

AURORA

THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:
GK SAGAS CONTINUE
TOWARDS MARS
REIMAGINING THE CHRONICLES



AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE
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I WANT YOU



FOR AURORA
NEAREST SUBMISSION DATE

AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE SHADES IN THE NIGHT

From the Editor...

Something exciting is in the air.

And it's all about the X.

I could be talking about starting Aurora's 10th year in publication, which is, undeniably, exciting. With nine solid years of fan produced, fan submitted, and fan energized submissions, full of art, stories, experiences, rules, designs, and more, Aurora's proven to be the little fanzine that could. Some issues have been stouter, some slimmer, but always full of the passionate works of a passionate band of gamers.

And, just a few days ago, this happened:



Photo Credit: Space Exploration Technologies Corporation (SpaceX)

SpaceX, the first fully private space launch company, successfully landed their first stage booster from (an also successful) orbital mission launch back onto terra firma in a powered descent.

I watched the launch/landing live, and erupted in wild, crazy, excited cheers when they stuck the landing. (Actually, as I was intently watching the screen as the image resolved itself from the brilliant blur of the engine, my first words from strained silence was "Holy crap it's vertical!" Then, post landing and engine shutdown, I began cheering like mad...) An amazing achievement and one that could prove to herald in a new era of much less expensive launches, opening up the potential for further space exploration, inhabitation, and a visit to our lovely neighbor, Mars.

When the Curiosity rover was landing on Mars I also was lucky to catch it live and erupted into similar cheers as their insane scheme worked to deposit the deceptively large rover onto the dusty red planet.

It's amazing that, even after over 50 years of spaceflight, it's still a tricky and exclusive affair. Space travel excites me so much because of that difficulty, and because of what it could make possible. Heavy Gear, Jovian Chronicles, both are predicated on an expansion in space exploration technologies. These kind of moments, these developments, are happening now, live, in front of us, by government agencies and private entities alike.

Exciting times for sure.

And with luck, when we get there, we can avoid the foibles of war that permeates both HG and JC.

Welcome to 2016, and indeed, welcome to Aurora X, our tenth year of publication! Please join us in another fantastic year of publication...

Welcome to Issue 10.1 of your Silhouette magazine.

Game on,

Oliver Bollmann
Aurora Magazine Editor



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BREW
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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

John Bell (jakarnilson@magma.ca) -- *Alfie's Tanners, Kraut Patrol*

He gets labeled a "walking-talking encyclopedia." He draws what goes through his mind. He builds what he can't afford. He walks what others would take a lift for. He'd probably trade in his bike for a real, working Ferret; but then again, who wouldn't?

Aaron Bertrand (thisnewjoe@gmail.com) -- *The Journal Part 7: Moon*

While a dabbler in the boardgame and video game realm, few things are quite so enjoyable over a long period as the storytelling adventure created among friends during an RPG campaign. My we all embark on many such glorious adventures!

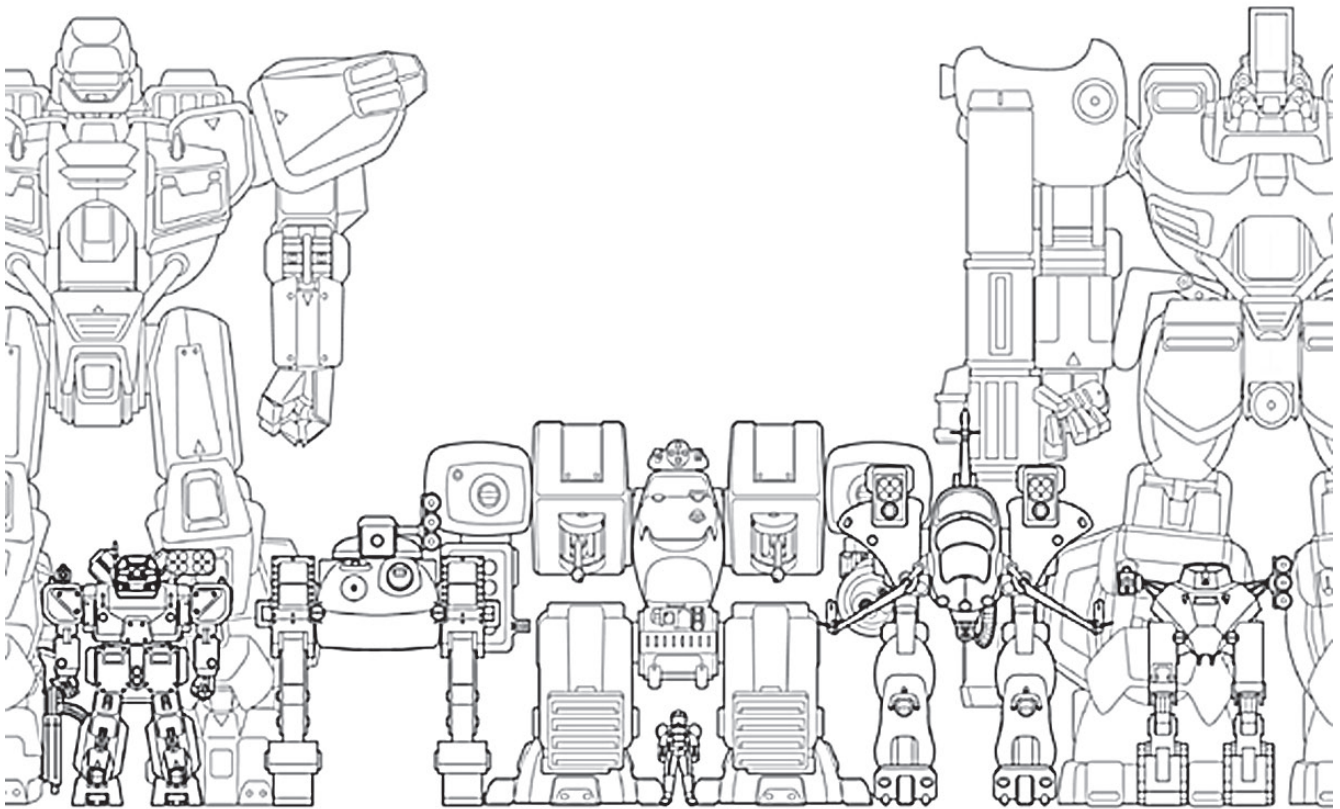
Oliver Bollmann (auroramag@gmail.com) -- *Editor*

It all started in a hobby store one day twenty odd years ago with an odd box containing something called Top Secret. Since then games have just become a big part of his life. He's been in love with the DP9 universes since the first HG release and began his direct involvement with the Pod crew numerous years ago. He also runs a gaming imprint *Kannik Studios at rpgnow*:

http://rpg.drivethrustuff.com/index.php?manufacturers_id=291

Christopher Gregory (chrisgregory@hotmail.com) -- *Reimagining The Chronicles - Part 4*

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REIMAGINING THE CHRONICLES - PART 4

their size. The most common interceptor, the Lancer, is an oversized missile pod loaded with an excessive amount of munitions. It has one of the highest acceleration rates of any vehicle in the solar system and carries an efficient anti-missile system. Unfortunately it carries paper thin armour and rarely survives an extended combat mission unscathed.

Jovian ships are highly modular. In fact, the JAF had standardized many of the components used on their ships. A module can be removed from one ship and attached to another rather easily since the connectors on the components are simply plugged in and the modules merely bolted on unlike with most other factions who integrate the components more completely. Modules on Jovian ships tend to be more self sufficient than modules built by other factions. In many cases, the only module unique to any given ship class is the main hull. This defines everything about a ship, from it's mission to even it's name. The loss of a main hull is typically viewed as the loss of the ship even if the rest of it is intact. The Jovians tend to equip their combat ships with very large spinally mounted weapons allowing them to engage larger targets with ease. Their carriers are often very well armed and have a large fighter complement allowing them to engage hostile ships by themselves with a little caution. These two facts tend to give Jovian ships an edge against similar ships in other forces. Unfortunately the reliance on spinal weapons for their warships means they are less effective if the enemy is not to the front, while carriers are poor combatants despite their heavy weapons load.

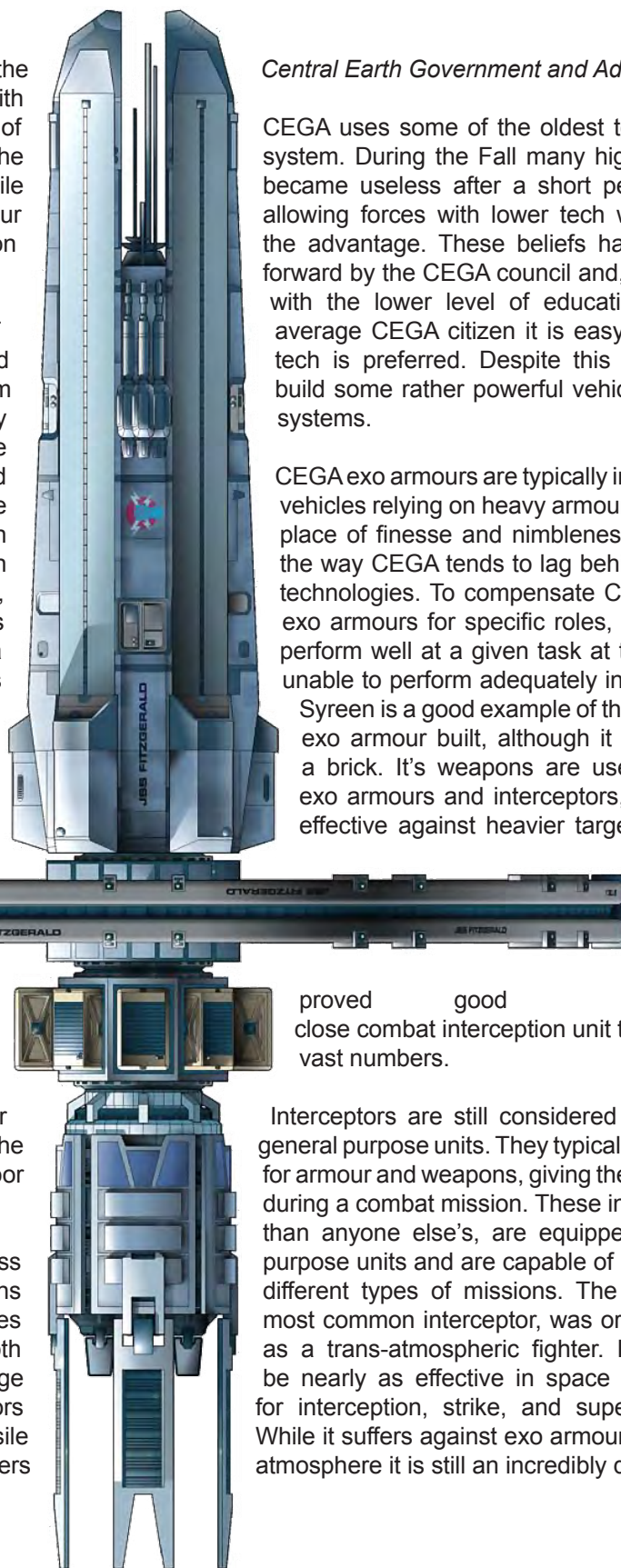
The standard Jovian warship is the Forge class patrol carrier. The dual drive sections, operations section, and habitat section are all the same ones used on Alexander class destroyers allowing both classes to swap modules if needed. The Forge carries six fighters, typically a mix of interceptors and exo armours, and is armed with a light missile bay and two KKC turrets. Forge class patrol carriers account for almost half the Jovian's navy.

Central Earth Government and Administration

CEGA uses some of the oldest technology in the system. During the Fall many high tech weapons became useless after a short period in the field allowing forces with lower tech weapons to gain the advantage. These beliefs have been carried forward by the CEGA council and, when combined with the lower level of education given to the average CEGA citizen it is easy to see why low tech is preferred. Despite this they manage to build some rather powerful vehicles and weapon systems.

CEGA exo armours are typically inelegant low tech vehicles relying on heavy armour and weapons in place of finesse and nimbleness. This is due to the way CEGA tends to lag behind on numerous technologies. To compensate CEGA designs it's exo armours for specific roles, allowing them to perform well at a given task at the cost of being unable to perform adequately in other roles. The Syreen is a good example of this. It is the fastest exo armour built, although it manoeuvres like a brick. It's weapons are useful against light exo armours and interceptors, but proves less effective against heavier targets. While it was never meant to be a mass production model, the Syreen proved good enough as a close combat interception unit that it was built in vast numbers.

Interceptors are still considered by CEGA to be general purpose units. They typically sacrifice speed for armour and weapons, giving them staying power during a combat mission. These interceptors, more than anyone else's, are equipped to be general purpose units and are capable of performing many different types of missions. The Wraith, CEGA's most common interceptor, was originally designed as a trans-atmospheric fighter. It has proven to be nearly as effective in space and is still used for interception, strike, and superiority missions. While it suffers against exo armours in space, in an atmosphere it is still an incredibly deadly opponent.



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The ships that CEGA builds are less advanced and more integrated than ones built by many others. Despite this they are still capable of going toe to toe with comparable enemies in a one on one fight. Unfortunately for CEGA the components and materials used are normally bulkier and heavier than standard, meaning that the ships tend to have higher mass than they would otherwise. Because of this CEGA ships rarely have a habitat module, instead subjecting their crews to extended periods of zero-g living. Most CEGA ships rely heavily on turret mounted weapons, meaning that they sacrifice raw stopping power for a more flexible ability to deliver at least some firepower onto any given target.



Exo armours perform best at close range, and their effectiveness diminishes as that range increases. With this in mind, the Venusians have created exo armours which are capable of dancing around almost any other vehicle in the solar system. While somewhat slower, this is easily offset by the nimbleness of the exo itself. They mount few fixed weapons, instead relying on hardpoint or hand held weapons. Despite being light weight, their weapons are still powerful enough to be a threat to many opponents. The Ryu exemplifies this way of thinking. It's a slow but highly responsive unit with a variety of moderately powerful weapons. When combined with its armour it is possible for a Ryu to take out an opponent without being damaged. In the hands of the clumsy or careless however, this quickly turns into a liability.

Interceptors are simpler to build and maintain than exo armours. They are also easier to design. Venusian doctrine for the use of exo armours means that their interceptors are responsible for all medium to long range combat. This includes escorting exo armours closer to the enemy. The result of Venusian doctrine is that their interceptors have to be capable of doing everything except close range combat, and they need to do it well. The solution was to design and build multiple interceptor chassis and specialize each one to a specific role. This places them between CEGA's jack of all trades Wraith and the Jovian's highly specialized Lancer. There is no single most common class of Venusian interceptor, but the Seigfried is considered to be representative of how the Venusians build an interceptor to combat other interceptors and exo armours at medium to long range.

The most common ship in CEGA's fleet is the Bricriu corvette. Originally designed by the Orbitals near the beginning of the Fall, the Bricriu has been upgraded several times. It has high striking power for a ship of its size and can be produced in all but the tiniest shipyards allowing them to be produced at a prodigious rate. It is used everywhere by CEGA for just about every mission profile. While it's weapons are light for a warship, there are a lot of them. Combined with the fact that Bricrius never operate alone, this ship can be a very real threat to enemy ships much larger than it is.

Venusian Planetary Advisory Board

The Venusians have access to the most advanced technology in the solar system, but insists on having everyone believe otherwise. Because of this there are typically two versions on their vehicles, those made for everyone to see and those which are kept hidden and are only used when there would be no witnesses. Despite this there are still general principles which can be used to describe most Venusian vehicles.

Venusian military ships share a lot in common with their civilian ships, starting with their appearance. This is because they are built using similar hulls and are intended to be able to hide in plain sight as a civilian merchant ship. Most Venusian ships are delicate for their class. They typically carry moderate weapons on spinal mounts which can be hidden behind movable panels. This allows the ships to not advertise the fact that they are armed with any weapons at all, and especially not warship class weapons. Unfortunately Venusian ships make numerous compromises to their combat abilities to be able to pass themselves off as civilian ships, and if they can't surprise their enemy and cripple them fast, these facts will turn against the Venusian ship. This means they excel in quick, short missions and very poorly in extended combat.

The most common Venusian designed ship is the Chieftan class escort cruiser. The Chieftan carries a pair of fighters, typically exo armours, and similar weapons to some destroyers. Unfortunately it doesn't have enough fighters to be a true carrier, and lacks sufficient weapons or the armour

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needed to be a proper combat vessel. If it can cripple an enemy fast enough the Chieftan is likely to win the fight, but if it can't then the lack of armour and weapons will leave it vulnerable to return strikes.

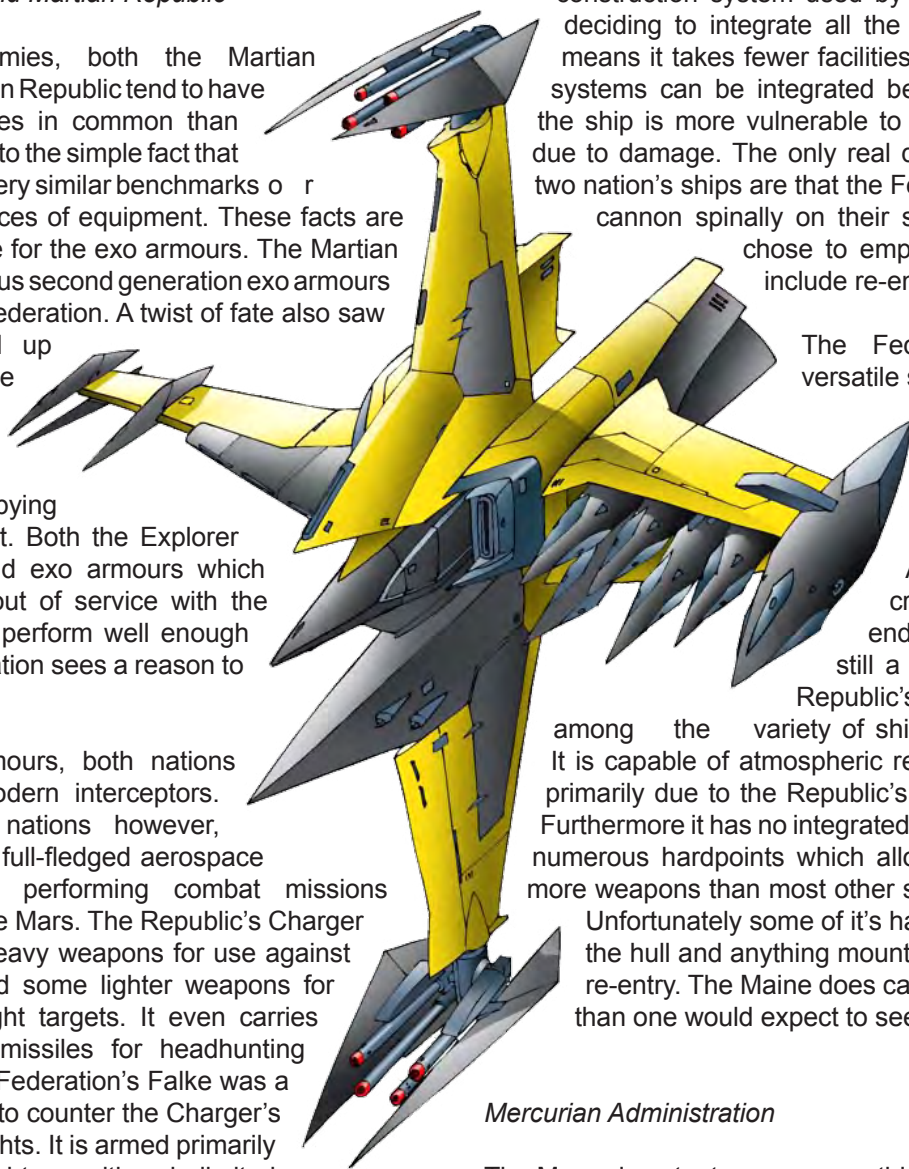
Martian Federation and Martian Republic

Despite being enemies, both the Martian Federation and Martian Republic tend to have more design principles in common than they don't. This is due to the simple fact that both nations require very similar benchmarks or had very similar sources of equipment. These facts are no truer than they are for the exo armours. The Martian Republic bought surplus second generation exo armours from the Jovian Confederation. A twist of fate also saw some of these end up in the hands of the Martian Federation. The two nations have begun building more exo armours, copying the ones they bought. Both the Explorer and Defender are old exo armours which have been phased out of service with the Confederation. They perform well enough though and neither nation sees a reason to replace them.

Unlike with exo armours, both nations have invested in modern interceptors. Unlike most other nations however, their interceptors are full-fledged aerospace fighters capable of performing combat missions anywhere on or above Mars. The Republic's Charger carries a variety of heavy weapons for use against hardened targets and some lighter weapons for use against other light targets. It even carries some anti-radiation missiles for headhunting command units. The Federation's Falke was a rapidly designed unit to counter the Charger's trans-atmospheric flights. It is armed primarily for engaging other fighters, with only limited capability against heavier targets. Both interceptors are capable of operating in an atmosphere or in space. They both carry thick armour and are ruggedly built.

Both nations maintain small navies. Unlike most of the other solar nations, however, the Martians have unique requirements. Neither nation has need of warships which can traverse interplanetary distances. They also lack the ability to field large ships. As a result, both nations have developed

short ranged spacecraft. To increase the flexibility of their ships both nations also make use of hardpoints. Weapon or equipment bearing pallets can be attached to these hardpoints allowing the ships to carry a variety of weapons and support systems. Both nations did away with the module construction system used by everyone else, instead deciding to integrate all the systems together. This means it takes fewer facilities to build a ship and the systems can be integrated better, but it also means the ship is more vulnerable to being put out of action due to damage. The only real differences between the two nation's ships are that the Federation placed a laser cannon spinally on their ship while the Republic chose to employ thicker armour and include re-entry systems.



The Federation's Adler is a versatile ship. It can carry an exo armour or a squad of exosuits. It also mounts two large weapons to supplement the built in laser cannon. The Adler carries a minimal crew to extend its mission endurance, however it is still a short ranged ship. The Republic's Maine is unique even

among the variety of ships in the solar system. It is capable of atmospheric re-entry on Mars. This is primarily due to the Republic's lack of orbital facilities. Furthermore it has no integrated weapons. Instead it has numerous hardpoints which allows the Maine to carry more weapons than most other ships in its weight class. Unfortunately some of its hardpoints are external to the hull and anything mounted there will not survive re-entry. The Maine does carry much thicker armour than one would expect to see on a ship of its size.

Mercurian Administration

The Mercurians try to reuse everything, or make things to do as many tasks as possible. This is due to the severe resource limitations they have to live with. Nothing is allowed to go to waste. Despite this redundancy is also highly valued by Mercurians. This seeming contradiction between not wasting things and having extra of things can cause confusion for some, but the Mercurians have found a balance.

Mercurian exo armour technology is relatively new since they had previously not seen a need for them. With the recent

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increase in tensions between the Confederation and CEGA, and the upswing in piracy, the need for a home grown exo armour became apparent. The exo had to have good armour protection, high acceleration, be able to maneuver quickly, and carry a variety of weapons. It also had to be capable of assisting in cargo handling, search and rescue, and a variety of other tasks. The Brimstone managed to fulfill all these goals. Unfortunately it is also a study in conflicting design goals. The desire for it to be able to operate as a work exo means that it's combat capabilities suffered as a result. It's weapons are light and underpowered, it doesn't carry much reaction mass, and it has a larger sensor profile than almost any other exo armour created. It's also ungainly on the ground, being much more at home in space.

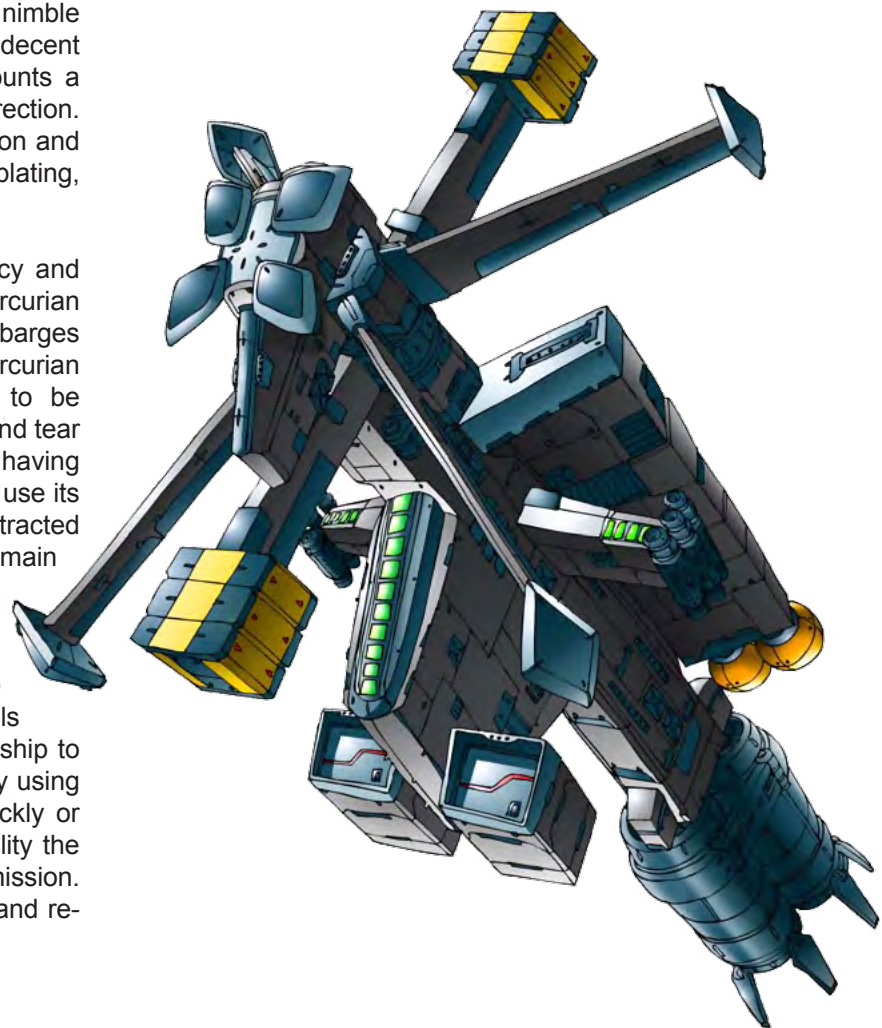
If Mercury saw little need for exo armours, it saw none for interceptors until very recently. As a result it has only just produced their first interceptor. As such they don't have much of a defined guideline for their interceptors. The Agares, however, can be viewed as the way the Mercurians intend to design their interceptors. It's a fast and highly nimble interceptor with light armour. The interceptor has a decent amount of reaction mass, and most uniquely it mounts a turreted laser allowing it to engage targets from any direction. This combines to make it a highly effective interception and escort unit. The only real downside is the thin armour plating, barely any thicker than tinfoil.

Mercurian warships were designed for cost efficiency and long mission endurance. Since the majority of the Mercurian Merchant Guild ships are either solar sail or magsail barges which have constant but low acceleration, the Mercurian Administration decided that it's warships needed to be magsail as well. This would prevent excessive wear and tear on PCC drives during the long voyages. Unfortunately having a deployed sail meant that a ship would be unable to use its drive sections for several hours while the sail was retracted making it impractical. The solution was to create two main hulls which could dock with one another. The first main hull has many similarities with the main hulls of any other type of ship. The second main hull had the Magsail unit and often houses a Habitat module as well. When escorting MMG ships these vessels are docked together and the magsail allows the starship to keep pace with the other sail ships without constantly using its drive section. When it needs to move more quickly or enter a situation where the magsail would be a liability the warship detaches from the magsail and performs its mission. Afterwards it can then return to the magsail section and redock.

The most common Mercurian warship is the Erel. The Erel consists of two parts which can dock together, referred to as the Erel Wing and the Erel Sword. The Wing contains a habitat module for crew comfort and mounts long ranged lasers for defence. The Sword essentially started as a modified Bricriu corvette, but has since been built in Mercurian shipyards. It mounts more powerful short ranged weapons and is often used to intercept the enemy away from the convoy it is protecting. It also has a hangar allowing it to carry a pair of fighters, often Brimstone exo armours.

Other factions

While there are more organizations than presented above, these typically acquire their vehicles from one of the powers above. The Nomads, for example, use very old exo armours and civilian ships. They very rarely have the ability to construct their own equipment.



ALFIE'S TENNERS

JOHN BELL

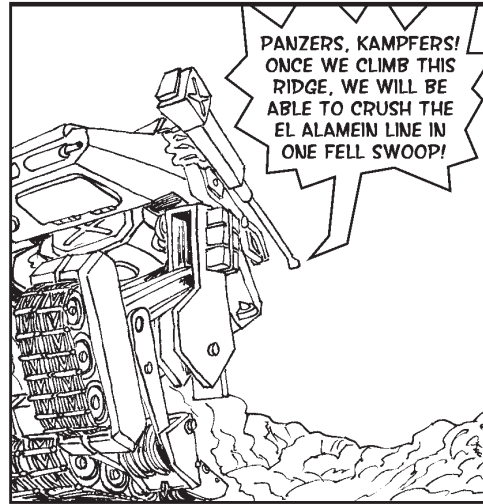
ALFIE'S TENNERS

ART & STORY: JACK BELL

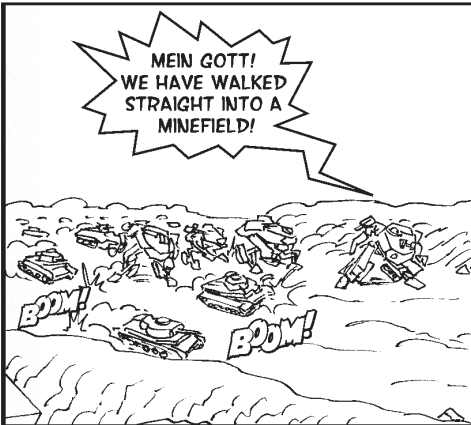
EARLY SEPT. 42. LT. GEN. BERNARD LAW MONTGOMERY, THE 8TH ARMY'S NEW COMMANDER, HAS SET A TRAP FOR THE AFRIKA KORPS NOT ON THE EL ALAMEIN LINE, BUT ON THE ALAM EL HALFA RIDGE, 20 MILES BEHIND IT.



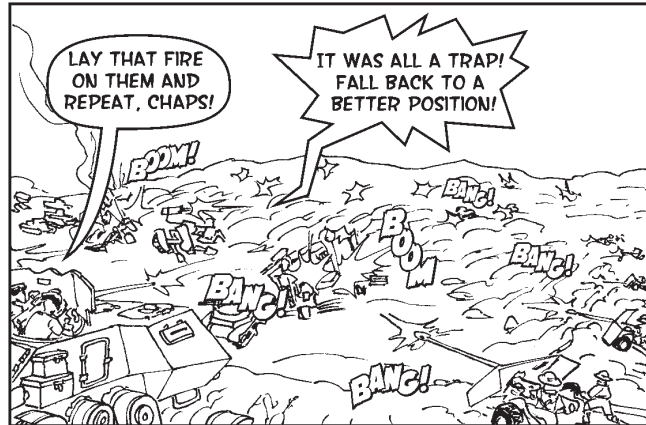
HERE COME THE JERRIES. FALL BACK!



PANZERS, KAMPFERS! ONCE WE CLIMB THIS RIDGE, WE WILL BE ABLE TO CRUSH THE EL ALAMEIN LINE IN ONE FELL SWOOP!



MEIN GOTT! WE HAVE WALKED STRAIGHT INTO A MINEFIELD!

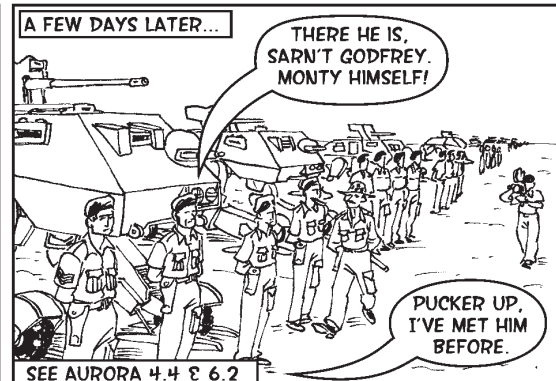


LAY THAT FIRE ON THEM AND REPEAT, CHAPS!

IT WAS ALL A TRAP! FALL BACK TO A BETTER POSITION!



NICE FIRING, LADS. YOU'VE MADE THE TENNERS' NAME PROUD. AND IT SHOULD MAKE ROMMEL THINK TWICE ABOUT GOING UP AGAINST US.



A FEW DAYS LATER...

THERE HE IS, SARN'T GODFREY. MONTY HIMSELF!

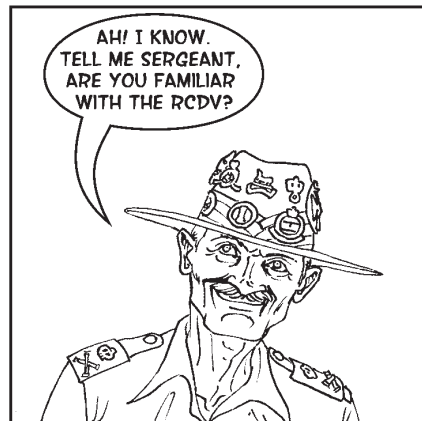
PUCKER UP, I'VE MET HIM BEFORE.

SEE AURORA 4.4 & 6.2



SIR, I HOPE WE'RE NOT GOING TO RUNNING AROUND, LEAVING THE POOR BLOODY INFANTRY IN THE DUST.

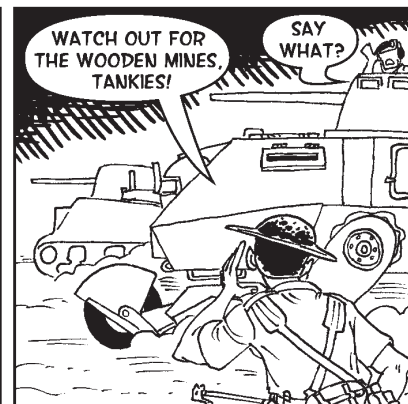
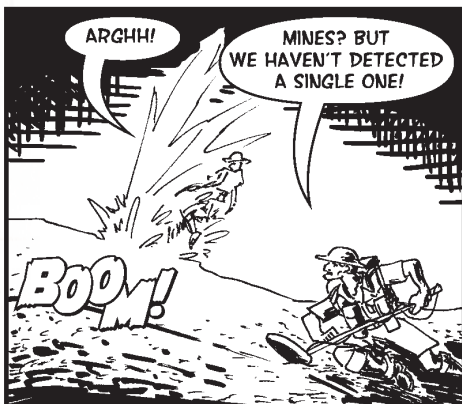
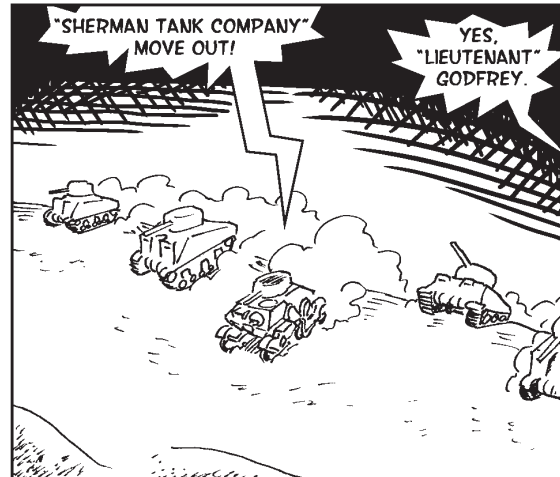
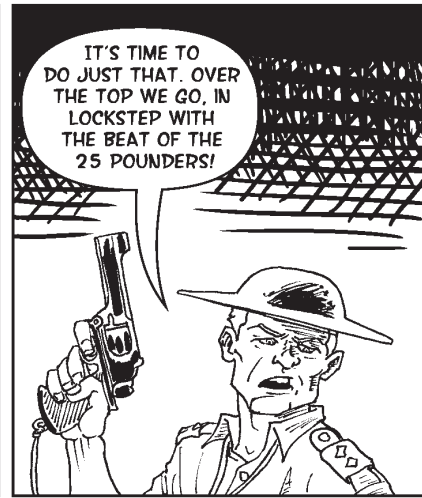
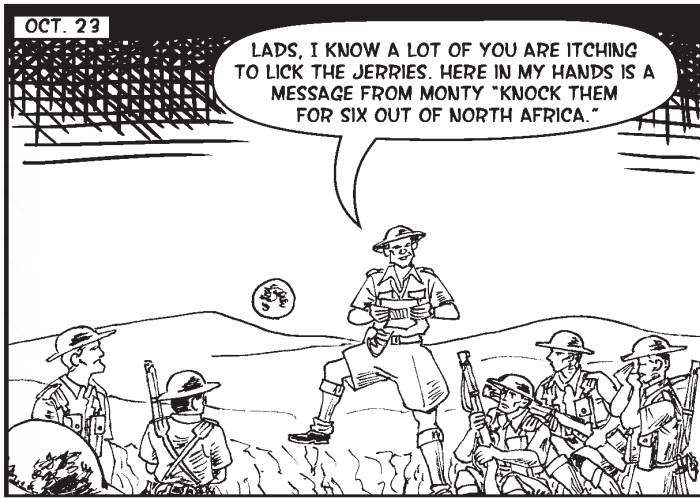
HMM. THE BRITISH ARMY WASN'T BUILT ON EVERYBODY ACTING WILLY-NILLY. BUT YES, OUR STRIKE AGAINST THE GERMANS WILL INVOLVE COORDINATION.



AH! I KNOW. TELL ME SERGEANT, ARE YOU FAMILIAR WITH THE RCDV?

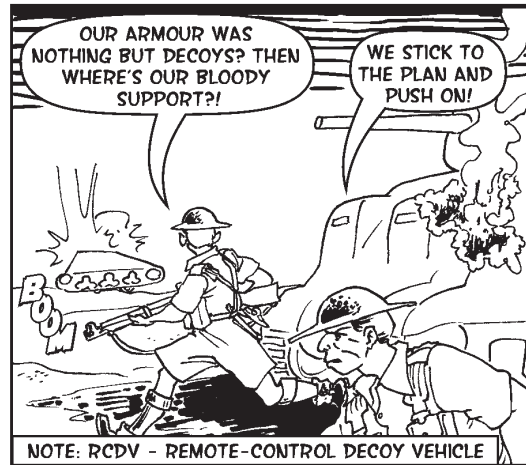
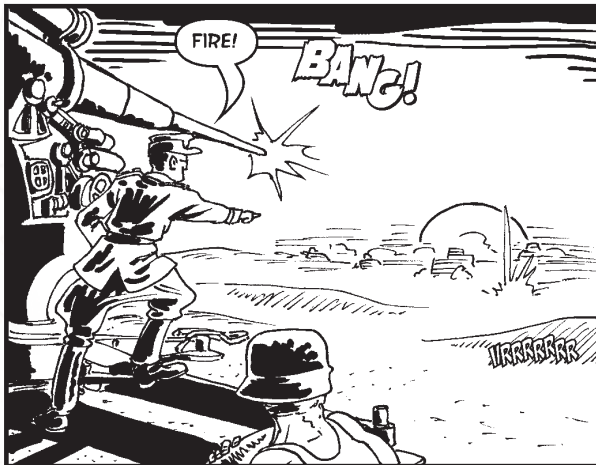
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ALFIE'S TENNERS

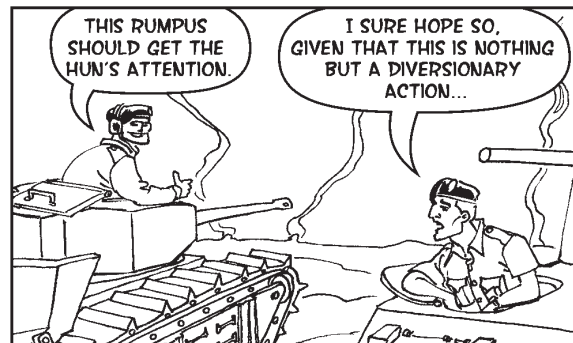
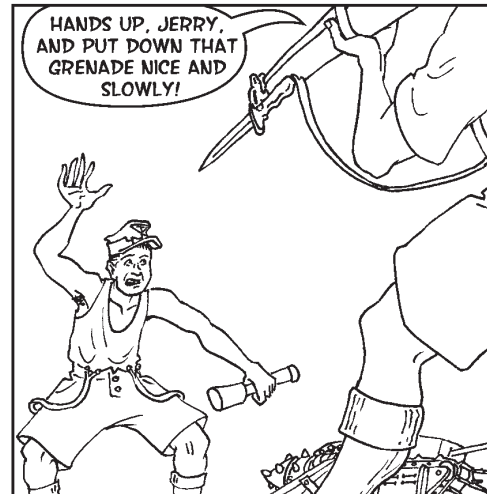
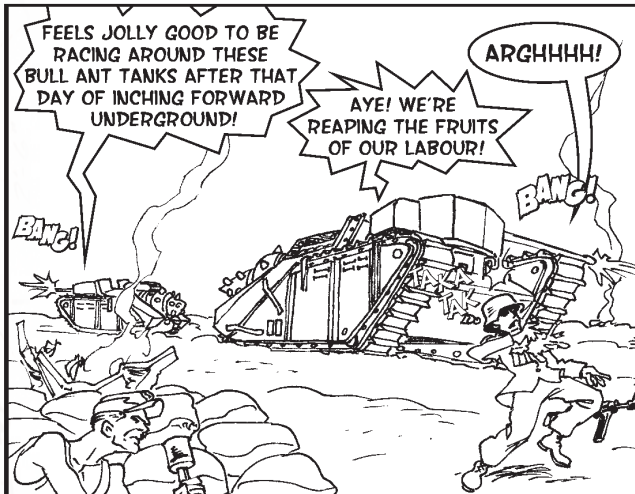
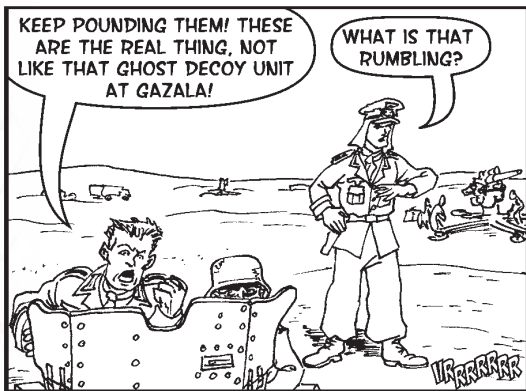


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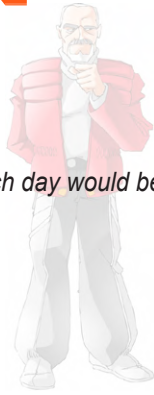
ALFIE'S TENNERS



NOTE: RCDV - REMOTE-CONTROL DECOY VEHICLE



NEXT: WITNESS THE REAL BRUNT OF THE 8TH ARMY'S HAMMER, AS THE TENNERS FIGHT ON AT EL ALAMEIN...



Without a song, each day would be a century.

— Mahalia Jackson

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THE JOURNAL, PART 7: MOON
AARON BERTRAND

MONDAY, 10/01/2210 06:47 TARDIFREY (SHIP TIME)

My nightmares have continued. The yellow-eyed monkey keeps coming up. I can't remember ever seeing it in my waking life, and I have no memory of reading of this character, but even when I'm awake and I think of it, I start getting the signs of a panic attack like I had when sleeping. I've been able to nap some, but not deeply, and I fall asleep only after being exhausted from trying to fight the physical exhaustion.

The illness and nightmare has also made it hard to focus during this illness. I've been working with Olivia to try to figure out who it is I could know anywhere in Jovian space, especially anyone in a position of a lot of power or with access to significant financial resources. Nobody comes to mind, and it's frustrating. She says that the locations the communications are coming from are different each time, so the true origin is being masked.

FRIDAY, 10/05/2210 07:55 TARDIFREY

The medic on ship and a couple others with specific medical training have found a parasite in my system. Typical scans didn't show signs of it because they only look for organic materials. This parasite is a nanobots. Once they found it, they checked the rest of the crew. Only Agram, Duncan and Olivia had also had signs of the nanobots, but the ones in them were deactivated. After several minutes of conversation, we traced back the only connection the three of us had that Clarice didn't, and that was the bartender in the hotel lobby. I spent the most time there, and met with Agram once. Duncan and I met before I knew who he was, and Olivia met me soon after that. I can't be certain it was the same individual bartender, but that's definitely the best clue about where this started.

Olivia reported to our mysterious benefactor that we are all on board, and that everyone is safe, with the exception of my particular condition. She also mentioned the hotel lobby bartender.

I asked Olivia about the risk of them being activated while we're still out here. She said it was remote because it usually required a powerful and near-skin transmitter to activate them, and they haven't got any of the right kind of tech onboard.

Based on our last update from Olivia's contact, we know we need to get to Mars. We don't yet know if we're stopping there or making a slingshot maneuver around it. Duncan think we may need to stop regardless what our contact says, depending how much farther we have to go.

Agram came into my room and we discussed the Martian space elevator.

"You might get to see it with your own eyes this time, Agram." I said to him, hopefully.

"That would be nice, but whatever it is we've gotten ourselves into is shaking up some of the biggest players on the field. I don't know that we want to be anywhere near Mars right now, frankly." His wisdom puts a damper on false hopes, but because he's so often right about things, I don't want to complain much about it. I'd love for him and his wife to get that vacation they've dreamed about.

"I'm not even sure how big this field is," I admitted to him, while letting some of the frustration with all this waiting and worrying come out in my tone.

Agram looks around for a moment. The room is unoccupied at the moment. He sits on the medical bed, facing me sideways, and quietly asks me to keep an eye on the door. I nod that I will.

"I've been thinking about our work. Right now, the majority of our work is on developing systems that can distinguish clear thoughts from the mess of neuronal firings that's constantly happening in our brains." He looks at his hands. "Our work has been to reach into the brain --" he pushes his hand outward, as if grasping an apple, "and find out what's going on inside there."

I nod again. This is the specific work we've been trying to have breakthroughs in for a long time. The kinds of developments in the areas of mental health, trauma recovery, and a variety of emotional issues could be accessed directly by scientists and surgeons, psychologists and counselors. With that kind of immediate access, we could ignite a revolution in discovery around brain science.



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THE JOURNAL, PART 7: MOON

"Well, as you might expect on a long and relatively uneventful trip such as this, Clarice and I have had a lot of time to discuss the work our team had been involved in developing, especially the technology. I told her about how we're looking into the brain, trying to find ways to see what's happening inside so we can open up some of the secrets of what it is to have a human mind."

I smile, knowing that our work would make an incredible contribution to the future of humanity, and would help us develop greater understanding and compassion. We don't really expect to stop wars, but we do expect we'll have an impact that lasts far beyond our lifetimes.

"Alastair, have you considered what it would be like if we turned that viewfinder around?"

I told him I didn't really know what he meant.

"Instead of looking into the human brain, what if our work enabled a typically-minded human to interface with other things. To see with the sensors of a computer system, for example. To be able to observe and report on the condition of things by simply thinking about them. And I'm talking at a level far beyond the basic sorts of controls people have over things like wheelchairs now. I mean like being connected to something and having the sense of being within that thing, as if it were a person's own body."

"That sounds kinda cool." I said, thinking that it really did.

"Yes, I said that, too. So what if we take that a step further: Consider if you weren't merely observing systems or controlling simple machines, but you were using that thing as an avatar. You could control it completely."

I saw where this was going. "It would make a lot of things easier. I can see how being able to connect to a ship or sensor array could add a new dimension to our exploration in the universe."

"Indeed it would," he said. "But it also enables some undesirable things. Consider if the person was connected to some new kind of war machine that allowed them to control a whole array of weapons and sensors and because thought is now action, their thoughts could result in destruction and death."

I must have blanched, since Agram's sober expression became worried and he asked if I was okay. "I'm pretty sure you and Clarice figured out the same things everyone else figured out already", I told him.

"I think we have discovered one of the more likely outcomes, too. War is grossly expensive, but it's also necessary to maintain advantages wherever possible, since they can often lead to one side giving up a fight when they are outmatched."

"So then what about Olivia's contact? We don't know who she's working for, and have no idea what's really happening out there. I don't want to be on the run forever, and I don't want to give anyone any ideas about using our tech for the exact opposite purpose it's intended."

"We were never going to be able to control what people did with our tech." He said.

I shook my head. "We were naive and full of good intentions."

"We are still naive, and we still have good intentions. It does not mean we cannot make choices that benefit people now and in the future."

"I don't know if you're going to be able to take your wife to that fancy dinner, Agram. At least -- not anywhere within the inner planets."

About halfway through my sentence, Duncan walked in.

Agram replied, "You're probably right, but even Jupiter has marvels worth investigating. Since we're headed in that direction, let's make the most of it, okay?"

"Yeah, let's do." I said. He headed out after a hello to Duncan. Duncan and I set ourselves into our usual card game. I've learned more of those in the past few weeks than ever in the rest of my life. I'm getting pretty good at some of them, too.

FRIDAY, 10/05/2210 17:03 TARDIFREY - SUPPLEMENTAL

It was an unusually long time in getting a response from Olivia's contact, but it just came through. The update started with a thanks for update on our conditions and the mission, and emphasized that the tip about the hotel lobby bartender was particularly important. With the message came detailed instructions for the medics that would have them disable the activated nanobots in me. Because they can't be extracted reliably on the ship, our contact promised we would be treated for them when we arrived at the final destination.

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And speaking of that, we got new coordinates from our contact, and a warning that we are being hunted by CEGA. They're somewhere out in the black behind us, trying to get a ping on us. The navigators took a look at the coordinates and the rough plan shows we should be able to miss any more CEGA outposts.

The new coordinates and much needed treatment plan are welcome, though they've been cast in some darkness by news about the next legs in our trip. Our final destination is well inside Jovian-patrolled space, and we're warned that the front-line Jovians do not know anything about our mission. Avoidance is our best bet at staying safe. Instead of a slingshot around Mars, we're now stopping at the Martian platform to refuel and resupply.

It occurs to me that the crew doesn't really know what we're all up to. I know some of them haven't been to Mars before, let alone the settlements in the Belt and anywhere in Jovian space. Duncan says he's been most places people have ever been inside Saturn's orbit, and says the trip is going to start feeling slower as soon as we leave Mars because everything is so far spread out. He says they've been on other missions before where they didn't know all that was going on, and they're well-trained and disciplined enough not to mind anymore. Duncan, Olivia and the rest have all proved themselves to each other time and time again.

As a kid, I remember learning about the asteroid belt and it always occurred to me as this sort of floating mess of rocks that we would barely get through, just like in any of the popular space movies in the past few generations. Duncan says it's nowhere near that dense, and while it's relatively highly populated compared to the rest of interplanetary space, it's actually still very spread-out. We shouldn't have an issue flying through it without getting near any of the stuff orbiting out there

After he left I caught myself spending several minutes thinking about how this could all end with us smashed at high speed against some dark space rock we didn't see until too late, and we can't avoid it. I know the navigational systems are good enough to figure it all out, but still... it's making the primal parts of my brain all itchy, and I don't want to cause myself another panic attack.

SATURDAY, 10/06/2210 09:45 TARDIFREY

The navigation team have provided Duncan and Olivia a course that will get us to Mars for resupply and refuelling, including a slot in the Martian Space Elevator's orbital platform for that purpose. They've identified the target coordinates as belonging to an uncharted part of The Greeks, the cluster of around 3000 asteroids at the leading Lagrange point in Jupiter's orbit. They tried to brief us scientists in the orbital mechanics, but it mostly went over my head.

Duncan says the trip is getting very expensive. I looked at him, worried, and he said that they've "discovered" the ship's finance account has more money in it again, including resupply and fuel costs as well as a portion of the promised wages for the crew. The accountant left Duncan a frustrated note about not getting notice of these large transactions, and would appreciate it very much if Duncan could give him advance notice in the future. For his part, Duncan just smiled as he read the complaint to us over breakfast. I think that he doesn't really expect to head back to the inner planets again anytime soon, if ever.

SUNDAY, 10/07/2210 11:02 TARDIFREY

Over the PA a short while ago Duncan announced to the whole ship that it's time to "Sing for our asses!" I had no idea what that meant, but since he left the PA on and started singing merrily, backed-up by the crew on the bridge, at the same time I felt a slight lurch and movement of the ship.

I found myself hoping they hadn't all gotten drunk in the past couple hours, and were taking us off course.

As I listened to the lyrics coming over the PA, and as the lurching sensation steadied into a slow change in direction, I realized it was probably us reversing orientation so we could use the main engines to slow ourselves down on our approach to Mars.

The song itself was loud, long, and everyone was raucous. They sang of a crew of fishermen, out at sea for days, looking for a bounty to bring home to feed their families and sell at the big city. They'd been troubled by storms for days and unable to find good hunting grounds. At sunset of the fifth day, the captain clambered to the deck, looked out over the water, and turned away while pulling his trousers down and showing his full and naked backside to the sun. The gods of the sea, of course, were not to be disrespected in this way, and the crew were astonished and worried all night about reprisals from



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the gods. Instead, they woke up to a sea filled with fish, and in a few short hours were on their way home again, bringing with them a bounty that had been blessed by the gods, who had apparently loved the captain's response.

A minute or so after the song was done, Duncan came in and with a wry grin asked, "Didn't expect any of that now, did you?" and I definitely hadn't.

I tried to keep the straight face of a person who is used to this all the time and asked him, "Did you all keep your pants on?"

"We only let the ship herself shine her bright arse to the gods these days."

I laughed with him. "And when did you guys start that tradition?"

"This is how we've always done it" he said, grinning mischievously, and left for his rounds. I'm pretty sure I heard him skipping down the hall.

Over the next several hours, the navigational program (with the guidance of the navigator and pilot) will execute a series of maneuvers that will slow us down to the appropriate speed and direction so that we dock on-schedule at the Martian platform. Clarice suggested earlier today that we who were part of the escape from Venus should probably stay aboard, and others should go out in place of the captain and Olivia, so that we can further distance ourselves from our pursuers.

I, for one, wouldn't put it past Olivia to have figured out some disguise in which to go out in, once we arrive.



JOHN BELL



EVEN BEFORE THE GERMAN ARMY ENTERED STALINGRAD, THE LUFTWAFFE HAD BEEN BOMBING THE CITY ON A DAILY BASIS SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE SUMMER OF 1942. DESPITE THE CONSTANT ONSLAUGHT, THE RED ARMY HAS DEFENDED THE JEWEL OF THE VOLGA BLOCK BY BLOCK, FIGHTING LIKE CORNERED BEASTS.

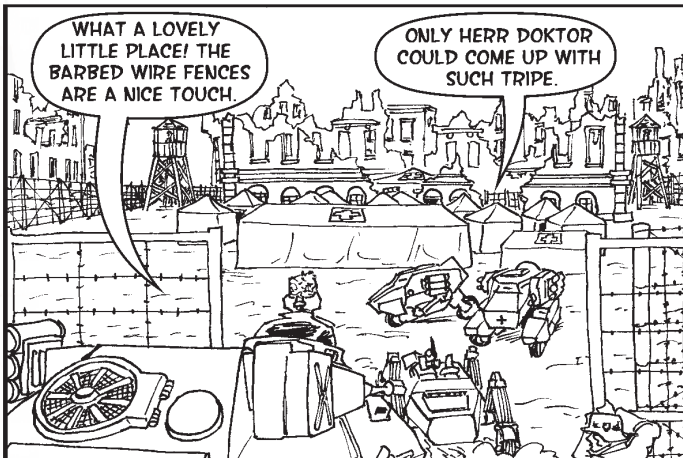
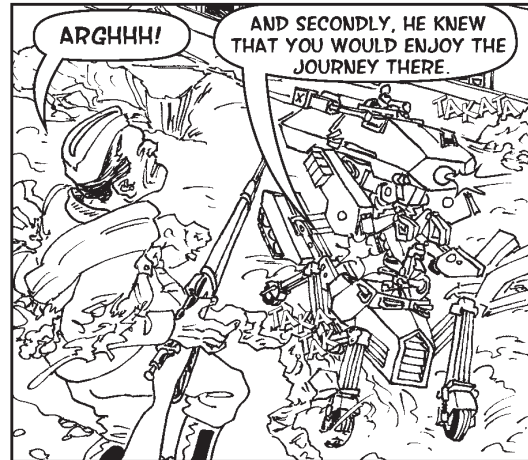
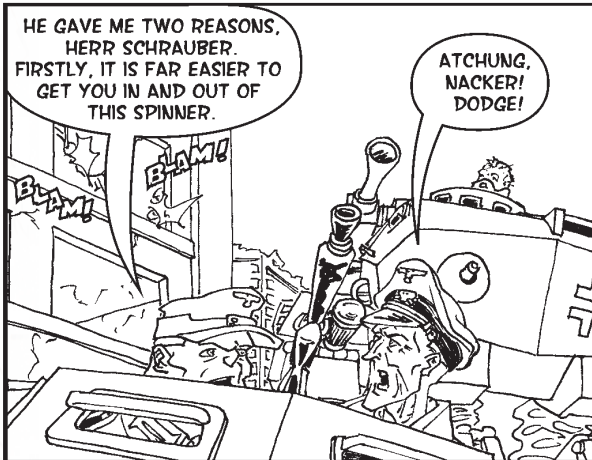
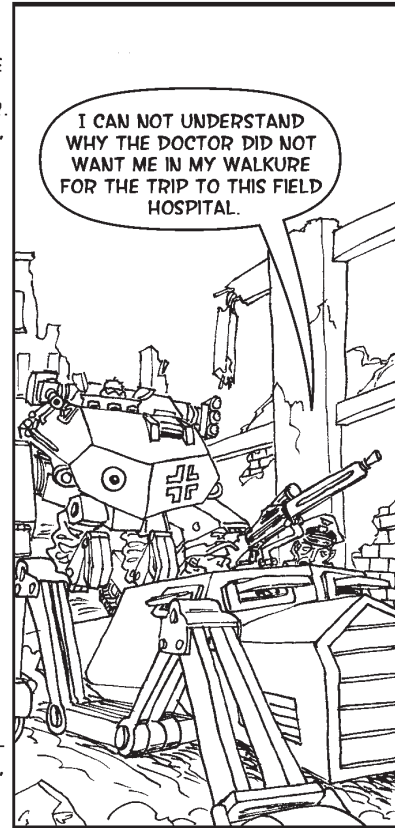
IT IS HERE THAT WE FIND THE

Kraut PATROL

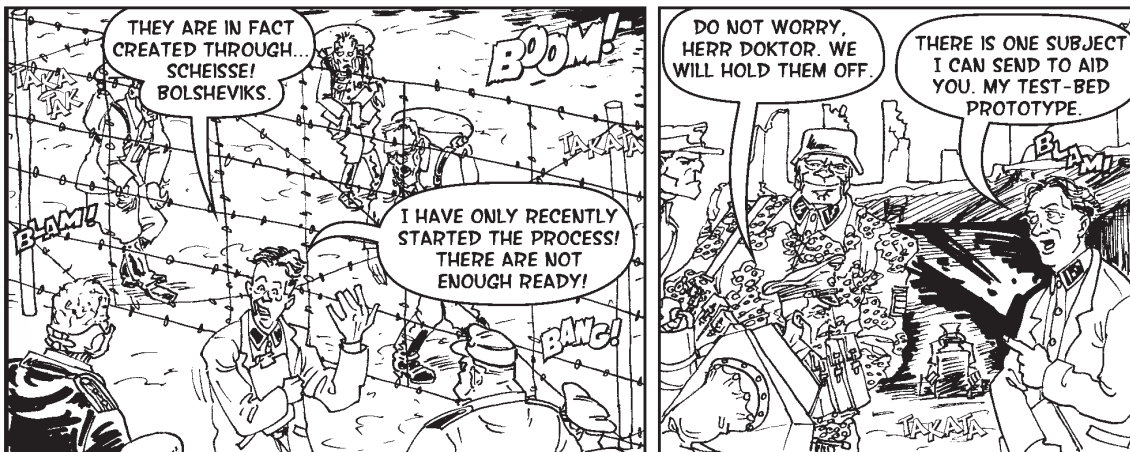
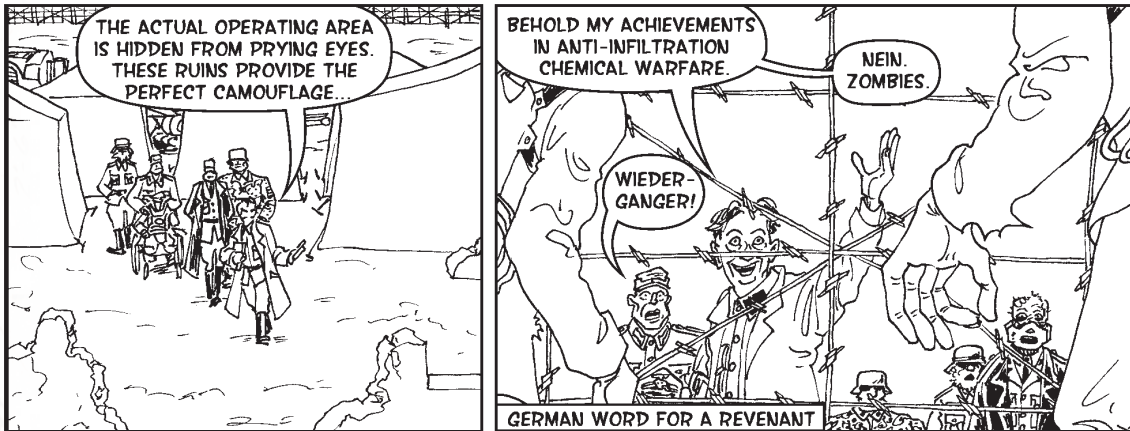
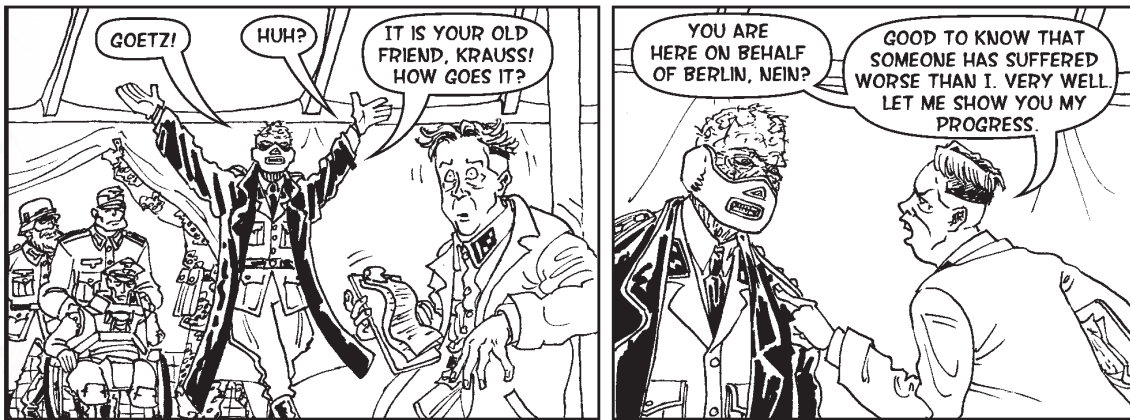
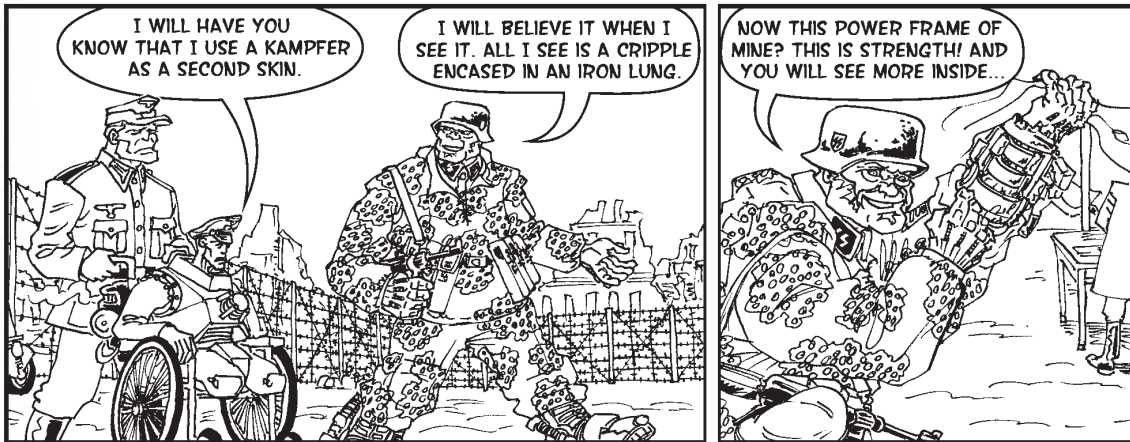
ART & STORY BY JACK BELL

A SMALL PENAL UNIT LED BY DR. KRAUSS AND SS HAUPTSTURMFÜHRER SCHRAUBER. ORIGINALLY FORMED TO LAY THE GROUND FOR THE ORIENTKORPS, THEY NOW FIGHT TO WREST THIS GIGANTIC PRIZE OUT OF THE HANDS OF STALIN.

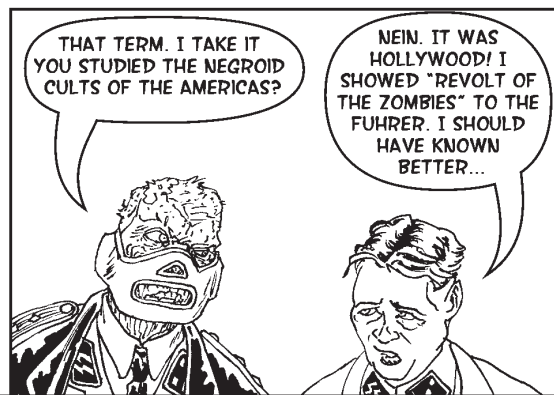
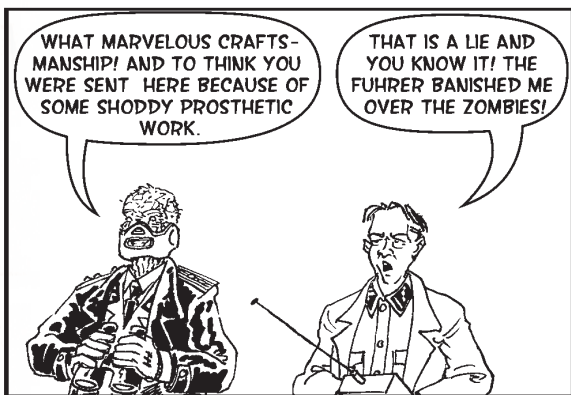
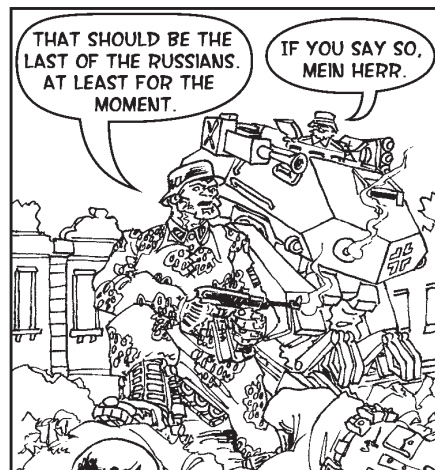
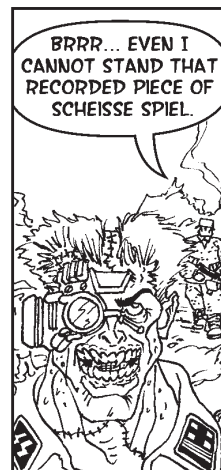
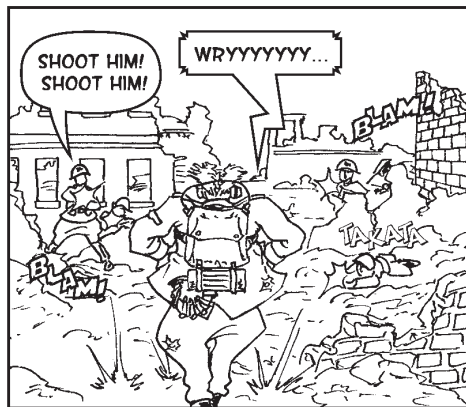
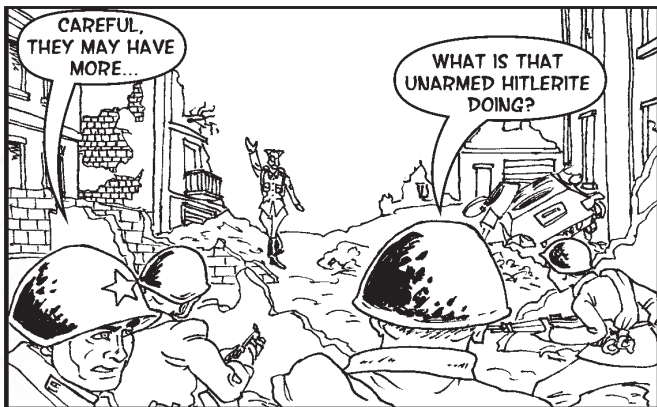
IT IS NOW EARLY OCTOBER, AND THEY HAVE DRAGGED THEIR POOR UNFORTUNATE LACKEYS, FORMER BRANDENBURGER OTTO NACKER AND FORMER FALLSCHIRMJÄGER TRAUOGOTT "LUMPI" HUNDT, TO THE VERY FRONTLINES OF THE BATTLE...



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KRAUT PATROL



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NEXT: A CHILLING RHAPSODY IN THE CITY OF STEEL

AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Article Guidelines

The Aurora Magazine focuses on the worlds created by Dream Pod 9. As such, we are primarily interested in, but not limited to, articles dealing with SilCore and Blitz! rules (variants, additions and explorations of the rules) and on fiction, mechanized designs, equipment, artwork and similar ideas that draw on the established DP9 universes. This does not mean, however, that articles that are generic in nature or that do not deal with unique or original material, only that the focus is on exploring Silhouette and it's attendant universes.

Any article that is a promotion piece for another product, be it an excerpt or a lead-in to another product, must be clearly defined as such within the article body.

No articles will be accepted that use another's Intellectual Property or Copyrighted material without an included signed permission to use said material.

Fiction may be a one-off or serial based, as desired. Please note that long works of fiction may be split into multiple pieces over multiple issues for length reasons; if you are writing a long story it is best to indicate breaks in the story (chapters, for example) that allow us to chose the best point to split the story, if necessary. Stories are encouraged to be accompanied by Silhouette CORE or Blitz! rules detail of some kind, be it stats for characters or equipment in the story, game scenarios, mechanized designs, new rules or explanations of how to simulate aspects of the story using the Silhouette/Blitz rules. This is not a hard requirement however, and stand-alone pieces will be considered and published.

Aurora is also looking for original artwork. Art may be used to accompany the article and/or for the cover of the APA as well as individual pieces. Please see below for copyright information regarding images.

Submission Guidelines

All work for Aurora should be submitted in an .rtf or .doc file. The text within should be in Arial 10pt font, and single-spaced. Hard returns should be used only to separate paragraphs (with a double hard return) or with bullet points and list items. Do not indent paragraphs. You may use italics, boldface or bullets where deemed necessary.

Tables may be included in the submission. Preferably, tables should be created with minimal lines between cells, instead using background colour and/or cell spacing for clarity. Tables may also be included in courier-font/fixed-formatting. Identify these kind of tables with the following: <<<Table>>>

The article's title should be clearly noted at the beginning of the file, followed by a short (less than 75 words) introductory text. This introductory text can either be a synopsis, a quote, story, etc. It will be used at the beginning of the article to 'set the stage'.

The file should end with the Author's name(s), contact information (if desired) and a short bio (optional). This information will be placed on a Contributing Author's page in the magazine.

Please spell check and proofread your article. English or American spellings may be used as desired.

Photos, drawings or images should be accompanied by photo credits as well as a brief description/caption for each photo (optional). Indicate within your article where the images are to be included like so: <<<Image_Filename.ext>>>. Images should be sent at a maximum of 200dpi for greyscale or colour images, 600dpi for black & white images (1-bit). Given the size of a page, images should be no larger than 7 by 10 inches (18 by 18 cm). If we need a higher resolution image, we will contact you. Images should be compressed with an appropriate method; please check the quality of your images before sending.

Copyright Guidelines

Quotes or information that are attributable to other sources are permissible in appropriate quantities, and should be identified/cited (including page numbers), preferably within the article. Be sure that each quote is written exactly as it appears in the original source.

If you wish to include photos/drawings/images with your article, please provide the photo credits (artist/photographer/illustrator and subject if applicable). You may only submit images for which you have obtained permission to include in your article.

All articles and images used by Aurora remain in the copyright of the original submitters. You, as the author, must consent to release the article for publication by Aurora, with the knowledge that Aurora will not provide any compensation other than what has been listed above, and that Aurora, as an online magazine, will be downloaded by third-parties in a PDF format. All work for Aurora is volunteer-based. Should DP9 decide at a later time to compile and sell articles within a contract will be negotiated with the author at that time.

The End Print

Please send all submissions to the following email address:

auroramag@gmail.com

Thank you everyone for your interest, and we look forward to seeing your submissions soon!

Deadline for Submissions for Issue #10.2: March 28th 2015

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ARTICLE SUGGESTIONS

Historical Articles

Under this broad category are pieces meant primarily for illuminating or detailing something within the game universe. This can be truly historical in nature (describing history), detailing a region, the language, customs, architecture, technical systems, corporations, social structure, music, and more, to name a few. Articles may either be written from a neutral point of view (impartial observer from above) or written 'in character', that is, in the manner such information may be presented if it were available in the game world. See the Historical Accuracy note, below (especially important for this category).

Fiction

Any story (narrative with characters) that takes place within the established DP9 game worlds falls under this category. See the Historical Accuracy note, below, and also see the submission guidelines for further requirements.

Modules

Also known as adventures, a written collection of plot, character, and location details used by the gamemaster to manage the plot or story in the DP9 RPGs. All manner of modules are open for submission, from espionage to social to military to a combination of all three. Module submissions must be detailed enough for the GM to run the entire adventure, including descriptions and dispositions (where applicable) of major NPCs, locations, accessories and story/plot. See the Historical Accuracy note, below.

Scenarios

These are the tactical equivalent of modules, an encounter between two (or more) factions set up for combat. A complete scenario will detail the background of the encounter (the why), the forces engaged (the who – what physical units at a minimum, regiment and designations to go the full way), the map and terrain (the where) the victory conditions (the how) and any special rules or conditions (the what). Scenarios should be designed to be balanced for each side, either via the types/numbers of units or through special circumstances or conditions. If the scenario is not balanced this must be mentioned in the background. See the Historical Accuracy note, below.

Note: Historical Accuracy

Aurora is committed to accuracy within the established DP9 worlds. All articles that take place 'within' the game world should be checked for its accuracy within the established timeline, faction dispositions, available equipment, etc. Please double check your work! You may also submit your article clearly marked as "Alternate History" and if published the article too will bear this mark. Be sure, if you submit this way, to provide in the background all that is necessary to describe what has changed.

Designs

New mechanical designs/vehicles/ships for use in the DP9 worlds. Designs must be legal and use either the latest SilCore rules (including all errata and the FAQ) or Blitz! rules. Please indicate which design rules were used. Mechanical designs should fill a void that is not already covered by another unit. Background and a description must be included with the design, while artwork is optional and preferred. See the Historical Accuracy note, above.

Artwork

Aurora accepts all artwork for consideration, no matter the media type (rendering, sketch, painting, etc) within the rules set herein. Miniature photographs will also be accepted (dioramas encouraged!). Artwork must relate to an established DP9 universe and be easily identified as such. Artwork with nudity, racial undertones, sexism or sex will not be considered. See the submission guidelines on how to submit images.

House Rules

Original rules for the Silhouette/Blitz! system and modifications to existing rules. All rules submittals must include an explanation of the rule's purpose, the rules themselves clearly written, and an example of the rule in play. If you are tweaking rules that exist within the game already, please clearly denote those as well as the reference to where the original rules reside. Do not copy any existing game rules text, only note what is changed from the existing rules.

Note that all rules will be clearly marked as "House Rules" or "Home Brew Rules" when published within Aurora, to distinguish them from official rules that can be used at tournaments, conventions, and etc. Around the home gaming table, however, we all love house rules!

Tactics

Have you won countless battles? Have a strategy you would like to share? Write a tactics article. Usually this type of article will be in a step-by-step (or turn by turn) format to illustrate the tactic. An introduction and conclusion is required to create a complete package and to convey to the reader where the tactic is applicable and how it came about.

Miniatures/Modeling

Any article on preparing miniatures, painting, terrain making, sculpting, foliage techniques, etc will be accepted. Photographs and/or diagrams are strongly encouraged.

Something Else!

We pride ourselves on the creativity of our gaming friends. If you have something else to contribute that's not listed here, please submit it!