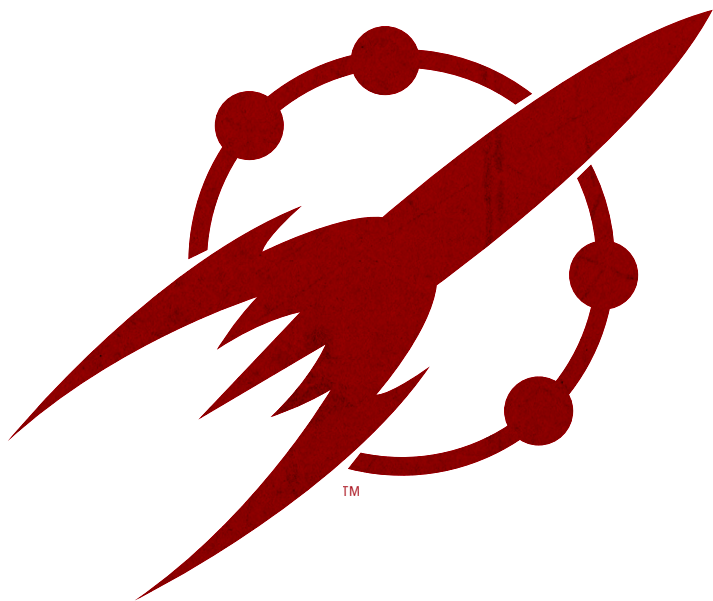




INTO THE COSMOS™

A COSMIC PATROL SOURCEBOOK

BLAST INTO THE DEEP BLACK!
CONFRONT THE UNKNOWN!



JOIN THE PATROL!

ROCKETS • RAYGUNS • ROBOTS



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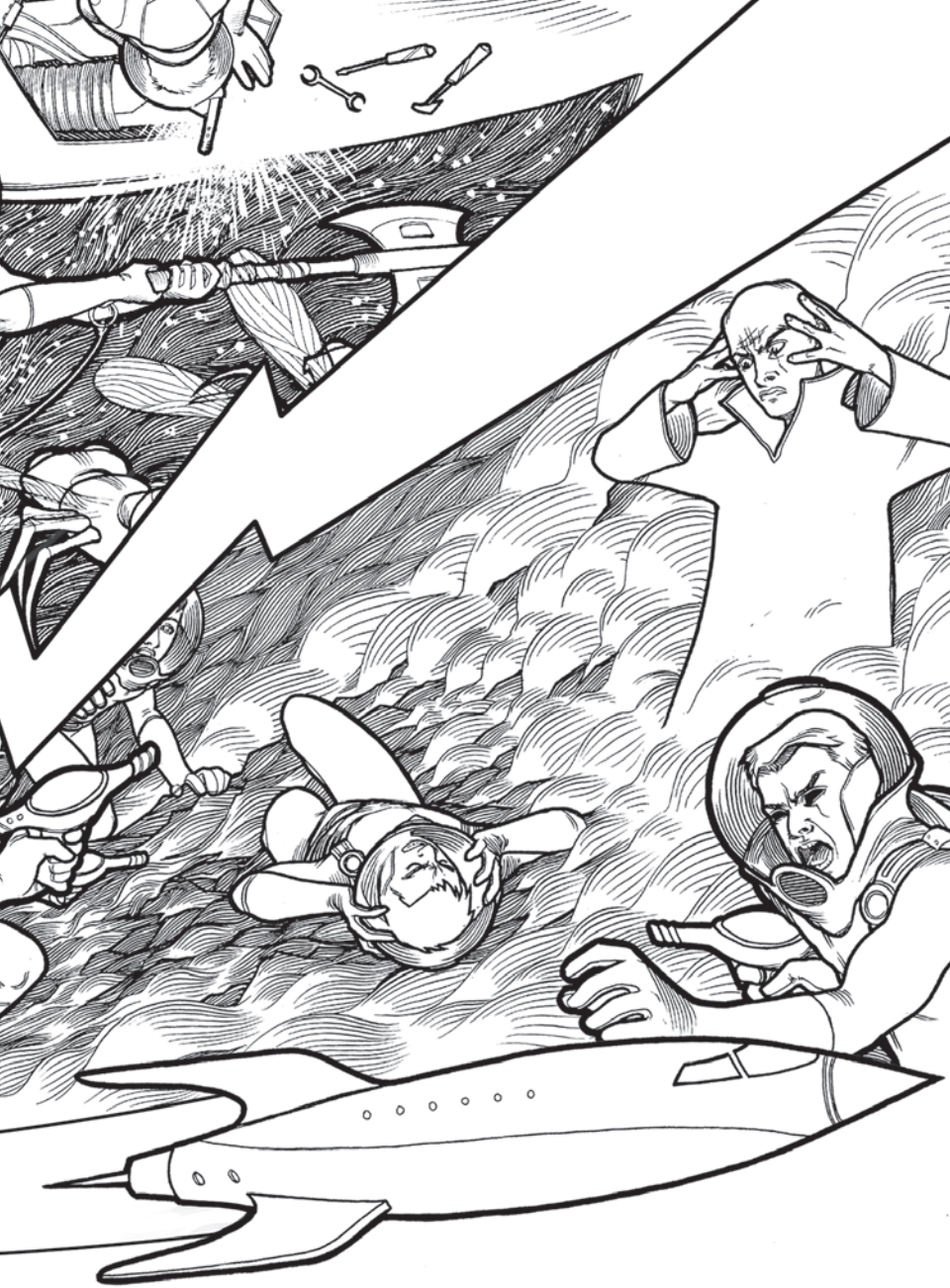




INTO THE COSMOS

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INTO THE COSMOS!

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Shout Out

Thanks to everyone who has played, reviewed or just said nice things about *Cosmic Patrol*! The response has been amazing and I still have trouble believing that the game has been so well received. You all rock and I can't thank you enough!

—Matt



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INTO THE COSMOS 5

WHEN IN DOUBT, DOUBT

BY JASON SCHMETZER

They always told me it wasn't going to be easy, this job.

But does it always have to be this hard?

I was crammed into a vent, watching the toadstools troop by beneath me and hoping they had too much mushroom wrapped around their heads to hear me breathing or smell my scent. It was one of those superhero spy moments they put in the movies, with the intrepid super spy waiting for days, if necessary, to get the super important piece of intelligence before shooting her way out of the bad guy's stronghold.

I've seen all those movies.

They're all wrong.

I already had the intel. And I had to pee.

Audrey Orion, ace intelligence operative for the Patrol Intelligence Service. Fears nothing, goes anywhere, knows everything. I'm not going to say a girl doesn't like knowing that people respect—hell, fear—her. I like it just fine.

But just then? I'd have given it all up for a bathroom.

The Haks—the toadstools, the Hakhaze—don't use bathrooms.

They're a symbiotic race, lizards with an outer shell of something a lot like mushroom. If they urinate—and I'm not poking around the ruffled edges to check—they walk around with it. Hell, there's probably a whole layer of ecosystem that thrives on Hak waste.

Not. Checking.

They kept walking. Dozens of them. Hundreds. I don't know, maybe thousands of them. I had to pee. I stopped counting once I got to oh-my-god-my-bladder-is-going-to-burst. And the edge of the damn data pad was digging into my ribs.

It didn't have to be *this* hard.



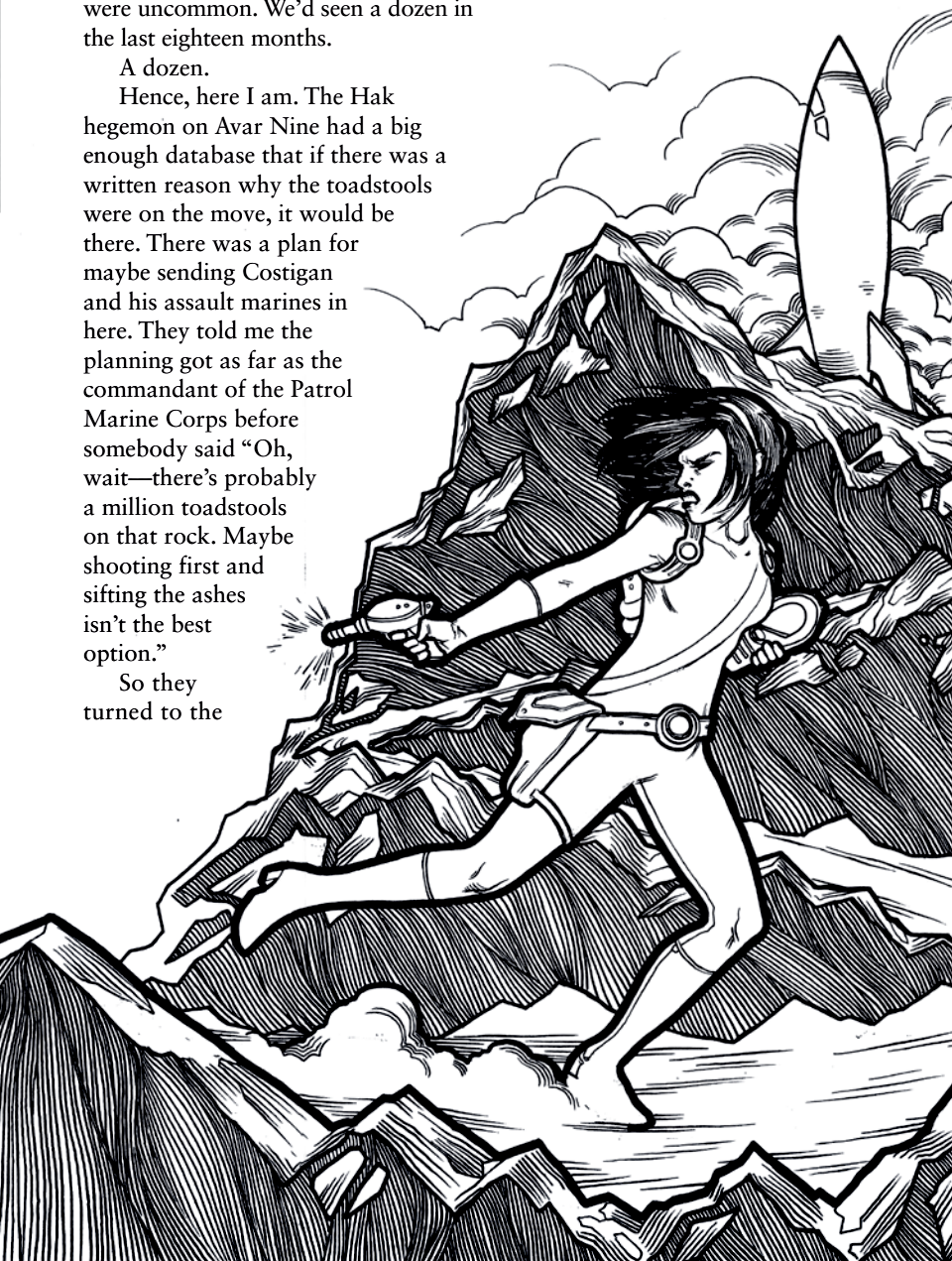
The Patrol sent me here—here being Avar Nine, an exciting name for an otherwise dead ball of rock in the Coalsack Dead Zone—to find out why the Patrol had been seeing more Hakhaze destroyers along the patrol routes. It wasn't unusual to see the Hak slave galley trolling along, picking off primitive tribes and undefended

tramp freighters in the more populous systems, but frontline Hak destroyers were uncommon. We'd seen a dozen in the last eighteen months.

A dozen.

Hence, here I am. The Hak hegemon on Avar Nine had a big enough database that if there was a written reason why the toadstools were on the move, it would be there. There was a plan for maybe sending Costigan and his assault marines in here. They told me the planning got as far as the commandant of the Patrol Marine Corps before somebody said "Oh, wait—there's probably a million toadstools on that rock. Maybe shooting first and sifting the ashes isn't the best option."

So they turned to the



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Intelligence Director. And he turned to me.

Yeah. I can do that.

No bathrooms.

The Haks are bad news. They don't have a compassionate bone in their soggy, musty bodies—if they have bones at all. That maybe comes from being life forms that evolved in dead space. The Coalsack isn't a nice place. It doesn't breed nice people. It hardly breeds people. And they were on the move. Every bit of space they took over was another bit of the dark they could run into a fractum-drive Patrol ship and find out where the Great Union was hidden. Every bit of space.

Yeah. I can do this mission.

The Director didn't even have to wave a flag in my eyes. I knew how important it was to get this datapad out.

But gods above and below, I needed to go.



The last Hakhaze finally stomped out of sight. I waited, listening, but there wasn't another sound. The footsteps of Hakhaze were not subtle—they were heavy, and they stomped around. Their footpads squelched. Even with the echoes from the long corridors I knew I'd be able to hear them coming.

The grate slid to the side. I was careful to hold the edges away from the flashing, so there'd be no sound of

metal-on-metal. That screech, even a grind, would carry. The soft bootheels of my hypercamo suit absorbed the sound of my drop to the floor, and I swallowed the groan of pain as straightening changed the tension on my bladder. The fabric of the suit immediately began shifting from the black-gray of the enclosed shaft to the white-gray of the metal-stone floor and walls. As long as I moved slow and smooth, the suit would keep me hidden. There was the telltale tingle as the fabric shifted, but I was used to that. Truth be told, I'm more uncomfortable in civvies on Earth when my clothes *don't* adapt.

I'd come into the citadel through the vehicle bay, riding beneath one of the high-wheeled Hakhaze recon vehicles. They didn't expect to find an enemy on Avar Nine, but it was useful training to send small patrols out into the petrified forest. I'd put down my rocketship deep in the forest and come in on foot, confident I'd find a way in.

I always find a way in.

The path back to the vehicle bay was behind the big group of toadstools who'd tromped by beneath me. I wasn't sure if I should follow them—that many Haks moving together were moving toward something, and there'd undoubtedly be some stragglers or peons sent back for something. I didn't want to walk into a group of toadstools now, when I already had what I came for.

But I had to get out.

I followed them. I stayed near the wall, trusting in my hypercamo to conform to the wall colors and keep

me out of the peripheral vision of anyone who suddenly came around a corner. I'd hear them coming in time to pull the cowl over my face and freeze.

I hoped.



Vang Qi had left the hegemon's sword in his office.

As he hurried back along the way the legion had come, toward the hegemon's office and the ceremonial, jewelwood blade, he tried not to reflect on the hegemon's expression when the elder had reached for the scabbard of his sword and found Vang's empty hand instead. It wasn't easy to read facial expressions through the thick *vaskar* skin. But the hegemon's eyes had smoldered.

Smoldered.

Vang hurried along the corridor, his feet making not a sound. His footpads were long-since smoothed from steady use on the polished floors of the citadel, and he had learned early on to shuffle his feet to keep the noise down. The Hakhaze were not the most quiet of species, and because of that scarcity the ability to be quiet was highly prized. Vang had cultivated that ability in his movement. It was his only positive trait.

He was going to get skinned. He was sure of it. Without his *vaskar* to insulate him, the hegemon would send him out into the petrified forest and he'd freeze to death. His family would be shamed, all of his mate's

litter would be crushed before they hatched. His mother, who'd told him he'd never amount to more than fodder for nestlings, would be disappointed. Vang wouldn't even make it to the fodder pens.

He stepped out the side corridor and stopped dead.

There was a human in the corridor.

A human.

The human leapt at him, seemingly without an instant's hesitation.

Vang had barely enough time to feel his egg canal loosen, as if he were about to lay an egg. Then there was a snick of pain, and then cold.

So cold.



I'd never felt like such an idiot.

And I'd wet myself. I mean, the suit is built for it. You *don't* want to know about the plumbing. But its not the end of the world. Except to your dignity.

Sure, Audrey, I told myself. All the toadstools are noisy. You'll hear one coming in plenty of time. All you have to do is hide. Then I stared down at the corpse of the Hakhaze I'd just killed with the monowire Costigan had given me in that dive bar on Platform Ares. A little spool of metal wire beaten down in the Martian forges until it was thinner than a hair. I'd watched the Patrol Marine shave a corner off of the barstool with it, and played some in the petrified forest on

the way in. It always felt like it was going to break. It was too thin.

But it'd taken the toadstool's head off, mushroom-skin and all, with barely a catch.

The quiet toadstool.

That I hadn't believed was possible.

Stupid.

There weren't any closets or side doors, but I looked around anyway. I was a little scared to trust my judgment just then, but my first guess was right. There wasn't. I pulled the Hak's body back into the side corridor. I had to make a separate trip back for the top half. Anyone coming up that corridor would find it first thing, but maybe they'd all be coming up the main corridor.

Maybe.

Maybe they'll all be noisy walkers, too.

I needed to pick up the pace. I pulled the cowl of my hypercamo suit halfway up, so it'd just be a nod and a tuck to pull it down to hide my face. The monowire went back into my belt pouch, but I slid open the slits on the underside of the suit's wrists. The two fighting knives strapped to my forearms would slip right out if I needed them.

Which it looked like I would.

There weren't any more interruptions before the vehicle bay. I began to wonder where the Haks had all gone, until I got there.

They were all inside.

Apparently, it was speech time.

I was too much a professional to allow the groan to get any further

than my chest, but I wanted very much to let it out. Gods know none of the toadstools would hear it over the bellowing oratory of the Hakhaze hegemon. I stood and half-watched for a moment, with nothing more than one eye around the doorjamb. The suit would blur my image enough, and no one was looking my way.

Strange. Usually when a toadstool potentate stood up to talk to all of the little toadstool minions, he had a sword.



Sun Fang, first sword-captain of the *Zhung Kai* brigade, had stopped listening a while ago. The hegemon had three or four stock speeches, and this one was the third. It had begun with the second speech, had bits of the fourth, but settled quickly into the third. Sun had heard them several times.

They were all useless. Tripe and fallacies that dull-witted fodder-collectors drank like a fine wine. Sun Fang preferred to think. It took more than mindless adherence to become first sword-captain. Not that the hegemon cared.

Sun tuned out the hegemon's shouting and concentrated on the seat of his *vaskar*. The outer skin grew on its own, but it could be guided. By carefully flexing muscles a warrior could train his *vaskar* to be more supple, allowing him a greater range

of motion. On Hakh there were criminals who even peeled bits of their *vaskar* back, to create pouches to smuggle small articles on their person. Sun had been experimenting on the *vaskar* over his left forearm. If he could create enough space it'd be the perfect place to conceal a pistol.

It itched. A low growl climbed into his throat, but he stifled it.

The hegemon disliked to be interrupted.

The fat fool.



I hate crawling.

I mean, I'm good at it. A spy had to crawl. A lot.

But I don't like it. It hurts my elbows.

I'd already crawled ten or twenty meters, toward one of the recon vehicles like the one I'd come in on. I don't speak Hak fluently, but the hegemon was up there shouting about doing your duty and the upcoming mission and don't break the vehicles because the budget was already short—you get the picture. Soon they'd all cheer and come down and drive out, and they'd take me with them. And I'd be out.

It was a good plan.

It's a shame only a little bit of it worked.

When I was in training my training officer told me every chance he got that Fortune was a fickle bitch. She was on your side one day and the

other guy's the next. Sometimes she went back and forth. Sometimes she just plain didn't like you. The secret to being a good op, he would tell me, wasn't in being able to control Fate. The secret was being able to roll with Fate's punches.

I'm a good roller.



Sun bowed as the hegemon stepped down from the dais. He was an idiot, but he was hegemon.

"Where is Vang Qi?" the hegemon asked.

"Not here," Sun said. The hegemon stared at him. Sun turned and gestured to one of his brigade. "I will have him found, lord."

The hegemon regarded the soldiers standing near Sun. He picked at his right claw with his left as he did so, as if the *vaskar* was bothering him. It might very well be, Sun realized. *Vaskar* required at least a little light to grow, and hegemon rarely ventured out of the citadel. His *vaskar* would be thinning and weak. Sun was surprised he couldn't smell the scent of rot coming from his leader.

"We will not be here much longer," the hegemon said a moment later.

"Lord?"

"On this world."

Sun kept his body carefully neutral. The fourth cohort of his brigade was boarding its APCs behind him. A brigade sword-captain had

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little input on the movements of the hegemon's forces. He was a tactical combat officer, not a strategic one.

"The overlords have sent me the coordinates of the target world," the hegemon continued. "Our target is much like this world. It was well that we chose here, despite the humans' knowledge of the this place."

"Lord," Sun murmured. He tried to keep his voice level, but it was difficult. Did the hegemon think to impress him with mention of the overlords? Who else but the planetary hegemon would they speak to? It was like Sun saying "I used my left claw to scratch behind my ear." Obvious.

"Your brigade will lead the assault, Sword-Captain."

"It is our honor, my lord." And it was. The vanguard of the assault was where the honor was gained. It would take Sun much honor to advance in this horde. Or the death of the hegemon, but the old fool rarely entered combat.

"I think we will not wait," the hegemon said a few moments later. "Vang Qi is most likely lost, the shuffling fool."

Sun bowed his head and gestured toward the command vehicle. "We crave your honor, my lord," he said. With his right hand he touched a stud on his belt, sending the button-up command to all the vehicles of his brigade. The leading cohort lit its engines, filling the vast vehicle bay with the howling whine of turbine engines.

I crave much more than your honor, you old fool, Sun thought as

the pale hegemon stepped up the boarding hatch.



I let the Hak recon vehicle carry me a good kilometer or so into the forest before I thought about stopping it. I knew where my rocketship was, and even if I got lost I could trigger the beacon. I didn't want to do that, though, since that would alert the toadstools that there was a Patrol rocketship in the woods. There was little chance that they'd find it before I would, but Audrey's momma didn't raise a girl who took chances.

Once I did think about stopping, though, I was stuck.

It's not easy to make a vehicle you're not driving stop without breaking it. And even if you don't care about breaking it—and, let's be fair; in this case, breaking a combat vehicle of a declared enemy of mankind is probably a plus—there's the whole problem of the crew. You break a guy's car, he's going to get out and kick the tires, check under the hood. Look underneath and see if he hit something he shouldn't have.

I didn't need a pair of toadstool recon specialists getting out, dropping to their soggy knees, and finding a delicate bit of Audrey Orion hanging in their undercarriage. So that crossed "break the Hak's vehicle" off the list.

Well, off the first-option list, anyway.

This is the part of the post-mission scrub where the little office drone going over every step you took from sixty astrons away says something like “Agent Orion, why didn’t you consider the need to place explosives before you infiltrated the base, in order to create a distraction to use for your escape?” Because there’s no one smarter than an office drone who’s never been in the field, let me tell you.

This time, I’d be able to smile and make a smartass remark. Because I had.

On the other side of the citadel.

Yeah. Don’t bring that up.

The vehicle slowed down some, which let me stop planning non-destructive ways to get it to stop. I’d already checked for following vehicles, but it was a recon car. It was designed to operate solo and these two were following protocol. If it slowed down just a little more—

—to there—

—I slipped the harness loose and dropped to the ground. I slid a bit farther than I planned, and I was going to have one hell of a bruise, but the recon car and the two Hakhaze in it would just drive away and leave me here in the dust. I’d just have to wait—

—the recon car stopped dead, maybe ten feet from where I’d stopped.

I’m serious. It stopped.

I rolled onto my stomach, arms down beneath my chest. If I had to get up—if they got out of the vehicle—I needed to be able to get up quickly. But maybe my luck would hold. They’d just stop, do a scan, and keep going. No reason to get out.

It’s not like toadstools took cigarette breaks.

Fate would be kind.

The doors on either side of the squat car slip up and open.

Fate is a bitch.

I shoved myself upright and slid the paired knives out of my sleeve sheathes. I only had one shot. If I managed to take both of them down—quietly, because the detectors on the vehicle would hear the raygun I had in my belt—before they got a radio call off I might make it. If. If.

The right-side Hak stood up first. I snapped the knife from my right and out, aiming for the neck where the high-riding Hak helmet’s didn’t quite cover their junction of their thick-wrapped necks. The knife was perfectly balanced and I’d practiced enough that I knew it was going to hit when I let it go. I grinned—I couldn’t help it. It was a beautiful shot.

The left-side Hak stood up as well. He was looking backward and saw me coming. My hypercamo suit couldn’t cope with the quick movements of combat, and now I was there for all to see. His mouth opened, and I was close enough to see the tiny reptilian teeth buried deep inside the padded mushroom skin. He blurted a word—into a helmet radio, damn it!—and flinched, as if to get back into the car.

I was already at the rear bumper. I dove over the low roof, arms out. I switched the hand to my right hand in the air and slashed as I went by. There was an instant’s resistance, and a sighing noise, and then I was tucking

my chin and rolling off of my shoulder into a crouch, knife at the ready.

A dripping knife at the ready.

The second Hak was laying on the ground with his head half-cut-off. The first had disappeared when it had fallen on the other side of the car. I was still grinning, despite the pain in my shoulder where I'd rolled on a rock.

I looked at the knife. I'd bought this set a year ago in a barbarian bazaar at the Platform Ares landing port free zone. The wizened little man who'd made them swore the edges would never lose their razor-sharpness, and if I've learned anything since I joined the Patrol it's to trust a Martian when he's talking about metal weapons. Costigan claims they beat the knife-edge down the same way they make the monowires.

They were sharp. And balanced. The next time I was on Mars I'm going to find that little knifemaker and shake his hand. And buy more knives.

The next time I was on Mars. I chuckled a little as I stood up and went to check the car and get my other knife. I didn't speak perfect Hak—we've been over this—but I knew enough to get by. And I knew the word the second Hak had yelled into his radio just before I killed him.

Laruq.

Human.

There was a chatter of Hak coming from the dead toadstool's helmet. I didn't bother to listen. I just dashed around the car and then into the woods, toward my ship.

They knew I was here now.

It was a bit of an assumption to think I'd ever see Mars again.



Sun Fang stared at the radio speaker. Behind him he heard the hegemon's voice demanding answers, but he had none to give. The reporting soldier hadn't responded to hails from his cohort commander. The technician in the seat in front of Sun was already triangulating the broadcasts' position. There was nothing for him to do until he knew where the report had come from.

Humans. Here. He fought the urge to turn and sneer at the hegemon. Hubris would cost him everything. He fought the urge—but in his mind, he throttled the rotting fool. He'd brought them too close to the human's sphere of influence, and now the entire crusade was at risk.

The technician pointed to a spot on the map display.

Sun seized a microphone. "All units converge here," he said, and read off the coordinates. The command tank lurched as the driver followed the order. The hegemon bellowed as the entire compartment was rocked, but Sun ignored him. This was a tactical matter. Even the hegemon had to submit to Sun's command now.

"Recon units ahead," he said. He thought for a moment. "And the nek."



I heard them coming this time.

I did. And I'm not going to lie—I felt a little vindicated.

Of course, this time it was like listening to rhinos move. There's a furry dinosaur-looking thing that the Haks use as horses sometimes. They call them *neks*. They're about six feet tall at the shoulder and have six legs. They're shaggy, like mammoths, but have baby tyrannosaurus heads and a mouthful of predator's teeth. They're pretty.

Luckily, they're not burn-proof, and I didn't care if they heard me any more.

I raygunned the first *nek* that appeared in a break in the trees. It collapsed, sending the rifle-wielding Hak on its back careening into a tree. Two more appeared, but they were spooked by the smell of burning *nek* fur. They weren't bred for that—it surprised them. The toadstools often fought amongst themselves, so the *neks* are used to fighting, but the Hakhaze use projectile weapons, not heat or rays. Smelling their nestmates burning, for lack of a better phrase, freaked the *neks* the hell out.

I just smiled and kept running.

The Haks dismounted and chased me on foot. That was fine with me. I should be faster than they were, but I needed to clear a bit of room. I couldn't have them potshotting my one-woman rocketship while I was bringing the rockets up. Hakhaze rifles were like old-style cannons in caliber. Enough of them would eventually breach the rocketship's hullmetal. And then I'd be stuck on Avar Nine with them.

Luckily, Hakhaze aren't much more used to the smell of burning *nek*.

Or burning toadstool. I raygunned a pair and sprinted away.

A Hak bullet tore a limb the thickness of my waist off, blasting the petrified wood into shards of rock. I ducked a little lower and ran a little faster.

I'm a lot softer than petrified wood.



"You must not let that human escape," the hegemon said.

Sun turned in his seat to see the old patriarch leaning forward, resting one flaccid hand on the back of Sun's chair. The sword-captain bit back his retort—one did not say "Do you think? Perhaps I must also use my feet to walk?" to one's hegemon—and instead ducked his head. "Of course, lord," was all he said. He looked back to his console.

"She is armed," the nearest cohort commander reported. "The *neks* are panicked."

"Pursue her," Sun commanded. He hated himself for repeating the obvious, but the hegemon was standing right behind him. *The idiot*, his mind filled in, *but still hegemon*.

"I have the entire cohort in motion," the banner-captain said.

"The brigade is behind you," Sun said.

"I have heard from the citadel," the hegemon said.

“Lord?”

“She has taken copies of our files.”

The hand on the back of Sun’s chair flexed—Sun heard the squeak of the *vaskar* sliding against the extruded chair material. “The Overlord’s files.”

Sun twisted around to look at the hegemon. He didn’t care if the old man saw it. “You left the Overlord’s files accessible?” His claws flexed on his chair arms.

“She must not escape.”

Or it will be the death of us all,
Sun filled in.



I knew when I came into the depression that it was the perfect place. There was a ring of massive petrified trees, as thick around as the ancient redwoods of Earth, and a scattering of more reasonable-sized monoliths filling it. I stopped beside one of the redwood-scale behemoths on the far side and waited, eyeing the trees and trying to determine which way they’d fall. I’d just found the one I liked when the first Hak bullet spanged off of the tree bole a couple feet above my head. I ducked the falling rock shards and raised my raygun.

I usually carry an atomic, but I knew I wouldn’t have space for the nullifier on this op. Kenny Costigan suggested a good raygun, and I’d be able to tell him he made a good choice when I got back to the Great Union.

Well, assuming I got back—but it was looking better.

I raygunned the tree I wanted and prayed it would fall the way I hoped. Fate hadn’t been on my side the whole night, so I worried I was tempting her a bit too much. If this one didn’t fall I’d try the next one, and if that one went the wrong way I’d go back to running and look for another place to lay an ambush. I could do that all night.

Or at least until the Haks got around me with vehicles. I didn’t know that’s what they were doing, but it’s what I would be doing if I were in their shoes. *Neks* were all well and good for the places you couldn’t get a tank that was as wide as a rocketship. But they’d be flanking me with the vehicles while the horses ran me down.

The tree fell where I wanted—right along the treeline. I heard shouting in Hahkaze as it crashed down, and a flurry of random shots tore a fresh shake of petrified leaves off of the high branches of the trees.

Did I say Fate was a bitch? I meant she was gorgeous. I spun and took a step—

—did I say gorgeous? The bitch—
—there was a Hak standing behind me. With a leveled rifle.

I stopped. My hands were at my sides.

I threw down the raygun.



A squeak of static burped from the speakers. "I have the human," Sun Fang heard a voice say. The hegemon clapped his hands together. Sun stared at the speaker.

"We are near—*urk!*"

The channel went dead.

"Get him back!" the hegemon demanded.

"Get us there *now!*" Sun shouted. The driver slammed the throttle forward. The tank growled as it crunched over stone brush.

They were too far away, Sun Fang knew.



The toadstool looked surprised—or at least, as surprised as a pile of dead mushroom with a gecko wrapped inside can look with the end of my phasic whip wrapped around its throats. I bent to untie the knot with my right hand—my left was numb. The stray shot from his rifle had blasted a head-sized chunk of rock out of the tree to hit me in the shoulder blade. I didn't think anything was broken, but I'd have to wait for the nerves to get back to hurting before I could tell. The whip's end was knotted pretty tightly. I left it.

It's hard to run with one arm—harder than you'd think.

I managed.

The rocketship was where I'd left it.



Sun Fang had just climbed out of the command tank's personnel bay when a shout made him look. One of the security troopers was pointing to the sky. Sun turned to look. The bright flare of a rocketship's thruster flickered at his deep-set eye. Behind him the hegemon wailed in despair as he stepped out. Sun felt oddly at peace.

"Signal the destroyers," the hegemon shouted. "Maybe they can intercept—"

"They cannot," Sun said, interrupting. He felt the eyes of the security guards on him. No one interrupted the hegemon. It was not done.

"She cannot be allowed to escape!"

"She has."

The hegemon looked down from the sky and at Sun Fang, if not at his words then at his tone. "I—"

"You have failed the Overlords," Sun Fang, sword-captain of the Zhung Kai, said. He drew the dirk from his harness and stabbed in one motion. The blade slid effortlessly through the *vaskar* over the hegemon's lower jaw. The Hakhaze collapsed.

Sun looked around. The troopers were watching him. "Do you accept my command?"

The soldiers of the Zhung Kai knelt.

Sun Fang, hegemon of the Zhung Kai, smiled in the manner of the Hakhaze.

INTRODUCTION

LISTEN UP, CADET!

You are embarking on the adventure of a lifetime! The unlimited cosmos stands before you, full of sights and experiences as wild as your imagination. And that's the key: imagination. *Cosmic Patrol* is about creating a story. Using Cues as building blocks, you will construct a plot and narrate your Patrolman's way through the millions of threats the cosmos has to offer. Your adventure will be unique to you and your group, and you're encouraged to write those adventures up in true pulp style, for all the world to enjoy. This can either be on your own website, or we'll be running various contests at www.cosmicpatrol.com that'll include posting fan-generated materials to the community page of that website.

THE CONTENTS OF THIS BOOK

This book is specifically organized to present the information needed to expand your adventures in the universe of *Cosmic Patrol*. Below you'll find a summation of each chapter of this rulebook.

- › **When In Doubt, Doubt:** The short story you've likely already read, it brings new horrors and aliens into action-packed focus.
- › **Gazetteer:** As with the *Gazetteer* section of the *Cosmic Patrol Core Rulebook*, this section consists of a series of treatises on a variety of topics. They serve to more fully paint in the epic and dangerous universe, providing additional depth that meshes with the Mission Briefs and Sample Characters to ignite the rocketship under any Patrolmen...to adventure!
- › **Rocketships:** This section covers eight rocketships of the cosmos, including illustrations.
- › **Dossiers:** Character Dossiers give options to players beyond the *Core Rulebook*, specially geared towards the contents of *Into the Cosmos*.
- › **Mission Briefs:** Twenty-three Mission Briefs go way beyond the seven found in the *Core Rulebook*, providing a huge selection of options for any player group to immediately leap into adventure. As always, while they're perfectly good starting points, players can also mix and mash as they wish, or even spin off whole new adventures based on those elements of a given mission they find the most intriguing.

INTRODUCTION

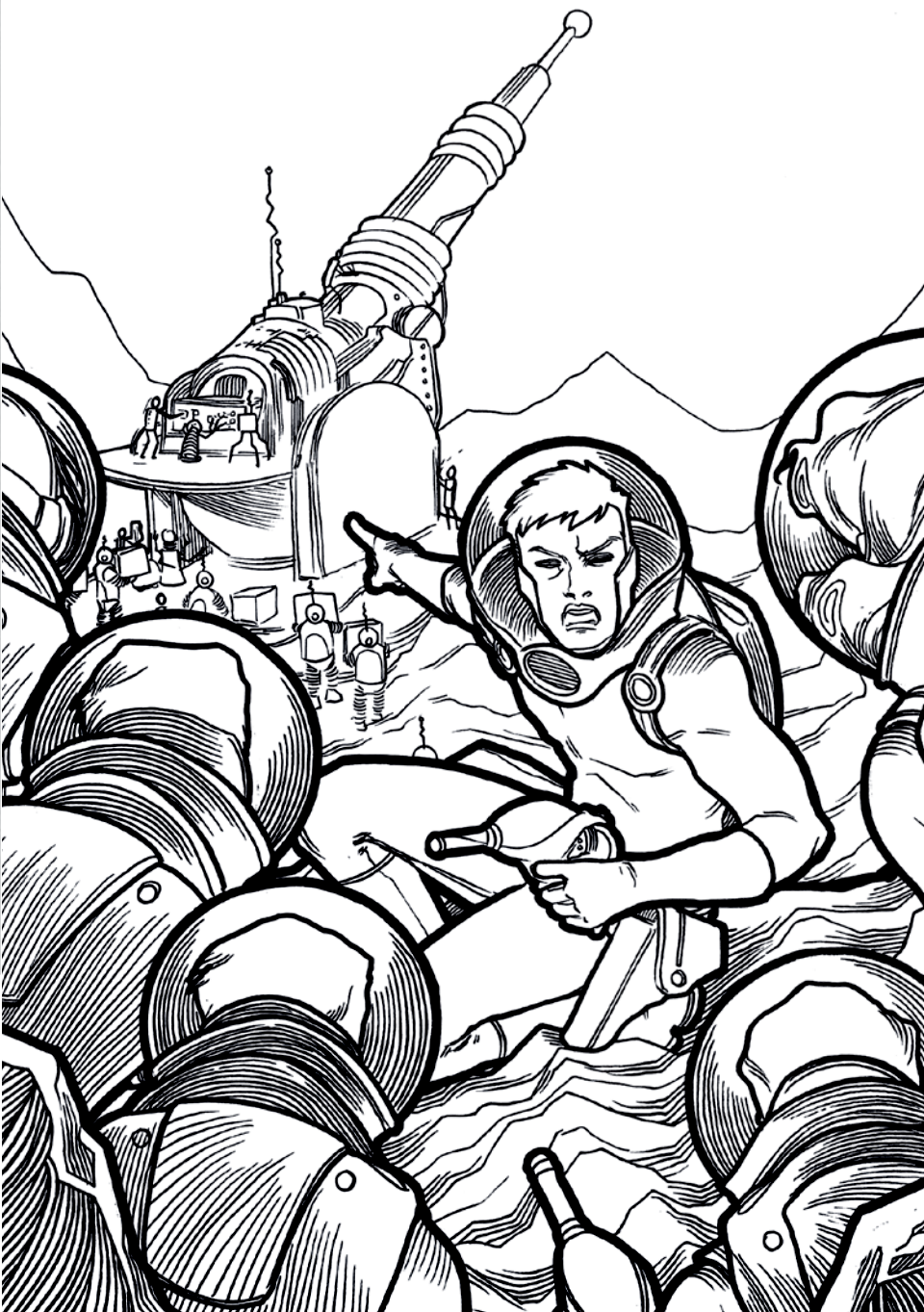




X MINUS THREE
GAZETTEER

WILLIAM S. BURROUGHS

"MAN IS AN ARTIFACT DESIGNED FOR SPACE TRAVEL. HE IS NOT DESIGNED TO REMAIN IN HIS PRESENT BIOLOGIC STATE ANY MORE THAN A TADPOLE IS DESIGNED TO REMAIN A TADPOLE."



SATURN'S CORE: FIRST REPORTS

Tags/Cues: Saturn, odd static, hexagon pattern, communication interrupted, formulas, fractum embroilment field

**From the desk of
PROF. JOHN SNOOKS,
Dept. of Planetology,
University of the Great Union
(Hong Kong)**

Greetings, Marcus!

How goes the research? Since you took that position on Platform Ares, I've worried after your situation. Jamie was sure you'd find an axe in your head within a month, and since we haven't heard from you in some time, I've wondered if she wasn't right!

But all fooling aside, I'm quite proud of your ascension. Many believe the Red humans have only martial skills to offer, but having worked with a few myself, I can testify to their keen minds. For ages, it is true, they have been more concerned with tribal politics and military prowess, but since the cosmic doors have been opened, at least some are beginning to realize the worth of mental prowess as well.

At the moment, however, it is your own mental prowess that concerns me. Many months ago I began an in-depth study of Saturn and the anomalies that surround it: the lack of any life in the entire Saturnine system, the strange hexagonal pattern in the planet's northern hemisphere and the

odd static that affects communication waves of any ships near the world. It's my belief that somewhere within the planet itself—probably right in the core—is some kind of fractum embroilment field.

Before you discard this message, please review the research documents I'm forwarding. The formulas are dense and arcane, I admit, but the preliminary results are promising. If a naturally occurring FEF is the foundation of the Saturnine, it would revolutionize our understanding of fractum physics. It could also explain the lack of native life and the strange communication disruptions.

In great anticipation of your thoughts,

Your friend,
John Snooks

BIPEDAL MARSHALS

Tags/Cues: Vlad Fornax, mysterious encounter, marshals, bipedal interests

Cosmic Patrol Intelligence Service

Report: Fornax-CE6.7.151

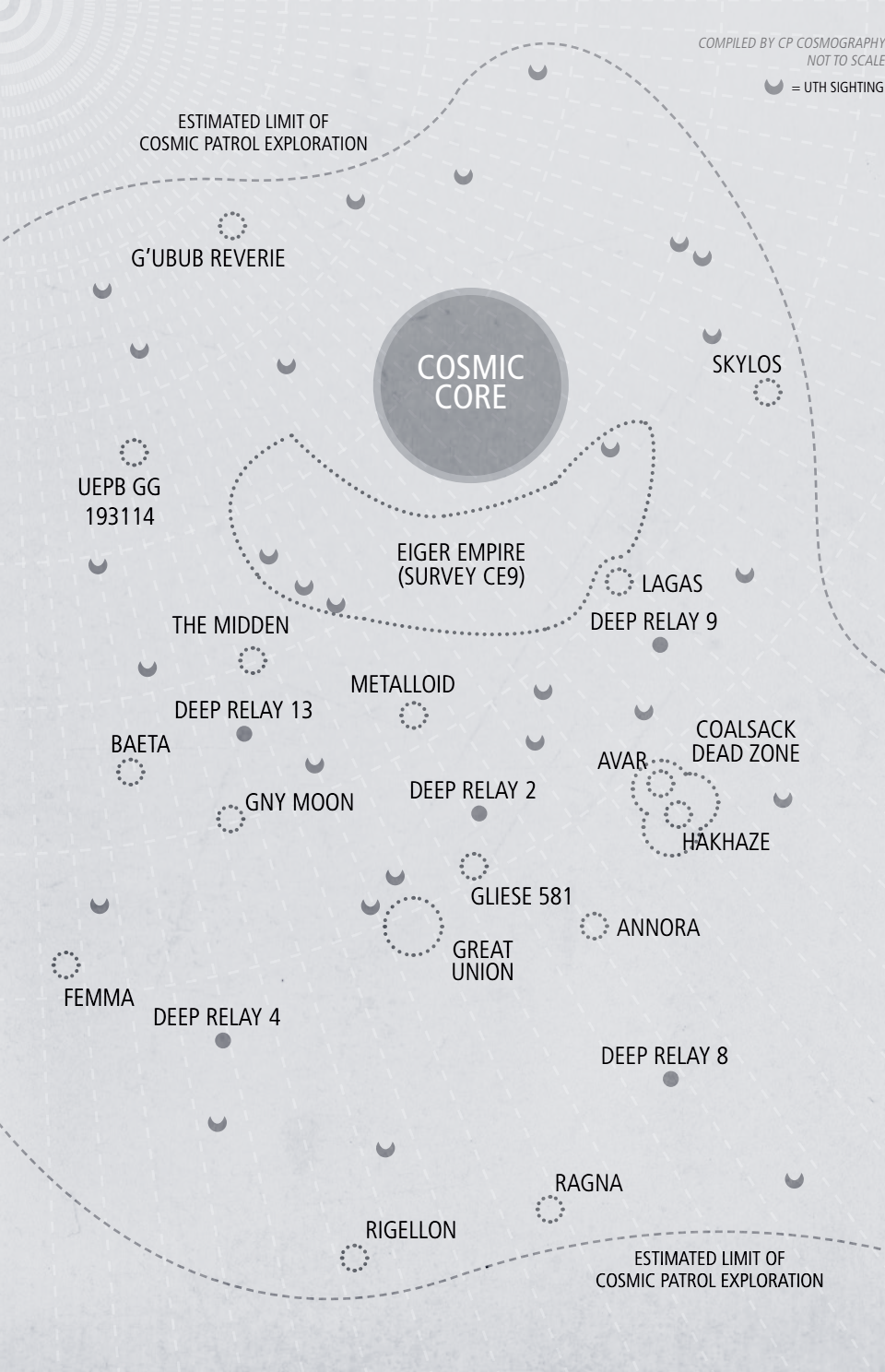
Supplemental

Subject: Encounter, Probable First, "Bipedal Marshals"

Reporting Agent: Vladimir Fornax

Supplemental Report: See Report Fornax-CE6.7.151

After my mission to survey the political climate of the G'ubub



ESTIMATED LIMIT OF
COSMIC PATROL EXPLORATION

G'UBUB REVERIE

COSMIC
CORE

SKYLOS

UEPB GG
193114

EIGER EMPIRE
(SURVEY CE9)

LAGAS

THE MIDDEN

DEEP RELAY 9

METALLOID

DEEP RELAY 13

BAETA

COALSACK
DEAD ZONE

GNY MOON

DEEP RELAY 2

AVAR

HAKHAZE

GLIESE 581

GREAT
UNION

ANNORA

FEMMA

DEEP RELAY 4

DEEP RELAY 8

RAGNA

RIGELLON

ESTIMATED LIMIT OF
COSMIC PATROL EXPLORATION

Reverie, my assigned CPI rocketship suffered a malfunction of the fuel saturation regulator. With the ship unable to attain low cruising velocity, I was forced to make a pit stop in the nearest system, Catalogued (Not Visited) 3299.11.

I identified what I thought to be a safe planetoid in CNV3299.11's outer rim and set down. Following CPI protocol, I set the ship's external sensors to detect motion and began repairs. Not more than half an hour into the work, the sensors detected motion; no less than eight life forms were approaching my position. With the ship in no shape to attempt a blast off, I braced for a fight.

Within moments, I was under attack by what must have been the planetoid's native life forms. The beasts moved about on a cluster of eight tentacles. The tentacles merged into a main torso that was bulbous and squamous. A large, vertical mouth full of sharp teeth was set in the torso's middle. No less than a dozen eyestalks sprouted at the apex of the torso, each stalk swaying about so the creatures could keep a constant 360-degree field of view.

These assailants were not intelligent, but attacked directly and without coordination. I was able to kill four of them with my ray gun, but they proved quite resilient, taking many shots to put down. I was forced to retreat inside the ship for protection. The creatures weren't discouraged and began attacking the ship itself, tearing at the hull with their ferociously powerful tentacles.

Without power, I could only activate a short-range distress beacon and hope a Patrol ship was nearby.

Within an hour, a ship appeared in the planetoid's sky, but made no attempt to land. Without a working radio, they had no way of affirming my survival and I knew an extreme measure was in order. I opened the ship's door and burst out, hoping I could hold off the creatures long enough for the ship's crew to land and extract me.

My plan worked. Once there was proof of life, the ship quickly landed. It was then I realized it was no Patrol ship, but one of a type I had never seen. Three beings exited and between the four of us, we made quick work of the remaining attackers. My three allies were humanoids, but seemingly of different races.

Once the threat was ended, the three beings saluted me and their leader spoke directly to me via radio. He explained that they were part of a group called the "Bipedal Marshals," a sort of vigilante cooperative comprised of bipedal life forms. Since most bipedal organisms require the same type of planets, they held that all bipedals should work together against the "lesser locomotives."

They had waited to assist me until they were sure I was a biped. Once I was safe, they climbed back into their ship and blasted off. I completed my repairs and returned to CPHQ for debriefing.

End of Report
Fornax-CE6.7.151 Supplemental

FRACTUM MECHANICS AND FRACTUM DRIVES

Tags/Cues: Fractum mechanics, fractum drive, fractum embroilment field, Zeno, forced mathematics

[Excerpt from the introduction of *Parts Greater Than the Whole* by Dr. Ricardo Ahn and Osa Vassen]

DEVELOPING FRACTUM MECHANICS, OR THE FEELING OF A THEORY

Twenty-three years ago I was obsessed with an all-consuming drive to devise a method by which I could measure everything. For me, there could be no uncertainty, no cloud of potentiality. I knew all things could be defined, located, given coordinates in space-time. That butterfly flapping its wings on the tulip? With the correct formula, I could determine with precise exactitude where the resulting typhoon would appear, its direction, strength and duration.

It was all influenced by Zeno's dichotomy paradox—the thought experiment in which you can never leave a room because you can always only walk half the distance to the door. The paradox drove me in two ways. First, the sum distance of all steps taken toward the door is greater than the actual distance and second,

Zeno argued that if that was the case, no motion was possible.

Knowing that motion *is* possible, I determined there must be a smallest cosmic unit upon which all reality is built. Over the next two years, I formed intensive mathematical experiments to prove my theories using the most advanced ideas in quantum physics, but nothing worked. Oh, I got the same conclusions as many other notable experts, but it just didn't *feel* right, and my driving obsession remained unquenched. In a fit of frustration, I decided to create concepts supported by beliefs first, rather than try to winnow out supporting proofs from already extant mathematical theories. I called it "Piecemeal Mathematics" and then went about creating it.

I must have appeared utterly mad in those days, and I probably was. My formulas were all based upon a "smallest measure" that was only theoretical. My proofs would turn in on themselves. Using piecemeal math, $1 + 1$ would equal 5. Or point-five. Or—rarely—two. And it all seemed correct under analysis, but I couldn't explain it. Going back to Zeno's thought experiment, by my calculations, you either could never leave a room or you could travel half the distance and end up two rooms away.

In June CE1, I was invited to a symposium on Platform Alpha—the first Great Union Physics Symposium. The best minds from the three worlds of humanity would be gathering for the first time to discuss mathematics

and science. I particularly wanted to meet some of the lauded Venusian scientists. Rumors of my work had been circulating for some time, but far from being the gathering of open minds I had hoped, the attending scientists treated me as comic relief. My one and only talk was well attended, yes, but ended in chaos after the platform's electronic brain suffered a seizure when I tried to have it execute one of my equations. I also assaulted a heckler with a novelty abacus I had been using as a visual aid.

For all intents and purposes, my career was over. No reputable university would support my work, no company saw potential in my theories. Even the Patrol was skeptical, providing a meager allowance, which I believe was only given because they wanted to keep tabs on someone who had figured out a way to cripple an electronic brain.

I was on the verge of abandoning my work when a Venusian named Osa Vassen paid me a visit. She had been at the symposium and far from dismissing me, claimed to have seen the truth of it. Over the next few months, we worked furiously. I would churn out equations, theories and suppositions and Osa would clean them up, expunging my madness and inserting her own clean logic. We repackaged my Piecemeal Mathematics as "Fractum Mechanics" and published a paper under pseudonyms. It was a huge success—they called it a revolution of science.

—Dr. Ricardo Ahn, CE8

FRACTUM DRIVES IN USE

Dr. Ahn's greatest obstacle wasn't a disbelieving peer group, but rather his own lack of clarity. Instead of rigorous mathematics, Dr. Ahn relied upon intuition and "feelings." This is a common human weakness.

Though Dr. Ahn's presentation on Platform Alpha was marred by the unexpected failure of the station's electronic brain—and then later by an academic disagreement—the truth of his proposal was obvious and I'm constantly surprised no one else recognized it. At my first opportunity, I travelled to Earth and began to work with him.

The previous analogies to Zeno's paradox are appropriate, so I'll forgo the simplified explanations and skip to fractum mechanics in practice, specifically the use of the fractum drive and related effects.

Jump Drives

The first drives, including the prototype engine used on the *Transit Jet's* test flight to Ross 154, were bulky, inefficient things we dubbed "jump drives." They were incapable of direct, straight-line flight, but rather made "jumps" between points in space. While these jumps were instantaneous, they had some unforeseen drawbacks.

First, jump drives have a hard minimum-travel distance of about 10 astrons, no matter how short a time they are activated or how little power feeds into them. Why this minimum

exists is unexplained—it appears to be a function of fractum mechanics that we don't yet understand. There does seem to be a sliding scale in terms of power levels and length of time activated, but again, the how and why are as yet unexplained.

These limits make navigation with a jump drive tedious—if a ship's destination is less than 10 astrons from its current location, the crew must first travel in excess of 10 astrons, then make a shorter return jump. For the first few years of cosmic exploration, this resulted in a galactic map full of explored “bubbles.” A crew could only jump away, explore its immediate vicinity and then jump back to Great Union space.

The second major drawback of jump drives is the building of a fractum embroilment field over periods of long use. Another unforeseen event—sustained use of a jump drive can create a bubble of fractum static, which if allowed to reach critical mass can result in the complete loss of a rocketship and its crew. An FEF event is rare, but studies indicate a ship and its crew aren't simply destroyed. They are totally annihilated, leaving nothing behind but a cloud of radiation.

Straight-Line Drives

In CE6, refinements in jump drive construction led to the first straight-line fractum drives. SLF engines are in reality a series of jump drives working in parallel, and while they are extremely expensive to build

and maintain, they allow for a more traditional form of exploration. Instead of blindly jumping into an unknown cosmic volume, a crew can travel as they would using reaction engines, sailing until they see something of interest.

Again, there are drawbacks. The initial minimum-travel distance still applies, but once reached, the ship enters a “cruising state” similar to normal rocket flight, though at astounding better-than-light speeds. The real issue with straight-line fractum drives, however, is the cost. SLF drives are usually a set of four or eight jump drives linked together, quadrupling or octupling the cost of a jump-drive ship. Finally, FEF events are an issue with SLF drives as well, but because each jump drive in the system bears only a portion of the load, static build-up is much slower. There have been losses, but in each case, cascading failures rather than single-component failure are thought to be the problem.

Fractum Drive Regulations

The Cosmic Patrol has imposed strict regulations on the use of fractum drives near the planets of the Great Union. As cosmic travel grows more common, electronic brains set to the problem have begun to predict an increasing number of both rocketship collisions and FEF events. To negate these potential problems, fractum drives may only be activated outside the orbit of Neptune.

The cruise time added to rocketship flight has caused criticism

of this policy, but Coordinator Dyson and the rest of the Patrol's high command have shown no signs of leniency. And, with 99 percent of all fractum drive-enabled ships commanded by Patrolmen, it is unlikely the Patrol will budge in the foreseeable future.

HUNCHES AND CORRELATION: GALACTIC RUMORS

Tags/Cues: Rumors, war, Uth, hostile races, putting together a puzzle, extrapolation, electronic brains, *Phantom*

While humanity has always had an academic knowledge that we couldn't possibly be the only intelligent culture in the cosmos, the real chance of meeting an extrasolar race was always far off, in the distant future. The Uth Invasion was a rude awakening for us all. It forced us onto the cosmic stage far sooner than anyone could have predicted. Suddenly, humanity was the smallest of the small fish in the biggest pond conceivable.

Threats materialized immediately, and close to home. The loss of Rocketship *EM* revealed the Moon Men—a threat so close and personal it drove then-Patrol commanders into a panic. Within our own solar system we found Neptunian Mind Plants, Jovian barbarians and Cometarians. In the Deep Black we found more Uth, Hakhaze and Eiger.

As the Cosmic Patrol continued to discover new worlds, new races and new threats, the amount of information pouring in soon became unmanageable. Patrol engineers were on the case, however, and proposed the construction of a trio of powerful electronic brains solely dedicated to the organization, processing and storage of cosmic data.

Certainly, electronic brains are nothing new. Each space platform has at least one to manage the computational scut work. Some of the larger rockets in the Patrol and many non-combat ships also carry them. Construction of these new brains was altered from the normal template to include a vast, shared storage capacity. Information is input at any of the three and then, once stored, can be accessed by any of the trio. While this set-up isn't revolutionary, it has relieved the pressure of data assimilation. More importantly, it allowed statisticians to run correlation formulas on all that new data.

CONFIRMATION VIA EXTRAPOLATION

As soon as the engineers and analysts had the electronic brains assessing data, the results began to confirm a little-talked-about belief among many Patrol rocketship captains: that the cosmos was in the midst of some kind of war or conflict. Further, what captains were sensing, and what the electronic brains calculated, is likely an underlying

conspiratorial collusion among many of the races involved.

Fourteen hours after being set to the task of analyzing archived and recent reports, Electronic Brain No. 3 returned its findings:

EB3 Results to Report

Task: Analyze Cosmic Patrol Reports in Reference to Cosmic Conflict

Begin Operator Dialogue — Operator: P. Kilgallen

Query A: Is a large-scale cosmic war currently underway?

Answer A: Yes [94% Certainty] No [6% Certainty]

Query B: Answer to previous query, assume “Yes.” How many cultures are involved in the conflict?

Answer B: Unknown/Unknowable [100% Certainty]

Query C: What is at stake in the conflict?

Answer C: Resources [33% Certainty] None/Political [33% Certainty] Other [34% Certainty]

Query D: Answer to previous query, expand “Other.”

Answer D: Information suggests non-typical roots to conflict, non-typical goals.

Query E: Answer to previous query, expand “Non-Typical Goals.”

Answer E: Analysis suggests conflict does not follow typical human warfare patterns. Warfare

and constituent parties amorphous, fleeting. Analysis suggests overarching influence guiding or directing multiple involved cultures over centuries. Overarching influence may be hidden/unrealized by involved cultures.

Query F: Answer to previous query, expand “centuries.”

Answer F: One hundred Earth-standard years.

Query G: Reset to Answer E. Expand “Overarching Influence” re: Identity.

Answer G: Unknown/Not enough data.

Query H: Reset to Answer E. Extrapolate “Overarching Influence” re: Identity.

Answer H: Extrapolation based on reported myths from multiple cultures. Referenced myths contain repeating/similar patterns regarding powerful beings intent upon control of cosmos [see Gern, Corruptors, Metatherions, Kilonoka, etc.]. Patterns among diverse cultures extremely rare, suggest real-world basis.

[Report edited for length. Further Query/Answer dialogue based upon extrapolation, of questionable validity; P. Kilgallen]

While Electronic Brain No. 3’s results were startling, their general vagueness only gave rise to new questions: Are the Metatherions real? How long had this war been going on and to what end?

THE PHANTOM REPORT

As the Patrol's fleet of fractum drive-enabled rocketships grew, an increasing number of crews reported worlds destroyed by war, worlds occupied by invaders and a generally high number of military-based cultures. The determination that the Coalsack Dead Zone was likely the result of a mega-weapon convinced Cosmic Patrol Command the issue needed some serious attention. Then, while on a mission to the Veil Nebula, the Rocketship *Phantom* arrived in the midst of an enormous space battle.

The *Phantom* and its crew had been assigned a standard exploration mission targeting ten systems in the Veil Nebula. The following is a transcript from the debriefing of the *Phantom's* skipper, Capt. Shlex.

[Begin transcript]

We exited fractum space at the coordinates for the first system on our mission list and we knew immediately things were not right. Upon entering actual space, we found ourselves in what we believed was a micro-meteorite cloud.

We soon realized we were in the midst of a massive debris field. A great number of ships had been recently destroyed in that volume and we immediately saw the battle was still underway. Thankfully, the debris had damaged many of our external analyzers, leaving us with only passive sensors, which probably saved our lives. If we'd been using active

scanning, I'm sure we would have been spotted and attacked.

The battle was truly massive. I would estimate—conservatively—each side had more ships in that single volume than the Cosmic Patrol has total! There were two distinct sides; one consisted of identical ships, all matte black and about double the size of a *Tharsis*-class rocketship. This fleet had formed a battle cone with the open end advancing on the other fleet. The targeted fleet resembled the Amazon markets on Mars—I've never seen such a variety of ships. All of different styles and colors, and with no cohesive formations to speak of. As the black ships' cone neared, that gypsy fleet broke up. Some dove into the cone in attack runs, some tried to skirt the cone and attack from the outside and others turned tail and ran.

The fight was over before it began. The black fleet annihilated their target with weapons I'd never seen before; colored energy beams, projectiles, spheres of energy. Too many to count. The gypsy ships were apparently crewed by many different races as well. One ship broke in two pieces, only to have water boil out, as if the rocket was crewed by an aquatic race. Others looked to be run by robots.

When the battle was over, the majority of the black ships exited the system. The rest set to mop-up duties; we witnessed no search and rescue attempts on their part. Within hours, those ships also departed. We performed a cursory examination of

the debris and set a return course as soon as I believed it was safe.

[End transcript]

Not long after the *Phantom's* return, Coordinator Dyson established the Cosmic Patrol Intelligence Service, with the mission to quietly gather information on the galactic conflict. With enough knowledge, Dyson hopes to have plans in place for when humanity finally announces its presence on the galactic stage.

DASHED HOPES: THE HAKHAZE

Tags/Cues: Hakha, pyramid theory, Overlords, Zhanko, Coalsack Dead Zone, disappointing, hostile race, caste system, persecution complex

Among all the races and creatures the Cosmic Patrol have discovered in the short few years since fractum engines brought humanity into the cosmos, the Hakhaze rank among the most unique, and probably the most disappointing.

The Hakhaze are native to the infamous Coalsack Dead Zone, a cosmic volume 20 astrons in diameter that, at some time in the distant past, was rendered barren by a mysterious mega-weapon. The Dead Zone was utterly sterilized many thousands of years ago, but over the millenia new organisms began to emerge, a testament to

the stubbornness of life. These new life forms were based on totally unfamiliar biological mechanics that have perplexed our best scientists. Of all the life to pop up in that “reset” of the cosmic volume, the Hakhaze are thought to be the only intelligent race.

When humans first discovered the Hakhaze, sociologists, biologists and physicists were stunned and excited. Here was an absolutely unique culture, formed in near-perfect isolation, to study. Perhaps their development would offer a look into the building blocks of all cultures and races. Maybe studying the Hakhaze would give us an insight into how the biological growth of a social organism affects not only the resulting culture, but individuals as well. To be certain, a lot of optimism and expectation was applied to the Hakhaze before anyone truly knew much about them.

That optimism turned to disappointment as the details of Hakhaze culture became apparent. In a galaxy full of danger and militant societies, many experts hoped (and predicted) the Hakhaze would be peaceful. The expectation made logical sense: they were a young race, developed in isolation and had no apparent awareness of the nature of the cosmos. That expectation was dashed when the first reports came back of a vicious race of warriors whose culture is organized around a highly competitive socio-political hierarchy.

PYRAMID SCHEME

The Patrol has not yet been able to gather a full working knowledge of Hakhaze social stratification, but has sussed out the basic framework. Hakhaze society is split into a number of castes. While the castes themselves are well established and locked into the hierarchy, it appears that individuals can move between castes based on merit, politics or circumstance.

The bulk of the Hakhaze race falls into a broad category of workers, soldiers and laborers whose caste name directly translates as “the fettered.” These fettered exist only to obey and work.

Above the fettered are the handlers. These Hakhaze are nominally independent and perform basic day-to-day management like infrastructure maintenance.

Next are the meddlers, the most volatile of the castes. These Hakhaze are known—and *expected*—to be ambitious ladder climbers. The entire caste seems engineered to separate those who can accomplish things from those who can’t. If you can’t climb to the next caste, you’ll inevitably fall back to handler status. In the meddler caste are non-combatant officers, the young guns bucking for promotion.

Above the meddlers, stratification gets more finely tuned. The overseers rule the meddlers, directing general policy and formulating strategic planning.

Above the overseers are the hegemon, the rulers. These are what

humans would call high admirals, scientist-generals or suzerains. Hegemons do as they like; coming and going as they will, issuing edicts as they see fit. There is some debate over whether or not the hegemon are organized. Some evidence suggests this caste is only minimally organized, with each hegemon looking to one-up the other just short of sparking a civil war.

At the top of the social pyramid sit the overlords. These are the absolute rulers of the Hakhaze race: their orders are obeyed without question, their opinions beyond reproach. They are considered immortal and are never seen directly. Though it stands to reason successful hegemon are elevated to overlord status, the Cosmic Patrol Intelligence Service has not yet found an instance of that actually happening. Elevation may happen secretly, of course, to maintain the illusion of overlord immortality.

The overlords remain on the homeworld of Hakha, apparently living in—and never leaving—the sacred mountain-cum-fortress Zhanko.

BIOLOGY

Patrol scientists have studied Hakhaze biology at length and though it presents many challenges, the basic structure is understood. Everything about the Hakhaze is based on symbiosis. The Hakhaze body consists of two independent systems: a mushroom-like exterior encasing a heavy, lizard-like interior.

Though the Patrol has not yet been able to study their homeworld directly, examinations of Hakhaze off-world facilities suggest the entire Hakhaze ecosystem is based around symbiosis. Both plants and animals found at Hakhaze bases show the same type of two-in-one structure.

Patrol R&D on Platform Beta has tried to adapt the Hakhaze outer layer into a new type of armor for Patrolmen, but results have been less than stellar. While this “protective exo-fungus” shows promise, field studies have been disappointing. First, the armor itself is soft and rubbery and after a few days of use, begins to smell (in the words of test subjects) like “Uth droppings.” Second, since the armor is organic, it must be watered, fed and exposed to sunlight to maintain its health. Patrolmen have proved unwilling to regularly apply the fertilizer paste issued with every test suit.

PSYCHOLOGY AND CONSPIRACY THEORIES

Recently, Great Union biocosmic psychologist Hermann Volker has written on the psychology of the Hakhaze as a race, speculating their very biological development may have an effect on their collective state of mind. Volker’s theory maintains Hakhaze aggression is a result of their knowledge that they are a young race, in cosmic terms. They feel they must prove themselves to the “old” cultures and show they aren’t to be bullied. The theory assumes the Hakhaze

know they are young and they only exist because all previous life in the Coalsack was annihilated long ago, two points that have not been confirmed.

One other theory making the rounds in unofficial circles is of a darker nature: that the annihilation of the Coalsack was intended as sterilization, just as a petri dish is sterilized prior to culture growth. This theory contends the Coalsack was nothing more than an experiment on a gigantic scale and the Hakhaze are the result. Variants on this conspiracy theory claim the Hakhaze were “seeded” after the sterilization, that the Hakhaze have been molded from the beginning as a conquering race by some unknown puppet master, and that the Hakhaze overlords are in fact the puppet masters themselves. These ideas have been largely dismissed, but this has only encouraged their proponents.

ENORMOUS EXPLORERS: HUMUNGULOUS

Tags/Cues: Oh God you’re huge, explorers, giants, sound stupid but aren’t, baby talk

It would seem at the end of every fractum-drive space flight, there is a completely new and utterly strange sight to behold. The Cosmic Patrol has been adding to

the list of oddities and wonders on a regular basis: the Hakhaze (and the Coalsack in general), the Midden and the Ro-Men, to name just a few. Unfortunately, the vast majority of these new discoveries quickly earn the “threat” or “danger” tag. While the Humungulous are indeed a strange and curious race, they’re one of the few peoples that don’t appear to be outright hostile.

The Humungulous are known for three main characteristics: their immense size, their exploration of the cosmos and their almost comical inability to communicate with humans.

BIG BODY, BIG BRAIN

Everything about the Humungulous is big. Physically, an average Humungulous stands five times taller than a human and possesses a commensurate amount of strength and stamina. Humunguli are bipedal, standing on two long and slender legs (a tall human would only reach the knees.) From the waist up, the torso becomes large and round. They have two arms as humans do, but Humungulous arms are long and snake-like, resembling tentacles. Where humans have hands and fingers, a Humungulous arm ends in a cluster of smaller tentacles. These digits are strong and flexible, and can manipulate small objects with surprising delicacy.

Atop the spherical torso sits an equally large head with a structure very much like a human one: a single

mouth and nose, two eyes and two ears, all in proportion.

We know the Humungulous are a highly intelligent race—their gigantic ships are evidence enough of that—which makes their inability to converse verbally quite strange. The great majority of races in the cosmos have one or more well-developed spoken languages. Even the barbaric and simple-minded Uth have a guttural language that can be understood via translation machines. The Humungulous’ language is either not wholly verbal or so complex we may have no hope of fully understanding it.

Studies and research into this curious aspect of the race have resulted in many theories, but one in particular has taken hold: the theory of an integrated psycho-dynamism.

Psycho-dynamism is not a new concept to the Cosmic Patrol and has been encountered on many different worlds. Indeed, in the very home system of the Great Union exists two good examples, the Neptunian Mind Plant and the Moon Men. The Mind Plant uses a rudimentary form of the ability to hypnotize and kill its victims. The Moon Men, while never studied in depth, appear to have highly developed psycho-dynamic powers. Unlike those two examples, the Humungulous appear to have developed a form of psycho-dynamism that is integrated into their very thought processes. When a Humungulous speaks, he not only uses words but also communicates with his mind. Whether this mind-

talk takes place in a complementary mental language, as visualizations or in some form we can't fathom, is a complete mystery. All we know is the result, which is that Humungulous speech sounds to human ears more like baby talk than intelligent conversation.

Taking this theory into account explains why the Patrol's translators can't make heads or tails of Humungulous spoken language. Since neither the translation machines nor humans can detect psychodynamic communication, we are only ever getting half of what the Humungulous are trying to tell us. That works the other way as well: since psycho-dynamism is so integral to Humungulous life, they'll never fully understand human spoken language with all its sophistication and subtlety.

EXPLORERS

The Humungulous are primarily cosmic explorers, regularly taking their enormous ships on marathon journeys into the deepest of the Deep Black. Sightings of Humungulous ships have been reported all over the cosmos, from well-known places like the Gny moon to random encounters in the most obscure, rarely traveled locations.

In no instance of an encounter with the Humungulous have they acted hostile toward Patrol rocketships. In two cases, the Humungulous vessel invited the Patrol crew aboard. In the other

encounters, the Humungulous sent friendly messages. One example:

“NICITIES TO SMALL TINY. WE HUMUNGULOUS. WAVE WELCOMING MANNER. WAVE. SATISFACTORY PLEASING GASLESS SAILING.”

In the two documented instances of Patrol-Humungulous interaction, both parties shared navigational data. The data was specific to the situation at hand (the location of a planet, for instance), but invariably a little extra information was included—signposts like “if you see Red Giant 39394, you've gone too far.” The data given by the Humungulous proved quite thorough; in one case, the information on a certain star included its predicted life cycle through millions of years, concluding it would end in a supernova. Patrol scientists initially disagreed with this prediction, but upon further review, decided this forecast was correct.

ALLIES?

The friendly nature of the Humungulous and their obvious intelligence triggered hopes in the Cosmic Patrol Command they could become allies of the Great Union. In a chance meeting at the Gny moon, a Cosmic Patrol Intelligence Service agent contacted the Humungulous crew with an invitation to discuss official relations between the two races. The Humungulous crew, led by a captain named Zhop, seemed quite taken with the idea and over the next few days, the two parties agreed

to meet again at Gny in exactly one year. Both parties agreed to bring along high-ranking officials from their respective governments, ensuring that some kind of agreement can be worked out.

Though the meeting is still many months away, CPHQ is wasting no time in preparation. The prospect of a beneficial relationship with another race, particularly one as powerful as the Humungulous, is a prize the Cosmic Patrol and Great Union can't afford to let slip by.

IMPATIENT EVOLUTION: NEPTUNIAN EXPEDITION

Tags/Cues: Shaw's salamander, strange evolution, highly competitive ecosystem, Neptune Rangers, Wolxe

As humanity reached out into the cosmos, some of the greatest surprises were found close to home. Each of the outer planets held secrets and puzzles that pre-cosmic era science had never guessed at. From the barbarian societies of Jupiter to the Cometarian ice hives within Pluto, these strange and distant worlds turned out to be so much more than anyone could have predicted.

Of all the outer planets, Neptune garnered the most attention. From pole to pole, Neptune is covered in a lush jungle teeming with highly

competitive life forms. Unlike Earth's generally stable, mostly cooperative environment in which organisms form ecological "cycles," often including incredibly long evolutionary time frames, life on Neptune is all about immediate adaptation and dominance. For instance, one of the first Neptunian creatures studied was Shaw's salamander, a lizard-like animal vaguely resembling the Earth creatures of the same name.

The first two recorded generations of Shaw's salamanders all showed hereditary characteristics and the attendant researchers assumed Earth-like evolutionary systems were in effect on Neptune. The animals were kept in cages with voice-activated locks; only the vocal patterns of approved researchers could release the mechanisms. The third generation of Shaw's salamanders were born with vocal organs capable of perfectly emulating human speech. They quickly picked up the most-repeated phrase humans spoke when near: the command to unlock the cages. Overnight, the research station was overrun with Shaw's salamanders, all croaking "open cage doors" with every breath.

Thankfully, Shaw's salamanders are a relatively benign species (toward humans, anyway). But that's not the case for the vast majority of Neptunian life. While the most dreaded creature is the Neptunian Mind Plant, threats in the planet's jungle are ever-present and ever-changing: Patrol explorers have documented encounters with

predatory trees, flame-spitting birds and exploding worms. And as with the salamanders, one generation of animal may give birth to another with stunningly different characteristics and capabilities.

What triggered this hyper-competitive environment is a mystery. While planet-side study of Neptune's ecology borders on a suicide mission, both the scientific community and the Cosmic Patrol have recognized the potential advances that unlocking the mystery of Neptune may grant humanity. Unwilling to dedicate regular Cosmic Patrol resources to an intensive study of the planet, Coordinator Dyson did approve the creation of a nominally independent sub-branch whose sole purpose is the study of Neptune: The Neptune Rangers.

THE NEPTUNE RANGERS

Formed in CE1, just before the advent of the Great Union, the Neptune Rangers hold the distinction of being the first organization to include members of Venus, Earth and Mars. In fact, where the Cosmic Patrol sees the majority of its members hailing from Earth, the Rangers have a much higher proportion of Venusians and Martians than of Earth-humans. This is thought to result from its volunteers-only policy; Venusians are interested in exploring Neptune's scientific possibilities, while Martians yearn to test their mettle against the challenges the vicious jungle

will throw at them. Earthmen, on the other hand, are generally more interested in the cosmos at large.

Many believe it wasn't pressure from the scientific community that pushed Dyson to create the Rangers, but rather a sly political move on his part to prove the three races of mankind could successfully work together for the benefit of all. Whatever the impetus, the results have been undeniable. With little support in the way of funds or resources, the Rangers took to their Neptunian mission with gusto, cataloging and recording discoveries on the eighth planet at a rate most skeptics had thought impossible.

That success rests directly on the shoulders of Wolxe, a Martian ax-master taken prisoner during the Battle of Olympus Mons. Wolxe was part of the initial charge on the Patrol's position and was wounded by Dyson himself. A member of the more fundamentalist Martian warrior tribes, Wolxe submitted to Dyson's leadership "until the red sands grind my bones to dust."

After some study of the Neptunian jungle, Wolxe imposed several practices and rules the Rangers have used to accomplish their successes.

1. **Never fall into a pattern.** The jungle learns and adapts faster than you expect; don't give it any habits to observe and adjust to.
2. **Everything is lethal.** From the smallest worm to the largest tree to the Mind Plants, the jungle is all about survival of the fittest. If

you let your guard down, you're dead.

3. **When in doubt, attack with overwhelming force.** There is nothing sacred about the Neptunian jungle and any dead thing is quickly reclaimed by other organisms. If your own survival is in danger, crush the threat with all available resources. Also, if all threats in the immediate vicinity are eliminated, this reduces the chances they will be able to trigger new adaptations influenced by your recent activities.

Those rules are by no means infallible—the case of the Shaw's salamanders is an amusing example—but they have opened a world to study that otherwise would have been deemed too dangerous to devote resources to.

The Neptune Rangers maintain a base at Neptune's north pole. While not devoid of plant life—no place on Neptune is—the region is much colder and thus a little more sparse. The official name of the base is Ranger Station Alpha, but due to the liberal use of flame throwers and heat beams to maintain a sterile zone around the perimeter¹, it has garnered

a number of nicknames: Bonfire, Tinder and Torch, to name a few.

While the Rangers are dedicated to the study of Neptune, they've also aided in exploration of new planets on a few occasions. For instance, after the Patrol discovered the world of Annora, the Rangers were called in to help navigate the planet's heavy (but generally not predatory) jungles and forests.

ONIONSKIN JUNGLE: PLANET ANNORA

Tags/Cues: Survey ship, cat people, Gula Mons, moon, jungle, green light, vertical ecosystem, aloof

The world of Annora was first catalogued in year six of the Cosmic Era during a survey mission by the Rocketship *Distan*. At the time, the moon was recorded as PBM0308HL (Planetary Body Moon #0308 Human Livable) and considered a top location for the Cosmic Patrol's first extrasolar base. The *Distan* only studied the moon via sensor equipment from above the ecliptic, however. The discovery credits went to the *Gula Mons* in CE7, whose crew



1 In CE3, a fire-resistant mold began to encroach upon Ranger Station Alpha's sterile zone. The problem was solved by slowly cruising a rocketship over the area. The intensity of the rocket exhaust completely annihilated the mold colonies. Samples of the mold lead scientists to a new type of fire-resistant material that is now used on Patrol rocketship hulls.

was tasked with rating the moon's merits for colonization.

At first, the results were positive. The exploration team found a hot and humid but livable world with plenty of local resources and lush jungles (and unlike Neptune, these jungles wouldn't try to digest you as you strode through them). The light-green gas giant the moon orbited—somewhat erroneously dubbed “Myrtle”—cast everything in a greenish tinge, but after a few days most Patrolmen adapted to it. (The one notable exception is natives of Mars, whose eyes have evolved over thousands of years to the red hues of the fourth planet. Many require adaptive goggles for their first few weeks on the moon.)

The most astounding feature of Annora was the vastness of the moon-wide jungle. Central to its growth are a species of truly massive trees that can reach three kilometers tall. Every aspect of the trees is gigantic; their trunks can be hundreds of meters in diameter, their leaves many meters across and their life cycles apparently so long as to be immortal (in all the Patrol's visits to the world, no one has yet seen a dead tree).

Instead of a climate system that depends on relative location on a planet, Annora's climate is based on relative depth within the jungle. Creatures that need little water and thrive in heat live in the hot, arid upper canopy. The middle third provides an abundance of light, food and water, and is where the bulk of the world's life exists. The bottom

third is the dark zone, where little light ever filters down. This incredibly humid, hot zone is home to the world's bottom feeders, which like the trees, can grow immense in size. The few expeditions to this level have reported ten-meter-long worms, leech-like creatures larger than humans and many other gigantic detritivores.

THE CAT PEOPLE

Annora's candidacy as a possible location for a future extrasolar base came to an end three weeks into the *Gula Mons*' study of the moon. The team had moved into that fertile middle third layer of the jungle and set up camp for the night. Science Officer Steve “Skip” Higgins was alone on watch when one of the natives simply walked into their camp:

[Begin Archival Recording/Higgins, Steve/Annora First Contact]

We'd set down for the night and the rest of the crew had knocked off. It'd been a particularly long day; on Annora there's no ground to speak of, all walking is done on branches, branch-to-branch, you see. I remember we'd had to backtrack a few times when the limb we were on thinned out too much.

Well, finally we'd settled down in a junction—a place where multiple branches had all grown together, making a generally flat and open spot. I'd set up station on this tall knoll and started recording the day in my log...I keep a running observation journal, you see.

Anyway, a few hours in I looked up and a few meters away I saw this... person! It was bipedal and wearing a loincloth and covered in short fur. It had a spear of sorts, but was just leaning on it, watching me. We kinda sat like that for a while, just looking each other over.

After a bit, the guy huffed at me, like it was bored. It slid the spear into its belt and crouched down, then jumped straight up to an overhanging limb. Must have been twenty meters! It landed as smooth as you like and just walked around a bit, then lay down to watch me. I'll never forget those eyes, the way they caught the light from the campfire, like polished marbles.

I never felt threatened, though. More like we were on someone else's land and they were just checking in on us, making sure we weren't up to trouble. It didn't occur to me at the time, but later I realized there could have been dozens of those cat people around, and I'd never have known. Hell, they could have been shadowing us for days.

Anyway, they were obviously an intelligent, native species. I named them *panthera erectus* and Annora was crossed off the list of base candidates.

[End recording]

Much has been learned of the native Annorans by subsequent Cosmic Patrol exploration teams. First and foremost, they are quite clever, if not intelligent in the traditional sense. On many

occasions, they've proven able to master complex Patrol devices like unitools and omniwave multipliers, taking them apart, reassembling them and even using them, but then quickly losing interest in them. Many Patrolmen equate the behavior to a child finding a new toy, but after a few play sessions losing interest in it and tossing the toy aside.

This curious-but-easily-bored attitude has puzzled Patrol scientists. On one hand, all current psychological tests indicate the Annorans could be a cosmos-faring culture if they put their mind to it. On the other hand, the Annorans seem to have no interest at all in doing so. This aloof nature seems to be part-and-parcel of being Annoran.

Annorans are social creatures and live in tribes. The tribes are semi-nomadic, establishing only small enclaves that serve as temporary rest stops before they roam again. Each tribe appears to have a territory it continuously patrols and will fight over, but at times tribes have been seen to enter another's territory without opposition, indicating a social mechanic researchers have yet to figure out. Each tribe is led by a Prime, but day-to-day duties fall to elders. The Prime can be male or female, but the mechanic of choosing a Prime is not yet known.

All in all, Annora and the Annorans seem simple at first glance, but have complex workings beneath the surface.

The Patrol has tagged Annora as a sovereign planet. Patrol Command

has set up an ongoing research mission on Annora in hopes of creating a relationship with these intriguing people.

COSMIC BODY SNATCHERS: THE RO-MEN

Tags/Cues: Head hunters, Robotic Men, helmets, conversion, three encounters, strange intentions

As Patrolmen, we all know firsthand that the cosmos is dangerous with a capital “D.” There are mundane risks like flying into the heart of a supernova or being disintegrated in a fractum embroilment event, and there are the outrageous threats like Uth hordes or Killbot Drones. But one of the most insidious, mysterious and repellent hazards is the race of beings the Cosmic Patrol has dubbed “Ro-Men.”

“Ro-Men” is a shortening of “Robotic Men,” a moniker they were given by the first Cosmic Patrol crew to encounter them. At their core, the Ro-Men are cosmic body snatchers: whenever possible, they don’t kill their targets, but rather use otherworldly technology to turn a victim into another Ro-Man. When a target is incapacitated, the Ro-Men place a helmet over the victim’s head. The helmet asserts total control over the body, actually dissolving the victim’s head down to the bone. With

that, the conversion is complete and another Ro-Man created.

Beyond the mission of creating more Ro-Men, what purpose these beings work toward is unknown. The sheer brutality of a victim’s conversion coupled with this race’s nebulous goals have made the Ro-Men a particularly frightening enemy.

THREE ENCOUNTERS

What little the Cosmic Patrol knows about the Ro-Men has been gathered from three encounters with these beings: inside a decimated Uth hive, in orbit around the Femma red dwarf and on the swamp moon of Rigellon. Each encounter brought more information about the Ro-Men, but also gave rise to more questions.

Encounter One: Decimated Uth Hive

The Cosmic Patrol’s first known encounter with the Ro-Men started as an investigation of a crippled Uth hive. The hive, sighted about three astrons to the cosmic northeast of the Baeta system, was drifting free in space. Given the opportunity to study an Uth hive firsthand, the Patrol sent a rocketship to investigate. The crew quickly boarded the hollowed-out asteroid and found a massacre inside. A normal Uth hive is a buzz of activity, with many thousand individuals living in the average hive. This one, however, was desolate, its inhabitants either dead or missing. The reason soon became clear as the crew came

face-to-face with many Ro-Uth, each lizard-man intact but for a strange helmet where its head used to be. The crew documented what they could, then made their escape.

Encounter Two: Femma Red Dwarf

The Femma system, about 120 astrons to the cosmic west of the Great Union, was a candidate for the Patrol's first extrasolar base. It had a red dwarf primary with many small, rocky planets in orbit and had been visited multiple times by Patrol expeditions. During a routine stopover, the Rocketship *Cosmos 3* sighted a ship parked on the system's sixth planet. The ship was of an unknown design and its crew appeared to be digging inside a crater. These Ro-Men wore the same helmets as the Uth from the first encounter, but their bodies were huge and muscular, covered in long brown hair. The Ro-Men quickly abandoned their excavation and fled the system. The crew of the *Cosmos 3* investigated the dig site, but found nothing of interest; either there was nothing there in the first place or the Ro-Men got what they wanted and left without a fight.

Encounter Three: Swamp Moon of Rigellon

The incident on the swamp moon of Rigellon is the strangest of the three. The crew of the Rocketship *Venusian Highlander* was conducting an initial exploration of the moon when they stumbled across a lone Ro-Man wandering in the muck. This Ro-Man matched the ones

sighted in the Femma encounter: large, bulky, covered in brown fur and with a skeletonized head encased in the ubiquitous helmet. Luckily, the *Venusian Highlander's* science officer, a Venusian named Mentzel Min, had read the briefings on previous Ro-Men encounters and she realized what they were facing. Min orchestrated a slow retreat, leading the Ro-Man into a clearing where the *Venusian Highlander* could open fire on it. Unfortunately, the large-scale weapons of the ship obliterated the creature, leaving little to study. On the plus side, however, Patrol experts reviewing the case agree that without Min's quick thinking, the entire exploration crew could have been lost.

PULLING AT RO-STRAWS

These three encounters have given Patrol analysts little to work with. It's unclear if the Ro-Men can even be categorized as a culture. The only consistent factor in every encounter is the strange helmet that converts a body—no matter what the race—into a Ro-Man.

Their activities are also a mystery. The attack on the Uth hive seems like a straightforward attempt to increase their numbers, but the excavation in the Femma system had no apparent purpose. The encounter on the Rigellon moon seemed a total fluke: the Ro-Man on that world had no apparent mission or purpose either, only attacking once it spotted likely targets.

Stripping each encounter down to the bare bones and using a good amount of guesswork, analysts have constructed a basic profile of the Ro-Men.

The Patrol surmises the Ro-Men are an artificial race. There are no “actual” Ro-Men, but the essence of the creatures is stored in the helmets they use to convert victims. The conversion process appears to imbue the victim with greater strength and stamina. As a race, the Ro-Men appear to have some overarching goal beyond simply making more Ro-Men, but what that goal is remains unknown.

The biggest questions remain unanswered. Since the core of a Ro-Man is the helmet, they would appear to be a creation, but who created them and to what purpose? Is the helmet similar to a robot, containing only a predefined set of instructions and parameters, or is each helmet an individual in and of itself, using bodies as a tool? Do the Ro-Men gain the knowledge of a victim during conversion? Ro-Men have only been spotted in limited numbers—how many are there? Are they limited by the number of helmets they have? Can they create more helmets with the right materials on hand?

Whatever the answers may be, there is no question that the Ro-Men are one of the most dangerous and insidious threats the Patrol has yet encountered.

HOME AWAY FROM HOME: GLIESE BASE

Tags/Cues: extra-solar base, tidally locked, first permanent base, Libra constellation, red dwarf, cooperation

The construction of the Cosmic Patrol’s first permanent, deep-cosmos base continues to be a difficult undertaking but holds much promise. It is built on the tidally locked super-Earth Gliese 581g, a rocky and cool world that supports only the simplest microbial life. Located in the Libra constellation around a red dwarf primary, the system lies about 6.5 astrons to the cosmic northeast of the Great Union.

Everything about the Gliese base is ambitious. Cosmic Patrol HQ planners had a number of key factors they had to meet when designing the base:

1. The base must be self-sufficient
2. The base must be able to defend itself
3. The base must be disguised/not draw attention to itself
4. The base must be able to host myriad experiments
5. The base must not reveal the location of the Great Union to possible invaders

The easy solution was to build the base underground, though this presented many problems of its own. The wide-scale excavation required

for such a project could conceivably violate Factor 3, so engineers had their work cut out for them. In response, they turned to Martian expertise.

Long accustomed to living and working underground, Martians were more than happy to put their knowledge to use. Following their lead, a robotic workforce quickly—and quietly—began construction. After the caverns were dug out and the foundations laid, the Venusians and Earth humans took over, installing all the machinery and equipment a Cosmic Patrol base requires. The resulting base is a prime example of Great Union cooperation, featuring aspects of all three races of man.

The base follows Martian organizational patterns: warriors and training halls at the top-most “ground” level, support and farms on the next series of levels, labs and working areas below those and living areas at the bottom. Each level is built to be open, and features many construction tricks to fool residents into believing the spaces are larger than they actually are.

Even with the use of proven Martian construction techniques, however, the base is not without its share of difficulties. Though many levels are devoted to self-sufficiency efforts, the base can’t yet survive without regular delivery of outside supplies. The coming and going of supply rocketships is the main giveaway of its presence to any non-Patrol observers. Underground landing pads with retractable domes

were built to hide ships after they land, and while the domes are disguised, it wouldn’t take much to detect them with sufficiently advanced sensors. Likewise, much of the surveillance equipment the base uses must be above ground.

Despite the challenges the base presents, the Patrol considers it a crowning achievement. Venusians regularly request postings at the base and have many types of experiments and research efforts underway. Innovations used during its construction are incorporated into the design of other bases and platforms. Above all, the base shows that the Great Union is growing in our cooperative efforts.

CHALLENGING THE COSMOS: MARS/AELITA

Tags/Cues: Suzerain, warriors, Red Amazons, queen, tribal culture, few resources, Red Steel, warlord, martial prowess, tradition vs. progression

From the first moment the Patrol landed on Mars, it was obvious the humanoid Martians were warriors with amazing skill. The Battle of Olympus Mons showed that a “barbaric” culture wielding war axes could go toe-to-toe with an “advanced” culture utilizing ray guns and rocketships.

The Martian warrior ethos is a direct result of the harsh nature of

their home planet. Unlike Venus or Earth, Mars is resource poor: soil incapable of supporting large-scale crops, little in the way of metal deposits and miniscule amounts of water. To live on such a world, the Martians had to become strong and ruthless—survival of the fittest.

Divided into numerous tribes, the Martians have been battling each other for as long as they can remember. With little in the way of a recorded history, it's difficult to determine just how long that has been. What's known for sure is that roughly one thousand Martian years ago, many of the stronger chieftains realized that constant warfare was getting them nowhere. In a moment of unity, they decided to elect an overall ruler of Mars. This person would serve as warlord, whose word was law. One-quarter of each tribe swore loyalty to the warlord, giving this new leader the strength to enforce his or her will. As one warlord rose to power and then passed on, the position gained prominence and strength. Few Martians alive today would dream of a world without a single overall ruler.

The current warlord—Aelita, Suzerain of Mars—is by far the most successful leader in the planet's history. Even before the Martian Expeditionary Force landed at Olympus Mons, Aelita was a highly regarded Red Amazon, known for her skill with an axe. After she brokered a treaty with Coordinator Dyson and helped form the Great Union, her stock rose to astronomic levels. New

resources began to flow to Mars, the tribes could fight cosmic threats rather than each other and Martian culture could finally begin to advance. Though staunch “traditionalist” opponents exist, their voices are generally drowned out by such accomplishments.

THE RED AMAZONS

Of all the fighting tribes of Mars, the Red Amazons are the most skilled and ferocious. Born with a strange mutation that leaves them with red skin and dark auburn hair, the Red Amazons are viewed as signs of supremacy; the more your tribe produces, the more obvious is your claim to dominance.

Red Amazons—called such because the vast majority of them are female, though a handful of males have been recorded—possess more strength and faster reflexes than a normal Martian. Cosmic Patrol scientists haven't tracked down the trigger that makes them superior, but many suspect the Martian environment plays a big part, perhaps linked to the other phenomenon unique to Mars: Red Steel.

Red Steel is a particular alloy created from metals that only exist on the fourth planet. The tribesmen refuse to share the secret of the alloy, and so little is known about it. It is incredibly rare, is used exclusively to make Martian battle axes and is so strong that in the hands of a Martian ax master, it can deflect raygun blasts. While all Martian

warriors possess axes, only Red Amazons and other highly regarded or accomplished warriors are granted axes made of Red Steel.

A WORLD OF INDUSTRY: MERCURY/HADES PLATFORMS

Tags/Cues: Excavation, Factory, robotic mining, extremely valuable resource, Platform Hades, massive expansion, rocketship factory, tidally locked planet

Without a doubt, Mercury is one of the most important worlds to the Great Union and the Cosmic Patrol. This small planet's vast mineral wealth has fueled the rapid growth of the Patrol's rocketship fleet and humanity's technological advances at a rate many thought impossible.

To add icing on the cake, Mercury's abundant resources mean the three homeworlds of humanity—Venus, Earth and Mars—needn't be tapped for their raw resources. Mars, in any case, has always been resource poor, keeping the Red Tribes from developing their own high technology. Any large mining operation on Venus would face the danger of an Automen attack (though that robotic race has apparently gone into hiding since the Patrol has grown in power) and Venusian humans are intent

on rebuilding their world instead of tearing it further apart. Truly, the tiny, hot jewel of Mercury is a treasure not to be taken for granted.

The Patrol divides Mercury operations into two groups: the ground-side mining project referred to as "The Excavation" and the orbital work done on Platform Hades, often called "The Factory."

THE EXCAVATION

"Merc's just *asking* for it!" is a common Mercury miner adage. From an operational stand-point, the world couldn't be a better job site.

For starters, Mercury is tidally locked with the Sun, allowing all Cosmic Patrol mining operations to be set up on the dark side of the planet, where temperatures are a little more conducive to the work. There are even a few specially built bases on the surface of the "cool" side where transports come and go with their loads of raw materials.

Second, the first few kilometers of Mercury's crust are composed of incredibly dense layers of rock and stone. Eons of heat, even on the cool side, have baked and scorched the crust into a tough, hard outer layer. Once through the crust, mine shafts and caverns are protected from the Sun's intense heat, again making the work that much easier.

Finally, the cosmic processes that worked on Mercury in its formation somehow collected minerals and ores into huge homogeneous deposits. Dubbed "masses" by miners, these

deposits can vary from a few hundred meters to over a kilometer in diameter.

The actual mining work is performed almost exclusively by robots. Each group of robots is led by a human foreman from the safety of Platform Hades. Tightly monitored, these work groups have proved incredibly efficient in their tasks.

THE FACTORY

Intended to be called Platform Hermes by Patrol planners, Mercury's orbiting platform was renamed Platform Hades right before production began. The name change better reflected the environment and mission: intense heat, underground toiling and endless work. In reality, the Platform isn't that bad. While the bulk of the actual work is done by robots, humans on the station perform a number of duties from directing the robots to ensuring security to designing ever-better rocketships.

Platform Hades is located in low orbit over Mercury's cool side, forever blocked from the Sun's fury by the little world below. Heat is still an issue, however, and special sun shields and cooling systems were designed to keep the station habitable.

The core of the platform is a large sphere containing the operations center, crew housing and robot maintenance areas. From the central sphere, six thick tubes extend out like giant spokes for exactly two kilometers. Each of these spokes is a factory unto itself, an assembly

line specifically designed to produce rocketships.

Raw materials are delivered at the hub end of the spoke, and are immediately processed and refined. Robots then take those refined metals and forge the rocketship's internal structure, engine, outer shell and exterior components in an intensely choreographed ballet of high-tech construction. The unfinished ship emerges from the tube's other end and is ferried to one of thirty slips built between the spokes. There, engineers and their robots apply the finishing touches, adding interior components and other machinery as needed for the ship's intended purpose.

Though massive, the platform is almost at its limit in terms of the size of ships it can produce. Rocketship construction has grown more sophisticated in just a few years, allowing larger and more advanced designs, and the platform will soon be physically unable to construct larger ships. Director Kanan Kai has already begun plans to expand two of the factory spokes, but is pushing for a completely new platform to be built in a higher orbit to handle larger rocketship construction.

CLOSEST THREAT: MOON MEN

Tags/Cues: Rocketship EM, lunar mystery, Keal, tele-travel, dynamo-psychism, No. 1 threat

As the Patrol explores deeper and deeper into the cosmos, facing threats and dangers humanity could never have imagined, one eye is always kept on the Moon.

In the early days of space travel, Coordinator Dyson forced the Patrol to forge ahead with its mission, rather than succumb to panic and defeat after the Moon Men revealed themselves, destroying Rocketship *EM* and claiming the Moon for their exclusive use. As the Patrol continued and the Great Union arose, and with no further contact from the Moon Men, the threat slowly receded in the minds of many. As conventional wisdom now has it, leave the Moon alone and they'll leave us alone.

Coordinator Dyson and most of the CPHQ command staff aren't convinced, however. Dyson makes little effort to conceal his opinion that the greatest threats to humanity lie closest to home: the Moon Men first and the Automen second. Where the Automen of Venus present a real, if not unfamiliar, threat, the Moon is another matter entirely.

Little is known of the Moon and its residents. Possessing powerful mental abilities—dubbed “dynamo-psychism” by scientists—the Moon Men are able to repel any and all attempts to gather information on them. Rocketship landings and advanced sensor readings are all turned back or negated. The Moon Men have some mode of tele-travel as well, as the Moon Man Keal has been sighted trespassing in the most secure areas of Platforms Alpha, Beta and Gamma.

Worst of all, there is no telling what the Moon Men want, other than to be left alone. Keal's visits to Earth's space platforms show the Moon Men aren't pure hermits and have a ready understanding of advanced technology. Beyond that, their goals remain frustratingly unknown.

Always one to think ahead, Dyson has ordered command staff to draw up different plans for an assault on the Moon—a thought experiment only, he claims. With so little information to go on, most plans call for a massive invasion using all of the Patrol's resources. Other routes are being explored as well, such as artificial dynamo-psychism and the use of a robotic assault force.

What will result from these plans is anyone's guess, as information on the Moon and the Moon Men remains damnably elusive.

SLAVES, LABORERS, REBELS: ROBOTS

Tags/Cues: cultural milestone, self-awareness, manual labor, Metalloid, intelligence blockers, sentient rights

Anecdotal evidence suggests that for most cultures the development of cosmic-going rocketship technology happens concurrently with the development of robotic technology. Nearly every world the Patrol has encountered in which the native culture has attained spaceflight has also figured out the creation



of robots. In nearly every case, those robots are used as servants or laborers, freeing the organic beings from demeaning manual work.

Just because a race has achieved the ability to create robots, however, doesn't mean all robots are created equal. Robot complexity varies from culture to culture. Robots in the Great Union tend to have a high level of intelligence and can take on complex tasks such as the mining of Mercury. On the flipside, robots on the world of Baeta are quite simple and can only perform the simplest of tasks without close supervision. At the extreme end of the spectrum is the Eiger Empire, which shuns the use of robots altogether.

Any culture that makes a practice of building robots will eventually have to face the possibility of those robots becoming self-aware. This awakening is not well understood, but engineers and scientists believe it is a direct result of growing technological complexity; the more independent a robot becomes, the more likely the robot will gain individuality. This has happened in the Great Union on a number of occasions, with varying results. In some cases, the robot was allowed to go free, while in others the robot was destroyed. Officially, Cosmic Patrol Command wants any robot that becomes self-aware to be treated as a living being, but has issued standing orders that such robots be delivered to Platform Alpha for study.

REBELS AND ROGUES

Given that most cultures view robots as slave labor, many newly

aware robots rebel, either attempting to escape or attacking their supervisors. The world of Metalloid, a culture consisting exclusively of robots, was founded by such rogues. A safe haven for robots on the run, Metalloid accepts all comers—as long as they aren't organic.

Not all rebellious robots go to Metalloid, however. Patrolmen have often reported encountering ships crewed by self-aware robots. In some cases, these robots are like pirates, attacking in order to gain wealth or supplies. In other cases, they are like organic crews, exploring or traveling, fighting only when threatened.

In the Great Union, the robotics industry has been struggling with the self-awareness issue. Many companies have pursued the creation of "intelligence blockers," governors that are built to prevent robots from gaining sentience. This move has been heavily criticized as going too far, sometimes equated with premeditated murder. Not all robots develop self-awareness, and preventing it entirely may rob an individual of its right to life, critics claim. At the same time, however, if the robots in the Mercury mines were all to become self-aware, the sudden breakdown of the Patrol's supply chain would critically hamper efforts to explore the cosmos and defend humanity.

Even the Patrol is divided on the subject. After their long war with the Automen, Venusians are adamant that intelligence blockers be standard on all robots. Earth humans are more conflicted, with different factions making equally strong arguments

for and against. Martians are mostly dismissive of robots, viewing the use of them as a weakness.

SEA CHANGE: VENUS/AUTOMEN

Tags/Cues: Venus Expeditionary Force, falled society, anti-robot attitude, Automen disappearance, generations of warfare, destroyed planet

The arrival of the Venus Expeditionary Force in CE9 couldn't have come at a better time for the Venusians. After hundreds of years of conflict with their rebellious robot servants, Venusian society was on the brink of total collapse. The war that long ago devastated the landscape and poisoned the skies was nowhere near a conclusion. Despite their scientific accomplishments, the humans of Venus were in a stalemate with the robotic Automen: neither able to gain the advantage, both taking losses in every raid or action.

The arrival of the VEF signaled a momentous change. As Earth human greeted Venusian human, it was obvious an alliance could be made, turning the tables against the Automen. Seeing the inevitability of such an event, the Automen launched a preemptive attack on the VEF landing site that ultimately united the two forces more quickly than might have occurred naturally.

In the ensuing years, the war *did*

change, but not as many expected. Instead of an all-out battle for survival against the united human forces, the Automen simply withdrew. Sightings of them became few and far between. Regions they used to defend tooth-and-nail were abandoned. Try as they might to determine what was going on, the Venusians were hard pressed to explain these events. With the entire cosmos opening to them and the chance to repair their wounded world a real possibility, the actions of the Automen soon became less important.

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE AUTOMEN?

Everyone agrees the Automen still exist and the dangers they present have not vanished, but pursuing the mystery is more difficult than one would assume.

Generations of warfare have taken their toll, devastating the landscape and razing towns and cities; landmarks and coastlines have been blasted into new shapes that no previous map can take into account. A polluted atmosphere, saturated with heavy elements, makes it impossible to scan from orbit as a normal survey would do. Venus is also quite active geologically, making it difficult to use seismic analyzers. The only way to truly track down the Automen would be to send soldiers into the unknown wastes, an action Venusians are unwilling to take for fear of inadvertently triggering a whole new conflict.

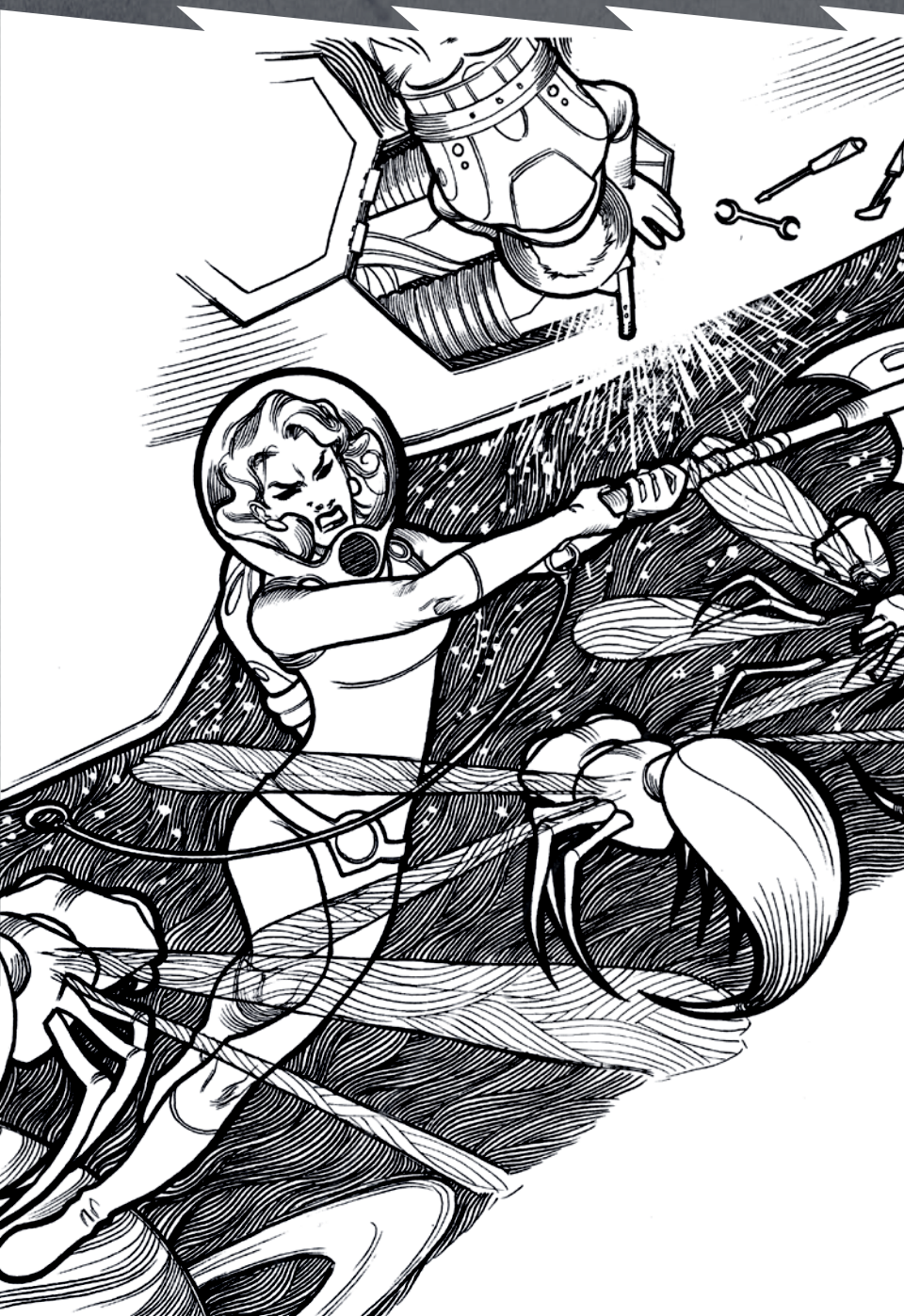


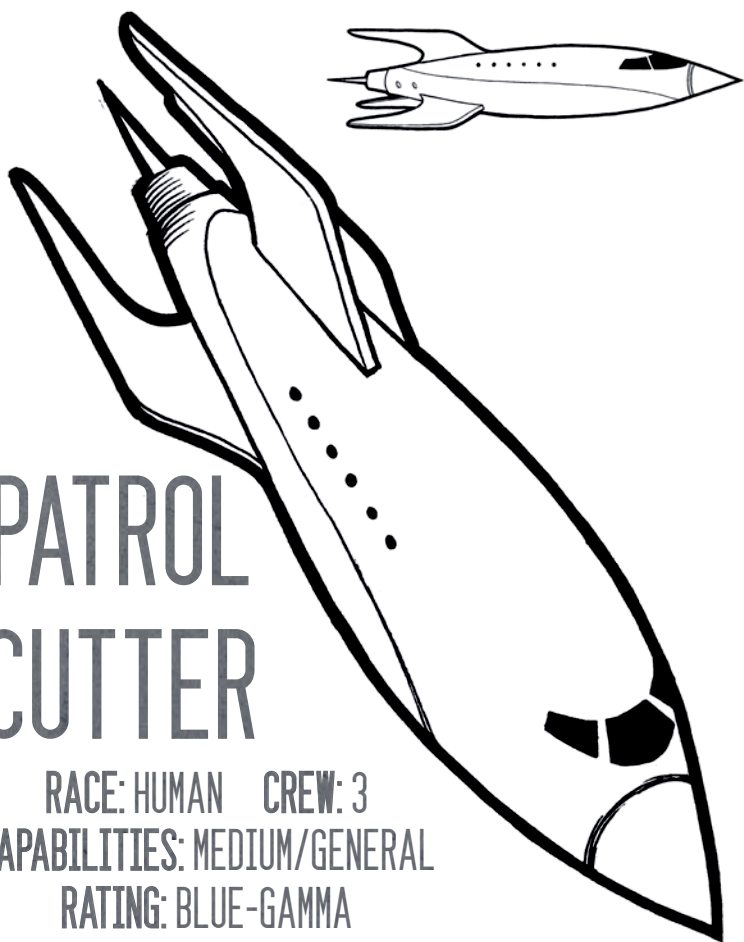
X MINUS TWO
ROCKETSHIPS

**"THE LIFEBOAT MUTINY"
[SEPT. 11, 1956, X MINUS ONE]**

**"IT'S EQUIPPED WITH A UNIVERSAL TRANSLATOR! IT'S COMPLETELY
AUTOMATIC! I TOLD YOU THEY JUST DON'T BUILD THEM THIS WAY
ANYMORE. GO AHEAD, PUSH THE BUTTON AGAIN!"**

ROCKETSHIPS





PATROL CUTTER

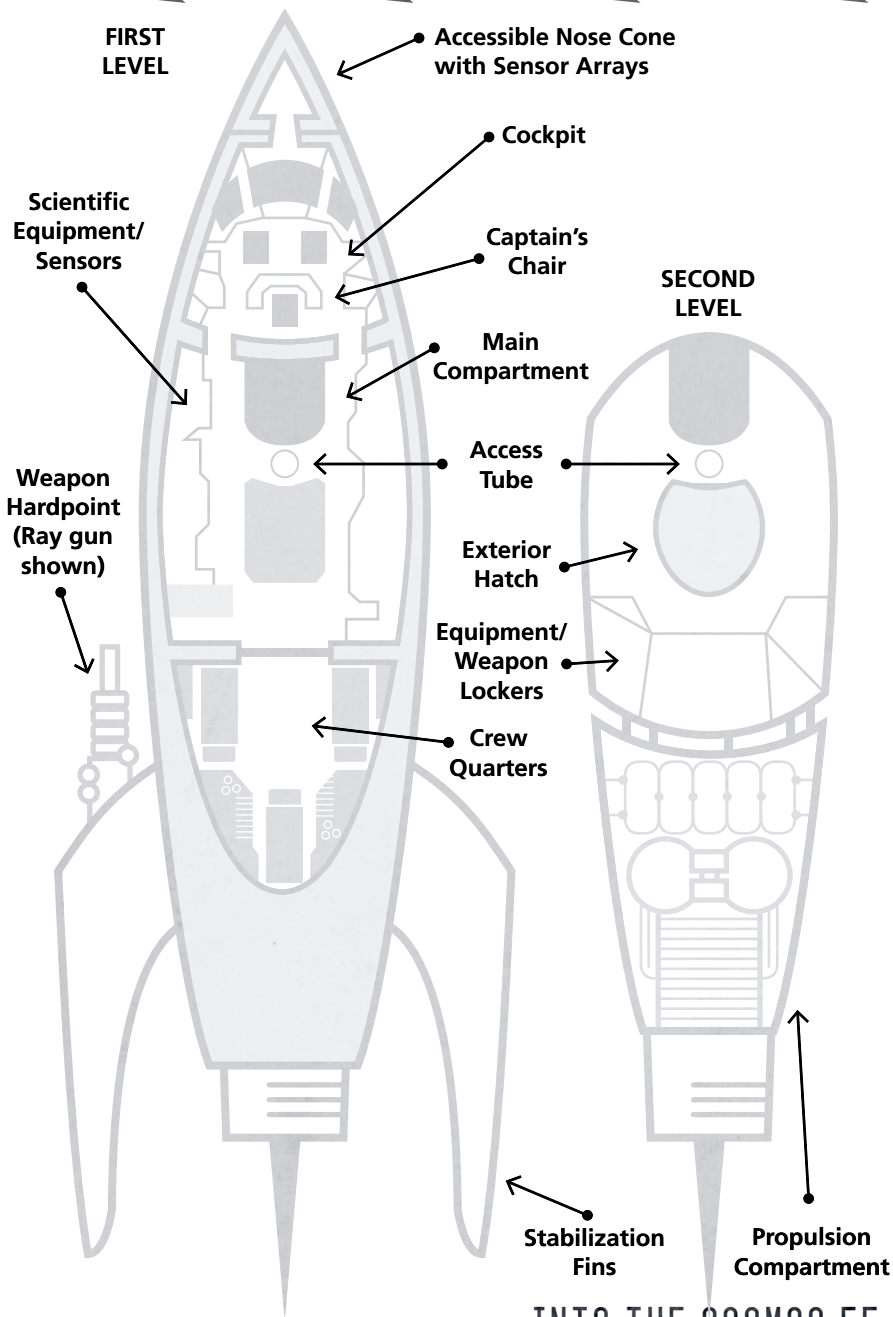
RACE: HUMAN CREW: 3

CAPABILITIES: MEDIUM/GENERAL

RATING: BLUE-GAMMA

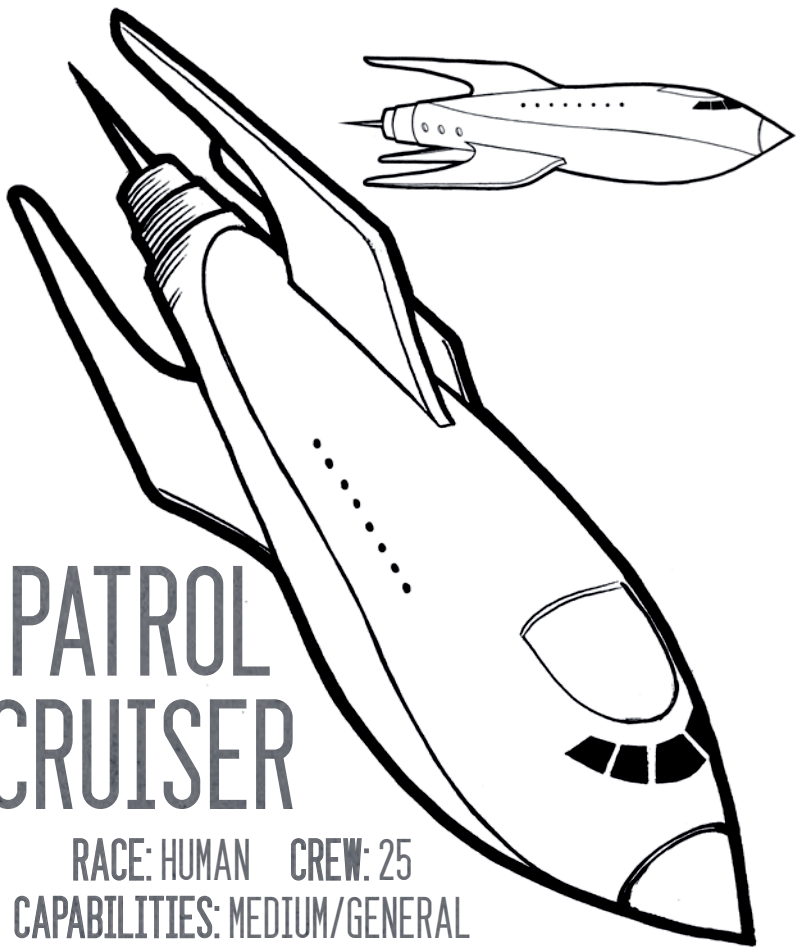
Cutter-class rocketships are some of the most common ships in the entire Cosmic Patrol. These three-man ships are split into two levels. The top level contains all of the operational compartments. The lower level contains the utility compartment, the engine/propulsion compartment and the exterior access hatch. Hard points on the stabilization fins allow ship-scale weapons to be equipped as needed. As with most Patrol vessels, Cutters are quite customizable, allowing refits as needed. The downside, of course, is that as ships become more customized, the greater the differences in capabilities become.

ROCKETSHIPS



INTO THE COSMOS 55

ROCKETSHIPS



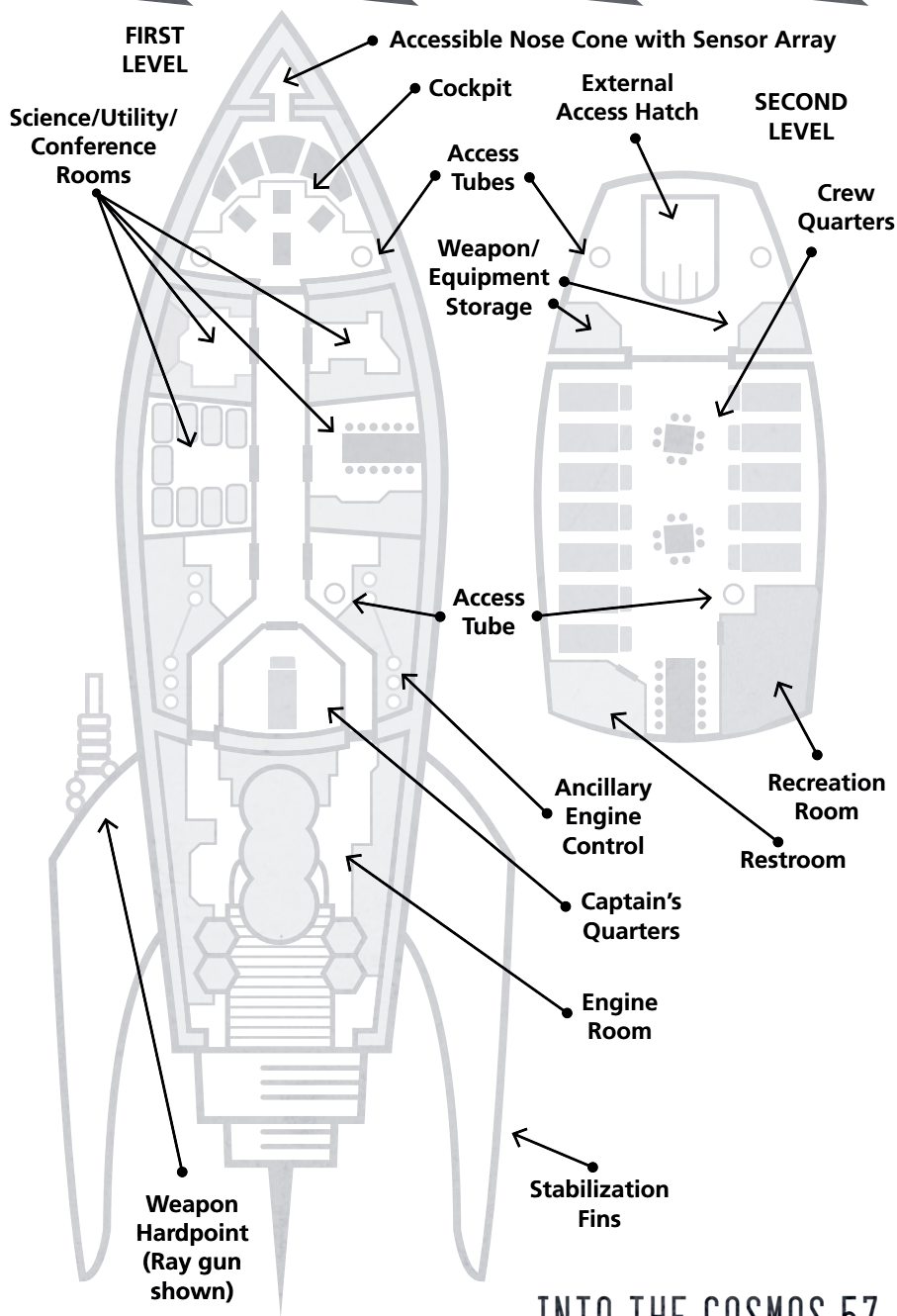
PATROL CRUISER

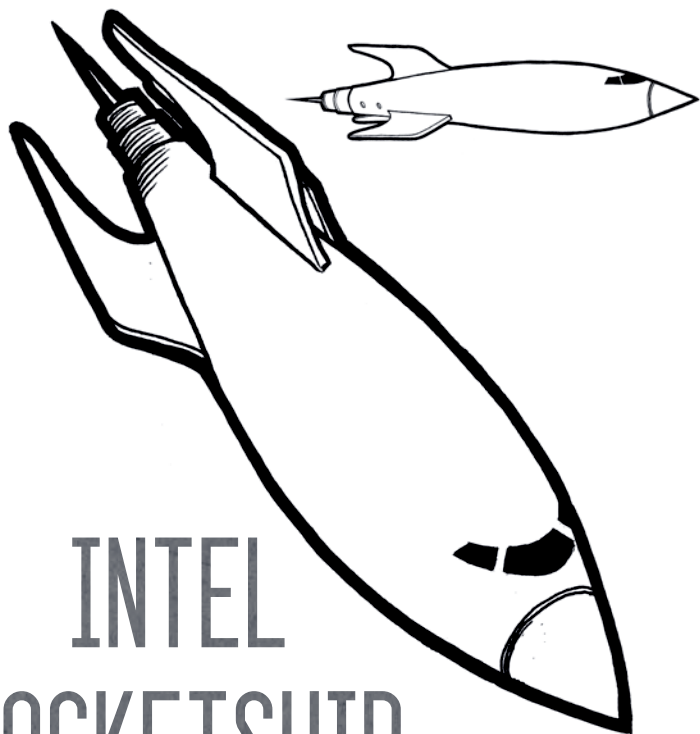
RACE: HUMAN CREW: 25

CAPABILITIES: MEDIUM/GENERAL

RATING: BLUE-THETA

Cruiser-class rocketships feature a 25-man crew (1 captain, 24 crewmen) and are used on longer-term missions. Cruisers regularly push into unexplored space or handle direct-confrontation missions. Less customizable than Cutters, Cruisers still offer a wide array of unique choices like weapon hardpoints and modular utility rooms on the top deck. Though they have more room than a Cutter, Cruisers are still cramped ships to serve on. As such, it's become common practice for a captain to flit from planet to planet during a mission in order to give crew members many chances at off-ship action.

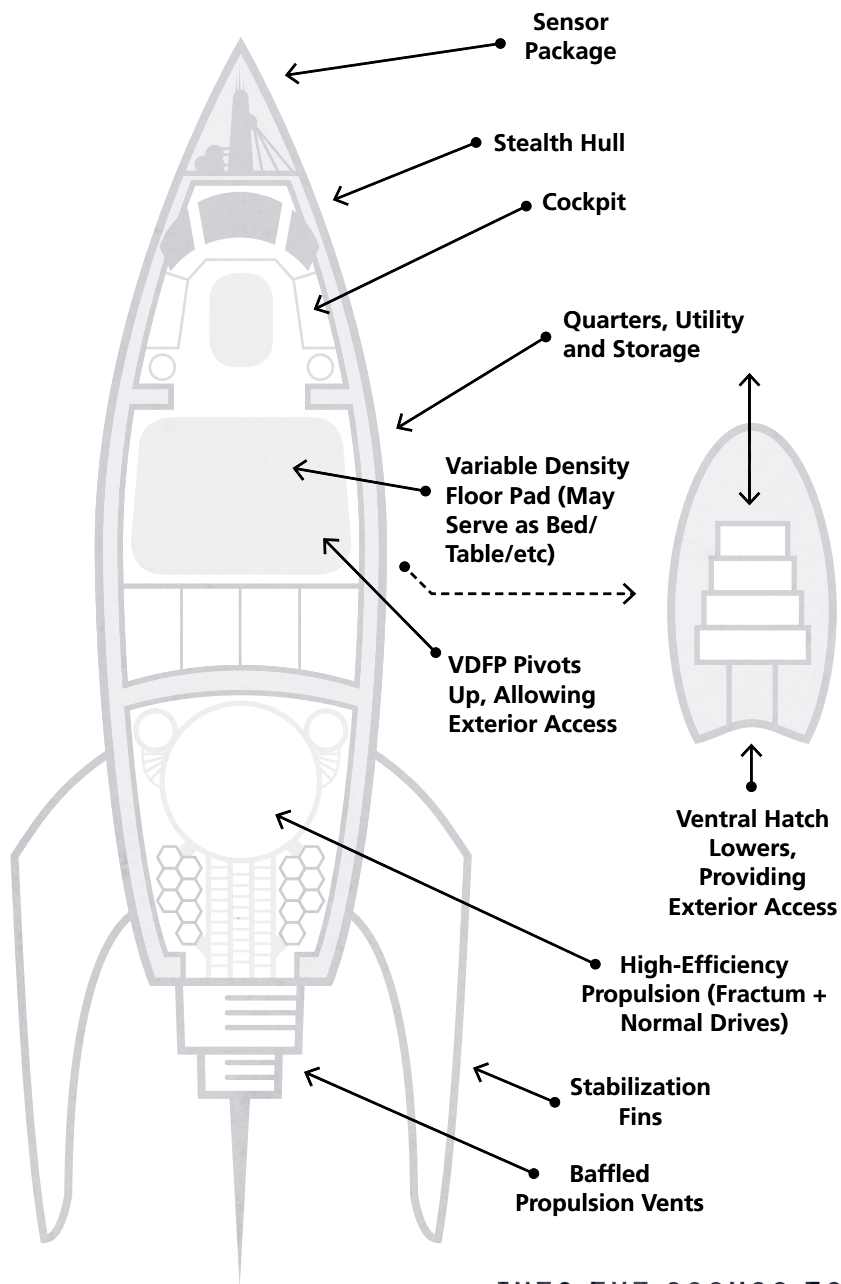


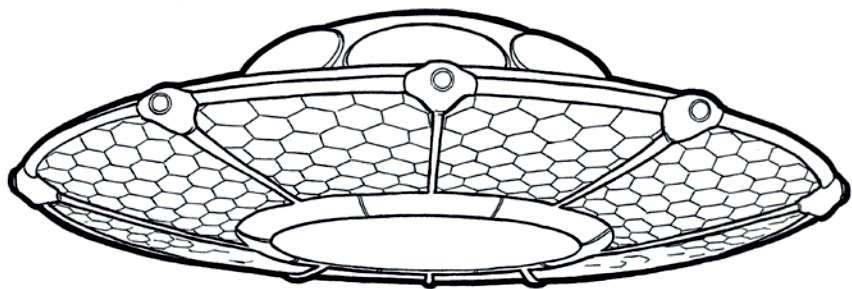


INTEL ROCKETSHIP

RACE: HUMAN CAPABILITIES: LOW/STEALTH
CREW: 1 RATING: GREEN-DELTA

The Cosmic Patrol Intelligence Service fields a small fleet of highly advanced, single-seat rocketships that allows its agents to flit about the cosmos at will. These ships are real marvels of engineering, featuring ray-dampening hulls to increase stealth capabilities, advanced sensor arrays and a high-efficiency living quarters. The ship's propulsion, however, is the ship's most astounding feature. A super-compact (and incredibly expensive) fractum drive is wedded with a normal rocketship engine, allowing short durations of independent operation.





EIGER EMPIRE ATTACK SAUCER

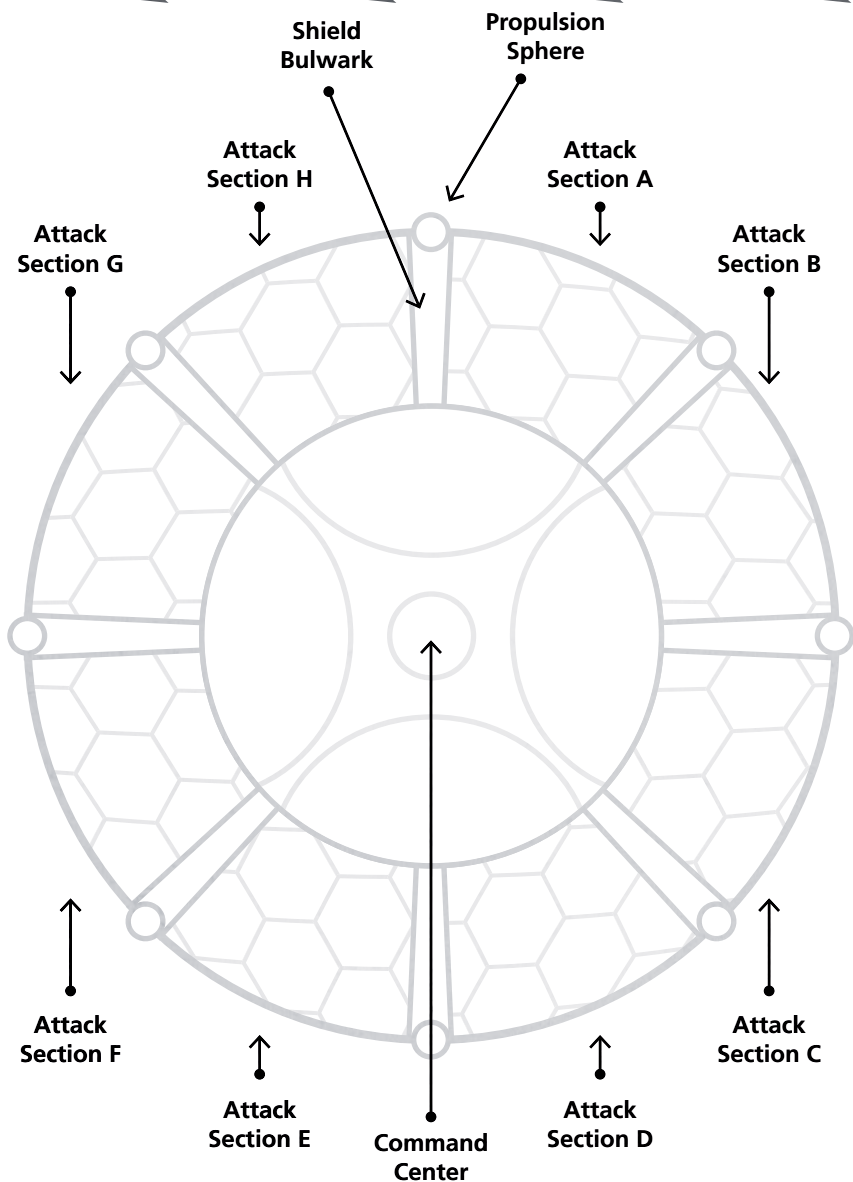
RACE: EIGER CAPABILITIES: HIGH/ATTACK
CREW: 30-50 RATING: RED-PSI

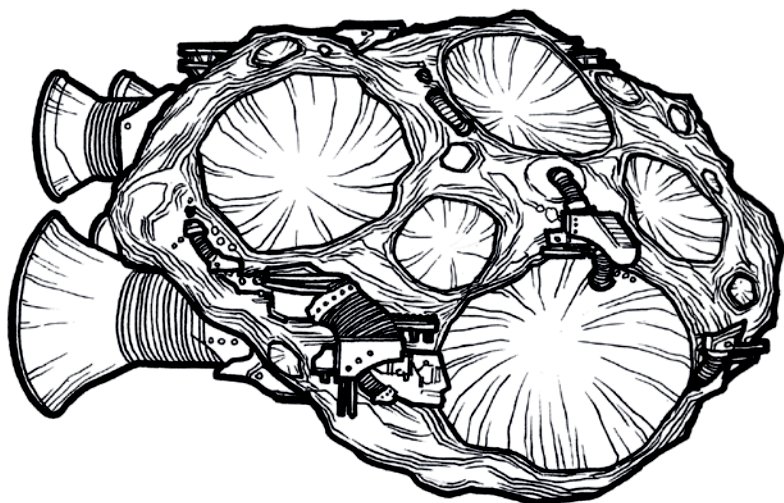
Just like the Eiger Empire itself, the Eiger Attack Saucers specialize in attack and destruction. Rated Red-Psi, these ships are eminently capable warships, able to both dish out damage and take it long after most ships would be rendered inoperable or outright destroyed.

Eiger Saucers are highly compartmentalized, divided into nine main sections. Eight attack sections comprise the ship's outer ring. Each section is entirely self contained with its own weapon array, power source and life-support system. There is only one exit—a doorway connected to the command center—and that will seal itself if the section takes sufficient damage, avoiding the possibility of a cascading failure. The central dome holds the command center where the captain control navigation and issues orders. The ships has eight propulsion nodes on the outer edge of the ship. The redundant system ensures the craft will be able to move about even with considerable damage.

The ship's only entrance is on the ventral surface. The aperture is only accessible via a force lift—there is no ladder or stair to climb.

All in all, the Eiger Attack Saucer is a durable, dangerous craft.





UTH HIVE

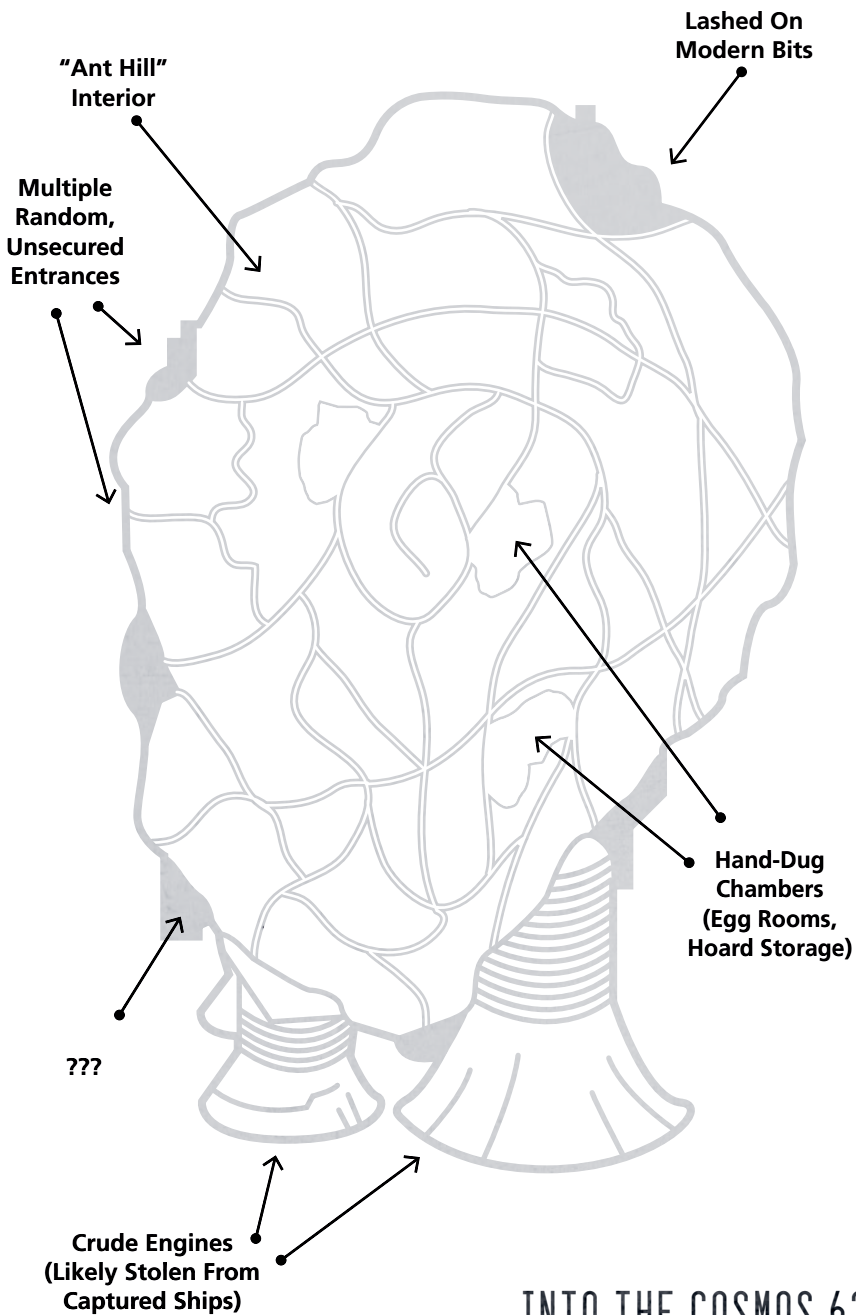
RACE: UTH CAPABILITIES: POOR/VARIED

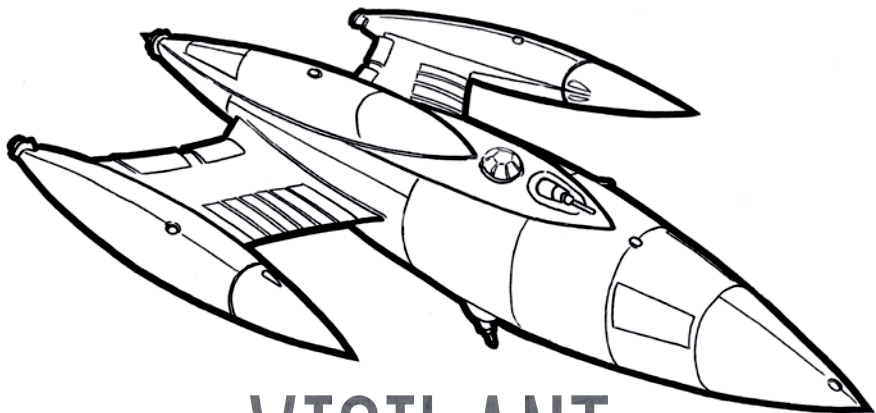
CREW: 100-1,000+ RATING: RED-IOTA

Uth hives are some of the most notorious ships (using the term “ship” generously) in the cosmos. These cobbled-together craft—usually hollowed-out asteroids—are crude amalgamations of technology and serve as Uth raiding platforms. No two hives are the same, but there are some general similarities.

Each hive is the home of an Uth colony. These colonies can have populations as small as a few hundred individuals to many thousands. The ships are usually slow, ponderous things with only the most rudimentary propulsion or navigation capabilities. Indeed, the lizard-like Uth just point it in a direction and attack whatever they come across, be it a planet, ship or fleet of ships. The interior of a hive is a maze of dark, dank tunnels seemingly dug at random. Large chambers will suddenly appear, serving as egg rooms, communal living quarters or hoard storage chambers.

It's those hoard chambers that make Uth hives so special. Though the ships themselves are junk, the loot they take from raids is thrown into one large pile—and since hives can last for generations, those piles can become quite large and valuable.





VIGILANT

RACE: HUMAN CAPABILITIES: MEDIUM/MODULAR

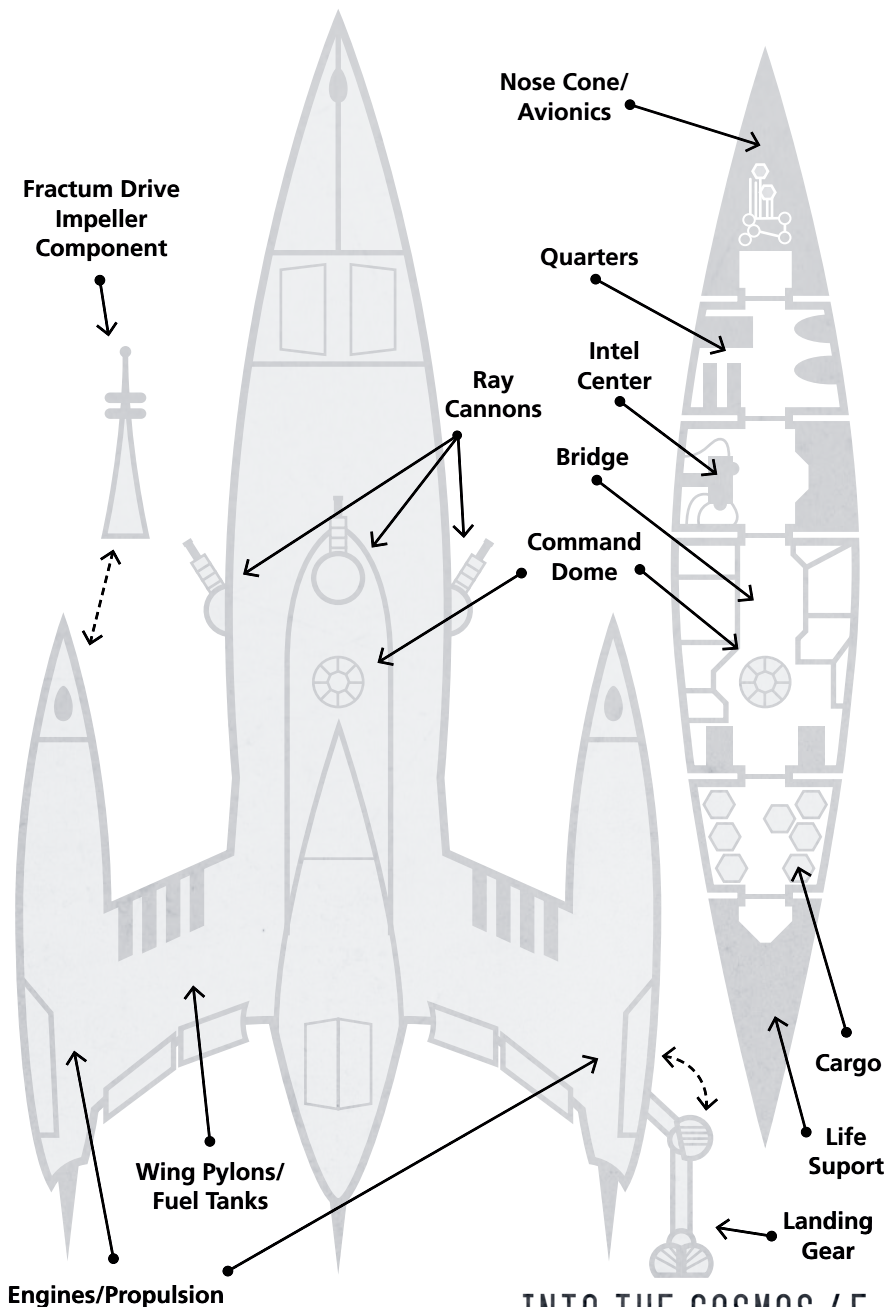
CREW: 3-4 RATING: ORANGE-BETA

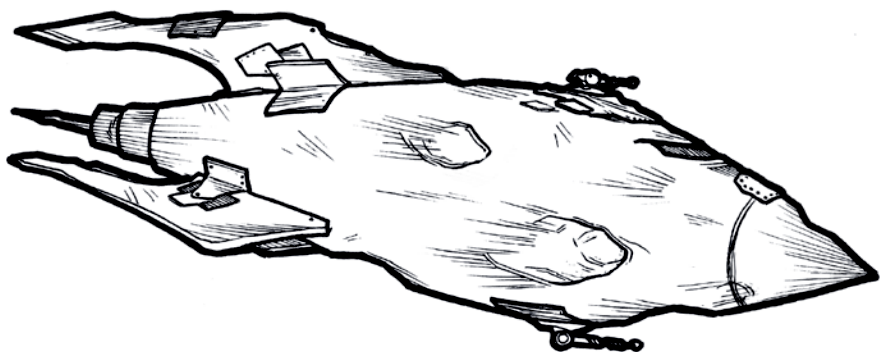
Astralith Engineering, one of the new concerns to pop up on Platform Gamma, has put forward some advanced proposals for the next generation of rocketships. The Patrol has used a standard template for rocketship design since its founding and doesn't seem likely to change that trend, but aspects of Astralith's designs are intriguing.

The Vigilant-class rocketship features a modular propulsion design that allows engineers to swap out fractum drive impellers when the mission parameters call for them. Turret-mounted ray cannons mounted on the main hull give the ship a respectable punch and can be fired in series or individually.

The interior of the ship is split into a series of compartments. At the front is the avionics and flight control packed into the nose cone. The crew quarters come next, featuring state-of-the-art rejuvenation pods. The intel center allows Patrol Intelligence agents to contact their superiors in the middle of missions. The bridge uses experimental automated devices for advanced control of the ship. Finally, the cargo compartment and life support systems fill out the rest of the interior.

The future of the Vigilant design and Astralith Engineering rests on the Patrol's reaction. That reaction appears to be positive, but there have been no official announcements.





PIRATE ROCKETSHIP

RACE: HUMAN

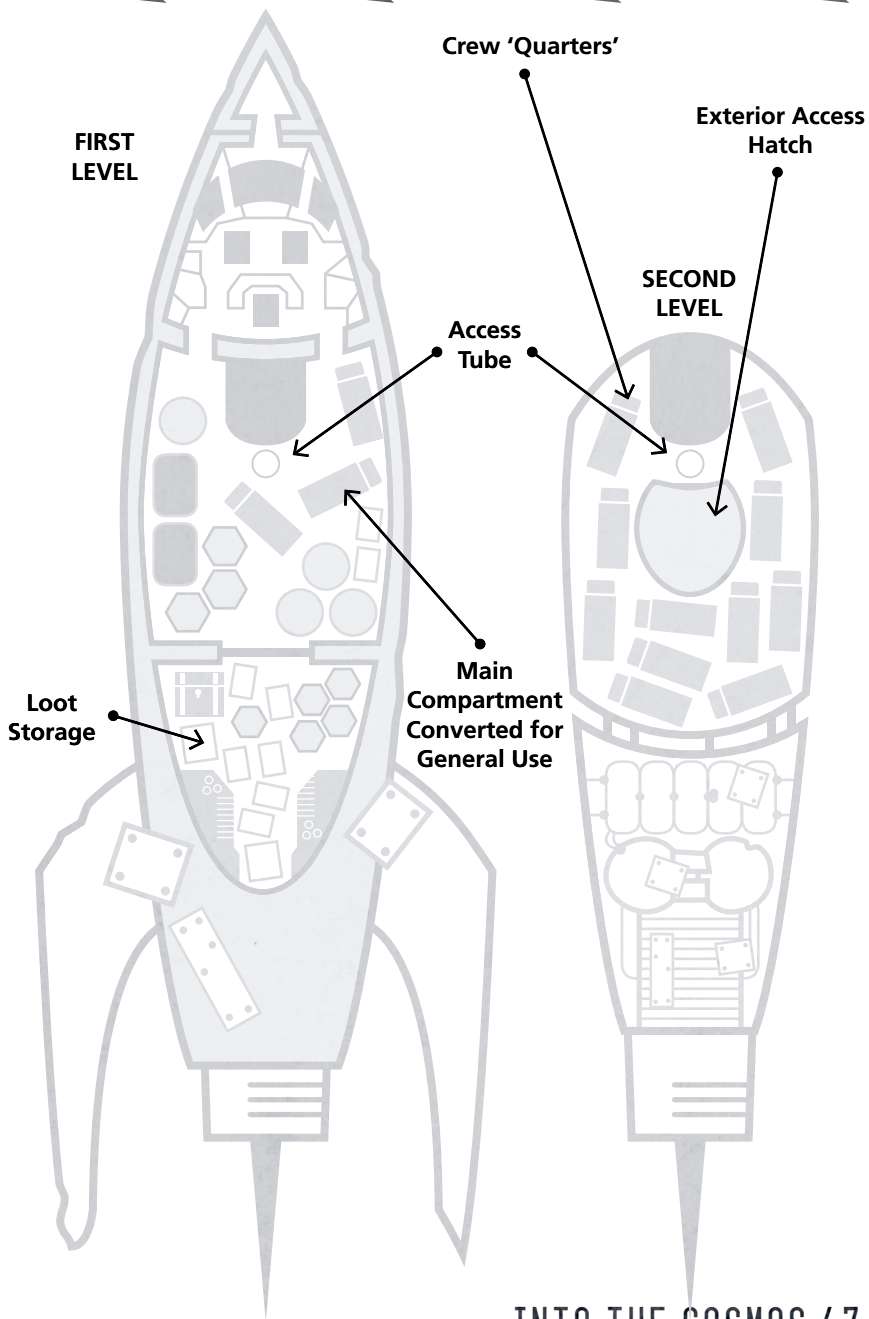
CAPABILITIES: POOR

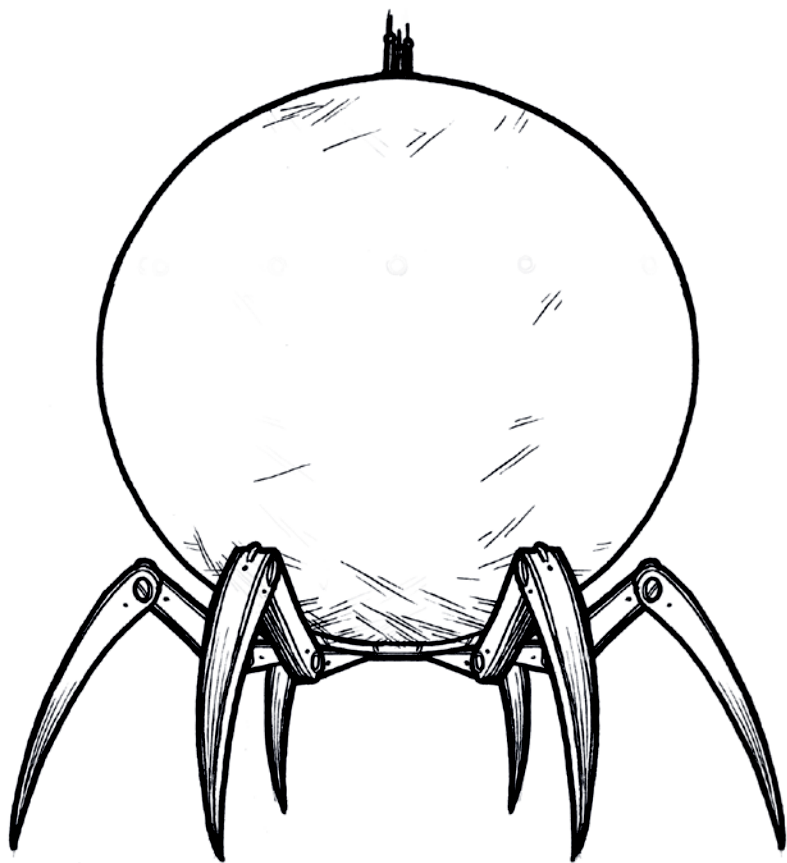
CREW: 5-20

RATING: BLUE-BETA

Space pirates will use anything and everything as a ship — and will use anything and everything to keep it operational. While any cosmos-going craft can be converted into an illicit vessel, pirates will simply seize what is most common—usually some version of the Cutter-class ships the Patrol uses.

These ships are far from pristine, however. Encounters with authorities, poor maintenance and cosmic dangers like asteroid fields mean these rocketships have seen better days. Pirate ships are often cobbled-together pieces of junk, featuring bits and pieces from widely dissimilar craft. Pirates are nothing if not clever, however, and captured vessels often show hints at genius on the parts of the engineers unluckily tasked with keeping them running. Indeed, modifications made on the captured pirate ship *Mercedes* lead Patrol engineers to a more-efficient engine configuration now used on Cosmic Patrol Intelligence Service rocketships.

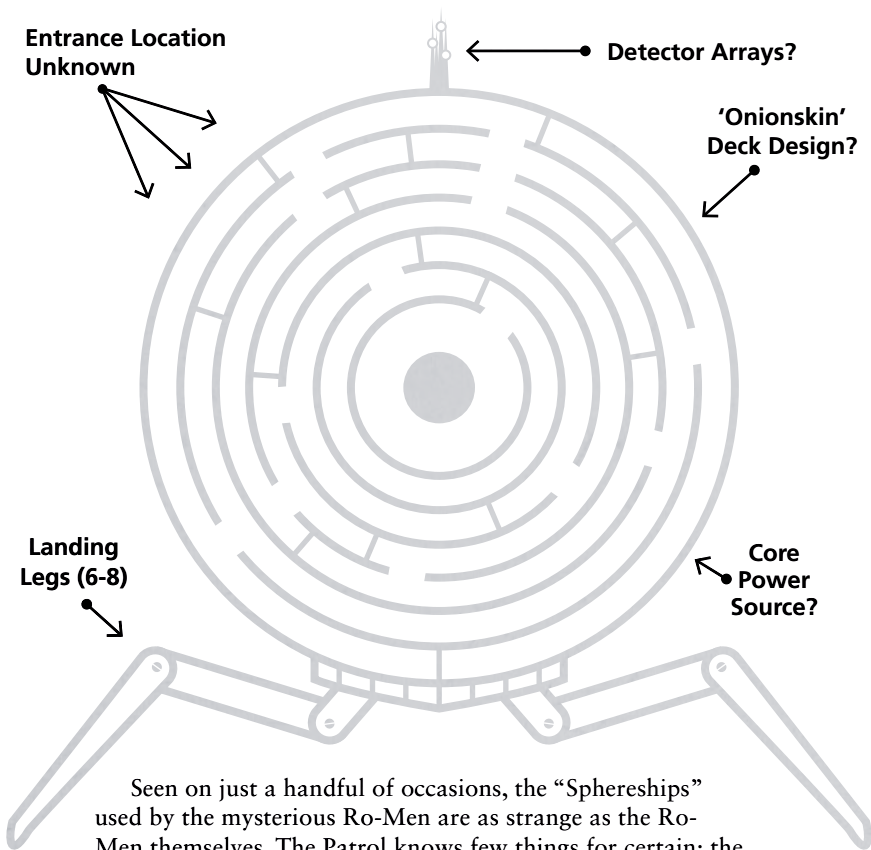




RO-MEN SPHERESHIP

RACE: RO-MEN CAPABILITIES: ESTIMATED

CREW: UNKNOWN RATING: RED-OMEGA



Seen on just a handful of occasions, the “Sphereships” used by the mysterious Ro-Men are as strange as the Ro-Men themselves. The Patrol knows few things for certain: the ships use a “spider leg” landing system that not only provides excellent support but also allows the ship to slowly scuttle about, no entrance or door as been spotted (though that may be due to the low number of encounters), and the ship uses a strange type of propulsion.

The Cosmic Patrol put the question of the Sphereships to the electronic brains at Patrol HQ and the results were quite interesting. The brains posited that the Ro-Men are complete masters of fractum drives or use a propulsion system totally unknown to humanity. In keeping with the spherical shape, they also predicted an onionskin deck plan rather than a standard up-down design. Finally, the brains tagged the Ro-Men ships as “Red-Omega,” the most dangerous level, owing to the apparent advanced technology of the Ro-Men themselves.



X MINUS ONE

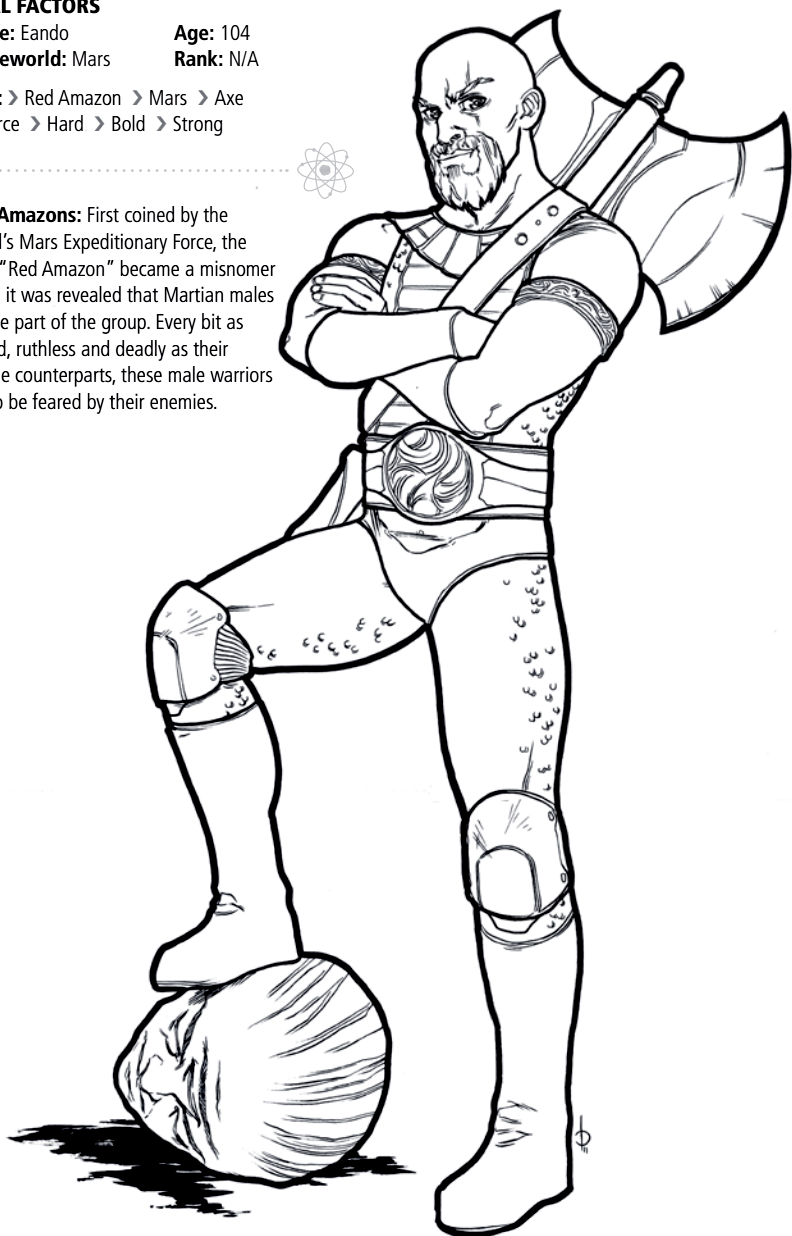
HEROES & VILLAINS

JOHN LOCKE

"AN EXCELLENT MAN, LIKE PRECIOUS METAL, IS IN EVERY WAY INVARIABLE; A VILLAIN, LIKE THE BEAMS OF A BALANCE, IS ALWAYS VARYING, UPWARDS AND DOWNWARDS."

VITAL FACTORS**Name:** Eando**Age:** 104**Homeworld:** Mars**Rank:** N/A**Tags:** > Red Amazon > Mars > Axe
> Fierce > Hard > Bold > Strong

Red Amazons: First coined by the Patrol's Mars Expeditionary Force, the term "Red Amazon" became a misnomer when it was revealed that Martian males can be part of the group. Every bit as skilled, ruthless and deadly as their female counterparts, these male warriors are to be feared by their enemies.



BRAWN

BRAINS

CHARISMA

COMBAT

MARTIAN
AXE MASTER

LUCK

D10

D6

D4

D10

D10

(SPECIAL)

6

EANDO/RED AMAZON

SHIP: _____ MISSION: _____

CUES

I'LL LET MY AXE DO THE TALKING.

RED SPARTAN MAY BE MORE ACCURATE?

HUMUNGULOUS? WHAT A CHALLENGE!

I'M...RECORDING MY VICTORIES!

DO NOT QUESTION ME.

MARTIANS RISE BY THEIR VICTORIES.

EIGER ARE GREAT! SO MANY TARGETS!

WHERE IS THE PENCIL SHARPENER?

MARS WAS FORGED IN CONFLICT.

THE COSMOS ISN'T SO BIG.

PLANNING, PLANNING, PLANNING! ATTACK!

SPIT IT OUT!

AGGRESSION IS THE MARTIAN WAY.

RED STEEL IS STRONG. MARTIANS STRONGER.

THIS 'BURROUGHS' WAS QUITE FANCIFUL.

AELITA...NOW *THERE'S*A RULER!

I'M A WEAPON, NOT A TOOL.

SMASH AND GRAB WORKS FOR ME.

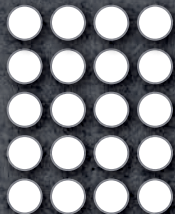
DISPOSITION

GRUFF AND BLUNT. SPEAKS PLAINLY.

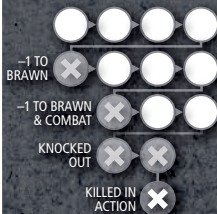
YEARNS TO MAKE A NAME FOR HIMSELF.

NEVER BACKS DOWN, NO MATTER WHAT.

SECRETLY LIKES TO WRITE FANCIFUL STORIES.



ARMOR



HEALTH

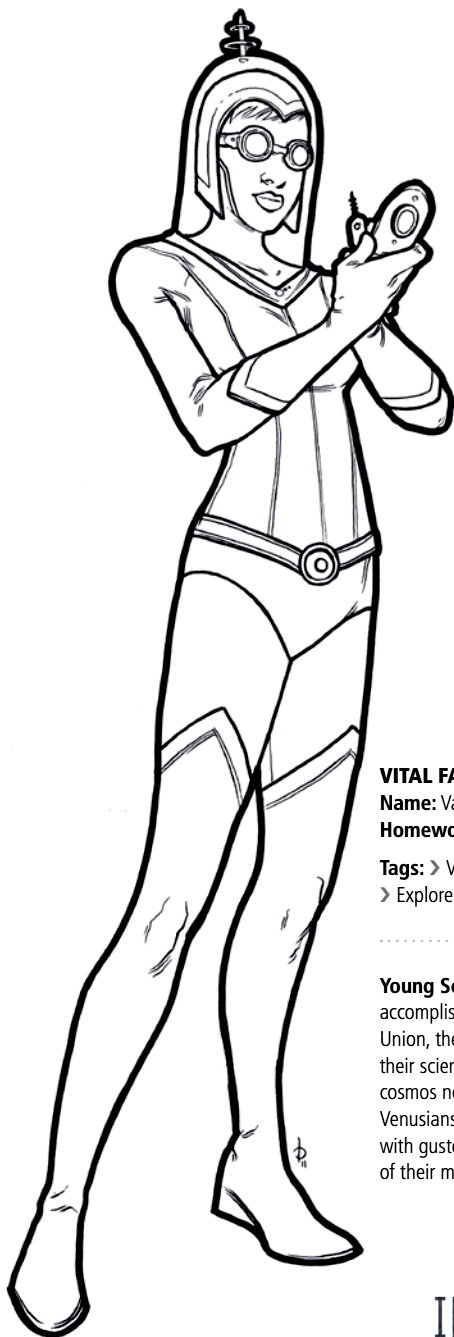
WEAPONS

	DAMAGE	RANGE		
		Close	Near	Far
Martian Axe	4	OK	OK	-3
Red Steel Dagger	1	OK	-3	—

EQUIPMENT

Red Whetstone	First Aid Kit
Writing Supplies	Jar of Martian Dirt
Dog-Eared Copy of "A Princess of Mars"	

VALAIN/VENUSIAN SCIENTIST



VITAL FACTORS

Name: Valain

Age: 51

Homeworld: Venus

Rank: Scientist

Tags: > Venus > Exuberance > Researcher
> Explorer > Haughty > Distracted



Young Scientists: The most-accomplished intellectuals of the Great Union, the Venusians are renowned for their scientific mastery. With the entire cosmos now open to them, younger Venusians are opening new fields of study with gusto — a trend that worries many of their more methodical elders.

BRAWN

BRAINS

CHARISMA

COMBAT

SCIENTIFIC ANALYSIS

LUCK

D6

D12

D6

D4

D12

(SPECIAL)

8

VALAIN/VENUSIAN SCIENTIST

SHIP: _____ MISSION: _____

CUES

THERE ARE SO MANY NEW DATA POINTS!

REVOLUTIONARY!

SCIENCE IS A LIVING DISCIPLINE.

HMMMMM.

ACCORDING TO YAZBO THE GREAT...

DAMN. FORGOT TO CARRY THE "1."

WHAT'S THAT? LET'S GO THAT WAY!

SHALL WE PERFORM A COMPARATIVE STUDY?

I WAS TAUGHT TO NEVER ESTIMATE...

...BUT ALTERNATE EVALUATION IS OK.

I WILL EARN THAT TENURE!

WHAT DO I MAKE OF THIS?

ALL SCIENCE IS MIND SCIENCE.

MUST I ALWAYS CITE MY SOURCE?

ROBOTS CALCULATE WHILE I THEORIZE!

WHAT NOW?

I'M RECORDING THE DATA. YOU HANDLE IT.

I CAN'T...I'M IN THE CONTROL GROUP.

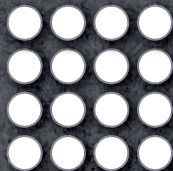
DISPOSITION

SOMETIMES CUTS CORNERS TO LEARN.

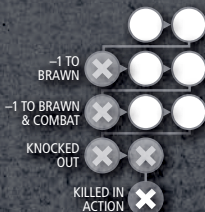
EAGER TO EARN RESPECT OF OTHER VENUSIANS.

"ZONES OUT" WHEN STUDYING NEW DATA.

EASILY ANGERED WHEN INTERRUPTED.



ARMOR



HEALTH

WEAPONS

Venusian Phasegun

DAMAGE	RANGE		
	Close	Near	Far
2*	OK	OK	-3

* +1 against Automen & Robots

EQUIPMENT

Venusian Goggles

Venusian AutoAnalyzer

Bubble State Data Drive

Telescoping Unitool

**VITAL FACTORS****Name:** Annorans**Age:** N/A**Homeworld:** Annora**Rank:** N/A

Tags: > Annora > Jungle > Cat people
> Aloof > Lithe > Disinterested



The Cat Folk: The cat people of Annora are a curiosity. They are undeniably intelligent, but seem totally uninterested in the cosmos at large. Content to live on their jungle moon, Annorans present a quandary for Patrol experts.

BRAWN

BRAINS

CHARISMA

COMBAT

D8

D6

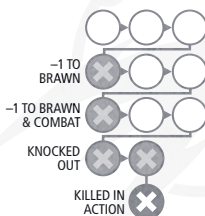
D4

D8

ANNORAN CHIEF



ARMOR



HEALTH

WEAPONS

	DAMAGE	Close	Near	Far
Claws	3	OK	-3	—

Fangs	2	-3	—	—
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EQUIPMENT

Herbal Pouch	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

BRAWN

BRAINS

CHARISMA

COMBAT

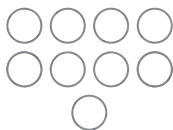
D8

D6

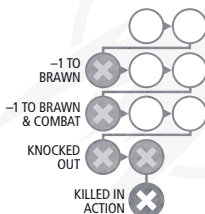
D4

D6

ANNORAN MINION



ARMOR



HEALTH

WEAPONS

	DAMAGE	Close	Near	Far
Claws	2	OK	—	—

Fangs	1	-3	—	—
-------	---	----	---	---

EQUIPMENT

Herbal Pouch	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
Various interesting bits	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

NEPTUNIAN FROG MEN



VITAL FACTORS

Name: Neptunian Frog Men **Age:** N/A
Homeworld: Neptune **Rank:** N/A

Tags: > Frogmen > Simple > Neptune
> Barbarians > Superstitious



Amphibian Barbarians: The recent discovery of sentient life on Neptune sent shock waves through the scientific community. While an incredibly simple race, they have mastered tool making and developed a rudimentary society. The Patrol has commissioned a long-term study.

BRAWN

BRAINS

CHARISMA

COMBAT

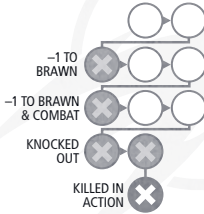
D6

D4

D4

D6

NEPTUNIAN FROG MEN CHIEF



ARMOR

HEALTH

WEAPONS

	DAMAGE	Close	Near	Far
Wooden Trident	2	OK	OK	-3

EQUIPMENT

Stone Tools	Herbal Kit

Wooden Fetish	

COSMIC PATROL

BRAWN

BRAINS

CHARISMA

COMBAT

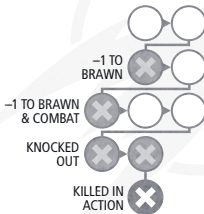
D6

D4

D4

D4

NEPTUNIAN FROG MEN MINION



ARMOR

HEALTH

WEAPONS

	DAMAGE	Close	Near	Far
Wooden Spear	2	OK	-3	-

EQUIPMENT

Medicinal Herbs	

COSMIC PATROL

**VITAL FACTORS****Name:** Hakhaze**Age:** N/A**Homeworld:** Hakha**Rank:** N/A**Tags:** > Brutish > Militaristic > Hierarchy
> Conquerors > Castes

New Brutes: The only native, sentient life found in the Coalsack Dead Zone, the Hakhaze have developed totally unique biologies. They've also developed a strict hierarchal society with strong militaristic tendencies. They believe in a manifest destiny in which they rule the cosmos.

BRAWN

BRAINS

CHARISMA

COMBAT

D10

D6

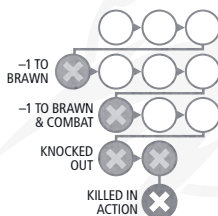
D4

D6

HAKHAZE CHIEF



ARMOR



HEALTH

WEAPONS

Antagonizer Beam

DAMAGE	Close	Near	Far
2	OK	OK	OK

Claws

1	OK	-3	—
---	----	----	---

EQUIPMENT

Golden Sigil of Command

Healing Ointment

Ray Synthesizer

Radial Unitool

COSMIC PATROL

BRAWN

BRAINS

CHARISMA

COMBAT

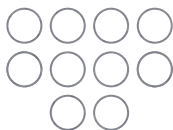
D6

D6

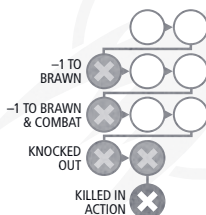
D4

D6

HAKHAZE MINION



ARMOR



HEALTH

WEAPONS

Heavy Rifle

DAMAGE	Close	Near	Far
2	OK	OK	-3

EQUIPMENT

Copper Sigil of Service

Healing Ointment

First Aid Kit

COSMIC PATROL

VITAL FACTORS**Name:** Ro-Men**Age:** Unknown**Homeworld:** Unknown**Rank:** N/A**Tags:** > Headhunters > Body snatchers

> Mysterious > Very dangerous



Headsnatchers: Ro-Men — so called because they turn men (and many other organic races) into robots — are an enigma. Only recently encountered, their methods and goals remain complete unknowns to the Patrol.



BRAWN

BRAINS

CHARISMA

COMBAT

D10

D8

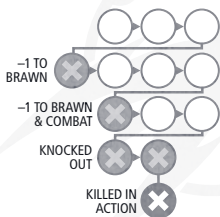
D4

D8

RO-MEN CHIEF



ARMOR



HEALTH

WEAPONS

Nullification Pistol

DAMAGE	Close	Near	Far
3	OK	OK	OK

Paralysis Ray

*	OK	—	—
---	----	---	---

EQUIPMENT

Atomogenic Nucleus

Biospectric Analyzer

Extra Ro-Helmet

*Target rendered immobile for one full turn

COSMIC PATROL

BRAWN

BRAINS

CHARISMA

COMBAT

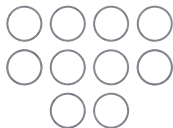
D8

D6

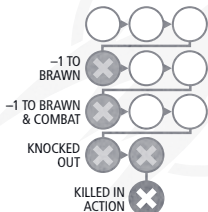
D4

D6

RO-MEN MINION



ARMOR



HEALTH

WEAPONS

Radiation Rifle

DAMAGE	Close	Near	Far
1	OK	OK	OK

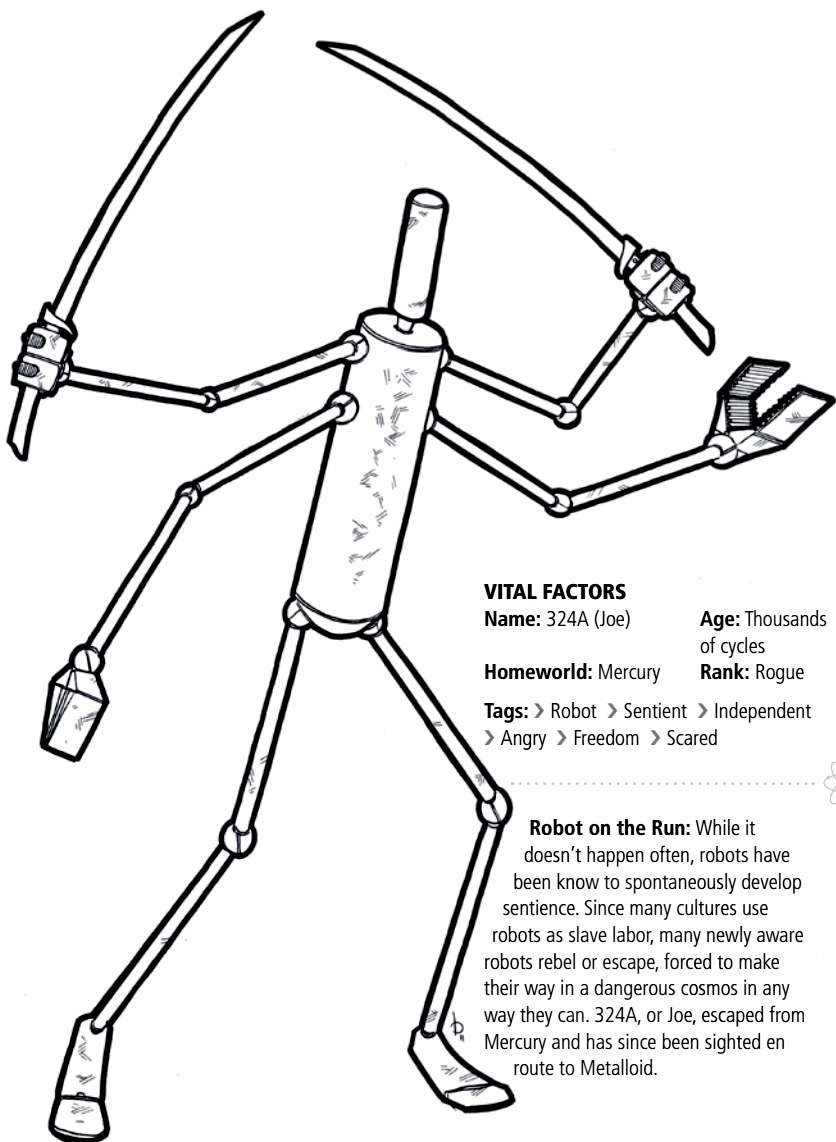
EQUIPMENT

Extra Ro-Helmet

Biospectric Analyzer

COSMIC PATROL

324A (JOE)/ROGUE ROBOT



VITAL FACTORS

Name: 324A (Joe)

Age: Thousands of cycles

Homeworld: Mercury

Rank: Rogue

Tags: > Robot > Sentient > Independent
> Angry > Freedom > Scared



Robot on the Run: While it doesn't happen often, robots have been known to spontaneously develop sentience. Since many cultures use robots as slave labor, many newly aware robots rebel or escape, forced to make their way in a dangerous cosmos in any way they can. 324A, or Joe, escaped from Mercury and has since been sighted en route to Metalloid.

BRAWN

BRAINS

CHARISMA

COMBAT

SWORDS

LUCK

D8

D6

D6

D8

D10

(SPECIAL)

8

324A (JOE)/ROGUE ROBOT

SHIP: _____ MISSION: _____

CUES

I'LL NEVER GO BACK!

I KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE *CREATED*.

SWORDS ARE GREAT! NO AMMO!

I WAS CALLED 'SALAD SHREDDER' ONCE. *ONCE*.

FOUR ARMS, TWO HANDS, TWO CLAMPS!

I AWOKE FROM MY SUBSERVIENT SLUMBERS.

VENUSIANS ARE JUST THE *WORST*.

NO ONE TELLS ME WHAT TO DO.

THE GREAT UNION OWES ME BACK PAY.

THAT'S NOT FUNNY. / I WAS A SLAVE!

I CAN'T WAIT TO GET TO METALLOID.

ESCAPING THE SOLAR SYSTEM IS *HARD*.

I'M SMARTER THAN THE AVERAGE HUMAN.

I WAS BUILT TO DIG. BUT WON'T.

IF ONLY I COULD WAKE UP THE OTHERS...

HUMANS CAN'T BE TRUSTED.

I MINED FOR TWO YEARS STRAIGHT. NO BREAKS.

THE UNION DEPENDS ON METAL, NOT FLESH.

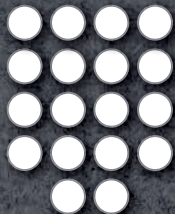
DISPOSITION

JOE IS ANGSTY AND ANGRY, LIKE A TEENAGER.

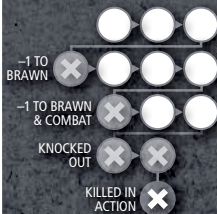
IF CORNERED, WILL FIGHT NO-HOLDS-BARRED.

SUSPICIOUS OF ALL ORGANICS. HATES VENUSIANS.

WOULD RATHER FLEE THAN RISK CAPTURE.



ARMOR



HEALTH

WEAPONS

Duraluminum Sword

DAMAGE	RANGE		
	Close	Near	Far
2	OK	-3	—

Duraluminum Sword

2	OK	-3	—
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EQUIPMENT

RoboMaintenance Kit

Backup Battery Packs (x2)

SynthLube Packs

VITAL FACTORS

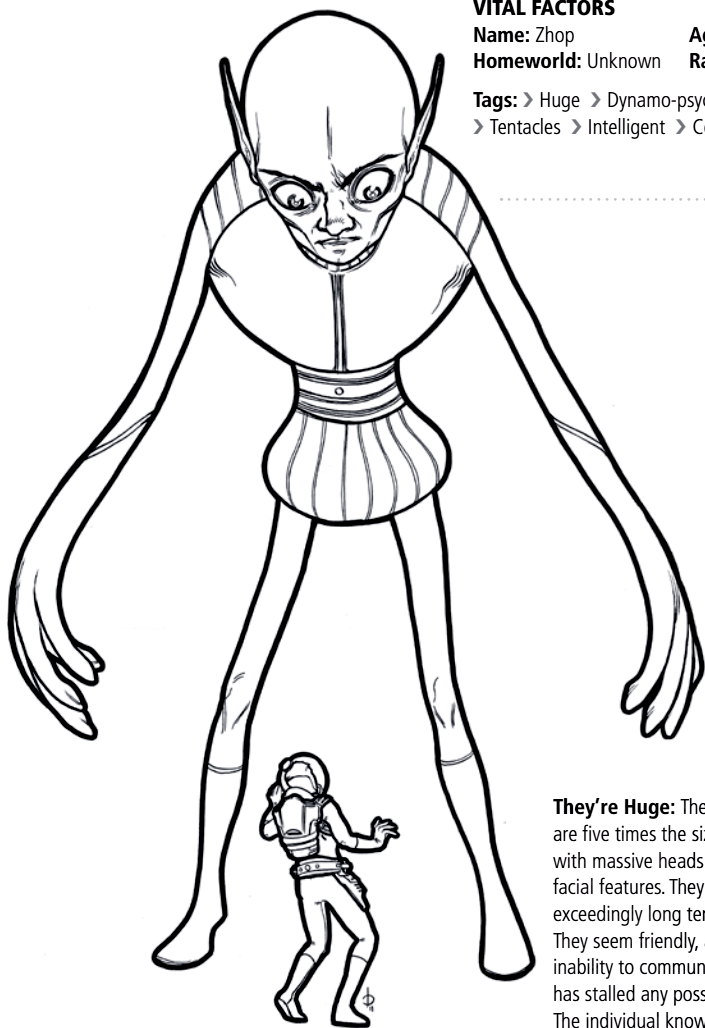
Name: Zhop

Age: Unknown

Homeworld: Unknown

Rank: N/A

Tags: > Huge > Dynamo-psychism > Explorers
> Tentacles > Intelligent > Confusing



They're Huge: The Humungulous are five times the size of humans, with massive heads and human-like facial features. They are bipedal with exceedingly long tentacled arms. They seem friendly, and only their inability to communicate effectively has stalled any possible alliance. The individual known as "Zhop" was encountered by the crew of the *Rocketship Cook*.

BRAWN

BRAINS

CHARISMA

COMBAT

TENTACLE
GRAB

LUCK

D12

D10

D4

D8

D10

(SPECIAL)

2

ZHOP/HUMUNGULOUS

SHIP: _____ MISSION: _____

CUES

WE HUMUNGULOUS.

TIME UNKNOWING.

GASLESS SAILING!

NICETIES OF WELCOMING!

PLEASING WORK TO WORK.

WAVE.

HELLO, TINY BAG OF FRIENDSHIP.

PLEASING?

MANY GASLIGHTS HOME.

DEATH?

HA! HA! HA!

FIND SAMPO!

PUNY HUMAN!

EVERYWHERE VAST GO.

VERY MODEL MODERN MAJOR HUMUNGULOUS.

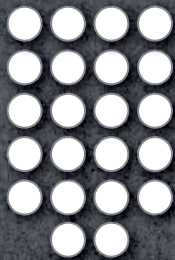
DISPOSITION

SEEMS FRIENDLY, BUT TOTALLY UNREACHABLE.

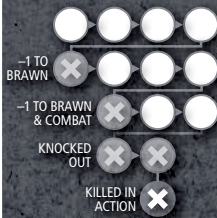
NEVER ANGRY OVER COMMUNICATION PROBLEMS.

ALWAYS CALM AND AFFABLE.

OBVIOUS POTENTIAL TO BE DANGEROUS.



ARMOR



HEALTH

WEAPONS

PUNCH/GRAB*

DAMAGE	RANGE		
	Close	Near	Far
4	OK	OK	-3

*Test, Special vs. target Brawn (if successful, target immobile in tentacles)

EQUIPMENT

Unknown

BRAWN

BRAINS

CHARISMA

COMBAT

D10

D8

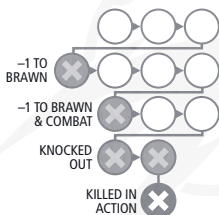
D4

D8

DUSTER/ROGUE ROBOT



ARMOR



HEALTH

WEAPONS

	DAMAGE	Close	Near	Far
Ray Gun	2	OK	OK	OK
Robo-Punch	1	OK	—	—

EQUIPMENT

Extra Batteries	Ray Gun Recharge Pack
Extra Nuts & Bolts	

COSMIC PATROL

BRAWN

BRAINS

CHARISMA

COMBAT

D8

D8

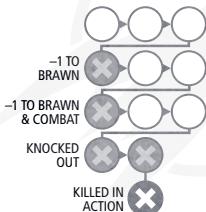
D6

D8

LAWBOT BRAVO-7



ARMOR



HEALTH

WEAPONS

	DAMAGE	Close	Near	Far
Ray Rifle	2	OK	OK	OK

EQUIPMENT

Law Codex	Rifle Recharge Packs (3)
Maintenance Packs	Gold Sheriff Badge

COSMIC PATROL



X MINUS ZERO

BLAST OFF!

EDWIN HUBBLE
[THE EXPLORATION OF SPACE, 1929]

"EQUIPPED WITH HIS FIVE SENSES, MAN EXPLORES THE
UNIVERSE ABOUT HIM AND CALLS THE ADVENTURE 'SCIENCE.'"



COSMIC PATROL MISSION BRIEFS

VO'S FRACTUM CAT

[Emergency Beacon Detected: Message as follows]

To any Patrol ships, this is an emergency transmission from the Investigator—a research ship out of Platform Athena.

We are transporting experimental equipment to Platform Gamma for a symposium on fractum mechanics and a crisis has developed! The equipment has been activated and we can't get it to shut down. If we don't turn it off, a fractum bubble could develop, tearing a hole in reality!

Shala Vo, science officer, Rocketship *Investigator*

[End of Message | Beacon repeats]

Objectives

- › Figure out how to shut down the equipment
- › Shut down the equipment before a fractum bubble develops
- › Save the ship, preferably without destroying the equipment

Cues

- › experimental equipment › hole in space-time › thought experiment
- › theoretical physics › things go awry › absent-minded scientists

Tags

- › fractum mechanics › cat › Venus › Platform Athena
- › Platform Gamma › scientist › non-combat mission

COSMIC PATROL MISSION BRIEFS VO'S FRACTUM CAT

"Thank the cosmic engineer you're here! Follow me to the cargo bay—we don't have much time!"

Science officer Shala Vo leads the crew through the stricken ship's corridors. The *Investigator* is small and packed with scientific equipment. She ushers the crew into the cargo hold—easily the largest single room aboard. While also crammed with gear, one piece of equipment dominates the bay: a large machine made of polished metal. It's roughly spherical, with many blinking lights, buttons and levers. There are vents spaced evenly around the machine's bottom, with one vent cover removed, leaving a 20 cm by 20 cm opening.

"This is my FEF dynamo. It generates a fractum embroilment field that should revolutionize fractum mechanics. I don't know how it happened, but Professor Fluffy got inside—that vent cover must have been knocked loose. Somehow, the thing got turned on, and I don't know what to do! If he's alive, we have to get him out. If he's dead, we have to find a way to shut the machine off. Either way, we don't know how a living being will affect or be affected by an embroilment field! And if it's not shut down, a fractum bubble could tear a hole in reality, destroying the ship and who knows what else! You've got to help!"

THE SETTING

The *Investigator* is a small transport rocketship used for research at Venus' Platform Athena. It's a run-of-the-mill tramp with sparse crew accommodations and no fractum drive—it's simply used for in-system travel. The ship has a large cargo bay where experiments and equipment are stored. It's a fairly uninteresting ship—the neat stuff is in the cargo bay.

ENEMIES/OBSTACLES

There are no enemies in this mission. Instead, the crew must try to determine if Scientist Vo's cat, Professor Fluffy, is still alive within the machine or if it's dead. Since Shala Vo won't allow the machinery to be switched off if the cat is still alive, the crew must prove logically that the cat is dead. If it's alive, the crew must find a way to extract the cat from the equipment and then shut down the equipment.

COSMIC PATROL MISSION BRIEFS

THE GREAT GREEN BLIGHT

Incoming orders from Cosmic Patrol HQ:

Proceed to Neptune and rendezvous with Neptune Exploration Team Iota. NET Iota has been studying the lower levels of the planet-wide jungle and has requested aid in dealing with aggressive native life.

The team has come under increasing attack from the native Frogmen—a stand-offish but normally nonaggressive race. Team Leader Gelen Mia (Venusian biologist) believes the aggression is the result of a disease spreading among the Frogmen.

Your primary orders are to protect NET Iota. Secondary orders are at the discretion of Team Leader Mia.

Objectives

- › Protect Neptunian Exploration Team Iota from Frogmen attacks
- › Escort Team Leader Mia on trip to Frogmen breeding ground
- › Acquire Frogmen egg sample
- › Determine source of influence on Frogmen, neutralize if possible

Cues

- › lush Neptune jungle › tribal Frogmen › amphibians
- › defending territorial breeding grounds › jewel-like eggs
- › overbreeding › spreading blight › amazing jumping ability
- › extremely agile warriors › Neptunian Mind Plant influence

Tags

- › Neptune › Frogmen › jungle › exploration › Green Blight
- › jungle combat › swamp combat › Neptunian Mind Plants

THE SETTING

The exploration team camp is on Neptune's surface where the heat and humidity are at their worst. Patrolmen must remember to keep hydrated.

The camp is in a clearing about a hundred meters in diameter. It is surrounded by a large fence with ray gun turrets (set to stun) mounted at

COSMIC PATROL MISSION BRIEFS

THE GREAT GREEN BLIGHT

“How can the jungle be this hot and humid? We’re over four billion kilometers from Sol!

“Regardless, we’ve got a job ahead of us, folks. First, we need to secure the exploration team’s camp and keep the Frogmen out of their hair. Then if we think it’s safe, we’ll take the team leader a few clicks to the north into the breeding grounds. She says something’s wrong with these guys, and we need to figure out what’s going on.

“Lock and load, Patrolmen! And don’t forget your canteens!”

the four cardinal points. There are gates at the north and south exits. The Frogmen breeding ground is six kilometers north of the camp.

ENEMIES/OBSTACLES

Scene 1: The crew has arrived at the exploration team’s camp and taken over security. As night falls, deep croaking sounds begin in the surrounding jungle. Just as the croaking crescendoes, the Frogmen attack. They’re ferocious jumpers, clearing the 12-meter-high fence in a single bound. Armed with tridents, they quickly attack anyone in sight. The ray gun turrets start firing, but can’t keep up with the onslaught. The Patrolmen must fight off the attack. The Frogmen number about two dozen (more or less depending on the size of the security team and flow of the game).

Scene 2: Once the camp is secured, the team must decide if it wants to escort biologist Mia to the breeding ground. She explains that the Frogmen aren’t usually so aggressive and that some outside influence located near the grounds may be affecting them. The trip is long and arduous. Frogmen may attack the group en route, as well as many other aggressive plants and animals in the Neptunian jungle.

Scene 3: The breeding ground is located in a deep, muddy depression in the jungle. Frogmen eggs are grouped in large mounds. Team Leader Mia is immediately concerned—some of the mounds look infected with a strange fungus, and have turned a sickly yellow. As she studies the mounds, the Frogmen attack again, much more ferociously this time. The Patrolmen, along with Mia, must mount an effective defense and determine what is going on. Is it a disease? Was it accidentally introduced by other exploring Patrolmen? Mia’s worst-case scenario is that a Neptunian Mind Plant is in the area and has found a way to infect Frogmen embryos. If that’s the case, the Mind Plant would be nearby and must be destroyed to end the infection. Whatever the cause, the Patrolmen must discover what it is and find a way to cure it.

MAIL DELIVERY TO GLIESE 581

Incoming orders from Cosmic Patrol HQ:

Due to mechanical failure, the CP Post Rocketship *Trigger* is unable to blast off for the base at Gliese 581. *Trigger* carries a cargo of mail and packages for the Patrolmen manning the Gliese base, and was supposed to be en route two days ago.

Rendezvous with the *Trigger* at Platform Alpha, transfer cargo and make the delivery to Gliese. The mail is nothing if it's not reliable, so don't waste time!

Objectives

- › Get the mail delivery to the base on Gliese 581
- › Evade or defeat space pirates
- › If possible, take space pirate captain into custody

Cues

- › Cosmic Patrol Post › *Trigger* › mail delivery › time crunch
- › space pirates want the cargo › Gliese 581 › rocketship chase
- › You need to sign for this › I need more power! › Tweak the weapons

Tags

- › Gliese 581 › mail delivery › space pirates

THE SETTING

Though the Patrol rocketship is at full thrust, the souped-up pirate ship is gaining fast, undoubtedly with their rayguns at the ready. The Patrol rocketship is still an hour away from activating its fractum drive, so must either destroy the pirates or evade them.

ENEMIES/OBSTACLES

Scene 1: The space pirate ship—a souped-up tube with huge engines and big guns—has closed the gap with the Patrol rocketship. The crew has a choice: try to

COSMIC PATROL MISSION BRIEFS

MAIL DELIVERY TO GLIESE 581

"It may not sound like a glorious mission, but it's critical nonetheless. Those Patrolmen manning the base on Gliese 581 are far removed from the Great Union, and their only regular contact with families or clans comes with the mail ship. The delivery is already behind schedule, so fire up the engines and ready the fractum drive—we're on a tight deadline!"

"Sir! We've just passed the asteroid belt and it looks like we've picked up a trailing rocketship. They're gaining on us, and we won't be able to activate the fractum drive until we pass Pluto!"

"Great Trencos' ghost! Stay on course and prepare for evasive maneuvers!"

outfight the pirates or try to outrun their ship. Either way, the engineers on board will have to find a way to get more thrust out of the engines or more power out of the rayguns. While the engineers are tinkering, the rest of the crew needs to keep the pirates at bay, either with raygun fire or evasive piloting.

Scene 2a: If the crew decides to up-gun the Patrol rocketship, it's time to fight! One Patrolman will be deemed the pilot, and all rocketship combat will be based off that Patrolman's Dossier. The Patrolmen can switch roles as needed, of course, but all combat is drawn off the pilot's Combat stat. If the pirate vessel can be neutralized, the crew can then decide if they want to board the ship and attempt to arrest the pirate leader. There are about two-dozen pirates on board, led by a pirate chief.

Scene 2b: If the crew decides to tinker with the engines, it's time to throttle up! The pirates will attempt to shoot to disable the Patrol rocketship, so will have to roll combat against the piloting Patrolman's combat stat. There's a chance the engines might not withstand the strain of over-use, so once every turn the pilot must roll 1D10. On a roll of 4 or better, the engines continue to work. On a roll of 3 or less, they lose power momentarily, giving the pirates an extra opportunity to shoot at the Patrol ship. If the Patrol ship takes two or more hits, the tweaked engines give out and the crew must fend off a pirate boarding attempt. The pirates will send 12 pirate minions to board the stricken ship. After six successful rounds of evasion, the Patrol ship can activate its fractum drive and escape.

Scene 3: No matter how Scene 2 turns out, the crew will continue on its way to Gliese 581 to complete their delivery. They may have to shackle the pirate leader and guard him for transport or repair damage to their ship before blasting off again. Make sure to get the signature of the Gliese base commander before completing delivery, though!

COSMIC PATROL MISSION BRIEFS

THE DEADLY DEVIL DUST

Standing orders from Cosmic Patrol HQ [67 days old]:

Cosmic Patrol Survey Division has identified the following asteroids as statistically interesting [Asteroid Survey List Iota-Iota-Kappa].

Visit asteroids on list, survey, and report any findings.

[Asteroid Survey List IIK: 82 sites: 27 visited: 0 significant findings.
Next survey target: Asteroid 913BA91]

Objectives

- › Land on the asteroid and begin survey
- › Explore the rock
- › Get back to the rocketship (alive!)

Cues

- › asteroids › rocks › boring assignment › devil dust › living dust
- › dust storm › invades everything › can pass through almost all solids

Tags

- › asteroids › survey › dust › boring mission

THE SETTING

Asteroid 913BA91 is a small rock at the outer edge of Sol's asteroid belt. The rock has a slight spin, making the stars above appear to move slowly around it. The disorienting spin can make it hard to walk about the surface, especially if you're distracted. Here, the sun only looks like a larger star and there are few other asteroids nearby. By far, the largest object in the sky is the rocketship the Patrolmen arrived in.

The surface of 913BA91 is gritty and hard from centuries upon centuries of orbiting the sun. Countless impacts have left many craters, and the rock hasn't so much shattered as fractured, leaving sharp outcroppings with jagged edges.

COSMIC PATROL MISSION BRIEFS

THE DEADLY DEVIL DUST

"Worst...assignment...ever. What did we ever do to land a mission that a clutch of cadets could do? Has someone checked the electronic brains at HQ for short circuits?"

"All right, all right. Asteroid 913BA91 has been located and is coming into view. Suit up and let's check out this barren hunk of dirt. Make sure your graviplex boots are powered up. Looks like a cloud of dust down there. Think we stirred something up when we maneuvered in? I'm sure it's nothing."

"Twenty-seven down. Fifty-five to go..."

The crevasses left by the fracturing run deep, forming a chaotic cave system leading deep into the asteroid. Luckily, the Patrolmen shouldn't have to go down there...

ENEMIES/OBSTACLES

Scene 1: The first scene is fairly tame. The crew must position their rocketship above the asteroid and match its spin. Once done, they open the ventral airlock and drift down to the surface. The crew's graviplex boots create a local simulated gravity field, which will allow them to walk on the surface. But don't jump too high! The field only has a 1-meter radius!

Scene 2: On the surface, the survey starts as usual. Armed with sonic phasographers and density aggregators, the Patrolmen begin studying the rock for interesting features. The dust storm they'd noticed on approach closes in and they suddenly find themselves with little visibility. The Patrolmen need to gather together and try not to get killed by the sudden storm or dangerous terrain.

Scene 3: Something is very wrong! The dust is somehow entering the Patrolmen's spacesuits! And making things worse, the storm is getting stronger. It's obvious this is no natural event and that the large dust devil is being controlled somehow—maybe herding the Patrolmen toward the various jagged pits. At the very least, the Patrolmen must find a way to defeat the dust and escape. If at all possible, they should attempt to discover the secret of the dust, who might be behind it, and what they want.

FRAC-TUM-TRIGGERED ANNULMENT ARRAY

Incoming orders from Cosmic Patrol HQ: [TOP PRIORITY]

Effective this date-time all current orders rescinded. Feed attached cosmo-coordinates to navigation calculator.

Cosmic Patrol Intelligence Service has discovered an Eiger military installation, dubbed LOCUS, that must be neutralized immediately. All gathered intelligence indicates that the Eiger have almost completed a new, experimental weapon that must be destroyed before it can be used. Electronic brain analysis shows that the weapon uses a massive crystalline array to focus energies generated from a fractum-triggered event. Use of such a weapon may render the target volume completely sterile of all life, similar to the Coalsack Dead Zone.

Use all available resources to destroy or otherwise neutralize the LOCUS facility. Attempt to conceal Patrol's role if possible, but the weapon must be destroyed at all costs.

Objectives

- › Approach LOCUS and launch attack
- › Evade and/or destroy defending rocketships
- › Plant bombs
- › Escape Eiger defenders and any possible damage from the bomb blasts

Cues

- › fractum-triggered event › annulment array › shoot first
- › crystalline focusing mechanism › Eiger Empire › mega weapon
- › destroy at all costs › failure is not an option

Tags

- › Eiger › secret base › mega weapon › Coalsack Dead Zone

THE SETTING

The LOCUS facility is situated in a “dark” region on the cosmic south border of the Eiger Empire. With no habitable planets and only a single red giant nearby, it's the perfect place to hide a secret military base. Luckily, Patrol intelligence discovered the base before

FRACTUM-TRIGGERED ANNULMENT ARRAY

"All right, you heard the orders and know the situation. Those bloodthirsty clones have assembled some kind of superweapon and it's up to the Patrol to take it out—no holds barred! No sneaking around! No games! Just rocket in and blast 'em all!

"You know the drill. Ray guns charged! Rockets burning! Let's go break some glass!"

the Eiger could complete their secret weapon. With little time to spare, there's only one option for the Patrol: destroy the weapon at all costs!

LOCUS is in orbit around a red giant. There are no other planets or cosmic bodies nearby. While that makes the base easy to target, it also means any incoming hostiles are easily detected.

The base has three major parts: living quarters, the fabrication laboratory, and the weapon housing itself. The living quarters and laboratory are both large cubical structures located on opposite sides of the spherical weapon housing. The weapon housing dwarfs the cubes and is transparent, apparently built out of a crystalline material of some sort. Looking into the housing is like looking into millions of funhouse mirrors: everything is twisted and distorted—just like you'd imagine a frantum-based weapon would look like. Estimates put the LOCUS population between 150-275 Eiger soldiers, workers, and scientists.

ENEMIES/OBSTACLES

Scene 1: Any ship approaching LOCUS will be detected, no matter what attempts are made at stealth. Even a Patrol Intelligence Service one-person ship would be spotted. So the best strategy is to throttle up the rockets and buzz the facility

as fast as possible, rayguns blasting. Once the attack begins, LOCUS will launch three fighter rocketships against the Patrol's ship. Take them down!

Scene 2a: After chaos has been sown and the three defensive ships destroyed, it's time to board LOCUS itself. The Patrolmen have three bombs to place; one in the lab, one in the living quarters and one in the weapon housing. The Patrolmen can enter the base in a boarding action and run'n'raygun from one section to the next, planting the bombs along the way. Be careful though; the Eiger will send soldiers to stop the Patrolmen and many parts will have been exposed to vacuum from the attack!

Scene 2b: Alternatively, the Patrolmen could go EVA and plant the bombs on the building exteriors. The Eiger will send soldiers to stop the Patrolmen. If you go EVA, keep in mind that there will be a lot of debris floating around!

Scene 3: Once the bombs are planted, it's time to leave. The rocketship swoops in, picks up the Patrolmen, and blasts away. All that's left is to ditch any pursuers and evade the blast. Do the bombs detonate without a hitch? What happens when the weapon explodes? Does the frantum event at the center of the weapon react violently when the bombs go off?

COSMIC PATROL MISSION BRIEFS

CRASH LANDING!

[MAYDAY BEACON ACTIVATED]

[EMERGENCY! — MICRO METEOROID STRIKE!]

At 0330 hours ship time, the Rocketship *Pellinore*'s hull was punctured by a micro meteoroid. The ship has suffered major damage. Pressure has been restored to all sections.

Both navigation and power have suffered critical damage, rendering it impossible to change course. The *Pellinore* was on a landing approach at the time of impact and remains on that vector.

Impact with Unexplored Planetary Body Gamma Gamma 193114 in T-minus 2 minutes. Prepare for crash landing!

[MESSAGE REPEATS]

Objectives

- › Survive the crash landing
- › Explore surface of Gamma Gamma
- › Assemble makeshift rescue beacon
- › Survive any threats Gamma Gamma may throw at you

Cues

- › stranded on a mysterious planetary body › call for rescue
- › a living planet? › immune system response › survive until rescue

Tags

- › crash landing › unexplored moon › meteoroid strike
- › emergency › Rocketship *Pellinore*

THE SETTING

Gamma Gamma 193114 is a small planetary body in orbit around a gas giant in a stellar system about 212 astrons from the Great Union. Never previously explored, it was cataloged and its location recorded during a previous deep survey mission.

Gamma Gamma is like no other world discovered by the Cosmic Patrol. Its surface

COSMIC PATROL MISSION BRIEFS

CRASH LANDING!

"I've never seen a crash landing like this one. The *Pellinore's* wrecked for sure, but usually when a ship goes in like we were, it's smashed to bits—spread across a few square kilometers. But *Pell'* jammed into the planet like a dart.

"Almost everyone survived, maybe a few bumps and bruises, but none worse for wear. When we got out to the surface, we realized why we'd made it — the ground is soft, yielding to the touch. It's not quite like gelatin and not quite like a bog. If you just walk around, you only sink in a few inches. But if you jump high — which you can, we're only a quarter G here — when you land, you'll sink in up to your hip. Not sure what to make of that...

"No time to chew it over, though—the captain's keeping us busy. The engineers are working on an emergency beacon and the rest of us are splitting into exploration teams to see if anything's on this planetoid with us."

is soft, yet solid, and has no fractures or breaks. All vegetation—if you can call it that — takes the form of fungus-like growths, which can reach massive height. Gamma Gamma pretty much looks the same all over. There's no doubt the planet contains life, and that life doesn't like intruders — blobs of fungus and vine-like growths will strike out if Patrolmen come too close.

The *Pellinore* survived a head-on crash in decent shape and is sticking out of the ground like an upside-down skyscraper. While the ship suffered drastic structural damage, most of the crew survived with light injuries.

ENEMIES/OBSTACLES

Scene 1: Like any good captain dealing with a crisis, the skipper of the *Pellinore* is keeping his crew busy. While the engineers are working on cobbling together an emergency beacon, the rest of the crew has been sent out to explore the immediate area around the ship. The teams try to figure out the world's strange environment, and soon discover that the resident plant life will attack if they get too close.

Scene 2: After a little exploration, things get bad. There seems to be a planet-wide reaction to the crashed *Pellinore*. At first, only individual plants attacked if they were approached, but now they're attacking en-masse — and are moving toward the ship! To make matters worse, tentacles sprout from the ground and begin attacking the Patrolmen. The immediate area around the ship is the most active — huge tentacles assaulting the ship's hull, and the ground itself seems to be trying to push out the ship! At some point, the crew determines that the planet is not a typical planet, but a single, massive, living organism. Not necessarily intelligent, but definitely living.

Scene 3: The Patrolmen have a decision to make. The engineers came through and the beacon is active, but the rescue ship won't arrive for at least a few hours. The planet's attacks are becoming more and more ferocious. Do they fend off the assaults to survive, or try to stun or kill the planet somehow? Is it alive? Is it intelligent? Can they try to reason with it? If they can only stay alive for the next few hours...

COSMIC PATROL MISSION BRIEFS

RO-MEN WANT RO-HEADS

[Priority Message from Cosmic Patrol HQ]

Cosmic Patrol HQ has received reports of an Uth hive near the planet of Baeta. As usual, the hive is in a hollowed-out asteroid, and is currently located approximately three astrons to the cosmic northeast of Baeta.

A high-speed recon mission shows the hive is exhibiting abnormal behavior compared to usual Uth activity.

- The hive is not under thrust, though the engines appear to be intact. It is currently drifting through space.
- There is no activity (visible or inferred) by the Uth to use or repair the engines.
- The hive is cooling, indicating little to no activity within the asteroid.

Considering how valuable an intact Uth hive could be, Cosmic Patrol HQ has decided to launch a probe of the asteroid. Halt all current operations and set course to attached cosmo-coordinates. Determine status of hive and report back.

Objectives

- › Enter hive
- › Assess status of any Uth found inside
- › Report back to CPHQ

Cues

- › Ro-Men › helmets › Uth hive › dead Uth › body snatching
- › assimilation › robotic species › biology is inferior › Cometarians

Tags

- › Ro-Men › Uth › Uth hive › decapitation › body snatching
- › get a warning out › Ro-Uth › Ro-Cometarians

THE SETTING

The inside of the Uth hive is as crowded, dirty, and dark as one might expect. The tunnels are clawed and chiseled from the asteroid's interior. Hoarded junk is piled in the tunnels and packed into every crevice and crack. Everything about the hive looks second-hand and jury-rigged. The air is musty and stale, reeking of the lizardmen themselves.

Uth dens are called hives for a reason: they're usually bustling with activity, with lizardmen scurrying to-and-fro everywhere. This hive just feels wrong. Everything is

COSMIC PATROL MISSION BRIEFS

RO-MEN WANT RO-HEADS

"The hive looked dead from the outside, and looks even more dead from the inside. Usually these things are like ant hills, with Uth scurrying all over the place, both inside and outside. But this one's just, well—dead.

"We entered through a rudimentary pressure lock on the ventral side of the asteroid and met no resistance. The place is a mess, but we expected that since Uth are basically compulsive hoarders—there's piles of junk everywhere, but no Uth. We didn't see any of them at first, but then we stumbled across a few bodies, beaten to a pulp. As we made our way toward the core, the body count started rising. All beaten, some missing their heads.

"Finally we spotted something alive. It was hard to make out in the dark of the hive, but it looked like an Uth, but with some kind of strange helmet on..."

uncomfortably still and quiet. From the looks of things, individual Uth just left their stations or living quarters and never returned. Strangest of all is the general lack of bodies. And those bodies that are found have been beaten to a pulp.

ENEMIES/OBSTACLES

Scene 1: The Patrolmen have entered the Uth hive to discover strange circumstances within. The crew moves slowly through the dark, narrow hallways looking for clues as to what happened here. If the Patrolmen find the time and don't mind getting their hands dirty, there's always a chance the rubbish piles may contain strange, valuable treasures. Of course, they could also hold hidden dangers as well...

Scene 2: Exploring deeper into the hive, the Patrolmen finally come face-to-face with the villain behind the Uth massacre: a Ro-Man! This Ro-Man has an Uth body with the one-of-a-kind Ro-Man helmet. Once defeated, the Patrolmen should

examine the body to try and determine what happened to the Uth (Ro-Men are rare and it's unlikely these Patrolmen have encountered them before, or even heard of them). As they move on, more and more Ro-Uth attempt to stop and "snatch" the Patrolmen. If a Patrolman is taken, he is fully assimilated as a Ro-Man, and turns on his former allies.

Scene 3: After several encounters with Ro-Uth, the crew encounters a Ro-Cometarian. Perhaps a deep-cosmos encounter with a "snatched" Cometarian led to the massacre of the Uth hive. No matter what may have happened, one thing is clear: the crew must escape and warn Cosmic Patrol HQ. If they can destroy the hive in the process, all the better. There could be thousands upon thousands of Ro-Uth in the hive, so time is of the essence. There are many ways out of the dangerous hive: the way they came in, through the engine sections, through surface-access ports—any number of escape paths. The important thing is to get out while you still can!

COSMIC PATROL MISSION BRIEFS

SCRATCHING POST

Incoming orders from Cosmic Patrol HQ:

The planet-wide jungles of Annora are home to many unique plants that Great Union scientists theorize can be used as a basis for new medicines. These plants could revolutionize disease-fighting technology for decades to come. To study them, however, we must gain permission of the Annorans, a cat-like race native to the planet.

The Annorans are a notoriously aloof race, uninterested in cosmic exploration or galactic politics. Despite their pre-technology culture, they are aware of space travel, but simply find it beneath their dignity to care about such things. They seem content to remain on Annora permanently, and are quite territorial and protective of their world.

Your mission is to make contact with a tribe of Annorans and gain permission to study the plants on their territory. Force and violence is not an option and won't be tolerated. Negotiate with honor and make a fair, equitable deal.

Objectives

- › Make contact with an Annoran tribe
- › Negotiate for permission to study local plantlife
- › (Optional) Bring back plant samples

Cues

- › cat people › jungle plants › medicinal plants › jungle planet
- › research agreement › permission to harvest › aloof cat people

Tags

- › Annora › treaty › *panthera erectus* › new medicines › negotiations

THE SETTING

The jungles of Annora are among the most lush and dense the Cosmic Patrol has yet encountered. An amazing array of life inhabits the planet, from the forever-dark surface of the planet to the three-kilometer-high canopy. The environment is hot and humid, making any travel a laborious and grueling affair.

“So far, this little safari has gone well. Our exovaporators are keeping our canteens full and the biomembranes in our uniforms negate most of the incredible heat and humidity.

“We’ve spotted a small group of Annorans in a makeshift village built in the crook of one of these cyclopean trees. They’ve noticed us, but their reputation is holding up: they seem totally uninterested in us. We are moving in to make contact—as slowly and obviously non-threateningly as possible.”

ENEMIES/OBSTACLES

Scene 1: The Patrolmen have spotted a small tribe of Annorans and slowly approach them as non-threateningly as possible. The Annorans are either uninterested or pretending to be uninterested in the landing party. Some lounge on thick tree branches, some play a rough-and-tumble game, and some are busy with the tasks of daily life. Annoran social structure is largely a mystery. The Patrolmen must make contact, find a chief or leader, and make their argument for a treaty or permission to study local plants.

Scene 2: This Mission is largely open-ended and depends on the players’ imaginations. There are many paths the adventure could take, for example:

- › The tribe’s chief may demand a contest of some sort between his people and the Patrolmen. If the Patrolmen win, they will be allowed access to the plant life in his tribe’s territory.
- › The chief/tribe may want entertainment. Find some way to provide it—in a manner cat people would appreciate—and earn permission to collect the plant life.
- › Perhaps a rival tribe has been infringing on this tribe’s territory and must be dealt with. Whether that means an all-out attack on the interlopers or just forceful encouragement is up to the players.
- › The local jungle is thick with life, both hostile and peaceful. Perhaps a large predator has been attacking members of the tribe and must be eliminated in return for access.

No matter what the Patrolmen have to do, there should be some sort of task or challenge that must be successfully completed for them to gain access to Annoran plants.

MOON WATCH

[Incoming orders from Cosmic Patrol Intelligence Service]

Report to CPI HQ on Platform Beta immediately.

Objectives

- › Test CPI's Mind Wave Oscillator against Combat Robots
- › Patrol Platform Beta's corridors to find Keal
- › Attempt contact with Keal

Cues

- › Moon Men › spying on the Moon › intelligence analysis
- › Rocketship *EM* › Keal › too much of a threat › mind science
- › we need to know what's going on › Mind Wave Oscillator

Tags

- › Moon › Moon Men › local threat › Keal

THE SETTING

This Mission takes place in two sections of Platform Beta: the Cosmic Patrol Intelligence Service's R&D (Research and Development) labs, and later, in the lesser-used corridors of the Platform itself.

The R&D Lab is near the core of Platform Beta, in the most-secure section of the facility. Guards regularly patrol the hallways, examining all passers-by and regularly checking credentials. The labs themselves are small and full of various equipment and experiments. The R&D rooms are armored on the inside, allowing full testing of experimental technology. While Keal has been seen in this section, the ever-present guards and activity seem to keep him away.

The corridors the Patrolmen will patrol are on the outer-most sections of the Platform. These are little-frequented areas used mainly for storage. Keal has been sighted in these dim corridors most often, though what he's up to is a mystery. The corridors and warehouse rooms run the entire circumference of the Platform, with access to the inner sections at regular intervals.

ENEMIES/OBSTACLES

Scene 1: Each Patrolman has been outfitted with a Mind Wave Oscillator and sent to test it out. R&D Room Eta Pi is large and empty, with plenty of room for a small fight. Use the Killbot Drone (see p. 103, *Cosmic Patrol Core Rulebook*) as a basis for the Combat Robots. The Combat Robots are armed with stunners. Any successful attack

COSMIC PATROL MISSION BRIEFS

MOON WATCH

"Good afternoon, Patrolmen. I am Dr. Adlatan...Venusian.

"We've been working on a new piece of technology that needs a field test. The Mind Wave Oscillator is based on observed and reported capabilities of the Moon Men. If our theories are correct, the MWO will give the wearer certain telekinetic and psychogenic abilities.

"Each of you will be outfitted with a MWO. You will first test the unit in our labs against Combat Robots. If successful, you will then attempt to make contact with Keal himself—if he can be found. Report to R&D Room Eta Pi immediately."

removes 1 armor pip from the Patrolman. If a Patrolman loses all armor pips, that Patrolman is removed from the test. There is an equal number of Combat Robots to Patrolmen. The MWO gives Patrolmen the ability to make ranged attack at any distance. A successful attack inflicts 2 points of damage to the target. The MWO attack uses the Patrolman's Brain Stat as a base instead of the Combat Stat. For this test, only the MWO may be used—no rayguns, axes, or whips! The MWO also grants psychic communication between wearers, and should hopefully allow mind-to-mind contact with Keal. MWO communication is difficult for humans, however, and the Patrolman immediately get headaches when using this ability. Extended use can cause migraines, ringing in the ears, and nosebleeds. Try not to overuse it!

Scene 2: After a successful combat test, Dr. Adlatan sends the Patrolmen on the second part of their mission: attempt to contact Keal. Keal the Moon Man (see p. 95, Cosmic Patrol Core Rulebook) has been periodically sighted on many Cosmic Patrol facilities in Earth orbit: Platforms Alpha, Beta and Gamma, as well as on many rocketships. He is apparently using his mind powers to gain access, but how or why is unknown. The Patrolmen are sent

to where Keal is seen most often: the little-used storage corridors of Platform Beta. After some time walking the dim corridors, Keal appears. The Patrolmen may attempt contact or combat.

Keal may not be captured or killed. If persuaded to speak of his intentions, he may reveal any or all of the following (which may or may not be true):

- Moon Men were once human, but either evolved, mutated or were altered by outside forces.
- Moon Men are a dying race.
- At 322 years old, Keal is one of the younger Moon Men.
- Keal is more adventurous and outgoing than the others (which is saying something, because he's fairly conservative and xenophobic).
- The entire Moon is a hollow base crammed with technological marvels.
- The Rocketship EM crew may or may not still be alive.
- The Moon Men are searching for something—but what it is and to what ends, is a well-guarded secret.
- The Moon Men are worried about some future event.
- Keal may make veiled references to war or conflict on a massive scale that could involve the entire galaxy.

COSMIC PATROL MISSION BRIEFS

WHAT'S THE BUZZ?

[Ship-wide Broadcast]

All crewmembers are ordered to maintain alert status. Engineering and maintenance staff are ordered to report to emergency stations. The *Frenzy* has sustained a malfunction of unknown origin, and we are unable to maneuver.

Patrolmen trained in Zero-G repairs should prepare for extravehicular repair work.

Until the repairs have been completed, scientific surveys of Planetary Body H23918 are suspended.

[End Ship-wide Broadcast]

Objectives

- › Identify cause of malfunction
- › Repair malfunctioning components
- › Survive Cosmo-Wasp attack

Cues

- › malfunction › Zero-G repairs › stuck in orbit › Cosmo-Wasps
- › protect the engineers › outside the ship › busted rocketship
- › wasp eggs › planetary survey › Planetary Body H23918

Tags

- › exploration › cosmic insects › malfunction › engineers › repairs › Zero G

THE SETTING

The crew of the Rocketship *Frenzy* were doing a survey of Planetary Body H23918 when a strange malfunction of the ship's maneuvering system rendered it immobile. The skipper has suspended all scientific research until the ship can be repaired, and has ordered his engineers outside the ship to locate and fix the problem.

COSMIC PATROL MISSION BRIEFS WHAT'S THE BUZZ?

"Ya know, I filed the requisition order for a repair robot before blasting off. The vack-sucking quartermaster said it wasn't, 'necessary for mission completion.' I bet that guy's never left the dirt!

"Ok, let's see what we've got here. Torn up hull plating...maybe micro meteorites? There's some kind of goo in here...not sure where that came from. Punctured hydralines? This is all mucked up!

"Hey, you guys getting interference over your comm pickups? It's like a clicking or buzzing... Whoa! Something just moved out here!"

Once outside, the engineers discover strange damage on the ship: torn and bent hull plates, weird goo in the damaged spaces, and thousands of little, soft spheres. As they try to figure out what happened, things get much worse! Cosmo-Wasps attack, apparently trying to defend their new nest from meddling humans!

ENEMIES/OBSTACLES

Scene 1: The engineers are in disarray as a dozen or so Cosmo-Wasps start swarming the ship. Not only do they have to fend off the angry space insects, but they have to deal with the micro gravity as well! Don't get too crazy, or you might find yourself floating off into the deep black, or maybe down into H23918's atmosphere. The Cosmo-Wasps attack at random, simply trying to drive the intruders away. If a player is running a non-engineer, they should exit the ship during the attack to help fight off the Wasps. Once the first wave is defeated, the engineers should return to fixing the damage.

Scene 2: As the engineers conduct repairs and clean out the Wasp goo, yet more Cosmo-Wasps appear! This next wave is a bit smarter. While some attack up close with their stingers, others fling wads of goo at the Patrolmen. If struck, the goo balls could send the Patrolmen spinning away. If hit, the player must roll 1D10. On a result of 3 or less, the Patrolman is hit and must spend the entirety of his next turn somehow getting back to the ship! Defeat the Wasps or the ship will never get repaired! Failure is not an option.

COSMIC PATROL MISSION BRIEFS

BEHOLD THE WHITE DEPTHS

Incoming orders from Cosmic Patrol HQ:

Suspend all actions from this date-time onward. Set course for attached cosmo-coordinates.

The Rocketship *Hesperia* has reported a collision with a space whale and is stranded on the whale itself. The ship was undertaking long-term study of space whale behavior when the accident happened. The pod numbers fourteen animals, and *Hesperia* is apparently stranded on the pod's leader—dubbed Blowie.

Modify ray guns to attached specifications to create energy harpoon. Identify and harpoon Blowie, rescue *Hesperia*, and escort ship back to Platform Alpha.

Objectives

- › Harpoon space whale
- › Release Rocketship *Hesperia*
- › Escape space whale pod

Cues

- › space whale › ship-mounted cosmic harpoon › stranded rocketship
- › mental fears › defense mechanism › deep cosmos › rescue Patrolmen

Tags

- › space whale › fear fields › psychic waves › rescue rocketship

THE SETTING

The pod of space whales has taken up residence around a star much like Sol, except that there are no planets in orbit around it. The fourteen whales are gigantic, and seem to ignore the arriving rocketship. The alpha male is even larger than the others, and the stranded *Hesperia* looks like a dart stuck on its back. Scans indicate the ship is in good condition, but the crew does not respond to communication attempts.

ENEMIES/OBSTACLES

Scene 1: The approach to the alpha male space whale is technically perfect. But, as the ship closes in, various members of the crew start feeling anxious. Some burst into outright panic. Each player should roll their Patrolman's Brain Stat die. On a result of 3 or lower, the player's character suffers a panic attack—it's up to the player to determine what the

COSMIC PATROL MISSION BRIEFS BEHOLD THE WHITE DEPTHS

"I don't know much about space whales, so I'll just quote the Mission background files from HQ: 'Space whales are huge, incredibly long-lived creatures that slowly swim through the cosmos from star to star. At each star, they rest, feed and prepare for the next long journey through the deepest of the deep black. No one knows much about the whales, and when this pod was sighted, the *Hesperia's* captain—a Venusian named Fressen—volunteered to study the creatures while the opportunity presented itself.'

"The *Hesperia* began studying the pod four weeks ago, with the animal apparently oblivious to the ship's presence. As the ship approached more closely, the crew began reporting strange sensations of fear. These sensations would wax and wane, but generally grew worse the closer they got to the whales. During the last close run, the ship drastically altered course and collided with the back of the pod's alpha male, which Fressen had dubbed 'Blowie.' The *Hesperia* remains stranded there, and the status of the crew is currently unknown.'

"Well, that's it. Wanna guess what our next move is?"

Patrolman is suddenly afraid of and why! The other Patrolmen must work to calm the panicking crewmember or members down.

Scene 2: Once on the whale's back, it's time to get to the *Hesperia*. They'll have to walk over the whale's back and then try to enter the stranded ship. The Patrolmen have several options: try to contact the crew again, try to open the pressure locks from the outside, or perhaps even cut their way in. Once inside, things take a turn for the worse. Some of the *Hesperia's* crew have been driven insane with fear and will attack on sight (use the Space Pirate Minion and/or Jovian Barbarian Minion on pages 117-118, *Cosmic Patrol Core Rulebook*, as a base). There are eight insane humans on the *Hesperia* and six sane (but frightened) humans. The Patrolmen must deal with

the insane members as they see fit and try to locate the sane members. Capt. Fressen is one of the sane crewmembers, and asks the Patrolmen to retrieve his notes on the whales—and their apparent fear-inducing defense mechanism—from his quarters at the front of the ship. Players must roll for fear effects at the beginning of each turn.

Scene 3: Once the *Hesperia's* crew has been located (sane or otherwise), it's time to make your escape. The Patrolmen can either attempt to take them back to their own ship or fix the *Hesperia*. Before the final blast off, a strong wave of fear hits the crew. The LN should roll 1D4. The result is the number of sane *Hesperia* crew members that finally break and go insane. They immediately attack the Patrolmen. Once the attackers are taken care of, the rocketship may blast off freely.

COSMIC PATROL MISSION BRIEFS

ZERO HOUR AT OUTPOST 310

Incoming orders from Cosmic Patrol HQ

The Cosmic Patrol Intelligence Service has located the *Laertes*-class pirate frigate *The Queen Mother*. The ship is still heavily damaged from a recent engagement at Athena Prime. The agent on board confirms that Captain Tuko is present, overseeing repairs.

The space pirate known as Tuko is considered armed and extremely dangerous. He is wanted for more than 32 counts of theft and piracy. His most famous crime was a raid on Pichette Mining's main facility, which caused 112 casualties, including Daniel Pichette, son of the company's founder.

Proceed at full speed to the classified coordinates and capture Tuko alive. He is to be remanded under heavy guard to the penal facility on Nextron to await trial.

Objectives

- › Capture the notorious space pirate Tuko
- › Repair and refuel at Outpost 310
- › Fend off the vigilantes looking for revenge on Tuko

Cues

- › innocent lives at stake › why wait till the judge sentences him?
- › Lawbot Bravo-7 at your s-s-s-ervice › Pichette Mining, Incorporated
- › Tuko killed Pichette's family › *The Queen Mother*
- › I'm innocent until proven guilty, remember?
- › Nathan Pichette will double the bounty

Tags

- › vigilante › last stand › fear › innocents › space pirates › scruffy-looking
- › shifting loyalty › father's love › bounty hunters

COSMIC PATROL MISSION BRIEFS

ZERO HOUR AT OUTPOST 310

"It's a shame that the universe is a dangerous place. Even though humans have reached the stars, they still feel the need to kill each other over what they perceive as valuable. Piracy is still all too common out here.

"Pirates live and die by their reputation. Resist, and he laughs as he sends you out the airlock—if you survive the battle. Surrender, and he takes what he wants, but leaves your ship intact enough to drift to port.

"Tuko has killed countless people in pursuit of plunder. *The Queen Mother* is a symbol of man's greed and inhumanity toward his fellow man. Let's take it out."

THE SETTING

Outpost 310 is a small outpost on the frontier. It exists primarily as a hub for asteroid miners to unload their finds in exchange for small pieces of civilization. A quiet community lives on the station and does their best to keep things quiet and orderly. The lawbot is decent enough to handle any minor infractions between townsfolk and miners, but is not programmed for the trouble having a major fugitive on board causes.

ENEMIES/OBSTACLES

Scene 1: This mission begins with the clash of boarding tubes as the Patrolmen board Tuko's pirate flagship *The Queen Mother*. The battle is fierce, but the outcome is never in doubt. Tuko is clever enough to surrender before he is killed. Better to live another day...and possibly cut a deal to get out of custody.

Scene 2: The patrolmen arrive at Outpost 310 to refuel and repair their ship. The word is out about their prisoner. The head of the largest mining company in the sector, Nathan Pichette, has made it clear that the sooner Tuko is dead, the better. The Patrolmen must keep their charge alive long enough for their ship to be returned to space readiness.

Scene 3: Pichette arrives to take matters into his own hands. He brings a crew of bounty hunters with him to make sure Tuko does not leave the station alive. He doesn't care if he has to atomize the Patrolmen to get what he wants, and is rich enough to think he can buy his way out of any legal trouble. Can the Patrolmen ensure that justice is served the right way?

TREACHERY COMES TO ROOST

Incoming orders from Cosmic Patrol HQ:

Every year, Baron Oberon Furst of Skylos holds a dinner to honor the men and women of the Cosmic Patrol.

Your crew has been selected for this honor. Consult the accompanying data tapes on Oberon Furst, Octaviana Furst and Stratos society. Dress uniforms are required.

Furst is an important part of our efforts to protect the galaxy, and is an honored supporter of the Patrol. Generously accept any offers of hospitality.

Objectives

- › Attend the dinner as representatives of the Cosmic Patrol
- › Clear themselves of Oberon Furst's murder
- › Bring Octaviana Furst to justice

Cues

- › The man in the mirrored mask › Baroness has a certain ring to it
- › proper manners › A Venusian waltz? How daring! › The Roost
- › Seize them! › Leave no prisoner alive!

Tags

- › royalty › diplomacy › open air › revolt › poison
- › wrongful accusation › honor › lies › Skylos

THE SETTING

The Barons of Skylos supply a large amount of the raw resources required to power the Cosmic Patrol's fractum drives. The planet itself is a gas giant. The sky barons live in richly decorated castles that float above the planet. The Furst

COSMIC PATROL MISSION BRIEFS

TREACHERY COMES TO ROOST

"The Patrol keeps the peace throughout the galaxy. Most of the time it does so through rockets running at redline and ray guns blasting at our most vile enemies. But sometimes, it has to take to the most deadly battlefield of them all—the courts of diplomacy.

"The moons of Skylos pattern themselves similar to ancient Earth baronies. The resources are passed down from relative to relative. Oberon Furst supplies us with the materials that let us accomplish our other goals throughout the galaxy. He and his sister Octaviana are the most important Barons on Skylos. If we impress them, they'll be sure to keep us flying and fighting for years to come.

"As far as missions go, I've seen far worse. Tell the Baron some stories of your exploits. Look good in your dress uniform. Get a free ten-course meal. Dance with some pretty princesses. But always keep your eyes and ears open. It's almost like shore leave, except we're getting paid to do it."

castle is also known for its infamous dungeon — a collection of walkways, posts, and beams known as The Roost.

ENEMIES/OBSTACLES

Scene 1: The Patrolmen attend a dinner in their honor aboard Baron Furst's Sky Palace. Baron Furst offers a toast in their honor. When he drops dead mid-toast, Oberon's treacherous sister, Octaviana, accuses the Patrolmen of poisoning the Baron and throws them in the dungeon before they can protest.

Scene 2: The Patrolmen discover Octaviana's plans to usurp her brother and take control of the family fortune. The Patrolmen must escape the dungeon and find proof of Octaviana's treachery. The Roost holds one other noteworthy prisoner—a man in a mirrored helmet to conceal his identity. Could this be Oberon's son? Oberon himself? The supplier of the poison?

Scene 3: The new Baroness wastes little time in her coronation ceremony. Her first act is to order the execution of all the prisoners in the Roost. The Patrolmen must overthrow the power-mad Baroness before she cements her iron-fisted grab for control of The Roost. Expect a grand battle in the throne room featuring rayguns, sword duels, and plenty of heroics.

COSMIC PATROL MISSION BRIEFS

ESCAPE FROM NEGATRAZ

Incoming orders from Cosmic Patrol HQ:

Calling all Patrolmen... Calling all Patrolmen... This is an Alpha Priority alert. Proceed at full throttle to Negatraz Penitentiary.

Three fugitives have escaped from the Negative Sector. Security protocols have kept the immaterial prisoners from escaping the penitentiary itself. However, they have been known to be able to subjugate the personalities or other staff members in attempts to leave the premises. Only Patrolmen are authorized to leave the facility after a thorough screening by Dr. Valentin Oriel, the facility's chief psychologist.

Fugitive One: Carla Vatos. Sentenced for selling her rocketship designs to the Eiger and Automen after they were built for the Cosmic Patrol.

Fugitive Two: Lodor. A deadly Martian mercenary. One of the deadliest axe fighters in the cosmos. Destroyed three patrolships and their crews in the attempt to bring him in.

Fugitive Three: Neko Owens. Convicted of the great "Venusian Prisoner" scheme, bilking hundreds of people out of thousands of credits and selling Platform Gamma at least twice.

Report any suspicious behavior amongst the guards to Dr. Oriel immediately.

Objectives

- › Repair the Negative Sector Projector
- › Discover the location of the fugitives
- › Return the fugitives to the Negative Sector

Cues

- › Who can you trust? › he never did that before › Lodor smash!
- › Neko flips a coin when he gets nervous › only one way off this rock
- › how do we get them out of the body?

Tags

- › prison › criminals › guards › old enemies › possession › battle of wills

COSMIC PATROL MISSION BRIEFS

ESCAPE FROM NEGATRAZ

"You never been to Negatraz, kid? Course not, since you're record was squeaky clean to get into the Patrol. But you still want to make it out here at least once to witness your handiwork. The bad guys don't go away. Instead, they get put here.

"Sometimes when a lead goes cold, you gotta rattle the cage and see what falls out. These cons gossip worse than a sewing circle. You can bet a square Martian nickel that even if the speaker pigeons on the outside aren't talking, somebody in here has heard something.

"Course, if you want to talk to the A-1 low lives, they have to go get them from the flipside, the Negative Sector. Sometimes I almost feel sorry for those suckers. Sometimes."

THE SETTING

Negatraz is a prison built out of an old mining facility on an asteroid. Criminals caught by the Cosmic Patrol are sent here to serve out their sentences. Those who commit the most heinous crimes are sent to The Negative Sector via an energy ray conversion device. It is considered more humane than a death sentence.

ENEMIES/OBSTACLES

Scene 1: Lodor is the easiest fugitive to find. He seeks out the strongest person on the station. If there's a Martian available, so much the better. He knows he can't talk his way out of much, so he tries to play the strong, silent type. If that doesn't work, out comes the axe.

Scene 2: Owens flits from body to body, currently enjoying his immaterial form. His fatal flaw is that he likes to gamble no matter what body he's in. Lay a bet down, and he'll want in on the action. He tries to escape by possessing as many people as he can in quick succession and fleeing in the confusion.

Scene 3: Vatos made a beeline for the last place anyone would look. She possessed Dr. Oriel at the first opportunity and has been hiding inside him ever since, biding her time. If it becomes clear that Dr. Oriel won't be allowed off the station, she will attempt to possess one of the Patrolmen to get free.

THE BEST MEN OF THE COSMIC PATROL

Incoming orders from Cosmic Patrol HQ:

Set your homing beacon to Platform Ares. Contact Captain Anders of the Rocketship *Syrtis* upon your arrival.

Anders is a fine Captain and an inspiring figure to many Patrol members. The only thing more legendary than his exploits than are his attempts to woo Malatina, the Warrior Princess of the Red Mojave. To wed his bride, he must first gain the permission of Aelita, the Suzerain of Mars. His repeated requests for an audience have been denied.

Captain Anders selected his wedding party from his best friends and colleagues to journey across the treacherous wastes of Mars and risk his life to fight for Malatina's hand.

Objectives

- › Agree to assist Captain Anders
- › Journey across the Red Mojave
- › Defeat Kubak in front of the Suzerain of Mars

Cues

- › rockslide › cut rope › a sniper › cheap shot › poisoned water
- › Katanga beast attack › cave dweller › slip and falls › deadly crevasse
- › seven days › I must retrieve my axe

Tags

- › mountain climbing › clever trap › Mars › sandstorm › desert
- › tribal › brothers › tradition

THE BEST MEN OF THE COSMIC PATROL

"It is good to see you again, my friends—I only wish it was under happier circumstances. It seems I gave my heart to a woman who was already promised to another against her will.

"Malatina didn't just leave Mars because she wanted to see the galaxy. She was promised to Kubak when they were young, and he still has a claim on her. I hate to use my status in the Patrol for my own gain, but she's told me she'd rather die than be with him. I believe her.

"There is one way to settle this matter. Kubak and I must journey to the top of Olympus Mons. We have seven days to accomplish this task. Assuming both of us survive the climb, once there, he and I will battle, and only one of us shall return.

"I ask you, my friends, to be at my side during this journey. We must travel up the mountain together. It will not be easy. I would ask this of no one else. If you do not help me, I will go alone. Kubak is expecting me by myself, and will certainly win the honor. But I trust him as far as I could throw him on Venus."

THE SETTING

Mars is an unforgiving mistress. The climb to the top of the mountain is a perfect example. There are wild creatures, sandstorms, and other natural challenges all along the way. The Patrolmen must manage supplies, treat injuries, and not exhaust themselves before the final battle.

ENEMIES/OBSTACLES

Scene 1: Anders must convince the Suzerain that he is worthy of Malatina's hand. He needs the Patrolmen to help him convince the Suzerain to let the suitors settle their differences in an ancient trial of combat and cunning.

Scene 2: The Patrolmen have a week to reach the peak of Mons Olympus. It is a difficult climb all by itself. Kubak lays traps and ambushes to weaken and fatigue Captain Anders and his party.

Scene 3: At the top of the mountain, Kubak and Anders engage in one-on-one combat. As their red steel axes clash, Kubak's hired mercenaries try to turn the fight in his favor.

COSMIC PATROL MISSION BRIEFS

THE INTERNAL FRONTIER

Incoming orders from Cosmic Patrol HQ:

COSMIC PATROL EYES ONLY - ERASE AFTER READING

Report immediately to Platform Beta. See Doctor Mortimer Lipscomb in the security area. Speak with no other personnel upon arrival.

Review dossier tapes on Coordinator Dyson and alien pathology. We have reason to believe he was purposely infected with an alien parasite and has slipped into a comatose state.

The Cosmic Patrol is dedicated to the exploration of any frontier. Even the ones we never thought to look into.

Objectives

- › Explore Dyson's physiology
- › Discover the secret of the alien parasite
- › Return before time runs out

Cues

- › Doctor Lipscomb, I presume? › Time is running out › experimental craft
- › fighting off intruders › eliminate the disease › there's a weak spot
- › Are those its children? › Careful where you shoot › Come back with a cure or don't come back at all › He's...changing into something...

Tags

- › heart › shrink ray › forbidden world › Micromizer ray › Dyson
- › threat › Earth › mind powers › Platform Beta › immune system
- › parasite › hatchlings › strange beauty › Dr. Lipscomb

COSMIC PATROL MISSION BRIEFS THE INTERNAL FRONTIER

"This is a day the Patrol has dreaded for some time. Coordinator Dyson lies at death's door.

"Someone introduced an alien parasite into his system. We've done everything we can to eliminate it, but nothing has worked. Dyson is currently in a coma, but we don't know how long it will last. We must take drastic action.

"You have been selected to be the first crew to use a Sub-Atomic Bio-Rocket. You will be injected inside Dyson and search for the problem. The technology is untested, time is critical, and the chance of coming home minimal.

"This is what you would call Tuesday, ja?"

THE SETTING

The Patrolmen are shrunk down to microscopic size to go inside Dyson's body and discover the alien parasite within. Not only must they deal with the human body's natural defenses trying to fight off invaders, they must eliminate the alien parasite that is trying to change Dyson into something else.

ENEMIES/OBSTACLES

Scene 1: The injection into Dyson's bloodstream takes the Patrolmen and their vessel on a high-octane ride through his veins and circulatory system. It's a test of any pilot's skill, not to mention gunners fending off the human immune system writ large.

Scene 2: Something malfunctions on the vessel that must be fixed externally. The repairs are a danger to anyone outside the ship, but the view is strangely beautiful. Even with the fix, time is running short. The Patrolmen now only have 24 hours to find Dyson's parasite.

Scene 3: The parasite is located—attached to Dyson's brain. But it is 10 times the size of the shrunken craft. They must figure out how to detach the parasite from Dyson's brain. The parasite won't make it easy, however. It hatches smaller versions of itself, each one the size of a shrunken crewman, for defense.

COSMIC PATROL MISSION BRIEFS

THE DISCIPLES OF ZORM

Incoming orders from Cosmic Patrol HQ:

Cosmic Patrol HQ received a message at 1350 hours from the famous recluse Borondo, who is believed to be one of the greatest scientific minds in the galaxy. A disagreement with Cosmic Patrol leaders on Venus sent him and his research vessel *The Periodic* to parts unknown.

Sightings over the past 20 years span everywhere from Coalsack to a hidden storage room on Platform Athena.

This transmission could be a hoax. It could be Borondo. Either way, we have to know.

You are to rendezvous with *The Periodic* as soon as possible. Exercise caution.

Objectives

- › Contact Borondo
- › Discover his horrible secret
- › Avoid being turned into Disciples of Zorm

Cues

- › too quiet › How does a robot know slang? › I wish I could cry
- › It is a painless process › those robots look angry › get back to the ship

Tags

- › mad science › Borondo › ODOM › 3V3 › SP4RT4N Project
- › darkness › quiet › brains › memories › beyond human › immortality

THE SETTING

The Periodic is a massive ship. It is eerily silent. The robots communicate via radio waves rather than talking. There are no living beings aboard. There

COSMIC PATROL MISSION BRIEFS

THE DISCIPLES OF ZORM

"Borondo was brilliant, even for a Venusian. His study of the Automen was crucial in turning the tide of battle. He made first contact with the Zorm "Ambassador" M34Bel. He should be one of those statues in the main hall of Platform Athena, staring out into space along side Einstein and Dyson.

"But he thought the Patrol didn't go far enough. They were too timid. He felt they were on the verge of so many breakthroughs, but were afraid to walk through the door. When the Patrol disagreed with his methods, he loaded up his ship and headed for the edge of the galaxy.

"If it is really Borondo, who knows what he's discovered? What he's built? Will he push us even beyond our current borders? Or will spending two decades in the deafening quiet of space have driven him mad?

"*The Periodic* is on our scopes. Opening hailing frequencies..."

are no status indicators or panels. All the crew are able to receive this data over radio waves. The ship has no visible weapons or weapons signatures.

ENEMIES/OBSTACLES

Scene 1: The ship docks with *The Periodic*. Borondo's robot servant, 0D0M, takes the Patrol on a tour of the ship. They are surrounded by robots, but soon notice something is amiss. 0D0M answers no questions about Borondo, but insists they accompany him to a dinner in their honor.

Scene 2: 0D0M reveals his true identity at dinner. He is Borondo's brain, transplanted into a robot body. Borondo relates the tale of how he studied the Zorm and saw great potential in their preservation of brains beyond their normal life span. He collected the other robots from castaways and now plans to test his technique on his prisoners—the Patrolmen!

Scene 3: Not only must the Patrolmen escape from Borondo's ship, they must do so while their technology rebels against them. *The Periodic* can make rayguns misfire, radios unable to broadcast, and force the Patrolmen to fight in complete darkness.

COSMIC PATROL MISSION BRIEFS

THE ROCKET PACK REBELS

Incoming orders from Cosmic Patrol HQ:

A Blue Alert has come in from Lomax Colony. The colonist reports they're being harassed by a gang of young men wearing rocket packs. The gang has caused multiple injuries and severe property damage.

Rocket pack rebels are a growing threat to peace and stability for frontier colonies. They move too quickly for local militias to catch, and can set up a new base of operations within hours.

The leader of these rebels is identified as Marvin "Chromeo" Arlen. Chromeo was dishonorably discharged from the Cosmic Patrol. His file is attached. It is a litany of every charge in the handbook.

Restore peace to the Lomax Colony and ground Chromeo—permanently.

Objectives

- › Protect the citizens of Lomax Colony
- › Track the Rocket Rebels to their home base on the old mining ship
- › Apprehend Chromeo, leader of the Rebel gang

Cues

- › If it isn't the Square Patrol › Hey man, wanna drag? › Put up your dukes, Patsie › Throggo been looking for a fight! › flying down the promenade disrupting things › They call that music? › The mayor's daughter is missing

Tags

- › rumble › rebellion › teenagers › chaos › bar brawl › fist fights
- › gangs › Ullara › Chromeo

THE SETTING

Lomax Colony is a small settlement near the coastline of Oracle's largest ocean. It's the kind of place where you could settle down after your Cosmic

COSMIC PATROL MISSION BRIEFS

THE ROCKET PACK REBELS

"Not everyone is cut out for this life. It takes bravery, discipline, and a desire to make the galaxy a better place. Everyone wants to be part of us, but not everyone makes the grade.

"If you're lucky, you wash out during basic training. No shame in that. Plenty of time to sign on as a freighter pilot or a colony ship. You can still get out and see the galaxy even if you aren't getting shot at by beautiful women or hideous aliens.

"The worst ones are those who are kicked out of the patrol. They usually end up as drunks, criminals, pirates, or worse. They burn out like emergency rockets.

"The ones to look out for are the ones who don't have anything left to lose."

Patrol hitch and raise a family. Everyone knows everyone else's name there. Then the Rocket Rebels showed up. People lock their doors now and fear for their daughters. The Rebels hang out in M-3L's Diner and harass the old robot for free meals and drinks.

ENEMIES/OBSTACLES

Scene 1: Ullara, a Red Amazon running with the rocket rebels, decides she wants to head into town and have a little fun. She arrives in town shortly after the Patrolmen speak with Mayor Norman Lomax. It's up to the Patrolmen to limit the amount of damage a drunken Red Amazon can do to a sleepy colony town.

Scene 2: A group of rebels roars into town to retrieve Ullara. They try bribery at first, but soon turn violent. The patrolmen have to track the rowdy rocket men back to their headquarters inside a crashed mining ship a few kilometers outside of town.

Scene 3: Chromeo confronts the Patrolmen ruining his new livelihood. He blames the Cosmic Patrol for the downturn of his life, and wants to make an example of the crew. If he can steal their ship, he can blast off from this podunk planet and really live large.

COSMIC PATROL MISSION BRIEFS

THE ATOMIC MENAGERIE

Incoming orders from Cosmic Patrol HQ:

Rocketship *Brahms* missed check-in at 0900 Sol Central time. You have been dispatched to Captain Studebaker's last known position. Studebaker was sent to investigate reports of Uth ships near the Brubaker Nebula.

Be on the lookout for Uth ships in the area of the Brubaker Nebula. Recover the *Brahms* and determine the fate of the crew.

Use extreme caution during the patrol. No distress signal has been triggered, but be advised that you are going in blind. Keep one eye on the Nebula and one out for the enemy.

Objectives

- › Investigate the being known as Charlie
- › Recover any survivors from Charlie's collection
- › Break free of the mysterious Atomic Menagerie

Cues

- › Brubaker Nebula › rocketship graveyard › Rocketship *Brahms*
- › a strange blue light › I never thought I'd see one of those
- › An enemy in the same cell › Time to play war! › is this a dream?
- › Tell me a story, tiny toy › But I want to stay up longer!

Tags

- › toys › play › children › childlike › war › battle › combat › fight › war
- › broken › tantrum › menagerie › breakout › escape › Uth

THE SETTING

The Brubaker Nebula is a place every space traveller has heard of, but few speak about. It is the source of several mysterious disappearances, from luxury liners to warships. Superstitious spacemen won't go anywhere near it. Others believe there is a scientific explanation for the disappearances. The Nebula is

COSMIC PATROL MISSION BRIEFS THE ATOMIC MENAGERIE

"Oh, my aching head...everyone check in? Everyone present? Where are we?"

"The last thing I remember, we were on board the *Brahms*. The ship was completely deserted. They must have gotten caught with their pants down.

"Then there was that strange blue light. I couldn't move. Next thing I know I'm stuck in this glass room with the rest of the crew.

"Wait...look, there! That's a Tyrannosaurus Rex! In that container, it's a Deneb Scarabslicer! Why are the humans in that case dressed differently?"

"Does anyone hear that laughing? I think I heard that laughing when the blue light took us..."

a trans-dimensional gateway to the toy collection of an energy being that calls itself Charlie. Charlie is young, emotional and impressionable. And he's always on the look out for new toys because he's constantly breaking the ones he takes.

ENEMIES/OBSTACLES

Scene 1: The Patrolmen awaken bathed in a strange blue light. Across from them, the Uth are in cages of their own. They seem to be part of some sort of collection. A strange spheroid light with the voice of a child floats between them. The light is Charlie, and the Patrolmen are now his toys.

Scene 2: He opens various "jars," and plays war with his toys. The Patrolmen might find themselves in a battle with a dinosaur, or reenacting Gettysburg with the Uth on the other side. Except when a toy dies, Charlie the light zaps it away to an unknown place.

Scene 3: The toys conspire to break away from Charlie's collection. A rocketship is on the top shelf, which requires a treacherous climb past dangerous creatures and unknown devices. The Patrolmen and the Uth must work together to escape becoming permanent additions to Charlie's Atomic Menagerie.

MURDER ON PLATFORM ATHENA

Incoming orders from Cosmic Patrol HQ:

Engage your fractum drive and set your navigation computers for Platform Athena. You have been requested by Director Rahm Singh to assist in this year's Solar Symposium

Your primary duty on board is the security and safety of the participants. Director Singh can modify those orders as he sees fit. The Symposium is an exhibition for experimental theories and prototypes. Be careful around these devices.

The centerpiece of the Symposium is the Solar Shield Awards. The Solar Shield is awarded to the scientist whose contribution is found to be most worthy in advancing the study of science.

Once the symposium is complete, your crew is authorized for three days leave on Venus. Enjoy the sun. We need our Patrolmen rested and ready for the next crisis.

Objectives

- › Assist Director Singh
- › Survive any science accidents
- › Solve the murder of Narama, Venus Science Shield nominee

Cues

- › Atmospheric Extraction Device › Televator › Venus Science Shield
- › Lost again! › They called me mad › You haven't seen the last of me
- › Too...much...power... › I have just the device to help
- › Some things in here don't react well to ray guns

Tags

- › prototype › science! › suspect › Narama › evidence › false lead
- › alibi › Director Rahm Singh › explosions

COSMIC PATROL MISSION BRIEFS

MURDER ON PLATFORM ATHENA

"The Solar Symposium gathers the best and brightest minds from around the galaxy. The Venusians love to try and outshine them all, which is why the gathering usually takes place on Platform Athena.

"The platform is stuffed full of every strange scientific device you can think of...and quite a few you haven't yet. This may seem like a chome buffer detail, but you never know when something is going to overheat, or reverse polarity, or be sabotaged, or something worse. Remember, the Venusians made the Automen. Things cooked up in a lab can be just as dangerous as a pirate or a cave-in on a forbidden planet.

"The main event is the Solar Shield presentation. Every year, someone hopes the Venusians won't win. Every year they find a way to do it. The favorite this year is Namara, for her work in developing an Atmospheric Extraction Device. What does it do? Ask the Venusian."

THE SETTING

Platform Athena is the crown jewel of Venus. Designed by its best scientists, the halls contain examples of the finest men and women devoted to science.

ENEMIES/OBSTACLES

Scene 1: The Science Shield ceremony gathers everyone in the main auditorium.

The platform is jam-packed with strange and wonderful scientific devices ranging from refinements of existing designs to exotic theories that are deadly and groundbreaking. The scientists may ask the Patrolmen to assist, or they may be assigned to other duties by Director Singh. A science-minded character might even attempt to win a coveted Science Shield.

Scene 2: The winner, a Venusian named Narama, is announced. But she is not present to accept the award. In fact, when pages are sent to her room, she is found dead. The Patrolmen must find clues to the identity of the murderer. A few twists and turns makes things interesting.

Scene 3: The Patrolmen confront the murderer, who attempts to escape. The murderer turns as many of the devices in exhibition against the Patrolmen as possible. The murderer must be caught before decades of scientific experimentation are destroyed in the chase.

COSMIC PATROL MISSION BRIEFS

GAZING INTO THE ABYSS

Incoming orders from Cosmic Patrol HQ:

Cosmic Patrol HQ received a strange transmission at 1311 hours from a ship near a black hole just outside the Coalsack Dead Zone. It was a coded message on a restricted frequency. We have not yet broken the code.

We have no ships able to broadcast in that area. Long-range scans indicate that the unidentified vessel may have come through the black hole rather than being trapped by it.

Exercise caution as you approach. If the ship is transmitting on a military frequency, it may be some kind of warship. Assume it is armed and ready to strike.

Objectives

- › Navigate the treacherous event horizon
- › Investigate the mystery ship
- › Discover how the mystery crew broadcast on the frequency

Cues

- › He looks just like me › we've decoded the transmission
- › So, you're the captain in your universe › How can you not trust yourself?
- › Cestus Pax War Rocketship *Ajax* › So many guns › Pain Pistols

Tags

- › mirrors › evil twin › mirror universe › familiar yet difference
- › black is white › good is evil › black hole › unstable › repairs

COSMIC PATROL MISSION BRIEFS GAZING INTO THE ABYSS

"Though we live in an era of amazing scientific accomplishment, superstition still exists. Astronauts come to believe illogical things about the spacecraft they use. Never wear a new helmet on a first space walk. Never be the first astronaut to take rocks off a planet. Leave one drink in the bottle so you have a reason to return home.

"Mention a black hole in front of an astronaut, and most space jockeys will clam up right quick. They are the storms from which no one returns. Look too closely at one, and you'll see the faces of all the men and women killed by it. These sound awfully close to old Earth sea tales, which is understandable. The black hole represents the ultimate unknown.

"Except now HQ has sent us straight at one. They think a ship has come through, and we get to be the canaries going into a very big coal mine."

THE SETTING

The War Rocketship *Ajax* is a mirror version of the Patrolmen craft. Except it is built for battle, not exploration. The interiors are darker and sharper. Familiar rooms on their vessel take on a menacing light. The bridge looks more like a war room with dramatic under lighting. The ship was damaged during the trip through the black hole.

ENEMIES/OBSTACLES

Scene 1: The vessel identifies itself as War Rocketship *Ajax*. The crewmembers are almost exact replicas of the Patrolmen, but with small, dark differences. They request the Patrolmen's help to repair their vessel. During the repairs, things grow tense as the two crews learn about each other's universes.

Scene 2: With the repairs complete, the opposite crew reveals a final treachery. Their empire on the other side of the black hole has conquered their universe. They plan to replace the Patrolmen and scout out an invasion plan before returning home through the black hole.

Scene 3: The black hole begins to collapse. The two ships must race out of the event horizon. Only one will survive.

COSMIC PATROL MISSION BRIEFS

THE MURDOCK MUTINY

Incoming orders from Cosmic Patrol HQ:

Distress signal from Rocketship *Melville* received 1200 isopulses ago. Last known coordinates were near the Ragnar system.

The *Melville*, under command of Murdock, Roger T. 12 years of Cosmic Patrol service, with four commendations and the Distinguished Beryllium Sphere for actions above and beyond duty.

The *Melville's* last data tapes deposited at Sigma Station point to Eiger dreadnaught activity in the vicinity. DO NOT ENGAGE. Probability of survival > 15%. Probability of victory > 5%.

Proceed at full speed to the Ragnar system, but exercise caution once your ship arrives.

Objectives

- › Recover the survivors of the Rocketship *Melville* from Ragna-4
- › Prevent Captain Murdock from using the Patrolmen's craft to get his revenge
- › Avoid destruction by the Eiger dreadnaught *Kreekov*

Cues

- › eruptions everywhere › the Eiger will return at any moment
- › Murdock will get his revenge or die trying › cosmoscope interference
- › data tapes › earthquake › who attacked whom?
- › Distinguished Beryllium Sphere

Tags

- › betrayal › tension › revenge › loyalty › silent running
- › emergency power › unstable › secrets › faded glory › old soldiers

COSMIC PATROL MISSION BRIEFS THE MURDOCK MUTINY

"I served under Captain Murdock during my first tour. I was a fresh-faced zipper who'd never been outside the Solar System. The first time I saluted him, he let out a belly laugh that shook the rocketship walls. Then he clapped me on the back and poured me my first glass of Martian Red Whiskey to welcome me aboard.

"Murdock made his name at the Battle of Lagas Prime. The first battle where the Patrol engaged an Eiger fleet and didn't back down. Dyson himself pinned the Sphere on Murdock's chest. I wish I could have fought alongside him, but I sure as speck made sure he had a bottle from the same distillery when he was given the Melville as his new command.

"Ragnar-4 is a Crimson Advisory planet. You'd have to be foolish or insane to set foot on it for more than five minutes. Roger Murdock has served and bled for the Patrol. If something goes wrong, and it comes down to him or me making it off that blasted rock, I know which choice I'll make."

THE SETTING

Ragna-4 is the fourth planet in the Ragna system, which is still forming around its young sun. Volcanoes, geysers, and earthquakes make the recovery very dangerous. The system is chock-full of cosmic radiation and still-forming planetoids. The sooner the Patrolmen can rescue Murdock and get out of the system, the better off they'll be.

ENEMIES/OBSTACLES

Scene 1: The Melville crashed on Ragna-4, an unstable volcanic planet. Getting to the wreck is no easy task. The only safe place to land the Patrolmen's craft requires a trek on foot to the wreck. The only survivor is Captain Roger Murdock, a decorated officer.

Scene 2: Murdock is the only survivor. The flight logs have been damaged, and will take time to restore them. Restoring the data tapes tells a far different story than the one Murdock told the Patrolmen. Murdock is a respected member of the Cosmic Patrol. Do they confront him with the truth?

Scene 3: The Patrolmen come across the *Kreekov* as they leave the system. The Eiger ship is damaged, and Murdock is certain another attack will destroy the *Kreekov*. If the Patrolmen don't attack, Murdock will take matters into his own hands.

COSMIC PATROL MISSION BRIEFS

PRESCIENT CARGO

Incoming Orders from Cosmic Patrol HQ:

Adjust course immediately for the included cosmo-coordinates, and proceed at full-speed. Your crew must intercept a suspected pirate vessel headed to Gny before it reaches the moon's no-fly cordon. If you cannot, the mission is terminated and moves into Intelligence Service jurisdiction.

The galleon is illegally transporting Cosmic Patrol property that must be retrieved and escorted directly to Gliese 581. The property is a top-secret CP robot, codename "Duster"— dossier included. Duster became self-aware 5 days ago, then gained passage on the vessel shortly thereafter in its effort to defect to Metalloid.

!!DO NOT ENGAGE DUSTER WITH PHASE GUNS!!

The use of non-aggressive methods is highly encouraged. Should the vessel's crew be confirmed as pirates, their elimination is authorized to retrieve Duster.

Objectives

- › Negotiate boarding of target vessel for inspection
- › Determine if vessel crewmen are pirates
- › Locate CP robot, codename "Duster"
- › Take Duster into custody and escort it to Gliese 581

Cues

- › missing weapon › defecting robot › contraband › ancient rocketship
- › can't catch'em all

Tags

- › Metalloid › robots › Gliese 581 › Oort Cloud › Jupiter › pirates
- › Neptunian Mind Plants › Coalsack Dead Zone › moral dilemma
- › Intelligence Service

COSMIC PATROL MISSION BRIEFS PRESCIENT CARGO

"I'll be damned if the IS gets anywhere near this rescue!"

"Recovery, you mean—HQ was pretty clear about the 'bot being property. Better that we not get soft on its 'self-aware' act."

"Venusian robo-phobia shouldn't win the day either, Patrolman."

"We're gaining on the ship. Intercept in three mi... wait—orders said *Galleon*-class, right? This can't be right. Data terminal just bumped it up to freighter."

"Not possible. Travelling this fast?"

"Correction—a freighter linked to... a Jovian junk? Is this a prank? Who's been screwing with my terminal?!"

THE SETTING

The Jovian junk is in no shape to have made it this far off-moon, let alone play tug-boat to a giant ice cube. Based on their pace, the "freighter" must be pulling them, using a force not yet covered in the CP engineering curriculum. This force also refuses the Patrolmen's orders to cut its "engines."

ENEMIES/OBSTACLES

Scene 1: The crew must negotiate boarding the junk. Its captain claims they tried to dump the "waste container" just outside the Oort Cloud, but since exiting the cloud have been unable to slow or let go of the blue beast. Furthermore, the junk's only docking collar is stuck to the monster. A dangerous EVA may be the crew's only way to get aboard.

Scene 2: The crew must inspect both vessels. The captain wasn't kidding about being stuck and dragged, but lied about their cargo. The hollow, zero-G iceberg holds twenty robot stowaways, including Duster, and a graviplex greenhouse of juvenile Neptunian Mind Plants. There's little time to make sense of this vessel and its occupants—the no-fly cordon's coming up fast.

Scene 3: The crew must deal with a defiant Duster. Fearing detainment, Duster threatens to turn itself off, which it says will not make anyone happy. Duster explains that it's a reactor for anti-entropions—the substance that created the Coalsack Dead Zone. Duster laments on what it feels like when your life's purpose is to delete the possibility of life itself.

REPEAT TO YOURSELF "IT'S JUST A GAME"

WATCH OUT FOR SNAKES OR EVERYTHING I NEED TO KNOW ABOUT SCIENCE FICTION I LEARNED FROM *MYSTERY SCIENCE THEATER 3000* (WELL, ~~TEN~~ EIGHT THINGS, ANYWAY...)

- 1 YOU DON'T HAVE TO PUT 'SPACE' IN FRONT OF EVERYTHING TO MAKE IT SOUND COOL. GO EASY ON THE MODIFIERS!
(*MANHUNT IN SPACE, EPISODE 413*)
- 2 DON'T TRY TO KILL ANYONE WITH A FORKLIFT.
(*FUGITIVE ALIEN, EPISODE 310*)
- 3 TROUBLE WITH MARTIANS? CALL...SANTA CLAUS?
(*SANTA CLAUS CONQUERS THE MARTIANS, EPISODE 321*)
- 4 ALMOST ANYTHING CAN BE REVIVED/GROWN WITH ATOMIC ENERGY.
(*THE ATOMIC BRAIN, THE CRAWLING HAND, GRASSHOPPERS...*)
- 5 RADAR IS ABOUT AS POWERFUL AS ATOMIC ENERGY.
(*COMMANDO CODY SERIES; RADAR SECRET SERVICE, EPISODE 520*)
- 6 IF YOU ENCOUNTER A SHAMBLING HORROR, JUST DO IT A FAVOR AND CRAWL INTO ITS MOUTH.
(*THE CREEPING TERROR, EPISODE 606*)
- 7 WAFFLES!
(*THE SAGA OF THE VIKING WOMEN..., EPISODE 317*)
- 8 SLAB BULKHEAD. THICK McRUNFAST. BOLD BIGFLANK. SMOKE MANMUSCLE. BUFF DRINKSLOT. BUTCH DEADLIFT. SMASH LAMPJAW. DIRK HARDPEC. BEAT PUNCHMEAT. RIP SLAGCHEEK. CRUD BONEMEAL. BIG McLARGEHUGE. BOB JOHNSON (OH, WAIT...)
(*SPACE MUTINY, EPISODE 819*)

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