ALTERNITY

5

LAST RESORT

ALTERNITY
GAME DAY
march 3rd

The Last Resort Disclaimers

Credits

Submissions Guidelines

The Last Resort is accepting any Alternity-related articles for publication. We will also accept general roleplaying articles that can be used for the Alternity game.

Authors may wish to submit applicable articles to regular or semi-regular columns. The following is a list of the current columns:

Action Emporium: arms, armor and equipment
Bestiary Bizarre: creatures for Gamma World setting
Cyber Shop: robotics and cybernetics
Domain Virtua: detailed grid site
Foes Fantastic: creatures for arcane Alternity
Grid Run: computers and gridrunning
Home Rule Advantage: home rules for Alternity
Legion: heroes, villains, and SCMs
Mind's Eye: psionics
Special FX: super powers and magic
Species Catalogue: alien species for Alternity
Sword and Staff: arcane Alternity
Tavern Tales: game fiction
Tangents: alternate worlds
Veritas Omnes Liberant: conspiracies for Dark Matter setting
Xenohunter's Field Guide: xenoforms for Dark Matter setting

Note: Cook's Guide is written every issue by Matthew R. Esch under the pseudonym of Montgomery Cook IX. We will accept other correspondents who want to cover the Star Drive universe and either incorporate the article into Cook's Guide or format it as a stand alone article, whatever the author's preference.

If you have an idea for a new regular column feel free to email us at lastresortmail@yahoo.com or meschman09@yahoo.com

Article Guidelines

1. Word (.doc), Rich Text Format (.rtf), or ASCII text (.txt) are the preferred formats for submission of articles. Other formats will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
2. Excel files can be submitted for tables used in the article.
3. Indicate within the text what sections need to be sidebars and where pictures (if applicable) need to be placed in relation to the text.
Requests for pictures from staff artists may also be made if you do not or cannot provide your own.
4. Do not place pictures in article file. Send them as separate files.
5. The title and author's name must be placed on the first line of the article to insure proper credit is given.
6. Citing material from other sources is acceptable, but credit should be given to original source. When citing core rule books, "PHB p.x" or "GMG p.y" is strongly suggested. Other canon sources should have thier full common names. For example, "Dataware" should be spelled out, whereas "Alien Compendium 2" can be shortened to "AC2". Outside game resources should also be listed in some form of bibliography. Consult assigned editor for specific questions."

Send files to:
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Art Guidelines

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Changing Lives, Shifting Priorities

Written by Matthew R. Esch

I hope that some ALTERNITY RPG fan is reading this somewhere. It's not that I doubt that they are out there, far from it. My hope is that this piece that is being written now sees the light of day in the promised 5th issue of *The Last Resort*. The previous issue, LR4, nearly had to be cancelled. This issue, the 5th, was beginning to look as though it might suffer the same fate and, remarkably enough, for the same reason: the editor-in-chief had a baby on the way. For LR4, it was *The Last Resort's* founder, Darryl Blasi, expecting his daughter. For LR5, it's me, expecting my daughter. On January 29, at about 3 in the morning, Kathryn was here, and my wife, Angela, and my son, Zack (now 4), welcomed her to this world.

When LR4 was languishing and fading into near obscurity within the Alternity on-line community, I took it upon myself to rally the LR staff troops to the cause to get LR4 out there. Now, I am guilty of (nearly) allowing LR5 to do the same. For those readers out there who have not experienced expecting parenthood, take it from me, the experience is difficult to put to words, even for someone was wordy as I've been accused of being. In this space last issue, I wrote of a landmark event for a hero I created and played for four and a half years in the campaign that gave that hero purpose. Since then, the campaign has quickly faded into history for the remainder of the cast. EV2503's GM, Mike Meechan, and I haven't even played Alternity in nearly a year since then. That campaign was, and will likely remain a tough act to follow for several years.

Some who have read a few of my hordes of posts on TS.net and/or A.net a couple of years ago know that I have added a few letters to the end of my name, and changed jobs. It's very safe to say that I'm not the same person that I was a mere two years ago. We all change and grow as time passes: it is inevitable. To quote *Star Trek: The Next Generation*'s Borg: "Resistance is futile." The direct result of this is that this machine that I have become so entwined with for my formative Alternity on-line community years I hardly use these days. Where I once would spend 8+ hours a day, 5 days a week on a computer, and with little oversight as to what I was doing between entering piles upon piles of data, I now could easily go weeks, even months between checking my e-mail. Some would wonder why I would do this. Why, the never-ending quest for the almighty dollar, that's why! Sure, it's nice that I'm doing a job that is needed, necessary, and is rewarding, and not just monetarily, but this also means a change for me and my relationship to not only this publication, but also to the on-line community. Where before I would post an average of 12-20 posts each site per weekday, now I've not posted in months.

I guess part of me was in wicked denial about this new reality. You would think that someone who makes his current living pointing this out to others would be quick to point this out to himself. Think again. In my capacity as co-editor-in-chief (as anointed by Daryl following LR4), I have followed his footsteps all too well, it would seem. It saddens me to write such a downer, especially considering the subject matter of the last piece I wrote here. I signed on to write for this publication when it was first formed as a way of contributing back to a community that provided me with a sense of a larger community beyond my somewhat small, and isolated world. I took a lot of ideas from everyone who I traded posts with for those years, and hopefully, I, or rather, something I wrote, inspired someone else to a new way of looking at this really cool role-playing game system. I especially liked trading posts with Neil Spicer, a man whose writing (though in that typically long-winded Borealin style) I have grown to respect as much as anyone else who has read at least 3 of Neil's posts (three-paragraph minimum). TS.net is littered with several episodes of the "Neil and Bri' show", and I think for about 2-4 months after Vassilis created forums at TS.net, we were the only regular posters. A few weeks ago, I checked TS.net, only to find it was off-line, due to technical issues. What a kick in the teeth.

I think that beyond the nuances of the game of Alternity itself and its settings, both published and fan-created, we all couldn't help but to let some of our own, real selves out in each post. Though many of us could walk down the same street and not recognize one another, at different times, some of the posters were as well known to me as one could be, only by reading what was written. The allure of the present day Grid, the feeble Internet, is still potent. I called you "brother" or "sister", as appropriate. I meant it. I still do. There is a kinship, a bond, which we have all shared to some degree or other, depending on how often one visits. The welcome given may have varied for some, but I made it a point to be accommodating to each new handle I saw post a comment or ask a question. I can only hope that this precedent has become tradition. Though I am not as active I used to be, I hope that this, as well as the other small gifts I have given back to the on-line community have not been lost. I hope that there still is a community not only by the time this sees press, but also for years to come. Though many cried foul when Wizards of the Coast ended the line, they too saw that the time had come to move on. No, my Alternity books aren't for sale. I envision them getting a LOT of use, especially in about 10 or so years, when my kids are ready to play. Until then, I need to come up with a story that will keep them interested!

Written by Jonathan McMonigle

Terran Armor

CMC-100 Combat Vest
Availability: Controlled
Mass: 3 kg
Environmental Tolerance:
    Gravity: n/a
    Radiation: n/a
    Atmosphere: n/a
    Pressure: n/a
    Heat: n/a
Action Penalty: 0
Toughness: Ordinary
LI/HI/En: d4/d6-2/d4-2
Hide: +2
Effective Strength: -
Skill: -

The CMC-100 Combat Vest is a simple protective vest designed to protect the wearer's vital organs and covers the stomach, chest, shoulders, and back. Although certainly not the best armor, many agree that it's better than nothing.

CMC-200 Flak Jacket
Availability: Controlled
Mass: 8 kg
Environmental Tolerance:
    Gravity: n/a
    Radiation: n/a
    Atmosphere: n/a
    Pressure: n/a
    Heat: n/a
Action Penalty: +2
Toughness: Ordinary
LI/HI/En: d4+2/d6+1/d4
Hide: -
Effective Strength: -
Skill: Armor Operation-*combat*

The CMC-200 Flak Jacket is worn by militia that can't afford to buy or maintain powered armor. While still considered "soft" armor, it stands up to a fair amount of punishment and covers everything but the wearer's head, hands, and feet.

CMC-300/400 Powered Combat Suit
Availability: Military
Mass: 25 kg
Environmental Tolerance:
    Gravity: G2-G3
    Radiation: R0-R5
    Atmosphere: A0-A4
    Pressure: P0-P4
    Heat: H0-H4
Action Penalty: +2
Toughness: Good
LI/HI/En: d6+1/d6+2/d6
Hide: -
Effective Strength: 15
Skill: Armor Operation-*powered*

The standard armor worn by Terran Marines, the CMC-300 Powered Combat Suit is effective against small-arms fire and provides full life-support and NBC (Nuclear/Biological/Chemical) shielding for use in deep space or hazardous environments. A comm system and shoulder-mounted floodlight are also included. The CMC-400 model comes equipped with StimPacks.

UEA-375 Melee Combat Suit
Availability: Military
Mass: 20 kg
Environmental Tolerance:
    Gravity: G2-G3
    Radiation: R0-R5
    Atmosphere: A0-A4
    Pressure: P0-P4
    Heat: H0-H4
Action Penalty: +2
Toughness: Good
LI/HI/En: d4+3/d6+1/d4+1
Hide: -
Effective Strength: 15
Skill: Armor Operation-*powered*

The UEA-375 Melee Combat Suit is designed for close-quarters combat. It provides excellent defense against most melee weapons and small arms fire as well as the usual environmental protection, comm gear, and floodlight.

UEA-405 Light Combat Suit
Availability: Military
Mass: 20 kg
Environmental Tolerance:
    Gravity: G2-G3
    Radiation: R0-R5
    Atmosphere: A0-A4
    Pressure: P0-P4
    Heat: H0-H4
Action Penalty: +2
Toughness: Good
LI/HI/En: d4+1/d4+1/d4
Hide: -
Effective Strength: 15
Skill: Armor Operation-*powered*

The UEA-405 Light Combat Suit worn by UED Medics provides full life-support and NBC (Nuclear/Biological/Chemical) shielding for use in deep space or hazardous environments. A comm system is also included.

UEA-500 Combat Support Suit
Availability: Military
Mass: 28 kg
Environmental Tolerance:
    Gravity: G2-G3
    Radiation: R0-R5
    Atmosphere: A0-A4
    Pressure: P0-P4
    Heat: H0-H4
Action Penalty: +3
Toughness: Good
LI/HI/En: d6/d6+1/d6
Hide: -
Effective Strength: 16
Skill: Armor Operation-*powered*

The UEA-500 Combat Support Suit is used almost exclusively by Marines using heavy weapons. It serves as an anchor point, negating the usual +1 penalty for firing such a weapon without the use of support. The UEA-500 provides the same environmental protection as the CMC-300 and also comes with comm gear and a shoulder-mounted floodlight.

CMC-660 Heavy Combat Suit
Availability: Military
Mass: 28 kg
Environmental Tolerance:
    Gravity: G2-G3
    Radiation: R0-R5
    Atmosphere: A0-A4
    Pressure: P0-P4
    Heat: H0-H4
Action Penalty: +3
Toughness: Good
LI/HI/En: d6+1/d6+2/d8+1
Hide: -
Effective Strength: 16
Skill: Armor Operation-*powered*

The trademark armor of Terran Firebats is the CMC-660 Heavy Combat Suit. It provides more strength than the CMC-300 and increased protection against heat and flame but is otherwise the same.

Hostile Environment Suit
Availability: Restricted
Mass: 5 kg
Environmental Tolerance:
    Gravity: n/a
    Radiation: R0-R5
    Atmosphere: A0-A4
    Pressure: P0-P4
    Heat: H0-H4
Action Penalty: +1
Toughness: Ordinary
LI/HI/En: d4+1/d4/d4
Hide: +2
Effective Strength: -
Skill: Armor Operation-*combat*

Worn exclusively by Ghosts, the Hostile Environment Suit provides environment protection equal to the CMC-300 but lacks all other features save comm gear. Instead, the suit includes a cloaking device that lasts for 2 hours and will recharge itself in 3½.

NeoSteel Shield
Availability: Military
Mass: 3 kg
Environmental Tolerance:
    Gravity: n/a
    Radiation: n/a
    Atmosphere: n/a
    Pressure: n/a
    Heat: n/a
Action Penalty: +1
Toughness: Good
LI/HI/En: +3/+2/+2
Hide: -
Effective Strength: -
Skill: Armor Operation

Generally carried by Terran Medics, the NeoSteel shield provides additional protection and a source of mobile cover.
If used as cover, the NeoSteel shield serves as Good cover (+2 resistance modifier)

Terran Weapons

Combat Knife
Availability: Any
Mass: 1 kg
Payload: Conventional blade
Accuracy: 0
Actions: 4
Type/Firepower: LI/O
Damage: d4+1w/d4+3w/d4m
Range: Personal*
Hide: +3
Clip/charge Size: n/a
Skill: Melee Weapons-*blade*

A favorite of outdoorsmen and soldiers, the combat knife is a sturdy metal blade that can be used to pin something down or open something up. In a pinch, it can also be used as a weapon.

Ghost Energy Blade
Availability: Restricted
Mass: 1 kg
Payload: Psionic energy
Accuracy: 0
Actions: 4
Type/Firepower: En/G
Damage: d6w/d6+1w/d4m
Range: Personal
Hide: +3
Clip/charge Size: 12
Skill: Melee Weapons-*powered*

The Ghost energy blade is a result of Terran research into Protoss technology. It allows a Ghost to turn psionic energy into a blade in much the same way a Zealot power suit does for Protoss soldiers. However, the method used has yet to be refined and the weapon can be used for only a limited time.

A-4 Striker Gauss Carbine
Availability: Military
Mass: 3 kg
Payload: 8mm metal "spike"
Accuracy: 0
Actions: 3
Mode: F/B
Type/Firepower: HI/O

Damage: d4+4w/2d4+2w/d6+3m
Range: 15/50/120 meters
Hide: +1
Clip/charge Size: 18 rounds/6 bursts
Skill: Modern Ranged Weapons-*rifle*

The A-4 Striker gauss carbine serves as the primary weapon of vehicle crews or Marines engaged in urban combat. It has the same hitting power as a C-14 gauss rifle and slightly better range than the C-7 gauss pistol.

C-7 Stinger Gauss Pistol

Availability: Military
Mass: 2 kg
Payload: 8mm metal "spike"
Accuracy: 0
Actions: 4
Mode: F
Type/Firepower: HI/O
Damage: 2d4w/2d4+1w/d4+3m
Range: 10/20/100 meters
Hide: +3
Clip/charge Size: 12 rounds
Skill: Modern Ranged Weapons-*pistol*

The C-7 Stinger gauss pistol is the standard sidearm issued to all Terran forces.

C-10 Canister Rifle

Availability: Restricted
Mass: 4 kg
Payload: Various ordinances
Accuracy: 0
Actions: 3
Mode: F
Type/Firepower: varies
Damage: by ordinance
Range: 80/200/800 meters
Hide: -
Clip/charge Size: 15 rounds
Skill: Modern Ranged Weapons-*rifle*

Although considered the exclusive property of Ghosts, the C-10 canister rifle is occasionally issued to specially trained Marines. The rifle is designed to accept a variety of 25mm ordinances and is the only weapon that can be fitted with a laser designator to target nuclear missiles.

A-12 Combat Shotgun

Availability: Military
Mass: 3 kg
Payload: 12-gauge FSDS slug
Accuracy: 0
Actions: 3
Mode: F
Type/Firepower: HI/O
Damage: d6+2w/2d4+1w/d4+3m
Range: 10/20/80 meters
Hide: +1
Clip/charge Size: 6 rounds
Skill: Modern Ranged Weapons-*rifle*

The UED A-12 combat shotgun fires FSDS slugs designed for maximum armor penetration. It uses a tubular magazine and comes fitted with a laser sight.
This weapon does Good damage at short range.
This weapon has –1 Accuracy and does double damage at short and medium ranges.

A-13 Flash Grenade Launcher

Availability: Military
Mass: 2 kg
Payload: Flash grenade
Accuracy: 0
Actions: 3
Mode: F
Type/Firepower: special
Damage: special
Range: 50/200/350 meters
Hide: -2
Clip/charge Size: 6 rounds
Skill: Heavy Weapons-*indirect*

The A-13 grenade launcher is designed to fire flash grenades. Other grenades can be modified to work with this weapon with a minimum of changes. The A-130 under-barrel grenade launcher has the same characteristics but holds only one grenade at a time.

C-14 Impaler Gauss Rifle

Availability: Military
Mass: 3 kg
Payload: 8mm metal "spike"
Accuracy: 0
Actions: 4
Mode: F/B/A
Type/Firepower: HI/O
Damage: d4+4w/2d4+2w/d6+3m
Range: 90/180/600 meters
Hide: -
Clip/charge Size: 30 rounds/10 bursts
Skill: Modern Ranged Weapons-*rifle*

The standard issue weapon of Terran Marines.

C-17 Burst Laser

Availability: Military
Mass: 8 kg
Payload: Coherent light
Accuracy: -1
Actions: 3
Mode: F
Type/Firepower: En/G
Damage: d6+1w/2d4+1w/d4+2m
Range: 100/ 600/ 1500 meters
Hide: -
Clip/charge Size: 12 shots
Skill: Heavy Weapons-*direct*

The C-17 Burst Laser is the same weapon mounted on Wraith fighters and modified to be used by infantry. If used with the UEA-500 Combat Support Suit, it receives an additional –1 to Accuracy.

C-18 Supernova Rocket Launcher

Availability: Military
Mass: 7 kg
Payload: Various rockets
Accuracy: As load
Actions: 2
Mode: F
Type/Firepower: by warhead
Damage: by warhead
Range: 40/400/2000 meters
Hide: -
Clip/charge Size: 4 shots
Skill: Heavy Weapons-*indirect*

The C-18 Supernova is an infantryman's anti-vehicle weapon and accepts a variety of missiles, including Hellfire AA and Decimator AT missiles.

A-19 Penetrator Gauss Machine Gun
Availability: Military
Mass: 10 kg
Payload: 8mm metal "spike"
Accuracy: 0
Actions: 4
Mode: F/B/A
Type/Firepower: HI/G
Damage: d6w/d6+2w/d4+1m
Range: 200/600/1200 meters
Hide: -
Clip/charge Size: 150 rounds
Skill: Heavy Weapons-*direct*

Brought to the Koprulu Sector by the UED, the Penetrator is a heavier version of the C-14 gauss rifle.

Perdition Plasma-based Flamethrower
Availability: Military
Mass: 6 kg
Payload: Incandescent plasma
Accuracy: 0
Actions: 2
Mode: F/B/A
Type/Firepower: En/G
Damage: d8w/d8+2w/d8+4w
Range: 6/20/60 meters
Hide: -
Clip/charge Size: 15 bursts
Skill: Heavy Weapons-*direct*

Along with the CMC-660, the Perdition plasma-based flamethrower is the trademark of the Terran Firebats.

Terran Ammo

U-238 Gauss Shells
Availability: Restricted
Payload: Depleted uranium
Platform: Any gauss weapon

The U-238 shells provide a 10% increase to the range of the weapon they are used with.

HE Canister Rounds
Availability: Restricted
Payload: Shrapnel
Type/Firepower: HI/G
Damage: d4+3w/d6+3w/d4+2m
Area of Effect: Contact/2m/6m

The HE canister is the standard ammunition for the C-10 canister rifle.

Thorn Canister Rounds
Availability: Restricted
Payload: NeoSteel Slug
Type/Firepower: HI/G
Damage: d8w/d4+1m/d6+2m
Area of Effect: Contact

The Thorn NeoSteel spike is designed to drop targets in a single shot.
Halve the target's armor (round up)

Shock Canister Rounds
Availability: Restricted
Payload: Unknown
Type/Firepower: En/G or En/A
Damage: d6+4w/2d6+3w/2d4+1m
Area of Effect: 2m/4m/10m

The Shock canister round turns the canister rifle into a low-end Shock Cannon. It does En/A out to medium range (4 meters).

Lockdown Canister Rounds
Availability: Restricted
Payload: EM pulse
Type/Firepower: special
Damage: special
Area of Effect: Contact

The lockdown canister is designed to disable electronic equipment. Any device shot with a lockdown canister suffers a +5 penalty to all actions for 5 rounds (1 minute). Possible targets include powered armor, vehicles, cybergear, robotic/automatic defenses, or any form of computer. Zerg are unaffected by this round.

RV-26 Canister Rounds
Availability: Restricted
Payload: Retrovirus
Type/Firepower: special
Damage: special
Area of Effect: 5m

The RV-26 is a bioengineered virus designed specifically for killing Zerg. The canister functions like a gas grenade, releasing the virus into an area 5m wide. The virus is heavier than air and will quickly (after 1 round) fall to the ground. It will then begin to saturate the area and affect everything 2m down. The virus is potent for approximately 1 hour. Against Zerg, it acts as a neurotoxin, Terrans suffer the effects of an irritant, and the virus has no known affect on Protoss.

Longbolt AA Missile
Availability: Restricted
Payload: Shrapnel
Type/Firepower: HI/A
Damage: d4+1w/d4+3w/d4m
Area of Effect: 4m/8m/12m

The Longbolt AA missile is designed to take out enemy aircraft. It uses a proximity warhead that detonates as close to the target as possible.

Decimator AT Missile
Availability: Restricted
Payload: Directional charge
Type/Firepower: HI/A
Damage: d6+3w/2d4+3w/d4+2m
Area of Effect: Contact/1m/2m

The Decimator AT missile is for use against ground opponents such as Siege Tanks, Goliaths, Dragoons, or Ultralisks.

Terran Miscellaneous

StimPacks

Commonly used by Terran infantry, StimPacks provide an unequalled method of improving combat performance. However, using them too often will result in several unwanted effects.

The benefits of StimPacks are many. Characters under the effects of a StimPack have a -1 step bonus to their Action Checks, 1 additional action per round (max. of 4 actions), and their movement rates increase by 25%. Also, the affected character does not suffer the effects of being Dazed or Fatigued and cannot be knocked out if all their stun points are gone (this includes a failed *endurance* check for taking an Amazing hit). Loss of all wound points will render a character unconscious and penalties for mortal damage still apply.

A StimPack lasts for 5 rounds (1 minute) or until the end of the combat scene. At this time, all Stun damage is removed as normal and d6+2 stun is then applied. Medical attention cannot remove this stun though it can revive a character to one stun point if they are rendered unconscious from this damage. After 8 hours of rest, the stun damage is removed.

Characters may also become addicted to StimPacks. A character's resistance to becoming addicted is equal to their Will score. Each time a character uses one, they must make a Resolve-*mental resolve* check. Critical failure results in a loss of 3 points, Failure: 2, Ordinary: 1. There is no effect on the character on a Good or Amazing result. At the end of each week that a character did not use a StimPack, they may make another Resolve-*mental resolve* check. Ordinary restores 2 points, Good: 3, and Amazing: 4.

Addicted characters must use a StimPack every 8 hours or suffer the effects of Moderate Mental Instability (page 175 in the *GMG*). Characters with Medical Science-*psychology* may attempt to treat the addicted person. Rolls are made once per week and treated as a Resolve-*mental resolve* check with Failure indicting no change and a Critical Failure requiring the psychologist to start over. Once a character has recovered all of their points, the addiction is broken.

Protoss Armor

Dark Templar Battle Dress
Availability: Controlled
Mass: 4 kg
Environmental Tolerance:
    Gravity: n/a
    Radiation: R0-R2
    Atmosphere: A0-A4
    Pressure: P0-P4
    Heat: H0-H2
Action Penalty: +2
Toughness: Ordinary
LI/HI/En: d4+2/d6/d6
Hide: -
Effective Strength: -
Skill: Armor Operation-*combat*

The Dark Templar battle dress armor is more akin to an armored soft e-suit than to actual combat armor. Its primary purpose is to allow the wearer to survive in space and includes oxygen, temperature control, and comm gear.

Protoss Power Suit
Availability: Military
Mass: 15 kg
Environmental Tolerance:
    Gravity: G2-G3
    Radiation: R0-R5
    Atmosphere: A0-A4
    Pressure: P0-P4
    Heat: H0-H4
Action Penalty: +2
Toughness: Good
LI/HI/En: d4+3/d6+1/d6
Hide: -
Effective Strength: 15
Skill: Armor Operation-*powered*

The powered armor worn by all Protoss Zealots. The standard version is equipped with two psionic blades. However, some of the newer power suits have only one psionic blade and a PPG. Comm gear is included with both versions.

Protoss Shields
Availability: Military
Mass: 2 kg
Environmental Tolerance:
    Gravity: n/a
    Radiation: n/a
    Atmosphere: n/a
    Pressure: n/a
    Heat: n/a
Action Penalty: -
Toughness: special
LI/HI/En: special
Hide: +2
Effective Strength: -
Skill: -

All Protoss units serving in or near combat situations are given a shield generator. This device, usually worn as a backpack, turns psionic energy into a defensive field that surrounds the wearer. This field acts as an ablative harness (page 191 of the *PHB*). Light shields have 35 points, medium shields have 50, and heavy shields have 75.

Protoss Weapons

Dark Templar Sword
Availability: Military
Mass: 2 kg
Payload: Conventional blade
Accuracy: 0
Actions: 4
Type/Firepower: LI/O
Damage: d6+1w/d4+3w/d4+1m
Range: Personal
Hide: +3
Clip/charge Size: n/a
Skill: Melee Weapons-*blade*

The sword used by Dark Templar is a fallback weapon should they exhaust their psionic energies. It resembles a short sword.

Psionic Blade
Availability: Military
Mass: 3 kg
Payload: Psionic energy
Accuracy: -1
Actions: 4
Type/Firepower: En/G
Damage: d4+1w/2d4w/d4+1m
Range: Personal
Hide: -
Clip/charge Size: n/a
Skill: Melee Weapons-*powered*

The Protoss power suit is usually equipped with two of these weapons.

Warp Blade
Availability: Military
Mass: -
Payload: Solidified warp energy
Accuracy: -1
Actions: 4
Type/Firepower: En/G
Damage: d6+1w/2d6w/d4+3m
Range: Personal
Hide: -
Clip/charge Size: special
Skill: Melee Weapons-*powered*

Because the Dark Templar severed their psionic link to the rest of the Protoss, they are unable to utilize the same technologies and techniques as their brethren. This required that they develop new ways of doing old things. One of the developments was the harnessing of warp space. Dark Templar may form a blade of solid warp-space energy at will. Summoning a warp blade does not require an action or a skill check but the character must spend one psionic energy point per round to maintain the blade.

Phased Psionic Projectile Gauntlet
(created by Velocity_Boost)
Skill: Modern Ranged Weapons - *Pistol*
Accuracy Mod: +1
Modes: F
Range: 6/12/40
Type: En/O
Damage: d4w/d4+2w/d4m
Actions: 3
Clip Size: 6
Hide: +2
Mass: 1

Psionic Overcharge
By increasing the aperture of the crystal focusing lens, a less-controlled burst of energy can be released from the weapon. Whereas the primary weapon's projectiles (each draining one from the 'clip') are a pale, bluish-white, the 'overcharged' projectiles become more reddish than blue.
Firing an overcharge round drains three (3) 'rounds' from the clip, but does d6w/2d4w/d4+1m damage (still of En/O type).

Psionic Flare
By expending some of the psionic energy stored within the weapon into temporarily 'phasing' the focusing crystal, the psionic projectile then fired also becomes phased, allowing it to pass through most corporeal objects surrounding a living target. The 'flare' projectile is a distinctive purple in colour.
Firing a flare drains all of the power points in a fully charged weapon; it must have all 6 points available, otherwise the flare cannot be used. After firing, the phased nature of the focusing crystal also dissipates, so any consecutive firings are not automatically phased.
A flare projectile deals the normal listed damage, but its range becomes 10/20/60 and it ignores all armour on living targets only. The phase vibrations are, in essence, 'powered' by the vibrations generated by nearby living things, and is unable to pass through solid surfaces unless a living entity is near at hand. In game terms, this means that if the target is living and wearing armour, it ignores the armour. If the target is, for some reason or another, not alive (a wall or a tank, for example), the projectile deals damage normally and does not pass through**.**

Phase Disrupter Pistol
Availability: Military
Mass: 2 kg
Payload: Disintegration bolt
Accuracy: 0
Actions: 3
Mode: F
Type/Firepower: En/G
Damage: d6w/d6+2w/d6m
Range: 10/20/80 meters
Hide: +3
Clip/charge Size: 8 shots
Skill: Modern Ranged Weapons-*pistol*

The phase disrupter pistol is a hand-held version of the cannon mounted on Dragoons and Arbiters.

Photon Blaster Rifle
Availability: Military
Mass: 4 kg
Payload: Particle beam
Accuracy: 0
Actions: 3
Mode: F/B/A
Type/Firepower: En/O
Damage: d6+1w/d6+3w/d6+1m
Range: 60/150/400 meters
Hide: -
Clip/charge Size: 36 shots
Skill: Modern Ranged Weapons-*rifle*

Another vehicle-mounted weapon scaled down for use by infantry, the Photon Blaster Rifle serves as a Protoss assault rifle.

Protoss Psionics
The Protoss have access to a few psionic skills that the Terrans do not: Mind Control, Psionic Bolt, and Psionic Storm. All three of these are detailed in the StarCraft.pdf file.

Protoss Notes

Protoss Technology
Most Protoss technology is designed to take advantage of their inherit psionic powers. Details are found in the StarCraft.pdf.

Psionic Recharging
Protoss ranged weapons can be "reloaded" by expending psionic energy. 1 psionic energy point will completely recharge a weapon's "clip". Shields can also be recharged by expending 1 energy point per shield point regained. A Protoss cannot "drain" a weapon or shield to regain lost psionic energy. If a Protoss rests for 8 hours, all of his psionic energy is restored and his shields are fully recharged.

Dark Templar, Warp Energy, and Technology
Warp energy by nature is extremely unstable. Because of this, Dark Templar may not use Heavy Shields or Power Suits. Ranged weapons may be used normally.

Protoss and Fatigue
Because Protoss technology relies so much on psionic energy, a worn out Protoss has trouble using his gear. A Protoss with Fatigue damage suffers an additional +1 penalty if attempting to use something that actively draws energy (such as a power suit or psionic blades). Also, shields do not recharge and ranged weapons cannot be "reloaded".

Written by
Jake "Apoc527" Bernstein

Ship Weapons, Defenses, and Equipment

Advanced Personal Weapons

New Verge Equipment

New Tried and True Personal Arms

And More…

Introduction

The *Verge Runner* is a comprehensive catalog, published yearly, that contains a sampling of the year's technological advances in personal arms, ship weapons and systems, and miscellaneous equipment. Many items appearing in the Verge for the first time are also included, for those wanting an explanation of our Charge Weapon section. Most of these items can be ordered through the *Verge Runner* for our listed price. It may be possible to find the item you're looking for elsewhere, and it may cost less, but good luck getting a hold of it. The *Verge Runner* has licenses for equipment that are unavailable to the average spacer.

Disclaimer: The *Verge Runner* takes no responsibility for actions done with equipment from this catalog. Nothing here can be linked to the *Verge Runner* and all transactions are kept in highly secure databanks. DO NOT TRY TO HACK INTO OUR COMPUTER SYSTEM. Thank you.

Ship Weapons and Modifications

We at the *VR* know how much the safety of your cargo and person mean to you, and this section is meant to help ease these concerns. Our ship weapon systems can be installed at most major ports, as long as you have a valid *Verge Runner* installation 3D. The service is performed free of charge, the *VR* takes care of minor things like the installation fees and proper "clearances." Remember, not all weapons are legal in all parts of space. Please do not act irresponsibly with these systems.

Mark V Fusion Beam

Collecting energy in the form of highly charged particles from a fusion reaction, the fusion beam is a high powered "heat ray" combined with kinetic impact. The Mark V Fusion Beam has been known to go completely through a ship, cleaving it in two. Normally restricted to capital ships because of size, the Mark V is designed specially for *your* medium sized vessel.

Mil ● 450K ● 4 ● 4 ● 0 ● 3/6/9 ● En (e) ● d6+3w/d8+3w/d6+2m ● 2

Series 5 Neutron Cannon

An incredibly illegal and inhumane weapon, the Neutron cannon projects streams of intense radiation. The main use of this weapon is to kill a ships crew, as the weapon is not as effective against the hull as a plasma cannon or fusion beam. When a compartment is hit, any crew inside take full damage at Good firepower through the ships armour.

Res ● 600K ● 3 ● 3 ● -1 ● 4/8/16 ● En (e) ● d6+1w/d6+3w/d4+2m ● 3

"Devastator" Disrupter Cannon

A brute force weapon, the disrupter harnesses energy from a ship's power plant and projects it in the form of a phased energy bolt. It disrupts the molecular cohesion of the target, blasting it apart. These weapons are a decent compromise between damage, power, and size. While relatively small, they take up a lot of power that many ships are incapable of producing. A ship armed with disrupters means business. They are also extremely expensive. When combined with an autofire modification, disrupters are especially deadly because of their inherent accuracy.

Mil ● 750K ● 2 ● 5 ● -2 ● 4/8/16 ● En (e) ● d6+3w/2d6+1w/3d6+1w ● 4

Weapon Modification: Heavy Mount

This option increases a weapon's space and energy requirements by drastically improves damage and range characteristics.

Dur: +2, Pow: x2, Range: x1.5 each bracket, Damage: +1 step each bracket

Weapon Modification: Continuous Fire

This option fits the weapon with an incredibly efficient cooling system allowing it to sustain a beam for several seconds. This drastically increases the chance to hit, but costs more power and space.

Dur: +1, Pow: x1.5, Acc: -3

Weapon Modification: Autofire

This option outfits a weapon with a high speed cycling and cooling system allowing it to fire three times in succession. Each beam is rolled to hit separately and each beam does its own damage. Treat this as autofire from a personal weapon. The first shot is +1, then +2, finally +3 situation die. A small amount of hitting power is lost, but it does not make a difference with a solid hit.

Dur: +1, Pow: x1.5, Damage: -1/0/0

Note: Autofire and Continuous modifications are mutually exclusive.

Cost Table (in percent of weapon's cost)

Heavy Mount:	100%
Continuous:	80%
Armor Piercing:	75%
Autofire:	100%

Note: Some weapons can not be modified in some ways. The tables below mark which weapons are capable of each modification.
(H) Heavy Mount, (C) Continuous Fire, (AP) Armour Piercing, (A) Autofire

PL 6- Fusion Age
Arc Cannon   H, C, A
Laser Cannon   H, C, A
IR Laser   H, C, A
Rail Cannon   A
X-Ray Laser   H, C

PL 7- Gravity Age
Mass Cannon   H, A
Mass Converter   H, C
Particle Beam   H, C, A
Plasma Cannon   H, A
Fusion Beam   H, C, A
Neutron Cannon   H, C, A
Disrupter   H, A

Modifications can be combined, but the weapon will get really large. Always round up for all these calculations.

Some Sample Weapons

"Heavy Continuous AP Autofire" Laser Cannon (just a joke)

Mil ● 355K ● 7 ● 14(!) ● -3 ● 2/3/5 ● En (e) ● d6s/d6w/d6+2w ● 4(12) ● AP

"Autofire Disrupter Cannon"

Mil ● 1.5M ● 3 ● 8 ● -2 ● 4/8/16 ● d6+3/2d6+1w/3d6+1w ● 4(12)

"Heavy Mass Cannon"

Con ● 600K ● 4 ● 6 ● 0 ● 8/15/22 ● LI (e) ● d8+2s/d8+1w/d8+3w ● 3

"Continuous Fusion Beam"

Mil ● 810K ● 5 ● 6 ● -3 ● 3/6/9 ● En (e) ● d6+3w/d8+3w/d6+2m ● 2

"Heavy Plasma Cannon"

Mil ● 800K ● 5 ● 6 ● 0 ● 4/8/16 ● En (e) ● d8+2w/d12+2w/d8+1m ● 3

Ship Systems and Equipment

Scout Lab
This laboratory includes everything a scout could possibly need to explore strange, new worlds and seek out new civilizations. It has a variety of automated testing systems that completely analyze every aspect of a world and can take samples from the soil, plants, and animal life of a planet. It comes with communication and translation software and a huge array of survey options. Anyone on an exploration mission should have one of these. Provides a –2 to any applicable skill.

SUP ● Scout Lab ● 7 ● Com ● 50K ● 2 ● 1

Class III Energy Shield
An improvement of the Deflection inducer and a precursor to what one day may be called an Ablative Shield, Class III Energy shields employ gravity induction technology and intense magnetic fields to create a shimmering globe of negative energy. Any energy weapon impacting a shield is either stopped outright or partially absorbed by the field. A projectile is affected by the gravitic field, causing it to turn away from the vessel.

Against Projectile Weapons: Same as Deflection Inducer
Against Energy Weapons: Stops up to 8 points of damage per attack. Can absorb Pow * 5 points before falling. The power can be reallocated every 4 combat rounds. Maximum power allocation is 5 power units. If a shield falls, it is fried and can not be put up until after the combat when time can be taken to fix it. It takes one round to put "shields up."

DEF ● Mil ●Class III Energy Shield ● 7 ● 900K ● 3 ● * Per 20 durability of ship
Must completely cover ship or is ineffective.

Battle Pods
A strap on weapon's pod, battle pods can be added to any ship of 20 durability or greater. A ship can have a number of battle pods equal to its durability divided by 20. Each pod acts as 5 extra durability points that can house weapons or defenses. They "add" 3 extra durability each to the ship for purposes of starfall range and maneuverability. They have 4 stuns, 4 wounds, and 2 mortal. They can be armored as a ship. Each battle pod costs 600K and has Military availability. It costs power as per the weapon or defense system installed. The weapon can have any number of modifications as long as it does not exceed 5 durability.

SPEC ● Mil ● Battle Pods ● 7 ● 600K ● -3 ● *May have Dur/20 Pods.

Example: A Transport Class (40 dur) ship can have two battle pods attached to it. It now acts as a 46 durability ship for purposes of starfalling and maneuver rating. It has two 5 durability pods for weapons. The owner chooses to put a Heavy Plasma Cannon in each pod, increasing his ship's combat ability by a lot.

Hidden Weapon System
More of a weapon modification than a ship system, a hidden weapon either retracts or is covered to disguise its true nature. These can be made scanner proof, but that just serves to make it more illegal. Of course, if they never find it, they can't charge you for it either. A retracted/covered weapon is completely invisible to inspections and it takes 1 phase to ready a hidden weapon. Any weapon can be made hidden.

Dur: +1, Cost: 300K (Note that battle pods cannot be hidden)

Personal Arms - Charge Weapons

Model 2500 9mm Charge Pistol
Designed especially for the new millennium, the M2500 is another well designed 9mm pistol. It has a good magazine capacity and is comfortable to shoot. It is a little more compact than most other pistols, which helps when concealing it. Overall, it is a good buy.

Model 2500 9mm Charge Pistol
Starmech Edge One Division
Availability: Common
Cost: C $500
Mass: 1 kg
Length: 18 cm
Payload: 9mm bullet
Accuracy: -1
Actions: 4
Mode: F
Type/Firepower: HI/O
Damage: d4+1w/d6+1w/d4m
Range: 8/16/60 meters
Hide: +4
Clip/charge size: 12 shots
Clip/charge cost: C $50
Skill: Modern Ranged Weapons- pistol

15mm Sniper Rifle

An extremely high powered charge rifle, built for taking out soft targets, the 15mm Sniper rifle shoots nearly 2 kilometers and retains its accuracy. The 15mm slug rips through nearly anything and can be used to pick off someone even if they're in a body tank. A useful scout weapon, the 15mm Sniper rifle is the ONLY sniper rifle you'll ever need. The attached scope cancels out most light and range penalties.

15mm Sniper Rifle
Soze Arms, Ltd.
Availability: Military
Cost: C $2,500
Mass: 3 kg
Length: 180 cm
Payload: 15mm bullet
Accuracy: -3
Actions: 1
Mode: F
Type/Firepower: HI/O
Damage: d6+2w/d6+4w/d6+2m
Range: 200/800/1800 meters
Hide: -
Clip/charge size: 7 shots
Clip/charge cost: C $50
Skill: Modern Ranged Weapons- rifle

10mm Charge Pistol

Another good weapon made by Karadnya-Brusilev Industries. This 10mm charge pistol is high quality and will not let you down. The 10mm round is becoming a more reasonable type of charge pistol round, created to deal with the laser pistol. This round gives more punch and almost as much range without the complexities of energy weapons. Finally, it is comfortable and easy to conceal.

Stormbolt 9 10mm Charge Pistol
Karadnya-Brusilev
Availability: Common
Cost: C $500
Mass: 1 kg
Length: 20 cm
Payload: 10mm bullet
Accuracy: -1
Actions: 4
Mode: F
Type/Firepower: HI/O
Damage: d6w/d6+1w/d4m
Range: 10/25/80 meters
Hide: +2
Clip/charge size: 13 shots
Clip/charge cost: C $50
Skill: Modern Ranged Weapons- pistol

"Eliminator" 11mm Charge SMG

This extremely high caliber SMG is incredibly powerful and almost matches the capabilities of an 11mm charge rifle. Offering far more firepower than a measly 9mm charge SMG, the Eliminator combines speed, hitting power, and concealability to make a very dangerous weapon. Easily hidden under a long coat, the Eliminator can be taken from its holster and put quickly into action. It is a very good weapon, and a must have for any Combat Spec needing a powerful sidearm.

"Eliminator" 11mm Charge SMG
Thuldan Weapons, Inc.
Availability: Controlled
Cost: C $2,500
Mass: 2.5 kg
Length: 20 cm
Payload: 11mm bullet
Accuracy: 0
Actions: 4
Mode: F/B/A
Type/Firepower: HI/O
Damage: d4+2w/d6+2w/d4+1m
Range: 10/20/80 meters
Hide: +2
Clip/charge size: 24 rounds/ 8 bursts
Clip/charge cost: C $50
Skill: Modern Ranged Weapons- SMG

Personal Arms - Energy Weapons

Lightning 6 Laser Pistol

A generic, cheap laser pistol, the only reason to buy this is the price. It looks ugly, shoots ugly, and has ugly energy usage. Cheap thugs use this when they can't find anything else. To make it worse, this things Common as dirt.

Lightning 6 Laser Pistol
Generiarms, Ltd
Availability: Common
Cost: C $200
Mass: 1 kg
Length: 20 cm
Payload: Coherent light
Accuracy: +1
Actions: 3
Mode: F
Type/Firepower: En/O
Damage: d4+1w/d6+1w/d4m
Range: 15/35/100 meters
Hide: +2
Clip/charge size: 10 shots
Clip/charge cost: C $50
Skill: Modern Ranged Weapons- pistol

Fusion Rifle

This is a brand new rifle designed by Austrin-Ontis, who, as always, are looking for new and different ways to kill things. This weapon works along the same principles as the ship mounted fusion beam, but was built for personal use. It is quite powerful, able to completely disintegrate a large portion of a person, and will go through many forms of armour. The drawbacks are its weight, cooling time and energy usage. It becomes more effective when combined with a backpack and power armour, but this is usually unavailable to common folk. Still, it makes nice, big holes in things.

FR-10 "Incinerator" Fusion Rifle
Austrin-Ontis Munitions Div. 2
Availability: Military
Cost: C $5,500
Mass: 8 kg
Length: 130 cm
Payload: Super charged particles
Accuracy: 0
Actions: 2
Mode: F
Type/Firepower: En/G
Damage: d6+2w/d8+2w/d6+1m
Range: 20/40/100 meters
Hide: -
Clip/charge size: 6 (20 w/backpack) shots
Clip/charge cost: C $150
Skill: Modern Ranged Weapons- rifle

"Thunderer" Super Heavy Laser Pistol

This weapon uses a lot of power, fires a bright beam, and puts big holes in things. By far the universe's most powerful laser weapon, the Eliminator Super Heavy Laser Pistol uses enormous amounts of energy per shot but the results are spectacular to say the least. Built by ThunderCorp Arms, the Eliminator is good for the few shots it has, but won't replace any weapon with longer staying power. Good for intimidation and quick fights, but if you are entering a combat zone, leave this monster at home.

"Thunderer" Super Heavy Laser Pistol
ThunderCorp Arms
Availability: Controlled
Cost: C $2,500
Mass: 2 kg
Length: 25 cm
Payload: (Extremely) Coherent Light
Accuracy: 0
Actions: 2
Mode: F
Type/Firepower: En/O
Damage: d4+3w/2d4+1w/d6+2m
Range: 40/80/300 meters
Hide: +2
Clip/charge size: 5 shots
Clip/charge cost: C $50
Skill: Modern Ranged Weapons- pistol

M3000 "Penetrator" Plasma Rifle

A new take on a plasma gun, the M3000 plasma rifle makes no attempt at a "blast radius" of any sort. Instead, it takes the plasma beam created and projects in a relatively focused beam, allowing it to punch through armour like it wasn't there. Capable of holing a body tank, this weapon is used by infantry against otherwise undamageable targets.

M3000 "Penetrator" Plasma Rifle
Starmech Edge One Division
Availability: Military
Cost: C $9,500
Mass: 4 kg
Length: 100 cm
Payload: Focused incandescent plasma
Accuracy: -1
Actions: 3
Mode: F
Type/Firepower: En/O
Damage: d6+2w/2d6+1w/3d6+1m
Range: 60/125/450 meters
Hide: -
Clip/charge size: 12 shots
Clip/charge cost: C $150
Skill: Modern Ranged Weapons- rifle

"Renegade" Quantum Pistol

This is a new design. A quantum weapon in a (nearly) pistol sized package. Packing a punch similar to the Quantum minigun, the Renegade is just smaller with far less ammunition. It is probably one of the most powerful hand held designs, capable of burning through most people with ease. It is capable of full autofire, so if someone points one of these puppies in your direction, move.

"Renegade" Quantum Pistol
Karadnya-Brusilev Industries
Availability: Military
Cost: C $8,500
Mass: 3 kg
Length: 30 cm
Payload: Particle beam

Accuracy: 0
Actions: 4
Mode: F/B/A
Type/Firepower: En/O
Damage: d8w/d8+2w/d6m
Range: 35/75/175 meters
Hide: +1
Clip/charge size: 30 shots/10 bursts
Clip/charge cost: C $250
Skill: Modern Ranged Weapons- pistol or SMG

"Mjolnir" Series 5 Laser Pistol

This is a high quality laser pistol with a hefty price tag. It has amazing accuracy and a long range, with damage equal to a 9mm charge pistol. The top mounted sight is a high quality HHUD (holographic heads up display) that displays a targeting reticle with tracking for up to three separate targets.

"Mjolnir" Series 5 Laser Pistol
Soze Arms, Ltd.
Availability: Controlled
Mass: 1 kg
Length: 20 cm
Payload: Coherent light
Accuracy: -3
Actions: 4
Mode: F/
Type/Firepower: En/O
Damage: d4+1w/d6+1w/d4m
Range: 35/65/175 meters
Hide: +2
Clip/charge size: 20 shots
Clip/charge cost: C $50
Skill: Modern Ranged Weapons- pistol

Series 140 Disrupter Rifle

A relatively new type of energy weapon, the hand held disrupter works much like its ship mounted relative. By producing a concentrated energy bolt that appears light blue in color, the disrupter causes molecular cohesiveness to break down at the point of impact. Causing horrible wounds in living creatures (generally a nasty scooping hole), and good structural damage to inanimate objects, the disrupter will be a popular weapon. For now, the only real drawback is the amount of power used per shot: the raw power needed to break bonds limits the number of shots per lanth cell the weapon has. Unfortunately, the Disrupter rifle has one further drawback: it requires a "magazine" of capacitors to channel the incredible energy being expelled. Much like a pump action shotgun, the weapon needs to be "pumped" for each shot as the old capacitor is ejected and the new one is inserted. The weapon includes a quick fire laser sight to aid in target acquisition.

Series 140 Disrupter Rifle
Tsunami Arms, Inc.
Availability: Military
Cost: C $8,000
Mass: 3 kg
Length: 45 cm
Payload: Phased energy bolt
Accuracy: -1
Actions: 2
Mode: F/
Type/Firepower: En/O
Damage: d8+1w/d12+1w/d8+1m
Range: 30/70/170 meters
Hide: -
Clip/charge size: 6 shots
Clip/charge cost: C $150

Personal Equipment - Armour

Wraith Series 200 Scout Body Tank

This is a highly maneuverable, flight capable scout body tank. It is, of course, powered and is composed of light neutronite plating. Manufactured by Austrin-Ontis Arms, the Wraith sees action mainly against other Stellar Nations. Available for the first time to paramilitary and private customers, the Wraith is light enough to be worn without severely limiting movement.

Austrin-Ontis Armour Div. 1
Availability: Military
Cost: C $40,000
Mass: 45 kg
Composition: Neutronite alloy
Environmental Tolerance:
    Gravity: G0-G4
    Radiation: R0-R4
    Atmosphere: A0-A4
    Pressure: P0-P4
    Heat: H0-H4
Action Penalty: +3
Toughness: Good
LI/HI/En: 2d4+1/2d4+1/2d4
Effective Strength: 14
Skill: Armour Operation: powered armour

This suit includes the normal features included in most powered armour as well as a jet engine propulsion unit. Powered by an on-board fuel tank, the jet has nearly 2 hours of fuel, but most stop every .5 hours of continuous use for 1 hour to cool down. It has a maximum speed of 200 kph (or meters per phase) and can fly as high as 1 mile. On open terrain, it moves a steady 65 kph and on broken ground it moves 35 kph. It includes a built-in weapon system that makes this scout body tank more than just a recon suit. The weapon is equivalent to a 13mm charge machinegun but has enough ammo for 200 bursts. It is linked to the suits targeting computer, giving it an addition −1 accuracy bonus.

"Trooper" Class VI Cerametal Armor

The Trooper suit of non-powered armor was developed by the Thuldan Empire for its Mobile Infantry divisions. It is completely NBC sealed and has an internal air supply good for 30 minutes of continuous use. The armor itself provides good protection and is put on over a type of body glove. The soldier shown here is carrying the Thuldan CAR-25, a high quality 11mm charge rifle.

Thuldan Armaments, Inc.
Availability: Military
Cost: C $7,000
Mass: 18 kg
Composition: Cerametal plate
Environmental Tolerance:
    Gravity: n/a
    Radiation: n/a
    Atmosphere: A2-A4
    Pressure: P1-P3
    Heat: H1-H3
Action Penalty: +2
Toughness: Ordinary
LI/HI/En: d6+2/d8+1/d6
Effective Strength: n/a
Skill: Armor Operation- combat armor

Explorer: Full Composite Body Armor

The Explorer series armour is expensive, top of the line, full body protection from Exploratech, Inc. This armour is this company's first endeavor and it has done a fine job. The armour is unpowered, but light enough to be worn by almost anyone with a minimum of training. Its composite plates provide good protection against all types of attack, and the helmet's sensor array comes in handy when on a strange planet. Targeted towards scouts who feel safer encased in hard metal, the Explorer suit is worth the money, assuming you value or own life.

Austrin-Ontis Armour Div. 1
Availability: Military
Cost: C $4,000
Mass: 12 kg
Composition: Composite plate
Environmental Tolerance:
    Gravity: n/a
    Radiation: n/a
    Atmosphere: A2-A4
    Pressure: P1-P3
    Heat: H1-H3
Action Penalty: +1
Toughness: Ordinary
LI/HI/En: d6+1/d6+1/d6
Effective Strength: n/a
Skill: Armour Operation: combat armour

Ultimax 160-VX Body Tank

This Body Tank from Austrin-Ontis Armour Div. Two is the biggest, baddest suit of powered armor to ever hit the market. Capable of quick movement of any type of terrain, the Ultimax was built for only one purpose: ground warfare. The armor is heavy neutronite plate with a miniaturized grav-fusion cell providing power. This power cell lasts for 24 hours of continuous use or close to 100 hours of standby or light use. The sensor suite includes a tactical minicomputer and a complex communications system. The computer can provide automapping of the terrain and produce detailed tactical maps. The suit is engineered to be utilized by an NIJack equipped solider, helping to negate the obviously restricted movement. Finally, this suit includes the 180-VX Super Quantum Rifle. There is no additional heavy weapon hardpoint, nor is it capable of flight.

Austrin-Ontis Armor Div Two
Availability: Restricted
Mass: 90 kg
Composition: Neutronite alloy
Environmental Tolerances:
    Gravity: G0-G4
    Radiation: R0-R4
    Atmosphere: A0-A5
    Pressure: P0-P5
    Heat: H0-H4
Action Penalty: +3
Toughness: Good
LI/HI/En: 2d4+1/2d4+1/2d4+1
Speed: Open Terrain- 50 kph; Broken Terrain- 25 kph
Effective Strength: 17
Skill: Armor Operation- powered armor

180-VX Super Quantum Rifle

This rifle attaches directly the armor's power plant, but can utilize its own power clip. It is basically an improved, overpowered Quantum Rifle. Extremely effective against all types of targets, the 180-VX gives the Ultimax its own personal death cannon. The weapon has an effectively unlimited power source, and a very long range. It is, of course, linked directly to the suit's targeting systems, providing it with excellent accuracy.

Austrin-Ontis Munitions Div. 3
Availability: Restricted
Cost: not available for sale
Mass: 14 kg
Length: 150 cm
Payload: Particle beam
Accuracy: -2
Actions: 4
Mode: F/B/A
Type/Firepower: En/G
Damage; d8+1w/d8+3w/d6m
Range: 60/125/350 meters
Hide: -
Clip/Charge size: 10 bursts (clip)/ 100 bursts (suit battery)
Clip/charge cost: C $1000
Skill: Heavy Weapons- direct fire

CAR-25 11mm Charge Rifle

Manufactured by Thuldan Armaments as their standard trooper rifle, the CAR-25 (Charge Assault Rifle) is a very simple, reliable design. It offers nothing over the Austrin-Ontis 11mm charge rifle except that it is a little more robust and reliable at certain times. Obviously, for the Thuldan Army, it is the best choice. It comes with an optical sight that reduces range penalties by up to –3.

Thuldan Armaments, Inc.
Availability: Military
Cost: C $1,700
Mass: 3 kg
Length: 70 cm
Payload: 11mm bullet
Accuracy: 0
Actions: 4
Mode: F/B/A
Type/Firepower: HI/O
Damage: d6+1w/d6+3w/d6+1m
Range: 90/180/600 meters
Hide: -
Clip/charge size: 30 rounds/10 bursts
Clip/charge cost: C $60
Skill: Modern Ranged Weapons- rifle

Mark II Personal Armour

This armour is meant for low intensity combat or riot situations. It has next to no ability to stop energy attacks (except lasers) but is highly effective against low impact attacks. The helmet is fully padded to protect against concussion and the face mask is shatter proof and strong.

General Arms Manufacturing
Availability: Controlled
Cost: C $1,200
Mass: 5 kg
Composition: CF weave/heavy padding
Environmental Tolerance: none
Action Penalty: +1
Toughness: Ordinary
LI/HI/En: d8+1/d6/d4-1 (d4 vs lasers)
Effective Strength: n/a
Skill: Armour Operation

Link to Colonel Merrick's Weapons Report: 2501

The Verge Runner proudly presents a link to the galaxies best known arms magazine. Colonel Merrick's Reports are known around the Stellar Ring as the fairest, most detailed weapon's review catalog ever published. Now available for the first time in the Verge, here is Colonel Merrick's Weapons Report: 2501!

Written by

Jake "Apoc527" Bernstein

The VERGETECH Editions

Advanced Personal Weapons

New Verge Equipment

New Tried and True Personal Arms

And More…

Introduction

The *Verge Runner* is a comprehensive catalog, published yearly, that contains a sampling of the year's technological advances in personal arms, ship weapons and systems, and miscellaneous equipment. Many items appearing in the Verge for the first time are also included, for those wanting an explanation of our Charge Weapon section. Most of these items can be ordered through the *Verge Runner* for our listed price. It may be possible to find the item you're looking for elsewhere, and it may cost less, but good luck getting a hold of it. The *Verge Runner* has licenses for equipment that are unavailable to the average spacer.

Disclaimer: The *Verge Runner* takes no responsibility for actions done with equipment from this catalog. Nothing here can be linked to the *Verge Runner* and all transactions are kept in highly secure databanks. **DO NOT TRY TO HACK INTO OUR COMPUTER SYSTEM.** Thank you.

VERGETECH
First Edition

Vergetech
A Verge Runner Company

The following is an excerpt from Vergetech's latest catalog:

Vergetech has opened an office on Bluefall in the Aegis system, and will start a database unique to the Verge. Our technical guide is dedicated to bringing up to date reports on what is available to those of us on the frontier. Because of the amount of time and money required making shipments from the Core Worlds it is more cost effective to buy what is available in the Verge. Now those decisions can be made without wondering if you made a mistake. Those who are interested may order a copy of Vergetech by paying $50.00 for a monthly release on 3D crystal.

For those who are interested you can order 1 Standard Years subscription for $500.00, a savings of over $100.00. Prices are listed on the value of the Concord Dollar in the Aegis system for ease of comparison and any inquires for purchase should be made to the manufacturer or a local purchasing agent

In the years since the Great Silence ended the Verge has seen a resurgence in technology available to people and governments alike. This is most apparent in the weapons and armor that is now available. Although some of the latest and greatest WarTech has yet to reach as far as the verge, the list of weapons and armor available to those hearty souls who are trying to expand the Verge's borders, or their own national borders, still continues to grow.

Small Arms are the backbone of any security force or army. Although history is full of examples of ill-equipped forces defeating better armed forces, this is mainly due to position and numerical superiority. Another contributing factor was that in the 18th-21st centuries armies of those days did not wear an appreciable armor, so soldiers were susceptible to the smallest of caliber weapons. With today's modern armor non-military weapons lack the ability to penetrate military grade armor. If you plan to face organized opposition, mainstream hardware is the way to go. In this first edition we are going to review the 5 best small arms weapons to reach the Verge to date.

Charge Weapons

ARZ 11mm Squad Automatic Weapon
Karadnaya-Brusilev Industries
Availability: Military
Cost: $2,500
Mass: 4.2 kg
Length: 97 cm
Payload: 11mm bullet
Accuracy: 0
Actions: 3
Mode: B/A
Type/Firepower: HI/O
Damage: d6w+1/d6+3w/d6+1m
Range: 90/180/600 meters
Hide: --
Clip/Charge Size: 30 bursts
Clip/Charge Cost: $150
Skill: Modern Range Weapon- *Rifle*

This is the follow-up design to the popular ARZ 6mm Autorifle. A squad automatic weapon is designed to supplement a unit's firepower without slowing it down with heavy weapons. Although heavier than a standard rifle, it does not quite fill the role a machine gun could. Its' good range together with its' large ammo capacity makes it a favorite of troops in the field. Expect to see this weapon if you face well financed troops.

"Rhino"20mm Gauss Sniper Rifle
Soze Arms Ltd.
Availability: Restricted
Cost: $6,000
Mass: 8kg
Length: 140 cm
Payload: 20mm nickel-iron slug
Accuracy: -1
Actions: 2
Mode: F
Type/Firepower: HI/G
Damage: d6+1w/d6+3w/d4+2m
Range: 100/400/1600 meters
Hide: --
Clip/Charge Size: 8 shots
Clip/Charge Cost: $150
Skill: Modern Ranged Weapon-*Rifle*

Soze Arms continues their line of heavy hardware with this monster rifle. Big, awkward, and as easy to wield as a Weren war knife, this rifle is capable of dealing out lethal damage at long range. Because of the large energy use, the Rhino may only be fired every other action (i.e. in Amazing, then Ordinary, or Good then Marginal.) as it needs an action to build up a charge for firing. The Rhino also comes with a built in bi-pod to assist with long-range shots (-1 to Accuracy if Prone or Braced on a horizontal surface).

Energy Weapons

T-2 Heavy Laser Rifle
Storm Technologies
Availability: Military
Cost: $2,500
Mass: 4.5kg
Length: 80cm
Payload: Coherent Light
Accuracy: -1
Actions: 3
Mode: F/B
Type: En/O
Damage: d6+3w/2d4+3w/d4+2m
Range: 60/300/800 meters
Hide: --
Clip/Charge Size: 30 shots\10 bursts
Clip/Charge Cost: $100
Skill: Modern Ranged Weapon-*rifle*

The heavy laser or "Graser" is a combination of gravity induction and laser technology. Developed at the end of *GW2* Graser weapons were not utilized in large numbers. One of the major producers of Graser weapons, Storm Tech, was nearly bankrupted when the war ended and weapons demands were scaled back. Although originally thought of as just another Autrin-Ontis gun shop, Storm Tech has managed to hang on even though peace has broken out throughout the stellar nations. Their marketing strategy is what has kept them going. Instead of introducing their latest weapon in the Core Worlds, where it would see little use, they have started mass shipments to Gavin in the hopes that combat footage showing troops using the T-2 can be used to boost sales. So far this has worked, despite several legal battles with the Concord, in which the T-2 was NOT used.

Starfire Graser Pistol
MRA Technologies, Inc.
Availability: Military
Cost: $1,400
Mass: 1kg
Length: 22cm
Payload: Coherent Light
Accuracy: 0
Actions: 3
Mode: F
Type/Firepower: En/O
Damage d6+1w/d6+3w/d4+1m
Range: 15/30/100 meters
Hide: +2
Clip/Charge Size: 18 Shots
Clip/Charge Cost: $60
Skill: Modern Ranged Weapons-*Pistol*

This is one of the newest designs to reach the Verge to date. While not as accurate as most laser pistols, it makes up for this in damage capabilities. With long range, good damage, and high payload capacity this pistol is quickly becoming a favorite among CombatSpecs. The Starfire doesn't match up to a Mass Pistol as far as damage, but you don't have to be rubbing bellies with your opponent to shoot them either. Show here with attached combat flashlight and aiming module (negates up to +2 steps for darkness).

Alien Weapons

T'sa Flechette Rifle
T'sa Cluster
Availability: Military (Controlled for T'sa)
Cost: $1,500
Mass: 2kg
Length: 40cm
Payload: 3mm Flechette penetrators
Accuracy: -1
Actions: 4
Mode: B/A
Type: HI/O
Damage: d4w/d6w/d4m
Range: 60/150/500 meters
Hide: +1
Clip/Charge Size: 15 Bursts
Clip/Charge Cost: $100
Skill: Modern Ranged Weapons- *Rifle*

Most humans consider themselves superior to their alien brethren based on the fact that we are the most prolific of the known sentient races and have the widest spread of technologies. This weapon makes a lie of this kind of thinking. While not as hard hitting as some human weapons, this rifle more than makes up for it in the subtle area of penetration over raw stopping power. Utilizing induction coils to propel 3mm Ceremetal penetrators at extreme velocities these projectiles can penetrate some light body tanks and most of the heaviest personal armors. Any target hit must subtract 1 from their armor roll to a minimum of 1. Furthermore damage **IS NOT** changed based on range.

VERGETECH
Second Edition

This is the second installment of Vergetech, since the first installment we have received several notes of encouragement and gratitude for making it easier to get reliable information on what's happening in the weapons industry. In this issue we are going to review 4 Heavy Weapons that we believe to be top of the line equipment in what is available to those of us on the Frontier.

In the past Heavy Weapons were just that, heavy. HMG's and Rocket launchers were dug in to positions and used almost exclusively for the defense of an installation or to deny enemy forces an objective. Today Heavy Weapons are light enough to be moved around in a running battle and some can be fired on the run, although we do not recommend this unless you are in a Bodytank. Heavy weapons are used to lead attacks and to weaken fortifications in today's armies. A modern platoon has the mobility, staying power and firepower of a 22nd century battalion, upgrade this platoon to frontline bodytanks and they could conceivably hold their own against a division.

All prices are listed in the value of the Concord Dollar in the Aegis system for ease of comparison only. Any inquiries for purchase should be directed the manufacturer or a local purchasing agent.

Direct Fire Weapons

WA-8 Medium Charge Machinegun
Austrian-Ontis Munitions Div. 1
Availability: Restricted
Cost: $6,000
Mass: 12kg
Length: 112cm
Payload: 12mm bullet
Accuracy: -1
Actions: 4
Mode: A
Type/Firepower: HI/G
Damage: d6+1w/d8+1w/d6+1m
Range: 150/500/1,000 meters
Hide: --
Clip/Charge Size: 30 bursts
Clip/Charge Cost: $400
Skill: Heavy Weapons-*direct fire*

This weapon was introduced during *GW2* to provide Austrin-Ontis troops with mobile firepower when facing Naric cyber enhanced troops. To make this weapon usable by a single trooper, it was built around a gyro-stabilized Waldo unit. The waldo unit utilizes a lanthanide power cell and a small induction motor to neutralize most of the mass of the weapon and a small amount of recoil, thus allowing a single man to handle the weapon easily with no penalties. The power cell must be replaced after 12 hours of continuous use. Since the weapon is fired from the hip a small HUD monocle is utilized for aiming of the weapon.

"Scorcher" Plasma Gun
Storm Technologies, Inc.
Availability: Restricted
Cost: $25,000
Mass: 12kg
Length: 85cm
Payload: incandescent plasma
Accuracy: 0
Actions: 3
Mode: A
Type/Firepower: En/G
Damage: d6+1w/d6+3w/d4+2m
Range: 75/200/600 meters
Hide: --
Clip/Charge Size: 30 bursts
Clip/Charge Cost: $1,000
Skill: Heavy Weapon-*direct fire*

Through out known space the Rigunmor nation is thought of as a nation of swindlers, but their large economy base allows them to equip their troops with some of the very best available equipment. This weapon is hideously expensive as far as troop weapons go, and other weapons can meet most of the same requirements for a fraction of the cost. If you have available funds though, this is a fearsome battlefield weapon to use against an opponent. Instead of firing a large bolt of plasma, the Scorcher fires several small bolts in rapid succession without

the area of effect damage seen in other plasma guns. The gattling style barrels on this weapon allow continuous rate of fire without fear of overheating and permanent damage to the weapon. Most of the weight comes from the backpack style power cell.

"Thor" Heavy Combat Laser
Krund Armsworks, Thulda Prime
Availability: Restricted
Cost: $5,500
Mass: 6kg
Length: 100cm
Payload: Coherent light
Accuracy: -1
Actions: 3
Mode: B
Type: En/G
Damage: d8w/d8+3w/ 2d4m
Range 400/900/2,000 meters
Hide: --
Clip/Charge Size: 30 bursts
Clip/Charge Cost: $250
Skill: Heavy Weapons-*direct fire*

Among Thuldan legionaries this weapon is referred to as the "Pulse" laser. The name is derived from the fact that to keep the focusing crystal from overheating during autofire a nanosecond delay in the firing mechanism is used, thus seeming to make the laser beam "pulse".

The Thor is a popular hardpoint attachment for Bodytanks that will be used in mostly open terrain or space, as its exceptionally long range can be used to the fullest. In urban terrain a Charge MG will work just as well.

Indirect Fire Weapons

ZK-5 MK. II Grenade Launcher (Rifle Attachment)
Pulan-Tough Job Corporation
Availability: Military
Cost: $1,500
Mass: 1.2 kg
Length: 35cm
Payload: Various grenades
Accuracy: 0
Actions: 3
Mode: F
Type/Firepower: by Grenade
Damage: by Grenade type
Range 40/240/480 meters
Hide: see description
Clip/Charge Size: 4 shots
Clip/Charge Cost: varies
Skill: Heavy Weapons-*Indirect fire*

The Mk II is a modified "Zeke 5" designed to fit as an under-barrel attachment on a rifle. The box style magazine is removed and an internal tube magazine is used instead. While this decreases the amount of available ammo, it keeps the weapon from becoming unwieldy. A competent weapons tech can install it in ten to fifteen minutes with an Ordinary Complex skill check; the installation is permanent; unless removed with another Ordinary Complex skill check. When used a hero must declare if he is firing the rifle or the ZK-5 Mk II for his/her action, or he can fire both at the same time at a +2 step penalty. The weapon uses the hide modifier of the weapon it is installed on.

VERGETECH
Third Edition

Our third edition of Vergetech we will take a look at the some of the personal armor and Bodytanks that have found their way to the frontier. Over the centuries armor has made the way battles are fought change. As the protection of individual soldiers has increased the need for numbers has decreased. During the 21st century weapons technology outpaced available defensive capabilities to the point that only Law Enforcement wore any appreciable type of armor, and its use was questionable at best. Large amounts of men were used in an assault, so that when an objective was taken their numbers would be sufficient to hold it against a counter-attack. As technology progressed personal armor reappeared in greater numbers; newer alloys were found that could withstand the damage meted out by the newer weapons. Bodytanks added to the flexibility of the individual soldiers and to the amount of firepower he could wield single-handedly.

The 5 models of personal armor and Bodytanks that we are reviewing in this issue are ones we think stand out from all those that have found their way to the Verge so far. Most armors are relatively identical, with minor differences in price, weight or small features. These however merit recognition based on their own virtues.

All prices are listed in the value of the Concord Dollar in the Aegis system for ease of comparison. Any inquires for purchase should be addressed to the listed manufacturer or a local purchasing agent.

Personal Armor

Grenadier Combat Armor
Dietterlich Industries
Availability: Military
Cost: $8,500
Mass: 12kg
Composition: Ceremetal plate
Environmental Tolerance:
    Gravity: N/A
    Radiation: N/A
    Atmosphere: A1-A3
    Pressure: P1-P3
    Heat: H1-H3
Action Penalty: +2
Toughness: Ordinary
LI/HI/EN: d6+2/d8+2/d6+1
Hide: --
Effective Strength: N/A
Skill: Armor Operation-*combat armor*

Used in the Austrin-Ontis Light Assault divisions for their non-powered troops, this armor has several add-ons that separate it from most of its class. A Climate weave bodysuit worn as an under garment to protect the wearer from the elements, the suit also contains a microprocessor of marginal quality which monitors the wearers life signs. The Ceremetal shell armor features an attachment for a Trauma Pack II and a charge-cell for the helmet with an endurance of 48 hrs. The helmet, which is included, is the true star of the show. Standard features include a thermal visor, multiband Comm gear, a respirator, and a Gunsight aiming system. (-1 to all skill rolls with weapons fitted with the sight, one sight is included with the purchase). Two variant models exist, the command model which adds a satellite receiver and a gyrocompass for an additional $200. The "Marine" variant of the standard model has the same Environmental Tolerances as a hard e-suit and has hard points for attachment of a backpack thruster unit, add $1,500. Additional sights cost $1,000 apiece.

Chameleon Stealth Suit
MRA Technologies, Inc.
Availability: Restricted
Cost: $20,000
Mass: 5kg
Composition: CF Stealth weave
Environmental Tolerance:
    Gravity: N/A
    Radiation: N/A
    Atmosphere: N/A
    Pressure: N/A
    Heat: N/A
Action Penalty: +1
Toughness: Ordinary
LI/HI/EN: d6+1/d6+1/d6
Hide: +2
Effective Strength: N/A
Skill: Armor Operation.

Used extensively by VoidCorp "removal" teams, the Chameleon suit provides the wearer with the best protection of all, the ability not to be seen. Combining Antiscan and Stealth weaves with a CF protection layer produces a suit which is invisible to most sensors and to the naked eye (see Arms & Equipment Guide, page 9 for details). The charge cell lasts for 6 hrs, allowing adequate time for hostile penetration and "removal" of targets. There are stories that the last thing an "involuntary" retiree sees is an operative suddenly appearing in his office with a notice of Employment Termination.

Fox Scout Armor
SekureTek Group, Ltd.
Availability: Military
Cost: $4,800
Mass: 8kg
Composition: CF weave and Polymere plate
Environmental Tolerances:
    Gravity: N/A
    Radiation: N/A
    Atmosphere: A2-A3
    Pressure: P1-P3
    Heat: H1-H3
Action Penalty: +1
Toughness: Ordinary
LI/HI/EN: d6/d6+1/d6-1
Hide: +1
Effective Strength: N/A
Skill: Armor Operation

Although some might consider this an outmoded design, few can argue against its usefulness. The use of an Antiscan weave in the CF fiber makes detection of this suit difficult even with modern sensors, allowing the user to move around with a measure of confidence. The drawback is that the suit sacrifices armor for the ability to avoid detection. Image enhancing goggles and a respirator are included in the hood, for use in night operations and/or tainted atmospheres.

Bodytanks

WV-13 Wolverine Battle Armor
Astrin-Ontis Armor Division
Availability: Restricted
Cost: $ 40,000
Mass: 70kg
Composition: Neutronite alloy
Environmental Tolerance:
    Gravity: G1-G4
    Radiation: R0-R4
    Atmosphere: A0-A4
    Pressure: P0-P4
    Heat: H0-H4
Action Penalty: +4
Toughness: Good
LI/HI/EN: 2d4+1/2d4+1/2d4+1
Hide: --
Effective Strength: 16
Skill: Armor Operation-*powered armor*

The Wolverine is the main-line battle armor of the Austrin-Ontis army and the A/O Fleet Marines. Although there are heavier bodytanks out there the Wolverine packs a lot of punch in a reasonably sized package. Along with standard suit features the suit has a back mounted grenade launcher, similar to the ZK-5, hardwired into the suit, in addition to the standard weapon hardpoint. A helmet mounted laser designator is used to aim the launcher and a detachable magazine holds 30 rounds of ammunition for it. The magazine can be changed in one round by anyone other than the occupant of the suit.

Manticore Mark 3 Powered Armor
Raupp Arms, Thuldan Prime
Availability: Restricted
Cost: $15,000
Mass: 20kg
Composition: Ceremetal alloys
Environmental Tolerance:
    Gravity: G2-G3
    Radiation: N/A
    Atmosphere: A2-A3
    Pressure: P1-P3
    Heat: H1-H3
Action Penalty: +2
Toughness: Good
LI/HI/EN: d6+2/d6+3/d6+1
Hide: --
Effective Strength: 15
Skill: Armor Operation-*powered armor*

The Thuldan Empire maintains the largest standing army of any stellar nation and with so many troops to equip they usually look for simplicity and efficiency in their arms and armor. Based on the success of their Tiger mod 6, Raupp Arms delivered an updated design. Using ceremetal alloy in place of the polymere plate and upgrading onboard electronics that are comparable to standard designs, this suit has all the standard features a bodytank has with the exception of a weapon hard point. The Skull motif is designed to strike fear into the hearts of the Thuldan Empire's enemies. It normally works quite well.

VERGETECH
Fourth Edition

In this edition of Vergetech we are going to review weapon accessories, items which can enhance the use or performance of a weapon. There are a myriad number of items, which can be attached to a weapon. We are going to present 4 items, which we believe to be the most useful. Those listed are examples of what is available on the frontier.

Late in the 21st century a military officer in the North American army was asked, "why is the government down-sizing the army, yet spending more on weapons research?" His reply was, "better killing, through better technology." That type of thinking still holds true centuries later, manufacturers are always looking for that little something that will provide an edge the other guy doesn't have. Most of these items detailed herein were developed hundreds of years ago and as new materials and technologies were developed, refinements were made. As long as we continue to need weapons, we will continue to find and improve ways to utilize them effectively.

All prices listed are in the value of the Concord Dollar in the Aegis system for ease of comparison only. Any inquires for purchase should be directed to the listed manufacturer or a local purchasing agent.

NOTE: Three new Optional Rules are introduced at the end of the equipment listing. Players should consult with their GMs before you use these rules in character creation or in game play.

Weapon Accessories

Induction Assisted Waldo Unit
Availability: Controlled
Cost: $700-$900
Mass: 3kg
Platform: Heavy Weapon

A Waldo unit is a frame harness with an articulated armed in the front, on which a heavy weapon can be mounted. The arm contains a miniature gyroscope and servos to help control recoil and to maneuver the weapon. Located at the end of the arm is a universal mount with a small weight neutralizer that sets the weight of each weapon at 4 kgs. Most manufacturers include a sighting monocle that wearer uses to aim the weapon, without the sighting monocle the user suffers a +2 penalty to attacks. A Waldo unit allows a normal person to wield weaponry comparable to that used by bodytanks, however it doesn't provide the protection a bodytank does. While wearing a Waldo unit an individual can move no faster than a run, nor can they swim or perform aerial movement. While wearing a Waldo unit the user is not allowed to makes Dodge skill checks. The charge-cell on the left shoulder usually requires replacement after 12 hrs of continuous use.

Gun Camera
Availability: *special
Cost: $100-$200
Mass: 0.1 ñ 0.5kg
Platform: any ranged weapon

A guncam comes in basically two forms. The first use is on worlds that require visitors and locals to register their firearms. The firearms that the heroes are allowed to carry are turned over to the local constabulary for processing, during which time a micro-camera is installed on the weapon. Whenever the weapon is gripped or fired the camera records the incident on a micro-crystal and signals the police by a built in transmitter. The police may then seize the weapon for evidence either for or against the heroes. Many worlds consider tampering with the guncam a felony and authorize their police to use deadly force in the apprehension of perpetrators. When the heroes are ready to leave the authorities will

remove the gun camera. Registration fees run anywhere from $50- $5,000 depending on the world and its views on personal weapons.

The second use is by some security or police forces. These mount not only the camera on the weapon, but also a small view screen on a swivel mount on top of the weapon. The screen can be turned so that the weapon can be pointed around a corner and the wielder can see what's there without exposing himself to hostile fire. All Awareness-perception skill checks suffer a +2 step penalty by using this method, and if the user fires his weapon in this manner he suffers a +4 step penalty. The listed cost is for this type of camera.

Charge Weapon Sound Suppressor
Availability: Restricted
Cost: $400-$800
Mass: 0.5 kg
Platform: any Charge SMG or Pistol

Because of their availability and versatility charge weapons are still used in great numbers. The major drawback of using a charge weapon is everyone in half a kilometer hears it when you do. A sound suppressor muffles most of a charge weapons discharge, how much depends on the quality of the suppressor. In order to hear a weapon fired with a low quality suppressor ($400) will require anyone within 50 meters to make a Awareness-perception skill check with standard penalties for walls, background noise, etc. and a bonus of ñ1 for each 10 meters closer than 50 (i.e. ñ2 at 30 meters). For each additional $100 the detection range drops 10 meters to a minimum 10 meters at $800. Past the listed range detection is impossible to unaugmented individuals unless the Gamemaster deems otherwise. Possession or use of a suppressor is illegal on most worlds and punishable by death on a few.

Holographic Imposed Sight
Availability: Military
Cost: $900
Mass: 0.3
Platform: any Modern Ranged Weapon

The H.I. sight comes in two parts. A U/V laser sight is mounted on the weapon and a pair of goggles with a microprocessor is used to translate the data the beam sends and superimpose a set of crosshairs on the target to show where the shot will strike. This translates to a ñ1 step bonus to hit targets at ranges 500 meters or less. For $500 the goggles can be installed in the helmet of existing armor. Image enhancement can be added to the goggles for $300 and/or Magnifying enhancement for $425, thermal imaging can be added for $350. Thermal and Image enhancement cannot be combined.

Optional Rules

Customizing

An item can be tailored to fit a specific individuals dimension and thus feel more like an extension of his/her own body. Most items are produced for the masses; thus some innovations or additions are not made a standard part of the manufacturer process. Customizing allows for minor changes that suit the individual user of the item, this applies mainly to Weapons and Armors.

To customize a weapon, a Good complexity Technical Science-invention skill check is made with the appropriate modifiers for tools and facilities. The cost is 25% of the weapons cost for parts and whatever salary the Armorer requires if any. If successful the weapon receives a bonus ñ1 to accuracy whenever used by the person it was tailored too. Failure means no bonus and the parts are still used up. The process works the same when used to customize armor or bodytanks. Success means that the Action Penalty of the armor is lowered by 1, failure has the same results. Gamemasters and players should feel free this rule on any item they feel would work out. Is not inconceivable for a TechOp to customize his gridcaster for best performance. Most people put Biolocks on such

valuable items, however if others try to use an item customized to someone else they suffer a +1 penalty to all actions utilizing that item. Making a Ordinary complexity Technical Science-repair skill check will revert the item back to its original state at a cost of 20%-50% (d4+1x10) of its original cost, but the item will be destroyed if another attempt to modify it is made.

Clip Extensions

Sometimes you can never have enough ammo in your gun to make you feel safe. To modify your weapon to hold twice its payload costs an initial 5% of the weapons cost and an Ordinary complexity Technical Science-invention skill roll, with success meaning your weapon can now hold twice its normal clip size in ammo. Failure means that you weapon was not altered and cannot be until conditions change. Reload costs are at twice the listed cost plus 10% round to the nearest tens.

Example: An IF-3 11mm charge rifle has been modified to now hold twice its ammo capacity. Its reload cost would be $130. (60x2=120) (10% of 120 is 12) (12+120=132 rounded to the nearest Ten is 130).

Laser Autofire

When autofiring laser weapons, the step modifiers are +0, +1, +1 instead of the normal +1, +2, +3 because lasers have no recoil. Also, lasers can be "hotshotted" adding +2 to the listed damages but costing 4 shots of energy. Only heavy laser pistols and military grade rifles are designed to be hotshotted. On a critical failure, non-military weapons will malfunction.

The Elsa

"It's going to take HOW LONG to get there?"

Written by Kevin Loughran

"It's going to take *HOW LONG* to get there?"

With these words, and the accompanying answer, Dr. Hermes Andros set himself both a challenge and a goal.

"The problem as I see it is simple", he said, "How can we build a ship capable of 15 light year starfalls and still make it affordable for the small business consumer?"

"The problem is quite basic. Durability issues prevent the installation of sufficient power supply to permit long distance starfalls, without necessarily using up so much hull space as to severely restrict any small vessels functionality."

"Every ship needs to have certain basic functions; power, drive, navigation, sensors, communications and life support. None are expendable, but if you build a small ship capable of these and place a 50 power point mass reactor in it, you've used up two-thirds of capacity simply for power with no room for specialization."

"We MUST find a way to compress the power supply in order to achieve our goal".

His solution had two parts, first use a slightly larger hull class and build into it the components for another mission and second, build a lighter and more efficient mass reactor system.

Well, no one believed it was possible and for six years he struggled forward on his own. In desperation, he presented his ideas time and again, to the larger shipyards at first but as he faced rejection after rejection to smaller and yet smaller concerns until finally, protonic industries, agreed to co-fund a test bed vehicle. Choosing a 'courtesan' class attack hull he began assembling components for a new type of scout/exploration vehicle.

That was the easy part.

The hard part was the power supply. He spent two years on experimental matter converters, but as the technical problems led to too many dead ends he returned to standard mass reactors and began devising ways to compress the dark matter decay reactions. He eventually accomplished this by using two standard mass reactors with one being solely dedicated to 'overdriving' the non-baryonic particle decay in the other, thus increasing power capacity by a factor of two.

It worked, but no one trusted it.

As news of his work became known, engineers and scientists at first claimed fraud, but when he showed them practical applications they were silenced... temporarily. Unfortunately a third problem had appeared. The engine was unreliable and no matter how he tried to solve it, eventually one reactor or the other became unstable and had to be shut down, thus limiting the power to one quarter of it's overdriven capacity.

Pilots and ship owners refused to even consider the new design. "Who's going to fly a ship that might crap out in the middle of deep space?" one pilot said. "What if both reactors go out, then you'd REALLY be stuck." Dr. Andros pointed out that even if one reactor went down, the ship would still be capable of five light year starfalls, but no one was willing to test the concept.

So he did it himself.

Advertising through the StarMech grid, he drew to himself private investors, adventurers, the bored and the curious and acquired both a crew and funding to build his test bed.

"We'll call her the 'Elsa", he said at the initial press conference, "in honor of my first grandchild". The child's mother promptly picked her up and fled, but Hermes didn't notice.

Beginning in early December 2496, protonic began installing standard operational equipment in the 'courtesan' hull as Dr. Andros oversaw the installation of his new mass reactors. The command compartment was purchased whole from indigo electronics, who also provided the latest commercial computer cores and programs. His crew, not wanting to go out with at least some protection, demanded armaments, so he built six single-missile launch tubes into her frame. "This is a peaceful vessel of exploration, not a warship", he said. "We wish to display no aggressive attributes". Other investors threatened to pull their backing unless he added commercial capacities, so he also outfitted the ship with a small cargo bay capable of holding one standard cargo unit.

Finally, in January 2499, she was ready for her maiden voyage. With Dr. Andros as Captain and chief engineer, pilot Sakai Yohanato, communications officer ernie Douglas, weapons officer C.C.Osbourne, science officer tom Watson, A-tech toby as security officer and Jadea Koruun as backup engineer and navigator, she set sail for the Verge, a load of exotic spices in her cargo hold and predictions of disaster trailing behind.

As of August 2499, she hadn't broken down.

Yet.

S.M.S.S. Elsa

1 PILOT
2 CO-PILOT
3 COMMAND
4 COMMUNICATIONS
5 MEDICAL/LIFE SUPPORT
6 SENSORS
7 WEAPONS
8 COMPUTER CORE
9 SENSOR ARRAYS
10 MISSILES
11 INDUCTION ENGINE
12 CARGO BAY
13 SICK BAY
14 LIFE SUPPORT
15 MASS REACTORS
16 STARDRIVE
17 GUEST CREW QUARTERS
18 WEAPONS LOCKER
19 CREW LAVATORY
20 SUPPLY CLOSET
21 KITCHEN
22 CREW LOUNGE
23 AIRLOCK/E-SUIT STORAGE
24 ESCAPE PODS
25 AUXILIARY STORAGE
26 AUXILIARY LIFE SUPPORT
27 COMMAND QUARTERS
28 CREW QUARTERS

Cook's Guide Special

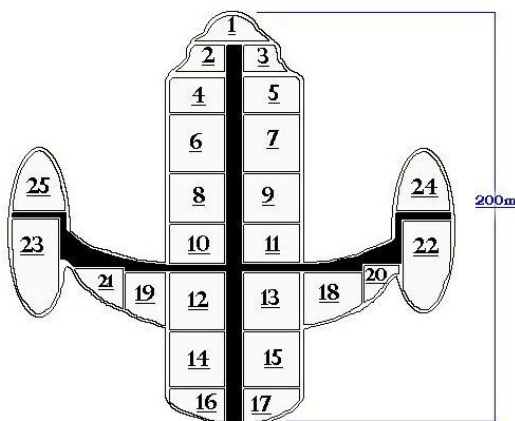# THE LIQUID SKY III

Written by Mike Meechan & Matthew R. Esch

The Liquid Sky Model LSIII

A Supplement for Escape Velocity 2503.

http://games.groups.yahoo.com/group/escapevelocity2503

The Liquid Sky III

Vessel Class: Destroyer   Registry: Independent, Kai System
Compartments: 25   Total Durability: 208
Base of Operations: Kai System, Nova Belt, Kixil Station

Compartment 1   S:6 W:6 M:3
-jammer dur0, pow1.

Use System Op-*comm*. To determine penalty to enemy fire:

critical failure	-2 bonus
failure	no modifier
ordinary success	+1 penalty
good success	+2 penalty
amazing success	+3 penalty

-mass detector, spaceship detection range=10/50/100Mm. dur1 pow0.
-ladar, spaceship detection range=5/20/30Mm. dur1 pow0. very good vs. jamming attempts and/or magnetic interference.
-multiband radar, s.d.r.=30/60/90Mm. dur0,pow0.
-spectroanalyzer, for gathering planetary & stellar data for surveys. dur1,pow1.
-em detector, dur0,pow0. used to detect/indentify energy sources.
-internal monitors, the ship is equipped with cameras & audio in every room/compartment.
-reentry capsule, we get one for free. Has room for 1 with 48 hour O2 supply.

Compartment 2   S:2 W:2 M:1
-cutting airlock, dur1 pow0. like a boarding airlock, but has laser cutter for breaching the other ship's hull.

Compartment 3   S:6 W:6 M:3
-computer core, amazing, dur3, pow0. dedicated systems provide –3 step bonus to corresponding skill checks: comm., defense, engineering, navigation, sensors
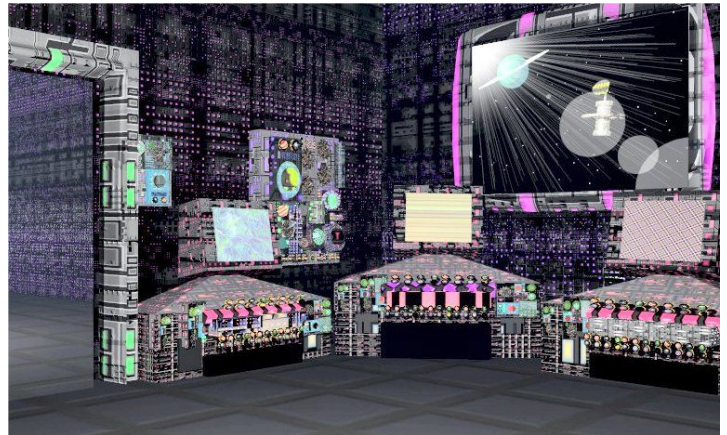
The state of the art computer core provides amazing control.

Compartment 4   S:6 W:6 M:3
-airlock, dur1, pow0.
-boarding pod, dur2, pow0. has room for 10 and stores for 4 wks. features a small engine, fastening clamps, and cutting torches.

The boarding pod is deployed to investigate a disabled ship.

Compartment 5   S:6 W:6 M:3
-airlock, one for free
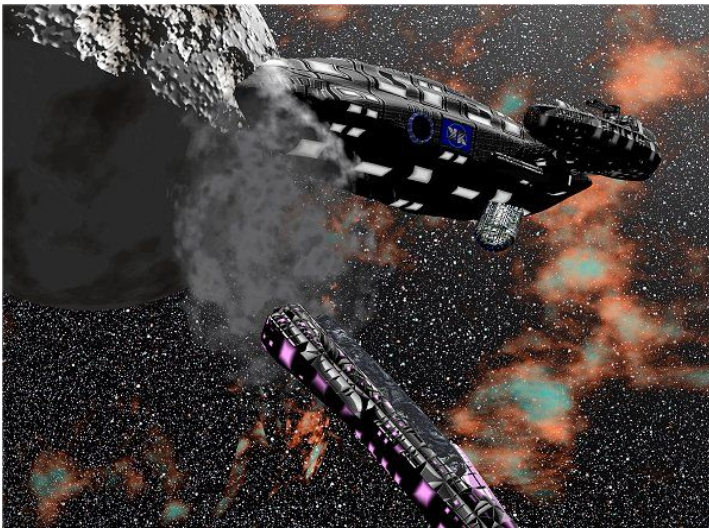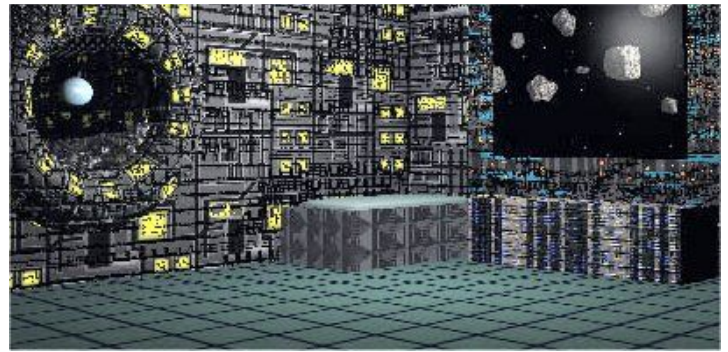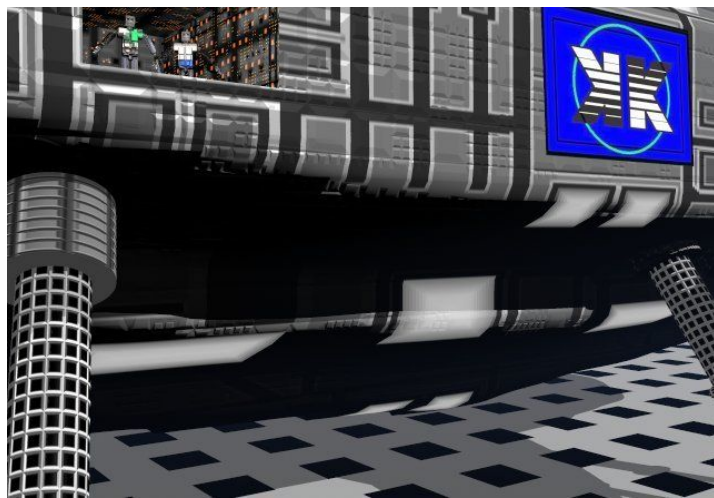-hangar, holds 1 dur worth of space vehicles or 2 dur worth of standard
    vehicles per durability point assigned to it. To accommodate a
    skycar (dur:11/11/5) hangar is 3dur.
-armored hatches, dur1, pow0. amazing toughness, 6mortal, +2 step pen
    to attempts to bypass it with security devices.
-psi detector, scans each passenger prior to boarding

Compartment 6   S:6 W:6 M:3
-recycler, dur1, pow1. Makes 10 weeks' stores last 40 weeks.
-workshop, dur2, pow1. considered a "good" facility for Tech Sci skill
    checks.

Compartment 7   S:8 W:8 M:4
-lab section, dur2, pow0.
-sick bay, dur2, pow0. considered a "good" facility for Med Sci. skill
    checks.

Compartment 8   S:8 W:8 M:4
-crew quarters, for 6 personnel requires 1dur, 0power.

Compartment 9   S:6 W:6 M:3
-crew quarters, for 6 personnel requires 1dur, 0power.

Compartment 10   S:6 W:6 M:3

Crew quarters aboard The Liquid Sky.

Compartment 11   S:6 W:6 M:3
-crew quarters, for 6 personnel requires 1dur, 0power.

Compartment 12   S:20 W:20 M:10
-mass reactor, 2dur gives 5 power factors. fuel stores last 30 weeks.
    need at least 100 power factors for a 50ly spacefold.

Compartment 13   S:20 W:20 M:10
-mass reactor, 2dur gives 5 power factors. fuel stores last 30 weeks.

Compartment 14   S:20 W:20 M:10
-mass reactor, 2dur gives 5 power factors. fuel stores last 30 weeks.

Compartment 15   S:20 W:20 M:10
-mass reactor, 2dur gives 5 power factors. fuel stores last 30 weeks.

Compartment 16   S:20 W:20 M:10
-deflection inducer, dur1,pow2. need 1 per 20dur. Use System Op-
    defenses to determine the penalty to enemy fire:

critical failure	-2 bonus
failure	no modifier
ordinary success	+1 penalty
good success	+2 penalty
amazing success	+3 penalty

    Eight deflection inducers to cover the ship. Total dur=8
-foldsender, dur1, pow1. Can send a message 100,000 LY in one hour.

Compartment 17   S:10 W:10 M:5
-spacefolding drive, dur3, pow Varies:
    1-8 power factors=0.5 ly
    9-15 power factors = 1.0 ly
    16-30 power factors=2.0 ly
    31-50 power factors=5.0 ly
    51-70 power factors = 10.0 ly
    71-100 power factors = 20.0 ly
    100+ power factors = 50 ly

NOTE: The spacefolding drive cycles almost instantaneously, but it
creates dangerous stresses in the fabric of space; for safety the ship must
travel 5d20 (x) 10 AU from its arrival point in space before it is safe to
use the drive again.

-transdrive, dur1, pow 75% of total durability, used to travel between the
divisions, clusters, and tangents of superspace.

Durability: 1
Power: Varies, recommend applying a number of power factors
                equal to 75% of the vessels total hull points.
Cost: C$15million. However, the Transdrive may command a
                much higher price. They are (nearly) impossible to obtain
                since Ion Productions stopped production after The
                Newfound Glory and her crew were forever lost in a

botched trial run.
Manufacturer: Kixil Station Innovations
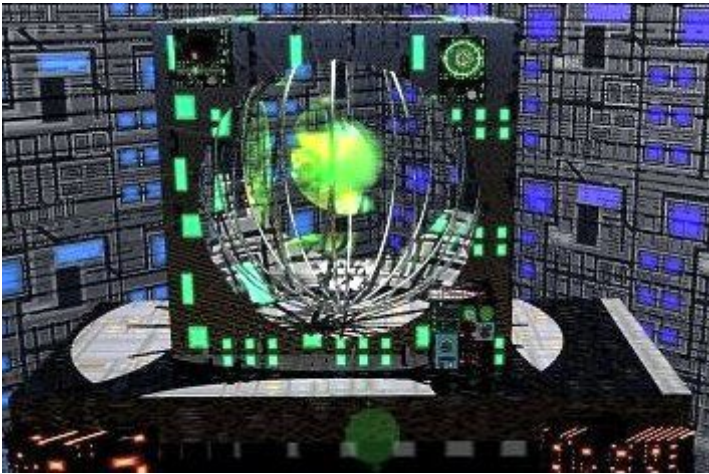
The Transdrive

Overview:

The Transdrive is a starship system permitting travel between the divisions of superspace, as defined in Tangents. To use this artifact in your campaign, you must have the Tangents supplement, as well as Starships.

The Transdrive itself is actually a modification of the spacefolding drive. Invented by the Aleerin engineer known as Starbirth, formerly of Insight, she now serves as Electronics Officer of Kixil Station and aboard the independent vessel Liquid Sky.

Theory:

This patented modification utilizes an extremely rare power source to vastly increase the already intense gravity generated by the spacefolding drive. Whereas the spacefolding drive shortens interstellar distances by folding space, the Transdrive functions somewhat differently. When supplied with sufficient power factors the Transdrive will actually tear the fabric of space, effectively opening a rift to another dimension, or tangent. To determine how many power factors are required to generate a rift large enough to safely accommodate a given vessel, simply multiply the ships hull points by 0.75. Attempting to open a gate using less power is possible, but the likelihood of success is greatly reduced. A +1 step penalty is applied to the heros Superspace Navigation check for each power factor short of the minimum safe value. (In order to use the Transdrive, the hero must possess the INT skill, Superspace Navigation, as seen in Tangents. Although not required, I would highly recommend the associated skill Superspace Theory.)

Associated Skills:

Dimensional lore gives the hero working knowledge of the stories and legends about parallel dimensions.
Superspace navigation (INT) gives the hero the ability to determine locations and destinations in the fabric of superspace.
Superspace theory (INT) gives hero a working knowledge of the scientific principles behind dimensions and dimensional travel.

WARNING

Engaging the Transdrive creates temporary instability in the fabric of space-time, which persists for some time after its use. During this time the Transdrive should never be re-engaged, as the principles of physics for such a state are unpredictable. Even if the attempt to open a gate is unsuccessful, DO NOT make another attempt until sufficient time has passed for re-stabilization. (*1)

Operation:

To the neophyte dimensional traveler, the Transdrive can be very difficult and dangerous to use. The hero's degree of success with their Superspace Navigation skill check determines the outcome. The following table should be used in conjunction with tables T1 through T5 (Tangents pgs.10-12).

Alternate Use:

Gate projector: Working in conjunction with a renowned expert on drivespace theory, the Transdrives inventor devised an alternate use of the drive system as a weapon. In this application the Transdrive creates a tear in the fabric of space-time that is centered upon a target. Thus, the target is unwittingly transported to another tangent. The destination is determined using the tables provided below.

The range of this attack is limited only by the users ability to detect their target. For this reason it is typically limited by the maximum range of the sensor system of the Transdrive-equipped ship. In order to utilize this attack the user must make a System Op>sensors skill check.

When using the gate projector function the number of power factors applied determines how many points of durability are swallowed up by the gate. To make an enemy ship vanish completely, apply power factors equal to the vessels durability multiplied by 0.75.

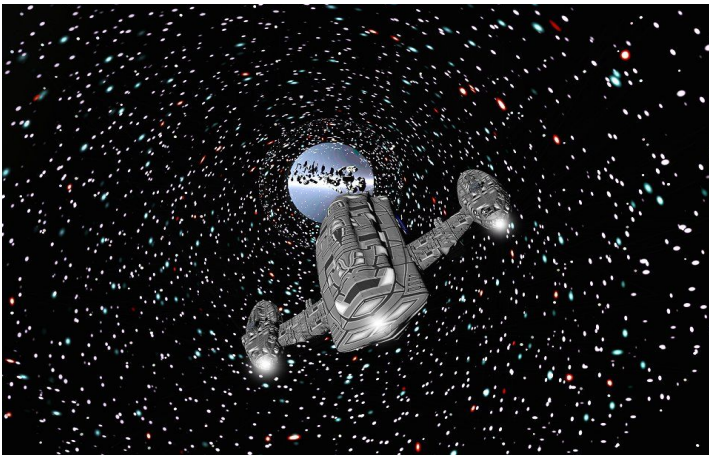| Success	Result
Critical failure	roll on critical failure table. Instability lasts 1d4 days.
Failure	no gate opens. Instability lasts for 4d6 hours.
Ordinary success	gate opens but destination is in the adjacent division. +1 step penalty to next attempt to use Transdrive. Instability lasts 3d6 hours.
Good success	gate opens to correct division, but incorrect cluster. Instability lasts 2d6 hours.
Amazing success	gate opens to correct division, cluster, & tangent Instability lasts 1d6 hour(s).

Critical Failure Table (Roll 1d6):
1-2 ship emerges 3 divisions away from its intended destination
3-5 destination is completely random
6   space-time hiccup (*2)

To randomly determine the destination, consult tables T1-T5 from "Tangents", pgs 10-12. Corresponding descriptions of tangent attributes follow, pgs 13-24.

*1. This phenomenon is the suspected cause of the loss of the Alaundrin vessel Newfound Glory, which disappeared during a test of the Transdrive being conducted by Ion Productions, Babel.
Note to GM: Should a hero attempt to open a gate during this instability, the result should automatically be a considered a critical failure.

*2. In this case I suggest that the GM be creative. Here are a couple ideas I've had: The ship emerges to find: its compartments have been rearranged, one member of the crew is missing, an entire section of the ship is gone, etc. For other ideas see table T9, Hazards of Superspace Travel (Tangents pg34). The overall result of a space-time hiccup really just depends on how badly you want to ruin the crews day. It could be an opportunity to put a damper on things, in case the Transdrive (or one of your heroes) has upset the balance of power in the campaign. Or it could be a source of unlimited adventure hooks. The choice is yours.

-hypermagnetic engine, dur2. gives 1 movement point per 3 power factors applied.
Maneuverability rating -3, Acceleration 5, Cruise 6

Compartment 18   S:6 W:6 M:3
-mass reactor, 2dur gives 5 power factors. fuel stores last 30 weeks.
    need at least 100 power factors for a 50ly spacefold.

Compartment 19   S:6 W:6 M:3
-mass reactor, 2dur gives 5 power factors. fuel stores last 30 weeks.

Compartment 20   S:24 W:24 M:12
-Gatling Maser*

Hull	18	Fire	En/M
Power	36	Damage	d8+4w/d8+2m/d12+2m
Acc.	+1	Mode	F/G/B/A
Range	3/7/14		

Compartment 21   S:24 W:24 M:12
-Gatling Maser*

Hull	18	Fire	En/M
Power	36	Damage	d8+4w/d8+2m/d12+2m
Acc.	+1	Mode	F/G/B/A
Range	3/7/14		

*Mounted on TURRETs, which adds 25% to the durability to gatling maser cannon.

The Liquid Sky has 4 plasma cannons and 2 launch tubes

Compartment 22   S:26 W:26 M:13
-2 Plasma Cannons
    dur3, pow6, acc0, En(e), Range: 4/8/6Mm
    Damage: d6+2w/d8+2w/d6+1m, 3 actions/round
-weapon linked, dur0,pow0 2 plasma cannons, each on a:
-raised turret, dur2,pow0,acc-1. each one mounts 2 weapon-linked
    plasma cannons.
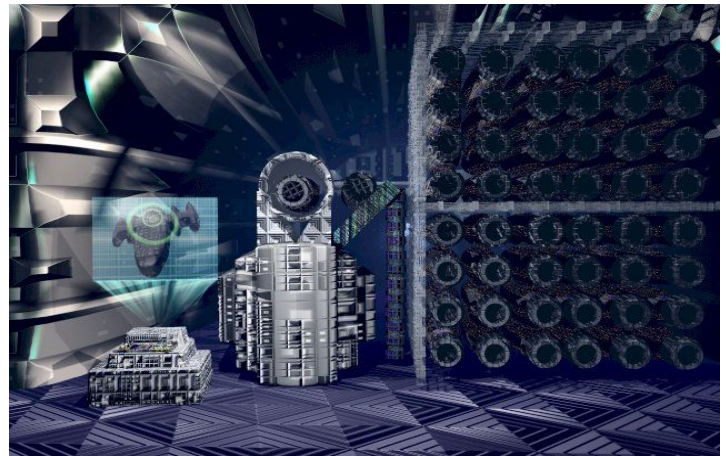-stabilizer, one per 20dur. each=dur2,pow0. (4 stabilizers)

Compartment 23   S:26 W:26 M:13
-2 Plasma Cannons
    dur3, pow6, acc0, En(e), Range: 4/8/6Mm
    Damage: d6+2w/d8+2w/d6+1m, 3 actions/round
-weapon linked, dur0,pow0 2 plasma cannons, each on a:
-raised turret, dur2,pow0,acc-1. each one mounts 2 weapon-linked
    plasma cannons.
-stabilizer, one per 20dur. each=dur2,pow0. (4 stabilizers)

Compartment 24   S:6 W:6 M:3
-R.R. launch tube, dur3,pow1, acc-1.
    fires plasma missiles: En(g), 15/30/45Mm
    Damage: d6+3w/d8+3w/d2+2m, 3 actions/round.
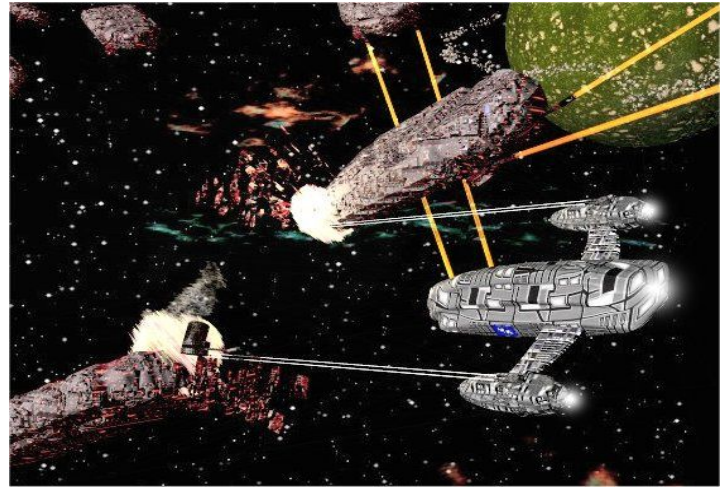
In the first seconds of this battle The Liquid Sky took out two Kandaran fighter vessels.

Compartment 25   S:6 W:6 M:3
-R.R. launch tube, dur3,pow1, acc-1.
    fires plasma missiles: En(g) 15/30/45Mm
    Damage: d6+3w/d8+3w/d2+2m, 3 actions/round.

One of the two missile control stations aboard the Liquid Sky.

Non Compartmental Systems:
-autosupport, dur0, pow1. need one per 20 dur.
    8 autosupport systems to cover the ship.
-heavy neutronite armor, dur cost= 20% of the total durability.
    absorbs d8+1, any type.
    20% works out to 32 dur
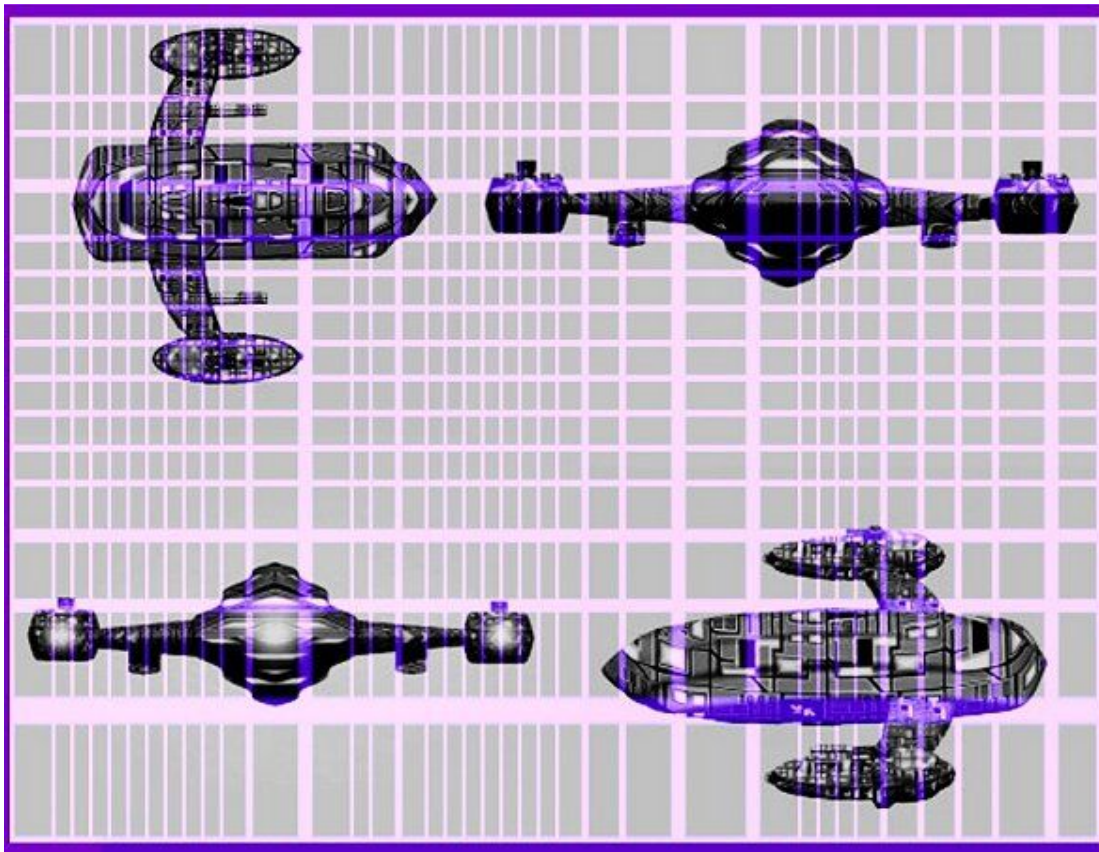
The Liquid Sky was designed and constructed at Kixil Station's shipyard
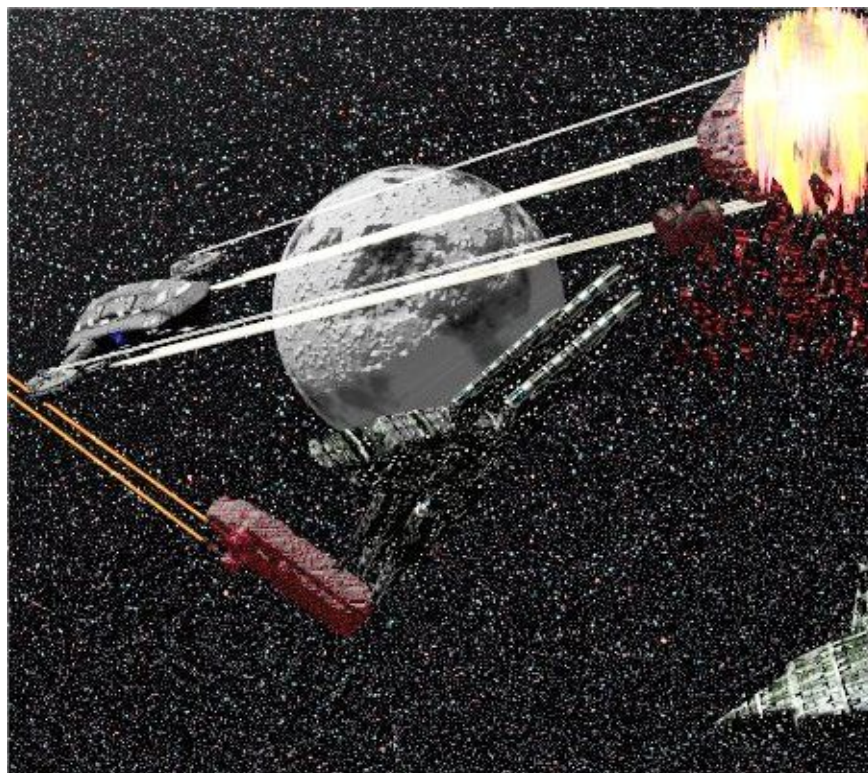
The Liquid Sky III engages Sifarv and Kandaran Externals near planet Kirlinao, Kai system.

LSIII Designation of Tasks:

Pilot: Commodore Nova

Sensors: Joseph Freeborn / Ygevni Markov
   Dedicated Sensor control systems give -3 step bonus when using:
      -mass detector, ladar, multiband radar, spectroanalyzer, em detector
      -internal monitors
   *Rank3 in Sensors allows Joe to improve the random compartment hit location by one point. At Rank4 his sensors checks improve the quality of the weapons operators' attack rolls by 1 step. Thus, any good success on an attack roll now becomes an amazing success. A critical failure can't be changed.

Comm: Officer Kristen Michaels
   Dedicated system gives -3 step bonus skill checks with the Foldsender.

Weapons:
   Fire Control dedicated system gives -3 step bonus skill checks with:
      -Gatling Maser X2 (Chief Gunner Gavin Antilles) **Gatling masers have an Accuracy of +1, reducing bonus to -2.
      -Plasma Cannons X2 (Joseph Freeborn) Accuracy: -2
      -R.R. Launcher with Plasma Missiles X2 (Counselor Sturhnak Meehn Abhaal) **Rapid Recovery Launch Tubes have an Accuracy of -1

Engineering: Keri McMasterson, Chief Engineer
   Mainframe with engineering Reference programs (located in workshop) gives -3 step bonus to Engineering skill checks

Defenses: Major Gavin Heltbrenner / Joeseph Freeborn
   Dedicated system gives -3 step bonus skill checks with:
      Jammer, Deflection Inducer

Navigation: Science Officer Ttomolas / Kerri McMasteron
   Spacefolding Drive, Transdrive
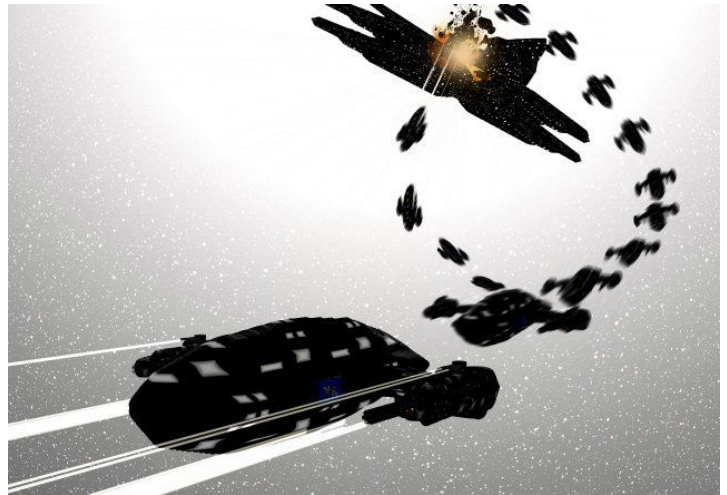
The Liquid Sky III. The last thing Externals ever see.
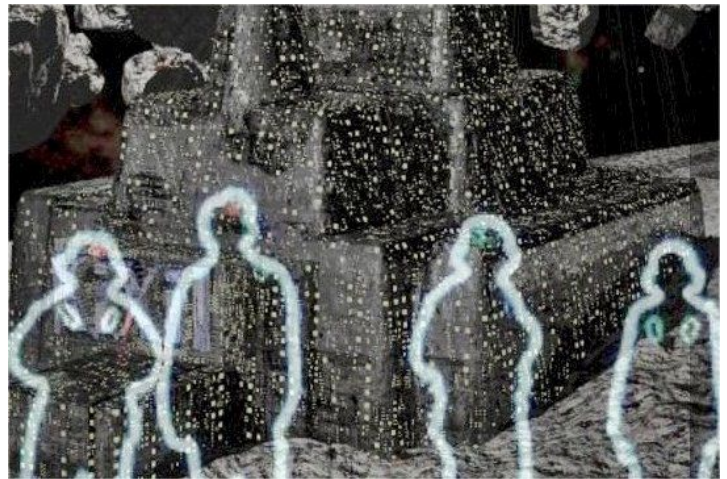
Engineering Crew of The Liquid Sky III

Made up of engineers from the late Bri'aitsya's renown "Engineering Team", these gifted individuals were part of the group responsible for repairing and maintaining The Liquid Sky. Already advanced engineers when they were hired by Kixil Station, their skills were further honed in the Station's cutting-edge technical facilities. Following the death of First Mate & Chief Engineer Bri'aitsya and the "resignation" of the Electronics Officer Starbirth, seven of these engineers were promoted to crew positions aboard The 'Sky . Each specialist in this highly-skilled group was selected by the keen management of Kixil Station Administration based on their individual areas of expertise.

In addition to performing all repairs and modifications to The Liquid Sky, these engineers spend long hours running through training holos and simulations in the state of the art engineering lab. They regularly practice emergency protocols by simulating various system failures in Kixil's Holofield Bay. On Commodore Nova and Major Heltbrenner's insistence, each crew member has also received SWAT training in the rare event that they are called upon join in combat. This intensive cross-training and ongoing education means the Engineering

Crew can skillfully operate The LSIII's incredible systems, as well as handle themselves in ground-based skirmishes. The engineers are supervised by the brilliant Kerri McMasterson who, as the new Chief Engineer, reports directly to Commodore Nova.
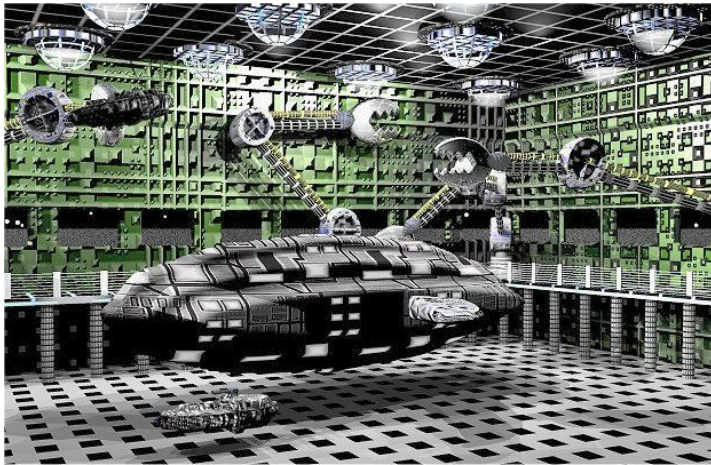
Kerri McMasterson
Level 16 Human female, Tech Op: Scientist

STR 11 (+1) INT 15 (+3) DEX 12 (+1) WIL 12 (+2) CON 14 PER 12

Durability: 11/11/6/6	Action check: 15+/17/7/3
Move: sprint 22, run 14, walk 4	# Actions: 3
Reaction Score: Good/3	Last Resorts: 2

Attacks:
Tornado 15mm Sabot pistol wp AP rounds1 ,2
14/7/4 Type: HI/O Damage: 2d4w/ 2d4+1w/ d4+3m
1. reduces the effectiveness of armor by ½
2. 6 shots/ clip Range: 10/ 20/ 100 meters

Defenses:
Reinforced CF Bodysuit, dark gray w silver trim   LI d8/ HI d8/ EN d6

Perks: Willpower (applied) Flaws: Obsessed [starship design]

Skills: Modern Ranged Weapons [14]-pistol [13]; Business [15]-corporate [17]; Physical Science [15]physics [22], Navigation [15] – super space [18] system [18] (Kai, Tendril) drive space[18] Technical Science [15]-technical knowledge (starship design) [21]–super space theory [19]; Creativity [12]-academic writing [13]; Teach [12]-tech op [15]

Equipment: CF jumpsuit, soft e-suit, sensor gauntlet, headset multiband comm gear, notebook computer, stutter pistol, sabot pistol, engineering tool kit.

Background:
     Since this Borealin native left Ion Productions for Kixil Station over two years ago, she has come to understand some of the universe's most challenging mysteries. Working alongside the engineer and inventor Starbirth -Kixil's foremost technical expert- she learned first hand the revolutionary physics behind the Aleerin's many unique and ingenious devices. Unobtrusive and diligent McMasterson developed a close professional relationship with Starbirth, even though the mechalus was known around the Station to be quite domineering and abrasive. The unusual harmony between the two was thanks in large part to McMasterson's incredible intellect. She was Kixil's only other engineer who could fully comprehend the complex equations and mechanics used

by the Aleerin. Kerri's humble nature and modest ego helped her to avoid the head- butting which was typical of Starbirth's other work relationships. Known for her near-obsessive dedication and hard work,
     Kerri can be often be found in her room studying super space mechanics while the rest of the crew is enjoying much-deserved R&R. But her hard work recently paid off when Commodore Nova chose her to be the new Chief Engineer of The Liquid Sky. With Bri'aitsya and Starbirth now gone, she fills a very large void aboard The LSIII. Only she and the tsa Emissary Ttomolas know how to operate the incredibly complicated dimensional drive known as the Transdrive. As Chief Engineer she is responsible for:
1. supervising and training the Engineering Crew
2. performing navigational and other technical duties as required
3. making sure all the ship's mechanical and electronic systems are working at optimal capacity and efficiency

Key skills:
Navigation - drivespace R3, superspace R3, system R3
Technical Science - technical knowledge R5*, super space theory R4

Bonuses:
+1 to INT (applied); Obsessed (+4 points) [starship design].
*R5 in Technical Knowledge gives -1 step bonus to associated skill checks.

Ygevni Markov
Level 14 Human male, Tech Op: Spacehand

STR 13 (+2) (+3 w blade) INT 11 (+1) DEX 11 (+1) WIL 12 (+1) CON 14 PER 11

Durability: 14/14/7/7	Action check: 13+/12/6/3
Move: sprint 24, run 16, walk 6	# Actions: 3
Reaction Score: Good/3	Last Resorts: 1

Attacks:
TN Blade 18/9/5 Type: LI/G Damage: d6+2w/ d6+3w/ d4+2m

Defenses:
Bushmaster Cerametal Mail   LI d4/+2/ HI d6/ EN d6
Reinforced CF Bodysuit, gray w blue trim   LI d8/ HI d8/ EN d6

Skills:
 Melee [13]-blade [17], Armor Operation [14]; Stamina [14]-endurance [18]; Knowledge [11]-hobby [12], first aid [14]; System Operation [11] -sensors [16]; Technical Science [11]-juryrig [16], repair [16]; Street Smart [12]-knowledge [16], criminal elements [13]; Leadership [11]

Equipment: CF jumpsuit, lift harness, laser torch, specialized engineers tool kit, TN knife, helmet mounted multi-band comm, helmet mounted vidcam, IR goggles

Background:
     Being a native of Alaundril, Tendril (Commodore Nova's homeworld) Ygevni found he had much in common with The Liquid Sky's commanding officer. For his part, Mig admired the soft-spoken Ygenvi for his dedication and loyalty to former First-Mate Bri'aitsya. Markov had worked under Mig's late best friend for years and was one of the first to leave his job at Ion Productions to follow Bri to Kixil Station. In fact, it was he who drafted the letter of resignation that the rest of the engineering team signed. So when Mig had the time he did his best to take the young engineer under his wing, providing first hand training in armor and melee weapons.
     Ygevni continues to invest much of his salary in Ion Productions stock, although the External War has lead him to diversify his holdings. Since the establishment of the External blockade at Tendril he has lost

contact with his Micha, his former girlfriend. With her choice to remain on Alaundril their romance had faded over the past two years. Ygevni still considers her his soulmate, however, and he kept up contact with her as long as he could. He hopes that somehow one day they will be together again.

Key Skills:
System Operation - sensors R5 1
Technical Science -jury rig R5 2, repair R5 3
Melee Weapon -blade R4 4

Bonuses:
-1 step to System Operation-sensors, during Tendril Burn.
1 R5 in sensors -increases weapons operators degree of success by one
     step. (A Good Sucess becomes Amazing, etc).
     This bonus cannot save them from a Critical Failure, however.
2 R5 in jury rig -increases time that a jury-rigged system holds together.
     d6 + an additional number of rounds equal to their rank.
     For Ygevni a jury rigged system will hold for d6+5 rounds.
3 R5 in repair - starting at R4 the number of successes required to repair
     STUN damage is reduced by one. At R4 the tech can repair ALL the
     stun damage to a given compartment on a Good Success or better.
     (takes only one round)
4 R4 in blade applies an additional +1 to STR resistance modifier

Brenna Hartung
Level 14 Human female, Tech Op: Space hand

STR 11 (+1) INT 11 (+1) DEX 14 (+2) WIL 12 (+1) CON 13 PER 11

Durability: 11/11/6/6   Action check: 15+/17/7/3
Move: sprint 22, run 14, walk 4   # Actions: 3
Reaction Score: Good/3   Last Resorts: 2

Attacks:
Tornado 15mm Sabot pistol wp AP rounds1 ,2
14/7/4 Type: HI/O Damage: 2d4w/ 2d4+1w/ d4+3m
1. reduces the effectiveness of armor by ½
2. 6 shots/ clip Range: 10/ 20/ 100 meters

Defenses:
Reinforced CF Bodysuit, navy blue w gray trim LI d8/ HI d8/ EN d6

Skills:
Mod Ranged Weapons –pistol [17] Stamina [13]-endurance [16];
Knowledge [11]-hobby [12], first aid [16], System Operation [11]-
communications [12], engineering [14]; Technical Science [11]-juryrig
[14], repair [14], technical knowledge (communication) [16]; Interaction
[11]-taunt [12]; Leadership [11].

Equipment: CF jumpsuit, magnetic boots, vacuum mask, zero-g web,
toolkit, sabot pistol, combat knife.

Background:
     One of Kixil Station's most well-known residents, the stunning
Brenna seems to be on a first name basis with everyone. From her "gear
head" technical obsession to the rigorous aerobics classes she instructs,
she is always buzzing around the Station like a bee. She is a social
drinker, but stays in incredible shape thanks to her strict exercise regimen
and loose vegetarian diet. (Meaning that she won' t eat beef or pork, but
occasionally gets an undeniable craving for a chicken salad sandwich on
pumpernickel.) Most of the men of Kixil Station would like to get to
know her on MORE than a professional level, referring to her as a
"white-hot hottie in a jumpsuit". The fact that she can be very flirty
-especially after a couple drinks- makes her seem attainable. However,
none of the rumors of Brenna having affairs with other Station residents

have been substantiated.
     Since being chosen to join The Crew of The Liquid Sky there have
been some hard feelings toward Brenna from a few of her fellow
Engineering Team members. Some of those who did NOT get promoted
feel that they are better qualified, and that Brenna was chosen for her
good looks. Being quite used to dealing with jealousy, she simply points
out her expertise in comm systems and repair. Few have had the courage
to take their complaints to Commodore Nova, who hand-picked Hartung.
Truth be told, Mig does feel that morale might be better with her
onboard, but that wasn't his only motive. For those who have
complained, Nova brushed them off saying that "Her abilities speak for
themselves. And she's damn good with a pistol."

Key Skills:
System Operation -comm R1, engineering R3 1
Technical Science -jury rig R3, repair R3, technical knowledge
(communications hardware) R5
Modern Ranged Weapons -pistol R3 2

Bonuses:
1 R3 in engineering allows the operator to overpower systems
2 R3 in pistol means Brenna can draw a pistol and fire it in the same
     phase without the standard +1 penalty

Butch Harlan
Level 14 Human male, Tech Op: Space hand

STR 13 (+2) INT 11 (+1) DEX 12 (+1) WIL 12 (+1) CON 13 PER 11

Durability: 12/11/6/6   Action check: 15+/17/7/3
Move: sprint 22, run 14, walk 4   # Actions: 3
Reaction Score: Good/3   Last Resorts: 2

Attacks:
Tornado 15mm Sabot pistol wp AP rounds1 ,2
14/7/4 Type: HI/O Damage: 2d4w/ 2d4+1w/ d4+3m
1. reduces the effectiveness of armor by ½
2. 6 shots/ clip Range: 10/ 20/ 100 meters

Defenses:
Reinforced CF Bodysuit, blue w gray trim LI d8/ HI d8/ EN d6

Perks: Vigor (Mild) [applied] Flaws: Obsessed (Mild, shadowboxing)

Skills: Mod Ranged Weapons –pistol [13] Stamina [13]-endurance [16];
Knowledge [11]-hobby [12], first aid [12], Computer Science – hacking
[15], programming[14], hardware[15], System Operation [11]
engineering [14]; Technical Science [11]-juryrig [14], repair [14],
robotics [15], technical knowledge (robotics) [15]; Interaction [11]-taunt
[14]

Equipment: CF jumpsuit, magnetic boots, vacuum mask, zero-g web,
toolkit, 15 mm sabot pistol, combat knife.

Background:
     The energetic Butch Harlan and his twin, Kaylar, are originally from
StarMech Collective but like the rest of the Engineering Crew had
worked at Ion Productions on Bri'aitsya's team of engineers. Their
Starmech background with its seeming contradiction of wild partying and
hard work meant the fun-loving duo fit right in with Bri'aitsya and the
Commodore. The brothers jumped at the chance to follow Bri' to Kixil
Station, never looking back. Despite the relative isolation the two found
life at The Station very much to their liking. After all, where else could
they learn so much about their two favorite subjects -robots and
computers? Having continual access to Kixil's wondrous technology
has been a dream come true for them.

The brothers have been careful to keep their lust for leisure in check, however. Butch takes primary responsibility for robot maintenance and maintains an ample inventory of spare parts. Kaylar helps with programming and repair of the shipboard computers and electronic controls.

When off duty the brothers indulge their obsession for shadowboxing. The twins have vastly improved their skills under the tutelage of Starbirth, quite possibly the foremost hacking expert the Verge has ever known. She was amused by the way they carefully dissected her every move in the Grid and memorized every line of code, hoping that they could one day become half the expert she is. Although she was never especially friendly toward the two, she did write some unique hacking simulations and computer tutorials for them. From time to time she disregarded Station protocol and relaxed the computer security clearances for them when she felt it was warranted.

Although he is a good guy at heart, Butch has a tendency to talk trash which has gotten him into trouble on more than one occasion. Kaylar has a cooler head and has talked the two out of trouble about as many times.

Key Skills:
Computer Science -hacking R4 1, programming R3 2, hardware R4 3
System Operation -engineering R3 4
Technical Science -jury rig R3, repair R3, technical knowledge (robotics) R4 5

Bonuses:
-1 bonus to Technical Science (or subskills); Obsessed (mild, 2 points: shadowboxing)
1 R4 in hacking gives -1 step bonus
2 R3 in programming means Butch can modify programs up Good Quality/Complexity.
    He can write programs of Marginal Quality/ Complexity
3 R4 in hardware gives -1 step bonus
4 R3 in engineering allows the operator to overpower systems
5 R4 in technical knowledge robotics gives added -1 step bonus

Kaylar Harlan
Level 14 Human male, Tech Op: Space hand

STR 13 (+2) INT 11 (+1) DEX 12 (+1) WIL 12 (+1) CON 13 PER 11

Durability: 12/11/6/6   Action check: 15+/17/7/3
Move: sprint 22, run 14, walk 4   # Actions: 3
Reaction Score: Good/3   Last Resorts: 2

Attacks:
Tornado 15mm Sabot pistol wp AP rounds1 ,2
14/7/4 Type: HI/O Damage: 2d4w/ 2d4+1w/ d4+3m
1. reduces the effectiveness of armor by ½
2. 6 shots/ clip Range: 10/ 20/ 100 meters

Defenses:
Reinforced CF Bodysuit, blue w gray trim LI d8/ HI d8/ EN d6

Perks: Vigor (Mild) [applied]   Flaws: Obsessed (Mild, shadowboxing)

Skills: Mod Ranged Weapons –pistol [13]; Stamina [13]-endurance [16]; Knowledge [11]-hobby [12], first aid [12]; Computer Science – hacking [17], programming[17], hardware[19], System Operation [11] defenses [14], engineering [16]; Technical Science [11]-juryrig [16], repair [16], technical knowledge (starship defenses) [18]; Interaction [11]-bargain [12]; Leadership [11].

Equipment: CF jumpsuit, magnetic boots, vacuum mask, zero-g web, toolkit, Tornado 15mm sabot pistol, combat knife.

Background:
Kaylar Harlan is friendly and outgoing like his brother Butch, but not quite so overbearing. He shares his twin' s enthusiasm for shadowboxing. He takes great delight in the inability of those who do not know the twins intimately to tell them apart. Differences in personality aside, the two are completely indistinguishable, save for their handedness preference. Kaylar is left-handed; Butch is right-handed.

Key Skills:
Computer Science -hacking R6*, programming R6**, hardware R8***
System Operation -engineering R5****

Bonuses:
-1 bonus to Technical Science (or subskills); Obsessed (mild, 2 points: shadowboxing)
1 R6 in hacking gives -1 step bonus
2 R6 in programming means Kaylar can modify programs of any Quality/Complexity.
    He can write programs of Ordinary Quality/Complexity
3 R8 in hardware gives -2 step bonus
4 R3 in engineering allows the operator to overpower systems

Logan MacLeod
Level 14 Human male, Tech Op: Space hand

STR 13 (+2) (+3 w Blade) INT 11 (+1) DEX 12 (+1) WIL 12 (+1) CON 13 PER 11

Durability: 11/11/6/6   Action check: 15+/17/7/3
Move: sprint 22, run 14, walk 4   # Actions: 3
Reaction Score: Good/3   Last Resorts: 2

Attacks:
Valkyrie 9 AutoLaser
16/8/4 Type: EN/O Damage: d6+1w/ d6+3w/ d4+1m
20/ 80/ 200m 10 bursts/clip

TN Blade 18/9/5 Type: LI/G Damage: d6+2w/ d6+3w/ d4+2m

Defenses:
Bushmaster Cerametal Mail LI d4/+2/ HI d6/ EN d6
Reinforced CF Bodysuit, blue w gray trim LI d8/ HI d8/ EN d6

Skills: Mod Ranged Weapons –smg[16]; Melee Weapons -blade [16], Armor Operation [14]; Stamina [13]endurance [16]; Knowledge [11]-hobby [12], first aid [12], System Operation [11]- weapons [14], engineering [14]; Technical Science [11]-juryrig [16], repair [18], technical knowledge (starship weapons) [16] Interaction [11].

Equipment: CF jumpsuit, magnetic boots, vacuum mask, zero-g web, toolkit, auto laser pistol, TN knife.

Background:
Since coming to Kixil Station, Logan has proven himself time and time again. On the occasions that The Liquid Sky came home in dire need of repair, his hands-on ability was indispensable . If not for Logan's extra effort and his weapons expertise, The Sky's gatling maser installation might never have been completed after Starbirth left Kixil Station. More than any other engineer, except perhaps Kerri McMasterson, Logan has earned his position on the LSIII Engineering Crew. He whole-heartedly throws himself into his work, and expects the same of his fellow crew members. Although MacLeod can be hard on others in the rare event that they make a mistake, he is much harder on himself.

To say that Logan is a somber individual would be an understatement. The pain over his decision to leave his (now estranged)

wife and two young sons on Alaundril to work at Kixil Station has changed Logan. A family man at heart, Logan was never an outwardly cheerful individual, but now he seemed downright grim. Ever the gentleman, he has never blamed anyone at Kixil for his woes. But he does wear his emotions on his sleeve. He has never forgiven himself for his decision, and that can be seen in his eyes. Since the External blockade cutoff contact with Alaundril, Logan's emotional distress has compounded. So far none of this seems to have affected his job performance. However, Counselor Sturhnak does visit with him regularly to offer support since Mig reported that MacLeod has been brutal, almost sadistic in recent combat training holos.

Key Skills:
System Operation -weapons R4, engineering R4 1
Technical Science -jury rig R5 2, repair R7 3, technical knowledge R5 4
Mod Ranged Weapons –submachine gun R4 5
Melee Weapons –blade R46

Bonuses:
1 R4 in engineering means Logan can overpower systems
2 R5 in jury rig -increases time that a jury-rigged system holds together. d6 + an additional number of rounds equal to their rank. For Logan a jury rigged system will hold for d6+5 rounds.
3 R7 in repair - starting at R4 the number of successes required to repair STUN damage is reduced by one. At R4 the tech can repair ALL the stun damage to a given compartment on a Good Success or better. (takes only one round)
4 R5 in technical knowledge applies -1 step bonus to related skill checks.
5 R4 in SMG means Logan can change clips and fire in the same action with only +1 penalty
 6 R4 in blade applies an additional +1 to STR resistance modifier

Kristin Michaels
Level 14 Human female, Tech Op: Space hand

STR 10 (+2) INT 14 (+2) DEX 12 (+1) WIL 12 (+1) CON 13 PER 11

Durability: 11/11/6/6	Action check: 15+/17/7/3
Move: sprint 22, run 14, walk 4	# Actions: 3
Reaction Score: Good/3	Last Resorts: 2

Attacks:
Zero-g pistol 6/3/1 Type: HI/O Damage: d4+1w/ d6+1w/ d4m
Combat knife 5/3/2 Type: LI/O Damage: d4+1w/ d4+2w/ d4+3w

Defenses:
CF Bodysuit, light blue w silver trim LI d8/ HI d8/ EN d6

Skills: Stamina [13]-endurance [16]; Knowledge [14]-hobby [15], first aid [15], System Operation [14]communications [18], engineering [18]; Technical Science [14]-juryrig [16], repair [16], robotics [18], technical knowledge (robotics) [17]; Interaction [11]- seduce [12]; Leadership [11].

Equipment: jumpsuit, magnetic boots, vacuum mask, zero-g web, toolkit, zero-g pistol, combat knife.

Among the Engineering Crew Kristin Michaels is somewhat of an enigma. Her considerable skills in communications and robotics made her a shoe-in for promotion to the LSIII Crew. However, very little is known of her personal interests. She is quite friendly and enjoys socializing occasionally, but tends to speak about others' interests rather than her own. From what little her fellow crew members know of her, she seems to be rather reclusive, spending most of her off-duty time alone in her quarters listening to odd music and watching obscure holofilms. Michaels seems nervous and awkward in her dealings with Commodore

Nova, but everyone attributes that to his imposing appearance and manner. Unbeknownst to the others, Kristin actually has a fetish for machines and cyborgs. She has never revealed this to anyone, but once when the Loki09 android Joe Freeborn was in the repair shop she did "get lucky". Since that time she has turned her attention toward Commodore Nova, who is a cyborg. However, he seems nearly as oblivious to her subtle advances as the android Joseph.

Key Skills:
System Operation -communications R4 1 *, engineering R4 2 **
Technical Science -jury rig R2, repair R2, robotics R4, technical knowledge (robotics) R3 3

Bonuses:
1 R4 in comm gives -1 step bonus. At R3 comm operator can attempt to hack into another ship's computer core. -1 step bonus.
2 R4 in engineering permits her to overpower systems
3 R4 technical knowledge (robotics) -gives -1 step bonus to robot-related skill checks
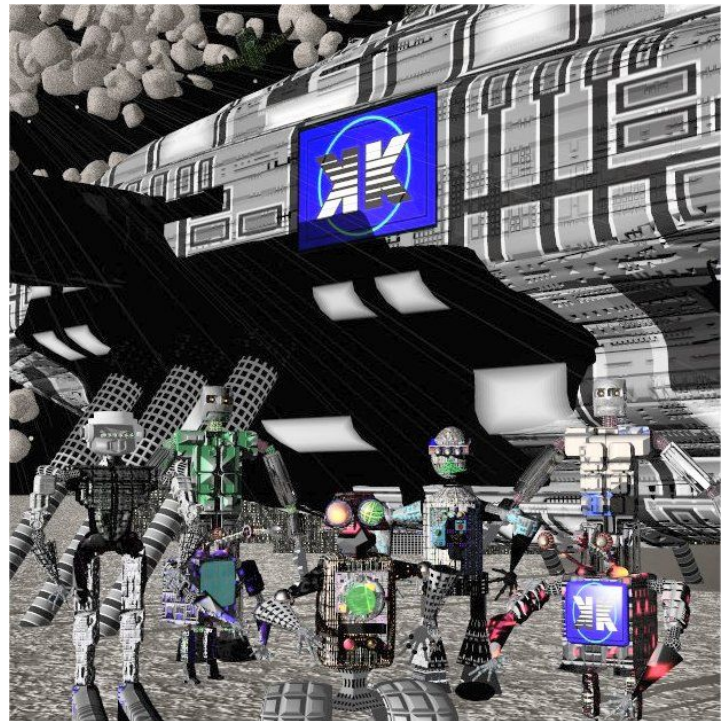
Written by Matthew R. Esch

Hunter-Killer Class Escort

Note: All statistics follow GMG-Starships rules.

Crew:	No long-term accommodations	**Passengers:**	No long-term accommodations		
Durability:	20/20/10/5	**Cost:**	$8.045 M		

Weapons:	**Acc**	**Range**	**Damage**	**Fire**	**Mode**
Plasma cannon	-2	1 / 2 / 4	d6+2w / d8+2w / d6+1m	En/S	F

Defenses: Medium neutronite armor: d6+1 (LI), d6+1 (HI), d6+1 (En)
Stealth hull: +2 step penalty to all enemy active sensor checks

Type	System	Hull Pts	Power Req.	Cost
Hull	Escort	+40	-	
Armor	Medium neutronite	4	0	
Power	15-pt. Grav-Fusion Cells	15	+30	
	2-pt. Mass Reactor	2	+5	
Engine	2-pt. Induction Engine	2	2	
	Planetary Thrusters	1	1	
FTL	Stardrive	3	*	
Support	2 Life Support Units	2	2	
Weapons	Turreted Plasma Cannon	4	3	
Defense	Stealth hull	1	0	
	Deflection inducer	1	4	
	Jammer	0	1	
	Damage control	1	1	
Command	Command deck	1	0	
	Amazing Computer Core	3	0	
	Computer Systems (all available)	0	0	
	Radio transceiver	0	1	
Sensors	Multiband radar	0	0	
	Mass detector	1	0	
	IR detector	0	0	
	Spectroanalyzer	1	1	
	EM detector	0	0	
Misc.	Escape Pod	2	0	
	Reentry Capsule	1	0	
	Standard Airlock	1	0	
	Cutting airlock	1	0	
	Total:	47	16	$8.045 M

Damage Diagram

Command	Command deck, cutting airlock, standard airlock, radio transceiver, re-entry capsule, 1 lifesupport unit
Engineering 1	Induction engines, 1 grav-fusion cell, planetary thruster
Engineering 2	Stardrive, 1 grav-fusion cell, 1 lifesupport unit, mass reactor
Electronics	Computer cure, dedicated systems, multiband radar, spectroanalyzer, mass detector, EM detector, IR detector
Auxiliary	1 Grav-fusion cell, escape pod, jammer, deflection inducer, damage control, stealth hull
Weapons	Turreted plasma cannon, moderate neutronite armor

Description:

Thorn Shipyards has recently unveiled a new escort-class vessel, the Hunter-Killer, in partnership with the T'sa Cluster with rights to produce this new design in each of the respective sectors of space. The Hunter-Killer is currently at the pre-production stage of development, with conceptual design and blueprints being safe-guarded by both Thorn & The Cluster. Industry insider Hans Jorgensshonn comments: "The Hunter-Killer-class vessel, from what Thorn is putting out in the pre-promotional information packet, looks to be a system vessel with starfall capability, excellent sensor array, good armor, and firepower. Just by eye-balling this, it looks like it'll give a standard Lorrid Deathseed-class a serious run for its money."

Hunter-Killer Deckplan
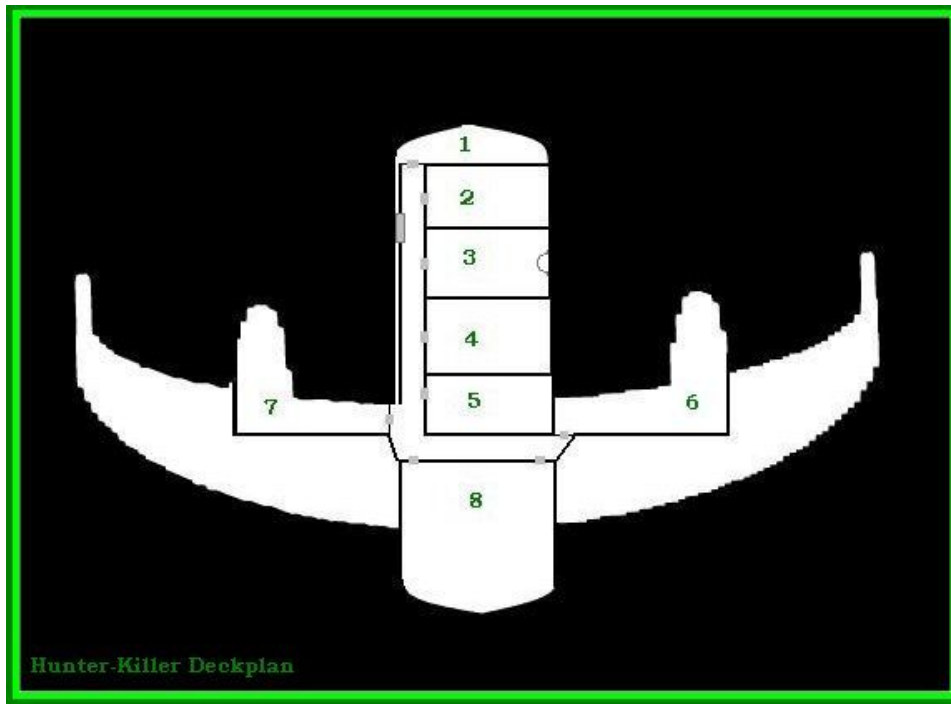
with this new design. A spokesperson for Thorn, who preferred that their name not be used in this report, said that a prototype should roll off the assembly line "soon".

The T'sa Cluster, however, claims to have 3 Hunter-Killer's ready-to-be commissioned with another 2 dozen in production. The cluster, having been prey to vicious sneak attack from the External aliens, the klicks, and with a few other run-ins with the n'sss, have beefed up their patrolling of their borders, and are obviously pinning their hopes on the Hunter-Killer-class to e the new vanguard of their fleet. It is speculated that the Cluster intends to use these vessels as escorts to their colony ships as well.
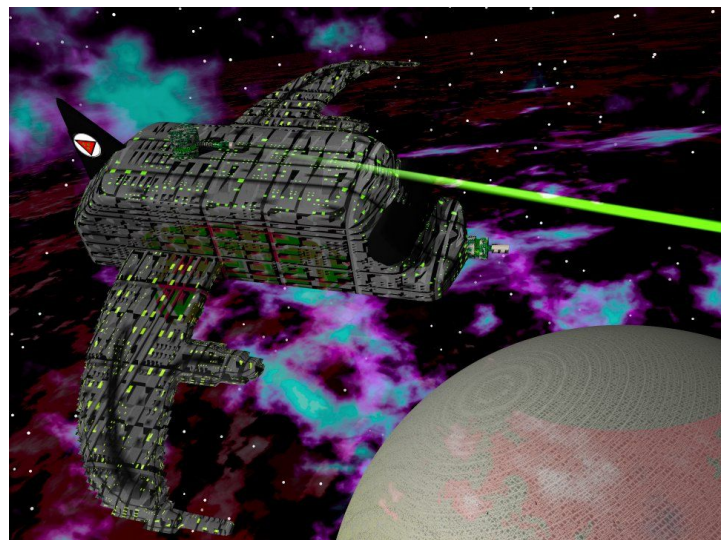
Bri'-aitysa, as the warden of the floor, a "Nurse Rachett" stated, was unavailable for comment.

But why are Thorn & the t'sa suddenly partners in building this vessel? The answer lies in the designer: the institutionalized, t'sa, Bri'-aitsya, currently recieving psychological treatment following his involvement in The Hughes Island Incident.

Jorgensshonn assures TVN in his interview that although Bri'-aitsya is trained as a roboticist, "his tenure at Ion, along with that uncanny t'sa knack for know-how has produced a sound design, based on what specs I have seen. Look, don't give a [expletive deleted] what he supposedly did over on Bluefall that got the Regency all bent out of shape. This is an apparently good design. Just look at who's backing it!"

Indeed, investors seemed to take notice of this unusal alliance between the up-and-coming Thorn Shipyards and the T'sa Cluster. Thorn, recently recovering from a tragedy two years ago that claimed the lives of a young human male & young t'sa male, is apparently back in the mix of things

KIXIL STATION

Written by Matthew R. Esch

Kixil Station, somewhere within the Nova Belt, orbiting planet Abal; Kai System.

> *Author's note: These events transpired prior to the demise of the t'sa hero, Bri'-aitsya, and the termination of the EV2503 story line. -MRE*

After I had booked passage from Iphus aboard the passenger cruiser, VCT CL51478 *(Expediency)*, I found myself bound for the Kai system, and its rugged squatter colonists. These rugged squatters have earned a bit of a reputation in the Verge, with the administration of the newly found Kixil Station. The system was barely surveyed a few years ago, and now is a richly rewarding small enterprise for a semi-retired Alaundran commodore by the name of Mig Nova. The independent colony is largely self-sufficient, generating estimated millions in Concord dollars just on the mineral rights to the Nova Belt alone, but the shrewd Commodore retained and legally claims the entire system, but recently, a small Nariac outpost on Kirlinao had been abandoned.

The Kai system is a single white dwarf system, with three terran like planets, one barely habitable (Abal), the others only worthwhile for their mineral rights (Bri'at and Kirlinao). The VCT CL51478 *(Expediency)* starrose about 2.4 AU from Abal, leaving the remainder of the voyage to Abal Relay Station for cruising speed. VCT CL51478 *(Expediency)*'s captain informs me of a delay in processing, and I needed to contact home headquarters at the *Guide* to verify my legitimacy. Kixil Station boasts one of the tightest security checks in the Verge. Apparently this is all troublesomely 'routine' for my paranoid hosts. No matter. I thought it odd that I was the *only* passenger, not that the hosts aboard the VCT CL51478 *(Expediency)* leave much to be desired. Granted, there were no first class accommodations, nor much in the way of anything more than standard VoidCorp rations, but the proximity to the inevitable first stop to all visitors to Kixil Station, Abal Relay Station (ARS), and its lovely drivesat certainly enabled a quicker response from ARS.

ARS's operations manager, a Solar ex-patriot named Mr. Nashimura, granted docking clearance and transmitted the security protocols for all passengers debarking at ARS. All weapons are to be surrendered immediately, and all visitors and baggage are completely scanned. Kixil Station Administration has a well known healthy paranoia. I guess with allegations of sabotage and a short-lived bounty from the Regency of Bluefall on their heads, that these people are to be respected. A nondescript man flanked by a large hulking robot, easily 1.4m tall, immediately greets me. The man introduces himself as "Joseph Fields" and promptly scans my body and my baggage. The hulking behemoth stands firm and silent, as if ready to pounce on me for the slightest bit of contraband.

I recall from the TVN reports from this system and its caretakers that these people have good reason to be cautious. Joe Fields takes me to the lounge area to await transport to Kixil Station via its dedicated transport vessel, *The Renfrew*. I kept myself entertained with testing the accuracy and breadth of the bartender robot's programming. Apparently, my human hosts at ARS did not have the luxury or the manners to join me, but the free booze was certainly worth the slight.

The Renfrew arrived, and escorted me to Kixil Station deep within the Nova Belt. I regret that I wasn't afforded a suite near a view portal, and it was explained that the *Renfrew* doesn't have any for security reasons. I blacked out and next recall awakening in Dr. Byron Cordell's sick bay.

Dr. Cordell explained that I had passed out *en route*, and though it is standard Kixil Station procedure for medical examination, being admitted was not. Dr. Cordell pointed to a series of sutures along the center of my chest, explaining that I was infested with some sort of parasite. He then pointed to a jar that held a tapeworm-looking creature within. He then pointed to another robot (Great Beyond, are there more robots than people here?), labeling it "Dr. Watts", crediting the machine for the find. I could sense a measure of some unease from Dr. Cordell, but his concern was apparently genuine. He explained that Kixil Station Admin were "very interested" in this parasite, and he asked me if I had seen one of these creatures before.

I dimly recalled this creature from my experiences aboard the *Lighthouse*, but honestly couldn't say as to where it came from or what it was about. Nevertheless, Dr. Cordell left me, and another fellow, a man who called himself Joseph Freeborn, began to interrogate me, as if I had personally caused the Silver Bell catastrophe. Another one of those hulking security robots flanked him, though this one was slightly different. After what seemed like hours, I was seriously beginning to reconsider travelogue as a career and wonder about the advertised amenities of Kixil Station. So far, all I had was a tapeworm and a really nasty hangover.

Following this, I was personally greeted by the Commodore himself, flanked by a few of his infamous crew, now semi-respectable members of Kixil Station Administration. Mig Nova also had a few harsh words, but seemed to soften with the intervention of Dr. Cordell and another man, who was later identified as Gavin Heltbrenner. The t'sa male and mechalus female remained somewhat wary, and said little. I could only presume that these were Bri'-aitsya and Starbirth, respectively. If so, then I was in the presence of some of the finest engineers in the Verge, with reputations as party animals on par with their technical expertise. However, this encounter left much to be desired from both.

I was held in sick bay for observation for 48 hours, flanked by one of those monstrosities and the robot Dr. Watts constantly poking and

prodding. After I was released, I proceeded to tour the facility. My granted clearance afforded me free reign to explore the Station's levels 1-9, which held the docking zone, ship construction facility, and warehouse area of the station. Level 10 was the access area to the first nine levels, but my clearance only allowed me limited access to levels 11-12, which I was told housed communications, sensors, and surveillance, but the station's artificial intelligence, Plato, notified me the area was 'off limits for my clearance status', or some such nonsense.

My access to level 13's offices was similarly limited, but these weren't of much interest to me, anyway. Level 14 was home to the medical bay, where I first awoke in Kixil, as well as the life science laboratories. Level 15's engineering workshops and physics labs were of mild interest, and I was offered a guided tour, by appointment, with both Bri'-aitsya and Starbirth. Though the material was way over my head, the sheer amusement of watching the two of them argue with one another, and try to outclass each other was worth the hassle of having the security beefed up and being subjected to another scan. Admittedly, my touring of levels 16-17's industrial machinery and level 18's emergency facilities and escape pods were only formality, as I reached the Xanadu of the Kai system. Kixil Station's famed level 19, home to the Station's common areas, such as the mediocre dining facilities, conference rooms, auditorium, and library, and its support, and level 20: food preparation and storage. It is notably home to Club Kixil, where I hoped to spend much of my time.

Club Kixil

As far as the food goes, the choices are rather limited. With regard to food product selections, maximizing shelf life and minimizing storage is key. Most everything offered at all of Kixil's "eateries" is pre-packaged and pre-cooked; practically everything but pre-digested. But at least the booze is quality. As the bartending robot was very apt to demonstrate, skills with creating alcoholic beverages range from the mundane to the truly exotic, as I sampled various drink mixes, but much more cautiously this time.

My access was limited to the defense systems located on level 21, but typical guests are permitted to have access to level 22's training and exercise holo-facilities, and levels 23-36 are reserved for living quarters. Level 37's weapons systems were off-limits, but I spoke with their gunner, Gavin Antilles about the defensive capabilities over a few rounds, but the Chief Gunner of Kixil Station wasn't much help to the layman civilian as far as letting the intrepid travel writer pick off a few asteroids. I was most dismayed, especially after buying him a few rounds. I guess having one of the security robots breathing down my neck wasn't much help in the persuasion department. The subterranean levels are devoted to more mundane things such as munitions and equipment storage, life support facilities, and power generation facilities. I attempted to poke around in there, but got a very stern lecture from the t'sa, Bri'-aitsya, for being "too snooty".

There was a fair amount of information about the benefits of colonizing in the Kai System, particularly in Kixil Station. Assuming that you are willing to work for the Station, the AI, Plato explains that Station residents are afforded the following benefits:

*1 Medical "Insurance": Fully covered for all employees. Robot employees are similarly covered for repairs and most parts.

*2 Nutrition: Every employee takes vitamin and mineral supplements. The station also provides these. If you don't mind spending your own money, you can order finer foods, but since Galactic Enterprises' supply ships only come around twice a month you have to be careful what you order to ensure that it is still fresh when it arrives.

*3 Taxes: Employees at Kixil do not pay taxes to Station Administration. Every bit of what they earn is theirs to keep. The Kansas Mining Facility that has partnered with Kixil provides more than sufficient income to keep the Station running in spite of its very high overhead.
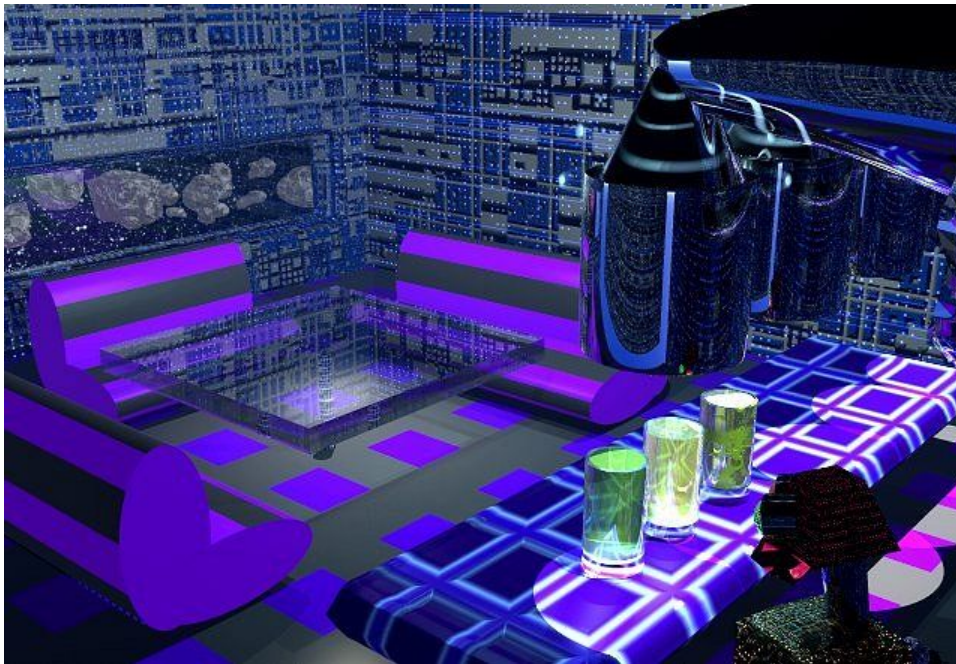
In all, I spent about 3 weeks at Kixil, and if it weren't for the holo recordings of my activities, I would be hard pressed to recall much of my stay there. It appears that aside from the excitement generated by drunken Station employees, and the occasional External skirmish, that Kixil Station in the Kai System would be a snoozer, a backwater system with great promise for economic development, but not much for future colonization. My hosts at Kixil were gracious enough to have me stay, but the next supply ship from Galactic Enterprises wasn't due any sooner, and I hitched a lift to my next destination, Karnath, via a layover on the outskirts of Tendril.

Yours faithfully,

Montgomery V. Cook IX

Montgomery V. Cook IX

Cook's Guide STAR★DRIVE

Cook's Guide Special

A Tour of Kai System

Written by Mike Meechan & Matthew R. Esch
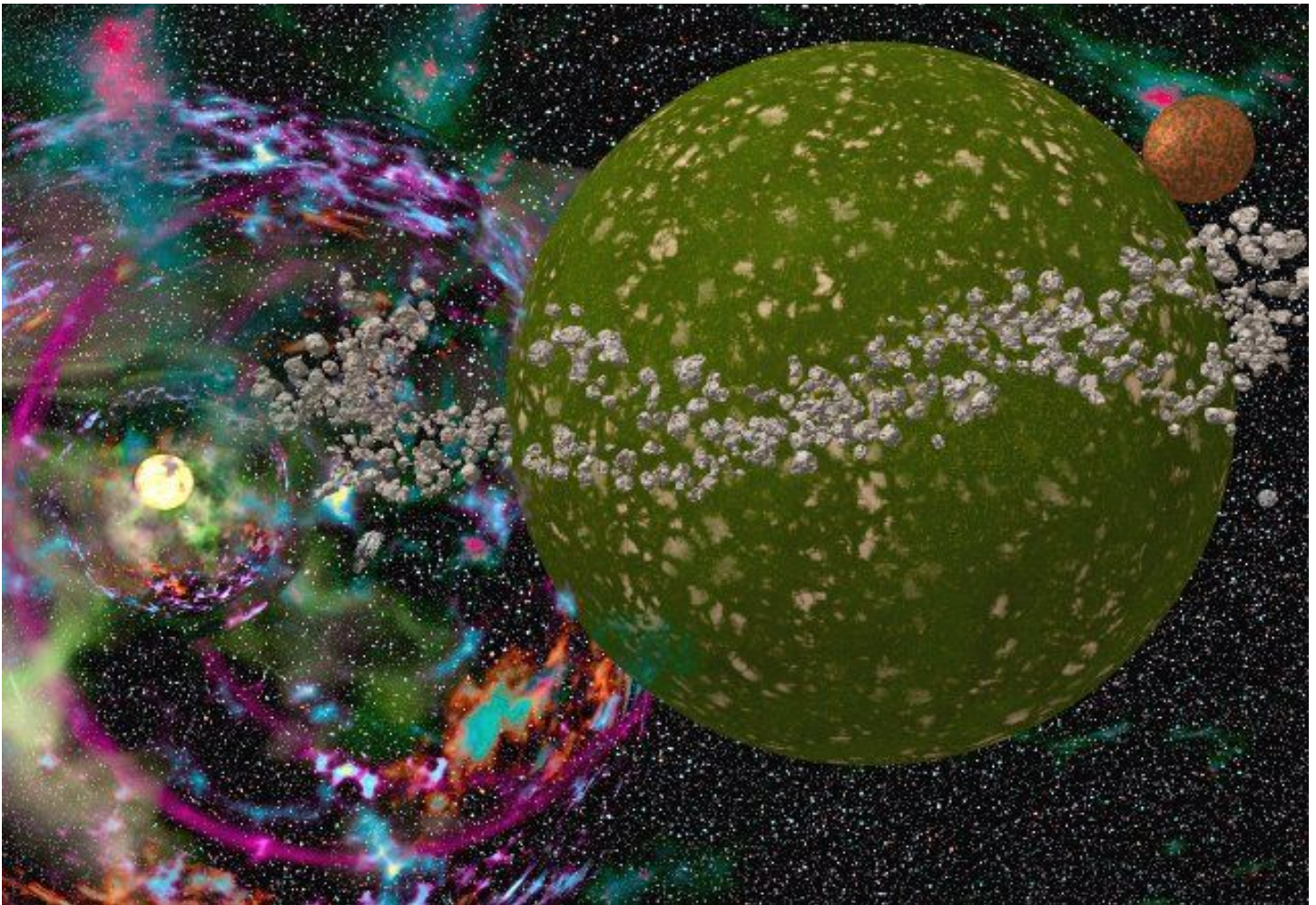
Kai System

Cataloged and named by The Liquid Sky's Sturhnak Meehn Abhaal, Kai system is about twenty light years past Tendril space - near the edge of the Verge. It is small and cold with a single sun, three planets, and an asteroid belt.

The Crew of The Liquid Sky reside at Kixil Station, the larger of Kai's two outposts hidden deep within the Nova Asteroid Belt. The second outpost is the drivesat facility, Abal Relay Station, in orbit of planet Abal.

The official flag of the independent Kai System.

Planet One
Abal
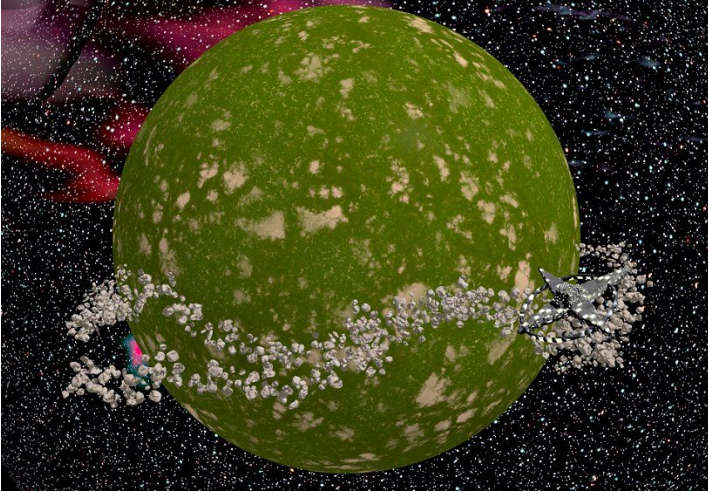
Physical Data:
Diameter	66,242km
Year	10.07 years
Day	58.4 hours
Axial Tilt	10 degrees
Orbital Dist.	4 AU
Eccentricity	.09

Abahl:
-liquid ammonia seas
-some water in the form of ice

G4 (3xg)
R1 (10rem/yr)
A1 Hydrogen, Nitrogen, Ammonia
P4 (6atmospheres)
H1 (-70C)
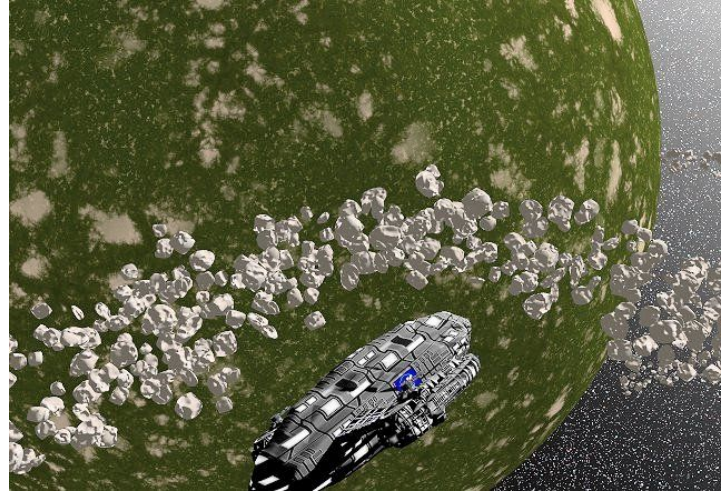
The Liquid Sky in orbit.
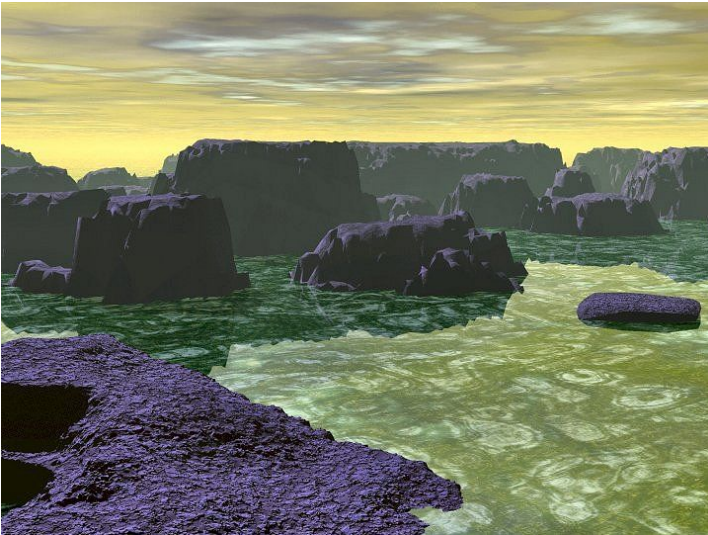
Abal's ammonia ocean has huge pure water icebergs.
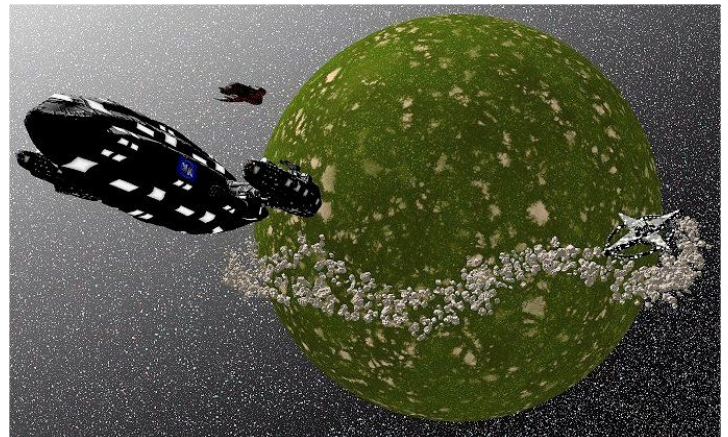
The Liquid Sky and Kreen Hunter Killer leaving Abal's orbit.

Planet Two
Bri'at
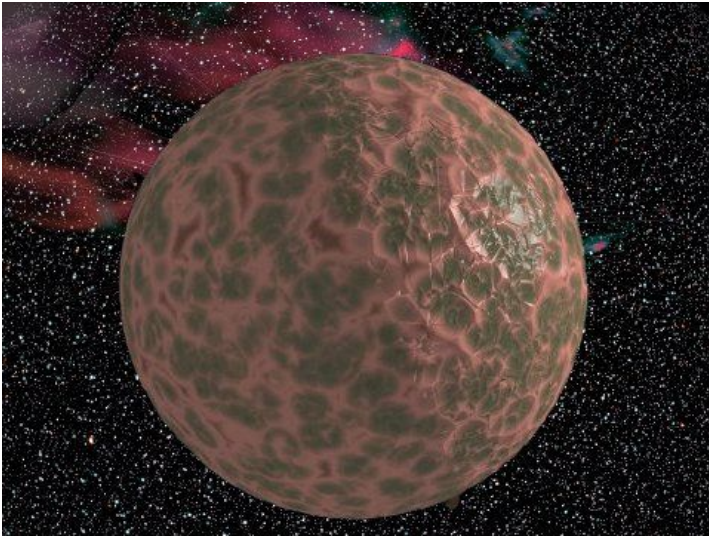
Briat:
-crust rich in iron and carbonaceous compounds
-thin atmosphere of carbon dioxide and hydrocarbons

    G2   (0.85xg)
    R2   (25rem/yr)
    A1   (methane,ethane,carbon dioxide)
    P1   (0.2atmosphere)
    H0   (-50C)
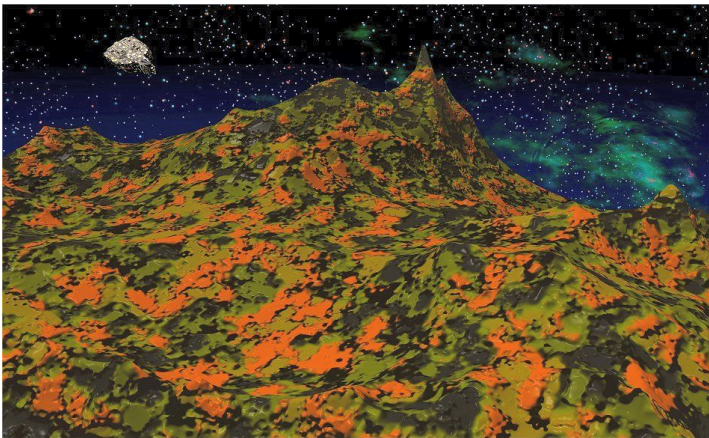
Physical Data:

Diameter	8,114km
Year	26.39 years
Day	67.6 hours
Axial Tilt	29.3 degrees
Orbital Dist.	10AU
Eccentricity	0.15
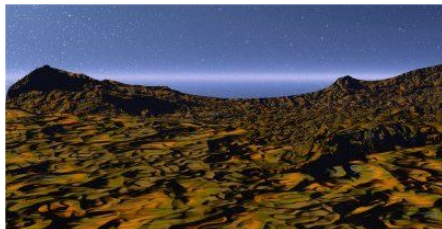
Planet Three
Kirlinao
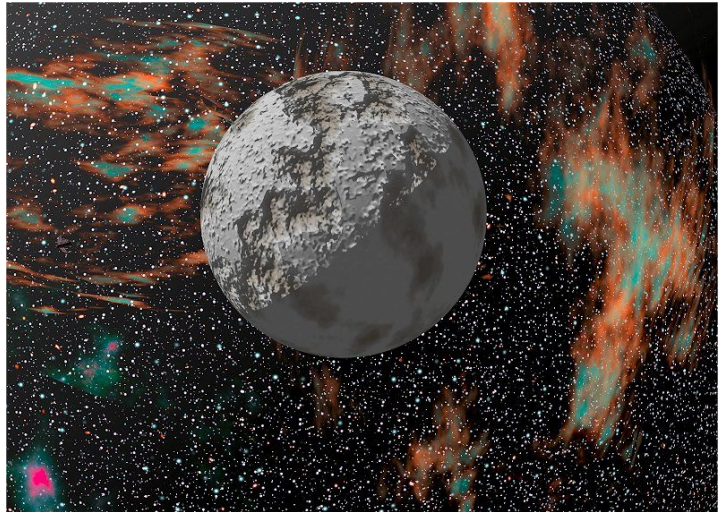
Kirlinao:
-too small to hold an atmosphere
-probably a fragment of a larger planet destroyed in an early collision

    G1   (0.62xg)
    R2   (20rem/yr)
    A0   (vacuum)
    P0   (vacuum)
    H0   (-170C)
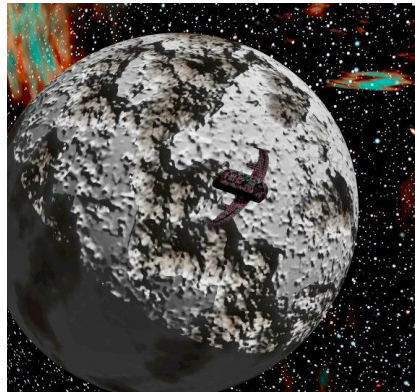
Physical Data:

Diameter	5,312km
Year	58.36 years
Day	17.2 hours
Axial Tilt	48.7 degrees
Orbital Dist.	17AU
Eccentricity	0.29
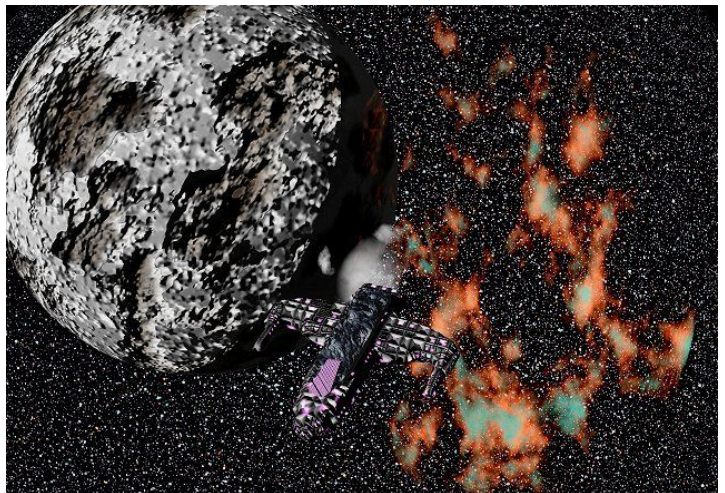
Celestial Object Four
The Nova Asteroid Belt

Nova Asteroid Belt:
-fragments of a planet destroyed in a collision
-rich in iron, nickel, and other valuable metals
- G0   (varies by size)
- R2   (30rem/yr)
- A0   (vacuum)
- P0   (vacuum)
- H0   (-273C)
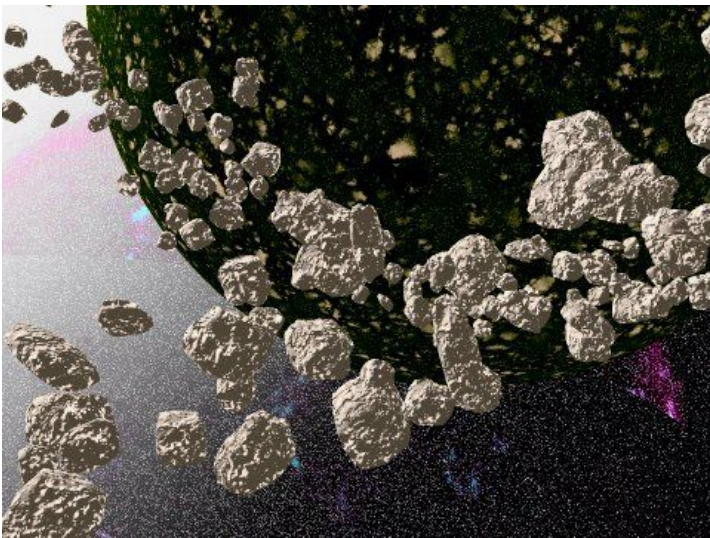
Physical Data:

Mean distance from planet Abal	41,000 to 61,000 kilometers
Mean Diameter	60-120 km
Orbital period	1.31days

Kai

KAI [system star]:
-This is a white dwarf that has exhausted most of its nuclear fuel and has collapsed to a very small size. Its radius is only 0.01 times that of Sol's sun, but it's mass is roughly equal. This gives a Kai a density about 1 million times that of water!

Physical Data:

Corona Temperature:	1-10 million degrees C
Surface Temperature:	100,000 degrees C
Solar Mass:	1.09

The Verge

$\square$ = 2.5 light years

Valles (▲6)

Ptolemy (▲26)

Tendril (▲6)

Ignatius (▼11)

Kai

Chisholm (▼8)

Nyrthak (▼15)

Pallas (▲26)

ucullus (▼7)

Miyashi (▼17)

Corrivale (▲34)

Terivine (▲17)

Karnath (▼36)

Mikoa (▲1)

Aegis
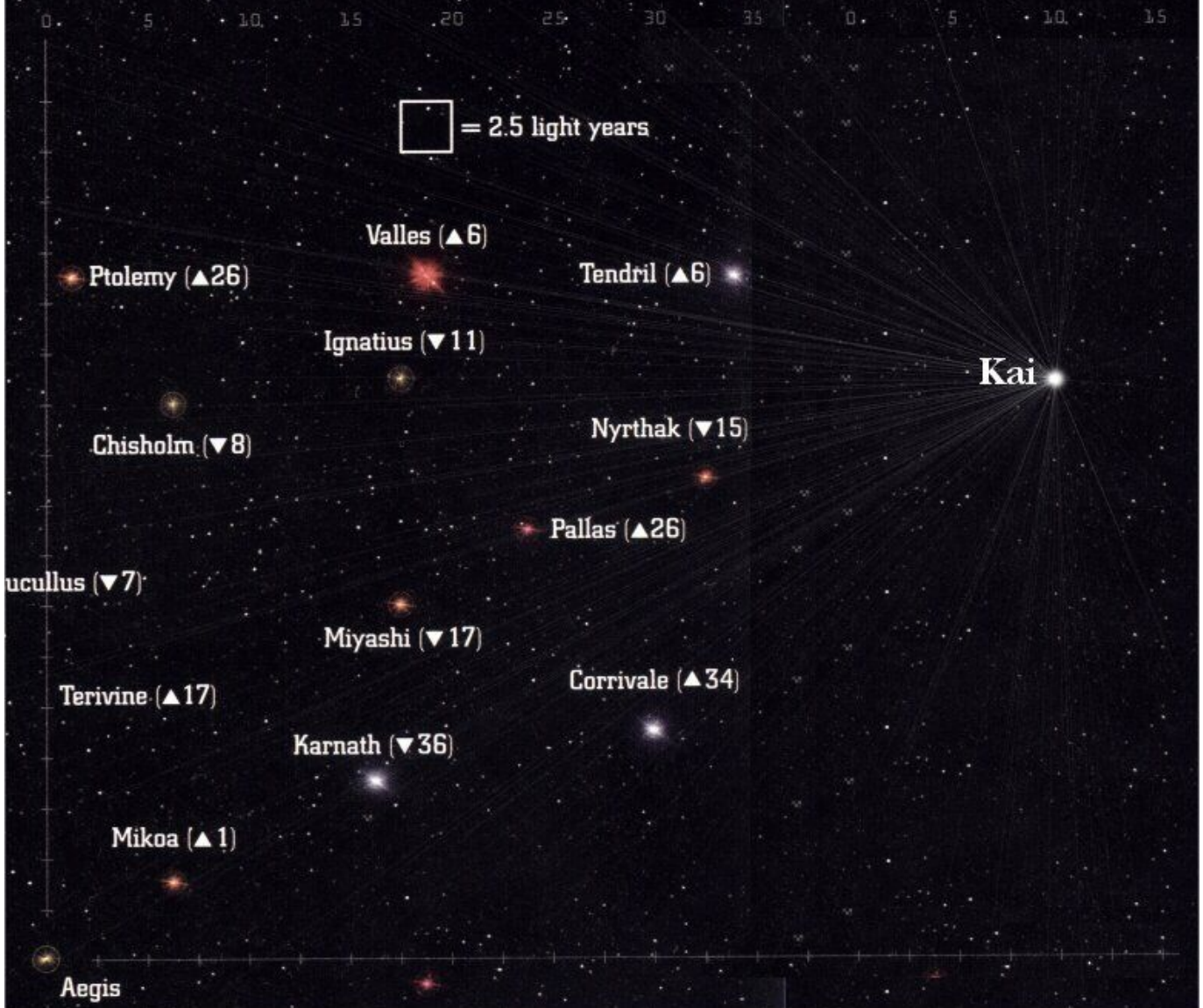
Kai system is quite close to Tendril but was overlooked for many years due to its small size and dim, cold parent star.
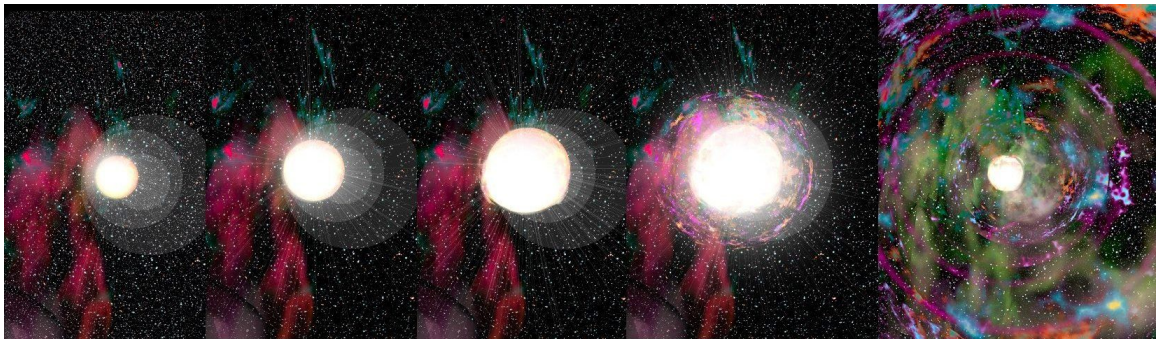
Kai's supernova left behind picturesque planetary nebulae.

Abal Relay Station
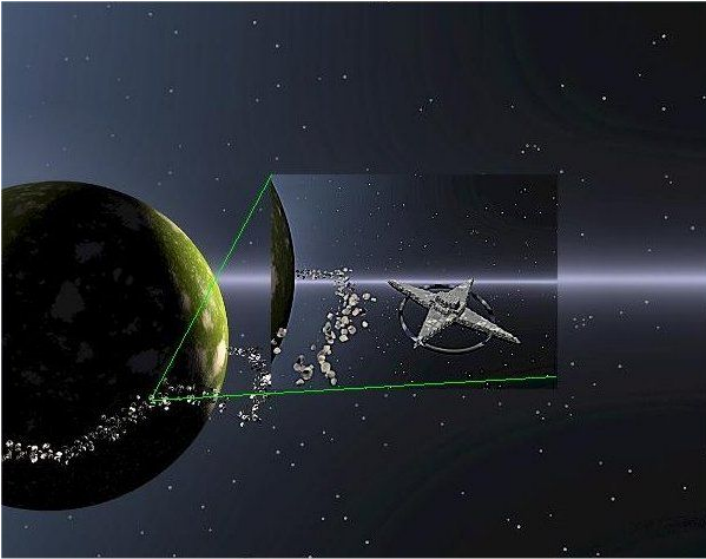
This orbital space station houses a drivesat and a sophisticated sensor array. The facility serves as the check point for inbound vessels that have business in the Kai system. If the ship is carrying cargo for Kixil Station, it transfers its payload to the autocargo holding area on Abal Station. The deposited cargo is then transferred to Kixil Station's own transport/cargo ship, The Renfrew for transport to the Station. If the arriving vessel is carrying would-be visitors, the passengers are instructed to wait in Abal Relay Station's luxurious lounge area while security clearances are conducted. If the travelers check out ok, they are then transported to Kixil Station aboard The Renfrew. This highly modified cargo ship has an ablative shield to protect it from the hazards of the asteroid belt in which Kixil Station is located.

Game Specs

Hull: Habitat Complex   Size: Medium
Damage Tracks: Stun 38, Wound 38, Mortal 19, Critical 10
Total Hull: 313   Zones: 8
Toughness: Light
Total power factors generated: 626.5
Total power factors used: 25

The Renfrew departs from Abal Relay Station.

Most of Abal Relay Station's space is occupied by engineering systems and hardware.
Station Security meets all guests immediately upon deboarding. All personal weapons must be surrendered before guests can proceed to the main facility.
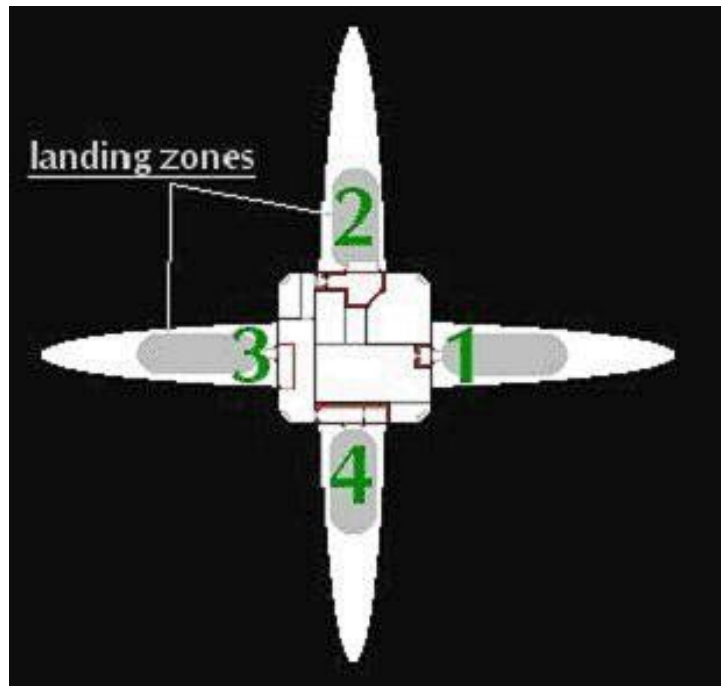
1. Private dock - only for use by members of Kixil Station's fleet. Max ship size: 180 hull
2. Cargo dock - for freight carriers. Max ship size: 90 hull
3. General dock - Max ship size: 40 hull
4. General dock - Max ship size: 40 hull
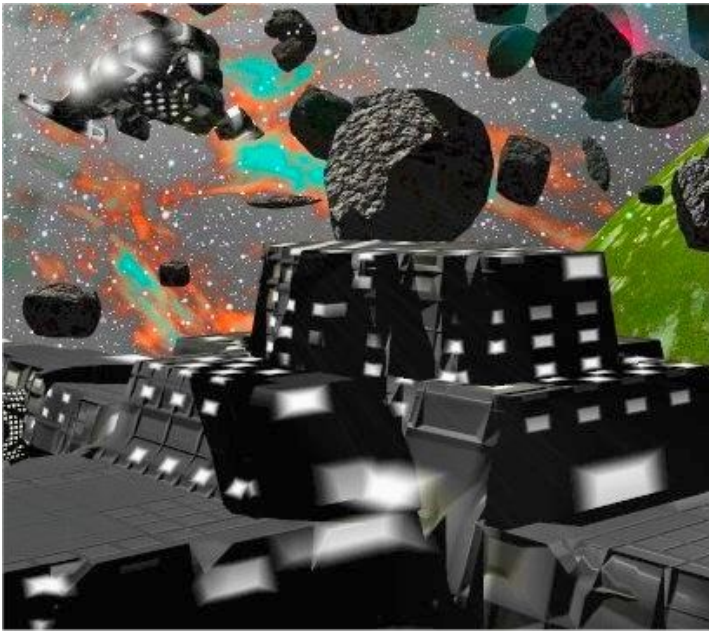
A diplomat's vessel approaches Abal Relay Station and prepares for landing.

The Renfrew sits on the dock waiting to be unloaded. On the left dock sits a Kreen Hunter-Killer.

Main Facility:

a= airlock

(1) reception area
(2) lounge
(3) autocargo bay
(4) holofield bay
(5) workshop
(6) administrator quarters
(7) offices

Systems:

Armor: Reactive, heavy 2d4+1 LI/ d8 HI/d4+1 EN, 30 hull
Power Plants: Mass Reactors -give maximum output of 626.5 power factors- 179 hull
Support: Autosupport- 7 hull; 7 power
Accommodations: Crew Quarters for 6 crewmembers (Includes free airlock)- 2 hull; 0 power
Stores: 20 days supply

Defensive systems:

Ablative shield generator- 15 hull, 30 power
Compiler- 1 hull, 20 shield points
Jammer- 4 hull, 4 power

Command & Control:

Cockpit- 1.5 hull; 0 power

Sensors:

Multiband Radar- 0.5 hull; 1 power
Mass Detector- 1.0 hull; 1 power
Spectroanalyzer- 1.0 hull; 1 power
Hi-Res Video- 0.5 hull; 0 power
Computer Core: Amazing- 1.5 hull; 1.5 power.
Features: sensor control- 4 hull; 0 power

Communications Systems:

Drive transceiver 50ly range, 11hr connection time- 2 hull; 2 power
Mass transceiver, 1000 AU range, instantaneous- 1 hull; 1 power
Hangars & Docking: 4 docks with docking clamps. 44 hull; 0 power total

Miscellaneous Systems:

Airlock- 8 of them for a total of 7 hull; 0 power
Autocargo bay- 300 cubic meter capacity- 1 hull; 1 power
Escape Pod- 2 of them. 10 person capacity each- 2 hull; 0 power total
Security Suite- 7.5 hull; 7.5 power

Security Robot Gamma screens all would-be visitors before allowing them into the Station.
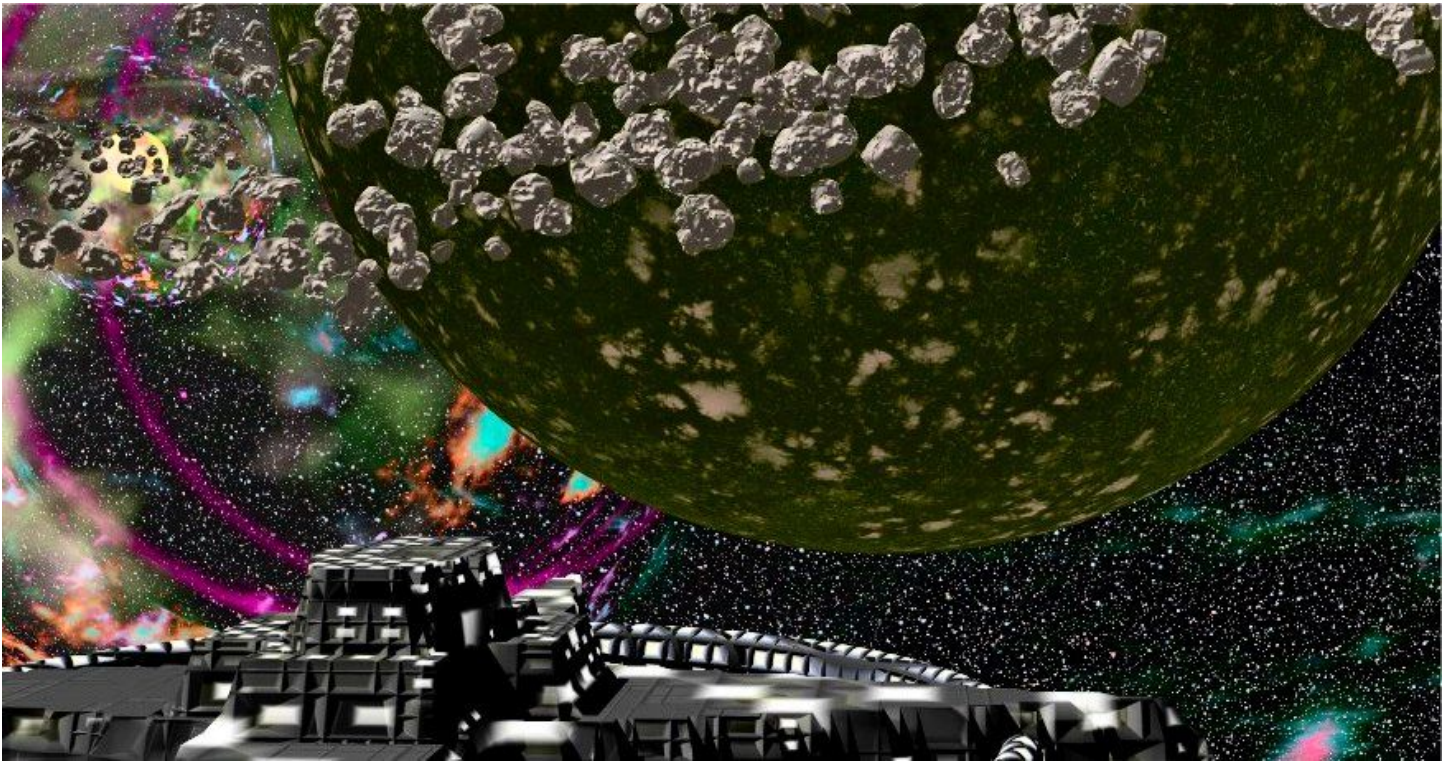
The view from planet Abal's orbit can be breathtaking.

Kixil Station, Nova Asteroid Belt, Kai System

Kixil Station's Shipyard:

Space Station Type: Outpost/Shipyard	Armament Type: 5
Class: Medium Platform	Hull Points: 400
5%=20...**10%**=40	Toughness: Medium

Target: -1 Step　　Zones: 8　　Limit: 96　　Crew: 200

Stun:　　50
Wound:　50
Mortal:　25
Critical:　13
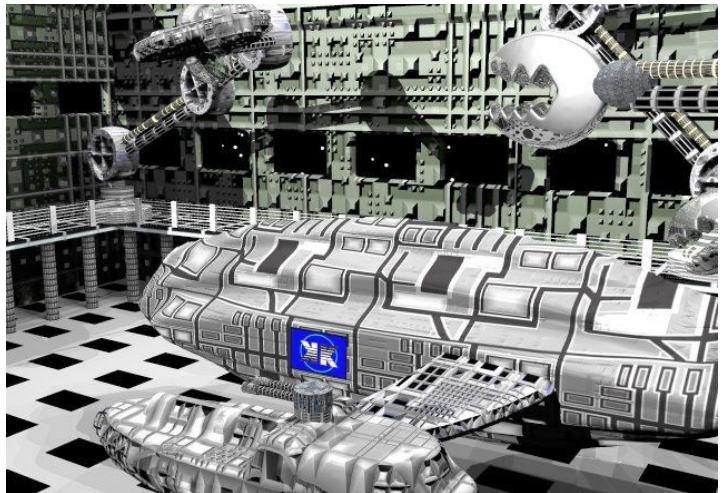
-Can perform repairs on non-capital class starships. (up 200 dur)
-The chance of having a particular system in stock is 50%, but any system PL(7) and lower can be ordered. -Some PL(8) systems are available, but on a very limited basis.
Installation Modifier: x3
Repair Points: 50+6d12

Station Systems:

Defenses:

Reflective Armor (PL 6) Absorbs d4/ d4/ d8+1

Jammer (PL 6) Adds a +2 step penalty to enemy missile attacks and sensor checks. Kixil Station requires multiple ECM emitters to cover the entire hull.

Cloaking Unit (PL 8) Imposes a +4 step penalty to enemy sensor checks and missile attack rolls.

The ablative shield prevents damage to the Station's hull from enemy attacks.

Ablative Shield (PL 8) -protects from asteroid impacts and enemy attacks The energy from incoming damage converts into shield points as shown: Stun 1, Wound 2, Mortal 3, Critical 5

Energy Compilers (PL 8) Has a capacity of twenty shield points per hull point. Reduces the power requirement for Kixil's shield generators from two points/ unit to ONE per unit, provided there is some energy already stored in the compiler.

Weapons:

Gatling Maser Array: 10 gatling masers on turrets, controlled by point defender type robots. Acc: -2
(Can also be controlled by gunner or Station A.I.)

Hull	Power	Cost	Acc	Range	Fire	Mode
18	36	$50m	+ 1	3/7/14	En/M	F/G/B/A

Damage: d8 + 4w / d8 + 2m / d12 + 2m
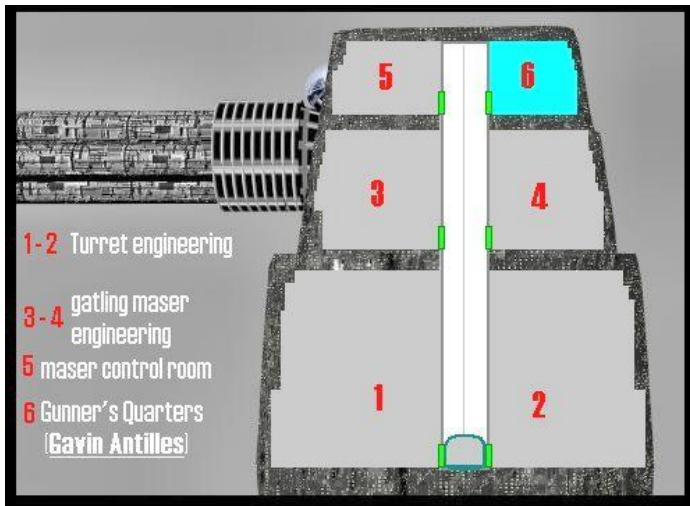
Turrets: Permits three arcs of fire to each gatling maser.

Kixil's gatling masers have repelled many would-be invaders.

Control:

Amazing Computer Core with A.I. (PL 8)

System	Tech	Hull	Pow	Cost
Computer Core, Amazing	C	1	1	$2 M/hull
1 required per 200 hull points				
Fire Control, Amazing	C	1	0	$300 K*
-3 step bonus to dedicated weapon				
Sensor Control, Amazing	C	1	0	$300 K*
-3 step bonus to dedicated sensor				
Tac Control, Amazing	C	1	0	$400 K
-3 step bonus to Tactics skill checks				

Kixil's command & control

Fire Control (PL 8) Provides a −1, −2, or −3 step bonus to attack rolls made with gatling maser array.
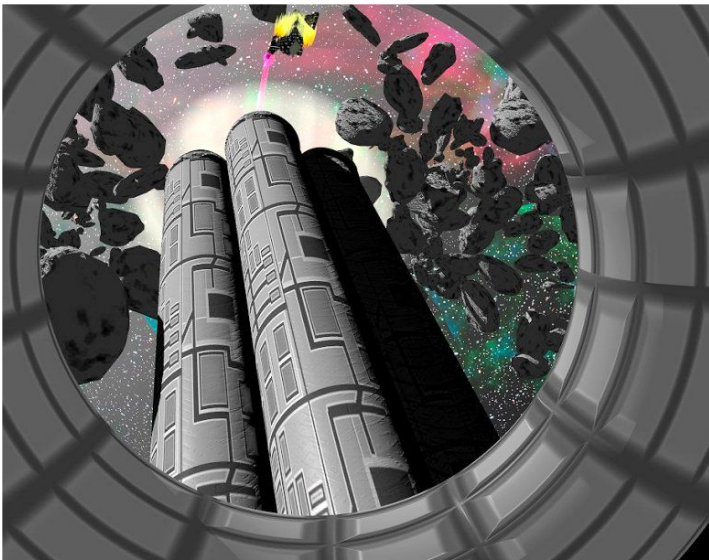
View from gunner's porthole

Sensor Control (PL 8) Provides a –1, –2, or –3 step bonus to System Op, sensors checks made with a given sensor system.

Tac Control (PL 8) Kixil's tac control computer provides a –3 step bonus to Tactics checks.

Kixil Station A.I."Plato"
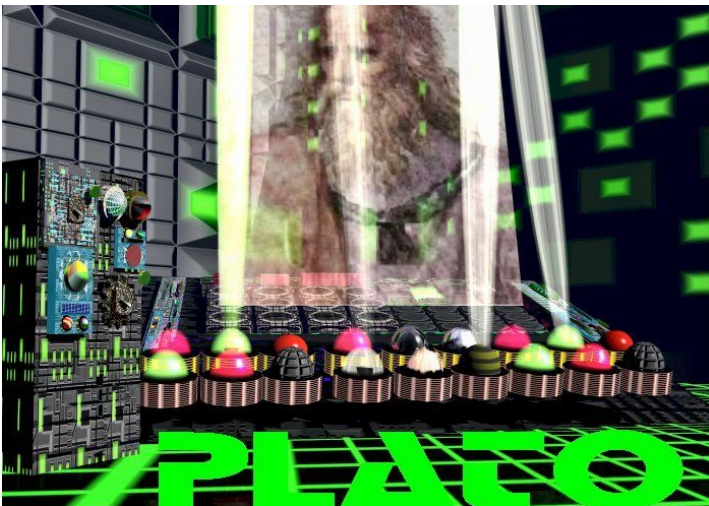
At any of several interfaces throughout the Station, Plato appears at the touch of a button.

STR: per remote
DEX: per remote
CON: per remote
INT: 18
WIL: 13
PER: 11
Action Check: +19/18/9/4   Modifier: -d8
Actions Per Round: 4
Active Slots: 13   Maximum Rank in Specialty Skills: 12

GRID avatar Program:

STR=15, DEX=15, CON=17   GRID Movement Rate: 18
Resistance Modifier versus GRID attacks: +3
Resistance Modifier versus Encounter Skills: +3 INT, +1 WIL

Plato's shadow has the appearance of the philosopher for whom the A.I. was named.

Duties:

Plato monitors Kixil Station around the clock, watching for problems and continuously running diagnostics to ensure that each and every system is running at optimum performance. He coordinates with Dr. Watts to make sure all employees are healthy and keep their medical appointments. He helps to keep the Station secure by monitoring everyone's movements and activities. Any significant breaches are "further investigated" by his remotes, the security robots Alpha and Beta.

Plato keeps Kixil Station running by managing a wide array of affairs from the minute to the massive. He helps Station administration and engineers keep track of their projects and appointments. He is always ready to provide helpful answers to questions, or to give logical advice to all who inquire. Plato also maintains the Station's electronic and physical defenses. He can operate the turreted gatling masers mounted on the Station's roof. He maintains the Kixil Station homesite and defends the computer core from attacks. The huge amounts of information in Plato's database can be further supplemented by his avatar, which can run the GRID for further information.

Programs:

AI Core OS (amazing) Plato maintains a full array of software tools, plus hacking and defense programs.

Plato's Skills:

1) AI Functions
*multitask*_R1 score: 19/8/4
*remote*_R4 score: 22/11/5

2) Computer Science
*artificial intelligence*_R2 score: 20/10/5
*hacking*_R10 score: 28/14/7
*hardware*_R8 score: 26/13/6
*programming*_R12 score: 30/15/7

3) Knowledge
*first aid*_R4 score: 22/11/5
*language, Galactic Standard*_R3 score: 21/10/5

4) Navigation
system (Kai)_R4 score: 22/11/5
*superspace*_R1 score: 19/9/4

5) Security
*protection protocols*_R2 score: 20/10/5

6) System Operation
*communications*_R4 score: 22/11/5
*defenses*_R2 score: 20/10/5
*sensors*_R4 score: 22/11/5
*weapons*_R4 score: 22/11/5

Remotes:

Plato can assume control of any robot at Kixil Station, but primarily uses the following:

K.S.I. Custom Security Robots:

INT: 15   STR: 17   DEX: 12   CON: 18   WIL: 9   PER: 8

Processor: amazing	Active Memory: 13
Action Check Score: 17+/16/8/4	Situation die Modifier: -d4
Actions per Round: 4	Movement: 24 sprint/ 16 run/ 6 walk
Power Source: mass reactor	Chassis: 3m
Mass: 900kg	Casing: Heavy Neutronite
Toughness: good	Armor Rating: 2d6+1/d26+1/2d6

Brawling Damage: d8s/d6+1w/d8+1w

Actuators: K.S.I.   Manipulators: hands   Propulsion: legs

Sensors: chem sniffer*1, holo*2, IR*3, life recorder, motion sensors*4, pickup/voicebox, range finder*5, sonar*6, tactile, video

Data ports: encrypted, telepresence link, uplink, wireless

Perks: Hidden systems- uplink, laser pistol*7

Flaw: command circuitry

*1   detects chemicals in the ppb range at 10m
*2   gives the robot depth perception
*3   heat vision to 100m
*4   -1 step bonus to surprise rolls
*5   -1 step bonus to ranged attacks
*6   night vision to 40m
*7   hidden laser pistol

Laser Pistol:

Range: 20/40/150m	Actions/Round: 4
Accuracy: -2 (total)	Damage: d4+1w/ d6+1w/ d4m

20 shots per clip

Key Skills:

Armor Operation -*powered armor*(4)
Unarmed Attack -*brawl*(2)
Ranged Weapons, Modern -*pistol*(4)
Stamina -*endurance*(1)
Computer Science -*hacking*(2)
Demolitions -*disarm*(2)
Knowledge -*deduce*(1), -*language* Galactic Standard(3)
System Operation -*comm*(1), -*weapons*(2)
Investigate -*interrogate*(2), -*search*(2), -*track*(3)
Awareness -*perception*(3)
Interaction -*intimidate*(2)
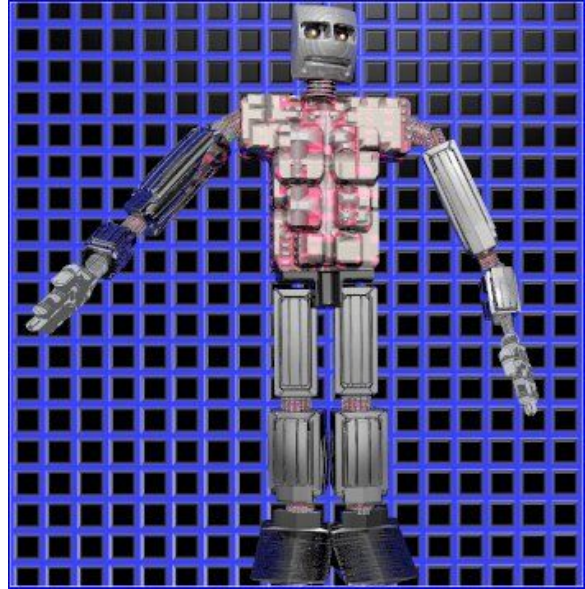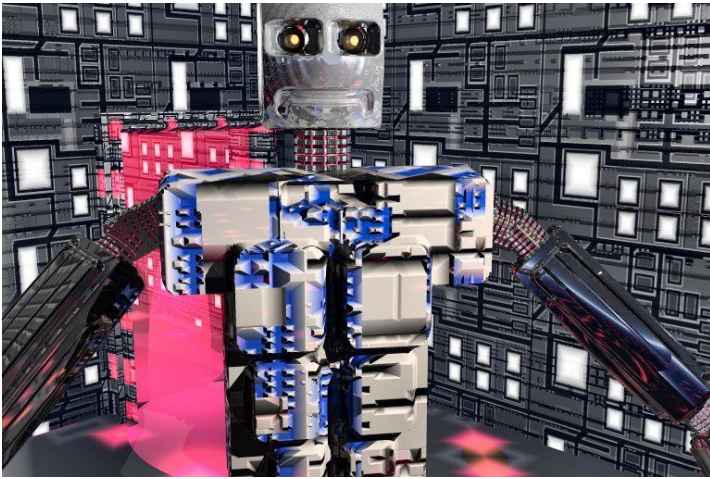
Alpha - first of the Station's security robots

Beta - second of Kixil's security robots
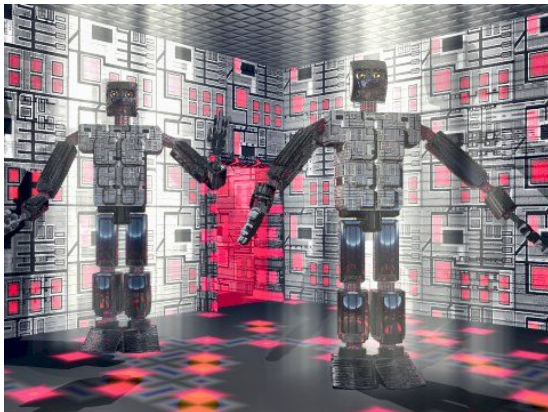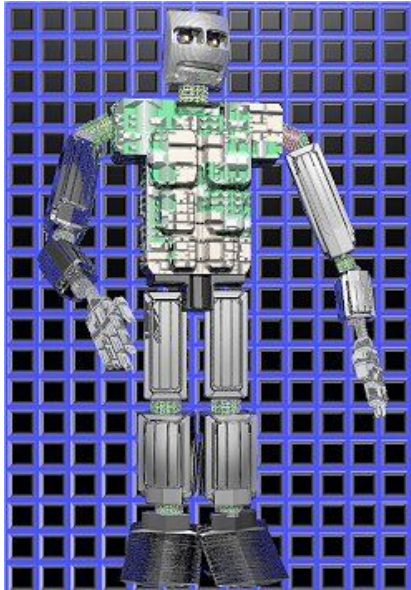
Gamma - Kixil's 3rd security robot model

Bax Series Robot
An original design by Starbirth
of Kixil Station Innovations, Inc.

STR: 13
DEX: 9
CON: 14
INT: 17
WIL: 13
PER: 10

Action Check Score: 16+/15/7/3
Actions per Round: 3
Situation die Modifier: -d4
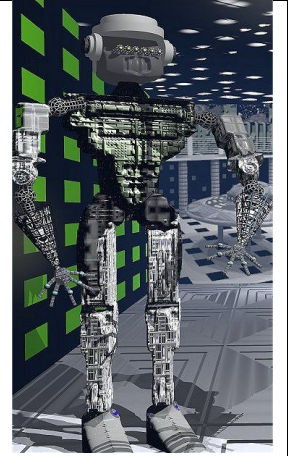
Processor: Amazing
Actuators: Aleerin
Casing: Attack, d6-1(HI)/d4+1(LI)/d4-1(En)
Chasis: 2m
Mass: 200kg
Propulsion: Legs
Manipulators: Hands
Sensors: IR, Life Recorder, Pick Up/Voicebox, Tactile, Video
Dataports: socket, telepresence, wireless

Miscellaneous Onboard Systems:
biodetector -2 step bonus to System Op-sensors
chem detector -1 step bonus to System Op-sensors
em detector -1 step bonus to System Op-sensors
rad detector -2 step bonus to System Op-sensors
multiband comm 1000 km surface range or 10,000 km line of sight

Perks: Fuzzy Logic, Language Module
Flaws: Command Circuitry

Skills:
Unarmed Attack: brawl_R3
Acrobatics: zero-g training_R1
Ranged Weapons, modern: pistol_R1, rifle_R3 (-1 step bonus)
Vehicle Operation: land_R4 (-1 step bonus), air_R4 (-1 step bonus), space_R8 (-2 step bonus)
Stamina: endurance_R1
Computer Science: hardware_R4 (-1 step bonus)
Knowledge: first aid_R1
Navigation: drivespace_R1, surface_R1, system_R3
System Operation: comm_R1, engineering_R6*1, sensors_R1, weapons_R1
Technical Science: juryrig_R2, repair_R4, robotics_R4, technical knowledge_R3 (-1 step bonus to all Technical Science specialty skills)
Awareness: perception_R1

Combat:
brawl: 16/8/4 Brawl Damage: d6+2s/d6+3s/d6+4s
laser rifle: 12/6/3 -2 step bonus 3 actions per round Mode: F
Charge: 12 shots   Range: 100/600/1500 meters   Mass:4kg
Damage: d6+1w/d6+3w/d4+1m

Bax - all-around assistant robot

Equipment:
specialized tool kits (-1 step bonus to corresponding skill checks)
BerTek Laser Torch
BerTek Portable Generator with 5 additional 10L Oxymite fuel tanks
Celestial and Inertial Navkits for Kai, Tendril, Karnath (-2 step bonus to Navigation-system and Navigation-surface)

*1 This can increase the effectiveness of a System Op-engineering skill check when assisting in permanent repairs made with the skill Technical Science-repair as follows:

critical failure: +1 step penalty
marginal: -1 step bonus
ordinary: -2 step bonus
good: -3 step bonus
amazing: -4 step bonus

Barbot "Vinnie":

STR: 10   DEX: 12   CON: 12   INT: 14   WIL: 10   PER: 10
Action Check: 19+/ 18/ 9/5   Actions/Rnd: 4   Move: 24/ 14/ 4
Processor Quality: Amazing   Situation Die Modifier: -d4
Active Memory: 13   Brawling Damage: d6s/ d6+1s/ d6+2s
Chasis: 1.5m   Mass: 175kg
Casing: Standard   Armor Value: d4-2/ d4-2/ d4-3

Actuators: musclewire
Manipulators: hands, professional tools
Propulsion: tracks
Data Ports: uplink, wireless, encrypted, socket, telepresence
Sensors & Imaging: chem sniffer, GPS, holo, IR, life recorder, pickup/ voicebox, tactile, video
Perks :language module, lightweight alloy
Flaw: command circuitry

Vinnie, as he is affectionately known, has many skills besides bartending.

Key Skills:

Unarmed Attack -brawl (1) 11/6/3
Ranged Weapons, Mod -pistol (1) 13/7/4, rifle (1) 13/7/4
Stamina -endurance(1) 13/7/4
Business -small business(1) 15/8/5, illicit business(1) 15/8/5
Computer Science -hacking(1) 15/8/5, hardware(1) 15/8/5, programming (1) 15/8/5

Knowledge -deduce(1) 15/8/5, bartending (6) 20/13/9, mixology (6) 20/13/9
Law -court procedures(1) 15/8/5
System Operation -comm(1) 15/8/5, defenses(1) 15/8/5, engineering(1) 15/8/5, sensors(1) 15/8/5, weapons(1) 15/8/5
Awareness –perception(1) 11/6/3
Technical Science -repair(1) 15/8/5, robotics(1) 15/8/5, juryrig(1) 15/8/5, Interaction -charm(4) 14/9/7

Plato also has 2 constructor remotes:

STR:8 DEX:8 CON:6 INT:13 WIL:8 PER:3
Durability: 6s/6w/3m
Movement: Sprint 16, Run 10, Walk 4
Subprocessor quality: ordinary (7 active slots)
Action Check: 14+/13/6/3
Actions Per Round: 2
Weight: 40kg
Size 1.4m

Kixil's constructors are equipped with specialized tools and fine manipulators. Autonomously or under the remote control of Plato they can construct and/or repair most any system on the Station. They can even build more constructor units.

Skills/Progs:
OS, Knowledge-construction; Sys Op-engineering; Technical Science-invention, jury-rig, repair, robotics; Awareness-perception

Detonator Robots:

STR 3 (-2)   INT 12 (+1)   DEX 12 (+1)   WIL 5 (+1)   CON 14   PER 4
Durability: 14/14/7   Action check: 15+/14/7/4
Move: glide 14, fly 28   # Actions: 2
Reaction Score: Good/2

Attacks:
Brawl 9/8/7, Type: LI/O, Damage: d4-1s/ d4s/ d4+1s
Plasma jelly (double) 9/8/7, Type: En/A, Damage: d4+3m/ d4+3w/ d4+1w

Defenses:
Standard Casing LI= d4-2/ HI= d4-2/ En= d4-3
resistance modifier vs. melee: -2
resistance modifier vs. ranged attack: +1
resistance modifier vs. encounter: +1 (INT)/ -1 (WIL)

Body Type:
Processor: Marginal (PL7) [4 active slots]
Actuator: Servo   Casing: Standard
Chassis: 45 cm   Data port: wireless
Manipulators: Claw (2)   Propulsion: Gravitic
Sensors: Life recorder, rangefinder, IR, motion sensor, video

Key Skills:
Armor Operation; Unarmed attack, Brawl 6; Acrobatics, flight 2;
Stamina; Computer Science; Knowledge, Computer operation 1; System
Operation.
Cost: $24500

Kixil's staff includes many semi-autonomous robots.

Power Plant:
Matter Converters (PL 8)
Can utilize almost any material as fuel.

Support Systems:
Symbiotic Hull (PL 8)
A single station-wide system specially designed by Starbirth, Kixil's
Electronics Officer.
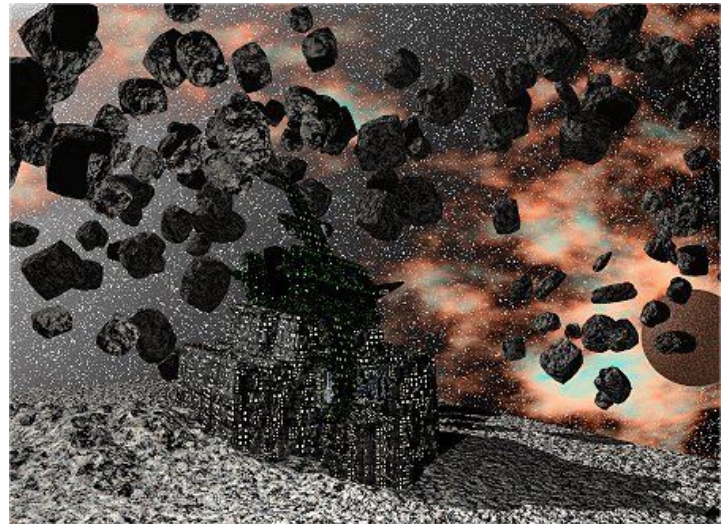
Hidden among the asteroids.

Stores:
Whenever Kixil purchases accommodations they order enough provisions
to feed the entire crew for at least 100 days.

Hydroponics Bay (PL 6)
Kixil's system is large-scale. It yields fresh produce for up to 200 people.

Sensors:
Tracking Capability
Kixil's Sensor Control Computer gives unlimited tracking /detection
range

CE Passive Array (PL 8)
Features EM, IR, and video. Receives a –4 step bonus to detect a target
using active sensors.

Range	Arcs	Targeting
30/60/100 Mm	2	Normal

Multiphase Radar (PL 8)
Kixil's powerful multiphase radar has a tracking capability 50% greater
than less sophisticated systems.

Type	Range	Arcs	Targeting
Active	20/40/80 Mm	1	Normal

Communication:
Mass Transceiver (PL 7)
Allows for instantaneous communication between two mass transceivers.
Must be used WITHIN a given star system since the range is limited to
about 1,000 AU.

Controls:
Command Deck (PL 6)

Miscellaneous Installations:
Autocargo (PL 7) -200 cubic meters

Kixil's cargo is quickly and safely handled by robotic systems so that limited personnel resources are conserved.

Hangar (PL 6) -250 hull point capacity
Kixil's hangar features a cutting-edge construction and repair facility for vessels up to 250 hull.

Laboratory Section (PL 6)
This facility features a wide range of useful databases to assist in technical and scientific work. Applies a -2 step bonus to related skill checks.

Fabrication Facility (PL 7)
Kixil's fabrication facility can produce virtually any component for which schematics are available. It is also useful for producing Kixil' Station Innovations' many unique and original inventions.
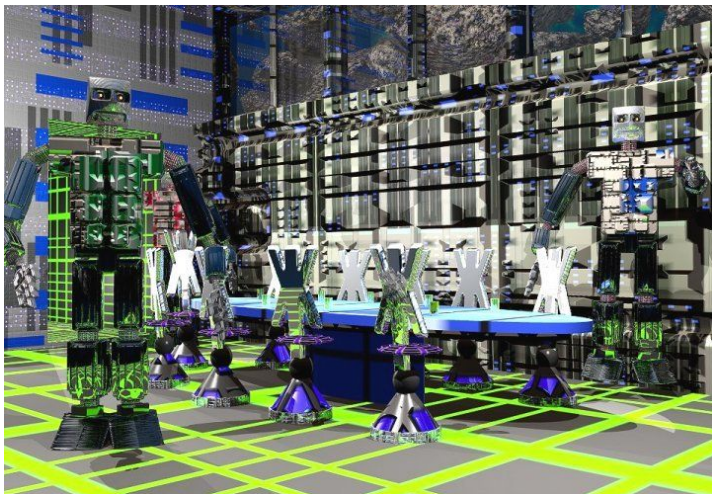
Robots perform a security sweep of one of Kixil's meeting rooms before the attendees arrive.

Workshop (PL 6)
Specially equipped and set up for repair, light manufacturing, and custom fabrication.

Medical Bay (aka Sickbay) (PL 6)
Kixil's sickbay is small, but well-equipped. It enables Dr. Byron Cordel and/or Dr. Watts to provide comprehensive treatment for up to four patients at a time. Provides a –3 step bonus to Medical Science treatment or surgery skill checks. It also features a cyber surgery system with everything necessary to implant or repair previously implanted cybernetic components.

Security Suite (PL 7)
Monitors wide areas of the Station recording video, sound, and thermal data. These areas feature armored doors which can only be opened by bio-scan. These can be manually overridden by certain individuals within Kixil Station Administration. Key areas also feature psi detection, imaging scanners, bio detection, and chemical sniffers.
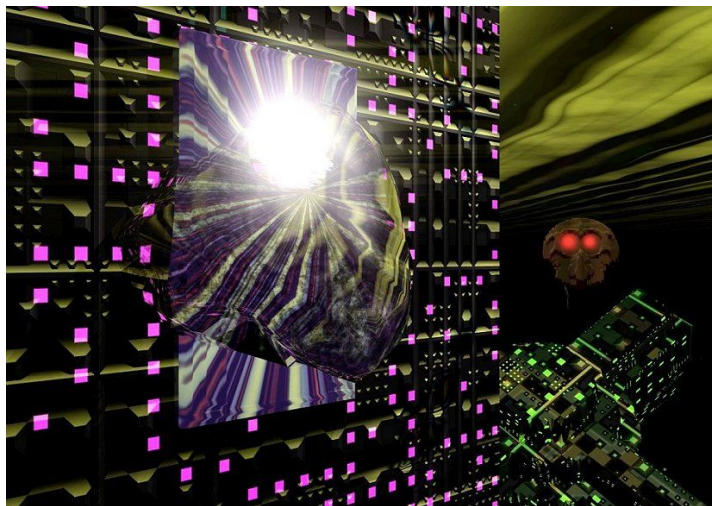
The virtuality of Kixil's Datacore. Code by Electronics Officer Starbirth.

Kixil Station Datacore:

Kixil Station's Datacore has THREE levels of clearance. Everybody who is a staffer (and some registered guests) gets level 1, the most basic, common access. This includes 99% of the content of the datacore. It has all the utilities, assist progs, reference databases, and everything else residents need to run their daily lives and maintain contact with the outside worlds.

Officers get level 2 clearance. Here is the more secure information. Most of the engineering database is level 2. Some personnel information is on level 2. Most holos logged by Kixil's security cameras and various ships' security cameras, including the LSII are level 2, but some segments are level 3. Level 3, the most secure level is open only to the crew of the Liquid Sky, although Dr. Byron Cordel-the Chief Medic-has access to the medical record portion of each resident's personnel file. That means someone who has cyber would not be able to keep it secret by making the info level 3. The info could still be seen by Dr. Cordel, or any crew member of the LSII. (If this information was withheld from their medical record, the treachery would be discovered when they pass through the security suite and get scanned. They would be questioned immediately and (probably) denied access.

It is important to keep in mind that the private information which makes up a Kixil resident's personnel file first came from that individual. They could have withheld whatever information they so chose before the files were ever presented to Security at Abal Relay Station. So, for all you hackers out there, don't expect to find all kinds of dirt on Station staffers by poking around in the Kixil Datacore. The only place any real info like that resides is in Starbirth's personal system, which is more or less impenetrable to hackers. She does background searches on everyone who passes through Kixil Station and usually has data on those individuals that they would have rather kept secret. Most times she does not reveal specific secrets to anyone else, though. Rather she will simply deny that sentient access to Abal Relay Station, which of course means he/she doesn't get to come to Kixil. Finally, the top three Officers of Kixil Station; Nova, Bri', and Starbirth can change the security level designation of any data they so choose.

Another important point:

Where a Station resident can and cannot go, (what areas they are allowed clearance) is based on their datacore clearance. Someone who has level three access can go wherever they want.

Plato, the AI that monitors Kixil's datacore, helps Station residents take advantage of the various systems and services available to them. "He" makes sure everyone stays within the parameters of their clearance while in the datacore. He operates the Security Robots who patrol Kixil Station and makes sure nobody strays into restricted access areas of the Station.

Whether in the datacore or on the Station, trespassers are dealt with swiftly and harshly.

Kixil Station Levels:
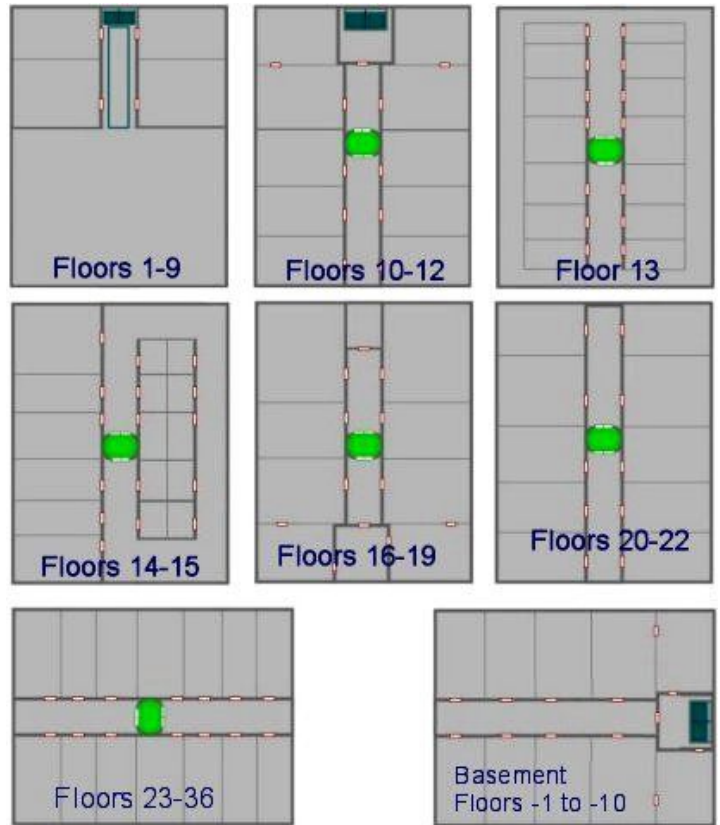
levels 1-9: docking zone, ship construction facility, warehouse
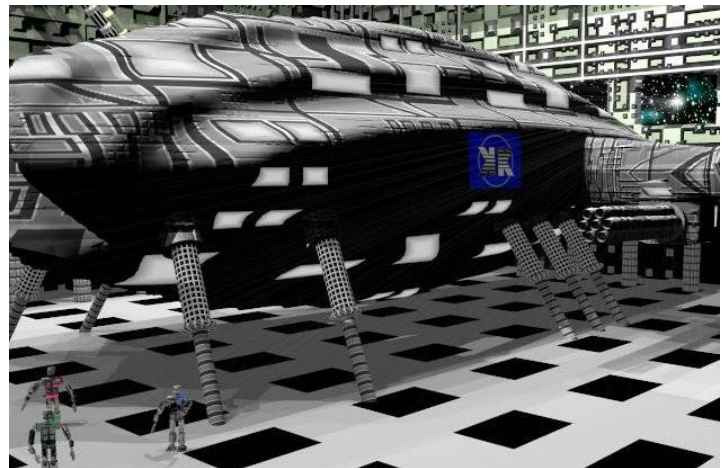
Kixil's shipyard.

level 10: access area
levels 11-12: communications, sensors, and surveillance

Kixil's ever-vigilant system operators.

level 13: offices
level 14: medical (sick) bay, life science laboratories
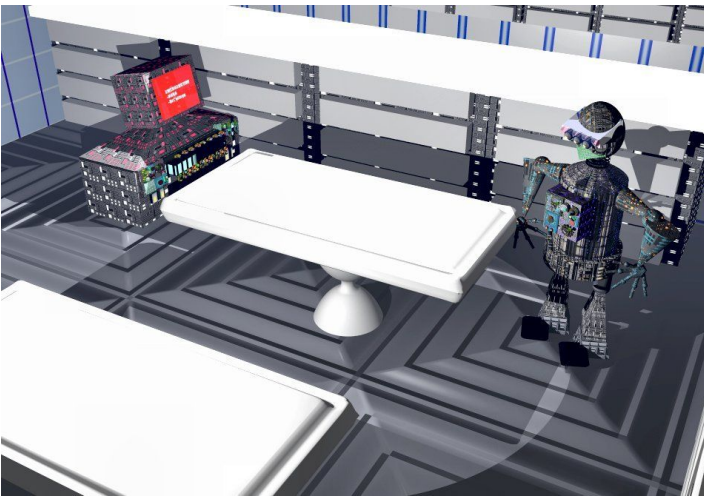
Dr. Watts prepares the sick bay to receive two new patients.

level 15: engineering workshops, physics lab
levels 16-17: industrial machinery
level 18: emergency facilities, escape pods
level 19: common areas (Club Kixil, dining facilities, conference rooms, auditorium, library)

Club Kixil –the place for R&R

level 20: food preparation and storage
level 21: defense systems
level 22: training and exercise holofacilities
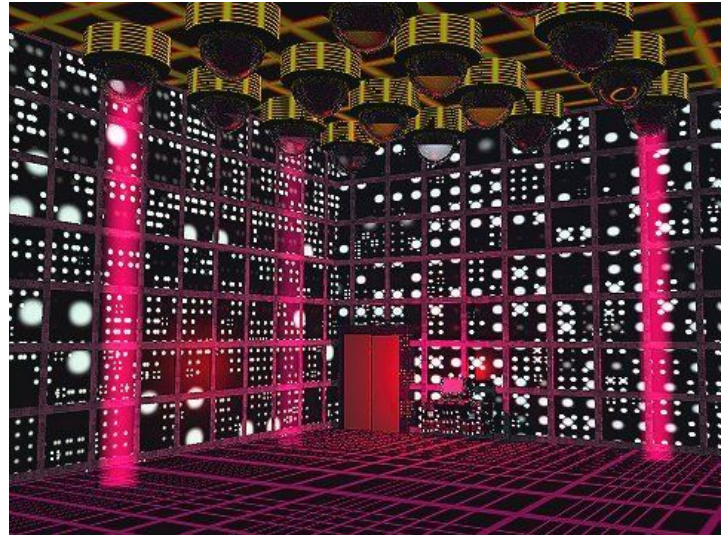
Combat and training simulations can be run in the holoprojection facility.

levels 23-36: living quarters
level 37: weapons systems

Basement/Subterranean Levels:

levels -1 to -2: munitions and equipment storage
levels -3 to -5: life support facilities
levels -6 to -10: power generation facilities

Partial List of Medical Assets and Supplies :

Equipment Description	G.E. contract price	Mass	Dimensions	Current Stock
Iso Med Surgical Kit- Serves as a self-contained medical facility. Includes: Laser scalpels, vital signs monitoring system, anesthesia delivery system, antiseptics, portable lighting, and requisite toolkit. Considered a marginal facility in the field OR an ordinary facility if indoors with water hookup. (Gives a –1 step bonus to Medical Science-treatment.) The supplies used each time the kit is employed cost $C250 to replenish.	$C 1,250	12 kg	40X25X10cm	20 kits
Iso Med Forensics Kit- Includes: Laser scalpel, powered bonesaw, clamps, spreaders, syringes, built-in microcomputer for instant genetic analyses (complex skill check required). Gives –2 step bonus to Medical Science-forensics.	$C 200	3kg	40X25X10cm	6 kits
Med Care One First Aid Kit- includes: 3 applications of artificial skin, surgical thread & needles, burn dressings, chemical treatment kit, antiseptic dressings, and a 3D crystal detailing hundreds of medical treatments. Gives -2 step bonus to Medical Science-treatment and restores d4 wounds if successfully applied.	$C 100	1kg	30X20X5cm	80 kits
Nanosurgery Kit- a powerful computer and intricate senor system to control accompanying nanite robots. Used to perform impossibly difficult surgical procedures, the microscopic robots are injected,then later retrieved with a simple blood-extraction tube. If surgeon has R5 in Medical Science-surgery, nanites give –2 step bonus to surgery complex skill check. (-1 if less than R5). Heals 2 wounds & 1 mortal PER success on the complex skill check ladder. Costs $C2000 per operation.	SC 25,000	10kg	40X30X12cm	2 kits
Isomed Artificial Skin- large polymeric patches applied over wounds. Adds 1 point to the amount of damage healed by Medical Science-treatment. Also counts as 1 automatic success on the surgery complex skill check ladder. Benefits can be combined with those for artificial blood.	$C 50	0.1kg	4x10cm patches	50 packs -six applications per pack.
Isomed Artificial Blood- powder suitable for infusion when mixed with water. Adds 1 point to the amount of damage healed by Medical Science-treatment. When given to a hero who has taken mortal damage, gives –2 step bonus to his next Stamina-endurance check.	$C 50	0.3kg	Na	100 packs -six infusions per pack.

Isomed Artificial Blood- powder suitable for infusion when mixed with water. Adds 1 point to the amount of damage healed by Medical Science-treatment. When given to a hero who has taken mortal damage, gives –2 step bonus to his next Stamina-endurance check.	$C 50	0.3kg	Na	100 packs -six infusions per pack.
Bone Graft- gel like substance that hardens to form an internal cast/matrix for bone regrowth. Disintegrates after 40-60 days. Counts as 1 automatic success in the Medical Science-surgery complex skill check. Adds 1 point to wound or mortal damage healed by surgery. Benefits can be combined with those for artificial skin and artificial blood.	$C 500	0.5kg	Na	45 grafts
Tissue Graft- gel like substance that cures to the consistency of healthy muscle tissue. Provides vascular structure, automatically forms muscular attachments, and serves as framework for tissue regrowth. Counts as 1 automatic success in the Medical Science-surgery complex skill check. Adds 1 point to wound or mortal damage healed by surgery. Benefits can be combined with those of bone graft if patient sustained both skeletal and soft tissue injuries.	$C 500	0.3kg	Na	65 grafts
Medical Gauntlet- features a variety of sophisticated sensors and samplers that can accurately diagnose almost any medical condition via blood sample and NMR. Contains medical supplies equivalent to trauma pack I. Has 9 slots of active memory. Gives –3 step bonus to Medical Science skill checks.	$C6000	2kg	35X12X10cm	2 gauntlets
Forensics Gauntlet- like medical gauntlet, except gives –3 step bonus to Medical Science-forensics skill checks. Gives untrained user skill equivalent to 14/7/3 when plugged into a computer which has the accompanying software package.	$C 2000	2kg	35X12X10cm	1 gauntlets
A.S.I.S.T. collar- a thin flexible collar that fits tightly around wearer's neck. Has microcomputer which monitors vitals and delivers serums/pharmaceuticals, emergency nutrients, antivenom, as needed from tiny compartments in the collar. Can also be programmed to deliver via vice command.	$C 2500	0.2kg	3 cm w X 1 thick	10 collars

Trauma Pack II- cybernetic (or body tank) system which monitors the users vitals and responds instantly to: Knockout- if wearer loses ALL stuns, pack injects painkillers & stimulants, instantly returning him to ½ his full stuns (has +2 penalty to all actions from grogginess for next round). Heal Wounds- when wearer's wounds drop below ½ his full level, the pack's automedic immediately begins to repair the damage, restoring d4+2w. Mortal Damage- automatically staunches mortal damage, negating the need for Stamina-endurance checks. Subject suffers +3 step penalty until the end of the scene.	$C 400	2kg	Na	20 packs
MCI Life Support Pack-a portable life support system built into what appears to be a breast plate. Through an inserted transfusion tube it oxygenates and pumps the victims blood as necessary. It also administers medications, anesthesia, coagulants, plasma, and artificial blood. Eliminates need for stamina endurance checks due to mortal damage for as long as it's power cells holds out. (cells last 12 hours) If the life support pack is applied within 5 rounds after a hero loses his last mortal point, it restores 1 point of mortal damage and preserves his life. To apply and activate the pack requires Medical science-treatment check. + 2 step penalty if victim is at 0 mortal.	$C 800	3kg	Na	25 packs
IM Neural Stimulator-skull cap with electrodes used to resuscitate heroes at 0 mortal. -Requires medical science treatment to apply. -Result depends on success: Good: -1 Step bonus to heroes WIL feat check to "cling to life." -Amazing: -3 step bonus to WIL feat check If hero succeeds on WIL feat check, he regains one mortal. Cumulative +1 penalty for every 10 minutes the hero has been dead.	$C 5,000	0.5 kg	Size adjustable	1 system
All-Terrain Stretcher—stretcher on grav inducer-levitates 1m off the ground, capable of carrying 250kg, power cells last 24 hours, control module has 50 meter cable.	$C 500	10kg	40cmHx30Wx10 thick	5 units
Medical Walker-powered leg braces and back support to allow mobility regardless of physical condition, walk at up to 6 meters/phase.	$C 1500	10kg	Size adjustable	3 units
BerTek Portable Generator-can produce enough power to meet the needs of an outpost of 10 people. Burns 1 liter of Oxymite fuel per 2 hours of operation	$C 500	25kg	Na	2 units
Oxymite Fuel, 10L Tank- fuel for BerTek portable generators. Lasts about 20 hours.	$C 10	20kg	Na	10 tanks
Medical Monitor-measures and records patient's vitals on his indelible medical record. Automatically alerts medical staff if patient takes a turn for the worse.	$C 800	10kg	Na	10 units

Pharmaceutical Supplies:

Description	G.E. contract price	h	T	M	b
Analgesics- painkillers, used to offset the penalties from excessive wound or mortal damage.	$C 10/dose	500	50	50	50
Anesthetic-KO's willing patient for up to 12 hours	$C 50/dose	200	10	10	10
Antibiotic- fights all types of bacterial/viral infections. Requires 24 days of dosage.	$C 50/dose	300	10	10	10
Antiradiation Serum-IV serum treats radiation Sickness.	$C 100/dose	300	5	5	5
Anti-venom- counters effects of poison.	$C 100/dose	20	6	6	6
Coagulant-slows bleeding drastically	$C 50/dose	250	10	10	10
Immunization Booster- provides resistance against all common ailments	$C 50/dose	300	5	5	5
Sedative-used to calm dangerously agitated persons. We stock injection, aerosol spray and pills.	$C 25/dose	100	10	5	5
Stimulant-shot that counter effects fatigue and stun damage.	$C 25/dose	400	20	20	10
Tranquilizers- KO's hero for D6 hours	$C 40/dose	50	0	0	0
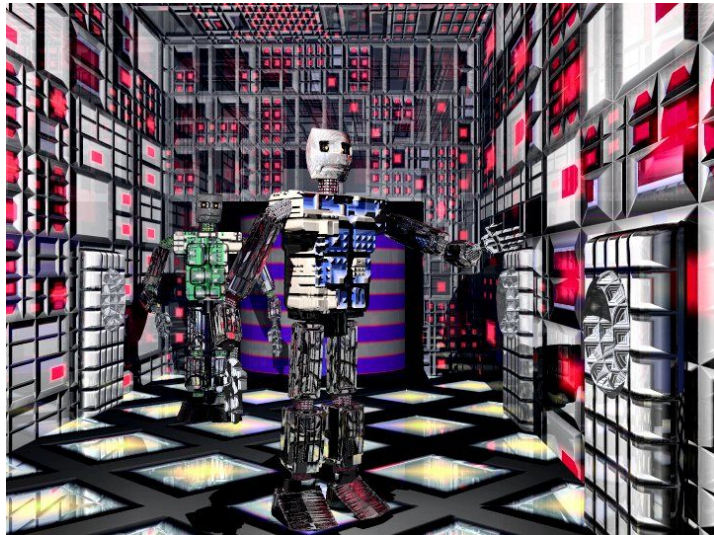
Security robots searching for an intruder detected by the security suite.

Medical Hardware/Systems/Robots:

Medical Science Dedicated Station

This is a specialized computer terminal linked to Kixil's computer core. It features a wealth of information and assistance programs regarding all aspects of medical diagnosis and treatment. This system is utilized in all but the simplest medical procedures performed at the station.

It also houses the indelible drive that holds all the medical records of all station personnel, along with that of any visitors who require medical treatment. Provides a -3 step bonus to all Medical Science skill checks.

Medical Science Expert System

This system is installed in the dedicated station. It is an intricate computer routine which functions like a limited artificial intelligence with regard to medical science. It mimics an expert physician in all fields of medical science, providing rank 6 of ability in each Medical Science specialty skill. The system can be accessed by medical robots via uplink.

Dr. Watts:
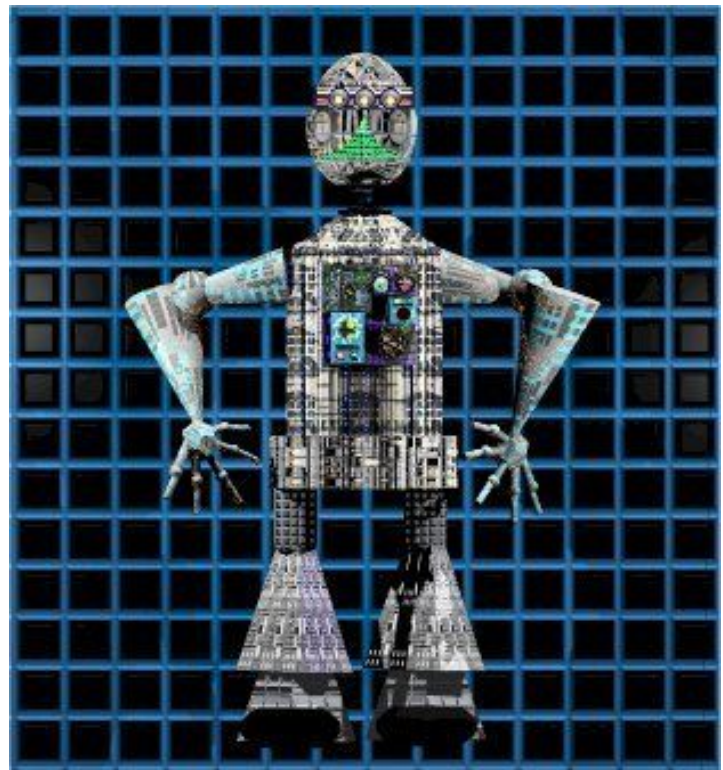
Dr. Watts, as he is affectionately known, is a highly modified Lister Series Medical robot. He keeps everyone at Kixil Station healthy, and is known for his impeccable bedside manner.

STR: 12   DEX: 13   CON: 12   INT: 15   WIL: 12   PER: 11
Action check: 17+/16/8/4   Actions/ round: 4
Processor quality: Amazing   Situation die modifier: -d4
Active memory: 15 slots   Chassis: 2m
Mass: 250kg   Move: 20/ 21/ 4

Casing: Standard   Armor value: d4-2 / d4-2/ d4-3
Brawling damage: d8s/ d6+1w/ d8+1w

Actuators: aleerin   Manipulators: hands, professional tools
Propulsion: legs   Data Ports: uplink, wireless, encrypted,
                               socket, telepresence
Sensors and Imaging: chem sniffer, holo, IR , life recorder, metal
detector, pickup/ voicebox, tactile, video

Whether working with humans or other robots, Dr. Watts has no problem getting his point across.

Perks: language module, self-editing programming
Flaw: command circuitry

Key Skills:
Unarmed attack – brawl 13/ 7/ 4
Ranged weapons, modern – pistol 14/ 8/ 5, -rifle 14/ 8/ 5
Vehicle Operation – air 14/ 8/ 5, -land 14/ 8/ 5, -water 14/ 8/ 5
Stamina – endurance 13/ 7/ 4
Computer science – hacking, -hardware, & -programming 15/ 8/ 5 (all)
Knowledge – deduce 15/ 8/ 5
Life Science – biology, -botany, -genetics,- xenology [tsa, mechalus,
    fraal, bhruu, sesheyan, weren], -zoology 16/ 9/ 5 (all)
Medical Science –forensics 18/ 11/ 7, -cybersurgery, -medical
    knowledge, -nanosurgery, -surgery, -treatment, -xenomedicine [tsa,
    mechalus, fraal, bhruu, sesheyan, weren] (all) 25/ 18/ 14
System Operation – comm., - defenses, -engineering , -sensors, -weapons
    (all) 16/ 9/ 5
Awareness – perception 11/ 6/ 3
Technical Science – repair & robotics (both) 18/ 11/ 7, -jury rig 16/ 9/ 5
Interaction – charm 12/ 7/ 4

Dr. Cordel, Kixil's Chief Medic, tries to make his office comfortable and welcoming to his patients.

Personnel and Policies:
1) Medical "Insurance":
    -Fully covered for all employees. Robot employees are similarly
    covered for repairs and most parts.
2) Nutrition:
    As far as the food goes, the choices are rather limited. With regard
    to food product selections, maximizing shelf life and minimizing
    storage is key. Most everything offered at all of Kixil's "eateries" is
    pre-packaged, pre-cooked, -practically everything but pre-digested.
    [It's better than the lumpy slop they eat on the Nebuchadnezzar in
    The Matrix, but not much.]
    Every employee takes vitamin and mineral supplements. These are
    also provided by the station. If you don't mind spending your own
    money, you can order finer foods, but since Galactic Enterprises'
    supply ships only come around twice a month you have to be careful
    what you order to ensure that it is still fresh when it arrives.
3) Taxes:
    Employees at Kixil do not pay taxes to Station Administration.
    Every bit of what they earn is theirs to keep. The Kansas Mining
    Facility which has partnered with Kixil provides more than
    sufficient income to keep the Station running in spite of its very
    high overhead.

Kansas Mining Facility

Kansas Mining provides the primary source of revenue that keeps the Station running.

Daily Production: 65-70 cubic meters of refined metals
-At full production capacity the Facility takes about 5 days to finish enough rare metals to fill the autocargo bay of The Renfrew, Kixil's specially outfitted cargo ship. (A full load is approximately 336 cubic meters). The Facility ships 2 or 3 loads per month, which yields Kixil Station Administration between C$33,169,000 and C$41,462,000. For mining workers' stats use the laborer template from GMG page 97.

Director of Operations:

Richard "Rex" Rencox, is originally from Kansas Station, Bhruusil, in the Karnath system.

Rex is the CEO of Kai's Kansas Mining Company. The parent company is a small but well-established mining and prospecting business on Bhruusil with their base of operations near Kansas Station. The Bhruu Sturhnak Meehn Abhaal (Kixil Station's Counselor) and Aleerin Starbirth (Chief Electronics Officer & Alleerin Inseer) had done some preliminary mineralogy and crust surveys that showed Kai system's Nova Asteroid Belt and second planet, Briat, to be rich in valuable rare metal ores.

When Sturhnak contacted Rex about becoming involved in the start-up of Kixil Station, Rex was intrigued and sent a prospecting team from Kansas Mining to confirm the preliminary data. After the prospectors' results showed that there was a fortune to be made, Rex got together his own investors and started up his own sister company, Kansas Mining of Kai, based in the Nova Asteroid Belt in the Kai system. The profits from that mining operation provide most of Kixil Station's income, with income from "Kixil Station Innovations" making up the remainder.

Grid advertisement for KSI

Kixil Station Innovations is the industrial manufacturing business of Kixil Station. All inventions/products/systems that Kixil's employees produce are manufactured and marketed as "KSI". This includes all proprietary designs from Starbirth, Bri'aitsya & his Engineering Team, and / or the Station's robot engineers; Vinnie, Dr.Watts, Bax, plus others. All Kixil's cutting edge original designs and stock manufactured equipment which are submitted for sale to outside entities carry this label. The engineer receives payment for the original design. Profits from the sale of production units go to Kixil Station. KSI gives Kixil Station a way to market products as a business entity.
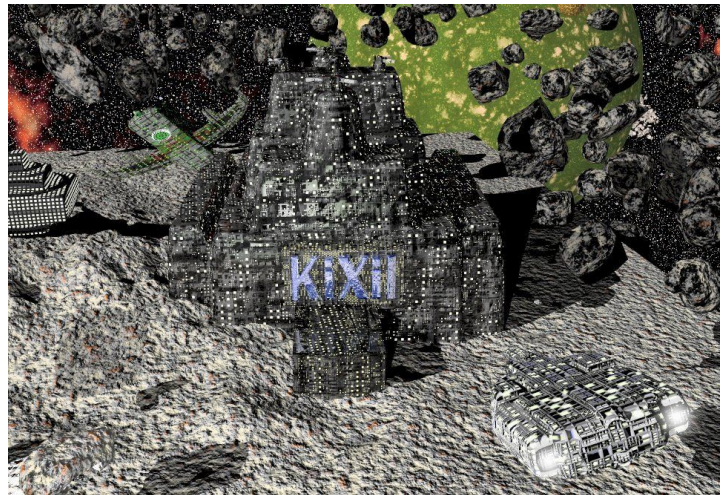
The cargo vessel, Renfrew, approaches Kixil Station just as the Kreen Hunter-Killer departs. Kansas Mining is near the left rear.

SHAMANS

Written by Jim Clunie

The peoples who follow living shamanic faiths exist in close interdependence with the land and its indwelling spiritual forces. Through a lifetime of teachings and initiations, every adult draws upon lore and rituals to guide them in everyday life.

Thus, most of the Supporting Cast described here follow the four standard professions of Combat Spec, Diplomat, Free Agent and Tech Op. They live as valued and important members of their community rather than distant ritualists.

Those societies that need a more complex organization to support their way of life – typically those that live by sustained agriculture in a more or less fixed location – may support enclaves of dedicated religious figures who can devote all of their time to prepare complex, impressive ceremonies for greater magical force. These rare and specialized people are Adepts.

To adapt the Songkeeper, Healer, Rainmaker, Witch or Witch-Fighter template to describe an Adept, reduce any skill of 2 ranks or higher that is not an FX, Lore or language skill by 1 rank, increase each skill that the character gains in FX and Lore specialty skills by 1 rank and add the Shamanism FX skill to the Ordinary skill set.

These Adepts most often have the same secondary profession as the profession of the non-Adept version, but any other secondary profession except Mindwalker can be substituted without change.

Respectful Hunter

This hunter has been brought up and initiated into the proper rituals of the shamanic faith to gain good fortune on the hunt and to maintain the proper relations of goodwill and respect between humankind and the spirits of animals. As a result he or she is well suited to supply the community with game without inviting supernatural disaster by improper behaviour.

A Respectful Hunter is a Free Agent. Other members of shamanic faiths call on the favours of the spirits in battle with human foes, combining a similar set of abilities with the Combat Spec profession.

	M	O	G	A
STR	9	10	11	12
DEX	10	11	12	13
CON	9	11	12	13
INT	8	9	10	10
WIL	10	10	11	12
PER	8	9	10	11

Marginal Skills: Athletics, Melee Weapons, Survival, Athletics-*throw* or Primitive Ranged Weapons-*specific*, Stealth, Investigate-*track,* Lore
Ordinary Skills: Melee Weapons-*blade*, Movement, Stamina, Survival-*survival training*, Stealth-*hide, sneak,* Navigation, Awareness-*perception*, Investigate-*search, track 2*
Good Skills: Athletics-*climb 2, jump,* Unarmed Attack, Movement-*swim, trailblazing 2,* Stamina-*endurance 2,* Survival-*survival training 2,*

Athletics-*throw 3* or Primitive Ranged Weapons-*specific 3,* Stealth-*hide 3, sneak 2,* Knowledge-*first aid,* Law-*traditional,* Life Science, Navigation-*surface,* Awareness-*perception 2, intuition,* Lore-*occult lore,* Teach-*Free Agent,* Culture-*etiquette,* Shamanism-*guide my hand*
Amazing Skills: Melee Weapons-*blade 2,* Movement-*trailblazing 3,* Survival-*survival training 4,* Stealth-*hide 4, sneak 3,* Knowledge-*deduce 2,* Law-*traditional 2,* Life Science-*zoology 2,* Navigation-*surface 2,* Physical Science-*planetology 2,* Awareness-*perception 3, intuition 2,* Investigate- *search 2, track 4,* Lore-*occult lore 3,* Resolve-*physical resolve 2,* Teach-*Adept 2,* Leadership-*command 3,* Shamanism-*hunter's stare, spirit of the beast*

Songkeeper

This Diplomat plays a central role in a functioning community based on a shamanic faith, as a properly trained and authorized leader of rituals that are necessary to daily life, from Marginal trainees to greatly respected Amazing shamans who hold knowledge of the rarest and most potent of ancient ceremonies.

	M	O	G	A
STR	8	9	10	10
DEX	8	10	10	11
CON	8	9	10	11
INT	10	10	11	12
WIL	10	11	12	13
PER	10	11	12	13

As Diplomat:
Marginal Skills: Stamina, Knowledge-*specific language*, Law, Lore, Culture-*etiquette*, Entertainment, Interaction
Ordinary Skills: Law-*traditional 1*, Knowledge-*specific language 2*, Creativity, Lore-*occult,* Resolve, Culture-*etiquette 2,* Entertainment-*dance, musical instrument, sing,* Interaction-(choose 2 specialties at rank 1)
Good Skills: Stamina-*endurance,* Manipulation, Knowledge-*specific language 3,* Law-*traditional 3,* Awareness-*intuition 2,* Creativity-*specific,* Investigate, Lore-*occult 2,* Resolve-*mental resolve 2,* Teach-*diplomat 2,* Culture-*etiquette 3,* Entertainment-(choose 2 specialties at rank 2), Interaction-(choose 1 specialty at rank 3), Leadership-*inspire*, Shamanism-*trance visions*
Amazing Skills: Stamina-*endurance 3,* Survival, Manipulation-*prestidigitation 2,* Stealth-*sneak 2,* Knowledge-*specific language 5, deduce 2,* Law-*traditional 4,* Creativity-*specific 2,* Investigate-*interrogate 2,* Resolve-*mental resolve 3,* Teach-*adept 3,* Culture-*diplomacy 2, first encounter,* Deception, Entertainment-(choose 1 specialty at rank 4), Leadership-*inspire 3,* Shamanism-*dreamwalking, ghost dance*

As Adept:
Marginal Skills: Stamina, Knowledge-*specific language*, Law, Lore, Culture-*etiquette*, Entertainment, Interaction
Ordinary Skills: Law-*traditional*, Knowledge-*specific language 2,*

Creativity, Lore-*occult 2*, Resolve, Culture-*etiquette,* Entertainment-*dance, musical instrument, sing,* Interaction-(choose 2 specialties at rank 1), Shamanism

Good Skills: Stamina-*endurance,* Manipulation, Knowledge-*specific language 3,* Law-*traditional 2,* Awareness-*intuition,* Creativity-*specific,* Investigate, Lore-*occult 3,* Resolve-*mental resolve,* Teach-*diplomat,* Culture-*etiquette 2,* Entertainment-(choose 2 specialties at rank 1), Interaction-(choose 1 specialty at rank 2), Leadership-*inspire,* Shamanism-*trance visions 2*

Amazing Skills: Stamina-*endurance 2,* Survival, Manipulation-*prestidigitation,* Stealth-*sneak,* Knowledge-*specific language 5, deduce,* Law-*traditional 3,* Creativity-*specific,* Investigate-*interrogate,* Resolve-*mental resolve 2,* Teach-*adept 2,* Culture-*diplomacy, first encounter,* Deception, Entertainment-(choose 1 specialty at rank 3), Leadership-*inspire 2,* Shamanism-*dreamwalking 2, ghost dance 2*

Healer

Healers have the Tech Op profession and exhibit skills in diagnosis, bonesetting, natural remedies and helpful advice on the avoidance of disease, as well as more spiritual methods of aid.

Note: When converting this template to the Adept profession, don't reduce the Healer's Medical Science skills.

	M	O	G	A
STR	8	9	10	11
DEX	10	11	11	12
CON	8	9	10	11
INT	9	11	12	13
WIL	9	10	12	13
PER	10	11	11	12

As Tech Op:
Marginal Skills: Stamina, Knowledge, Awareness-*perception,* Lore, Interaction
Ordinary Skills: Manipulation-*prestidigitation 2,* Law-*traditional 2,* Knowledge-*deduce,* Medical Science-*psychology 2, treatment 2,* Awareness-*perception 2, intuition,* Resolve-*physical resolve,* Entertainment-*musical instrument,* Interaction-*bargain 2, interview, intimidate*
Good Skills: Stamina-*endurance 2,* Life Science-*botany 2,* Medical Science- *forensics, surgery 3, treatment 3,* Investigate-*search,* Lore-*psychic lore* 2, Resolve-*physical resolve 3, mental resolve,* Teach-*adept 2,* Interaction-*interview 3,* Leadership, Shamanism-*trance visions, venom spirit*
Amazing Skills: Knowledge-*deduce 4,* Life Science-*biology 2,* Medical Science-*surgery 5, treatment 4,* Awareness-*perception 4, intuition 3,* Lore-*psychic lore 3,* Teach-*adept 3, tech op 3,* Leadership-*command 2,* Shamanism-*trance visions 3*

As Adept:
Marginal Skills: Stamina, Knowledge, Awareness-*perception,* Lore, Interaction
Ordinary Skills: Manipulation-*prestidigitation*, Law-*traditional,* Knowledge-*deduce,* Medical Science-*psychology 2, treatment 2,* Awareness-*perception, intuition,* Resolve-*physical resolve,* Entertainment-*musical instrument,* Interaction-*bargain, interview, intimidate,* Shamanism
Good Skills: Stamina-*endurance,* Life Science-*botany,* Medical Science-*forensics, surgery 3, treatment 3,* Investigate-*search,* Lore-*psychic lore* 3, Resolve-*physical resolve 2, mental resolve,* Teach-*adept,* Interaction-*interview 2,* Leadership, Shamanism-*trance visions 2, venom spirit 2*
Amazing Skills: Knowledge-*deduce 3,* Life Science-*biology,* Medical Science-*surgery 5, treatment 4,* Awareness-*perception 3, intuition 2,* Lore-*psychic lore 4,* Teach-*adept 2, tech op 2,* Leadership-*command,* Shamanism-*trance visions 4*

Witch-Fighter

The profession of witch-fighter overlaps to some degree with the place of a healer, but these Diplomat characters work specifically to combat the dire effects of evil or hostile spirits, spells cast by wicked shamans or curses brought upon the sufferer by wrongful actions. Some of the cases before a witch-fighter have no supernatural element but arise from the common malice and secret sins of human beings, which the shaman must mediate to resolve the bitterness and discord in the community, perhaps covering his efforts with the trappings of ritual to avoid recriminations.

	M	O	G	A
STR	9	9	10	11
DEX	8	9	10	11
CON	8	10	11	12
INT	9	10	11	12
WIL	10	11	12	13
PER	10	11	12	13

As Diplomat:
Marginal Skills: Melee Weapons, Law*,* Investigate-*interrogate*, Lore-*occult lore,* Interaction-*intimidate*
Ordinary Skills: Melee Weapons-*blade,* Unarmed Attack, Knowledge-*first aid,* Law-*traditional 2,* Investigate-*search*, Resolve-*mental resolve,* Deception
Good Skills: Ranged Weapons-*specific ranged weapon,* Stamina-*resist pain,* Knowledge-*specific language 2,* Law-*traditional 3,* Investigate-*interrogate 3, search 3, track,* Lore-*occult lore 3,* Street Smart, Resolve-*mental resolve 2,* Teach-*adept 2,* Interaction-*charm, interview 2, intimidate 3,* Leadership-*command,* Shamanism-*dreamwalking*
Amazing Skills: Melee Weapons-*blade 3,* Acrobatics-*dodge,* Lore-*occult lore 6,* Resolve-*mental resolve 5, physical resolve 2,* Street Smart-*street knowledge 2,* Teach-*adept 3, combat spec 2,* Leadership-*inspire 2,* Shamanism-*ghost dance, venom spirit*

As Adept:
Marginal Skills: Melee Weapons, Law*,* Investigate-*interrogate*, Lore-*occult lore 2,* Interaction-*intimidate*
Ordinary Skills: Melee Weapons-*blade,* Unarmed Attack, Knowledge-*first aid,* Law-*traditional,* Investigate-*search*, Resolve-*mental resolve,* Deception, Shamanism
Good Skills: Ranged Weapons-*specific ranged weapon,* Stamina-*resist pain,* Knowledge-*specific language 2,* Law-*traditional 2,* Investigate-*interrogate 2, search 2, track,* Lore-*occult lore 4,* Street Smart, Resolve-*mental resolve 2,* Teach-*adept,* Interaction-*charm, interview, intimidate 2,* Leadership-*command,* Shamanism-*dreamwalking 2*
Amazing Skills: Melee Weapons-*blade 2,* Acrobatics-*dodge,* Lore-*occult lore 7,* Resolve-*mental resolve 4, physical resolve,* Street Smart-*street knowledge,* Teach-*adept 2, combat spec,* Leadership-*inspire,* Shamanism-*ghost dance 2, venom spirit 2*

Rainmaker

This Tech Op serves the tribe with specialized lore in choosing or magically invoking fruitful times to plant, tend and harvest those staple crops on which the welfare of the community depends. Fish-bringers have similar skills.

	M	O	G	A
STR	8	9	10	11
DEX	8	9	10	11
CON	8	10	11	12
INT	10	11	12	13
WIL	10	10	11	12
PER	10	11	12	13

As Tech Op:
Marginal Skills: Law-*traditional,* Awareness-*perception,* Lore, Interaction-*bargain*
Ordinary Skills: Stamina, Law-*traditional 2,* Knowledge, either Life Science or Physical Science, Interaction-*charm,* Leadership
Good Skills: Stamina-*endurance 2,* Survival-*survival training,* Law-*traditional 4,* Knowledge-*deduce 2,* Life Science-*botany* or *zoology,* Physical Science-*planetology,* Awareness-*perception 2, intuition 2,* Lore-*fringe science,* Leadership-*inspire,* Shamanism-*trance visions*
Amazing Skills: Athletics-*climb 2,* Life Science-*botany 3, zoology 3,* Physical Science-*planetology 3,* Awareness-*intuition 5,* Investigate-*search 2,* Lore-*fringe science 3,* Teach-*adept 2,* Shamanism-*trance visions 3*

As Adept:
Marginal Skills: Law-*traditional,* Awareness-*perception,* Lore, Interaction-*bargain*
Ordinary Skills: Stamina, Law-*traditional,* Knowledge, either Life Science or Physical Science, Interaction-*charm,* Leadership, Shamanism
Good Skills: Stamina-*endurance,* Survival-*survival training,* Law-*traditional 3,* Knowledge-*deduce,* Life Science-*botany* or *zoology,* Physical Science-*planetology,* Awareness-*perception, intuition,* Lore-*fringe science 2,* Leadership-*inspire,* Shamanism-*trance visions 2*
Amazing Skills: Athletics-*climb,* Life Science-*botany 2, zoology 2,* Physical Science-*planetology 2,* Awareness-*intuition 4,* Investigate-*search,* Lore-*fringe science 4,* Teach-*adept,* Shamanism-*trance visions 4*

Respectful Fisherman

This Free Agent's skills help him to obtain food from seas, lakes or rivers rather than the land.

	M	O	G	A
STR	9	10	11	12
DEX	10	11	12	13
CON	9	11	12	13
INT	8	9	10	10
WIL	10	10	11	12
PER	8	9	10	11

Marginal Skills: Melee Weapons, Movement, Survival, Vehicle Operation-*water vehicle,* Stealth, Lore
Ordinary Skills: Athletics, Melee Weapons-*blade,* Movement-*swim,* Stamina, Survival-*survival training,* Stealth- *sneak,* Navigation, Physical Science, Awareness-*perception,* Investigate-*search, track 2*
Good Skills: Athletics- *jump,* Unarmed Attack, Movement-*swim 2, trailblazing,* Stamina-*endurance 2,* Survival-*survival training 2,* Athletics-*throw,* Knowledge-*first aid,* Law-*traditional,* Life Science, Navigation-*surface 2,* Physical Science-*planetology,* Awareness-*perception 2, intuition,* Lore-*occult lore,* Teach-*Free Agent,* Culture-*etiquette,* Shamanism-*guide my hand*
Amazing Skills: Melee Weapons-*blade 2,* Survival-*survival training 4,* Stealth- *sneak 3,* Knowledge-*deduce 2,* Law-*traditional 2,* Life Science-*zoology 2,* Navigation-*surface 4,* Physical Science-*planetology 3,* Awareness-*perception 3, intuition 2,* Investigate- *search 3,* Lore-*occult lore 3,* Resolve-*physical resolve 2,* Teach-*Adept 2,* Leadership-*command 3,* Shamanism- *spirit of the beast, trance visions*

Witch/Skinwalker

A Witch follows an aberrant shamanic tradition of ancient derivation that calls upon the dreaded dark spirits of chaos and insanity, inimical to human purposes, in order to increase the worshippers' personal power through intimidation and dire physical gifts. Some revel in the fear of others, dwelling in shunned places and adopting a bizarre and frightening appearance. Others hide within communities as secret murderous cults. Many are Diplomats, but a Witch can arise from any walk of life.

A Witch may not use or benefit from the *ghost dance* miracle but adds *shapechanging, black warding, command, rend the weave* and *summoning* to the skills available to him under the Shamanism broad skill.

Many Witches are marked physically by their dark masters with a sign on some hidden part of their bodies, as well as a general grim, unnaturally aged, troubled or menacing look.

	M	O	G	A
STR	9	10	12	13
DEX	8	9	10	11
CON	9	10	11	11
INT	8	9	10	11
WIL	10	11	12	13
PER	10	11	11	12

As Diplomat:
Marginal Skills: Athletics, Stealth-*sneak,* Awareness, Lore, Deception, Interaction-*intimidate*
Ordinary Skills: Athletics-*climb,* Melee Weapons-*blade,* Unarmed Attack, Survival, Manipulation, Stealth-*hide, shadow,* Investigate-*track,* Lore-*occult lore 2,* Deception-*bluff,* Entertainment-*dance, sing,* Interaction-*intimidate 2, taunt 2*
Good Skills: Unarmed Attack-*brawl,* Manipulation-*pickpocket 2,* Ranged Weapons-*specific ranged weapon 2,* Stealth-*shadow 2, sneak 3,* Awareness-*perception 2, intuition 2,* Investigate-*track 2, search 2,* Street Smart-*criminal elements,* Entertainment-*act 2,* Leadership-*inspire,* Shamanism-*dreamwalking, shapechanging, venom spirits*
Amazing Skills: Melee Weapons-*blade 4,* Survival-*survival training 3,* Stealth-*hide 4,* Awareness-*intuition 4,* Creativity-*specific 2,* Investigate-*interrogate 2,* Lore-*occult lore 5,* Interaction-*charm 3, intimidate 4,* Shamanism-*command, summoning*

As Adept:
Marginal Skills: Athletics, Stealth-*sneak,* Awareness, Lore, Deception, Interaction-*intimidate*
Ordinary Skills: Athletics-*climb,* Melee Weapons-*blade,* Unarmed Attack, Survival, Manipulation, Stealth-*hide, shadow,* Investigate-*track,* Lore-*occult lore 3,* Deception-*bluff,* Entertainment-*dance, sing,* Interaction-*intimidate, taunt,* Shamanism
Good Skills: Unarmed Attack-*brawl,* Manipulation-*pickpocket,* Ranged Weapons-*specific ranged weapon,* Stealth-*shadow, sneak 2,* Awareness-*perception, intuition,* Investigate-*track, search,* Street Smart-*criminal elements,* Entertainment-*act,* Leadership-*inspire,* Shamanism-*dreamwalking 2, shapechanging 2, venom spirits 2*
Amazing Skills: Melee Weapons-*blade 3,* Survival-*survival training 2,* Stealth-*hide 3,* Awareness-*intuition 3,* Creativity-*specific,* Investigate-*interrogate,* Lore-*occult lore 6,* Interaction-*charm 2, intimidate 3,* Shamanism-*command 2, summoning 2*

Suggested Flaws for Witches: Bad Luck, Divided Loyalty, Forgetful, Illiterate, Infamy, Oblivious, Obsessed, Old Injury, Phobia, Poor Looks, Possessed, Powerful Enemy, Rampant Paranoia, Temper

New FX Skills: Shamanism

Flame sisters (PER)
Summon miracle, 3 FX energy points
Some traditions of shamanism hold that volcanoes and volcanically active areas are inhabited by spirits of great power, some of whom share a common lineage with the ancestors of human beings. A shaman of great presence can attempt to call upon the spirits of subterranean fire for aid.

This miracle requires an Amazing trance (8 successes) as the volcano spirits must travel through the earth from their faraway home to

respond. For each Amazing success that the shaman achieves during this complex check, another volcano spirit will arrive at the conclusion of the check.

When the shaman concludes his skill check successfully, the volcano spirit bursts from the earth, creating a semi-permanent volcanic feature at that spot (a geyser, fumarole or boiling mud pit, at least). A volcano spirit resembles an earth elemental (as described in *Beyond Science*) except that it also causes contact burns, adds burning damage to its pummel damage, has a heightened En armour value and can throw sparks at will, all identical to the abilities of a fire elemental.

The volcano spirit is not obliged to obey the shaman. He must convince it to help by means of encounter skills. The spirit begins with a Friendly attitude due to the shaman's bond of kinship.

Volcano Spirit Game Data

STR	16	Durability:	15s/15w/7m/7f
DEX	6	Move:	walk 4
CON	15	Reaction score:	Marginal/1
INT	4	Action check:	10+/9/4/2
WIL	8	#Actions:	2
PER	10	Last Resorts:	1

Attacks

Contact burn d4s
Burning limb 19/9/4   d6+3s/d6s/d6+5s/d6w/d4+3w+2d6w   LI/O + En/O
Spark   20/10/5   d4s/d4w/d4+2w   En/O

Defences

+3 resistance modifier vs. melee attacks
-1 resistance modifier vs. ranged attacks
Immune to mental effects as described in *Beyond Science,* p. 78
Immune to heat and fire
Armor: d6+2LI/d4+2HI/d8+2En

Skills

Athletics (16) – *throw (20)*, Unarmed Attack (16) – *brawl (19)*, Stealth (6) – *hide (10)*, Movement (15) – *trailblazing (18)*, Stamina (15) – *endurance (18)*

Summon sharks (PER)

Summon miracle, 1 FX energy point

The shaman calls dangerous aquatic predators to the area. He may choose to call 1d12 medium-sized sharks (subtract 1 from STR, CON and bite damage from the shark in the *Gamemaster's Guide*), 1d6 large sharks or 1 huge shark (add 2 STR, 2 CON and +1 bite damage to the typical shark).

In a river or lake setting, the shaman might attract a giant catfish, rogue hippopotamus, giant crocodile or a school of carnivorous fish instead.

The sharks remain in an area of 10 kilometres radius for one day. The shaman may keep them around by repeating the skill check successfully each day. They may make a collective Awareness-*perception* check once per hour that a likely meal is in the water (once per 30 minutes if the potential target is swimming strongly or struggling in the water, or once per 10 minutes if it is bleeding). If the sharks succeed in *perception*, they arrive and attack the prey.

Harming the summoned sharks may anger the god of the sea or river. The divinity may respond by sending more sharks, a storm, or by withdrawing all fish from the region. The god's anger will fade and the sea return to calmness within a week at most**.**

Summon storm (WIL)

Conjure miracle, 2 FX energy points

This miracle raises a violent storm with high winds, heavy precipitation (rain or snow) and other weather conditions typical of

severe weather in the area and at the season in which the shaman invokes the skill. This requires a Good trance (6 successes).

Clouds begin to gather and the wind rises. The worst effects of the storm begin within 2d12 hours.

Determine the severity of the storm by a roll of 1d6:

1-3 Typical storm with strong winds and (except in a desert region) heavy rain or snow, lasting 1d12 hours.

4-5 Severe storm with strong to gale-force winds. Depending on the location and season, a severe storm may include hail, sleet, a significant lightning strike, localised flooding or deep snowdrifts. In a desert region, enough rain falls to soak the ground. The storm lasts 3d12 hours.

6 Extreme weather which may include a hurricane or tornado in the proper season. Otherwise, the storm is similar to, but more destructive than a severe storm with widespread damage by high winds, lightning or floods. In a desert region, a major downpour fills temporary pools and water flows. Extreme weather lasts d4+1 days.

Rank benefits:

+ **Control:** At rank 4, the shaman may choose to add or subtract 1 from the roll for severity.

+ **Greater Control:** At rank 9, the shaman may add or subtract 2 from the roll for severity, add or subtract 1d12 hours (for a typical or severe storm) or 1 day (for extreme weather) from the duration, and subtract 1d20 hours from the time for the storm to build. This can't reduce any of these time periods to less than 1 time unit.

Trepanation

Some traditions of shamanism follow a strange ritual for the most powerful of their magicians. In a sacred ceremony, a group of shamans of great skill drill a hole in the skull of the aspirant, allowing the spirit forces (or oxygenated blood) to flow more freely directly in and out of his brain.

As a form of surgery performed to increase the subject's capabilities rather than to repair damage, trepanation has an analogy to procedures at higher Progress Levels such as cosmetic surgeries or the installation of cyber-gear.

The person performing the trepanation must have the Shamanism broad skill for the operation to have any supernatural effect. She must also have a minimum of rank 5 in Medical Science-*surgery.*

Trepanation is a single skill check if carried out during the hero creation process or between adventures. If played out during an adventure, the GM may use a complex skill check of Ordinary complexity. If the shaman carrying out the trepanation suffers a Critical Failure or three Failures, the patient suffers 1 point of Mortal damage, any successes accumulated up to that point are lost and the procedure must be started again.

Earlier, less precise tools make any surgery on the brain a dicey operation. Typical conditions at PL 0-2 are Marginal (no modifier) for this surgery. There is no barrier to trained shamans of later ages performing the ritual with more advanced tools, perhaps increasing the likelihood that the subject will survive.

When the procedure is complete, the subject gains the Old Injury (Moderate) flaw. If the character is struck in the head (suffers Amazing damage from an appropriate form of attack) she takes an additional 2 Wound and 1 Stun damage from the attack. At the GM's option, a badly performed trepanation may impose an Extreme rather than Moderate Old Injury.

The subject adds 1 FX point to her pool for each 5 FX points that an Adept receives in her starting pool for the campaign: 1 FX in a Realistic campaign, 2 FX in a Heroic or Dark Matter campaign, or 3 FX in a Superheroic campaign. If the subject's Old Injury flaw is ever removed she loses the additional FX points provided by trepanation.

This is a preview of my upcoming article: "Supporting Cast: Monotheists", following on from "Shamans".

Supporting Cast: Snake Handler

"And these signs shall follow them that believe: in my name they shall cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues: they shall take up serpents and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover." - Mark 16:17-18

These Supporting Cast Members are the most devout of a movement of believers originating in mining and farming towns of the southern United States. They believe themselves to be anointed by God, who has promised to protect them from harm as a sign of their true faith. These signs consist of handling various poisonous snakes, drinking small amounts of poisonous solutions and faith healing. Serpent handling congregations are relatively small, independent and close-knit, often based around the heads of a handful of families who are influential in the area. The preacher and leaders of the church are as tough and hard-working as the rank and file and as the townsfolk attending rival churches with whom they coexist.

	M	O	G	A
STR	9	10	11	12
DEX	9	10	12	13
CON	11	12	13	13
INT	7	8	9	10
WIL	9	10	11	12
PER	9	10	10	12

Marginal Skills: Athletics, Unarmed Attack-*brawl*, Stamina-*endurance,* Vehicle Operation, Resolve

Ordinary Skills: Melee Weapons-*blade, bludgeon,* Movement-*trailblazing,* Knowledge-*Bible*, Investigate-*track,* Resolve-*physical resolve 2*

Good Skills: Unarmed Attack-*brawl 3,* Stamina-*endurance 3, resist pain 2,* Manipulation-*snake catching,* Vehicle Operation-*land 2,* Physical Science-*chemistry,* Technical Science, Interaction-*bargain, intimidate 2,* Monotheism-*cure, signs and portents*

Amazing Skills: Melee Weapons-*bludgeon 3,* Stamina-*endurance 5, resist pain 4,* Knowledge-*Bible 3, first aid 3,* Resolve-*mental resolve 3, physical resolve 5,* Leadership-*inspire 3*, Monotheism-*aura*

Order of the Many Horned Viper

Written by Ryan Kershner

The dark book vibrated in Rik'Zal's hands as he read the inscription, which was nothing more than a series of words strung together in random fashion. "Ch'Nab xizi kestri artik manees kistra yuuk." He repeated the words over and over, looking into the mirror that sat on the ground, propped up by a stone. Rik'Zal was sitting on his knees, reading the inscription, and sitting in one of the marshy swamps indigenous to Taasa. A skull hung from his neck. It was made from the head of one of the horned lizards that inhabited a world in the T'sa Cluster.

A faint glow appeared on the mirror, which suddenly turned to a swirling display of clouds and light, finally emitting a dark purple glow. This glow spread over the ground like flame and a voice came in an ancient language, known to Rik'Zal, "What is it you seek of me?"

Rik'Zal had performed this hour long ritual several times, and had been greeted the same way every time. He spoke the last words of the binding spells at once and answered, "I need you to bring death to an enemy of mine. He is a priest of Ch'Nal, your eternal adversary, and has been hounding me for some time."

The voice from the mirror hissed at the mention of Ch'Nal, the Ch'nakan that created the universe. The light turned from dark purple to blood red for a moment then reverted back to its previous hue as the spirit overcame its fury, "What you ask of me is impossible, I cannot interfere directly with your kind, as I am bound by k'chals to my prison. Yet, I have hope for you. There is an artifact in one of the caves on Ka'Taasa that holds tremendous power."

The glow in the mirror faded as the binding spells faded and the spirit retreated back to its existence. Rik'Zal was fatigued, as he always was after spending his several hours in the swamps of his homeworld, summoning the spirit of his particular Ch'nakan. He has his mission, the planet of Ka'Taasa.

Not all the T'sa are generous. Inside some lurks a hunger for power and the desire to corrupt others to their ways. Many of these groups are small, and short lived, but one group has survived since the beginning of the Growth Age. They are the Order of the Many Horned Viper, the Order of Vipers for short. The Vipers are more direct action than behind the scenes, a style that most dark groups fall into.

Thousands of Ch'Nakan, T'sa for 'guiding spirits', exist. Many of them are seen as truly guiding spirits, while a few of them had been swayed by the desire for power and had fallen many ages ago.

As bold as they are, the Vipers have managed to hide their numbers safely in the darkness of space. Apt to space stations, trader ships, Concordian survey teams, and pirate outposts, the Order is scattered through the galaxy, but is in touch with each other in a unique way. As part of the initiation rite into the order, an acolyte is instructed to create a simple item, known as the "Seeing Skull". This allows each member to communicate with and track other members of the order. This is attributed as the key to the Vipers' success, as they are able to call help from others quickly and easily, and the others can find them with only a little time.

The Order is steeped in Psionics and FX and uses a wide variety of them to achieve their dark goals. Typical Psionics include ESP – *clairaudience, clairvoyance*; Telepathy –*drain, mindblast, mind wipe,* and *tire*. Most notable FX are Diabolism, Necromancy and Shamanism.

The agenda of the Order is to remove the current belief structure of the T'sa nation, bringing them away from the distasteful Ch'Nal the Creator and bring the dark 'god' Ch'Sheen'Esh, literally translated the [guiding] spirit of ice, into power. While summoning dark Ch'nakan the Order had learned of a spiritual war long ago, a war that sundered the Fraal nation, destroyed several sentient species, and brought down several strong and influential guiding spirits of the T'sa.

A powerful species, yet unnamed, had offered these fallen spirits power over their races if they aided in their victory. Unfortunately, the powerful species was defeated, and they dragged the fallen Ch'nakan into their astral prison. It took centuries before a few budding arcanists had summoned Ch'Nab, the fallen spirit of fury, and learned of this. Ch'Nab's hatred boiled over and the power of his essence captivated the young T'sa sorcerers, soon corrupting them to the core.

The adepts, through Ch'Nab, had found ways to summon other of these fell Ch'nakans, and learned much in history and the arcane. It was Ch'Kril, fallen spirit of knowledge, that taught them how to harness power into the skull, so that the young T'sa were able to keep tabs on one another, and converse over distances. It was soon after this lesson that they formed the Order of the Many Horned Viper, as was the representation of Ch'Sheen'Esh in many of the holy books of the time.

It was after this the revelation given to them about the "Unnamed Ones", as spoken by Ch'Nab, came to light, and their mission was set in motion. Over the next several thousand years, the T'sa history books are lined with skirmishes with these dark servants. Each time the victor had always been the followers of Ch'Nal, though dark times were always afoot. The most notable battle took place during the Science Age, when the Order took a major city by force, and held it.

For the next hundred and fifty years the T'sa fought against the Order and their dark servants, before finally defeating them by sending in several Ch'Nal adepts falsely seeking to join the Order. Once they gained access, these priests of Ch'Nal gained the trust of the city officials and joined the ranks of the arcanist soldiers. Once they had attained the permission to patrol the city, they simply opened the gates and let the others in. These T'sa slaughtered many of the Order, captured a few, and was dismayed to find that several of them had escaped.

Over the years, they have waxed and waned in followers; many do

not make it past the initiation rite before either being driven mad or becoming fearful for their lives and family. Initiation requires one to sever his connection with his egg-clutch brethren, a prospect that chills all T'sa.

With victory and defeat, the Order has maintained its core belief and mission, while adapting to other creeds as well. They are particularly fond of ancient earth religions such as the Egyptian necromancy and the various cults of black magic.

It is feared by the T'sa that the Order will join, or has already joined, the ever growing threat of the Externals, and bring the fight deep into the T'sa Cluster, where they may have to relinquish their desire for individualism and join with the Concord directly. Thus, a new wave of Viper hunting has begun.

Seeing Skull

This Psi/FX artifact allows the holder to communicate through the skull (through several means, such as Telepathy – *contact*) to others within the Order. It also provides a link with the others in order to find them (such as ESP – *navcognition*) in case of danger, or summons for a council meeting. Each Skull holds a different source of power, some Psionic, some FX, but all of them provide the same effects.

Typical T'sa FX Adept
Achievement Level 5

STR	8 +0	INT	12 +1
DEX	9 +0	WIL	12 +1
CON	8	PER	12

Durability: 8/8/4/4   Action Check: 12+/11/5/2 (-1d4)
Move: sprint 16, run 10 walk 4   #Actions: 2
FX Energy Points: 7-12   Last Resorts: 2

Defense
T'sa Natural Armor d4+1 (LI) / d4 (HI) / d4-1 (En)
+1 INT resistance modifier vs. encounter skills
+1 WIL resistance modifier vs. encounter skills

Perks: *Heightened Ability (INT)*
Flaws: *Obsessed (their mission) 6, Powerful Enemy (T'sa opposed) 6, Infamy (for being a member of the Order) 4*

Skills
Athletics [8]; Manipulation [9]; Vehicle Operation [9] –*land vehicle [10], space vehicle [10]*; Stamina [8] –*endurance [9], resist pain [9]*; Knowledge [12] –*the Order of the Many Horned Viper [13]*; Awareness [12] –*intuition [13], perception [13]*; Resolve [12] –*mental resolve [13], physical resolve[13]*; Deception [12] –*bluff [13], bribe [13]*; Interaction [12] –*charm [13]*

FX skills
Diabolism
-*binding [14], command [14], spirit wrack [13], summoning [14], tongue of the damned [14]*

Typical Possessions
Seeing Skull, a few arcane tomes (perhaps on a dataslate), ceremonial dagger, a mirror or some other device used for seeing into another dimension

(Note: While they are capable of summoning Ch'nakan, the Order also has access to any of the demons described in Beyond Science.)

BIOWARRIOR

Written by Matthew R. Esch

The Biowarrior's primary Mindwalking focus is the Biokinesis skill. He starts with the *–bioweapon* specialty, thereafter quickly adding *–heal, -control metabolism, -morph,* and *–rejuvenate* to his psionic repertoire.

As a psionic soldier, the biowarrior seeks combat-oriented mundane skills at first opportunity. Since he prides himself on never being without a weapon (he can always create one from his own psionic energy), he often learns Melee Weapons and Unarmed Attack. The *–bludgeon* specialty skill is virtually essential for using *–bioweapon.*

When the biowarrior decides to expand his psionic base of skills, he often adds ESP so that he can take advantage of *–battlemind, -empathy,* and *–mind reading.*

Biowarrior SCM Template (Human)

	Marginal	Ordinary	Good	Amazing
STR	7	8	9	10
DEX	7	8	9	10
CON	9	10	11	12
INT	9	10	11	12
WIL	11	12	13	14
PER	11	12	13	14
Action Check	9+/8/4/2	10+/9/4/2	11+/10/5/2	12+/11/5/2
# of Actions	2	2	3	3
Psionic Energy Points	11	12	13	14

Skills:

Marginal: Athletics; Vehicle Operation, Melee Weapons; Stamina, Biokinesis *-bioweapon*; Knowledge; Awareness; Interaction.

Ordinary: Athletics; Vehicle Operation, Melee Weapons *-bludgeon*; Stamina, Biokinesis *–bioweapon 2, -rejuvenate*; Knowledge; Awareness; Interaction.

Good: Athletics; Vehicle Operation, Melee Weapons *–bludgeon 3*; Stamina *–endurance*; Acrobatics *–defensive martial arts*, Biokinesis *–heal, –bioweapon 2, -rejuvenate, -morph*; Knowledge, ESP- *battlemind, -empathy*; Awareness; Interaction.

Amazing: Athletics; Vehicle Operation, Melee Weapons *–bludgeon 6*; Stamina *–endurance 3*; Acrobatics *–defensive martial arts 3*, Biokinesis *–heal 3, –bioweapon 5, -rejuvenate 2, -morph 3*; Knowledge, ESP- *battlemind 2, -empathy 3, -mind reading 4*; Awareness; Interaction.

Equipment:

None specific. Generally Biowarriors don't carry equipment, since they pride themselves on never being without a weapon.

Biowarrior SCM Template (Fraal)

	Marginal	Ordinary	Good	Amazing
STR	6	7	8	9
DEX	8	9	10	11
CON	10	10	10	10
INT	10	11	12	13
WIL	12	13	14	15
PER	8	10	12	13
Action Check	10+/9/4/2	11+/10/5/2	12+/11/5/2	13+/12/6/3
# of Actions	2	2	3	3
Psionic Energy Points	18	19	21	22

Skills:

Marginal: Vehicle Operation; Biokinesis *-bioweapon*, Melee Weapons; Knowledge; Awareness; Resolve; Interaction; Telepathy.

Ordinary: Vehicle Operation; Biokinesis *–bioweapon 2, -control metabolism, -rejuvenate*; Melee Weapons *-bludgeon*; Knowledge; Awareness; Resolve; Interaction; Telepathy.

Good: Vehicle Operation; Biokinesis *–heal, -morph, –bioweapon 2, -control metabolism 2, -rejuvenate*; Melee Weapons *–bludgeon 6*; Stamina; Knowledge; Awareness; Resolve *–mental 2, -physical 2*; Interaction; Telepathy.

Amazing: Vehicle Operation; Biokinesis *–heal 3, -morph 2, –bioweapon 6, -control metabolism 2, -rejuvenate 3*; Melee Weapons *–bludgeon 12*; Stamina *–endurance 2*; Knowledge; ESP *–battlemind, -mind reading, -empathy*; Awareness; Resolve *–mental 4, -physical 4*; Interaction; Telepathy.

Equipment:

None specific. Generally Biowarriors don't carry equipment, since they pride themselves on never being without a weapon.

CAPRISAURIAN

Written by DJ Brown

Ecological Data:

Biochemistry:	Series Ia
Environment:	Class I
GRAPH:	G=2 R=2 A=2 P=3 H=2
Biome:	Grasslands/Savannah
Encounter Chance:	Probable
Group Size:	Potentially thousands
Organization:	Herd
Niche:	Large Herbivore
Intelligence:	Low Order Animal

Ability Scores:

STR=15 (1d8+10)	INT=2 (Animal 4 or d4+2)
DEX=9 (d6+6)	WIL=6 (d4+4)
CON=18 (2d6+11)	PER=4 (Animal 9 or d6+6)
Durability: 27/27/13/13	Action Check: 9+/8/4/2
Move: Sprint 44, Run 30, Walk 8	# Actions: 2
Reaction Score: Marginal/1	Last Resorts: 1
Psionic Energy: N/A	F/X Energy: N/A

Attacks:

Type	Scores	Damage	Damage type
Trample	12/6/3	d6s/d4w/d6w	LI / O

Defenses:

+1 res mod vs melee attacks
+0 res mod vs ranged attacks
Armour (scales): d6+1 (LI), d6-1 (HI), d4+1 (EN)

Skills: Movement [18]-race [20]; Stamina [18]-endurance [19]; Awareness [6]; Resolve [6]

Caprisaurians are a large, reptilian herbivore, usually with bluish green scales. Native to a dry world originally, they have been spread to countless other worlds by settlers looking for readily available, rapidly reproducing livestock. The caprisaurians are still acclimated to an arid, warm environment; they cannot thrive in any environment damper or colder than Temperate.

Description: Their appearance is as a large scaly animal with a short tail and three vestigial horns on their heads, giving them a certain resemblance to Terran goats. They stand about a meter tall at the shoulder, are about two and a half meters long and can mass up to 300 kilograms. They have four toed feet on their six legs, with soft pads well adapted to sand traction or scrub grasses. The dental ridges in their mouths are well suited for grinding up plant matter, but are incapable of inflicting any real damage. The sight of a herd of caprisaurians grazing is noted to have a soothing effect on humans, fraal and sesheyans. Mechalus seem unaffected by the scene, while weren are apparently given to planning an event similar to an Earth barbeque. T'sa are evidently driven to distraction by the placidity of the panorama; more than one stampede has been caused by a t'sa's attempt to ride, drive or otherwise 'perk up' a caprisaurian.

Encounter: Caprisaurians live in herds that can reach vast sizes. Anecdotal evidence from Sauroterra indicates that some of the wild herds can have tens of thousands of members. Transplanted herds rarely reach that size; they are constantly fragmenting and merging, drifting along in search of new forage. As long as the heroes are careful, they can easily approach a herd; indeed, predators have killed one member of the herd while others grazed contentedly 20 meters away. On the other hand, a herd can be incited into a stampede seemingly at whim, trampling anything in their path. More than one victim of such an event has had to be identified by a genetic scan of his remains.

Habitat/Society: Caprisaurians are hermaphroditic reproducers, capable of both siring and laying eggs in the same season. After mating in early summer, a clutch of eggs (1d12+4) is laid in a shallow pit and covered over with a thin layer of dirt. The incubation period lasts six weeks; the hatchlings will crawl out of the sun warmed earth and start grazing within the hour. Members of the clutch will eventually attach themselves to a passing herd. They are capable of reproducing at 8 months. One difficulty with Capri-ranching is their tendency to breed constantly in an environment without well-defined seasons, resulting in up to 6 clutches per year.

Their diet is almost any plant in their vicinity, although they seem to prefer flowering plants. This is a legacy from their original home world, where they helped to disperse seedpods by eating them and later depositing them in their droppings. While any individual caprisaurian does not eat a large amount per day, their rapid rate of reproduction generally results in the near destruction of any environment they are entered into as the herds gradually overgraze the pasturage. Their meat, after one gets used to a certain sappy tinge, is quite tasty and is easily handled for a variety of recipes. Their hides can also be processed into a rough leather, durable but not overly attractive.

CEPHALOZOID

Written by Jim Clunie

Planetary data:

Thoraxis 9

Parent:	Thoraxis (Super-Terran Planet), Cephais (F2 Main Sequence Star)
Orbital Radius:	520,000km (Thoraxis) 6.2AU (Cephais)
Orbital Period:	157 hours (Thoraxis) 5460 days (Cephais)
Rotation Period:	21 hours
Axial Tilt:	Severe (26°)
Diameter:	14,255km
Density:	0.95
Surface Gravity:	1.08G
Atmospheric Gases:	N_2, O_2, H_2O, CH_4, H_2S
Atmospheric Pressure:	1.3 standard atmospheres
Median Temperature:	18°C
Satellites:	0 (Thoraxis 9) 13 (Thoraxis)
GRAPH:	G=2 R=1 A=2 P=3 H=2 Class 1a

Ecological Data:

Biochemistry:	Series I
Environment:	Class I
GRAPH:	G=2 R=1 A=2 P=3 H=2
Biome:	Coastal
Encounter Chance:	Probable
Group Size:	1-8
Organization:	Philosophical pseudo-monarchy
Niche:	Grazer / Advanced technological civilization
Intelligence:	Sentient

When the Rigunmor Star Consortium encountered the shore-dwelling cephalozoids, their civilization had evolved, through countless ages of collapse and rebuilding based on the records and survivors of past cycles, to the equivalent of the High Middle Ages in Earth's history.

Under the Rigunmors' guidance, cephalozoids left their homeworld and entered galactic society, where they now provide many skilled services and own small businesses, protected by the continuity of galactic civilization against the tyranny of their spawning cycle.

Description:

A cephalozoid's body comprises a partial exoskeleton with sections of flexible muscle-wall and hide on the underside of her limbs and torso, divided into a thick disc-shaped body and a projecting head with a squat, muscular neck.

The species has four major limbs of equal size ending in crustacean-like nippers. The forward claws (hands) have an array of smaller gripping spikes in a fringe inside the great claws while the hind claws (feet) are adapted to clamp together into a flat oblong for support. The majority of the time, when on land, a cephalozoid stands semi-upright in a bipedal stance with knees bent and feet splayed to either side. Her ancestral tail curls between her legs in a rounded shield. Four to six vestigial limbs project as swimming flippers that are generally held flat against the body around waist level.

The head has two large eyes with a complex dual lens arrangement and a mouth surrounded by food-gathering projections. A thick band of pores along each flank contains the important taste/scent sensor complex (normally covered by clothing in galactic society).

Cephalozoids have had no evolutionary need to preserve their bodies beyond the breeding season. They age quickly through multiple ailments from the age of 17 to 20 onwards. Records place the limit of natural survival of a cephalozoid at about 40 years, though galactic medical science can extend this span to nearly 100 years.

Encounter:

Most cephalozoids are strongly conformist in their views, supporting regulation and government and seeking a stable existence with the opportunity to excel through hard work. They become irritable and aggressive in their 14th year of life as the breeding season approaches.

A cephalozoid's gripping spikes can manipulate small tools and input devices such as keyboards with great skill. However, her nippers are not well suited to agile use of large objects. A cephalozoid suffers a +2 penalty on skills that require the use of force to operate large tools, such as Heavy Weapons, Melee Weapons, Acrobatics-*daredevil,* Modern and Primitive Ranged Weapons and Vehicle Operation (reduced to +1 for specially adapted vehicles). Cephalozoids tend to avoid careers that require such tools and defend themselves with their own claws when needed.

A cephalozoid's seemingly clumsy stance and hip arrangement allow her to move sideways or backwards with an ease that often surprises her opponents. Whenever a cephalozoid is attacked before she has acted in a round, she may elect to make an immediate walk move in any direction before the attack is resolved, potentially placing her beyond the reach of the attack or reducing the severity of area-based damage. This uses up one of the cephalozoid's actions for the round.

Cephalozoids are amphibious creatures who can breathe water almost as easily as air (though they tire more quickly if forced to perform long stretches of physical work underwater) and swim at least twice as fast as a human.

Scent Communication: Their names for themselves bear little resemblance to human language, composed, as they are, of vastly complex scent-structures released into the waters of their homeworld.

Scent communications can also pass through the air with considerable loss of meaning.

Hearing serves this species only as a warning of environmental conditions and possible danger, similarly to the skin-based heat sense of humans. The occasional belches and groans that cephalozoids make under the influence of strong emotions are no more meaningful or voluntary than a human's blush.

Cephalozoids translate their scent-utterances to surface-dwellers and comprehend human language through a Taste-o-Phonic (also known as a Smellulator – two long-established trade names of competing Rigunmor enterprises). This girdle-like polymer harness extends a number of thin pipes into the scent pores along a cephalozoid's body, collates their chemical stimuli through electroresponsive fibres and expresses sounds through a speech synthesizer at collar level. At home on Thoraxis 9, cephalozoids have no need of such expedients and instead require visitors to wear translator devices in headband form or as components of their encounter suits.

These technical means have developed a high level of function in translating the literal meaning of each species' language, but still struggle with the nuances of expression of two fundamentally different forms of communication. Professional translators consider that spoken artistic works will remain mostly inaccessible.

Cephalozoids have no need of learned skills to communicate between themselves using scent, as this is an instinctive ability, allowing a cephalozoid to use encounter skills towards any other cephalozoid without penalty. The standard sound-based languages that they speak and understand depend on what language 3Ds are currently loaded into the Smellulator. Reading and writing require skill ranks.

Habitat/Society:
In some ways the cephalozoids' homeworld, Thoraxis 9, is a sister planet to Alaundril in the Verge. The planet, itself slightly larger than Earth, orbits close within the complex satellite system of a 6.5-Earth-mass world that circles the blue-white star Cephais at a distance further than Jupiter orbits from Sol. The massive presence of the parent, Thoraxis, has not yet bound the rotation of Thoraxis 9 which spins about 7 ½ times for each orbit around its primary.

More than half the land surface of Thoraxis 9 is inundated weekly (or, rather, monthly) by the tide. Thus, country-sized mud flats form the homes of the native sentients. In the distant past, they were farmed for seaweed and shellfish, but the population has expanded massively and most land that is livable for cephalozoids is now urbanized.

Tidal forces also stimulate constant volcanic activity that has prevented the coalescence of large stable continental masses. Instead, the landmasses of Thoraxis 9 are fragmented into mini-continents, large volcanic shields and archipelagoes.

Cephais gives off more ionizing radiation than a G-class star like Sol (though not enough to present a hazard to off-worlders in the short term), causing across-the-board increased mutation rates, but even so the 600-million-year-old biosphere of Thoraxis 9 has not developed to the degree found on Earth. Lifeforms and their ways of life are simpler and by the same token less able to defend themselves from the advanced invasive techniques of lifeforms from older biospheres. By the Charter, animals and plants from Earth may not be imported to Thoraxis 9 and humans may not take up permanent residence there. Visitors are required either to undergo purging treatment to destroy their commensal microbes for the duration of the trip, or to wear sealed encounter suits. Cephalozoids away from their homeworld are careful to wear protective clothing and take regular medical checkups and immune boosters.

The cephalozoids themselves have known amazing luck by xenoevolutionary standards, achieving sentience at a level of development barely beyond the first amphibian colonization of the land in Earth's history. However, they have been held back for millennia by the society-wide disruption of their spawning cycle, which caused near-complete collapse at the breeding season with every 15-year cycle of the planet around Cephais.

Their success hinged on evolving complex genetically encoded race-memories for communication, supplemented from Progress Level 1 onwards by the heroic efforts of thousands of generations to carve the necessary information for their children's development on stone steles. Their advance to Progress Level 2 was made possible by the development of celibate orders, small groups who pledged to refrain from the spawning frenzy in order to preserve culture and knowledge for the coming generations. Cephalozoids have an almost desperate ingrained need to find a social niche and to form traditions, precedents and groups, however artificial.

Rigunmor surveys in the early 23rd century noted the presence of a sub-sentient species on Thoraxis 9 but judged them to be of little economic value. Researchers of the Borealis Republic's Institute for Comparative Ethics obtained permission to make a private planetary survey in 2258. The Borealin team leader, Rapha Iphigenia, was dismayed by what she saw as a dead-end culture in danger of being engulfed by galactic contact. Iphigenia drafted the planet's Charter of Moral Principle, blending her understanding of the celibate orders' doctrine with a large infusion of Plato, George Washington and numerous Utopian writers of other cultures. The Charter created a republican government under the leadership of a celibate Philosopher King chosen by examination, all within an early forerunner of the Concord's reservation policy.

Though the Rigunmors quickly elbowed aside Borealin influence during the First Galactic War, they have seen no reason to scrap the Charter, merely adding to it trade protocols and a planetary enterprise corporate structure. The Philosopher King now carries out many duties as a commercial mascot and planetary entertainment host as well, not unlike the Solar tradition of Kris Kringle, presiding over massive complexes of tourist businesses such as Poseidon's Casinos and Atlantis Beach Resorts (though, for pressing safety reasons, the only offworlders allowed to land during the breeding season are those on government business). The cephalozoids themselves serve the King and the Republic with zeal, not through personal devotion to a figurehead no more than a cycle older than themselves, but through reverence for the stable society that he represents.

These Rigunmor policies are an ongoing source of contention in the Galactic Consulate with the Borealins, who decry the lip service paid to the Principle of Preservation and the degrading and exploitive employment of cephalozoids in Rigunmor sub-companies. Rigunmor representatives, in turn, dismiss these complaints as incomprehensible ivory-tower Senderistism. They point out that the Thoraxis 9 planetary enterprise has made use of the same rights of investment as other segments of Rigunmor society to acquire major interests in several Consortium-wide divisions.

Cephalozoid Game Data

This cephalozoid is a typical non-professional food service employee.

Ability Scores

STR=10	**INT=11**
DEX=7	**WIL=9**
CON=9	**PER=8**
Durability: 9s/9w/4f/4m	Action Check: 11+/10/5/2
Move: Sprint 16, Run 10, Walk 4, Easy Swim 4, Swim 8	# Actions: 2
Reaction Score: Marginal / 2	Last Resorts: 1

Attacks

Type	Scores	Damage	Damage type
Nipper	11/5/2	D4+2s/d4+1w/d4+2w	LI/O

Defenses
Partial exoskeleton: d6-1 (LI), d6-4 (HI), d6-3 (En)

Skills
Athletics (10), Unarmed Attack (10)-*brawl 1* (11), Movement (9)-*swim 2* (11), Knowledge (11)-*restaurant procedures 3* (14), *read/write language (Cephalozoid) 3* (14), *read/write language (Galactic Standard) 3* (14), *stellar nation (Rigunmor) 3* (14), Administration (9), Awareness (9), Interaction (8)

Equipment: Protective coat, Taste-O-Phonic, language 3Ds (Galactic Standard, Rigunmor), spatula

Cephalozoids as Heroes

The GM may allow Cephalozoids as a hero species. Heroes are members of the Rigunmor Star Consortium or emigrants to neighbouring stellar nations. They generally favour the Tech Op profession. A cephalozoid hero gains the free broad skills Athletics, Unarmed Attack, Movement, Knowledge, Awareness and Interaction and must spend attribute points within these limits:

STR 6-15
DEX 4-12
CON 6-13
INT 8-15
WIL 4-13
PER 4-12

See the Encounter section above for the cephalozoid's skill penalties, sidestep ability, amphibious nature and scent communication, the Attacks section for their claw damage and Defenses section for their natural armour value. A cephalozoid hero begins play with appropriate protective clothing, translation gear and immune booster medication.

(This species is loosely based on the character of Dr. Zoidberg in *Futurama*.)

TANGENTSCAPE

Written by Dragan Ciric

Foreword

This article is based on the Tangentscape forum game which sadly ended due to the low response of players. However, I did spend a lot of time devising plots and creating character relations and up to today it remains one of my favorite campaigns so I decided to share parts of it with the audience.

The game was meant to be conspiracy/tangents game with an abundance of fantastic technology going as far as PL9. You can also think of it as Planescape with high tech. The idea was to create a setting in which anything was possible and which could encompass all kinds of genres.

While I run it as a game where different powergroups play games within games to gain control of the city and uncover the secrets that ruling forces hide, there is no reason why this can not be turned into an epic battle game where brave defenders of Metropola clash against Temporal Raiders and other dangers of superspace, or a horror game where gatherer teams must brave terrors from the most dangerous and mind-twisting tangents.

This article provides basic guidelines to anyone interested in running it while at same time leaving enough freedom to GMs to add their own ideas and flavour to the endless alternativities of tangents.

Ruled by a mysterious Council, Metropola has floated across the superspace wavelanes for centuries. Moving from one alternate Earth to another it has scavenged technology and knowledge from dying tangents, and brought forth to the city's fold those who could aid its prosperity and survival, for Metropola is not without its enemies. Temporal Raiders, a race of mysterious cybernetic time and tangent hoppers, have stalked the city from its foundation and are bent on its destruction. They have often caused havoc on various tangents to stop the city's progress. But there are also those forces who dwell within the city itself and who work behind the veil of secrecy. Over time various power groups have formed in the city and are seeking ways to overthrow the ruling Council. And of course there is always the often thought about, but never spoken aloud question about the motives of the Council itself – what are they planning to do with all that harvested technology?

Living in Metropola - Layout of the City

The city floats among the evershifting purple-black-green "skies" of superspace, surrounded by a force bubble that makes living in superspace possible. Sixteen force generators, located at the city's edges, generate the field. Enforcers, the Council's elite guards, protect the generators from attacks and possible sabotage, for should the generators be destroyed the city would also fall.

The city is divided into five rings.

Fifth ring (a.k.a Edge of Nothingness) is a protective perimeter around the city, that houses force generators, Enforcer garrisons, and Protectors compounds, salvage bases, decontamination and pod launch facilities.

Fourth ring is residential area, with living quarters, hospitals, and biodomes (where food is grown)

Third ring consists of training facilities, city management buildings, utility compounds and facilities, Protectors and Gatherers HQ.

Second ring (a.k.a Outer Ring) houses the buildings of science clans, storage areas, factories and research labs.

Steel walls and Protectors bases divide each of these rings. While the movement from ring to ring is free, the walls are there to ensure that should one ring fail to some threat, the others could be protected.

First ring (a.k.a. Inner or Prime ring) is a giant, dark, metallic tower in which the Council dwells. The tower's top is known as the Jewel for it shines with bright light and illuminates the city. It is believed that the Jewel allows the city to travel to different tangents.

Enforcers protect the prime ring and permission is needed to enter it.

Metropolans - Living in the City

All citizens live in the fourth ring with the exception of Enforcers, who live in their own special garrisons. The living facilities include all things necessary for normal living. All flats are more or less the same. Since the city cannot house an indefinite number of people, birth control is administered. Couples wanting to have children need to file a request, which is then considered at the Assembly. The more the citizen helped the city (by being Protector, Gatherer or helping science clans) the more chances are that their request will be approved.

The majority of citizens have been born in Metropola. They believe that they need to help the city, but of course, everyone has a different opinion of how the city should be handled and what is best for it. A majority of citizens join the Protectors or Gatherers at some point of their lives and stay in their ranks for at least a year.

Even though not everyone gets along, when Metropola is threatened all rivalries are forgotten and everyone works to secure the city's survival.

Transport in the City

A small number of people possess personal vehicles. These would be either air-razors (vehicles similar to skybikes) or skypods (four man flying vehicles). The rest of the population uses railwagon transports- a sort of train that is connected to different parts of the city by rails that are suspended in the air between different buildings.

And finally there are gravboards. These futuristic skateboards have appeared recently among the city's youth, distributed by unknown source, and are forbidden to use. Anyone caught using it may be subjected to the Trial.

Protectors and Gatherers

Protectors are composed of civilians who work alongside enforcers to protect the city against invasion from Temporal Raiders. Gatherers are citizens that have undergone special training and are sent on different tangents to recover technology or people. Some Gatherers also align themselves with science clans, which can provide them with additional knowledge or equipment (in exchange for some favors while on a visit to tangent).

Science Clans

Science clan is popular name for those working in facilities that research different branches of tech and work on reverse engineering in order to reproduce it. Due to their importance, clans have managed to acquire a form of independence within the city. And within the clans themselves small, but powerful groups have formed who try to influence the Council or vie to replace it. There are seven science clans, five of them are considered major and two are minor clans.

Xenos

Xenos is a nickname for Xenotech researchers. Whenever gatherer teams bring back from tangents unortodox technologies, Xenos are assigned to uncover how they function. These technologies include various fringe science devices, strange combinations of bio and cyber tech and alien power sources.

Powergroups: None

Heroes aligned with Xenos gain a -1 step bonus to fringe science and xenology skill checks.

Frostburners

Frostburners research weapons, armors and forcefield tech recovered from tangents. In addition to this they are in charge of supplying Protectors with weapons and equipment and the strategic deployment of defense points in the city.

Power groups:

The Covenant – one of the oldest power groups, Covenant members are aggressive and ambitious, constantly recruiting members for their ever-growing secret army. They also have hidden weapon crèches all over Metropola. Covenants know that their army will never be able to stand against the Enforcer's skills and equipment, unless something weakens them. Like a Temporal Raiders all-out assault. And so they bide their time, train and wait.

Heroes aligned with Frostburners have excellent combat training facilities. They get either a -1 step bonus to weapon speciality skill of their choice or a 2 step reduction to called and style shots.

Councillors

While not exactly science branch, Councillors play important part in city's prosperity. Councillors are tangential observers who are in charge of choosing individuals from tangents and recruiting them for city's causes. This recruitment can be either voluntarily or by peruasion and psychological manipulation. They also study psychological and sociological profiles and are assigned whenever contact with different cultures needs to be made.
Another duty of Councillors are tasks related to city management and morale in the city.

Power groups:

Conclave of Silence - members of the Conclave do not aspire to take direct control of the city. Relying on stealth and cunning Council members either spy other power groups or try to discover the Council's true motives. They believe that by uncovering Council secrets they will put themselves into position to manipulate the Council.

Heroes aligned with Councillors gain -2 step bonus to speciality skill of their choice from Diplomacy, Deception or Interaction category.

Lifespinners

Lifespinners dwell in genetics, biotech and nature sciences. They also work on the development of decontamination and utility equipment for hazardous tangents.
Within the city, they take care of the city's food supplies and the health of its citizens.

Power groups:

Splicers - not really a power group with hidden agendas but instead a special branch of trustee Lifespinners. Splicers are in charge of the Tangentborn project, growing Enforcers in their special laboratories and selecting genetic material to be included in the Enforcer's genepool. There are rumors that vast amounts of genetic material has recently disappeared from Splicer's labs.

Heroes aligned with Lifespinners gain one ordinary mutation of their choice from this list:
 adaptation:enviroment
 biorhytm control
 improved immunity
Or they can opt for a -2 step bonus speciality skill from Life Science group.

Monks

Monks are a minor science clan since Metropolans are unable to manifest psychic powers. However, during their visits to different tangents Metropolans have encountered realities where people have been gifted with powers of the mind.
And so, several small labs were set up where these powers were studied. So far, Monks have been able to create crystals with which psionics could be manifested. The drawback is that material for crystal creation can be found only on several tangents and the crystal creation process takes a lot of time.

Heroes aligned with Monks gain number of crystals based on their personality score:

PER	Crystals
4-6	1
7-9	2
10-11	3
12-13	4
14-15	5

Each crystal can hold one psionic power of players choice.
Psi crystal broad skill (WIL) cost: 5
Psi crystal speciality skill cost: 4

Puppeteers

Puppeteers are another minor clan since robots proved to be rather useless in Metropola. Even armored in advanced alloys and equipped with high tech weaponry they proved to be no match for Temporal Raiders and their time-bending technology. The City also only had minor uses for them and the only use for them on tangents was as probes, monitors and occasional sample gatherers.

Power groups:

Metallic Council - another militant group, the Metallic Council has formed recently and has built robots with secret orders and hidden weaponry and then placed them all over the city. For now these robots are no match for Enforcers or Temporal Raiders, but Council has somehow managed to get his hands on one of Raiders time-bending devices. They secretly work on reverse engineering it and once they figure out how to use it in conjunction with their robotic army they will wrest control of the city from the Council.

Heroes aligned with Puppeteers gain either -2 step bonus to robotics speciality skill or observer probe.

Kogheads

VR, cybernetics, holotechnology, nanotech, communications and sensory devices. Kogheads deal with most of these standard technologies. They are also in charge of the Metropolas grid and information flow.

Power groups:

GridSliders - The original GridSliders created the Metropolas grid at the request of the Council. They were disbanded afterwards and left on one of the tangents and the control of the grid was given to the Council. GridSliders seek to uncover the Council's secrets since they believe they have been hidden somewhere on the grid. This will put them in the position to raise Metropolans against them and put GridSliders in a place of power.

Church of the Digital Divine - church members believe that the Grid is the ultimate tangent and they work on overthrowing the Council so they can use the technology they hide from Metropolans to create a device that can shift Metropola to the grid where they could be Gods

Heroes aligned with Kogheads gain a -2 step bonus to a technology oriented speciality skill of their choice or they can have 3 cybernetic implants of ordinary quality for free.

While science clans don't think much about each other, they usually have to work together when dealing with technology brought from tangents. For example, frostburners would cooperate with xenos and lifespinners when dealing with organic weapons.

Every month, clan representatives go to the Inner ring to meet with the Council. This is called the Assembly. During the Assembly, they present reports, make plans, consider various requests, observe tangents...

All power groups keep their existence a secret except for the Church, which has propagated itself across the grid. Whether the Council knows about power groups or not, nobody knows..

The Enforcers

The Enforcers are the ultimate warriors, created in the labs of Lifespinners who have improved their genepool for centuries. They serve the Council with blind obedience and act as their iron fist when the need arises. Armored in high tech power armors and equipped with cutting edge weaponry, Enforcers stand guard at the Edge of Nothingness fighting Temporal Raiders or patroling the streets serving the will of the Council. The Enforcer will only obey the Enforcer with the rank above himself or a Council member.

The Council

The Council is composed of ten members, each one hidden behind the faceless iron mask, each one known only by a pseudonym. They are the ruling power in the city and their agendas are mysterious and incomprehensible to the people of Metropola. However, people live nicely under their rule and do what they say, for they believe that it is for the good of the city.

Tangent hopping

There are two ways to hop to other dimension. The first is when the entire city shifts to a tangent. It usually cloaks itself and lands in a desolate area. However, should the environment prove to be hazardous (the city's tech is advanced enough to deal with most of threats but the Council wants to avoid any risks) or if there is a risk of the city being detected, then tangent pods are used. Tangent pods are four man vehicles with dimension shifting generators. They are equipped with small storage, computer and sensory equipment and a small med bay. They can have additional modules attached to them like a science module or weapon module.

Temporal Raiders

Little is know about Temporal Raiders. Armored in golden-black power armors and cybered up, they have been the enemy of the city from the beginning and have also caused havoc on various tangents. They have mastered temporal technology and have devices that can shift them several seconds forward and back in time. None of the devices has ever been retrieved for they are set to self destruct when the Temporal Raider dies. Obduction showed that Raiders are of human origin, but they have "merged" themselves with cybernetic implants. Black oily liquid runs through their veins, some of their organs have been replaced with wires and mechanical parts and their skin is dead pale. All attempts to communicate with Raiders have failed for they just come and attack without a word or emotion shown.

So far, their attempt to destroy the city have failed, but then again, they have been attacking in small forces. No one knows how many Raiders ride the waves of superspace or from where they come.

In game terms, temporal mastery means that each Raider has two last resorts available and that he can use them in same manner as Free Agent.

Those who have made themselves known..

Councillor Prime

Spokesman for the Council, Councillor Prime is the only one that communicates with clans, Protectors, Gatherers and citizens. Like all other councillors he is distant and mysterious, hiding behind a mask and saying only those things that need to be said-no more and no less.

A "Friend"

There are Gatherers that have encountered life threatening situations on tangents and would have ended up dead were it not for a Friend. No one knows who or what he is but he has often communicated via comm devices or teleported needed accessories to Metropolan salvagers.

Enforcer 23

No other Enforcer has been feared or respected more than 23. Ultimate killing machine, he has fought with squads of Temporal Raiders alone and came out of the fight unscratched. Now, even emotionless Raiders tend to retreat when 23 comes to battle.

Lifespinner Alexandra Ro

Alexandra has just recently been appointed as a head of the Splicer group. At the age of 29 that is an enormous success, but she has proven herself as a brilliant scientist. Quiet and withdrawn, Alexandra is of light build, with shoulder length blonde hair, green eyes and wears glasses from the 20th century (she refuses to use the advanced occular equipment of Metropola)

Prophet

Prophet has introduced himself as the head of the Church of the Digital Divine. He appears on the grid as an angelic being with a golden halo and a flaming sword.

Protector Kyle Gray

Since he has arrived from tangent 31-9 two years ago, Kyle has stood alongside the Enforcers on the Edge of Nothingness and defended the city against the onslaught of the Temporal Raiders, together with his three man team.

Kyle has athletic build, short cropped black hair, black eyes and tribal dragon tattoo over the left side of his face. He usually wears cerametal armor and uses a maser rifle. He is also an expert with vibroswords.

Frostburner Seth Black

Seth is a head of the Frostburner clan, but nevertheless he is an active Gatherer and explorer.

Quiet and ominous, wielding T-Bar Blades and laser weapons with deadly efficiency, at the same time Seth uses his vast technical

knowledge to ensure his teams success.

Standing two meters tall, Seth is a man in his late thirties, with short black hair and piercing brown eyes. He keeps himself in top shape by working rigorously in the Frostburners training fields

Monk Jericho Cross

A talented scientist and psionic prodigy, Jericho is able to use Cryna crystals like no one in Metropola. He has manifested through them never before seen powers and has puzzled the entire Monk clan.

The only thing that keeps the Monks from "locking" him up in study rooms and examining him is that he often goes on scavenging missions.

Lifespinner Miai Swan

Miai is an expert in hazardous tangents and is often found accompanying Gatherer teams or working as an advisor during briefings. Miai is a short Asian girl, fragile looking and quiet, but this is only on the outside. She is known to be fiery dancer and martial arts expert.

Councillor Cassidy Sinner

Cold and calculating, Cassidy is expert psychologist and manipulator. He is often sent on a mission of people retrieval when simple offers won't work and persuasion and brainwashing techniques are needed.

Cassidy is way past his forties. Thin and tall with pale-blue piercing eyes, he seems to be able to analyze any man within seconds.

Why No Stats For SCMs?

Tangentscapes was meant to be a conspiracy/tangents game and in that spirit I have left GMs free reign on how powerful important SCMs should be, should they choose to run a game in the Tangentscape universe and players get a hold of this article.

Crime and Punishment

Whenever someone breaks the law in Metropola, he is tagged with the name the Accused, an Enforcer team is sent to retrieve him and he is taken to Prime Ring for a Trial. There he presents his case to a Councillor Judge who silently listens to him, then he is sent to a "waiting room". Several minutes later, Enforcers come and escort the Accused to his punishment.

There are three possible punishments:
Release - the Accused is found not guilty and is sent home
Heavy Labor - the Accused is sent to work in the city's core to maintain old machinery or when city shifts to a tangent to gather resources he is sent to do the physical work. Minor crimes, like using a gravboard, stealing and/or causing disorder warrant this punishment.
Exile - the Accused is exiled to some desolate tangent and is never to return to the city. Things like endangering the city, murder and conspiracy warrant this punishment.

Misc Info:

Names:
People aligned with a clan are addressed by the first letter of the clan's name and then by their real name. So, Xeno Ned Sharpe would be X.Ned Sharpe, and Koghead Jason Lore would be K.Jason Lore.

Dogmas and beliefs:
The sky above Metropola shifts from purple to green. On rare occasions the sky becomes white. An old story says that on several occasions when sky turned white, the city was struck by Temporal Raiders and badly damaged and ravaged by unknown disease brought accidentaly from a tangent. Thus, people started to believe that white sky is omen of hardships to come.

Sports:
Gravball is one of most popular sports today in Metropola. It is played in a giant sealed dome and one match consists of 4 rounds. Each round gravity is changed at random.

Other sports include golf, martial arts competitions, razor-race (air-razors race through a series of tunnels with obstacles) and gravboard racing (illegal).

What To Play:

A clan scientist researching xenotechnology.
Gatherer working for Frostburners clan, recovering advanced weaponry.
Protector assigned as bodyguard to Gatherers team.
Monk (science clanner) trying to unlock secrets of psychic powers.
Councilior diplomat (science clanner) versed in persuasion techniques for recruiting people from other tangents.
Gatherer expert for hazardous enviroments.
A newcomer to Metropola trying to adjust to a new life.
Agent for one of the power groups who is seeking to uncover Councils secrets and recruit people for his cause.

Plot Ideas:

Rumors about the Council's project 'Behemoth' appear on Metropola's grid. The players are working for one or more powergroups and are sent to investigate and obtain info.

During a casual supply gathering mission on a newly discovered tangent one of the team members is afflicted by a disease that begins to spread quickly through the city. The players must race with time to create the cure before the Council declares extreme measures or the disease kills off the entire population of the city.

Tangent SDF-0923 has had a technological breakthrough with nanotechnology and heroes are sent to infiltrate a highly protected military base and 'recover' science project. Things can get additionally complicated by other power groups who would like to get the chance to inspect nanotech first.

Temporal experiments have been detected on tangent KLR-1112. A team has been assembled to observe them and relay results which could yield important information about the Temporal Raiders tech. Of course, Raiders are aware of this too and have their own ideas.

A presence of Omega, the deadliest form of radiation has been uncovered on a seemingly desolate tangent. Players are part of the team assembled to devise technology to create appropriate shielding as well as explore what caused Omega effect.

The players are accused of a crime they have not committed. Surveillance tapes show them in acts of vandalism and heavy crimes and they are about to be Exiled. A Friend offers to help in exchange for future services and provides a lead to a hideout of doppleganger androids. More important than the question why is: Where do these machines come from?

ORPHAN SOLDIERS: THE AWAKENING

Written by Dragan Ciric

Acreea Novaburn brought her flitter down on the abandoned factory's landing platform. Before getting out she once again replayed the recording of a murder. The kreii ambassador entered the great hall to greet the ones that were leaving Embarkation and joining the Majority when Neneeva Moonclipse, the sole reason the ambassador has come to Ochre, pulled out the hidden needler and fired at the kreii. Her aim was perfect, as it would have been expected from the prodigy girl, and she shot him below the neck which sent needles straight through the flesh and at the back of the cranium, blowing kreiis brain. As the ambassador's heavy body slumped on the ground Neneeva quickly disappeared in the confusion and chaos that erupted.

Why would a girl with such a promising future do something like this was beyond Acreea. In the last four decades there was no child born that had shown such a potential as Neneeva. Her medical and psychological profiles never showed any kind of instabilities. The kreii ambassador itself has come to honor her and maybe even embark her in the ranks of a Trustees.

According to the information that Vigilant 92 has gathered for them, Neneeva has spent a lot of time lately with several of her younger friends in this old factory at the outskirts of Pax. Orders from the tower were simple enough. Retrieve the girl – alive, if possible.

Downloading the map via her diadem, Acreea entered the dark corridors of the factory. The air was stale and lighting was poor at best. Using the map she found the emergency power room and activated the generator, lighting parts of the complex when she caught a movement at the back of her eye. She turned around, quickly pulling her force rod out, but no one was there. She slowly stepped out of the room but the corridor was empty. On the ground there was a piece of candy bar that wasn't there when she passed the corridor.

"Neneeva, come out! I need to talk to you!" she called.

Behind her, she heard the sound of running footsteps. Acreea raced after them, covering the hallway with swift steps, rounding the corner and running into elevator doors that closed in front of her nose. Extending her battleklaw, she punched through the front door, forced them open and jumped into the shaft landing on a descending elevator's top. Using her klaw again she punched several holes trying to rip it open, when the elevator came into sudden stop. With several more punches she made a hole big enough for her to slip in. The escapee was not in the elevator and the doors were open, leading into a vast complex of underground storage rooms.

Empty crates and cargo boxes were stacked upon each other, creating a kind of maze. Why would a girl go here, when the only way out is up, through the elevator? Quickly displaying the map, she found the reason. There is an old underground service tunnel with a cargo wagon running from factory all the way to Arborea. Apparently, the chemicals needed for production were manufactured in another factory in Arborea and tunnel was built to lessen the possibilities of damage to the environment.

There was a swift movement as locks of black hair dodged behind a wall of crates.

"Stop!" Acreea shouted and went for the wall when something tripped her, causing her to fall flat on her face. Someone was behind her and she instinctively pointed her force rod and fired. There was a sound of a body slamming against the crates and then there was silence.

Acreea approached the body. A boy, not older than sixteen was lying motionless on the ground. He was breathing deeply, knocked out by the rod. One of Neneeva's friends, she thought. She quickly restrained the boy and went after Neneeva. She passed behind the crate wall and entered another storage room.

This one was unlike the previous one. The crates have been moved into shape of two half circles to form some kind of theatre. On the far end of "the theatre" there was a holoprojector placed on the pile of mechanical parts and the remains of an outdated cargo walker. Next to it there was an old model of nanny-bot. As Acreea entered the inner circle the nanny bot came to life and a 3D picture of a solar system formed from the holoprojector, zooming into the third planet from the yellow sun. The robot spoke a pre-programmed history lesson.

"There were two things that doomed Humanity from the start. The first was their own violent, clannish nature. The second was the very planet that spawned them. Unlike many worlds, Earth had a very strong and stable magnetic field. At first this may seem like a boon, but the result of this was that Earth-based life was woefully ill equipped to deal with a life in space. After a few false starts, Humanity began a major push into space, founding bases across the inner planets and amongst rich sources of asteroids.

Then the blow struck. The higher radiation environment of space wrought unseen but terrible damage on the first colonists. While the first generation of space-born children seemed healthy enough, many turned out to be sterile. Falling back to the Earth in disarray, Humanity left the harvesting of the Solar System's riches to robotic spacecraft. However, despite the resources coming from space, the people of Earth had no new lands to settle and no new fields to till. Pushing their environment to the breaking point, desperation turned nations against each other as the Earth's biosphere collapsed.

In a paroxysm of despair, Humanity's wars became deadlier and more spiteful. Terrible poisons and biological agents were unleashed, and robotic warriors crushed nations with bombardment from the heavens.

But then, the saviors came from the far reaches of space. In the irradiated smoke of the mutilated planet, kreii rescue teams searched by sensor and physical probes, seeking out any survivors. From caves, from bunkers, from isolated pockets of misery, barely two million human beings were rescued from Earth.

Then the saviors took humanity to the stars and are helping them to leave their aggression behind and become the part of galactic society."

Then, the bot's voice changed to that of a female.

"This is all a lie."

"Many man dreamed that they were not alone in the universe. Many man believed that out there, there are other sentient life forms. But no one expected them to be like this."

The holoprojector displayed hundreds of kreii battleships emerging from the dark void of space.

"They watched us all this time. They have studied our strengths, our weaknesses. A virulent infection to be studied then exterminated. And so

they carefully made their plans and then, when we least suspected, they struck."

Ships from the projected image dispatched a lethal salvo of kinetic projectiles and antimatter bombs toward the unsuspecting Earth. Earth was pounded with a hail of unstoppable missiles while at the same time gamma-pulse explosions shredded its atmosphere.

Then the scene switched from space to images of humans fighting in corridors and kreii invaders taking infants to their warships as the robot described the battles that humans fought and how many died, protecting their children or blowing themselves up in the last act of defiance.

"They stole our children.They stole you."

"Humanity has been harvested for a purpose", continued the bot as the projector shut off "but now it is time for you to awaken and resist the invaders. You must thwart whatever foul plans they have for us. The time has come..."

"You saw it. You heard it." came a voice from behind Acreea.

"They have lied us all this time. That is why he had to die."

Acreea turned around facing Neneeva while slowly switching her force rod to maximum setting.

"You are a Trustee. You have more access to the kreii than we will ever have. Help us fight them. Help us to tell other what really happened."

A wicked smile crossed Acreeas face.

"My dear child, we are the Trustees. We knew the truth all this time."

For a moment there was disbelief and shock on Neneeva face, but she quickly regained her composure.

"The kreii will overthrow Civilisation's Assembly with our help and then we will rule the galaxy at their side." she said in cold voice as she pressed the rod against Neneevas chest and fired. The impact sent the girl flying across the room and crashing into the boxes.

"A pity. You should have been smarter. You should have joined us instead of turning to this pitiful rebellion of yours."

"Now lets take care of the eviden.." Acreeas sentence was cut short by a sound of walker startup and a giant hand clasping at her ankle. There was a sound of snapping bone and Acreea found herself on the ground, dropping her rod which rolled away from her. The walker shut down, its energy depleted. A young girl was sitting at its controls. Acreea extended her battleklaw when the boy she has stunned jumped from the boxes, slamming a sonic cutter at her hand, pinning it to the ground. Acreea cried in pain and reached for the cutter to try to dislodge it but electric shock rippled through her body. Standing above her was Neneeva, holding the force rod in her hand. From the hole in her clothes where she was struck with the force rod Acreea could see gelcoat. Half conscious she saw a dozen other children gathering around her. Some were less then ten years old. Neneeva looked at the boy.

"Gather the others. We need to evacuate and find a new hiding place. It is obvious we can not trust the Trustees and they will probably swarm this place soon."

Then she lowered her gaze at Acreea while setting the rod to its highest setting.

"You will pay for betraying humanity, Trustee. You will all pay. The time has come.."

There was the sound of a force rod charging and for Acreea Novaburn everything faded to black.

The MANISOLA

Written by Jim Clunie

Continent: All continents and oceans, particularly regions of wind eddies in the upper air such as the northern Pacific and southern California (or Canada, in El Niño years), Easter Island, the Sahara, India and western Australia.

"Forty-three thousand feet. I shall never see earth again. They are beneath me, three of them. God help me; it is a dreadful death to die!"

- Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, "The Horror of the Heights"

Description: If the upper atmosphere shelters mysterious creatures, they might seldom descend far enough to be seen by any human eye. These unknown beings of fine, lighter-than-air metallic-looking substance or of pure, swift-moving fire and light have sometimes been called manisolas.

The life cycle of manisolas is little-known, but those sightings that can be reconstructed seem to separate into two forms that are most familiar to human reasoning as female and male – sometimes called *yin* and *yang* from Chinese precedent – though they could equally well be categorized as material and spiritual, or watery and fiery forms. It is speculated that after the process of mating, a "female" manisola develops inside herself a geometric cluster of smaller female forms. When the young are fully developed, consuming most of the manisola's physical substance, the female form splits apart, scattering her daughters while releasing the adult's vital force as an incorporeal "male" manisola composed of brilliant energy. The small fraction of the adult's decayed internal organs that remains falls directly to earth as a shower of foetid ooze or slime, while the sundered outer skin floats on the wind, dropping after months or years as a clean drift of fine translucent fibres or thin sheets of tissue with a high content of zirconium.

Manisolas begin to develop magical abilities as they near the end of their female existence. Not all males use magic, but most do, casting freely if attacked or angered in some other way.

Encounter: Earth-bound heroes most often encounter the mysterious falls of matter derived from manisola births or see them, high and far off, in unusual atmospheric conditions of utterly clear air and severe high-level aerial disturbances.

Heroes who venture into the upper atmosphere may fall victim to female manisolas, who hunger for the rare scraps of protein that they usually gather only from the strongest-flying birds, or their aircraft may be damaged by the heat and electrical discharges of a male that approaches for its own mysterious reasons.

Female Manisola Game Data
Ability Scores:

STR=5 (2d4)	INT=7 (d4+5)
DEX=12 (d4+9)	WIL=11 (d6+8)
CON=8 (d4+6)	PER=8 (d4+6)
Durability: 8s/8w/4f/4m	Action Check: 13+/12/6/3
Move: Glide 32	# Actions: 2
Reaction Score: Ordinary / 2	Last Resorts: -
(FX Energy: 3)	

Attacks:

Type	Scores	Damage	Damage type
Tendril slash or grapple (3)	8/4/2	D6-1s/d4-1w/d4w or grapple	LI / O

Defenses:
-1 STR resistance modifier vs. melee attacks
Can only be attacked in melee by an opponent who can reach her body
+1 DEX resistance modifier vs. ranged attacks
+1 WIL resistance modifier vs. encounter skills

Skills: Unarmed Attack (5)-*brawl 3* (8), Stamina (8)-*endurance 2* (10), Survival (8)-*survival training (aerial) 3* (11), Acrobatics (12)-*dodge 1* (13), *flight 2* (14), Stealth (12)-*hide 1* (13), *shadow 2* (14), *sneak 2* (14), Knowledge (7)-*deduce 1* (8), Navigation (7)-*surface 2* (9), Physical Science (7)-*planetology 2* (9), Awareness (11)-*intuition 2* (13), Investigate (11)-*search 1* (12), *track 2* (13), Resolve (11)-*physical resolve 1* (12)

(Personality skills: Presumably exist, but no attempt to communicate with humans ever recorded)

(Enochian FX-*lumen* (12), *unravel enchantment 3* (14))

Habitat/ Society: Depending on the vagaries of the wind, a female manisola may drift alone or in a loose group of 1-6 individuals. Females in a group seem mostly self-interested and without an obvious hierarchy, but can communicate by unknown means to arrange simple tactics. It seems likely that more mature females teach survival skills by some means to the younger members of a group.

Male Manisola Game Data
Ability Scores:

STR –	INT=11 (d4+9)
DEX=14 (d4+11)	WIL=13 (d6+10)
CON=6 (d4+4)	PER=11 (d6+8)
Durability: 9s/9w/4f/4m	Action Check: 15+/14/7/3 (-d4)
Move: Fly 1500	# Actions: 2
Reaction Score: Good / 2	Last Resorts: 2
FX Energy: 6	

Attacks:

Type	Scores	Damage	Damage type
Burning touch	13/6/3 (-d4)	D6s/d8+1s/d6w	En / O
Electrical discharge – Range: 10/20/60	16/8/4 (+d4)	D8+1s/d8w/d6+3w	En / G

Defenses:
Cannot be harmed by LI or HI attacks or chemical damage
+2 DEX resistance modifier vs. ranged attacks
+1 INT resistance modifier vs. encounter skills
+2 WIL resistance modifier vs. encounter skills

Skills: Unarmed Attack -*brawl 3* (13), Stamina (6)-*endurance 4* (10), Survival (6)-*survival training (aerial) 3* (9), Acrobatics (14)-*dodge 4* (18), *flight 4* (18), Ranged Attack (14)-*electrical discharge 2* (16), Stealth (14)-*hide 4* (18), *shadow 5* (19), *sneak 4* (18) (-d6 bonus), Knowledge (11)-*deduce 3* (14), Navigation (11)-*surface 5* (16), Physical Science (11)-*planetology 5* (16), Awareness (13)-*intuition 3* (16), *perception 4* (17), Investigate (13)-*search 4* (17), *track 3* (20), Resolve (13)-*mental resolve 3* (16), *physical resolve 2* (15)

(Strength skills: A male manisola cannot manipulate physical objects, but for game rules that would normally use the Strength skill, it acts as if it had a Strength score of 10)
(Personality skills: Presumably exist, but no attempt to communicate with humans ever recorded)

Enochian FX-*grace 4* (17), *halo 3* (16), *lumen 4* (17), *peaceful shroud 2* (15), *unravel enchantment 4* (17), *white salamander 2* (15)

The male manisola

Habitat/ Society: Males are usually encountered alone but can gather in a swarm of up to 4 individuals. As best humans can understand their motives, they swarm together for purposes of debate or mutual curiosity.

However, male manisolas are keenly interested in perpetuating the species and seek out areas where females are common. There have been sightings of two or three males circling each other in the vicinity of a female accompanied by intense light flashes, interpreted as a conflict-display or even a physical battle for mating rights.

Adventure Hooks: *Brown Spots:* The Hoffmann Institute dispatches the heroes to a small town in British Columbia, Canada, where strange brown stains have begun appearing on houses, vegetation, clothes hung out to dry and even on the skin of people who spend time outdoors. Distant trails of cloud and flashes of light can be seen in the sky. The locals live in fear of a suspected bioweapons test by the government. Local militias, enraged by this assault on their health and their loved ones, have banded together in a threat of armed uprising that could end in tragedy.

Mercurio: An Argentinean multi-millionaire is missing after an attempt to cross from Peru to Easter Island in a human-powered plane during once-in-a-century calm conditions caused by the La Niña oscillation. His aircraft has been wrecked by an encounter with a mixed swarm of female and male manisolas, bringing him down on an uninhabited island. The heroes, taking part in an air search over the Pacific with the cooperation of the Peruvian Air Force, will probably be attacked in turn.
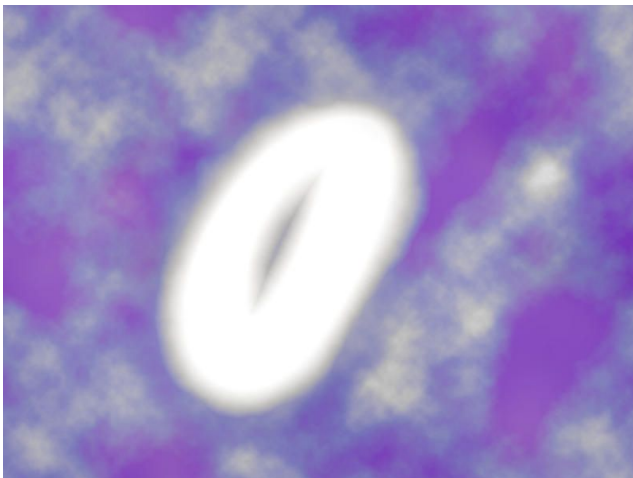
Matthew R. Esch

Conducted by Last Resort Staff

Matthew R. Esch
"Bri'-aitysa"

Last Resort: When did you start playing RPGs (not necessarily Alternity)?

Matthew: Hmm… I think I was about 9 when I first overheard a "game"… It was some Cub Scout thing where we were swimming at the YMCA downtown when a couple of the older guys were playing some sort of FRPG, D&D, most likely, in the back of a pick-up we were riding in. I wasn't actually playing, but I do remember that as my first exposure to the whole concept. A friend of the family had made one up based on the Transformers (which we were really big into at that time). I was officially a "lost cause" by 13 with the Basic D&D box, hand-me down.

LR: When did you start playing Alternity?

MRE: Shortly after it was out. The exact date was August 18, 1998. My partner-in-crime, Mike Meechan (bka, Mig Nova) had went out & bought it up. The first hero I created was a sesheyan bounty hunter named "Bŏkthrāh". A robot killed him off. My better known alter ego wasn't created until November 29, 1999.
Believe it or not, I had just a month before, was in Waldenbooks with my wife, *passed on it altogether*, thinking "TSR doing sci-fi? Hmm… nah… I'll stick with AD&D, thanks…" Then it was "I'll only play Alternity, and just get the PHB." Well, as all of us addicts well know, it was a slippery slope from there.

LR: What are your past contributions to the Alternity community?

MRE: A few things here and there. ;^) I have 2000+ posts on TS.net (2nd member to earn "Chancellor" status there), written close to 60 TVN reports there (as of this writing, those are hopefully not lost to history, as TS.net upgrades to version 2.0). On A.net, I have 2000+ (2.58% of total forum posts) and have Mastered the Dread Tome submitted 6 Resources. LOL. Assumed Co-Editor-in-Chief mantle of this austere publication, previously was an Editor and writer here. Naturally, much of my contribution stem from the involvement of a campaign I played with Mike for 5 ½ to 6 years. Originally, we published some of this on the web in a Yahoo club called *futureworlds*. From there, it became EscapeVelocity2503 (EV2503). EV2503 generated a *lot* of material, and needed to cull a lot of material from a lot of sources. My byline's been busy over the years, but I've slowed down some.

LR: What Alternity projects are you currently working on?

MRE: You mean, "allegedly working on", right? LOL. Well, there's the final piece (Volume 4: Concord and the Neutralities) to the legendary Stellar Ring Netbook, Editorial direction here, and like any good GM, cooking up good stories to explore next… These days, I needed to break away from Alternity, to shake "Ol' Bri" from my head. Playing Bri for that long was something that I've written of before. I'm on a creative hiatus, as the Robotech game I'm running needed to reorganize itself. I took my players from the post Macross era and jumped them 7 years ahead and had them transfer from the RDF to the Armies of the Southern Cross. Those familiar with Book 7: New World Order will know what's in store for my players… The most important contribution I hope to make is in my children. I hope to pass the fun onto them.

LR: What project would you most like to see accomplished for Alternity?

MRE: Survival. Thriving. Resurrection. Growth of the community. 'Nuff said.

LR: What is the most recent RPG-related book/item that you have acquired?

MRE: Oh dear… you probably won't believe this… Mike's cousin was unloading his stuff, and gave Mike about 2-3 boxes worth of stuff, ranging from good to at-least-most-of-the-pertinent-pieces-are-all-still-here. Mike calls me up one fine day, says come over, check this out, and sends me home with a 12x12x8 box full of AD&D 2e material of varying sorts.

LR: Any good (Alternity or other) websites to recommend?

MRE: You mean "Besides EV2503"? AlternityRPG.net, I can't wait until TS.net is reborn. I don't do as much web surfing these days, even though I recently upgraded the home service to broadband. The nature of my job keeps me away from the computer much of the time these days and I risk child neglect at home according to my wife. :^) A few of my posts on A.net explain my situation pretty well, I'd say.

LR: Favorite sci-fi/fantasy book(s) and why?

MRE: I loved the Dragonlance Saga, much of the Forgotten Realms series, particularly Bob Salvatore's series with Drizzt. Frank Herbert's "Dune" is a sci-fi classic, and I can't gush enough about Lovecraft. Each of these stories and authors tells a masterful tale, and RPGs are about collaboratively telling a tale. I look for themes into the human condition in stories. So the theme of, say, the Star Wars saga, changes as each of the trilogies was presented. The original (Episodes IV-VI) was of Luke Skywalker's growth and discovery of his destiny but after digesting the new trilogy (Episodes I-III) this changes. Each theme tells me something about what someone in this given situation would choose to do. That sorts of thing fascinates me. Perhaps that is why I do what I do for a living.

LR: What sci fi/fantasy character in a book, television show, video game, or movie would you most like to be and why?

MRE: HMM! Tough question. I answered a similar one years ago, and that was the Dark Knight himself: Batman. Not the cheesy campy TV version on Nick-at-Night or TV Land, which I grew up on, but the dark, brooding type from the comics, current Justice League, etc. Simply put, Jack Nicholson's Joker put it best, "Where does he get those wonderful toys?"

LR: What profession/career and level are you in Real Life and what is your highest skill rank?

MRE: Those who've read me before wouldn't (and shouldn't!) be surprised to read the following: I am a Tech Op-family therapist with Medical Science-*psychology 8*. I claim the following rank benefits: research, individual therapy, couple therapy, family therapy, assessment and diagnosis. I also have Computer Science-*operation 5*.

Foundry revealed!

In the latest news, last night a new robot production facility code-named "Foundry" has opened its doors to reporters. The Foundry CEO firmly claims the factory will begin with robot prototype construction in a matter of days. As always, we were among the first to reach this brand new complex, not to stare in awe, but to see what is really going on behind the public front.

To recapitulate the events of the last few weeks - Foundry was subject to various rumors and debate concerning the legality and ethical issues of its prototype "biological" robots, and the Foundry CEO has tried to suppress them by releasing a catalogue of services the factory will provide. However, having toured only the non-restricted parts of the complex we can only assume what's going behind the locked doors; it seems the controversy about secret robot prototypes are not yet fully disputed.

The catalogue itself is a massive document that not only lists all the robot parts Foundry can provide, but in itself is a technical guide to the design and construction of robots. And not only robots, but for the first time it seems that android and automaton construction is available to the general public, at outrageous costs, of course. We sent our best reporter, which we all know only as XCPMR, to infiltrate the factory, and this is what we learned of Foundry's true scope:

Foundry is on surface what is states - a guide to robot production. However, it is *a new guide* to robot production, surpassing current Dataware rules and in some places completely superseding them. It still relies on those Dataware concepts that were healthy in start but uses the far superior Warships mechanics. This approach allows production of all robots, not only playable heroes, but those robots that were previously impossible to produce; the scope goes from crude PL5 automatons to super-advanced PL9 androids that are made of synthetic flesh and capable of psionic powers. And what's even more important, these robots are *realistic*. The list of robot systems from original Dataware has been multiplied over and over to encompass over one hundred seventy distinctive robot parts through 5 Progress Levels, and the list of perks and flaws has been updated to over sixty. Tons of new mechanics and even alternative rules to those new mechanics have been introduced to fill in the massive gaps Dataware left behind. The result is a Warships-like netbook that will answer to your every single robot need in Alternity.

Foundry claims to be a guide, so it will take you by the hand through designing a robot concept, choosing a proper shape and size, picking robot systems, all the way to determining a profession, perks and flaws, and the other little numbers you will have on the character sheet (new action check and actions per round calculus, new brawling table, and modified movement rates). If you ever get lost there are numerous examples of complete robot construction that include skills and the reasoning why the robot needs them. Last but not least, Foundry covers special rules for AI-enhanced robots, robot damage and consequences, upgrading and maintenance, special robots that are in alien-like shapes, and even a full chapter dedicated to those robots that decide to use regular cyberware.