwise prevent the Guardian from asking any more, saying that further explanation can wait till later. Right now they need to get out of the open and find some shelter, as night is approaching.

The Ghost offers three options for the Guardian: remain in the woods, and take shelter in a nearby cave; head toward the ruined highway that borders the woods in one direction; or make for the ruins of a village on the outskirts of the forest in another direction. Alternatively, the Ghost might simply tell the Guardian which way to go.

If the Guardian heads to the cave, proceed to *Gone to Ground*. If the Guardian goes to find the highway, proceed to *Bridge Trolls*. If the Guardian goes toward the village, proceed to *The Village Green*.

Whichever direction the Guardian goes, ask the player if their Guardian will move stealthily, or move normally. If they are moving stealthily, they arrive at the scenario for their shelter well after sunset. If they are moving normally, they arrive during sunset.

GONE TO GROUND

Spurred on by your Ghost, you get on your feet, and find yourself less shaky than you'd have thought. With the first deep breath of your new life, you start walking deeper into the forest, in the direction your Ghost says they passed a cave a little while ago. You expected your mind to overflow with more questions, but once you get moving toward your goal, a quiet focus settles over you. Your Ghost floats along beside you sometimes, or occasionally darts ahead or to the side to examine a cracked rock or fallen log, but mostly it stays vanished from view—though somehow you can still feel its presence.

Hours creep by as you make your way through the woods. By the time you spot the rocky cave mouth, the sunlight [is dwindling/has dwindled away], [casting/deepening] dense shadows that clog the space between the trees. Your Ghost projects a bright beam like a lantern as you stoop to enter the dark cave. With that illumination available, you don't need to stay close to the entrance to be able to see, so you decide to venture at least deep enough that you'll be out of sight from the cave's opening. Fortunately the cavern ceiling rises after a short distance, and you're able to stand normally.

A few steps farther and a bend in the cave walls breaks line of sight with the entrance—but your momentary relief at finding shelter evaporates abruptly when you notice dim, yellowish light coming from deeper ahead. Instinctively you drop into a crouch as your Ghost's flashlight blinks out. Craning your neck, you peer around the curving rock to spot the light source: a rugged field lamp, sitting atop a couple of small supply crates. Beside the crates slumps a hulking mass, which at first you mistake for another rock. As your eyes adjust to the low lamplight, you make out the contours of a huge armored figure with rounded shoulders. Some viscous oily stuff is splattered on one of its armored legs, forming a small pool on the stone beneath.

Your Ghost hovers beside your head, looking on with you. "Cabal," it whispers. "A soldier in the biggest, meanest alien army in the galaxy... but this one's alone. Must be a deserter."

The Cabal deserter is a legionary with an injured leg (halved movement speed, add Tusks and Gore to the standard legionary stat block). She's not necessarily hostile, but will try to fight if threatened. The Guardian can opt to just attack or try to interact. The legionary only speaks Ulurant, which the Ghost can translate, and if the Guardian gives some indication they mean her no harm, she will stand down.

Approached Stealthily. If the Guardian moved stealthily to this encounter, they can observe the situation and scope things out, and get a surprise round against the legionary if they decide to fight.

If they try to sneak back out of the cave to avoid the legionary, they must succeed on a DC 18 Dexterity (Stealth) ability check or they make noise and the legionary notices them immediately. If they succeed, the legionary does not notice them.

Moved at a Normal Pace. If the Guardian moved normally, the legionary notices them immediately.

CABAL'S LOOT

She has a human firearm (auto rifle if the Guardian is a Titan, scout rifle if the Guardian is a Hunter, and pulse rifle if the Guardian is a Warlock), and will grab it and point it at the Guardian if threatened, but she's not able to use it. The supply crate also has the following contents:

- 200 glimmer in various bits and cubes
- 1 Weaponsmithing toolkit
- 1 gallon container of Cabal hydrostatic organogel
- Cabal foodstuffs

INTERACTING WITH THE LEGIONARY

If the Guardian interacts with the legionary and offers to try to provide some sort of help with her leg, the legionary will offer the gun in thanks. If the Guardian first indicates an interest in the gun, the legionary will ask for help with her injured leg in exchange.

The Guardian can't do anything about the wound itself, but should be able to tell the main problem is damage to the pressurized armor. If they can jury-rig a repair or seal of the breach, that'll do the trick. They can use the weaponsmithing kit in the legionary's supply crates, or their Ghost may be able to synthesize something using glimmer.

ENCOUNTER'S END

If the Guardian interacts with the legionary instead of fighting, she'll also tell them about a nearby transceiver station, and the Guardian can proceed directly to *A Voice in the Woods*.

If the Guardian does not learn this from the legionary, they must complete an additional encounter before their Ghost is able to detect the location of the nearby transceiver station, or before the Guardian stumbles upon it on their own. Either way, have the Guardian complete an additional encounter before proceeding to *A Voice in the Woods*.

BRIDGE TROLLS

Spurred on by your Ghost, you get on your feet, and find yourself less shaky than you'd have thought. With the first deep breath of your new life, you start walking toward the forest's edge, in the direction your Ghost says an old, ruined road borders the woods. You expected your mind to overflow with more questions, but once you get moving toward your goal, a quiet focus settles over you. Your Ghost floats along beside you sometimes, or occasionally darts ahead or to the side to examine a cracked rock or fallen log, but mostly it stays vanished from view—though somehow you can still feel its presence.

Hours creep by as you make your way through the forest. By the time you approach the treeline, the sunlight [is dwindling/has dwindled away], [casting/deepening] cracked shadows stretching between the trees. Between the trunks, you catch sight of the old road as it rises into an overpass, mostly still standing on its blocky concrete pylons. The bridge should provide passable shelter for the night—but as you clear the trees and get an unobstructed view, you behold something truly strange: two hunched, emaciated figures crouched under the bridge, their spare, worn armor daubed with rusty, dried-blood red. One is turned in your direction, revealing a face with two pairs of gleaming eyes above a mouth dense with small, pointed teeth. Three humans sit slumped a short distance away, their hands and feet bound.

Your Ghost blinks into being beside your head, looking on with you. "Dregs," it whispers. "The weakest of the Fallen, but still decidedly hostile. And those people must be refugees, headed for the Last City, or just living out here in the dead zone. Either way, they can probably help us—if we can get them away from the Fallen."

These two House Devils dregs caught the humans separated from their encampment and are taking them to some unsavory fate. The Guardian can attempt to rescue them however they want: direct attack, drawing off the dregs with some distraction, trying to sneak up to untie the humans, etc.

Start Distance. Guardians start the encounter 30 feet away from the dregs and prisoners.

Ghost Advantage. The Ghost should inform the Guardian that they can transmat the bindings off the prisoners, if the Ghost can get close enough.

Escaping Prisoners. If the dregs notice the humans trying to escape, one of them will concentrate on killing the prisoners. They'll only both attack the Guardian if the humans are still bound. If the prisoners are freed and the Guardian gets in a fight with the dregs, the prisoners will try to fight the dregs as well.

IF ARRIVING DURING SUNSET

The Guardian must immediately make a DC 13 Dexterity (Stealth) check. On a failed check, the dregs notice them and initiative is rolled. On a successful check, initiative is not rolled and the Guardian gains a surprise round. The surprise round starts as soon as the Guardian decides to move or make an attack. Until then, the Guardian can keep still and remain unnoticed indefinitely.

Ghost Advantage. The Guardian's Ghost is much smaller and can hide itself much more easily, and only needs a Dexterity (Stealth) roll, or passive Stealth, of 13 to move about unhindered, so long as it does not try to fly within 15 feet of the dregs. Any successfully sneaky movement from the Ghost will not start the surprise round for the Guardian.

The Ghost should tell the Guardian that it can possibly sneak around the area, if the Guardian does not realize this themselves.

Nearby Weapon. There is a discarded hand cannon nearby. The Guardian or their Ghost will need a Wisdom (Perception) roll, or passive Perception score, of 11 to notice it. The weapon is 30 feet from the dregs. It has no ammunition, but the Guardian's Ghost may have a magazine in its memory, or may be able to synthesize ammunition using glimmer.

IF ARRIVING AFTER SUNSET

The Guardian can observe the scene and remain undetected indefinitely, so long as they do not move. If the Guardian attacks before the dregs notice them, the Guardian gets a surprise round. If the Guardian or their Ghost wants to move, they will need a successful Dexterity (Stealth) check, or passive Stealth, of 13 to remain undetected.

While undetected, the Guardian or their Ghost (or both) can move to be within 10 feet of the dregs, or within 10 feet of the prisoners, without having to make another Dexterity (Stealth) check. To move any closer, the Guardian and/or Ghost will need to succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity (Stealth) check or they will be noticed and initiative will be rolled—no surprise round is given if the Guardian or their Ghost is noticed.

Nearby Weapon. There is a discarded hand cannon nearby. The Guardian or their Ghost will need a Wisdom (Perception) roll, or passive Perception score, of 14 to notice it. The weapon is 30 feet from the dregs. It has no ammunition, but the Guardian's Ghost may have a magazine in its memory, or may be able to synthesize ammunition using glimmer.

ENCOUNTER'S END

This encounter is resolved when the dregs are dead, or when the Guardian manages to escape to an appropriately safe distance, with or without at least one of the prisoners. If at least one prisoner survives, they tell the Guardian they are pilgrims passing through the EDZ, and ask if the Guardian can help them reach the Last City. In hopes of receiving the Guardian's assistance, the pilgrims tell the Guardian they heard about a nearby transceiver station before they were separated from their caravan. Proceed to *A Voice in the Woods*.

If none of the prisoners survive, or if the Guardian decides to bypass the encounter, they continue wandering, and must complete an additional encounter before proceeding to *A Voice in the Woods*.

THE VILLAGE GREEN

Spurred on by your Ghost, you get on your feet, and find yourself less shaky than you'd have thought. With the first deep breath of your new life, you start walking toward the forest's edge, in the direction your Ghost says an old, ruined village sits just outside the woods. You expected your mind to overflow with more questions, but once you get moving toward your goal, a quiet focus settles over you. Your Ghost floats along beside you sometimes, or occasionally darts ahead or to the side to examine a cracked rock or fallen log, but mostly it stays vanished from view—though somehow you can still feel its presence.

Hours creep by as you make your way through the forest. By the time you approach the treeline, the sunlight [is dwindling/has dwindled away], [casting/deepening] cracked shadows stretching between the trees. Between the trunks, you catch sight of several low buildings' dim outlines against the [evening/twilight] sky. Low light is visible through one cracked window, and a wispy thread of smoke trails from a rusty stovepipe chimney.

Your Ghost blinks into being beside your head, looking on with you. "Looks like someone's home," it whispers. "Careful. There's no telling who it is, or how they're disposed toward guests."

Here your Guardian will have an opportunity to interact with a group of survivors in the wild. Remember, like always, read through everything before getting started.

Approached Stealthily. If the Guardian moved stealthily to this encounter, they or their Ghost must have a passive Perception or Survival of 14 to notice a net trap hidden among the leaf litter. Failure to notice the trap means the Guardian springs the trap during whatever next movement they make. The trap causes the Guardian to become Restrained (escape DC 15), and three villagers will come out to see what's going on.

If the net trap is spotted, the Guardian and their Ghost can decide to leave without interacting with the village. Doing so means they will need to complete an additional encounter before proceeding to *A Voice in the Woods*.

Moved at a Normal Pace. If the Guardian approached this encounter normally, one human steps out from a building and offers a wary greeting. Unless the Guardian chooses to act hostile or aggressive, the human will warn the Guardian of a net trap to avoid.

INTERACTING WITH THE VILLAGE

Once interaction with any villager starts, the Guardian enters a faction relations encounter. The faction the Guardian is interacting with consists of five adult human survivors living in this old village. The disposition of the faction toward the Guardian determines how the faction interacts with the Guardian, as seen in the table below.

Disposition	Response	Faction's Values	Faction's Fears
5	Friendly	Kindness, honesty, respectful behavior	Hostile, rude, or intolerant behavior
4	Appreciative	Telling stories	Being forced to move to the City
3	Neutral	Volunteering for tasks	Unwillingness to contribute
2	Wary		
1	Distrustful		
0	Aggressive		

This faction starts at a disposition of 2. Whenever the Guardian performs an action, or engages in a significant dialogue, that is helpful, supportive, calm, or friendly to the faction, the faction's disposition increases. Whenever the Guardian performs an action, or engages in a significant dialogue, that is aggressive, rude, hostile, detrimental, or discouraging to the faction, the faction's disposition decreases. The definition of "significant dialogue" is left up to you: it will be your call whether something the Guardian says has a meaningful impact on the faction.

The Values and Fears of the faction listed above are to help you determine whether, from the perspective of the faction, the Guardian is acting positively or negatively toward them. However, ultimately it will largely be your decision if the Guardian is earning the faction's trust or not with their actions and dialogue.

GUARDIAN REVELATION

If the Guardian decides to reveal they are a Guardian, the faction's disposition will not inherently increase or decrease. However, once the faction knows the Guardian is a Guardian, they will *never* try to kill the Guardian, and they will instead become fearful and subservient if their disposition reaches 0, revealing the location of a transceiver nearby out of hope it will keep the Guardian from hurting them. The Guardian will need to complete one additional encounter before proceeding to *A Voice in the Woods*.

REACHING FRIENDLY STATUS

If the Guardian ever reaches Friendly status with the faction, the faction will inform the Guardian that they have a transceiver in the village that just needs the generator fixed before it can be used. The villagers will ask that the Guardian does *not* mention their existence, however. They like living out here and they don't want to be forced to move to the Last City.

FIXING THE GENERATOR

To fix the generator, the Guardian will need to complete a DC 12 skill challenge with three successes. Both the Guardian and the Ghost can participate in the skill challenge.

Challenge Succeeded. If the skill challenge is passed, the generator is fixed and the villagers offer the Guardian a hand cannon, with ammunition, as thanks for the assistance. Proceed directly to *A Voice in the Woods*.

Challenge Failed. If they fail, the Guardian's Ghost informs everyone the situation can still be salvaged, they just need to acquire some glimmer and usable scrap wire. The villagers will be able to scrape together the glimmer needed. The Guardian will need to complete one additional encounter before finding the scrap wire needed. After doing so they can return to the village, and proceed to *A Voice in the Woods*.

ENCOUNTER'S END

The encounter ends whenever the Guardian decides to proceed to *A Voice in the Woods*, after the option becomes available. If the Guardian must complete an additional encounter first, this encounter ends when the Guardian moves on to that additional encounter.

A VOICE IN THE WOODS

At last, you find your way to the transceiver station. It sits in the tilted remains of a tiny hunting shack almost completely overgrown with moss. The equipment inside is obviously old, thoroughly battered, and heavily weatherworn, yet somehow still functional. It sputters to life with a staticky hiss of complaint when you flip the main power switch, and its dials and control interface respond with grudging illumination.

“Honestly, I didn’t think it would work,” your Ghost declares. “But even so, it doesn’t have the range to reach the City, so our best bet is trying to raise other Guardians nearby. Careful, though—we don’t want to broadcast our location far and wide. Guardians might not be the only ones listening.”

At this point, the Guardian will be able to get in contact with a nearby Guardian fireteam as determined by the steps outlined later in this section. You could have this fireteam be inconsequential NPCs who the Guardian never sees again, or they could be the other player characters in your campaign, and this is how they all get introduced to each other. Exactly who they are is up to you. No matter what, the fireteam should readily aid the Guardian and offer transportation back to the Last City. A table of suggested additional aid is provided below, which you can roll on as much or as little as you like, or not at all.

ADDITIONAL AID PROVIDED

d6	Aid Given to Guardian
1	1,000 glimmer
2	Martial weapon (melee or firearm)
3	A Tier 1 simple firearm
4	Food, water, and medical supplies
5	An armorsmithing toolkit, a weaponsmithing toolkit, or a tablet computer (choose what best suits the player’s character)
6	A voucher for a free bowl of ramen

If the Guardian previously completed *Bridge Trolls* and rescued any of the surviving pilgrims, you will have to consider their presence along with the Guardian. If the Guardian previously completed *The Village Green* before reaching this encounter, you will have to account for the inclusion of the villagers in this encounter as well.

OPERATING THE TRANSCEIVER

The Guardian’s Ghost will be able to walk the Guardian through the steps of broadcasting an appropriate signal; the exact steps themselves are insignificant. However, the Ghost should inform the Guardian that, due to the state of the equipment, there is little either of them can do to control which channels the signal is broadcast on, or how far it goes—it’s mostly going to come down to luck.

First, have the Guardian and their Ghost each perform a DC 12 Intelligence (Technology) check. After, tell the Guardian they will need to roll three d20s, plus an additional number of d20s equal to the number of successful Intelligence (Technology) checks made. There are no modifiers to these d20 rolls. Use the table below to determine the result of broadcasting the signal.

Number of d20s that rolled 10 or higher	Result
3 or more	Friendly Guardian team is hailed, no hostiles alerted. See “A Friendly Voice.”
2	Friendly Guardian team is hailed, but so are hostile forces. See “Help Is Close.”
1	Roll a d6. On a roll of 5-6, the Guardian can try to roll the pool of d20s again and use the new result. If the Guardian gets this result twice in a row, or if they do not roll 5-6, they get the result of 0 d20s.
0	Hostile forces are alerted before any friendly Guardians. See “Fight to Survive.”

A FRIENDLY VOICE

The Guardian’s signal is picked up by the Ghost of a nearby Guardian, who opens a private channel with the Guardian’s Ghost. The Guardian can now have a conversation with the friendly Guardian and their fireteam. The fireteam should readily come to the Guardian’s aid and offer transport back to the Last City. The fireteam is only a few minutes away by sparrow. This is a very good opportunity for role-play, while the Guardian waits for the fireteam to arrive.

HELP IS CLOSE

The Guardian’s signal is picked up by the Ghost of a nearby Guardian, who opens a private channel with the Guardian’s Ghost at the same time that the loud, klaxon alarm of a sentry shank echoes through the forest. The sentry shank also detected the Guardian’s signal and is alerting all nearby Fallen of the Guardian’s position!

The Guardian will have to hide, fight, or otherwise survive for 1+1d4 rounds of combat against one shank, one sentry shank, two dregs, and one vandal before the friendly Guardian and their fireteam can arrive. When the fireteam arrives they immediately clear out all hostile forces with their overwhelming strength (feel free to get very cinematic and grandiose with this description if you want). If the Guardian dies before the fireteam arrives, they are resurrected by the friendly fireteam, who have driven back all hostile forces.

FIGHT TO SURVIVE

Before the Ghost can confirm if any friendly forces were reached, a blaring klaxon rings through the forest—the Fallen have picked up their signal! Two shanks, one sentry shank, two dregs, and one vandal begin to hunt down the Guardian. The Guardian has one turn to act before the Fallen arrive. The Guardian must defeat the Fallen, or successfully evade them for 10 minutes, to survive this encounter.

After defeating or evading, the Guardian’s Ghost will receive a call request from a nearby friendly fireteam who heard the noise and are on their way.

If the Guardian dies during this encounter, they are resurrected by the friendly fireteam, who have cleared out the hostile forces.

ENCOUNTER’S END

This encounter, and origin story, ends when the friendly fireteam arrives. This completes the encounter and this origin story.

OCEAN OF STORMS

Oceanus Procellarum is the largest of the Moon's ancient volcanic flood plains, and once played host to humanity's first offworld colony and scientific installations. Many Golden Age structures survive on its surface relatively intact, though the depredations of the Fallen have stripped them clean of most salvageable equipment and materials. Reclamation of lunar territory began in the early City Age, when jumpship restoration efforts enabled more Guardians to break Earth orbit. However, that return was cut short by the emergence of the Hive, whose terrible threat had secretly haunted the Moon for centuries.

Guardians may be resurrected in the Ocean of Storms at any time after the advent of the City Age without restriction, keeping in mind that the disposition of the lunar setting changes dramatically during different periods. Resurrections during the Dark Age, when most Ghosts had yet to venture beyond Earth, are possible but very unlikely, and may require you to modify encounters accordingly.

EYES UP

This is where you have the opportunity to introduce your player's Ghost to them, and the player can roleplay as their Guardian, taking their very first steps and forming their very first thoughts in this second life. Read the text in the box below to your player(s) when you're ready to begin. After, allow the player's Guardian to ask up to three questions that the Ghost can then answer. Some common questions and possible answers are provided below, but be prepared to come up with your own answers to unique questions, or to modify answers to fit the personality of the Ghost.

You awaken, absolutely disoriented, and sit up as your vision clears. You don't remember how you got here—wherever here is. Looking around, you see the dim outlines of a cramped room, visible only by the intermittent glow of stuttering emergency lighting. The floor is littered with loose documents printed on plasticized sheets and a thin, undisturbed layer of dust. You are nonplussed to spot a brittle skeleton encapsulated in a space suit, slumped next to a broken console. Glancing away, you determine that a weighty-looking hatch is the only way in or out. Before you can even get to your feet to move toward it, you hear a voice.

"What are you?"

- Ghost Answer: "I'm a Ghost—well, now that I've found you, I'm *your* Ghost. The Traveler made me to find you, and bring you its Light."

"Who am I?"

- Ghost Answer: "You've been dead, and your old life died with you. You're a new person now—and a Guardian."

"Where am I?"

- Ghost Answer: "This is the Moon, inside an old colony installation."

MOVING ON

Once the Guardian has asked any three questions, the Ghost will need to interrupt or otherwise prevent the Guardian from asking any more, saying that further explanation can wait till later. Right now they need to get out of this part of the lunar installation to avoid a Fallen pirate crew that's been tracking the Ghost.

The Ghost offers two options for the Guardian: either head further into the installation to escape through the underground monorail tunnels, or try to get onto the lunar surface and make a break for it in the open. Alternatively, the Ghost might simply tell the Guardian which way to go.

If the Guardian goes into the tunnels, proceed to *Station to Station*. If the Guardian opts to leave the installation, proceed to *Airlock Blues*.

Whichever direction the Guardian goes, ask the player if their Guardian will sneak or move normally.

STATION TO STATION

Spurred on by your Ghost, you get on your feet, and find yourself less shaky than you'd have thought. Taking care to keep quiet, you slowly unseal the compartment hatch and slip through into the darkened, narrow corridors of the installation, following your Ghost's directions. Some still run straight and solid, while others have partially or totally collapsed, admitting pale beams of faded starlight. At one junction, you stop dead in your tracks to stare through a broken bulkhead, out across the grey stillness of the lunar surface at the glorious blue of Earth peeking over the horizon.

"We have to keep moving," your Ghost says, interrupting your reverie. "The monorail is just ahead."

Another corridor deadends into a maintenance junction. Before you follow your Ghost down a snug ladder tube, you notice the floor hatch has been torn from its hinges. After a long climb, the ladder drops you into a pitch-dark room. You can tell from the echo of your boots on the hard decking that it's a large chamber. Your Ghost bobs up beside your shoulder, shining a bright beam from its eye. There is no other illumination.

Before you have time to ask which way to go, something clatters high above you on the ladder overhead. Both you and your Ghost glance upward, but your Ghost's flashlight only reveals the bottom few rungs of the ladder. "Fallen," it whispers. "I can make it out in infrared. A vandal. Decidedly hostile."

Have your Guardian roll initiative. If they moved stealthily, they have two turns to take actions and decide what to do before the vandal comes down the ladder, and they have advantage on any Dexterity (Stealth) checks they make to hide. If they moved normally, they have one turn before the vandal arrives. In either case, they can deal with this enemy however they see fit. Perhaps they try to fight the vandal, or perhaps they hide and wait until the vandal leaves. The Ghost might even have some strong opinions on how the Guardian should handle things—including how to take advantage of its flashlight to blind and surprise the enemy.

The items the vandal carries are listed below. The Guardian and/or the Ghost may be able to identify these items before engaging with the vandal; use your best judgement.

VANDAL'S LOOT

- 1 tiny cube of glimmer (13 bits, approx. 1" cube)
- 1 half-empty ether canister
- 1 House of Exile banner cloak
- A shock dagger (see Architect's Guide)

ENCOUNTER'S END

After the Guardian deals with the vandal, proceed to *All Aboard*.

ALL ABOARD

Without pausing to dwell on your encounter with a hostile alien pirate, you begin searching the station for a functional monorail car—or at least one your Ghost can get running again. Progress is slow in the inky blackness with only your Ghost's small searchlight to see by, but after a while you come upon an undamaged car sitting on what looks like an unobstructed track. You pry one of the doors partway open and squeeze through, then make your way to the end of the car to check its controls and see about getting it to move.

The Guardian's Ghost can examine the console and determine the car is operable, but they will have to do two things to get it moving: restore power to the track, and engage the car's drive. If they fail at any point, if they try to engage the car's drive before restoring power (their Ghost should warn them not to do this), or if they simply choose not to try, they won't be able to take the car down the rails and will have to go on foot.

RESTORE POWER TO THE TRACK

The Ghost searches along the track and finds a junction box. The Guardian will then have to complete a DC 13 skill challenge with four successes to restore power to the track. Because the junction box is mechanical, and not digital, the Ghost cannot make any skill checks in this challenge, but it can use the Help action to grant the Guardian advantage on their skill checks.

Darkvision Advantage. If the Guardian has darkvision to at least 30 feet, and a passive Perception of 12, they notice a nearby user manual. Apart from some creased pages, a broken spine, and other wear and tear, the book is intact and perfectly legible. Finding this book grants the Guardian one automatic success on this skill challenge. Their Ghost can dismantle the book into 250 bits of glimmer when they're done.

Challenge Failed. If the Guardian fails to restore power to the track, the junction box malfunctions and they must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw, taking 7 (2d6) arc damage on a failed save. They must now proceed on foot, as the power system has been damaged and cannot be repaired.

ENGAGE THE CAR'S DRIVE

After restoring power, the Guardian can return to the car's console and attempt to get it moving. The Ghost is able to report that this vehicle has an ignition sequence they will need to get right, or the car's safety and security failsafes will prevent them from going anywhere. The Ghost can determine what is used *in* the ignition sequence, but they can't figure out the correct order just by scanning the console.

Automatic Success. If the Guardian or the Ghost can succeed on a DC 16 Intelligence (Technology) check, they can immediately determine the correct ignition sequence using context clues and some deductive reasoning, and get the car moving with no trouble.

Trial and Error. The ignition sequence involves three mechanical functions: disengaging the brakes, initializing the engine, and enabling the forward controls. The Guardian can attempt the functions in any order. If they get the order wrong, the sequence resets and they can try again. If they get the order wrong three times the console initiates a safety lockdown, and the Guardian will have to proceed on foot. Have the Guardian give one function at a time, and if the function they give you is the wrong one in the sequence, say the console resets as soon as they attempt that function.

The Solution. The correct order is to initialize the engine, enable forward controls, and then disengage the brakes.

ENCOUNTER'S END

The encounter ends when the Guardian either proceeds on foot or gets the car moving. If the car is moving, the Guardian proceeds directly to *End of Line*. If they proceed on foot, they will need to complete one additional encounter before proceeding to *End of Line*.

END OF LINE

After what felt like forever in the close darkness of the monorail tunnel, you finally emerge back into an open space: a terminal station, which according to your Ghost should have an exit to the surface. Yet your excitement to get back above ground is quashed as you step onto the terminal platform and something squelches putridly under your foot. Some kind of organic detritus litters the platform, and as you begin to look around you see what appear to be heaped egg casings and other slimy growths bulging from the corners of every wall in the station. The far end of the platform has collapsed, dropping off into a fissure that splits nearly the whole terminal. A sickly green glow emanates faintly from deep within the crack.

Your Ghost hovers in front of you, its flashlight off. It almost seems to wear a worried expression. "This could be bad," it cautions you. "We really don't want to awaken the Hive."

The Guardian and their Ghost will need to complete a DC 13 skill challenge with five successes to cross the terminal without drawing the attention of Hive forces.

Hidden Weapon. Whenever they make their first success, they will discover a hidden weapon among the muck. This weapon can be either a fusion rifle, a shotgun, or a grenade launcher, whichever you feel best suits the Guardian. The Guardian's Ghost can easily synthesize ammunition for the weapon.

Challenge Failed. Upon failing the challenge, the Guardian will be forced to roll initiative against arriving Hive forces. The forces that arrive are determined by how many successes the Guardian accumulated before failing the challenge, as shown in the table below. The fewer successes, the more difficult the fight is.

# of Successes	Hives Forces
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0 or 1	1d4 thrall, 1 acolyte, and 1 knight
2	1d4 thrall and 1 acolytes
3	1 acolyte
4	1d4 thrall

The Guardian can choose to fight or escape. Attempting to escape means they will need to complete a DC 13 skill challenge with three successes in order to evade the Hive and reach the exit.

ENCOUNTER'S END

The encounter ends if the Guardian defeats all Hive enemies, or if they complete the escape skill challenge. If they defeat the Hive or successfully escape, they proceed to *Moon Rocks* with no enemies in pursuit. If they attempt the escape skill challenge but do not succeed in shaking the Hive, they arrive at the *Moon Rocks* encounter with the remaining Hive hot on their heels, and you will need to adjust the content of *Moon Rocks* to compensate.

AIRLOCK BLUES

Spurred on by your Ghost, you get on your feet, and find yourself less shaky than you'd have thought. Taking care to keep quiet, you slowly unseal the compartment hatch and slip through into the darkened, narrow corridors of the installation, following your Ghost's directions. Some still run straight and solid, while others have partially or totally collapsed, admitting pale beams of faded starlight. At one junction, you stop dead in your tracks to stare through a broken bulkhead, out across the grey stillness of the lunar surface at the glorious blue of Earth peeking over the horizon.

"You can't jump out there. We have to keep moving," your Ghost says, interrupting your reverie. "The way out is just ahead."

Another corridor deadends into an airlock junction. Its formidable hatch is sealed, and the control panel next to it indicates it's locked. "Huh. That was open a little while ago," your Ghost muses, hovering beside the hatch and scanning the panel with a glittering beam of probing Light. "I can open this. Just give me a minute."

Scraping footfalls from around a corner down the corridor catch your ear. Your Ghost notices too. "It's the Fallen. Decidedly hostile—but sounds like there's only one of them. You'll have to keep it away from me."

Have the Guardian roll initiative against 1 Fallen dreg that is approaching their position. The dreg is 60 feet away through various corridors at the moment initiative is rolled. The Guardian simply needs to do whatever they can to give their Ghost 4 uninterrupted rounds of interacting with the door panel. This may mean killing the dreg, tying it up, blocking the dreg out, hiding until the dreg wanders off, or whatever else the Guardian can think of.

Approached Stealthily. If the Guardian moved stealthily toward this encounter, the dreg will arrive at the end of its second turn. The dreg will still be able to take an action, but it will have no movement remaining when it arrives on the scene.

Moved at a Normal Pace. If the Guardian moved normally to get to this encounter, the dreg will be aware of them and will spend its first turn taking the Dash action. It will arrive on the scene right away, but it will not have any movement or action remaining to do anything.

ENCOUNTER'S END

The encounter ends when the Ghost is able to spend 4 uninterrupted rounds interacting with the door panel. Proceed to *Lunar Sprint*.

LUNAR SPRINT

As soon as it groans open, you leap through the airlock and take off at a clip without bothering to try to close it

behind you. The brightness of the surface is dazzling, but you allow yourself no pause to take in the beautiful, silent emptiness of the silvery lunar landscape. The powdery thuds of your footfalls in the regolith fill your awareness as you dart out, curving around crater lips and hopping over the odd scrap of wreckage.

It doesn't stay silent or empty for long. A piercing, sharp cry rings out from the installation behind you, prompting a quick glance over your shoulder. You spot several four-armed figures, their many eyes all on you. Two have already broken into a low, scurrying run after you.

"Keep moving!" your Ghost's voice tells you. "If we can make it to that ridgetop, I think we can get away."

Without asking what your Ghost has in mind, you just fix your eyes on the low ridge ahead, tilt forward, and run as hard as you can.

The Guardian must make five successful skill checks in order to reach the ridgetop. The skills they use, and why they use each skill, is up to the Guardian. Treat it like a skill challenge, except there is no maximum to the number of failed skill checks the Guardian can accrue, and the Guardian can repeat skills if they already attempted every skill they are proficient in at least once. Additionally, each time the Guardian fails a skill check, one of the Fallen crew members gets to make an attack roll against the Guardian.

THE CREW

The Fallen crew chasing the Guardian consists of two dregs, one marauder, and one sniper vandal. The order of creatures who get to make an attack roll against the Guardian is: dreg 1, dreg 2, marauder, sniper vandal. If the Guardian fails enough for all creatures to have made at least one attack against the Guardian, the order repeats.

FAILED ATTACKS

If a dreg or marauder makes an attack roll that misses, the player can have their Guardian take one action. This action must be either the Attack, Dodge, Dash, or Cast a Light Ability action. The effects of these actions are slightly modified for the situation.

Attack or Cast a Light Ability. The Guardian attacks or casts a Light ability at a Fallen creature of their choice. Assume the dregs and marauder are within 30 feet, but the sniper vandal is at least 60 feet away.

Dodge. The next attack roll against the Guardian has disadvantage.

Dash. The Guardian gains one success in their attempt to escape.

ENCOUNTER'S END

The encounter ends when the Guardian accumulates five successful skill checks. Proceed to *Slip-Sliding Away*.

SLIP-SLIDING AWAY

Your heart pounds in your ears as you scabble to the rocky ridgetop in a flurry of fine dust. Casting your eyes back downhill, you see the Fallen crew pursuing in full force, their swiftest runners already nearly at the base of the ridge.

"Hurry! Through here!" your Ghost urges, bobbing next to a conduit broken open over the lip of the ridge. It continues, apparently intact, down the other side of the ridge at a rather precipitous angle. "It's part of the old ventilation network. The tubing should be clear all the way down. The Fallen can't follow, it branches off in too many places." A moment of hesitation passes as you look dubiously at the dark maw of the conduit, then back to your Ghost. The angry calls of the Fallen grow louder below.

"Come on!" Drawing a deep breath and shaking your head to yourself, you drop feet-first into the conduit and let yourself slide away.

The Guardian has to make a series of predetermined skill checks to determine the outcome of sliding down the conduit.

1. DC 11 Acrobatics, to avoid tumbling awkwardly. Failing this causes disadvantage on the next step.

2. DC 12 Dexterity saving throw, to avoid colliding with the wall of a juncture in the conduit. Failing this causes the Guardian to take 3d6 bludgeoning damage.
3. DC 13 Perception to notice an upcoming object lodged into a rupture in the conduit. Succeeding on this grants advantage on the next step.
4. DC 13 Strength or Dexterity saving throw (Guardian's choice) to grab an old hand cannon wedged in a crack in the conduit as the Guardian slides by.

ENCOUNTER'S END

When all checks are complete, the Guardian then lands in a small, shallow cave near the base of a crater. Their arrival disturbs a pair of Hive thrall gnawing on indeterminate remains. After dealing with them, the Guardian proceeds to *Moon Rocks*.

MOON ROCKS

Brushing the clingy lunar dust from yourself, you emerge into the self-contained clearing of a midsize impact crater. Its sloping walls give you the impression of standing in a small stadium, or perhaps an arena—but you hastily put the latter image out of your mind.

At the rise of the crater's center sits a small heap of stones, clearly deliberately piled together. From the top of the sloppy little cairn protrudes a small, ruggedly constructed transmitter module with a short antenna and a bright, green signal light that flashes every few seconds.

"That's our ticket out of here," your Ghost explains, "a Vanguard patrol beacon. I can use the signal uplink to get a message back to the Tower, and find us help hitching a ride. Just wait till you see—"

A low rumble overhead cuts your Ghost short, just before a large, rounded shadow falls into the crater. "A skiff... The whole crew couldn't have mobilized to come after us so quickly..."

As the sharklike ship passes overhead, something bulky shimmers into being between you and the beacon at the middle of the crater. It seems to grow taller and larger, and after a moment you realize it's rising from a crouch and extending its four arms, two of which hold a pair of vicious-looking cutlasses. Four eyes gaze out coldly from below the brow of a crested helm, and a predatory growl issues from its rebreather.

Your Ghost draws close to you, taking cover behind your shoulder. "That'd be the captain. Guess he split off from his crew to get to us faster. That makes this situation a bit more complicated."

Roll initiative! It's time for the Guardian to face off against a captain from the House of Exile. The captain stands 30 feet away from the Guardian, and the beacon is 60 feet beyond the captain. The crater has a radius of 90 feet, and the crater slopes are 30 feet high. The slopes themselves count as difficult terrain if a creature attempts to climb them.

Sick and Starving. The captain is not at full strength when it faces off against the Guardian. It has two levels of exhaustion, and it is missing half its health points. The captain is *desperate*. Killing a Guardian may very well be the proof of prowess it needs to secure a higher place (and better rations) within the House of Exile.

Reaching the Beacon. However they want to approach this fight, the goal is not actually to kill the captain, but to get their Ghost within 5 feet of the beacon so it can signal the Vanguard. The Guardian's Ghost may choose to point this out if the Guardian misses an opportunity to complete this goal. Once the Vanguard has been signaled, they will then need to survive for 1 hour, at which point help will arrive. Surviving could mean killing the captain, reasoning with the captain, or hiding.

ENCOUNTER'S END

This encounter, and origin story, ends when help arrives. This could be a single high-level NPC who specializes in retrieving the newly Risen, or it could be a fireteam whose members are composed of the other players in your campaign. Exactly who they are is up to you!

MERIDIAN BAY

During the Golden Age, Mars was home to many of the facilities at the forefront of humanity's technological advancement. The massive and multifarious technology conglomerate Clovis Bray built entire cities on Mars to house and support its extensive operations and their large populations of scientists, engineers, and workers. The city of Freehold in the Meridian Bay region was the jewel of Clovis Bray's holdings, an integrated, business-minded metropolis unto itself in the lushly terraformed landscape. Now it is a vast, phantasmal ruin blasted and buried by the rusty sands of the Martian desert. The broken spires and hidden depths of Freehold are both a grim monument to humanity's lost Golden Age and a daunting temptation to those who would pursue the buried secrets of Clovis Bray.

Guardians may be resurrected in Meridian Bay at any time after the advent of the City Age without restriction. Resurrections during the Dark Age, when most Ghosts had yet to venture beyond Earth, are possible but very unlikely, and may require you to modify encounters accordingly.

EYES UP

This is where you have the opportunity to introduce your player's Ghost to them, and the player can roleplay as their Guardian, taking their very first steps and forming their very first thoughts in this second life. Read the text in the box below to your player(s) when you're ready to begin. After, allow the player's Guardian to ask up to three questions that the Ghost can then answer. Some common questions and possible answers are provided below, but be prepared to come up with your own answers to unique questions, or to modify answers to fit the personality of the Ghost.

*You awaken, absolutely disoriented, and sit up as your vision clears. You don't remember how you got here—wherever here is. Looking around, you see the empty deck of a tower rooftop, small drifts of rusty sand gathered in the corners and against the edges of access hatches and utility ducts. Beyond the cracked lip of the roof's edge stretches a vast, undulating redness, dunes like still waves [glinting in the sunlight/glittering in the starlight]. Desert winds mutter and sing mournfully through the thin, empty sky overhead.
Before you can even get to your feet to look around, you hear a voice.*

"What are you?"

- Ghost Answer: "I'm a Ghost—well, now that I've found you, I'm *your* Ghost. The Traveler made me to find you, and bring you its Light."

"Who am I?"

- Ghost Answer: "You've been dead, and your old life died with you. You're a new person now—and a Guardian."

"Where am I?"

- Ghost Answer: "This is Mars, what's left of one of the old cities."

MOVING ON

Once the Guardian has asked any three questions, the Ghost will need to interrupt or otherwise prevent the Guardian from asking any more, saying that further explanation can wait till later. Right now they need to get off the roof and determine how to get down from the ruined skyscraper.

The Ghost offers two categories of options for the Guardian: try to make their way down through the building, or find a way to descend from the exterior. Alternatively, the Ghost might simply tell the Guardian which way to go.

If the Guardian elects to descend through the building, proceed to *High-Rise Lowdown*. If the Guardian elects to find a way down outside, proceed to *Scavenger Hunt*.

HIGH-RISE LOWDOWN

Your Ghost leads you off the roof through an open hatch and down a short ladder into a cramped utility control room. "This is how I got up to the roof," your Ghost explains. "Almost nothing in the building works anymore, but there are still ways through it to get up and down. We can check the schematic status readouts in here to figure out which way you want to go."

You begin to shuffle toward the flickering, dim displays on the other side of the room, but your Ghost bobs around in

front of you. "There's just... one other thing. The building isn't empty. I didn't have trouble sneaking through on my way up, but you're... a lot bigger. You should try to find a weapon along the way."

On the opposite side of the utility room is a barely functioning computer console with a flickering schematic display of the skyscraper. The Ghost can attempt to stabilize this display to show the Guardian the layout of the building, clearly pointing out the location of the stairs and elevator shaft, their two main avenues of descent. The Ghost will need to complete a DC 12 Intelligence (Technology) check to stabilize the display. Doing so allows the Ghost to highlight the general location of Cabal troops it noticed on the way up, and both Ghost and Guardian can see there's a security armory directly below them that the Ghost missed.

If the Ghost doesn't stabilize the display, the Ghost can still inform the Guardian of the location of the stairs and elevator shaft, they just won't have a visual display to emphasize where the two are going, and they will miss the opportunity to notice the armory.

At this point, the Ghost and/or Guardian should decide whether to take the stairs or take the elevator shaft. The Ghost should inform the Guardian that taking the stairs will be easier, but will make it more difficult to avoid encountering the Cabal scouts in the building. The elevator shaft will require significant athletic prowess to navigate in its half-destroyed state, but there is less risk of attack from the Cabal.

GOING FOR THE ARMORY

If the Guardian attempts to reach the armory first, they simply go down one set of stairs and get there with no trouble. The armory has a digitally controlled mechanical lock, meaning both a successful DC 13 Intelligence (Technology) check and a successful DC 13 Intelligence check with a thieves' toolkit will be required to enter.

Seeing Inside. There is no way to see inside the armory before opening the door.

Thieves' Toolkit. If neither the Ghost nor the Guardian own a thieves' toolkit, you can add a thieves' toolkit as loot on a corpse found randomly while completing either the *Taking the Stairs* or *Taking the Elevator* paths. The corpse is of a post-Collapse scavenger who apparently died of dehydration. The Guardian can then return to the armory, following the same mechanics to go back up the skyscraper as they took to go down.

The Loot. There are four auto rifles, two shotguns, and nine sidearms in the armory. One of the sidearms is a tier 0 sidearm+1. This means it has no perks, but it does have a bonus +1 to attack and damage rolls. Perks cannot be purchased for this ancient weapon without removing its +1 bonus first; a gunsmith like Banshee-44 could do this.

TAKING THE STAIRS

Descending the stairs is an easy task, but there is plenty of risk of running into Cabal units. Make six d20 rolls, one roll at a time. Whenever you roll 8 or less, the Guardian has encountered a Cabal unit. Roll once on the Cabal Patrol table, and then have the Guardian roll initiative. Resolve the encounter.

Moving Stealthily. The Guardian can attempt to move stealthily to avoid detection by Cabal units. Before making your d20 roll, have the Guardian make a DC 12 Dexterity (Stealth) check at the same time you make your d20 roll. The Ghost cannot assist the Guardian on this check. If the Guardian succeeds, and the d20 roll also results in encountering Cabal units, the Guardian can choose to sneak past the Cabal and skip the fight instead.

Challenge Completed. When all six d20s have been rolled, the Guardian has made it to the bottom of the staircase. Proceed to *Lobby Security*.

CABAL PATROL

d20	Encounter
1-5	1 legionary
6-10	1 psion
11-15	2 war beasts
16-20	1 scorpius turret

TAKING THE ELEVATOR

The Guardian will need to succeed on five DC 14 Strength (Athletics) skill checks in order to traverse the elevator shaft. It's not a straight shot all the way down: there are tangled cables, stalled elevator cars, and jutting metal beams obstructing the descent.

Challenge Failed. If the Guardian accumulates three failures before accumulating five successes, they die due to a misjudged movement, falling down one of the greater gaps in the elevator shaft and cracking their spine on a jutting beam. Their Ghost is able to resurrect them on a nearby floor of the skyscraper and will inform the Guardian that they'll have to take the stairs the rest of the way down because their fall caused a shift in the rubble that blocked off the rest of the shaft.

Follow the directions for *Taking the Stairs*, except instead of rolling six d20s, roll only three. These should still be rolled one at a time.

Challenge Succeeded. Describe the player as having to crawl through an elevator car to get to the bottom floor. Inside the elevator car is a pile of broken skeletons, with various pieces of costume jewelry that the Ghost can turn into 1,200 bits of glimmer. The door from the elevator car to the lobby is open. Proceed to *Lobby Security*.

LOBBY SECURITY

Brushing a small flurry of red dust off yourself, you finally step into the wide open space of the high-ceilinged main lobby. The invasive Martian sand has poured in through many cracked and broken windows, pooling on the floor and heaping into small dunes at the edges of the room, but the main doors are unobstructed.

However, standing in the middle of the lobby, between you and the doors, is a towering armored thing that looks like a tank on two legs. The eyeless faceplate of its helmet is turned squarely toward you.

"Colossus!" [squeaks/chirps/cries/yells/growls] your Ghost, vanishing from sight. "Take cover!"

The colossus hefts forward a massive repeating gun, taking aim in your direction. Its multiple barrels begin to spin up.

Before the Guardian rolls initiative, ask them to make the following saving throws, in this order: Charisma, Intelligence, Wisdom. The effect of each saving throw is described below. Have the Guardian roll initiative afterward. If the Guardian succeeds on any two of these saving throws, they get a surprise round against the colossus.

What the player does after rolling initiative is largely up to them. There are two main actions we cover: making a break for it, and dropping the light fixture. Should the player decide to try to fight the colossus, the combat is handled normally.

SAVING THROW RESULTS

The DC for each saving throw is 11.

Charisma. If the Guardian fails this saving throw, they become Frightened of the colossus.

Intelligence. If the Guardian succeeds on this saving throw, they will quickly realize there is a way out through a broken window they can reach, with decent cover along the way.

Wisdom. On succeeding this saving throw, the Guardian will notice the colossus is standing beneath a very large and elaborate light fixture hanging from the ceiling. The fixture clearly can't be shot down, but if their Ghost were to fly up there and do some clever transmat work, it would be able to detach it and drop it on the colossus.

MAKING A BREAK FOR IT

If the Guardian wants to try to run for the door or the broken window, they will need to take the Dash action to make it there on their turn, or they will need to use all of their movement on two turns. If they try to move toward the broken window, they gain the effects of half cover against the colossus.

DROPPING THE LIGHT FIXTURE

The Ghost can use its action to Dash up to the light fixture on one turn, and then an action on its next turn to attempt a DC 13 Dexterity (Sleight-of-Hand) check to download key parts of the sculpture's support (screws, bolts, etc.) into its memory. On a success, the fixture is detached and falls on the colossus, dealing 12d8 bludgeoning damage and pinning it to the floor. The colossus is considered Prone and Restrained by the fixture.

If the Ghost fails their check, they can try again on their next turn.

In the meantime, the Guardian can take their turn like normal. There are enough pillars and other fixtures in the lobby to easily provide half cover for the Guardian, should they decide to seek cover.

ENCOUNTER'S END

However the Guardian manages to escape the lobby, they proceed to *Cabal Cordon* after.

SCAVENGER HUNT

Your Ghost leads you off the roof through an open hatch and down a short ladder into a cramped utility control room. "This is how I got up to the roof," your Ghost explains. "Almost nothing in the building works anymore, but there must be something we can use to get down. The construction crews left some materials up here in those crates, and maybe we can salvage something from the building itself..."

You begin to shuffle toward the bulky, dusty crates on the other side of the room, but your Ghost bobs around in front of you. "There's just... one other thing. The building isn't empty. I didn't have trouble sneaking through on my way up, but if you go down the outside, you might get spotted."

The crates contain various materials: coils of high-tension cable, lightweight plasteel tubing, some fasteners and fixatives, a self-powered riveting gun, and a few yards of superlight insulating foil. These materials can be assembled in a number of ways. The Ghost can suggest two clear options for what to do: create a harness that the Guardian can use to rappel down, or create a paraglider.

The Nailgun. The nailgun can be used as an improvised Finesse weapon, dealing 1d4 piercing damage on a hit, with a range of 20/60.

Assembly. The Guardian and Ghost will have to complete a DC 13 skill challenge with four successes to assemble their chosen equipment. If they fail, they will still be able to assemble their chosen equipment, but they will be interrupted by a psion who comes to investigate the noise they made during the assembly.

ENCOUNTER'S END

The encounter ends when the Guardian has finished assembling their choice of equipment from the supplies. If the Guardian decides to rappel, they proceed to *Controlled Descent*. If they decide to paraglide, they proceed to *Uncontrolled Descent*.

The Guardian may decide to just jump off the building. If they do so, they die, and their Ghost can resurrect them at the start of *Cabal Cordon*.

CONTROLLED DESCENT

Your makeshift rappelling gear in hand, you return to the windblown rooftop and cautiously sidle up to the edge. The glassy façade of the skyscraper swoops down and gradually outward below you, most of its window panels unbroken. You're unsure how to estimate the number of floors, but one way or another, the way down is very long.

You set your anchor in place, and while your Ghost welds it down, you attach the coil of heavy cable to your armor and hope it's long enough to get you to the bottom.

The Guardian will need to complete six Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) checks to make it to the bottom of the skyscraper. The DC of these checks is 12. If the Guardian fails any three of these checks, they slip and fall the rest of the way.

Running into Trouble. At the same time the Guardian makes their skill check, roll a d20. If your d20 rolls as 3 or less, a Cabal patrol unit notices the Guardian and begins shooting at them through the window. Roll initiative. The Guardian is considered Restrained while they are still in their rappelling gear. If the Guardian failed their skill check at the same time a Cabal patrol unit was rolled, the Guardian is also considered Prone at the start of combat.

The Guardian can use their action to continue rappelling down. If they do so, Cabal units (except the scorpium turret and war beasts) can attempt to break the cable, causing the Guardian to automatically fail their attempt to rappel down.

Moving Stealthily. The Guardian can attempt to move stealthily to avoid detection by Cabal units. Before making your d20 roll, have the Guardian make a DC 14 Dexterity (Stealth) check at the same time you make your d20 roll. The Ghost cannot assist the Guardian on this check. If the Guardian succeeds, and the d20 roll also results in encountering Cabal units, the Guardian can see what the Cabal units are, but can continue rappelling without alerting the Cabal to their presence.

CABAL PATROL

d20	Encounter
1-5	1 legionary
6-10	1 psion
11-15	2 war beasts who bark and howl a lot
16-20	1 scorpius turret

ENCOUNTER'S END

When the Guardian reaches the bottom of the building, they proceed to *Cabal Cordon*. If the Guardian fails their attempt to rappel, their Ghost resurrects them at the start of *Cabal Cordon*.

UNCONTROLLED DESCENT

Your makeshift gliding gear in hand, you return to the windblown rooftop and cautiously sidle up to the edge. The glassy façade of the skyscraper swoops down and gradually outward below you, most of its window panels unbroken. You're unsure how to estimate the number of floors, but one way or another, the way down is very long. Starting from this high, you should be able to glide a good distance away—if your glider holds together.

You carefully unfold the foil paraglider itself, and attach it to the harness you rigged over your armor. Stepping back from the edge of the roof, you take a few deep breaths, then run toward the horizon and jump.

The Guardian will have to complete a DC 13 skill challenge with five successes in order to ride the wind and safely paraglide away from the skyscraper. If they fail, but they have at least one success, they land safely but didn't ride the wind well enough to make it very far from the skyscraper. Proceed to *Cabal Cordon*.

If they succeed on the skill challenge, they proceed to *Solitary Vexation*.

If they fail the skill challenge and have 0 successes, they crash and die. Their Ghost can resurrect them at the start of *Cabal Cordon*.

CABAL CORDON

Your boots pound the pavement of the plaza outside the Freehold skyscraper, then slip and slap the sand as you flee the dead city. You run on without looking back till you find yourself crouched behind a tall dune, well away from the edge of the ruins.

While you catch your breath, your Ghost materializes in front of you. "We're still inside the Cabal exclusion zone. If we can get to the edge of their territory, maybe we can find a patrol beacon and contact other Guardians for help. But move carefully. The Cabal take territorial defense very seriously."

The Guardian will have to traverse the desert to reach a patrol beacon. First, have the Guardian and Ghost complete a DC 12 skill challenge for things the two characters are doing to make the journey easier. They will need five successes to fully complete the challenge. However, even if they fail the challenge, for each success they get in the challenge they receive a +10 to any roll that is made on the Desert Encounter table.

After the skill challenge is resolved, roll on the Desert Encounters table to narrate the journey, until you get the "Beacon Reached" result. Once you roll an encounter, you cannot roll that encounter again; cross it off and ignore that result for any future rolls.

At any time, feel free to bring in a friendly fireteam of Guardians to help out if things get too rough or drag on for too long. The fireteam may be the ones who resurrect the Guardian if they die in any of the encounters.

DESERT ENCOUNTERS

d100	Encounter
1-4	2 legionaries
5-8	3 psions
9-10	1 centurion
11-19	1 war beast
20-29	The Guardian comes across a sheltered area where it is safe to take a short or long rest without interruption.
30-38	The Guardian finds a psion and a legionary who have made camp under a rocky outcrop. There is a pair of parked interceptors nearby laden with supplies.
39-47	1 scout legionary
48-56	2 war beasts
57-65	The Guardian finds a small oasis.
66-74	1 goblin stands among a wreckage of other Vex units, scanning them with its eye.
75-83	The Ghost detects an old tablet buried only a foot beneath the sand. It needs its battery charged, but it's otherwise functional.
84-92	2 half-buried scorpius turrets that can only fire in a single direction.
93+	The Guardian reaches a Vanguard patrol beacon.

RESTING

At any time before making a Desert Encounter roll, the player can choose to have their Guardian attempt a short or long rest. Roll on the Desert Encounter table when they make their attempt. If the result is a combat encounter, this encounter interrupts the Guardian's rest. If any other type of encounter is rolled, ignore the result and allow the Guardian to complete their rest in peace.

Whenever the Guardian completes a long rest without drinking water, they gain a level of exhaustion at the end of the long rest.

MOVING STEALTHILY

The Guardian may elect to move stealthily through the desert. If they do so, have them make a Dexterity (Stealth) roll at the same time you make your Desert Encounter roll. If there are hostile creatures in the Desert Encounter result, and the Guardian's Dexterity (Stealth) roll beats the passive Perception score of all hostile creatures, the Guardian can elect to navigate around the encounter instead of rolling initiative against them. Ignore the encounter on any future results like normal if they do this.

However, moving stealthily means moving slowly. Whenever the Guardian decides to navigate around an encounter, they get a -5 bonus to the next Desert Encounter roll. Add this bonus to whatever bonus they may have gathered from the initial skill challenge to determine their final bonus for the next Desert Encounter roll.

ENCOUNTER'S END

This encounter, and this origin story, ends when the Guardian reaches the patrol beacon. They will be able to hail the Vanguard and request extraction from Mars, which the Vanguard will be able to provide in two hours. Whoever they send to extract the Guardian is up to you. It may be an inconsequential NPC, or it could be another character in your campaign.

SOLITARY VEXATION

You land with a controlled tumble, and quickly detach the glider from your harness. As the wind carries it away over

the desert, your boots sink a little in the red sand as you turn to glance back at the dead city's skyline. You walk on without looking back again till you come to the crest of a tall dune, and spot something strange: a metallic figure, somewhat singed and battered, crouched at the bottom of the dune.

At first you take it for an odd statue, absurdly left in the middle of the desert, but your Ghost materializes in front of you with urgency. "Vex. We must've made it out of Cabal territory and walked right into theirs. They're extremely dangerous, but maybe if we don't disturb it..."

The sand shifts slightly under your boot, sending a tiny cascade down the dune. A single pebble rolls out from the minuscule sandslide, striking the foot of the machine figure with a clear plink. Almost instantly, the Vex rises from its crouch to a considerable full height and turns an unblinking red eye directly toward you.

Roll initiative! This minotaur was being hunted by a Guardian fireteam and is at half hit points and deals half damage on a hit. If the Guardian defeats the minotaur, or survives 3 rounds of combat against it, the fireteam arrives. If the Guardian dies, the fireteam will resurrect them after defeating the minotaur.

ENCOUNTER'S END

This encounter, and this origin story, ends when the fireteam arrives. This fireteam could be high-level NPCs who were just messing around in the local area, or it could be a fireteam whose members are composed of the other players in your campaign. Exactly who they are is up to you!

DEATH IS TEMPORARY

This is an optional encounter to be played in the event the Guardian dies. Read the text below to the player.

A flurry of feelings overtakes you as you fall: surprise, alarm, fear—but also resignation, and a peculiar calm. Everything slows, and as your sight grows hazy and sensation recedes, your attention turns to these strange feelings. You're unaware of your awareness itself dissolving.

With a sputtering cough, you sit up. You're fully awake, and don't remember going to sleep. In fact, you remember pain, losing your balance, falling...

"You died," your Ghost says matter-of-factly, hovering into your field of view. "But don't worry, I brought you back—again." It rotates its shell [cheerily/proudly/stiffly/huffily/impatiently]. "You'll be alright. Come on, let's try again."

Depending on the circumstances of the Guardian's death, you may proceed in any number of ways. The most straightforward option is to have the Guardian's Ghost tell them they should go a different way, and then choose an appropriate encounter from the Additional Encounters section for them to complete before resuming the regular progression of the module. However, feel free to be creative with the situation the Guardian finds themselves in upon resurrection, and what they must do to continue. You may use any of the following elements to create a minor encounter, or devise something of your own along similar lines:

- The Guardian is resurrected while a Fallen dreg is preoccupied trying to steal their boots, or a stray Cabal warbeast is chewing on their armor.
- The Guardian is resurrected in the same place they died, but their weapons and gear have been looted.
- The Guardian is resurrected somewhere other than where they died because someone moved their body. They must find their way back to where they were going.
- The Guardian is resurrected under duress by bandits who have captured their Ghost.
- The Guardian is resurrected in the middle of a shootout between hostile creatures and a Guardian fireteam.
- The Guardian is resurrected when their body is found by another of your players' characters.

Alternatively, you may simply take the opportunity to let your player roleplay conversation with their Ghost before continuing to the next encounter in the normal progression of the module.

ADDITIONAL ENCOUNTERS

If the Guardian's earlier choices require an additional encounter, select from these options, or devise an appropriate interstitial encounter of your own. Whatever you decide, you will need to narratively frame the context of the encounter appropriately to suit your Guardian's circumstances. For example, you could present the additional encounter as occurring while the Guardian has to backtrack or travel toward another part of the area, or as something that takes place while following Ghost's advice on where else to search.

BAD WEATHER

The Guardian is caught in a violent storm. They must decide whether to try and press on despite the dangerous weather, or seek shelter nearby.

- The Guardian can find shelter in a cave, ruined building, old cabin, or any other edifice suitable to the specific setting.
- You can complicate this encounter by placing hostile creatures in the shelter, or even connecting it to a Lost Sector.

THE DESPERATE AND THE DEAD

The Guardian comes upon a single, starved-looking Fallen dreg crouched over the body of a long-dead captain. It appears to be trying to siphon the last fumes of ether from a canister the captain was carrying.

- The Guardian must succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity (Stealth) check to avoid being immediately noticed by the dreg. If they succeed, the Guardian may choose whether to surprise-attack the dreg or take cover and wait to see what it does.
- If the Guardian hides and waits, the dreg will catch their scent and move to investigate their hiding place.
- If the dreg notices the Guardian, it will attempt to flee in terror.

DON'T MAKE 'EM LIKE THEY USED TO

The Guardian finds an ancient personal communication device. Though battered, they can still make out part of an 'N' logo on the casing, and their Ghost says it may still be functional.

- Ghost can provide a small recharge to power the device for a few minutes. The Guardian must succeed on DC 15 Intelligence (Technology) check to operate it.
- If they successfully operate the device, the Guardian discovers it contains low-resolution images of the Traveler's arrival on Earth. Ghost suggests these may be of value to the Cryptarchy or other people in the Last City.

DREGS WITHOUT A CAUSE

The Guardian's Ghost alerts them to the presence of an approaching Fallen pike gang, and urges them to take cover.

- The pike gang almost certainly can't be defeated in direct combat, but you could set up environmental elements the Guardian can try to use to beat them, such as a tree that could be toppled, a boulder that could be rolled, or ruins that could be collapsed.
- If the Guardian takes cover to hide, they must succeed on Dexterity (Stealth) check against the dreg's passive Perception to remain out of sight until the pike gang passes through.

A DYING SCAVENGER

The Guardian comes upon a dying scavenger. With no way to save their life, the Guardian must choose whether to let them die slowly, or grant the only kind of mercy to be found in the wilds.

- This scavenger could be human, but need not be. Depending on the setting, the scavenger could plausibly be Elikzni, a Cabal deserter, or Reefborn Awoken.

THE FALL OF A HOUSE OF PIRATES

The Guardian comes upon the aftermath of a battle between two Fallen houses in a ravine. The area is littered with dead Fallen, damaged and destroyed Elikzni equipment, and the wreckage of a Fallen walker.

- The walker appears to be destroyed, but is actually still partially active. If the Guardian or Ghost examines it, or after the Guardian has spent some time looking about the rest of the site, the walker will begin moving and may attack the player. Its legs are mostly missing or broken, so it has no movement speed (it is considered Restrained and Prone), and its weapons and onboard systems are severely impaired by the extensive damage it sustained. The walker has no legendary actions, and it can only attack with its turret. Whenever it makes an attack with its turret, roll a d6. On a roll of 5–6 the turret explodes and the walker can't do anything anymore.
- If the Guardian manages to defeat the damaged walker, their Ghost can scavenge 2d4 x 1,000 glimmer out of its body.
- To determine what they can find in the other wreckage, roll on the CR 0–4 individual glimmer table six times. This is what the Ghost is able to find or break down into glimmer. Any equipment is too damaged or broken to use.
- The Guardian may end the encounter without defeating the walker by escaping the ravine.

FINDERS KEEPERS

The Guardian accidentally discovers an exposed cache. Their Ghost warns it could be rigged to discourage tampering—or might even be a disguised trap.

The Guardian must decide whether to uncover the cache to examine it more closely. If they do, roll a d6:

- **1:** The cache is a trap containing a Fallen web mine rigged to detonate when the chest is opened. Tell the Guardian it appears to be a typical cache chest. The Guardian must succeed on a DC 13 Investigation or Perception check to detect the trap (passive Investigation or Perception can apply here to automatically detect the trap). If they open the cache, the web mine detonates immediately, and a Fallen vandal emerges from hiding to attack the Guardian.
- **2-3:** The cache is booby-trapped. Tell the Guardian it appears to be a typical cache chest. The Guardian must succeed on a DC 13 Investigation or Perception check to detect the trap (passive Investigation or Perception can apply here to automatically detect the trap), and can disarm it with a DC 15 Intelligence (Technology) check. If they open the cache without disarming the trap, it shocks all creatures within 5 feet for 10 (3d6) arc damage. Whether or not the trap is disarmed, roll on the Individual Glimmer CR 0–4 table three times to determine the cache's contents.
- **4-5:** The cache is not a trap. Tell the Guardian it appears to be a typical cache chest. Roll on the Individual Glimmer CR 0–4 table three times to determine the cache's contents.
- **6:** The cache belongs to Cayde-6. Tell the Guardian it appears to be a reinforced cache chest with a spade stenciled on the lid. It is sealed with an integrated digital lock. The Guardian or Ghost must succeed on a DC 16 Intelligence (Technology) check to circumvent the lock. If unlocked, the cache contains a mundane exotic item and 2d4 x 1,000 glimmer. The chest can be stored in the Ghost's memory (10/1).

A GHOSTLY BEQUEST

The Guardian finds a dead Ghost with a single stable block of memory, which the Guardian's Ghost can access.

- You may have the dead Ghost contain a single item, or a message or recorded memory, or both.
- You may decide exactly what item the Ghost was carrying if you'd like your Guardian to receive something special or a particular piece of gear, or you may roll on the Trinket table to determine what it is.
- If you choose to include a memory or message from the Ghost, it could be about what killed the Ghost, who the Ghost's Guardian was, what they were doing, or anything else you like.
- If you wish to complicate this encounter, you may have the Ghost's message lead to the location of a stashed item (rather than have the item itself in the Ghost's memory), point toward the enemy that killed the Ghost, or otherwise connect to an additional objective.

A HARD PLACE

The Guardian is trapped underground or beneath rubble in the aftermath of a cave-in or other collapse. They have room to breathe, and their Ghost is present but also unable to escape. They must figure a way out using anything that comes to hand around them.

- Resolving this encounter probably should require some number of appropriate skill checks to represent the Guardian's attempts to excavate themselves, such as a DC 13 skill challenge with three successes. However, you can also focus on roleplay between the Guardian and their Ghost, perhaps as the Ghost psyches up the Guardian to overcome their predicament through a feat of strength or ingenuity.

THE LOST LEADING THE LOST

The Guardian encounters a lone Ghost searching for its Guardian.

- The Guardian may attempt to assist the Ghost in its search somehow. If you wish, you may use the lost Ghost finding its Guardian as an opportunity to combine the origin stories of two of your players' characters.
- You may have the Ghost request the Guardian provide an escort to another area, or even ask to accompany them back to the Last City.

LOW RIDER

The Guardian finds an old sparrow. It was clearly somebody's pet project, cobbled together from a mix of nonstandard production parts and creatively contrived custom components. Despite looking rough around the edges, it appears functional.

- Activating the sparrow's drive as it is will cause it to explode for 6d6 solar damage. If the Guardian attempts to activate the sparrow without examining it first, their Ghost should advise them to check it out.
- If they examine the sparrow, they will be at least able to see its components are rigged in an unusual way, and have deteriorated from exposure to the elements over a long time. If they are proficient in sparrows (vehicle) or succeed on DC 14 Intelligence (Technology) check, they can repair or reconfigure the sparrow's drive to make it safely operable.
- If the Guardian repairs the sparrow, the first time they activate it, roll a d6. On a 1, despite the repairs, the sparrow's drive still explodes for 6d6 solar damage.

SPIN ME A TALE

The Guardian finds an active patrol beacon broadcasting a prerecorded request for spinmetal salvage.

- Ghost suggests the Guardian can use this beacon to contact the Vanguard. If they do, they can raise a Vanguard patrol coordinator who isn't able to provide any immediate assistance, but can point the Guardian in the right direction.
- The Guardian may elect to complete the patrol assignment by searching the nearby area for salvageable spinmetal, which they will be able to find upon completing a DC 13 skill challenge with five successes. If they complete the patrol, they will receive 2d4 x 1,000 glimmer and 100 XP.

UNFRIENDLY FIRE

The Guardian steps out into the open and immediately dies, shot in the head without warning by another Guardian sniper who mistook them for a hostile target. After resurrection, the Guardian must assess the situation and decide how to proceed.

- The Guardian sniper may be an NPC, or you may use this encounter to introduce another player character into your campaign.
- The Guardian may attempt to interact with the sniper however they like, but the sniper is covering their location, and will almost certainly shoot the Guardian again if they simply emerge from cover. The shot came from such a distance that it's unlikely the Guardian's voice will carry far enough to communicate with the sniper.

UNINTENTIONAL INTRUSION

The Guardian's resurrection interrupts a shootout between a pirate and an Awoken Corsair.

- These characters may be NPCs, but either or both of them could be other player characters if you choose to use this encounter to introduce them to your campaign.

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