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SURVEY REPORT ON WRAITH SECTOR

Sixty years ago, a coalition of planetary governments organized and funded an expedition to survey the anomalous region of space known as Wraith Sector. Officially, the survey team succeeded in their mission and produced a final report—a report that never saw public release. Unofficially, however, only five members of the expedition returned as living creatures, and three of those survivors experienced perpetual nightmares for the rest of their lives. Their findings remain classified to this day.

Fortunately, thanks to a few rogue technomancers, we have obtained parts of the survey report of Wraith Sector and provided them here for you. If you still choose to venture into this region of accursed space,

this information may offer you a slim chance of getting out with your sanity and soul intact.

OVERVIEW

Wraith Sector is a region of space you can use in your science fantasy campaigns, either as something the characters learn about in advance or something they wander into during their adventures. The exact dimensions of this sector are up to the GM, but in general a starship should require at least several days (or longer) to cross this expanse without traveling by hyperspace.

Travel through Wraith Sector involves many different threats and challenges, including hazardous



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navigation, haunted vessels, strange radiation, mysterious communications, and a seemingly endless supply of undead (e.g., marooned ones, wraiths, void zombies, and others). Several of these difficulties are described below.

NAVIGATIONAL HAZARDS

Whether due to the release of powerful arcane energies or an incursion of Three-Fold Space into normal space, navigation through this sector poses a challenge even to the most skilled pilots.

The eddies and currents of energy and matter in this region change often, quickly rendering star charts inaccurate. Increase by 5 the DC of any piloting check to navigate within Wraith Sector. If you fail the check by 8 or more, you aren't aware your calculations were wrong, which adds 1d4 days to your journey. Finally, regardless of how many times you visit this sector, your navigational familiarity with it cannot go higher than "seldom visited."

Although no sane person would do so, it is possible to jump into Wraith Sector via hyperspace. Leaving this sector via hyperspace, however, becomes more challenging. Powerful currents of negative energy in this region can damage a hyperspace engine attempting such a jump. There is a 25% chance that a hyperspace jump out of the sector causes the jump engines to malfunction and fail, and a 10% chance the jump leaves those engines wrecked instead. In either case, the jump fails to occur.

COMMUNICATION ANOMALIES

Ships venturing close to Wraith Sector are bombarded with overlapping comm signals and a constant wash of disruptive static. Dozens, if not hundreds, of ghostly voices plead for help or rescue in every known language—and some languages that are long dead.

After an hour spent listening to comm chatter, a DC 15 Culture check reveals that some of the vessels named in the mayday messages were thought destroyed or lost for a century or longer. A successful DC 15 Engineering or Computers check allows a character to isolate specific signals to hear a complete message.

The presence of so many overlapping signals interferes with ship-to-ship communication. Any attempt to correctly decipher a message transmitted by another ship inside Wraith Sector requires a successful DC 20 Engineering or Computers check. If this check fails by 10 or more, the message received undergoes alteration in some sinister way, as if some outside

intelligence is playing cruel tricks, such as subverting the sender's original intent.

In addition, periodic bursts of exotic radiation sometimes erupt throughout this region of space. There is a flat 10% chance each hour of such an event, in which case the electronic and radio communications on board any ship within Wraith Sector cease functioning for 4d12 x 10 minutes.

Finally, a DC 20 Mysticism check reveals that a few of the messages being transmitted contain a powerful, mind-affecting curse that threatens all those listening. The haunting voices insinuate themselves into the consciousness of the victim, pushing them to madness if the ship does not attempt to render assistance to those voices. Any creature that hears this curse-laden message must save against the Curse of the Damned.

CURSE OF THE DAMNED

Type curse; Save Will DC 20

Effect If the vessel on which the victim resides does not move towards the Wraith Sector of space, the afflicted creature has a 20% chance each hour of becoming confused. When struck by this effect, the victim adds +10 to the percentile roll for the confusion effects. This effect also occurs if the vessels attempts to leave the sector.

Cure The curse fades once the afflicted enters the Wraith Sector, or once 24 hours have elapsed without entering that sector.

STARSHIP COMBAT

A fight between starships within Wraith Sector often becomes a brutal affair that inflicts greater damage than what might occur in regions of normal space. While in this part of space, critical damage occurs whenever a gunnery check results in a natural 18, 19, or 20 on the die and the damage is dealt to the target ship's hull. In addition, for normal hull damage, a starship's Critical Threshold is reduced by 20% (round down). Thus, a ship with a CT of 40 in normal space would have a CT of 32 in this part of space.

When a critical damage effect occurs that strikes the ship's life support system, the result is automatically a malfunction rather than a mere glitch.

OTHER HAZARDS

GHOST SHIPS

Most spacefarers have heard—and told—more than their share of ghost stories. Within Wraith Sector, however, those

stories take on a more lethal aspect. A number of derelict ships within this sector are not only crewed by ghosts, but the ships themselves can become incorporeal.

An incorporeal ship uses the statistics for a standard starship of its size and class, but on his turn the captain can use his action to cause the ship to turn incorporeal. An incorporeal ship is immune to all nonmagical attacks. The incorporeal vessel takes half damage from spells, spell-like effects, and supernatural effects. The ghost ship does, however, suffer full damage from other incorporeal ships and effects, as well as all force effects. Of note, an incorporeal ship cannot harm other normal vessels—its weapons can only damage other incorporeal ships.

A favorite tactic of a ghost ship is to turn incorporeal, approach its prey, and attempt to occupy the same space as the other ship. This allows the crew—incorporeal undead such as ghosts, spectres, and wraiths—to easily board the enemy ship and attack. If the ghost ship is several times larger than its target, it may even attempt to “swallow whole” the enemy ship, engulfing it entirely and then turning solid again. This essentially traps the target vessel inside the ghost ship.

LEECH BARNACLES

Wraith Sector is littered with thousands of Tiny-sized undead parasites known as leech barnacles. These Tiny creatures, each of which resembles a pale red starfish similar to those found in terrestrial waters, crave warmth and life in order to satiate their unending hunger. When a starship or creature passes through a field of the barnacles, one or more Medium-sized swarms of them latch onto the hull and begin draining energy. This has several effects on the ship and its crew.

First, for each day the barnacle swarm remains attached to the hull, the ship’s power core produces a cumulative 20% fewer PCUs than normal. Thus, after five days of leeching, a vessel’s power core can no longer produce sufficient energy to power even a single shipboard system. Each barnacle swarm divides and grows into two fully-grown swarms every 24 hours.

A living crew also suffers deleterious effects from leech barnacles. For every day spent on board a ship plagued by these creatures, each crewmember must make a DC 16 Fortitude save or become fatigued. Thereafter, a fatigued crew member must make a DC 18 Fort save or become exhausted.

Removing leech barnacle swarms from the hull involves its own hazards. Although these creatures possess no inherent attacks, they emanate a 20-foot-radius aura. Any living creature entering or remaining within the aura must succeed at DC 12 Fortitude saving throw or become confused and

sickened. A fully grown barnacle swarm has a KAC of 8, EAC of 11, and 22 hit points, but suffers vulnerability against positive energy. When one dies, it explodes. Any creature within a 10-foot-radius of an exploding barnacle swarm must succeed at a DC 12 Reflex save or take 3d6 piercing damage.

NECROTIC RADIATION

An insidious type of radiation suffuses much of the sector. Necrotic radiation uses the same rules as standard radiation, but unlike standard radiation, this type penetrates ship shielding, standard space suits, and personal armor. Also unlike standard radiation, a creature poisoned by necrotic radiation becomes infected with a contagious disease known as eternal hunger. A victim afflicted by eternal hunger grows pale and gaunt with each passing day no matter how much food they consume. A creature killed by this disease rises one hour later as a mindless void zombie but with the hit points they possessed in life.

ETERNAL HUNGER

Type disease; Save Fortitude DC 15

Track physical; Frequency 1/day

Effect At the impaired state, the victim treats each hour as a day as if it is starving. It is immune to effects that prevent the need for sustenance or that remove starvation.

Cure 2 consecutive saves

OBSIDIAN CLOUDS

An obsidian cloud is an astronomical anomaly that, from a distance, appears like a rip in the fabric of space through which no light shines. In form, it features a dense collection of particles combined with negative energy motes. Most of the time, the cloud drifts along currents and eddies of particles throughout Wraith Sector. When it comes within one hundred miles of a starship, however, the cloud accelerates towards the vessel at a speed of 12 hexes per turn and attempts to engulf its target. An obsidian cloud is difficult to detect by sensors or other instrumentation; detecting one requires a successful DC 25 Computers check.

Once a ship plunges into this anomaly, all lights on board, whether mundane or magical, are suppressed and wink out immediately. Likewise, no spell or effect that produces light works while within the cloud. Darkvision remains unaffected by the ensuing darkness, including that provided by spells or technological equipment. Once the ship exits the cloud, all lights resume normal function.

The obsidian cloud follows the movement of any ship it has engulfed, attempting to keep it contained. Escaping requires the pilot to first succeed at a DC 20 Bluff check to decoy or misdirect the cloud, followed by a DC 25 Piloting check to actually slip free. The GM may allow several different tactics to help divert the cloud's attention or fool it into following the wrong object, such as ejecting an escape pod or jettisoning a load of debris.

Not surprisingly, a number of undead prefer lairing on a ship or other derelict within the lightless environment of an obsidian cloud—especially vampires and wraiths.

RISKS VERSUS REWARDS

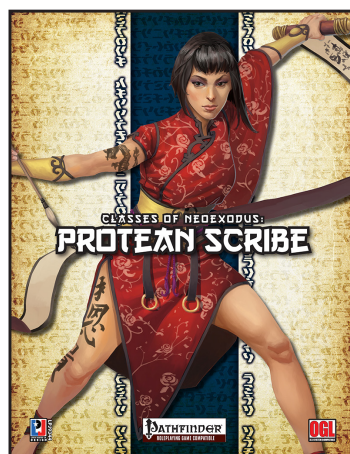
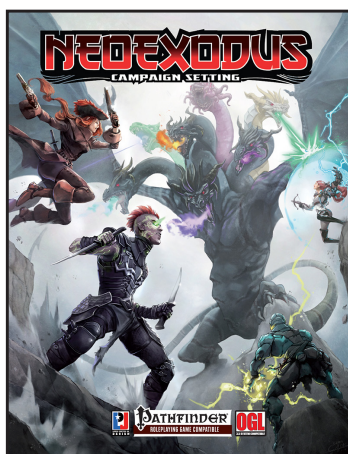
Given the horrors that threaten any ship foolish enough to enter Wraith Sector, one might wonder why anyone would attempt such a voyage. Here are a few possible reasons or adventure hooks for pursuing such a foolhardy course.

- **Salvage & Plunder.** This sector of space is home to hundreds or even thousands of abandoned, dead, or otherwise derelict spaceships. While many of these ships are dangerous, each also represents a potential treasure trove of equipment, lost information, and abandoned wealth.
- **Rescue.** Ghostly cries for help flood the radio waves within this sector. That being said, there are occasional true requests for rescue. Almost every month, another ship finds itself adrift or helpless within this expanse and in need of saving. The characters might attempt rescue of an important diplomat, a royal heir, or a cargo ship loaded with refugees. They might do so for reward, for glory, or because it is the right thing to do.
- **Exploration.** Over two dozen worlds exist within the expanse of the Wraith Sector. Who knows what treasures and wonders await discovery on these planets? Archaeologists, historians, and treasure hunters alike have reasons to undertake missions of exploration into the expanse.

NEOEXODUS

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THE WORLD OF EXODUS NEEDS HEROES...

WILL YOU BE ONE?

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