

STARFINDER[®]



FLY FREE OR DIE
ADVENTURE PATH

**PROFESSIONAL
COURTESY**

BY JOE PASINI



EJ CORP NEGOTIATOR

TIER 5

Large Destroyer

Speed 4; **Maneuverability** average (turn 2); **Drift** 1

AC 17; **TL** 16

HP 170; **DT** —; **CT** 34

Shields medium 120 (forward 30, port 30, starboard 30, aft 30)

Attack (Forward) 2 heavy laser arrays (6d4; 5 hexes)

Attack (Port) light laser cannon (2d4; 5 hexes)

Attack (Starboard) light laser cannon (2d4; 5 hexes)

Attack (Aft) light laser cannon (2d4; 5 hexes)

Attack (Turret) light particle beam (3d6; 10 hexes)

Power Core Pulse Red (175 PCU); **Drift Engine** Signal Basic; **Systems** budget short-range sensors, mk1 mononode computer, mk 2 defenses, mk 3 armor; **Expansion Bays** breaching pod^{SOM}, cargo holds (3)

Modifiers +1 to any 1 check per round; +2 Piloting; **Complement** 6 (minimum 6, maximum 20)

CREW

Captain Diplomacy +16 (5 ranks), gunnery +10 (5th level), Intimidate +16 (5 ranks)

Engineer Engineering +11 (5 ranks)

Gunners (2) gunnery +10 (5th level)

Pilot Piloting +11 (5 ranks)

Science Officer Computers +11 (5 ranks)

Depending on who one asks, the Negotiator is either an aptly or terribly named ship model. While EJ Corp ostensibly created this ship to defuse tense situations, the Negotiator ultimately has one solution to any given problem: firepower. Often crewed by ex-military mercenaries pulled from the most hardscrabble corners of the galaxy, Negotiators are well known for not living up to their name; their crews typically issue hard ultimatums and resort to violence with little provocation. The Company isn't known to waste any opportunity to acquire new starships, so standard operating procedure for Negotiator crews is to quickly blast through a "noncompliant" ship's shields, then deploy a breaching pod full of combatants to convince the ship's crew to stand down in person. Failing that, the Negotiator is expected to ram its target at full speed—but this is a tall tale spread by the Company to discourage resistance.

The Negotiator's bristling armaments are meant to intimidate—as well as to distract from its relatively weak defenses and complete inability to give chase. However, the mere presence of its weaponry is often enough to discourage dissent, and it is often accompanied by hardier, faster ships that can compensate for its limitations.

Of course, if the Negotiator were all bark and no blasters, its reputation would erode quickly. The ship often proves its weapons' effectiveness in brief, violent conflicts with competing interests in remote parts of the galaxy, where consequences for armed warfare are minor or nonexistent. The Company has deployed the Negotiator as a strikebreaker, breaking up would-be picketers with a few well-placed warning shots. A Negotiator's high firepower, short effective range, and relatively low defenses make for explosive engagements that end quickly and conclusively—part of what makes them terrifying to those who dare to resist the Company.

When not actively squashing dissent or engaging in literal corporate warfare with competitors, Negotiators are most commonly spotted in EJ Corp blockades, which the Company commonly uses to protect its interests on remote planets with active terraforming or construction operations, such as Entha (page 62).

STARFINDER

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This book refers to other Starfinder products using the following abbreviations, yet these additional supplements are not required to make use of this book. Readers interested in references to Starfinder hardcovers can find the complete rules of these books available online for free at paizo.com/sfrd.

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|-------------|----|----------------------------|-----|
| Armory | AR | Starship Operations Manual | SOM |
| Pact Worlds | PW | | |



ON THE COVER

Velloro is under pressure in Entha's Shadow Sea as the green dragon Avarin-EJ Corp's merciless representative on Entha—looks on in this cover by Tomasz Chistowski.



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PROFESSIONAL COURTESY

PART 1: THE BIG ASK

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Tarika, a loyal friend to the crew of the *Oliphaunt*, needs a favor: her daughter, Shan, works at a Company terraforming site on Entha, a remote ocean planet. Tarika hasn't received word from Shan for months, so she asks the crew to find her and—if there's trouble—bring her home safe!

PART 2: A WATERY EMBRACE

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The *Oliphaunt* travels to Entha, where the crew meet some old rivals and track Shan to an underwater terraforming facility. Getting there won't be easy, and once they arrive, they find a disaster in progress!

PART 3: DUEL IN THE DEEP

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Entha is home to aglians, a unique and intelligent species threatened with extinction by the Company. Can the crew of the *Oliphaunt* collect the evidence they need to expose EJ Corp while also sabotaging the Company's terraforming efforts to save the aglians from certain doom?

ADVANCEMENT TRACK

The PCs begin this adventure at 5th level.

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The PCs should reach 6th level by the end of Part 2.

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The PCs should be 7th level by the end of the adventure.

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ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Entha is a water world orbiting a star in the Vast, and its history prior to the Gap is unknown. Over the last few years, however, Entha has seen an explosion of activity. In 309 AG, an Evgeniya-Jaimisson Corporation scouting vessel happened upon the world when its Drift navigation failed to take the ship to its intended destination. The ship's crew dutifully took brief readings of the relatively unremarkable planet, including a thorough depth scan standard for ocean worlds—but the information received little attention for several years.

In 316 AG, **Avarin Sacrion** (LE female green dragon), an ambitious rising star for EJ Corp, came across the scouting vessel's report. A young dragon with a lot to prove, Avarin immediately recognized the planet's potential for providing a huge return on investment—as well as a rebound for her career. She had recently overseen a research project developing a mutagen that was intended to encourage aquatic plant life to naturally produce valuable minerals; instead, it caused uncontrollable overgrowth and structural failure. Stinging from the one blemish on her otherwise excellent Company record, Avarin seized on the opportunity Entha offered to turn her failure into success: EJ Corp could use her mutagen to terraform Entha's extensive underwater reefs into large floating platforms for surface construction. The original report recognized Entha's immense biodiversity, but Avarin focused her proposal solely around the potential ecotourism revenue a major terraforming project could enable. EJ Corp swiftly approved and funded the project, partially due to Entha's complete lack of government oversight and partially due to Avarin's commitment to using low-wage labor on a breakneck schedule. Neither she nor the Company cares what impact the project might have on Entha as a whole.

While EJ Corp doesn't keep the project a strict secret, it tightly controls the flow of information—and visitors—to and from Entha. The project's workforce consists primarily of laborers from economically disadvantaged parts of the galaxy who are willing to take whatever work they can get, no matter how remote, low-paid, and dangerous it is. A few others, like Tarika's daughter, Shan, went for the adventure, heeding the call of a massive, exciting project on an unexplored world. Avarin oversees everyone on Entha with extreme scrutiny, relying on a cadre of kalo mercenaries to keep her informed and to enforce her will and Company standards. Shan isn't the first person on Entha to suddenly fall silent after speaking out against EJ Corp, and everyone

working there knows the Company will do whatever it takes to complete this project.

Unknown to all but a few, including Shan and Avarin, Entha is home to a sapient species called aglians (page 56), who've come under dire threat as a result of the Company's encroachment. Avarin's mobile terraforming bases draw huge amounts of energy; to obtain that energy cheaply and locally, the Company employs a harvester to convert local biomatter into power cells. If word gets out to the broader galaxy that the Company's efforts are destroying ecosystems and endangering sapient life, organizations such as the Xenowardens can potentially exert enough pressure to shut the project down—an outcome Avarin works to prevent at absolutely any cost.

PART ONE: THE BIG ASK

Prior to this adventure, the *Oliphaunt's* crew had their trial by fire as independents, running jobs in a hard-hearted galaxy while facing constant challenges and existential threats. Throughout the Fly Free or Die Adventure Path, the PCs have dealt with difficult choices that help define their moral characters, both as individuals and as an independent starship crew still building a reputation and struggling to make a living.

In their travels to Entha, the crew will have further opportunities to choose their path through the moral maze that now encompasses their lives. Will they take the high ground and help those in need, or will they take any advantage and payday they can get to keep their shoestring operation afloat, regardless of who they hurt?

As the adventure begins, the PCs receive a message from Tarika—formerly their Company dispatcher and now their fixer and friend who finds them jobs. She asks the PCs to meet her in person at Absalom Station. Her tone sounds more subdued than usual, and she says only that she needs their help.

EVENT 1: PRECIOUS CARGO (CR 6)

Before the crew of the *Oliphaunt* depart for the Pact Worlds, they might want to pick up a cargo to help fund their voyage. After all, Absalom Station is the center of Near Space interplanetary trade, and finding something that they can sell there won't take long. In fact, if they do decide to look for work, they receive a mysterious message from a local smuggler, **Verran** (N female half-orc), within hours of starting their search. Read or paraphrase the following if the characters accept the transmission.

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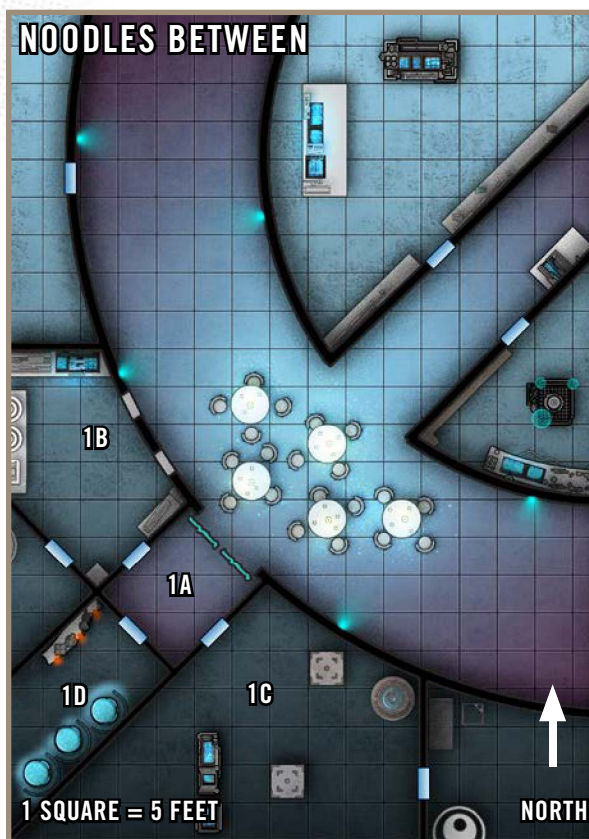
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A low-pitched, gravelly voice comes through the speakers. "This is for the Oliphaunt and her crew. Name's Verran. I've heard you might've broken away from some big corporation and gone solo, that you might not be too concerned about the letter of the law. If that's true, I have a proposition for you. I need some archaeological relics transported to Absalom Station, where a xenoarchaeologist friend of mine can verify my hunch that they're ancient hobgoblin artifacts. If you're interested, reply to this message—but either way, don't mention it to anybody, yeah?"

Verran will pay handsomely (15 BP) for the delivery of the artifacts, which were stolen from the contested world of Sansorgis (see *Starfinder Society Scenario #1–24: Siege of Enlightenment* for more on Sansorgis). Verran works in the interest of the Marixah Republic. If the relics are indeed hobgoblin in origin, the discovery would support the Gideron Authority's claim to the planet. If, however, the artifacts originated from some other culture, the Marixah Republic would benefit instead. Verran wants the job kept secret from law enforcement (because the relics were stolen), and if the results don't suit the political agenda of the Marixah Republic, he intends to bury the xenoarchaeology report so the Gideron Authority can't make use of it.

Starship Combat: If the crew accepts the job, Verran delivers the stolen artifacts in a single cargo crate weighing about 50 pounds. However, Verran's contacts couldn't keep

a secret, and the Gideron Authority has learned of the stolen relics. They send two Sword-class attack vessels after the *Oliphaunt* to retrieve the artifacts. The ships engage the *Oliphaunt* in starship combat without warning, just as the PCs prepare to make their jump to Absalom Station. On the first round of combat, Captain **Niko Haddan** (LE male hobgoblin), the commanding officer of one of the attack vessels, orders the crew of the *Oliphaunt* to surrender and hand over the archaeological artifacts in their cargo hold. If the characters agree to this demand and Haddan believes them, he calls off the attack and proceeds to board; see Development on page 5.

SWORD-CLASS ATTACK VESSELS (2) TIER 2

Medium explorer (*Starfinder Near Space* 116)

Speed 8; **Maneuverability** good (turn 1); **Drift** 1

AC 14; **TL** 12

HP 55 each; **DT** —; **CT** 11

Shields basic 40 (forward 10, port 10, starboard 10, aft 10)

Attack (Forward) minor ramming prow (2d4; see below)

Attack (Port) light laser cannon (2d4; 5 hexes)

Attack (Starboard) light laser cannon (2d4; 5 hexes)

Attack (Turret) coilgun (4d4; 20 hexes)

Power Core Arcus Heavy (130 PCU); **Drift Engine** Signal

Basic; **Systems** basic medium-range sensors, crew quarters (common), mk 1 mononode computer, mk 2 armor; **Expansion Bays** cargo holds (2), medical bay, recreation suite (gym)

Modifiers +1 to any one check per round, +2 Computers (sensors only), +1 Piloting; **Complement** 6 (minimum 1; maximum 6)

CREW

Captain Computers +7 (2 ranks), Diplomacy +7 (2 ranks), Engineering +7 (2 ranks), gunnery +6 (2nd level), Intimidate +12 (2 ranks), Piloting +7 (2 ranks)

Engineer Engineering +7 (2 ranks)

Gunners (2) gunnery +6 (2nd level)

Pilot Piloting +7 (2 ranks)

Science Officer Computers +7 (2 ranks)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Minor Ramming Prow If a sword-class attack vessel ends its movement adjacent to an enemy ship in its forward arc, it can attempt to ram that ship; the target must have moved already during this helm phase. The pilot immediately attempts a gunnery check against the enemy ship's AC. If the check is successful, the attack deals the listed damage. If a sword-class attack vessel is no more than one size category smaller than the enemy ship, a successful attack also pushes the target ship 1 hex in the direction the attacking ship is facing. If this movement would push the ship into an occupied hex, the ship doesn't move but instead takes additional damage equal to the attacking starship's tier. If the pilot's gunnery check fails, the sword-class attack

vessel takes damage equal to the ramming weapon's minimum damage.

Development: Should the crew agree to surrender the artifacts—either sincerely or out of a desire to lure the hobgoblins aboard their ship—one of the attack vessels positions itself 5 hexes away from the *Oliphaunt*, keeping the players' starship in the forward arc. The other attack vessel, commanded by Captain Haddan, docks with the *Oliphaunt*, and Haddan leads a boarding party to collect the goods.

A fight might break out between the characters and the hobgoblins, especially if the crew planned to ambush Captain Haddan all along! While the hobgoblin boarding party tries to fight their way back aboard their ship, the second attack vessel opens fire on the *Oliphaunt* to help their fellows (see pages 40–41 of the *Starfinder Starship Operations Manual* for how to resolve boarding actions).

HOBGOBLIN TROOPERS (6)

CR 1

XP 400 each

HP 20 each

TACTICS

In Combat The hobgoblins stage a fighting withdrawal to their own starship, using cover whenever possible. They focus their attacks on a single target.

EVENT 2: THE GOLDEN LEAGUE STRIKES (CR 6)

The *Oliphaunt*'s arrival on Absalom Station seems relatively uneventful, but Lord Sinjin, the drow who double-crossed the crew, has kept tabs on them across the galaxy. He has called on his Golden League contacts to bring retribution down upon the *Oliphaunt*'s crew. The Golden League's Hafrigeek family (*Starfinder Adventure Path* #15 50), operating out of the Spike, locally represents the syndicate on Absalom Station. Happy to help a fellow member of the League (and earn a future favor), the Hafrigeek family sends a few well-equipped and flashy agents to dispatch the crew. Unless the characters have taken extraordinary care to cover their tracks, the Hafrigeek family's well-paid contacts at the docks immediately inform the crime family of the crew's arrival, and the agents attack the crew as the PCs make their way to meet Tarika. Otherwise, news reaches the Hafrigeek family more slowly, and the agents attack as the crew leave their meeting with Tarika (see Tarika's Big Ask on page 6).

In either case, the agents find the characters as they pass through an intersection crowded with working-class establishments: a pawn shop and payday lender, the 1 Credit Store (where everything costs only 1 credit), a locksmith, and the Noodles Between, a popular eating

establishment run by sarcesians. Describe the intersection as the crew wanders without making the scene sound ominous—after all, the Golden League attack should come as a surprise!

As the characters pass the Noodles Between, use the map on page 4 and the following keys for the encounter.

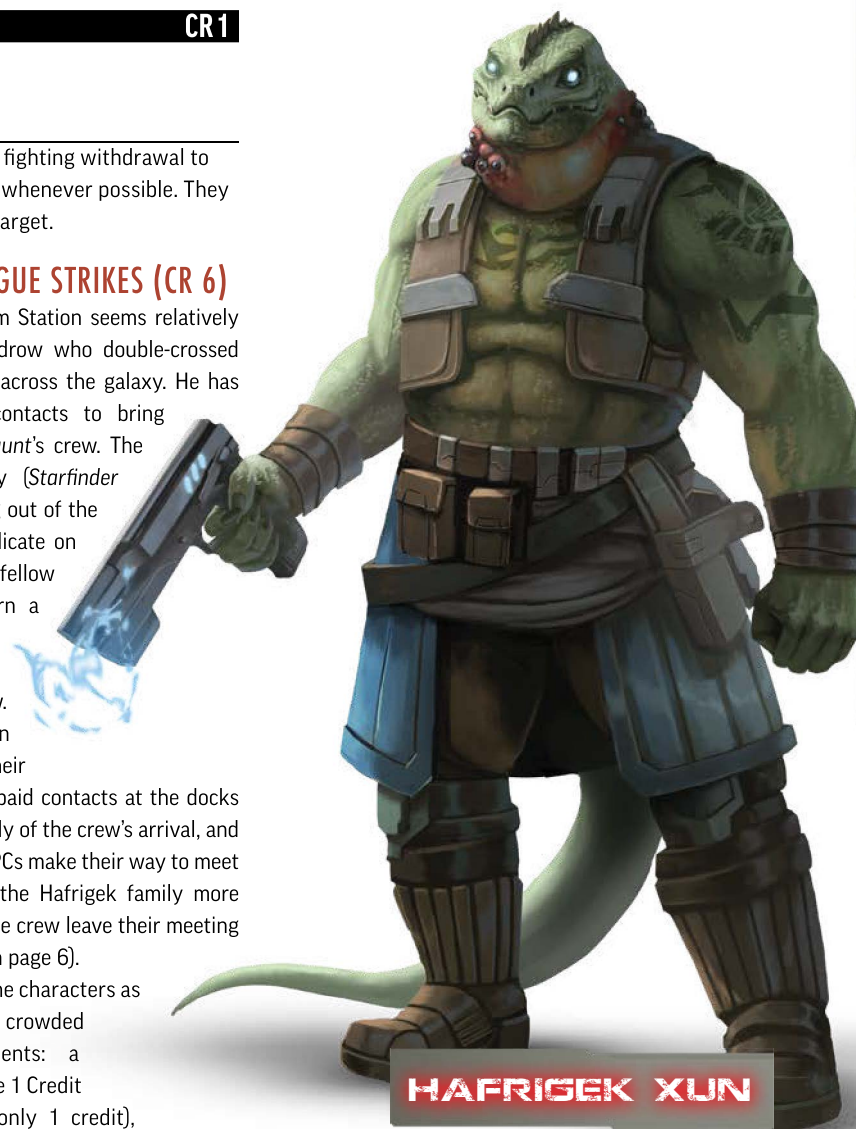
Area 1A: Separated from the seating area by a curtain, this area provides access to various rooms inside the restaurant.

Area 1B: Two sarcesians sit behind small windows. Customers line up before these windows to place and pick up orders.

Area 1C: This is a storage area.

Area 1D: Two sarcesians relentlessly cook noodles, vegetables, and rice in this kitchen to fill an unending list of orders.

Creatures: Three well-equipped and well-connected Xun assassins—muscle for the Hafrigeek crime family of



HAFRIGEek XUN

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the Golden League—have tracked the movements of the PCs and prepared an ambush in the crowded open dining area of the Noodles Between. All three Xun assassins are female vesk who bear massive, striking tattoos—the black ink accents their natural scale coloration to create images of exciting battle scenes and roaring defrexes. They're each heavily augmented with darkvision capacitors, dragon glands, and dermal plating, all intentionally left visible to make their appearance even more fearsome. One assassin sits at a table in the intersection, one trails the PCs, and one lurks unseen around a corner ahead of the crew.



HAFRIGEK XUN (3)

CR 3

XP 800 each

Female vesk operative

LE Medium humanoid (vesk)

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision;

Perception +9

DEFENSE

HP 42 RP 3

EAC 14; **KAC** 15

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

DR 1/—

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee survival knife +7 (1d4+4 S)

Ranged explorer handcoil +9 (1d6+3 E; critical arc 1d6)

Offensive Abilities dragon gland (15-ft. cone, 3d6 A, Reflex DC 14), trick attack +1d8

TACTICS

Before Combat Despite their flashy looks, the Xun can seemingly appear from nowhere, giving them a +4 bonus to initiative unless one of the PCs succeeds at a DC 27 Perception check.

During Combat The Xun target the frailest-looking enemy even if it means absorbing hits from tougher ones. They also prioritize anyone who looks capable of healing the crew or restoring Stamina Points.

Morale If the Xun fail, they can't return to the Hafrigek family; they fight to the death.

STATISTICS

Str +1; **Dex** +4; **Con** +1; **Int** +2; **Wis** +0; **Cha** +1

Skills Acrobatics +14, Athletics +9, Intimidate +14, Medicine +14, Stealth +14

Languages Common, Vesk

Other Abilities operative exploits (uncanny mobility), specialization (ghost)

Gear graphite carbon skin (except one; see Treasure below), explorer handcoil^{AR} with two batteries (20 charges each), survival knife; **Augmentations** mk 1

dermal plating, standard darkvision capacitor, wyrmling dragon gland

Treasure: Hafrigek Xun are known for being extremely well-equipped, and these three prove no exception. One of them wears a d-suit I armor (rather than graphite carbon skin), and each has a credstick holding their advance payment of 1,300 credits for dealing with the *Oliphaunt's* crew. One of the Xun also has a full punch card for a local augmentation shop that offers the bearer 25% off the next augmentation installed.

TARIKA'S BIG ASK

A small one-story building with a single narrow doorway occupies the space between a red-tea stand and a used holovid shop. A handwritten note hanging from the building's door reads, "Church of Hylax Meet-and-Greet Downstairs, Every Thirdday!" Underneath, a hasty scrawl in a different color adds: "(DO NOT use upstairs restroom.)"

Tarika waits for the crew in a dilapidated basement in a working-class neighborhood in the station's Spike (not far from where the Hafrigeks operate). Here, a small, local branch of the church of Hylax holds a weekly "friendship hour." An extremely friendly and overcurious shirren named **Tikchas** (NG male shirren) has appointed himself the one-bug welcoming committee for any newcomers to the gathering. He immediately greets the PCs when they arrive, handing each of them a tag that reads "Hello, Friend, My Name Is" with a space to write in a name. Tikchas asks an endless stream of questions: Where do the PCs each originally hail from? What brings them to the gathering? Why are they here as a group? What was their first experience with Hylax's power? What other friends have they made this week?

If the PCs give even the merest hint that they're adventurers or workers for hire, Tikchas barrages them with questions about the creatures they've met, especially in any first-contact situations. He begins quoting his personal tenets of first contact: "Greet, glean, gab," and he attempts to go into great detail about what each stage means.

Tarika refuses to talk to the PCs until the shirren has lost interest; she avoids even acknowledging the crew. To shake the enthusiastic shirren, a crew member must succeed at a DC 27 Bluff or Diplomacy check to direct the energetic adherent of Hylax into conversing with someone else. Alternatively, a character can fully engage the shirren in conversation by succeeding at a DC 17 Bluff check to create a diversion, allowing the rest of the party to sidle off and meet with Tarika in relative privacy.

The favor Tarika needs to ask is detailed below, along with answers to some likely questions the PCs might have. If one or more of the crew picked the new hire or old hand backgrounds (*Starfinder Adventure Path* #34 44–45), Tarika addresses them with warm familiarity, hoping this favor of hers will fall on friendly ears, and she recalls the history they have of helping one another out of tight spots.

Why did you pick this place to meet? “Well, the idea was we’d blend in with all the weirdos. I guess I didn’t think about them blendin’ in with us...” She casts a sidelong glance at Tikchas.

Why did you call us here? “A couple things. First, I recovered some data when you—” she lowers her voice even more, “—acquired the *Oliphant*. I’m still workin’ on decryptin’ it, and I think I found the right angle to hack in.” Tarika sighs. “But I’ll need more time. I’ve been a li’l distracted. That... that brings me to the second thing: I need your help.”

What can we help you with? Tarika takes a deep breath, looks around, and briefly fidgets with her wrench before continuing. The PCs can clearly see that her gestures seem at odds with her usual boisterous confidence. “It’s my daughter, Shan. She’s missin’. She’s been workin’ for the Company on some terraformin’ project way out in the Vast. Turns out the planet’s full of life—life that’s gonna be wiped out by the project. And, surprise surprise, the Company’s goin’ ahead with their plans anyway.” Tarika chuckles, then seems to realize the strangeness of it. She quickly explains, “Oh, it’s just that the Company picked the wrong employee if they wanted someone to stay quiet. Shan told me she’d rather leave the Company for good than carry on with that. Thing is, that’s the last I heard of her. And that’s not like her. I need you to go out there and make sure she’s okay. Bring her back to me safe—if she’ll let you.”

What’s this job pay? Tarika looks down, rubbing a paw thoughtfully across the fur on the back of her head. “I can’t afford to pay you for this one. I’m askin’ as a... a professional courtesy.” If the crew insist on payment, Tarika looks hurt and disappointed. She hands over all she has on her, a pittance of 1,000 credits, and says, “Please, this is the last of my Company pay. Shan’s a good kid, she needs more than me on her side right now.”

Tell us more about this planet. “Entha’s a water world. Right now, it’s nothin’ but a Company town while they work to terraform the planet into some kinda highfalutin’ resort. There’s no reason for folks to show up there unannounced. Fortunately, I have your way in. The Company’s pushin’ all their equipment to its absolute limit, which means they need a regular influx of replacement machine parts.” She hands one of the PCs a folded piece of paper with an address in the Spike and a shipping manifest. “This is a warehouse here on the station, where the Company’s next delivery is waitin’ for pickup. Of course—like always—there’s a catch.”

What’s the catch? “This delivery job technically goes to the lowest bidder, but it might end up bein’ first-come, first-served. A lotta crews want to get in good with EJ Corp, thinkin’ a free delivery shows moxie or somethin’. So you’ll have to hustle—maybe even convince the warehouse workers that they should load your ship instead o’ someone else’s.”

What are these parts used for? “Apparently the Company’s terraformin’ operation on Entha means drillin’ into the seabed. These are highly specialized fittings meant to keep their drill rigs operatin’ basically nonstop. Of course, there’s no reason they should be burnin’ through these at a high enough rate to need this many replacements, but let’s not look our gift yakaraja in the mouth.”

Tarika ends the conversation when the host of the friendship hour makes an unnecessarily loud announcement over a buzzing speaker: “Alright then! Time for everyone to say good-bye to your old friends and make some new ones! Everybody switch groups!”



**HUGBOT
INCAPACITATOR**

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Story Award: After the characters speak to Tarika to learn about (and presumably accept) their new mission, award them 1,600 experience points.

WAREHOUSE 47-C (CR 5)

Tarika's directions lead the crew to a cavernous warehouse filled with hundreds of workers, some using cargo lifters, while tons of crated goods pass in and out of the warehouse on racks that hang from automated tracks built into the 30-foot-high ceiling.

Skix (N male ysoki) manages this warehouse. He looks extremely busy and barely acknowledges the PCs while answering their questions.

Where's our cargo? "What are you, new? Go find it yourself! Then bring us the shipping ticket and your auths." If Skix gets nothing but a blank look, he sighs exasperatedly and says, too slowly, "Your auth-or-i-za-tion code. And your ship's dock number. Then, we'll have it loaded by—" Skix pauses to look at a large digital clock on the wall that shows the status of a mind-boggling number of shipments. "—tomorrow morning." A character who succeeds at a DC 22 Diplomacy check can get the time frame shifted to this evening; greasing the wheels with a credit bribe grants a +1 bonus to the check for every 100 credits (or 100 credits' worth of goods) given, up to a maximum of +10.

Inside the warehouse, large cargo containers move in and out above and around the PCs. Use the map above for warehouse 47-C. Dashed lines denote the automated

cargo tracks. The two outer lines move cargo containers south into the warehouse, and the double line in the center moves cargo north out of the building.

Creatures: A group of would-be thieves recently attempted to pick up the same cargo the PCs came here to claim, but their faulty authorization code triggered security. Two incapacitator "hugbots" arrived and dispatched the interlopers, and they now guard the shipment from further attempts at retrieval. Sloppy instruction from an overworked and frazzled warehouse overseer has resulted in the robots attempting to detain anyone approaching the cargo regardless of their authorization, which includes the *Oliphant's* crew.

HUGBOT INCAPACITATORS (2) CR 3

XP 800 each

Incapacitator robots (*Starfinder Adventure Path #25: The Chimera Mystery* 61)

N Medium construct (technological)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision;

Perception +8

DEFENSE HP 40

EAC 14; **KAC** 16

Fort +3; **Ref** +3; **Will** +0

Defensive Abilities integrated weapons; **Immunities**

construct immunities; **DR** 3/piercing or slashing

Weaknesses vulnerable to critical hits, vulnerable to electricity

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee slam +12 (1d6+7 nonlethal B plus grab)

Ranged integrated voltaic anchor pistol +10 (1d6+3 nonlethal E; critical bind) or

stickybomb grenade I +10 (explode [10 ft., entangled 2d4 rounds, DC 12])

Offensive Abilities exploit advantage

TACTICS

In Combat The hugbots launch grenades, then attack entangled targets.

Morale The hugbots fight until destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str +4; **Dex** +2; **Con** —; **Int** +1; **Wis** +0; **Cha** +0

Skills Acrobatics +8, Athletics +13, Intimidate +8

Languages Common

Other Abilities unliving

Gear voltaic anchor pistol with 2 high-capacity batteries (40 charges each), stickybomb grenades I (2)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Exploit Advantage (Ex) When a hugbot incapacitator hits an entangled creature, it deals extra nonlethal damage to that target equal to its CR (3 extra damage for most incapacitator robots).

Hazard: Every round, a cargo container quickly moves along one of three tracks. At the start of each round, roll

1d20 to determine the initiative count at which the cargo container moves, and 1d3 to determine which track it moves on. Containers moving south into the warehouse on the outer tracks fill a 10-foot-wide space between other stacked containers; containers moving north out of the warehouse on the inner track fill a 15-foot-wide space. A container moves so fast that it covers the entire length of the map in mere moments, beginning and ending its movement off the map.

Characters in spaces the cargo containers move through must succeed at a DC 15 Reflex save or take 4d6 bludgeoning damage. Characters who wish to grab a moving container and use it to rapidly move across the map can ready an action and then do so with a successful DC 22 Athletics or Acrobatics check, immediately moving to any space within or adjacent to spaces the cargo container passes through on its path off the map; this movement doesn't trigger attacks of opportunity. A PC who looks for the next cargo container and succeeds at a DC 22 Perception check learns which track the container will arrive on, but not its initiative.

The hughbots have no special awareness of or immunity to the dangers posed by the moving cargo containers, and PCs can try to maneuver the robots into the path of this hazard.

Treasure: Flustered by the day's events, Skix eagerly wants to get back on schedule but seems anxious about the crew possibly reporting him for endangering their lives. Skix offers the PCs "a little something out of the lost and found" if they promise to keep quiet about all that happened at the warehouse. He gives them a crate containing a cache of highly polished ceremonial equipment meant for a powerful dignitary and member of the Grand Assembly on Verces; this includes a silver AbadarCorp travel suit, commander ceremonial plate, a red star plasma pistol, and a *staff of mystic healing*.

PREPARING FOR TAKEOFF

The crew know enough about Entha to assume the next stage of their mission will take them underwater. Before leaving Absalom Station, the PCs can easily find suppliers that sell equipment useful for underwater exploration and survival (including most options described in "Aquatic Adventures" on page 50); several level-appropriate items are listed in the Underwater Supplies sidebar below. You can assume that the PCs know about the various penalties associated with underwater combat (see Underwater Combat on page 15), so remind your players of these penalties and give the crew a chance to switch or modify their weapons.

During the *Oliphant's* journey to reach Entha in the Vast, the crew can avail themselves of the downtime system (*Starfinder*

UNDERWATER SUPPLIES

The following are level-appropriate supplies useful for characters heading into underwater biomes.

| Gear | Source |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Bayonet bracket (weapon accessory) | Armory 58 |
| Brightlight projector (armor upgrade) | Armory 82 |
| Darkvision capacitors (augmentation) | Core Rulebook 209 |
| Gill sheath (augmentation) | Core Rulebook 211 |
| Hydrojet (armor upgrade) | Armory 83 |
| Iridescent spindle aeon stone | Core Rulebook 222 |
| Light projector | Armory 84 |
| Portable light | Core Rulebook 220 |
| Respiration compounder (augmentation) | Core Rulebook 210 |
| Scuba gear | Armory 131 |
| Swimming fins (augmentation) | Armory 87 |
| Trailblazer (weapon fusion) | Core Rulebook 195 |
| Wraith motes (augmentation) | Armory 97 |

PART 2: A WATERY EMBRACE

Character Operations Manual 150) to perform activities that take a day or more, including the new activity described in the sidebar on page 10. Other downtime activities include coordinate, lounge, maintain readiness, and, for when they near the planet, drill or explore futures.

IN ENTHA'S ORBIT (CR 6)

Entha's orbit teems with starship traffic supporting EJ Corp's terraforming project, especially above Elysia, a large domed installation floating on the water planet's surface.

As the *Oliphant* approaches the planet, a small space station and EJ Corp Negotiator (see inside front cover) bristling with firepower monitor the queue of starships waiting to land. An AI traffic control program regularly broadcasts queuing information. Eventually, the ship at the front of the line receives clearance for landing, then the Negotiator escorts it to the surface. Both ships shrink into dots as they approach the vast water world's surface.

While the *Oliphant* waits in the queue, an open emergency broadcast from the surface reaches the ship:

SIOVAN

PROFESSIONAL COURTESY

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NEW DOWNTIME ACTIVITY: AQUAFIT

By tinkering with a weapon, you improve its underwater performance.

Activity: You spend the day modifying a piece of weaponry to work well underwater, sealing joints and improving its aquadynamics. You must spend UPBs equal to 10% of the item's value.

Benefit: A single weapon gains the underwater special property—when you use it underwater, you ignore the normal -2 penalty to attack rolls, and the weapon deals full damage on a hit.

"Attention: An RC-HPR-class ship in unauthorized possession of Company property has left Entha without clearance from the Evgeniya-Jaimisson Corporation. Parties able to detain these criminals will be well-compensated for their assistance."

Once the message ends, the *Oliphaunt*'s scanners pick up a ship moving rapidly toward the queue—an Ulrikka RC-HPR called the *Surnoch's Tooth* (see below).

A PC who succeeds at a DC 17 Culture or Piloting check recognizes that RC-HPRs are quintessential working-class vessels, unlikely to be used by criminals, and have no Drift travel capability. The character also knows the Company's Negotiator in pursuit—which is as slow as the *Surnoch's Tooth*—likely can't catch the other vessel without help. The crew of the *Oliphaunt* can engage the *Surnoch's Tooth* and help detain it, or they can do nothing and let it escape into the unpopulated system (though where it goes next without a Drift engine poses a different question).

As the *Surnoch's Tooth* nears the *Oliphaunt*, the captain of the vessel, **Siovan** (N female ghoran), hails all nearby ships with a desperate message.

"This is Captain Siovan of the *Surnoch's Tooth*. The Company isn't telling you everything. My crew and I are independent contractors. Our ship was ferried to Entha weeks ago for a mining operation, but the Company neglected to tell us Entha is a water world! The *Tooth*'s not rated for underwater operations, so I figured no harm done, we'd be on our way. But the Company called us in breach of contract and tried to seize my ship! Well, they can go to Hell!"

The other starships in the queue don't interfere. If the *Oliphaunt* responds, the crew can have a brief conversation with Siovan.

Where are you going to go? "Anywhere but here! We figure the Company's not gonna expend too many resources to track down this hunk of junk. Doesn't do them any good anyway. It was just out of spite they kept us there so long—that and making us buy their overpriced rations in that damned store! Once we get far enough away, we figure some kind soul might

hitch us a ride out of here. We could use some help convincing that Negotiator not to follow us, though."

How can we help? "You have a Drift engine, right? Feh, of course you do. If you vent its radiation shielding in our wake, that should confuse the Negotiator's cut-rate sensors enough to give us time to get outta here."

What do we get out of helping you? Siovan snaps, "My crew's eternal thanks and a shiny button that says, 'I didn't side with the Company!'" She takes a deep breath and apologizes. "Sorry. They've bled us dry. I can't offer you anything but the advice that working with EJ Corp never did me any favors."

A PC in the Engineer or Chief Mate (*Character Operations Manual* 146) starship role can attempt a DC 17 Engineering or Athletics check, respectively, to vent the *Oliphaunt*'s Drift engine, causing enough interference that the Negotiator can't easily follow the *Surnoch's Tooth* after arriving a few minutes later.

The *Oliphaunt* can end the conversation at any point by engaging the *Surnoch's Tooth* in starship combat.

SURNOCH'S TOOTH

TIER 4

Ulrikka RC-HPR (*Starship Operations Manual* 91)

Medium transport

Speed 4; Maneuverability average (turn 2)

AC 18; TL 18

HP 85; DT —; CT 17

Shields light 60 (forward 15, port 15, starboard 15, aft 15)

Attack (Forward) flak thrower (3d4; 5 hexes), heavy laser array (6d4; 5 hexes)

Attack (Aft) laser net (2d6; 5 hexes)

Attack (Turret) linked mining lasers^{PW} (4d6; 5 hexes)

Power Core Pulse Green (150 PCU); **Drift Engine** none;

Systems advanced short-range sensors, crew quarters (common), mk 2 mononode computer, mk 4 armor, mk 4 defenses; **Expansion Bays** cargo holds (3), escape pods, physical science lab

Modifiers +2 to any 1 check per round, +4 Computers (sensors only), +2 Piloting; **Complement 4**

CREW

Captain Computers +10 (4 ranks), Diplomacy +10 (4 ranks), gunnery +9 (4th level), Intimidate +10 (4 ranks), Piloting +12 (4 ranks)

Engineer Engineering +15 (4 ranks)

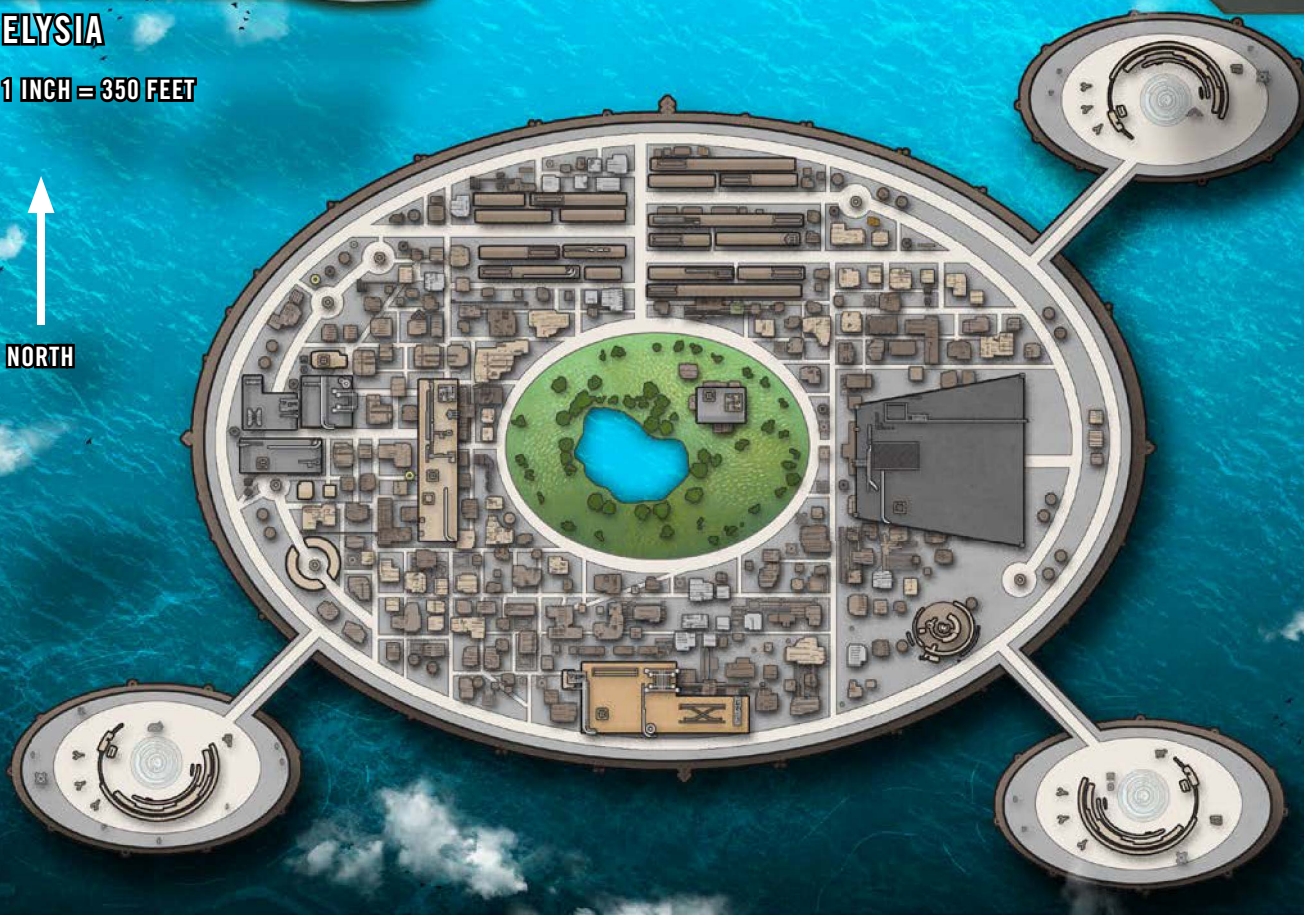
Gunner gunnery +9 (4th level)

Pilot Piloting +12 (4 ranks)

Development: If the crew helps detain the *Surnoch's Tooth* by engaging it in combat, the Negotiator arrives 1d4 rounds later and helps disable the ship before taking it into custody. The Negotiator's captain, **Jorlah** (LE male human), tersely thanks the PCs before transferring over a mere 1,200 credits. The *Oliphaunt* then moves to the front of the queue and receives a quick escort to the surface.

ELYSIA

1 INCH = 350 FEET



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If the *Oliphant* helps cover the *Surnoch's Tooth's* tracks, Joriah opens communication and demands to know "where that Rock Hopper went!" A character who succeeds at a DC 17 Bluff check can feign ignorance or claim they didn't receive the Company's initial message due to comm issues, and they thought the ship was simply leaving Entha. If they fail this check, Joriah suspects them of aiding the enemy and becomes especially ready to attack them when they leave Entha (see Parting Shot on page 36).

Otherwise, the Negotiator returns to its post and the *Oliphant* must wait 2 hours before being directed to land at Elysia, where the PCs can unload their cargo.

Story Award: If the crew defeats the *Surnoch's Tooth* in combat, award them 2,400 XP. If the crew covers for the *Surnoch's Tooth* and helps them escape, award them 2,400 XP as though they defeated it in combat.

ELYSIA

An enormous transparent dome encloses a small settlement built atop a massive floating platform on the sea, complete with a dozen modular and portable buildings of varying sizes. A few open areas feature artificial grass with gym equipment and an "outdoor" cafeteria. Several large, round landing pads surround the dome, linked by swaying docks. Additional landing pads are still under construction, and a mix of above-water and undersea scaffolding forms a wood-and-steel patchwork around the entire facility.

A wonder of construction, Elysia rose in record time as a result of highly skilled laborers who worked long hours with AI assistance, drones, and sophisticated nanite assemblers. The sea below the floating facility churns with heavy waves that sometimes climb to 30 feet tall before crashing harmlessly against the magically strengthened, transparent aluminum dome covering the entire complex. Elysia's designers and engineers took inspiration from domed installations on other worlds, innovating a gyroscopic stabilization system that makes the entire platform extremely stable even in wild seas; to show off the city's even keel, the Company even hired professional noqual-billiards players to have a match atop the platform during its grand opening.

Since the celebrated completion of Elysia's construction, however, things have gone downhill. The initial flood of investments into the facility has dwindled to a trickle, largely due to the questionable reputation of the Company's head of operations on Entha, a green dragon named Avarin Sacrion. Her focus on the bottom line is ruthlessly efficient, and she extracts any credits she can from suppliers, construction workers, and everyone in between. All but Avarin's crew of kalo mercenaries are underpaid and overworked, often to the point of endangering their lives, which leaves few happy with their situations on Elysia. To speed up the completion of the facility's permanent starship landing pads, Avarin had crews working on several stages of construction simultaneously, eschewing crucial safety checks. As a result, a recent partial collapse badly injured several workers and damaged the long-term structural

integrity of the platform. However, the Company only saw (or cared to see) Avarin's progress report, which boasted record construction times thanks to "workflow innovations."

A long, low bunkhouse offers shelter to most workers on Elysia, while a well-appointed, multistory prefabricated home houses Avarin and her mercenaries. The Company store sells necessities at an inflated price, and incoming cargo is checked carefully for "contraband"—in other words, competing products. A small saloon offers low-quality liquor and several gambling vidconsoles, all owned by the Company and meant to funnel workers' wages back into its coffers.

When the *Oliphaunt* clears the blockade in orbit, the crew is directed to land on one of the floating landing pads attached to the dome city, where familiar faces await them.

RIVALS' ARRIVAL

As the crew lands the *Oliphaunt*, they're greeted by a familiar sight: the *Wintermourn* rests nearby, on the other side of the gently swaying landing pad. Jinx, Nemelith, Dizzy, and Dizzy's drone, Digit, all wait outside the ship as captain Niva RoVo consults a datapad, her brow furrowed.

The *Oliphaunt* finds itself sharing a landing pad with the *Wintermourn*; for details on the ship and its crew, see pages 38–43 of *Starfinder Adventure Path #35: Merchants of the Void*. At the end of that adventure, the PCs might have helped rescue the *Wintermourn*'s crew or, alternatively, left them to their own devices. In any case, they probably battled Dizzy, and both Dizzy and Niva could still be recovering from the effects of the *mind siphon*. The crew might wonder if they've stumbled into something sinister or if the *Wintermourn*'s presence is mere coincidence. In fact, Niva looked into EJ Corp to learn more about the *Oliphaunt* and its crew after her repeated encounters with them. In her research, she discovered Entha, a bustling Company town and potential source of work. After landing a day ago, however, she still hasn't received clearance to enter Elysia. She figured that the Company must use this negotiating tactic to make crews more desperate for work—an approach Niva doesn't enjoy but can appreciate.

Each member of the *Wintermourn*'s crew has a goal on Entha, and a PC with a particularly friendly or unfriendly relationship with one of these NPCs can yield additional effects, as described below. Use as many of these goals and effects as you wish to tell a coherent and engaging story.

Combat between the *Wintermourn*'s crew and the crew of the *Oliphaunt* is outside the scope of this adventure, but you can update the rival crew's primary statistics using the advice on page 39 of *Starfinder Adventure Path #35* and the rules on page 126–143 of *Starfinder Alien Archive*, increasing each character's CR by 1 if necessary.

Niva RoVo: EJ Corp invited the captain of the *Wintermourn* to Entha for her expertise in drilling. In addition to delivering minor parts, she provides her services as a consultant for

Company drill engineers. She's extremely on edge, given her bad history with large companies tinkering with global ecosystems. As ever, she stays on the lookout for additional jobs, including less-than-legal ones.

Friendly: Niva lets slip that the materials used for the drilling operations on Entha rate below industry standards and lack key redundant safety features. This information can prove helpful later when the crew tries to convince Shan of her own innocence (see *Helping Shan* on page 26) and also serves as evidence of the Company's suspect practices for this project.

Unfriendly: Niva scowls and says, "There's no way you're here just for a delivery. It'd be a shame if city security became aware of your interesting past. I suggest you keep clear of us while you're here."

Dizzy and Digit: Dizzy seems ecstatic to visit a planet-scale terraforming project and witness the advanced associated technologies at work. Dizzy and Digit likely observe the PCs carefully, trying to spot any technological or hybrid gear the crew has acquired since their last meeting, as well as any upgrades or improvements made to the *Oliphaunt*.

Friendly: Dizzy offers to use some scrap parts they have on hand to quickly kit out a character's weapon (add a weapon accessory of 2nd level or lower; see page 58 of *Starfinder Armory*) or armor (add an armor upgrade of 2nd level or lower to an empty upgrade slot). They perform this favor only for the PC with whom they have the best relationship; Dizzy doesn't have enough spare parts for further modifications.

Unfriendly: Dizzy distracts a PC with seemingly friendly conversation about the abundance of exciting Company technologies on Entha. Unless the distracted character succeeds at a DC 20 Perception check, Digit sneaks a battery out of one of their unattended pieces of technological gear. The PC likely doesn't notice until they attempt to use the item, at which point they can attempt a DC 10 Wisdom check; on a success, they realize what must have happened.

Nemelith: Nemelith already looks beyond bored and frustrated with this latest mission, which offers little hope of bloody combat and even less hope of meeting fellow worshipers of Zon-Kuthon. She might even take the opportunity to taunt the *Oliphaunt*'s crew in hopes of getting into a brawl, though Niva quickly shuts her down.

Friendly: Nemelith tosses a *defiant fusion seal* (4th) to the PC she's most friendly with. Smirking, she says, "Looks like that weapon might get away from you in a fight—here, I don't need this anymore." Nemelith has only one of these fusion seals.

Unfriendly: Nemelith offers the most gullible character what she claims is a *mk 2 serum of healing*; on consumption, this liquid—blessed by priests of Zon-Kuthon—instead deals 3d8 damage (Fort DC 16 half). A character who succeeds at a DC 22 Mysticism check to identify a magic item can discern the serum's true nature.

Jinx: Like Nemelith, Jinx is a bit disdainful of the crew's legitimate reasons (both personal and financial) for being on Entha. He hopes to strike up some games of chance—with

odds skewed in his favor, naturally—among similarly bored Company employees while stuck on this ocean world.

Friendly: Jinx teaches the PCs a few of the subtle nonverbal cues the crew of the *Wintermourn* use to alert each other while on a job. This gives each of those characters a +4 circumstance bonus on Bluff checks the next time they try to pass a secret message to another member of the crew.

Unfriendly: Jinx offers one of the characters—likely the one most susceptible to a game of chance or a seeming free choice, such as a shirren—a chance to wager up to 2,000 credits on a small shell game. He places a dried fruit in one of three silver spherical capsules and then contact juggles them for 20 seconds, signing, “Follow the fig” before asking the character to select which orb they think contains the fig. He promises to pay double their wager if they choose correctly. The character then attempts a Perception check; they must roll a natural 20 to notice Jinx palm the fig, allowing them to realize that none of the capsules contain it. If a character independently guesses that Jinx has palmed the fig, he secrets it back into an orb; noticing this trick requires a successful DC 28 Perception check. If the character spots Jinx in either case, he simply returns the character’s wager, grinning as he flicks an empty credstick at the character and signs, “Oops—I’m out of cash.” Otherwise, he keeps their credits with smug satisfaction.

Development: If the PCs decide to avoid the *Wintermourn*’s crew for now, don’t try to force an interaction—but keep the *Wintermourn*’s crew present while the PCs investigate Elysia and locate Shan. The crew might see these NPCs going about their business and subsequently reach out to them socially or while investigating; you can use the goals and effects provided above at that time. Regardless, the *Wintermourn*’s crew reappear at the end of the adventure, but they do not otherwise interfere with the PCs on Entha.

After the PCs have a chance to interact with the *Wintermourn*’s crew, a serious-looking kalo in business attire makes her way onto the landing pad, proceeding directly to Niva. The two exchange brief greetings; shortly thereafter, Niva says, “Well, looks like some of us are finally getting off the waiting list,” and she, her crew, and the kalo head into Elysia.

Story Award: If the PCs have at least two interactions with the rival crew (friendly, unfriendly, or both) before they descend to Terra 5, award them 1,600 XP.

AVARIN ARRIVES

As the crew of the *Wintermourn* depart, the sea near the landing platform foams and wells up. Four wavecutters (page 16) emerge from beneath the water. As the vehicles bob to the surface, their bubble domes slide apart in two halves, rotating beneath the craft to function as gyroscopic stabilizers to keep the vehicles stable in the churning tide.

A large, juvenile green dragon dressed in EJ Corp attire rides in the foremost wavecutter. She signals to the other vehicles’ riders—kalos wearing thin, black wet suits and carrying laser rifles—and they join her as she steps onto

the platform. The dragon is Avarin, the director in charge of the Company’s terraforming efforts on Entha. She recently fired the employee assigned to receive and inspect cargo shipments for asking too many questions about the frequency of incoming replacement parts. Now, Avarin and a small cadre of kalo mercenaries personally inspect each arrival—in addition to regularly patrolling Elysia.

One kalo approaches the PCs and asks for the captain while the others move to board the *Oliphant*; Avarin looks on with a mixture of boredom and low-grade suspicion. The kalo looking for the captain asks for a cargo manifest and permission to board and offload, offering a waterproof datapad with a straightforward form to sign. The rest of the PCs likely have questions for Avarin, who engages them in conversation for her own mild amusement; she ends the conversation and returns to her vehicle when she grows bored.

Who are you? Avarin rolls her eyes, casting a sideways glance at a kalo. “I am Avarin Sacrion, EJ Corp’s director of operations for Entha and Elysia. I presumed it part of an errand runner’s purview to know to whom their deliverables are due. Perhaps you would be well served to do some research before embarrassing yourself with questions like that.”

We’d rather offload the equipment ourselves. “Would you? Surely your point of contact informed you of the liability issues at play. This equipment is critical to the functioning of our operations here, and I am sure you would not want to accept any responsibility for damaging it in transit, yes? Assuming you have not damaged it already, of course. No, we shall handle it from here. Feel free to avail yourself of our cafeteria while you wait, or perhaps take one of our guided tours of the facility.” She gestures to a yellow submersible floating just inside Elysia’s massive bubble dome (see the Elysia Tour Boat sidebar on page 14). “That should occupy you sufficiently while we ensure your cargo is present, accounted for, and properly offloaded.”

Why is such an important person handling receiving? “I assure you that I am personally involved in all matters of operation here on Elysia. Please keep that in mind as you enjoy our facilities.”

What about our payment? “Your credits will be transferred once we have secured our equipment. I can offer you an advance of twelve thousand credits on good faith.” She gestures to a kalo to transfer the credits to the character previously identified as the captain.

The crew might have heard about Avarin during their time with the Company; the characters can attempt Culture checks to see what they might know, as described in the table below. The results of these checks are cumulative; on a successful check, the character knows all of the information listed for lower results as well.

| Result | Information |
|--------|---|
| 12+ | Avarin is a rising star in EJ Corp and recently won a prestigious award of accomplishment, given at the annual shareholder meeting; she has even appeared in promotional materials. |

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ELYSIA TOUR BOAT

A tier-1 computer controls this submersible vehicle; hacking the computer allows a user to control its direction, though its speed caps at 22 mph (water). A user with access also can open the boat's transparent aluminum dome, allowing water in (fully flooding the vehicle in 1 round if submerged) and reducing the cover provided from total cover to cover. If the tour boat breaks, it begins to sink. If the vehicle's dome was closed when the vehicle breaks, the dome shatters and the boat takes on water, becoming fully flooded in 3d4 rounds.

SUBMERSIBLE TOUR BOAT

LEVEL 2

PRICE 2,500

Huge water vehicle (15 ft. wide, 30 ft. long, 10 ft. high)

Speed 20 ft., full 200 ft., 22 mph (swim)

EAC 14; **KAC** 15; **Cover** total cover (enclosed)

HP 24 (12); **Hardness** 3

Attack (Collision) 6d4 B (DC 11)

Modifiers -1 Piloting, -3 attack (-6 at full speed)

Systems autopilot (Piloting +13); **Passengers** 6

- 17+ Avarin headed a project codenamed Racetrack that raked in record profits for the Company but relied on cheap, high-turnover contract labor that ultimately destroyed several local economies.
- 22+ Within her first few years at EJ Corp, Avarin has been brought to court on several worlds at least a dozen times. Charges have ranged from reckless endangerment to obstruction of justice to blackmail. In each case, a team of well-paid Company lawyers successfully defended Avarin, often through obscure legal technicalities.

LOCATING SHAN

The PCs can freely explore some parts of Elysia, though other areas appear clearly off limits, marked with "Employees Only" signage or barred by biometric locks and portals welded shut. If the PCs have more to say or do with the crew of the *Wintermourn*, you can have Niva and her crew available for interaction as the PCs explore Elysia. If not, they return at the end of the adventure (see Parting Shot on page 36).

The crew can purchase basic food and necessities—including batteries, but not other ammunition or weapons—at a small kiosk at prices 25% higher than usual; the Company takes full advantage of its closed ecosystem, working to reclaim as much of its workers' paychecks as it can. You might rule that certain minor magic items (see Aquatic Gear on page 50) are available for purchase at normal prices.

EJ Corp strictly regulates the infosphere on Elysia. Terminals (tier-2 computers connected to internal networks) are scarce and often attended by one or more Company employees. A

character must succeed at a DC 17 Diplomacy or Bluff check to gain access to a terminal for a number of rounds equal to the amount by which their check result exceeded the DC (for example, a result of 25 means the terminal stays clear for 8 rounds). A character can then attempt a Computers checks to hack into the terminal as a typical tier-2 computer. Once a character successfully hacks into the Company's infosphere, they can spend their remaining rounds rooting through its labyrinthine data system. The hacker can learn the following details, and each round earns the character another piece of information.

1 Round: The Company houses hundreds of employees on Elysia, with more on several mobile terraforming stations.

2 Rounds: Shan is stationed on Terra 5 along with five other employees (page 19).

3 Rounds: Terra 5 is currently crawling along a deep-sea reef about 300 miles away; the crew can save its coordinates and general layout (show the players the map of Terra 5 on page 17).

4 Rounds: A mysterious automated data feed connects to something referred to only as Harvester 1. The crew will encounter this harvester later in the adventure (page 33).

5 Rounds: Two Company employees were recently dispatched to Terra 5, though their names and the purpose of their visit have been wiped from the files.

At your discretion, the crew can also learn some or all of this information from speaking to Company employees, though the Company employees on Elysia have starting attitudes of indifferent at best, and are likely unfriendly if their boss or any *kalo* mercenaries are nearby.

Story Award: After the crew successfully determines Shan's location on Terra 5, award them 1,600 XP.

A ONE-HOUR TOUR

With the *Oliphaunt* tied up in Company customs (and not rated for underwater travel), the crew must find a way to reach Terra 5 without being detected, likely by stealing or otherwise acquiring one or more aquatic vehicles.

The tour boat Avarin mentioned provides the most obvious option for aquatic mobility, and large posters throughout Elysia advertise tour services. Characters who succeed at a DC 17 Culture or appropriate Profession check know that such boats commonly appear in large Company undertakings; they provide tours that cater to investors and potential clients, intended to instill confidence in their investments or to encourage future business. A PC who succeeds at another DC 17 Culture or Engineering check also knows that very simple computers guide such tour boats, making them notoriously easy to hijack.

The submersible tour boat has a large transparent aluminum dome that can hold up to six Medium creatures (one Large creature takes up the space of two Medium creatures). A vidscreen occupies the front of the boat, and an

AI narrator speaks to occupants in a mellifluous and overly enthusiastic voice.

Tours take about an hour and begin whenever more than two creatures board the boat. The boat gives an automated tour of the floating platform, circling it before diving under the waves to show off the Company's innovations in exaggerated style; both the boat and the tour can serve as potential sources of information for canny characters. The crew interrupts the tour sequence when they hack the boat or when Reisor's agents attack (see **Event 3: Aquatic Ambush** on page 16).

Aside from the basic information given about the facility and Entha, the tour's vidscreen presents several options, each denoted with a bright and colorful reef icon on the touchscreen menu. The characters can access these options to learn the following.

Elysia: "Elysia is our primary base of operations as we work to make Entha as beautiful on the surface as it is beneath the waves. The utilitarian facility you see now will eventually be absorbed into a museum of Entha's history commemorating Evgeniya-Jaimisson's incredible undertaking here, along with a gift shop for mementos of your unforgettable experiences on Entha." As the narrator speaks, the vidscreen shows an image of the existing structure with planned expansions superimposed.

Terra 6: The main vidscreen lights up with a wireframe model of an impressive undersea structure; the model then slides over and appears on the transparent dome of the tour boat, overlaid atop the actual structure, still currently under construction in the ocean nearby. "Terra 6 will be the Company's newest terraforming base, building upon the lessons learned from previous successes to produce the known galaxy's most efficient, most effective, and safest undersea terraforming platform to date." A character who succeeds at a DC 27 Engineering check detects crucial structural integrity issues within the wire frame, likely the result of intentional design decisions meant to save material and construction costs. The crew can use this evidence to reveal how EJ Corp is risking lives with its cost-cutting measures.

Wildlife: "Entha offers sightseers a dazzling array of colorful creatures that make the nearby reefs their home. Undersea safaris will bring tourists up close to the most impressive aquatic specimens Entha has to offer." On the vidscreen, a computerized mock-up shows two ysoki tourists in a two-seater version of the boat, appearing awestruck while watching fish dart in and out of a colorful coral structure. A character who succeeds at a DC 17 Perception check notices that this same coral appears outside the tour boat; in reality, it's much less populated by sea life, and pollution has dimmed its colors.

The Future of Entha: The vidscreen shows an image of Entha from space, covered in ocean. As the narrator speaks, colorful continents and archipelagos made of reef pop out of the waves, scaled up cartoonishly for effect. "In just a few short years, Entha will become a planet-scale resort for aquatic and nonaquatic species alike from all over the galaxy.

UNDERWATER COMBAT

This adventure assumes that NPCs on Entha have prepared for underwater combat, and the weapons they wield have the underwater special property. When a creature uses such a weapon underwater, it ignores the normal -2 penalty to attack rolls and deals full damage on a hit.

Adventurous guests can enjoy countless activities and ecotourism opportunities, while visitors in search of a calm getaway can simply relax on Entha's miles-long beaches of particulate coral or at one of dozens of themed resorts. Meanwhile, entire private islands can be purchased and outfitted with every luxury as a home away from home on this beautiful aquatic slice of paradise."

Leadership: The vidscreen shows a corporate image of an unsmiling Avarin posing in a corporate office, sitting behind a brushed steel desk. "Operations on Entha could not proceed without strong leadership, and this watery world is lucky to have Avarin Sacrion at the helm. Well known for



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her successes in a bevy of past Evgeniya-Jaimisson projects, Avarin's brilliance and efficiency encourage the best from her charges here on Entha."

EVENT 3: AQUATIC AMBUSH (CR 7)

The PCs haven't gone unnoticed in Elysia, and their trip in the tour boat quickly turns eventful: a hit squad of shobhad mercenaries, led by an android named **Sigma Seven** (NE agender android), lies in wait for the crew of the *Oliphant*!

The makeshift hit squad moves covertly, avoiding unwanted scrutiny. If the PCs hack the tour boat to take them to Terra 5, Sigma Seven and their allies attack once the crew has left Elysia's immediate vicinity; otherwise, they strike when the tour boat travels behind a reef along its preprogrammed route, out of sight of Elysia. Regardless, the ambushers approach swiftly underwater, riding wavecutters in wave mode so they can attack the crew with weapons.



WAVECUTTER

LEVEL 5

PRICE 7,000

Large water vehicle (10 ft. wide, 10 ft. long, 10 ft. high)

Speed 20 ft., full 200 ft., 22 mph (water); 80 ft., full 900 ft., 105 mph (swim)

EAC 14; **KAC** 15; **Cover** total cover (enclosed) in sea mode; partial cover in wave mode

HP 40 (20); **Hardness** 2

Attack (Collision) 5d8 B (DC 13)

Modifiers -1 Piloting, -3 attack (-6 at full speed) in sea mode; -2 Piloting, -1 attack (-4 at full speed) in wave mode

Systems planetary comm unit; **Passengers** 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Convertible A wavecutter has two movement modes:

wave mode for traveling atop water and sea mode for submersible movement. Its pilot can change between modes as a swift action; changing to wave mode while underwater exposes the pilot to water. If the pilot changes to sea mode while underwater, the wavecutter pumps out the water and restores atmosphere to the cockpit over 6 rounds. While in wave mode, gyroscopic stabilizers make it easier for the wavecutter's pilot to attack.

Creatures: Soon after their arrival on Entha, the crew of the *Oliphant* attracted the attention of Sigma Seven—who happens to be a close contact of Eline Reisor, the EJ Corp executive vice president from whom the PCs stole the *Oliphant*. The android knows about the crew's role in the theft, as well as Eline's cover-up of the incident. Sigma Seven sees this covert ambush as a perfect opportunity to recover the ship while protecting Eline from any further disgrace.

SIGMA SEVEN

CR 3

XP 800

Agender android envoy

NE Medium humanoid (android)

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision;

Perception +8

DEFENSE

HP 35

EAC 14; **KAC** 15

Fort +3; **Ref** +5; **Will** +7

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee underwater survival knife +7 (1d4+4 S)

Ranged underwater vapor cavitation pistol +9 (1d6+3 E & F; critical pulse^{AR} 1d4)

TACTICS

During Combat Sigma Seven deals as much damage to the tour boat as possible. They hope that doing so will distract and slow the PCs long enough for the shobhads to finish the job.

TERRA 5

1 SQUARE = 5 FEET



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NORTH

ROOM BY ROOM

Terra 5's hatches are designed so that no more than one hatch to a room can open at any given time. It's very difficult, but not impossible, to override this safety feature (Engineering DC 30) or open the door with brute strength (Strength DC 21). If one of these checks succeeds, the hatch opens; add the water level for all connected rooms and divide by the number of connected rooms (rounding up) to get the new water level in each room.

Morale Sigma Seven fights until reduced to fewer than 10 HP, then tries to escape the combat and flee offworld to avoid the consequences of their failed attack.

STATISTICS

Str +1; **Dex** +1; **Con** +1; **Int** +2; **Wis** +0; **Cha** +4

Skills Acrobatics +13, Bluff +13, Diplomacy +8, Medicine +8, Sense Motive +13

Languages Common

Other Abilities constructed, envoy improvisations (clever feint, not in the face), flat affect, upgrade slot (quick-release sheath)

Gear graphite carbon skin, vapor cavitation pistol^{AR} with two batteries (20 charges each), survival knife

To help apprehend the crew of the *Oliphant*, Sigma Seven recruited three shobhads; though they're currently working as underwater welders, the three have checkered pasts as mercenaries for hire, and the android is paying them well. Sigma Seven has access to Elysia's limited armory and has equipped the welders with wicked-looking plasma arrays (Armory 42).

SHOBHAD WELDERS (3)

CR 3

XP 800 each

Shobhad (*Starfinder Alien Archive* 104) soldiers
N Medium monstrous humanoid

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; **Perception** +9

DEFENSE

HP 40

EAC 14; **KAC** 16

Fort +5; **Ref** +3; **Will** +4

Defensive Abilities ferocity; **Resistances** cold 5

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft. (40 ft. in armor)

Melee underwater thunderstrike pulse gauntlet +8 (1d6+6 B & So; critical knockdown)

Ranged underwater red star plasma array +11 (1d6+3 E & F; critical burn 1d4)

Offensive Abilities fighting styles (blitz)

TACTICS

During Combat The shobhads target the strongest-looking enemy first, as they assume taking down that individual will cow the others into surrender.

Morale The shobhad welders are strictly motivated by credits. Each shobhad welder fights until they or Sigma Seven is reduced to fewer than 10 Hit Points, then they attempt to surrender. However, if their ferocity is triggered by being reduced to 0 Hit Points, they make a final full attack at the nearest enemy.

STATISTICS

Str +2; **Dex** +4; **Con** +1; **Int** +0; **Wis** +0; **Cha** +0

Skills Acrobatics +8, Athletics +8, Intimidate +13

Languages Common, Shobhad

Gear squad defiance series, red star plasma array with two batteries (20 charges each), thunderstrike pulse gauntlet with one battery (20 charges)

Development: Provided the combat takes place relatively far from Elysia, it takes several hours for anyone to notice the missing welders, who just came off a 12-hour shift; even then, no one suspects the PCs of being involved. If the PCs let the shobhads go, the welders lie low, tending to their wounds. Likewise, if Sigma Seven escapes, they don't want to risk exposing Eline to any trouble as a result of their failure, so they likely won't bring any attention to themselves or the crew.

The PCs can commandeer their attackers' wavecutters and use them to speed up their journey to Terra 5, though they'll be at more risk from the a giant jelly they run into on the way (see below).

EVENT 4: PC AND JELLY SANDWICH (CR 5)

The most direct route to Terra 5 from Elysia takes 3 hours of travel if the crew use the wavecutters in sea mode; this journey takes significantly longer if the crew use the tour boat. Unknown to the crew, however, this route also passes directly through the territory of a giant jelly (page 60). About an hour into the journey, the crew starts to hear a deep, booming, and intermittent percussive noise that gradually grows in frequency. A character who succeeds at a DC 22 Life Science or Physical Science check can deduce that this noise originates from a large creature of some kind, possibly as a warning or threat display; this knowledge grants that character a +4 bonus to initiative for the upcoming combat with the giant jelly.

GIANT JELLY

CR 5

XP 1,600

HP 70 (page 60)

TACTICS

Before Combat Giant jellies are especially territorial and aggressive at the end of their life cycle; they can easily overtake the PCs if they attempt to escape.

During Combat The jelly instinctively attacks the largest creature, first at range with its sonic pulse and then with its slam attack after closing in.

Morale The giant jelly struggles to protect its unborn progeny and fights to the death.

Treasure: This giant jelly was preparing to reproduce, so it has been gathering minerals. Still tangled in part of its jelly lattice are precious minerals worth a total of 10,000 credits; the minerals take 10 minutes to extract from the corpse and separate from mundane material.

Development: Upon defeating the giant jelly, the PCs receive a communication from Avarin: their cargo has been cleared, so they're free to leave Entha within the hour. A character who succeeds at a DC 17 Sense Motive check understands they're being asked to leave the planet immediately.

TERRA 5

Terra 5, at full capacity, represents the most modern and specialized terraforming base on Entha. The platform crawls slowly over the coral reef, periodically stopping to sink a long drill bit deep into the reef's base. After digging each shaft, a second extension injects a mutagen into the reef. This mutagen vastly accelerates the coral's growth, choking off and then severing its connection to the seabed and the magic source therein (page 62). The detached reef structure then gently bobs to the surface, where it continues to grow and becomes a serviceable landmass upon which the Company can build resort property.

Adjacent to a large, brightly colored coral reef, a well-lit underwater structure of steel and transparent aluminum perches on large articulated legs that allow it to crawl slowly along the ocean floor. The structure lists toward a deep trench that disappears into the inky depths. Flurries of white and green foaming bubbles stream from various ruptures. Red emergency lights pulse intermittently along its perimeter as a water-dampened alarm faintly sounds through the water.

When the PCs arrive at Terra 5, they find the base in jeopardy. The drill hit a rare pocket of magically infused gas deep within the reef, causing a huge explosion that sent adamantine shards from the drill shaft rocketing into the station's hull. These punctures caused a cascade of deadly breaches throughout the base that now threaten to tip the station over the edge of the nearby trench and drown the nonaquatic creatures aboard.

Inside the base, Shan (whom the PCs can first encounter in area **A8**) frantically tries to stem the flooding and help her nonaquatic coworkers, but she can't be everywhere at once. If the crew encounters her while the base is still flooding or in danger of falling into the abyss, she refuses to speak to them, instead ordering the PCs to help her rescue others and stop the flooding—"or else get the hell off the boat!"

Shan deals with this disaster under duress because she fears that she caused the drill's catastrophic failure. She recently attempted to sabotage the station to prevent it from further damaging Entha's ecosystem. Ultimately, the Company's cost-cutting measures caused the failure, but the PCs won't have a chance to learn these details (and more

ALTERNATIVE TO FLOODING

You can skip the flooding mechanics of Terra 5; the PCs could simply repair the external struts, preventing the base from going off the edge of the abyss and allowing them to explore the totally flooded base at their leisure. However, this approach likely means some of Terra 5's crew die in the flooding, and much of the evidence that the PCs and Shan could have used against the Company becomes useless due to water damage.

importantly, convince Shan of the truth) until after they've gotten the flooding under control.

STOPPING THE FLOW

The crew has two obvious points of entry into Terra 5, and a character who succeeds at a DC 17 Perception check identifies them: the base's moon pool (area **A1**) and its observatory (area **A2**). The intact and functional moon pool allows easy access to the facility, while the hatch from the breached and flooded observatory into the corridor requires more effort to pry open.

Hazard: Terra 5 is flooding, and worse, as water fills the base, the struts are in danger of collapsing and dropping the base into the nearby trench. Some areas flood quickly, others more slowly, and a few remain safely sealed for now. As soon as the PCs enter Terra 5, have them roll initiative and determine each character's actions in turn on a round-by-round basis for the duration of the event.

To stabilize the base and save its nonaquatic occupants from drowning or being dragged into the abyss and crushed to death, the PCs must accomplish three tasks. They must fix the on-board emergency water pump in the Pump Room (area **A12**), repair the breaches caused by the explosion in the ROV Workshop (area **A6**), and reinforce the struts holding up the base (area **A13**).

Water Level: Each room's description gives its starting water level, and states whether it is flooding (or starts to flood as systems fail). Flooding rooms list their starting water level and the rate at which the water level increases in that room (usually by 1 per round), up to a maximum value of 6. To make keeping track of water levels easier, start counting rounds and increasing a room's water level only when the PCs open the hatch to that room. Alternatively, for a much more challenging encounter, you can track each flooding room simultaneously; use d12s to keep track of each room's water levels and double the water level threshold for each effect listed below (the effects are cumulative).

| Water Level Threshold | Effect |
|-----------------------|---|
| 0 | None |
| 1 | Area is difficult terrain, Acrobatics check DCs increased by 2. |
| 2 | Land speed reduced by 5 feet. |

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| | |
|---|---|
| 3 | Land speed reduced by 5 feet. |
| 4 | Land speed reduced by 5 feet; swim speed can be used; Small or smaller creatures must swim. |
| 5 | Land speed reduced by 5 feet; Medium or smaller creatures must swim. |
| 6 | No air to breathe; suffocation and drowning rules in effect (<i>Starfinder Core Rulebook</i> 404). |

Hatches: When the PCs open a hatch, it affects the water level in the two rooms on either side of that hatch. Add the water levels of both rooms and divide by two (rounding up), then set the new water level for both rooms to that value. For example, if the PCs enter a room that has a water level of 1 and

then open a hatch to a room that has a water level of 6, both rooms now have a water level of 4 (7 divided by 2, rounded up). While rooms remain connected by an open hatch, their water levels increase separately until the difference is 2 or more, at which point you should add and divide their water levels again, as above.

Struts: Terra 5's support struts sustained critical damage in the explosion and threaten to collapse at any moment, which will send the entire base tumbling into the abyss. If the water level in 10 rooms reaches the maximum value of 6, the struts break and the base begins its fall. These struts can be repaired only from the outside of the base (area **A13**).

A1. MOON POOL

The interior of this wide, open room appears awash with glowing rivulets of light that reflect off the large, round pool of water at its center. Along the water's edge, a steel grating supports an assortment of diving equipment. On the northern wall, wet suits and heavier aquatic gear hang in open lockers, each accompanied by a name stenciled above it. Soft, red warning lights pulse along the edge of the room.

Six names appear above the aquatic gear: Shan, Dev, Righteous, Zivix, Brishae, and Kaia—the usual occupants of this station. A character who succeeds at a DC 17 Culture or Perception check can deduce the species of each crew member based on the equipment present (or absent, in the case of the aquatic species). Shan is, of course, a brenneri; Dev and Kaia are humans; Righteous is an android; Zivix is a shirren; and Brishae is a morlamaw. Two Company goons, both kalos, have also come onto the station, sent to intimidate Shan and to keep her in check. A character who succeeds at a DC 24 Perception check notices two out-of-place underwater propeller jets that hint at the presence of more than just the typical occupants.

Water Level: The water level in this room starts at 0 and doesn't increase unless a hatch to a room with a higher water level opens, as normal.

Treasure: A fully charged suit of personal, submersible powered armor is plugged into a charging bay. A bank of 10 batteries and 10 high-capacity batteries, all waterproofed and compatible with standard technology, sits on a rolling rack, all fully charged.

PERSONAL SUBMERSIBLE

LEVEL 7

EAC Bonus +10; **KAC Bonus** +14

Max Dex Bonus +2; **Armor Check Penalty** -4; **Speed** 20 ft., swim 30 ft.

Strength 18 (+4); **Damage** 1d10 P

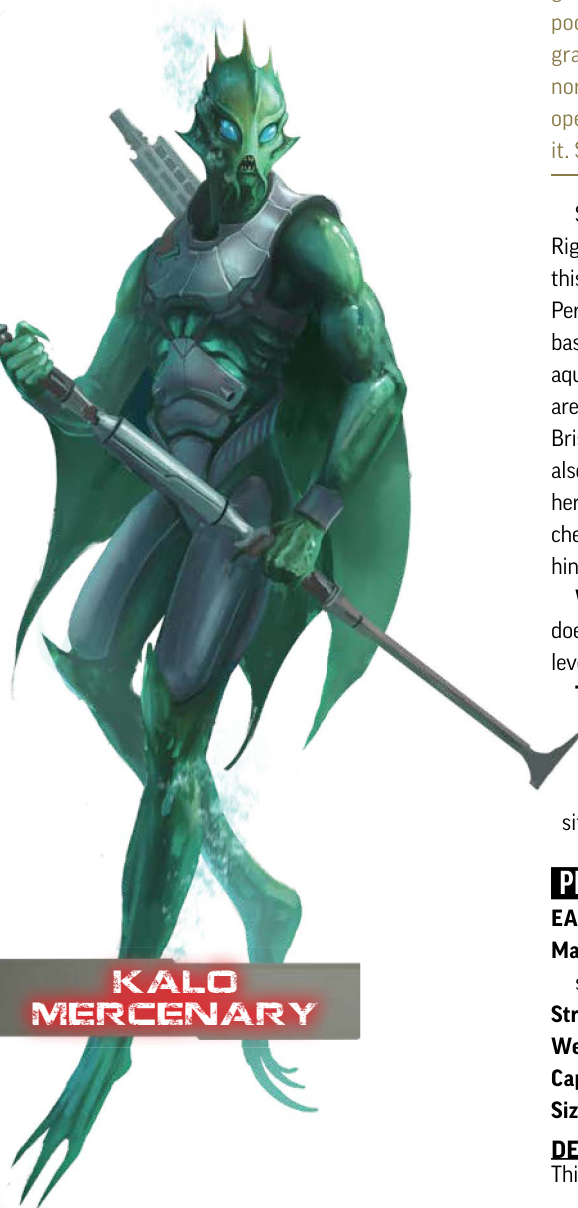
Weapon Slots 1; **Upgrade Slots** 2

Capacity 40; **Usage** 1/hour

Size Large (5-foot reach); **Bulk** 32

DESCRIPTION

This bulky and bulbous armor consists of pressure-resistant



**KALO
MERCENARY**

plates with durable seals. Retractable ridges along the armor's arms, legs, and back function as fins, providing increased mobility in water and most fluids. The armor grants you a swim speed; its survival functionalities allow you to breathe underwater and to endure the pressure of thick atmospheres and great depths even when your environmental protections aren't active.

A2. OBSERVATORY

This simple, gently sloped room has smooth walls and two rows of seats arranged in theater-style ascending rows, all bolted to the floor. The seats face the remains of a 10-foot-wide, 20-foot-high viewing window. Company-issued datapads and coffee mugs float in the completely flooded chamber.

One of the likely points of entry to Terra 5, the observatory was originally conceived and built as a place for visiting investors to get a close look at Entha's terraforming project; later, the Company repurposed the chamber because it posed too much exposure to liability should a wealthy visitor get injured or drown. Shan and her crewmates began using the observatory to record scientific observations about the flora and fauna of Entha—and, more discretely, the deleterious effects of terraforming the planet. A character can open the sealed hatch with a successful DC 27 Engineering or DC 18 Strength check, but with serious negative consequences.

Water Level: If the hatch to this room is opened, treat the room's water level as 6, then adjust the water level of connected rooms each round the hatch remains open (instead of just when the hatch opens). A PC can close the hatch again with a successful DC 18 Strength check.

Treasure: The waterproof datapads floating in the room contain firsthand observations and recordings of Entha's sea life and the effects of terraforming; a character can recover one with a full action, and it provides a piece of evidence as to the Company's wrongdoing.

A3. HALLWAYS (CR 5)

Conduit pipes and maintenance gear clog this cramped corridor.

The design of Terra 5's hallways prioritize spatial efficiency over easy movement, so Medium and larger creatures are considered squeezing (*Core Rulebook* 257) while moving through these hallways.

Water Level: The water levels in hallways **A3a** and **A3b** start at 3 and increase by 1 per round; the other hallways

have a water level of 0 and don't increase unless a hatch to a flooding room opens, as normal.

Creatures: Each time the crew enters a hallway, they have a 25% chance to encounter the two kalo mercenaries the Company sent to strong-arm Shan off the station; this chance increases by 25% each time they don't encounter the mercenaries. The mercenaries know that the *Oliphaunt's* crew haven't returned from their tour; they assume the PCs caused the damage to Terra 5 and attack on sight.

KALO MERCENARIES (2) CR 3

XP 800 each

Kalo soldiers

LE Medium monstrous humanoid (aquatic)

Init +6; Senses blindsight (sound) 60 ft., low-light vision;

Perception +8

DEFENSE

EAC 14; KAC 16

Fort +5; Ref +3; Will +4

Resistances cold 5

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., swim 50 ft.

Melee underwater soprano singing spear +11 (1d8+9 P & So; critical confuse^{AR})

Ranged underwater frostbite-class zero rifle +8 (1d8+3 C; critical staggered)

Offensive Abilities fighting styles (blitz)

TACTICS

During Combat The mercenaries move toward enemies to increase their potential for attacks of opportunity. They also open nearby hatches to help flood the hallway, as flooding gives them an advantage in combat.

Morale The kalo mercenaries fight until defeated.

STATISTICS

Str +4; Dex +2; Con +1; Int +0; Wis +0; Cha +0

Skills Athletics +8 (+16 to swim), Intimidate +8, Stealth +13 (+17 in water)

Languages Common, Draconic, Kalo

Other Abilities water breathing

Gear graphite carbon skin, frostbite-class zero rifle with 2 high-capacity batteries (40 charges each), soprano singing spear^{AR}

A4. HALLWAY OUTSIDE LABORATORY

A PC who succeeds at a DC 17 Perception check while in this corridor picks up on a weak and wordless telepathic plea for help coming from somewhere inside the laboratory (area **A5**). A character with telepathy automatically succeeds at this check.



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A5. LABORATORY

This sleek, well-appointed laboratory has a variety of research and analytical equipment. Built into its curved exterior wall, several aquariums host a myriad of life—including coral colonies, small glowing fish, and a large eel with feathery fins. Large, rectangular metal tanks topped with nets of fine mesh rest below each aquarium. Dissection tables, scales, and waterproofed computers sit in organized rows in the middle of the room.

This lab is the only one of its kind on Entha's terraforming bases; Shan pushed to have a larger, better facility included on Terra 6, but Avarin's budget cutbacks made her argument irrelevant. Shan discovered aglians' sapience here and pushed hard for the lab to be used in cataloging and preserving as much knowledge about Entha's ecosystems as possible.

A character who succeeds at a DC 17 Engineering, Life Science, or Perception check realizes that each aquarium has a control panel that opens either of its sides; it can open to Terra 5's interior and exterior, but not both at the same time, forming a sort of water lock with the ocean outside the lab. The metal tanks reclaim the water, and the nets catch the contents of the aquariums when they empty into the interior.

A character who succeeds at a DC 17 Perception check can tell the approximate origin of the telepathic message from area **A4**, enough to narrow it to the tank containing an aglian (page 56); characters with telepathy automatically succeed at this check. The aglian can't be identified with Life Sciences or other skills, as they're unique to this world and only recently discovered by outsiders. Isolated from the rest of their kind and trapped in the aquarium, this aglian appears helpless and under considerable stress. Any character can use the control panel for this tank to open the aglian's aquarium to the sea, and if the creature has any opportunity to escape, whether by being released or because the laboratory floods, they do so.

Water Level: Two rounds after the PCs enter the room, the water lock containing reef fragments shorts out in a shower of sparks, and both sides of its aquarium, interior and exterior, begin to open simultaneously; as the room floods, the water level increases by 1 per round. This flooding can't be stopped,

and the PCs must close another hatch—such as the one leading to area **A4**—to seal off the lab. The aglian can escape once the water level reaches 6.

Treasure: Valuable reagents in several vials scattered around the lab can fetch 10,000 credits; the PCs can sell them with a successful use of the find buyer downtime activity (*Starfinder Adventure Path* #34 54).

Development: Note whether the characters attempt to attack, capture, or help release the aglian; their choice here affects the way that other aglians receive the crew later in the adventure.

Story Award: If the PCs release the aglian, award them 800 XP.

A6. ROV WORKSHOP

Machine parts are strewn about this dark, crowded workshop. The only light emanates from a control console showing a video feed of the terraforming base as seen from right outside. The smell of oil and grease fills the air.

A character can use this room's control station to pilot a Remote-Operated Vehicle (ROV) to conduct makeshift repairs outside the base, reducing the flooding in other rooms with breaches. Only one character can operate the ROV at a time, which requires a full action and a successful DC 17 Piloting or Engineering check. Failing this check twice in a row results in a malfunction that renders the ROV unusable for 1d4 rounds. With a successful check, the operator can either move the ROV to a different room's exterior or repair a breach in an adjacent room (see Development on page 23) using the ROV's built-in welders.

A second large console, currently turned off, controls the entire base's locomotion. In ordinary circumstances, Terra 5 can "walk" across the seafloor on multiple legs, which are currently damaged; if the crew turns the console on and attempts to use it (1 standard action each)—against Dev's immediate objections (see Creature below), presuming he has regained consciousness—the entire base shudders and leans even more to the side as its damaged limbs attempt to reset; advance the flooding in the next room the crew enters by 2 rounds, and increase the DC of Engineering checks to repair or lower the struts (area **A13**) by 2.

Water Level: The water level starts at 0 and doesn't increase unless a hatch to a room with a higher water level opens, as normal.



Creature: The PCs find **Dev** (NG male human mechanic) unconscious and slumped over in a folding chair. The explosion that rocked Terra 5 hit while Dev was performing routine maintenance, and the blast sent him headfirst into the ROV control console. A character can revive him with a standard action, but for 3d4 rounds, he's still too groggy to operate the ROV himself; once able, he automatically succeeds at Piloting and Engineering checks to operate the ROV. During his recovery time, Dev can issue simple instructions and corrections to anyone operating the ROV, giving them a +2 circumstance bonus to operate it. Embarrassed and rubbing his head, he comments about the still-functional ROV, "Them things are damn-near indestructible—can't say the same for my skull."

Treasure: Secured to the wall are three advanced emergency repair kits, each full of limited-use nanites designed to adapt to and repair a variety of machinery. These kits have light bulk; a character can use one as a standard action to restore up to 2d8 Hit Points to an adjacent construct (including an android or a mechanic's drone); a construct can use a kit on itself.

Development: For every round a character successfully performs repair work on the base's exterior using the ROV (or for every round Dev operates the console after recovering), slow the flooding rate in the corresponding room by 1 round (for example, a room whose water level would increase every round instead increases every 2 rounds), to a minimum rate of 1 water level increase every 3 rounds. ROV repair can't reduce flooding to 0; PCs still need to seal flooding rooms behind hatches.

A7. BUNK ROOM (CR 5)

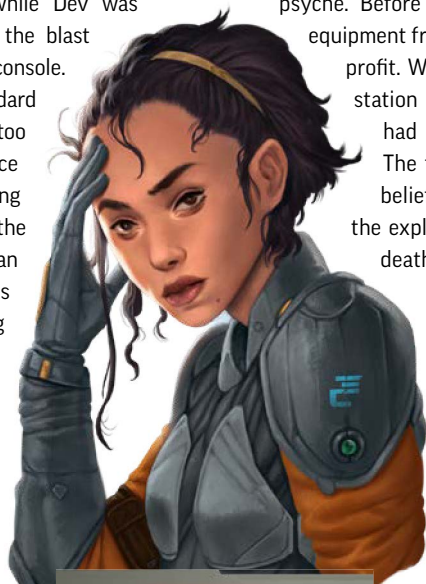
This cramped, damp-smelling room hosts ten bunks, five above and five below. Each bunk has a simple vidscreen built into the wall next to it, along with a shallow recess that holds personal items, most of which have scattered across the room.

Water Level: The water level in this room starts at 0 and doesn't increase unless a hatch to a room with a higher water level opens, as normal.

Creature: On a top bunk, a trembling shirren named Zivix has crouched on all fours in a defensive pose, covered in a wet blanket that sticks uncomfortably to his chitin. Currently experiencing the worst day of his life, Zivix is the newest member of the Terra 5 crew and has begun experiencing claustrophobia in his new home. He's already

uncomfortable with water, and living so deep beneath the waves for extended periods has taken a deep toll on his psyche. Before coming to Entha, Zivix used to skim equipment from the Company and resell it for a small profit. When he noticed the two kalos board the station earlier today, he concluded that they had come to exact revenge for his thefts. The final nail for his fragile state lies in his belief that the Company deliberately caused the explosion at Terra 5, intending to make his death look like an accident.

When the PCs show up, Zivix assumes they're corporate assassins and lashes out in a desperate survival instinct.



KAIA

ZIVIX **CR 5**

XP 1,600

Male shirren mechanic

N Medium humanoid (shirren)

Init +3; **Senses** blindsense (vibration) 30 ft.; **Perception** +11

DEFENSE **HP 65**

EAC 17; **KAC** 18

Fort +6; **Ref** +6; **Will** +6

Defensive Abilities evasion

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee unarmed strike +10 (1d3+5 B; nonlethal)

Ranged voltaic anchor pistol +12 (1d6+5 E nonlethal; critical bind^{AR})

Offensive Abilities overload (DC 15), target tracking

TACTICS

During Combat Zivix attempts to flee into the adjacent common area (area **A8**), unaware it's flooding; as he runs, he fires wild shots at the PCs.

Morale Zivix surrenders if a PC succeeds at a DC 20 Diplomacy or Intimidate check, or if he's reduced to 20 Hit Points or fewer, throwing his weapon down and collapsing in tears.

STATISTICS

Str +0; **Dex** +3; **Con** +2; **Int** +5; **Wis** +0; **Cha** +0

Skills Acrobatics +11, Computers +16, Culture +16, Diplomacy +11, Engineering +16

Languages Common, Shirren; limited telepathy 30 ft.

Other Abilities artificial intelligence (exocortex), custom rig, mechanic tricks (energy shield [10 HP, 5 minutes], quick repair), remote hack (DC 15)

Gear voltaic anchor pistol^{AR} with 1 high-capacity battery (40 charges)

Treasure: The personal effects of Terra 5's crew include three credsticks, each with 1,200 credits. Still too shaken, Zivix doesn't object if the PCs rifle through his and his coworkers' belongings.

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Development: If the PCs subdue Zivix relatively nonviolently, he gives them basic information about the pump room (area A12), the ROV workshop (area A6), and the lab (area A5). He doesn't know which rooms have flooded or why, or that the struts threaten to collapse, so he can't help the PCs with any of those issues; after the fight, he refuses to leave the bunk room.

Story Award: If the characters subdue Zivix without defeating him in combat, award them 1,600 XP.

A8. COMMON AREA

This utilitarian room's benches fold out from the walls, and one wall has a large vidscreen mounted on it. A low table even with the surface of the water sloshes over the floor.

Terra 5's common area served as the site of several heated discussions between Shan and the rest of the crew about what to do about the destruction of the aglians.

Water Level: The water level in this room starts at 1 and doesn't increase for 2 rounds. At that point, anyone in the room hears a loud, ominous creaking noise, followed by an explosion of water as part of the wall gives way; the room's water level then increases by 2 per round.

Creatures: **Kaia** (N female human) and Shan were watching a horror movie on the vidscreen in this area when the explosion rocked the station; now they frantically work to locate micro leaks causing floods in the common area. The crew surprises both Shan and Kaia—especially if they arrive following Zivix fleeing from area A7—and Shan demands to know their business in Terra 5. If a PC has the terraformer or union busted background (*Starfinder Adventure Path* #34 45), Shan recognizes that character and shoots them a grim smile. “Came crawling back for me, eh? Well,” she says, gesturing around, “I haven't exactly moved up in the world, have I?” If the crew tells her that Tarika sent them, Shan seems shocked but puts off any longer conversation until they've solved the crisis (see Helping Shan on page 26). Kaia is a noncombatant; a character who succeeds at a DC 17 Diplomacy check can convince Shan and Kaia that they came to help; otherwise, both continue working to find the source of the flooding. Shan tries to prevent the PCs from opening any further hatches, accurately pointing out that no one knows the extent of the damage and opening a hatch could further flood the base.

Once the flooding increases, Shan shouts, “If we don't stop the flooding, the struts will give out and we'll all die! I can feel them buckling!” Kaia leaves the room as quickly as possible. Kaia will close hatches behind herself—even if the PCs remain inside the room—in an attempt to stem the flooding, but Shan will wait for characters and try to rescue anyone else trapped on the wrong side of a hatch.

Development: If the PCs know of a safe route back to the moon pool (area A1), they can tell Kaia and Shan, who thank them and rush off to get their aquatic gear. Shan is unarmed and has no desire to fight the PCs, but she'll likely accompany

the crew for Part 3 of this adventure. To help adjudicate her actions, use the following stat block.

SHAN CR 5

XP 1,600

Female brenneri (*Starfinder Alien Archive* 3 8)

NG Medium humanoid (brenneri)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; **Perception** +11

DEFENSE **HP 65**

EAC 17; **KAC** 18

Fort +4; **Ref** +4; **Will** +8

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., swim 20 ft.

Melee improvised weapon +10 (1d6+6 B)

Offensive Abilities supporting fire

TACTICS

Before Combat Shan is unarmed and avoids combat

by choice, but she follows her friends and the PCs if they help her save the aglians. If given a small arm or longarm, her ranged attack bonus is +10, and she adds her CR to damage.

During Combat Shan uses supporting fire to help the PCs.

Morale Shan falls back if the PCs signal a retreat but otherwise fights by their side.

STATISTICS

Str +1; **Dex** +2; **Con** +1; **Int** +3; **Wis** +5; **Cha** +2

Skills Athletics +11, Diplomacy +16, Engineering +16, Life Sciences +11, Sense Motive +16

Languages Brenneri, Common

Other Abilities favored object (seashell), hold breath, team player

Gear personal comm, seashell

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Supporting Fire If armed with a small arm or longarm, Shan automatically succeeds at covering fire or harrying fire, and the bonus gained from these actions is increased to +3.

Team Player When Shan aids another with one of the skills listed in her skills entry, she automatically succeeds and the bonus increases to +3.

A9. GALLEY

A well-stocked galley lies in utter disarray as dry foods have fallen off steel shelving and into seawater.

Low-quality, long-lasting food is strewn about this galley. Some of the rations have expired but technically remain edible; they haven't been replaced thanks to the Company's cost-saving measures.

Water Level: The water level in this room starts at 1 and increases by 1 every round. Rather than a breach to the ocean, the flooding here is due to a ruptured pipe that normally draws sea water for filtration to produce water for drinking

and food preparation. A character can deduce this function and discover an emergency shut-off valve with a successful DC 24 Engineering or Perception check; a character can then spend 1 round engaging the emergency valve, which ends the flooding in this room.

Treasure: Someone's secret stash of expensive aged liquor has fallen from an upper cabinet and floats in the water undamaged. It has 1 bulk and a value of 4,000 credits.

A10. POWER BAY

An array of subtly glowing power cells lines the walls of this cramped room, where the smell of seaweed and an underlying scent of ozone fill the air.

To fulfill the incredibly demanding power needs of this terraforming station, the Company relies on custom-crafted hybrid power cells harvested from Entha's magical seaweed forests. This room stores the cells in series, powering the station for months at a time so that work can proceed uninterrupted.

A PC who succeeds at a DC 17 Mysticism or Engineering check can tell that the hybrid power cells lining the walls each have an output equal to several ultra-capacity batteries (though the hybrid power cells are too large and bulky to be adapted for weapons, armor, and most other equipment).

Water Level: The water level in this room starts at 2 and increases by 1 each round.

Hazard: One of the power cells higher up on the wall isn't properly seated in its housing, exposing an incomplete circuit. At the beginning of the round that the water level reaches 4, the water completes the circuit and creatures touching the water in this room take 3d6 electricity damage. A PC who succeeds at a DC 27 Perception check notices the danger and can adjust the power cell in 1 round, seating it safely in its housing.

Treasure: A character can take 2 rounds to safely remove a power cell. Each power cell has 2 bulk and can be sold for 3,000 credits.

Story Award: If the PCs fix the power cell or take damage from the hazard, award them 800 XP.

A11. DRILLING BAY

Water fills this room. A massive drilling rig has collapsed through the sea-facing wall, and now takes up much of the chamber. An android's corpse occupies the control chair. Large tanks filled with a dull-gray liquid leak into the water.

Creature: The crew sees Righteous, Terra 5's deceased rill operator, slumped in the operator's chair. A character who succeeds at a DC 17 Medicine or Perception check can see

that while shrapnel from the explosion hit him, the collapsed drilling rig pinned him in the seat, so he likely drowned.

Water Level: If the hatch to this room is opened, treat the room's water level as 6, then adjust the water level of connected rooms each round the hatch remains open (instead of just when the hatch opens). A PC can close the hatch with a successful DC 18 Strength check.

Treasure: Righteous carried his credstick on a chain around his neck, along with a holo-locket containing an image of his wife to remind him why he worked this dangerous job. The credstick contains 4,000 credits; the locket is worthless to anyone but his widow.

Development: If the PCs discover Righteous, they have further evidence that the Company's malfeasance costs lives. Righteous's widow, **Tula** (N female ghoran), resides on Ghorus Prime; if the crew later returns the locket to her (a course of action Shan might suggest), award them 800 XP.

A12. PUMP ROOM

An extremely loud and massive water pump fills this room, connected to the ceiling and floor with thick steel conduits. A small walkway leads around its edge. Smoke pours from vents along the top of the straining pump.

The pump in this room maintains Terra 5's air and water pressure; the recent explosion caused it to malfunction. The pump must be restored to full functionality to stabilize Terra 5 and prevent the station from falling into the nearby abyss.

A character who succeeds at a DC 17 Engineering or Perception check notices that several smaller conduits have been knocked out of alignment. Shoving them into place requires a successful DC 14 Strength check; due to the cramped space, only one additional creature can aid another on this check. Repairing these conduits stabilizes the pump and returns it to minimal functionality, but getting it back to full capacity requires a successful DC 22 Computers or Engineering check to restart its software and run diagnostics.

Water Level: The water level in this room starts at 0 and doesn't increase unless a hatch to a room with a higher water level opens, as normal.

Development: If the PCs restore the pump to full capacity, the water level in each room of Terra 5 begins to decrease by 1 every 5 rounds. Note that this might not be enough to offset the still-flooding rooms, and the observatory (area **A2**) and drill room (area **A11**), which are exposed to the sea, permanently stay at the highest water level. Restoring the pump to only minimal functionality greatly reduces its effectiveness, and the water level in each room begins to decrease by 1 every 10 rounds. If the PCs fail both checks, they might need to



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COLLECTING EVIDENCE

At this point in the adventure, the crew of the *Oliphaunt* has repeatedly found proof that EJ Corp has knowingly conducted operations that destroyed Entha's ecosystem, including endangering the aglians, its local sapient species. As the PCs proceed through Entha's seas, they'll encounter more opportunities to collect evidence that prove Entha is worth saving. They or Shan can present their findings to the broader galaxy at the end of the adventure, potentially saving an entire world from ruin.

find another solution for reducing Terra 5's overall water level, which you, as the GM, can adjudicate.

Story Award: If the PCs repair or stabilize the pump, award them 1,600 XP.

A13. STRUTS

Four massive articulated struts, bubbles hissing from their joints, support Terra 5; each glows with area lights and access panels. Two of the struts have taken serious damage, and the remaining two groan with the stress of carrying more than their share of the weight.

Terra 5's support and mobility structures are accessible only from outside the base. The station's chief mechanic **Birshae** (N female morlamaw) is desperately trying to shore up failing systems. She swims around the entire station, patching major holes and attending to the struts as best she can; if the PCs offer help, she tells them how best to direct their efforts.

A character can access repair panels on damaged struts and activate their self-driven repair processes—this required manual activation is a result of the Company's cost-cutting. This task requires a successful DC 22 Computers or Engineering check, or 2 extra rounds of fiddling with the controls. If the PCs carry out emergency repairs on the two damaged struts, the base remains stable after fully flooding for 10 extra rounds before failing. If they carry out the repairs and the station doesn't fully flood, these repairs are sufficient to save it from collapse.

Alternatively, each strut has a manual release lever that requires a successful DC 14 Strength check to engage, causing the strut to slowly collapse and safely lower the base to the sea floor. A character who succeeds at a DC 17 Engineering or Perception check realizes that lowering just one of the remaining functional struts will put too much strain on the remaining one—this has a 50% chance of causing catastrophic failure, sending the entirety of Terra 5 careening off the edge of the trench and into the watery abyss. However, if the PCs successfully lower the struts within 1 round of each other, the base settles safely to the seabed and is no longer in danger of collapsing into the nearby trench.

Story Award: If the characters save Terra 5 by repairing or safely lowering the struts, award them 1,600 XP.

HELPING SHAN

Once the characters have Terra 5's flooding under control and have either reinforced or manually released its struts, they can safely take a 10-minute rest, though the base remains in bad shape.

In the aftermath of the explosion that nearly destroyed her home of the last few months, Shan handles herself ably. However, she holds what she feels is a terrible secret: she believes herself responsible for the drill's catastrophic failure. Just a day earlier, desperate to stop the Company's terraforming efforts and forestall the destruction of the aglians, she attempted to modify the software running Terra 5's drilling machinery. This adjustment proved moderately successful in reducing the drill's efficiency, but ultimately had nothing to do with the failure. A character who succeeds at a DC 24 Sense Motive check while talking to Shan suspects that she feels guilty for the disaster. A PC with the terraformer or union busted background (*Starfinder Adventure Path* #34 45) gains a +5 bonus to this check.

The PCs have had several opportunities to learn that the Company has engaged in risky cost-cutting measures that led to equipment failures on the station; characters can attempt an additional DC 19 Computers, Culture, or Engineering check to confirm that Terra 5's emergency didn't result from Shan's software modifications. Convincing Shan of her innocence represents a more difficult task—the PCs must show her evidence of the Company's malfeasance and succeed at a DC 24 Diplomacy check.

Once the base is safe, the PCs can find Shan in the bunk room (area **A7**) as she hurriedly packs her limited possessions in a black duffel bag. She talks to the PCs as she packs; her answers to questions they might have are as follows.

What happened to Terra 5? "I—" Shan cuts herself off. "Drill failure." This is a good opportunity for the PCs to notice and draw out Shan's guilt, as well as convince her of her innocence given what they've seen and heard.

Why are you packing? "Listen, thanks for your help, but I have to get out of here. Just before—" She gestures at the mess. "THIS happened, a couple Company goons came by. They were trying to convince me to come back to Elysia with them. I gotta be honest. I think the plan was for me to get lost on the way." She shakes off a sudden chill and returns to packing.

What happened to your comms? Shan looks confused for a moment, then seems struck with a grim realization. "So that's why I haven't heard from Ma. I bet those Company bastards have been screening my comms—Wait, they didn't even let my birthday message through?!"

Come with us to our ship and we'll take you home. Shan scoffs. "Home?! I'm not just gonna leave and let the Company get away with genocide!" Shan pauses to collect herself.

"Look. I could use your help. You, me, and the Company aren't the only sapient species living on this world." Shan quickly taps through menus on a nearby wall console, bringing up a slowly rotating model of an aglian, similar to the one the crew might have seen in area A5. "Meet the aglians," she says, gesturing at the screen. "Give the Company another year here, and they're history."

How is EJ Corp threatening the aglians? Shan stops packing, looking skeptical. "You did see that giant hole in the reef on the way in, right? You think that's good for an ecosystem? To pump it full of mutagen and sever it from its lifeblood?" Shan catches herself. "Sorry. Actually, that's not the half of it. This boat and all the other Terra bases run on power cells the Company harvests from seaweed forests—same forests the aglians live in, if I'm right."

What are you going to do? "My plan is to head to the source. I'm gonna make contact with the aglians and get evidence that the Company is destroying their homes. The Company harvester ain't camera shy." Shan gestures to the small camera built into her datapad. "If I can get enough proof and somehow get it to the Xenowardens, maybe they'll be able to put enough public pressure on the board of directors to shut this operation down. And the more evidence and witnesses there are, the better."

How do you know the aglians are sapient? "On their own, they're limited to a single concept. But enough of them schooling together form a kind of neural network that's as thinking and feeling as you and me. I've watched them investigate Terra 5, swarming together into individual schools, separating, and reforming into different groups. It's hard to explain, but I've seen proof that they can think, and reason, and plan. Now I just gotta prove it to the rest of the galaxy."

So they're like barathu? "Sort of, but barathu are sapient on their own. As far as I can tell, single or even small groups of aglians can act only instinctively. It's not until they link up that they gain sapience like we know it. And while barathu merge for the long haul, these critters constantly swap constituents—and change radically in the process."

How are you going to find the aglians? "I've kept track of aglian sightings as we crawled over this particular reef. They always come from roughly the same direction, and there were more of them at a certain point a few hundred miles back. That's not too far from what the grunts around here call the Shadow Sea—a stretch of ocean whose waters are too dark to be natural, even at this depth."

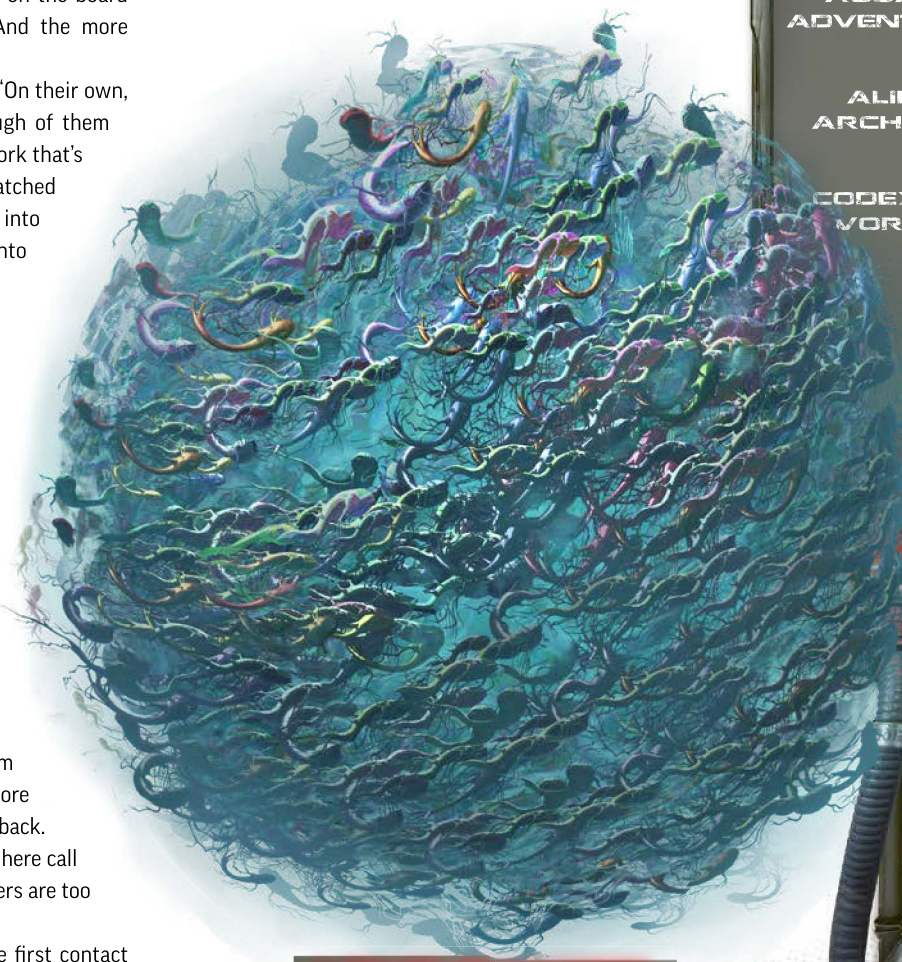
How can we help? "Come with me to make first contact with the aglians, and help me collect evidence that this planet's life-forms are worth saving. You wouldn't think

people should need much convincing, but if EJ Corp's good at one thing, it's sweeping folks like me under the rug."

Development: Even with the extensive efforts of the PCs, Terra 5 remains in critical condition, barely hanging together. The surviving crew calls for help, supplies, and repair equipment from Elysia, which means the terraforming base will become a hotbed of activity in a few hours. Shan has no interest in sticking around, and she insists that she'll seek out the aglians with or without the help of the PCs, though she clearly hopes they'll join her.

Shan (or one of the PCs, if they offer her the use of a wavecutter) can use one of the kalo's propeller-jets to keep pace with the crew's wavecutters, though it doesn't offer any of the benefits of a vehicle, such as cover. On the way out, Shan stops at the moon pool to suit up; as a brenneri, she can hold her breath for long periods of time but still benefits from the advanced wet suit, which functions as a space suit.

Story Award: If the characters speak with Shan and agree to help her make first contact with the aglians, award them 1,600 XP.



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BACK IN MOTION

Once the crew and Shan set out to find the aglians, they reach the Shadow Sea in 2d3 hours. When they arrive, the lights built into the crew's armor and comm units—as well as the running lights on their wavecutters or other vessels—begin to dim. The area and range of nonmagical light are halved in the Shadow Sea, and such lights can provide only dim light at best. Magical sources of light provide only dim light but with normal range. All is not entirely dark, however; magically glowing patches of coral reefs and bioluminescent seaweed twinkle in the distance like a star field, emitting light that still penetrates the darkness.

EVENT 5: ALWAYS A BIGGER FISH (CR 7)

As the PCs proceed through the Shadow Sea to the spot Shan suspects houses an aglian enclave, another giant jelly emerges from the depths and attacks them. After 1 round of combat, a character who succeeds at a DC 24 Perception check notices that some portion of a distant glowing reef blinks out, as though turned off by a switch. An enormous abynthic blocks the view as it swims in the direction of the crew, specifically aiming for the giant jelly. The abynthic arrives at the beginning of the second round of combat, swallows the jelly whole, and then replaces it in the initiative order. If attacked, the abynthic fights back; if the crew refrains from attacking the abynthic for a full turn after it appears, it swims on, interested only in digesting its considerable meal. A PC who tries to identify the creature or predict its behavior can attempt a DC 24 Life Science check; on a success, that PC suspects the abynthic will leave the crew alone if allowed to pass by unharmed.

GIANT JELLY

CR 5

XP 1,600

HP 70 (page 60)

TACTICS

During Combat This giant jelly was taken by surprise while digesting a recent meal. It unleashes a sonic pulse at the nearest PC.

Morale If the jelly somehow survives the abynthic's attack, it flees the area immediately.

ABYNTIC

CR 7

XP 3,200

HP 112 (page 55)

TACTICS

During Combat The abynthic targets the giant jelly, as

it's the largest creature present. If the PCs attack the abynthic after it swallows the giant jelly, it attempts to swallow a PC whole; otherwise, it leaves (see above).

Morale The abynthic fights to the death.

Story Award: If the PCs wait out the abynthic instead of fighting it, award them 3,200 XP as though they defeated it in combat.

FOREST OF THE SHADOW SEA

The Shadow Sea hosts a massive seaweed forest that sprawls for thousands of square miles. Dozens of unique species found only on Entha thrive within this verdant ecosystem, the most notable of them being the sapient eels known as aglians. Aglians draw sustenance from the seaweed, which along with being a food source, is also the likely origin of their supernatural and telepathic ability to form sapient collectives. Over the last few years, the Company has encroached more and more on their territory, including razing the forest they depend on; since then, the aglians have become increasingly desperate to save their homes.

Soon after the crew's arrival, they discover that Shan's hypothesis is correct: aglians indeed live in and around a large seaweed forest in the Shadow Sea. Just as the characters reach this forest, their wavecutters begin to die out, one by one. The vehicles' batteries are made for relatively short-distance travel, and extended use by the PCs and the mercenaries before them has drained them of their charge.

Creatures: An aglian collective (page 56) emerges from the seaweed—not as a single unit, but as individuals that then cluster together in a swarm. The school speaks to the PCs using telepathy, and their form fluctuates between a rapidly darting series of angles and a smooth spinning sphere. If the crew freed the captured aglian from Terra 5 (area A5), that aglian has joined the school that approaches the party, and the school starts with an attitude of friendly. Otherwise, they start with an attitude of indifferent.

This aglian collective introduces itself to the PCs as Love-Danger-Trust; they seems very curious about the PCs and Shan. They ask about the group, including what brought the PCs to the aglians' home. If the PCs didn't free the captured aglian, Love-Danger-Trust initially assumes that the Company sent the group; convincing them otherwise requires a successful DC 19 Diplomacy check.

Shan brims with excitement and validation as she records the exchange and furiously takes notes. The following lists Love-Danger-Trust's replies to some of the PCs' likely questions.

How can you understand us? "We have learned your simple languages from your transmissions." If the PCs have spoken any languages beyond Common in an aglian's presence, they repeat this answer in that language as well.

Who are you? "We are Love-Danger-Trust. We are aglians, keepers of the grove. You are welcome here." The swarming

collective shifts slightly into a more angular form. "So long as your intentions are trustworthy."

Are you in danger? "The machines are destroying our homes and that which gives us life and thought."

How can we help? "We must find a way to stop the machines consuming our grove." At their response, Shan mutters "the harvester" and shakes her head disapprovingly.

Development: As the PCs finish their conversation with Love-Danger-Trust, several swarms of aglians emerge from the seaweed and frantically school, exchanging component eels with each other. Love-Danger-Trust reforms from its original components and informs the PCs that they must tend to an emergency.

EVENT 6: CRITICAL MASS (CR 5)

If the crew follows Love-Danger-Trust, the collective explains that aglians often hold council meetings in which they freely exchange ideas—and component aglians—to solve a problem facing the species. In this case, the debate focused on the approaching harvester, but a rare phenomenon interrupted the proceedings. Too many aglians embodying the same concepts joined the same collective, sending them spiraling into a hyper-focused state of tunnel vision driven by those concepts. Normally, this occurrence doesn't pose a problem; for example, a collective focused on Love might temporarily become exhaustingly affectionate, while one focused on Thought might simply spin in a circle until the components tire enough to disperse. However, this latest mega-collective has formed from Fear, Anger, and Retaliation, and they've taken to lashing out violently at any creatures that approach them. In fact, they are currently destroying the council's meeting area, a sacred spot in the seaweed forest where the aglians store their relics.

Love-Danger-Trust communicates the problem to the PCs and asks for their help in subduing the collective, peacefully if possible. If the crew agrees, Love-Danger-Trust leads them to a 50-foot-by-50-foot clearing in the seaweed forest.

Creature: A huge swarm of aglians, much larger than any the PCs have encountered thus far, whirls furiously in the clearing, damaging nearby seaweed and raising a flurry of sand. The silt stirred up by their activity provides concealment to all creatures within 10 feet of the seabed. Fear-Anger-Retaliation swarms around a collection of precious artifacts; the aglians created these artifacts over centuries by using sand from the seabed as an abrasive medium to sculpt smooth, abstract shapes out of starmetal, forming sculptures that represent the eels' most treasured concepts. Each could fetch a considerable sum, but they're invaluable to the aglians.

Characters can talk Fear-Anger-Retaliation down with a series of Diplomacy checks, though the creature still attacks them while they do so. Each round, one PC can attempt a DC 24 Diplomacy check; a character using telepathy gains a +2 circumstance bonus to this check, and others can aid that PC as normal. After

three successful checks, Fear-Anger-Retaliation disperses as though the PCs had defeated them in combat.

FEAR-ANGER-RETALIATION

CR 5

XP 1,600

Aglian collective (page 56)

CN Tiny animal (swarm)

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision;

Perception +11

DEFENSE

HP 70

EAC 17; **KAC** 18

Fort +6; **Ref** +6; **Will** +8

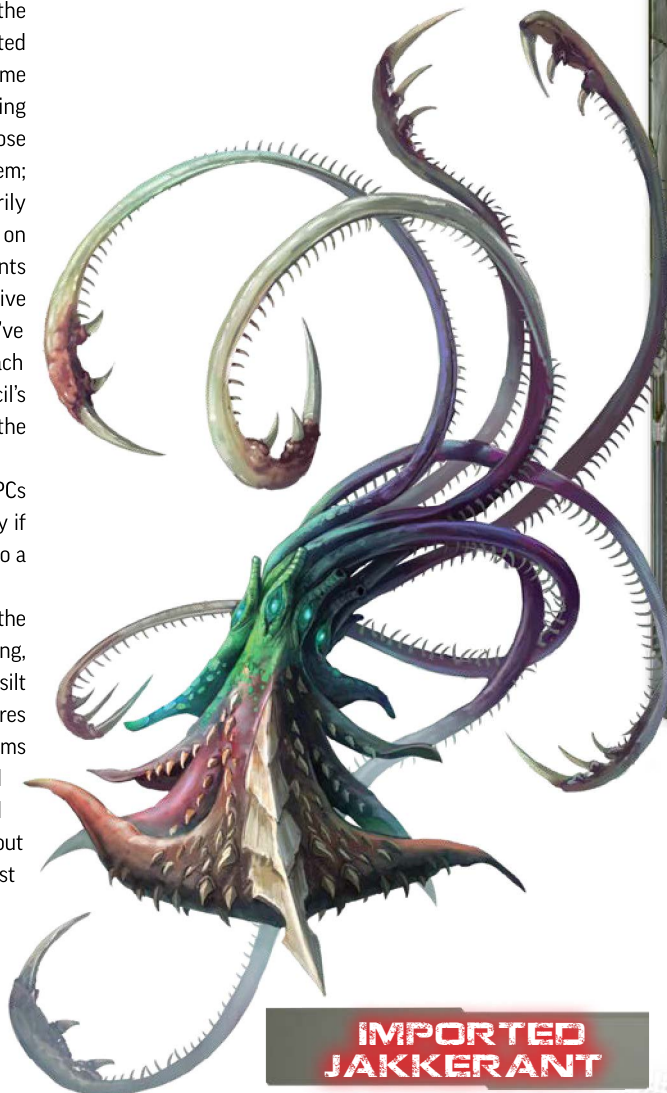
Defensive Abilities swarm defenses; **Immunities** swarm immunities; **Resistances** cold 5; **SR** 16

Weaknesses vulnerable to electricity

OFFENSE

Speed swim 50 ft.

Melee swarm attack (1d6+5 P)



IMPORTED
JAKKERANT

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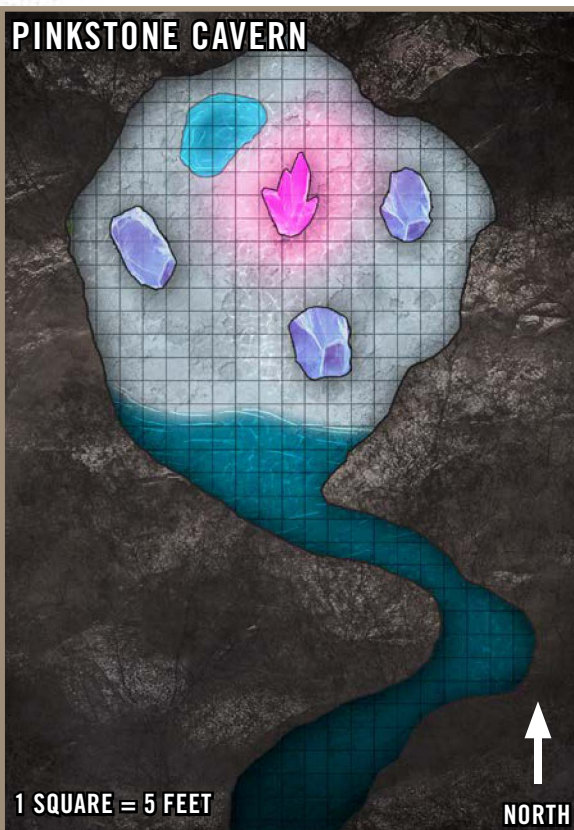
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Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

Offensive Abilities dominant traits (retaliation)

TACTICS

During Combat Fear-Anger-Retaliation attacks the nearest creatures, enveloping them within their 15-foot space if possible.

Morale When Fear-Anger-Retaliation is reduced to fewer than 10 Hit Points (but still more than 0), the remaining aglians composing the swarm disperse and swim into the surrounding seaweed forest.

STATISTICS

Str +0; **Dex** +5; **Con** +2; **Int** +2; **Wis** +3; **Cha** +1

Skills Acrobatics +16, Athletics +11 (+19 to swim)

Languages Aglian, Common; telepathy 60 ft.

Other Abilities dominant traits, water breathing

ECOLOGY

Environment any water

Organization solitary or intellection (6-12)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Dominant Traits (Ex) See page 29; the following traits are already incorporated into the stat block.

Anger: Melee attack damage increases by one die size.

Fear: +10-foot bonus to swim speed.

Retaliation: +2 bonus to attacks of opportunity; one additional reaction per round.

Treasure: The aglians' valuable starmetal artifacts are the only treasure here. The eels swarm to protect their property

if they see a character attempting to take it, though someone who succeeds at a DC 29 Stealth check can take advantage of the chaotic aftermath to secret one away without being noticed. Each artifact is worth 10,000 credits, but a character willing to take the time to find an art collector who truly appreciates the sculpture might secure a higher price.

Development: If the crew subdued the raging aglian swarm without destroying them, the aglians thank them profusely and gift the PCs one of their sacred relics: a well-rounded, teardrop-shaped hunk of starmetal that represents Peace; the artifact is worth 10,000 credits, though the PCs might get a higher price for it from the right buyer.

WINNING THE AGLIANS' TRUST

With the immediate threat to their sacred meeting place resolved, the aglians gladly speak further with the crew. They share their observations that a certain species of magical coral, which they call pinkstone, seems to disrupt the harvester's technology and causes it to malfunction. However, the Company has recently reprogrammed its terraforming machines to detect and avoid pinkstone. As told from their legends, the aglians know of an underwater, air-filled cavern that holds a great deposit of the pink coral. However, this cave is also a sacred site, and the crew must prove themselves to the aglians before they can learn its location. The aglians also refuse to mention the harvester's location out of lingering fear that the PCs might still be Company agents in disguise sent to accelerate the harvester's destructive work.

EVENT 7: INVASIVE SPECIES (CR 7)

Love-Danger-Trust asks the PCs for help with a nearby threat that has picked off young aglians. They explain that these new creatures seemingly appeared at the same time as the Company machinery and have slowly taken over the local food web. Love-Danger-Trust directs the crew to a nearby stretch of open, dark water in the Shadow Sea that these predators seem to appear from and return to.

These new predators are jakkerants, also known as javelin squids. When EJ Corp began its terraforming efforts on Entha, it imported a batch of genetically modified jakkerants that had been bred to be docile, primarily for their impressive, tentacled appearances and mesmerizing color-changing abilities. The Company hoped to seed a population of the fearsome-looking creatures to entertain and delight its future resort guests during underwater safaris. Predictably, local wildlife quickly consumed the vast majority of these defenseless creatures, while the ones who exhibited the most aggressive and predatory behavior survived. Now, thanks to their rapid reproductive cycle, the creatures' population has grown to a size that makes them a threat to local sea life.

IMPORTED JAKKERANT (2)

CR 5

XP 1,600 each

Jakkerant (*Starfinder Adventure Path #20: The Last Refuge* 56)

N Small magical beast (aquatic)

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision;

Perception +11

DEFENSE

HP 70

EAC 17; **KAC** 19

Fort +9; **Ref** +9; **Will** +4

Resistances acid 5

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., swim 60 ft.

Melee tentacle +13 (1d6+8 P plus grab)

Ranged caustic jet +15 (1d6+5 A & P; critical corrode 1d6)

Offensive Abilities digesting grab

TACTICS

During Combat The jakkerants team up on the smallest character or the one with the least armor.

Morale The jakkerants fight to the death.

STATISTICS

Str +3; **Dex** +5; **Con** +0; **Int** -3; **Wis** +2; **Cha** -1

Skills Athletics +11 (+19 to swim), Stealth +11, Survival +11

Other Abilities amphibious, hide in plain sight

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Caustic Jet (Ex) As a standard action, a jakkerant can spray a caustic mixture of seawater and digestive fluids. This attack has a range of 40 feet and the line weapon special property. Outside of water, the jakkerant can use this attack only once every 6 hours. However, if within or near water, a jakkerant can take a move action to ingest enough water to recharge this ability immediately.

Digesting Grab (Ex) Whenever a jakkerant uses its tentacle to maintain a grab, the damage changes to 2d6+8 A & P and has the corrode (1d6) critical hit effect.

Hide in Plain Sight (Ex) As a move action, a jakkerant that remains still can change its internal chromatophores and skin texture so that its coloration and texture match its surroundings, allowing it to attempt to hide without cover or concealment.

Development: After the PCs defeat the invasive jakkerants, an aglian collective proposes a way to verify the crew's true intentions (see **Event 8: Joining the Collective** below).

EVENT 8: JOINING THE COLLECTIVE

The aglians have trouble understanding, let alone trusting, beings like the PCs: creatures who are permanently locked into neural networks that change only gradually and who rely on physical instruments, such as speech and sign, to communicate their ideas.

After the PCs assist the aglians with the invasive jakkerants, an aglian collective called Idea-Trust-Communicate comes up with a plan: incorporate one of the PCs into an aglian collective. They choose the most telepathically adept PC for this experiment. If none exist, they gravitate toward the character with the highest Wisdom modifier.

The aglians begin a 10-minute ritual to incorporate a willing character into a collective. One at a time, so as not to overwhelm the PC, aglians make physical contact and slowly float in the water along with the character, telepathically adding their component to a new collective that centers around the PC's mind. The character involved must attempt three DC 12 Will saves to avoid being overwhelmed by the sensation of dozens of rudimentary minds gradually coalescing with the PC's own to form a larger intelligence. If the character succeeds at two or more of these saving throws, they briefly merge with the aglians and share their thoughts with the collective, which calls itself Curiosity-Risk- and adds a third word to their name chosen by the PC. In this case, the aglians accept that the PCs' intentions are good.

A character that fails two or more of these Will saves can't form a collective with the aglians, which they interpret as a willing resistance to their telepathic evaluation. The aglians remain unconvinced of the PCs' claims, but they nevertheless stay willing to attempt this ritual again with another character. If this second attempt also fails, Shan insists on trying, and she successfully wins their trust as part of Curiosity-Risk-Bravery.

Treasure: Idea-Trust-Communicate presents the PC who became part of the collective with an intricate basket woven from their home's magical seaweed and decorated with tiny shells. This functions as a *mk 1 null-space chamber*.

Development: Having won the aglians' trust, the crew receive the location of the sacred cavern containing pinkstone (see Event 9 below). The PCs can travel there and secure the pinkstone deposit—though a dangerous creature protects the mineral at all costs.

Story Award: If the crew successfully convince the aglians of their intentions without Shan needing to help with the ritual, award them 1,600 XP.

EVENT 9: PINKSTONE CAVERN (CR 5)

This open-air, 50-foot-by-50-foot cavern has existed in isolation for centuries. The crew can access this natural formation via an underwater tunnel that allows one character to enter per round. Use the map on page 30 for this encounter. When the PCs enter, have them establish a marching order, then read or paraphrase the following.

A long, narrow undersea tunnel leads up to a water-filled cavern. Luminescent red moss covers the rocky walls and keeps the area lit. A large formation of bright pink coral glows dimly at the center of the cave, pulsing gently with an irregular rhythm.

Creature: Pinkstone has a powerful magic aura, and this particular vein has attracted a large water elemental like a flame drawing a moth. The elemental attacks underwater as soon as the first character enters the cavern and goes on to attack the rest of the PCs as they make their way out of the narrow tunnel.

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LARGE WATER ELEMENTAL

CR 5

XP 1,600

N Large outsider (elemental, extraplanar, water)

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; **Perception** +11

DEFENSE

HP 70

EAC 17; **KAC** 19

Fort +9; **Ref** +7; **Will** +4

Defensive Abilities water mastery; **DR** 5/–; **Immunities** elemental immunities

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., swim 90 ft.

Melee slam +15 (1d6+10 B)

Space 10 ft. **Reach** 10 ft.

Offensive Abilities vortex (1d6+10 B, DC 13, 1/day)

TACTICS

During Combat Drawn to the deposit, the water elemental focuses its attacks on anyone who has touched (or is closest to) the pinkstone.

Morale The water elemental fights until destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str +5; **Dex** +3; **Con** +2; **Int** –3; **Wis** +0; **Cha** +0

Skills Acrobatics +11, Athletics +11

Languages Aquan

Other Abilities drench, water breathing

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Drench (Ex) A water elemental's touch douses nonmagical flames that fill an area of no more than 10 feet by 10 feet. It can dispel magical fire it touches, as *dispel magic* (caster level = the elemental's CR).

Water Mastery (Ex) Waterborne creatures take a –1 penalty to attack and damage rolls against water elementals.

Treasure: The PCs can easily harvest 5 bulk of pinkstone from this vein, taking 1 minute per 1 bulk. They can harvest an additional 2 bulk of pinkstone with another half hour of work, but spending this extra time means the kalo mercenaries arrive 1 round earlier in **Event 12: Ending the Harvest** (page 34). The pinkstone is worth 2,000 credits per 1 bulk (the PCs can salvage the pinkstone after using it against the harvester).

Development: The PCs notice that when they harvest the pinkstone, its magical glow slowly dims as its connection to Entha's magical subcurrents is severed. Shan excitedly records this phenomenon as further evidence that the Company's terraforming has damaged Entha's natural resources.

TO THE HARVEST

With the aglians' other immediate problems resolved and the pinkstone secured, the crew has everything they need to strike out for the harvester. Maneuvering through the Shadow Sea isn't easy, however, even with aglian guidance. A character must succeed at a DC 24 Survival check to navigate; failure means the characters get lost on the way to the harvester, and the kalo mercenaries arrive 2 rounds earlier in **Event 12**.

Regardless of any success or failure in navigation, the following two events take place on the way through the seaweed forests of the Shadow Sea.

EVENT 10: DRAWN BREATH

A large chasm in the ocean floor impedes the crew's route. Read or paraphrase the following.

An enormous rift in the sea floor slices through the seaweed forest, continuing in either direction until it disappears into the Shadow Sea's darkness. Near its edge, plant life, tattered at the ends from endless buffeting, bends precariously toward the chasm, drawn by a powerful current.

The aglians call this place Drawn Breath, believing it the airway of an enormous subterranean creature. According to aglian legend, this rift cycles through inhalation and exhalation; the direction of the current in the rift changes accordingly, though it has been "breathing in" since at least the Gap. Whatever the supernatural current's source, it stretches for miles in either direction; if the PCs take the time to avoid it, the kalo mercenaries arrive 1d4 rounds earlier in **Event 12**.

If the PCs choose to swim across the 50-foot-wide rift, they must attempt Athletics checks to swim as though in stormy conditions. Each time a character fails this check, the current drags them 20 feet vertically down into the chasm, though they can continue swimming parallel to the current. Once they reach the opposite wall, they can attempt an Athletics check to climb as though scaling a rough wall in heavy gravity (DC 20).

A character who gets pulled 50 feet or deeper in the chasm takes 2d6 bludgeoning damage at the end of their turn as the depths slowly crush them. This damage increases by 1d6 for every 10 feet deeper than 50.

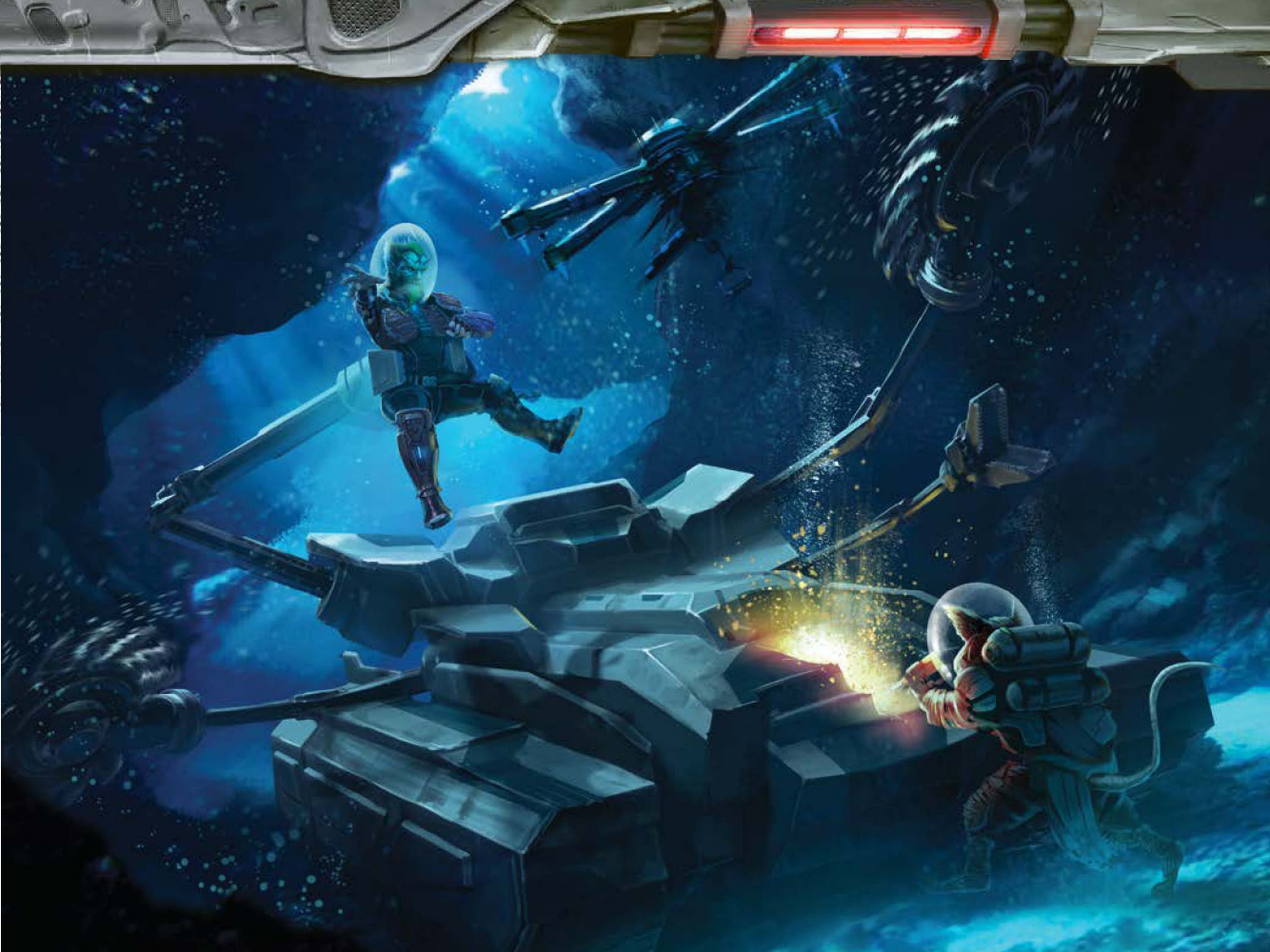
Story Award: For crossing the Drawn Breath, award the characters 1,600 XP.

EVENT 11: CARCASS COVE (CR 4)

A now-extinct species of undersea titan came to its final rest along the crew's path to the harvester. Read or paraphrase the following.

The bones of some colossal creature, larger than even an abynthic, lie half-covered in sediment. A dual ribcage pokes jaggedly from the floor, with softly glowing plant life stretching across the ribs to form a tunnel.

Trap: The crew could easily avoid the ancient carcass if not for the hypnotic, bioluminescent plant life that beckons creatures toward it. Every creature that sees the carcass must attempt a DC 18 Will save or be fascinated and compelled to move inside the tunnel. Large carnivorous plants known as waterwheels float lazily inside, blending in with the plant life and waiting for a fascinated creature to wander into their



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stinging nettles. Creatures fascinated by the bioluminescence are exposed to the waterwheel trap.

WATERWHEEL TRAP

CR 4

XP 1,200

Type analog; **Perception** DC 30

Trigger touch; **Reset** none

Effect stinging nettles (5d6 A & P); Reflex DC 15 half; multiple targets (all fascinated targets within 20-ft. radius)

Treasure: Whatever the nature of this gigantic creature, it was lanced with powerful magic that has since dissipated into the nearby sea. Only its bones and massive heart remain, the latter of which looks like a large boulder that pulses slowly with a warm glow. The first character who comes within 10 feet of the heart falls unconscious for 1d4 minutes as the residual magic leaps into the creature's soul and overcomes them with a feeling of peace, which functions as a mk 2 personal upgrade that must be applied to Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma.

THE HARVESTER

After several hours of travel, the crew arrives at the Company's harvester. Read or paraphrase the following.

A massive harvesting machine with several mechanized limbs operates next to a glowing clump of seaweed several yards tall. The harvester's limbs end in grasping claws and

serrated circular blades ten feet in diameter. The machine razes the nearby seaweed, depositing it in a large processing tank at the back of the machine.

EJ Corp's harvester is a huge hybrid machine that sucks up ambient magic and biomatter, such as the seaweed forest, to convert into energy for the terraforming project. Thanks to the rich magical fields along the ocean floor the harvester consumes, it is the primary power source for the Company's operations on Entha. Though previously crewed by a lone operator, it now runs autonomously; rumors of the planet's sapient life had begun to circulate, which Avarin had to quash.

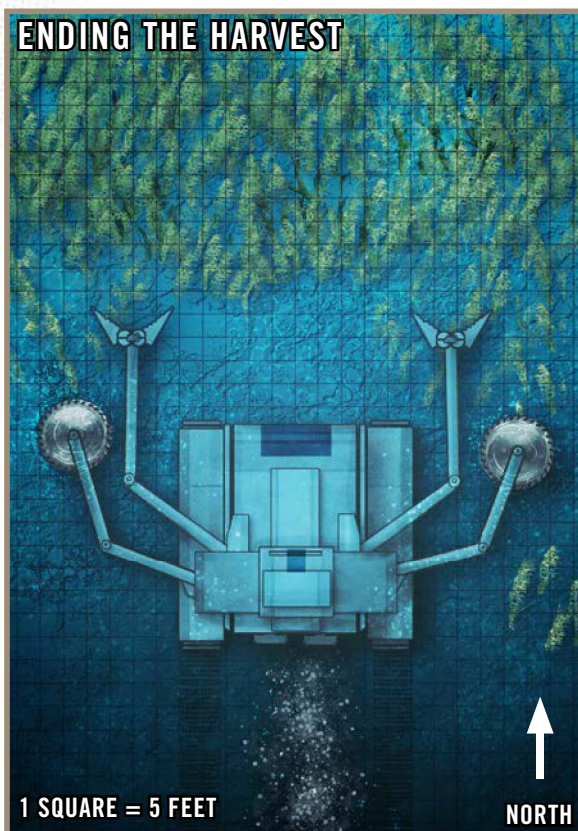
The harvester has cut wide, destructive swaths on multiple trips through the seaweed forest. Its current path, calculated by a complicated algorithm, leads directly toward the aglian population center from which the crew have come. Shan insists they shut the harvester down to buy the aglians time.

EVENT 12: ENDING THE HARVEST

The PCs can sabotage the harvester in multiple ways; track the PCs' sabotage attempts round by round. The crew must act quickly, as a group of kalo mercenaries (see Final Countdown below) arrives at the harvester 4 rounds after the crew begins sabotaging it—or potentially sooner, if modified by failures in previous encounters. Use the map on page 34 for this event.

To attempt to disable the harvester, a character must be adjacent to it and take a full action. The options below detail several approaches, each with appropriate skill checks. The

ENDING THE HARVEST



crew progresses by succeeding at these checks; track these successes and consult Development. If the PCs try to sabotage the massive machine using methods not covered here, use the DCs and success and failure conditions listed below to as examples to help adjudicate their attempts. If Shan is still helping the crew, she assists them in their sabotage efforts, using the rules for aid another.

Break Important-Looking Pieces: Any number of characters can each attempt a DC 15 Strength check to damage the harvester's structure.

Success: A critical piece of the harvester rips free and tumbles to the ocean floor; award 1 success. The DC of the next attempt to jam the gears (see below) decreases by 2.

Failure: Trying to force one component wedges another even tighter; the DC of that character's next attempt to break important-looking pieces increases by 2.

Failure by 5 or More: A piece of plating rips off too suddenly and cuts into the character, dealing 2d8 slashing damage.

Hack the Mainframe: A single character can attempt to hack into the harvester to shut down its various subroutines one by one. The harvester is a tier-3 computer that requires a DC 25 Computers check to hack. The character can voluntarily increase the DC to reduce the time taken to hack, as normal.

Success: One of the harvester's limbs, sensors, or cutting blades ceases functioning; award 1 success.

Failure: The subsystem merely resets and continues to function normally. However, the DC for the next attempt to hack the mainframe decreases by 2.

Failure by 5 or More: The harvester accelerates its progress instead, and the PCs lose 1 success.

Jam the Gears: Any number of characters can each attempt a DC 29 Engineering check to identify a weak point in the harvester's design and apply pressure by jamming a stone into a critical joint, for example, or short-circuiting a harvesting limb.

Success: A critical component of the harvester grinds to a halt or collapses on itself; award 1 success.

Failure: The harvester's redundant systems kick in, compensating for the failed component.

Failure by 5 or More: The character gets a limb stuck in the harvester's ever-moving mechanisms and takes 2d8 bludgeoning damage.

Use the Pinkstone: Any number of characters can each use 1 bulk of pinkstone, along with a successful DC 24 Mysticism check, to disrupt the harvester's delicate sensors. A success expends the pinkstone (though the PCs can later recover it after the ensuing battle with the kalo mercenaries and Avarin).

Success: The harvester's sensors begin to fail; award 1 success. The DC of the next check to hack the mainframe decreases by 2.

Failure: The pinkstone disrupts a noncritical system of the harvester, which continues uninterrupted.

Failure by 5 or More: The harvester's equipment misreads the pinkstone—and the character holding it—as harvestable, dealing 10d6 slashing damage with one of its giant blades (Reflex DC 18 half).

Development: If the crew achieves 10 or more successes by the time Avarin joins the fight (see Avarin's Wrath on page 35), If the crew achieves 10 or more successes, they disable the harvester and Avarin can't use her harvester hack ability. The PCs can continue to sabotage the harvester during combat with the kalo mercenaries and Avarin.

FINAL COUNTDOWN (CR 7)

While the crew adventured in the Shadow Sea, news reached Avarin about the incident at Terra 5, including the PCs' involvement. This information, along with the crew's failure to return to Elysia and depart, confirms Avarin's suspicions that the PCs are making trouble. She dispatches her personal entourage of kalo mercenaries to find them, delegating tasks at Elysia before following closely behind. The mercenaries immediately move into position, attack, and send Avarin their exact coordinates.

The seaweed forest provides concealment. In addition, the seaweed's magical fields amplify energy damage taken by creatures within it by one additional die (for example, 1d8+3 damage becomes 2d8+3 damage).

KALO MERCENARIES (4)

CR 3

XP 800 each

HP 40 each (page 21)

TACTICS

Before Combat Before attacking, each kalo mercenary drinks a serum of enhancement (sneak), gaining a +2 bonus to

their Stealth checks for 1 hour (for a total bonus of +19 in water). They also split up, each moving to intercept a single character. They stick to the magical darkness, giving them the ability to attempt Stealth checks to hide as they approach, moving at half speed to avoid penalties.

During Combat The mercenaries enter melee combat with their opponents as soon as possible, looking to prompt attacks of opportunity. If a character looks close to death, they gang up on that character before returning to their individual targets.

Morale The mercenaries know that Avarin is on her way and that she'll inflict fates worse than death for any defectors. They fight until defeated.

AVARIN'S WRATH (CR 9)

Avarin arrives 2d4 rounds after the kalo mercenaries arrive and attack. She uses her advanced permissions and a remote computer to hack into the harvester and take control of it. When the crew has defeated all but one kalo mercenary, Avarin unleashes the harvester on the PCs and joins the fray (see the Tactics section of her stat block below).

AVARIN SACRION

CR 9

XP 6,400

Female juvenile green dragon

LE Large dragon (air)

Init +3; **Senses** blindsense (vibration) 60 ft., darkvision 120 ft.; **Perception** +17

Aura frightful presence (150 ft., Will DC 18)

DEFENSE

HP 135

EAC 22; KAC 23

Fort +10; **Ref** +10; **Will** +14

Immunities acid, paralysis, sleep

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., fly 200 ft. (Su, average), swim 40 ft.

Melee bite +18 (3d4+12 P)

Multiattack bite +12 (1d6+12 P), 2 claws +12 (1d6+12 S), tail slap +12 (1d6+12 B)

Ranged underwater aphelion laser pistol +20 (3d4+9 F; critical burn 1d4)

Space 10 ft. **Reach** 10 ft. (15 ft. with bite)

Offensive Abilities breath weapon (35-ft. cone, 10d6 A, Reflex DC 18 half, usable every 1d4 rounds), harvester hack (10d6 S, Reflex DC 18 half, usable every 1d4 rounds)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 9th; melee +18; ranged +20)

1/day—*discharge* (DC 18), *slow* (DC 18)

3/day—*caustic conversion* (DC 17), *microbot assault*, *mirror image*, *security seal* (DC 17)

At will—*erase*, *jolting surge*

TACTICS

Before Combat Avarin casts *mirror image* before entering combat.

During Combat Avarin opens combat by using her harvester hack ability to attack the weakest-looking

EVALUATING THE CREW

Have the crew of the *Oliphaunt* become hard-hearted mercenaries, altruistic working-class heroes, or something in between? The answer to this question informs how other characters in the world (including the crew of the *Wintermourn*) react to them, not just at the conclusion to this adventure, but in stories to come as the *Oliphaunt* travels the galaxy. Based on their actions throughout "Professional Courtesy" (and in earlier encounters throughout the Fly Free or Die Adventure Path), assign the characters one of the following results.

High Road: The PCs consistently sacrifice their personal interests for the greater good.

Middle Road: The PCs are neutral; they accept risks to do good on some occasions but take the easy way out when the going gets especially rough.

Low Road: The PCs generally put their personal safety and profit ahead of other concerns, committing to arguably noble acts only if they also benefit.

Some actions that might incline the party toward the high road outcome include dealing with Zivix (page 23) without reducing him to 20 Hit Points or fewer, convincing Shan of her innocence in Terra 5's catastrophe (page 26), or resolving the rogue aglian encounter (page 29) nonviolently.

On the other hand, if the crew insisted on payment from Tarika to find Shan (page 7), stole any of the aglians' sacred artifacts (page 30), and most especially if they accepted Avarin's offer to take the money and run (see Development on page 36), they tend toward being a low-road crew that'll do anything for a buck.

Parting Shot on page 36 gives a detailed explanation of the consequences of this assessment.

enemy; she uses this ability every time it becomes available. She also casts *discharge* as soon as possible, preferably on a PC who's a technological construct or wielding a heavy weapon or longarm that uses a battery. Avarin uses her breath weapon whenever it would catch at least two enemies in its area.

Morale Though she's confident of victory, Avarin changes tactics and attempts to bargain with the PCs once she's reduced to 20 Hit Points or fewer (see Development on page 36). If the PCs reject her offer, though, Avarin fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str +3; **Dex** +3; **Con** +3; **Int** +4; **Wis** +3; **Cha** +6

Skills Acrobatics +17 (+25 to fly), Bluff +22, Computers +22, Diplomacy +22, Engineering +17

Languages Aquan, Common, Draconic, Kalo

Other Abilities water breathing, woodland stride

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Gear underwater aphelion laser pistol with 2 high-capacity batteries (40 charges each)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Harvester Hack (Ex) As a move action every 1d4 rounds, Avarin can command the harvester to attack a character within 30 feet of the harvester. The target takes 10d6 slashing damage (Reflex DC 18 half). Avarin can't use this ability if the PCs have achieved 10 or more successes in sabotaging the harvester (page 34).

Woodland Stride (Ex) Avarin can move through natural foliage (including the seaweed forest) at full speed without taking damage or suffering impairment. Areas of magically altered foliage affect her normally.

Treasure: Avarin carries a ludicrously expensive timepiece worth 10,000 credits, primarily to show off her wealth.

Development: If the PCs reduce Avarin to 20 Hit Points or fewer, she changes tactics, dropping her datapad and laser pistol. She offers the crew 5,000 credits each if they return to their ship, leave Shan and any evidence they've collected behind, and sign a nondisclosure agreement. She explains that she can transfer the money from her personal accounts at Elysia, where she'll also release their grav-locked starship, making them wealthy and free (this effectively skips the crew straight to Parting Shot, below). Avarin makes this offer as an all-or-nothing deal; she continues fighting using her breath weapon and natural attacks if it becomes obvious the PCs won't agree to her terms.

RETURN TO ELYSIA

Following Avarin's defeat and the sabotage of the harvester, the crew can use Avarin and the kalo mercenaries' wavecutters return to Elysia.

Fortunately for the PCs, Avarin had complete confidence in her ability to locate them and bring them down. This, combined with her paranoia about any rumor getting out that she doesn't have every last thing on Entha under control, means that she left no instructions behind. The PCs can move freely on Elysia while everyone waits for Avarin to return.

Unfortunately for the crew, Avarin detained the *Oliphaunt* with a grav-lock. Treat this device as a tier-2 computer with alarm and lockout countermeasures (*Core Rulebook* 217)—or as a Large 4th-level object with 13 Hardness and 27 Hit Points, depending on what methods the crew uses to free their ship. A character who succeeds at a DC 19 Culture or Engineering check is familiar with grav-locks and knows they can be hacked or physically broken.

PARTING SHOT (CR 7)

The *Oliphaunt*'s departure from Entha features a final appearance by the crew of the *Wintermourn*, who've heard about what the PCs have done. Combined with the *Wintermourn*'s previous dealings with the PCs, this information leads to an important turning point in the crews' relationship.

Niva and her crew identify with the PCs in many ways, for good or for ill; the path the *Oliphaunt*'s crew chooses inspires the *Wintermourn*'s crew to take a similar path. At this point in the Adventure Path, the PCs' rivals choose whether to, as a rule, do what's easy or do what's right.

The *Wintermourn*'s crew either interact with the PCs somewhere on Elysia, possibly while the PCs try to remove the *Oliphaunt*'s grav-lock, or communicate with the PCs after they've taken off and are heading toward space. The rival crew eavesdropped on enough of Elysia's communication traffic and extrapolated their knowledge of the PCs to get a broad outline of what happened below the surface, but a character can attempt a DC 29 Bluff check to successfully lie to the *Wintermourn*'s crew about the choices they made on Entha.

If the PCs stood up for the sapient life on Entha—risking their lives and livelihood for no expectation of reward—they earn the admiration of the rival crew, who begin to wonder if there's indeed more to life than credsticks. Niva and her team provide cover for the PCs while they remove the grav-lock on the *Oliphaunt* and escape. However, if the PCs didn't succeed or refused to help Shan and the aglians, Niva and her crew feel validated in their choice of a mercenary life, and they abandon the PCs to their fate—which in this case involves running a blockade of EJ Corp Negotiators (see the inside front cover of this adventure).

You can roleplay these interactions with your players or narrate them, as appropriate for your table. The guidelines below include specific reactions from Niva, Dizzy and Digit, Nemelith, and Jinx, depending on the decisions the PCs have made thus far. To determine each NPC's reaction, as well as the ultimate outcome of this final encounter, use the Evaluating the Crew sidebar on page 35 to help determine whether the *Oliphaunt*'s crew overall took the high road (doing what was right even when it wasn't easy), the low road (doing what was best for them at any cost to others), or in the middle.

Niva: Entha has posed a painful trip down memory lane for Niva, who had to swallow her pride and rage to help a corporation run a drilling project that put profits over people—all to make a buck for her and her crew. She can be swayed only by the most selfless actions.

High Road: For the first time since she escaped a group of ruthless killers with her life and her starship, Niva feels like she and her crew might not be alone in the galaxy. She starts turning down morally bankrupt jobs and attempts to keep tabs on the *Oliphaunt* and its crew, hoping their paths will cross again one day.

Middle Road: Niva started out at least mildly suspicious of the *Oliphaunt*'s crew and still can't get a read on them. She likely continues to keep them at a distance and helps them only if it helps her crew.

Low Road: Niva sees the PCs as no better than the Company itself, and she begins planning to sabotage them should their paths ever cross again.

Dizzy and Digit: Dizzy has a healthy professional curiosity about the PCs' efforts to stabilize Terra 5 and sabotage the Company's harvester. Depending on how the *Oliphaunt's* crew conducted themselves, Dizzy might even add (modest) violence to their toolkit for future jobs the *Wintermourn's* crew takes.

High Road: After seeing the crew of the *Oliphaunt* conduct themselves act honorably even in a dangerous and violent galaxy, Dizzy and Digit reconsider their own pacifism, favoring a philosophy that permits the use of violence in the name of just self-defense.

Middle Road: Dizzy continues to hold out hope that they can gain allies among the PCs, especially any engineering-minded individuals or those who appreciate or practice nonviolence.

Low Road: Dizzy and Digit are utterly disappointed with the PCs and retreat into their relationship with Jinx, the only person in the galaxy who seems to understand their desire for peaceful and equitable resolution to conflict.

Nemelith: Regardless of the choices made by the PCs, Nemelith delights in any tales of armed conflict and envies that they could revel in the glory of combat in such an unlikely locale.

High Road: Nemelith interprets the difficult and selfless choices of the PCs as the free acceptance of pain, and she invites them to join her faith in Zon-Kuthon. If word gets to her about any especially clever battlefield quips, she adopts one of them into her combat lexicon.

Middle Road: The witchwarper doesn't have a good read on the PCs, but as they can capably engage in violent conflict, she entertains the idea of one day going up against them to see who comes out alive.

Low Road: Nemelith considers the PCs weak-hearted, weak-willed opportunists who take the easy way out whenever possible. She ignores the *Oliphaunt's* crew, deeming them unworthy of her attention.

Jinx: The verthani is hard to impress, especially given his disposition toward a criminal lifestyle (but then, he's hard to disappoint, too).

High Road: The nobility demonstrated by the PCs amuses Jinx, who wonders how he might use that predilection to his advantage in the future. Still, he must admit he has some newfound respect for the crew.

Middle Road: Jinx continues treating the PCs as he did before: as easy marks at worst and as allies of convenience at best.

Low Road: The PCs' selfish nature presents nothing new to Jinx, who remains unsurprised and cynical. He actively joins the captain in devising a way to rob the *Oliphaunt* and its crew.

Development: What happens next depends on the actions the PCs took on Entha and the impact these choices had on the crew of the *Wintermourn*.

High Road: The *Wintermourn's* crew tells the PCs that they have a lot to think about, and Niva gives them a drive full of sensitive corporate data that she surreptitiously copied during meetings with EJ Corp; this data clearly proves the Company

had sufficient evidence of the aglians' sapience and chose to go ahead with its destructive terraforming efforts anyway.

Middle Road: The *Wintermourn* sends a communique to EJ Corp Negotiators in orbit around Entha, giving them the *Oliphaunt's* coordinates and a laundry list of their crimes against the Company; Niva ensures this communique happens on an open channel, so the PCs can hear it. Then, switching back to private comms, Niva says, "Good luck!" as the *Wintermourn* jumps into the Drift.

Low Road: The crew of the *Wintermourn* have stalled the PCs to allow an EJ Corp Negotiator (see the inside front cover) to ambush the *Oliphaunt*. Before the PCs can enter the Drift, a Negotiator moves into firing position in the *Oliphaunt's* aft arc. Joriah, the same captain the crew interacted with while queued to enter Entha's orbit (see Development on page 10), opens comms as he fires upon the *Oliphaunt*. "I knew you were scum from the moment you arrived. You're not leaving Entha alive."

EJ CORP NEGOTIATOR

TIER 5

Inside front cover

HP 170

Story Award: If the PCs avoid fighting the EJ Corp Negotiator because they took the high road and Niva never alerted the Company to their actions, award them XP as if they defeated the EJ Corp Negotiator in combat.



Once the *Oliphaunt* departs from Entha with Shan, the crew can return to Absalom Station. Shan takes the evidence the PCs collected to the Xenowardens, promising to visit her mother directly afterward.

PCs who have copies of the information they collected on flora and fauna while on Entha can also gain a fair amount of prestige if they share their findings with interested organizations and individuals, such as the Starfinder Society or Xenowardens.

Meanwhile, the PCs can get in touch with Tarika, who tersely expresses her gratitude; she's clearly both emotional and uncomfortable about feeling so indebted to the PCs, despite her friendship with them. Tarika shakes off her discomfort and reveals that while the crew had gone off to help get her daughter back, she stayed busy, too. She successfully decoded the data she intercepted during the theft of the *Oliphaunt* in "We're No Heroes," and it has all the information they need for the job of the century—a job that will finally make them all rich enough to retire.

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SIDE JOBS

"There's nothing like a well-made, well-maintained engine. With people, you never know what to expect—they're wild, unpredictable, and not always who they appear to be. But an engine is an engine, and even when it's broken, there's usually a way to fix it. And when it's not broken, it doesn't bite back when you try to improve it. I don't dislike people—I simply don't like them as much as I like my machines. I know I'm good at what I do. It's a shame that others try to stop me from doing it."

—Mehvisa Pau Riojin, kasatha engineer

Side jobs are designed for when you need some extra encounters in between the big plot beats of an Adventure Path (especially the Fly Free or Die Adventure Path). Maybe your players managed to skip some of the content presented, or maybe you ended up with a bigger group of players than the adventure assumes. Additionally, if your players come up short of their expected wealth by level, a side job provides a worthwhile way to dump some extra credits on them without shoehorning extra wealth into an existing encounter.

Alternatively, if you aren't running Fly Free or Die, you can use the side jobs presented here for a quick palate cleanser between campaigns or when you're looking for a session's worth of fun and excitement. Whatever the reason, any group can easily use side jobs.

You should keep in mind that if you run your players through all of an Adventure Path's encounters in addition to these side jobs (especially if they're a typically-sized group who earns the average amount of credits and recovered gear), the PCs will end up with more experience and gear than the rest of the Adventure Path expects. This option can actually be good if your players seem to have a lot of trouble during encounters. Side jobs don't present a great deal of extra material and will likely have negligible impact on the PCs' overall effectiveness. However, by the same token, if your players already easily overcome the adventure's challenges, you might not want to give them yet another advantage going into the next set of encounters.

MEHVISA PAU RIOJIN

The PCs receive the three side jobs presented here through their fixer or other friendly contact. If you're running the Fly Free or Die Adventure Path, you can use the brenneri Tarika, who has contacts all over the Pact Worlds and beyond through her fledgling independent network; this connection only strengthens during "Professional Courtesy," and these side jobs can act as breathers during that adventure for when the PCs want to dry off.

The PCs' fixer reaches out to them when they know the crew is in or near an area where a contact has asked for help, passing along the important information or putting the crew in touch with the contact. The first job can occur just about anywhere in Near Space, but the other two jobs take place in and around Absalom Station.

After the first side job, the PCs' fixer gives their transponder information to **Mehvisa Pau Riojin** (NG female kasatha mechanic), an engineer who works on Absalom Station. Riojin requests help while the crew is at or near the station, then reaches out about another job later. Somewhat awkward, the kasatha prefers the company of machines over flesh-and-blood people, though she can relax a little around her best friend and business partner, the android Priy-4. Riojin's preference for solitude has led some to believe she dislikes them, and as a result, she has a couple

of low-key enemies. Those who get to know her—which takes time and patience—know she has a good heart but is better at connecting wires than connecting with people. Many on Absalom Station haven't given her that chance, resulting in some residents treating her cruelly or ignoring her completely.

Most everyone who meets Riojin soon learns she's an excellent mechanic. While she doesn't have many friends, she has a huge cadre of loyal customers who happily bear her frankness for the sake of her exquisite work. As long as the PCs don't act rudely toward her, she eventually warms up to them and happily trades work on their ship for specialty parts and interesting finds from their travels. Eventually, Riojin might even come to see the PCs as close friends, especially if any character is a construct species, such as an android.



**MEHVISA PAU
RIOJIN**

PROFESSIONAL COURTESY

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PART 3: DUEL IN THE DEEP

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ALIEN ARCHIVES

CODEX OF WORLDS

LET SLEEPING CAYPINS LIE

This side job is suitable for 5th-level characters.

BACKGROUND

Rok Dregnaugh (NE male human) is a wealthy merchant who typically remains secluded on his private asteroid. Lately, he has set his sights on acquiring a caypin—an amphibious predator that can detach its tentacles to hunt independently—for his personal zoo of exotic animals.

He dispatched the crew of the *Macomber*, his personal “collection crew,” to fetch a caypin from a swampy planet in Near Space. They successfully captured the creature, but as they left orbit, the caypin escaped from its tank and rampaged through the engineering deck, damaging several safety systems. Wounded from the beast’s rampage, the crew managed to corner the caypin in an escape pod. Just then, the *Macomber*’s engines exploded, ripping a hole through the ship’s hull and killing everyone on board—nearly everyone, that is.

The *Macomber*’s automated fail-safes launched the escape pod with the caypin inside. Meanwhile, ancient systems on a forgotten space station orbiting the planet flared to life and locked onto the escape pod. A tractor beam brought the pod to the station’s only functioning airlock, which cycled automatically. The caypin was released onto a still-sealed deck, where soil and plant samples taken from the world below created a flourishing environment in the hydroponics bays.

After examining the *Macomber*’s final logs, sent before the ship exploded, Rok Dregnaugh believes his caypin survived and will pay handsomely to have it retrieved.

THE JOB OFFER

Rok Dregnaugh posted a reward of 10,000 credits for the live recapture of his prize on infospheres across several star systems. The PCs’ fixer contacts them and relays the information, as they happen to be closest to the *Macomber*’s last known location.

Their fixer tells the PCs all they know. The wealthy client, Rok Dregnaugh, possesses many contacts. A ship he owns was transporting a creature for his private collection before it had a terrible accident with its engines. Dregnaugh believes that the creature survived but won’t elaborate on its species in the message. The fixer has reservations about this job because of this omission, but admits that the payment is significant, leaving it up to the PCs whether or not they want to take the job. The fixer warns them that based on Dregnaugh’s reputation, he’ll likely reduce payment if the creature arrives injured.

1. THE MACOMBER

Their fixer sends the PCs the *Macomber*’s coordinates, located in Near Space, 3d6 days of Drift travel away from the PCs’

current location. When the PCs arrive, they see the ship drifting serenely through space. Scans indicate that large sections of the *Macomber*’s hull have been blown open from the inside, which exposed all of its interior to the vacuum of space, and otherwise detect no signs of life.

The PCs can pull up alongside the *Macomber* and space walk over to it. The vessel’s lighting, artificial-gravity, and life-support systems are nonfunctional. They can access the interior through one of the larger blast holes in the hull or by prying open an exterior door.

It takes over an hour for the PCs to search through the *Macomber*; if at least half of the PCs succeed at a DC 20 Perception check, they find the information below within 30 minutes instead.

The PCs clearly discern that the ship’s engines suffered a catastrophic explosive failure. Most of the damage to the ship is centered on the engineering deck. The cargo hold contains a large glass container with two connected chambers—one has a large crack running up one side and a bit of water floating in it, while soil and plants fill the other like a terrarium. There are signs of combat—walls scorched from laser blasts and dried spatters of blood—in the cargo hold and in the corridors between the *Macomber*’s engineering deck and escape pods. Lastly, they find one of the escape pods missing. There are no signs of the crew’s bodies, which likely got blown into space.

A PC who succeeds at a DC 22 Engineering check while examining the remnants of the destroyed engines discovers that the explosion likely occurred after its safety systems sustained damage. A PC on the bridge who succeeds at a DC 25 Computers check can access the *Macomber*’s logs and learn that the crew attempted to transport a caypin at Dregnaugh’s behest. The captain didn’t have time to make any entries in the time between the caypin’s escape and when it caused the ship’s destruction. However, the ship’s systems show that one of the escape pods automatically launched due to a catastrophic hull breach. The PCs can easily trace the trajectory of the escape pod: it headed back toward a nearby planet, though it seems to have disappeared before it breached the atmosphere.

A PC who succeeds at a DC 21 Life Science check can tell that the container in the cargo hold can confine an amphibious creature (either a single Large one or several Medium or smaller ones). If the PCs recovered the *Macomber*’s logs, the character who succeeded at this check recognizes that the tank was meant to hold a caypin. A character who has at least 2 ranks in Engineering or Life Science and 100 UPBs can repair the tank with 2 hours’ worth of work. However, the PCs must find some way to refill it with water and transport it to their ship.

Treasure: A small, locked cabinet (Engineering DC 20 to open) in the cargo bay contains four tier 2 sedatives.

2. ABANDONED SPACE STATION (CR 6)

With conventional thrusters, it takes several hours for the PCs' ship to reach the escape pod's last known location. When the PCs arrive, they immediately spot a large, dilapidated space station in orbit around the swamp planet. Cursory scans reveal that the structure is over 200 years old and of an unfamiliar design. A section of the station has limited power, provided by some kind of still-functioning hybrid reactor. The *Macomber's* escape pod has docked at an airlock in this section. A PC who succeeds at a DC 22 Computers check can detect several signs of life aboard the space station; most remain stationary, though a dozen moving life-forms appear clustered together.

The PCs can dock their vessel at an adjacent airlock with no trouble and make their way aboard. Once they pass through the airlock, the smell of sulfurous flora and the nearly unbearable humidity overwhelms their senses. Vines grow along the walls and ceiling (apparently nourished by UV lighting), and half an inch of fetid water covers the floor. If the PCs follow this natural encroachment, they find the source: an overgrown hydroponics bay that resembles a bog.

Creature: The caypin settled in the hydroponic bog, injured from its escape but still alert. After everything it has gone through, the confused and extremely hostile creature lashes out at anything that approaches it. Before the PCs arrived, the caypin detached one set of its feeding appendages to scour the bog for nutrients. This set attempts to sneak up on the PCs and take them by surprise. The PCs will likely want to deal nonlethal damage to the caypin to subdue it, so feel free to remind them of the sedatives they might have acquired from the *Macomber* to help with this task.

CAYPIN

CR 6

XP 2,400

HP 90 (currently 80; *Starfinder Alien Archive* 26)

Development: If the PCs kill the caypin, they should realize that Dregnaugh probably won't pay them and might even get angry. At this point, they should leave the scene and possibly erase any traces of their presence. If the PCs subdue the beast, they can drag it back to their ship to place in the (hopefully repaired) tank from the *Macomber* for a long journey to the drop-off point.

GETTING PAID

Before the PCs return the caypin to Dregnaugh, a rival crew shows up asking for a temporary truce. The captain reveals that a conservationist group who believes Rok Dregnaugh's private zoo is a cruel practice hired them to prevent the merchant from acquiring more creatures. The rival crew offers the PCs the 2,000 credits the conservationists paid to rescue the caypin, though they know this amount doesn't compare to what Dregnaugh offered. If a PC tries to negotiate and succeeds at a DC 22 Diplomacy or Intimidate check, the captain agrees to throw in a backup generator and brown force field armor upgrades.

If the PCs hand over the caypin, the rival crew advises the PCs to cover their tracks. Dregnaugh is a powerful man, and if he finds out what happened, the PCs might find themselves with a rich and well-connected enemy. If the PCs don't turn over the caypin to the rival crew, the captain shakes her head sadly and leaves peacefully.

Rok Dregnaugh resides on a private asteroid in Near Space, so the PCs must take another 3d6 days of Drift travel to reach the drop-off point. During this time, the PCs should try to heal the caypin of any it received. For every 10 Hit Points the caypin lacks, Dregnaugh reduces his offered payment by 1,000 credits; if the creature has fewer than 20 Hit Points, Dregnaugh refuses to compensate the PCs, citing that the caypin is close to death, so he'll have to pay for its care.

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THE RAT'S NEST

This side job is suitable for 5th-level characters.

BACKGROUND

Absalom Station already had a well-known electrovore problem, but it has experienced a sudden rise in occurrences thanks to the schemes of a local space goblin con artist named **Zootgarq** (NE male space goblin). The trickster trained a nest of the so-called conduit rats to attack those passing through his territory—a stretch of isolated corridors between several docking bays and engineering workshops. He then tries to sell the victims his “proven anti-electrovore spray” (actually just aerosol cans of engine grease with Zootgarq’s face painted over the label). While Zootgarq has made a few credits with this scheme, most locals have figured out that they can simply circumvent the infested hallways. Zootgarq has become desperate for more cash when the PCs arrive at Absalom Station, and he makes the mistake of launching an assault on them as they transport equipment for a new ally.

THE JOB OFFER

The PCs arrive at Absalom Station between other jobs for some starship repairs and upgrades. Before they dock, their fixer puts them in touch with Mehvisa Pau Riojin (page 39), a kasath mechanic who used to work for a large corporation (if you’re running the Fly Free or Die Adventure Path, she’s a former employee of the Company). Even if the PCs can perform the maintenance themselves, they might want to use Riojin’s workshop. Riojin gives the PCs clearance to land at her bay, and when they exit their ship, the engineer greets them curtly. Though brusque, she isn’t intentionally rude. A PC who succeeds at a DC 18 Sense Motive check realizes that Riojin seems preoccupied with another matter.

If the PCs ask Riojin what’s wrong while she assesses their vessel, she tells them she expected a delivery of necessary equipment from the other side of the station, but her supplier has been reluctant to transport it. Riojin doesn’t know why, and her work has kept her too busy to retrieve the gear herself. She offers the PCs 4,000 credits (in either cash, ship repairs, or a combination of both) to pick up her equipment.

Riojin suggests that the PCs use equipment to make carrying the cargo easier, such as a cargo lifter or a suit of powered armor. If they don’t have any such equipment, she lets the PCs borrow her cargo lifter powered armor, so long as they promise to return it in perfect condition. She sternly warns the PCs that if the cargo lifter is damaged, they must cover the cost of repairs (or the cost of replacing it, depending on the extent of the damage).

THE PICK-UP

Riojin gives the PCs the address of her supplier, a hulking, bald android named Platform-2. The android happily points out Riojin’s shipment when the PCs arrive: five crates of heavy equipment, each weighing 5 bulk. A PC who succeeds at a DC 18 Engineering check while examining the machinery within the crates can discern their rarity and that replacing the equipment would present more than a trivial matter. If the PCs don’t have their own powered armor with them or didn’t take Riojin’s offer to borrow hers, Platform-2 can sell them a cargo lifter for the usual market price of 2,150 credits.

If the PCs ask why Platform-2 has reservations about delivering Riojin’s equipment, the android shakes his head and says, “All my usual couriers are raising their rates, claiming something about hazard pay due to all the rats.” He doesn’t know any more and simply shrugs when pressed.

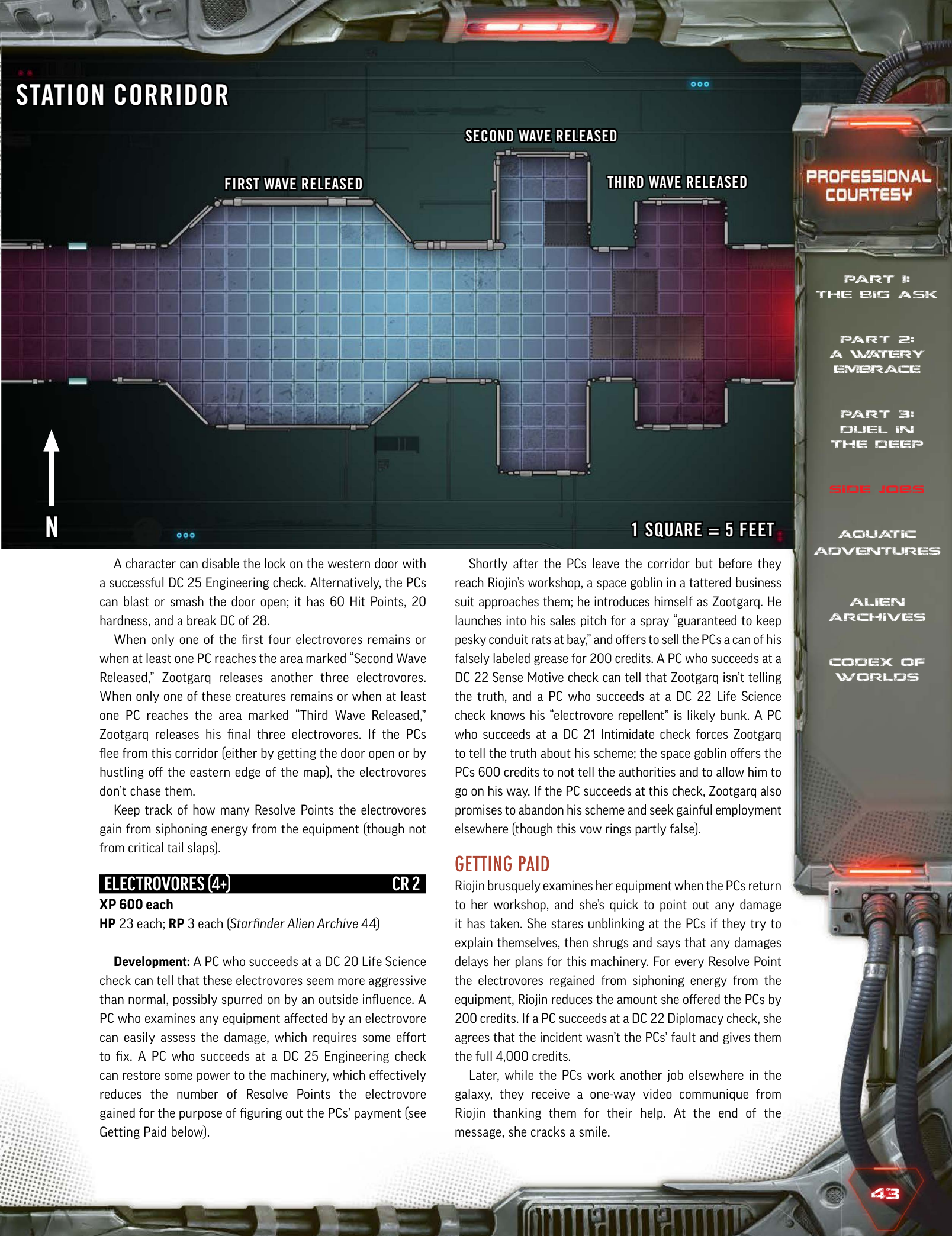
If the PCs poke around on Absalom Station’s infosphere for further information, they don’t discover anything pertinent. A PC who succeeds at a DC 28 Computers check comes across a recent forum post complaining that the electrovore menace aboard the station has gotten worse over the past few months, though it doesn’t specify locations. A dismissive reply states that “most conduit rats turn tail once you give them a hard smack on the snout.” The original poster notes, “These didn’t.”

STATION CORRIDOR (CR 6+)

As the PCs move Riojin’s equipment to her workshop, they pass through Zootgarq’s corridor. They will need to successfully escort their goods through a gauntlet of electrovores to make their delivery. The PCs are assumed to have strapped the crates to their backs or attached them to a cargo lifter, essentially leaving their hands free. They begin at the western end of the corridor.

Creatures: When the PCs reach the area marked “First Wave Released” (see the map on page 43), Zootgarq triggers his ambush, which shuts and locks the door at the western end of the corridor. Simultaneously, four electrovores emerge from the ducts near the ceiling to surround the PCs and attack using their electrical discharge ability. Each round, one electrovore (usually the closest to a PC carrying one of Riojin’s crates, but otherwise determined randomly) attempts a grapple combat maneuver against a crate. A crate has an AC of 10 plus the Dexterity modifier of the PC carrying it. If an electrovore successfully grapples a crate, it can siphon energy from the equipment within as a move action, regaining 1 Resolve Point. A PC can remove an adjacent grappling electrovore with a successful grapple combat maneuver or a successful DC 18 Strength check.

STATION CORRIDOR



SECOND WAVE RELEASED

FIRST WAVE RELEASED

THIRD WAVE RELEASED

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1 SQUARE = 5 FEET

A character can disable the lock on the western door with a successful DC 25 Engineering check. Alternatively, the PCs can blast or smash the door open; it has 60 Hit Points, 20 hardness, and a break DC of 28.

When only one of the first four electrovores remains or when at least one PC reaches the area marked "Second Wave Released," Zootgarq releases another three electrovores. When only one of these creatures remains or when at least one PC reaches the area marked "Third Wave Released," Zootgarq releases his final three electrovores. If the PCs flee from this corridor (either by getting the door open or by hustling off the eastern edge of the map), the electrovores don't chase them.

Keep track of how many Resolve Points the electrovores gain from siphoning energy from the equipment (though not from critical tail slaps).

ELECTROVORES (4+)

CR 2

XP 600 each

HP 23 each; RP 3 each (*Starfinder Alien Archive* 44)

Development: A PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Life Science check can tell that these electrovores seem more aggressive than normal, possibly spurred on by an outside influence. A PC who examines any equipment affected by an electrovore can easily assess the damage, which requires some effort to fix. A PC who succeeds at a DC 25 Engineering check can restore some power to the machinery, which effectively reduces the number of Resolve Points the electrovore gained for the purpose of figuring out the PCs' payment (see Getting Paid below).

Shortly after the PCs leave the corridor but before they reach Riojin's workshop, a space goblin in a tattered business suit approaches them; he introduces himself as Zootgarq. He launches into his sales pitch for a spray "guaranteed to keep pesky conduit rats at bay," and offers to sell the PCs a can of his falsely labeled grease for 200 credits. A PC who succeeds at a DC 22 Sense Motive check can tell that Zootgarq isn't telling the truth, and a PC who succeeds at a DC 22 Life Science check knows his "electrovore repellent" is likely bunk. A PC who succeeds at a DC 21 Intimidate check forces Zootgarq to tell the truth about his scheme; the space goblin offers the PCs 600 credits to not tell the authorities and to allow him to go on his way. If the PC succeeds at this check, Zootgarq also promises to abandon his scheme and seek gainful employment elsewhere (though this vow rings partly false).

GETTING PAID

Riojin brusquely examines her equipment when the PCs return to her workshop, and she's quick to point out any damage it has taken. She stares unblinkingly at the PCs if they try to explain themselves, then shrugs and says that any damages delays her plans for this machinery. For every Resolve Point the electrovores regained from siphoning energy from the equipment, Riojin reduces the amount she offered the PCs by 200 credits. If a PC succeeds at a DC 22 Diplomacy check, she agrees that the incident wasn't the PCs' fault and gives them the full 4,000 credits.

Later, while the PCs work another job elsewhere in the galaxy, they receive a one-way video communique from Riojin thanking them for their help. At the end of the message, she cracks a smile.

SPACE JUNK

This side job is suitable for 6th-level characters.

BACKGROUND

A group of raxilite ecoterrorists, sick of seeing so many starships shooting across space and leaving debris in their wake, have set a trap outside of Absalom Station's orbit. Starting with a trio of tiny raxilite Doons (*Starfinder Adventure Path #20: The Last Refuge* 49) hidden among some biomechanical wreckage and emitting faint but curious energy readings, the radicals have captured several vessels to form a haphazard flotilla. As more ships come to investigate, the raxilites set upon them, offering the crews one chance to surrender peacefully and leave their "polluting vehicles" behind—or face dire consequences.

The raxilites have conducted their scheme for a few weeks, but the survivors from their raids have yet to contact the Stewards, so their efforts haven't attracted much attention. Their leader, a talented bioengineer named Taraxa, has been tinkering with equipment salvaged from the captured ships to create an efficient biomechanical engine that can move the entire flotilla. If she succeeds, these raxilites could take their unique brand of activism across the galaxy.

THE JOB OFFER

Mehvisa Pau Riojin hears word about the unusual energy signature from unexplored wreckage outside of Absalom Station's orbit and contacts the PCs directly for a simple salvage job, or so she believes. Riojin offers the PCs 2,000 credits to bring her some "interesting trinkets or equipment" from the wreckage, saying they can keep anything else they find.

THE FLOTILLA

The PCs have no trouble reaching the coordinates of the so-called wreckage. As they approach, computer scans reveal five fully intact starships, all of them powered down, floating among chunks of rock and metal; the ships don't seem to have functioning transponders, so they have no way to identify them through a scan. The PCs also spot a spiderweb of biomechanical tethers connecting the vessels as well as a central asteroid.

The PCs can dock with or spacewalk over to any of the five ships, or they might make their way onto the asteroid. Whichever of the five ships they explore first, they receive an encrypted transmission with a set of demands: abandon their ship here by heading to area **5** and using the escape pods on that hulk, or else—the consequences are left intentionally vague. The PCs can track the source of the transmission with a successful DC 26 Computers check, which points them toward the debris field's central asteroid (area **7**).

1. ARODEN'S FOLLY

This light freighter has several symbols on the hull marking it as property of the Knights of Golarion. Similar icons decorate its interior, though the PCs quickly notice that all of the ship's electrical equipment has been removed.

Treasure: By succeeding at a DC 24 Perception check while exploring *Aroden's Folly*, the PCs can find a sintered longsword with a red-and-gold hilt.

2. BRASS EAGLE

A PC who succeeds at a DC 22 Culture check while examining this explorer can tell by some subtle flourishes in its design that this ship likely belonged to the Free Captains of the Diaspora. The interior has been stripped clean of usable equipment but otherwise looks undisturbed.

3. STEVEDORE-ONE

Compiler Enterprises built this heavy freighter for anacite cargo merchants. Its blocky silhouette and utilitarian interior suggest that the vessel was designed for robotic life-forms.

4. WAR RAZOR (CR 8)

The fiercest-looking of the captured vessels snatched by the raxilites, the *War Razor* is a destroyer that has clearly undergone some alterations from the cultists of the Devourer. The raxilites have further modified *War Razor* to act as a kind of greenhouse with sheets of thick vines and plants growing almost everywhere.

Creatures: The raxilites converted this undergrowth-choked ship to a quartet of vracineas, carnivorous plants that use the rooms and corridors as stalking grounds.

VRACINEAS (4)

CR 4

XP 1,200 each

HP 51 each (*Starfinder Alien Archive* 3130)

5. THE UNBREAKING WAVE

The undead crew of *The Unbreaking Wave*—a bulk freighter—fled in their escape pods, and the raxilites replaced the pods with biomechanical versions in case future captured crews need them. These seed-shaped escape pods clearly don't match the flowing design of the rest of this large vessel.

6. TETHERS

Biomechanical tethers that resemble bluish vines crisscross the spaces between the flotilla's ships, allowing the raxilites to use their LFAN augmentations to zip quickly between the ships when necessary. They also enable the transfer of power between the ships and the raxilites' biolab (area **8**).



THE FLOTILLA

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7. ASTEROID SURFACE

The PCs can explore the barren surface of this central asteroid, which measures less than a mile in diameter. A PC who succeeds at a DC 30 Perception or Physical Science check finds a constructed hatch in the rock, though it only has enough space for Tiny creatures to fit through.

8. RAXILITE BIOLAB (CR 6)

A 150-foot corridor (also sized for Tiny creatures) lies beyond the hatch, leading to an expansive biolab whose ceiling has a 7-foot clearance. Medium creatures can stand and move normally, but Large creatures need to squeeze (if they somehow managed to first get down the corridor).

Creatures: Taraxa and her raxilite activists work here, developing their propulsion system and broadcasting their threats to anyone they lure in. If the PCs reach this area or find a way to contact Taraxa (possible if they traced the original signal to this location), she negotiates with them as described in Getting Paid (below). However, if the PCs make the first hostile move, the raxilites respond in kind.

RAXILITE RESEARCHERS (6)

CR 1/2

XP 200 each

HP 12 each (*Starfinder Alien Archive* 3 82)

TARAXA

CR 4

XP 1,200

Female raxilite mechanic (*Starfinder Alien Archive* 3 82)

HP 45

Development: If the PCs defeat the raxilites, they can take the half-finished biomechanical engine found here in the lab, which might be of interest to Riojin.

GETTING PAID

If the PCs get into a position where they can bargain with the raxilites, Taraxa willingly explains her mission and listens to alternatives. A PC who succeeds at a DC 28 Diplomacy or Intimidate check can convince the raxilites to either stop capturing ships or let them in on the scheme. A PC who succeeds at a DC 26 Engineering or Physical Science check can point the raxilites in a different direction, allowing their research to continue without the need for further ambushes. For aiding them, the raxilites promise the PCs a payment of 3,000 credits, which arrives in a few weeks.

If the PCs return to Riojin with the raxilites' biomechanical prototype, she gets quite excited. She gives the PCs the promised 2,000 credits, plus an additional 4,000 credits for the engine. If the PCs didn't bring anything back from the flotilla, Riojin offers the PCs 1,000 credits as a token of thanks.

Alternatively, the PCs can introduce Taraxa and her raxilites to Riojin, though this approach requires a character to succeed at two DC 22 Diplomacy checks to convince each party. Riojin gives the PCs the promised 2,000 credits payment, and Taraxa contacts the PCs again after several weeks. Through Riojin's and the raxilites' combined efforts, they can offer an upgrade to the PCs' starship that treats the vessel as one size smaller for determining the cost in BP to upgrade their Drift engines!



AQUATIC ADVENTURES

"The cold, the pressure, the quiet, the dark—a body and mind can get used to all that, especially when the pay's right. But there're things in the depths that don't make sense. Things that rise up out of nothing and swallow entire crews without a sound. I saw some strange stuff, but worse than seeing is just... feeling it, all around me, all the time. Waiting. And you're telling me people actually choose to go down there for some kind of thrill? You won't catch me so much as stepping in a puddle after what I've been through. Nope. Never again."

—Righteous, deep-sea drill operator

AQUATIC RULES

The following rules represent a compilation of and expansion on the rules for underwater adventure presented in various sections of the *Starfinder Core Rulebook*. Most of these rules relate to creatures that are completely submerged, except where noted otherwise.

SURVIVING UNDERWATER

Most *Starfinder* adventures assume that the PCs wear armor, which affords environmental protections for a number of days equal to its item level (expended in 1-hour increments) unless otherwise specified. These protections provide two primary benefits to a submersed creature: self-contained breathing and protection from the pressures of extreme depths, as described below. The space suit personal item (*Core Rulebook* 231) also provides these protections.

Most adventures assume that NPCs have adapted to their native environments and therefore ignore many of the dangers and penalties that follow.

SUFFOCATION AND DROWNING

Unless a creature has a way to breathe underwater (or doesn't need to breathe), it must hold its breath or risk drowning. A creature can hold its breath for a number of rounds equal to twice its Constitution score. If the creature takes a standard or full action, the remaining duration that the creature can hold its breath is reduced by 1 round. After these rounds have elapsed, the creature must attempt a Constitution check (DC = 10 + 1 per previous check) each round to continue holding its breath. When the creature fails one of these Constitution checks, it begins to suffocate. On the first round of suffocation, it is reduced to 0 Hit Points and becomes unconscious (but stable). The following round, it is no longer stable and gains the dying condition. On the third round, the creature suffocates and dies.

An unconscious character must begin attempting Constitution checks immediately upon losing air access (or upon becoming unconscious, if the character was conscious when they lost access to air). Once the character fails one of these checks, they are immediately reduced to 0 Hit Points and gain the dying condition. On the following round, they suffocate and die.

Certain effects, such as androids' constructed racial trait, the *life bubble* spell, and the water breathing universal creature rule allow creatures to mitigate or ignore this danger.

EXTREME DEPTH

At certain depths, the pressure of the surrounding water becomes so great that it endangers non-adapted creatures (such as most PCs, including aquatic species).

A creature in deep water (100–999 feet deep) must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC = 15 + 1 per previous check) or gain the sickened condition. This condition ends when the creature returns to a normal depth.

SWIMMING EXAMPLE

Suppose a creature has a swim speed of 30 feet. With a successful check to swim (if required), it can swim forward 5 feet, turn 45 degrees to the left, and swim 5 feet diagonally, all of which costs a total of 15 feet of its movement. The creature can then turn 90 degrees to ascend 5 feet straight up, which costs another 15 feet of movement (10 feet to change its direction and 5 feet to move). At this point, it has used its 30 feet of swimming movement, so its move action ends.

Severe depths (1,000 feet or deeper) are far more dangerous. Every minute, a creature not accustomed to these depths that needs to breathe must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC = 15 + 1 per previous check) or begin to suffocate as though they've lost access to air (see Suffocation and Drowning above). In addition, every hour while at these depths, all such creatures without environmental protections must succeed at an additional Fortitude save (DC = 15 + 1 per previous check) or take 2d6 bludgeoning and 2d6 cold damage.

Note that even aquatic creatures and others able to breathe underwater (or who don't breathe at all) are still subject to the non-suffocation effects described above.

UNDERWATER MOVEMENT

Moving underwater can prove difficult for land-based creatures that don't have a natural swim speed. Those with swim speeds (whether from their species, gear, magic, or some other effect) have distinct advantages.

SWIMMING WITHOUT A SWIM SPEED

A creature that takes a move action to move its speed while underwater must choose a direction to swim (including up or down) and attempt an Athletics check to swim. The DC of this check is 10 in calm water but increases in rough conditions (DC 15), stormy conditions (DC 20), and maelstrom conditions (DC 30). Strong currents, debris, and other environmental conditions can increase this DC further. A creature can't take 10 to swim in combat or in stormy or maelstrom conditions, even if not distracted or in immediate danger.

On a successful check to swim, the creature moves half its land speed in a straight line in its chosen direction. If the creature wants to change direction (including ascending or descending) while swimming, it costs an additional 5 feet of movement to turn 45 degrees. See the Swimming Example sidebar for an example of a creature swimming and changing direction.

If a creature fails a check to swim by 4 or less, it makes no progress. If it fails by 5 or more, it sinks, moving 5 feet directly downward.

Every hour while swimming, a creature without a swim speed must succeed at a DC 20 Athletics check or take 1d6 nonlethal damage from fatigue.

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SWIMMING WITH A SWIM SPEED

If a creature has a swim speed (whether from its species or another source), it can move that full swim speed when it takes a move action to move its speed. This movement uses the same rules presented in the Swimming without a Swim Speed sidebar on page 47, which also provides an example of a creature swimming and changing direction.

A creature with a swim speed doesn't need to attempt an Athletics check to swim except in hazardous circumstances, including stormy and maelstrom conditions. It also gains a +8 bonus to Athletics checks to swim and can always take 10 while swimming, even during combat and when distracted or in immediate danger. Creatures with a swim speed can also use the run action while swimming, provided that they swim in a straight line.

A creature with a swim speed (such as from their species) doesn't need to attempt an Athletics check to avoid fatigue damage for each hour it swims.

UNDERWATER COMBAT

Non-marine creatures often have considerable difficulty fighting in water. The following adjustments apply whenever a character walks in chest-deep water, becomes fully submerged, or traverses along the bottom of a body of water.

Attacks: Attacks made underwater take a -2 penalty. Attacks that deal electricity damage take a -4 penalty instead of a -2 penalty.

Attacks from above Water: Characters have cover against attacks originating from above water in the following situations: characters are fully immersed, or they're swimming or floating at least chest-deep in water.

Thrown Weapons: When used underwater, the range of thrown weapons is reduced to a maximum of 5 feet; this limitation overrides any abilities that normally increase a thrown weapon's range or range increment (such as the grenade expert ability of the soldier's bombard fighting style).

Damage: Most attacks underwater deal half damage (minimum 1 damage). However, melee attacks that deal piercing damage deal full damage, and any attacks that deal fire damage (including spells that deal fire damage) do one-quarter damage rather than half damage.

Combat Maneuvers: The distance you move a target with a successful bull rush is reduced by 5 feet. The trip combat maneuver has no effect underwater.

Burning Condition: Effects that would apply the burning condition (such as the burn critical hit effect) instead deal the damage listed for the condition only once (the normal underwater reduction for fire damage still applies; see Damage above), and the creature doesn't receive the burning condition.

Spells: Some spells work differently underwater, either as stated in their spell description or per the GM's discretion. Spells with the fire descriptor often function differently when used underwater.

Prone: Creatures swimming in water can drop prone only if they're standing on the bottom of a body of water. If a creature underwater would be knocked prone by an effect, it instead gains the flat-footed condition and takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls. These effects last until the affected creature takes a move action to reorient itself.

Stealth and Detection: It can be hard to find cover or concealment to hide underwater (except along the seafloor). How far a character can see underwater depends on the water's clarity. As a guideline, creatures can see 4d8 × 100 feet if the water is clear and 1d8 × 10 feet in murky water. Running water always counts as murky unless it's in a particularly large, slow-moving river.

PLAYER OPTIONS

Adventures in aquatic environments present opportunities for characters to showcase a different set of skills and acquire new types of gear.

AQUATIC FEATS

The following feats are useful for characters who spend a lot of time in and around water.

AGILE SWIMMER

You can dart around underwater like a fish.

Prerequisites: Racial swim speed.

Benefit: When you take a move action to swim your speed, the first two times you change your direction by 45 degrees during that movement, it doesn't cost an additional 5 feet of movement.

Normal: Each time you change your direction by 45 degrees while swimming, it costs an additional 5 feet of movement.

EXPANSIVE BREATH

You're much more adept at holding your breath than others of your species.

Prerequisites: Con 11.

Benefit: You can hold your breath for 50% longer than normal for your species (equal to 1-1/2 times your Constitution score more for most species).

MASSIVE SPLASH (COMBAT)

You can batter the water's surface to create a huge sheet of water that temporarily conceals you from your foes.

Prerequisites: Str 11, base attack bonus +1.

Benefit: When partially (but not fully) submerged in water, you can take a move action to create a massive splash, causing your space (minimum of one 5-foot square) to provide concealment until the beginning of your next turn.

SUPERHEATED SPELLS (COMBAT)

Your particular brand of fire magic can superheat air or water instead of producing fire, allowing your spells to remain effective underwater.

Prerequisites: Ability to cast spells, Mysticism 5 ranks.

Benefit: Your spells, spell-like abilities, and supernatural abilities that deal fire damage deal an additional amount of fire damage equal to half your level (minimum 1), and they deal full damage underwater.

Normal: Fire damage deals one-quarter damage underwater.

UNDERWATER BRAWLER (COMBAT)

Even underwater, you can leverage your strength to devastating effect.

Prerequisites: Str 15, base attack bonus +5.

Benefit: Your melee attacks that deal kinetic damage deal full damage underwater.

Normal: Bludgeoning and slashing damage is reduced by half underwater.

UNSINKABLE CASTER (COMBAT)

You tap into your inner focus, allowing you to cast spells even in dire situations.

Prerequisites: Ability to cast spells, character level 3rd.

Benefit: You can concentrate sufficiently to cast spells while subject to violent weather or attempting Constitution checks to hold your breath.

Normal: A creature that's in violent weather or attempting Constitution checks to hold its breath can't concentrate enough to cast spells.

WATER MAGIC

You have a magical affinity for spells that manipulate water.

Prerequisites: Ability to cast spells.

Benefit: The DC of spells you cast with the water descriptor increases by 1. Any damage done by spells you cast with the water descriptor increases by an amount equal to half your caster level.

GIANT PIPEFISH COMPANIONS

On countless watery worlds across the galaxy, convergent evolution has resulted in a vast array of somewhat similar creatures known collectively as giant pipefish. While the size, color, and exact shape of these relatively tame carnivores vary based on their ecosystem, they all have one thing in common: symbiotic relationships with other creatures. A giant pipefish has a fragile, tubular form that ends in a thin, sharp feeding tube. It relies on filter feeders, scavengers, and other hangers-on to attach themselves to its cylindrical body and to provide physical protection against predators and other threats; in exchange, the riders get a free meal out of the pipefish's constant movement (in the case of filter feeders) or scraps (in the case of scavengers). Convincing a giant pipefish that you're a friend and not just another meal is no easy feat; the DC of Survival checks to bond with a giant pipefish companion is 3 higher than normal.

The complete rules for creature companions appear on pages 138-147 of *Starfinder Alien Archive 3*.

GIANT PIPEFISH

LEVELS 1-20

Medium or Large animal

Senses blindsense (vibration) 60 ft.

Good Save Ref; Poor Saves Fort, Will

Speed 10 ft., swim 40 ft.

Melee Attack feeding tube (P; critical needle maw)

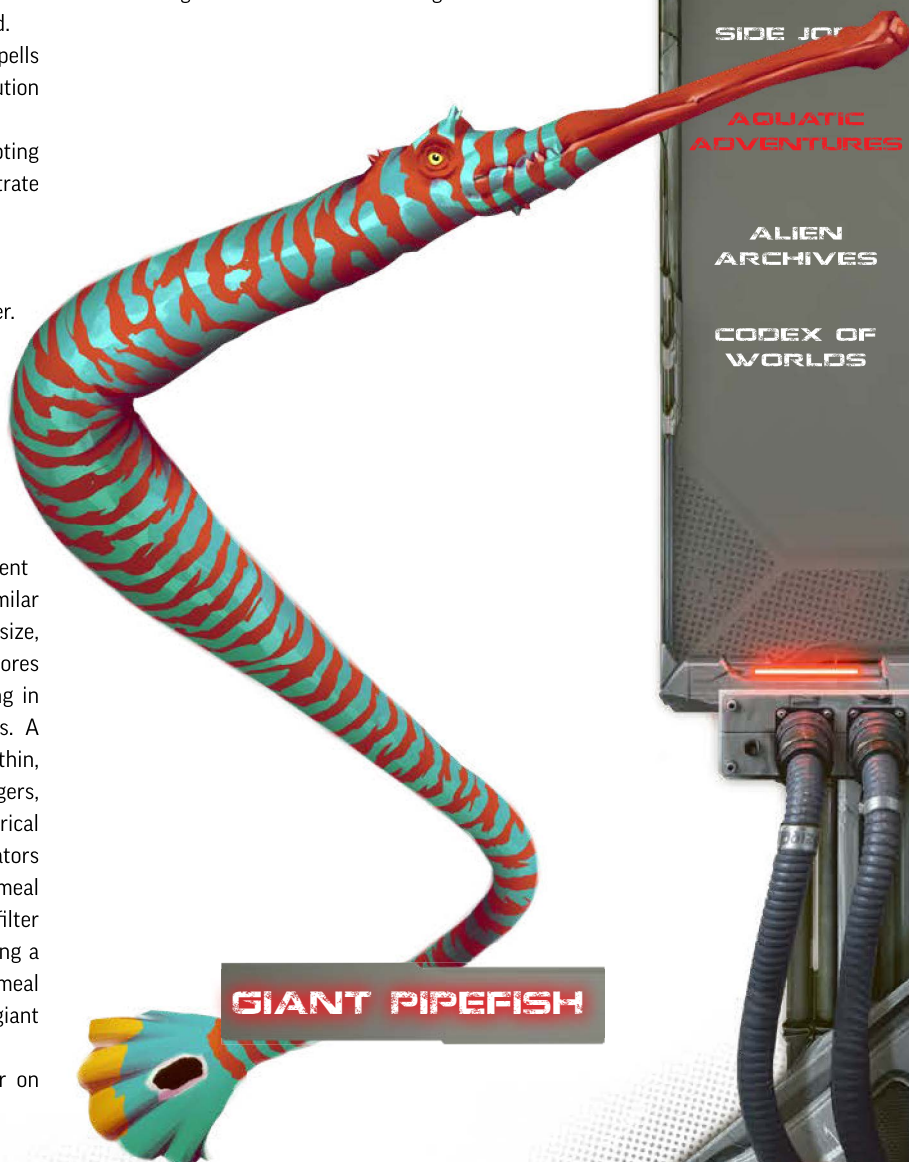
Space 5 ft. (Medium) or 10 ft. (Large); **Reach** 5 ft.

Ability Modifiers Dex, Str

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Needle Maw (Ex, 5th level) Giant pipefish are excellent at finding weak spots in their prey. When a giant pipefish rolls a 19 or 20 on its melee attack, it applies the wound critical hit effect to its target (save DC = 7 + the giant pipefish's level); roll a d12 instead of a d20 on the Wounding Weapons table.

Rapid Turning (Ex) Giant pipefish are incredibly agile swimmers, so it doesn't cost them additional movement to change direction while swimming.



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AQUATIC GEAR

These items are available in most shops, especially those found on watery worlds or adjacent to large bodies of water.

BEACON BUOYS

LEVEL 3

| TECHNOLOGICAL ITEM | PRICE 1,250 | BULK 1 |
|--------------------|-------------|--------|
| CAPACITY 10 | USAGE 1/DAY | |

Beacon buoys are tiny, specialized flotation devices, each of which can self-adjust to float in place in water of any density. You can deploy a single beacon buoy as a move action, and each is automatically paired with a simple application that can be installed on most comm units and datapads. To deploy a buoy so that its data proves useful, it must have sufficient space by being at least 1 mile from any other buoy you've deployed. When you have at least 2 buoys deployed with sufficient space, you can use their relational-data feed to give you a circumstance bonus to Piloting checks to navigate in a vehicle and to Survival checks to orienteer underwater. This bonus is equal to half the number of buoys you've deployed with sufficient space (to a maximum of +10).

CURRENT GENERATOR

LEVEL VARIES

| HYBRID ITEM | PRICE VARIES | BULK 2 |
|--------------|---------------|--------|
| CAPACITY 100 | USAGE 10/HOUR | |

This large technomagical device can create strong currents in water. It's often used for the short-distance transport of material in underwater excavations, but it has limitless applications. A *current generator* takes a full action to activate, at which point it creates a strong current in a line of a length that depends on the mark of the generator. Creatures that start their turn in or enter the area must succeed at a Fortitude saving throw (DC = 10 + item level of the generator) or be moved 10 feet in the direction of the line, away from the *current generator*. Swimming through the area requires an Athletics check to swim as though in stormy conditions; the DC of this check is 10 higher if moving in the opposite direction of the current, and 5 higher otherwise.

| MODEL | LEVEL | PRICE | LINE |
|-------|-------|--------|---------|
| Mk 1 | 5 | 2,750 | 50 ft. |
| Mk 2 | 10 | 17,000 | 100 ft. |
| Mk 3 | 15 | 95,000 | 300 ft. |

EMERGENCY SURFACER

LEVEL 5

| TECHNOLOGICAL ITEM | PRICE 2,750 | BULK 1 |
|--------------------|-------------|--------|
|--------------------|-------------|--------|

When activated with a standard action, an emergency surfacer propels you to the surface at a rate of 100 feet per round for 10 rounds. You can release the surfacer at any time to stop your ascent (including at any point during the 100-foot movement per round); stopping this movement doesn't require an action. An emergency surfacer ceases to function once it reaches the surface and has no effect above water. After use, an emergency surfacer must be recharged for 10 minutes in an atmosphere before it can be used again.

MICROJET

LEVEL 2

| TECHNOLOGICAL ITEM | PRICE 150 | BULK – |
|--------------------|-----------|--------|
|--------------------|-----------|--------|

This single-use, miniature jet pack can be attached to a thrown weapon (including a grenade) to increase its thrown range underwater to 60 feet (instead of the normal limitation of 5 feet). You can use the microjets as part of an action to make a ranged attack; this attack uses your Dexterity modifier instead of your Strength modifier.

QUICK-DIVE PEARL

LEVEL 3

| MAGIC ITEM | PRICE 210 | BULK – |
|------------|-----------|--------|
|------------|-----------|--------|

While underwater, you can activate this single-use magical pearl as a move action while holding it in one hand. Once activated, it sinks with preternatural speed, taking you with it at a rate of 60 feet per round. You can release the pearl at any time to stop your descent (including at any point during the 60-foot movement per round); stopping this movement doesn't require an action. A *quick-dive pearl* sinks for 600 feet before its magic fades and becomes a mundane pearl worth 10 credits.

SCUBA GEAR

LEVEL 1

| TECHNOLOGICAL ITEM | PRICE 25 | BULK 1 |
|--------------------|----------|--------|
|--------------------|----------|--------|

Although this scuba gear offers little protection against attacks, it does provide 24 hours of breathable air; this capacity must be used in 1-hour increments but can be recharged in the same way as armor environmental protections. In addition, while wearing scuba gear, you gain a swim speed of 20 feet, and you don't need to attempt Fortitude checks to avoid being sickened due to being in deep water (underwater at depths between 100 and 999 feet). You can't wear scuba gear while also wearing armor.

Unlike armor, scuba gear isn't designed for the rigors of combat. Whenever you take damage while wearing scuba gear, you must succeed at a Reflex saving throw (DC equal to the damage dealt) or else the scuba gear's oxygen system suffers catastrophic failure, gaining the broken condition and losing all ability to provide breathable air in 1d6 minutes unless repaired. If you fail this saving throw while the scuba gear already has the broken condition, it loses its ability to provide breathable air in 1d6 rounds unless repaired.

SONAR HELMET

LEVEL 5

| TECHNOLOGICAL ITEM | PRICE 3,000 | BULK 1 |
|--------------------|-------------|--------|
|--------------------|-------------|--------|

| CAPACITY 40 | USAGE 1/HOUR | |
|-------------|--------------|--|
|-------------|--------------|--|

When you wear this advanced headgear underwater, you gain blindsight (sound) with a range of 30 feet, blindsense (sound) with a range of 100 feet, and the ability to detect the presence of Medium or larger creatures at a distance of up to 1,000 feet (depending on conditions and subject to GM discretion). These senses apply only to creatures and objects within the same body of water in which you have line of effect.

AQUATIC SPELLS

Throughout the millennia, many spellcasters have taken interest in the properties of water and discovered ways to harness its fluidity and strength for themselves.

ALGAE BLOOM

School conjuration

Casting Time 1 standard action

Range medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

Area 20-ft.-radius burst

Duration 1 round/level (D)

Saving Throw Fortitude negates;

Spell Resistance no

You conjure a toxic algae bloom composed of particles that are sufficiently tiny to bypass standard environmental protections. Creatures that breathe (whether water or air) that start their turn in or enter the area must attempt a Fortitude save or become sickened for 1d4+1 rounds.

If the entire area of this spell is underwater, its duration increases to 1 minute per level.

AQUEOUS FORM

School transmutation (water)

Casting Time 1 standard action; see text

Range personal

Duration see text (D)

You temporarily transform part or all of your body into water, gaining unique abilities.

1st: When you cast *aqueous form* as a 1st-level spell, you gain a swim speed of 30 feet for 1 round, and changing direction while swimming doesn't cost additional movement.

2nd: When you cast *aqueous form* as a 2nd-level spell, you're affected as per the 1st-level version. Also for 1 round, you reduce the amount of bludgeoning, slashing, and fire damage you take by an amount equal to half your caster level (this reduction doesn't stack with DR or resistances you might already have), and you gain vulnerability to electricity.

3rd: When you cast *aqueous form* as a 3rd-level spell, you're affected as per the 2nd-level version except the spell lasts 1 minute per caster level. In addition, you gain a +4 circumstance bonus to AC against combat maneuvers while you're completely submerged in water.

4th: When you cast *aqueous form* as a 4th-level spell, you're affected as per the 3rd-level version except the spell lasts 10 minutes per caster level, and you gain concealment while you're completely submerged in water.

5th: When you cast *aqueous form* as a 5th-level spell, you're affected as per the 4th-level version except the spell lasts for 1 hour per caster level. You can cast the 5th-level version of *aqueous form* as a purely defensive reaction when

you're about to take damage, but when you do so, you can't take a standard action on your next turn.

BIOLUMINESCENT LURE

School conjuration

Casting Time 1 standard action

Range medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

Area 30-ft.-diameter sphere

Duration 1 round/level (D)

Saving Throw Will save negates;

Spell Resistance no

You cause a 30-foot-diameter sphere of water or other liquid to fill with bioluminescent plankton, increasing the light level from dark to dim or from dim to normal. For the spell's duration, you can take a standard action to move this area up to 30 feet in any direction.

You can also take a standard action to condense the plankton into a tight, brightly glowing ball at the center of the sphere. If you do so, each creature that starts its turn in or enters the

spell's area must attempt a Will save or become fascinated until the beginning of its next turn. A creature that saves against this effect is immune to it for 24 hours. This spell has no effect above water.

CAVITATION SPHERE

School evocation (sonic)

Casting Time 1 standard action

Range close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Targets one creature

Duration instantaneous

Saving Throw Will negates (harmless) and Reflex half (see text); **Spell Resistance** no

You cause a rapid change of pressure in liquid to form vapor-filled cavities, causing damaging localized shock waves.

The target is surrounded by a series of quickly forming and dissipating rings that rotate around it. These rings are harmless to the target, but each creature adjacent to the target (in any direction, including diagonally and above or below) must attempt a Reflex saving throw or take 4d10 sonic damage. A successful save halves this damage.

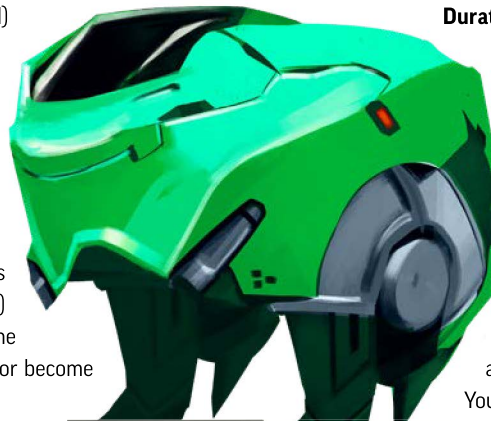
This spell can be cast on a target that isn't entirely submerged in water, but adjacent creatures that aren't at least partially submerged are unaffected by the spell.

FLASH BOIL

School evocation (fire)

Casting Time 1 standard action

Range 30 ft.



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Area cone-shaped burst

Duration instantaneous

Saving Throw Reflex partial; **Spell Resistance** yes

You cause water in the spell's area to instantly boil, dealing 7d8 fire damage to creatures that fail a Reflex save. Creatures that save take half damage. This spell has no effect in vacuum, deals half damage in normal and thin atmosphere, and deals full damage in thick atmosphere and underwater.

FLUX DENSITY

School evocation

Casting Time 1 standard action

Range medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

Targets up to one creature/level, no two of which can be more than 30 ft. apart, and each of which must be partially or fully submerged in water

Duration concentration + 1 round

Saving Throw Fortitude partial; **Spell Resistance** yes

When you cast *flux density*, choose rise or sink. If you choose rise, each target ascends 10 feet per round, or if you choose sink, each target sinks 10 feet per round; this movement doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity. In addition, each creature must attempt a Fortitude save each round it's moved by this spell; a failure causes the creature to gain the flat-footed condition and to take a -2 penalty to attack rolls until the beginning of its next turn.

GYRE

School evocation (water)

Casting Time 1 standard action

Range medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

Area cylinder (10-ft. radius, 40-ft. high)

Duration 1 round/level (D)

Saving Throw Reflex partial (see text); **Spell Resistance** no

You cause the water in *gyre*'s area of effect to form a twisting whirlpool that drags creatures in and down. Each creature that enters or starts its turn in the spell's area must attempt a Reflex save. A creature that fails its save is pulled a total of 15 feet: first, it's pulled toward the *gyre*'s center; then once its space is adjacent to the *gyre*'s center, it's pulled downward. A creature that succeeds at its save is pulled only 5 feet. Movement caused by *gyre* doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity, and any portion of this spell's area that isn't in water has no effect.

ICE BOLT

School evocation (water)

Casting Time 1 standard action

Range 50 ft.

Area line-shaped burst

Duration instantaneous

Saving Throw Reflex half; **Spell Resistance** yes

You cause the ambient atmosphere or water to flash freeze, creating a jagged icicle that deals 5d6 cold and 5d6 piercing to each creature in its area.

When cast underwater, this spell deals an additional 2d6 cold damage.

LAST GASP

School abjuration (air)

Casting Time 1 reaction

Range medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

Targets one willing creature

Duration instantaneous

Saving Throw none; **Spell Resistance** no

You can cast *last gasp* as a reaction when a creature within range would die from suffocation. They instead begin attempting Constitution checks as though they had just run out of air (including resetting the DC of such checks to 10).

AQUEOUS FORM

PRESSURIZE

School transmutation (water)

Casting Time 1 standard action

Range medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

Area 20-ft.-radius sphere

Duration concentration + 1 round

Saving Throw Fortitude half (see text); **Spell Resistance** yes
You increase the water pressure in *pressurize*'s area, dealing 2d10 bludgeoning damage to creatures that enter or start their turn in the area; this damage isn't reduced as a result of being underwater. Succeeding at the saving throw reduces damage by half. A creature that fails its saving throw by 10 or more must immediately attempt a Constitution check to hold its breath as if it had run out of air; if it fails, it becomes unconscious but stable and continues to suffocate normally unless moved out of the area or the spell ends.

SINKING SHIP

School conjuration

Casting Time 1 round

Range medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

Area 40-ft.-radius sphere

Effect one summoned spectral shipwreck

Duration instantaneous

Saving Throw Reflex partial; **Spell Resistance** yes

You conjure a massive spectral shipwreck that drops into the designated area then vanishes. In atmosphere, this spell deals 6d10 bludgeoning damage (Reflex half) to creatures in the area. Underwater, this spell deals half damage as normal, but it also pushes creatures who fail the saving throw 20 feet straight down. If a creature in the area can't move the full 20 feet (because of the seafloor or an obstacle), it takes full damage as it gets crushed between the ship and the obstacle.

SWIM

School transmutation

Casting Time 1 standard action; see text

Range see text

Targets see text

Duration see text

Saving Throw Will negates (harmless); **Spell Resistance** yes (harmless)

You magically enhance one or more targets' physiologies to allow them to swim through liquids with increasing levels of ease and grace.

1st: When you cast *swim* as a 1st-level spell, you can target one Medium or smaller creature per caster level at close range (25 feet + 5 feet/2 levels) that's partially or fully submerged in water or another liquid. The targets must all be within 20 feet of each other. A Large creature or object counts as two Medium creatures, a Huge creature or object counts as four Medium creatures, and so on. The affected targets gain a +8 bonus to their Athletics checks to swim. For each target, this casting of the spell lasts 1 round per

caster level or until that target leaves the water (whichever happens first).

The 1st-level version of this spell can be cast as a reaction, but when you do so, you can't take a standard action on your next turn.

2nd: When you cast *swim* as a 2nd-level spell, you can target one willing or unconscious touched creature and give it a swim speed of 40 feet, and the spell lasts until the creature leaves the water or for 1 minute per caster level (whichever happens first).

3rd: When you cast *swim* as a 3rd-level spell, you can target one willing or unconscious touched creature and affect it as per the 2nd-level version of the spell, except the target gains a swim speed of 60 feet and the spell lasts for 10 minutes per caster level.

4th: When you cast *swim* as a 4th-level spell, you can target multiple willing or unconscious creatures at close range (25 feet + 5 feet/2 levels) and affect them as per the 3rd-level version of the spell. You can target one creature per caster level, all of which must be within 30 feet of each other.

WALL OF AIR

School evocation (air)

Casting Time 1 standard action

Range medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

Effect wall up to 20 ft. long/level or a ring with a radius of up to 5 ft./2 levels; either form 40 ft. tall

Duration concentration + 1 round/level (D)

Saving Throw Reflex (see text); **Spell Resistance** no

You cause a massive sheet of flowing air to appear. When you cast *wall of air*, choose whether the air flows upward or downward. This spell has different effects depending on the environment in which it is cast (below). You can place a *wall of air* so that it's in multiple environments at once; in this case, it affects each environment separately. This spell can't be cast in a vacuum.

In Atmosphere: The wall's area is treated as a windstorm, which requires flying creatures to attempt Acrobatics checks to fly through it and imparts a -4 penalty on ranged attacks that deal kinetic damage. Attacks with archaic ranged weapons made through or within the wall of air automatically miss. Small or smaller creatures starting their turn in the wall's area must succeed at a Reflex save or be knocked prone.

In Water: The *wall of air* creates a massive sheet of bubbles that provides concealment. A creature that moves through the *wall of air* must succeed at an Athletics check to swim in stormy conditions with the DC increased by your caster level; on a failure, it's moved 10 feet in the direction you chose for the wall's air to flow. In addition, any creature within a *wall of air* while underwater can breathe air as if in a normal atmosphere. This wall doesn't adversely affect water-breathing creatures.

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"You think you're cold? Brother, you haven't felt cold until you've camped out in the northern tundras of the Drakelands during the height of a long winter. Temperature drops so low, you'll wish you were dead, even with your environmental protections on. And to make matters worse, there's critters out there that thrive on that cold: giant crabs with so much frost crusted onto their shells that they can shrug off the heat of a laser blast and turn your blood to ice just by looking at you. Don't complain to me about cold!"

—Ildizian, Skyfire Legion centurion

ABYNTHTIC

CR
7

XP
3,200



N Colossal animal (aquatic)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision;

Perception +14

DEFENSE

HP 112

EAC 19; **KAC** 21; +4 vs. attacks of opportunity

Fort +11; **Ref** +11; **Will** +6

Defensive Abilities flexible; **DR** 5/piercing; **Resistances** cold 5

OFFENSE

Speed swim 60 ft.

Melee slam +17 (2d6+12 B)

Multiaction bite +17 (1d6+12 P plus swallow whole), 3 tail swipes +17 (1d6+12 B)

Space 30 ft.; **Reach** 30 ft.

Offensive Abilities swallow whole (2d6+12 B, EAC 19, KAC 17, 28 HP)

STATISTICS

Str +5; **Dex** +2; **Con** +4; **Int** -4; **Wis** +0; **Cha** +0

Skills Acrobatics +14, Athletics +19 (+27 to swim), Stealth +14

Other Abilities water breathing

ECOLOGY

Environment any water (Entha)

Organization solitary

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Flexible (Ex) An abynthtic can contort itself surprisingly well for its enormous size. An abynthtic gains a +4 bonus to its AC against attacks of opportunity.

Measuring up to 100 feet from their eel-like jaws to their four-part tails and weighing hundreds of tons, abynthtics are among the largest and most formidable creatures found in the seas of Entha (page 62). While they're swimming on long migratory patterns that circumnavigate the planet's full circumference twice a year, their segmented tails cleave together and function as one powerful limb that propels them through the depths. Abynthtics are incredibly flexible for their size and can use their tails individually to attack with devastating effect when they happen across a worthy meal.

These carnivorous giants attack their prey by first ramming into it with their massive jaws, then clamping down with enormous pressure and bringing their flexible tails to bear. When they've appropriately subdued and tenderized a creature, they swallow it whole.

Abynthtics are constantly on the move and have no established hunting grounds. Often, their travel takes them through smaller ecosystems, where their voracious appetites can leave devastation in their wake, upsetting an area's fragile balance. On Entha, the only refuges from these massive creatures are the magical reefs that supernaturally decrease the surrounding water pressure; abynthtics are adapted to the high pressure of the deep sea and fare poorly in shallow and low-pressure environments.

Many other worlds contain creatures that closely resemble abynthtics, though most have notable differences in their number of tails or diet; some are even herbivorous. Sapient species study, fear, or even worship these mysterious beings wherever they appear—but nothing is known about their reproductive cycle. Some posit that the massive creatures are effectively immortal, dropped fully formed into the seas by some divine entity, as no abynthtic young, eggs, or decaying remains have ever been found. The leviathans can be killed, however, and powerful mercenaries regularly mount expeditions to hunt abynthtics. These poachers primarily want the creatures' uniquely strong jaws, which are sometimes incorporated into deep-sea submersibles to help them withstand enormous pressure.



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AGLIAN COLLECTIVE

CR
5

XP
1,600



CN Tiny animal (swarm)

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision;

Perception +11

DEFENSE

HP 65

EAC 17; **KAC** 18

Fort +6; **Ref** +6; **Will** +8

Defensive Abilities swarm defenses; **Immunities** swarm immunities; **Resistances** cold 5; **SR** 16

Weaknesses vulnerable to electricity

OFFENSE

Speed swim 40 ft.

Melee swarm attack (1d4+5 P)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

STATISTICS

Str +0; **Dex** +5; **Con** +2; **Int** +2; **Wis** +3; **Cha** +1

Skills Acrobatics +16, Athletics +11 (+19 to swim)

Languages Aglian, Common; telepathy 60 ft.

Other Abilities dominant concepts, water breathing

ECOLOGY

Environment any water

Organization solitary or intellection (6–12)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Dominant Concepts (Ex) Each aglian collective has three different dominant concepts drawn from its collective members; examples are described below. These concepts determine the aglian collective's personality, form its name, and affect its statistics. When other aglians are present, the collective can take a full action to change any of its dominant concepts, though no concept can repeat. This stat block represents a school with no concepts applied to it. At the GM's discretion, aglian collectives can have other dominant concepts with varying effects.

Anger: Melee attack damage increases by one die size.

Charity: Alignment changes to CG.

Curiosity: Culture and Life Science are master skills.

Fear: +10-foot bonus to swim speed.

Hope: Can reroll one d20 roll. This can be used only once per day, no matter how many times the collective changes its component concepts.

Love: Diplomacy and Medicine are master skills.

Mistrust: +1 bonus to KAC.

Each of these tiny eel-like natives of the aquatic world of Entha (page 62) has a limited individual consciousness focused around a single idea—usually a broad theoretical concept but sometimes a specific object or action like coral, bedrock, swim, or search. An aglian's coloration varies based on the content and complexity of their particular thought, from dull gray for those that concentrate on narrow concepts to rainbow hues for those that embody curiosity or truth.

While individual aglians can function in perfunctory ways, they are usually found in schools, telepathically linking with each other like neurons in a brain to form a new consciousness. EJ Corp scientists have dismissed the species as nonsapient, but the large schools in which most aglians spend their time are indeed sapient. Each member contributes and receives each other's concept, building a collective yet individual personhood for each aglian in the school.

When aglians reproduce, two or more parents contribute genetic material, and the offspring, called an elver, has an equal chance to embody either the same concept as a parent or an entirely new thought resulting from the experiences of each. In this way, the aglian population of Entha has grown to embody extremely specific and refined concepts. Their recent interactions with EJ Corp employees, however limited and scattered, have already begun to produce elvers that embody concepts like wonder, dismissal, and greed.



AUGERWING

CR
5

XP
1,600



N Medium animal

Init +5; **Senses** low-light vision; **Perception** +16

DEFENSE

HP 70

EAC 17; **KAC** 19

Fort +7; **Ref** +9; **Will** +4

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., fly 50 ft. (Ex, perfect), swim 10 ft.

Melee beak +11 (1d6+8 P) or

talon +9 (1d8+8 S; critical 1d4 bleed)

Ranged enzyme jet +14 (1d10+5 A plus embalming enzymes)

Offensive Abilities impale

STATISTICS

Str +3; **Dex** +5; **Con** +2; **Int** -4; **Wis** +0; **Cha** +0

Skills Acrobatics +16 (+24 to fly), Athletics +11 (+19 to swim)

ECOLOGY

Environment any land or sky

Organization solitary, pair, quiver (3-10), flight (11-30)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Enzyme Jet (Ex) As a ranged attack, an augerwing can open its beak pores to spray high-pressure streams of ink-like enzymes with a maximum range of 30 feet and no range increment. This attack has the unwieldy weapon special property and can be used only every 1d4+1 rounds.

Impale (Ex) An augerwing can perform a spiraling dive to drive its beak into prey. When the augerwing performs a charge and deals damage, if the result of the attack rolls meets or exceeds the target's KAC + 4, the augerwing's beak pierces the target's body; if the target is Medium or smaller, it is also grappled. The augerwing can keep its beak embedded in the target if it succeeds at further grapple combat maneuvers as normal; it receives a +4 racial bonus to these attacks. A creature can pull out the augerwing's beak (and remove the grappled condition) with a successful Acrobatics check to escape or grapple combat maneuver as normal for the condition. A creature impaled in this way is exposed to embalming enzymes (see above) at the start of its turn.

EMBALMING ENZYMES

Type poison (injury)

Track Dexterity (special); **Frequency** 1/minute for 10 minutes

Effect progression track is Healthy-Sluggish-Stiffened-Staggered-Immobile

Cure 2 consecutive saves

An augerwing is a tall, lean bird with two sets of wings and eight legs. Its long, sinuous, rasp-covered beak splits into multiple sections, each of which sports numerous pores. Colored bright yellow or red, each augerwing's beak displays a pattern of spots unique to that individual. An augerwing has eight spindly legs and two sets of wings with muted brown, gray, and white plumage, keeping its secondary wingspan close to its body when not in use. By switching between wing pairs while flying, an augerwing moves through the air in a hypnotic, twisting spiral pattern that has endeared Pharasmin cultures to this strange avian.

When hunting, an augerwing approaches its prey in a rapid, spinning dive. Strong muscular and skeletal structures help the bird muster the power to drill into their target's flesh. It then continues to twist and stab, injecting fixative enzymes into its prey to limit mobility.

Groups of augerwings use large animal carcasses as nests and lay their tiny eggs inside the corpse's bones; after the eggs have hatched, these hollowed-out bones resemble flutes and can fetch a high price. The birds have spread throughout Near Space and have mostly resisted domestication efforts.



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DETONATION OOZE

CR
9

XP
6,400



N Large ooze

Init +3; **Senses** blindsight (vibration) 60 ft., sightless;

Perception +17

DEFENSE

HP 145

EAC 22; **KAC** 24

Fort +13; **Ref** +9; **Will** +6

Immunities ooze immunities

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee pseudopod +21 (1d10+13 B plus 1d10 F)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Offensive Abilities detonation, engulf (2d10+13 B, DC 16)

STATISTICS

Str +4; **Dex** +3; **Con** +6; **Int** –; **Wis** +0; **Cha** –2

Other Abilities unstable expansion

ECOLOGY

Environment any urban (manufacturing plants)

Organization solitary

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Detonation (Ex) When the detonation ooze is reduced to 0 HP, the destabilized chemicals that make up its body trigger a violent explosion. The ooze detonates

in a 20-foot burst, dealing 2d10+13 fire damage (Reflex DC 16 half) to creatures within the radius, including those currently engulfed.

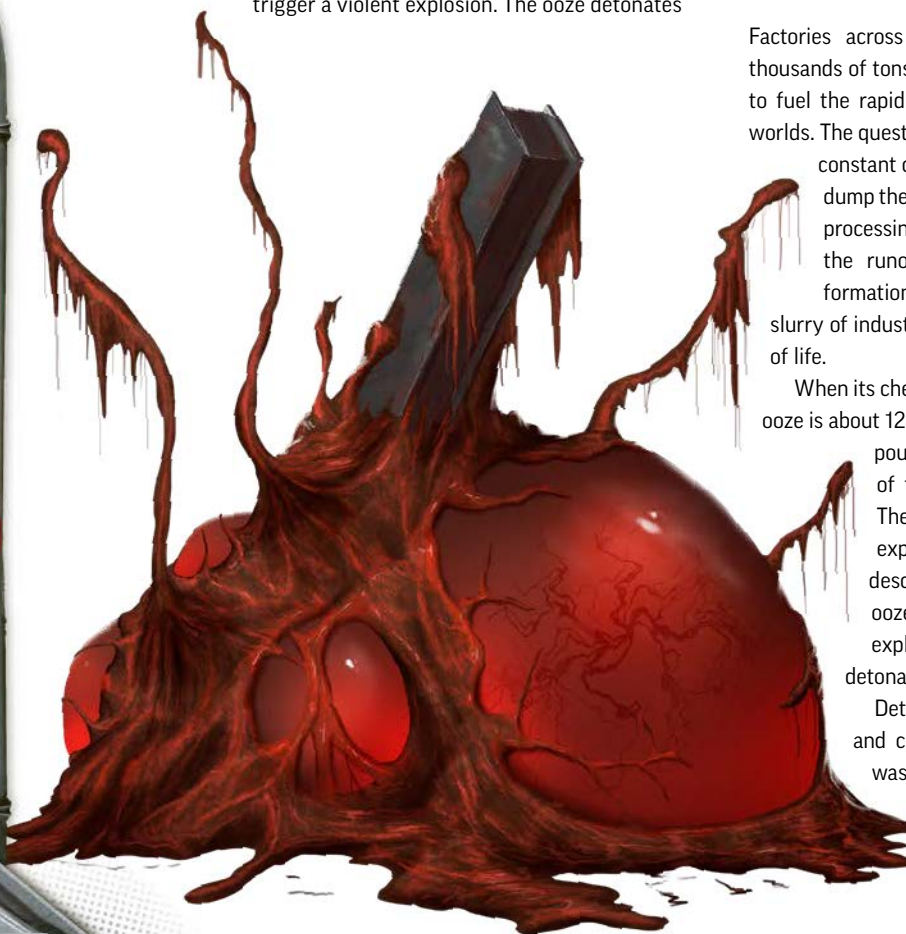
The explosion can't be prevented entirely, but the damage can be mitigated. If at least 30 points of cold damage are dealt to the ooze over the course of the encounter, the volatile chemicals cool and partially stabilize, making the final detonation instead deal only 1d10+13 fire damage (Reflex DC 16 half).

Unstable Expansion (Ex) A detonation ooze is made of highly unstable chemical compounds that begin to break down as the ooze takes damage. As a reaction when a detonation ooze is reduced to 100 HP, its size increases to Huge. When it expands, it can attempt to engulf any Medium or smaller creature in the new squares it grows to occupy; it can't grow to occupy squares that are occupied by Large or larger creatures, and if there is no room for the ooze to expand, unstable expansion fails. The process repeats when the detonation ooze is reduced to 50 HP, except that its size increases to Gargantuan if it was already Huge, or Huge if it was still Large.

Factories across the galaxy pump out thousands upon thousands of tons of industrial waste every day as they seek to fuel the rapid technological consumption of spacefaring worlds. The question of what to do with that waste remains a constant concern; more unscrupulous facilities simply dump the chemical remnants resulting from industrial processing. Sometimes, complex interactions within the runoff from munitions factories lead to the formation of a detonation ooze, a highly volatile slurry of industrial waste given its own strange semblance of life.

When its chemical makeup is stable, a typical detonation ooze is about 12 feet across and weighs anywhere from 800 pounds to 2 tons, depending on the amount of the trace metallic compounds in its mass. The ooze's weight remains the same even as it expands, leading to what some survivors have described as a runny consistency the larger the ooze gets. Accompanied by the occasional small explosion from within its amorphous body, a detonation ooze is an unmistakable danger.

Detonation oozes have proven to be a deadly and consistent threat to industrial workers and waste cleanup crews near the factories where they spawn. When one is spotted, freelance hazard teams are often sent in to deal with the problem, hopefully with adequate protection.



GAMMENORE

CR
8

XP
4,800



N Large magical beast (cold)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision;

Perception +16

DEFENSE

HP 128

EAC 20; **KAC** 22

Fort +12; **Ref** +10; **Will** +9

Defensive Abilities shell of ice (60 fire); **Immunities** cold;

Resistances fire 10

Weaknesses vulnerable to fire

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., climb 20 ft.

Melee pincer +20 (3d4+14 S plus grab; critical bleed 1d4)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Offensive Abilities thermokinesis (100 ft., 6d8 C or F plus staggered, DC 16, usable every 1d4 rounds)

STATISTICS

Str +6; **Dex** +2; **Con** +4; **Int** -3; **Wis** +3; **Cha** -2

Skills Acrobatics +16, Athletics +21, Stealth +16 (+24 in snow or icy terrain)

ECOLOGY

Environment any cold (Triaxus)

Organization solitary, pair, cluster (3-9)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Shell of Ice (Su) Much of a gammenore's carapace is encased in a thick layer of ice that helps regulate the creature's body temperature, granting it resistance 10 to fire. The shell can absorb up to 60 fire damage before melting. Once the shell melts, the gammenore takes a -2 penalty to its AC and loses its resistance to fire. A gammenore can reconstitute a melted shell by spending time in areas of intense cold. This process takes 2 hours in a cold environment, 3d10+8 minutes in areas of severe cold, and 1d10 minutes in areas of extreme cold.

Thermokinesis (Su) Once every 1d4 rounds, a gammenore can drastically raise or lower the body temperature of another creature. It can target either a creature within 100 feet as a standard action or one it has just struck with its pincer as a reaction. In either case, the target takes 6d8 cold or fire damage and is staggered for 1 round; a successful DC 16 Fortitude save halves the damage and negates the staggered effect.

Sparse ancient records note that gammenores were once rarely seen outside of Triaxus's long winters, but these giant, blue, ice-armored crabs now range across the planet's wild areas regardless of season. The creatures have been able to expand their habitat thanks to their thermokinesis ability: gammenores can supernaturally modulate their own internal temperature or that of creatures nearby. This ability allows gammenores to freeze or boil prey at will, though most prefer ice-coated meals.

Gammenores seem attracted to extreme temperatures. In remote areas, the usually solitary beasts are found scuttling around commercial refrigeration units or hot springs. Settlements close to mating sites must contend with crustaceans breaking into such locations to lay their eggs. This is a serious threat, and most communities have anti-gammenore security protocols in place.

The creatures migrate yearly toward Triaxus's poles or the equator in clattering hordes. Populous cities accommodate their passage with arched roadways or creative architecture, but sometimes security forces need to intervene. Some communities make their arrival a festival, with thrill seekers attempting to stay ahead of a gammenore cluster as it charges through the streets.



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GIANT JELLY

CR
5

XP
1,600



N Huge animal (aquatic)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft., low-light vision;

Perception +11

DEFENSE

HP 70

EAC 17; **KAC** 19

Fort +9; **Ref** +9; **Will** +4

Defensive Abilities amorphous, lenticular lattice

Resistances cold 5

Weaknesses vulnerable to slashing

OFFENSE

Speed swim 40 ft.

Melee slam +11 (1d6+10 B; critical stunned)

Ranged sonic pulse +14 (1d6+5 So; critical stunned)

Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.

STATISTICS

Str +5; **Dex** +2; **Con** +3; **Int** -4; **Wis** +0; **Cha** +2

Skills Athletics +11 (+19 to swim), Acrobatics +11, Stealth +16

Other Abilities water breathing

ECOLOGY

Environment any water (Entha)

Organization solitary

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Lenticular Lattice (Ex) A giant jelly can supernaturally manipulate its hexagonal lattice to reflect light in confusing ways. It has concealment against all attacks originating within 30 feet.

Sonic Pulse (Ex) As a standard action, a giant jelly can form itself into a large concave disc and emit sudden, violent vibrations as a ranged attack with a range increment of 60 feet that targets EAC. This attack doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity.

Deep in the seas of Entha (page 62) float giant jellies: massive, amorphous creatures composed of a thin fleshy material stretched across a hexagonal lattice. These strange magical beasts undulate through the waves in a constantly changing pattern, like a loose sail carried by the wind, making their movement and intention hard to predict. In addition to this constant undulation, the giant jelly can twist and flex its framework to produce confusing visual effects, making it difficult to target.

When not drifting silently while on the hunt for food, giant jellies sometimes tense and flex their entire form to emit intermittent percussive pulses, creating deep, arrhythmic bass thumps. The purpose of these noises is unknown, though xenobiologists hypothesize the jellies might use these sounds to establish territory or scare off competitors.

While much of a giant jelly's diet consists of microscopic organisms, the creature evolved long ago to also prey on—and defend itself against—much larger creatures. It can move with astonishing speed, slamming into creatures to stun them, but can also focus its sonic waves into a damaging blast of sound that is especially devastating underwater.

Once it has incapacitated its prey, a giant jelly slowly wraps itself around its victim, twisting into a tight spiral and digesting its meal over the course of days or even weeks.

At the end of a giant jelly's life cycle, it stops consuming organic material and focuses instead on absorbing magic-infused minerals from the seabed. Gradually, the hexagonal lattice holding the jelly together begins to break down, and each of its thousands of component hexagons becomes a new, tiny protojelly. Typically, other deep-sea creatures quickly consume this mass of protojellies, but any that escape predation will grow to full size over the course of a few months.

HIVEHEAD

CR
7

XP
3,200



N Medium monstrous humanoid

Init +5; **Senses** blindsense (thought) 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft.; **Perception** +14

DEFENSE

HP 105

EAC 19; **KAC** 21

Fort +9; **Ref** +11; **Will** +8

Immunities mind-affecting effects

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee slam +15 (1d8+11 B)

Offensive Abilities stingswarm (15-ft. cone, 1d6+7 P plus neurotoxic venom, DC 15)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 7th)

1/day—*mind thrust* (3rd level, DC 16)

STATISTICS

Str +4; **Dex** +5; **Con** +0; **Int** +2; **Wis** +0; **Cha** -4

Skills Stealth +14

ECOLOGY

Environment any

Organization solitary

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Stingswarm (Ex) As a standard action, a hivehead can exhale a swarm of neuralwasp drones in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in the cone takes 1d6+7 piercing damage (Reflex DC 15 half) and is subjected to neurotoxic venom.

NEUROTOXIC VENOM

Type poison (injury); **Save** Fortitude DC 15

Track Dexterity (special); **Frequency** 1/round for 4 rounds

Effect progression track is Healthy—Staggered—Paralyzed; no end state

Cure 1 save

No one knows exactly where the dangerous pests called neuralwasps come from. Theories vary wildly, speculating that they're a mutant offshoot of the Swarm or the result of a mad apiarist's experiments in arcane crossbreeding (and everything in between). However, those attacked by a neuralwasp are less concerned about their origin than their paralytic sting, as these carnivorous insects usually attack sentient creatures for one of two reasons: to feed on their flesh or to build a living hive, called a hivehead.

The creation of a hivehead is a horrifying affair. The drones swarm over a paralyzed victim and coat the victim's head with a waxy saliva, leaving only small openings for the victim to breathe through. The material dries over the course of a few minutes while the victim is still conscious, after which the neuralwasp queen takes residence inside their skull. The queen psychically assumes control of the host's senses and motor functions while slowly consuming the host's brain,

transforming it into a kind of royal jelly to feed her eggs. As this happens, the unfortunate victim stumbles about, attacking anyone who would try to disturb the queen.

For 1 week after a queen takes over, the victim can still be saved, though potential rescuers must fight off dozens of neuralwasps and the hivehead himself. If the host can be subdued, the queen can be removed with careful surgery or powerful magic, though victims can take months to recover from the loss of brain tissue, and some are never the same again. After that week, however, the infestation is permanent, as the host's brain has been almost completely dissolved. The body still lives and must eat and sleep as normal, but the queen is fully in control of its actions. A hivehead can live for years as its queen lays eggs to strengthen her swarm, eventually birthing a new queen who then leaves to take over a new host.



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ENTHA

Ocean World on the Rise

Diameter: $\times 1$ **Mass:** $\times 1$

Gravity: $\times 1$

Location: The Vast

Atmosphere: Normal

Day: 45 hours **Year:** 525 days

EJ Corp recently claimed Entha, an ocean world in the Vast bursting with aquatic life, for a massive terraforming project. Entha's surface appears rather mundane; its foaming seas are only occasionally interrupted by rocky outcroppings jutting up from undersea mountain ranges. The amphibious flying creatures that nest on these rocks are a visitor's first hint at the biodiversity that lies below. Deep underwater, thick forests of twisting seaweed strands that stretch hundreds of yards up from the ocean floor shelter underwater clearings replete with bioluminescent creatures of all shapes and sizes, whirling around each other in a dangerous ballet of survival. Unfathomably deep trenches conceal secrets and horrors unimagined by any explorer, and throughout Entha's oceans, microscopic, protomagical plankton imbue the water with a low-grade supernatural aura.

Entha's most remarkable natural fixtures are extensive deep-sea structures that resemble coral reefs—the formation

of which would be impossible on most worlds, where the pressure of the depths makes it difficult for such fragile yet vibrant frameworks to grow. However, Entha's reefs are manifestations of a world-spanning magical network that twists and winds beneath the seabed, and the reefs not only survive at great depths but are imbued with this same magic. As threads of Entha's magical mantle escape through its crust and touch the supernatural seawater, they harden into labyrinthine, shining, psychedelic forms, creating frozen explosions of color and texture deep beneath the waves—a process xenobiologists estimate must take millennia, though the Gap has made it difficult to know for sure.

One of the reefs' most influential effects is their localized reduction of water pressure to near-surface levels; even on the ocean floor, this magical depressurization enables all manner of creatures to thrive in what would otherwise be utterly crushing conditions. EJ Corp's terraforming efforts on the planet involve detaching these reefs from the seabed, causing them to float to the surface and provide large swaths of new "land" on which resort property can be built. Of course, as the Company strips this coral from the ocean floor, it severs the reefs' tether to the planet's magical undercurrents. The sudden, full weight of the water above proves deadly for the myriad life-forms that inhabit the reefs. The first Company machinery to lift coral immediately imploded due to the sudden change in water pressure, but the corporation has since built specially adapted coral crawlers to withstand the pressure change.

All manner of creatures, both mundane and magical, have evolved to live on Entha, from the leviathan abyenthics (page 55) and giant jellies (page 60) to hill-sized flounders hugging the sea floor and dart-like shark-rays that teleport short distances to close in on their prey. The only sapient life to exist on Entha are the eel-like creatures known as aglians (page 56). Individually, each aglian embodies only a single specific thought or concept, but when enough gather together, they link together like neurons and form an emergent consciousness. They depend heavily on the sustaining magic of the coral reefs, and the Company's terraforming efforts are rapidly jeopardizing their habitable space.



NEXT MONTH

THE WHITE GLOVE AFFAIR

By Kendra Leigh Speedling

When the crew of the *Oliphaunt* get a lead that promises to make them rich beyond their wildest dreams, they plan a heist to steal one of the Kalistocracy's golden commerce barges. Naturally, their quick theft soon turns into a deep-cover long con that will take cunning and skill just to survive!

SIDE JOBS

By Joshua Hennington and Lu Pellazar

Side jobs are brief adventures played between chapters of an Adventure Path or when your players go off on their own. In this outing, the PCs take on a trio of jobs on a planet ruled by emotional fey.

THE PROPHECIES OF KALISTRAD

By Randal Meyer

Learn more about the history and adherents of the Prophecies of Kalistrade, centered around the belief that accumulating enough wealth in life promises a personal paradise after death.

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