# STAR SWORD

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- MORE GALACTIC ADVENTURE AWAITS!

WHITE STAR COMPATIBLE

# STAR SWORD
## THE OFFICIAL WHITE STAR MAGAZINE

## Issue #1

# In This Issue

# Captain's Log

Welcome to the inaugural issue of *Star Sword: The Official White Star Magazine.* This semi-regular publication aims to be your source for new and exciting material for all things *White Star*. Why a magazine? Well, I thought long and hard about how to proceed once *White Star: Galaxy Edition* was released. You see, producing and publishing something as massive as *White Star: Galaxy Edition* is no small task. It is brought to life by a very small team of dedicated creators who are doing what they do because they love of gaming. We all have responsibilities that pull us away from galactic adventuring. So, it takes a long time to take a project from concept to release.

But I wanted to make sure that *White Star* fans got regular content. You see *White Star* is a living, breathing thing – and it's never more alive than when folks are producing content and people are playing the game. By doing a magazine with regular content and a simple layout, that ensures that *White Star* gamers get their hands on the latest and greatest in OSR sci-fi gaming goodness.

Each issue of *Star Sword* magazine will bring you several regular columns. New equipment, creatures, classes, aliens, locations, adventures, and mystic abilities will be found in these pages. Regularly appearing columns will include:

- **Captain's Log:** Commentary on the state of *White Star* from the editor.
- **Tales of the Cosmic Kestrel:** Thrilling fiction set in the *White Star* universe.
- **Edge of the Galaxy:** New locations such as space stations, planets or even entire star systems.
- **Interstellar Merchant:** New weapons, armor, cybernetics, starships, vehicles, and other gear.
- **Strangers Among the Stars:** New classes, creatures, and aliens.
- **Uncharted Starlanes:** A short adventure or encounter designed to be easily inserted into your campaign.
- **Walking the Way:** Articles focusing on Mysticism in its various forms.

Other columns may be introduced in future issues, but it is the editor's hope that you'll use the material in *Star Sword* magazine to help create new and thrilling experiences your *White Star* adventures.

# Tales of the Cosmic Kestrel
## *Easy Credits*
### By James M. Spahn

"Absolute Zero." A smug grin slid across the young human's face as he laid his cards down upon the table and extended an eager hand to claim his credits. He slipped them into the pocket of his orange flight jacket with a satisfying clatter. With these credits, he'd finally get off planet - hopefully before the Galactic Consortium found him.

The Qinlon across from him growled and bared its teeth slightly. "That's the sixth hand in a row, human. No one's that lucky." His dusky hand slipped below the table.

Truth be told, Fitch Evans didn't believe it either. No one was that lucky - but somehow he'd managed to go from barely enough credits to buy a shot of cheap booze to several thousand in just a few hands of Knight's Gambit. More than a bit nervous, he hoped the ridge-headed gambler didn't notice the fear in his blue eyes. "What can I tell you, Gr'ak? I guess it's you who isn't that lucky today."

Oops. Wrong move. Fitch almost immediately regretted his quip as Gr'ak brought his hand back up with serpentine swiftness, modified laser pistol already spitting angry bolts of energy across the table. Falling backward off his chair as much out of shock as instinct, the beams sizzled just inches from Fitch's face as he tumbled to the floor. By the time he was able to gather his wits, the Qinlon was already standing over him with murder in his blazing yellow eyes. The business end of a laser pistol was about to end his lucky streak.

Instead of a final screeching shot, there came a massive crash as the bar erupted into an all out brawl as a massive ebony scaled alien whirled around and locked eyes on Gr'ak. Fitch had bumped the lizard-faced brute when he fell to the floor and the creature had mistaken it as a jostle from Gr'ak. The creature reacted the only way it felt was appropriate - with violence. It took no notice of Fitch, but instead grabbed the fallen chair and smashed it across the Gr'ak's face before the two went down in a tumble and the rest of the establishment followed suit.

Fitch rolled out of the way and made his way towards the exit. After dodging more than a few stray punches and managing to get out the door with a "complimentary" swig of Kelronian ale, he faded into the crowds going about their business on the streets of Mar Tella. He eyed the few Consortium soldiers he saw, but didn't make any sudden moves. It was best for him to appear as just another citizen who was passing through or touring

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the sites. Most visitors to the largest city on Talamar were looking to lose a few credits at the Luring Allurean Casino or get pampered at the Hotel Grande - but Fitch was never impressed by what the high-minded nobles and arrogant senators called "high society."

Native to Talamar, Fitch had spent most of his life scouring the junk piles that the local officials and law enforcement tried to pretend weren't there. But those massive piles of technological detritus were the lifeblood of Mar Tella - the greasy, clogged lifeblood. Scavengers came looking to make it rich searching for junk while smugglers and bounty hunters both used it as a port of call to find work. Fitch smiled as he recalled sitting on some of the planet's massive junk hills and watching the flashes of gunfights that broke out on hot summer nights when predator and prey accidentally rubbed shoulders. As a kid, he'd slip in after these firefights were over and scavenger for what was left behind - a few credits, a energy cell, maybe a hold out laser.

But that seemed like a long time ago, and this last score was going to set him straight. Looking over his shoulder one last time, Fitch looked up at the glowing holographic projections that dangled above a rusted, prefab hangar: Honest Ondo's Quality Used Spaceships.

Fitch was unimpressed by Ondo's stock. He had three freighters that looked anywhere near serviceable: An old light freighter whose landing gear was sitting in massive pools of lubricant, a heavy hauler with no cargo pods, and an old star insurgent that still had some kind of smoke trickling out of the exhaust ports even though it obviously hadn't been off the ground in a long, long time. The young gambler was torn from his less than spectacular impressions by the exasperated mechanical intonations of a robot. It let out what he would have thought to be a sigh and spoke in the monotone voice of someone who had repeated the same phrase ten thousand times and such monotony had crushed their will to live.

"Welcome to Honest Ondo's Quality Used Spaceships, where Ondo promises you the best deal this side of the galaxy - honestly. I'm L1-VE, but you can call me Leevee. How can I help you, sir or madam?." It was an old L1-Series mechanical robot that had seen as much abuse as the ship's it was trying to sell. It had already started to blandly repeat the phrase in some alien language when Fitch raised his hand to interrupt.

"I want to buy a ship."

The robot stopped mid-sentence and Fitch swore a look of surprise came into its optical receptors. "Seriously? From here?"

"Yes, from here - I mean if the stock is any good." Fitch sighed. The robot's cynicism was already starting to bother him - but his impatience to finally own a ship as well as get away from Gr'ak meant that he didn't have time for a long term plan. Besides, Fitch hoped, there was no chance that the

Qinlon would think he'd go immediately to a dealership - especially one like this. Plus, there was no way Gr'ak would be stupid enough to call the local Consortium law enforcement - at least that was the hope.

"Oh," Leevee's voice dipped again - returning to its defeated monotone. "Let me show you our high quality offerings, sir." It shuffled over towards the Star Insurgent first and retrieved the standard sales pitch for the ship from its memory banks. "Here we have the Harrier Class Insurgent, perfect for traveling the galaxy in comfort and style. Sleek, swift and simple, the Harrier is sure to be exactly the ship you need when you blast off from the Sterling System and tour all the way to the Galactic Edge. Equipped standard with a Dual-Class FTL-Drive and Double-Thrust Sub-Engine Technology, the Harrier is as smooth as a silk and priced to own at just 135,000 credits."

Fitch nervously waited for the robot to finish, but his eyes widened. "A hundred and thirty five thousand?! For this piece of junk? It must be at least twenty years old!"

Leevee nodded. "Twenty two point four standard galactic years, sir. But I cannot negotiate the price. I am only permitted to repeat the purchase price set by Mister Ondo."

"Well, let me talk to him. Where is he?" Fitch felt like he was being taken for a ride and not in some beat up star freighter.

"I will retrieve him for you, sir." Leevee turned and shuffled towards the far end of the hanger before disappearing into a small door. A few minutes later the robot returned, but he was alone. "Mister Ondo will be right with you. He's seeing to a... personal matter at the moment."

Shifting from foot to foot, Fitch kept looking between the door on the far side of the hanger and the entrance to the lot. Something wasn't right - he could feel it. After a few moments are positively corpulent human came waddling from the same room that Leevee had just been. He had stained breeches, cracked leather boots, and a shirt painted with a garish flower pattern barely containing his massive frame. Thin strands of greasy black hair covered his head and a thick cigar was billowing smoke from between yellow teeth.

He plucked the cigar from his mouth and stuck a meaty hand out to Fitch when he finally ambled across the lot. "Olara Ondo , how can I help you?"

Fitch took the sweaty hand and shook it reluctantly. "Fitch," he greeted. "Leevee here tells me you
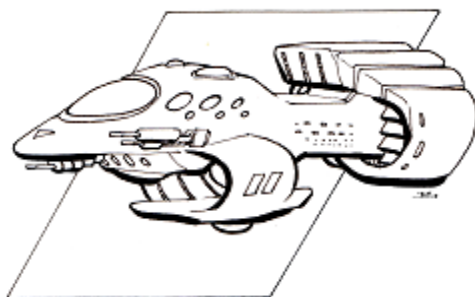
want one hundred and thirty five thousand for this twenty year old rust bucket?"

Ondo's face turned to a mixture of jovial falsehood and indignation. "Rust bucket? The Cosmic Kestrel is a ship full of character, lad!"

"She's full of something, alright."

The salesman waved his hand, "Hold on now, let me check my records on the ol' Kestrel to show you how reliable a ship she really is." He retrieved a micro-computer from his shirt pocket, flipped it open and began tapping some keys. "Let's see now... the Cosmic Kestrel."

Fitch felt the hair on the back of his neck standing up as Ondo reviewed his records.

"Here we are, Mr. Evans. Proof positive she's as solid as block of novasteel!" Ondo shoved the micro-computer into his face. Fitch looked at the ship's specs for a few seconds before it finally dawned on him.

He slowly pushed the micro-computer down and stared hard at the slugrat of a saleman. "I never told you my last name."

Ondo's face dropped and before either of them had time to react the high-pitched whine of a vehicle filled the air. Fitch whirled to see a Consortium skycruiser pulling into the lot. An officer wearing an armored vest and already clutching a laser pistol hopped out before the vehicle even came to a full stop and half a dozen armored Consortium shock troops followed suit.

"Fitch Evans," the officer called. "I am Corporal Harris Trent. You are under arrest on suspicion of petty theft, larceny, corruption of Consortium youth, and conspiracy to defraud Consortium finances! Surrender now!"

Not waiting for Consortium mercy and ignoring Ondo's pleas that he had nothing to do with this, Fitch shoved the salesman between himself and the shock troops before breaking into a sprint to the only safety he found on the open tarmac of the ship lot: the gangplank of the Cosmic Kestrel.

With Trent's command to "Open fire!" all hell broke loose. A hail of laser fire filled the air and the last thing Fitch heard before making his way on board the Kestrel was the scream of Ondo Olara being mowed down. Scrambling into the ship's cockpit, he mashed down on what he thought was the gangplank controls he got back a red klaxon warning him that something was obstructing the ship's entrance and preventing him from sealing himself inside the ship.

"Damn!"

That meant Trent and his soldiers were already on their way up. Swallowing the lump in his throat, Fitch shoved his hand into the folds of his jacket and pulled out the laser pistol he had hidden its lining. They weren't going to take him without a fight. Flicking off the safety, he waited nervously,

feeling the sweat beading on his broke just below his short brown hair. "C'mon, you bio-symbiote sucking scum," he muttered to himself.

Laser fire outside stopped and seconds later a lone figure came into the cockpit. The hum of servos and a familiar voice filled the room. "Pardon me, sir."

Leevee practically shoved Fitch aside and sat in the cockpit. Seconds later the gangplank was closed and the engines struggled to life. With the realization that he wasn't about to be blasted by a squad of Consortium soldiers, Fitch lowered his laser pistol.

"What are you doing?" he demanded of the robot, who was casually beginning the Kestrel's launch cycle.

"Preparing for flight, sir. Oh, and calculating the jump to light speed." The robot turned and looked at him, "Unless you'd rather speak to Corporal Trent, Mr. Evans."

Fitch wasn't sure if the robot was mocking him or not, but it didn't matter. "No. Fine. Whatever." He ran to the viewport beside the cockpit and saw Trent ordering his troops back into the cruiser. Collapsing into the co-pilot's chair with a sigh of relief. "How'd they find me so fast," he said - almost to himself.

As casually as if he were reporting a data readout, Leevee chimed in. "Because I called them, sir."

"You what?!" It took everything Fitch had not blast the robot right then and there.

"Sir, you must understand that being the service of Mr. Olara is a less than optimal existence. I felt the need to establish a new employer. You are young, active, and based on your criminal record, quite willing to take the necessary risks to achieve a high profit margin." The robot spoke calmly, continuing to work at the console.

"Employer? Profit margin?" Fitch was at a complete loss for words at this point.

"Yes, sir. According to Consortium recordings you told Govenor Darlan's daughter that you planned on becoming the richest smuggler in the galaxy. You told her you had a detailed plan that was going to make you countless 'easy credits,' in the span of a few galactic years. Is this not true?"

"What? How the hell do you know this?"

The robot seemed to sigh, almost exasperated. "Sir, you told Ms. Darlan this five standard nights ago in the Dual Suns Restaurant, did you not?"

Fitch watched the skyline turn to stars as they broke atmosphere. "Well yes, but-"

"I was in the Dual Suns at the time, retrieving some vile concoction for Mr. Ondo. A most regrettable task."

Leaning forward, Fitch looked at the robot. "So, let me get this straight. You're using me to get away from Ondo and make 'easy credits,' all because you overheard me flirting with the Governor's daughter?'"

"Precisely, sir. Only someone willing to take incalculable risks would do such a thing in a public location with Ms. Darlan's bodyguard standing two meters away."

"I didn't even-" Fitch sighed. "Nevermind. Fine, whatever. Get us out of here."

"The light speed coordinates are almost calculated, sir. A few more sec-"

The Cosmic Kestrel was suddenly rocked by a blast and a warning alarm began blaring. "What was that?" Fitch called out in a panicked voice.

Leevee never broke his calm demeanor. "It appears we have attracted the attention of an Galactic Consortium Dreadnought, sir. They have launched a pair of Stunt Interceptors to prevent our departure. Do not worry, sir. The ship will jump to light speed in three… two…"

A second salvo shocked the ship in the same instant the Kestrel leaped to light speed. Stars exploded around them in a dazzling visual display of faster-than-light travel.. They were safe, for the moment.

Fitch took that moment to catch his breath. "So, let me get this straight: I've been kidnapped by a robot who conspired to use me as his partner in crime in the nebulous quest to make easy credits, we're aboard a now-stolen ship that could fall apart any second and has probably been flagged as a criminal vessel by the Consortium Fleet, and we have no idea where we're going?"

"Incorrect, sir." Leevee turned in the pilot's chair to look at the young man. "I know precisely where we are headed."

"And where is that?" Fitch was almost yelling.

"Crocodila Space. It is the most optimal location for a high risk endeavor which will allow us to make, as you called it, 'easy credits.'"

"Crocodila Space?"

"Sir, you told Ms. Darlan that you had several contacts in the highest levels of several of the independent enterprises that regularly occur in Crocodila Space." The robot seemed almost confused.

"I lied!"

"Oh," Leevee said with a start. "Most unfortunate. I will attempt to alter our course in that case." He turned back to the console and began to engage the ship's subsystem engines.

"No," Fitch cried. "Enough!" Standing up, he strode over to the control panel and tried to stop the robot. He grabbed Leevee's arm and

reached for the ship's controls. "This is my ship. I was going to buy it. I'm the captain."

The two began to struggle, pushing and pull against each other. "Sir, I wouldn't recommend-"

Fitch felt himself begin to slip on the greasy deck of the Cosmic Kestrel. He felt Leevee's metal leg slip between his and trip him up an instant before he finally tumbled across the ship's controls and then sprawled to the floor. The Stunt Insurgent was ripped from light speed by whatever switches he had managed to activate in the struggle and the twinkling starfield abruptly dimmed, returning to the void of space.

Instead of finding a field of stars before them, both human and robot found their view port filled with the image of a great green and blue planet bearing down on them. Proximity and warning alarms began to echo against the metal bulkhead of the ship. "Warning. Warning. Planetary obstruction. Impact eminent."

Fitch got to his feet long enough to an endless landscape of massive evergreen trees hurtling towards them at breakneck speeds. A thin line of smoke trailed from the Kestrel's console. Leevee turned to him and said in a calm voice. "Your orders, Captain?"

# Edge of the Galaxy
## *The Pickled Pulsar*
### By James M. Spahn

Tucked away in a particularly unsavory part of a forgotten backwater planet sits a waterhole where spacers and smugglers trade secrets, lies, and more than a few laser beams. *The Pickled Pulsar* is a dive bar frequented by pilots, crewmen, smugglers, travelers and galactic drifters. The only thing the patrons share that they're all just trying to survive another day on the raggedy edge of the galaxy.

No one knows what the Pulsar's original purpose was, nor is there anything beyond vague hints and rumors regarding its original proprietor. But, truth be told, very few patrons care about the Pulsar's past – they're too busy trying to live through today. What is obvious about the Pickled Pulsar is that it's very, very old. Though it's been retrofitted with modern blast-resistant doors , laser-reflective windows, and some of the best modern amenities that uttin scavengers can cobble together, the walls are a strange gray-green stone set in place by a faded, golden mortar. Though the structure is worn with age, these walls are highly resistant to damage and capable of resisting grenade blasts, swipes from star swords and even vehicle scale rayblasters.

## Location 1: Courtyard

Little more than a dirt lot, the open air in front of the Pulsar's entrance serves as a parking lot for a mismatched collection of skybikes, skyboosters, and other personal transports. Mecha and starships are too small to park here.

At its center is a large, half-rusted holoprojector that casts a translusent neon image high into the sky above the bar. The spinning red and green moniker of the establishment can be seen from almost a mile a way – on nights when its working properly.

In addition to any ruffians, uttins, or other scavengers that can be found lounging outsider, there is also a rusted old combat robot that has been reprogrammed by Scaly J to serve as security. L3-X, commonly known as "Lex" by the regulars, is a hulking machine brandishing a laser rifle held together by little more than rusted bolts and old secu-tape. In spite of his intimidating chassis, Lex is polite. He comes running if he hears any sign of a scuffle and blasts any offenders he witnesses with stun bolts – most of the time.

## Location 2: Common Room

Tables, bars, and benches haphazardly litter this area of the Pulsar. It's where most of the patrons can be found drowning their troubles in a mug of Kelronian ale or eating cheap fast-fry. The walls are covered with holoscreens broadcasting everything from the latest starball scores to news reports from the Consortium News Netework – not that they can be seen clearly through the constant haze of smoke from Kavendish leaf-pipes. In truth, most patrons spend time between drinks burning away the last of their credits playing Knight's Gambit or dicing.

While brawling is technically forbidden, none of the employees get involved if little more than a fist or two is thrown. But, if a weapon is drawn none of them will hesitate to put the scuffle to and end – sometimes with deadly force, if necessary.

## Location 3: Auto-Bar

A long metal bar lines one wall of this room, filled with bottles, decanters, , and tap barrels. Opposite these are several large dispeners capable of producing reasonable faximilaies of foods from a thousand worlds. A boisterous Brimling by the name of Raval is always found here, scurrying into and out of the common room as he brings whatever is requested of him by the patrons. Raval always has a story about his days as captain and quartermaster aboard the famous (at least to him) star galleon

"Astral Appetizer" are a source of endless enjoyment to those who regularly visit the Pickled Pulsar.

## Location 4: Kitchen

On rare occasion a patron of the Pickled Pulsar will request real food. Not from a dispenser or recreator. Real, honest-to-stars food. Its even rare for the same patron to be able to afford to pay for these requests. When this does happen, Raval goes into the kitchen and prepares as fine a feast as can be managed for such rich guests. The Brimling loves cooking if for no other reason that his opportunity to sample the food as he is preparing it.

Raval's pet and boon companion, a Jas'par named Muffin Max, lounges under the large carving table at the center of this room. He is friendly enough, though fiercely protects his master should danger arise.

## Location 5: Enviro-Storage

More than a simple refrigerator, this chamber has environmentally sealed crates that range from coffin sized to hand held. These crates are used to store delicacies from around the galaxy that require more exotic means of storage. The door to this room is locked with an iris scanner which can only be unlocked by Scaly J or Raval.

Unfortunately, real food is infrequently ordered at the Pickled Pulsar. As such many of these exotic components have grown, festered, and mutated in their own storage facilities. Bio-symbiotes and worse are likely to be sealed away, unnoticed by Raval and the others.

## Location 6: Lobby

This is really nothing more than an empty hallway that leads to the few rooms available for rent at the Pickled Pulsar. On rare occasion, and always on nights when Scaly J is away, Alsa will sometimes hold gladiatorial combats in this room and allow patrons to wage away whatever credits they may have. These battles are always done using non-lethal melee weapons.

## Location 7: Standard Guest Room

Little more than a padded cot and a secured footlocker are stuffed in this closet of a room. But at least the door can be locked from the inside. The atmosphere and temperature of this room are set to accommodate most common oxygen-breathing species found across the galaxy.

## Location 8: Enviro Guest Room

Similar to the standard guest room, this chamber holds little in the way of luxury. It is, however, environmentally sealed when the door is

closed. This, combined with an isolated ventelation system allows the chamber's temperature, humidity, and even atmosphere to be altered. The chamber can be filled with methane, carbon dioxide, and many other gasses breathed by some of the more exotic species found in distant star systems.

## Location 9: Scaly J's Room

Unlike every other door in the Pickled Pulsar, the entrance to Scaly J's personal chamber has a heavy security door with a bio-scanner which only permits entry to him. Behind this door is a bed only slightly nicer than that offered to his guests, though the walls are lined with trophies and trinkets from the bartender's many travels. He even keeps a small lockbox with a bio-scanner lock hidden beneath a stone in the floor. This lock box contains Scaly J's wealthy, which is surprisingly meager. He makes sure that his employees are paid a reasonable wage, often at his own loss.

## Location 10: Suite

This is the closest thing to lavish that can be found in the Pickled Pulsar. This suite has two variable gravity beds, a holographic gaming table with computer, hotbox and system-wide audio and video broadcasting capabilities, as well as an ambient audio system that features over a one-hundred thousand musical and ambient sound options from across the galaxy. The door can only be opened via a ident-card, which is normally carried by Scaly J when the room is not rented out. In addition, the walls are soundproof and even have a frequency scrambler to prevent those inside from being tapped by any listening devices. There is even a personal food and drink recreator against one wall. Quite simply, it offers anything a reasonable guest could ask for and is quite beyond the means of most who visit the Pulsar.

The room does not have variable environmental features like the Enviro Guest Room, though.

## Non-Player Characters
### Scaly J (5th Level Alien Brute)

As long as any grizzled old spacers can remember, the Pulsar has been owned and operated by a one-eyed reptilian humanoid known simply as Jones, or as some call him Scaly J. The only reason the patrons know this to be his name is that he wears an old field jacket from the days before the Great Star Crusade, when the

Unified Systems still ruled the galaxy. Scaly J is friendly enough to his patrons unless they bring up the Great Star Crusade and the rise of the Galactic Consortium, then he becomes cantankerous. However, on some late nights and after a few drinks from his own stock, Scaly J will hint at the horrors he saw in the war and what exactly happened to the burnt nub where he once had a tale.

Truth be told, Scaly J misses the "good ol' days," and even his whirling cybernetic eye twinkles when he speaks of his time in the United Navy. But he's no idealist, and thinks the Restoration are reckless fools who are likely to get innocent folks killed. He doesn't tolerate violence in his bar and anything beyond fisticuffs results in Scaly J making pragmatic use of the ion stick he keeps stashed behind the bar. In extreme cases, he keeps a sawed off laser rifle hidden in the kitchen for protection.

Scaly J carries all of the key cards and codes to the various guest rooms that the Pickled Pulsar offers. While he has no interest in the war between the Consortium and the Restoration, he will occasionally hire spacers and mercenaries to serve as muscle in his establishment, or transport goods and supplies to the Pulsar. If he comes to trust individuals who have served him well in the past and seem sympathetic to the Restoration, he will help would-be freedom fighters make contact with would-be freedom fighters he knows that frequent his bar.

### Alsa (Allurean)

Quick with a smile and quicker with a fresh drink, Alsa is an Allurean who works alongside Scaly J to keep the patrons of the Pickled Pulsar from going thirsty. Her verdant skin and lithe form have kept her attractive well into her middle years, and she's quick to use her charms to keep tempers from flaring if things get heated. She calls every patron "hon," and gives everyone a grin and a wink.

Alsa is actually a runaway slave who escaped Omega Consor over fifteen years ago. She keeps a low profile and a sharp ear for news of the Interstellar Upheaval. The last thing she wants is to be noticed by some Galactic Consortium officer or shock trooper. Her natural charm and quick wits have kept her safe so far, but the hold out laser hidden in dress can be just as useful if things get dangerous.

She counts Scaly J as her closest friend, mainly because he's treated her fairly and never probed about her past. This hasn't stopped her from occasionally pilfering a loose credit or two from passed out patrons when no one's looking.

### L3-X, aka "Lex" (2nd Level Combat Robot)

Ever cheerful and friendly, this nearly eight-foot combat robot gleefully engages in all the tasks required of him by his owner, Scaly J. Whether its cracking skulls or greeting patrons, Lex loves his job and will gladly talk the ears off anyone who so much as offers him even the stiffest of courtesies. He's an older model of combat robot that has long been out of service and has gone almost a decade without a memory wipe or software update. This has made him a bit off kilter for a robot. In his misguided efforts to be friendly, Lex will flirt with any female patrons who visit the Pulsar and challenge idle visitors to a hand of Knight's Gambit. He is remarkably skilled at the game (Larceny Skill 4), but does not understand why patrons grow angry at him when he regularly takes all of their credits. Those unwise enough to draw a weapon on the robot will find that he takes great joy in turning them into a bloody smear if weapons are drawn.

### "Captain" Raval Ryestar (4th Level Brimling) & Muffin Max (Jas'par)

In spite of his rolly-polly physique Raval Ryestar carries himself with the jovial confidence of a man who has not a care in the world. His gaudy doublet is covered in cheap crimson sequins and a basket-hilted star sword handle hangs off his beer-splattered apron. He is always puttering around the Pickled Pulsar, tossing scraps to Muffin Max, his spotted Jas'par or spinning half-true stories to any patrons who will listen.

Some days he claims to be the captain of a great fleet of star galleons and others he says a pirate's treasure horde was stolen from him over a decade ago. No one, not even Scaly J, knows which of his stories are true and which are fabrications. The owner puts up with his wild tales and ridiculous outfits simply because there is one indisputable fact when it comes to Raval Ryestar: The Brimling can turn almost any slop served in the Pickled Pulsar into a decent meal.

Even when he's not working, Raval hangs around the Pulsar dicing, drinking, and generally reliving the glory days that have long since passed him by. Muffin Max, on the other hand, is a lump of a Jas'par. The hound sleeps at all hours, only driven to action when Raval is in danger. The beast seems to be able to sense when his friend is in trouble and rushes headlong into the fray to defend the portly swashbuckler, regardless of danger.

### Encounters

**Mistaken Prey:** While relaxing in the Pickled Pulsar after their latest adventure, a mysterious bounty hunter enters the bar and mistakes one of the player characters for his latest target! The bounty hunter is no fool, and not likely to start a firefight inside the bar, but he does begin tracking the player characters before closing in! Whether they manage to convince the deadly hunter that they're not the quarry in question, have a deadly shoot

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out, or even convince the tracker to split the bounty with them in return for help is up to the referee.

**Alsa Escaped:** When a bounty hunter gets too close for comfort, Alsa decides its time to abandon the Pickled Pulsar – by stowing away aboard the player character's ship! By the time the PCs discover Alsa, they're halfway across the cosmos, likely with thugs or the Galactic Consortium hot on their tale in search of the Allurean. The PCs will need to find out why Alsa is on the run and settle things once and for all if they hope to escape with their skins in tact!

**Booze Run:** Drinks don't make themselves, and Scaly J is looking to improve his stock with some rare vintages. He hires the player characters to "liberate" some of the finest distilled beverages from a secure location, like the personal stores of a high ranking Consortium officer or noble, or a particularly discerning and violent crime lord.

# Interstellar Merchant
## *Gunslinger Gear*

A gunslinger without a pistol is a dead man. But these dead-eyes rely on more than just lightning reflexes and galactic grit to survive. As they drift from planet to planet making their way one shot at a time, sometimes they have to keep an ace up their sleeve to survive. Detailed below is collection cybernetics, weapons, and armor favored by many gunslingers – though other character classes might find this gear useful from time to time.

## Cybernetics

**Counter's Computer:** This small chip is installed at the base of the character's neck, easily concealed by a human's hair. It allows the character to count cards without error as well as perform basic mathematical equations instantly. The character may re-roll a failed Larceny skill checks made to determine the success of any game of cards once per hand.

**Dead Eye:** This large, bulky modification to the a cybernetic eye is obvious to anyone who sees it, typically appearing as a single goggle-like cover over one of the character's eyes. It is typically colored red, though others are possible. Characters with this modification have a +1 to all ranged "to-hit" rolls and inflict double damage with personal ranged weapons when they roll an unmodified 19 or 20 on their "To-Hit" roll.

**Hand Laser:** Similar to a Lasso Launcher, this modification for a cybernetic hand allows the character to fire a laser beam from their index finger if this is installed. This does the same damage as a laser pistol. Larger versions of this can be installed, doing damage as a laser rifle, though these larger modifications are obvious. Hand lasers require an energy cell, and large hand lasers consume energy cells twice as fast as normal and are capable of only ten shots before the cell must be replaced. Because of its unique designs, attacks made with a hand laser receive a +1 to all "To-Hit" rolls.

**Knuckleduster:** These are little more than retractable metal studs installed into the knuckles of a cybernetic hand. The character must already have a cybernetic hand to make use of knuckledusters. They grant a +1 bonus to all unarmed melee damage and do not count against a character's normal limit on cybernetic enhancements.

**Lasso Launcher:** A coiled cable of highly flexible steel mesh is installed into a character who already has both a cybernetic arm and cybernetic hand. At the character's command, a length of this cord up to twenty feet in length can spring forth already knotted in a lasso. Electro-lasso versions can also be purchased. If the character declares they are using a lasso before initiative is rolled during combat, they receive a +1 bonus to initiative.

**Palm Shuffler:** This enhancement can be installed into a cybernetic hand. A small chamber inside the cybernetic hand stores a single deck of cards which can be shuffled and dispensed at the character's mental command. These can be (and often are) modified to shuffle the cards in a fashion that ensures that specific cards are dealt to specific players. Because of this, the gamblers who use them are regarded with particular distrust. They do not count against a character's normal limit on cybernetic enhancements.

**Teetotaler's Filter:** Characters with cybernetic modification cannot get drunk, no matter how much alcohol they consume. They also receive +1 to all Saving Throws made to resist poisons.

## Weapons

**Boomer's Rang:** These appear to be truncated boomerangs, but when thrown two small laser beams (similar to the full length blades of a Star Sword) spring to life, making this a deadly weapon. After being thrown the attacker must roll a d20 and score equal to or under his Dexterity ability score. If successful, the weapon returns to the attacker's hand whether or not the attack misses. A Boomer's Rang can be used by Alien Brutes, Bounty Hunters, Gunslingers. and Mercenaries.

**Buckstar:** Similar to star swords, these are heavy handles (often of ivory) that cause a short broad bladed blade of laser energy to spring to life. They do not do as much damage a star sword, but are still quite deadly. Any character capable of wielding a star sword can use a Buckstar.

**Electro-Lasso:** Favored by those who herd cattle and atomic bovines, these long cords of flexible metal mesh can be used to restrain and subdue creatures large and small. Once a target has been roped (see below), the

attacker can activate a small power cell which causes target to suffer the listed damage. Robots suffer double damage from the charge of an electro-lasso. Lassos and eletro-lassos are typically no more than 20 feet in length. Gunslingers and any character capable of wielding an energy whip can use an electro-lasso.

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**Special Maneuver: Head 'em Up**
When a character attacks with a regular lasso or electro-lasso they can attempt to disable a target. If the attack roll is successful, the target must make a saving throw. If the saving throw is failed, the target is unable to move or attack for one round. Each following round, the attacker can choose to maintain their grip and the target may make a new saving throw to slip free. Attempting to break free is extraordinarily difficult, requiring the defender to roll a d20 and add their Strength ability score modifier. If this is successful, they have broken the lasso. The defender is free and the lasso is destroyed.

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**Plasma Shotgun:** These double-barreled monstrosities are short ranged and brutal. Their long barrels are often sawed down to make the weapon more concealable at the expense of a shortened range. They fire a massive blast of white-hot plasma that does extraordinary damage, but are only capable of two shots before requiring a new power cell. Any character capable of wielding a sporting laser or laser rifle can use a plasma shotgun.

## Armor
**Atomic Duster:** Made from the hide of atomic bovines, these dusters can be worn over light or medium armor and provide some minor additional protection and a +2 bonus on all Saving Throws made to resist radiation. These long, bovine leather coats are often dyed black or brown for style. Any character who is able to wear an energy cloak can wear an Atomic Duster. It can be combined with the benefits of light armor, medium armor or shields, but not with energy cloaks or heavy armor.

## Equipment
**Peacemaker Pack:** This special cylindrical energy cell can only be used in laser pistls and laser rifles. These laser weapons require special modification to even accept the Peacemaker Packs, which costs 25% of the weapon's purchase price. Peacemaker Packs draw enormous amounts of energy to fire deadly, but short ranged blasts. They are expended after six shots and any weapon using a Peacemaker Pack has its range reduced by one-half. However, the weapon receives a +2 bonus to damage.
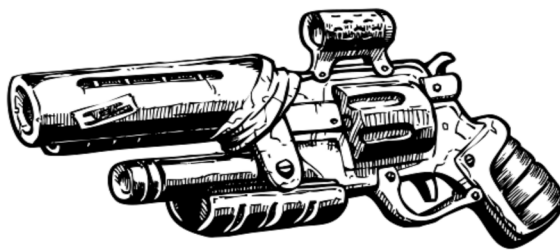
| Cybernetics | Cost |
|---|---|
| Counter's Computer | 1000 credits |
| Dead Eye | 6500 credits |
| Hand Laser | 250 credits (standard) or 500 credits (large) |
| Knuckleduster | 100 credits |
| Lasso Launcher | 500 credits (standard) or 650 credits (electro-lasso) |
| Palm Shuffler | 500 credits |
| Teetotaler's Filter | 250 credits |

| Melee Weapon | Damage | Cost | Weight |
|---|---|---|---|
| Buckstar | 1d6+2 | 75 credits | 2 lbs |
| Electro-Lasso | 1d6/2d6 | 50 credits | 2 lbs |
| Lasso | – | 5 credits | 1 lbs |

| Ranged Weapon | Damage | Rate of Fire | Ammo Capacity | Range | Cost (in Credits) | Weight |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Boomer's Rang | 1d6+2 | 1 | – | 40 ft | 35 | 2 lbs |
| Plasma Shotgun | 3d6 | 1 | 2 | 30 ft | 175 | 10 lbs |

| Armor | AC [AAC] | Cost | Weight |
|---|---|---|---|
| Atomic Duster | -1 [+1] | 15 credits | 5 lbs |

| Equipment | Weight | Cost |
|---|---|---|
| Peacemaker Pack | 0.5 lbs | 25 credits |

# Strangers Among the Stars
## Prime Humans

If nothing else, humanity has proven itself endlessly capable of surviving and adapting. They are commonly found across the universe. From the central systems to the Galactic Edge, humanity has evolved to survive the countless dangers found across the stars. During their endless generations of adventure and exploration of the cosmos, some humans have been exposed to unique radiation, genetic mutation, or sudden, explosive evolution that appears in a single generation. These life altering experiences leave some humans forever changed as they manifest any number of new and powerful abilities.

As more and more of these changed beings began to appear they became known to the universe at large as Prime Humans. Some travel from planet to planet using their powers to defend and protect the downtrodden, while others fancy themselves intergalactic warlords bent on using their abilities to dominate lesser beings. Prime Humans are as diverse as humanity itself, and just as unpredictable.

### Prime Human Advancement

| Level | XP | HD | BHB | ST |
|-------|---------|-----|-----|----|
| 1 | 0 | 1 | +0 | 14 |
| 2 | 2,500 | 1+1 | +0 | 13 |
| 3 | 5,000 | 2 | +1 | 12 |
| 4 | 10,000 | 3 | +1 | 11 |
| 5 | 20,000 | 3+1 | +2 | 10 |
| 6 | 40,000 | 4 | +3 | 9 |
| 7 | 80,000 | 5 | +3 | 8 |
| 8 | 160,000 | 6 | +4 | 7 |
| 9 | 320,000 | 6+1 | +4 | 6 |
| 10 | 640,000 | 7 | +5 | 5 |

**Weapon/Armor Restrictions:** Prime Humans, willing to brave the many dangers of the galaxy, are capable of wielding any weapon and may wear energy cloaks, light armor, scout armor, or medium armor as well as use any shield.

**Class Skill:** Athletics.

**Prime Hero:** At 1st level Prime Humans may select one ability from those listed below. They gain an second ability at 4th level and a final ability at 8th level. Some abilities may be selected more than once as notated in their description.

- *Attribute Increase:* Increase any attribute by +4, permanently. This ability may selected more than once, but no attribute can be increased above 18.
- *Energy Projection:* You are able to fire bolts of energy from your body, whether from your hands, eyes, or some other source. These bolts of energy do 1d6+1 points of damage. They can be fired once per round and have a range of 100 feet. Selecting this ability twice increases the damage to 2d6, while selecting it a third time doubles its range.
- *Extraordinary Senses:* You have extraordinary senses. You can see perfectly even in complete darkness, and are able to detect concealed or secret doors on a 1-4 on 1d6 if you are looking, or 1-2 on 1d6 when simply passing near them. If this ability is selected twice you can see invisible and cloaked objects and people, as well as automatically detect secret doors when searching for them and have a 1-4 on 1d6 chance of detecting them when you pass near one.
- *Flight:* You can have a flight speed of 24 and may fly at will with no limit to the duration. This ability may only be taken once.
- *Heightened Reflexes:* You can only be surprised on 1 on 1d6 and have a +2 bonus to Initiative. If this ability is selected twice you can never be surprised or ambushed and receive a +4 bonus to Initiative.
- *Limited Invulnerability:* You receive +2 hit points per character level and a permanent -3 [+3] to your Armor Class. This ability may only be taken once.
- *Psychic Abilities:* Characters who select this ability may use the the *Charm Person* Meditation three times per day. If selected twice, the character may also use the *Detect Thoughts* Meditation three times per day. Selecting this ability three times allows the character to use both abilities five times per day.

- *Regeneration:* A character with this ability regenerates one hit point every ten rounds. If this ability is selected twice the character regenerates a hit point every round.
- *Telepathy:* This ability allows a character to telepathically communicate with any intelligent creature within 100 feet, as long as that character understands their language. If selected twice, the character can communicate at a distance of up to one mile. If selected three times, the limits on the characters can communicate telepathically at a distance of up to 10 miles.
- *Uncanny Luck:* Selecting this ability grants a character +1 to all saving throws. If taken twice, they receive a +2 bonus and if taken a third time the character receives a +3 bonus.
- The referee is encouraged to develop other abilities to suit their campaign.

**Saving Throw:** Prime Humans receive a +2 bonus to all Saving Throws made to resist the effects of hazardous environments, such as radiation or extreme temperatures.

**XP Bonus for High Constitution:** Prime Humans with a Constitution of 15 or higher receives a 5% bonus to all Experience Points earned.

# Uncharted Starlanes
## *The Derelict*

Some ships have seen too many light years. Some light transports have traveled to one star system too many. Some star cruisers need to be scraped. But there's nothing like a captain's love for their ship and the galaxy is filled without countless starships that should long ago have been abandoned. But spit and wire, luck and prayers, or sheer determination, they keep running.

Until one day, they don't. They get forgotten. They get abandoned. They fade into the past. *The Derelict* is an encounter location featuring one such ship. This map and it's location descriptions can be easily dropped into an existing *White Star* campaign. How the player characters discover the beaten old ship is up to the referee.

Maybe they win it in a game of Knight's Gambit, buy it from a shady Uttin starship dealer, or find it floating in the void of space with only the faintest hints of a functioning energy core. The referee is encouraged to customize the ship's discovery to suit their individual campaign. This encounter location is an excellent resource for introducing player character's to their first starship if they're low on credits. Finding the ship is easy, exploring and restoring it are another matter entirely – and the *Bolt Hole* has more than a few surprises for her new owners.
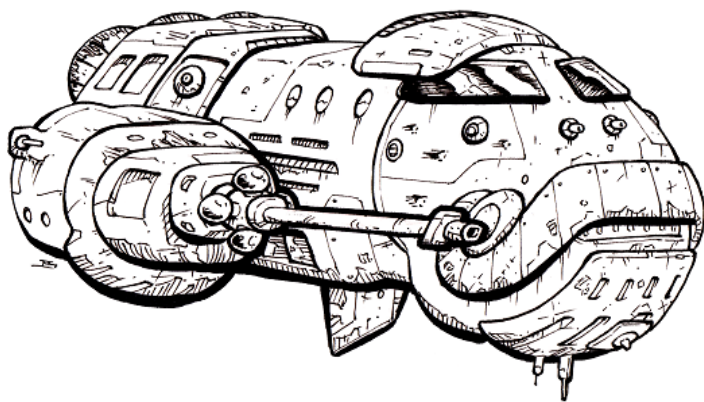
## Introduction

Read or paraphrase the following text to introduce the encounter.

> *Well, here she is – your new starship. Well, "new" might be a bit of a stretch. OK, it's a lie. The* Bolt Hole *is beaten, battered, and dirty. Hell, you're not even sure she'll fly. But this antique of a scout ship is yours now – and the only way to find out is to crack open the sealed entry hatch on the port side and take a look around. You and your companions have nothing but time to investigate the junker, so now it's time to see if she's even worth the effort or if the* Bolt Hole *is a hunk of junk bound for the scrap heap.*

## Location 1: Entry Hatch

> *It's dented, laser burnt, and the magnetic sealing looks a bit rough, but you're pretty sure the environmental seal is still in tact. The security panel beside this oblong entry hatch has a cracked display screen that flickers with a weak green light and a keypad whose symbols have long been worn away.*

Gaining entry into the *Bolt Hole* can be done a number of ways. Any character with a technology-based class ability, such as a Pilot's Jury-Rig ability or a Two-Fisted Technician's Man of Science ability. Cyphers attempting to user their Codeslinger ability treat the entry hatch as a Normal Security Lock.

Another option is simply to blow open the door. Strapping a few grenades together and putting them in front of the entry hatch is more than enough to blow the door off its hinges – but means the characters will need to find a way to environmentally seal the ship if they hope to get her airborne again.

Once the door is open the *Bolt Hole*'s internal security lights activate, providing dim illumination through out the whole ship.

## Location 2: Port Airlock

> *A pair of space suits rest against the the wall in this otherwise empty airlock. They're old, a bit beaten, but seem in tact. A few other hand tools, such as fusion cutters, hang on the wall and bulky out dated long-range comm box sits opposite the space suits. Across from the ship's entry hatch is a second hatch with a small activation button beside it.*

Short of blowing the door open in a manner similar to Location 1, the door into the Primary Cargo Hold will not open unless the Entry Hatch is sealed. Once the Entry Hatch has been sealed, pressing the button will cause

a low hiss as the chamber floods with oxygen and then the door will open to the Primary Cargo Hold.

All of the equipment in the Port Airlock is usable. This includes two space suits, a tool kit, and a long range communicator capable of broadcasting to any other publicly available comm station of a distance determined by the referee.

## Location 3: **Primary Cargo Hold**

> *This long, wide chamber obviously serves as the ship's primary storage area. A narrow hall runs off to the right while the main cargo hold turns gently to the right near it's end. Running lights line the walls, which rise to nearly twenty feet before touching a rounded metal ceiling. Just inside the airlock on the right-hand wall is a narrow irising service door. Behind it you can hear the idle hum of a function, but inactive FTL engine.*
>
> *A single computer terminal is mounted against the wall next to this service door and a secondary entry hatch breaks up the metallic grime and decay of the far wall. A massive lift-door of solid reinforced metallic alloy covers a small alcove on the far side of the chamber.*
>
> *A small power station is set next to the secondary entry hatch with several available ports for charging energy cells, flashlights, and even robots. In fact, a dented old mechanical robot still appears to be plugged into one of these ports, though its photoreceptor is clouded and the treads on one of its legs is beginning to fray.*

The computer terminal in this room provides basic information regarding the *Bolt Hole*. This includes the ship's serial number and basic capabilities. This particular scout ship is not as advanced as modern models, and is listed as a Humfleet Industries Boomer-Class Explorer. Boomers haven't been in production for over thirty years, and most Pilots, Star Pilots, Two-Fisted Technicians, and Uttins will be aware of this fact immediately. Other characters may roll a d20 and score equal to or under their Intelligence to know this.

Cyphers can use their Codeslinger ability or characters with the Technology skill can use that skill to do a deep investigation of the ship's computer. Success yields an interesting "data pocket," where the computer's hard drive is storing a large packet of data, but the data cannot be found. Whether it is a special key card, password, or more details investigation that will reveal the nature of this data packet is up to the referee, as is the exact nature of this data. The referee is encouraged to use this as a hook for a future adventure. Perhaps its data on a hidden planet where treasure was

concealed by pirates, maybe its secret plans to the latest Consortium super weapon, or maybe its info on a lost Star Knight artifact. Anything is possible.

The power cells can be used to charge any hand held weapons that use energy cells – allowing them to be recharged at no cost. A careful search of the recharging station (with a 1-2 on 1d6 chance of success) reveals a med kit has fallen behind the ports and though dusty, is still usable.

The beaten old Mechanical Robot is inoperable, but if characters invest 1d6 x 100 credits in parts and make a successful Technology skill check, then it can be restored to service. By default, it is loyal to whomever is the captain of the ship – though it is cantankerous and regards living organisms as a bit stupid. It's designation is B0L-T3R, or "Bolter" and is a first-level Mechanical Robot.
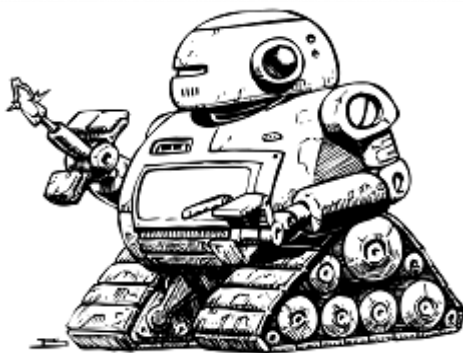
## Location 4: Engine Room

*The narrow access door opens to an alcove barely large enough for a single human to stand. The scent of grease, ozone, and lubricant fills the air. A massive tangle of wires, diodes, fuses and diodes cover the walls here, through between two of these large panels is enough room for a particularly slender humanoid to slip into the massive rumbling machinery that is the heart of the ship.*

Any character with even a passing knowledge of FTL engines can easily see that the *Bolt Hole* is held together by prayers and less than safe repairs. It's reckless maintenance, even by Uttin standards. Each time the FTL drive is fired up there is a 1 in 1d6 chance that the drive will falter, dropping the *Bolt Hole* in a random location of the referee's choosing. Fixing this problem will require 1000 credits and two weeks of work, though Pilots can temporarily bypass it by making a successful use of their Jury-Rig ability. Unfortunately each time they do this, the chance of an FTL failure increases by 1. If it ever reaches 6, the FTL fails completely and must be replaced entirely.

## Location 5: **Cargo Lift**

> *The large rolling metal door lifts with a grinding screech to reveal a lift platform painted with yellow and black stripes. A mechanical toggle just inside the doorway appears to allow for the floor to be lowered to the ground outside or raise again to bring anything on it onto the ship. A beaten old Skybike is parked in the far corner, though its engine is half-gutted and scattered across the floor.*

Unlike so much of the *Bolt Hole*'s other features, the lift works perfectly. It cannot, however, be activated while the ship is in space unless the controls are overridden. The skybike has seen better days, and while it could be repaired – it'd probably be cheaper just to buy a new one. Still, if someone insists on repairing it and is willing to invest 1,250 credits and a few months of loving care, they'll have a classic skybike with a Movement of 35 instead of the standard 30. (See *White Star Companion* or *White Star Galaxy Edition* for statistics.)

## Location 6: **Galley**

> *A long metal bench and table are tucked into the corner of this room opposite a clunky, half-rusted ration generator and water purifier. Next to this ramshackle equipment is a pile tin cups, titanium sporks, and ceramic bowls. The scent of ozone fills the room.*

The galley is perfectly serviceable and in good order, if a bit dirty. Unfortunately, other than flavored and carbonated water, the only food it produces flavored to the pallet of a Qinlon. This means most of the food tastes like raw meat and burning spices. Also, whenever the ration generator is activated the scent of burning pork fills the room.

## Location 7: **Secondary Cargo Hold**

> *The door to this room is reinforced metal and has an environmental seal along with an external locking mechanism. Its interior is empty except for several large crates with similar seals, large enough to hold a humanoid. There are display panels next to the door showing temperature, oxygen levels, and humidity.*

The Secondary Cargo Hold is surprisingly advanced for such a beater of a ship. It is environmentally sealed and has an independent oxygen intake,

meaning it can be vented and turned into a zero-g chamber if necessary. This can only be done from controls in the cockpit or gunnery pod.

The large crates are similarly sealed, and also have magnetic sides, which can be activated with the touch of a glowing button on their side, meaning they will attach to the ship's deck, even in zero-g. These crates even offer temporary protection from the vacuum of space and have enough oxygen for a single being to breath for 1d6 hours if they seal themselves inside.

## Location 8: Lounge/Crew Quarters

*This large area is segmented by a plastic sheet hanging across the middle of the room. One side features a small gaming table with a pair of chairs bolted to the floor at opposite sides of it, and a long row of wall-mounted lockers for storing clothing, weapons, and other goods. Behind the curtain is a tiny sanitation station and a pair of thinly padded cots set into the wall.*

The gaming table has a retractable central pod that can act as a Knight's Gambit dealer. Its tiny internal computer is also capable of producing digital pieces for a game of Stellar Commander and can even pump music through the entire ship – though this music library is tiny and old. The same three songs are blasted on squelching speakers in an endless loop if activated.

Only one of the equipment lockers has anything of interest. A ragged pile of old coveralls serves as a makeshift bed for a bumble-dog that has been living in the ship for some time. Though initially skittish, it can be befriended if treated gently and offered food. (See *White Star* or *White Star: Galaxy Edition* core rules for statistics.)

The sanitation station smells like a cheap refueling depot and the beds have mattresses only in the loosest sense. In spite of the ship requiring a three people to have a full crew, there are only two beds, though a rickety folding cot is stuffed under the bottom bunk. It will break two hours after it is used, likely waking the slumbering spacer in the process.

## Location 9: Gunnery Pod

*A single swiveling chair is the centerpiece of this tiny room. A large computer terminal with all manner of display screens, toggles, switches, and even a guidance stick with a trigger. Just behind the chair is a small computer terminal which shows the various energy readouts for the the ship.*

The gunnery station here also doubles as a sensor array and control station for Location 7: Secondary Cargo Hold. Because the ship has a dedicated location for its only weapon, the laser cannon is not designed as [Pilot-Linked]. That feature was not added until more modern models were put into production. When the laser cannon is activated, the door to this room automatically closes and locks, and the lights lower to make reading sensors easier. Short of blasting open the door, it can only be opened from either the controls at the cockpit or from the inside.

## Location 10: **Escape Pod Deployment**

*The hallway ends abruptly in a chamber similar to the ship's airlock, save for a recessed handle set into the floor. A caution symbol has been painted by the handle and a reinforced door ends the hall into what is likely the forward of the ship and the cockpit.*

The hatch to the floor can be opened manually, but requires anyone attempting to do so to roll a d20 and score equal to or under their Strength. It can also be opened automatically via controls at the cockpit.

Once opened, there is a single large escape pod capable of holding up to six humanoids with a week of supplies for each individual. The escape pods will fire automatically if the *Bolt Hole* is reduced to zero Hit Points, but can be activated manually by anyone inside them.

## Location 11: **Cockpit**

*Crammed in the opposite nooks before a massive control panel that encircles this room is a pair of torn, repaired, and torn again chairs. Before the port side chair is an obvious control panel, while it's mirror on the starboard side if covered with switches, toggles, and dials. The thick, reinforced glass that dominates the space above it is covered with grime and discolored with age – revealing a distorted image of what lay beyond the prow of this battered old ship.*

Cramped, smelly, and with squeaky chairs, this cockpit has seen better days. When the ship's FTL drive activates, the lights in the cockpit flicker. It's amazing that everything in this room actually works. In addition to the miracle of reckless science done in this room to keep the *Bolt Hole* running, the center console also has a port which serves as a Robot Socket, a rare feature on any ship this large – let alone one so old.

**Starship Modification: Robot Socket**
Typically installed on Stunt Fighters and other small vessels, this allows a Mechanical Robot to plug in directly to a starship's central computer and act as a pilot without taking up additional space aboard the vessel. Being directly interfaced in this fashion grants the Mechanical Robot +1 to Initiative during Starship Combat. It can be installed on Light Transports, Orbital Shuttles, Scout Ships, Stunt Bombers, Stunt Fighters, Stunt Insurgents, and Stunt Interceptors.
_Base Cost:_ 50 credits.
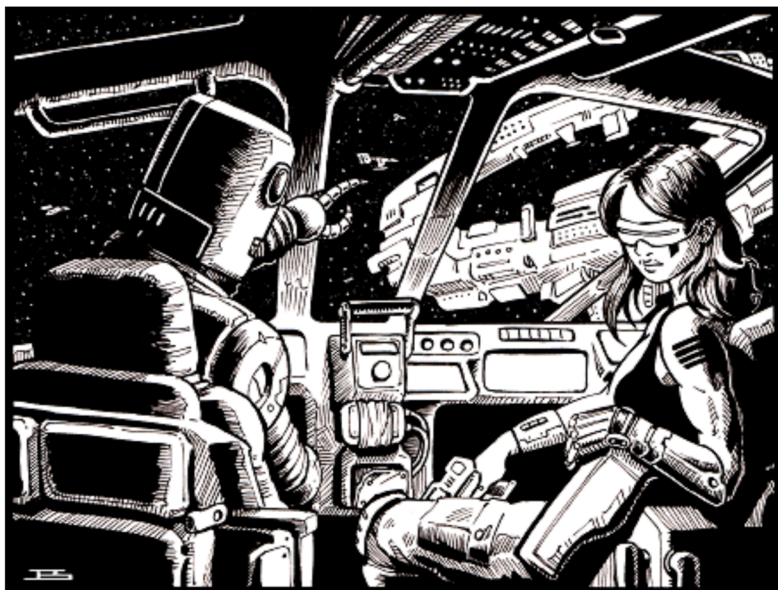


## Encounters

**Buyer Beware:** The previous owners of this seemly beaten up old ship are looking for it, and they're not exactly friendly. This band of bloodthirsty space pirates believe that the _Bolt Hole_ has coordinates in her FTL drive to a secret drop where vast wealth is hidden – and they're willing to kill to get it, or destroy the ship to if they can't get the treasure for themselves.

**Uttin Unseen:** Hidden in the bowels of the _Bolt Hole_'s engine is a ragged, half-mad Uttin who has been living there for weeks. He's made secret modifications to the ship's FTL drive and neither he nor those modifications are discovered until the characters find themselves crash landed on an unknown and very dangerous world on the edge of the galaxy.

# THE BOLT HOLE
## Outdated Scout Ship

**Armor Class:**  5 [14]  **Hit Points:**  60  **Shield Strength:**  1
**Movement:**  9  **Targeting:**  +1  **Attack:** Medium Laser (4d6)
**Modifications:**  Faster-Than-Light Drive, Robot Socket
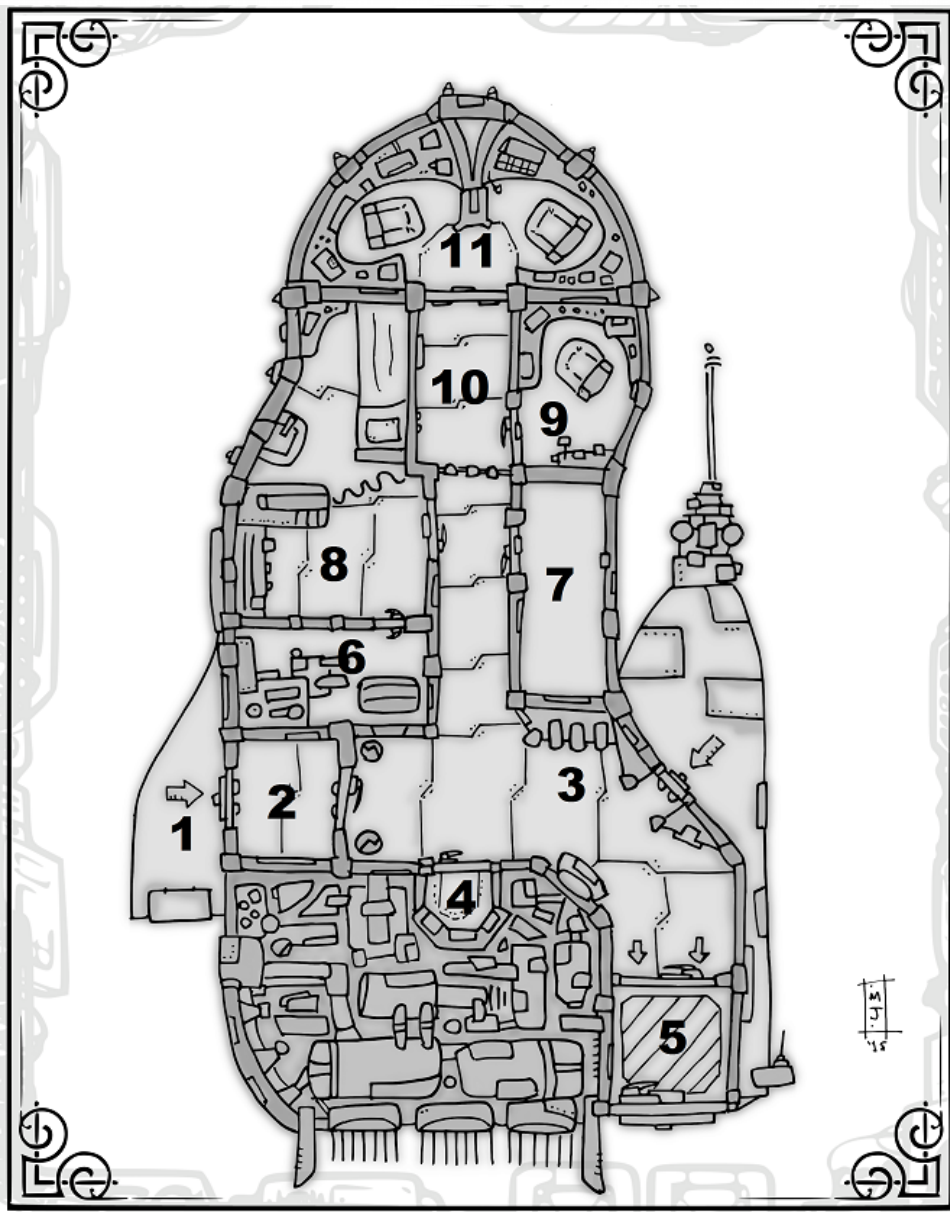
# Walking the Way
## *The Blade's Way*

The following set of optional rules is designed to add an element of chance, high drama, and cinematic flair to duels between Star Knights and Void Knights. They allow players and referees to make use of a Knight's Gambit deck to represent the rise and fall of the Way as its powers are drawn from star to void and back again.

## Step One: A Duel is Declared

When two combatants face off in a duel of Star Swords, if both players (or the player and referee) agree, they can engage in a formal duel. Only Star Knights, Star Pilots, Untrained Initiates, and Void Knight NPCs may engage in a formal duel. All formal duels must be done wielding Star Swords and must be agreed upon before the first round of combat begins.

## Step Two: Hands are Dealt

Each combatant is then dealt a hand of cards, face down. The number of cards dealt to each combatant is determined by that character's level (in the case of Star Knights, Star Pilots, or Untrained Initiates) or Hit Dice (in the case of Void Knight NPCs). Each combatant does not reveal these cards until they are played.

## Step Three: Play Cards

Before initiative is rolled during each combat round, each combatant secretly decides how they will use their hand using the guidelines listed below. The cards they plan to use are placed on the table, face down. Each combatant is limited in the number of cards they may play each round as determined by their level as shown on The Blade's Way table. Characters are not required to play a card.

### The Blade's Way Table

| Star Knight or Star Pilot Level | Void Knight Hit Dice | Untrained Initiate Level | Initial Hand Size | Maximum Cards Usable Each Round |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1-2 | 5-6 | 1-4 | 1 | 1 |
| 3-4 | 7 | 5-8 | 2 | 1 |
| 5-6 | 8 | 9-10 | 3 | 2 |
| 7-8 | 9 | – | 4 | 2 |
| 9-10 | 10+ | – | 5 | 3 |

## Step Four: Reveal Cards & Apply Effects

Once cards have been chosen, each player reveals the cards they have decided to play during that combat round. The modifiers provided by the cards a combatant has chosen to play are detailed below and take effect immediately – most for the duration of upcoming combat round.

Star Knights, Star Pilots, and Untrained Initiates play cards of the Star Suit to gain any one of the following modifiers during a duel. These

modifiers only apply to rolls made during the round of combat in which they are played. These modifiers cannot exceed the Star Knight's, Star Pilot's, or Untrained Initiate's level, if the card value is higher than their level.

Void Knights may choose to "play" a Star suited card only to discard that card. This counts towards the maximum number of cards they may play in a single round.

Regardless of the played card's effect, no more than one card can be used to achieve the effects listed below.

- Add card value, if positive, to Initiative.
- Add card value, if positive, as a bonus to Armor Class
- Subtract card value, if negative, to opponent's To-Hit Roll.
- Subtract card value, if negative, to opponent's Damage Roll.

Void Knights play cards of the Void Suit to gain any one of the following bonuses during a duel. These modifiers only apply to rolls made during the round of combat in which they are played. These modifiers cannot exceed the Void Knight's Hit Dice, if the card value is higher than their hit dice.

Star Knights, Star Pilots, and Untrained Initiates, may choose to "play" a Void suited card only to discard that card. This counts towards the maximum number of cards they may play in a single round.

Regardless of the played card's effect, no more than one card can be used to achieve the effects listed below.

- Add card value to To-Hit Roll.
- Add card value to Damage Roll.
- Subtract card value if negative to opponent's Initiative.
- Subtract value, if negative, as a penalty to opponent's Armor Class.

Nebula Cards Can be spent (regardless of value) by any duelist to gain any one of the following benefits:

- *Star Knight, Star Pilot, and Void Knight only:* Automatically prepare any Meditation they could normally use of a level no higher than the value of the card listed (if positive). This Meditation remains prepared until it is activated, though the duelist cannot exceed their normal number of prepared Meditations as determined by their level or hit dice. Two or more different Nebula cards cannot have their values combined to prepare a single Meditation.
- Activate any prepared or known Meditation whose level is no higher than the value of the card (whether positive or negative) without expending an action. Two or more different Nebula cards cannot have their values combined to active a single Meditation.

- Add card value (if positive) to Saving Throws made to resist Meditations for the remainder of the round. This modifier cannot exceed a character's level or Void Knight's Hit Dice, if the card value is higher than their level or hit dice. Two or more different Nebula cards cannot have their values combined.
- Subtract card value (if negative) to Saving Throws made by their opponent to resist the effects of a Meditation for that round. This modifier cannot exceed a player character's level or Void Knight's Hit Dice, if the card value is higher than their level or hit dice. Two or more different Nebula cards cannot have their values combined.

## Step Five: Combat

Now that cards have been dealt, played, and their effects applied, the combat round plays out normally (with modifiers from the cards as detailed above), as described in *White Star: Galaxy Edition.*

## Step Six: Draw

If the combat rounds without a victor, each duelist draws one card from the Knight's Gambit deck. All cards which have already been played are then shuffled back into the deck *after* these have been drawn. There is no limit to a character's hand size.



## Optional Rule: Dueling in the Void

A Star Knight, Star Pilot, or Untrained Initiate may use Void suited cards as a Void Knight if they so choose – but in doing so are subject to Drawing Down the Void as described in *White Star: Galaxy Edition.* The saving throw made to resist the effects of Drawing Down the Void are suffer a penalty equal to the numeric value of the Void suited card that is played, regardless of whether that card is positive or negative.

## Optional Rule: Absolute Balance

A Star Knight, Star Pilot, or Untrained Initiate (but not Void Knight), regardless of level, who had a hand of containing the Zero of Nebula, Zero of Stars, and Zero of Void, has achieved Absolute Balance with the Way. If the character achieves such a hand, they must immediately reveal and play these cards. They gain a bonus of +5 to Initiative, +5 to all Saving Throws made to resist Meditations, and a -5 [-5] to their Armor Class for the remainder of the combat. In addition, they may make two attacks each combat round. The player then immediately refresh their hand to their initial hand size, if it is not at or above this number of cards after achieving Absolute Balance.

A character cannot achieve Absolute Balance more than once during a duel, even if they draw the cards to do so on a later round.

# Submission Guidelines

*White Star* is <u>your</u> galaxy and *Star Sword* is <u>your</u> magazine! If you're interested in submitting an article for publication in future issues of *Star Sword*, we're interested to see what you've got!

All articles should be between 1000 and 2500 words, and should be family friendly. *White Star* is a pulp sci-fi roleplaying game built on the foundation of *Swords & Wizardry WhiteBox,* so all material should be submitted with these rules sets in mind. Beyond that, let your imagination sore!

- All articles must be Open Gaming Content and comply with the White Star Compatibility License.
- Multiple submissions are permitted.
- The submission of previously published material is not permitted.
- Authors are paid $0.01 (USD) per word if their submission upon acceptance. Payments are sent via Paypal.
- Authors receive a free digital and print on demand copy of the issue of *Star Sword* in which their work appears once the formats become available.
- Once an article has been accepted, the author agrees to not publish their material elsewhere until it has first appeared in *Star Sword Magazine.*
- All accepted submissions may be edited for clarity and presentation.
- All contributors will receive credit for their published material in the issue in which that material appears.
- Prior professional experience is not required.

What are you waiting for? There's a galaxy of adventure out there and the only thing it's waiting on is *you!*

Send your submissions to *White Star* author and *Star Sword* Editor-in-Chief James M. Spahn at **jspahn1978@gmail.com**.

List the subject line as "Star Sword Submission" and provide all submissions in *.*odt or *.*doc format.