

YEAR OF SCOURED STARS
STARFINDER SOCIETY SCENARIO #1-39, TIER 7-10

STARFINDER[®]

SOCIETY

THE HERALD'S WAR

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HOW TO PLAY

Starfinder Society Scenario #1-39: The Herald's War is a Starfinder Society Scenario designed for 7th- through 10th-level characters (Tier 7-10; Subtiers 7-8 and 9-10). This scenario is designed for play in the Starfinder Society Roleplaying Guild campaign, but can easily be adapted for use with any world. For more information on the Roleplaying Guild, how to read the attached Chronicle sheets, and how to find games in your area, check out the campaign's home page at StarfinderSociety.club.



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GM RESOURCES

The Herald's War makes use of the *Starfinder Core Rulebook*. This adventure assumes the GM has access to these sourcebooks. All rules referenced in this adventure are available in the free online *Starfinder Reference Document* at sfrd.info.

SCENARIO TAGS

Scenario tags provide additional information about an adventure's contents. For more information on scenario tags, see Chapter 1 of the *Starfinder Society Roleplaying Guild Guide*.

 **FACTION (SECOND SEEKERS [JADNURA])**

 **FACTION (SECOND SEEKERS [LUWAZI ELSEBO])**

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THE HERALD'S WAR

BY MIKKO KALLIO



The jinsuls are a race of xenophobic chitinous creatures who have spent the past year terrorizing countless civilizations across the Vast. Their history is inexorably linked with that of their ancestral home, a trinary star system known as the Scoured Stars. Long ago, the jinsuls were one of many species who lived within the system, and they practiced a hardline religion in service to the deity of the Scoured Stars: Kadrical the Preserver. Over time, the jinsuls became the most devout of Kadrical's servants, though their dutiful service to religion faltered as the covetous Kadrical kept the Scoured Stars sealed off from the rest of the universe for millennia. When Kadrical's barrier around the Scoured Stars did eventually fall, the jinsuls and seven other civilizations struck off into the unknown of the Vast and made new lives for themselves.

In the Vast, the jinsuls made a new home on the world of Rax (detailed further in *Starfinder Society #1-34: Heart of the Foe*) where they eventually built their society in service of a group of jinsul heroes. A relic sent by Kadrical to entice the jinsuls to return was defiled, and the heroes drank its powers to become deathless beings powered by a sliver of divine energy. Eventually, Kadrical dispatched his most fervent servant, the divine herald Dhurus, to return the jinsuls to the fold. While Dhurus succeeded in topping the deathless leaders (gruesomely affixing their bodies to the prow of the jinsuls' greatest starship), the jinsuls' destruction of their relic made it impossible to return to the Scoured Stars unaided.

Only a year ago, nominated First Seeker Luwazi Elsebo brought the Starfinder Society together for a mission to rescue Starfinders trapped during the Scoured Stars Incident (events detailed in *Starfinder Society #1-99: The Scoured Stars Invasion*). During the course of this mission, the Society battled returning jinsuls and managed to rescue the bulk of the stranded agents, along with the missing First Seeker Jadrnura. While the overall mission succeeded, the Society's efforts in reopening the Scoured Stars also granted the jinsuls, under Dhurus's harsh direction, the opportunity to return to their ancestral homeland.

For the past two years, the Society has encountered some of the other civilizations that long ago departed the Scoured Stars. One of these groups was the Kreiholm Freehold, who struck out into the Vast and settled in a partly inhabited solar system, where they worked with the local species to form a unified government.

Where in the Universe?

The Herald's War takes place in a binary solar system in the Vast known as Saaruq-Ruaan. Saaruq is a yellow dwarf star orbited by eight planets. A federation of species known as the Kreiholm Freehold settled on several of these worlds centuries ago, where they maintain an isolated and peaceful society to the present day.

The Kreiholm Freehold has remained distant from galactic affairs, despite maintaining a sizable fleet for defensive purposes. The jinsuls attempted to coax members of the Freehold back to the Scoured Stars and service of Kadrical. During a recent mission, the Starfinder Society helped the Freehold drive back an advance jinsul invasion force, saving a high-ranking Freehold leader (detailed in *Starfinder Society #1-29: Honorbound Emissaries*). Though the Starfinders aided the Freehold in this initial skirmish, the jinsuls have continued their aggression by dispatching more and more ships into Freehold space.

As this adventure begins, the jinsuls have massed their largest fleet yet for a direct assault against the Kreiholm Freehold. Hierarch Kraaton, one of the jinsuls' most prominent religious leaders, has taken personal command of the incursion fleet and intends to see the Freehold submit or burn. Kraaton intends to crush the remaining Freehold forces and then proceed to bombard the Freehold worlds until they capitulate and return to the Scoured Stars—or die as unworthy traitors!

SUMMARY

The PCs travel to Saaruq-Ruaan in the Vast as part of a large Starfinder fleet to help the Kreiholm Freehold break an ongoing jinsul siege. The PCs' starship arrives in the midst of a massive space battle, and the joint First Seekers provide the PCs with orders to assist the Kreiholm defenders. After the PCs and their allies score a few tactical victories against the jinsul fleet, the jinsuls withdraw from the immediate battle zone to regroup for their next attack.

Scaling Authority Tower Meeting

The Herald's War uses many skill checks in several encounters. Instead of all skill check DCs being listed individually, the skill checks are each assigned a difficulty—Easy, Average, or Hard—that determines their DC.

SKILL CHECK DCs

Subtier	Easy	Average	Hard
7-8 (4 players)	16	21	27
7-8 (5+ players)	18	23	29
9-10 (4 players)	19	24	30
9-10 (5+ players)	21	26	32

The First Seekers summon the PCs to negotiate an alliance with Speaks Forgotten Words and other representatives of the Kreiholm Freehold. The Society's optimal plan is to force the jinsul invasion fleet out of the Kreiholm Freehold and then pursue the jinsuls back to the Scoured Stars. In order to help arrange this, the PCs must successfully influence various members of the Freehold to earn their support. Following this, the immediate battle plan shifts to having the PCs infiltrate the jinsuls' command carrier and defeat Hierarch Kraaton. The Society and Freehold agree that the loss of the jinsuls' most senior leader, along with the unexpected Starfinder presence, should cause the remains of the jinsul fleet to retreat back to the Scoured Stars.

After agreeing to the plan, while the starships of the new Starfinder-Kreiholm alliance provide cover, the PCs put their starship crew skills to the test as they slip through the jinsul formation and skillfully avoid the defenses of the hierarch's command carrier, trying to land onboard the massive command ship before the jinsuls realize what is happening. The jinsul crew mounts a hasty defense as the PCs enter the hangar bay. At the same time, more and more jinsul ships start entering the star system, and while the PCs are fighting, they receive distressed messages from the allied fleet. After the initial battle to breach the outer defenses, the PCs clear the path to the vast command chamber at the center of the ship.

Surrounded by many religious objects venerating both Dhurus and Kadrical, the PCs battle against the jinsul leader, the Hierarch Kraaton, in a climactic showdown. Meanwhile, a new fleet led by Iteration-177 exits the Drift and joins the allied fleet, and

soon the Starfinders and their allies gain the upper hand. As the hierarch falls, its body rises from the ground as though it were a puppet on invisible strings. The divine herald Dhurus, far off in the Scoured Stars, uses its connection with the fervent jinsul hierarch to manifest into its body. As Dhurus taunts the PCs on the pointlessness of their struggle, an epic showdown ensues as the PCs face off against the divine herald.

Once the reanimated foe falls, the hierarch's body crumbles and Dhurus' presence within the system disappears. As the exterior space battle winds down, the remnants of the defeated jinsul fleet escape into the Drift, bound back to the Scoured Stars for new orders. In the debriefing, the PCs meet with Iteration-177 and learn stunning news that could change the course of the conflict with the jinsuls. The First Seekers also reveal their plan: the Society and their allies must return to the Scoured Stars and defeat the jinsul menace.

GETTING STARTED

The PCs begin the adventure aboard Jadnura's personal flagship, the *Perfect Silence*, along with a fleet of other Starfinder Society vessels that make their way to the Saaruq-Ruaan binary star system.

Read or paraphrase the following to get the adventure under way.

On the bridge of the *Perfect Silence*, the First Seekers Luwazi Elsebo and Jadnura stand in front of a large tactical screen. The screen shows the Saaruq solar system, where numerous blips of different colors indicate fleet positions and other strategic information.

Jadnura and Luwazi turn away from the screen. "It is good to see you all," Luwazi says in a formal tone. Jadnura walks a few steps away from the screen, puts each of his four hands on his hips, and nods approvingly before deferring to Luwazi to continue. "You are some of our most trusted and experienced Starfinders, and I'm glad that you're able to join our fleet in this very demanding mission.

"Months ago, a group of Starfinders investigated a previously uncharted star system, hoping to find a lost civilization that might have more information about the warlike species we've come to know as jinsuls. They succeeded and discovered a civilization we've come to know as the Kreiholm Freehold, and much like jinsuls, they originated from the Scoured Stars. Once the Starfinders located the Freehold's new home in the binary star system of Saaruq-Ruaan and traveled there, they realized that the jinsuls had begun a full-blown invasion of the star system. Those agents managed to rescue an important council member, which greatly helped us establish diplomatic relations with the Freehold."



Jadnura

Jadnura waves of his hands and the view on the tactical screen changes to show dozens of Starfinder ships in a vast formation. The kasatha speaks with deliberate emphasis. "When the Starfinders returned with news of the jinsuls' expansionist actions, we started to muster all of the Starfinder Society's available starships in preparation for this mission. Our main objective is to assist in relieving the Kreiholm Freehold from an ongoing jinsul attack. This is also in part a diplomatic mission—we hope we can convince the Kreiholm Freehold that the jinsuls are a threat that must be stopped, lest they keep building their forces and maintain their offensive. Hopefully, we can forge an alliance with the Freehold and they'll join us in a future strike on the Scoured Stars to put an end to this threat."

Luwazi nods, sharing a concerned look with Jadnura. "We'll be exiting the Drift into the Saaruq solar system, and once we get there, it's going to be a rough ride. Be prepared for anything. If you have any questions, ask them now."

Luwazi indicates that the PCs must choose which starship frame they'll take: the Drake or the Pegasus. She mentions that the Drake's combat ability is more likely to be useful in the mission because the objective is to repel the jinsul invasion fleet.

Luwazi and Jadnura do their best to answer any questions the PCs may have about the mission.

What can you tell about the jinsul invasion fleet? [Jadnura]

"In the aftermath of the Starfinder Society's rescue mission to the Scoured Stars, the Jinsul Hierocracy reclaimed the trinary system. Since then, the jinsuls have dispatched expeditions to many solar systems. They seem to believe they're tasked with a divine mandate to reunite the species that departed from the Scoured Stars in the distant past and create an interstellar empire with their priests—under the divine herald Dhurus—in control. Recently, they dispatched demagogues to convince the Kreiholm Freehold's leadership to return to the Scoured Stars. The Freehold rebuked these jinsul agitators and believed their dealings with their old neighbors to be finished. Unfortunately, the jinsuls had other plans. According to intelligence reports, they have completed construction on a war fleet, having converted the Scoured Stars into a massive factory for war material. They launched a war fleet with the goal of forcibly conquering the Kreiholm Freehold, starting with Saaruq's outermost planetoids. We believe a high-ranking religious figure—a hierarch—leads this jinsul fleet."

Who are the Kreiholm Freehold? [Luwazi] "They are one of the eight civilizations that left the Scoured Stars thousands of years ago. So far, the Society has encountered three species belonging to the Freehold: the bat-like nelentus and gaseous thyrs, both of which originated in the Scoured Stars, and the amphibious syngnathrixes, who are native to Saaruq-5. There are several habitable planets in the system that host other sapient species who have joined the Freehold. One of the Freehold's leaders is a thyrs named Speaks Forgotten Words, whom Starfinders rescued during a recent clash with the jinsuls."

What do you know about the Saaruq-Ruaan star system?

[Luwazi] "It is a binary star system in the Vast that the Starfinder Society explored only recently. Saaruq is a yellow dwarf star orbited by eight planets, while Ruaan is red dwarf star with three planets. A multiplanetary federation known as the Kreiholm Freehold settled on several of the planets orbiting Saaruq centuries ago, where they have maintained an isolated and peaceful society to the present day. The system's outermost habitable planet, Saaruq 5, is the site of the ongoing jinsul invasion."

Boon Allocations: Have the PCs finalize their boon slots for the session after their briefing with Luwazi and Jadnura. As the two faction leaders' presence implies, this scenario is very important to both the Second Seekers (Luwazi Elsebo) and the Second Seekers (Jadnura) factions, and PCs should be encouraged to slot one of these two factions in their Faction boon slot.

A. BURNING SKIES (CR 9 OR CR 11)

Luwazi Elsebo sends a message to every vessel in the Starfinder fleet, ordering each of the ships to exit the Drift. One by one, the ships disappear out of the Drift and arrive moments later near the planet Saaruq-5. There, dozens of Kreiholm and jinsul ships dart around each other, already engaged in intense firefights. Blinding flashes of laser cannons and plasma appear in fantastic displays over the blue-green surface of Saaruq-5.



Shortly after exiting the Drift, the PCs receive additional orders from First Seeker Jadnura: "Get to your battle stations! Our fleet is deploying to assist the Kreiholm Freehold's ships and engage these damned jinsuls. You have a special task—our analysts have identified an unexpected threat. The enemy has deployed a new type of starship, and they're mercilessly taking down several of our ships trying to join the Kreiholm Freehold's defense. Destroy those new jinsul ships before they cause more trouble!"

Luwazi
Elsebo



A. BURNING SKIES

▼ PC'S STARTING POSITION

1 SQUARE = 5 FEET

STARFINDER FLIP-MAT: BASIC STARFIELD

- ▲ SUPPLICANT-CLASS STARSHIPS
- ▲ JINSUL UNITS
- ▲ FRIENDLY UNITS
- DANGER ZONE

Hazards: The following hazards complicate this encounter.

Friendly and Enemy Starships—Ships marked on the map as jinsul units represent the jinsul assault fleet while friendly units represent the defenders of Saaruq-5, comprising the Kreiholm Freehold's fleet as well as the recently arrived Starfinder fleet. If the PCs move through a hex occupied by a jinsul ship (or a jinsul ship moves through the defending fleet), an enemy ship fires a laser cannon (gunnery +13 in Subtier 7-8, gunnery +17 in Subtier 9-10; 4d8 damage to a random quadrant in both Subtiers). The GM should advise the players that these ships are not active threats and that the PCs should not waste their actions on attacking them. If the PCs attack these ships regardless, they receive a vexed message from Jadrura, telling them to stop wasting time and to focus on firing at the two more dangerous ships.

Threat Zone—The shaded hexes between friendly and jinsul battle formations represent crossfires and smaller vessels performing attack runs. If a starship flies through these hexes, enemies fire on their ship as though it were flying through an enemy ship's hex (see above), with the following adjustments: for the purpose of determining which quadrant the attack targets, there is a 50:50 chance the attack comes from a Starfinder ship or a jinsul ship. The pilot of the ship entering the threat zone can attempt an Average Piloting check to avoid getting attacked while entering the area, provided that the pilot does not attempt any other stunts on the same turn. A starship ending its turn in one of these hexes may not attempt the Piloting check to avoid the attack.

Starship Combat: Upon receiving Jadrura's orders, starship combat immediately begins. The new ships that Jadrura ordered the PCs to destroy represent a recent evolution in jinsul technology. The jinsul captain typically fires one of the ship's weapons rather than supporting their crew. The jinsul pilot typically uses the evade action and maneuvers to offer the best arc of fire against foes. The jinsul gunners generally make single shots but sometimes use the Fire at Will action if it seems easy to hit the PCs' ship. The science officer rebalances shields when necessary, but they usually use the target system action to target the PCs' starship's engines.

SUBTIER 7-8 (CR 8)

JINSUL SUPPLICANT-CLASS STARSHIP (2) TIER 6

Medium transport

Speed 10; **Maneuverability** average (turn 2); **Drift** 1

AC 20; **TL** 21

HP 85; **DT** –; **CT** 17

Shields light 70 (forward 25, starboard 15, port 15, aft 15)

Attack (forward) coilgun (4d4), maser (6d10)

Attack (aft) coilgun (4d4)

Attack (turret) linked coilguns (8d4)

Power Core Pulse Red (175 PCU); **Drift Engine** Signal Basic;

Systems budget medium-range sensors, crew quarters (common), mk 4 armor, mk 5 defenses, mk 2 trinode computer, self-destruct system **Expansion Bays** none

Modifiers +2 to any three checks per round; **Complement** 6

Scaling Encounter A

Make the following changes to accommodate a group of four or five PCs.

Both Subtiers: The jinsuls assembled the new supplicant-class jinsul ships hastily and there was no time to train the crews properly. If there are five PCs, the crews of both jinsul ships take a –1 penalty to all skill checks made during the starship combat, which increases to –2 if there are only four PCs. If there are only four PCs, instead of two heavy laser cannons, both jinsul ships have two light particle beams (3d6 damage) in the forward arc.

CREW

Captain Diplomacy +13 (6 ranks), Intimidate +13 (6 ranks), gunnery +15 (6 ranks)

Engineer Engineering +13 (6 ranks)

Gunners (2) gunnery +15 (6 ranks)

Pilot Piloting +18 (6 ranks)

Science Officer Computers +15 (6 ranks)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Reversible The ship's shape and the thrusters' position make it very easy to reverse its heading. The ship grants a +2 bonus to Piloting checks made to perform a flip and burn stunt.

SUBTIER 9-10 (CR 10)

JINSUL SUPPLICANT-CLASS STARSHIP (2) TIER 8

Medium transport

Speed 10; **Maneuverability** average (turn 2); **Drift** 1

AC 23; **TL** 23

HP 100; **DT** –; **CT** 20

Shields light 70 (forward 25, starboard 15, port 15, aft 15)

Attack (forward) coilgun (4d4), maser (6d10)

Attack (aft) coilgun (4d4)

Attack (turret) linked coilguns (8d4)

Power Core Pulse Red (175 PCU); **Drift Engine** Signal Basic;

Systems advanced medium-range sensors, crew quarters (common), mk 5 armor, mk 6 defenses, mk 4 trinode computer, self-destruct system **Expansion Bays** none

Modifiers +4 to any three checks per round, +4 Computers;

Complement 6

CREW

Captain Diplomacy +15 (8 ranks), Intimidate +15 (8 ranks), gunnery +17 (8 ranks)

Engineer Engineering +15 (8 ranks)

Gunners (2) gunnery +17 (8 ranks)

Pilot Piloting +20 (8 ranks)

Science Officer Computers +17 (8 ranks)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Reversible As Subtier 7-8.

Development: The PCs' defeating the two jinsul starships allows the remaining Kreiholm defenders to break through the jinsul fleet at strategic locations, which considerably weakens the jinsul fleet. The battle breaks into smaller skirmishes as the greater jinsul fleet withdraws to regroup. The First Seekers contact the PCs as detailed in the Kreiholm Covenant encounter below.

If the PCs' ship is rendered inoperative or they have to withdraw from the fight, Starfinder starships quickly come to their aid, forcing the jinsul ships to withdraw.

Rewards: If the PCs fail to defeat the enemy starships, reduce each PC's credits earned by the following amount.

Subtier 7-8: Reduce each PC's credits earned by 1,697.

Out of Subtier: Reduce each PC's credits earned by 2,688.

Subtier 9-10: Reduce each PC's credits earned by 3,679.

THE KREIHLOM COVENANT

The vicious-looking jinsul ships begin to turn away from the dissipating battle, regrouping near an enormous command carrier vessel, which occupies a strategic position between clusters of asteroids. As this occurs, the recently arrived Starfinder ships form a defensive line near Saaruq-5 along with several surviving ships of the Kreiholm Freehold defenders.

Soon after the battle's end, First Seeker Luwazi Elsebo sends a message. "Well fought, Starfinders. I must now ask you to immediately return to the *Perfect Silence* to attend an important meeting. Five representatives from the Kreiholm Freehold are set to arrive soon, and we are trying to convince them that the jinsuls are too much of a threat to merely repulse; we have to defeat them decisively. It's our goal to form an alliance and together defeat the jinsul menace. However, I fear that because the Freehold has relied on an isolationist policies for centuries, they may be hesitant to enter an alliance. You've proven yourselves capable not only today, but many times before, and I believe that you—the heroes of the Battle of Saaruq-5—may be able to convince the Freehold representatives that we are worthy of their trust, and that we are fighting for the right cause."

Once the PCs return to the *Perfect Silence*, Jadrura summons them to a meeting room where he, Luwazi Elsebo, and the Kreiholm Freehold council members await. The leader of the Kreiholm contingent is **Speaks Forgotten Words** (LG agender thyr mystic), whom the Starfinder Society rescued during a recent mission. The thyr personally greets each PC who has a Chronicle sheet from *Starfinder Society #1-29: Honorbound Emissaries*, sending a telepathic message: "Good to meet you again, and thank you again for everything you have done for the Kreiholm Freehold." Four other Freehold representatives stand around the meeting table:

Kahura (NG female nelentu), **Lieron** (LE agender matoh), **Livakian** (CG female tekian), and **Xirillis** (LN male sygnathrix).

Influence: In this encounter, the PCs must convince the five representatives that it is in the Kreiholm Freehold's best interests to forge an alliance with the Starfinder Society. Luwazi Elsebo intercepts the PCs as they enter, explaining there is no time to waste, and negotiations with these representatives must take place simultaneously. This means that five of the PCs must each choose a representative to talk to. If there are six PCs in the party, the sixth PC may attempt an aid another action during one of the negotiations. If there are only four PCs in the party, one PC can opt to talk to two of the representatives.

Before the PCs decide which representative to speak with, each PC may attempt an Average Sense Motive check for each NPC to assess their personality. If successful, the PCs find out what that council member's main political agenda or concern is as well as what skills can be used to persuade the council member and what their approximate level of difficulty is (Easy, Average, or Hard).

Each PCs' negotiation with their chosen representative begins with the representative stating that the Kreiholm Freehold must maintain a neutral stance. The GM then reveals the key skills that the PCs can use to persuade the representative to change their opinion, if the PCs have not already determined those skills. The PC must choose and attempt one of the skill checks. Encourage the players to roleplay their PCs' responses rather than just rolling the check—any PC who presents good arguments or compelling evidence from their past adventures receives a +2 bonus to their roll. Further, the Special section mentions topics that provide an additional bonus if the PC happen to use similar words or ideas to persuade the council member.

If the PC succeeds at the skill check, they successfully persuade the council member to support the Starfinder Society, and as a result, the Kreiholm Freehold pledges to commit more resources to fighting the jinsuls, as detailed in the Development section.

KAHURI

This council member resembles an anthropomorphic bat with fungal growths emerging from her head. In a whispering voice, she speaks: "We are Kahuri, representing the nelentus. You fought the new jinsul ships today, yes? Their fleet is impressive, their ships numerous and all built for war. Hmm, yes, they are. That is not to say ours aren't exceptional—they are—but they were built for defending our homes. You, your Society, you are explorers. Your fleet—no offense—is no real war fleet, either. They can outbuild, outgun, and outfight us. Today, you managed to catch the jinsuls by surprise. I do not mean to belittle your courage and skill, but can you imagine what happens next time if you aren't so lucky?"

Agenda: Kahuri is not convinced that the Kreiholm Freehold and the Starfinder Society's combined resources and technology are enough to defeat the jinsuls.

Persuasion Skills: Average Computers, Hard Diplomacy, or Average Engineering.

Special: Mentioning that it is important to attack before the jinsuls have a chance to build even more impressive fleets grants the PC a +2 bonus on the check to influence Kahuri.

LIERON

When this pale worm speaks, its mouth opens like a blooming flower, each flapping petal lined with needlelike teeth. The claws on its tiny appendages twitch in anticipation as it speaks a greeting in its gurgling voice: "I'm Lieron of the matohs. I know who you are, your leaders told me so much about you. But enough of the niceties. I've understood that your Society wants a war with the jinsuls. Wars are costly. We lost many ships today, and so did you. Many more will be lost by the end of the day and the days to come. Do you even have any idea how much they cost? Of course not, you only fly them. And who is going to pay for it all?" The worm chuckles and snorts, then continues: "Are you going to make the jinsuls pay for the war?"

Agenda: Lieron wants to ensure the financial stability of the Kreiholm Freehold.

Persuasion Skills: Hard Bluff or Average Profession (accountant, con artist, corporate professional, manager, merchant, or politician).

Special: Mentioning that war can create new business opportunities sparks Lieron's interest, giving the PC a +2 bonus on the check to influence them.

LIVAKIAN

Silvery and smooth, this three-eyed biped looks like its body is composed of mercury. Crystalline spirals on the creature's neck oscillate as it speaks: "I am Livakian. I have not met your kind before. I am one of the tekian, and we are an ancient race from the Scoured Stars. It is there where Kadrical found us when we were still young. He is a jealous and oppressive god, and when we saw our opportunity to leave, we undertook our exodus, joining with the thyrs and nelentus and never looking back. We promised ourselves never to return. If Kadrical finds us again, he will never let us go. This is why we can't join your crusade."

Agenda: Livakian wants to make sure that her people will never be subjugated by a religion again.

Persuasion Skills: Hard Culture, Hard Diplomacy, or Average Mysticism.

Special: Learning that Dhurus makes Kadrical's religion even more dangerous helps Livakian understand it's important to defeat the jinsuls, giving the PC a +2 bonus on the check to influence her.

SPEAKS FORGOTTEN WORDS

The thyrs's gaseous form swirls inside their encounter suit as they send a telepathic message: "Thank you for coming to our aid. Your leaders speak of a coming war, in which the Kreiholm Freehold

New Species

Nelentus, syngnathrixes, and thyrs were first introduced in *Starfinder Society #1-29: Honorbound Emissaries*. The following two new species also belong to the Kreiholm Freehold. The PCs can attempt an Average Culture check about each race to learn the following information.

Matoh: These pale, eyeless, and tubular creatures developed from parasitic brain worms. Each cell in their bodies simultaneously functions as a neuron, sensory receptor, and muscle cell, making them incredibly strong, intelligent, and sensitive to vibrations and changes in air pressure. Matohs have a small pair of appendages near their mouths. Their clawed fingers are similarly small but incredibly nimble. Matohs reproduce asexually by splitting into two halves, which then spend weeks in hibernation, regrowing the lost cells. Matohs evolved on Saaruq-3, where their civilization emerged from the steaming hot swamps of black mud near the equator of the planet. For a long time, Matohs held a grudge against syngnathrixes, and it took some time after their arrival to join the Freehold.

Tekian: Naturally evolved from simpler silicon-based lifeforms, tekians have become living machines with a nervous system not unlike sophisticated circuitry. Tekians require a combination of ammonia and electricity to live. A tekian's skin has a smooth, liquid appearance like mercury. A tekian's round eyes, which form a triangle on its long, oval face, are somewhat transparent. Anyone who looks deeply into a tekian's eyes can see an endless maelstrom within the creature's head. Their upper limbs are short but their fingers are long, and the knees of their long legs bend both ways. Originally from the hottest parts of the tidally locked Callion-1, tekians thrived where other organic creatures couldn't survive. Most tekians now live on Saaruq-1, which is comfortably hot for these resilient beings. Despite their construct-like appearance, they have two distinct genders.

would play an important role. While you are right that we should take the fight to the resurgent jinsuls, I must also think of those whom I represent. War is not our way. We have remained distant from galactic affairs on purpose, yet now you ask us to go to war. What shall I tell my people who only desire peace?"

Agenda: Speaks Forgotten Words is concerned about the well-being of the people and the preservation of tradition.

Persuasion Check: Easy Culture or Average Diplomacy.

Special: Mentioning that sometimes war is necessary for peace, and to preserve traditions, gives the PC +2 bonus on the check to influence Speaks Forgotten Words.



XIRILLIS

This bipedal creature resembles a human-sized cross between a chameleon and seahorse, with coral-like growths sprouting from his head. He wears jewelry of coral and glittering metal and carries a coral-tipped baton in his prehensile tail. "I am Xirillis, and I represent the sygnathrixes of the Kreiholm Freehold. I know you selflessly put yourselves in harm's way to help our people. Nonetheless, I believe this attack on our planet would never have happened, had your Society stayed out of the Scoured Stars. Here in Saaruq, we haven't known war since the Kreiholm Freehold arrived centuries ago and we joined them. The jinsuls have been born and raised as killers. They know nothing else—no fear, no remorse. We are no warriors. What chance do we have against them?"

Agenda: Xirillis does not believe his peaceful civilization is ready for war.

Persuade: Average Culture, Average Intimidate, or Average Profession (mercenary).

Special: The PC gains a +2 bonus on the check to influence Xirillis if they mention that the Kreiholm people are actually stronger because they know more about life than just war, and thus have more to fight for than the jinsuls.

CONCLUDING THE NEGOTIATIONS

After the PCs speak with each of the five representatives, Luwazi and Jadnura thank the PCs and conclude the negotiations.

Development: The PCs' successes determine how much support the Freehold provides to the Society during the following encounter (and well beyond). Regardless of the result, the First Seekers outline a plan to attack the jinsul command ship and dispatch Hierarch Kraaton, as detailed in the Eye of the Needle encounter. Further effects of the PCs' negotiations are as follows:

5 or 4 Dignitaries Influenced—Filled with determination and enthusiasm, the Kreiholm council pledges their fleet's full support to the Starfinder Society. The PCs can rely on the Kreiholm fleet's help twice during the next encounter.

3 or 2 Dignitaries Influenced—The Kreiholm council's reaction is reserved, but some of their ships join the Society's front line. The PCs can rely on the fleet's help once during the next encounter.

1 or 0 Dignitary Influenced—Hesitant, the Kreiholm council decides that they'll only bolster the Starfinder fleet's flanks, providing no direct support where the fighting is fiercest.



Livakian

THE EYE OF THE NEEDLE

With the meeting concluded, the members of the Kreiholm Freehold contingent depart, bound for their ships to relay instructions. Jadnura clasps his lower set of hands together and looks around at those still in the room. "We've no time to waste. We must plan the next phase of our mission—forcing the jinsul invasion out of the Kreiholm Freehold's star system."

Luwazi Elsebo nods and speaks: "We've analyzed reports from countless Starfinder missions over the past several months and concluded that an influential religious figure known as Hierarch Kraaton leads the fleet from a massive jinsul command carrier. As far as we know, this hierarch is one of Dhurus's most trusted commanders. The jinsuls probably expected an easy victory here, but our presence forced an unexpected stalemate. If we can defeat the hierarch, the leaderless jinsul fleet has no choice but to retreat to the Scoured Stars."

Jadnura cracks his knuckles on each of his four hands. "Your mission is one of utmost importance: fly your ship into the command carrier, fight your way to the command chamber, and defeat the hierarch. Although you will be alone aboard that ship, we will be providing you cover and clearing a path so that you can reach the command carrier before the jinsuls even realize what's happening. Let's get to work."

After the briefing, the First Seekers urge the PCs to return to their ship as quickly as possible. As promised, the Starfinder fleet (and depending on the PCs' successes, some of the Kreiholm fleet) mobilize to support the PCs' daring mission.

If a PCs scoffs at the prospect of an assassination mission, Jadnura prepares to deliver a rousing retort, but Luwazi Elsebo steps in. She explains that the jinsuls are a force that cannot be reasoned with, and that their entire society is one built around the concept of their inherent superiority to all other lifeforms of life. The Society and its allied forces must first show the jinsuls the error of their thinking before even considering negotiation.

Development: The PCs can return to their starship, which still bears the damage and scars from their previous starship battle. The PCs have only two hours to prepare for the coming battle. Once the time elapses, the PCs can launch from the Perfect Silence and begin the operation.

APPROACHING THE COMMAND CARRIER

Defensively positioned between two vast clusters of asteroids, the jinsul fleet looms in the distance. Near the blue-green world of Saaruq-5, the Starfinder fleet assumes an attack formation, and on Jadnura's command, the starships begin darting toward the enemy formation as a unified front. When the allied ships reach just outside the enemy's firing distance, Jadnura sends a message to every ship across the fleet: "There is no retreat. No surrender. Today we fight and make the jinsuls pay for their heinous actions! Make the jinsuls regret they ever stepped their chitinous feet in this star system! Starfinder fleet, attack at speed! Hold the line! Support our valiant agents in their mission!"

Immediately after Jadnura's speech, Luwazi Elsebo sends a message to the PCs: "Now! We've got your backs!"

In this encounter, the PCs must reach the jinsul command carrier. The encounter progresses through the steps listed below. During each step, each PC can attempt one of the skill checks listed in that phase. The PCs must decide who attempts which skill check or aid another check prior to rolling. Some skill checks are marked as "max 1", which means that only one PC may attempt the check; other PCs may only attempt an aid another action using that skill. Encourage the PCs to attempt all available checks, as skipping a check detracts from their overall success.

For each skill check that the PCs collectively succeed at, the PCs increase their total number of successes by one. Multiple PCs succeeding at the same check do not increase this total. For example, in the "Incoming Asteroids!" step, the PCs may increase their successes by three (for succeeding at Engineering, gunnery, and Piloting checks). These successes represent the PCs figuring out a fast but safe way to approach the carrier. The total number of successes determines how prepared the jinsul defenders are and how much damage the PCs take when the ship lands in the hangar bay (area **B**), as detailed in the Development section.

If the PCs managed to persuade at least two Kreiholm council members in the previous encounter, they can rely on the Kreiholm fleet to help them once or twice during this encounter. Calling in a favor causes the PCs to automatically succeed at any one skill check—no PC needs to attempt that check. The PCs must choose to use this option before they decide who attempts which check.

STEP 1: RAPID APPROACH

The Starfinder fleet mobilizes quickly, and the PCs' starship must quickly reach an advantageous position near the enemy formation.

Easy Piloting (max 1): The PCs quickly maneuver the ship to a tactically advantageous position.

Average Engineering: The PCs give the engines a really good boost.

STEP 2: PLOT A ROUTE

The PCs quickly plot an optimal route through the enemy jinsuls' formation.

Easy Computers: The PCs calculate an optimal route to avoid enemy contact.

Average Sense Motive: The PCs anticipate the enemy ships' moves as they prepare for a fight.

STEP 3: INCOMING ASTEROIDS!

In order to slip past the enemy's front line, the PCs must take a dangerous route through a cluster of asteroids.

Hard Piloting (max 1): The PCs evade the largest asteroids. It is possible to use Computers to perform aid another checks, calculating asteroid trajectories.

Average Gunnery: The PCs destroy incoming asteroids, clearing a route for the ship.



Speaks
Forgotten Words

Scaling Encounter B

Make the following adjustments to accommodate a group of four or five PCs.

Subtier 7-8: Remove one jinsul engineer if there are five PCs, or 2 if there are only four PCs.

Subtier 9-10: Replace the jinsul commander with a jinsul praetorian.

Average Engineering: The PCs divert more power to the shields, deflecting small asteroids.

STEP 4: FIGHT ME!

While approaching the carrier, an enemy craft challenges your ship to a dogfight, but there's no time for such monkey business.

Average Bluff (max 1): The PCs fool the enemy into thinking they're going to fight the jinsul starship.

Average Piloting (max 1): The PCs perform a well-timed barrel roll or other maneuver, deftly slipping past the enemy.

Hard Gunnery: With a few solid hits, the PCs make the enemy ship think twice about pursuing them.

STEP 5: QUICK ENTRY

Having reached the carrier, the PCs must quickly find a way in.

Hard Piloting (max 1): The PCs cleverly avoid the carrier's laser turrets and other defenses and manage to fly in through a narrow opening.

Hard Computers: The PCs find the entry point quickly, avoiding additional flybys.

Development: The number of successes the PCs secured determines which adjustments apply when they land in the hangar bay (area B). Increase the number of successes earned by the PCs by 2 if there are five players, and by 3 if there are only four players.

10-12 Successes—The PCs take no damage. The PCs gain a surprise round in the following encounter (area B).

7-9 Successes—The PCs take no damage.

4-6 Successes—Rough landing; each PC takes damage equal to $1d4 \times$ their APL. All jinsuls start from positions behind cover relative to the PCs in the following encounter.

3 or Fewer Successes—Each PC takes damage equal to $1d6 [xts]$ their APL. All jinsuls begin behind cover and gain a surprise round on the PCs in the following encounter.

JINSUL COMMAND CARRIER

The jinsul command ship is three-quarters of a mile long with six decks and a crew of more than 150 jinsuls. The maps of areas B and C represent only small portions of the enormous ship's interior.

Dark metal alloy with ornamental etchings, some of which are abstract designs while others are religious imagery, make up the walls within the vessel. The walls require a successful DC 25 Athletics check to climb. Small lights are embedded in the walls in irregular patterns, providing dim light to the entire area.

The PCs arrive in the hangar bay (area B) at the top of the map.

B. HANGAR BAY (CR 10 OR CR 12)

The enormous hangar bay the PCs land into is all but empty—only a few badly damaged jinsul starships sit on the metal alloy floor. This area usually holds numerous jinsul ships, but when the PCs arrive, Hierarch Kraaton has already dispatched the ship's stored vessels into the brewing engagement outside the carrier.

Creatures: A few jinsul engineers are repairing damaged ships in the hangar bay when the PCs arrive. These jinsuls have numerous visible cybernetic augmentations across their chitinous bodies; instead of the usual metallic leg blades of jinsul warriors, the engineers have plasma torches capable of cutting and welding embedded in their legs, and they wield bolt guns equally well suited for repairs and combat. The jinsul engineers immediately attack the PCs. Though they're of a lower caste, they fight with the same ferocity as any jinsul warrior.

One or more jinsul praetorians also join the fight. The praetorians are hand-picked veterans who serve as bodyguards to the hierarch. Their fanaticism and loyalty are legendary even by jinsul standards.

SUBTIER 7-8 (CR 10)

JINSUL ENGINEERS (4)

CR 5

CE Medium monstrous humanoid

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; **Perception** +16

DEFENSE

HP 70 EACH

EAC 17; **KAC** 19

Fort +7; **Ref** +9; **Will** +6; +4 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities unflankable

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee bite +12 (1d6+10 P) or

plasma torch leg blades +12 (1d6+10 E+F; critical burn 1d4)

Ranged bolt-throwing gun +15 (1d8+5 P)

TACTICS

During Combat The engineers try to avoid melee, making ranged attacks when possible. They each fire single shots at the closest PC, preferring to use pack tactics to take down threats. They communicate verbally, so only PCs who understand Jinsul can intercept their shouted commands.

Morale The engineers fight to the death in defense of their craft.

STATISTICS

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

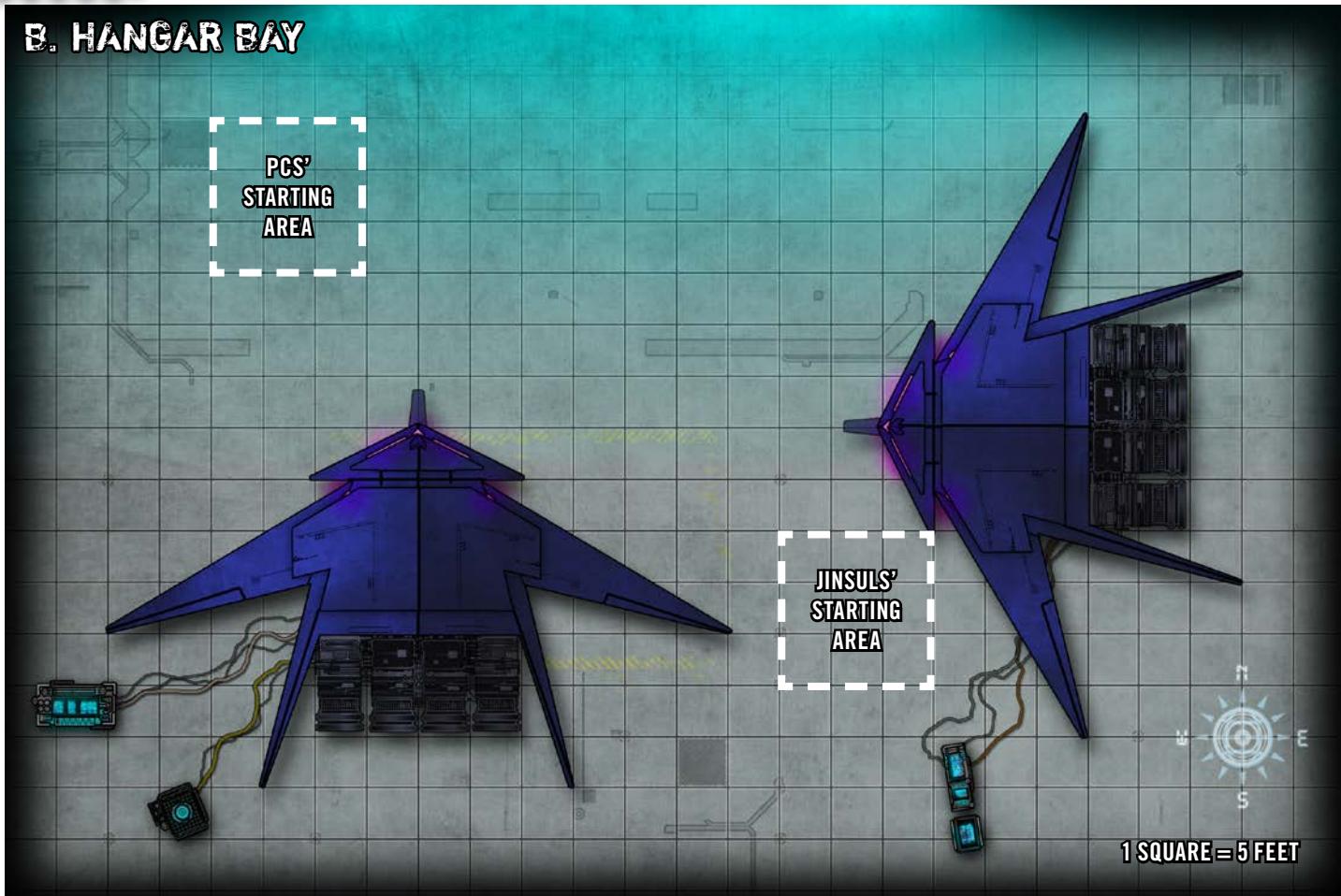
Skills Athletics +11, Computers +11, Engineering +16

Languages Jinsul

Other Abilities powerful leap

Gear bolt-throwing gun (as hunting rifle) with 12 rounds

B. HANGAR BAY

**SPECIAL ABILITIES**

Powerful Leap A jinsul treats any Athletics check made to jump as if it had a running start.

JINSUL PRAETORIAN**CR 7**

CE Medium monstrous humanoid

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; **Perception** +19

DEFENSE**HP** 105

EAC 19; **KAC** 22

Fort +9; **Ref** +11; **Will** +8; +4 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities unflankable

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft.

Melee bite +18 (1d6+12 P) or

leg blades +18 (2d6+12 S)

Ranged corona laser rifle +15 (2d6+7 F; critical burn 1d6)

Offensive Abilities charge attack, fighting styles (blitz)

TACTICS

During Combat The praetorian enters melee quickly, trying to quickly overwhelm a dangerous PC, simultaneously mocking them in the Jinsul language.

Morale The praetorian fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str +5; **Dex** +4; **Con** +2; **Int** +0; **Wis** +1; **Cha** +1

Skills Athletics +14, Mysticism +14, Survival +14

Feats Step Up

Languages Jinsul

Other Abilities discourage, powerful leap

Gear warrior caste armor (as freebooter armor II), corona laser rifle with 2 high-capacity batteries, jetpack, praetorian insignia

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Discourage (Ex) When an enemy envoy uses a sense-dependent improvisation, as a reaction, the praetorian can shout religious nonsense to overwhelm a creature's senses. The praetorian chooses a target within 30 feet and attempts a Mysticism check with a DC equal to 10 + the envoy's level + the envoy's Charisma modifier. If the check is successful, the target of the envoy's improvisation is unaffected by the improvisation. This ability functions even if the target does not share a language with the praetorian.

Powerful Leap A jinsul treats any Athletics check made to jump as if it had a running start.

SUBTIER 9-10 (CR 12)**JINSUL ENGINEERS (2)****CR 5**

HP 70 each (see page 12)

JINSUL PRAETORIANS (2)**CR 7**

HP 105 each (see page 13)

JINSUL PRAETORIAN COMMANDER**CR 10**

Jinsul solarian

CE Medium monstrous humanoid

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; **Perception** +24**DEFENSE****HP 165****EAC** 25; **KAC** 27**Fort** +12; **Ref** +10; **Will** +11; +4 vs. fear**Defensive Abilities** solar manifestation (solar armor), unflankable; **Resistances** cold or fire 5, electricity 15**OFFENSE****Speed** 40 ft.**Melee** bite +19 (1d6+18 P) or

leg blades +19 (2d10+18 S; critical bleed 2d6)

Ranged red star plasma cannon +16 (2d10+10 E & F; critical burn 1d8)**Offensive Abilities** black hole, flashing strikes, starquake (2d8, DC 17), supernova**TACTICS****Before Combat** The commander activates stealth warp, trying to remain unseen until it can attack.**During Combat** The commander closes into melee range, alternating between melee attacks and using solarian abilities in order to overwhelm the PCs. The commander uses the plasma cannon only if it's able to catch at least three PCs in the affected area. During combat, the commander mocks the PCs in the Jinsul language.**Morale** The commander fights to the death.**STATISTICS****Str** +8; **Dex** +5; **Con** +2; **Int** +1; **Wis** +1; **Cha** +3**Skills** Athletics +19, Mysticism +19, Survival +19**Feats** Step Up**Languages** Jinsul**Other Abilities** defy gravity, powerful leap, stealth warp, stellar alignment (graviton)**Gear** leader caste armor (as kasatha microcord III), red star plasma cannon with 2 high-capacity batteries (40 charges each), forcepack, mk III electrostatic field, commander insignia (worth 6,000 credits)**Development:** After defeating the initial wave of jinsul defenders, the PCs can continue further into the command vessel. They need to negotiate a dizzying maze of corridors in the following encounter, before finding their way to the command chamber (area C) where Hierarch Kraaton directs the ongoing fleet battle.**Rewards:** If the PCs do not defeat the defenders, reduce each PC's credits earned by the following amount.*Subtier 7-8:* Reduce each PC's credits earned by 735.*Out of Subtier:* Reduce each PC's credits earned by 2,035.*Subtier 9-10:* Reduce each PC's credits earned by 3,334.**NAVIGATING THE CORRIDORS**

Luwazi Elsebo sends a message over the comms. "You're inside? Good. From what we know about jinsul ships, there should be a command chamber closer to the front of the ship, probably on an upper decks. The hierarch will be there. The ship is enormous, but time is of the essence, so try to make it to the command chamber in less than thirty minutes. See if you can hack a terminal and access the ship's map to find the best route."

The PCs have to pick a route through the ship to reach the command chamber. Before they start off, they can attempt a Computers check to access a map of the enormous ship from a nearby terminal. If the skill check's result is enough to succeed at an Easy, Average, or Hard Computers check, accessing the map takes 6, 4, or 2 minutes, respectively. Any PC who speaks Jinsul receives a +4 bonus on the check. Without the map, reaching the command chamber takes an additional 10 minutes.

Regardless of the skill check's result, the PCs must choose a route from the following three options. The PCs are aware of what skills are involved in each option (though not the skill check DCs) and how much time it takes to reach the command chamber if they succeed or fail.

If the PCs find the command chamber in less than 20 minutes, the GM should encourage them to take a 10-minute rest, should they need one, because they were so fast.

Crawl Spaces: The second fastest option is that the PCs sneak through maintenance crawl spaces, elevator shafts, and even a trash compactor to avoid detection. The PCs must first succeed at an Average Engineering check to open doors, vents, and other mechanical barriers. Each attempt takes 2 minutes. After that, each PC must attempt an Easy Acrobatics or Athletics check to quickly navigate narrow spaces, precarious ledges, and so forth. Reaching the command chamber takes 10 minutes plus 2 minutes for each PC that fails the skill check. If the PCs choose this route, they also smell incredibly terrible for the remainder of the scenario.

Main Deck: The route through the main deck is the shortest, but it is also the ship's busiest part. The PCs must choose a leader, who must succeed at a Hard Stealth check to scout ahead, and the other PCs must each attempt an Easy Stealth check to sneak past crew and guards. The PCs are successful if the leader succeeds at the Stealth check and no more than two of the other PCs fail their Stealth checks; it takes them 5 minutes to reach the command chamber. If they fail, they have to backtrack, wasting 10 minutes, after which they must choose another route. The PCs can use invisibility and similar abilities, provided that the effect's duration is at least 5 minutes.

Safe Route: The PCs plot a long but safe route through the ship's least busy sections. This takes 15 minutes, and the PCs must succeed at three Hard Perception checks to take the right turns. Each failed check increases the amount of time spent by 5 minutes.

C. COMMAND CHAMBER (CR 11 OR CR 13)

This spacious room is more than one hundred feet across. Computer terminals and screens glowing with sensor readings, data streams, and other information cover almost every wall. Elaborately carved reliefs with religious imagery depicting jinsuls in various poses frame the screens. A large statue of a jinsul wearing a long liturgical vestment and holding its long leg blades extended in a proud stance stands atop a jet-black dais. The dais bears a triangular, golden, radiantly glowing prism.

The room is alive with sounds: like a drum beat, the steady hiss and murmur of machinery accompanies a melody of radars and other devices intermittently issuing forth sine waves at various frequencies.

If the PCs succeed at an Easy Mysticism check, they realize this chamber doubles as a place of worship to Kadrical, the preserver god of the Scoured Stars and his herald, the being known as Dhurus. If the result is enough to succeed at an Average Mysticism check, they also notice that Dhurus is the preferred subject of veneration—the fact that Dhurus's statue is standing on Kadrical's holy symbol suggests that Dhurus is the more important of the two in the many eyes of the jinsuls.

The statue and other fixtures in the room can be used as cover. Stairs in the room are steep and count as difficult terrain for non-jinsuls to climb, as they've been designed for jinsul anatomy.

Creatures: The jinsul fleet's leader, Hierarch Kraaton, guides the battle from within this chamber. They hierarch is a fervent worshipper of Kadrical's herald and the jinsuls' current leader, Dhurus. A group of praetorians accompany the hierarch, defending their leader with their lives. Upon seeing the PCs, Kraaton asks the PCs (in a broken form of Common) what they are doing aboard their ship. If the PCs ask Kraaton what their name is or whether they are the hierarch or commander of the jinsul fleet, Kraaton answers bluntly but truthfully. If the PCs ask any other questions, Kraaton replies, "That is none of your concern." If the PCs chose the "crawl spaces" route in the previous encounter, Kraaton also complains about the PCs' smell. Regardless of what the PCs ask or tell Kraaton, after 2 rounds, Kraaton says that they've heard enough and attacks. Also, if the PCs approach Kraaton or otherwise provoke them, Kraaton immediately attacks, cursing the PCs in Jinsul and promising the Society's demise.

SUBTIER 7-8 (CR 11)

JINSUL PRAETORIANS (2)

CR 7

HP 105 each (see page 13)

HIERARCH KRAATON

CR 9

Jinsul mystic

CE Medium monstrous humanoid

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; **Perception** +22

Radio Chatter

Once the PCs land onboard the jinsul command carrier, more and more jinsul ships begin to exit the Drift. These enemy reinforcements begin to systematically overwhelm the Starfinders and Freehold starships engaged in the ongoing battle. When the encounter begins, the PCs pick up messages on their comms from the Starfinder fleet. Use these messages to increase the dramatic tension of the ongoing mission and to provide context for the wider battle occurring outside the jinsul command ship.

[Jadnura] "Concentrate on keeping the jinsul command ship occupied, we need to buy our team the time they need!"

[Luwazi Elsebo] "Multiple ships exiting the Drift... it's more jinsul vessels!"

[Venture-Captain Arvin] "We're taking heavy fire here! Requesting backup!"

[Venture-Captain Naiaj] "Our reserve force is already engaged. No backup available, hold them with what you have Arvin."

[Jadnura] "More ships have moved around and are attacking our rear. I'm moving to engage."

[Chiskisk] "They're breaking through our front lines! Captain Zhast is pulling back, her ship is too badly damaged!"

[Luwazi Elsebo] "They're attacking the *Perfect Silence*. Jadnura, can you hold?"

DEFENSE

HP 120 RP 4

EAC 21; **KAC** 22

Fort +8; **Ref** +8; **Will** +12; +4 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities unflankable

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee bite +21 (1d6+15 P) or leg blades +21 (2d10+15 S)

Multiattack 4 leg blades +15 (1d10+15 S)

Offensive Abilities backlash (9 damage), mental anguish (DC 18), sow doubt (4 rounds, DC 18)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 9th)

At will—*mindlink*

Constant—*tongues*

Mystic Spells Known (CL 9th)

3rd (3/day)—*dispel magic*, *mind thrust* (DC 20)

2nd (6/day)—*hold person* (DC 19), *inflict pain* (DC 19), *mystic cure*, see *invisibility*

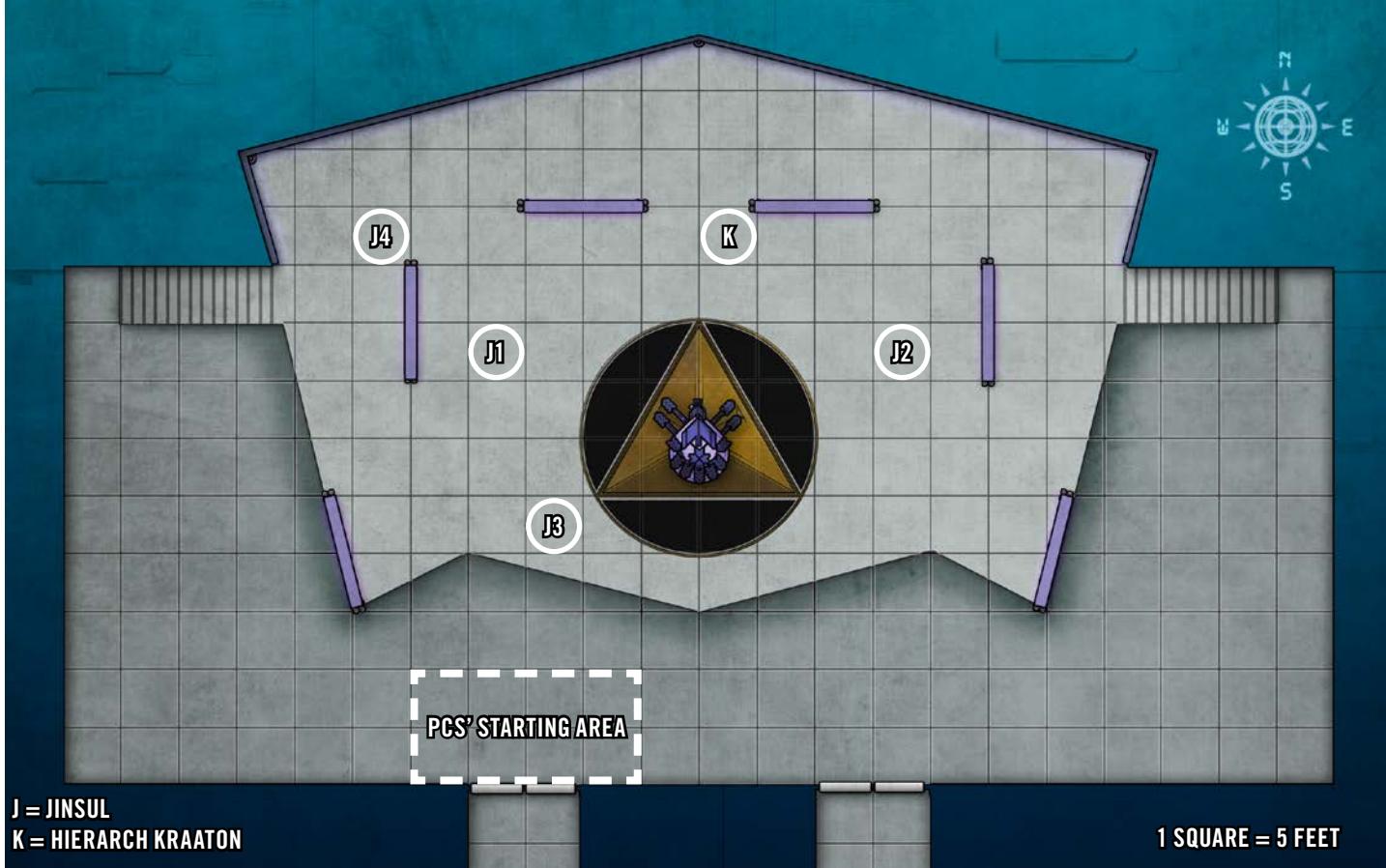
1st (at will)—*command* (DC 18), *lesser confusion* (DC 18)

Connection mindbreaker

TACTICS

Before Combat Kraaton casts see *invisibility*.

C. JINSUL COMMAND CHAMBER



During Combat Kraaton is a highly mobile combatant, always looking for the most advantageous position. On the first few rounds of combat, Kraaton avoids melee, casting *mind thrust* and other spells and abilities to attack. On later rounds, Kraaton may attack foes in melee but prefers to attack targets who are physically less impressive than the jinsul.

Morale Kraaton fights to the death, knowing the fate of the jinsul fleet may depend on the outcome of the fight.

STATISTICS

Str +6; Dex +2; Con +2; Int +1; Wis +4; Cha +3

Skills Acrobatics +17, Intimidate +17, Mysticism +22

Languages Common, Jinsul

Other Abilities powerful leap

Gear hierarch armor (estex suit IV) with *haste circuit* and white force field (15 hp), hierarch insignia (worth 12,000 credits)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Powerful Leap A jinsul treats any Athletics check made to jump as if it had a running start.

SUBTIER 9-10 (CR 13)

JINSUL PRAETORIANS (4)

HP 105 each (see page 13)

HIERARCH KRAATON

CR 11

Jinsul mystic

CE Medium monstrous humanoid

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; **Perception** +25

DEFENSE

HP 155 **RP** 5

EAC 23; **KAC** 24

Fort +10; **Ref** +10; **Will** +14; +4 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities unflankable

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft.

Melee bite +23 (1d6+19 P) or

leg blades +23 (4d6+19 S)

Multiattack 4 leg blades +17 (2d6+19 S)

Offensive Abilities backlash (11 damage), mental anguish

(DC 20), sow doubt (5 rounds, DC 20)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 11th)

At will—*mindlink*

Constant—*tongues*

Mystic Spells Known (CL 11th)

4th (3/day)—*confusion* (DC 22), *mind thrust* (DC 22)

3rd (6/day)—*dispel magic*, *mystic cure*, *synaptic pulse* (DC 21)

2nd (at will)—*hold person* (DC 20), *inflict pain* (DC 20), see
invisibility

Connection mindbreaker

TACTICS

Use the tactics from Subtier 7-8.

STATISTICS

Str +8; Dex +2; Con +2; Int +1; Wis +5; Cha +3

Skills Acrobatics +20, Intimidate +20, Mysticism +25

Languages Jinsul

Other Abilities powerful leap

Gear hierarch armor (as freebooter armor IV) with *haste circuit* and gray force field (20 hp), hierarch insignia (worth 38,000 credits)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Powerful Leap As Subtier 7-8.

Development: Once the PCs defeat Hierarch Kraaton and the praetorian guards, the divine herald Dhurus manifests into the hierarch's body as detailed in the Dhurus' Heresy encounter below. If the PCs wish to heal themselves or take any other actions, they have two rounds before the next encounter begins.

Rewards: If the PCs fail to defeat Dhurus, reduce each PC's credits earned by the following amount.

Subtier 7-8: Reduce each PC's credits earned by 3,394.

Out of Subtier: Reduce each PC's credits earned by 5,377.

Subtier 9-10: Reduce each PC's credits earned by 7,360.

DHURUS'S HERESY (CR 11 OR CR 13)

As the hierarch falls, the screens on the command chamber's walls go black. Just as suddenly, they blink back to life, displaying thousands of tiny blinking silver eyes that stare in constantly shifting directions.

"You," it says in a gravelly voice that resembles a rough engine sputtering, "I've watched you from afar. You've heard of me. I am Dhurus. I've seen the outcome of this pointless struggle through my endless eyes. You will go to great lengths only to be crushed under the weight of history. So futile. Every victory, every loss, it was predestined. Kadrical's power shall lead the jinsuls to a final victory, but he slumbers, forever and ever. I, however, am very much awake. Kadrical's power shall rise through me. And I will not wait."

The hierarch's body starts twitching and thrashing. Its eyes give off a sinister glow, and with sickening pops and meaty cracks, the body rapidly grows and sprouts more limbs and eyes, transforming into what looks like a cross between a jinsul and an immense centipede. Suddenly, the whole command chamber trembles with strange energies emanating from the hierarch's transformed body, and for a fleeting moment, all sounds blur into deafening white noise, and time seems to slow down. While everyone and everything else moves in slow motion, the body effortlessly floats off the ground, and looking like a puppet getting its strings tugged on, it reanimates and assumes a menacing fighting stance as time returns to its normal speed. Now the voice of Dhurus on the screens and the voice of the hierarch's body speak as one: "Finally, we meet."

Unexpected Allies

As the PCs engage Hierarch Kraaton, the situation outside the jinsul command ship also begins to change. Fleets of various groups exit the Drift and begin to assist the allied fleet against the jinsuls. Radio chatter continues to pick up, and you should space them as the PCs progress in the combat. Once the PCs defeat Kraaton, the radio chatter also continues during the final fight against Dhurus.

[Chiskisk] "I'm detecting more ships exiting the Drift, but these aren't jinsul signals."

[Yuluzak] "This is Captain Yuluzak of the *Honorbound*. We're here to help, and we've got a few friends too!"

[Venture-Captain Naaj] "There's only a few Veskarium ships in this new fleet. Wait, I'm detecting signals like those recorded from the Icefront mission. Are those izalguun ships?"

[Naarma] "This is Elder Naarma from Izalraan. We don't have many ships, but we came with the others to help however we can."

[Luwazi Elsebo] "Unidentified ships, we're grateful for the assistance, but who's in command over there?"

[Iteration-177] "This is Iteration-177, I must apologize for our sudden arrival. I take responsibility for bringing these ships here unannounced. Let's discuss this matter later. For now, we should handle the task at hand."

[Jadnura] "The jinsuls are pulling back to their command ship, attempting to pursue... by the gods, something massive is emerging between the fleets!"

[Fitch] "This is Fitch and the *Master of Stars*, coming in to assist. Let's punch a hole in that jinsul line, shall we? Wait, Kirkath don't press that button!!!"

[Venture-Captain Arvin] "We've breached the jinsul outer cordon, but they won't stop until their leader is defeated. Keep going!"

After this, the radio chatter continues with cheerful messages about destroyed jinsul ships.

Once the PCs defeat Hierarch Kraaton, something unexpected happens. From across the galaxy, the divine herald Dhurus uses its connection with the hierarch to manifest into the hierarch's body. Though Dhurus is not physically present, it uses its connection with the hierarch to partly manifest within the command chamber in a last effort to defeat the Society's greatest champions.

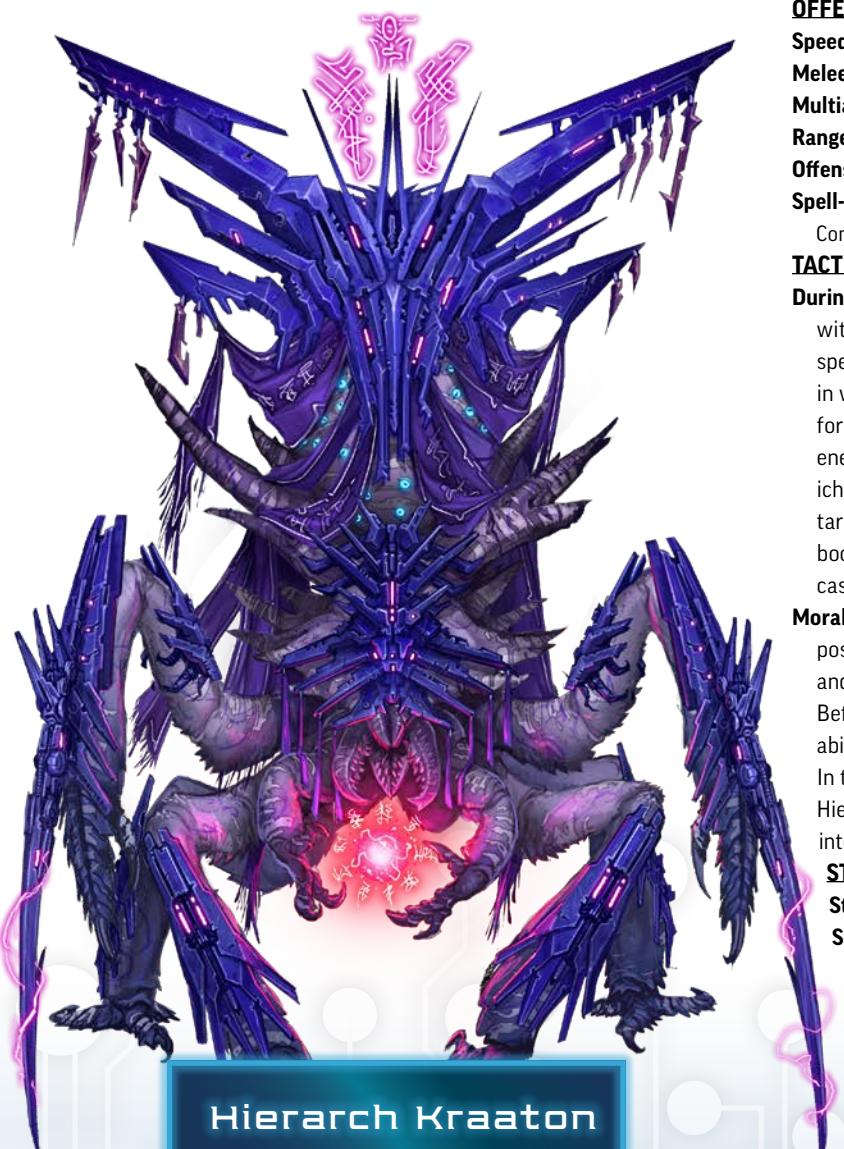
Creature: The hierarch's transformed, centipede-like body attacks the PCs immediately. None of the injuries or conditions the hierarch suffered during the previous encounter affect the transformed body Dhurus now possesses; treat Dhurus' manifestation as a new creature.

Scaling Encounter C

Make the following adjustments to accommodate a group of four PCs.

Subtier 7-8: Remove one jinsul praetorian.

Subtier 9-10: Remove two jinsul praetorians.



Hierarch Kraaton

After 12 rounds of combat with Dhurus, Jadnura sends the PCs a message: "You need to get out of there!", and simultaneously, explosions rock the command carrier. If the PCs continue fighting despite Jadnura's warning, Dhurus attacks them one last time, and on the following round, leaves the hierarch's body, quipping "We'll meet again" before departing.

SUBTIER 7-8 (CR 11)

DHURUS MANIFESTED

CR 11

CE Large monstrous humanoid

Init +9; **Senses** blindsense (vibration) 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft., see invisibility; **Perception** +28

DEFENSE

HP 200 **RP** 6

EAC 24; **KAC** 26

Fort +13; **Ref** +15; **Will** +12

Defensive Abilities resolute mind, unflankable

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft., climb 50 ft.

Melee bite +24 (4d6+19 P plus repose)

Multiattack 4 leg blades +18 (2d6+19 S)

Ranged ichor spew +21 (3d8+11 A; critical corrode 4d4)

Offensive Abilities repose, stretch

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 11th)

Constant—see invisibility, tongues

TACTICS

During Combat Dhurus attacks any adjacent or close opponent with its leg blades, savaging them with a multiattack. It spends Resolve Points using its action boost ability to drag in weak opponents within its longer reach to set them up for multiattacks at its regular Initiative count. Against flying enemies or PCs who try to spread out, Dhurus uses its ichor spew attack to make ranged attacks if it cannot bring targets into melee. Dhurus makes liberal use of the action boost ability but saves 1 Resolve Point for resolute mind in case the PCs use effects that cause debilitating effects.

Morale Although Dhurus is unharmed by any injuries the possessed body sustains, the herald finds defeat humiliating and abandons the body if reduced to 30 HP or fewer. Before departing, Dhurus says "This was just a test of your abilities. I shall easily defeat you when we meet again: In the Scoured Stars, where Kadrical sleeps." After this, Hierarch Kraaton's body slumps to the floor and dissolves into a pool of acidic sludge.

STATISTICS

Str +8; **Dex** +5; **Con** +2; **Int** +3; **Wis** +2; **Cha** +2

Skills Acrobatics +20, Athletics +20, Mysticism +25

Languages Jinsul; tongues

Other Abilities action boost

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Action Boost (Su) Dhurus can spend 1 Resolve Point to take an additional move action, standard action, or swift action at its initiative count -10.

Ichor Spew (Ex) As an attack, Dhurus can unleash a stream of corrosive bile from its mouth. This attack has the line weapon special property and a range increment of 60 feet.

Reposition (Ex) If Dhurus hits a creature with its bite attack, it can attempt a reposition combat maneuver against the target as a free action, using its bite's attack bonus with a +4 bonus to perform the maneuver. When repositioning a creature in this way, Dhurus can move the target up to 10 feet from its original position.

Resolute Mind (Ex) Dhurus can easily shrug off debilitating conditions while possessing the hierarch's body. As a reaction, Dhurus can spend 1 Resolve Point to remove any conditions its host body would gain, or already has (as *greater remove condition*).

Stretch (Ex) Whenever the transformed body makes only one attack on its turn, it may extend its reach by 10 feet until the end of its turn.

SUBTIER 9-10 (CR 13)

DHURUS MANIFESTED

CR 13

CE Large monstrous humanoid

Init +10; **Senses** blindsense (vibration) 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft., see invisibility; **Perception** +28

DEFENSE

EAC 27; **KAC** 29

Fort +15; **Ref** +17; **Will** +14

Defensive Abilities resolute mind, unflankable

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft., climb 50 ft.

Melee bite +27 (3d12+21 P)

Multiattack 4 leg blades +21 (2d8+21 S)

Ranged ichor spew +24 (5d6+13 A; critical corrode 4d6)

Offensive Abilities reposition, stretch

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 13th)

Constant—see invisibility, tongues

TACTICS

Use the tactics from Subtier 7-8.

STATISTICS

Str +8; **Dex** +6; **Con** +3; **Int** +4; **Wis** +3; **Cha** +3

Skills Acrobatics +23, Athletics +23, Mysticism +28

Languages Jinsul; tongues

Other Abilities action boost

SPECIAL ABILITIES

See Subtier 7-8.

Development: Shortly after the PCs defeat Dhurus, Jadnura sends them an urgent message, requesting their immediate return to the *Perfect Silence*. Busy trying to avoid the allied fleet's attacks, the remaining jinsul crew members aboard the command carrier offer no resistance when the PCs return to the hangar bay and leave the carrier. Instead, the jinsuls fervently try to save the doomed ship, though the ongoing battle has irrevocably compromised the

Scaling Dhurus's Heresy

Make the following adjustments to accommodate a group of four PCs.

Both Subtiers: The hierarch's newly reanimated body is sluggish and clumsy because of the great distance from Dhurus. It has the sickened condition. Dhurus cannot remove this condition with its resolute mind ability.

vessel, which is doomed to cinematically explode mere moments after the PCs return to their ship and leave the jinsul vessel.

If the PCs withdraw from the fight with Dhurus, the herald doesn't pursue them. The allied fleet defeats the jinsul fleet regardless of how the PCs fare against Dhurus, yet if Kraaton or Dhurus is victorious, the Society fleet attain only a pyrrhic victory instead of a dealing a decisive blow before the larger conflict.

CONCLUSION

Once they depart the jinsul command ship, the PCs have a moment to breathe before the jinsul vessel explodes behind them in a definitive statement that the jinsuls have lost the battle. From their ship, the PCs notice the allied forces have gained the upper hand, and soon after, the remaining jinsul vessels begin escaping in a disorganized retreat, with jinsul ships entering the Drift while taking massive casualties.

After the carrier is destroyed, the jinsul fleet immediately exits the Kreiholm Freehold's space, returning to the Scoured Stars for new orders. Meanwhile, the PCs return to the *Perfect Silence*, and the First Seekers call the PCs to the bridge to attend a debriefing, along with the recently arrived faction leaders, Speaks Forgotten Words, and the mysterious android who brought in much-needed reinforcements, Iteration-177.

Read or paraphrase the following as the PCs arrive, once again, in the *Perfect Silence*'s meeting room.

"I want to thank you," begins First Seeker Luwazi Elsebo, "You showed no hesitation when dealing with the jinsul hierarch despite facing such overwhelming odds. Infiltrating the jinsul command ship and defeating their hierarch was an amazing feat of skill and courage, and then standing to face this Dhurus figure and living to tell of it is nothing short of remarkable."

Jadnura waves one of his hands, and the view on the bridge's tactical screens changes to show the map of the Scoured Stars trinary system. Jadnura nods respectfully at Speaks Forgotten Words, the android Iteration-177, and various other allied leaders in the room.

"Today, we gave our help to the Kreiholm Freehold and also received help from unexpected allies. The battle showed that our combined strength is formidable. After today, the

jinsuls may finally know a modicum of fear." After a pause, Jadnura continues, "We now have a unified fleet, and more reinforcements are on the way. Now is the time to strike the jinsuls and stop Dhurus, once and for all, before they recover from this defeat."

Luwazi nods. "I could not agree more—we cannot rest until we have defeated Dhurus. Otherwise, the jinsuls will doubtless rebuild and continue their efforts against us." After this, Luwazi's expression suddenly grows concerned as she turns to regard Iteration-177. After a moment of uneasy silence, she speaks. "Iteration-177, your timely arrival and the reinforcements you brought with you saved us from an almost certain defeat, and you have my deepest gratitude. However, your recent actions—today and in recent months—raise questions that demand immediate answers," Luwazi declares.

In a calm voice, Iteration-177 replies: "I knew it would come to this sooner or later. It is now time to reveal the truth of me." There is a profound silence in the room as the leaders exchange worried looks in anticipation.

"I was once, and perhaps still am to some, known as Ailuros. Like Dhurus, I am one of Kadrical's four divine heralds. I only recently returned to galactic affairs when the Starfinder Society inadvertently earned Kadrical's attention during its first mission into the Scoured Stars.

"So perhaps you can understand why I did not reveal my identity before or assume you would trust me. Kadrical's awakening would have threatened me, so I did not know if you were friend or foe. Rest assured, you've proven yourself friends, and I hope my actions today proved I genuinely want to stop my wayward sibling as much as you do. We must put an end to Dhurus before it and the fanatical jinsuls cause more damage. I fear Dhurus, in its hubris, may even move against Kadrical in an attempt to usurp the deity's divine energies."

With their proclamation made, Iteration-177 eagerly takes questions from the group, though they prioritize any the PCs have.

What was your mission? "My task, as ordained by Kadrical, was to find the mentrasi—one of the eight civilizations that long ago fled from the Scoured Stars—and take them back home, but I found their civilization destroyed. Bereft of purpose, I decided to... explore the galaxy rather than return to Kadrical."

Why have you meddled in Society affairs? "When the Godshield rose during the first Scoured Stars mission, I realized Kadrical was stirring. Knowing that the overbearing deity would mean some trouble and an end to my rather enjoyable exploration of the galaxy, I did my best to stay aware of all activities around the Scoured Stars. I began to exert influence in helping the Starfinder Society so that Kadrical's slumber would continue."

Didn't Kadrical have four heralds? Where are the others? "I could not say. Like the four as-of-yet undiscovered civilizations from the Scoured Stars, Kadrical imparted no information about the doings of my fellow heralds. I only know Dhurus thanks to the efforts of your Society."

What does Kadrical want? "So much time has passed, I do not presume to judge how a waking god would react to all that's happened. If Kadrical remains as he was, then I would presume that he wishes to once again fill the Scoured Stars with loyal followers. To preserve them and their legacies for all time."

What do you know of Dhurus? "A wayward sibling of sorts, Dhurus always sought favor from Kadrical. I believe, with the veneration the jinsuls provide it now, Dhurus may believe itself superior to our guiding deity. As I said, Dhurus may, now that we've foiled its plans here, seek to usurp Kadrical and siphon the sleeping god's energies for its own malign purpose. Regretably, Dhurus and the jinsuls must be stopped by whatever means available."

RETURN TO THE SCOURCED STARS

Once the PCs ask Iteration-177 any questions, the assembled dignitaries and leaders depart. Eventually, only the PCs and First Seekers Jadnura and Luwazi Elsebo remain. The Society leaders once again profoundly thank the PCs for their achievements during the battle, but they seem distant as they ponder the startling revelations laid out by Iteration-177. Jadnura turns his back to the group and looks out a nearby window at the immense fleet gathering outside. Luwazi breaks this silence by observing the assembled fleet is ready to return to the Scoured Stars. She invites the PCs to join in the coming fight, though she understands if after the brutal combat today the PCs would rather take a ship home.

The Society is destined to take one more major offensive into the Scoured Stars, an event to be detailed in *Starfinder Society #2-00: Fate of the Scoured God*. For now, Luwazi bids the PCs return to their ship, rest, and prepare themselves for the coming conflict.

PRIMARY SUCCESS CONDITIONS

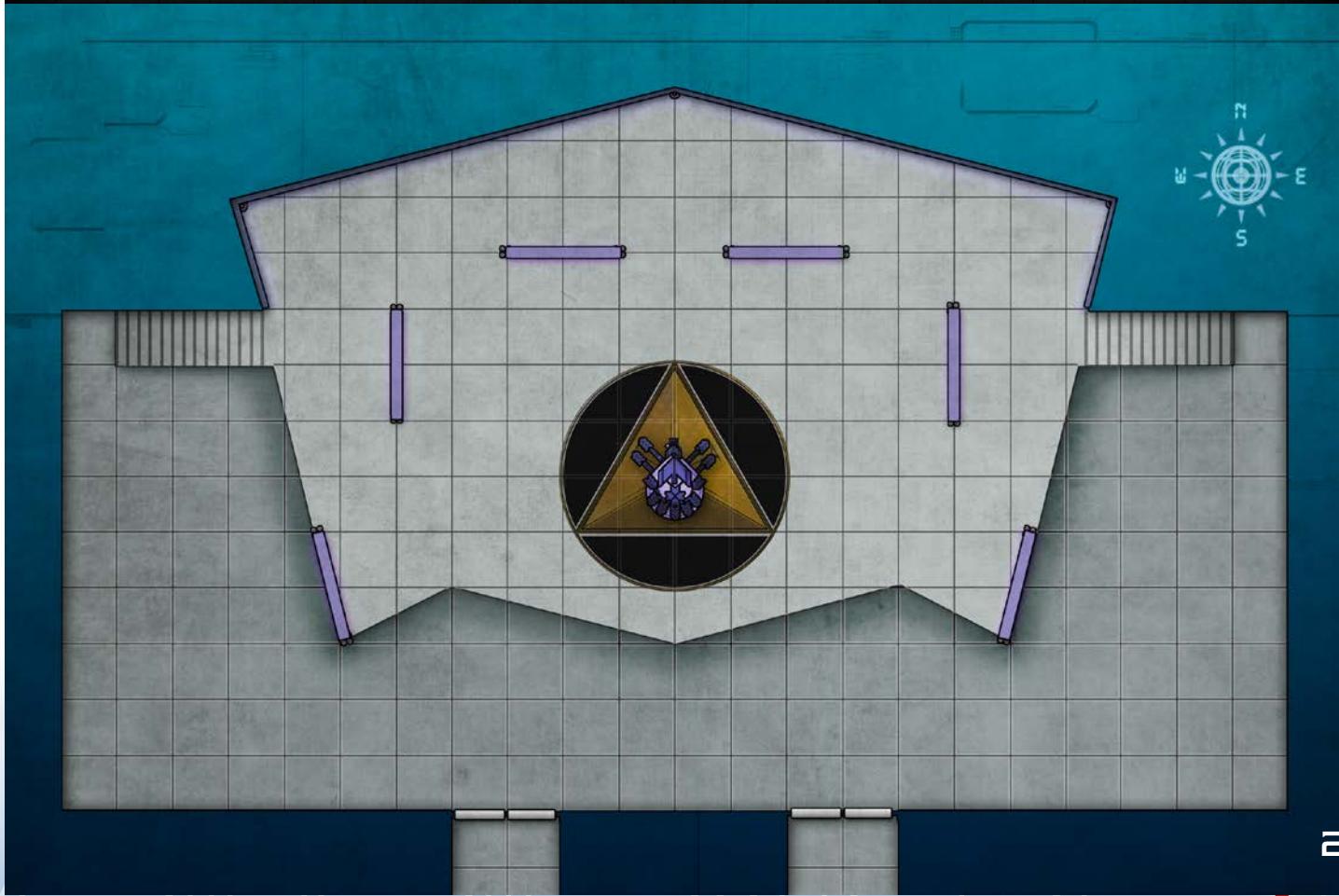
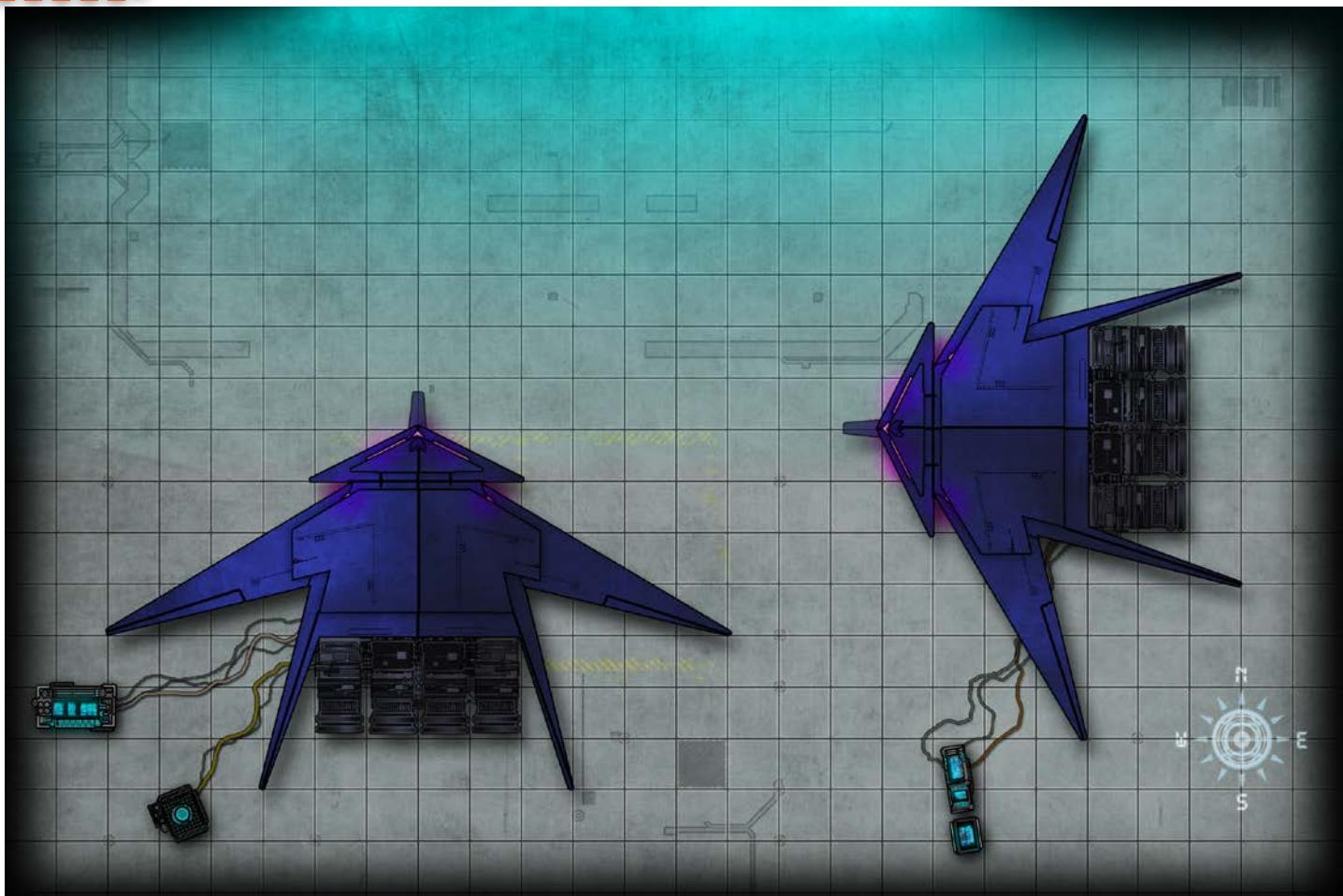
The PCs complete their main mission if they defeat Hierarch Kraaton and then defeat or escape from Dhurus when the divine herald manifests. Doing so earns each PC 1 Fame and 1 Reputation for any factions associated with their current faction boon, and earns them the three boons on the Chronicle sheet.

SECONDARY SUCCESS CONDITIONS

If the PCs complete at least three of the following, then they earn 1 additional Fame and 1 Reputation for any factions associated with their currently slotted Faction boon: defeat the two jinsul ships in starship combat, successfully negotiate with at least two of the five Kreiholm Freehold representatives, succeed at six or more skill checks when approaching the jinsul command carrier, reach the command chamber of the jinsul command carrier in less than 30 minutes, or defeat the Dhurus manifested foe.

FACTION NOTES

Completing this scenario contributes directly to both of the two First Seekers' goals. Each PC earns 1 additional Reputation with either the Second Seekers (Luwazi Elsebo) faction or the Second Seekers (Jadnura) faction, in addition to any other Reputation earned as a result of completing this scenario.



Starfinder Society Scenario #1-39: The Herald's War

Event	Date	
GM #	GM Character #	
GM Name	GM Fame Earned	
<input type="checkbox"/> Acquisitives <input type="checkbox"/> Second Seekers () <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> Exo-Guardians <input type="checkbox"/> Faction _____ <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> Dataphiles <input type="checkbox"/> Wayfinders
Character #	Fame	Faction Boons
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Character #	Fame	Faction Boons

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Starfinder Society Scenario

#1-39: The Herald's War

Character Chronicle #

A.K.A.		7	MAX CREDITS <input type="checkbox"/> Normal Max Credits SUBTIER 7-8 5,826 SUBTIER Out of Subtier 10,100 SUBTIER 9-10 14,373 SUBTIER - - EXPERIENCE Starting XP + GM's Initials XP Gained (GM ONLY) = GM's Initials Final XP Total FAME Initial Fame + GM's Initials Fame Gained (GM ONLY) - GM's Initials Fame Spent Final Fame CREDITS Starting Credits + GM's Initials Credits Garnered (GM ONLY) + GM's Initials Day Job (GM ONLY) - GM's Initials Credits Spent = GM's Initials Total	
Player Name	Character Name	Organized Play #		Character #

Items Found During This Scenario

Journey to the Scoured Stars: Segment 8 (Unidentified Boon): You defeated the jinsul Hierarch Kraaton in defense of the Kreiholm Freehold. By doing so, you've helped cement an alliance that prepares for a final offensive against the jinsuls in the Scoured Stars. This boon represents your character's involvement in this critical step toward solving the Scoured Stars mystery. This is the final boon in an ongoing series of boons that details the mysteries of the Scoured Stars. Collecting these boons will result in a unique bonus to be detailed on a future Chronicle sheet.

Tip of the Spear (Starship Boon; Second Seekers [Jadnura] Tier 3): Before using this boon, you must have a Reputation Tier of 3 or higher with the Second Seekers (Jadnura) faction and spend an additional 4 Fame to check the box that precedes this boon; once you do so, this boon is active and can be slotted as a Starship boon.

Once per adventure, when this boon is slotted, at the start of a starship combat and before the first round, you can use your tactical acumen to push yourself and fellow crew members. Your ship can choose one of the following: let your pilot take a single pilot action, let one of your gunners make a single gunner action, or let your science officer take a single science officer action. The selected action occurs before the first combat round begins. If you are in the captain role and use this ability, you can choose to make a captain action to influence the other action (such as encourage or demand).

United Society (Social Boon; Second Seekers [Luwazi Elsebo] Tier 3): Before using this boon, you must have a Reputation Tier of 3 or higher with the Second Seekers (Luwazi Elsebo) faction and spend an additional 4 Fame to check the box that precedes this boon; once you do so, this boon is active and can be slotted as a Social boon.

Once per adventure, when this boon is slotted, as a swift action you can make a passionate speech, state a simple reminder, bring up a stirring bit of digital data, or any other kind of inspirational element to remind you and your fellow Starfinders what you're fighting for. When you use this ability, every ally within 60 feet can choose one of the following:

- Gain a +2 morale bonus on all attack and damage rolls until the beginning of your next turn.
- Regain a number of Stamina Points equal to their level.
- Remove a single condition as per *remove condition*.

All Subtiers <p>haste circuit armor upgrade (9,250; item level 8) kasatha microcord III (9,000; item level 8) red star plasma cannon (8,650; item level 8) white force field armor upgrade (20,000; item level 10)</p>	Subtier 9-10 <p>d-suit III (13,300; item level 9) estex suit IV (49,250; item level 13) forcepack armor upgrade (13,100; item level 9) gray force field armor upgrade (40,000; item level 12) mk 3 electrostatic field armor upgrade (35,000; item level 12)</p>		
Reputation			
Faction _____	Reputation _____	Faction _____	Reputation _____
Faction _____	Reputation _____	Infamy _____	

For GM Only