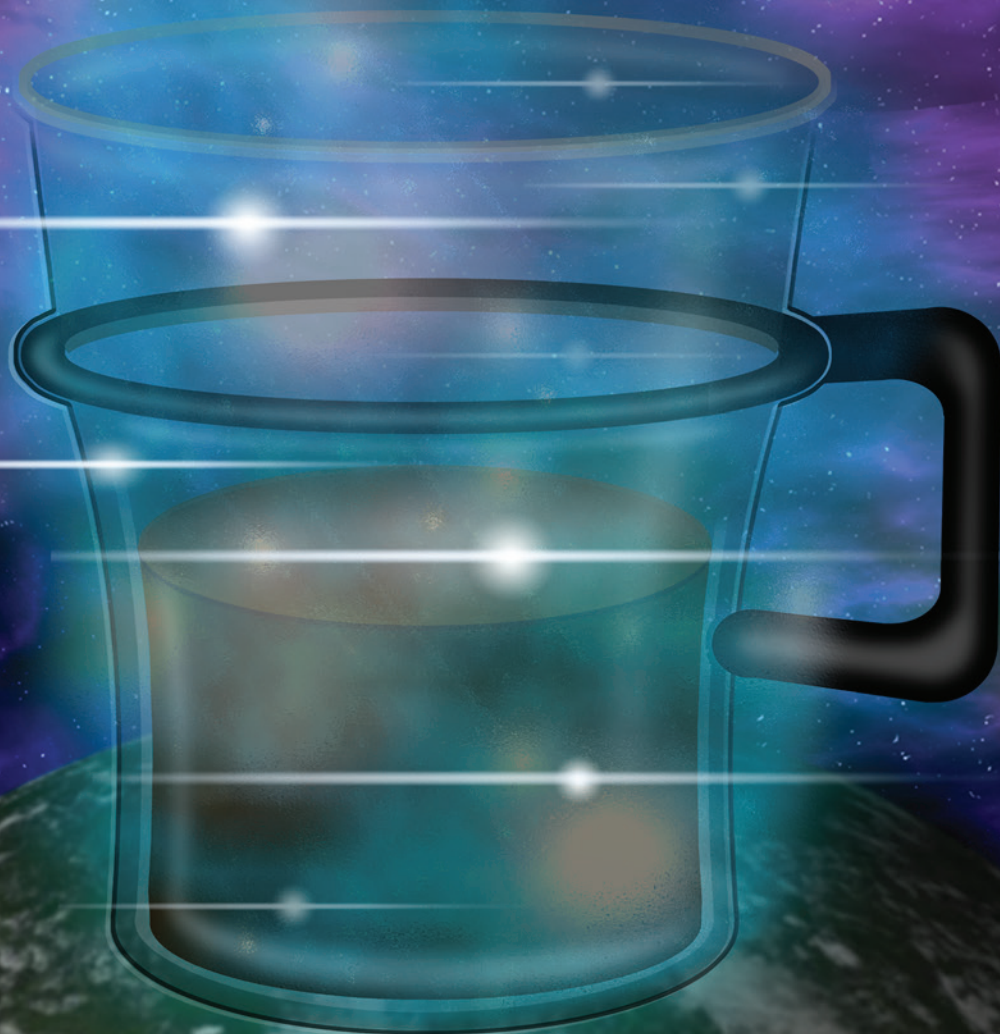
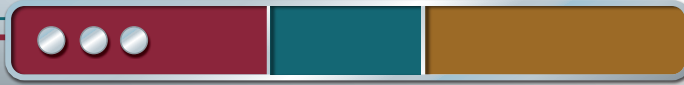




EARL GREY, HOT



STARFINDER
COMPATIBLE

BY MICHAEL ALLEN
AND COLIN STRICKLIN

EARL GREY, HOT

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ADVENTURE SUMMARY

It's no easy life in the Vast. Pay is lousy, the food is bad, and riding herd out in the shipping lanes can get you dead in all manner of nasty ways. That's why a corrupt contractor named KA-Masd decided to cut a deal with a gang of pruo bandits. Normally crustecar like KA-Masd prefer to raid, plunder and kill the living ships known as bioships, but this outcast from clan and kin has parlayed his knowledge of crustecar raiding patterns into regular employment with the Bonanza Creek Shipping company. This wealthy concern uses the local star beasts to carry valuable cargo as they migrate amongst the stars. Once a deceiver, always a deceiver, and KA-Masd decides to earn a little more than this current contract provides.

The plan was simple. En route to market, KA-Masd would look the other way while the pruo cut a prize calf from his herd. They'd take the cargo, kill the ship, and split the profits afterwards. It would've worked too, but the pruo made a fatal mistake.

After rustling a valuable bioship named *Whiskey Jack*, the bandits didn't account for the nature of the creature's cargo. The aquatic pruo pumped their prize full of fluid "atmosphere" and then eagerly pried open one of the cargo containers. They should have read the shipping manifest first. A fortune in exotic tea leaves floated free inside of *Whiskey Jack* and was promptly sucked into the ship's circulatory system. The resulting allergic reaction was both spectacular and fatal—at least for the bandits.

As reputable salvagers (or lowlife scavengers depending on who you ask), the PCs have lucked into the comatose *Whiskey Jack*. Once they discover that the ship is still alive and kicking, they will have to deal with one very agitated herd animal. After they calm *Whiskey Jack* down, they can track the jettisoned containers of tea to the surface of Frentellis 6. Unfortunately, the primitive lifeforms down there are the violent type, and it's going to take precious time to find the loot. Meanwhile, the two-faced KA-Masd has been busy covering his tracks. He's leading a posse of avenging company men to the "lowdown thieves" that stole poor *Whiskey Jack*. That puts the PCs in the unenviable position of explaining their innocence to a sky full of hostiles.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

For a crew of ragtag PCs out in the Vast, there are any number of reasons to get embroiled in this adventure. Here are a few to get you started.

- » **Professional Pickers** — The PCs are a legal salvage crew working out of the nearby system

colloquially known as The Breakers' Yard. After some shore leave on Frentellis 4, (a world famous for its exotic foodstuffs), sensors have picked up a derelict. It's floating free and clear in neutral space; the brand on the hull reads *Whiskey Jack*.

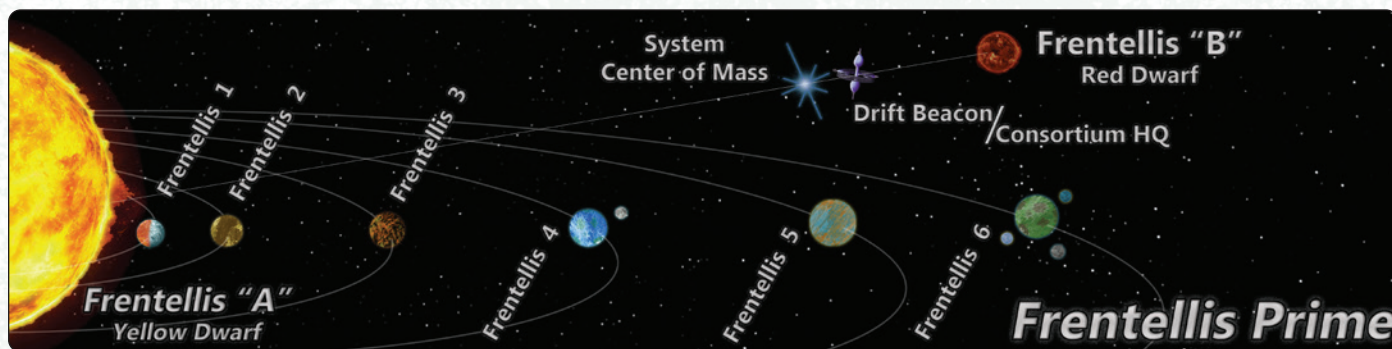
- » **Lowdown Thieves** — Pirates and thieves have been known to hang about the local shipping lanes, lying low and keeping watch for easy prey. The PCs are one such crew, and they've been observing the pruo rustlers and their bioship prize. As the PCs debate whether to attack now or wait for a more opportune moment, *Whiskey Jack* begins bucking wildly, ramming the pruo ship and jettisoning his cargo before going comatose. It seems that the more opportune moment has arrived.
- » **Company Men** — The Bonanza Creek Shipping Company doesn't take kindly to rustlers. That's why they've hired the PCs to investigate a recent rustling incident. A calf named *Whiskey Jack* has gone missing, and it's the PCs' job to find him and his cargo. If the crew want to keep their good names as guns for hire, they'll have to prove they weren't the ones who staged the robbery.
- » **Environmentalists** — The majestic Clarkson's star beast is a noble animal, and it deserves to fly free. Unfortunately, the greedy owners of the Bonanza Creek shipping herds refuse to acknowledge the PCs' protests. When these stellar activists notice that a young calf has split from the herd, they spot an opportunity to do some good. If they can rescue *Whiskey Jack* and return him to the wild, the infosphere publicity would be invaluable.

THE FRENTELLIS SYSTEM(S)

This adventure takes place in the Frentellis Prime system. The larger of a binary pair, Frentellis Prime boasts a pair of habitable worlds: the wealthy agricultural planet of Frentellis 4, and the untamed marsh wilderness of Frentellis 6. Travel within the system is made difficult by Drift anomalies emanating from the red dwarf Frentellis B which prevents in-system drift travel and hampers both communications and sensor scanning. That means that thruster-driven shipping lanes are a fact of life in Frentellis, and so are the pirates that haunt them.

THE BONANZA CREEK SHIPPING COMPANY

There is a single working drift beacon in the Frentellis AB System able to overcome the local Drift anomaly, and it is located at the center of mass between its two stars. With bad blood between the natives of Frentellis Prime and Frentellis B, a group of wealthy shipping companies



THE FRENTELLIS SYSTEMS

Additional information on both stars in the binary pair can be found in the star system sets: *Frentellis Prime* and *The Breaker's Yard* (Frentellis B) from AAW Games. All the information needed to run this adventure is included or reproduced in this product (including the two new monster cards from the above). Other cards in the system sets will allow you to expand the PCs' knowledge, discoveries, and options at your discretion.

known as The Consortium have stepped in and are the de facto rulers of the spaceport that has grown up around the beacon. Of these, an outfit known as the Bonanza Creek Shipping Company commands the largest herds of bioships, as well as the largest fees for safe transport through the pirate-haunted shipping lanes.

BIOSHIPS

There are many kinds of bioships scattered throughout the galaxy, but within Frentellis the Clarkson's star beast is by far the most common. Highly intelligent herd animals, Clarkson's star beasts have been domesticated for untold millennia. With interior cavities capable of carrying cargo and crew in the same style as a conventional ship, star beasts have been known to form close bonds with their captains. Few of these star beasts boast crews however. They merely follow traditional migration routes that coincide with shipping needs, and so find themselves loaded with cargo and placed under the care of contracted drovers to see them safe. The herds are vast, and for good reason. Between the valuable produce exported from Frentellis 4 and the luxury goods imported to the wealthy world, less than 10% of a typical shipping herd are manned or laden. In this way, losses from pirate attacks are kept to a minimum, and any would-be rustlers are forced to guess which star beasts hold valuable cargo.

PART 1: SALVAGE

If the PCs want their payday, they'll have to climb aboard the "derelict" starship. Of course, the real challenge is figuring out what happened to the cargo. That's going to require getting *Whiskey Jack* back online, and this starship isn't exactly a morning person.

SHIP EXTERIOR

It's a bioship. A male calf judging by its size and the shape of its ventral armor. It's also deader than dirt. Bits of debris float like tiny satellites around its bulk, and it looks as if a docking port has been drilled through the creature's back.

With *Whiskey Jack* comatose and apparently dead, the doors to his main cargo hold (area 7) cannot be forced from outside the ship. Happily, there is another way inside.

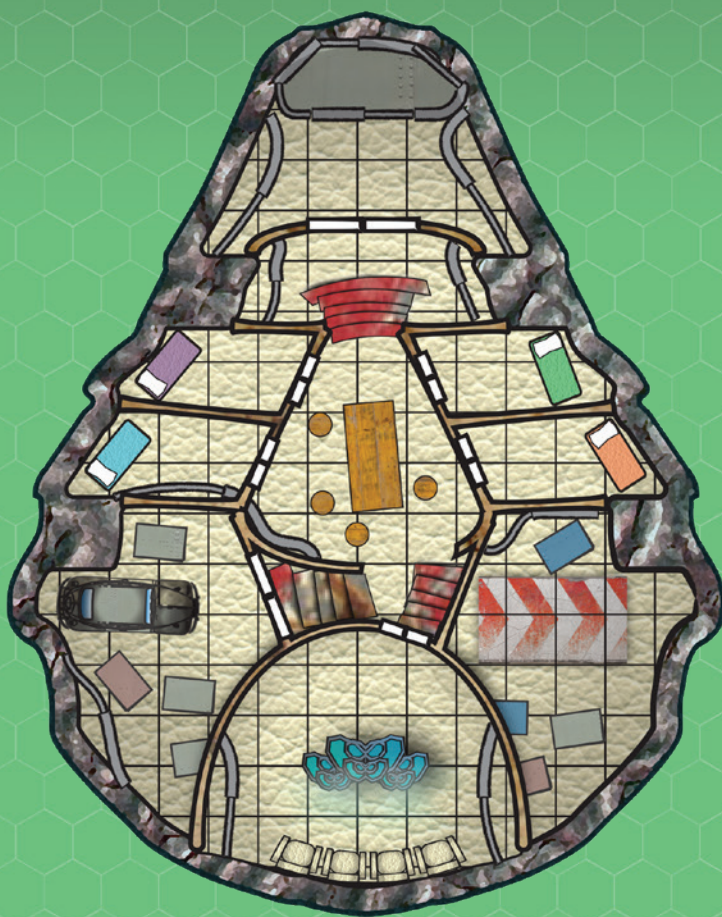
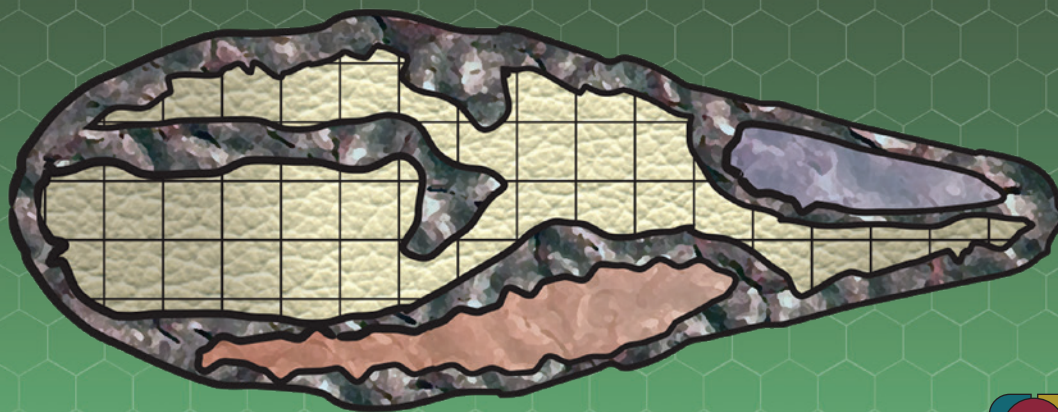
As aquatic lifeforms, the pruo bandits used a modified boarding tunnel to pump their conquest full of fluid. It requires a DC 11 Culture check to recognize these modifications. This tunnel is 10 ft. wide, 20 ft. long, and looks like a straw punched through the side of the bioship.

Eager to claim their bounty, the pruo were sloppy with their boarding procedure. A few feet farther aft and they'd have pierced *Whiskey Jack's* grey matter, rendering the ship braindead. The boarding tunnel is still a nuisance to the starship, reducing its maneuverability from good to average until it can be removed. This requires four man-hours of work and a DC 17 Engineering check. It otherwise functions as normal airlock, leading into area 2. It takes a DC 21 Medicine or Life Science check to recognize that the tunnel did not kill the ship.

1. ENGINEERING | CR 1

If the PCs want to figure out what happened to the cargo, they're going to need to get *Whiskey Jack* awake and online. To do that, they're going to have cure the big lug's brain damage. Unfortunately, *Whiskey Jack's* allergic reaction has corrupted some of the organic systems of the star beast.

WHISKEY JACK



1 SQUARE = 5'

NEW GEAR

WHISKEY JACK | TIER 1

Small bioship light freighter

SPEED 10; **MANEUVERABILITY** good (turn 1); **DRIFT** 1

AC 13; **TL** 14

HP 40; **DT** —; **CT** 8

SHIELDS basic 10 (forward 3, port 2, starboard 2, aft 3)

ATTACK (Forward) light torpedo launcher (2d8), light laser cannon (2d4)

POWER Core Pulse Brown (90 PCU); **DRIFT ENGINE** Signal Basic; **SYSTEMS** budget mid-range sensors, Crew Quarters (Good), Mk 2 armor, Mk 3 defenses, mk 2 mononode computer

EXPANSION BAYS cargo holds (2), gullet

MODIFIERS +2 to any 1 check per round, +1 Piloting

COMPLEMENT 4

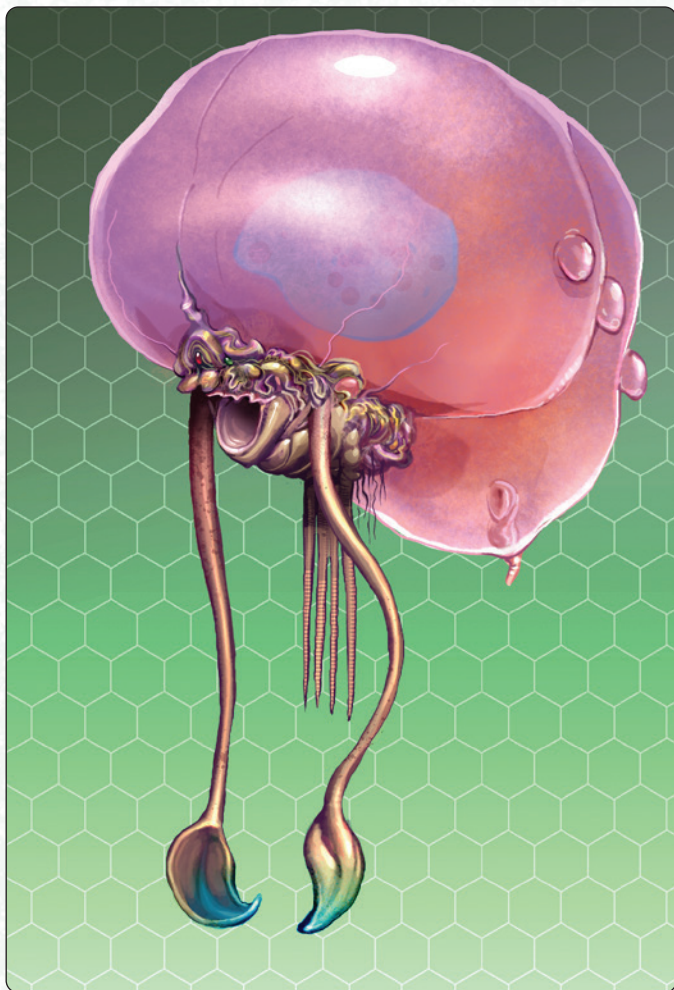
CREW

ENGINEER Engineering +10 (1 rank)

GUNNER gunnery +5

PILOT Piloting +11 (1 rank)

SCIENCE OFFICER Computers +5 (1 rank)



ROGUE ANTIBODY | CR 1 | XP 400

HP 20 (see appendix 2)

CREATURE: A guardian stands outside the door to Engineering, just at the bottom of the stairs from the galley (area 2).

Once past the antibody, the Engineering doors open with no trouble.

This compartment was clearly intended for smaller races. The ceiling bulges low, leaving only a four-foot-high chamber. Tendrils hang down from overhead, and they brush past your face like moss as you enter. Some of these are plugged into consoles set into the bulkheads, while others seem orphaned from their sockets. Weakly pulsing lights run along their length.

HAZARD: The hanging tendrils are neurofilaments: the link between *Whiskey Jack's* biological systems and the artificial crew interface built into Engineering. Getting the right tendrils plugged into the right ports will get *Whiskey Jack* back online. However, that's impossible without gaining access to *Whiskey Jack's* grey matter "mainframe". The captain's jack in Area 8 is one such access point, or the PCs may attempt to hack directly into the ship's brain with a DIY jack here in engineering (see developments

below). Otherwise, randomly trying to plug in the tendrils is hazardous: a DC 26 Computers or Engineering check realizes the futility of a guess-and-check method. The DC drops by 5 each time the PCs make the attempt.

If the PCs do try to plug in tendrils at random, roll 1d4 and consult the following chart.

DEVELOPMENT: DIY Captain's Jack With a room full of

- 1 **RADIO FEEDBACK:** The PCs discover *Whiskey Jack's* PA system. It is not a pleasant experience. All creatures in the area must make a DC 12 Fortitude save or be deafened by the feedback for 1 hour.
- 2 **A GRIPPING INTELLECT:** If the neurofilament lights weren't a clue that *Whiskey Jack* is still alive, the grabbing and choking should be. The tangle of tendrils attempts to wrap around all creatures in the area, initiating a grapple combat maneuver with a +9 bonus to the attack roll. The tendrils make only one attempt to begin their grapple, but they renew successful grapples each round until the affected creatures are freed. Grappled creatures begin to suffocate.
- 3 **ELECTROCUTION:** The triggering creature takes 2d6 electricity damage as arcs of blue energy leap from the consoles. A successful DC 11 Reflex save results in half damage.
- 4 **CEREBRAL FLUID LEAK:** Exposure to a bioship's grey matter can have unpredictable effects on sentient lifeforms. The triggering creature must make a DC 13 Will save. Failure temporarily replaces all of a creature's languages with one randomly determined language. The effect lasts for 1 hour.

unfamiliar circuitry, technologically inclined characters may attempt a Computers check in this room to hack the ship. Such an attempt reveals that *Whiskey Jack* is designed to respond to wireless commands, usually from an interface known as The Captain's Jack (Area 8). An hour's work and a successful DC 16 Engineering check cobbles together a DIY captain's jack from the materials in this room. This jury-rigged device functions like the Captain's Jack in Area 8 (granting the information needed to rewire the tendrils which wakes the ship up), but it does not grant any bonuses to Diplomacy checks to calm *Whiskey Jack*, nor does it grant a +1 bonus to Computer checks (it is only a standard interface rather than high density).

2. GALLEY

Whiskey Jack's common area sports a large table, several cheap folding chairs, and small piles of ruined dry goods. These are all in disarray, covered by the residue the pruo

BIOSHIP TECHNOBABLE GENERATOR

Half animal and half machine, bioships are bizarre creatures. The malfunctions that plague such beasts are equally bizarre. When players ask, “What’s wrong with the ship!?” roll 3d12 on the following chart “Bad news guys. It looks like the....”

D12 RESULT	BIO-SYSTEMS	TECHNOLOGICAL SYSTEMS	THE PROBLEM
1	Thoracic	Graviton Inhibitor	Is venting coolant!
2	Pulsatile	Drift Coupling	Isn't freaking there!
3	Cerebrovascular	Pulse Regulator	Has ruptured!
4	Ventral	Grav Manifold	Is half-melted!
5	Cranial	Heat Exchange	Is full of some weird goo!!
6	Abdominal aortic	Gearbox Casing	Seems to be growing a tumor!
7	Limbic	Plasma Array	Has shorted out!
8	Interspace	Shield Membrane	Looks infected!
9	Respiratory	Resonance Shifter	Is flooded!
10	Gastrointestinal	Control Circuit	Isn't getting any oxygen!
11	Contiguous Neuronal	Splitter Assembly	Is absolutely filthy!
12	Anterior	Blowback Chamber	Won't respond!

atmosphere. Puddles of the stuff coat the floor. An acrid stench emanates from the sink and work surface against the forward bulkhead. A DC 16 Perception check suggests an acidic quality to the smell, hinting at the hazardous digestive troubles rumbling in *Whiskey Jack's* fuel bladder.

A set of aft stairs lead down to Area 1, while stairs forward lead up to Area 8 or down to Area 7. All adjoining doors and hatches open easily, sliding into recesses in the walls. The exception is the door leading into Area 6. It's stuck and requires a DC 16 Strength check to pry open.

3-6. CREW QUARTERS | CR 1

Thanks to their herding instincts, it's a simple matter to load up the hold of a Clarkson's star beast and allow it to make a delivery run under its own power. No crew members necessary. For this reason, areas 3-5 never had occupants, and were sealed fast against the pruo bandits' atmospheric tampering. That means these rooms are full of neatly made beds, unused bureaus, and dry carpeting. Area 6 is another story.

One of the pruo was exploring area 6 when *Whiskey Jack* had his allergic reaction. The bandit is still here in fact but has long-since asphyxiated and is well on his way to being digested. An ankle-deep pool of digestive enzymes covers the floor, rushing out over unwary PCs' boots when the doors are opened.

TRAP: Stomach Acid: Acid washes out over the feet and ankles of any creature adjacent to the door when it is opened. The acid quickly drains away into floor recesses,

but the nauseating smell lingers. Once the door is closed, the room begins to refill unless the pruo corpse is bagged and removed.

TREASURE: The stench of the half-digested pruo is awful. Creatures who enter in must make a DC 11 Fortitude save or be sickened for 1d4 minutes. The remains of the pruo bandit are barely recognizable. Thankfully, the outlaw's gear was more durable than its owner. A search of the body yields a needler pistol, 6 darts, a dose of tier 1 sedative,

STOMACH ACID TRAP | CR 1 | XP 400

TYPE analog; Perception DC 21

DISABLE Engineering DC 13 (drain the acid safely) or Medicine DC 17 (disable acid flow)

TRIGGER location; **RESET** 10 minutes (removing corpse negates)

EFFECT surge of acid (3d6 A); **REFLEX** DC 12 half

a dose of id moss poison, and a credstick containing 34 credits.

7. CARGO HOLD | CR 3

There is a burnt meat smell as you walk down the stairs. It's not hard to see why. A gaping hole has been knocked in the side of the ship but seems to have been patched with semi-transparent biological material. Aside from the various organelles that hang from the walls and ceiling, this cargo hold is strangely devoid of cargo. There is only a single shipping container

embedded in the portside bulkhead, protruding like some strange bulging tumor.

The smell emanates from a weapons discharge into *Whiskey Jack's* more tender interior bulkheads. On her way to being sucked out into space, one of the pruo bandits got off a last desperate shot with a reaction cannon. As it turns out, shooting the insides of a living spaceship does not keep you from being sucked out of it. A DC 16 Profession (bounty hunter) or Profession (mercenary) check reveals that the shot came from within the ship. A DC 11 Engineering check reveals that someone—or something—has recently patched the wound.

When the pruo opened the shipping container they unleashed a cloud of valuable earl grey tea. During the ensuing allergic reaction, *Whiskey Jack's* antibodies tried to seal off the container, incorporate it into the superstructure of the ship and melding the crate into the bulkhead (DC 11 Life Science). Unfortunately, too much tea had escaped, and in a reflexive move, *Whiskey Jack* opened his cargo bay doors and jettisoned the remaining containers. When the doors closed, the remaining container/tumor jammed them shut. Any attempt to dislodge the container is going to anger the nearby antibodies.

DEVELOPMENT: Labels on the side of the container designate it as #3 of 7 pieces. It smells strongly of bergamot oil, and even a cursory inspection reveals that flecks of organic matter and torn packaging still cling to the interior. The packaging reads, Tea-Earl Grey.

TREASURE: The PCs recognize blobs of protoplasm in the cargo bay as a resource for possible use in crafting lifters to shift cargo. They can stabilize this protoplasm with a DC 11 Life Science or Engineering check. They may subsequently add a swim speed to the device with a DC 16 Life Science or Engineering check once they realize they might need to (encounter 9, Part 2).

PROTOPLASMIC LIFTER

ITEM LEVEL: 2; PRICE: 1,000

NEW GEAR

These blobs of protoplasm move space junk, raw ore, and other materials through the digestive tracts of bioships. They can be stabilized and re-tasked as cargo lifters with a Life Science or Engineering check, (DC 10 plus the tier of the host ship). Standard lifters have a speed of 20 and can carry up to 300 lbs. (30 Bulk). Increasing the conversion DC by 5 allows an engineer to add a swim, climb, or burrow speed to the lifter (which also doubles the price). Additional movement speeds can be added by further increasing the DC by 5 per type and doubling the item price each time. The protoplasm provides no life support or other protections, although a creature encased in the blob can travel with it. A full-round action is required to climb free of the protoplasm; a move action is required to direct the lifter, and the operator must be encased in the blob or have its own method of matching the movement type used. A lifter has EAC 10, KAC 10 and 21 Hit Points.

8. BRIDGE

A cluster of plush organic seating stands at the center of the chamber. Console displays and monitors line the walls. All of them are dead. A drift of stars can be seen through the long, narrow portholes that line the bulkheads. It seems you've found the ship's bridge.

Anyone within 5' of the captain's chair can hear a low beeping sound. It's coming from a compartment inside the headrest of the soft, fleshy seat. Closer inspection soon reveals a strange cybernetic augmentation embedded there. The item cannot be removed by force, but the chair automatically installs the captain's jack on anyone who sits in it, lancing out to jab the augmentation into the occupant's skull. This biomechanical earpiece serves as a kind of owner's manual for *Whiskey Jack*.

A captain's jack reveals how to bring *Whiskey Jack* out of his coma. Subsequent attempts to rewire the neurofilaments in Engineering succeed automatically.



NEW GEAR

BIOSHIP CAPTAIN'S JACK

ITEM LEVEL: 3; PRICE: 1,300

The external portions of this neural augmentation are made from the same chitinous material as bioship armor. It functions as a high density datajack (+1 to Computers) that works with any bioship, but also grants a +5 bonus to Diplomacy checks when befriending the bioship from which it originates.

DEVELOPMENT: The Ship is Awake: Stolen from his herd, pumped full of unfamiliar atmosphere, and suffering from a circulatory system full of finest quality organic black tea, *Whiskey Jack* is a frightened and confused animal. When he wakes up to find strangers aboard, he reacts violently. The ship begins bucking wildly in space, throwing his unfortunate passengers against his bulkheads. Antibodies still in *Whiskey Jack's* system are not affected by the bucking.

Roll initiative. Every round on Initiative count 10, all PCs who aren't strapped down take 1d3 bludgeoning damage and fall prone (Reflex DC 13 negates).

Winning the trust of the terrified ship requires a DC 26 Diplomacy or Survival check – the bucking continues for 10 rounds as the PCs calm the star beast. A character wearing *Whiskey Jack's* captain's jack gains a +5 bonus to these checks and knows that releasing an anti-inflammatory agent into the bioship's bloodstream from engineering (area 1) will help. A DC 11 Engineering or Computers check succeeds at dosing *Whiskey Jack*, reducing the DC to calm the bioship to 16.

PART 1, CONCLUSION: WHAT IS IT, BOY?

Once the PCs win *Whiskey Jack's* trust, the ship regains control of his senses and his faculties. The acid pools and rogue antibodies disappear, absorbed back into the hull. The ship becomes friendly towards the PC wearing the captain's jack, and indifferent towards everyone else.

Whiskey Jack is an extraordinarily intelligent animal. He has a basic understanding of Common, though he cannot speak. The moment anyone mentions the missing cargo, Whiskey Jack attempts to impress his new crew by displaying a holographic projection of the cargo's last known trajectory. The hologram shows a range of probable landing sites on the planet below, and even includes helpful diagnostic readouts of the near-indestructible shipping containers. In other words, the ship is doing everything in its power to tell the party that their salvage is still out there, and that it might still be in one piece.

DEVELOPMENT: For the remainder of the adventure, *Whiskey Jack* follows the PCs like a friendly dog, landing beside them on the planet below and drawing enemy fire during the climactic starship battle.

**FRENTELLIS 6**

Jungle/Swamp Planet; Three Moons; Normal atmosphere (humid atmosphere makes scanning and communications difficult); Habitable; Indigenous animal life forms influenced by bioship DNA during the evolutionary process. Marshy continental terrain and archipelagos separate salt-water seas around the equator from fresh water seas near the ice-capped poles exhibiting volcanic activity.

LOCAL TERRAIN

The PCs find a large island in a marshy sector near the shipping containers' splashdown on which to land (there is space on the same island for *Whiskey Jack*). Travel by foot or boat through the swamp is required to collect the missing cargo. Grassy islands provide firm ground for stands of trees. Shallow bog along the shoreline gives way to deep bog within 5 to 10 ft. of the shore. Deeper water (up to 15 ft. deep) exists in some areas of the swamp. Chapter 11 of the Starfinder Core Rulebook details the effects of local terrain.

PART 2: PLANET SIDE, THE SEARCH FOR EARL GREY

The Frentellis Prime star system lies on one of the ancient migratory routes of the bioship herds. Hundreds of millions of years ago a massive (and gravid) cow crashed into the swampy marshes of the sixth planet. This “mothership” survived long enough for some of its biomatter and DNA to be incorporated into the evolutionary processes of the planet. Much of the local flora and fauna is compatible with modern bioships and can be utilized to repair and even upgrade the living ships. The humid atmosphere and scattered bioship DNA throughout the planet’s ecosystem makes scanning the surface tricky – creating an ideal haven for bioship rustlers to hunker down with their catch.

9. SCANNING AHEAD

Your long-range scans for the cargo containers, supported by eager sharing from Whiskey Jack, have gotten you close, but there is a tremendous amount of interference in the swampy terrain in which you have set down. The cache may have dispersed – some readings are stronger than others.

The mix of bioship DNA in the flora and fauna of Frentellis 6 makes discovery of the cargo containers (still covered in bioship mucus) a tricky affair. A DC 16 Life Science or DC 21 Engineering scan sets the group on the correct path: proceed to encounter 11. Exceeding the check by 5 or more allows the party to bypass encounter 11: award the PCs 200 XP and proceed directly to encounter 12. Failure sends them into harm’s way (encounter 10).

TREASURE: Even through the difficult scans, the PCs can tell moving cargo containers through the swamps will be tricky. Before setting out, grant them an opportunity to modify their protoplasmic lifter to the task (adding a swim speed). For details see Part 1, area 7 (cargo bay).

DEVELOPMENT: If the PCs return to this encounter after discovering the plasma-croc bomb in encounter 10, proceed to encounter 11 regardless of the second scan check result unless it exceeds the DC 5 or more, in which case proceed to encounter 12.

10. EXPLODING CROC | CR 2

If the PCs enter this encounter because of a failed scan check from encounter 9, read the following:

Hidden pockets of mud pull greedily at your feet as you wade through waist-deep water. Submerged logs catch the ankles of the unwary, granting an inconvenient dunking for the clumsy. For the last klick some logs have been covered in hard fungus with razor sharp edges – almost as if they are sprouting shells.

Otherwise, if the PCs are seeking charged hosts for salvage (encounter 16) read the following:

The dead plasma-croc sprouts shells bearing a striking similarity to the armored torsos of the tentacled plant creatures previously encountered. Scans show an ongoing power surge from the plasma tail of the croc and the implanted shells on the body.

TRAP: The shell-encrusted floaters once hosted implantacle egg nodes. For 1-4 days after the last node hatches, a latent bio-energy reaction between the plasma tail and the cracked-open egg nodes creates a floating bomb.

TREASURE: A disarmed trap yields valuable salvage in the form of torpedo rearms for *Whiskey Jack*, or antipersonnel grenades. A DC 11 Life Science or Engineering check grants this information and the ability to “harvest” three (Mk 1) Frag Grenades and one (Mk 1) Plasma Grenade. Alternately, the entire corpse may be stabilized and loaded into *Whiskey Jack*’s torpedo launchers. This new ammunition upgrades them from light torpedo launchers to light plasma torpedo launchers with a limited fire equal to the number of installed corpses (maximum 5).

DEVELOPMENT: If the PCs are engaged in salvage from encounter 16, they may continue to seek more salvage, repeating this encounter to the limits of their scan result. If

PLASMA-CROC CORPSE TRAP | CR 2 | XP 600

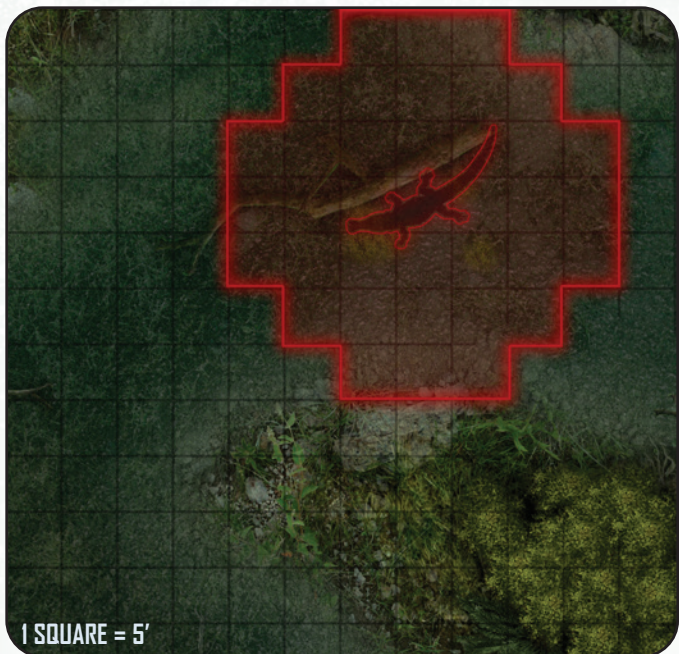
TYPE analog; Perception DC 23

DISABLE Engineering DC 18 (defuse explosives)

TRIGGER location; **EAC/KAC** 12/16; **HP** 25 (explodes at 0 HP as if triggered); **BYPASS** Bioship pheromones (see text)

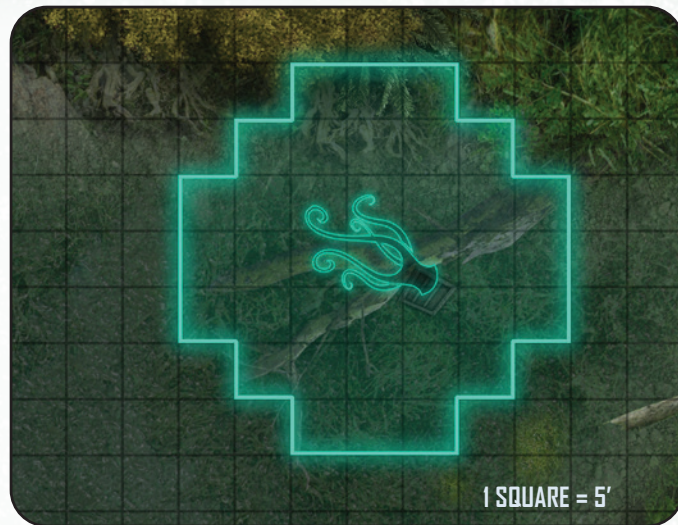
EFFECT explosion (2d6 P and 1d6 F, 1d4 burn); **REFLEX** DC 13 halves and negates burn; multiple targets (all targets within 15-ft.)

A DC 23 Life Science check on either an armed corpse trap, or the fragments from the explosion (which scatters razor sharp shell bits and plasma) reveals bioship DNA. Success allows a pheromone paste to be synthesized; this pheromone sends a signal to the thin tendrils that trigger the trap and stabilizes the reaction. A disarmed corpse trap provides enough DNA to synthesize 6 doses of pheromone which, when applied to a creature’s body, last for one hour, even in the watery conditions of the swamp. An exploded corpse provides enough DNA for 1d6 doses. After succeeding on the Life Science check, a clever player might also notice that the tendrils span out into the water, and that disarming or approaching the trap from above is marginally safer, granting a +5 circumstance bonus to the disarm check. An armed corpse can be detonated by weapons fire at range.



11. SNARE | CR 1/2

The bog is a frustrating place for a day hike. Small hillocks and islands break the surface of the stagnant waters and grant easier footing, but vines dangling from the lichen-covered trees obscure vision and snatch at loose clothing and gear.



TREASURE: Moving tea containers through the swamp requires a modified protoplasmic lifter (with a swim speed) from *Whiskey Jack* (Part 1, area 7) or fashioning a harness to drag it through the mud and water. A harness requires a full-round action to slip on or off and grants the entangled condition in combat. Out of combat, a DC



IMPLANTACLE | CR 1/2 | XP 200

HP 12 (see appendix 2)

TACTICS

BEFORE COMBAT The implantacle casts *reflective armor* as the PCs approach, and attacks in the surprise round, attempting to drag a victim underwater. It hides 5 ft. under the water next to the island's shore, perched on a submerged cargo container of tea.

DURING COMBAT The implantacle drags and pins a victim in the lowest depths of the bog (15 ft. under water) hoping to implant an egg node once it starts drowning. The plant creature instinctively removes/interferes with any breathing apparatus or gear after a successful grapple.

11 Fortitude check is required every 30 minutes to avoid fatigue (or exhaustion after multiple failed saves). Reduce the DC by 2 for every additional PC harnessed to the container (all pulling the rig must save every 30 minutes).

DEVELOPMENT: It takes 90 minutes to follow short-range scans to encounter 12. A DC 16 Life Science scan check or a DC 11 Survival check finds an easier path, reducing the trip to one hour. If the PCs bypassed this encounter with skillful scanning in encounter 9, they find the container as part of their search in encounter 16 – the implantacle has abandoned its ambush.

12. HATCHLINGS | CR 2

Scorch marks and burns with the same characteristic of light energy weapons mark the tree trunks in the surrounding area. Larger burned-out sections of marsh grass on the small islands indicate where some fires spread before burning out.

HAZARD: The mud in this area is particularly thick. A DC 9 Acrobatics check (DC 11 if in a shallow or deep bog square) is required to move at all unless swimming; failure by 5 or more results in a stuck creature falling prone. The plasmacroc hatchlings use their Athletics skill instead of Acrobatics when traversing the islands.

CREATURES: A trio of plasma-croc hatchlings swim in the waters nearby. A DC 16 Perception check spots them as they investigate the strange approaching creatures, so different than the implantacles that usually intrude into their territory.

EXPERIENCE AWARD: An additional 200 XP is awarded due to the thick mud in this encounter.

13. BURNED TREE | CR 1

A tremendous tree leans out over the marsh from the shore of a large island. The blast marks on its trunk and roots appear to have been created by a much more powerful charge than those encountered previously. A pair of cargo containers are stuck in the mud at the shoreline, directly under the tree.

TRAP: Pulling the cargo containers out of the mud (DC 16 Athletics) disturbs the roots of the damaged tree, causing it to tilt. The change in the center of gravity brings down a burned branch, which targets a random PC manipulating the containers (there is room for up to 4 to aid each other freeing the loot).

TREASURE: The island here is large enough for *Whiskey Jack* to land on, and he responds quickly to a request for aid; the two cargo containers (and the third from encounter 11 if already found) can be loaded directly into the cargo bay.



PLASMACROC HATCHLINGS (3) | XP 135

HP 6 each (see appendix)

TACTICS

DURING COMBAT The hatchlings fling plasma before retreating underwater, or else seek cover behind a landmass to recharge, demonstrating instinctive skirmish tactics. They cannot resist moving in for the kill with their powerful bite against a creature mired in mud or otherwise vulnerable, even if it exposes them to retribution.



FALLING BRANCH TRAP | CR 1 | XP 400

TYPE analog; **PERCEPTION** DC 21; **DISABLE ENGINEERING** DC 16 (bring down branch safely)

TRIGGER touch (cargo containers)

EFFECT +1l melee (3d6 B)



14. MOMMA | CR 2

Scanner readouts show multiple concentrations of bioship DNA ahead, making it easy to track the mucus-covered shipping containers. It looks like three containers plunged all the way into the bog and are submerged. The relatively weak DNA readings suggest the mucus may have dispersed a bit during or after splashdown. 500 meters beyond these solo crates, a large concentration of shipping containers stands out clearly on your scans.

CREATURES: The three nearby readings are a fully-grown plasma-croc hiding from a pair of implantacles. Bioship DNA incorporated into their evolution from the ancient cow confuses the scanners. The two aberrations, in conjunction with other members of their bed, have driven momma croc across the swamps all day. A DC 16 Life Science or Engineering check made as part of a more focused scan reveals the momma croc for what she is and indicates a concentration of plasma energy (from her charged tail). Exceeding the DC by 5 or more reveals the implantacles are not shipping containers as originally thought, but there is no time for a more intensive scan before momma croc rises out of the swamp 30-ft. away to attack the new threat (the PCs). A DC 23 Perception check allows a PC to act in the surprise round if the scans failed to reveal the plasma croc as a threat.

DEVELOPMENT: A standard action each round allows a PC to scan for and track the movement of the implantacles under water (DC 21 Life Science includes the distraction of combat). Both have already cast status on momma croc and are patient enough to wait for the PCs to render her helpless before attempting to implant an egg

PLASMA-CROC | CR 2 | XP 600

HP 25 (see appendix)

TACTICS

DURING COMBAT The angry croc prefers the waters of the bog close to shore. On land, momma croc stays near the water's edge, so she can attempt a death roll against grappled foes. There are plenty of sunken logs and roots to use as meat lockers within 10-ft. of the shore line. Momma croc stashes dead, dying, or unconscious characters in one of these cubbies with a successful pin check so she can attack extant threats. These victims are at high risk of drowning; the roots have a **KAC** of 3 (Hardness 5, hit points 30), and require a DC 13 grapple or Acrobatics check to escape.

node (encounter 15). If the PCs are overwhelmed, the aberrations might implant an egg node in one of them, stabilizing them and even preventing them from drowning until the party can render aid. They might even finish off momma croc if needed.

15. HUNTING MOMMA | CR 1

CREATURES: The implantacles stay under the murky water, which grants full cover until they approach within 10 ft. of a PC, where they can be spotted with a DC 23 Perception check. Once adjacent to a dying momma croc (or PC) they drag the victim into the deep bog, implanting egg nodes from underneath as the body floats above. During this process, the Perception check to spot them (usually the tentacles) is DC 14. They attack only if the PCs interfere with momma-croc's body, or with PCs who

were implanted with an egg node during encounter 14. A DC 11 Life Science of Medicine scan after spotting the implantacles at work reveals the details of their Implant ability.

IMPLANTACLES (2) | XP 200

HP 12 each (see appendix)

TACTICS

The implantacles cast reflective armor while the PCs are engaged against momma-croc. If attacked, they drag dying or drowning victims underwater and implant an egg node before returning to combat.

DEVELOPMENT: If left alone, the implantacles retire after implanting 5 egg nodes in momma-croc. Award XP as if they had been defeated if the party recognizes they are not an immediate threat and elect not to interfere.

16. SALVAGE IN THE SWAMPS

The collection of shipping containers ahead promises profit once you get them loaded onto your own ship or Whiskey Jack. But that is not the only bounty in the swamp. Further scans reveal a match between bioship DNA and the two creatures you have encountered so far. It appears the bits and pieces of these creatures could be incorporated into needed repairs and re-arming of Whiskey Jack, especially the corpses of the plasma-crocs that recently hosted the eggs of the tentacled plants.

A DC 11 Life Science or Engineering check discovers 1d3 charged plasma croc traps (see encounter 10), plus 1 for every 2 points exceeding the DC within easy range of recovery. The PCs must still disarm or bypass the traps to harvest the weapons. Award XP only for the first two corpse traps encountered (including encounter 10) – there is only so much to be learned from getting blown up the same way.

Additionally, the PCs can use the tentacles and ovipositor of an implantacle as an emergency repair patch on a bioship, granting a +5 circumstance bonus to a single engineering check to repair a malfunctioning system.

DEVELOPMENT: Feel free to allow the PCs to hunt implantacles in the swamp to make up any experience shortfalls for a larger party, or to salvage some bioship repair kits. An overnight rest planetside may be in order to heal and recover. When you are ready to proceed to Part 3, Whiskey Jack warns the PCs of incoming vessels.

PART 3: COVERING HIS TRACKS

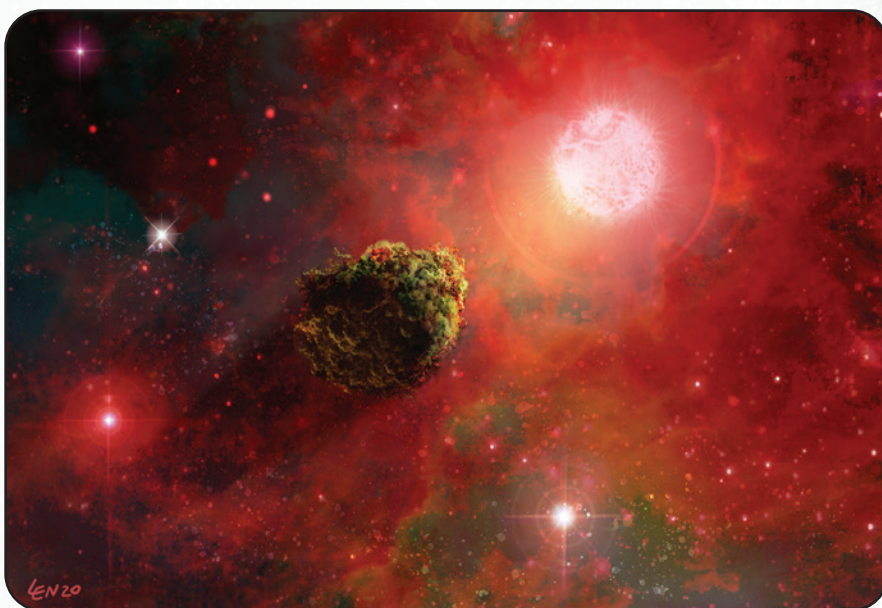
KA-Masd continues to have a bad week. Company investigators responded with unusual alacrity over the disappearance of *Whiskey Jack*; it seems that the tea was destined for delivery to an important official at the on Frentellis 4. As the investigation probed deeper into the corrupt rancher's affairs, he decides to pin the blame on the PCs, and offers to track down the "rustlers" with his own crew.

17. BLAST OFF!

Your comm links start going crazy. Whiskey Jack is extremely agitated. It takes a few moments to calm the bioship's frightened babbling, but once accomplished you see the reason for the ship's concern. An inbound vessel could be on an attack trajectory and based on the continued pleas by Whiskey Jack "to keep that bad person away from me," you conclude it might be best to get back into orbit in case you need room to maneuver.

There is sufficient time for the party to have *Whiskey Jack* ferry them back to their own ship at the original landing site, but no time to shift the rescued tea from the bioship to the PCs' own vessel. Limited scanning data reveals one inbound vessel: a medium explorer. *Whiskey Jack* offers to help fight the "bad person" if the PCs promise not to abandon him. The bioship can fly itself, or the party may split up to augment *Whiskey Jack's* combat effectiveness. If the PCs leave the bioship behind, he follows anyway after they blast off.

DEVELOPMENT: *Whiskey Jack's* statistics and rules for crewing a bioship during starship combat are included in Appendix 1.



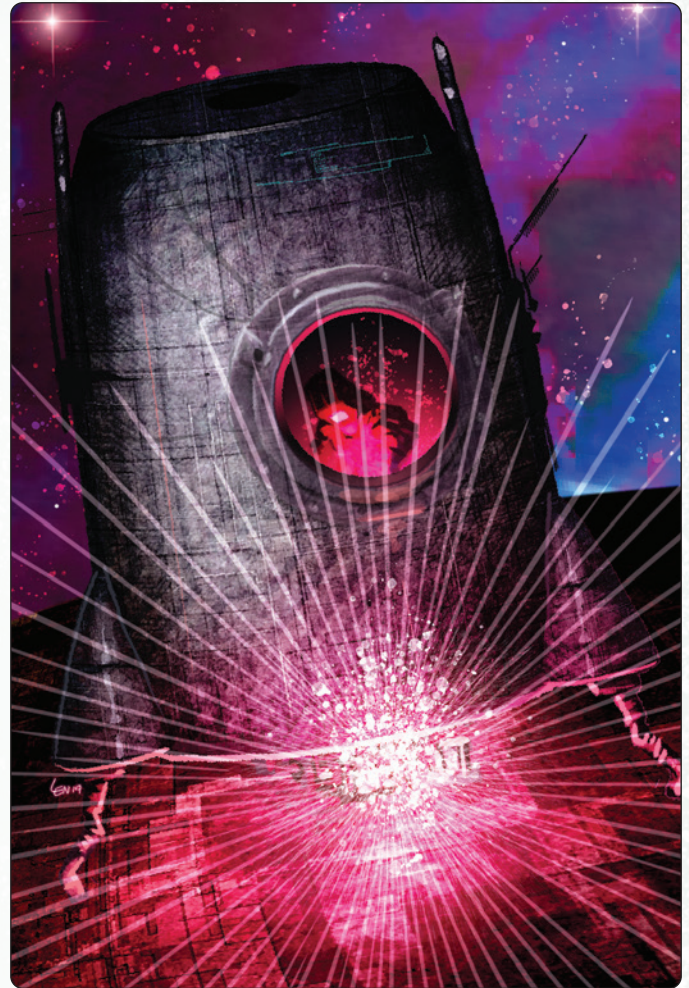
18. SOMEONE ISN'T COMING HOME! | CR 1/2

You make orbit in time to get a good scan on the incoming vessel: a Kevolari Venture that has seen better days. In fact, even on long-range visuals it looks like the ship was rescued from a junk yard. About the only thing that looks new is the color scheme – the corporate colors of the Bonanza Creek Shipping Company. You would think they would be glad to see one of their herd (*Whiskey Jack*) safe, but they are coming in weapons hot. As the ships close, a burst of frantic signaling pours in from *Whiskey Jack*

Statistics for KA-Masd's salvaged Kevolari Venture can be found in Chapter 9 of the *Starfinder Core Rulebook*. The crustecar wrangler (see appendix 2 for full statblock) sits in the captain's chair (Skills Bluff +15, Computers +15, Engineering +15, Piloting +10) and spends his first two actions attempting to Taunt his enemies (first *Whiskey Jack*, telling him to "Shut it or face his wrath!" and then the PCs on their ship, telling them that there is no mercy for rustlers in this system.) He then uses his actions to encourage his crew where possible. He never relinquishes his role. Use the standard statistics for the Venture's other crew actions.

TACTICS: KA-Masd initially orders his crew to disable the PCs' ship before firing on *Whiskey Jack*. The battle commences at a range of 10 hexes, unless the PCs' personal ship has long-range sensors, in which case combat is joined at 20 hexes.

If the PCs work for Bonanza Creek (see adventure hooks), they may be mystified as to why they are under attack. *Whiskey Jack's* information seems to be pertinent, but deciphering it requires a DC 14 Scan check by a science officer during the helm phase (from either onboard the bioship, or the PCs' own vessel). Success reveals that the crustecar KA-Masd was *Whiskey Jack's* wrangler, in charge of the herd's safety, but that the corrupt crustecar was the one who directed the pruo bandits to him. Comm files in *Whiskey Jack's* memory banks provide proof of the crime. The bioship says KA-Masd wasn't in the Venture when the water-breathers (pruo) showed up but piloting a shuttle while the larger ship and rest of the crew were on the far side of the herd. From this the PCs might deduce that the crustecar's Bonanza Creek crew are not in on the scheme (DC 16 Sense Motive if your players don't connect the dots). Getting this information to the unsuspecting dupes on the Venture is another matter: it requires two successful Scan checks in a helm phase to break through the communications jamming long enough to share the evidence. The first check must merely cut through the passive jamming (DC 12 Computers), at which point, KA-Masd directs his science officer to actively jam communications, increasing the DC to 20



BOARDING POD | TIER 1/4

Small racer

SPEED 12; **MANEUVERABILITY** perfect (turn 0)

AC 14; **TL** 15

HP 40; **DT** —; **CT** 8

SHIELDS basic 10 (forward 4, port 1, starboard 1, aft 4)

ATTACK none (boarding cutter)

POWER CORE Micron Light Solid Fuel (50 PCU; three rounds of powered flight); **DRIFT ENGINE** none;

SYSTEMS budget short-range sensors, basic computer, boarding cutter, mk 1 armor, mk 2 defenses.; **EXPANSION BAYS** none

MODIFIERS +2 Piloting

COMPLEMENT 1

CREW

PILOT (KA-Masd) Bluff +15, Computers +15, Engineering +15, Piloting +12

(but using up his science officer's action each turn). After the first such attempt KA-Masd also shifts fire to *Whiskey Jack* to destroy the evidence.

MICRON LIGHT SOLID FUEL CORE (50 PCU)**NEW GEAR**

This fuel core contains enough fuel for only three consecutive rounds of powered flight, after which the vessel coasts at half its previous speed each round in its current direction of travel. A smaller permanent power core maintains other ship systems and allows the solid fuel to regenerate over a 24-hour maintenance cycle in an escape pod bay or shipyard.

BOARDING CUTTER (4 PCU, 4 BP)

This powerful cutter can only be placed on Tiny craft and allows them to clamp onto and cut through an enemy hull. The pod moves through the target ship's hex and makes a Computer check (DC 15 + 1/2 the tier of the target starship + its bonus from defensive countermeasures) to clamp on. Failure results in the target ship receiving a free attack as the pod continues through its square (see moving through enemy ships in Chapter 9 of the *Starfinder Core Rulebook*). Once clamped, cutting an access hole into the target vessel requires an Engineering check (DC 15 + the tier of the target starship + its armor bonus). The DC of this check is reduced by 4 in each subsequent round. While a clamped-on pod is cutting through a hull, the pod's aft arc can be targeted by other ships. The pod gains the shield protection of the enemy ship it is clamped onto unless a science officer successfully targets it in the helm phase (using the Target System action). The pod can also be targeted by small arms fire from spacewalking crew on the hull of the "boarded" ship: small arms fire deals half damage to the pod, but it gains no protection from the target vessel's shields.



DEVELOPMENT: Disabling the Kevolari Venture or exposing KA-Masd's corruption to his crew (who powers down) ends the combat; award the party 600 XP. If the party ends in the disabling of the enemy vessel, *Whiskey Jack* can send the details of his abduction to KA-Masd's crew on his own, sparking a quick reaction from the crustecar, the same as if the PCs punch through the comm jamming to unmask him.

EXPERIENCE AWARD: PCs receive full XP for this encounter, even with *Whiskey Jack* helping out.

19. BOOM! | CR 1/4

The Bonanza Creek vessel erupts in a massive fireball. The lack of power surges in the power core indicate that this might have been a self-destruct event. Along with the shrapnel, it looks like at least one escape pod got away. Weirdly, it doesn't seem to be heading for the planet below. Instead its rockets fire up and propel the pod directly towards you. And what's up with the skull and crossbones on the nose of the tiny ship?

KA-Masd knows he is in trouble. Already under suspicion because of his racial heritage, he kills his own crew to begin the increasingly more difficult task of erasing the evidence against him. He pilots a boarding pod to the nearest enemy ship (the PCs' vessel or *Whiskey Jack*), hoping to overpower the crew and continue the fight.

DEVELOPMENT: If the PCs disable the boarding pod before it clamps on to a target, they avoid a boarding action, unless the pod is still in the target ship's hex. In this case, KA-Masd's armor is damaged: he takes sudden decompression damage (modified by his vacuum-jumping ability) and jumps onto the nearby ship with his drone. He can attempt to hack an airlock to gain entry to the ship, taking decompression damage if this takes more than 3 rounds. If KA-Masd docks with an enemy ship but does not cut through the hull before his pod is destroyed, his armor remains intact and he must still hack an airlock. In both cases, the two allied vessels (the original PC ship and *Whiskey Jack*) have time to dock and transfer crew to meet the intruder (encounter 20).

KA-MASD | CR 4 | XP 1,200

Male Crustecar mechanic

HP 45 (Freelance Scrapper - see Appendix 2)**DRONE | CR —****HP 26** (gleaning germ - see Appendix 2)

20. BOARDED! | CR 4

If KA-Masd makes it aboard, choose a tactically interesting compartment for him to penetrate for the ensuing boarding action.

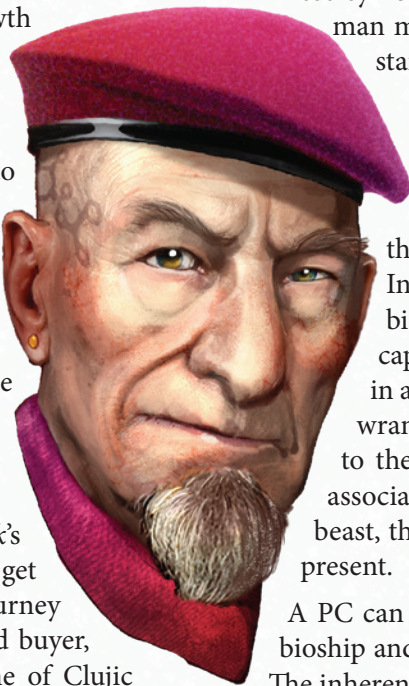
This guy doesn't know when to quit! Maybe you can gang up on him now that he is aboard.

CONCLUSION

SUCCESS: Once KA-Masd is defeated, *Whiskey Jack* can be observed eating the wreckage of the Kevolari Venture, drawing it into his gullet. He even scrapes the boarding pod off the side of the PCs' ship if possible. As the PCs bandage their wounds and make their repairs, an indicator light flashes on a console on *Whiskey Jack's* bridge. The console bears a simple Y/N question: "Initiate Growth Spurt?" Answering in the affirmative triggers a transformation in *Whiskey Jack* as the ship grows to Tier 2.

At this point, the PCs may choose to abandon their original ship in favor of *Whiskey Jack*, rebuilding him to their specifications. See the Appendix for rules on upgrading bioships. If the PCs do elect to adopt *Whiskey Jack*, the Bonanza Creek Shipping Company has little choice in the matter. The headstrong bioship has taken a liking its new crew and is no longer useful as a standard transport ship.

Finally, a quick glance at *Whiskey Jack's* shipping manifest tells the PCs where to get their payday. They can complete the journey to Frentellis 4 to deliver the tea to the end buyer, an elderly human gentleman by the name of Clujic de Paran. A retired ship's captain turned vintner, this gentleman farmer is relieved to see his tea arrive safely. He offers the PCs 2,000 credits for the delivery, as well as a case of fine wine worth another 300 credits (assuming the



PCs don't drink it themselves). As de Paran brews himself a hot mug of earl grey tea he remarks, "If you ever need anything in this system, please call. I'll make it so."

FAILURE: If KA-Masd defeats the party, all is not lost. The protective instincts of *Whiskey Jack* save the day as he overwhelms the mechanic and his drone with antibodies. The biological horde pushes the pirate back into the PCs' ship, and then drags the unconscious party members into *Whiskey Jack's* hold before undocking. He also jettisons the tea containers into space to delay pursuit. The PCs awaken in a herd of bioships, snug in the hull of *Whiskey Jack* and with plenty of reason to seek revenge on KA-Masd.

APPENDIX 1: BIOSHIP BASICS

BIOSHIP CREWS

Bioship "crews" consist of various single or simple multicellular organisms dwelling in the organic systems of the living ships, often integrating technological components into their structure as a bioship matures. In mammals, the closest corollary would be red and white blood cells and the microbiota of the host creature.

These symbionts grant larger bioships the ability to man multiple stations just like any other larger starship.

At higher tiers bioships are still animal-like in their actions, which are determined by instinct and experience, no matter the seeming complexity of their powerful "grey matter" computers. In the wild, unless playing host to a crew, bioships do not enjoy the benefit of a captain. Where a captain's skill set is listed in a bioship stat block, it is assumed to have a wrangler NPC in the command chair, tending to the creature's needs (and the needs of any associated herd). The more dominant the star beast, the more likely a Wrangler captain is to be present.

A PC can serve as captain in a friendly or hacked bioship and additional PCs can serve in other roles. The inherent crew on a "wrangled" bioship augments the PC crew up to the ship frame's maximum complement and can assume and change roles normally. Excess crew symbionts enter a stasis mode.

BIOSHIP UPGRADES

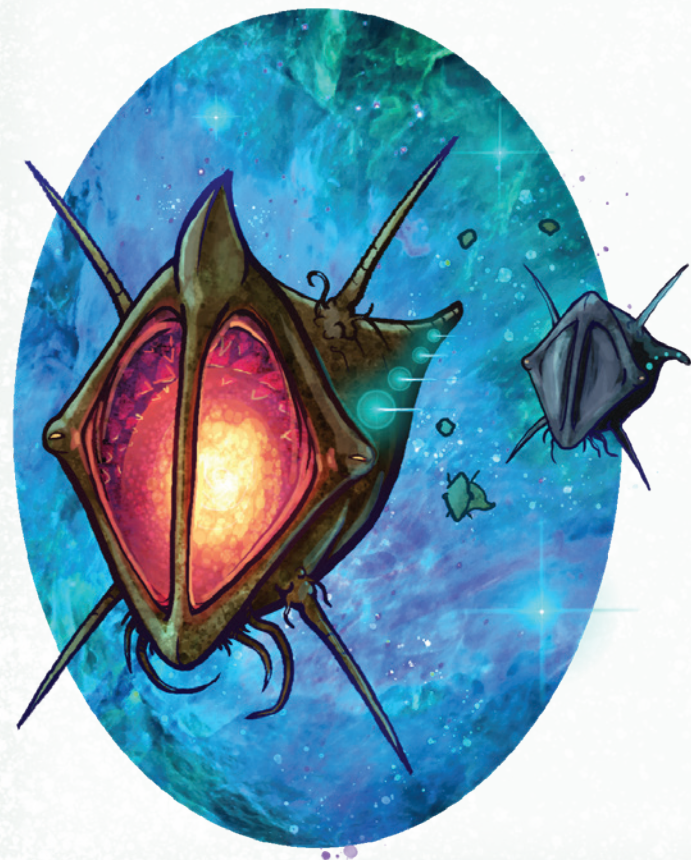
Bioships never need to visit safe or inhabited worlds to upgrade. When the characters' Average Party Level increases, a bioship's tier increases automatically, representing a sudden growth spurt. Refitting or upgrading bioship systems does not require a stardock and takes only 1d2 days with a successful Engineering or Life Science check equal to 15 plus ship's Tier. After a failed attempt, 1d2 days must pass before retrying. PCs may elect to upgrade the ship's base frame to Medium at Tier 5, and to Large at Tier 10.

BIOSHIP EXPANSION BAYS

GULLET

PCU 2x ships size; **BP** 0; 1 expansion bay slot

All bioships of size Small or larger automatically carry this system, which is only operational when all weapons systems are disengaged. A medium-range tractor beam draws space junk and inert ships (disabled from hull point loss) into the bioship's gullet at a speed of two hexes per round. Linked to one of the forward arc's weapon systems, the gullet deals that damage once per hour, commencing one hour after arrival in the gullet: apply critical damage as usual. The weapons degrade the target into smaller pieces for digestion and integration into the bioship's mass. Restoring hull points above 0 frees the ship, expelling it from the gullet 1d4 hexes distant.



APPENDIX 2: THE FRENTELLIS SYSTEM

The new creatures and NPCs in this adventure are detailed in the *Frentellis Prime* and *The Breaker's Yard* Star System Sets from AAW Games, included here on the following pages. The other five cards in the system set include more information on the systems themselves, as well as new gear, ship designs, archetypes, themes, adventure hooks and even a pair of mini-adventures, opening new possibilities for adventure in this corner of the Vast.

NEW STARSHIP

WHISKEY JACK | TIER 1

Small bioship light freighter

SPEED 10; **MANEUVERABILITY** good (turn 1); **DRIFT** 1

AC 13; **TL** 14

HP 40; **DT** —; **CT** 8

SHIELDS basic 10 (forward 3, port 2, starboard 2, aft 3)

ATTACK (Forward) light torpedo launcher (2d8), light laser cannon (2d4)

POWER Core Pulse Brown (90 PCU); **DRIFT ENGINE** Signal Basic; **SYSTEMS** budget mid-range sensors, Crew Quarters (Good), Mk 2 armor, Mk 3 defenses, mk 2 mononode computer

EXPANSION BAYS cargo holds (2), gullet

MODIFIERS +2 to any 1 check per round, +1 Piloting

COMPLEMENT 4

CREW

ENGINEER Engineering +10 (1 rank)

GUNNER gunnery +5

PILOT Piloting +11 (1 rank)

SCIENCE OFFICER Computers +5 (1 rank)

“WHISKEY JACKIE?”

The Clarkson's star beast presented in this adventure is a young male. Female bioships can add expansion bays to dock small craft (usually their young, but standard starships can use these bays as well) on smaller frames than noted in the core rulebook. If your players are interested in flying multiple ships (perhaps a fighter or two or a shuttle to support their main vessel) consider making *Whiskey Jack* a young female. As she grows, her weaning bays will make this possible. The mechanics for these additions, as well as additional information on bioships in general, are included in the *Frentellis Prime* Star System Set from AAW Games.

NEW STARSHIPS

BIOSHIPS

The living ships known as bioships travel every corner of the Vast, plodding along ancient migratory routes. Tended by the race known as the wranglers, these star creatures are often semi-domesticated by other species and pressed into duties as ready-made cargo vessels when these migrations fall along major trade routes. More brutal species harvest them for parts, integrating the biologically grown systems into their own starship designs. Some ethicists argue that this is nothing more than the “circle of life”, as the living ships devour derelict craft and space junk themselves. Engineers and scientists postulate that this explains why the biotech mirrors (and integrates with) standard tech across the universe. This sophistry is easily discounted by more enlightened species. Of all the systems scavenged by hunters of the living ships, tearing the womb out of a young bioship to fit out a smaller ship frame with combat patrol craft is one of the most egregious acts against the species.

Colloquially known as “Clarkson’s Star Beasts” (after the human scientist who first studied them), it remains unclear as to whether the star creatures evolved Drift technology after the broadcast of the Signal or enjoyed its advantages prior to it. Charted migration routes include generational conventional thruster travel and Drift jumps.

BIOSHIP LIFECYCLES

Bioship herds number from 40 to 200 head; great migrations can number in the thousands. Bioships live in maternal herds, which include other females and their offspring. Bulls leave once attaining maturity (usually as explorer or transports frames, but occasionally as shuttles or light freighters if their drift engine develops early) and live singly or in bachelor herds. Male and female herds rendezvous during mating season where strict dominance hierarchies guide the propagation of the species.

Newborn calves are generally no larger than fighter craft. Weaned in hangar, shuttle, or small weaning bays in the youngest mothers, calves make Drift jumps snugly ensconced in these “wombs”. Most calves develop into freighter frames once weaned, while the most rambunctious develop into shuttle frames. These “yearlings” or “stirks” (male and female) eventually grow into heavy or bulk freighter frames, while the most dominant develop into warship frames, females as carriers and dreadnoughts, and the most powerful bulls as battleships. Younger, aggressive males and females live as destroyers and cruisers (or occasionally explorers) until driven out of a herd or attaining dominance in their own time.

NEW BIOSHIP EXPANSION BAYS

GULLET (PCU: 2x ships size; BP 0; 1 expansion bay slot) All bioships of size Small or larger automatically carry this system, which is operational only when all weapons systems are disengaged. A medium-range tractor beam draws space junk and inert ships (disabled from hull point loss) into the bioship’s gullet at a speed of two hexes per round. Linked to one of the forward arc’s weapon systems, the gullet deals that damage once per hour,

commencing one hour after arrival in the gullet: apply critical damage as usual. The weapons degrade the target into smaller pieces for digestion and integration into the bioship’s mass. Restoring hull points above 0 frees the ship, expelling it from the gullet 1d4 hexes distant.

ADVENTURE HOOK: Escaping the gullet A short trip through the vacuum of the gullet puts escapees into the inner organs and systems of the bioship (usually a cargo bay or engineering section near the fuel bladders).

Trapped PCs have until their ship is destroyed to explore and befriend or hack into the beast’s systems (usually in the bridge compartment located near the bioship’s grey matter) to convince it not to eat their ship.

WEANING BAY (PCU: 5; BP 2) In young females (known as heifers or first-calf heifers), this small landing bay provides a place for one tiny starship to dock. A weaning bay takes up two expansion bays and can be placed on a Medium or Large starship (a Large starship can handle a more mature weaning bay, with space for two tiny starships at twice the PCU, BP and expansion bay slot cost). These bays develop into standard shuttle and hangar bays in more mature females.

BIOSHIP STARSHIPS

Bioship Crews Bioship “crews” consist of various single or simple multicellular organisms dwelling in the organic systems of the living ships, and often integrate technological components into their structure as a bioship matures and feeds. In mammals, the closest corollary would be red and white blood cells and the microbiota of the host creature. These symbionts grant larger bioships the ability to man multiple stations just like any other larger starship.

At higher tiers bioships are still animal-like in their actions, which are determined by instinct and experience, no matter the seeming complexity of their powerful “grey matter” computers. In the wild, unless playing host to a crew, bioships do not enjoy the benefit of a captain. Where a captain’s skill set is listed in a bioship stat block, it is assumed to have a wrangler NPC in the command chair, tending to the creature’s needs (and the needs of any associated herd). The more dominant the star beast, the more likely a Wrangler captain is to be present.

A PC can serve as captain in a friendly or hacked bioship and additional PCs can serve in other roles; the inherent crew on a “wrangled” bioship augments the PC crew up to the ship frame’s maximum complement and can assume and change roles normally; excess crew symbionts enter a stasis mode.

FRISKER CALF | TIER I

Tiny Fighter

SPEED 10; **MANEUVERABILITY** good (turn 1); **DRIFT** none

AC 18; **TL** 17

HP 35; **DT** –; **CT** 7

SHIELDS basic 40 (forward 16, port 7, starboard 7, aft 10)

ATTACK (Forward) gryolaser (1d8), light torpedo launcher (2d8)

ATTACK (Aft) light laser cannon (2d4)

POWER CORE Micron Heavy (70 PCU); **DRIFT ENGINE** none; **SYSTEMS** basic computer, budget long-range sensors, mk 5 armor, mk 5 defenses, T10 thrusters; **EXPANSION BAYS** none

MODIFIERS +1 Piloting

COMPLEMENT 2

CREW

PILOT computers +10 (1 rank), gunnery +5 (1 rank), piloting +11 (1 rank)

GUNNER gunnery +10

Bioship calves tend to be over armored and under gunned, playing amongst the herd when not feeding in their mother's weaning bays. Male herds are absent these playful youths.

MAVERICK | TIER 5

Medium Explorer

SPEED 10; **MANEUVERABILITY** good (+1 piloting, turn 1); **DRIFT** 1

AC 19; **TL** 20

HP 65; **DT** 10; **CT** 13

SHIELDS medium 100 (forward 40, port 25, starboard 25, aft 10)

ATTACK (Forward) light plasma cannon (2d12)

ATTACK (Port) coilgun (4d4)

ATTACK (Starboard) coilgun (4d4)

ATTACK (Turret) light torpedo launcher (2d8)

POWER CORE Pulse Red (175 PCU); **DRIFT ENGINE** Signal Basic; **SYSTEMS** mk 2 dounode computer, advanced long-ranged sensors, good crew quarters, mk 4 armor, mk 5 defenses M10 thrusters; **EXPANSION BAYS** cargo hold, gullet (light plasma cannon), weaning bay (or 2 additional cargo holds for males)

MODIFIERS +2 to any two checks per round, +4 computers, +1 piloting

COMPLEMENT 6

CREW

CAPTAIN Computers +17 (5 ranks), Diplomacy +16 (5 ranks), Engineering +13 (5 ranks), gunnery +11, Intimidate +16 (5 ranks), Piloting +13 (5 ranks)

ENGINEER Engineering +16 (5 ranks)

GUNNERS (2) gunnery +11

PILOT Piloting +17 (5 ranks)

SCIENCE OFFICER Computers +15 (5 ranks)

These bioships often stray from the herds, living in the deep reaches of space, seeking new migratory routes. Most mavericks pair with a Truebond wrangler pilot – the Captain's statistics include the racial and bonded pilot archetype bonuses.

MATRIARCH | TIER 14

Gargantuan Carrier

SPEED 4; **MANEUVERABILITY** poor (turn 3); **DRIFT** 1

AC 24; **TL** 27

HP 330; **DT** 10; **CT** 66

SHIELDS medium 200 (forward 75, port 40, starboard 40, aft 45)

ATTACK (Forward) vortex cannon (2d12x10)

ATTACK (Port) heavy laser cannon (x3) (4d8)

ATTACK (Starboard) heavy laser cannon (x3) (4d8)

ATTACK (Turret) linked chain cannon (12d4)

POWER CORE Gateway Heavy (400 PCU); **DRIFT ENGINE** Signal Basic; **SYSTEMS** mk 2 trinode computer, advanced long-ranged sensors, good crew quarters, mk 4 armor, mk 7 defenses, G4 thrusters; **EXPANSION BAYS** cargo hold, gullet (vortex cannon), hangar bay, shuttle bays (2)

MODIFIERS +2 to any three checks per round, +4 computers, -1 piloting

COMPLEMENT 155

CREW

CAPTAIN Computers +31 (14 ranks), Diplomacy +30 (14 ranks), Engineering +27 (14 ranks), gunnery +25, Intimidate +30 (14 ranks), Piloting +24 (14 ranks)

ENGINEER (2 officers, 30 crew

each) Engineering +30 (14 ranks)

GUNNERS (3 officers, 25 crew each) gunnery +25

PILOT (1 officer, 6 crew) Piloting +24 (14 ranks)

SCIENCE OFFICER (1 officer, 6 crew) Computers +29 (14 ranks)

Matriarchs wean newborns in their hangar bays and carry more mature offspring in their shuttle bays. The dominant matriarch of larger herds often develops into a dreadnought frame (Tiers 16-20) with additional hanger space.



CRUSTECARIAN STARSHIPS

BOARDING POD | TIER 1/4

Small racer

SPEED 12; **MANEUVERABILITY** perfect (turn 0)

AC 14; TL 15

HP 40; DT —; **CT** 8

SHIELDS basic 10 (forward 4, port 1, starboard 1, aft 4)

ATTACK none (boarding cutter)

POWER CORE Micron Light Solid Fuel (50 PCU; three rounds of powered flight) ; Drift Engine none; Systems budget short-range sensors, basic computer, boarding cutter, mk 1 armor, mk 2 defenses.; **EXPANSION** Bays none

MODIFIERS +2 Piloting

COMPLEMENT 1

CREW

PILOT Computers +10, Engineering +10, Piloting +12

Most crustecarian ships modify their escape pod bays to carry sets of three boarding pods, along with a prize crew to man them and capture enemy vessels.

RAIDER | TIER 6

Large destroyer

SPEED 10; **MANEUVERABILITY** average (turn 2); Drift 1

AC 17; TL 17

HP 170; DT —; **CT** 34

SHIELDS light 60 (forward 25, port 10, starboard 10, aft 15)

ATTACK (FORWARD) gravity gun (6d6), heavy seed dart (5d6)

ATTACK (PORT) light laser cannon (2d4)

ATTACK (STARBOARD) light laser cannon (2d4)

NEW STARSHIP WEAPONS & PROPERTIES

TRACKING WEAPONS	RANGE	SPEED	DAMAGE	PCU	COST (IN BP)	SPECIAL PROPERTIES
Light Seed Dart	Long	16	2d6	5	4	Venting, Limited Fire (5)
Heavy Seed Dart	Long	14	5d6	10	8	Venting, Limited Fire (5)
Capital Seed Dart	Long	12	2d6x10	15	20	Venting, Limited Fire (5)

VENTING | STARSHIP WEAPON PROPERTY

This weapon deals two levels of critical damage against life support when it delivers critical damage to that system. If life support is currently wrecked, it deals crew damage. Excess damage levels beyond wrecked in a single attack do not carry over – additional critical hits are required to apply to crew, only one crew member takes damage per hit.

ATTACK (TURRET) coil gun (4d4)

POWER CORE Pulse orange (250 PCU); Drift Engine signal basic; Systems mk 1 trinode computer, budget long-range sensors, mk 2 armor, mk 2 defenses, L10 thrusters, common crew quarters; **EXPANSION** Bays cargo hold, boarding pod bays (3)

MODIFIERS +1 any three checks per round

COMPLEMENT 20

CREW

CAPTAIN Bluff +13 (6 ranks), Computers +13 (6 ranks), Diplomacy +13 (6 ranks), Engineering +13 (6 ranks), gunnery +13, Intimidate +18 (6 ranks), Piloting +13 (6 ranks)

ENGINEER (1 officer, 4 crew) Engineering +18 (6 ranks)

GUNNERS (2 officers, 2 crew each) gunnery +13

PILOT Piloting +13 (6 ranks)

SCIENCE OFFICER Computers +13 (6 ranks)

PRIZE MASTER (3 officers, 2 crew each) Bluff +10 (4 ranks),

Computers +10 (4 ranks), Diplomacy +10 (4 ranks), Engineering +10 (4 ranks), gunnery +10, Intimidate +10 (4 ranks), Piloting +10 (4 ranks)

The crustecarian raider menaces shipping lanes on extended raids, using its gravity gun to hold targets in place while it dispatches boarders. On long cruises, additional prize crews can be drawn from the gunnery and engineering teams, often leaving the raider short-handed. Venting

This weapon deals two levels of critical damage against life support when it delivers critical damage to that system. If life support is currently wrecked, it deals crew damage. Excess damage levels beyond wrecked in a single attack do not carry over – additional critical hits are required to apply to crew, only one crew member takes damage per hit.

PRIZE MASTER | CREW SLOT

These sub-officers and their teams do not participate in starship combat, except to man boarding shuttles or pods. They are dispatched to recover, or salvage surrendered and destroyed ships. They can be pressed into service to defend their ship against boarders. When generating on-board tactical actions, each NPC team member usually has a CR equal to their host ship's tier -2.

EXPANSION BAY | BOARDING POD BAY (PCU: 3; BP 2)

These modified escape pod bays can rack six escape pods or three boarding pods.

SEED DART

These small torpedoes deliver vacuum bloomer seeds as part of their payload. The seeds, dormant in vacuum, get into life support systems, consume air and other life-support resources as they bloom at an accelerated pace, and cause back-up compressors to overload and burn out.

MICRON LIGHT SOLID FUEL CORE | (50 PCU, 48P)

This fuel core contains enough fuel for only three consecutive rounds of powered flight, after which the vessel coasts at half its previous speed each round in its current direction of travel. A smaller, permanent power core provides 10 PCU for other systems once the solid fuel is expended and allows the solid fuel to regenerate over a 24-hour maintenance cycle in an escape pod bay or shipyard.

BOARDING CUTTER | (4 PCU, 4 BP)

This powerful cutter can only be placed on Tiny craft and allows them to clamp onto and cut through an enemy hull. The pod moves through the target ship's hex and makes a Computer check (15 + 1/2 the tier of the target starship + its bonus from defensive countermeasures) to clamp on. Failure results in the target ship receiving a free attack as the pod continues through its square (see moving through enemy ships in Chapter 9 of the Starfinder Core Rulebook). Once clamped, cutting an access hole into the target vessel requires an engineering check (15 + the tier of the target starship + its armor bonus). The DC of this check is reduced by 4 each subsequent round; while a clamped-on pod cuts through a hull, the pod's aft arc can be targeted by other ships. The pod gains the shield protection of the enemy ship it is clamped onto unless a science officer successfully targets it in the helm phase (using the Target System action). The pod can also be targeted by small arms fire from spacewalking crew on the hull of the "boarded" ship: small arms fire deals half damage to the pod which gains no protection from the target vessel's shields.

NEW GEAR**DISTRESS SIMULATOR**

ITEM LEVEL 8; PRICE 12,000

This portable broadcast computer contains a limited AI that allows it to simulate crew communications between a derelict ship and would-be rescuers. Pirates use these devices to maneuver prey into a tactical disadvantage. A communications exchange requesting aid and replying to queries from investigating ships can last up to six rounds; each round the simulator makes a +10 Bluff check to take advantage of the situation; each success grants a +2 bonus that can be applied to any crew action check in a starship combat that takes place immediately following the exchange (these bonuses do not stack with themselves). A DC 33 Culture or Computers check identifies the communication as false, terminating the exchange – every time the AI fails its Bluff attempt, this DC is reduced by 5. This miniaturized tier 5 computer can be connected to higher tier ship's computer with a successful hacking attempt against the target computer – in this case the Bluff check is equal to twice the tier of the hacked computer, and the DC to identify the deception is the same as the DC to hack the higher-tiered computer.

**ANTIPERSONNEL HOLO-BAIT**

ITEM LEVEL varies; PRICE varies

The holograms emitted by these ball-shaped devices can trick antipersonnel systems, causing them to fire prematurely, expending ammunition on the wrong targets. The holograms remain invisible to living creatures, who often assume the antipersonnel weapon is malfunctioning and shut it down. An Engineering or Life Science check as part of a scan reveals the decoy, allowing an antipersonnel system to be reprogrammed to ignore the bait the following round. The DC is equal to 10 plus 1-1/2 times the item's level. These devices range in level from 1 to 20 and cost 50 credits times the square of the holo-bait's level.

STOWAWAY CRATES

ITEM LEVEL 5; PRICE 5,000

These containers provide life support, food and water for up to 4 Medium or Small creatures, using battery capacity at a rate of 1 charge per day per creature. Scan-resistant materials and scanning dampers require a DC 20 Computers check as part of a security scan to reveal the hidden creatures inside; a DC 20 Perception check as part of a visual inspection accomplishes the same. For every 5,000 additional credits spent on fabrication, the DC of these checks increases by 5 to a maximum of 50. Each +5 increase also doubles the power usage. Batteries can be swapped from within the container, but no facilities for recharging them are provided.

FRETELLIS PRIME

The yellow dwarf sun of Fretellis A sports not one, but two terrestrial planets with livable atmospheres, making the primary star of this binary pair one of the richest systems in this sector of the Vast. Unexploited until recent times, and with no sapient civilizations, these virgin planets were protected by their position on the migratory routes of living ships, known as bioships, whose wranglers safeguarded the planets while herding their charges on their never-ending space journeys.

When the Crustecar of Fretellis B achieved pre-Drift space flight, they came into conflict with the bioships and their wranglers. Early colonization attempts from the secondary star of the binary pair saw crustecar ships attacked and devoured by bioship herds. As the conflict intensified, the wranglers began to organize offensive operations to Fretellis B to stop the incursions at the source. Defeated, crustecar colonization efforts soon pursued other systems. A Drift technology accident later destroyed most of Fretellis B, removing the crustecar as a primary threat.

The Drift accident also impacted travel in the two systems. Drift jumps between the two systems, or within them, prove impossible. A single Drift beacon near the binary system's center of mass functions normally, but local travel from that point is required to enter either system of the pair. This beacon was placed by returning crustecar colonists, who were once again pushed back into the asteroid debris of Fretellis B by the bioship herds. The beacon opened the system to those species who could "get along" with the bioships, and the fourth planet of Fretellis now boasts a sizeable human and pruo (an aquatic species) population, well mixed with other species looking to cash in on the rich agricultural resources. The other habitable planet, the sixth, is a wilderness preserve slated for future development.

CONSORTIUM HQ/DRIFT BEACON

Close to the Binary System's Center of Mass, an impressive space station controlled by a group of powerful shipping companies known as The Consortium protects (and collects tolls from) ships inbound via the only reliable local Drift beacon.

FRETELLIS 1

Lava and Ice Planet; no moons, atmospheric bursts at the equator provide a thin atmospheric band with random storms of superheated or frigid air (extreme heat and cold dangers, *Starfinder Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook*,

Chapter 11). Fretellis 1's axis of rotation is perpendicular to the sun. The sun side hemisphere is molten, while the far side is ice. Red/orange and blue/white by hemisphere.

FRETELLIS 2

Desert Planet; No Moons; no atmosphere; Mostly beige with black streaks.

FRETELLIS 3

Carbon Planet; No Moons; Thin atmosphere primarily composed of carbon dioxide and carbon smog; Heavy gravity; Vast fields of brown, red, and black crust cover the planet.

FRETELLIS 4

Terrestrial Planet; One Moon; Normal atmosphere; Habitable; Pre-sapient indigenous life forms, Multiple colonial enclaves dominated by human centers on the continental land masses, and the aquatic Pruo in the rich oceans. Fretellis 4 society includes rich planter classes backed by corporate allies, and worker classes, whose lot planet side is eased only by the abundance of resources to hand for the thrifty and hard-working.

FRETELLIS 5

Salt Planet (Desert variation); No Moons; No Atmosphere, Heavy Gravity; White, yellow, and pale blue bands.

FRETELLIS 6

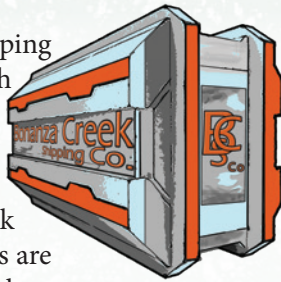
Jungle/Swamp Planet; Three Moons; Normal atmosphere (humid atmosphere makes scanning and communications difficult); Habitable; Indigenous animal life forms influenced by bioship DNA during the evolutionary process. Marshy continental terrain and archipelagos separate salt-water seas around the equator from fresh water seas near the ice-capped poles.

BIOSHIPS, "WRANGLERS" AND THE CONSORTIUM

Scientists of many species still search for the reason the living ships include Fretellis Prime on their migratory routes, but whatever the reasons, the constant influx of herds into and out of the Fretellis Prime system provides additional cargo space for the shipping magnates controlling the Drift beacon at the Consortium HQ. Communication in the outer orbits of Fretellis Prime is spotty due to solar and gravitational disruptions attributed to the Drift disaster on Fretellis B, and constant raids by crustecar and other pirates threaten shipping in the "dead zone". The atmospheric interference of Fretellis 6 doesn't help legitimate traders, as pirates often hunker down there, rising to attack inbound convoys.

The solution is elegant, yet simple. Most shipping between the Drift beacon and the rich agricultural planet of Frentellis 4 is done in the bellies of living ships. Trading companies wrangle entire herds past the Consortium HQ to transship inbound product and pick up exports on the return. These great convoys are difficult targets for a lone pirate ship, although convoy raiding is still profitable for skilled crews. Savvy traders often hide luxury goods in one or two bioships in a wild herd – finding the valued cargo is like hunting a needle in a haystack.

The Consortium maintains strict standards so as not to offend the wranglers (the symbiotic bioship herders) who travel with the wild herds. Some environmental groups still protest the use of the bioships, but these groups are often considered on the fringe considering the care with which the Consortium guards these unique resources. Those entering into contracts with the Consortium at large (or even the individual members of that governing body) should still beware that in almost all other aspects of trade and power the Consortium is as cutthroat as one might expect from a monopolistic concern.



SKELLSARA (CN FEMALE WRANGLER MYSTIC II): Skellsara dwells in a remote hut on Frentellis 6, studying and meditating on the life forms evolved from the DNA introduced by a bioship which crashed there millennia ago. This wisdom of this aging wrangler is known to the bioship herds, although Skellsara's behavior is often considered erratic.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Homesteaders on Frentellis 4, hoping to escape drudgery in service to the rich planter class, are threatened when the corporatocracy shuts down the only nearby trading post and bumps up tariffs. A bit of smuggling might aid the struggling independents, or unethical PCs might be hired to stir up native animals to force the homesteaders to abandon their claims.

The high-profile murders of three major stockholders of important shipping companies on Consortium HQ are pinned on an innocent man. Oomprin seeks to clear his name; the man is a patsy for someone attempting to play the market and gain control of those companies in a bid to oust Shareholder from her position as Consortium Chair.

A pair of wild bioship bulls has been attacking domesticated herds. Wranglers are concerned the bulls may be diseased and might infect larger populations. They suggest seeking Skellsara's insight before taking harsh measures against the bulls.



IMPORTANT NPCs

SHAREHOLDER (LE FEMALE ANDROID ENVOY 13): The Chair of Consortium HQ, Shareholder rules the Consortium through her proxies and executive boards with a ruthless hand. Polite, diplomatic and even friendly, few see the dark side of this commercial megalomaniac whose sole purpose is to maximize shareholder value no matter the cost.

CALRO HAINES (CG MALE HUMAN OPERATIVE 9): From a dilapidated cargo bay on Consortium HQ, Calro Haines runs a junk fleet of low-end (and slow) freighters through the dead zone, but every quarter seems to satisfy his investors with a sufficient ROI to stay in business. The canny operative is the most successful smuggler in system and always on the look out for new talent – either to supplement his legitimate runs, or as muscle for the not-so-kosher trips.

OOMPRIN (LG FEMALE PRUD SOLARIAN 5): Drawn to Frentellis Prime in search of the cosmic reasons behind the bioship migrations, Oomprin now splits her time between Frentellis 4 and Consortium HQ. Planet side, she canvasses for and collects aid destined for the downtrodden workers on the space station. Space bound, she metes out some level of justice in the under-resourced warrens of the “disposable” classes.

CONSORTIUM HQ

LN Space Station

POPULATION 18,649 (14% android, 40% human, 23% prud, 23% other)

GOVERNMENT Corporatocracy

QUALITIES bureaucratic, financial center, technologically advanced

MAXIMUM ITEM LEVEL 15th

The Consortium maintains powerful fleets at the Drift beacon and at a moon base orbiting Frentellis 4. These ships safeguard the transfer of cargo at each point and collect tithes and tariffs. Consortium hulls augment house fleets, which bear the brunt of in-system convoy duty and patrol, safeguarding the interests of their respective corporations. Drydock facilities at Consortium HQ are sufficient for repair and maintenance, but most ships are imported from other systems. Life on the space station is hard on the worker class, especially in those sections of the station controlled by failing merchant concerns.

FRENTELLIS B

The lesser of two stars in a binary system, Frentellis B suffered a system-wide disaster shortly after the broadcast of the Signal. Most scientists hold that the indigenous race, the crustecar, were attempting to develop Drift technology in moon-based factories orbiting their home planet of Graska (Frentellis B-3) when a chain reaction destroyed every planetary mass in the system, save the two moons of Graska, which were caught half-in and half-out of the Drift. Amidst the newly formed asteroid belt of planetary debris, the moons began a random cycle of phasing in and out of the Drift.

The phasing moons create a unique interaction with the Drift. Firstly, it has been impossible to place drift beacons directly in either system of the binary pair. A single Drift beacon near the binary system's center of mass functions normally, but Drift jumps between the two systems, or within them, prove impossible. Secondly, the moons serve as a huge magnet for derelict ships in the Drift, eventually drawing them into the Frentellis B system. Other species have recognized this phenomenon and often dispose of obsolete vessels and other space junk by boosting them into the Drift and allowing them to collect in one of the largest space junkyards in existence.

THE BREAKERS' YARD

STAR: Frentellis B, red dwarf, binary star with Frentellis Prime (yellow dwarf)

CONSORTIUM HQ/DRIFT BEACON: Close to the binary system's center of mass, an impressive space station controlled by a group of powerful shipping companies known as The Consortium protects (and collects tolls from) ships inbound via the only reliable local Drift Beacon.

ASTEROID BELT AND JUNKYARD: Various natural bodies with no atmosphere; Two phasing moons: Spirtos and Kasck; uncounted debris fields with varying density of space junk and derelicts. Four asteroid/satellite bases enhanced with construction salvaged from generation ships and other collected debris provide centers of power for the dominant crustecar clans. Minor clans and hundreds of pirate/salvage crews homestead in smaller debris fields.

SPIRTOS: Phase Moon; while in the Drift, this moon accumulates a thin atmosphere which almost entirely bleeds out on its return to normal space; some low valleys and cave systems maintain a thin atmosphere (Save?Fortitude?DC 14; Onset?2 hrs; Frequency?1/4 hrs; Initial Effect 1?Con?damage, Fatigue;?Secondary Effect 1 Con drain, Exhaustion; Cure 1

save). Plant life, genetically modified to this cycle, enjoys short-burst growing seasons in the Drift, while seeds lie dormant in normal space. Most industry is agricultural; all major crustecar clans maintain a presence on Spirtos.

KACSK: Phase Moon; no atmosphere. One hemisphere is a blasted wasteland from the destruction of the earlier Drift accident, while the other continues to see improvement and industrialization by Clan Chotka and Clan Skortrish. Industrial sabotage and espionage rule, and buyers from other clans and homesteaders frequent Kacsk when it is in normal space. Salvage into the blasted lands is dangerous but lucrative, as some salvage is drawn directly to the moon during its cycles in the Drift.

KACSK-TELLERI

CN City (moon base)

POPULATION 43,372 (9% android, 82% crustecar, 9% other)

GOVERNMENT Council (The Greater Clan Council)

QUALITIES politically fluid, technologically advanced

MAXIMUM ITEM LEVEL 16th

GA-CHOTKA: A substantial space station with a core of a crustecarian generation ship augmented by ring and spoke additions built from salvage from the yard. Firebases on nearby asteroids and other debris provide point defense for this power base of Clan Chotka. The variety of alien tech in the defensive ring makes this a particularly difficult target to assault.

GA-CHOTKA

LN **SPACE** Station

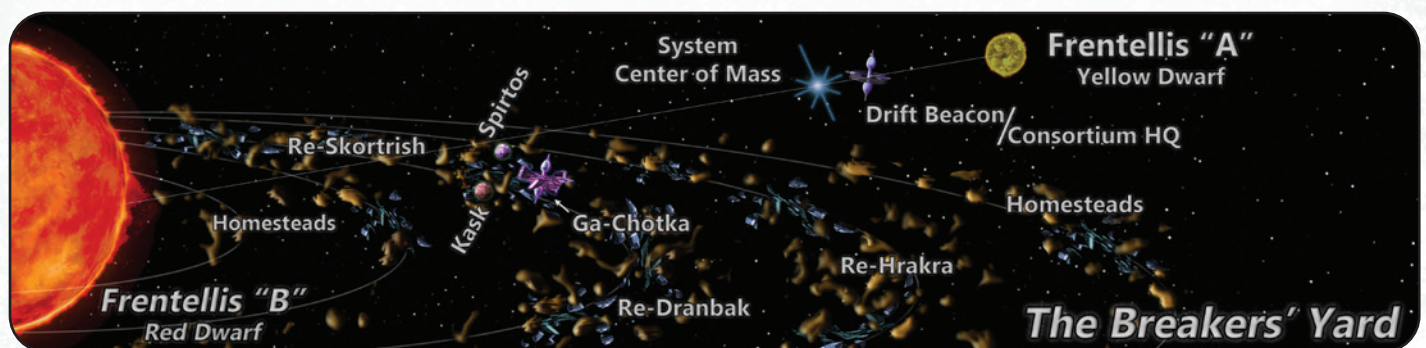
Population 13,372 (92% Crustecar, 8% other)

Government Oligarchy (council of ruling families)

Qualities insular, technologically average

Maximum Item Level 12th

RE-HRAKRA: An asteroid base with scattered settlements crafted from a segmented generation ship, divided at the bulkheads. Tunnels link these scattered settlements (which expand via a mix of mined asteroid rock and salvaged parts) to a central power core deep in the space rock. This core generates reserve power for the scattered settlements of Clan Hrakra.



RE-DRANBAK: Clan Dranbak lost its generation ship to a collision when returning to Frentellis B. They now live on a fleet of ships in a sector of the belt rich in salvage drydock facilities on fortified asteroids. Escape pods from the generation ship are scattered amongst asteroids and larger debris, often serving as shrines around which small communities of Dranbak center.

RE-SKORTTRISH: Clan Skortrish used Drift technology to return to the Frentellis system. The drift beacon at the Center of Mass is of their design. Weakened by a battle with a migratory herd of living ships, the return fleet was unable to maintain control of the beacon when the Consortium consolidated power. The survivors retreated to a sector of the belt near the phase moons, vying for control of those bodies with Clan Chotka.

THE HOMESTEADS: Minor crustecar clans, pirates, salvage masters, and homesteaders stake claims throughout The Breakers' Yard. These vary from hardscrabble salvaged facilities with minimal ship repair capability to high-tech islands of savvy mechanics and salvage artists.

THE WAR WITH PRIME

The crustecar have been at war with the living ships of Frentellis Prime for most of their spacefaring history. The bioship wranglers, while not native to Frentellis Prime, protected and guided the living ships during their migratory routes to the dominant star in the binary pair. Early colonization attempts of Prime by crustecar clans saw their ships devoured by the herds of bioships. The repeated assaults grew so heated, that the wranglers eventually mounted offensive forays to Frentellis B. On the defensive, the crustecar abandoned all hopes of settling the nearby (and richer) system of Frentellis Prime and launched generation ships to other nearby stars. This act saved the race, as returns from those nascent colonies were able to resettle The Breakers' Yard following the disaster.

The settlement of Frentellis Prime by agricultural magnates backed by the powerful shipping companies of The Consortium make conquest of that system unlikely, but the reduced Crustecar are content to raid the shipping lanes along with a host of other pirates and mercenaries based out of The Breakers' Yard, rustling and enslaving bioships when possible, killing them when not, and reserve their greatest hatred for the wranglers.

IMPORTANT NPCS

KA-SKORTTRISH BEK

LN male crustecar soldier 12

The military commander of Clan Skortrish, Bek feels marooned in Kacsck-Telleri, the moon-base city on Kacsck where council delegates from all clans safeguard the future of the race. Brash and short-tempered, council member Bek's diplomatic abilities leave much to be desired. He longs to command a fleet again against clan Chotka to push them out of the top spot of crustecarian hierarchy. Mercenaries, spies, and free-lance diplomats would find KA-Skortrish Bek a lucrative patron.

JE-DRANBAK CHRO

LG female crustecar mechanic 14

This reclusive salvage expert advances and refines alien tech to the advantage of her clan from a secret docking facility in Dranbak space. Rumored to be able to build anything, and willing to teach those who can find her hidden lair, this mechanic's reputation is legendary even beyond the system.

HRAKRA LAJ

NE female crustecar outlaw operative 9

Erroneously tagged as a Deceiver (a betrayer of clan and race), Laj haunts Kacsck-Telleri collecting intelligence on opposing clans, which she anonymously delivers back to clan Hrakra. Her current cover identity, Hrakra-Kel is that of a marginally successful (and risk-taking) salvage broker of gear from the badlands of moon Kacsck.

VOLOTEA, TECHBENDER OF CLAN JIT-WA, OF THE MAGES OF HOUSE DURDU, DESCENDED FROM CALLED THE STARWATCHER

CN female kasatha technomancer 11

Volotea joins the never-ending search of derelicts to discover never-before encountered alien tech drawn by the Drift magnets into The Breakers' Yard. Volotea remains certain there are enough "first contact" opportunities amongst this graveyard to unlock the greater secrets of the multiverse.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

A chance encounter with three apprentices of JE-Dranbak Chro provide a link to finding the elusive mechanic when one of them refers to her sister student by her full honorific, je-Dranbak Cres-Chro, which identifies her as a student of the legendary master.

Hrakra Laj needs a new cut-out to deliver stolen tech to clan Dranbak. She feeds a rumor about tech desired by that clan in a downed alien craft in the badlands of Kacsck. The operative has planted the download there herself, but the vessel is no longer abandoned.

A space collision with a piece of alien junk tech brings the PCs to the attention of Volotea, who seeks the alien artifact for her own study. The kasatha will have the tech, no matter the cost to the PCs.



NEW RACE

CRUSTECAR

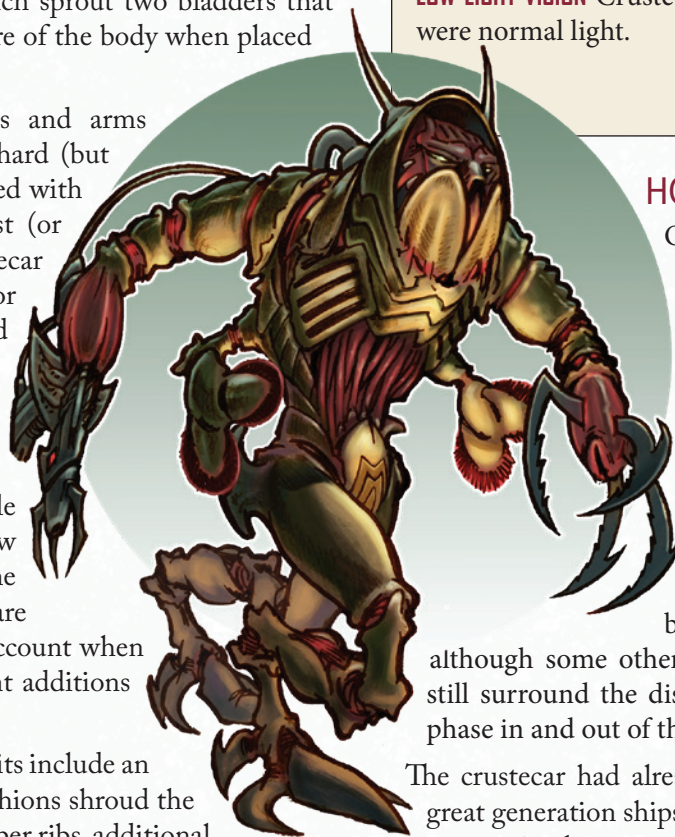
A stern and leonine visage crowns an aggressive stance on powerful legs, lending an aura of menace to the crustecar's looming form. Usually enhanced by cybernetic augmentations (decorative and functional) crustecar seem fully armed and armored even in moments of repose. One would think that this aura of menace would make intimidation by the crustecar a powerful tool, but most species react to such threats with a curious stiffening of resolve, usually thinking, "that thing is going to rip me apart no matter what – kill it quickly!"

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

So well-formed is the musculature of the crustecar, that the reddish-brown skin exposed between plates of armored shell is often mistaken for bare muscle. Digitigrade legs allude to an evolutionary history of powerful sprinters, but modern crustecar have been too long in space to benefit from their menacing stance. Tight muscles at the abdomen accentuate the narrow waist, driving up into the armored rib cage, from which sprout two bladders that stabilize the internal pressure of the body when placed under extreme stress.

The upper body, shoulders and arms of the crustecar appear as hard (but non-functional) armor, mixed with hard muscle. The wealthiest (or most resourceful) crustecar augment their natural armor with dermal plating, and often swap out arms and hands with prosthesis of their own design, built from parts scavenged from derelict starships. The nimble digits of the hand withdraw into a slotted pocket in the forearm: weapon grips are designed to take this into account when mounted as semi-permanent additions to the crustecar's silhouette.

Most crustecar personnel suits include an armored hood; even soft fashions shroud the neck and head. From the upper ribs, additional plated sheaths protect inner organs, and lower jaw. A similar ring of smaller plates girdles the neck and upper back near the spinal column, visible when these hoods are removed. The front sheaths flex and pivot to the side from the base, exposing the full face when a crustecar is at rest, or comfortable amongst company.



CRUSTECAR

+2 CON, +2 INT, -2 CHA

ABILITY MODIFIERS

6

HP

SIZE & TYPE Crustecar are Medium humanoids with the crustecar subtype.

PLUGGED-IN Crustecar are implanted with a standard datajack at birth. It can be upgraded normally.

SHIP-WRECKERS Endowed with innate skills to quickly probe, hack, and even survive in hostile ship environments, crustecar gain a +2 racial bonus to Computers, Engineering, and Survival checks in starships and on space stations. Terrestrial-based systems and environments prove too overwhelming for this boon.

VACUUM-JUMPER Long acclimation to the rigors of space provide crustecar with some durability against vacuum. Crustecar can survive for three rounds in vacuum before taking bludgeoning damage, and sudden decompression damage is reduced to 1d6 bludgeoning damage.

LOW-LIGHT VISION Crustecar can see in dim light as if it were normal light.

HOMEWORLD

Originally the third planet in the Frentellis B system, the crustecar home planet was destroyed shortly after the broadcast of the Signal, in a chain reaction that pulverized all remaining planetary masses save for the two moons of Frentellis B-3. Most attribute the disaster to the incorrect development of Drift technology in moon-based manufacturing facilities, although some other far-fetched conspiracy theories still surround the disaster. The two surviving moons phase in and out of the Drift on a random schedule.

The crustecar had already colonized nearby systems in great generation ships, a strategic move necessitated by a centuries-long war with the Wranglers of Frentellis Prime, whose bioships consumed early crustecarian space tech, retarding their early space programs for generations. The Drift disaster wiped out 80 percent of the crustecarian universal census, but the eventual refinement of Drift technology provided an efficient means for the colonial science missions to travel back to Frentellis B which

now sports multiple asteroid rings around the red dwarf star. This reverse colonization is at an end, as the only reliable and safe Drift beacon shared by the binary stars of Frentellis Prime and Frentellis B is now controlled by The Consortium, a powerful group of shipping companies which dominate Frentellis Prime.

Latent and recurring rifts into the Drift draw space junk into these asteroid belts, creating one of the largest graveyards of derelict starships known. The two original moons of Frentellis B-3 (the crustecarian home planet) phase in and out of the Drift and act as powerful, though unpredictable beacons. In addition to ships captured by navigational errors caused by the phasing moons, multiple species have seized on the moons' ability to attract junked ships in the Drift to rid themselves of aging designs and other trash, often pushing such ships or loads into the Drift with cheap one-shot Drift boosters or by utilizing Drift tugs. These cast-offs eventually make their way to Frentellis B; in some sectors, the density of abandoned craft is greater than that of the asteroids and other space junk. Asteroid-based or space-station settlements of crustecarian returns hide in what is now known as "The Breakers' Yard.

SOCIETY AND ALIGNMENT

The loss of the home system intensified the clannish nature of crustecarian society; most returning generation ships were manned by specific clans. Tiny, insular settlements scattered amongst the debris fields vie for harvesting rights amongst the ever-growing mothball fleet. Settlements are quick to defend their perceived territories, forming alliances of convenience with rival clans. Though these conflicts seem chaotic in nature, crustecar maintain a lawful outlook corresponding to their sense of honor and clan stability.

Combat between clans is personal, be it at close quarters or ship-to-ship, but rarely pursued to fatality. The crustecar recognize that their race stands on the precipice of extinction, that it will be generations more before the census numbers reach a safe threshold for continuation of the species. Crustecar take pains to avoid the death of racial brothers and sisters, and while they will strip an enemy ship of parts (or steal it outright), escape pods, or survival habitats on a nearby asteroid or derelict ship are usually provided to the defeated. Tales speak of crews marooned in the Breakers' Yard that subsequently fashion their own escape vessels from junk, rescuing themselves from temporary set-backs.

These niceties do not always extend to non-crustecar opponents, which is why crews operating out of the

Breakers' Yard often recruit one or more crustecar members. While this does not guarantee quarter, it usually helps if things go sideways during an encounter with crustecar rivals. As a result, crustecar have become more widely travelled across the Vast.

RELATIONS

The looming and aggressive physical form of the crustecar makes most species wary on the approach, a drawback further exacerbated by the clannish mentality of the scavenger race. Once these obstacles are overcome, the crustecarian sense of honor and clan is often an asset. True acceptance breeds true friends, albeit often constrained within the boundaries of existing clan alliances. Personal loyalty is prized and upheld, but the unpredictable nature of the average crustecar can test those ties when friends and shipmates are drawn in to feuds, existing or spontaneous. Those in relationship with crustecar are wise to ensure that their friendship is indeed a true one, for some of the scavenger race treat all such ties as ones of convenience. Known as Deceivers, these socially aberrant crustecar feel no shame in the betrayal of friend, kin, or race.

ADVENTURERS

The Breakers' Yard is home to huge numbers of crustecarian mechanics and operatives; the soldier profession appeals to the less intelligent or focused members of the species. Crustecar breed a high percentage of ace pilots who can fly anything, mercenaries always on the hunt for prosthetic upgrades to enhance their bodies, and pirates and outlaws who turn their scavenging abilities to more nefarious purposes. Great thinkers or contemplatives are rare amongst the crustecar, and usually spring from hereditary clan leadership lines, secret cults on the fringe of crustecarian society, or from exposure to alien cultures across the Vast.

NAMES

Crustecar clan names (Chotka, Hrakra, Dranbak, and Skortrish being examples) precede personal names in formal greetings. Personal names are short, usually translating to three to four letters in most languages (Luc, Bek, Cres, Masd, Fryz, Chro). A prefix to the clan name denotes one's role within the clan. A clan (or crew) leader (KA), elder (GA), or teacher (JE) thus becomes KA-Chotka Luc, GA-Chotka Luc, or JE-Chotka Luc. Those in the line of succession or apprenticed to clan leaders are sometimes awarded the diminutive version of the prefix as an honor; in such cases their mentor's name is also added as a suffix to their personal name (ka-Chotka Fryz-Luc) until they achieve full status.

NEW RACE

WRANGLERS

Standing sturdily on four powerful legs, the rear of this creature's back rises from its loin, adding solid mass to its hindquarters. From this hump, two heads on either side rise on elongated necks, webbed membranes joining them to the flanks, reminiscent of ancient sails.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Wranglers tend towards the large side of the Medium creature spectrum, weighing between 250 to 300 pounds. Longer (5 to 6 feet) than they are tall (3-4-1/2 feet), the bulk of their mass is in the rear hump and hindquarters, although their forelegs provide a powerful natural kick attack. Elongated necks rising from each flank can reach around the rump to meet at the rear, unhampered by the stretchy membranous skin flaps connecting neck to body. The coloration of the wrangler's leathery hide runs a gamut of colors with greens, blues, and mauves predominating; usually trending towards darker hues. As wranglers age, swirls and spots of lighter value tints, usually mottled with the original hues begin to appear. About one in ten



WRANGLERS

+2 DEX, +2 WIS, -2 CON
ABILITY MODIFIERS

4
HP

SIZE & TYPE Wranglers are Medium Humanoids with the wrangler subtype.

FOUR-LEGGED STABILITY When unarmed, wranglers receive a +4 Bonus to KAC against Bull Rush and Trip attempts.

LIVING ENGINEER Knowledge of and experience with biological systems grant wranglers a +2 racial bonus on Life Science checks, and a +2 Engineering bonus for all systems relating to bioships.

POWERFUL KICK A wrangler's natural attack deals 1d3 lethal Bludgeoning damage and is not considered archaic. At 3rd level, the wrangler gains a unique weapon specialization that allows them to add 1-1/2 times their character level to damage for their natural attack (rather than just their character level). This attack may not be used when the wrangler is armed.

SHIP SYMBIONT Wranglers instinctively grasp the design and workings of starship systems, even those with no biological components. They receive a +2 racial bonus on Computer checks relating to starships. They may interface with a bioship without an independent data jack.

TWO-HEADED Two heads grant heightened awareness in combat. As a reaction a wrangler may deny a flanking opponent its flanking bonus until the Wrangler's next initiative count.

A wrangler is not slain if one of its heads is cut off, although it loses any ranks in half its skills (determined randomly). A severed head regenerates naturally in eight weeks; a mystic cure spell of fourth level or higher halves this recovery time for each level beyond third (minimum one-week recovery).

wranglers are born as partial albinos – their hide begins in the light value range (true albino skin being the rarest) and adding whorls of darker color as they age.

The hooves of the front legs contain recessed articulated digits that can be extended for small-motor skill manipulation. A slot in the anterior portion of the hoof allows equipped gear to be carried along even as the wrangler moves – the loping form of a wrangler dragging a grenade launcher slung backwards between its hind legs is a sight to see. Wranglers rear up on two or three legs when engaged in close combat. Much of their gear is carried in belly slings or on bands and sheaths on the forelegs, although supplies that usually do not demand immediate and speedy access are often carried in “lap-pouches” at the base of the rear hump between the two necks.

HOME WORLD

Wranglers, along with their symbiotic charges, the living ships known as bioships, are not known to have a home world. Their society exists amongst the migratory routes of the bioships themselves, great journeys in which the herds serve as home. In some cases, wranglers may adopt systems of planets along the migratory routes, placing them under their protection for the betterment of the never-ending diaspora of the bioships. Some mystic wranglers claim an origin system exists for both herders and herd, but these cultists exist on the fringe of wrangler society – an original genesis story remains one of the greater mysteries of wrangler beliefs.

SOCIETY AND ALIGNMENT

Wrangler communities are small, usually no more than half a dozen families serve any given bioship herd, which number anywhere from 40 to 200 head. Extended familial lines sometimes see the formation of a super herd of thousands of ships, joining for extended migrations through the cosmos.

Bioships live in maternal herds, which include other females and their offspring; wrangler society mirrors this structure, with male wranglers and their sons remaining with the larger herds, and female wranglers leaving the family with male bioships once they achieve maturity. Male bioship bulls live singly, or in bachelor herds, most bachelor herds are supported by female wranglers in a sisterhood. Like their bioship hosts, the two sexes of the wranglers come together during mating season where strict dominance hierarchies guide the propagation of the species.

Most wranglers live their entire lives without bonding to a specific bioship, moving about the herds as required to tend and manage the living ships. At the end of each lifecycle, a dying wrangler finally bonds with a bioship, transforming itself in the brain core of the ship, taking the form reminiscent of the command chair seen on constructed starships. Other wranglers, and indeed other species can interact with the bioship through this structure, and some memories and skills of the wrangler remain in the consciousness of the bonded bioship.

As societal clout is based on dominance, wranglers are often unpredictable in their actions; one never knows when they will attempt to assert their dominance in any given social setting. As a culture, these chaotic impulses are tempered by an instinctual need to safeguard the herds and the migratory routes on which they travel. Wranglers often adopt entire star systems – especially those with pre-space flight civilizations to keep the migratory routes safe. Destruction or dominance over upstart species on the migratory routes is typical, although coexistence is possible between space going species – wranglers often enter into

trading agreements, shipping cargo in the bellies of living ships for concessions and safeguards along the migratory routes.

RELATIONS

The unassuming four-legged stance of the wrangler puts other species at ease until they perceive the power in the four legs, and the posturing of the dominance-driven wrangler. Initial overtures are often verbal or physical intimidation contests to establish a pecking order amongst new acquaintances; if a wrangler “loses” such an exchange, she become deferent in tone until she sees a new opportunity to assert herself. This deference does not extend to the point to allow abuse or true subservience – a wrangler still safeguards her own agendas. Because of these trials of dominance, first contact with less warlike species tends to breed better results, although mutual respect can occur between wrangler and other aggressive species.

ADVENTURERS

Wrangler adventurers are rare, most preferring to remain within the familial structure. The greatest number of adventures are drawn from single females who have not joined with a sisterhood in a bachelor herd, or from sisters pushed out of such herds after losing dominance contests. Male wranglers leave a main herd when they are unable to accept a subservient role in the familial structure. Usually, in all these cases, an adventuring career grants skill and experience that allow these self-imposed exiles to achieve dominance over a herd later in life, often reinvigorating staid bloodlines or stagnant ideals. Less rebellious wranglers serve as planetary or system guardians amongst the migratory routes, leaving the herds for short periods of time to achieve specific goals. These adventurers maintain familial connections and patronage during these pilgrimages. Finally, the rarest wrangler adventurers are often Truebonds. Bonded pilots who form a deep symbiotic relationship with a living ship. These symbiotic pairs are the interstellar explorers of the wranglers, seeking new migratory routes amongst the cosmos.

NAMES

Wrangler names combine familial prefixes (Del, Grin, Johl, Nar, Skell, Vrul, Zheb) with personal names (donda, dondu, grippa, grippu, jazza, norwa, sara, vylu, zpa). Female personal names end in “a”, and are combined in alliterative pairs (Skellsara, Vrulvyla). Male names end in “u” and are not alliterative (Delgrippu, Narjazzu). Being of lesser dominance places the emphasis on the personal name when addressing their seniors, otherwise emphasis is placed on the familial name. A strong emphasis on both names is awarded to the dominant patriarch or sister in a herd, as well as to Truebonds, who often take a new family name once bonded, founding new lineages.

NEW CREATURES

IMPLANTACLE | CR 1/2 | XP 200

N Medium aberration (aquatic)

INIT +1; **SENSES** Darkvision 60 ft.; **PERCEPTION** +9**DEFENSE****EAC** 10, **KAC** 11**HP** 12**FORT** +0, **REF** +0, **WILL** +5**OFFENSE****SPEED** 20 ft., **CLIMB** 15 ft., **SWIM** 15 ft.**MELEE** tentacles +4 (1d4+3 B plus grab)**SPELL-LIKE ABILITIES** (CL 3rd)*1/day*—reflecting armor, status (DC 11)*At will*—stabilize**OFFENSIVE ABILITIES** implant, snare**STATISTICS****STR** +3, **DEX** +2, **CON** +1, **INT** +0, **WIS** +0, **CHA** +0**SKILLS** Athletics +9, Stealth +9 (+15 on water); Racial Modifiers +6 on Stealth in water**OTHER ABILITIES** amphibious**ECOLOGY****ENVIRONMENT** warm rivers and marshes**ORGANIZATION** solitary (bud), stalk (2-4), or bed (5-12)**TREASURE** none**SPECIAL ABILITIES**

IMPLANT (EX) As a full-round action against a dying creature, an implantacle may implant one egg node under the skin, which automatically stabilizes the creature. While bearing implanted egg nodes a creature does not recover hit points naturally. If healed above 0 hit points, the egg nodes burst, dealing 1d3 points of damage each. A creature may host up to 3 egg nodes plus one for every 20 hit points (or fraction thereof) of its hit point maximum. The nodes take 1d6+4 days to mature, growing like huge fistulas in the comatose body. Removing an immature egg node requires a DC 11 medicine check; failure deals 1d3 point of damages and dismisses any remaining stabilization effects from other nodes. When mature, a fully grown implantacle breaks free of the egg node in a shower of blood and skin, dealing 1d3 points of damage. If the subject survives and can be stabilized, the organic detritus can be removed with a DC 6 Medicine check.

SNARE (EX) Three times per day, an implantacle can extend its tentacles to grant itself a reach of 15-ft. and the pull special ability (10-ft.) for one attack. This process takes 10 minutes; an opposed Perception check against the implantacle's Stealth check spots the snare.

FRENTELLIS SYSTEM BESTIARY

These plant-like aberrations stealthily hunt small game and fish in their watery hunting grounds, setting stealthy ambushes and patiently waiting for prey to come within their reach, which is often extended as the creature's vine-like tentacle extend into the brush, or along pond bottoms of riverbeds in search of meat.

Implantacles hunt larger game in groups when seeking to implant their eggs. A stalk of creatures will hound prey into overlapping snares of tentacles before knocking them out and implanting the eggs. The stalk remains to guard the host, and never implants in the same creature again; some unfortunates have survived the unpleasant experience to tell the tale.

PLASMA-CROC | CR 2 | XP 600

N Large animal

INIT +1; **SENSES** Low-light vision; **PERCEPTION** +7**DEFENSE****EAC** 13, **KAC** 15**HP** 25**FORT** +6, **REF** +6, **WILL** +1**OFFENSE****SPEED** 20 ft., **SWIM** 30 ft.; **SPRINT****MELEE** bite +10 (1d6+6 B and P plus grab) and tail slap +5 (1d6+2 B plus 1d4 F, crit burn 1d4)**RANGED** plasma tail +7 (1d4+2 F plus burn 1d4)**SPACE** 10 ft.; **REACH** 5 ft.**OFFENSIVE ABILITIES** death roll, plasma-tail, sprint**STATISTICS****STR** +4, **DEX** +1, **CON** +2,**INT** -4, **WIS** +0, **CHA** +0**SKILLS** Athletics +12, Stealth +7 (+13 on water); **RACIAL MODIFIERS** +6 on Stealth on water**OTHER ABILITIES** hold breath**ECOLOGY****ENVIRONMENT** warm rivers and marshes**ORGANIZATION** solitary, pair, or colony (3-12 plus hatchlings)**TREASURE** none**SPECIAL ABILITIES**

DEATH ROLL (EX) When grappling a foe of its size or smaller, a plasma-croc can perform a death roll upon making a successful grapple check. As it clings to its foe, it tucks its legs and rolls rapidly, twisting and wrenching its victim. The plasma-croc inflicts its bite damage and knocks the creature prone. If successful, the plasma-croc maintains its grapple.

HOLD BREATH (EX) A plasma-croc can hold its breath for a number of minutes equal to 3 times its Constitution modifier (1-minute minimum) before it risks drowning.

PLASMA-CROC HATCHLING | CR 1/3 | XP 135

N Small animal

INIT +1; **SENSES** Low-light vision; **PERCEPTION** +3

DEFENSE

EAC 10, **KAC** 12

HP 6

FORT +3, **REF** +3, **WILL** +0

OFFENSE

SPEED 15 ft., **SWIM** 20 ft.; **SPRINT**

MELEE bite +4 (1d6+3 B and P)

RANGED plasma tail +1 (1d4+1 F crit. burn 1d4)

OFFENSIVE ABILITIES plasma-tail, sprint

STATISTICS

STR +3, **DEX** +1, **CON** +0,

INT -4, **WIS** +0, **CHA** +0

SKILLS Athletics +7, Stealth +3

(+9 on water); Racial Modifiers +6 on Stealth in water

OTHER ABILITIES hold breath

PLASMA-TAIL (EX) The energy flung by a plasma-croc's tail takes 1d4 rounds to recharge; while charging, the tail slap does not deliver fire damage (or burn damage on a critical hit). The plasma blobs have a range increment of 30-ft. (20-ft. for hatchlings).

SPRINT (EX) Once per minute a plasma-croc may sprint, increasing its land speed to 40 feet for 1 round.

The addition of a ranged weapon makes these crocodiles deadlier than their standard cousins, and less likely to flee from ranged fire even as their tails are recharge. They often take advantage of their sprint ability to close to melee after releasing a blob of plasma. Evolved plasma-crocs have a taste for burnt as well as tenderized meat, and are as likely to pummel their prey into fiery oblivion as they are to take them under the water to drown. Nevertheless, their swampy hunting grounds contain plenty of underwater meat lockers to tenderize and store future meat.

Plasma-crocs lay half a dozen to a dozen eggs; the hardier young are more likely to survive in hostile environments, although the mother croc still tends a newborn pod for over a year. Pods tended by a father croc in the absence of a mother are more aggressive and are prized by species who train these animal as mounts.



ROGUE ANTIBODY | CR 1 | XP 200

N Small aberration

INIT +4; **SENSES** darkvision 60 ft.;

PERCEPTION +5

DEFENSE

EAC 11, **KAC** 13

HP 20

FORT +3, **REF** +3, **WILL** +3

OFFENSE

SPEED 30 ft.

MELEE welding tentacle +8 (1d6+3 F)

RANGED spew sealant +5 (entangled 2d4 rounds, 10 ft., DC 10)

STATISTICS

STR +2, **DEX** +4, **CON** +0, **INT** +0, **WIS** +1, **CHA** +0

SKILLS Engineering +10, Stealth +5

OTHER ABILITIES camouflage

ECOLOGY

ENVIRONMENT bioships

ORGANIZATION solitary, pair, or wrecking crew (3–9)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

CAMOUFLAGE (EX) A rogue antibody seems to merge with the hull of its ship, changing appearance to match its surroundings. Whenever the antibody remains stationary for 1 round, it gains a +10 circumstance bonus to its Stealth checks (this bonus doesn't stack with similar effects). If the antibody takes any action, it loses this bonus until it once again spends 1 round without moving.

SPEW SEALANT (EX) As a standard action, a rogue antibody can discharge a stream of fast-drying epoxy at its foes. This functions as a stickybomb grenade 1, and is usable once every 1d4 rounds.

Tentacle-like pseudopods reach out from this amorphous blob, crackling energy sparking from a narrow tip, or viscous liquid dripping from dual-pierced ends.

Through immune system disease or extreme old age, a bioship sometimes loses control over its antibodies. These malignant creatures' instincts send them into a flurry of harmful activity. They often wreak havoc on bioship endocrine systems, attempting to "fix" them.

FREELANCE SCRAPPER | CR 4 | 1,200

Crustecar mechanic
NE Medium humanoid (crustecar)

INIT +5; **SENSES** low-light vision; Perception +10

DEFENSE

HP 45 **RP** 3
EAC 16, **KAC** 17
FORT +7, **REF** +5, **WILL** +5

OFFENSE

SPEED 30 ft.
MELEE tactical dueling sword +8 (1d4+4 S)
RANGED thunderstrike sonic pistol +10 (1d4+4E; crit deafen) or sonic grenade 1 +10 (Explode 15 ft., 1d10 So, deafened 1d4 minutes, DC 15)
OFFENSIVE ABILITIES drone (gleaning germ), overclocking, overload, energy shield, vacuum-jumper

TACTICS

BEFORE COMBAT The mechanic activates his energy shield, gaining 7 temporary hit points.

DURING COMBAT The mechanic begins by throwing grenades at clustered enemies before sending his drone into melee.

STATISTICS

STR +0; **DEX** +5; **CON** +1; **INT** +3; **WIS** +0; **CHA** +0
SKILLS Bluff +15, Computers +15, Engineering +15, Piloting +10, Stealth +10
LANGUAGES Common, Crustecar
GEAR custom rig (standard datajack), defrex hide, dueling sword, screamer grenade 1 (3), thunderstrike sonic pistol

ECOLOGY

ENVIRONMENT any (Breakers Yard)
ORGANIZATION solitary, pair, or salvage crew (3-6)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

VACUUM-JUMPER (EX) Long acclimation to the rigors of space provide crustecar with some durability against vacuum. Crustecar can survive for three rounds in vacuum before taking bludgeoning damage, and sudden decompression damage is reduced to 1d6 bludgeoning damage.

Like many crustecar, the organic arms and armor of this creature is enhanced by prothesis and other integrated parts. The enhancements in this case are unique, and although they appear pulled from the scrap-bin, they also show a high level of care and maintenance in their recycled nature.

Good mechanics are in high demand all throughout the galaxy. Whether it's strapping on a toolbelt aboard an explorer-

class ship out in the Vast or cleaning corporate malware on some civilized world, a suitably talented technologist can always choose to put in the time and draw a steady paycheck. Of course, that's no life for an ambitious scrapper.

The mechanics of the Breakers' Yard come to view the band of orbiting scrap as a species of gem mine, laying claim to promising derelicts the way prospectors of another era might have claimed rich seams of ore. All it takes is one lucky find to pay for years of fruitless searching, and the lights of small salvage vessels darting among lifeless hulks of the Yard are testament to the popularity of the job. Such reclusive freelancers have been known to defend their territories violently, seeing off interlopers with a few well-placed shots or, more often, a bit of well-placed sabotage. More than one would-be claim jumper has returned from prospecting to find themselves stranded, their ship's engines suddenly in pieces.

GLEANING GERM | CR 2 | XP 600

N Tiny construct (technological)

INIT +4; **SENSES** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +7

DEFENSE

HP 26
EAC 13; **KAC** 15
FORT +2; **REF** +2; **WILL** -1
IMMUNITIES construct immunities
WEAKNESSES vulnerable to critical hits, vulnerable to electricity

OFFENSE

SPEED 30 ft., fly 30 ft. (average)
MELEE pincer +10 (1d6+4 S)
RANGED integrated arc pistol +8 (1d4+2 E; crit arc 2)
OFFENSIVE ABILITIES child germ, scrapper

STATISTICS

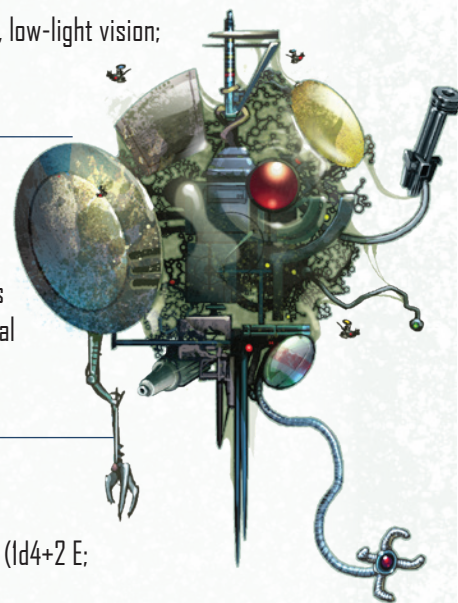
STR +2; **DEX** +4; **CON** -; **INT** +1; **WIS** +0; **CHA** +0
SKILLS Acrobatics +7, Computers +7, Engineering +12
LANGUAGES Common
GEAR integrated arc pistol

ECOLOGY

ENVIRONMENT any low-gravity (Breakers' Yard)
ORGANIZATION solitary, infection (2-5), or outbreak (6-12)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

CHILD GERM (EX) Left to its own devices, a gleaning germ can replicate once per week. It keeps the parts for its "child construct" inside its transparent body, assembling them with dozens of slow but



energy-efficient manipulators. As a move action, the germ can launch this half-formed replicant. Treat the child germ as a gleaming germ that acts on the parent's initiative. It has 4 hp, may only take the aid another, covering fire, or harrying fire actions, and ceases to function after 2d4 rounds. The gleaming germ must wait at least 24 hours between uses of this ability.

SCRAPPER (EX) Gleaming germs are adept at disassembling machinery, transforming advanced tech into raw materials with shocking speed. When using the Engineering skill, these constructs treat all devices as being one category simpler for the purposes of determining how long it takes to use the skill. Thus, difficult devices count as tricky, tricky devices count as simple, and simple devices can be dismantled as a free action.

A jumble of transparent goo and technological parts, this creature looks like a primary school science project mashed with the cast-offs of shop class. The tiny bots and manipulators in the form appear in good order, including the guts of light energy weapons.

A plague upon the Breakers' Yard, these robotic pests are the result of an ill-fated attempt to systematize salvage operations. Gleaming germs are self-replicating constructs designed to build functional copies of themselves from scrap. The mechanics who invented the things expected to sit back and watch as wrecked hulks transformed into vast swarms of obedient bots. Rather than turning themselves in for reclamation as expected however, the things went feral. Decades later and they continue to propagate themselves from the drifting detritus of the Breakers Yard, where they can regularly be found prying parts off salvage crews' ships.

HERMIT RELIQUARIAN

CR 11 | XP 12,800

Kasatha technomancer
CN Medium humanoid (kasatha)
INIT +3; Perception +20

DEFENSE

HP 155 **RP** 5
EAC 23; **KAC** 24
FORT +10; **REF** +10; **WILL** 14

OFFENSE

SPEED 30 ft.
MELEE power battleglove +17 (2d8+11 B)
RANGED elite semi-auto pistol +19 (3d6+11 P)
OFFENSIVE ABILITIES cache capacitor (detect radiation), four-armed, tech countermeasures, seeking shot
Spells Known (CL 11th)
4th (3/day)— corrosive haze, remove

radioactivity
3rd (4/day)— arcane sight, dispel magic, entropic grasp, resistant armor (lesser)
2nd (at will)— invisibility, make whole

TACTICS

BEFORE COMBAT The technomancer prefers to keep her distance, casting arcane sight and invisibility to size up her foes. If they appear hostile, she also casts resistant armor.

DURING COMBAT The technomancer attempts to scare off opponents rather than fight them head on, using her seeking shot magic hack as a warning shot. If that fails she relies on corrosive haze, using her jetpack to move from cover to while her nanites do the fighting.

STATISTICS

STR +0; **DEX** +3; **CON** +0; **INT** +8; **WIS** +5; **CHA** +0

SKILLS Acrobatics +25, Athletics +25, Computers +25, Culture +20, Mysticism +20, Physical Science +20

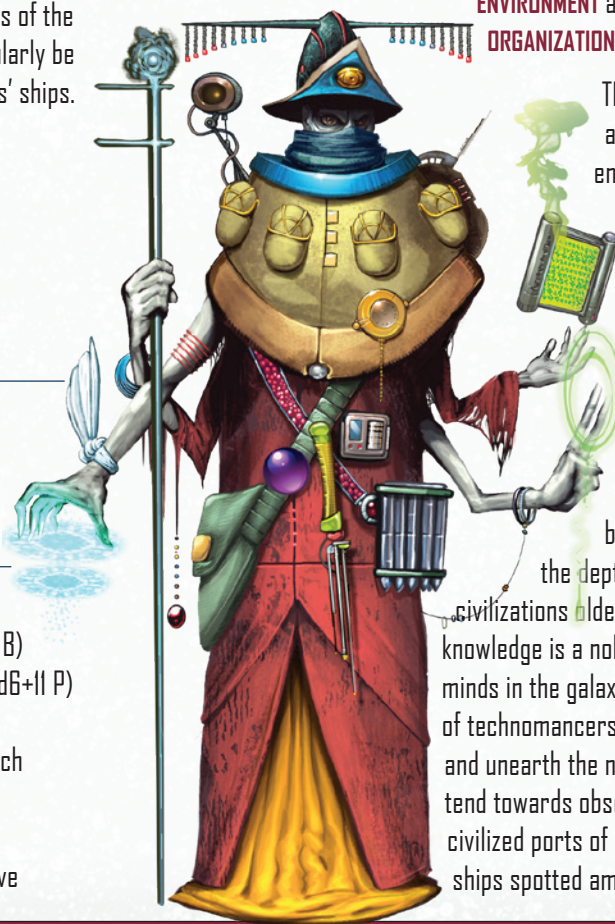
LANGUAGES Common, Kasatha

NONCOMBAT ABILITIES desert stride, four-armed Gear elite semi-auto pistol, Kasatha microcord IV with jetpack, power battleglove, spell cache (ring), spell gem of clairaudience/clairvoyance, spell gem of discharge

ECOLOGY

ENVIRONMENT any (Breakers Yard)

ORGANIZATION solitary



The clothing and gear of this kasatha is a hodge-podge of oddities, scribed or embroidered with ancient symbols, or of obviously antique design. The ensemble somehow fits, pleasing both the eye and mind, even in its eccentricity.

For some inhabitants of the Breakers' Yard, the stately procession of derelicts around Frentellis B is more than a means to easy wealth. Exotic reactor cores, rare technomagic alloys, and entire new branches of science have emerged from the depths of the Yard, some of them dating to civilizations older than recorded history. Pursuing such knowledge is a noble calling, a quest worthy of the brightest minds in the galaxy. In consequence, generations' worth of technomancers have descended upon the system to try and unearth the next great breakthrough. Such driven folk tend towards obsessive personalities, and only return to civilized ports of call to seek out new rumors of legendary ships spotted amongst the Yard's mundane salvage.

BONDED PILOT

When the engines are hungry, and the g-forces are tugging at your consciousness and you're dodging a sky full of enemy fire, it's almost like you're one with the ship. For some pilots, that feeling is very real. Whether it's through the Truebond pairing of a bioship and its captain or a direct neural interface between an engineer and her ship's AI, bonded pilots share a special relationship with their chosen starships. This symbiotic relationship can result in shared emotions, senses, and even physical sensations between pilot and ship. The benefits are many, but the hazards are significant. After all, it is the rare pilot who can fight through the pain of a laser net wrapped around her hull.

The wranglers of Frentellis Prime make natural bonded pilots, though the pairing of bioship and pilot is not unknown among empathic races such as the lashunta and shirrens. Androids who feel a special connection to a ship's computer may also develop such a bond. Mechanics and technomancers are the most common bonded pilots, though the archetype has representatives among other classes as well.

ALTERNATE CLASS FEATURES

The Bonded Pilot grants alternate class features at 2nd, 4th, 6th, 9th, 12th, and 18th levels.

SHIP SENSE (EX) | 2ND LEVEL

Select a starship. You gain an empathic link with the chosen ship and must remain within a set distance of your bonded ship to receive the benefits of your bonded pilot abilities. At 2nd level this distance is planetary (including orbital range), increasing to system-wide at 9th level and planar at 16th level.

The connection between a pilot and her bonded ship allows for a limited ability to sense danger through one another's senses. Your bonded ship provides a +1 bonus to Piloting checks made to determine who moves first in the helm phase of starship combat.

The bond goes both ways, allowing your bonded ship to warn you of hazards that you may fail to notice on a conscious level. You gain a +1 bonus to initiative checks, Reflex saves made to avoid traps, and AC against attacks made by traps. These bonuses increase to +2 at 5th level, and every 5 levels thereafter to a maximum of +4 at 15th level.



NEW ARCHETYPE

EYES IN THE SKY (SP) | 4TH LEVEL

Your bonded ship gains the ability to process your visual information through its sensors, replicating the effects of certain spells.

You gain the following spell-like abilities:

1/day—*detect affliction*, *detect tech*, *detect radiation* and *keen senses*. The caster level for these effects is equal to your character level.

TIGHT-KNIT CREW (EX) | 6TH LEVEL

Over time, members of a bonded pilot's crew tend to grow uncommonly close, gaining a measure of the empathic bond shared between pilot and ship. Once per day, each member of a bonded pilot's crew may use the aid another, covering fire, or harrying fire actions as a swift action. Only fellow crew members may benefit from these actions.

For purposes of this ability, a crew member is any creature that you consider an ally and has spent a significant amount of time aboard your bonded ship.

LINKED CONSCIOUSNESS (EX) | 9TH LEVEL

Once per day, as a reaction when you fail a saving throw against a mind-affecting effect, you can call upon your bonded ship to share the mental burden. When you do so, you are not affected by the mind-affecting effect, but for the normal duration of that effect, you lose the benefit of your other bonded pilot abilities. When your bonded ship is shielding you from a mind-affecting effect in this manner, spells such as *dispel magic* or *break enchantment* can be cast on you to end the effect as if you were affected by it. Once the duration of the mind-affecting effect has ended, you regain access to your bonded pilot abilities.

SHARED PAIN (EX) | 12TH LEVEL

You and your bonded ship draw strength from each other and may shoulder the burden of one another's pain. Whenever you take hit point damage, or your ship takes hull damage, you may spend a Resolve Point to reduce that damage by up to one half. The amount of damage not taken by your ship is taken by you as hit point damage, while the amount of damage not taken by you is taken by your ship as hull damage. Forms of harm that do not

involve hit points, such as charm effects, temporary ability damage, level draining, and death effects, are not affected by this ability.

ORBITAL STRIKE (EX) | 18TH LEVEL

In general, starship weapons are not precise enough for use in PC-level combat. The bond you share with your starship makes you the exception to this rule. Using your biosignature as a beacon, your bonded ship can fire an orbital strike onto your position.

Once per day, you may nominate a grid intersection within a range of up to 40 feet. Your bonded ship must be within orbital range and have a clear line of effect to the target. Fire one of your bonded ship's light direct-fire weapons at the target as if you were using the shoot gunner action in starship combat. All creatures within a 30-foot-radius vertical cylinder, 50 feet high, originating from the impact point suffer $10 \times$ the listed amount of damage, or half as much on a successful Reflex saving throw. The save DC of this ability is equal to $10 +$ half your class level $+ your$ key ability score modifier.

This maneuver can be extremely hazardous for the bonded pilot acting as guidance system. Due to the extreme range, an orbital strike carries a 20% miss chance. On a miss, the shot scatters as if you were using a thrown weapon.

NEW SPELLS

BEFRIEND SHIP

Mystic 4 / Technomancer 4

SCHOOL Divination

CASTING TIME 10 minutes

RANGE touch

TARGETS 1 starship

DURATION one hour

You come to an unspoken understanding with a starship, gaining certain benefits while aboard. Up to three times during the duration of this spell, if you are on board the targeted ship, you may invoke one of the following abilities.

- » **Commune:** Learn one piece of information about the ship's past. This information might be a glimpse of a recent starship combat, a brief vision of the ship's crew, or perhaps an intuition for major malfunctions. The GM determines what information is gained in this way.
- » **Come on You Bucket of Bolts:** Roll 1d6 and add the result to one crew action you take during starship combat. You can do this after rolling the check but before the result is revealed.

- » **Helpful Power Surge:** Treat one malfunctioning system as if it were not malfunctioning for one round. You may also use this ability to power a broken part of a ship for one minute (e.g. open an unpowered hatch, activate a ruined elevator, or turn on the lights in one room).
- » **Friendly Warning:** Roll twice and take the best result on an initiative check or a piloting check made to determine who moves first in the helm phase of starship combat.

You can have only one befriend ship spell active at any one time. If you cast this spell while another casting is still in effect, the previous casting is dispelled.

JUNKBOT ARMOR

Technomancer 2

SCHOOL Transmutation

CASTING TIME 1 round

RANGE touch

TARGETS 1 bulk of inert electronic equipment; see text

DURATION 1 round/level

SAVING THROW none; **SPELL RESISTANCE** no

You turn a pile of technological junk into robotic armor.

You must target inert, nonworking electronic equipment of at least 1 bulk such as a large broken computer system, nonworking or unconnected computer or robot parts, a destroyed mechanical system, related electronic components, or any combination of the above. While casting this spell, you use your magic and technological skills to arrange the junked parts into a suit of hodgepodge armor.

Junkbot armor bonds to your existing armor, granting it a +1 enhancement bonus to KAC. It also provides you with temporary Hit Points equal to one-quarter of your maximum Hit Point total. When you lose the last of these temporary Hit Points, the junkbot armor is destroyed.

While a suit of junkbot armor cannot perform independent actions, it does come equipped with a pair of manipulator arms that can hold or manipulate objects about as well as the wearer's normal limbs. You cannot wield weapons or make attacks with these arms, but you can use them to retrieve small, stowed objects carried on your person as a swift action.

When the junkbot armor is destroyed or this spell ends, the electronic equipment you used to create it falls apart into refuse, its components and circuitry fried beyond anything recognizable. You can't use this refuse as a target to create another junkbot.

NEW THEMES

DECEIVER

Among the crustecar of Frentellis B, clan loyalty is prized above all other virtues. To betray the trust of blood and kinship is to lose everything from military rank and social standing to the possibility of a normal life. Failed coups against a clan matriarch, forbidden romance with a rival family, or consorting with the hated wranglers of Frentellis Prime can all yield the same result. The offending crustecar is shunned from society, branded forever with the name of Deceiver.

Those Deceivers who survive being cut off from the ordered hierarchy of clan life may take up with alien crews, seeking to outrun past misdeeds. Others revel in their infamy, banding together with fellow Deceivers as criminal gangs or spy networks for hire. The faceless operatives of the Null Hand, their identities blurred by holographic masks, are the most famous of these, though other bands exist in the shadowy corners of the Breakers' Yard. Such unrepentant crustecar find freedom in their clan-less lives, discovering an odd sense of liberation in their newfound guile.

Deceivers can also be found amongst all races throughout the cosmos – estranged individuals with no meaningful connections to kith and kin.

Whether it's your honest face or silver tongue, you are expert in the art of deception.

From petty cons to grand conspiracies, your lies are uncommonly convincing. Call yourself a gambler, a politician, or an expert salesman, but the underlying truth remains the same: you lie and cheat for fun and profit, and you are very good at what you do.

THEME KNOWLEDGE | (1ST)

You've seen all the cons, and you can spot a "shirren prisoner" or the classic "beacon glitch" from a mile away. The DC of Culture and Profession checks to recall knowledge about scams, con artists, and games of chance is reduced by 5. Bluff is a class skill for you, though if it is a class skill from the class you take at 1st level, you instead gain a +1 bonus to Bluff checks. In addition, you gain an ability adjustment of +1 to Charisma at character creation.

LIE THROUGH YOUR TEETH | (6TH)

Talking your way out of difficult situations comes naturally to you. Once per day, you can reroll any Bluff check to lie. You must decide to use this ability after rolling but before learning your target's reaction. You must take the second result, even if it is worse.

CAN'T KID A KIDDER | (12TH)

You gain +2 to Sense Motive checks and a +1 to saves against spells of the Illusion school. In addition, enemy captains that attempt to use the Taunt action against your ship or enemy pilots that attempt to use the Trick maneuver against your vehicle must roll twice and take the worse result.

GRAND DECEIVER | (18TH)

A good lie well told is its own reward. Up to twice per day, when you successfully deceive a significant foe, you regain 1 Resolve Point.

SABOTUER

With their home planet Graska reduced to so much debris, the native inhabitants of the Breakers' Yard have grown to resemble their shattered system. The wonders of the cosmos drift at random among worthless junk in Frentellis B's asteroid belt, and the salvage crews that make their living there have learned to turn trash into treasure.

In the lawless sprawl of The Breaker's Yard, it pays to keep a laser pistol handy. It also pays to keep a toolbox, a few spare batteries, and a lookout man on duty. With competition for valuable salvage rampant throughout the system, many of the Yard's junkers have turned from respectable reclamation work to claims jumping. Of course, the real danger isn't a stand-up fire fight. It's sabotage.

If you want to take out your competition, a few loosened screws or a grenade stuffed into a ship's exhaust manifold will do the trick. Some saboteurs have been known to use subtler methods, arranging for convenient accidents or uploading time-delayed viruses to rival spacers' critical systems. With an unresponsive helm and a thick band of scrap metal



orbiting nearby, a distress signal has little chance of breaking through the noise. All alone and drifting, the victims of a Breaker's sabotage are as good as dead. That's how the system's most enterprising scoundrels extort their prey, offering to "rescue" the very ships that they've targeted. More than one unhappy crew has suffered the indignity of being towed back to station, a hefty ransom wired to the duplicitous "do-gooders" on the other end of the tow cable.

The Saboteur theme is appropriate for any character that likes to leave nasty surprises for their foes.

You have a talent for breaking things, especially your enemies' things.

Whether you work for a ruthless megacorporation, a band of shady mercenaries, or as an independent contractor, you understand the value of creative destruction. You might target organizations, structures, or computer programs: all of them have their weak points. It just takes the guts to get in close and apply a little leverage. No matter what obstacle stands in your way, you have the tools and the talent to bring it down.

THEME KNOWLEDGE | (1ST)

You understand how the galaxy's infrastructure operates, and you know how to take it apart from the inside. Choose either Computers or Engineering. If you choose Computers, the DC of skill checks to recall knowledge about system security and electronic countermeasures is reduced by 5. If you choose Engineering, the DC of skill checks to recall knowledge about the weaknesses of buildings, fortifications, spacecraft, and other man-made structures is reduced by 5. Your chosen skill is a class skill for you, though if it is a class skill from the class you take at 1st level, you instead gain a +1 bonus to checks with your chosen skill. In addition, you gain an ability adjustment of +1 to Intelligence at character creation.

COVER STORY | (6TH)

Professional saboteurs are at constant risk of getting spotted prowling around someplace they shouldn't be. That's why it pays to have a cover story. Once per day as a swift action, you may use Computers to forge documents. At your GM's discretion, you may substitute an appropriate Profession skill for the check. For example, if you're spotted inside a mercenary installation, you may roll Profession (mercenary) to produce appropriate regimental insignia. This ability does not produce documents from thin air. Rather, it represents the detailed planning that comes with a carefully plotted infiltration.

TIMED DEMOLITION | (12TH)

When you exceed the DC of a Computers or Engineering check to disable a device or computer system by 5 or more, you can choose to delay the effects of your sabotage

AUTOTOMIC LIMBS

You can detach your arms and legs to absorb damage.

PREREQUISITES: Medicine 5 ranks, prosthetic limb cybernetic augmentation

BENEFIT: Once per day when a critical hit or trick attack is scored on you, the critical hit or trick attack is negated, and damage is instead rolled normally. When you use this ability, choose one of your prosthetic limbs. The chosen appendage falls off, absorbing the impact of the blow. If you choose an arm and hand, you may not use two-handed weapons or take any action that requires two hands until the limb is restored. If you choose a leg and foot, your speed is reduced to half and you can no longer run or charge until the limb is restored.

Reattaching a prosthetic limb takes one hour of work and a DC 15 Medicine check.

NEW FEATS

JUNK MODDER

You've learned how to turn spare parts into temporary upgrades.

PREREQUISITE: Engineering 4 ranks

BENEFIT: Once per day as a move action, you can gain the benefit of one of the following drone mods as if you were a drone with that mod installed: cargo rack, climbing claws, enhanced senses, hydrojets, jump jets, resistance, smuggler's compartment, speed, or weapon proficiency (gaining proficiency in advanced melee or heavy weapons). The mod functions for one minute before falling apart.

You may gain up to one additional use of this ability per day by salvaging parts from an appropriate source (scrap yards or destroyed constructs, for example). This takes 10 minutes of work and a DC 20 Engineering check.

by 2d4 rounds. If you exceed the DC by 10 or more, you may instead choose a trigger that will cause your sabotage to take effect.

MASTER SABOTEUR | (18TH)

Nothing is quite so invigorating as walking away from an explosion. Up to twice per day, when you destroy significant infrastructure or successfully hack significant computer systems without being caught, you regain 1 Resolve Point.

THE DEEP END OF THE POOL

A mini-adventure for four to five level 7 PCs.

The wrangler mystic Skellsara comprehends a disturbance at the Living Hill, located on the jungle/swamp world of Frentellis 6, and broadcasts a request for aid.

THE SHRINE: Millennia ago a crashed (and gravid) bioship leaked its DNA into the planetary ecosystem. The dorsal spine of the living craft snapped; the broken segment crowns the top of a swamp-bound hill, under which the mass of the ancient bioship rests. A great canopy of spinal nerves dangles from the broken end, reminiscent of a weeping willow. Vines and lichen native to the planet cover nerves and “trunk”, and in conjunction with other similar genetic symbioses, the ship remains alive after a fashion. A hilltop pool under the “tree” is an attractive end-life pilgrimage site for wranglers – the iconic chair-like transformations of the departed dot the shoreline.

An escaped band of kalo laborers from a Pruo corporate work farm seeks to genetically adapt creatures to help them free the rest of their brethren. With more desperation than ethics, these aquatic crusaders drained the hilltop pool and are currently pumping it full of amniotic fluids from the ancient bioship. The pumping station below develops an infection.

PLANET SIDE: Skellsara (CN female wrangler mystic 11) speaks in riddles and prophecy, referring to the pilgrimage site as “the living hill”. She charges the PCs to cleanse the body and restore the “pool of reflection.”

APPROACHING THE SHRINE: Scans indicate active radar around the site. A stealthy approach involves setting down on a nearby island and a 2-hour boat journey through the swamps. The landed shuttle on the western slope and a minefield on the eastern slope deter penetration from those directions. Scanning the pumping station at the reflecting pool shows three humanoid sentries guarding pipe running down to the water’s edge on the northern slope. The mud-slicked southern approach is less guarded.

THE CANOPY: The dangling nerves of the canopy targets flying creatures higher than 20 feet (or those climbing the tree) with one +27 attack vs EAC per round, which delivers a dominate effect (DC 21 Will negates) forcing the creature to land and not take to the air again within the canopy for 20 days.

THE MINEFIELD: Navigating the minefield requires 6 perception checks to find and clear a path. Spotting the first mine requires a DC 26 Perception check; each subsequent check increases by 1. The mines are frag grenades II, with a location trigger and must be disabled individually (DC 21). Creatures following a mine sweeper must always remain within 30 feet of the leader to make



a single DC 26 Perception check to follow safely, otherwise they chart their own course. Any explosions alert the kalo.

1. LANDED SHUTTLE: The kalos’ stolen shuttle scans for airborne targets, allowing them to recall a scratch crew (no captain) to engage in an atmospheric/low orbit battle if the PCs contest the LZ with their own ship. Use the statistics for the Blackwind Sepulcher, although the pruo design is commercial and boxy rather than eoian baroque. Climbing the western slope to the shuttle sets off its antipersonnel system. A squad machine gun (+5 attack) opens up at 180 feet, where scant cover provides a clear field of fire. The machine gun commences automatic fire if more than two targets are within its 30’ cone range. Two kalo sharkhunters from area 3 investigate weapons fire on round 4, and all kalo are put on alert.

2. MUD SLICK: Drainage from the reflecting pool turns this slope into a quagmire. A mud eel lurks here (mountain eel statistics with a burrow and swim speed of 20-ft.; the paralyzing gaze ability manifests from a colorful mist of mud spray exhaled from triple breathing spouts on the eel’s back). Creatures lacking a burrow speed treat the terrain as difficult, and if struck by a melee (or trample) attack dealing 16 or more points of damage must make a DC 16 Reflex save or slide 10 feet down the hill and fall prone. Failure on this save by 5 or more also grants the entangled condition until the trapped creature makes a DC 15 Athletics or Escape check to free themselves as a standard action; they may attempt the check as a move action by increasing the DC to 20.

3. PUMPING STATION: A temporary platform holds pumping gear and generators, as well as a 10-ft. high weapons platform (mounts grant a +2 bonus to ranged attacks from longarms and cover). A temporary pipeline runs down to the water’s edge (4). Three kalo sharkhunters stand guard, one in the tower, two near the pumps; the two on the ground investigate weapons’ fire at the shuttle; if the shuttle engaged in aerial combat, only the tower sentry remains. One observer-class security robot from area 4 reinforces any combat at a rate of one per round starting on round 3. The mines to the east are frag grenades II with a location trigger; Perception DC 26, Disable Device DC 21.

4. WATER’S EDGE: The temporary piping dives under the water. The unsubmerged pipeline is patrolled by three observer-class security robots, staying low and hidden (Perception, DC 14) amongst the pipes, popping up no higher than 20 feet to avoid the canopy above. The robots are encountered singly; failure to destroy them in under one round puts the kalo in areas 3 and 6 on alert, robots reinforce each other at a rate of one per round.

5. HULL BREACH: Forty feet underwater, the temporary pipes pass through a hull breach. Secondary pumps clamp to the far wall; piping continues deeper into the ancient creature. A kalo deepspeaker and three kalo sharkhunters (one sharkhunter if the shuttle engaged in the air) attempt to clear impurities in the lines at the pumps. If alerted, they are hidden and have set an ambush. Surface lighting and equipment displays provided low-light in the 35'-ft. cubed chamber.

6. CAYPIN CORRIDORS: Squares within 10-ft. of the pipeline are lit with low-light from readout displays, otherwise corridors are unlit. Two caypin, attracted by the corruption, hunt these corridors. Their appendages and swarms can pass through the small tunnels in the bony walls (6a); the caypin have found additional 10'-ft diameter tunnels connecting the three marked locations (Perception DC 25) and can move under and over the detailed corridors to each spot. The two creatures start at the north and south locations when the PCs enter from 5, with one swarm each deployed in the main corridors (Perception DC 28 to spot).

7. RIB SHAFT: The kalo piping leads into a shaft which links with a circulatory artery connected to the egg sac.

8. CIRCULATORY ARTERY: The plug driven into the egg sack membrane at an arterial valve must be removed to clear the infection, which requires entry into the egg sac either through the plug itself or by squeezing between the membrane wall and the plug wall; both routes act as valve plug traps.

9. EGG SAC: The infection manifests as a huge water elemental whose slam and vortex attacks deal demon fever (DC 18), increasing its CR to 8. A DC 20 Life Science or Medicine check clears the infection and causes the valve to begin a 12-hour healing process once the plug is removed (DC 15 Disable Device or Engineering).

VALVE PLUG TRAP | CR 7 | XP 3,200

TYPE technological; **PERCEPTION** DC 30; **DISABLE** (Valve Plug) Engineering DC 25 (disable compression valve); **DISABLE** (Membrane) Medicine DC 25 (synthesize muscle relaxant)
TRIGGER location; **DURATION** 3 rounds; **RESET** automatic;
EFFECT +19 attack (3d10 B) and **REFLEX** DC 18 to avoid being trapped for 2 additional rounds of attacks; multiple targets (all targets passing through the valve/membrane)

CONCLUSION: Returning the stolen shuttle earns a reward of 9,000 credits; keeping it puts a price on the PCs' heads. Five mk II frag grenades can be recovered from the minefield. Salvaged pumping equipment and miscellaneous gear can be sold for 4,000 credits. Skellsara rewards the PCs with augmentations (cybernetic, biotech, or personal upgrades) developed from bioship DNA of up to 8th level; she credits each PC 2,500 credits towards these upgrades. The living hill accepts the PCs as guardians, allowing them to explore further into its reaches; many adventures await within.

WATER ELEMENTAL GRAFT

TRAITS Water subtype, swim speed of 90 feet

ABILITIES Drench, vortex, water mastery

LANGUAGES Aquan.

DRENCH (EX) A water elemental's touch douses Large or smaller nonmagical flames. The outsider can dispel magical fire it touches as per dispel magic (caster level = the elemental's CR).

WATER MASTERY (EX) Waterborne creatures take a -1 penalty to attack and damage rolls against a water elemental.



THE LAST GROVE OF GRASKA

An adventure for four to five level 10 PCs.

Crustecar legend speaks of the wild places of their lost homeworld. The lush forests of Graska were said to be the demesne of the fey, but the connection to the First World was destroyed along with the rest of planet in a system-wide catastrophe. Now a wandering asteray has discovered an ancient First World portal in the debris. She seeks to reestablish the severed connection but cannot perform the requisite story-ritual on her own.

THE WRECK: This adventure begins in medias res. Read the following text aloud:

You awaken covered in fire-suppressant foam. Sparks sputter from your ship's instrument panels, and groans rise from your battered crewmates. The last thing you remember is the blare of the proximity alert, then someone shouting, "Brace for impact!"

The asteray used her holographic image ability to lure her victims into the debris orbits the Grove. Throughout the adventure she hides within holographic images, watching the PCs' progress. With a DC 33 Perception check, PCs may notice subtle changes to the landscape as the asteray discards one holographic hiding place in favor of the next.

The asteray telepathically narrates the story of the PCs' adventures (the italicized text at the start of each area description). A DC 23 Culture check identifies the structure of the tale. Crustecar fairytales begin with danger to a clan homestead. A hero sets out into an enchanted forest, overcomes dangerous obstacles, and at last gains audience with the fairy queen KA-Ilfam Mab. The asteray has set herself up as the ritual's stand-in for this powerful fey, though the imposture may be her undoing.

1. ENCHANTED WOOD: *And so they set out into the enchanted the wood. Despite the dangers, they knew that only the magic of KA-Ilfam Mab could restore their ruined home.*

A forest of unfamiliar plant species covers the asteroid. Graska's vegetable life was lost during the cataclysm, and a DC 28 Life Science check reveals that samples could be worth upwards of 6,000 credits to the right buyer. Jagged cliffs rise 100 ft. or more towards the stars, segmenting the asteroid into narrow valleys. Following any of these towards the Grove's edge reveals a steep drop-off into space. The magic of the First World portal in Area 7 creates its own gravity and atmosphere. PCs foolish enough to jump from the edge of the Grove descend far enough to get a view of the asteroid (a spherical cone of roots and stone) before hitting vacuum.

Even a cursory Engineering check reveals that the PCs' ship is too damaged to fly. Worse, the asteray has stolen the party's spare parts and UPB reserves. As the voice suggests, they will have to brave the Grove.

2. FALLEN "HEROES": *Other heroes had braved the forest before. But they were not pure of heart.*

A pair of botanists heard rumor of a scientific curiosity in the region, and so came looking for the Last Gove. Their crash left them too weakened to perform the asteray's ritual, and they slowly succumbed to their injuries. Rising as **marooned ones**, the undead now hope to lure other explorers into an early grave.

The undead converted their wrecked ship's crew cabin into a death trap. Luring PCs inside with audio recordings of their logs, the botanists hide within, ready to slam the cabin doors behind an unwary PC (no save). They do not attack, instead commiserating with their victim. The cabin is rigged to vent its atmosphere. After three rounds the air becomes unbreathable, and trapped PCs watch their armor's oxygen reserves slowly drop.

Treat the cabin doors as **airlock doors and the walls of the damaged bulkhead as concrete walls**. When the trapped PC escapes, the botanists attack in a rage.

3. STRANGE FLOWERS: *The clan elders had always warned: "Hold your nose in foreign glades. There are strange flowers there. To smell their perfume is to lose your way."*

Shards of the botanists' hydroponics module litter this valley. A DC 23 Culture check identifies the wreckage, while a DC 23 Mysticism check reveals that enchantment has taken root among the plant life. Ambient First World magic causes these normally sessile species to sway unnaturally, and several harmless flowers puff pollen towards any movement (DC 11 Fortitude save vs. minor allergic reactions). Tangled vines hang across the valley's exit. Like the rest of the valley's vegetation, these ksaric creepers have been mystically infused to grow exceptionally fast.

4. A FEY IN NEED: *They soon lost their way. If ever they wished to find the courts of KA-Ilfam Mab, they would have to befriend the forest spirits.*

When the PCs arrive the asteray's holograms block passage into Area 6. They disappear once the PCs return here from Area 5.

An unlucky **hesper** named Hotspur has been pressganged into the asteray's fairytale. Clinging to his bonded reactor like a life raft after his own wreck, the hesper found himself spat out of the Drift and into the Breakers' Yard. Hotspur's reactor has been superficially altered to resemble a tree, though the 30 ft. tall unit is still obviously technological.

KSARIK CREEPER TRAP | CR 9 | XP 4,800

TYPE magical; **PERCEPTION** DC 32; **DISABLE** Survival DC 24

(gently move aside triggering tendrils) or Life Science DC 27 (neutralize blinding spores) **TRIGGER** location; **Initial EFFECT** vines +20 (4d12+4 B); **Blinded** 1d4 rounds; **WILL** DC 15 negates; multiple targets (all targets within a 20-ft. radius). **SECONDARY EFFECT** One round after triggering, three fully formed and hostile **ksariks** sprout and grow out of the writhing vines.

Reciting his assigned lines like a bad actor, Hotspur whispers his true story sotto voce, "Will you not help a poor dryad? Wicked creatures have stolen my heartwood. Fetch it back for me? (Seriously guys. I'll explain everything. She gets moody if you don't play along though.)"

Scavenger slimes in Area 5 guard Hotspur's fuel rods. If the PCs retrieve this "heartwood," the fey loudly proclaims that the party have earned his "blessing" (a roll on the mutating touch table). He also explains the asteray's plans, then begs for passage off the asteroid.

5. BEASTS OF THE WILD WOOD: *As they walked, they heard a howling. Beasts of the wild wood were close, and their teeth were large and sharp.*

Two **scavenger slimes** nest 50 ft. up the valley walls. A bridge of kit-bashed scrap spans the gap between cliffs. The slimes hiding inside have adapted to the steep environment by incorporating climbing spikes into their shells, gaining a 20 ft. climb speed. It takes a DC 23 Perception check to find Hotspur's missing fuel rods in the nest.

6. FE-5 Q-FUM: *They had faced many dangers, yet there was one last test. If the heroes wished to claim the magic seeds, they would have to defeat their guardian.*

Crustecar fairytales usually end with firebreathing giants. This one is no exception. Waiting long years for a suitable guardian, the asteray's patience paid off when an **AHAV** (Ram MODEL) emerged from the Drift. Without relevant orders from its commanding officers, the robotic titan has grown to believe the asteray's story. It thinks of itself as a fearsome giant and has accepted its duty to guard the entrance to KA-Ilfam Mab's court.

7. FALSE QUEEN

You have proven yourselves brave and true. You are worthy to stand in the courts of KA-Ilfam Mab. Come and claim your reward.

Carvings on the tunnel walls depict crustecar engaged in the same sorts of challenges the PCs just endured. The passage descends deep into the asteroid before opening into a chamber of carved stone. The asteray waits there, floating before a pair of leaf-shaped double doors. At her feet is a large pile of "magic seeds": 31,075 UPBs, as well as any spare parts and UPBs stolen from the PCs.

The asteray is not hostile. She claims to be KA-Ilfam Mab and urges the PCs to take their reward and so end the story-ritual. When they do the leaf doors swing open, and a new voice issues forth: "Little fey! You have used a name that does not belong to you. Why don't we allow your playthings to render judgement? Mortals? What shall be the fate of this creature?"

The voice belongs to the real KA-Ilfam Mab. The powerful entity carries out whatever sentence the PCs pass upon their tormentor. Regardless of the party's verdict, they will return to their ship to find it supernaturally restored. All of the asteray's stolen UPBs are theirs to keep.



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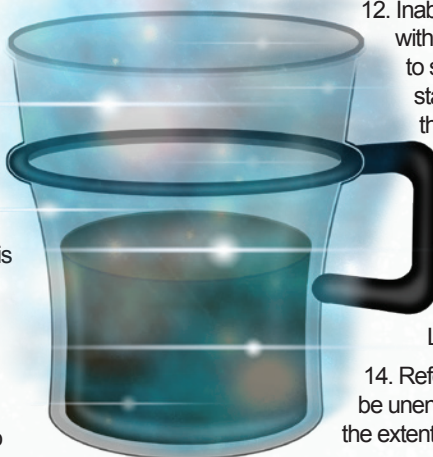
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IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN A SIMPLE SALVAGE JOB.

Board the derelict, grab the goods, and get back in time for dinner. Easy as lying. Only problem is that the ship isn't exactly derelict. It's just unconscious, and suffering from one whale of an allergic reaction. It seems that a hold full of exotic tea leaves doesn't much agree with a bioship's digestion.

Assuming that the PCs can survive the antibodies, digestive enzymes, and short temper of a living spacecraft, they'll still need to figure out what happened to the cargo. The big lug jettisoned the offending containers before it passed out, meaning that a king's ransom worth of loot is somewhere on the surface of a very hostile planet. Even worse, there are other salvage boats inbound, and they don't look to be the sharing type.

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