

First Arc Recycling

Demolitions/recycling/construction firm. The last ten years has seen tremendous change across the Valles-New Shanghai region, including the influx of many times the original population leading to a huge housing crisis, hypercorp-sponsored megascale engineering of new domes, new building technologies and economic chaos. If there is one thing that is always needed, it is a way to get rid of the old mistakes. First Arc is one among the many deconstruction firms that have profited greatly.

First Arc maintains a fleet of demolitions robots and nanoswarms, dismantling everything from obsolete settlements to roads and neatly recycling valuable resources. While it started out as merely a demolitions company it has grown into a full “urban recycling solution”, allowing architects and engineers to rebuild using nearly all the original material. It works closely with construction firms like Fa Jing Engineering, Yili Habitronics and GMAC Valles, but also ecoengineering and terraforming firms such as Arbortech and Merah ke Hijau.

One of the secrets of FAR’s success is the open and transparent structure of the company. While CEO Miriam Fraenkel is no extropian, she has cribbed some of their ideas on transparent modular corporations. The company consists of numerous internal units and projects bidding on internal markets for offers, encouraging employees to become stockholders in the company or in individual projects. It makes use of many indentured workers but is known for giving them relatively fair deals: the work is not too exciting and the morphs tend to be more industrial equipment than nice shells, but there are few cases where indentured workers feel they have been cheated (FAR currently is rated as 84% Green in JobRate by former employees).

Although FAR might internally be fairly just, many outsiders does not welcome it when it arrives to recycle a neighborhood into a modern development or reshape the local ecosystem into the next stage biome. It regularly comes into contact and conflict with squatters, community activists, people trying to preserve the “historical treasures” of Mars and even some Barsoomians seeing them as the arm of the hypercorps. In such situations FAR likes to contract security firms on shorter or longer leases to provide security during work, but usually gets tarred for whatever the firms do or don’t do.

Adventure possibilities

FAR workers have access to heavy equipment, explosives and powerful disassembler swarms. This makes theft or hacking a serious risk. Characters in desperate need of something destructive to combat something dangerous might want to infiltrate FAR or even hijack demolitions equipment. Conversely, a series of thefts might be of Firewall interest since whoever is behind them is acquiring a pretty destructive arsenal.

During routine demolitions to make way for a new development in the outskirts of New Pittsburgh FAR encounters something left from the Fall. It appears to be unexploded TITAN ordnance, and God knows what it could do. Firewall agents tipped off about the find must rush to ensure that it is handled safely and doesn’t end up the wrong hands. But the find might be stranger still: exactly what is Project Ozma’s interest here? Is the “TITAN weapon” actually an alien artifact? And how did it end up under a disused garage just outside Valles-New Shanghai?

Contact is lost with a FAR work team recycling some remote flood control channels. They have been infected with the exsurgent virus, and now a group of heavily armored and very destructive synthmorphs are becoming alien monstrosities. Discovering this and stopping them might be a tough challenge in itself (especially since they seem to have decided to camp close to the Nyima Dam – a heavy assault might blow up the dam and connected aquifer, flooding some densely populated land in the chasmas below). But the real mystery is how they caught the virus in the first place – if a group of deconstructors working in the middle of safe Marineris can get it, then others could get it too. Did someone *deliberately* send them the virus? And why?

There have been a few cases of “nail house” situations where everything but a lone holdout has been demolished. FAR as a company usually tries to follow their contract to the letter, but individual workers might be sympathetic and there are often public opinion supporting the nail house holdouts. A tense situation often develops where different groups might want to manipulate events to their advantage.

A serious workplace accident has occurred where a “smart building” deconstructed itself prematurely, crushing several workers and a few outsiders. Safety inspectors descend on the scene, blocking further operations until they have investigated the cause. Some FAR workers really want to ensure their bonuses/stocks and hire the characters to investigate, hopefully speeding up the investigation. But the real cause might be a seething, long-running quarrel between two gangs of reinstantiated that by sheer chance found themselves working within the same company. Getting too nosy might lead to further “accidents” involving dangerous equipment. And the quarrel itself might date back to a pre-Fall conflict, a conflict where the truth could be somewhat damaging for other people who did much better after the Fall and now are in positions of relative power.