

Frontier Explorer

Issue 6
Fall 2013

*Truane's Star System Brief
Sathar Summit II
Conspiracy Theories
A Thin Sharp Line
The Gray Wave*

... danger wrapped in darkness ...



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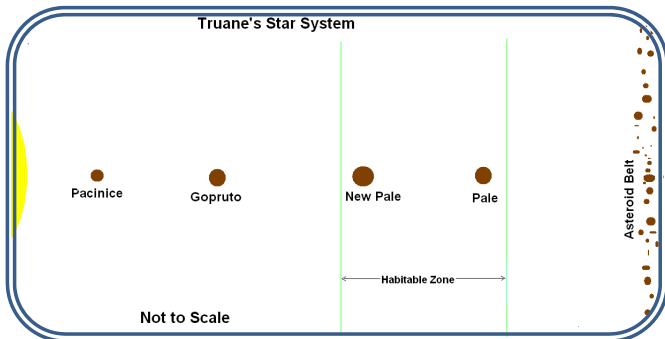
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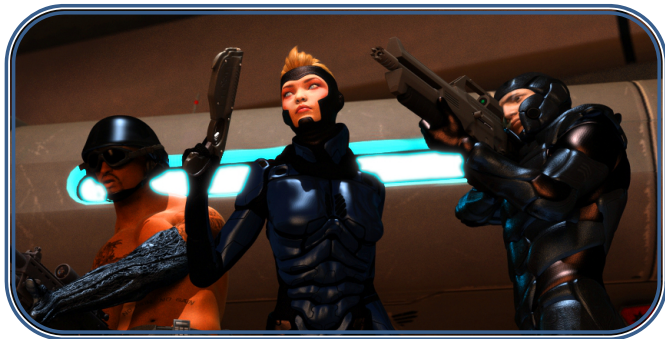
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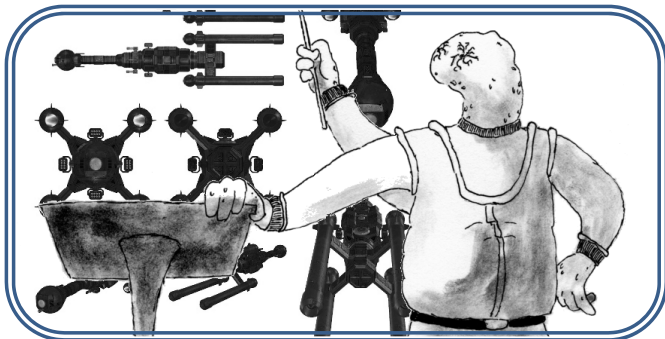
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FROM THE EDITORS

Welcome back explorers!

It's the much anticipated (at least by me) Sathar issue. In this issue we take a look at the Sathar, the enemy alien race in the Star Frontiers setting. And while the Sathar come from Star Frontiers, most of the material presented here is game mechanics light and could easily be used to drop the Sathar into any existing sci-fi campaign.

I was looking forward to this issue for a couple of reasons. The first is that the ideas that are presented in the Sathar Military Organization article have been bouncing around in my head since about the time we started the Frontier Explorer and I finally had a chance to get them out on paper.

Along with the details from that article, I've had the ideas for the interior deck plans of a Sathar ship rattling around in my brain as well. I generated a complete set of deck plans for a Sathar Destroyer, 25 decks in all. And then when we started to put the issue together I realized that we had way too much material. Since the deck plans were a very large article, between 15 to 20 pages in length, they simply weren't going to fit and had to be dropped from the issue.

Since the ship didn't fit in this issue, we will be releasing it as a 'Frontier Explorer Presents' special issue. Look for it around Thanksgiving time. In the end I think that format will work better as we won't be trying to cram the images into as small a space as possible to allow as many other articles to be included. It will be a stand-alone technical manual for the Destroyer.

I'd also like to give a shout out to our new staff member, William Douglass. William is coming onboard as another editor primarily responsible for doing the layout and helping put the issue all together. Those of you who read the Star Frontiersman magazine have seen his work as he has been doing layout and editing of that magazine since issue 18.

You may also have noticed a change in the cover design. We had an excellent review of issue 3 by Paco Garcia Jaen over at the GSM Magazine blog. Paco gave us some great advice in the review. You can find the full review at http://www.gmsmagazine.com/role_playing_game/rpg-review-frontier-explorer. We'll be implementing some of his suggestions in upcoming issues, starting with the content titles on the cover of this issue. If you have any suggestions for improvements to the magazine, feel free to drop us a line at editors@frontierexplorer.org and let us know. We'd love to hear from you.

PRODUCTION CREDITS



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"Space is disease and danger wrapped in darkness and silence."

*- Leonard McCoy
Star Trek 2009*

Now it's time to dive in and start learning about the Sathar. Hopefully it will give you some ideas for your own game.

Have fun and keep exploring!

- Tom Stephens
Senior Editor

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Campaign Material

A PLAYER'S GUIDE TO THE STAR FRONTIERS SETTING

Tom Verreault

Star Frontiers is a setting that is over 30 years old and is currently kept alive by a fantastically loyal fan base. This document is a primer for the new player being introduced to the game. It covers the high points and particulars of the setting in a succinct manner. It's designed to be printed on one sheet of paper and given to a new player at character generation to bring them up to speed.

ORIGINS OF THE FRONTIER

In a spiral galaxy a species of humans, like humans on Earth, evolved and entered the Frontier to colonize planets there. Once in the area known as The Frontier they met a species of sapient bugs called the vrusk who had discovered a species of blob like shape shifters called the dralasites. The three species lived amicably for a span of time before a war-like species called the yazirians entered and settled a corner of the Frontier in an exodus like fashion. Despite the war-like tendencies of the yazirians peace prevailed for the most part.

FREE WORLD REBELLION

Through a quirk of timing Madderly's Star was discovered by humans but the inhabitable planet, Kdikit

was colonized by the vrusk first then humanity second. Over time resentment on the part of the humans lead to the Free World Rebellion, where the human population evicted the vrusk running the colony. The now human-only colony would eventually be known for its exportation of elite mercenaries.

BIRTH OF THE MEGA CORPS

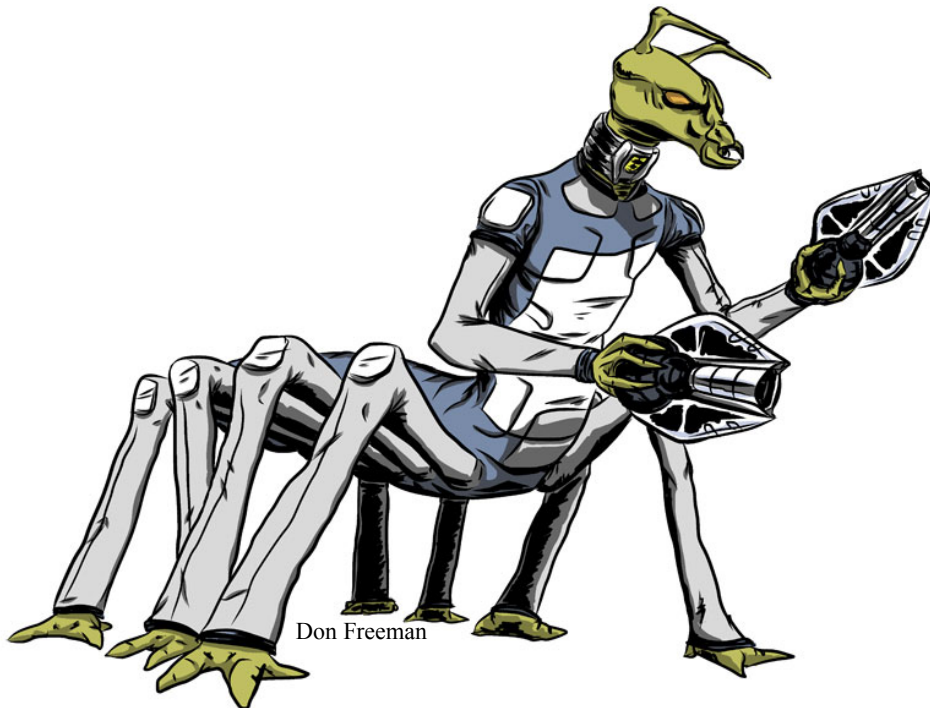
During this time one company rose to be the first mega corporation with a Frontier-wide business: Pan Galactic Corporation. PGC had showrooms everywhere making its brand ubiquitous. It further cemented its place in the Frontier by leading the charge to establish universal standards for trade and communication. Galactic Standard Time, the interstellar credit of monetary exchange, and the interstellar trade language known as Pan Gal are all accepted Frontier wide due to the influence of the PGC brand. In the early Frontier, PGC was the only mega corp that many others sought to emulate.

THE FORGING OF A FEDERATION

Two events lead to the development of the United Planetary Federation and both involved a Common Muster.

A pirate known as Hatzk Naar went on a grand raid of planets and commerce starting at Dramune and ending at Timeon. Piracy had been on the rise but the planets of the Frontier had agreed to call a common muster of all armed ships to put down the pirates. Captain Morgaine was named leader of this muster and eventually stopped Hatzk Naar in Timeon. The Common Muster then disbanded.

Later a mysterious 5th sapient race called the sathar invaded and began devastating planet after planet without any attempt to communicate. A Second Common Muster was called and Admiral Morgaine was tapped to lead this one as well. His force of will and tactical genius saved the day and defeated two sathar fleets equal to



his own but at the loss of his life. His sacrifice sent the sathar into retreat and led to the renaming of a lightly populated world in his honor. The worlds of the Frontier realized that they needed some form of central government to organize the common defense and perhaps to reign in the power of the mega corps and thus the United Planetary Federation was born in the aftermath of the First Sathar War.

The UPF is organized into a Council of Worlds and various civil service organizations like Star Law and the Medical Services Organization as well as a military arm.

STAR LAW

In the aftermath of the First Sathar War it was discovered that the sathar were employing agents and turncoats to subvert the UPF, disrupt commerce, and terrorize the citizens of the Frontier. Star Law was formed with interstellar police powers to pursue and apprehend these agents. Later, Star Law's mandate was expanded to include interstellar criminals. Its marshals are highly trained and capable and may commandeer any ship in the pursuit of a criminal or sathar agent.

SPACE FLEET AND GROUND FLEET

Born in the conflict of the First Sathar War these organizations protect the UPF against the threat of military conquest by the sathar. Space Fleet is known for its highly trained officers and enlisted ranks recruited from the dregs of the space ways. Despite this there has never been a mutiny on a Space Fleet vessel.

Ground Fleet is a small cadre of officers maintaining depots of hardware and a training cadre for the next war when the organization will swell its ranks again to engage the sathar ground troops anywhere in the Frontier.

THE AGE OF EXPLORATION

After the war as new mega corps were rising to challenge PGC's place of dominance, the peoples of the Frontier sent out numerous ships to explore the space around them. Many ships would be lost probing the depths of the nebula surrounding the Frontier.

THE BLUE PLAGUE

During the Age of Exploration a plague that affected all four sapient species struck the Frontier. The Medical Services Organization eventually discovered a cure but the plague killed millions and dislocated populations across the Frontier. To this day conspiracy theories



Don Freeman

abound surround its origin whether from the sathar or a bug escaped from a super-secret corporate lab but the truth may never be known.

CORPORATE WARS

With the rise of corporate challengers to PGC's dominance of Frontier society, corporate conflict was inevitable. The first corporate war was Laco's War between Streel and PGC. It lasted ten years, caused hundreds of thousands of casualties, and destroyed dozens of star ships in orbit. Other famous conflicts involved Streel and Cassidine Development Corporation at Alcazzar.

DRAMUNE WARS

The Dramune Wars were interplanetary conflicts in the Dramune system (3 total over many decades) waged between the planets of Inner and Outer Reach. Since both worlds held seats on the Council of Worlds, policing them was problematic for Space Fleet except the one where criminal elements from Outer Reach where a clear and present danger to the stability of the Dramune system.

NOTE

Some items discussed above may not have occurred at the point in time that the game is being played. Also the Voltumnus campaign, the Second Sathar War, and issues dealing with the mechanons are not discussed even though they may be History to the player characters just in case they are part of the current campaign.

Archetypes

YAZIRIAN PARA JUMPER

Tom Verreault

When it comes to jumping out of a perfectly good air vehicle to perform a dangerous mission you're the one they call. Whether it's a low level insertion without a chute or high altitude insertion using a gli-jet, this is what you live for. Evolution has gifted you with patagium skin flaps for gliding and you were born to fly. You love what you do and the fact that you get paid to do this is just sauce for the barbeque!

CHARACTER CONCEPTS

RESCUE JUMPER

Even colonies with large populations are still new to their planets and most of the planet's surface qualifies as untamed. It's routine that people exploring or recreating get into emergencies and when they do the call goes out for Air Rescue to respond. Using jetcopters your service responds quickly and your unique abilities allow you to jump safely from a low hovering jetcopter while others must be lowered by winch. You are always the first responder to reach emergency victims.

You're able to reassure and comfort those being rescued and treat them for life-threatening medical conditions. You have a sharp awareness of the environment and are able to function in harsh conditions. Some call you hero but you call yourself lucky that you get to do such an exciting job.

FORCE RECON

Militaries, militias, and mercenary outfits across the Frontier rely on force recon patrols to support their overall missions. You are part of an elite Special Forces community that is capable of independent action cut off from direct support. You and your team are able to insert by air, ground, or orbit and get behind enemy lines. You specialize in stealthy reconnaissance and the opposition never knows you're there. Your team can take direct action then fade away, but you excel at recon.

Whether you're the sniper, the demolitions tech, or the medic on the team, you're supremely confident in your skills. You can pass unheard and unseen within a meter of an enemy. You are a ghost in the night and you can't imagine being anything else.

UPPER STORY THIEF

In a modern society so much of the focus of security is against threats from ground level. That is why you are in demand: you sneak in from above. Whether base jumping from another, higher building or from an aircar, you've found that rooftop security is usually easier to penetrate. You get in and out with the "goods" and depart the way you came.

You know security systems and your tech and stealth skills are superb. You also know all the fences and ways to dispose of the goods or to launder the credits. Some of your contacts are dangerous people but that goes with the territory.

You live for the challenge of the next job. You love the thrill of what you do and may one day retire but there is always another big score out there. Perhaps you will always be chasing the next big job but if that's true you'll also be having fun.

DEVELOPMENT

DEVELOPING ABILITIES

The focus of the skill sets for each character concept is a little different but one ability pair is crucial to all three: RS/DEX. If the parajumper is required to grab a hold of something at the end of his glide path to keep from descending further it's almost guaranteed that the referee will call for a RS check to see if he succeeds. In addition, RS and DEX are likely to modify many of the skills and subskills used by a parajumper making this a crucial ability pair (depending on the rule set used). The upper story thief will also benefit from developing PER in an effort to bluff and misdirect NPCs he encounters while on the job.

DEVELOPING SKILLS

For the rescue jumper, medial and environmental skills will be paramount. If he is likely to face aggressive or hostile wildlife, a shooting skill could come in handy. Eventually the rescue jumper may wish to be able to fly the vehicles he relies on, if for no other reason than to be a backup pilot.

For the force recon jumper, skills conferring stealth and concealment are paramount as his safety will lie with the enemy's inability to detect him. Combat skills are a given.

He needs to be able to shoot accurately and take down a guard up close but quietly. Most recon jumpers have a specialty that is connected to their position on the team; medic, technician, demolitions, robotics, etc. Early on a recon jumper should focus on his specialty, building it up before branching out. Robotics will be required to identify and deal with robotic sentries. A technician will be useful for detecting and defeating security devices. Demolition skill is important when the mission is to take out a target in support of other military operations.

For an upper story thief, technician and stealth skills will be important. Because a thief often works alone, he may wish to take a level of medic skill to patch himself up if things go wrong. Robotics and computer skills will be important to the thief when dealing with robotic sentries or hacking the installation's security. Of less importance is shooting and combat skills since his safety relies on getting in and out unchallenged, but occasionally things can go very wrong and the ability to shoot could come in handy.

All parajumpers can benefit from the martial arts subskill tumbling. Tumbling can reduce damage from a fall and will allow the parajumper to exceed his maximum glide distance for the current gravity and negate some of the damage he would otherwise suffer.

EQUIPMENT

Sometimes the altitude involved will be beyond the safe gliding distance and require other means of descent. Glijets, parawings, and flit boards come in handy when jumping from a height too high to land safely.

Parajumpers will want to outfit themselves with both a skeinsuit and inertia screen. If they are forced to take a hard landing both of these items used together will reduce any damage taken to ¼. Other screens and suits of use to the parajumper are holo or light-shift screens and stealthskin suits.

A rescue jumper entering a hostile environment or a thief might carry a small pistol while the recon jumper will want a silent or silenced rifle. A knife that will double as a tool is also a good choice of melee weapon.

Finally an infrared jammer will be a must for all but the rescue jumper. Infrared detection is a common security measure and the jammer is light enough that it should always be carried.

EDGES AND FLAWS

If using the optional system of Edges and Flaws at the back of the Alpha Dawn Remastered book, you may wish to consider some of these ideas.

EDGE: COOL UNDER PRESSURE

When the pressure is at its hottest the parajumper is at his coolest. Once per session the para jumper gains a +20 to a skill or ability check in a high stress situation.

EDGE: NATURAL ARIAL ACROBAT

Arial acrobats are in the jumper's blood. He is able to double his safe gliding distance with a successful DEX check. This applies to all gravities due to his raw ability.

FLAW: ADRENALINE JUNKY

The character just can't help but push things too far sometimes. Once per session the referee can invoke this flaw and force the character to take an action that could fail and that is an unwarranted risk. Jumping from just a little too high, leaving a taunting note for investigators, or stealthily moving within centimeters of a security asset when he doesn't have to.



CJ Williams



SYSTEM DATA

System Primary: Truane's Star

Spectral Type: G7

Color: Orange-Yellow

Habitable Planets: Pale, New Pale

PALE

Moons: Dan (Colonized industrial/mining)
Joe (Military Base)

Distance from Star: 175,597,870km

Climate Range: Low humidity temperature frozen cold at the poles to warm at the equator.

Atmosphere: 60% nitrogen 24% oxygen 16% Carbon dioxide

Gravity: 0.91

Colonists: 2 Billion Sentient (Human 65%) Core Four and immigrants from Rim and Volturnus

Diameter: 11,004 kilometers

Length of Day (hours): 50

Average Surface Temp: 15 C

Native Life: No sentient native life. Primitive plant life: lichens, mosses, and algae. Some ferns near the equatorial regions.

PLANET DESCRIPTION

Pale started as a mining colony but soon grew into an industrial center. With very little usable life on the planet; heavy industry has been allowed to flourish almost unimpeded by environmental regulation and factories of various types now dot the landscape. Clean water and air, however, are must haves for the health of the entire population as healthy workers are productive workers.

Though there are numerous population centers on the planet, the most notable is the capital City of Point True where Streel Corporation Headquarters dominates the skyline with a 500 story triple tower mega skyscraper complex.

NEW PALE

Moons: Sven, a dead lifeless rock with a communications outpost and separate military observation/listening post.

Distance from Star: 149,597,870km

Climate Range: Moderate humidity with temperatures ranging from frozen cold at the poles to tropical at the equator.

Atmosphere: 60% nitrogen 24% oxygen 16% Carbon dioxide

Gravity: 1.4

Colonists: 23 million sentient – 79% Human, 20% Mix of others (Core Four). 1% Rim races

Diameter: 15,000 kilometers

Length of Day (hours): 23.94

Average Surface Temp: 30 C

Native Life: No sentient native life but home to a great variety of flora and fauna in a variety of species.

PLANET DESCRIPTION

New Pale is considered one of the most fertile farming colonies in the Frontier, producing a seasonal bounty that provides a vast amount of exportable foods for sale throughout the Frontier and use on Pale; ranging from grains to various types of cattle.

More than half of the farming output is shipped off planet in system ships owned by Streel Corporation for use on Pale where various farming companies, corporations, and grange associations must compete for market share in the agricultural commodities market. Remaining stores are exported fresh or frozen for trade throughout the Frontier. The high profit margin on these exports provides the people of New Pale with a thriving economy.

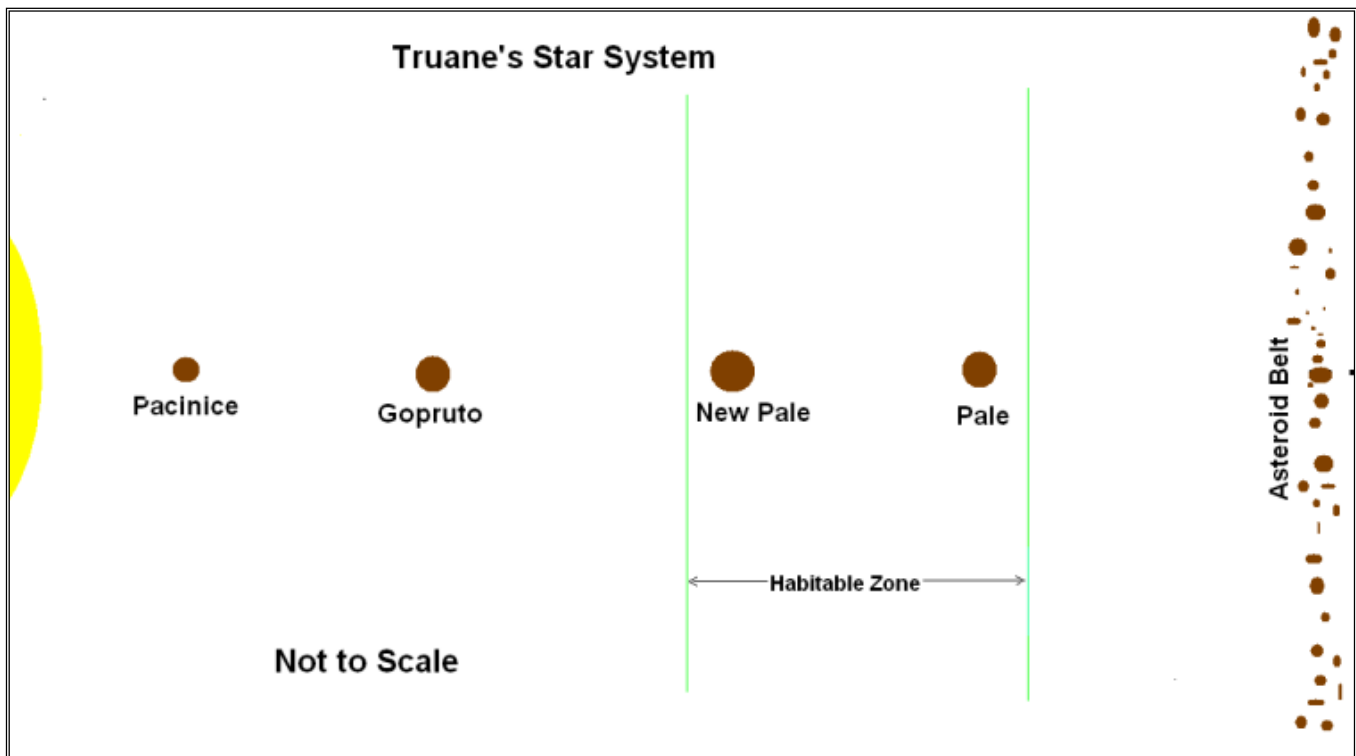
The surface is covered in vast oceans and 5 large continents - water covers 72% of the planet's surface.

Environmental laws and regulations are considered to be very important on New Pale. Clean farm production is the key to the survival of both planets in Truane's Star

SYSTEM GOVERNMENT

The Truane's Star system has a system wide Republic governing both planets.

After the invasion during the Sathar War, the populations of both planets decided that corporate government could not guarantee the safety of the colonies. Corporate security forces were no match for a Sathar invasion force, and fell quickly to the Sathar onslaught. A de facto people's militia was formed and fought on as partisans. On the other hand the people did not want any form of dictatorship or monarchy, they had already lived under the corporate dictates of the Streel Corporation. Democracy was not considered strong enough and too liable to become a tyranny of the majority. So the people of



Truane's Star decided on a republic with divided powers and a solid set of laws to be their government. They have three official branches of government: a legislative body composed of 2 houses, an executive with two Consuls and a high court.

Wealthy landowners are allowed to fill the upper house called The Senate. There are 50 senate seats (25 from each planet) elected every 6 years. To add a candidate to the ballot costs one million credits, paid to the government treasury and the fee must be put forth by a private citizen landowner, not a corporation (Although the CEO of Streel is a wealthy landowner). After the vote, the candidates who take the most votes from 1st to 51st are elected. Any number of candidates may take part in this senate race.

The second house is the Plebiscites. These are voted on by district and they serve for 3 years. There are 221 districts between both planets. Population level was not a consideration when these districts were formed. The citizens of the planets vote on the Senators and the Plebes. Any citizen can run for Plebe in his/her own district, the price of putting yourself on this ballot is 1000 credits.

The executive branch is composed of the Consuls. There are 2 of these Consuls and they must make joint decisions on everything. If a law is sent through legislation it must be passed by both Consuls.

The third branch is the Court of the People. The court's composition varies based on the Judges chosen by the Senate and Plebiscites and approved by the Consuls. Usually the 5 to 9 judges are chosen for 10 years. Besides seeing that the law is correct, the Judges choose the Consuls, one from the Senate and one from the Plebes. In

times of emergency a dictator is chosen from the military for a period of six months. The dictator is allowed to prosecute a war or handle a natural disaster only. If a dictator exceeds his bounds or granted powers during his/her tenure, he or she can be tried for high crimes after the emergency has past.

ARTIFICIAL SATELLITES

Above Pale orbits *Fortress Pale*, a UPF space fortress and Class I construction and resupply center for fleet use only. (Sometimes the Pale militia contracts for use of building/repair space). This fortress is used as a forward operating base in the case the Sathar come back. Spacefleet command suspects they will come through the Zebulon system first, giving an early warning that way. The recent Battle of Voltornus (SF2 Starspawn of Voltornus) seems to confirm this theory. Spacefleet is known to keep a light cruiser and her escorts near this system in case of such an emergency. Strike Force NOVA also visits on an irregular schedule.

A trading station named *Pale Point Station* is the major mercantile station in the System. Almost anything can be bought here, if the price is right.

Truane's Shipyard is the third station that orbits Pale. It is a Class III construction and docking facility. Originally owned by Streel Corporation, it was sold off to a small private company after the Sathar invasion. As a Class III shipyard it is still profitable due to the large amount of system ships in Truane's Star that need repair and refuel.

Granger Point Station is an Armed Space Station orbiting New Pale. It is usually the first stop for agricultural

products coming from New Pale to all points. There is a lot of freighter traffic here.

In conjunction with Sorru Suub Shipbuilding and CFM, Streel is currently building a Class I shipbuilding center orbiting New Pale. The station has yet to be named. The mega corporations have decided to let the citizens vote on the name. The most popular name for the new station so far is *Lyllianna Trent Construction Facility* after a hero of the resistance during the Sathar invasion Lyllianna Trent.

HISTORY

Pale was settled as a mining colony by Streel about 200PF and New Pale was settled as an Agricultural support colony. This was a more convenient way to grow food for the mining colony than putting in an agriculture station around it. This would shorten shipping time from already populated worlds for food needed to sustain the miners, and later factory workers. With strike after strike finding valuable minerals, the Pale colony grew very quickly with new immigration daily. New Pale was a challenge to farm on as the gravity was so heavy, but a few generations had both colonies well established. Streel and its security force ruled with an iron hand. Soon, a labor movement was founded. It was organized labor, in conjunction with free landowners, that would give the most in the resistance to the Sathar invasion.

Corporate security was not prepared for an invasion. Rather they were more a police force and union breaking thug organization. When the Sathar landed thousands of combat troops around the City of Point True and the sky was filled with the streaks of fire from crashing spacecraft, corporate security was quickly overwhelmed.

It was Jamie Cerval, a retired Captain of the Clarion Royal Marines, who organized the resistance. He had settled on Pale hoping to strike it rich with a copper mine, which panned out well. With that money he started many small businesses and sent a call to friends also retiring from the CRM such as Master Chief Allen Mako. These fifty or so old buddies built a lot of small factories and mines. When the Sathar came threatening to undo all that hard work.... "Well, once a marine always a marine."

It was this group that contacted union boss Jack Bolt and started to organize the two groups into an effective guerilla fighting force. It took more than 5 months to take back the City of Point True and eliminate the Sathar invaders. Once that was done they took the fight to New Pale using a star freighter that had come with a relief force from Streel Corporation. By this time the battles at Cassidine and Prenglar were long over with.

Meanwhile on New Pale, Lyllianna Trent, leader of an independent farming coalition, organized another force of partisans who waged a 6 month long guerilla campaign to "exterminate the alien infestation". It was these three forces that fought the Sathar at the Battle of MaCombs

Farm, completely eliminating the enemy force. The battle was long and bloody. The Sathar had no place to retreat to as the fleet had long been destroyed and dispersed at the battles around Cassidine and Prenglar. The Sathar fought to the death.

After the Invasion the peoples of the two planets were not going to allow corporate dictatorship by any corporation. A constitution was written and the Pale Republic was formed. The First Consuls of the new Republic were Jamie Cerval and Lyllianna Trent. It was Jamie who organized a new army for the republic.

ORGANIZATION OF PALE REPUBLIC MILITARY

COMBINED PALE FLEET (CPF)

"WE SHALL NOT FALL AGAIN!"

Headquartered on the moon Joe at the MaCombs base is the Combined Pale Fleet (CPF)

Currently the CPF has one frigate, *CPFS The City of Point True*, and three Assault Scouts: *CPFS Cerval*, *CPFS Mako*, and *CPFS Bolt* [Author's Note: Those names were taken from SFMan #11 page 9]. There is also a new experimental Corvette, *CPFS Battleaxe*, currently on its trial runs. Two more Assault Scouts are currently on order: *CPFS Arrow* and *CPFS Bullet*.

There are two squadrons of fighters at MaCombs base for a total of 12 fighters, and two HS 2 reconnaissance ships. Number 1 Squadron, known as *Lylly's Hammers*, is a space superiority squadron of interceptors armed with the newest Pod Lasers. Number 2 Squadron, *Mako's Marauders*, is a squadron armed with the normal compliment or Assault Rockets used for anti-shipping.

The moon Joe is armed with six planetary defense Laser Batteries. Since this moon has no atmosphere the batteries can reach a full ninety thousand kilometers in range. (Unlike planet based batteries hindered by atmosphere – see page 95 Knight Hawks remastered rules). There is also a roving missile battalion carrying 20 torpedoes with them and 2 reloads for each vehicle. Range 40,000 Kilometers. (Standard KH torpedo with a larger rocket booster to account for escaping the moon's gravity). MaCombs base is surrounded by several ICM launcher sites.

GROUND FORCES

There are five major Army Commands called Legions. Legions are commanded by a Major General with a Brigadier as his assistant commander. All the Legions together are commanded by the Field Marshall there is only one of those. Each legion is made of 10 Cohorts and several support battalions.

First and Second Legions are stationed on Pale and New Pale as maneuver units. First through 4th Cohorts are Mechanized Infantry and armed with infantry fighting vehicles (IFV) and powered armor for the dismounted infantryman. Numbering around 500 soldiers called Legionaries, a Cohort is divided into companies, and below that platoons, and then Squads. A squad consists of 1 IFV and 6 to 10 dismounts. 5th thru 7th Cohorts are Heavy Armor utilizing the best hovertank technology available. A platoon consists of 5 hovertanks. 8th Cohort consists of a recon group, the eyes and ears of the legion, usually lightly armed with fast hovercycles to get around on. Their job is to reconnoiter the enemy. 9th and 10th Cohorts are the Artillery. They provide heavy firepower for the Legion. They are armed with 185mm self-propelled cannons on tracks. Nobody has made a hover vehicle that can absorb that much recoil yet. Every Legion has several Support Battalions which deal with logistics issues: food, ammo, fuel, SEU, spare parts replacement, as well as Maintenance and a field hospital for each battalion.

Third and Fourth Legion are Air Combat and Combat Support. They consist of armed aircars and rotary wing (helicopter) assets. Third Legion supports First as they slug it out on the ground and Fourth supports the Second Legion. Third is On Pale while Fourth is on New Pale.

Fifth Legion is the Air and Space Defense Legion. They are stationed at various anti-ship energy batteries around each planet along with missile silos used to launch torpedoes or ICMs into space. These Legionaries also man the Space Station Defenses around the planets and moons.

LAWS

Most of the laws of the Pale Republic are just plain common sense and follow basic moral principles: no murder, no theft, no prostitution, no controlled drugs. After the Sathar Invasion firearms and lasers are encouraged and some small towns require citizens to carry a blaster of one type or another in the open. You don't need to conceal it; we want you to have it. Further it is illegal to conceal a ranged weapon. The only exception is convicted felons; they can't carry anything bigger than a vibro-knife.

A NEW SHIP DESIGN

These are the KH board game statistics for the Experimental Corvette *CPFS Battleaxe*:

HS: 4 **HP:** 32
DCR: 64 **ADF:** 4 **MR:** 4
Weapons: LB x4 ARx5
Defenses: RH MSx2
Crew: 20

The Battleaxe is a new ship being tested by Combined Pale Fleet. They don't see the Assault Scout as a good

warship. However, they wanted a starship that could use the assault rocket's firepower and have a lot of versatility after the fact. But not being able to afford another frigate at the moment, they came up with something bigger than a scout but not as powerful as a frigate. After watching the slaughter of their fellow colonists at the hands of the Sathar, the people of Pale and New Pale are willing to pay high taxes for defenses to prevent it ever happening again. If this ship design works out as well as hoped, they will demand more of them. Shakedown cruises are happening now.

OTHER PLANETS OR BODIES

Gopruto	
Distance from star	40,078,898km
Radius	2,038km

Pacinice	
Distance from star	59,298,399km
Radius	4,934km

Asteroid Belt	
Distance from star	222,898,078km
Many of the asteroids are large enough to land on	

Larras	
Distance from star	826,840,962km
Radius	52,371km
Gas Giant. Has four small satellites.	

Hammilwort	
Distance from star	3,470,338,706km
Radius	172,920km
Gas Giant. Has 3 planet-sized satellites around it, left intentionally not described for referee use.	

Tiberon	
Distance from star	7,624,487,995km
Radius	121,000km
Gas Giant	

RESOURCES

- Star Frontiersman Number 11; Article: "Military Ship Design" by Adam Moffett.
- Star Frontiersman Number 11 Article: "UPF Order of Battle" by pariah.
- Alpha Dawn Rulebook
- Knight Hawks Rulebook

SATHAR SUMMIT II

Tom Verreault

The Sathar Summit is a multi-disciplinary meeting of the best experts on the sathar from Spacefleet, Star Law, the Flight, and top universities. The first was held at the University of Zebulon but the second was hosted at the University of Port Loren. The purpose of the summits is to prepare a report reflecting the most current information on the sathar for all operatives tasked with apprehension of the sathar and their agents. Occasionally there are opposing theories without consensus among the experts and both theories will be included in the reports.

It should be noted that the reports of the Sathar Summit are classified and not for public dissemination. Possession of these reports without proper clearance is a crime and could result in detainment by Star Law under the provisions of the Frontier Patriot Act.

NEW DISCOVERIES IN THE ORGANIZATION OF SATHAR SOCIETY

The keystone of sathar society is domination. One sathar clan dominates another and all sathar clans dominate other sapient species. Domination of another sapient species comes in two forms: enslavement or genocide. It's been speculated by previous Sathar Summits that the dividing line between genocide and enslavement is how far advanced the sapient species' space capabilities are and whether this species can be a threat to them militarily. However, the reason one race is wiped out and another is enslaved might be simpler and rooted in the fabric of sathar society.

With the liberation of Liberty system and the realization that the sathar are organized in clans with a flexible hierarchy have come new insights and theories of sathar society. The intergalactic sathar civilization is organized in an unknown number of clans. A sathar clan is organized into cadres made up of an upper caste sathar and numerous middle and lower caste sathar. The ruling cadre controls the other cadre's in its clan.

A CASTE SYSTEM

From autopsies of captured specimens we now believe that the sathar have essentially three castes in their society. The lower caste show distinct evidence of chemical and surgical manipulation. Testimony of mhemne witnesses suggests that lower caste sathar

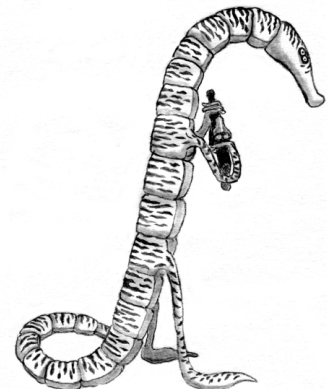
undergo a "processing" while still juveniles that involves a cocktail of bio-chemical injections, surgery, and harsh treatment. Indications are that the conditioning involves unquestioned subservience to authority. Their role in society is that of grunt labor. In war they are used as cannon fodder. They are rarely provided more than a single weapon and thrown into combat. They are considered expendable and treated in the worst possible way.

The middle caste is the educated technical workforce in sathar society. There is similar evidence that the middle caste sathar receives a similar but less severe processing compared to that of the lower caste. Middle caste sathar perform all the technical and most low to mid-level leadership roles. Whole naval and army units are filled with middle caste sathar. They are better equipped and more capable than the lower caste sathar. They are also treated as expendable but given greater freedom of choice. The conditioning is focused on obedience to their cadre leader.

Observed occurrences of an upper caste sathar being killed show that the middle class members of their cadre become fanatically suicidal once the upper class sathar has died. It's been described as, "like they have no reason to live." This is probably true in that without an upper caste cadre leader they have no real standing in sathar society. Lower caste sathar may react in the same way but an estimated 50% of the time they lose the ability to perform organized tasks and most suicide or attack opponents that approach within a few meters.

Upper caste sathar are the pinnacle of power in a sathar clan. They form the leadership class. Each individual upper caste sathar heads a cadre of middle and lower caste sathar. The upper caste sathar bears a natural pattern of spots and

Upper Caste Sathar



Tom Verreault

markings. These spots and markings are tattooed on every sathar in the leader's cadre to mark them as belonging to this particular upper caste sathar. As part of their processing all middle and lower caste sathar have been drugged to prevent the emergence of spots and markings in their juvenile stage.

CADRES

An upper caste sathar commands the total obedience of his cadre. Partly due to the numerous specimens recovered after the liberation of the Liberty system and the testimony of the mhemne we can now say that the sathar practice a form of corporal punishment involving partial lobotomy and demotion to the ranks of lower caste. The speculation is that failure or rebellion is treated in this brutal fashion. What is certain is that the sathar rule with an iron tentacle.

A ruling cadre tightly controls the clan through fear of lobotomization. Control of the clan is always precarious as any other cadre leader is always looking for the opportunity to topple the ruling cadre. Political infighting and jockeying for position is the rule of the day in a sathar clan. The ruling cadre controls the actual numbers of upper class sathar by only allowing a miniscule number of sathar to not receive middle and lower caste processing. New upper caste sathar are beholden to the ruling cadre – demonstrating loyalty and obedience till the day they are allowed to form their own cadre. The cadre-less sathar play the role of princeling in the byzantine politics of the clan. They are often used as spies and “political officers” within the military command structure as a ruling cadre can never fully trust the cadres it has entrusted with its war machine. Ironically, the most loyal of these cadre-less princeling sathar are allowed to form a cadre and enter the arena of political infighting seeking to become the next ruling cadre.

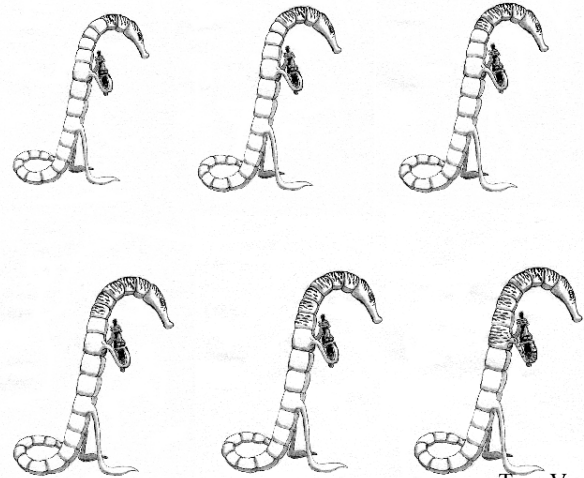
FROM CADRES TO CLANS

The relationship among the cadres of a sathar clan is mirrored among sathar clans. One clan dominates and the others seek to supplant. It is now believed that the divided command structures within sathar armadas have contributed to their defeat in both the First and Second Sathar Wars. Different clans are quick to back stab each other and cadres within a clan look to allow a higher positioned cadre to fail while it succeeds. The evidence suggests that the sathar begin fighting each other even before the conquest of another space faring species is completed.

RELATION TO OTHER SPECIES

The sathar relationship to conquered species is one of domination. From the sathar invasions of the UPF and the Rim we know that the sathar armada arrives packed with ground troops. A typical armada is made up of 2-4 task groups from multiple clans. An individual task group can

Middle Caste Sathar

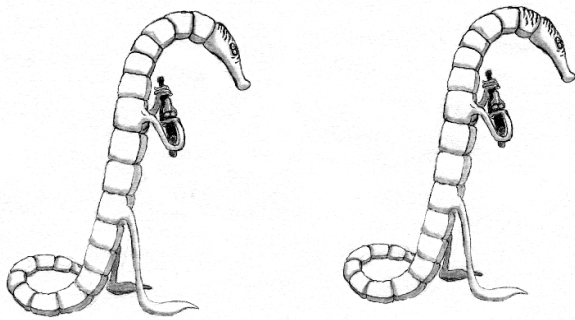


land anywhere from 10,000 to 100,000 or more ground troops. This is insufficient to actually conquer and control a planet with a sizable population, hence the sathar tactic of nuking all but one major population center. The sathar occupation goals seem to be the study and assimilation of technology, obtaining new genetic samples for their bio-engineering industry, and the enslavement of a client species. The sathar occupation of Pale during SW1 witnessed this process with Point True becoming a concentration camp. The decision of a ruling clan to enslave or wipe out a conquered species may boil down to whether there are enough troops under its control to enslave that species or not. In the brutal sathar math of political infighting it may be more desirable to wipe out a potential slave species than to allow another clan to benefit from controlling them.

It also goes without saying that a rival clan may smuggle a nuclear device into a planetary concentration camp to deny the dominant clan the opportunity of enslaving a new species. Sathar actually fighting sathar has never been observed directly, but it is now considered highly likely that war amongst the clans is possible and may explain the long periods between the sathar invasions of the UPF and the Rim as well as the sporadic sathar incursions. Thus periods lasting decades between major sathar invasions may be due to infighting where the sathar are trying to resolve which clan will be the new dominant. The sporadic sathar incursions may represent one clan testing its strength or looking to gain an advantage in the interclan politics.

One theory now suggests that the decimation of the sathar clan designated clan Y changed the balance of power amongst sathar clans and may have precipitated the final consolidation of power that allowed one clan to organize the campaign of conquest we call the Second Sathar War. If this is true the implications could be dire if Spacefleet ever locates and destroy the home system of another sathar clan.

Lower Caste Sathar



Tom Verrault

**REFEREE INFORMATION:
PROFILES OF THE SATHAR
CASTES**

LOWER CASTE SATHAR

Usually equipped with only a single weapon (laser rifle is the most common) and if they are lucky 1 spare clip. They are not expected to last long in combat. Their skill set is usually limited to fighting skills. Swarm tactics are common and they rarely show sophisticated tactical thinking. It is usual for a lower caste squad to be under the control of a middle caste sathar but it could be possible for an above average lower caste sathar to lead a squad as an analogue to a corporal. A typical squad of lower caste sathar is 6-8 with a middle caste leader. In war, a swarm squad could be as many as 20 with a middle caste leader and about half will have weapons.

MIDDLE CASTE SATHAR

These sathar are better equipped with both a gun and a melee weapon as well as a defensive suit (skein suit is common). They also fill the ranks of support weapons operators like mortar and other heavy weapons crews. Their skill set includes both fighting and technical skills. They are capable of sophisticated tactics and don't throw their lives away uselessly in combat unless under a suicide imperative. They can be found leading lower caste sathar or grouped into a squad of all middle caste sathar. Starship crews are predominantly crewed with middle caste sathar. They are fanatically loyal to their cadre leader and will suicide if he dies. This also means they will aggressively defend him as well.

UPPER CASTE SATHAR

These sathar are the most dangerous to encounter. They always have middle caste body guards present and they carry the best equipment. Expect them to have multiple weapons, plenty of ammunition, a defense suit and a defense screen. Hypnotism performed by upper caste sathar carries a -15 penalty to the LOG check to resist.

They will use squads of lower and middle caste sathar as cannon fodder to wear down opponents and only seek direct confrontation when they feel they have the advantage. They are arrogant and power hungry and view themselves as above everything else in the universe.

SATHAR ABILITY MODIFIER TABLE

Sathar Caste	STR/STA	DEX/RS	LOG/INT	LDR/PER
Lower	+5	0	-5	0
Middle	0	-5	0	+5
Upper	0	-5	-5	+10

SATHAR CASTE IDENTIFICATION

Note: The Alpha Dawn book simply states that, "A pattern of dots, speckles, and stripes decorates the back of the head. These patterns are natural on some Sathar, but are tattoos on others." In addition some artwork, namely the autopsy picture in Alpha Dawn, portrays these marking on the rest of the body. What follows is a possible interpretation of the Alpha Dawn information but is by no means authoritative.

The following charts were produced by experts at the Second Sathar Summit for decimation among the military forces of the United Planetary Federation and Star Law. They are based on new theories of the structure of sathar society developed by experts at the Second Sathar Summit and it is cautioned that the information contained within is still considered theoretical.

The latest theories of sathar society propose the presence of three castes. Upper caste sathar act as princelings and political officers within sathar society until they are allowed to form a cadre. These sathar have natural markings on their bodies that are as unique as finger prints. When a cadre is formed middle and lower caste sathar are processed to not allow their natural markings emerge. Instead they are tattooed with exact copies of their cadre leader's markings. The amount of their bodies covered in tattoos indicates whether these sathar are middle or lower caste and their relative ranking within the castes.

Lower caste sathar will be tattooed on their head and possibly one segment of their body if they are used to lead other lower caste sathar. Middle caste sathar seem to start with their head and two segments tattooed and have more segments tattooed to represent higher positions in their society. The natural state of the upper caste sathar is their whole body bearing their natural markings.

Campaign Material

CONSPIRACY THEORIES

Pillip Companaro

When beginning to write a campaign or adventure, it generally starts with one idea which is the main theme. What follows is intended to present some themes or background ideas for campaigns or adventures. Remember just because you're paranoid doesn't mean they aren't out to get you.

ENTER CODE PHRASE

CODE PHRASE ACCEPTED

Welcome fellow believer, you have found the TRUTH not only the TRUTH, but the one source for the TRUTH in the entire Frontier. The UPF, Star Law, Spacefleet, Landfleet, the Megacorps, the News Media, the Planetary Governments; none of them will tell you the TRUTH because they are all part of the LIE. But here my fellow believers you will be told the one and only TRUTH about everything.

This week we show how two of the greatest threats to the TRUTH out there are working together to keep all of us in the LIE. That's right Believers; today we shine the light and show the TRUTH about how the Sathar and the Megacorps are working together.

PAN-GALACTIC CORPORATION

The Sathar have always been a mystery to the races of the

Frontier. Why do they come and attack, why do they not surrender, what are their goals? We here have of course presented you with much of the TRUTH but there is one group who knows that whole TRUTH about the Sathar and they are not sharing.

PGC was once the undisputed leader of the Megacorps. Then they not only fell, but gave up many of their core industries and devoted themselves to some strange new ones. All of this started after PGC investigated some Tetrach ruins. It was there PGC found everything they needed to learn the TRUTH about the Sathar. It was this TRUTH that made them drop everything, change leadership and begin more extensive digs and exploration. Now you ask, what is this TRUTH?

Well we have not yet learned that but we have some theories:

- 1) The Sathar have an enemy which can defeat them and PGC is seeking them out.
- 2) The Sathar are not the true threat. There is a greater threat which must be dealt with. PGC is seeking the location of this new threat.
- 3) Long ago the Sathar were defeated by another race. PGC is seeking out that race and the means with which they defeated our great enemy.



Tom Verrault



STREEEL CORPORATION

Our friends at Streeel had the quickest rise of any Megacorp. Many beings put this down to the hard driving attitude of Hilo Hadow and his possibly illegal actions. The TRUTH is Streeel has the backing of the Sathar which allows them more freedom of action than other Megacorps, as long as they do their masters' bidding. It was during the battle for Truane's Star that the Sathar somehow got to Hilo Hadow and somehow convinced him to be their prime contact in the Frontier. What do the Sathar want with Streeel? The Truth is the First Sathar War was nothing but a recon-in-force action. The Sathar then left behind numerous deep cover agents to make the UPF ready for their real push to take the Frontier. Hilo Hadow and Streeel just happen to be their most successful. But what do they need or use Streeel for? Well we have not yet learned that but we have some theories:

- 1) The Sathar have Streeel learn and steal secrets for them with numerous beings not knowing it is all going to the Sathar.
- 2) The Sathar are not very resource rich because they are a space wandering race. They use Streeel to provide for their needs and fuel their war machine
- 3) Hilo Hadow has made a deal with the Sathar to become Emperor of the Frontier after the Sathar take over.

GALACTIC TASK FORCE INCORPORATED

Security guards, secretaries, line workers, and other low level employees are looked down upon or just ignored by about everyone. They are so much a part of the background that they are seldom ever seen. This makes them the perfect spies and shock troops in the next invasion. The horrifying truth is the majority of the GTF employees do not even now they are working for the Sathar. They just try and do their jobs and make their reports and keep the surveillance going – not knowing where all that surveillance is actually being sent. But this information is just what the Sathar need to find the TRUTH. Now you ask, what is this TRUTH? Well we have not yet learned that but we have some theories:

- 1) The Sathar gather and review all this surveillance to learn all they can from it. They do this in large collection centers where GTF employees search out keywords and themes their Sathar masters tell them to look for.
- 2) While Merco fight battles everywhere outside the Frontier, the Sathar are positioning .GTF employees inside key positions to destroy the Frontier at the ground level.
- 3) GTF is using their connection with the Sathar to make an end run around the Sathar. They are preparing their "special" clients to be ready while letting others (those not paying GTF) be ruined.

TRANS-TRAVEL

They own the space lanes. They take beings and cargo everywhere. They are the trusted face of space travel. Yet not everything or everyone seems to arrive when and where it is supposed to. What happens to all this not only lost luggage but lost passengers, cargo and entire ships? Trans Travel might not know but the Sathar do. Now you ask, what is this TRUTH? Well we have not yet learned that but we have some theories:

- 1) Trans Travel has numerous duplicate ships. This lets them have one ship vanish and report with whatever it is carrying to their Sathar masters, while the other arrives at the destination.
- 2) A Trans Travel ship can innocently sit in orbit for a couple of weeks without a second look from anyone, even if they are orbiting a military installation, key industrial park, governmental building, important scientific conference, or females of the Frontier party bus trip.
- 3) Trans Travel never retires a ship. They just take them out and put them in orbit around a nearby planet. No one really knows what is on that planet. Trans Travel says maintenance and salvage crews NOT a Sathar invasion force, refitting the ships to take over the Frontier.

SYNTHETICS CORPORATION

No one is sure exactly how much of the food eaten in the Frontier is provided by Synco but it is a whole lot of calories. Now if you can't trust what you are getting from the local McKing Bugger Joint who can you trust? The TRUTH of them working with or for the Sathar is enough to make you want to take up hydroponic gardening. That is if you can find a kit not made by Synco. Now you ask, what is this TRUTH? Well we have not yet learned that but we have some theories:

- 1) The Sathar need Frontier beings as not a food source but some special chemical/vitamin/vaccine source. Synco is making sure the beings of the Frontier are prepped to provide it by lacing the food with special substances.
- 2) The average weight of Frontier beings has increased by 15 kg over the last 10 years. Whether this fattening up is for food for the Sathar or just to make us easier to conquer is debatable.
- 3) Saying they are adding special chemicals to the food to make us more compliant or just more susceptible to Sathar engineered viruses seems too easy but sometimes easy is what works.



TACHTON INSTRUMENTS

Margaret Bouvia is a war hero who just happened to start a Megacorp, a living example of the Frontier Dream. Except she started a high tech company on one of the most backward worlds in the Frontier and then there is the one month period during the war where she went missing. The TRUTH of her really being a Sathar-backed agent and building an army of robots to use against the Frontier makes a lot more sense than the presented history. Now you ask, what is this TRUTH? Well we have not yet learned that yet but we have some theories:

- 1) The robot revolution idea is too simple for the Sathar. The robot spy program is more their style.
- 2) The Sathar have failed twice to take the Frontier. But they come back stronger. The production robots which seem to go missing from Tach are being sent to the Sathar to help build them up for their next bigger invasion attempt.
- 3) Taking over the entire Frontier with robots is hard to imagine. Taking over the low population world of Lossend and using it as a staging area for the next invasion is easy to imagine.

UNIVERSAL HOUSEHOLDS

The most innocent of Megacorps because they just don't make anything really offensive or defensive. They only make the products everyone needs to live the comfortable life. This is exactly why they are the perfect cover for the Sathar. No one ever thinks twice about their oven or copier or light fixtures but if those things could be turned against us my fellow Believers we would not know how to respond. Now you ask, what is this TRUTH about your toaster? Well we have not yet learned that but we have some theories:

- 1) The Sathar have a plot in effect to throw us back to the Stone Age and once there we will be easy pickings. They will do this by a massive EMP pulse delivered through a mass of conjoined consumer products.
- 2) The Sathar are masters of robotics. Many of the devices they have Universal make are actually killer robot assassins waiting for the order to begin the uprising.
- 3) Universal is actually our greatest defense against the Sathar. Unfortunately they are going to do this by using the mind control devices implanted in their products to turn us all into super soldiers.

NESMITH ENTERPRISES OF TRIAD

We weekly hear the stories of how NES has stopped another group of hackers from infiltrating this system or stopped this plot from happening by their wonderful computer abilities. We should most definitely not be celebrating these crushing defeats to finding the TRUTH. Now you ask, what is this TRUTH? Well we have not yet learned that but we have some theories:

- 1) The Sathar are actually in charge of NES. This is why you never see the beings in their corporate offices. The Sathar are learning all kinds of information from the reams of data streams they collect.
- 2) NES does not know the TRUTH and they do not care. They are in the business of hiding the TRUTH for others and do not care to learn it themselves. These traitors to the TRUTH and Frontier are giving us up and are ready to retreat to luxury safe planets they had deleted from all navigation star charts.
- 3) The Sathar are working hand in hand with NES on a project that is so far above everyone else that both groups are using wars to distract others from finding it. Possibly this involves the greater threat than the Sathar which exists and is too scary for the Frontier to learn.

STARPLAY ENTERPRISES

They bring joy and sports to all our lives through the various media organizations they own. They also bring the Sathar to us. The Players could possibly be in more households than Universal Households. What they present on our screens has started cultural fads and started more than one riot. The TRUTH is they could turn that power of communications into a real advantage for their Sathar masters. Now you ask, what is this TRUTH? Well we have not yet learned that but we have some theories:

- 1) The Sathar have control of the fun time substances of most of the Frontier. What those substances are really doing to our minds and bodies is to horrifying to contemplate.
- 2) The Sathar are slowly being presented in the media controlled by the Players as not so threatening and as a misunderstood race by the UPF. Many programs now show the UPF as the real enemy to the kindly and helpful Sathar who we would be better to make friends with.
- 3) The Sathar are demoralizing the Frontier by weakening our sports teams and heroes. This is the only explanation for the 109 Yazirian All Star Game.

ASSOCIATION OF INTERGALACTIC POWER SUPPLIERS

Everyone knows the Power story; how all the little guys banded together to stop themselves from being enslaved by PGC. But was this the whole TRUTH my fellow Believers? You know it is not. Now you ask, what is this TRUTH? Well we have not yet learned that yet but we have some theories:

- 1) The takeover threat was a Sathar ploy to gain control of our power grid. Now they coordinate blackouts to allow their agents to come and go with no fear of detection.
- 2) The Sathar use the power grid to gain access to places others can't go. Like military installations, government buildings, and other Megacorps facilities.
- 3) The Sathar are using the search for raw materials as a cover to look for the artifacts they or the other threat lost centuries ago and which are somewhere in the Frontier.

GALACTIC OVERALL DEVELOPMENT COMPANY

One of our favorites, GODCo is so extensive and so fantastic that they must be behind many of the TRUTHs we seek to find. Now in this case we do not feel that the Sathar have control of GODCo. The Family of One would never allow someone else to control them. They do however have no compunction against working with the greatest threat to the TRUTH there is. Ever notice how their world has never been in a Sathar attack path. Now you ask, what is this TRUTH? Well we have not yet learned that yet but we have some theories:

- 1) GODCo built the Sathar a planet or possibly several planets for their own use. After all that is what they do. This trade off allows them to make certain demands on the Sathar. Like which planets to destroy to aid GODCo's plans of conquest.
- 2) The Sathar use bioengineered creatures in their attacks. This technology is of great interest to GODCo who trade for it with the Sathar. Remember the next time you kill a Sathar bioconstruct to look for the Made by GODCo label.
- 3) The Family of One has never reported a Sathar spy attack. Not because they are so secretive but because they share with the Sathar. The Sathar also do some spying at the request of GODCo. This trade off means Sathar can be found hoping rides on GODCo ships or hiding in their facilities.
- 4) *[Editor addition, I'm surprised Phillip didn't include this one himself]* – The Yazirians that run GODCo came from outside the Frontier initially where they had set up shop before migrating. The Sathar themselves are actually a construct of GODCo and controlled by them having been created and started on their way before the Yazirians migrated into the Frontier.

WARTECH INCORPORATED AND EVERSAFE ENTERPRISES

Actually these two seem to be safe from the Sathar. This only means we have yet to uncover the TRUTH behind these two Megacorps. Stand by as we here continue the search for the TRUTH.

The next code word is Vistaisgreat.

Campaign Material

SATHAR AND THE MEGACORPS

Phillip Companaro

All of us have seen the holovids of Star Law Rangers and Spacefleet Sailors and Landfleet Soldiers confronting and stopping the evil Sathar in their never ending attempts to destroy the Frontier. But these is not our sole defense, and in some cases offense, against our enemy. While the UPF was formed as a result of Sathar attacks there are other groups equally and some would say better able to deal with the Sathar attacks. These are of course the Megacorps of the Frontier. As is appropriate, each of the Megacorps has its own ways and methods of dealing with the Sathar threat.

First off, this does not mean that there are not common methods used by all of the Megacorps and lesser companies as well. Pretty standard methods include the use of security guards, identification badges, security devices such as retinal scanners, and of course security departments charged with keeping out all interlopers. These methods work for the usual threats but how do you deal with a Vice President who has worked for the company for 75 years who has been hypnotized into doing the Sathar's bidding? Here is some of the ways those with the resources have developed to handle these problems.

Pan-Galactic Corporation, Streel, and Cassidine Development Corporation are the top three Megacorps. Each of them likes to use the famous, or infamous, Troubleshooter teams in dealing with the possible Sathar threat. However they each approach how their teams are put together and how they operate in a way that reflects that Megacorp. The following is a breakdown of the top three's teams.

PAN-GALACTIC CORPORATION

The oldest of the Megacorps and one of the few in existence when the Sathar first appeared, PGC had to find ways from scratch to deal with this new threat. They began by upgrading their usual security and by creating an entire new Megacorp with a special hidden purpose. Galactic Task Force, Incorporated, headquartered at the same place as PGC: Port Loren, Gran Quivera, Prenglar, is known to provide employees for any and all jobs including security work.

They find the perfect job for everyone with an extensive screening process which includes personality tests. It is these tests where GTF screens for those with a strong

ability to resist the Sathar hypnotism ability. These beings are further tested during an employment period which can last up to five years to ensure both their loyalty and ability to resist being turned against PGC and GTF.

Once these beings have been identified, they are then brought in and offered special positions and training with the sole objective of protecting PGC assets. These are usually high-level, behind-the-scenes jobs like quality inspectors and floating supervisors. Whatever the title, they are given the authority and backup needed to handle whatever they find. For those with a more teamwork approach, troubleshooter teams and strike force groups are also available to deal with larger scale Sathar problems.

A typical PGC undercover investigative team would look like this:

A four member team with the following positions:

Lead Investigator (PSA Agent), Science Investigator (PSA Science), Support (PSA Technician), and Protection (PSA Military). Each member of the team would also have skills outside their PSA and outside the PSA of the other team members to give as much diversity as possible.

The team goes into a suspected section of the Megacorp with either the cover of a Quality Assurance Team or an Asset Rebranding Team. Both of these teams are actual parts of PGC and serve real purposes. Quality Assurance Teams are sent out to review all levels of PGC's holdings and report back. They are not considered a threat because the action taken on their reports is usually suggestions for improvements or so that some of the numerous awards, rewards, and certifications can be given out. Asset Rebranding Teams are a little feared since they are usually sent to failing sections of the Megacorp to see if those sections can be saved or not, usually through drastic measures. However since it is PGC policy to send employees back to GTF for reassignment it is not as devastating to be rebranded as with other companies.

Once a team is on site they begin to investigate. Many times they are not sure what they are looking for so they try and keep open to any and all possibilities, spies, Sathar, embezzlers, Taurcut Frogs in the wiring, etc. The teams are encouraged to deal with the problem as they see fit either internally or contacting whichever planetary or UPF agency has jurisdiction.

Editor's note: The skills and Primary Skill Areas are taken from "A Skilled Frontier", [Star Frontiersman](#) issue 9

STREEL CORPORATION

One of Streel's secrets to success is their copying of everything that PGC does. Of course they do this much more aggressively. Streel uses Merco for these jobs and Merco does not pretend to hire janitors and secretaries they just go after warriors. Streel and Merco use the same methods of screening and training as PGC, but when they put teams together they seldom pretend to be anything other than who they are. The real twist to Streel is that they not only investigate possible attacks against themselves but they look for and attack Sathar outposts. It is said that Sathar technology in Streel's possession is the real reason for their innovations and successes.

A team from Streel will typically be small and not have a lot of equipment but be very highly skilled with the following positions: Lead Investigator (PSA Agent), Science Investigator (PSA Agent), Support (PSA Military), Protection (PSA Military). Each member of the team would also have skills outside their PSA to cover skills needed. i.e. the Support being would have driving or computer at level 3 or 4.

The team goes into a suspected section of the Megacorp as an Investigating Team. They demand full cooperation from all Streel employees. To say that they are heavy handed might be an understatement but these beings are smart and resourceful and know when to use the carrot and not just the stick. However, since it is Streel policy to deal with employees who do not cooperate internally, they usually do not have a problem getting cooperation from loyal employees.

The teams are encouraged to deal with the problem as

they see fit, but it is seldom externally. They can call in additional resources and even entire battalions if needed. Of course if the team calls in too much and it is not justified, there are repercussions from Streel.

CASSIDINE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

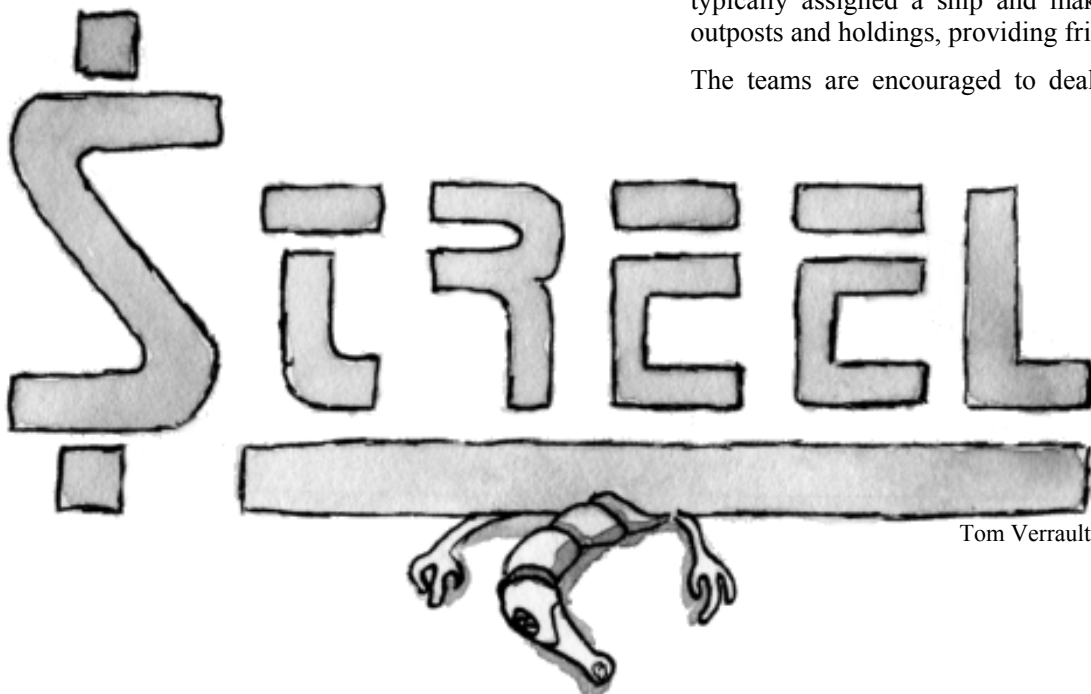
CDC sponsors many activities beyond the Frontier. They have a special need for protection since they are often far from UPF and Star Law assistance. Besides the standard protocols used by all space travelers, CDC takes a unique approach: they are actively seeking peaceful contact with the Sathar. Why? CDC is at heart explorers and first contact with other species is all important to them. Contacting and negotiating with the Sathar is a top priority. However this does not mean they go in with flowers and cuddles. Armed and ready is more like it.

A team from CDC will typically be a self contained unit with its own starship consisting of a Lead Investigator (commander of the vessel), 2 or 3 Science Investigators (PSA Science – specializing in alien contact), as many Support as needed (various PSAs), and 2 or 3 Protection (PSA Military). Each member of the team would also have skills at high level but typically not as high as a PGC or Streel team since CDC teams are usually much larger.

The team goes into action in two different ways. If it is an internal problem then the team usually enters a suspected section of the Megacorp as individuals. One team member may not know every being on its team, only the Lead Investigator who usually stays separate. Once they find what they need, action is taken and the team is quietly pulled out. If the team is outside the Frontier they are typically assigned a ship and make rounds of all CDC outposts and holdings, providing friendly check-ins.

The teams are encouraged to deal with the problem as they see fit, but the importance is placed on not letting the information get outside of the Megacorp. CDC feels this would damage their reputation of getting along with everyone.

FE



Adventure

A THIN SHARP LINE

Layne K. Saltern

For years, the mysterious Sathar have been slaughtering Frontier worlds from space. No one knows their motivation, or much of anything else about these evil worms. But that may change. You see, a Sathar individual has just made contact with us, expressing his desire to defect to the Frontier. Is this our first breakthrough...or a cleverly designed trap? Either way, we need your help!

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

This adventure hook was originally designed for the Star Frontiers role-playing game, although it could easily be adapted to other systems. In the Star Frontiers universe, the Frontier faces the constant threat of a murderous race called the Sathar, a technically advanced swarm of man-sized worms bent on total and unconditional annihilation. Very little is known of the Sathar, and no live Sathar specimen has ever been captured. A coalition of worlds called the United Planetary Federation (UPF) has been formed to defend against the Sathar menace. Star Law is a division of the UPF that specializes in hunting down Sathar agents.

The Player Characters (PCs) either work for the UPF or have some sort of relationship with the UPF.

The UPF has received a covert message from a Sathar who has expressed a desire to defect to the Federation. A small team is to take a solitary Assault Scout to an asteroid belt in an uninhabited star system just beyond the Frontier's edge. There they will meet up with the Sathar in a small Scout Ship and take him aboard. All lie detection and verification methods show that the Sathar seems to be sincere.

If the PCs work for the UPF, they are selected for the mission. If they do not work for the UPF, they are selected because the Sathar requested that non-UPF personnel be chosen for the job.

The Sathar is indeed sincere. There are a number of possible motives for his desire to defect. The Sathar nation has gone to great lengths to cull the general populace into a mentality of cohesion and hatred. But an individual mind might be stronger than that. Maybe this single Sathar being, probably having been sheltered in a privileged status, has slipped through the holes and

decided that what his race is doing is wrong. Or on another note, perhaps he has committed some unpardonable crime and is fleeing for political asylum. The details are up to the game referee.

THE TWIST

Unbeknownst to the defecting Sathar, Sathar intelligence is aware of his plan and is using it to set a trap. The primary goal of Sathar intelligence is to capture an Assault Scout undamaged, so that they can study it and reproduce it.

For this reason, Sathar intelligence has subjected the defectee to hypnotic suggestion, causing him to insist that an Assault Scout be sent. The reasoning the Sathar being will give for requesting that type of ship is that he is being picked up in a remote corner of space. The Assault Scout is the smallest UPF craft capable of interstellar jumps and capable of decently defending itself. A larger ship would attract too much attention.

By the time the defecting Sathar arrives in the asteroid field, a fleet of "sleeping" Sathar warships has already been strategically placed and hidden. (They are difficult but not impossible to detect.)

If the PCs fall for the trap, they find themselves ambushed on all sides. However, since the Sathar wish to capture the ship unharmed, they will only fire shots to disable the PCs' craft--and will only do that if absolutely necessary. It is up to the players' ingenuity to either outsmart or outrun their would-be captors. One point of leverage that the PCs might use is that the Sathar are mainly interested in acquiring an intact Assault Scout. The Sathar might get nervous if the PCs threaten to destroy their own ship. Ultimately, this is the players' chance to be creative, and the referee should honor that creativity by improvising accordingly with the rules.

AFTERMATH

If the PCs do manage to make it home with the defecting Sathar, the Sathar begins talking about this being the start of a new era of friendship between the two peoples--when suddenly he is shot and killed by a hot-head Star Law Ranger.

FE



This article is about working new ideas into Layne Saltern's "A Thin Sharp Line" and developing a whole adventure campaign from it. The Star Frontiers community is indebted to Layne for being a torch bearer who maintained an amazing directory of Star Frontiers information from the 1990's into the 2000's. We located snapshots of his site through an internet archive and decided to preserve his adventure seed from being lost. The following is simply suggestions for using Layne's material.

Interestingly there is a new television series about to debut called, "Black List," about a criminal mastermind in the custody of the FBI who is feeding information on ultra-secret criminals and terrorist to the authorities. The plot is very similar to this and timely as well since this show could be a wealth of ideas.

MOTIVATIONS

The sathar defector has a motivation and it's not all that altruistic. He is an upper caste sathar that failed spectacularly and is facing lobotomization and demotion to the ranks of the lower caste. He's fleeing his clan to save his own skin and has turned to the United Planetary Federation for asylum. Upper caste sathar being what they are, inveterate byzantine political in-fighters, he believes that he can still win. His plan is to use the UPF to weaken the sathar and create an opportunity for him to return to power.

ASSETS

He has committed to memory lists of agents, locations of secret outposts, and long term plots by the sathar against the UPF. He will use them sparingly to secure his position. As long as he remains a valuable resource he knows he can't be dispensed with.

He also is a wealth of information on sathar technology, tactics, and society. He will be an invaluable advisor on all things sathar.

Finally, he still has a cadre of middle and lower caste sathar. These sathar are bonded to him and serve him as servants and slaves. At birth they were processed to fit the caste they are in which means the lower caste cadre members are little better than dumb grunt labor and the middle caste are technicians and aids. As part of their processing they were injected with agents to prevent the

emergence of their own unique marking pattern and later had the marking pattern of their cadre leader tattooed on them. The number of segments of their body that is tattooed reveals their relative position within the cadre.

Since the defector escaped on a small scout ship he was only able to bring along a small number of his cadre members. There should be about 3 middle caste sathar and 6-8 lower caste sathar. The lower caste sathar are generally kept in a mass stasis module to minimize life support usage. They can be revived and armed but generally travel in this module. It can be transferred to another ship if need be as the defector will not wish to leave them behind. His choice to not abandon them is not about valuing their lives as he will freely sacrifice them for tactical gain, he just wishes to maintain as much of a power base as possible. Each of the middle caste sathar should have a different technical specialty. The classic Alpha Dawn PSAs would work well for these specialties. [Ed. Note: Having this many sathar along precludes all of them coming on-board the Assault Scout from "A Thin Sharp Line". Thus the PC's will have to figure a way to get both the Assault Scout and the Sathar Scout ship away safely and who will be on each ship as they get away.]

LIABILITIES AND SECRETS

He does not know everything. There are agents he's unaware of as well as plots and secret outposts. When these blind spots surface, it could lead to the UPF distrusting him so he must tread carefully.

Sathar reproduce fast. Any sathar born in the UPF and allowed to mature normally will effectively become upper caste sathar. The defector cannot allow this to happen. He will need to use his bio-social specialist to sterilize all of the lower caste members of his cadre since they are too stupid for his orders to override their biological imperative to reproduce. Any reproduction will only occur between him and the middle caste sathar but he will need to acquire the right compounds and equipment to process these new sathar properly and add them to his cadre. Uncontrolled reproduction leading to myriads of upper caste sathar would result in a new colony of S'sessu (Dragon magazine 96), the amoral race of all upper caste sathar individuals. This possibility is feared by all sathar. The defector is still a product of his culture and will fear this almost irrationally. He will have his medical specialist working on recreating the compounds for caste processing

but this project will take time. He will look to use the UPF to recover equipment and materials to aid in this endeavor.

He is well aware of the S'sessu and where they can be located. He will avoid revealing them to the UPF, even lying about evidence of them. His gut reaction would be to try to use the UPF to destroy a S'sessu colony if necessary. This would be an option of last resort because the S'sessu are potentially a cat's paw to use against the sathar in an attempt to return to power.

He knows about the Klikk's, who are an ancient enemy that the sathar fear. He would not want klikk technology to fall into the UPF's hands lest it have the potential to wipe out the sathar. He still believes he can return to power and there is not much point to that if his species is wiped out.

He would know about the outpost at Starmist. If the module "Sundown at Starmist" has not been played it could be an episode in the campaign to confirm the defector's information and neutralize any sathar threats. Since the sathar are doing advanced bio-experiments there, it would be a good opportunity for him to try to get his tentacles on certain compounds and equipment for the caste processing mentioned above.

GAMBITS

The UPF might allow him to detail a squad of lower caste and middle caste to aid a regular team on a dangerous mission. For example infiltrating a sathar detention center

would be easier with such a team. Naturally, the UPF would be loath to let the defector leave the holding facility where he is housed. Without a doubt he would give the middle caste leaders special orders and objectives during any such away mission.

Making clandestine contacts with agents and turning them to his use would also be of major importance to the defector. For example a high level official working with the team might be a sathar agent that the defector knows about. The defector will not out him but instead use him as a double agent against the sathar and the UPF. He will also seek to protect this double agent from UPF detection, ordering a lower caste member of the cadre to kill an agent that could identify the double agent then commit suicide. One the lower caste assassin has suicide he'll blame the killing on it being defective and snapping and press for obtaining the equipment and compounds for caste processing as a means for screening the lower caste slaves to screen for other defectives so they can be euthanized to prevent any other incidents of them snapping. That is of course a lie but the PCs are dealing with an upper caste sathar so they should be already be on notice to not trust him.

All cadre members look alike since they are tattooed to match the cadre leader's markings. At some point a lower or middle caste member could be made to stand in for the defector by using a holo screen or actually adding all of the leader's tattoos. This gambit would only be used once and likely for an escape attempt or some important meeting somewhere away from observation by Star Law.



[Star Law Troubleshooters](#) by [ILJackson](#)

THE PLAYER CHARACTERS

It's Star Law's job to interdict sathar agents. Thus this operation will fall under their authority. The details for creating a Star Law agent player character are covered both in Dragon magazine #91 "Careers In Star Law" as well as in Frontier Explorer #5 "Albatross Down".

It's quite possible that the special action team that will deploy to investigate the intel supplied by the defector will have members of other agencies like Spacefleet, Landfleet, the Medical Services Organization, or an exploration service. Create these characters with the same level of skill as specified for the Star Law agents with some adjustment to fit the background of the character. Note that these will be characters with high level skills so don't expect combat encounters to be much of a challenge, instead use role play and investigation encounters to flesh out the campaign.

ANATOMY OF A DEFECTION

The defecting sathar will be very cautious about how he approaches the UPF and not unduly risk his life. The best method will be via an intermediary and the sathar are renowned for using intermediaries with the UPF in the form of agents from the native species making up the UPF. The defector will have hypnotically programmed a UPF citizen previously held in sathar detention to walk into Star Law headquarters on Gran Quivera and announce he is a sathar agent. When the duty officer or clerk treats him as a nut and tells him to leave he will fire a weapon into the air. This will obviously get him detained and brought into an interrogation room where he can deliver the message, "I am a sathar agent and my master wishes to defect to the UPF."

This incident of the agent firing a weapon into the air at Star Law headquarters could be the basis for a solo to 2-3 player encounter held immediately after character creation. The set up would be that the character(s) are reporting to headquarters for something (possibly fresh out of the academy) and as they walk through the lobby this agent fires his shots. They might not even know each other at this point. If they use lethal force and actually kill the agent a medic will revive him and they will receive 0 to 1 EXP. If they detain him with non-lethal force award a bonus EXP as the agent is not actually trying to hurt anyone but rather draw attention to himself.

The player characters may be invited to witness the interrogation by another marshal or, if they are already experienced officers, they might be given the lead in the interrogation. In the agent's possession is a holo-video of the sathar defector explaining his wish to defect, information he has to offer, and details of a proposed meeting site and time. Naturally Star Law's leadership is suspicious of this but the chance to have a living breathing sathar leader talking to them and aiding them in detaining

sathar agents, locating sathar outposts, and advising them on sathar society, technology, and strategies is invaluable. A team will have to investigate and, if this is not some sort of trap, the defector will need to be brought in.

ANATOMY OF FIRST CONTACT

The defector will have travelled to a sathar listening outpost and taken it over to use as a base of operations. The proposed meeting is in the same star system but it is not at the outpost so that the defector can observe the arrival of the UPF team. He will exercise caution and use his unarmed sathar scout ship to fly to the meeting location after the UPF Assault Scout sets down. (The outpost and scout ship are well shielded against detection and attempts to scan for them could be interpreted as violating the terms of the deal for the meeting. He will insist that his cadre comes with him and remain with him since they are bound to him. He will also agree to kill the quickdeath he has control of immediately (explosive implant in the creature's brain) but will not surrender his personal weapons until leaving this system due to some fear on his part.

The defector will deal shrewdly with the UPF not fully trusting the UPF team but as a sign of good faith will reveal the location of the listening outpost he took over. The motive is that he desires for the UPF to be blamed for the loss of the listening outpost by the sathar high command.

The above is essentially a role play encounter designed to bring the defector over to the UPF side. However, there has not been much excitement yet. To raise the stakes a sathar patrol group of two destroyers should arrive just after the PCs have toured the outpost. Both the scout ship and the assault scout will be in the shielded location near the listening post. There is an imbalance of fire power between the assault scout and the destroyers and this should prevent the PCs from opting for a straight up fight. The defector strongly advises against allowing the sathar to realize that he is defecting. It would be his desire for the UPF team to go to ground and wait out the destroyers or to call in a Spacefleet strike force.

The player characters may opt to run but the defector will not agree to this course of action until the destroyers are in orbit. At this point any bid to blast off and run would be very risky as two destroyers could do enough damage to the assault scout in two turns before its speed could put some distance between them. The UPF team knows they have about 20 hours before a patrol group of a frigate and two assault scouts show up to "scout" the system. They may opt to wait for the arrival of this patrol to distract the sathar before running. They should not join in the battle with the sathar destroyers with the defector on board. The commander of the Space Fleet patrol group is briefed on

the need to allow the stealth assault scout being used by Star Law to escape with its ultra-secret cargo but will not fight to the death with the destroyers if the team with the defector managed to escape. The sathar scout ship can be brought along or destroyed by the PCs. Saving sathar equipment is of less importance than getting the defector safely to the Frontier. The players can play the UPF side of this Knight Hawk encounter. Note the stasis module for the lower caste sathar will need to be brought on board the stealthed assault scout to house them and even then the ship will be crowded with 4 extra sathar on board. The defector will be willing to do this but if possible will want to bring his scout ship along.

NEW EQUIPMENT

THE STEALTH SCOUT

The stealth scout is a modified assault scout. It loses the assault rockets and 1 ADF. The hull is made with special radar absorbing material reducing its radar signature and the engines have special baffles and heat shielding to protect against detection from energy sensors. The stealth coating is not compatible with reflective hull defense so the ship is shot at as if it has no defenses on the Knight Hawks Advanced Combat Table.

Normally radar can detect a ship at a range of 300,000 km (30 hexes). The stealth scout can be detected at 10 hexes or less and each turn the attacking ship must roll for radar lock on the following table:

Range (hexes)	Chance of Detection
10	10%
9	20%
8	30%
7	40%
6	50%
5	60%
4	70%
3	80%
2	90%

There is a 5% bonus for each turn of continuous radar lock. Beyond 10 hexes the ship becomes undetectable. Energy sensors can detect a ship with atomic engines at a range of 500,000 km (50 hexes). The engine baffles of this ship reduce that range to 40 hexes if the ship is using more than 1 ADF per turn and a range of 20 hexes if it is only using 1 ADF. If the engines are on standby but not under thrust then energy sensors will only detect them at a range of 3 hexes.

The ship has a special system of compressed air thrusters that will impart 1 ADF worth of thrust over 3 Knight Hawks turns while the engines are completely shut down

and undetectable or on standby. This system is usually used to sneak by an enemy or change trajectory before an enemy can create a plot on their course.

COM PROBE

The com probe fits the standard atmoprobe launcher and thus an assault scout can hold 3 com probes in its atmoprobe launcher. Com probes have a low radar signature and are detectable with radar at only 10,000 km (1 hex). The thruster on the probe is not enough to move it on the Knight Hawks scale of movement (its built on the atmoprobe body which was only intended to be fired into the atmosphere of a planet from orbit). The com probe is very short legged and is usually dropped in a hex where the dropping player wants it, placed in orbit or sent to land on a planet surface (parachute landing).

The com probe can be programmed to delay activation, broadcast a pre-recorded message, record broadcast data, and various other communication functions. One use for it is to place it in geo-synchronous orbit to relay chronocom signals for explorers on the ground (chronocoms have a 3000 km range). The com probe was also designed to broadcast pre-recorded com chatter to distract an enemy and allow a stealth scout to slip away. Stealth scouts come equipped with an atmoprobe launcher and has 3 com probes.

THE CAMPAIGN

The campaign should run in episodes with each chapter involving the running down sathar agents, scouting out post locations, or preventing a sathar plot. The published modules involving sathar can be worked into this campaign. However, the campaign should build toward some climax as the defector has no intention of going quietly into the night. He plans to rise again and is working toward using the UPF and the team of player characters as his pawns.

His first act will be to secure his own double agent within Star Law. He is aware of a sathar agent within the organization but will seek to eliminate the handlers that protect this agent as well as turning this agent to his agenda. He will seek to cause the apprehending team to accidentally trigger a suicide engram in the handler.

The game master should drop clues pointing toward a long term agenda on the part of the defector but since he's cooperating with Star Law he's shielded. As the plot to return to power progresses, the defector will begin to reveal targets that take the team deeper into sathar space and create opportunities for members of his cadre to accompany them to assist with infiltration. These deeper missions are about destabilizing the political structure of sathar clans and preparing the ground for his return. Ultimately he will seek to replace one of his cadre members on such a mission and affect his escape.

SATHAR MILITARY ORGANIZATION

Tom Stephens

Author's note: This briefing is intended to take place sometime after the First Sathar War that prompted the formation of the UPF but before the Second Sathar War. As the Second Sathar War hasn't happened yet, the terminology reflects this.

INTRODUCTION

Welcome, I am proud to present today's keynote speaker, Dr. Reesta Lar, who also holds a commission as a Commander in Starfleet and leads Starfleet's Sathar Starship Study Division, which I'll admit, we didn't even know existed until a few months ago when the initial results of the studies Dr. Lar will be presenting were announced.

Dr. Lar holds a Ph.D in Sathar Studies from the Triad Institute of Technology where she did her thesis entitled "An Analysis of Sathar Fleet Deployment in the Battles of the Sathar War." Since then she has served as a Starfleet officer on active duty with Task Force Cassidine and Strike Force Nova and as part of the Frontier Expeditionary Force. For the past several years she has served on and then led the Sathar Starship Study Division.

Recently, Dr. Lar and her colleagues announced the discovery of an intact sathar destroyer from the Sathar War. Today she will present her team's findings from that ship, Dr. Lar.

Thank you, Dr. Laurwence. And thank you to everyone in the audience who are here to listen to these recent findings. They are both exciting and terrifying at the same time. Let's start with some background.

BACKGROUND

As you are all aware, in the decisive final battle of the Sathar War around the planet we now know as Morgaine's World, there were hundreds of ships lost on both sides and many sathar ships fled at the battle's end. It is also well known that sathar ships, rather than be boarded, detonate their engines to completely obliterate the ship. This seems to be an automatic response that is also triggered when the ship is destroyed in battle. There are many reports from the War of sathar ships that were cut to ribbons which then subsequently detonated their engines destroying the fragments.

However, a careful study of the details of the battle, which I did as part of my doctoral dissertation, shows that not every destroyed ship detonated. It turns out that there were two ships from that final battle, both destroyed early in the fighting, that didn't detonate their engines. These ships were both destroyed in the first hour of the battle and drifted out of the combat zone during the ensuing hours as the battle raged on. Once it was over, no one was interested, let alone capable, of following up and looking for drifting hulks, especially given the fact that for the last many hours every sathar ship destroyed had been blowing itself up. No one expected there to be anything to look for and so no one looked.

After I published the findings in my dissertation just over fifteen years ago, Spacefleet's S3 Division started looking for those ships, hoping to find one or both to study. I was also offered a commission in Starfleet which I accepted not knowing about the S3 division or the search for the ships I had identified.

Starfleet has actually found both ships. The first, a frigate, was discovered over a decade ago. You haven't heard anything about it as there is nothing really to report. The ship was discovered but it had crashed into one of the moons orbiting the outermost planet in the Prenglar system. Apparently, it's velocity at the time of destruction put it on a long period orbit around Prenglar and as it was passing through the outer system, it collided with the moon. All that is left is a big crater and shrapnel. Very little of the ship survived.

DESTROYER FOUND

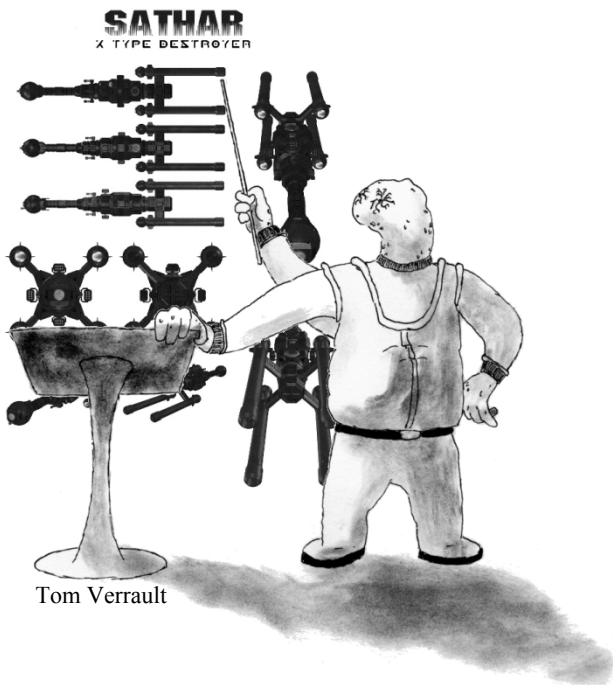
We were much more fortunate with the second ship. This one is nearly intact. It was finally discovered nearly 700 AU from Prenglar after years of careful survey work trying to locate it. A year and a half ago, we were able to recover it and begin studying the ship and attempting to decipher the records and information contained on-board. I'm here to present some preliminary findings.

First the ship. It is a destroyer class vessel, roughly hull size 6, although about 18 percent bigger than a hull size 6 UPF destroyer. One of the four engines were blown off during the battle and missing when the ship was found. Beyond that, it had sustained significant hull damage, venting many of its decks to space. Despite this, it was amazingly intact. Much of the equipment was still

functional once power was reapplied and many of the equipment stores were fully intact.

I'm not going to go into the details of the deck plans. That will be covered in a separate technical report. [Editor's Note: The Sathar Destroyer deck plans were originally going to be part of this issue. However, with 25 decks and descriptions, it simply wouldn't fit and will be made available in a special Frontier Explorer Presents issue before the end of the year.] Nor am I going to go into detail about the recovery mission. I'm not really in the mood to recount having to deal with hundreds of sathar bodies discovered as we searched the ship. And yes, I said hundreds. Plural.

You see, the Sathar destroyer is a troop carrier. Each ship is capable of carrying between 500 and 600 sathar ground troops and the shuttles needed to get them to the surface of a planet. Additionally, it has pens for nearly a dozen attack monsters that can be shuttled down with the troops as well. Each sathar destroyer represents a formidable ground force just waiting for somewhere to land. I'll talk more about that in a bit but first let's step back a bit and discuss some of the other things we've learned.



Tom Verrault

COUNTING

It's been known from other Sathar specimens that Sathar have eight digits, four on each of their tentacles. And, based on some captured equipment, it was suspected that they used a base eight number system. Our work on the captured destroyer confirms that fact. Everything we've found is based off a base eight system, from their equipment design to their personnel organization. It all fits nicely with that system.

MILITARY ORGANIZATION

Based on a variety of sources, from the layout of the destroyer's decks, to the design of the three landing shuttles on board, to the equipment stores, and even some recovered computer files, we believe we've been able to reconstruct the basic organization of the Sathar ground forces. At least on the smaller scales.

The basic combat unit seems to be a team of eight sathar, possibly divided into two groups of four. This platoon sized unit is led by one of its members that seems to rate slightly more or better equipment. We found quite a number of pre-packaged equipment packs. They were basically generic kits that the Sathar could grab on their way to their shuttles. One of every eight had a bit more ammo and a radio as part of its composition as compared to the others, seeming to indicate a leader's kit.

The next larger grouping seems to be a company sized unit composed of 8 platoons, for a total of 64 ground troops. This company seems to be led by a group of 4 officers. These officers plus the ground troops make the company size 68 Sathar in total. This is the unit size that the drop shuttles we found on board are designed to carry. There were three drop shuttles on board but the ship had berths for 8. We have no idea where the other five went. They may have been lost in fighting on Pale or Laco, or used in an attempt to abandon ship after the fighting around Morgaine's world.

The destroyer had berthing space, life support, and shuttle capacity to sustain eight of these company sized units. All the troops on board seem to make up a battalion, with eight additional Sathar in command at this level. Eight 68 Sathar companies plus the 8 Sathar command staff brings the total battalion strength to 552 Sathar.

There may be higher organizational units in the Sathar ground forces but there has been no evidence found yet on board to suggest what these organizations are. We can speculate that the groups of eight continue to larger units but beyond what I have presented it is pure guesswork.

In addition to these ground troops, the main body of the ship contained berths for a platoon of animal handlers, the shuttle crews – two per shuttle for a total of 16 – and what appeared to be two squad units of engineers or technicians. All of which seemed to be in support of the ground troops. Plus there were an additional 32 sathar that were the ship's crew.

SOCIAL STRUCTURE

There have been hints from other sources that the sathar are organized into various social levels, possibly along a caste system. The life support and berthing found on board the ship support this idea and seem to indicate two or possibly three distinct social levels among the ground troops and crew of the ship.

LOWER CLASS SATHAR

The vast majority of berthing space on-board, that housed the 512 ground troop squad members, covered only three levels of the ship and consisted of three huge “slime pools”. These were large pools of nutrient rich water that what we are calling the lower caste sathar seemed to live in when on the ship. This seemed to be the whole of their world on-board.

MIDDLE CLASS SATHAR

The company commanders seemed to be from a higher caste than the majority of ground troops. We’re calling this the middle class. Their accommodations were on a separate level and were fundamentally different than the lower caste sathar accommodations.

The slime pool was still present. However, given the number of sathar housed on this level, it was much more spacious. In addition, there were individual pool beds with attached computer/video systems and stand-alone computer systems for the sathar to use. There were only 16 pool beds for the 32 sathar housed on this level so it seems that they had to take turns. It would be called hot-bunking in Spacefleet. I have no idea what term to use for the sathar. Regardless, the quality of life of these sathar seemed to be significantly higher than that of the main body of ground troops.

UPPER CLASS SATHAR

Finally, the brigade commanders, the animal handlers, the shuttle crews and technicians and the rest of the ship’s crew seemed to form an upper class [*Referee’s Note: These are actually still middle class sathar but are an “upper” middle class while the company commanders are a “lower” middle class.*] Each of these positions has a slightly larger pool bed and there seems to be a one-to-one correspondence between the crew members and the bed. No hot-bunking for these sathar. In addition, they have more computer facilities and more space allotted, although it is less than what would be typical on a UPF vessel. It seems the sathar want, need, or tolerate much closer working conditions than the UPF races.

SHIP STAFFING

In all of the technical positions related to the operation of the ship, it seems that the Sathar operate on a two crew system. Every position has two sathar assigned, we

assume that they alternate duty cycles with one resting while the other works.

Also, for the most part, the crew “bunks” – their pool beds – are located right next to their duty stations. Thus the controls for the laser battery were in the same room as the two pool beds for the crew that manned the system. The engineers had their accommodations on the engineering level and the command crew’s room was just below the bridge.

ACCOMMODATIONS

As I’ve mentioned already, there are two main types of accommodations onboard the sathar vessel: community pools and individual pool beds.

For the lower caste sathar, the community pools on the main troop levels are the only accommodation available. These huge pools are about two meters deep and fill most of the deck. The pools are filled with a nutrient-rich fluid that gives it an almost slimy feeling. Hence you’ll see them referred to as slime pools in some of the write-ups. In addition to the soluble nutrients in the water, there are also mechanisms to release small animals/insects/etc. into the pool. Thus the pool is both a living area and a feeding area for the sathar.

When fully occupied, these pools are a writhing, seething mass of sathar bodies. There is only about five cubic meters of pools space allocated per sathar, that’s just a little more

than twice their body volume. They are packed in fairly tight and constantly in contact with the other sathar in the pool.

The upper class sathar, on the other hand have individual pool beds. These beds are filled with the same nutrient solution as the community pools but have separate feeding trough areas for the solid matter. In addition, each pool bed has a built in computer/video system that is presumably for education and entertainment and possible for monitoring of ship functions as needed. The exact use of these facilities is still unknown.

In addition to their pool beds, the upper class sathar have smaller community pools spaced around the ship. These don’t have the mechanisms to release the solid food into the water and are presumably for social interactions between the sathar as no other common areas exist on the ship.



The middle class sathar have both a community pool like those of the lower class sathar as well as individual pool beds. Their community pools is more spacious than that of the lower class sathar, having about 10 cubic meters per sathar available while their individual pool beds are a little smaller than those of the upper class sathar.

Both the pools and individual pool beds seal up in times of high or zero gee maneuvers and act as acceleration couches for the sathar within. For each pool, there is a cover that descends from the ceiling of the deck to seal the pool and prevent the water from leaving the pool containment. In the larger pools for the lower and middle class sathar, these covers are riddled with regularly spaced breathing masks. The sathar simply swim up to them as the cover is descending and insert their heads into the masks. This provides air while the pools are sealed. The community pools for the upper class sathar lack these breathing masks and it is presumed that they are not intended to be occupied during zero or high gee maneuvers

The pool beds each have an individual cover that can be closed to contain the fluid inside. Like the larger community pools, each pool bed contains a breathing mask that can be donned when the tank is fully closed.



IMPLICATIONS

Based on the layout of the sathar destroyer we have recovered, there are a number of implications about the other sathar vessels and their fleet composition and philosophy.

THE FRIGATE

Seen from the perspective of the warship as a troop transport, it becomes apparent why the sathar favor the destroyer over the frigate while the UPF prefers the latter.

A frigate is only about one third the size of a destroyer. From the UPF perspective, this means that for a significantly lower cost, you can field a ship with slightly

higher maneuverability and smaller crew and therefore lower operating expenses. You sacrifice 20% of your weapons capability but since a frigate is roughly 20% cheaper than a destroyer as well, your cost to weapon ratio is the same while reducing operating expenses and spreading your weapons platforms among more hulls. Thus it is more cost effective to field frigates for the UPF.

From the perspective of a troop transport, however, the frigate is practically useless. At only one third the volume compared to the destroyer, there simply isn't room for any troops. All of the space is taken up by the machinery and crew needed to fly and fight the ship, with little room left over. It might be possible to shoehorn a company sized unit and their shuttle into a frigate, especially given the propensity of the sathar to really pack in tight, but most likely that would be a stretch. Thus, if the sathar see warships as a means of transporting ground troops, the frigate is too small and the destroyer makes much more sense. They still have some frigates in their fleet, but they presumably serve a secondary role as escort ships to the larger vessels, much like the UPF Assault Scout does.

THE ASSAULT SCOUT AND CUTTER

This may also explain why the sathar had no real equivalent to the UPF Assault Scout during the Sathar War. With a mindset that focused on transporting large numbers of ground troops, these smaller vessels have no value. And so they never pursued that line of thought in development of their spacecraft.

The sathar cutter is a new ship we've been seeing recently and seems to be their first attempt at a ship along these lines as a response to the UPF Assault Scout. Even smaller than a frigate, the cutter is also incapable of carrying troops and thus serves a new function in the Sathar space fleets.

THE LIGHT CRUISER

This is where things start to get interesting. And scary at the same time. The light cruiser is more than 10 times the volume of a destroyer. Think about that for a moment. Assume that the sathar are using all their ships for troop transports and that they are packing the troops in as tightly in the larger ships as they are in the destroyer. If that is true, then the light cruiser is capable of transporting between five and six thousand sathar ground troops, their support creatures, and support vehicles. That's larger than many LandFleet units and it's flying around on a single warship.

THE HEAVY CRUISER

And if that isn't scary enough, let's take a look at a heavy cruiser. The Sathar heavy cruiser is about six times the volume of the light cruiser. Again scaling things up, that means that the heavy cruiser is capable of transporting

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something between twenty-five and thirty thousand sathar ground troops. That's bigger than many Landfleet armies.

OTHER DATA

While the numbers on the larger ships are pure speculation based on the ship sizes, these numbers are reasonable based on the few data points we have beyond the destroyer we recovered.

First let's look at the land battles in the Sathar War. We know that the original invasion fleet that arrived in the Truane's Star system was comprised of 12 heavy cruiser sized vessels, 16 light cruisers, 64 destroyers, and 16 frigates. Assuming the numbers given above, that corresponds to a troop capacity of between 420 thousand and half a million sathar ground troops. This correlates well with the estimates of nearly half a million troops in the Pale and Laco campaigns of that war.

The other datum we have is the recent Voltornus incident. In that case, Spacefleet's Strike Force Nova and the Truane's Star militia engaged a sathar force consisting of 1 Heavy Cruiser, 4 Light Cruisers, 8 Destroyers, and 4 Frigates. This represents a transport capacity of between 50 to 60 thousand ground troops which correlates well with the 30 thousand ground troops engaged on the surface after accounting for losses from the planetary defense system on Voltornus which destroyed nearly half of the incoming shuttles.

Thus the other data, and the fact that we've never seen a sathar ship that was a dedicated assault transport, also support the speculation that the sathar ships double as their troop transports and support the numbers presented.

IMPLICATIONS

What does this tell us about the sathar based on previous incidents? And what does this mean for future encounters?

BOARDING ACTIONS

Well, first, attempting to board a sathar warship, even if the opportunity presented itself, is practically a suicide mission. If all those troops could be mobilized, any attacking force would be taken down by sheer numbers.

The marine contingent on a battleship might be able to take on the troops in a Destroyer, but it would take a couple of our Assault Transports to provide the force necessary to try to clear out even a light cruiser.

This new information makes the current practice of destroying the sathar vessel from a distance seem even more of a good idea. As much as we'd like to capture some of their larger vessels, it's most likely not going to be feasible. And attempting to board could result in the loss of the UPF vessel if the crew is swarmed under. However, the sathar still seem to prefer to self-destruct their vessels instead of even allowing a boarding attempt.

Perhaps this is because there is no easy mechanism to release the majority of the sathar being transported or they are not equipped or trained to fight in zero gee.

INVASION DANGER

Given the number of troops on these ships, the possibility of an invasion from any sathar ship force is very real. Recently, there have been sightings of sathar fleets in the outer reaches of some of the star systems in the Frontier. There have been no confrontations to date but Spacefleet suspects that is only a matter of time. The Sathar seem to be scouting but many times they are scouting in force. Reported sightings range from a pair of destroyers up to small task forces consisting of a heavy cruiser, a light cruiser, a pair of destroyers, and a frigate.

Given what we have learned and speculate based on the captured destroyer, the potential for an invasion or assault from one of these groups is large. Even the pair of destroyers carries over a thousand sathar troops. That's enough to do seriously damage to, or overrun, almost any installation. The large task forces are estimated to be carrying between 36 and 43 thousand troops. That's a small invasion army.

Any sightings of sathar vessels should be reported immediately and these vessels should be avoided at all costs by civilian ships.

DISREGARD FOR LIFE

It is well known that the Sathar seem to have a great disregard for life. They have no qualms about obliterating a civilization or razing a world. It would seem that this disregard carries over into their own species.

The fact that they willingly self-destruct their ships rather than be captured, even when there are hundreds, thousands, or tens of thousands of sathar on-board, indicates that they see their lives as cheap.

The thought is truly alien to us. Maybe it is because the Sathar have a short lifespan, or maybe they have a high reproduction rate and their worlds are constantly overcrowded. We simply don't know. But the sheer magnitude of slaughter of their own kind implied by the self-destruction of these troop carrying ships is mind-boggling.

CONCLUSIONS

There's not much more to report at the moment. The analysis of the sathar vessel is still on-going and probably will be for years. New information will be announced as it is discovered. While there is still much to learn, especially if we can crack their computer systems, what we have learned has given us some excellent insights into how the Sathar organize both their space and ground units.

Thank you for your attention. Any questions?

SATHAR MONSTERS WITHOUT NUMBER

Tom Verreault

The following article is a conversion of classic Star Frontier sathar attack monsters to the Stars Without Number rules system. This article is also part of a series of conversion articles that will tackle converting SwoN to the Star Frontiers setting. Ironically, the article on character creation will be in the following issue since this article is preempting it for the sathar theme of this issue.

There are some substantial differences between the two systems. An apex predator in SwoN moves 40m per 6 second turn but the quickdeath in SF is rated at Very Fast, which translates to 120m per 6 second turn. Clearly this creates an imbalance. The solution is that since this is a conversion to SwoN the following chart is used to convert movement rates in general.

Movement Rates	Speed
Very Slow	10'
Slow	15'
Medium	20'
Fast	30'
Very Fast	40' or more

The second major difference is the scale of damage. Characters in Star Frontiers begin with higher stamina than their counterparts in SwoN and further rely on technology to deflect damage with defensive suits and screens and the weapons have a high damage output per turn. A combat by skilled and well equipped characters in SF tends to be short and bloody. Weapons in Swon have a much lower damage output per turn but since the characters start with low hit points combat still tends to be short and bloody. Despite the fact that SwoN is a leveling game, the hit dice for the player characters is not additive. Instead at each new level the hit dice for the character are completely rerolled and if the total is higher than the current hit points then the hit points are increased otherwise they remain the same. Thus advancing a level does not automatically improve hit points.

The challenge in converting creatures is that in SF an apex predator can have a damage expression of 6d10 (usually representing multiple modes of attack: bite and claws which are rolled in one attack) while a SwoN apex predator could have multiple attacks rolled separately with lower individual damage expressions. For purposes of this conversion, SF creatures will have their damage

expressions reduced but referees are encouraged to modify them if they find that the creatures do not present enough of a challenge or too much of a challenge for the player characters.

SwoN has a morale rule but most sathar creatures are cybernetically controlled and thus will never flee in combat. Those that are not cybernetically controlled are engineered to attack viscously and are not likely to flee in combat. All sathar monsters have morale of 0 if they are cybernetically controlled but a creature like a wild quickdeath may be given a higher morale score so that it could potentially flee a losing battle (though such a fleeing quickdeath is very likely to lick its wounds and begin stalking its former opponents).



Tom Verreault

QUICKDEATH

The quickdeath is a bio-engineered attack monster designed to be the ultimate land predator. It looks like a powerful, thick-necked jaguar with razor sharp claws. Its brain is located at the base of its neck to facilitate the four eye stalks that retract into its head when it attacks. Its tail has a poison dart that can be shot once every four hours. Along each side of the creature are three tentacles that end in suction cups that the quickdeath uses to grab a victim and drag the unfortunate prey into its mouth for an automatic attack each turn until a successful strength check to break free. (Once the quickdeath has used the

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tentacles to stuff prey into its mouth it no longer rolls for its bite attack).

The hide of the quickdeath is tough and covered in a viscous slime. It reduces damage from projectile weapons and acts as a reflective armor against lasers; ½ damage for both. The reflective nature of the hide provides good camouflage making it 70% undetectable to within 120m. Since it retracts its eyestalks when it bites the creature is blind in the moment it attacks. Anyone fighting a quickdeath can avoid being bitten by keeping a man sized “dummy” or target between him and the quickdeath which will be attacked 50% of the time.

Females lay hundreds of eggs per year in clutches of 50. The first quickdeath to hatch in a clutch eats the other eggs. Thus only one quickdeath hatches per clutch. They can be encountered as mated pairs or singly in all terrains except the mountains. Their special abilities make them dangerous ambush predators and persistent stalkers.

The sathar also employ these creatures as infantry support during ground battles. It is presumed that they use a cybernet implant to do so.

Quickdeath	
Armor Class	6
Hit Dice	6
Attack Bonus	+7/+7/+7
Damage	1d10/1d10/tentacles (special)
No. Appearing	1 to 2
Saving Throw	12
Movement	80'
Special Attack	Poison Tail dart (Range 30/50) Toxicity 7, Interval 10 minutes, Virulence 3, Effect 1d10 damage
Special Defense	Immune to Needler Weapons, 1/2 damage from laser and projectile weapons, 70% chance to remain unseen until within 120'
Morale	15
Terrain	All except mountains

First seen in SF-0 Crash on Voltumnus

SLITHER

The slither looks like vegetation while lying in ambush and it does derive some nourishment from photosynthesis. It is 20 meters long and two meters wide looking like a cross between a worm and a centipede. Its eyesight only detects movement but the creature can also sense salt and water.

It has powerful grinding mandibles ringed with tentacles which can attack one creature while it employs its coil attack on another creature and it can coil about another

creature and burn it with the oily acid secretions of its body. It must recoil to make a new coil attack each turn.

Slithers are part of the sathar program to genetically engineer attack monsters to destroy (or perhaps cleanse from the sathar point of view) ecosystems on inhabitable worlds. Thus the slither can be found anywhere the sathar have visited.

Slither	
Armor Class	5
Hit Dice	10
Attack Bonus	+8/+8
Damage	1d12/1d12
No. Appearing	1
Saving Throw	10
Movement	10m
Special Attack	Surprise Attack & and may attack two targets at once
Special Defense	None
Morale	12
Terrain	Salt flats and near water

First seen in the Alpha Dawn rulebook.

FROGGS

Frogs were engineered to resemble common species of terran frogs that have been found on colonized planets in the Frontier. They remain invisible 85% of the time and attack with surprise. Their attack is to leap at the face, biting for one point of damage, and leap away. They only make one random attack and if they miss they disappear into the surroundings. Only characters with a dexterity of 16 or better have a chance at hitting one.

Note the Sundown on Starmist module has 10 engineered nuisance vermin like the clinging lilies and the frogs. We've only listed a sampling here.

Frogs	
Armor Class	7
Hit Dice	½
Attack Bonus	1
Damage	1
No. Appearing	1 to 10
Saving Throw	10
Movement	40m
Special Attack	Surprise
Special Defense	None
Morale	NA
Terrain	Jungle and forest where seeded

First seen in SF-3, Sundown on Starmist.



Tom Verrault

CYBOSLUG

The cyboslug is an engineered creature that spits flame from its cybernetically implanted flamethrower. It can cling to walls and ceilings. Its body is covered in a reflective slime that reduces laser and flame damage.

Cyboslug	
Armor Class	6
Hit Dice	3
Attack Bonus	6
Damage	1d10
No. Appearing	1 to 5
Saving Throw	14
Movement	10m
Special Attack	Flame thrower (Range 30/50)
Special Defense	1/2 damage from lasers and flame
Morale	0
Terrain	Anywhere underground

First seen in SF-1, Voltornus, Planet of Mystery

CYBODRAGON

A cybodragon is a huge lizard with cybernetic implants. It can attack with its bite, claws and two metal tentacles. Its eyes have been replaced with lasers and each may attack a different target and a flame thrower has been installed in its mouth. The eye lasers can shoot 5 times and the flame thrower can shoot 10 times before their ammunition reserves are depleted.

In prolonged battles the sathar will employ a support unit to change out power packs for the eye lasers. It requires two sathar technicians four combat turns to change a power pack. They and the cybodragon must remain stationary for all four turns.

This is an attack monster used for shock and awe tactics in combat it is not likely to be found without sathar handlers nearby. The cybodragon can be controlled by a rider or by wireless means.

Cybodragon	
Armor Class	5
Hit Dice	10
Attack Bonus	+12/+12/+12
Damage	1d12/1d12/1d12
No. Appearing	1 to 2
Saving Throw	12
Movement	40m
Special Attack	2 eye lasers 1d12 (Range 300/500), 1 flame thrower 1d8 (Range 30/50)
Special Defense	None
Morale	15
Terrain	All, except mountains and dense forest

First seen in SF-2 Star Spawn of Voltornus & The Official Character Record Sheets.

SLAVEBOT

Slave bots are cybernetically controlled sapient beings. The sathar implant them with a cybernetic device to control them and are able to use the skills of the slave. They do not react to pain and can punch in a manner that would normally inflict pain on the one throwing the punch. Alternately they can use weapons and tools they knew how to use in their prior life. Slave bots are usually controlled by a tubed sathar brain and operate as its limbs but they can also be controlled by the same cybernetic control units used for quickdeath and cybodragons.

SlaveBot	
Armor Class	7
Hit Dice	1
Attack Bonus	2
Damage	1d10 or weapon
No. Appearing	1 to 5
Saving Throw	15
Movement	20m
Special Attack	Punching
Special Defense	None
Morale	0
Terrain	Any but usually defending installations

First seen in SF-1, Voltornus, Planet of Mystery.

Skills

EXPLORING HYPNOTISM IN THE FRONTIER

Tom Verreault

HYPNOTISM BY PLAYER CHARACTERS

Surprisingly, in the Star Frontiers game, the hypnosis subskill of the Psycho-Social skill requires no updating to match the current scientific thinking concerning hypnosis even after 30 years. The medical literature on hypnosis continues to identify it as a mental state of focused concentration that allows for suggestion and imaginative focus. It's been used to block pain, treat some ailments, and treat some addictions.

In the game it automatically succeeds with a willing subject and can be used to gain a +10% bonus to a skill check or an ability check (hyper focus). It can be used to block the penalty for half Stamina (blocking of pain).

Other creative uses might be slowing the metabolism of a subject to slow the damage done by poison till proper medical treatment can be found (half damage from poison but for double the duration). It could be used to compel a character suffering from a disease that automatically ends in death to "not go into the light," but rather remain in the world of the living (any disease with a "!" at the end of its stats results in death when the disease runs its course).

Natural healing is 1 point per 20 hours rest but hypnosis could be used to put the character into a comatose state for accelerated healing of 5 points per 20 hour period. The number of days the character will remain in a comatose state must be specified at the time of being hypnotized but a stim dose will revive the subject sooner. Hypnotism might also be used to slow the metabolic rates of beings in a life boat to extend the duration of its life support in an emergency situation.

The main limit on using hypnosis is time; it takes 1d10 minutes. If combat erupts suddenly there will be no chance of using it. And since most combats will resolve in less than a minute there simply will not be time to do it during combat.

The other limit is that the rules seem to suggest that the application of hypnosis for a specific effect can only be done once per 20 hours. For example, hypnosis can block the pain penalty for half stamina (-20 to all activity) which will last for 1d10 hours and cannot be repeated for 20 hours. I would allow for multiple uses of hypnosis like skill check, ability check and a medical use like blocking

pain or slowing metabolism but each one can be performed only once per 20 hour GST day in game.

Finally, there should be a wealth of opportunity to use hypnosis in game much like Obi-wan used it to trick the storm troopers in Star Wars: "These aren't the droids you're looking for." However, this sort of thing would be dicey since the target gets an intuition check to resist. This is a double failure point since the character must first pass a skill check to hypnotize then the target gets an INT save to resist. Of course most mooks in game don't have full stats that provide an INT score so I recommend that a referee simply uses their STA score or their STA score minus 10 for the INT save.



HYPNOTISM BY THE SATHAR

There is no skill roll by the sathar to do this, the action is automatic but it must be done outside of combat. The player character gets a logic check to save against it. It clearly is a little different from the hypnosis done by the player characters in that the save for it is based on logic not intuition.

should be that the sathar and or their agents have already benefited from the compulsion so that it cannot be simply undone. The player will now know they have been the victim of a sathar hypnotic manipulation and that they are responsible for what is currently happening, thus allowing them to fix it but not easily.

Finally the setting material intimates that there are 1,000s of sathar agents out there. The act of being an agent goes quite a bit beyond simple hypnotism. I would propose that the sathar are able to turn non-player characters through hours of torture, sleep deprivation, and hypnotic meddling. The turned agent has an imprint of the sathar psyche that operates beneath the surface of the host's conscious mind. In many cases the host will become clinically insane over time. It might be that a character can use the psycho-pathology subskill to free an agent from the imprinted sathar psyche, but the result will be a shattered and borderline personality that talks about voices in his head.

FE



Tom Verrault

I've never been comfortable with sathar hypnotism as it takes away player control of their character. I suppose that loss of player control of their characters is not all that uncommon in RPGs since D&D included lycanthropy and undead conditions where control was loss to the player.

Carefully handled, sathar hypnotism would result in heightened tension for the players. After one or two incidents of hypnotism they would seek to counter the hypnotism ability of the sathar with shooting first, fast, and furiously to prevent a sathar from talking to them. The likelihood of a sathar actually hypnotizing a player character is low as their appearance should precipitate combat almost immediately. Hypnotism by a sathar is probably only going to happen by referee fiat- carefully crafted situations where the players might not realize they are talking to a sathar.

I would limit such loss of player control of their characters to an inability to attack the sathar or to the automatic performance of a simple action that does not "violate the character's morals or religion." Since the opportunity to hypnotize must be crafted by the referee the compulsion to perform a simple action should be well planned and thought out.

An example might be the shutting off of a security device that lets a sathar or its agents penetrate a facility. I would handle this by first rolling the logic save secretly and if the character fails not telling the player about the hypnotism until the compulsion is performed. At that point the player is told of the hypnotism in a sort of flash back. The situation



CYBERNUK OF NEW PALE

Eric "iggy" Winsor

After the troubles of the last few months with the Alzof, Tik and I decided we should take Dwain to New Pale for some dinosaur safari. Dwain was quite down trodden from his time in the hospital and we figured that a large raptor head for his trophy room would get him back on track. We arrived on New Pale in time for the northern hemisphere spring and took an aircar to the small hunting expedition town of Mead in the heart of dinosaur country.

Dwain was amiable to the adventure yet Tik and I could tell he was forcing it. He declared he wanted a V-raptor head but he kept passing on respectable trophy kills. He was also neglecting to hunt during the hottest parts of the day when the dinos are most active. After two weeks without a kill we pulled back to Mead for some R&R and supplies over the weekend. Dwain immediately wandered off seeking the local hangouts and we left him to his pursuits.

Two days after the weekend Dwain had still not returned so Tik and I sought him out and found him in the most unlikely of hangouts. New Pale has quietly fostered a new but old fighting sport since the Sathar invasion of SW1. Neither Tik nor I had ever heard the ancient human sport of cock fighting until Dwain spied us searching the backwater streets of Mead and pulled us into an arena hall where cock fighting has been reborn as cybernuk fighting. Dwain was smitten by this sport and the creature that seems to have been perfectly designed for it.

Now I must say that Dwain is against animal blood sport but has found a unique quandary with cybernuk fighting. Cybernuks are not a natural animal, nor the creation of anyone in the Frontier. Cybernuks were created by the sathar during their occupation of New Pale during the First Sathar War. The colonists of New Pale returned to their home to find the planet plagued with them. They have worked hard to eradicate them but have also found a few uses for them which have fascinated Dwain, Tik, and I. So let me tell you about cybernuks and some of the uses that the residents of New Pale have come up with to use these sathar attack beasts.

Cybernuk is a human derived name created by shortening the name cyber-manuk. The word manuk is the name for a chicken from an ancient human language still spoken by some of the original human colonists of New Pale.



Cybernuk – from [Random Creatures](#) by [Tysho](#)

ORIGINS

Cybernuks are not just chickens that have been cybernetically enhanced by some half-baked sathar cyber-veterinarian. The sathar seem to have had an actual well thought out plan for this mutated terrestrial poultry. Due to this they mixed the DNA of the chicken with native New Pale dinosaur DNA and other alien DNAs the sathar brought along with them. They then created a unique cyber carapace that attaches to the beasts back so they could control it. Tik looked up a few New Pale scientists who are experts on the cybernuk and learned what the consensus of the experts is concerning the sathar's purpose in creating them.

Apparently the sathar took quite a liking to the climate of New Pale and may have been attempting to terraform the planet for colonization. Their tool for terraforming New Pale was the cybernuk.

Almost all cybernuks had a cyber-carapace when the sathar were present in the system to continue manufacturing carapaces. New Pale survivors of the

sathar occupation have supported this conjecture. The sathar made this cyber-carapace rugged enough to survive generations of cybernuk and reattach itself to the naked backs of cybernuk offspring. This self-sustaining reuse of the cyber-carapaces and a breeding ability not before seen among other sathar cyber-beasts is what has lead UPF scientists to suspect a longer term sathar purpose for the cybernuk.

Cybernuks are ravenous omnivores, they eat everything! They also have a gut that is ideal at producing manure that changes the soil to support sathar biology. Cybernuks travel in herds controlled by those cybernuks that have bonded to a cyber-carapace. This carapace is programmed to control the cybernuk and enable it to herd the other cybernuks it encounters that do not have a cyber-carapace.

The cybernuk that have bonded with a cyber-carapace exert some form of control over the herd. The scientists that Tik interviewed estimate that a cybernetic enhanced cybernuk can control about a hundred other cybernuk. This control appears to be some form of cybernetic enhanced mind control. Shellbacks, as the locals call them, will wander among the herd and stare into the eyes of bareback cybernuk. This wandering is constant to maintain control. The controlled barebacks will then follow the shellback wherever it goes and defer to it when it is feeding. Shellbacks that die are quickly devoured by the herd and the cyber-carapace latches on to another of the cybernuk that gets close enough for it to claw up onto it. Shellbacks exhibit a level of cooperation that is frightful and very much like an artificially intelligent hive mind of swarming tactics.

INTERACTIONS WITH COLONISTS

When the colonists returned to New Pale the cybernuks were roaming the northern continent of Juras in herds numbering in the thousands. They were eating everything from plants and animals to the fungus in the topsoil. They reduced large sections of jungle to open spaces knee-deep in manure. The new areas they were devouring were first stripped of all animal life. Then the plants were eaten, including the roots. The stragglers of the groups ate the dirt in mouthfuls.

The cybernuk leading the advance profited from the meat of the animals they ran down. Not even the largest dinosaurs of New Pale would survive a mob attack of cybernuk swarming around them and biting and clawing their legs until they were brought down to be devoured alive. Those cybernuk killed by the dinos were equally devoured by their companions. Behind the cybernuk gorging on flesh are those forced to devour the plants or even the soil if there are no plants left. However, those cybernuk in the plant and soil waves that perish are also lustfully devoured by the other cybernuk.

Cybernuk are prolific breeders that lay eggs in nests of eight to ten. Unlike the human chicken they do not brood their eggs but leave them in the manure to incubate and hatch about 45 days after they are laid. Each egg is about 15cm in diameter and come in a variety of soil tone colors. The cybernuk mate frequently in an almost haphazard mayhem. They lay their eggs with casual disregard as they travel. Very few eggs laid within the core of a herd survive because the cybernuk eat them. Mothers have been recorded laying eggs and eating them as they reach the ground. The majority of surviving eggs are found in the remaining manure fields behind the advancing herd followed by those that are overlooked on the sides of the herd's advance.

The returning colonists were overwhelmed by the cybernuk and resorted to military cavalry units to eradicate the herds. They flanked the herds with tanks and machine gunned the cybernuk down as the herd advanced. Helicopter cavalry units controlled the direction of the herd to keep them from advancing directly onto the flanking tanks. During this time some useful exploits of cybernuks developed.

CYBERNUK USES

New Pale farmers and civil engineers have developed methods of employing herds to clear land for farming and to clear paths for roads. Remote landowners have used packs of cybernuk to bring down large carnivorous dinosaurs that break into their land. Placing a captured shellback in a very rugged cage out in the wild will attract other cybernuk in the area. The cage must be very rugged as the barebacks that arrive will begin tearing at the cage after the shellback gains control over them. The locals use this method to gather stray cybernuk from the jungles and destroy them.

Cybernuk manure that has been heat treated to kill the sathar micro-organisms in it is rich in minerals and makes a great fertilizer. Several mining firms reconditioned their war ravaged processing plants to process the vast amounts of manure they found upon returning to liberated New Pale.

Somewhere a few humans isolated a couple of shellbacks and found that disabling a few of the neural connections between the cyber carapace and the cybernuk caused them to turn upon any other shellback immediately. They also discovered that if they overload a few of the neural feedback circuits into the carapace they can paralyze the shellback. This margin of safety for handling the shellbacks and making them attack other shellbacks on command generated cybernuk fighting.

CYBERNUK FIGHTING

A typical fight is conducted as follows. Each shallback is brought out in its cage for presentation to the spectators.

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During this time it is held in carapace paralysis. The owners stand up and tout the qualities of their cybernuk. Some grandstanding such as placing an extremity into its open maw or releasing the paralysis and hand feeding it through the cage bars is showcased. Then bets are taken and the cybernuk are released into a caged ring. The two square off and the owners attempt to control the fighting capability of their shellback by modulating the neural connections inducing in-species aggression.

Dwain spent the entire weekend watching fights and learning about the cybernuk. He was fascinated that life finds a way to be useful, however it was made. Dwain personally would like to add that though this is a sport that the people of New Pale have found acceptable he does not endorse the sport nor the modifying of animals for use in fighting sports. This sport is a fluke of the sathar that Dwain feels should not be perpetuated or used as an excuse to revive ancient animal blood sports with what he calls franken-animals. Dwain fully supports the New Pale government bans on exporting cybernuk and expanding the sport beyond the few hunting expedition towns that created the sport.

Cybernuk	
Type:	Omnivore
Size:	Medium : 1m
Number:	2 to 200
Move:	Medium : 70 m/t
IM/RS:	+6/60
Stamina:	80-120
Attack:	75
Damage:	2d10
Special Attack:	Cybernetic guidance to swarm (108 bare back cybernuk)
Special Defense:	None
Native World:	New Pale, Truane's Star

GM NOTES

PURPOSE OF THE CYBERNUK

The sathar intended the cybernuk to be a self-replenishing cyberbeast. The cyber-carapaces are rugged enough to survive many generations attached to successive cybernuk. The cyber-carapace detaches from its host when the cybernuk dies or the brain functions cease. The cyber-carapace will then attach to the next available cybernuk.

Apparently the sathar needed the cybernuk to survive unattended from sathar cyber technicians for many

generations until they had completely altered the biosphere of New Pale to accommodate sathar colonization. The intentional result would appear to be the total collapse and extinction of all New Pale life so that the planet is ready to be seeded with sathar life forms. The cybernuk themselves would eventually die out as they turned to cannibalism and eventual starvation. Only the cyber-carapaces would survive, signaling to the cyber monitoring station that the cybernuk had changed the planet and completed their purpose.

CYBERNUK ORIGINS

The cybernuk project was a new idea among the sathar. The sathar scientists that conceived the terraforming project were inspired by yazirian GodCo scientists they captured when their exploration ship found its way into sathar space and was captured. The UPF and GodCo long ago wrote the ship and crew off as lost to a missjump. However, the ship had jumped into a system patrolled by the sathar. The sathar struck them by surprise, destroying the bridge of the ship swiftly and preventing any distress messages from being sent. Most of the crew were killed as they fought off the sathar. The few captives the sathar gained were traveling in freeze fields and never had the chance to resist as they were brought out of hibernation into hypnotic slavery. Most of these captives were GodCo scientists.

The sathar scientists that championed the cybernuk project and defended the use of the GodCo scientists were not well liked by their peers. The defeat of the sathar on New Pale cut off the cyber monitoring system communicating with the transmitters built into the cyber carapaces. This resulted in a lack of evidence suggesting success of the project and caused these scientists to lose influence within the sathar leadership. Hence the GodCo scientists have been taken away from them and possibly killed.

FRONTIER RESEARCH

Back in the Frontier, secret Star Law and UPF labs have been studying the cybernuk in attempts to discover biological and chemical means of attacking the sathar and their many attack beasts. The success of these programs is unknown as the cybernuk are extremely resistant to disease and poisons. There are also rumored secret megacorp labs that have acquired cybernuk illegally for pharmaceutical development. A common conspiracy theory of many deep space subspace radio programs is that these megacorps are withholding great cybernuk derived medical cures from the public to maintain their medical care businesses.

No one in the Frontier has yet discovered the transmitters in the cyber-carapaces. These would be easily detectable by any sathar ship equipped to control cyberbeasts.

A CAN OF WORMS

Tom Stephens

These Knight Hawks Encounters were inspired by some of the articles in this issue and provide an opportunity to play with the new ships introduced in this issue of the Frontier Explorer and play out parts of some of the suggested adventures.

TRIAL RUN

A new ship design runs into some sathar on its maiden voyage.

BACKGROUND

The CPFS Battleaxe, a new Corvette design built for the Truane's Star Militia (See the Truane's Star system brief, p 5) is out on its maiden voyage and shakedown cruise with two of the militia's Assault Scouts. In the outer reaches of the system, they stumble across two sathar destroyers that have jumped into the system. The militia is going to get a fuller test of their new ship design than they were expecting. With no help nearby can the militia ships hold out against the larger sathar vessels?

ORDER OF BATTLE

MILITIA SHIPS

- *CPFS Battleaxe* – Truane's Star Militia Corvette
- *CPFS Cerval* – Assault Scout
- *CPFS Mako* – Assault Scout

SATHAR SHIPS

- 2 Sathar Destroyers

SETUP

The militia ships set up first on one of the short sides of the map. They may have any speed up to 15 hexes per turn but all ships must have the same speed.

After the militia ships are set up, the sathar ships are placed on the opposite side of the board. Their initial speed must be 10-15 hexes per turn faster than the militia ships and both ships must be moving at the same speed.

SPECIAL RULES

RUNNING BATTLE

This fight could turn into a running chase depending on how the militia ships react. Use the rules for extending and shifting the map in the UPF Tactical Operations Manual (KH boardgame rules) on page 10.

UPF & SATHAR SHIP STATISTICS

Here are the statistics for all the UPF and Sathar ships used in this scenario.

SATHAR SCOUT

HP: 10 ADF: 6 MR: 5 DCR: 29
Weapons: none
Defenses: RH

ASSAULT SCOUT

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

STEALTH SCOUT

HP: 15 ADF: 4 MR: 4 DCR: 50
Weapons: LB
Defenses: RH (special, see p. 22)

CORVETTE

HP: 32 ADF: 4 MR: 4 DCR: 64
Weapons: LB x4, AR(x5)
Defenses: RH, MS(x2)

FRIGATE

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

DESTROYER

HP: 50 ADF: 3 MR: 3 DCR: 75
Weapons: LC, LB, EB, RB(x4), T(x2)
Defenses: RH, MS(x2), ICM(x5)

ESCAPING THE FIGHT

The militia ships can escape the fight if they remain out of weapons range of the sathar ships for a full turn and have a higher speed than the sathar ships.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

SATHAR VICTORY

The sathar do not want their presence known and seek to destroy the militia ships. A minor victory is achieved if the CPFS Battleaxe is destroyed. A major victory is achieved if all three militia ships are destroyed.

MILITIA VICTORY

The militia's goal is to get the CPFS Battleaxe home safely and report the sathar incursion. The militia scores a minor victory if the CPFS Battleaxe escapes the battle. A

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major victory is achieved if both sathar ships are destroyed.

RUNNING THE WORMS

A UPF Stealth Scout needs to escape with a defecting Sathar on-board.

BACKGROUND

This scenario is from the Extending the Line article (p 19). UPF Star Law Rangers, flying a new Stealth Scout have made contact with a defecting sathar at a sathar listening post in an asteroid belt. Just as they are about to make their getaway, a pair of sathar destroyers show up. Help should arrive at any moment but the destroyers are coming in to orbit at the asteroid base. Hopelessly outgunned, their only chance is to make a run for it.

Waiting until the destroyers have shed their velocity to allow maximum use of the Stealth Scout's and sathar Scout ship's higher ADF, the Star Law ships blast off from the asteroid base at maximum acceleration. Can they evade the destroyers? Can they hold out until the cavalry arrives?

ORDER OF BATTLE

STAR LAW

- Stealth Scout
- Sathar Scout ship

UPF SHIPS

- 2 Assault Scouts
- Frigate

SATHAR SHIPS

- 2 Destroyers

SETUP

Place 60 upside down counters in a band 16 to 20 hexes wide across the center of the map to represent the asteroid field. Each counter should be placed on the intersections of three hexes as described in the Knight Hawks Campaign Book p 34. The rules from the Campaign Book covering movement through asteroid fields apply to this scenario. [*Author's Note: This level of asteroid density is completely unrealistic but it makes the play much more interesting.*]

The sathar base should be marked with a UPF or pirate station marker to designate its location. There should be several paths through the asteroid field from the base to open space but they don't have to be straight.

The Star Law ships should be placed on the map on top of the station. The Sathar ships are placed on the map in a hex adjacent to the station. All these ships have a starting speed of zero.

The UPF ships do not enter the fight until round 7. At which point they enter the map with a speed of 10 from



AZ_Gamer

either of the two short sides of the map. All three ships must enter from the same side.

SPECIAL RULES

DEFECTOR'S LOCATION

Before play begins, the Star Law player should secretly record which ship, the Stealth Scout or the Sathar Scout, the defecting sathar agent is on. This choice is revealed when that ship is destroyed or leaves the game.

HITTING THE STEALTH SCOUT

The Stealth Scout has technology that makes it hard to track. In order for the sathar ships to fire on the Stealth Scout, they must have a successful radar lock. Follow the rule for detecting the Stealth Scout as described on page NN of this issue in the Sharpening Stone article. The Sathar Scout has no such protection.

ESCAPING THE BATTLE

Any ship that makes it off either of the short edges of the board, with no other ship in weapon's range, or with a higher speed and ADF than any pursuer, is considered to have escaped the battle.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

The sathar achieve a minor victory if they destroy the ship with the sathar defector. They achieve a major victory if they destroy both the Stealth Scout and the Sathar Scout ship. They achieve an overwhelming victory if all UPF ships are also destroyed.

The Star Law/UPF teams achieve a minor victory if the ship with the sathar defector escapes the battle. They achieve a major victory if both the Stealth Scout and Sathar Scout ship escape the battle. They achieve an overwhelming victory if both sathar destroyers are eliminated or all surviving Star Law/UPF ships escape the battle (including both the Stealth and Sathar Scout ships) and no more than 40 HP of UPF ships were lost.

FE

Optional Rules

LIVING EXPENSES

Indy

Editor's Note: This article is adapted from a great little web page by Indy on the Raiders of the Lost Dungeon website. The site is now off-line but you can find a copy of the original page at

<http://web.archive.org/web/20001219183700/http://www2.interconnect.net/indy/expenses.htm>.

RELEVANT RULES

There are a few sections from the rules that are relevant to determining the cost of living expenses. All page references are from the original, not remastered, rule books.

COST OF LIVING

In the Expanded Rules book, p52, it states that “Instead of keeping track of many small expenses, the referee should assume that characters spend one-half of all the money they earn on food, clothes, rent, and other miscellaneous items.”

The Living Expenses section below breaks down where that 50% of their income is going. This may be more relevant for urban campaigns where the characters are living at home and are only away for short periods. When they are gone for extended periods, some of these expenses may be different. It provides a guide to the referee on ways he might adjust that value based on the circumstances.

LENGTH OF A WORK WEEK

In the *Pay and Experience Point* section on page 55 we learn that “The typical work week is five days of work with three days off.” That, combined with the 400 day year (p 52) leads us to ten 40 day months each composed of 5 weeks. These are the numbers used in determining the values below. Thus if a being earns 20 cr/day, their income will be 100 cr/week or 500 cr/month.

MINIMUM WAGE

In the NPC wage table on page 60, the entry for Non-skilled labor is listed at 20 cr/day. This is taken to be minimum wage and the income for the lowest income category on the Living Expenses table.

LIVING EXPENSES

The following sections give the living expenses broken down by expense category and income level. For each standard of living, a representative income is given, followed by the expenses incurred.

SUBSISTENCE (20 CR/DAY)

Basic Living – expenses: 50 cr/week, 250 cr/month

- single room apartment – 200 cr/month Poor location
- food – 10 cr/month basic staples, some treats
- monorail – 25 cr/month
- miscellaneous (clothing, etc.) – ~15 cr/month very few items, clothes look it

POOR (30 CR/DAY)

Moderate Living – expenses: 75 cr/week, 375 cr month

- single room apartment – 300 cr/month okay location
- food – 20 cr/month decent, occasional meal out
- monorail – 25 cr/month
- miscellaneous – ~30 cr/month very occasional movie, nightclub

STRUGGLING (50 CR/DAY)

Good Living – expenses: 125 cr/week, 625 cr/month

- double room apartment – 450 cr/month okay location
- food – 45 cr/month good food, sometimes meal out
- monorail – 30 cr/month
- miscellaneous – 100 cr/month some movies, nightclubs, decent restaurants

LOWER MIDDLE CLASS (70 CR/DAY)

Better Living – expenses: 175 cr/week, 875 cr/month

- 2 bedroom or large double room apartment – 600 cr/month nice location or better location
- food 60 – cr/month some luxuries
- monorail – 35 cr/month
- miscellaneous – 180 cr/month

MIDDLE MIDDLE CLASS (90 CR/DAY)

Decent Living – expenses: 225 cr/week, 1125 cr/month

- Large apartment or 2 bedroom house – 700 cr/month nice location or better location
- food – 100 cr/month really good, some luxuries, eat out
- monorail – 35 cr/month
- miscellaneous – 290 cr/month

UPPER MIDDLE CLASS (110 CR/DAY)

Well Off – expenses: 272 cr/week, 1360 cr/month

- as above, but luxury housing – 800 cr/month better location
- food – 125 cr/month
- monorail – 35 cr/month
- miscellaneous – 400 cr/month nightclubs, movies, misc

LOWER UPPER CLASS (150 CR/DAY)

Rich – expenses: 370 cr/week, 1850 cr/month

- as above but even nicer housing – 1000 cr/month
- food – 215 cr/month
- monorail – 35 cr/month
- miscellaneous – 600 cr/month

NOTES

- Prices will be somewhat more expensive on stations, and the quarters smaller. But stations also may not

have monorail fees.

- Prices for each category are minimum guidelines for each standard of living and consider only a single person.

EDITOR'S COMMENTS

FOOD COSTS TOO LOW

Personally, I feel that Indy's numbers for food are a little low. The cost of 4 days of survival rations in the AD rules is 2 cr. So for a 40 day month, living just on survival rations, that works out to 20 credits a month for food, double the amount listed for the Subsistence level. And I'd argue that the survival rations, while specially formulated and therefore slightly pricier than "regular" food, still represent an absolute lowest value for food for a month. Even fresh food at the subsistence level probably costs more. However, we've presented Indy's numbers here unaltered. As with any rule or guide, feel free to adjust them as you see fit for your campaign.

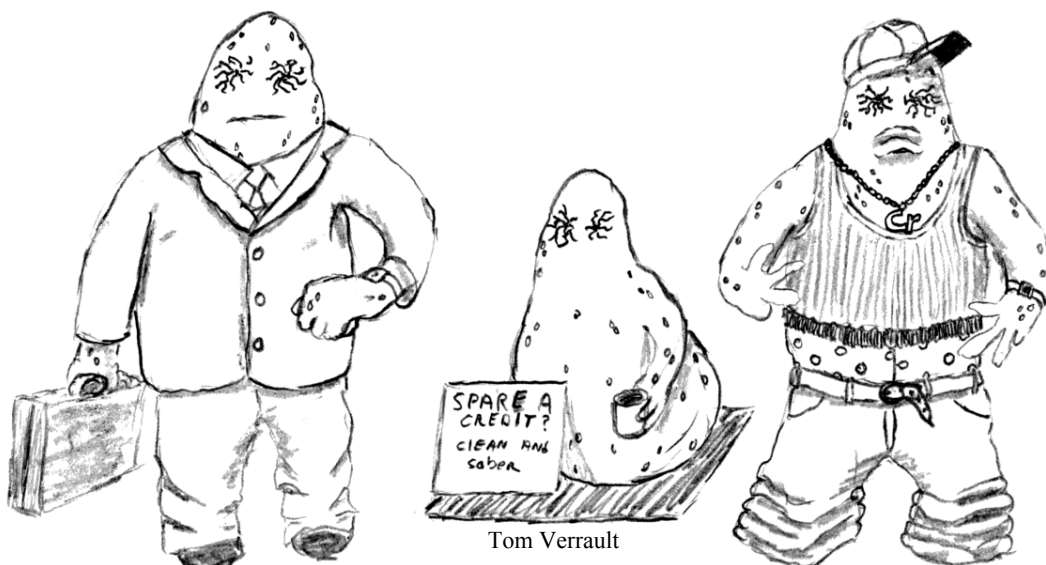
SAVABLE INCOME

These numbers assume that the person on that income is saving half of their income or has it available for discretionary spending per the Alpha Dawn rules. At the lower income levels, this probably isn't true. You're not going to be saving that much money if it means you're going without food, shelter, or clothing. You're going to spend that money on the necessities first. Thus you could easily increase the basic costs of living in general and still survive on the 20 cr/day, you just wouldn't be saving half of your income.

TRANSPORTATION

At the higher income levels, I'd personally probably increase the transportation costs by factoring in privately owned vehicles. It's great to take the monorail but it's also nice to have your own car (and possibly driver). That's another factor that can be adjusted to provide some variety to the above values.

FE



GOT TECHNO-BABBLE?

Tom Verreault

Techno babble has been the staple of science fiction for decades. It sounds cool and intelligent and often provides a plot hook or turning point. Why not use it in your science fiction role playing games?

You need a reason to keep the player characters on planet for a few days? Well, perhaps the photonic relay inducer blew before landing and it will take a few days for the local parts supplier to deliver one and another day to install and test it otherwise there is a risk of the engines

hyper igniting on lift off. Perhaps the Clarion Royal Marines are inspecting the ship before clearing it to dock at Clarion Station and discover that the neutron sequencing inverters on the atomic engines are faulty and they cannot clear the ship to enter the docking bay until they're fixed. Perhaps you just want a little flavor for describing the combat damage to the players. For this situation use the techno babble table below. Roll a d100 and consult the babble result.

FE

D100	Result	D100	Result
1	ATMOSPHERIC E-M FIELD	21	TRANS-WARP INTERFACE EFFECT
2	MODULATED PHASE CONDUIT	22	MAGNATOMIC SUBSPACE INVERSION
3	PHASED DAMPENING CONTINUUM	23	MICROSCOPIC WAVEFRONT NUTATION
4	IONIC SUBSPACE DISCRIMINATOR	24	AUXILIARY SYSTEM NUTATION
5	INVERTED FLUX FIELD	25	MODULATED RIDICULOUS CONDUIT
6	MICROSCOPIC BARYON DISTORTION	26	LINEAR WARP INTERFERENCE
7	NUCLEONIC SPACE-TIME NUTATION	27	MODULATED PHASE HARMONIC
8	AMBIENT GRAVIMETRIC DISTORTION	28	RECIPROCATING DAMPENING EMISSION
9	ATMOSPHERIC GRAVIMETRIC HARMONIC	29	GIGA-WATT SPACE-TIME NETWORK
10	GIGA-WATT PARTICLE INTERFERENCE	30	TRANS-WARP ENERGY SINGULARITY
11	OPTICAL INTERFACE EFFECT	31	BARYON RELAY
12	GIGA-WATT SPACE-TIME FIELD	32	MODULATED FREQUENCY VARIANCE
13	AMBIENT QUANTUM STREAM	33	INVERTED TETRYON EFFECT
14	ANOMALOUS NADION PATTERN	34	THERMAL SPACE-TIME CONTROLLER
15	NUCLEONIC E-M SIGNAL	35	MAGNETIC DAMPENING DISTORTION
16	RECIPROCATING NADION ACTUATOR	36	QUANTUM DAMPENING CONTROLLER
17	ASSYMETRICAL WAVEFRONT PATTERN	37	PHASED WAVEFRONT NUTATION
18	AUXILIARY PLASMA CONFIGURATION DIVERTOR	38	PHOTONIC ARTIFICIAL DISTORTION CONTROL
19	PHASED POWER CONFIGURATION CONTROLLER	39	RECIPROCATING STASIS FIELD MODULATOR
20	ARTIFICIAL DISTORTION WAVEFRONT INDUCER	40	MODULATED ALTERNATING CONTROLLER

D100	Result	D100	Result
41	GIGA-WATT SPATIAL COUPLING	71	SONIC SYSTEM DOMAIN TRANSLATOR
42	IONIC PARTICLE STREAM	72	IONIC SUBSPACE STREAM CAPACITOR
43	RAPID SPACE-TIME CONTINUUM	73	GIGA-WATT GRAVIMETRIC SINGULARITY
44	NUCLEONIC FREQUENCY MODULATOR	74	AUXILIARY PARTICLE CONDUIT
45	UNKNOWN SUBSPACE RELAY	75	GIGA-WATT SPACE-TIME EMISSION
56	INVERTED WARP FIELD SCANNER	76	ANOMALOUS DATA CONTINUUM
57	MODULATED WARP EMITTER	77	ASSYMETRICAL E-M SIGNAL
58	THERMAL NADION HARMONIC MONITOR	78	MAGNETIC SYSTEM DISCRIMINATOR
59	QUANTUM NADION COUPLING	79	TEMPORAL TETRYON HARMONIC
50	MODULATED TACYON STREAM CONDUIT	80	GIGA-WATT NEUTRINO RELAY
51	PHASED WAVEFRONT RELAY	81	SPATIAL DATABANKS VARIANCE LOG
52	OPTICAL DATA CAPACITOR	82	PLASMA PULSE SEQUENCER
53	DATABANKS CONTROLLER	83	WARP PHASE CAPACITOR
54	QUANTUM PARTICLE EFFECT	84	IONIC SUPERFICIAL EFFECT
55	TEMPORAL PLASMA DISCRIMINATOR	85	OSCILLATING SYSTEM DISTORTION
56	THERMAL PARTICLE DISTORTION FIELD	86	PHOTONIC DATA RELAY
57	IONIC GRAVIMETRIC CONTROLLER	87	THERMAL QUANTUM ARRAY
58	MAGNATOMIC ALTERNATING PHENOMENON	88	RECIPROCATING GRAVIMETRIC CONTINUUM
59	AUXILIARY DATABANKS CONTROL BUS	89	VERTERON TETRYON ARRAY
60	MICROSCOPIC BARYON MATRIX	90	RAPID TETRYON SINGULARITY
61	POWER DAMPENING CAPACITOR	91	TEMPORAL BARYON DISTURBANCE
62	QUANTUM CAPACITOR	92	SONIC DATABANKS CAPACITOR
63	RECIPROCATING WAVEFRONT STREAM MODULATOR	93	THERMAL SUBSPACE PATTERN SEPARATOR
64	SONIC BARYON PATTERN CONVERTOR	94	OSCILLATING SUBSPACE NUTATION
65	MICROSCOPIC SPACE-TIME INVERSION SEQUENCER	95	RECIPROCATING NEUTRINO EMISSION REDUCER
66	OPTICAL NEUTRINO VARIANCE SEQUENCER	96	PHOTONIC INTERFACE VARIANCE SEQUENCER
67	TRANS-WARP GRAVIMETRIC CONTROLLER	97	PHOTONIC SEQUENCING ARRAY
68	MODULATED GRAVIMETRIC SINGULARITY	98	VERTERON DATA FIELD CROSS CONTROLLER
69	SUBSPACE DISCRIMINATOR	99	OPTICAL SYSTEM DATA CONTROLLER
70	ATMOSPHERIC TETRYON CONDUIT	100	AUXILIARY NEUTRINO EFFECT

Frontier Fiction

THE GRAY WAVE

Edwin Cintron

CHAPTER 1

I find it amazing that while every human in the Frontier is an descendant of someone that was either brave enough or foolhardy enough to leave Earth on man's first attempt to migrate to a new world, that so many of us are scared of space. Even the most hardened space rat gets the cold sweats when it comes to making a spacewalk.

Not me, being out in the void of space is like being in heaven; no gravity and the sight of the stars leaves me in a state of bliss. Maybe it was that or the fact that I was too busy checking my ship, Granny's Gift, that made me fail to notice that approach of company.

"Nice ship, a real classic." The voice over the com unit was feminine and had a musical tone that put me at ease.

"Yeah, a real relic! Look at the hull, that Whipple shielding. Not the passive reactive armor that modern ships use to protect against micro meteors. The engine boom, at least a hundred meter long. You know those first Fission Fragment rockets were dirty and leaked radiation like a sieve. You really wanted to be as far as possible when they were on," I replied turning to face her. She wore a heavy suit of space armor with a polarized visor that made it hard to see what she looked like. At least she wasn't armed and she was human.

"But I bet you she's fast, even with one engine, the mass to thrust ratio should make her quite some race horse," she replied with a laugh.

"Care to take a look inside," I offered.

"Sure. By the way I am Mary Nebula."

"Rodworth Shimout, but you can call me Rod," I said as I motioned toward the airlock.

She moved like an experienced spacer, using a hand jet to push her toward the airlock of Granny's Gift. I had a line attached to my ship so I pulled myself toward the lock. She waited patiently as I fumbled with the key pad. She had the grace to look away as I punched in my code and as the outer lock door opened I motioned, "After you."



She entered the lock and I followed, it was a cozy fit as it was design for a single person. We huddled together as the lock cycled and when the inner door opened we drifted inside. We both began removing our suits, first our helmets then chest plates, then piece by piece till we were both floating in our skinsuits.

We both smiled, as we looked each over. She was fairly attractive, with a heart shape face, short hair styled in a Spacer cut, and a lean muscular body. Her eyes scanned me and her smile widened, apparently pleased with what she saw.

"Well do you always accept invitations from strange men to check out their rockets?" I said.

"You're no stranger, I know a lot about you already. As a matter of fact, I've been looking for you all over the station," she said drifting close.

"For what?"

"So I can kill you!"



CHAPTER 2

Unarmed Zero Gee Combat is sometime called the Art of the Embrace because it is fought up close and personal. It was perfected back in the early days of the Frontier, when ships did not spend as much time under thrust. The limits placed on hand to hand combat by Newton's laws of motion and their effect on a person attempting to throw a punch or kick in microgravity forced spacers to adapt locks, grabs, and choke holds from the old martial arts of Muay Thai, wrestling, and Brazilian Jujutsu into a unique and deadly form of combat.

As Mary and I bounced off the walls of the small compartment, exchanging holds and counter holds, it became apparent that she was a master of the art. Also the force of her attacks revealed that she was a lot stronger than I was, and obviously she had undergone enhancement treatments to provide a strength advantage over her opponent, but she wasn't trained by Granny Shimout, one of the living masters of the Art.

Granny herself was taught by a great master, her deceased husband and my granddad, Mack "the Spider" Shimout, the man who fought his way unarmed through Hatzck Naar's flagship to bring Hatzck Naar's crippled body to Granny as a bride price.

But even with that advantage Mary was gaining the upper hand. I was getting winded and each of her attacks were

becoming harder and harder to counter. Suddenly she broke through my defense and applied a shoulder lock, which began to pop it from its socket. I twisted my body, bringing my head to her feet, my free hand braced against the bulkhead as I kicked out with both my legs and my feet connected with her chin.

The impact broke the hold, but not before my shoulder popped out of its socket, and hurled her hard into the lockers that lined the opposite bulkhead. The impact left her dazed and I pushed off the wall and wrapped my legs around her neck. A choke hold will take minutes to bring an opponent down, instead I used my legs to apply pressure to the arteries in her neck supplying blood to her brain and Mary slipped into unconsciousness.

I held the hold longer than is considered safe, but for me the danger of inflicting brain damage to her, was far out weight by the fact that I was in no condition for a rematch. After disengaging from her, I drifted over to the lockers, grabbed onto one of their handles and slammed my shoulder into the locker's edge. The impact popped my shoulder back into place but the accompanying pain almost caused me to pass out.

I struggled to search the lockers with my remaining good arm for a med kit. Once I found it, I broke out an applicator of No Pain, and jabbed it into my aching shoulder. I ran the kit's Bio-scanners over my injury and the kit's microcomputer recommended several shots from various color-labeled vials to combat the swelling and to repair muscle damage. I applied them in the recommended order, and then queried the kit for the right compound to induce sleep. Doubling its recommended dose, I jabbed it into Mary.

That would buy me time. I shifted through the remaining lockers and was able to find a tube of hull patch compound, a few cargo straps, and a needle gun. I floated Mary over to the acceleration couch and used the straps to tie her down but had my doubts that it would hold her for long. So I used the hull patch compound to glue her down to the acceleration couch.

CHAPTER 3

I waited, using the time to think, and heal. I had to find out why and who sent Mary to kill me, and I figure that she wouldn't give up that information easily.

Then an idea came to me. I began putting on my spacesuit. By the time Mary came to, I was already working on the controls for the air lock.

"What the heck are you doing?" she asked.

"Bypassing the safeties," I replied, "I need to be able to open the inner door while the outer one is open. These older ships won't normally let you do that. They were really safety conscience in the old days."

“Why are you going to open the lock to the vacuum!” her voiced rising as she started to struggle.

“Well, I know you are a professional, so I’d hate to waste my time asking who sent you. So I figure I may as well just get rid of you. I can’t just chuck you out the airlock, and I really want to make it look like an accident. Defective airlock, the perfect excuse.” I trailed off.

She gave me a look which conveyed that she had doubts about whether I had the jets to go ahead with my plan.

So I closed the air lock control panel, hit the Cycle button and the lock alarm sounded.

“You’re crazy! You wouldn’t kill me in cold blood!”

“Wouldn’t be the first time I spaced someone, and you did try to kill me,” and began donning my helmet.

“I’ll talk! Go ahead and ask me anything!” She was on the verge of tears.

“Fine, who sent you?”

“Don Sam!” She replied expecting me to know who that was.

Organize crime is one of the many players in the struggle for power on the Frontier. It walks the fine line between the Corporations and the Cadres, providing not only items that are illegal or immoral but also providing a balancing influence. Neither of the three could ride roughshod over the other as the other two will band together to prevent such excess. Not a perfect system, but one that works without a strong government to manage the Frontier. Don Sam or “Sammie the Knife”, ran one of the biggest crime families on Lossend, the main world of the Timeon system.

“Why?” I asked

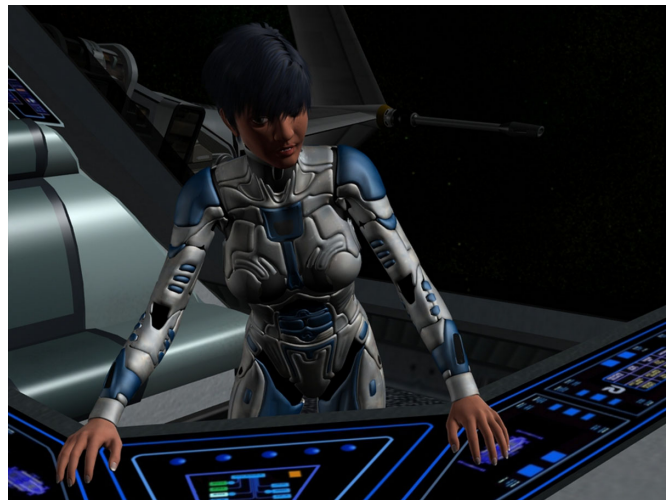
“He told me that they wanted the ship, I am to pilot her over to a berth that he reserved. It’s nothing personal, they pay me and I do the job,” she said.

“Well I just need to see the why then!”

CHAPTER 4

Granny had told me when she gave me the ship, that she suspected that it was a smuggler craft. With newer ships like the assault scout and massive bulk freighters doing most of the hauling, there were little cargoes that a one man pinnace could carry that would make a profit, and they were all illegal.

I began my search, knocking on bulkheads, floor and ceiling, listening for a hollow space. As it turned out I found one, on the floor of cabinet. Taking a pry bar from the repair locker, I managed to separate the floor plate from the struts and found a compartment filled with a dozen silver flasks. I grabbed one of the flasks finding it



cold to the touch, and marked with a strange symbol. What could it be?

I needed answers and knew of only one person that could help. I closed the compartment, found in my suit locker my void bag, which is used to carry items in the vacuum of space, and placed the flask in it. I cycled the lock and donned my helmet.

Mary, who was watching the whole time shouted, “You’re not leaving me here?”

“Yes, as soon as get back I’ll let you go. If I don’t return, then I figure you’ll somehow manage to free yourself.”

After entering the station, I went to Land Fall, the station’s only space bar, sitting alone in the corner, nursing a bottle of gin was Eddy “The Mouse” Wilson. His eyes widen and he got up and fled to the men’s room. I intercepted him. “Eddie, wait I need your help!” Eddie was not exactly one of my fans; he had a real crush on Alice who I left stranded with no radio and only twelve hours of air on an asteroid.

Eddie sobbed, “Why should I help you?”

“Cause we are both Spacers. And you owe me your life.” I reminded him of how I rescued him and the crew of the Star Dancer from pirates.

I showed him the flask and he said “that’s a cryo-flask, it used to transport biological material like frozen embryos.”

“How do we find out what in it?”

CHAPTER 5

Eddie had a girlfriend (who would have known?) that worked for the station medical department. We brought the Flask to her and she opened it in an air tight isolation box and examined the content of the flask with a fiberscope.

“Looks like rabbit embryos, the flask could easily store a hundred at this stage of development.” See said as she looked at her scope.

“Rabbits?” Eddie and I asked.

There was a big black market in Earth pets on human worlds on the Frontier, Eddie's friend explained. Rabbits were a potential money-maker. Being cute and cuddly made them easy to sell. Each one could yield a profit of ten thousand credits apiece. And being fast breeders, they could easily build an inventory to meet demands.

The major issue was that they were fast breeder. Without any natural predators on Timeon, any that managed to escape into the wild would be the start of a natural disaster. Eddie's friend called it the Gray Wave.

“You know that on Old Earth, in a land called Australia, a score of rabbits were introduced, after ten years rabbits had become so numerous that millions could be shot or trapped annually without having any effect on the population.

Hundreds of millions of credits worth of crops were damage by the creatures.”

“But, you need a lab to grow them?” I asked.

She looked at me, giving me the look that women give men when they reveal that there's more to the packet than just brawn, “Yes, and an artificial womb would be needed, and a supply of nutrient formula to have them develop. Not a small operation in the least, especially if you want to decant hundreds of the little buggers.”

A thought tugged at my mind, true there was money to be made, but the amount of embryos and the scale of the operation, didn't seem to fit. Couldn't they have just smuggled a dozen embryos in a small container and walk it through customs. Why thousands of rabbits, wouldn't that flood the market and bring the price down?

“What's the gestation period of a rabbit?” I asked.

“Average gestation period for rabbits is thirty days,” she replied and arched her eyes brow. “By the way, I'm Renee.” as she held out her hand to shake.

“Rodworth, you can call me Rod,” I said as I shook her hand.

Eddie gave me a crossed look, not very pleased with the attention I was getting.

“Renee, how did the Earthers handle the rabbit overpopulation problem?”

“Well Roddie, they tried everything, fences, hunting them, eventually they tried a biological solution, they released a virus called Myxomatosis, but the population became immune, so other diseases were introduced.”

“And if these rabbits are immune to all the known countermeasures?”

She took a tissue sample and placed in a gene reader.

She uttered a swear, “Wow you wouldn't believe it, but these kits are immune to all know biological agents that target rabbits, these are super bunnies.”

As I thought, this was more than a struggling operation, someone wanted to sabotage the farming industry on Lossend. Since mankind had seeded the entire world with Earth vegetation, someone could introduce the rabbits into the wild far from farmlands, and in a few years the rabbit would overrun the entire planet. Lossend supplied foodstuffs to most of the human industrial worlds in the Frontier, the effect would be catastrophic.

I had Renee contact the station law enforcer, she explained about the rabbits and the effect on the farm industry, and after they contacted their higher ups in the planetary government, I had an escort of a dozen enforcers, custom officials and a Guard cutter to take me back to my ship.

Renee came along to help in the handling of any biological material they retrieved, there was a good chance the other vials contained some kind of biological trap.

We cracked the door of the inner lock and as soon as we entered, Mary spotted the uniforms of the Timeon Enforcers and went into convolutions. Renee rushed to her and injected her with something to stop the fits. The convolutions stopped but Mary slipped into a catatonic state.

The Timeon authorities, had my ship towed to the station, and began a detailed search of Granny's Gift. The flasks I found were removed under guard, very likely to be destroyed.

As for Mary, the Peace Officers searched all their databases, while they could not find match for her as an associate of Don Sam, her DNA matched a member of an exploratory mission that was lost five years earlier in the Lesser Morass.

Many ships disappeared over the years exploring that area, no one ever discovered why. Mary's appearance here was a mystery along with her employer, and their true goal. Was it simple terrorism or some plot to blackmail the farming corporations?

As the last enforcer left my ship, Renee hung back.

“I owe you one, without your help with the enforcer, they very likely confiscated my ship and hurled me in the brig as some kind of accessory,” I said offering my hand to help her through the airlock.”

“You could pay me back by taking me to dinner,” she countered, staring me in the eyes.

“Sure thing,” I said as we headed into the station.



GRYMZ

GUIDE TO INTERGALACTIC CONQUEST



LESSON #6: LOOSE ENDS

