

THE DERELICT

A TRAVELLER ADVENTURE FOR 2-6 PLAYERS

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ABOUT THE ADVENTURE

A derelict starship of unknown origin has shown up at the edge of the sector. It has no apparent damage, and it is absolutely massive - roughly half the size of a small moon.

Its existence has been noted by a number of major players in the system. Each of them is preparing a team to board the ship, and hopefully score whatever treasures it possesses before the others can.

Meanwhile, something horrific is lying in wait aboard the vessel. It has the simple mind of an uncompromising, pure predator – it doesn't feed, it doesn't reason, it just kills. While it is dormant at the beginning of the adventure, eventually one of the many parties boarding the ship will wake it up. At that point, the job of capturing the ship becomes much, much harder.

GETTING THE JOB

The PCs' ship is listed on a register of local free traders. They are enjoying drinks in a local bar when they are approached by a series of agents,

each representing one of the groups interested in the derelict.

The groups that approach the PCs are:

THE YULAND CORPORATION

Simply called "the Company" by its employees, the Yuland Corporation tells the players that it believes the starship is a long-lost pre-Imperial battleship called the Absolution. They will pay 1,000,000 credits for the retrieval of any data disks positively identifying it as that craft.

The Yuland Corporation is the only one of the three potential employers that knows about the existence of the Creature. The Company encountered this ship five years ago, and its initial survey team reported the Creature's existence before going silent. The ship then vanished into warp space, and the Yuland Corporation has been trying to track it down since then.

THE ARGOSI INITIATIVE

This private-sector research and development company believes the ship might be alien in origin, and wants to retrieve any advanced technology it can. The Initiative is represented by Dr. Freeling, a senior

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research associate. He offers the players 500,000 credits, plus a share of any advances resulting from research into retrieved items.

Dr. Freeling is an honest man, and genuinely wants to advance science. The Argosi Initiative is a company with secrets, however – although its stated goal is to make life better for all the Empire's citizens through learning and creating new advances in technology, its anonymous Board of Directors seeks to forcibly evolve humanity beyond its current limitations and is willing to make great sacrifices to attain that goal.

TYVON, ADRUS, AND SMYTHERS LEGAL SERVICES

Wallace Smythers of TA & S Legal approaches the players shortly after Dr. Freeling. He sneers at the idea of the ship being alien - he presents the players with paperwork proving that the ship is lost property of one of his clients. He insists that the players will be handsomely paid by his client after retrieval of the vessel, which he claims is a mining frigate named the Indomitable Spirit. The exact amount is open to negotiation, but his client has authorized him to make an initial offer of 20,000,000 credits.

TA & S Legal in general, and Wallace Smythers in particular, is devoted to the pursuit of money above all else. The paperwork Smythers presents is forged, and a successful Investigate check at DM -4 will let a player know that it's fake. If the players confront Smythers about the forged document, he will deny everything, but increase the promised payment to 25,000,000 credits. He has no intention whatsoever of actually paying the players, however. If they successfully return the ship to him, he will arrange for one of the other two teams to attack them.

If it comes to that, the Unforgivables will genuinely attack the players, but Bullet Company will side with them in favor of discrediting TA & S.

THE OTHER TEAMS

Whichever employer the players choose, the other two will send teams of four mercenaries and free traders into the ship also. The players may or may not meet up with them. The mercenaries are:

THE UNFORGIVABLES

This group of mercenaries has been in the business for a long time. So long, in fact, that each member has gone slightly insane from all the

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action they've seen. The only member who still has everything together is Alexei, the leader.

ALEXEI MIRKOV

Alexei is the generally likable, heavily armed leader of the group. Alexei is the most sane, and tries to keep his comrades from killing too many innocent bystanders. He doesn't always succeed, and he feels bad about that. Sometimes.

Skills:

Athletics (co-ordination) 1, Gun Combat (Assault Rifle) 2, Recon 1, Melee (blade) 1, Streetwise 1, Leadership 1

ADRIATUS "GUNNER"

NARGOLAN

Gunner is trigger happy, nervous, and armed with a heavy assault rifle and grenades. He always smells faintly of sulfur.

Skills:

Athletics (co-ordination) 1, Gun Combat (Assault Rifle) 2, Recon 1, Melee (blade) 1, Streetwise 3

RUFUS BALLWICK

Rufus is the psychopath of the group. He's calculating, cold, and fully willing to kill his friends to save himself, if it comes to that.

Skills:

Athletics (co-ordination) 1, Gun Combat (Assault Rifle) 2, Melee (blade) 2, Streetwise 1

NOORO GANMA

The other Unforgivables don't really know when they picked up Nooro, but they'll never forget him. He's a flamethrower-toting pyromaniac, and the only member of the group to have an unusual weapon. He wields the following:

Flamethrower, 5d6 damage, Ranged (rifle), Fuel Tank (10)

Skills:

Athletics (co-ordination) 1, Heavy Weapons (Flamethrower) 2, Melee (blade) 1, Streetwise 1

BULLET COMPANY

Everybody loves Bullet Company! More show than go, Bullet Company is a local celebrity group of "action

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heroes” that take merc jobs to keep up appearances. While they’re primarily actors, they’ve been in enough scrapes that they’ve picked up some genuine skills in the process.

LEILA WARREN

Ms. Warren plays a close-quarters fighting specialist. She was formerly a professional chef, and every so often uses her knife skills to good effect in her new line of work.

Skills:

Athletics (co-ordination) 2, Gun Combat 0, Melee (blade) 1, Deception 1, Carouse 1, Persuade 1

WILLIC BANRORI

Willic plays the role of a greedy former pirate. He’s actually a former accountant, and enjoys his new life of acting and feigned heroics far more.

Skills:

Athletics (co-ordination) 2, Gun Combat 0, Melee 0, Deception 1, Carouse 1, Persuade 1

MANNY DROGAN

The nominal leader of Bullet Company. Plays an opportunistic but

loyal former soldier in the Army. Actually a bouncer for a local night club.

Skills:

Athletics (co-ordination) 2, Gun Combat 0, Melee (unarmed) 2, Carouse 2, Persuade 1

FRED "FREEFALL" FANELLI

Thrill-seeking ace pilot. In reality, a stuntman who made a name for himself as a pilot. Gained his nickname by skyjumping from low orbit for an advertisement for a local hair care product.

Skills:

Athletics (co-ordination) 2, Gun Combat 0, Melee 0, Carouse 1, Persuade 1, Pilot (spacecraft) 2

MERCENARY STATISTICS AND GEAR

All of the mercenaries have the following stats:

Strength 7

Dexterity 7

Endurance 7

Intelligence 8

Education 8

Social Standing 5

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Except for Nooro, everyone in both the Unforgivables and Bullet Company are armed with the following:

Assault Rifle, 3d6 damage, Ranged (rifle), Magazine (30)

OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES

There are several other groups besides the ones that approach the PCs that are sending in teams. They all have assault rifles (stats as above), and have Mesh Armour (2).

IMPERIAL INTELLIGENCE

Several agents of the intelligence division of the Imperial government are already en route to the vessel. Their mission is to identify the craft and either claim it for the Empire or, if that proves impossible, destroy it. Among them are:

Adarius Olando, pilot and technical specialist

Marius Reed, special weapons expert

Lee Mandrake, xenolinguistics expert

All of the Intelligence operatives have the following stats:

Strength 6

Dexterity 8

Endurance 7

Intelligence 8

Education 9

Social Standing 7

Each of the operatives is armed with the following:

Laser Pistol, 3d6 damage, Ranged (pistol), Magazine (100)

IMPERIAL NAVY SPECIAL EXPEDITIONARY CORPS, SECTION 11

INSEC Section 11 officially does not exist. The Imperial Intelligence team is unaware of Section 11's team, but the reverse is not true. These agents are heavily armed. They have reason to believe the ship is infested, and their mission is to destroy it before it reaches populated space. They have the training and the heavy ordnance to successfully destroy the derelict, but it will take them 1d6+6 hours to get everything in place and leave the ship before they can detonate it.

The Agents are all dressed in black outfits with no markings other than a

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number on their collars. They wear full helmets that obscure their faces, and no skin shows anywhere; their outfits are fully-enclosed TL 13 environmental suits made of some unknown synthetic material.

All Agents use the following stats:

Strength 7

Dexterity 7

Endurance 7

Intelligence 8

Education 8

Social Standing 7

Agent 13, demolitions expert

Agent 25, xenobiologist

Agent 17, heavy weapons expert

Agent 21, computer specialist

Each Agent has the following armaments:

Laser Rifle, 5d6 damage, Ranged (rifle), Magazine (100)

Laser Pistol, 3d6 damage, Ranged (pistol), Magazine (100)

THE BLACK STAR CORSAIRS

This group of pirates and renegades operates out of the next star system, but on learning of the derelict, they

mobilized every ship they had in an effort to get to it first. They are already on board. The Corsairs are hostile to every other person that enters the ship, and their fighters will strike at any vessel getting near to the derelict.

The Corsairs all have the following stats.

Strength 7

Dexterity 7

Endurance 7

Intelligence 8

Education 8

Social Standing 5

They are all armed with assault rifles (3d6 damage, ranged (rifle), magazine (30))

THE DERELICT

The ship is ancient, and in a state of disrepair. While its atmosphere is stable and breathable, various systems temporarily lose power occasionally. Lights frequently will flicker, and sometimes go out altogether for extended periods of time.

It has thirty seven levels, each of which has its own hazards. The bridge is in the center of the ship, and is sealed shut from the inside.

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There are no signs of life in most parts of the ship, though the deeper the players go, the more they will start to notice signs of a struggle. Some of this is ancient - old carbon scoring from energy weapons, ash from explosions underneath thick layers of dust, and so on. Some, however, is fresh - bloody remains of members of the other teams. Most of the corpses are Corsairs.

The ship is actually an ark. Once the players reach the fifteenth level, they will discover vast bays full of thousands of stasis pods. Each pod contains a desiccated alien corpse; it's clear that the stasis systems, even with their redundant power supplies, have suffered a number of failures over the centuries. Only a handful of the pods have survived fully intact; the players have only a 5 in 100 chance of finding any of these.

The intact stasis pods contain living aliens. If awoken, they will be too groggy for the first half hour to be able to really comprehend their surroundings. As time passes and they gain more coherence, these aliens will prove to be reasonably friendly, given their circumstances. They have no knowledge of the Creature, and their primary motivation will be finding out what happened to the rest of the ship and continuing on their original course.

Once awakened, they will seek out and wake up all remaining alien survivors. Assuming the players allow this, it will take 2d6 hours.

HAZARDS

The ship is very, very old, and while it's in pretty good shape, there are still problems that could cause catastrophic results for the players.

Every few rooms or so, roll on the hazards table below to see if anything untoward occurs.

Roll (1d20)	Event
1-8	Nothing happens
9-11	Weird sound
13	Alien infection
14	Bulkhead collapse
15-17	Environmental change
18	Toxic gas leak
19-20	Distant explosion

TABLE 1: HAZARDS

THE CREATURE

Despite the vast amount of death aboard the ship, there is something still alive here - the Creature. It is uncannily fast, has incredible regenerative abilities, and the unrelenting instincts of a predator.

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The Creature is the size of a human, but has elongated limbs, grey skin, unblinking black eyes, and a wide maw full of razor-sharp fangs. It has the strength of a bull and is as tough as a tank. However, it fears fire and will retreat in the face of it. It favors moving along the ventilation system.

If attacked by multiple enemies, it will retreat into the nearest crawlway, ventilation duct, or other narrow space. It moves very quickly, and once out of sight of the characters, it is undetectable.

Every hour that it is out of combat, it regains 1 point of damage.

Every time the players enter a new area after the first half hour - whether it's a corridor, chamber, or open area - there is a chance they will gain the Creature's attention. The chance of this starts at 5 in 100, and increases by 5 for every new room they enter thereafter.

It will prefer to catch its prey alone, and will not attack a group directly. It may drop down out of the ventilation to attack, and then retreat with its prey in hand. If there is no way to ambush its prey, it will wait for another opportunity. If it thinks it has been discovered, it will retreat and try to sneak in from a different direction.

Weight: 100 kg

Strength: 22 (3d6 damage)

Dexterity: 14

Endurance: 17

Weapons: Claws and Teeth +3

Armour: 6 (1 against fire)

ENTERING THE SHIP

When the player first reach the derelict, they find a number of possible entry points. Whatever entry they choose, they will be attacked by a Corsair vessel before docking. It should pose little challenge, being destroyed after a handful of shots. After reaching the derelict, the players will see other ships docked or docking with it in the distance.

ENCOUNTERS

Once in the ship, every chamber they enter, they have a 1 in 10 chance of running into a member of one of the other teams. For the first half hour of the adventure, every time they encounter one of them, all of the NPCs will be alive and well, and may be hostile to the PCs (1 in 4 chance). After that, the Corsairs will have awakened the Creature. At that point, every time they find an NPC, roll 1d6. On 1-2, he's alive and unaware of the danger. On 3-5, he's alive, but aware of something out there - he's heard sounds, or perhaps lost a comrade. On 6, he's recently

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deceased, having been torn limb from limb by the Creature.

SALVAGED TREASURES

While the ship is highly dangerous, and the Creature a deadly threat, there are treasures to be had if the players are careful and lucky. The ship contains a fully functioning example of stasis technology well beyond anything currently in existence in known space. This alone is worth a fortune if retrieved intact. This will satisfy the Argosi Initiative.

There is also alien capital ship weapons technology in various states of disrepair - the PCs have a 25% chance of recovering useful examples of it. Additionally, if the players manage to make it to the bridge and break in, it is conceivable that they could get the ship running again.

Though it's bigger than anything they've ever seen before, it operates largely on autopilot. The artificial intelligence the ship displays makes it seem eerily like a sentient being.

EXPLORING THE SHIP

Every time the players enter a new room, roll on the following table to determine what kind of chamber it is.

Roll (1d20)	Room Type
1-5	Living Quarters
6-8	Recreational Room
9-12	Workroom
13-16	Stasis Facility
17-18	Cargo Bay
19	Eating Hall
20	Laboratory

TABLE 2: ROOM TYPE

AREAS OF INTEREST

THE BRIDGE

The bridge of the ship is barricaded from the inside, and the players will need a laser torch or something similar to open it up. If they spend 4 rounds searching, they will find a device of this nature in a nearby chamber. Inside the bridge is a dead alien sitting in a central command chair with no visible wounds. Further inspection will let the players conclude that he probably died of starvation. Though the bridge is operating on minimal power and of alien design, a reasonably intelligent character will be able to figure out enough to get the ship running again. Once the power is on, the characters will be able to track the Creature's movements when it's not in the vents using the internal sensor system.

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There are no ventilation openings in the bridge, and the bridge doors can be re-secured with material obviously hoarded there for that purpose by desperate crew.

ENGINEERING / THE CREATURE'S LAIR

The ship has a self-destruct system, but it's inoperative. To repair it, the players must head to the engineering bay and reconnect a severed main power conduit. Repairing this conduit will also restore full power to the ship. Unfortunately, the lair of the Creature is also in engineering, as that is the warmest part of the ship. There is a 50% chance that the Creature will be out hunting when the players reach its lair. The lair is full of skeletons stripped clean of any meat. Many of them are alien and long dead. Several are recently deceased and still glistening. The entire engineering bay has a rotting stench that permeates the air.

LIVING QUARTERS

All of the living quarters on board the ship were originally for inhabitants caring for those in stasis. As this was a generational ship, many families of aliens lived and died without ever seeing a planet. Players will see mementos from generations of aliens in most of the

living quarters. Almost none of these chambers is completely empty, and most have ancient corpses in each. It's very difficult to tell what killed the aliens, though a Life Sciences check at -4 DM will display one common theme among the corpses: they all have cutting damage to some degree or other.

CARGO BAYS

The ship has cargo bays on almost every level. Most of them are full of crates of food and other supplies. Whenever the players enter a cargo bay, roll 1d12 and consult the following table for the cargo bay's contents.

Roll (1d12)	Result
1-2	Empty
3-8	Crates full of food, most of which is still in stasis
9-10	Crates full of clothing and tools
11	Crates full of weapons (roll on weapons table for type)
12	Crates full of data chips (roll on data chip table for type)

TABLE 3: CARGO BAY CONTENTS

Roll (1d6)	Result
1-2	Broken and unusable
3	Energy pistols (3d6+3, mag 100)
4	Vibro-blades (M(SB), 4d6 dmg)
5	Energy rifles (6d6, Auto, 50 mag)
6	Ammunition (power packs)

TABLE 4: WEAPON CRATE CONTENTS

Roll (1d8)	Result
1-4	Blank
5	Scientific Studies
6	Histories
7	Medical Data
8	Personal Journals

TABLE 5: DATA CHIP CRATE CONTENTS

LABORATORIES

The ship contains a number of laboratories, most of which are dedicated to biological research. Players stumbling into these labs have a 50% chance of finding a lab with perfectly preserved specimens of dead alien lifeforms in display tanks.

Players have a 10% chance of finding the lab that the creature was created in. This lab houses several large display tanks. Some of the tanks are broken, with shards of glass on the floor around them. Others are intact, and contain various iterations of the creature –all of these are dead.

There is one tank that looks like it was purposefully opened rather than broken open; the glass is lowered, and there is no residue around it, like there is around the broken ones. This laboratory has a number of desiccated, horribly mauled corpses of alien researchers. A successful Computers check with a DM of -2 will unlock the last entry in the research data computer; though the language is undecipherable, there is a full schematic on the Creature that jumps onto the holographic display.