

Mega-mallrats

As teenagers in the town of Hillsvie how are you meant to find fun? No facilities for you, numerous churches and barely a skatepark to be had. That all changed when the sport of **Slugblasting** arrived in Hillsvie. With an experimental research facility in town and some of the thinnest space-time around, it is easy to jump on your hoverboard and visit alternate dimensions, do cool tricks, and put it on your socials. Getting your homework done is a secondary consideration, at least to you.

In **Mega-mallrats** we find our teenage crew finishing up a run in the rainbow world of Prismata. Having just tagged the Hardecker Kashon mining facility, they need to get out before the security robots capture them. Back in Hillsvie they will deal with the young adult drama of being teenagers. Then it is off again into Vastiche to the legendary Megamall, in the hopes of landing some of the infamous Tang-xiety energy drink. Then back home to see what the fallout of all that is!

Setup

This is a one-shot for Slugblaster designed to give the players a feel for the whole system including a bit of downtime and engagement with the beats. It is not designed to teach the GM the game so you will need a copy of the book. It should give the GM a feel for the sort of action that Slugblaster lends itself to. I've run a full campaign of Slugblaster and this one shot a couple of times in terms of experience with the system. The whole thing should take about 2-3 hours to run including character introductions and rules explanations.

This is based heavily on a one-shot that Guy Milner from [Burn after Running](#) shared with me. Check out Guy's blog as it is a wealth of great GMing advice. Guy also helped me out with feedback on this version of the scenario and the character sheets that I made to go along with it.

Give each player one of the character sheets. These sheets are reduced versions of the normal Slugblaster sheets, with some traits chosen and Beats partially filled out. Each character has some established background so give the players a chance to read them over and choose the one they want to.

For the signature weapons, the sheets are just the same [as regular slugblaster](#). Let the players choose one as usual and get them to choose a **two component upgrade**.

Once all the characters are established, give the players the crew sheet, point out where they are on the map, and give them a brief overview of the factions their crew is entangled with. This won't be used a lot in this one shot, but it is nice to give some context for the world.

Each character starts with **3 style** and **3 trouble**.

Tutorial

It is very likely that you are using this one-shot to teach Slugblaster. If that is the case I recommend doing this:

- 1) Give out character sheets and signature weapons as described above
- 2) Get each player to introduce their character, their signature weapon, and their traits. Whenever a new mechanism is mentioned, pause and tell the table what that means. I find this to be a very effective way to teach mechanisms and context while keeping the pace flowing. I would avoid explaining Legacy and Doom until it comes up in play, but if someone asks, touch on it briefly.
- 3) Lay out all the signature devices and get them to choose one. They can take one **two component upgrade** for free.
- 4) Put out the crew sheet. This is going to be mostly flavour for this session but does give them some communal dice to use. Also gives context for the session.
- 5) Let everyone know they start with **3 style** and **3 trouble**.
- 6) Get Slugblasting!

Optional: Use Bite and take 1 per player. I personally don't like Bite and feel like it is just another mechanism to mention. I have run several games of Slugblaster without really engaging with this particular mechanic.

The Scenario

I've split the scenario up into scenes that have a pretty linear pattern. I don't think that should be a problem in a one-shot. The non-linearity will come from the solutions the players pursue. I've provided Slam ideas for each scene to get those creative juices flowing. Feel free to adapt or ignore as needed.

Scene 1 - Prismatic Problems

We open in medias res. The crew has just finished painting their tag several feet high in the Hardecker mining facility in Prismata. Describe Prismata a bit, pointing out where it is on the map of realms.

The Kashom crystals really look good surrounding it, reflecting the tag through visual and non-visual light spectrums. Your socials are on red alert with all the likes! Unfortunately so is the security system. Alarms go off everywhere! Security bots pour out of a dispenser in the side of the mining facility. The escape chutes start to close! How are you going to get out of here?

Give each player an opportunity to do something to avoid, sabotage, or otherwise deal with the facilities security and the bots. Describe the bots however you want, riff off what the characters describe. Slam them if it is appropriate.

- Potential Slams

- Laser-burned
- Wanted by Hardecker
- Crushed by cave-in
- Saved by Rescue

Scene 2 - Downtime, Hillview

One way or another the crew gets home. Set the scene by describing Hillview. Emphasise that they see it as boring and it is that and then some.

Let each of them do a downtime scene. Maybe we see them at school interacting, or something about their homelife. Let them take another beat if they want. Might be an opportunity to explain Legacy and Doom if you want to at this point. Let the players lead this as much as possible but don't be afraid to help anyone out who is having a problem coming up with something to do in this section.

Over the course of downtime, or after it is over, the crew has discovered that something momentous is about to happen. In the realm of Vastiche it was rumoured that there was a mega-mall. Seemingly infinite in scope it has long been lost. The dunes in vastiche have revealed a structure poking through as the winds whip around and it is the mega-mall! What's more it is known that the mega-mall had some vending machines of Tang-xiety Panic Energy Drink. It's legendary and getting some would send your crew to the next level! You grab the co-ordinates and head to Vastiche.

As the crew head to Vastiche, cut to a scene in the basement of a house. It is decorated however you want, but go a bit old school. Think wooden boards, guitars on the wall, some real genuine original slugblasting boards. A balding, dad-bod guy has his feet up on his hoverboard, lounging on the sofa. He is drinking a can of Tang-xiety, crushes it in his hand, burps loudly, and throws it in the trash. It is clear this is the last can of this he has. Other older slugblasters are gathered around. A young person runs down the stairs breathless. They say something along the lines of

“ Chad, the mega-mall is back”.

Chad smiles, puts on his jacket that says Old Guard on the back, and flips his hoverboard into his hand. “Let's ride”.

You might want to describe the presence of the Heart's crush in this scene just to make that connection. They could even be the person who is talking directly to Chad.

Scene 3 - Vast Vastiche

We cut back to the Infinite Grind Crew on the way to Vastiche. You might want to ask them which realms they pass through to get there, and you could take some time to describe these places as they zoom on through. I would give a decent description of Vastiche as they approach the portal into it.

Most importantly though the crew know of two routes into Vastiche.

- Route 1 - This brings you in over the Billboard Jungle. It's the main route into Vastiche and will likely be lousy with other crews all heading to the mega-mall.
- Route 2 - Through the Wastes, the micro-plastic Dunes that cover large areas of Vastiche. The mega-mall is located at the border between the Billboard Jungle and The Wastes. Crews don't seem to go there but you don't know why. More dangerous, less rivals.

Route 1

Describe the arrival over the billboard jungle as you wish. You could even have a race with other crews to get to the mall first if you feel you have time. Don't forget you can use clocks like CHASE to manage such bits of action (slugblaster rules reference).

When you arrive at the mall there are loads of crews trying to get in. You might be at the front but the other crews aren't far behind. Null Range are amongst the first to arrive (check the slugblaster rules for some characters from that group you might want to use). A bunch of older slugblasters wearing Old Guard clothes are guarding the front entrance and not letting anyone in. There are scuffles, chaos, etc. Start a clock GUARD and let the players get inventive at how to get past the Old Guard and the other crews.

- Potential Slams
 - Bad write up in Slugblaster Magazine that the Old Guard put out
 - Beaten up
 - Board damaged
 - Make enemies amongst the other crews
 - Bruised Ego

Route 2

It really is quite peaceful back here as you pop out in the rainbow micro-plastic dunes. There's no one here, not even the trace of another crew. You want to throw an obstacle in the way though because this is a role-playing game after all. I've used 'oops it's a minefield' or 'weird tremors like creatures burst from the sands and chase you' but anything would do really. Let's assume you use the minefield. Give them the idea that it is such by describing some robots trying to sweep up the sand and one of them picking up a glowing red object that instantly explodes. As you look you can see there are many more of these glowing red dots between you and the back of the Mega-mall. Start a clock KABOOM and give the crew an opportunity to get creative on how they are going to navigate the area.

- Potential Slams
 - Exploded
 - Board damaged
 - Caustic storm blows in
 - Micro-plastics breathed in

Either way, once you've overcome these, we can smash-cut to the Mega-mall; half way revealed under the plastic dust. There are crews all over - Null-Range and the Old Guard are

bickering over there, and you can see other opportunistic Slugblasters trying to impress one another.

If the crew does sneak in the back then consider giving them some mechanical advantage in the scenes to come: The Old Guard catch up to them later, the other crews are stumbling over each other causing a distraction for them to exploit etc.

Scene 4 - Inside the Mega-Mall

It's entirely up to you how you do the trip through the mega-mall itself. You could have some chases with other crews, maybe make some allies and enemies along the way. One technique that has worked well for me is to do a Montage. You could do this through dice rolls but I have just done it as a narrative between the players. A lot of this will depend on the time you have given yourself to run this scenario.

In order to achieve this, the GM starts by describing what happens as they get inside the mall and then throws a problem in to overcome. The next person in the chain then has two tasks. They must narrate how the problem is overcome as the journey continues and throw a problem to the next person around the table. You keep passing this round till everyone has had a shot solving a problem. This is a technique from the 13th Age RPG and Guy has written about it [here](#).

Once the Montage is over the crew sees the neon glow of a Tang-xiety vending machine and there are definitely still cans inside, but there is a problem. Phasing in and out of reality around the vending machine is a swarm (one per player) of Quantum Centipedes (page 119 in the core book).

I'm not including potential slams here as the possibilities are down to what the players suggest for issues.

Scene 5 - It's Quantum baby

You are so close to your goal but those centipedes are going to be a pain in the ass. How are the crew going to get past them? As they are thinking about it the other crews are making their way through the mall, chasing the Old Guard who are pursuing you! It's a Slugblasterpalooza!

Throw whatever obstacles you want at the crew here, get creative. Is the Mall like the Tardis, effectively infinite on the inside? What happens if you hitch a ride on a quantum centipede to another dimension? How do you even get past those mandibles?

A clock is not a bad idea here, but not entirely necessary depending on the situation. Something like QUANTUM makes for a slightly longer clock allowing the crew space to have fun coming up with solutions.

- Possible Slams
 - Replaced by another version of yourself!
 - Poisoned by the quantum centipede (woozy, paralyzed, etc)

- Mental breakdown caused by quantum realities
- Humiliated by the Old Guard, or another crew

Scene 6 - Escape!

As the crew achieves their goal and finally gets their hand on the drinks they notice that apart from the crews that may be directly in their vicinity the rest of the mall is pretty quiet. Winds howl around and through the mega-mall and as they look up they see the rainbow sands starting to cover up the glass roof again! Time to get out of dodge before you become a permanent resident of this place.

A few ways you could handle this

- ☐ Group check to get out of there
- ☐ Montage as earlier but that might feel a bit anti-climatic
- ☐ Clock called ESCAPE with another one called PURSUED to represent a chase out. I like to make the pursuer clock a little longer no matter the word I choose.

- Possible Slams

- Choked with micro-plastics
- Items lost to the dunes
- Minefield blows into the mall
- Held responsible for the disappearance of the Old Guard
- Arrested by Rescue

Scene 7 - Home, Sweet, Home

One way or another the crew gets home. Let them all take another downtime scene, maybe a beat or two. Maybe they've taken enough hits to cause the crew to split up? What does that look like? How does this chapter end?

Wrapping Up

Don't forget to thank everyone for playing. Maybe highlight some moments you thought were particularly great. If anyone is interested you can give them an overview of how a campaign might run if you are familiar enough with the game. I hope you've enjoyed running it!

How I made this

The character sheets were laid out in Affinity publisher, chopping up and adding to the character sheets provided by the publisher. No AI was used in the making of this one [shot.If](#) you've enjoyed using this then please give it a share and check out my other RPG work on [my site](#).