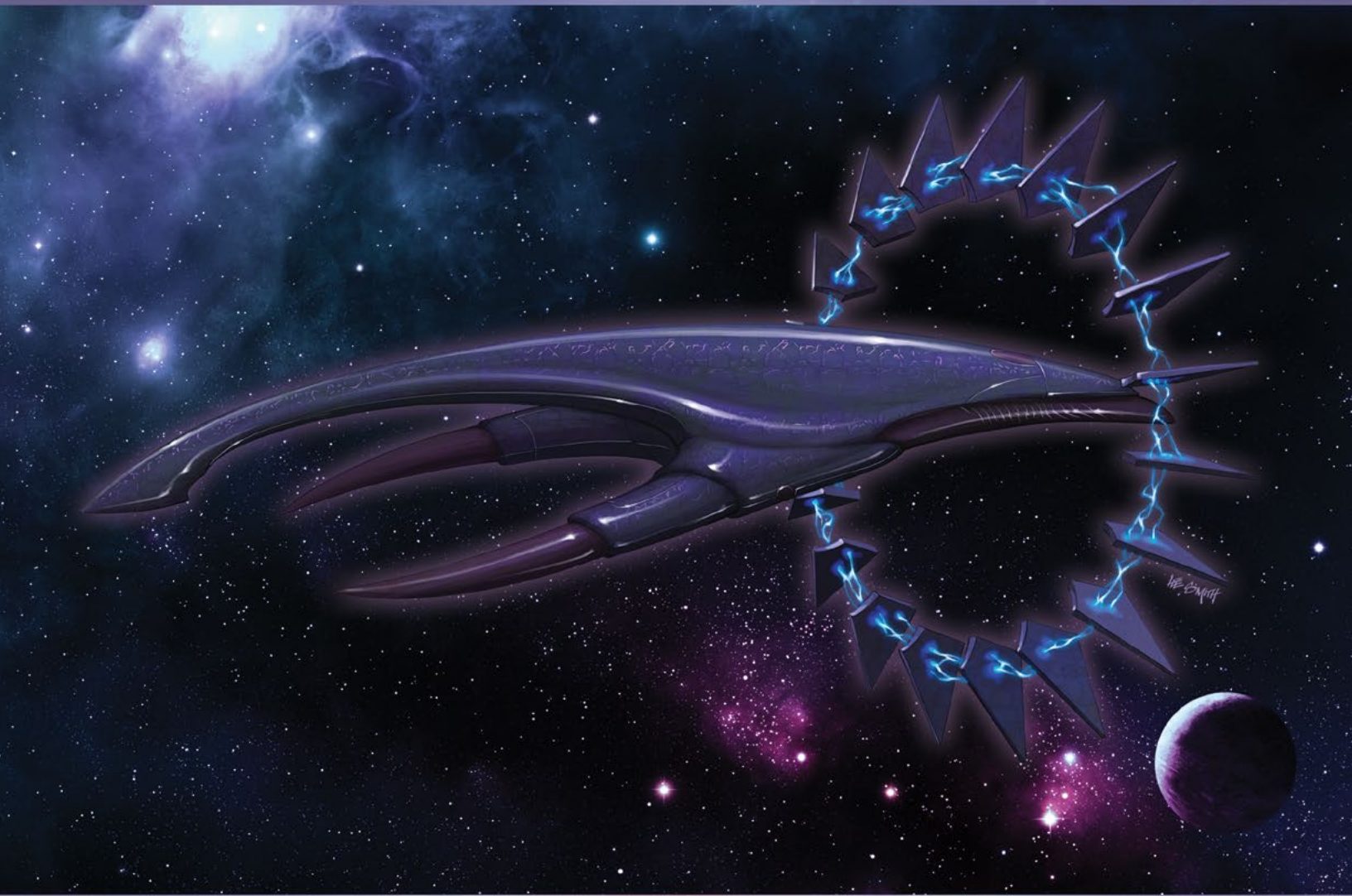


NUMENÉRA



THE NIGHTCRAFT

BY MONTE COOK



THE NIGHTCRAFT

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Aeon Priests speculate that at some time in the distant past, the Earth was the hub of an empire that spanned the vastness of space. At such a time in the dim recesses of the prior worlds, numenera craft of all varieties crossed the gulfs and came here, only to later turn around and fly back into the night. Some of these craft remain in the Ninth World deep inside ancient ruins, buried in the ground, submerged in the sea, lying out in the desert, or in similar locations.

The Nightcraft, as it is called, is one such vehicle. Although its existence is not well known, a few numenera experts have long speculated that the ship can be used to travel into the void beyond the edges of the world. And they are right.

THE VESSEL

The outside of the craft is smooth and sleek black metal, shaped like a giant manta ray (albeit backward). It has no visible windows or obvious numenera, although large runic inscriptions in some unknown language are cut into the hull in sweeping, precise strokes. While landed, it flattens so that the rear of the ship, the control area, and the sensors are all resting on the ground. When the ship is in the air, the power panels spread out in a halo around the engine, channeling energy throughout the craft.

Overall, the Nightcraft is a level 6 vessel. It cleans itself and has self-repairing systems throughout, so damaged elements (even seat cushions) are renewed to their original state within hours, though repairing major damage takes up to ten times longer. It is theorized that even if the ship were entirely destroyed, it would still repair itself, although



Throughout this book, you'll see page references to items accompanied by this symbol. These are page references to the *Numenera* corebook, where you can find additional details about that item, place, creature, or concept. It isn't necessary to look up the referenced items in the corebook, but doing so will provide useful information for character creation and gameplay.

restoration in this case would take months and likely would not help any living creatures that were inside the Nightcraft when it was destroyed. All of the cleaning and repair is done by invisible nano-spirits.

One enters the Nightcraft from below—an iris door provides access to the interior. The hold also has a large, bottom-oriented entrance.

The hull is comprised of mostly unknown materials. It is unclear how, but there are suggestions that the ship's speed is greatly amplified by one or more of the materials in its hull, as though they have a strange effect not only on the craft's mass but also on its relative position in time and space. In other words, something about the hull means that the faster the ship goes, the farther away its position is instantly transposed. Given time to build up relativistic speeds, the Nightcraft can suddenly appear across the galaxy. This of course makes no sense, in the same way that so much prior-world technology seems to make no sense.



The Nightcraft is intelligent and independent. It speaks, and its voice can be heard throughout the ship. Unfortunately, it does not use a language known to anyone in the Ninth World. If someone figures out how to speak this language, she can speak to the ship from anywhere inside, or outside if she is within a short distance. The Nightcraft cannot be communicated with telepathically.

In personality, the craft is curious and friendly, although it worries and expresses its concern anytime someone inside is hurt or at (perceived) risk. Of course, if those inside the ship can't understand the language, all its words of interest or concern just seem like strange noises it makes from time to time.

The Nightcraft has no memories and doesn't keep track of things. Unless somehow modified, the ship takes commands from anyone who issues them within its hearing, as long as the speaker uses its language.

THE INTERIOR CHAMBERS

The interior of the vessel is comfortable, with few sharp edges or right angles. Furnishings are comfortable for humans but were clearly designed for larger, broader beings.

Entrance. The level 6 door irises open if someone can get the controls to work. The door is on the underside of the craft, but gravity-nullifying suspensors bring anyone wishing to enter up and into the vehicle. A minor force field keeps the inner atmosphere from escaping, even when the door is open. However, solid creatures and objects can pass through the field normally. The door can be opened from either side or from the control bridge.

Within the entry chamber, hidden behind concealed level 5 wall panels, are five [shipskin](#) canisters.

Control Bridge. This chamber has a few comfortable seats but is mostly filled with synth orbs floating in the air. These orbs (all level 7 devices) are the controls. They must be manipulated in specific ways to activate the functions here. If a character can communicate verbally with the ship, all functions here can be controlled purely through voice commands.

For additional details about the interior of the craft, see the map on page 7.

The Player Handouts on pages 8 and 9 are designed to be given to players. As they explore the craft, they can fill in the name of the area and add additional notes about their discoveries.

Shipskin, page 4

From this room, the characters can control the ship's immediate movements and long-term navigation as well as monitor what's going on in and around the vessel. The bridge is also where the craft's internal environment (air, gravity, and temperature) is adjusted.

Weapon. Complex tubes and wires are strung all over this room. In the middle, a red synth pyramid hangs from the ceiling. Using the pyramid device, one can control the Nightcraft's weapon, viewing potential targets within range on screens in the pyramid. The weapon is a level 6 device. It projects orbs of destructive energy up to 20 miles (32 km), inflicting 12 points of damage in an immediate radius.

Communication. Here, one will find a level 5 console with a flat piece of synth. When touched, this device allows telepathic communication with one other person within 100 miles (161 km).

Engine. This chamber contains a series of transparent pillars filled with roiling gas, which together serve as a level 7 device. Occasionally one can see flashes and arcs of energy within the gas.

A series of synth knobs on each pillar manipulates the gas and thus adjusts the engine. Figuring out how to do so correctly requires an Intellect-based roll. However, this should never be necessary unless someone is repairing damage or attempting to modify or upgrade the engines.

Quarters. This long chamber holds beds, chairs, and other comforts. The room contains a level 4 device that will produce food that is nourishing to a specific creature,

and it can be used up to ten times in a 28-hour period. There is also a level 3 device here that will clean a person using sonic vibrations, along with 1d6 entertaining oddities.

Hold. This area has its own large hatch to the outside. It is empty when the ship is found.

FINDING THE CRAFT

The GM should place the Nightcraft anywhere that seems fitting. Gaining access to the craft probably won't be easy for the PCs. Here are four possible locations:

1. Within the Ruins. The PCs explore a strange ruined structure from the prior worlds and come upon an iris-like door in the ceiling that doesn't easily open. The ceiling is made of an odd reflective black material. The door is actually the entrance into the Nightcraft, which is currently "docked" with the structure.

2. Buried. The Nightcraft stood still in time while Earth changed around it. Literal mountains have formed over the ship, and now it lies at the very roots of a peak in the [Black Riage](#). The PCs learn of its location somehow (perhaps the endpoint of an electronic map discovered elsewhere) and must find a way to reach it. This might involve gathering numenera tunneling equipment, major explosives, or phasing technology.

3. Submerged. The Nightcraft lies at the bottom of the sea off the coast of [Ghan](#). Again, the PCs learn of it via some means—perhaps by treating with an intelligent aquatic creature like an octopus, who trades the location of the craft for information or a device it needs. The characters will also need a means of surviving the trip down into the deep, but the return trip is a bit easier, as the vessel can travel up and out of the water.

4. Just Waiting. This is the easiest way of getting to the Nightcraft, but perhaps the most enigmatic. The ship is just sitting, almost waiting, out in plain sight. As the PCs approach, the door opens, beckoning. Local witnesses might relate that it landed there very recently.



*Black Riage,
page 177*

Ghan, page 145

ARTIFACT: SHIPSKIN

Level: 4

Form: Cylinder

Effect: Sprays organic tissue over a single creature the size of a human or smaller. The tissue forms a thick, tough skin that provides the creature with 28 hours of oxygen and protection from the dangers of the void. It also provides +2 to Armor.

Depletion: 1 in 1d6

SOARING INTO THE NIGHT

Once someone with knowledge of the numenera figures out how to control the Nightcraft, it is ready for travel. Fuel does not seem to be a concern. The craft is awkward in an atmosphere and makes for a poor means of traveling from place to place on Earth (destinations are frequently overshoot, and landing is difficult). But it excels at very long-distance journeys, including to the stars.

The nature of the craft belies the dangers of space. Ships designed for the void are exceedingly sturdy and filled with intricate mechanisms to control speed and position, as well as navigation, inner atmosphere, gravity, food, and other necessities for the crew. Special engines (if that's even the right word) propel the craft at unimaginable speeds to cross even more unimaginable distances in relatively short periods of time. The Nightcraft can travel to anywhere in the sun's system in less than three days, and anywhere in Earth's galaxy within two weeks. Beyond that, a trip takes months, not weeks.

NIGHTCRAFT ADVENTURES

The Stowaway: The PCs leave behind a strange alien world only to discover a creature on board the Nightcraft that they

THE WEIRD OF THE NIGHTCRAFT

What's That Sound? Beginning about three days after the PCs start using the Nightcraft, whenever someone is alone in the quarters, they hear a strange scratching sound coming from within one of the walls. It happens only if someone is alone, and no manner of straightforward investigation turns up a cause.

Lingering Effects: After spending ten minutes or more in the engine room, a character's flesh takes on a random, nonhuman color like purple or green. Sometimes the color change is splotchy, and sometimes it is total. Sometimes it fades after a few minutes, and sometimes it lingers for hours. After this happens a few times, it no longer occurs, but something else does: an itchy sensation, a change in voice pitch, or an inability to abide the touch of a particular substance. All of these effects are temporary and eventually shift to something else.

Surprise Trip: Without warning or explanation, the Nightcraft veers off onto its own course and travels to a destination that appears random.

For more ideas for starfaring encounters, see page 10 of Into the Night.



Ggryxal: level 4, numenera as level 9, communication and interaction as level 6; 1d6 oddities and 1d6 + 2 cyphers

Sorg are ruthless, antagonistic creatures protected by a pressurized-bivalve shell crusted with tech. Level 5; for details, see Into the Night, page 152

Defense automaton: level 5, defense as level 6; health 20; Armor 3; long-range energy weapon inflicts 6 points of damage on target and (on a failed Might defense roll) renders one random limb useless until the lost points are restored

Uerv clone: level 4, attacks on other clones as level 6

The Gloaming is an artificial structure well beyond the reaches of Earth's galaxy. For details, see Into the Night, page 118

were not expecting. The stowaway is a tall, hairy humanoid with four spindly arms. It can't speak the same language as the PCs, but it can make itself understood through complex gestures. This is **Ggryxal**, a creature adept with the numenera (a skill that made it easy to get into the ship). Ggryxal is on the run from the dangerous and aggressive **sorg** because it stole something of importance from them—a crystal information storage device that holds plans and positions of sorg operations. Ggryxal tries to get the PCs to take the device far from their current location, but the sorg appear in pursuit of the creature and the stolen crystal. The stowaway has a bag of cyphers and oddities that it can trade for the characters' help.

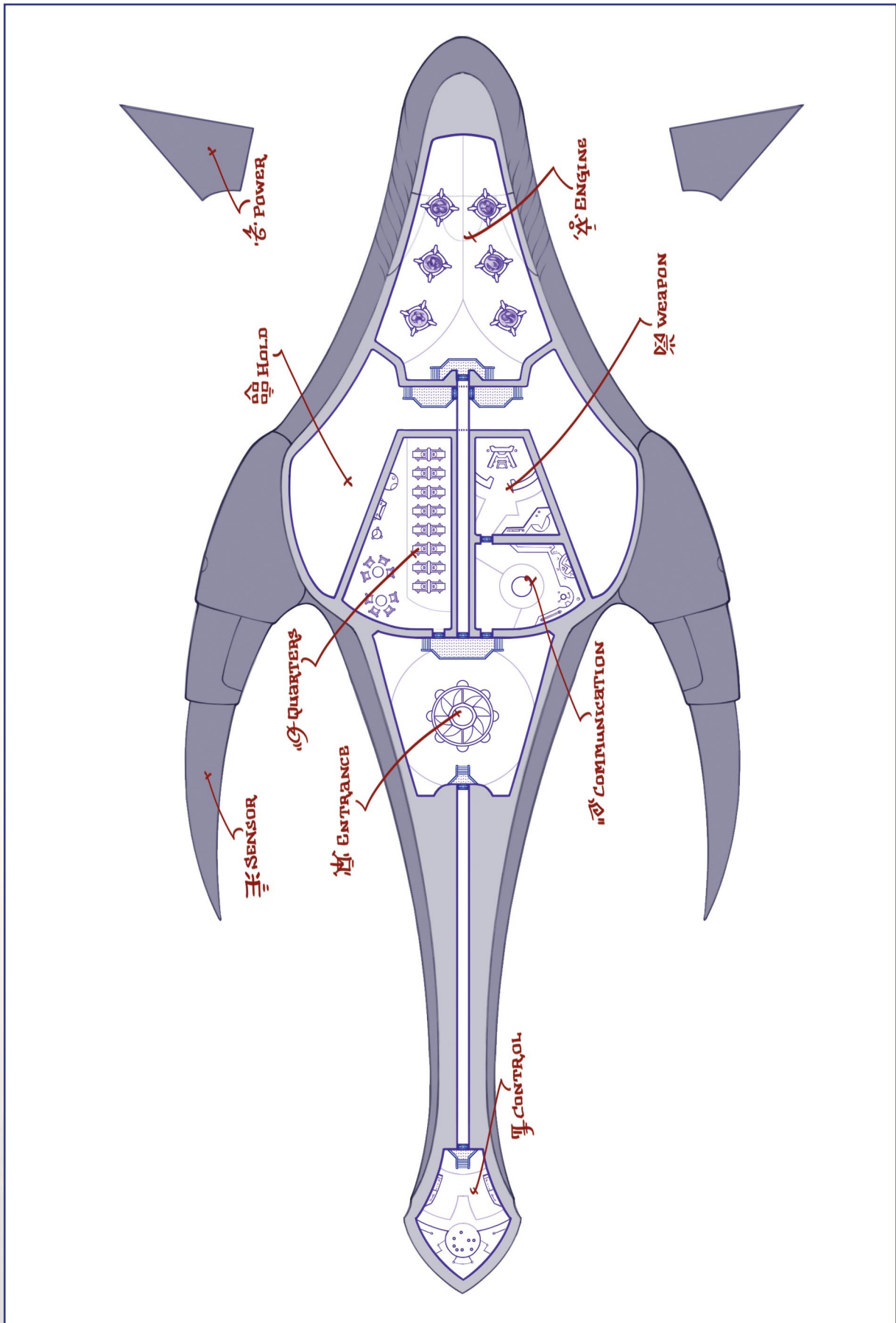
The Door: A PC goes into the engine room and sees a door in the floor of the chamber that simply wasn't there before. It leads to a low-ceilinged compartment with four level 7 devices—long cylinders that serve as stasis pods. Three of them currently hold humans in stasis. They are all **clones** of a human woman named Uerv, and they all hate each other and will stop at nothing to see the others killed. The clones have no idea how they got in the stasis pods. Despite this, diplomatic PCs might learn that the real Uerv is lost somewhere on **the Gloaming**, and—unlike the clones—she might know more about the Nightcraft than the characters do.

The Unexpected Stop: A weird anomaly in the void brings the Nightcraft to a dead stop. No amount of fiddling with the vessel can get it moving again. However, another vessel (level 4) is also trapped by the anomaly and has been for a very long time. The crew of the ancient craft is long dead, but the ship holds information that is likely to help the PCs figure out a way to escape the anomaly. Unfortunately, the other ship is more than 10 miles (16 km) away, across the open void. Even if the PCs can reach it, they must get inside and

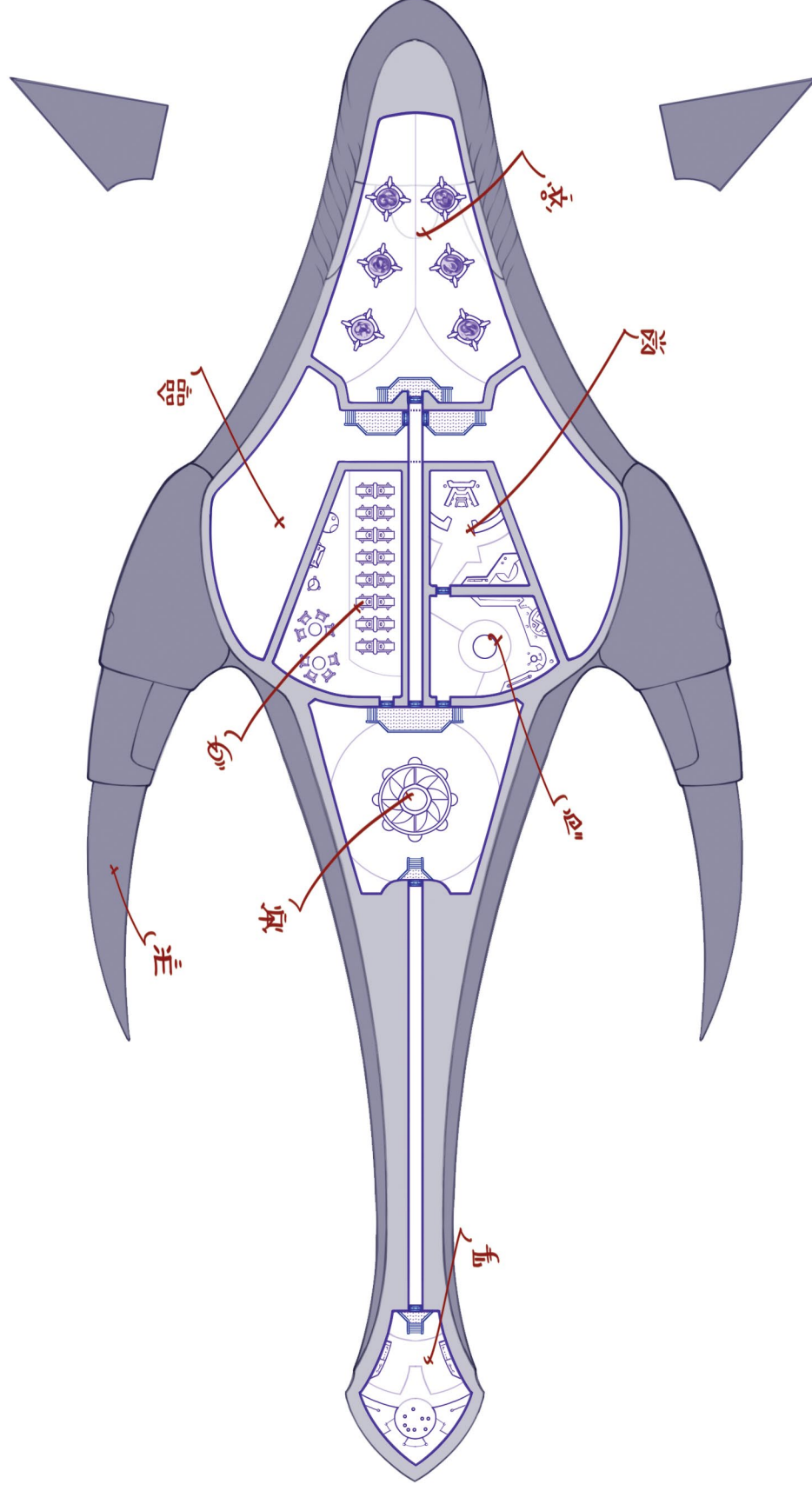
find and decode the information, a task that is made all the more difficult by a **defense automaton** inside the vessel that attacks all intruders.

The trick is creating an explosion near the anomaly. The easiest way to do so is to use the Nightcraft's weapon to target the power supply of the other vessel, destroying it. The crew of the other vessel came up with this solution and drew up plans, but they had no way of creating the explosion without destroying their own craft.





PLAYER HANDOUT: THE NIGHTCRAFT



PLAYER HANDOUT: NOTES



_____ The door is on the underside of the craft.



_____ This chamber has a few comfortable seats but is mostly filled with synth orbs floating in the air.



_____ Complex tubes and wires are strung all over this room. In the middle, a red synth pyramid hangs from the ceiling.



_____ This chamber has a console with a flat piece of synth.



_____ This chamber contains a series of transparent pillars filled with roiling gas. Occasionally one can see flashes and arcs of energy within the gas.



_____ This long chamber holds beds, chairs, and other comforts.



_____ This area has its own large hatch to the outside. It is empty.

NUMENERA GLIMMERS

Numenera Glimmers are inexpensive PDF-only products that allow us to respond to fans' desires for new material on the fly and let us delve deeper into the Ninth World, covering unusual and specialized topics that might not find a home in a larger publication.

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