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A STAR FRONTIERS®

KNIGHT HAWKS ADVENTURE

Face of the Enemy

Ken Rolston

The second part of the Beyond the Frontier series



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Ken Rolston

Years have passed since the end of the Sathar Wars, but skirmishes with Sathar raiders and infiltrators have continued. However, there has never been an opportunity to learn much about this wily and elusive foe—until now.

Courageous volunteers are needed to carry the fight against the Sathar to the very edge of the unknown. The prize is a major Sathar base and, perhaps, a live prisoner. However, the least mistake will probably destroy the UPF strike force. A calculated risk, but well worth the gamble if successful.

Volunteers...?

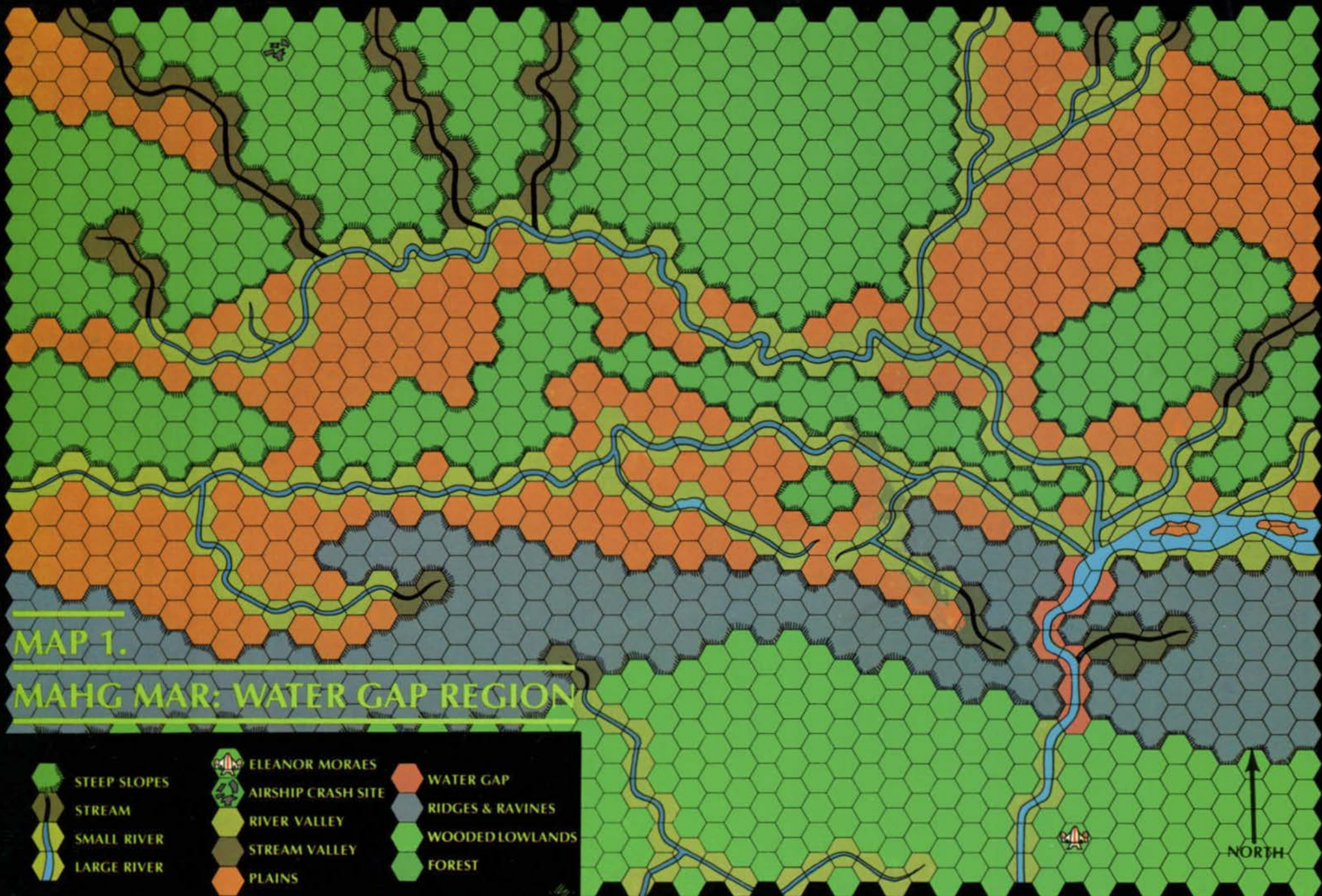
The Face of the Enemy combines the Alpha Dawn role-playing rules with the Knight Hawks space-faring rules. Both are needed for this module, which combines delicate negotiations and a daring boarding action in a rousing adventure for 3-6 players.

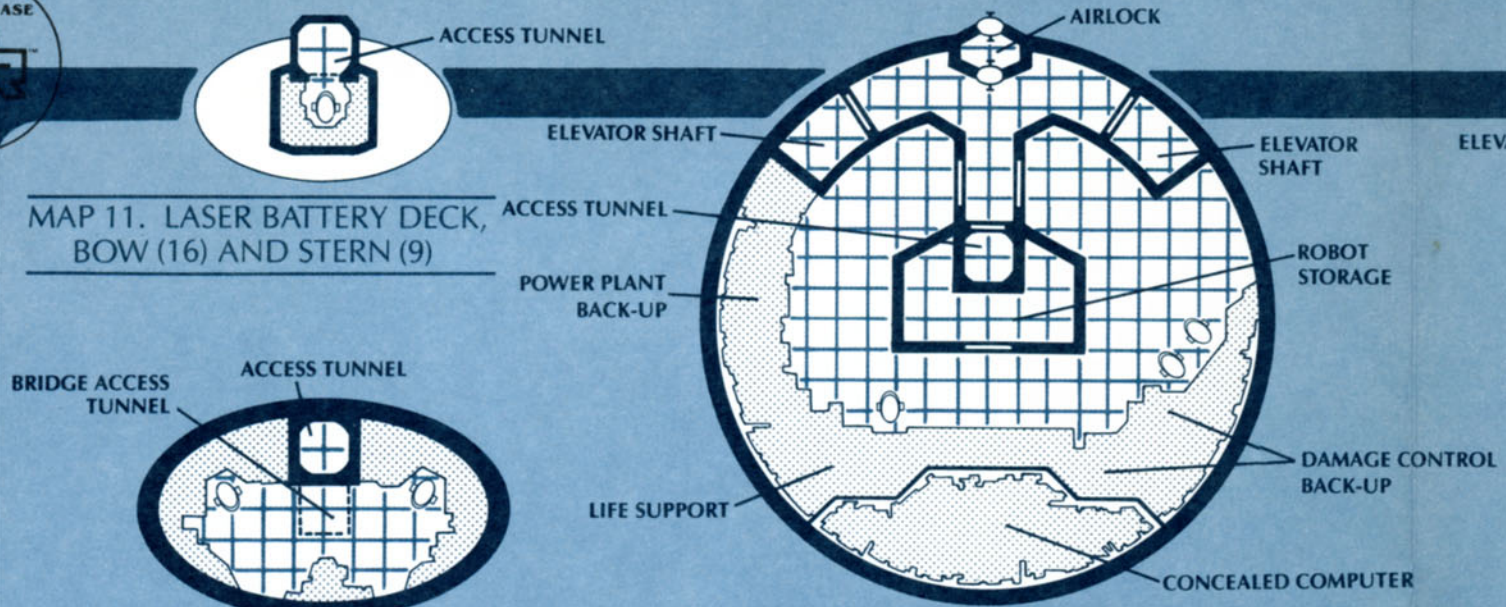
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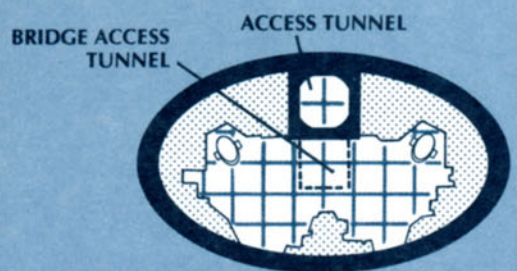
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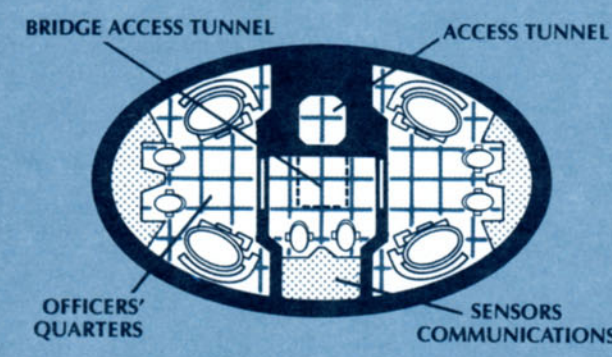




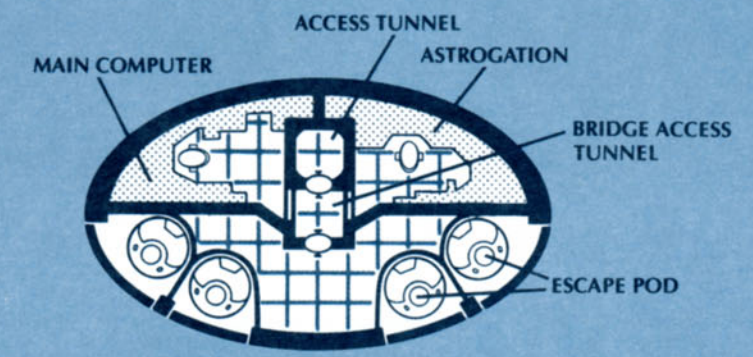
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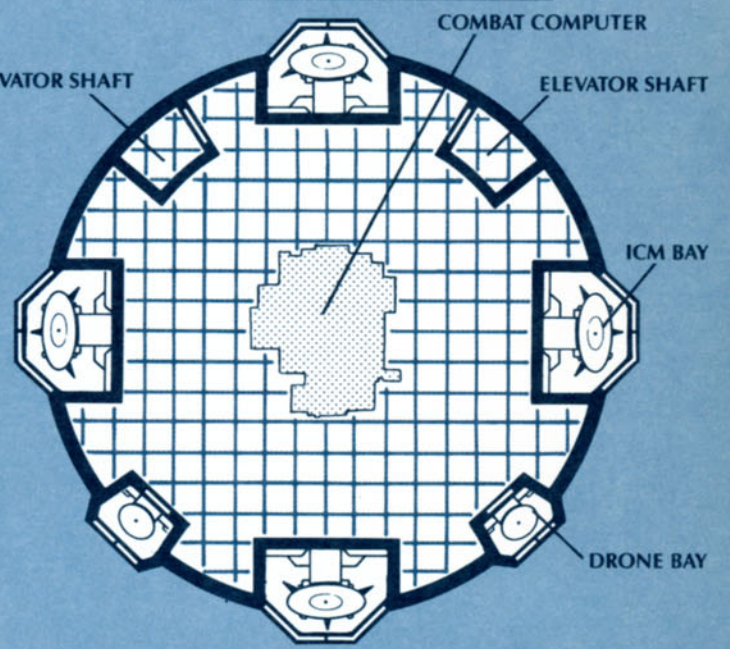
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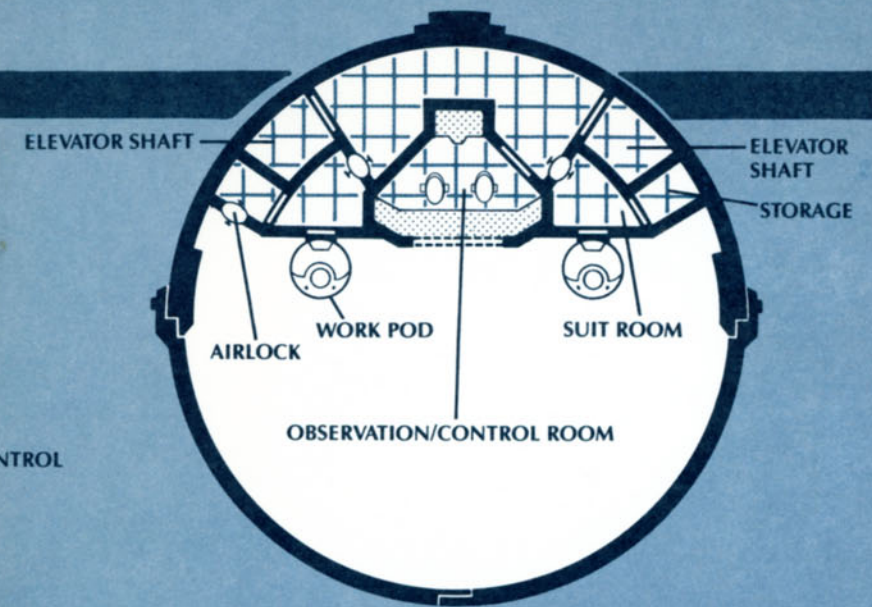
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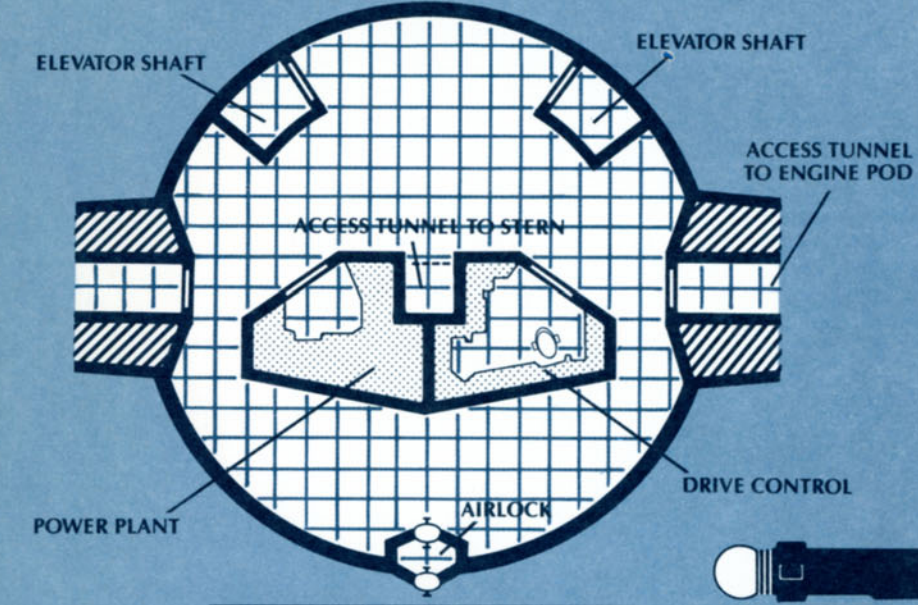
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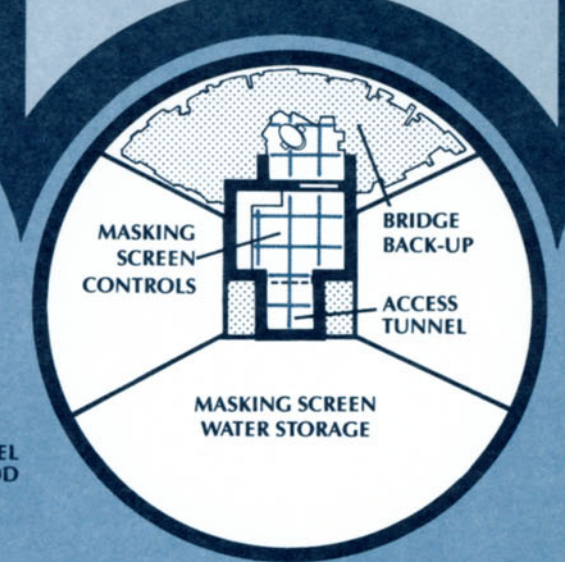


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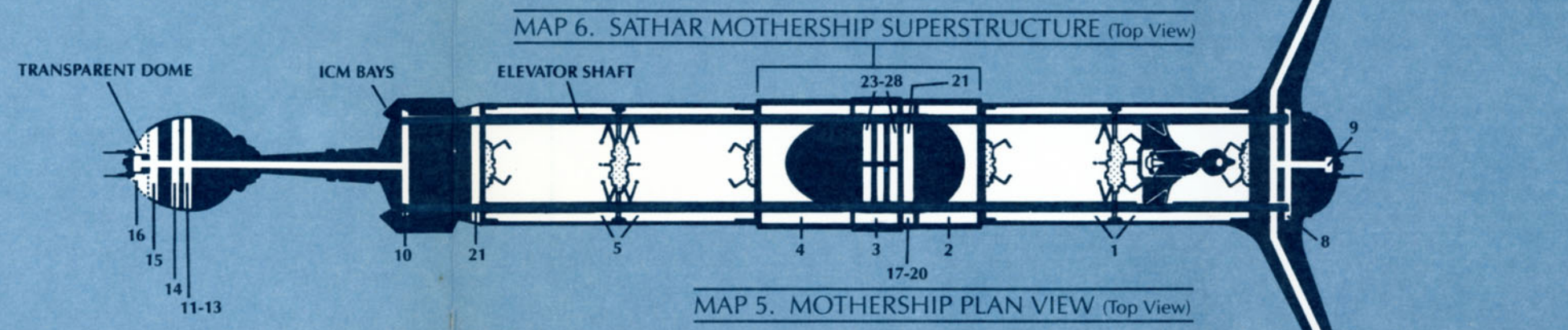


MAP 9. ENGINEERING DECK

- 1 SQUARE = 2 METERS
- DOOR
 - WINDOW
 - HATCH
 - FLUID BATH
 - COUCH
 - MACHINERY/COMPUTER

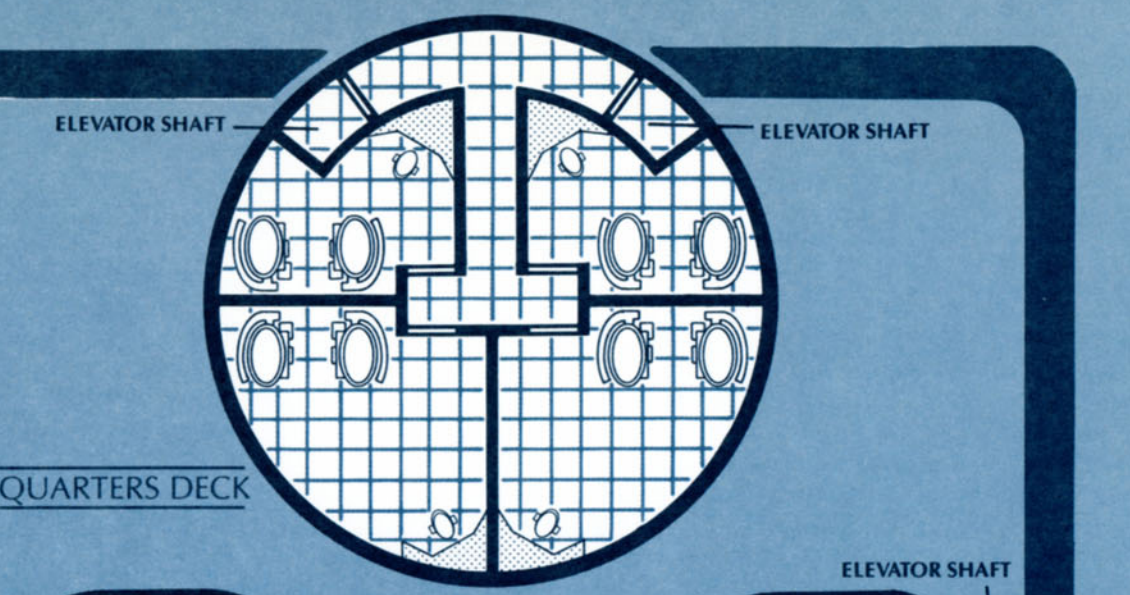


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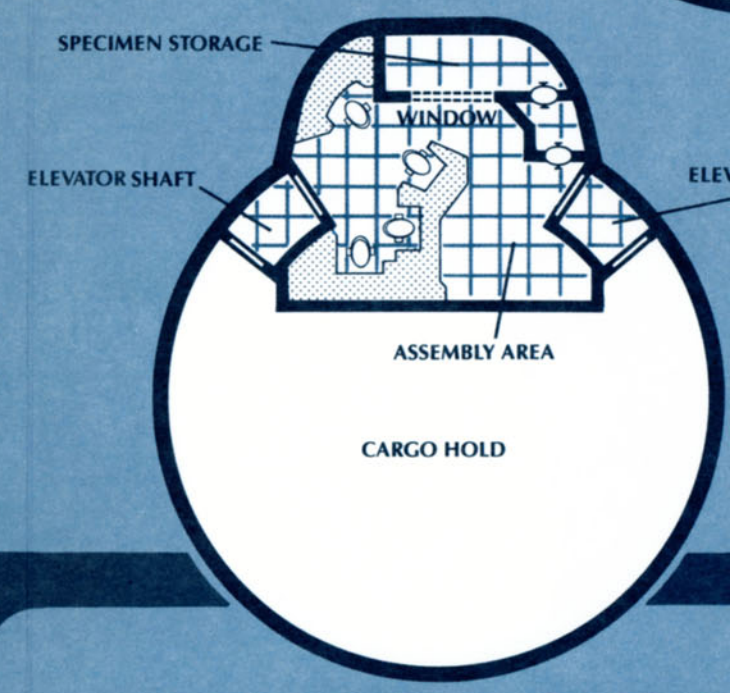


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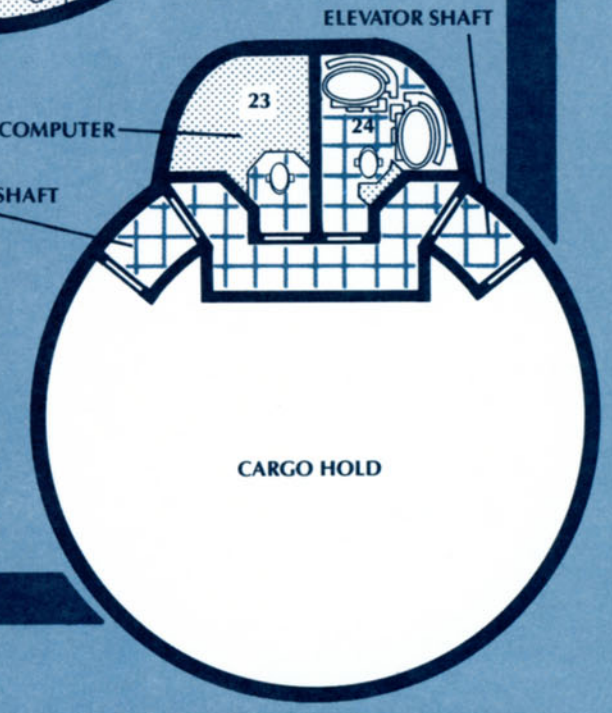
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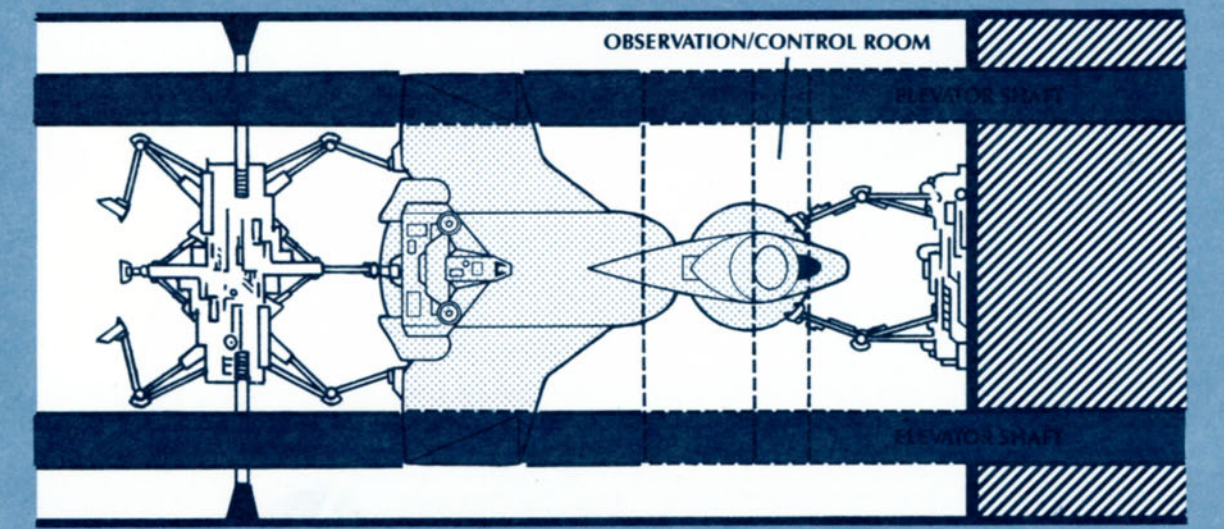
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MAP 18. SCOUT HEADQUARTERS DECK



MAP 19. SCOUT QUARTERS DECK



MAP 7. DOCK 2, DOCKING BAY

This module can be played alone or as the second part in the Beyond the Frontier adventure.

STAR FRONTIERS®

KNIGHT HAWKS ADVENTURE

Face of the Enemy

Ken Rolston



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ALPHA SECTION: INTRODUCTION

You can play *Face of the Enemy* by itself or as the second module in the *Beyond the Frontier* series.

This module is written for the game referee. If you plan to participate as a player, don't read any further.

Alpha .1 OVERVIEW

Mastery of the Alpha Dawn Expanded game rules and familiarity with the Knight Hawks Campaign Book is important. Read and study this module from beginning to end before playing. As you prepare for a game session, carefully reread the part of the module you plan to play. The more familiar you are with this module, the more smoothly your adventure will run and the greater the excitement you and your players will enjoy.

The module begins when the assault scout CMS *Osprey* arrives at Mahg Mar, in response to the distress signal of the stranded crew of the *Eleanor Moraes*. The *Osprey's* commander, Captain Dentin, organizes a series of robotic survey probes, one of which discovers an odd settlement of alien design. The investigation of this settlement is the first part of this adventure.

At the village the player characters will discover the Notui and will also learn of the Sathar visit. The clues they will find lead to an intact Sathar scout ship, hidden on a river bottom.

Investigation of this ship reveals the coordinates of a Sathar mothership in the asteroid belt of the previously unexplored FS 30 star system. When the discovery of an operational Sathar scout ship is reported to FEF headquarters, Captain Dentin is ordered to select a crew to use the captured Sathar ship to investigate the secret base. With the recognition codes discovered in the scoutship, the UPF forces have a chance to surprise and capture the mothership.

The final part of this module is a boarding operation in zero-gravity decompressed conditions. The player characters must penetrate the mothership and prevent activation of the self-destruct sequence while fending off the counterattacks of the crew.

At the middle of this booklet are several removable sections, including the Player Character Background Report, and Pregenerated Characters. These sections may be removed from the booklet for ease of reference. Bend the staples and pull the sheets from the book, then bend the staples

down again. Before the adventure starts, give your players the Player Character Background Report to provide them with the necessary background information.

Alpha .2 FORMATS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Sections of text enclosed in boxes are descriptions of action, places, and things the player characters (PCs) encounter. Read boxed text aloud to the players. Unboxed text contains information not immediately apparent to the PCs. You should reveal this information to the PCs only when it is appropriate to do so.

When the PCs encounter creatures, non-player characters (NPCs), or robots in this adventure, statistics for the encounter are included in a shorthand format so you can easily refer to the material you need. Table 1 lists the abbreviations used in statistics and the rest of the module.

TABLE 1. ABBREVIATIONS

ATT	Creature's attack rating
CMS	Clarion Militia Ship
d10	Ten-sided die
DEX	Dexterity
DM	Damage caused by successful attack
FEF	Frontier Expeditionary Force
IM	Initiative Modifier
M	Melee attack score
MV	Movement Rate
NPC	Non-player Character
PC	Player Character
PS	Punching score
RS	Reaction Speed
RW	Ranged weapons attack score
SA	Creature's special attack forms
SD	Creature's special defenses
SEU	Standard Energy Unit
STA	Stamina point total
STR	Strength
UPFS	United Planetary Federation Ship

Alpha .3 PLAYER CHARACTERS

This adventure is designed for 4-8 player characters of any race. The characters should have strong technician skills and a good mix of military skills. Each PC should have a second or third level spaceship skill.

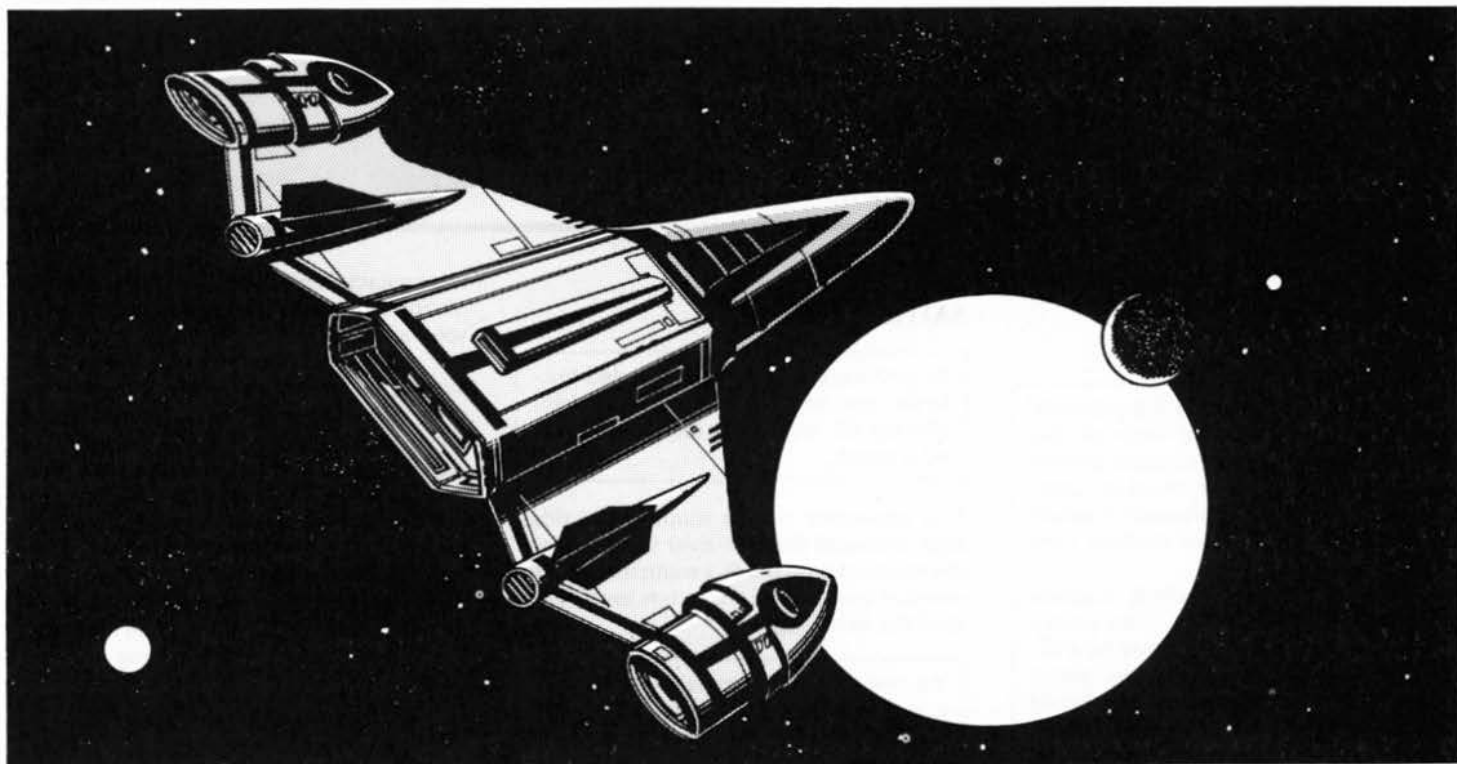
If you play this adventure as the second part of the *Beyond the Frontier* series, the PCs are crew members from the survey ship *Eleanor Moraes*. If you play this adventure by itself, the PCs are crew members from the assault scout *Osprey*. Modify boxed text if necessary to suit the PCs.

The center pullout section includes pre-generated PCs. If your players want to use their own characters, the pregenerated PCs are a fine example of an appropriate group of characters.

IMPORTANT NOTE: If the player characters are the *Eleanor Moraes* crew, the PCs are legally civilians. Captain Dentin has authority over them only in his capacity as survey mission leader. Civilians are not normally obligated to obey the commands of military officers, nor can civilians be forced into military service. However, cooperation between civilians and the military is a tradition on the Frontier. When the time comes, Captain Dentin will try to persuade the player characters to join the attack on the Sathar mothership, because the PCs are needed for the plan's success.

Alpha .4 HISTORY

While visiting the planet Mahg Mar in the FS 24 system, two Sathar scouts encountered a large group of Notui, a primitive but semi-intelligent bird-like race. The Sathar killed one in order to frighten the others. The Notui, more angry than frightened, killed both Sathar and hid their bodies. The entire encounter was over before the scouts had a chance to report their discovery to their two comrades aboard their scout ship, which was hidden at the bottom of a river. Several hours later, the two remaining Sathar used a rocket sled to search for the missing scouts. Bad weather and low visibility caused the rocket sled to crash during



the search. The sled was only slightly damaged, but both Sathar were killed.

When the *Eleanor Moraes*, a UPF survey ship, landed on Mahg Mar several months later, the UPF found no evidence of the Sathar visit. The survey ship was damaged in an incident involving the mutiny of one of the ship's officers. (For details, see the Knight Hawks adventure *Mutiny on the Eleanor Moraes*.) The stranded *Moraes* crew requested emergency assistance, and the assault scout CMS *Osprey* from the Frontier Expeditionary Force was dispatched on a rescue mission. It is at this point that *Face of the Enemy* begins.

IMPORTANT NOTE: The background material for this module assumes that the *Eleanor Moraes* is intact but under repair when the *Osprey* arrives. If your players have played the previous module in this series and mutineer Terry managed to destroy the *Eleanor Moraes*, assume that a character managed to salvage and repair a subspace radio and call for help.

The freighter hull of the *Eleanor Moraes* is still in orbit around Mahg Mar. The freighter contains emergency living quarters, spare parts and equipment, and three landing modules. The characters will be able to reach the freighter hull once the *Osprey* arrives; however, the vehicles stowed in the

landing modules (2 aircars, 2 blimps, and 1 explorer per landing module) cannot be loaded onto the *Osprey*.

Alpha .5 THE FRONTIER EXPEDITIONARY FORCE

The Frontier Expeditionary Force was created in response to Sathar raids in the White Light system. The UPF wanted a substantial presence in the area to supplement the local militias of the Frontier systems. Unlike the system militias, the FEF can range at will over a large area and respond to any Sathar activity in remote or unexplored regions.

The UPF can currently spare only one frigate and a pair of assault scouts for the FEF, but has convinced the Clarion Royal Marines to temporarily attach the assault scout CMS *Osprey* to the FEF. The FEF is officially part of Strike Force NOVA, but has been given broad initiatives by the Fleet Admiralty. In overall command of the FEF is a young and unconventional officer, Space Commodore Karl "Rough" Reider.

Reider has complete confidence in the hand-picked crews of the FEF squadron. When he learns of the derelict on Mahg Mar, he makes the bold decision to order the use of the derelict scout ship to search for the Sathar base.

Alpha .6 APPLYING SKILLS TO SATHAR TECHNOLOGY

At various points in this adventure, player characters will attempt to work with Sathar technology. Sathar artifacts fall into two categories—those designed for use by both Sathar and their subject races, and those designed exclusively for Sathar use. Most distinctively Sathar designs will be incomprehensible to the peoples of the Frontier Worlds. Character skills cannot be successfully applied to these. (This permits the referee to deny the use of certain captured Sathar artifacts in the interests of preserving the mystery of the Sathar.)

On the other hand, many commonly-used artifacts (like weapons, tools, computers, and electronics gear) employ the same basic engineering principles as found in Frontier Worlds technologies, and are designed to be used easily by Sathar subject races, even those somewhat less intelligent and dexterous than the Frontier races. These items may be successfully studied and used with character skills at the normal -20% modifiers for alien designs. You must decide how much time is needed to figure out the operation of an alien artifact.

BETA SECTION: THE NOTUI

Beta .1 PREPARING FOR THE JOURNEY

The repairs to the *Moraes* are proceeding smoothly, with the help of the *Osprey* and her crew. Captain Dentin seems to be a better mission commander than the unfortunate Captain Marlboro, who is under medical care aboard the *Osprey*.

During a brief rest period, Captain Dentin calls you together. "The survey robots have detected what may be a village in the high plateau region, about thirty kilometers from here. We should check out the possibility, and I think you're best for the job. If you like, my men will finish up here while you investigate. You can take whatever equipment you want. You know better than anyone else how important it is that we establish friendly relations with them, if there are intelligent beings out there."

The settlement site is in rugged upland terrain. Show Map 1 to the players and point out the location of the village (shown on Map 4). If you show them Map 4, do not let them see the location of the scout ship. Let the players choose a route to the native village. The atmosphere of Mahg Mar is toxic, and breathers must be worn at all times.

Players may choose to have NPCs accompany the party on the journey. The expedition can take only such equipment as would reasonably be found aboard the *Eleanor Moraes* or the *Osprey*. Dentin says that the survey robots will be needed at the landing site, though he promises to send one if there is an emergency. The expedition is to remain in radio contact with the main base.

The encounters below are designed to occur in the sequence given. The Knight Hawks module *Mutiny on the Eleanor Moraes* gives a more detailed treatment of wilderness adventuring on Mahg Mar and a list of encounters that may be used for this adventure.

Beta .2 SATHAR ARTIFACT

As you travel through the wooded lowlands, you top a rise and see sunlight glinting off metal 500 meters south of your route.

This encounter occurs south of the ridge area, between the two river valleys. Place the encounter on the PCs route through the wooded lowlands. If characters investigate, read the following:

You see a 4x4 meter metal platform with a transparent dome sitting in a small clearing. Inside the dome are two dead Sathar crewmen, still at the controls.

The platform seems to be a rocket-powered hovercraft. The front of the vehicle has a heavy laser mounted in it. A small robot is mounted in the middle of the two sides of the platform. A pair of mechanical arms are attached to each corner of the platform above the rocket motors. There is a hatch on the rear of the dome. The platform appears to have crash-landed here at least a month ago, judging from the condition of the Sathar bodies.

This is a Sathar Rocket Sled. All security and computer locks on this vehicle are Level 3.

The hatch is locked. A careful examination and successful skill checks (defeating security, opening locks, engineering) reveal the following

1. The design is unique, but not technologically advanced.
2. The construction is modular, permitting easy assembly and compact storage.
3. The steering controls appear to attach to the tails of the Sathar.
4. The Sathar have unusual markings on their heads. No one has seen Sathar with these markings before.

Failure to get into the platform will not penalize the players, as long as the charac-

ters contact Dentin and arrange to have the platform brought in to the main camp as soon as possible.

If a character tampers with the rocket motors, control mechanisms, or flight console one of the rockets will ignite, flipping the platform upside down, smashing the transparent dome, flight controls, and Sathar corpses. Characters aboard the platform take 5d10 points of damage, unless they make RS avoidance checks. Any character within 5 meters suffers 3d10 points of damage unless he makes a successful RS avoidance check. The culprit will face Captain Dentin's wrath for damaging a Sathar artifact.

Beta .3 THE PLATEAU

As you leave the wooded lowlands, you see the steep slope of the plateau, at least 400 meters high, before you. The settlement you seek is somewhere on that rugged plateau. From your maps and survey data, you know that your explorer cannot climb the plateau slope; you must either continue on foot or turn back.

Beta .4 FIRST CONTACT!

Beet-Chest, male Notui
MV 60m; IM/RS 6/60; STA 70; ATT 50; DM 2d10

This encounter will occur in the first hex of ridge country that characters enter.

As you slowly make your way through an area of dense undergrowth, a large bird-like creature with brilliantly-colored red scale-feathers on its chest suddenly pops out of the undergrowth ahead of your group. The creature appears for a second, pauses, then instantly draws back into the undergrowth.

The creature is a Notui, who deliberately showed himself to see how the characters

would react. He is hiding in the undergrowth, still watching the party; a character wearing infra-red goggles will be able to see where he is hiding. If the party acts in a friendly, non-threatening way, play encounter Beta .7 immediately.

If characters try to chase or capture the alien, he will stay ahead of them in the undergrowth, which is too thick to allow a clear shot at him. Eventually he escapes. Characters who attempt to track him will find large bird-like footprints. If the tracking

roll is successful, these tracks can be followed to encounter Beta .5.

Beta .5 **CURIOUS BIRDS**

Flightless Birds

MV 60m; IM 5; RS 45; STA 20; ATT 40; DM 1d5

Large Bipedal Carnosaur

MV 60m; IM/RS 5/50; STA 175; ATT 75; DM 4d10

A group of seven one-meter-tall flightless birds emerge from the underbrush and fearlessly walk among you. Some of them peck and pry with blunt beaks at your equipment, while others use their clawed feet to scratch any gear they can reach.

These creatures act like chimps or



raccoons. They will try to eat, hide, or play with anything they can latch their beaks onto. They are basically harmless, but might damage some equipment. They will not fight even if attacked.

Play out this encounter until the characters decide what they are going to do (if anything) about these birds. Shortly after this they will be attacked.

A sudden crashing noise in the underbrush causes the birds to squawk frantically and run around aimlessly. A roaring dinosaur charges out of the underbrush!

Run the encounter with the dinosaur normally. The dinosaur will not fight any character that does not attack it; it will attack the birds instead. If attacked by a character, the dinosaur will fight fearlessly until death.

Beta .6 SIGNS OF INTELLIGENT LIFE

As you trek through the rugged highlands, you see a crude suspension bridge, lashed together with vines and creepers, that spans a swift-running creek. The creek is less than 20 meters wide, but it is in your way and the current would make swimming or wading difficult.

This creek is too small to be shown on the maps. It can be waded, but any character who tries to cross must make a STR avoidance check; failure means that the character has been swept along by the current. The character will be swept to the bank, where he can automatically grab a handhold and climb out.

If a character inspects the bridge he will see that it is decorated with small stones and rope patterns. If they test the bridge characters will find that it supports all of them easily. The area around the bridge is covered with large, bird-like footprints. If a character has seen a Notui before, a tracking check will confirm that these prints were made by a Notui.

Beta .7 BEET-CHEST

Beet-Chest

MV 60m; IM/RS 6/60; STA 70; ATT 50; DM 2d10

Stone-Eye

MV 60m; IM/RS 6/55; STA 80; ATT 40; DM 2d10

A creature that looks like a large, flightless bird emerges from the forest. It wears a decorative harness ornamented with colorful stones, and footgear possibly made from reptile skin. It squawks softly at you. About 30 meters behind this creature another one like him is trying to hide in the brush.

Any characters who saw the Notui in encounter Beta .4 will recognize the species.

COMMUNICATING WITH BEET-CHEST

The easiest way to communicate with the creature will be by drawing either on paper or in the soil. Stick figures will be adequate; the Notui are very good at recognizing symbols and abstractions. This part of the adventure can be especially fun if the players role-play their characters' efforts to communicate with the Notui. You should draw out Beet-Chest's questions and give the drawings to the players.

Beet-Chest identifies himself as a Notui, a word that means "person" or "people" in his language. He then uses drawings to ask three questions:

1. Where are the characters from? (drawing of a Notui shelter)
2. What are they planning to do here? (drawings of humans hunting, humans weaving, and a drawing of an egg)
3. Are they related to the Sathar? (drawing of a Sathar)

If the players cannot figure out the meaning of the drawings, let them make Intuition checks for their characters. If a check is successful, explain Beet-Chest's question to the player. Have the players make an Intuition check for each question. (Empathy and

Communication subskills may be used instead of an Intuition check.)

IMPORTANT NOTE: If a character is carrying a polyvox, the communication with Beet-Chest can serve as the basis for a quick translation of the Notui language. Beet-Chest will cheerfully recite his questions as well as draw them.

If characters ask Beet-Chest to accompany them or lead them to the Notui village, Beet-Chest agrees. If a character wants to program a polyvox for the Notui language, Beet-Chest will name places and things in the Notui language, recite poetry, or say anything asked of him.

Stone-Eye, the other Notui in this encounter, is much more cautious than Beet-Chest. He never completely emerges from the forest cover. If Beet-Chest is attacked or leaves voluntarily with characters, Stone-Eye immediately hurries back to the Notui settlement on the ridge.

You may extend or compress this encounter as you like. The PCs may resume the "dialog" when they arrive at the Notui village.

Once communication is established with the Notui, it is up to the referee whether or not to insist on the players' struggling with communication-by-drawing. To avoid frustrating the players, let the Notui figure out most of what the PCs try to communicate, once the longer communication process begins to interfere with game-play.

Beta .8 EXPERIENCE AWARDS

MAXIMUM AWARD (3 points): Characters reach the village without significant injuries and without unnecessary violence. Sathar artifact examined and reported without harm. Contact with Notui friendly; communication well-established.

AVERAGE AWARD (2 points): Characters reach village. Contact and communication with Notui is partially successful; no serious offense to Notui. Sathar artifact discovered and not destroyed.

MINIMUM AWARD (1 point): Injuries to explorers and unnecessary injuries to local lifeforms. Damage to Sathar artifact. Ineffective communication or offensive behavior in contact with Notui.

GAMMA SECTION: THE VILLAGE

To run this section smoothly, review the material in Referee Briefing: The Notui, and encounters Beta .4 and Beta .7. Your ability to create a credible alien race for your players depends on a thorough understanding of the abilities, behavior, and philosophy of the Notui. This village contains about 100 Notui and 5 priests.

Gamma .1 ENTERING THE VILLAGE

The native settlement is surrounded by a 3-meter wall of creepers interwoven with the natural vegetation. The wall blends perfectly with its surroundings and is nearly invisible from a distance. At the base of the wall are dense thorn bushes. A narrow path through the thorns leads to a pair of large vertical logs that swing to either side on a system of pulleys, pressing the natural wall aside to permit entry into the settlement.

Characters can't approach closer than 100 meters to the settlement without meeting a representative of the village who appears silently from the forest to investigate the characters. (If the PCs successfully established contact with the Notui before this, the representative leads them directly into the settlement.) Once the PCs make their peaceful intentions plain, the Notui welcome them into the village.

The walls enclose an oval area 50 meters in diameter. The heavy logs and the thick wall of vines is sufficient to deter any native predators, providing a secure environment for the tribe. There are two entrances, at opposite ends of the enclosure.

Shelters constructed from wooden frames and woven vines stand clustered in the center of the enclosure. Dense plant growth is cultivated on the wood-and-vine frameworks, providing insulation and windbreak. The exteriors of the shelters, the interior of the encircling wall, and the surfaces of various other constructions are covered with brightly-colored and decorative designs of incomprehensible pattern.

The shelters are rough lean-tos, open on one side. The Notui use great heaps of dry, fluffy plant fiber as cushioning and insulation, making a shelter look like a bird nest. This material, however, is more organized and flexible; the material can be moved to form "furniture" of many shapes and purposes.

The settlement contains many large insect hives, apparently built by the Notui.

The insects are the equivalent of livestock for this insectivorous race. The insects will prove annoying but harmless to characters.

As the explorers walk through the village, the villagers stand around gawking at the visitors. Their curiosity is plain by their careful attention to anything a character says or does. The PCs are brought directly to a large shelter in the center of the village.

Inside the large shelter sit a group of five Notui draped with cloaks that look like chain mail made from woven reeds. The exposed skin of these individuals appears more brittle and scaly than on the other Notui.

The Notui in the shelter are the priests, spiritual and social leaders of the Notui community. The PCs may guess that the Notui in the central shelter are older than the other Notui. Characters with psycho-social skills will realize these Notui are physically feeble and weaker than the other Notui.

COMMUNICATING WITH THE NOTUI

If a character programmed a polyvox for the Notui language during the conversation with Beet-Chest, communication with the priests will be easier. A pre-programmed polyvox will decipher the language in 2 hours. If the polyvox is programmed during the conversation with the priests, a full translation will take 10 hours.

To sustain the alien atmosphere of the adventure, present the Notui communications in a broken English. In the interests of speeding up play, it is not necessary to require the players to role-play their communications with the Notui. Of course, if the players enjoy it, encouraged them to play this feature of the scenario to the hilt.

Gamma .2 THE NOTUI PRIESTS

The most immediate concern of the Notui priests is whether the visitors are Sathar and whether they come to burn more Notui. Once the priests' fears on this score are removed, they will answer any questions.

THE NOTUI-SATHAR CONTACT

Three months ago a group of Notui were gathering decorative colored stones near this settlement. A young Notui got lost, and in looking for the group, met two new animals (Sathar scouts). The scouts killed him for sport with laser fire. The remainder of the group discovered what had happened, ambushed the Sathar, and killed them before they could send a message to the scout ship.

The Notui are very concerned that the PCs might be associated with the Sathar. Any hint of behavior similar to the Sathar's makes the Notui wary and suspicious. Unnecessary violence by characters, particularly with weapons producing fire, electricity, or heat burns, causes the Notui to distrust and fear the characters. The Notui have a horror of fire, since they do not use it themselves, and its manifestations in nature, usually the result of a lightning strike, represents all that is destructive and capricious.

If anyone asks about unusual celestial phenomena, the Notui priests will mention a fireball that descended from the sky to the earth. This occurred only four days before the Sathar incident. The priests can estimate the approximate distance and heading of its landing site. Since they have no concept of flying transport, the Notui didn't connect the fireball with the Sathar, but they catch on immediately if the characters point it out.

A group that is playing very well will make some attempt to determine precisely where the Sathar ship came down. The Notui priests will point in the direction of the rocket platform, even though they do not know anything about the smaller craft. The priests cannot provide an accurate estimate of distance. If the party members don't inquire, Captain Dentin will suggest the question when the explorers make a radio report.

Gamma .3 NOTUI COOPERATION

Characters may seek practical assistance from the Notui. In general, the Notui are



extremely friendly and eager to be helpful; however, they will do nothing that is dangerous, and they will avoid Sathar artifacts as ordered by their priests. If the referee feels that the players are trying to exploit the Notui, that is how the Notui feel. If characters ask too much, the Notui will gradually become disenchanted and unwilling to help. They may become hostile if any Notui is forced to do something against his will. Reasonable and trivial requests will almost always be cheerfully acknowledged. Excessive requests for dangerous or physically exhausting work will be sourly rejected, and relations with the Notui will deteriorate.

Gamma .4 ORDERS FROM DENTIN

As soon as the party makes its preliminary report about the Notui account of the Sathar visit, Dentin orders the explorers to return immediately to the spaceships for a conference.

Gamma .5 EXPERIENCE AWARDS

MAXIMUM AWARD (3 points): Observant and perceptive conference with Notui priests yields all important data about the Sathar. Strong friendship with Notui and appreciation of their culture.

AVERAGE AWARD (2 points): Friendly contact with Notui. Obtain account of Sathar encounter.

MINIMUM AWARD (1 point): Obtain information permitting location of Sathar derelict. Avoid alienating Notui.

NO AWARD (0 points): Totally blow encounter. Notui greatly offended. Captain Dentin sends NPC group to patch up relations and discover information.

DELTA SECTION: THE SATHAR SCOUT SHIP

Delta .1 PLANNING THE SEARCH

After you return from the Notui expedition, Dentin holds a conference aboard the *Osprey*. He spreads a thick sheath of computer analysis sheets on the table and projects on the wall a map of the surrounding region.

"I have some ideas about this Sathar business, but I want to see if you come up with the same conclusions that I do. Let's take another good look at what we know and see if we can answer a few questions.

"One, are there Sathar still on the planet?

"Two, what were they doing here?

"Three, where do we go from here?"

"We used the survey robots to take videographs of the area indicated by the Notui. There is no scorched vegetation or any other visible sign of a landing in that area. Any speculation on where they might have landed?"

Let the players speculate and ask questions as long as they like. There are two vital facts that may be of use in finding the scout ship:

1. The Sathar ship would normally have left a large scorched area anywhere it landed.
2. A spaceship could have landed in a body of water without leaving any trace of its presence on the shore.

If the characters don't make these points to Dentin in a reasonable amount of time, he can bring them to their attention. While waiting for further orders from FEF headquarters, Dentin will direct the party to investigate the river for signs of a Sathar visit while the *Osprey's* personnel conduct additional surveys in an attempt to locate any other Sathar.

The players should prepare a list of the equipment they need for the expedition. Any minor items they need later can be

delivered to the site by remote survey robot.

Delta .2 AT THE RIVER

The only clue to the ship's location visible above the water's surface is a large metal cable that tethers the scout ship's airlock to a tree along the river bank. The Sathar used the cable to ferry themselves to the shore against the river's strong current. If the party searches along the bank of the river they will eventually discover this cable. All other traces of the Sathar have been erased by weathering.

If the party takes the explorer to the river, when the explorer enters the river hex containing the scout ship, the explorer's compass will be affected by the scout ship's metal hull. If no one checks the compass, let the driver make an Intuition check to notice the malfunctioning compass.

The river itself is 500 meters across, drops off quickly to a depth of 20 meters, and has a current of 5 km/hour. The ship, which is 20 meters long, rests on the bottom, in the middle of the channel.

The first challenge is to devise some means to reach the Sathar ship. An explorer can enter the water, but cannot be submerged. It is too far to swim underwater, and most of the expedition's gear won't function if immersed in water. The breathers, especially tend to malfunction if immersed. A space suit protects a character and his gear from the water, but will prove too buoyant for underwater use. The characters can improvise weight belts or similar devices, of course. Characters must figure out a way to keep their equipment dry.

If the party takes reasonable precautions, the underwater journey should not be too difficult. If the players are careless or poorly-prepared, the referee may require Dexterity, Logic, or Intuition Checks to avoid accidents or malfunctioning gear.

If the discovery of the scout ship is reported to Dentin, he will forbid the use of explosives to force the scout ship hull or air locks.

Delta .3 THE HIDDEN SHIP

Since the four Sathar scouts perished in unusual circumstances, the automatic systems have not sent an alert back to the mothership (located in the asteroid belt of the unexplored star system FS 30; five light years away). The Sathar robots are keeping the ship in readiness for a crew that will never return. Sufficient power remains to maintain the ship for years; the ship's security program and defenses will automatically take over if intruders try to enter the ship. Don't forget that a -20% modifier applies to all skills used on security, computer, and operating systems aboard the Sathar scout ship because of alien technology. All alarm systems, and locks on the scout ship are Level 3.

THE OUTER AIRLOCK DOOR (1)

The cable leads along the bed of the river to what is obviously a spaceship. Narrow seams indicate a hatch on the starboard hull near the bow. A large number of shallow depressions surround the outline of the door inside and outside of the seams.

A technician must detect and deactivate the airlock's security system, then unlock the door. The system is activated or deactivated by two small depressions on each side of the door. The Sathar place their manipulating tentacles simultaneously in both depressions, tapping on a membrane in a special sequence. If the characters fail to deactivate the airlock security system, the Sathar ship's computer will be alerted to the intruders' presence. The alarm system is triggered and a Repel Intruders program is activated, establishing a computer link with all robots and organizing them to defend the ship.

When the Repel Intruders program is activated, a bank of blinking amber lights around each hatchway will light up. This normally warns Sathar crewmen of an attack, and is a hint to the players that their attempts to deactivate the security system have failed.

THE AIRLOCK (2)

As you open the hatch, you hear a whooshing sound and feel an undertow as a chamber fills with water.

Characters within one meter of the opening must make a Dexterity check or be swept into the chamber (no chance of damage, but it keeps the players interested). There is an identical door on the other side of the chamber. Along the chamber's left wall is a series of depressions, gauges, and unfamiliar instruments.

If the party has not succeeded in deactivating the airlock security program, a bank of amber lights flash on and off around the top of the chamber. The controls to close the door and cycle the airlock are on the wall on the left. Until the outer door is

closed and the airlock fills with air, the inner airlock door will not open. The inner airlock door has a level 3 security lock.

If the deactivation and lock opening checks fail, you should eventually allow the characters to safely operate the airlock and enter the ship. Time delay due to failure is up to you, but such setbacks should only be temporary.

ROCKET SLED STORAGE BAY (3)

2 Sathar "Cockroach I" security robots (Level 2; MV 20m; IM/RS 5/50; STA 75; ATT 50%; DM Special). Each robot has four dorsal turrets, one each of:

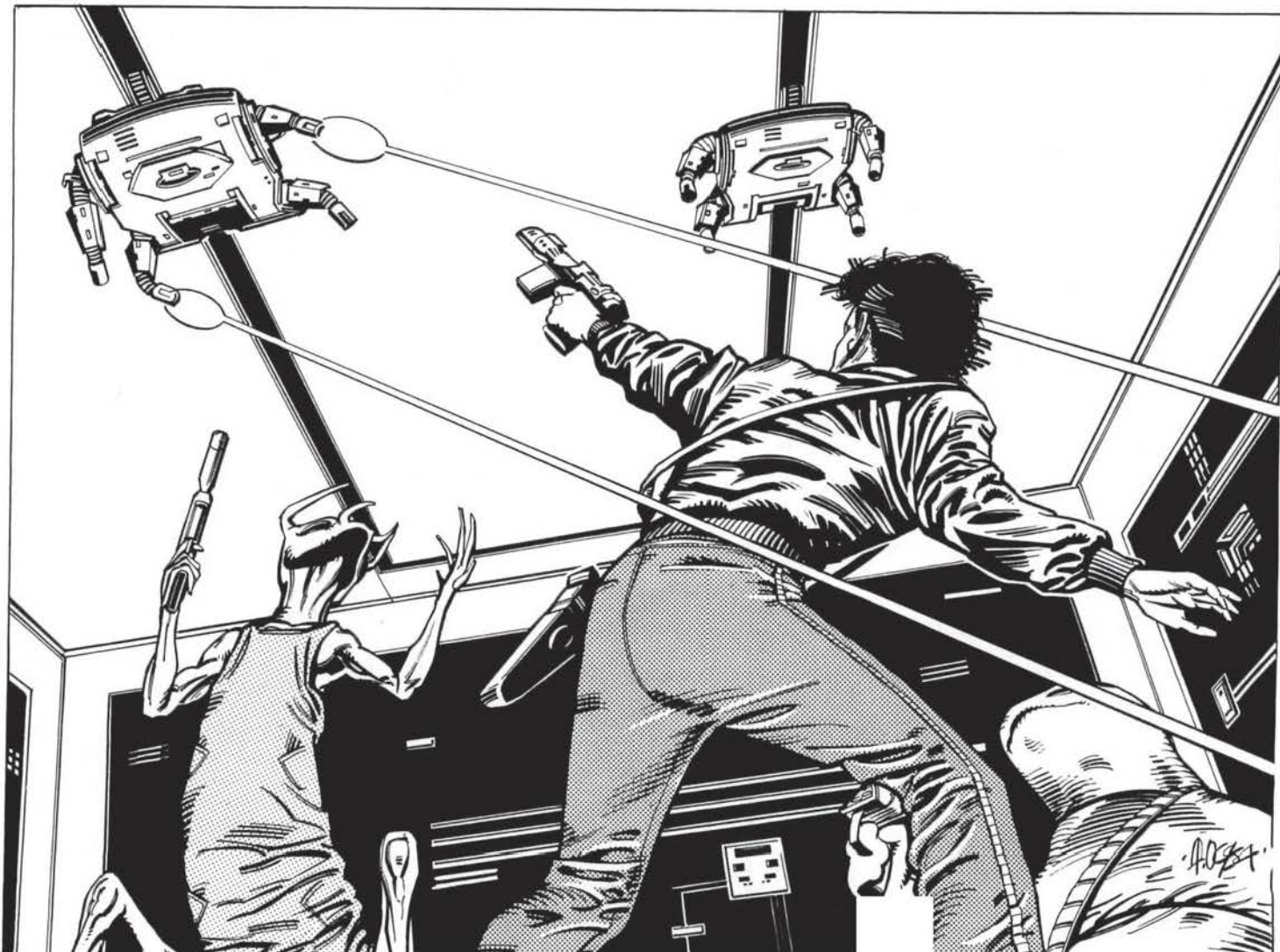
- Laser pistol, set for 2d10 per shot, 50 SEU;
- Electrostunner, set for blast, 50 SEU
- Sonic stunner, 20 SEU
- Needler pistol, 10 shots

As the airlock door opens, you see that the compartment beyond contains storage

containers and empty racks, and two cockroach-like robots 1 meter long and .5 meters wide. Each robot has a large central turret and four miniature turrets evenly spaced around its oval upper surface. The four smaller turrets apparently hold weapons.

If characters triggered the Repel Intruders program when they entered the ship, the robots get initiative; otherwise, roll normally for initiative and conduct combat.

The range is point blank. The robots will not move, continuing to fire, until all intruders are dead or motionless. The robots will not advance into the airlock. The robots target by video/infrared scanners. They fire on moving targets only and their chance to hit can be reduced to 05% by smoke or by damage to the sensors in the central turret.



If the party immediately closes the intervening door against the robots the airlock will not cycle and the bridge computer will automatically open the door two rounds after the characters close it. (This may catch the party by surprise!) This time the inner airlock door won't close.

Locked hatches lead forward to the bridge and to the rear (the living space, computer center, and storage compartments).

In the event one or more robots are captured and reprogrammed, the referee can limit their usefulness by using any of the following:

1. Repair is nearly impossible, as spare parts are of Sathar manufacture and almost impossible to duplicate.
2. The imbedded weaponry is of Sathar manufacture; no reloads are available, aside from stores in this ship.
3. The FEF confiscates captured Sathar equipment for analysis.

THE BRIDGE (4)

This compartment contains two acceleration couches of unfamiliar design. The couches face control consoles. The function of the controls is unknown.

The consoles contain flight, navigation, communication, and security systems controls. A technician who figures out how to operate the security systems can use the console to deactivate installation security (hatch locks and alarms). The ship is prepared to destroy itself in ten minutes from the moment the alarm was sounded, but no Sathar survives to confirm the self-destruct sequence. A computer terminal here is linked to the main computer (access is blocked by a Level 3 computer lock).

CREW QUARTERS (5)

2 Sathar "Spider I" Workbots (Level 2; MV 60m; IM/RS 5/50; STA 75; ATT 50; DM 2d10 per arm pair or Special)

If alerted, each robot carries 4 laser pistols, DM 2d10 per shot; 20 SEU per pistol.

This compartment is almost filled by two large and two small covered troughs. A computer console is at one end of each large trough. A track running the length of the compartment is directly above each large trough. A robot is attached to each track. Each robot has four arms and

a sensor turret. The turrets are swiveling in your direction.

If the ship is alerted, the two level 2 work robots are armed with four laser pistols each and will attack. Roll normally for initiative and conduct combat.

If unalerted, the robots immediately transmit a radio signal that alerts the security system when characters enter the compartment. The robots then slide rapidly on their tracks to the rear of the compartment where the weapons are stored. The party will get two free turns before the robots can return fire.

A robot's chance to hit can be reduced to 05% by smoke or by damage to the sensor turret.

The smaller troughs are food storage for the Sathar. The large troughs are fluid baths that serve as beds for two of the crew. The computer consoles are linked to the main computer and have level 3 security locks.

The hatch to area 6 is locked.

PASSAGEWAY (6)

2 Sathar "Spider I" Workbots (Level 2; MV 60m; IM/RS 5/50; STA 75; ATT 50; DM 2d10 per arm pair or Special)

Each robot has four laser pistols, set for 2d10, 20 SEU per pistol.

You enter a corridor with a hatch at the opposite end and a door in each side wall. Two robots in the corridor open fire on you with four laser pistols each. Each robot has four arms and a sensor turret.

A robot's chance to hit can be reduced to 05% by smoke or by damage to the sensor turret.

COMPUTER ROOM (7)

This compartment is obviously the ship's computer room.

The computer is prepared to destroy its stored data, but cannot do so without a confirmation code. A technician can detect installation security on the computer and deactivate it. A computer technician can defeat the computer's security systems and access the computer. See below for information obtainable from the computer.

LIFE SUPPORT (8)

This compartment contains control consoles, pump machinery, water tanks, and a covered trough full of insects.

In addition to handling water, atmosphere, and waste processing functions, this compartment houses the Sathar food supply, a grub farm connecting with the troughs around the fluid baths in area 5.

MOTORS AND STORAGE (9)

This compartment holds racks of weapons, storage containers, four deactivated cockroach-like robots, and two powerful electric motors.

The robots are "Cockroach I" security bots. The electric motors are powered by the ship's atomic engines and drive twin screws that allow underwater maneuvering.

SATHAR GEAR

- 4 Sathar space suits with radiation protection
- 8 spare suit life support cannisters
- 2 glijets with tail-directed maneuver controls
- 50 fuel cannisters for glijet rocket packs
- 2 engineer tool boxes
- 1 laser tool/power pack
- 2 laser rifles
- 2 heavy lasers
- 4 grenade rifles
- 60 rifle grenades (10 of each type)
- 20 50-gram charges of Tornadium D-19
- 4 stunsticks
- 4 electrostunners
- 4 sonic stunners
- 4 laser pistols
- 4 vibroknives
- 4 sonic knives
- 2 armored space suits
- 6 albedo screen/skinsuits sets

ATOMIC ENGINE PODS (10)

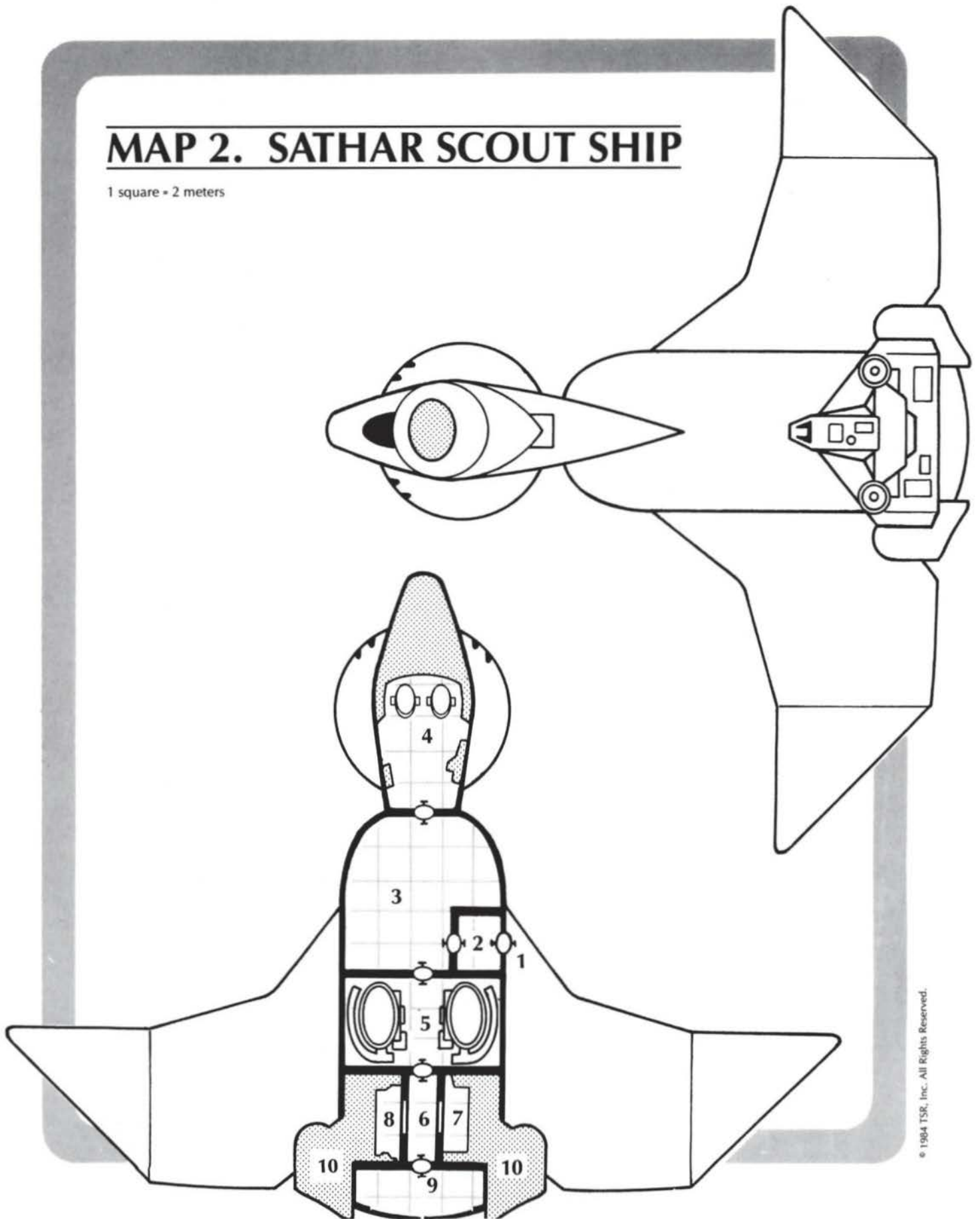
The pods have maintenance hatches that can be removed for servicing the engines. The engines are of an unusual design.

Delta .4 THE SHIP YIELDS ITS SECRETS

When the ship is captured and its security systems are deactivated, a search of the ship's computer files reveals the following:

MAP 2. SATHAR SCOUT SHIP

1 square = 2 meters



THE COMPUTER MEMORY BANKS

Most data files are incomprehensible because of the language barrier. Proper analysis of this data must await the experts of the Frontier Worlds. However, some of the numeric data and screen displays are easier to decipher. The following valuable information is soon discovered:

1. The ship's log indicates a series of visits to several local star systems. All of these flights originate and terminate at the same distance from the central star of the FS 30 system five light years from Mahg Mar.
2. The radio log indicates strict radio silence except for one transmission which is broadcast every time the ship approaches within 500,000 km of a point in the FS 30 system.
3. The astrogation log records the star route from the FS 30 system to Mahg Mar.

THE FLIGHT AND OPERATING SYSTEMS

No ship like this has been encountered before. It is apparently of recent construction and advanced design. The following specific information is particularly significant:

1. The drives and astrogation systems are built on principles similar to the latest Frontier Worlds designs. It should be possible to operate the scoutship with a UPF crew.
2. All systems appear to be operational. The engines have been recently overhauled and the ship appears to be ready for action.
3. Drive, astrogation, engineering, and maneuver programs suggest a high level of automation of routine operational tasks.
4. The controls are designed to accommodate operators of varied races with different manipulative limbs and senses.
5. The absence of ship's weapons and the high acceleration capability are atypical of known Sathar craft. Sathar apparently can withstand accelerations of up to six gravities for an indeterminate period.

SATHAR SCOUT DESIGN

For referee's use only. This information may be revealed as the characters investigate the ship. Note that the specifications do not conform to normal Knight Hawks ship design rules. This is a special design that

balances its unusual abilities (superior maneuver and acceleration) with distinctive liabilities (no armament and weak hull).

A Sathar scout ship is unarmed but maneuverable and capable of high acceleration, and maneuvering. A scoutship carries a crew of four Sathar, plus robots. Scoutships are capable of atmospheric flight and can land or take off from shore or underwater.



Length:	40m	Width:	10m
Hull Size:	3	Hull Points:	10*
Wing Span:	50m	Hatches:	1
MR:	5	ADF:	6
DCR:	29		
Engines:	2 A-rated Atomics		
Fuel:	1 loaded, 1 in reserve		
Weapons:	None		
Defenses:	reflective hull		
Life Support:	main and backup—capacity 6		

Communi-

cations: videocom, subspace radio

Detection: radar

Computer Programs:

Computer Security

Installation Security

Computer Lockout

Damage Control

Information

Storage

Alarm

Astrogation

Life Support

Atomic Drive

Robot Management

* Hull Section structural points only 100 + 2d100

All security, alarm, and computer lock systems are at Level 3.

Delta .5

MAKING THE REPORT

When the analysis of the Sathar scoutship is complete, Captain Dentin relays the information to Commodore Reider at FEF headquarters on Clarion. Reider acknowledges the report with unconcealed excitement and tells Dentin to stand by for further orders concerning the scoutship. In the meantime Dentin is to make all preparations for putting a crew aboard the scoutship and readying her for an interstellar voyage.

Delta .6

EXPERIENCE AWARDS

MAXIMUM AWARD (6 points): Gain control of the scoutship with minimum damage to the ship and injury to the exploration team. Careful analysis of the the ship. Report includes inference of Sathar installation, based on computer data.

AVERAGE AWARD (4-5 points): Capture scoutship without serious casualties and without damage affecting scoutship's seaworthiness. Study ship and report information to Dentin.

MINIMUM AWARD (2-3 points): Capture scoutship, but with serious casualties and damage to the ship. Obtain and report computer data to Dentin.



PREGENERATED CHARACTERS

Lieutenant Dentin is an NPC;
the others can be used as PCs.

LIEUTENANT GREGOR DENTIN, CAPTAIN

RACE: Human

STR/STA	60/65	PS	3
DEX/RS	50/50	IM	5
INT/LOG	55/55	RW	25
PER/LDR	45/55	M	30

Special Abilities: None

Skills: Technician PSA, Technician 6, Computer 2, Robotics 2, Pilot 3, Engineering 1

Tenacious, aggressive, rough background. Driven by personal pride and loyalty. Fanatic hatred of Sathar. Overwhelming ambition to capture one alive, or at least an intact space vessel.

LT. BOOBOR MOMNOD, 1ST OFFICER

RACE: Dralasite

STR/STA	70/60	PS	4
DEX/RS	50/50	IM	5
INT/LOG	55/65	RW	25
PER/LDR	50/40	M	35

Special Abilities: Form Change, Perception 20%

Skills: Technician PSA, Technician 6, Computer 2, Projectile Weapons 3, Pilot 2

Clever, unconventional, always hatching hare-brained schemes that often work, simply because they are so outlandish. Though a capable fighter, he prefers trickery.

M'KIX RIS'Z, JR. LIEUTENANT (Engineer)

RACE: Vrusk

STR/STA	40/40	PS	2
DEX/RS	65/65	IM	7
INT/LOG	60/50	RW	33
PER/LDR	55/65	M	35

Special Abilities: Ambidexterity, Comprehension 25%

Skills: Technician PSA, Technician 5, Robotics 2, Beam Weapons 3, Computer 3, Engineering 3

Hard-working, but not ambitious. Proud of

THE CREW OF THE CMS OSPREY

intellectual and professional accomplishments, but longs for days of action and adventure. Loves to tinker. Well-respected and trusted by crew.

RHANDA KLAST, JR. LIEUTENANT (Astrogator)

RACE: Human

STR/STA	65/60	PS	4
DEX/RS	50/40	IM	4
INT/LOG	50/60	RW	25
PER/LDR	60/50	M	33

Special Abilities: None

Skills: Technical PSA, Comp 6, Projectile Weapons 4, Gyro Jet Weapons 2, Astrogation 2, Rocket Weapons 2

Hot-tempered, rash, impatient, though usually well-controlled with friends (the crew). Rhanda hates astrogation work, but is very good at it.

STANN HARTIS, GUNNER (Marine)

RACE: Human

STR/STA	50/60	PS	3
DEX/RS	60/55	IM	6
INT/LOG	50/45	RW	30
PER/LDR	50/60	M	30

Special Abilities: None

Skills: Military PSA, Beam Weapons 6, Gyro Jet Weapons 3, Energy Weapons 2

A born leader with a rebellious streak. Often in trouble in the past, has found a home on the *Osprey*. Very loyal to fellow crew members. Sometimes hard on strangers.

BEEBE RHED, GUNNER (Marine)

RACE: Yazirian

STR/STA	40/50	PS	2
DEX/RS	65/65	IM	7
INT/LOG	50/50	RW	33
PER/LDR	45/45	M	33

Special Abilities: Battle Rage 25%, Gliding, Night Vision

Skills: Military PSA, Power Weapons 5, Gyro Jet Weapons 2, Martial Arts 3, Rocket Weapons 3

Unpredictable and moody. Very competent, loves combat. Very fond of the *Osprey*, and by association, of her crew. Peculiar talent for being in the right place at the right time.

LETTES HRADEM, 2ND ENGINEER (Medic)

RACE: Human

STR/STA	45/55	PS	2
DEX/RS	60/50	IM	5
INT/LOG	55/45	RW	30
PER/LDR	40/40	M	30

Special Abilities: Battle Rage 15%, Gliding, Night Vision

Skills: Technical PSA, Technician 4, Robotics 3, Medical 2, Engineering 2

Formerly a medic in a mercenary unit. Embarked on a new career, hopes to become a civilian space pilot. The militia provides free training, room and board, and valuable experience.

BOGAN DOOREM, COOK (Marine)

RACE: Dralasite

STR/STA	60/80	PS	4
DEX/RS	50/50	IM	5
INT/LOG	45/45	RW	25
PER/LDR	50/40	M	30

Special Abilities: Form Change, Perception 10%

Skills: Military PSA, Beam Weapons 6, Martial Arts 5, Energy Weapons 2

Fine soldier, dangerous cook. Fond of exotic and spicy cuisine. Bogan is a careerist and would be happy to remain with the *Osprey* until retirement in five years. Bogan never takes unnecessary risks.

S'HAX MRILL'Z (Marine)

RACE: Vrusk

STR/STA	40/50	PS	2
DEX/RS	70/60	IM	6
INT/LOG	45/45	RW	35
PER/LDR	50/50	M	35

Special Abilities: Ambidexterity, Comprehension 37%

Skills: Military PSA, Power Weapons 4, Gyro Jet Weapons 4, Rocket Weapons 2

S'hax joined the Royal Marines for adventure and is always in the thick of action. Has led a charmed life, often barely escaping death. Bogan is trying to have a settling influence on S'hax's foolhardy enthusiasm.

"HAM" LABORI (Marine)

RACE: Human

STR/STA	70/70	PS	4
DEX/RS	65/55	IM	6
INT/LOG	45/40	RW	33
PER/LDR	50/45	M	35

Special Abilities: None

Skills: Military PSA, Beam Weapons 6, Gyro Jet Weapons 5, Martial Arts 3, Energy Weapons 1

A rookie to the *Osprey*, but an experienced soldier. It is rumored that "Ham" is a fugitive from justice, but no proof has ever been found. "Ham" seems to be trustworthy.

THE CREW OF THE ELEANOR MORAES**GRATCHU HAKES, LIEUTENANT (Acting Captain)**

RACE: Yazirian

STR/STA	40/50	PS	2
DEX/RS	60/55	IM	6
INT/LOG	45/55	RW	30
PER/LDR	50/60	M	30

Special Abilities: Battle Rage 10%, Gliding, Night Vision

Skills: Technical PSA, Technician 6, Computer 2, Beam Weapons 2, Pilot 2, Martial Arts 2

Hot-tempered and impulsive by nature, he has schooled himself to control his emotions and to carefully consider his options. Knows when to ask for advice, but can act swiftly and decisively if necessary. When in doubt, he withdraws, not out of cowardice but out of a conviction that rash action is often foolish action.

MARNIE SYMMES, LIEUTENANT (Medic)

RACE: Human

STR/STA	40/60	PS	2
DEX/RS	55/55	IM	6
INT/LOG	65/60	RW	28
PER/LDR	50/50	M	28

Special Abilities: None

Skills: BioSocial PSA, Medic 4, Environmental 2, Beam Weapons 6, Energy Weapons 1

Intelligent and experienced, but has never sought leadership responsibility. The mutiny has required that she assume authority, and she did so effectively and intelligently. She is well-read and sophisticated, and a passable musician.

TERRENCE FITZPATRICK (Survey Team)

RACE: Human

STR/STA	55/60	PS	3
DEX/RS	50/40	IM	4
INT/LOG	50/60	RW	25
PER/LDR	70/70	M	28

Special Abilities: None

Skills: Bio-social PSA, Environmental 4, Psychosocial 1, Technician 6, Computer 2, Pilot 1

Former university professor and noted authority on planetary ecologies. Clever administrator, politician, and peacemaker, universally trusted and respected by the crew. In excellent physical condition for a man of his age. Believed to be a bit of a crackpot, but undeniably clever and charming.

LAPPSOD DOG (Survey Team)

RACE: Dralasite

STR/STA	65/60	PS	4
DEX/RS	50/50	IM	5
INT/LOG	50/55	RW	25
PER/LDR	40/40	M	33

Special Abilities: Form Change, Perception 05%

Skills: Technical PSA, Robotics 4, Computer 2, Technician 4, Engineering 1, Beam Weapons 2

A young and robust specimen of its race, Lappsod is unusually "reserved" (by Dralasite standards). Appalling taste in humor. Very proud of its strength, always showing off and challenging others to contests. A card and loud "dresser" who dyes its skin in garish colors. Hard on the nerves sometimes.

GLIGITS PSSHEST (Survey Team)

RACE: Vrusk

STR/STA	55/50	PS	3
DEX/RS	65/70	IM	7
INT/LOG	50/40	RW	33
PER/LDR	55/55	M	33

Special Abilities: Ambidexterity, Comprehension 28%

Skills: Bio-social PSA, Psychosocial 4, Technician 1, Beam Weapons 6, Demolition 1, Energy Weapons 1

Merchant background, entered academic study of alien cultures at a late age. Slightly condescending attitude to others, though not really offensive. Rumors that Glig is an agent for the Pan Galactic Corporation (PGC) are unconfirmed.

LEONID MOLOKOV, ASTROGATOR (Survey Team)

RACE: Human

STR/STA	40/40	PS	2
DEX/RS	65/60	IM	6
INT/LOG	50/70	RW	33
PER/LDR	55/55	M	33

Special Abilities: None

Skills: Technical PSA, Computer 6, Robotics 2, Medical 1, Astrogration 1, Martial Arts 2, Power Weapons 1

Wealthy child genius, wizard with computers. Has worked as an astrogator for civilian passenger services. Good-natured and eager to please, but rather eccentric, particularly in his fondness for adventure novels and videos. The crew tolerates Leonid's eccentricities with good humor.

PRADI INNESTI, LIEUTENANT (Engineer)

RACE: Yasirian

STR/STA	50/50	PS	3
DEX/RS	60/55	IM	6
INT/LOG	45/50	RW	30
PER/LDR	50/50	M	30

Special Abilities: Battle Rage 15%, Gliding, Night Vision

Skills: Technical PSA, Technician 5, Beam Weapons 2, Computer 2, Engineering 4

Recently badly injured in a blimp crash and somewhat shaken by it. Shy and quiet, seldom speaks unless spoken to. Knows the Moraes by heart. If an emergency requires an improvised repair or jury-rig, Innessi can be relied on. Always seems to know what to do before he is ordered to do it.

PLAYER CHARACTER BACKGROUND REPORT

THE RESCUE MISSION

Minotaur Station received a distress call from the UPF Survey vessel *Eleanor Moraes*, originating from an unexplored system 10 light years from Theseus, far beyond the area of colonized space called the Frontier Sector. Bill Terry, the ship's executive officer, had mutinied, an act without apparent logic or motivation. In the mutiny, Captain Marlboro and Engineer Innessi were seriously hurt. In the process of recapturing the *Moraes*, the ship suffered extensive damage. The crew managed to rig a subspace radio and broadcast the distress call.

Minotaur Station relayed the call to the Frontier Expeditionary Force headquarters on Clarion. Commodore Reider dispatched the assault scout CMS *Osprey* with skilled engineers, spare parts, and instructions to assist the *Moraes's* crew in making repairs. Reider further directed Lieutenant Dentin, captain of the *Osprey*, to investigate the suspicious circumstances of the mutiny, looking particularly for evidence of Sathar subversion and sabotage.

The *Osprey* was also given broad discretion in pursuing the Standing Orders of the FEF (which require an ongoing effort to suppress Sathar espionage activity, to destroy any bases which support Sathar espionage, and, if possible, to capture Sathar personnel and vessels for analysis). FEF personnel are encouraged to use independent initiative in pursuance of these orders.

The *Osprey* made the voyage from Clarion Station (the FEF base of operations) to the FS 24 system and the planet Mahg Mar (where the *Moraes* was grounded) in 24 days, with two-day stopovers at Minotaur Station and Padda system for engine overhauls. When the *Osprey* finally landed on Mahg Mar, the crew of the *Moraes* had made most of the necessary repairs and Pradi Innessi had recovered from his injuries.

MAHG MAR

Mahg Mar is a planet well-suited for supporting life, though its atmosphere is slightly toxic (breathers are necessary for characters). The planet is 12,350 km in diameter and has a gravity of .98007. Its day is 23 hours, 57 minutes GST. The surface temperature ranges from -20 to 25 degrees Centigrade. The *Eleanor Moraes* mission is the first UPF exploration of the planet. The module *Mutiny on the Eleanor Moraes* gives more complete information on the planet.

THE ELEANOR MORAES

The following is a brief description of the exploration survey ship UPFS *Eleanor Moraes*. Further information can be found in the module *Mutiny on the Eleanor Moraes*.

Hull Size:	3
Length	40 meters; 50 meters with lander module; 60 meters with lander module legs extended.
Diameter:	24 meters (not including wing/engine mounts); 28 meters with lander module.
Engines:	2 atomic, size A
ADF/MR:	4/3
Weapons:	2 laser batteries
Defenses:	None
Crew:	12
Lander Modules Carried:	4
Vehicles:	2 explorers, 2 airships per lander module

One of the lander modules is on the surface of the planet Mahg Mar (it was attached to the *Eleanor Moraes* when the ship landed). The other three lander modules are in orbit with the remainder of the ship's hull. The

airships in the lander module on-planet were disabled or destroyed by mutineer First Officer Bill Terry. The two explorers are still intact.

ROBOTS

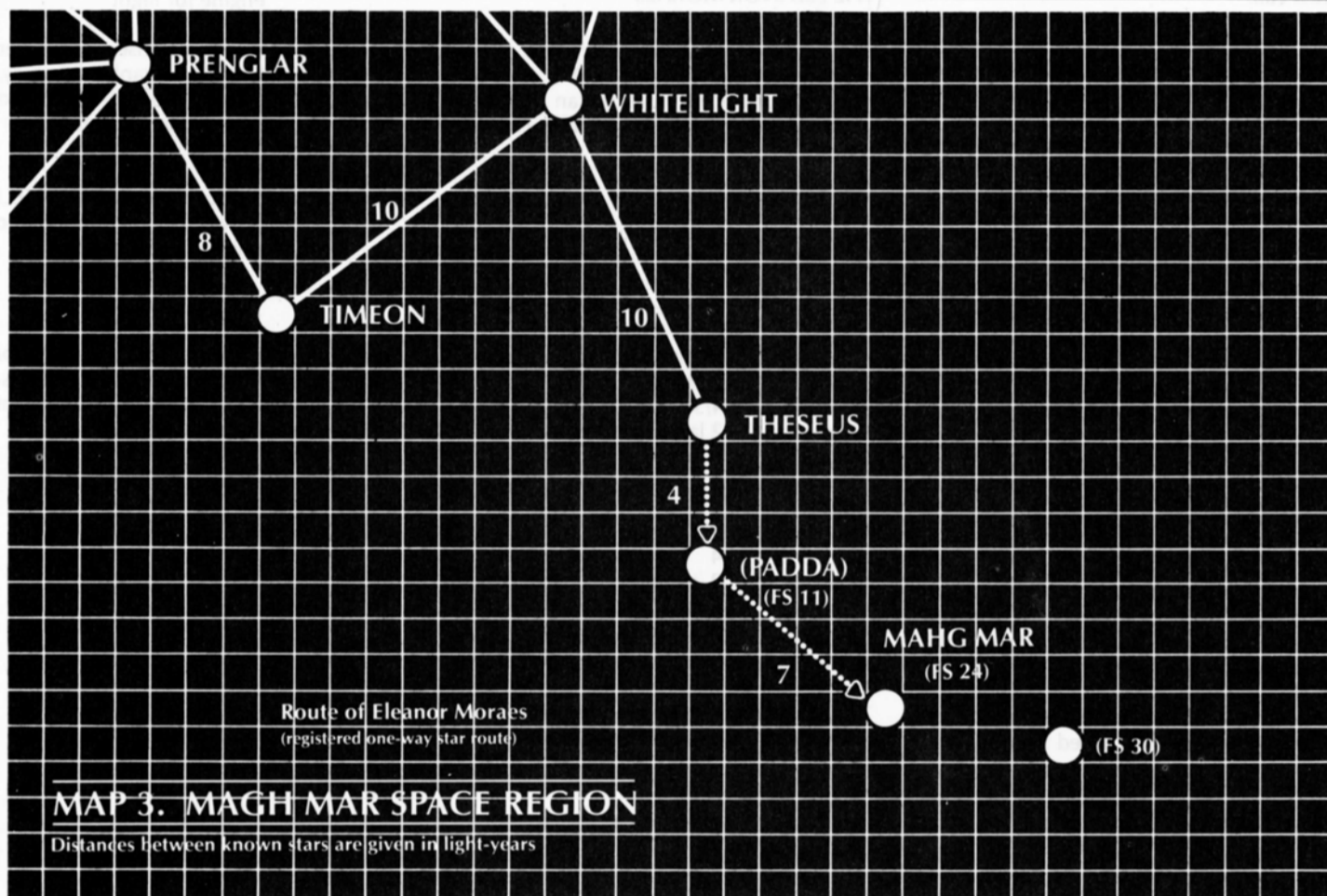
Each lander module carries three survey robots with the following characteristics:

Remote Expedition Survey Robot

Level:	1
Body Type:	Heavy Duty
Movement:	4 mechanical legs for surface movement; jetcopter engine for flight
Manipulators:	2 heavy duty arms
Programs:	Attack/Defense, Computer Link, Topographical Survey, Sample Collection, Photo survey, Site Management
Battery:	Type 2
Stamina:	500
Weapons:	1 heavy laser with 100 SEU power pack; 1 automatic rifle with 100 rounds

Basic Change to Hit:	70%
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If you played *Mutiny on the Eleanor Moraes*, any robots that survived that mission are available; otherwise assume that two survey robots are available.



EPSILON SECTION: THE BATTLE OF BASE ALPHA

You should not try to run this section until you are familiar with the mothership layout, routines, and Sathar tactics. These are given in Epsilon .4.

IMPORTANT NOTE: There is an error in the numbering on Map 6: Sathar Mothership Superstructure. The area labeled 21 should be labeled 22.

Epsilon .1 THE MISSION

Two days after Captain Dentin reports the investigation of the Sathar scout ship on Mahg Mar to FEF headquarters, he receives the following orders:

Lt. Gregor Dentin
CMS *Osprey*
Planet Mahg Mar, FS 24 System

Orders:

Select a crew to man the Sathar scout ship, temporarily registered as the UPFS *Backdoor*. CMS *Osprey*, UPFS *Eleanor Moraes*, and UPFS *Backdoor* will proceed to star system FS 30 and presumed location of Sathar installation, codename Base Alpha. UPFS *Backdoor* will dock at the installation and surprise the enemy with a boarding party. CMS *Osprey* and UPFS *Eleanor Moraes* will support boarding party as needed.

FEF squadron assembling at Clarion base. Will proceed to support you as soon as practical.

Mission Objectives:

1. Capture a live Sathar prisoner.
2. Capture Sathar technology and artifacts.
3. Capture Sathar base intact.
4. Make notes and videorecords of all information gathered. Insure that this information is immediately relayed to FEF headquarters in case mission unit is lost.
5. If the capture attempt fails, destroy the enemy base.
6. Arrange for any information, artifacts, or prisoners to be recovered by later units if assault personnel are captured or killed.

Good luck to you and your man,
Greg,

:Commodore Karl Reider
:Clarion Base, White Light

Read the boxed text below only if the player characters are the civilian members of the *Eleanor Moraes* crew.

Dentin asks you to report to him for a private conference on the Crew Deck of the *Osprey*. When you arrive, he speaks. "Thank you for coming. I want to thank you for what you did in salvaging that scout ship—I was impressed. The information on that scout ship gave us the location of a Sathar base in the FS 30 system. Commodore Reider gave me orders to use that scout ship to mount an immediate surprise attack on the Sathar base. I want to talk to you about that, because, frankly, we need you.

"We have to attack now while we can surprise them, and that means boarding the Sathar installation, codenamed Base Alpha. The boarders must neutralize the garrison and any self-destruct device. We also need the *Osprey* and *Eleanor Moraes* on hand to deal with any armed ships in the system. We don't have enough men and robots to pull the mission off unless you help. If we capture Base Alpha, it will be the first major capture of a Sathar installation. We'll learn vital information that could save countless Federation lives. It's that important. You're civilians, so all I can do is ask you to volunteer. If you do, you'll earn the thanks of the Frontier Worlds. Are you with us?"

Dentin orders anyone who volunteers to be at a briefing later to form the attack plan. Anyone who doesn't volunteer will stay aboard the *Eleanor Moraes* during the attack.

When the council of war convenes, Dentin speaks to the volunteers and the *Osprey's* crew.

"Here's the basic plan. All three ships will fly to the target, codenamed Base Alpha, in the FS 30 system. The scout ship will dock at Base Alpha, using the recognition codes we found. The scout ship crew will overpower the Sathar crew, and neutralize the communications gear and self-destruct mechanisms before the base can be blown. Meanwhile, the *Osprey* and *Eleanor Moraes* will deal with any armed ships in-system and support the scout ship crew when possible.

"The volunteers will man the scout ship. They did a good job with the scout ship, and are more qualified to deal with Sathar equipment. We want to get as much information as we can, but your priority will be the self-destruct system. If the installation's ground-based, the self-destruct device will be part of the power plant. If the installation's a ship, self-destruction is usually achieved by engine overload; either the bridge or the engineering section might control the self-destruction program. You must get past the docking area as quickly as possible, or be prepared for the Sathar to explosively decompress it.

"We'll have to work hard to get the scout ship ready. The crew can take any weapons and equipment they choose. Are there any questions?"

Refinements to the basic plan are welcome, but Dentin will veto proposals that involve a direct frontal assault. If the players come up with an alternate plan that gives an equal chance of success, go with it, instead. If the party does not include an engineer, an NPC engineer should be assigned.

Epsilon .2 PREPARING FOR BATTLE

With the help of all personnel of the *Osprey* and the *Eleanor Moraes*, the newly-christened *Backdoor* is readied for her maiden flight in the UPF Spacefleet. The

flight controls, acceleration couches, computer, and life support systems are modified to suit the new crew.

The players should specify what equipment their characters carry in the scout ship. Exercise restraint if the players request unreasonable quantities or qualities of equipment, keeping in mind the limited space of the *Backdoor*. Take particular note of the following useful gear. (Dentin may make suggestions if the players overlook something important.)

Tornadium D-19	subspace radio
robots	space suits
space armor	rocket packs
grenades	tool kits
weapons	videocorders
ammunition	research and test gear

Epsilon .3

THE FLIGHT TO BASE ALPHA

You should have the players follow the countdown and liftoff procedures (Knight Hawks rules pp. 31-33) if they are not already familiar with them. The course is uncharted.

Once the route is worked out, make a secret roll and announce that all three ships successfully jump to system FS 30.

Days later, the scout ship enters the range of the mothership's detection equipment and the characters transmit the identification codes. Arrival at Base Alpha is fifty minutes away. During the first forty minutes the *Backdoor* will be under tremendous deceleration (six gravities) and the characters will be unable to move about the ship.

By the final ten minutes, the pilot will have reduced deceleration to near free fall and the other characters have ten minutes to make any special preparations before they reach Base Alpha. Players should indicate exactly what their characters do during this period. Take special note of the weapons, equipment, and scientific gear each character carries. If players decide to take robots along, have them tell you which robots they are using.

The estimated time to docking is ten minutes. Give the players this time to make their plans. If the players need help getting organized, don't hesitate. They will have a better time if they are successful, and they will be more successful if they are organized. However, if an enthusiastic group prefers inspired confusion to planning, by all means indulge them. If they are effective, more power to them.

BOARDING ACTION TIMETABLE

Action encounters aboard the Sathar mothership are short firefights mixed with longer periods of non-combat turn movement through the mothership. The basic unit of non-combat time is the minute. You should keep track of time carefully throughout this section, shifting into the shorter combat turn time scale as necessary. Remember that the attackers will be under time pressure to capture the mothership before the Sathar can destroy it.

When the Sathar scout ship enters the FS 30 system, it is out of detection range of the mothership.

- 0:00** At 500,000 km from the mothership, the scout ship is detected, sounding an alarm on the bridge. Remind the players to broadcast the identification signal to the mothership now. When this signal is received, the mothership captain deactivates the alarm and notifies three technicians and the engineer to report to Dock Two to prepare for an incoming scout ship.
- 0:40** The scout ship has decelerated to one gravity. The player characters have 10 minutes to prepare for action.
- 0:45** At five minutes from rendezvous, the mothership takes over remote control of the scout ship's approach. Begin play at this point with the approach to docking. Sathar radio silence is still maintained.
- 0:50** When the scout ship arrives at the mothership, the giant docking bay doors are opening. The scout ship drives shut off and robot work pods act as tugs to maneuver her into Dock Two. Docking proceeds routinely, with the three technicians and engineer guiding the robot tugs and grapples to complete the mooring procedure. Radio silence is maintained.
- 0:55** The docking procedure takes five minutes. When it is complete, the docking bay begins to fill with air.
- 1:00** At this time, the bay reaches full pressure. When player characters attack, the Sathar engineer will escape and reach the engineering room in 5 minutes.
- 1:05** If no one has emerged from the scout ship within five minutes after

full pressurization, the captain attempts to contact the scout ship over short range radio. If there is no response, the captain sends the ship to Code Amber alert status. The technicians and robots in Dock Two attempt to disable the scout ship's atomic engines and board her, while the engineer rushes to the engineering section. If the engineer is already in the engineering section, this is the earliest time at which the self-destruct program can be triggered, if the other conditions for self-destruction are met.

- 1:20** The *Osprey* and *Eleanor Moraes*, which have coasted in close to the mothership with their atomic drives shut down, are detected by the Sathar radar system. The FEF forces begin decelerating at four gravities.
- 1:45** The FEF ships are 5 minutes from the mothership. They will not approach closer than 1500m unless the characters have deactivated the self-destruct program.
- 2:00** This is the earliest time the mothership can self-destruct, assuming the Sathar are at maximum efficiency.

NOTE: 15 minutes before detonation, inform the players that the engines are approaching critical mass, but do not tell them how much time is left.

Epsilon .4

GENERAL NOTES

ABOUT THE MOTHERSHIP

THE MISSION

The mothership is an obsolete assault carrier of ancient design, once intended to carry four small fighters. It has been refitted as a reconnaissance-surveillance vessel and serves as headquarters and supply station for a squadron of four scout ships. The mothership can operate independent of home base for up to ten years. Its missions are to explore potentially-useful star systems and to observe the operations of rival Sathar clans.

Sathar clans maintain their own espionage and intelligence networks to keep track of what other clans are doing. The clan-in-power, referred to hereafter as Clan X, is responsible for the current campaigns against the Frontier Worlds. Clan Y, the clan to which the mothership belongs, is powerful but currently dishonored, and desperate to reestablish its influence in Sathar affairs. Clan X currently commands the full



resources of the Sathar homeworlds, focusing those resources on the war against Frontier civilization. Clan Y is spying on a Clan X spaceship construction base orbiting around a planet in system FS 30. Clan Y hopes to ascend to a position of power and prestige among the Sathar clans by finding some evidence to discredit Clan X's conduct of the war.

THE CREW OF THE MOTHERSHIP

All thirty-two crew members of the mothership are Clan Y Sathar. Eight are lower caste Sathar (regular crewmen), four are middle caste Sathar (ship's officers) that attend to the maintenance and operation of the mothership and the four scout ships. Four upper caste Sathar form the Intelligence Group. Sixteen middle caste Sathar form the four-man crews of the scout vessels. Only one crew is aboard the mothership, undergoing intense debriefing by the headquarters unit as their ship is overhauled, refitted, and resupplied for its next mission. Four scout crewmen died on Mahg Mar where the party acquired their ship, and two crews are out on extended missions.

The crew schedule is organized into two alternating shifts of 2 officers and 4 crewmen. A shift lasts four days, during which the rest of the crew remains in a deep hibernation-like dreamsleep. The intelligence officers keep a random schedule based on the return of the scout ships.

Each Sathar aboard the mothership has a personal robot which accompanies the Sathar wherever he goes. Each of these robots is linked with the ship's main computer and with any other computer that the Sathar is using at the moment. These robots perform practically all physical labor for the Sathar.

The scout crewmen are less dependent on robots than the mothership crew and Intelligence Group, since the scouts have to cope routinely with alien environments and unexpected situations, but the dependence on robots and computers of the other Sathar aboard the mothership is a weakness the player characters may be able to exploit. Use of these robots is a distinguishing trait of Clan Y Sathar.

DREAMSLEEPING

The Sathar aboard the mothership are trained in a hibernation technique known as dreamsleep. Dreamsleep is used by Sathar who have to do a great deal of work in a short time, or who have work that cannot be interrupted. This technique allows a

Sathar to go without sleep for as long as 20 days. After this period, the Sathar must hibernate (dreamsleep) for several days. Darkness and quiet are not needed during the hibernation period. If a Sathar is forcibly awakened from dreamsleep, he will need 10 minutes to prepare for a battle, and all his abilities and skill checks have a -10 modifier for the first half-hour after he awakes. Sathar scouts do not suffer these penalties; they carry a drug that, when injected, makes them fully alert immediately.

Sathar trained in the dreamsleep technique will often fall into dreamsleep involuntarily if seriously wounded or in danger of capture. The drug used by Sathar scouts prevents involuntary dreamsleeping.

SATHAR NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

The Sathar Tactics section explains the function and behavior of the various crew members in combat. Read that section thoroughly.

Technicians and Engineers

STR/STA	40/40	PS	2
DEX/RS	40/40	IM	4
INT/LOG	45/45	RW	30
PER/LDR	25/45		

Weapons: Electrostunner and 2 powerclips, 2 tangler grenades

Protection: Spacesuit

Skills: Beam Weapon 1, Computer, Robotics, and Technician skills 1-4, Energy Weapons 1, Engineer levels 1-4

Mothership Officers

STR/STA	40/40	PS	2
DEX/RS	40/40	IM	4
INT/LOG	55/55	RW	40
PER/LDR	55/75		

Weapons: Laser pistol and 4 powerclips, 2 tangler grenades, 5 fragmentation grenades (for suicide and sabotage)

Protection: Spacesuit, skeinsuit

Skills: Beam Weapon 2, Computer, Robotics, and Technician skills 1-6, Piloting and Astrogration 1-4

Intelligence Group

STR/STA	40/40	PS	2
DEX/RS	40/40	IM	4
INT/LOG	70/70	RW	30
PER/LDR	45/65		

Weapons: Electrostunner and 2 powerclips, 2 tangler grenades

Protection: Spacesuit

Skills: Beam Weapon 1, assorted Technological and Biosocial skills from levels 1-6

Scout Crewmen

STR/STA	50/50	PS	3
DEX/RS	50/50	IM	5
INT/LOG	60/60	RW	45
PER/LDR	45/65		

Weapons: Vibroknife and laser pistol with 4 powerclips each. (In zero-gravity conditions, a group of four scout also carries 2 hand-held heavy lasers and 2 grenade rifles with 2 tangler, 2 smoke, and 5 fragmentation grenades each)

Protection: Space armor, skein suit, anti-shock implant

Skills: Beam, Gyrojet, and Projectile Weapons 2, Melee Weapons 3, Demolition 2, assorted Technological and Biosocial skills at levels 1-2

ROBOTS

"Spider II" Personal Robot (Level 2; MV 60m; IM/RS 5/50; STA 50; ATT 50; DM 4d10 arms or Special; electrostunner with 20 SEU, sonic stunner with 20 SEU)

Each Sathar on the mothership is accompanied by one of these robots. Use of personal robots is a distinguishing trait of Clan Y Sathar.

"Cockroach II" Security Robot (Level 2; MV 20m; IM/RS 5/50; STA 75; ATT 50; DM Special; two laser pistol turrets, 50 SEU, and two automatic pistol turrets, 20 rounds per turret)

If the robot is attacked and the dice roll of the attack is 01-05, the attack destroys the robot's sensors, reducing its ATT to 05. The robot's ATT is reduced to 05% if attacked by a smoke grenade.

SATHAR CREW LOCATION TABLE

Position	No Alert	Battle Station
Captain	Up. Bridge(15)	Up. Bridge(15)
Comm Officer	Low. Bridge(14)	Low. Bridge(14)
Co-pilot	Off Qtrs(14a*)	Up. Bridge(15)
Astrogator	Off Qtrs(14b*)	Astrogation(12)
Int Off #1-4	Scout Hqtrs(22)	Scout Hqtrs(22)
Scout Crew	Dock One(5)	Dock Two(1)
Tech #1	Dock Two(1)	Dock Two(1)
Tech #2	Dock Two(1)	Dock Two(1)
Tech #3	Dock Two(1)	Dock Two(1)
Engineer #1	Dock Two(1)	Engineering(7a)
Tech #4	Tech Qtrs(17*)	Dock Two(1)
Tech #5	Tech Qtrs(18*)	Dock Two(1)
Tech #6	Tech Qtrs(19*)	Dock Two(1)
Engineer #2	Tech Qtrs(20*)	Tech Qtrs(20*)

* dreamsleeping in quarters

INTERNAL SENSOR SYSTEMS

All compartments and passageways are covered by cameras, audio sensors, and sensitive atmosphere testers. These sensor systems may be monitored at any computer terminal throughout the ship or through the personal robots in link with the main computer, but access to this information is routinely controlled by officers. In an emergency, access is not limited.

SECURITY SYSTEMS

All security systems are Level 3. Energy and radar systems set off an alarm whenever they detect an approaching ship. If the recognition code is given, the alarm is deactivated manually by the officer-of-the-bridge. Hull sensors automatically set off an alarm when an object strikes the hull. The energy, radar, and hull sensors can be deactivated from the bridge. Locked hatches and sliding doors must be unlocked with skill checks or physically forced. Sliding doors have 25•2d10 and hatches have 200•1d100 structural points. Computer systems have standard security programs. The computer system is also booby-trapped.

SECURITY ALERT

There are three stages of security alert. Banks of lights surround each hatchway in all compartments and passageways of the ship. These flash the appropriate colors to indicate the alert status, giving the whole area an eerie glow. Emphasize this visual

effect during play to increase tension.

Code Blue: Combat Alert. All shifts to battle stations in space suits (scout crew in armor) with personal weapons. (Each Sathar's battle station is listed in the Crew Location Table). Airtight hatches are sealed and code-locked (no access without password). Computer lockout.

Code Amber: Attack. All compartments are depressurized except the bridge and scout headquarters. The self-destruct sequence is started. Computers destroy sensitive data; the most crucial data is sent to hidden storage (area 10).

Code Green: Self-Destruct. Atomic drives are overloaded. All computer files are destroyed.

SELF-DESTRUCT PROCEDURE

Previously, Sathar vessels have self-destructed before they could be boarded and captured. The attackers will not know how much time they have to capture the ship before it is destroyed. The uncertainty and time pressure is a crucial element in this adventure's tension and suspense. You should stress the time factor throughout this part of the adventure. Technicians who successfully bypass computer security can ask how long ago engine overload began.

Once the self-destruct order is given, the ship's atomic drives will explode in 55 minutes. This means that the player characters must jettison the engines within 45 minutes of the time the self-destruct program is acti-

vated. Certain player tactics, like immediately blasting through bulkhead walls directly to the engine room, may prevent the initiation of the self-destruct sequence, or the characters may use demolition skills to blast the engine pods free from the mothership. Remember that it takes 10 minutes for the engines to drift to a safe distance before detonation.

SATHAR PANIC

Sathar crew members may panic or dreamsleep if wounded or cornered. A wounded or cornered Sathar must make a Leadership check. If passed, the Sathar follows orders. If failed, the Sathar will flee if possible. If there is no escape, or the shock is powerful enough, the Sathar drops into dreamsleep. The Sathar appears dead. Close examination (requires removing any space suit) reveals life signs. If the Sathar awakes as a captive, it dies instantly by a hypnotically-triggered command. Sathar scouts are not subject to panic or involuntary dreamsleep; however, scouts have received the hypnotic command that will prevent them from being captured alive.

MOVEMENT IN ZERO-GRAVITY

The mothership is designed for operation in both zero-gravity and acceleration environments. All compartments, elevators, and passageways are equipped with travel rails and grips for Sathar tentacles. Movement is at walk rate, half this if magnetic shoes are worn.

Emphasize the zero gravity nature of this adventure during play. Remember that objects will tend to travel in the same direction at the same rate unless acted on by outside forces. Especially review the Alpha Dawn Expanded Game rules on weightlessness (pp 20, 26) and the Knight Hawks Campaign rules on spacesuited combat (pp 28, 36-37).

SATHAR TACTICS

Before the mothership goes to alert status, all Sathar are in their non-alert positions (see the Crew Location Table). The Sathar captain must initially make do with the active shift and scout crew.

The engineer in Dock Two heads for the engineering deck. Only three technicians are available in Dock Two. They use their

robots to spearhead the attack while cautiously maneuvering in cover, giving support fire.

The captain sends the scouts to Dock Two as shock troops. The three off-duty technicians head for Dock Two (or wherever the captain sends them). If the off-duty shift is still groggy from dreamsleep, and the characters are not aggressively moving throughout the ship, the captain delays committing them to combat until they are at full effectiveness (10 minutes).

The scout-and-technician force tries to contain the boarders to Dock Two. If the boarders are loose in the ship, the captain coordinates the defense operations from the bridge, where he has access to sensor data throughout the ship. However, the scout crew is unreliable, and will withdraw to their ship first, aiding in a coordinated defense only if the player characters cut them off. If the characters move swiftly, the captain will be forced to throw his groggy technicians into battle before they are ready.

Throughout the action the officers remain on the bridge. They defend this area with spirit and dedication, and they do not leave it for any reason. If necessary to prevent the capture of the bridge, the officers will use their grenades to kill themselves and destroy the bridge controls.

The scout headquarters unit is desperately compiling its information for a message drone, intending to send it to homeworld clan headquarters at the last minute. They cannot risk a radio message that might be intercepted, yet they refuse to let their information and analyses be lost. Most particularly they intend to report who is attacking the mothership and how the ship was discovered. (They will NOT succeed unless the player characters blunder badly.)

The intelligence officers defend the headquarters compartment with more courage than skill. They have delayed destroying their wealth of intelligence data until the last minute, thereby running a risk that some of it may fall into the characters' hands.

The first engineer remains at his station on the engineering deck. He uses his personal robot and the security robot to defend engineering deck. He will not hesitate to initiate the self-destruct sequence, with or without the captain's orders, if wounded and outnumbered. The captain will order self-destruction if:

The characters reach the Lower Bridge (14), or

He realizes the characters are in the Engineering Section (7)

Epsilon .5

THE SATHAR MOTHERSHIP

DOCK TWO (1)

The scout ship will be docked in this bay by remote control. The mothership uses the scout ship's maneuvering jets to bring the scout ship below the bay doors. From there the technicians and dock computer take over. The four dock robots provide fine maneuvering while the pods provide the thrust. Four grapples at each end of the bay lock the scout ship into position.

Read the following to the players as the *Backdoor* approaches the mothership:

The mothership bears some resemblance to an assault carrier, though too lightly built and armed. It matches no previously encountered Sathar design.

Two atomic drive engine pods are attached near the stern of the ship. The engineering deck would be near this juncture in a UPF ship. The internal arrangement of Sathar vessels is unknown.

Sensor arrays are located at the bow and stern, and there is a transparent dome located near the bow.

ICM bays of typical Sathar design are evenly spaced around the circumference toward the bow. There is one laser battery in the bow and one in the stern.

The mothership is equipped with grapples and moorings for two spacecraft of hull size 2-4 on top of the ship. This Sathar external mooring design has never been seen before.

You see two top hatches near the bow and two bottom hatches near the stern. No lifeboats or launches are evident.

Two large bay doors are on the bottom of the ship. One door opens as you approach and a flood of light spills from a vast compartment. There is a sudden silence as the scout ship's maneuvering jets shut off. Your flight controls suddenly go dead.

This is standard docking procedure; all the pilot has to do is allow the scout ship to be guided in. If this is permitted, docking is completed automatically and the adventure continues.

A character with computer skill can determine that the scout ship controls have been overridden by another computer. Control can be restored by manipulating the Level 3 program (at -20% for alien technology).

Any deviation from a normal scout ship approach will cause the mothership's captain to go to Code Blue Alert. Deviation includes refusal to accept docking pod guidance, breaking of radio silence, unauthorized extra-vehicular activity in space suits, and so on. Certain activities might not be easily detected. In general, any activity not detectable by radio or radar will go unnoticed until seen by Sathar in Dock Two (the Sathar do not visually monitor the scout ship's approach). Sathar radar is sensitive enough to detect characters who leave the ship unless they remain on or very close to the hull.

If the Sathar are alerted, they will let the ship dock, but the engineer will be gone, the scouts will be present and armed, the off-watch technicians will be up 5 minutes sooner, you may strengthen the defenses with another Cockroach II security robot.

If the docking proceeds normally, read:

The *Backdoor* is slowly maneuvered beneath the stern of the ship. A fleet of small multi-armed robots, led by two large pods, emerge from the huge, brightly-lit, compartment. The robots swarm about the scout ship, gently nudging it toward mooring grapples inside the compartment.

As the scout ship is firmly docked by the grapples, the bay doors below swing shut. Outside the scout ship there is a loud hiss of inrushing air. Moisture condenses on the scout ship's viewports, obscuring vision. Finally there is silence.

The engineer and one technician are at their work stations in the control room, guiding the pods and dock robots. Two technicians are in the pods under direction from the control room.

Important Note: The engineer will not be discovered by the characters. When the action starts he will head for the engineering section (7a). There is NO way the boarding party can keep him from escaping.

If characters emerge and attack, the technician in the control booth will immediately decompress the bay if he passes a Leadership check. The technicians fight until their personal robots are destroyed. Then, if they are getting the worst of it, they disregard orders and retreat toward the computer deck where they take cover and hope that the scouts and other crewmen will handle the boarders.

4 Dock Robots (Level 2; MV 60m; IM/RS 5/50; STA 75; ATT 50; DM 2d10 grasp, 2d10



ram with RS avoidance check)

2 Heavy-Duty Work Pods (Level 2; MV 30m; IM/RS 5/50; STA 500; ATT 50; DM 6d10 grasp, 6d10 ram with RS avoidance check)

3 Sathar Technicians (MV 20m; IM/RS 4/40; STA 40; RW 30; M 20; PS 2; LDR 45; 2 tangler grenades, electrostunner with 20 SEU; spacesuit)

3 "Spider II" Personal Robots (Level 2; MV 60m; IM/RS 5/50; STA 50; ATT 50; DM 4d10; electrostunner with 20 SEU, sonic stunner with 20 SEU)

If no one has emerged from the scout ship five minutes after the bay is up to normal pressure, the captain goes to Code Amber. The engineer heads for the engineering deck. The technicians are ordered to force entry and board the scout ship.

One robot-Sathar pair concentrates its fire to disable the scout ship's atomic drives. (The technician's familiarity with the scout ship design permits him to disable a drive by doing 150 points of structural damage at a crucial spot.) The other two technicians use their personal robots to force an entry through the main airlock.

The robots can open the scout ship hatch with electronic security overrides. They can also open the service access plates on the atomic drives and disable them. If the robots are defeated, one technician will direct the pods and dock robots from the control room, using them to ram, grapple, and restrain the attackers while the others fire from cover.

The two technicians get out of the pods at the first sign of trouble, retreating to the suit room hatches where they shoot from cover inside the hatch, closing the hatch and retreating when the characters approach. If in hand-to-hand combat, under direct fire, or if wounded, technicians must make a Leadership check or flee. This Leadership check must be made each turn that the technician is still in sight of attackers. If subsequent checks are successful, the technician may turn and fight again. A technician that fails a Leadership check and is cornered with no avenue of escape falls into dreamsleep.

Meanwhile, the scout crew is on its way to Dock Two. The awakened technicians in the crew quarters begin to fumble into their spacesuits.

When the Sathar scout crew in space armor arrives, they use their personal robots to flush out attackers. They maneuver through the dock compartment using the scout ship fuselage for cover. Two scouts will initially use the grenade rifle

with tangler ammunition, trying to take captives. If they encounter stiff resistance, the two scouts with heavy lasers will open fire while the other scouts switch to fragmentation grenades.

4 Sathar Scouts (MV 20m; IM/RS 5/50; STA 50; RW 45; M 55; PS 3; LDR 65; heavy laser or grenade rifle, laser pistol with 20 SEU, vibroknife; space armor, anti-shock implant)

If they begin to lose, the Sathar scouts will withdraw, taking one technician, and ordering the rest to cover their retreat. The technicians will offer little resistance. If wounded, they automatically flee; if cornered, they automatically fall into dreamsleep.

If they are losing, the Sathar scouts will head for their own scout ship in Dock One. If Docks One and Two and the other scout ship are captured or destroyed, the scout crew will attack from ambush as the characters explore the mothership. The scout crew will use their familiarity with the ship to attack from behind, set booby traps, and prepare ambushes throughout the ship.

CARGO BAY ONE (2) and CARGO BAY TWO (4)

These contain the vast quantities of life support and inventory necessary to permit extended missions. Numerous containers of food, supplies, replacement parts, spare robots, and so on.

WORKSHOPS (3)

The layout of this deck is almost identical to that of the Life Support Deck; use Map 12 to represent this deck. The only physical differences are that the airlock and access tunnel do not exist on this deck; treat the airlock and tunnel squares as open squares. The access tunnel door is used as a second entrance to the robot storage area on this deck.

The machinery on this deck is used for manufacturing equipment needed for the maintenance of the mothership. The area resembles an automated, robot-equipped factory. Ignore the map references to other types of equipment. The concealed computer area shown on the map is entirely filled with machinery on this deck and the secret compartment does not exist.

The machinery of the workshop deck is served by ten manufacturing robots identical to dock robots.

10 Manufacturing Robots (Level 2; MV 60m; IM/RS 5/50; STA 75; ATT 50; DM 2d10 grasp, 2d10 ram with RS avoidance check)

DOCK ONE (5)

Dock One is identical to Dock Two; use the Dock Two maps to represent this area. A fueled and operational scout ship is decked here. If Sathar scouts retreat here, at least one will stand guard in the control boom as the others prepare for takeoff.

A fueled and operational scout ship is docked here. If Sathar scouts retreat here, at least one will stand guard in the control room as the others prepare for takeoff.

Their intention is to escape with as much information as possible if the mothership self-destructs or is captured. They will link with their headquarter's computer, transferring as much data aboard as possible before they have to leave.

If the characters arrive here, the scouts will toss fragmentation grenades at each elevator door, then blast through the observation window into the bay, heading for the scout ship's hatch. The technician in the control room will panic, firing wildly. He falls into dreamsleep if wounded.

Readying the scout ship for take off takes five minutes. If the scouts have time to prepare, the scout ship will be ungrappled and floating just outside the opened bay doors, ready to blast off instantly. They will wait for the scout guard before blasting off, but if he is delayed, they will abandon him. If attackers arrive before the ship is ready to leave, the scouts will fight to defend the control room and scout ship, trying to buy time. If the defenders are overwhelmed, the Sathar pilot will abandon them, taking off with maneuvering jets and ramming through the bay door.

If the mothership is captured or destroyed, the scout ship will flee to a secret shelter on an asteroid. You can use this as the beginning of a short adventure if desired.

Sathar Technician (MV 20m; IM/RS 4/40; STA 40; RW 30; M 20; PS 2; LDR 45; 2 tangler grenades, electrostunner with 20 SEU; spacesuit)

Sathar Scout (MV 20m; IM/RS 5/50; STA 50; RW 45; M 55; PS 3; LDR 65; heavy laser or grenade rifle, laser pistol with 20 SEU, vibroknife; space armor, anti-shock implant)

"Spider II" Personal Robot (Level 2; MV 60m; IM/RS 5/50; STA 50; ATT 50; DM Special; electrostunner with 20 SEU, sonic stunner with 20 SEU)

ELEVATORS (6)

Outside each door opening onto the elevator shaft:

You see before you a sliding door with a small unmarked panel with a single central button on the wall to one side.

Pressing the button will call the elevator, which arrives almost instantly. After a very brief delay, accompanied by the whine of machinery, the door opens on an empty 4x4 meter compartment. Inside, the only feature is a panel with ten unmarked buttons, arranged vertically.

Two shafts run along the top of the mothership from the stern to the bow. The shafts are equipped with handholds in case of elevator malfunction. The elevators travel from any stop to the next in two turns. Because of the instant acceleration, any character who is not braced properly (holding the handholds or leaning on the wall away from the destination) must make an RS avoidance roll or suffer 1d10 points of damage. The elevators can be turned off from the bridge or via the security code on the control panel in the car. The elevators open on these compartments:

Life Support Deck
Dock One
Cargo Bay One
Workshop
Cargo Bay Two
Dock Two
Crew Quarters
Weapons Deck
Scout Hqtrs
Engineering

The captain will shut down the elevators if attackers are detected operating them. Once the elevators have been shut down, characters may force the top or bottom access doors and climb along the shaft, or try to override the computer lock and get the elevator moving again.

Scouts with demolitions skill can booby-trap a car by placing an explosive charge on the outside of the car which explodes when a button is pressed. The car absorbs most of the damage, but anyone in the car suffers 2d10 points of damage. The car jams in place at the level where it is boarded. Passengers must climb through the access panel and continue along the shaft.

ENGINEERING (7)

A main airlock is located below areas 7a and 7b. Doors on both sides of the deck lead through access tunnels to the engine pods. The on-shift engineer will be here unless player characters somehow get to this area

first. In this case, the deck is defended only by a Cockroach II security robot.

Sathar Engineer (MV 20m; IM/RS 4/40; STA 40; RW 30; M 20; PS 2; LDR 45; 2 tangle grenades, electrostunner with 20 SEU; spacesuit) "Cockroach II" Security Robot (Level 2; MV 20m; IM/RS 5/50; STA 75; ATT 50; DM Special; two laser pistol turrets with 50 SEU each, two automatic pistol turrets with 20 rounds each)

If the die roll for an attack against the robot is 01-05, the robot's sensors have been destroyed and the robot's ATT is reduced to 05.

DRIVE CONTROL (7a.)

If the engineer is here, he is in his spacesuit and armed. If the mothership is on alert, the drive programs are set to dump and the self-destruct program is ready to activate. The engineer will do both as soon as he is outnumbered or wounded, before making his Leadership check. The ship goes to Green Alert status immediately. If the engineer passes the Leadership check, he continues to fight. If he fails, he falls into dreamsleep. Note that once the ship is on green alert, either the captain or engineer can trigger the self-destruct program.

If the characters enter before the self-destruct program is running, the engineer can set up the program in one combat turn and activate it the next. If the program is not set up, a player character need only kill the engineer or destroy the control panels to prevent the activation of the program.

The self-destruct program cannot be aborted once activated. An engineer working at the control console for 2d10 minutes can jettison the engines if he makes a successful Engineering roll at a -20 modifier. If the check fails, an engineer who examines an engine pod through the access tunnel can manually jettison the drive in 2d10 minutes for each engine.

If explosive charges that can cause 300 points of structural damage (650 grams of Tornadium D-19) are placed at any point along an access tunnel, or on the outside of the hull along these tunnels, the atomic drives can be blown free as though they had been jettisoned.

POWER PLANT (7b.)

If this power plant is destroyed, the ship switches to a backup system located in the forward Life Support Deck.

AUXILIARY BRIDGE AND BACK-UP SYSTEMS (8)

MASKING SCREEN SYSTEMS (8a.)

The masking screen system control panel and water storage access is in this passage.

BRIDGE BACK-UP (8b.)

This cramped compartment is filled with a confusion of unfamiliar panels and displays arrayed around a single Sathar couch. The arrangement is bewildering, with no apparent logic or purpose. None of the displays or systems are apparently operative.

Complete bridge, life support, and damage control systems are provided here in case of destruction of the Bridge Decks. Since this compartment is so jammed with control panels and displays, and since unrelated functions are combined in single pieces of equipment for compactness, player characters will not have time to analyze and use these controls during this mission.

STERN LASER BATTERY (9)

This compartment is crammed with computer and video displays arrayed around a single Sathar couch. The control panel is relatively simple, however, and resembles the layout of a starship laser battery gun station.

This is a Sathar laser battery gun station. The simplicity of the controls allows a robot to do most of the work involved in manning the battery.

LIFE SUPPORT DECK (10)

This deck is the "nerve center" of the ship, providing life support and back-ups for most of the mothership's vital functions. In the center of the deck is an access tunnel that leads to the command decks and the bow laser battery. An airlock in this corridor exits on top of the ship.

Behind the panel door is a large room with three work stations. Another door apparently permits access to a small enclosed compartment in the center of the room.

After a brief examination, an engineer or technician will recognize the functions of



each work station: life support, damage control, and power plant. The damage control and power plant stations are back-ups, and normally not active. Inside the small central compartment are four spare personal robots.

A secret computer is hidden behind the damage control and life support display panel. This computer is capable of handling all normal ship's functions if the main computer is destroyed. All secret or sensitive data is stored here when the ship goes to

Code Amber status. This computer can be reached only by dismantling the concealing display panels. The data in the hidden computer is automatically wiped when the ship goes to Code Green status.

If the computer is discovered, a computer technician can pick out specific pieces of information for each successful use of his Defeat or Bypass Security skill. On the first failure the computer automatically wipes all passwords, intelligence data, and other secret information, leaving only the programs necessary to operate the ship. You decide what information the character discovers, but the data should help the characters accomplish their mission (for example, the hatch passwords, elevator security override, locations of shipboard systems, etc.). Requests for information regarding the Sathar home system, the Clan X operation on the other side of the asteroid belt, other Sathar outposts, and similar sensitive information will automatically fail and wipe all secret data. The players may be given bonus XP for the following: 1 for finding the hidden computer, 1 for getting useful information, and 2 for turning it over to *Osprey* technicians without trying to do anything with it (3 maximum).

MAIN COMPUTER (11)

This computer is equipped with a self-destruct booby-trap equivalent to four fragmentation grenades. If a character tries to use Defeat or Bypass Security skill on this computer, the computer will explode regardless of the outcome of the skill roll. However, if the skill roll is successful a bank of lights on the control console will flash green (meaning detonation in very few seconds); give the triggering character the normal RS avoidance check. If the skill roll fails, the triggering character does not receive an avoidance check. Other characters receive avoidance checks only if they have taken special precautions.

If this computer is destroyed, the hidden computer in area 10 will automatically assume the functions of the main computer.

ASTROGATION (12)

Astrogator (MV 20m; IM/RS 4/40; STA 40; RW 40; M 20; PS 2; LDR 75; laser pistol with 4 powerclips, 5 fragmentation grenades, spacesuit, skainsuit)

"Spider II" Personal Robot (Level 2; MV 60m; IM/RS 5/50; STA 50; ATT 50; DM 4d10 arms or Special; electrostunner with

20 SEU; sonic stunner with 20 SEU)

This station is manned by the astrogator (if he has been awakened from dreamsleep) and his personal robot. The robot and the officer will defend to the death, destroying the astro-gation equipment first with pistol shots into the panels. The displays and course plotting equipment are not in use at this time. Only Sathar officers can access the star chart and navigation information here. The data automatically destroys itself when any attempt to use Defeat or Bypass Security on the navigation equipment fails. All the astrological data is automatically destroyed when the ship goes to Code Green status.

BRIDGE ACCESS TUNNEL (13a)

This compartment has a hatch at each end and panel door in the side walls. A ladder leads up through an opening in the ceiling to another deck.

The communications officer and his personal robot attack with a fragmentation grenade and weapon fire from cover on the lower bridge deck (area 14) above this passage. Unless the attackers are taking precautions (like sending a decoy in first) they will be surprised if the first character in fails an Intuition check.

SPACESUIT ROOM AND ESCAPE PODS (13b)

Four Sathar spacesuits hang along the walls of this compartment. Four egg-shaped capsules similar to work pods are located in individual bays in this compartment.

The four capsules are one-man escape pods. Just inside each access portal is a large, obvious button which triggers an alarm, then closes the portal and fires the escape pod. The controls are simple; a character can use these to escape from the Sathar ship. These pods will not go anywhere until a destination is selected or the maneuver controls are activated. By trial and error they can be guided like work pods. Under the circumstances, the Sathar will not use the pods; however the characters can use them to abandon the mothership if necessary.

LOWER BRIDGE (14)

Communications Officer (MV 20m; IM/RS 4/40; STA 40; RW 40; M 20; PS 2; LDR 75;

laser pistol with 4 powerclips, 5 fragmentation grenades, spacesuit, skeinsuit)

"Spider II" Personal Robot (Level 2; MV 60m; IM/RS 5/50; STA 50; ATT 50; DM 4d10 arms or Special; electrostunner with 20 SEU; sonic stunner with 20 SEU)

The Sathar communications officer and his robot here will attack any intruders who enter the Bridge Access Tunnel (area 13a) below. If attackers reach this deck, the Sathar will defend this deck to the death. He will take the first opportunity to destroy the sensor and communications equipment with his laser pistol.

OFFICER'S QUARTERS (14a and 14b)

The doors to each compartment are always closed and locked. The astrogator and co-pilot may still be groggy from dreamsleep if they are in their quarters. Once all officers reach their battle stations, these rooms will be empty.

This compartment contains two fluid baths with surrounding troughs, similar to those on the Sathar scoutship. The two baths are on opposite sides of the room. Two control consoles with large video screen are between the two fluid baths. A couch is in front of each control console.

UPPER BRIDGE (15)

Captain, Co-Pilot (MV 20m; IM/RS 4/40; STA 40; RW 40; M 20; PS 2; LDR 75; laser pistol with 4 powerclips, 5 fragmentation grenades, spacesuit, skeinsuit)

"Spider II" Personal Robot (Level 2; MV 60m; IM/RS 5/50; STA 50; ATT 50; DM 4d10 arms or Special; electrostunner with 20 SEU; sonic stunner with 20 SEU)

The ship's captain will be here (along with the co-pilot if he has awakened from dreamsleep). They will fire from cover on any attackers who enter the passage below. They and their robots will defend desperately after doing as much damage as possible to the controls (using grenades to destroy them).

BOW LASER BATTERY (16)

Identical to the stern laser battery (area 9). Accessible through a long corridor from area 10, Life Support Deck.

TECHNICIAN CREW QUARTERS (17-19)

Technician (MV 20m; IM/RS 4/40; STA 40; RW 30; M 20; PS 2; LDR 45; electrostunner

with 2 powerclips, 2 tangler grenades, spacesuit). -10 modifier to all skill and avoidance rolls.

"Spider II" Personal Robot (Level 2; MV 60m; IM/RS 5/50; STA 50; ATT 50; DM 4d10 arms or Special; electrostunner with 20 SEU; sonic stunner with 20 SEU)

The room is brightly lit. A pair of fluid baths with troughs similar to those in the Sathar scout ship are side by side. One corner is filled with a control panel with video screen. A single couch is in front of the control panel.

If the ship is on alert, the off-duty shift will be absent. If they are here and awake, they will be groggy, with a -10 modifier to all abilities and skill checks. They move very slowly and indecisively, and may be in the process of struggling into their space suits and getting their weapons. They and their personal robots will defend themselves, but if wounded, they immediately lapse back into dreamsleep.

ENGINEER CREW QUARTERS (20)

The room is brightly lit. A pair of fluid baths with troughs similar to those in the Sathar scoutship are side by side. One of the baths is occupied by a motionless Sathar, partly submerged in the fluid. One corner of the compartment is filled with a control panel with video screen. A single couch is in front of the control panel.

Regardless of the alert status, a Sathar engineer will be found in his fluid bath deep in dreamsleep. The automatic systems failed to rouse him, and he can be awakened only by an injection of stimdose.

This is as close to a live captive as characters will get. The key to this encounter is to make bio-medical records without waking him. The Sathar's respiration is extremely slow. A successful Analyze Ecosystems check will suggest an analogy with hibernation. Careful observation will reveal that the Sathar twitches occasionally, with rapid eye movements and barely audible grunts. A medical Diagnosis check at a -50% modifier will suggest dreaming behavior.

If the Sathar is awakened by stimdose injection or is left to awaken naturally in four hours, he will instantly die, as will all captured Sathar, by hypnotically-implemented command.

WEAPONS DECK (21)

Technician (MV 20m; IM/RS 4/40; STA 40; RW 30; M 20; PS 2; LDR 45; electrostunner with 2 powerclips, 2 tangler grenades, spacesuit)

"Spider II" Personal Robot (Level 2; MV 60m; IM/RS 5/50; STA 50; ATT 50; DM 4d10 arms or Special; electrostunner with 20 SEU; sonic stunner with 20 SEU)

From this location all weapons systems can be controlled automatically or semi-manually with combat computer assistance. The technician and his personal robot will defend this compartment if not already captured or killed.

COMBAT COMPUTER (21a)

This computer assists in directing and coordinating the laser batteries, ICMs, and maneuver systems in a space battle.

MESSAGE DRONE BAY (21b)

These two rockets contain a small computer and a subspace radio. When used, a drone travels toward a predetermined target point, then automatically transmits the data stored in the computer when the target is within subspace radio range. A drone is small, maneuverable, and fast enough to evade detection and pursuit, and provides a method of preserving and transmitting information without revealing the location of the base or destination.

ICM BAYS (21c)

Four ICMs are installed here. The large bay doors open when the missiles are fired.

SCOUT HEADQUARTERS (22)

4 Intelligence Officers (MV 20m; IM/RS 4/40; STA 40; RW 30; M 20; PS 2; LDR 65; electrostunner with 20 SEU, 2 tangler grenades, spacesuit)

4 "Spider II" Personal Robots (Level 2; MV 60m; IM/RS 5/50; STA 50; ATT 50; DM 4d10 arms or Special; electrostunner with 20 SEU; sonic stunner with 20 SEU)

Four Sathar in space suits are working or studying at displays and control panels. A small robot accompanies each Sathar. The robots swivel toward you, and the Sathar immediately grab their hand weapons.

Resolve the combat before giving further details about the apparatus in the room.

The four Sathar headquarters staff remain here throughout the boarding attempt. They are trying to load as much information as possible into a message drone which they will send back to the regional scout base. These Sathar are fanatics, and with their personal robots they will defend this compartment to the death. When the combat has been resolved:

This is apparently a research lab equipped with every instrument necessary for the study of alien biospheres. Each work station has its own computer terminal. An airlock divides this compartment into two parts. The smaller compartment is used for storing biological and geological specimens, which are visible through a window in the small compartment. The specimens are arranged neatly on shelves and in bins. A larger specimen, wrapped in cloth, is in a far corner, along with some unknown machine.

Heaps of shredded and melted computer copy and holograms are scattered throughout the lab.

A character who examines the partially-destroyed holograms and computer tapes will find evidence of a giant starship construction operation around a planet in this system that orbits closer to the sun. Other holograms show Sathar warships under construction at an enormous robot base orbiting around a planet gripped in an ice age.

Two other slightly damaged holograms are of interest. One shows asteroid mining operations in system FS 30; the technology in use is more primitive than the technology of the Sathar or the UPF races. The other shows a primitive abandoned space station similar to those used in the beginnings of human intra-system space flight, also obviously in this system.

The cloth-wrapped specimen is the corpse of an alien very similar to a human being. The large machine is a hovercycle designed for this alien's use. There are other stored artifacts designed by this alien's race, including: a book, with a kind of paper made from unfamiliar organic material, and a needler rifle. All these artifacts are obsolete by UPF standards. (The corpse and artifacts belong to an intelligent race native to this system. These people are being used as slave labor in Sathar starship yards that orbit the moon of their home planet.)

SCOUT HEADQUARTERS COMPUTER (23)

This very large computer is used for analysis of intelligence and research information. When the mothership is at alert status, all data files are transferred to the hidden computer in area 10. The scout headquarters computer is booby-trapped like the main computer in area 11.

SCOUT CREW QUARTERS (24-28)

The room is brightly lit. A pair of fluid baths with troughs similar to those in the Mahg Mar Sathar craft are side by side, and a single couch sits before video screens and a control panel.

These compartments are identical in layout. No Sathar are here, but rooms 24 and 27 show signs of recent occupancy—the troughs are moist with particles of food and the baths are maintained at a warm temperature.

Epsilon .6

ARRIVAL OF THE OSPREY AND THE ELEANOR MORAES

When the *Eleanor Moraes* and *Osprey* arrive, the NPCs aboard these ships can help in the capture of the mothership if the boarding party manages to prevent the Sathar from self-destroying the mothership. Once the mothership is either captured or destroyed, the surviving members of the boarding party will be called aboard the *Osprey* to report to Dentin.

If the characters captured the ship, read the following ending:

Dentin greets you formally, saluting you as he eyes your battered gear, injuries, and obvious fatigue. He then breaks into a restrained grin, and shakes your hands in excitement.

"I haven't had a chance to look at the stuff you brought over, and I don't know what you went up against in there, but in this one raid we have learned more about the Sathar than in all the years we've been fighting them. In fact, this has certainly been the most successful mission of the whole war. Commodore Reider is waiting to congratulate you by subspace radio. Before I let you speak to him, I just want you all to know how proud I am of you and all you've accomplished."

You can create additional adventures in this

system. In addition to the evidence of Sathar activity elsewhere in the system, two Clan Y scout ships are still at large. Hunting down these scout ships may be a challenge for your players.

Epsilon .7 EXPERIENCE AWARDS

Each character earns 2-6 experience points.

MAXIMUM AWARD (6 points): None of the boarding party is killed, and the mothership is captured intact. All important data collected and reported to Dentin. The Sathar scoutship is prevented from escaping.

AVERAGE AWARD (4 points): The mothership is captured with a minimum of damage, and the boarding party suffers no unnecessary casualties. The party gathers most of the important information.

MINIMUM AWARD (2 points): The Sathar are forced to destroy the ship to prevent its capture, and the boarding party escapes the mothership before it is destroyed. The boarding party manages to gather some data before escaping.

Epsilon .8 THE MYSTERY OF THE SATHAR

To date the Sathar have been remarkably effective in maintaining the shroud of mystery that cloaks their origins, culture, and motivations. No Sathar has been captured alive, no significant translation of the Sathar language has been successful, no Sathar vessel has ever been captured intact (until this adventure). The location of the Sathar home worlds is unknown, and almost nothing is known of Sathar psychology or society. All Sathar personnel commit suicide to avoid capture; all Sathar vessels self-destruct when in danger of being captured; and the slaves, subject races, and victims of Sathar captivity and influence are able to tell us nothing about Sathar objectives.

The experience point reward for this section will depend on how carefully and ingeniously the player characters study and record what they discover in the mothership and in the actions of her Sathar crew and passengers. If they are able to effectively interpret what they discover, they should receive the bonus points; otherwise they will have to await interpretation of the data by scientists and researchers back in the universities and intelligence organizations of the Frontier Worlds. This information may take a long time to filter back to the characters; you may delay giving the players the experts' interpretations for six

months to a year in game time.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE SATHAR

Most of the following information must be inferred from what the players observe on the ship.

DREAMSLEEP: This is a special hibernation technique that allows a Sathar to work without sleep for long periods. The crew of the Sathar mothership is trained in dreamsleep techniques. Dreamsleeper is fully explained in section Epsilon .4.

CLAN, CASTE, AND VOCATION HEAD MARKINGS: The marking on a Sathar's head indicates his clan, caste, and vocation. Examination and comparison of markings from various members of the mothership reveals certain consistent groupings. All members of the mothership crew have identical Clan Y markings.

DEPENDENCE ON ROBOTS AND COMPUTERS: Clan Y Sathar are always accompanied by a personal robot. Personal robots can be linked to any computer terminal or control panel. By contrast, Frontier Worlds races are far less reliant on technology. An inference might be drawn, but not easily confirmed, that Sathar lack the self-reliance and independence of the Frontier Worlds races. Further, for Clan Y Sathar, robots are related to the general Sathar need for slaves and subject races.

NON-WARRIOR BEHAVIOR: All Sathar encountered previously were of warrior or scout psychology. Not all Sathar are equally dangerous fighters, and non-warrior Sathar (particularly ones like the technicians) are useless in combat.

SATHAR SPYING ON SATHAR: That the mothership does not send a distress signal to the Sathar spaceship construction base, and that it has pictures of the base taken from a distance, may suggest that the mothership is spying on the spaceship construction yard.

SATHAR TECHNOLOGY: Sathar technology is often designed for use by various races. This suggests that the UPF might be able to make use of captured Sathar equipment. The diversity of their equipment may mean that the Sathar may have many different subject races. The Sathar's high level of automation suggests that they use technology as a substitute for training. The low proficiency of Sathar technicians with hand weapons and their assignment as gunners may account for the Sathar's poor gunnery in space combat.

CLAN Y PERSONAL ROBOT

"Spider II" Personal Robot

Level:	2
Body:	50kg cylinder (.5m tall, .4m wide)
Movement:	compressed air jets—60m turn (designed for weightless environment)
Manipulators:	four delicate limbs that fold up into the chassis; various fittings at the end of each limb; plus two sensor arms
Programs:	Computer Link, Attack/Defense, Maintenance
Battery:	Type 1
Stamina:	50
Weapons:	electrostunner, sonic stunner
Self-destruct Mechanism:	as fragmentation grenade
Basic Chance to Hit:	50%

DOCK ROBOTS

Level:	2
Body:	50 kg cylinder (.5m high, .4m wide)
Movement:	compressed air jets—60m/turn
Manipulator:	four sturdy grasping arms
Programs:	computer link, maintenance
Battery:	type 1
Stamina:	75
Weapons:	none (ramming: 2d10 damage, RS avoidance check)
Basic Chance to Hit:	50%

HEAVY-DUTY WORK PODS (robot, remote-controlled, or operator-directed)

Level:	2
Body:	heavy-duty
Movement:	compressed air jets—30m/turn
Manipulators:	two heavy work arms
Programs:	computer link, maintenance
Battery:	type 2
Stamina:	500
Weapons:	none (ramming: 6d10 damage, RS avoidance check; grasping: 6d10)
Basic Chance to Hit:	50%

SATHAR SUICIDE: A hypnotic suggestion is implanted during the training of Sathar soldiers and ship crews that will cause death if the Sathar is captured. Blood flow to the brain shuts down and the Sathar dies in seconds. If a Sathar is captured alive in dreamsleeper, a medic will be able to monitor and record the vital functions of the Sathar as it dies.

REFEREE BRIEFING:

THE NOTUI

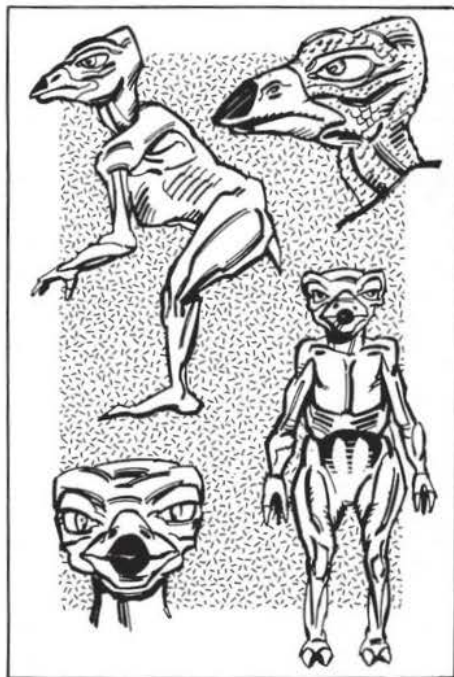
TYPE:	Medium Insectivore
NUMBER:	1-5
MOVE:	Medium
IM/RS:	6/55
STAMINA:	40-80
ATTACK:	40
DAMAGE:	2d10
SPECIAL ATTACK:	None
SPECIAL DEFENSE:	None
NATIVE WORLD:	Mahg Mar

The Notui range from 1.5 to 2 meters in height and look like a cross between a tall flightless bird (like the ostrich) and a small, bipedal, carnivorous dinosaur. A Notui is covered with very thin scales that ruffle and move like feathers to control body heat; unlike feathers, they are tough enough to provide some protection from predators. A Notui has small grasping claws at the end of its two fairly robust upper limbs, which are somewhat less dexterous than human hands. A Notui's legs are powerful, capable of short bursts of great speed and powerful kicks. Massive toe claws can also deal a nasty wound to an attacker. A Notui's head resembles that of an eagle, though the horny beak is large, wide, and unhooked. The skull is large and massive, supported on a short but flexible neck.

CULTURE

The Notui are remarkably happy and comfortable. They cultivate large hives of insects with remarkable efficiency and a minimum of effort. Much of a Notui's life is spent in artistic pursuits. They enjoy a long and relatively safe existence. There have never been any significant conflicts between individuals or tribes of Notui. Food has always been abundant, and the species has an automatic hormonal mechanism which prevents overpopulation. When the population density gets too great, the females automatically become less fertile.

All of these factors contribute to a stable and conservative culture, which has existed in essentially the same form for thousands



of years. There is a very strong resistance to change, and explicit disapproval of any individual with original or adventurous ideas. However, since the epochal event of the arrival of the Sathar and the arrival of the *Moraes*, there is a reluctant respect for the importance of non-traditional thought and behavior.

The Notui are completely unfamiliar with the notion of war or intra-species conflict. They can understand the need of animals to kill other animals for food or self-defense, but they do not equate that in their minds with killing other intelligent creatures—only an animal would do that. (The Notui band killed the two Sathar scouts in the belief that the Sathar were dangerous animals, not intelligent beings.) The only reason the Notui have any ability to fight at all is that they have various games (which they think of as art) which pit Notui against Notui in physical contests. There is an absolute prohibition on injuring an opponent, but accidents occur from time to time, and the competitions are serious and spirited.

One obsession with the Notui is their love of art and ornamentation. Everything they make is colorful and covered with abstract and realistic designs. They use whatever medium is available—clay pigments, flowers, colorful stones, bits of bone and sloughed-off scales. This may actually be the most reliable path into the hearts of the

Notui. They greatly admire the variety of colors and designs in the equipment and garments of the characters, and gifts of such items are of inestimable value to the Notui. Further, any character who shows an interest in the art of the Notui will politely be given a tour and restrained lecture, but in their hearts the Notui will never be able to think uncharitably toward a creature that can appreciate art and design.

NOTUI REACTIONS TO PLAYER CHARACTERS

The Notui approve of any actions which display intelligence and the ability to reason. They will be greatly impressed by the technology and artifacts of advanced civilization. They will be particularly impressed with any evidence that the characters love and appreciate art, but will be politely restrained in their reaction, not wishing to offend by being surprised at such refinements. They may show little outward sign of their approval of the party, since excessive displays of feelings are taboo, but they will be strongly inclined to friendship with the characters if they are thinkers and art lovers.

The Notui strongly disapprove of any use of violent force against intelligent creatures (the Notui); perhaps the definition will be expanded to include the Frontier Races, depending on the behavior of the party members. There is no excuse for injuring or killing a Notui; such is Sathar behavior, and evil. However, if a Notui is injured by accident, and the party is able to heal his wounds, there may be room for forgiveness, though relations will never be completely friendly.

The Notui will treat stupid or unreasonable actions with tolerance if the characters are judged to be no more than animals. If the characters prove themselves to be intelligent, yet occasionally perform acts which the Notui consider foolish, unreasonable, or animal-like (attacking creatures or other intelligent races with weapons, for example, or telling untruths), the Notui will be greatly puzzled and will politely but insistently request an explanation of the odd behavior.