STAGING GROUND: VOLTURNUS

A STAR FRONTIERS™ Campaign

by Chris Putnam

version 0.12

Based on the original STAR FRONTIERS™ Trilogy:

SF0 *Crash on Volturnus*

SF1 *Volturnus, Planet of Mystery*

SF2 *Starspawn of Volturnus*

original adventures by Mark Acres, Tom Moldvay, and Douglas Niles

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CAMPAIGN BRIEFING

ALPHA SUBSECTION 1
RE-ENVISIONING VOLTURNUS

The Volturnus trilogy (*Crash on Volturnus*; *Volturnus, Planet of Mystery*; and *Starspawn of Volturnus*) is the classic set of Star Frontiers adventures. Not only was *Crash on Volturnus* bundled in the STAR FRONTIERS™ boxed set, but the adventures supported the classic *Star Frontiers* themes of fighting space pirates, fighting Sathar, and exploring unknown planets. Volturnus was the definitive shared experience among *Star Frontiers* players.

Volturnus is a complex planet with many different factions. The original adventures demanded that the characters ally with each of the races on Volturnus in turn. This re-envisioning of the adventures attempts to give characters greater freedom. At a number of places, the adventure becomes easier if the characters make appropriate alliances, but in general the adventure should be playable if the players choose to go it alone. This re-envisioning does change aspects of Volturnus adventures that are known and loved by many players, so a number of design notes are included in the Omega section to provide some rationale for a number of the choices.

Sections Beta, Gamma, and Delta roughly correspond to *Crash on Volturnus*; Epsilon to Zeta roughly correspond to *Volturnus, Planet of Mystery*; and Eta to Iota roughly correspond to *Starspawn of Volturnus*.

ALPHA SUBSECTION 2
CAMPAIGN BACKGROUND

Native Life on Volturnus

The Eorna were the only intelligent life-form that evolved from the bilaterist organisms on Volturnus in the Zebulon system. The Eorna possessed a moderately complicated technology based on psi (mentalist) powers and crystal manipulation. The Eorna technology developed sufficiently that they had system-ships and a variety of space stations; however, they had not solved the problem of intersystem travel.

Arrival of the Sathar

Volturnus was identified as an ideal site for a base from which the Sathar could strike at the Frontier. Volturnus is close to the center of the Frontier and until recently was isolated from any Frontier-identified travel routes to Truane's Star by the Xagyg Nebula. Moreover, the substantial asteroid belts encircling Zebulon played havoc with attempts to detect ships at long distances and would allow the Sathar to keep a hidden fleet in the system.

The Sathar assault squadrons rapidly defeated the native Eorna forces and devastated the in-system facilities as well as their cities and technological base. The Sathar established genetics laboratories to develop new species of combat soldiers, importing the ancestors of the Ul-Mor, the Kurabanda, and the Edesteki as breeding stock. Each race was chosen for their specific skills. The Ul-Mor, as touch-telepaths, were uniquely suited for running Sathar war machines. The Kurabanda were chosen to be acrobatic infiltrators and assassins. The Edesteki were well-established slaves of the Sathar whose native abilities to genetically manipulate species were central to the Sathar efforts.

Eorna that were not eliminated by the initial attacks were also genetically manipulated, but abandoned as unsuitable for Sathar purposes. The survivors tended to either be sterile or, more problematically, have offspring with serious mental defects and occasional genetically-enhanced powers. These shunned offspring were called the Yernoids by the Eorna who have realized that these degenerate offspring will be their biological legacy.

Entry of the Frontier

Recently, independent mapping of the Xagyg Nebula by both the Star Devil pirates and the government of Truane's Star has provided new routes for travel to Volturnus. The Star Devil pirates first sought to exploit Volturnus for mining possibilities; however, they readily discovered that the biological diversity of the planet (actually introduced by the Sathar) has provided numerous drugs that are being smuggled into the Frontier. Some of these drugs have been so profitable that the effort of the Star Devil fleet is being redirected into protecting Volturnus and preventing the governments, mega-corps, or the UPF from interfering. The Sathar are well aware of the Star Devil presence on Volturnus, but tolerate it with the intent of allowing the Star Devils to take the lead in preventing a Frontier presence (and to use them as a smoke screen for Frontier ships and missions that the Sathar destroy).

The first expedition from Truane's Star was an unmanned exploration probe that reported substantial mineral wealth, but more importantly a planet with water and an environment suitable for settlement by Humans, Dralasites, Vrusks, and Yazirians. A second manned expedition was mounted nine months ago with the intent of surveying the planet's geological and biological wealth as well as identifying any potential problems with intelligent or semi-intelligent species that might backfire against the government's plans to exploit the planet. The loss of communication with this mission has lead to Truane's Star government recruiting the characters to investigate what went wrong.

ALPHA SUBSECTION 3
FACTIONS ON VOLTURNUS

The Star Devils

The Star Devil pirates found the Zebulon system before the Truane's Star government and have started to use it both as a base and a source of revenue by providing drugs derived from the Ul-Mor and the Edekesti to the

Frontier.

Recently, the Star Devils has started to recruit disaffected natives of New Pale who are fighting against the dominance of Pale in the Truane's Star system and want to prevent Pale from extending their control to Volturnus. While these new recruits have been helpful in aiding the Star Devil's piracy, their real plan is to settle on Volturnus to contest any claims of the Pale government. The new recruits have also been responsible for most of the infrastructure that the pirates have constructed on Volturnus, including Slave City One.

The Truane's Star Mission

Three members of this expedition, Commander Jameson, Grod, and Geeko-Sur-Mang, are actually allied with the Star Devils (though not members) as they hope to help prevent the spread of the Truane's Star government to the Zebulon system. Jameson brought Itklikdil to the Star Devil desert compound in an attempt to help solve the "distasteful" practice that the Star Devils performed, killing the Ul-Mor and Edekesti to extract compounds from them. Itklikdil refused to be recruited for this cause, and the Star Devils threw her in a holding cell normally used for Ul-Mor captives. At the same time, the Sathar captured Grod and Geeko-Sur-Mang and took them to their Genetics Facility, but not before they radioed for help. With the attack from an unknown adversary, the Star Devils went on high alert, and Jameson and Itklikdil were taken to Slave City One.

The Sathar

Sathar opinions on how to manage the Truane government mission are currently split between a conservative branch that wants to pull out of Volturnus, those that want to fight to protect their investments, and those who would seek to manipulate the Star Devils, the Truane's Star government, and their introduced races into a battle to test the capabilities of their creations.

Substantial success by the characters against the Sathar will lead to success of the conservative faction and orbital bombardment of the known Star Devil and Truane's Star facilities.

The Eorna

The Eorna have had several responses to the invasion of their planet and the corruption of their genomes by the Sathar. The different factions that have arisen have fragmented the Eorna even further and many spend their time plotting revenge as individuals or occasionally small groups.

Some Eorna have emphasized their robotic capability with the hope that this technological legacy will become independent and drive the Sathar from Volturnus. In this regard, the Eorna have become too successful, and their independent robots have rejected the fight with the Sathar as not being necessary for their survival, and have emerged as the Mechanon race.

Other Eorna have sought to manipulate the Sathar's slave races against them. Using their telepathic powers, they have been somewhat sucessful in gaining the trust of different Sathar slave races and are training them to become a military force.

Other Eorna, though only a few, have virtually retreated from the physical world and live as hermits in the ruins of their civilization, waiting for the end.

The Ul-Mor

The Ul-Mor are a non-native species introduced to Volturnus by the Sathar. Ul-Mor possess true short-range telepathy with each other and touch telepathy with other races. The Sathar have chosen them as "raw material" to be shaped into drivers of their military vehicles and tanks, which require psi ability to operate. Most Ul-Mor are permitted to live on the surface of Volturnus as part of a sophisticated, long-term genetic manipulation and breeding experiment.

The Sathar maintain their control of the Ul-Mor using sophisticated religious and telepathic controls. The free Ul-Mor worship "The One" and long to receive "The Reward" for their faithfulness. Only the strongest Ul-Mor pilgrims are selected at "Pilgrim's End" where Edekesti "priests" select the greatest warriors who survive battle with a quickdeath for entry into "The Reward", which is in truth subjugation to the Sathar, manipulation by the Edekesti to improve their telepathic abilities, and conversion to cyboslaves and integration into drivers of military vehicles by the Sathar. Pilgrim's End is also the location of the telepathic beacon that maintains control over the Ul-Mor who have yet to receive "The Reward".

The Ul-Mor are also preyed upon by the Star Devils, who have discovered that a chemical extracted from Ul-Mor corpses permits touch telepathy. The Star Devils have launched numerous attacks against the Ul-Mor settlements, driving the various warring Ul-Mor tribes towards political unification and driving the formation of an Ul-Mor military made up primarily of guerrilla-style raiders mounted on their reptilian loper mounts.

The Edekesti

The Edekesti are long-term slaves of the Sathar who can innately biosculpt and gene splice other species. Edekesti have served as genetic engineers for the Sathar for many generations. The small population of Edekesti on Volturnus are primarily involved in processing Ul-Mor and Kurabanda for Sathar purposes and essentially run the genetics facility at the Ul-Mor's "Pilgrim's End".

The Edekesti, however, have not escaped the notice of the Star Devils. Application of their Ul-Mor processing to Edekesti corpses generated an extract that allowed the generation of mutations and a new form of "biosculpting" that is taking hold in the Frontier. Edekesti captives are prized by the pirates even more highly than the Ul-Mor.

The Kurabanda

The Kurabanda are the third and final slave race introduced to Volturnus by the Sathar. The Sathar hope to use the Kurabanda as special forces troops to function as saboteurs and assassins. The Kurabanda have enjoyed considerable freedom on the surface of Volturnus but are struggling against a number of introduced predators that the Sathar are using to train and select the best among their species. A long standing conflict between the Kurabanda and the pirates at Slave City One is permitted to continue by the Sathar precisely because the battles fit with the Sathar's long term goals. The lack of indirect and direct controls on the Kurabanda makes them the

introduced species that could be most easily turned against the Sathar, a fact not lost on Eorna who have stepped in as "revered advisers", utilizing their telepathic ability to ease the Kurabanda's initial mistrust.

The Mechanons

The Mechanons have emerged from their "servitude" as a fiercely independent race that has established multiple facilities to mine raw materials and have resettled a number of the sites of Eorna cities as they are immune to the effects of radiation. The Mechanons are aware of the other sentient races, including the Sathar, but are indifferent to all of the other sentients. The Mechanons will leave their seclusion only when their interests are directly involved.

ALPHA SUBSECTION 4
CAMPAIGN SYNOPSIS

The characters are recruited by the Truane's Star government to investigate the circumstances of the loss of its initial crew on the surface of Volturnus (Beta Section). The characters are taken to the Zebulon system in the hired transport, the *Serena Dawn*, which is attacked and disabled by the Star Devil pirates near an abandoned Eorna orbital station that holds clues to the extent of the Star Devil presence and more ancient battles involving the Sathar (Gamma Section).

Using the *Serena Dawn*'s shuttle, the characters manage to crash land on Volturnus near the original base camp; however, they find the base camp empty and in the middle of a vast Volturnian desert (Delta Section) where they encounter the Ul-Mor under hostile conditions but have the opportunity to recruit them to aid in the attack against a Star Devil facility with resources they desperately need.

Evidence at the Star Devil desert facility leads them to the pirate base at Slave City One (Epsilon Section). Slave City One is currently under a massive assault of Kurabanda lead by an Eorna adviser. Siding with either the Kurabanda or with the beleaguered pirates, the players are able to grasp the scope of the Star Devil plans for Volturnus and thwart or adopt them.

The characters, either through the Eorna adviser or through the Star Devils, are recruited to raid Pilgrim's End (Zeta Section), a genetics facility for the Sathar that is under the guise of an Ul-Mor religious site.

The Sathar response to the raid by Frontiers races on Pilgrim's End is an orbital nuclear strike against all facilities associated with the Star Devil pirates, the Truane's Star base camp, and known Eorna ruins (Eta Section). This strike, hitting several key Mechanon facilities, sparks the Mechanons into action. They cannot defeat the Sathar, but compute that a pogrom against all other sentient races on Volturnus would safely eliminate Sathar targets and avoid future attacks by the Sathar (Theta Section).

ALPHA SUBSECTION 5
CAMPAIGN STYLES

This campaign can be run either as a "gritty" campaign or as a more "cinematic" campaign. The easiest way to change campaigns is run the
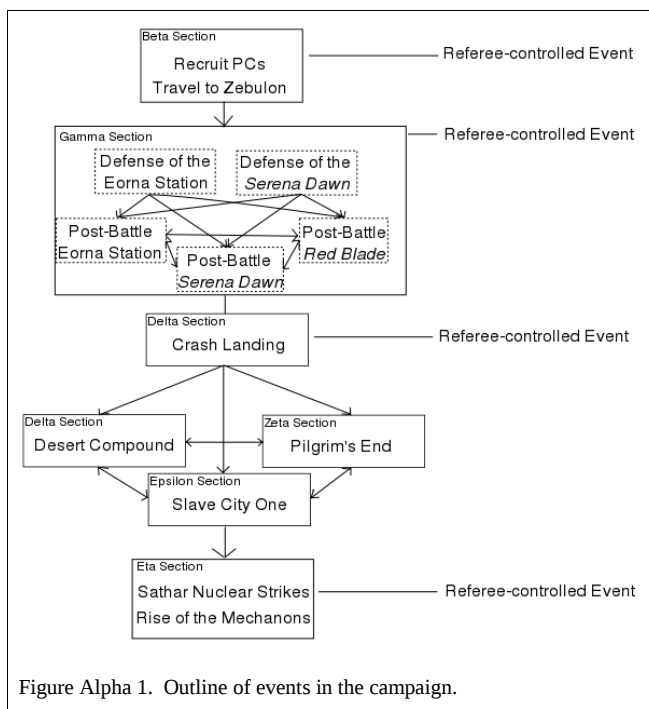
Figure Alpha 1. Outline of events in the campaign.

opponents indicated throughout the adventure as "minions" in two different ways.

For a gritty campaign, use the statistics shown. Every encounter will be tougher and more realistic.

For a cinematic campaign, treat minion as being present to slow down the characters by a round or two. Minions are only likely to cause problems for characters in groups. Mechanically they can be treated as having only a STA score of only 1, so that any successful attack kills them. Similarly, any plan to capture them automatically succeeds. Any successful attack by a minion only causes 1/4 the maximum damage possible. Similar mechanics for this concept for "mooks" and "minions" has been used in a number of other RPGs, including *Feng Shui* and 4th edition *Dungeons and Dragons*, and similar rules have been laid out for *Star Frontiers* in two issues of the online *Starfrontiersman* magazine ("Thugs, Mooks, and Goons" by Bill Logan in issue #4 and "Cinematic Action" by Andrew Mordo in issue #7).

In general, non-minions ought to use the statistics shown to ensure that difficult combats remain satisfying, unless, of course, the referee judges otherwise.

ALPHA SUBSECTION 6
NEW RULES

In the course of this adventure, a number of attempts are made to make certain skill sets more generally useful. Some suggestions on how to use existing subskills and ability checks to do new things are described in the Chi section. I do like many of the suggestions for modifying the Alpha Dawn skill sets and their integration with ability scores laid out in "A Skilled Frontier" by Bill Logan in *Starfrontiersman* issue #9; however, I

will only use statistics for *Alpha Dawn* and *Zebulon's Guide* rules here for maximum compatibility. For referees who choose to use these modifications presented in the Chi section, assume that the characters know how to perform these tasks, even if the players need guidance that their characters skills are useful in these circumstances.

MISSION TO ZEBULON

BETA SUBSECTION 1
SYNOPSIS

The characters are recruited by the government of Truane's Star to travel on a rescue mission to Volturnus in the Zebulon system.   They will be transported on the *Serena Dawn*, which must make three jumps through the Xagyg Nebula to reach Zebulon, giving the characters time to investigate the ship and to potentially identify the captain's secret agenda as well as to find hints to the fact that pirates have infiltrated the crew.

BETA SUBSECTION 2
RAILROADING CHARACTERS

The entire Beta section is a clear example of railroading characters. If the characters do not choose to be recruited, then the entire campaign is over. Once they board the *Serena Dawn*, the travel to the Zebulon system will also be out of their hands (assuming they do not simply kill the crew). Players do have the ability to interact with the crew and the ship during the travel, however.

BETA SUBSECTION 3
RECRUITING

The Truane's Star government does not have an established branch to coordinate exploration. The route through the Xagyg Nebula was recently mapped by the Truane Defense Force (TDF) and requires three successive jumps through the Void. Coordination of the exploration has fallen to a joint venture between the TDF and the Truane's Star Department of Commerce (DoC) due to both the potential military and business implications of the route.

Thus characters will meet with both the commander of the hastily assembled Truane's Star Military Expedition Force, Admiral Marcus Xavier (human), and a bureaucrat from the DoC, Comptroller Vivikravi (vrusk).   The meeting will likely be at a DoC office building on Pale; however, the exact location doesn't matter. After introducing themselves, Xavier and Vivikravi explain the nature of the secret job that the government wants to hire them on: rescuing the initial mission to Volturnus. Details are listed below under specific character questions as the form of a dialog between Xavier and Vivkravi. As always, the referee should feel free to provide details even if the characters don't ask the exact question listed. The time frame for the start of the mission can be established by the referee; however, Admiral Xavier is quite anxious to get the rescue mission started.

Character question: What's the job?

Xavier: Using a series of exploratory probes into the Xagyg Nebula, and Professor Alorne Zebulon found a route through it to a new star system, which he has modestly dubbed Zebulon....

Vivikravi: [To Xavier] And how many probes did it take, and what did they cost?

Xavier: [Ignoring Vivikravi] ...Given the problems of controlling remote probes in system-wide exploration, we next sent a ship that discovered a habitable planet. A four-person team was dispatched to the surface after orbital reconnaissance, but our recent nine-month supply mission returned without being able to contact the team. We need you to rescue them or, if that's not possible, find out what happened.

Vivikravi: And in that case, we need you to continue the initial mission of evaluating the planet's commercial potential. What sort of mineral wealth is there? Are there any native species, especially intelligent native species, that led to protests here when we start to exploit the planet...

Xavier: [Interrupting] Of course any additional information you might discover about the planet will be welcome, and you will be compensated for those efforts. But your primary mission is to discover the fate of the initial team.

Character question: Why is the Truane's Star government hiring us and not using the military?

Xavier: Politics. Right now the government is under substantial pressure from the UPF. Normally, they like to mass their forces at systems at the edge of the Frontier. Now it's clear that this system isn't protected by the Xagyg Nebula; we're at the edge of the Frontier, and UPF protocol calls for us to stop our exploration until they can build a base here.

Vivikravi: But we didn't. It's pretty clear to the government that the UPF policy isn't looking out solely for the Frontier and certainly not the interests of our government. A number of megacorps have serious bribes with the UPF that give them first dibs at newly discovered systems, so the UPF slows down any government trying to expand out of the system.

Xavier: Those allegations have never been proven.

Vivikravi: Wait and see. Once one of those megacorps establishes a company-run government on a new world, we'll see battles between different megacorp militias yet, and the UPF won't stop them.

Xavier: So at the moment the government's official line is that we haven't sent any crewed missions to the Zebulon system.   The bureaucrats [gesturing at Vivikravi] certainly won't let us send an official rescue mission for a mission that was never sent.

Vivikravi: [Looking back at Xavier] The UPF has threatened serious

financial penalties against the Defense Force. [To the characters] Remember you were hired by Truane's Star, but if anyone outside of the mission asks you're helping us survey large asteroids in the Xagyg Nebula. That was something were doing for a while but no companies were willing to pay for mining rights to any of the objects we found.

Character question: Who are the missing team members?

Xavier: [Xavier provides the mission report.] The layover members of the expedition were Commander Jackson, one of my officers, and three personnel to support the mission and analyze Volturnus's potential for commercial and military expansion. The biographies on the report are correct, but the details of the mission have been 'sanitized' for UPF consumption. The genetic identification markers will allow you to positivity identify trace biological material and, if necessary, identify any remains.

Character question: What is the Zebulon system like?

Xavier: [Xavier provides the Zebulon system brief to the player characters.] The Zebulon system is rather unusual. It consists of a number of asteroid belts and four major planets: Volturnus, a habitable world; Anker, a hot world with terraforming potential; Star's Hope, a gas giant; and Zebulon VI, an ice world. Star's Hope is so close to the mass of a brown dwarf that our astronomers are having a hard time believing that it isn't a brown dwarf and

they're currently studying it to calibrate their models for stellar evolution. More importantly, Star's Hope looks like a captured object that didn't originally form in the Zebulon system – it has a retrograde orbit relative to the other bodies in the system and might have been responsible for generating the multiple asteroid belts by causing collisions between planets that were already in orbit when it was captured.

Character question: What is Volturnus like?

Xavier: [Xavier provides the Volturnus planetary brief to the player characters.] The orbital data indicate that the planet can be divided into two major hemispheres. The "western hemisphere" is mostly ocean, with a long line of volcanic islands rising from several hot spots underneath the crust and a subduction zone where two plates meet.

Vivikravi: Volcanic islands tend to have little in the way of profitable ores and such.

Xavier: [Obviously irritated at the interruption.] The "eastern hemisphere" contains the single major continent...

Vivikravi: This was where the first team landed. We really want to see the preliminary geological reports from this region. Too much surface sand blocked the ability of the orbiter to sniff out good mineral deposits.

Xavier: [Pausing to glare at Vivikravi; Vivikravi backs down.] Because this continent is so large, there are large deserts that can be quite hot. I think Professor Zebulon called the planet Volturnus because of the deserts. The continent does have a varied environment though and it's certainly not all desert....[Seeing Vivikravi's look]...Trust me, the first team had plenty of supplies for the desert. That can't be the problem with this mission. And we'll ensure that you have enough desert supplies for yourselves as well as for the first team once you find them. We wouldn't send you there unprepared.

Character question: How will we get to Volturnus?

Vivikravi: At considerable expense, the government's chartered the starship *Serena Dawn* for your mission. They will drop you and your supplies off and return for you and the first team in three months, which should give you plenty of time to find them and for us to negotiate appropriate

Map Beta 4. The *Serena Dawn*.
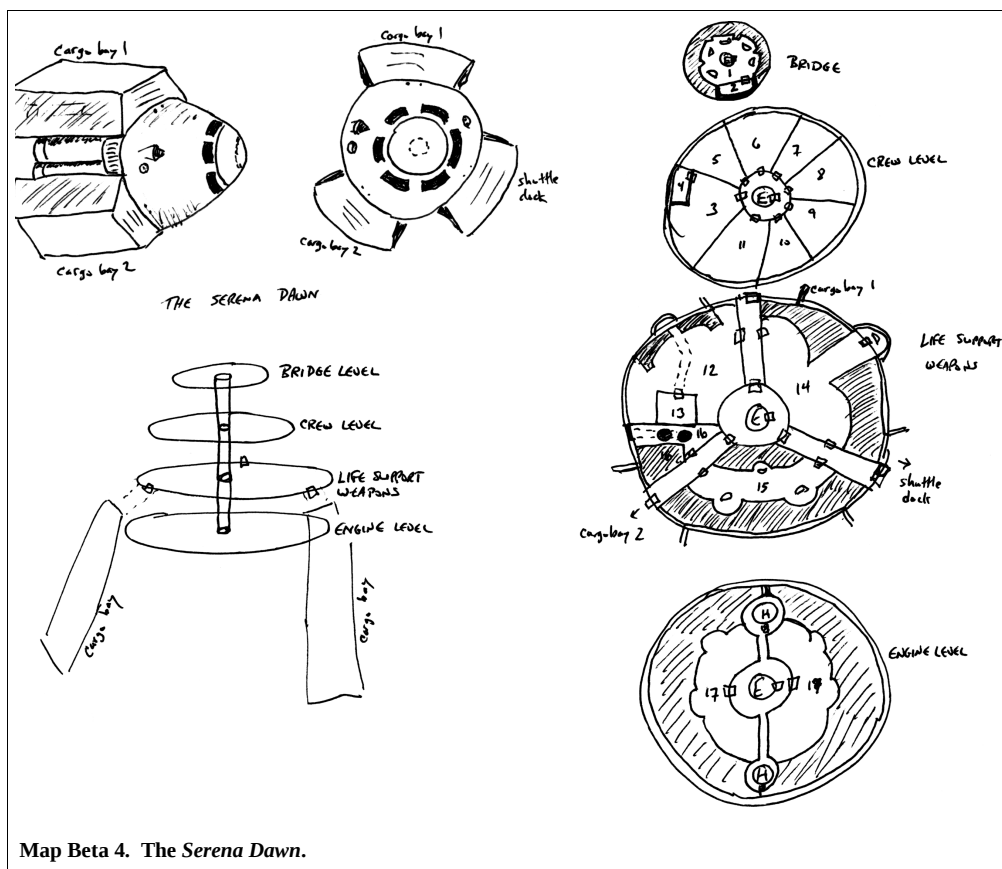
permissions with the UPF so that we won't have to hide the Serena Dawn's return mission.

BETA SUBSECTION 4
THE *SERENA DAWN*

The Truane's Star government does not have the resources nor can they allow the UPF to discover that government ships were involved in the rescue mission. Vivikravi thus hired the armed civilian freighter the *Serena Dawn* for the characters.

The *Serena Dawn* (Freighter)	
Hull Size	8
Hull Points	40
DCR	44
Size	180 m length, 30 m diameter
Hatches	3
Engines	2 Atomic Drives
ADF	3
MR	3
Life Support	Main = 20 creatures
	Backup = 12 creatures
Weapons	Torpedo Launcher
	3 Torpedos
	Laser Battery
Defenses	Refective Hull
Emergency Equipment	15 Spacesuits
	1 Shuttle
Other Equipment	2 Remote Probes

The *Serena Dawn* is a modular freight hauler. The main ship (front section) is the bridge, life support, crew quarters, galley, and has engine pods. The freighter is designed to connect to multiple modules for cargo and currently carries three. The third is a split cargo bay module that is retrofitted to hold onto an aerodynamic shuttle for atmospheric excursions.

The *Serena Dawn* (Map Beta 4):

Elevator (E): A single-car elevator runs through the permanent habitable sections of the ship. The cargo bays, although pressurized, are not permanent as they can be replaced at space docks. Under conditions of no power, the doors can be forced open STR check at -50; multiple characters can contribute. There is no interior ladder as the powerless ship is expected to be under zero-G.

Bridge (1): This is the command center of the ship and typically Captain Ohed Epps, Astrogator Loken Stahl, or Gunnery Officer Hithyin will be here full time. During important events, all three will be here. This is the physical location of the Command and Control and Astrogation computers.

Emergency equipment locker (2): This locker contains nine EVA suits, oxygen tanks, and several fire extinguishers.

Galley (3): This is the center of entertainment and socialization for the crew. The galley level contains the galley proper, a common table for eating (only six beings can be around the table at any one time), and the large entertainment console as well as the Entertainment computer. The galley contains a only few days of food and water; the remainder for the rest of the voyage is stored in Epps' cargo bay.

Food storage (4): This storage area holds the current stock of food for the galley brough up from Cargo bay 2.

Crew quarter (5-11): The crew quarters are small single-being rooms. None of these quarters can be locked, except for Epps' (lock level 1). The bed is placed on the floor (due to times of gravity generated by accelerating and deaccelerating), but has velcro straps to hold the sleeper (due to times of zero-G). 5- Epps, 6-Kilitia/Hithyin 7-Stahl, 8-Rathel/Monten, 9-Nordoth, 10, 11- cleared out for the characters. Normally Epps' crew don't share quarters. Most contain mostly clothing, occasional photos, typically of family, friends, or scenes from planets to contrast with the inky blackness of space. Nordoth's quarters and Loken Stahl's quarters are bare, excepting their clothes. It is obvious that they just arrived or don't plan to stay long.

Torpedo launch room (12): This room is locked (level 1) and alarmed (level 1). The center of the room is dominated by a track by which torpedoes (from storage room 13) are loaded into the firing mechanism. Given the free-space on the walls, this is also where Epps stores the ship's cache of weapons for personal combat. Most of the weapons are laser pistols and associated SEU clips.

Torpedo storage (13): At the beginning of the mission, the storage room contains three torpedos. Unarmed torpedos are difficult to trigger by non-specialists.

Laser battery (14): This room is locked (level 1) and alarmed (level 1).

Life support (15): This level contains the Life Support computer and all of the mechanical components necessary to run life support on the Serena Dawn. Typically there are no crew here, except in emergency situations. Six EVA suits are stored here. The door to this room is not locked, but opening without a keycard (Epps and Kilita both have them) will trigger an alarm (level 1) on the bridge.

Probe launching room (16): This room stores the remote probes carried by the *Serena Dawn* for remote sensing. Epps bought them with the hopes of maximizing his profit on the trip. Both probes lie in an automated launch tube that feeds to an external hatch (which is too small to fit characters in EVA suits).

Engine rooms (17, 18): The engine rooms (each controls one of the atomic engines) are the personal domain of Engineer Kilita, though she tolerates occasional visits by Captain Epps. The rooms are locked (level 1) and alarmed (level 1), and characters caught here will both be excoriated and reported to Epps, who will attempt to smooth things over, depending on what the characters had been doing in the engine rooms and if they lie about the entrances already being open. Access hatches to the engines themselves are marked "H" and are protected by a level 1 security lock when they are fueled and operating. If the access hatches to the engines are opened, the characters will be exposed to radiation.

Cargo bay 1: This cargo bay stores the equipment that will be shuttled down to the Volturnus surface for the characters' mission. In order to get all of the biological and mineral sample containers to the surface, multiple trips will be required. The majority of the time, at least two of the general crew members, Thalen Rathel, Samuel Monten, and Nordorth, will be here during their shifts. The problem that they face is that the equipment must be

broken down (sample containers disassembled and the like) in order to fit within the hold of the shuttle. Frequently, the engineer Kilita will be on hand to advise on the disassembly or to effect repairs of equipment damaged during the disassembly. Characters entering will be treated as unwanted supervisors, and the crew members will attempt to recruit the characters to do their job for them (while the crew members "supervise"). Kilita, Epps, or Stahl will prevent this from happening, if present. This cargo bay contains one of the ship's hatches (airlock) to the outside and is large enough to move big cargo. This hatch is locked (level 1) and opening the hatch will set off an alarm (level 1) on the bridge.

Cargo bay 2 (Epps' cargo bay): This cargo bay actually contains extensive biological and mineral sample containers necessary for bringing back enough material for Epps to sell the route to the Zebulon system. It also contains excess (and emergency) supplies of food and water that do not fit within the storage area in the galley. The hatch into this cargo bay is locked (lock level 1). This area is surveyed by a motion-detecting camera system (alarm level 2) that alerts the captain via computers on the bridge and his PDA. He will confront the characters directly with Hithyin, Samuel Monten, and Nordorth if the alarm is sounded. All of Epps' equipment is already broken down and ready to be placed on the shuttle. This cargo bay contains one of the hatches (an airlock) to the outside that is large enough to move large cargo. The hatch is locked (level 1) and alarmed (level 1) if it is opened.

Shuttle dock: The shuttle dock is a converted cargo bay; the *Serena Dawn* originally had three. The hatch of this cargo bay leads directly into the shuttle craft and isn't open to space and so isn't locked. However, the hatch is alarmed with a level 1 alarm that will sound on the bridge when opened.

Unlike the freighter, the shuttle craft is designed for in-system use only and is driven by chemical drives.

Shuttle Craft	
Hull Size	3
Hull Points	15
DCR	29
Size	50 m length, 8 m diameter
Hatches	1
Engines	2 Chemical Drives
ADF	1
MR	4
Life Support	Main = 12 creatures
	Backup = 12 creatures
Weapons	None
Defenses	None
Emergency Equipment	None
Other Equipment	None

BETA SUBSECTION 5
THE CREW

The Serena Dawn is currently has a crew of seven:

> Captain Ohed Epps (Human)
> Astrogator Loken Stahl (Human)
> Engineer Kilita (Vrusk)
> Gunnery Officer Hithyin (Yazirian)
> Thalen Rathel (Yazirian)
> Samuel Monten (Human)
> Nordorth (Dralasite)

Captain Ohed Epps has kept a good enough reputation with various governments and the UPF to be hired for this mission; however, he has not been above being involved in some amount of smuggling. He is charming when he wants to be and has been compared to a used hover car salesman. His initial goal will be to charm the players to keep Vivikravi's business, though he will work to make himself unavailable if the characters start to get demanding. In this mission, Epps is charging the government too much money (he justifies it as payment to keep the UPF from being informed).

More ambitiously, Epps secretly plans to scout the Zebulon system himself, obtain evidence of the usefulness of Volturnus as a new planet for settlement, and sell this information along with the route to Zebulon to the highest bidding megacorporation after his returns. This plan explains the purchase of the two remote probes and his plans on keeping the shuttle with the Serena Dawn after delivering the characters to mount his own expedition to Volturnus.

The remainder of the crew have been hired by the captain. These crew members are unaware of the captain's plans; Epps plans on giving the orders once the characters have left.

Most of the crew have been with the captain for some time. However, both the astrogator Loken Stahl and Nordorth are plants by the Star Devil pirates. They have infiltrated the crew to aid the attempted capture of the ship and the elimination of the crew in the Zebulon system (Gamma section). Hints to the astrogator's involvement can be found if the characters hack into the ship's computer network (subsection 6).

Captain Ohed Epps (Human Male)			
Alpha Dawn Statistics			
STR/STA:	50/50	PS:	+3
DEX/RS:	40/40	IM:	4
INT/LOG:	50/50	RW:	20
PER/LDR:	60/65	M:	25
PSA:	Technological		
Skills:	Computers 6 (AD)		
	Technician 6 (AD)		
	Piloting 4 (KH)		
	Astrogation 2 (KH)		
Zebulon's Guide Statistics			
STR/STA:	50/50	PS:	+3
DEX/RS:	40/40	IM:	4
INT/LOG:	50/50	RW:	20
PER/LDR:	60/65	M:	25
Profession:			
Skills:	Computers: Access & Operate 6 (ZG)		
	Computers: Display Information 6 (ZG)		
	Machinery: Operate 6 (ZG)		
	Piloting 4 (KH)		
	Astrogation 2 (KH)		

Astrogator Loken Stahl (Human Male)			
Alpha Dawn Statistics			
STR/STA:	50/50	PS:	+3
DEX/RS:	60/60	IM:	6
INT/LOG:	60/60	RW:	30
PER/LDR:	35/35	M:	25
PSA:	Technological		
Skills:	Beam Weapons 4 (AD)		
	Computer 6 (AD)		
	Astrogation 2 (KH)		
Zebulon's Guide Statistics			

STR/STA:	50/50	PS:	+3
DEX/RS:	60/60	IM:	6
INT/LOG:	60/60	RW:	30
PER/LDR:	35/35	M:	25
Profession:	Techex		
Skills:	Weapons: Beam 4 (ZG)		
	Astrogation 2 (KH)		
	Computers: Access & Operate 6 (ZG)		
	Computers: Display Information 6 (ZG)		

Engineer Kilita (Vrusk Female)

Alpha Dawn Statistics

STR/STA:	45/40	PS:	+3
DEX/RS:	50/50	IM:	5
INT/LOG:	65/60	RW:	25
PER/LDR:	55/55	M:	23
PSA:	Technological		
Skills:	Technician 4 (AD)		
	Robotics 2 (AD)		
	Ship Engineering 5 (KH)		
Abilities:	Ambidexterity		
	Comprehension (15%)		

Zebulon's Guide Statistics

STR/STA:	45/40	PS:	+3
DEX/RS:	50/50	IM:	5
INT/LOG:	65/60	DM:	+0 CS
PER/LDR:	55/55		
Profession:	Techex		
Skills:	Engineer: Mechanical 4		
	Machinery: Operate 4		
	Machinery: Repair 4		
	Robotics: Activate/Deactivate 2		
	Robotics: Alter Functions 2		
	Robotics: Repair 2		
	Ship Engineering 5		
	Vehicle: Repair 1		
Abilities:	Ambidexterity		
	Comprehension (15%)		

Gunnery Officer Hithyin (Yazirian Male)

Alpha Dawn Statistics

STR/STA:	55/45	PS:	+3
DEX/RS:	55/60	IM:	6
INT/LOG:	45/50	RW:	28 (88 beam)
PER/LDR:	30/30	M:	28
PSA:	Military		
Skills:	Beam Weapons 6 (AD)		
	Ship Energy Weapons 2 (KH)		
Abilities:	Night Vision		
	Gliding		
	Battle Rage (5% chance, +20 to hit melee)		

Zebulon's Guide Statistics

STR/STA:	55/45	PS:	+3
DEX/RS:	55/60	IM:	6
INT/LOG:	45/50	DM:	+0 CS
PER/LDR:	30/30		
Profession:	Enforcer		
Skills:	Weapons: Beam 6		
	Weapons: Ship Energy 2		
	Body Speak 2		
	Security System: Access & Operate 1		
Abilities:	Night Vision		
	Gliding		
	Battle Rage (5% chance)		

Thalen Rathel (Yazirian Male)

Alpha Dawn Statistics

STR/STA:	30/40	PS:	+2
DEX/RS:	45/50	IM:	5
INT/LOG:	30/35	RW:	23
PER/LDR:	55/55	M:	15
PSA:	None		
Skills:	None		
Abilities:	Night Vision		
	Gliding		
	Battle Rage (5% chance, +20 to hit melee)		

Zebulon's Guide Statistics

STR/STA:	30/40	PS:	+2
DEX/RS:	45/50	IM:	5
INT/LOG:	30/35	RW:	23
PER/LDR:	55/55	M:	15
Profession:	None		
Skills:	None		
Abilities:	Night Vision		
	Gliding		
	Battle Rage (5% chance, +20 to hit melee)		

Samuel Monten (Human Male)

Alpha Dawn Statistics

STR/STA:	60/65	PS:	+3
DEX/RS:	55/55	IM:	6
INT/LOG:	40/40	RW:	23
PER/LDR:	40/40	M:	30
PSA:	None		
Skills:	None		

Zebulon's Guide Statistics

STR/STA:	60/65	PS:	+3
DEX/RS:	55/55	IM:	6
INT/LOG:	40/40	DM:	
PER/LDR:	40/40		
Profession:	None		
Skills:	None		

Nordorth (Dralasite)

Alpha Dawn Statistics

STR/STA:	60/60	PS:	+3
DEX/RS:	65/65	IM:	7
INT/LOG:	50/50	RW:	33 (53 beam)
PER/LDR:	30/30	M:	33
PSA:	Military		
Skills:	Martial Arts 2		
	Beam Weapons 2		
Abilities:	Elasticity (6 limbs at once)		
	Lie Detection (5% success rate)		

Zebulon's Guide Statistics

STR/STA:	60/60	PS:	+3
DEX/RS:	65/65	IM:	7
INT/LOG:	50/50	DM:	
PER/LDR:	30/30		
Profession:	Enforcer		
Skills:	Weapons: Martial Arts 2		
	Weapons: Beam 2		
Abilities:	Elasticity (6 limbs at once)		
	Lie Detection (5% success rate)		

BETA SUBSECTION 6
ONBOARD COMPUTERS

Characters with computer skills have sufficient time to investigate the computer systems on the *Serena Dawn* (Map Beta 6) and may uncover hints to the hijacking attempt to come (Gamma section). Suggested rules for exploring the computer network are given in Chi subsection 1. Unlike the restrictions listed in the *Alpha Dawn* rulebook, characters can make as many tries as they like to perform any of the above tasks on the *Serena Dawn* computers (due to available time and lax security).

Astrogation computer. This computer is used for all calculations for

Entertainment

Programs
  Information Storage 3 (8)
Stored Information
  Music Library
  Video Library
  Written Library
Level 1 Computer

Command and Control

Programs
  Computer Security 3 (8)
  Information Storage 4 (16)
  Ship Command/Control 2 (6)
  Alarm 2 (2)
Stored Information
  Previous/current voyage plans
  Previous/current cargos
  Epps logs
Level 3 Computer

Epps 1

5-11   3   1

Hithyin 1   Kilita 1   Rathel 1   Monten 1   Nordoth 1   Stahl 6

Engine Control

Programs
  Information Storage 2 (4)
  Ship Drive 4 (32)
Stored Information
  Previous/current engine status
  Previous/current fuel status
  Maintenance logs
Level 3 Computer

17-18

External Probe Computer

Programs
  Information Storage 2 (4)
  Ship Drive 1 (3)
  Astrogation 1 (3)
Stored Information
  Current mission/fuel status
  Maintenance logs
Level 1 Computer

16

Life Support

Programs
  Life Support 2 (15)
  Information Storage 2 (4)
Stored Information
  Previous/current life support status
  Previous/current supplies
  Maintenance logs
Level 2 Computer

15

Shuttle Computer

Programs
  Information Storage 2 (4)
  Ship Drive 1 (3)
  Astrogation 1 (3)
  Life Support 2 (2)
Stored Information
  Current mission/fuel status
  Maintenance logs
Level 2 Computer

Shuttle

Navigation

Programs
  Astrogation 4 (24)
  Information Storage 5 (32)
Stored Information
  Star charts
  New navigation routes to Zebulon
  Shortcuts in the Frontier (dangerous)
Level 3 Computer

1

Pos   User Access Point (Pos = Physical Location)
Crew 1   Crew Personal PDA (1 = Computer Security Level)
Computer: Program Level (FP) / Information / Level — Computer
Wired connection   Wireless connection

Map Beta 6. The *Serena Dawn* computer network.

jumps into the Void. It is normally slaved to the C&C computer and not directly accessed by crew members.

Command and Control (C&C) computer. This computer is capable of running the Astrogation, Engine, Life Support, and Communications computers, so characters with access to C&C computer can potentially control the entire ship (assuming that they have the appropriate skills for ship management). Any attempt to take over the *Serena Dawn* through the computer network will immediately initiate a response by the entire *Serena Dawn* crew.

Engine computer. This computer handles all of the calculations for controlling all aspects of engine function. It is normally slaved to the C&C computer and not directly accessed by crew members.

Entertainment computer. The most likely gateway to the computer network is the Entertainment computer. This computer has no security and characters can automatically operate it (it's intended for use by the general public) and investigate data on it (essentially recent news, holo-dramas, and other forms of entertainment to keep the crew and other travelers distracted). A successful *list information* check is required, however, to determine all of its network connections.

External probe computers. The computer for the external probes is only connected to the network when they are launched.

Life support computer. This computer handles all life support functions for the ship. It is normally slaved to the C&C computer and not directly accessed by crew members.

Shuttle computer. Like the external probe computers, the shuttle computer is only connected once it is launched.

Personal digital assistants (PDA's). The various PDA's are held by individual crew members and are linked wirelessly to the ship computers. These hold personal e-mails and other files. The data on these computers will not be particularly interesting, unless the referee deems otherwise.

Captain Epps' PDA. Unlike the other PDAs, the Captain's PDA does hold clues to the fact he is defrauding the Truane's Star government by overcharging them for equipment that was never purchased and for "creative accounting" with regards to the costs of the travel to Volturnus. Deciphering these financial records requires a successful INT check by characters examining them. This data is potentially damning, and the characters can use this to blackmail the captain, if they are so inclined, or could keep it to report the captain to Vivikravi later. The fate of the *Serena Dawn* (Gamma section) makes the consequences of this fraud less significant in the long run. For this adventure, direct confrontation with the captain will cause him to ensure that additional geochemical analysis equipment (from his secret stash in Cargo Bay 2 that he intended for his personal use) and more supplies (also from his supplies for his own planned Volturnus mission) will be added to the shuttle (under the characters' supervision) prior to the detection of the Eorna orbital station.

Loken Stahl's PDA. The most interesting feature of the ship network, however, is the presence of the Loken Stahl's PDA with a security program level 6 that is connected directly to both the Entertainment computer and to the Command and Control computer. If characters fail in an attempt to operate or defeat this PDA's security, it will immediately be dropped off-line, although both the Entertainment and C&C computers will bear records of the connection. Characters that are able to access and list information from this computer will discover communication between Stahl and an unnamed recipient giving details of anticipated arrival to the Zebulon system. The navigator will discover any successful access by the players (but only after the fact).

If characters access Stahl's PDA, the navigator will attempt to deal with the characters directly during the defense of the *Serena Dawn* by being with their team and then turning against them first (Gamma subsection 7).

BETA SUBSECTION 7
TRAVEL TO ZEBULON

The three jumps required to reach Zebulon span 2, 4, and 2 light years respectively (Map Beta 7). Each jump requires 10 hours of calculation time

Map Beta 7. Jumps required to reach Zebulon. The Serena Dawn will follow the solid lines involving two intermediate way points. Numbers correspond to light years for each leg and the dashed line corresponds to the shortest distance jump path between the systems (from the *Alpha Dawn* map), which has not been identified yet.
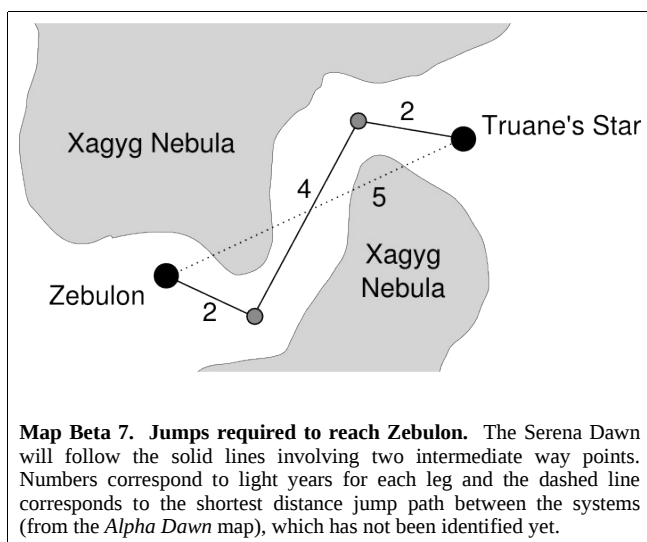
for each light year of travel (the first jump has been pre-calculated), and 1 day of travel time. Together, this means that the characters take roughly 11 days to reach the Zebulon system (Gamma section).

Characters have sufficient time to wander the ship and will be allowed to do so as long as they don't cause problems with the ship's operators or try to investigate Captain Epps' equipment in Cargo Bay 2. The time on the ship, however, can be divided up into a number of events, two of which are planned and the others are optional. Importantly, the characters may get bored during the trip, but the players shouldn't. If the players aren't interested in exploring the *Serena Dawn*, skip to the arrival in the Zebulon system.

Event 1 (Day 1): Arrival at the *Serena Dawn*

The captain, Ohed Epps, will personally meet the characters when the enter the hanger. He gives them a short tour of the ship and will get them settled in the passenger quarters (room 10 and 11). He invites them to visit him on the bridge between the first and second jumps. In the meantime, he suggests that the characters make themselves comfortable and take advantage of his well-stocked entertainment computer in order to keep them distracted during the flight.

Event 2 (Day 2-5; Optional): Target Practice with Hithyin

The gunnery officer, having defeated all of the crew willing to challenge him, will invite the characters to a session of target practice in the empty regions of Cargo Bay 1. He has special training laser pistols that do not cause damage, but do register hits on targets. Hithyin will begin with small stationary targets (5 targets per trial) and then set them to move about at random. If the characters do well and/or are good natured about the

competition, Hithyin will want to keep the characters with him during the defense of the ship (Gamma subsection 7).

Event 3 (Day 2-6; Optional): Crew on Strike

Several members of the crew are owed back pay by Captain Epps. The engineer Kilita is the ring-leader of the operation and is supported by all crew members, except Hithyin, who remains loyal to Epps. Loken Stahl & Nordoth will side with the crew, but will not take leadership roles. Kilita has rendered the C&C computer inactive (Computer Security level 3) until her demands are met, and will approach characters about the strike and attempt to get their support. Kilita will promise the characters that they will still get to Volturnus once the negotiations are over. Epps will attempt to recruit suitable characters to undo the computer lockout that Kilita has initiated. Characters siding with Epps will have half the supplies loaded in the shuttle due to a continued "slow down" in work by the disgruntled crew. Similarly, characters with "questionable" onboard activities, such as hacking the computer systems, will be reported to Epps immediately. Those that "sabotage" the strike by restoring Epps' control of the C&C computer will be given the cold shoulder by crew members for the rest of the trip. Characters siding with the crew will be given complete access to the entire ship, including Epps' secret cargo bay.

Event 4 (Day 7; Optional): Stahl's Folly

During the second jump, Stahl will mis-jump the Serena Dawn and miss the stellar nursery that was his second mass target in the Xagyg Nebula. The target reached by the ship is a solitary brown dwarf star. Despite Stahl's alliance with the Star Devils, this mis-jump is an honest mistake. This event will allow characters to hear grumblings about "the new guys" and "how this would never happen with the Anathoth, the last astrogator" who would never make such a "rookie mistake". Hithyin is the strongest proponent of the previous astrogator, a female yazirian, and the strongest critic of Stahl. If pressed, Hithyin will deny any romantic interest in the previous astrogator, but will claim that Epps is the reason she left. Captain Epps is also a harsh critic and will go so far as to call the unnamed brown dwarf "Stahl's Folly". Nordoth will be quite vocal in his defense of Stahl and will attempt to recruit the characters to shout down the old hands of the ship. The difficulty for the ship is that sufficient room must be found to allow the *Serena Dawn* to jump to the next marker without running into the debris fields in this region of the nebula. One of the *Serena Dawn*'s two remote probes will be sacrificed to ensure the safety of the ship. A jam in the door for the probe will cause Kilita and a recruited character with Technician skill to fix it in a space walk (see Gamma section for rules on handling space walking).

Event 5 (Day 11): Arrival in the Zebulon System

Epps will call the characters to the bridge as the ship enters the outer portion of the Zebulon System. This event continues in the Gamma section.

ATTACK ON THE *SERENA DAWN*

GAMMA SUBSECTION 1
SYNOPSIS

Upon reaching the Zebulon system, the *Serena Dawn* detects an abandoned Eorna orbital station (subsection 5). The station currently serves as a early warning post for the Star Devils (containing a passive scan detector and a tight-beam connection to the pirate's satellite communications array around Volturnus). The *Serena Dawn*'s passage will initiate an attack by the pirate cruiser *Red Blade*, whether or not the characters investigate the orbital station. If the characters decide to enter the orbital station, the attack will occur before the characters can return to the *Serena Dawn*. Thus, characters will be defending the orbital station (subsection 6) or the *Serena Dawn* (subsection 7). The space battle between the captains will leave both ships crippled and the crew of the *Serena Dawn* dead. In EVA suits, the characters can readily move from the *Serena Dawn* to the *Red Blade* to face surviving pirates (subsection 8) as well as the Eorna orbital station if the ships are still in range; however, the only way to reach the planet (and an oxygen supply) is the *Serena Dawn*'s pre-programmed shuttle (subsection 9).

GAMMA SUBSECTION 2
RAILROADING CHARACTERS

The beginning of the Gamma section also railroads the characters. They cannot avoid the pirate attack. However, they do have the choice of whether or not to go to the Eorna orbital station. They also have some limited ability to choose how they reach Volturnus; however, the lack of oxygen will ultimately force them to the surface.

Hooks for bringing characters back into line: If the characters have failed to pick up on the strong hints from the Beta subsection, the referee can find other motivations, such as hunting down the pirates, or perhaps the characters are recruited by the pirates and reach Volturnus to stop a Truane's Star rescue mission.

GAMMA SUBSECTION 3
TRAVEL IN SPACE

In the investigation between the Eorna orbital station and the subsequent battle between the *Serena Dawn* and the *Red Blade*, the characters have several options for how to travel between these locations. Initially, characters will reach the orbital station using the *Serena Dawn*'s shuttle; however, the characters are also equipped with Extra-Vehicular Activity (EVA) suits for dealing with the depressurized station that can also be used. One interesting possibility to force characters to use each is to have Stahl recall the shuttle to the *Serena Dawn* during the pirate attack, forcing them to use the EVA suits to return to the ship.

The *Serena Dawn* shuttle: The shuttle can hold up to 8 individuals comfortably and has already been preprogrammed with the site of the original Volturnus base camp as a target. Characters with piloting skills can fly the shuttle on non-preprogrammed courses. The ship can also be flown remotely by characters with piloting skills (such as the navigator) from the *Serena Dawn* bridge.

EVA suits: EVA suits in this adventure are the standard unarmed types described in the *Knight Hawks* rules that provide a breathable atmosphere for 20 hours. They are equipped with lights and magnetic boots suitable for walking along the hull of the *Serena Dawn* (their original purpose) or the hull of the *Red Blade*. The surface of the orbital station, however, is a non-magnetic pseudo-crystalline composite. The EVA suits are also equipped with a thruster pack. For purposes of reaching the Eorna orbital station (see the *Knight Hawks* rules), it should be treated as having a Station Hull Size of 1 (roughly equivalent to a starship Hull Size of 9).

GAMMA SUBSECTION 4
COMBAT IN SPACE

The effect of space on combat is two-fold. First, vacuum has significant effects on weapon functionality. Second, the zero-gravity (zero-G) environment also affects how the characters fight. For most encounters in this section, both vacuum and zero-G effects will apply, but their effects are considered separately below.

Vacuum effects on weapons: Various weapons are designed with the expectation of either oxygen or an atmosphere for their effect. Laser weaponry, proton beam weaponry (raffleurs), maser weaponry, bolt weaponry, needler weapons (that magnetically propel the needles), and gauss weaponry function as well in vacuum as they do in atmosphere. Other weapons require oxygen for ignition (*e.g.* automatic pistols, rifles, machine guns, and grenades) or an atmosphere to propagate their effect (e.g. sonic weapons and electrostunners) will not function. Specialized automatic pistols, rifles, and machine guns to exist that carry their own oxygen supply (as described in the *Knight Hawks* rulebook), but they are bulkier and more expensive than their commonly found counterparts and the character's weapons will not be of this type, unless they have specifically purchased ones designed for oxygen-free environments. Note that the above restrictions contradict the *Knight Hawks* rules (which assumes only sonic weapons do not function); however, fighting in space will only be memorable if it affects what the characters can do.

Puncturing EVA suits: The *Knight Hawks* rules specifies that space suits automatically seal punctures 1 cm in diameter or less; punctures have a 25% chance less of sealing for each additional cm. Emergency patches (10 cm in diameter) can be applied with a DEX check +20 for punctures on the front and a DEX check -10 for punctures on the back. An additional 10% penalty

should be applied if the character is at 50% of his STA or less. The following table gives suggested guidelines for different weapons; AD=weapon from *Alpha Dawn* rules, ZG=weapon from *Zebulon's Guide* rules.

Suggested Puncture Sizes	
AD: Laser Pistols (ZG: Laser Ke-1000, Ke-1500)	2 cm (75%)
AD: Laser Rifle (ZG: Laser Ke-2000)	3 cm (50%)
ZG: Laser Ke-5000	5 cm (0%)
ZG: Rafflur M-1, M-2, M-3	2 cm (75%)
ZG: Rafflur M-4	none
ZG: Rafflur M-6, M-7	3 cm (50%)
ZG: Rafflur M-8	5 cm (0%)
ZG: Maser weapons (all)	none
ZG: WarTech Alpha-Bolt, Omega-Bolt	3 cm (50%)
AD/ZG: Needler weapons	1 cm (100%)
AD: Electric Sword	0.5 cm/pt dmg
ZG: Force Axe	0.5 cm/pt dmg
AD: Vibroknife	0.5 cm/pt dmg
AD: Axe	0.5 cm/pt dmg
AD: Arrow	3 cm
AD: Knife	0.5 cm/pt dmg
AD: Javelin	4 cm
AD: Polearm	0.5 cm/pt dmg
AD: Spear	5 cm
AD: Sword (ZG: Sword, small/medium/large)	0.5 cm/pt dmg

Punctured EVA suits: If a leak is not fixed, the character will lose consciousness in 10 – size in cm of the leak. After losing consciousness, the character must make a successful STA check every five turns (30 seconds) or die.

Zero-G effects on weapons: Projectile ranges (when they can be fired) are doubled in zero-G. Range effects in zero-G environments has more to do with difficulties in aiming over long distance rather than an absolute range restriction for the projectiles. Combined with EVA suits, melee weapons are not effective unless the attacker and target are anchored, the attacker can grab and pull the target onto the weapon, or the attacker and target are traveling towards each other.

GAMMA SUBSECTION 5
THE EORNA ORBITAL STATION

After entering Zebulon space, the *Serena Dawn* sensors pick up an object in the stable L_1 Lagrangian point between Star's Hope and Zebulon. The object reflects laser altimeter scans as if the surface is made up of flat surfaces that meet in perfect 60 degree angles. In reality, this is an ancient orbital station built by the Eorna and destroyed during the Sathar attack. Originally, the station had an orbit much closer to Volturnus; it's current location is due to movement of the station after the Sathar attack. The station currently serves as an automated lookout post for the Star Devil pirates in the system; it is at a prime spot outside of the asteroid belts likely to draw the attention of the UPF and/or other groups from the Frontier.

The initial measurements made by the *Serena Dawn*'s sensors are inconsistent with natural objects in orbit around stars, and Captain Epps orders one of his long-range probes to investigate object. He, unlike his astrogator, is unaware that the probe's scans will alert the Star Devil pirates to his presence. He also calls the characters, as leaders of the Truane's Star mission to the bridge.

Closer investigation of the object appeared to have been built to resemble a giant twinned crystal in space. As additional gravimetric scans from the probe build up, it is clear that the object is likely to be substantially hollow, similar to space stations throughout the Frontier. Images from the probes show that the surface is pitted with micro-asteroid impacts. The larger impacts are surrounded by cracks that are reminiscent of broken glass. The largest hole is at the junction between the two "crystals" and, unlike all of the others, appears to have edges that were melted. This melted opening is the only one large enough to allow the characters to enter the structure.

Captain Epps offers to let the players take the shuttle which is preprogrammed to land at Volturnus base camp (guided from the *Serena Dawn* bridge, if no character has piloting skills) to what increasing appears to be an orbital station. If the characters choose not to investigate the orbital station first, but rather head to the Volturnus surface, skip the remainder of this subsection and subsection 5 and instead continue with the defense of the *Serena Dawn* in subsection 6. Referees may choose to have the attack occur in the vicinity of the orbital station so that characters can travel from the disabled *Serena Dawn* back to the orbital station. If the characters choose to investigate the orbital station, the pirate attack commences when the characters are in the orbital station (subsection 5).

Characters heading to the station will be equipped with EVA suits and an appropriate weapon for vacuum combat of their choice (subsection 3) from the ship's armory if the characters do not own an appropriate one. The characters are also informed of the second EVA suit oxygen pack placed in the shuttle, which the captain anticipates that they will not need.

Orbital Station (Map Gamma 4):

The orbital station was breached during the Sathar attack so the entire interior has no atmosphere. The power generator was also destroyed so the entire station is completely dark; its power systems are not compatible with the characters' equipment so none of the equipment can be activated.

S1. Nexus. This was the nexus between the four arms, but was the place where Sathar invaders entered the station. Anything of interest here was long-since destroyed.

S2. Landing bay. Two vehicles, which can only be some form of shuttlecraft, are in this hexagonal section pointed to two closed doors 120 degrees apart. These ships, unlike the rest of the station, are not constructed purely of crystal but are a mix of metal and crystal. The craft themselves appear quite primitive – chemical thrust engines, single pilot, and vaguely aerodynamic, though the wings span is insufficient to sustain flight in an the atmosphere.

Like the rest of the station, these shuttles have no power (or chemical propellant) left. Characters will be able to force entry to the shuttles (successful *Operate Machinery* skill check for Technicians) but while the

AL = Access Ladder

S2

S3

S4

S8

S11

S5

S9

S12

S10

S13

S6, S7

Map Gamma 5. The Eorna Orbital Station. AL = Access Ladder.
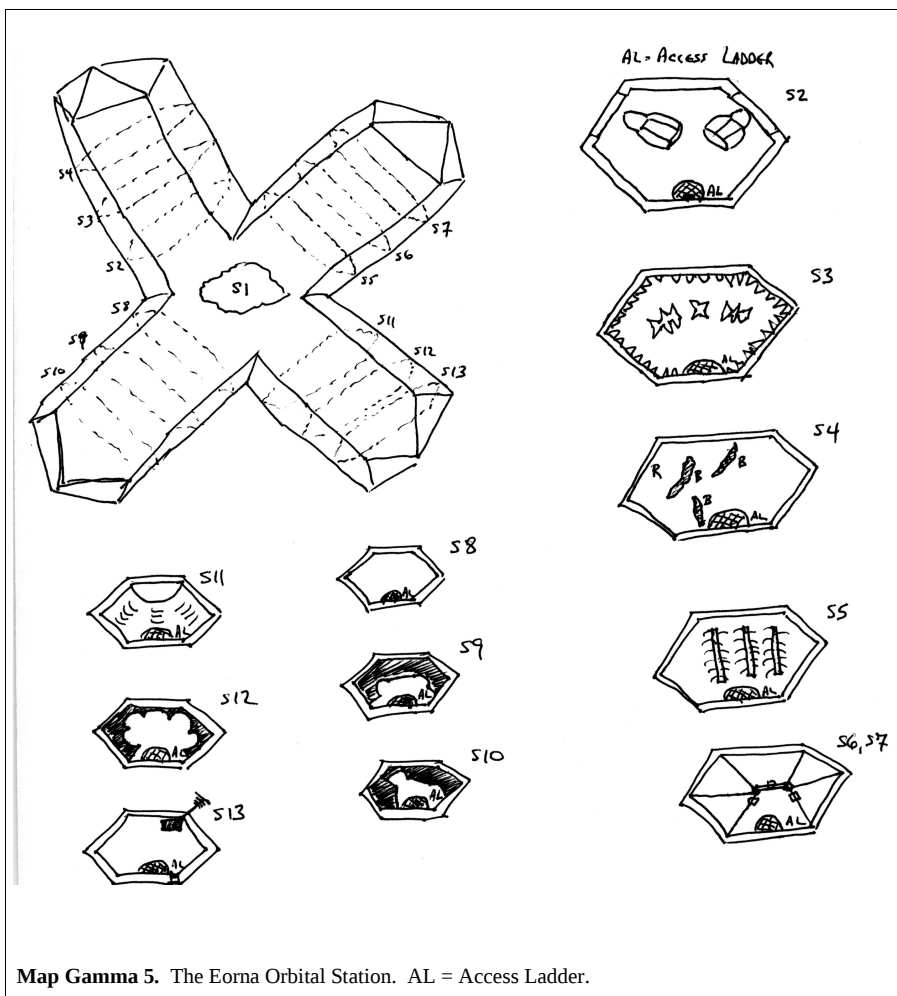
After depressurization killed the Eorna themselves, the Sathar rounded up all of the remaining robots and destroyed them all.

S5. Frozen garden. What at first appears to be more statues and artwork are clearly plant-like organisms, snap-frozen in the vacuum of space. Most of are short and stubby with globular leaves and fruit.

Firefights in this deck between characters and Star Devil pirates will involve use of the plants as partial cover. The soil holds water locked in the form of frozen ice – characters will have to heat it in a sealed container to obtain it. Fruit may be edible, if heated, based on the referee's discretion. Plants are native to moist areas of Volturnus.

S6, S7. Quarters. This non-descript chamber contains a number of straps tied to knobs on the walls. The openings to several hand-sized pipes in the walls are open. Various finger-sized crystals float in the center of the room.

The straps were used to secure Eorna sleeping in zero-G. The pipes were used for sanitation when the station was functional. The crystals are Eorna psi-rememberances, a psychic equivalent to the family photo. Psi-aware characters will be able to sense an echo of someone's caring and love from the crystals. Non-psi-aware characters will get a similar sensation if the crystals are carried into the room S3. Carrying a crystal will protect characters from the residual influence of that room and thereby negate the combat penalties.

S8 Egg storage. Fragments of what could only be described as egg shells float about the chamber in zero G. Around the sides of the chamber are sealed chambers with clear lids containing round indentations—the interiors are filled with egg shell debris and the frozen egg contents.

A later role of the station was to cryogenically preserve Eorna eggs with the hopes of protecting them from the Sathar attack. This final attempt to save the Eorna progeny from the Sathar nuclear strikes on their cities on Volturnus proved unsuccessful.

S9. Life support level. Three identical partially crystalline banks of machines line the outer walls of the station. None of the machinery appears to be functioning—nothing is moving and there are no lights anywhere.

At one point, these were three redundant life support systems for the station. These were controlled by psionic Eorna technology, meaning that technicians cannot control the technology even if it was powered, but they can figure out the purpose of the machinery.

S10. Power generator level. This level contains a vast array of crystalline

shuttles have clear cargo space and pilot seat (another crystal control helmet), characters will be unable to interface with the powerless Eorna psi-tech. Shuttles do possess an oxygen supply and can be used to extend oxygen supplies by 2 hours per character.

S3. Reflected horror. Hand-sized crystals line the walls, ceiling and floor in this chamber. Something about the chamber is entirely unsettling and distracting, as if there is something lurking in the crystals.

Eorna used crystals capable of psychic amplification for both entertainment and communication. The entire chamber still resonates with the horror and fear the Eorna felt during the Sathar attack on the station, and characters must make a LOG check or be affected (-20% melee, -40% ranged weapon attacks, *Alpha Dawn* Rules; -2 CS melee, -4 CS ranged weapon attacks, *Zebulon's Guide* Rules). Only one check should be performed; characters failing the check will always be affected whenever they are in this room.

S4. Robot's last stand. Littered amongst the inactive consoles of this level are metallic fragments and broken articulators of what appear to have been robots of some form or another; however, even the robot fragments appear to be remarkably different than anything in the Frontier.

This level was the last stand of the Eorna robot defenders against Sathar.

components that appear to be fragments of a very large machine with conduits leading to floors above and below this level.

This was fusion generator that was once generated power for the station and was controlled by Eorna technology. Technicians can figure out the purpose of the machinery, but the fuel that once powered the generator has been lost during the Sathar attack and even if the machinery could be powered, it would require the ability to interface via the Eorna's psionic abilities.

S11. Auditorium. Ironically, the Eorna have built this chamber to be much like an auditorium anywhere on Volturnus, with seats and a raised platform, even though straps were used to keep the Eorna in their seats in the zero-G environment.

S12. Eorna controllers. Arranged in a circle around the center of the room are six crystal-lined creches, each of them contains a single body of a bipedal reptilian-like creature. Remarkably each body is free of any form of adornment or any obvious technology. The crystals in the creche are concentrated around and tend to point to the heads of each of these creatures.

These Eorna station controllers died and were mummified when the Sathar breeched the station. Each creche was used to control different functions of the station psionically.

S13. Pirate broadcast chamber. In stark contrast to the dark crystalline chambers, a simple metal Frontier issue computer sits, flashing lights in the vacuum. A conduit leads from the computer through a hole in the crystal wall to the exterior of the station.

The Star Devil pirates have converted this portion of the station into an early warning by blowing a hole through the outer wall and connecting a computer to a passive detector for ships and a transmitter to communicate with the Star Devil pirates. Characters accessing this level 1 computer will be able to discern that the *Serena Dawn* has already been detected and the pirates have already been warned.

ASSAULT ON THE EORNA STATION

The pirate attack on the *Serena Dawn* starts when the characters are in the station. They are contacted by Captain Epps:

"Expeditionary force, we are under attack by an unknown vessel. Attackers are headed your way in EVA suits. Prepare for attack and defend your shuttle craft."

No further communications between the characters and the ship will occur —Epps is too busy to handle any questions from the characters and then will be unable to contact them after the *Serena Dawn* loses power.

Four squads of three pirates each will enter the Eorna Orbital Station in EVA suits. Each squad will slowly travel down each branch of the station searching for characters. Once the first squad finds the characters, they will radio the other squads to join them in the firefight. Assume that prior to encountering the characters, each squad takes two rounds to investigate each level, but only one round if responding to a call for help.

Pirate Thug (Minion)			
Alpha Dawn Statistics			
STR/STA:	40/40	PS:	2
DEX/RS:	45/45	IM:	5
INT/LOG:	35/35	RW:	25 (35 beam)
PER/LDR:	40/40	M:	25
PSA:	Military		
Skills:	Beam weapons, 1		
Zebulon's Guide Statistics			
STR/STA:	40/40	PS:	2
DEX/RS:	45/45	IM:	5
INT/LOG:	35/35	RW:	25 (35 beam)
PER/LDR:	40/40	M:	25
Profession:	Enforcer		
Skills:	Beam weapons, 1		
Equipment:	EVA suit		
Weapons:	laser pistol, 20 SEU clip		
	knife		

After the attack, characters who venture outside of the orbital station observed the battered hulks of both the *Serena Dawn* and the *Red Blade* with obvious extensive damage to drive systems on both ships; neither ships are maneuvering and neither have any visible external lights. Characters returning to the *Serena Dawn* must use EVA suits; the *Serena Dawn*'s power will be out due to the damage, and the Epps will have proactively decompressed the ship to prepare for combat. Any supplies not on the shuttlecraft rapidly freeze. Characters will find only the dead on board (the entire *Serena Dawn* crew as well as a few pirates boarders killed in fighting; skip Gamma subsection 7).

Characters can readily move between the orbital station, the *Serena Dawn*, and the *Red Blade* (subsection 8) without problems as the pirate rescue force will not be organized and reach this position for at least a day. Even to unskilled characters, it will be clear that only the shuttlecraft is capable of reaching the surface of Volturnus (visible from this distance as a rather small marbled red and blue globe) and a source of oxygen.

DEFENSE OF THE *SERENA DAWN*

If the characters do not enter the orbital station, they will be on the *Serena Dawn* during the pirate attack and will be able to assist in its defense against boarders, although both vessels will be disabled. The captain will order all crew and passengers into space suits when combat commences – the captain will do a precautionary depressurization of the ship to prevent potential violent decompression during the ship-to-ship combat.

The characters will have no real impact on the ship-to-ship combat, so the referee should get it over with rather quickly. The captain will order all crew and passengers to strap down in preparation for violent changes in direction and speed. Characters who do not heed this advice will take 2d10 points of damage being bounced around the cabin with a 1% chance per point of damage (non-cumulative) of breaching their space suit. Weapons fire from the *Serena Dawn* will disable the *Red Blade*'s engines. Immediately thereafter, the Serena Dawn's engines will fail (either through

Map Gamma 8. The *Red Blade*.

Hithyin will defend the hatch leading to cargo bay 2 and Epps will order the characters to hold the hatch leading to cargo bay 1 with one of the crew members (Nordoth, if the characters have not found him out). The captain tells the characters that the fallback position is the central corridor on the life-support level. If the characters refuse to help in the defense of the ship, they will be locked in their quarters (*Serena Dawn* rooms 10 & 11) and the entire ship's complement will be killed by the pirates, Stahl, and Norden, who will then hunt down the characters.

The pirates will enter the two cargo bays in two groups of 6 each. Battles immediately at the hatches will give each side partial cover; the characters can gain full cover if they think to set up a barrier with the material in the cargo bay. As the pirates enter, Stahl will kill Hithyin in cargo bay 1, and Nordoth will turn on the characters in cargo bay 2. Nordoth will only be armed with a knife, but hopes to distract the armed characters while the other pirates cut them down. The other crew members will not be able to stop the pirates (see subsection 6 for statistics), though they will wound or kill 2 of the 6 pirates from cargo bay 2 and 1 of the 6 in cargo bay 1. If the characters have identified Stahl, then Hithyin will be alive and only one pirate will emerge from cargo bay 2. The pirates' goal will be to secure the ship and kill or capture any remaining defenders, including the PCs.

GAMMA SUBSECTION 8
THE DISABLED *RED BLADE*

Player characters can also reach the *Red Blade* by EVA suits or the shuttle after it has been disabled either from the *Serena Dawn* or the orbital station. The characters do not need to go to the *Red Blade* on their way to the surface of Volturnus; however, tackling the pirates on this ship gives the characters two major advantages. First, their shuttle craft had not been completely stocked with supplies for the travel to the surface and what supplies existed on the *Serena Dawn* are now lost. Thus, the *Red Blade*'s survival packs will substantially ease the character's difficulties once they reach the surface of the planet. Second, if pirates survive on the *Red Blade* or the characters do not disable the communications equipment, they will monitor and report the character's launch of the shuttle to Volturnus. If this report is made, the characters will face a ground force of pirates in addition to the jetcopter search once they reach the surface (see Delta subsection 7).

The *Red Blade* (Map Gamma 8):

Two pirates will be on the *Red Blade* at all times, the astrogator (who also doubles as the captain) and the engineer. For purposes of the battle, use the statistics for Loken Stahl and Kilita (Beta subsection 5) for these pirates. In addition, any pirates surviving the attacks on the *Serena Dawn* or the Eorna Orbital Station will attempt to retreat here.

R1. Command Deck. The ship can normally be controlled solely by one individual (seated at left on the map). The other two positions are for a secondary astrogator and engine monitoring for when the primary pilot is engaged in combat.

R2. Weapons Deck. In addition to containing the controls for the ship's weapons, this deck also held the weapons and EVA suits used by the pirates for the assault. The hatches on either end of the ship access maintenance

sabotage — if Stahl and Nordoth have not been identified – or through weapons fire).

Once both ships are disabled, pirates from the *Red Blade* move to board the *Serena Dawn*. The two pirate infiltrators (Stahl and Nordorth) will destroy the ship's cache of personal weapons (the character's personal weapons will not be affected) and open the external airlocks so that *Red Blade* crew members in EVA suits can board. In addition, they plan to kill Gunnery Officer Hithyin, the only real threat to the pirates among the *Serena Dawn*'s crew, before they reveal their true allegiance.

The captain will divide the crew into two groups to cover each of the *Serena Dawn*'s hatches that are accessible in the two cargo holds. In the absence of the ship's cache, only Hithyin, Epps, and the characters will have real weapons; other crew members will be holding knives and tools. Epps and

shafts for repairs of the primary ship weapons. When the PCs enter, this deck will be empty.

R3. Living Deck. Contains galley, food storage, and bunks. The Red Blade is not as comfortable or as spacious as the Serena Dawn. The mission was only a short term patrol from the asteroid belt, so only a small amount of food and water are present in the storage lockers. If pirates are returning from their EVA to the Eorna Orbital Station, half of them will be found here, waiting orders from the astrogator. The other half will be assisting the engineer on the Engineering/Life Support Deck.

R4. Engineering/Life Support Deck. The astrogator and the engineer can be found here attempting to restore emergency power (which will take 4 hours) and fix the engines (which will prove impossible without help as the control computers require repairs at a space dock). After abandoning that effort, they will then return to the command deck to repair the radio to get aid from other pirates. The astrogator's delay in requesting help stems from the fact that his ship will be treated as salvage by any Star Devil "rescuers".

GAMMA SUBSECTION 9
SHUTTLE TO VOLTURNUS

The *Serena Dawn* shuttle provides the only functional ship available to the characters. The shuttle is preprogrammed to reach the surface of Volturnus near the character's destination – the Truane's Star base camp (Delta section), and will be readily apparent to any character examining the shuttle's computer; initiating this preprogrammed trip always succeeds. Only characters with piloting skills have the option, at the referee's discretion, of traveling to other targets. Once underway, the shuttle reports a fuel leak (due to combat either at the Eorna orbital station or at the *Serena Dawn*). The shuttle will barely have enough fuel to slow the decent to Volturnus and will crash.

The only other option for the player characters to reach Volturnus is to wait for the Star Devil rescue force. This rescue force consists of many pirates and will be a non-trivial task for the characters to overcome. If captured as the only survivors from the *Serena Dawn*, the characters will be taken directly to Slave City One so that the Star Devils can learn of the plans of the Truane's Star government for Volturnus and what they know of the Star Devil presence (Epsilon section). At the referee's discretion, captured characters who are not able to escape on their own might then be released in the Volturnus desert without weapons or supplies to die in the sand (Delta section) or be caught up in the Kurabanda attack on the city (Epsilon section).

CRASH ON VOLTURNUS

DELTA SUBSECTION 1
SYNOPSIS

The *Serena Dawn* shuttle carrying the characters is at the extreme end of its range and crashes on Volturnus. The crash site is on the surface near the original Volturnus base camp established by the Truane's Star government. The characters discover that the members of the original mission are gone and that the camp has been ransacked of all useful gear. Within the camp, however, are several clues to other marked camps on the surface (actually a Star Devil facility imaged from orbit). The characters face survival alone in the Volturnian desert with attacks from the Star Devil pirates near the base camp and Ul-Mor raiders. The characters have the opportunity to befriend the Ul-Mor (by aiding them in an attack by the Star Devil pirates) and if successful, the characters will gain allies in an assault on the Star Devil facility, which will provide them with water, food, and access to vehicles.

GAMMA SUBSECTION 2
RAILROADING CHARACTERS

The beginning of Delta section deals with the repercussions of the characters crashing in the Volturnus desert. After the crash, however, the characters have great freedom of where to go. Appropriate referee hints about the possibility of food and water at the other outpost (controlled by the Star Devils) should encourage them to go in that direction. Neither the Eorna ruins nor alliance with the Ul-Mor are necessary for the characters.

Hooks for bringing characters back into line: Skipping the Star Devil desert outpost can be readily dealt with. In fact, the desert outpost, Slave City One (Delta section), and Pilgrim's End (Epsilon section) can all be approached in any order. It is critical, however, to ensure that the characters have motivation or at the very least stumble upon these different encounters. For eaxmple, characters who are not moved by revenge against the Star Devils might come under assault by Sathar patrols that might lead them back to Pilgrim's End, where they might make alliances with a raiding Kurabanda party that brings them back to Slave City One.

DELTA SUBSECTION 3
CRASH LANDING

The pre-programmed shuttle brings the characters to their desired location, the surface of Volturnus near the original base camp; however, the shuttle is at the extreme end of its range and is unable to slow down sufficient to avoid crash landing in the desert.

Normally, the shuttle would reach the Volturnus surface with substantial supplies for the characters; however, the shuttle was not stocked early enough by the *Serena Dawn* crew and thus the shuttle will only reach the surface with four survival kits and some heavy equipment for biological and mineral sample collection and storage supplied by the Truane's Star government.

Each survival kit contains:
- 8 liters water
- 4 survival rations (1 ration/day/person)
- 1 box of matches
- 1 all-weather blanket
- 1 first-aid pack
- 1 pocket tool
- 1 flashlight
- 1 toxyrad gauge
- 1 polyvox

Displayed on the navigational computer is a strip of a map showing details of the surface that the shuttle flew over prior to its crash (see Player Handout #). This map shows two areas of interest: the Truane's Star Basecamp (subsection 4), which is next to the crash site, and the Star Devil's Desert Base (subsection #), which is further away.

Creative characters can also attempt to salvage equipment directly from the shuttlecraft; however, as all of the shuttle equipment is tied into the shuttle's electrical system, it will require characters with the appropriate skills to marry this equipment to the portable power supplies present in the cargo hold. Technicians can combine a parabattery, the wheeled biological storage containers, and motors for driving the shuttle's hatches into a make-shift dune buggy. Computer specialists can extract the navigation computer and two parabatteries from two toxyrad gauges or two flashlights to construct a computer-driven map with a built in compass. Similar equipment can be constructed from the ship salvage, depending on the referee's discretion. Note that this construction will take several hours and the pirate assault described in subsection 5 might occur during the characters' salvage operations.

DELTA SUBSECTION 4
TRUANE'S STAR BASE CAMP

The initial base camp was established at an unfortunate site for surviving off of the land. The base camp is in the center of a variety of eroded desert foothills that dominate a landscape mostly made up of the sand dunes. These foothills are rich in mineral and metal ore deposits, but have little shade and no water. The base camp has been stripped of supplied by Star Devil pirates and Ul-Mor raiders.

The camp itself was a ring of nine circular prefabricated shelters, four of these are currently missing and have been taken by the Star Devils to their desert camp (subsection 12). However, the foundations of the missing prefabs are still visible (Map Delta 4).

Map Delta 4. The Truane's Star Mission Base Camp.

attempt to poison characters that pass by it (one character at random is chosen as a target). The burrower snake strategy is to strike and retreat back into the sand drift (hard cover) and wait for the poison to take effect, much like its strategy in attacking lopers.

Burrower Snake			
Alpha Dawn Statistics			
MV:	Slow (30m)	STA:	15
RS:	80	IM:	8
RW:	-	M:	75
DM:	1d10/2		
SA:	Poison S5/T10		
Zebulon's Guide Statistics			
MV:	Slow (30m)	STA:	15
RS:	80	IM:	8
RW:	-	M:	75
DM:	5		
SA:	Poison S5/T10		

B6 to B9 – Foundations of missing prefabs.

DELTA SUBSECTION 5

GROUND ASSAULT

If the characters did not prevent the remaining pirates trapped on the *Red Blade* from communicating with Volturnus, then the pirates will have tracked the crash of the shuttle craft and sent two jetcopters of thugs to the shuttle crash site. These six thugs (three on each jetcopter, not including the pilots who do not participate in the assault) track the characters from the shuttle crash site to the original base camp. This attack occurs any time the characters are in (or near) the base camp at the referee's discretion (and may be particularly useful in cases where there is a real debate between the characters about the course of action).

The pirate thugs have a simple strategy. They will attempt to get into position in the ruins of the base camp around the party and attack from partially hidden positions. An INT check by a character will indicate that some pirates were noticed and the pirates lose any advantage of surprise. If pirates gain surprise, they gain a free round of attacks before normal combat begins. Pirates will attempt to disable characters with tangler grenades, following up the attack with conventional weaponry. These thugs are not particularly brave, and if the party puts up a strong resistance or they run out of ammunition, they attempt to escape to the jetcopters. If the party has been particularly successful and less than half of the original force can escape, the jetcopter pilots will abandon the thugs to the desert and the characters.

The short-wave radio headset worn by each thug has a fixed frequency and can be used by characters to overhear the pirates (and communicate with them if they wish) if the pirates are nearby. This can be useful during the attack by the jetcopter (subsection 7) and around the Star Devil facility (subsection 13).

Pirate Thug (Human Minion)			
Alpha Dawn Statistics			
STR/STA:	40/40	PS:	2
DEX/RS:	45/45	IM:	5
INT/LOG:	35/35	RW:	25
PER/LDR:	40/40	M:	25

A substantial amount of biological trace evidence (Human and Yazirian skin and hair, Vrusk exoskeleton fragments, and Dralasite rubbings) can be found by characters for investigation (see Chi subsection 2). Most (80%) match the genetic profiles of the Truane Star personnel. 10% of the material does not (from the Star Devils), and the remaining 10% superficially resemble Dralasite rubbings, but clearly do not belong to Dralasites and do not share genetic molecules with any known race (these are skin fragments from the Ul-Mor raiders).

Prefab huts (Map Delta 4)

B1 – Dormitory. This prefab housed Commander Jameson (room a) and Geeko-Sur-Mang (room b). These rooms are stripped and partially filled with sand from blown out panels. The quarters themselves have been stripped of all movable items (by both Star Pirates and Ul-Mor) and only drop down cots (built into the walls) are present, but lack all bedding. In these quarters, the primary biological trace evidence (90%) will be from the Truane's Star personnel and (10%) will be from unknown sources.

B2 – Dormitory. For Itklikdil (room a) and Grod (room b) and are essentially equivalent to those in B1.

B3 – Biological/geological laboratory. This hut contained the laboratory equipment for Itklikdil's and Geeko-Sur-Mang's studies. Fragments of syringes and sample containers litter the floor between built-in counter tops.

B4 – Equipment and supplies prefabs. The extensive shelving has spots of oil and grease stains, and the floor is littered with empty food canisters that were crudely broken open.

B5 – Gallery and dining hall. This prefab was a galley-style kitchen that was open to a dining area. The prefab currently has several blown out plasteel panels, and sand from the desert has blown in, forming several sand drifts against one wall and the counter between the galley and the dining hall. These drifts have become the home of a burrower snake that will

PSA:	Military		
Skills:	Projectile weapons, 1		
Zebulon's Guide Statistics			
STR/STA:	40/40	PS:	2
DEX/RS:	45/45	IM:	5
INT/LOG:	35/35	RW:	25
PER/LDR:	40/40	M:	25
Profession:	Enforcer		
Skills:	Projectile weapons, 1		
Equipment:			
Weapons:	1 tangler grenade		
	automatic rifle (20 rounds)		
	knife		
Other:	2 L water		
	radio headset		

DELTA SUBSECTION 6
TRAVEL IN THE DESERT

In the desert, characters need 8 liters of water per day to survive (which includes water needed to re-hydrate survival rations). Characters can reduce this amount by 1 liter if they travel at night and rest in some shade during the day. Characters who are not traveling consume 4 liters per day.

Each day, characters have a 50% chance of having a random desert encounter.

Random desert encounters:

Roll (1d10)	Encounter
1	Sandstorm
2-3	Whispering spikes
4	Parasol trees
5	Sand shark
6	Funnel worm
7	Lopers
8	Eorna crystal fragments
9-10	Rock stack

Sandstorm. Sandstorm winds rapidly raise to 120 kph and the dust cloud is visible for some distance. The sandstorm will last 1-3 12 hour periods (1d10, 1-8=1, 9=2, 10=3). Characters without shelter will take 1d10 points of damage per 12 hour period; however, the real damage of the storm is that travel is impossible (characters get separated if not tied together and fall into ravines, holes, and desert creatures waiting out the storm). Thus, the sandstorm will force the characters to consume extra supplies.

Whispering spikes. Whispering spikes are protected by swarms of small lizard-like agrifangs that live inside the hollow spikes and move into the base of the plant to collect water. Agrifangs will swarm (1d10 individuals) and attack any characters that investigate or damage the whispering spike, but will drop off and retreat 1 round after the characters leave the whispering spike alone. Each whispering spike is home to more than 100 agrifangs, but the underground base does hold 20 liters of water.

Agrifang Swarm			
Alpha Dawn Statistics			
MV:	Medium (60m)	STA:	1 per agrifang
RS:	50	IM:	5
RW:	-	M:	50
DM:	5 pt per agrifang		
SA:	Swarm attack (see appendix)		
SD:	Swarm defense (see appendix)		
Zebulon's Guide Statistics			
MV:	Medium (60m)	STA:	1 per agrifang
RS:	50	IM:	5
RW:	-	M:	50
DM:	50		
SA:	Swarm attack (see appendix)		
SD:	Swarm defense (see appendix)		

Parasol trees. Parasol trees are fairly common through the desert, providing shade with a giant dehydrated "leaf" and gaining water and nutrients from animals using them as shade. 20% of parasol trees are infested with blood-sucking mite swarms (2d10 individuals) that drop onto resting lopers or characters. Extraction of water from the parasol trees is difficult and generates no more than 1 liter per plant (as most of the above-ground plant is a dessicated husk).

Mite Swarm			
Alpha Dawn Statistics			
MV:	Slow (30m)	STA:	1 per mite
RS:	50	IM:	5
RW:	-	M:	50
DM:	1 pt per mite		
SA:	Swarm attack (see appendix)		
SD:	Swarm defense (see appendix)		
Zebulon's Guide Statistics			
MV:	Slow (30m)	STA:	1 per mite
RS:	50	IM:	5
RW:	-	M:	50
DM:	20		
SA:	Swarm attack (see appendix)		
SD:	Swarm defense (see appendix)		

Sand shark. The rhythmic walking of the characters have attracted a sand shark patrolling this region of the desert for prey. Sand sharks are able to propel themselves through sandy soil visible on the surface only a moving mound. Characters noticing this mound ("Spot" check), otherwise the sand shark attacks from surprise and gets initiative in the first round. Characters who fail an RS check when attack are pulled into the sand shark burrow and the sand shark gains a +20% to hit (+2 CS, Zebulon Guide) for further attacks against them. Climbing out of the burrow takes a full round during which characters cannot attack. Sand sharks cannot cross rocky terrain.

Sand Shark			
Alpha Dawn Statistics			
MV:	Medium (60m)	STA:	80
RS:	50	IM:	5
RW:	-	M:	50
DM:	2d10		
SA:	Double damage when attacking from surprise		
	Characters failing RS check when attacked get pulled into loose sand		
SD:	Hard cover when burrowing		
Zebulon's Guide Statistics			
MV:	Medium (60m)	STA:	80
RS:	50	IM:	5
RW:	-	M:	50
DM:	20		
SA:	Double damage when attacking from surprise		
SD:	Hard cover when burrowing		

Funnel worm. A field of funnel worms has staked out a region of desert that the characters are passing through. Unlike sand sharks, funnel worms are ambush predators that try to populate the paths that lopers tend to take across the desert.

Funnel Worm			
Alpha Dawn Statistics			
MV:	Slow (30m)	STA:	200
RS:	35	IM:	4
RW:	-	M:	30
DM:	3d10		
SA:	Automatically hit if prey falls in funnel (fails RS check)		
SD:	Unnoticed until attack		
Zebulon's Guide Statistics			
MV:	Slow (30m)	STA:	200
RS:	35	IM:	4
RW:	-	M:	30
DM:	30		
SA:	Automatically hit if prey falls in funnel (fails RS check)		
SD:	Unnoticed until attack		

Lopers. The characters encounter a skidish group of 2d10 lopers who had been mounts for the Ul-Mor, but were lost in a sandstorm. These lopers are likely to stampede if characters approach (80% of the time). In a stampede, each character must dodge 1d10 lopers (a RS check for each) or suffer trampling damage. Lopers can also be stalked by sand sharks (20% of the time). If sand sharks are present, then the lopers stampede and the sand sharks then turn their attention to the more slowly moving characters (see sand shark encounter details above).

Loper			
Alpha Dawn Statistics			
MV:	Fast (90m)	STA:	100
RS:	41	IM:	5
RW:	-	M:	40
DM:	2d10		
SD:	Immune to needer weapons		
Zebulon's Guide Statistics			
MV:	Fast (90m)	STA:	100
RS:	41	IM:	5
RW:	-	M:	40
DM:	20		
SD:	Immune to needler weapons		

Eorna crystal fragments. Fragments (1d10) of hand-sized or larger crystals can be found scattered across the Volternian desert. These fragments are pieces of Eorna building and technology blown from their cities by the Sathar nuclear strikes. Some (50%) have what appear to be internally etched (crystalline circuitry) and 10% of these are partially powered and the etches glow faintly. Some (30%) are still sufficiently radioactive from the Sathar nuclear strikes to activate a low-level warning from a toxyrad gauge, but are not sufficiently dangerous to cause damage from short exposures.

Rock stack. These 1-3 meter high stacks of rocks are constructed by Ul-Mor to mark the sites of fallen Ul-Mor. characters can find bullet casings from Frontier nearby most of these stacks. These are not graves, however, and no Ul-Mor remains will be found here.

DELTA SUBSECTION 8
STAR DEVIL SEARCHCRAFT

After the crash of the shuttle (and potentially after the failed ground assault), pirates from the desert compound are ordered to track but not to engage the characters. Two search jetcopters can be heard some distance away and are at fairly high altitudes. If characters make no effort to hide, the jetcopters will locate them and, in violation of their orders, lower to attack. A single pirate will fire a laser pistol from the moving jetcopter (-20 to hit Alpha Dawn Rules, -2 CS Zebulon's Guide Rules) using 2 SEU/shot (2d10 damage Alpha Dawn Rules, 20 damage Zebulon's Guide Rules) until the 20 SEU clip is depleted or the characters damage the jetcopter. Use the pirate thug statistics from the ground assault for the lone gunman. At the referee's discretion, the damaged jetcopter can be the same one as the downed jetcopter encountered in subsection 10.

For purposes of this encounter, a character can apply *Concealment* (Environmental subskill, *Alpha Dawn* rules; skill, *Zebulon's Guide* rules) to also benefit other characters. Without the appropriate skills, the characters have a base 10% chance to avoid detection by the jetcopter if they make an effort to hide. Only jetcopters that move in to attack will be close enough for characters to see the Star Devil symbol without binoculars.

DELTA SUBSECTION 7
UL-MOR RAIDERS

Ul-Mor raiders scour the desert hunting and looking for humans, dralasites, vrusks, and yazirians (whom they associate only with their enemies, the Star Devils). Five mounted Ul-Mor find the characters and will attack, calling out their loud, almost musical hooting battle cries. These attacks are primarily probes of the strength of forces; the Ul-Mor warriors are constantly looking for weak isolated groups to eliminate.

If the characters manage to kill any Ul-Mor or two or more lopers and/or severely injure two or more Ul-Mor, the raiders will retreat looking for easier prey. Depending on the apparent state of the characters, the retreating raiders might seek to attack again when the characters are distracted (by a random encounter or the Eorna ruins) or they may retreat back to an Ul-Mor campsite (typically an artificially-enlarged cave or overhang in the desert).

The Ul-Mor raiders respect fighting prowess, and if characters impress the Ul-Mor, an alliance could be made. One potential strategy is to clearly defeat the raiders, yet withhold the killing blow. In the raiders' experience, the Star Devils always kill their vanquished foes, and this would be sufficient to cause the Ul-Mor to offer to communicate by touch-telepathy (see subsection 10). A second potential strategy towards peaceful communication with the Ul-Mor raiders is if the characters provide a spectacular display of technical superiority to warn against combat (such as the simultaneous use of loud and/or visually stunning weaponry like grenades and lasers) without harming the Ul-Mor. These strategies differ enough from the Star Devils' search-and-destroy and search-and-capture tactics that the Ul-Mor will become curious and will allow communication.

Ul-Mor Raider			
Alpha Dawn Statistics			
MV:	Slow (30m)	STA:	40
RS:	50	IM:	5
RW:	45	M:	45
DM:	2d10/spear, 2 spears each		
SA:	Multiple attacks per round with multiple spears		
Zebulon's Guide Statistics			
MV:	Slow (30m)	STA:	40
RS:	50	IM:	5

Map Delta 9. Eorna Ruins.

RW:	45	M:	45
DM:	20/spear, 2 spear each		
SA:	Multiple attacks per round with multiple spears		

Loper Mounts			
Alpha Dawn Statistics			
MV:	Fast (90m)	STA:	100
RS:	41	IM:	5
RW:	-	M:	40
DM:	2d10		
SD:	Immune to needer weapons		
Zebulon's Guide Statistics			
MV:	Fast (90m)	STA:	100
RS:	41	IM:	5
RW:	-	M:	40
DM:	20		
SD:	Immune to needler weapons		

DELTA SUBSECTION 9
THE EORNA RUINS

From some distance, the characters will be able to see a large hole in the desert that at a distance looks something like a crater. The distant far edge of the crater can be seen; however, the bottom lies out of site from travelers on the desert.

Once characters reach the edge of the sink hole, they can see numerous building-sized crystals several stories below the level of the plains. Throughout the region, the sand is littered with fused glass spheres. These spheres were formed from melted sand thrown into the atmosphere by the Sathar nuclear strikes. The spheres and the entire region still have a low level of residual radioactivity left over from the nuclear orbital strike by the Sathar (toxyrad gauges will flash blue); however, the level of radiation is only dangerous to characters with prolonged exposure. The "sink hole" was actually generated by the collapse of an extensive underground facility during the attack.

Each of the crystal buildings have darkened interiors (excepting the crystal that still holds the active computer) due to the surface reflective properties of the crystals. Because of this, the interior of the buildings are quite cool

and characters can reduce their daily water usage for the time that they stay here.

The Eorna Ruins (Map Delta 9).

R1 – Rogue crystals. A portion of the psi-sensitive Eorna crystals in this complex have gone rogue due to the combination of the stress on the Eorna due to the Sathar strike and the lingering effects of the radiation. Two crystals appear to be no more than any other large powered Eorna crystals until they attack. Rogue crystals will only begin their attack at point blank range and will randomly choose electrical, laser, or sonic attacks each round, regardless of whether or not the attack is successful.

Rogue Crystal			
Alpha Dawn Statistics			
MV:	Slow (0m)	STA:	110
RS:	35	IM:	4
RW:	50	M:	-
DM:	5d10 (as laser pistol or sonic devastator)		
SA:	Attack as electrostunner, laser pistol, or sonic devastator.		
SD:	Half damage from laser, sonic, or electrical attacks.		
Zebulon's Guide Statistics			
MV:	Slow (0m)	STA:	110
RS:	35	IM:	4
RW:	50	M:	-
DM:	50 (as laser pistol or sonic devastator)		
SA:	Attack as electrostunner, laser pistol, or sonic devastator.		
SD:	Half damage from laser, sonic, or electrical attacks.		

R2 – Active computer core. Sunlight filters through cracks in this building and this light generates enough energy to partially power a computer core. For non-psi-aware characters, enough energy is present to light up various crystal chambers in a non-random pattern. Psi-aware characters get a sense of unease – the computer is locked into a continuous looping warning from prior to the Sathar attack. This psi warning is enough of a deterrent to keep the Ul-Mor away. The computer is too badly damaged for any psi-aware characters to interact with the computer or affect its warning broadcast.

R3 – Star Devil corpse. The remains of a Yazirian pirate are partially dessicated by the desert. A victim of the recent Ul-Mor retaliation, he was able to escape the Ul-Mor by hiding here, but his injury from an Ul-Mor spear was mortal. A portion of the spear is still impaled in his abdomen. The corpse still wears a headset (which can be used to overhear the pirates), a Star Devil patch on his jacket (that can be used for identification at the desert compound) and a laser pistol with a 5-SEU clip.

R4 – Artist gallery. The damaged crystalline sculptures here were only for artistic purpose and lack any internal circuitry. A small group of five nocturnal shovelmouths have made this darkened crystal their daytime home. The shovelmouths have a 50% of stampeding when the characters enter. Give the characters a bonus to reduce the chance of stampeding for everything that they do to quietly enter the building and a penalty for things for anything that might disturb the shovelmouths. Injuring a shovelmouth will automatically trigger a stampede. If the shovelmouths do not stampede, they will not harm the characters.

Shovelmouths			
Alpha Dawn Statistics			
MV:	Medium (60m)	STA:	60
RS:	25	IM:	3
RW:	-	M:	45

DM:	2d10		
SA:	Stampede for 1 round per shovelmouth		
Zebulon's Guide Statistics			
MV:	Medium (60m)	STA:	60
RS:	25	IM:	3
RW:	-	M:	45
DM:	20		
SA:	Stampede for 1 round per shovelmouth		

R5 – Robot storage. This crystal building was once a storage unit for Eorna cleaning robots (level 1) that once served this town. Characters hoping to use these robots must overcome the fact that their crystalline batteries have been discharged and that their technology is quite alien (if it is not substantially advanced over Frontier robots), thus the robots are effectively level 5 for all attempts to repair and/or reprogram them.

R6 – Fallen towers. These crystal towers that have fallen over due to the force of the nuclear blast. These towers "imploded" when they fell and are little more than piles of sharp crystalline shards (some quite large).

DELTA SUBSECTION 10
THE ENEMY OF MY ENEMY

Characters stumble across a battle between Ul-Mor raiders and a downed jetcopter crew of Star Devil pirates. This jetcopter crew was en route from the desert compound to Slave City One when the jetcopter suffered from mechanical problems.

The pilot and three passengers of the crashed jetcopter have been surrounded by 20 Ul-Mor mounted on lopers. The pirates have taken cover behind the wreckage and a number of rocks and are currently picking off the Ul-Mor raiders at a distance with their rifles and keeping them from getting close enough to strike with grenades, repelling a number of charges by the spear-wielding Ul-Mor.

From the character's vantage point, it is clear that the pirates have the upper hand, so long as their ammunition holds out. If the characters make no attempt to intervene, the pirates' limited ammunition will fail to defeat a massed Ul-Mor charge; however, the cost to the Ul-Mor will be high.

The Ul-Mor will respond violently to any characters who attack them. These raiders will pull back in the face of serious opposition, but will continually fight guerrilla-style attacks using their faster lopers so long as the characters are in Ul-Mor territory.

Characters who simply turn away will not be followed or attacked, and they will not seek revenge for any causalities among the Ul-Mor raiders. The Ul-Mor will not understand their actions, but recognize that the characters do not belong to the same "tribe" as the pirates.

The Ul-Mor will cautiously greet characters if they aid them in defeating the Star Devils. Their approach will be initially tense, but the Ul-Mor will make no initial threatening moves. Their hoots and gestures (along with a pantomime of the Ul-Mor representative wishing to touch characters to initiate touch-telepathy) will be quite subdued compared to the noises the Ul-Mor make during the fight with the raiders.

Characters accepting the touch-telepathy contact will be able to directly without use of a polyvox. This communication is similar to talking in that it does not intrude upon private thoughts; however, meaning is more directly understood by both parties.

The Ul-Mor will ask a number of questions: Why did you act against your own kind? How powerful is your tribe? How many are there? Why has the enemy that is you, but not you taken so many of our kind?

In turn the Ul-Mor will answer a number of PC questions:

What are you? We are the Ul-Mor, the great desert warriors who fear nothing except failing to be worthy enough to join "The One".

Where are you from? The desert is our home.

Why are you attacking the Star Devil Pirates? They capture and take us and prevent us from joining "The One". All of the Ul-Mor tribes have ended their wars with each other and are now united against the new foe.

Why do the Star Devils capture Ul-Mor? The Star Devils capture our younglings and only attack our warrior when they can outnumber us. They take us to their camp. No Ul-Mor has returned from the camp.

Where is the Star Devil camp? They hide behind their walls at the Temple of the Forbidden Cult and their automated towers. But we can show you. We can also show you the secret tunnels. With your weapons, you can fight them and win.

DELTA SUBSECTION 11
THE BACKDOOR

Characters that ally with the Ul-Mor will learn of the automated turret defenses surrounding the pirate camp and the secret caverns that emerge within the pirate compound. The Ul-Mor are happy to lead the characters to the caverns, but are not yet trusting enough to brave the backdoor with the characters.

The Ul-Mor can explain the following features of the pirate compounds.

- Cowardly pirates retreat behind their walls.

- Pirates built it on the ruins of a temple of the forbidden cult.

- The compound is surrounded by death-dealing towers that kill all that move.

- There is a secret tunnel leading into the camp used by the fake priests of the forbidden cult to trike the Ul-Mor.

- The true priests of "The One" revealed the deception and all of the Ul-Mor.

Ironically, the "Forbidden Cult" was actually the original Ul-Mor religion that whose adherents were stamped out by the Sathar and replaced with the cult of "The One" that better suits their needs for the Ul-Mor. Despite this deceit, the secret tunnel backdoor into the pirate camp does exist and the Star Devils are unaware that the opening extends all of the way through the hillside.

The Backdoor. Map Delta 11.

B1. Shovelmouth Den

Ten nocturnal shovelmouths have made their home here. The shovelmouths have a 50% of stampeding when the characters enter. Give the characters a bonus for everything that they do to quietly enter the building and a penalty for things for anything that might disturb the shovelmouths.

Shovelmouths			
Alpha Dawn Statistics			
MV:	Medium (60m)	STA:	60
RS:	25	IM:	3
RW:	-	M:	45
DM:	1d10		
SA:	Stampede for 2d10 turns per shovelmouth		
Zebulon's Guide Statistics			
MV:	Medium (60m)	STA:	60
RS:	25	IM:	3
RW:	-	M:	45
DM:	10		
SA:	Stampede for 2d10 turns per shovelmouth		

B2. Salt Chamber

Millenia ago, this chamber was filled with water. Since then, slow evaporation into the desert has left the entire chamber filled with giant salt crystals growing from every surface. Crossing the chamber requires a RS check, failure indicates characters have slipped and cut themselves on the crystals causing 1d10 points of damage.

A mummified Eorna corpse is here, preserved by the desert dryness and salt. This Eorna had escaped the initial Sathar attacks, but not the subsequent radiation poisoning. It is clear that the corpse has been here for a very long time. A toxyrad gauge will still detect some of the longer-lived radioactive isotopes in the Eorna's body.

B3. Gas Pocket

As part of the geothermal portion of the caves, this chamber is slowly building up a pocket of methane and hydrogen sulfide gases. Characters can smell a distinctive "rotten egg" odor due to the hydrogen sulfide and toxyrad gauges will warn of the dangerous atmosphere. The methane in the atmosphere here is explosive, and characters using open flames, firing projectiles, gyrojet weapons, or lasers will ignite the pocket causing 3d10 points of damage. After an explosion, the pocket will take a day or so to return to an explosive level of methane. Clever characters can use this chamber to lay traps for pirates.

B4. Malfunctioning Robot

In the center of this large cavern is a central stone carving that strongly resembles some large piece of machinery with carved pipes leading in and out of the central block. Dials, buttons, and levers appear to be accurately depicted. Unlike the rest of the caverns, the floor here is smooth and polished. At one side of the carving, a Frontier-issue maintenance bot is busy at work, checking the fake dials and polishing the carving's surfaces.

This carving is a stone replica of the heat exchange generator in the next cavern carved by the maintenance bot. This robot was tasked with keeping the generator operating, but due to a bug in its programming, it found its way into this cavern and mistook a central rock formation as an encasement of the generator that had to be cleared off.

This robot is not dangerous to characters unless they interfere with the operation of this "generator" - a defensive function programmed by the Star Devils primarily aimed at Volturnian life forms. The pirates are unaware this robot's plight, as its function was primarily precautionary and the generator has yet to fail.

SA74 Maintenance Robot	
Level	2
Type	Maintenance Robot
Body Type	Standard
Parabattery	Type 1
Move Mode	Limbs
Move Rate	10 m/turn
Limbs	2 arms, 2 legs
STA	100
RS/IM	35/4
Melee	50 for limbs
Ranged Weapons	-
Damage	1d10 punching
Programs	Attack/Defense, Maintenance
Equipment	None
Mission	Maintain operation of the thermal exchange generator; attack all creatures who interact with the generator unless authorized.
Definitions	Maintain generator – use limbs and built in tools to clean off thermal generator and keep all vents clear. Attack – pummel targets using limbs; do not damage generator during attack Authorized – creatures presenting the Star Devil patch, matching leader's profile

B5. Thermal Exchange Generator

Map Delta 11. The Backdoor.

the central computer.

Powering down the desert compound will cause two pirates to investigate. If the pirates lose contact with the base, the remaining pirates assume that an assault in is progress and head in to attack. Only half of the pirates will enter the caverns, with the other half and the pirate leader Thokalin remaining in the base. Without power, the pirates are unable to contact Slave City One for reinforcements.

DELTA SUBSECTION 12
ASSAULTING THE PIRATES

The desert compound is merely a way station for the pirates where they rest, recharge, and repair their vehicles, and hold Ul-Mor prisoners for transport to Slave City One. The desert compound took advantage of an older Ul-Mor temple to the "Forbidden Cult" that was abandoned after the Sathar drove a cultural revolution amongst the Ul-Mor to their engineered "Cult of the One". This abandoned temple has a thick mud wall separating the temple from the rest of the desert. All of the pirates' "buildings" in the compound are clearly old shipping crates welded together, excepting the prison cells that are prefabs taken from the Truane's Star base camp. Eight of the pirates here are low-level minions and are lead by Thokalin. Thokalin is a Yazirian who manages this facility to ensure timely deliveries of prisoners. Thokalin's reward for this service is that he was allowed to be biosculpted by the Edekesti-derived formula and has gained unusual powers (Chi Section).

Pirate tactics

If warned, the pirate defense will be intelligent and adaptive. Pirates will only be in the locations indicated in Table Delta 12 if the characters manage to enter the base without setting off any alarms. If the pirates are warned, they will initiate a defense that is highly fluid. The pirates will use buildings as cover as they move to engage the characters. If possible, they will use one or more pirate minions to lure the characters into an ambush between buildings or within one of the larger buildings with two entrances.

The pirates will attempt to defend the compound, but will not do so with their lives, if they can help it. If it is clear that the pirate's cause is lost or if Thokalin is captured or killed, the remaining pirates will either withdraw to the power generator (if the characters attack from the main gate) or to the

Part of this cavern drops off into a vast chasm from which heat radiates. At the edge of the precipice is a giant machine with pipes leading down into the chasm and out through an opening that appears to lead into daylight. The machine is illuminated and hums at a low level.

This machine is the mirror image of the stone sculpture in the cavern B4. Characters with the technician skill will recognize that this machine uses a heat differential to generate geothermal energy and will be able to modify the output of this generator to recharge both SEU clips and backpacks (10 SEU/round) with a successful *Operate machinery* check.

The pipe leading out of the caverns is the power line to the Star Devil desert compound. Disrupting the machine or destroying it (causing 150 structural points of damage, or only 15 structural points of damage to a specific part which can be identified if a technician succeeds in an *Operate machinery* check) will power down the compound, including the automated turrets and

desert (if the characters attack from the backdoor).

If the pirates are driven into the desert, they will attempt to assault the characters, though if the characters reprogram the turrets or release the quickdeaths, the pirates will meet their end without directly combating the characters.

If the pirates are in the caverns, they first sabotage the power generator and then either try to ambush the characters when the enter the caverns to repair them, or they will try to retake the compound if the characters leave or drop their guard.

Captured pirates

If the party is successful in capturing pirates, they can intimidate pirate minions to get information (automatic success except for Thokalin). The pirate minions know the following:

− The pirates have been tasked with capturing Ul-Mor for shipment and "processing" at Slave City One.

− Ul-Mor are desert nomads and fierce fighters, but only fight with archaic weaponry.

− Captured Ul-Mor need to be handled with gloves to prevent direct psychic communication made possible by touching them.

− The Star Devils have multiple ships in orbit and maintain one main base on the planet, Slave City One.

− The prefabs used as prison cells were recently "appropriated" from the remains of a Truane's Star outpost.

− A Vrusk was recently captured and transported to Slave City One; she (Itklikdil) was treated far more kindly than most of the pirates would have preferred to see.

Thokalin (Yazirian Male)			
Alpha Dawn Statistics			
STR/STA:	45/45	PS:	3
DEX/RS:	65/65	IM:	7
INT/LOG:	50/50	RW:	33
PER/LDR:	60/60	M:	33
PSA:	Military		
Skills:	Beam weapons, 4		
Zebulon's Guide Statistics			
STR/STA:	45/45	PS:	3
DEX/RS:	65/65	IM:	7
INT/LOG:	50/50	RW:	33
PER/LDR:	60/60	M:	33
Profession:	Enforcer		
Skills:	Beam weapons, 4		
Equipment:			
Weapons:	XXX		
Other:	Radio headset		
SA:	Biosculpted ability:		

Pirate Thug (Minion)			
Alpha Dawn Statistics			
STR/STA:	40/40	PS:	2
DEX/RS:	45/45	IM:	5
INT/LOG:	35/35	RW:	25
PER/LDR:	40/40	M:	25
PSA:	Military		

Skills:	Projectile weapons, 1		
Zebulon's Guide Statistics			
STR/STA:	40/40	PS:	2
DEX/RS:	45/45	IM:	5
INT/LOG:	35/35	RW:	25
PER/LDR:	40/40	M:	25
Profession:	Enforcer		
Skills:	Projectile weapons, 1		
Equipment:			
Weapons:	automatic rifle (20 rounds) knife		
Other:	radio headset		

Desert Compound (Map Delta 12)

C1. Automated Turret Defenses: Around the main wall of the compound are four metallic cylinders approximately Y meters apart rising from the ground. You do not see any movement along the compound wall.

The pirate's desert compound is surrounded by four gun turrets that scan for non-Star Devil intruders and open fire upon them when they reach xxx meters or closer. Originally these turrets were programmed to only attack non-Frontier species; however, after the Sathar assault on the Truane base camp, the turrets were reprogrammed.

If the characters are allied with the Ul-Mor, the Ul-Mor will warn the characters of the turrets before they reach the demarcation line.

Additionally, the referee should make a secret *Survival* subskill check (Alpha Dawn Rules) to notice that the unnatural stillness and partially buried (and uneaten) corpses of lopers and some shovel mouths before they enter the field of fire.

Each turret is a stationary level 2 security bot armed with twin laser rifle and powered via an underground line from the desert compound. These turrets can be deactivated if the thermal exchange generator in the caves (see cavern B5 in subsection 10) is destroyed.

The turrets can be reprogrammed individually by characters with the Robotics skill or they all can be reprogrammed simultaneously via the central computer (see room CY+4) with characters with the Computer skill. Accessing the turrets directly takes 1 round. Although the turret's guns cannot depress far enough to fire upon a character at this position, the character is in the field of fire of an adjacent turret.

| T47 Facility Defense Robot	
Level	2
Type	Combat Robot
Body Type	
Parabattery	None, power externally supplied
Move Mode	Limbs
Move Rate	0 m/turn
Limbs	None
STA	500
RS/IM	70/7
Melee	-
Ranged Weapons	50
Damage	2d10 per rifle
Programs	Attack/Defense
Equipment	Twin laser rifles
Mission	Attack all unauthorized creatures within XX meters.
Definitions	Attack – target closest creature with twin laser rifles Authorized – creatures presenting the Star Devil uniform or broadcasting passphrase on fixed frequency from pirate headset

C2. Main Gate: Large metal doors block the entry into the walled compound. These doors look like they were hatches scavenged from a large cargo ship and re-purposed for an entry here. Beside the large gate is a simple keypad.

The main gate is typically unguarded as the pirates rely upon the lock (level 2) and the automated turrets to keep out the animals and other sentients. The lock can be bypassed if characters are identified as Star Devil pirates (e.g. use of captured uniforms or a broadcast of the pass phrase on Star Devil headsets). If the pirates have been altered to the characters' presence, two of the pirates will be manning firing positions on either side of the gates (gaining the benefit of partial cover). These positions will be manned so long as the characters do not enter the base. Importantly, the pirates at the firing positions can fire on characters attempting to bypass the lock.

C3-C6. Prisons: The four prefabs stolen from the Truane's Star base camp, which will be clearly recognizable to the characters, have been taken here and are being used as cages for various prisoners. All of the prefabs are behind an electrified fence and were taken at the same time that Jameson brought Itklikdil to this camp. Characters can see into the prisons through glassteel windows.

C3. Ul-Mor scouting party (3). These Ul-Mor are weak and emaciated due to mistreatment by the Star Devil pirates. They will be extremely wary but non-aggressive towards the characters unless attacked. If the characters have not formed an alliance with the Ul-Mor, release of these scouts will open the door to an alliance if the characters are willing to submit to touch telepathy. See subsection 9 for details.

Emaciated Ul-Mor Raider			
Alpha Dawn Statistics			
MV:	Slow (30m)	STA:	10
RS:	30	IM:	3
RW:	30	M:	30
DM:	1d10, punch with random object		
SA:	None		
Zebulon's Guide Statistics			
MV:	Slow (30m)	STA:	10
RS:	30	IM:	3
RW:	30	M:	30
DM:	10		
SA:	None		

Map Delta 13. The Pirate Computer.
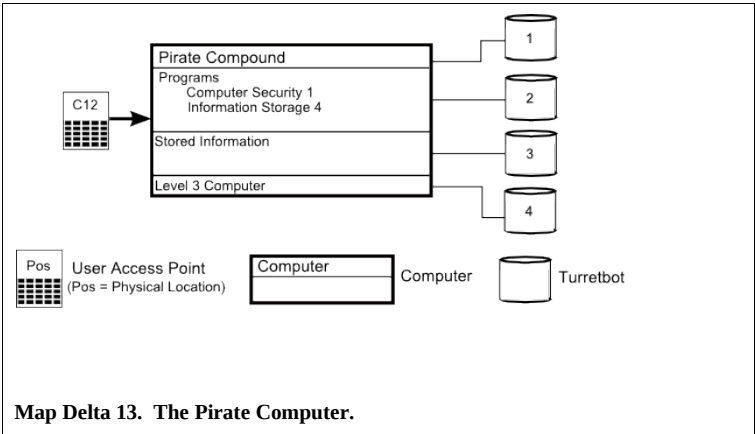
C4. Immature quickdeath (1). Within this prefab is what appears to be a scaly, tentacled cat, sporting multiple eyes on independent tentacles. The interior of the prefab is covered in claw marks from the animal's knife-length claws.

Immature Quickdeath			
Alpha Dawn Statistics			
MV:	Medium (60m)	STA:	90
RS:	75	IM:	8
RW:	60	M:	70
DM:	3d10 claws		
SA:	Second attack each round, either poison dart or bite: Poison dart S10/T3, treat as spear for range effects; Bite attacks second creature (1d10 damage)		
SD:	Immune to needer weapons; half damage from laser, proton, or projectile weapons		
Zebulon's Guide Statistics			
MV:	Medium (60m)	STA:	90
RS:	75	IM:	8
RW:	60	M:	70
DM:	30 claws		
SA:	Second attack each round, either poison dart or bite: Poison dart S10/T3, treat as spear for range effects; Bite attacks second creature (10 damage)		
SD:	Immune to needler weapons		

C5. Immature quickdeath (1). See C4.

C6. Empty. This hut does, however, have the scrapings from the Itklikdil's exoskeleton that can be genetically matched with the records that the characters were given.

C7. Damaged Vehicles: The explorer and jetcopter here are damaged and require extensive repairs, which is obvious even to characters without the Technician skill. The repairs are possible with supplies available in the storage hut (C9), but will take a few days to accomplish – long enough for the pirates to counterattack. For parties without a character who can repair the vehicle, the vehicle are fully functional but require a few days to recharge their parabatteries.

C8. Common Area: This hut serves as a multipurpose room for all living activities. It contains a galley-style kitchen. The kitchen is mostly used for reheating prepared meals stolen from Frontier ships, which can be deduced from the stamps on the meal packages. It also contains a dining area, which is a hodge-podge of mismatched tables and chairs, and an entertainment unit (the holovideo collection is many years out-of-date). Overall, this hut is well-lived in, poorly cleaned, and at night is infested with Volturnian sand bugs able to extract moisture and sustenance from the detritus here. Very little food is stored in the galley area – no more than a meal or two for the player characters.

C9. Storage Hut: This hut is a mixture of a recycling center and a storage area for the entire compound. All conceivable supplies, including spare parts for the power generator and the vehicles, can be found here (along with failed components that have yet to be disposed of). Ammo, explosives, captured equipment, and containers of food can all be found here.

C10. Water Tower: Gravity provides the pressure for running water in the desert compound. The water is hot during the day and stays warm during the night.

C11. Communications Hut: This hut contains the compound's radio equipment and the private quarters of Thokalin. The radio primarily receives static, unless a jetcopter or explorer is near to the compound, or a Star Devil starship attains an appropriate orbit. The private quarters of Thokalin also contain the compound's sole source of intoxicating liquids for humans, vrusks, dralasites, and yazirians. This is one of the mechanisms by which the pirate minions are kept in line.

C12. Command Computer: Information about Slave City One.

Itklikdil's journal entries which are available on the command computer:

"Analysis of the Volturnian lifeforms captured by Grod have lead to some interesting surprises. All of the lifeforms I've seen can be divided into two classes based on both genetics and morphology. One class are the radially-symmetric creatures that I'm calling radialarians, such as the whispering spikes and the funnel worm. The other are bilaterally symmetric creatures (bilaterians), such as the parasol trees and the lopers. Rather surprisingly, there is not fundamental division between the 'fauna' and the 'flora'. There are bilaterians and radialarians that are both motile and sessile and subsets of both of groups have adopted various forms of photosynthesis—possibly through symbiosis with unicellular organisms, but that will take additional work to sort out."

"The reason behind Jackson's familiarity with Volturnus is now clear. He has made accommodations with the 'Star Devils' – pirates that attack the Truane's Star shipping lanes and are rumored to have ties with the New Pale independence movement. These pirates have already established bases on Volturnus. Apparently Jackson arranged the entire mission to get his co-conspirators and me here."

"My Star Devil captors have forced me to analyze the creatures that they have been rounding up. What is clear is that the Ul-Mor, the Edekesti, and the quickdeaths do not use the same molecules for genetic information as all other Volturnian creatures and they do not even share the same genetic molecules each other. The simplest hypothesis is that each of these creatures was brought to Volturnus from different planets with different evolutionary histories. So who did it and why?"

C13. General Barracks:

DELTA SUBSECTION 13
THE PIRATE COMPUTER

Unlike other computer networks the characters encounter in this adventure, this network is simple. Only a single computer is responsible for running the entire pirate facility (Map Delta 13). Characters with computer skills could readily manipulate the Installation Defense program to either be inactivated, to attack all Star Devil pirates (as opposed to all non-Star Devil pirates), or to attack all non-characters. Reprogramming this computer will greatly increase the security of the facility against recapture by Star Devil pirates (if the characters defend it) and will reduce the Star Devil pirate presence at Slave City One when the characters reach it (reflecting the cost of attempts to retake the facility). Characters who abandon the desert compound without setting up automatic defenses against the Star Devils will return later to find that it has been repopulated with four armed pirates (and their jetcopter) who are on alert and have re-established power and the perimeter turret defense.

DELTA SUBSECTION 14
AFTERMATH

Due to the remoteness of the desert compound, there is only a 10% chance that a supply or capture mission will be sent via jetcopter from Slave City One. Thus, characters will be unlikely to draw the pirate's attention unless they actively seek it. More likely (30% chance per week), Ul-Mor tribesmen will have scouting parties approach the compound. This chance raises to 90% if the characters have actively befriended the Ul-Mor. The Ul-Mor will approach the camp and enter it, unless the automated defenses or the characters warn them off or attack them.

The characters can take the supplies from the Star Devil's desert compound and follow clues that they find there to Slave City One (see Epsilon section). From Slave City One, the characters will have the option of following advice from an Eorna to assault the Ul-Mor Pilgrim's End. If characters instead follow their Ul-Mor allies, the Ul-Mor will be suitably impressed with the characters and offer to let the characters join the tribe by taking them directly to compete at Pilgrim's End and gaining acceptance by the Edekesti priest (see Zeta section). If the characters take this route and run into the Sathar early, then the raids on Slave City One (see Epsilon section) can be presented as gathering a stockpile of supplies and weapons for use against the Sathar.

SLAVE CITY ONE

EPSILON SUBSECTION 1
SYNOPSIS

When characters reach Slave City One, they find the city under attack by a Kurabanda strike force lead by an Eorna advisor, Tolicha. The Eorna will attempt to recruit the characters to remove the Star Devil pirates from Slave City One. While in the City, the characters will discover the pirates' use of sentients on Volturnus for the development of biologically active compounds, the fate of two of Truane's Star mission members, and that the Sathar are behind much of what's going on Volturnus.

EPSILON SUBSECTION 2
RAILROADING CHARACTERS

Xxxx

EPSILON SUBSECTION 3
TRAVEL TO SLAVE CITY ONE

Slave City One is located over a mountain range and in the shard glass plains. Shard grass grows 1-3 meters high and characters attempting to walk through it take 1d10 points of damage per day of travel due to the sharp silica-edges of the grass and will require characters to use knives or machetes unless they follow roller paths.

Random encounters (characters on foot):

Roller path

Roller herd

Sky shrike flock

Shard glass mimicks

EPSILON SUBSECTION 4
BACKGROUND

Slave City One was founded by a faction of the Star Devils who are merely seeking freedom from the Pale government's domination of New Pale. Slave City One was constructed using two massive freighters captured by the pirates that were permanently landed on the surface of the planet. The freighter laying on its belly has been renamed the *Pheonix* (actually a controlled crash landing that created the gouge leading to Pheonix Lake) and the standing freighter has been renamed the *Clouddiver*. The engines of the ships are used to power the city. The pirates have been using this city as the central point for their efforts to extract pharmaceutical compounds from the Ul-Mor and the Edekesti and as a Starport to ferry men and material to Volturnus using shuttles from starships.

Slave City One is currently under attack by a band of Kurabanda being lead by their Eorna advisor, Tolicha. Tolicha plans to use this assault as both a way to train the Kurabanda before assaulting Sathar facilities (including Pilgrim's End, see Zeta section) as well as an opportunity to collect Frontier weapondry for his commandos. Tolicha is aware of the Sathar manipulation of the Ul-Mor and their introduction of the Ul-Mor, Kurabanda, and Edekesti to Volturnus and will share this information when he feels characters can be trusted.

Characters can respond to the current situation in a number of ways. First, they can join the Kurabanda and fight all pirates. Second, they can foment a division between the pirates and settlers and lead a Kurabanda/settler strike against the pirate leaders. Third, they can join the pirates and sweep the Kurabanda and Tolicha from the city. Fourth, they can try to impose peace – but whatever solution they come up with must be palatable to all sides, otherwise fighting will continue.

EPSILON SUBSECTION 5
SLAVE CITY ONE

External description. Within the perimeter fence are two starships: one lays on the ground—dug into the ground in something was probably a controlled crash-landing, the second is vertical. Behind the horizontal ship is a narrow lake. Neither ship is aerodynamic, and neither were ever intended to reach the surface of the planet. Several primitive bridges and a vast network of cables and conduits connect the two starcraft. Surrounding the ship is a maze of small buildings, constructed from a vast array of shipping containers and a large clear tent filled with greenery, reminiscent of a greenhouse. The ships and surrounding buildings are protected by a high wall, also constructed from debris welded to a scaffold made from pipes and metal struts. A single entrance is visible, and the doors are wide open. From the distance, the occasional sound of gun fire can be heard and several flocks of flying creatures circle above and dart down between the buildings.

C1. Entrance. Sign "Slave City One: The first city built by the slaves for themselves." This is the only ground entrance to the city. The rest of the reinforced wall was constructed to deter the frequent roller stampedes from damaging the city.

Exchange Hall. (Barter economy)

Saloon.

Individual Barracks.

Greenhouses for Frontier plants.

Water tower.

Food storage/Cafeteria.

Vehicle parts/maintenance.

Random vehicles: Forklife, hovercars (but very few groundcars).

Ul-Mor and Edekesti pens.

Foundry.

CX. The *Pheonix*. The *Pheonix*, currently the headquarters of the Eorna advisor Tolicha, is detailed below in subsection XY.

CX+1. Pheonix Lake. Some nasties from Volturnus.

CX+2. The *Clouddiver*. The *Clouddiver*, currently the last defense of the Star Devil Pirate leadership in the city, is detailed below in subsection YY.

EPSILON SUBSECTION 6
RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

None of these random encounters have a specific site in the city where they occur. Nor are any encounters required; however, the referee may wish to run them in the order indicated. Additionally, the referee might want to avoid giving the characters an opportunity to engage the Kurabanda in combat before the Tolicha's telepathic communication (subsection 7).

MAINTENANCE ROBOT. This is a high-end maintenance robot that looks like it came from an expensive cruise liner. Asks for clarifications of orders: "Define the monsters and clarify how they are to be kept away." The robot then turns its attention to debris on the road and attempts to tidy things up.

PIRATE CORPSES. Characters stumble upon pirate corpses (number, gender, and Frontier race is up to the referee). They have been killed by a variety of slash wounds, but there is nothing to indicate what attacked them. The pirates have holsters for weapons, but their weapons and any ammo they may have carried are gone.

OVERHEARD ATTACK. Characters hear automatic gun fire nearby. If they investigate, they arrive in time to see two holed up pirates be pulled down from behind. The characters will not be able see the attackers; however, they will briefly hear high pitched chittering and then silence. The pirates will be dead before the characters arrive. At least one of the pirates here will appear deformed (due to unfortunate side-effects of biosculpting by the Edekesti-derived drugs).

KURABANDA SCOUTS. First view of Kurabanda. Very fast – very fluid movement along rooftops that is a mixture of swinging, jumping, and gliding.

MISSILE STRIKES. Missiles launched from hand-held launchers are fired from the *Clouddiver*. Most strike the *Pheonix*, but many....

EXPLORER STRIKE FORCE. Explorers travel down the roads, shooting down Kurabanda and cause as much or more damage to the city. PCs are not targeted unless they ally with the Kurabanda and there was a reasonable chance they were recognized and reported as assaulting pirates. However, the explorer fires randomly at characters not taking cover risk being hit.

Explorer (standard from Alpha Dawn rules, has machine gun mount). Two pirate minions (driver & gunman).

SKY SHRIKE ATTCKS.

DEFENSIVE ROBOTS. These robots have been gathered to aid the pirates against the Kurabanda. The fighting has moved on, but the hastily programmed robots still patrol the pre-programmed "defensive corridor". Unfortuantely for the characters, the "enemy" was simply defined as sentients approaching from the character's direction and they attack once the characters enter the pre-defined corridor region.

HOVERCAR SNIPERS.

EPSILON SUBSECTION 7
PSYCHIC MISSIVE

Once charactes have entered the city, they will be contacted telepathically by Tolicha, the Eorna advisor for the Kurabanda assault on the City. *"Seekers and potential allies, I am Tolicha"* -- characters see an image of an Eorna in their minds -- *"I seek a mutually beneficial alliance. My forces"* -- characters see images of the Kurabanda strike force -- *"will allow you pass unharmed. Please join me"* -- characters see the *Pheonix* -- *"where we can talk in earnest."*

Tolicha's request is in earnest. Whether the characters choose to follow this request is entirely up to them. At this point, the characters can side with the remaining pirates and sweep the Kurabanda from the city. This event is described in subsection XX "Switching Sides" below.

EPSILON SUBSECTION 8
THE FIREFIGHT

The PCs come upon a firefight between the Star Devil pirates holed up in a former bar built from shipping crates and a group of Kurabanda. The pirates are firing unsuccessfully at ten rapidly moving Kurabanda that are bouncing between the walls surrounding the buildings. The Kurabanda, for their part, fire back rarely, content to let the pirates run out of ammo.

If the PCs don't hide, the pirates on the inside call for help. The Kurabanda will not attack the characters unless attacked first, but do not expect them to get involved. If the PCs do side with Kurabanda (or an oppose them), the news will spread rapidly via Tolicha and affect all future encounters. If the PCs save the pirates or capture them, they can glean several facts:

- Not all "pirates" support the illegal activities going on here. Some are just settlers hoping to claim a home away from the "repression" of the Truane government at Pale.

- The leaders of the pirates have been cutoff from the rest of the city and are in the *Clouddiver*.

- The pirates retain a substantial orbital force who are unwilling to aid the "ground pounders" at Slave City One.

- Only the upper echelon officially get across to the psychic and

biosculpting drugs extracted here – the rest are sold off-world to raise money for the pirates. There is also an underground trade in the drugs within Slave City One as well.

- Many settlers are angry about the drug trade and the killing of sentients, but dare not rebel against the pirate leadership.

EPSILON SUBSECTION 9
THE *PHEONIX*

Xxxx

ITKLIKDIL'S BODY. Regardless of the characters' willingness to join Tolicha, he does bring them to Itklikdil's remains as he is aware of their mission from having read their minds. Tolicha explains that Itklikdil was killed by the Kurabanda, but that it was a tragedy – the Kurabanda believed that she was a Star Devil and not a prisoner. Itklikdil's PDA has all of her previous reports (see Delta section) as well as one final entry.

"Jackson has assured me that my assistance will allow the pirates to extract the drugs without organ harvesting the Ul-Mor and the Edekesti. But even if I can figure out how to do it, these sentients will be little more than cattle the pirates' pharmaceutical farm. What's become clear to me is that the leaders among the pirates don't care if I succeed or not. My presence is being announced to heal a split between the settler and drug supplier factions within the Star Devils. Jackson is either an excellent liar or an ideological fool. I will confront him later to find out which."

MEETING WITH TOLICHA. Four Kurabanda guards armed with "liberated" autorifle will meet the character and the entrance to the Pheonix. If the characters have previously taken side against the Kurabanda, only one will be visible and the others will be prepared with doze grenades and electrostunners (as Tolicha hopes to win the characters over). Captured, unconscious or cooperative characters will be taken to the secondary extraction room to meet with Tolicha.

THE PROPOSAL. Tolicha explains that the pirates are solely a training run and a weapons gathering mission for the Kurabanda in preparation for rooting out the Sathar from Volturnus.

If Tolicha is asked to defend his raid on Slave City One:

- Pirates have slaughtered many sentient Ul-Mor, Edekesti, and even Kurabanda were killed in the pirates' attempt to extract drugs.

- Pirates have weapons but no will to fight the real enemy. The Kurabanda

have the will but no weapons. Slave City One is a useful stockpile.

- When the true enemy is done on Volturnus, they will slaughter innocents in other systems as well. Volturnus is only a staging ground.

TO THE CLOUDDRIVER. Characters leaving the Pheonix will be fired on by the gyrojet gunners in the Clouddiver. Unless the characters have made efforts to contact and convince the pirates of their peaceful intentions, the characters will have to make their way to the Clouddiver under fire. If characters successfully cross ½ the distance, Clouddive snipers (pirate minions) and Clouddiver motorcycle gang. The characters may wish to recruit the Kurabanda as a distractionary force.

EPSILON SUBSECTION 10
THE *CLOUDDIVER*

Xxxx

EPSILON SUBSECTION 11
AFTERMATH

If the characters have defeated the Star Devil pirate leaders, Tolicha will then try to recruit them to lead an assault against the Sathar genetics facility at Pilgrim's End (Zeta section). He will explain the Sathar presence on Volturnus and will appeal to their desire to defend their homes or their desire to enrich themselves to recruit them. If the characters refuse or if they have turned against him and the Kurabanda, then he (or his Kurabanda lieutenants) will lead the surviving forces against the facility at a later date with Star Devil (e.g. Frontier) weaponry, which will lay the groundwork for the Sathar nuclear strikes (Eta section).

If the characters have allied with the pirates, the Star Devils will try to recruit the characters to raid Pilgrim's End, thinking that it is only a place where the Ul-Mor gather with the Edekesti and not a Sathar facility. The pirates will attempt to use the possibility of rescuing Grod and Geeko-Sur-Mang or giving them passage off of Volturnus as motivation.

In the wreckage of the city after the battle, characters will be able to find substantial amounts of equipment, if they are so inclined. Melee weapons, ranged weapons, ammo, food, medicine, and other standard equipment can be found if the characters are willing to go through supply sheds and homes of dead pirates. Regardless of who the characters sided with, the victors will not prevent characters from reequipping themselves.

PILGRIM'S END

ZETA SUBSECTION 1
SYNOPSIS

Characters travel to Pilgrim's End and either win the trial or invade the hidden Sathar Genetics Facility. In the facility, the characters will discover that the Sathar are on Volturnus, manipulating the Ul-Mor and the Kurabanda using their Edekesti genetechs. The Ul-Mor are being used as drivers and pilots of Sathar armor and aircraft units, and the Kurabanda are being trained as raiders. The characters will also discover both Grod and Geeko-Sur-Mang, who are being held as captives of the Sathar and who can reveal many details about the Star Devil pirates on Volturnus and beg to be returned to Slave City One.

ZETA SUBSECTION 2
RAILROADING CHARACTERS

Xxxx

ZETA SUBSECTION 3
TRAVEL TO PILGRIM'S END

Pilgrim's End is in the Volturnian desert, so random encounters should be the same as in Delta Section.

ZETA SUBSECTION 4
BACKGROUND

Pilgrim's End is the ultimate religious shrine for the Ul-Mor who worship "the One." Worship of "the One" is essentially a Sathar-constructed religion that was constructed for their purposes after stamping out the Ul-Mor's native religion, of which the only remainder is the destroyed temple taken over by the Star Devil pirates as their desert compound. Ul-Mor champions, which are the fittest of the genetically unstable Ul-Mor that the Sathar's Edekesti genetechs have released "into the wild", have a programmed compulsion to return to Pilgrim's End. The champions, typically watched by their tribes, are then allowed to compete in a final battle against a quickdeath in an arena-setting. Survivors are brought to a central spire which hides an elevator into a Sathar Genetics Facility operated by their Edekesti genetechs who also double as priests for the Ul-Mor's "the One" religion. Ul-Mor who enter the Genetics Facility are used for experimental purposes or as pilots for Sathar armor and aircraft. Their tribes leave Pilgrim's End with a psychically-reinforced believe that their champions have left for a "better place."

ZETA SUBSECTION 5
THE AMPHITHEATER

AMPHITHEATER SEATING. Seating for the amphitheater is constructed from roughly-hewn rock that encircles the entire arena, but is beneath the Priest Outlook and has no direct access (though characters with climbing skills and ropes could reach that platform). During a typical test, the amphitheater is only partially filled by Ul-Mor and their loper mounts; however, on special religious occasions, multiple tribes will fill all of the stands.

BLOCKED ENTRANCE. During a trial, the entrance to the arena is blocked with a mesh-work constructed from whispering spikes to prevent the Ul-Mor and the quickdeaths from escaping. Characters can easily climb over this mesh-work (3 meters high), though during a trial Ul-Mor stationed outside of entrance will use spears to prevent the escape of individuals involved in the ceremony.

PRIEST'S OVERLOOK. During a trial,

CENTRAL SPIRE. The Spire reaches up

XX meters and is wrapped by a circular staircase leading to a metallic door at the top. A simple pressure-sensitive panel opens the door to an elevator that travels underneath the ground beneath the arena. Decorating the staircase are Ul-Mor offerings of Eorna crystal fragments, some of which are still radioactive, and some of which are partially powered and glow faintly.

ZETA SUBSECTION 6
THE TRIAL

The characters can come to Pilgrim's End either as guests of befriended Ul-Mor (see Delta Section) or as part of a raid by Tolicha's Kurabanda commandos or the Star Devils (see Epsilon Section).

If the characters are guests of the Ul-Mor, they will be treated as champions and will join Ul-Mor tribesmen in a trial against quickdeath. The Ul-Mor use their own weapons during the battle and see no shame in allowing the characters to use their own weapons. Two Ul-Mor raiders and the characters will face down three quickdeaths. Assume that the Ul-Mor raiders are successful in killing one of the quickdeaths, but only one survives to help the characters with the final two. Victors will be encouraged by the Edekesti to enter the central spire, where they plan to capture the characters.

If the characters are part of the Kurabanda raid, the Kurabanda and characters arrive in time to watch five Ul-Mor champions fight against two quickdeaths and see the single survivor enter the central spire as the reward.

Ul-Mor Raider			
Alpha Dawn Statistics			
MV:	Slow (30m)	STA:	40
RS:	50	IM:	5
RW:	45	M:	45
DM:	2d10/spear, 2 spears each		
SA:	Multiple attacks per round with multiple spears		
Zebulon's Guide Statistics			
MV:	Slow (30m)	STA:	40
RS:	50	IM:	5
RW:	45	M:	45
DM:	20/spear, 2 spear each		
SA:	Multiple attacks per round with multiple spears		
Quickdeath			
Alpha Dawn Statistics			
MV:	Very Fast (120m)	STA:	180
RS:	75	IM:	8
RW:	60	M:	70
DM:	6d10 claws		
SA:	Second attack each round, either poison dart or bite: Poison dart S10/T3, treat as spear for range effects; Grapple with tentacles and bite attacks second creature (10 points damage/turn)		
SD:	Immune to needer weapons; half damage from laser, proton, or projectile weapons		
Zebulon's Guide Statistics			
MV:	Very Fast (120m)	STA:	180
RS:	75	IM:	8
RW:	60	M:	70
DM:	60 claws		

SA:	Second attack each round, either poison dart or bite: Poison dart S10/T3, treat as spear for range effects; Grapple with tentacles and bite attacks second creature (10 points damage/turn)
SD:	Immune to needer weapons; half damage from laser, proton, or projectile weapons

ZETA SUBSECTION 7
USING EDEKESTI TECH

ZETA SUBSECTION 8
INTERFACING WITH SATHAR TECH

ZETA SUBSECTION 9
THE GENETICS FACILITY

The genetics facility is functionally divided int two main sections. The first section is the domain of the Edekesti and al of the interfaces (such as door controls and computer consoles) are specialized to them. The second section is where the Sathar overseers spend most of their time. These areas are populated primarily by cyboslaved Eorna, Ul-Mor, and Kurabanda.

G1. RECEPTION ROOM. An imposing squat and multilimbed statue that appears to merge the physical features of the Ul-Mor and the Edekesti looms over this room. The statue broadcasts a continuous, deep hum (which is purely ambiance for the Ul-Mor). Unless the characters can deactivate the sensors (level 4 due to alien technology) in a round, a white gas is automatically released into the room.

This is the typical reception for the Ul-Mor and the released gas will render any Ul-Mor accompanying the characters unconscious, but will have no affect on any other species. Two rounds after the gas is released, the doors leading to the monorail will unkock (level 4 due to alien technology), and three cyboslaved Eorna will enter to carry off the unconscious Ul-Mor and to stun any who have resisted the attack. If characters have participated in a trial, there will be six cyboslaved Eorna. [Have Electrostunner-equivalent attack]

G2. UNDERGROUND MONORAIL TERMINAL

Breeding experiments and cyberslave modifications.

SATHAR NUCLEAR STRIKE

ETA SUBSECTION 1
SYNOPSIS

In response to the characters' attack on Pilgrim's End, the Sathar initiate an orbital nuclear strike against key settlements known to be associated either with the Star Devils, whom they blame, or the Eorna, who they suspect have been providing information. This includes several key facilities currently controlled by the Mechanons. This event initiates the Sathar ground assault that will

ETA SUBSECTION 2
RAILROADING CHARACTERS

The events of this section are triggered by an attack on Pilgrim's End by invaders using Frontier weapons. If characters have avoided attacking and are unlikely to do so, the strike is initiated in response to an assault by Kurabanda using weapons captured during their raid on Slave City One.

ETA SUBSECTION 3
SATHAR ORBITAL STRIKE

The attack on Pilgrim's End by Frontier weaponry leads the militant faction of the Sathar to convince their leaders that the presence of Frontier pirates and surviving Eorna is too dangerous for their long term goal. Sathar ships move into orbit and fire nuclear warheads at the Truane Star's Base Camp, the Pirate Desert Compound, Slave City One, and several Eorna facilities that the players have not visited. Importantly, Pilgrim's End and other Sathar installations are not targeted. This attack is an attempt to "sterilize the infestation" not to remove evidence of the Sathar on Volturnus.

Characters must not be at any of the eliminated sites during the attack. This is best accomplished by initiating the strike when the characters are returning either to Slave City One or the Pirate Desert Compound. Additionally, referees can rule that several unvisited Eorna and Mechanon facilities are close enough to the character's location so that characters can see multiple mushroom clouds rise from the nuclear strikes. Characters in vehicles must deal with the resulting electromagnetic pulse that will temporarily halt the motors of jetcopters (forcing a piloting check to restart them before crashing) or other vehicle.

The characters can respond to this event as they wish; however, equipment left at any of the target sites will be eliminated. If the characters have befriended the Ul-Mor, the Kurabanda (and their Eorna advisor Tolicha), or have contact with surviving Star Devil pirates (in their spaceships), they can

get reports of varying qualities indicating that many sites have been destroyed. Both the Eorna advisor and the Star Devil pirates will know that the Sathar are behind the assault.

ETA SUBSECTION 4
SPACE BATTLE

In addition to the initial nuclear strike, the Sathar fleet moves to start attacks on the Star Devil ships in the system. Characters with access to Star Devil communications equipment will get a running commentary on the battle. This battle will extend for quite a while, as the Star Devils are canny opponents who will be using the asteroid belts in the system for hiding and to launch sneak attacks at the larger and more powerful Sathar fleet.

ETA SUBSECTION 5
GROUND FORCES

The Sathar who want to see how their newly trained forces will do in combat start releasing squads of varying sizes throughout Volturnus to conduct assaults on surviving Ul-Mor and Kurabanda villages. In addition, these forces will begin to target the Mechanons once they arise from their inactivity (see Theta section). These various types of squads will be encountered by the players randomly, although if they are traveling by vehicle, they will be attract additional attention. These ground forces will be more important later in the Battle of Volturnus (see XXXX Section).

Typical Ground Infantry Squad:

Typical

ETA SUBSECTION 6
AFTERMATH

In many way, the characters' plight is similar to when they crashed on Volturnus. In order to run the rest of the campaign, the referee ought to discern the characters' primary motivation and use that. By default, the remaining section assume that the characters are allied with various factions on Volturnus and/or seek to defeat the Sathar. If characters are, in contrast, motivated purely by self-preservation, then the plot can center upon the characters' attempts to get back to the Frontier – such as by raiding the Mechanon Mounds to radio the Star Devil orbital forces who will only aid the characters if the Sathar ion cannon is knocked out all in the background of a brewing war of Sathars and their proxies against the Mechanons, Kurabanda, and Ul-Mor.

RISE OF THE MECHANONS

THETA SUBSECTION 1
SYNOPSIS

The Sathar nuclear strike included several key facilities currently controlled by the Mechanons. As the Mechanons cannot directly attack the Sathar, they move out to eliminate all of the life forms on Volturnus that might prompt future Sathar targets. Given sufficient time, the Mechanons can accomplish their goal, and the characters must travel to the Mechanon Mounds to confront the Mechanon nobles and convince them to abandon this route or to eliminate them all together.

THETA SUBSECTION 2
RAILROADING CHARACTERS

The events of this section are triggered by an attack on Pilgrim's End by invaders using Frontier weapons. If characters have avoided attacking and are unlikely to do so, the strike is initiated in response to an assault by Kurabanda using weapons captured during their raid on Slave City One. The site of the Mechanon Mounds is entirely up to the referee. One convenient site will be where the characters are after the nuclear strikes....

THETA SUBSECTION 3
INTERFACING WITH MECHANON TECH

Unlike their Eorna creators, the Mechanons are not gifted with psychic abilities, hence their technology is driven primarily by direct interface between the sentient robots and access ports. Attempts by the characters to interface in general with the Mechanon technology requires use of a computer to make the interface, such as a bodycomp. The characters can, of course, attempt to bypass the standard interface using Techkit or Robcomkit tools.

Note that Mechanons

THETA SUBSECTION 4
MECHANON DRAGOONS

Characters can observe the Mechanons attacking ally.

ETA SUBSECTION 5
THE KURABANDAS' PLEA

Regardless of the character's actions at Slave City One, Tolicha (if he survives) and the Kurabanda are under attack from the Sathar ground forces at their home in the Bachanda trees in the swamplands. They will be contacted telepathically (by Tolicha) and/or by radio (by the Kurabanda leader).

THETA SUBSECTION 6
YERNOID CAMPS

THETA SUBSECTION 7

THE MECHANON MOUNDS

EPSILON SUBSECTION X
ALLYING WITH THE PIRATES

Given the problems the characters have had with the pirates, their first inclination might not be to ally with the pirates. The Star Devils, however, have several factions. Those members who are predominantly searching for a new life free from the Pale government might be convinced to aid the characters. Even if the pirates on Volturnus are killed, the pirates do have ships in orbit, and characters might be able to negotiate with the forces in space. Their willingness to ally with the characters will be much greater, if it is clear that the Sathar, a greater threat, are present in the Volturnus system, and will be at its highest level immediately after the Sathar nuclear strike (Section Eta).

BATTLE FOR VOLTURNUS

IOTA SUBSECTION 1
SYNOPSIS

Characters are engaged in missions to aid their allies against the Sathar ground forces. Each successful mission accumulates victory points for the anti-Sathar forces. (The referee should keep track of victory points even if the characters attempt to stay out of the battle in order to track the background events happening around the characters.)

THETA SUBSECTION 2
RAILROADING CHARACTERS

The ….

THETA SUBSECTION 3
INITIAL VICTORY POINTS

Characters allied with Ul-Mor +5

Characters allied with Kurabanda +5

Characters allied with both Ul-Mor and Kurabanda +20

Tolicha is still alive +5

Mechanons are still executing their pogrom -20

Mechanons are allies +20

THETA SUBSECTION 4
MISSION: RECRUIT STAR DEVILS

Crashed ship from space battle. Characters can contact Cmd XXX. If allied, Star Devils will help stop some aerial assaults, but will need ion cannon destroyed. Star Devil Allied +5; Star Devil Allied and Ion Cannot

destroyed +20.

THETA SUBSECTION 5
MISSION: DESTROY ION CANNON

Hooks: Star Devil or Mechanon allies will request characters destroy the Sathar mountaintop ion cannon. This will allow them to support ground
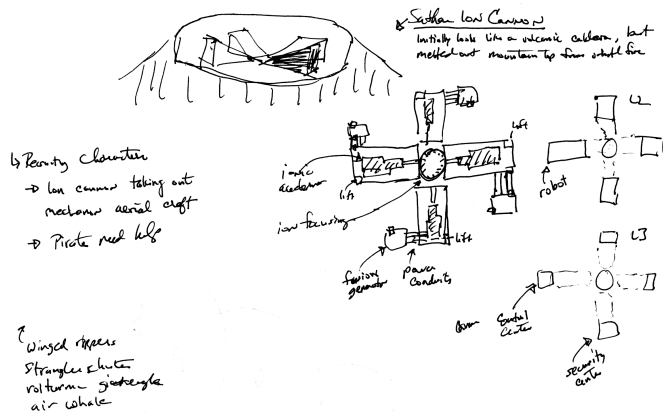
forces (and, if the characters have arranged transportation with the Star Devils, will allow the characters to leave Volturnus).

THETA SUBSECTION 6
MISSION: STOP TELEPATHIC BROADCAST

Hooks: The Ul-Mor tank drivers are controlled by the Sathar using psychic....

NEW ABILITY AND SKILL USE

COMPUTER NETWORK INFILTRATION

Networks of different computers can can be infiltrated and studied by characters with the appropriate skills. Unlike the assumptions in the Alpha Dawn Rules, the ubiquity of personal computers and networking provides insight into how future systems might look. The process involves entry into a computer in the network, identification of network connections, and entry into the adjacent network computers. Once the security for a computer is defeated, characters can investigate both the network connections for the computer as well as the programs and information stored on it.

Alpha Dawn Rules:

Investigation of each computer requires the use of three computer subskills in this order: *Operate Computer, Defeat Security, List Information.* Thus, three most important pieces of information about a particular computer on the network are: the computer level, the security program level, and the computer network connections including connections to physical terminals and wireless connections. All computer network maps provide these key pieces of information.

List information provides not only the programs on the computer, the information currently stored, and the current (and former) connections between this computer and other computers as well as any physical terminals for accessing the computer. Note that the network information is virtual and does not provide the physical location of any computer or terminal (unless such information is specifically stored in a file on that computer). Once a character can operate the computer and list its information, the character can infiltrate the next computer in the network by repeating the above procedure.

Of course, once characters can *Defeat Security*, they can do far more than simply list information. For example, they can add/delete/change information as well as affect the programs and functioning of the computer, but these subskills are the same as described in the Alpha Dawn rulebook. Note that *Bypass Security* requires physical rewiring of the computer and is not appropriate for hacking into a network.

IDENTIFICATION OF TRACE GENETIC MATERIAL

Given a trace biological sample, such as bodily fluids, skin cells (or the equivalent), characters can identify a match for these genetic materials given the appropriate skills, a medkit, and the genetic information to be matched (either another biological sample or genetic records). This allows characters who are typically constrained to the roles of "medics" to also do "crime scene investigation".

Alpha Dawn Rules:

The key medical subskill is *Diagnosis*, and with a medkit and genetic information to be matched, a successful *Diagnosis* subskill check is sufficient to determine whether or not a sample genetic belongs to the same individual as the genetic information to be matched. Failure indicates that the trace biological material being used is degraded in some way to make it inappropriate for analysis. A subsequent check can be performed if new trace biological material is available. A second *Diagnosis* subskill check would be required to identify if the trace genetic evidence is related to, but not identical with the genetic information to be matched.

Zebulon Guide **Rules:**

The key skill for identifying trace genetic material is *Medical Diagnosis*; however, everything else is identical to the *Alpha Dawn* rules.

NEW RULES

CHI SUBSECTION 1
BIOSCULPTING

The rules given here for handling biosculpting through exposure to Edekesti extracts are deliberately kept vague as only NPCs have access to biosculpting and the introduction of biosculpting to the Frontier could be disruptive to an ongoing campaign. In general, the abilities gained by biosculpting should not be substantially more useful than what can be performed by weapons and equipment already available to the characters. In addition, a per encounter or per day limit on the abilities are also appropriate. The fan-generated *Gamma Dawn* merging of the *Gamma World* rules for mutations into *Star Frontiers* can be used as a source of inspiration for biosculpting abilities and defects. Similarly, biosculpting might also be an intriguing plot device to introduce mentalists into a campaign. As a future plot device, biosculpting might become important for various military groups, including mercenaries, planetary defense militias, or even the UPF. The distasteful practice of distillation of Edekesti almost certainly ensures that biosculpting would remain a "need-to-know" military secret, could spell the end of the freedom of all Edekesti on Volturnus, and might lead to missions to locate the Edekesti homeworld.

Without an Edekesti directing the modifications, biosculpting process is inherently error-prone and specific results cannot be guaranteed. Typically, although not inevitably, biosculpting also leads to noticeable deformation of the subject (the level of the deformation is left to the referee's discretion and its usefulness for any particular plot). Moreover, there is no guarantee that biosculpting subjects will gain a useful power; many of the Slave City One pirates suffer from unsuccessful and deformation-generating biosculpting procedures. Slave City One also lacked the appropriate resources to perform plastic surgery to hide some of the more unpleasant deformations as well.

CHI SUBSECTION 2
CYBOSLAVES

Sathar frequently create cybernetic slaves, or cyboslaves, from captured intelligent species, such as Yernoids, Eorna, Ul-Mor, Kurabanda, or even Frontier races. These cyboslaves retain the intelligence and abilities of their previous selves, but lack the appropriate will to stand up to the Sathar. Cyboslaves are superior to robots in the sense that they can adapt to new circumstances that might differ from their original instructions. Cyboslaves must also be distinguished from cybernetically modified creatures using non-intelligent creatures as their base, such as cybodragons. These other creatures are much more similar to robots in that the programming of the cybernetic controlling device combined with the instinctual response of the animals create responses that are substantially less adaptive to changing circumstances. Cybodragons are useful when carefully controlled on the battlefield, whereas Ul-Mor cyboslaves are useful as vehicle drivers and Kurabanda cyboslaves can be trusted to serve as independent deep-strike commandos. Mechanistically, cyboslave is a creature template that can be applied to almost any intelligent base creature. The effects of the cyboslave template are to..

CHI SUBECTION 3
## SWARMS

asdfsdf

ALIEN CREATURE UPDATE

PSI SUBSECTION 1
DESERT ECOLOGY

Sessile organisms. As on other planets, photosynthesizing sessile life form the basis for which other life survives in the desert. The major types of sessile lifeforms in the desert are the whispering spines (radiolaterian) and the parasol trees (bilaterian).   Both of these sessile organisms are concentrated in the rocky zones and are infrequent or rare in regions dominated by sand dunes.
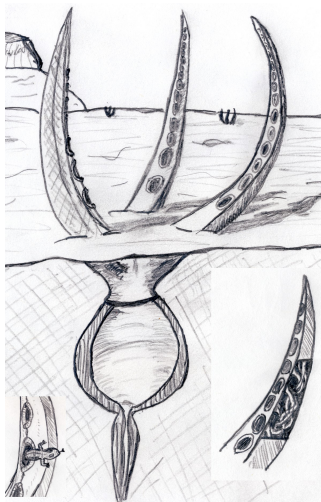
Whispering spines.   Whispering spines collect air through multiple openings in their spines and push the air via an underground air bladder into a root that reaches deep underground. A combination of the large temperature difference with special water-absorbing tissues allows it to extract tiny amounts of moisture from the atmosphere.   The sound of air being forced into and out of the root has an airy sound that is reminiscent of whispering. Whispering spines are a fairly reliable source of water. Lopers are known to feed fairly exclusively on them; however, whispering spines are also hosts for a small symbiotic lizard-like species called agrifangs. The agrifangs (bilaterian) extract some of the moisture and food that the whispering spines make and in return swarm and attack animals that come to feed off of the spines.   The presence of agrifangs has effectively prevented lopers from completely eliminating whispering spines from large sections of the desert.
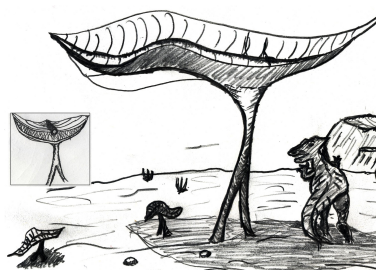
Parasol trees. Parasol trees take a novel strategy for desert survival.   During the winter months, parasol trees grow a huge leaf-like structure supported on a split stalk that provides shade.   This "leaf" dries up and dies during the summer, but remains standing and continues to provide a shaded resting place for many of the animals of the desert. The concentration of their eliminations provides both moisture and nitrogen to the underground portion of the tree that survives during the hot and dry summers. During the day, animals can frequently be found clustered around parasol trees. Some loper herds, for example, are quite territorial and will protect specific trees that they have claimed. Other unclaimed parasol trees, however, are dug up and eaten by loper herds.

Parasol trees occasionally host mite swarms (radialaterian), which either consume or become parasites on other larger organisms.

Motile organisms.   The primary large herbivore of the desert, the loper (bilaterian), is the most important prey animal, and the sand shark (bilaterian) is the most important predator. Sand sharks predominantly hunt at the sandy dunes and at the edges of the rocky regions where the lopers use the whispering spines and parasol trees for food, water, and shade. Other motile organisms also play important roles in the desert ecology. Shovelmouths (bilaterians) are small herbivores that are mostly nocturnal and tend to build nests in caves and other darkened holes to await the night. The burrower "snake" (radialaterian) is a hunter that uses poison to kill its prey so that it can track down and consume it at its leisure. The funnel worms (radialaterian) lie in wait and trap and consume any motile organisms that fall into their gullet.

PSI SUBSECTION 2
SHARD GRASS ECOLOGY

Sessile organisms.   The predominant sessile organism in the shard grass plains is the shard grass (radialaterian) itself.

Shard grass. Shard grass grows 1-3 meters high and characters attempting to walk through it take 1d10 points of damage per day of travel due to the sharp silica-edges of the grass and will require characters to use knives or machetes unless they follow roller paths.

Shard grass mimicks. Shard grass mimicks are a semi-sessile parasite for the rollers. The mimicks resemble stalks of the shard grass that are 0.5-1 meters in length and frequently chew off and "replace" the end of a shard grass stalk. The mimicks are readily observed if they are being looked for due to the discoloration of the shard grass end and the bulge of the "hold-tight" head keeping the mimic on the shard grass stalk.   Shard grass mimicks will bury their head into exposed flesh (1d10 damage). If the mimic is removed, it causes an additional 1d10 damage unless a successful surgery skill check is made.

Motile organisms.   The major large motile organism of the shard grass is the herbivore known as the roller (bilaterian). The roller's ability to thrive in the shard grass itself is fairly unique, and the major roller predators are the flocks of sky shrikes (bilaterians) that use flight to avoid the problems of travel within the shard grass. There are a number of smaller animals that hide amongst and have predator/prey relationships in the shard grass, but these smaller motile organisms are no more a problem for the PCs than the average insects and spiders are on Earth.

Rollers. Herds of rollers tend to fire sharp shard grass hulls upwards at a fairly continuous basis, so that the positions of the herd can often be detected by the plumes of hulls falling from the sky even when the shard

grass is too tall to see the actual rollers.

Sky shrikes. The sky shrikes are the primary predators and scavengers of the rollers use flight to overcome the problems of travel in the shard grass. Sky shrikes hunt in flocks (packs) and typically search out wounded or dead rollers. Sky shrikes are also the principle hunters of the rollers, which explains the evolution of the roller's ability to fire the sharp shard grass hull skyward.

PSI SUBSECTION 3
BACHANDA ECOLOGY

Sessile organisms. The predominant sessile organism in the Bachanda swamp is the Bachanda tree (radialaterian) itself. The swamp is filled with numerous sessile organisms that are both aquatic and terrestial.

Bachanda tree. The roots of the Bachanda tree extend deep into the ground beneath the water to support their extensive branch networks. The Bachanda tree is critical for the non-aquatic creatures in the swamp and its shade helps prevent moisture loss through evaporation and is hence critical for the aquatic creatures as well.

Motile organisms. Several important aquatic predators

DESIGN NOTES

OMEGA SUBSECTION 1
THE ORIGINAL TRILOGY

The published background to the Volturnus trilogy was that the Volturnus is the homeworld of the Eorna, a dinosaur-like race that developed a technology based on crystal manipulation. As exploration and colonization ships left the planet, they ran into the Sathar who overwhelmed them with their advanced technology. The Sathar then attempted a systematic genocide, which almost succeeded, and left the system after establishing an artifact that would signal the Sathar if intersteller vessels once again roamed the system. The defeated and depopulated Eorna, struggling against a depleted genepool, sought to manipulate other races and raise them to intelligence (the Ul-Mor, the Kurabanda, and the Edesteki) in order to maintain a legacy that might one day challenge the Sathar. (Another potential race with a small role in the modules, but potentially part of the Eorna legacy either as being raised to intelligence or possibly a degenerate form of the Eorna are the reptilian Yernoids.) The emergence of the Mechanons, from the evolution of Eorna-constructed robots was an independent development. This was the current situation when Volturnus was discovered by the Star Devil pirates and who attempted to defend it against official investigations from the government of Truane's Star.

The adventure proceeded through three adventures: SFAD0 *Crash on Volturnus* (in the Alpha Dawn Rule set), SFAD1 *Volturnus, Planet of Mystery*, and SFAD2 *Starspawn of Volturnus*.

Crash on Volturnus opened with the Star Devil pirates hijacking the Serena Dawn and forcing the characters to crash land in the desert of Volturnus after the Serena Dawn is destroyed. In the desert, the characters are rescued from death by meeting with the Ul-Mor. The Ul-Mor lead the characters into the Forbidden Caverns where they become separated after a rock slide. Characters passing through the caverns are able to fight a quickdeath and join the Ul-Mor tribe to find the next plot hook for SFAD1.

Volturnus, Planet of Mystery picks up with the characters traveling to the Kurabanda and allowing them to aid the Kurabanda against the Star Devils. They raid a pirate outpost and start an assault on Slave City One, freeing the enslaved Edesteki. They investigate the ruins of Volkus (actually only the outer regions containing the insane Eorna), and are then lead to the Sathar artifact that signals that the Sathar need to return to attack Volturnus.

Starspawn of Volturnus concludes the series with a war between the races of Volturnus and the Sathar invaders. Each of the native races, the Mechanons, the Ul-Mor, the Kurabanda, and the Edesteki, must be recruited through some act of the characters. Each recruited race (and character actions during the battle) contribute points towards a potential victory against the Sathar. This is a useful mechanism that has been used many different times in putting RPG characters into the middle of a larger battle/war.

OMEGA SUBSECTION 2
INTEGRATION INTO FRONTIER HISTORY

The original Star Frontiers series was published prior to the official timeline for the Frontier published in *Zebulon's Guide to Frontier Space*. The timeline here (mostly found in the histories of the Truane's Star team the characters are to rescue) is not compatible with the timeline in *Zebulon's Guide*. *Zebulon's Guide* suggests that Professor Zebulon discovered the system in 61 PF ("Pre-Frontier"). Volturnus was settled "almost immediately" and its companion planet, Anker, destined to house the Zebulon University, was settled just three years later. This gives almost no time for the characters to act. Additionally, it would force the timeline in this adventure to slowly decrease to "0 PF", a year that clearly could not have been identified during the Volturnus adventures. Thus the adventure was shifted to a time preceding the second Sathar War.

OMEGA SUBSECTION 3
SATHAR MOTIVATION

[This section has been submitted in modified form to the Starfrontiersman *e-zine.]*

The Sathar, underlie the entire history of Volturnus and are brought back through the character's investigation of the Sathar artifact. The rationale for the artifact is that the Sathar wished to ensure that star travel would never again be launched from Volturnus (presumably by the Eorna). When I addressed my vision of the Sathar motivation, I was able to pin the source of all of the sentient races on Volturnus to their activity (influenced no doubt by the Frontier species on Starmist, which were an important plot point in *Sundown on Starmist*) and resolve my frustration that Volturnus's many races seemed more like a fantasy or pulp science fiction role-playing adventure than a modern role-playing adventure.

From details in the Alpha Dawn source book and various published adventures involving the Sathar, several clear tendencies for the race emerge. First, the Sathar prefer to fight using either technology (S.A.S.E. and S.A.S.I. robots from *Sundown on Starmist*, as well as invasion fleets as detailed in the various Sathar wars in the Frontier) or intermediaries (quickdeaths, slithers, slavebots, cyboslugs, and cybodragons from Volturnus, as well as "traitors" from the Frontier on Starmist). Second, the Sathar are quite adept at manipulating individuals and species using genetics, cybernetics, and/or hypnotic control.

One possible explanation for the reliance on technology and intermediaries and for the Sathar's tendency to attack all other life forms is that the Sathar evolved from a prey species and not a predatory one. As a prey species

(who were quite vulnerable without any external armor or an internal skeleton), their intelligence originally evolved in order to avoid predators. As the Sathar developed the ability to reason, they decided that their safety required that all predators must be exterminated or subdued. Although the extinction of their natural predators was achieved in ancient times, this response became the bedrock of Sathar culture. When other intelligent, space-faring species were encountered, the choices were simple: either exterminate them or dominate them. The Frontier was a particularly horrifying discovery for the Sathar as the Frontier's technology was sufficiently advanced that neither option was possible. Thus the Sathar initiated decades-long plans to overwhelm the Frontier through corruption and through the use of intermediaries that were developed on worlds distant enough from the Sathar that disloyalty could never directly threaten the Sathar themselves. Starmist is a training center for traitors to the Frontier, and Volturnus is center to develop new intermediaries (the Ul-Mor, the Kurabanda, and the Edesteki) to use as decoys, spies, and troops against the Frontier worlds.

OMEGA SUBSECTION 4
THE EORNA

Unlike the Edesteki (and Vrusks and Dralasites), I don't care for the default appearance of the Eorna as a hairy bipedal dinosaur-like race that lay eggs (I have similar complaints for the Kurabanda, which are frankly little more than intelligent monkeys/Yazirian-wannabes in my view). Unlike the Edesteki that are completely alien, the Eorna fit a lot of fantasy tropes as "dinosaurs" that are an intelligent species. Another odd feature is the presence of the Yernoids (at the Mechanon mounds in SFAD2), which are never explained and seem odd in a world originally ruled by the Eorna.

I also don't care for the rather simplistic role of the species as an art- and peace-loving race that was brutally savaged by the Sathar and doomed, yet retain their overall "goodness and light". The secret Eorna healer in the caverns in Crash on Volturnus that takes care of the characters but only after putting them to sleep bothers me. The ability of the Eorna to "uplift" the Ul-Mor, the Kurabanda, and the Edekesti is also really remarkable and substantially "higher-tech" than I feel comfortable with for the Frontier. (Although I've read some versions where the Eorna are placed as a "Tetrarch" race that have substantially advanced technology.) Frankly, the most interesting feature of the original versions of the Eorna are their manipulation of an alternative crystalline technology (making them quite distinctive), and the potential effect the Sathar attack on the psyche of an originally non-belligerent species.

Thus, the Eorna in this rewrite are quite different. They are a species that are angry at the brutality unleashed upon them and their civilization. The survivors from the attempted genocide faced with a future of only having the mentally deficient Yernoids as children are seeking to create a force to strike back at the Sathar (that can persist even when the Eorna themselves are gone), which unintentionally has lead to the creation of the Mechanon race. The Eorna also see the other Sathar-introduced races on Volturnus (the Ul-Mor, the Kurabanda, and the Edesteki) as invaders. While they do not like them, some surviving Eorna are not above attempting to use them to get revenge against the Sathar. While individuals might retain some of the non-belligerency of their ancestors, these Eorna are the exception, not the rule.

In addition, by making only the Eorna (and Yernoids) native species from Volturnus, we set the stage for making reptilian-inspired creatures an important part of the other native life forms (rather than having lots of species inspired by invertebrates and mammals as well). For me, the picture of Ul-Mor warriors on lopers is the perfect example of an introduced species adopting a native (reptilian) animal as a mount. Thus, in this rewrite of Volturnus, most of the native species have reptilian features (their ancestors dominated the creatures that conquered the land), making the Sathar-introduced species more distinctive (assuming the characters are paying attention to these details). This not only steals an idea from the *Sundown on Starmist* adventure, but also can give characters a clue that something else is going on on Volturnus.

The Eorna technology itself was rather incompletely defined. If the Eorna really are technology adept at manipulating telepathy (such as their insanity machine, programmed illusion room, and hypnotic robots), then their interfaces with their technology ought to also use telepathy. This suggests that there will be no keyboards, monitors, or other useful interfaces. The one described Eorna weapon, the psi stunner, is really equivalent to the sonic stunner with the sole exception that antishock isn't a defense.

If the Eorna are given mentalist disciplines (as in *Zebulon's Guide to Frontier Space*, the appropriate disciplines should include link, paralyze, shield, suggestion, telepathy-aliens, illusion, fear, empathy, confusion, detection, but probably not disciplines like teleportation.

OMEGA SUBSECTION 5
THE *SERENA DAWN*

Excepting the Yernoids and the adventure hook to get the party into the adventure, the *Serena Dawn* got the shortest treatment in the original Volturnus adventures. The map was taken directly from the starliner map in the boxed set. I always envisioned starliners as being equivalent to today's modern cruise liners and always thought it odd that the cash-strapped Truane's Star government would hire an entire starliner just to drop off a small number of characters on the newly mapped route to Volturnus. The crew (and passengers) of the starliner are written off early - the only interactions with them is that the steward gives the characters a map and an unidentified individual is attacked (and presumably killed) by the pirates outside of the character's cabin. One of the goals of this rewrite of the Volturnus adventure was to make the *Serena Dawn* a real place for the characters to increase the emotional blow that it's destruction has and to give characters some choices in affecting the events that take place on the ship during the pirate attack (though in this rewrite, the *Serena Dawn* is ultimately doomed in order to force the characters to the planet surface).

The original events on the *Serena Dawn* were also very disturbing from a player choice point of view. Characters were separated from their weapons early on, and the weapon locker was destroyed under events that the characters could not control. From the standpoint of a game for which

matching weapons with skills and for an introductory adventure where a character might really want to try out a particular piece of equipment, I find this potentially very frustrating. I don't feel that the impact of crash landing on Volturnus with few supplies is lessened if a character happens to have their favorite weapon available. In addition, the original adventure forces characters to evacuate the *Serena Dawn* in a very short period of time in a way that is clear to the adventure author but not necessarily to the characters. In this rewrite, I wanted to set up a scenario in which the characters make a conscious (albeit forced) decision to leave the *Serena Dawn*/*Red Blade*/Eorna orbital station to help preserve something of the appearance of choice. I also particularly like the idea of the characters dealing with the aftermath of the space battle and having the option to jet around in EVA suits between the different ships to collect supplies and potential help themselves once the reach the surface of the planet.

OMEGA SUBSECTION 6
COMPUTERS

On the *Serena Dawn* and throughout this adventure, details of computers are provided. Twenty years of hindsight has revealed how computers and computer networks have revolutionized the modern world in ways that were hard to envision when the original Volturnus adventures were written; I can only imagine the same impact must be felt on the Frontier. This is why I cringe with the only contact players have with computers in the original *Crash on Volturnus* adventure:

EMERGENCY ALERT! EMERGENCY ALERT! SECURITY VIOLATION ON BRIDGE. REPEAT: INTRUDERS ON BRIDGE!

EMERGENCY ALERT! EMERGENCY ALERT! EXPLOSION REPORTED IN WEAPONS LOCKER. REPEAT: WEAPONS LOCKER DESTROYED.

The details of computers also seek to help achieve balance between characters with different specialties. My hope was to have computers be an additional type of exploration (rather than a simple mainframe doing the job of everything) that actually helped the party and justified a character that wasn't specialized in weapons or healing. In some cases (such as the *Serena Dawn* or the *Red Blade*), the information extracted can point the party to correct actions that will help them. In other cases, such as the Star Devil desert compound, reprogramming the computer can substantially aid the party's defense.

ZEBULON SYSTEM BRIEF

STAR
ZEBULON

Zebulon is a F-class main sequence star that is in an unusual system containing a number of asteroid belts and four major planets. The entire system appears to have been influenced by the gravitational capture of Star's Hope sometime in the distant past

PLANET
ANKER (ZEBULON I)

Anker is a hot world, close to Zebulon; however, it has a nitrogen-containing atmosphere and fits a number of terraforming criteria laid out by GodCo.

ASTEROID BELTS
ZEBULON III, IV

These asteroid belts appear to have been generated by gravitational collapse of planets in the Zebulon system when Star's Hope was captured. A number of these asteroid belts are dense enough to be a problem for interstellar flight. All incoming vessels are suggested to enter the system between Star's Hope and Zebulon VI before heading in system.

PLANET
VOLTURNUS (ZEBULON II)

Volturnus (Zebulon II) is a habitable planet with infrared signatures of nitrogen, oxygen, water, and water vapor in the atmosphere.

PLANET
STAR'S HOPE (ZEBULON V)

Star's Hope is a massive gas giant that is very close to the mass of a brown dwarf. The orbit of Star's Hope is in the opposite direction of all other objects in the system, suggesting that it is a captured.

PLANET
ZEBULON VI

Zebulon VI is an ice planet that may have been formed by a number of Kuiper belt objects.

Not to scale
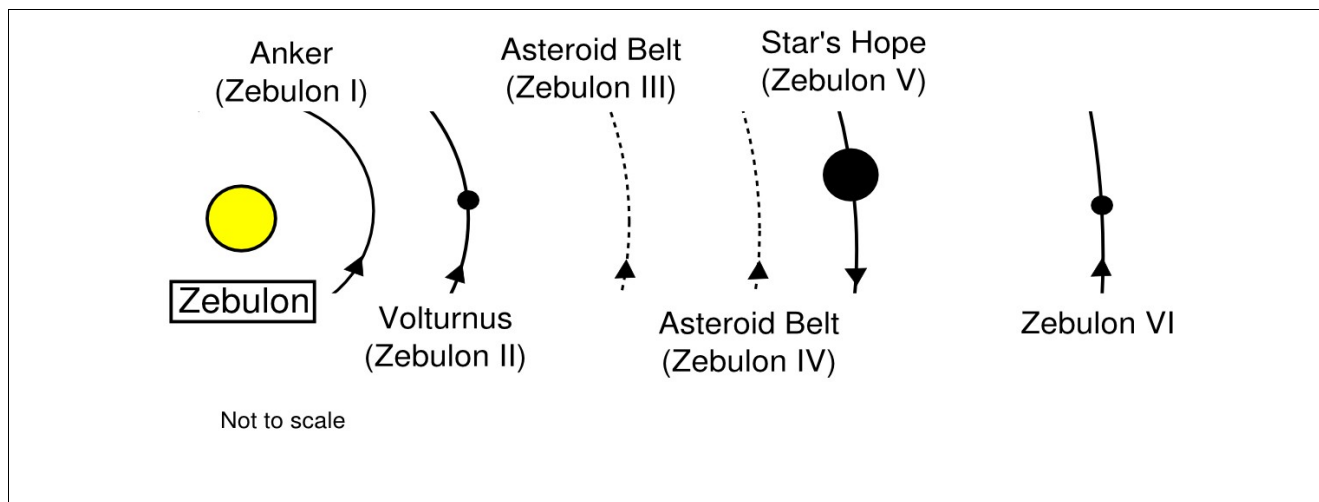
VOLTURNUS BRIEF

TRUANE EXPEDITION BRIEF

Xagyg Dust Nebula Expedition X102F

Expedition Mission: X102F is intended to map new regions of the Xagyg Dust Nebula for military defense and government-reimbursed commercial investment. Careful analysis of biological activities of deep space organics will be pursued, requiring additional biological expertise.

Louis V. Jackson

Commander, Truane Defense Force, Pale, Truane's Star

Physical Details: Human Male, 1.9 m, 88 kg, 43 yrs

Genetic Identification Markers: Hafde0872743cdbe209a

Expertise: Leading deep space exploration missions; military security.

Security Profile: Jackson's commanders on New Pale reported that he had become disillusioned with defending the New Pale terraforming project against attacks by successionist forces, and some suspected that he might have hold some sympathies for their position. Since this time, Jackson has been transferred to and eventually commanded successful deep space missions with few political complications and has been praised highly by the TDF admiralty.

Brief History:

FY47 – present   Commander Xagyg Dust Nebula Expedition X102F

FY45   Commander Xagyg Dust Nebula Expedition X99F

FY44   Commander Asteroid Survey Mission A401.3

FY34 to FY44   member of numerous Asteroid Survey and Deep Space Mining Escort Missions

FY26 to FY34   security detail New Pale terraforming project

FY26   entered TDF

Itklikdil

Biotechnician, Skelton Pharmaceuticals, New Pale, Truane's Star

Physical Details: Vrusk Female, 1.5 m, 85 kg, 32 yrs

Genetic Identification Markers: Vac12fed13qwxttuvx5aaffgt

Expertise: Bioprospecting new ecosystems for new pharmaceuticals

Security Profile: Itklikdil left Barrowwoods Pharmaceuticals on Pale shortly before the company collapsed due to a scandal due to the contamination of the designer pharmaceutical danthik and subsequent lawsuits. Was hired at a substantially higher position at Skelton Pharmaceuticals on New Pale immediately prior to the launch of Skelton's panel of "wonder drugs." Cleared by Star Law of accusations of inappropriate transfer of Barrowwoods research, not known to be involved in the New Pale successionists, and cleared by the TDF as a government contractor.

Brief History:

FY47 – present   Xagyg Dust Nebula Expedition X102F

FY 41-47 Exobiology Group Leader, Skelton Pharmaceuticals, New Pale

FY 37-40 Research Technician, Barrowwoods, Pharmaceuticals, Pale

Geeko-Sur-Mang

Professor of Geology, Capital University, Pale, Truane's Star

Physical Description: Yazirian Male, 2.1 m, 50 kg, 52 yrs

Genetic Identification Markers: Yggct12h443afcbeedaf23cc311a

Expertise: Geophysics with a speciality in planetary crust formation

Security Profile: Geeko-Sur-Mang only security-related records are a number of minor parking violations in and around the Capital University campus.

Brief History:

FY47 – present   Xagyg Dust Nebula Expedition X102F

FY32   Truane's Star VII Crustal Drilling Expedition

FY 27 – present   Associate Professor Geology, Capital University

FY 24-27 Assistant Professor Geology, Capital University

Grod

Truane's Star Civil Servant, Pale, Truane's Star

Physical Description: Dralasite, 65 kg, 85 yrs

Genetic Identification Markers: Duuv126849xxy122f00upxyv2

Expertise: Inventor and technician, developer of the hydro-magnetic stabilization system for Dralasite vehicles, fluid flow compressors for terraforming engines, and energy flow restrictors.

Security Profile: No criminal or military record.

Brief History:

FY47 – present   Xagyg Dust Nebula Expedition X102F

FY34 – present   Support for Truane's Star space expeditions

FY26-34   Assigned to Pale Power Infrastructure Redevelopment Project

FY17-26   Assigned to New Pale Terraforming Project

FY17 – present   Truane's Star Civil Servant, Research and Engineering Division

TOPOGRAPHIC MAP

Truane's Star Base Camp and Unidentified Site