

Main story file: [HERE](#) Finished story stuff should be slotted in where appropriate.

Everybody who gets write permissions needs to color-tag their contributions so I can figure out who's who. If you've got permission, choose a color and write your name here (and those who didn't choose a color, I chose for you. Voila: **Mal** **Dartz** **Fox** **Rob** **Firv** **BA** **Dakota** **ECSNorway** **Bob** **jferio**

and now, on with the show.

I've put the notes into a mockery of a semblance of order (although there's still some unsorted stuff at the end), and added appropriate headers for ease of finding things...

Word of Mod

Just a general heads up for the crew: If I see something like this:

Despite the best efforts of both BuWeaps and BuShips, the Royal Manticoran Navy's missile pods kept obstinately proliferating, spinning off one new variant after another, and of late, pod capacity had trended steadily downward. The original "flatpack" pods, which had come in with the final generation of superconductor capacitors, had carried twelve MDMs each. Then along had come the next-generation flatpacks, with internal tractor systems. They'd still managed to keep capacity up to a dozen birds, but only until they'd shifted to the fusion-powered Mark 23. At that point, the designers had been forced to figure out how to cram in the pod's own fusion plant, since its new power budget had to be able to spin up the Mark 23s' plants at launch. The Bureau of Weapons had opted to hold the pod's dimensions constant in order to simplify handling and manufacturing constraints, despite the fact that it had dropped its capacity to only ten Mark 23s.

The reduction in throw weight hadn't been universally popular, particularly since the number of pods each ship carried hadn't magically increased, which left them with a sixteen percent overall reduction in magazine capacity. BuWeaps had argued, however, that the advantages of the new fusion-powered missiles—especially the advantages that kind of power supply made possible for the electronic warfare platforms—and of the new pods' vastly extended capacity for independent deployment more than compensated for the reduction in missiles per pod, especially coupled with the introduction of the Keyhole platforms. Although each pod might carry fewer missiles, Keyhole-based tactics were going to emphasize stacked patterns, anyway. The number of control links the new platforms made available would have required that even with the older style pods, if salvo density was going to be maximized.

But then Apollo had come along, and the Apollo control missile—the Mark 23-E. The Echo was the heart of the Apollo system . . . and big enough that a single Mark 23-E displaced two standard Mark 23s. That had pushed the maximum capacity of a same-dimension pod down to just nine missiles, only eight of which were attack birds. No one had objected to that, given the incredible increase in lethality Apollo made possible, but it had constituted yet another reduction in over all ammunition stowage, so BuWeaps had gone back to work and come up with yet another in the flatpack pod series—the Mark 19.

The Mark 19 was the same size as the Mark 15 and Mark 17 pods, and it contained no more missiles, but its surface contours had been changed significantly. Whereas earlier marks of pods had been symmetrical, the Mark 19 was asymmetrical. Its surface contours had been deliberately designed so that flipping alternate

layers of pods allowed them to pack even more flatly into the available volume of the RMN's SD(P)s' missile cores. As a consequence, although the total number of missiles which could be deployed using a single pattern of pods was no greater, the total missile stowage of the existing SD(P) classes had been restored to pre-fusion levels. In fact, it had actually increased by just under four percent.

None of which had any particular relevance to Tenth Fleet at this particular moment ...

I'm going to cut it. And then I'm gonna come over to your house and *kick your ass*. And don't think I won't, even if you're on the other side of the planet - Ben - or just 'cause I'm a cripple. I'll beat you to death with my gimpstick. See if I don't.

You Have Been Warned.

Agreed. That's a FenWiki entry, not a story fragment Put this sort of thing in the FenWiki (tagged as an Infinities article). Actually, that's davidweber.txt, the five paragraphs folks like me pull out to prove that David Weber is a complete hack. Yeah, yeah... you all know what I meant. (And I don't dispute your assessment of Weber.)

Operation “Burning Bright”

Liberation raid on Camp Dependable... sometime in April/May/June. (Preferable as soon as possible after hostilities begin.)

Okay... how we do this?

Basic operational requirements.

*: 10 or more Engels, with standard combat load. (Engel Gruppe are PKG members with flight ability.)

*: Armed guards, at least 50. A force enough to make someone think twice about fighting back. (Anyone wanna come along?)

*: A medical team, preferably military. (Nikaido Foundation MASH)

*: 200+ AK-47's, maybe a few SKS's with scopes. Grenades, handwavium, military kit, Ammunition.

*: Airborn support: 5-10 F-Ezigs (From Roughriders? Will make contact soon)

*: Stocks of Plumpy'nut or similar RUTF's and clean water. ('danelaw charity's)

*: 1 Whale King. Transport capacity “Enough”, even if it's crowded.

*: 1 Sabre Tiger.

*: 1 Shadow Fox + Pilot. (Ford Sierra volunteers) Make a good piece of sabre showing her how to pilot a zoid. Indeed. She might be able to jack on to some of the onboard systems. It'll be able to fly on it's own unlike Sabre's. That'll be mainly a secondary function so it'll be slow, but you can make it up and down from orbit. Or to the moon if need be.

Whale King *Tyger Tyger* will be modified for refugee transport. Unused hangers and machine spaces can be retrofitted and partitioned off. Food, water and basic sanitation should be provided. Expected time to perform modification *days.

PKG *Engel Gruppe* will be stationed in forward launch bay, along with Sabre Tiger and Shadow Fox. Rearmost bay is converted to house a field hospital, with emergency capability for handling weakest survivors. Spare spaces assigned for guards. Small windowless room assigned specifically for Pinkard.

You can have a field hospital from the Nikaido Foundation. You just need to staff it (possibly with Blue Blazers). Contrary to NF policy, you will be expected to bring it back with you instead of abandoning it in-place; while the CSA could use modern medical care, they have no idea how to use the equipment in a Foundation MASH.

That'll do grand, I've added it to the list. It won't be leaving the *Tyger Tyger*, so no worries about it not coming back.

Probably installed into one of the hangers.

Rearmost, we're loading the weakest prisoners first.

Shadow Fox is equipped with: Smoke dispersal and anti-armour

Sabre Tiger is equipped for: Anti-armour...

The zoids would mainly be a intimidation item unless tanks show up. Maybe have him armed with anti-aircraft.

That's what we have aircraft ourselves for.

Staging point is Earth Orbit. Intention is to be capable of beginning this operation as soon as it is called for. Preference however, is for a night attack, between 1 and 4am local time. On receiving Go-signal, Whale King will begin steep dive through the atmosphere (Battlestar Galactica Storming New Caprica Style).

On entering Confederate Airspace, F-EZig's launch to escort *Tyger Tyger* down. While it is doubtful WW2 era craft could damage a Whale King with cannon, it is better to be safe than sorry.

Bombs or a kamikaze run, even accidental, will hurt.

Does *Tyger* have point defences. Even manned guns?

Nope, but she's got the hardpoints for them. They'd be remote controlled guns. You can mount rather heavy weapons on them.

They'll do. I wonder if we can skyve a Peacemaker or two off the Roughriders to help. Maybe, would have to corner BA next time he's on.

Aerial attacks *can* hurt us. And have a pair of those along will make for more space aboard the *Tyger* to carry supplies... the 36's can carry the Zig's

The Zig's should be capable of breaking Atmo on their own, but it would be close. Entry would

be a different matter, especially if you want them to have any missiles, as the hardpoints are under the wings.

We'll carry the Zigs aboard Tyger, or on a 36. They'll be missile armed. They're taking out any enemy aircraft.

Once the camp is in sight, *Engel Gruppe* launch ahead and commence operation. Zoids will launch when a safe altitude is attained. I can just see Jet or some of the others using the catapult on the launch ramp XD

All forces to be provided with at-minimum face-masks and respirators, preferably closed cycle life-support. We don't want our own people getting sick.

* Stage 1: *Tyger Tyger* Jams AM radio. Blunts enemy response. Longer it takes them to realise they have an issue, the better. It is expected that ground forces will take at minimum an hour to arrive in strength. Aerial forces may take less than 15 minutes, depending on readiness. Enemy armour will take longer.

Both Sabre and the pilot of the Shadow fox may end up playing a game of 'pounce the barrel' if the confeds manage to get any armor deployed. Let them try to figure out what the heck happened afterwards when they find broken tanks littering a roadway without signs of cannon fire.

Barrels are to be referred to as tanks in all official communications. They'll have no idea what we're talking about :) But, chances are there won't be any armour in the area. We can introduce them to the concept of aerial superiority if there is.

* Stage 2: *Engels* disable guard towers and Anti-Aircraft batteries first. Cyborgs are near invulnerable to small arms. Zig's move in second and provide an aerial patrol to ward off attacking Confederate aircraft. Shadow Fox lands spreads smoke around camp perimeter. Sabre Tiger is deployed to camp main entrance.

* Stage 3: *Engels* split and hit Commandant's Office and Residence to force Pinkard to surrender. *Tyger Tyger* lands between main camp and guard barracks. Onboard infantry deploy into barracks to neutralise guards and secure any surviving anti-aircraft guns. Load up the AA guns as loot :D Too Heavy mate. They're best where they are providing cover.

"Oh God it's you... you're them.. You're the Mysterons!"...

("Your orders are to reduce the camp's population, Mr. Pinkard? Well guess what, so are ours.... You're under arrest for crimes against humanity. You are not obliged to say anything unless you wish to do so, but whatever you say will be recorded and may be given in evidence. .")

*Stage4: Commence loading *Tyger Tyger with refugees*. This will take time. Weakest to be taken first, carried by the strongest. It is expected that enemy air units may attack. These will be engaged by Zig fighters. Depending on time taken to load the transport, ground forces may also attack. Armour in strength is not expected. It takes time to mobilise tanks. Zoids and *Engels* deploy to handle enemy infantry assaulting base.

*Stage5: Camp Garrison survivors formally taken prisoner. Garrison 'requested' to assist with loading camp food and medical supplies onto transport. Expected time to complete loading, between 4 and 6 hours. Those who do not wish to escape are to be armed using captured garrison weapons and all spare munitions. Care must be taken to prevent a massacre of camp guards.... stray rounds may strike innocents.

*Stage6: Raze camp. Sabre Tiger and Shadow Fox reboard *Tyger Tyger*. Infantry casualties are boarded. Infantry then reboard escorting Prisoners. *Engels* board last. Leave one flagpole standing, and run the Spaceship and Sun up that flagpole. When the camp falls, no one is to have any illusions about who's responsible. This is about sending messages as much as a humanitarian mission.

*Stage7: Climb to orbit. EZigs escort *Tyger Tyger* off the ground to orbit. Make sure people on board understand that opening the door is a bad thing to do. Refugees evacuated to pre-established facilities in Germany. Guards are either interned locally or taken Fenspace as politicians demand. Might want to offer the refugees a place to live on Mars - **NOT** force them to accept, not "just happen" to take them along, just offer it. Let them know that it's pioneering and thus it'll be hard, backbreaking work, but they'll own the fruits of their labours free and clear, and see how many accept the offer. Most won't - space is a scary place if you don't have the background to appreciate it - but enough should accept Fenspace's equivalent of "forty acres and a mule" that most of the Martian cities should see a small population boom. A point to remember about this is that a lot of the refugees -- especially from an early-on raid on Camp Dependable - are going to have families; wives, kids, parents, extended family, etc. that weren't in the camp. Offering them a homestead on Mars isn't going to take even for the most adventurous refugee unless they can get their family out too. Which leads to all sorts of entertaining problems. **Just means we spend some time reuniting families... which I suspect we'd want to do anyway.** That's a bit more long term, however... they can be offered on the ground, but they're going to be spending some time in a refugee camp either being treated for disease, immunised and in general being ensured that they are healthy. Disease and prevention of disease is a big thing. It's nice to make the offer though... there are those who will have lost ***everything***.

* Addendum: Ships are to carry surplus weapons and ammunition, something easy to maintain like the AK-47. These are to be distributed to prisoners who decline the offer of transport to Europe or Canada. **Version 0.1a of the story had a similar suggestion, which Noah reacted to with "What idiot thought crossing TL-191 and The Guns of the South was a good idea?"** Be very,

very careful about passing out advanced weapons to people who might be killed for them - especially when the killers are an army that you may have to fight against. Indeed. Well, the garrison has recently been disarmed. And in fairness, a Kalashnikov isn't that far ahead anyway (About 7 years). Repeating firearms and sub-machineguns are known technology..

*It is the express opinion of Firefall high command: "fuck the guards." Just following orders is a cheap excuse and will not be used as a poor-me-get-out-of-jail card. If the strike force is feeling generous, they can cart the guards back to Fenspace for human-rights trials and eventual incarceration in Azkaban (Commandant Pinkard is especially wanted for this role, btw). If they're not feeling generous... well, let the prisoners deal out justice.

Sometime in December, after the Draka attack. Not sure if I want to include it in the main or not. Most important part is introducing Jet's plan and intentions, and some of the consequences of her earlier decisions. Everything else is a bit of Panzer Kunst flavour.

"May I have your attention please.

First of all let me reassure you. There is no need to be afraid of us. I am Lieutenant Max Heinz, of the German Army. These people here, including Doctor Kenzo Tenma beside me are from the Fenspace Convention. We're here to help

We are here to liberate you, and take you to a safe place where you will be provided with food, good accommodation, medical care and the basic human rights you have been denied for so long. Our aircraft, the *Tyger Tyger* is capable of taking you all to Germany and safety, and the potential to start a new life for yourself, if you so wish.

You will be granted political asylum within the countries of the European Union. You will have the right to work and earn a fair wage. You will have the right to own a home, to raise a family and to travel freely.

We will not force you to come with us. You may stay here in the Confederacy if you so choose. We will provide you food and supplies, along with weapons and ammunition to those who have

experience in using firearms, including automatic rifles such as this Kalashnikov. You may join the fight.

It is your decision."

I don't think Stae'd appreciate cleaning his Whale King afterwards. And showing 'mercy' will look good. Besides. Who better to be forced to cook, clean, shift food and ammunition, and in general do dogwork than the former guards. Bad idea. Either take 'em as POWs or shoot 'em. As a rule, making the enemy into slave labor is something we leave for the bad guys, 'kay? I'm not talking long indentured servitude... I'm talking load your base' food/ammo/supplies onto that big thing parked over there, which I think they can be 'requested' to do. "Thanks for loading that, now you five minutes to run before we let loose the healthy and now armed prisoners that don't want to go with us." Now that's just too bastardy. Yea I know, but aren't the camp guards at this point hand picked if you think about it? It makes a good threat.. I'm tryin' to remember that we're trying to be the good guys...

An expedient to save time on the ground. Generosity will do well.... it'll encourage others to give up later.

In OTL in Afghanistan, there are documented cases of wounded Taliban being left where Canadian patrols can find them, because they know the Canadians provide good medical care to their POWs. It doesn't change how they treat us, alas... (But it's still the Right Thing To Do.) In-story, I suggest treating captured Confeds *exactly* the same way you'd treat your own troops, except that you don't give them liberty or let them remain armed. That's the easiest way to obey the Geneva Conventions.

Dunno if 191 *has* "Geneva Convention" or equivalent...

Doesn't matter - we have them.

Being nice is it's own reward. It makes us so much better than the bad guys.

Stage final: Get back to Fenspace, find that while yeah, it's cool that you did that.... you probably should have waited until there wasn't a chance of war and shit that you probably just made worse by making us look like liars to the Confeds. "No chance of war? Hell they'd probably jump the gun and start trying to do as much damage as they can once they realize the stance of the fen and the rest of the world."

Anything to add (Please)

Hmm there is the shadow fox he was working on when the event happened. It's a stealth zoid with smoke dispensers. Find someone to pilot it and have them move to intercept any troops heading to the camp. Then confuse them with the smoke. Have it piloted by someone that supports the *Engels*?

Sierra, she's described as 'tanned'... Sierra would be a good pilot.

Works for me, she'll probably need some practice with it.

Also need to cut any hardlines from the camp. The shadow fox might be good for that too.

Would we have time to pick up a field hospital from somewhere?

We have about a day to put this together. Might be able to scratch something up.

Either pull in some browncoats, or wavium.

Saber would have a stock of wavium onboard the Tyger for building stuff. Considering he was working on a zoid at the time probably in 50 galleon drums.

That'd do for the worst cases... like imminent death. Better mod than dead. Some sympathising browcoats would be the best to actually handle this stuff. They'll only be aboard for a few hours. Just enough to get to Germany. It'll be a mess inside. But it'll work.

Aye, the browncoats would help with crowd control too. Hm if Europe is willing to provide small numbers of troops from each country. SpecOps? Swat?

Sabre Corp's Spartans would be best...the wear power armour. Followed by Sammies or even catgirls with homeostasis. Followed by dirtsiders. At the very least, somebody able to fight wearing breathing gear, or with disease immunities, because the atmosphere in that camp is gonna be poisonous. No good liberating it, and we all get sick ourselves.

And is the camp layout described anywhere?

Maybe in the books. We'll see.

Combine scenes from Auschwitz with "Cool Hand Luke" for a rough idea. Does Dependable still have its political prisoners at that point?

Maybe a few. Willy Knight doesn't die until 1941. We can recover interesting political prisoners at a later date.

====>

Yes. On Mars. Outskirts of Grunthall base, Noctis Labyrinthus, Valles Marineris, Mars. That's where Jet lives in 2016, and where her and the other *Engels* are based, There's enough space to land Tyger Tyger in the Canyon's if Sabre's careful.

Info come's from: https://secure.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/wiki/Panzer_Kunst Great place for armoured martial arts... and learning to fly properly. Until some twits flood it in 2050/60. They're

near enough(Halfway down the four thousand-kilometre Valles Marineris) to Helium that Helium's probably being used as the staging post for this. Which ever location works. I can see Sabre making a trench run between the two places. At points, Marineris is a couple of hundred kilometres wide. Noctis is really nice in the mornings... when the Carbon Dioxide frost begins to sublimate into a white mist.... it'll be a shame when the terraforming project kicks into gear. Actually, Noctis will be above most of the terraforming (using <http://www.modifiedmars.com/> as my default 'final terraformed Mars' map). There might be a river or three running through the labyrinth, and depending on location it might be above the snowline, but otherwise the labyrinth stays above water. Sounds like quite a nice place then. If nobody else wants to stick anything there, I'll put the Panzers there. Could also be where the Engels that will be joining the attack on the camp get themselves familiar with the Tyger.

Speaking of which... I should probably add the Panzer-Kunst Gruppe to the wiki. Right now, they're only mentioned in passing on the Cyber's page... but since Jet is one, and I've already mentioned a few things about them in the Kentucky Story and here.... they could do with a mention. Though tbh... I'm not sure if this'll ever have an effect on the story beyond a few placenames. Well would only need a basic write up for them on the wiki Tomorrow. Gonna get some kip. later.

"In five minutes, we're going to launch the greatest rescue operation in Fenspace history. By sunrise, we will have saved the lives of over ten-thousand innocent human beings. We will be flying them westwards to freedom and safety. And we will have sent a message to Featherston and the Confederacy.

We will show them our power. We will show them our resolve. And we will show them that we will not stand idly by will they commit atrocities against the human race.

Everyone. Helmets and masks on, visor's down. Hide your faces. Hide your eyes. Hide the fact that you're human if you are. Now we're the Mysterons. We're their terror... and there is nothing more terrifying than the unknown.

Brace for turbulence.

"

Here, let me give it a shot:

"Ladies and gentlemen of Operation Burning Bright:

"In the next hour, you will partake in what will be the first salvo in a war. Unlike some, who fight for glory, or for wealth, or for power, you will be fighting for the most noble cause possible: freedom. You will be fighting for the freedom of over ten thousand people trapped in the prison camp below us. And you will be fighting for the freedom of the families of those ten thousand,

and for millions more trapped under the brutal thumb of a tyrant and the system that created him.

“Furthermore, you will be sending a message, to the Confederate leadership and to the world at large. You will tell them that we will not stand idly by while murder and mayhem are perpetrated against the powerless. You will tell them that their weapons, while terrible and brutal, cannot stand against our ingenuity. And you will tell them that a free society will always triumph against the slave society.

“This will not be an easy task. Your enemies are not foolish, and they will retaliate. But I have every confidence in your courage and devotion to duty and your skill in battle. We will accept nothing else than full victory!

“Good luck. Those of you who follow a God, ask their blessings for the beginning of this great and noble undertaking.

“All hands, brace for turbulence.”

One bit I'd like to see in whichever version gets used (exact wording isn't necessary, but the thought is a powerful one): “Six decades ago, we made a promise: Never Again. It's time to keep that promise.” TBH, I'm not fond of that ‘powerful thought,’ but I'm something of a cynic and I've read enough history to know that ‘never again’ was a pretty big lie, because it has happened again, and again, and *again* and the people who said ‘never again’ did very little to stop it. Now, I understand that my view isn't the majority view here, and we're not writing a dissident history. So consider this an objection (noted and logged), but not a veto.

That was the EU declaration in the original doc. Yeah, and in some ways it's *really fucking hypocritical* of the EU to say something like that - but then, it'd be the same if it was the US, or China, or Russia or whoever. Don't want to turn this into a debate, just wanted to say that so it didn't blow up into a huge commie drama thing down the line, is all.

It is... but it's also the exact sort of thing the EU would say. Which is why I'm not jumping up and down demanding it be removed from the text. ;) I know... but feel free to mention it in-story... at least privately.

'Sallright. Of course, actually living up to the promise does show the moral fibre of Fenspace... Or our Mary Sue qualities. But fuckit, that's one path we're damned no matter which way we turn, might as well embrace it.

Marsden will say it, if no one else will. In fact, he already has.

Mary-Suism is as much in the reactions of characters to what they do, as it is in what they do. I'm trying to keep to that. That's what I'm trying to do with Jet's mission on Dependable. Not

sure how well that's working, mind. I mean... her reaction on camera after it's all said and done won't be a big long confident speech (The one she gave at the start was pre-prepared by 'someone else'), but a rather stunned "Holy shit... we actually did it... and... it's like... Holy shit. All those people... we all saved all those people." Probably a bit goofy and stupid, but perhaps more natural than standing confidently in front of the news crews and giving a speech about justice and honour and righteousness and courage and freedom.

One of the things that stops Fenspace from being Mary-Sue is that the residents still react in a very human manner to the world around them.... even those who aren't actually human, are still 'people'.

I mean, it's all to easy to kick the shit out of characters like Pinkard and the like.... and say smart things as you 'accidentally' manage to injure them. The reality is, if you're arresting the guy and pulling his arms around behind his back.... and your strength is beyond human to the point where you could pull his arm clean off... if he screams 'You're hurting me!' the first thing you're going to do is back off with a slightly embarrassed flush. You don't want to hurt the squishy by mistake. Actually... I might just do that.

And I should really not stay up this late.

~~(Fragment, just something I thought to put down, meant to be a 'interview' as the Tyger heads towards europe.)~~

~~Commandant Pinkard winced as the hood was pulled off his head. Blinking rapidly before his eyes adjusted to the light shining down on him. He found himself sitting at a lighted table in a other wise dark room. He could vaguely make out the shape of people sitting across from him. He was startled as a glass of water floated down and landed on the table in front of him. A odd small black device joined it on the table at the very edge of the light. There was a click as something inside the clear cover started spinning.~~

~~(Something ate the first line of this. Going to try to fix it.)~~ (I like Mal's version better)

{here's something re: Pinkard}

"Take that off him, would you?" A mild voice in front of Pinkard said. "We're not barbarians here."

Pinkard winced as the hood came off. Blinking rapidly as his eyes adjusted to the light, he found himself in a simple bare metal room, sitting in front of a metal table. At the head of the table sat a mild-looking man with a neat black mustache. And behind him...

Jeff Pinkard stared at the turning Earth outside the window. The other man smiled thinly. "You're not in Louisiana anymore, Mr. Pinkard," he said.

“I-wha-how-who?” Jeff sputtered.

“In order, you’re now in Orbital Processing Station #4, we brought you here and we-” the man grinned, becoming nigh-diabolical in Pinkard’s eyes “-are the Fen. I think congratulations are in order, Mr. Pinkard. You’re the first person we’ve brought up here, though not the last. You see, you’re now a prisoner of war.”

“You damnyankee bastard!” Pinkard roared. “You declared war on us! Jake Featherston’ll kick your Martian asses all the way back to wherever you came from!”

“That... remains to be seen,” said his interrogator. “However, your war is over. We’ll be moving you on to a nice prison camp we’ve arranged someplace very, very far away from the Confederacy and any hope of rescue.” The man’s smile grew nasty. “I’m curious to hear your critique of it, seeing as you have a reputation as an innovator in prison design.”

Pinkard is gonna be wetting himself. Especially if he wakes up to meet a Kunstler at the end of his bed, face hidden by armour, bloodied elbow-blades gleaming.

What happens to guards who don’t surrender... ain’t gonna be pretty either. It’s all about intimidation... putting the fear of God into them so they throw down their guns and don’t make a big fight of it. Because if they fight back, we can still lose people.

I wonder if some of the Kunstler would be willing to use electrified riot shields. How would the guards regard a sparking shield sweeping towards them. To few of them. And electricity and cyborgs doesn’t go well together . They can be shielded against that and it’ll be toggable, sort of like a taser. I’d rather not.... they have to fly ahead of the Tyger with their gear... best give the riot shields to the redshirt troops who might actually have a use for them keeping prisoners in line. .

Hm could dress the redshirts up like the shotgun armed peacekeeper troopers from RA 3. They carry riotshields as well.

Hm Sabre has a HL2 gravity gun system built into his zoid body so he can throw small vehicles and trucks around.

Try to keep the in-camp destruction to a minimum. We don’t want to accidentally kill any of the prisoners trying to make a big impressive bang. That’s the whole point of using the Kunstlers and their blades, rather than firepower. It’s messy, (One of their attacks involves flipping over the enemy out of the line of fire, and driving their blades through the enemy’s back) but less bullets flying.

Might be a bit too bloody for a Fenspace story mind.... As long as it’s no more grim than this story, I see no problem. I suppose I can use the euphemism ‘disarmed’... and similar.

We will show the our ability to ask for speeches from friends who happen to know more about writing than I do :P -The delegation to Richmond will probably explain that there are no mysterons.... but there's still something terrifying about full-armoured cyborgs and gas-masked infantry, and the thought will be there. A little intimidation might well encourage a bloodless surrender, which is far nicer because it means less prisoners caught by stray rounds. Just FYI, the "Mysteron" thing is going to remain a running gag through the story and any followups, just because a) I think it's funny and b) history is made of weird little misunderstandings like that. Much like the (probably apocryphal) story that Spanish explorers named a bunch of places after the local word for "I don't know what you're saying!" ;) **Not just the Spanish - "Canada" comes from a local-to-me word meaning "village". Pretty good for the second-largest country on Earth.** I'll have to figure out how to make it funnier. I wonder if the camp will have a PA system that'll **work**. Don't try to force the funny, that only makes it obvious and lame. Just let the funny come natural.

Just having the Tyger and everything else dropping in on their heads will be enough. This is just getting bigger and bigger... isn't it? Storywise and in Universe, it's gone from a raid with 10 Engels in 2 days time, to something with a giant dropship plotted in a bar, to a full blown operation involving personnel from multiple factions, including mundanes and BNF's... All because a cyborg had a hotheaded moment after overflying the place and taking a few pictures, and a chance meeting in a bar. History - and Fenspace - tends to work like that. Might actually put that in the story... it's a nice quote to start the mission off.

Ref:

http://www.fenspace.net/index.php5?title=Tyger_Tyger
http://www.fenspace.net/index.php5?title=File:Sabre_Fang_2_copy.jpg
http://zoids.wikia.com/wiki/Shadow_Fox

For the Panzer's

http://www.fenspace.net/index.php5?title=Panzer_Kunst_Gruppe

Angreifen!

As pronounced by Jet, Angry Fen

Telegram to a Mr J. Featherston, Richmond, Virginia.

LAST SPEECH SAID CONFED TROOPS WOULD MEET CONVENTION WHEREVER THEY LANDED STOP WHERE ARE THEY

(Probably won't put that in the story. But the thought makes me smile. Reference to 1941 Lofoten Islands raid)

And I just noticed half the notes in this are related to this op. We need to clean this section up. Or just write the op and clear the notes. Either way works. ;)

I'll pick a date in April and run with it. Who'se starting the war, btw? It's a race, Featherston will make the first move more-or-less simultaneously as the strike on Dependable.

It's a night mission anyway... shortly after midnight local time. 'S about when Featherston would send the 'go' orders on Blackbeard, canonically. Can't see him not pulling the same gag this time round.

Sounds like doable. Might also include the line "Private First Class Peter Wells was thrilled to death to have the dubious honour of being the first casualty in the war between the Mysterons and the Confederacy," or some variation of same.

---->>Notes on the camp

Few hundred Yards from Main Entrance.... road to New Orleans. Machine Gun outpost at main entrance.

Machine guns in towers.

Infirmary.

Barbed wire separated the warden's office and quarters and the guards' quarters from the prisoners' barracks.

Barracks Six: Willy Knight resides

Telegram on base (apparently.. fun could be had)

(Aerial Combat over the Dependable area. Enemy fighter's lead by one John S. Thach. OTL, he was from Pine Bluff, Arkansas. Using a variant of his new 'Beam Defence' idea.. he's able to bring down an unfortunate Zig pilot... giving the confederates a nice piece of technology, and forcing Jet to send a rescue mission for the downed pilot. Thoughts on that?)Dropping a Zig is fine, though since it's pre-waved it shouldn't give the Confederates any special insight into Mysteron magic. Not that this should stop them from trying, but hey.A little bit of propaganda. "Hey, they can be shot down, and here's the Pilot who did it," Yeah, that'd work. At the very least it gives 'em a reason to keep fighting. Considering a Zig is one of the lightest flying fen units that isn't powerarmor or a cyborg. Just out of curiosity, how do they treat POW's? Well enough by the standards of the time; if the locals don't get them and deliver a little rough justice, then they're rounded up and stuck in a POW camp. Just thinking over whether they should be successful rescuing the downed pilot, or not. Could be they moved the pilot just before the rescue mission goes down. So the mission goes off without a hitch, just that the one being rescued isn't there anymore. So in other words, far from going off without a hitch, it fails. More like the prison rescue in Vietnam where do to a leak all the prisoners had been moved. The op goes off perfect, just no one at the target to be rescued anymore. Well... it's not an op... it's searching for a pilot who's just been down, trying to get him before he's taken prisoner by the South

Confederate Airforce Attack...

~

I hope that's not Noah's Kohran who designed that "type-242 Starburst" aircraft-shredder - it's out of character for her. (High Explosives, yes. Terror weapons, no.) Besides, it's overkill.

If you can, track down a copy of *Zipang*. There's a chapter/episode where the *Mirai* is forced to open fire on a squadron of US aircraft (an "us or them" moment) - in it, one of the WWII aircraft is hit by a modern antiaircraft missile that didn't have time to arm after being launched, so the missile goes all the way through the aluminium fuselage... and acquires a new target once it's done so. One shot, two kills, no nastiness with terror weapons. That's the sort of thing that Kohran would design for this sort of engagement.

Thing is... that's kinda how AA missiles work. It was something I specifically looked it up before writing it. They fill a chunk of space where the the enemy aircraft might be with enough metal fragments, and hope that they go through vital parts of the plane. In many ways, they're designed to overkill, because they're design to at least guarantee *something* hits a small, fast moving target. I supposed I should've finished things off a bit... where the weapon detonates and puts a few holes through the tail (which'd be a problem in a pressurised fighter in space, or something as densely packaged as a Zig)... but doesn't manage to cut any control cables... it just fouls up the aero's a little.

The original idea was that instead of spraying shrapnel in all directions... it directs it towards the target, so you take out only what you're aiming at, not what it's parked beside.

Part of the thing I was planning on for this was the, with the missiles, the Zigs are devastating... but without them, they have only a single coilgun which just can't damage the 1940's planes fast enough. Most of a plane's fuselage is empty space... especially in the 1940's. You could scoot a missile right through it... and all you'd manage to do was add to the onboard ventilation.

Might try something different. Maybe 'Silly string'... which gums up the prop's and control surfaces? For the time being, I changed the effects of the missile... so it's clearly trying to aim just for the aircraft's engine to cripple the plane. It's 'less' lethal, as much as an explosive missile can be.

I kinda want something that can be evaded/can do negligible damage too... in order to give them a fair chance. Making it interesting, rather than a total boring curbstomp. I want it to be at least 'possible' for Burning Bright to lose.... Y'know, I actually disagree. BURNING BRIGHT should be a complete and clear victory, a demonstration of the power and finesse with which the

Fen can pull off military operations. There will be other opportunities to show that war ain't easy, even with huge technological advantages. So, y'know, let it be curbstompy. As it stands it's compelling enough, we don't need to force-nerf Fen forces or give the CSA plot shields to inject drama. *Agree, CSA can bring the tyger down, but it requires a lot of force to do to so. Sitting on the ground like she is makes her a big bomb target. They do have to get through everything that the tyger brought.* I think you're missing my point. I'm saying, *let BURNING BRIGHT get off without a hitch; they take on the Confederate rear guard, kick their asses and leave successfully. We don't need to have a Dramatic Airfight where the Tyger and escorts get away by the skin of their teeth. We can do that elsewhere.* This is, and should be, a curbstomp. They didn't expect it, and the Fen sucker-punched 'em.

The plan was that they never got near the tyger. You also didn't let me finish typing XD. Anyway the sort of force the CSA would need would badly effect their war effect on the front. See, I still think you're missing the point kinda. It's not that the CSA has something that can effect the Tyger, it's that we *shouldn't care* if they do. It's not dramatically appropriate for the CSA to put up significant resistance, so we shouldn't shoehorn it in because we're afraid of curbstomping. So let the Zigs swat down whatever pitiful air support the CSA can send to middle of nowhere Louisiana in the dead of night, and then fly off for good German beer.

Of course it's going to be a spectacular success. But there still has to be the unexpected, things don't go exactly to plan. One of the Peacemakers breaks down. Resistance from the camp guards in the barracks was a little higher than expected, it's taking longer to load the Tyger. Missiles are great at taking down planes, but without them, Zig's can't damage 1940's Era planes fast enough with just one coilgun. 1 Zig pilot gets shot down, and an attempt has to be made to rescue him. There should be a minimum of friction to be overcome. They intercept a message telling them that a confederate force is inbound....just some PBI's in trucks and a pair of tanks expecting to face paratroopers. Fodder for the zoids. Just enough to suggest that they can't sit there forever and that they are in enemy territory, while not enough to pose an actual threat. At the end of the day, job's done and done very well...

Great war era tank? I know 191-US has a bunch, the CSA might in their rear area.

Might as well have two of them. Tiger has a gravity cannon, right? Lift one... flip... drop on the other. Tank Commander Willy. E. LaTrans finds himself under a broadening shadow. Followed by three trucks reversing.... fast. Sabre has the gravity cannon, He'd 'pounce' the first tank to stop the convoy and then use the gravity cannon fling the second one away.

Yeah. But that's just not funny. A tank being picked up, and dropped on another.... has a certain hilarity to it. It just looks cooler. Pick up the rearward tank.... drop it on the front. Block the road... and give them an obvious escape.

~***~

God damn hunk of greatwar scrap. Thought Barrel Commander Willy E. LaTrans as the old barrel clattered along the road. A matching barrel clattered along in behind of his, bringing up

the rear of the column. One barrel in front, one at the back, guarding the troops in the middle. That both crews and the troops in the three trucks were greener than the Kentucky grass didn't help his sense of growing dread. They'd been kicked out of bed at oh-dark-hundred and sent rattling off towards Alexandria to look for a **supposed** mysteron pilot the fly boys had shot down. With his luck, it'd probably be another damned weather balloon.

He peered ahead through the swirling mist and fog, blackout lamps sending out thin rays of light into the night time gloom. Damned weather coming in off the swamp... it only serves to make things even spookier.

The sound of squealing **metal** brought his head around, "Now what..." He turned around to see the following barrel appear to levitate off the ground in one place... tracks spinning useless in mid air.

"What the hell?" he blurted out.

He could hear the radio operator below him yelling at a panicked voice coming over the speakers calling for the virgin Mary.

Quickly, he glanced around.... two bus-sized shadows loomed in the darkness, looking for all the world like giant cats.

"Oh Christ," he gasped, suddenly grasping what was happening. His training took control, and he dropped down to the hatch. "Gunner, Target left. Bearing zero-nine-zero degrees. Load one anti-tank shell,"

The gunner stared back at him, eyes like golfballs.

"Do it numbnuts!" he yelled, "Or I'll kick your green ass from here to Albuquerque."

That snapped the gunner out of his reverie "Sir! Yes Sir!"

LaTrans felt the turret begin to turn towards the target as he pulled himself up through the open hatch. There were more panicked shouts coming from the trucks, some of the troops inside breaking and fleeing.

"Get back here you cowards!" he yelled after them.

As soon as he said so, he became vaguely aware of a shadow passing over him, and the odd feeling that something very heavy was right above his head. He looked up to see a side of a barrel very few men ever did, outside of an inspection pit.

The electric feeling went away, and he became aware of it starting to get larger. It seemed to

whistle softly as it dropped.

"Yipe.." he said, deadpan. His final act was to grab onto the hatch ring, and wonder if maybe he should've worn a helmet.

Sabre mentally sighed as rifle rounds ricocheted off his nose. Giving his head a slight toss he dropped the tank with all the grace of a brick. It landed dead centre on top of the leading barrel, squashing the thing half flat in the process. Its sides bowed out and burst open like a squashed cardboard box, splintered tracks and metal shrapnel flying everywhere.

In the cockpit of the Shadowfox, Ford Sierra smiled. That had been a deeply satisfying noise, the kind of satisfying noise only made when something big and heavy, lands on something else big and heavy. A cross between a mighty clang like God's own swords crashing together, followed by a deep hollow rumble that she felt run up right through the structure of the zoid.

"I love that sound," she said, before realising that the barrel on top of the strange marriage was still trying to fight. Its turret slowly began to rotate around to face her. The barrel of a cannon, facing right at her... while below, a single dazed crewman had managed to somehow get out of the bottom vehicle. He stumbled and staggered senselessly, falling into a ditch at the side of the road.

A giddy thrill ran through her as she fired her zoids main guns.... hitting the bottom barrel dead in the side. For a half-instant, nothing happened, before the whole lot went up like a brilliant orange firecracker, as both vehicle's fuel and ammunition detonated near simultaneously. The turret of the top vehicle popped off like a rocket riding a spark, cartwheeling through the air before coming down in a field nearly a hundred meters away.

Sabre stepped out onto the road and roared at the remaining troops. Sending them fleeing into the woods on the heels of those smart enough to flee when they had first appeared.

An anti-tank rocket corkscrewed towards his shoulder, impacting with a hot flash, and very little damage. He saw the shooter standing on the bed of a truck... alone. He brought one paw down on the engine of the truck as he tore the bed from it with his jaws. A toss of his head sent it flying into the woods.

Those who remained finally figured that discretion was the best part of valour and fled.

(Now see, this is why we need Metal Gears [Metal Gears?!]. Metal Gears make appropriately terrifying noises, like *really pissed* T-Rexes.)

(got a really cool idea for big damn railgun, if that's the case.)

~***~

“Zig fighter down. We have a Zig fighter down,”

Sabre had been watching the air battle through both his zoid body's sensors and the ones on board the Tyger. His anger boiled over as he acquired one of the offending planes and shifted his 78 ton weight as the back mounted mass driver swung around. One thought selected a HE round as another shifted him to the Zig radio freq. *“Ground fire inbound, one round only.”* The supersonic crack of the mass driver firing washed over the camp causing people to duck.

Thach was trying not to cheer, by god it worked. He and his wingman continued the weave, daring any of the other zigs to come for them. His turn brought him around to face the camp just in time to witness the destruction of his wingman. As what he would later swore was a flaming meteor rising from the ground struck the fighter.

“Take that you murdering damnyanke...”

The round struck the tail of the hound dog, it passed harmlessly through the plane

Thach watched horrified as the remains spun earthward until a parachute appeared amid them. A numb corner of his brain noted that what ever it was, it wasn't flak. One of the other pilots called out *“Ground fire! That was ground fire! It came from the camp!”*

~

Hound dog description based off-of P-39 Airacobra Because it's got a 37mm Cannon and is an interesting design.

* Squadron of Hound Dogs, maybe about 10-20, lead by John Thach.

* Picked up by *Aluminium Overcast*, coming in from a Northerly direction.

- * Zig fighters move to intercept, over the city and environs of Alexandria.
- * First missile volley knocks down half of the HoundDogs, for no reply. Thach is stunned. Missiles robotech through the air. A few Confed' pilots figure out that those missiles are guided, and dive down to the ground, hoping to wronski feint them. Maybe 5 or so escape, trailing explosions behind them.
- * Piston engines roaring, spitting fire, they pull up, chasing after Zigs, which have expended their missile loads. Zigs are faster and more maneuverable, with the altitude advantage. But single 20mm coilguns are no match for 4 20mm cannon and 4 machine guns.
- * Without missiles, Zigs just can't hurt the Hound Dogs fast enough.
- * Thach decides to employ a new defensive maneuver he's been tinkering with.
- * Allowing a Zig fighter to chase him, he deliberately weaves in front of his wingman, giving his wingman a shot at the Zig.
- * Zig dives, realising the trap... only to get shot through the wing and engine. Pilot ejects from the wrecked aircraft.
- * Thach loses another plane... and decides it's time to beat a hasty retreat before Zig's can press their overwhelming numbers. Long range ground fire? Would be amusing if he realizes that there is another threat besides the zigs that have already gutted his force. ~~Railgun-round from sabre takes the tail off his wingman?~~ Correction, mass driver round, a HE shell that goes off after exiting the plane because it has a delayed fuse as it was designed to 'waved armor and not TL-191 aircraft armor.

That'd do it alright.

Order is given to launch a rescue mission.... because nobody wants to tell Rhodes they left his pilot behind.

Southerners find the Zig wreckage... whether the mission to rescue the pilot is a success or not, depends on what other people want for the future story. The Pilot rescue can be the last ground operation...

Southern Propaganda: "They can be defeated, and here is the proof! "

John S. Thach to himself "Yeah tell that to all the dead pilots bring that thing down."

Ending Burning Bright.

Enemy infantry are mobilising, and approaching from (wherever), including a decent squadron of tanks. Loading of the *Tyger* is almost complete. Search and rescue is still searching, whether it's successful or not... someone else call it depending on what you want to write.

The Pilot is found at the last moment, and it becomes a race against time to get him the few kilometres back to *Tyger*. Panzers cannot carry people when they fly, so it's the German's making the run.

Tyger can't hold much longer... base has been demolished, only the Sun and Spaceship remains. A handwaved flag, on a handwaved pole. Give them some fun taking it down.

Recovery team finds Pilot and his captors. If they're Confederate Army, or FPG's... they die. (Either that, or they just find a transponder, looking like it fell unnoticed, and signs of a scuffle.... Someone can take that up.)

Hard part now is getting the recovery team back to *Tyger* before the camp becomes a battlezone.

Instead of waiting, *Tyger* takes off without them.... flies about three kilometres or so to their location, and drops climbing ropes, just as Confed' troops are closing in.

Tiger roars away to much Confederate fist-shaking, passing low over Alexandria on the way, before boosting up out of there.

Jet signals Command with the success code, along with important details of the Op, before they fly off into the sunrise.

A few hours later, the whole lot lands at Bielefeld in Germany. Survivors are disembarked, the press are gathering around. Jet, or a few of the other's are caught by reports. Lieutenant Heinz is eloquent and calm "Today we signed the history books," , while Jet just sort of stares and is more or less... "Holy shit... look what we actually did. I mean... all these people. They... We saved their lives. I'm... oh wow. It's just it's...awesome." sounding like she doesn't believe it actually went off, before laughing a little. It's embarrassing and cringeworthy... the opposite of a sombre reflection on the evil just escaped, or even something in any way elegant about sending messages ... but at the same time, very human.

In a dark cell somewhere, someone else scares the crap out of Pinkard

And then. Done. Maybe a few Fenspace reaction shots.

Thoughts Dakota?

looks good to me

We do have to end it sometime. It's already metastised from a Drop-down and pick-em-up quicky... into the (benign) tumour it is now... no need to make an entire story out of it. Anything else?

Putting this here temporarily.... finding stuff in the middle of the doc is hard.

Jet and Stae liberate Camp Dependable, most likely the exact same time diplomacy is happening. 25th November, while the Fen Delegation casts its shadow over the capital, *Operation: Ansturm (Rush)* is launched. I would like to point out that this is a magnificently bad idea, for many reasons related to trying to prevent all-out war against cracker-Hitler.

I'm aware of it being a magnificently bad idea from that perspective but Jet's based on me enough, and that's not somethi

Stop. Stop right there. Stopped? Good. If you want *want* Jet, Stae and whoever else they rope into this to sit the rest of the story out in Azkaban, then go *right ahead* and keep plotting. 'Cause that's *exactly* what will happen if you commit an act of war the first day the Fen open talks with the CSA. If you're *lucky*.

I'm not screwing around, guys. You write this as an end-run around Firefall and the Convention, and I *will* write both your asses into the joint.

Right, right. Well.... maybe it's something that gets sat on in case things go bad... something that can be done on a moment's notice. It makes sense if somebody finds out about it.... they'd get them to hold off.

sigh Look, a strike on Camp Dependable is in the cards - it's one of Firefall's main sell points. But there is a *time* and a *place* for these things, and right when the Convention's trying to sell Featherston on the carrot is not the time or place. And if you play silly buggers with this, it just leads to drama and other bullshit that's best left alone. If you guys want in on the strike, I've got no problem with that... but you have to play by the rules of engagement, and those involve listening to Firefall and not tearing off on your own. Okay?

Alright << We can do that. We could probably retask this as the plan for that then, sometime in December or whenever command want's it done. We'll behave :)

~***~

Alexandria, LA and general environs: [GoogleMaps](#)

Thanks.

~***~

Join the Navy, Already in Progress...

(Hmmmm... Speaking of *Zipang*, here's something for another operation: "Confederate battleship, this is the Fen patrol vessel *Ciara*. Because of your multiple attempted attacks on us, we have had no choice but to launch a Tomahawk-class cruise missile at your vessel. If you signal that you are ceasing hostilities and surrendering any time in the next twenty-nine minutes, we will send the destruct order to that weapon. If you do not, then the missile will sink your vessel. It is your choice whether to reply, but if you do not, may God have mercy on your souls.")

Ooh... cool. Is it wrong that I heard that in the Magrathean voice from H2G2 movie?

New York

Crew are docked somewhere in lower Manhattan, as a goodwill gesture running tours of the ship for locals. Showing them around the ship, not being shy about talking about her defence capabilities, what life is like in space.

Carsten's first impression is that it's definitely not a military ship.... it's still very civilian inside. Crew are relaxed. Not naval discipline.... just a bunch of friends who got a boat.

The server room (Actually more a CIC), from where all the ship's weapon systems can be controlled simultaneously. The *Mithril* system... capable of automatic selection of targets, appropriate weapons, and firing.

"We prefer to do it manually though,"

"Ah, to save ammunition," Carsten theorised.

Main radar array... radio antennae, interwave. Capabilities in space. Shutdown right now.

Starscream missiles provide anti-missile defence. Capable of knocking out battleship shells quite happily mind.

The original Oto melara gun and 2 rheinmetals handle anti-aircraft, and navigation hazards. Carsten is especially impressed by the 76mm gun capable of targeting and tracking aircraft. He chats with the gunner, who shows him around the auto-loaders and some of their shell types.

Anti-shipping is handle by two launchers and 4 Sagittarius missiles... designed for use against spacecraft... but should be good against ocean going ships.

He leaves with a lot of notes, and the belief that some of Ciara's capabilities may just be hot air on their part. Somehow, he doubts they'd use their weaponry. Mostly, they seem content to sit behind them and trust other people's fear of them to keep them safe.... if forced to use them, they might hesitate.

Cut to wartime, and they're escorting a convoy heading towards the US coast, just after landing in the water, when they're overflowed by a floatplane. A few minutes later a Confederate battleship starts lobbing shells at them.

One shell would be enough to blow her out of the water.

Starscreams manage to shoot down every single one.

They radio the battlewagon, encouraging them to withdraw. Naturally, they refuse to believe a small destroyer could be capable of one-shutting them. They fire again.... One of Ciara's guns jams, but the shell falls short.

The battleship isn't playing around. And if they get taken out, it'll happily run riot with the convoy. Carsten was right, they are pretty hesitant to respond with force.

Targetting the missile is a bit like playing a game of Battleship. The little red mode select button is pushed on the bridge. The missile lances away up into the sky on a cloud of fire and smoke and proceeds to fly about 5 minutes or so towards the battlewagon.

They radio her one last time, suggesting they withdraw. The battleship returns fire one last time.

Her captain sees something coming in high, and diving down. It punches through the deck, just ahead of a gun turret. There is a terrible awful silence. Followed by a terrible, Earth shattering kaboom.

A few minutes later, on Ciara's bridge, it's noted that the target has 'disappeared'. A black column of smoke is visible on the Horizon. "You sunk my battleship," the Radar declares aloud.

There are some varied reactions... from the 'We just killed how many thousand people' variety, to 'Boom, headshot!'

And the South gets a Bismark to send everything after.

~***~

What the new neighbors think

Thoughts for a 191-pov sequence, sometime early/mid war and continuing through to the end of hostilities & beyond: The 191 Dept. of War, not being composed of complete idiots (see pioneering Asst. Secretary of War Franklin Roosevelt, who also spearheaded the 191 A-bomb project), sets up a TSAB-esque office - Office of Unusual Events or somesuch - to handle both the new technologies available from the 'Danelaw and experiments with handwavium. It's also an intelligence analysis office. Headed by Capt. Robert Heinlein, w/ a cast of characters from the 30s and 40s pulps, many of whom were involved in OTL WW2 information offices, fwiw. This is driven mainly by the image of RAH cracking the whip in an attempt to get some work out of Lt. Lafe Hubbard. Whaddya think, sirs?

Sounds fun. Everything's better with Heinlein. Was 'Lafe Hubbard' too subtle? Not for me. Might want to invite him aboard the VVS' DC-8...

hee

<grin>

If it's not too late to add something here, Asimov was already writing and publishing in OTL by age 19 (1939). He should probably be on the staff, too. Hm. Well, it's possible, though IIRC Asimov's parents left Russia to avoid the Revolution, which didn't happen in TL-191. But hey, if the idea's cool enough, we'll make like HT and ignore plausibility. Good point about the revolution; I'd hate to not have him, especially since he *did* work for the Philadelphia Navy Yard's Naval Air Experimental Station during WWII. ISTR a story in Asimov's years ago that featured Asimov, Heinlein, Grace Hopper and the USS Eldridge. Good times. %) Oh yeah, the mythical connection to the Philadelphia Experiment. Always good material. Too bad we can't have one in this TL... there's no background to lead up to it. Are you *sure* about that? We do have a US Navy looking into strange phenomenon, and the Navy Yard is still the Navy Yard... something to think about, if nothing else. Oh, an analogue would be fun. I was just saying the classic Phil.Exp. was unlikely. A local Eldridge plus handwavium would make for some new local good guys we could play with. Indeed. </teal'c>

DUDE! THIS is the source of the CANON-Fenspace Eldridge "Ghost Ship!"

So I'm not the only person thinking that.

You know, I never even considered that.

yobxof2000: "Department Analyzing Future Technology" "DAFT"

ESPECIALLY if they have proto-fen as the staff

dakota: hee

yobxof2000: Works even better if they keep calling it by the full name for a while before realizing

what the acronym is.

The more serious, grumpy types may well call it "A. Eff. Tee"

So what section is this in reference to, or is it still unwritten?

dakota: unwritten, there was talk about it being run by the navy on the skatchpad

yobxof2000 has left.

Department of Odd Technology and Space(D.O.T.S.) (Placeholder name until something better is found.)

Goal of sorting through the technology of the world that their nation has found itself transplanted to and adapting it for use. Including sorting 'waved tech from non-waved tech and researching the applications of the wave on native technology. Setup shortly before the outbreak of war and headed by Capt. Robert Heinlein who reports directly to Asst. Secretary of War Franklin Roosevelt. Currently housed at the Los Angeles Spaceport to directly have access to the Fen.

Draka notes:

((We should hash out just what the wave has let the Drakensis have from their source material. Most Common Superpower, obviously, with Arrogance and Delusions as the major quirk?

Sounds reasonable. The major delusion being that they have superior intelligence. If the neo-Draks are true to source socially, they're going to be a whole new ball-game for the Fen, as they DO NOT take prisoners, nor do they offer or take Quarter. EVER. I'm thinking the Archon is perhaps the most "rigorous" Draka and may have made a "Drakensis Machine" which is the source of "reliable" Draka mods No doubt based on the !@^!(!@(* catgirl machine pioneered by Asmodeus Grey, the sonofabitch. And no more reliable than the Professor's Julian Friez machine. My idea here is that Archon LONGNAME tried to make a Servus machine, as Catgirls aren't his "kink" but made the Drakensis machine as a quirk from the attempt. Disagree, the drakensis converter is/should be considered a *reward* for the snakes who get to use it; a personality-reboot might be sort of useful, but having to retrain loyal followers wouldn't make it worth it. Okay. Let's work with that. I'm presuming the "aggression/domination" pheromones are part of the delusion, reinforced by them just having the devil's own luck finding say Gorean submissives, etc Oh lord, let's not bring Gor into this, otherwise we'll be so busy wiping out *that* we'll forget all about the Confederates. *ahem* Anyway. Yeah, the pheromones are at least 90%

delusion; the rare drakensis might have pheromones, but they don't seem to *do* much of anything. Maybe if they had a proper example of servus to work with, but... I was thinking that the luck, and the fact that they were keeping their head down, kept them out of OGJ's sights back when. Most of the Draka forces are Turnerites who play along, perhaps.))

(...)

Infinity Notes:

Let's play the Infinity game!

So, establishing that we want to - or at least I want to - hang onto the Inifinity and Centrum subplot, does the floor have any ideas on how to proceed? The basic format of the subplot goes as follows:

1. Shift happens.
2. Infinity agent Maico Tange starts investigating, requests help.
- 2a. Centrum agent Mohammed Chang does likewise.
3. Maico makes the mistake of sending a report back home while on Stellvia. Noah rumbles her.
4. In response to the latest report, Infinity ISWAT director Otto Skorenzy decides to send in ISWAT Sigma Team (consisting of interdimensional expys of Noah, Mal and Ben Rhodes) to aid in the investigation. Presumably Centrum does much the same thing. (Special Circumstances division of the Interworld Service? Maybe have *them* as expys of other Fen or 191ers? Or *both*?)
5. ???
6. Profit!

Hey, here's a question: Centrum Original Flavor, Centrum Light or Centrum Dark? I could make arguments for all three...

I've always preferred Original Flavor... but am willing to be outvoted. Personally I'm in favor of Light-ish, as it allows Centrum to be reasonably Good Guys, but with enough ideological opposition to Infinity that the whole crosstime war thing makes sense. Also, I like the idea of being able to split Fen opinion on the subject without making half the factions out to be either baby-eating monsters or easily duped nitwits. ;) Sounds good to me. Allright, anybody else want to throw in their two creds? Another Vote for Light-ish. Blackaeronaut here, chiming in for Lightish as well. Roughriders, under Benjamin, would push for a neutral stance between Infinity and Centrum, perhaps even going as far as wishing to act as a mediator between the two to prevent serious conflicts. Federation and VVS would probably be more interested in Centrum, at the very least looking at alternate forms of democratic governance and economic systems (down with the capitalists, etc.) (*Ribs Mal* Oh dear, not this again. ;) Hey, just because you're a

capitalist oppressor... ;) *Sniffs* Capitalist, yes, but not an oppressor. Yeah - that's Noah's job.

<g>

Vote for Light-ish

Likewise Light-ish.

A later bit for the Infinity subplot - Noah's going to feel guilty about blowing Maico's cover. No reason he should, but sometimes he's irrational. (Yes, just sometimes.) After consultation with the SMOFs, he's going to offer Infinity some embassy space on Stellvia, with the provision that Maico is part of the staff. If he's really lucky and Infinity's really stupid ("Why would they bug us?"), they'll accept. Hah. Benjamin would allow both Centrum and Infinity to keep offices at 36 Atalante, but he would make sure that they both knew that their actions are being monitored. You know, play nice and all. ;)

Potential point of conflict within the Convention/Firefall political structure:

Is it possible that the Federation might - *might* - decide that now is a good time to be canon-faithful and start arguing against Convention intervention within the 191 transfer zone? After all, the Prime Directive says that primitive cultures should not be interfered with... The "Mysterons" broadcast blows that out of the water, though. The contamination's been made; all the Feds can do now is limit the effects. And somebody's bound to point out that *that* means letting a war with a high butcher's bill take place when they could have stopped it - not that they'll care if they really are being canon-faithful, but it would make interaction relations dicey for a long time. Somebody did; recheck the SMOFcon segment. In the end I decided this wasn't a serious idea, or at least not a serious idea worth exploring in this story. I figure they'd only really have it just so they have it to break. They may take a more Culture type approach. I'd lean towards something closer to what it was in TOS myself, basically don't exploit the natives. This is as opposed to what it grew into in TNG, VOY and ENT. There's probably a debate among the Trekkies about it too. That said, I agree with Bob's notion that it's mostly observed in the breach.

United States - E Pluribus Plurum

(bad Latin - so sue me... or fix it)

{something for later in the story, perhaps as we near the end of the Weird War II:

"The way things are heading, we're going to have two heirs to the Washingtonian tradition

standing when the dust settles; I see no great moral reason to not have a third."

premise: The uptime US (Alaska/Hawaii/Greenwood + diaspora pop.) and the 191 US will not be able to come to an agreement regarding power. Also, certain SMOFs are floating a trial balloon regarding the continued survival of the CSA post-Featherston. The argument here is that occupying and annexing the CSA would lead to too much heartbreak for everybody involved, so perhaps an arrangement more like OTL/FTL's Axis powers is more appropriate. This of course depends on the outcome of the conflict. It'd make for an interesting post-war world, esp. if we decided to extend HT's ww2 metaphor out into the Cold War - the Nashville Wall, anyone? ;)

Partition of a country is never an effective solution. It's all gonna have to be dealt with like Nazi Germany after WW2. Right, but Nazi Germany was never "officially" partitioned. The original idea was for the country to end up as one nation again, except the Soviets decided that *their* occupation zone was special and wanted to keep it, along with the rest of Eastern Europe. Is it a good idea to leave these people fighting a Cold War however.... even without proxy conflicts and the like, it'll still be a bloody mess. Best to rebuild as one, I think. Hard work now, but less mess in the long run. See, I'm not sure I buy that. HT made a good point that anti-US occupation resistance was going to be fifteen types of ugly, and if you tried to reannex the CSA into the US, the sheer depth of bad feelings between the two countries would just end up depopulating the CSA. This is not an acceptable solution. If letting the CSA stay independent - even if it ends up mostly a proxy or puppet of the uptime US, EU and Convention - helps keep the general peace, then so be it. A puppet state I could agree with, but there should still be a timetable for the eventual reintegration of all three halves of the US. People can be weaned off bad feelings and prejudices... I mean, look at Ireland and how things have changed in even the last decade or so. There're a few morons left, but they're in the minority now. I'm gonna be a bastard and say 'so, how's that unification with the North going?' 'Cause that's really the issue here. You're thinking that the US can be reintegrated into one whole. I'm not so sure that it can, and I'm less sure that it *should* be. Besides, one of the great future history tropes is the balkanization of the USA, and why should we abandon the holy tropes? ;) I love a good inversion of things like that myself... that's just a taste matter. At the end of the day though... just supplying a bit of discussion for the SMoFcon that follows victory. People will have both opinions. And, with the North here... you don't really notice the border anymore. A lot of stuff is already all-island. it's just going so slowly, nobody really notices. Just as planned ;) It's going to be one hell of a heated debate... and you probably have the right of it.

It can all be sorted out at Yalta either way... there's more than just TL191 USA and ConFed's here though, and they're gonna want their slice of CSA pie.

Benjamin would take Texas, though I'm not certain what the atmosphere down thereabouts is like in TL-191. You ever get around to reading the dox? I ask because they outline Texas' fate in the later books; assuming everything happened according to schedule, Texas would declare independence & sell out the CSA in the final stage of the war in order to save their own asses - especially after US forces invade and find Camp Determination.

Whoah. Sorry, Mal, Navy life at it's worst. Anyhow, guess Ben's job there wouldn't be too hard to pull off. It'd sure as hell destabilize the CFA. quick, fast, and in a hurry. Ben has a higher priority job ahead of him - convincing the Mormons not to rebel, or evacuate Utah, whichever is easier to accomplish. Oh, that's in the opening moves, though. I would think that the Texas operations would begin in the middle of the game, about the same time things with the Mormons would be wrapping up (for better or for worse). Mm. Well, at the very least we need to get there first. Of course. I do like the idea someone (dartz I think it was?) had about arming people up with Kalishnakovs and other simple, reliable weaponry. Makes for a pretty strong argument in helping to maintain borders. Anyhow... I can see the Mormons as being willing to... 'spread their influence' so to speak... but they will definitely want to keep Salt Lake. Or at least be able to return at some later date. Another location they'd be interested in would be Palmira (sp?). It was one of their frontier cities before they got chase out across the Great Plains.

You thinking the Temple for SLC?

That thing is not going anywhere short of a Divot Event. Sucker is solid granite.

Your point being? We have a solution. If the Temple needs to move, then we can move the Temple. Grover's Corners outmasses it prolly by twenty times or more, and it's mobile. Will the US be pissed about digging up a chunk of Utah and hurling it to god knows where? Probably a little, but when you say "it was to prevent another Mormon rising" they'll probably go with it, 'cause a chunk of Salt Lake visiting the stars is worth not having to deal with suicide-bomber Mormons popping up everywhere.

Something that kinda wrangles my chain - dunno where Turtledove got that idea. An LDS is more likely to go down in a firefight - blaze of glory - but not suicide. Anyhow! My line of thinking is that at this point the Mormons are sick and tired of running. Though I may be wrong because it's been a generation or two since they finally settled, but that just means they have more invested in the area. They may move... but only temporally. But I think ensuring the City itself remains safe is a good way to hedge our bets. My read on it is that the Mormons just want the US to leave them alone, let them have their New Zion and *go the fuck somewhere else*. The problem is they settled right in the middle of the damn continent, so there's no way the US - especially a revanchist US that's been stung multiple times by the Confederacy - will ever willingly cede them territory. So they fight, and they fight with what they have because they don't have the armies or the weapons to fight on equal terms with the Americans. Which is where the idea of suicide bombers, and car bombs and other terrorist/guerrilla warfare tactics come from. I think, that if we can guarantee them more-or-less complete autonomy (as signatories of the Articles of Convention, see below for thoughts on that) and if we can guarantee the safety of the Temple, by moving it away from US artillery - thing's already been razed once before, remember - then we have a shot at convincing the LDS leadership not to rise up when Featherston makes his move. And that's what we want: not to turn the inevitable conflict against the CS into a total clusterfuck.

Okay, they will definitely be all for getting everyone up and out of harms way, but once the war is over and the mindsets and attitudes have changed they'll probably want to resettle. It'd take ten or twenty years for things to really cool down, but hey! They waited how long to rebuild the Temple at Palmira in OTL? Things were much less tense in OTL. Where you see twenty years, I'm thinking at least fifty or more.

Yeah, but OTL didn't have the Fen hanging over their heads like the Sword of Damocles the whole time. ;) I... really don't want to condemn the Convention to being the world's nanny for however long it takes attitudes to change. That's just downright *cruel*. Besides, having the Fen play God won't help; if anything it'll make it worse.

Understandable, but unavoidable to a certain degree.

Prime Directive to a point? To a point. We'll want to stop bloody massacres at the very least. So, only when it's....necessary.

Precisely. I'm all for letting them have their way of life, but the Convention must be upheld.

~***~

Operation Technicolor Dreamcoat

bit o' dialogue for whenever the Mormon stuff hits the fan:

Mal: "Well, no, I'm not especially *worried* about the Saints as a faith, or as a religious group. One of my top men is LDS, after all."

{foo}: "Really?"

Mal: "Yes, General Rhodes. Granted, it's been a good long while since he's been to temple," /shrug "afraid he'll catch fire should he step inside perhaps, but as far as I know he's otherwise devout."

notes towards Case TECHNICOLOR DREAMCOAT:

The Fen position here is "as long as you agree to abide by the Articles of Convention, any and all Mormons are free to settle in the greater Solar System. The polygamy thing doesn't bother us - you should meet the Heinleinians... or maybe not. However, there are a few bit to 'abide by the Articles' that might stick with some folks, so we need to clear a couple things up front. First things first, we've got this thing called an 'age of consent law' in most jurisdictions. That means that if you wanna marry a girl, she's got to be of age. We catch any of your patriarchs marrying twelve-year-olds, we come down on them like God did to Sodom, savvy?"

Oh, the Mormons will be more than happy to comply - after all they've been living with much more stringent rules for quite a while.

"Oh yeah, if you don't want to abandon the Temple... well we've got a solution. You'll like this one, it's really neat."

Just for reference, if we use a Grover's Corners solution for the Temple, it takes *time*. The GC didn't take two years to build just because they were trying to hide what they were doing. And

it's possible the LDS might object to the Neopagans and their rituals necessary for guiding the process. Well, the nice thing about Fenspace is we've got *lots* of different examples of land theft to choose from, if it comes down to it. GC is the largest of them, but the Island method would work just as well. My understanding was that GC crew were also trying to find what they were doing from the gov't. Another possibility is the hell with a containment dome and assume that the waved spindizzy acts in all ways as a fictional spindizzy -- and that the GC folks were just being suspenders-and-belt paranoid in their design principles. (A reasonable assumption as there were several real engineers among the designers who *would* have been that careful.) Building the spindizzy would be fast, and it would solve all the problems at once. I'd want to run a test flight at least one time just to be sure. I mean, we're trying to evacuate the Mormons here, not kill them in the endless airless depths of space. And of course it runs into minor problems once we get the Temple to the destination point; have to leave the spindizzy running or the air goes byebye. That's pretty much what they did in the source material. The power requirements of a spindizzy are ridiculously low. And their efficiency scales up -- by the cube? I can't recall -- the bigger they and their loads get. If the spindizzy is the real deal, we don't need to take just the temple, we can take all of SLC, which will improve performance radically -- and make it okay to keep things running all the time. Now *that* would piss off the American government beyond any and all belief... but that just makes it more compelling to me. Moving Salt Lake to Mars... it'd improve the viability of Salt Lake's surroundings.

191 US may decide it's worth it having a new lake with the mormons gone.

Plus, if your new sort-of allies can just up and away with an entire city on short notice, it might act as a deterrent to backstabbing. Or an encouragement to backstabbing. Either way, might be worth playing out.

Plus it's a nice tribute to the source material to actually put a city in flight, as opposed to a "village".

We can replace the stolen land with a piece of land from elsewhere or a mountain sized bribe in the form of a asteroid heavy in ores in SLC's place.

I like that. Double shock-and-awe -- first a city up and flies away, then a miles-wide chunk of metal ore is lowered *gently* to replace it. Well it needs not to weight more than the removed land by much.

For reference: [the Wikipedia page on the Spindizzy](#) -- and the page for the [Blackett Effect](#), on which the drive concept was based.

Fluff: The Stig

Need to get this out of my head. From *Top Gear* series (whatever), 2017:

CLARKSON: To find out which country makes the better car, the Union or the Confederacy, we've handed them over to our tame racing driver. Some say that he's the one responsible for

the Event, and that his singing causes birds to flee to another universe. He's not the Stig, but he is the Stig's 1940s American cousin!

Hahaha. I always wondered if they'd revisit their Reliant Robin Rocket with handwavium.... that thing was awesome. Almost worked, too Okay. I'm gonna have to write that sometime. "Space Stig" anyone?. Someone with a minor noticeable biomod? I could see them finding someone that looks like a grey alien.

I'm actually working on that sort of idea right now. Their 'Fenspace Special'. - jferio

Naturally Richard Hammond has to get hurt/ biomodded/ blasted across space in a rocket car/all three.

Before the Declaration of War

President Featherston,

On the evening of April {foo}, the Confederate States of America without previous warning either in the form of a conventional declaration of war or of an ultimatum with a conditional declaration of war, launched an invasion and air attack on the United States of America.

In view of these wanton acts of unprovoked aggression committed in flagrant violation of International Law and of the Christmas Agreement between the Confederate States, the United States and the United Nations, I inform you in the name of the United Nations that a state of war now exists between this alliance and the Confederate States of America.

Can we hold off until June 5th/6th on that?... for obvious reasons

The longer we hold off, the more likely somebody's going to do a "cowboy" maneuver and go liberate Camp Dependable before war is declared. They can try at any rate, but I shall brook no dissent. More seriously, this is less an RP and more a collaborative novel, and people who try to play cowboy are going to get jumped on. If this was an RP I'd get slagged for excessive railroading, maybe, but again, not really an RP.

ICly we can handwave it as the cowboys being sat on by the more level-headed people, or they've managed to cool down to the point where they've joined Firefall and will wait for orders. Not the most elegant fix, but I'm willing to roll with it.

Pretty much what actually happened with Burning Bright. Jet had a hothead moment after overflying the place to snap some pictures... and was talked out of it.... making it clear that to liberate the camp without stuffing it up would need the resources of a mid-sized faction... and so many people that it'd be impossible to do without Firefall support.

but before this happens, we've got some stuff to cover, half-assed plans before the declaration and Operation Burning Bright kick of festivities:

- * The Fen meet with Featherston and the UN
- * CSA signs... let's call it the ~~Richmond~~ Treaty screw that, call it the Christmas Agreement (signed 12/25/16), which is an extended 'wait and see' thing due to the trauma of the Event.
- * Clashes with Draka over Canada and the sea approaches to the CSA. Featherston stops being nervous and starts getting bold.
- * An assassination attempt on the Fen delegation in Philly, either CSA or Draka-backed (and blaming the CSA in order to spark war)
- * The second (third?) exodus of the Mormons.
- * And then finally, Featherston feels confident enough in his new allies to make the jump on Blackbeard, and the Convention retaliates by hitting Dependable.
- * And we're off to the races~!

for reference, the beginning of the end (last paras of *Victorious Opposition*):

Lulu made most of his telephone calls. He made this one himself, on a special line that didn't pass through her desk. It went straight from his office to the War Department. Men checked twice a day to make sure the damnyankees didn't tap it. It rang only once before the Chief of the General Staff picked it up. "Forrest speaking."

"Featherston," Jake said, and then, "Blackbeard." He hung up.

There. It was done. The die was cast. Whatever was going to happen would happen ... starting tomorrow morning, early tomorrow morning.

Summer had just come in. Jake worked through the rest of June 21. He ate supper, and then went right on working through the night. Lulu brought him cup after cup of coffee. After a while, yawning, she went home to bed. He worked on, behind blackout curtains that kept light from leaking out of the Gray House and showing where it was from the air.

June 21 passed into June 22. All that coffee made Jake's heart thud and soured his stomach. He gulped a Bromo-Seltzer and went on. At a quarter past three, the drone of airplane engines and the thunder of distant artillery-not distant enough; damn those Yankee robbers!-made him whoop for sheer glee. He'd waited so long. Now his day was here.

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
April {foo}, 2016, 12:00 AM EST

The miracle of distributed communications allowed the ad-hoc group calling itself Supreme Headquarters, Allied Command to operate together from across millions of miles. While the spy

satellites picked up thermal blooms from Confederate vehicles, the information was fed through to an analysis room in Greenwood City, while orders based on that information were relayed through Stellvia and Atalantae.

Meanwhile, the drafted Supreme Commander himself stood on a rooftop in Philadelphia, watching everything unfold on holographic screens beneath the stars.

"So, this is it," he said.

"Yes, sir," replied the duty officer on Greenwood. "We're picking up bloom all up and down the line. We expect that they'll start moving in the next hour or so."

"Put me on group-wide."

"Yessir." A moment, then all over the solar system phones and commlinks buzzed and the announcement "Standby for an announcement from the Supreme Commander," came over the line.

Mal held his breath, counted to ten, and began.

"Comrades. What we've expected these last few months is about to begin. The Convention expects each of you to do their duty, to your comrades, to your nations, and to your homeworld. That is all, prepare for action."

The lines of destiny all converged to a single point.

~***~

At this point, Yayoi and Kagome get detached to FIREFALL for the duration. Stellvia may be concentrating on finding FTL-USA, but that doesn't mean they aren't patriotic...

The Other Story Arc - Where'd Everybody Go?

Current plans for "finding the lost FTL's USA" is for Noah to crack open the grimoires in the original Whole Fenspace Catalog, build a mage who knows something about both spellcasting and teaching so the operation isn't going from a standing start, get the artificial mage to use the grimoires to train up as many people with magical potential as he can find, and concentrate on

the magical methods of locating and reaching the Lost Continent. Let's let Infinity and Centrum do the tech-based searching - that's what they do best, after all.

Noah does not have magical potential - he has a long-standing magical spell effect upon him, which will be addressed in the R. Honami Project (see below). Safety has magical potential, being an angel as well as an "angel". Kohran has a very low magical potential - Magery 0 in GURPS terms - which won't let her cast any of the really useful spells. The rest of the Stellvians don't even have enough magical ability to light a candle.

There are a few tests in the grimoires to determine whether somebody has Magery - Noah will be spreading this test around to locate potential spellcasters. Bob indicated in version 0.1a that some of the *Grovers' Corners* folks have magical potential.

I just want to reiterate that of the GC's magically-capable population, fully 2/3s are children and as such are a) mostly devoid of plotcool so far and b) going to stay *out* of the action.

I strongly suggest that any character that already has a lot of Cool (e.g. Noah, Ben, Mal, A.C., Vulpine Fury, Haruhi, Sabre) not have Magery - we've already established their characters can function just fine without it. Besides, most of those characters are busy with Operation FIREFALL. If you've got somebody who's been in the background all this time, though, now's the perfect chance to let them take a level in badass-mage...

Dee: Well, I've got a particle accelerator that on paper should work, but I need particles to accelerate... hmm...

Mal: /epic facepalm

Remember that list of characters who already have a lot of Cool? Dee's got buckets full of Cool already... although she could be a mage too, I suppose. I'm not going to tell her "no". <g> Despite the fact that Dee's cackling "archai status, here I come!" in the back of my head, it does raise a point. Assuming that the goal of the other Op is to reverse the Switch, then you're going to need not just power but a level of understanding that your average mage, or even your average super-mage doesn't have. And who better to really understand the laws of magic than a (barely) subsingularity AI that's already been poking at Things Man Was Not Built To Comprehend?

Noah's hoping for "reverse the Switch". Honami/Hayate thinks "establish a permanent bridge" is the best they're going to be able to do. Meta - your call. What works best for the story as a whole? On a meta level, bridge is the best option. Reversing the switch would end up giving the group way too much ability to Fuck Shit Up, and reduce the entertainment value of the world on the (very low but non-zero) chance I decree South Is Rising to be official Fenspace canon.

Oh, and Mayonaka Rhodes should be on the list of Mage-active characters. She seems to be

Raven's avatar in Fenspace. Don't hold with the 'avatar' thing, but agreed otherwise. Now if only we had a Rhodes to write her. %P I tend to agree about the "avatar" thing. Maybe "she has Raven as a totem, and thus is connected to magic" would be better... if we can sell that to BA.

((And here I was about to correct "avatar" to "analogue" upon misunderstanding just *which* Raven you were talking about...)) Yeah. She isn't a Teen Titan, she's an aboriginal American.

(added 12/2) Y'know, this "totem" thing, plus a few thoughts about the endgame, have put me on lines considering a) canonizng SIR, and b) turning it into a Shadowrun merge. I really need to stop being creative in the middle of a story, shit's distracting. %P

~***~

The R. Honami Project

Noah's already noticed that his "angels" wake up with some skills pre-loaded. He's hoping that 'waving an "angel" based on a mage character will give her magical abilities. His contact with an actual mage (and a goddess) back in LoGG gives him just enough of a residual magical charge for this to work - the magic will flow from Noah to Honami. (This has the happy side-effect of turning his hair and eyes back to their original colour, and the disastrous side-effect of giving him a thionite craving for a while. But he'll get over that, probably with A.C.'s help, and Yayoi can run StellviaCorp while Noah's going through rehab. Noah'd better get well before the balloon goes up...)

(The description of Honami that was here is now on the FenWiki)

~***~

As-Yet-Unsorted Stuff (including hints and re-writes)

((Scratch for Supers dispatch for the Draka encounter))

The assembled DIANA operatives were about to embark on their transports to the various locations chosen to receive Mystery Men: Pittsburgh, Lexington, Philadelphia, Chicago and others chosen for size and strategic importance. The operation was interrupted by a young Senshi bursting into the hangar with a message.

"Bogeys over Canada on approach vector for Richmond!" She paused to catch her breath. "Canadian Air Force is requesting our help as they've splashed the Super Hornets that were scrambled in response!"

Colonel Parker swore softly. "All right!" He turned to look over the assembled Supers.

“Who’s got air-to-air capability?”

Parker’s adjutant looked up from her PADD. “We have three power suit operatives from the Pittsburgh, Minneapolis and Cincinnati Leagues. Everyone else either has no flight capacity or no air-to-air weaponry.” She tapped the screen, bringing up the names. “Mister Bessemer, Vulpine Fury, and Red Knight of the Knight Watch.”

“Right!” Parker barked. “You three heard the lady, gentlemen! I want you airborne on an intercept five minutes ago!”

(plotholes? Bah! There are no plotholes, only plot hooks! Not quite ready for inclusion in the main doc, but had to get it out before I forgot)

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
November 26, 1940

Something was wrong. The thought had been nagging Flora Blackford all through the ride back to Powel House. She couldn’t figure out why, though: the two Fen envoys had been nothing but gracious during the trip. Their aides had been somewhat less so, but then that was expected of aides, really; theirs was to be neither seen nor heard.

Still, the nagging sensation remained, worrying at her like a dog with a bone. It wasn’t until they’d reached the presidential residence that it struck her like a thunderbolt.

He had known her name.

By all the information that they’d had, from the other-US and from the other-US’s allies, this was a completely different world, one where the War of Secession had turned out differently. So how, in the name of all that was holy did General Fnord *know her name*? The realization stopped her cold in the doorway, long enough for the general’s aide to run right into her.

Flora stumbled, and almost made an inglorious landing on Powel House’s front stoop when her descent was stopped.

“Thank you, Captain...?” she trailed off, having forgotten the woman’s name in her moment of epiphany.

“Weatheral, ma’am, Athene Weatheral, but most folks call me Tina.” Weatheral’s voice was soft, but carried strong hints of an English accent. “Are you sure you’re all right, ma’am?”

“Yes, yes,” Flora said. “I was... distracted. It occurred to me that I hadn’t been introduced to General Fnord, yet he knew my name.”

Weatheral looked pained. "The cheeky bastard overplayed his hand a little," she muttered, then mustered a slight smile. "Don't worry about it, ma'am, Mal and Mr. Marsden will explain everything."

"Mal," Flora echoed. "That's an awfully informal way for a subordinate to talk about her, er, commander."

Weatheral shrugged. "Us Reds, we're a pretty informal group in a lot of ways, dictatorship of the proletariat and all that, you know?"

A little early bit, covering initial reaaction from Greenwood. Some of this was alluded to in the early emails:

Commodore Elza Newman was already having a bad day when she received the electronic memo from her boss. It had arrived by the usual secure communications channel, and the format was correct. The authorization code was clearly forged, however, as it consisted of nothing but a certain Anglo-Saxon obscenity repeated several times.

The actual orders themselves were completely out of bounds.

Given the most recent news from Earth, however, and the results of her own hasty literature search, however, they were clearly going to have to act in some manner, and quickly.

Elza knew her employer's mind quite well, as they had worked together for more than seven years by this point in time. She was quite familiar with his political leanings, even if she might not fully agree with them. She fully agreed that what was happening down below was unacceptable. It was possible, she considered, that as an android based on a fictional character, she might not have the emotional depth to fully appreciate the nature of her employer's reaction.

It was also entirely possible, she reminded herself as she paused outside of the office's entryway and heard the sound of wordless screams, falling objects, and crashing glass from within, that her employer was quite simply unstable.

Christopher Marsden -- CEO of Greenwood Inc., the parent company of her own Greenwood Security Services -- was clearly not dealing well with the current situation.

"Ayanami-san," Elza asked as she opened the door, "Is this a bad time? I need to get clarification on the orderrs I just received."

The aqua-tressed girl sitting, for the moment, at the secretary's desk, took one look at the memo form Elza passed her and nodded. "You may consider the orders rescinded, Commodore," Rei

said, quietly. A gesture deposited the order for the nuclear bombardment of Richmond, Virginia, Confederate States of America, in the shredder, and the now-empty hand reached for the intercom link. "Medical? The Commander is in dire need of a sedative." After a moment's pause, she added, "And I believe Commodore Newman could use a stiff drink."

A few quick notes on what I've taken to calling "Operation Share The Shit Out Of The South":

- * The *Grover's Corners* breaks orbit and re-enters the Earth's atmosphere somewhere west of the CSA's westernmost reach.
- * It then makes a "Grand Tour" across the entire CSA at an altitude of only a few hundred feet -- making a point of *very* slowly passing over every major Confederate city, lingering long enough to be seen and believed.
- * Dump pamphlets? informational pamphlets about Fenspace, quickly worked up with stock photos and cut'n'pasted Fenpedia/Wikipedia entry text. No strategic information other than "Hi, we rebuild planets for fun"-type stuff.
- * Final approach on ~~Charleston~~Richmond (right, I would have caught that in a moment. I'm not pasting this, I'm writing it right now) involves circling around the entire city once, then parking about 500 feet above the capitol building and staying there for the entire duration of the visit.
- * Basic idea is shock-and-awe on a grand scale -- "You think you're badass? We're bigger and badder than you can even *imagine*. We rip entire towns out of the ground and make them fly just to get from place to place." With the hope that they will derive the corollary: If they can make mile-wide rocks float, they can drop them, too, wherever they want.

Part of me says that the whole grand tour aspect of the approach is a little overblown, especially the whole cruising at treetop level across the whole CSA. The way I had imagined the scene was the GC coming in to Richmond out of the east all *Independence Day*-style, with lots of cloud and smoke until it breaks free and sails in majestic indifference ~~to your puny hoo-men weapons~~ up to the capital, or the Richmond airfield, where it drops the Roughriders diplomatic party. *Why am I suddenly seeing the end of Close Encounters in my mind here? <grin>* That would work too, especially if the RR sent some small craft ahead to do the tiny UFO thing. Pity there's no huge mountain in the Richmond area to hide the Corners behind. ;) If I had ever actually seen *Independence Day*, I probably would have had that image to work with. As it is, I can see the appeal.. especially if we can generate the necessary clouds to come through. *<grin> Well, the appropriate scenes are on Youtube, more than likely. Good point, time to go looking.*

Hey, here's a question that's bugging me: So the spindizzy generates a field that among other things, acts as a barrier to keep atmosphere and random people who aren't watching where they're going in, right? Well, how does one get *out* while the spindizzy's running? *<blinks>* You know, I have no idea. I've never actually read the Blish "Cities in Flight" books. But this is the handwavium equivalent. We can say it does whatever we need it to do -- perhaps if, as on the

GC, airlocks and docks are set up before the field is engaged, it "knows" not to seal those off. Alternatively, well, the spindizzy works by a rotating masses + magnetic fields. We could easily set up smaller counter-rotating systems where we want airlocks or bay doors to be -- which might be cool if the field is visible and opening an airlock looks like a gate from *Sliders* appearing in the shimmery air.

However, I'd just like to add, as my in-story counterpart is doing the nav planning and all, and he's just as fond of overblown gestures as I am, I might do it this way unless there is some kind of overruling order from higher up... and even then, he might be tempted to ignore it. I think FIREFALL Command would be willing to compromise; say, letting him do a run at altitude over the eastern coast of the CSA instead of a tour of the whole country. Timing is an issue here; have to get to the church on time and all. Fair enough, good point there. East coast is acceptable. The idea is to make the Fen and their power irrefutable in the minds of as many CSA citizens as possible. The more folks who actually see the *Corners* sail majestically by, the fewer there will be who will discount the Fen's very existence as a propaganda plot. And the more likely it is the Festherston government will be driven into the arms of the Draka, but history is made of unintended consequences like that. Are we aware of the Draka actions at that point? I thought they were just making their own first contact. We're not, but they're more likely to accept the Draka deal once they get over the initial shock n' awe. Plot fodder, then. Of course. Cool. There are no plot holes, only plot hooks. ;)

I scribbled this together while at MileHiCon this weekend, and edited a little more once I got home. Blame being able to talk to Mal real time. ;) (moved to the bottom where it can be seen.)

<Serenity Valley, shortly after things Start To Happen.>

The office was rather cramped, but that was to be expected given that the "city hall" was entirely contained inside an old cargo container. Jeph had to admit that it was *efficient*... but that was about all he'd say that was positive about it. Of the rest he'd say, only a quarter would be printable in the Danelaw.

About half of that unprintable was currently embodied by the man seated behind the antique green metal desk. Jeph would admit to his close friends that Governor Malcolm was the most annoying governor that had come to Serenity Valley... but would honestly concede that he was useful... at least for 'another week'.

At least he wasn't beating around the bush this time. "So you're providing assistance to the efforts with the, ahem, swap issues?"

"Well, yes. We're providing logistical support to the integration efforts."

Governor Malcolm looked a bit annoyed. "Mister Antilles, you know who they're helping. They should have just let it just settle down before becoming involved and starting a fool war. And you should just leave them to it. We've got no business messing with this situation, we have enough going on up here in the Black as it is."

"Be that as it may," Jeph growled, "you do not run Jupiter Mining Corp. We have the resources needed to help with the overall situation, and that's what we're doing. More importantly," he paused for a moment, "whatever happens down there is already affecting folk here. I have missing people, who's families are looking to me, asking when their loved ones are coming home. Economic troubles are on their way as well, far worse than you can ever anticipate. If I don't act now, things will be worse for us all. And also... they're just folk themselves. They didn't ask for their governments. They didn't ask to suddenly be yanked into a world they can barely comprehend. And they need help coming to terms with it."

"And don't worry about your precious shipments," Jeph said, intense sarcasm coloring every word. "They'll still arrive on time. But what's happening on Earth right now is just as important as anything else going on in the 'verse, maybe the most important event we have happening right now."

"What makes you think that's the case?" Malcolm looked like he was digging his heels in.

Jeph sighed, pulled out his PDA, and pulled up the first of the pictures. "I have it right here. You'd better not have eaten in the past hour."

An hour later, Jeph walked through the door of the JMC offices, closed it behind him, then leaned up against the wall beside it, sighed deeply, and seemed to deflate slightly as he released his control and his biomod kicked in, rendering him into a her.

"That bad?" Nene asked from the couch on the other side of the room. There was a small pile of pocky boxes on the couch next to her, all of them opened and emptied, which was never really a good sign.

"Well, I at least got him to back the fuck down on the idea that we just let things be until it all settles down, although I had to use the photos to do it," Jeph commented as she walked over, kicked the pile of boxes off the couch, and settled into it, laying her arms on the open arm on that side, and then dropping her head onto them. "Apparently he doesn't keep a very close eye on the newsgroups and email feeds."

"You know, you could just, well, say those six words and topple him out of the government."

Jeph raised her head up, and gave Nene a look. "You know, as tempting as that is... I'd rather get the Earth situation fixed first." She put her head back down. "Maybe I'll do it if he tries to pull that crap again. Cullen would do a much better job than he's doing anyway."

the following is a rewrite of Dakota's "Tyger meets the Remembrance" scene in the main doc. It's been bugging me, so I took a swing.

3,000 m over the Grand Banks

19 November 2016 00:20 UTC (Event T+ 20 minutes)

The CV *Tyger Tyger* had been creeping towards the east coast of the United States for almost a half hour, and its owner was getting increasingly worried. The part-time infomorph Sabre Fang had been down in his workshop tinkering with his latest Zoid design when the autopilot went nuts on him. The sensor record showed a titanic wall of cloud forming right in front of the *Tyger Tyger*, holding steady for a solid minute, and then vanishing as quickly as it had appeared. Curious, Sabre edged his flying whale closer to where the clouds had been and started scanning for anything and everything.

What he got was a surface contact, and a large one at that, northwest of him and moving west almost as slowly as the *Tyger*. A quick thought to the sensors resolved the one large contact into a set of smaller contacts. As he examined the readings, the largest contact in the center started painting his ship.

"Huh!" he said to the empty air. Another thought hooked him directly into the radio. "This is the Fen craft *Tyger Tyger* calling unknowns on westerly heading, are you receiving, over?"

~***~

On board the USS *Remembrance*, the Y-range operator looked up from his set with surprise. "Sir! Got a contact!"

The duty officer hurried over to the station. "What've you got, Sparks?" Sparks, for his part, just looked confused.

"I'm not sure. The contact is huge, dirigible sized or more, but it's moving way too fast and headed right for us."

"A glitch?" asked the duty officer.

Sparks shook his head. "No sir, this is way too clear for a glitch."

The duty officer took one glance at the large spot on the Y-range scope, then made up his mind. He stepped to the intercom and slammed his hand down on the general quarters alarm.

“General quarters, this is not a drill! All hands man battle stations!”

Sam Carsten heard the alarm and sprinted for his duty station down in the bowels of the ship. He only just managed to beat his team down. “What’s up, Lieutenant?” asked {needname}.

“Something coming in,” Sam said. “Don’t know what.”

“Goddamn Confederates,” said {neednametoo}.

“No,” replied {needthisname}. “We’re too far north, it’s the limeys, gotta be.”

“Settle down, guys,” Sam said. “Get to your stations and we’ll find out soon enough.”

~***~

Detroit, Michigan

18 November 1940, 20:09 EST (Event T+ 1 hour 9 minutes)

The moment the fog lifted people started lining up on the riverbanks, just to look.

Before the fog, the city of Windsor on the other side of the river had been the impoverished country cousin of the mighty Detroit industrial complex. Now, instead of the partially-rebuilt wreckage of a city there were neat and clean glass-walled towers rising along the Canadian side of the river.

On the Canadian side, confusion was equally rampant. The skyscrapers and abandoned factories littering Detroit had been replaced with smaller towers and operational factories lighting the night sky with activity. People gathered together in the November cold, standing on the bank, taking photographs and talking in low voices about what the hell was going on.

Eventually, somebody on both sides noticed that the Ambassador Bridge connecting the two cities was still there, a fact noted with even more confusion in Detroit, since there had never *been* a bridge between the two cities as far as they knew. The crowds started drifting towards the bridge, and milled around on either side as American and Canadian debated on what to do next.

Peter J. Cropes, sophomore at the University of Windsor and already annoyed that the party he was heading to in Detroit had been canceled by act of *somebody*, became the first person to make contact with the brave new world waiting on the other side of the river. Peter had been delayed when the fog shut down the bridge, and now his Pontiac cautiously made its way along, followed not far behind by dozens of other cars and pedestrians.

On the Detroit side, the small cordon of policemen who’d been called out to try and maintain

order watched as an automobile that looked simultaneously like a ratty piece of garbage and more advanced than something out of a Flash Gordon serial trundled down the mystery bridge and stopped right in front of them. Out climbed a young man in workingman's clothes, who gave the cops, the crowd and the entire city a very puzzled look.

"Uh, hi," he said. "We come in peace?"

~***~

USS Remembrance Task Force, Atlantic Ocean
19 November 2016, 01:13 UTC (Event T+ 1.25 hours)

To say that the task force was surprised when a seven hundred foot whale came diving out of the sky, circled around the task force and then swung back up to hang in the air in a way that no whale should ever hang would be a drastic understatement. Based on the size of the Y-range return, they had been expecting a swarm of bombers, probably British, hell-bent on destroying the *Remembrance* and all who sailed in her.

Sabre, for his part, was equally surprised to find a flotilla of museum pieces steaming along like they were on just another patrol voyage. "It's like *The Final Countdown*, only in reverse," he muttered as he commanded the cameras to record everything. "Well," he said after a minute, "might as well try talking to them again." He hooked up to the Internet to google up antique naval radio frequencies, grumbled as the Internet connection failed to work properly, then mentally shrugged and tried something on the lower edge of the military frequency bands.

By this time, the only people above decks who were not staring at the massive shape hanging over the fleet were the wireless operators. The man onboard the *Remembrance*, who was trying to contact a shore station, broke off as an unknown transmitter interrupted his work.

"This is the spacecraft *Tyger Tyger* calling unidentified warships, please respond, over." The operator's sat there slack-jawed, unable to answer. "This is the CV *Tyger Tyger* calling unidentified warships, ~~bah weep gragnah weep nini bong!~~ Please respond, over."

Not a phrase Sabre would know, much less use if he did.

Sabre sighed at the lack of a answer and circuits started to hum as electronic commands flew. Armored plates along the *Tyger*'s back began to slid back on tracks as the launch ramp elevated into position. As the ship descended towards the water below. Sabre moved through the belly of the beast to his truck.

Three friends sat in a old barn around a makeshift table. The young adults regarding a mason jar full of a gray slime. One of them reached out plucked the jar off the table.

Holding it up the a sunbeam leaking through a roof crack. Tim Ray watched the weird metallic patterns swirl in the slime. "So where did it come from Siles? Another one of your mail order items?"

Siles Mayweather looked up from cleaning his glasses with the edge of his shirt. "No, it showed up on my porch one day while I was in town."

The only girl in the group, a Debbie Stonewall set down a stack of typed sheets on the table, "I'd not believe any of the claims made by these papers if it wasn't for the EVENT and the Broadcast." She shook her head, "I'm still weary of it even then."

Siles pointed at the jar in Tim's hand, "Well that was half full when I got it, I 'fed' it one of my pulps like those papers said. It didn't act like any acid I know of, the pulp just seemed to fall apart like it'd been in water too long. The next day the jar was nearly full."

Debbie tilted her head at Siles, "I hope you used gloves for that, anyway the other thing nagging at me is that these papers don't seem complete. Like somethings been removed and skirted around. It claims you can make a rocketship, but I know that you can't go to high up before you pass out from when I was learning to fly a aeroplane." She threw her hands in the air, "So how do you breath when going to the moon? They don't say anything about that at all."

Siles frowned as he put his glasses back on, "Your right, we'd need a enclosed craft." He paused, a light bulb going off in his head as he remembered a navy article he read one time. "That's it, maybe they are like submarines, but how do they refresh their air?"

The other two didn't have a answer for that.

Notes, hints and views of the endgame of South Is Rising.

The following will (most likely) happen:

- * Jake Featherston will outlive the nation he loves.
- * The Confederacy will outlive Jake Featherston.
- * Drake's Rock will end in fire.
- * The Archon of the Domination will die laughing.
- * Agatha Clay will reclaim her family name, in a manner unexpected.

Assuming I'm reading that last bullet point the way you meant it to be read, here's a decrypted memo from FIREFALL HQ to OpCmdr Tango Shoes the day before Operation Whatever-We're-Calling-The-Draka-Hunt:

Yayoi,

You already know that I started a "long-term autonomous AI experiment" back in 2008. You also already know, in part from the phrase I quoted in the last sentence, that I was something of a jerk back in 2008 - you and your sisters have humanized me as much as the rest of the Fen have humanized you over the years. One of the things I did as part of that "experiment" was to install non-overrideable shutdown codes in the "experimental subjects" in case they went out of control. That was before I realized that you were people, not things, and I apologize for being so rude to you. A.C. tells me that she's removed the shutdown codes from you, Kohran, Sora, Yoriko, and Natsuki - long after I realized it was wrong to even think of controlling any of you - during your routine maintenance, but we could never find Agatha to remove her shutdown code.

I hope that you, as the current leader of Task Force Tango Shoes, will not need to use Agatha's shutdown code. It is possible that she's already discovered and removed the code herself; she was designed to be a Smart Girl, so it's quite possible she's altered herself that way even without access to A.C.'s, Sora's, or Dee's labs. However, should it become necessary to destroy her personality completely and turn her into what is essentially an animatronic device, the code is a phrase delivered verbally: "Klaus Wulfenbach's Revenge". Do not use it unless you intend to kill her, and remember that there is every chance that it will not work.

I apologize again for even creating the shutdown codes, and I hope you can find it in your heart to forgive me for doing so.

Noah

Meet the Team

(the following are notes designed for publication/posting on non-Fenspace boards once South Is Rising is ready for primetime. Add to them, but don't overdo it. Two paragraphs maximum.)

Handwavium

Handwavium is the go-stuff that makes Fenspace work. There are three main forms of it: solid, liquid and the green stuff. Solid handwavium is used to generate power or as spaceship engines. Liquid handwavium is used to coat materials, usually electronics, and make them into space-opera widgets. The green stuff looks like Kelly green guacamole, and it can be eaten. Don't do this, though, unless you have a really good reason; handwavium does the same thing to people that it does to objects, and the results can be unpredictable.

Nobody knows where the stuff came from, who made it or what it really is, to be honest. It could be concentrated magic, some sort of alien picotech or maybe something even stranger. All we really know is, it showed up sometime in late 2006 and set the entire world on its ear.

{map}

Fenspace

This is what they call the Solar System, or at least the Solar System minus Earth. The main settled worlds (Venus, the Moon, Mars, Ganymede and Callisto) are populated by Fen and governed by the Fenspace Convention.

Fen

Fen are... well, you and me. Science fiction and fantasy fans, given the ability to make (most of) their fantasies reality and spreading out into space, because that's what you do when you have stuff that makes spaceships.

{flag}

The Fenspace Convention

The Convention is the main governing body everywhere but Earth. More or less. It's the result of a hundred thousand geeks, nerds, otaku and other such folk deciding "we need a government!" and making one out of whole cloth. It's made of "factions," which is to say various groups descended from fanclubs, online groups, knitting circles, etc. that migrated out into space once handwavium made the journey (reasonably) cheap and (reasonably) safe. The various factions all have their grievances with each other, and those get aired out through the Convention.

The Convention is a bi-cameral governing body: there's the SMOFs and then there's everybody else. The SMOFs (that's Secret Masters of Fandom for those who don't know the old lingo) are the folks among the Fen who know what the fuck is up, and they usually meet when shit needs to get done fast. In normal years the factions do most of the shit work in governing, and the Convention is held once a year so delegates, onlookers, trolls and other interested parties can get together and review how things are going.

{image here}

General Mal Fnord

This is Mal Fnord, the guy who ended up in charge because he was the only one with a plan at

hand. He and his group of scientists, engineers and explorers – who all run a collective faction called the Soviet Air Force-In-Exile – made their names on being part of the early wave of interstellar exploration. As part of a long-term plan to bring the rest of Fenspace over to the Revolution, he's invested a lot of the group's resources into building up important interfactional linkages. The sudden ISOTing of TL-191's warring brothers into his world has upset some of those plans, but not as many as you might think.

{image here}

Christopher Marsden.

Chris is the second member of the triumvirate, filling the Stalin slot in the Fen command structure. This is a little uncomfortable for Chris, since he's a lifelong, die-hard Republican. Still, as CEO of Greenwood, Unlimited (the second-largest corporate combine in the Solar System) he packs both a lot of clout Downstairs and in the Main Belt, which is where 90% of Fenspace's material resources are located. Chris considers himself an American patriot, which makes the whole ISOT business very, very personal for him.

{image here}

Captain Benjamin Rhodes

Ben rounds out the Fen triumvirate for this crisis. He runs a Teddy Roosevelt-themed paramilitary group called the Roughriders out of an asteroid in the Main Belt. The youngest of the group, and also the most reckless, Ben is here less for his tactical abilities or resources and more so the more sober Mal and Chris can keep him from going loose-cannon.

{image? here}

Eljay "Vulpine Fury" Goddard

Eljay is Fenspace's Jim Henson or Fred Rogers. His puppets and telepresence rigs are among the best in Fenspace. As a member of the Supers faction and a resident of the Lunar dome city of Kandor, he has chosen to undertake his civic responsibility to his faction by "donning the cape" as a public relations and propaganda stunt.

{image here?}

Bob Schroeck

Bob is a SMOF mostly by accident. He is the usual representative of a rather anarchic group of interrelated friends and families who all bought homes in the same neighborhood of a rural West Virginia town and then -- after a lot of work -- took that neighborhood into orbit as the Space Vessel *Grover's Corners*. A ¾-mile-wide sphere of live farmland makes for a vast amount of economic clout in outer space, and when this was explained to the newcomers, they rose to the challenge of their new influence. Bob and the *Corners* folk are among the few true Generalist SMOFs, trying to be the middle path among the extremes whenever possible. Bob himself is given toward the flamboyant and overdramatic, despite being a rather cautious person, and is usually the SMOF most in favor of grand gestures intended to intimidate and frighten the enemy.

{image here?}

Stea “Sabre Fang” Nor

Formerly human, Zoidian AI inhabiting the core of the full scale Zabre Fang zoid he built. Member of the Gearhead faction and self trained designer/builder of heavy equipment. Was a salvage and used parts reseller before becoming a AI just before the Kentucky Cat Incident. By the start of this story, he has managed to build a quiet name for himself in custom space based construction equipment. With a commissioned ship based on Whale King transport zoids called the CV Tyger, Tyger as his mobile workshop/house.

{Image here?}

Noah Scott

Noah is one of the first people who took up permanent residence in space. He started with a few million dollars, a large supply of handwavium, a small personal space station, a custom-built spaceship, and a half-dozen android assistants. By the time this story starts, he has a billion dollars, a wife and a daughter, a corporation, a small fleet of space stations and spaceships, a dozen android assistants (only two of which are from the original group), and a reputation (only partially justified) of being the Richest S.O.B. in Fenspace. One of those original half-dozen android assistants is now dating Mal Fnord. Another has “gone over to the dark side,” and (unknown to all) is a power behind the throne in the opposing forces.

Usually one of the more active of the SMOFs in a crisis, Noah isn’t taking part in the integration of the TL-191 United and Confederate States into the Fenspace timeline. Instead, he’s spearheading a team on a possibly-quixotic quest to find the USA that belongs in Fenspace and at least bring his family’s relatives back home. He’s also volunteered to be the public face of the team rising to the crisis, so that random Fen have somebody to yell at without upsetting the people who are doing the “real work.”

{Image here?}

Jet Jaguar

A cyborg of the Panzer Kunst Gruppe, and leader of the Engel Gruppe. The result of an unfortunate choice of storage container for unused handwavium, Jet is essentially, her own spacecraft. By the time of the story, Jet has been with the Panzer Kunst for four years, and could well be one of the most effective individual fighters in Fenspace.

Her partner, Ford Sierra has been with her for nearly three years. Jet trusts her with her deepest secrets about her own origins.

Jeph Antilles

The man in charge of Jupiter Mining Corporation, Jeph is basically responsible for a large amount of the shipping of vital supplies back and forth in Fenspace, particularly in the region of the outer planets. He generally tends to have a ‘hands off’ policy with regards to Fenspace politics, but he does keep at least one finger on the pulse of Fenspace, and is capable of using the clout that he has to great effect when it’s actually called for.

Anyone who truly gets on his bad side tends to find that they’re limited to independent shippers, with the resultant

loss of volume and dramatic increase in costs.