

FROM BEYOND Adventure Path Episode 3 - Level 9-11

FIRST STRIKE

By Davide Tramma



STARFINDER
COMPATIBLE

INDEX

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND.....3

Working on the Nuclear Transmutator.....	3
Cerberus's crew.....	3
About the hogboglin's battleship.....	4

FOR THE GAME MASTER.....4

In this episode.....	4
NPCs from the previous episode.....	7
The Subroutine goal.....	7
Subroutine's forces.....	8
The Hive vessel.....	8
The PCs goal.....	8
Countdown for the drone attack.....	9
Countdown for the freighter arrival.....	9
The Nuclear Transmutator.....	9
The cyborg hobgoblins.....	9
Cyborg Collective ICS.....	9
A spy on board.....	10
The Marooned One.....	11
Timeline.....	13

CERBERUS STATION.....13

General Description.....	13
Command Room.....	17
Armaments Deck.....	18
Housing Deck.....	19
Storage Area.....	28
Torpedo Launcher.....	31
Thruster.....	31
Engineering Deck.....	31
Power Core Deck.....	32
Life Support Deck.....	32
Docking Area.....	32
Sensors and Radar.....	33

CHAPTER 1 - LIFE ON BOARD.....33

Installing the Nuclear Transmutator.....	33
Cleaning the decks.....	36
Analyzing the Nuclear Transmutator.....	38
Repairing the Cerberus systems.....	39
Improving the Cerberus systems.....	42
Incident on the Cerberus.....	43

Unidentified Flying Ship.....	44
Freighter arrival.....	46
Enemy vessels approaching.....	46

CHAPTER 2 - UNDER ATTACK!.....46

First strike!.....	47
The Cerberus is boarded.....	55

CHAPTER 3 - RETREAT.....55

The Cerberus is captured.....	55
Retreat!.....	56
Captain Tibb sacrifice.....	57

CHAPTER 4 - ABANDON THE CERBERUS!58

Warp!.....	58
Chased.....	58
Ending.....	59

THE NEXT EPISODE.....59

APPENDIX.....60

Npc.....	60
----------	----

NEW CREATURES.....74

Hobgoblin, Cyborg.....	74
------------------------	----

NEW SPACESHIPS.....75

War Drone.....	75
Fighter, Automated.....	76

NEW GRAFT.....78

Cyborg.....	78
-------------	----

PRINTABLE MAPS.....79

CREDITS.....83

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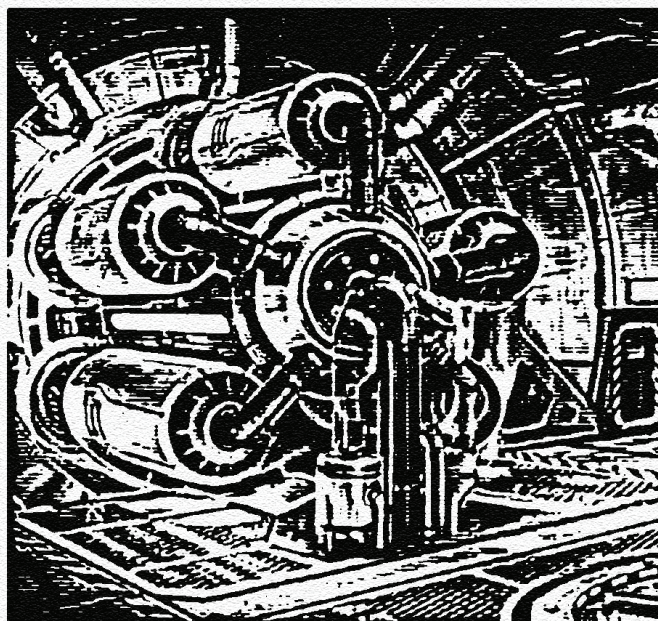
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ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

The PC's have retrieved what they needed to make the Cerberus's power core work again. The Nuclear Transmutator, an arcane-technological artifact they found on the hellish icy planet named DLB01.04, possesses the energy required to reactivate the Cerberus power core. Now the PCs and the crew on the Cerberus have only to install the artifact and wait for the freighter and the supplies, at that point Captain Tibb will decide the next step. Staying and asking for military support, or withdrawing into the Federation* space to warn them about the danger lurking in this solar system. Only time and circumstances will tell what the right decision is.

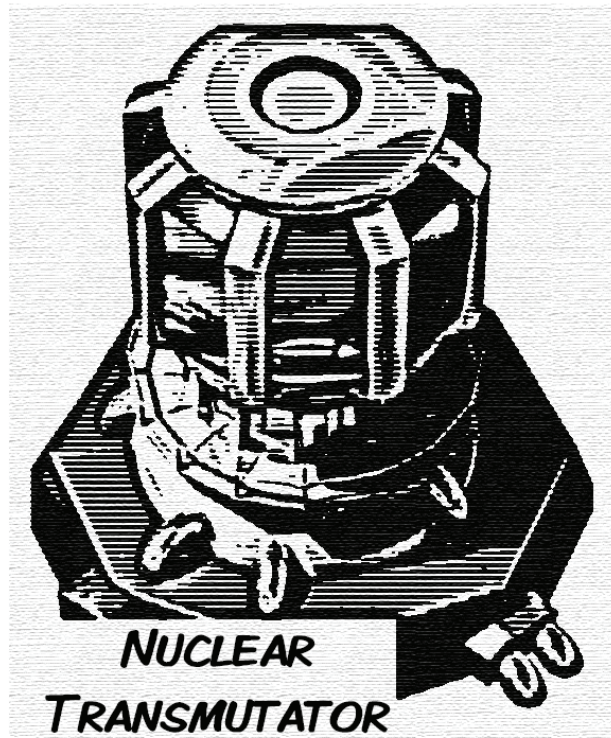
(*) The Federation is an interstellar organization led by the Wytchwyrd civilization. The PCs are supposed to be part of it, as full citizens or hired professionals that come from elsewhere. More details about the Federation will come when the Campaign Setting is published.



POWER CORE

WORKING ON THE NUCLEAR TRANSMUTATOR

The first task the PCs and the engineers have to accomplish is to install the Nuclear Transmutator and later study its full potential. The install phase re-initiates the power core and so the life support starts working again. This is proof that the Nuclear Transmutator is capable of producing enough energy despite that it has been made by a less advanced race. The PCs will have the chance to analyze in depth other potential of this artifact later. However, the Nuclear Transmutator is not essential to run the station, and the PCs may eventually decide to convince Captain Tibb to disconnect the artifact and move it to the storage area.



**NUCLEAR
TRANSMUTATOR**

CERBERUS'S CREW

The PCs are not the only personnel on board. Captain Tibb, officers, civilians and soldiers help in running the Cerberus.

The crew is composed of the following people:

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

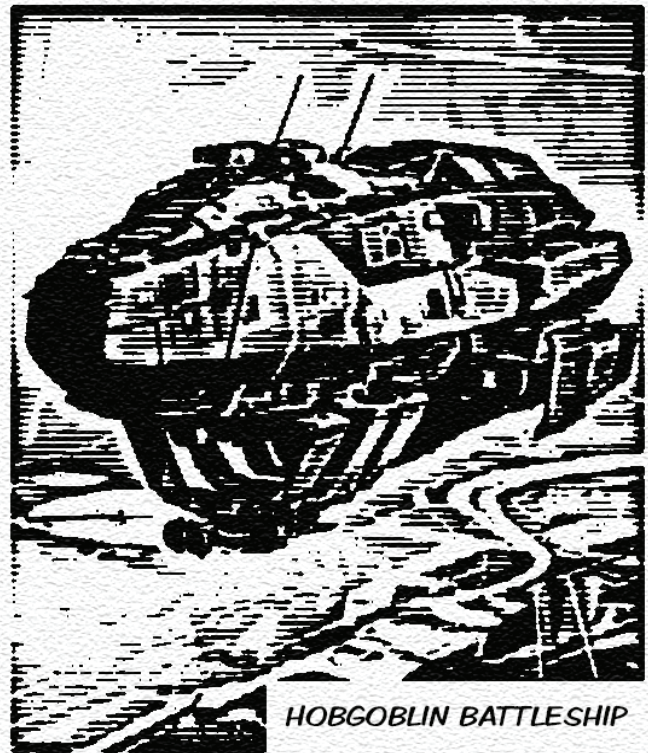
- Viktor Tibb, Captain (Human Icon Soldier 8)
- Tzaru, Engineer Officer (Contemplative Engineer 7)
- Hans Thissen, Gunner Officer (Human Soldier 6)
- Tassel Borf, Pilot Officer (Halfling Soldier 6)
- Ivan Yukov, Science Officer (Human Mechanic 6)
- Karsk, Senior Engineer (Dwarf Expert 7)
- Junior Engineer x9 (Dwarf Soldier 2)
- Guard x6 (Half-elf Soldier 1)
- Yuri Wassily (Human War Medic 4)
- Civilians x15

See Appendix for more details.

ABOUT THE HOBGOBLIN BATTLESHIP

In episode 2 “DESCENT” the PCs witness the last breath of the dying Hobgoblin battleship. An explosion blasted its hull while the surviving Hobgoblin crew died while in the attempt to fire a round of torpedoes. Since then the battleship remained adrift, caught by the planet’s gravity only to disappear a few hours later behind the hidden face of the planet, is invisible to radars and active scanners. The weird event is that the Duergar’s satellites, which were operational up to that moment, stopped working and became silent too. Further studies conducted on the data recorded by the Sawshark reveals that the Hobgoblin battleship belongs to an obsolete class of warships built by the Dominion*. This class of battleships were employed around 50 years ago during the wars of secession which led some Dominion’s colonies to earn independence and later join the Federation.

(*)The Dominion is a fascist-like state known for its aggressive and expansionist policy, formed



mainly by humans, dwarfs and dark elves. More details about the Dominion will come when the Campaign Setting is published.

FOR THE GAME MASTER

In this section useful information is reported for the Game Master in order to properly run this episode. Read these paragraphs in order to prepare and plan your game session. Take note of the main event and of the calendar, especially if you plan to make some changes and adapt the story line to your “gamemastering” style.

IN THIS EPISODE

Here we report a summary of what is going to happen during the four chapters that compose this episode, read them so that you can have an idea of the main events.

CHAPTER 1

This chapter contains nine phases which happen

FOR THE GAME MASTER

in sequence.

1) Installing the Nuclear Transmutator

It is vital to restore the energy, the Nuclear Transmutator is the key. At this point in the adventure the station has limited access. Captain Tibb ordered that only the Elevator and the Power Core are safe zone. See the paragraph Installing the Nuclear Transmutator. This task takes almost one day.

2) Cleaning the decks

Now the energy is restored and all decks are safe and accessible. Captain Tibb orders to solve some problems. It seems that some creatures have to be dealt with. See the paragraph Cleaning the decks. This task may take one day or more, depending on the PCs resources.

3) Analyzing the Nuclear Transmutator

Now the crew is more relaxed and seems that they can take their time to come back to ordinary duties. Captain Tibb orders that the Nuclear Transmutator has to be analyzed to discover its true potential. See the paragraph Analyzing the Nuclear Transmutator. This task may take more

days, depending on how much time the PCs want to spend on it. The more time they dedicate, the more they discover about the artifact. The PCs have four days to analyze the artifact, because the fifth day the Cerberus will be under attack and the entire crew will be required at the battle stations.

4) Repairing the Cerberus systems

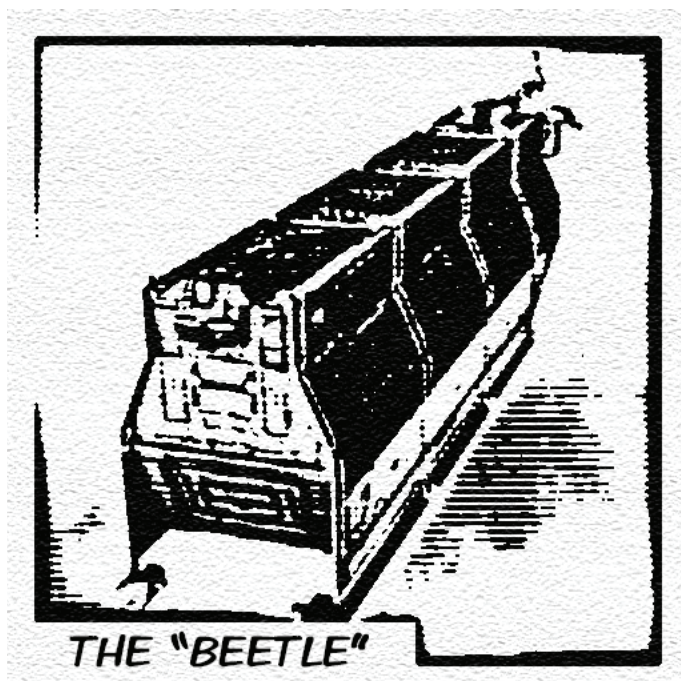
Even if the power core has been restored, there are some technical problems that need to be fixed. The impact with the Farseer shuttle (See From Beyond – Descent Ep.2 for more details) was violent and not all of the systems function properly. See the paragraph Repairing the Cerberus systems. This task can be easily completed in one day if the PCs and the NPCs make team work.

5) Improving the Cerberus systems

Captain Tibb ask the PCs to improve the Cerberus systems as they did for the Sawshark. Considering the circumstances they need everything that could increase their chance of surviving and coming back home. At this point the crew spread rumors about the Captain intention to abort the whole mission and return to Federation Space. See the paragraph Improving the Cerberus systems. This task must not take more than one day, if the PCs fail to improve the performance of the Cerberus systems it means they do not find anything worthy to improve.

6) Incident on the Cerberus

Something is wrong with the life support, despite the system has been checked and rechecked. The PCs have to deal with what is left of Captain Thomas Fraser, former captain of the Sawshark who has been declared dead. He turned into a Marooned One (See Starfinder Alien Archive) after dying in outer space and returned to the



FOR THE GAME MASTER

Cerberus to take revenge on those who abandoned him to a slow and dreadful death. However, the PCs will have the chance to “convince” him what really happened. See paragraph Incident on the Cerberus. This is the last day available to analyze the Nuclear Transmutator.

7) Freighter arrival

The Federation Freighter “Beetle” emerges from warp and approaches the Cerberus with fresh supplies and spare parts. Everything seems to be going on the right direction. See the paragraph Freighter arrival.

8) Unidentified flying ship

This is the moment where the Cerberus comes into contact with a Hive vessel. Mr. Yukov, the science officer, explains the vessel is not registered and its frame is unknown. The hive vessel attacks the Cerberus with a psionic weapon, destabilizing the mind of some crew members. See paragraph Unidentified flying ship.

9) Enemy vessels approaching

The subroutine launches the attack. The first strike is happening. It’s not a coincidence that the attack arrives shortly after the freighter docked. See the paragraph Enemy vessels approaching. This is the eighth day.

CHAPTER 2

This chapter is made up of two crucial parts, both of them involve fighting. The first part is about a battle in space fought between the Cerberus and the subroutine fleet. The second part is about fighting on board of the Cerberus to slow down the enemies.

1) First Strike!

Mr. Yukov sounds the alarm. Multiple signatures

appears on the radar and one of them belongs to the Hobgoblin battleship that the PCs thought destroyed. An intense and violent battle begins, where the whole crew tries to repel a swarm of war drones. Eventually the shields collapse and the hull suffers heavy damage, until the whole station ceases to function. At that point the Cerberus is boarded. See paragraph First Strike.

2) The Cerberus is boarded

Despite the effort to defend the Cerberus’ integrity it is highly probable that the station will fall. There is a chance that the PCs eliminate all the war drones before the shields are exhausted and the hull points reach zero, but the Hobgoblin battleship eventually rams the Cerberus and board it. See paragraph The Cerberus is boarded. This is the most delicate moment of the adventure, where the previous decisions of the PCs, influence the outcome. Did they rescue the Duergar survivors? Did they try to parley with the Marooned One or former Sawshark Captain Thomas Fraser?

CHAPTER 3

When this chapter begins the Cerberus has already been invaded, captured, or is no longer operational. They are outnumbered and what they need most is time to retreat, retrieve the Nuclear Transmutator, and save as many lives as possible.

1) The Cerberus is captured

In this paragraph the enemies invade the ships decks and outnumber the PCs and their allies. See the paragraph The Cerberus is captured.

2) Retreat!

In this section the PCs plan to retreat and reach the docking area where they can flee with the Sawshark and the Beetle. The enemy outnumbers

FOR THE GAME MASTER

them and take advantage of their fast healing ability to implement hit and run tactics to deplete the PCs strength and resources. To give the crew an advantage he eventually sacrifices his life to stop an assault that gives the PCs more time to run away. The PCs have to save as many crew members as possible, including their families. See paragraph Retreat!.

CHAPTER 4

In this chapter the PCs and the survivors manage to take possession of the Sawshark and/or the Beetle, turn the engine on, and leave behind the wrecked Cerberus.

1) Warp!

After leaving the docking area the PCs immediately turn the warp engine on and run. They have to leave Captain Tibb behind but at least men, women, and children are still alive. See paragraph Warp!.

2) Chased

Some enemy ships manage to track and chase the PCs and when they leave the warp, the enemies' ships do the same. A second space battle occurs but it's an easy win for the PCs. See paragraph Chased.

NPCs FROM THE PREVIOUS EPISODES

In this episode some NPCs from previous episodes appear as part of the crew. If you played the previous episodes they have probably gained levels or it is possible they died in action. When these NPCs appear you can use the datasheet contained in the APPENDIX or you can use your own updated datasheet. However, if the appearing NPC is dead you should change him or her for another who is

appropriate for that role. For example, this episode assumes that Tzaru the Contemplative survived from Descent Ep.2 and is the Engineer Officer on the Cerberus. If during your game sessions Tzaru died (or something else happened to him), as a Game Master feel free to have him substituted by another NPC or a PC.

The following NPCs from previous episodes appear in First Strike Ep.3:

Tzaru the Contemplative, Engineer Officer.

Karsk, Senior Engineer.

Numa, Engineer

Sah'Ah Mal, Engineer

Yuri Wassily, War Medic.

The duergar survivors

THE SUBROUTINE GOAL

In this adventure the Subroutine pursues three key goals.

First, seize the Cerberus and recycle its components to assemble more war drones, enhance the Hobgoblin battleship, and repair the damaged or destroyed war drones.

Second, convert any living being on board into cyborgs to increase the supply of sentient beings and extract more knowledge from their mind. Until now the Hobgoblin minds have not provided vital intelligence about the Federation. However, the crew of the Cerberus, including Captain Tibb, can provide much more intelligence than any Hobgoblin or database. For the above reasons the Subroutine attempts to incapacitate and capture as many living beings as possible, relying on termination in only dire cases.

Third, the Subroutine needs at least the Beetle or the Sawshark to be intact so that it can load and

FOR THE GAME MASTER

deploy as many war drones as possible into the Federation space and then spread its viral code inside as many ships as possible. During the space battle, the PCs notice that the war drones are not targeting the Sawshark and the Freighter, leaving the vessels intact until the last moment, when the PCs and the survivors are about to enter warp speed.

SUBROUTINE'S FORCES

In order to accomplish its goals, the subroutine relies on the following forces:

- The Hobgoblin's battleship: the vessel has been scrapped and its power core and engines repaired in order to move against the Cerberus. It can't open fire on its own, but it will launch assault pods to board the Cerberus or eventually ram the hull if this last option is safer.

- Automated fighters: the subroutine repaired and armed two fighters that were on board of the battleship. The fighters have no pilot and rely on AI only.

- 50 war drones: these war drones have been assembled from scratch thanks to the facilities found inside the battleship. Like the automated-fighters, they have no pilot.

- 50 Hobgoblin cyborgs: the subroutine has found a way to implant electronic and mechanical devices to restore seriously wounded life beings. Most of the Hobgoblin crew was dead or wounded by the Coil Cannon hits as described in From Beyond - Descent. The Hobgoblin battleship hosted 70 crew members, only 50 of them were converted into cyborgs. The cyborgs neither respond to subroutine remote control nor possess will power, but retain their memories and skills. The subroutine is



capable of converting almost any humanoid life form into a mindless cyborg. See NEW GRAFT for more details.

THE HIVE VESSEL

The ship that appears on the radar in Chapter 1 is a reconnaissance vessel sent by the Hive to check the situation. This represents the first contact with this unknown alien race. Besides employing their psionic weapon against the crew, the vessel doesn't have any other goal. They are there to soften the ground for the incoming war drones attack and to make sure that this phase of their mission is a success. After launching the psionic attack, the hive vessel puts distance between them and the Cerberus and disappear at FTL speed.

THE PCs GOAL

The PCs goals may be many, and they may change during the adventure. At the beginning they are just planning to withdraw from the solar system. Once the war drones attack commences they may want to counterattack. Then, once the space battle turns into the favor of the attacking forces, their goal is to stay alive, withdraw to the dock,

FOR THE GAME MASTER

and abandon the Cerberus. The overall goal is however, to gain time to prepare the retreat, saving as many civilians as possible before heading into Dominion's territories.

COUNTDOWN FOR THE DRONE ATTACK

When the adventure begins the PCs are already on board on the Cerberus. The PCs have eight days left before this event occurs. See the Timeline in the Appendix for more details.

COUNTDOWN FOR THE FREIGHTER ARRIVAL

The Freighter arrives the same day the war drones attack. Have the Freighter arrive some hours before the attack but make it happen on the same day. This time lap is useful to give the PCs time to make plans, make vital decisions, and maybe move the Nuclear Transmutator. See the Timeline in for more details.

THE NUCLEAR TRANSMUTATOR

When the PCs found the artifact on planet DLB01.04 they had not had the chance to study its powers. They were not able to do that on the Sawshark either, due to lack of proper scientific equipment. They deduced some properties like the ability to transmutate raw matter at atomic level and relied on some intelligence provided by the surviving Duergar. They also discovered that the Nuclear Transmutator reacted to energy input while analyzing its properties. Once they reach the Cerberus they have the time and the proper equipment to uncover the artifact secrets. The essence of the artifact is that it can change

the atomic structure of matter. It requires and at the same time provides, massive amounts of energy. However, the more energy that is given to the Nuclear Transmutator the more unstable it becomes and the more unpredictable the outcome is. As a general rule the artifact responds to energy input and produces energy output plus some other effects, these effects are not predictable but, if the energy input is not too high the effects can be controlled. It is yet unknown how the artifact could react if stimulated by other exotic energies. In Chapter 1 the PCs have the chance to experiment and discover some, but not all, of the possible outcomes and learn how to control them for their benefit. The Game Master can change these outcomes to fit his or her game mastering style or campaign goal.

THE CYBORG HOBGOBLIN

In this adventure the Cyborg new graft is presented. A cyborg is a complex electronic and mechanical set of implants that is applied to a humanoid life form. The host must have died within a few hours in order for the graft to be applied. Physical attributes are enhanced but mental ones are canceled, thus turning the host into a semi-sentient being that act by following instructions from a central AI, in this case the subroutine. See New Graft for more details.

CYBORG COLLECTIVE ICS

The Cyborg graft consists of a collective AI programmed by the subroutine to manage and control recycled life forms of the humanoid type and as a whole the collective mind can be treated as an ICS as described in the Starfinder Core

FOR THE GAME MASTER

Rulebook.

Computer Tier: 3 (+1 every 5 cyborgs for Root Access; see below)

User Interface: sub cranial micro-console for direct access or communications unit for remote access.

It is possible to access any cyborg by direct or remote access with a DC 29 Computer check to hack (see below Access paragraph).

Size: cyborgs employ subroutine computing power and extreme miniaturization thanks to technology advancement possessed by the Hive, the race that programmed the subroutine. The size of an ICS does not respect the normal rules described in the Starfinder Core Rulebook. A cyborg individual ICS fits easily inside a humanoid body.

Note for the game Master: A tier III computer would not normally fit into a human sized head. However, as described in “Distress Call” episode 1, the Hive has accomplished amazing technological advancements in the field of artificial intelligence. The subroutine is actually a quantum software enhanced by means of psionic powers.

Access: once access is achieved it is possible to take harmful actions against the cyborg that has been hacked. See the below list of possible actions a PC may take.

Shut down – the cyborg stop to operate for 1 round plus int modifier.

Attack – the cyborg can be forced to attack the closest being.

Move – the cyborg can be forced to move at its top speed in a straight line.

Data overcharge – the cyborg can be forced to overcharge the flux of data between all cyborgs. This reduces the DC to hack any cyborg by one

point for one hour. The effects of this action stack if made on a different cyborg.

Root Access: In order to obtain Root Access a DC 69 computer check must be successfully rolled. Reduce the DC by 4 for every five cyborgs terminated. Root Access means the hacker obtains access to the collective main frame that control all the cyborgs. The actions shut down, attack, move, and data overcharge affect all of the cyborgs at once instead of a single cyborg.

A SPY ON BOARD

Sah’Ah Mal works as a spy on behalf of the Dominion and is employing a low frequency transmitter hidden in her room under her bed to send intelligence to a satellite located outside the solar system around 3 light-days distant from the Cerberus. During this episode, Sah’Ah Mal will play her role of introverted person that doesn’t like to get involved too much in social activity, this is for the purpose of having enough time to gather intelligence, take notes of the main events occurring on board, and transmitting the information to the spy satellite. However, once Captain Tibb orders that he wants the Nuclear Transmutator to be studied and analyzed Sah’Ah Mal will make a step forward insisting she is the one suitable for the task. If none of the PCs decide to study the artifact then Captain Tibb assigns Sah’Ah Mal to the task. If some of the PCs ask explicitly to be in, then Sah’Ah Mal insists to join. In the last case the role-play decides what the outcome will be. It is possible that Sah’Ah Mal is accepted in the research team or not.

If Sah’Ah Mal is alone while studying the artifact, she jeopardizes the outcome of the research by

FOR THE GAME MASTER

omitting key discoveries while making public lesser details in order not to rise suspicion. If Sah'Ah Mal joins the research team she eventually tries to slow down the studies. This implies a penalty on the skill check performed by the PCs with an extremely slight chance that the PCs notice what is going on.

THE MAROONED ONE

(former Sawshark Captain Thomas Fraser)

When the PCs, during the first episode “Distress Call”, went to save the Sawshark crew they didn’t find any survivors. The subroutine terminated anyone on board and spaced their bodies. Since then, all Sawshark crew members were declared officially dead and the event recorded in the logbook. Indeed, this is how the events occurred. However,

the situation is, under certain points of view, slightly different. The Captain of the Sawshark, or what is left of him, was Thomas Fraser. His body kept floating in space until the life support of his space suit ceased to function. Death was the natural consequence given the circumstances, and his return as an undead creature, also. When he woke up he realized immediately he was something else, he was changed, and he didn’t forget he was left out there to die slowly either. His newly undead form pushed him to pursue a single and important goal; come back to the Cerberus and take revenge. Captain Thomas Fraser managed to reach the Cerberus’ coordinates by employing the engine of a drone abandoned after the Sawshark incident. It took days to reach the Cerberus, but time and vacuum of space were no longer a problem. Fraser reached the Cerberus a few days before the exploration team returned from the planet DLB01.04 and stayed hidden in outer space close to the station hull, studying the situation and waiting for the proper moment and conditions before taking action.

GOAL: murder all the crew on the Cerberus.

REASON: take revenge on those who didn’t save him and left him to die in space.

STRATEGY: Thomas Fraser is very familiar with the Cerberus systems and knows how to manipulate and hack the peripheral consoles to hide his presence. He first murders a couple of crew members by simulating system malfunctions, well aware that the suspicions will lead to address as a responsible the subroutine, thus further feeding the paranoia that the station could be infected. Below you find some possible actions Fraser can take to sabotage the Cerberus. Feel free to employ



FOR THE GAME MASTER

different events according to your session goal or game mastering style.

Incident #1 – Storage Area room #6

Thomas Fraser lures a soldier (lesser NPCs) inside the storage area. He accomplishes this by calling the victim on the radio transmitter, asking for a routine task. Once the soldier reaches the location, the trap is triggered. Fraser opens the airlock, spacing the unlucky victim. At this point the command room immediately detects that the airlock was opened without authorization and that one soldier is floating in space.

Incident #2 – Housing Deck room #6 (swimming pool)

At night, Fraser sabotages the swimming pool by hiding an electric cable in the water. The day after some civilians are found death due to high voltage electrocution. An inspection of the swimming pool requires a DC 20 perception check to discover the planned sabotage.

Incident #3 – Life Support

This act of sabotage is probably the last step of Fraser's plan to murder the whole crew.

The first step is to leave the emergency beacon that was installed on his space suite, outside the station to "announce" his presence. Until now the beacon was shut down so no one on board was aware of his presence. As a second step, he seals himself inside the life support deck and shuts down all life support subsystems; air, water and artificial gravity. In order to prevent anyone from entering the life support deck he hacks the doors by rolling a computer check. Keep in mind that Fraser, now being a Marooned one, has a +21 bonus to its computer check rolls. If the PCs want to hack the doors they have to beat Fraser's hack

roll. The third and final step is to openly manifest his presence on board. At this point he accesses the communications system and openly declares he is back and that everything will soon be over. Fraser will mock the whole station, calling them stupid and fools for leaving him to die in the coldness of space. Soon after, he unmask Sah'Ah Mal, revealing her as a spy who is working for the Dominion.

COUNTERMEASURES: it is possible to prevent Fraser from wreaking havoc inside the Cerberus. In order to accomplish this, two options exist:

Option #1 – Catching Thomas Fraser during the night

Fraser always operates during nighttime. This means there is a chance that someone crosses his path while he's sabotaging a system, especially when he is sabotaging the swimming pool. Keep in mind that Fraser is very stealthy and has +21 on his stealth checks, making him very difficult to detect.

However, there is a chance to catch him and if this event occurs the outcome can only be a fight. If Fraser wins the fight he tries to cover his tracks and go on with his plan.

Option #2 – Negotiating with Fraser

Despite his nature, Fraser preserves some memories of his past life; they are there but buried under is ongoing madness and rage against everyone who is still alive. However, his wife and son are still people he thinks about and are the only things that are keeping his human nature alive. In episode 1 of this adventure path, the PCs found a photo of Fraser's family. This object represents the only hook that can open the mind of the captain therefore granting a chance to negotiate with him.

CERBERUS STATION

If the portrait is shown to Fraser he will become silent, almost catatonic, for few minutes, while the memories of his past life violently emerge. At this point the PCs can attempt to negotiate with him. If words are well chosen and the conversation is lead by the finest psychologist, you can give the PCs the chance to roll a DC 15 diplomacy check. If the roll is successful then Fraser asks to be given the portrait, once this happen he ceases every hostile action and spends all his time grasping the photo and watching his family, doing nothing other than that.

If the PCs are smart they could go even further. It's a fact that Fraser seeks revenge in some way but the PCs can try to explain to Fraser how he died and who killed him. The PCs can tell Fraser that they tried to rescue him and they really tried everything to save his life, but it was too late. They can tell him that something unknown murdered him and his crew and nearly destroyed the whole station. If the conversation is plausible and well played give the PCs a chance to roll a second DC 15 diplomacy check. If successful, then Thomas Fraser finally becomes aware of what has happened and will pick a side and probably turn into a temporary ally.

Note for the Game Master: the incident should occur in Chapter 1 – Incident on the Cerberus. If you want to go beyond this adventure, you can have Thomas Fraser survive the whole affair, leave the Cerberus, and turn him into an undead wandering pirate. In the campaign setting that will follow this adventure path, Thomas Fraser is present and leads the dreaded Ghost Fleet.

TIMELINE

See the table below for the the day by day occurring

events.

CERBERUS STATION

A description of the Cerberus Station, including the decks and the rooms.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The Cerberus is divided into decks and areas. Each one is composed by one or more rooms depending on their purpose. Each room contains elements, with some elements being specific for that room while others are present in any room. If the element is specific to a room then it is described in the room description, otherwise it is reported below in this paragraph.

Every deck or area is usually occupied by skilled personnel able to run the technological equipment. In the room description you find which of the NPCs can usually be found inside.

Below come two elements that are to be considered common subsystems that are active on all decks. They have a tactical value once the Cerberus is boarded and the PCs may decide to use them to their advantage.

Crew worksheet

All crew members, except the civilians, work from 7.00 AM to 20.00 PM standard time. During this time they are supposed to be occupying their assigned station, outside of this time they are employing their downtime on other activities, unless an emergency occurs.

Automated fire extinguishers

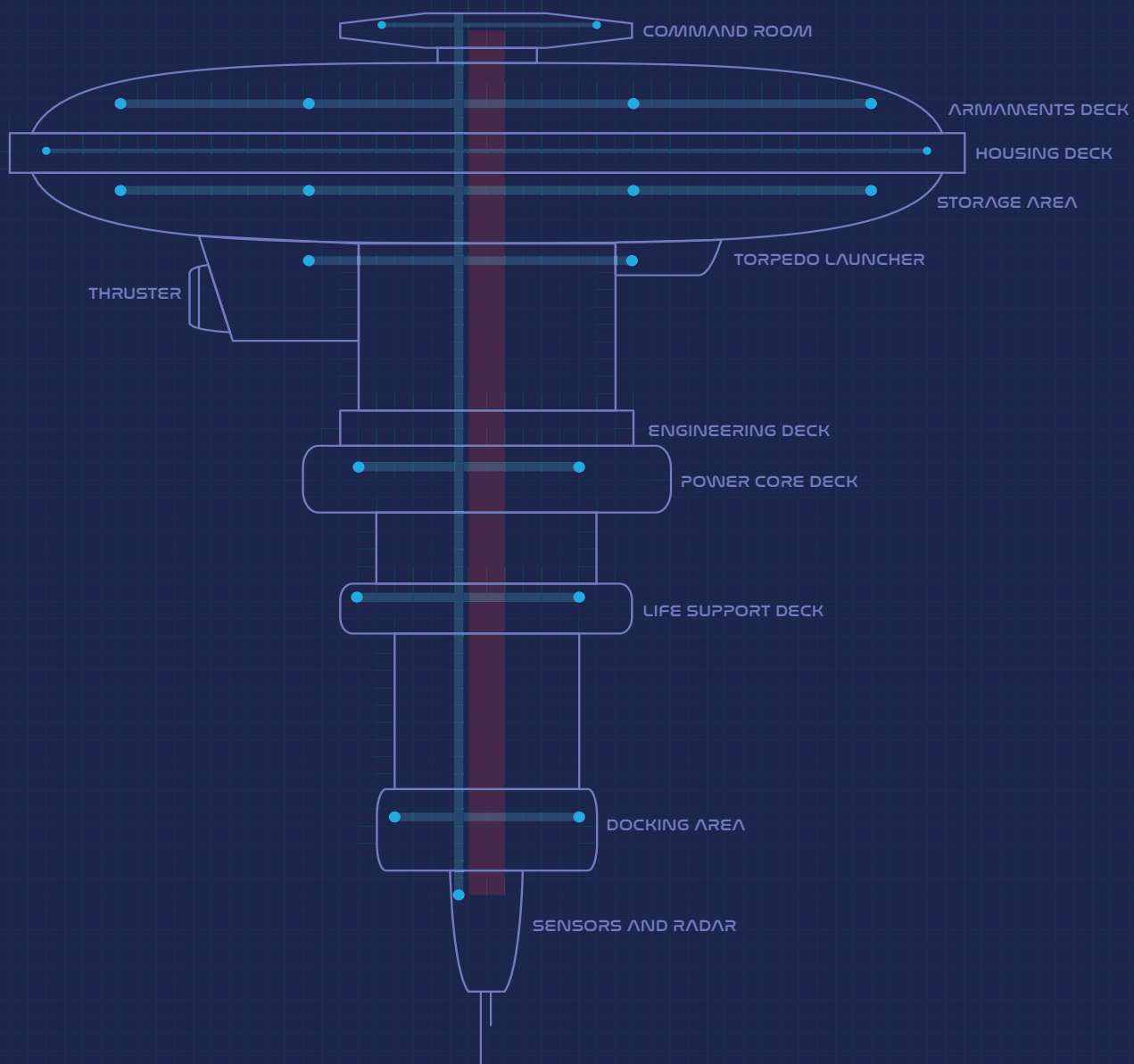
This module is installed in every room of the station. The automated fire extinguisher sprays a foamy compound which completely fills the room in one round and quench every fire. The foam

CERBERUS STATION

TIMELINE

DAY	CHAPTER	EVENTS
1	Chapter 1	Installing the Nuclear Transmutator
2	Chapter 1	Cleaning the Decks
3	Chapter 1	Analyzing the Nuclear Transmutator
4	Chapter 1	Repairing the Cerberus Systems Analyzing the Nuclear Transmutator
5	Chapter 1	Improving the Cerberus Systems Analyzing the Nuclear Transmutator
6	Chapter 1	Incident on the Cerberus Analyzing the Nuclear Transmutator
7	Chapter 1	Unidentified flying ship Analyzing the Nuclear Transmutator
8	Chapter 1	Freighter Arrival
8	Chapter 1	Enemy vessel approaching
8	Chapter 2	First Strike
8	Chapter 2	The Cerberus is boarded
8	Chapter 3	The Cerberus is captured
8+	Chapter 3	Retreat!
8+	Chapter 4	Warp!
8+	Chapter 4	Chased

CERBERUS STATION



CERBERUS STATION

LENGTH 84m

WIDTH 78m

POWER CORE: 560 PCU

PULSE ORANGE **ONLINE**

PULSE BROWN **ONLINE**

MICRON LIGHT a **ONLINE**

MICRON LIGHT b **ONLINE**

MICRON LIGHT c **ONLINE**

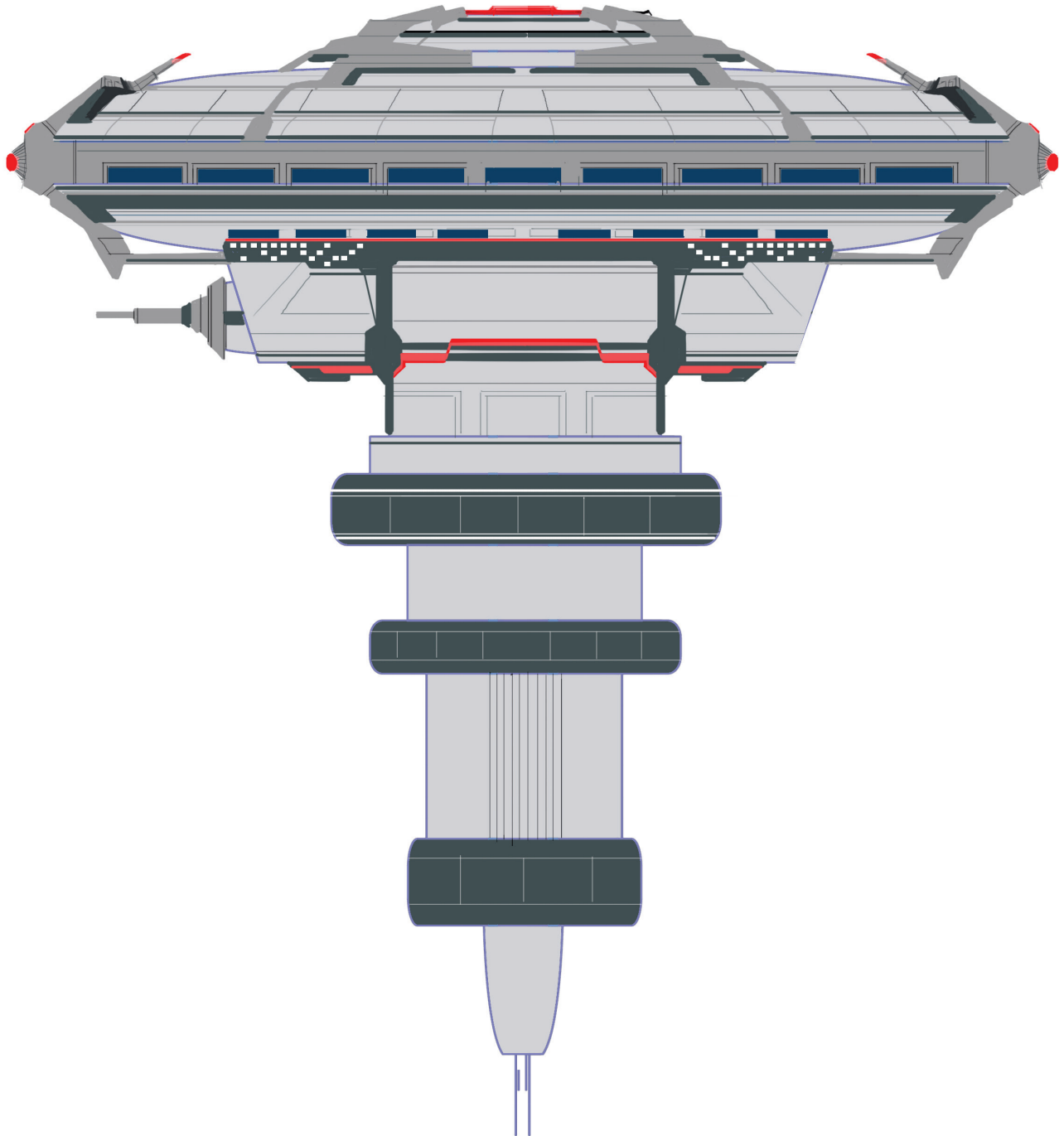
MICRON LIGHT d **ONLINE**

● HOOD

— VENTILATION DUCTS

— ELEVATOR TUBE

CERBERUS STATION



CERBERUS STATION

possesses electric absorption properties capable of neutralizing short circuits. Any electrical device that comes into contact with the foam has a 50% chance to stop working for that round. The foam is very slippery and walking on it requires a DC 15 acrobatics check, if the check fails you suffer the prone condition. The foam loses its effectiveness after 1d4+1 rounds it comes into contact with breathable air (typically oxygen/nitrogen/carbon dioxide atmosphere). If the foam is exposed to the space vacuum, thus to an extremely cold and airless environment, it freezes immediately and solidifies in 1 round. It is possible to move 1d4 squares per round across the foam once it solidifies. After being triggered, the automated fire extinguisher is exhausted and can't be used again for 24 hours.

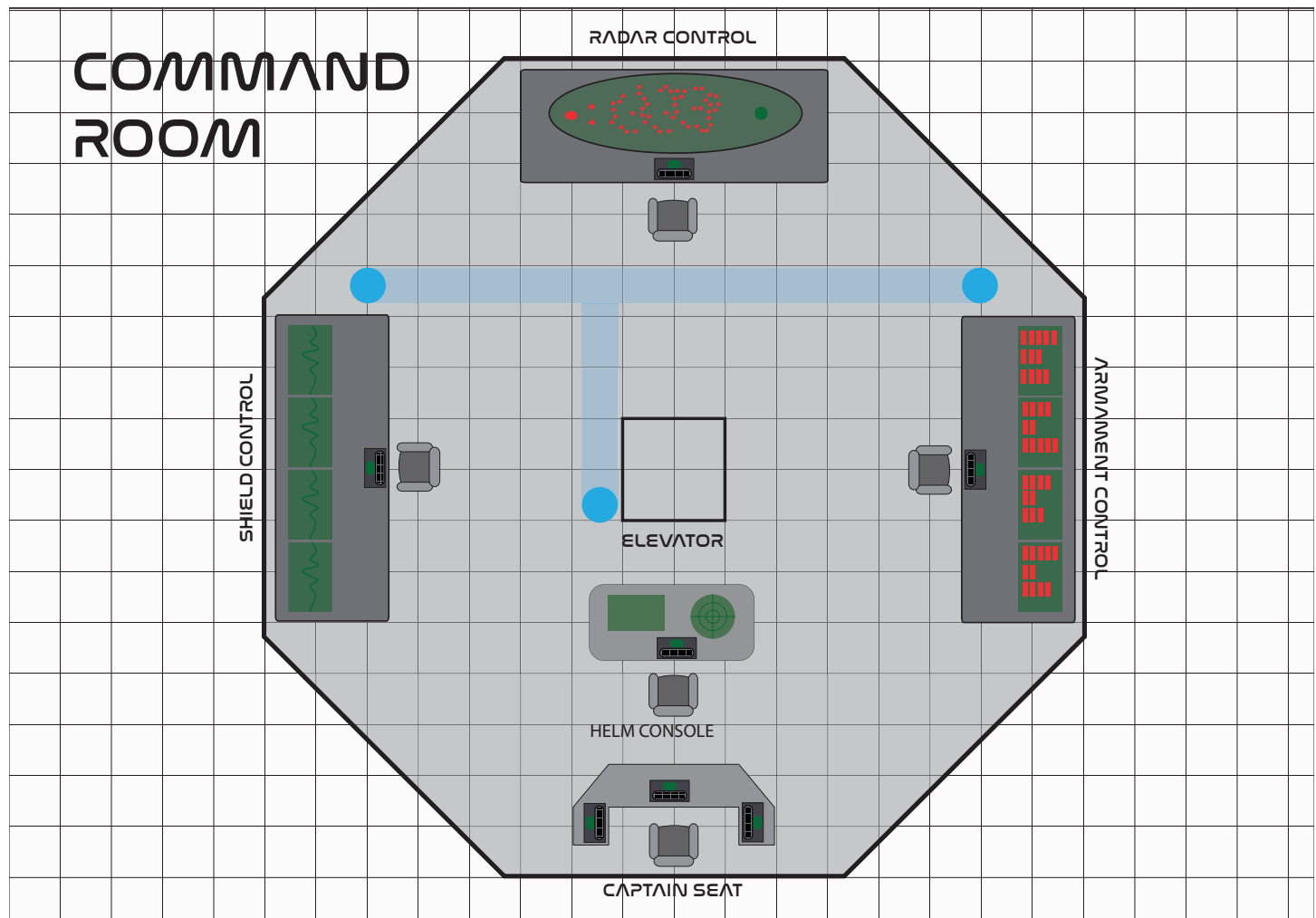
Ventilation Ducts

almost every deck and every room is served by a ventilation duct, this has to be considered as an alternate access point that could prove to be useful for tactical movement once the Cerberus is boarded. Each duct allows the passage of one medium sized humanoid provided he moves prone.

COMMAND ROOM

CREW 5 (**Captain** Victor Tibb, **Engineer Officer** Tzaru, **Gunner** Hans Thissen, **Pilot** Tassel Borf, **Science Officer** Ivan Yukov)

The Command Room is the brain of the whole station and all systems can be remotely controlled from this post. Under normal circumstances Mr. Yukov, the science officer, is



CERBERUS STATION

in charge and is always monitoring the outer space for possible threats. The remaining officers can be found in their quarters or spending their time on other activities. When the situation becomes critical, the five main officers take their respective places in the Command Room.

The officers occupy their seats as follow:

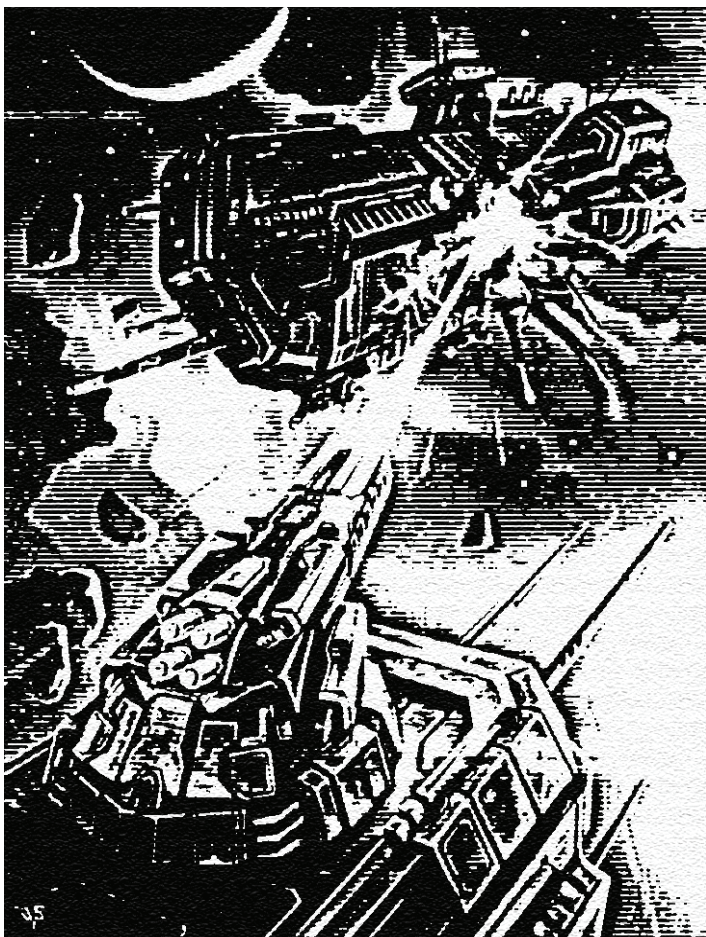
Captain Seat: Captain, Victor Tibb

Shields Control: Engineer Officer, Tzaru

Armament control: Gunner Officer, Hans Thissen

Helm Console: Pilot Officer, Tassel Borf

Sensor Control: Science Officer, Ivan Yukov



ARMAMENTS DECK

CREW 6 (Senior Engineer Karsk, 5 Junior Engineer)

The armaments deck hosts four Coil Guns and one

Persistent Particle Beam. Each weapon can be remotely controlled from the Command Room, but a junior engineer takes the seat during hostile events to intervene in case of emergency. Each weapon is isolated from the rest of the deck by a reinforced wall to isolate the weapon from the rest of the deck when it is exposed to vacuum. A senior engineer is present to supervise the junior engineers and to control the power core performance. The senior engineer is an expert in his field and the junior engineers are just soldiers with skill points in the engineering skill.

Pulse Brown Power Core: Senior Engineer, Karsk

Coil Guns: Junior Engineer (see Appendix, NPC)

Persistent Particle Beam: Junior Engineer (see Appendix, NPC)

Special access points: access inside the armaments deck room is possible by passing through the doors which open when the coil guns and particle beam have to be fired.

SENIOR ENGINEER ACTION

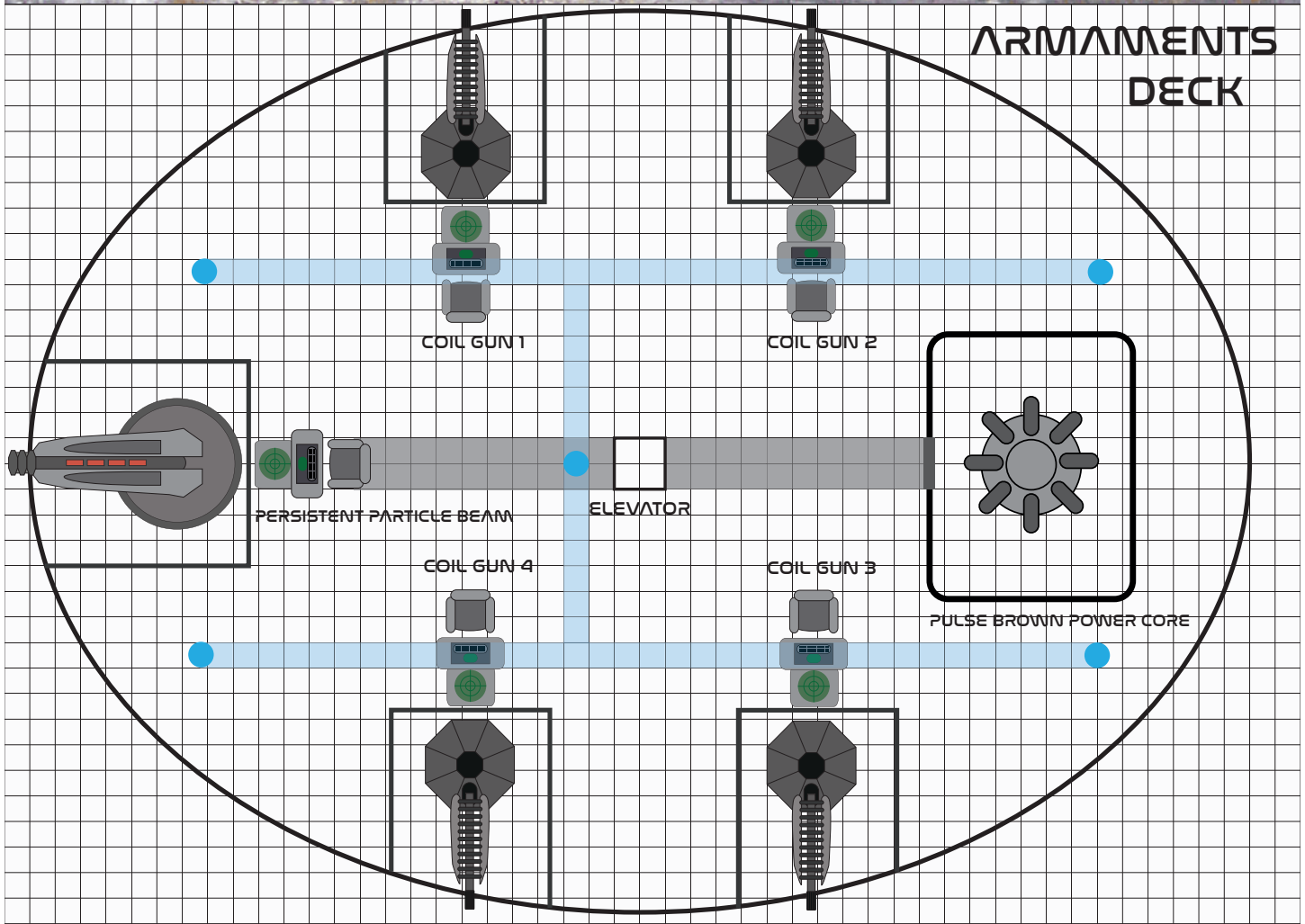
Karsk is in charge of the power core on this deck. He knows every gear of this engine, is aware of its limits, and knows how to go beyond them. When ordered by Captain Tibb, he can perform the following actions.

Overcharge

Karsk is able to overcharge the power core to increase the energy output and empower the persistent particle beam. Roll an DC 15 engineering check, if successful for every 5 points below 15 you can add 1d4 damage points to the damage inflicted by the persistent particle beam.

CERBERUS STATION

ARMAMENTS DECK



There is however a 10% chance that the beam, after firing, will overheat and won't be able to fire for the next round.

If you roll 1: the persistent particle beam turns off and has to be reactivated, this action requires a full action and a successful DC 25 engineering check.

HOUSING DECK

CREW variable (usually civilians or personnel during break or rest)

Captain, officers, engineers, and civilians spend most of their free time on this deck, enjoying the holograms room, the swimming pool or practicing jogging. The civilians, who are all family members of some of the crew members must spend their

time here and are usually not allowed to leave the housing deck.

1. OUTER CORRIDOR

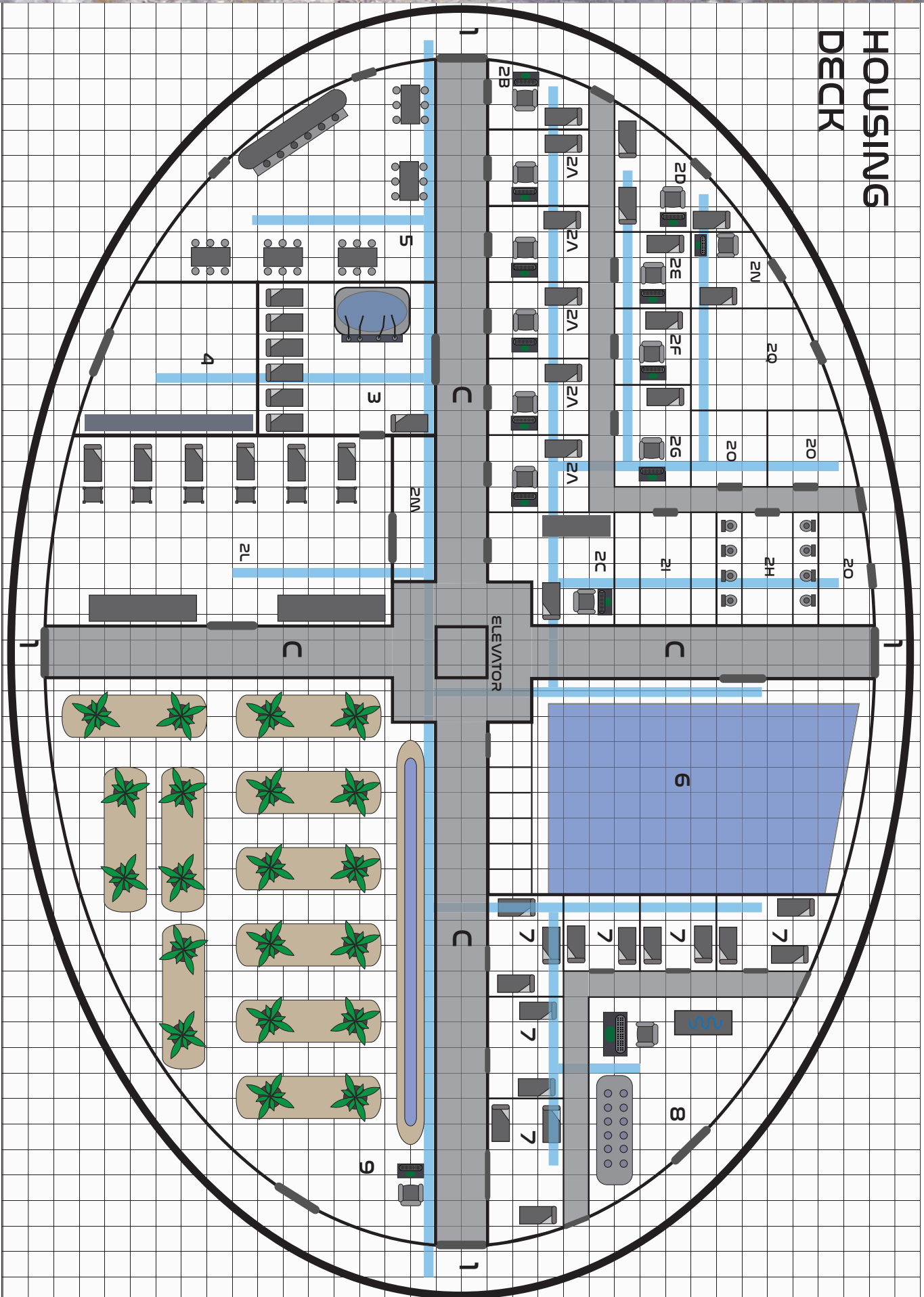
This corridor offers an open view to outer space through portholes from where it is possible to admire the majestic brown dwarf star at the center of the star system. The crystal that the windows are composed of have special reflecting properties which allow the viewers to not be blinded by the light of the star. This corridor is often employed by people to practice jogging, even if it should be against the rules, Captain Tibb has always closed an eye about this practice.

2. QUARTERS

Quarters are where the personnel and the civilians sleep, rest, or just spend some time in privacy.

CERBERUS STATION

HOUSING DECK



CERBERUS STATION

Crew members and civilians are located in different sections of the deck. A quarter usually contains the personal effects of each occupant plus other details if it is relevant to the current or future adventures.

2A. Junior Engineer's Quarters

These five quarters belong to the four dwarf engineers under command of Karsk. The junior engineers can be found in their quarters during night time. During the day they can usually be found at the mess hall or walking in the outer corridor.

2B. Karsk's Quarter

This is the quarter of Senior Engineer Karsk, he usually sleeps here but sometimes but also spends time to rest or to study technical issues, leaving his four junior engineers to carry out routine tasks at the armaments deck. Karsk categorically asked to be assigned to a private quarter because he didn't want to share his space with anyone else, especially Numa the Verthani who always makes jokes that the dwarf does not appreciate at all.

2C. Captain Victor Tibb's Quarter

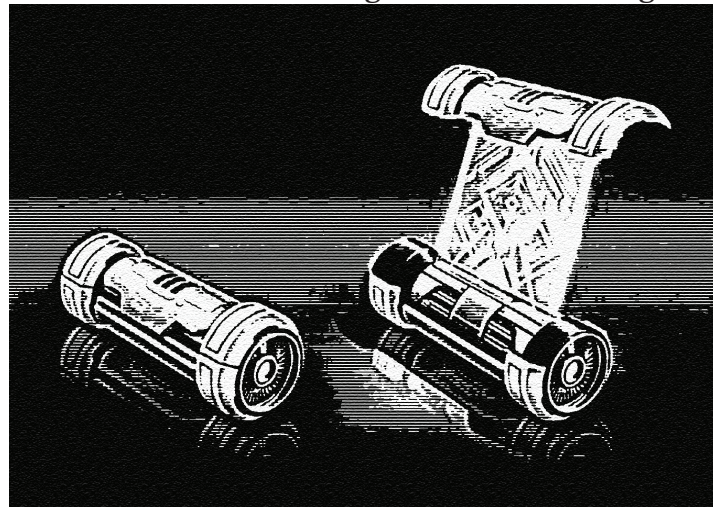
Captain Tibb spends around five hours a day in his room, exactly the time required for him to sleep before going back to work. Recently he spends even less time there because he has been busy overseeing the repairs on the station. The room contains his bed, a console and a bookshelf filled with tablets, portable data storage and other personal stuff.

2D. Numa, Sah'Ha Mal and Tzaru's Quarter

The three engineers share the same room and were the same Tzaru who proposed the deal. Tzaru is a contemplative who loves communicating with other beings and the fact that he's telepathic clearly plays in his favor. Numa and Sah'Ah Mal simply

agreed, with the exception of Karsk who preferred to keep the distance between him, the invasive, contemplative, and the pesky Numa. The three friends can be found here before nighttime when they plan to spend some time at the holographic room before going to sleep. However, most of the time Sah'Ah Mal politely declines the invitation and leaves Tzaru and Numa together while she spends her time immersed in her studies.

Hidden stuff: Sah'Ah Mal carefully hid a couple of devices under a mobile tile placed under her bed. If the PCs actively search under the bed, may be because they have suspicions about Sah'Ah Mal, then secretly roll a DC 25 perception check to notice and find the mobile tile. Under the tile they find a couple of weird electronic devices; a low frequency radio transmitter and a frequency attenuator. The radio transmitter allows to send limited amounts of data to a maximum distance of 3 light-days, while the attenuator disguises the radio signals



making them appear as natural space noises. The provenience of both devices is unknown at first glance, unless the PCs successfully roll a DC 30 culture check which reveal that both devices are manufactured by the Dominion and such kinds of devices can't usually be found in the free market. It is eventually possible to hack the radio transmitter

CERBERUS STATION

LOW FREQUENCY RADIO TRANSMITTER CONTENT (FOR PLAYER ONLY)

4D 5A 50 02 0F FF: LOST CONTACT WITH SAWSHARK VESSEL.

REQUEST THAT SENT

BA 00 0F 20 72 6F: RESCUE TEAM CAME BACK. SHUTTLE CREW

DEAD. UNKNOWN REASON

3E 9C 31 E3 9B F2: SHUTTLE CRASHED INTO POWER CORE. HEAVY

DAMAGE

ED EB FF F4 80 95: LIFE SUPPORT FAILURE. PLEASE EXTRACT ME

5A 23 F9 38 60 7E: ERROR. STRING CORRUPTED.

EE 57 87 F3 F7 3A: ERROR. STRING CORRUPTED.

E2 C6 92 A1 CF F4: ERROR. STRING CORRUPTED.

80 95 5A 23 F9 38: ERROR. STRING CORRUPTED.

60 7E EE 57 87 F3: CAME BACK FROM PLANET UNKNOWN ARTIFACT
RETRIEVED

F7 3A E2 C6 92 A1: CAPTAIN WANTS ARTIFACT TO BE ANALYZED

LOW FREQUENCY RADIO TRANSMITTER CONTENT (FOR GM ONLY)

4D 5A 50 02 0F FF: LOST CONTACT WITH SAWSHARK RESCUE TEAM SENT

BA 00 0F 20 72 6F: RESCUE TEAM CAME BACK SAWSHARK CREW DEAD

UNKNOWN REASON

3E 9C 31 E3 9B F2: SHUTTLE CRASHED INTO POWER CORE HEAVY DAMAGE

ED EB FF F4 80 95: LIFE SUPPORT FAILURE PLEASE EXTRACT ME

5A 23 F9 38 60 7E: ERROR. STRING CORRUPTED.

EE 57 87 F3 F7 3A: ERROR. STRING CORRUPTED.

E2 C6 92 A1 CF F4: ERROR. STRING CORRUPTED.

80 95 5A 23 F9 38: ERROR. STRING CORRUPTED.

60 7E EE 57 87 F3: CAME BACK FROM PLANET UNKNOWN ARTIFACT
RETRIEVED

F7 3A E2 C6 92 A1: CAPTAIN WANTS ARTIFACT TO BE ANALYZED

in order to access some of its contents by rolling a successful DC 30 computer check. If the check fails by 5 or more, all the data stored inside the transmitter are deleted and can't be recovered. If the check is successful it is possible to read all previous messages stored inside. See below for the transmitter content.

These transmissions and its contents represent the evidence that Sah'Ah Mal is a spy on behalf of

the Dominion.

2E. Hans Thissen's Quarter

This is the gunner officer's quarter and he spends his free time in his room. His main downtime activities are reading and sometimes having fun in the holographic room. There is a 50% chance to find him here, if not he can be found in the holographic room.

2F. Tassel Borf's Quarter

CERBERUS STATION

The pilot has had a lot of free time since the Cerberus arrival and his presence in the command room is required only when the station has to be maneuvered or moved to other coordinates. With all this free time at his disposal, as the good halfling he is, he has not lost time gossiping with almost everyone on board actually becoming a true living newspaper. If approached properly he's an interesting source of information about many key figures on board, especially if he's invited to drink a good bottle of scotch. However, he gets bored pretty quickly, so he is not willing to share news with the same person, or the same group of people, in the same day.

If the PCs talk to Tassel with the purpose of gathering information, roll a diplomacy check and a D10 then consult the table below to know what gossip they uncover. Keep in mind that the result of the D20 determines the kind of gossip, but if the diplomacy check is not high enough then Tassel will be very elusive about the information he knows.

2G. Ivan Yukov Quarter

The science officer spends his free time sleeping in his room. When not in his room Yukov can be found at his station in the command room. Yukov is indeed very busy, more than anything else on board because he's responsible for the radar, the sensors and the communication system. Like Captain Tibb he sleeps no more than five hours per night.

2H. Common W.C.

Nothing more than common W.C for all the crew.

2I. Common Showers

Nothing more than common showers for all the crew.

2L. Guards Barrack

Here the six guards sleep and spend some of their free time. The ordinary duty of a guard is to be present at the docking area when a vessel docks or when a vessel has to be boarded. If they are not carrying out specific order they may be just wondering around the station or exchanging the last gossip heard from the mouth of Tassel Borf.

2M. Storage Area

Gears, arms, ammo and armors belonging to the guards are placed here, together with some additional gears for emergency case.

Gear: frag grenade I x10, frag grenade II x5, frag grenade III x2.

2N. Corporal Yuri Wassily

Better known as the Doc, Yuri is a close friend of Captain Tibb. He spends his time at the medical bay carrying out routine medical check on the crew following an established schedule. Every day he examines two or three crew members and



then goes back to his medical research at the green house. He sleeps here during night time, but it's not uncommon to find him sleeping in the green house.

2O. Guest room

Cerberus station doesn't host many guests, except

CERBERUS STATION

Tassel Gossips

D10	DC	Information gathered
1	10	You know the six guards that are supposed to be in charge of the security? Of course you know them. They are quite lazy and they attend their duties as I attend mine!
2	12	Wow guys! Those dwarfs you brought on board are very weird! I mean, did you look at them when they go around the station? It's like watching a bunch of stupid cavemen discovering fire for the first time. I'm not sure, but I think they are trying to learn our alphabet.
3	15	Do you want to know something weird? Of course you do, who doesn't! Well, it happened when we were about to die, a few days before you saved our asses by coming back all in one piece from that shitty planet. I had to comply my duties as a pilot, every day, and I saw for a moment a really small signature on the radar. A very small one, and then POOF. Nothing. Not a rock for sure.
4	15	I was talking with Numa, down at the engineering deck. She is very nice and very hot. Isn't she? I love her deep black eyes, but sadly, I'm too short for her. Well, she told me that Sah'Ah Mal wants to be on the research team that will analyze the artifact. Hey, could you put in a good word with her on my behalf?
5	16	Now, don't think Tassel is a drunkard or something like that. Because I'm not. More than once I've heard noises. I mean, during the night. I spend many nights awake because I'm not tired, you know, I really have nothing to do. What kind of noises? Footsteps! Yeah, footsteps in the middle of the night. Then I open my door and no one is there. Funny eh?
6	17	You know Karsk? The Senior Engineer at the armament deck? He's quite a freaky guy. Always on his own, zero social relations. I don't like him. He spends too much time in his quarter.
7	17	Let's talk about that ryphorian. Her name is Sah'Ah Mal, many call her Sah. What a useless and complicated name! Well, she is whining but in a silent way. Do you understand what I mean? I can see she is unhappy. One day I went to the mess hall to munch something and she was there. As soon as I sat down she got up and left her food on the table. She's like Karsk, maybe even worse! Always busy in her quarter and always busy when no one is inside with her. Tassel keeps his open! Always!
8	18	I've heard Captain Tibb is planning to abort the whole mission in this system. I'm not 100% sure but I heard him talking with Mr Yukov and he seems to agree.
9	20	I know for sure that Captain Tibb is not just the captain of this station, he's a stakeholder and his presence here is more important than the simple officer role. The more this station gains, the more he gains. The more the station loses, the more he loses.
10	n/a	Tassel is not very talkative and does not reveal anything interesting.

CERBERUS STATION

the crew that arrive every two or three weeks to deliver fresh supplies and pick up some raw materials. During the last months the Freighter “Beetle” and his two crew members have been sleeping here.

2Q. Detention room

This is actually the jail. It has never been used since the Cerberus became operational. The detention room can be opened only from outside or by remote control.

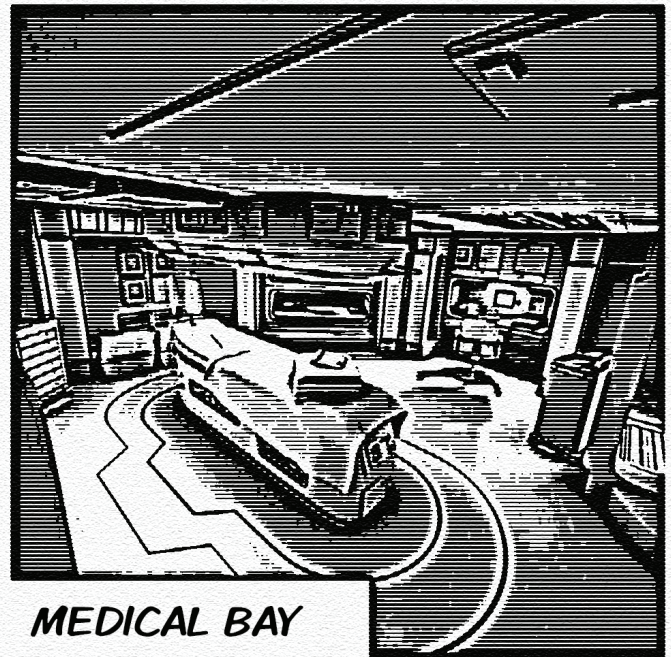
3.MEDICAL BAY

The medical bay is run by Yuri Wassily. The Doc receives his patients here and has recently been pretty busy, due to the power core incident and some radiation poisoning. Doctor Wassily routinely calls in every crew member one by one, civilians included, to perform a complete medical check, both physical and psychological.

Medical bay works as described in the Starfinder Core Rulebook – Chapter 7: Technological Equipment. Besides that, it has other functions. The medical lab can provide advanced surgeries, tissue reconstruction, transplants, augmentation implants and regeneration procedures. A human driven robotic surgeon performs the complex procedures described below.

Advanced Surgery: this procedure can bring a patient back to life that has suffered mortal and traumatic injuries, provided the subject has not been dead for more than one hour. Performing this procedure requires 1 hour and a DC 20 medicine check. The patient will have 0 hit points after the operation.

Tissue Reconstruction: this procedure can restore injuries caused by fire or acid, by



reconstructing the damaged tissue. Performing this procedure requires 1 hour and a DC 20 medicine check.

Transplants: this procedure transplants a vital organ to replace a damaged one. The organ must be grown beforehand and has to be customized for the patient. Growing an organ requires 1d4 hours. Replacing an organ takes 10 minutes and a DC 15 medicine skill check.

Augmentations: this procedure follows the rules detailed in the Starfinder Core Rulebook – Chapter 7: Augmentations. The medical bay can 3D-print any augmentation of tier 2 or lower. Higher tier augmentations have to be assembled at the Laboratory (see Room 8).

Regeneration: this procedure can restore lost limbs or body parts, except vital organs. The robotic surgeon assists the regeneration procedure and the operation takes 2d4 hours, depending on the complexity.

Note for Game Master: some of the medical procedures described above make sense if, in your set of home-rules, you employ the option of

CERBERUS STATION

suffering permanent injuries. If you do not employ such home-rules, just change the outcome of the medical procedure to a flat hit point recovery.

3. HOLOGRAPHIC ROOM

The holographic room offers many kinds of programs, ranging from entertainment, simulations, training, and rehabilitation work outs. The programs uploaded are many, but anyone skilled enough can create their own holographic scenario. The holographic room allows three levels of reality, sight sense, full senses and contact sense. Sight sense stimulate only the sight. Full sense stimulate all of the five senses. Contact sense stimulates the five sense and includes physical contact by means of a micro-gravity lens, this last level of reality can be set to a level that can actually causes non-lethal damage. To unlock the safety level so that the holographic programs can deliver lethal damage, a specific permission from one of the officers is required.

Entertainment: these programs are essentially virtual reality games. The holographic room database has plenty of them and are usually first person games.

Simulations: these programs allow to run scenarios where the player can bring to life historical battles of almost any period.

Training: these programs include physical training programs that simulate those of an advanced gym

Rehabilitation: these programs are for medical purposes and include a complete guided work out to recover functionality of muscles and articulation.

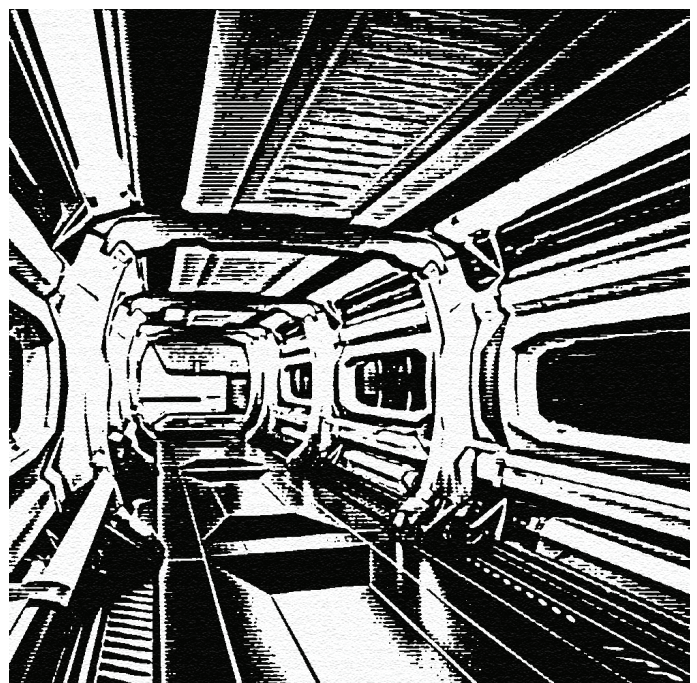
4. MESS HALL

The mess hall has 30 seats, more than the present crew-members. A set of food replicators can serve vitamin and protein-based foods. The quality is not great, but the food is nourishing and well balanced. The replicator includes water and nothing else. If the crew ever wants to drink alcohol they can rely on the supplies stored in the Storage Area – Room 1, provided the Captain gives permission.

5. SWIMMING POOL

This facility is employed to provide some moments of relaxing both for the crew and the civilians hosted on board. The pool contains 3,000 cubic feet of water and 5 feet deep. Six showers and a changing room are placed south of the swimming pool.

Special actions: the water contained in the pool can be released by opening a breach on the surrounding wall. Given the Hobgoblin cyborg's weakness to water this could turn to be a useful offensive tactic to slow them down.



6. CIVILIAN QUARTERS

Civilian quarters contain the essentials for a host to conduct a comfortable life during a permanence that could last months. The only civilians that are usually admitted on board are the crew's family members. Civilians are admitted on board for no more than two weeks every two months and those who are on board now are supposed to leave with the next incoming cargo. Civilians have no noteworthy fighting skills but can perform lesser tasks at Game Master discretion. At the moment there are 15 civilians on board.

Note for the Game Master: as the Game Master you may decide that two of the civilians on board are Thomas Fraser's family members, specifically his wife and son. Both are of course mourning the death of their beloved husband and father. You could opt for this decision if you need to solve the encounter with the Marooned One (see The Marooned One for more details) in a diplomatic way.

7. LABORATORY

The lab works as a science lab or a physical lab thus granting a +2 circumstance bonus to life science and physical science checks. It contains equipment to manufacture drugs, medicine and poison as well as technological equipment to study physical phenomenon.

The Nuclear Transmutator is guarded here to be studied, thus the access to the laboratory is restricted to authorized personnel only and the access to the lab is possible only by means of an electronic badge.

Authorized personnel include:

-The PC with more ranks in physical science, if

none of the PCs possess ranks in physical science then Captain Tibb just considers their presence inappropriate in the laboratory.

-Ivan Yukov, being the Science Officer, is automatically included in the task force that study the artifact. However, he won't be present too much and will leave the matter to someone else.

-Sah'Ah Mal, if Captain Tibb included her in the task force. If Sah'Ah Mal is not in the task force she could plan to hack the access to the lab or clone one badge to infiltrate the lab and steal some secrets. Any plausible and alternative options is plausible.

8. GREEN HOUSE

The greenhouse contains exotic plant species useful to craft medicines, rare or complex chemical compounds and basic chemical compounds like analgesic, antibiotics, etc. Yuri Wassily is supposed to be in charge of the greenhouse and if he were not always so busy he could dedicate more time to research new formulas. Indeed the station is looking for a researcher willing to take care of the greenhouse, so the vacant position can be taken by a PC. However, Doctor Wassily left some recipes on the computer that can be crafted to obtain the following extracts:

Extract of Anti-radiation: this extract delays the negative effects of radiation sickness for 24 hours and must be injected to work properly.

Credits required: 1,000; medicine DC 15 to craft; crafting time: 2 hours.

Extract of Resistance: this extract increases body resistance to extreme environmental effects by granting +4 bonus to fortitude saves against harmful heat and cold effects. The extract must be injected and lasts for 24 hours.

CERBERUS STATION



Credits required: 2,000; medicine DC 20 to craft; crafting time: 2 hours;

Metabolic Enhancer: this extract enhances and speeds up the metabolism, especially the healing processes of organic tissues. The stronger the metabolism is, the stronger the effect is. The metabolic enhancer must be ingested to work properly and takes 10 minutes before it grants fast healing equal to the constitution modifier. The enhancement lasts for 10 minutes and then expires. The extract has a side effect. Whoever uses the substance must roll a DC 20 fortitude save, if successful the subject suffers the exhausted condition, if the roll fails the subject enters a comatose state for the next 24 hours and suffers the helpless condition.

Credits required: 3,000; medicine DC 25 to craft; crafting time: 6 hours.

The greenhouse contains 10,000 credits in equivalent raw materials to craft substances, plant regrowth regenerates 100 credits every day. To craft the substances the PCs may use the

greenhouse or the medical bay, both possess the proper equipment to complete the procedures. The required time refers to an automated process that doesn't require the constant presence of an operator except for preparing the raw materials and the equipment, which shouldn't take more than 10 minutes.

Note for the Game Master: the PCs can use the greenhouse to craft other substances other than those described above. Which substances are allowed is at Game Master discretion.

C.INNER CORRIDORS

The inner corridors connect the four sections of the housing deck.

STORAGE AREA

CREW variable (usually guards)

Here is where provisions, supplies, spare parts, ammunition and machinery are stocked. A specific area is employed as for the cages that contains animals for medical or crafting purposes.

CERBERUS STATION

1. SUPPLIES

This section of the storage area contains food, molecular cartridges for the food replicator, small spare parts, and ammo.

2. FUEL TANKS

There are three main fuel tanks, two of them contain deuterium to feed the thruster and the third one contains metallic hydrogen. Metallic hydrogen allows the compression of a huge amount of hydrogen that is then recombined at molecular level to form deuterium. The engine process prepares the deuterium and sends the fuel directly to the thruster (see Thruster).

Special actions: the fuel tanks section can be released in space as an emergency measure and detonated. This special action can be useful once the war drones of the subroutine are swarming around the station and the battle is turning in their favor. The detonation causes 10d6 damage. Distribute the damage among the attackers at your discretion.

3. WAREHOUSE

The warehouse is employed to stock large spare parts and processed raw materials ready to be sent back in the Federation Space.

4. TORPEDO AUTO-LOADER

The whole machinery contains 4 tactical nuclear torpedoes ready to be loaded in the torpedo launcher placed at the area below. When the torpedo auto-loader is empty it is possible, even if not easy, to pass through the narrow opening to reach the torpedo launcher. This allows a PC to make a tactical move without resorting to the elevator. If not in combat no skill check is required

to pass, during combat it requires a successful DC 20 acrobatics check. Whoever falls inside the torpedo auto-loader mechanism when this is operating suffers 10d10 damages.

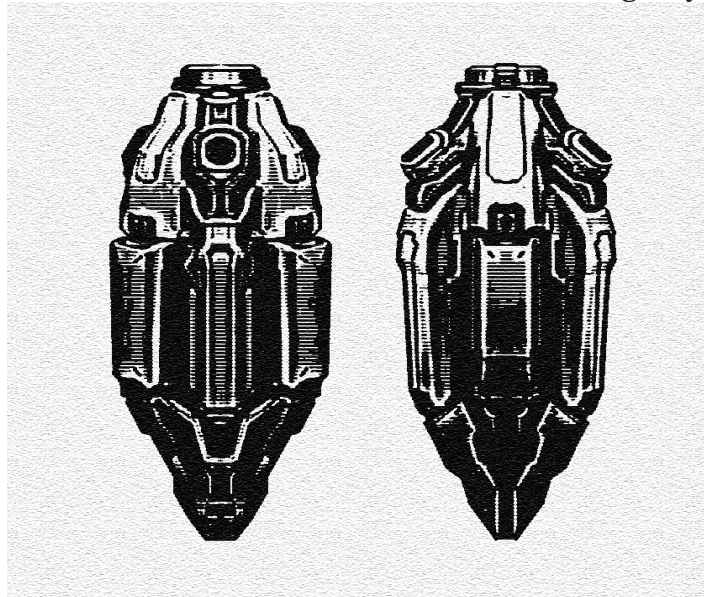
Special actions: the auto-loader has an emergency battery that allows the whole machinery to work even when the power core is off; indeed during the second episode “Descent”, Captain Tibb relied on this emergency power to save as much energy as possible. The whole torpedo launching system could technically open fire even when the Cerberus is short of or without energy at all or when the hull points reach 0, provided the system is not damaged (see Torpedo Launcher paragraph for more details).

5. ESCAPE POD BAY

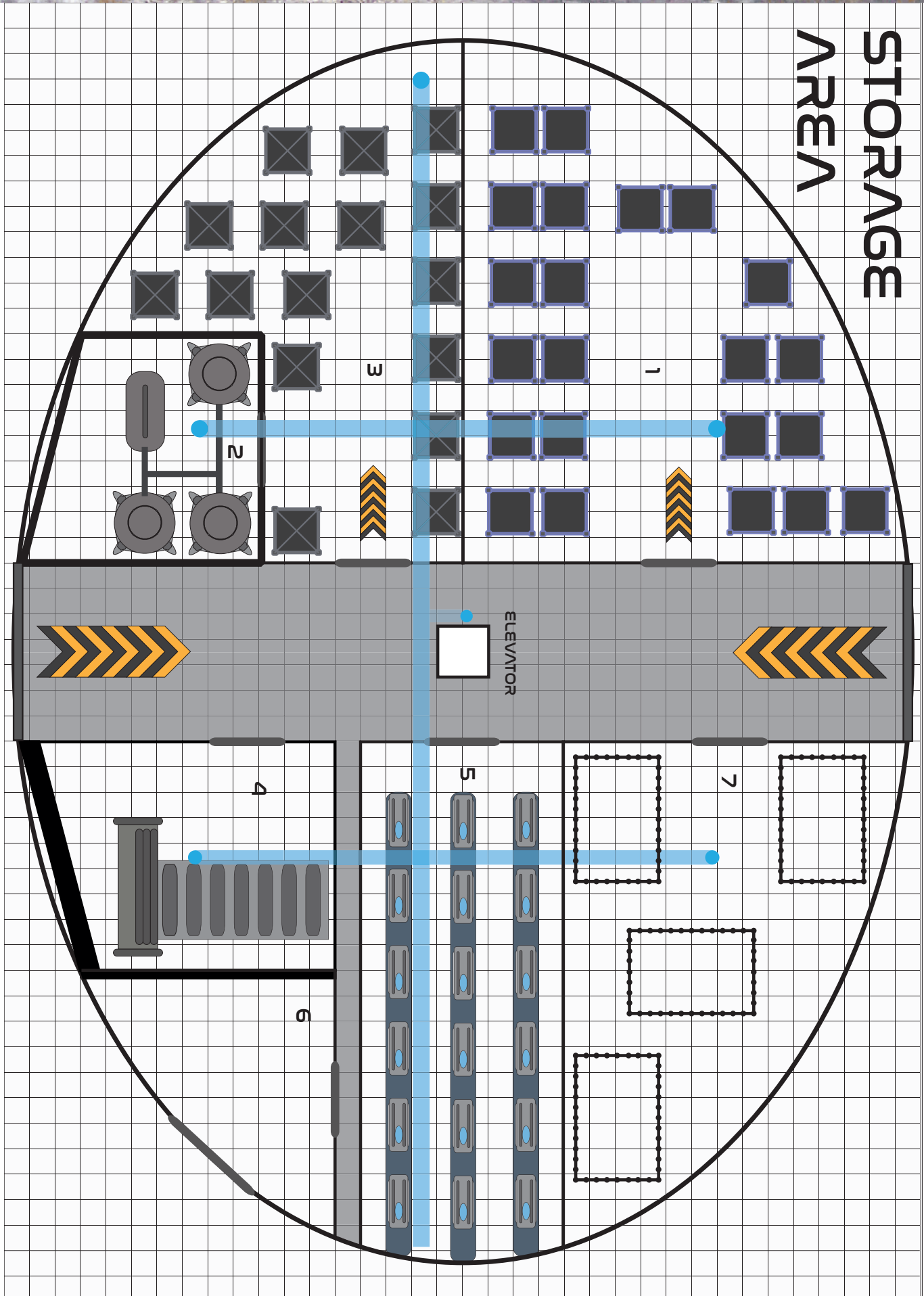
There are 18 escape pods docked at the bay. The pods can be activated independently and the bay can launch up to three pods in one round. Each pod allows a creature to survive up to 7 days.

6. VEHICLE AND MACHINERIES

This section of the storage area contains some vehicles to use for the station in case of emergency.



CERBERUS STATION



CERBERUS STATION

The airlock is opened when the vehicles have to be moved in and from the station. During episode 2 “Descent”, the PCs moved the mining machine from this room to the Sawshark cargo hold.

Vehicles: Basic Enercycle x2, Exploration Buggy.

Special actions: vehicles can be remote controlled from any local computer. The PCs may decide to employ the vehicles to ram the Hobgoblin cyborgs once they board the station.

7. CAGES

There are four cages in this section, one of them is empty while the remaining three respectively contain:

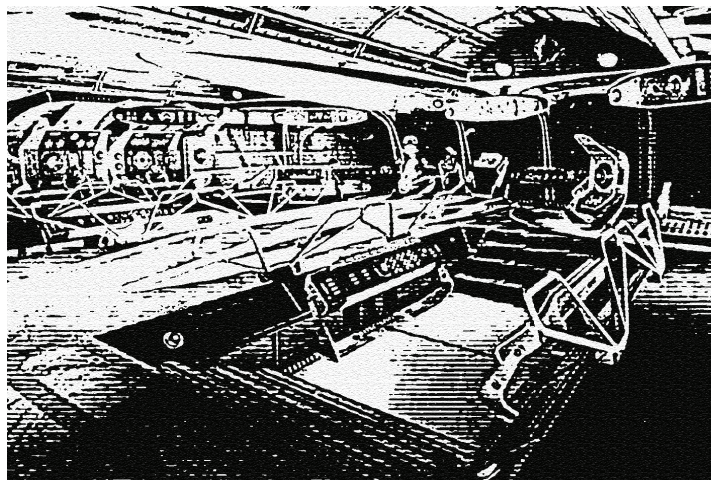
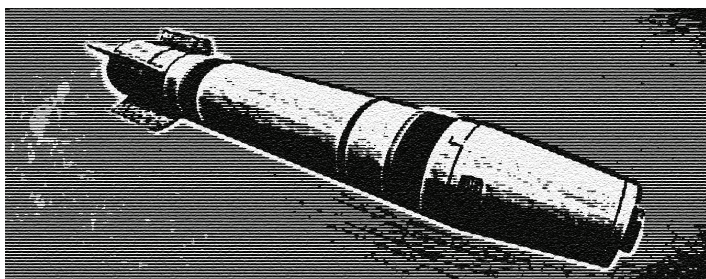
Electrovores (4): enclosed together and captured a few weeks ago, they have been studied for their metabolic ability to absorb electricity and then discharge it.

Crest-eater (1): useful for its venom capable of dissolving metals at molecular level allowing a scientist to create specific and balanced alloys.

Ksarik (1): Ksariks are, due to their plant-like metabolism, a source of medical substances useful to craft fast-healing medicines.

Note for the Game Master: have the player try to experiment or create innovative gears or equipment, many alien creatures may possess exploitable properties.

TORPEDO LAUNCHER



This section hosts the torpedo launching system which is completely automatized. It is connected with room 4, above in the storage area, where the torpedo auto-loader is located.

Special access points: access to the torpedo launcher is possible by passing through the ventilation duct or the torpedo auto-loader in room 4.

THRUSTER

This is the main engine, a H1 Thruster, and can push the whole Cerberus at a speed rate of 1. The thruster receives deuterium from the fuel tanks placed in the above deck through a complex injection system.

ENGINEERING DECK

CREW 2 (Engineer Sah’Ah Mal, Engineer Numa)
The engineering deck hosts the four power cores that feed the aft, port, starboard and forward shields.

Each power core is dedicated to a single shield. It is however, possible to relocate energy from one shield to another in order to quickly restore lost shield points. The procedure is not 100% efficient and provoke some energy losses during the transition. Each engineer can relocate shield

CERBERUS STATION

points from one shield to another and the amount of shield points moved depend on the skill ranks, for each engineering skill ranks 5 shield points are relocated.

POWER CORE DECK

CREW 4 (Junior Engineers)

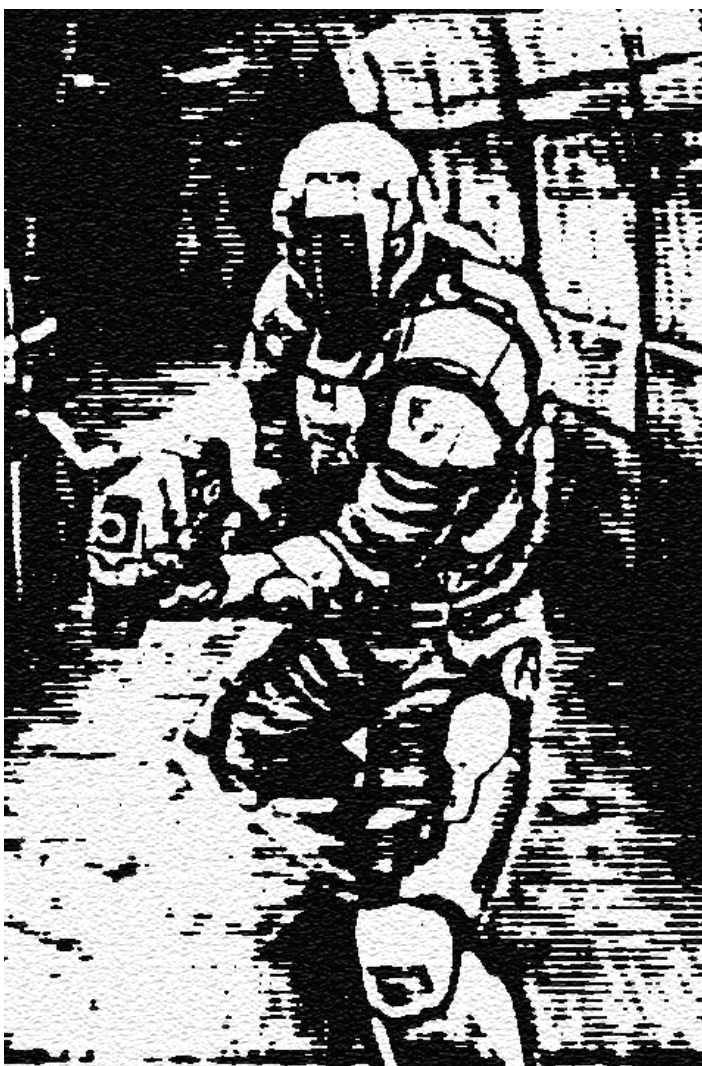
This power core is the main source of energy for the whole station, serving all the systems on board. Four engineers constantly monitor the energy fluctuations, the power consumption, and are ready to intervene if any anomaly arises. A reinforced steel wall surround and protect the power core.

LIFE SUPPORT DECK

CREW variable (usually maintenance personnel when required)

The life support provides fresh air, fresh water, and recycles both fluids. The system is supported by a local battery and can work up to 7 days if the main power core ever ceases to function, keeping alive up to 40 man sized people. The tanks contain gases at their pure status, oxygen is highly flammable and at certain pressure and temperatures reacts with nitrogen.

Special actions: the PCs can exploit the gases



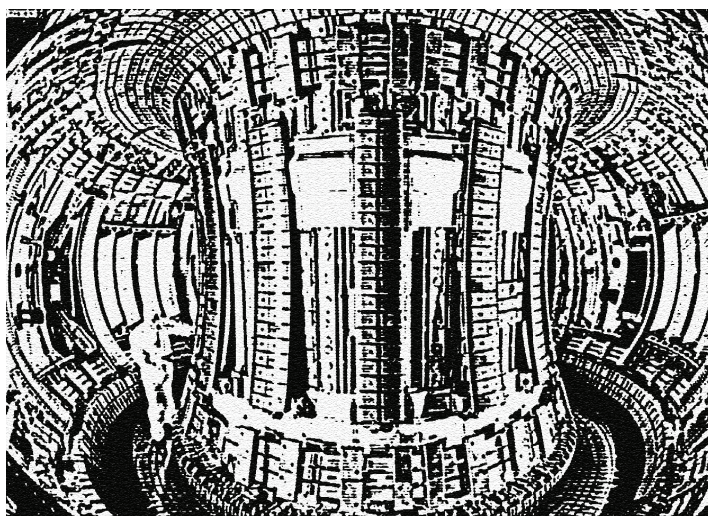
explosive force to their advantage. An explosion should cause at least 10d6 damage and invest the whole deck.

DOCKING AREA

CREW 2 (guards)

Four airlocks are placed around the hull and each one has its own depressurizing chamber. Each airlock can be remotely controlled from the Command Room, it is eventually possible to manually control each airlock by means of a hydraulic lever place beside the airlock. Each airlock includes safety measures against radiation and biological hazard; the radiation attenuator and the biological sterilizer.

Radiation Attenuator: this device emits



CHAPTER 1 - LIFE ON BOARD

frequencies capable of partially neutralizing harmful radioactive effects like gamma-rays, x-rays and ultraviolet-rays. The device allows to roll an extra saving throw against radiation sickness with a +2 circumstance bonus.

Biological Sterilizer: this device reduces the risk of biological contamination by providing a +2 circumstance bonus on saving throws against disease effects for the next 24 hours. The procedure is usually harmless for humanoid life forms, it is however possible to make it harmful for complex organic tissues by removing safety measures. If safety measures are removed, organic tissues exposed to the device suffer 1d4 damages for every round of exposition.

Special access points: access to the docking area is possible by passing through the ventilation duct or one of the four airlocks. Placed on the external hull there is an emergency hydraulic lever for each airlock.

SENSORS AND RADAR

This room does not usually host any crew and is completely remote controlled from the Command Room. The elevator doesn't grant direct access to the sensors and radar room, instead it stops to an upper room from where it is possible to access the system by passing through a hatch. The Cerberus mounts an Advanced long-range sensor which permits passive detection up to 40 hexagons and active detection up to 20 hexagons.

Special actions: the radar can be manipulated to emit a jamming frequency capable of disturbing short range communication all around the station. This function can be activated from the Command Room or by direct activation. The frequency

impose a -2 penalty on gunnery check made by the war drones during the space battle, at the same time any remote communication is impossible within 1 hexagon from the station, so the PCs and their allies can't communicate one another.

CHAPTER 1 - LIFE ON BOARD

In this chapter, access to the Cerberus is limited to the Housing Deck, the Power Core Deck and the Docking Area and all civilians are confined to their quarters. The Power Core needs to be turned on again and the life support system has to start recycling fresh air and water as soon as possible. The engineer did his best to repair damages but much more has to be done before the Cerberus can be considered safe again. Soldiers report the presence of electrovores inside the engineering deck, where this creature is sucking residual energy from capacitors. Ivan Yukov, science officer and second in command, reports that three guards are missing, probably death during the crash and the subsequent explosion.

INSTALLING THE NUCLEAR TRANSMUTATOR (DAY 1)

Captain Tibb wants the energy to be restored as soon as possible, no matter the cost. As soon as the PCs dock they receive instructions to proceed with the Power Core reactivation by means of the Nuclear Transmutator. The artifact fits inside the elevator and moving the object should not pose a problem due to lack of artificial gravity.

The main Power Core, a Pulse Orange type, works at specific energy frequencies and it's synchronized in order to work with specific systems and

CHAPTER 1 - LIFE ON BOARD



subsystems. The Cerberus station works with more than one power core, so that all energy supply does not depend on a single source, in this way if one power core fails the lack of energy affects only a portion of the systems and subsystems. The drawback is that every power core must be tuned and is compatible to its specific systems and subsystem, this is a complex, dangerous and energy demanding procedure because every Power Core possesses an energetic matrix that is set the very day the core it is connected to a ship. So, that is what the PCs and their engineer skills have to face while installing the Nuclear Transmutator. The artifact more than enough of its own supply of energy. The problem will be tuning the energy frequency so that the whole electric grid does not fry or worse.

Note for the Game Master: explain this detail to your players so that they are aware of what they are about to do, the risks and the consequences of a mistake. The steps described below require

the Game Master to secretly roll any skill check and the players should not know what the DC is. The players will know only the outcome of their roll and they'll have to decide if that outcome is suitable for the task. The players must accomplish the installation within 24 hours, or the crew on the housing deck will start to die.

STEP 1 - DETECTING THE POWER CORE FREQUENCY (required time: 1d4 hour, DC 25 engineering check)

The PC in charge of this task has to roll a DC 25 engineering check. The player won't know if the check was successful or not, but will know the outcome. Just for the sake of convenience consider the outcome as $D20 \text{ roll} \times 25 = X \text{ Gigahertz}$ of frequency detected. Communicate this frequency to the player. If the skill check is successful it means that the procedure has been correctly carried out and thus the frequency detected is correct. If it fails it means that the lectures have been misleading.

CHAPTER 1 - LIFE ON BOARD

If the player is not confident with the outcome he can decide to re-roll the skill check. However, he has to spend 1d4 hours on the task.

STEP 2 – DETECTING THE NUCLEAR TRANSMUTATOR FREQUENCY (required time: 1d4 hours, DC 25 physical science check)

The PC in charge of this task has to roll a DC 25 physical science check. The player won't know if the check was successful or not, but will know the outcome. Just for the sake of convenience consider the outcome as $D20 \text{ roll} \times 25 = X \text{ Gigahertz}$ of frequency detected. Communicate this frequency to the player. If the skill check is successful it means that the procedure has been correctly carried out and thus the frequency detected is correct, if it fails it means that the lectures have been misleading. If the player is not confident with the outcome he can decide to re-roll the skill check. However, he has to spend 1d4 hours on the task.

STEP 3 – SYNCHRONIZING THE FREQUENCIES (required time: 2 hours)

Once the players are confident of the skill checks rolled in Step 1 and Step 2, they can attempt to synchronize the Nuclear Transmutator with the Power Core, and the outcome of this task depends on the outcome of step 1 and step 2.

1) Both skill checks successful

The Power Core turns on without any issue and the energy is restored on the Cerberus. The life support automatically turns on, and both air and fresh water are restored.

2) One skill check is successful

The PCs fail to synchronize the frequencies, so

the outcome is a failure. The lack of synchronicity has consequences. A high frequency radio burst infests the station, damaging most of the smaller electrical devices. This includes powered weapons, arms and armors, augmentations, implants and technological items, all of these gears suffer the broken condition. Computer, vehicles and other larger equipment are screened against this harmful effect and thus work normally. A broken gear can be repaired, see the Starfinder Core Rulebook for more details.

3) Both skill checks fails

This is the worse situation that could occur. First, all the harmful effects described in the paragraph above occurs. Second, the high frequency radio burst is even more powerful because the two frequencies are not compatible at all. Extend the broken condition to any vehicle on board. The radio burst affects the secondary electric grid, where the cables are thinner. This means that many subsystems won't work properly and lose efficiency. Primary systems, that employ wider cable, resist the harmful effect.

Note for the Game Master: these damages can be repaired in many ways. However, it takes time and effort. You could allow the PCs to repair every damaged system. For example, you can state that if every dedicate themselves to repair the elevator it will increase the speed of the elevator by 1 or more squares. Every day on the ICS, restore a +1 bonus. Every day a good technician can repair a single escape pod. Feel free to change the numbers, the outcome and set a proper DC; repairing the ICS should require at least a DC of 20, while repairing the elevator should be much easier. Invite the players to think about alternative or more creative

CHAPTER 1 - LIFE ON BOARD

If both skill checks fails

Subsystems	Harmful effects
Elevator	The elevator can no longer move any more than 4 squares per round.
ICS Mk3 Tetranode	Most of the capacitors and heat sinks are burned. The ICS easily gets overheated and stuck. The Mk3 Tetranode works at 0/0/0/0 instead of +3/+3/+3/+3
Escape Pods	Only the guidance system is still working. The life support and other more delicate components have to be changed or repaired. Each escape pod can't sustain a life form for more than 24 hours.

solutions.

XP award: 1,000 only if both checks are successful

CLEANING THE DECKS (DAY 2)

After the crush that damaged the main power core, most of the safety subsystems shut down.

Two main issues worry Captain Tibb.

The first are the cages located in the Storage Area where some Ksariks employed for medical purposes are now free and making that section of the deck inaccessible.

The second are the electrovores, which infiltrated the station after the shields failed due to the electromagnetic waves that invested the decks after the explosion. The creatures are now wandering in the station causing minor damages that are difficult to spot. Some guards were sent to hunt them down, but had to come back soon in order to save energy and air.

ELECTROVORES

These creatures are infesting the Engineering Deck and the Thruster because the guards managed to confine them and lock the doors to prevent the

creatures from escaping. Captain Tibb considers this an easy task, and it's the first he wants to deal with.

Creature: electrovores in the Engineering Deck (6), electrovores in the Thruster (5)

KSARIKS

The four cages in room 7 of the Storage Area are open. Each one contained one Ksarik. However, two of them are now dead due to a ferocious fight between the creatures. Captain Tibb asks that both creatures should be captured alive because of their usefulness for medical purposes.

Creature: Ksarik in the Storage Area (2)

Xp award: 2,400 only if the PCs manage to capture both the Ksariks alive and put them in their cages.

NIHILI (optional encounter)

According to what was reported by the science officer Yukov, three guards are missing and they probably died during the explosion, and indeed that is true. The three guards were overcome by an explosion that occurred shortly after the crash,

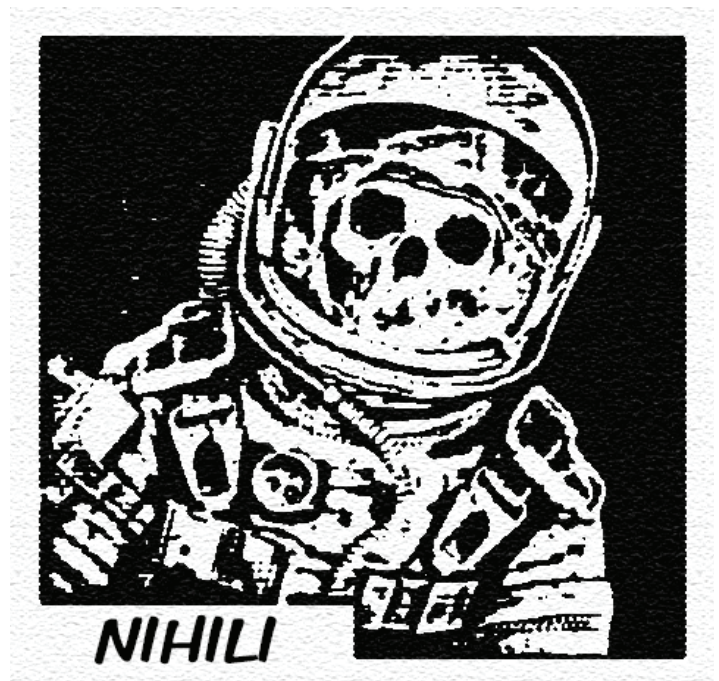
CHAPTER 1 - LIFE ON BOARD

when they reached the Power Core Deck to enforce the safety countermeasures and prevent any further damage beyond those already suffered. They made it on time and indeed saved the Station from certain destruction, but this cost them their lives. They were wearing their space suit when a burst of residual ionized gaseous lithium erupted from a pipe and spaced all of them through the hull breach.

More so than any harsh desert or freezing tundra, the airless void of space is an unforgiving killer. Most life-forms can survive for about 90 seconds in a vacuum before dying, though rapid depressurization can cause unconsciousness in as little as 15 seconds. When an unprotected body is introduced to a vacuum, the gases inside it begin to expand due to the difference in pressure. While this causes discomfort, especially in the abdominal area due to the expansion of intestinal gases, the real danger comes from any oxygen still in the lungs. If that gas can't escape (say, because the person is trying to hold his breath), the delicate pulmonary tissue can become severely damaged. Those who survive such an event can be left with permanent injuries, such as blindness, a collapsed lung, or worse. Those who do not survive spend their last few moments in terrible pain and mind-numbing terror, and sometimes such suffering prevents souls from passing on to the afterlife.

The three guards are now Nihilis, which is the undead described above (see Alien Archive for more details). Their death was quick and extremely painful, so painful that their souls are now unresting. During the time it took the PCs to reach the planet and come back, while the rest of the crew was hiding in the housing Deck, the Nihilis

had time to infiltrate the station and hide inside the elevator tube, waiting for the proper moment to strike. The Nihilis wait until someone uses the elevator, at that moment they attack anyone inside by tearing the upper floor off the elevator and burst into to attack the passengers. This encounter can be pretty dangerous, potentially lethal for the PCs. Unless the PCs decide to explore the elevator tube just to be sure that nothing is hiding there, like more electrovores for example, they won't find the Nihili at first glance. However, they have a chance to detect weird gravitational anomalies, caused by the Nihili's Gravity Well ability, emanating from the elevator tube. This signature does not explain



the Nihili presence, but certainly represents something that should not happen unless the artificial gravity is not working properly.

Creature: Nihili (3)

Xp award: 1,000 to the player or players that decide to explore the elevator tube and reveal the threat, plus 1,600 for each Nihili eliminated.

CHAPTER 1 - LIFE ON BOARD

ANALYZING THE NUCLEAR TRANSMUTATOR (DAY 3 up to DAY 7)

Once all the threats on board have been dealt with it's time for the crew to calm the nerve, breathe some fresh air, and possibly bathe. However, this does not mean the work is over, not at least for key elements of the crew. The Nuclear Transmutator has to be studied and analyzed and Captain Tibb seems to be particularly interested in discovering as much information as possible.

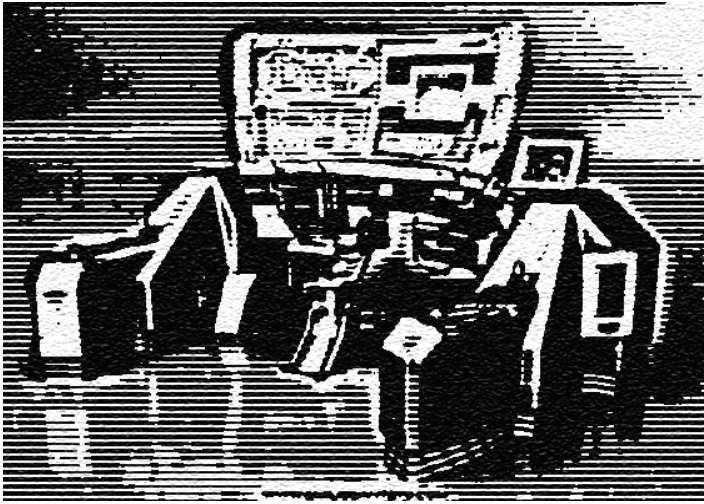
Captain Tibb wants a task force of scientists to work on the artifact and doing nothing else besides eating and sleeping, so he and Yukov call the PCs together with Karsk, Numa, Sah'Ah Mal and Tzaru for a briefing in the laboratory (see Housing Deck, room 8). Once there he explains his goals. He initially wants Tzaru to be leading the research team, but Tzaru refuses recommending Sah'Ah

Mal as the most indicated person for this task. Keep in mind Sah'Ah Mal is a spy for the Dominion (see For the Game Master, A Spy on Board section). Captain Tibb eventually gives one PC (no more than one) the opportunity to join the research task force if one of them takes a step forward to join. If this happens, Sah'Ah Mal, who wants to study the artifact on her own, manifests her disapproval by claiming she's the best engineer on board and remarking the fact that she works better alone. At that point Tzaru intervenes supporting Sah'Ah Mal position. If the PCs insist that one of them has to join the task force have Sah'Ah Mal rolls a Bluff skill check to reflect her attempt to persuade and trick Captain Tibb into thinking she's is right. The PCs can roll a diplomacy skill check with a DC equal to Sah'Ah Mal bluff check. The PCs can take the action aid another to increase the chance

ANALYZING THE NUCLEAR TRANSMUTATOR

D6	Skill check ^(*)	DC	Discovery
1	Physical Science Engineering	25	Hull Regeneration (Ex): the Nuclear Transmutator can record the Cerberus's atomic structure. When the hull is damaged the station can regenerate damage suffered at a rate of 1 hull points per round. If the hull points reach 0, the regeneration stops. Xp award: 2,500
2	Physical Science Engineering	25	Molecular Teleport (Ex): the Nuclear Transmutator can teleport molecular matter up to 1 ton per round. The matter teleported can't be complex and has to be constituted by only one kind of element. Xp award: 2,500
3	Computers	25	Elemental AI (Ex): the Nuclear Transmutator opens a rip into the elemental plane and instills the consciousness of an elemental into the Cerberus ICS. Increase by +1 the tetranode performances. Xp award: 2,500
4	Engineering	25	Warp Enhancement (Ex): Increase warp by 1. Xp award: 2,500
5	Physical Science	20	Anti Matter (Ex): the Nuclear Transmutator can create a small amount of anti-matter every 24 hours. The anti- matter produced can be used to fuel the warhead of a torpedo, adding 1d12 damage. Xp award: 2,000
6	N/A		Nothing discovered

CHAPTER 1 - LIFE ON BOARD



of success. If the check is successful then the PCs manage to convince Captain Tibb to have one of them join the task force. Give one PC the chance to roll a Sense Motive skill check to notice Sah'Ah Mal's bluff. If the check is successful the PC notices that the ryphorian is playing dirty and has in some way lied about her true intentions. Choose the PC who appears to be more skeptic, or a PC that is usually more suspicious.

Once the research task force is formed, consult the table below to see the result of the research team. The research team uncovers one artifact property every day for the subsequent five days, provided the required skill check is successful. The fifth day will be the last because at that moment the subroutine attack interrupts any activity. Every day roll 1d6 to determine the outcome of the research.

(*) not all checks involve one skill, some permit more than one. If a PC does not have ranks in that skill and he's in charge of the project he or she can ask the help of another PC or NPC who is skilled enough to assist in the discovery. If Sah'Ah Mal is in charge of the project she omits the fact that she is not able to achieve the discovery, at this point only if another PC is with her as an assistant there is a chance he can unmask Sah'Ah Mal true intentions.

Note for the Game Master: if Sah'Ah Mal is in

the task force and is teaming with a PC she tries to sabotage the research, any skill check suffers -4 penalty. If Sah'Ah Mal is the only scientist in charge of the project, she hides any relevant discoveries except the Warp Enhancement.

REPAIRING THE CERBERUS SYSTEMS (DAY 4)

After the crash, Captain Tibb and his engineers repaired the damage inflicted to the power core deck as best as they could. However, they had no time to do more because they had to save energy and air to survive as long as possible. Some secondary damages still persist and have to be dealt with before the Cerberus can operate at one-hundred percent.

Note for the Game Master: tell the players they can employ NPC crew to do some repairing if required. Captain Tibb gives them full control of the Junior Engineer and Karsk, the Senior Engineer.

Roll any related skill checks in secret and don't tell the players the outcome unless the specific task asks you to do so. Some repairs won't manifest any flaws until some conditions are triggered, others will manifest immediately.

ADVANCED LONG RANGE SENSOR (required time: 24 hours, DC 25 engineering check)

During the explosion caused by the crash the long range sensors fried most of the capacitors and circuits. At the moment both passive and active radars are not working so the station is completely blind.

If the check is successful: the advanced long

CHAPTER 1 - LIFE ON BOARD

range sensors work normally. Passive sensors (20 hexagons) and active sensors (10 hexagons) sight range are restored.

If the check fails: the sensors apparently work properly, but the engineer made a mistake or forgot some detail. Every 24 hours (or every day) there is a 50% that the sensors get damaged and have to be repaired again.

If the check fails by 5 or more: the repairs are made with negligence and the whole system balance is precarious. Every 24 hours (or every day) there is a 50% that the sensors get damaged, if this occurs an electrostatic discharge infests the deck (anyone inside suffers 10d6 damage). The sensors can be repaired again, but this time it takes 48 hours and the DC to repair the system increases by 5, thus raising to 30.

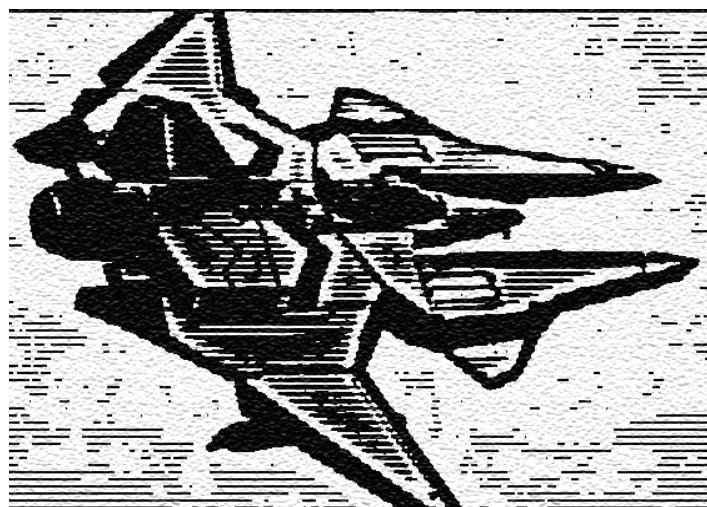
If 1 is rolled: the engineer probably did not know what he or she was doing, so the outcome is a disaster. An electrostatic discharge immediately strikes the deck (anyone inside suffers 10d6 damage). The sensors can be repaired again, but this time it takes 72 hours and the DC to repair the system increases by 10, thus raising to 35.

Note for the Game Master: if the checks to repair fail, it is highly possible that the situation get worse and worse. Keep this in mind once the subroutine launches the attack, because there is a chance that the Cerberus won't have a radar and won't detect the subroutine fleet coming.

Xp award: 5,000

ICS TETRANODE (optional, see below, required time: 24 hours, DC 25 computer check)

Note for the Game Master: this task is triggered



only if during the installation of the Nuclear Transmutator to reactivate the power core both skill checks in STEP 3 – SYNCHRONIZING THE FREQUENCIES failed.

The engineers attempt to fix the ICS that got damaged when they tried to reactivate the power core. Every day spent on repairing the ICS reduces the Tetranode penalty by 1 point. At the moment the tetranode performance is 0/0/0/0, so after the first day, provided the skill check is successful, the performance will be +1/+1/+1/+1, and so on until the performance +3/+3/+3/+3 is restored.

If 1 is rolled: if a 1 is ever rolled than the situation gets even worse. The day spent repairing the ICS is lost and the performance decreases by 1 point. Keep in mind that it is possible that the ICS performance goes negative, if such is the case any skill related to station system or subsystem suffers that penalty.

Xp award: 5,000

HULL BREACHES (required time: 24 hours, DC 20 engineering check)

Many breaches and structural flaws are present on the Cerberus hull because the explosion jeopardized the hull integrity. At the moment

CHAPTER 1 - LIFE ON BOARD

four main breaches have been identified and every breach requires 24 hours to be sealed. One engineer can work on every breach and for every breach that is not repaired the Cerberus loses 5% of its maximum hull points. Consider the Cerberus has 270 hp, so 5% is 14 hp.

Note for the Game Master: feel free to place the breaches anywhere on the main axis of the Cerberus, possibly not on the disk section. At your discretion you can have the one Nihili (see Cleaning the Decks) lurk outside and attack one of the engineers while occupied on his task.

If the check is successful: the hull breach is perfectly repaired, however the engineers who worked on it suffer the exhausted condition for the next 24 hours.

If the check fails: the repairing fails, however the engineer assigned realizes that the task has to be repeated.

If the check fails by 5 or more: the repairing fails, but the engineer doesn't realize that it's flawed. The day after, the breach opens again. Whoever is in the room is spaced and suffers

vacuum harmful effects.

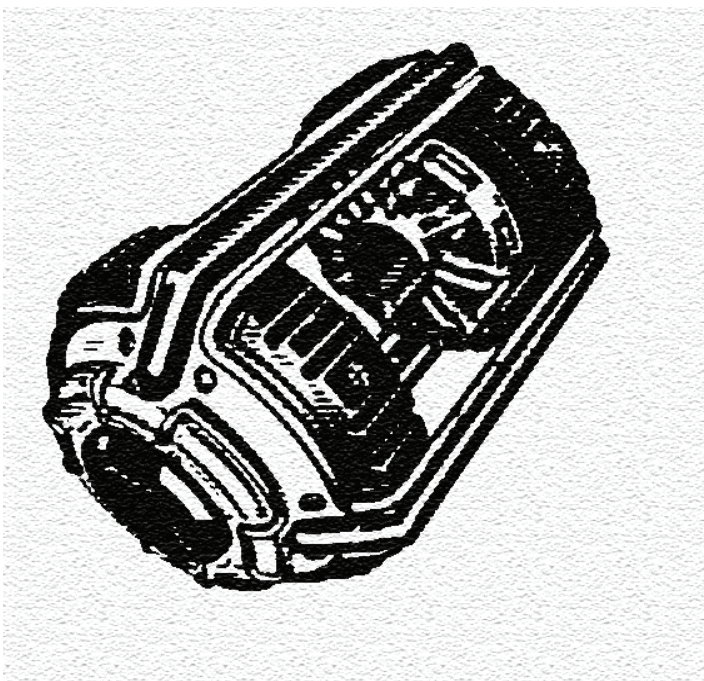
If 1 is rolled: the repairing fails and everything seems to be all right. The first time the hull takes damage. However, the breach opens again and the hull's structural integrity is jeopardized thus suffering additional 3d6 damage.

Xp award: 5,000

FUEL TANKS (required time: Game Master discretion)

Yuri Yukov reports a fuel leak inside the fuel tanks room. The leak has already saturated the room and the environment inside is highly flammable. Captain Tibb sent a couple of engineers some days ago to seal the section in order to prevent the sublimated metallic hydrogen from invading other sections of the deck or leaking into the thruster. Yukov informs the PCs that every fuel tank contains and keeps compressed metallic hydrogen by means of a powerful magnetic field. The frequency of the magnetic field is tuned to the hydrogen frequency. The science officer assumes that when the main power core shut down, the magnetic field collapsed, thus letting the metallic hydrogen free to sublimate. In case the magnetic field collapses, each fuel tank automatically activates a safety countermeasure that allows gaseous hydrogen to sprout out of the tanks to prevent explosions. The countermeasures require a quick reaction to repair the flaw, but by now, days have passed and the pressure inside the room is becoming unbearable for the structure.

The PCs have to deal with this and possibly fix the damage as soon as possible, that means within 48 hours or the Captain will order to release the whole section containing the fuel tanks. This will



CHAPTER 1 - LIFE ON BOARD

leave the Cerberus without thruster, but at least will prevent worse damage.

Note for the Game Master: this task allows the players to openly decide how to solve the problem. Instead of describing what they should do, the paragraph below states what they should not do. Assure that the players are aware of the following clues:

1) The pressure inside the room is slowing but constantly rising.

2) The hydrogen is highly flammable and, given the present conditions, extremely explosive.

The conditions described below lead to harmful effects. However, don't tell the players and have them make their assumptions.

If the PCs open the door employing the automated control: if the PCs try to reduce the pressure by opening the automated door of room 2 (fuel tanks) or room 3 (warehouse) then the doors electrical system produces a spark that causes a fire and detonates the hydrogen causing devastating effects. Everything within 60 feet radius suffer 10d6 F(fire) damage and 10d6 K(kinetic) damage.

If the PCs try to drill the outer hull or the inner walls with an electric or fire source: in such a case the action provokes the eruption of pressurized plasma from the hole. If the drill is made in outer space the person is drenched by the scorching plasma, the space suit becomes useless and he or she is subjected to vacuum effects. If the drill is made on the walls that contain the fuel tanks but inside the station then a scorching ray of hydrogen plasma sprout from the hole. First, the person who was performing the drill suffers 3d6 F damage, second the plasma eruption invades the warehouse causing 1d6 cumulative damage every



round in a 30 feet radius, that means 1d6 the 1st round, 2d6 the 2nd round, 3d6 the 3rd round, etc., until it reaches 20d6 damages where at this point the gas pressure stabilizes. Consider that all the content in the warehouse will probably melt.

The PCs may figure out creative and unpredictable solutions, discuss these solutions with them and have fun enjoying the outcome.

Xp award: 5,000

IMPROVING THE CERBERUS SYSTEMS (DAY 5)

Karsk, in quality of senior engineer, and Tzaru as chief engineer, propose Captain Tibb to improve some of the Cerberus systems the same way they did on the Sawshark (see From Beyond – Descent Ep.2). Both the engineers think it is worth a try, even if it won't be as easy as it was for the Sawshark.

CHAPTER 1 - LIFE ON BOARD

Note for the Game Master: the improvements allow only one attempt, so if a skill check fails it means the improvement can't be accomplished. Improvements grant the Cerberus bonus and thus a higher chance to stand during the space battle against the subroutine fleet (see Chapter 2), or at worse buy more time to organize a defense against the boarding. So keep track of the successful improvements.

IMPROVING THE THRUSTER (required time: 4 hours, DC 30 computer check)

Tzaru is convinced that the pattern of the algorithm generated by the Sawshark's ICS during the descent on the planet (see Descent, episode 2) can be adapted and optimized to work on the Cerberus ICS. If the improvement is successful, a chance that the thruster can be enhanced exists.

If the skill check is successful: the algorithm is correctly installed on the Cerberus ICS. The thruster speed increases from 1 to 2, but only for 1d4 rounds every combat.

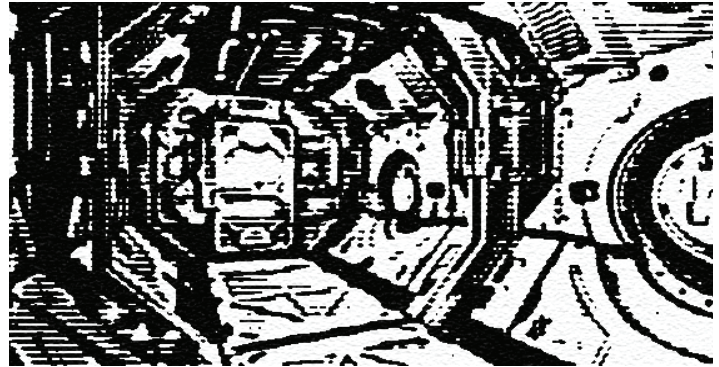
Xp award: 5,000

IMPROVING THE SENSORS

(required time: 4 hours, DC 30 physical science check)

Cerberus sensors are particularly powerful and thanks to the new source of energy represented by the Nuclear Transmutator it is possible to enhance its performance beyond the engineered limits. The sensors can be modified so that it can emit a powerful jamming frequency capable of disrupting auto-targeting weapons and radio communications.

If the skill check is successful: Cerberus TL



increases permanently by +2.

Xp award: 5,000

IMPROVING THE PERSISTENT PARTICLE BEAM (required time: 8 hours, DC 35 engineering check)

Karsk states he can optimize the power consumption of the particle beam and increase the amount of damage it deals.

If the skill check is successful: the persistent particle beam now deals 10d6+10 damage.

Xp award: 5,000

INCIDENT ON THE CERBERUS! (DAY 6)

The Cerberus seems to be working to the best of its capabilities, and after all the damage suffered, the crew made a real miracle in the last days. This is the moment where the crew is probably tired and trying to recover their strength. The ex Sawshark Captain, Thomas Fraser, now turned into an undead, takes advantage of this moment to make his move. See For the Game Master – The Marooned One for more details.

Xp award: 4,800 (if the Marooned One is defeated), 9,600 (if the Marooned One is convinced to help the PCs)

CHAPTER 1 - LIFE ON BOARD

UNIDENTIFIED FLYING SHIP (DAY 7)

Yukov warns the Captain that an unidentified vessel has appeared on the radar. The vessel signature is unknown and no records appear on the ICS database. It is flying at a distance of 100 hexagons and the sensors can barely analyze the hull. Yukov has not given the alarm yet, but he's taking the emergency countermeasures and energizing weapons. As soon as Captain Tibb reaches the command room he announces the red alert and informs the crew that a potentially hostile vessel appeared on the radar.

The vessel, which has the approximate size of a corvette, is following a fixed course around the Cerberus and until now has not sent any communication or attempted to actively scan the station.

Karsk, getting nervous, has already armed the tactical nuclear missile and is aiming it at the target waiting for Tibb to give the order to open fire. Yukov seals the comm receiver in order to prevent any harmful codes from infiltrating the ICS and he already suspects that whatever the thing out there is, is connected to what happened to the Sawshark and its crew.

Suddenly a wave frequency is emitted from the alien vessel, the sensors do not identify the frequency as a radio signal, a communication, or an attempt to scan the station. The wave lasts few seconds but Captain Tibb immediately orders to open fire. Karsk executes the order and a sequence of three torpedoes are launched immediately. At this point the unknown vessel detects the torpedoes and rapidly enters FTL speed, disappearing from the radar and emitting an exotic FTL signature.

Note for the Game Master: the radio wave

the unknown vessel sent is of psionic nature and the vessel detected belongs to the Hive, the alien race that programmed the subroutine. The vessel is spying the experiment to record the response of the subroutine to the environment and the reaction of test subjects (the crew in other words). While the subroutine is a new weapon, the psionic wave has to be considered a conventional one employed by the Hive. Indeed it's nothing more than an amplified psionic power capable of writing mental instructions deep inside the subconscious of the host. Every mind on board receives the subconscious message but not everyone is going to carry the content out because only weaker minds will be affected and manifest the effects. To know more about who is affected and what he or she is going to do, see the table below, pick one or more subjects at your discretion:

The effects presented above take a few hours to manifest and eventually last for more than 24 hours. If you want the madness going on for more time to spice-up your role-play situations for more



time just shift the next events by one or more days. For example, the next day, which is the 8th in the timeline, would see the freighter arrives at the Cerberus and the subroutine launching the attack, but if you want the PCs to deal with the madness on board for two or three days just shift those

CHAPTER 1 - LIFE ON BOARD

Crew member affected ^(*)	Psionic wave effect ^(**)
Guard (1)	ASR (Acute Stress Reaction): the subject recover memories of recent or far traumatic experiences and his/her subconscious amplifies them. The subject shows dissociative symptoms and over reacts to emotional stimulus becoming potentially dangerous. You should have the subject reacts violently but without planning any move. Consider this mental disorder as an emotional disorder.
Civilian (3)	Claustrophobia: the three civilian develop almost immediately an acute claustrophobia, thus becoming intolerant to any enclosed environment. This mental disorder can become dangerous once the subjects attempt to leave an enclosed space and reach an open one. They are not completely rational, but are able enough to plan the necessary moves to exit the station. They probably attempt to reach the closest airlock and open it.
Junior Engineer (1)	MDD (Major Depressive Disorder): the subject loses any interest to accomplish his duty and reacts negatively to routine. His mates just notices a change in his mood. Soon the subject attempts suicide without caring if others life are put at risk. He may eventually attempts to threaten someone life inducing him to kill for self defense and so put an end to his life.
Junior Engineer (1)	Misophonia: the subject develops an intolerance to sounds, especially repetitive ones. The symptoms manifest in crescendo, until the subject will do whatever it takes to shut the source of the sound. He could attempt to remove the air on a deck to prevent sounds from emanating in the environment, or he could destroy the very source of the sound.
Tassel Borf	PPD (Paranoid Personality Disorder): Tassel, who usually news to tell about everyone becomes silent and absent, even when accomplishing his duty. Is paranoia has lead him to believe that someone on board is actually a danger for the station, so he's carefully planning how to get rid of him. While previous mental disorder did not require careful planning, paranoia does, thus converting this disorder in a pretty dangerous one.

(*) this is just a suggestion, feel free to change the affected subject to reflect your own GMing style or your roleplaying goals.
 (**) the effects presented are the most common mental destructive mental disorder, feel free to employ more exotic and elaborated mental pathologies to fit your Gming style or your roleplaying goals.

events accordingly. It will work fine.

Xp award: 5,000 (for establishing a first contact with an unknown vessel), 2,000 (for each crew member saved from his or her mental disorder).

If Tzaru the contemplative is on board: Tzaru's race possesses telepathy, which is nothing else than a primitive psionic ability employed to communicate. When the radio wave hit the station Tzaru felt something was attempting to infiltrate his subconscious but he was unable to decipher or understand the content. Tzaru report this to

Captain Tibb, the officers and the PCs, and it's up to the PCs to keep not of this clue.

Xp award: 2,000

If the FTL signature is analyzed: if such is the case then more clues are revealed. Indeed the FTL signature possesses the same basic characteristics of the psionic signal, this means it was produced by the same source. However, the effects produced are completely different.

Xp award: 3,000

Note for the Game Master: the Hive employs

CHAPTER 1 – LIFE ON BOARD

their psionic abilities for multiple purposes. The same can be said for FTL travel. This alien race has developed a technology that enhances their psionic power enter FTL speed. Psionic Warp Speed will be detailed in the future campaign setting together with other FTL technologies.

FREIGHTER ARRIVAL (DAY 8)

Finally the 8th day the freighter and the provisions arrive. The ship's name is Beetle and belongs to a small corporation who won the contract to resupply the station. Since the star system was occupied the Beetle has made many travels and both the Beetle crew and those on the Cerberus know each other. The Beetle has a small crew, one captain and one pilot, but plenty of space in its cargo hold. The freighter arrives in the early hours of the 8th day after a two week journey. The crew is tired and more than happy to have some rest. The captain of the Beetle hails the Cerberus asking permission to dock, "Affirmative Beetle" is Yukov's answer. It doesn't take too long before Captain Alexis, commander of the Beetle, realizes that something wrong has happened on the Cerberus in the last days.

Both the captains meet in private for a briefing, where all the recent events occurred to the Cerberus, the Sawshark and its crew are revealed. After a couple of hours, Tibb and Alexis close the briefing and sent an update to all the crew.

"Crew of the Cerberus, this is your Captain. The mission has changed. Considering all the events that have occurred I am making the decision to leave this system for the safety of us all. The recent discoveries we made have to be preserved and put at disposal of the high command. We

don't know yet what kind of threat we are facing, but we can't face it alone and so far from home. Within 24 hours we'll enter warp speed and we'll head home"

So the decision is made. The Cerberus have to come back and the Beetle will follow during the two week long journey toward the closest harbor.

Note for the Game Master: at this point the PCs are convinced that within 24 hours they'll be home, but this is not going to happen because the subroutine is already preparing the attack and in less than 8 hours its fleet will be upon them. Have the PCs spend this time to do whatever they want encourage them to relax if is required. Once the attack begins, events will occur fast.

Xp award: 10,000 (for storyline accomplishment)

ENEMY VESSELS APPROACHING (DAY 8 – 6 hours after the Beetle arrival)

The voice of Yukov breaks the silence on the decks when he reports that the radar has just detected multiple signatures approaching at high speed. Yukov directs the active scanners toward the signatures and discover something more. It seems that a bigger object is following the multiple signatures and, whatever it is, it has just turned the engine on. A few moments after a volley of fire is shot from the signatures, heading against the Cerberus, Captain Tibb gives the order. Everyone reaches their battle stations. The attack begins.

Xp award: 2,000 (for story line accomplishment)

CHAPTER 2 – UNDER ATTACK!

During this chapter the two sides will face each

CHAPTER 2 - UNDER ATTACK!

other in a space battle. The PCs may try to slow down the subroutine's forces but can hardly prevent them from boarding the station. They have to weaken the attacker to gain time and plan a retreat, using the Sawshark and the Beetle to reach a safe place, this implies to leave behind the Cerberus. The more civilians and crew members they save, the better.

FIRST STRIKE!

The subroutine employs a swarm of 50 war drones as shock troops to soften the Cerberus defenses. Yukov detects the war drones are 20 hexagons to the far right when they turn the engines on and cease to be objects moved by inertia that could be confused for the many small asteroids around, that's why it seems a whole fleet appears from nowhere.

HOW TO MANAGE THE BATTLE

Below we describe some tips to manage a small scale space battle.

About the Subroutine's forces

If you don't want to roll 50 hit rolls every round you can roll 1 D20 dice for every five or every ten war drones and then determine the damage accordingly. Consider that the war drones have a base gunnery check bonus of +7, bonus that increases to +9 due to the amount of war drones present in the fleet. See the war drone data sheet for more details. The War Drones mount a chain cannon which has short range (5 hexagons) and thus for every 5 hexagons beyond the first five receives a -2 penalty on attack rolls. The chain cannon inflicts 6d4 damage (15 average damage) and has the ripper special properties which half

the damage inflicted when it hits the shields (7/8 average damage on every hit). Keep in mind that the war drones move at a speed of 6 hexagons every round. The subroutine goal is to capture the station to assemble more drones, so once the Cerberus reaches 0 hull points the war drones cease the attack and wait for the battleship and the assault pods that will board the station.

About the Cerberus

Managing the Cerberus firepower is easier. You just need to have everyone at their battle stations and have them firing the weapons against the war drone swarm. Weapons are taken from Starfinder Core Rulebook. The Cerberus mounts the following weapons: 2 coil guns at port, 2 coil guns at starboard, 1 persistent particle beam at forward, and 1 tactical nuclear missile launcher that counts as a turret. Considering that the Cerberus can fire straight at the enemy fleet with the turret (tactical nuclear missile launcher) the port or starboard coil guns batteries and the persistent particle beam at the same time. You have to imagine that the swarm proceed in a wide formation and that the Cerberus is capable of exposing both port and starboard by accomplishing simple spinning maneuvers. Once the war drones swarm is upon the Cerberus they will attack by surrounding the station and at this point every weapon is able to fire without limitations.

STUNTS & MANEUVERS

Here we propose some custom maneuvers employable for the purpose of this battle. It's up to you, as the Game Master, to decide if the players can use each and all the maneuvers in one round or not.

CHAPTER 2 - UNDER ATTACK!



Rotatory maneuver (Cerberus): piloting check CD 20.

This maneuver makes rotating the Cerberus on its axis fast enough to distribute the shots received equally on every shield, thus preventing one shield from receiving all the damage or avoiding direct damage on the hull when the enemy fire is directed toward a depleted shield.

If the piloting check is successful: if the piloting check is successful the pilot is able to redirect all the damage on a shield of its choice (remember that the Cerberus has four shields).

Shield compensation (Cerberus): engineering check CD see below

This maneuver pushes the Cerberus's power cores to the limit by draining energy from secondary systems, except weapons and shields. The fresh pumped energy becomes available to recharge the shield and any exceeding shield points beyond the maximum allowed have to be transferred in order

to avoid an overcharge. The higher the engineering check the higher are the shield points transferred and gained.

Effect of the engineering check: the result of the engineering check is the amount of shield points regenerated in one round.

If 1 is rolled (critical failure): the shield points are lost instead of being gained and an electromagnetic wave emanates through the engineering deck causing 5d6 damage to the occupants.

Overcharge effect: any consecutive round the compensation is attempted increases the critical failure by 1. So, the first round the critical failure is a natural 1 on a D20 dice, the second round the critical failure is a natural 1 or 2 on a D20 dice, and so on. If the sequence is interrupted for one round the critical failure is restored to 1.

Focus fire (war drones): piloting check CD 24

The war drones can perform this stunt if they

CHAPTER 2 - UNDER ATTACK!

properly coordinate an attack and concentrate their fire on a single shield or, if the shield is already depleted, hit directly the hull.

If the piloting check is successful: instead of distributing the whole damage on all the four shields the war drones can inflict half the whole swarm damage on a single shield.

DAMAGE EFFECTS ON HULL

Once the shield points are exhausted the hull receives direct damage, thus causing dangerous and harmful effects on the crew and the systems. The table below describes what harmful effects occur when a randomly determined section of the station receives a hit. Roll one or more times, at Game Master discretion, each round of combat and only when the hull is hit, to determine the damage effect.

BATTLE HISTORY

Below is a description of the sequence of rounds that compose the space battle. It is an estimate of what could happen in every round, what distance the war drones are, the automated fighters and the battleship. For every round an estimated gunnery penalty is shown in order to better manage the encounter. It is possible that the situation may change depending on PCs decisions. The PCs may for example decide to launch the Sawshark to a frontal attack in order to slow down the attackers or may have prepared other countermeasures.

Xp award: 2,000 (for each war drone destroyed).

Round 1

The war drones have just been detected and are at a distance of 20 hexagons. They open fire and suffer a -6 penalty on gunnery checks. Given the

distance and the angulation only two of the four shields receive damage. The war drones do not attempt to focus the fire on a single shield. The Cerberus can counter fire provided someone is overseeing the armament deck.

Round 2

The war drones are at a distance of 14 hexagons, suffer a -4 penalty on gunnery checks and can aim only at two shields, like round 1. However, the Cerberus can rotate easily to expose untouched shields. At this point the Cerberus has probably open fire and the swarm is suffering losses.

Round 3

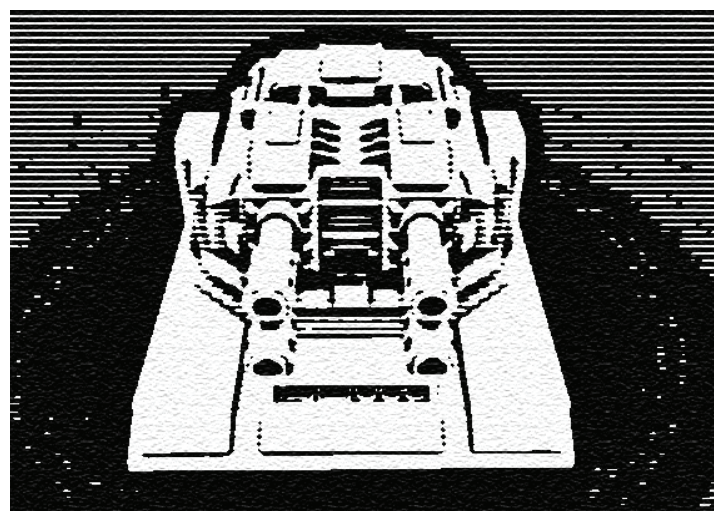
The war drones are at a distance of 8 hexagons, suffer a -2 penalty on gunnery checks and can aim at two shields only and as per round 2 the Cerberus can rotate to expose untouched shields.

Round 4

The war drones are at a distance of 2 hexagons, suffer no penalty on gunnery checks and can aim at two shields only. The Cerberus can rotate to expose untouched shields.

Round 5

The war drones have engaged the Cerberus and now the damage dealt is divided among the four shields. Keep in mind that the war drone weapon



CHAPTER 2 - UNDER ATTACK!

DAMAGE EFFECTS ON HULL

D100	DECK	EFFECTS
1-19	Armaments	An explosion deals 2d4 damage to every crew member crew inside the deck.
20-24	Armaments	The hit invest one of the coil guns chosen randomly 1)Coil Gun #1; 2)Coil Gun #2; 3)Coil Gun #3; 4)Coil Gun #4. The weapon affected is now damaged and suffers a -4 penalty on gunnery checks and -2 on damage.
25-26	Command Room	The hit causes an explosion, all the crew inside suffers 5d6 damage.
27	Command Room	The hit starts a fire on one control console (shield control, armament control, radar control), the operator suffers 5d6 damage and is stunned. The system controlled by the console can't be remotely controlled and every action has to be taken directly by the crew on the related deck.
28	Command Room	The hit destroy the pillar that keep attached the command room to the rest of the station. The command room starts to float in space and the crew inside is isolated. Doors close automatically to prevent depressurization.
29	Housing Deck	The hit pierces the hull and the whole outer corridor (section 1) depressurizes, whoever is in this section suffers the effect of vacuum.
30	Housing Deck	The hit reaches the Guest Rooms (section 20), metal splinters cause 3d6 damage to any occupant.
31	Housing Deck	The hit reaches Yury Wassily's quarter (section 2N), if the Doctor is inside he suffers 3d6 damage.



CHAPTER 2 - UNDER ATTACK!

32	Housing Deck	The hit reaches the quarter of Tzaru, Numa and Sah'Ah Mal (section 2D). Whoever is inside suffers 3d6 damage. If the low frequency radio transmitter is inside the room it is destroyed and can't be used as an evidence.
33	Housing Deck	The hit reaches the mess hall (section 5) and the explosion reaches the medical bay (section 3). The occupants suffer 5d6 damage and the medical bay is destroyed. If doctor Yuri Wassily was not in his quarter then he was here and remain injured.
34	Housing Deck	The hit reaches the barrack (section 2L) where the guards are stationed when not on duty. There are 1d6 guards when the section is invested by the explosion. Any of them inside suffer 5d6 damage.
35-36	Housing Deck	The hit reaches the green house (section 9) and any occupant suffers 5d6 damage. Any experiment or production occurring inside is destroyed.
37	Housing Deck	The hit reaches the civilian quarters (section 7) and kills 2d4 civilians.
38	Housing Deck	The hit reaches the laboratory (section 8). Anyone inside suffers 5d6 damage. If the Nuclear Transmutator was inside it suffers no damage but the vacuum prevents anyone from recovering it without a space suit.
39	Housing Deck	The hit reaches the swimming pool (section 6), the explosion causes 5d4 damage and the water inside the pool, in contact with vacuum, freezes in few seconds thus creating a thick barrier of ice water that obstructs the outer corridor close to the swimming pool.
40	Housing Deck	The hit reaches the doors that give access to the inner corridor (section C), this provokes the loss of pressure in every corridor. It is impossible to move from one room to another without suffering the effects of vacuum.

CHAPTER 2 - UNDER ATTACK!

41-46	Storage Area	The hit reaches the supplies (section 1). All crates are spaced into vacuum. Any occupant suffer 10d6 damage.
47-50	Storage Area	The hit reaches the fuel tanks (section 2). However, the whole section is protected by a reinforced wall that protect the tanks. There is only a 10% chance that the wall become crippled. If a second hit reaches the fuel tanks than the reinforced wall collapses and the fuel explodes causing 20d6 damage to any occupant in the whole storage area
51-52	Storage Area	The hit reaches the warehouse (section 3). All crates are spaced into vacuum. Any occupants inside suffer 10d6 damage
53-54	Storage Area	The hit reaches the torpedo auto-loader (section 4) The section is protected by a thick reinforced wall and there is only a 10% chance to pen a breach on the first hit. If the reinforced wall is hit for the third time then the auto-loader cease to function. The explosion detonates the torpedoes causing 10d8 damage to the hull.
55-56	Storage Area	The hit reaches the vehicles and machinery bay (section 6). Everything inside is spaced or destroyed.
57-59	Storage Area	The hit reaches the escape pods bay (section 5). The launching system is jeopardized and now the pods have to be launched manually. At least half of the pods are now damaged and can't be employed to flee.
60-64	Storage Area	The hit reaches the cages (section 7). All creatures inside are killed except the electrovores that are now free.
65-71	Thruster	The first hit damages the reinforced hull around the thruster, dealing normal damage. However, if a second hit reaches the thruster then the reinforced hull is pierced and the thruster ceases to function. The speed of the station drops to zero and no maneuver or stunts are now possible.

CHAPTER 2 - UNDER ATTACK!

72	Torpedo Launcher	The hit reaches the launch chamber dealing 5d6 damage to anyone inside. Every time impose a cumulative -2 penalty on gunnery to check.
73-76	Engineering Deck	The hit reaches the engineering deck jeopardizing the power cores. Anyone inside the deck suffer 5d6 damage and one randomly determined power core becomes crippled. Severe radiation leaks invade the whole deck thus exposing anyone to radiation sickness unless they successfully roll a DC 30 fortitude saving throw. A second hit reaches the engineering deck one power core, possibly one that was already damaged, explodes. Inbuilt safety countermeasures prevent the power core from triggering quantum chain reaction but the whole station is invested by a powerful and severe radiation level for one round. Every living being must succeed a DC 20 fortitude saving throw. Any subsequent hit affects a different power core.
77-81	Life Support Deck	If a hit reaches this deck, one of the tanks containing hydrogen, oxygen, nitrogen and water explodes (determine randomly which one). If the hydrogen or the nitrogen tanks explode than the fiery burst invest the whole deck causing 10d6 damage to anyone inside. If the oxygen tanks explode then a wave of fire envelope the whole deck causing 5d6 damage and the burst extends into the ventilation ducts thus affecting all of the decks. If the water tank explodes the liquid immediately freezes creating block of ice water inside the deck, in this case anyone invested by the freezing liquid must roll a successful DC 25 reflex saving throw or remain trapped inside a block of ice, thus suffering the helpless condition.



CHAPTER 2 - UNDER ATTACK!

82-90	Power Core Deck	If a hit reaches the main power core chamber it deals 5d6 damage to anyone inside. If a second hit reaches the deck then the power core leak severe radiation level and anyone close must roll a successful CD 30 fortitude saving throw or contract radiation sickness. The third hit destroys the power core causing an explosion that causes 20d6 damage to everyone on the deck and breaks the station in two sections.
91-97	Docking Area	If a hit reaches the docking area anyone inside suffers 5d6 damage. Any ship docked, like the Sawshark and the Beetle, are separated from the station. Now, to reach and enter any of the two ships, it is required to cross vacuum.
98-100	Sensor & Radar	If a hit reaches the sensor, the station loses the ability to employ the radar or to scan the surrounding environment. As a consequence, if the station has not been destroyed, any gunnery check suffers a -2 penalty.

inflicts half damage when hitting the shield, unless that specific shield is already depleted, in such case the war drones deal full damage on the hull.

The Cerberus can rotate to expose a specific shield in order to protect a depleted or about to be depleted one (see above Stunts & Maneuvers - Rotatory Maneuver paragraph). At the same time the war drones attempt to Focus Fire on the most depleted shield in order to hit the hull.

Round 6

Two auto-fighters appear on the radar from nowhere employing the same stealth technique employed by the war drones. They are a distance of 20 hexagons and move at a speed of 8 hexagons per round. Each auto-fighter mounts three particle beams on the forward side that deal 3d6 damage

each. The auto-fighters have good maneuverability and must spend 3 movement points to perform a 180° turn.

Round 7-9

The battle continues, keep track of the damage suffered by the shield and those suffered by the hull. It is probable that at this point of the battle the shields are completely exhausted and the hull is crippled. Once the Cerberus reaches 0 hull points the war drones cease fire and wait for the battleship to launch the assault pod containing the cyborgs.

Round 10

If the radar is working it detects the battleship 20 hexagons distant, otherwise the radar of the Sawshark or the Beetle can easily detect the enemy

CHAPTER 2 - UNDER ATTACK!

vessel approaching provided someone is on board on one of the two ships of course. Otherwise the battleship goes undetected until it is within a1 hexagon distance and can be spotted on sight.

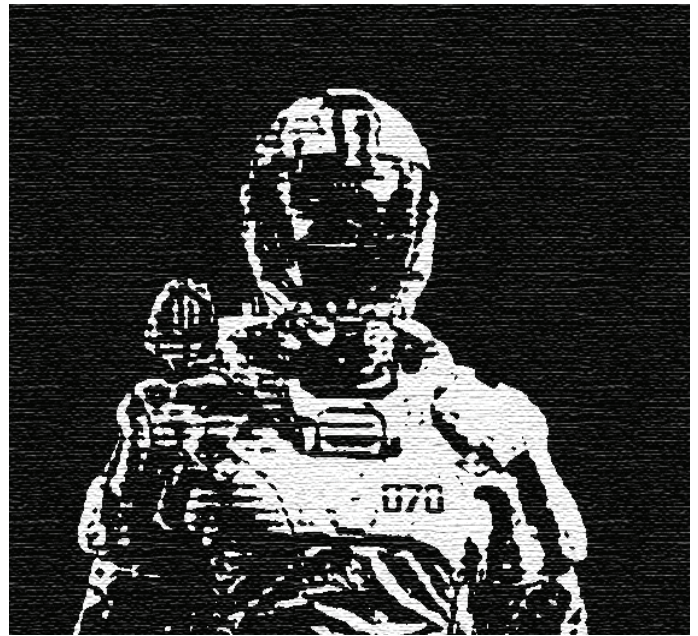
Round 11-13

The battleship takes 3 rounds to cover the distance with the Cerberus and by the 13th round its 2 hexagons close, enough to launch the assault pods. Five pods are launched and each one contains 10 cyborgs (see Appendix – New Creatures).

THE CERBERUS IS BOARDED

Under a massive rain of fire the Cerberus cease to function and its metal body floats defenseless in space. The hull presents various breaches and many decks have lost pressurization. Metal wrecks surrounds the space around the station, small explosions and fire scar the Cerberus hull. From the battleship, five assault pods are launched. Four of them board the housing deck while the fifth hooks at the docking area. The goal is to capture many living humanoids as possible and prevent them from escaping. At this point the war drones have ceased any hostile action and the battle moves inside the station, where the cyborgs attempt to occupy and secure strategic points (see Chapter 3 - Retreat to know more about strategic points). Each assault pod carries 10 cyborgs that forms an assault squad, each squad is capable of communicating by means of radio signals.

Note for the Game Master: this part of the adventure is pretty tactical and requires the PCs to carefully plan their moves. Even if the cyborgs have a challenge rating the PCs can handle, they have their advantage in numbers and are driven by the extremely efficient computing power of



the subroutine. This implies the cyborgs employ advanced tactics, aiming at tiring PCs and their allies and consume their resources. Keep in mind that the cyborgs use tactically their fast healing ability and can recover the body of the fallen to repair them.

Xp award: 1,600 (for each Hobgoblin cyborg destroyed that does not manage to heal and return into combat).

CHAPTER 3 - RETREAT

After a fierce fight Captain Tibb, and probably the PCs too, realize that rescuing the Cerberus is not possible and the only reason the war drones have not destroyed the crew is because the enemy is trying to get them alive. Given the situation, this is the only advantage the crew has. The order is to retreat and save as many lives as possible before every deck is overrun. The PCs have to reach the Sawshark or the Beetle, or both, and use them to warp away from here to a safer harbor.

THE CERBERUS IS CAPTURED

The subroutine is trying to capture strategic

CHAPTER 3 - RETREAT

positions on the Cerberus and secure them from any counterattack. These key positions are the power core deck, the engineering deck and the armaments deck. Until these positions are secured the subroutine won't concentrate its attention to anyone or anything else. Once the strategic points are secured the cyborg commence to repair these positions. The PCs have time to organize a retreat and they may try to sabotage the subroutine's actions in order to buy time. Every strategic position gives the subroutine an advantage that can be employed against the PCs and their allies, but every strategic position requires some time to become operational. Read below for more details.

POWER CORE DECK (required time to repair: 1d4 hours; double this amount if the deck was hit during the battle in space; cyborgs assigned: 6)

The power core is the first strategic position. Capturing this deck and putting the power core on line allows any other system, both primary and secondary to turn on. The efforts of the cyborgs go toward this goal so they move from their boarding points and, fighting defensively, they try to reach this deck. At the same time the cyborgs try to prevent the PCs from reaching the docking area so that they cannot escape and they do this by controlling the elevator and the outer space to prevent the crew from reaching the ships. In the latter case it's possible that the PCs have to fight in vacuum.

Advantage: once the power core is active the cyborgs inundate the station and its surroundings with low radiation. Anyone on board must roll a successful DC 13 fortitude saving throw or contract

radiation sickness.

ENGINEERING DECK (required time to repair: 1d4 hours for every power core; double this amount if the deck was hit during the battle in space; cyborgs assigned: 2 for every power core)

The engineering deck allow to control the shields, thus impeding anything from entering or exiting the station without suffering heavy damage. If the cyborgs take this strategic position, running away gets even more difficult because opening a breach into a shield requires fire power. However, the shields are not fully effective, having only 10% of their capacity. The cyborgs can repair all the power core simultaneously, but every power core takes its own time to be repaired.

Advantage: when the shields are on, no life forms can leave the Cerberus without being incinerated, unless they find a way to counter the shields magnetic field.

ARMAMENTS DECK (required time to repair: 2 hours for every weapon; cyborgs assigned: 2 for every weapon)

The armaments deck allows the invaders to seize control of the coil guns and the persistent particle beam. If the subroutine gains such an advantage it will be able to open fire on any ship trying to leave the docking area. The armaments firepower is not enough to take down a ship in a single round but can easily destroy any escape pods or other smaller objects.

RETREAT!

During this phase the PCs and their allies, as

CHAPTER 3 - RETREAT

ordered by Captain Tibb, begin the retreat. They have to reach the ships at the docking area, or it is even possible they try to assemble something to leave the station and save their lives. This phase requires tactical planning and careful steps if the PCs want to make it. The war drones, or what is left of them, won't attempt to fire on living beings until the last moment. Keep in mind that the subroutine's strategy is capturing as much sentient beings as possible.

Different scenarios may be occurring at this point. The PCs can plan to move outside the station or inside. Outside the station means walking on the hull, inside the stations means taking advantage of the ventilation ducts or other tactics the PCs are capable of putting in place. The only advantage the PCs have is that probably the Hobgoblin cyborgs are still attempting to repair the strategic points, this gives the PCs some time to organize.

CAPTAIN TIBB SACRIFICE

Tibb is the captain, and covering such a role imposes doing whatever it takes to save his crew. Situations may go dire, and extreme measures may be necessary. After ordering the retreat, Captain Tibb has already planned a last desperate attempt to delay the cyborgs and give the crew enough time to reach the ships and abandon the system. Tibb's sacrifice may occur at any moment the PCs decide so, and in different circumstances. Read below for more details.

Blowing up a strategic point

Captain Tibb decides to blow one of the strategic points up, so that the cyborgs have to start the repairing again. This action grants the PCs extra time to organize the retreat while Tibb draws

their attention toward him. This action sees Tibb blowing himself up by means of explosives together with the designated deck.

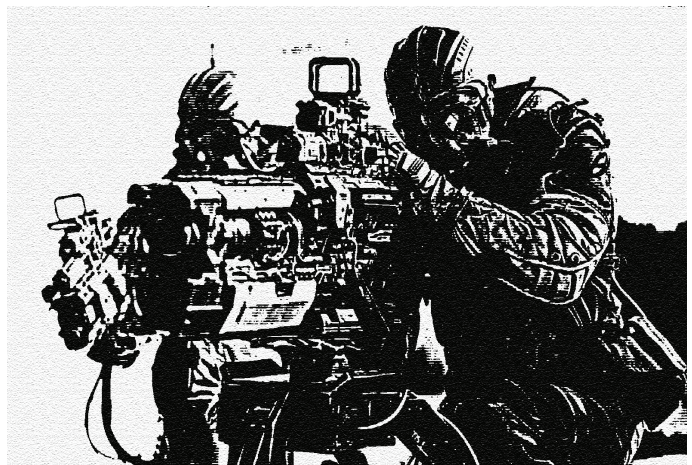
Last stand

Captain Tibb covers the retreat of the PCs and any survivor by blocking the passage of the cyborgs. This action should occur when the PCs are about to reach the docking area or are surrounded on both sides by overwhelming enemy forces. Tibb stands to stop the attackers by covering one of the two sides thus giving the PCs the possibility to focus their strength on one side only. The PCs are granted 1 minute of time where they don't have to worry about their flank. After 1 minute passes Tibb is overwhelmed and killed.

Radio disruption

Captain Tibb attempts to reach the sensor and radar deck in a desperate attempt to disrupt communication between the cyborgs. He accomplishes this by manipulating the radio frequency emitter so that the emission is strong enough to damage all communications between the enemies. This action has the effect of paralyzing the cyborgs, and the war drones too, for 1 minute. However, the frequency damage Tibb nervous systems and kills him also.

Note for the Game Master: this paragraph



CHAPTER 4 - ABANDON THE CERBERUS

describes how Tibb could save the day or at least help the PCs attempt to flee easier. Don't play this on rules and game mechanic, just give the actions the right drama and rely more on the role playing aspect.

CHAPTER 4 - ABANDON THE CERBERUS!

At this point the PCs have somehow reached the ships, not necessarily both the Sawshark and the Beetle, may be just one of them and it is possible they have lost people in the attempt. Turning on the warp drive requires 1 minute and during this time the war drones do not open fire. The PCs have to decide where to head to warn the Federation in time, to do so they need a powerful radio transmitter capable of sending a signal before the subroutine reaches the Federation Space. Heading straight into Federation space requires 2 weeks of warp travel which means that for two weeks the crew won't be able to do anything but travel and wait. During this time the subroutine could easily warp and reach Federation space well before the PCs, due to superior warp speed. In that case it would be too late.

Ivan Yukov proposed another plan, a risky one, but a plan that gives the opportunity to contact the Federation in few days instead of 2 weeks. Whether Yukov is alive or not, he placed his plan inside a portable memory that the PCs now possesses. Inside the portable memory there are the coordinates of an outpost occupied by the Dominion. The outpost was built during the war between the Federation and the Dominion as a safe harbor for Dominion forces in need of repair and supplies. After the war the outpost became

of lesser importance and now is guarded by few garrisons. The outpost possesses a powerful radio transmitter built with Dominion technology that is not yet mastered by any federation member. However, any Federation vessel entering Dominion's space is usually boarded and captured, the ship seized and the crew executed or deported. The advantage is that the outpost is only 2 days away and the radio transmitter can send a signal into Federation space in just 24 hours.

WARP!

After 1 minute the warp engine is ready to work. In the very moment the ships are about to enter warp speed the war drone attempts to stop those trying to escape. Not all of the war drones attack the ships at once however, at best just a couple of them open fire. The real danger comes from the Cerberus armaments, provided they have been repaired, because they have enough firepower to heavily damage one of the ships. Many conditions could influence this step. Beside the armaments capable of damaging the ships, the station shields have to be considered. If the Cerberus shields are on line because the cyborgs have already repaired them, then their electromagnetic force clashes with those of the ships thus causing a magnetic shock wave. If such is the case the shield points of both the Sawshark and the Beetle drop to zero, leaving the hull completely unprotected. When and if the PCs enter warp, give the war drones and the armaments only one round of fire.

Xp award: 5,000 (for story line accomplishment)

CHASED

The PCs have entered warp speed and are now

CHAPTER 4 - ABANDON THE CERBERUS

traveling to the outpost. However, the fight is not over.

Have 4 war drones (modify the amount of war drones accordingly if required) chase the ships into the warp and persecute the PCs up to their destination. Once they leave warp speed, the Sawshark and the Beetle have to engage a small scale space battle against the pursuer.

The battle occurs far from the planet that host the outpost and the radio transmitter, so consider that the PCs are outside the Dominion's radars reach.

Xp award: 5,000 (for the battle in space)

ENDING

This episode ends with the PCs and their allies preparing to attack the outpost and plan how to avoid detection and defense systems in order to seize the radio transmitter and warn the Federation. The PCs should have reached level 11 at this point. When PCs reach this level it is important to consider their role and position in the campaign setting. They have enough skill and power to mold the events actively and not just them suffering in a passive way. Their decisions and their actions influence the surrounding environment and have repercussions at political level, so they are not supposed to just receive orders or follow an agenda, they must be encouraged to have an agenda on their own. This first part of "From

Beyond" adventure path gives them resources, allies, contacts and places useful to build their own path.

THE NEXT EPISODE

The next episode of this adventure path proposes a radical change in what we consider a traditional adventure path. The next episode assumes that our old PCs have seized the outpost, took control of the radio transmitter and warned the Federation. All these events occurred within the boundaries of the Dominion. The old PCs are now important and influential actors in the eye of the Federation and have become the target of the Dominion vengeance. So it's time to switch the role and wear the shoes of

another faction. The players will become those who suffered the attack at the outpost, they will be the survivors of this brutal and merciless assault, at least under their point of view, carried by unknown Federation forces that without any apparent reason slaughtered their comrades and forced them to hide like rats. This approach presents the opportunity to introduce another power in the future campaign setting, the so called Dominion. The players will have to retake control of the outpost after the Federation invaders have destroyed the place...but will have to deal with something else, something unknown to them.



APPENDIX - NPC

GUARD

SOLDIER 1

CR 1

XP 400

LN M Humanoid (elf, human)

Init +7; **Senses** low-light vision; **Perception** +4

DEFENSE

HP 11

SP 18

EAC 15; **KAC** 16

Fort +4; **Ref** +3; **Vol** +3

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee weapon +4 dueling sword (1d6+3 S)

Ranged weapon +4 azimuth laser rifle (1d8 F)

STATISTICS

Str 17; **Dex** 17; **Con** 15; **Int** 12; **Wis** 13; **Cha** 7

Feats skill focus(stealth), mobility

Other abilities half-elf traits, primary fighting style(blitz), primary style technique(rapid response)

Skills acrobatics +7, athletics +7, perception +4, stealth +7, survival +5

Languages human, elvish

Gear tactical dueling sword, azimuth laser rifle, flash grenade I, freebooter armor I

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Rapid Response (Ex) You gain a +4 bonus to initiative checks and increase your land speed by 10 feet.

DESCRIPTION

The secessionist colonies have started to train their own military forces soon after the end of the independence war, taking advantage of the experience and tactics learned during the engagement against the Dominion forces. Colonial guards are specialized in fast movement tactics and stealth actions.

HANS THISSEN, GUNNER OFFICER

SOLDIER 6

CR 6

XP 2,400

NG M Humanoid (human)

Init +12; **Senses** low-light vision, darkvision 60 ft., infrared, ultraviolet; **perception** +7

DEFENSE

HP 46

SP 48

EAC 16; **KAC** 17

Fort +6; **Ref** +6; **Vol** +6

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

APPENDIX - NPC

Melee weapon +9 tactical knife (2d4+2 S)

Ranged weapon +11 advanced semi-auto pistol (2d6+8 P)

STATISTICS

Str 14; **Dex** 18; **Con** 13; **Int** 12; **Wis** 12; **Cha** 13

Feats improved combat maneuver(bull rush), improved feint, improved initiative, quick draw, skill focus(bluff), weapon focus(basic melee weapons), weapon focus(small arms), weapons specialization(small arms),

Other abilities gear boost(bullet barrage +2), primary fighting style(blitz), primary style technique(rapid response, charge attack)

Skills acrobatics +13, athletics +8, bluff +10, intimidate +10, perception +7 (+9 for sight based checks), stealth +10

Languages human, orcish

Gear advanced semi-auto pistol, tactical knife, freebooter armor I, advanced darkvision capacitors

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Bullet Barrage (Ex) You gain a +1 insight bonus to damage rolls for weapons in the projectile category. This bonus increases by 1 for every 4 soldier levels you have.

Charge Attack (Ex) As a standard action, you can make a charge without the charge penalties, and you can substitute a bull rush for the melee attack at the end of the charge. When you gain the soldier's onslaught class feature, you can make two attacks instead of one at the end of your charge, both with a -4 penalty.

Rapid Response (Ex) You gain a +4 bonus to initiative checks and increase your land speed by 10 feet.

DESCRIPTION

Hans Thissen, as Captain Victor Tibb, is a veteran of the independence war against the Dominion. He took part in the first act of hostilities against Dominion's occupying forces in his city. He's specialized in surprise attacks, infiltration and night time operations.

IVAN YUKOV, SCIENCE OFFICER

MECHANIC 5

CR 5

XP 1,600

NG M Humanoid (human)

Init +6; **Senses** human; **perception** +9

DEFENSE

HP 34

SP 35

EAC 13; **KAC** 14

Fort +5; **Ref** +6; **Vol** +2

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

APPENDIX - NPC

Melee weapon +3 tactical knife (2d4 S)

Ranged weapon +5 (1d6+5 P)

STATISTICS

Str 11; **Dex** 15; **Con** 12; **Int** 21; **Wis** 12; **Cha** 10

Feats far shot, fleet, heavy armor proficiency, improved initiative, kip up, longarms proficiency, skill focus(computers), weapon specialization(longarms),

Other abilities artificial intelligence(exocortex), bypass +2, custom rig, exocortex(combat tracking, memory module, wireless hack), mechanic trick(neural shunt, portable power), overload, remote hack

Skills acrobatics +7, athletics +8, computers +18, engineering +15, mysticism +6, perception +9, piloting +10

Languages dwarvish, halfling, humans, orcish, ratfolk,

Gear tactical knife, autotarget rifle, casual stationwear

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Bypass (Ex) You are skilled at getting inside computer systems and electronic devices. At 1st level, you gain a +1 insight bonus to Computers and Engineering skill checks. At 5th level, every 4 levels thereafter, and at 20th level, this bonus increases by 1.

Combat Tracking (Ex) Your exocortex provides you with enhanced combat ability, granting you proficiency with heavy armor and longarms. At 3rd level, you gain weapon specialization in longarms just as if your class granted proficiency. As a move action during combat, you can designate a foe for your exocortex to track. As long as that target is in sight, the exocortex feeds you telemetry, vulnerabilities, and combat tactics, allowing you to make attacks against that target as if your base attack bonus from your mechanic levels were equal to your mechanic level. Designating another target causes you to immediately lose this bonus against the previous target.

Custom Rig (Ex) see Starfinder Core Rulebook Mechanic class.

Memory Module (Ex) You can use your exocortex's memory module to enhance your own knowledge. Once per day, as a reaction while not in combat, you can reroll a failed skill check to recall knowledge. In addition, your exocortex grants you the Skill focus feat as a bonus feat. You can't use your exocortex's memory module while combat tracking is activated. Every time you gain a mechanic level, you can rebuild your exocortex's memory module, replacing the exocortex's bonus Skill focus feat with Skill focus in a different skill.

Neural Shunt (Ex) Once per day, as a reaction when you fail a saving throw against a mind-affecting effect, you can shunt that effect into your exocortex instead. When you do so, you are not affected by the mind-affecting effect, but for the normal duration of that effect, you lose the Skill focus feat granted by your exocortex's memory module and cannot use any of the exocortex's abilities in any way (including any proficiencies and mods it grants you). When a mind-affecting effect is shunted into the exocortex, spells such as dispel magic or break enchantment can be cast on you to end the effect as if you were

APPENDIX - NPC

affected by it. Once the duration of the mind-affecting effect has ended, your exocortex resumes its normal functions. You must have an exocortex to learn this trick.

Overload (Ex) As a standard action, you can cause a short in an electronic device, including most ranged energy weapons, melee weapons with the powered special property, or a single armor upgrade. This makes the device nonfunctional for 1 round. Overload doesn't cause a locked door, safe, or other device to open, but it prevents anyone from opening it for 1 round. You must be adjacent to the device to use this ability. You can instead use this ability on any electronic device within range of your exocortex's wireless hack. If you use overload on an item or armor upgrade in someone's possession, the owner can attempt a Reflex saving throw to negate the effect ($DC = 10 + \text{half your mechanic level} + \text{your intelligence modifier}$). Overload doesn't affect androids, cybernetics, drones, powered armor, robots, or creatures with the technological subtype (all of which have shielding against this sort of attack), or items larger than Medium. Once a device has been successfully overloaded, a residual static charge prevents that device from being overloaded again for 1 minute.

Portable Power (Ex) You can use your custom rig to supply limited power for up to 1 minute to a computer or starship system that lacks power. If this system is part of a much larger network, this trick does not supply power to the entire network, just to a limited point of access (typically a terminal), which might greatly limit functionality. Once you have used portable power on a system, you cannot do so again on that system for 24 hours.

Remote Hack (Ex) You can use your custom rig to attempt Computers and Engineering skill checks at a range of 20 feet. At 7th level and every 2 levels thereafter, this range increases by 10 feet. A target of this ability (or a creature attending or observing your target) can attempt a Perception or Sense Motive check ($DC = 10 + 1\frac{1}{2} \times \text{your mechanic level} + \text{your Intelligence modifier}$) to determine that you are the origin of this activity.

Wireless Hack (Ex) Instead of combat tracking, your exocortex can access another computer system within 20 feet, allowing it to attempt a Computers check against that computer each round, using your skill bonus. This counts as a standard action for the purpose of the Computers skill. You must remain within 20 feet of the computer system for the entire time your exocortex is interacting with the computer. If the task requires multiple actions (or even rounds) to accomplish, you can spend your actions to work in concert with your exocortex, counting both your action and the exocortex's effective standard action toward the total time required. If you don't have the remote hack class feature, you must be adjacent to the computer to attempt your checks.

DESCRIPTION

Ivan Yukov is the right arm of Captain Tibb on board the Cerberus. He went through the independence war but before the war erupted worked for a Dominion high tech facility to design and produce remote controlled torpedoes and other last generation armaments. He was more a captive than a free engineer and when the war started he took the chance to run away during the bombing of the facility. He then

APPENDIX - NPC

joined the colonial forces and offered his services and his brilliant mind to enhance the colonial firepower. He is known for having invented a bio-mechanical remote guide for torpedoes to use against the Dominion fleet. More than one captain from the colonial warships claims that this remote guide system actually reverted the result of the war in favor of the colonies.

JUNIOR ENGINEER

SOLDIER 2

CR 2

XP 600

LN M Humanoid (dwarf)

Init +1; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; **perception** +3

DEFENSE

HP 20

SP 16

EAC +1; **KAC** +1

Fort +4; **Ref** +1; **Vol** +4

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee weapon +4 tactical starknife (1d4+2 P)

Ranged weapon +3 semi-auto pistol (1d6 P)

STATISTICS

Str 14; **Dex** 13; **Con** 13; **Int** 16; **Wis** 13; **Cha** 8

Feats Kip Up, Skill Focus(engineering)

Other abilities dwarf traits, primary fighting style(bombard), primary fighting technique(grenade expert)

Skills acrobatics +6, athletics +7, computer +5, engineering +11, medicine +8, perception +3, survival +6

Languages dwarvish, hafling, human, orcish

Gear tactical starknife, tactical semi-auto pistol, flash grenade I, incendiary grenade I, smoke grenade I, shock grenade I x3

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Grenade Expert (Ex) You increase the range increment of your thrown grenades by $5 \times$ your strength bonus. In addition, you're able to salvage enough materials to create a grenade without paying for it. Creating a grenade takes 10 minutes. You can create any grenade whose item level is less than or equal to your soldier level, but this grenade is unstable and only you can use it effectively. If anyone else tries to use the grenade, it is a dud. You can have only one grenade created by this ability at one time (if you create a new grenade using this ability, the old grenade no longer works).

DESCRIPTION

Engineers with basic knowledge are required on all space ships but those coming from the secessionist colonies are prepared for the next coming war against the Dominion. Due to this reason the ex-colonies

APPENDIX - NPC

implemented a training program where the recruit had to be able to solve technical problems and enter battle as well.

KARSK, SENIOR ENGINEER

ENGINEER 7

CR 7

XP 3,200

NG M humanoid (dwarf)

Init +1; **senses** darkvision 60 ft.; **perception** +7

DEFENSE

HP 34

SP 14

EAC 12; **KAC** 13

Fort +3; **Ref** +3; **Vol** +5

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft

Melee weapon +5 cestus battle-glove (1d4 B)

Ranged weapon +7 azimuth laser pistol (1d4+7 F)

STATISTICS

Str 10; **Dex** 12; **Con** 13; **Int** 14; **Wis** 10; **Cha** 7

Feats skill synergy (engineering/culture), small arm proficiency, weapon focus(small arms), weapon specialization(small arms)

Other abilities expertise field(engineering, medicine)

Skills computers +9, culture +11, engineering +14, medicine +12, perception +7, stealth +8

Languages Dwarvish, Triaxian

Gear advanced engineering tool kit, engineering tool kit (identify technology specialty), second skin armor, azimuth laser pistol (20 charges), cestus battle-glove

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Ship Repairing (Ex) An engineer working with an advanced engineering toll kit can repair hull damage to the ship from scraps, fix breaches, etc. For every eight hours of uninterrupted work roll and engineering skill check and divide the result by ten (rounding down), this is the amount of hull points restored.

BACKGROUND

Karsk has been hired by Basirius corporation few weeks before the Sawshark departed for the DLBO1 star system. Basirius accepted his petition in case they found any alien technology or artifact. Karsk left his community and specialized in xeno-technology, mostly because bored by the lack of innovation by their kins. He is sophisticated when it comes to talk about technical specifications, but when a task is accomplished he loves to relax and spend his free time with good comrades.

NUMA, ENGINEER

APPENDIX - NPC

ENGINEER 4, MECHANIC 3

CR 7

XP 3,200

LN M humanoid (verthani)

Init +7; **Senses** low-light vision; **perception** -1

DEFENSE

HP 40

SP 44

EAC 12; **KAC** 13

Fort +6; **Ref** +7; **Vol** +4

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft

Melee weapon +4 cestus battle-glove(1d4-1 B)

Ranged weapon +7 azimuth laser pistol (1d4+4)

STATISTICS

Str 8; **Dex** 12; **Con** 14; **Int** 15; **Wis** 8; **Cha** 9

Feats improved initiative, skill focus(engineering), skill synergy(engineering/medicine), toughness, weapon focus(small arms), weapon specialization(small arms)

Skills computers +12, culture +9, engineering +17, life science +9, medicine +15, sleight of hand +8

Other abilities artificial intelligence(exocortex), bypass(+1), custom rig(arm), exocortex(memory module), expertise field(engineering), mechanic trick(overclocking) , overload

Languages vercite, triaxian, dwarvish

Gear advanced engineering tool kit, engineer tool kit (craft item specialty), azimuth laser pistol (20 charges), cestus battle-glove, second skin armor, prosthetic left arm (+1 circumstance bonus on engineering check)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Custom Rig (Ex) You have created a customized toolkit you can use to hack systems and items. Your custom rig can be configured to take up an upgrade slot on your armor or can be installed as a cybernetic augmentation system in your brain (though it can be combined with a datajack for the same price as installing a datajack normally), your eyes, or an arm. For more information on augmentation, see Equipment. Alternatively, you can configure it to be a handheld device, meaning that you must retrieve it and hold it to use it effectively. While using this rig, you always count as having the appropriate tool or basic kit for any Computers or Engineering skill check you attempt. Some mechanic tricks and drone mods require the use of a custom rig. In addition, you can use your custom rig as a Mk I comm unit (see Equipment). Finally, if you have a drone, you can use your custom rig to communicate over an encrypted channel with your drone to issue commands to its AI or directly control it at a range of 2,500 feet. If your custom rig is damaged, destroyed, lost, or stolen, you can kitbash a new one from any engineering kit, hacking kit, or other technological toolkit, reconfiguring the materials into a new custom rig with 1 hour of work. You can have only one custom rig at a time. If you create a new custom rig, your old one functions as a normal toolkit of whatever type you made it from and can no longer be

APPENDIX - NPC

used with your mechanic tricks.

Memory Module (Ex) You can use your exocortex's memory module to enhance your own knowledge. Once per day, as a reaction while not in combat, you can reroll a failed skill check to recall knowledge. In addition, your exocortex grants you the Skill Focus feat as a bonus feat. You can't use your exocortex's memory module while combat tracking is activated. Every time you gain a mechanic level, you can rebuild your exocortex's memory module, replacing the exocortex's bonus Skill Focus feat with Skill Focus in a different skill.

Overclocking (Ex) You have augmented the performance of your AI for maximum response timing. You gain a +2 insight bonus to initiative checks, and either you (if you have an exocortex) or your drone (if you have a drone) gains a +2 insight bonus to Reflex saves.

Overload (Ex) As a standard action, you can cause a short in an electronic device, including most ranged energy weapons, melee weapons with the powered special property, or a single armor upgrade. This makes the device nonfunctional for 1 round. Overload doesn't cause a locked door, safe, or other device to open, but it prevents anyone from opening it for 1 round. You must be adjacent to the device to use this ability. If you have a drone, you can instead use this ability on an electronic device adjacent to your drone. If you have an exocortex with the wireless hack ability, you can instead use this ability on any electronic device within range of your exocortex's wireless hack. If you use overload on an item or armor upgrade in someone's possession, the owner can attempt a Reflex saving throw to negate the effect ($DC = 10 + \text{half your mechanic level} + \text{your intelligence modifier}$). Overload doesn't affect androids, cybernetics, drones, powered armor, robots, or creatures with the technological subtype (all of which have shielding against this sort of attack), or items larger than Medium. Once a device has been successfully overloaded, a residual static charge prevents that device from being overloaded again for 1 minute.

Skin mimic (Ex) see Alien Archive: Verthani

Ship Repairing (Ex) An engineer working with an advanced engineering tool kit can repair hull damage to the ship from scraps, fix breaches, etc. For every eight hours of uninterrupted work roll and engineering skill check and divide the result by ten (rounding down), this is the amount of hull points restored.

BACKGROUND

Numa is an engineer specialized in designing and crafting technological items. Her fields of study is biotechnological engineering which requires knowledge in both anatomy and mechanical devices. She voluntarily implanted her prosthetic left arm to improve her efficiency in her tasks. She is a straightforward aptitude toward almost any issues and her critics tend to be as much as constructive as possible. Renowned in Basirius corporation for her loyalty she always puts mission goals above anything else.

SAH'AH MAL, ENGINEER

APPENDIX - NPC

ENGINEER 5, OPERATIVE 2

CR 7

XP 3,200

CG M humanoid (ryphorian)

Init +2; **Senses** low-light vision; **Perception** +4

DEFENSE

HP 40

SP 26

EAC 12; **KAC** 13

Fort +4; **Ref** +7; **Vol** +7

Resistances cold 5

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft

Melee weapon +3 cestus battle-glove (1d4-1 B)

Ranged weapon +5 azimuth laser pistol (1d4 F)

STATISTICS

Str 8; **Dex** 12; **Con** 13; **Int** 14; **Wis** 10; **Cha** 9

Feats great fortitude, lightning reflexes, skill focus (engineering), skill focus (stealth), master crafter (computers),

Other abilities evasion, expertise field (computers, engineering), operative edge (+1), operative exploit(jack of all trades), specialization (spy), trick attack(1d4)

Skills bluff +9, computers +14, engineering +21, medicine +14, perception +12, sense motive +13, sleight of hand +5, stealth +13

Languages Triaxian, Dwarvish, Human.

Gear advanced engineering tool kit, engineer tool kit (disable device specialty), azimuth laser pistol (20 charges), cestus battle-glove, second skin armor

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Evasion (Ex) If you succeed at a Reflex save against an effect that normally has a partial effect on a successful save, you instead suffer no effect. You gain this benefit only when unencumbered and wearing light armor or no armor, and you lose the benefit when you are helpless or otherwise unable to move.

Jack of all Trades (Ex) You've learned how to handle any situation. You can use all skills untrained, and you double your operative's edge bonus when using a skill in which you have no ranks.

Operative Edge (Ex) Your diverse training as an operative grants you a +1 insight bonus to initiative checks and to skill checks. This bonus increases by 1 at 3rd level and every 4 levels thereafter.

Ship Repairing (Ex) An engineer working with an advanced engineering toll kit can repair hull damage to the ship from scraps, fix breaches, etc. For every eight hours of uninterrupted work roll and engineering skill check and divide the result by ten (rounding down), this is the amount of hull points restored.

Specialization (Ex) Your specialization represents your primary area of expertise. Pick one specialization upon taking your 1st level of the operative class. Once made, this choice cannot be changed. Your specialization grants you the Skill Focus feat in your specialization's associated skills,

APPENDIX - NPC

and you gain a free skill rank in each of those skills at each operative level (this does not allow you to exceed the maximum number of skill ranks in a single skill).

Trick Attack (Ex) You can trick or startle a foe and then attack when she drops her guard. As a full action, you can move up to your speed. Whether or not you moved, you can then make an attack with a melee weapon with the operative special property or with any small arm. Just before making your attack, attempt a Bluff, Intimidate, or Stealth check (or a check associated with your specialization) with a DC equal to 20 + your target's CR. If you succeed at the check, you deal 1d4 additional damage and the target is flat-footed. This damage increases to 1d8 at 3rd level, to 3d8 at 5th level, and by an additional 1d8 every 2 levels thereafter. You can't use this ability with a weapon that has the unwieldy special property or that requires a full action to make a single attack.

BACKGROUND

Sah'ah Mal is specialized in reverse-engineering, however she has never finished her career of studies. Basirius corporation hired her due to her merits in analyzing and replicating hi-tech discoveries produced by market competitor. She is supposed to work in team with Karsk, but the ryphorian is too taciturn and introverted to be a good company for the dwarf. She spends most of her time at the lab, studying devices and executing security protocols.

TASSEL BORF

ACE PILOT SOLDIER 4

CR 4

XP 1,200

NG S Humanoid (halfling)

Init +5; **Senses** halfling; **Perception** +7

DEFENSE

HP 30

SP 32

EAC 15; **KAC** 16

Fort +6; **Ref** +6; **Vol** +6 (+3 vs fear)

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee weapon +2 tactical knife (1d4-2)

Ranged weapon +10 hunting rifle (1d8+5)

STATISTICS

Str 6; **Dex** 20; **Con** 13; **Int** 11; **Wis** 12; **Cha** 17

Feats far shot, skill focus(piloting), weapon focus(long arms), weapon specialization(long arms), Other abilities gear boost(bullet barrage +1), halfling traits, primary fighting style(sharpshoot), primary fighting technique(sniper aim)

Skills culture +4, perception +7, piloting +15, stealth +11

Languages dwarvish, halfling, human, orcish, ratfolk

Gear hunting rifle, tactical knife, flight suit stationwear,

APPENDIX - NPC

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Bullet Barrage (Ex) You gain a +1 insight bonus to damage rolls for weapons in the projectile category. This bonus increases by 1 for every 4 soldier levels you have.

Sniper Aim (Ex) When you make a ranged attack against a target with cover, reduce the AC bonus from cover by 2. You can't use sniper's aim against an enemy with total cover.

DESCRIPTION

Tassel Borf joined the independence war in its last and most violet moments. Once he realized that the colonies had a chance to win the war he fetched all his courage and decided to enlist. His purpose was to save as many of his people as possible from the slavery and brutality of the Dominion. He proofed to be an excellent pilot and was assigned to civilian rescue on the hottest war zones. If asked about the war he just say he handled small transport ship from planet surfaces to orbit, dodging anti aircraft enemy fire and he has been close to death so many times that he doesn't even remember.

TZARU, CHIEF ENGINEER

ENGINEER 7

CR 7

XP 3,200

LG M monstrous humanoid (Contemplative)

Init +1; **Senses** blindsense (thought) 30 ft; darkvision 60 ft; **Perception** +9

DEFENSE

HP 30

SP 21

EAC 12; **KAC** 13

Fort +5; **Ref** +2; **Vol** +5

Weakness atrophied

OFFENSE

Speed 5 ft; fly 30 ft (average)

Melee weapon claw +4 (1d4 S)

Ranged weapon +6 azimuth laser pistol (1d4 F)

Offensive abilities applied knowledge

STATISTICS

Str 8; **Dex** 12; **Con** 12; **Int** 17; **Wis** 8; **Cha** 11

Feats great fortitude, skill focus(engineering), skill synergy (engineering/computers), toughness

Other abilities expertise field(engineering, physical science)

Skills acrobatics +6, computers +15, diplomacy +7, culture +7, engineering +19, mysticism +2, perception +9, physical science +13

Languages Akitonian, Dwarvish, Triaxian, Vercite, telepathy 100 feet.

Gear advanced eningering tool kit, engineering tool kit (repair item specialty), second skin armor, azimuth laser pistol (20 charges)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

APPENDIX - NPC

Applied Knowledge (Ex) see Starfinder Alien Archive: Contemplative

Atrophied (Ex) see Starfinder Alien Archive: Contemplative

Ship Repairing (Ex) An engineer working with an advanced engineering tool kit can repair hull damage to the ship from scraps, fix breaches, etc. For every eight hours of uninterrupted work roll and engineering skill check and divide the result by ten (rounding down), this is the amount of hull points restored.

Expertise Field (Ex) The expert extends her knowledge and add a new skill as a class skill. She can choose among the following skills: computer, engineering, life science, medicine, physical science.

BACKGROUND

Tzaru is specialized in repairing and maintenance and he is considered as the team leader among all the other engineers on board. Patient, kind and brilliant he is the one who makes the whole machine working. Beside being a good engineer and computer expert he always openly recognize that Sah'Ah Mal is the best engineer in his team. He tends to be very talkative when relaxed and when he has free time he spends some hour with the ryphorian, trying to compensate her introverted personality. He loves to tell stories and anecdotes.

VICTOR TIBB, CAPTAIN

ICON SOLDIER 8

CR 8

XP 4,800

LG M Humanoid (Human)

Init +6; **Senses** humans; **Perception** +8

DEFENSE

HP 60

SP 64

EAC 16; **KAC** 18

Fort +7; **Ref** +4; **Vol** +6

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft. (50 ft. climbing master feat)

Melee weapon +9 (4d4+1 P)

Ranged weapon +12 aphelion laser rifle (3d6+8 F burn 1d6); deadly aim feat +10 aphelion laser rifle (3d6+12 F burn 1d6)

STATISTICS

Str 13; **Dex** 15; **Con** 13; **Int** 11; **Wis** 11; **Cha** 17

Feats adaptive fighting, climbing master, deadly aim, dive for cover, improved initiative, mobility, parting shot, shot on the run, side step, weapon focus(longarms), weapon specialization(longarms)

Other abilities gear boost(armored advantage, laser accuracy), primary fighting style(sniper aim, focus fire), primary style technique(sharpshoot)

Skills athletics +12 diplomacy +11, engineering +11, perception +8, survival +11

Languages human

APPENDIX - NPC

Gear Aphelion laser rifle, sintered starknife, elite stationwear, standard speed suspension.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Armored Advantage (Ex) When you are wearing armor, you gain a +1 insight bonus to your Kinetic Armor Class

Focus Fire (Ex) When you make a full attack with a ranged weapon, you can make both attacks with a –3 penalty instead of a –4 penalty as long as they both target the same creature. If your first attack kills or knocks out the target, you can instead make the second attack against a different creature at a –4 penalty. Once you have the soldier’s onslaught class feature, you can use this ability with it, making three attacks against the same creature at a –5 penalty; if your first or second attack kills or knocks out your target, you can make your remaining attacks against a different creature at a –6 penalty.

Laser Accuracy (Ex) You gain a +1 insight bonus to attack rolls with weapons in the laser category.
Sniper Aim (Ex) When you make a ranged attack against a target with cover, reduce the AC bonus from cover by 2. You can’t use sniper’s aim against an enemy with total cover.

DESCRIPTION

Vitkor Tibb is a middle aged officer and veteran soldier from the independence waged by the out human colonies against their mother system, the Dominion. His hairs are becoming grays and he rarely cut his beard preserving the habit during the ongoing war of not shaving, mostly due to lack of time. He was badly injured during a skirmish and now both his legs have been restored and enhanced with cybernetics augmentation. He’s a quiet man now, tired of fighting and accepted the assignment on the Cerberus as soon as he knew that the station would have been sent in the outer space and far from civilization. When the war ended he earned a good reputation on the colonies and for a while became famous on the stream due to the many interviews he had, where he talked about the heroic actions in battle performed by him and his mates. Having served as sniper, infiltrator and saboteur among the colonial army he’s a quite experienced and fierce fighter. He kept in his quarter the many decorations received by the colonial army. He has not lost his habit to clean and keep in efficiency his aphelion laser rifle.

YURI WASSILY, SERGENT

WAR MEDIC 4	CR 4	XP 1,200
LN M Humanoid (human)		
Init +1; Senses human; Perception +9		
DEFENSE	HP 20	SP 12
EAC 12; KAC 13		
Fort +1; Ref +5; Vol +3		
OFFENSE		
Speed 30 ft.		

APPENDIX - NPC

Melee weapon +3 tactical dueling sword (1d6 S)

Ranged weapon +4 azimuth laser pistol (1d4 F; burn 1d4)

STATISTICS

Str 10; **Dex** 12; **Con** 11; **Int** 13; **Wis** 14; **Cha** 12

Feats basic melee weapons; light armor; small arms; Skill Focus (medicine), toughness

Other abilities first aid

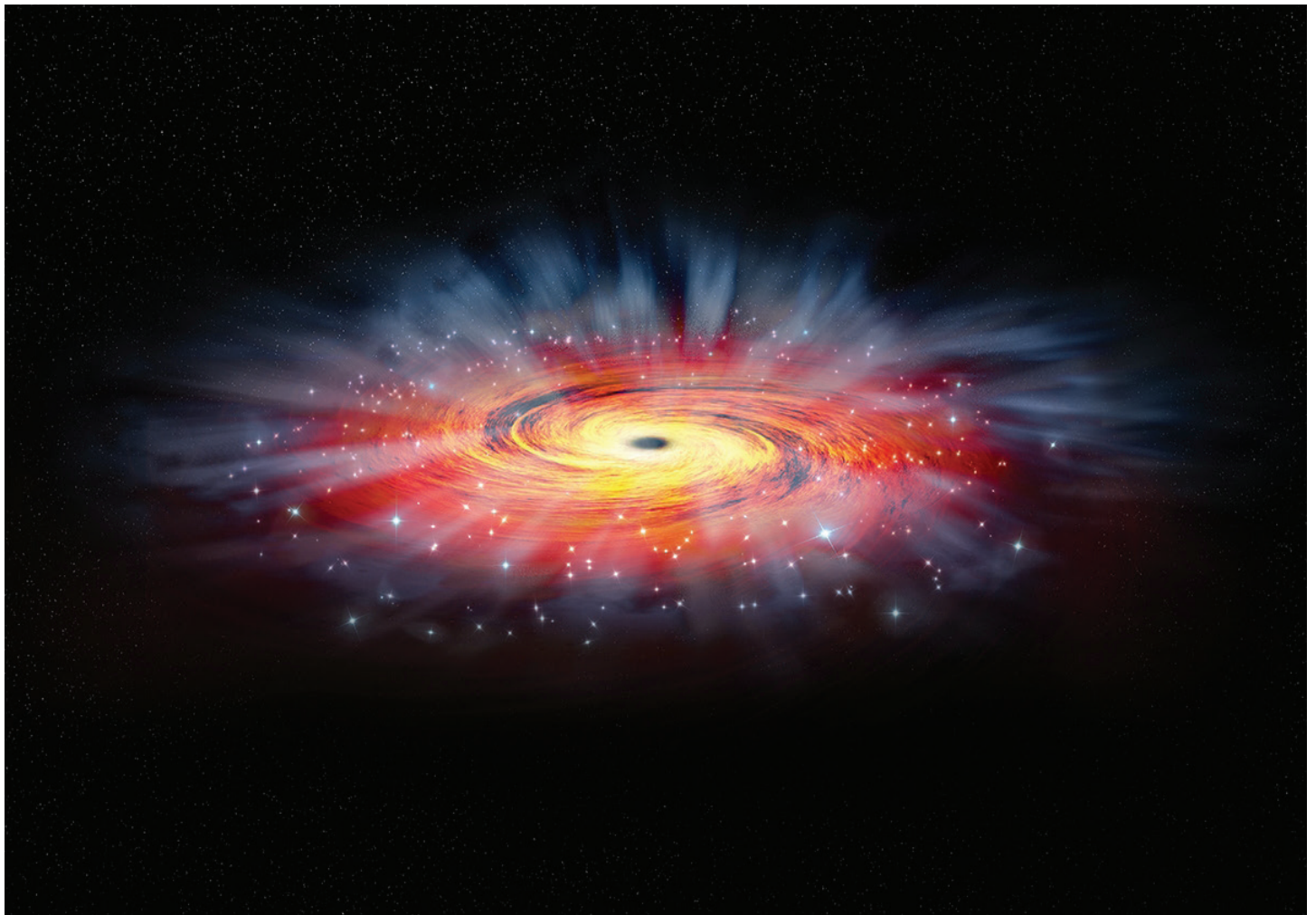
Skills diplomacy +6; medicine +11; perception +9; survival +9

Languages human

Gear tactical dueling sword, azimuth laser pistol (20 charges), second-skin armor, advanced med-kit, spray-flesh (3).

STATISTICS

First Aid (Ex) A warmedic who rolls a successful medicine skill check to provide first aid heals 1 hit point in addition to normal effects of the skill.



APPENDIX - NEW CREATURES

CYBORG, HOBGOBLIN

CR 5

XP 1,600

N M Humanoid (Cyborg)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision, thermal vision; **Perception** +10

DEFENSE

HP 50

EAC 16; **KAC** 18

Fort +9; **Ref** +7; **Vol** +1

Defensive abilities fast healing 2 (see below nanobots)

DR 5

Resistance 5 (see below energy field)

Weakness water (see below **weakness to water**)

OFFENSE

Speed 30 feet

Melee weapon incapacitator +14 (3d4+4 B staggered)

Ranged weapon light machine gun +12 (2d10+2 P)

STATISTICS

Str +4; **Dex** +2; **Con** +4; **Int** -; **Wis** -; **Cha** -

Skills computers +15, culture +10, engineering +15, perception +10

Languages long-wave radio communication as a comm unit.

Gear integrated exoskeleton (eac+4, kac+6, body), integrated incapacitator (right arm, 20 charges), integrated light machine gun (left arm, 60 rounds)

ECOLOGY

Environment any

Organization solitary, platoon (5-8), commando (4-16) or brigade (6-36)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

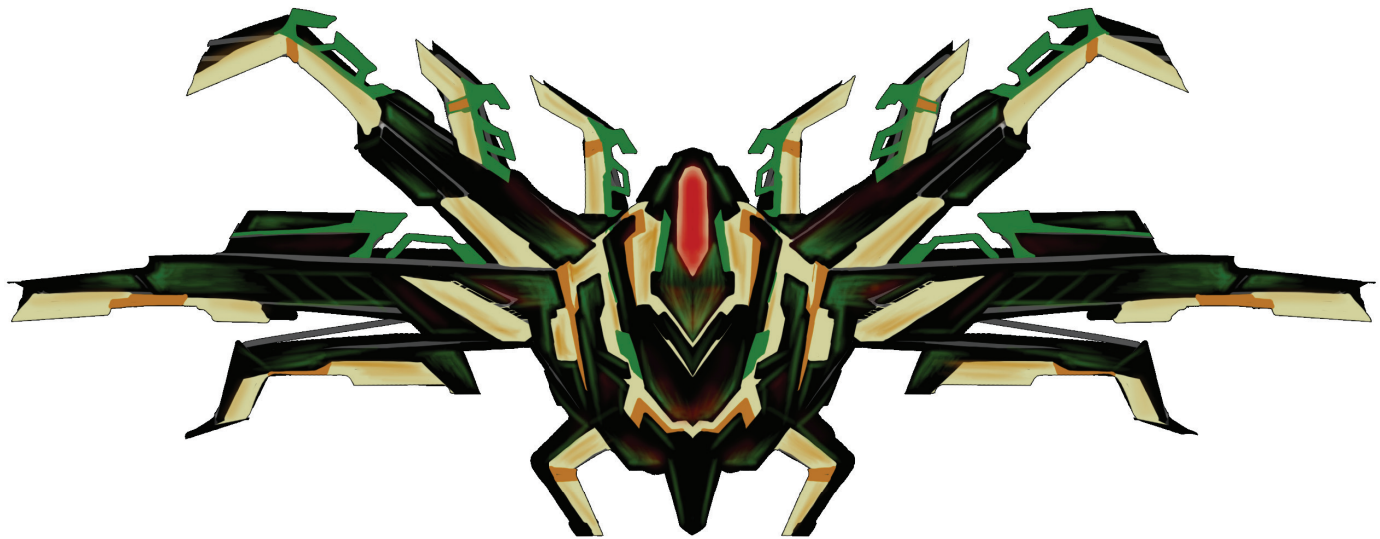
Energy Field (Ex) grants resistance 5 against energy based attack of the cold, fire and electricity type. The cyborg can pick one resistance type per round and can switch to another type as a full round action.

Force Field (Ex) grants damage reduction 5.

Integrated Armor, Arms and Weapons (Ex) cyborgs have armors, arms and weapons integrated in their bodies, they can occupy the following slots: right arm, left arm and body.

Nanobots (Ex) grants fast healing 2 by means of regeneration nanobots. Damage dealt by a source of electricity can't be healed.

Weakness to Water (Ex) when a cyborg enters in contact with enough water to cover most of his body it suffers the staggered condition for 10 minutes.



WAR DRONE

TIER 1/4

Subroutine fleet Interceptor

Tiny Racer

Speed 6 (T6 thruster); **Maneuverability** (perfect); **Warp** -

AC 16; **TL** 22 (see description);

HP 20; **DT** -; **CT** 4

Shields 0 (forward 0, port 0, starboard 0, aft 0)

Attack (forward) chain cannon (6d4; ripper)

Power Core Micron Light (50PCU)

Warp Engine n/a

Systems basic computer, MK5 defense (+5 TL)

Expansion bays none

Modifiers +7 piloting (see description)

Complement AI pilot (see description)

Description

War drones are tiny ships around 20 feet long, specialized in dog fighting. They are cheap and easy to assemble. This tiny machines swarm the target and are able to bring it down by the force of sheer number.

AI pilot: War drones do not require a pilot. The pilot's rank depends only on the AI complexity and consequent calculation speed. For the purpose of this adventure, First Strike, the subroutine has developed basic war tactics thanks to complex probabilistic algorithm supported by all the basic computer installed on each war drone, thus forming a sort of collective AI. Indeed the more war drones are connected during a battle, the higher is their performance. The base pilot's rank is +4, which can increase depending on the number of war drone that compose the fleet. The stats described above do not include the bonus due to the number of drone. Increase the piloting rank as explained in the table

APPENDIX - NEW SPACESHIPS

below:

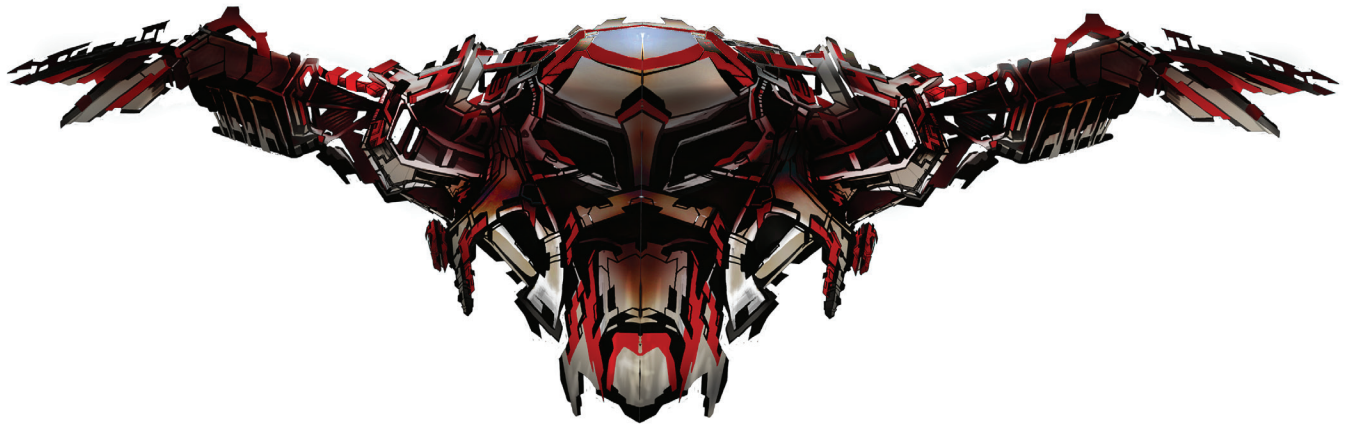
10 or more drones / +1

20 or more drones / +2

40 or more drones / +3

80 or more drones / +4

160 or more drones / +5



AUTO-FIGHTER

TIER 1

Subroutine fleet Auto-fighter

Tiny Fighter

Speed 8 (T8 thruster); **Maneuverability** good; **Warp** -

AC 20; **TL** 16;

HP 40; **DT** -; **CT** 8

Shields 70 (forward 18, port 18, starboard 17, aft 17)

Attack (forward) light particle beam (3d6)

Attack (forward) light particle beam (3d6)

Attack (forward) light particle beam (3d6)

Power Core Micron Heavy (70PCU)

Warp Engine n/a

Systems Basic computer, MK4 armor (+4 AC),

Expansion bays none

Modifiers +5 piloting (see description)

Complement AI pilot (see description)

Description

Auto-fighters are tiny ships around 60 feet long. In some aspect they are drones with higher firepower and durability. Auto-fighters usually follow a wave attack of war drones and fore run the the the strike of heavier warships like cruisers or battleships.

APPENDIX - NEW GRAFT

AI pilot: Auto-fighters do not require a pilot. The pilot's rank depends only on the AI complexity and consequent calculation speed. For the purpose of this adventure, First Strike, the subroutine has developed basic war tactics by a complex probalistic algorithm supported by all the basic computer installed on each war drone, thus forming a sort of collective AI. The base pilot's rank is +4, however it can increase in case of better performing ICS installed on the auto-fighter.



APPENDIX - NEW GRAFT

CYBORG (CR 3+)

Any small, medium or large sized humanoid with at least intelligence 10 can be converted into a cyborg. The cyborg graft replaces any previous creature subtype.

Required creature type: Humanoid

Weakness: Weakness to Water (Ex), when a cyborg enters in contact with enough water to cover most of his body it suffers the staggered conditions.

Abilities:

Fast Healing (Ex), grants fast healing 2 by means of regeneration nanobots.

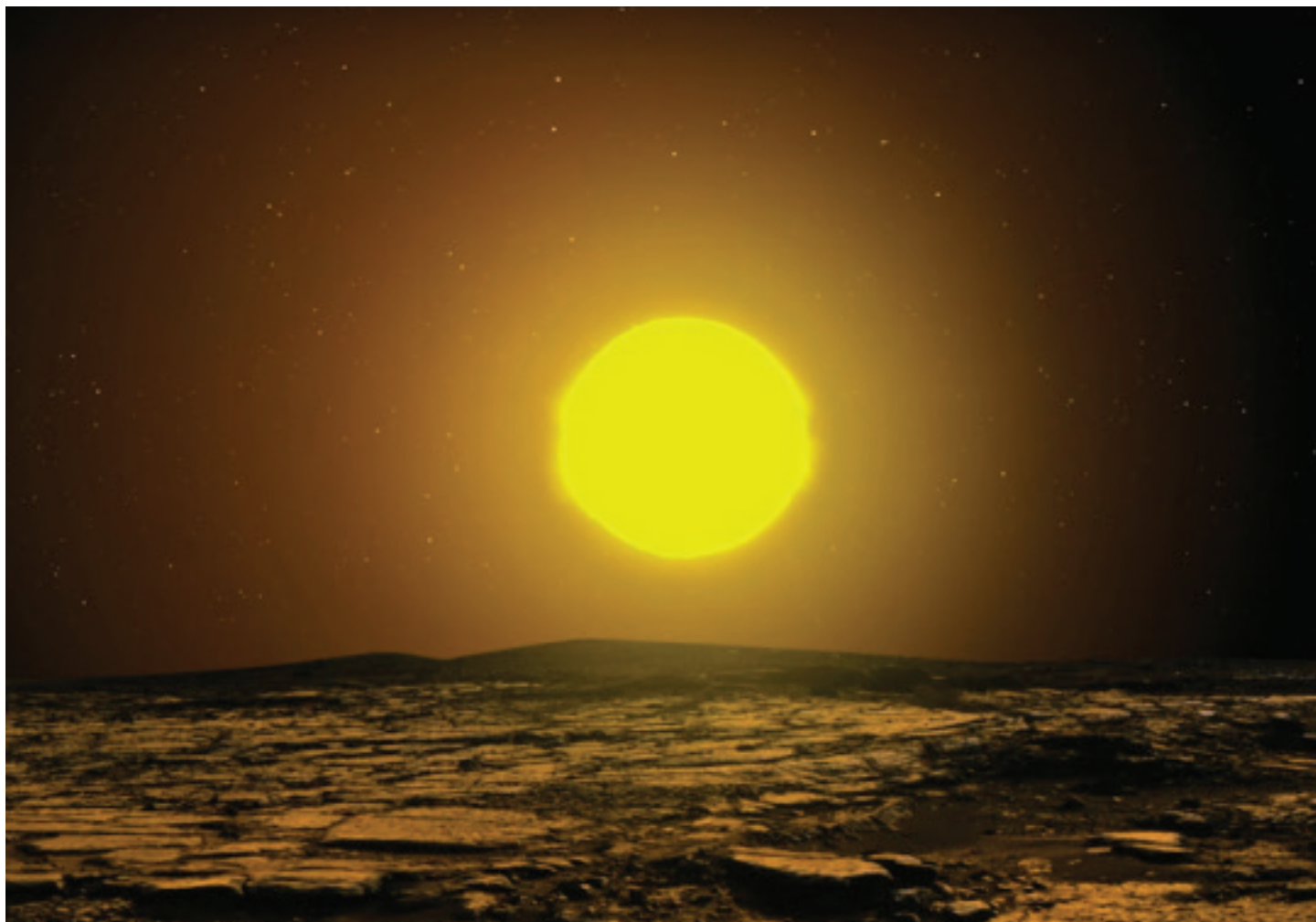
Energy Field (Ex), grants resistance 5 against energy based attack of the cold, fire and electricity type.

The cyborg can pick one resistance type per round and can switch to another type as a full round action.

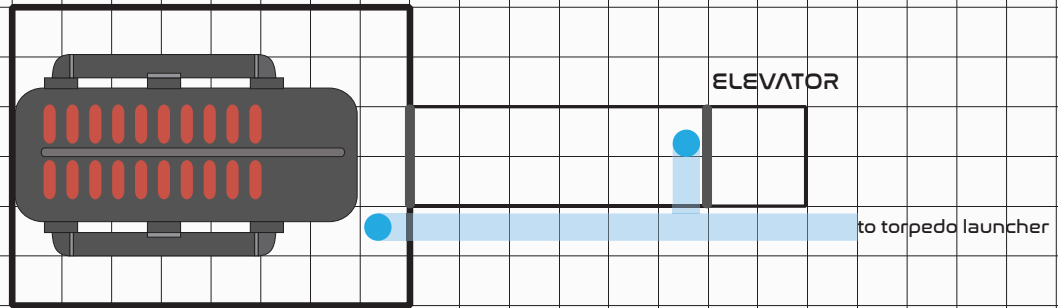
Force Field (Ex), grants damage reduction 5.

Integrated Weapons and Arms (Ex), cyborgs have weapons integrated in their bodies, they can occupy the following slots: right arm, left arm and body.

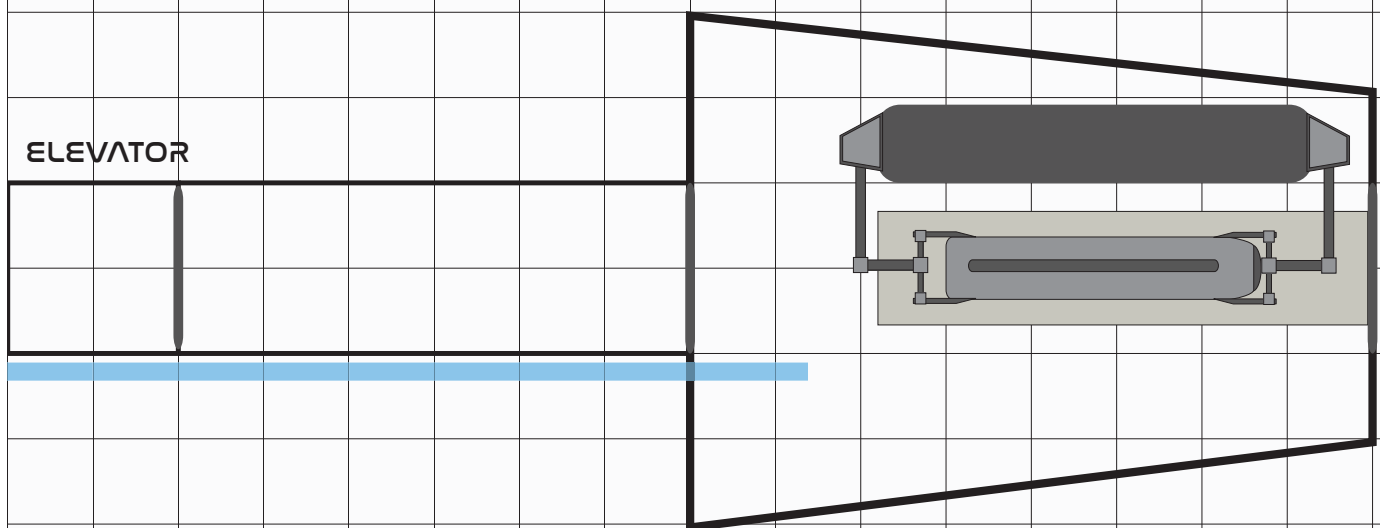
Ability score modifiers: Strength +4, Dexterity +0, Con +2. Intelligence, Wisdom and Charisma are all set to “-”, cyborgs have no self awareness or personality traits and obey to an artificial collective intelligence.



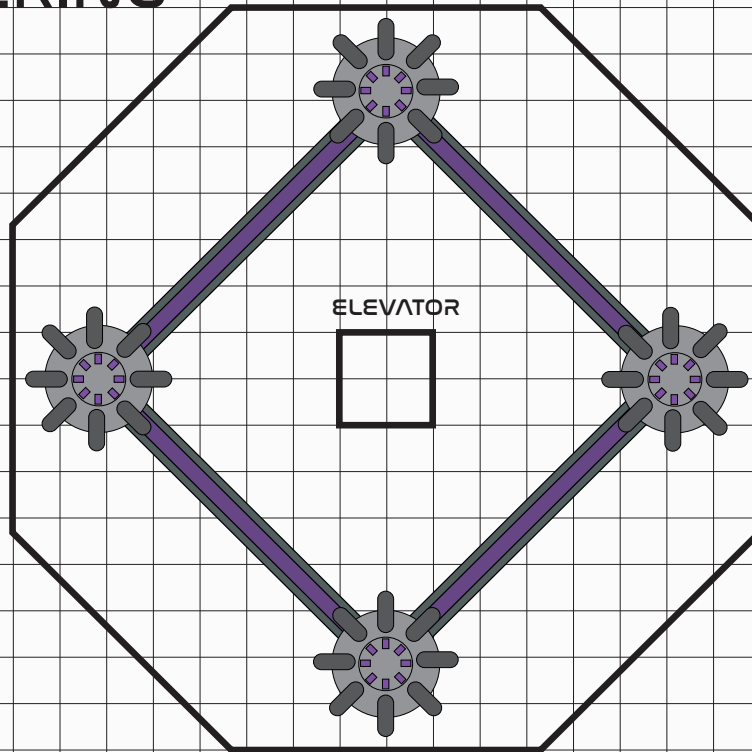
THRUSTER



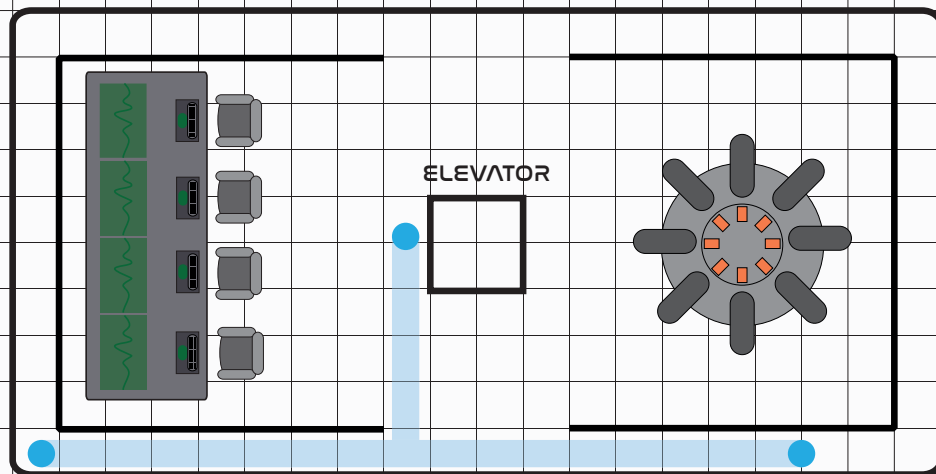
TORPEDO LAUNCHER

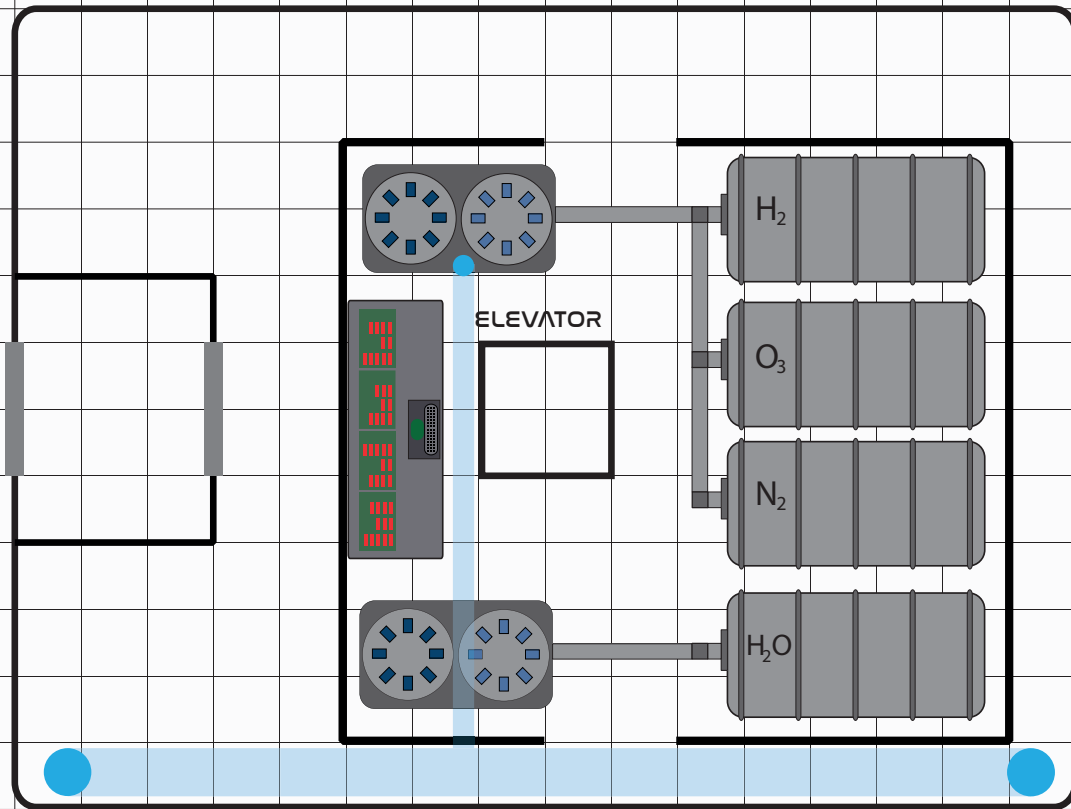


ENGINEERING DECK



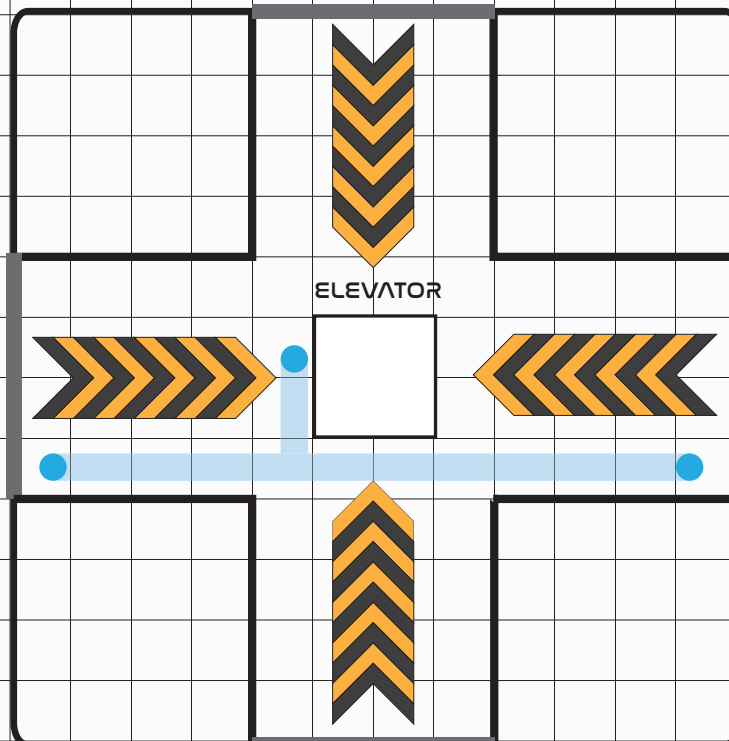
POWER CORE DECK



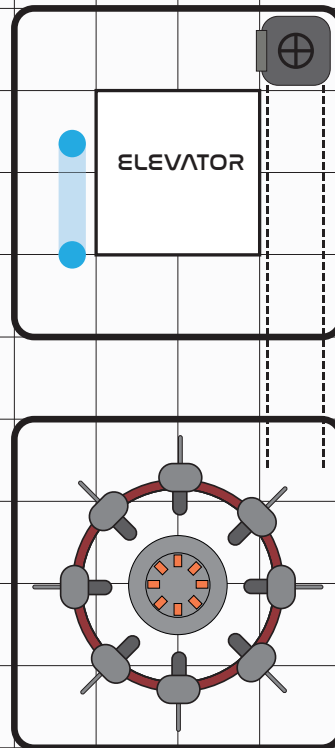


LIFE SUPPORT DECK

DOCKING
AREA



SENSORS AND RADAR



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