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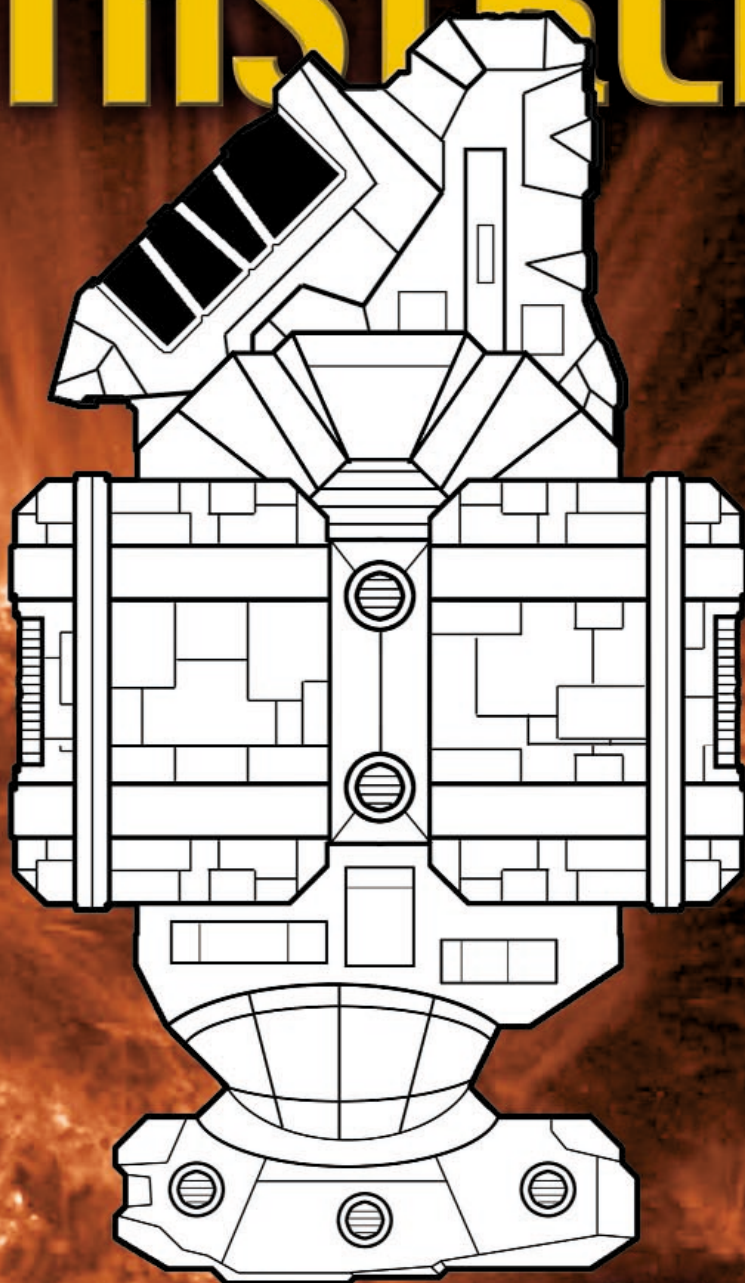
DATASTREAM

08.2005

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the latest collection of material published through Ronin Arts' *Future: Datastream*. For those of you new to the *Datastream* you're about to get a look at material that subscribers to the *Datastream* received in their e-mail throughout the month of August, 2005. Currently, the *Datastream* is scheduled to run until the end of December, 2005, at which point a master collection will be created and released — free of charge — to subscribers. There are currently no plans to extend the *Datastream* into 2006 though if there is a demand we would be happy to do so.

To discuss the *Datastream* with other subscribers please visit our official forums, hosted at **www.raforums.com.** Subscribers are encouraged to contact Ronin Arts with suggestions and requests — we want to release material through the *Datastream* that is useful to *your* campaign.

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CHARACTERS

STARTING OCCUPATIONS

DISPLACED TERRAN

As the people of the Sol system took to the stars, exploring new system after new system and new world after new world, they sometimes encountered sentient life that, except for a few minor cosmetic differences, was identical to their own kind. How terrans became so widespread before the species even managed to achieve space travel is a mystery, though many of the newly discovered species — frequently referred to as displaced terrans — have their own creation myths that tell of strange visitors that took the ancestors of the displaced terrans aboard a special craft and transported them to a new world.

You will need to work closely with your GM in order to devise details regarding your chosen race. At your GM's option, he may rule that you are the only member of your race alive — you managed to survive some great cataclysm that wiped out your race. Of course, as we all know from movies and television, even a "last of its kind" will at some point discover another member of its race.

Displaced terran is a type of occupation modifier — you select this template to represent your race's background and then select a second occupation (as described below).

Prerequisite: Age 15+.

Cosmetic Mutations: Select any two cosmetic mutations from the future SRD. These mutations exist on every member of your species — this is how your race differs from pure humans.

Second Starting Occupation: Select any one occupation as a second occupation — you gain all of the benefits of that second occupation except you may select only one skill as a permanent class skill and the occupation's Wealth Bonus, if any, is reduced by 1 (minimum of 0).

FORCE-GROWN CLONE

Several decades ago, maybe even a century or more, you were selected for advanced experiments in human cloning. While the science and technology of the time could not match the dreams of the day the experiments were important steps in the development of the cloning process. Recently, scientists discovered your DNA in an abandoned research facility and after several months of debate the decision was made to create a new individual — you — from that found cellular matter.

Through advanced cloning procedures and technology, careful study of the documentation found with your DNA samples, and nanotech memory and training systems, you were created. Now, just weeks after you were "reawakened," you have escaped the facility in which you were created. It seems that you were created for a single purpose: study in a laboratory and then dissection to determine the viability of storing genetic material for future use.

Force-Grown Clone is a type of occupation modifier — you select this template to represent a specific type of background and then select a second occupation (as described below).

Prerequisite: Age 25. (The age that you were "awakened" at after force-growth procedures were initiated.)

Bonus Level: You automatically begin play at character level two — the first level represents the work of the memory and training nanotech systems.

Second Starting Occupation: Select any one occupation as a second occupation — you gain all of the benefits of that second occupation except you may select only one skill as a permanent class skill

and the occupation's Wealth modifier, if any, is reduced by 2 (minimum of -1).

Disoriented: The scientists attempted to program your mind with information relevant to the time in which your original body lived. You suffer a −5 out-of-time penalty on all Knowledge skill checks and when operating "modern" equipment. This penalty is reduced by one each time you gain a level until it drops to −2 where it permanently remains − you will always be just a little out of touch with the world in which you awakened.

Hunted: This is a plot tool for the GM's use. You will be hunted by the people behind your awakening until either they've captured you or they no longer exist.

STELLAR MARINE

In the future, extensive training programs shuttle recruits between low-gravity planetoids and high-gravity worlds, orbital stations and stellar destroyers, and dump them on dozens of different worlds − both hostile and friendly − in order to prepare them for combat anywhere in the galaxy.

Stellar Marine is a type of occupation modifier − you select this template to represent training as a futuristic soldier and then select two additional occupations as described below.

Prerequisite: 20+.

Reduced Starting Skill Points: Class skill points x 2.

Bonus Feats: Personal Firearms Proficiency, Planetary Adaptation (select one; this represents your training and not your home world conditions), and Zero-G Training.

Second Starting Occupation: Select any one occupation as a second occupation (this represents your primary military specialty) − you may select only one skill as a permanent class skill and the occupation's Wealth modifier, if any, does not apply to your character.

Third Starting Occupation: Select any one occupation as a third occupation (this represents your secondary military specialty) − you may select only one skill as a permanent class skill, do not gain any bonus feats, and the occupation's Wealth modifier, if any, does not apply to your character.

Defense Bonus Increase: +1.

NEW TALENT TREE

THE CHARISMATIC HERO

The following new talent tree is available to the Charismatic hero.

XENOMORPH RELATIONS TALENT TREE

The Charismatic Hero has a natural affinity for communication with intelligent alien races. The talents in the Xenomorph Relations talent tree allow the Charismatic hero to communicate with intelligent xenomorphs, even if they share no common language.

Common Ground: The Charismatic hero is able to make a connection with a xenomorph with which he could not normally communicate due to the lack of a common language. With this talent the Charismatic hero may make a Charisma check (DC 20 minus the Intelligence modifier of the alien with which he is attempting to communicate) when interacting with an intelligent alien. On a successful check the Charismatic hero can understand − and make himself understood − simple commands. This Charisma check must be made once for each exchange; each check is a free action though a Charismatic hero may only make a single Charisma check for the Common Ground talent once each round.

Deeper Understanding: The Charismatic hero, after five successful Charisma checks when using the Common Ground talent (see above), may spend one action point to use this talent. The Deeper Understanding talent gives the Charismatic hero a permanent near-perfect communication with a single intelligent alien. Any attempts to communicate with that particular alien require a successful Charisma check (DC 10 minus the Intelligence modifier of the alien with which he is attempting to communicate) in order for the Charismatic hero to be understood by the alien or to understand the alien. Additionally, the Charisma check DC base (see above) when interacting with other members of that race is reduced from 20 to 15.

Prerequisite: Common Ground.

Xenoempathy: There are no barriers to communication between the Charismatic hero and intelligent aliens that he encounters. As a full-round action

the Charismatic hero may spend an action point to understand, or be understood by, any intelligent xenomorph that he comes into contact with. Please note that communication does not equal a friendly exchange. This talent, and the other talents in this talent tree, only allow communication to take place and does not modify the initial attitude of the xenomorph toward the Charismatic hero.

Prerequisites: Common Ground, Deeper Understanding.

FEATS

DEFENSIVE SURGE FORWARD

You are skilled at evading fire, even when pushing your starship into a surge maneuver.

Prerequisite: Pilot 4 ranks.

Benefit: When making a surge forward move while piloting a starship you do not lose your Dexterity bonus to Defense.

Normal: A pilot's Dexterity bonus to Defense is lost during a surge forward move.

EVASIVE WITHDRAWAL

When withdrawing from a battle you evade enemy starships, even as you fly directly beneath their noses.

Prerequisite: Pilot 6 ranks.

Benefit: During a withdraw maneuver you may pass through a number of squares threatened by enemy starships equal to one-quarter the number of ranks you possess in the Pilot skill without provoking attacks of opportunity. These squares are in addition to the square from which the withdraw starts.

Normal: Attempting a withdraw maneuver in a starship does not provoke an attack of opportunity when leaving the starting square but enemy starships threatening squares through which you move get attacks of opportunity.

FAST JUMP

You can break free of an engagement and jump to cruising speed faster than most other pilots.

Prerequisite: Pilot 6 ranks.

Benefit: As a move action, when piloting a starship, you can leave an engagement by jumping to cruising speed. Additionally, threatening enemy pilots must make a Sense Motive check against your Pilot skill — only if the enemy pilot wins the check does an enemy pilot get an attack of opportunity (if the starship is equipped with point-defense systems) as you flee the battle.

Normal: A jump to cruising speed maneuver requires a full-round action and provokes attacks of opportunity from threatening enemy ships armed with point-defense systems — no Sense Motive check is required.

POWER DOWN!

When engaged in a starship battle your reflexes and piloting abilities are so sharp that you can shutdown all non-essential systems and drift silently, almost completely disappearing from an enemy starship's sensors.

Prerequisites: Computer Use 6 ranks, Pilot 8 ranks.

Benefit: In any turn in which line of sight between you and an enemy starship is broken — such as when you take the opportunity to maneuver behind an asteroid or other stellar objects/debris — you may power down your ship as a free action. While powered down you cannot move or make attack actions but all sensor checks made against your starship suffer a −15 penalty. Additionally, you gain nine-tenths concealment against all attacks (40% miss chance) when powered down. Powering up your starship after attempting this trick is a move action.

RADIATION TOLERANCE

You were raised in an environment with a higher background radiation level than most others.

Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus to Fortitude saves made when exposed to radiation. Additionally, you do not have to make a Fortitude save when exposed to a mild dose of radiation.

Special: This feat may only be selected at 1st level.

ROBO-HUNTER

You are adept at hunting and killing robots, so much so that you are considered an expert in the field of robot tracking and destruction.

Prerequisites: Base Attack Bonus +1, Track.

Benefit: You gain a +4 bonus to all skill checks made while using the Track feat on a robot. Additionally, you gain a +1 bonus to all attack rolls made against robots.

ROBO-SCOURGE

Your knowledge of combat techniques usable against, and weaknesses of, robots is nearly unparalleled.

Prerequisites: Base Attack Bonus +4, Robo-Hunter.

Benefit: Your bonus to all attack rolls made against robots increases to +3. Additionally, any damage you inflict on robots is increased by your Wisdom modifier.

SHE CAN GO FASTER!

Your experience with mecha has taught you that any mecha can be pushed to speeds beyond its designers intended operating limits.

Prerequisites: Advanced Mecha Operation, Repair 6 ranks.

Benefit: You can push any mecha that you pilot, increasing its base speed by +10 ft. By spending an action point you can push your mecha even harder, increasing its base speed by +20 ft. for a number of rounds equal to one-half your character level (round down).

STARSHIP WEAPON BOOST

By disabling safeguards and shunting auxiliary power into your weapons, you can attain greater destructive power at the cost of weapon accuracy.

Prerequisite: Starship Gunnery, Base attack bonus +6, Repair 6 ranks.

Benefit: You can take a penalty of up to −5 on your attack roll. If you do, the starship weapon of your choice deals +1d6 points of damage for each −1 penalty you took. The attack penalty persists until the beginning of your next turn, but the additional damage applies only to the next single attack you make.

STARSHIP WING COMMANDER

As a flight leader with prior experience as a wingman you've learned to divide your time between your primary responsibilities as a wing commander and on getting your men home safely.

Prerequisite: Starship Wingman.

Benefit: You provide each wingman in your flight wing with a +1 cover bonus to defense.

STARSHIP WINGMAN

You've logged hundreds of hours of combat — both real and simulated — as part of a fighter wing. That experience makes you a more valuable member of a fighter wing.

Prerequisites: Starship Mobility, Starship Operation (ultralight).

Benefit: When you are part of a fighter wing, and not the wing commander, you count as two fighters for purposes of defending your wing commander (+2 cover bonus to Defense instead of a +1) and on a successful aid another check your wing commander gains a +4 circumstance on attack rolls (instead of the usual +2 as described in the future SRD). Additionally, you provide other wingmen in the fighter wing a +1 cover bonus to Defense.

Special: More than one wingman in a fighter wing may possess this feat; its effects stack.

Example: A fighter wing of four ultralight fighters — a wing commander and three wingmen — in which all of the wingmen possess this feat would grant the wing commander a total cover bonus of +6 on Defense, if all of the wingmen made successful aid another checks the wing commander would gain a total circumstance bonus of +12 on attack rolls, and each wingman in the fighter wing would gain a +2 cover bonus to Defense from the other wingmen in his wing.

TEMPORAL SENSE

Extensive experience in time travel has led you to possess an almost supernatural ability to sense the presence of gateways in time and the time into which a gateway opens.

Prerequisite: You must have traveled to six different times other than your native timezone.

Benefit: At any time that you are within 30 ft. of a temporal gateway — either natural or artificial — you automatically sense the gate's location and the time into which the gate opens. Your sense of the current date at the connected timezone is accurate within 3d6 (plus your Wisdom modifier) weeks.

Thunderous Approach

You lean hard on your mecha's controls when you walk, forcing it to move slowly with heavy steps, shaking opponents much smaller than yourself as you approach them.

Prerequisite: Mecha Trample.

Benefit: When walking at one-quarter your mecha's speed (round down), opponents two size categories smaller than your mecha (and those that are even smaller than that) within four times your reach must make a successful Reflex save (DC 15 + your mecha jockey level); on a failed check an opponent is shaken for 1d4+1 rounds and if the save fails by 10 or more the opponent is knocked prone by the heavy vibrations of your approach.

Example: A 7th level mecha jockey piloting a huge mecha could elect to move at 10 ft. and use this feat's effect on all medium-size or smaller characters and creatures within 40 ft. of his position. The Reflex save DC would be 22.

GEAR

FUSION AGE WEAPONS

Heavy Laser Gun (PL 6)

The massive HLG is basically a ship-mounted laser modified for used by a crew. Extremely heavy, the weapon must be fired from a heavy tripod or mounted on a vehicle in order for the gunner to have any hope of hitting something. As with the LLG, the purpose of the loader is to exchange the large power pack required to keep the weapon operating.

Note: Requires the Exotic Firearms Proficiency (heavy machine gun) feat to use effectively.

Damage: 6d8
Critical: 20
Damage Type: Fire
Range Increment: 110 feet
Rate of Fire: S, A
Magazine: 500 box
Size: Huge
Weight: 95 lb.
Purchase DC: 25
Restricted: Mil (+3)

Light Laser Gun (PL 6)

A replacement for ballistic crew-served ballistic machine guns, the LLG is a heavy laser gun that requires a bipod or tripod to aim.

Much like a crew-served ballistic machine gun does not actually require two individuals to fire (the second individual feeds ammo and changes out barrels), a single individual can fire the laser MG. In fact, the real purpose of the second member of the MG crew is to carry and exchange the large power packs required to keep the weapon operating.

Note: Requires the Exotic Firearms Proficiency (heavy machine gun) feat to use effectively.

Damage: 4d8
Critical: 20
Damage Type: Fire
Range Increment: 100 feet
Rate of Fire: S, A
Magazine: 500 box
Size: Huge
Weight: 25 lb.
Purchase DC: 24
Restricted: Mil (+3)

FUSION AGE ARMOR

Shock trooper Armor (PL 6)

Given only to elite units of the military (largely because of cost), shock trooper armor combines the protection of light combat armor with the subsistence capabilities of the survival suit in one complete package. Essentially, shock trooper armor is a full body survival suit with armor pieces in the appropriate places.

Shock trooper armor is further enhanced by the ultralight composition gadget and a derivative of the Paint-On LCD gadget that allows the wearer to select an appropriate camouflage pattern for his or her surroundings. Selecting the appropriate pattern for the environment (i.e. a brown/green pattern for jungle or a white pattern for arctic) grants a +5 equipment bonus to Hide checks.

Type: Tactical
Equipment Bonus: +3
Nonprof. Bonus: +1
Max Dex Bonus: +5
Armor Penalty: -1
Speed: 30 ft./20 ft.
Weight: 7 lb.
Purchase DC: 28
Restriction: Mil (+3)

FUSION AGE EQUIPMENT

Ammunition, LLG/HLG Power Pack (PL 6)

These power packs supply power to the LLG/HLG. Note that the LLG/HLG can also use standard power packs, although this reduces the rate of fire significantly since they must be changed more frequently.

While ordinary laser rifles, pistols, sniper rifles, etc. (any laser weapon smaller than Huge size) can make use of these massive power packs, the sheer weight and bulk that such a big power pack possesses would render such a weapon practically useless (assume a

—8 penalty on attack rolls).
Damage Type: Special
Weight: 10 lb.
Purchase DC: 15
Restriction: Mil (+3)

Aquapeller (PL 6)

An underwater version of the jetpack, an aquapeller is a backpack-size device that uses a powerful internal propeller to suction in large amounts of water through an intake and force it out through a small nozzle to provide propulsion.

An aquapeller is powered by a set of high-capacity rechargeable batteries capable of powering the device for up to 24 hours. These batteries can be recharged at an appropriate fast-charge power source in 1 hour or with a "trickle" charge (i.e. typical wall outlet) within 8 hours.

A character equipped with an aquapeller gains a swim speed of 30 feet and does not need to make Swim checks as long as the aquapeller is working.

Most aquapellers come with an integrated acquaconverter.
Size: Large
Weight: 24 lb.
Purchase DC: 17 (18 with integrated aquaconverter)
Restriction: Lic (+1)

Aquasuit (PL 6)

The most advanced wetsuit available in the Fusion Age, an aquasuit is made of artificial materials that tremendously reduce the drag and turbulence associated with swimming.

An aquasuit allows its wearer to swim half of his or her speed as a move action or his or her full speed as a full-round action. The wearer must still succeed at a Swim check, of course.
Size: Tiny (when folded)
Weight: 1 lb.
Purchase DC: 11
Restriction: —

LLG Waist Mount (PL 6)

Consisting of a shoulder-and-waist harness (to distribute weight) and a gyro-stabilized mount, this

item allows an individual to fire the LLG effectively without a bipod or tripod.

While automatic fire is unaffected, semi-automatic fire suffers a −2 penalty on attack rolls due to the fact that the gunner is unable to use the sight. Of course, this penalty can be offset by using a set of display glasses connected to a camera mounted on the LLG (effectively, the camera acts as the weapon's sight) or a video scope.

Size: Medium

Weight: 7 lb.

Purchase DC: 12

Restriction: Mil (+3)

PERSONAL WATER PURIFICATION UNIT (PL 6)

One of the great advances in survival technology, the PWPU makes use of advanced chemistry and microelectronics to filter out any harmful elements (i.e. viruses, germs, toxins) from water or other liquids.

The suspect liquid is poured into the PWPU's top chamber where the hydrogen and oxygen atoms are separated from the liquid (much like in an aquaconverter), passed through a membrane, and recombined in the separate bottom chamber. The waste products are then dumped from the top chamber.

The PWPU has a one quart capacity.

Size: Tiny

Weight: 1 lb.

Purchase DC: 9

Restriction: —

GRAVITY AGE EQUIPMENT

QUICKFEAT INJECTOR (PL 7)

NOTE: The following rules do not follow the futuristic SRD rules for short-term genetic modifications. The effects of the quickfeat injector assume that the object is beyond the experimental stages and seen in use on a fairly regular basis. To better represent the early stages of the device's life simply add the penalties detailed in the futuristic SRD to those below.

Much like the quickstudy injector, a quickfeat injector takes the hardwired genetic coding — and the memory responses and experiences — of a subject and breaks down the information in order to create a fast-acting gene therapy program that provides a user with access to a specific feat (for a limited time).

It requires a total of three rounds to load a feat cartridge into the injector and inject it into a subject. The effects of the injected feat take effect within one minute, after which point the injected character gains access to a feat he did not previously possess. A quickfeat injector's benefit lasts for five minutes.

The sudden, overwhelming rush of knowledge and experience of a quickfeat injector system can have harmful effects on the chosen subject. Each time a character is injected he must make a successful Will save (DC 25) or suffer 1d4 points of Wisdom damage and 1d2 points of Intelligence damage. Each additional quickfeat *or* quickstudy drug injected into a character while a quickfeat drug is already active in the character increases the Will save's DC by +2.

Quickfeat cartridges have a purchase DC of 12 each if the feat has no prerequisites. The purchase DC increases by +2 for each prerequisite the feat requires, even if the user already has any one of those prerequisites. Almost any feat can be loaded into a quickfeat unit — your GM may veto any feat he feels is inappropriate.

Example: Salvage, as a quickfeat drug, would have a purchase DC of 12 since it has no prerequisites. Starship Feint would have a purchase DC of 16 since it has two prerequisites.

Size: Diminutive.

Weight: 1 lb.

Purchase DC: 25.

Restriction: Military (+3).

SCIENTIFIC ENGINEERING

GENE THERAPY TEMPLATES

TERROR-RAY (TEMPLATE)

Intended as underwater combat specialists, terror-rays are created by melding the genetic code of manta rays and stingrays with humans. The aquan template (see the future SRD) was used as the basis for the terror-ray gene therapy program and in functionality a terror-ray greatly resembles an aquan. Cosmetically, though, an aquan and a terror-ray are two greatly different beings. Whereas an aquan retains a primarily human appearance the terror-ray takes on a monstrous, alien form. Standing close to seven feet tall with large, heavy wing-like growths protruding from their backs and a long, spiked tail, terror-rays most closely resemble humanoid creatures from horror stories and fairy tales.

The terror-ray gene therapy program is grueling, requiring a much greater period of time than most gene therapy programs. Additionally, any subject that fails 5 Fortitude saves during the process permanently loses 1 point of Constitution and is scared for life – the subject's skin takes on the gray, dull color of a ray and the program fails completely.

"Terror-ray" is an acquired template that can be added to any humanoid or monstrous humanoid (referred to hereafter as the character). It uses all the character's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

The terror-ray template allows the character to survive on both land and under water. A character acquires the terror-ray template by undergoing a course of gene therapy (see the future SRD). The regimen requires 35 successful Fortitude saving throws (DC 30).

Special Qualities: A terror-ray retains all the special qualities of the character and gains the additional special qualities listed below.

Amphibious (Ex): Terror-rays can breathe equally well in air and water.

Blindsight (Ex): Terror-rays have blindsight with a range of 60 feet when under water only.

Low-Light Vision (Ex): Terror-rays have low-light vision with a range of 60 feet on land and in water.

Sting (Ex): The tail of a terror-ray is spiked and poisoned and can be used in combat. The tail attack inflicts 1d6 points of piercing damage and the victim must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 10 + one-half the terror-ray's character level, round down) or succumb to the poison (initial damage 1d6 temporary Strength, secondary damage 2d6 temporary Strength).

Skills: Same as the character, with a +2 species bonus on Listen checks while under water, a +2 species bonus on Move Silently checks while in the water, a +2 species bonus on Navigate checks while under water, and a +6 species bonus on all Swim checks.

Feats: A terror-ray gains Athletic as a bonus feat.

Advancement: By character class.

STARSHIPS

SENSOR CONTACTS

MESSENGER DRONE (PL 7)

At any time that the player characters' starship is moving between two rival worlds the sensors indicate a metallic contact several thousand feet from their position, moving slightly below the system's elliptic plane. A single Computer Use check reveals the following (the players learn all of the information up to the highest result of the check):

10: Metallic object registering faint energy output.

15: The object is human-sized and moving very fast — tactical speed of 5,000 ft. The sensors are reading a static-like transmission coming from the object.

20: The object is a messenger drone, a "dumb" robot that's little more than a ship's navigation system, engines, and a message transmitter mounted in a spheroid case The messenger drone's trajectory, the ship calculates, leads it directly to a nearby inhabited world.

25: The static-like transmission is actually a coded signal. While the ship's computer is unable to completely decipher the message it has unscrambled the message to a point that it predicts — with a 98% chance of success — that the message carries someone's financial information.

If the player characters attempt to overtake the messenger drone (it's moving directly at them and has a starship autopilot system) it should be a fairly simple task as long as they capture it before it flys by. At its tactical speed, it's highly unlikely that the players' starship will be able to keep pace with the messenger drone.

If they manage to capture it and bring it onboard — the messenger drone has no defenses — a successful Computer Use check (DC 25) is required to break the code and read the information. The messenger drone is carrying a great deal of financial information for one Darren Urquat, including access codes to the man's various accounts and stocks. All of the access codes will be changed 3d4 hours after the drone's capture (the instant the drone disappears off of its owners scanners they go to work) but if the players move quickly they'll be able to take control of Urquat's finances and transfer everything to their own accounts. The stocks and accounts are treated as having a sale value of 48 for purposes of determining the effect this transaction could have on the players' Wealth bonus scores.

There is a 25% chance — +3% for every five rounds the players remain in the vicinity of where they captured the messenger drone — that the individuals monitoring the messenger drone will be able to secure a reading of the player characters' starship and correctly identify them. If this happens they're likely to have problems as Urquat sends bounty hunters to track them down (Urquat has a lot more money to spend on this endeavor).

UNUSUAL ROCK (PL 8)

While passing near a minor asteroid belt the ship's sensors detect an unusual piece of debris that registers both a single lifesign and emits an energy signature unlike any the player characters have ever encountered. A single Computer Use check reveals the following (the players learn all of the information up to the highest result of the check):

10: Contact is a bizarre melding of metallic and organic materials.

15: The organic portion of the contact is completely enclosed within the metallic element.

Additionally, the metallic portion of the contact is displaying high levels of electrical energy — something inside the contact is highly active and constantly performing thousands of miniscule tasks each second.

20: The metallic portion of the contact is millions of nanites — somehow an active nanocolony has completely captured an organic being. Most startling is the fact that even here in deep space the organic being inside the nanocolony is alive.

25: The nanocolony has detected the player characters' ship and is transmitting a signal. A second Computer Use check (DC 15) is required to recognize the signal as a distress beacon.

If the player characters move to snatch the object it's a simple matter — the object is captured in an orbit around a small asteroid and its speed is negligible compared to the players' characters' starship's capabilities. Once brought onboard, the player characters can see that the object resembles a stone obelisk though it's constructed completely of nanites. Scanning the object reveals a humanoid inside the obelisk though no amount of investigation or experimentation can reveal a way to deactivate the nanites and release the unknown being. The nanocolony provides the being with protection but 25 or more points of damage will completely destroy the object and kill the humanoid inside.

A successful Knowledge (current events) check (DC 20) is required to identify the object as an artifact from Lizka Alpha VII, a recently discovered world that once supported a powerful, intelligent society. The citizens of the world encased several members of their race in nanotech obelisks like this one just before a catastrophic event wiped out their society. So far archeologists and scientists have been unable to determine how to free the encased aliens. Wealthy individuals have been buying the obelisks to use as decoration in their homes. How this one came to be floating freely in space is a mystery.

SS8-A LIGHT SHUTTLE

Fully automated, the SS8-A is an in-system transport designed to carry passengers and cargo between worlds. The SS8-A carries a single human engineer to monitor the ship but all piloting and control of the ship is handled by the onboard autopilot system — there isn't even a backup pilot station! The SS8-A is limited to a travel time of 3 hours and can carry up to 8 passengers in the shuttle's luxurious forward compartment and another 6 in the cramped, uncomfortable jumpseats. The ship's two cargo bays can carry 20,000 lbs. each or, in some instances, the cargo bays are redesigned as passenger compartments capable of carrying 20-25 passengers in each bay.

Automated facilities provide the passengers with drinks and light snacks. The shuttle does not have restroom facilities, though, so passengers are warned to use the station facilities before departing on a trip. Some advanced models are equipped with chemical toilets.

The SS8-A is incapable of entering a planet's atmosphere. In the event of a hard landing the ship will be destroyed completely and all cargo and crew will suffer 3d6 points of damage due to the lack of deceleration brakes, crash restraints, or any other features commonly found on a ship designed for atmospheric flight.

The SS8-A is a reliable shuttle in use in countless systems. The ship is so common that many refer to it simply as the "spacebus."

SS8-A LIGHT SHUTTLE (PL 7)

Type: Ultralight
Subtype: Automated Shuttle
Defense: —
Flat-footed Defense: —
Autopilot Defense: 8
Hardness: 20

Hit Dice: 5d20 (100 hp)
Initiative Modifer: —
Pilot's Class Bonus: —
Pilot's Dex Modifier: —
Gunner's Attack Bonus: —
Size: Gargantuan (—4 size)
Tactical Speed: 2,500 ft. (8 sq.)
Length: 100 feet
Weight: 100,000 lbs.
Targeting System Bonus: —
Crew: 1 (engineer only)
Passenger Capacity: 14–65 (see text)
Cargo Capacity: 30,000 lbs.
Grapple Modifier: —
Base Purchase DC: 52
Restriction: None

Attack: None
Attack of Opportunity: None

STANDARD PL 7 DESIGN SPECS

Engines: Thrusters
Armor: Alloy plating
Defense Systems: Autopilot system, damage control system (1d10)
Sensors: Class I sensor array
Communications: Laser transceiver, radio transceiver.
Weapons: None
Grappling Systems: None

STARSHIP KEY

The following characteristics are common to all areas in an SS8-A.

Doors: Doors within the starship are fully powered and tied to motion sensors — unless otherwise noted each door opens automatically whenever anyone enters a space adjacent to a door. 2" thick steel, hardness 12; hp 30; AC 5; break DC 30.

Walls: The walls in the starship are white in color in all areas except the luxury lounge, which is blue and decorated with silk curtains. 1 ft. thick steel walls, hardness 25; hp 200; AC 10.

1 — LUXURY LOUNGE

This forward compartment's primary feature is its wonderful view of the stellar landscape. Luxurious recliners dot the lounge, allowing up to eight passengers to ride in glorious, expensive comfort (a seat in the lounge has a purchase DC of 25). The recliners are bolted to the ship's deck though they swivel and can slide up to 2-feet in any direction. Automatic vending units in the various tables and counters dispense drinks and light snacks to the passengers at no extra charge. Passengers are free to wander the ship during flight but in most instances the cargo bays (see below) and maintenance station (also below) are kept locked.

Each recliner includes a retractable computer system that is tied into the starship's central database and can be used to transmit and receive messages, research, watch vids (including those broadcast from other ships or stations), and a number of other entertaining tasks.

2 — AIRLOCK

This airlock is the passengers' primary means of entrance and exit from the ship. Medical supplies, emergency lamps and blankets, and other assorted supplies are stored in storage lockers at the far end of the area. Three jumpseats along one wall are designed for up to six passengers (a seat here has a purchase DC of 17). The doors to the lounge automatically seal closed in the event of an emergency — if rescuers are forced to cut their way into the ship they'd rather kill those in the cheap seats than anyone in the high-priced lounge. The exterior hatch *cannot* be opened from the inside.

3 — CARGO BAYS

These two standard-sized cargo bays are used to transport mail, light freight, and other small items between worlds. While some SS8-A cargo bays have been redesigned to include additional passenger seating this modification is rare.
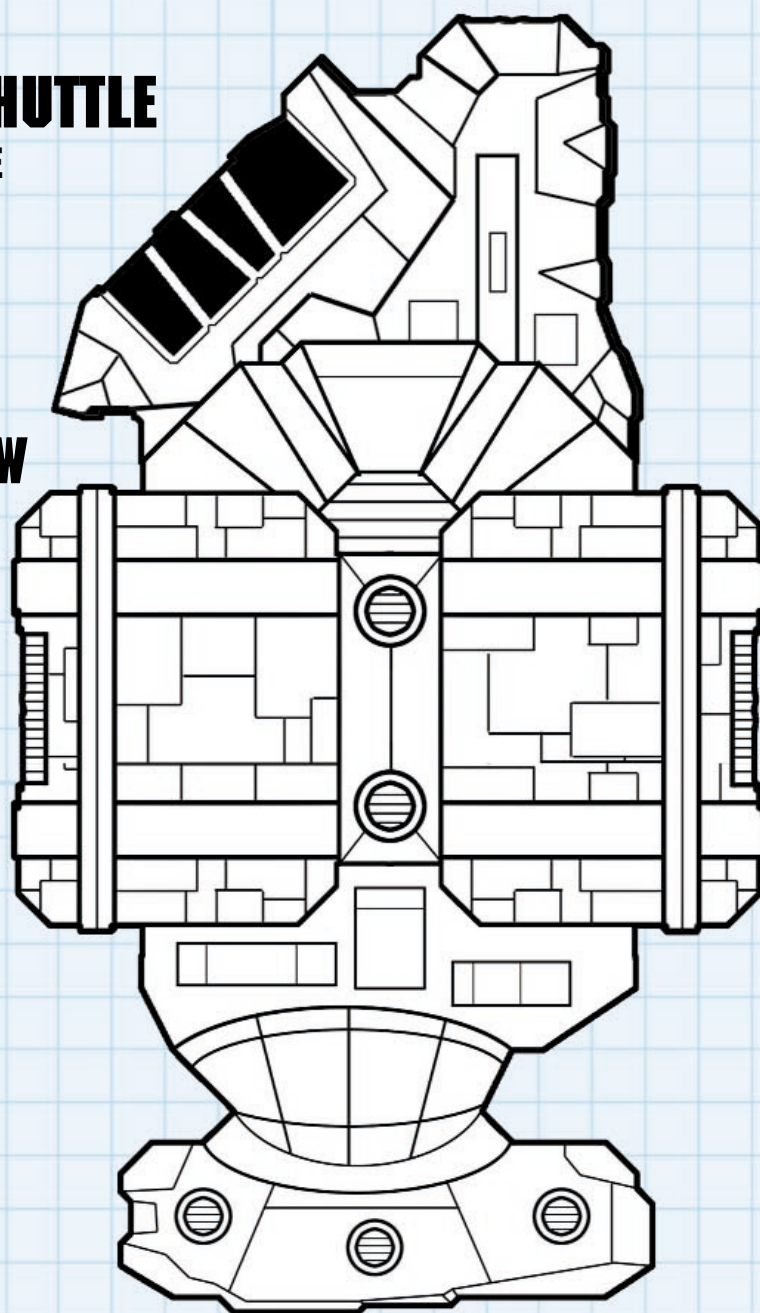
4 — MAINTENANCE STATION

This small maintenance station is staffed by and engineer, the only crewmember onboard the ship during flights. To be honest, the engineer is really nothing more than a token effort at helping the passengers to feel safer. In the event of an emergency the engineer is likely to be as frightened and worthless as most of the passengers — oftentimes the shuttle company uses teens and college students to fill this position and on some runs they just don't send anyone along.

The maintenance station allows access to the ship's engines and a crawlspace that can be used to get to an exterior hatch. A computer system here is primarily an entertainment console used by the engineer during flights.
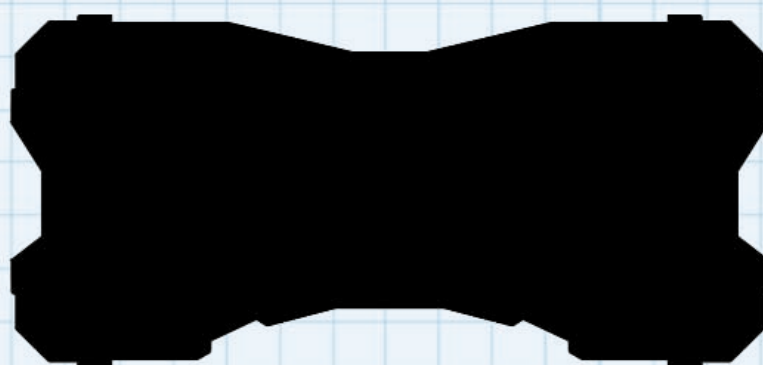
SS8-A Light Shuttle
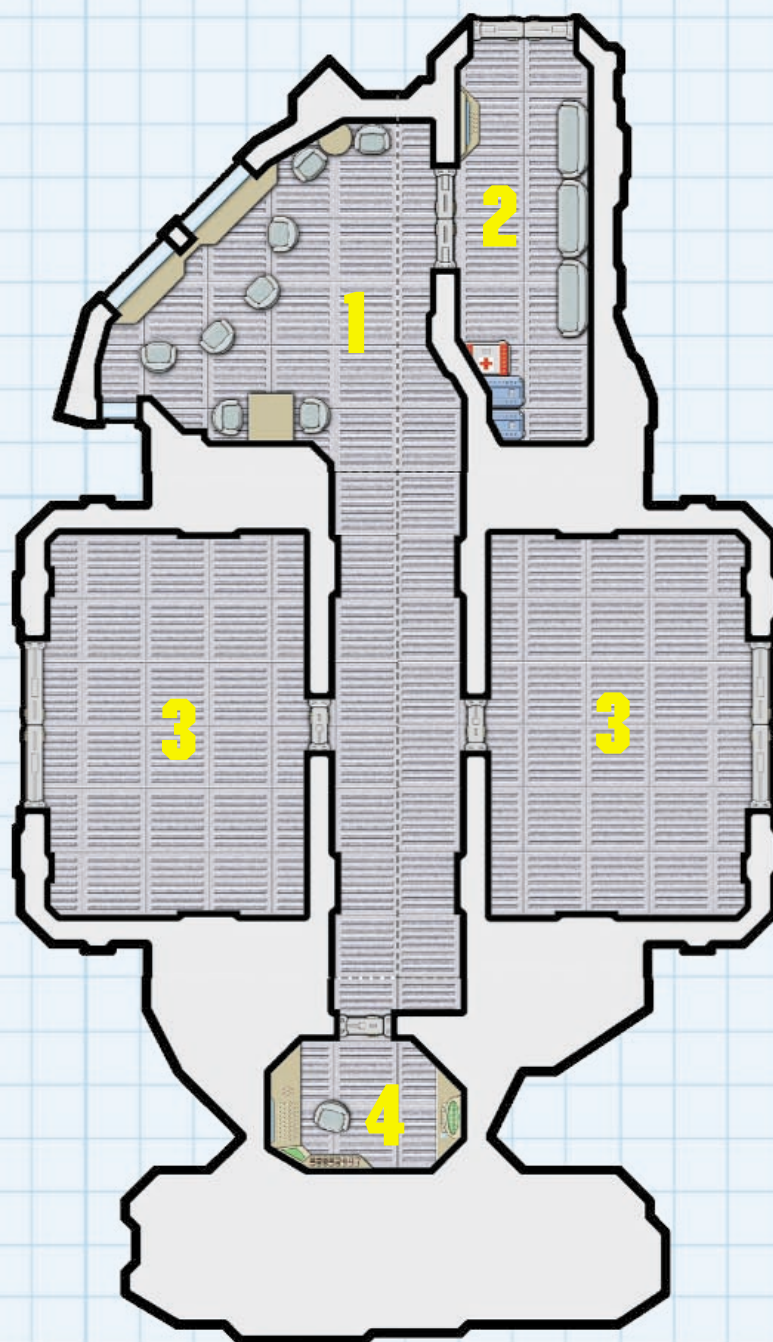## AUTOMATED SHUTTLE

TOP VIEW

SILHOUETTE VIEW — FRONT

SS8-A Light Shuttle

AUTOMATED SHUTTLE

STYLE SWITCH

PONDEROUS MECHA

As presented in the official future rules, mecha are agile, fast implements of destruction that can move just like large characters. This is a perfectly acceptable vision of mecha that's common in a lot of the source material but there's another, just as popular vision of mecha: walking engines of destruction that are little more than man-shaped tanks.

To change the basic mecha rules to suit a campaign in which walking tanks and not mobile, ninja-like robots are prevalent following these simple changes.

Hit Point and Base Speed Changes: The first and most important change to transform the mecha in the future rules to walking tanks is to adjust the mecha body size's base speeds and hit points. In place of the rules as written use the following:

Mecha Body Size	Hit Points	Base Speed
Colossal	1,000	15 ft.
Gargantuan	500	20 ft.
Huge	250	25 ft.
Large	125	30 ft.
Medium*	75	30 ft.

 * The medium mecha appears in ***Future: Datastream 06.2005***.

Flying Mecha: In most of the source material involving mecha as walking tanks mecha cannot fly. Sure, they can sometimes use jets to make extended leaps but actual flying is out of the question. All mecha flight systems, except jump jets, are prohibited.

Skills: Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Hide, Move Silently, and Tumble skill checks are not permitted when piloting a mecha – they're just too large to take advantage of these skills.

Prohibited Feats: Advanced Mecha Operation, Mecha Crush, Mecha Fling, Mecha Sweep, and Thruster Blast are not allowed.

Prohibited Equipment: In addition to flight systems (see above), the GM may select any mecha equipment to disallow. Some suggestions include: shields, claws and melee weapons, space skin, stealth suite, and zero-g stabilizer.

UNUSUAL MECHA TYPE

NANOSWARM MECHA (PL 8)

This advanced mecha type – which may be used in conjunction with any existing type of mecha such as quadrupedal, armless, or six-legged – is constructed as per the SRD rules for mecha design and, in most cases, functions exactly like any other mecha design.

What makes a nanoswarm mecha unique is that the mecha is actually composed of millions of nanites that, at the mecha pilot's command, swarm over the pilot and form into the mecha. A second command rips the mecha apart, each of the nanites separating and moving to a distance no greater than 40 ft. from the pilot. The pilot of a nanoswarm mecha, when not piloting the mecha, is surrounded by a thin, fog-like haze of nanites, the tiny robots constantly swirling around his body.

To activate or deactivate a mecha swarm requires a full-round action – the pilot's body carries millions of nanites that are attuned to his brain waves and little more than a thought is required.

On the round after the command is given the pilot is inside his mecha. The nanoswarm mecha will not form in a space that is too small for the mecha design to function in — the full-round action is lost.

The nanites include nanomachines that create replacement nanites, the colony constantly working to stay alive. A nanoswarm mecha that takes damage automatically repairs itself at the rate of 1 hit point per round. If the mecha is ever reduced to 0 hit points it is completely destroyed — there are no surviving nanites to continue rebuilding the colony.

A nanoswarm mecha equipped with a nanorepair unit heals 6 points of damage each round.

Nanoswarm mecha are a specialized type of utility fog (see the SRD).

Equipment Slots: 0.
Activation: None or full-round action (see text).
Range: Personal.
Target: You.
Duration: Persistent.
Saving Throw: None.
Base Purchase DC Modifier: +20.
Restrictions: Restricted (+2).

MISCELLANEOUS EQUIPMENT

REENTRY SHIELD (PL 6)

The mecha is equipped with a retractable heat shield that protects it from the extreme temperatures of entering a planet's atmosphere. Once the mecha enters a planet's atmosphere it will need a flight system or a parachute, otherwise it falls to the planet's surface (a fall from such a great height that mecha is automatically destroyed — no saves and do not roll for damage.

Deploying or retracting a reentry shield requires a full-round action. During the 4d6 rounds entry into a planet's atmosphere requires a mecha with a deployed reentry shield is blinded.

A mecha without this device — or one with the device retracted during reentry — that enters a planet's atmosphere suffers 8d6 points of fire damage per round and is blinded and helpless for the 4d6 rounds entry into a planet's atmosphere requires. If a mecha is destroyed during reentry its parts rain over the planet's surface, debris spread along the mecha's flight path.

A reentry shield must be properly maintained; after each use a DC 10 Repair check requiring 1 hour of time must be made. If a reentry shield is used before this check is successfully made the mecha suffers 1d6 points of fire damage per round during reentry. The DC of the Repair check increases by +5 — and the fire damage during reentry increases by +1d6 — each time the device is used without being maintained. The reentry fire damage caps at 8d6.

A mecha equipped with a reentry shield has one less equipment slot.

Equipment Slots: 1 (equivalent).
Activation: None or full-round action (see text).
Range: Personal.
Target: You.
Duration: Persistent.
Saving Throw: None.
Purchase DC: 20.
Restrictions: Licensed (+1).

COCKPIT, COMMAND CENTER (PL 6)

This specialized passenger cockpit — which is so large that it may only be mounted in the torso of a colossal mecha — consists primarily of a massive bank of computers and video displays and satellite and radio communications gear that creates a network tying the mecha equipped with the command center and up to six other mecha (equipped with slave centers, see below) together. When a competent leader is riding in a command cockpit (any character with at least one leadership talent) all mecha tied to the network gain the following advantages:

■ Each mecha in the network, including the mecha equipped with the command center, gain a +1 bonus on attack rolls and saving throws for each mecha in the network (up to one-half the leader's character level, rounded down). *Example: A 9th-level leader with a network of 6 mecha gives each mecha a +4*

bonus. This bonus represents the leader directing fire, using the video feeds from all of the mecha to determine the best angle of attack.

■ The number of allies that may benefit from the leader's Coordinate talent is increased by +2.

■ The morale bonus to saving throws granted by the leader's Inspiration talent is increased by +2 (to a total of +4). If the leader has the Greater Inspiration talent then the total morale bonus is +5.

■ All mecha pilots tied to the network gain a +1 bonus to Spot and Listen checks for each mecha in the network.

Equipment Slots: 4.
Activation: None.
Range: 100-ft. As long as a mecha is no more than 100-ft. from another mecha in the chain the system functions. If the chain is broken the network collapses.
Target: You and up to six allied mecha equipped with slave centers.
Duration: Persistent.
Saving Throw: None.
Purchase DC: 25.
Restriction: Restricted (+2).

SLAVE CENTER (PL 6)

A slave center is a small computer system that ties a mecha into a command center's network. A slave center works with only one command center — reprogramming a slave center to work with a different network requires a Computer Use check (DC 15) and two hours.

Equipment Slots: None.
Activation: None.
Range: 100-ft. Moving more than 100-ft. from the another mecha in the chain removes the mecha from the network.
Target: You and a command center's network.
Duration: Persistent.
Saving Throw: None.
Purchase DC: 15.
Restriction: Restricted (+2).

BACKUP SYSTEMS (PL 7)

Select any two pieces of mecha equipment when this device is installed. The first time a device with backup systems is affected by a critical hit the critical has no effect — the device operates as if it had not been damaged by the attack. A second critical on an affected device is treated normally as per the future rules. Repairing a system that has suffered its first critical requires 1 hour of work and a successful Repair check (DC 15).

A mecha equipped with backup systems has one less equipment slot. A mecha can take this device multiple times, each time applying its benefits to two different pieces of mecha equipment.

Equipment Slots: 1 (equivalent).
Activation: None.
Range: Personal.
Target: You.
Duration: Persistent.
Saving Throw: None.
Purchase DC: 22.
Restriction: None.

MECHA DESIGNS

NINJA STEALTH UNIT (PL 7)

Combining a stealth suite and climbing spikes, the Ninja's most common means of approach is from above — climbing across walls, hanging from bridges, and doing anything it can to get above the battlefield a Ninja is most effective when it can perform hit and fade attacks. When a Ninja pilot finds himself cornered the inertial inhibitor can help to protect it as the pilot searches for a means of escape.

A Ninja installed with the standard equipment package (see below) has a base purchase DC of 45.
Size: Large.
Bonus Hit Points: 100.
Superstructure: Neutronite.
Hardness: 25.
Armor: Crystal Carbon.
Bonus to Defense: +10.
Armor Penalty: -8.
Reach: 10 ft.

Strength Bonus: +8.
Dexterity Penalty: −.
Speed: 30 ft..
Base Purchase DC: 44.

Standard Equipment Package: Pilot's cock-pit (torso and back), retractable climbing spikes (1 slot equivalent), inertial inhibitor (1 slot equivalent), stealth suite (boots), PS-25 Tiger Claws (right arm), external equipment pod (shoulders), M-75 Cricket Rocket Launcher and six extra rockets (external equipment pod), comm. system (no slots).

ROBOTS

AQUABOT VII (PL 6)

Ceding to population and resource pressures on the surface world, the Fusion Age saw a serious population migration into the undersea realms. Emerging technologies allowed entire underwater cities to be constructed, and leading the forefront of such construction was the Peoples' Robot Company's Aquabot series.

The Aquabot series actually began in the Information Age with remote-controlled sub-mersibles that worked on oil drilling platforms and in scientific research. However, given the challenges involved in long-term construction and maintenance under the sea, the Aquabot series soon became full-fledged robots.

The Aquabot VII series was designed to function in shallow waters (500 feet depth or less) as that was were the vast majority of construction took place. As a result, unlike the series VII, which were massively armored and reinforced machines designed for deepwater operations, series VII robots are not actually significantly different from their land- or space-based brethren.

AQUABOT VII

Purchase DC: 31
Restriction: Licensed (+1).
Charles: CR 1; Medium construct; HD 1d10+10; hp 15; Mas ——; Init +0; Spd 30 ft., swim 30 ft.; Defense 11, touch 11, flatfooted 10; BAB +0; Grp +1; Atk +2 melee (1d3+2 nonlethal, 2 hands) or +1 ranged; FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; SQ construct traits, critical systems, darkvision 120 ft., lifelike appearance, resistance acid/cold/electricity/fire 10; AL Owner; SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +0; AP 0; Rep +0; Str 14, Dex 13, Con -, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 5.

Skills: Craft (structural) +8, Listen +4, Navigate +10, Repair +8, Spot +2.
Feats: N/A
Equipment: N/A

ServBot has the following systems and accessories:
Frame: Biodroid
Locomotion: Legs (pair) and aquapeller
Manipulators: Hands (2).
Armor: N/A
Sensors: Class V sensor system (sonar version).
Skill Software: Language chip (Owner's language), Craft (structural) progit (8 ranks), Repair progit (8 ranks).
Feat Software: N/A
Ability Upgrades: Dexterity upgrade, Strength upgrade.
Accessories: AV transmitter, survivor array, tool mount (usually fusion torch) with vocalizer.

VEHICLES

MILITARY HOVERVEHICLE

M-21 "Wild Weasel" Scout Hoverbike (PL 6)

A true tour-de-force in military scout hover-bikes, the M-21 "Wild Weasel" is a lightly armored, fully canopied hoverbike. It is one square wide and two squares long.

Although not as fast as most civilian hoverbikes, the M-21 is just as maneuverable, which is quite a feat considering the additional mass in terms of arms and armor the bike carries. Other important points:

■ The full, armored canopy provides all-weather capability.
■ Although there is room for a passenger aboard the M-21, this is for emergencies only. Standard protocol calls for operation by a single rider; the spare seat is usually used to carry cargo.
■ The M-21 is armed with a front-mounted LLG (light laser gun). The LLG is fixed, meaning that the M-21's operator lines up the shot by maneuvering the bike into position. The LLG draws power from the reactor, obviating the need for a power pack.

■ Standard equipment for an M-21 operator includes a personal sidearm and light combat or scout armor.
■ The operator's helmet's visor includes HUD capability (with vehicle link HUD software) mated to the M-21's onboard computer via a fiber-optic cable as well as low-light visual capabilities.
■ M-21 standard equipment includes GPS, Class II Sensor Array (see Mecha Sensor Systems), and Comm System including satellite link.
■ Optional systems (usually assigned only to elite or high-risk units) includes a sealed life-support system (see Mecha Miscellaneous Equipment), and a Stealth Suite (see Mecha Miscellaneous Equipment).

Crew: 1
Passenger: 1
Cargo: T
Init: +1
Maneuver: +2
Top Speed: 350 (35)
Defense: 10
Hardness: 10
Hit Points: 18
Size: M
Purchase DC: 38
Restriction: Military (+3)

XENOBIOLOGY

XENOBIOLOGICAL HAZARDS

Mutagenic Slime (CR 5)

Dark gray in color, mutagenic slime is wet and sticky and clings to walls, ceilings, and floors in patches, growing and spreading as it consumes organic matter. Like most other slimes, mutagenic slime drops from walls and ceilings when it detects movement (and possible food) below.

A single 5-foot square of mutagenic slime deals 1d2 points of Constitution damage per round while it devours flesh. On the first round of contact, the slime can be scraped off a creature, but after that it must be frozen, burned, or cut away (dealing damage to the victim as well). For every 3 points of Constitution damage a patch of mutagenic slime inflicts on a character or creature the target of the slime's attack must instantly roll on the mutation drawbacks table (see the future SRD); the target suffers from this drawback for 1d4+1 hours after which point the target's body reverts, shrugging off the drawback, though the ordeal leaves the victim fatigued.

Mutagenic slime has no effect against wood, metal, or stone. An injection of sporekill or 15 or more points of cold or fire damage destroys a 5-foot patch of mutagenic slime.

Temporal Fog (CR —)

This thick, black cloud rolls slowly across the landscape of alien worlds that have been subjected to a barrage of devastating temporal anomalies. On some worlds that have seen thousands of temporal gateways — either natural or man-made — temporal fog can grow to cover miles of area at once. Fortunately for most, though, a typical patch of temporal fog appears as a 20-ft. cube.

Any character or creature entering a temporal fog is negatively affected, the fog instantly advancing their age by 2d4 years (a successful Will save [DC 15] reduces this time to 1d4 years). This adverse effect on the character or creature's age happens each time that the fog is entered.

A patch of temporal fog moves at a rate of 20 ft. — in a random direction — and cannot be dissipated. The only thing that can be done is to wait for the fog to cease to exist on its own; a temporal fog patch has a natural lifespan of 1-2 hours per 5-foot square that it covers.

There have been reports of temporal fogs that act as gateways in time, opening a portal to either a time in the distant past or the distant future. Such fogs still negatively affect the age of anyone that enters them.

ALIEN SPECIES

Faluth

QUOTE

"It is a great pleasure to meet a fellow traveler of the Harmony."

SUMMARY

A faluth (singular or plural) is a thin, muscular humanoid with soft, moist skin that ranges in color from an emerald green to a sky blue.

A faluth's head most closely resembles that of a terran salamander. It features a pair of slit-like nostrils, gills where one would normally expect ears, and a wide mouth filled with small, fine teeth. These teeth are ineffective at chewing food and instead are used for catching and holding prey; faluth swallow their food whole or cut it up into mouth-size pieces. The eyes of a faluth are large

and set to the side of its head, with jet-black pupils in white irises. Although it has no visible ears, a faluth hears almost as well as a human.

Faluth speak their own language and can learn to speak others as well. They see as well as a human, although their color perception is particularly vivid. Their sense of taste and smell are not as developed as those of humans, but they have a finer sense of touch.

The typical faluth stands between 5 and 5 1/2 feet tall and weighs100 lbs.

Most faluth are deeply spiritual, concerned with living in harmony with their immediate surroundings and the universe. Faluth tend to be peace-loving and always seek to find a compromise or to leave when conflict arises; they resort to violence only as a last resort and then only to preserve their (or others') lives.

Faluth enjoy all manner of arts, from music to theatre, as well as philosophical discussions about the nature of the universe and everyone's place in it. Politics and religion leave them cold as they see such artificial constructs as interfering with the natural harmony.

Faluth are not materialistic, finding that possessions beyond those required for daily survival are nothing more than an unnecessary burden. Consequently, they are not impressed with science of any kind, simply accepting that things work as they do and that what other species call technological progress only makes things more complicated and removes those species from the true meaning of existence.

Faluth are equally accepting of all other species, seeing them as simply another facet of existence; they are absolutely not prejudicial. Of course, those species that do not reciprocate soon find themselves being ignored by the faluth. Although many faluth are honest and guileless, experience quickly teaches them that other species do not share their inclinations to honesty.

Faluth heroes are usually misfits who wanted something more than they found on their homeworld or, much more rarely, outcasts that could not fit in. Many faluth heroes travel the universe on a sort of spiritual quest, joining up with whomever accepts them and exulting in the experiences they have.

HOMEWORLD

Faluth is entirely covered by water dotted by thousands of small islands. These islands, which are rarely larger than a couple of square miles in size and one-to-two hundred feet in thickness, are free-floating and driven by the currents along the planet's surface.

Clouds and rain are a constant on Faluth and even when it is not raining, the air is very warm and humid. The waters of Faluth are teeming with aquatic life in all forms and the faluth diet consists of eating small marine creatures and various aquatic plants.

SPECIES PROGRESS LEVEL

PL 1 (baseline human PL −6). The faluth homeworld's environment and lack of easily accessible resources virtually prevents the development of technology (there's no need for shelter and plenty of food) while the fact that the Faluth live in extended family groups on small islands means that socially society is also little advanced. This situation is unlikely to change without outside interference.

Faluth have no written language, passing along their knowledge as oral history. Faluth *taiman*, akin to the historical humand bards and druids, serve as the repositories for Faluth knowledge and travel between islands gathering, preserving, and sharing that knowledge.

EQUIPMENT

Faluth never carry any kind of equipment beyond perhaps a sharp rock or shell used to cut up larger food. Given their amphibious nature and aquatic lifestyle, faluth do not wear clothing of any kind on their homeworld. Off their homeworld they wear whatever clothing is deemed appropriate in order to fit in and not be disharmonious (although they will shed such clothing as frequently as possible).

AGE

Child	1-8
Young Adult	9-12
Adult	13-35
Middle Age	36-50
Old	51-65
Venerable	66+

HEIGHT AND WEIGHT

Base Height – Male	4'10"+2d4
Base Weight – Male	90 lb. x(1d6 lb.)
Base Height – Female	4'8" +2d4
Base Weight – Female	85 lb. x(1d6 lb.)

SPECIES TRAITS

Type: Humanoid (faluth)

Size: Medium-size. Faluth have no special bonuses or penalties due to their size

Ability Modifiers: +2 Constitution, +2 Strength, +2 Dexterity, -2 Intelligence, -2 Charisma. Despite their small size, faluth are more physically fit and capable than humans but less interested in concrete knowledge and are anything but aggressive in their personality.

Speed: 40 feet, swim 40 feet. Faluth are very athletic and quick.

Armor Restrictions: Faluth do not like wearing armor, finding it confining and restrictive. A faluth that does not have the appropriate Armor Proficiency will not wear armor under any circumstances; if it is put on the faluth against his or her will, the faluth will take it off at the earliest opportunity and is unable to do anything otherwise until he or she does.

Even with the appropriate Armor Proficiency, a faluth only gets a portion of the armor's equipment bonus to Defense (as if he or she were not proficient).

Amphibious (Ex): Faluth can breathe and survive equally well in air and water.

Low-Light Vision (Ex): Faluth can see twice as far as humans in poor lighting conditions. Faluth can still distinguish colors, even in dim lighting.

Bonus Feat: Faluth gain the bonus feats Acrobatic and Athletic.

Level Adjustment: +0

RUMORS

USING THE RUMORS

The rumors that follow may be sprinkled liberally in a campaign either as written or modified by the GM. GMs should always be prepared for the situations, characters, and locations discussed in any rumor to leap to the forefront of the game session; you never know what bit of information the players will grab and run with.

When in any cantina, hangar bay, powerstation, or similar establishment where men and women gather, select a rumor (or two or three) from this PDF and have each player make a *Gather Information* check and then check the roll against the chosen rumor(s).

I've discovered that rumors work especially well if, after the *Gather Information* check is rolled, you give the PCs first the failed result (if they made their roll) and then, shortly after, give them the successful result. This adds some roleplaying opportunities and, I've found, encourages the PCs to talk over the false rumor before discovering the truth.

Each rumor follows the format:

RUMOR HEADING (GATHER INFORMATION DC)

Failed *Gather Information* Check: If the check is failed this is what the PCs hear. A section of this entry is to be read aloud to the players though many GMs will choose to paraphrase the information (especially if any of it needs to be tweaked to better fit the campaign). This entry also discloses the source of the rumor.

Successful *Gather Information* Check: If the check succeeds this is what the PCs hear. Again, this entry is intended to be read aloud and gives the source of the rumor.

THE RUMORS

AN ALIEN INFORMATION STORAGE FACILITY HAS BEEN DISCOVERED (DC 15) (PL 7)

Failed *Gather Information* Check: "It was either in the Steber-Kaletsky system or the Astrakathka Sphere, I can't remember exactly, but I swear they found an entire orbital station packed with alien databanks and memory cylinders. Zeb, he's my bunkmate on *Dorian's Legacy*, told me he was there when they first found the alien library last year. He even managed to steal a treasure from the facility and gave it to me."

If the player characters ask about the stolen treasure the man hesitates and then reached into a pocket in his jacket. "Now keep this bit here quiet, especially since Zeb could get in big trouble if anyone found out, but this here is a genuine alien artifact off of that library station." The man shows the player characters a small metallic disc with a single clear gem mounted in the center. None of the player characters recognize the item though a successful Knowledge (technology) (DC 25) check identifies the object as human-created and not alien in nature. The man will sell the object — purchase DC value of 15 — but he refuses to accompany them to search for the station and tells them that Zeb is away on vacation right now. He's not sure where Zeb went.

Source: Tomas Ferrara **[male human, Charismatic Ordinary 4, 15 hp],** a clean-shaven man in his late thirties dressed in a fashionable bodysuit and synthleather jacket. Ferrara is a con-man attempting to unload the last item linking him to a robbery. There is no alien information facility — Ferrara has been planting this rumor for the last few weeks and is using it to sell of prototype items he stole. Once this item is sold Ferrara will vanish. There is no "Zeb."

Successful *Gather Information* Check: "Watch out for that one, he's wanted in six systems for burglary, numerous con jobs, and and one count of murder. I've already alerted station security and they're on the way to arrest him."

If the player characters purchased the "alien treasure" and show it to the woman she looks it over. "Looks like a piece of Mallah-Hirata Corporation tech — see this small MHC etched into the outer edge — but I've no idea what it is."

Source: Stephanie Knighton **[female human, Smart Ordinary 5, 15 hp],** an elderly woman wearing a gray dress that's almost the exact same color as her hair. Knighton is a research scientist on the Lucifer's Vial, a military science vessel currently docked with the station for refueling and to take on supplies. Knighton offers to purchase the item so that she can study it — she'll pay up to twice what the player characters paid for the object.

Follow Up: If the player characters set off in search of the "alien facility" all they'll find is a Mallah-Hirata Corporation research station in the Astrakathka Sphere. The station refuses admittance of any non-authorized personnel — except in an emergency situation — and if the Corporation learns that the player characters possess the item (which is an advanced laser aperture) they'll either offer to buy it back or attempt to steal it. The item is almost priceless to the right people since it represents a significant leap forward in laser weapon technology.

Follow Up: If the PCs choose to investigate the rumor this information will help the GM to prepare for what could happen.

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