CH2 – Skirmish over America – DONE

PC reflects on the earth and space, and life therein. However, in the midst of his reflections, he spots a glint from the viewport of an enemy ship. He reports the sighting to his XO, Wright, who immediately begins evasive action to throw off the pursuers. However, realizing their cover is blown, the enemy ship opens fire with missile batteries, and dispatches high-speed boarding parties to attack the Daedalus. What ensues is the first melee the PC is involved in, and he can either cower in his quarters or assist in fighting. If he is a soldier he will do well and not be injured, but if he is a pilot he will get injured, which will negatively affect this stats.

CH3 – Intermission

Daedalus reenters the atmosphere over the Pacific, eastbound. PC marvels at the world he’s never seen before, with its bright blue oceans and sky with wispy peaceful clouds. The 301st Transport Corps links up with the Daedalus in Hawaii, introducing Sarah Kaufman, the lead officer of the Corps. Daedalus is resupplied, before the ship heads off on its way. PC has some down time during which he interacts with some of the crew, including the head technician Adam Ross, head medic Shimizu Rai, and a few others. They discuss the journey and the Earth, most of whom having never been on the planet. They remark on gravity, wild animals, and a menagerie of other things.

The journey toward California goes smoothly. They see strong vistas and other wonderful landscapes.

CH4 – Saboteurs

Daedalus arrives in San Francisco, where they dock in a hidden military facility for SSTO vessels like the Daedalus-class. However, just as the crew are getting ready for some well-earned leave, there is an attempt at sabotage: somebody tries to destroy the powerplant for the ship using a makeshift explosive. The attempt fails, and the saboteur is apprehended. The player can either aid in the interrogation, or go with Wright to visit with General Manstein.

In the former case the player will be presented with the horrific reality of war, including real torture techniques which the player will only be able to stomach if his drive is high enough, and in either case will result in heightened depression.

In the latter case, no stats changes are made. The player will end up meeting the general in either case, but can learn a bit about Wright on the way over instead of having to deal with the torture. Once together with Manstein, an overview of the big picture is given. The war is going very badly for the Terrasphere both on the ground and in space. Major resource deposits have been seized on Earth, funding Colonial war effort and draining the Terran effort. The TFSF has been all but driven out of the lunar lagrangian point bases and outposts, as well. However, there is a plan – a weapon capable of turning the tide of the war that was developed prewar and has only now been manufactured.

CH5 – Return to Space

A few days later, the Daedalus has undergone heavy modification and the crew has been refitted for duty. News of the Christmas Campaign spreads like wildfire, with untold numbers of Terran troops being committed to assaults across the globe. Furthermore, the remaining fleets have begun turning the tides with numerous small victories from the fringes. The ship leaves the city to much fanfare as it heads to space.

The return is smooth. PC laments he could not have stayed longer. The ship makes its course toward the L7 colony group.

CH6 – L7

Weeks later and the Christmas Campaign has failed. Morale is at a new low. Only the nearing of the L7 colonies represents the possible salvation for the TFSF and Daedalus’ crew. The atrocities committed during the Christmas Campaign are discussed, including a massive nuclear exchange that leveled entire cities and wiped out about a quarter of both sides’ populations.

The ship docks at a solemn secret base in L7. The PC grabs a bite to eat from a local restaurant while waiting for the ship to be ready to set out again. PC overhears rumors of Colonial infringement of the colony’s neutrality in the war. The irony of this isn’t lost on him.

However, on his way back toward the ship some hours later, the distinct sounds of the colonial alarm system begin to sound throughout the cylinder. An ambush by a Colonial ship.

CH7 – The Ambush

Colonial ground troops make landfall on the colony, quickly overrunning the local garrison. The PC makes his way, steadily, back toward his ship. With just a side-arm, he has to make several decisions during which he could die if his marksman isn’t high enough or his pt isn’t high enough.

The longer it takes, the more delayed Daedalus is, and the more likely to get a much worse ending. If the character can’t rush through 5 decisions, the ship leaves without him, and he gets a nonstandard gameover in the form of the Ikarus destroying the colony.

In all other cases, however, he makes it onto the ship.

CH8 – Fighting Flight

Back on the ship, the PC assists with gun crews. Shortly thereafter he witnesses a misfire of the Ikarus device. He misses it. And in just the blink of an eye, the enemy ship has disappeared… along with a massive chunk of the colony they just fled from.

Wright gets orders from Admiral Pettit to immediately head toward the Luna base. It’s learned that the second and fifth fleets have linked up on the opposite side of the planet and are putting up staunch resistance against renewed waves of enemy ships, now termed Orion-classes.

The physical toll of constant combat begins to manifest within the PC, as he constantly passes out whenever he isn’t actively doing something. And often he becomes aware he is doing something well after he has started doing it. Without their full armament, the Daedalus can’t decisively beat back another Orion that has been following them since L7.

Eventually, however, the pursuit devolves into a duel. It is the most cinematic part of the VN, describing the streak of rockets, the flashing of railguns, and the cacophony of the ship as it proceeds. Unlike earlier on, the ship is fully crewed, and the PC is the battery commander. So rather than aiming and firing, he is observing the battle using the newfangled holo display and using its much better processor to direct the gunner and loader.

The duel ends with the Orion destroyed. However, their trail is immediately picked up by an Orlov-class. The big ship that faced down an entire space station in the first chapter. Without the sufficient means to destroy it, and running low on ammo, the Daedalus flees toward Luna. The Orlov ceases following just outside.

CH9 – Losing Friends

At the Luna base, the poor state of its garrison is made clear. Their desperation is illustrated as they surrender to Daedalus – despite not knowing who was crewing it. The number of injured persons is shown and Rai, from earlier, nearly has a mental breakdown seeing the number of dead and dying. Everybody is feeling it. If the player has lost too much drive or has too high a depression at this point, their response will be numbness. Otherwise they’ll flee back to the ship and await, as the façade of their crew begins to crack and many people stay behind to assist the Luna base.

Between the genocidal tendencies and constant loss of crew, the Daedalus’ crew is on the verge of falling apart completely. It’s now heavily understaffed as the ship leaves the luna base.

CH10 – In at the Death

Another ambush. By the Orlov, again. This time fully armed, the battle itself is glossed over by focusing on how weary the PC is. He blocks out all outside input and focuses on the holo display, numbly giving orders to the remaining battery crew. The Orlov is destroyed, and the ship continues on its way. However, as they head toward the ISS en route to the Joint TFSF Fleet on the opposite side of the globe, during which the PC reflects on everything he’s gone through, they pick up a new pack of pursuers.

The entire Colonial fleet.

The PC leaves his post and heads toward the bridge this time. To see how it looks, realizing that they are so badly outgunned that they will most certainly die. He finally gets to watch as Wright gets so flustered and is so clearly terrified that he authorizes the use of the Ikarus again.

The incredible light show is described.

And the game ends with the PC lamenting that war is a strange thing.