

Frontier Explorer



Issue 2
Fall 2012

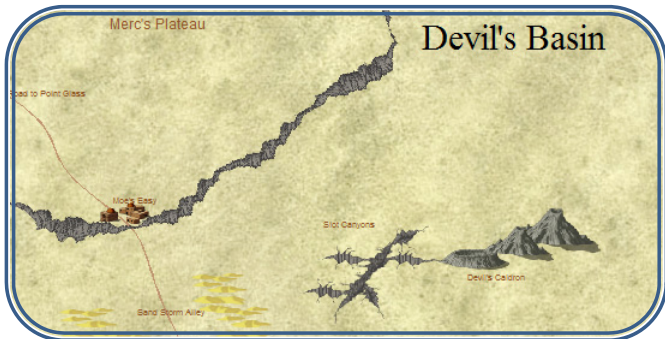
... seek out alien shores ...



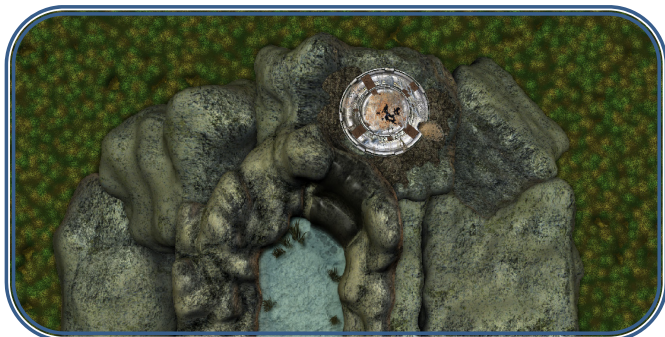
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FROM THE EDITORS

Welcome to the second issue of the Frontier Explorer! We have been amazed at the response issue one received. With over 500 downloads in the first two weeks, and over 1000 in the first two months, the number of you reading this is much larger than we had dared dream possible for our first issue. Needless to say we are humbled by this amazing response.

In addition to the large number of readers, we've already had several submissions from the community, another milestone we hadn't expect to achieve until sometime after issue three or four. You'll find some of these submissions in this issue. Others will be coming out in future issues. To those of you who have submitted articles and art: Thank you. It is your support that makes all this possible. To those of you considering a submission: Go for it! We'd love to print your material as well and we'll help you make it the best it can be.

In keeping with the spirit of the 30th anniversary year for Star Frontiers, this issue contains summaries of some Star Frontiers gaming conventions held back in 1999 that included interviews with two of the games original designers: Lawrence Schick and Kim Eastland. These transcripts provide insight into the philosophies that went into the game's development.

Finally, I'd like to say a few words about the print edition of the magazine. It took us about a month to work out the details of creating the print edition and understanding the additional workflow, as well as time, required to get the print edition ready and through the screening process of our print publisher. We learned a lot, including helping [DriveThruRPG](#) discover a "feature" of their print submission process. But in the end it was completely worth it. The print edition of issue one is beautiful and provides the Town Map from the Mooks Without Number adventure as the center page that can be removed and used with counters on your gaming table. It is our goal that future issues (including this one) will have the print edition available when we release the electronic edition. If you want to order a print copy, jump over to [our product pages at DriveThruRPG](#).

Now turn the page and dive back into the Frontier and remember to always continue exploring.

- Tom Stephens

PRODUCTION CREDITS



Cover Art: Scout Patrol remix by [jrmalone](#) at Deviant Art. Special thanks goes out to jrmalone for making this image as it is a special remix of his [original Morning Scout Patrol image](#) which he made specifically for us to be the cover on this issue of the Frontier Explorer. He also created an image used in the Digging in the Dust of Laco article.

Back cover comic: AZ_Gamer

Banner Logo Image: NASA

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Layout: Tom Stephens

Full Cover Quote: "Leave your home, O youth, and seek out alien shores. A wider range of life has been ordained for you." – Petronius

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THE FAMILY OF ONE

Tom Verreault

A LOOK AT WHAT IS IN THE BOOKS

It has been 30 years since the creation of the Family of One as a setting element and yet very little has been done with it in that time. Having attended a theological school, I've always been interested in the religions of the Frontier. The Alpha Dawn rule book gave us, "Hentz is ruled by a religious clan, the Family of One. Everyone who lives there wears a uniform showing his job and position." Zeb's Guide expanded on this a little, "...not an overly fanatic or expansionist religion, it does dictate that everyone that lives on Hentz or works for GODco must wear a uniform denoting his job and social position." The flavor these statements leave is that of an autocratic organization concerned with controlling its subjects. Since the organization is less concerned with "fanaticism" (being a true believer) and expansion (being missionary in nature) a model of a religion with temporal and worldly power fits the Family of One best.

The religious clan controlling the Family of One, called Clan Anglann in Star Frontiersman #8, holds immense temporal power. It controls a world government and strips the citizens of that world of their personal freedoms even dictating modes of dress. The planet Hentz has a large military that is capable of projecting power into other star systems and this military machine was probably necessary for not only external threats but internal discontent. It is certain that the dictatorial nature of the Family of One runs contrary to the yazirian personality that has evolved in fan literature over the decades. Thus the dictatorial nature of the Family of One and the lid it has clamped down on Hentz society are producing pressure within that must one day release steam.

The Family of One also controls one of the Frontier's mega corps, Global Overall Development Company or GODco. The yazirians are said to have "entered the Frontier" and not lived there all along so it would seem they came with a mission to terraform the worlds they colonized. The Family of One controlled this activity and latter organized the mega corp. We're told that Cassidine Development Corporation funded GODco

and the Capellan Free Merchants underwrote the loan leaving GODco indebted to both organizations. This was likely a public relations move on the part of the Family of One as an organization concerned with control does not give up control willingly. Its activities in terraforming, which up to this point had been on yazirian colonies, had been generating bad press and creating a mega corp separate from the religion allowed the Family of One to feign innocence in the matter. Everyone knows that the church controls the mega corp so this is just about PR for the wider Frontier. The only change that occurred with the formation of GODco is that yazirian expertise in terraforming is now exported to the wider Frontier and beyond.

The situation with the Family of One seems unnatural to the yazirian personality profile that has evolved since our contact with them. Such a situation must have arisen out of unusual circumstances. The one such circumstance listed in the books is their migration to the Frontier. Sometimes called the Yazirian Star Exodus, it represents a major disruption in their society and created an opportunity for Clan Anglann to exert control. Its control is not universal in yazirian society in that it can only directly control the lives of the citizens of Hentz.

BACKGROUND

The yazirian home planet of Yazira was facing destruction. A brown dwarf with an imminent close pass to Yazira had been detected. Yazirian society had already developed a world government centuries before in the form of an imperium that had ended the clan wars. Yazirian society had also been experiencing a space age and the Imperial Court directed an initiative to save the population and the planet's cultural and biological heritage.

Clan Anglann was at the forefront of this initiative. It was one of the clans with a science and astronomy focus and its members led the way in sending out exploration ships and crews. They eventually discovered the Araks system and charted a route. The Imperial Court directed them to begin terraforming efforts on Hentz in the Araks system while the ships of the Exodus Fleet were built. Clan Anglann

administered the new outpost on Hentz and prepared for the first wave of refugees.

In ancient times yazirians had worshiped deified heroes and legendary figures of myth as gods. Since the end of the clan wars and the industrial revolution, yazirian society had become increasingly secular. The advent of the crisis had caused introspection in some segments of society, but large portions had reached the verge of panic and only through the focused will of the Imperial Warhon had a return to the violence of the clan wars been averted. The Imperial Warhon needed to focus his society on its own salvation and give it hope. A new philosophy that had taken root in the recent social unrest was chosen for the new initiative.

The Philosophy of One stated that all yazirians were one family and clan. It became the message of the Imperial Court, “we’re all in this together.” Under the Warhon’s direction yazirian society was restructured to meet the impending doom. As the baleful eye of the brown dwarf loomed closer, the philosophy began to take on the strength of religious belief. The core belief of all yazirians being one unified the society even in the face of its destruction and gave hope.

Not long after the arrival of the first wave of the Star Exodus to the Araks system, Clan Anglann detected signals originating from the vrusk and human colonies in the Frontier. Humans explorers were then encountered in the Prenglar system and Clan Anglann realized that they were not alone in the Frontier. History is unsure of what happened next, and Clan Anglann isn’t telling, but suddenly Clan Anglann transformed itself from being the colonial administration in charge of terraforming Hentz to the Family of One.

Their charter from the Imperial Court was reinterpreted to expand their power to administrate all yazirian activities in the Frontier. It seems they spun the contact with three other space faring races as reason for the changes implemented and downplayed the expansion of its power with the Imperial Court. While some of the Warhon’s councilors advised he move his government to Hentz and oversee the founding of yazirian society there, he insisted that he would be on the last ship leaving Yazira.

The original colony plan seems to have been that the entire yazirian population would settle on Hentz and that Hentz would be terraformed to resemble Yazira as closely as possible. However, Clan Anglann redirected the second, third, and fourth waves of the Star Exodus to the systems of Gruna Garu, Athor, and Scree Fron in a bid to establish a yazirian hegemony in the Frontier. The habitable planets of these systems received

nominal terraforming support and for decades terraforming was used as the stick and carrot to control these colonies.

Clan Anglann’s dreams of galactic empire were not to be realized as these colonies formed their own governments and in some cases rebuffed the Family of One. With the Family of One controlling access to the Ark of Yazira (the ark is an institute containing genetic samples of almost all of Yazira’s life forms) and the infrastructure that terraformed their worlds, most yazirian colonies were forced to follow Clan Anglann’s lead at first.

Controversy erupted when, of all the ships involved in the Star Exodus, only the Warhon’s personal ship failed to reach the Frontier. Odds were that some of the ships would become lost but miraculously only the Warhon's did. Conspiracy rumors abounded and Clan Anglann, the hero of the exodus, saw its name blackened. It could no longer exert total control over all yazirian society in the Frontier. It does exert strong influence and is the leading superpower of the yazirian colonies but its dreams of a multi-system hegemony were never realized.

BELIEFS

The beliefs of the Family of One are referred to as The Two Wings. And although a third wing has been proposed by some theologians, it is by no means considered orthodox:

1. All yazirians are one
2. The Garden of Yazira will be replanted
3. Yazirians will inherit the galaxy

The above beliefs have led to the development of a credo called the Creed of Yazira. It is oft recited at religious observances. “We are one family. We are the children of Yazira. The Spirit of Yazira is a flame within the sha-ka of every yazirian. Yazira will endure because we endure. We will make Yazira's name great among the stars.” (The sha-ka is the yazirian analog to a soul.)

One implication of the Two Wings is that clan war is a sin. The Family of One asserts that yazirians everywhere must bring disputes before the inquisitor’s court prior to taking arms against one another. In practice this only really happens on Hentz. The irony is that the Family of One has practiced clan war under the guise of settling a clan dispute on Scree Fron. They sided with the clan they had business interest with and all but wiped out the opposing clan. The incident has angered yazirians across the Frontier.



Tom Verreault

Another implication of the Two Wings is that of eco-theism. A concept of the perfect and “ordained” ecology based on Yazira’s. This sacred ideal is held as the standard that all planets for yazirian colonies should be conformed to. Because Yazira has become a defied ecology, yazirians travelling or living at great distance from yazirian colonies often bring plants or animals as a tangible contact with Yazira. The effective worship of a sacred ecology means that if terraforming obliterates a prior ecology it is of little consequence. Finally there is an undercurrent of thought that yazirians should not live in mixed specie colonies, unless of course those colonies are to be conformed to the Yazira ecology. However, the Family of One spends heavily to maintain networks of agents on mixed race colonies and throughout the Frontier.

The “third wing” is not endorsed by many but it has been making in-roads with the leadership of the Family of One as it appeals to its original desire for hegemony. A theological war is brewing among the leadership of Clan Anglann over this third wing as current leadership views this third wing as a pretext to interstellar hegemony. Some want to declare Hentz the second coming of the Garden of Yazira and cease all attempts to recreate the Garden of Yazira anywhere else while others want to see the spirit of Yazira spread throughout the galaxy. Some observers caution that

yazirians could become as expansionist and dangerous as the sathar. Others note the fractured nature of the yazirian government in the Frontier as making it impossible for a yazirian star empire to arise. Only time will tell where all this will lead.

PRACTICES

The essential practices of the religion are summed up in the Five Talons:

1. The Creed of Yazira (recited at religious and clan observances)
2. Pilgrimage to the Ark of Yazira
3. Planting a yanyon tree
4. Producing progeny
5. Priestly vows

The first talon is a litmus test that identifies a yazirian or clan as orthodox. Clans that embrace the oneness philosophy will recite the creed at most clan events. Extremely conservative and traditional clans will not recite it at all.

The Ark of Yazira is the institute and laboratories established on Hentz to facilitate the terraforming of the planet into a replica of Yazira. It contains a gene bank that is claimed to contain samples of every organism native to Yazira. It’s unlikely that this claim is true but it’s also impossible to prove otherwise. The institute now has had a massive temple like structure added to it to receive pilgrims. The pilgrimage to the ark is for the purpose of obtaining a seedling of the yanyon tree to replant at the pilgrim’s home.

The Family of One charges high prices for the yanyon seedling and asserts that only seedlings obtained at the ark fulfill the third talon. However, since the trees have been planted on all yazirian colonies it is possible to obtain seedlings without travelling to Hentz. This tree is symbolic of Yazira and deeply connected to ancient racial memories of clans of hunters living in the forests of Yazira at the dawn of Yazirian History.

Producing offspring is now considered a racial obligation. Females that choose a career over motherhood come under some disapproval by the Family of One. It’s possible for a female on Hentz to choose career in this fashion but her social standing will be impacted. On other colonies there isn’t much in the way of stigma if she does.

There is a dichotomy in the priestly orders. The positions of true power and influence within Family of One clergy are reserved specifically for members of Clan Anglann. In fact, since the religion is effectively

the clan business nearly all members of the clan are considered members of the priestly Order of Yazira. Members of all other clans may join the second rank clergy, known as the Order of Araks.

The Order of Araks has no influence within the church and individual priest or their clans must support these priests. They labor to instruct and spread the Family's beliefs. Members of the order are called priests and some rise to the position of priest overseers (think bishop). The most fervent of this order are selected to join the Inquisitors.

Members of the Order of Yazira are called priest as well. Its hierarchy is organized with overseers (think bishop), prelates (think cardinals), and the prime prelate (think pope). Anyone of the rank overseer and above is referred to as reverend.

Orders of monks sprung up but are rarely endorsed by the Family of One. Many of these orders have established monasteries outside of yazirian space distancing themselves from the Family of One and its Inquisitors. Orders of monks call everyone a monk but some choose an overseer monk to lead them.



Tom Verreault

CONTROVERSIES

The Family of One is accused of having a wide spread espionage network run by its Inquisitors. The Inquisitors are essentially a secret police organization that functions openly on Hentz and is accused of running a reign of terror to keep dissidents in line. It is forced to act more circumspectly on other yazirian colonies. It's said that where you see one Inquisitor

there are ten more in his network. Espionage by Inquisitors has even reached the Council of Worlds, the seat of Frontier government. Star Law now monitors Inquisitor activities outside of the Araks system.

Members of the Imperial Warhon's personal body guard, Clan Renegade, accused the Family of One of a coup and sabotaging the Warhon's ship. It has never been proven but teams of Inquisitors did detain or kill resisting members of Clan Renegade. It's said that the survivors of Clan Renegade swore blood enemy against the Family of One and went underground to secretly work for its downfall.

Eco-theism has sparked numerous protests by various small environmental groups in the Frontier. The organization of GODco put a layer of insulation between the church and these accusations but no one really buys the claim that GODco is its own company. The other side of the coin has been the protest by yazirian colonies that the Family of One and GODco have failed to meet the original mandate to recreate the Garden of Yazira on all yazirian worlds. Terraforming has become an implement of foreign policy.

The destruction of Clan Dol-Fron, under the guise of settling a clan dispute, has seriously blackened the Family of One's name. Most clans from the Scree Fron and Athor systems are irate over this incident. Rumor has it that some clans have begun stockpiling weapons against future need. Where such stockpiling takes place it's believed that the Inquisitors have increased their activities.

The Brotherhood of One is a movement that embraces a more relaxed view of the Two Wings and Five Talons and criticizes the autocratic nature of the Family of One's structure. The movement represents a return to the philosophy's roots in the fight to save yazirian society from destruction prior to the existence of the Family of One. One aspect of this movement is that it has embraced all sapient beings as part of the "one." The Family of One has unleashed its Inquisitors on this movement labeling its followers as heretics. One branch caved and began towing the church's line while one branch was forced to relocate to Gran Quivera.

The rise of Bajorism has been very troubling for the Family of One. Bajorism is a reconstructed belief system developed from the Ballad of Bajor (the yazirian equivalent of the Epic of Beowulf or the Epic of Gilgamesh). It's a return to blood sacrifice and quasi worship of deified heroes from the past. The traditional sacrificial animal is the wyvole, a dangerous pack predator that is just as likely to take a serious bite out of the one holding the knife. The Family of One has tried to bar ownership of the wyvole by anyone other than

the Ark of Yazira. The Inquisitors and the Hentz militia have illegally stopped ships and killed wyvoles leading to major interstellar incidents forcing Space Fleet and Star Law to become involved. The trade in wyvoles has flourished off Hentz and ownership of the animal is practically a statement of opposition to the Family of One.

FAITH AND TRUE BELIEVERS

The members of Clan Anglann are probably the most cynical of all yazirians. Disinterested observers have commented that they seem indifferent to the actual beliefs and that their core value is power for their clan. Inquisitors tend to be the most hard core believers in the philosophy. Some inquisitors seem genuinely sincere but as a whole the organization breeds extremism. On Hentz, every citizen pays lip service to the Family of One but there is an undercurrent of fear so that it's hard to gauge the sincerity of their faith.

The prior secularism, the near return to clan war before the Star Exodus, and the massive fight to save their society that was facilitated by the Philosophy of One has given the philosophy great sway with a vast majority of yazirians. Even though many are troubled by activities of Clan Anglann they are not willing to cast aside the whole philosophy. Outside the Araks system many clans still hold to the philosophy viewing it as a better alternative to the return to belief systems of the past. That simple fact that the philosophy allowed the yazirian species to save itself gives it great power. Its broad endorsement clouds the issue of how much power Clan Anglann actually has.

Unrest and discord has been stirring on colonies like Scree Fron and Athor. The anger over actions taken by Clan Anglann has resonated with religious beliefs from the distant past. Some clans have returned to a more traditional worship of clan heroes and the honored dead. A few clans have adopted Bailorism and flaunt their opposition to the Family of One.

By and large yazirians across the Frontier are moderate believers in the Philosophy of One. A minority, are true believers and have been labeled conservatives. A growing but disorganized group has been labeled as reactionaries though the Family of One calls them heretics.

CUT AND FOLD PAPER MODEL CHALLENGE

The Frontier Explorer is hosting a challenge for a cut and fold paper model submission to be published in Issue 4 (April 2013). The model will appear on the pages at the center staple of the print version of the magazine to facilitate removal for assembly. Hi-res downloads of the winning model will also be available on our website.

To submit a model to the contest, send your submissions to modelcontest@frontierexplorer.org and include the name of the model in the subject line.

CONTEST RULES

1. The winner will receive, besides a free copy of the PDF, a free copy of the print edition (as well as the love, adoration, and acclaim of science fiction fans, gamers, and model makers across the internet).
2. The model must be of a scale compatible with 25mm miniatures.
3. The model must be a hovercraft vehicle.
4. The model must fit completely on 1 or 2 sheets of 8.5" x 11" paper and be in color.
5. The model must have clear instructions for assembly (written or diagramed) which may include photographs.
6. The submission must be received by February 1st, 2013.
7. It is recommended that the model be geared for modelers with low to moderate experience in building paper models. Models designed to challenge elite modelers would be considered unsuitable.
8. Models with variant versions (i.e. a hover car submission with a police and taxi variant) will be considered in the final judging but primarily there must be one submission for consideration for being printed in the magazine with the variants available via hi-res download. All variants must be labeled with the word "Variant" in the title and the name of the primary model. Example: original submission: 'Simons Hover truck', and variant submission: 'Simons Hover truck military variant'.
9. We are primarily looking for hover car, hover truck, or hover cycle vehicles that could be bought, used or rented by the average RPG player character in a science fiction game. Corporate security, police, and commercial vehicles are equally valid as civilian vehicles but the editors would prefer to see military vehicles as variants for the actual submission.
10. No entry may violate copyrights or intellectual property rights and must be an original work.
11. All entries remain the property of the submitter. However, submission of an entry gives the editors of the Frontier Explorer one time rights to publish the submission in a "Frontier Explorer Presents" special edition.

Starships/Knight Hawks Encounters

FRIEND OR FOE?

Matt Crymble/Tom Stephens

Editor's Note: This ship came about because of a question about one of the old Star Frontiers miniature blister packs which was posted on the [Star Frontiers Underground Yahoo! Group](#). After tracking the miniature down, it turned out to be a ship that looked remarkably like the silhouette of the UPF minelayer on the Knight Hawks counters. Matt Crymble created the ship write-up. Tom Stephens added the Knight Hawks encounter.

SATHAR CUTTER

BACKGROUND

Frustrated by the successes of the small but effective Assault Scouts against their Destroyers, the Sathar plotted to acquire the Scout design for themselves. Several attempts to seize copies of the small vessels failed. The CMS Osprey was saved at the last moment by its boarding crew's valiant actions despite the Sathar having a spy aboard. The planned purchase via intermediaries of one of the Malthar's Scouts ended with his disappearance after the Dramune War. Eventually the leaders of the Sathar elite became impatient because simply duplicating the ships would only level the playing field. They wanted an advantage!

Several Sathar clans worked in competition with one another to create their own Scout vessels. Unfortunately, Sathar science was geared more toward making things bigger and more powerful but not necessarily smaller and more efficient. Despite this, Sathar Clan Y succeeded brilliantly in their design of an ultra-fast Scout that was first seen by the Frontier only by the accidental discovery of one by a Mahg Mar survey team in the Liberty System. But while this design was fast it was also fragile and completely unarmed so was suitable only for scouting and survey missions. Something else was needed.

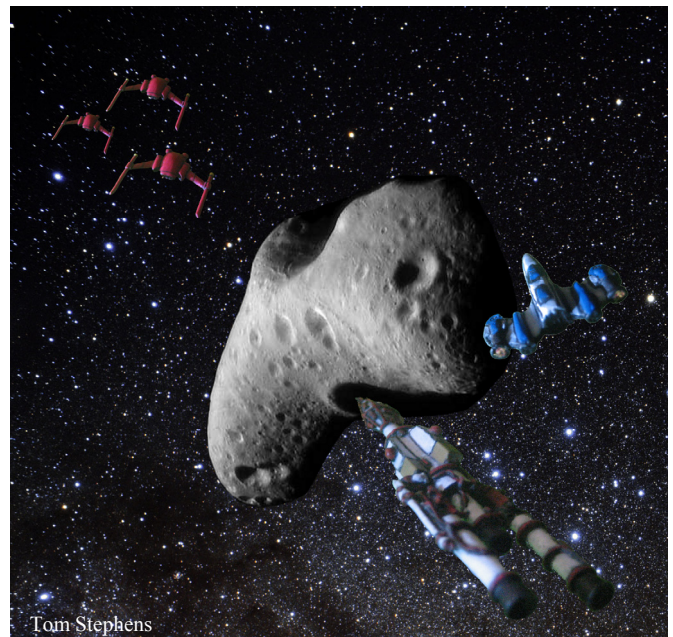
A workable design was finally created by Sathar Clan K, a clan of little real power in the Sathar hierarchy but eager to gain an advantage. Some consider their efforts only partially successful as they were not able to improve upon the Frontier's Assault Scout. However

their design was only loosely based on the Assault Scout. The Cutter is both larger and slower, but it still fills a unique role in Sathar warships as a raider and heavy scout. Deployment of the new design has also freed up larger Destroyer class ships for other missions. Additionally, pairs of Cutters can be extremely dangerous to lone patrolling UPF Frigates or mid-sized yachts and privateering ships.

STATISTICS

HS: 4 **HP:** 25 **DCR:** 60**ADF:** 4 **MR:** 3**Weapons:** LB(x2), Grapples **Defenses:** RH, MS(x2)**Crew Size:** 12 (+ 16 Marines/Scouts/Boarding Crew)

Description: Originally envisioned by Sathar Clan K as a potential counter to the Assault Scout, over the course of its design the Sathar Cutter turned into a different ship entirely. Falling somewhere between a Scout and a Corvette, the Cutter is faster than the latter and stronger than the former. Common tactics include disabling vessels with laser fire then boarding them to kill or capture the occupants or subvert the target ship itself. They can also be used effectively in colony raids or as freighter hunters. Radically designed by Sathar standards and not fully embraced by the more powerful



Frontier Explorer

Sathar clans, Sathar Cutters are still somewhat rare.

BUSHWACKED!

A UPF patrol stumbles upon something and doesn't realize what it is until it is too late.

BACKGROUND

A UPF Frigate and Assault scout are patrolling at the edge of the asteroid belt in the Liberty system when they stumble across an unidentified ship.

Radar returns and initial imaging seem to indicate that the ship is a UPF Minelayer but it is not responding to hails and something isn't right about the sensor readings. Before they realize it, they've come within range of the ship which looks like a minelayer but is only hull size 4 instead of 7. It's a new class of Sathar ship. And it isn't alone. The UPF ships must fight to survive and report their discovery while the sathar ships want to keep their presence hidden.

ORDER OF BATTLE

UPF

- 1 Assault Scout
- 1 Frigate

SATHAR

- 3 Cutters

SHIP STATISTICS

Statistics for all the ships used in these scenarios.

ASSAULT SCOUT

HP: 15 ADF: 5 MR: 4 DCR: 50
Weapons: LB, AR(x4)
Defenses: RH

FRIGATE

HP: 40 ADF: 4 MR: 3 DCR: 70
Weapons: LC, LB, RB(x4), T(x2)
Defenses: RH, MS(x2), ICM(x4)

SATHAR CUTTER

HP: 25 ADF: 4 MR: 3 DCR: 60
Weapons: LB (x2)
Defenses: RH, MS(x2)

SETUP

This scenario can be played two different ways, with or without an asteroid field on the map. In this scenario the Sathar are the attacker.

WITHOUT THE ASTEROID FIELD

In this setup, it's just a straight fight between the opposing sides.

- The UPF ships are set up within five hexes of one of the short sides of the map with an initial speed of up to 15 hexes/turn.
- The sathar ships are then set up within five hexes of the other short side of the map with an initial speed of up to 20 hexes/turn.

WITH AN ASTEROID FIELD

The addition of the minefield can make for a game of cat and mouse.

- Use 40 upside down counters to mark the asteroid field along the center of the map in a band 15-20 hexes wide running from one long edge of the map to the other. Place each counter at the junction between three hexes on the map. Each hex touched by a counter is considered to have asteroids in it.
- The UPF player sets up first and places their ships within 5 hexes of the edge of the asteroid field with an initial speed of up to 5 hexes/turn.
- The Sathar player then places their ships anywhere within the asteroid field in hexes that contain asteroid and within 15 hexes of the UPF frigate. They may have an initial speed of up to 5 hexes/turn as well.

SPECIAL RULES

If playing with the asteroid field, use the rules for asteroid field movement found on page 34 of the Knight Hawks Campaign Book.

VICTORY

This is a fight to the death. The UPF ships must eliminate the Cutters in defense of Liberty system and the cutters need to eliminate the UPF ships to prevent their detection from being reported. The winner is the first player to eliminate all of the opponent's ships.

Convention Reports

SCI CONS I & II - 1999

compiled by Tom Verreault

Editor's Note: These reports are compiled from the Sci Con websites that were once part of the [Frontier News Network Site](#) but now are no longer live on the web. They can only be found as part of the [Internet Archive](#) at the [Sci Con 1 archive](#) and the [Sci Con 2 archive](#). We thought it would be appropriate to preserve a summary here as the cons introduced the last 'canon' material blessed by the creators of Star Frontiers as well as an interview with some of those creators.



SCI CON I - FEBRUARY 1999

Attended by Andy Campbell (Kveldulf), Dean Bailey (KDBAILEY91), Frank Pentatubo (Sir_phalanx), Albin Johnson (fairhand), Alan Isom (aisom), Roy Romero (roymeo), Matt Crymble (m76762) and Denni Feagins (dfeagins)

The convention began with a meet and greet on Friday night at the Meadowview Convention Center in Kingsport, Tennessee. Participants grabbed dinner where they could and the socializing lasted until 1:00 am.

On Saturday the Convention began in earnest at 9:15 am. Andy Campbell's Netbook was presented and 30 to 40 minutes are taken up with reviewing the impressive amount of material in it. [Editor's note: The

Netbook was an old Star Frontiers website. It is no longer live but can be found on the Internet Archive. I also have a copy of its contents and hope to get them, as well as the con websites, on-line at the Star Frontiers Network Archives at some point.] Around 10 am Albin Johnson began a marathon 12 hour Star Frontiers adventure with brief breaks for food. His adventure included the locations Chinzo Station, the ship the Lady Vane, and Charon Tavis Asteroid.

Sunday involved breakfast at Matt's parent's house and signing of the con book and photographs.

THE MCCAMERON CLASS SHUTTLE

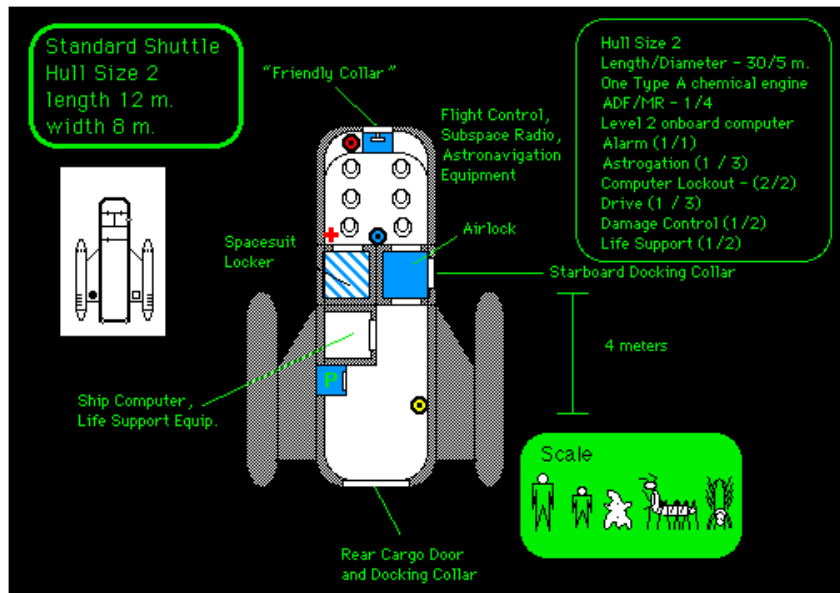
The McCameron Class shuttle was introduced at the convention. It was named after a James McCameron. James was and extraordinary game referee and fan of Star Frontiers. Albin Johnson had maintained a touching tribute to him on his website for many years.

Included here are the recovered data files on the McCameron Class Shuttle. At Sci Con 2 (below) one of the original creators of Star Frontiers, Lawrence Schick endorsed the McCameron class shuttle as official game material.

DESCRIPTION

The McCameron Class shuttle is named for the famous adventurer James McCameron who explored and expanded the frontier in innumerable directions.

The McCameron Class shuttle has been a part of the frontier as much as the ideals of freedom and individualism. Predating the birth of the UPF by at least 25 years, the McCameron Class shuttle has been the backbone of the spacefaring culture that is the UPF. The ease of construction and low maintenance of the McCameron Class shuttles have made them available in all parts of the Frontier. The atmosphere handling capabilities allows the shuttles to be built and tested on the ground, which also keeps the cost down. The



McCameron Shuttle – Sci Con I presentation

shuttles are currently built by the Wolfbane Development Corp at any Class A, B or C starport.

The McCameron Class shuttle is the workhorse of the frontier. The standard version (Mk I) is as show, with both cargo and passenger capability. The Mk II has no passenger capability, but can carry twice the cargo. The Mk III is just the opposite in that it has twice the passenger capability with almost no cargo area. The Mk IV is a jumbo shuttle in that it is a cargo carrier, but with more cargo capacity than the Mk II.



McCameron Shuttle – circa 12 p.f. (Sci Con II presentation)

SHIP STATS

	Civilian	Military
Hull Size	2	2
Crew	2	2
Hull Points	10	14
Armor	No	Yes
Acceleration	1	4
Maneuver	4	4
Containers	1	1
Engines	Ion	Atomic
Fuel	Hydrogen	Plutonium
Width	7m	7m
Length	17m	17m
Height	5m	5m
Wingspan	17m	17m

Model	Type	Capacity
Mk I	Standard	9 Passengers 210 m ³ Cargo
Mk II	Cargo	420 m ³ Cargo
Mk III	Liner	18 Passengers
Mk IV	Jumbo	840 m ³ Cargo
Mk V	Travel	6 Passengers Full Long-Term Living Quarters
Military Only		
Mk X	Weapons	Laser Piston Battery 2 Aft Assault Rockets
Mk XI	Transport	30 Troops Full Equipment

SciCon2 – OCTOBER 1999

Following on the heels of the successful Sci Con 1 in February, Sci Con 2 was quickly organized and had greater attendance. The new picture of the McCameron Class Shuttle, seen above was the official convention poster. There were door prizes which included a rare copy of Dramune Run and new Alternity material donated by TSR. It was again held at Meadowview Resort in Kingsport Tennessee.

The events at the con included conference call interviews with

Lawrence Schick, one of the original game designers, and with Kim Eastland, the author of Zebulon's Guide. The games that were hosted at the convention were "Dogs of War" by Stanley Brown, "To Serve and Protect" by Andy Campbell, "Shadows in the Dark" by Layne Saltern, and "But the Tigers Come at Night" by Brad McMillan.

The following are the notes taken from the teleconferenced interviews of the game designers Lawrence Schick and Kim Eastland. Note these are all that is available and if you possess a copy of the audio recordings of these interviews please contact the editorial staff of the Frontier Explorer (editors@frontierexplorer.org) as we would love to make them available to the public through the [Frontier Explorer website](#). The notes are presented as published on the Sci Con site.

GUEST SPEAKER: LAWRENCE SCHICK

Interview by Matt Crymble

Lawrence Schick is one of the two original creators of Star Frontiers. With the help of Dave "Zeb" Cook, he created the game we all know and love. I have been in contact with Mr. Schick and he has been kind enough to commit to a "conference call" with us at the convention. This will be a real time question and answer session with Mr. Schick on speakerphone speaking to us.

Here are some of the topics and his response to them:



RACES

Yazirians were the embodiment of the ID.

The Sathar were originally to be known as the S'sessu, and they were to be a PC race. (Later this occurred) [Ed. Note: See the interview Tom Verreault did with Dave Cook that was published in the [Star Frontiersman Magazine](#), issue 18]

Schick created the insectoid Vrusk, the ideal of teamwork and cooperation. Vrusk had a hive-like society in which the group came first, and players could

play off of that angle; interestingly, the vrusk also were obsessed with aesthetics - ugly objects or living things could literally send them into an "artistic frenzy" in which the vrusk would mindlessly destroy the offending objects/beings.

Schick also created the wormlike S'sessu, a wormlike race best described by Schick himself as the ultimate "amoral libertarians". The S'sessu are the diametrical opposites of the group-oriented vrusk; the worms only cooperated for mutual gain, and treachery among them was common. When Alien Worlds was sent to TSR, it was decided the game needed a black and white background and therefore an enemy - and so it was the amoral S'sessu became the diabolical Sathar.

Dave "Zeb" Cook was responsible for the Yazirians and Dralasitas. Like Schick's species, they were exaggerated fragments of the human psyche. The Yazirians were flamboyant and high-strung, given to great emotion. The Dralasitas by contrast were the jokesters of SF, with an odd sense of humor as described in the books. Said Schick: "Dralasitas are big on shape humor. A dralosite would find a tube very funny." This led to no end of dral jokes among the Con crowd.

HOMEWORLDS

The original idea was to release a module for each of the five major PC races. (In the original game, there were 5, not 4, PC races.) Each module would include background information - including the homeworld - of one of the races. This obviously never happened.

SKILLS

His original skill system was much simpler than the one that appeared in Alpha Dawn. He found it strange that the TSR editors made the skill system more complex with the move to Alpha Dawn, since overall it was their intention to make the game simpler.

The subskills that appear for the skills in Alpha Dawn were added after the game left Schick's hands.

That there were "A" skills and "B" skills--the "B" ones being more advanced and harder to obtain. Whether this was something like "Basic Medical Skill" vs. "Advanced Medical Skill," or something a bit more diversified, I don't know.

The SF designers started with their concept that mechanics should follow role-playing, and designed around what PC's should be able to do. Streamlined mechanics were emphasized; originally there were just skills, classed A and B. A skills were simpler and cost less to gain; B skills were more complicated and cost more points. There were no subskills - the AD

Frontier Explorer

subskills were originally all skills in their own right, more like the way Zebulon's Guide did them (only no color bars). Schick was baffled when TSR complicated the system with subskills with fixed % values instead of a unified skill list with unified skill percentages for success.

TECHNOLOGY

Inertia screens were inspired by shields in Dune.

It's really too bad the gauss weapons were taken out. (We were robbed!)

Tech was drawn from literary science fiction, favoring "hard sci fi". Railguns were in the original game as artillery pieces, but for some reason replaced by Recoilless Rifles in the AD game.

GAME MECHANICS

SF's original title was "Alien Worlds."

SF was originally to be released in basic and expert sets.

Schick left TSR before the game was published, so he never got to do any more with it after the original version.

If we could just get our hands on those water stained originals in Schick's home, we could say for sure about Alien Worlds

INFLUENCES

Schick and Zeb (Dave "Zeb" Cook) were primarily influenced by the literary science fi tradition, more so than the popular science fi which saturated the late 70's / early 80's (i.e. Star Wars, the Trek movies, Alien, Battlestar Galactica, Bladerunner). While the movie stuff was great, the SF designers worked mainly from authors like Larry Niven, Poul Anderson, Frank Herbert, etc.

DESIGN PHILOSOPHY

The game was from the start designed around what the team wanted PC's to be able to do, rather than to mirror real tech past or future. Robots and computers were kept intentionally "dumb" so that PC's had to be self-reliant. Since it is much more engaging for a player to "do it themselves" (whether it's taking out a villain, shutting down a reactor, etc.) the tech was played down somewhat in favor of high adventure.

The original game was intended to offer a more thoughtful experience than other science fiction RPG's of the time; hence the original title "Alien Worlds". Each species (as in most sci-fi) represented a fragment of the human psyche, exaggerated.

Schick gave the impression he wanted to design a game for real role-play - let players and GM's explore new worlds, go off on great adventures etc., in the tradition of "classic sci fi" like Niven's Known Space stories, Asimov's Foundation series, Poul Anderson's Ensign Flandry stories, etc.



LIFE AFTER TSR

Schick ran a SF (Alien Worlds) game well through the late 80's / early 90's among his friends and continued to develop / refine the mechanics. He still has the notes in his basement somewhere. Asked if he'd consider releasing the refined Alien Worlds as a system to an RPG company, he replied that too much of it was borne of SF and would risk legal problems.

After TSR, Schick went into game design and computer programming, working on computer, video and arcade games. He was [at the time of the interview] in charge of AOL's online RPG content, and selects what online games will be run by AOL.

GUEST SPEAKER: KIM EASTLAND

Interview by Matt Crymble

Kim Eastland, creator of Zebulon's Guide to Frontier Space, spoke to us about Zeb's and answered some important questions. Here are some of the topics and his response to them:

RACES

The Osakar were a race created from a miniature made of 2-part epoxy. This miniature has now been donated to Sci Con. Thanks Kim!

As suspected, the Ifshnits were indeed the dwarves of SF.

The Humma were based on a character that was played in Kim's group from a Gamma World campaign. They were intended as a "brick" race.

Ifshnits were related to dwarves in fantasy campaigns. What he failed to mention is where the name originated from. Kim Eastland's gaming group got in the habit of referring to anyone playing a dwarf as 'little sh&t'. This was translated it SF as Ifshnit. So, most posts

making fun of the ifshnit's name are not totally off base.

Humma (which he pronounced Hoo-ma) were put in because it would be neat to have a race that could stomp one to death like Kim's mutant kangaroo PC from his Gamma World campaign (kid you not on that one). The Osakar were also originally a GW PC ported to SF as a new species.

HOMEWORLDS

He deliberately left the homeworlds out of Zebulon's Guide volume 1 and had no intention of ever including them in his additional 14 volumes of the Guide that were never completed. His reasoning was that he did not want to conflict with background material along these lines that dozens or possibly hundreds of GMs may have already developed on their own.

The Tetrarchs were a concept so that Refs would have an excuse for similar aliens and creatures to be found on many worlds. They were an ancient race that traveled the Frontier long before there were other sentient races. They deposited about 100 various types of animals on many planets, so that Refs would not have to make up new creatures to fight every weekend. A fine concept if you ask me! (Star Trek also did this)

TECHNOLOGY

The Bap Bins were brought in to allow refs a chance to avoid space travel or orbital hops. They are an optional plot device. They were thrown in because Kim's playtest group was worried about being attacked in space and having nowhere to run away (I kid you not).

Robots were slated for Zeb's II, and the existing material was ported to the Gamma World Module "Epsilon Cyborg."

VISION

Eastland had a very ambitious vision of what he wanted Star Frontiers to become, but that vision was not in harmony with the original game setting. (He flat-out said that he wanted the game to be more like Gamma World.) Eastland hated the Alpha Dawn rules, especially the skill system, and he hated Knight Hawks. One of his future planned projects was to throw out Knight Hawks and start over from scratch his way.

TIMELINE

He changed the timeline himself, simply because it didn't correspond with what HE wanted to do with his future volumes of Zebulon's Guide.

What is the major problem with the Zeb's timeline? Is it just the feeling that the Frontier would not have been populated and developed as quickly as the line

suggested? Actually, that's one of the reason's Kim Eastland gave for changing the timeline. He wanted to do some modules that took place in the Frontier's distant past, and the original timeline didn't have enough of a past to work with.



ARTWORK

The guy on the cover of Zeb's was Kim's boss at the time.

The corrections to Zeb's that were printed in Dragon said that a caption was dropped from above that picture "Mechanon Propaganda Poster". Kim Eastland, the creator of Zeb's Guide, mentioned this picture at SciCon2. He was... not really pleased with that one. So maybe that's how these comments crept in to the corrections.

DEATH OF STAR FRONTIERS

Linda's father invented Buck Rogers, and she killed Star Frontiers to start a Buck Rogers line at TSR. Her take on this move was that even if TSR *lost* money, her family would *make* money through licensing fees. Despite this, Kim said the Buck Rogers game was actually quite excellent, and something to snatch up if you ever found one.

DIGGING IN THE DUST OF LACO

Tom Verreault

SYSTEM DATA

System Primary: Dixon's Star

Spectral Type: G0

LACO

Moons: Saucer

Climate: Hot, arid, dust storms

Atmosphere: Standard
Breathable

Gravity: 1.4

Diameter: 16,154 km

Length of Day: 60 hours

Temperature: 39C

Colonizers: Prospectors,
refugees, and corporate
personnel

Population Density: Disputed

Economy: Industrial



After the Battle of the Ruins the Royal Guard transferred to Pale for the mopping up operations there and PGC controlled units took up garrison duty on Laco. This enabled PGC to insinuate itself into the shattered colony and solidify its control of the Tetrarch ruins. Despite PGC's promises to rebuild and help the refugees on Laco, it was the Capellan Free Merchants (CFM) that supplied the food for the starving population immediately after the war.

Eventually, most of the refugees from Truane's Star returned

home and Laco subsided to outpost population levels. PGC rebuilt the colony with a focus on infrastructure that supported their operations as they built robotic factories. The newly organized Strel Corporation, with its interests in finance and real estate, used the Truane's Star refugees still remaining on Laco as a pretext to become involved in the colony. PGC had largely failed in their promises to the local population but Strel earned great respect by providing aid.

Strel and PGC were on a collision course as Strel aggressively sought to oust the other mega corp from its control of Laco and the Tetrarch ruins but it would take decades for the shooting war to erupt. MerCo and Galactic Task Force both become heavily involved on Laco, providing security and support personnel to PGC and Strel. The CFM and Cassidine Development Corporation (CDC) had minor operations on Laco during this time as well.

Laco's War was a decade long corporate conflict. There were thousands of casualties and several starships destroyed in space. Eventually, Steel was soundly defeated by massive military expenditures on the part of PGC. PGC has maintained control of the planet ever since.

Since Laco's War, the colonists have made every effort to grow the colony past the outpost level in order to gain a seat on the Council of Worlds. PGC wishes to

PLANETARY HISTORY

Discovered soon after first contact with the yazirians, Laco was bypassed in favor of colonizing Truane's Star. With an inhospitable environment, it remained an outpost world until the First Sathar War with the influx of refugees from Truane's Star.

The sathar pursued the fleeing refugees from Pale and attacked Laco. The colony and its fledgling infrastructure were devastated. When the sathar discovered the Tetrarch ruins they dug in. After the defeat of the sathar in space, it was planned to wipe out them on Laco with orbital bombardment. However, their close proximity to the ancient alien ruins necessitated the raising of ground troops and a conventional battle.

Pan Galactic Corporation (PGC) supplied weapons and equipment for scratch built army formations from several planets but the Royal Guard of Clarion, already organized and trained, was the first unit on the ground. Even as follow-on troops were arriving on Laco, the Royal Guard engaged and destroyed the sathar at the Battle of the Ruins.

avoid this occurrence and has successfully blocked it at every turn. During the war the planet was temporarily classified as Moderate population due to the numbers of mercenaries and support personnel present. However, PGC, through large political contributions, forced a reclassification to Outpost, having all the mercenaries discounted.

Currently, for the past five years, the colonists have alleged that the population has reached the level of Light but PGC has managed to block its reclassification. The mega corp has instituted a policy of purchasing property debt and foreclosing on the occupants. Most of the evicted accept the PGC's offer of a cash inducement to be relocated off planet. Thus PGC has artificially maintained its control of the planet long past the time that interstellar law would allow for self-determination by the local population.

Today Laco is a dangerous place. The environment is deadly and inhospitable, doing its level best to kill the unwary. Pirates are attracted to the desolate loneliness of this sparse outpost. PGC maintains its grip on the planet and has large stockpiles of munitions left over from the war. The planet's lonely wastes are dotted with rusting hulks of military equipment, mute memorials to the battles fought there. Rumors abound of lost sathar stockpiles and alien artifacts. Its black market is one of the more robust with a deeply entrenched criminal element.



Jumped on the Streets of Point Glass by Tom Verreault

ENVIRONMENTAL SURVEY

SEAS

The seas of Laco are generally shallow, small and teeming with aquatic life. They are often choked with algae-like plant growth. The seas represent the largest concentrations of native wildlife abounding with eel-fish and larger predators. A few are in low lying

depressions of the planet's crust and have concentrated large quantities of salts and minerals making them barren and lifeless. These are generally surrounded by salt flats.

PLAINS

The plains are dusty and barren with only sparse clumps of short mat-grass. Mat-grass has deep roots, tens of meters long, able to tap into the deep aquifer for water. Dust storms and dust devils are common occurrences. Technically, it would be correct to call the plains "desert" but the name has stuck with the locals and it persists.

RIVER CARVED CANYONS

(Only slightly smaller than the Grand Canyon).

There are grand river-carved canyons, numbering about two dozen over the whole planet. They are stark evidence of a lush environment in eons past. Today many are dry and lack the water courses that carved them. Some are dotted with small lakes and ponds that can no longer drain to the sea and few have active streams still running down their length. These canyons are typically riddled with caves and slot canyon complexes radiating out from the main canyon. Water can be located in these caves and slot canyons making them niches for wildlife. Caves and slot canyons also offer protection from dust storms. This environment generally experiences less severe dust storms and only infrequent dust devils.

HILL REGIONS

This region offers greater opportunity for deep rooted mat-grasses to colonize hollows and depressions. It also offers some protection from severe weather effects.

WEATHER EFFECTS

WATER

In the harsh Lacosian environment characters need 4 liters of water per day to survive. Characters can reduce this requirement by 1 liter by taking 4 salt pills per 60 hour Lacosian day and another 1 liter by only being active at night.

Characters on foot can move their maximum rate but must double their water intake (after taking into account any precautions taken to reduce water consumption). Thus a character moving at maximum speed during daylight without taking salt pills would need 8 liters of water a day to survive. If, however, the character were taking four salt pills per day he could survive on 6 liters of water. Finally, a character

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moving at maximum speed at night while taking 4 salt pills could survive on 4 liters of water per day.

Characters who do not have enough water to survive quickly become dehydrated suffering -5 to all abilities. Dehydrated characters who continue to not get enough water become heat exhausted and suffer a -10 penalty to all abilities in addition to the penalty for dehydration. Heat exhausted characters who continue to not get enough water will suffer heat stroke incurring another -15 penalty to all abilities in addition to the former penalties. Unconsciousness occurs if the character's stamina drops to 0. Even if a character suffering from heat stroke does not become unconscious, it will happen soon without medical help and will be followed by death.

A lot of variables go into when dehydration sets in so a referee will simply have to take note of the fact that the PC's are at risk and apply the penalty when he thinks best or require all characters to pass a STA check to avoid dehydration. Characters will transition from dehydration to more severe effect in as little as an hour to 1d5 hours depending on shelter, activity level and lack of medical remediation for the conditions. For example if the characters are fleeing from a threat with the sun at its zenith and they are already dehydrated they will likely transition to heat exhaustion in minutes – require STA checks every 10 minutes to check for heat exhaustion. In most cases the players will realize that they should take steps to fix the problem and such actions should be rewarded.

DUST STORMS

In a typical dust storm the wind can blow at up to 120 kph. Any character with an environmental skill should make an Intuition check; modify this roll by +10 per level of environmentalist skill; -15 if in a canyon, and +10 possible for having a species of domesticated flute flutterer present (see below). If any character makes a successful INT check, the party will be able to improvise shelter and survive the storm without taking damage.

If the characters happen to be in a hex with an unusual rock formation, canyon, or caves the characters can find shelter quickly and avoid taking damage from the storm.

If the characters have no advance warning and are not in one of the hexes listed above, they will take damage from the storm. Have each character roll a Reaction Speed check. If the check is unsuccessful the character takes 4d10 damage from the storm. If successful, the character only takes 2d10 damage.



DUST DEVILS/WHIRLWINDS

When these occur the referee should place a counter on the map and roll for the whirl wind's strength, duration, and speed: strength is 2d10, duration is 3d10 turns, and speed 5-10 m/turn. The dust devil will move in random directions (use the center grenade bounce table to determine) every turn. If it comes within one square or hex of a character, at any time during its movement, it will do the damage listed above but the character gets a RS check for half damage. If it enters the square or hex of a character, at any time during its movement, it will do double damage but the character gets a RS check for half. When the duration is reached (in turns) the dust devil disappears suddenly.

The local colonists speak of dust devils that have a mind of their own or frequently turning up during combat. Some even talk of them being possessed and an independent scientist alleged that they are more frequent in proximity to the Tetrarch ruins. The Pan Galactic Corporation adamantly denies this. It's hard to say what the truth actually is concerning the dust devils on Laco as hard data is sadly lacking.

DUST SPORE

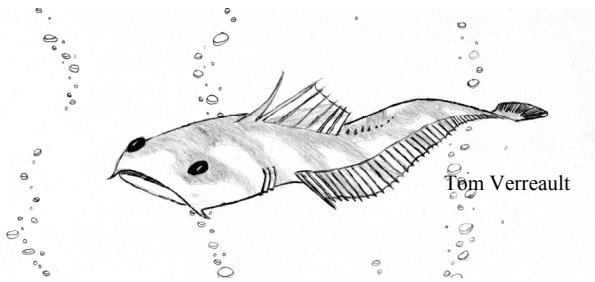
The presence of the dust spore on Laco is universal, being an airborne infective agent. Normally it does not affect healthy individuals but anyone weakened due to severe injuries, disease, radiation illness, or is in a condition of generally compromised health can be afflicted with spore sickness. Any character below half STA must pass a current STA check once per day or become infected with spore sickness. Spore sickness is rated as (-10/D10!); meaning that any character with this disease is at -10 to all ability checks for 100 hours with death as the end result without treatment. In addition, all healing from any source is halved while the character is afflicted by spore sickness.

ZOOLOGICAL SURVEY

Laco’s biosphere has been diminishing for millennia. Evidence clearly indicates that it was once a garden like world with lush forest and abundant wildlife. The fish on Laco are usually eel like. The planet supports only limited avian life. The dominant terrestrial animal forms are mammal like. These creatures have a tough hide with short thin hair though most appear hairless from the distance. A unique feature of Laco zoology is that most creatures are blind with highly developed tremor sense or sonic capabilities and there is the possibility of psychic capabilities, though this is a controversial hypothesis.

LACOSIAN EEL FISH

The Lacosian Eel Fish has poor eye sight but excellent hearing. It feeds on algae in shallow waters. Upon detecting the presence of possible predators the eel fish will burrow into the muddy bottom leaving its poison barb exposed. Unshod individuals walking in the water will step on an eel fish barb based on the number of fish present: 5% for 5 fish or 50% for 50 fish. The barb is painful and does 1 STA damage but the poison sets in immediately. The eel fish is otherwise harmless and good eating.



Lacosian Eel Fish	
Type:	tiny aquatic herbivore fish (10-15cm)
Number:	5-50
Move:	Fast (80m)
IM/RS:	+7/65
Stamina:	1-10
Attack:	-
Damage:	-
Special Defense/Attack:	Poison barb (S3/T5) + 1 STA

LACOSIAN ANACONDA EEL

The Lacosian Anaconda Eel looks like a larger version of the eel fish but without the barb. Its diet consists largely of eel fish but it will attack small to medium sized creatures approaching the shore.

Lacosian Anaconda Eel	
Type:	medium aquatic carnivore fish (1-3m)
Number:	1-5
Move:	Medium (60m)
IM/RS:	+6/55
Stamina:	60-120
Attack:	50
Damage:	1-10
Special Defense:	naturally camouflaged lurker 60% concealment (counts additional +20% concealment vs. terrestrial animals walking in shallow water for 80%)
Special Attack:	on a successful bite the anaconda eel makes an opposed RS check each turn to grapple (wrap the target in coils and constrict). Each turn the victim fails to break free (STR check) constriction causes 1d10 STA damage and the character runs the risk of drowning if he’s in water that is over his head.

LACOSIAN DEVIL EEL

The Lacosian Devil Eel looks like a larger version of the anaconda eel but with 3 fins surrounding the head that ruffle out as it attacks. It’s believed that the devil eel will be extinct within decades due to habitat loss and hunting. On a successful attack the devil eel injects the victim with a powerful toxin causing the victim to make a STA check each turn for five turns to resist being stunned. Once a victim has succumbed to the stun effect it will attack another target until all opponents have succumbed to the poison. Then it will feed on them. Victims of a devil eel attack that are not immediately rescued will not be found.

Lacosian Devil Eel	
Type:	large aquatic carnivore (2-5m)
Number:	1
Move:	Medium (60m)
IM/RS:	+6/55
Stamina:	100-150
Attack:	60
Damage:	5d10
Special Attack:	Poison (S stun/T5)

LACOSIAN DUST SNAKE

Native to most environments on Laco, the dust snake is a pack hunter. It uses its tremor sense to localize prey and burrow up and attack. A victim must pass a RS

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check to successfully attack the dust snake before it burrows back underground to attack 1-5 turns latter.

Lacosian Dust Snake	
Type:	tiny terrestrial omnivore (15-25cm)
Number:	1-10
Move:	Very Fast (110m)
IM/RS:	+8/75
Stamina:	1-10
Attack:	30
Damage:	1d10
Special Defense:	Burrow (see below)
Special Attack:	Poison bite (S5/T3)

LACOSIAN FLASH LIZARD

A harmless herbivore, the flash lizard is the bottom of the Lacosian food chain. The greatest threat it poses is to ground cars as it darts onto the road to become road kill and cause a handling check for drivers.

Lacosian Flash Lizard	
Type:	small terrestrial herbivore (30cm)
Number:	5-50
Move:	Fast (80m)
IM/RS:	+7/65
Stamina:	10
Attack:	-
Damage:	-

LACOSIAN HOUND

Lacosian hounds are pack hunters with a gray mottled hide. Typical tactics involve the whole pack surrounding its prey and using the sonic attack before moving to melee. When severely wounded, the hound will use its sonic attack before attempting to flee. Attempts to domesticate this animal have failed as the creature has a high likelihood of turning on its owner.

Lacosian Hound	
Type:	medium terrestrial carnivore (2m)
Number:	2-20
Move:	Medium (60m)
IM/RS:	+6/60
Stamina:	75
Attack:	75
Damage:	3d10
Special Attack:	Sonic Bark (Damage: 1d10 sonic + stun 1 round, Range PB 5/S 10m, sonic screen nullifies)

THE LACOSIAN MAWE

The mawe is blind but has an extremely sensitive tremor sense and possibly psychic sense (controversial and disputed). Possessing no olfactory or optical organs, they show acute sensitivity to their surroundings and unerring ability to locate prey (they are never fooled by holo or sonic screens. Luckily, they are not numerous but they are the apex land predator of Laco.

Lacosian Mawe	
Type:	large terrestrial carnivore (2-5m)
Number:	1-3
Move:	Medium (60m)
IM/RS:	+6/55
Stamina:	100-150
Attack:	60
Damage:	5d10
Special Defense:	Stealth 50%
Special Attack:	Poison (S stun/T5)

FLUTE FLUTTERS

There are 62 species of flute flutters on Laco that differ largely in coloration and beak structure. They have four bat-like wings with clawed fingers at the wing knuckle and no legs. In flight they appear to be a mass of flapping wings. When predators are in the vicinity they emit shrill fluting cries and fly away as a defense mechanism.

Flute Flutters are otherwise harmless and are a popular domesticated pet. The colonists of Laco use them as an early warning alarm against the more dangerous of Laco's predators. Easily tamed, some have their wings clipped while some are trained to return to the owner. They typically cling on the owner's shoulder and back. They will detect predators for their owners (owner is immune to surprise), though the fluting cry is sure to give the owner's location away. Most varieties can detect coming sand storms like a 1st level environmentalist (for details see the sand storms).

Flute Flutter	
Type:	tiny omnivore avian (10-15cm)
Number:	10-100
Move:	Flying - Fast (90m) Crawling/Climbing - Slow (25m)
IM/RS:	+7/70
Stamina:	1-10
Attack:	-
Damage:	-

DISTINCTIVE SPECIES OF FLUTE FLUTTERS

BLACK LECTOR FLUTE FLUTTER

This flute flutter has black coloring with white markings streaking the neck and chest. They detect sand storms 100% of the time. Costs: 500cr due to demand and rarity.

FLUTE HAWK FLUTTER

This flute flutter has patchy brown coloring (natural camouflage: concealment 40%) and aggressively swarms predators making a sonic attack. (Attack 35; Damage: 2 pts sonic damage, Range (sonic attack) PB 0-1m/ S 1-2m/ M 2-4m/ L -). It can be trained to attack opponents engaged in melee with its owner. A trained flute hawk flutter will automatically attack an opponent that its owner is fighting with in melee and suffers no penalties for "firing into melee" combat but an untrained animal will only do this 40% of the time.

To get a trained flute hawk flutter to attack an opponent that its owner is not engaged with in melee combat will require an animal handling skill check (consult the rule system being used for the appropriate skill). The flutter will perform 1d5 attacks before returning to its owner.

Characters can own a trained flute hawk flutter and not have any animal handling skill as its attack of an opponent in melee is automatic. In combat it benefits from being a Fast moving tiny target, making it difficult to hit. However, trained Hawk Flutes cost more. Cost: untrained-200cr/ trained-350cr.

MUTE RED SPARROW FLUTE FLUTTER

This species is a bred variety. Some have escaped to the wild but have not fared well there. Bred to not deafen their owners they emit a light chirp instead of the typical fluting cry. They have no sense of impending sand storms but will not give away their owner's position when they detect a predator. They are also quite dull witted. Cost: 125 cr.

FLUTTER CARE

Flute flutters that are taken off planet require care to ensure proper diet. They can consume seed and insects not native to Laco

but many such food sources on other planets can make a flute flutter quite ill or cause death. The referee determines chances of these food items affecting a flute flutter. A pet owner would do well to buy supplies of seed and dried insects, costing 10-25cr/ Kg, with the typical animal requiring 1-2kg/month. A PC can also take precautions by having an environmentalist scan new plants and insects for compatibility or by keeping the flute flutter caged while on other planets (if its caged then its presumed it only eats the food offered to it otherwise they are opportunistic omnivores. Cages typically cost 5-10 cr.

PLACES OF INTEREST

PANGAL CITY

PanGal City is a secure corporate compound with robotics factories, warehouses, offices, and The PGC Institute of Archaeology. It is the PGC headquarters on Laco

BATTLE OF THE RUINS

Located just beyond the ruins of the Tetrarch city is the battle plain where the Royal Guard of Clarion faced and defeated the entrenched sathar.

RUINS OF BASE HEADROW

These ruins are an abandoned Streel compound which is now more of a ghost town. There is a defunct starport here but only the truly desperate land here since Laco's War.



[City of Delusion](#) by [jrmalone](#) at Deviant Art

INNARRA SEA NATURE PRESERVE

Owned by StarPlay through a subsidiary, this game preserve offers live game hunts.

Note: environmentalists decry this practice warning against the inevitable extinction of the mawe and devil eel. It's almost certain that if the people of Laco can wrench control of the planet away from PGC they will outlaw the game hunts.

POINT GLASS

A significant town with the only active and non-PGC controlled starport. The term starport is used loosely in this case as the landing field is little more than packed dirt with mooring blocks. Services to support starship operations are rudimentary and expensive. Since PGC denies the use of its starport to all non-company traffic, most independent traffic is funneled through Point Glass. It is also a significant market for artifact thieves but most antiquities on the market are fakes.

DAVO'S BAY

This quiet town mines salt and mineral deposits surrounding the bay. After Laco's War, PGC has begun buying up property or simply asserting claim to unclaimed land around Davo's Bay leading to friction with local colonists.

MO'S EASY IN DEVIL'S BASIN

Mo's Easy began as a bar in the middle of nowhere and is now a small settlement. It is oft referred to as a wretched hive of scum and villainy. A handful of mooring blocks for landed shuttles dot the plain beyond the canyon bluffs. A notorious black market exists here and it is suspected of being used by pirates. It's a significant market for artifact thieves but again, most are fakes.

NAMOTH CANYON

A mini-grand canyon and the lowest dry spot on the surface of Laco, it's famed for the Fire Fountain. The Fire Fountain is a flaming geyser of hot liquid that ignites upon contact with air. There are several hypotheses concerning this phenomenon but science has yet to fully explain the effect.

LAYOVERS ON LACO

Player characters visiting Laco or having a layover there could have any number of the following encounters. These are not actual campaign ideas but filler encounters and well suited for sessions when some of the players are absent.

THE MYSTERIES OF LACO

Besides the vast enigma of the Tetrarch ruins there are numerous other mysteries on Laco. The following ideas can be used as mysteries and adventure hooks.

THE ATMOSPHERE

It has been estimated that the amount of mat-grass, algae and other sea weeds are insufficient to maintain oxygen levels on Laco. No explanation is evident for the consistent oxygen levels despite the amount of CO₂ produce by colonist, native wildlife, and PGC's industrial centers.

FREQUENCY OF DUST DEVILS

Whirlwind atmospheric effects are much more prevalent near archaeological sites. No explanation is evident.

MAGNET FIELD FLUCTUATIONS

The magnetic field can fluctuate wildly and the magnetic north and south poles reverse often. A compass is next to useless though most colonists quickly learn other methods of land navigation. No explanation is evident for this phenomenon. Before and after Laco's War (Streel destroyed them early in the war) PGC maintained global positioning and communication satellites to aid with land navigation.

PSYCHIC ABILITIES

The alleged psychic abilities of a few Lacosian animals are a hotly debated topic. In particular is that of the blind mawe predator that unerringly locates prey. No explanation is evident.

SATHAR STOCKPILES

There are persistent rumors of lost sathar stockpiles and artifacts. The Sathar occupied Laco during the First Sathar War and much of their equipment was destroyed or collected by appropriate authorities. Rumors persist that there are of lost caches of sathar equipment but everyone knows these are just rumors...

I SEE DEAD PEOPLE

There are also persistent rumors of dead people being seen and empty graves being found. These rumors began during Laco's War and are usually centered at archaeological sites. There is some evidence of empty graves but the evidence of "dead" people walking is anecdotal in nature. Some have alleged that nanites accidentally released from the alien ruins were able to animate corpses. No scientific explanation is evident.

1. Approached by antiquities dealer with hard luck offering a great deal on an artifact. The artifact could be of sathar or tetrarch origin and could easily be a fake.
2. A youth handing out hand bills gives one to the PCs, advertising a live hunt at the Innarra Sea Nature Preserve.
3. A dirty peddler is offering a flute flutterer for sale, claiming it's fully domesticated and trained. It may or may not be. A wild flutterer will fly away once released from the cage.
4. Grad students from Port Loren University are looking for someone to transport them to Mo's Easy in Devil's Basin and then ferry them overland to the Fire Fountain at Namoth Canyon. Their stated reason is to take scientific readings at the Fire Fountain; however, they also plan on purchasing items from the black market while at Mo's Easy.
5. One PC has inherited a mineral claim at Davo's Bay but discovers that PGC has moved in and is exploiting the claim.
6. A vrusk is looking to contract with a pilot to pick him up 1 km from Pal Gal City at night with no questions asked in two days. He's offering 3,000 cr for this service.
7. Sand Storm.
8. Star Law agents question the PCs about an NPC they were seen talking to.
9. On a tour or a trip to see the famous Tetrarch ruins the tour vehicle is struck by a powerful dust devil. Unrestrained passengers are violently thrown about and the vehicle comes to rest on its side, broken. The party is outside the com range of all communication devices present and the closest geosynchronous com satellite was damaged by solar flares a week ago; they cannot call for help. If it is a tour, not all of the NPCs will agree with the PCs about the best use of assets or the best course of action. The hazards of the environment should figure large in this encounter as well as the larger terrestrial carnivores.
10. A member of the Pan-Galactic Corporation Artifact Research and Development Team is looking for someone to smuggle a package off planet.
11. A star liner arriving in Prenglar after leaving Dixon's Star reports to system authorities, Space

Fleet, or the Medical Services Organization (MSO) that 3 people; a child, an elderly individual, and one traveling to Port Loren for specialized medical treatment, have all been diagnosed with Lacosian Spore Sickness. PCs must investigate. The cause is that a ship's crew member is involved in smuggling artifacts off Laco. The artifacts, which are contaminated with dust spore, are hidden in an air vent aboard the star liner. This adventure can turn into an investigation to unravel the whole smuggling ring. If the crew member involved can get the artifacts off the star liner at Port Loren they are likely to disappear.

12. While the PCs are visiting Point Glass an emergency broadcast com call goes out to all chronocoms. A wrecked starship left in orbit from the corporate war has been discovered to have a decaying orbit. Computer projections give a 65% probability it will land within 1 km of Point Glass. Residents are advised to seek shelter or to evacuate. The ship is likely to break into pieces and strike in several areas.
13. PCs are visiting Mo's Easy in Devil Basin when pirates land in a shuttle for a little R&R and "painting the town red".
14. An independent (non-corporate) scientist is looking for a ship and crew that can help him obtain good optical and energy sensor images of the Tetrarch ruins from low orbit. A PGC privateer may try to intervene to prevent the flyover. This scientist may have other missions after obtaining the scans.
15. A zoologist from the Port Loren Zoo is looking to transport dangerous animals from Laco to Gran Quivera. Weird dreams and sleep walking occur on the trip as well as animals getting loose.

SAMPLE CATALOG OF TETRARCH ARTIFACTS

Note that black market values are listed but the true value of these items is priceless. PGC and Star Law have invested a great deal of effort to stop artifact thieves. There are also shops where fakes are made by skilled and not so skilled forgers. The hypothesized purpose of items is listed but this may not be accurate. Additionally, when an archaeologist doesn't know what an item's purpose is the default guess is "ceremonial."

Finally, the following list is not meant to be a catalog of amazing artifacts that create black holes or open

gates to the other side of the galaxy. Instead, it's meant to be typical of what might actually be found at an archaeology dig. The purpose of this list is to provide a referee with a suitable artifact for use in several of the encounters described above. It would be rare indeed, that a truly earth shattering artifact would turn up. A referee could have a powerful artifact turn up but he will want to invest more effort into such an undertaking than a random list.

1. Strange nickel iron disk etched with lines and patterns that do not seem to be a form of writing. Hypothesized purpose: unknown or ceremonial. Black market value: 5,000-6,000 cr.
2. Odd four sided statue with four faces; one has been chiseled away. The remaining faces appear to be humanoid or simian, snake like and insect like. Hypothesized purpose: unknown or ceremonial. Black market value: 4,000-8,000 cr.
3. Smooth 2 meter rod etched with un-deciphered characters at one end. Hypothesized purpose: unknown or ceremonial. Black market value: 1,000-3,000 cr.
4. Crystal cubes (hundreds found) that seem to have Tetrarch written characters stored at the molecular level. Hypothesized purpose: data storage device. Black market value: 10,000-30,000 cr.
5. Set of four crystal rods, 10cm to 40cm in length in a cellulose material case. Hypothesized purpose: ceremonial or keys. Black market value: 25,000 cr.
6. The "sarcophagus," a 3 meter box with a lid of the same Lacosian granite the pyramids were constructed from. Its weight is 300kg. Hypothesized purpose: ceremonial. Black market value: 50,000 cr.
7. Crystal cylinder, 5 cm by 3 cm diameter, encased in thin metal strips. Found in the hundreds. Hypothesized purpose: power storage device. Black market value: 10,000-30,000 cr.
8. Small stone bowl 20 cm in diameter with no markings. Found in the thousands. Hypothesized purpose: kitchen implement. Black market value: 300-500 cr.
9. Clay bowl 15cm in diameter with no markings but generating a magnetic field. Only 4 found. Hypothesized purpose: unknown. Black market value: 10,000 cr.
10. Figurines of Lacosian animals living and extinct. Hypothesized purpose: ceremonial. Black market value: 1,000-5,000 cr each.
11. Iridescent woven mat, 2 by 1 meter, made from strips of various metals. Mysteriously untouched by tarnish on the strips of metal that should have tarnished or oxidized. Hypothesized purpose: home furnishing or ceremonial. Black market value: 35,000 cr.
12. Fossilized wood pallet, 2 by 1 meter, with 6 upright posts topped with a U shape. Hypothesized purpose: Bed, medical exam table or ceremonial. Black market value: 15,000 cr.
13. Hollow cylindrical device, 10cm by 4.5cm, made of metal and ceramic composites with crystal facing. Hypothesized purpose: unknown device. Black market value: 50,000 cr.
14. Thin granite stone tablet, 10cm by 20cm and 1.5cm thick. The tablet is covered with lines and circular depressions. Hypothesized purpose: game or ceremonial. Black market value: 16,000-17,000 cr.
15. Crystal knife, 22cm long with mono-molecular edge. Hypothesized purpose: weapon or ceremonial. Black market value: 45,000 cr.
16. A mask that appears to contour to one of the faces on the statue described in # 2 but the outside is a geometric block shape. The only masks found contour to the three undamaged faces but the fourth face has not been discovered yet. Hypothesized purpose: ceremonial or grave mask. Black market value: 35,000 cr.
17. A metal concave disk, ½ meter in diameter, blackened with carbon. Hypothesized purpose: fire brazier. Black market value: 5,000 cr.
18. A conical metal disk with a handle, ½ meter in diameter, and trace amounts of carbon. Hypothesized purpose: Fire brazier lid. Black market value: 4,000 cr.
19. Crystal statue fragment, 40 kg, no discernible detail to identify the statue's subject. Hypothesized purpose: statue. Black market value: 8,000 cr.
20. Three metal two pronged forks, of descending sizes. Hypothesized purpose: tuning forks. Black market value: 6,000 cr.

Adventure

MOOKS WITHOUT NUMBER

PART 2 – LAYOVER ON LACO

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PART 2: LAYOVER ON LACO

“Mooks Without Number” is a serialized adventure that is being run over the course of The Frontier Explorer’s first year. Previously the player characters (PCs) were hired to crew the Capellan Free Merchant (CFM) ship Venture by its owner, Captain Kleevor. In this installment the Venture will travel to Laco through the Prenglar system and off load its cargo. If you plan to play in this adventure it goes without saying that you should probably stop reading now.

The overall concept of this adventure is that the players’ characters have signed on as crew for a merchant vessel travelling around the Star Frontiers setting. In particular the ship is a Capellan Free Merchant. The CFM is an organization listed in both the Knight Hawks (KHs) and Zebulon’s Guide (Zebs) books, however if a referee prefers to not use the Zebs material simply change Captain Kleevor’s race to that of human and ignore any other details coming from the Zebs rule book.

ALPHA SECTION: RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

REFEREE’S NOTES

All of the referee’s notes from Part 1 still apply.

The bulk of the action is this portion of the adventure takes place on the planet Laco. In this issue of the Frontier Explorer is a comprehensive planetary brief on Laco, a referee should be familiar with the details of the planet’s environment and dangers: flora, fauna and weather.

As per Captain Kleevor’s habit of having a meal with the crew, use the open snack time at the beginning of the RPG session to role play this. It’s a perfect time to review important details on the planet Laco and its general hazards. It’s also a perfect time for Kleevor to assign responsibilities to the crew. Laco’s day is 60 hours long but the PCs will operate on the standard GST day of 20 hours. They will be responsible to overhaul the ship’s engines which have now made three

jumps since the last overhaul (see KHs for rules concerning overhaul times). If the ship saw combat in the Timeon system, then Kleevor will order a careful inspection of the hull, full repair of any battle damage, and a repaint of the reflective hull coating which will take 40 work hours total. Any PC can work on the hull regardless of whether they have technician or star ship engineering skill.

The adventure is for the PCs, thus Captain Kleevor will leave the PCs to their responsibilities while he’s arranging the sale of the ship’s cargo and procuring the next load. The crew will work hard for 4 GST days to off load the ship’s agricultural cargo and stow a new cargo of refinery parts destined for Clarion. Kleevor will be in orbit while the PCs are on their last cargo run. He will indicate that on this final run they will have time to try a little side trading (if they obtained some luxury items on Lossend) or they may indulge themselves in some R&R for three days as the ship’s next delivery allows them some time off dirt side. Kleevor will tell them they’ve done well, pay them their wages since they signed on, and will begin the jump calculations himself.

The article on Laco has a number of layover adventure seeds and any of them can be used as side adventures as well. The PCs are responsible for the shuttle and all have baton keys to lock the shuttle and access it afterward. They have just received 24-25 days’ worth of pay and have their trade goods, the next few days would be an excellent opportunity to shop or trade and have a little fun, perhaps even rent an air car to go see the Tetrarch ruins.

BETA SECTION: LAYOVER, CRACKS IN THE GLASS

The Lucky Devil pirates have taken a hit because of the Venture’s crew and they will bear a grudge. Unfortunately for the Venture’s crew, Laco is their base of operation. While the crew is going about their business in Point Glass, the pirates will learn of their arrival and lay plans to get even. The Lucky Devil pirates have decided to steal the Venture’s shuttle, Capitol, while it’s on the ground.

Ramirez, if he survived part 1, has been discredited and has escaped death at the hands of his compatriots. He is living in fear when not living inside a bottle of alcohol. He hates the Venture and its crew but is not a real threat. As the PC's have encounters with the Lucky Devil pirates, he made be found and induced to give up information about his erstwhile compatriots.

AN ALLURING RED HEAD

Captain Scarlet Rose, a.k.a. Scarlet Terror, has always hated Ramirez and is glad his days are numbered. She plans to increase her standing with the pirate band by stealing the Venture's shuttle and crew it with people loyal to her. With Ramirez on the outs, there is an opening for a new captain to begin running a ship within the band. If it is someone of her choosing, her power base will be expanded. She does not plan to take orders from "El Capitan" forever.

To steal the shuttle, Capitol, she needs to obtain a baton key from one of the Venture's crew. She will begin simply, by using feminine wiles and escalate to full on violence if necessary. A referee may have to fly by the seat of his pants depending on the precautions the players take against trouble. The following approaches might be used or the referee may invent one. The pirates will attempt non-lethal action with subdual weapons as a mugging is much less likely to draw official attention than a murder. The last thing they want is for Star Law to be looking into a murder of a crewmember of a ship they are in the process of stealing. Muggings are common enough that they don't usually get logged into the database.

APPROACH 1

Scarlet will single out 1 or possibly 2 PCs on the street and ask to speak to them more privately. Her body language will suggest she is in fear. She is wearing a pheromone perfume [see new equipment appendix] that conveys a +20 bonus in her favor to all ability checks made by a human male character. In other words if the players try to use INT or PER to gain information or influence her the ability check either fails automatically with the character thinking it succeeded or the final result is moved 20 points in her favor.

Her goal is to get them into a bar close at hand with upstairs rooms and subdue the PC or PCs. Crew from

her ship have effectively taken over the bar and are the only ones present except for the bar tender who is sweating bullets. If there are two PCs Scarlet will opt to do the subdual in the bar room with her crew present but if there is only one PC, she will make like she wants to go upstairs to her room [any excuse- because her child is there, or something of value is there, or if the promise of sex will work then that]. As they go to the stairs a stealthy member of the crew will quietly step up behind the PC and stab him with doze dagger [see the new equipment appendix] and Scarlet will spin and shoot with an electro-stunner. PC's are at -20 to avoid surprise at the sudden attack if they are human males due to the pheromone perfume.

Scarlet Terror: (RW 60, M 40, PS 3, IM 5, RS 50, STA 45) skein suit, electro stunner, albedo screen, holo screen, belt pack 50 SEU

3 pirates: (RW 35, M 35, PS 3, IM 4, RS 40, STA 40) skein suit, doze daggers

3 pirates: (RW 35, M 35, PS 3, IM 4, RS 40, STA 40) skein suit, 3 tangler grenades

3 pirates: (RW 35, M 35, PS 3, IM 4, RS 40, STA 40) skein suit, electro stunners, 1 20 SEU clip

If successful the pirates will take the baton key(s) for the shuttle and leave for the "To Jack a Shuttle" encounter. The stun effects from an electro stunner or a doze dagger last d100 six second turns and tangler grenades incapacitate for 30 minutes. Scarlet and her pirates will be springing their shuttle jacking about the time the stun, doze, or tangler effects wear off.

APPROACH 2

Scarlet will feign fleeing from scum bags who are actually her crew and cling to a human male counting on her pheromone perfume to help cover her pick pocket attempt. The pirate toughs will distract the PCs with threats and bluster for a few seconds before dispersing. Scarlet will seek to get away from the PCs (to return to her child or any other excuse) but if the PCs insist on escorting her she will lead them into a trap in an alley where they will have no cover nor room to maneuver. Use the pirate stats above and rearm the pirates with doze daggers with sonic stunners.



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Scarlet and her crew will move onto the “To Jack a Shuttle” encounter leaving the PC or PCs incapacitated in that alley. If she gets away clean then she will leave them to shop or run whatever errands, counting on the distance to the shuttle to delay them long enough.

APPROACH 3

If all else fails, she will use the direct approach and simply way lay a group in the street and perform subdual attacks. A referee should increase the number of attackers as needed and probably re-arm the pirates with doze daggers with sonic stunners.

Regardless of the approach used, the goal of the pirates is to get one of the PC's baton keys. By the end of their time on planet, at least one of the keys should be lost at some point.

TO JACK A SHUTTLE

Once Scarlet has a baton key, she will move quickly to make off with the shuttle. In all likelihood one or more of the PCs have been subdued and there may not even be someone watching the shuttle. If there is no one watching the shuttle, Scarlet will begin the process of hacking its lockout program while a pirate with engineering skills preps the engines for take-off. A large number of pirates have cordoned off the area around the shuttle to intercept the PCs if they return. Some of the Lucky Devil pirates will have exchanged their subdual weapons for the more lethal variety.

If there is someone watching the shuttle then Scarlet will use a holo screen (20% chance to see through the deception) and approach the shuttle in the guise of a port authority customs inspector accompanied by a technician carrying a bio-scanner. Their story is that there have been reports of dangerous invasive species arriving with agricultural goods and records show that this shuttle is one of five to off-load ag goods in the past week. The shuttle will need to be inspected and if the PC does not comply then the shuttle will be quarantined automatically. They will instruct the PC to wait with the disguised Scarlet while the tech sweeps the ship. Within a minute the tech will com Scarlet and

announce the shuttle is hot. Scarlet will regretfully inform the PC that the shuttle must be quarantined and wave over members of the pirate band from the beat up hover truck. The PC should begin to feel something is wrong at this point, if he has not already, but Scarlet will use her electro stunner on him with surprise. If this happens they will dump the unconscious body in a crate outside the fence.

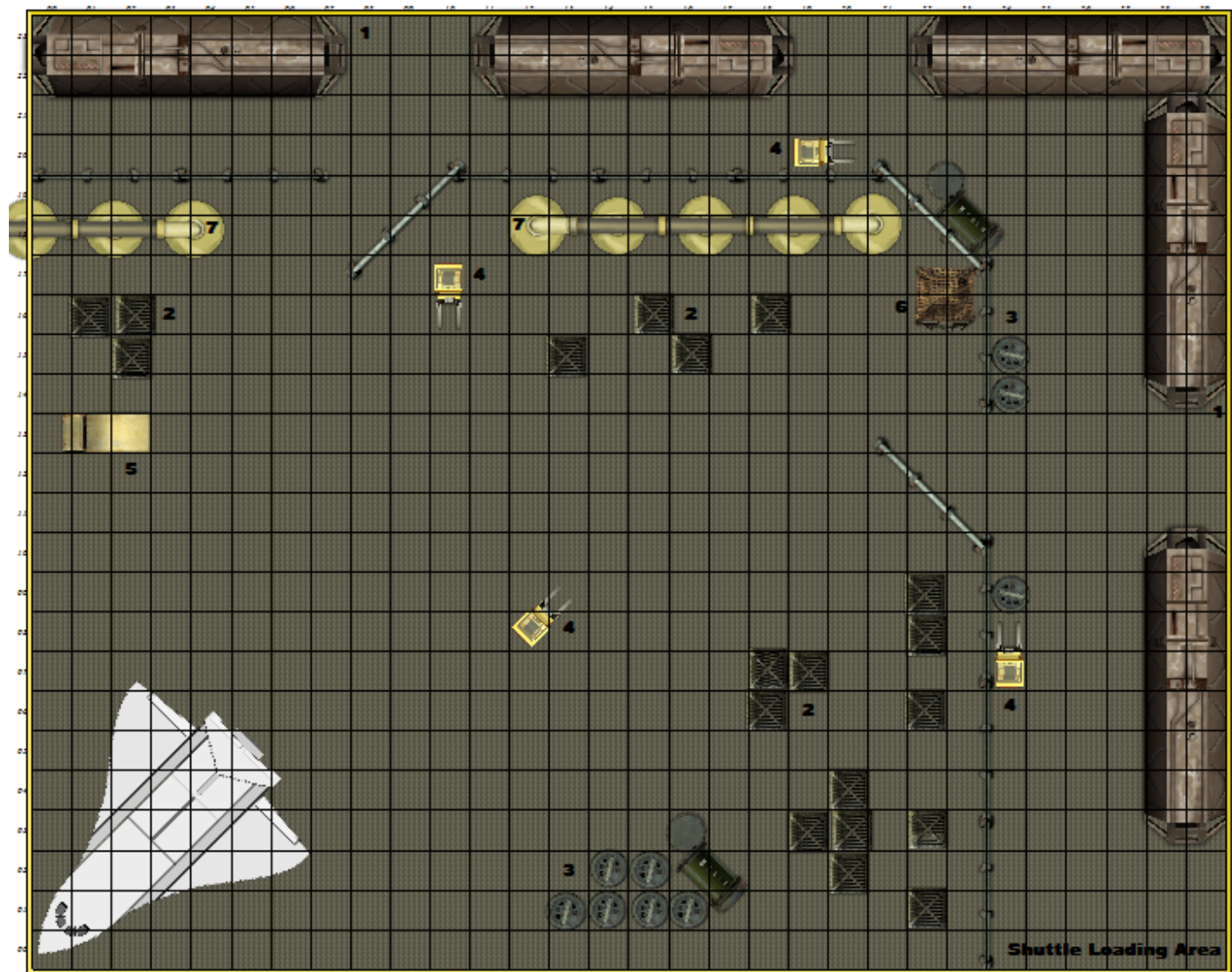
The “real” encounter will begin once the whole party knows (or even suspects) that the pirates are trying to steal the shuttle. This will happen once the stun or tangler effects wear off of the PCs that had the baton key stolen (its assumed that their first response is to com everyone but Scarlet and her team will already be at the shuttle). Roll 1d5+7 turns to determine how long the encounter will go. This time period is the length of time Scarlet still needs to hack the shuttle's lockout program and get it moving once the PCs, as a group, are aware there is a problem. If the PCs have done anything to slow up the pirates in some way the referee can add a few turns to this time.

If the PCs are not together as a group, they will arrive from basically the same direction (the right side of the map) but staggered time wise. Begin rolling for each PC or group of PCs to arrive at the shuttle location at the beginning of the “real” encounter. Each PC or group of PCs gains 15% chance of arriving for each turn of the “To Jack a Shuttle” encounter. On turn one they must roll 15% or less to arrive on the edge of the encounter map. If they do not succeed in arriving on the first turn they increase their chance by 15% each turn till they do arrive. The ramp will be closed in 10 turns after the encounter begins.

Only one or two of the pirates will leave on the shuttle. The rest will hold off the PCs until Scarlet fires the shuttle's engines. At that point they will pile into a beat up looking hover truck and race for their ship 1 km away. Both ships will perform sub-orbital maneuvers and land at the pirates' secret base 100 km from Mo's Easy.



Tom Verreault



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MAP LEGEND: SHUTTLE UNLOADING AREA

This area of the Point Glass star port is like many industrial warehousing parks across the Frontier. It's zoned for industrial and warehousing and most people found here are working. The 10 meter high fencing in the area is battered but serviceable and can take 25 structural points of damage per 1m x 1m section. Scale 1 square=2 meters.

1. **Old habitat modules** – These have been converted to warehousing. They are the legacy of the emergency housing set up for refugees in the aftermath of the Frist Sathar War. They are 10 meters high but occasionally are stacked two high.
2. **Large shipping crates** – various uninteresting bulk cargo and 5 m high
3. **Small shipping containers** – 2.5 meters high.
4. **Wheeled Load Lifters** – Locked but ready to be rented with the swipe of an ID card, see equipment appendix for full details.
5. **Beat Up hover truck** – stolen less than an hour ago it's the escape vehicle for the pirates that don't leave on the shuttle.
6. **The old watch tower** – The tower is in poor condition: with no more than 25 points of structural damage to one of the supporting legs it will fall and obstruct the gateway. It is 20 m tall.
7. **High pressure coolant pipeline** – if a section receives 50 structural points of damage, the coolant will geyser out, spraying a few meters into the air and creating a slippery mess that spreads one square in every direction per turn. Characters caught in the coolant must make a RS check or fall prone when they attempt to move.

THE MOOKS

Scarlet Terror aka Scarlet Rose: (RW 60, M 40, PS 3, IM 5, RS 50, STA 45) skein suit, electro stunner, albedo screen, holo screen, belt pack 50 SEU

Pirate Engineer: (RW 60, M 40, PS 3, IM 5, RS 50, STA 45) skein suit, laser pistol, albedo screen, belt pack 50 SEU

3 pirates: (RW 35, M 35, PS 3, IM 4, RS 40, STA 40) skein suit, laser rifles, 3 power clips

3 pirates: (RW 35, M 35, PS 3, IM 4, RS 40, STA 40) skein suit, auto rifles, 3 ammo clips

3 pirates: (RW 35, M 35, PS 3, IM 4, RS 40, STA 40) skein suit, gryrojet rifles, 3 ammo clips

3 pirates: (RW 35, M 35, PS 3, IM 4, RS 40, STA 40) skein suit, sonic stunners, 3 power clips

AFTERMATH

Several things will happen after the shuttle leaves the area:

1. The computers on the Venture will note the lift off of the shuttle and then the sudden cutting out of its transponder. This will cause Captain Kleevor to call the PCs and ask them what's going on and inform them that theft of the shuttle will be prosecuted to the fullest extent possible (he's thinking they are making off with the shuttle unless they have specified calling him).
2. The local Star Law Marshal will arrive and order a stand down of all combatants, firing on anyone that does not obey him. He will question the PCs and take statements and examine and identify some of the pirate's bodies or prisoners (as the case may be). Live pirates may be forced to reveal the general area of their base but dead pirates will simply point to a connection to Mo's Easy – they were arrested there before or something similar.
3. Kleevor will order the PCs to recover the shuttle and ask what they need from their personal gear and the arms locker on the Venture and will send it down on someone else's shuttle.

Should the PCs stop the heist of the shuttle this complicates things as the mission to strike back at the pirates was predicated on the need to recover the shuttle. All is not lost should this occur. Have the shuttle severely damaged in the process such that it's taken out of action for a few days. The CFM is

notorious for getting even with individuals and organizations that attack its ships, crews, and captains. The policy of making anyone and everyone rue the day they struck at the CFM is bed rock to the organization's standard operational procedures and Kleevor will be quite fed up with the Lucky Devil pirates.

Allow of the PCs to discover the location of the secret base but Kleevor will require on-the-ground confirmation before he shoots anything from space. Even when he does employ the ship's laser battery from orbit he will only target legitimate military targets like pirate ships and vehicles, mindful of UPF prohibitions against orbital bombardment. Thus the PCs will need to actually clear the outpost the hard way. The primary targets will be the pirate's "hanger" and its vehicles. Kleevor, however, will want to not only cripple the pirate band but also send a message to prevent them from ever coming against the Venture and its crew again.

If at all possible, Scarlet should escape by any means to be present at the climax.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

Award 1-3 EXP based on performance. Give higher experience for the PCs capturing pirates and generating clues to their hideout. Award 4 EXP if they prevent the theft of the shuttle.

GAMMA SECTION: THE DEVIL'S DUE

DISCOVERING THE PIRATE'S BASE

The PCs will need to generate clues on the pirate's base of operations. It's hard to predict what every player will decide to do to investigate and a referee may need to improvise for this part. This section is about role play and skill use to generate clues and the following are some ideas that could be pursued.

1. The Venture didn't get a good scan on the sub-orbital hop performed by pirates. The PCs may attempt to sweet talk or bribe other star ship crews for a good scan if their ships or shuttles were over head during the sub-orbital hop. A PER ability check modified with a positive modifier for the appropriate bribe may do the trick.
2. Prevailing on Marshal Ben to force the flight control at the Pan Galactic Corporation's private star port to turn over their scan data will require a PER check but offering a bribe causes automatic

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failure. Role playing a surly attitude with the marshal may cause him to not bother as well.

3. They may beat the grape vine in a half dozen bars and will get conflicting rumors but among them will be the name Mo's Easy.
4. If they have learned a general area and do a data search on the local info nets, they may discover that there is an old Steel Mercenary base in an old volcanic caldera called Devil's Caldron about 100 km from Mo's Easy.
5. If they supply the captain with the general location he can do a fly over with cameras and computers set to scan and that will positively locate the pirate base.
6. Travelling to Mo's Easy and discreetly questioning some of the residents will turn up a general though not exact location for ships seen landing and taking off about 100 km away to the East. Alternately, some pirates from the base may have come out to Mo's Easy with a hover car for a night on the town and the PCs can encounter them and attempt to get information out of them.

ENCOUNTERS AT MO'S EASY

Mo's Easy is a notorious collection of saloons and habitat modules half way between Point Glass and the Tetrarch Pyramids (a day's travel). The location is



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plagued with sand storms and dust devils. If it's necessary to have encounters here, a referee can abstract the location without a map as most people go from their vehicle directly into a building. The location is optional and not completely necessary for the adventure.

The center of interest here is the bar known as Mo's Easy. Some people are involved in illegal activities and thus not very likely to talk to the PCs and others are just worried about personal safety and are afraid to talk to the PCs. The best way for the PCs to turn up solid information will be for a handful of Lucky Devil pirates to show up to blow off steam and party.

DEVIL'S CALDRON & THE CANYON HIDE OUT

Devil's Caldron was a mercenary base during Laco's war. Built by Steel and MerCo, the floor of the volcanic caldera was leveled and a ceramacrete landing pad put in. It fell into disuse and was re-occupied by the Lucky Devil pirates. The rim of the caldera provides camouflage for grounded ships and is a relatively secure landing site.

DEVIL'S CALDRON MAP LEGEND,

(scale: 1 square = 5 meters)

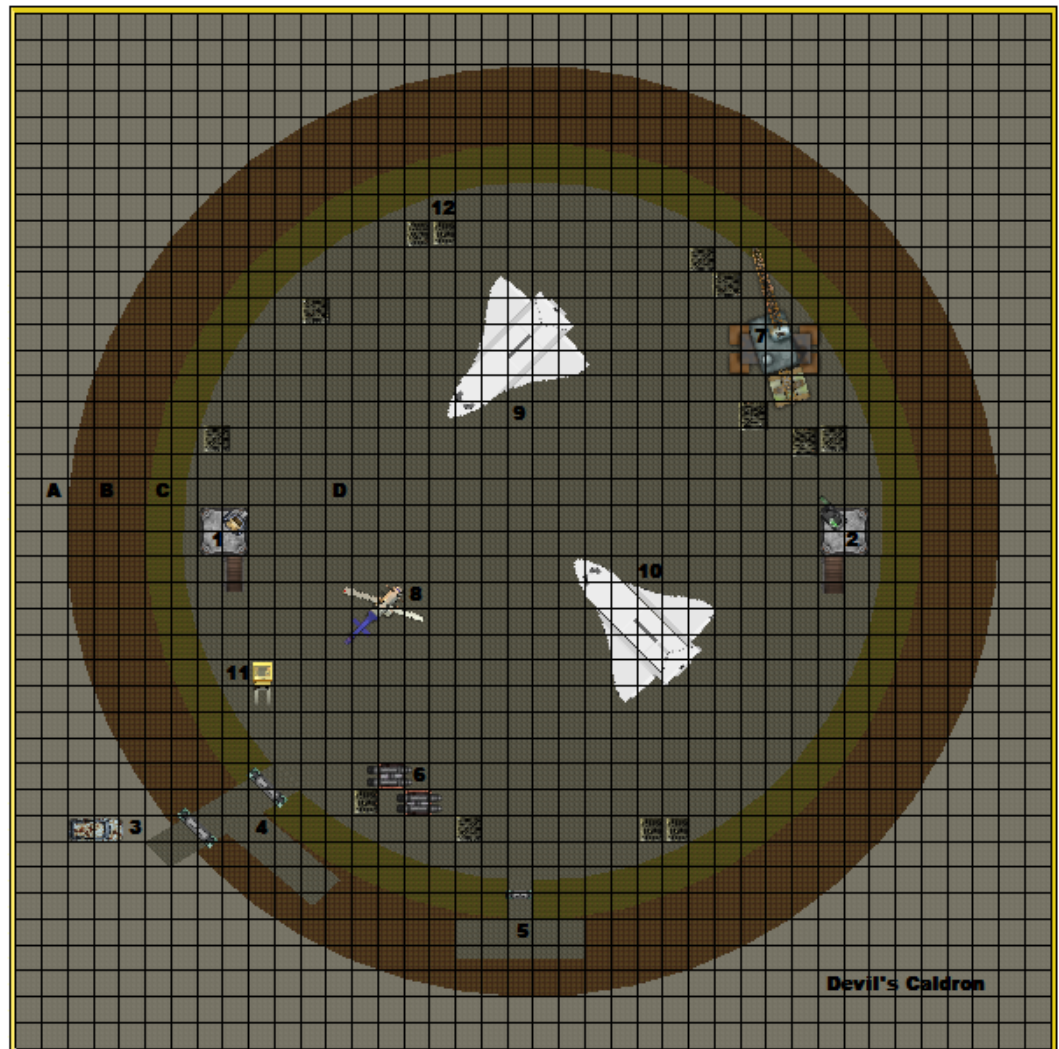
- A. **Desert floor**
- B. **Outward slope of the caldera** – 50m high
- C. **Inward slope of the caldera** – 40m high
- D. **Caldera floor** – leveled and covered with star port quality ceramacrete

1. **Weapons platform** – 10m high with heavy laser and type 1 parabattery (500 SEU). Weapon covered with tight fitting cover which takes one turn to remove as protection against sand and dust.

2. **Weapons platform** – 10m high with heavy machine gun and locker with 5 ammo belts. Weapon covered with tight fitting cover which takes one turn to remove as protection against sand and dust.
3. **Rusty hover truck** – baton key is with one of the pirates in the caldera.
4. **Entry tunnel to the caldera** – chairs, table, crates, and sleeping cot. The pirates have arranged crates as a wall to separate the side passage off and have a lounge for card playing and sleeping.
2 pirates : (RW 35, M 35, PS 3, IM 4, RS 40, STA 40) skein suit, auto-rifles, 2 ammo clips, doze daggers, one with IR goggles

5. **Storage**

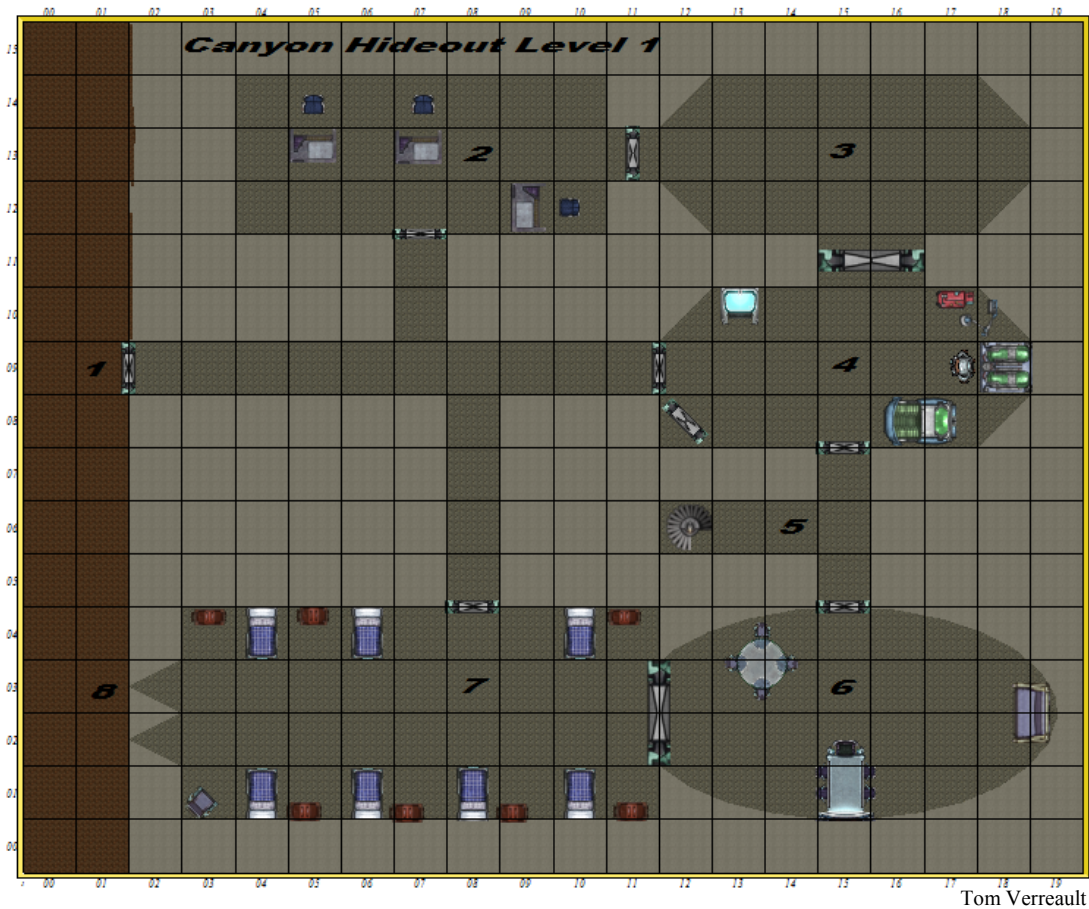
6. **Assault rocket reloads** – 2 pallets with two rockets each. Rockets covered with tight fitting cover which takes one turn to remove as protection against sand and dust.



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7. **Inoperative crane** – left over from Laco's War 30m high.
8. **Jet copter** – undergoing engine maintenance, the copter will not fly till another two hours of work is done. 2 pirates: (RW 35, M 35, PS 3, IM 4, RS 40, STA 40) skein suit, laser pistols, 1 power clip, doze daggers, technician tool kits.
9. **The Venture's shuttle** – The external locks have been changed and the lock out program has been reprogrammed.
10. **Scarlet Terror's Thruster class privateer** – Requires a baton key held by Scarlet to gain access.
11. **Wheeled load lifter** – unlocked and ready to use (see new equipment appendix for details).
12. **Large shipping crates** – mostly empty, 5 m high.

Players have variety of ways the can approach the caldera. The pirates all have chronocoms and will be able to raise pirates at the hide out .75 km away once



“deus ex machina” laying done the “god smack” from orbit.

The players can employ the laser battery on the Venture once every 50 turns. It will effectively destroy the jetcopter, a hover vehicle or a weapon’s platforms for a 60% skill roll or do maximum damage to the privateer vessel for 50% skill roll (by Kleevor but rolled by the players). The players must request the orbital “god smack” and direct which target they want hit. Note if the Venture’s laser battery is used to destroy a hover vehicle while pirates are riding in it Scarlet will

they realize the PCs are here. Two are in their “lounge” (area #4) playing cards and two are doing engine maintenance on the jetcopter, they will be focused on their activities and may not notice the PCs unless the players do something rash or foolish. If the pirates at the hide out are summoned they will arrive in 2d10 combat rounds. If the other pirates are summoned have 10+1d10 pirates arrive in a hover car and a hover transport. Average mooks have a skein suit and a rifle with 2-3 ammo clips and possibly a melee weapon. Officers (2-3) will have a skein suit, a defense screen, power belt, pistol or rifle with 3-4 ammo clips, and a melee weapon. If the pirates from the hide out respond to the caldera, the hide out will only have two pirates left if the PCs investigate it afterwards.

One asset the players have is that Kleevor will have moved the Venture directly over this site and can shoot a large target in the caldera with the ship’s lasers. Possible targets would be a grounded ship, the crane, the jetcopter or the weapon’s platforms. Kleevor must be mindful of UPF laws concerning orbital bombardment and the above list represents legal targets for him under the law. He might also shoot to destroy the entrance to the caldera to prevent pirates from the outpost from using it, however, he will not target the outpost lest there be kidnapped civilians there. For that reason the players will just not be able to use him as

automatically have been in the other vehicle and thus survive to face the PCs.

CANYON HIDE OUT

(scale: 1 square = 2 meters)

The canyon hide out is built into the side of a canyon wall. It would be very difficult to find if a hover car and hover transport were not parked at the entrance.

1. **Parked hover car and transport** – guard in chair reading a hard copy travel magazine. 1 pirate: (RW 35, M 35, PS 3, IM 4, RS 40, STA 40) skein suit, IR goggles, gyrojet rifle, 3 ammo clips, water canteen filled with strong alcohol, large free standing umbrella and folding chair.
2. **Office** – three desks a good search will turn up a magnetic holster holding an auto-pistol up under the middle desk. 1 pirate officer smoking : (RW 45, M 40, PS 4, IM 5, RS 50, STA 50) skein suit, auto-pistol, 3 ammo clips, sonic sword
3. **Storage area** – crates of food, water, toilet paper, etc.
4. **Workshop** – maintenance area for robotic and storage closet. 2 pirates: (RW 35, M 35, PS 3,

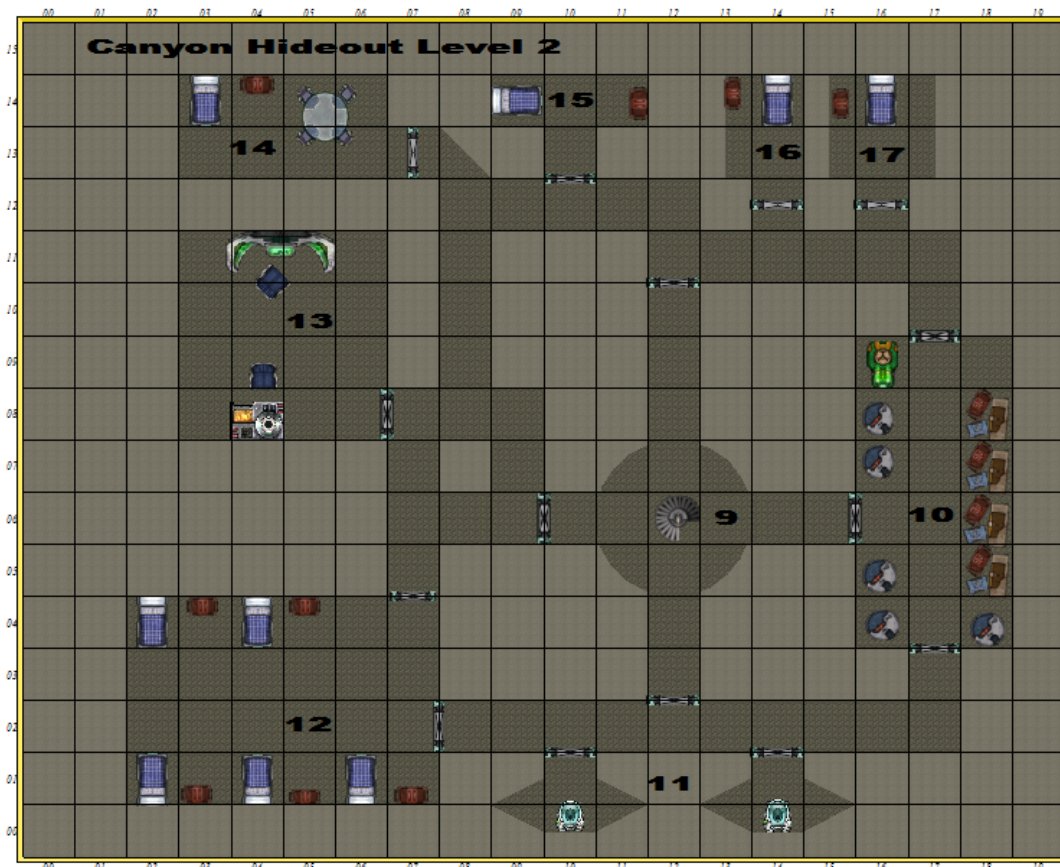
- IM 4, RS 40, STA 40) skein suit, doze daggers, gyrojet pistol, 3 ammo clips
5. **Passage to stairwell going up.**
 6. **Lounge** – 3 pirates: (RW 35, M 35, PS 3, IM 4, RS 40, STA 40) skein suit, sonic stunners, 3 power clip, vibro-dagger with power clip
 7. **Dorm** – beds and locked footlockers [level 2 locks]. 2 pirates : (RW 35, M 35, PS 3, IM 4, RS 40, STA 40) skein suit, needler pistols, 2 ammo clips, and random melee weapon. Overall there will be some limited identification papers here in the foot lockers that may lead to arrests by Star Law.
 8. **Sealed windows** – look out into the canyon.
 9. **Second level ladder well.**
 10. **Storage area** – There are ten squares that may be searched roll on the table in the sidebar.
 11. **Uni-species restrooms** – doors are lockable from the inside.
 12. **Dorm** – beds and locked footlockers [level 2 locks]. 2 pirates : (RW 35, M 35, PS 3, IM 4, RS 40, STA 40) skein suit, auto-pistols, 2 ammo clips, and random melee weapon. Overall there will be some limited identification papers here in the foot lockers that may lead to arrests by Star Law.
 13. **Computer Room** – Radiocom, subspace radio, and computer. Treat the computer and its security as level 3 each. There are extensive records for this group of pirates on the computer though not all of them are of interest. Buried deep in the files are files on finances (1), pirate personnel (1), and ships (1); one skill roll per set of files to locate. If these files are turned over to Star Law, nearly the whole band will eventually be captured. In 1d10 months there will be a reward for the PCs based on the number of sets of records turned over to Star Law: 10,000cr per set of records. 2 pirate officers : (RW 45, M 40, PS 4, IM 5, RS 50, STA 50) skein suit, gyrojet pistol, 3 ammo clips, sonic sword or vibro-dagger with power clip, baton keys to the pirate ship and the shuttle
 14. **Quarters** – 1 pirate cleaning his auto-rifle : (RW 35, M 35, PS 3, IM 4, RS 40, STA 40) skein suit, auto-rifle, 3 ammo clips, doze dagger
 15. **Quarters** – empty

RANDOM CARGO TABLE

(Canyon Hideout area 10)

Roll 2d10	Cargo search results
2	Pheromone perfume for human males +10 (10 bottles) *
3	Locked brief case level 3 mechanical lock: 5000cr in credit drafts and a curious gold coin. The value of the gold in the coin is 25cr but the true value of the coin is a mystery to be determined by the referee. *
4	Wood presentation case and two antique mussel loading gyrojet pistols of yazirian manufacture. *
5	Stolen artwork 1250-1500cr
6	Display case of war medals and UPF flag*
7	110 year old computer, seemingly inoperable*
8	Five boxes of Nagana cigars 5cr each or 100cr /box
9	Case of hypo sprays (20)
10	1d10 Yazirian musical instruments
11	2d10 Pelts from an endangered species typically valued at 10,000cr each, hard to sell due to legal issues, if caught a character could face 1 month jail time plus 1d10 X 10,000cr / pelt
12	25 used up skein suits (useless and no value)
13	A type 1 parabattery
14	1d100 clothing outfits that appear to be two decades old, 40% they are back in style and worth something, 5cr/ outfit after being cleaned for musty smell
15	2 cases of freeze dried space rations, low on taste and value, each case holds 10 boxes of half priced survival rations from the AD equipment list
16	1 case (6) of 0 g Vrusk Checkers 35cr each. They are inexpensive, mass produced and beneath the dignity of any vrusk who view them as cheap and chintzy.
17	15 identical Tetrarch Artifacts (fake) 5cr each
18	A robot's head, scorched and roughly hacked off
19	Data cube with a star chart (map- Now why would pirates need a map?)*
20	1 Tetrarch Artifact (real) Roll on artifact table in Laco brief*

Note any item marked with * can only be discovered once. A second roll with the same result is an empty container.



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- 16. **Quarter:** 1 pirate – (RW 35, M 35, PS 3, IM 4, RS 40, STA 40) skein suit, sonic stunner, 2 power clips, sonic dagger
- 17. **Quarters** – empty

Note: Scarlet is not keyed to a particular location. Each referee has the option to place her when they wish as a boss encounter and she will have 1d5 pirates with her. If the PCs look like they plan on settling for just taking out the vehicles at the hanger she can turn up in a hover car. The goal is to hold her in reserve as a boss encounter and/or prevent the PCs from having too easy of a time with this section of the adventure.

Scarlet Terror aka Scarlet Rose: (RW 60, M 40, PS 3, IM 5, RS 50, STA 45) skein suit, laser pistol, albedo screen, 3 power clips, belt pack 50 SEU, baton keys to the pirate vessel and the stolen shuttle.

1d5 pirates: (RW 35, M 35, PS 3, IM 4, RS 40, STA 40) skein suit, random pistols (Laser 1-20%, auto pistol 21-40%, gyrojet 41-60%, Needler 61-80%, Electro stunner 81-100%), 3 power or ammo clips, random small melee weapon and power clip if required (knife 1-20%, sonic knife 21-40%, vibroknife 41-60%, brass knuckles 61-80%, shock gloves 81-100%)

THE PIRATE'S RESPONSE

A large group of pirates will converge on the hanger if the pirates at the outpost are alerted to the PC's presence. The number of pirates listed as showing up and the number of pirates keyed to particular rooms at the outpost do not match. This is somewhat intentional as the name of the adventure is "Mooks Without Number"; so there is no hard and fast number of pirates. A referee can increase or decrease the numbers of pirates at any point in the adventure to match the challenge to the size and health of the party.

If the pirates from the outpost have responded to the PCs presence at the hanger then the PCs will find 4 pirates guarding the front door to the outpost if they make their way there. There will be one pirate skulking through the dorms stealing from his fellows. He'll have 1d5+5 trinkets of silver, gold, and costume jewelry valued at 3d10cr each.

The players could also stumble across the hide out as they make their way to the caldera. If they attempt to clear the hide out first it is not likely that the pirates at the caldera will be called for support. If there is a general hue and cry among the pirates over the presence of the PCs, then the pirates at the caldera will be on alert, watching and trying to raise their fellow pirates by chronocom. The two doing maintenance will be watching from the rim of the caldera and the others will be set to defend the entrance.

If the players should use the Venture's laser battery to destroy the entrance to the caldera the pirates coming from the hideout will dismount their vehicles and climb over the rim of the caldera. The driver of the hover car will retreat for two turns and come racing back on the third turn at top speed and crash the hover car into the caldera wrecking it and stunning himself for 1d5+3 turns. Referee chooses a suitable location for the hover car to come to rest in the caldera.

AFTERMATH

Some, but not all, of the pirates have identity cards and if these are captured and turned in to Star Law it will fill in some information in the Star Law files on this pirate band and may eventually lead to arrests. If the computer at the hide out is hacked and key financial, personnel, and ship registry files are turned over to Star Law, it will eventually lead to most of the band being rounded up and their fence being arrested. If the players simply obtain computer files and scans from the pirate's ship, it will allow Space Fleet, Star Law, and militia forces to cripple the pirates capturing most of their ships. In 1d5+5 months rewards can come in for the information (1d5 x10,000cr).

The pirate's ship at the caldera is stolen and the players will not be able to keep it if they capture it but a reward could be paid to lessen the sting of not getting the ship. Typically, such rewards are 1-3% of the value of the ship concerned. In this case a Thruster class privateer costs close to 1 million credits so the PCs will split 1% of that and Captain Kleevor will collect 3%. The portable items of value at the caldera are the two pallets of two assault rockets each, the jetcopter, the wheeled load lifter, and the captured heavy weapons. Anything that is shot with Venture's laser from orbit is scrap. Note: it might seem that Kleevor makes out while the PCs do all the work but this is just how prize money is divided for capturing pirate and enemy vessels.

The players should, at the very least, be able to recover their shuttle and destroy the pirate shuttle. On a very successful run of this adventure they could capture some information of value to Star Law which will give the Lucky Devil Pirates someone other than the Venture and her crew to worry about.

Many of the items from the cargo search results table under room #10 could become hooks for further adventure. For example, the data cube with a star chart is essentially a modern pirate map or it could be nothing at all. As referee you have the option to fudge a table result if you want a particular item to use as a hook for continuing adventure. Some items on the chart could be problematic for the Venture's crew to sell due to legal issues. After this encounter with the Lucky Devil pirates, the Venture's crew will have several months of boring shipping duty before they ever deal with these pirates again. It would be good for their reward from Star Law to catch up with them during that time and let the players think that the Lucky Devil pirates are crippled or destroyed.

It's up to the referee to decide if Scarlet should live to bother the PCs another day. If she is reduced to 0 STA she may still survive as per the rules on death and

dying. Other officers may survive being reduced to 0 STA as well but unnamed "mooks" reduced to 0 STA can be treated as dead. A Scarlet that escapes or survived only to be turned over to Star Law can return at another time in the player's adventures to be a thorn in their side.

EXPERIENCE POINTS

Award 1 EXP for taking the hanger and a bonus point for recovering navigation data from the pirate's starship. Award 1 EXP for taking the outpost and a bonus point for recovering computer records on the pirate band. The bonuses apply only if they data are turned over to the appropriate authorities; namely Star Law and Space Fleet.

DELTA SECTION: LEAVING LACO

Depending on events the PCs may be tied up with answering questions for Star Law for a few days. It could also play out that they are off Laco in a day and on to the Venture's next port of call.

The Lucky Devil pirates are not completely destroyed no matter what the outcome of this portion of the adventure is. There are other ships out there. With information provided by the PCs or recovered by Star Law investigators after they reach the pirate outpost, the Lucky Devil pirates will be crippled once Space Fleet captures their vessels. Just enough of them will escape and come together with a plan to get even with the PCs in about 6 months. That plan also involves them replacing their lost ships with Venture.

The referee can abstract 6 month's activity (simply pay the PCs 6 months wages) and then run part 3 or he can run a series of short adventures to get the player's minds off the Lucky Devil pirates.

NEW EQUIPMENT

PHEROMONE PERFUME

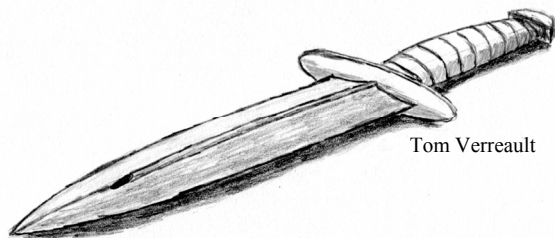
Pheromone perfumes are keyed to body chemistry based strictly on sex and race; when purchasing the target race and sex must be specified. Wearing a pheromone perfume confers a bonus to ability checks involving individuals of the correct sex and race. The body chemistries that respond to pheromones are human and yazirian. If it is worn by a race or sex that the target of a particular perfume is not normally attracted to, the bonus that the perfume confers is reduced by 5 for wrong sex and by 5 for the wrong race. A perfume can effect ability checks to cause a character to fail to notice something or influence them

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to go along with a suggestion but the referee is the final arbiter on how far these effects may be pushed. The bottom line is that a character will probably not go against their base moral character. Any bonus over 10% causes 1d5 NPCs to “hit on you” during the course of the day.

- For a +5 bonus pheromone perfume costs: 25 Cr. (30 doses)
- For a +10 bonus pheromone perfume costs: 75 Cr. (25 doses)
- For a +15 bonus pheromone perfume costs: 225 Cr. (20 doses)
- For a +20 bonus pheromone perfume costs: 775 Cr. (15 doses)
- For a +25 bonus pheromone perfume costs: 2325 Cr. (10 doses)

DOZE DAGGER



The doze dagger is a stabbing blade with a hollow channel that opens within 3cm of the tip and connects to a reservoir in the handle. Upon a successful melee hit a chemical nearly identical to that used in a doze grenade is injected into the victim requiring a STA check to resist being rendered unconscious for d100 turns. If the melee hit was 01-05 or doubles causes a -10 modifier to the STA check. The reservoir in the handle holds 3 doses and a replacement cartridge costs 10 Cr. In all other respects the dagger functions as a regular knife. This item is illegal on some worlds.

Cost: 25 Cr.

LOAD LIFTER (WHEELED)

Cost: 3000 Cr (Rental- 50Cr plus 30 Cr/day)

Top/Cruise Speed: 45kph/ 30kph

Passengers: 1

Cargo Limit: 2500kg

Also known as a fork lift the wheeled load lifter is a ubiquitous piece of heavy equipment for moving heavy cargo containers. They typically use a type 2 parabattery due to the heavy loads they manage. Due to the short wheel base and placement of the turning wheels, if this vehicle is driven forward at top speed a vehicle handling roll must be made every turn. Failure means a swerve or tipping over. Depending on the skill

system being used this vehicle can be operated by either a character with technician skill or driving ground vehicles skill or a skill that conveys the ability to operate heavy equipment.

NPC STATS

SCARLET ROSE **A.K.A. SCARLET TERROR**

Human Female, age 29

STR/STA: 45/45 INT/LOG: 45/45
DEX/RS: 60/50 PER/LDR: 70/50

PS: +3 IM: +5

Beam(3), Melee(1), Computers(2), Starship Piloting(3)

Skein suit, laser pistol, albedo screen, 3 powerclips, power belt pack

Bottle of pheromone perfume 6 doses (formulated for human males +20 bonus)

Scarlet Rose is a stunning red head who exudes sexuality. She has a knack for attacking with surprise after using that sexuality to disarm her target.

Scarlet Rose has access to credits stashed away in various accounts under various names and possesses excellent identification papers for each identity. Some of her idioms of speech suggest she's spent significant time on Out Reach but she does her best to keep her background secret.



MARSHAL BEN BROOKS

Star Law marshal

Human Male, age 45

STR/STA: 60/60 INT/LOG: 55/55
DEX/RS: 60/60 PER/LDR: 45/55

PS: +3 IM: +6

Beam (5), Melee (3), Psycho-social (3), Environmental (2), Computers (1)

Skien suit, albedo screen, power belt pack, laser pistol, 4 power clips, ID, hand cuffs.

Marshal Brooks is originally from Morgaine's World and has been in Star Law for 20 years. He's slightly bored with the job and may not prosecute his duties with quite the alacrity that the players might desire. He is basically honorable and will do his job but if the PCs aggravate him he may drag his feet a little.



ALL WE ARE IS DUST IN THE VOID

Tom Verreault

A recent article came to my attention concerning the toxicity of lunar dust and the potential hazards of living and working in the lunar environment.

<http://www.universetoday.com/96208/the-moon-is-toxic/>

The article presented three distinct hazards that I have labeled Lunar Lung, Lunar Blindness, and Lunar Rash. What follows is an explanation of the hazard and the possible effects in game terms. These effects apply to working on any small airless body.

Lunar dust is very fine and very sharp edged. Its abrasiveness is due to the lack of exposure to erosion forces that Earth dirt experiences. Micro-gravity environments enhance its ability to float and accumulate on space-suited characters. The Apollo astronauts were plagued by suit bound dust during their brief visits to the Moon and it wore through three layers of Kevlar on one astronaut's boots.

Lunar outposts and ships touching down on lunar bodies must employ strict decon procedures to protect their crew and equipment. Failure to do so will lead to possible health effects for those exposed and possible damage to the environmental systems of the ship or outpost.

LUNAR OUTPOSTS

Lunar outposts face a never ending battle against the dust. Automatic systems like cleaning robots work continuously and life support systems and air filtration require continuous overhaul. Even then, the crew faces the toxic results of lunar dust. The following table lists the chances of a health or equipment problem for a lunar outpost based on the weeks since the last overhaul of the life support's air filtrations system. Roll once per GST week in game.

Weeks Since Last Overhaul of LS	Chance of Problem
1 week	10%
2 weeks	20%
3 weeks	40%
4 weeks	80%



SHIPS

Ships experience the same problems when their crews visit a lunar environment and return to the ship. The following table is the chance of a health or equipment problem for a starship or shuttle with limited contact with a lunar body. Use the table for an outpost is the contact is significant. Roll after the first contact and again after each week of extended contact.

Weeks Since Last Overhaul of LS	Chance of Problem
1 week	5%
2 weeks	10%
3 weeks	20%
4 weeks	40%

Various decontamination procedures can be employed to reduce the chance of a problem. The type of decon procedure will modify the above percentages. Water decon is the most effective but also the most expensive as it requires a doubling of the cost of the ship or outpost's life support equipment in cost and mass without actually increasing the performance of the system. Next is a compressed air or sonic system paired with a vacuum and filtration system which increases LS equipment mass and cost by 50% without increasing performance.

OTHER MODIFIERS

Decon Procedure	Modification
water based shower	-25%
sonic or compressed air	-10%

The amount of traffic entering and leaving a ship or outpost can modify the above rolls.

Air Lock Traffic	Modification
Trivial	+0%
Light	+20%
Medium	+40%
Heavy	+80%

CONSEQUENCES

The number of problems occurring is equal to the number of weeks since the last overhaul of the life support system. The crew of an outpost is trained to live with the problem of dust and is conditioned to avoid it, making it more likely that the problem afflicts equipment. On a ship it's the other way around, while the crew will be aware of the problem, the reality of it will not hit home until someone is suffering ill effects from lunar dust. Consult the following tables and all health effects are randomly assigned to crew members.

Weeks since last LS overhaul	Outpost	
	Outpost	Ship
Week 1	1E	1H
Week 2	1E & 1H	1E & 1H
Week 3	2E & 1H	1E & 2H
Week 4	2E & 2H	2E & 2H

E=equipment problem, H=health problem

Die Result of 1d5	Equipment Malfunction
1	1 random Vacuum suit degraded, and must be preplaced
2	Air Lock seal not holding, clean and repair, 1-5 hours
3	filtration clogged; LS system cut in half till repaired, 1-5 hours to repair
4	LS system breaks down, 2-10 hours repair
5	Referee choice, one piece of equipment malfunctions, referee determine repair time

Die Result of 1d5	Health Problem
1	problem caught early, no ill effects
2	lunar lung
3	lunar rash
4	lunar blindness
5	dust in face, 1 character with both lunar lung and blindness

Lunar lung is caused when dust particles are inhaled and damage the lung. It cuts the character's STA in half and enforces a pain penalty for all actions. Standard treatment is First Aid subskill with a daily dose of Bio-cort for 1 week. Condition is cured in a week, if treated daily.

Lunar rash is caused by dust particles irritating the skin. The rash enforces the pain penalty of half STA without actually reducing STA. Standard treatment is First Aid subskill with 1 dose of Bio-cort and clears in one day.

Lunar blindness occurs when dust scratches the surface of the seeing organ, regardless of the species involved. It is painful and damages eyesight. Effects are pain penalty for all actions and any shooting by the character uses the range penalty for the next range band. Standard treatment is First Aid subskill and a dose of Bio-cort once a day for a week. Condition clears in one week with daily treatment.

The hypnotism subskill of the psych-social skill can be used to reduce pain penalties as per its description.



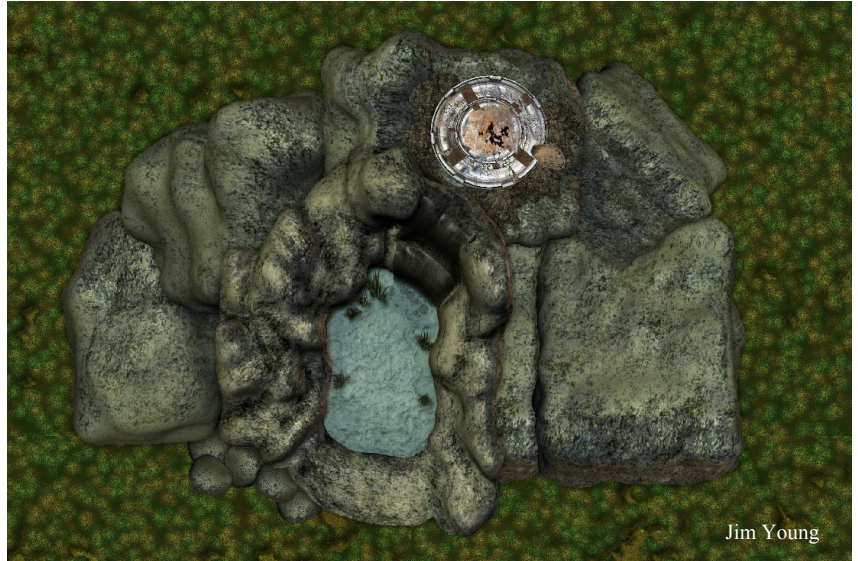
NASA

Location

EORNA DEFENSE INSTALLATION

Jim Young

High atop a cliff in the Bachanda Forest region of Volturnus sits the ruins of an Eorna defense installation which was destroyed by the Sathar during the Day of Doom over 900 years ago. The installation served as a planetary defense battery capable of firing on enemy ships in orbit. As several Sathar ships were destroyed by the battery, its destruction became a high priority for the invading forces. The roof of the installation took several direct hits from Sathar assault fighters and was destroyed.



Exterior, top-down view of the defense installation area.

Jim Young

BACKGROUND

This encounter location is meant to take place during the Volturnus series module *SF:1 Volturnus, Planet of Mystery*. Ideally, it can be used once the PC's obtain the jetcopter from the pirate outpost and are heading toward Slave City One. Although it is written as an encounter to leave a few clues for the PC's as to the nature of the Eorna and the Day of Doom, it can be adapted to any campaign setting as a ruined outpost.

Originally, the installation consisted of a planetary defense battery that sat on top of the cliff and two lower levels (barracks and entrance) inside the rock of the cliff that were accessed by a lift. The main entrance of the facility is through a cave opening behind the waterfall, where small Eorna craft could fly in and land.

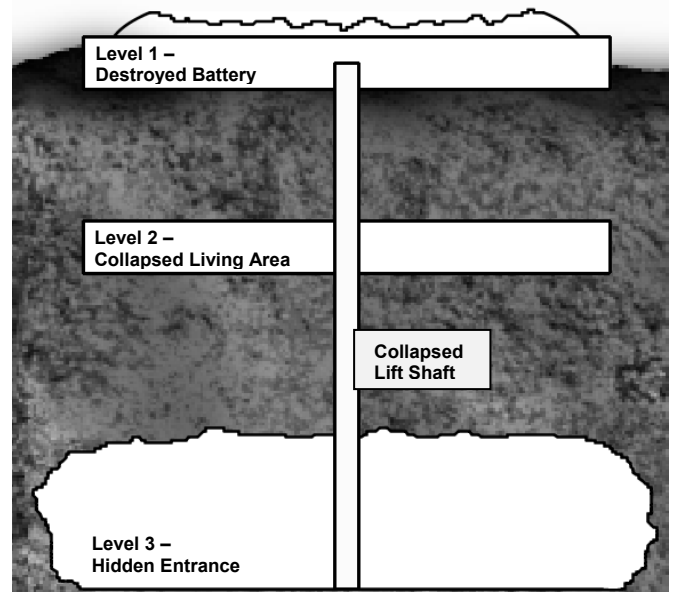
The Sathar attack on the facility almost completely destroyed the top (battery) level and caused a structural collapse which completely filled the second level (barracks), the lift, and lift shaft with debris. The entrance level was less damaged, but in the years following the Sathar attack the level was stripped of any useful items and technology by the Eorna.

As seen in the profile view – the main battery is on the surface, with the lift descending 50 meters to the destroyed barracks level. The floor of the entrance level is 75 meters below the second level or 125 meters from the top of the cliff. The height of the cave opening in the cliff is 35 meters.

The only areas that can be accessed are:

The top level can currently be entered through a hole that was blown in the side by a rocket hit. The spaces that can still be explored are detailed in the map legend section.

The entrance level can be accessed either by the party's jetcopter or by scaling down the cliff from the top. The entrance and the interior are detailed in the map legend section.



Jim Young

ADDITIONAL NOTES

This location includes provisions for two separate scenarios:

In the first scenario, the Eorna installation was destroyed during the Sathar attack, and in the subsequent years, the entrance level was salvaged by the surviving Eorna for equipment and technology that was brought to Volkos to assist in their Great Mission. In this version, the level is empty with the exception of the debris from the collapse of the lift shaft and parts of the cavern ceiling.

In the second scenario, the entrance level of the installation was occupied years later by a lone Eorna scientist who did not agree with the Great Mission. He felt that it would be more effective to develop their existing technology to create sentient machines, which became the Mechanon. This storyline takes artistic license with the canon material and is optional. The storyline is covered in detail on the Starfrontiers.us site in the [Voturnus Revisited](#) project.

In both scenarios, the material will be the same, with the exception of the description of the third level. Further details will be given there.

ENCOUNTERS

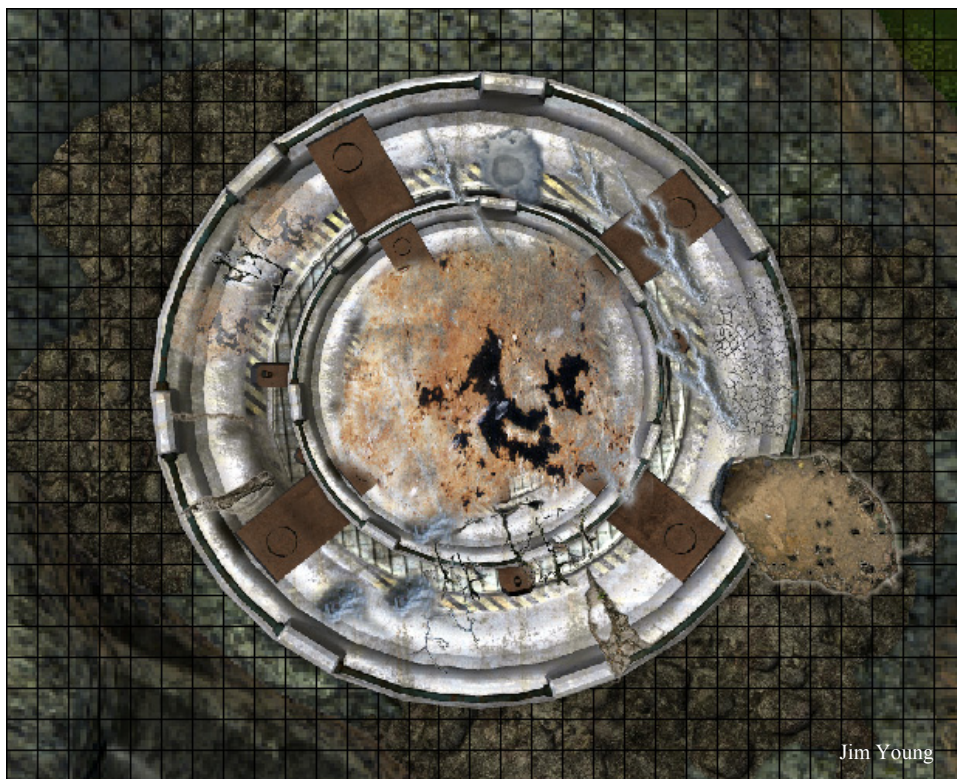
At GM discretion, random encounters can be placed outside the facility, in the ruins of the first and third levels. Note that if the optional scenario is used, there are planned encounters.

Roll	Encounter
1	Air Whale ^a (1)
2	Voturnian Baboons ^a (1-10)
3	Tangler Vines ^a (1-10)
4	Queequeg ^b (1-5)
5	Korrvarr ^a (1-5)
6	Mordax ^a (2-10)
7	Sraak ^a (1-10)
8	Strangler Chutes ^b (5-20)
9	Rasties ^c (2-20)
10	Voturnian Cave Bear ^c (1-2)

^a – see SF-1 Voturnus Planet of Mystery

^b – see Alpha Dawn Rules

^c – see SF-0 Crash on Voturnus



Exterior, top-down view of the defense installation upper level.

LEVEL ONE – DESTROYED BATTERY

NOTES ON LEVEL 1

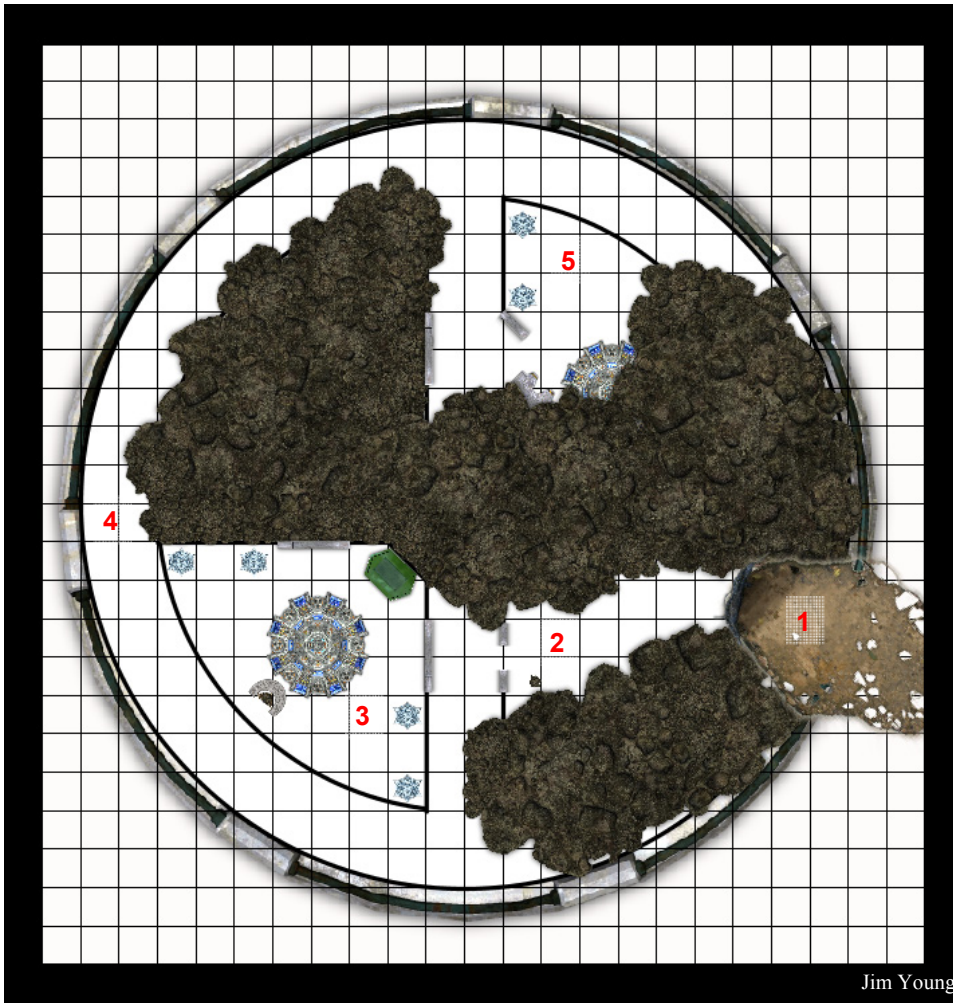
The power to the installation was knocked offline by the Sathar attack. Therefore, there is no power to the installation so none of the equipment, lighting doors, etc. will function. Any use of explosives inside the battery level may dangerously affect the remaining structure, causing a chance of collapse.

1. ENTRANCE

The perimeter wall of the battery was blown open by a Sathar rocket attack. The damage blew a hole through the wall over 4 meters wide. Characters can easily enter the opening in the wall by climbing the debris pile and crouching down to avoid the jagged rocks and metal protruding from the edges of the hole.

2. PARTIALLY COLLAPSED CHAMBER

This room is partially filled with rubble – metal, stone, remains of conduit, wiring, etc. – as a result of the structural collapse. The rubble fills the sides of the room, but there is a path down the center that will allow the characters to pick their way through to the doors leading to the hallway. The doors are open about a meter wide, obviously blocked open at the bottom by debris at the time of the collapse.



Interior view of the defense installation upper level

3. CONTROL ROOM

The doors to this room are closed. With the power offline in the installation, the doors will have to be forcibly opened. A torch will open the doors without any issue, as will a pry bar. Any attempts at using explosives of any kind have a chance of collapsing the area.

Description

As you open the doors, the stale air coming from within the room overwhelms your senses. This place has obviously been sealed off for a long time. The room is almost untouched by the collapse seen so far. For some reason, the ceiling has seemed to hold in this area – a very small amount of debris can be seen inside. In the center of the room is a strange looking circular console with a seat facing the corner to the right of the door. Along two of the walls are strange clear crystals about a meter high. In the corner near the center of the level is a cabinet of some sort.

This room was used as a gunner's station for the defense battery. The weapon was controlled from the

console by sitting on the bench in front of it. The cabinet in the corner houses computer equipment and a large display monitor which are no longer functioning. The four crystals provided light to the room when the installation still had power.

Any examination of the console will reveal that the surface of the console is severely scorched. There are scorch marks on the floor below the bench as well. The Eorna manning this position was killed by a power overload at the console when the installation was hit. On the floor next to the bench are the skeletal remains of the unfortunate gunner mixed with small, fragile scraps of his rotting clothing. The characters will notice that its skull does not look like any of the intelligent species they have yet discovered on Volturnus. The cabinet in the corner appears similarly scorched. Any technician character examining this equipment may ascertain its purpose (with the -20 penalty for alien technology), that

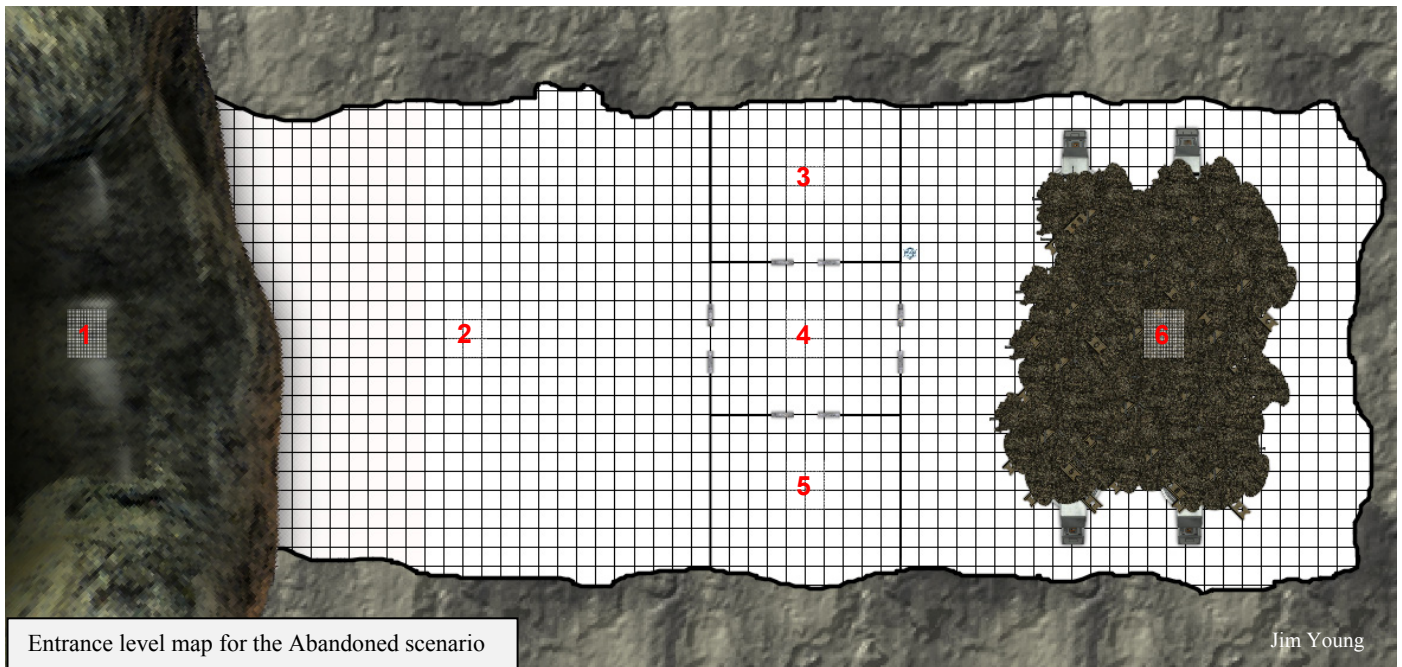
it was completely fused and destroyed by a heavy power surge, and that it is a level of technology that seems both advanced and ancient.

4. PARTIALLY COLLAPSED HALLWAY

The perimeter hallway has debris along the wall shared with the collapsed northeastern room. The characters should have no problem passing through the area. If the referee elects to have an encounter in the open room at area 5, the PC's might be able to detect tracks or other evidence that they are not alone in the area.

5. PARTIALLY COLLAPSED CONTROL ROOM

This room was another gunner's station, which was partially collapsed in the attack. One of the doors was ripped off and partially buried under the rubble. The console is also mostly buried. Digging through the rubble by the console will reveal another Eorna skeleton. The referee may elect to have a creature encounter here, as this room is open to the outside and could serve as a den or lair to one of Volturnus' inhabitants.



LEVEL THREE (A) – ABANDONED ENTRANCE FIRST SCENARIO

NOTES ON LEVEL 3 (A)

The collapse of the second level and lift shaft caused a partial collapse of the ceiling in the engineering area of the third level. The Eorna subsequently removed the undamaged power reactors and computer equipment and returned it to Volkos. The entire level has been obviously picked through for salvage, although some evidence of the Eorna can be seen in the debris.

1. SECRET WATERFALL ENTRANCE

125 meters from the top of the cliff is a cave opening concealed from the outside by the waterfall. It is not easily visible from the air, as the cool water and mist interferes with IR detection devices. Additionally, the waterfall obscures the opening from a distance, but is not so large that it completely blocks it from view. It is visible to characters who are actively searching for it from the pool at the bottom, the top of the cliff, or within 200-300 meters from the air.

The rough entrance is approximately 46 meters wide and 35 meters high. The jetcopter captured from the pirate outpost could land inside the cave provided the pilot does not try to hover under the falling water before the opening. The GM may require a skill check to safely do so.

2. LANDING AREA

The walls and ceiling are rough and vary slightly in dimension, but the floor throughout the level has obviously been made level and flat by some sort of artificial means. There are large scratches in the rock

floor throughout this area from the many takeoffs and landings of air and spacecraft. The air inside this area is damp from the mist created by the repeated action of the water against the rock. The GM may elect to have an encounter with some type of mold or slime type of creature.

Party members will see some shattered crystal shards amid the rock, dust, and debris on the floor. They may also find bits of tubing and wiring made from strange metal alloys left over from the removal of the various pieces of equipment that had once been here.

3. STORAGE ROOM

The dust in this room is very thick. It has apparently only been disturbed by small creatures for a long time. Characters may find debris matching the description of area 2, above.

4. HALLWAY

The doors are all stuck open throughout the level. If the PCs examine them, they show evidence of having been pried open.

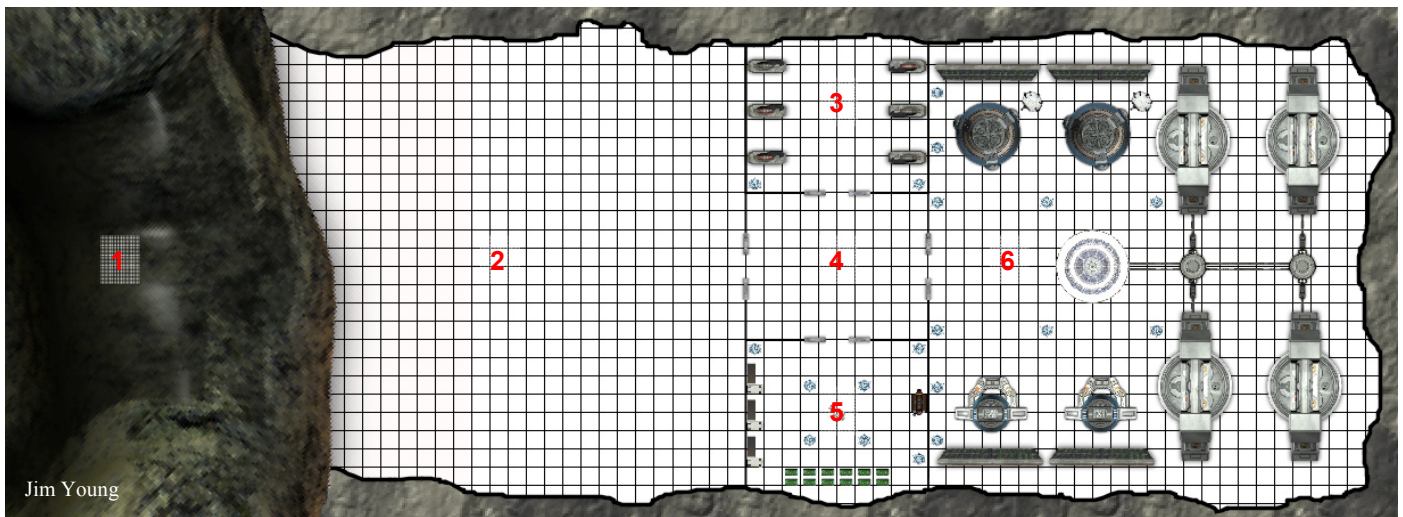
5. STORAGE ROOM

This room matched the description of area 3, above.

6. ENGINEERING

This large room has suffered a partial collapse. The force of the second level and lift collapse carried into sections of this cavern. The walls of the lift shaft along with all of the supporting structure and power lines going through it collapsed throughout the center of the cavern and took a part of the rock ceiling with it.

The resulting damage destroyed and buried 4 large power reactors. There were other reactors here as well,



Entrance level map for the Mechanon lab scenario

and characters searching through the area may notice that there was other equipment here that has long since been removed. Bent and torn conduit and shattered crystal shards are throughout the debris area. There is also a damaged crystalline light near the door. It has taken some damage and has several cracks in it.

Parts of the buried reactors can still be seen, and it can also be seen that panels on the equipment have been opened and components removed. A tech character would recognize that the technology is the same as in the first level: old, yet advanced. It obviously uses some form of crystalline circuitry.

LEVEL THREE (B) – ABANDONED ENTRANCE SECOND SCENARIO

NOTES ON LEVEL 3 (B)

The collapse of the second level and lift shaft caused a partial collapse of the ceiling in the engineering area of the third level. The Eorna maintenance robots, unaffected by the strikes to the defense batteries atop the cliff immediately began clearing obstructions and restoring backup power to the installation. The robots were able to bring one of the reactors back online before emergency power failed. Once the robots accomplished this task, they began clearing debris and continuing repairs. The process was coordinated through the main computer, which was protected from the attack. The Sathar, unaware of the location of the entrance, assumed the installation destroyed and left it alone after they defeated the Eorna.

Years later, after the surviving Eorna created their Great Mission, a young Eorna scientist, Anon, decided to go another way. After openly disagreeing with the council of elders, he presented a plan to make advanced robots to combat the Sathar. He was denied and told to

spend his efforts assisting the Great Mission. Convinced the leadership was in great error, he waited, and formulated a plan. He suspected that the secret entrance level of the bombed out installation in the Bachanda forest may still be intact. He thought that if the Sathar couldn't see it behind the waterfall, it could have been untouched. When he arrived, he took control of the computer and robots, and set them to work building his dream – a lab in which he could work on designing the ultimate sentient machine.

Anon began designing the perfect killing machine – a champion to save his race from the Sathar. His intense devotion to save his people combined with the sorrow of the great loss felt by all Eorna slowly eroded his sanity. In the beginning, Anon was consumed by the thought of saving his race, and being proved right. Over the years in isolation he focused less on saving his race, and more on being proved right. He decided to document his work with a video log. Over the centuries, the data began to be corrupted, but several log entries survive, detailing Anon's descent into complete madness.

In time, Anon achieved success in creating the Mechanon. He ended up moving his operation to the Mechanon mound location to begin a new phase of his work: the uploading of his mind to the computer there. As he left the installation, he left his log and some pre-sentient robots that he had developed as prototypes to defend the site...

PLANNED ENCOUNTERS

There are three **Mechanon prototypes** on this level. They are similar in appearance to the Mechanon, but are not as advanced. They act as level 5 robots. At the referee's discretion, the number can be adjusted up or down to better suit the strength of the party. They work to maintain the facility, and also defend it against

unauthorized visitors. They will attack the party on sight.

MECHANON PROTOTYPES

MV 60m; IM/RS 9/90; STA 130; ATT 80; 2d10 melee or by special attack as listed:

Prototype #1 SA – Electric shock emitters: it's hands produce an electric charge (treat as an electrostunner for damage and range)

Prototype #2 SA – Sonic Blast emitters: hands produce sonic energy (treat as sonic disruptor)

Prototype #3 SA – Laser Blast emitters: (treat as 4 SEU laser pistol)

If the party enters the facility with the pirate jetcopter, at least one prototype will be in area 2. The others will arrive within a few rounds. If the party enters by climbing, the prototypes will be in other areas of the facility.

1. SECRET WATERFALL ENTRANCE

The physical description of this area is identical to the description in the section **Level Three (a)–Abandoned Entrance First Scenario**, above.

2. LANDING AREA

The walls and ceiling are rough and vary slightly in dimension, but the floor throughout the level has obviously been made level and flat by some sort of artificial means. There are large scratches in the rock floor throughout this area from the many takeoffs and landings of air and spacecraft in this area. The air inside this area is damp from the mist created by the repeated action of the water against the rock.

If the party enters the facility with the pirate jetcopter, at least one prototype will be in area 2. and the others will arrive within a few rounds.

3. ROBOT CHARGING STATIONS

This room contains 6 strange looking devices – metal with crystalline circuitry. In the corners are large crystal structures that provide light to the room. The devices are recharging stations for the robots that used to be here and the prototypes that currently guard the facility. If the party entered the facility quietly, a prototype will be in this area.

4. HALLWAY

The hallway is empty with heavy sliding metal doors to each area. None of the doors are locked and can be opened by pressing a panel beside the door.

5. LAB

This area was where Anon slept and did a lot of his design work. The room has three workbenches on the west wall from which most of the tools have been taken. In the center of the room is a strange chair that looks like a cross between an exam table and a workbench. The exam chair is surrounded by crystals that light the room. There is a bed on the east wall of the room. Along the south wall are stacks of crates, most of which are empty, but some contain ore, crystals, wire, and other miscellaneous components for Anon's experiments. If the party entered the facility quietly, a prototype will be in this area.

6. ENGINEERING

This large room is the engineering section for the installation. If the party entered the facility quietly, a prototype will be in this area. The main computer is now only partially functional due to centuries of sitting idle. The programming that controls the reactors is still online, but the programs that operate the other machinery in the room are now corrupted and offline. The reactors fill the east end of the large chamber. The computer terminal is in the center of the room, surrounded by lighting crystals. The northwest and southwest corners have strange machines and displays that were once used to manipulate the robots but are now offline. On the computer terminal is a data pad that is resting atop a series of small crystals that act as charging points for the pad. There are three entries on the pad that have not been corrupted. A polyvox is necessary to translate the entries.

Entry #1 shows Anon in his younger years. The log entries show him working in the lab. He says, “The fools would not listen to reason. Their creatures will be too weak to defeat the Sathar. My killing machines will save our people. The tragedy that struck us on the Day of Doom will not be repeated.”

Entry #2 shows Anon quite a bit older. A Mechanon is in the lab in the exam chair. “After years of experimenting, I have finally achieved true artificial intelligence. I told the council this day would come. They wouldn't listen! I knew I would prove myself smarter than they are. I knew I would beat them!” He then activates the Mechanon, who begins to stand up.

Entry #3 shows Anon very old now. The image is fuzzy and garbled at some points. “Work must continue. I've worn out this body. I still need to show them I was right. I'm going to connect my mind to the mound computer so I can finish my work. Then we non-biologicals will prevail!!!”

Creature File

GREAT AQUATIC SANDWORM OF MOONWORLD

Eric "iggy" Winsor



Jurak Hangna is a yazirian naturalist and game preserve operator on Hakosoar. He has been trapping and raising animals since he was a hanger*. He has established one of the strongest collections of native yazirian flora and fauna outside Araks.

*"Hanger" is a translation of the yazirian term for a vouth.

Hello fellow spacers! Today's program we'll introduce the Great Aquatic Sand Worms of Moonworld. On Moonworld they are commonly called shworms, a human name made from contracting the descriptive name shell worms.

GOOD TO EAT!

The original colonists of Moonworld had serious trouble with shworms when they were establishing their first coastal fisheries. Shworm hatchlings and juveniles found the imported fry irresistible and would tear through successive layers of sea nets to get into the fisheries and gorge on the fish. They ultimately spelled the demise of the fishery industry on Moonworld.

However, as in most colonization failures there was a hidden success. Shworms are a wonderful food source in their own right. Boiled, their inner flesh is much like the human food lobster. However, they must be boiled in a two-step process of hydrochloric acid to break down the tough shell and then brine to flavor the flesh properly. Hatchlings boil in about an hour, meter long juveniles can take two or three hours to boil. The adults found out at sea take much longer as they grow larger.

The largest recorded shworm ever boiled was ten meters long for a UPF Admiralty Banquet. The creature took fifteen hours to boil and was quite a sight stretched out along the dining table. The UPF Corps of Engineers cooked it in a crucible at one of their steel works. Out at sea, shworm recordings made with holoscanners have measured shworms that were more than eighty meters in length.

ECOLOGY

DIET

Shworms are carnivorous and will eat any creature they find. Scientific studies have not identified a single Moonworld species as a shworm primary food source. Shworms alternate constantly between feeding and sleep. If a shworm is not sleeping it is hungry and will attack the nearest available food source. This behavior includes eating other shworms. This causes shworms to be extremely territorial.

TERRITORY

Adult shworms will claim an area about thirty times their length and circle it often to drive off any shworms they may find. Territorial circling typically happens after the first meal of a waking period. Often a second circling happens before the shworm conceals itself to rest. Concealment is achieved by burying itself in the sand, rocks, or mud of the sea bottom. However, great shworms of twelve or more meters in length no longer need to be buried to be concealed. The duration of their sleep periods increase as they gain size which allows other aquatic life to attach to them such as crustaceans and shell fish. These cause the greater shworms to have a rocky or reef like natural camouflage.

REPRODUCTION

Shworms will beach themselves during high tide to lay their eggs. They swim inland during the high tide and bury themselves in the sand while they lay their eggs deep underground. When the tide recedes, the drying sand and the warmth of the sun triggers their egg laying response. The eggs then lay dormant for a year developing only enough to be ready for the first tide after their year-long gestation. The parent shworm sleeps, waiting for the very next tide to return to sea.

The larger the shworms get, the larger the tides they need to bring themselves inland to lay their eggs. Great shworms must wait for conjunction tides caused by the combined gravitational pull of multiple moons to get their increased bulk far enough inland to get dry sand and warm sun to lay their eggs. This naturally limits

Aquatic Sand Worms of Moonworld					
SIZE:	hatchling	Juvenile	Adult	Giant	Gargantuan
TYPE:	Carnivore				
SIZE ^a :	Up to 50cm	50cm to 1.5m	1.5m to 10m	10m to 60m	60m to 80m+
NUMBER ^b :	1 to 2	1	1	1	1
MOVE:	70 m/t	60 m/t	55 m/t	50 m/t	45 m/t
IM/RS:	+7/65	+6/55	+5/45	+4/40	+4/35
STAMINA ^a :	1-20	20-200	100-600	400-1800	1500-2100
ATTACK:	65	75	55	50	45
DAMAGE ^a :	1-2d10	3-5d10	6-10d10	10-14d10	15-16d10
SPECIAL ATTACK ^a :	Ambush, Bacterial Saliva	Ambush, Bacterial Saliva	Ambush, Bacterial Saliva	Ambush, Bacterial Saliva	Ambush, Bacterial Saliva
SPECIAL DEFENSE:	Immune to Needlers & Stun 1/2 damage from sonic weapons				
NATIVE WORLD:	Moonworld (Sandy beaches and oceans)				

a: Adjust stats based on size of the shworm.

b: On land shworms may raise up in height half their length. They may move ¼ of their length per turn when on land.

Bacterial Saliva: A bite from a shworm will infect the victim with very persistent bacteria that causes tissue breakdown. The natural use is to help soften the shells and hides of other creatures. Victims of a shworm bite will suffer an additional 10% of the damage inflicted by the bite each turn the infection is not treated. Treat with Antibody Plus to kill the bacteria and stop additional damage.

Coloring: Hatchling shworms are white and develop a brownish-green color as they age. Out of the water in dry sand their color is sandy brown matching the sands of Moonworld.

the reproductive rate of Great shworms. Many of the eggs laid by great shworms die waiting for a conjunction tide or are eaten by the parent shworm as it waits for a conjunction tide to provide it with a path back to sea.

The tides of Moonworld are a complicated cycle of single, multiple, and conjunction tides that keep the shorelines of Moonworld in a constant flux of sea levels. A single moon tide may cause a shoreline sea level change of only 10 centimeters. Multiple moons in close orbit to each other may change the tide by 10 meters. A conjunction tide with all of Moonworld's moons lined up is predicted to cause a tide of over 200 meters. As a result, the beaches of Moonworld are wider than most worlds and often change shape as the currents move sand and mud along the shoreline and out to sea and back. The shworms have evolved to use this movement of the soft shorelines to beach themselves, lay their eggs and allow the developed eggs to be brought back to sea to hatch. Shworms do not beach and lay eggs along the rocky shorelines of Moonworld. Conjunction tides have brought great shworms as far as 5 kilometers inland near Graug Gau Station where the military has installed a perimeter fence to keep great shworms off of the streets of the base.

Mating and reproduction favors the male shworm. The greatest shworms ever cataloged have all been male. Male shworms seeking to mate will cross territories seeking an appropriate size mate. All shworms encountered during this mating quest are attacked and eaten. When a shworm of sufficient size for mating is encountered the male shworm will attack her and begin mating at the same time. When the mating embrace is achieved the female shworm will be physically subdued in his clutches such that she cannot prevent him from eating her alive. She will then release her eggs into a reproductive chamber on the underside of the male shworm. When the female shworm is devoured, the male will immediately seek the tide waters and beach itself to lay its eggs.

Because the beaching ability of larger and larger shworms is tied to the size of the tides created but the conjunction of the moons the shworms have developed the ability to sense the coming tides and only appropriate sized tides trigger the larger shworms to mate.

GOING ON STAGE

Recently Dwain, Tik, and I had the opportunity to visit Moonworld during a great tide. We combed the beaches for great shworms and even collected some

eggs. We then showed hatchling shworms on one of our regular visits on the Grey Jello show. Here, courtesy of the Nebulae Broadcasting Company, is a transcript of the visit.



Grey Jello is the entertainment name of Glome Bula. Glome was schooled in the Stoa of Mol Hamol, the famed debater. Glome passed up a promising career as a political debater to pursue his passion for comedy. He created the Grey Jello show, modeled on old human late night talk shows, to meld his comedy

with political and entertainment interviews. The Grey Jello show is broadcast live every 20 standard hours by the Nebulae Broadcasting Company.

Grey Jello: “Now gentlebeings, our very good friend Jurak Hangna is here with us fresh from the beaches of Moonworld with some fascinating creatures to show us. A big welcome for Jurak Hangna!”

Grey shapes his body forward across his desk as the stage lights dim to acceptable yazirian levels. Jurak settles in his seat and removes his sungoggles.

Jurak: “Thank you Grey for having us on the show. Dwain, Tik, and I have had quite the adventure on Moonworld seeking the voracious Great shworm. I've brought you some young shworm that we just cooked up back stage fresh.”

Grey: “Oh thank you Jurak. Don't mind if I do try a bite.”

Audience: “Eewoo!”

Jurak: “Tasty aren't they Grey?”

Grey: “Oh absolutely. I think I'll put the rest of these away for later.”

Jurak: “Let me just nick another of those first.”

Grey: “Oh, take as many as you like.”

Jurak takes several as Grey pushes the plate eagerly to Jurak.

Grey: “I understand that you measured a sixty meter great shworm?”

Jurak: “Yes Grey, We were out in the late afternoon after the sands had fully dried from the last great tide. Dwain was ahead of Tik and I seeking the location of what appeared to be a sizable great shworm in an aerial photo when he walked right on top of its mid-section.

He was calling back to us that this had to be the spot when the thing just rose up with Dwain on its back.”

Grey: “That must have been frightening!”

Jurak: “I'd say! Dwain jumped right off that thing and ran faster than Tik to get out of there, and Tik has eight legs.”

Grey, rolling around and making human laughter sounds: “That would be a sight to see. I hope Dwain was not hurt again.”

Jurak: “No, Dwain was not hurt this time, but our photographers pieced together this reconstruction from our chronocom records.”



[Everyone Needs a Sandworm](#) by [Andy Wintrip Tysho at Deviant Art](#)

Grey: “That's amazing. Looks like it was about to eat Dwain.”

Jurak: “Yup! That thing came down and took a mouth full of sand about a meter behind Dwain.”

Grey: “And Dwain was not hurt?”

Jurak: “No, not in the least. Tik did treat him for shock afterward, but Dwain's OK with that. He'll be out in a minute with some hatch-ling shworms. You can ask him yourself.”

Grey: “Oh good. Too bad you didn't catch that on holo and had to make a reconstruction. What happened with your photographer, was he sleeping on the job?”

Jurak: “Well.... Tik ran the both of us over trying to catch up with Dwain.”

Grey: “Leave it to a bug to put duty first!”

Audience and Grey laughing.

Jurak: “Now Grey, the good Doctor is conditioned to get to Dwain as fast as he can. He was properly

Frontier Explorer

expecting that Dwain would at least get scratched by that thing.”

Audience and Grey conclude laughing.

Grey: “True, true. Tik was doing his job. I see Tik standing ready backstage. Sorry for any insult Doctor.”

Jurak: “Thank you Grey. Ah I see Dwain is ready with the hatch-ling shworms.”

Jurak motions for Dwain to come on stage.

Grey: “Welcome Dwain! You are looking rather fit for a change.”

Dwain: “Thank you Grey. I'm glad to be on the show and with all of my limbs in good order.”

Dwain places a glass box on Grey's desk with two shworms in it divided by a glass barrier.

Grey: “Do I need to grow an extra limb to keep that trend going for you tonight?”

Dwain: “No thank you Grey. The shworms are a vicious creature but if you know how to handle them they are amazing to work with. Look at the size of the face claws on that larger hatchling. And it's only a month old. I'm gonna pin it by the head with this fork and Jurak is going to grab it by the tail.”

Grey rolls his chair back and Jurak stands up at Dwain's side.

Jurak: “Grey. I'm going to hand this shworm to you.”

Grey: “No. Thank you Jurak, how about Dwain handle this one.”

Jurak: “Dwain has to help me get the second shworm out.”

Grey: “Both of them!”

Jurak: “Yes! If we get both of them out they will be interested in each other and not us. This is the best way to handle them. In pairs!”

Grey: “Our contract involves me keeping all of my limbs.”

Jurak: “We've got Tik here.”

Grey: “I was afraid you were going to say that. Go ahead, give it to me.”

Dwain adeptly pins the head of the shworm and Jurak grabs it by the tail and passes it to Grey who stands rigid with his arm stretching slowly away from himself to increase the distance between him and the creature.

Jurak: “Now I'm gonna get the other one that Dwain is holding down and move it close to yours. Watch how they reach for each other.”

Grey: “I can feel it shaking with anticipation for a fight.”

Jurak: “Yes! If we let these things loose right now there would be quite the tangle. I'd bet yours eats mine because it is bigger.”

Grey: “Let's not try that on live holo, OK Jurak.”

Dwain: “Grey, yours is bigger because it already took out one we were planning on showing tonight. It was a wild fight. He's a pretty feisty critter. You better drop him back in the box now. I'll take Jurak's.”

As Dwain moves to take Jurak's shworm, Jurak moves to adjust the glass box so that Grey's shworm falls into the cage. Jurak's shworm gets moved too close to Dwain and the creature latches on to Dwain's forearm.

Dwain: “Son of Down Under!”

Tik rushes on stage. Jurak grabs the shworm by the head and squeezes. The shworm comes loose and Tik rushes Dwain backstage.

Grey: “I hope Dwain will be alright.”

Jurak: “Don't worry Grey, Dwain and Tik have practiced just for this contingency. Tik has a dose of Antibody Plus ready backstage.”

Grey: “You didn't tell me they were poisonous.”

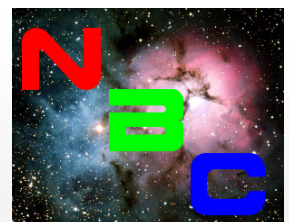
Jurak: “Highly poisonous! Not venomous mind you, poisonous. Their mouths are a bacterial nightmare.”

Grey: “Your still holding that shworm by the head.”

Jurak wrist snaps the shworm into the glass cage but gets it into the partition with the larger shworm. Immediately the larger shworm sets on the smaller shworm and begins eating it.

Grey: “Well gentlebeings, it's time for a commercial break. Jurak. As always, thanks for being on the show. Hope to have you back again soon.”

The Grey Jello show can be seen daily at 15:00 Galactic Standard Time. Check your local holoivid listings for the Nebulae Broadcasting Company's channel in your area and local play times.





GRYMZ

GUIDE TO INTERGALACTIC CONQUEST



LESSON #2: IT'S USUALLY THE RED ONE



GREETINGS PLANET DWELLERS! GRYMZ HERE, WITH ANOTHER LESSON IN INTERGALACTIC CONQUEST.

IF YOU EVER FIND YOURSELF STUCK INSIDE AN ALIEN SHIP'S AIR LOCK...



DON'T PANIC, THERE IS ALMOST ALWAYS ANOTHER WAY OUT.

THE PRIMITIVE DESIGN OF MOST SPACECRAFT ALLOWS EASY ACCESS TO THE MECHANISMS FOR MAINTENANCE OR REPAIR.



HMMMMM, WHAT DO WE HAVE HERE?

THIS ACCESS PANEL LOCATED HERE NEXT TO THE AIRLOCK DOOR SHOULD CONTAIN THE POWER CONTROL DEVICE FOR THE ACTUATOR MECHANISM.

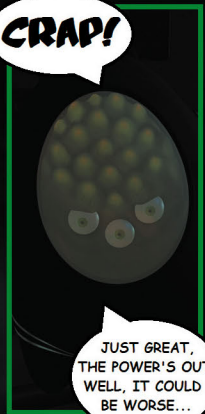


HMMMM?, THERE ARE A LOT OF UNNECESSARY WIRES IN HERE.



UNIVERSALLY, EVERYONE KNOWS THAT YOU ALWAYS PULL THE RED ONE.

ZAP!



CRAP!

JUST GREAT, THE POWER'S OUT. WELL, IT COULD BE WORSE...



WARNING! EMERGENCY LIFE POD LAUNCH IN 60 SECONDS!

UH-OH!



WHOOOSH

SRM 2012

