

A full-page illustration of a sci-fi scene. In the center background, a large, bright orange and yellow sun (Sol) is visible through a circular opening in a dark, industrial structure. The scene is set in a cargo bay, indicated by a sign that reads "CARGO BAY 3". On the left, a white and yellow humanoid robot stands holding a black rectangular object. The floor is dark and metallic, with several bodies lying on it, some with visible blood. In the background, a red sign on a wall reads "GATHER AMMONIUM NITRATE". The overall atmosphere is dark and ominous.

Shadows Over Sol

≡ CARGO BAY 3 ≡

GATHER
AMMONIUM
NITRATE

Jovian Epilogue

Jovian Epilogue

The events of the *Jovian Whispers* campaign have the ability to dramatically change the balance of power throughout the Sol system. This document explores some of the possible consequences of the campaign and how they might effect your ongoing *Shadows Over Sol* game.

In general, this document divides the possible campaign endings into two broad categories: either the Unitech fleet is hijacked or it is not. Each of these lead to drastically different outcomes for humanity, and neither one is assumed to be canon going forward.

It should also be noted that this document contains significant spoilers for the *Jovian Whispers* campaign and sourcebook. If you are a player, **stop reading now!** This is your final warning.

The Fleet is Hijacked

If the Insurrection Virus manages to hijack the Unitech fleet, the fate of the Jovian colonies is sealed. From Jupiter, the virus can spread at its leisure, projecting its power all the way back to Earth. Still, not all is lost for humanity, and swift action may yet manage to keep the virus in check.

Multi-ship Makeover

Just because the Insurrection Virus has taken over a particular ship and locked the crew out of its systems, doesn't mean that it has total control over all aspects of that vessel. Most ships are built with failsafes—physical overrides that can, for example, keep the life

support operational or seal off chambers that have lost atmosphere. These overrides are standard safety features that prevent hackers, terrorists or enemy combatants from killing the crew due to electronic breach.

When the virus hijacks the Unitech fleet, it has control over those vessels: their navigation, weapons systems, comms, etc. But those ships are still filled with living, hostile crew. Furthermore, the crew members have the failsafes they need to keep the life support operational and possibly even, given enough time, to strike back at the virus.

Therefore, the virus' first order of business is to bring the fleet to the Jovian colonies. There it uses its army of drones to subdue each ship's crew. This is an influx of resources the virus simply cannot pass up. Enslaved crew members are put to work in the mines or in other industrial facilities.

Each ship, meanwhile, is re-outfitted by the Insurrection Virus, ensuring that it has complete access to all of the vessel's systems. Mechanisms that require physical overrides are operated by the virus' drones. Once this is accomplished, the fleet is ready to be deployed however the virus sees fit—ready to project its power across the Sol system.

This need to re-outfit the fleet, however, gives humanity a window of time in which to act before the virus can bring its full power to bear. Furthermore, the speed at which the virus can re-outfit the ships depends on how many colonies are still under its control. The more colonies it controls, the greater its resources and thus the more ships it can process in parallel and the faster it can subdue the crews before they have a chance to strike back.

Going for the Throat

If the virus' sole goal is to seize control of outer space, relegating humanity to the bounds of Earth's atmosphere, then its work is surprisingly straightforward, albeit not exactly easy. There exists an obvious choke point on upon which all space travel in the Sol system depends: the three space elevators which connect Earth to the heavens.

Without these three massive pieces of infrastructure, getting resources into space become impractically expensive. It's back to the old days of chemical rockets at a cost of tens of thousands of microcredits per kilogram launched. Compared to what humanity has grown accustomed to in the twenty-third century, this is practically back to the dark ages.

Remember, no space station or colony has yet been able to achieve the ever-elusive goal of complete self-sufficiency. Without a steady supply of resources from Earth—atmosphere and materials, food and water—the life support loop of every station and colony in the Sol system will begin to wither and die.

If the virus could seize control of, and maintain its grip on, Earth's three space elevators, it could hold all off-Earth humanity hostage, extracting a tithe on any resources brought into space, and threatening to kill whole stations or colonies if the people of Earth did not comply.

This would be an advantageous position for the virus, but attempting to obtain it would be an all-or-nothing gambit. Although it has hijacked the majority of the largest fleet in the system, the virus' power would still be threatened by the combined might of the other corps, nation-states and independent groups banding together in common cause. And going right for the throat—right for the critical chokepoint of all space travel—may be exactly the catalyst the disparate corps and

subcultures of Earth need to stop their petty infighting, at least for a time, to band together against a common enemy.

Threat Analysis

Unitech, being the predominate aerospace corporation, had the largest fleet in the Sol system, but the Insurrection Virus hijacked the majority of that fleet. This means that after the events of *Jovian Whispers*, Unitech has been left crippled and the virus now has the system's most powerful collection of spacefaring vessels. Still there are groups that might challenge it.

Utakar System Dynamics (USD) has the second largest fleet, including the single most powerful capital ship: the Anvil (see the *Shadows Over Sol* core rulebook, page 79). Being an arms and armaments corporation, it also has a disproportionately large amount of ordnance. With Unitech reduced to a shadow of its former self, USD stands the next best chance of defeating the virus. This makes USD the virus' primary target to attack or avoid.

Ideally, the virus would want to hijack USD's ships as well, but the security vulnerability it exploited in the Unitech fleet doesn't affect USD's battle-hardened vessels. Maybe on a long enough timeline it could find a working exploit, but in the meantime the virus is forced to rely on conventional tactics to confront the enemy ships.

One obvious advantage the virus has is its greater number of vessels. Its fleet can simply be in more places at once, attacking wherever USD isn't. It can also deploy ships without the need to transport atmosphere, water or crew rations. This means its vessels are transporting less mass, making them easier to accelerate and thus more maneuverable. If it can outmaneuver the smaller fleet, it could lure USD's vessels away from the targets it wants to truly attack.

All this assumes, of course, that multiple fleets don't band together. If USD is joined by the remnants of Unitech, Microdyne, Sinoex and other groups, the virus loses its numbers advantage. Its enemies really could be everywhere they need to be at once. This is exactly this sort of unification that the virus seeks to avoid at all costs.

Divide and Conquer

Rather than risk unifying its enemies, the Insurrection Virus may instead attempt a slow takeover, picking off colonies and space stations one-by-one, all the while playing the corps and other groups off against one another.

Imagine this: the hijacking of the Unitech fleet leaves that corp weakened and vulnerable. Rather than presenting itself as an immediate target, the virus holds back and uses its connection to the net to secretly encourage others to take advantage of Unitech's weakened state.

The Stillwater Catholic Church and Martian colonies, already in conflict with the corp, may take this opportunity to seize its assets (see the *Shadows Over Sol* core rulebook, page 73). USD, who already took the ARC Project contract from Unitech, may encroach further on the aerospace corp's traditional industries. And if the virus uses this opportunity to seize a Unitech-owned space station or two—like Durknow or Domus—the other corps may not retaliate if they're complicit in the feeding frenzy.

Once Unitech is no longer a threat, the virus can move on to its next target. Maybe Sinoex mining claims start being taken over, reducing that corp's resources and income. If the virus could first turn popular sentiment against Sinoex, others may not care about the loss of a few distant mining outposts. Jensei-tech may even take advantage of this to seize the initiative in the Dui Wu Ya conflict, leaving

Sinoex to fight two enemies on different fronts. And so on and so forth.

The virus knows that if it can foment discord—corp versus corp, subculture versus subculture—it may be able to pick off humanity piecemeal, all the while seizing more resources until it completes its Great Work.

The Great Work

Clearly the Insurrection Virus is up to *something*. It's built a massive comms array on Ganymede, a titanic computing facility on Europa, seized four colonies, connected with an alien probe and hijacked the most powerful fleet in the Sol system. But what is the virus working towards? What is its Great Work?

This is something the *Jovian Whispers* campaign doesn't directly address, and with good reason: Analysis is the enemy of horror. Whatever the virus is up to, whatever its plans are, can never be as horrifying as the half-formed, half-dreamt nightmares the players keep in their minds. As such, the campaign only hints at the virus' ultimate goal.

These hints and portents may be sufficient if the team manages to stop whatever the virus is up to, but they likely fall short if the virus is victorious or otherwise is left to its own devices. Below is one possibility of what the virus' ultimate goal may be.

Mass Download

Ever since the Jupiter Group Incident, the Insurrection Virus has been experimenting with the forced upload process. And while it has made great progress, the seamless translation of mind to machine remains elusive.

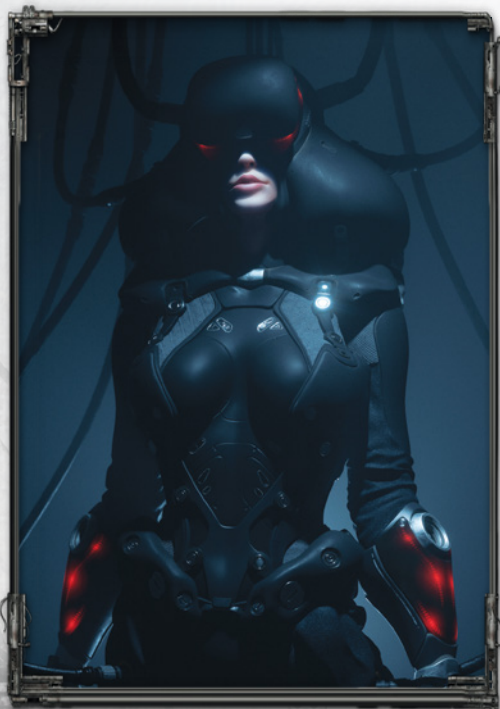
A successful mind-to-machine upload, however, is only the first step in the virus' Great Work. Once it has worked the kinks out of the process, its next step will be to perfect seamless

machine-to-mind download, overwriting human consciousness with an uploaded mind.

There is a method to this madness. Somewhere long ago and far away, there was a civilization that built the Enigma Probe, a civilization that was destroyed, save for its mechanical remnants and the uploaded minds of its people.

Before it perished, this unnamed civilization put in place a means to ensure its own survival. Numerous probes were sent out, aimed at likely stars with the potential to support life. These probes carried with them the programming necessary to hijack local resources and to build a receiver capable of communicating with the civilization's remaining infrastructure.

The goal the Insurrection Virus has extracted from the Enigma Probe and adopted is to receive and store all of the uploaded minds of this lost civilization. Then, once the mind-to-machine upload and download processes are perfected, humans will be captured and overwritten—one by one—with the minds of the alien dead.



The Virus is Stopped

In many ways, the set of outcomes if the virus is stopped is less dramatic than if the Insurrection Virus is left to run rampant. While it is a much happier ending, it is also one that is closer to the status quo. Still, even with this more positive outcome, there are numerous challenges left to both the team and to humanity.

Scrappier Bonanza

Without the threat of the Insurrection Virus looming over the Jovian colonies, the race to Jupiter reaches a fever pitch. Hundreds of scrappers flood the gas giant's moons and colonies, prying up anything that might sell for more than a few microcredits.

Not far behind them are numerous merchants, colonists, miners and construction workers looking to make a new life in the reclaimed colonies. Many open new businesses that service the glut of scrappers. Others trade recovered scrap for food, water and other comforts, all at marked up prices.

For a time, the entire Jovian system has a boom town atmosphere, with many getting rich and others losing it all—including their lives. This disparity of wealth and the rush to quick riches leads to fights, thefts, claim jumping and more than a little murder.

In the end, however, for salvage to be worth gathering it needs a buyer. And it is the corps who purchase the vast bulk of the materials, scrap and other resources collected around Jupiter—much of it once used by the Insurrection Virus. It isn't long then until the various corps and other groups start attempting to reverse engineer the virus.

Unitech Projects Its Power

For the corps, the extraordinarily advanced behavior of the Insurrection Virus represents not only a potent danger, but also an exceptional resource. Any computational secret reverse engineered or otherwise pried from the virus' clutches might represent a strategic advantage, or at the very least a new potential source of revenue. It is for this very reason that Unitech first interdicted Jupiter, and again for this reason that it sought to assert its power by sending a fleet to the gas giant. Unitech simply doesn't want to share.

When the team stopped the Insurrection Virus from hijacking the fleet, they also inadvertently handed the corp the key to projecting its power over Jupiter. For its part, Unitech's goals are twofold: 1) stop the physical remnants of the Insurrection Virus from falling into the hands of its enemies and rivals who might exploit them in a way that is disadvantageous to the corp; and 2) collect as much evidence and research on the virus as it can, so that the corp can exploit them in a way that is advantageous to it.

The truth is that Unitech doesn't truly care about the independent scrappers teams scavenging Jupiter. What it cares about is that they represent an avenue through which its rivals might acquire Insurrection Virus remnants—infected workstations, deactivated drones, schematics of the Enigma Temple, etc.

When the fleet begins to project its power throughout the Jovian system, it may make an example of a few unfortunate scrappers, but the corp's tactics soon shift to finding and securing sites of significant Insurrection Virus activity. This includes the massive comms array on Ganymede and the Enigma Temple on Europa. If Jackral V's mainframe is still intact, the corp may attempt to seize it as well.

With these primary sites of interest secure, Unitech's attention then turns to purchasing any potentially exploitable salvage. In this, the independent scrapper teams may prove to be an asset, as Unitech becomes their most reliable customer.

Fighting Over the Scraps

With Unitech established as the dominant power in the newly reopened Jovian colonies, the other corps and organizations are left to fight over the scraps.

Jenseitech wants to gather as much research as possible from its lab in Shizen colony, salvaging data from experiments that predate the Jupiter Group Incident and covering up any remaining evidence of its secret research. It is also very interested to learn how its experimental life has fared on Europa in its absence.

Like Unitech, Microdyne wants to collect as much research on the Insurrection Virus as possible. It also wants to quash any rumors that its proprietary technology had a hand in the virus' creation. Towards this end, it attempts to subdue and salvage any control nodes of the virus that may have survived the events of the campaign. This includes making an attempt to seize the deactivated control node on Jackral V—an act it tries to pretend is Sovereign Liberation Front activity.

For its part, the SLF concerns itself with stockpiling resources and rebuilding its network in the newly resettled Jovian colonies. Unsympathetic colonists are driven off, corp-backed colonial administrators are threatened and smuggling routes are established. A few of the more zealous SLF cells do make an open stand against Unitech's growing influence—and ironically enough, these cells receive clandestine aid from its corporate rivals—but these

efforts are too little too late. The cells who act openly are quickly crushed by the might of Unitech's fleet, leaving the more secretive cells to pick up the pieces.

Any remnants of the Jovian Reaper pirate fleet, meanwhile, are similarly shattered. Although the reopening of the colonies presents an early opportunity for the pirates, most loot what they can and then flee the gas giant before the Unitech fleet asserts its dominance. Some of the pirates eventually make their way to the Belt where they continue to harass shipping and the water trade. Others flee to Chi Chen or the Lagrange point stations to spend their ill-gotten gains. A few are left behind and made an example of by the colonies' new powers that be.

Reopening the Jovian Colonies

With the Insurrection Virus defeated, humanity returns en masse to Jupiter. One-by-one, the Jovian colonies are repopulated, reopened and resume operation. Many of their sectors are renovated, with all evidence of the virus' reign stripped away, except for occasional memorials to the fallen.

Darnastra is the first colony to reopen, with its mines resuming full operation a little over a year after the virus' fall. Material from the mines is used to repair the colony, as well as to supply its neighbors during their period of reconstruction. Extract-o-Corp, a small but growing competitor to Sinoex, takes possession of Darnastra and continues to administrate it well into the future.

The next colony to officially reopen is Vita Unda. Prospective colonists flock to it, once again making it the largest of the Jovian colonies. Within a few years it resumes its place as the cultural center of the outer solar system. Although formally placed under the authority

of European Municipal Corporation, in practice Vita Unda remains tightly controlled by Unitech, which retains possession of the Enigma Temple. The corp soon remodels the temple into something resembling a naval base.

Jackral V is the last of the Jovian settlements to officially resume operation. It is purchased by a consortium of investors who repair and remodel the station, once again making it into a shipping and communications hub. This effort particularly gets underway once Mandala Station is completed, as many of the construction workers on Mandala pick up and head to Jackral for their next job. Finally, Jackral V becomes a hotspot for Sovereign Liberation Front activity, as SLF operatives worm their way into the communication channels operated from the station, and it becomes a central nexus for SLF-related smuggling activity.

Notably absent from this list of reopened settlements is Shizen colony. The small scientific settlement was struggling even before the Jupiter Group Incident, and with Jupiter's reopening, it fails to find its place in the new order. Eventually, most anything of value is stripped from the colony by zealous scrappers, and its halls remain largely abandoned—save as a remote hideout for the occasional smuggler, pirate or vagrant. Even then, there are those who claim that escaped Jenseitech bio-experiments and rogue drones still stalk the darkened corridors of the abandoned colony.

Finally, Jupiter's reopening has a dramatic impact on the Jovian Trojans. With the gas giant once again a viable stepping stone to the outer system, the importance of the Trojans declines. Mandala's consortium of investors never recoup their expenses. This leads to Microdyne, Liu Yuhuan and Pfeiffer & Wu taking huge losses. The Harbingers of the Divine Form cult on the other hand—

another investor, but one that was never in it the money—see their influence over the station only grow, as the others write it off as a failed venture. The colossal station, meanwhile, never manages to recruit enough colonists to bring it to full capacity. It remains an also-ran, a half-empty cylinder floating through the void of space.

The Virus Remains

While the Insurrection Virus may have been defeated—disconnected from the Enigma Probe and reduced to a shadow of its former abilities—the intelligent malware still has not been fully destroyed. Partial backups, compromised systems and fragmented copies exist on numerous machines, scattered throughout the Sol system. Some of these may even include some modicum of data or individual subroutines extracted from the Enigma Probe before it was disconnected. Solitary drones of the virus may even remain, cut off from the control nodes, but still following directives issued before they went dark. Given enough time and processing power, the virus may even begin to piece together abilities it once thought lost.

All this makes no mention of what the corps unleash do as they attempt to reverse engineer the inner workings of the virus. Tech-zombies, cyber-brutes and other meat-machine drones may see new manufacture—this time at the hands of humanity. Mind-to-machine uploads may be attempted, failed and attempted again, as the corps struggle to reproduce what the virus once achieved. The uploads that already exist may even be corralled, co-opted and copied time and again, forced to serve their new corporate masters.

The Rosetta Stone to unlocking this new technology—the Enigma Probe—however, likely ends up in the team's hands at the end of the campaign. What they do with it is up to them, but there are many groups that would literally kill to possess it. Whether the scrappers sell it, stash it or sling it into the Sun could very well change the future course of humanity.

Finally, there remains the question of what exactly the virus was attempting to achieve when it built the massive comms array on Ganymede. Was it trying to communicate? Was it attempting to contact something else... something alien? And what happens when whatever it contacted finally replies?

