

BY JOHN & PHILIPPA HUGHES

XENOMORPH

WARNING!
IMPRESSION!

YOU ARE NOT
THE COMPANY

UNLOCK 4

WARNING!
DECOMPRESSION!

PHENOMENON 2012

CHUL-MOO
CROWE
SECURITY OFFICER
RSV SHACKLETON



'em I'll just say 'gedday' and them blow 'em away. Save us all the cost of a hearing. What they're doing is pretty harmless really, just annoying, but it's making Toorak look like a bunch of proper geoses. *Which they are.*

Problem is, there's a lot on our plate right now. Since the corporate skirts started taking pot shots at Weyland-Yutani spy ships, and then wanting to keep it all secret, things have gotten a bit hot down below among the real people. The entire station is in lockdown. The crew are getting really, really jumpy. Something is gonna blow. I just hope we can handle it when it does.

On the other hand, a little paranoia can be good for business, if you're in the *right* business. It's a hobby really. A little sideline. Lucrative though. It's amazing how many people will pay for help in escaping their day-to-day head space. A little *chemical* help ... People are trying to cope with a lot right now, and I'm always on the lookout for new clients. A bit of a buzz can help me through the day as well.

I have a sister with three kids on Mira Ceti 4. They're the only family I've got. Yeah, *that* Mira Ceti 4, the one where all the original colonists just disappeared. *Weird.* I think about them a lot, I worry for them; if we don't know what really happened it might happen again. The universe is sometimes too strange to understand.

I've never had much success with long-term relationships. Plenty of partying—some of my customers are happy to pay in kind rather than cash—but, well, I'm not always good to be around. I get drunk. I get *angry.*

I like sex, I like it a lot, always on for a bit—but the trouble starts if people get too close. I feel ashamed. Then I hit the stims, hit the grog. Things usually end up violent.

Since the bastards upstairs demoted me—for doing my job, for doing their dirty work!—I've lost most of my network access. Luckily, security sorted out a system back door ages ago—it comes in real handy in our line of work. Anonymous log in. Bingo! I started using it again (usually I left that stuff to others), and I found out I had access to all sorts of good shit. Personnel files, tracking logs, data dumps... and cameras. *All* the cameras, even the ones that aren't supposed to be there. The ones in the personnel quarters. The ones in the bedrooms.

I've been spending a lot of nights in recently. Some of this stuff is better than immersion.

On-shift though, Security can be a tough haul. Take the **Pearson** biz. That one really hurt, cause Pearson was one of us, a Drop Bear, and a mate. I get a call in the middle of the night, and Gould says to get my arse up to the Interrogation centre on Kilda. Gould looked terrible, but Pearson looked a whole lot worse: Pearson was dead. He had a fit, Gould said. It was an accident, Gould said. Then he gave me one of those don't-ask-stupid-bloody-questions looks. He usually does that for my own good.

In our business, its sometimes safer not to know.

We dragged the body down to Port, and a couple of Toorak skin jobs (androids) helped me dress him in a vacuum suit. Our report said that Pearson died in an airlock accident. Bloody machine failure. You can't trust machines. Gould wrote the report. I signed it.

If that wasn't bad enough, there's **Conrad**. Also one of us, security, a Drop Bear. And Pearson's wife. No, that's the wrong word: they'd fallen in and out of love years ago, but still shared quarters. A weird dynamic. I guess they enjoyed their fights, there certainly wasn't anything happening in the bedroom. (I know: I checked.)

Anyway's, Conrad sensed it didn't add up, and she's at me with questions. How come I wasn't rostered that shift? Why was the CCTV footage missing? How come Pearson was wearing the wrong size vacuum suit? Why was the autopsy report sealed? All that sort of shit. She's a total bitch, but Conrad doesn't miss much.

After the funeral she got more and more off-the-wall. Totally in my face. I put up with a lot, for her sake, for the sake of the section, but it got to the point I just snapped.

I told her to shut up. I told her that since Pearson had a new girlfriend when he died (I bet that was a surprise, but its true, he was doing the secret rabbit with some upper level skirt)), maybe she should stop playing the grieving widow? Get a grip. Get a life. You and Gould have been stalking each other for years, why not shack up so you both can get what you want?

That's when she hit me. *Hard.* I could have taken her, easy, but I didn't fight back much. I took one for the team. There's nothing major broken, but when it comes to a beating, Conrad does a really *professional* job.

Neither of us are talking about it. Not to anyone.

Two days later, in the mess line, in front of a dozen people, she threatens to kill me. The crazy bitch is steering herself toward a psych discharge.

I guess that's one way to get off this stinkin' boat.

Problem is, she's still on active duty. Gould is protecting her. *I can't be fazed. I can't let her see she's getting to me.*

Complications. Life is getting seriously complicated.



Crowe is your basic brownshirt thug, a dull, unreliable bully. He is a drug dealer, keeping his clients supplied with a range of illegal diversions. Crowe shares drugs around security, and is sometimes high himself while on duty. He can be creative with a knife. He bribes when he has to.

Despite his obsession with guns and military tech, Crowe is often confused by machinery. He is technologically challenged.

Severely limited by his sense of inadequacy and shame, Crowe's universe centres around his loyalty to a very small group of comrades. The Pearson/Conrad incidents are forcing him to re-assess.

Metagame

Crowe is almost a caricature of the testosterone-charged warrior. He might well be a figure of fun if he were not so brutal. Yet he has his strengths too, and depths, and vulnerabilities, and there are reasons why he became the person he is. These are for you to flesh out.

Xenomorph is a character- and emotion-driven game.

Your fellow players are also your audience. Do you want them to love your character, to love-to-hate them, or perhaps to be drawn in and then surprised by a sudden revelation?

Try to reveal more depth about your character as you go along, and try to externalise, to bring into the game through action and dialogue the challenges, dead-ends, decisions and transformations that you face.

One of the wonderful things about the movie **Aliens** is that every combat scene revealed something new about characters and relationships. Spectacle served both character and story. We're trying to do the same — the stress of game action is a mechanism for character and relationship transformation.

Physical roleplaying is important. We especially encourage use of hands in an expressive way—Drop Bear gimme-fives, discrete touch, signals, emotional gesticulations, etc.

Mission Crew

Iriaka Conrad: a fellow Shackleton security officer and Drop Bear. Conrad's approach to security work is the complete opposite of your own. She is the perennial soft good cop. (You of course are the hard-arse bad cop). Conrad has become increasingly unstable since the death of her partner Pearson. Because of your part in covering up the details of his death, Conrad has beaten you up and also threatened to kill you.

Cai Gentle: Shackleton shuttle pilot and cargo handler/courier. A looker, a steady pilot, though bit docile socially. Cai has family connections with station Executive.

Wayne Gould: Acting head of Shackleton security, a Drop Bear and your closest friend. Your loyalty to him is absolute. He's acting tired.

Uki Pynne: A research biologist and computer geek. Tiny guy, you nicknamed the little prick 'Bonsai' and it stuck. Typical science type, thinks he better than the rest of us.

Others

Katherine Argent: Usual head of Shackleton security, off on special projects for the last six months.

Margaret Baron: A member of the station Executive, head of Special Projects and Security.

Steven 'Ripper' Pearson: A fellow station security officer and Drop Bear. Pearson died after being hauled in for interrogation. In the cover-up report of his death, you were with him when a fatal accident occurred.

MOTHER (MU/TH/UR cb7500): Shackleton Station's artificial intelligence, memory and communications agent.

