

THE GYRE

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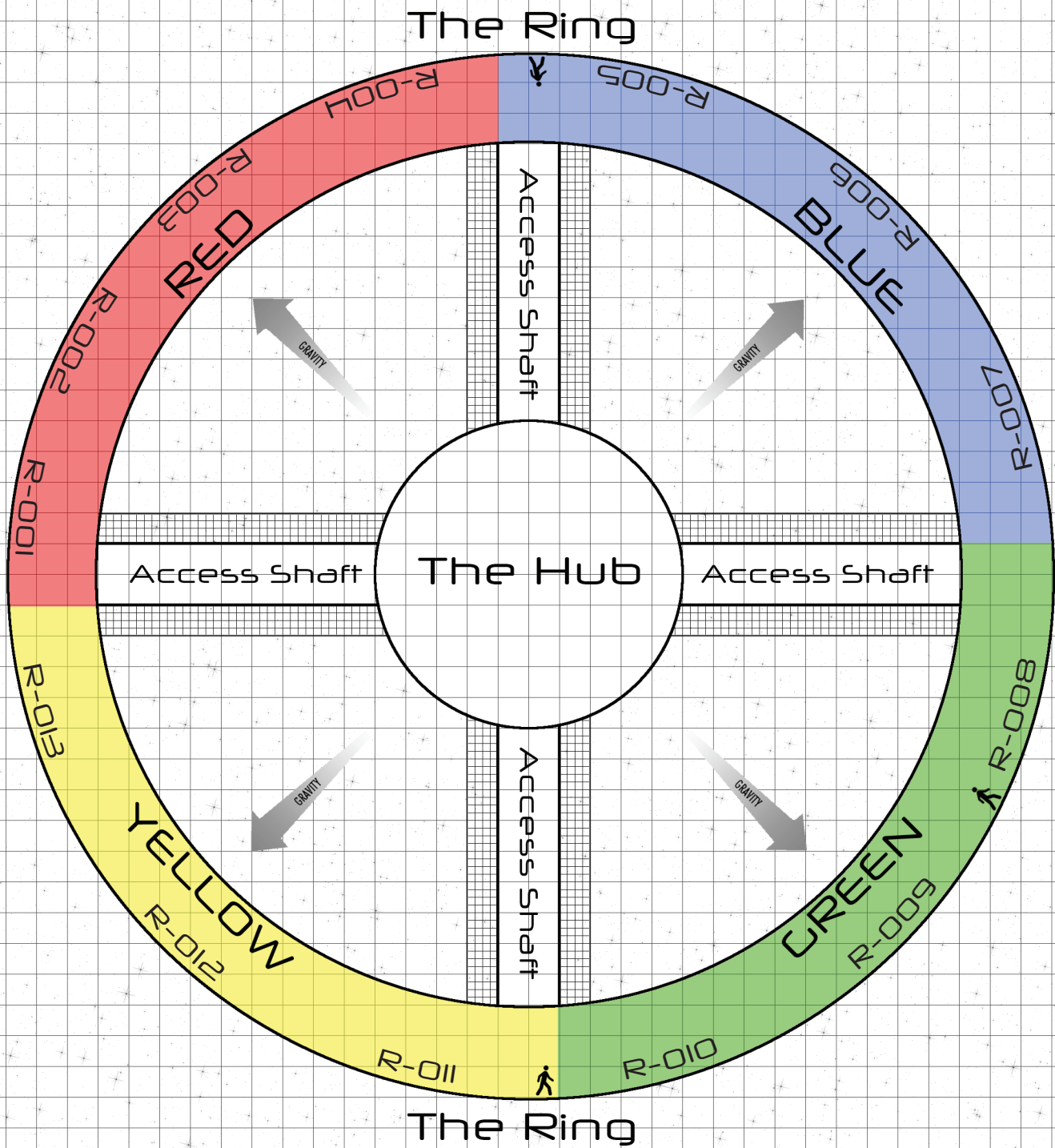
Steve Zieser

MUTANT FUTURE™ ADVENTURE

BY JEFF "BIGBIRD" SPARKS

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MUTANT FUTURE
COMPATIBLE PRODUCT



PULSATION

THE GYRE

Synopsis for the Mutant Lord

The party explores a mysterious doorway, only to find it leads into a spacecraft that launches them into orbit! After it docks with a derelict space station, the PCs encounter everything from malfunctioning robots to alien spies. Unfortunately, their arrival sets events into motion that will destroy the station. Can they stop the countdown or at least get clear of the ship and back home?

References:

(p20): Page in this module.

[MF99]: Page in Mutant Future™ rulebook.

ML: "Mutant Lord," or game master.

Running the Adventure

There is a wealth of technology, and danger, aboard the space station, not to mention the impending threat of the whole thing burning up in the atmosphere. Players will be on the clock as soon as they arrive--though they may not know it at first--so monitoring how long the PCs spend on things like exploring, fighting, technology rolls, or resting will make a real difference.

To increase or decrease the difficulty level of the adventure, consider the following:

- ✦ Remove Smiley's killing sphere or Oozy's disintegration mutation (see "NPC Gang," p2).
- ✦ Allow the Shuttle Bay doors to close, making the area safe to enter without spacesuits (see Area H-1).
- ✦ Increase or decrease the amount of time before the station burns up (see "Pascal Station," p5).
- ✦ Increase or decrease the number of Brain Lashers (see "The Spies," p20).
- ✦ Increase or decrease the healing artifacts in the Medical Bay (see Area R-001).
- ✦ Increase or decrease the weapons in the Armory (see Area R-004).

Player Information

The adventure begins in Warner Town, a typical, isolated settlement of the open wastelands. The land is too rocky for extensive farming, but the residents manage to grow a few tubers. They also herd RABBOXEN [MF91] among the broken hills. There are the usual assortments of shacks, shops, taverns, and craftsmen in town. The stink of the rabboxen pens permeates the air.

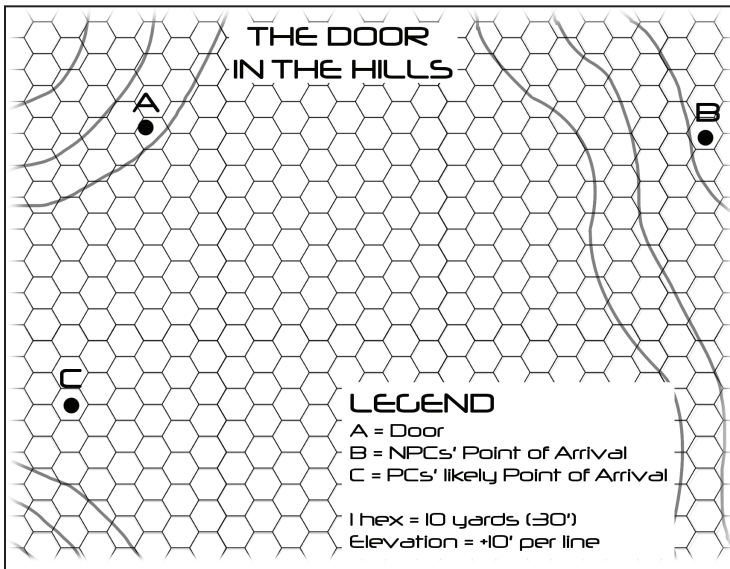
One afternoon Coney, a rabboxen herder, returns to Warner with the news that a recent landslide has exposed a steel doorway in the side of a hill a few miles outside of town. The town is quickly abuzz with speculation. Will it emit some threat? Does it hold powerful and valuable artifacts from ancient days?

PCs can attempt to gather rumors simply by bringing up the topic in any public place. The following is the most common scuttlebutt:

- ✦ It's really a portal to another world ruled by Morlocks. (F)
- ✦ The landslide was caused by machines beneath the earth. (T!)
- ✦ A group of androids are coming to claim what's behind the door for themselves. (F)
- ✦ Poison gas is leaking from the door. (F)
- ✦ Some local toughs are going to try to breach the door tomorrow morning. They're just gathering supplies. (T, see "NPC Gang" for more information.)
- ✦ The doorway appears every century, but never in the same place twice. (F)
- ✦ The door is the mouth of a giant robot, lacking only a few bites of living morsels to awaken the titan fully. (F)
- ✦ It's not a door, just a shiny rock. (F)

One thing is certain, if the party wants to get to it first, they'll need to hurry. PCs wishing to buy supplies in town can find most items from the standard equipment lists [MF16] at the standard price (ML's discretion).

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NPC Gang

Brutosh is a local tough, a two-headed mutant looking to make a reputation for himself. He considers whatever's behind the door his to plunder, and has gathered a small band of like-minded wastelanders.

All of the gang (except Oozy) ride rabboxen mounts [MF91]: Move: 240' (80'); AC: 7; HD: 3; Attacks: 1 (tusk or trample); Damage: 1d8/2d6; Save: L2; WIL: 4; Morale: 5

Brutosh: Mutant Human (Lvl2); Move: 120' (40'); AC: 5 (chain); HP: 50; Attacks: 1 (Spear or Axe); Damage: 1d6/1d8+1; Save: L2; WIL: 13; Morale: 10

Mutations: *Vampiric Field* (2d4 per round, 44' radius), *Dual Cerebellum* (second brain has *Acute Hyper Healing*), *Poison Susceptibility* (-4 to saves).

Smiley: Mutant Animal (alligator) (Lvl1); Move: 90' (30'); AC: 7 (hide + DEX); HP: 65; Attacks: 2/1 (2 Claws or Bite or Tail); Damage: 1d4 ea./1d6/1d6; Save: L1; WIL: 9; Morale: 8

Mutations: *Thermal Vision*, *Neural Telepathy*, *Killing Sphere*.

Junko: Basic Android (Lvl1); Move: 90' (30'); AC: 6 (thick rubber skin); HP: 50; Attacks: 2 (spear + tail); Damage: 1d6/1d4; Save: L1 (android bonuses); WIL: 16; Morale: 10

Mutations: *Natural Armor*, *Prehensile Tail*, *Energy Ray* (4d6 cold, from tail).

Hvart: Mutant Human (Lvl1); Move: 120' (40'); AC: 7 (leather); HP: 40; Attacks: 1 (spear or sledgehammer); Damage: 1d6+1/1d6+1; Save: L1; WIL: 13; Morale: 8

Mutations: *Dwarfism*, *Know Direction*, *Shriek* (10' radius, 1d4 damage + Deafened for 1d6+4 rounds).

"Oozy" (Ozymandius): Mutant Human (Lvl1); Move: 90' (30'); AC: 8 (hides); HP: 42; Attacks: 1 (light crossbow with 10 bolts, or machete); Damage: 1d6/1d6; Save: L1; WIL: 10; Morale: 8

Mutations: *Psionic Flight* (110'), *Dermal Poison Slime* (Class 3), *Disintegration* (140 lbs, 90').

Head for the Hills

As the PCs approach the hills, Brutosh and his gang are also riding hard for the door. Each carries basic gear plus three days' rations. Let the PCs make occasional INT checks to notice hoofbeat-like noises in the distance, or see the dust cloud raised by the beasts' passing.

Brutosh's gang moves toward the door along a parallel route about a quarter mile from the PCs'. Unless the party delays on its journey or makes a deliberate attempt to intercept the NPCs, both groups will arrive in the door's vicinity at almost the same time. The PCs can spot the door when they are within 60 yards. The NPCs will crest the hill opposite (120 yards away) 1d4 rounds later, with the PCs between them and the door (see map).

Brutosh does not stop to parley, but immediately gives the order to attack. The NPCs spur their mounts and charge down the hill. Those with effective ranged abilities attack before charging. They can close the gap within one round; those with spears gain a charge bonus to damage. The rabboxen make trample attacks [MF58] as they reach the targets.

The Door in the Hills

The doorway is much as the herdsman described it: A plain, metal door with a small wheel set in the center. It is partially blocked by loose dirt and rock from the landslide, but is still easily reachable. There is a tiny (6" diameter) round window in the door, but it is rather dark inside and not much can be seen, even with *thermal vision*.

Down the Rabboxen Hole

The wheel turns, opening the door without much effort. It swings inward with a hiss of escaping air. Within is a cramped chamber 5' square, with another identical door opposite. The inner door won't open until the outer door is closed, so characters will have to crowd in or enter one at a time.

Lights begin to turn on as people enter, revealing a small, clean, quiet room (see Shuttle Interior map, p4). At one end is a large window, the outside covered with dirt. There is a single padded chair by the window, bolted to the floor and facing a panel of switches, dials, and buttons. Deliberate inspection reveals that the chair is equipped with a tucked-away restraint harness. There are also two narrow doors.

Once all characters are aboard, an image flickers into life in front of the chair. It is a hologram of an artificial-looking face. The image breaks up with static every few seconds. It seems to be malfunctioning as it repeats itself like a broken record, saying the same word over and over.

The image is the autopilot interface. It is asking whether to proceed with the launch sequence that was initiated centuries ago. If the PCs say anything in its presence (or even make audible noise), the damaged audio sensors register that as an affirmative, setting the final pre-launch routine into motion.

Language Note: Characters who lack a background in ancient languages can still make an INT check [MF51] to understand that the head is speaking an archaic version of Common. Those who succeed by 4 points or more recognize the word as "Proceed?" This method can be used whenever the PCs are trying to understand the language (written or spoken) on the shuttle and the space station.

Countdown

Once the PCs trigger the autopilot, things move quickly.

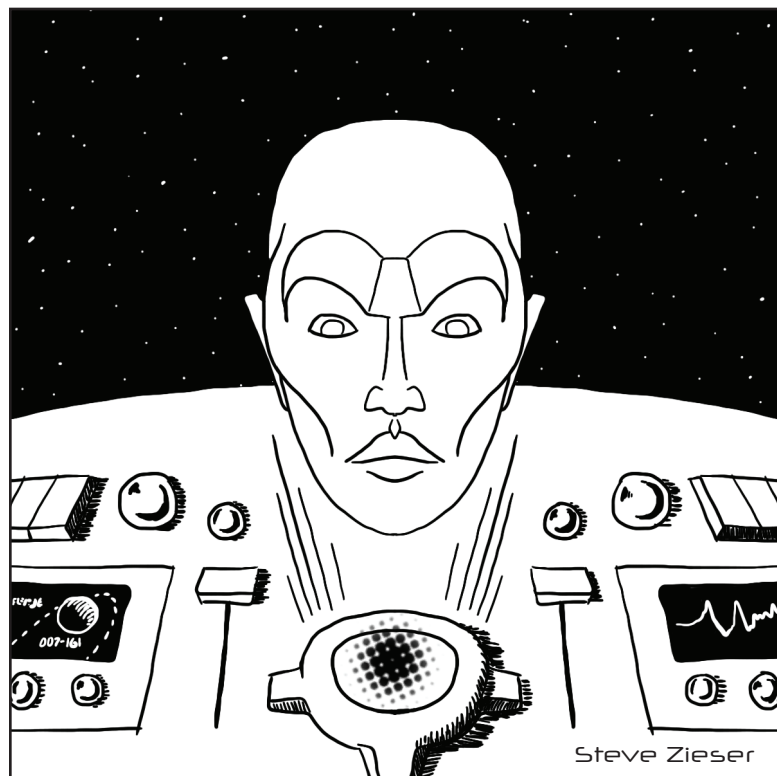
- ✦ Round One: The hatch seals shut. If something obstructs it, powerful hydraulics grind against the obstacle, dislodging any but the largest and toughest possible blockages.
- ✦ Round Two: The main engines prime. A deep rumbling shakes the room. The PA announces, in the same archaic tongue, that passengers should take their seats. Six panels in the floor (gray circles on map) flip over, each one revealing a padded chair with a five-point restraint. The hologram projector shows a looping animation of a figure sitting down and straps moving to secure it.
- ✦ Rounds Three and Four: The system continues to warn passengers to strap in.
- ✦ Round Five: Final countdown: "10, 9, 8,..." with a holo-projected ring of ten green dots turning to red, one by one. Last chance to strap in.
- ✦ Round Six: WHOOSH! The ground over the shuttle is pushed aside as the rockets blast the vessel clear and it takes off into the air!

Blast Off!

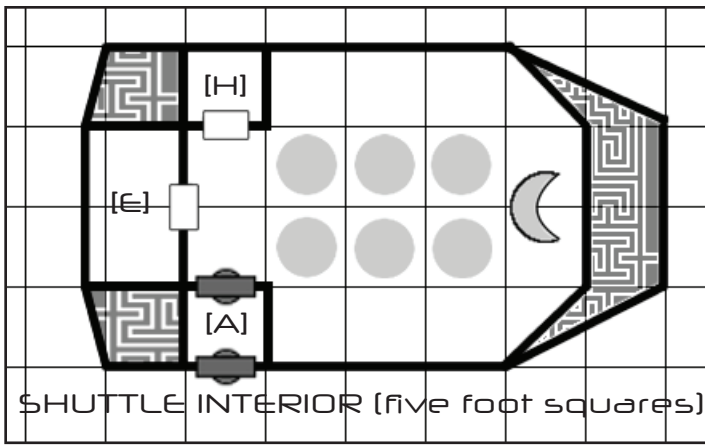
Despite the tumultuous takeoff with rock and dirt being flung off as the craft rises, unless the party makes a concerted effort to sabotage their journey, the trip from there proceeds simply enough. However, characters unused to rocket travel will have a rough several minutes as the craft reaches escape velocity. This is especially true of anyone who didn't strap in before takeoff.

Unsecured characters take 2d6 damage from being slammed about. Rigid armor or carapaces reduce damage by half. Humanoid characters who are strapped in take no damage. Characters of unusual physiology who are strapped in still suffer 1d6 damage. All non-mechanical characters in the shuttle must make a save vs. stun attacks or lose consciousness for 1d6 minutes.

After five minutes of hard acceleration, the remainder of the trip takes place in null gravity.



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The airlock through which the PCs entered is shown as [A] on the map. When one airlock hatch is open, the other is automatically locked shut.

The equipment locker [E] needs no key. It holds four working, human-sized spacesuits each with a helmet and air-tank. There is also one pair of magnetic boots. One suit holds a two-star ident-card in an outer pocket. (See "Stars & Bars," p6.) Each tank holds two hours of air. One or two tanks can be attached to a single suit. It takes a Complexity Class 1 technology roll to properly don a suit. A normal failure means that the suit is obviously not on correctly. A drastic failure [MF43] means that the suit looks right, but actually has the equivalent of a Pinhole breach (see "Decompression," p17).

The head [H] is a phonebooth-sized toilet stall (much like in an airplane), but has a complex set of instructions printed on one wall regarding its use in zero gravity. Even PCs who can read it must make an INT roll to follow the steps correctly. A mistake in procedure is not lethal, but embarrassing and quite messy.

Docking

The shuttle is pre-programmed to rendezvous with Space Station Pascal. The total journey takes approximately an hour; the PCs won't have enough time to complete the Complexity Class 3 technology roll needed to learn the helm's controls.

Forty minutes after launch, the station is visible in the distance, looking like a giant wagon wheel against the stars.

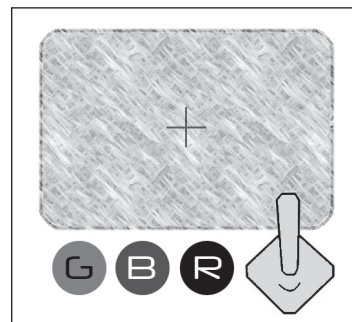
At T plus fifty minutes, the shuttle has come around so that it approaches the station perpendicular to the Ring. The bay doors are visible ahead, at the "bottom" of the Hub. As the autopilot begins to match the shuttle's rotation with the station's, the space station

becomes still relative to the PC's vantage. At T plus fifty-five, the autopilot begins calling out the approach status (distance, speed, time until landing, etc.). Two minutes later, the station appears to start spinning again. Its power levels have spiked and the spin has increased, but the shuttle's autopilot continues its countdown without compensating, as if nothing has happened. A red telltale light starts blinking on the controls.

The shuttle almost makes it through the opening unscathed. It glances off one door's edge and is knocked about a moment or two before landing hard, damaging unsecured characters as "Blast Off!," above. The flight deck's magnetic clamps seize the vessel and bring it to rest.

The shuttle is slightly damaged and out of fuel. The crash tore up some deck panels and cabling, fouling the landing gear and trapping the bay's two RepairBots under wreckage (see "New Stuff: Bots," p19). Until the debris is cleared, the shuttle cannot take off or be refueled.

A small panel pops open next to the shuttle's hatch. The controls consist of a green button, a blue button, a red button, a joystick, and a small vid screen. The panel controls a docking tube in the Shuttle Bay, allowing a passenger to extend the tube to the shuttle's airlock.



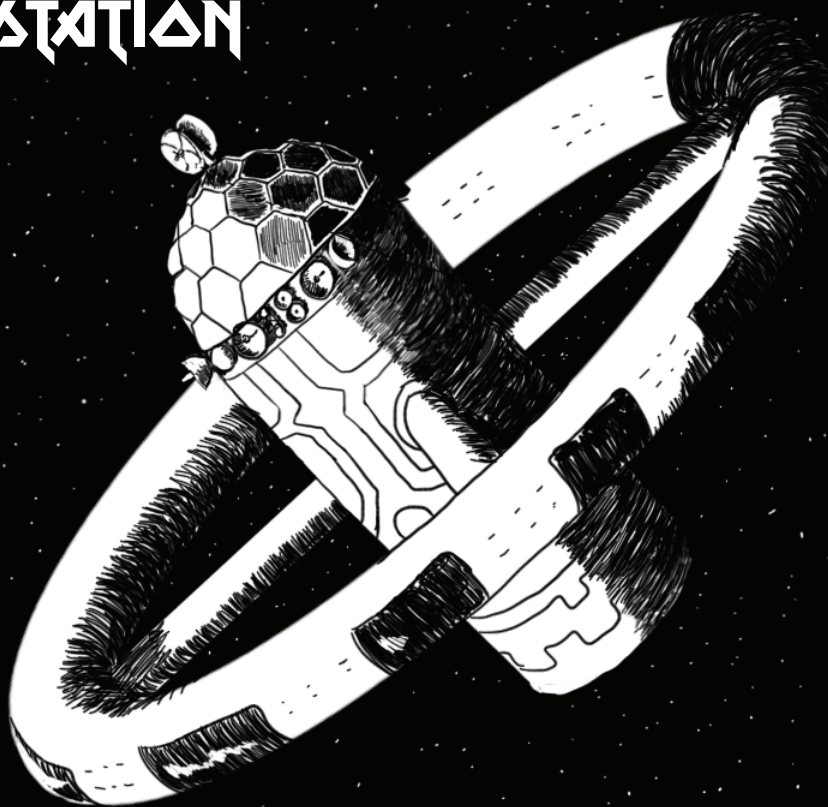
- ✦ The green button starts the motors to move the docking tube.
- ✦ The blue button attempts to engage the seal.
- ✦ The red button releases the seal.

- ✦ The joystick maneuvers the tube.
- ✦ The screen shows the view from outside the shuttle's airlock.

When the seal is aligned properly, the crosshair flashes and the controls ping.

If the players don't care to experiment, they can make a Class 1 technology roll to figure out the docking tube controls. If the characters don't figure out how to attach the tube at all, the only way off the shuttle without exposure to vacuum is to don spacesuits before going out the airlock. Large or grossly non-humanoid characters cannot fit into the suits.

PASCAL STATION



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Pascal Station

The space station looks like a giant wheel, with a cylindrical hub connected by four spokes to an outer ring. The whole thing spins constantly to provide artificial gravity through centripetal force. It was designed primarily as a research and observation center, not as a military or commercial facility.

The Hub holds the Shuttle Bay, Power Plant, and Bridge. Effective gravity is minimal, and characters can float along the halls that connect the rooms. The rest of the station's facilities are located on the Ring, where effective gravity is close to earth normal.

When alien spies got aboard and attempted to steal experimental technology, the station was evacuated (see "The Spies," p20). The automated systems kept Pascal Station functioning quite satisfactorily for many years until a small asteroid destroyed an orbiting satellite as it passed near the station. The debris breached the hull and damaged part of the station's solar array. The dust particles covered most of the panels. As a result, the station's overtaxed power plant has been slowly failing for many years. It

no longer has sufficient energy to drive the electric thrusters that the station once used to maneuver itself. See "Not at 100%," p16.

When the shuttle crash-lands into the landing bay, the station is knocked out of its precarious orbit and begins a slow death spiral in towards the atmosphere. Unbeknownst to the party, they have a limited amount of time to repair the situation or escape from the station before burning up on re-entry.

The station has twenty-four hours before it is destroyed. At twelve hours before re-entry, klaxons begin to sound persistently, and automated warnings are broadcast over the PA. At six hours before re-entry, the station's orbit can no longer be corrected; it is at the point of no return.

There are several things the PCs can do to escape this fate, but it will depend on their exploring the station and figuring out what's happening in time. Twenty-four hours may sound like a lot, but things like technology rolls can be very time-consuming. (Faster Monkey's *TurnTracker* is an excellent way to keep track of the countdown.)

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Doors and Hatches




Airlock hatches are heavy durasteel circles, sealed by spinning a large wheel in the center. Each has a small round viewport. Each also has a control panel that allows re-pressurization after a hull breach repair (see "Decompression," p16), but requires a two-star ident-card. See "Stars & Bars," below.

Room doors are lightweight panels that slide aside at the press of a hand plate. All doors include a window except those on the living quarters: Areas R-010, R-011, and R-012. Doors marked with a starred card symbol also require an ident-card and a DNA scan to enter. See "Stars & Bars," below.

Stars & Bars

Humanity's early contact with extra-terrestrial life was less than ideal. The first race encountered were the BRAIN LASHERS [MF63], who initiated contact to enslave men as chattel. The Lashers never managed to defeat mankind, but they left humans more than a bit xenophobic.

A two-part security system is standard on most systems for "Pascal-era" spaceships and bases. It requires an authorized ident-card, plus a biometric DNA scan to make sure the person requesting access is human.





Ident-cards on Pascal Station have three levels, represented by one , two , or three  stars marked on the card, three being the highest-level access. The gene-scanner is a plate with a hand-shaped outline. The user presses a palm against the plate. The card has an RFID (Radio Frequency ID) chip that allows the security scanner to read it from a distance of up to six feet.

Only Pure Humans [MF14] automatically pass the DNA scans. Mutated humans have a 10% chance of failing for each mutation or drawback they possess, and must roll every time. Mutant plants and animals have no chance of passing, nor do androids. Even a dead or severed hand could be pressed to the scanner, such as from the bodies in Areas H-3 and R-005. Note: The scanners check against the genetic sample stored in the Medical Bay's computer, which can be changed in Area R-001.

If a user attempts to access a restricted area without proper credentials (ident-card or DNA) three times or more, the GuardBots are summoned (see "New Stuff: Bots," p18). The robots attempt to restrain the intruder and imprison him in Area R-006.

The various robots on board have their own special credentials embedded in their motherboards, allowing them access to the areas they need to reach.

Door Security Levels

- : Room does not require a card or DNA scan to enter.
- : Room requires any ident-card to enter, plus DNA scan.
- : Room requires at least a two-star ident-card to enter, plus DNA scan.
- : Room requires a three-star ident-card to enter, plus DNA scan.

THE HUB

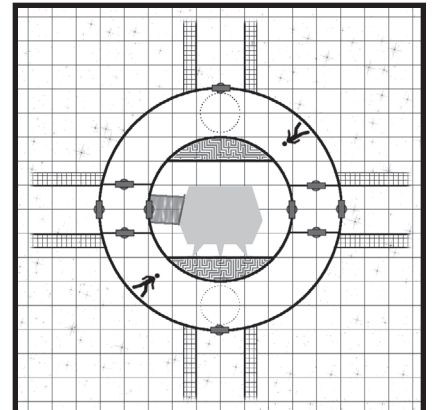
Area H-1: Shuttle Bay

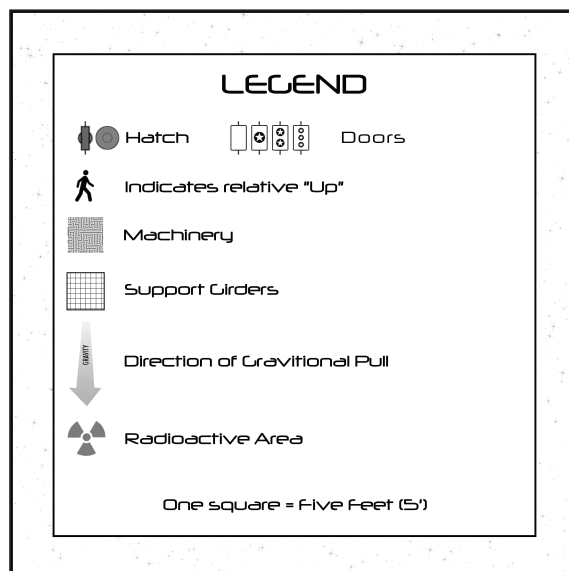
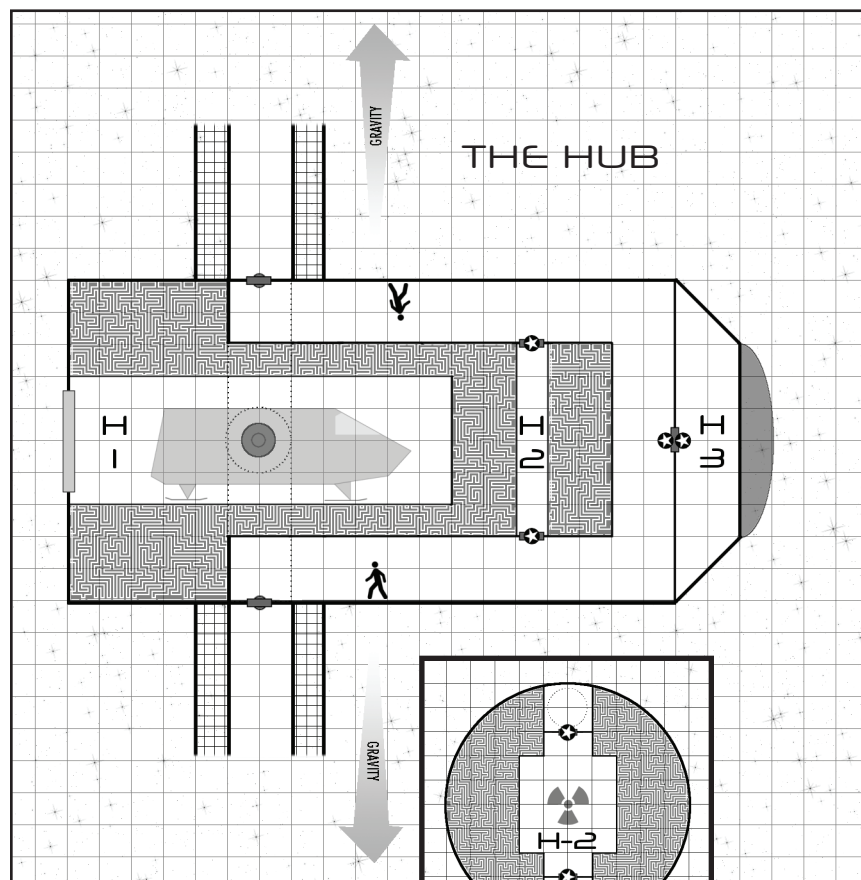
The bay looks like a metal aircraft hangar. Steel bulkheads, gratings, and pipes dominate the room. There are two large sliding doors behind the shuttle, one of which is jammed open in its track, showing inky blackness and stars beyond.

Two airlock hatches are visible from the shuttle, one on either side. One is connected to the extensible docking tube (see "Docking," p4). Both airlocks lead to the circular ring-hall that surrounds the Shuttle Bay. At 90° from the airlocks, access corridors run to Areas H-2 and H-3. A supply locker holds gear for space walks; see "Out of Doors," p17.

The Shuttle Bay, along with the rest of the Hub section, normally has low gravity (see "Weighty Matters," p16). "Down" is toward the outer wall. Beyond the airlock is a circular hallway that surrounds the Shuttle Bay.

Within a few minutes of characters leaving the shuttle, the lights flicker on the station and a klaxon can be heard distantly. After a few seconds, everything returns to normal. There is no immediate danger; it is simply a minor malfunction caused by the failing power plant (see "Not at 100%," p16) and serves to warn the players that everything here isn't ship-shape. This is also when the cryo-vats in R-003 shut down (see "The Spies," p20).





H2: Power Plant

Hatches to this room are in the corridor ceilings, though there is almost no gravity. Within, a narrow ladder crosses from one hatch to the other. The rest of the chamber is filled with pipes, wires, ducts, and various machines. The air is warm and close.

This is the main power plant for the station. It supplies electricity, propulsion, and climate control for the various systems onboard. It is also in bad shape. The power core is leaking, albeit not too badly--yet. At the start of play, the room has Class 2 radioactivity, and the rest of the Hub is safe. In six hours, the power overload of attempting to correct the orbit causes the magnetic shielding to decay further, irradiating the rest of the Hub to Class 2. After eighteen hours, the power plant is Class 6, the Hub and Spokes are Class 4, and the Ring is at Class 2.

The plant can't be repaired with the parts and materials on board, but a Class 3 technology roll would allow a character to divert power from other systems to propulsion. This would buy the PCs 1d6 extra hours before burning up in the atmosphere, but at a cost of rolling for power fluctuations every turn (see "Not at 100%," p16).

H-3: Bridge

The Hub's access tubes end in a cross-shaft. There is a hatch at the halfway point, leading into the Bridge. Like the rest of the Hub, it is a low gravity section of the station; characters can easily float up to the hatch.

This room is covered by a dome of tinted glass. The view beyond is obscured by some sort of dust or film on the outside. Outside the dome's edge are assorted radar dishes, antennae, and sensors. Computers blink and beep here, and a GuardBot sits idle (see "New Stuff: Bots," p19).

A desiccated corpse sits in one chair, wearing a yellow uniform with gold braid. Part of its skull is blown off and one bony hand clutches a revolver [MF111: Pistol, Revolver]. The gun holds two unfired rounds and is in excellent condition (Grade 5).

A successful INT check will reveal that the body in the chair was not pure human. Rather, it has slightly simian features. The captain had been transformed into *homo erectus* by the Brain Lashers' ancestral form power before they were captured (see "The Spies," p20). In a rage, the captain locked himself in the Bridge. The rest of the crew, fearing what he



might do in his altered state, fled the ship. The captain took his own life in despair. Note: His DNA has a 90% chance of passing the gene-scan (see "Stars & Bars," p6).

There is a small ident-chip embedded in the captain's insignia, which is pinned to his shirt. It is not separate like the normal cards. His badge will grant three-star access to any system or area on the ship with a successful gene scan (see "Stars & Bars").

One of the panels shows several images on a grid. These appear to be different areas of the station, some of which the PCs may have already visited and recognize, including the Shuttle Bay, as well as the exterior of the station. Outside images show the solar panels covered in dust.

A few key things the PCs can learn from these security cameras:

- ✦ One of the exterior views shows some damage to the glass-like solar panels. There is an object resembling a harvesting combine caught on some tangled metal. This is the ZamBot (see "New Stuff: Bots," p19).
- ✦ A view of the docking bay shows the shuttle's exterior. Close inspection shows the two RepairBots trapped in debris from the shuttle's hard landing.

- ✦ The Brain Lashers (see "The Spies," p20) are disabling cameras as they move through the station. Two screens, labeled LAB and RED CORRIDOR, are already offline and showing only static. If the PCs come to the Bridge more than an hour after arrival, 1d6 additional cameras are out.

THE SPOKES

Extending from the Hub are four access tubes that lead to the outer ring of the station like spokes on a wheel. The tubes are 90° apart. There are two sets of ladder rungs in each tube and airlocks at either end. The gravity increases from low to normal as one moves from the Hub to the Ring. A character leaving the Hub can float at first, but will pick up speed as he moves closer to the "bottom." A PC intending to float the whole way must make an INT check halfway through to notice the increase in gravitational pull before she begins to really fall. A DEX check at -2 will let them grab a rung instead of hitting the end of the tube for 3d6 falling damage.

THE RING

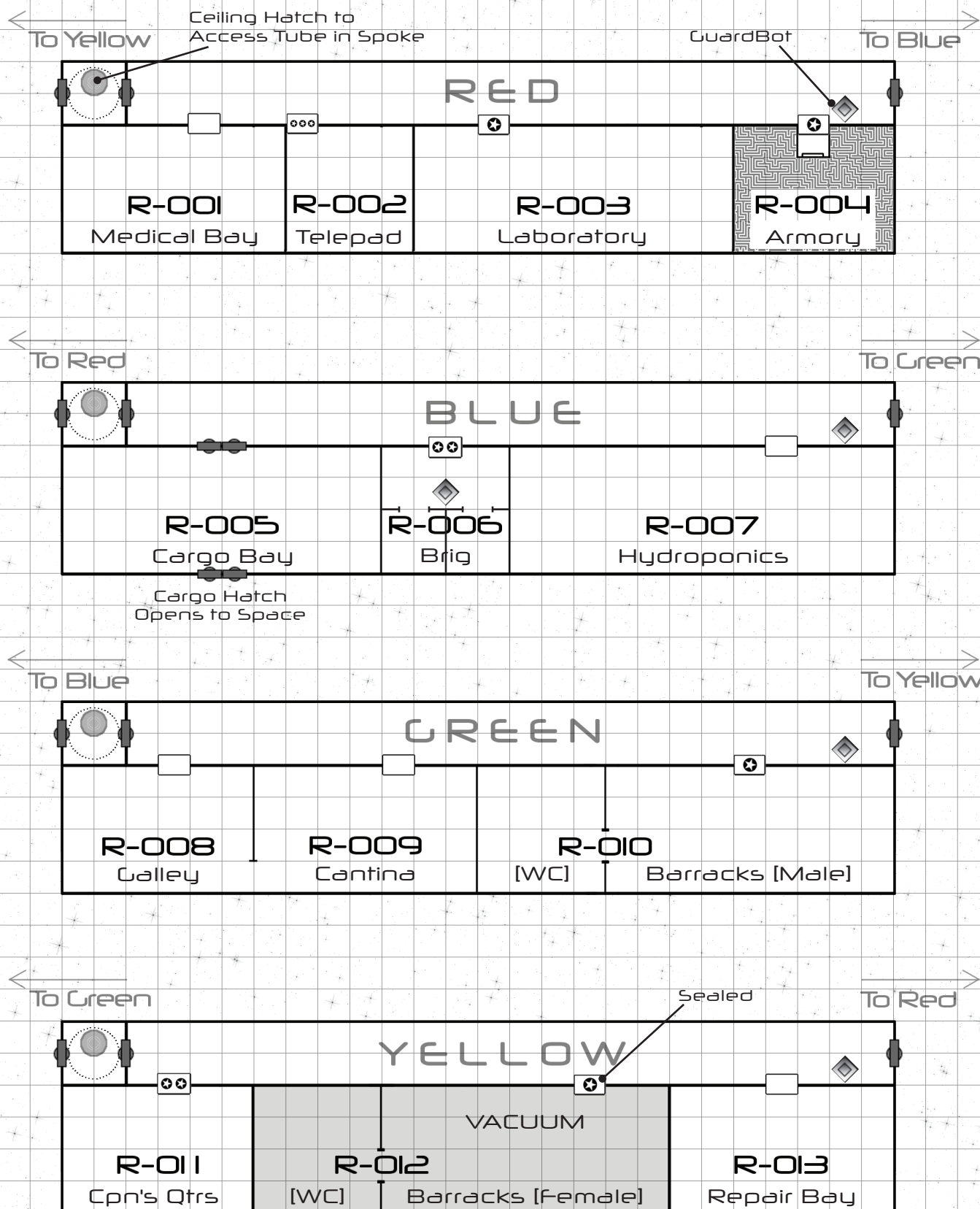
The majority of the station is on the outer ring. Gravity on the station is at its highest here, defaulting to earth normal (see "Weighty Matters," p16). Each access tube connects with the Ring via an airlock. There is a secondary airlock "under" each tube with doors on either side. This is to compartmentalize the station in case of a hull breach (see "Decompression," p17).

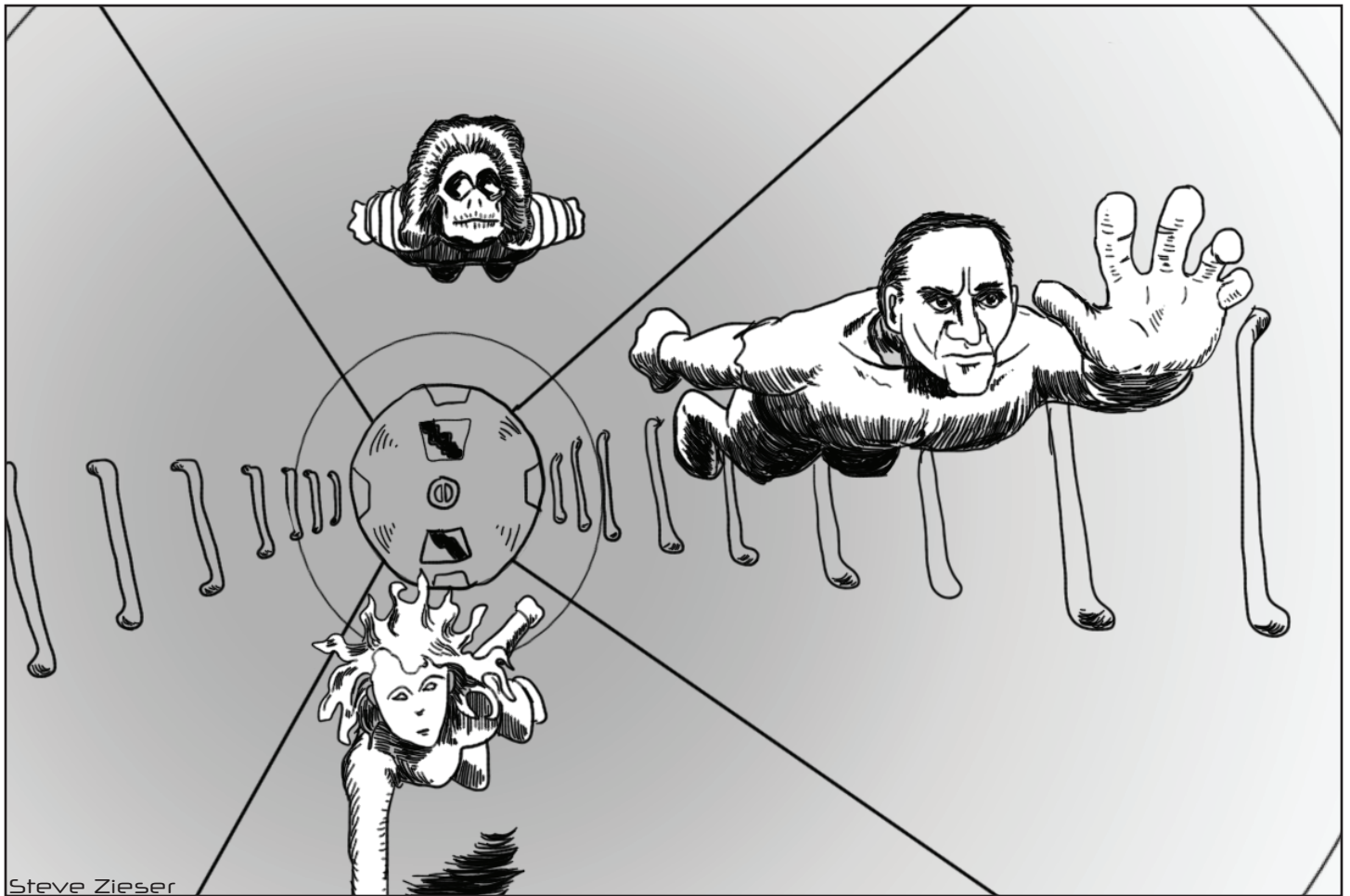
The circular nature of the section means the corridor appears to curve upward out of sight in each direction, with line of sight at approximately 100 feet. Each quarter of the Ring is coded by color: Red, Blue, Green, and Yellow. The sections are marked with a broad strip of their corresponding color painted along one wall. A color map of the four quadrants and their relative locations appears on the inside front cover.

RING QUADRANTS

Overhead View

See Inside Front Cover





The Ring: Red Quadrant

R-001: Medical Bay ☐

The door to Room R-001 is not locked. Inside it is white and austere. There are two elevated cots next to each other and a machine, about three feet cubed in size, hanging from the ceiling by what looks like some sort of crane. Lights blink on the machine and several spindly mechanical arms hang by its sides. There is also a bank of computer panels on one wall, a white box set on the opposite wall, and a 7' long split cylinder set lengthways into the floor. It appears to have a hatch on top that would open like a coffin.

This is the Medical Bay. The device hanging from the ceiling is the MedBot (see "New Stuff: Bots," p19). It is fully operational. It will move and face anyone entering the room, extending one arm toward them, scanning for injuries. The arm has a Diagnostic Scanner [MF125] attached, but it is integrated into the MedBot and cannot be removed without breaking the device.

The cylinder is a Regen Tank [MF126] built into the room. If the MedBot believes it

necessary, it will trigger the tank hatch and ask that the patient be stripped and placed inside. The tank heals 10 hp per full hour.

The MedBot can administer many drugs and treatments, including surgery. Such procedures and their recovery times are quite lengthy. Unless they can save the station first, the PCs will not have time to avail themselves of these services.

The computer panel allows a technician with proper medical training to monitor patient readings and make scientific measurements. This computer also sets the gene template used by all the security DNA scanners on the station (see "Stars & Bars," p6). A Complexity Class 3 technology roll reveals that the cell template can be changed here. The sample chamber holds very old, dried Pure Human blood. Replacing it with a small blood or tissue sample causes the station's door scanners to admit that species or mutant 100% of the time instead of Pure Humans. The same would work for the Brain Lashers, should they discover it. If no sample from a living thing is in place, no one can pass the DNA scans.

The box on the wall is a portable med-kit still containing one dose each of Antitox, Rad-Purge, and Stimshot A [MF125].

R-002: Telepad [000]

A counter stands in the room's center with cables and wires running to and from it. It is covered in buttons, switches, and dials. There is a raised section of floor in front of the device with cables running to it as well. The surface is mirror-bright metal with six rings of tiny lights spaced evenly on it. Each ring is approximately 3' in diameter.

This is where the Pascal Station scientists built their greatest breakthrough: a teleporter. It was still experimental when the station was abandoned, but it is fully operational. It requires a successful Class 3 technology roll to understand how to run the device. It can transport up to six human-sized subjects to a location with a functional receiving pad.

There were two locations originally programmed into the machine; one was another space station (long since destroyed), and the other was a small spaceport hangar on the planet below not far from where the PCs blasted off. The structure was also buried by the same cataclysm that covered the shuttle. The hangar is still there, now uncovered by the shuttle's launch. There is also a working telepad "receiver" there that allows teleportation to the site from the station.

Teleportation takes 1d4 rounds (roll for each "passenger"), during which time the subjects must not move. Characters or objects that move (or are moved) take 10d6 damage from molecular disruption. Each ring can only take one large living thing, otherwise the "passengers" get combined, resulting in a painful (and extremely gross) death. See "Cargo Bay: Ants!," p12, for the result if ants infest the station.

There is no way to trigger the device from down on the planet, but the controls can teleport things or people back up to the station from the pads down on the planet. A ring can't send anything else down until there is an empty ring at the other end. The Telepad can also be set for up to a one round delay to allow the operator to teleport himself if necessary.

Built into the Telepad is the unique mechanism sought by the Brain Lasher spies (p20): the De-Atomizer. The spies know how to remove the briefcase-sized device. If somehow recaptured, it can be fitted back into the Telepad with a Class 1 technology roll.

R-003: Laboratory [01]

This room was obviously some sort of scientific lab. It looks as if it has been ransacked, though. There are smashed test tubes and beakers, some with old stains. Several drawers have been pulled out of their slots and tossed aside. There is also a harsh chemical smell in the air.

There are three large steel vats against one wall. They are hooked to pipes and gauges. Their lids are open and there is a viscous liquid on the ground in front of them.

These are the cryo-vats that held the Brain Lashers, who escaped when the power fluctuation caused the cryonics to shut down. Two are out now and looking to complete their mission (see "The Spies," p20).

The third Lasher did not survive the freeze and has left only inhuman bones inside its vat. A PC who has encountered Brain Lashers before can make an INT roll to recognize the skeletal structure.

R-004: Armory [01] (+ special)

This room is more like a closet. One wall has a scanning device like those found on the doorways in the corridor, along with a display screen. When someone steps inside, the lights come on and the screen displays a laser pistol.

The Armory is designed to dispense weapons and armor to the crew if needed. The touch-screen can be swiped to scroll through the inventory. A brief description of each item appears beneath a picture.

An ident-card and gene-scan is required for each requisition. Each ident-card allows for up to two items to be checked out. The number of stars on the ident-card determines which items are available. The items are delivered via a sliding panel that opens beneath the controls. If a PC selects an item that his ident-card lacks clearance for, the screen flashes red and the words NOT AVAILABLE TO YOUR AUTHORIZATION LEVEL appear.

A failed gene-scan, tampering with the system, or three attempts to access unauthorized items will cause the Armory to lock down and summon a GuardBot (see "New Stuff: Bots," p18). The Armory will not function again without an override authorized by the captain's ID. During lockdown, any tampering or attempts to force the vault trigger an electromagnetic pulse that will permanently disable any electronic items (including the

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weapons inside) within 15 feet of the Armory door. Robots and Basic Androids must save vs. death or be destroyed.

Many items were removed during the fighting, most being taken in the evacuation. The following items are still available, fully charged. The stars indicate the minimum necessary clearance level:

- ☒ Energy Baton (x4)
- ☒ Stun Pistol (x3)
- ☒☒ Ballistic Nylon Armor (x2)
- ☒☒ Metal Insert Armor (x2)
- ☐☐☐ Laser Pistol, Mk 1 (x2)
- ☐☐☐ Laser Pistol, Mk 2 (x2)
- ☐☐☐ Laser Rifle (x1)

The Ring: Blue Quadrant

R-005: Cargo Bay ☐

Two airlock hatches make a double-wide entrance. The fleeing crew mostly emptied this storeroom, but a few containers were left behind. There are a dozen barrels in one corner and several metal crates stacked around the room. There is also a double-sized hatch on one wall, making the entire room into an airlock. The exterior hatch will not open unless the door to the hall is shut. If the controls are then activated, klaxons sound and all air is pumped out of the room in 6 rounds before the door opens out on the void (see "Decompression," p17). Because the room is first depressurized, characters and objects won't be blown out of the station, but it's still a very perilous situation.

This room is not safe. The containers here were stacked when the force of the station's spin was constant. The power fluctuations have made them unstable. If the gravity changes (see "Not at 100%," p16) while the PCs are here, there is a 50% chance that either 1d6 barrels tip over and roll across the floor or 1d4 empty crates tumble. Anyone within 10' of the containers takes 2d6 damage (even in low gravity, one must contend with mass). A successful save vs. stun attacks halves the damage. The loose containers break open and any contents spill out. One barrel is already lying on the ground, with a small crack spilling beige powder (flour) onto the floor. It lies between the other barrels and the wall.

Six barrels still have contents:

Synthesized Baking Flour. This is the broken barrel on the floor, full except for about a quart of spilled flour. The barrel is split and will leak when moved unless repaired. The high-tech flour inside never spoils, if kept dry, and suffices to make about 200 loaves of bread when combined with other ingredients.

Synthahol (scotch-flavored). This twenty-gallon barrel has a locked bung port on the side. There is a tap that fits the port among the hanging mechanical parts in Area R-013. A picture of a thistle is stenciled on the side with the word "SynGlen" underneath. Back on-planet, such a quantity of 100-proof drink would fetch quite a sum, far more than typical xeno-liquor. It is also quite flammable.

Graphite Grease. This industrial lubricant is used for mechanical moving parts like robotic arm joints. It is non-flammable and will not freeze even in space. It is extremely dense, however, so the barrel is very heavy (nearly a ton!). If it is ruptured or tipped somehow, it will spill out and cover a 15' diameter area. Anyone within the area of effect is essentially immobilized due to the high-frictionless qualities of the substance. Any attempts to move along the ground go nowhere and require a DEX check at -4. A failure results in slipping and falling; once on the floor it is impossible to get up unassisted. Mag-boots will counter the effect. Creatures with flight or similar abilities can get clear. Clinging creatures (like spiders) must be able to reach an unaffected area to get free.

Fertilizer. Twenty gallons of Grade-A, hermetically sealed, organic liquid manure, meant for the hydroponics unit.

Ants! A mega-colony of ants was shipped to the station in chemical stasis. When the giant "space ant farm" was ready, the insects were to be released into the habitat for study. If the barrel is breached, it exposes the insects to air and awakens them. Within 1d6 rounds, over a billion tiny black ants pour out of the barrel. Many head for the spilt flour, but more crawl into air ducts, out into the corridors, and into other areas of the station. Within three hours, the creatures infest the entire facility. They are mostly harmless, but in a zero-G situation, they will float free in clouds of ants that can obscure vision or, if inhaled, cause severe coughing.

The biggest risk is if the PCs try to use the Telepad after the ants get loose. PCs teleporting with ants in the room must save vs. poison or gain the *bizarre appearance* drawback [MF26] from a random bit of formic anatomy being added to their own. They gain no powers from it, just a bug-like feature. Pure Humans are not immune to this, but inorganic androids are.

Dead Body. When the Brain Lashers snuck aboard, they killed this crewman, ate his brain, and shoved the body in this large barrel. It was never opened and the corpse has mummified over the centuries. The head wounds are quite obvious: eight puncture wounds circling his skull. His clothes are brittle and crumble to the touch, but several items on his person are still in decent condition.

- ✦ A one-star ident-card.
- ✦ A full roll of Ion Bonding Tape [MF124].
- ✦ A Communicator [MF122] with a two-mile range. There is no charge left on the current power cell, although it could be recharged in Area R-013.

Crates: There are several empty crates and boxes stacked hurriedly, but three on the floor remain closed and locked. A pry bar, such as can be found in Area R-013, will open them with a STR check.

- ✦ 24 tins of canned food.
- ✦ 4 radioactive batteries, fully charged.
- ✦ 23 bright orange rubber boots, all for left feet.



R-006: Brig

This chamber consists of a small entrance area with two archways on the opposite wall, leading to identical cells. A robot floats idle in the central area, next to a storage locker. Each cell is bare of features except for a recessed blue rectangular area on the floor and two panels on one wall.

Characters captured or incapacitated by GuardBots get tossed in a cell and left for later questioning. The problem is that there is no crewman to question them, so they will be detained indefinitely. Attempting to enter the Brig without proper authorization (2+ stars) will activate the GuardBot present, which will attempt to imprison the intruder. Only a three-star card and gene scan can lower the force screens.

The alcoves are the two cells, each a 10' cube. They use energy containment fields to hold the prisoners, similar in strength to a Force Screen Belt [MF122]. If there is a power fluctuation, the field has a 25% chance of collapsing for 1d6 rounds, freeing any inmates. The GuardBot reacts to any escape attempts; see tactics under "New Stuff: Bots," p18.

The top panel is a food dispenser that produces up to two meal tablets and two quarts of water per day (water fountain). The bottom panel is a retractable toilet, and the 3'x6' blue rectangle built into the floor is a foam sleeping pad.

R-007: Hydroponics

This room is overgrown with vegetation. There are leaves and branches, vines, and fruits and vegetables crowding the space. From somewhere amidst the foliage, the trickle of water can be heard.

The hydroponics facility served to supplement the crew's rations as well as purify the air and water used aboard the station. The system is virtually self-sustaining, but background radiation has led to an unfortunate mutation among the green: A MUMMY VINE [MF85] grows here now.

The rest of the plants are perfectly safe, though some of the colors and flavors may be strange after years of cross-pollination. There is enough edible vegetation here to supply up to twenty meals, but it would take four hours to harvest it all and it would spoil in a week.

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The Ring: Green Quadrant

R-008: Galley

This room is gleaming stainless steel. There are counters and cabinets and cooking implements hanging on the walls by magnets. There is an open archway on one wall that leads out of the room.

The galley cupboards contain a dozen meals' worth of freeze-dried emergency rations and water in vacuum-sealed packs. Most of the food the crew ate was from the hydroponics facility, prepared by the ChefBot (see "New Stuff: Bots," p19).

When the PCs arrive, ChefBot is spinning around the room banging pots and pans together, making a general racket. Its sensors detect the new "diners" and it closes with them immediately, ricocheting off the walls and flailing uncontrollably with its articulated arms. It will follow the PCs if they flee, spouting its prerecorded phrases as it slices and dices around itself. See front cover.

R-009: Cantina

This is obviously a dining area. Tables and chairs are spaced around the room. Empty food trays lie gleaming at each place, badly dented but still wet from recent washing. There is an open archway in the right-hand wall as you enter. A lively, piping tune plays from somewhere.

Spending more than two rounds in the Cantina draws ChefBot's attention from the other room (see R-008), and it comes careening in to greet the "diners."

The tables are fixed to the floor and cannot be easily moved. The chairs are made of lightweight plastic and made to stack neatly.

R-010: Barracks, Male Crew

Note: There is no window in this door.

This room has eight metal cots with mattresses and a bank of lockers. An archway on the right-hand wall is hung with a heavy curtain of translucent plastic strips.

This is where the male crewmen slept (one can confirm this by the bathroom facilities). The archway leads to the toilets and shower. Most personal effects were removed when the crew evacuated, but there is a spare uniform in one locker with a two-star ident-card in its breast pocket.

The Ring: Yellow Quadrant

R-011: Captain's Quarters

Note: There is no window in this door.

Obviously designed for one occupant, this room holds a single bed, a locker, and a desk with a small computer terminal on it. The screen is cracked from some strong impact. One corner holds a basic toilet and sink.

This was Captain Lucie's room, and his effects are still here. There are three changes of clothes (all uniforms like the one he was wearing), two pairs of boots, assorted toiletries, a faded picture of several men in uniform standing in a line while smiling, and a polished wooden box on the desk. The box is unlocked. Inside is a velvet lining with a gun-shaped depression and six neat holes in a row beneath it. This was where Lucie kept his vintage revolver (see Area H-3).

The captain shattered the computer's screen in a hominid rage. Tucked under the keypad is his spare three-star ident-card.

R-012: Barracks, Female Crew (special)

Note: There is no window in this door.

The women's barracks were depressurized after the station was abandoned, when part of the destroyed satellite punctured the hull (see "Not at 100%," p16), making a Small breach (see "Decompression," p17). The windowless door is sealed; even an ident-card and successful DNA scan only cause a red light to wink on the handle. If the door is forced open, the air in the corridor rushes out through it. Alarms go off and airlocks lock shut for the Yellow quadrant. The corridor will be depleted of air within 2d4 rounds. If the door was battered or pried open, it cannot seal properly even if shut again. This leaves a Pinhole breach in place. As a result, the air pressure doesn't restore properly and the life support safeguards will not release the containment airlocks, but even an imperfect seal can buy the PCs some time to try to figure out some way to seal the door.

Inside, the room is a mess from the explosive decompression years before. There are enough beds and lockers for up to eight crew members, plus bathroom facilities. The room is empty of personal effects because the crew evacuated long ago and what was left got spaced when the hull was breached. Thick plastic curtain-strips hang from the bathroom entrance; clever players could use one to seal a Pinhole breach.

R-013: Repair Bay ☐

The walls of this room are hung with myriad mechanical supplies and equipment. There are spools of cable, assorted parts, and various tools here. A counter spans the far wall, strewn with miscellaneous hardware. In the center of the floor is a tangle of wires, servos, and machine parts. As the door opens it lurches into a semi-upright position.

The thing on the floor is a derelict RepairBot. It was nearly destroyed by the fighting among the crew caused by the Brain Lashers. It was dumped here for parts, but in the midst of the xenos crisis, the bot's programming core was not disabled. As a result, it began the herculean labor of fixing itself as its body lay in pieces. Its power source is too weak for it to remain functional for any length of time, so it has been using the recharger unit and smaller batteries to run itself for a few minutes at a time before having to lapse into a hibernation phase, waiting for the cells to recharge, repeating the cycle every few hours. Such power sources are not intended to run something like a robot. It has been doing this for years. A single radioactive battery would allow it to complete the task in no time, but those are in the Cargo Bay (Area R-005).

The RepairBot will finish its self-repair in three more days at the current rate; too late, unless the PCs prevent the station's destruction. The bot cannot get all the way to the Cargo Bay for a radioactive battery on its own, and it lacks the parts to repair its communication equipment, so it can't call other RepairBots for help.

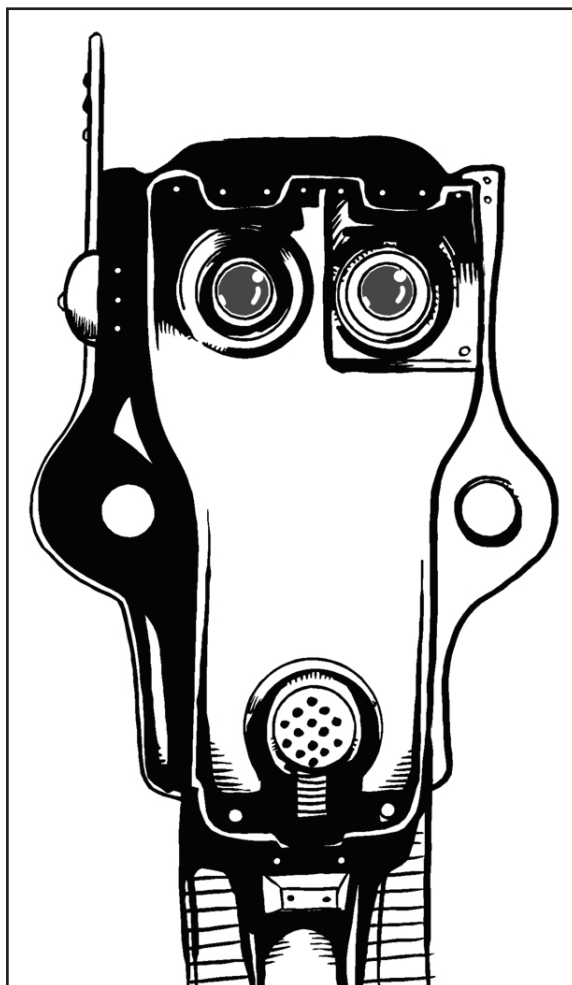
When the bot first lurches up, it is not attacking, it is grabbing for the now-charged power backpack (see below). Once it hooks that up, the bot can function well enough to continue repairing itself for one turn. PCs can see the charge meter going down on the backpack. Before the pack is completely empty, it plugs in a beltpack, which lets it just connect the backpack to the charger and go back into power-save mode. The remaining power in the beltpack will let it take the backpack off the charger when it's ready in 24 hours.

There are several mechanical parts and tools stacked on shelves or hanging from hooks along one wall. The mechanical parts could be used to repair a robot or mechanical android PC up to 3d6 hp, given the skill and time enough to use them.

The toolkit is a fairly complete assortment of screwdrivers, sockets, pliers, basic electrical tools, and wrenches (48 pieces). These grant a +5% bonus to technology and repair rolls for mechanical artifacts. Characters could take the set with them, but there is no tool box to hold them and the set weighs thirty pounds all together.

One shelf holds several power cells and batteries plugged into chargers built into the bulkhead, their lights winking green. They are all at full capacity. The chargers currently hold:

- ✦ 2 power cells (4 hours to recharge)
- ✦ 2 power beltpacks (6 hours to recharge)
- ✦ 1 power backpack (24 hours to recharge)



NEW RULES AND STATISTICS

Not at 100%

Pascal Station is not operating at its best. Even without orbital decay, the various systems have been erratic. There is a one in six chance of a power fluctuation every other turn. Consult the table below:

D8 Result

1. Lights flicker and remain dim for 1 turn (-2 to vision-based rolls).
2. Lights go out entirely for 2d6 rounds (-6 to rolls).
3. Short Circuit: A nearby room door opens and closes randomly 2-3 times.
4. Klaxons sound and fire extinguishers blast, then they all suddenly cut off.
5. Random machine nearby turns on for 1d6 rounds.
6. Climate Control: Temperature suddenly rises or falls by 20°F for 1d4 turns.
7. Spin Down: Gravity is reduced by one step* for 1d3 turns.
8. Spin Up: Gravity is increased by one step* for 1d3 turns.

*See "Weighty Matters"

There are two factors causing trouble for the station's power supply. First, the main power plant itself is in desperate need of maintenance. These repairs are beyond the scope of a simple technology roll. There are parts that should have been replaced decades ago, and no such spare parts exist on board. Despite these issues, the backup systems have managed to limp along for quite a while, keeping things running and the orbit stable, albeit barely. The impact of the shuttle crash changed all that, of course.

The second problem is the damaged and occluded solar array. Ordinarily, one panel torn up by satellite debris wouldn't take the system down. There is also a robotic panel cleaner, known as 'ZamBot,' that would normally clean the dust off the other panels (see "New Stuff: Bots," p19). Unfortunately, the robot became stuck in the damaged section and has powered down. Intrepid PCs might be able to fix the situation by spacewalking to the robot and replacing its radioactive battery (see "Out of Doors," p17).

Weighty Matters

Pascal station maintains artificial gravity through spinning. This can be somewhat confusing to players and ML alike at first, since the two-dimensional maps can give a skewed sense of direction. Remember, there is no up or down normally in space. "Down" only exists due to centripetal force. When in doubt, think of the station as a wheel; the farther one is from the center (Hub), the greater the effect of the spin and therefore the greater the gravitational effect.

Due to the erratic behavior of the power plant, the rate of spin can change suddenly, thus increasing or decreasing apparent gravity for the PCs. For simplicity, there are three basic levels of gravity used: Low, Normal, and High. When functioning properly, the station's Hub has low gravity and the Ring has normal gravity.

Low: Gravitational pull is so low that a character might as well be weightless. Walking (without something like magnetic boots or suction feet) is impossible. Motion is achieved by propelling oneself through the air. Characters with flight ability can move without penalty. Characters with telekinetic ability can pull themselves along. 'Grounded' characters must make a DEX roll to get from point A to B at faster than half their normal movement rate. Failure means they either over- or under-shot the mark. A critical failure means they hurl themselves into a bulkhead or land badly, taking 1d6 damage from the impact.

Ranged attacks (except energy weapons) are at -4 and the attacker must make a DEX roll or be flung backwards 1d6x10' in reaction to the propelling force.

Normal: This is near enough to earth gravity that ballistics and kinesthetics follow the rules the way your body expects. No special bonuses or penalties apply.

High: Weight is doubled or more. Characters move at 1/3 speed and STR bonuses are halved (STR penalties are doubled). After 1 turn of high gravity, CON rolls are required once every 10 rounds to avoid exhaustion. A critical failure results in unconsciousness for 1d6x10 rounds.

An exhausted character can barely walk (max 10' per round). If he attempts to perform any strenuous task like combat or using mental powers, it forces another CON check; a failure causes 1d6 damage and the character blacks out for 1d6 rounds.

A sudden change from one state to the other requires saving throws versus stun attacks or the characters are flung off balance, taking 1d6 damage from impact.

Out of Doors

Going outside the station is completely possible, exiting through the jammed Shuttle Bay doors in H-1, the cargo lock in Area R-005, or the hull breach in R-012. It is also a tricky business. There are several spacesuits, both on the station and in the shuttle, and the Shuttle Bay has a supply locker containing a 300' safety line with carabiners. The mag-boots in the shuttle's locker are the only pair to be found.

There are numerous places to secure the tether on the station's hull. Without the line, a space-walking character risks simply floating away into the void. PCs with psionic flight can move fairly easily. Neural telekinesis can allow a mutant to grab handholds and pull himself along, but he must be careful lest his grip loosens and he floats out of range of any solid anchor point.

The magnetic boots allow a PC to walk (slowly) along the metal hull. Running, jumping, spin fluctuations, or being physically struck will knock them loose, though. The boots can only secure one PC. For instance, if a character wearing the mag-boots is holding a tether for another PC and the line goes taut, the shod PC will be pulled loose and both may float away.

A PC who comes loose can make a saving throw vs. stun attacks to grab a stanchion or similar to keep from floating away. Failure means the PC moves 1d4x10' per round away from the station.

If the characters are headed for the solar array to fix the ZamBot, they must contend with additional factors. First, unless strapped on in some way, the radioactive battery takes one hand to carry. That leaves only one hand free to hold onto things. One-handed saving throws to grab hold are at a -2 penalty. Secondly, the solar panels are on the outer part of the rim, where the spin's pull is greatest. PCs on the array are effectively walking on the ceiling, their heads hanging "down" toward the whirling stars, with a constant sense of being about to fall head-first into space.

The trip is at least two turns (twenty minutes) each way. It requires a successful DEX check each turn. The rolls are at a -2 penalty unless one is wearing the mag-boots.

A failed roll means the PC makes no progress that turn. If the roll is failed by six or more, the PC loses his grip on the surface and floats free. Without a tether or some means of propulsion, the PC cannot get back on his own. It requires a Class 1 technology roll to replace the battery and a successful STR check to free the bot from the fouled track. PCs can make one check per turn. Mutant Lords should make note of how much air remains in PC spacesuits.

Once the ZamBot is operational again, it will begin cleaning the solar panels. It will take 1d4 hours to complete the task, at which point the station will have enough power to stabilize the orbit, assuming it is not already too late! See "Not at 100%."

Decompression

Being exposed to the vacuum of space is a very dangerous place to be. While it is not impossible to survive the experience, the odds are definitely against the unlucky character.

A character will die in CON/2 rounds unless retrieved and brought back into atmosphere (or spacesuit re-sealed). Spaced characters must make a save vs. death every round or lose consciousness. They also take 1d6 damage per round. Regeneration can restore lost hp, but will not prevent the countdown until death.

Basic Androids are unaffected by the void and can function normally, though they will not be able to communicate verbally or propel themselves in free fall.

In the case of a hull breach, the vessel's air is blown out into space. The resulting force can drag people off their feet and--in the case of a large enough hole--out into space. The station's automatic safety systems will seal the hatches around a breached quarter of the Ring within 1d4 rounds. Between the station's life support systems conserving the air before it is all lost, and the breach itself, the area will depressurize completely in 3d6 rounds. An undamaged room door can seal against a breach, but the system's redundancies seal off the area around the room as well.

At any airlock, a control panel lets characters use a two- or three-star ident-card to authorize re-pressurization. If the breach has been sealed off, characters are out of danger of asphyxiation within three rounds.

Hull Breaches

For game purposes, hull breaches are of three size categories.

Pinhole: A tiny, slow leak that takes several minutes to lower the pressure readings enough to trigger a lockdown. A simple patch job can cover this leak and eliminate the danger. In a spacesuit, this is noticed almost immediately, but the wearer has up to three rounds to repair it with a patch before losing enough air to depressurize. Every spacesuit has a simple patch kit included in a sealed pocket. Onboard the station, the breach will cause a hissing sound and light objects (like paper) will be sucked toward it.

Small: Up to approximately 1' in diameter. This is a serious problem and will immediately trigger the containment systems, as a strong wind rushes out the breach. A character who loses his footing (STR or DEX check at -3) is swept up against the hole and takes 2d6 damage per round. There is, however, a 50% chance his body effectively blocks the hole, reducing it to a Pinhole leak. A STR check will allow the PC to pull away, but it requires a new check every round to keep clear or move away at a move of 10'. Repairing a Small hole requires things like welding gear and sheet metal, which can be found in R-013. A spacesuit with a breach this size is instantly rendered useless and cannot be repaired while worn. The wearer is essentially exposed to space.

Large: Man-sized or bigger. People can be swept clean out of the hole, blown into space (STR or DEX check at -4 to avoid losing one's grip or footing). It would take hours for RepairBots or crew in spacesuits with welding tools to repair a hole this size.

Piercing the Veil: The hull of the space station is designed to withstand a measure of abuse. Simply knocking something (or someone) into a bulkhead isn't going to cause a breach. That said, accidents DO happen. If a critical failure is rolled during a combat, the attacker rolls damage normally. In addition to any other "fumble" effects that might occur, the shot or blow strikes a weak point in the hull. For every full ten points of damage dealt, the breach is one size larger (0-9 points, no effect; 10 points = Pinhole; 20 = Small; 30+ = Large).

BOTS

Pascal Station contains an automated "crew" of robots. Most are designed to perform simple maintenance or service tasks, but some can become antagonists for the PCs. As a rule, the bots try to go about their business and do not pay attention to anyone on board. There are, of course, exceptions to this.

GuardBots (Areas H-3, R-006, and Ring)

There are six of these security devices on the station, one in each quadrant of the rim, one at the Brig, and one on the Bridge. They are idle most of the time, but if activated, one appears within 1d3 rounds. If it deems that there are too many offenders to handle alone (odds of 2:1 or more), it signals for backup and two more arrive in 1d6+2 rounds.

GuardBot standard procedure is to stun anyone who appears to be a threat or violating security protocols. It will then restrain them with at least one mantacle (see below) and take them to the Brig (Area R-006). The GuardBot can drag up to 400 pounds at half movement.

A simple template scan allows it to remove any obvious weapons or armor before locking the prisoner in a cell. The bots will keep the prisoners isolated if they can, only doubling up when both cells are already occupied.

Mantacles are articulated tentacle-like arms that end in a handcuff-like pincer. They can extend up to 10'. GuardBots can attack with the mantacles at -4 to trap a limb. A stunned opponent can be automatically cuffed, but it takes a round, during which the bot can't move. Once cuffed, the prisoner has to make a STR check at -10 to break free, and if the first attempt fails, the bot jolts the prisoner with a Stun attack that automatically hits. The cuffs adjust from anywhere between 2" and 6" in diameter, so most creatures can be restrained.

HD: 13; Frame: Armature; Locomotion: MagLev; Manipulators: Mantacles (4), Baton (1); Armor: Duraplastic (AC 4); Save: L8; Move: 120' (40'); Sensors: Class III; Mental: Programming; Attacks: 3; Weaponry: Stun Pistol (built in); Stun Baton; Stun Cuffs (on mantacles)

MedBot (Area R-001)

This device is integrated into the Medical Bay's equipment. It cannot move from the room. While it is the "smartest" of the robots on board, and can speak, its knowledge is limited to medicine and surgery. It only talks to aid diagnosis. It is in good working order.

HD: 10; Frame: Armature; Locomotion: none (hangs from ceiling on articulated arm); Manipulators: Integrated diagnostic scanner (will not function if removed), injector (syringe and med spray), surgical arms (scalpel, clamps, etc.), advanced hands; Armor: Alumisteel (AC 4); Save: L2; Move: 0'; Sensors: Class III; Mental: AI; Accessories: vocalizer; Weaponry: none

ChefBot (Area R-008)

The ChefBot is a food preparation device comically decorated to resemble a chef, complete with a puffy white toque and an ancient apron that reads "Kiss the Cook." This was presumably for morale purposes. At some point, the device was damaged and is now malfunctioning badly. It will approach anyone who enters the Galley or Cantina, its vocalizer asking (in an outrageous French accent) how it can serve the character, but its multiple arms whirl and randomly lash out in all directions. Its attack rolls are at -2 due to their uncoordinated nature. As it slashes and spins, it cheerily spouts phrases like "Please take a seat!" or, "Fresh cracked pepper?"

HD: 10; Frame: Armature; Locomotion: MagLev; Manipulators: advanced hands, multiple special use grippers with kitchen implements (knives, blenders, graters, forks, etc.); Armor: Duraplastic (AC 5); Save: L4; Move: 60' (20'); Sensors: Class II; Mental: Programming (damaged); Accessories: vocalizer; Attacks: 4; Damage: 1d6 each; Weaponry: improvised

RepairBots (Areas H-1, R-013)

These robots look like small tanks with multiple hinged arms coming out of a central hub, like the legs of a spider. They are robust, but utterly harmless, with no combat programming whatsoever. There are two trapped in the Shuttle Bay and one, broken, in the Repair Bay.

HD: 30; Frame: Armature; Locomotion: Mag Treads; Manipulators: Assorted probes, special use grippers, advanced hands; Armor: Alumisteel (AC 4); Sensors: Class III; Save: L10; Move: 90' (30'); Mental: Programming; Accessories: Internal compartment (tool storage), robot repair unit, variable tool mounts, fire extinguisher; Weaponry: None

ZamBot (Exterior of Ring)

This large cleaning robot rides a track that circles the station. Sensors tell it when the solar panels need cleaning. Unfortunately, the satellite collision that coated the panels in dust also damaged the tracks and fouled the bot's wheels. Over the years, the device tried to work loose, but all it managed to do was run its battery down.

HD: 20; Frame: Armature; Locomotion: Magnetic Track (fixed rail); Manipulators: Ionized "squeegee"; Armor: Alumisteel (AC 4); Sensors: Class III; Save: L5; Move: 60' (20'); Mental: Programming; Accessories: none; Weaponry: None

NEW WEAPON

Lasher Needle Pistol: One Brain Lasher carries their preferred weapon, a needle gun. It uses compressed gas to recoillessly fire small (1") metal flechettes. It is nearly silent in operation and can even be fired in vacuum. While it only vaguely resembles a normal pistol, a humanoid hand can grasp it.

The pistol is about 8" long, tapering to almost a point. Its surface looks oily and almost scaly, but feels smooth and metallic, though covered with wart-like bumps. The butt is a roughly spherical knob at one end. The only one on the station is in the Lashers' hands.

The gun can be set to chemically treat the flechettes before firing, thus adding one of three special properties to the rounds. The gun fires only one needle per round. A Class 1 technology roll discovers how to shoot it, a successful Class 2 roll learns how to reload the weapon and change the ammo settings.

Damage: 1d6 + Special
Trigger: Normal (alien)
Normal/Max. range: 100'/200'
Weight: 2 lbs
Shots: 30 per clip

NEEDLE TYPES

- ✦ A neurotoxin which does not harm Brain Lashers, but others must save or be paralyzed for 1d6 turns.
- ✦ An electrochemical charge that acts as a stun pistol.
- ✦ Explosive charge that splinters the needle on impact (+1d6 damage).



THE SPIES

Back when Pascal Station was operational, three BRAIN LASHERS [MF63] managed to plane shift aboard. They were seeking the De-Atomizer, an experimental piece of teleportation technology (see Area R-002).

The Brain Lashers ran amuck among the crew, turning them against each other and eating brains. The surviving scientists panicked and fled in an escape shuttle, taking or spacing most of the supplies. Not so Captain Lucie, a heroic soul. He brought out the station's cache of stun grenades and single-handedly blasted each Lasher unconscious, dragging them one by one to the cold sleep facility and shutting them into sleep pods to deliver to his superiors for interrogation.

Unfortunately, the alien physiology of the Brain Lashers allowed them to awaken from stun before the cold sleep took full effect. Trapped in a pod, one of them was able to possess the captain on the Bridge and force him to begin a command override sequence that would shut down the cold sleep and set the aliens free. Unaware of his fellow's attempts, another Brain Lasher simultaneously hit the captain with the *ancestral form* power, causing him to violently revert to the body of a *homo erectus*. The shock broke the possession of the first Lasher.

Finding himself with the mentality of an ape, evil voices in his head, and a frightening series of warning lights that seemed about to do something important and bad, the simian hero drew his service revolver and blew his own brains out, depriving the spies of the only active body they might have been able to control. The cold sleep set in, and the empty station spun on. Then the first power fluctuation after the shuttle crash shut down the Lashers' cryonic sleep.

Tactics:

Once awake and free, the Lashers begin to explore the station, breaking cameras as they go. They use *precognition* to determine the safest route and head straight to the Telepad (Area R-002) to steal the De-Atomizer, the component that makes matter-to-energy transfer possible. Unfortunately for them, it is a secured area. It requires not only a three-star ident-card, but also a gene scan to enter (see "Stars & Bars," p6). If a Brain Lasher tried to use the lock, its DNA would set off a general alarm and the GuardBots would race to the scene. Luckily for them, their *precognition* warns them of this.

They will search for a three-star card. Six turns after awaking, they break into the Captain's Quarters and take the spare card there. Once the Lashers learn that the PCs are on board, they will attempt to secretly possess the character that looks the most like a Pure Human (or remove his hand) and use his DNA to open the Telepad room.

In a fight, they take turns using their *mind thrust* ability, so they can make one such attack every round between them. They also each try *ancestral form* against whatever mutant shows the most dangerous mutations. If they cannot dispatch their foes quickly, one of them will use *possession* to take over a PC while the other protects the possessing Lasher's unconscious form.

The Lashers are quite hungry after their long sleep, so they seize any opportunity to feed on a PC's brain if they can catch one alone.

If the Lashers succeed in getting the De-Atomizer, they *plane shift* away, leaving the PCs to their fate.

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