

AURORA

THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:
GLEAMING MECHA
FLOATING DREAMERS
ADVENTURE, INTRIGUE, & ACTION!



ISSUE 9.1

AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE
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AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

SHADES IN THE NIGHT

From the Editor...

*"A trap is only a trap if you don't know about it.
If you know about it, it's a challenge."*

— China Miéville

It has been an exciting year in the tabletop gaming arena! A new edition of the most iconic of RPGs, media copy, boosts from actors and actresses, and a fabulous Kickstarter for our very own introductory Heavy Gear box that'll allow for a magnificent entry point into our favourite gear universe. (Did you miss the Kickstarter and are now kicking yourself? You can still kick it! See page 5...) Of course, on a more individual level, many games were played, and plenty of good times were had.

Amongst those good times, however, some of the darker underbelly of the greater gaming and science fiction communities made itself known, with incidents of racial and gender discrimination and recrimination. This too garnered a lot of media attention, attention we may have preferred not to have. Truthfully, issues weren't anything new per se; they have been present in the community for a while, festering and not talked about much. But while it was painful, and in many cases turned particularly nasty, I think it was another positive to this year that they came to light and all the ensuing attention.

Why? To paraphrase Bill Cavalier: "Do you know how many people play tabletop games? Not. Enough."

That we as gamers have biases should not be a surprise – if you are human, you have biases. Often we tend to miss our biases because they're way more subtle than we expect. We hold images of overt and dramatic acts of hatred, violence, and discrimination as our model for what bias looks like. Thing is, bias is often hidden, and plays out much, much more subtly. Of course, there is much to say and explore about our hidden biases, greatly more than can be said in the editorial of a gaming rag. (If you want to do more reading on this, Shankar Vedantam's "The Hidden Brain" and Mahzarin Banaji's "Blindspot: Hidden Biases of Good People" provide good primers on the topic.) The main takeaway here is simply this: Bias in of itself is not good, or bad, or right, or wrong, it's just our bias, often inadvertently created. As uncomfortable as it can be (I'm not entirely comfortable even while writing this editorial) I invite us to un conceal and take ownership of our biases, because only by realizing we have bias can we alter and free ourselves from it.

We want to grow our hobby: we want more and exciting projects, we want more gaming groups we can play with, we want our fictional universes to gain the media attention (movies, books, etc) that comics and computer games have attained, we want more product to buy. Making sure our hobby is fully inclusive and welcoming is the pathway towards that aim. We get more people, we get more games, we enjoy ourselves more, we learn more, we make more friends, and we get to play more games with those friends.

'Cuz that's what it's all about.

Here's to 2015! May it be a year full of growth, community, and adventure.

Welcome to Issue 9.1 of your Silhouette magazine.

Game on,

Oliver Bollmann
Aurora Magazine Editor

[Visit Aurora Magazine on Facebook](#)

Have an idea for an article?

Please see our submission guidelines at the end of the issue!

OFFICIAL-DP9

"Official" Dream Pod 9 rules, updates and materials can be found in the Gear Up magazine, available at DP9's store on RPGnow.com.

HOME BREW RULES

All material inside Aurora is fan submitted and are not regarded as official and do not change the games or the DP9 game-universes as written in the books. Aurora material may not be used in tournament or other official play and may differ from current or future books. Any Aurora rules or material should only be used if all players agree upon their inclusion before play.

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

David "WarpHound" Barrow (Barrow.david.a@gmail.com) -- *Fighting in the Rocks*

Family man. Veteran. Gamer. Designer of house rules great and small. Writer of stories to amaze and entertain.

John Bell (jakarnilson@magma.ca) -- *Alfie's Tanners, Kraut Patrol*

He gets labeled a "walking-talking encyclopedia." He draws what goes through his mind. He builds what he can't afford. He walks what others would take a lift for. He'd probably trade in his bike for a real, working Ferret; but then again, who wouldn't?

Aaron Bertrand (thisnewjoe@gmail.com) -- *The Journal Part 1: Acceleration*

While a dabbler in the boardgame and video game realm, few things are quite so enjoyable over a long period as the storytelling adventure created among friends during an RPG campaign. My we all embark on many such glorious adventures!

Oliver Bollmann (auroramag@gmail.com) -- *Editor, EDF: Surface Ops & SOL-002 B'alam*

It all started in a hobby store one day twenty odd years ago with an odd box containing something called Top Secret. Since then games have just become a big part of his life. He's been in love with the DP9 universes since the first HG release and began his direct involvement with the Pod crew numerous years ago. He also runs a gaming imprint *Kannik Studios at rpgnow:*

http://rpg.drivethrustuff.com/index.php?manufacturers_id=291

Brandon Fero (thanatos_storm@hotmail.com) -- *Muck, Filth, and Honor... & Water Viper*

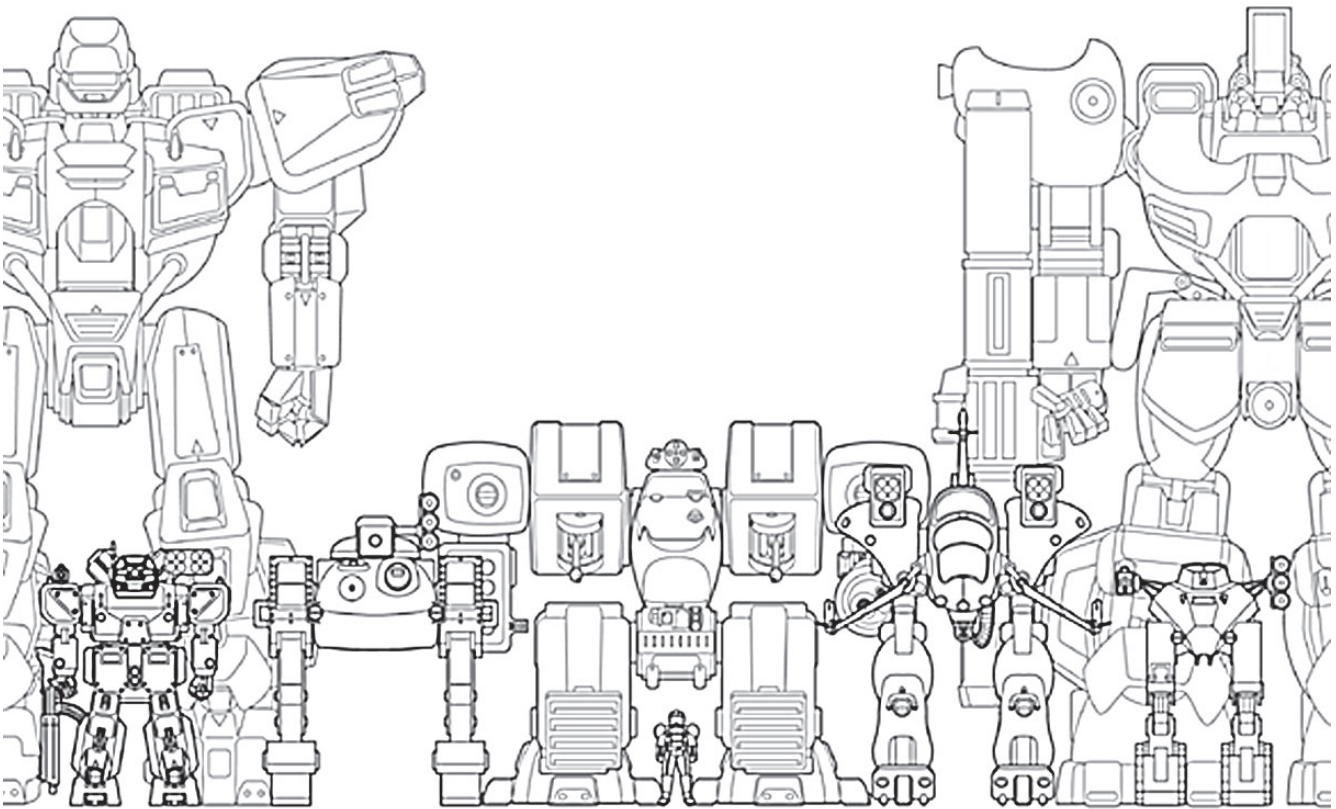
Many thanks to Oliver for all of his hard work, to David who has helped me gain a new group to game with, and to all the members of Terra Nova DMZ and all the Backers on Kickstarter who have renewed and rejuvenated the game. God bless!

Ben McSweeney (www.inkthinker.net) -- *The Dreamer*

Ben McSweeney is an animator and illustrator who has produced work for numerous animated series, video games, tv spots, comic books, and RPGs.

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS



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WAR FOR TERRA NOVA CORE STARTER SET

Did you miss the Kickstarter?

Do you have friends who missed the Kickstarter?

Do you want an Ammon??!?!?

Additional pledges are now being taken!

Get in on the action!


Unlock further stretch goals!

<https://www.fundafull.com/projects/dream-pod-9/heavy-gear-blitz-war-for-terra-nova-starter-set/outside-backers>


Please share and let's grow Heavy Gear's reach...

(And I really, really want a few Ammons! Please, help me out here!!)

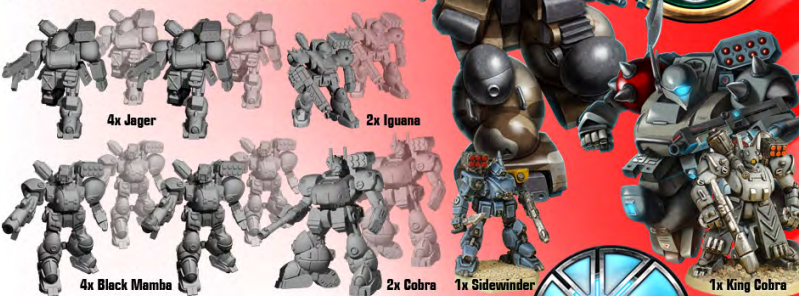
WAR FOR TERRA NOVA CORE STARTER SET



NORTH




SOUTH



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Also includes Free Downloads of the New Edition Heavy Gear Blitz Core Rules ebook (Living Rulebook),
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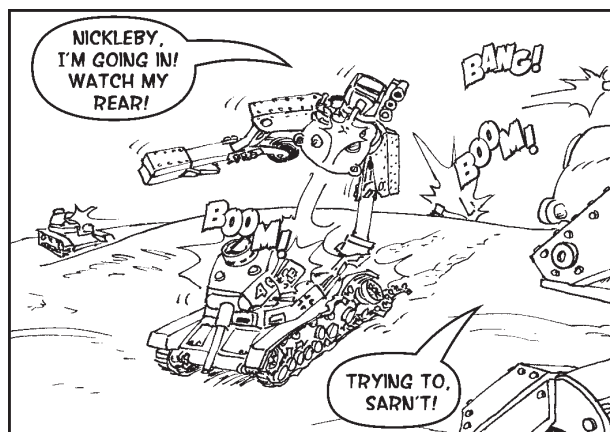
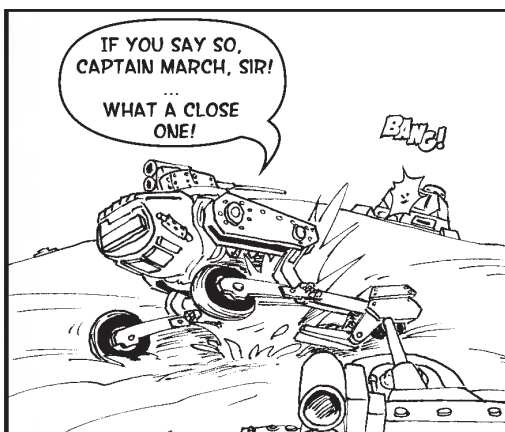
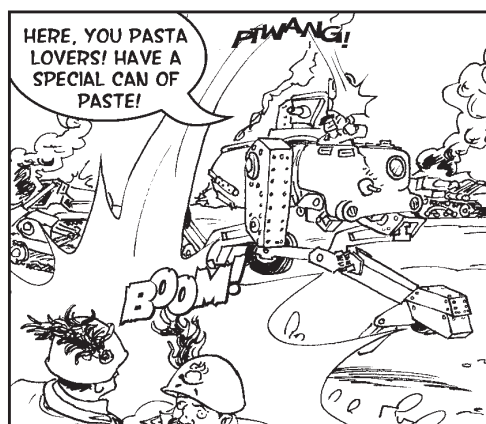
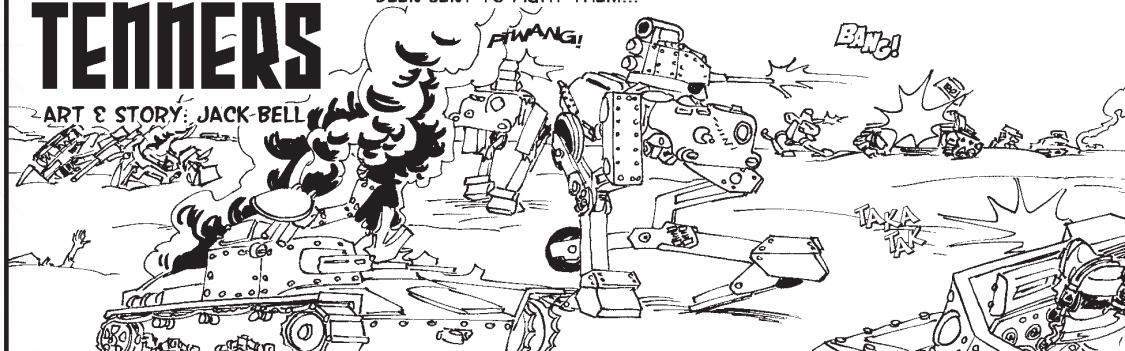
ALFIE'S TENNERS

JOHN BELL

ALFIE'S
TENNERS

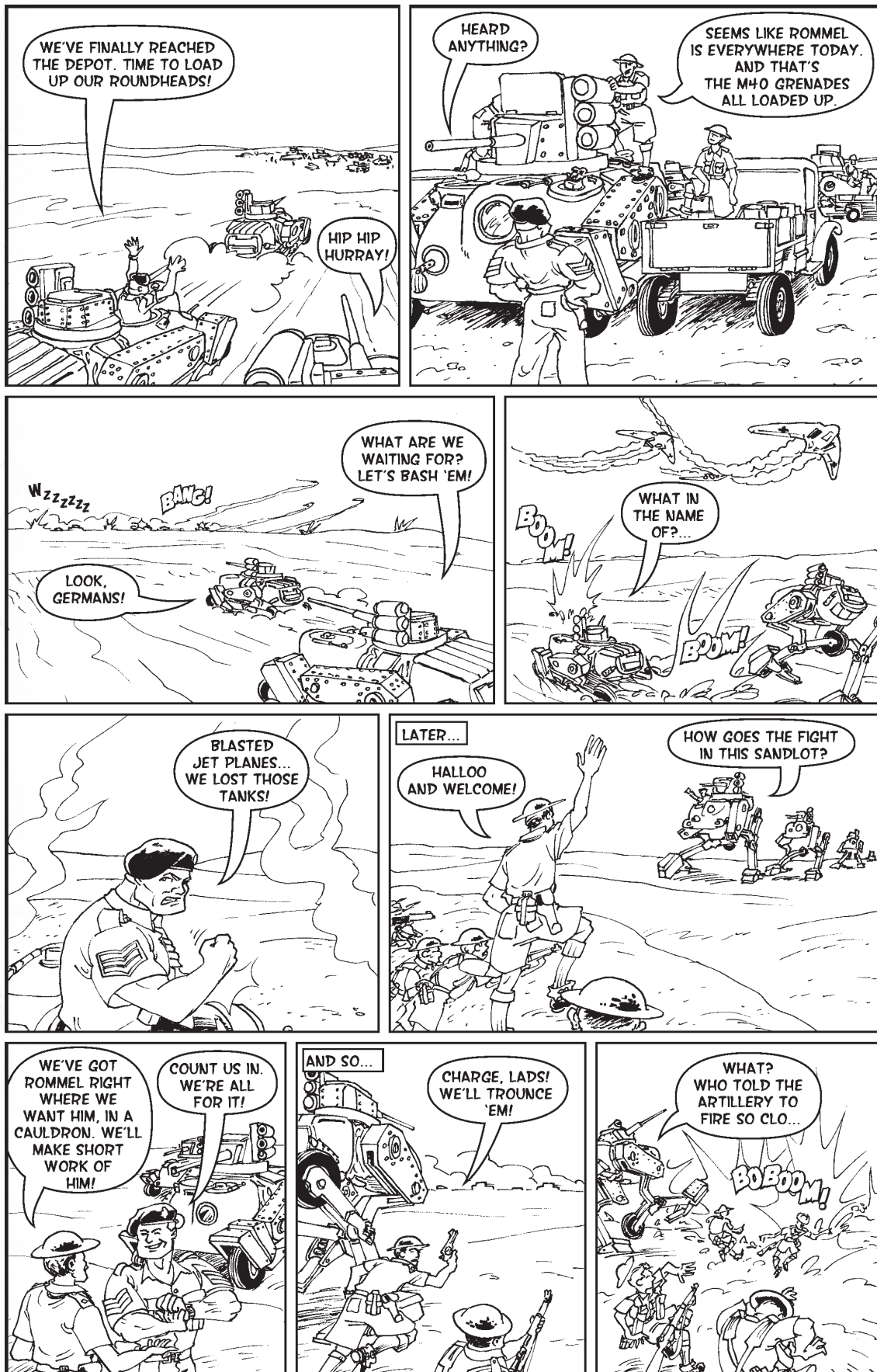
ART & STORY: JACK BELL

JUNE 5, 1942. LIBYA. THE 8TH ARMY HAS BEEN FORTIFYING THE VAST DESERT WEST OF TOBRUK FROM GAZALA ALL THE WAY DOWN TO BIR HAKEIM. ROMMEL'S AFRIKA KORP HAS JUST LAUNCHED AN ASSAULT ON THE WHOLE GAZALA LINE, AND SGT. DALY, ONE OF CPT. ALPHONSE MARCH'S WALKER SQUADRON, HAS BEEN SENT TO FIGHT THEM...



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ALFIE'S TENNERS



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ALFIE'S TENNERS

THE FOLLOWING DAYS...

WHERE'S OUR SUPPORT?

WOULD PROVE TO BE...

BOOM!

NOT THE BLOOMING JETS AGAIN!

JUST AS FUTILE...

I'VE GOT ONE!
...
WHAT?! FALL BACK?

BOOM!

IN THEIR ENDEAVOURS...

HUH? HOW'D THEY GET BEHIND US?

BANG!

BUT FINALLY!

BOOM!

GOT TO KEEP DODGING BEHIND THESE WRECKS...

DESTROY THAT KÄFER!

BOOM!

WHO IS IT IN THAT HEAVY KAMPFER? WHY YES, IT'S GEHER!

YOU! YOU ARE ONE OF ALFIE'S TENNERS! DONNER UND BLITZEN! WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THIS?

I'M GOING TO PUMMEL YOUR KAMPFER, GEHER!

KLUNK!

KLUNK!

PUMMEL? WITH THOSE PUNY ARMS? OPEN YOUR EYES! WE ARE NOT OUR MACHINES!

CHAK!

BLIMEY!

THIS FARCE HAS GONE ON LONG ENOUGH! FLEE, TENNER, AS THE REST OF YOUR 8TH ARMY IS DOING EASTWARD!

I HAVE GIVEN YOU ONE CHANCE, AND MY WORD!

NEXT TIME: THE LONE WOLF IRVINGS GOES ON THE HUNT WITH THE LONG RANGE DESERT GROUP.

"Another glorious fun filled day in our resort paradise, eh Echo Base? Do you think we'll see the parade today?"

"Echo one, we're picking up indications of a loose monkey in your vicinity," came the exasperated reply. "You might want to secure that before we secure it for you."

Agent Davies cracked a wry smile. "Roger that. I'll bag it and dress it up for tonight's cabaret. Heading to point Alpha." Through the mock exasperation he could hear Specialist Emilio grinning in return. It was corny, and they knew it, but out here, you did what you had to do in order to avoid going stir crazy. And if that meant canned cheeseball lines from some ancient tradition, then so be it.

"Out here" really was heavy on the "out". Davies wasn't even sure on what continent they were, though he judged by the tall trees and heavy foliage it must be in the cusp of the tropics. To the less astute, one might think he'd been punished and sent off to some tiny unimportant base to spend his duty time away in absolute boredom as some penance for a transgression against a general or something. But you'd have to be pretty daft to miss out on how black this site was, with only a handful of buildings on the surface and the irregular arrivals of heavy transports disappearing into the base's single hangar. Something was going on here, something the brass didn't want anyone knowing about.

That, at least, brought him a small measure of pride, pride that also helped to keep his sanity as he performed the same isolated patrol for the thousandth time. If someone deemed him worthy of protecting a sacred site, then he would honour their trust with his duty. "Can't complain with what I'm getting to drive too," he whispered to the cockpit as he maneuvered his Exo towards his next waypoint. Though few in number, he and his squad mates happily got to prance around in rather exquisite gear, and his Exo moved like nothing he'd ever piloted before.

Maybe one day, someone would even get to see them dancing in those shiny suits.

As his Exo reached the top of a ridge, Davies paused a moment as he always did to scan the valley below. With the sun just setting, the shadows were long and painted a rather pretty picture though his eyes were glued more to his cockpit displays than the vista before him. Taking a deep breath he readied to kick off and begin the next leg of his patrol when, at the very

edge of his HUD, a flash caught his eye. Whipping his head around, Davies blinked twice at the now placid HUD. Did I really just see that? Slowly he turned the Exo to face towards the direction of the blip, staring intently out his viewscreen as though his gaze could pierce the undergrowth below.

Heartbeats passed. Davies wasn't sure if he wanted the blip to return, or be a product of his imagination. His choice was rendered meaningless when the computer again painted that pulsing triangle on his viewscreen. "Crap!" he exclaimed as the distance readout spat out its findings: the bogey was already nearly atop him.

Bursting from the forest, a sleek form filled the HUD's reticule. If not for its size, and the large cannon affixed to its back, Davies would have thought it a sleek jungle cat. It moved with an unquestionable grace on four legs, and in several bounding strides it crossed his field of vision. Bringing up his weapon, he turned to track it, but the beast had already changed course, aiming itself right towards him. Reflexively he pulled the trigger, but the beast was well over his gun and the shower of earth and tree fragments only served to render more horrible the visuals before him. The beast's claws glowed with an unholy light that glistened off sharp fangs as it pounced.

With the sound of a dozen car wrecks, the beast made short work of his Exo. Every red light in existence flared to life in his cockpit, and Davies thought he might have even heard a warning klaxon above the din of wrenching metal before all in his cockpit went dark. As quickly as it had begun it was over, the silence rushing in along with the breeze from his compromised cockpit. As the sounds of the creature's metallic paws receded into the forest, Davies shook his head to clear it, askew in his command couch, gazing up to the twilight above as though waking from a dream.

Cursing, Agent Davies reached the top of the tree. He didn't know for sure why the survival kit's radio didn't reach the base, but the most likely reason filled him with dread. He'd heard the first boom about fourteen branches ago, and his hope that height might overcome whatever barrier there was to communication evaporated. Whatever it was, it was clearly hostile, and the base knew about it now. Grasping the tree with one hand, he brought up his binoculars with the other and trained his eyes frantically towards the flashes of light now emanating from the direction of the base.

His dread grew. Though difficult, he could catch glimpses of his squad in battle with a gaggle of the beasts. Moving with uncanny agility, they made his squad's upgraded Cerberus seem clumsy

by comparison, the sleek cannons on their back finding their marks over and over again. One by one his teammates fell and, gritting his teeth, Davies watched helplessly as the walls were breached.

It was thus with no surprise when, minutes later, the base erupted in an explosion that clearly wiped out whatever function it may have had. Swaying atop his perch from the shockwave, he wondered if they would leave him be to tell his tale, or if they would come for him, hunters in the night.

.....

Not all black facilities are outposts hanging in the inky curtains of space. Many rest easily on surface worlds and moons, taking advantage of reduced attack vectors, hidden emissions, planetary defenses, and the shielding effect of the ground itself. The EDF needed a planetary capable Exo to handle these. Like the Phoenix fighter, it needed to be quick, stealthy, and pack enough punch to get in and do its business to wipe out the facility.

Though several conventional designs were considered, it was a the unconventional choice of a quad design that won out to fill the mission needs. Freed from needing to operate in multiple environments, the dedicated surface assault Exo took all the advantages of a quadruped design, including speed, agility, and a low profile. Fitted with advanced stealth packages and a turreted weapons pack, the ensuing design was superior to most land units fielded by the solar nations.

The SOL-002 has all the styling and grace of a large cat. Its articulated body and multiple points of contact with the ground gives it excellent nimbleness and mobility. An advanced sensor and electronic warfare package is built into its "ears" and tail, which, when coupled with its incorporated stealth technologies, allows it to find and get the jump on its opponents.

Fitted to the feline's back is a turret mount, capable of accepting all manner of weapon packages. Primarily, the SOL-002 is fitted with a pair of powerful twin long-barreled pulse lasers. The turret mount provides an uninhibited range of fire, including straight up for anti-aircraft use. A smaller pair of turrets sits astride the main turret, providing anti-missile and point defense capabilities. A heavier pair of shock-cannons are affixed to the underbelly of the beast, used for short-ranged encounters even while grappling a target.

However, the most intimidating weapons are the B'alam's physical attacks. While its powerful bite is scary enough, it is the claws that are the most unique. Using a the same plasma channel system technology from the SOL-001 Phoenix fighter, each claw tip is fitted with a plasma emitter to create, in effect, a multitude of short-distance plasma lances. Thus empowered, the B'alam's claws can rend the armour from any known Exo in short order.

As with the Phoenix fighter, the prime method of destruction, when authorized, is a pair of HELL drones. Customized for each mission, these drones are fitted with the motive system required for them to accomplish their task. In an atmosphere, once the magnetic bottle collapses the intense pressure and heat of the plasma reaction (plus whatever was consumed within) leads to an impressive secondary incendiary and overpressure wave, equaling the intensity of a Fuel-Air Explosive in its destructive potential.

The Edicts Defence Force is an alternate campaign idea for Jovian Chronicles. In this campaign, the PCs are part of a specialized and very-well equipped rapid reaction force that may see action throughout the solar system. The secrets and origin of this shadow organization were first revealed in Issues 3.1 & 3.2 of Aurora.

SILCORE STATISTICS

Name: SOL-002 B'alam

Size: 12

Threat Value (TV): 6925

Devensive Threat Value (DTV): 1734

Movement: Walk 8/16

Maneuver: +1

Armor: 30/60/90

Miscellaneous Threat Value (MTV): 12077

Crew: 1 Living, 1 Computer (Dumb, Level 3) (3 Actions)

Deployment Range: 650 hrs

Perks And Flaws: 2x Life Support (Limited); Arms: 2x Manipulator Arm (12, can punch), 2x Battle Arm (12, can punch); Communications (+1/15km), Satellite Uplink; Sensors (+2/8km); HEP:Vaccum, Desert, Extreme Heat, Extreme Cold; Reinforced: Crew, Backups, Chassis; ECM (4/5km); EECM (4/5km); Armour: Heat Resistant (4); Autopilot; Off-Road Ability; Low-Profile; Stealth (2)

Offensive Threat Value (OTV): 6966

Qty	Name	Type	Arc	Acc	BR	DM	RoF	Perks & Flaws	Ammo
2	Pulse Cannons	Energy	T	+1	5	x18	4	RED, AD1, HEAT, LINK	U
1	AGAMS	Energy	T	+1	2	x13	2	RED, HEAT	U
	AMS Mode	Energy	T	+2	1	x4	6	AM, RED, DEF, HEAT	U
3	Shock Cannons	Physical	F	-1	2	x16	0	KB, LINK	20 ea
4	Strike Claws	Energy	F	+0	M	x22	0	AC, RED, LINK (2 Claws)	U
1	Bite	Physical	F	+1	M	x12	0	AC	U
*2	Hell Drone	Drone						DRONE	2

Name: HELL Drone

Size: 2

Threat Value (TV): 418

Devensive Threat Value (DTV): 416

Movement: Flight 10/20 Stall 0

Maneuver: +0

Armor: 4/8/12

Miscellaneous Threat Value (MTV): 348

Crew: Computer 1 (Dumb Level 2, Drone) (2 Actions)

Deployment Range: 50 hours

Perks And Flaws: Autopilot; Communications (-1/10km); Sensors (+1/2km); HEP:Vaccum, Desert; Extreme Heat; Extreme Cold; Vulnerable to Haywire

Offensive Threat Value (OTV): 525

Qty	Name	Type	Arc	Acc	BR	DM	RoF	Perks & Flaws	Ammo
1	HELL Warhead	Energy	FF	-1	M	x50	0	AC, AE0, PERS, HEAT	1

Peace River will not stand by idly in the second invasion. While the enemy falls from the sky, and burns the cities, a Strike Gear Company moves to intercept a column of CEF hover tanks moving into Peace Rivers backyard. But even the enemy has allies.

Specialist Linse Johnis looking down across the next valley Delta Company, 2nd Combined Task Force Regiment's route took them through, the stars the only illumination in the sky. She can just make out the battle going on above, in orbit. "Give 'em hell boys." Her Gear company is enroute to hit a column of CEF hover-tanks that had crossed over into the Karaq Waste, north of Elayu, almost along the equator. Being held in the reserve for just such an occasion, "The Stormriders" had dispatched Delta Strike Company, on board a stealth transport aircraft to a point 60 kilometers from their planned ambush site. They had set down at their Landing Zone, made liaison with a local Peace Officer Corp (POC) anti-rover squad that knew the area.

Currently the patrol stopped in an "at halt" to refuel and check equipment. They had bid farewell to the POC patrol that had guided them this far, but now had to return to their jurisdiction. The Mustangs and Bulldogs were really well designed for rough terrain out in this part of the Badlands, with their large wheels and rugged suspensions, but not for the stealth strike and open combat they were headed into. Their dust plumes already heading off in the distance the way they had come from as they headed back to their home settlement.

Fifteen kilometers back, the Company had come across what looked like the aftermath of a Rover stop gone wrong. But the POC guys estimated it was three hours too late to save the bandits from whatever had happened. There were some strange scorch marks on the ground, as if from a Hopper coming down for a landing, and some of the weapon hits seemed to be energy weapons, but not all. But the tracks leading away had led right up to a sheer cliff face. There was no evidence of block and tackle being used to haul Gears or Tanks up, but there was some strange indentions in the wall that looked like it could have been from a spike gun or something similar. Some of the Pilots had grumbled about it being those traitorous freaks over in the Barrington basin, and that they had a whole army of jump jet and climbing gear equipped Gears over there, not to mention the GRELS.

The opening of the valley was relatively flat, but dominated by a field of broken boulders and debris fallen from the mesa on the left side. It extended most of the way across the opening of the valley, leaving a pretty narrow pass on the right, only about one hundred fifty meters wide. Real tight space for such a large patrol to be caught in. Just then Master Lars Sorrens, the patrol leader, called over the patrol frequency, laying out the plan.

"Patrol, we will be passing into the valley in two to three man teams. Break. I want Skirmishers Two and Four first. Give me a sweep on your way through, but make it quick. Break. Skirmishers One and Three stay here, watch sensors, and be prepared to jam, and target designate as need be. Break. When they are through I want each Crusader flanked by a Warrior and Argos, moving on the double. We will move on in order from there, Break. Set up a one eighty on the other side, big enough for the whole patrol. Break. Not more than three in the pass at a time, watch the rocks for Infantry. Those Purple bastards in the rocks would be impossible to get out, and we'd probably just have to burn the whole area. I don't have time for that crap. Section leaders make it happen. Greyhound One, get command on the line, check in. Roamer Actual, out."

As the section leaders got the twenty man patrol organized, Johnis chuckled at Master Sorrens gruff demeanor. His rough scarred face from a lifetime out in the Badlands and exposure to the harsh chemicals emitted by weapons and equipment of these war machines. Johnis had been an orphan after the Destruction of Peace River, both her parents dying in the blast that had rocked the city-state. She had floundered for several cycles, being homeless, hungry. When she had finally been brought into the State Child Protection system, she had immediately struck out against the foster parents she had been assigned to. They weren't bad people, but Johnis was full of rage and guilt over her parent's death. When she had finally been put in an orphanage, with dozens of other children the system had given up on, she made friends with a rough character who happened by the crowded orphanage on his way home several times a week. This was Lars Sorrens. She had learned about the opportunities within the Peace River Defense Force, had heard stories from the many veterans in the neighborhood, and saw her way out. When she was of age, she enlisted, and the first person she sought out was Lars Sorrens. He had counselled her to learn everything she could, and to prepare for a hard life. When she was accepted into the Heavy Gear training school, Sorrens had taken time off to visit her graduation ceremony, he in full dress uniform. When she had been selected for the Combined Task Force, he had immediately positioned her into his Company. Now here she was, his comm tech, in the back end of the Badlands with her new family, the Combined Task Force, with a purpose, and a goal. Now to get ready for these invaders.

"Greyhound rogers." Changing over to Sat Comms, "Hoplite Control, this is Romeo Four, over.

"Go ahead Romeo-four, got you on the board. Status? Over."

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FIGHTING IN THE ROCKS

"We have made checkpoint Lima, and are continuing on our route. PO has separated off and left our control. Break. Ee-tee-aye on the recon fly over you promised? We're going blind into some tight quarters next. Over"

"Romeo four, Dragonflies have been delayed on the flight line, but will make your location in about forty-five mikes. How copy? Over"

"Roger, control... I got them thirty mikes behind sched-"

"CONTACT LEFT!!!!
CONTACT LEFT!!!!"
Skirmisher three called out over the patrol tac.

As the 3rd Crusader team began their push through the pass, Skirmisher three's thermal and radar picks up movement from behind a tumble of boulders big enough to hide a Red Bull. Ronal is a good sensor operator, and he doesn't get fooled by sensor shadows. He's also Johnis' lover, and they talk about settling down together, after their stints are up. He hunkers his Gear up to a boulder and the agile scout robot takes a knee and pulls up as close to the rock as it can. Ronal works his hands over the console furiously, adjusting virtual knobs and sliders in his heads up display, trying to resolve the flash of data into a coherent image.

As the image in the sensor profile solidifies into a quadraped machine with 4 spindly legs splayed out around it, and a weapon mounted to the top of the hull, similar to the Coyote Tanks-Striders favored by Peace River armor units. Instead, it's a Caprician Mount, a "Kadesh" according to the data, with a Project Talon data stamp in the corner, and the words "Confidential" stamped over the image.

He mumbles to himself, "Great, just what we need. Huh? Says they might be against the Earthers on here," Something didn't seem right though.

Keying the microphone on Patrol Tac again, "Roamer Patrol Actual, this is Sierra three. The silhouette I'm getting shows up as a possible friendly. Black Talons had these guys working with them on Caprice. How do you want to handle this? Over."

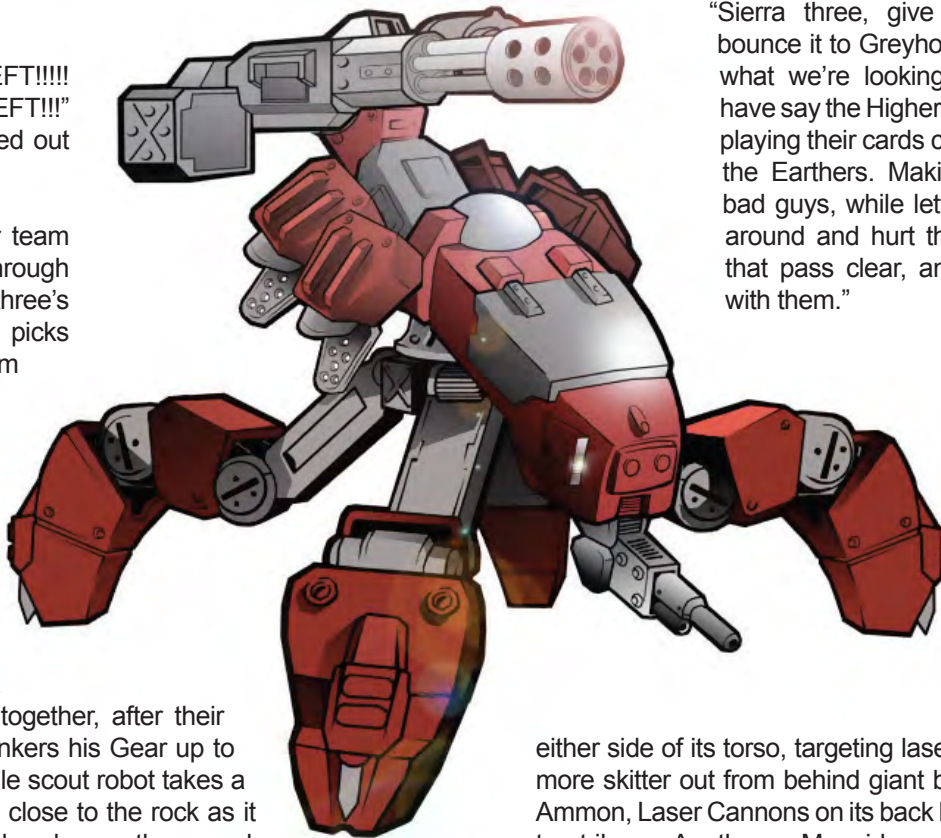
"Sierra three, give me the data, and bounce it to Greyhound. We don't know what we're looking at. The briefings I have say the Higher-ups on Caprice were playing their cards close to the chest with the Earthers. Making weapons for the bad guys, while letting the rebels move around and hurt the Purples. Let's get that pass clear, and try to get comms with them."

"Roger, staying put, sensors full gain-Whoa!" Another mount, a Moab, looking like a great squat crab rises up out of the sand, not fifty yards in front of him, blocky weapon pods on

either side of its torso, targeting lasers stabbing out. Two more skitter out from behind giant boulders, one a huge Ammon, Laser Cannons on its back like huge claws ready to strike. Another, a Meggido, walks out, flexes its 4 legs and leaps into the air on a blue-green jump jet flame, and alights on a tall rock like a wasp landing on a flower. It sweeps its sensors down at the whole patrol, the heavy rotary autocannon on its rear torso looking like a stinger

"Hey? They're paint ain't right. Should be reds not blue, purple, and yellow." Ronal said to himself.

CLUMP! CLUMP! CLUMP! CLUMP! The sound of mining charges detonating on the mountside behind the Peace River force. Then the rumble of a rockslide, as the mountain is brought down on top of the Gears still in, and on the other side, of the debris field, crushing the 8 Gears already through.



AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

FIGHTING IN THE ROCKS

"Patrol!! Close ambush! Clear that kill zone, do it NOW!!! Team leaders, kill those bugs!" Master Sorrens screams out. "Greyhound, transmit that data, and get us back up."

As the data push hits her screen, Specialist Johnis watches in horror as the Meggido opens fire at Ronals with its heavy rotary cannon, and his Skirmisher disappears in a ball of flame. Suddenly, everyone is firing as they take cover from the insectoid war machines begin raining death down on them.

She's frozen for a split second, then training and rage combine. She keys in the Aggressor array and puts the targeting indicator over the Meggido. It twitches as the powerful ECM burns out its sensors and causes feedback to course through its control system. The beast pitches off the rock spire, jump jets firing randomly. As it comes crashing down on its back on another boulder, its legs in the air like a dead cockroach. It twitches and rolls drunkenly over, the top of the carapace dented in.

"AAAAAAAHHHHHH!!!!!!" Johnis hears screaming in her helmet, not realizing it's her own voice until Master Sorrens gear reaches out and slaps the cockpit of her gear.

"Wake up, Linse! We need air support and we need it now. Get command on the hook, and get those Dragonflies here, this second. And get that data back to command. Go! Behind those rocks, I'll cover you, now MOVE!!"

As she turns to sprint, already loading the data into the Sat-comm she looks back to see Master Sorren in his Chieftain VI firing his Rocket Pod at one of the Moabs closing on his positions. She sees more of the machines coming out of the rocks, and realizes that they are going to be overwhelmed any second.

She dives her Gear into a pile of rocks, "Hoplite Command, This is Roamers four. I need those birds overhead this very second. I don't care if the pilots are out for lunch. We are being overrun by CEF allies, I'm transmitting data now. Get those birds on station NOW! HOW COPY?"

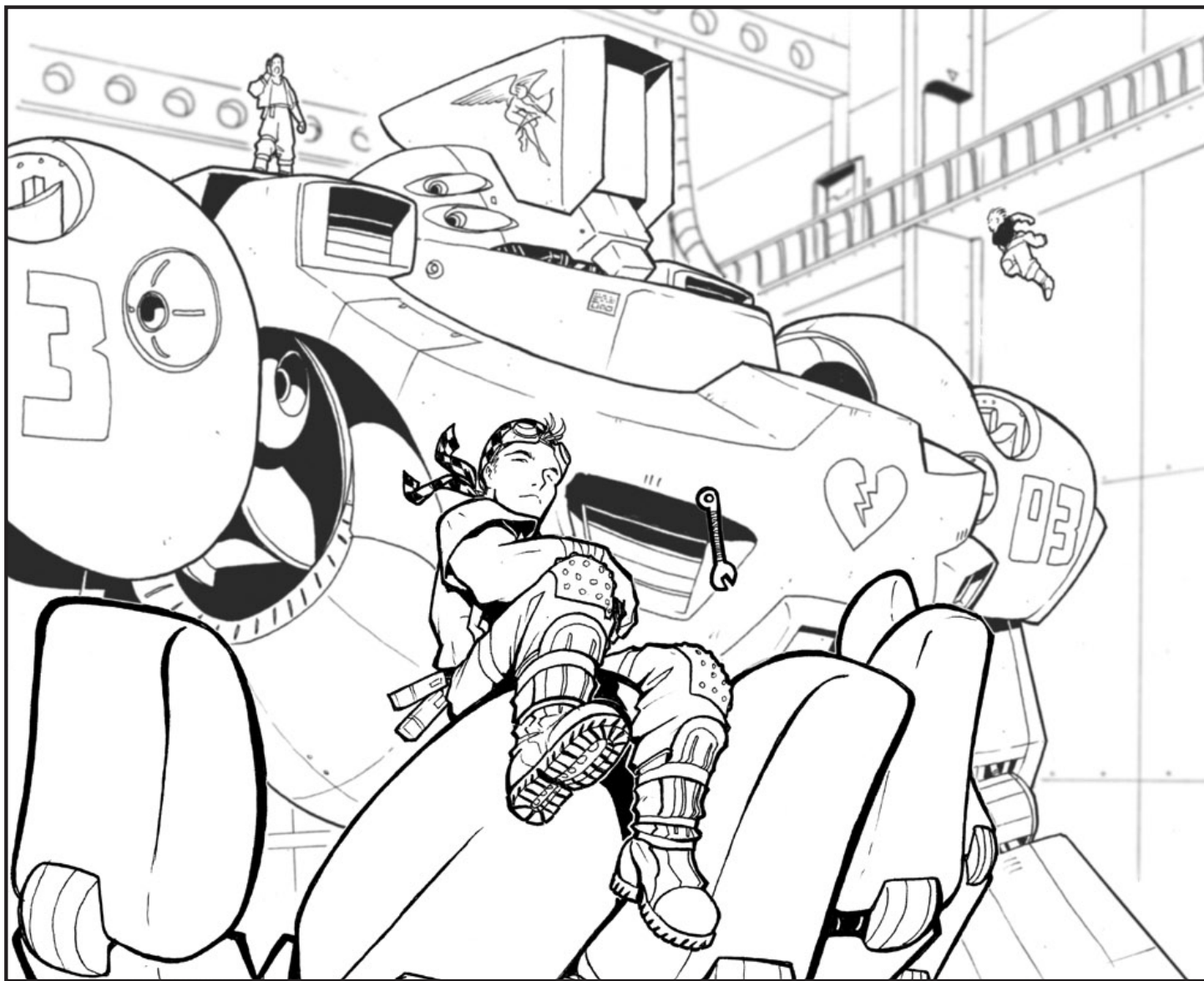
Commands reply coming through garbled, as every ECM on the patrol goes into full Sensor Interference mode at Sorrens Command. "Black out their eyes! I don't see any windows, so their using sensors." A burst of laser fire from the Moab severs Master Sorrens Gear's leg below the knee. It comes crashing down on its face. He lifts the Chieftain up on its elbows, and begins firing at the Moab again with his rapid fire bazooka, scoring hits on its underbelly. The Heavy Mount collapses, smoke rising from the leg joints on one side, as its weapons fall silent.

"Get in the Rocks, keep with your teams. Don't give them a clear line of sight," still giving orders, despite a bloody leg wound where the cockpit armor had buckled from the fall. Crawling his Gear slowly towards a nearby boulder, Master Sorrens watches on his screens as the remains of his Strike Force forms up on their team leaders and pushes into the rocks. He smiles fiercely as two Warrior VI's engage a Kadesh at point blank range with vibroblades and sever the legs off the front, and stab down into the cockpit together. His one remaining Crusader V, trading shots with another Meggido, heavy autocannon blasting away, then his shoulder mounted twin medium rocket packs scoring hits all along the invaders flank, blowing off the legs. Team leaders using short range radio and laser communications move their squads as one, striking back at the enemy.

"Aim for the legs boys. Pull their legs off, like a bug," Sorrens attention is so focused on the movement of his teams he didn't notice the Meggido come up behind his prone Gear, and raise one spike footed leg. His proximity alarms set off, just before the leg smashed down, crushing in the hull, the heavy climbing spike on the end, passing from between the Chieftain's head and V-Engine, to the lower front of the cockpit, and passing through the same path in Sorrens body killing him instantly. Turning its dented torso away from Johnis' position, emitting coded radio bursts coordinating the assault.

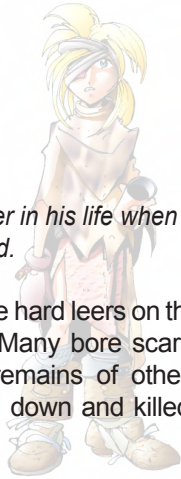
"Roger, Romeo four. Data received. Three strike fast movers diverted to your coordinates, eta two mikes. They'll need you to designate targets. Can you hold off that long? Respond. Over." Johnis is not listening, already lining up the Aggressor system, its capacitor whining as it charges up, She aims her accurate light rifle up to hit the vulnerable joints once she has immobilized the Intruder who killed the man who was like a second father to her, and killed the man she loved. The old hate runs cold in her veins, as she prepares to avenge her family.

"I'll take your lives for this. You owe a blood debt to me now. "



Ben McSweeney is an animator and illustrator who has produced work for numerous animated series, video games, tv spots, comic books, and RPGs. You can find his work at:

<http://www.inkthinker.net>



Anitoli could not remember a time ever in his life when he had been so scared.

The men and women around him wore hard leers on their faces like they had been born with them. Many bore scars, others tattoos. Some wore the scattered remains of other human beings and animals they had hunted down and killed without mercy.

These murderers were not even deserving of the name of 'rovers'. They were a scourge, a plague, a cancer that had summarily wiped out his entire village and left it burning in their wake. Anitoli barely remembered anything through the cloud of fear that had darkened his vision that night, but he still remembered the screams and wails of women being dragged off, men shouting curses and grunting at one another, and the sight of his father strung up on a tree. His mother had died, proud and defiant to the last, killing two more of the six that had entered their home after she had watched her husband bleed to death in her arms. They had shot her enough times that her body was no longer twitching when they were finished. They had turned on Anitoli and scooped him up like he was a sack of johar. His first efforts at resistance left him bruised and battered so badly he could barely breathe for the next entire day.

Their leader was a man who was neither large nor small. He was perhaps of average height and build, with long black hair that he wore tied back in a ponytail, held together with gold rings. But while everything about him appeared average, his aim was merciless and he had slaughtered the small outpost of MILICIA that had stood watch over the town. Those had been the first to die, but they were not the last.

Now Anitoli was all that was left of his village, most of his friends having been sold off in small towns and dark, dreary places where people shut their doors and windows and turned off the lights. Anitoli had been untouched, fed, watered, but he always felt like they were just biding their time before they did something horrible to him. Some of the men and women especially seemed to look at him with a hungry look that made him feel like his guts were puckering up into his chest and making it difficult to breathe.

He did not know where they were, but judging by the amount of time and the deltas that they now floated through on old, used vessels, he thought perhaps that they might already be in the Dominion by now. He had never been further than 20 kilometers from his village for the entirety of his fifteen cycles, and now he was literally hundreds of leagues away from everything that had been normal, happy, and comfortable.

"Boss, I don't see why you want to keep this one."

AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE MUCK, FILTH, AND HONOR... BRANDON KEITH FERO

That was Scarface, the one with a wedge-shaped scar over his left eye that made him appear even uglier the longer you stared at him. Anitoli had taken to watching him carefully. He constantly leered at the younger boy and made him feel like dung.

"That one is saved," Boss answered. "I know a yakuza who will pay a good price for the likes of that one."

Anitoli's insides quaked and he closed his eyes, uttering another silent prayer to whatever gods or spirits existed. But no answer came. There was just the heat, the gods-awful heat, sucking the life out of him while massive mosquitos buzzed overhead. Every now and then a pistol would crack, Anitoli would jump, only to see another mosquito land in the water, discarded wreckage after being shot by one of the murderers.

Scarface was adamant this time. "Boss, the guy ain't gonna care if the goods are damaged a bit."

"Yeah, let me play with him a bit," a female voice purred.

Anitoli shivered again when he saw the Wasserjager coming closer, floating on the brown tide and sweeping some detritus out of its way. Leech was at it again. She had been making those sorts of comments for the better part of their journey.

"Shut it, Leech," Boss spoke from the massive gunboat that was his flag vessel. He had his autocannon on the Wasserjager before Leech could come within twenty meters of Anitoli's boat. "That Wasserjager is chump change to what I'll get for the goods untouched. I'll even let you have a cut, so you be a good girl now and get back to your patrol."

"Hey Boss, why don't I get a cut?!" Scarface shouted from the front of the boat where he was standing over Anitoli, in case the boy might attempt to jump in the river and get himself killed. "I've been babysitting this little punk!"

"Because you got Harvick killed, remember?"

Scarface's scar and jaw tightened and his nostrils flared out, a sure sign that he was irritated. There was a tense second where Anitoli thought he might open his mouth and shout something, but instead he rubbed his hand over his mouth and spat into the brown muck.

"Where's Skagger?" Boss shouted on the Python's loudspeaker over to the third boat in their convoy.

"Just behind us Boss!"

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MUCK, FILTH, AND HONOR...

"Get him up here! The delta widens out here, I need him and Leech to watch the next pass! Move your tight behind Leech! And Marrol, get off the gunboat and watch the right flank!"

"Copy," Marrol shouted from the larger patrol boat while she maneuvered her Jäger off onto a sandbar that led up into the deeper jungle.

"Likes giving orders, don't he?" one of the newer recruits spat.

Anitoli closed his eyes, knowing what was coming next. The sound of torn flesh and the gurgle was almost rote to him, but it still curdled his stomach.

"-the keff you do that for?!" another new recruit shouted.

"You don't talk about the Boss like that," Scarface remarked smugly. "You want to be next, sunshine?"

There was no sound, but Anitoli imagined he could hear the sound of the man's neck muscles creaking while he shook his head wildly. Then the heave, the grunt, and the splash. Boss didn't even comment on it. Anitoli heard the boots coming closer to him now. Scarface's sneer was evident in his voice.

"Clean it."

The sound of metal on metal hit the deck in front of Anitoli, and without even looking he reached out and felt the hilt of the blade. He had three different stains on his shirt by now. Two of them were from previous naysayers who had learnt their final lesson... Scarface was loyal to Boss even when he did not like what he had to say. Anitoli took the blade and opened his eyes, choking back the tears while he wiped the blade on the left side of his shirt.

The fourth stain was far older, but it was on the right side. It was his mother's. Aside from the small jade stone he kept hidden next to his right pinky toe, now rubbed raw from scraping the precious stone, the blood was the only thing left of her he had. He dared not mix it with the blood of these rapists and criminals. Not as long as he still had breath in his body.

The rest of the day passed swiftly into a cruel, boggy night. Boss talked with Scarface about the incident. All was forgiven, and Boss promised Scarface he would get his cut now. Anitoli wanted to retch half the time he choked back the food they fed him.

.....

The next morning they had finally reached a point in the delta where it had become pockmarked with deeper ponds and narrower waterways, meaning that the monitor had to travel much more slowly to avoid getting stuck on a sudden dune that might have not been there a season or two prior. Yet Boss knew these waterways so well he navigated with the ease of a man born to the ocean, and not the land.

Anitoli hated the man, but he was also in awe of him, and a small part of him felt that it was traitorous to even acknowledge that Boss was cruel and malicious, but he was also skilled. Again, today, he had prayed, and again no spirits nor gods nor ghosts seemed to meet him. The only ghosts he saw were

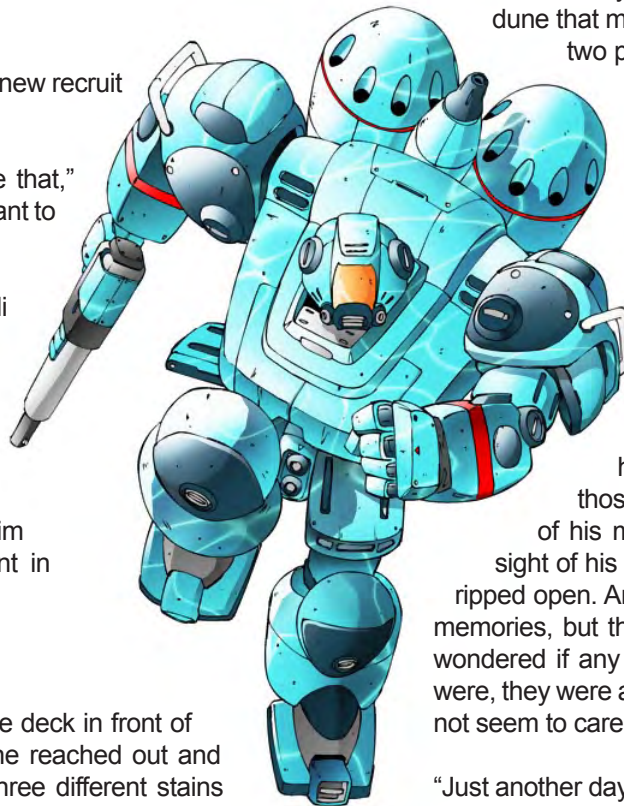
those that haunted his dreams, the eyes of his mother glaxed over in death and the sight of his father strung up in that tree, his body ripped open. Anitoli had tried his best to block these memories, but they always returned, and secretly he wondered if any such thing as a god existed. If they were, they were a cruel and malicious kind, for they did not seem to care nor even acknowledge him.

"Just another day!" Boss shouted over the water at the rest of his charges. "Just another day and we'll be able to hit the streets like kings and queens!"

"Just how much do you think this cargo is worth?" Leech shouted.

"That," Boss gestured at Anitoli from his Python. "That isn't the cargo. What's in the monitor is the real cargo. That is just the icing on the cake for us."

"What's in the monitor Boss?" Marrol called from her Jager on the aft end of the gunboat that was now leading the procession.



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MUCK, FILTH, AND HONOR...

"For me to know and you not to ever find out," Boss answered grimly. "Just know that it'll mean an easy half million for each of you in blood money."

Anitoli recognized that term. It was the term for his nation's currency. He had only heard it on several occasions, and always used with derision, the kind of thing that left a bad taste in the mouth, but for these murderers there was no such thing as bad taste. All of them looked as though they had seen a wonder.

"Boss, that's some awesome cargo," Scarface's shout made Anitoli wince. They had given him something alcoholic last night, and the hangover was still pounding his head like a drum beaten too often and too loudly. He licked his chapped lips and wondered what the river water would taste like.

He looked over the port side, and something rose out of the water. Something with a cyclopean red sensor eye and huge bulked shoulders, like something out of a horror film. The next moment he knew, there was a collision, and the world went on its head for him.

Then he tasted the river water. He almost choked, raging against the current that had caught him, kicking and flailing his legs to the surface while his lungs burned at the water that had stuck there. He found himself on a sandbar. A hollow thunderclap nearly deafened him. He squeezed his eyes almost shut, throwing his hands over his ears and shouting. The boat with Scarface was gone, ripped to pieces, debris scattered and oil and gasoline burning on the surface in flames so hot they singed his eyebrows.

He pushed himself back, and realized the state of his shirt. He looked down at it and started to weep when he saw the blood had mixed together.

"They got Marrol! Keffers got Marrol!" Leech was screaming, her Wasserjager jumping up onto the shoreline opposite where Anitoli found himself.

Boss' autocannon was thundering, but all Anitoli could think about was that the last piece of his mother remaining was now mixed with the blood of these dishonorable pieces of filth. He looked up at the Python that had now landed next to him, screaming, "Brûler en enfer!"

"Drop the depth charges!!!" Boss screamed, his voice hitting a pitch Anitoli had never heard before.

Anitoli turned to see them scrambling to the rear of the massive monitor, where the four depth charges – fifty-five pound barrels of high explosives – were kept on launch racks. Something came up out of the water, and a hollow thunderclap preceded the half-dozen men and women being scythed down. Anitoli had seen the blood splatter and the gore before he could even blink.

Boss's Python's hiss-whumped into a stance, but the other Heavy Gear sank beneath the waves and was gone in a swirl of blue, green and brown muck before the first shells hit the surface of the water. Boss was screaming something. Leech had just begun uncasing a grenade from its socket when another Heavy Gear, one that didn't look as sleek, appeared and unloaded a disposable pack gun into the Wasserjager. Leech's Gear fell into the river, dead. Her grenade went off uselessly, spraying the scene with more muck and mud.

Boss was looking around wildly, seeing the monitor set ablaze and the other gunboats now shredded in the aftermath. That's when Anitoli saw it.

The Water Viper wasn't the standard model. It was sleeker, it moved like lightning, and the classic bump-hiss of hydraulics he had become accustomed to didn't register for this one. Instead it simply moved. It came up as if it were going to tackle Boss. At the last second its left arm punched out, and Anitoli caught the muffled cough of some explosive discharge out the back of a canister on its arm. The spike plunged straight through the cockpit of Boss' Python. The Python jerked spastically and crumpled to the sandbar.

The Water Viper turned its main gun on Anitoli. In the last second its weapon went to the sky, clearing away from Anitoli's tear-streaked face.

"Mon Dieu, what are you doing, 31?!" a male voice shouted, and Anitoli saw a Water Viper appear, this one aiming towards his face again.

"Claude! Securite de votre arme!" a female voice shouted from the sleek Water Viper.

The other Water Viper raised its main gun. "Quoi?!"

"Imbecile! Il ne est pas un rover!"

Anitoli's eyes widened when he recognized his native language. "Non, je ne suis pas!"

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MUCK, FILTH, AND HONOR...

The sleeker Water Viper turned to regard him and knelt down. "Where is your family, jeune homme? Ou sont ta mere et le pere?"

Anitoli's throat constricted. Here he was, gods only knew where, talking with someone who wasn't trying to rape or murder him, and his parents... "... morte. Mon papa et maman sont morts."

"Vous..." the woman's voice over the loudspeaker choked for a moment. "... Vous etes en securite ici."

The Water Viper opened its cockpit. The woman climbed down to Anitoli. She pointed. "You are injured?"

"Non, non," Anitoli shook his head and gestured. "This... this on the left was from these murderers... maman's on the right... but it's all mixed now. I let her blood mix with theirs... je ai honte..."

"You have nothing to be ashamed of!"

The woman's voice whipped him, but her arms were holding him to her so swiftly he hardly felt any sting in the words. His face crumbled while he soaked up her warmth. She held him so tightly, and he could feel hot splashes of something on his forehead. Tears. The relief swept through him and all he could do was weep.

Twelve days later the woman returned him to the Republic. She formally adopted him as her son and a permanent member of her circle. She was Sous-Lieutenant Marjorie Molneau of Port Oasis. She was a maritime Heavy Gear pilot, and his new mother.



WATER VIPER: Death From Below

Water Viper Miniatures

While these are not official miniatures yet, the base model for their creation lies in the Pit Viper and Desert Viper, both of which are still available. I have decided to use the newest possible edition of Blitz with the appropriate Weapons and Traits given. Whether all of the rules remain as they are or change in the future will have to be seen, but for now consider these as placeholders giving you a fair estimate of the Gears' capabilities. I will also be expanding on this in the future with additional models that you can use for true 'brown naval' combat.

HOME
BREW
RULES

HG BLITZ! STATS

Codename: Water Viper
Manufacturer: Mandeers Heavy Industries
Unit Type: Amphibious/Underwater Gear
Height: 4.7 meters
Weight: 7320 kg

The Water Viper is considered a specialist build that was designed specifically to operate in or near water at all times during its deployment. It is fully water-proofed, and incorporates a back-mounted snorkel attached to its V-engine so it can operate while partially submerged. The V-engine also charges and is backed up by banks of superconducting batteries for operation when the Gear is fully submerged.

Model: Water Viper
Threat Value: 10
Unit Availability: GP, SF, ST
Movement Rate:
Walker – 5"
Armor: 6
Hull/Structure: 4/2
Actions: 1
Gunnery: 4+
Pilot: 4+
Electronic Warfare: 6+
Weapons: Medium Frag Cannon (MFC), Deployable Pack Gun (DPG), Vibroblade (LVB)
Traits: Arms, Amphib - 3"

Conversion Notes:

Converting a Pit Viper into a Water Viper should require some Green Stuff or Blue Tack, adding the appropriate dorsal humps to the back of the sensor head of the Pit Viper and also filled up the V-engine with rounded humps to represent the enclosed nature of its engine to ensure that no water enters it.

Also, filling in the sensor eye with a small tab of Green Stuff will represent the sheer cover that is placed over the sensors to ensure that area is water-sealed.

The Water Viper Silent Running will require more streamlining and filling in of the more rugged 'squared' components, but it is otherwise much the same as the above Water Viper.

HG BLITZ! STATS

Codename: Water Viper Silent Running
Manufacturer: Mandeers Heavy Industries
Unit Type: Amphibious/Underwater Gear
Height: 4.7 meters
Weight: 7320 kg

The Silent Running is a Water Viper given a coating of radar and sonar-absorbent material with enhanced cavitation engines that make the Gear 'one with the waves'. The Gear is designed for incursions on or near waterways, and is considered a first on Terra Nova as an explicitly amphibious stealth Gear. It utilizes a specialized linked pod over its V-engines that act as torpedoes, giving it significant firepower in the water.

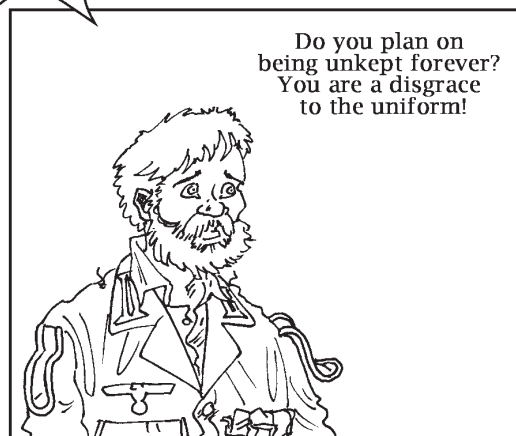
Model: Water Viper Silent Running
Threat Value: 13
Unit Availability: SK, SF
Movement Rate:
Walker – 5"
Armor: 6
Hull/Structure: 5/1
Actions: 1
Gunnery: 3+
Pilot: 4+
Electronic Warfare: 5+
Weapons: Medium Frag Cannon (MFC), Light Anti-Vehicle Rocket Pod (LRP, Linked, Underwater*), Medium Spike Gun (MSG), Vibroblade (LVB)
Traits: Arms, Amphib - 4", ECM:+1D6, Stealth, Smoke

*RPs can only be fired at other Models that are in Water terrain with direct line of sight between Attacker and Defender.

1942, AFTER A DEFEAT OF THE MAIN GERMAN ORIENTKORPS FORCE, OTTO KNACKER AND TRAUGOTT HUNDT HAVE BEEN FORCED BY THE MYSTERIOUS DR. KRAUSS TO FLEE NORTH INTO THE CAUCASUS MOUNTAINS. WITH SS HAUP-STURMFUHRER SCHRAUBER CLINGING TO HIS LIFE, THEY ARE WHAT IS LEFT OF THE...

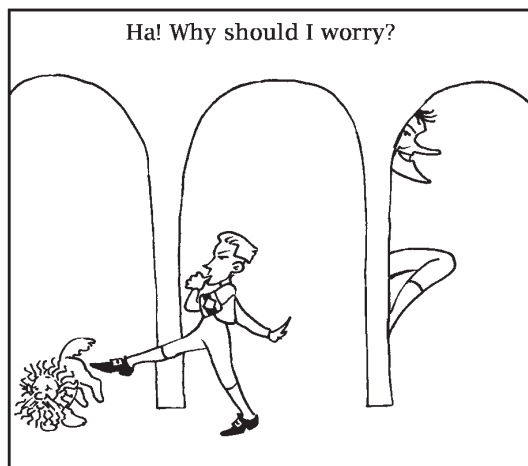
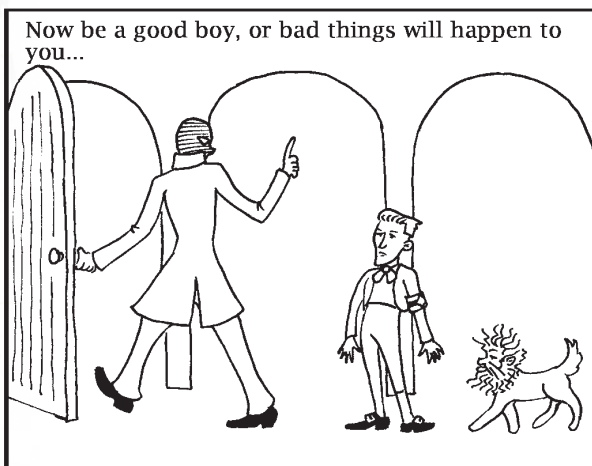
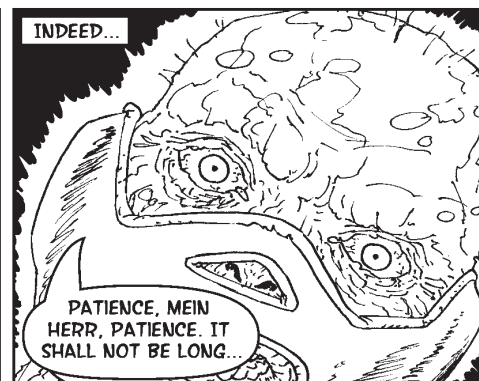
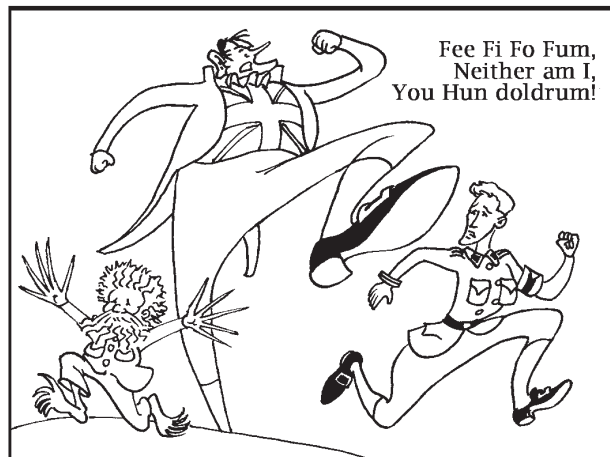
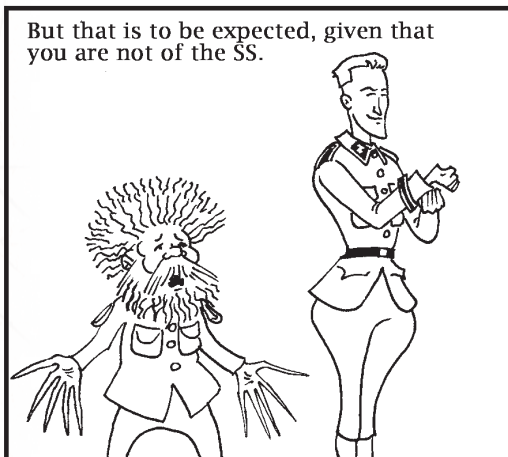
Kraut PATROL

ART & STORY BY JACK BELL



AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

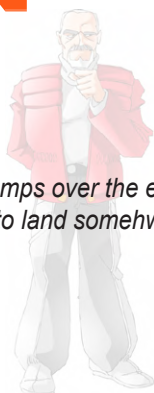
KRAUT PATROL



AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE

KRAUT PATROL





*"When one jumps over the edge,
one is bound to land somewhere."*

—D H Lawrence

August 24, 2210 01:45

Had to send a note to Agram about the intrusion. I shrugged-off his warning in the hospital, but now I have a healthy paranoia about my personal safety. I'll tell him in-person about the message on the wall, though, and what I found in the meds.

What have I done to get anyone's attention? My classified projects days are long past, and I wouldn't be allowed back in the service even if I requested it. The only Restricted Access project I've been working on is this one, but it's a bit of an open secret at the university anyway. Improving neural imaging technologies has been a topic of discussion in medical science for the past 300 years. Our ideas aren't even the best at this conference.

There's a team working on shipboard agriculture that revealed in yesterday's session that they've had a breakthrough in spaceflight agriculture. It's going to make it far easier to settle colonies out past the Titan barrier, which people have been trying to do for decades, but nobody had before found a way to make it economical and sustainable.

Another team of mostly mining and telecommunications engineers found a way to get twice the depth of scanning into a rocky body in space. That's going to make resource surveys and colony settlement mapping far safer and cost-efficient.

Again, I keep finding that we're not that extraordinary, and I don't see why we are attracting anyone's attention. In the universe of medicine and medical imaging, a lot of progress has been made in the last centuries, and while our take on neural imaging is novel, it yields only an 8% increase in resolution over existing technologies. We'll save some lives, but that's not like sending a colony ship to Titania or Oberon, out around Uranus.

I'm left with it being Dr Payarje or myself, or maybe the both of us. He's the lead on the project, but he seems to think I might have been injured intentionally. We weren't able to talk more at the time, and I wonder how much Agram suspects (knows?) about this situation.

AURORA: THE SILHOUETTE MAGAZINE THE JOURNAL, PART 3: THE CUSP AARON BERTRAND

I sent a message to Ellie. She's far away from all of this, and it'll take plenty of time to get to her. She'll probably tell me to play along with these guys until I figure out the game. My puzzles are those of science, and I never was a fan of spy stories.

Well, I'm awake and now my stomach is making noises. I'll get to the lobby early. They'll have some food.

August 24, 2210 02:33

Heading to meet Dr. Payarje and Clarice soon, but wanted to log a few happenings from the morning.

When I got to the lobby, I headed to the restaurant. It was sparsely populated: Just me at the counter and a guy over in a corner, reading something on his tablet. He had a cup of something warm and steaming and a half-eaten breakfast sandwich. Nothing about him stood-out. I had a few hours until the meeting time mentioned in the message, so I ordered some food.

I didn't any more thought to the man until the server dropped-off my food. Before returning to the kitchen, she asked me in an undertone if I had noticed the other man was periodically looking over at me. I hadn't, and I looked through the large decorated mirror behind her and saw him glancing over. With a little hum and a smile, the server walked into the kitchen, seeming to have come to some conclusion about the moment that I certainly didn't, not especially with the mystery of the stranger I was meeting in a few hours.

It was rash and probably rude, but I was suddenly agitated at the cloak-and-dagger feel of all this stuff. The last couple days were full of very unwelcome surprises, and I hadn't slept well enough at all. I grabbed-up my tea and breakfast plate, walked straight to his table, and sat down.

Was he who I was meeting? No. Why was he looking at me? The answer was a bit of a brush-off, but not the whole story. Why is he here? Waiting for a friend.

I felt like I was interrogating him, and he seemed fine playing along. I told him how I was sorry to take out my stressful week on him, he laughed. I eased-up more when he said that it seemed like I had a lot going on. We ended up chatting for a couple hours about the conference, about our research, and my extreme case of space sickness. I learned a little

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THE JOURNAL, PART 3: THE CUSP

about him, but a message arrived from his friend asking him to meet outside somewhere, and he headed out. I stayed in the booth and waited until whoever I was really supposed to meet came by.

Turns out that the mystery contact was Olivia, the reporter with Journalia Venetia, who interviewed me a couple days ago. It took me an embarrassingly long time to realize why she was there, figuring at first it was just coincidence. After a moment of silence in the conversation, I finally realized she might be the contact, and turned to her. She slid over fast and silenced me with a kiss. She moved slightly toward my ear and whispered that we were being observed. She leaned back and I nodded to her slightly. Back in her reporter mode, she said she'd like me to introduce her to Agram at the late morning session. I agreed.

That all being done, I came here to my room, packed a tablet and a couple data sticks with our research files and Agram's presentations on them, and take some notes about how today is going.

August 25, 2210 13:17

A few notes for myself as we're on our way by taxi to a dome on the far side of the settlement:

Turns out the Journalia Venetia reporter, "Olivia", is not only the one who beamed the warning onto the wall of my room, but "Olivia" is a cover name, as are her press credentials. I asked her who she really is and what's going on with all this, she declined to answer. "The captain will answer all your questions" was the only response she had, and that response sounded something like an order. When I asked "Olivia" who the captain is, she repeated her previous answer. I should have expected that response, but a moment of amusement flashed in her eyes before she turned her head away.

She was highly intelligent, prepared, effective in martial arts, and was quiet. She reminded me of soldiers, like some of the veterans at the old military academy.

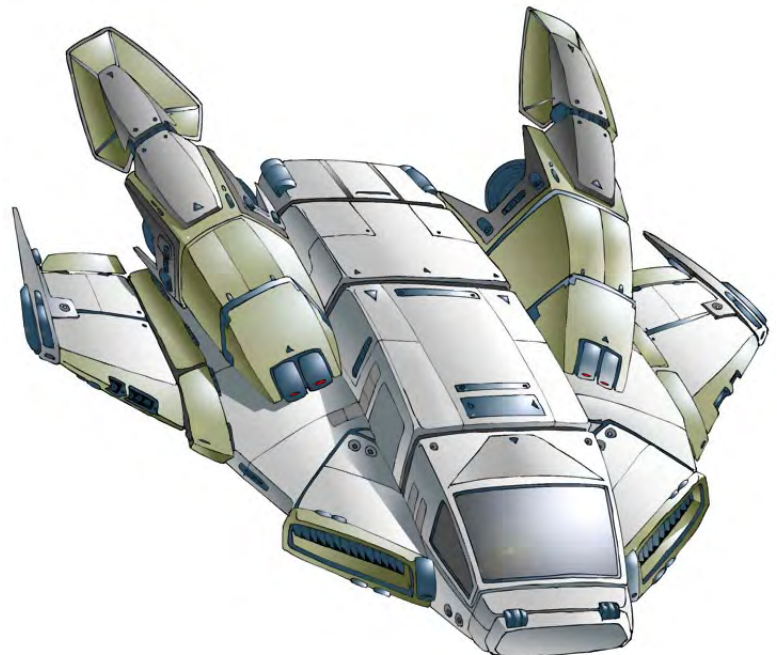
I turned to look at Agram but caught Clarice's eyes instead. "This is a unique adventure, Alastair. Some people are putting in a lot of work to keep us safe. We're only being asked to trust." Agram put his hand palm-upward on her thigh and she took it.

I can't think of anything better to do than wait, so that's what I'm doing.

August 25, 2210 13:38

The small refinery dome we're headed to has its own spaceport. "Olivia" has said we're leaving on a shuttle out of the receiving docks. I looked out at the starfield and realized that I hadn't prepared anything for the space sickness. She smiled and told me not to worry about it.

What does surprise me is that I'm actually looking forward to this. Maybe I'm finding a bit of trust in these people. "Olivia" has proven herself to be extraordinarily resourceful, and her calm seems unbreakable.



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SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Article Guidelines

The Aurora Magazine focuses on the worlds created by Dream Pod 9. As such, we are primarily interested in, but not limited to, articles dealing with SilCore and Blitz! rules (variants, additions and explorations of the rules) and on fiction, mechanized designs, equipment, artwork and similar ideas that draw on the established DP9 universes. This does not mean, however, that articles that are generic in nature or that do not deal with unique or original material, only that the focus is on exploring Silhouette and it's attendant universes.

Any article that is a promotion piece for another product, be it an excerpt or a lead-in to another product, must be clearly defined as such within the article body.

No articles will be accepted that use another's Intellectual Property or Copyrighted material without an included signed permission to use said material.

Fiction may be a one-off or serial based, as desired. Please note that long works of fiction may be split into multiple pieces over multiple issues for length reasons; if you are writing a long story it is best to indicate breaks in the story (chapters, for example) that allow us to chose the best point to split the story, if necessary. Stories are encouraged to be accompanied by Silhouette CORE or Blitz! rules detail of some kind, be it stats for characters or equipment in the story, game scenarios, mechanized designs, new rules or explanations of how to simulate aspects of the story using the Silhouette/Blitz rules. This is not a hard requirement however, and stand-alone pieces will be considered and published.

Aurora is also looking for original artwork. Art may be used to accompany the article and/or for the cover of the APA as well as individual pieces. Please see below for copyright information regarding images.

Submission Guidelines

All work for Aurora should be submitted in an .rtf or .doc file. The text within should be in Arial 10pt font, and single-spaced. Hard returns should be used only to separate paragraphs (with a double hard return) or with bullet points and list items. Do not indent paragraphs. You may use italics, boldface or bullets where deemed necessary.

Tables may be included in the submission. Preferably, tables should be created with minimal lines between cells, instead using background colour and/or cell spacing for clarity. Tables may also be included in courier-font/fixed-formatting. Identify these kind of tables with the following: <<<Table>>>

The article's title should be clearly noted at the beginning of the file, followed by a short (less than 75 words) introductory text. This introductory text can either be a synopsis, a quote, story, etc. It will be used at the beginning of the article to 'set the stage'.

The file should end with the Author's name(s), contact information (if desired) and a short bio (optional). This information will be placed on a Contributing Author's page in the magazine.

Please spell check and proofread your article. English or American spellings may be used as desired.

Photos, drawings or images should be accompanied by photo credits as well as a brief description/caption for each photo (optional). Indicate within your article where the images are to be included like so: <<<Image_Filename.ext>>>. Images should be sent at a maximum of 200dpi for greyscale or colour images, 600dpi for black & white images (1-bit). Given the size of a page, images should be no larger than 7 by 10 inches (18 by 18 cm). If we need a higher resolution image, we will contact you. Images should be compressed with an appropriate method; please check the quality of your images before sending.

Copyright Guidelines

Quotes or information that are attributable to other sources are permissible in appropriate quantities, and should be identified/cited (including page numbers), preferably within the article. Be sure that each quote is written exactly as it appears in the original source.

If you wish to include photos/drawings/images with your article, please provide the photo credits (artist/photographer/illustrator and subject if applicable). You may only submit images for which you have obtained permission to include in your article.

All articles and images used by Aurora remain in the copyright of the original submitters. You, as the author, must consent to release the article for publication by Aurora, with the knowledge that Aurora will not provide any compensation other than what has been listed above, and that Aurora, as an online magazine, will be downloaded by third-parties in a PDF format. All work for Aurora is volunteer-based. Should DP9 decide at a later time to compile and sell articles within a contract will be negotiated with the author at that time.

The End Print

Please send all submissions to the following email address:

auroramag@gmail.com

Thank you everyone for your interest, and we look forward to seeing your submissions soon!

Deadline for Submissions for Issue #9.2: March 27th 2015

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ARTICLE SUGGESTIONS

Historical Articles

Under this broad category are pieces meant primarily for illuminating or detailing something within the game universe. This can be truly historical in nature (describing history), detailing a region, the language, customs, architecture, technical systems, corporations, social structure, music, and more, to name a few. Articles may either be written from a neutral point of view (impartial observer from above) or written 'in character', that is, in the manner such information may be presented if it were available in the game world. See the Historical Accuracy note, below (especially important for this category).

Fiction

Any story (narrative with characters) that takes place within the established DP9 game worlds falls under this category. See the Historical Accuracy note, below, and also see the submission guidelines for further requirements.

Modules

Also known as adventures, a written collection of plot, character, and location details used by the gamemaster to manage the plot or story in the DP9 RPGs. All manner of modules are open for submission, from espionage to social to military to a combination of all three. Module submissions must be detailed enough for the GM to run the entire adventure, including descriptions and dispositions (where applicable) of major NPCs, locations, accessories and story/plot. See the Historical Accuracy note, below.

Scenarios

These are the tactical equivalent of modules, an encounter between two (or more) factions set up for combat. A complete scenario will detail the background of the encounter (the why), the forces engaged (the who – what physical units at a minimum, regiment and designations to go the full way), the map and terrain (the where) the victory conditions (the how) and any special rules or conditions (the what). Scenarios should be designed to be balanced for each side, either via the types/numbers of units or through special circumstances or conditions. If the scenario is not balanced this must be mentioned in the background. See the Historical Accuracy note, below.

Note: Historical Accuracy

Aurora is committed to accuracy within the established DP9 worlds. All articles that take place 'within' the game world should be checked for its accuracy within the established timeline, faction dispositions, available equipment, etc. Please double check your work! You may also submit your article clearly marked as "Alternate History" and if published the article too will bear this mark. Be sure, if you submit this way, to provide in the background all that is necessary to describe what has changed.

Designs

New mechanical designs/vehicles/ships for use in the DP9 worlds. Designs must be legal and use either the latest SilCore rules (including all errata and the FAQ) or Blitz! rules. Please indicate which design rules were used. Mechanical designs should fill a void that is not already covered by another unit. Background and a description must be included with the design, while artwork is optional and preferred. See the Historical Accuracy note, above.

Artwork

Aurora accepts all artwork for consideration, no matter the media type (rendering, sketch, painting, etc) within the rules set herein. Miniature photographs will also be accepted (dioramas encouraged!). Artwork must relate to an established DP9 universe and be easily identified as such. Artwork with nudity, racial undertones, sexism or sex will not be considered. See the submission guidelines on how to submit images.

House Rules

Original rules for the Silhouette/Blitz! system and modifications to existing rules. All rules submittals must include an explanation of the rule's purpose, the rules themselves clearly written, and an example of the rule in play. If you are tweaking rules that exist within the game already, please clearly denote those as well as the reference to where the original rules reside. Do not copy any existing game rules text, only note what is changed from the existing rules.

Note that all rules will be clearly marked as "House Rules" or "Home Brew Rules" when published within Aurora, to distinguish them from official rules that can be used at tournaments, conventions, and etc. Around the home gaming table, however, we all love house rules!

Tactics

Have you won countless battles? Have a strategy you would like to share? Write a tactics article. Usually this type of article will be in a step-by-step (or turn by turn) format to illustrate the tactic. An introduction and conclusion is required to create a complete package and to convey to the reader where the tactic is applicable and how it came about.

Miniatures/Modeling

Any article on preparing miniatures, painting, terrain making, sculpting, foliage techniques, etc will be accepted. Photographs and/or diagrams are strongly encouraged.

Something Else!

We pride ourselves on the creativity of our gaming friends. If you have something else to contribute that's not listed here, please submit it!