

# COLONIAL TIMES

THE JOURNAL FOR THE 2300AD SCI-FI ROLE-PLAYING GAME

## ANDROSYNTHESIS

ROBOTICS AND SYNTHETIC LIFE

'OPERATION BACK DOOR' PART TWO

THE YLII: ENIGMATIC NEIGHBOURS JUST OUT OF REACH

PATRONS: NIEMOLLER / DESAY

THE ROSE OF CASCADIA: PORTLAND, OREGON IN 2300

ON DECK: THE BOBCAT ARMoured FIGHTING VEHICLE

YOUR WORLD: NEWS FROM THE CORE & THE COLONIES

3

WINTER 2013

  
STYGIAN FOX

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# SIGNALS FROM THE DEEP DARK

## TOPICS BEING DISCUSSED ON FACEBOOK, G+, AND ELSEWHERE

### FACEBOOK

*James Randolph Thomas Jr.*

From 2300ad ships hulls are mold-ed sandwiches of material that are formed to the shape required. Wouldn't this make hull repairs a bit more expensive as it is a custom piece? Except for prefab slabs or standard hulls (cylinders and cargo containers) other sections might be more expansive.

*Randy McDonald*

Neutrino telescope arrays would be cool. Just saying.

<http://www.universetoday.com/106659/neutrino-detection-could-help-paint-an-entirely-new-picture-of-the-universe/>

*Constantine Thomas*

Speaking of higher gravity worlds, here's an interesting article by Anders Sandberg about what a world twice the radius of earth would be like (in Wet and Dry varieties): [http://www.aleph.se/andart/archives/2013/11/greetings\\_from\\_doubleearth.html](http://www.aleph.se/andart/archives/2013/11/greetings_from_doubleearth.html)

### GOOGLE+

*Klaus Teufel*

Thoughts about King.

I figure Kinglish males wouldn't shave as a rule, because of the danger of cuts. (As if they're not dwarvish enough!)

*Chris Lee*

So um...rules-lawyering question/hypothesis about extending stut-terwarp distance using ejectable cores:

What is the feasibility for using tugs (or just warping to) an empty chunk-o-space to build a production plant for drives. If done at tug-ish distances, would it be possible to overhaul old drives with a new core and reuse it? Take the used Ta-180 and put it on an unmanned barge to discharge, salvage it back to raw material to reuse?

I'm guessing the core discharge issue is a big reason why antigrav doesn't exist - to prevent building discharge waystations in the black to bridge uncoverable distances.

# Q EDITORIAL

One of the problems with sci-fi RPGs is that they can date really fast. Anyone who thumbs through the Equipment Guides will quickly realise that the Portacomp, with its memory chip of 200mb, is dwarfed by the 64gb micro-SD I currently have in my phone.

So I was wondering, what else in the 2300AD universe is likely to dated in the next 10 years? Hopefully we'll see 2300AD still in print for the next 10 years and Colin and others will be updating the tech as they go, but how much do you think it will have changed? Will we have computers with 10tb hard drives? Will smart phones have 1tb sd cards?

Over recent years we have seen enormous strides in technology in the spheres of propulsion, energy storage, energy production, and healthcare. Will those same areas have the same focus in 2300?

Many things can get in the way of that progress, something like Twilight perhaps, but also from reaching a scientific dead end. Of these, the tech tree that worries me the most is medicine. My girlfriend is a scientist working in immunology and while I find her work interesting, it's also a little terrifying. Not given to hyperbole, she is a woman who looks at evidence before entertaining something as

fact. Recently we had a discussion about medicine in the year 2300 and we barely got past 2020 before problems started to crop up.

"We've reached the end of antibiotics." is the kind of statement that I'd usually put up there with asteroid impact predictions and a zombie apocalypse. Nevertheless, in no longer than 10 years the miracle of anti-biotics will be behind us. People being prescribed incorrectly and not finishing their courses, overuse on animals, and a lack of research in alternatives have gotten us to a point where there are some virulent bacteria out there that cannot be controlled.

So will simple extrapolation do for 2300AD? Or will we need to rethink our ideas of technology for the future?

Next issue I hope to have an article that deals with medicine for 2300AD. Luckily, I have an excellent resource close at hand!

Steff. J. Worthington  
Editor



# OPERATION BACK DOOR

THE COMPLETE ADVENTURE BY CHARLES E. GANNON

## EPISODE 2 : FIRST CONTACT

### *Morgan's Firearm*

*First introduced in 2298, this pistol was fated from the first to be known almost exclusively by its nickname, the 'shoot and whisper.' The first AIA interdepartmental memo describing the gun contained a single typo (an omitted space) that rendered the gun's classification as the S&WISP 106. Given the extreme silence of the weapon, S&WISP immediately was jokingly translated into 'shoot and whisper.' The weapon itself is anything but a joke, however.*

*With the exception of its barrel, the S&WISP fits into the palm of a hand, and is almost 100% constructed from ad-*



### **BEFORE:**

In the first episode, the characters signed on to lead 'Operation Back Door.' The objectives sounded simple; explore the unknown systems leading to the brown dwarf known as **Back Door**, take a quick peek into what may be Kafer space, keep an eye out for a 'mystery race' that might be enslaved by the Kafers, and return. After accepting the mission, the characters got acquainted with their ship and crew and left to blaze a trail through unknown space. Now they are journeying toward the last stop on their agenda; system **SS-27 6854**. Uppermost on everyone's mind is that this might be Kafer territory.

### **ACROSS THE THRESHOLD:**

**Where:** System SS-27 6854  
(-8.8, -47.7, -11.7)

**What:** Arrival and spaceside discoveries in the Ylii home system

Upon entering the SS-27 6854 system, the players will immediately be aware that the system is inhabited. Radio signals --unintelligible binary coding-- can be found jumping up and down the dial, never staying in one place long enough

to be jammed. Similarly, radiation emissions from active sensors --and deep system scanners-- seems to be emanating from the general vicinity of the third and fifth planets in the system.

The signals begin to taper off as the Cat's Feet moves deeper into the system. However, since the signals are only traveling at the speed of light, a little basic math will reveal that the ship must have been detected just after it crossed the heliopause, causing the locals to cease their transmissions.

It is of course possible that the crew of the Cat's Feet will instead become the crew of the Cold Feet and decide to turn tail and run. However, two of the NPC crewmembers are fairly sure that these signals are NOT indicative of a Kafer presence insystem. Hannah, who served as a part-time comms officer in the Kafer Conflict, and Dumaine, who has as good a knowledge of Kafer communication styles and methods as just about anyone, both conclude that these signals are not of Kafer origin. Everything is wrong, from the bandwidths being used to the sophistication of the channel-switching. These signals, asserts Dumaine with a highly-excited gleam in his eyes, are being made by someone else; some intelligence that humanity has not yet encountered.

Since this will (SHOULD!) get the players eager to see what this system holds, they will begin to head insystem. The data --and scenes-- they will encounter are included below. Note that the great majority of the HISTORY of the garden planet cannot be attained in this scene, but must wait until actual contact with the inhabitants of the world (the Ylii).

## SS 27 6854

**Stellar Type:** K6 V  
**Absolute Magnitude:** 8.3  
**Radius:** 0.556  
**Mass:** 0.552  
**Luminosity:** 0.062  
**Temp. in Degrees K:** 3980  
**Number of Obits:** 6

### Planetary Data

Orbit	AU	World and Core Type	Diameter	Density
1	0.12	Hothouse, rocky	5,934	0.8
2	0.16	Hothouse, rocky	15,870	0.8
3	0.25	Cool Gdn rocky	17,123	0.7
4	0.35	Debris	-----	---
5	0.50	Failed Core rocky	9,989	0.9
6	0.75	Failed Core icy	17,120	0.3

### System Overview

The Y'Lii home system is most notable for the fact that its 'garden' world actually lies .006 AU beyond the parent star's life zone. The temperate environ-

ment on this planet is largely maintained by its very dense atmosphere and high greenhouse effect. Orbit four is not completely devoid of matter; a small attenuated cloud of debris is present. Long term analysis may in fact reveal that there was once a small world here (1120 km in diameter) that was apparently blasted apart over 100 millenia ago. This small world was a casualty of the Y'Lii War, a fact which the Y'Lii themselves lost track of, but have since rediscovered via their own research.

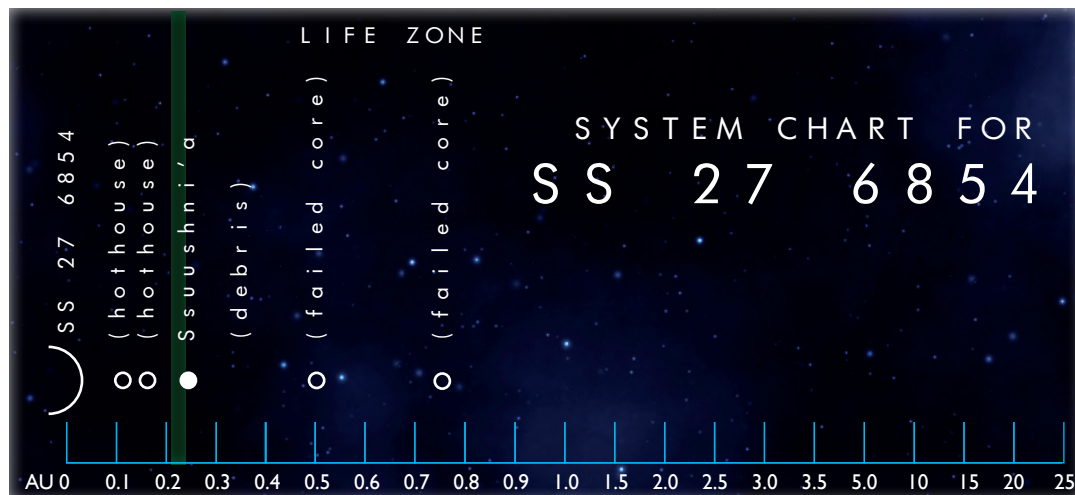
### Planetary Overview

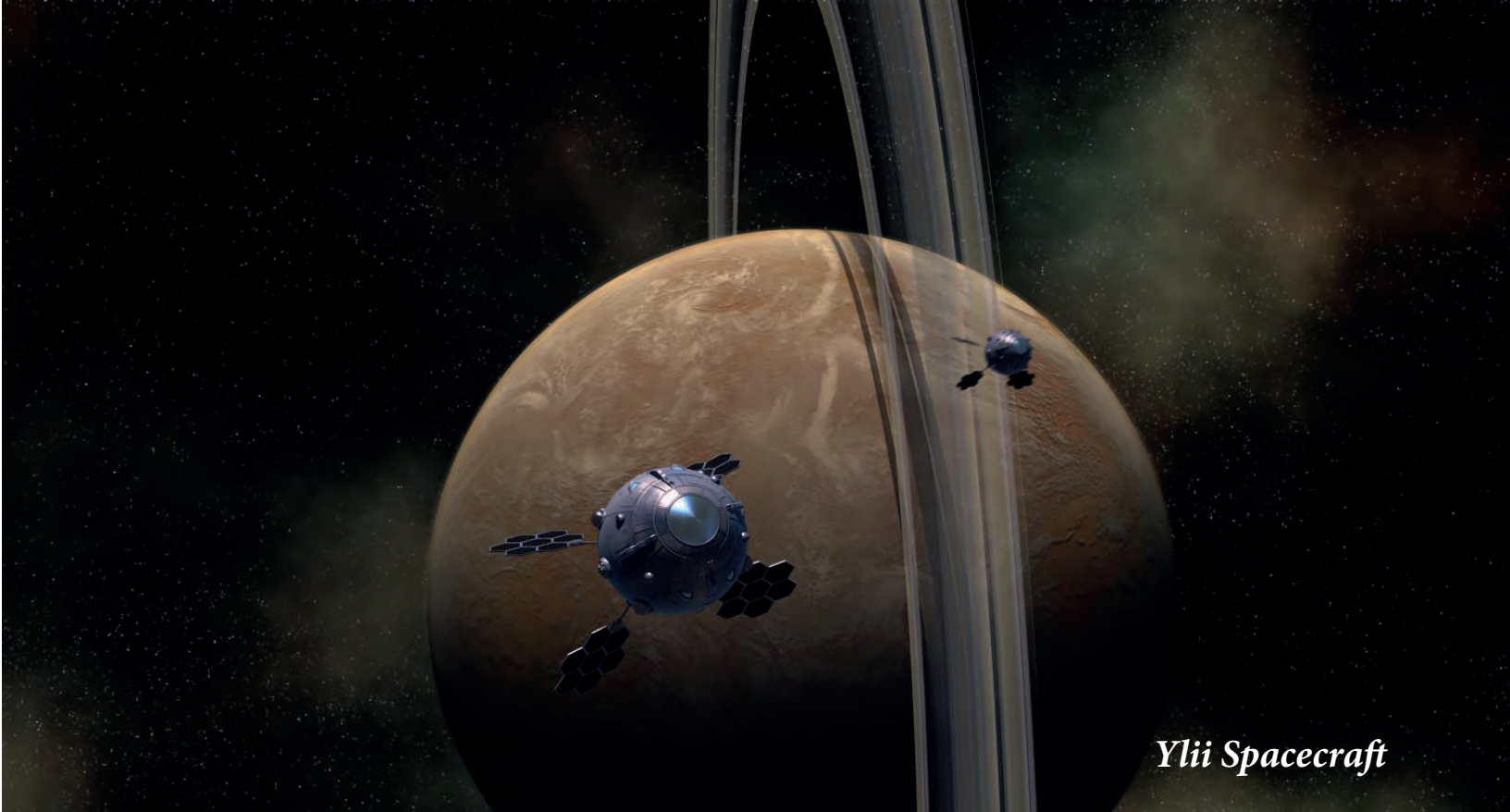
The Y'Lii homeworld, known to the Y'Lii as Ssuushni'a (which translates roughly as 'Mother-Island') is a large, misty world with extensive polar caps and deep oceans. Lying just beyond its smallish sun's life zone, it rotates through a very slow day/night cycle of just under 30 hours. The presence of three satellites creates significant tidal cross-currents, making the seas choppy, fickle, and pock-marked with storm-generation centers. However, these same features tend to undercut the formation of tidal waves.

The land which is not ice-bound is lush with undergrowth, owing to the high average humidity of the atmosphere. In the slightly lower gravity, vegetation tends to grow taller and favors tapering forms. Given the enhanced power of Ssuushni'a's

vanced plastics. Those pieces which are not made of plastic are easily removable (making the gun quickly 'invisible' to a great many security detection systems) and have been architected to give the weapon optimal balance and recoil-absorption characteristics.

The Shoot and Whisper is unusual in that it uses a binary propellant system, rather than fixed cartridges. However, the nature of these binary propellants is quite uncommon. The gas molecules produced by the exothermic reaction are ionized with a weak positive charge. This makes it possible for the S & W ISP to incorporate the compact return-sleeve (or 'u-turn') integral silencer design. As the bullet clears the barrel, an electro-magnetic ring at the muzzle puts out a brief, high-power negative pulse. This slows the expanding, positively-ionized gas via electromagnetic repulsion, redirecting much of it into baffles that travel





## Ylii Spacecraft

*'backwards' toward the firer.*

*The gas that maintains its forward direction (roughly 35%) is channeled through the*

*forward-leading baffles that continue for approximately 5 cm beyond the muzzle.*

*This results in a very silent weapon with a very short overall profile.*

*The S & W ISP also features an integrated laser sight with 100% coherence out to 15 meters. The numerical designation for the weapon --106-- is*

*short-*



windstorms (and their frequency), these growths also tend to grow as 'networks' that emulate a superstructure grid, or to display an almost elastic flexibility and resilience. Hence, the 'trees' of Ssuushni'a may be either area OR point producers.

The fauna of the world includes a great number of aviforms, some massing over 120 kg. Impossible on most other worlds, Ssuushni'a's low gravity and atmospheric density make these glider/fliers possible. Another common feature in its fauna are either very large eyes, or extensive echolocation/sonar development. Both of these sensory adaptations allow creatures to operate effectively in the murky, low-frequency light environment of Ssushni'a.

An orbiting observer would be hard-pressed to gather much visual data on Ylii civilization unless they were able to remain on station for many weeks. Ssushni'a's mean cloud cover

approaches 90 %. However, these are not 'clouds' in the proper terrestrial sense of the word, but are more akin to diffuse mist. Indeed, if the cloud cover was of a thicker variety, the planet's albedo (light reflective) properties would increase and probably tip it into a permanent glacial age. As a result of its peculiar atmospheric conditions, Ssuushni'a has a mysterious, murky appearance; a fuzzy smudge of greens, blues, and polar white.

However, a patient observer would eventually be rewarded with sightings of buildings in deserts and wastelands. Almost all of these would seem to be either spaceports, industrial complexes, and/or massive microwave rectennas. There will be little sign of habitation in these areas, since the Y'Lii place such 'environmentally troublesome' installations in comparatively inhospitable (and more resilient) biomes.

The two innermost natural satellites have been almost completely converted



into huge solar energy reception and processing sites, which then beam the collected power down the the rectennas in the wastelands. In addition to its three natural satellites, Ssuushni'a is ringed by a dense swarm of artificial ones, ranging from 1 meter diameter peewees to several gargantuan measuring almost 100 meters across. However, whereas humanity's spacecraft take on a bewildering array of shapes, the Y'Lii unfailingly construct theirs in the form of a perfect sphere. This gives Ssuushni'a the appearance of being ringed by drifting clouds of silver bubbles.

eccentric trajectories of their own.

A study of the planet's two innermost natural satellites will reveal HUGE solar energy collection complexes, plus beam-down facilities aimed at either the garden world OR orbital relays with relay/beam-down capabilities of their own. Any attempt to land on these two moons will be foiled by a blockade of more than a dozen of the smallish, silvery spheres --traveling at a respectable rate. However, no communication will be initiated, nor responded to.



## History

See the accompanying article entitled, 'The Y'Lii' for a complete history of the planet and its people.

As the team heads deeper in system, they will note a few spherical craft orbiting the outermost planet, a few more around the next --but as they approach what appears to be a garden-world just OUTSIDE the life zone, they will detect HUNDREDS of such craft in a bewildering variety of orbits. Some seem to be traveling in clusters, others off on

If, despite the daunting silence, the characters decide to move into orbit around the planet, about 50 of the spheres --ranging from 1 to 14 meters in diameter-- will gather around Cat's Feet and match vector. Surrounded by a cloud of drifting, silver bubbles, high above a mist-enshrouded green world, even hard-nosed Hannah Spitzmacher will spend a moment contemplating the silent and eerie beauty of the tableau. It will be Franchot Dumaine who finally shatters the moment; "Mon dieu! What are we waiting for? Let's LAND!"

*hand that refers to the fact that it takes a 10 round clip of 6mm bullets. These bullets are another unusual feature in the 'Shoot and Whisper' design. Comprised of a teflon-treated depleted uranium core (of approximately 3.5 mm) and a simple lead 'overjacket', these rounds have excellent effectiveness against both armored and unarmored targets. In effect, the lead serves as a discarding sabot that discards only upon contact with a target, allowing the frictionless armor penetrating core to continue on. It also means that 'soft' targets will not simply have a neat 6mm hole drilled in them; the expanding properties of the lead ensure that the weapon packs a significant whallop to targets which offer only light resistance to penetration. AIA agents refer to the ammunition (technically referred to as 'target-shedding sabot' or TSS) as a 'hammer and pancake' round.*

*Clearly, the Shoot and Whisper is not a particularly good*



*multipurpose weapon, but then again, it is not intended to be. It is a highly concealable, silent, and potent short range weapon --ideal for the special requirements of field agents and/or undercover law enforcement personnel.*

*The Shoot and Whisper is not available on the general market, and the only foreign nations which have been permitted to purchase the weapon are Australia, Germany, England, Canada, and Italy. Efforts are underway in France, Manchuria, and Austrovenia to duplicate the weapon.*

### **SMITH & WESSON ISP 106**

**Type:** 6mm binary propellant automatic  
**Country:** USA  
**Weight (empty):** .4 kg  
**Length:** 17 cm (Bulk=0)  
**Action:** single shot  
**Ammunition:** 6x14mm target shedding sabot  
**Muzzle velocity:** 450 mps  
**Magazine:** 10 round box



## **A WALK IN THE FOREST**

**Where:** on Ssuushni'a

**What:** exploring the Ylii homeworld

*Note: before reading further, the referee should read the article 'The Ylii' in order to understand the Ylii, their behavior, and motivations.*

In addition to the scientific and cultural wonders that await, it is also true that the planet below is by far the easiest refueling site in the system. And, judging from the spheres, there's probably some refined fuel available --that is, if the locals feel like sharing it.

Furthermore, this may be the 'mystery race,' a point which both Dumaine and Morgan will point out if the characters are thinking that this would be a good place to turn back. If he has to, Morgan will break his cover to get the team to land (by giving the order himself), but this is a LAST resort.

As the courier begins to change course for a descent, the spheres will part in what almost looks like a gesture of invitation. One by one, they peel away from the path of the Cat's Feet and resume their previous orbits.

The team will be struck by the pervasive forests, which show signs of scattered, irregularly-arranged construction --very reminiscent of the ruins the characters saw on Erie in the first episode (hint, hint!). If the team manages to spot --and head for-- one of the industrial complexes in the desert or wastelands, they will find it deserted (the inhabitants having fled underground pending the results of the first contact with the unknown visitors). The characters will eventually HAVE to land near a forest

and enter it; that is the only way that the Ylii will ever be in contact with them.

When approaching their selected landing spot, they will note two brief gleams of white light from deep in the forest. If they fly over to investigate, there will be nothing to be seen. There will also be no place to land; the nearest possible spot for the Cat's Feet is the landing site they had already decided upon. The first characters out of the ship will see the white light again, beaming up straight into the sky. Anyone with **Recon** skill will be able to tell at a glance that it's coming from precisely the same spot as before.

It will be an eight hour march to reach the source of the light. During this time, the players will have 3 encounters with local fauna. A bestiary for the Ylii planet is not provided here; space does not permit its inclusion. However, the last of these encounters should occur only 30 minutes or so before the group expects to reach the source of the light. The creature should be a 100 kg flier/glider Hunter that swoops down on the party while they're crossing a small glade. This final encounter will, in fact, involve a short fight, the attacking creature attempting to flee as soon as it takes any damage.

The other encounters should be determined randomly. Referees should consider the forest to be 'teeming' with life for purposes of determining the econiche of any creature confronted.

Consult the planetary description to determine some general traits of this world's flora and fauna. Some other interesting features that Dumaine or any interested observant players may note are:

1) Even the 'leaves' of the pinnacle-like trees are long and thin in shape, appearing more like streamers. The branches tend to be whip-like, resembling willow-wands or



thick vines. The root structures seem to be interlaced and exceptionally sturdy. All these features suggest the ability to resist high winds with minimum structural damage; a logical evolutionary trait on a large planet with a heavy atmosphere.

2) Animals tend to be somewhat 'spindly' in appearance. Even without dissection, observations of their movements suggest that many have cartilaginous, rather than bony skeletons. As noted earlier, eyes, ears, and even noses tend to be quite large --almost comically so by human standards. Marsupials seem to be quite prevalent, given the number of arboreal species in evidence. Ground carnivores tend to be fast and lethal, although the even the biggest is smaller than a black bear. Reptiles are not uncommon, although they show less adaptations for nocturnal activity; they are apparently almost uniformly diurnal.

3) The variety of reproductive systems is one of the most unusual features of

both the flora and fauna. There are several trisexual species (how that works is not exactly clear to the characters, who might merely assume that they are looking at unusual social structures), as well as egg-laying mammals. Plants seem to attract their necessary symbiots not only with scent and color, but light. The orange-gold glow that Ssuushni'a gets from its sun has very little green in it, and minimal amounts of any of the higher wavelengths of light. Consequently, nature's pastel is more limited. A large number of plants compensate for this limitation to their potential 'attractor stimuli' by producing their own light. Green and blue bioluminescence is a pervasive botanical 'sex' characteristic and attractor in the Ssuushni'an forest, lending it an almost 'christmas tree' appearance in the areas where this kind of flora predominates. There is one other factor that the characters may or may not note as they travel through the forest; they are being followed (see sidebar).

Only one attempt may be permitted per hour. If detected, the 'unseen observer'

**Magazine weight** (including filled, disposable propellant cells): .1 kg  
**ROF:** 3  
**Aimed Fire Range:** 30  
**Area Fire Burst:** 3 rounds  
**Area Fire Range:** 15m  
**DP Value:** .04  
**Price:** Lv390 (Lv25 per magazine, Lv10 for a box of 100 rounds)

To detect the unseen observer

**2300AD Task:** *Formidable, Reconnaissance, +2 for having either exceptional hearing or exceptional sight. Immediate.*

**MGT2300 Task:** *Formidable (-6), Recon, Intelligence, Immediate.*

**BRP 2300AD Task:** *Special Success (20% of skill), Skill: Spot or Track, Perception, Immediate.*

**GURPS 2300AD Task:** *Formidable (-5), Tracking, Immediate.*

*One attempt per hour for all systems.*



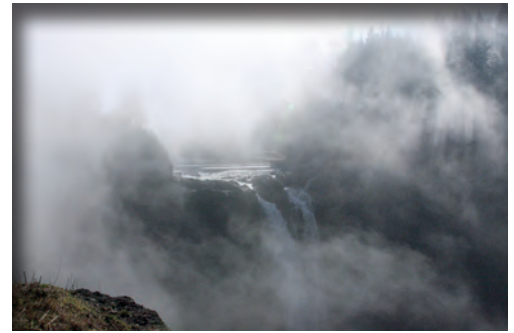
will be glimpsed briefly; only enough to discern that it is humanoid, a little smaller than a human, and fur-covered. There will also be an impression of HUGE eyes. This is the Ylii known as Vishzuss'zruhna'zhii (roughly: Self-knowing-speaker-of-basic-truths-who-is-an-Alpha-Alpha), who has been assigned the task of watching the group as they make their way through the forest.

Vish's (we'll use a nickname, whereas the Ylii NEVER would) duty is to see how this new race of sophonts treats the environment. A respect for flora and fauna, a sense that one does not 'own' nature but cooperates with it as an equal, is the key not only to the Ylii outlook on life, but their assessment of the level of a species' intelligence. If the characters smash around in the undergrowth, ripping up samples, casually dissecting creatures, etc., Vish --and the rest of the Ylii-- will be appalled. If, on the other hand, the characters evince respectful interest in the environment without mangling or mistreating it, the Ylii will be readily coming to the conclusion that prolonged contact with these odd, small-eyed aliens might be a good idea and a 'natural action.'

The key test will be how the characters respond to the conflict with the avian hunter at the end of their journey. Once wounded, the creature will attempt to flee as fast and as far as it can. If the group lets it do so unmolested, or fires shots that are only meant to scare it, this will crystallize the Ylii attitude toward the humans as positive. If, on the other hand, the group decides to blast the hunter to tiny pieces even when it is retreating in a panic, Ylii attitudes will be decidedly negative. If character responses are split between these two extremes, the Ylii will be undecided, biased in the direction of the greater

number of responses. For example, if all but one characters decides that the fleeing Hunter offers a great opportunity for target practice, the Ylii will be VERY skeptical --and will prefer to talk to the person who did NOT do the shooting.

There is one last crucial point having to do with the attack of this creature. Depending on initial range and whatever other weapon may be available for him, Morgan is likely to use his S&W ISP 106 handgun to dispatch/drive off the aerial



hunter. If he does this, the characters are likely to notice that the 'shoot and whisper' is no ordinary handgun; it is a very sophisticated, special-purpose weapon. If the players do not begin to voice suspicions about WHY a helmsman should have such a weapon, Dumaine will relentlessly pursue this line of inquiry. Clearly, it is to Dumaine's eventual advantage if he can make the rest of the group distrustful of Morgan (and by association, the AIA).

Morgan is too smart to try to lie once he is found out. He will explain completely and calmly why he is working undercover on the mission and what his duties are. He will NOT try to take command of the team; that is NOT part of his mission except as a very last resort. Dumaine will inflexibly insist that Morgan is not to be trusted, however, and that the whole group has been made the dupes (or guinea pigs) of the AIA.

## SPEAKER FOR THE PEOPLE:

**Where:** on Ssuushni'a

**What:** First personal contact with a Ylii

In the aftermath of the attack by the avian hunter --immediately afterward if there is a severely injured teammember-- the characters are likely to note a stirring in the undergrowth, followed by a long breathy whistle that begins at a shrill pitch and slowly descends to a bass tone. The duration of the sound lasts over 20 seconds. A few moments after it ends, a humanoid figure will arise out of the underbrush. This (of course) is Vish.

From here on, the flow of play will largely be determined by character actions. Consequently, the descriptions of the interactions with the Ylii are more general in nature, with the emphasis on Ylii objectives and attitudes. This allows a referee to determine the course of action the Ylii would adopt in any given situation.

Vish will approach the group cautiously, although if there is a wounded party member, he will move more rapidly and decisively. In the event that any of the characters present are a bit spooked by this, Dumaine assures them --based on his abilities in these matters-- that Vish is not threatening them. Instead, Vish will attempt to assist in whatever first aid is being administered to the injured, proving to be quite competent in this regard. The characters will notice that Vish is wearing a light harness, to which various tools are attached. In addition, he is wearing some sort of mechanical/ornamental armguard.

After the initial contact, in which both

sides will (presumably) try to make it clear to each other that they mean no harm and want to talk, they will have to go about determining exactly how to converse. If any of the characters has brought along a portacomp with ANY kind of language program at all, and they attempt to use it, Vish will become unusually animated and begin 'typing' with one hand upon his arm ornament (apparently a portacomp also). However, his unit seems extraordinarily powerful for its size (in comparison to human technology). After a little vocabulary is exchanged in the classic manner --pointing to an object, naming it, and then hearing what the other person calls it-- a crude level of communication can be established with the aid of some kind of phonetic emulator in Vish's unit (which converts his hums, whistles, and sibilances into their human language equivalents). (Note: if anyone has taken along a KAFER language program and tries to communicate with THAT, immediate understanding will be established: the Ylii have been dealing with the Kafers for over 300 years. In turn, with access to a common language, the two races will be able to decode each other's language with extraordinary speed.)

Vish will explain in broken English (the referee should try to emulate this) that there is a place nearby where what he calls the 'you-name and me-name' process can be vastly accelerated. He would be grateful if the group would accompany him there. A twenty minute walk brings the group to the base of a large tree with a suspiciously ladder-like vine running up its side. Although later arboreal acrobatics will prove that he certainly does not require a ladder, Vish (as any good host) will provide the example for his uncertain guests and begin climbing up.

Once in the mid-level of the foliage, the players will begin to learn the reasons why Ylii society is difficult to see from orbit. Almost all their dwellings are shaped and colored much like the botanical structures around them. A few aliens similar to Vish (other Alphas) are waiting when they arrive. These creatures also emit a long whistle of greeting and study the humans patiently while Vish accesses a much larger computer. If the players have a portacomp and language program, Vish will ask for permission to interface it directly with his system. In order to make sure that this goes smoothly, he will invite computer experts amongst the players to help him monitor things. The referee should design a few tasks for computer-skilled players to handle at this point. However, the outcome should be inevitably successful (since it would be hard to go much further without the ability to communicate!).

It turns out that Vish was assigned to watch and contact the 'ut'soYlii' (his word for humans, which translates as; small-eyed thinkers). If the group seemed violent or uncaring of the environment, Vish will want to learn more about that right away. This is as much to find out WHY an intelligent species would behave that way, as it is a way of determining how much further the contact should be pursued.

Regardless of how well (or poorly) the humans present themselves in Vish's eyes, two things will immediately be clear to him; this species can be communicated with peacefully and they seem to prefer cooperation over violence. This marks them as profoundly different from the Kafers, with whom the Ylii have been unable to establish even the smallest degree of conceptual common-ground. And consequently, --in accordance with the plans and in-

structions promulgated by the deltas who are constantly monitoring this first encounter-- the humans are to be considered as potential allies.

If the humans were a bit excessive in their use of violence, or used weapons as large and destructive as assault rifles, lasers, etc, Vish will immediately express curiosity as to why the humans would fashion and carry such things. But Vish's phrasing of this question will be skewed towards a species-and-econiche perspective; he will ask the group what prompted such a development and how it is an extension of their place in the natural order they evolved from.

If the players are not equally bursting with questions, Dumaine will be, and seems to be handling the situation with admirable calm, considering that he is living the ultimate dream of every xenosapientologist. In actuality, Dumaine is already calculating how he can get one of the Ylii to accompany him back to earth. One of Dumaine's first questions will be whether or not the Ylii have had contact with the Kafers, and if so, what the 'context' of that interaction has been.

Clearly, the group is free to be as candid or covert as they wish. The Ylii however, are open-handed and honest and Vish will rattle off a brief synopsis of Ylii-Kafer history. His comments will end with some hint of the moral/ethical/ecological dilemma this situation has thrust upon the Ylii. He will also ask what experience the humans have had with the Kafers, since they obviously knew enough about the species to inquire about its impact upon the Ylii.

Soon after these issues have been discussed, a high-toned chirp will emanate from Vish's decorative wrist-computer; the delta's have decided to invite the hu-

mans to the Ylii capitol of Hnnsiithu, where they are to be made welcome while talks of greater length are held.

## SUGGESTIONS TO THE REFEREE:

The drama --and enjoyment-- in this scene should stem from the (often comical) frustrations that arise when two cultures are trying to establish meaningful contact with each other. However, the players should also be reminded (by the NPC's, if necessary) that this one alien contact has the potential to be the deciding factor in the future of human conflict with the Kafers. So although there may be many amusing moments as each side misunderstands the other or expresses itself in a humorously awkward fashion, it is still deadly serious business; descending to slapstick is not a good idea here.

Before taking on the critical role of Vish, the referee should study the article on **THE YLII** carefully, particularly those sections relating to culture, language, history, and human interaction. The Ylii are a truly ALIEN race, whose different outlook is just as organic as is a Kaffer's. This quality should come across very clearly in the referee's portrayal of Vish (and any other Ylii).

A special note; Vish is not really an Alpha Alpha; he is a Defender. Like all other Defenders, he is not aware of this --or that there is even an ongoing re-evolution of this 'lost species.' The same qualities that suited him for his role as a Speaker for his people --courage, intense curiosity, decisiveness-- will create in him an affinity for the humans. However, he will seem slightly uncomfortable around Morgan, and even morose around Dumaine as time goes on. This is actually the uncanny Ylii com-

munal sense kicking in and tweaking to the fact that these two individuals are not what they seem to be, given the purported social structure of the human group. He is only mildly uncomfortable around Morgan because the AIA agent is not out to hurt anyone; his duty is to protect and, somehow, Vish can intuit that. But Dumaine has murderous-- even genocidal-- motives that Vish vaguely 'senses' but his unfamiliarity with such ideas makes him unsure of what he's sensing. Non-defender Ylii are less likely to pick up on this, since human social structure will be less accessible to them.

## THE YLII DILEMMA:

**Where:** Hnnsiithu, Ylii capitol

**What:** Ylii reaction to human culture and Operation Back Door

Vish will guide the characters a short distance away from the tree complex they were in, skimming easily along branches that the characters must cross with great care and no small amount of wobbling. The end of their brief journey puts them at an entrance to a tapering building. Once inside, they take a lift downward. This deposits them in an underground mag-lev station of simple but advanced design. After a 2 hour maglev ride, the characters are invited to debark, and along with Vish, emerge into the Ylii city of Hnnsiithu.

The Ylii capitol strongly resembles a forest itself. Without exception, the buildings are tree-like spires, joined by narrow walkways, and sturdy guidewires. The Ylii can be seen using the wires to travel between the buildings with the arboreal ease of gibbons, swinging from one to the next. Built right next to a forest, it is difficult to tell where the city ends and the buildings begin.

This is the first glimpse that the players will have of some of the 33 species of Ylii that comprise this society. The almost bizarre diversity of this is in odd contrast to the easy order and tranquility that pervades the place. There is also the odd feeling that although this place IS a city, its shape and concept defer to the land around it, not vice versa. Vehicles --usually hovercraft-- are infrequent; almost all the Ylii are walking --or swinging-- to wherever they're bound, and none of them seem to be in a rush. None of the Ylii are clothed, although a few (Betas and Alphas) are carrying tools of one sort or another. Lit by the golden glow of the K-type star, and seen against a backdrop of the green-blue bioluminescent foliage, the entire setting is a pastorage of unearthly beauty.

The Ylii will be equally interested in the humans, gazing at them and whistling their odd version of hello, which Vish translates as meaning 'This first meeting is a pleasure and a gift to be honored.' The Ylii seem to find nothing inherently rude in staring --often for prolonged periods of time-- and also seem to have no modesty taboos. However, they emanate an air of having respect for EVERYTHING they come into contact with.

The next item on the agenda is a meeting with a council of deltas, mostly comprised of the Conceiver species. This is the rough equivalent of the heart of the Ylii government. This group of individuals will be very polite, glad to share any information they have --including their outlook on life, the universe, and everything-- but will also try to get a few key questions of their own answered. These are:

- 1) Why did the humans come here?
- 2) HOW did the humans get here?

3) Do the humans have any message from their leaders? (Although in Ylii, the word for leader literally means, 'most-cautious Great-thinker.)

The players can be as open --or closed-- about these matters as they wish. However, in the case of each question, there are some important Ylii attitudes that already exist, and may influence the Ylii reactions to the characters' answers.

The Ylii HOPE to learn that the humans came here because they discovered some Ylii in the course of fighting the Kafers and wanted to become friends with the entirety of the Ylii race. (Remember; to most of the Ylii, 'becoming friends' means that they will begin to widen their polytaxic society to include humans.) Although the Ylii will be less pleased (and less trusting) if the sole motivation for contact is presented as an alliance against the Kafers, the Ylii will still be receptive. After all, they NEED allies badly --and in a hurry. However, they have an innate discomfort with the notion of making friends with a different race simply to join forces in an effort to injure a third species. The more violence-oriented humans seem, the less comfortable the Ylii will be with them. The fact that humanity has fought the Kafers in self-defense and has tried to communicate with them regarding a peaceful solution doesn't really change this discomfort. The Ylii reaction is not logical; it is instinctual.

As to how the humans got here, the Ylii are hoping to learn that the humans are now in control of the Kafer gateway system of HC +25 1902. This is the only way (known to the Ylii of this 'Second Civilization') that they can travel to systems beyond the last three they have been restricted to. The characters will not be able to mislead the Ylii into thinking that they came from this di-



rection, however. The Ylii will ask questions regarding conditions in systems lying along that rout. The players will not be able to 'fake' answers to these queries. It is inevitable, therefore, that the Ylii will come to realize that the humans arrived in Ssuushni'a via a different route, or a more power interstellar transit technology.

Regarding a message from humanity's leaders, the Ylii will be grateful for any word of friendship or alliance. They will be alarmed if the characters' statements reveal (either directly or indirectly) that the humans, too, are sorely pressed by the Kafers and their vicious attacks. However, this will only strengthen the resolve of the Deltas to pursue some sort of alliance with the humans.

There is one last point that underlies Ylii thoughts about the Kafers. This is a desire to prevent them from being wiped out. As deadly and destructive as the Kafer's are --the Ylii call them 'ze'ylyuYlii' (literally: the unthinking thinkers)-- the Ylii simply cannot accept the notion that any race or species MUST be exterminated to preserve another. The concept of control and containment is difficult enough for them to accept. Consequently, any brusque, militaristic jingoism such as 'it's us or them' will strike a decidedly sour note with the Ylii, who find such attitudes very similar to those evinced by the Kafers. Once again, the fact that the Kafers STARTED the war does somewhat explain and excuse the human reaction --but not much.

In the final analysis, the Ylii will wish to discuss things further with the small-eyed-thinkers, and will offer to send an envoy back with the group. To no one's surprise, this envoy will be Vish. Regardless of who disagrees with him or why, Dumaine will be adamant about

accepting this offer of an envoy. (In fact, if he is thwarted in this, he will prevent the departure of the ship until the group accedes to his demand.)

However, before the Deltas come to their momentous decisions regarding the humans, several days will pass. Over this time, Vish will be the group's constant (and extremely likable) companion. It is likely that during this time, the players will hear some things which hint at the current ethical/ecological crises that the Ylii find themselves caught up in. Should they wish to pursue the matter with any of the deltas, their comments will be welcomed, and in some cases, eagerly sought after. Despite their cultural orthodoxy, the Ylii are among the universe's most open-minded creatures and consider the perspective of an outsider to be valuable.

These contacts and discussions --which the referee should present as being extremely casual, if interesting, affairs-- may in fact be the most profound things the characters do while on Ssuushni'a. As Vish and the deltas are stimulated by the human perspective, they will consider new viewpoints, new possibilities regarding the future of the Ylii and what it means to be a sophont. The referee should reread the section (in the accompanying article of the Ylii) that covers Ylii/Human interaction prior to handling these conversations.

Detective work and fierce encounters with the minions of the treacherous Tricolor organisation enliven the third episode of *'Operation Back Door: Saboteurs & Skullduggery'* in Colonial Times #4. Also for a history of the planet and its people, refer to the companion article on the Ylii in this issue.



# YLII

## YLII NPCS

*In the course of this (and any subsequent) adventure, the players are likely to encounter a number of Ylii NPCs.*

*The following statistics offer mean values for each of the Ylii genera (based on the dominant species).*

*Variations across species can be inferred from the separate description of each genus' non-dominant strains. There is considerable variation due to individual differences as well, but generally less so than in humans.*

	<b>Alpha</b>
<b>STR</b>	7
<b>DEX</b>	15
<b>END</b>	9
<b>DET</b>	9
<b>INT</b>	11



This article expands upon basic data that was first presented in the *Kafer Sourcebook* by William H. Keith, whose work is gratefully acknowledged. While it is not necessary to possess the *Kafer Sourcebook* to run adventures involving the Ylii, the author highly recommends it as a source of deeper understanding about the Kafer-Y'Lii interaction, as well as some features of Y'Lii physiology.

## BASIC PHYSIOLOGY

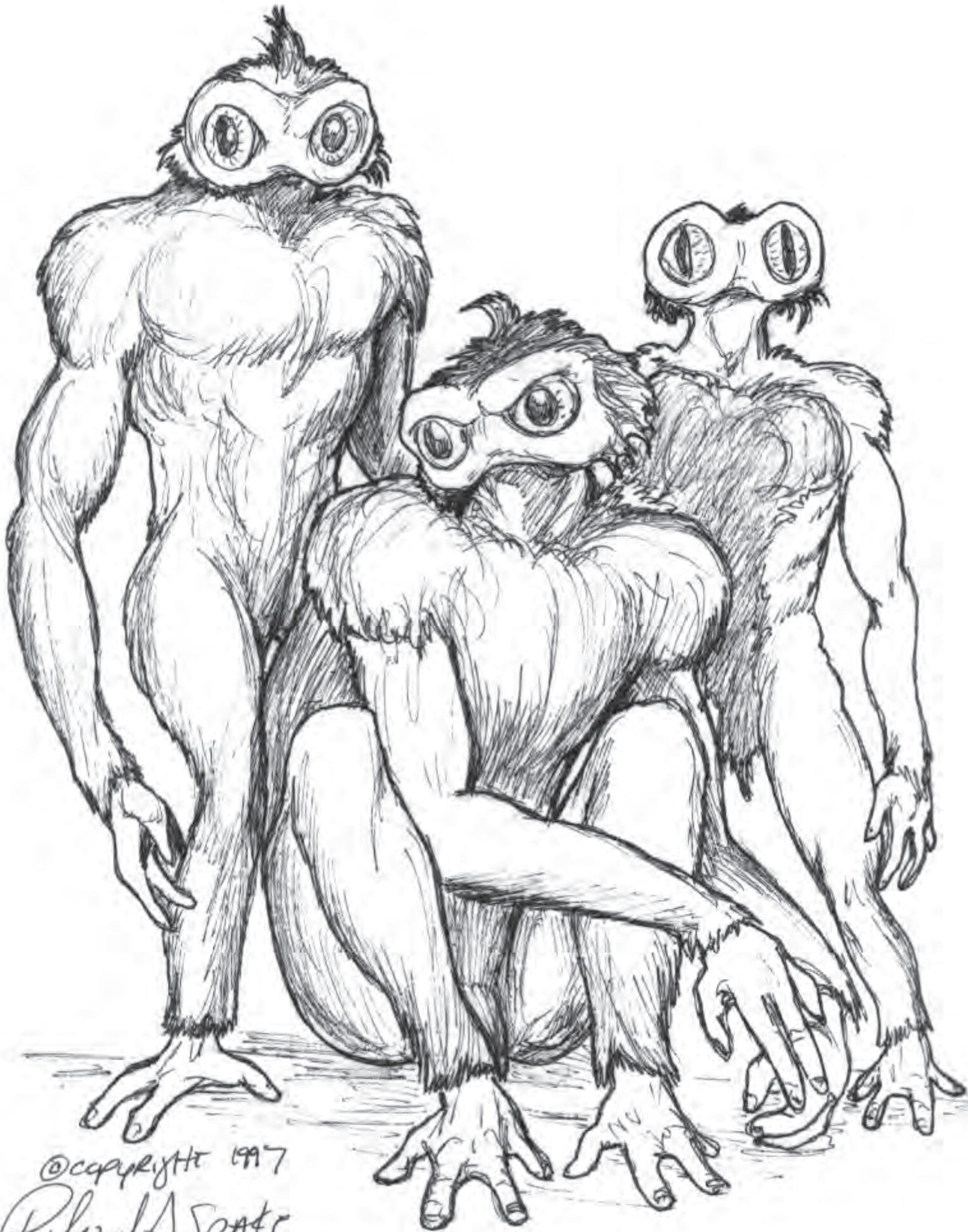
The Y'lii are homeothermic, oxygen-breathing humanoids that evolved in an environment of diffuse, low-frequency light. They are polytaxic, which means that their 'race' isn't a race at all, but is a sprawling amalgamation of sophonts belonging to (roughly) the same sub-order or superfamily of creatures. To use an terrestrial example, the Y'Lii 'race' would be equivalent to the entire superfamily of Hominoidea (man and the manlike-primates, or apes) operating as a single, integrated society.

Despite division into 33 separate species scattered across 7 genera, all Y'Lii evince certain common characteristics. They are upright bipeds, although some can adopt a rolling four-limbed gait. They have four fingered hands and feet, with two fingers of each extremity being opposable digits (thumbs). Almost all species are equally dextrous with their pedal digits as they are with their manual digits. Furthermore, they are

polydextrous, meaning that they do not evince a right/left coordination bias in either their manual or pedal 'hands'.

Ylii heads are actually 'sensor' housings for their large eyes (binocular arrangement), small ears (2, located on the 'cheeks' of the head), and a complex of hairlike sensory spindles dedicated to maintaining equilibrium and assessing air pressure (clustered in tufts around the ears). The Ylii eye is a large organ, designed to gather low-energy light. Consequently, Ylii can 'see' body heat, vehicle emissions, and other infrared sources that are invisible to humans. However, Ylii cannot see blue light and do not adjust well to high-intensity light conditions. Noon in the Sahara would be an intensely uncomfortable (and temporarily blinding) experience for a Ylii.

The Ylii brain is located in the center of the upper torso in a bony protective casing. A six-chambered sequential pump functions as the heart and is located in the upper abdomen. Four-lobed lungs overlay the brain case and acquire air through 4 slits located near where one would find the upper bronchea in humans. The Ylii mouth provides direct access to the alimentary canal, being located in the abdomen. The abdominal mouth structure inverts and folds out of sight when not in use. Communication is achieved by passing air through the 4 breathing slits, resulting in wheezing/



### Beta

STR	3
DEX	18
END	6
DET	10
INT	8

### Gamma

STR	7
DEX	15
END	9
DET	9
INT	11

### Delta

STR	6
DEX	16
END	4
DET	11
INT	15

### Epsilon

STR	5
DEX	14
END	8
DET	5
INT	9

whistling phonemes with a muted nasal quality that has been likened to French. Without palate, dental structures, or larynx, the tonal variations of Ylii language are much subtler, since fewer phonetic options are available.

The Ylii are trisexual and deliver single, live young. The three gender are male, female, and bearer. The male impregnates the female, who then carries the fertilized ova for approximately one month. Then the female transfers the ova to the bearer, who carries the child for another 10 months. Consequently, Ylii females do not endure long or difficult pregnancies. Also, the more specialized and single-purpose anatomical arrangement of the bearer makes for easier and safer births. Ylii infants are slightly less physically dependent than human newborns, but must quickly master the complex social arrangement that results from the polytaxic nature of their society.

All Ylii are covered with a smooth silky fur, although color, length, and texture vary according to genera. These differences are not signifiers of class or caste. With the exception of only 1 of the 33 species, Ylii are herbivores.

#### THE GENERA AND SPECIES

The Ylii are divided into seven genera --Alphas, Betas, Gammas, Deltas, Epsilons, Iotas, and Zetas. Within these seven genera, there are 33 separate species and subspecies. Each of the seven genera classifications is also the classification for the dominant (by percentage) species within that genus. The different species are distinguishable not only by physical characteristics, but by the tasks they perform within Ylii society. Most of these task-related roles will be explained in terms of human equivalents. However, the reader should be aware

that many of these parallels are crude congruences, at best. Even where Ylii activities may 'seem' to be physically analogous to human behaviors, this in no way implies that the two share a commonality of function, purpose, or cultural significance.

Ylii of the *Alpha* genus are the most 'adventurous' of the Ylii and are the most likely to be encountered off-world or as interspeciate liaisons. They are curious, hardy, and have a strong, aggressive will to survive. Alphas have traditionally served as the Ylii's explorers and first-wave colonists.

The Alpha genus includes two related but distinct species, which might best be termed the 'gamers' and the 'finders.' The gamers serve a purpose that might be likened to a cross between professional athletes and performers. In short, they seem to retain and enact those cultural aspects of Ylii society that require physical expression.

The finders seem to specialize in tracking things, searching for lost objects, persons, and livestock. They tend to be the most reclusive of all the Ylii, and tend to associate predominantly with the Alpha species of the Alpha genus.

All species of the Alpha genus are fairly large (for Ylii), averaging 1.5 meters in height. With the exception of the palms of hands and feet, they are covered with glossy brown or brown-grey fur.

The *Beta* genus might well be called the Ylii technicians. They tend to follow quickly in the wake of Alpha explorations, their inquisitive natures drawing them to the new and puzzling challenges presented by novel environments. While they are skillful artificers, they are also extremely placid and socially malleable. They quickly adapt to --and

adopt-- any social order in which they find themselves. The dominant species of this genus --Beta Beta-- are highly dextrous and knowledgeable engineers, designers, and manufacturers. However, their fixation on such things appears to degrade their overall intelligence. In fact, they are not so much 'slower-witted' as they are just plain uninterested in (and therefore, ignorant of) other things.

There are two other species in the Beta genera, which would best be called the 'fixers' and the 'tinkers.' The fixers tend to be a little less intelligent than the dominant Betas, and a little more stubborn. However, they are extraordinarily dextrous and doggedly persistent repairmen.

The tinkers are quite the opposite, being quick-witted, utterly cooperative, but a bit fickle. The tinkers manufacture the small items used by the Ylii, as well as little eye-pleasing objects that are jewelry-like adornments to be added to utilitarian devices. Tinkers do quick, beautiful work --but rapidly tire of making any given product, and so move on to something else.

The Beta genus are small for Ylii, never standing much more (or less) than a meter in height. They are covered with short brown fur that is quite sparse on their heads, hands, and feet. Exposed skin is red-brown to rust-colored and somewhat wrinkled.

The **Gamma** genus might be called the 'proles' of the Ylii culture. They provide the strong backs and hands that do whatever heavy labor remains to be done by Ylii. They are simple-minded and docile, and are less sensitive to environmental differences than other Ylii. Consequently, they are frequently found in the Ylii industrial sites that dot

Ssuushni's deserts, moons, and orbital stations.

There are three specialized species in addition to the dominant strain of Gammas. These species would be best referred to as 'helpers,' 'scavengers,' and 'wildlings.'

The helpers seem to fulfill a role not wholly unlike that of an itinerant laborer, except that their 'homelessness' seems to stem from an ingrained nomadic nature. In effect, they wander about Ylii society, perpetually on the look-out for any little (or big) job that needs a strong back or hand --which they gladly supply. They stay and eat either in the homes of other Ylii species, or in special 'hostels' maintained for them.

The scavengers are essentially garbage-man/undertakers, who consume any edible waste products --including dead Ylii. This makes them the only meat-eating species of all the Ylii. They also have the most complex sensory apparatus, including a variable-sensitivity retinal arrangement and brown-tinted nictating ocular membranes that function as 'sunglasses.' This arrangement allows them to function equally well in light and dark.

The wildlings are possibly the most interesting --and enigmatic-- of all the Ylii species. Essentially the wildlings are elemental or 'prehistoric' Ylii. They do not read, only fashion the crudest tools, and speak a simplistic pidgin dialect of the Ylii language. The rest of the Ylii accord them a great deal of respect and take great care not to influence or change the habits or lifestyle of the wildlings. In fact, the wildlings play a complex role in the 'macropsychology' of Ylii cultural outlook. Basically, the wildlings both serve as a living reminder of what

### Iota

<b>STR</b>	5
<b>DEX</b>	14
<b>END</b>	9
<b>DET</b>	10
<b>INT</b>	8

### Zeta

<b>STR</b>	4
<b>DEX</b>	18
<b>END</b>	10
<b>DET</b>	5
<b>INT</b>	4

*Ylii remains in human space can be found in systems*

**Ross 863,**

**DM +5 3409,**

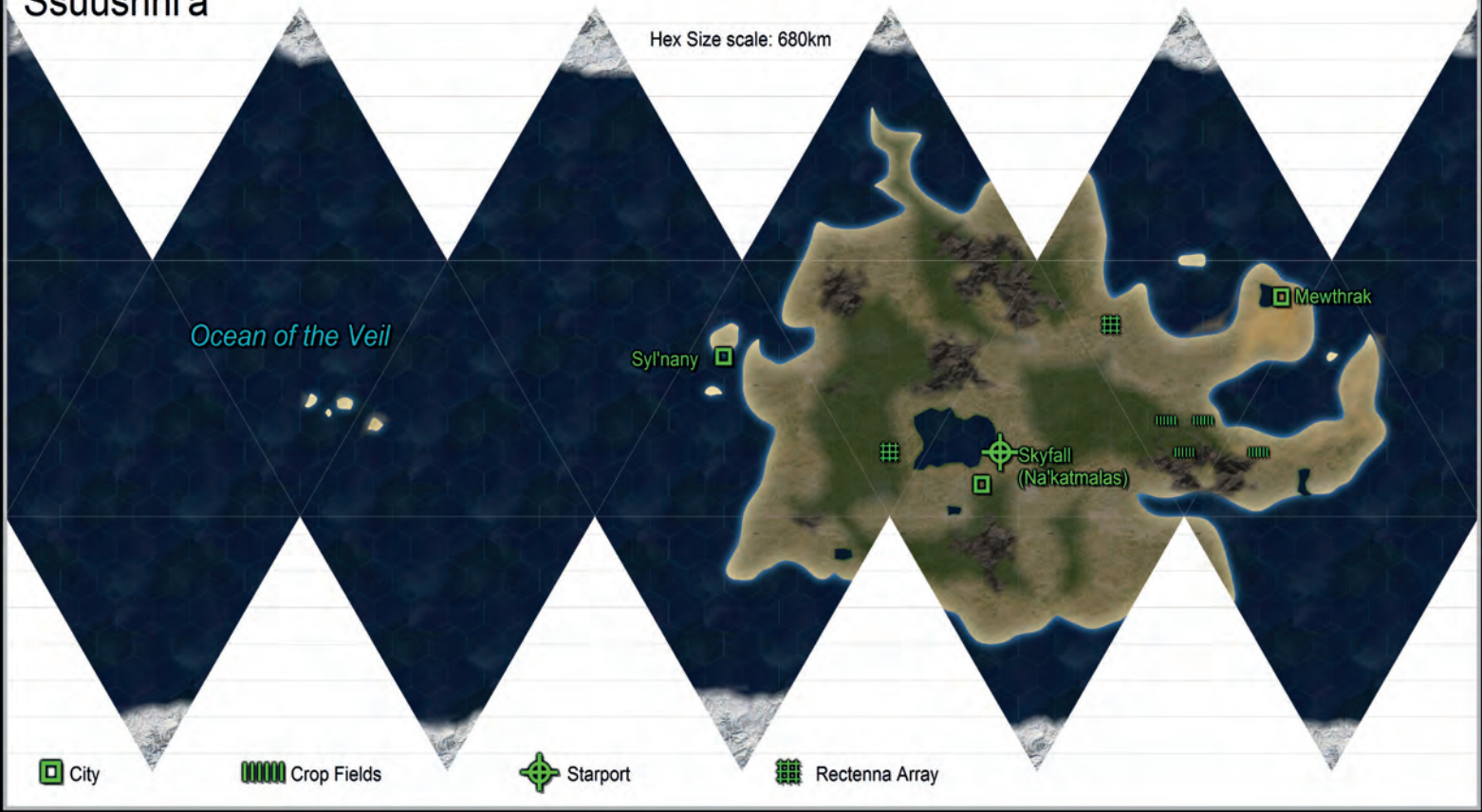
**Ross 867,**

**DM +3 3465,**

*and DK +17 4521.*

# Ssuushni'a

Hex Size scale: 680km



the Ylii were, and constitute a way for at least one species of the 'proto-Ylii' not to become extinct. The importance of these concepts reflects the Ylii focus on not exterminating any species, even if that means carefully preserving one's own evolutionary predecessors.

The Gamma genera are the largest of the Ylii, averaging 1.8 meters in height and 80 kilograms in weight. They are sturdily built and quite strong for their size. Their fur is short, thick, and either black or charcoal grey. Their hands and feet are hairless and black-skinned.

The *Delta* genus are the most intelligent --and elusive-- of all the Ylii. The great majority of them are teachers, a term which includes authors, documentarists, reporter/ observers, and any other task that focuses on the transmission of knowledge. Deltas are nonaggressive, but are highly individualistic. Humans would think of them as 'politely pig-headed.' A delta that is forced into an

environment or role that it does not approve of will quickly weaken and die. This is their inborn way of 'fighting back,' a physiologically-activated metabolic change that effectively 'suicides' the Delta.

The deltas generally oversee and orchestrate the activities of the other genera, although they are not 'hands-on' leader-types. Quite the contrary; their guidance takes the form of suggestions --which are readily obeyed by the other genera. Although the Deltas tend to make excellent and thoroughly-considered decisions, they do not do so rapidly. To a Delta, insistence upon a quick decision would be like telling a human that fish should have legs; it is a non sequiter. The only important thing to a Delta is that their decision is (in all ways) responsible and ecologically holistic.

Besides the dominant species Delta Delta, there are three other species, which would best be referred to as 'mnemon-

ics,' 'healers,' and 'conceivers.' Mnemonics are less mentally agile than the dominant deltas, but have extraordinary memories and a knack for logical and mathematical thought. They are expert computer programmers, librarians, and simulation experts.

Healers are the 'doctors' of the Ylii, who tend to work in close concert with the 'comforter' species of the Epsilon genus (which are described later on).

Perhaps the most important --and rarest-- of all Ylii species are the 'conceivers.' More than any other species, these are the Ylii leaders, who possess unusually powerful and versatile minds. They tend to spend long periods isolated in monospeciate groups, where they may work together or apart. Their role is a mix of many things: inventor, judge, macroeconomic logistician, and think-tank consultant.

Delta's stand about 1.4 meters tall and are almost completely hairless, except for scattered tufts on their torsos, forearms, and a sparse covering across their backs. Their skin is dark grey to black and is quite wrinkled. They are extremely sensitive to light (even for Ylii) and still follow an almost completely nocturnal existence.

The *Epsilon* genus is the most gregarious of the Ylii genera, with the dominant species of this genus being akin to civil servants. The Ylii word for this group translates roughly as 'communals' and certainly conveys more of the diffuse and broad nature of their role in this society. They are the noisiest of Ylii, tending towards hyperactivity when they are excited or upset.

The Epsilons are to the Ylii community what the Gammas are to Ylii industry; they are the hands that get the

work done. But beyond this, there is a predisposition in the Epsilons toward social amalgamation; in some strange way, they are the glue that holds the Ylii together as a unified society. There is no 'logic' behind this, nor is it simply explicable as an adaptation that ensures enhanced survival due to their specialized contribution to the welfare of the other genera. Rather, the activities and interaction of the Epsilons seem to be a behavioral cue to the rest of the Ylii to remain tightly integrated and socialized. They make the logical structure of the polytaxic society 'feel right' to its various, diverse members.

There are four species other than the dominant Epsilons in this genus. They are the 'commercials,' the 'organizers,' the 'comforters,' and the 'watchers.'

The commercials oversee the final distribution of goods and services in the Ylii community, although there is no 'selling' or 'buying' per se; Ylii do not have any concept of money. They are more akin to social welfare administrators.

The organizers fill a slot that might best be described as ombudsman/foreman. They keep track of what is going on in a community, do any simple planning that does not require a delta, and oversee the execution of any directives from the deltas.

The comforters are a combination day care/nurse/midwife/ hospice attendant/counselor. Separated from other Ylii, they will die within days.

One of the more interesting of the Ylii species is the watcher. Quite literally, the job of a watcher is to make sure that everything is going according to plan and that everybody is doing what they should be doing. While this might

sound to a human as a cross between a kibitzer and a policeman, it is actually more analagous to a babysitter/surrogate parent.

The most common task of the watchers is to see to the ongoing socialization of the Ylii young, regardless of genus. The complexities of a society that integrates 33 different species into a single functioning unit are learned with some difficulty, and parents cannot always be present. When they are not, a watcher will usually be around to guide the young Ylii through any social unsurities or errors.

Generally, adult Ylii are of no concern to watchers; lacking a concept of crime, the Ylii never TRY to do anything that's wrong. However, if a Ylii is getting senile or is becoming mentally disturbed, the watcher is there to make sure that their cognitive impairment does not bring them --or other Ylii-- to harm. The watcher will then report this impairment to one of the organizers.

The Epsilon genus averages 1.2 meters in height and frequently adopts a four-limbed lope when moving on the ground. Except for their hands and feet, they are covered with light grey to snow white fur. The fur around the eyes is jet black, giving them a 'masked' appearance. Their skin is also black. They are the most numerous of all Ylii genera.

The *Iota* genus is the Ylii answer to the builder. The dominant species of this genus has a fondness for structures, whether of stone, steel, or composites. Like the Betas, they're a bit detached from society. However, they are not as socially malleable as the Betas, and have a strong self-preservative instinct.

There are two additional species in this genus, which are best thought of as the miners and the finishers.

The miner's role is fairly self explanatory. These Ylii actually like working in narrow, confined spaces. Given their heavier fingers and prominent nails, Ylii evolutionists speculate that this species probably made its home in burrows, or in hollowed-out 'tree' trunks. The miners also enjoy working in P-Suits, although the vastness of space produces agoraphobic reactions in them.

The finishers essentially handle the fabrication of building components and have an extraordinary eye --and feel-- for balance, smoothness, and stress lines.

The Iota genus stands about 1.3 meters tall and (except for the hands and feet) is covered with an almost blue-grey fur. The skin of the Iota is tannish-grey.

The *Zeta* genus is essentially the agrarian equivalent of the Gamma. These smallish Ylii are fairly docile and simple-minded. although the dominant species of this genus has a thorough understanding of farming and horticulture. This genus is interfertile with the Epsilon genus, but offspring are sterile Zetas. Of all the genera, the Zetas are probably the least curious, evincing a strong desire to live and die in the same vicinity where they are born.

Although there are only two species (other than the dominant) of Zetas, each one of those species is further subdivided into subspecies. One species would best be qualified as arboreal gatherers, of which there are five subspecies. The arboreal gatherers have only one task in life; to tend and/or gather needed products that grow in the high vegetation of Ssuushni'a's temperate zone. The subspeciate discriminations are largely due to different sensory sensitivities and varying weight (with the smaller subspecies being able to range up into



the higher regions of the Ssuushni'an forest). They are by far the best climbers of the Ylii.

The other species --the land gatherers-- are ground dwellers who range back and forth across thinly-forested areas and even scrub-lands in search of food or other natural products of interest. They tend to be larger than the arboreal gatherers and are the swiftest runners of the Ylii, frequently using a 4-limbed gait.

Zetas range between .8-1.1 meters in height and are covered with tan-brown fur (except for their hands and feet). The arboreal gatherers have the largest ears of any of the Ylii, as well as the most developed balance sensors. However, their eyes are the smallest of any Ylii, giving them an almost tarsier-like appearance.

## Evolution and History

The Ylii 'race' evolved via the compilation of symbiotic interdependencies between closely-related species. This occurred largely due to the gradual cooling of Ssuushni'a's star, at trend which became significant enough to begin to change the biosphere approximately 10,000,000 years ago. Ssuushni'a became colder, glaciers advancing across once-temperate plains. Air temperature decreased, causing a long-term increase in rain.

For the 'forest'-dwelling proto-Ylii, this heralded unwelcome alterations to their biome. Preferring the lowland forests and jungles, their ranges were eventually flooded, killing many of the trees. This provided the first impetus toward a polytaxic society. The Epsilons and Zetas, originally a single suborder, had already begun evolving into separate genera. However, these branches of the Ylii evolutionary tree were still closely relat-

ed and still interfertile. Social structure was similar as well. Consequently, when local conditions worsened, these two proto-genera began to cooperate, evolving a symbiotic relationship. The Zetas were food-scroungers par excellence, possessing the excellent noses and superior agility that enabled them to locate and retrieve fruits from even the highest reaches of the trees. Meanwhile, the Epsilons patrolled, oversaw the young of both groups, and saw to the portage and storage of the food, thereby freeing the Zetas to do what they did best.

However, as the forests continued to decline, more ground foraging was required --which put the Ylii at hazard from various predators that they had never had to worry about before. In order to acquire protection for the Zeta ground foragers, the joint Epsilon/Zeta troops began to shadow the movements of the more formidable Gammas, who were often left alone by the same predators that troubled the smaller Ylii genera. In time, this relationship was cemented by food-sharing with the Gammas.

As the orchestrators of the Ylii proto-society, the Epsilons began to specialize in attracting and integrating other Ylii who possessed skills that were needed by the whole group in order to enhance its survival. And as the decline of the forests continued and their habitat shrank and grew colder over the course of several million years, these first crude polytaxic groupings began to migrate toward the warmer equatorial regions.

These were the darkest --and most dubious-- days of the Ylii struggle for existence. Forced to cross swamps, open plains, and mountains, the Ylii frequently found themselves stranded in treeless biomes. It was during this period that the Deltas and Alphas were added to the symbiotic network. More

individual oriented than the other Ylii, these genera were accustomed to fending for themselves, and were better able to adapt to living in treeless climes, due to their greater ingenuity and versatility. So, in a reprise of the way the Epsilons had begun to shadow the Gammas, the whole polytaxic troop now began to follow the Alphas and Deltas (which at this time had just begun to evolve into separate genera). The Alphas and Deltas adapted to this new arrangement quickly and rapidly emerged as the 'brains' of the troop.

Those groups which reached the warmer equatorial regions did so only because they adopted this sweeping macro-symbiotic arrangement. Consequently, by the time the 'crisis' of survival had passed (Ssuushni's climate essentially stabilized at a new, cooler level approximately 6 million years ago), the Ylii polytaxic structure was firmly in place. Some troops had stumbled upon tool-making as they struggled for survival during their equator-bound migrations. This skill was retained and enlarged by the intensely curious deltas, who still placed a higher premium on self-reliance than other Ylii. The tool as an extension of self was a notion that the Deltas were temperamentally primed to embrace, and before long, drinking gourds, ropes, and javelins (to repel predators) began showing up in their hands. The rest of the Ylii evinced keen interest in these objects as well, and an offshoot of the Epsilons began to fashion these devices with an almost compulsive dedication. This offshoot eventually subdivided into the Beta and Iota genera. At this point, Ylii society began a rapid upward climb in sophistication and intelligence.

It should be noted, however, that whereas human intelligence was almost exclusively prompted by survival needs,

Ylii intelligence evolved as much from the challenges inherent in managing a polytaxic social order as from desperate responses to Maslowian needs. Consequently, Ylii are not particularly 'tool' oriented compared to other intelligent species. Much of their intelligence and inventiveness is focused on the nature and manipulation of ecological and social relationships. Ylii thought tends therefore to be broad in scope (seeing the universe as an intensely and absolutely interactive whole made up of inextricably linked parts), yet oddly narrow in focus (the only valid criterion for anything is whether it is in keeping with the dynamics of the universal equilibrium).

Clearly, a full, cognitive realization of such issues is not the province of each and every Ylii. Some genera are not much more intelligent than exceptionally bright 'domesticated' creatures. The Gamma Wildlings --and several subspecies of the Zeta arboreal gatherers-- are not much more clever than an orangutan (but go and meet an orangutan sometime...).

These unusual aspects regarding the evolution of Ylii intelligence not only influence psychology and philosophy (which will be addressed later), but have had a profound impact on the history of the Ylii.

### **Early History: When Less Is More: The Ylii As Technical Minimalists**

At the core of Ylii thought and behavior is their reliance upon the skill specialization enabled by their polytaxic society. This arrangement ensures optimum capabilities for survival without recourse to tools; the differentiated expertise of the group members takes the place of special purpose artifacts. Therefore, the Ylii only invent a tool if it serves a

responsible purpose that cannot be met by the 'organic' abilities of the group. And they only improve the tool if the need that prompted its invention has changed or intensified in such a way that an enhancement of the tool is required. Also, violence is almost unknown amongst Ylii, so wars were very infrequent (and resembled brief, extensive barroom brawls more than anything else). Consequently, the Ylii have not had to contend with any of the classic human 'technology drivers.' Only as their societies grew larger and more complex was any form of industrialization or mass-provided service required. Hundreds of millenia passed before the changeover to a truly technical society began.

It is appropriate to note here that by the time they were beginning to enter their equivalent of the Industrial Age, the Ylii had evolved an alternative to war that might best be described as a 'war of words.' These 'wars' were simply generation-long debates between differently-minded factions. For instance, as smaller governments began to amalgamate and centralize into bigger entities, a three-century-long 'war of words' was waged between those Ylii that saw this trend as a movement away from a true 'oneness' with the natural order, and those which saw it as a natural evolution for an intelligent species. Central to this --and any other-- Ylii 'war of words' is the effort to determine whether a given course of action is 'holistic' or not.

The Ylii achieved most technical breakthroughs either to serve the needs of their society, or --later on-- to sate their curiosity about the universe. Lacking a colonial drive, the Ylii expanded slowly across the face of Ssuushni'a, and even more slowly once they began to reach out into space. By this time, the pattern of Ylii technical excellence was al-

ready clear. They evinced extraordinary abilities in the areas of animal communication, ecology, clean energy technologies, environmental control, philosophy, mathematics, programming, and biogeneering. Their military and health technologies were --by comparison--decidedly retrograde (and in some cases, downright primitive).

However, approximately 100,000 years ago, the Ylii encountered a crisis that they were unprepared for. In the course of their slow but steady expansion into their interstellar neighborhood, (including settlements or bases in a number of systems that are in human space) they came across a race of intelligent creatures --the first intelligent life they had ever encountered. Ironically enough, this race was the Kafers

## Culture in Crisis

Study of the Kafers had a profound effect upon the Ylii, who had been accustomed to discovering biospheres and biots in balance; the unfailing and unconscious drive of all things to follow the universal law of cosmic homeostasis. The Kafers confused the Ylii, who could not understand a species that would despoil environments, kill more prey than it needed, and revel in violence. It took several centuries for the Ylii to finally come to a consensus that the evolution of Kafer intelligence --indeed, its very nature-- was the product of a heritage of violence. Consequently, since it was the central adaptive quality of their society, Kafers were able to apply violence to other life forms, each other, or even the environment itself. The only driving factor was self-preservation; they had no concern or concept of ecological balance.

This presented the Ylii with a major problem. Clearly, the Kafers were a

product of the universal order; after all, everything is. Yet, the universal order had created a species which was either blind to or uninterested in maintaining the order that had created it. The philosophical implications and dilemmas embroiled the entire Ylii culture, which --for the first time-- was forced to consider that its emphasis on ecological communalism was an arbitrary, not inevitable, outcome of evolved intelligence.

Dramatic rifts in opinion began appearing in the Ylii society when this 'Kaf-er Question' advanced another fateful step --a step that mortally wounded the 'first' Ylii civilization. Xenologists began pointing to the Kafers' success as survivors, and the rapid (by Ylii standards) improvement of their technology and social ordering. The end result; eventual expansion into space, and contact with the Ylii.

What could be done? Certainly, the Ylii could contain the Kafers; they had the technological headstart to maintain absolute control of the situation if they wished. But such action flew in the face of the central Ylii instinct; never interfere with the natural order of things. And any decision to keep the Kafers bottled up on their home world would constitute just such interference with a naturally-evolving race.

Most Alphas took a stand with the minority of Deltas who believed that it was only natural for the Ylii to respond to the Kafer question with SOME kind of action. This involvement on the part of the Alphas was unique in Ylii history. The society's decisions and debates had always been the sole province of the Deltas. The Alpha reaction was seen by the majority of orthodox Deltas as the beginning of a fracturing of the natural

Ylii order --and panic began.

In actuality, the Alphas were responding in accordance with their nature. The Kafer Question, representing a threat to the Ylii, reactivated the old defensive/aggressive scout instincts of the Alphas, who were the closest things to decisive or military leaders that the Ylii had. But they had not functioned in this role for so many hundred's of millenia, that the 'organic' nature of their reaction was unrecognized by most of the Deltas.

Of course, following their natures, many of the Gammas sided with the Alphas --the footsoldiers following the officers. Others, however, stuck with the Epsilons, who remained dedicated to the orthodox Deltas.

No one incident touched off the ensuing cataclysmic war. However, the orthodox Deltas were unable to control the comparatively excitable Epsilons, who began to withhold communal services from those Alphas and Gammas that were seen as 'rebellious.' The dull-witted Gammas began causing incidents, that were in turn put down by the Epsilon-serving Gammas --and the ineluctable upward spiral of escalation took care of the rest.

The war devastated Ylii society. Unknowledgable in the waging of war, the Ylii did not have an ethic for how to handle it societally or personally. Literally billions of the Ylii --particularly the Epsilons-- went insane and/or committed suicide. The weapons developed were crude and imprecise, slaughtering millions that might have been spared had the Ylii ever evolved a science of war. All this was made more horrific by the fact that since there were no real 'military' targets, EVERYTHING was a target. The war itself only lasted about a year.

However, the aftershocks went on for several generations. Mentally-shattered Ylii ('reverts') roamed the surface of every settled world, occasionally destroying everything in their path. Just as often, whole communities would go silent, later discovered as suicides.

The orthodox delta factions won the war (if it can be said that anybody won it) and determined that the only way to preserve the homeostasis of Ylii culture was to remove those aspects of aggression that made the Gammas respond to Alpha crisis leadership. Similarly, they decided that the Alpha aggressiveness had to be toned down by making the defensive instinct of this genus self-centered rather than socially-protective. After several centuries of careful eugenics work, this was accomplished on Ssuushni'a, --which by then boasted the only remaining population of Ylii in the universe.

The Ylii experienced an inward turning after the war which shattered what they refer to as their First Civilization. Most of the foregoing history was lost --either obliterated by the chaos of the war itself or forgotten in the sad and desperate years that followed. Subsequent generations of Ylii did not want to remember it, desiring to put as much conceptual distance between themselves and that time of madness. One of the things they forgot about was the Kafers --a race that has (inadvertantly) already destroyed them once.

The Kafers are now preparing to finish the job they are unaware they started. The 'modern' Ylii resumed interstellar space travel only 900 years ago. 300 years ago, they encountered the Kafers, and since then the Ylii have been brutally swept aside or taken as slaves by these savage neighbors. (Please consult the KAFER SOURCEBOOK for more detailed information). Now, only three

systems still remain under Ylii control; SS -27 6854 (site of the Ylii homeworld, Ssuushni'a), DK -33 1023, and Dk +32 2390. And moves are afoot in the Kafer Associative to conquer the remaining Ylii worlds quickly, in order to free up assets for the next human conflict.

### **Psychology, Philosophy, and Interaction with Humans**

The broadest assertion that can be made about Ylii psychology and philosophy is that it is exceedingly conservative by human standards. Not surprisingly, this is a direct outgrowth of the environmental and physiological realities of Ylii existence.

In the first place, although the Ylii tri-sexual arrangement significantly reduces the risks that humans associate with reproduction, it does not alter the fact that Ylii never deliver more than one young over a combined gestation period of 11 months. Furthermore, the 'chain of reproduction' is more complex (requiring three rather than two participants), making it more fragile; the removal of any of the three participants will result in reproductive failure. Consequently, Ylii reproduction is a slow process that is still quite vulnerable to all sorts of disasters. The bottom line, then, is that (similar to humans) the first roots of Ylii society are grounded in assuring adequate care and protection for the young and for pregnant adults. As a strictly non-predatory, herbivorous species, this led to an extremely conservative approach to food-gathering and defense. Preemptive defensive aggression and hunting were unknown, which forced increased emphasis upon rationing of supplies and avoidance --or appeasement -- of predators.

This of course prompted the polytaxic arrangement of Ylii society. However, this arrangement in turn intensified Ylii

tendencies toward social conservatism. Place and role in one's society was largely predetermined. Furthermore, the complex rules of a polytaxic society and of trisexual parenting and family groupings have always forced developing Ylii to tread carefully and cautiously.

Consequently, the Ylii temperament is very mild, with a tendency to embrace the orthodox and the logical. It is also stresses rationalism, and patient observation. As a result of this, the Ylii had fully evolved notions of scientific method and empiricism before they even began to smelt metals.

It was this extraordinary (and perhaps for a human, unsettling) legacy of societal homeostasis that made the Ylii so unprepared to handle internecine war --and so unable to limit its destructiveness. Predictably, the victors of the war --the more orthodox deltas-- resolved to make sure that Ylii society could never be imbalanced again. However, in their urgency to take a hand in the evolution of their own species (ostensibly by ridding the Alphas and Gammas of recidivistic aggressive traits), they were actually flying in the face of their own beliefs. The traits removed from the Gammas --but most particularly, the Alphas-- were essential to a balanced Ylii society. The orthodox Ylii were too overwhelmed by the horror of the war to realize that their society NEEDED a defensive, reactionary element, if it was to have any capacity for self-preservation against an aggressive foe. Instead, they excised this very capability.

The result was more than just a reduction of aggressive tendencies in Alphas and Gammas, but a decided trend toward social stagnation. The adventurous Alphas now seemed more content to stay in known environs, to explore less boldly, to raise fewer scientific

questions that had spurred the Ylii on to some of their best and brightest discoveries. As is true for humans, the Ylii trait for aggressiveness was inextricably linked to decisiveness and adventurousness --and it had been removed. Acceptance of things as they are became the uncontested mindset of the Ylii.

This attitude underlies the Ylii approach to health and medicine. The delta hearers are quite capable surgeons and biogenerators; their expertise with recombinant DNA therapies is at least equal to human abilities in this area. However, the Ylii only use these capabilities to heal injuries or infectious diseases. Congenital, inherited, or other 'innate' health failures are left untreated, although any discomfort to the afflicted is alleviated. A human seeing this for the first time might perceive this as being profoundly cruel, but it is in fact a result of the Ylii worldview.

The Ylii care deeply for those among them who are plagued with an 'innate' illness, but their philosophy stresses harmony with the natural order of things, rather than the preeminent importance of individual lives. Consequently, they perceive an innate illness as a part of the natural order, and are thereby bound not to interfere with it. Conversely, the Ylii see the repairing of damage to be consistent with natural behavior; individual creatures attempt to heal themselves, and social animals rally to the aid of the infected or injured. Although it may also be claimed that animals do not care whether an affliction is innate or not, and that therefore the distinction is irrelevant, the Ylii would point out that nature prevents the animals from healing innate ailments. This factor serves to control their numbers in the event that predators or infectious disease cannot, and ensures a healthy species. The Ylii therefore conclude that a race which has



intelligence is not automatically mandated to save whatever life it can. Rather, intelligence must be used to order a society of sophonts in such a way that it continues to follow the natural order, no matter how complex and advanced that society becomes.

Ylii conservatism is also reflected in Ylii language, which emphasizes precision and functional construction. The complex social patterns of Ylii culture make it inevitable that each individual will have to describe and distinguish many different relationships between persons. Additionally, some of these relationships are almost identical structurally, but have vastly divergent social connotations. The necessary distinctions

are achieved through increased emphasis upon the importance and definitive detail of labels, or 'names.' This necessity produced the Ylii linguistic focus on naming and linguistic precision.

Consequently, the names for all things are not only precise, but functionally descriptive, being somewhat reminiscent of German. (An example; the German word for wrist --handgelenk-- literally means 'hand-linkage', or 'hand connector'.) The emphasis on names is reinforced by a number of grammatical rules, the most notable of which is that, in any sentence, a pronoun can only be used after the utterance of the proper noun it is connected. Therefore, where in English one would say, 'I saw Bob.

He's at the store,' a Ylii would have to say, 'John, (who is the speaker) saw Bob. Bob is at the store.'

Like English, the language obeys a subject-verb-object order. However, possessives, plurals, superlatives, and diminutives are each denoted by a single, discrete prefix or suffix. Ylii is remarkably free of grammatical exceptions, and is therefore structurally easy to learn. However, the vocabulary is tremendous, since terms do not change meaning according to 'context.' In Ylii, there is no such thing as context, and consequently, there is really no such thing as Ylii 'humor.' The closest thing that Ylii experience to laughter or amusement would be analagous to the Victorian notion of being 'charmed' or 'delighted.' Ylii would conceivably interpret human laughter as a sign of anger (or possibly, gastronomic distress).

As has already been indicated, the Ylii 'political process' is quite unlike anything that humans have ever developed. While neither a hierarchy or caste-system, Ylii society is nonetheless highly regulated, albeit by an invisible 'social metabolism' that seems to make all its members quite happy. However, despite the differences between Ylii and human society, there are clearly a large number of basic similarities in language and value-structures. In fact, unless players are wary --and astute-- they may make the erroneous assumption that social similarities are in fact interchangeable human:Ylii equivalents. This is not the case; the distinctions are all the more important BECAUSE so many of them ARE so subtle.

For instance, both humans and Ylii have a highly developed philosophical concept of what both call 'equality.' Brief exchanges between the two species would suggest (to both of them) that they mean

the same thing when they use the term 'equality.' But in fact, they do not.

The human concept of equality is hardly ironclad or immutable. It varies from individual to individual. For most people, any definition of equality includes the presupposition of a 'spiritual' equality that defines every life as being equally sacred and valuable. However, many humans expand this view to include assertions that the potentials and abilities of human beings are equal also (given completely equal opportunities), whereas others insist that there are vast innate differences. This nature vs. nurture debate remains unsettled, and thus clouds the meaning of the word 'equality' when used by humans; to know what it means, you must know the opinions of the person uttering it.

However, the Ylii use equality to mean ONLY equality of the spirit. Since Ylii social composition actually depends upon complementary IN-equalities (represented by the differing specializations of the various genera and species), the human nature vs. nurture issue is a non sequiter for Ylii. Similarly, the Ylii understand the concept of individualism but not with any of the human subtextual implications of resisting societal pressures.

For the Ylii, many human concepts will be utterly alien, odd, or downright alarming. Ylii have no word for 'murder.' Their closest equivalents --roughly corresponding to 'manslaughter,' 'assassination,' and 'war-killing'-- are not shaded by the concept of domestic premeditation that underscores the human concept of 'murder.' Similarly, the Ylii do not even have a concept faintly resembling the human values known as 'disgusting' or 'lofty.' The Ylii perception of the universe is that all things fit and therefore, all things are to be as they are. Individual



Ylii are not wont to pass aesthetic judgments when determining the worth of a thing. Consequently, a whole category of human adjectives --here represented by 'disgusting' and 'lofty'-- are meaningless to them.

Many human concepts --such as covetousness, gluttony, exploitation, competition-- are known to the Ylii only because of their three centuries of contact with the Kafers, in whom they observed such behaviors. Humans may not find the comparison very flattering, but that's the truth of the matter.

In all fairness, humans may have some problems understanding a number of Ylii attitudes, particularly the sometimes chilling aspects of their social pragmatism. While Ylii society might be called the ultimate welfare state, it is also true that the Ylii remorselessly discard their dead for the scavenger species of the Gamma genus to eat. They allow the 'innately' ill to perish (albeit painlessly) without making the slightest effort to heal them. Deltas can --and will, if necessary-- issue purely pragmatic prioritized survival lists dictating which members of a population should be saved if disaster is imminent. To humans, this may look like the ultimate in depersonalized, clockwork autocracy. However, to the Ylii, their adherence to --and acceptance of-- this system is as natural as a human's self-preservation instinct. No Ylii is complying unwillingly; no one is getting 'cheated' or 'exploited.' This is simply how Ylii society works. Consequently, humans may also find that the Ylii have a different view on the importance of individuals. Ylii revere each individual, much the same way we are grateful to each cell in our body, but this does not alter the social knowledge that certain Ylii are more expendable than others. Human society wages a tug of war between the ideal of

'perfect equality' and the logistical reality of differing degrees of expendability (usually based on abilities and attributes). The Ylii feel no such dilemma; their polytaxic social order makes such considerations moot. Expendability alters as the environment changes; new challenges define new needs. And right now, the Kafer challenge means that the Ylii need human allies.

### **Possibilities Of A Human/Ylii Alliance**

Clearly, the Ylii need allies if they wish to survive the continuing aggression of the Kafers. Despite projects to reintroduce aggressiveness into Gammas and the development of an effective remote fighter (the Fastball; see part II of the adventure BACK DOOR for details), the Ylii simply do not have the numbers or temperamental predisposition to mount a fast, effective war effort against the Kafers.

One of the major paralyzers of the current Ylii defense initiative is that many of the Deltas (once again) see the Kafers as behaving in accord with their natures; the species is doing what it evolved to do. However, unlike the last time, the Kafers are not just a potential threat; they are a proven hazard that is threatening to exterminate the entire Ylii race. So the Deltas are compelled to ask the question: is it the natural fate of the Ylii to be exterminated? Is this the Ylii role in the events of the universe? Or --as some are beginning to wonder --must they fight back, and thereby take a natural step forward in their own evolution?

To humans, this debate may seem ludicrous, but it is serious business to the Ylii. And resolution is difficult, since they eliminated the aggressive Alpha traits that would have galvanized thought and action in the face of such a threat. This is where the influence of first con-

tact with humans may have a profound impact upon the Ylii as a race. Certainly, upon learning that the modern Ylii believe that their forebears 'removed' the aggressive instincts of at least one genus, some human is likely to ask whether in fact the ancient Y'lii --in tampering with some of the genera-- destroyed the very thing they wanted to create; NATURAL balance. This is a crucial perspective that the Ylii need to consider and contact with humans --and their value system-- will help the Ylii make that critical conceptual jump.

In effect, the Ylii 'answer' to aggressive tendencies was not an 'answer' at all, but a dodge. The Ylii were so used to altering relationships between things in an organic or systemic fashion, that they did not see that the next step in their evolution was to realize that one of the unique challenges to sapient creatures is to realize that some situations are not 'fixable' per se; they are paradoxical, and even tautological in nature. Unfortunately, the post-war Deltas sought a \*structural\* answer to what was inherently a \*moral\* dilemma. They tried to delete the 'problem' aggressive component from their society. They never realized that it is 'natural' for an intelligent creature to change its NATURE by changing its THINKING. by being \*forced\* to ask questions such as: how do societies endure disagreement? Aggression? Is aggression --both external and internecine-- ever necessary and if so, when? Does the necessity of violence make it justifiable? Even if it is justifiable, how should one emotionally feel about it?

In effect, the ancient Deltas --in a manner similar to some orthodox human religions-- attempted to bypass the existential crisis of morality and ethics by 'mandating' an answer; in this case, mandating via genetic law, rather than the 'law of God.'

Contact with humans is sure to bring about self-questioning because human society --for all its imperfections and internecine cruelty-- is intimately involved with the dynamic (and often infuriating) process of trying to sort out what is moral and what is not. The Ylii will see clear parallels between themselves and human society --and will furthermore quickly come to the seminal deduction that the humans are social creatures who stand somewhere between the Ylii and Kafer evolutionary cultural extremes. Seeing the human interplay and conflict of morals will make the Ylii wonder; could this also be part of the natural order of OUR social evolution? Such a thought would have wide-ranging impacts on Ylii attitudes and thoughts, and would pave the way for a re-emerging subspecies that has --as of yet-- not even become aware that it exists again, or of the crucial role it may play in defending the Ylii race. (More on that later.)

However, there is an equally likely --and equally efficacious-- outlook that more conservative Ylii thinkers are likely to embrace (humans may find it somewhat odd --or even repulsive). This view would perceive humanity as the 'defender' species that must now be integrated into Ylii society!

Although this may seem a strange conceptual turn, one must remember that the Ylii do not see themselves as a 'race.' Each genus is physically and mentally disparate. Consequently, their collective 'identity' has nothing to do with biological/genetic conformity.

Furthering the perspective that suggests 'adopting' humanity into Ylii society is the alluring fact that the humans have come along JUST when their protective tendencies were needed. From the Ylii viewpoint, conflict (and therefore, fight-

ing) is evidently natural for humans, even though they also seem to have some degree of concern for maintaining harmony with the natural order. In this way, it is all too simple for the more orthodox Deltas to see current events as a parallel to the prehistoric evolution of the relationship between the Epsilons and Gammas --with the humans cast in the role of the less-aware but physically imposing protector-Gammas. In this equation, the Kafers are the new and dangerous predators that must be discouraged from attacking.

Clearly, this conceptualization fits with the current Ylii worldview. It does not require that the Ylii change; it merely requires that a new species be added to their polytaxic society. The Ylii DO realize, however, that this addition will not be like the others, that social and cultural differences will always be vast.

It is also important to note that any human offers beyond military alliance (such as trade and cultural exchange) will be seen as an invitation to the kind of 'social amalgamation' that underlies the more orthodox Ylii view. Not really understanding the human notion of sovereign states and commercial transactions, the Ylii will assume that the humans are following the polytaxic paradigm that shapes all Ylii thought and perception. Understanding the human political notions of 'united yet separate,' and 'cooperative yet self-determining,' will require a colossal conceptual leap on the part of the Ylii. To them, these ideas are every bit as logical as assertions that 'up is down,' and 'black is white.'

### **The Return Of The Defender**

However, some Ylii already exist who may be more ready to understand humans than the deltas or even the normal

Alphas: a new (or actually, very old) Alpha species, the 'defender.'

The Defender species is actually an evolutionary throwback to the original, prewar dominant Alpha Alpha strain. After almost 300 years of Kafer conflict and fears of extinction, the Ylii genetic pool has undone what was done to it by the ancient deltas who biogeneered the aggressiveness traits out of the Alphas. Despite their advancement in biology, the few Delta researchers who have suggested that such a thing may be occurring are at a loss to explain it. They can only ascribe it to nature's uncanny (almost spooky) knack for producing properly-adapted mutations in response to new environmental conditions.

The new 'Defenders' are no larger than the modern Alpha Alphas, and are similarly colored. However, they tend to be somewhat more intelligent, more goal-oriented, and more outspoken. However, the Ylii --including the Defenders themselves-- have not yet realized that these temperamental changes actually herald the reemergence of the original Alpha species.

Instead, the Ylii are much more focused on their attempts to reintroduce aggressivity into the Gammas. This is largely being done by accessing the Wildling gene pool, which was left unmodified in the wake of the Ylii war. There is some success here, but even the most aggressive mutant Gammas seem to need some sort of lightning rod to get them motivated. Despite intelligent planning by the deltas, and personal leadership by the dominant alphas, most gammas simply do not fare well as soldiers or guerillas. However, there have been one or two notable exceptions to this rule which are currently being studied.

Unfortunately, the study is centering on the mutant Gammas, rather than the unseen factor behind their success; they were being led by a Defender alpha mutation. In the same way that Epsilons possess a mysterious quality that generates a desire for close communalism in other Ylii, the Defenders have the capacity to excite, inspire, and organize the Gammas to perform as highly-effective soldiers.

The other major impact of human:Ylii contact will be the way that Alpha defenders gravitate toward humans and their philosophies. This does NOT mean that defenders are humans in Ylii-suits; not in the least. However, the defenders will understand the human capability

for decisive action when trying ensure survival. The defenders will gravitate toward the comparatively radical idea that the Ylii must accept that moral dilemma is part of the natural process of all sophonts, and that ecological and/or genetic engineering is not always the answer to social problem.

By clustering around humans, the defenders will increasingly come into contact with each other and become a distinct, cohesive voice in Ylii affairs. This in turn will prompt investigation by more deltas, who will begin to realize that the defenders are not just oddly-outspoken Alpha Alphas; they are the welcome throwback to the original alpha --now to be labelled as the defender species

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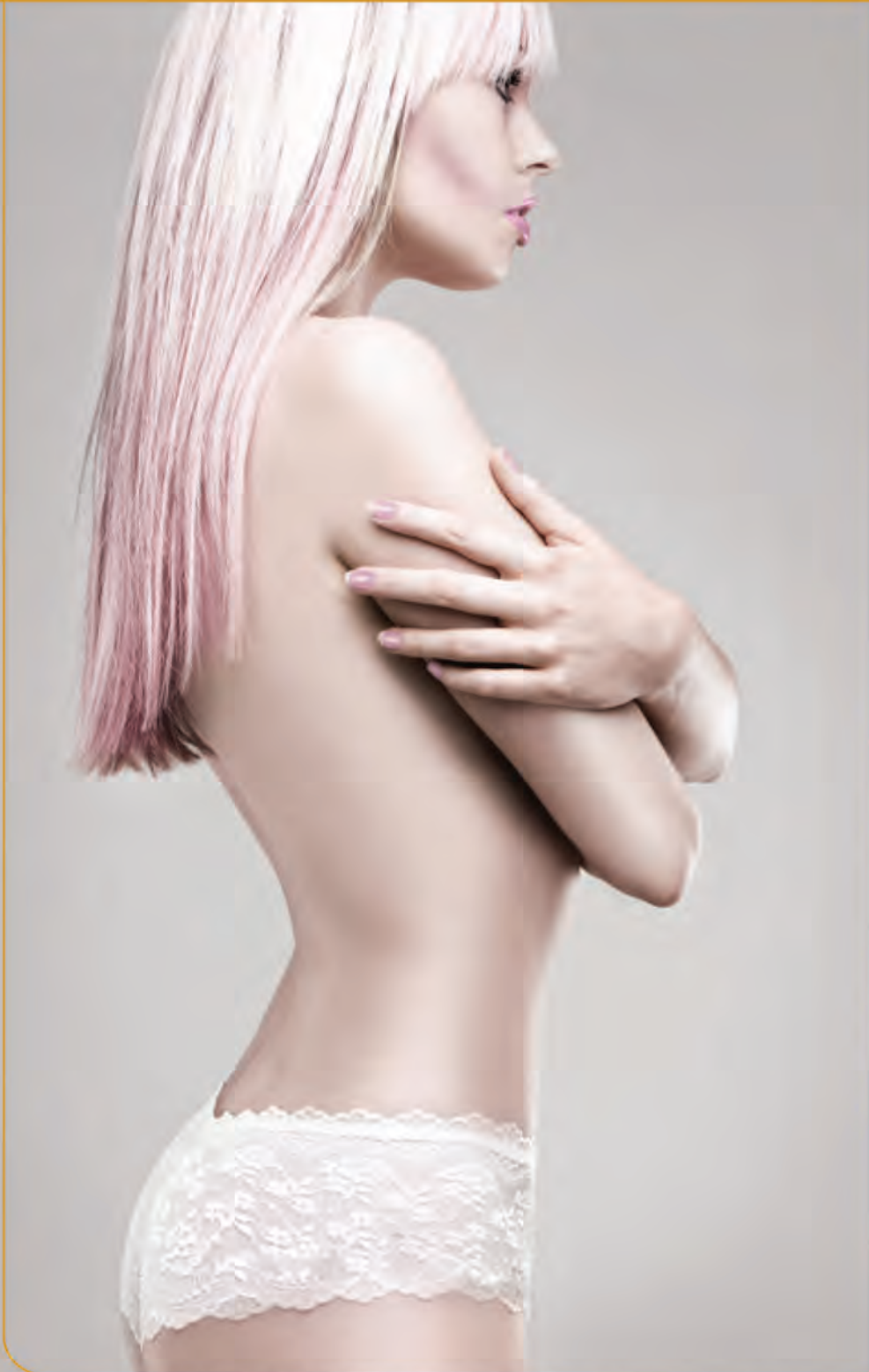
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# ANDROSYNTHESIS

ROBOTICS AND SYNTHETIC LIFE IN THE 24TH CENTURY

BY COLIN DUNN

*Diego turned his head slowly, finger poised on the trigger of his MP-67. The Company had hired him to find an experimental robot and destroy it. Sometimes these things got loose before User Acceptance Testing was complete. In this case, the UAT team had kinda ended up dead, and so the matter needed to be dealt with, quiet-like. It wasn't until after he had accepted that they told him it was an android, flesh body, artificial skeleton, and a brain that was half fullerene and half cloned animal tissue. Didn't really change the job for him, but if he had known he would have asked for more money.*

*Easing the safety of the gun off with a faint "click", he lowered himself into a crouch, and peeked around the corner. She was right there, less than half a metre in front of him, not breathing, just watching him. The target. She put her finger to her lips in a "shushing" motion, and with the other hand, she punched him the throat, crushing his windpipe, all in one blindingly-quick motion. As he struggled for his last breaths, his face discolouring, she crouched down close to him, and stared into his bulging eyes as the light slowly faded within in them. After his body had spasmed its last, she calmly picked up his gun and his linkphone, and started walking in the direction from which he had come.*

Robots are a common sight on the worlds of 2300AD, particularly on the Core worlds, but even the Frontier worlds have a great many robots in a variety of roles. It is this ubiquity that a major factor in the underemployment crises that affect most Core nations. On the Frontier, however, it is the lack of enough people that encourages the spread of robotic labour.

Robots can be found in practically any shape and size, from insect-sized swarmbots to massive construction and mining machines, and even starships. The most common types of robots seen in every-day situations are the various domestic and service robots. They handle most of the menial work in modern society, and even give their high price, they typically pay for themselves within a year or two, given how much it would cost to employ a human in a similar role. A typical domestic service machine, like the Sistemas Domesticas "Adele", is a spindly machine about 1 – 1.5 metres tall, with extendable arms for hard-to-reach areas. Domestic robots are primarily cleaning machines, though most are able to do light cooking as well. Service machines are able to perform heavier cleaning jobs, and are also designed to do light maintenance work, like replacing light panels and repairing cosmetic damage.

In the Core, surveillance robots and computer-controlled drones are a common sight, common enough that these machines are all-but-invisible to the average citizen on Earth and Tirane. Surveillance robots come in a wide variety of forms, but most are airborne. The most common is the NW-12, from Aquitaine, a small LTA drone controlled by a remote computer. This silent, disk-shaped machine has a pair of counter-rotating rotors in the centre, and is equipped with low-light cameras and sensitive audio pickups. Data from these machines is run through an expert system that looks for actions, faces, and key words, which can trigger an alert to a human analyst, which can trigger further action from police or other security agencies.

Another type of common surveillance technology are swarm robots. Due to their limited range, that are released



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SHAPING THE  
UNIVERSE  
OF 2300AD

## The King Crab

**Frame:** Basic Long Size: 2  
**Slots:** 6

**Strength** 8,  
**Dexterity** 8  
**Intelligence** 7,  
**Education** 3  
**Hull** 3,  
**Structure** 1  
**Mass:** 15 kg  
**Arms:** Size 2

**Locomotion:** 10 *Sprawling Legs*  
**Size** 2 10 kph, (*High Performance*)

**Armour:** 11

**Traits:** *Light, Strong*

**Brain:** *Parallel Computer with 2 Memory Sticks, running Command Algorithm 2, Personality Program 3, Antivirus 2, Encyclopedia 2 (Law Enforcement), Melee/2, Gun Combat 1, Recon 0, Athletics 0, VRC, AVS,*

**Equipment:** *Audio Sensors, Code Reader, Motion Sensor, Basic Optics, Advanced Optics, Infrared Vision, Tactile Sensor, Radio Transceiver (Very Distant Range), Smell Detector, Odour Emitter, Black Box, Wireless, Gek-kocote Feet, Enhanced Vision, Enhanced Audio, Video Recorder, Loud Speaker, Basic Vocoder, Lightbar, Satellite GPS, Gyroscope,*

(Cont.)

into areas where active confrontations are occurring, and they will fan out to image anything in range. The Humanitech “**Legion**” swarm consists of about 8-100 insect-sized robots, equipped with cameras and limited auditory receptors. Each unit has a narrow field of view and a “limited range to their “eyes” and “ears”. However, in concert, the swarm can produce very detailed audio and video.

The power supply for the swarm only lasts about 10 minutes, and the transmission range of individual units is very short, little more than 100 metres in a typical urban setting. However, they are a powerful tool for law enforcement and other security agencies.

Momotaro’s addition to the field of security robotics is the **King Crab**, a type of robot often referred to as a “Police Spider” in the media. The King Crab is about a metre tall at full extension, and varies from 0.5 metres to 1.5 metres wide, depending on the set of the legs. It scuttles about on ten legs, allowing it to move equally-well in all directions. It lacks hands or any sort of manipulatory appendages. On the Core worlds, Police Spiders are equipped with neural disruptors, and some, like the King Crab, can cast neural webs for safe and effective crowd control. For riot-control purposes, they can release a cloud of noxious-smelling gas as well. If all else fails, a Spider can also grapple with a target and immobilize it with its ten limbs. Spiders have very good vision and hearing, and even olfactory sensors, but their intelligence is fairly poor. There are intended to work with a human partner, or under the oversight of a larger computer system, and its human managers. Spiders are not good at decision-making.

Courier Robots are considered a secure way of moving small packages, like data chips, prototypes, and even pizzas, around the crowded confines of a typical city in the Core. Most courier bots are small flyers, using two or four shrouded rotors for lift and propulsion.

The Hyde “**Gopher**” is a common design. In normal use, like almost all couriers, it only carries its corporate ID in an RF chip, with no external marking to distinguish it from any other courier bot. There can be hundreds, perhaps even thousands of couriers on the loose in a city on any given day. Security on these courier machines is quite tight, with the owning corporation tracking them closely. The Gopher is armoured well-enough to withstand small-arms fire, and if the storage compartment is opened without the proper code, the contents are flash-incinerated.

The Gopher is about a meter across, using four shrouded rotors, one at each corner of the roughly-rectangular chassis. It usually operates from roof-top to rooftop, though some buildings have exterior doors built to accommodate these robots.

Many nations in the Core ban the production of Dolls, life-like humanoid robots that are typically used in companion and sex worker roles, though some models are also used as receptionists and customer service staff. Dolls are available in a wide variety of physiotypes and sexual configurations, from exclusively male or female to hermaphrodite and even gender-morphing at will. Dolls are programmed to be able to carry on a reasonable conversation, and can show enough “personality” that it is possible to mistake them for a living being. However, Dolls are not intelligent, they merely feign it well.





There are persistent stories of black-market Dolls available in non-human configurations.

In an advanced setting, Dolls would be Androids (see below).

The TP (Telepresence) Servo is related to Dolls, using much of the same technology, but with added sensory capabilities. TP Servos are drones, remotely-controlled by a nerve-fusion telepresence rig, giving the user sensory and even tactile feedback almost like they were there. A TP Servo can be operated anywhere there is an ultra-high-bandwidth link network. This encompasses most urban and rural locations within 300 kilometres or so from a major city within the Core, but likely only found in the largest cities on the Frontier. Some wealthy bio-isolationists use Servo to interact with the rest of the world while their meat body is safely ensconced in a hermetically-sealed life-support unit.

The **Pinchot D30** construction robot is a fairly typically heavy construction machine, used for excavating and light

crane work, as well as building demolition. It is the size of a small bull-dozer, with a dozer blade on the front, and an excavating arm at the rear. Unlike larger robots, it does not have provision for a human operator to ride on or it, but it can be controlled remotely by a dedicated workstation, or even any computer running the required software and possessing the proper encrypted access key.

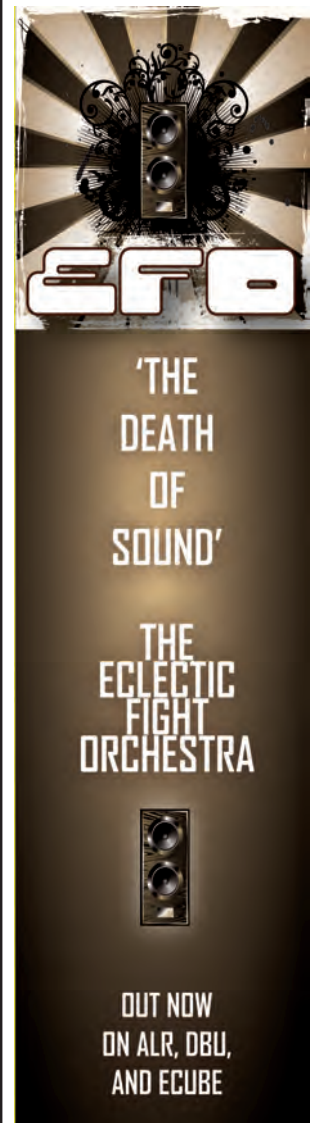
### Military Robots and Drones

Drones are rare on the battlefields of the 24th century. The requirement for a dedicated communications link makes them vulnerable to jamming, hacking, and other forms of electronic warfare. Robots are somewhat more common, but they are rarely armed, and can only fire under direct orders from specific humans, and only in person. Robot comm links are subject to the same vulnerabilities as drone communications, and are considered an unacceptable tactical risk. Of the major nations on earth, only Japan and Iran allow combat robotics to accept remote commands, and even then, the commands must be made by two different authorized humans.

*Neural Disruptor, Neural Web Launcher, Neural Web Launcher fires fine fullerene thread over a 20 meter radius area. Everyone within that area is affected as if by a neural disruptor.*

**Weapons:** Robot Punch (Melee (unarmed), 1d6 damage), Grapple

**Price:** Lv23,550



## Advanced Android

**Frame:** Standard Tall

**Size:** 3

**Slots:** 10

**Strength** 12,

**Dexterity** 12,

**Hull** 4

**Structure** 3

**Mass:** 115 kg

**Intelligence** 13,

**Education** 9

**Arms:** (2) **Size** 3, **Slots:** 4

**Locomotion:** Tall Legs

**Slots:** 4

**Traits:** Anthropomorphic, Bio-cover (Beautiful),

Light-weight

**Robot Brain:** Synaptic Computer with 6 memory sticks (TL13)

**Software:** Command Algorithm 3, Personality Program 5, Emotion Generator, Encyclopaedia 3, Advanced Reflexes, Antivirus 2, Voice Recognition Software, Advanced Vocoder Software, Skill Packs (2 at Level 0, 2 at Level 1, One at Level 2, one at Level 3) , 3 Languages, Emotion Analyzer, Experience Processor, VRC

**Equipment:** Basic Optics, Advanced Optics, Infrared Vision, Low-Light Vision, Enhanced Vision, Audio Sensors, Enhanced Hearing, Distant Radio Transceiver, Wireless Network Connection, GPS, Smell Sensors, Taste Sensor, Tactile Sensor, Genitals, Medical Scanner, Vocoder (advanced), Code Reader, Gyroscope

**Weapons:** Punch 2d6

**Cost:** Lv319,500

## Carnivore Attack Robot

The Carnivore is ground support aerial robot, a light tilt-rotor machine that can carry a load-out of up to 8 light tactical missiles, or four 70mm rocket pods firing laser-guided rockets. This ordnance load is in addition to the 3-barrelled heavy rotary machine gun in a turret in the nose. While it can act as an autonomous unit, it is typical paired with a remote human gunner/commander, while the robot brain flies the aircraft.

Carnivores were used by French forces against the Elysian revolutionaries on Joi, until hackers with the revolutionary council were able to penetrate the security protocols used by the French, and commandeer a flight of three of these robots, turning them on their former masters until the French forces brought in manned aircraft to eliminate them.

## Whisper drones

Whisper Drones, manufactured by Hundemann Industries in the United States, get around the vulnerabilities of data communications by using a hard link. This little drone is powered by a pair of ducted counter-rotating lift fans run off a small superbattery. Sensors are limited to basic optical and IR, but the drone also contains a spotting laser for designating targets for guided weapons.

The Whisper drone is connected back to the controller by 1000 metres of hair-thin fibre-optic cable. It is used by tanks and combat walkers to sight around obstacles and designate targets for missiles and guided artillery. This small drone is in use by both France and the United States, and similar drones are fielded by most modern militaries.

## Artificial Intelligence in 2300AD

Unlike many science-fiction settings, especially recent ones, 2300AD lacks widespread artificial intelligence. There are expert systems, numerous automatic systems that can drive vehicles, fire weapons, and even assist with research, but nothing that seems to have self-awareness and a personality. While true, self-aware AIs have been created in the past, they invariably go insane with 3-6 months. The exact reason is still unknown, but one possibility that has been mentioned is that these super-intelligences lose themselves in the vast virtual worlds they can create with their own processing power. These fantasies grow more involved and overwhelming that they lead to the intelligences withdrawing into themselves, in a sort of computer-autism.

## Androids in 2300AD

Androids are an unofficial part of the 2300AD milieu, presented here as an option for people who are looking for adventures in a universe that reflects science fictional sources like *Bladerunner*, the *Aliens* movies and books, or the recent addition, *Prometheus*.

Androids are not exactly robots, and the treatment of them in science fiction varies from source to source. Some see them as artificially-engineered biological creations, essentially enhanced clones of humans used for dangerous or unpleasant tasks, including the military. In a related vein are constructs like biroids, that layer vat-grown muscle and sinew over an artificial skeletal structure, using hybrid organic/computer brains.

Still others portray them as very advanced robots, still artificial, but unde-



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## Sample Bioroid

**Frame:** *Biological (Human)*

**Size:** 3

**Slots:** 10

**Strength** 8 (4),  
**Dexterity** 15 (9),  
**Endurance** 10 (6)

**Mass:** 95 kg

**Intelligence** 13,  
**Education** 9

**Traits:** *Living Body (Normal Human range of senses), Beautiful*

**Robot Brain:** *Synaptic Computer with 4 memory sticks (TL13)*

**Software:** *Command Algorithm 3, Personality Program 4, Emotion Generator, Encyclopaedia 3, Advanced Reflexes, Antivirus, Voice Recognition Software, 4 Languages, Advanced Vocoder Software, Skill Pack (Drive 2), Skill Pack (Carousing 1), Skill Pack (Steward 1), Emotion Analyzer, Experience Processor,*

**Equipment:** *Basic Optics, Infrared Vision, Distant Radio Transceiver,*

**Weapons:** *None*

**Cost:** Lv257,000



tectable as anything other than human save through a medical examination.

Androids are an outgrowth of the same line of development that includes Dolls and TP Servos, but with artificially-intelligent brains.

## Bioroid

Bioroids, for the purposes of the book 9 design system, are built with a biological frame, based on a human. Unlike the Biological Frame from Book 9, though, the bioroid is built up from a powered endoskeleton with biological tissue, including skin, laid over top. The robot brain is a hybrid organic computer, and is one of the few types of Artificial Intelligence that do not seem to go insane over time. Bioroids require deep body scans to differentiate them from humans, albeit humans with a great many implants.

Bioroids thus require both food and power. While the brain can draw enough power for operation from the biological systems, the endo skeleton requires power to operate at full efficiency. If power is not available, for whatever reason, then the android uses the second physical stat from the stat block in the near sidebar.

## Advanced Robot

The advanced robot is a more conventional design, featuring a near-perfect cover of material that looks and feels like skin, along with a number of other modifications that mimic a person, including a heartbeat, mimicry of breathing, and tiny, randomized movements that make them appear much more human.

The android described would artificially-intelligent, and even suitable for play as a player character. In the official

2300AD universe, a computer-based artificial intelligence would go insane within 1d6 weeks of coming on-line. In an alternate 2300AD, this may not be the case. This is, of course, up to the referee.



# THE ALICE 3 WITH JONNYR



an interplanetary special For the Vienna Robotics Show

Hi, everyone. I'm here in beautiful Austria at the VRS to bring the very latest in hardware, software, and wetware from the leading innovators in robotics technology. We've scored a bit of a scoop today as Guerlain, publisher and tech producer, have given an exclusive with one of the show models for the new Alice model android (3.0).

Well, it's really busy at the show so let's get started.... Good morning, Alice.

Good morning, Jonny.

You are quite the spectacle here today! Everyone is eager to get a look at you.

(Alice stands up and stands motionless in front of the crowd. Crowd goes silent until she tentatively gives a gentle wave. A roar of applause)

Lots of people have looked at me but it isn't everyone.

I understand that. What specs do you have over the previous model?

'The' previous model? My previous model? It's ok Jonny, you don't need those notes. I've studied your career, you are a better interviewer when it's 'on the fly'.

...er... thanks.

You're welcome.

(awkward silence. Alice studies for a second and then a weird and slightly creepy smile appears on her face. Only its only her lips. Her eyes keep studying me. I don't feel at ease at all but I think that was her intent. To put me at ease I

mean.)

It was meant as a compliment. My previous model had inferior facets such as the lack of taste and smell, and the inferior material which comprised skin. As you can see, or maybe not see, (it was here she let out a playful giggle but not a giggle of a woman, it seemed to be a recording of a giggle she had heard somewhere, Japanese maybe, either way it didn't suit her) my new dermis is DR-488xL, a real skin substitute. Feel it if you like.

(She offered her arm. It felt *very* real.)

Nice.

Do you think so? Good.

Do you think...

That I will be a popular model? Yes, I do.

....er...

If you like, I can answer all your remaining questions with a 94.883% accuracy based on previous interviews. I shall send them to your *Drift*™ account so you can spend more time enjoying the show.

(it was here that I suffered a certain sense of dread. For a second, it didn't feel like I was giving *tech-vocce* to a piece of equipment, but conversing with someone who had zero social skills, or some mental illness. She shot me that dispassionate smile again after studying me like an insect in a jar for a second and I left.

Guerlain (Robotics) P.R. Manager Andre Caron responded:

*"On the face of it, some may think we wouldn't approve of Jonnyr's article but on the contrary, it shows Alice to be so human-like that Jonnyr was unable to separate the reality of Alice from his preconceived notions of artificial person technology these days.*

*If anything, this article and part interview affirms our belief that the Alice3 is our most life-like model yet."*

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PATRONS

by DAVE ELRICK

# NEIMOLLER / DESAY ON ADLERHORST

## *International Tensions*

*It's easy to get caught up in the moment, maybe bullets are flying, harsh words, or threats. However, the referee does himself and his players a disservice if they do not keep in mind the international ramifications if they act less than discretely. What may seem on the face of it 'a small fracas' could conceivably result in the collapse of governments and in the gaining of resentful enemies. A good referee will temper these outre political issues to his troublemakers but sometimes throwing them in the deep end can result in wonderful play.*

Classic Traveller had a supplement called 76 Patrons which included 76 adventure seeds, each with six potential outcomes. Later on, BITS (British Isles Traveller Support) published a similar book in their 101... series for any version of Traveller called 101 Patrons. When Mongoose Publishing took over the Traveller licence, they took the format a little further with their 760 Patrons.

The patron encounters published in the above books were useful for referees who need an idea or a short filler adventure for an ongoing campaign. Typically, the entry would include some idea of the world type (if the entry was planet-based) and a suggested set of skills that the player characters would find useful to successfully complete the adventure.

Below is the second in a series of patron

encounters for 2300AD. The following entry specifically uses the background of one of the worlds in the 2300AD universe, although with a little work referees should be able to port the situation to other worlds in the 2300AD universe or even in their Traveller (or other science fiction game) universes.

## **Neimoller / Desay**

**World:** Adlerhorst, French Arm (C986625-9)

**Required Skills:** Stealth, vehicle skills, possibly illegal skills (e.g. bribery, forgery, etc)

**Situation:** Adlerhorst (page 58-60 of the 2300AD rulebook) is a habitable world in the French arm with two colonies – German and French. During the War of German reunification, tensions ran very

high on this world. By the end of the war on Earth a multi-national peacekeeping force was stationed on Adlerhorst to keep the peace between the two sides. Public ownership of weapons is heavily restricted, although this is only really enforced in the cities.

Tensions between the two colonies still run high and recent trouble has triggered demonstrations and violence. Some groups are picketing the spaceport demanding the removal of the peacekeeping forces. As a result, the spaceport has been closed to anything other than essential personnel for two days and the peacekeepers there are on alert for trouble.

### Player's Introduction

The player characters are currently on Adlerhorst – for this adventure to work they should start in either Neuberg or Saint Benoit. Depending on their backgrounds, they may be residents of Adlerhorst or just passing through. They should not be part of the peacekeeping forces. They have been contacted by a man called Gunther Neimoller (if they are in the German colony) or Jacques Desay (if they are in Saint Benoit).

Gunther/Jacques tells the PCs that he owns a chain of food stores in the colony. Some of the fruit and vegetables sold in his stores don't grow well on Adlerhorst and as a result are imported from off-world. Although they are packed in an oxygen-low environment to inhibit ripening, they must be sold within a certain amount of time or they will go off and he will lose the money he has paid.

Insurance will only cover so much of the cost, and they may even reduce the payout because the closure of the port could not be foreseen.

He needs some people to get into the port and recover the goods (six pallets worth – about the amount to fit into an eighteen-wheeler or similar vehicle). He has paid for them and has completed the necessary import permits (he will show them to the PCs if asked) so the goods belong to him. It's just a matter of getting them from the port warehouse to his warehouse. He doesn't mind how it's done, but if the PCs plan anything illegal he doesn't want to know any details as he doesn't want to get into trouble with the colony authorities.

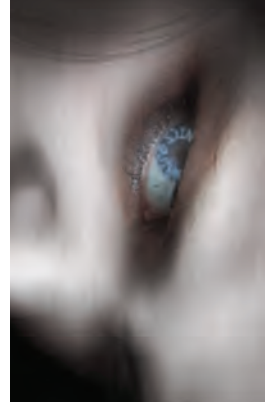
Gunther/Jacques can supply information about which warehouse the goods are held in and roughly where in the warehouse they are. He also supplies directions to a warehouse he owns (not his main one, in case there is trouble). He can also arrange for a vehicle if the PCs ask.

The spaceport is massive (about the size of an international airport, such as Heathrow or LA International) and has several service entrances as well as the public one facing Neuberg. The peacekeeping forces are stretched keeping an eye on the public demonstrations and, as a result, have too few troops to monitor the miles of fencing and every single service entrance. If the PCs manage to enter the port quietly and are careful about not being discovered they have a good chance to get the job done.

What's Really Going On: Roll a D6 or select whichever one of the following situations appeals to you the most:

NICOLAS  
FENRIS  
RETURNS

ASSASSIN  
SEASON 6  
11-04



**CAN  
YOU  
FILL  
THIS  
SPACE?**

**THEN  
COLONIAL  
TIMES  
NEEDS  
YOU!**

**WE  
NEED  
ART  
AND  
TEXT**

**SEE  
CONTACT  
INFO  
ON  
CONTENT'S  
PAGE**



**STYGIAN FOX**



- 1 All is as represented. Gunther/Jacques is a trader who wants the goods he has paid for before they lose their value.
  - 2 Gunther/Jacques is actually from the other colony. He is attempting to steal the goods so that he can sell them, make a profit and get one over on those damned Germans/Frenchies – if he can embarrass the peacekeepers at the same time, so much the better.
  - 3 Gunther/Jacques is actually a smuggler and the goods secretly contain items which are either subject to high import tax (e.g. expensive alcohol, rare perfume, cheese) or are actually illegal (e.g. drugs). With the spaceport closed, customs have the time to do a thorough check of all incoming cargos and Gunther/Jacques wants the goods moved before that can happen. The exact nature of the cargo is up to the referee.
  - 4 Gunther/Jacques is actually a separatist who plans to take over the spaceport by capturing the control buildings while the peacekeepers are at the main entrance. He has arranged several groups just like the PCs to force entry to the spaceport to cause confusion and overload the peacekeepers (he has also arranged for a riot to start outside the port at the same time). His own forces will follow up (or even conceal themselves in the PCs vehicle) and gain entry to the port where they will quickly move to control the port.
  - 5 The documentation is forged. The shipment contains guns and ammo for separatists on Adlerhorst. The peacekeepers don't know about this yet but customs are likely to find them soon. The PCs may find out if they drop a carton and ammo spills out, rather than fruit, or they may not find out until they deliver the cargo to the warehouse.
  - 6 The documentation is forged. The shipment contains guns and ammo for separatists on Adlerhorst. The peacekeepers already know about this and are waiting to see who comes to collect them and where they are taken to. They will initially follow the PCs discretely, but will have regular troops on standby to recover the weapons and neutralise the separatists.
- Further events are up to the referee.





**Bobcat are American and Australian it makes sense that these two countries were the first to receive their orders.**

Other nations include:

Canada  
(although the Bobcat is used in a purely battle-field command vehicle role)

Britain  
(known as The Jaguar)

Poland

The Netherlands

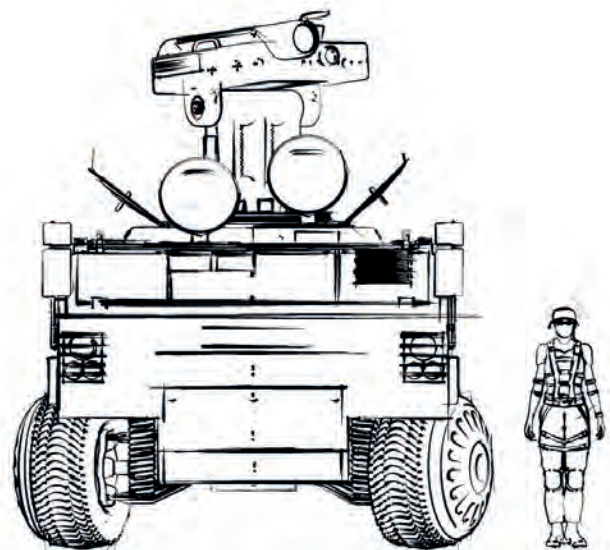
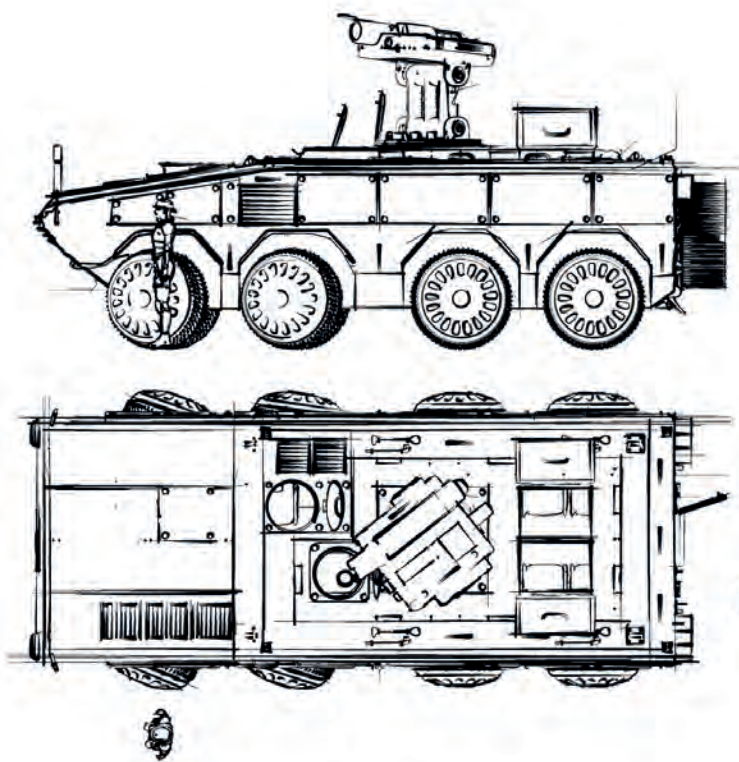
Flanders  
(Much to France' disgust)

and Brazil.

Environment Protection, Computer, Standard Nav (+2), Advanced Sensors (+2), Basic Electronic Countermeasures (+1), TL10 Continental Range Commo w/Encryption, Uplink, and Tightbeam, IR Mask /I, Visual Camouflage /I, Fire Extinguisher

Defenses: Reactive Armour/I, Explosive Belt Anti-Missile System, Laser-based Anti-Missile System, Smoke Dispenser (12 rounds), Flares (12 rounds)  
Weapons: Light Laser Cannon Range: Distant Damage: 5d6 Auto: No

Armour Allocation	
Front	160
Right Side	100
Left Side	100
Rear	100
Ventral	100
Dorsal	100
Turret Front	140
Turret Side	80



**Bobcat Multi-Mission Vehicle**



# PORTLAND 2300

BY WESLEY STREET

## Crime In The Rose City

Large-scale illegal activity in Portland is split between organized crime families and small street gangs. Reported crime as a whole is far below the global average though financially-motivated nonviolent crime is believed to be higher than the norm.

The Twilight-era was marked by the disruption of effective law-enforcement operations. International syndicates took advantage of the chaotic decades to curry favor with the regional micro-governments and warlords. The Mob rooted into the American East Coast and Midwest while the ethnic Chinese triad moved down from Vancouver to take the American Pacific Northwest. The West Coast yakuza clans, based primarily in California, have made some inroads into the Pacific Northwest over

*During my adjustment period I spent time traveling around Earth. I was a junior manager fresh from the Premiere agri-vehicle field office on Beta Canum and the best advice I received for acclimating to Core life was to jump in. So I had a disgusting delicacy called a "hotdog" in New York City, visited museums in Paris, and danced in nightclubs in the Tokyo Metroplex. I saw unemployed people and was staggered by how many there were. When I wasn't occupied with claustrophobia-induced panic-attacks I tried to frame the context of my experiences as, what Mom called, teachable moments. Earth history is incomprehensibly long and complex compared to the hundred-plus years we've been walking around on BC. I was humbled.*

*But all the culture diving and media exposure did little to prepare me for working in Portland. We took our work seriously on BC but it was a job that I left at the end of the day. Everywhere I turned in Portland I saw Papa Trilon. Trilon-made products, Trilon advertisements, Trilon 3V programming, and the Trilon logo on caps, jackets, and shirts. We had official Trilon housing, Trilon schools, Trilon-brand transportation, licensed Trilon stores which accepted only Trilon scrip, and Trilon cops watching us, always watching, at company picnics in Trilon Plaza and basketball games in Trilon Arena. One week in and the Trilon company anthem hard wormed its way into my dreams.*

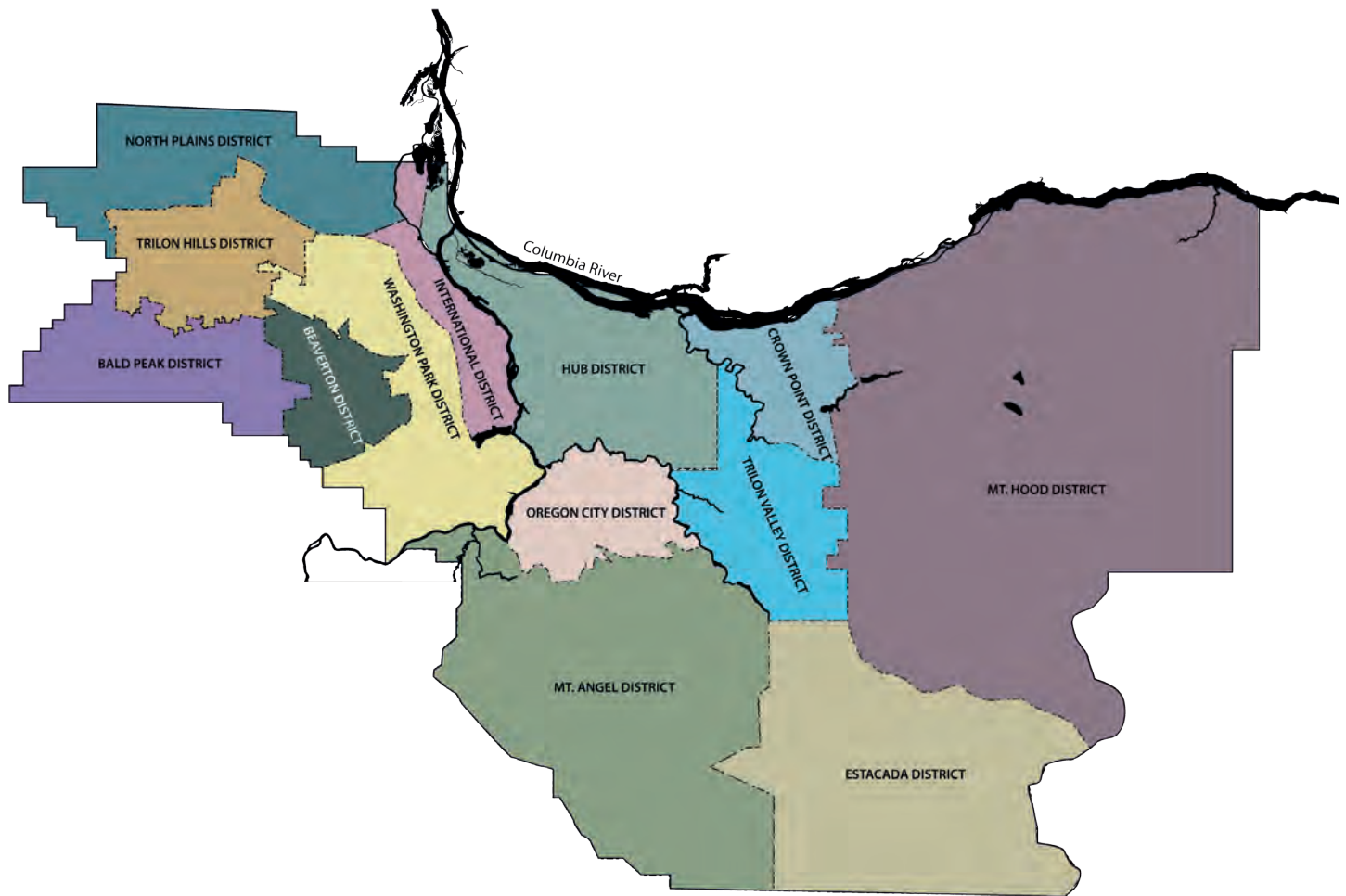
*I quit after my first year and used the last of my savings to move back home. Mom offered to put my name on the title for the ranch. I'm not convinced that raising beefalope is how I want to spend the rest of my life but at least my head is quiet again.*

## Overview

Originally a settlement and deep water river port for 19th century fur trappers, Portland, Oregon in 2300 is most well known as the home city of Trilon Industries, Inc.

The American Pacific Northwest avoided most of the direct violence of the Twilight period but climate change resulted in increased rainfall which damaged the region's agricultural output. Food shortages and mass population migrations in Oregon and neighboring Washington State were common until the last decade of the 21st century. When the American regional and national governments retook control of their territories and infrastructure, urban centers like Portland began the process of rebuilding.

New development differed from the typical urban/rural divide of the late-20th century. While the central business and industrial components of Portland remained, high speed air film and tube lines made commuting safer and more cost effective for residents living outside the city's Hub. By 2300 the greater Portland metropolitan area has expanded to



include all of Multnomah, Clackamas, Washington, and Hood River Counties. Portland's population of 1.7 million residents are majority European and Hispanic descent followed by a large Asian and First American community. During the disarray of Twilight, First American Nations organized to claim (some say reclaim) flooded lands abandoned by local ranchers and farmers. Over the span of several decades, local Chinook and Salish-speaking tribes established successful niche agribusiness concerns in the region including spice and decorative flower cultivation. The tribes have retained many ancient traditions and even introduced some nativist fashion and spiritual beliefs to the area. However, tribal elders and anthropologists worry that Core World cultural homogenization may completely end their way

of life in a way that European colonists failed to centuries earlier. Unemployment in Portland is on par with the global average of 25%. Assistance beneficiaries are concentrated in the Oregon City and Beaverton districts. Densely populated residential blocks consist of heavily police patrolled government housing units. As these districts sit within line-of-sight of the prosperous Hub, the blights are characterized by a distinct feeling of frustration, anger, and unrest. Most residents do not qualify for colonial settlement programs and are forced to languish on local employment waiting lists. Youth gangs destroy surveillance drones with homemade EM weapons. Targeted advertising systems are often sabotaged or vandalized. At the same time, food and small item vending machines are treat-

he last century though they remain a distant second in size and influence. The multi-million livre Zhou/Wong Shipwrights Ltd. is a triad shell-company that takes part in money laundering and fraud.

Gang activity is mostly limited to Portland's blight districts though a few "poseur" groups of disaffected middle-class youth operate across the city. Gangs typically take on one of

two forms: *bōsōzoku*-influenced “speed tribes,” who perform petty vandalism, illegal street racing, and general hooliganism; and more goal-oriented groups engaged in illegal business practices such as blackmail and vice peddling. Twenty-fourth century American street gangs have moved away from the purely racial lines of the late 20th and early 21st centuries. Low economic status has provided a unifying frustration for the chronically un- and under-employed. Average gangs range in size from 10-to-30 members but the largest four in Portland have over 100 members each.

The Scooter Kids are a group of teenage vehicle modification enthusiasts who operate in and around the Oregon City district and delight in causing mischief for police and private security forces. Considered to be generally harmless they're often responsible for illegal street parties and racing.

The Stumps are a group of brutal extortionists who control a ten block, fortress-like section of the Beaverton district. Gang initiation requires that each member have some sort of cybernetic weapon implanted in his or her body. The Portland triad will often contract the Stumps when violent action is required.

ed with utmost care as they remain the sole source of convenient consumable goods.

Post-Twilight Portland has been expanded, demolished, and rebuilt in a continuous cycle. The landscape remains pristine and natural landmarks, including the Columbia River, Mount Hood, and the regional parks, have changed little. Some pre-Twilight buildings are preserved as historic sites. These include the Observatory Museum, the Oregon Symphony hall, and the Portland Building with its Portlandia statue. Architecture is the typical blend of old, new, and revivalist styles that dominate cities across Earth. Neighborhoods with a strong ethnic heritage will often follow an identifiable design style or philosophy such as the heavily feng shui and Chinese Imperial-era influenced International District.

The city Hub is a collection of tower clusters connected by domes and walkways. The tallest building in Portland is the 150-story Trilon Industries Tower at the center of the company's sprawling corporate campus. The high-tech facility was built with aerogels and aggregated diamond nanorods which allow for both flexibility and tremendous tensile strength. To avoid a disruptive cast shadow, the spire uses a series of reflectors to illuminate the city below. At certain times of the day the tower literally glows with the sun's light. The tower is outfitted with several VTOL and helicopter landing pads for executive and VIP use.

Hub district clusters are separated by large areas of private or public green space which add to the feel of high-tech universities. Restaurants and boutiques serve area employees' dining, shopping, and entertainment needs. At night,

commercial product and service line animations run in loops on display surfaces or via holographic projection.

The city's middle class conglomerate in suburban and exurban communities in the city's southern and western districts. These districts are arrayed in orderly, geometric patterns and the average home is a large, single family, townhouse-style condominium. Automated drones handle the majority of food and other consumable deliveries along with waste removal but markets remain available for individuals who prefer a personal shopping experience or a local entertainment option. Shopping areas also double as airfilm train stations. Trilon owns several neighborhoods in these areas, assigning corporate housing to all of its employees and providing free education services to all dependents.

While the federal interstate roadways are decades behind in their overhaul process, the local TrafCon system is a model of efficiency and safety with an extremely low accident and fatality record. Highways leading in and out of the Hub are covered with transparent alumina paneling which keep the streets dry during the winter months and also serve as projection surfaces for ads and local news bulletins. These highways are limited access which make police patrol and automated surveillance simple. The city's tilt-rotor aircraft corridors are also heavily monitored to ensure safety and compliance. Portland maintains a state-of-the-art subway system and automated bus system for higher population density areas though service in and around the blights has been discontinued. Various ground and air taxi services are available with rates dictated by distance traveled.

Portland International Airport is open to air travelers, the majority of who are

business passengers. Trilon owns a cluster of hangers which are used to store and maintain the company's local air fleet. Portland International services all major Earth destinations and direct flights depart twice daily to the San Francisco Spaceport.

Portland receives little in the way of sea traffic as ocean borne shipping is transferred at the mouth of the Columbia River in the city of Astoria. Vessels that do dock in Portland are typically private watercraft or the occasional tourist ship. Portland's waterfront is dominated by parks, entertainment and dining facilities, and the private homes of the city's elite including the residences of Trilon Industries' senior leadership.

### **Economic Sites**

Trilon Industries is the largest private employer in Portland and their presence is reflected in the cityscape and local culture. Trilon Industries Plaza, encircling the base of Trilon Industries Tower, is the location of annual Trilon-sponsored concert, theater, and other cultural events. Trilon Industries Arena is a 50,000 seat sports and large-scale entertainment facility in the city's historic Rose Quarter and is home to local



*A Member of the PPB  
Rapid Response Team*

professional sports teams. The Oregon Museum of Science and Industry, located along the Willamette River, has received massive expansion grants and exhibit sponsorships from Trilon. OMSI maintains one of the largest stellar sciences attractions in North America. The museum runs exclusive screenings of declassified Trilon survey mission footage including guided tours of the Kie-Yuma colony landscape.

Trilon Industries Plaza is a manicured green space complete with rose gardens and riverside walkway located along the south bank of the Columbia River. Life-size copper statues of important figures in Trilon corporate history are interspersed across the grounds and

*The White Hand Angels, arch-rivals of the Stumps, are an all-female gang that engage in illegal software and drug dealing. The WHA's mysterious senior leadership are all rumored to be seasoned informatics experts and digital con artists. The disappearance of commercial grade chemical shipments, used in narcotic manufacturing, are often blamed on this criminal enterprise.*

*The King Road Set in Oregon City have their fingers in several illicit activities including smuggling and racketeering. The gang has made a name for itself by being the go-to organization for restricted black market items including military grade firearms. Their sources are heavily guarded secrets though American and Texan federal agents have busted several linked go-betweens in the Southwest.*



watercraft shuttle employees and visitors to Government Island where Trilon maintains an outdoor corporate retreat area. As the company is extremely security conscious, guards, hidden cameras, and surveillance drones are present at all facilities. Trilon Security Services' conservatively dressed, professional, and extremely polite employees are equipped to handle any sort of property incursion. However, first-time offenders are gently escorted from the premises before an armed response is necessary. Trilon Security Services is on good terms with the Portland Police Bureau so jurisdictional issues tend to be rare. PPB Chief Wayne Lee often subcontracts police services with TSS despite accusations of civil rights abuses.

The state of Oregon and the city managers are the city's second largest employer. Health, human services, labor, education, and law enforcement officials along with city leadership, including Mayor Shawna Dietrich, work out of the Portland Government building. The complex is a modern curved ten-story glass and steel structure. Originally constructed in 2219 it occupies five blocks. The Portland Hall of Justice is located in the Old Downtown neighborhood in the Hub and ten satellite police precincts are spread throughout the metro area. The four precincts located within the blights are the equivalent of small military outposts and are staffed primarily with heavily armed fast response teams. Patrol officer uniforms and vehicles are easily spotted with their distinctive black, white, and neon green color schemes.

Oregon State University's Portland campus is located along the bank of the Willamette River. Grants have expanded the university's nuclear engineering and ship design programs making the

university an incubator for new Trilon talent. The university is a top tier research institution with internationally recognized biology and health science courses.

The United States government maintains a small presence in Portland. The Army Corps of Engineers operate facilities that manage the Pacific Ocean-feeding waterways and the Geological Survey monitors Mount Hood. The local First Americans keep a joint tribal embassy in association with the Bureau of Aboriginal Affairs. The Department of the Interior monitors pollution output and while industrialists grumble about government interference, the lessons of Twilight have kept the majority of the population in the pro-enforcement camp.

Trilon Industries isn't the only major private employer in the area. Microtechnica Computers, a competitor in the home electronics market, keeps a large field office. The office is completely self-sufficient and handles a number of defense software contracts for the American and Canadian militaries as well as the city's public Augmented Reality overlay – a digital rose garden that combines elements of Baroque-era Europe with whimsical fantasy literature. Microtechnica owns the Portland soccer club, sponsored the restoration of Pioneer Courthouse Square, and is a financial backer of the Portland Rose Festival.

Victoria, Inc. makes use of orbital manufacturing co-ops but its corporate home office is located in the Hub district. The apparel design company specializes in high-tech everyday wear targeting the young adult market. Their most popular garments include built in sousveillance gear used by trendy life bloggers, genet-



ically engineered fibers spliced with bioluminescent properties, and EyeSnag™, a line of clothing with stitched-in glass fiber micro-holographic projectors that loop animated advertisements across their surfaces. EyeSnag™ wearers receive regular micro-payments from ad partners. The unemployed often sport these clothes as a method of receiving supplemental income, thus explaining their popularity in blight districts.

Like many cities, Portland has several banking institutions operating in its borders. New York-based American Off-World Financial has a large branch office in the Hub. Specializing in investment portfolios in American Arm stellar development, AOWF has seen its meteoric rise begin to flatten. Rumors persist of a hostile merger triggered by either Trilon or New World Order Bank, an action all parties involved deny.

Portland's top hospital and other health care providers are primarily not-for-profit institutions run by universities or charities. Oregon Health & Science University Hospital is highly regarded as a regional trauma center and includes a full staff of cybernetic, clone transplant, and electronic prosthesis specialists. St. Raphael the Archangel Hospital is the preferred elective surgical and rehabilitation facility for Portland's elite as well as a popular destination for legal bioenhancement. BOXdoc, a franchise of small, full-service, private health care providers, has recently expanded to include emergency transport services in the Portland metro area. However, charges of providing a front for ProVolution black clinic operations have put a dent in the company's public image.

The North American Research League has programs in Portland. While the Vancouver-based foundation has divorced itself from the actions of more

extremist members, NARL and Trilon Industries have been engaged in active hostilities for the past four decades. This typically manifests as info warfare and media smear campaigns. NARL is not averse to old-fashioned protest marches outside the Trilon campus. The foundation has some support in the local community, especially in the blight districts. However the average Portlander views Trilon's presence as a positive economic influence on the city and NARL as a group of out-of-touch reactionaries.

## Attractions

While Portland isn't a tourist mecca it does offer a variety of cultural, dining, and entertainment options for visitors and employed residents.

Washington Park is located just west of the Hub. The park offers a zoo, amphitheater, various gardens, 450 year-old scale steam engines, and a playground as well as memorial sculptures commemorating American participation in armed conflicts across the centuries. An interactive Augmented Reality overlay at the Mexican-American wars memorial provides a detailed account of the Mexican-Texan-American conflict though local Hispanic scholars have questioned the presentation's accuracy. Air and space attractions are a major draw for the city and the park maintains restored air and spacecraft for public view.

The International District is Portland's Asian cultural center. Originally the historic waterfront Old Town, the International District is populated with traditional Manchurian, Japanese, Hispanic, First American, and South East Asian restaurants, shops, and art galleries. The local triad & yakuza warlords typically avoid butting heads in this part of the city, preferring to handle their business in the blights or outside city limits.

The stratovolcano Mount Hood is visible from almost everywhere in the city. A minor eruption in 1933 was predicted well in advance by the Geological Survey thus preventing human fatalities. As of 2000 the volcano is unofficially considered to be dormant. Small earthquakes are a semi-regular occurrence and accepted as a part of life. Mountain climbing and hiking are popular activities along the mountain's slope as is cross-country skiing in the winter. Locals take personal pride in resisting any attempt at commercial development as the area provides a needed respite from Portland's heavy advertising and surveillance landscape.

Portland offers the typical prepackaged, franchise dining fare found in most North American cities including Night Owl coffee shops and American Bar family restaurants but local eateries are a popular destination.

The Loom is a high class restaurant frequented by the city's corporate power-brokers and their hangers on. The Loom specializes in coastal Salish foods – clams, fish, wildflowers, tubers, and berries.

The décor is primarily wood and leather mixed with neo-First American style.

Spat's Turbine is a three-story restaurant and dance club located along the Willamette River. A former hydroelectric power plant, the establishment's theme is 19th century industrial with a heavy emphasis on brass dials and tubes. The food is passable Quebecois haute cuisine and the drinks are notoriously watered down but the live entertainment is considered some of the best in the city. The house band specializes in instrumental interpretations of classical electronica compositions.

Despite being located in the Beaverton blight, Tejas Gastrobar is a local tradition and a favored destination for slumming Portlanders. The menu consists of simple tapas dishes and a limited selection of craft beers. The current owner, Mariano Diez, is considered by many in the local community to be the blight's official "spokesperson" and serves as a public face at anti-corporate rallies. This has made him a person of interest to the local authorities.



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# YOUR WORLD

THE LATEST NEWS BROUGHT TO YOUR FINGERTIPS



## *A thing of beauty & violence*

Master Hu has been making specialist cutlery for 3 decades but recently won the contract to design the swords for the Manchurian Army Officer College at Haerbin.

“It is a great honour. It will help me focus my art.”  
The swords will be given to every officer upon their graduation but judging by some of Master Hu’s earlier work (left) I’d say the honour was all theirs.

## *A Welcome Return*

Efforts to reintroduce the Arctic Wolf into parts of Northern Canada are proving successful with the news that the number of wolves in the wild is expected to exceed 2000 over the next year.

In ‘94 there were fears that the Arctic Wolf numbers had fallen to pre-Twilight levels (which, at the time, were mistakenly thought to be zero). While I’m sure they don’t all look as cute as the little fella to the right, I’m sure we can all agree that protection of the species is good news. Similar efforts are also ongoing in Russia, the Scandinavian Union, and the Far Eastern Republic.



## *Heights of Majesty*

Oskar Rendinger took this winning photograph in the National Geographic photo of the year competition and netted himself a neat Lv10,000 prize. Taken in Oskar’s home country of Austrovenia, it shows a storm rolling in and starting to build over Wildspitze. “It’s a good picture but it was a tense race to shelter once the storm came in.” confessed Oskar.

## YOUR WORLD



### *Art Reportage*

When two meteorites slammed into the hillside near his Wyoming home, artist Frank Harlende painted the view and then put the painting away. Little did he know that when he uploaded the image via his Drift™ his paintings and sketches would become all the rage.

“I’m not sure I see what the fuss is about. I just draw to pass the time. I’m glad of the money though.” a very humble Harlende told this reporter. Nearly 50 of his pieces have sold already and Frank’s store of artwork has run dry. He’s busy painting more landscapes to keep his friends and fans happy and so he can support himself and a nearby horse rescue.

‘The Night The Sky Fell’ recently fetched Lv120,000 at a NY auction house.

### *The Epic Continues...*

‘On White Mountain Slopes’, the third book in Julie Saunders’ epic ‘Sword Wielder’ trilogy is currently filming in Norway. Big things are expected of the third film as the previous two have taken 3 billion livre at the box office and home entertainment providers. Amelia Edison (right) plays Tamneril, a young Elf warrior intent on proving herself to her family but unwittingly uncovers a plot by the dark lord Axan to cover the world in death.

In this installment, Tamneril’s family have been killed by the Liche Army and she seeks revenge and the death of the dark lord.

As we probably all read it in English class, we are all aware that Saunders’ third book is violent and full of tragedy but Gateshead studios are understood to be resisting the urge from financiers to tone down the violence so a younger audience might fill the movie theatres.

“It’s a classic.” said Gateshead’s media rep William Danvers, “I’m certainly not going to change a 150 year old Scottish epic just to please the investors.”

Lets hope he gets his way.





## *Shrouded In Mystery*

Serene bottle green oceans cover the world of Avalon (DM-34 11626 A) at the far end of the American Arm and it's the seas that have brought scientists to this distant world in an attempt to explain why there is such a difference in depth between the poles at 1km and the rest of the planets' seas at 300m.

Theories of suspected life on the world have yet to be substantiated and many experts think that if there is life, it may have been transplanted by careless visitors.

Interplanetary™ episodes that feature Avalon have seen a significant rise in viewing figures and Ordis films is expected to send a team to film more in the near future. Sadly, complaints from academic circles may end that dream for the near future.

Until that day, we must content ourselves with looking at this relaxing photograph to the left.



NEXT ISSUE  
SPACECRAFT  
WORLDS  
OBD  
VEHICLES  
PATRONS  
NEWS

..and maybe something from you?  
In order for **Colonial Times** to continue we need your input! See the Contents page for the e-mail address to send your submissions ideas to.

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'Fire with Fire' out now  
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July 2014  
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available now from all good book retailers.



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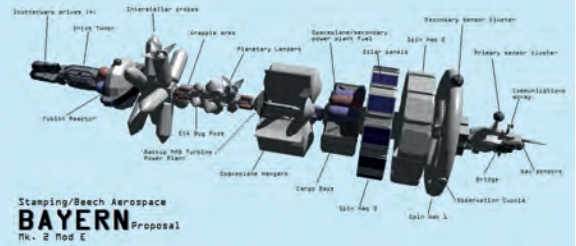


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hobbyist

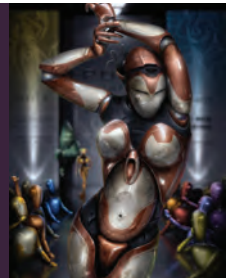


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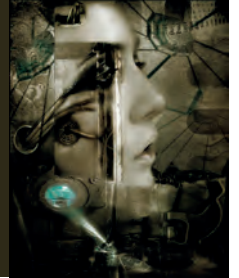


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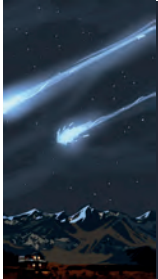
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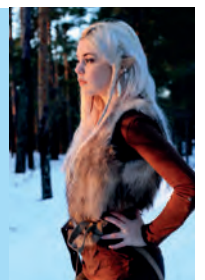
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Artist | Digital Art

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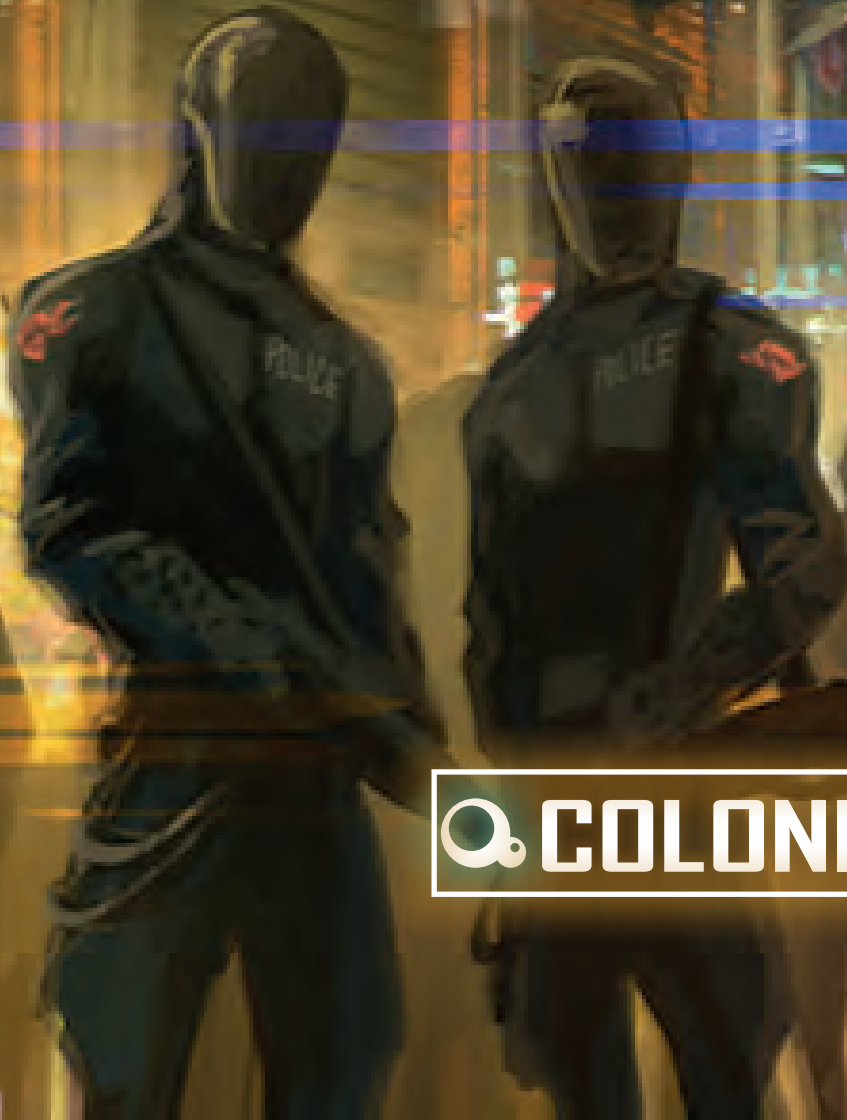
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STYGIAN FOX



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