

RETRO ROCKETS

Number Two

for use with

**THRILLING
TALES**



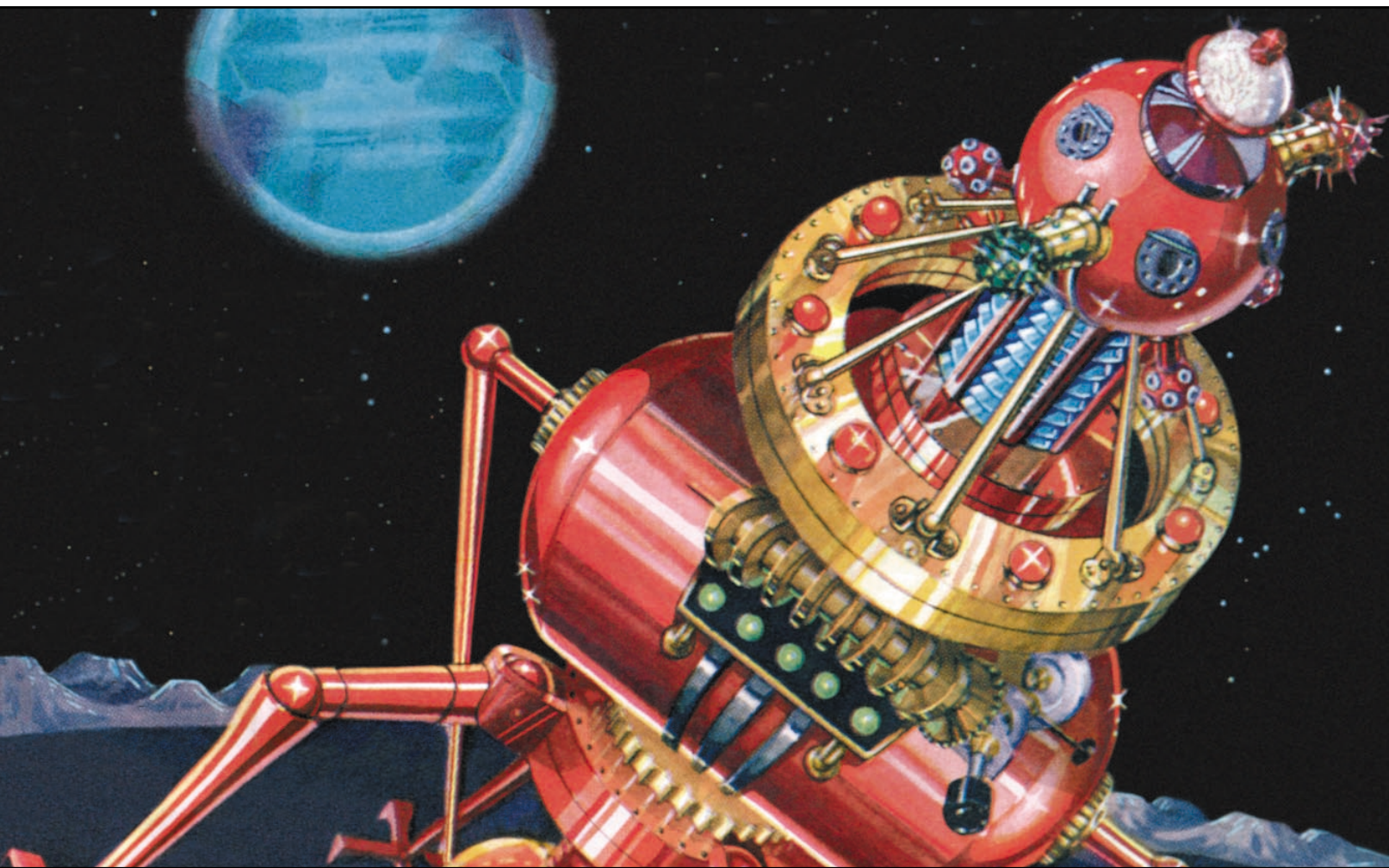
by Gareth-Michael Skarka & Philip Reed



■ Introduction

Welcome back, Cadet! *Retro Rockets*, a series detailing pulp-SF rocket ships for your d20 campaigns, continues with two more rockets and a nifty rocket belt!

Just as in the first volume, which shouldn't shock you at all, the rocket ships in these pages are written up as vehicles, using the standard Modern D20 vehicle format. Game masters wishing to use the Future SRD can adapt the vessel with that system's starship rules – although, as presented in the pulps, these ships are universally treated more like traditional aircraft than starships .



Written by **Gareth-Michael Skarka**
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■ Ranger's Rocket Belt

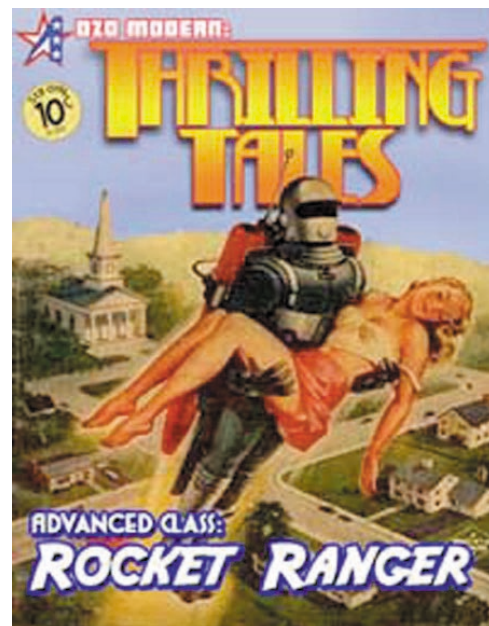
The *Rocket Belt* is an ingenious design, featuring a small, yet powerful engine designed to grant the wearer high-speed flight for short periods of time. Once activated, the Rocket Belt unleashes high-power anti-gravity waves, which propels the wearer upward at high speed.

There is a 5% non-cumulative chance for the Rocket Belt to misfire during ignition, stalling the ignition system for 1d4 rounds unless a successful Repair skill check (DC15) is made to clear the flooded ignition valves. In flight, the wearer has a top speed of 1000ft. per round (200 squares).

If the wearer reduces his speed to 50ft or less for two or more rounds, he must land or increase his speed to prevent the loss of momentum necessary to maintain his flight. In routine operation, the wearer of the Rocket Belt is typically not required to make Pilot checks with every action, however the GM may see fit to penalize wearers who do not have levels in the *Rocket Ranger* advanced class (available from Adamant Entertainment). Maneuvers in combat also require Pilot checks, and specialized maneuvers can be found as class abilities of the Rocket Ranger. The Rocket Belt has a hardness of 10 and 30 hit points. If the Rocket Belt suffers enough damage to drop its hit points to 0, it explodes dealing 10d6 points of damage to the wearer.

Adventure Hooks

- The player-characters are organized by a wealthy industrialist into a team of high-flying heroes, mobilized to assist in the home front during World War II, fighting saboteurs and Nazi Agents. Can the Eagle Legion defend America's shores against the insidious plans of the Third Reich?
- ...Or perhaps the wealthy industrialist has convinced the normally conservative War Department to field-test the Rocket Belt on the battlefields of Europe. The player-characters are a team of volunteers from various branches of the service, trained in the use of the Rocket Belt and sent into battle as a combination of airborne shock-troops and public relations coup.
- For a completely different style of campaign, make the player characters members of the Rocket Patrol (see last installment for details), "walking the beat" in a futuristic city as Rocket-belt-wearing street cops.





■ Ranger's Rocket Belt

■ The Solar Striker

The world laughed at Doctor Emil Luxor when he said that he had discovered radio transmissions from an advanced civilization, emanating from inside the sun. Doctor Luxor hypothesized that the fiery mass of the sun was in fact a defensive screen of sorts, protecting the world that must surely lie beyond.

To that end, he built the *Solar Striker*, a one man rocketship designed to penetrate into the very heart of the Sun itself. With a skin of purest Luxorium, a metal invented by the Doctor himself, the *Striker* is capable

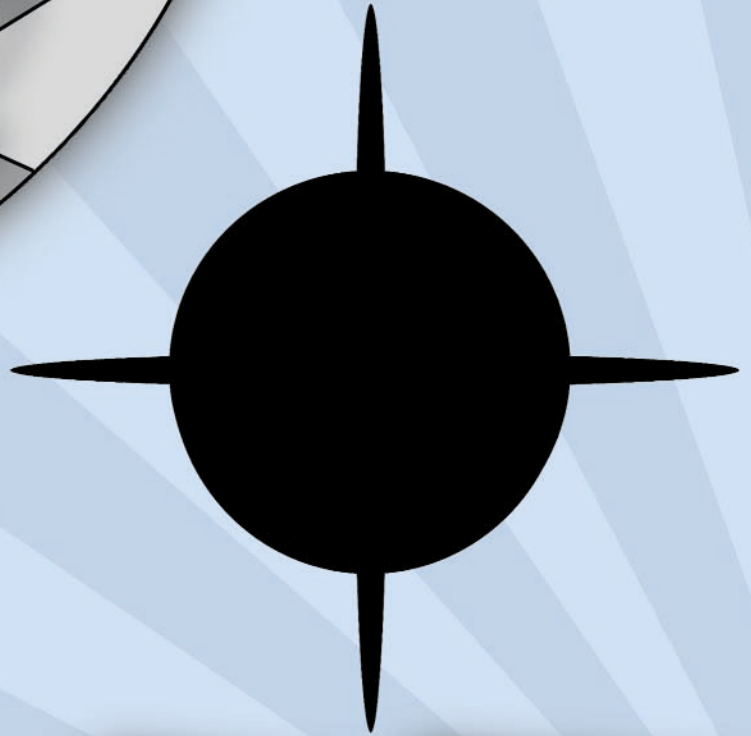
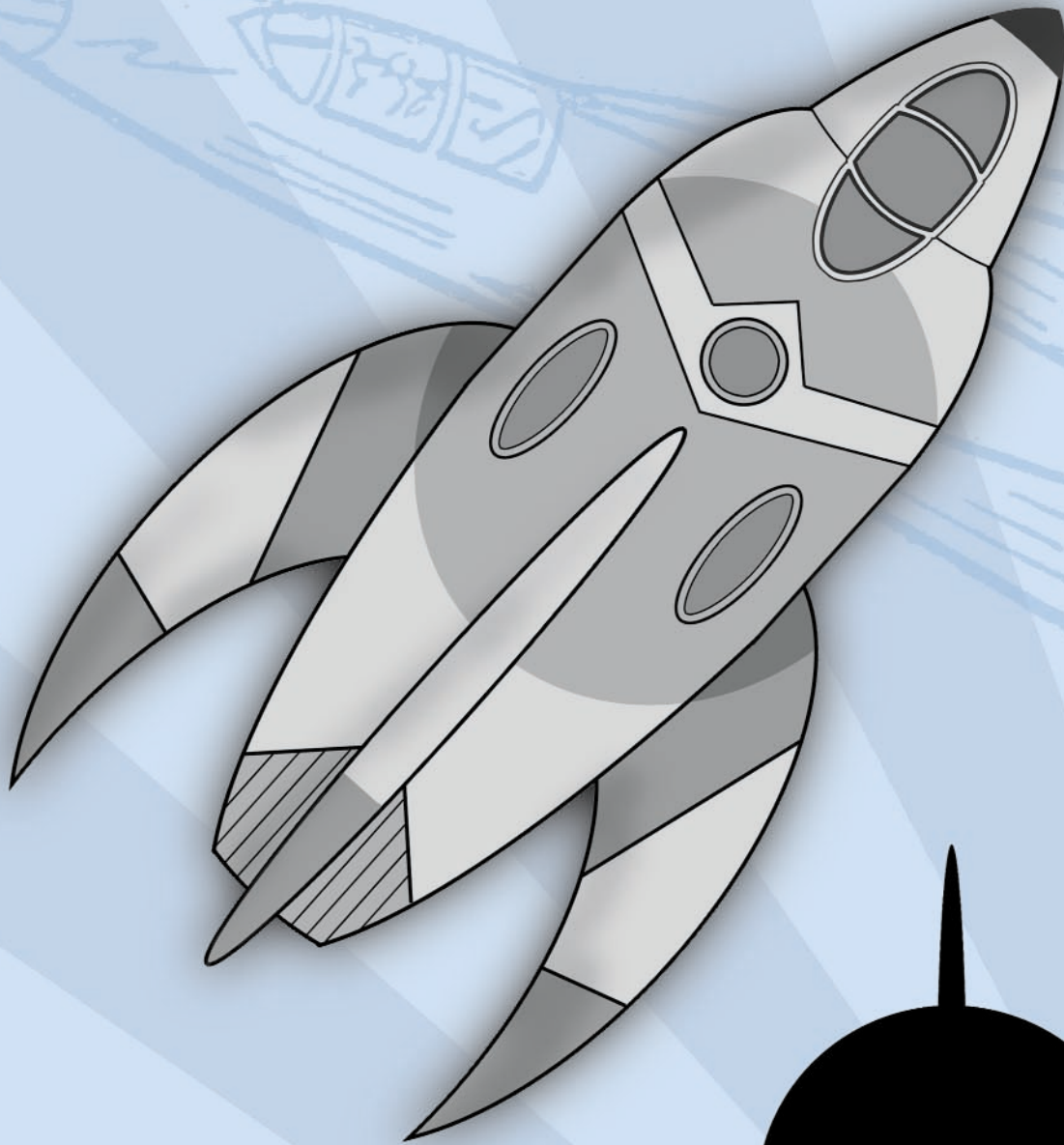
of withstanding the immense heat and solar radiation that would strike the hull. The immense weight of the Luxorium, however, taxed the power plant so heavily that Doctor Luxor was forced to sacrifice speed and maneuverability – and required that he ventured into the unknown without any armament.

Doctor Luxor's discovery of the Solar Men vindicated his apparent eccentricity, and the *Solar Striker* stands as one of the most famous exploratory vessels in history.

Crew: 1
Passengers: 0
Cargo: 200 lb.
Init: -6
Maneuver: -6
Top Speed: 700 (70)
Defense: 6
Hardness: 60
Hit Points: 35
Size: G
Purchase DC: 45
Restriction: Restricted
1 (+2)

Adventure Hooks

- Recreate Doctor Luxor's adventure, penetrating the outer shell of a star, to discover a thriving hidden civilization living within a protected bubble below the sun's surface. If your players balk at the scientific impossibility, smack 'em in the chops and remind them that this is PULP.
- A scientist uses the *Solar Striker* to investigate the tumultuous tides surrounding a black hole, but something goes wrong. Now, the ship is out of control, and on its current course, will crash into a highly populated city on a nearby planet. Can the members of the Rocket Patrol commandeer the vessel in time to avert disaster?
- What sort of havoc could a villain wreak if he stole a nearly-indestructible rocketship?



■ The Solar Striker

■ The Venusian Vessel

The Venusian Vessel is an example of the commercial spacecraft that ply the lanes of the solar system. Capable of carrying 22 passengers, 2 attendants and 1 pilot, vessels like this one are the airliners of the future. The one presented here is an example of Sirius Spaceways Corporation's V-1011, which is the workhorse of the popular Earth to Venus route.

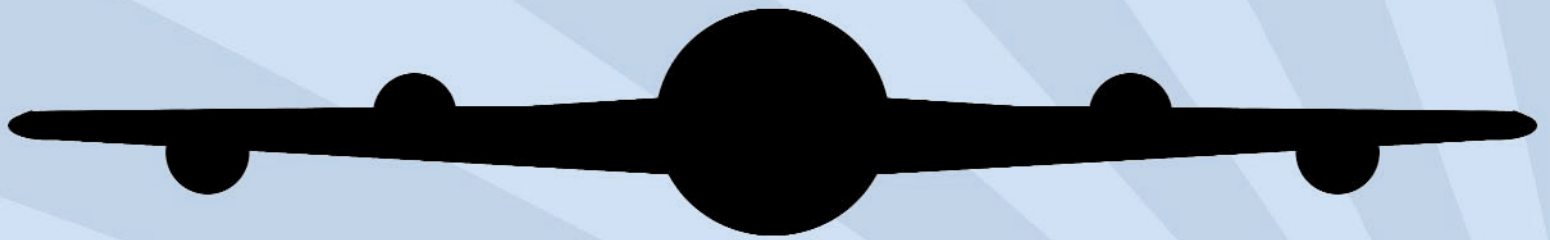
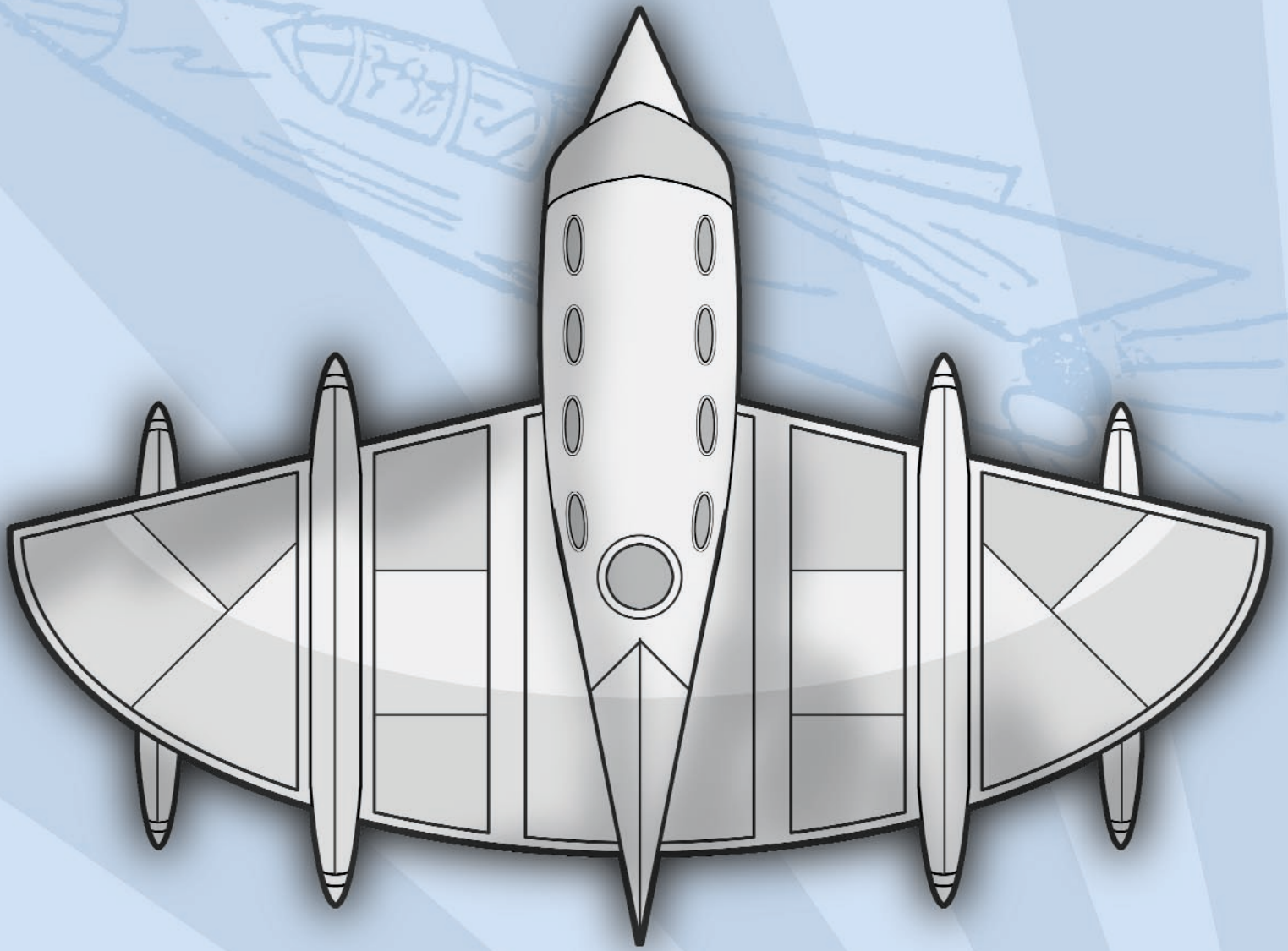
Crew: 3
Passengers: 22
Cargo: 2200 lb.
Init: -4
Maneuver: -4
Top Speed: 800 (80)
Defense: 6
Hardness: 10
Hit Points: 50
Size: G
Purchase DC: 55
Restriction: Lic (+1)

EMP Cannon: Traveling the space lanes is dangerous business, even for mundane vessels like commercial rocketships. *The Venusian Vessel* mounts an Electromagnetic Pulse Cannon in a 360-degree automated turret on the ships dorsal surface.

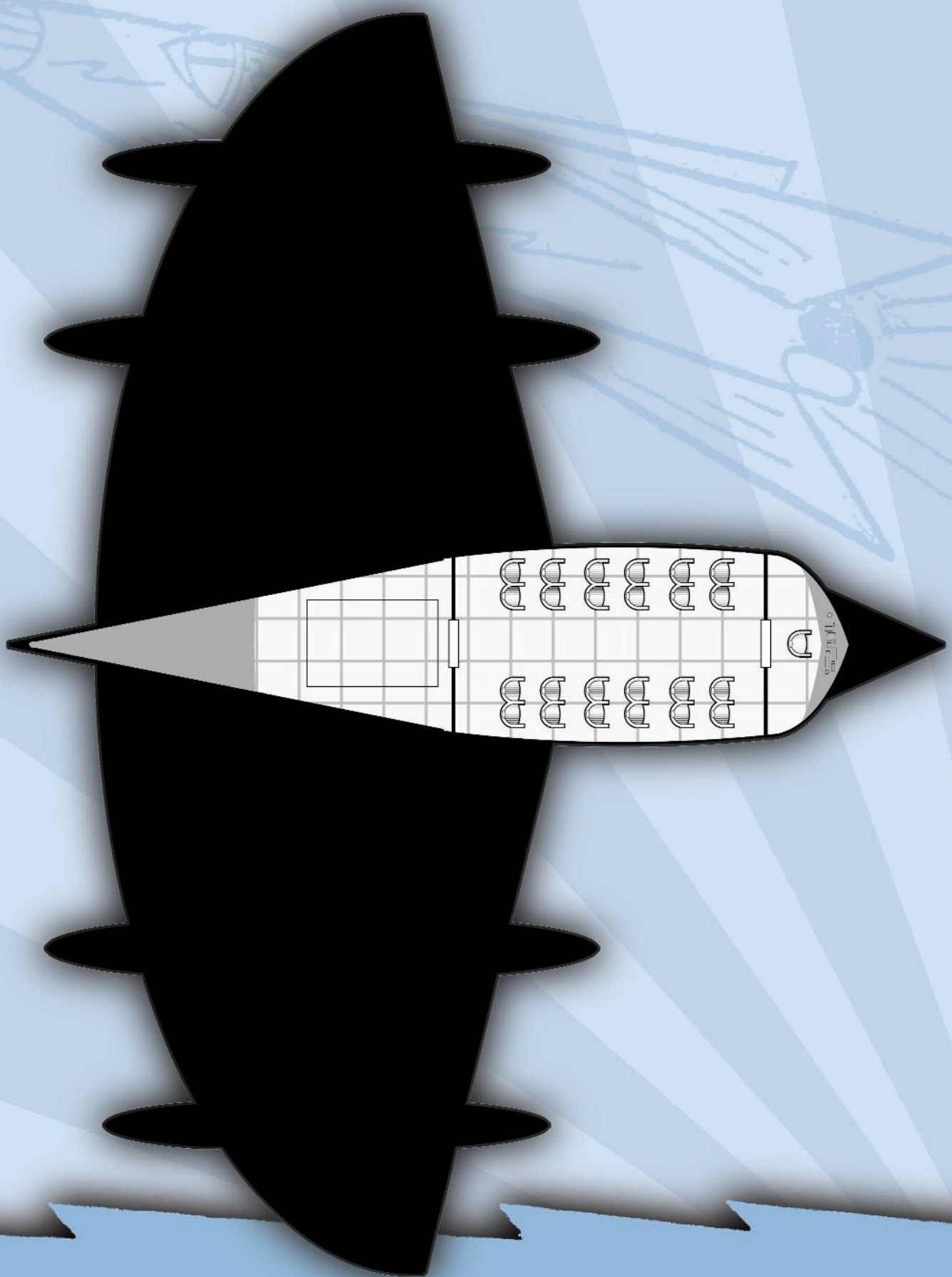
Damage: 2d8 + target "stunned" for one round.
Critical: 20
Damage Type: Electricity
Range Increment: 800 feet
Rate of Fire: Single
Magazine: Unlimited (runs off the reactor)
Size: Large
Weight: 200 lbs
Purchase DC: included with the vehicle
Restriction: Lic (+1)

Adventure Hooks

- Venusian separatists have hijacked a commercial spaceliner, and are demanding that the Rocket Patrol release members of their organization who are currently jailed as terrorists. The PCs can either be passengers who have to deal with this situation, or members of the Rocket Patrol who are sent to the rescue.
- Take a page from the disaster films of the 1970s – the player-characters are passengers aboard a *Venusian Vessel* when disaster strikes: The pilot dies, or the ship is slowly drawn into a black hole, or crash-lands on an uninhabited moon, and the PCs have to deal with the situation, each driven by their own motivations and personalities.
- Unlikely heroes – the player-characters are the crew of a cargo version of the *Venusian Vessel* (remove the seats for 20 passengers, and increase the cargo capacity to 6000lbs), who are going about their daily work when they suddenly find themselves faced with being the only ship in the vicinity when an emergency strikes. Can the crew of a cargo hauler transform into heroes, when duty calls?



■ The Venusian Vessel



■ The Venusian Vessel

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