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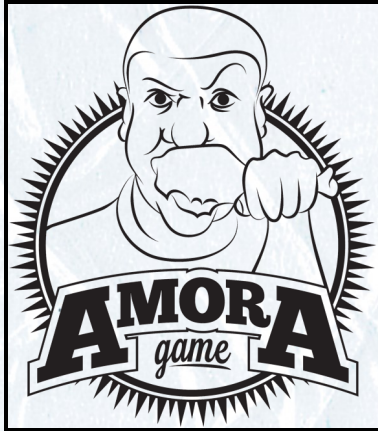
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XENO FILE:

BEHIND THE MUSIC:

The Midnight File

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Xeno File: Issue 10

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Xeno File is an electronic “magazine” designed to add content for science fiction entertainment and play for multiple roleplaying systems.

This issue focuses on the tidally locked planet known as Draaft. Living on the surface of Draaft is a lost Union space mission crew and their fey-touched offspring, the Bysylun.

Within these pages we also find the truth of what happened to the galactic pop music duo, The Midnight File. Along with their current locations and stat blocks to be used as NPCs with story hooks.

Enjoy the read and issue 10 is on the way. See you in the Void, Cowboy!

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HALO NEWS: RISE & FALL OF MIDNIGHT FILE PART 1

Those who were there at the Troglodero Canteena on Terra still talk about the night Etheen Neverstarr met Rhet Saturnine.

As few bysylun frequent Terra, neither had seen one of their kind in years. After a several drinks and some playful coaxing, Etheen convinced the shy Rhet to sing while she played the madrigan—her newly-invented synthesizer replete with a bizarre array of whizzing dials. While Etheen bounced about the stage as if chasing each effervescent note, Rhet's sonorous baritone and improvised lyrics provided a hauntingly beautiful melody. Their sound was wild, whimsical—and completely fey. After several thunderous encores and a few congratulatory rounds of drinks, Rhet won the coin flip. That night the band was born: The Midnight File.

The band's rise to stardom was the quickest the galactic music industry had ever seen. Upon The Midnight File's first release, the citizens across the United Star Systems clamored for more, propelling the duo on a whirlwind tour. Like their musical gifts, Etheen's gregarious laughter and Rhet's stoic contemplativeness should have been a recipe for a breakup. Instead, they complemented each other perfectly. Whenever Rhet's ennui plunged him into writer's block, Etheen's plucky incandescence sparked his creativity again. The only thing keeping Etheen from working on every project that came to her was Rhet's singular focus and drive. However, this combined effort, drove the next two albums to the top of the Xenospectrum 500. As bandmates, partners, and a rare pair of bysylun who stayed together, nothing in the 'Verse could stop them.

Though Rhet was the band's frontman, it

soon became apparent that all eyes were on Etheen. Her energy electrified their live performances, and critics heralded the madrigan as a breakthrough innovation. As hypnotic as Rhet's voice and languorous presence were, many considered him as the expendable half of the duo. No matter how much Etheen fiercely lobbied for her love to get more press, it was always her face that wound up on the Halo News networks.

At the third album release party, The Midnight File encountered the renowned label executive, Acadya Krenshawe. The seasoned Krenshawe applauded their talent, but cautioned that even the freshest sound could turn to white noise. When she offered the band "special" gel clams, injectable symbiots that she promised would "expand their creative scope," the duo politely declined.

While Etheen laughed off the incident, Acadya's portent of failure was already festering in Rhet's mind. Already mired in self-doubt and fearing his worthlessness, it took only a few days for him to come crawling to Acadya for a sample of the gel clams. It took only one injection for Rhet to see that Acadya was telling the truth. For the first time, he was seeing the universe, and the source of his pernicious malcontent, with brilliant, beautiful clarity.

It wasn't long before Etheen questioned Rhet's increasingly gaunt appearance and the constant shimmering glow in one of his visible eyes. As months passed, Rhet became increasingly taciturn, by either locking himself in his room to devour files or disappearing for days on end.

XENO FILE: BYSYLUN

Long after they are gone, the legends of the species bysylun live on among the brightest and most brilliant stars. Hailing from the tidally locked planet of Draaft, bysyluns are fey creatures born to humanoids. Though they resemble their biological parents, a preternatural kinship to the Primal World manifests through brilliant features, prodigious talents, and a stubborn streak of wanderlust that drives an untamable desire to reinvent themselves.

Ability Adjustments: +4 Cha, -2 Str

Hit Points: 4

Size and Type: Bysylun are Small or Medium fey with the bysylun subtype. Their parentage determines their size.

Low-light Vision: Bysylun can see dim light as if it were normal light.

Heritage Traits: Most bysylun are born to human or elven parents. By sight, they resemble their parents and have some of their racial traits. A human-parented bysylun will have the skilled racial trait (gaining an additional skill rank at 1st level and each level thereafter). An elven-born bysylun will have the elven immunities racial trait (rendering them immune to magic sleep effects, and they also receive a +2 racial bonus to saving throws against enchantment spells and effects).

Mind's Eye: Bysyluns have a powerful but invisible third eye that allows them to orient themselves in zero gravity. If a bysylun is off-kilter due to zero gravity, they can right themselves as a swift action without the need to use a method of propulsion or a stabilizing object.

Reinvention: A Bysylun focuses on a skill and work to become icons in that realm, but often feel the need to reinvent themselves refocusing on an other skill. They receive a +3 racial bonus to any skill of their choosing.

Bysyluns are able to apply this racial bonus to a new skill whenever gain a new character level up. When they choose a new skill in

ALL FOR ONE

Bysyluns can be born from any small or medium humanoid parent. At a GM's discretion, can choose one appropriate racial trait from that race. Physical traits, such as four-armed or natural weapons, are often appropriate.

which to apply this bonus, the past bonus is removed from the past skill. After a reinvention, a bysylun must have 8 hours of complete rest or become fatigued.

PLAYING A BYSYLUN

You likely...

- Are quixotic, intuitive, and prodigious.
- Strive to become outstanding and renowned in whatever interests you.
- Leave home at an early age to explore other worlds and uncover the mysteries of the cosmos.
- Make decisions based on caprice and pleasure instead of logic.

Other Races Probably...

- Don't know quite what to make of you at first glance.
- Are never ambivalent about their feelings toward you, whether awe or envy or scorn.
- Think you are a deity.
- Find you enigmatic and inexplicably attractive.

VERBAGE

Bysylun is used as a singular form for a member of the Bysylun species.

Bysyluns is the plural form when referencing multiple members of the Bysylun species.

RACE	AVG. HEIGHT	AVG. WEIGHT	AGE OF MATURITY	MAXIMUM AGE
Bysylun (human born)	6-7 ft.	90-180 lbs.	10 years	50+1d20 years
Bysylun (elven-born)	6-8 ft.	80-170 lbs.	20 years	50+3d20 years

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Though bysyluns vary in shapes and sizes, however they are lithier, wispier versions of their elvish and human ancestors. Renowned for the unconventional beauty, faint metallic markings—the texture of old scars—traverse a bysylun's face in a variety of celestial patterns. Their skin color reflects a mixture of their parents, but their cheekbones are highlighted with rich concentrations of pigmented undertones, such as azure or magenta. Bysyluns are generally slender and delicate appearances belie a physical and emotional resilience, which enables them to excel in almost any profession or pursuit they choose.

What makes the bysylun unique across the galaxy is what others can not see. All bysylun possess an invisible third eye, used to self-orient themselves in gravity, and opens only during a period of reinvention. The iris of this is typically a paler, more clouded shade of the skin's brighter hues. A reserved racial secret that can only be seen by other bysylun when it opens.

HOME WORLD

The cadre of Union Space Fleet ships first discovered the planet of Draaft when a scientific mission went array, leading to an encounter with pirates. Coming into the uncharted system, Union vessels geared towards the system's radiant sun beating down upon a lonely planet. From orbit, the

sunny side of the planet appeared to have an impermeable atmosphere of swirling blue-green gases. The other side echoed dense darkness where its edge was nearly indiscernible.

With a bright dazzling sun and a dense gaseous atmosphere, lead Union Science and Trade scientists and xenoarchaeologists cautioned that the ships could never survive entry on the bright side. The fate of those aboard, should they successfully land on the terrain, could be even more dubious. However, with slaving pirates of the Sluagh close behind, the commanders of mission ordered the ships to land all the same.

In a rare phenomenon or coincidence of timing, a solar eclipse occurred as the ships made their decent. Bathed in lunar shadow, that occurs only twice in a century, the gases of the atmosphere seemingly parted. Drawing closer, those onboard the Union vessels realized the gases belonged to a leafy canopy that unfolded to reveal a planet teeming with life. Emerald forests and crystalline lakes greeted the cadre, as well as a variety of unusual biological life.

Initially planning to repair their power cores and wait out the threat of capture, Union engineer teams brushed against a new problem. Every time a core was recharged or repaired, it would rapidly die and losing all power.

XENO FILE: BYSYLUN

Urgently in need of an alternative source of energy, exploring parties trekked the face of the planet, eventually reaching what seemed to be an abrupt edge to the vibrant half of the planet. After examination, scientists realized the existence of small creatures, which they termed chilzigs. Chilzigs seemed to hold power over the subtly undulating border. While all of the chilzigs appeared to have the same black exoskeleton, they seemed to be in violent opposition, with one half chomping at the shadow side and the other at the light. Despite their diligent investigations, no one could differentiate between the light and dark creatures. Confounded, the scientists simply gave up and returned to their ships.

As weeks turned into months, the cadre became increasingly comfortable with the unexpected but naturalistic lifestyle on Draaft. The longer they stayed, the less they recalled what the Union planets had ever looked like. In time, they forgot all about the other side of the planet and the ongoing tug of war between the light and dark chilzigs.

After a generation of inhabiting the strange planet of Draaft, some of the children born on the surface began exhibiting questionable traits. These children, numbering only one in two hundred born, had vibrantly-colored hair, an array of unusual skin tones, and uncharacteristically restless personalities that clashed with the acceptant tranquility that had come to distinguish the descendants of the original landing party. In analyzing their DNA, the scientists of Draaft noted several unprecedented anomalies. Most baffling of all was that each of these “special” children possessed fey blood.

Like many mysteries of Draaft, the uniqueness of wunderkind and their observable connection to the Primal World, simply became an accepted way of life. Parents of children who test positive for bysylun genes accept that time with their children is precious, for soon those children will submit to their nature. Blazing new trails and taking whatever fate the universe throws at them, head on.

SOCIETY AND ALIGNMENT

Bysyluns feels smothered when inhabiting a single location for more than several years. Expressing their fey nature, several youths leave Draaft soon after ending adolescence. In their younger years, before their talents and gifts have fully bloomed, their quixotic dispositions and curious features can make them easy targets for bullying. However, most bysyluns, convinced that they are destined for greater things, ignore such shunning.

Many bysyluns align on the chaotic neutral spectrum, befitting nonconformity and the need to follow their own rules. A bysylun's explorations, multivariate as they inevitably are, can lead one down good or evil paths. Regardless of any predilections and moral tendencies, few are immune to the extremes of infamy or glory.

RELATIONS

With their innate magnetism, bysyluns captivate and entrance others, no matter their profession. Though they crave adulation, romantic entanglements and intimate ties are as fleeting as their interests are. While they never abandon a paramour or friend out of malice, their need for reverence and attention

XENO FILE: BYSYLUN

spans mean that their relationships are often short lived. They leave behind an indiscriminate array of devotees and lovers from all races and cultures. All of whom continue to sing their praises, even after being discarded in the name of a reinvention. Even their creative rivals and adversaries reluctantly admit their talents.

Bysyluns are keep their emotions close and are guarded, if unintentionally. A member of the race will often adopting a public versus private persona. As it is far easier to beguile and astonish those unlike themselves, it is very rare for two bysyluns to cultivate a relationship for long term.

ADVENTURE

As born travelers, bysyluns often take the role of captains in charge of small ships. Most insist upon their crews being composed of diverse races and heritages. They rarely assume other positions on a starship, unless they are particularly gifted in another role, such as engineering or piloting. Exuding charisma, more extroverted bysyluns excel at the envoy class. Those with a quieter, more mysterious charm gravitate toward the mystic class.

NAMES

Upon their first reinvention, most bysylun reject their birth names for something with more panache. While their given names often still reflect their human or elven heritage, they often adopt cosmically themed surnames.

Sample names are: Lyrynne Aurora, Lanche Nebulist, and Aksel Syzygy

PLANET PROFILE: DRAAFT

Terrestrial: (20% rivers & lakes; 30% land mass; 50% unknown)

Atmosphere: Magical

Known Biomes: Primal Forest, Shodowy Plains

Gravity: Normal

Orbit: 42 Days

Rotation: 0 hours

LANGUAGE

Bysylun and the inhabitants of Draaft are decedents of the Union. Those from Draaft speak the common galactic tongue and Elven. They have not developed an independent language of their own.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

- Draaft scientists realize that there hasn't been a bysylun born on the planet in the last year and that the divide between the dark and light sides of the world has become increasingly unstable. They believe there is a connection between the two and send you to investigate.
- A bysylun ACE pilot recruits you for an important mission on Draaft. However, the only map she has glitches out and is unhelpful. When implored to accompany you, she forcefully insists that she never set foot upon Draaft again. Can she be convinced to accompany the mission?
- Headed toward Draaft to collect a rare botanical for Princess Ducati (NG female human envoy). a shadowy well-disguised man whispers that Draaft is not what it seems as he hands over a clandestine file. The file is heavily encrypted, but the file does has faintly scrawled writing with the title "The Death of the Sun Machine".

HALO NEWS: RISE & FALL OF MIDNIGHT FILE PART 2

Whenever Etheen inquired about his obsessive file surfing and disappearances, the once-gentle Rhet became boisterously defensive.

The press mostly bought the excuse that The Midnight File's grueling schedule had exhausted them. Their manager dismissed Etheen's constant worrying, reassuring her that Rhet was just being a bysylun. Privately, Etheen feared she would soon become a solo act if Rhet continued on his self-destructive course.

With her partner a crumbling shell of his former self, Etheen sought a connection elsewhere. She began talking to brash pilot and producer Wyndon Pulsar (CN male human soldier). Pulsar regaled her with tales and adventure from his time he spent with a classified division in ACE. One such adventure told was of a new school where aspiring pilots were taught how to build and pilot their own "dream ships."

Just thinking about building and flying her very own gleaming ship reinvigorated Etheen. But, when her third eye began to twitch warningly, she loyally ignored it. Rhet, of course, would inevitably come back to her.

One night, when Rhet had said he would be reading files, he came to the studio unexpectedly. There, he spied Wyndon and Etheen laughing and talking. It was, as most of Etheen's goofy conversations were, about nothing more than spitballs. However, in his addled mind, the exchange suggested the ultimate betrayal.

Grief-maddened at Etheen's suspected unfaithfulness, and his mind burdened with secrets, Rhet injected a symbiote yet again. Some say it was rotted, others say it was a

synthetic gel clam. The end result however was the unexpected opening of his third eye.

Security footage of the building would suggest Rhet was reeling with anger and stumbled around in pain. The last known footage tracks him through the dead of night taking an unmarked ship on a course jumping to FTL leaving Terra. The next day Etheen reported his disappearance and the only evidence left was a cryptic, rambling note stating that Rhet had returned "home" to "turn off the machine."

Etheen was left confused as she was devastated. Although there is no written bysylun law, it is an unspoken tenet that bysylun leave Draaft never to return. With her heart broken, and her third eye threatening to open, Etheen left with Wyndon for adventures out in the void.

The news that two of its greatest talents had vanished without a trace shocked the music world, (the disappears of Wyndon is often overlooked). After a period of mourning and tributes, the galaxy forgot all about The Midnight File and moved on to the next pop icons. Only the greatest fans still hope for a reunion, believing that Rhet and Etheen are somewhere out there in the stars.

XENO PROFILE: RHET SATURINE

Rhet Saturnine

CR 10 - 9,600 XP

Bysylun mystic 10

NE Medium fey (bysylun)

Init +3; Senses low-light vision; Perception +19

DEFENSE

HP 140; RP 5

EAC 22; KAC 23

Fort +11; Ref +11; Will +13; +2 vs enchantment

Immunities sleep

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee battleglove, power +15 (2d8+10 B)

Range zero pistol, hailstorm-class +17 (2d6+10 C; critical staggered, DC 19)

Offensive Abilities echoes of obedience, greater forced amity (DC 19), inexplicable commands

Mystic Spell-like Abilities (CL 10th)

At will-mindlink

Mystic Spells Known (CL 10th)

4th (3/day)- *confusion* (DC 22), *mind probe* (DC 22)

3rd (6/day) - *bestow curse* (DC 21), *charm monster* (DC 21), *deep slumber* (DC 21), *suggestion* (DC 21)

2nd (at will) - *force blast* (DC 20), *hold person* (DC 20)

Connection overlord

STATISTICS

Str +0; Dex +3; Con +0; Int +1; Wis +5; Cha +8

Skills Diplomacy +27, Mysticism, +24,

Profession (musician) +19

Languages Common, Elven

Other Abilities mind's eye

Gear white carbon carbon skin (quick-release sheath), hailstorm class zero pistol, 2 super-capacity batteries (80 charges each), power battleglove

Sprawled languidly across his stone throne, Rhet Saturnine glowers down upon the edge of his domain. The statues of long-dead kings are his only true companions, an arrangement he deems preferable to distracting conversation. Though he does not remember how he arrived on this strange planet, its haunted splendor captivated him instantly. As soon as he donned the ancient obsidian



XENO PROFILE: ETHEEN NEVERSTARR

crown, he knew it was his to rightfully claim.

Just as he cannot remember landing, Rhet does not know how he attained The Sight. It has made for an amusing game of superiority, watching the parades of scientists and investigators as they come to his edge of the world, searching to no avail for what their inferior eyes will never find. Only he can see the ultraviolet sparks dueling with infrared in a constant, undulating battle for dominance.

It has taken this singular vision, and years of diligent concentration, to comprehend and hone the power necessary to reshape Draaft. Under Rhet's control, the chilzigs in shadow are swallowing more of the false hemisphere every day. With righteous pride, he watches as the Light is gobbled away. It is a spectacle of power and justice all the more beautiful that it is his alone.

The constant pain in Rhet's visible eye, leaving his invisible third eye constantly twitching, is a small price to pay for his self-ordained mission. It would be rational to investigate the cause of it, but the mere thought of leaving Draaft always fills Rhet with a mysterious dread. It is almost as if he fears seeing someone, though he cannot remember whom.

When the occasional twinge of loneliness strikes, Rhet has no trouble banishing it. He reassures himself that soon, all will be as it should. He will expose the truth—in all its glittering darkness—for all of Draaft to see.

Etheen Neverstarr

CR 10 - 9,600 XP

Bysylun Envoy

CN Medium fey (bysylun)

Init +5; **Senses** low-light vision; **Perception** +20

DEFENSE

HP 150; **RP** 5

EAC 23; **KAC** 24

Fort +9; **Ref** +11; **Will** +13

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee battleglove, power +18 (2d8+10 B)

Range anarchic aphelion laser rifle +20 (3d6+10 F; critical burn, 1d6)

STATISTICS

Str +1; **Dex** +5; **Con** +0; **Int** +3; **Wis** +0; **Cha** +8

Skills Computers +20, Diplomacy +25, Piloting +28, Profession (musician) +20, Sense Motive +25

Languages Common, Elven

Other Abilities envoy improvisations (duck under, expert attack (1d6+2), hidden agenda, improved get 'em), mind's eye

Gear d-suit III, anarchic aphelion laser rifle, 2 super-capacity batteries (80 charges each), power battleglove

Etheen was always exceptional, even for a bysylun. While most of her race's personalities change with their reinvention, no matter what, who, or where she is, Etheen is always herself: an indomitable optimist with a burning zest for life.

Short and feisty rather than tall and languorous, she fights as hard as she belly-laughs. She often uses her unassuming stature to her advantage; especially when she needs to pack a surprise punch in battle. Only the network of silvery facial markings, sweeping outward from both eyes like two diamond constellations, give her away.

Under the pseudonym of Evie Io, Etheen has become a top ACE pilot, flying missions into the

SONIC	LEVEL	PRICE	DAMAGE	RANGE	CRITICAL	CAPACITY	USAGE	BULK	SPECIAL
Glitterdust Blunderbuss	10	28,000	3d4 So	15 ft.	Blind	40 charges	10	L	Blast, bright, unwieldy

most dangerous zones. Her ship, the Tin Spider, is the fastest known in the galaxy. Though she races just for the fun of it, she has recently contemplated making it a new career. No one has ever beaten her, no matter how much she dares them to try.

It is only in her rare unoccupied moments in

the loading docks that hazy memories of The Midnight File and Rhet pluck at her consciousness. To calm herself, she sometimes fidget with the dials of her madrigan which, to her chagrin, she mostly forgets how to play now. Deckhands who can hear the hesitant notes often swear that they are familiar, somehow. But, before they can place the tune, the Tin Spider is already a lightyear away.

SMALL ARMS

Glitterdust Blunderbuss (Sonic Weapon)

Glitterdust blunderbusses are manufactured on Draaft to help explorers combat the numerous invisible fey creature that inhabit the planet's forests. Created by Jansky Brightblast (CG female bysylun mechanic), a bysylun weapons manufacturer and designer, they are often ornate. They can be found the hand of any Draaft resident, but the one owned by bysylun are superiorly decorative.

The Glitterdust blunderbuss is a one-handed pistol with a trumpet-shaped barrel that fires a shimmering dust that outlines all invisible creatures and objects in a 15-foot cone, causing them to lose their invisibility for 1 minute. All creatures in the 15-foot cone also take a -10 penalty on Stealth checks for 1 minute.



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