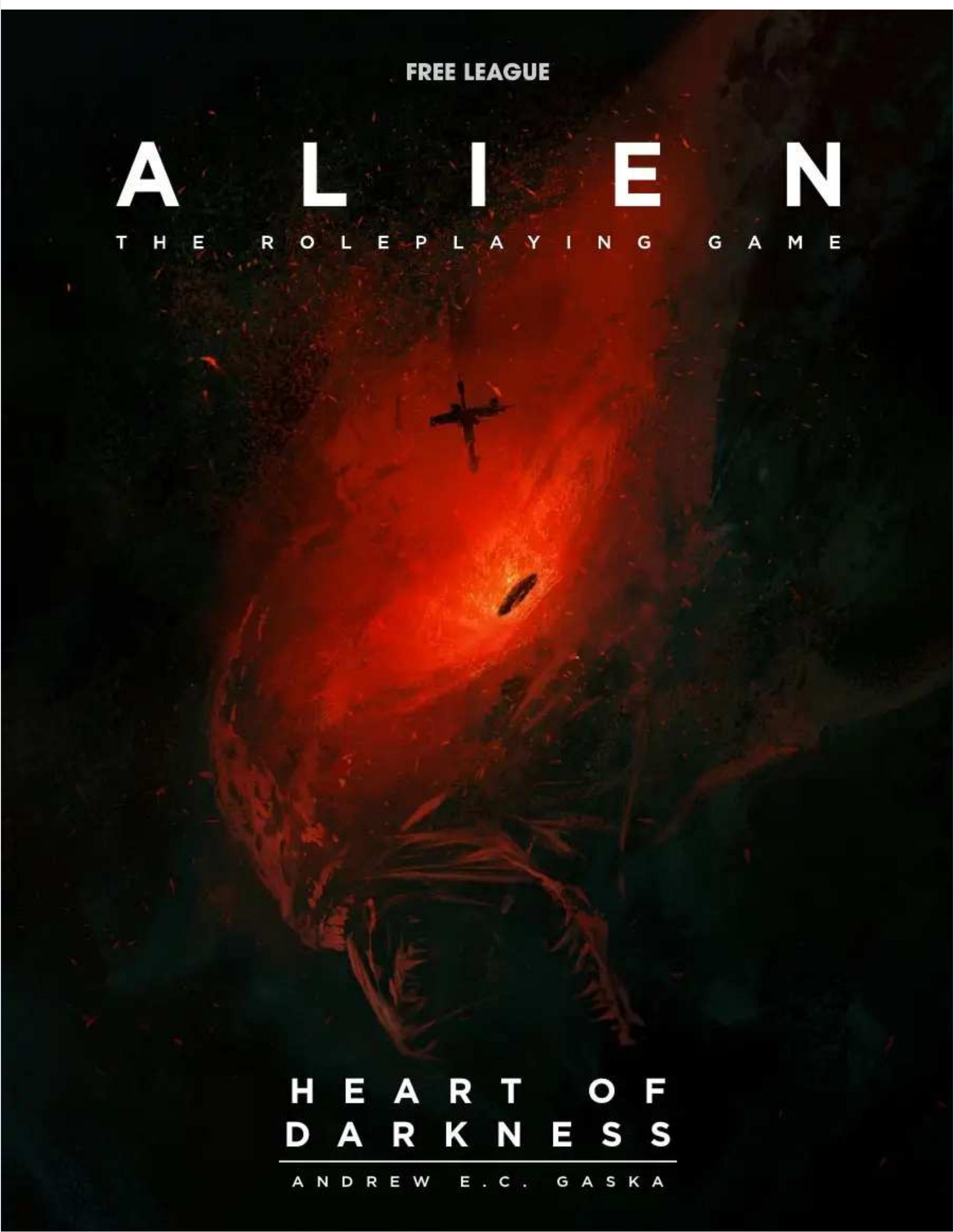


FREE LEAGUE

ALIEN

THE ROLEPLAYING GAME



HEART OF
DARKNESS

ANDREW E.C. GASKA



"We live in the flicker—but darkness was here yesterday."

—JOSEPH CONRAD

INTERFACE 3301 — WEYLAND-YUTANI — FROM NETWORK

COMCON NODE 1010141 — EIJA33477975

MESSAGE BEGINS.

NEW LIFE DISCOVERED. CLASSIFICATION: EXTREMOPHILE. SERVICES REQUIRED.
CONTRACT FOLLOWS.

AWAITING ACKNOWLEDGMENT ■ ■ ■

The company found a new lifeform, and they want you to study it. Their offer's uncharacteristically generous—you catalog this organism, determine how they can use it, and bring it back so they can slap their patent on it. Fairly routine stuff. In exchange, they'll hook you up with a cushy corporate department head position, secure you a book deal, and make sure the institute of your choice gives you tenure. Did I mention the money? There's a lot of it. Simple survey, sample, and analysis job. Seemed too good to be true.

Of course, it is.

They neglected to tell you this alien life was found by a work crew on a lonely space station sitting on the razor edge of a black hole. They also forgot to mention that the station crew is a prison workforce—composed of murderers, thieves, and the robot guards who wrangle them.

This isn't some minor singularity. It's devouring

its sister stars in a cacophony of swirling plasma, gamma rays, and death. Extremophile or not, what the hell can live in all that? Whatever it is, it's got to be different from anything we've encountered before—something strange. Something alien.

Heart of Darkness is a complete Cinematic Scenario for the ALIEN roleplaying game. It requires either the ALIEN RPG core rulebook or the boxed Starter Set to play. In this scenario, players take the roles of an extrasolar science team with a mystery to solve. While it is a stand-alone adventure, *Heart of Darkness* also serves as a conclusion to the Draconis Strain Saga begun in the cinematic scenario *Chariot of the Gods* and continued in *Destroyer of Worlds*. *Heart of Darkness* is designed for 3–5 players plus the Game Mother and is a spiraling descent into soul-crushing madness. Expect it to take at least three sessions to complete.

FOR MOTHER'S EYES ONLY

This entire booklet is solely for the GM, to be read before the game begins. Players should

NOT read the scenario text beforehand to avoid spoiling the horror of what is in store for them.

CHARACTERS

This scenario comes with seven pre-generated characters for the players to choose from—a science team with their corporate wrangler, security guard, and pilot. Weyland-Yutani tapped the Geholgod Institute for the very best science experts in their fields, regardless of nationality. The company has sent them to the *Erebos* trawling platform and energy depot to investigate signs of life where there shouldn't be any—in the swirling plasma streams circling a black hole. Located beyond the recognized Frontier of space, this lonely station sits precariously on the razor edge of an event horizon. Together with the station's small crew and a prison work detail, the team must solve the mysteries of this lifeform and its connection to the black hole before it devours them all.

CHARACTER SHEETS: Filled-in character sheets for the PCs can be found in this boxed set.

Let the players choose who they want to play. Any leftover PCs become NPCs under your control. If any of the PCs should die during the scenario, you can use any other station personnel or prisoners as replacements—including a surprise (see Be the Cat on page 16).

GETTING STARTED: When your players have chosen their starting PCs and familiarized themselves with the character sheets, show them the USCSS *Cetorhina* handout. The PCs are traveling on this FTL plasma tanker-ship when the scenario begins. Read the boxed text entitled “What’s the Story, Mother?” out loud (page 9). Show them the image of the Ablassen Black Hole and lay out the large map of Erebos station. Then give each player their Personal Agenda for Act I to kick off the action.

PERSONAL AGENDAS

Each character has a Personal Agenda for each of the three Acts of the scenario. More so than in previous ALIEN RPG Cinematic scenarios adventures, conflicting agendas play a major role in *Heart of Darkness*. These Agendas are printed on playing cards included in this boxed set. At the start of each Act, give each player their new Agenda for the Act about to start, and tell them not to reveal it to the other players.

EVALUATING AGENDAS: At the end of each Act, collect the Agendas from the players and evaluate them individually. If you feel a player has actively advanced their PC’s Agenda despite significant personal risk or sacrifice, announce this and award them one Story Point (see page 61 of the ALIEN RPG rulebook for more on spending Story Points). Don’t reveal the actual Agendas to the entire group; they should remain hidden until the end of the scenario.

STORY CARDS

Just like *Destroyer of Worlds*, *Heart of Darkness* uses Story Cards. A Story Card is similar to a Personal Agenda, but is handed out to a player when a specific event in the scenario triggers it. The player is not allowed to share the information on the Story Cards with the other players—instead, the player should act in accordance with the Story Card. At the end of each Act, Story Cards are evaluated just like Personal Agendas. If you feel a player has introduced the content of their Story Card into the game in a meaningful way during the Act, the player gains one Story Point, in addition to any Story Point gained from following their Personal Agenda.

MAPS

This boxed set contains a giant fold-out map with floor plans of *Erebos Station*. Show this map to the players when they approach the station (the *Cetorhina*'s ship A.I. provides it). A smaller map also depicts the *Cetorhina* on one side and the *Chelron* on the other. Let the players see only the *Cetorhina* side at the start of the game.

THE GEHOLGOD INSTITUTE

The PC scientists hail from the Geholgod Institute—a prestigious international research institution that focuses on higher scientific principles. A gathering of leading minds from all supernations, Geholgod has a keen interest in both exolife and humanity's possible extraterrestrial origins.

SCENARIO OVERVIEW

The PCs arrive in orbit around the Ablassen Black Hole, ready to catalog a new form of proto-plasmatic organism found living in the accretion disk of the singularity. They are here to be scientists and do science work on *Erebos* plasma trawling rig and platform. They quickly find out they are in for more than they bargained for. Damaged by an apparent meteor strike, *Erebos* station is running silent. The *Cetorhina* is nearly swept up into the black hole, but crashes into the station instead.

ACT I: Investigating *Erebos*, the PCs discover the meteors that hit the station are protoplasmic spores. They have grown fleshy roots and veins, covering the station's walls. The growth spreads, converting the station into a living biomechanical hive. The lifeforms the PCs came here to investigate have infected all energy conduits of the station's machinery, transforming it into the Living Proto-Hive's circulatory system. The PCs must look for survivors and earn the trust of potential allies, obtain the parts needed to attempt repairs on the *Cetorhina*, and discover just what they are up against—the station is crawling with Proto-Xenomorphs and is under control of evolved biomechanoid beings the station's Science Officer Clerke has dubbed the Fulfremmen—derived from

an archaic word meaning "to perfect"—or, the Perfected.

ACT II: The Perfected reveal they intend to release their spores on human colonies, converting entire worlds into Proto-Hives. These beings make the PCs an offer—help them recreate the 26 Draconis Strain for the next step of their evolution and the PCs will be spared. The PCs work for a way to either stop the Perfected or help them find the 26 Draconis Strain in exchange for their lives. Searching for a way to escape *Erebos*, the PCs perform several tasks to determine how to destroy these alien lifeforms. They learn the Living Proto-Hive is fusing the *Cetorhina* and *Erebos* into one, intending to use the tanker's FTL drive to take it to other systems.

ACT III: As the Living Proto-Hive traps the PCs in a maze of vascular tunnels, the station itself is transfigured into a biomechanical behemoth. The PCs and their allies must make their final move against the now-living station and each other as they fulfill their personal agendas. Few avenues of escape present themselves—the surest being the cold embrace of death.

THE 26 DRACONIS SYSTEM

26 Draconis was once a trinary star system composed of two orange giants and one red dwarf. Seventy-five years ago, the ill-fated Cronus mission visited the system's sole habitable planetoid LV-1113, and stranded half the crew there (see the *Chariot of the Gods* Cinematic Scenario).

Soon after, a chain reaction within the red dwarf caused the star to collapse in on itself, forming a black hole. It has since been devouring the other two stars and their planets one by one. Today, the system is just rubble spiraling down the drain.

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: 2b Draconis is considered a stellar anomaly—stars don't just spontaneously collapse, the process takes millennia and is relatively easy to predict. That's not what happened here. The actions of the Cronus crew caused the red dwarf star's cycle to accelerate into a black hole within a few short years. Because of this, the system is considered unstable. Colonial Administration put a travel ban and exploration restrictions on the system. Weyland-Yutani was contracted to exploit 2b Draconis and placed Erebus station in orbit with a conscripted labor force. ■

26 DRACONIS

(ABLASSEN BLACK HOLE, 26A AND B, EREBOS HIGH ENERGY PLASMA TRAWLING PLATFORM AND RECHARGE STATION)

Location	Beyond the Outer Rim, unclaimed space
Coordinates	+14 Spinward, 0 Coreward
Affiliation	Weyland-Yutani
Classification	Former trinary system. Now a black hole and two diminishing orange stars.
Climate (C)	Artificial (station only)
Mean Temperature	18°C (station)
Terrain	Artificial (station only)
Colonies	Erebus Station
Current Population	12 Administrators, 12 Corrections Officers, 99 prisoners, 36 Synthetics, and one cat.
Key Resources	Plasma batteries

EREBOS STATION

Erebos—a place of darkness halfway between earth and hell. Twelve years ago, a company probe flyby cataloged the young singularity, reporting the system's breakdown and its high-energy output. Weyland-Yutani won the exploitation contract from Colonial Administration and set up *Erebos* station to harness the plasma flow in energy trawlers, storing it in vast arrays of battery cells.

A Resurrection-class plasma trawling rig and platform, *Erebos* is a cruciform station composed of

recycled and refurbished starship and refinery parts. *Erebos*'s main sections are broken up into ten decks detailed in Stationside Locations (page 24).

To absorb energy, the station extends its trawling arms into the plasma jet of one of the diminishing stars. The plasma is channeled through an energy distillery and a battery of converters, eventually concentrating and storing the mixture in energy cells for transport back to the Frontier.

LIFE ON THE RIM OF THE ABYSS

Life on the edge of a black hole is neither physically or psychologically safe. After several deaths and an employee revolt, the company had to call in an independent review. Employees there claimed the singularity crushed souls—so now laborers assigned here have none. The station was converted into a prison work site for maximum-security penal workers under the supervision of a company administrative team that is mostly rotated out every six to twelve months. Order is

maintained by a team of android prison guards.

Discovery of the plasmatic lifeforms was accompanied by an uptick in psychological problems on *Erebos* (see NDDS: Terror on the Edge of Space on page 7). By the time the PCs arrive, the station has suffered severe meteor damage and is itself transmorphing into a Living Proto-Hive (page 62). Survivors are spread throughout *Erebos*, grouped into crazed factions who want revenge against each other.

THE ABLASSEN BLACK HOLE

Stumbled upon by a malfunctioning Weyland-Yutani probeship, the black hole in the 26 Draconis system was unceremoniously called Ablassen—"the drain"—by the work crew originally brought in to trawl the accretion disk. While Ablassen itself is a yawning black

nothing—the ignited plasma circling it burns with the orange-red plasma of the stars it consumes. Something about the black hole's energies affect the electro-synaptic signals in the human brain, causing severe depression and psychotic behavior.

"You're saying we get something inside... there's no way it can get out?"

"That's right. No fucking way."

—LT. ELLEN RIPLEY AND
FRANCIS "85" AARON

NDDS: TERROR ON THE EDGE OF SPACE

Proximity to the singularity's immense electro-magnetic fluctuations and insufficient shielding have proven dangerous to the human psyche, triggering an acute psychological effect in mammals known as Neurological Distortion Disorder—or the NDDs for short (page 151 of the core rulebook). The NDDs are also known to occur when someone is exposed to faster than light space travel outside of cryosleep. Here, however, the effects are much more acute.

RULES: On *Erebos*, NDD rolls are made much more frequently than at FTL speeds—typically once per Shift, but you are free to

modify this rate to suit your game. Roll a D6 on the NDD table on page 8 for each PC to see what impact they suffer. For each roll after the first, add a cumulative +1 modifier to the roll. Eventually, everyone will feel the effects of the black hole unraveling their minds. Use the Story Cards included to inform your PCs that they are affected. There are two types of anti-NDD drugs available to the players, that can be found in the Medlab on Deck C (page 32): five doses of a mental relaxant, nicknamed “Chil-X,” that reduces a PC’s accumulated NDD roll bonus

total by 1 point when taken, and two doses of a neural stimulant, nicknamed “NeuroTick,” that removes one NDD effect from a PC.

NEUROLOGICAL DISTORTION DISORDER, ABLASSEN VARIANT

- 5 **NO EFFECT.** Yet.
- 6-7 **PARANOIA.** You become convinced that someone or something on board the ship is out to get you. The effect, which lasts until the PC leaves the system, should be roleplayed.
- 8-9 **EPILEPSY.** You suffer episodes of epileptic seizures that disable you for a Turn. Exactly when in the Shift the seizure occurs is up to the GM.
- 10-11 **OBFUSCATION.** Your memory is clouded—you are very confused or even deluded. Roll D6 on the sub table below. The effect lasts for one Turn (about 5-10 minutes), unless otherwise stated, and should be roleplayed.
- WHO ARE YOU?** You're surrounded by strangers. You no longer recall who the other characters are or if they are friend or foe. You're suspicious of their motives and it will take a lot for you to trust them.
 - WHO AM I?** You have no memory of who you are. You know where you are and what you are doing, but you have no clue who you are or why you're doing what you're doing. You must question everything!
 - SHHH! THE VOICES ARE TALKING.** Voices in your head are making a lot of sense, telling you that you've got things all wrong about the people around you. For the duration of the affliction, you are convinced that your Buddy is really your Rival, and your Rival is actually your Buddy.
 - NOTHING IS CERTAIN ANYMORE!** You're terribly confused. Are these people your friends or enemies? The things on the station are friendly, aren't they? There's nothing dangerous on the station, it's all just a big misunderstanding. The others are behaving irrationally—it must be the damned NDDs! You have to stop them all from hurting themselves.
 - I KNOW WHO I AM!** You believe yourself to be one of the other player characters (roll randomly or the GM may choose). The other is an imposter, and you must convince the others that this is the case.
 - HOW DO YOU DO IT?** Tying shoes is hard. You've forgotten everything you've learned about your specialty—i.e. your highest rated skill. Rolls for that skill are made without any Base Dice added for your skill level.
- 12+ **PSYCHOSIS.** You've lost your shit. You immediately attack the nearest person or creature, friendly or not. You won't stop until you or the target is Broken. The effect lasts for one Turn. Every friendly character who witnesses your rampage must make an immediate Panic Roll.

ASTEROID 1113B

A chunk of LV-1113, this crumbling asteroid is less than 1,200 meters in size and disintegrating fast. If Erebus Station doesn't make a course correction

before the end of Act III, 1113B will collide with the station before plummeting into the black hole (page 57).

THE SITUATION

WHAT'S THE STORY, MOTHER?

You're an international science team, hand-picked by Weyland-Yutani to investigate a new form of life. It's a survey, sample, and assay job—but one where you were offered book deals, benefits, university tenure, and lots of money to accept. You were hastily contracted and transported past the Outer Rim aboard an understaffed plasma trawler called Cetorhina. After a three-month cryo-sleep trip, you've arrived at your destination.

The viewport shields in the galley slide open. A swirling whirlpool of pitch black greets you, set against a starry backdrop. The ravenous mass gulps torrents of plasma from two unravelling orange globes that were once dwarf stars. This is 26 Draconis—a restricted system that's home to the Ablassen Black Hole. The powerful singularity is consuming both the planets in its path and the system's two remaining stars. Whatever life they found is out there, in all that.

You're headed for Erebos—an orbiting Weyland-Yutani plasma-trawling platform and recharge station. You assemble on the observation deck for hot coffee (the only good thing on the ship) and the breathtaking view. The ship's Bishop-type android—Grey—quietly places an activated Modular Computing Device on the deck. "From the company, I'm told," he whispers.

The module sputters to life, projecting a holographic antique desk before the viewport. A familiar looking gentleman peers out from behind the monolithic furniture—he resembles the ship's android, Grey, only a bit older and a bit more tired. The man looks right through you and smiles.

"You look confused—probably wondering why a synthetic is sitting behind a mahogany

desk. Understandable. I'm not a Bishop android—I created them. I'm Michael Bishop, company director of special projects. I'm recording this August 7th, the year of our lord, 2185—the morning of your departure from Gateway Station."

Mr. Bishop's hologram stands before the viewport, gesturing towards the black hole. "Magnificent, isn't it? Living in that swirling plasma soup is a Xeno-extremophile they're calling the Hessdaleñ Lights. The lights fit all the criteria for life, and they may even be intelligent. Erebos observed them swarming around a significant meteoric mass in the plasma field, so we gave the green light to anchor the meteor to the station for study. Erebos's science officer—ah, name is Clerke—will brief you more on that when you arrive. Now, a couple of safety concerns—

First, Erebos is a W-Y prison work site—99 conscripted convicts. Warden Douglas Stykes and his android officers maintain order—just don't wander off alone.

Second, that black hole puts out electro-magnetic energies that can scramble your brain—like staying awake during FTL, but much worse. If you feel depressed or paranoid, talk to Dr. Lark. If you start feeling anything extreme, report to the station's medical officer—Webb—he's got meds to help.

Now about these lights—how smart are they? Is there a pattern to their flashes—are they trying to communicate? What exploitable properties do they exhibit?" Bishop shakes his head and laughs.

"Think of all we can learn from them! I only wish I could be there with you. Good luck!"

*"How far would you go to get what you came all this way for—your answers?
What would you be willing to do?"*

"Anything and everything."

"Worth drinking to, I'd imagine."

—DAVID B AND DR. CHARLES HOLLOWAY

WHAT THE HELL IS REALLY GOING ON?

2183: In the ALIEN RPG Cinematic Scenario, *Chariot of the Gods*, the USCSS Cronus was discovered adrift 72 years after leaving the 26 Draconis System.

FLASHBACK, 2111: When the Cronus was here, the red star that would become the Ablassen Black Hole had not yet collapsed. Making planetfall on LV-1113, the system's only habitable world, the Cronus science team investigated ancient ruins left behind by alien Engineers—beings that the fringe scientific community claims are responsible for creating humanity (page 284 of the ALIEN RPG core rulebook).

In the process, they inadvertently primed long-dormant Engineer biotechnology—and were infected by Neomorphic motes (page 294 of the core rulebook). A hasty cure for the motes was devised from the Engineers' black goo—a formula that became known as the 26 Draconis Strain. The strain arrested Neomorphic growth in a human body, but had a high probability of transforming those inoculated into inhuman Abominations.

THE PERFECTED: When the Cronus itself was endangered, the ship's company liaison made the decision to jettison the science/lifeboat (the *Cheiron*) and abandon half the crew on LV-1113. The Engineer technology activated, crushing the system's red star and collapsing it in on itself as the Cronus escaped. Those left behind became trapped in the accretion disc when the fledgling singularity tore the planetoid apart, eventually mutating into a new hyper-intelligent form of xenobiological life called Fulfremmen or "the Perfected." Before one of the Cronus crew—Chief Technician Aly Lugar—completed her transformation into a Perfected, she put the 26

Draconis infected Third Officer Lavigne to sleep and closed off that section of the ship to protect the young officer.

CURRENT STATUS: Flash forward to now, 2185: The Hessdalen Lights are proto-plasmatic lifeforms evolved from microscopic drops of the 26 Draconis Strain. The "meteoric mass" that Erebus anchored to is the science/lifeboat, *Cheiron*. Both are now aboard the station—and are the heart (and blood) of the problem. Through whatever processes were unlocked on LV-1113, the *Cheiron* is now a Living Proto-Hive (page 62). What's worse, pulling the *Cheiron* out of its orbit altered the trajectory of the meteor swarm that accompanied it—Proto-Hive Nodules that slammed into the station and began to grow.

The Hessdalen Lights have infested *Erebus*'s energy core, becoming the life force of the station. The reactor now thrums in rhythm with the pulsing frequencies of the black hole—like the beat of an alien heart. Biomechanical tendrils grew out of the *Cheiron* and meteoroids, tapping into *Erebus*'s various functions and transforming the station into a living biomechanical beast. The station has grown its own antibodies—multistage Proto-Xenomorphs who hunt down all life aboard (page 64).

The abandoned Cronus crew aboard the lifeboat had changed, evolved into Perfected. That's the ultimate secret of the 26 Draconis Strain—it doesn't just turn people into Abominations—it evolves its survivors into higher beings. The Fulfremmen tried to escape the system via the FTL lifeboat, but a semi-rational mind amongst them destroyed its engines, lest the strain be spread to countless other worlds.

THE END GOAL: Released from their perpetual imprisonment in the black hole's accretion disc, the Fulfremmen began transforming the station into a Living Proto-Hive, awaiting an FTL ship's arrival. The Fulfremmen intend to fuse the *Cetorhina* to the station and use its FTL engines to crash them into a highly populated core world—where they can multiply themselves and spread Proto-Hive Nodules across the middle heavens.

Science Officer Clerke and Medical Officer Webb realized what was going on, and tried to both recreate the 26 Draconis Strain and devise a necrotic virus to kill the Living Hive. Sadly, Webb was driven insane and Clerke was metamorphosed into a monster before they could complete their work in Medlab. Before his death, Clerke left clues to defeat the Perfected across the station (page 28).

Now, the station itself is in chaos. Fires rage across decks. As the station transforms, the staff and conscripts are also becoming monsters. The few survivors are mostly split into two feuding groups—staff and corrections androids led by Warden Stykes and the prison work crew led by inmate WY082609—Flo Wicks. Stykes and Wicks have a history that has them more concerned with killing each other than surviving this hell (see below).

PROJECT IRONFISH: To complicate matters, Erebus was involved in a black op called Project Ironfish before the disaster. The Ablassen Black Hole draws in the same electro-magnetic signals used for Network transmissions, making it an ideal antenna dish for spying on the nearby UPP. United American Allied Command contracted Weyland-Yutani to collect the data via broad spectrum receivers disguised as Hawking radiation sensors. Through Ironfish, the UAAC has learned about fleet deployments and several MSS black projects during the Frontier War.

Warden Stykes, Science Officer Clerke, and the DA/UT/UR mainframes were the only ones aboard the station aware of Ironfish. The data is stored in the DA/UT/UR Supercomputers on Deck H and MU/TH/UR's mission recorder on Deck C.

In the arriving science team, potential PCs Colonel-Doctor Drabikowski and Professor Navarre are both after the Ironfish data, and a UPP Destroyer lurks nearby. A Space Operating Forces unit led by Sub-Lieutenant Pflüger (page 23) stands ready to extract Drabikowski and Navarre upon retrieval of the data (see the events S.O.S. and The "Rescue" on pages 55 and 58).

INTERNAL CONFLICTS

Warden Stykes and Inmate Flo Wicks have a history dating back to when Erebus station was new. Stykes was the first Colonial Marshal assigned to Erebus and Wicks was the station manager. After her shuttle was stuck in a decaying orbit around the black hole for eight hours, Wicks returned changed... somehow different. She blew up a plasma tank and set fire to the station.

Stykes vented the airlocks, which put out

the fires. He claimed Wicks killed the entire crew—67 roughnecks—but in reality, he killed them when he vented the entire station to space. Stykes arrested Wicks and retired. The company made the station a private prison work site and hired Stykes as warden. He requested Wicks spend her life sentence on Erebus so that he could keep an eye on her—and keep her from revealing the truth to anyone who'd actually listen.

USCSS CETORHINA

MODEL DG-23B RORQUAL M-CLASS
COMMERCIAL PLASMA HARVESTER/TANKER

The *Cetorhina* is a relatively new ship (less than a decade old) of the Rorqual class. Designed to collect plasma energies from stars and comets, the vessel's bow is a yawning-open ribbed tunnel wrapped in high energy absorption coils. When taking in plasma, the coils' collector panels glow a harsh blue-white. The ship is essentially one-half energy collector, one quarter plasma storage, and one quarter engine. Collected plasma is channeled directly into the engines, providing a higher efficiency rating than other vessels in its weight class. The *Cetorhina* has undergone extensive modification to her displacement drives, giving her an FTL rating of 6. The ship and her captain have made the run from 26 Draconis to Earth and back eight times in the last six years.

USCSS CETORHINA

MANUFACTURER: Kellard and Howdeshell

CREW: 2-8

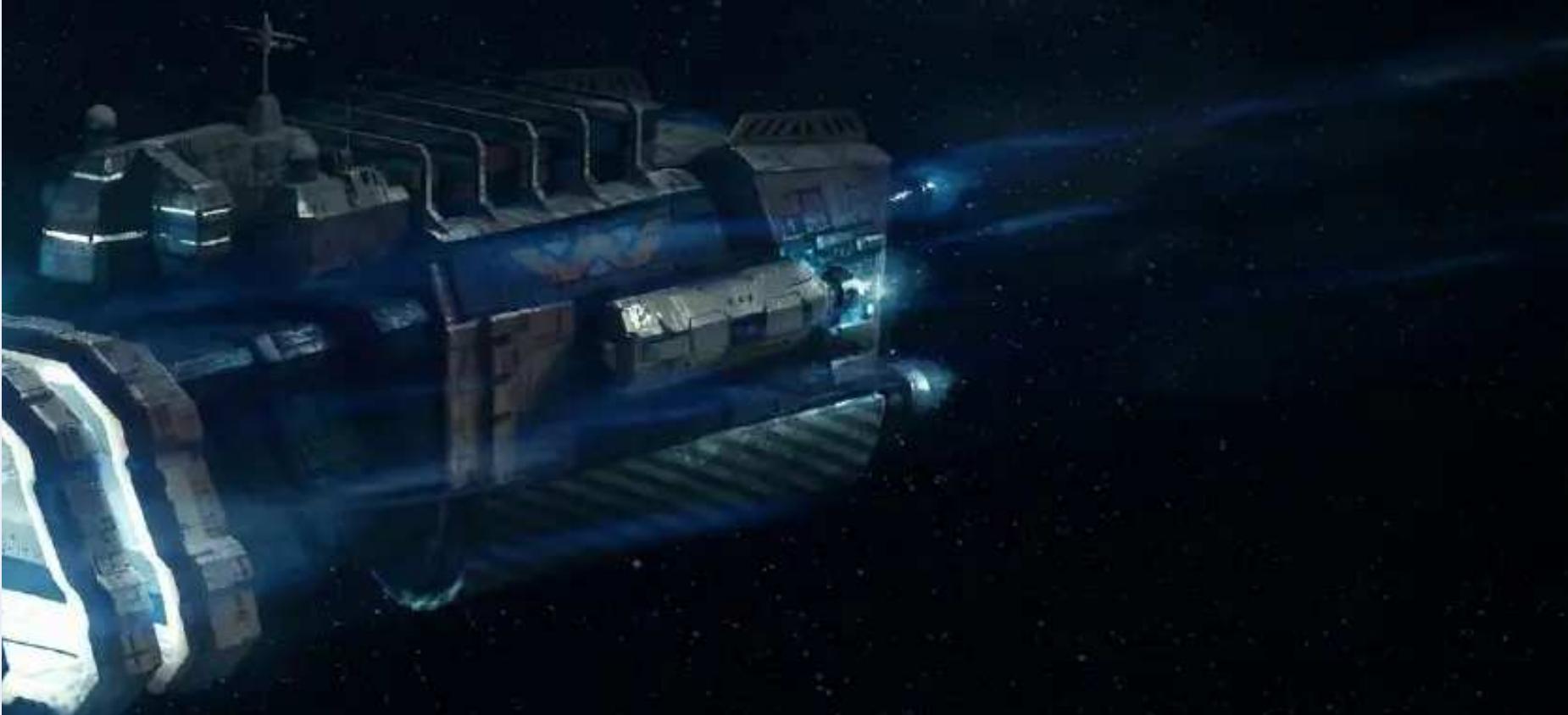
AI: MU/TH/UR 6500

LENGTH: 280m



A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: Captain Lugar has equipped the *Cetorhina* with a surprise for any pirates-jury rigged plasma charged orbital mines. *Cetorhina*'s internal cargo bays are plasma storage tanks. The flatbed area behind the conning tower is an external cargo area for magnetized storage containers. The salvage crane is used to load these containers. ■

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: As most of the action takes place on Erebus, there are no detailed maps of the Cetorhina. A cross section of the plasma trawler is included in the handouts, labeling Decks A-E and what sections are located there. In addition, the ship has four external airlocks on Deck B-fore (with an extendable docking umbilical), aft, port, and starboard. ■



FTL RATING: 6

SIGNATURE: +1

THRUSTERS: +2

HULL: 9

ARMOR RATING: 5

INTERNAL MODULES:

- ▶ Artificial Intelligence I
- ▶ Air Scrubbers II
- ▶ Cargo Bay IV × 4
(Plasma Tankage)
- ▶ Cyro Deck II
- ▶ Salvage Crane III
- ▶ Docking Umbilical II
- ▶ EEV II × 4
- ▶ Galley II
- ▶ Medlab II

ARMAMENTS:

- ▶ Orbital Mines × 2
(four mines total)

UPGRADES:

- ▶ Boosted Displacement Drives × 6
- ▶ Overpowered Thrusters × 2
- ▶ External Cargo Bay IV

THE PERFECTED PLAN

The Perfected want only one thing—to be perfect. Unfortunately, they cannot achieve this without the original 26 Draconis Strain—there has been too much genetic drift in the Living Proto-Hive. They intend to spread themselves across the stars, seeking the

formula as they work to “perfect” entire worlds. To that end, they will mate *Erebos* station to *Cetorhina*’s FTL drive and use it to enter populated systems, eject Living Proto-Hive Nodules, and move on, creating a Proto-Hive network that spans the stars.

BEATING PERFECTION

There are several ways to defeat the Perfected—some friendly, some not so much. In order for the PCs to consider any of these options, they must first discern the goals of the Perfected through dialogue, action, and reaction.

GIVE ‘EM WHAT THEY WANT: In a sealed forgotten chamber on the *Cheiron*, there is a frozen specimen with pure 26 Draconis in their veins—Cronus Third Officer Lavigne (page 50). The Perfected are unable to detect living things in cryosleep, so do not realize he is hidden aboard their own vessel.

Either through taking samples from Lavigne or by finishing what Science Officer Clerke and Medical Officer Webb started in the Medlab on Deck C, the PCs can reconstruct the 26 Draconis Strain and offer the Fulfremmen the serum. If the PCs do this, no Proto-Xenomorph on *Erebos* will harm them unless the PCs strike first—but *Erebos* will go FTL and begin infecting colonies.

CUT OUT THEIR HEART: A little less friendly, this method involves destroying or otherwise removing the *Heart of Darkness* itself—the Cronus’ lifeboat—*Cheiron*. This can be done by cutting off the main tendrils and blowing the thing into space.

POISON THEM: Either flood the station with toxic gasses from the Wastebin on Deck H or perfect the necrotic virus Clerke and Webb were working on and begin administering it to the Living Proto-Hive. If the PCs want to buy themselves some time, they can also “overfeed” the Living Hive to slow it down.

DISABLE CETORHINA’S FTL: Without the trawler’s FTL Drive, *Erebos* cannot leave the system. Of course, this will screw over the PCs as well as piss off the Perfected.

DESTROY THE STATION: Either find a way to overload the Reactor Rods in the Central Hub on Deck H, the Thermal Plasma Sinks on Deck I, or push the goddamn thing into the black hole before the Perfected perfect themselves.

THE GREAT AUNT: One of the Perfected is former Chief Technician Aly Lugar—the great aunt of the *Cetorhina*’s Captain Aloÿsia Lugar. If the PCs can use that familiar connection to convince the Perfected elder Lugar to help them, they may be able to defeat the enemy from within. Perfected Aly haunts the Operations Center on Deck B. See the event *The Help* on page 58.

EQUIPMENT

In addition to the personal gear the science team has brought with them, the *Cetorhina* has a supply of the following: four P-5000 Power Loaders, four Spacesub ASSO-400 Harpoon Grappling Guns, 200 meters of line, three Watatsumi DV-303 Bolt Guns (four shots each), four

electrical tool kits and med kits, three maintenance jacks and cutting torches (with D3 POWER each), eight rebreather masks (with D3 AIR each), six Rexim RXF-M5 EVA pistols (one reload each), and six ECO2 All-World Systems Survival Suits with 6 AIR each (page 74).

KICKING OFF THE ACTION

The *Cetorhina* approaches *Erebos* station, greeted only by her automated docking beacon signal. The station has external damage to a few decks—it looks like it took some meteor hits (but there is no evidence of the Living Hive visible). *Erebos* is mostly dark... mostly. As the *Cetorhina* approaches, the lights on the Main Concourse come alive—a docking port extends at Terminal O2 of Deck G.

The PCs can orbit the station, spacewalk to it, or extend an umbilical to one of its docking ports. Whether they decide to dock the *Cetorhina* at *Erebos* or keep their distance, disaster strikes! An alarm goes off—the black hole's gravitational pull has momentarily jumped, causing a storm of meteors to pummel the ship and trawling station. The stabilizing thrusters on *Erebos* fire to steady her—but the *Cetorhina* is caught in a gravity shear.

The Harvester lurches, loses control and careens towards the black hole. If Captain Lugar is an NPC, the sudden acceleration causes her to smack her head on a console, temporarily knocking her out cold. While Grey can help the PCs take control of the ship, he is incapable of taking control of the situation himself.

The PCs must assume the piloting and navigation stations and make a PILOTING roll. No matter if they fail or succeed, the *Cetorhina* is pulled toward *Erebos*, and a crash is unavoidable. If the roll succeeds, the pilot can choose one of three possible crash locations—see the chart on page 16. If the roll fails, the crash location is rolled randomly, and the crash is so violent that all PCs take 2 points of falling damage (mitigated by MOBILITY).

STATION'S THRUSTERS

Fluctuating gravity will cause more gravity shears to occur throughout the entire scenario. Each time, *Erebos*'s thrusters will automatically fire to keep her on balance. It's important to mention to the PCs that the

station's thrusters fire periodically to keep it in its proper orbit. Controlling those thrusters later can help the PCs survive (see the event Gravitic Shear and the Finale on pages 55 and 59, respectively).

CRASH LOCATION CHART

D6	DECK	LOCATION	CONDITION AND POINT OF ENTRY
1-2	E	Supplies and Quarters	The deck is exposed to space. Compression Suit required until the docking umbilical is secured. Station can be entered via the Chute on this deck, but will need to be cleared of wreckage before <i>Cetorhina's</i> docking umbilical can be connected to it. Will take cutting tools and one Turn of work to clear.
3-4	F	Port Side Cell Block	This area is engulfed in Intensity 12 fire. The PCs can avoid the blaze in this area by connecting their docking umbilical to Junction F8 on the map (HEAVY MACHINERY roll). Unless station airlocks are opened and fire snuffed out, the temperature in the <i>Cetorhina's</i> docking umbilical here will reach 55° Celsius. Characters without Compression Suits who operate here must make a STAMINA roll each Turn, or be unable to perform any form of hard work. The fires will begin to overtax <i>Cetorhina's</i> life support, raising internal room temperature by five degrees every six hours.
5-6	H	Trawling Arm 01	The <i>Cetorhina</i> is wedged in the now-twisted Plasma Collector MAW 01. EVA entry required via Airlock 21 on the map. A Compression Suit is required.

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: Wherever they crash, the *Cetorhina* will become entwined in the station's superstructure and slowly be invaded by the Living Proto-Hive. When the PCs first board the station, there is no obvious evidence of the Living Hive aboard *Erebos* itself—it's all behind the walls (see Act I, page 51). ■

BE THE CAT

Erebos station has a mascot—a resident rat-stalking, overweight, tuxedo cat named Adrien. If you allow it, a player whose PC has been killed can pick the cat as their next role. A unique experience, playing the cat is completely optional. Adrien has his own agenda that might not always sync up with those of the other PCs—and in fact might even get some of them killed.



ASSESS THE CETORHINA

Once they have crashed, the PCs may want to examine the meteorite damage done to the *Cetorhina*. They won't know yet, but these meteoroids are Living Proto-Hive Nodes (page 63). Several have struck the ship, embedding themselves in the hull (number and location are up to you, but there should always be at least one the PCs missed). The Nodes will quietly root their way through the deck and into *Cetorhina*'s systems, eventually bonding with the ship's FTL drive.

The PCs' agendas should cause them to want to explore the station, find out what happened, and/or rescue the survivors. Or not. Even if they decide not to follow their agendas, they will need to repair the ship to leave. The repairs will reveal living tendrils beginning to grow through the ship's power conduits and machinery. The Living Proto-Hive Nodes are preparing the ship to become an extension of the Living Proto-Hive, melding it with *Erebos* (see Escape on page 57 for breaking free in Act III).

The *Cetorhina* is mangled, twisted, and locked in *Erebos*'s superstructure. PCs do not have everything they need to free the ship, and will have to get some or all of the equipment and parts here from various areas on the station. Unless he has become a PC, Grey will not leave the ship—it's his duty to see to repairs.

POWER CELLS: The crash flash-drained the ship's batteries, causing them to oxidize

and corrode (the Living Proto-Hive is responsible). Replacement energy cells (one-meter-tall barrels with harness straps, Weight 3) can be found in Terminal O1 and the Lower Tower, or the PCs can repair (HEAVY MACHINERY Roll) and fire up the plasma distillery on Trawling Arm O1 to recharge them (pages 40, 44, and 41). The ship needs at least three cells for engine ignition. It will take one Turn to reinstall a cell on the ship.

THRUSTER COMPRESSION COIL: It's a nothing part, but without this coil the *Cetorhina*'s main thrusters won't work. The PCs will need to remove a working Compression Coil from one of the station's external thrusters, found near the Visitor Docking Port on Deck D, the Comms Tower on Deck H, and the Boiler Room on Deck J (pages 34, 44 and 46). It takes one Turn to remove or install the Compression Coil.

CUTTING TOOLS: Cumbersome power tools (weight 3) and/or EVA Pods will be needed to cut the *Cetorhina* free from the superstructure. Tools can be found in the Machine Room and Plasma Relay Stations (page 41) and if used will take one Shift to cut the ship free. EVA Pods are equipped with similar tool arms that can do the job in half the time. There are over a dozen of these pods marked on the map, located throughout the station.

NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

GREY



HYPERDyne SYSTEMS MODEL 341-G SERVICE ANDROID, USCSS CETORHINA, UA

FULL NAME: First Mate Grey 88-80

AGE: 12 (appears 44)

PERSONALITY: Docile

A service android, Grey was designed to take orders—he simply cannot act on his own recognition. Lugar's been saving for a processor upgrade that will allow him more freedom of thought. Grey, however, is perfectly content to just lend a hand. His philosophy—you can't miss a thing if you never had it in the first place.

STRENGTH 7, AGILITY 5, WITS 5, EMPATHY 3

HEALTH: 7

SKILLS: Heavy Machinery 4, Comtech 4, Observation 2, Medical Aid 2

TALENTS: Bodyguard

SIGNATURE ITEM: Red neckerchief

GEAR: P-DAT, boltgun, med kit, six bottles of bug juice.

PERSONAL AGENDA: Serve humankind.

WEBB



SCIENCE AND MEDICAL OFFICER, EREBOS STATION, 3WE

FULL NAME: Doctor Asher Webb, Md.

AGE: 51

PERSONALITY: Cranky

When Clerke warned the warden about the Living Proto-Hive, Webb was skeptical. Then the monsters came. Webb started designing a virus to kill them, and then lost his shit—a victim of the NDDs. Suffering from obfuscation (page 8) brought on by stress and the black hole, he's been running around in his lab coat without his pants ever since.

STRENGTH 2, AGILITY 4, WITS 4, EMPATHY 4

HEALTH: 2

SKILLS: Observation 3, Close Combat 2, Survival 3, Medical Aid 4

TALENTS: Field Surgeon

SIGNATURE ITEM: Pants (or lack thereof)

GEAR: Scalpel, three doses each of X-Stims, Naproleve, and Neversleep

PERSONAL AGENDA: Get his memory back, help the others complete the virus, and find some pants.

THE CAT



TUXEDO CAT, STATION MASCOT, EREBOS STATION

FULL NAME: Adrien

AGE: 13

PERSONALITY: Glutinous

Adrien is an accomplished tracker—he stalks, but always from a safe distance. He hates being alone, so will howl when he can't find anyone—even when he was just with them two seconds ago. Picked up, he'll want to sit on a human's shoulders—wrapping himself around the back of their neck. He gives his humans love bites when it's feeding time. If they take too long, he'll make the bite a good one.

STRENGTH 1, AGILITY 5, WITS 2, EMPATHY 2

HEALTH: 1

SKILLS: Close Combat 3, Mobility 4,

Observation 3, Manipulation 4

TALENTS: Stealthy

SIGNATURE ITEM: Crusty butt

GEAR: Implanted PDT

PERSONAL AGENDA: Eat, sleep, and get the humans to give him all the attention.

CLAWS AND FANGS: The cat attacks with claws and teeth, no bonus and Damage 1.

NIMBLE: Cats tend to land on their feet. When falling, they take half the usual falling damage (page 108 of the core rulebook).

SLINKY: Cats can slip through where others cannot. Unless an airlock is involved, a cat can skitter under the floor plates or through tubes and vents to get to another area with a successful MOBILITY roll.

PURR: A purring cat can calm one's nerves. Once per Turn, the cat can use the MANIPULATION skill to reduce the STRESS LEVEL of another PC within SHORT range. For each \oplus rolled, their STRESS LEVEL is reduced by one extra step (in addition to the default one step). You cannot use this on yourself.

HOBBS



CHIEF COOK, EREBOS STATION, UA

FULL NAME: John Hobbs

AGE: 51

PERSONALITY: Crude

An ex-con, Hobbs served his sentence here—his culinary skills securing him favors from the Warden. The day he was released, Stykes hired him back as his personal cook. Hobbs was surprised that the salary offer was decent, so he took it. The black hole doesn't bother Hobbs. In fact, he finds it relaxing.

STRENGTH 5, AGILITY 4, WITS 3, EMPATHY 2

HEALTH: 5

SKILLS: Heavy Machinery 4, Mobility 3,

Stamina 3, Survival 2

TALENT: Watchful

SIGNATURE ITEM: Meat cleaver

GEAR: Chicken livers for Adrien, can of Aspen for himself.

PERSONAL AGENDA: Murder monsters and steal the cat's affections from Crash.

STYKES



WARDEN, EREBOS STATION, UA

FULL NAME: Douglas "Stykes"

AGE: 59

PERSONALITY: Narcissist

When *Erebos* station was new, he was Colonial Marshal and Wicks was Station Manager. She lost her shit and blew up the plasma tanks. Stykes vented the atmosphere and snuffed the fires. 67 Roughnecks were killed—not by the explosion, but because Stykes' hero-move blew them all into space. He framed Wicks. The company made the station a private prison worksite and made Stykes warden. He requested Wicks spend her life sentence on *Erebos* so that he could keep an eye on her. Wicks led a prisoner revolt just as *Erebos* was overrun with Protomorphs. Now, Stykes is more interested in winning his war against Wicks than saving any lives. He has all the station's passcodes memorized. Along with Clerke, Stykes knows about Project Ironfish (page 11).

STRENGTH 4, AGILITY 4, WITS 4, EMPATHY 2

HEALTH: 4

SKILLS: Close Combat 2, Ranged Combat 3, Mobility 1, Observation 2, Manipulation 2, Command 2

TALENTS: Personal Safety

SIGNATURE ITEM: Insulated rubber gloves

GEAR: Kevlar vest, Weyland ES-4 Pistol, ES-7 Supernova Dual-Action Shockgun (page 74), two G2 Electroshtock Grenades.

PERSONAL AGENDA: Keep Wicks under his thumb, take back the station.

CRASH

WEYLAND-YUTANI DAVIS MODEL S TYPE F
CORPORATE CORRECTIONS DRONE, EREBOS STATION.FULL NAME: Corrections Officer Davis
• 404-4 "Crash Test Davy"

AGE: 49

PERSONALITY: Curious

Crash would be a just another automaton devoid of personality like the other corrections androids—if Stykes hadn't wanted an android bodyguard. Crash was augmented with a 3GO/1d personality upgrade meant for more sophisticated models. It crashes his synapses now and then, forcing him to reboot—but he's evolved because of it. He feels alive.

STRENGTH 7, AGILITY 2, WITS 2, EMPATHY 1

HEALTH: 7

SKILLS: Ranged Combat 3, Observation 2, Command 3, Comtech 2

TALENTS: Bodyguard

SIGNATURE ITEM: A bag of cat treats for Adrien.

GEAR: U4C civilian projectile launcher, kevlar vest, stun baton, six tear gas grenades.

PERSONAL AGENDA: Return the prisoners to their cells; ensure the safety of civilians and staff aboard the station. Feed the cat.

OUTDATED ANDROID: In an exceptionally emotional situation, roll a Stress die. If the result is a 1, Crash is forced to shut down and reboot, a process that takes the next Round to complete.

WY844528



CONVICTED MULTIPLE MURDERER, EREBOS STATION

FULL NAME: Brut "Cecil" Amor

AGE: 52

PERSONALITY: Demure

Cecil sees himself as a victim of unfortunate circumstances—it's not his fault everyone else is an asshole in need of killing. His massive bulk and menacing appeal belie his true refined nature. He considers himself an intellectual—sometimes he even reads an entire novel in only one month. Though capable of leading a prisoner faction himself, he doesn't want the burden of leadership.

STRENGTH 5, AGILITY 4, WITS 3, EMPATHY 2

HEALTH: 5

SKILLS: Close Combat 4, Ranged Combat 5, Mobility 3

TALENTS: Menacing

SIGNATURE ITEM: Copy of *Moby Dick* from the prison book cart.

GEAR: Weyland Flammenmacher 3 Heavy Incinerator Unit (page 72), toothbrush shiv (knife).

PERSONAL AGENDA: Revenge stories are Cecil's favorite. He's backed Wick's play to see how this one turns out.

WY082609



PRISON GANG LEADER, CONVICTED ARSONIST, EREBOS STATION

FULL NAME: Flo "Candlestick Maker" Wicks

AGE: 65

PERSONALITY: Psychotic

A decade ago, Wicks was *Erebos*'s station manager. After her shuttle was stuck in a decaying orbit around the black hole for eleven hours, Wicks returned changed... different. She ignited a plasma tank and set fire to the station (see Stykes' bio). She says the black hole told her to do it. Accused of killing 67 workers, Flo was given a life sentence. She got stuck serving it on *Erebos*—thanks to Stykes. She knows she didn't kill anyone, and that bastard Stykes is the devil himself. She's going to make him pay.

STRENGTH 5, AGILITY 3, WITS 2, EMPATHY 4

HEALTH: 5

SKILLS: Close Combat 3, Heavy Machinery 3, Manipulation 2, Command 4

TALENTS: Merciless

SIGNATURE ITEM: Bloody handkerchief

GEAR: Lighter, moonshine flask

PERSONAL AGENDA: Destroy any means of escape on the station. Finish what she started—burn all of *Erebos*—and shove Stykes head first into the black hole.

WY972313



CONVICTED ORGANIZED CRIME, EREBOS STATION

FULL NAME: Tommy "Mr." Man

AGE: 28

PERSONALITY: Cocky

A computer slicer formerly working for the Yakuza, Tommy has multiple convictions related to

organized crime operations within the Three World Empire. Weyland-Yutani originally bought his prison sentence with the intent of using Tommy's skills against their competitors, but when he stole from the company instead, they threw him into lock-up here.

STRENGTH 3, AGILITY 3, WITS 5, EMPATHY 3

HEALTH: 3

SKILLS: Close Combat 3, Mobility 3, Comtech 4, Observation 2,

TALENTS: Hothead

SIGNATURE ITEM: Mess hall napkin with the station's MU/TH/UR and DA/UT/UR access codes scrawled on it.

GEAR: Two stun batons.

PERSONAL AGENDA: Tommy wants out of here. There's \$100 million unmarked W-Y dollars waiting for him in a storage bay on Anchorpoint—\$10 million of that's for the asshole who gets him out of here.

PFÜGER



UPP SOF COMMANDO, SVV SNOVA TRAKHNUL

FULL NAME: Sub-Lieutenant C'ng Pfüger

AGE: 28

PERSONALITY: Annoyed

When she comes into play, Pfüger's team has just been murdered by monsters—all to save a traitor to the People and an MSS keeper who couldn't get the job done on his own. She can only hope the Ironfish data is worth it.

STRENGTH 5, AGILITY 4, WITS 3, EMPATHY 2

HEALTH: 5

SKILLS: Close Combat 4, Ranged Combat 4, Mobility 2, Stamina 1, Survival 1

TALENTS: Zero-G Training

SIGNATURE ITEM: Kill marks scratched on her helmet.

GEAR: AK104 Suit Gun (page 73), CC5 Compression Suit, six grenades, combat knife.

PERSONAL AGENDA: Retrieve the Ironfish data (page 11). Extract anyone she deems useful to the People.

CORRECTIONS ANDROIDS

WEYLAND-YUTANI DAVIS MODEL S TYPE-E SECURITY DRONE

These synthetic "officers" are repurposed Security Drones—the next step up from cheap Working Joes. Corrections Androids have a rudimentary personality that is normally augmented by their connection to a computer mainframe. With that connection corrupted on *Erebos* by the Proto-Hive, they can only perform limited pre-programmed actions.

STRENGTH 7, AGILITY 2, WITS 1, EMPATHY 1

HEALTH: 7

SKILLS: Ranged Combat 2, Observation 1, Comtech 1

TALENT: Pack Mule

GEAR: Kevlar vest, stun baton, Weyland ES-7 Shockgun (page 74), two tear gas grenades

GEAR: Weyland Flammenmacher 3 Heavy Incinerator Unit (page 72), toothbrush shiv (knife).

PERSONAL AGENDA: Revenge stories are Cecil's favorite. He's backed Wick's play to see how this one turns out.

CONSCRIPTED CONVICTS

The prison workforce on *Erebos* has been a primed reactor ready to blow for far too long—these convicts finally went nuclear. Wick's warned them monsters lived in the black hole, and she was damn right—so they rallied behind her to take the station.

STRENGTH 4, AGILITY 3, WITS 2, EMPATHY 3

HEALTH: 4

SKILLS: Close Combat 3, Heavy Machinery 1, Stamina 2, Manipulation 2

TALENT: Killer

GEAR: Two shivs or an ES-7 Shockgun (page 74), one dose of Arcturian Sweet Dreams.

GEAR: Lighter, moonshine flask

PERSONAL AGENDA: Destroy any means of escape on the station. Finish what she started—burn all of *Erebos*—and shove Stykes head first into the black hole.

STATION SIDE LOCATIONS

Lights are out all over *Erebos*, but the station is far from dead. Unidentified clanging noises echo somewhere in the labyrinth of corridors that make up the place. The reactor hums

sporadically, slowly growing rhythmic and strong, and the station's hull groans as machinery shifts and is replaced with Living Proto-Hive (see the boxed text on the next page).

THE LIVING PROTO-HIVE

Infected with the protoplasmic Hessdalen Lights (page 61) *Erebos* station is rapidly being converted into a Living Proto-Hive. Similar in appearance to the smooth-sculpted and ribbed free-forms of a Xenomorph XX121 hive, the Living Proto-Hive is a biomechanical honeycombed organism that supports a wide variety of protomorphic lifeforms.

Fleshy black veins and tendons grow inside the station's walls, transmogrifying metal supports into skeletal structures and power lines into arteries designed to pump plasmatic energies. Eventually, the station itself will become a monster of its own. For more on the Living Proto-Hive and its protomorphic offspring, see the addendum on page 62.

EREBOS STATION

ASTROMETRICS OBSERVATORY



OPERATIONS

HEALTH AND WELLNESS CENTER

RECEPTION AND SCIENCES

FOOD AND SUPPLY

CORRECTIONS MODULES
MAIN CONCOURSE

FACTORY COMPLEX

1 KM



THE BOILER ROOM


EREBOS 01
 PLASMA TRAWLING STATION
CREW COMPLIMENT

STAFF: 12 Administration

LABOR: 99 Prisoners

SECURITY: 12 Corrections Officers

36 Synthetics

01 Cat



USCSS CETORHINA

LOWER TOWER

THE BOILER ROOM

CONDITIONS INSIDE EREBOS

- ▶ **GRAVITY:** Parts of *Erebos* station are gravity free, as is space. Characters in Zero-G need to make MOBILITY checks to move effectively, and may suffer penalties due to the compression suit they are wearing. A failed roll means they are floundering and will bump into walls or other structures. If they are outside *Erebos*, they may float away to die in deep space, unless secured to the base by a safety cable.
 - ▶ **SPACE-WORKAROUND:** There are many obstacles on the station—but there are also many airlocks. PCs may need to go outside to circumvent things. Anyone outside the station is bombarded by Strong radiation (one Rad per Turn) from the black hole (below).
 - ▶ **RADIATION ZONES:** Any human or android
- that enters a zone with strong radiation must make a Sickness Roll against Virulence 6 or become tainted by the Hessdalen Lights (page 61), becoming an Abomination (page 69) within one Shift. If the radiation is weak, the roll is made against Virulence 4.
- ▶ **EVOLUTION:** *Erebos* station becomes less and less machine and more monster as the scenario progresses. Check your Act descriptions for the state of the Living Proto-Hive growth overtaking the station.
 - ▶ **PLASMA FIRE:** The port side of Decks F, G, and H are all ablaze with an Intensity 12 plasma fire. Venting any of these areas to space via airlock override (HEAVY MACHINERY or COMTECH roll) will snuff out the fire there.

DECK A: ASTROMETRIC OBSERVATORY

A watchtower added to the original station years after it was built, the Astrometric Observatory is perched atop *Erebos*.

SCIENCE STATION: A five-meter square compartment filled with an array of radiological monitoring equipment, the room is currently a wreck. Half-eaten emergency rations and sour smelling clothes are bundled into a nest—it looks like someone (Science Officer Clerke) was living here in squalor for weeks.

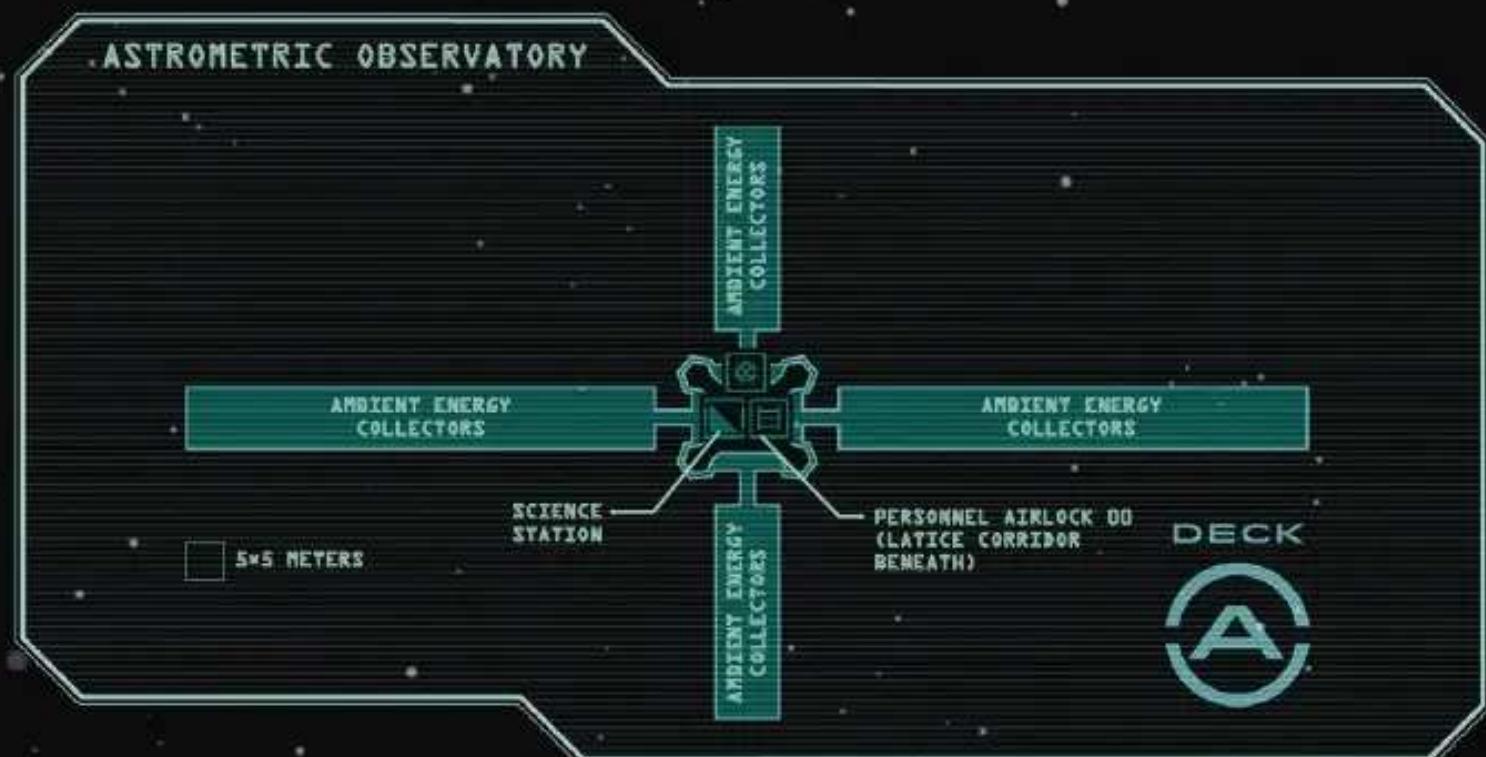
- ▶ **AMBIENT ENERGY COLLECTORS:** The *Cetorhina*'s batteries can be connected to these external ten-meter-long panels for recharging.
- ▶ **STORM SHIELDS:** The room is dark—the storm shields are closed. One of them is caught in a cycle, skipping open again a few inches each time it tries to lock. Opening them reveals a 360-degree view of space, dominated by the horrific splendor of the black hole and its plasma feeding frenzy—but also something more (see Viewports).
- ▶ **VIEWSHIPS:** Once the storm shields are open, the viewports reveal a secret—scrawled in

phosphorus paint across the viewports are ancient hieroglyphics—some with corresponding English translations. Anyone with Geholgod training will recognize the pictograms from Star Teacher artifacts discovered on Arcturus. For the message, see Clerke's Clues on page 28.

- ▶ **SENSOR TERMINAL:** This multi-monitored terminal is tied directly into *Erebos*'s sensor arrays, recording the gravitational waves generated by the black hole as chirping songs. It also relays encrypted audio transmissions drawn to the black hole, sending that data directly to MU/TH/UR on Deck C. It can only be retrieved at her interface terminal (see Ironfish, page 11).

LATTICE CORRIDOR, PERSONNEL AIRLOCK 00: Exposed to the vacuum of space, this ten-meter-tall tower of metal bars connects the Astrometric Observatory's ventral airlock to Operations. One must spacewalk through the lattice to travel between the two. Someone has been using the Astrometric Observatory's airlock as a bathroom.

[STATION SIDE LOCATIONS]



THE CHUTE, PERSONNEL AIRLOCKS, AND JUNCTIONS RANDOM CHART

There are no lifts on *Erebos* station. There are many airlocks and junctions with ladders throughout, but most vertical transportation is routed through a centralized zero-gravity Chute. The Chute traverses the vertical length of the station from Deck B to Deck J.

EMERGENCY: Every airlock and every 20 meters of chute has its own set of emergency

doors and control panels—so if a hull breach occurs in these areas, atmospheric loss can be isolated. Someone just has to hit the switch to cut the compartment off.

When the PCs are utilizing these areas, you can roll on the chart below at any time you feel it is appropriate or simply pick from the options to determine what makes the most sense for the current situation.

D6 OBSTACLE

- 1 **OXYGEN FIRE.** This zone is filled with Intensity 7 fire caused by a damaged life support line. Adjacent zones are filled with smoke (OBSERVATION -2). The fire can be extinguished if the zone's emergency doors are sealed, and oxygen flow is cut (one Turn of work and a successful HEAVY MACHINERY roll).
- 2 **IMPASSIBLE WRECKAGE.** Will take cutting tools and one Turn to clear, otherwise another route must be found. Explosives will cause explosive decompression (see Vacuum on page 107 of the core rulebook or page 73 of the Starter Set rulebook).
- 3 **COLD AND DARKNESS.** Power is out in this zone, as is life support. The temperature is -20 degrees Celsius, the air is stale. The zone is otherwise clear.
- 4 **FLICKERING LIGHTS.** If a PC is epileptic due to the NDDs, an episode is automatically triggered by the strobing lights (see the NDD chart on page 8). Otherwise, all clear.
- 5 **FLESHY TENDRILS.** Veins of Living Proto-Hive cover the walls in this Zone. If the PCs keep moving, nothing occurs. If they stop to linger, one of the tendrils will automatically grab a random PC's limbs. The grasp is weak and does no damage but will increase STRESS LEVEL by +1 for everyone present. The tendril has no armor and will immediately retreat if met with any resistance.
- 6 **SPORE ATTACK.** This zone has been completely converted into a bypass for the Living Proto-Hive. Spore polyps blemish the fleshly walls like acne. Anyone not actively looking will trigger the spores (page 63). One PASSIVE Deacon may be lurking here as well (Dealer's Choice).

CLERKE'S CLUES

Throughout all locations, notes and clues have been left by Clerke—the station science officer who began classifying the Hess-dalen Lights. Clerke is long dead—killed by Stykes in the MU/TH/UR station while he was mutating into an Abomination (page 69). The now torched creature sits in MU/TH/UR, identified only by Clerke's half-melted plastic ID card (page 32). Listed below, Clerke's Clues along with any of Clerke's Reports (see page 29 and handout) can be found in the following areas:

ASTROMETRIC OBSERVATORY (DECK A):

Mentioned on page 26, some of the Engineer hieroglyphs scrawled over the viewports in phosphorus paint have translations under them—Engineer warnings that “Humankind must be obliterated.” and “Do not allow perfection.” Also written there in German is “Border Bombers?”

MEDLAB (DECK C): Dr. Webb and Science Officer Clerke had already begun work on reconstructing the 26 Draconis Strain. Partial virus cell cultures can be found with notes on disk. The PCs can try to continue the work. Clerke and Webb's notes indicate they needed living cell cultures from a Proto-Xenomorph to complete the serum, and had slipped out to hunt down a Proto-Xenomorph (see the event **Catch of the Day** on page 54). With the living cells and a Shift of work, they will also be able to develop a virus that will kill the Living Proto-Hive (page 34).

MU/TH/UR (DECK C): Booted up, MU/TH/UR can supply the PCs with as many of Clerke's Reports (page 29) as you desire. MU/TH/UR can also report that Clerke attempted to access restricted company files, and she denied him. He expressed dissatisfaction with her performance, and moved his work to the classified DA/UT/UR computers instead. Later, Clerke was attempting to override Operations from MU/TH/UR's access terminal and set *Erebos* to collide with Asteroid 1113B. When the Warden's security lockouts made that impossible, he attempted to send the station into the black hole.

DA/UT/URS (DECK H): Located in the Comms Tower (page 44), the DA/UT/UR super-computers are expensive hardware that are running something called Project Ironfish on *Erebos* (page 11). Clerke hijacked these machines, having 01 dig up buried Weyland-Yutani files on the Cronus mission, and tasking 02 to decode signals emanating from the black hole. Any of Clerke's Reports can also be accessed here.

COMPUTER TERMINALS (ALL DECKS): Computer terminals are located on every deck, right off the Chute (page 27). Many of the machines sing a chirping “song” derived from the black hole signal (see DA/UT/UR 02 on page 44). Clerke also filed a dozen reports at various terminals around the station. The data cannot be accessed remotely—the PCs must go to a terminal to retrieve data. See the handout Clerke's Reports.

[STATION SIDE LOCATIONS]

CLERKE'S REPORTS

These reports are available for the players to find on computer terminals in a variety of locations. Most provide information that can help the PCs understand what's going on. Feed the players whatever info you want from these logs individually whenever

someone accesses a terminal. Most of these entries are complete. Report eight was deleted and is irretrievable. Reports nine and ten are corrupted and can each be partially recompiled with a successful COMTECH roll (see the handout entitled Clerke's Reports).

HANDOUT: CLERKE'S REPORTS

85:09:12:22:02 HOURS, S.O. CLERKE: METEORIC MASS FROM HESSDALEN PLASMA FIELD BROUGHT ABOARD. HEADING TO TERMINAL 01 TO EXAMINE NOW. ■

85:09:13:07:00 HOURS: 'PRELIMINARY' SURVEY COMPLETE. IRREGULAR OBJECT, 40 METERS LONG BY 22 METERS DIAMETER. COMPOSED OF BOTH ORGANIC AND INORGANIC RESIDUE. PETRIFIED CARCASS? SECRETED SHELL OR NEST, GENERATED BY THE HESSDALEN LIGHTS? ■

85:09:14:01:00 HOURS: WARDEN ORDERED CORE SAMPLE OF OBJECT. DRILLED THROUGH ROCK AND BIOMATTER-FLESH? STRUCK TEMPERED METALLIC MASS. HUMANMADE. A SHIP? ■

85:09:14:04:14 HOURS: UNIVERSAL POWER PORT LOCATED, WILL ATTEMPT TO RECHARGE OBJECT. ■

85:09:14:06:02 HOURS: STATION-WIDE BLACKOUT WHEN OBJECT WAS CONNECTED TO POWER. STYKES LOST HIS SHIT. WICKS' CONSCRIPTS PLAYED NICE—NO RIOT. POWER RESTORED. QUERIYING OBJECT'S EMERGENCY BEACON FOR TRANSPONDER ID PULSE. ■

85:09:14:09:38 HOURS: BEACON ACTIVATED. OBJECT IDENTIFIED AS CHEIRON-SCIENCE BOAT ATTACHED TO THE USCSS CRONUS. ABANDONED IN SYSTEM 72 YEARS AGO. MU/TH/UR SAYS CRONUS MISSION CLASSIFIED. DA/UT/UR LOOKING DEEPER. ■

85:09:15:13:21 HOURS. MU/TH/UR LOCKED ME OUT OF CRONUS NETWORK FILES. DID DOWNLOAD LOGS FROM CHEIRONE [REDACTED] BLACK HOLE SINGING? [REDACTED] DA/UT/UR TO DECRYPT. ■

85:09:15:20:00 HOURS: <<FILE DELETED>> ■

85:09:16:17:12 HOURS: - [REDACTED] 72 YEARS [REDACTED] CHRONED ENCOUNTERED [REDACTED] ENGINEER STELLAR-FIRMING FACILITY. [REDACTED] AFFECTED [REDACTED] RED STAR, COLLAPSING [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] LOGS [REDACTED] ERASED. [REDACTED] STILL [REDACTED] 26 DRACED [REDACTED] STRAIN IN [REDACTED] CHEIRON [REDACTED] LAVIGNE IS KEY. [REDACTED] HIEROGLYPH NOTEBOOK ALSO THERE. [REDACTED] COMPARE WITH [REDACTED] OWN FINDINGS. ■

85:09:18:04:46 HOURS: -CHEIREN REACTOR ONLINE. IT'S PULSE [REDACTED] RHYTHM [REDACTED] LIKE [REDACTED] HEARTBEAT[REDACTED] SYNC STATION. LIGHTS [REDACTED] SEEING CHANGING [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] CRENNUS CREW [REDACTED] ABOMINATE[REDACTED] [REDACTED] EVOLVED BEINGS [REDACTED] PERFECTED [REDACTED] NEED FTL [REDACTED] SPREAD INFECTION [REDACTED] HOW CAN WE KILL [REDACTED] CAN'T LET THEM ESCAPE [REDACTED] BLACK HOLE[REDACTED] <<ERROR>> ■

[HEART OF DARKNESS]

DECK B: OPERATIONS CENTER

The cognitive center of *Erebos*, Operations has no indication of Living Proto-Hive on it. Red emergency lighting clashes with the pale blue light from the center's many screen readouts. Any diagnostic run here will show that immense amounts of station power are being diverted to the Starboard Hangar Deck on Deck G. This is to feed the *Heart of Darkness*, the *Cheiron*. A single Fulfremmen haunts this deck, looking for humans to observe.

CONTROL: The computer terminals here are making chirping sounds and running numbers when the PCs arrive (see DA/UT/UR 02 on page 44). All functions of the station can be monitored and activated here—thrusters, sensors, communications, plasma-collectors, and more. Only MU/TH/UR does not respond. Your choice of Clerke's reports can be found here (page 29).

► **STATION LOGS:** Records here indicate the discovery of the Hessdalen Lights and the large organic object from the plasma stream. They decided to bring the damn thing aboard about five weeks ago. After that, they started having power failures and accidents. See Clerke's Reports for more information (page 29). Beyond that, most of the logs are wiped.

► **DAMAGE CONTROL:** The holotab here is active, depicting a blue holo of the station with flashing yellow-green sections. The *Cetorhina* crash cracked the central hub and started a plasma fire that is sweeping through the port side of the station on Decks F, G, and H.

A successful COMTECH Roll displays the location of *Erebos* station crew and workers via Personal Data Transmitters (page 132 of the core rulebook) and shows many are on the move—spread out all over the station. If not encountered yet, Clerke is with MU/TH/UR on Deck C, Stykes is in the Security Office on Deck F, and Webb is wandering around Deck H. There are large concentrations of crew in four places: 16 in Hydroponics on Deck C, 24 in the Starboard Hangar Deck on Deck G, 21 in the Cellblock on Deck F, and 20 in the Lifeboat Bay on Deck I.

Most importantly, the PCs will also notice eight PDT signals that are different from the others—labeled WYCRONUS, they are those of the former Cronus Crew who are Perfected (but the PCs won't actually know that). One of them is coming from the *Heart of Darkness* in the Hangar on Deck G (this is Lavigne). Another is marked A. LUGAR—Captain Lugar's missing aunt (see Perfect Aly on page 31).



A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: The PCs won't know it, but the workers in the Cellblock and Terminal 01 are dead. Those in the Lifeboat Bay are incubating Deacons (page 67), and those in Hydroponics are being Perfected (page 70). ■

[STATION SIDE LOCATIONS]

PERFECT ALY

A lone **PASSIVE** Fulfremmen wanders Deck B, looking at everything with an alien fascination. This biomechanoid is actually the perfected version of Cronus Chief Technician Aly Lugar—great aunt of the *Cetorhina's* Captain Lugar.

Perfect Aly is curious about the PCs. If Captain Lugar is with them, hand the PC playing the captain the Familiar Story Card. Perfect Aly will be mesmerized by Captain Lugar's monogrammed maintenance jack—as it once belonged to the human Perfect Aly was.

If Captain Lugar attempts to communicate with Perfect Aly and makes a successful OBSERVATION roll, the PC will believe this creature has something to do with her great aunt. Perfect Aly will not attack unless the PCs do. Instead observing the PCs before entering one of the

airlocks and blowing itself out into space.

If the PCs choose to watch or follow Perfect Aly, they will see these beings can easily survive in vacuum and endure high radiation exposure. Perfect Aly will make its way across the hull to Terminal O1 on Deck G, enter the airlock there, and step into the *Heart of Darkness* itself (see the *Chelron* on page 47).

Perfect Aly will find the PCs again after this encounter, intervening if they get in over their heads. Perfect Aly has grown too alien to grasp human concepts, but human emotions and a familiar bond with Captain Lugar can cause it confusion. Perfect Aly may help the PCs escape in the end, but the biomechanoid will be conflicted—it is also loyal to the Living Proto-Hive.

THE TRACK, PERSONNEL AIRLOCKS

O2 AND O3: A corridor that loops around Main Operations, the Track was used by station staff for exercise. Port and starboard airlocks can be found here along with two MK.40 Compression suits each.

OBSERVATION DECK: A ramp from Operations terminates here. This large viewport to space sits along the outer wall of the Track. Something has cracked the viewport—in fact, it looks like something about three meters across was applying pressure in a starfish pattern. Any weapons fire in this area will cause the glass to splinter, giving

everyone three Rounds to shore up the window or evacuate Operations (HEAVY MACHINERY roll, cutting torch or inventive idea required).

ARMORY 01, MUSTER POINT: These areas have been stripped clean by Stykes and his androids—not a single weapon or piece of ammo can be found here.

REC ROOM, STANDBY CREW BUNKS: These bunks are bare. A box of petrified glazed donuts sits open on the rec room table. The coffee machine works. Sadly, they only have decaf.

DECK C: HEALTH AND WELLNESS CENTER

Dominated by a large hydroponics garden, Deck C was designed for the psychological well-being of the station's crew. Unfortunately, it's now overgrown with Living Proto-Hive. The station's MU/TH/UR mainframe is also located here, as is Medbay.

MU/TH/UR: The mainframe is dark and full of smoke (-2 **OBSERVATION**). There are no blinking server lights. MU/TH/UR's access terminal on Deck C sits on a balcony over the Coolant Pit. A charred-black body is melted to the chair here—a grotesque misshapen deformity that used to be Science Officer Clerke, only identifiable by its partially melted plastic ID card. It looks like Clerke was in mid-transformation into an Abomination when he was torched (it was Stykes who killed him). **STRESS LEVEL +1** for all PCs present.

- ▶ **COOLANT PIT:** Reactivating MU/TH/UR from this room means flipping a circuit breaker behind a locked panel at the bottom of the server Coolant Pit—someone must dive into the four-degree Celsius coolant and make a **HEAVY MACHINERY** roll. The work takes three Rounds (if needed, see Freezing and Drowning on pages 107 and 110 of the core rulebook). Replacing the circuit activates the server lights and reboots the mainframe. MU/TH/UR can tell the PCs anything you want them to know.
- ▶ **MISSION RECORDER:** MU/TH/UR has a separate mission recorder drive that is dedicated specifically to the encrypted Project Ironfish data (page 11)—proof that the station is being used to spy on UPP communications. It also contains confirmation that the Cronus disappeared here 73 years ago, and that the "meteor" brought aboard the station is its science boat, the *Cheiron*. A successful **OBSERVATION** roll while examining MU/TH/UR's station will determine that the shoebox-sized recorder is accessible through a panel beneath the terminal seat—the PCs will just have to get real friendly with the abominable

Clerke-corpses to do it. Add another **STRESS LEVEL +1** for the PC handling this.

LIFE SUPPORT: The air scrubbers for different sections on the station are labeled here—A to E, F to H, and I to J. If someone wants to shut down life support to any particular section, all they need to do is pull the appropriate air scrubber (**HEAVY MACHINERY** roll). A large vent above the door leads directly to Hydroponics.

MEDLAB: The lab is undamaged. There are two incubators here and any medical supplies the PCs might need. Dr. Webb is not here.

- ▶ **AUTODOCS:** There are two of these diagnostic devices functioning here (page 136 of the core rulebook).
- ▶ **THE DISK:** A disk containing Webb's research is sitting on the counter—they were on the cusp of reproducing the 26 Draconis Strain. They needed to analyze a live Proto-Xenomorph to finish it (see the event Catch of the Day on page 54). They were also close to finding a virus that will kill the Living Proto-Hive (see the sidebar Weaponizing the Virus on page 34).
- ▶ **JAR OF FIREFLIES:** A large horizontal and transparent cylinder full of plasma energy dominates the room. A laser is refracted through it, illuminating thousands of tiny phosphorus lifeforms—the Hessdalen Lights. Increasing radiation levels in the cylinder causes the Proto-Plasmamorphs to multiply. Increasing them again will cause them to go dormant, essentially in a food coma. The same can be done with the Living Hive to buy the PCs time.
- ▶ **MEDICAL LOG:** Webb's logs here can provide any piece of information relating to Clerke's Clues (page 28) or anything in the Medlab that the GM so wishes. They also state that the biomechanoid beings (the Perfected) appear to be blind to creatures in hypersleep.

STATION SIDE LOCATIONS

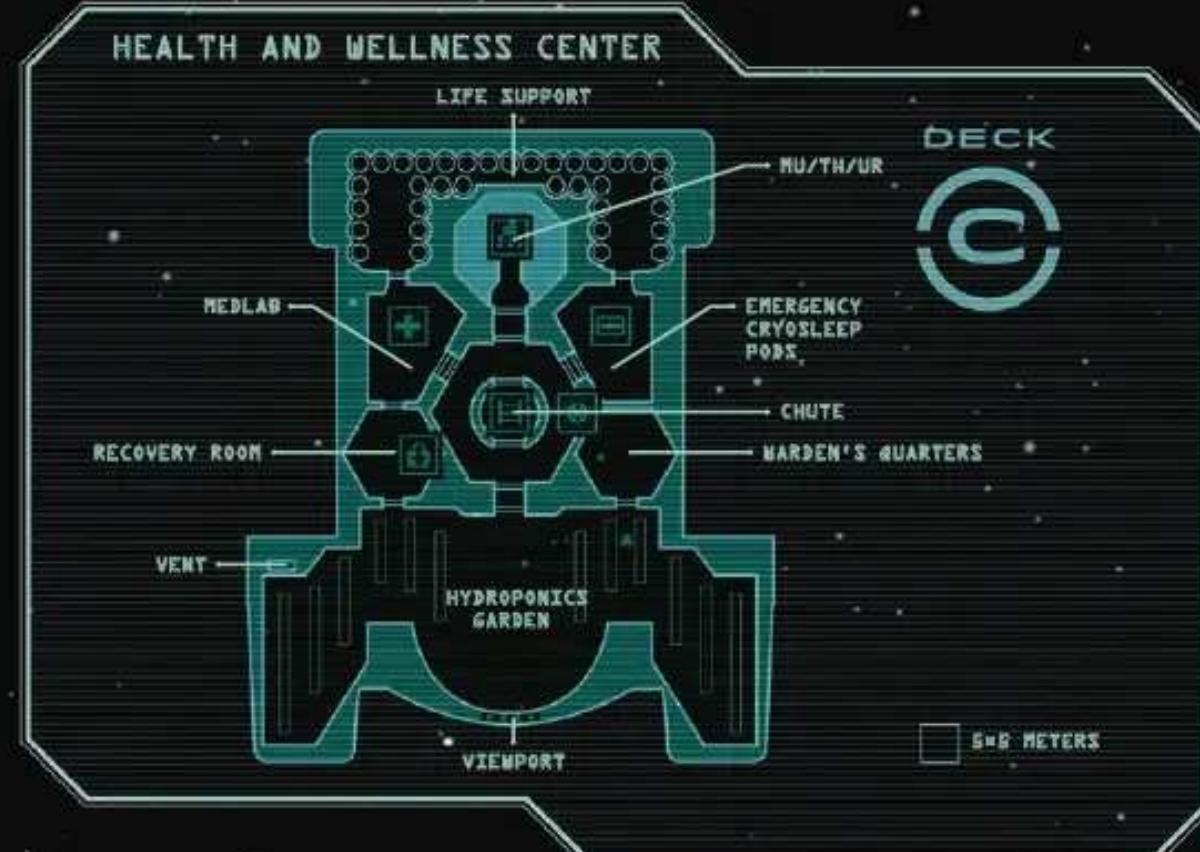
- ▶ **EXPERIMENTS:** Several cell culture dishes are scattered across the room—all of them dead from exposure. Some of these are Clerke and Webb's necrotic virus and others are partial successes at reproducing the 26 Draconis Strain (see Clerke's Clues).
- ▶ **NDD MEDS:** In the medical supplies are five doses of a mental relaxant Chil-X (reduces a PC's accumulated NDD roll total bonus by 1 point when taken), and two doses of the neural stimulant NeuroTic (removes one NDD effect from a PC when taken).

WARDEN'S QUARTERS, EMERGENCY CRYOSLEEP PODS: Wrecked by a meteor strike, these rooms are overgrown with pulsing tendrils of Living Proto-Hive. Three of the six cryosleep tubes here can be salvaged. Each needs a Turn of work and a **HEAVY MACHINERY** roll.

RECOVERY ROOM: The fluorescent lights in this pristine sterile white room are way too bright, the white linens on the bed tucked way too tight.

HYDROPOONICS: The curved front wall of this steamy, twelve-meter-high room is all viewport—but humidity has fogged it up. The plants have overgrown and mutated, transforming the garden into a slimy black-resin jungle. It is a nesting ground for beehive-shaped leafy cocoons—Abominations that are undergoing metamorphosis into the Fulfremmen.

- ▶ **VIEWPORT:** Scaffolding on the clouded viewport can be climbed by the PCs. Shooting towards this three-story tall window is not recommended (Armor Rating 3), see Explosive Decompression on page 107 of the core rulebook).
- ▶ **SWADDLING: A PASSIVE Mutant Abomination** (page 69) climbs the Chute, entering the Garden. The Mutant vomits a vicious black liquid, lays in it and begins sticking black vegetation to its body—cocooning itself.
- ▶ **JUST PERFECT:** If the PCs linger here, a **PASSIVE** Fulfremmen is birthed from another cocoon, shedding their shroud and taking in their new world. The Fulfremmen will not attack unless provoked—instead they simply stare curiously at the PCs.
- ▶ **VENT:** A large vent on the rear wall leads directly to Life Support.



HEART OF DARKNESS

WEAPONIZING THE VIRUS

In addition to recreating the 26 Draconis Strain, Webb and Clerke were close to developing a necrotic virus to wipe out the Living Proto-Hive. The Medlab contains nearly everything the players need to weaponize the virus and take the fight back to the Living Proto-Hive. Scribbled notes and data discs litter the workbench, and conical flasks contain withered Proto-Hive samples, mottled by a strange red ochre.

The notes make it clear that the Proto-Hive samples have been killed by a virus. If the players spend a Turn analyzing this, and make a successful OBSERVATION roll, they will learn:

- ▶ The living virus is fast-acting and deadly to the Proto-Hive and any creatures genetically bound to it—there are dead samples in petri dishes around the lab.
- ▶ Webb and Clerke had not found a way to concentrate the pathogen and administer it to the Proto-Hive.
- ▶ They will need a live Proto-Xenomorph (not just a hive tendril) to generate successful living viral cultures.

The virus is resilient and could be delivered to

a target via an aerosol spray, injection or even splashed in liquid form. If the virus is used against a Proto-Xenomorph it will immediately become sick, suffering a negative dice modifier equal to the number of successes on the COMTECH roll to weaponize the virus. Obviously, this also applies to a player who is infected by the Proto-Hive and exposed to the virus...

Once the virus is proven, the Medlab contains the equipment needed to produce it in sufficient concentrations and package it in the delivery mechanism of the players' choice (this could be in syringes, gas canisters, hand-held pump-action sprays or breakable containers). It will take another COMTECH roll and then a Shift In the Incubator to produce the weaponized necrotic virus (the PCs can do other things, but if they leave it unguarded, an Abomination is waiting for them when they return).

Once introduced to the Proto-Hive the virus's effects will be seen after another Shift—at that point there is no way to save the Proto-Hive other than spreading it to new worlds. Forty-eight hours after the effects are first seen, the Proto-Hive will be dead.

DECK D: RECEPTION AND SCIENCES

Visitors to *Erebos* usually dock here, far removed from the convict population. The Astrometrics Lab here is fed data from the Sensor Arrays, Astrometric Observatory, and the Comms Tower.

ASTROPHYSICS LAB: This room is empty save for the Holotab (page 132 of the core rulebook) in the center.

- ▶ **HOLOTAB:** The Holotab is functioning. The table is projecting a 3D mapping image of stars 26A and B, the black hole, the plasma jets cascading towards it—and if the PCs take a close look—Asteroid 1113B.

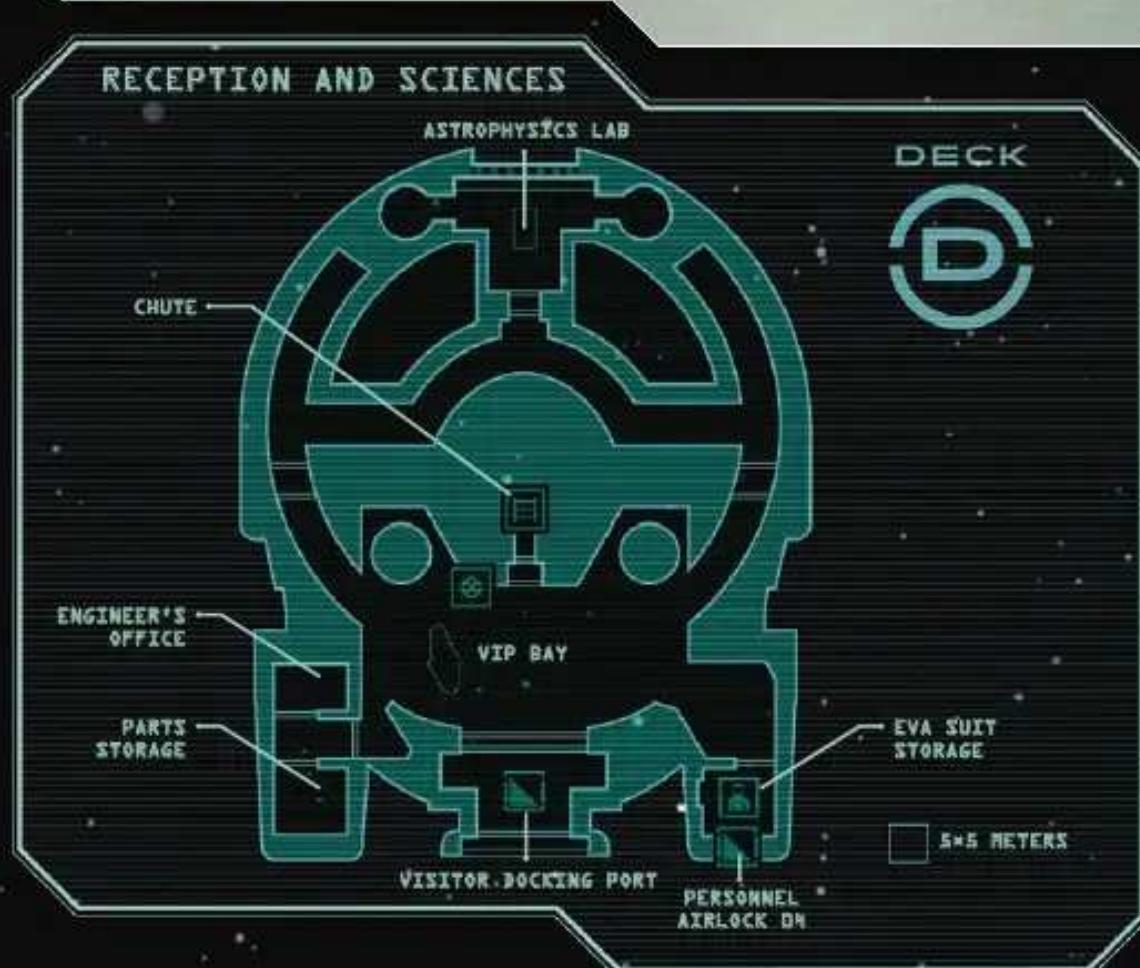
VISITOR DOCKING PORT, VIP BAY, PARTS STORAGE: The docking port and bay are mostly empty—only a single EVA Pod sits on the deck. Some parts the PCs need to fix the *Cetorhina* can be found in storage here.

EVA SUIT STORAGE: Four ECO2 suits are stored here. A large amount of dried blood is splattered across the airlock door—the legs and lower torso of a former station staffer lie sprawled by the airlock, apparently cut in half by it.

[STATION SIDE LOCATIONS]

PERSONNEL AIRLOCK 04: If a PC opens the airlock or peers through its little window to get a look at the rest of the man found in the EVA suit storage, they are in for a shock—an ACTIVE Protomorph Deacon seethes on the other side. If the PCs attempt to vent the beast into space, it will make its way across the station, looking for a way back in.

ENGINEER'S OFFICE: This room has been ransacked. A post-it note attached to a broken monitor says: OVERRIDE followed by six sets of numbers. Their functions become clear only after they are input. These codes supersede station settings and can be implemented from any hardwired terminal. Can be used remotely with a successful COMTECH roll.

**HANDOUT: POST-IT NOTE**

OVERRIDES:
67EC9420KA
LESSthan3CATZ
WY082609 STYKES?

T8333SIG33
ECHO9X-887W3
MAW5578112

67EC9420KA

Controls the station's thrusters.

WY082609 STYKES?

Controls the station's airlocks—individually or all at once. This is a back-door code Stykes used to kill the fires years ago (page 11).

MAW5578112

Controls Trawling Arms 01 and 02 on Deck H. This can be used to “over-feed” and slow down the Living Hive (page 41).

ECHO9X-887W3

Deactivates/activates the station's MU/TH/UR, DA/UT/URs, and Corrections Androids (one Round). Can be used to wipe and reset them to factory specs (one Turn).

T8333SIG33

Prompts the user with the query: Astrometrics Observatory, Comms Tower, or Lifeboats? Triggers explosive bolts that will eject these modules. The Observatory on Deck A and Comms Tower on Deck H will spiral into the black hole (this is to protect Ironfish, page 11).

LESSthan3CATZ

Prompts the user with the query: Operations, Medlab, or Security? It then dispenses cat food through the automatic cat feeder dish at that location on Deck A, C, or F, respectively.

[HEART OF DARKNESS]

**DECK E:
RESIDENCE**

A meteoroid smashed through this crew quarter deck, demolishing it. The airlock to the chute is functional.

STORAGE AND QUARTERS:

These rooms are flooded with Extreme radiation and are exposed to space. There is nothing here but death.

**THE CAUSEWAYS**

There are two Causeways on Erebus station (Decks F and G). The first time the PCs traverse one, describe the causeway to them:

"Gravity fluctuations from the black hole buffet the passageway, causing it to sway and creak ever so slightly. As you move down the corridor, the light ahead begins to flicker."

Pause, and when the players start to talk, pick up the core rulebook and drop it on the table, hard.

"WHAM! Something has hit the top of the causeway in front of you. A thick shadow squeaks across the transparent wall. Then there is nothing."

Everyone present receives +1 STRESS LEVEL. The thing is a Protomorph Trilobite (page 66). If the PCs don't pursue it, it will ignore them. If they insist, however...

CORRECT
OF

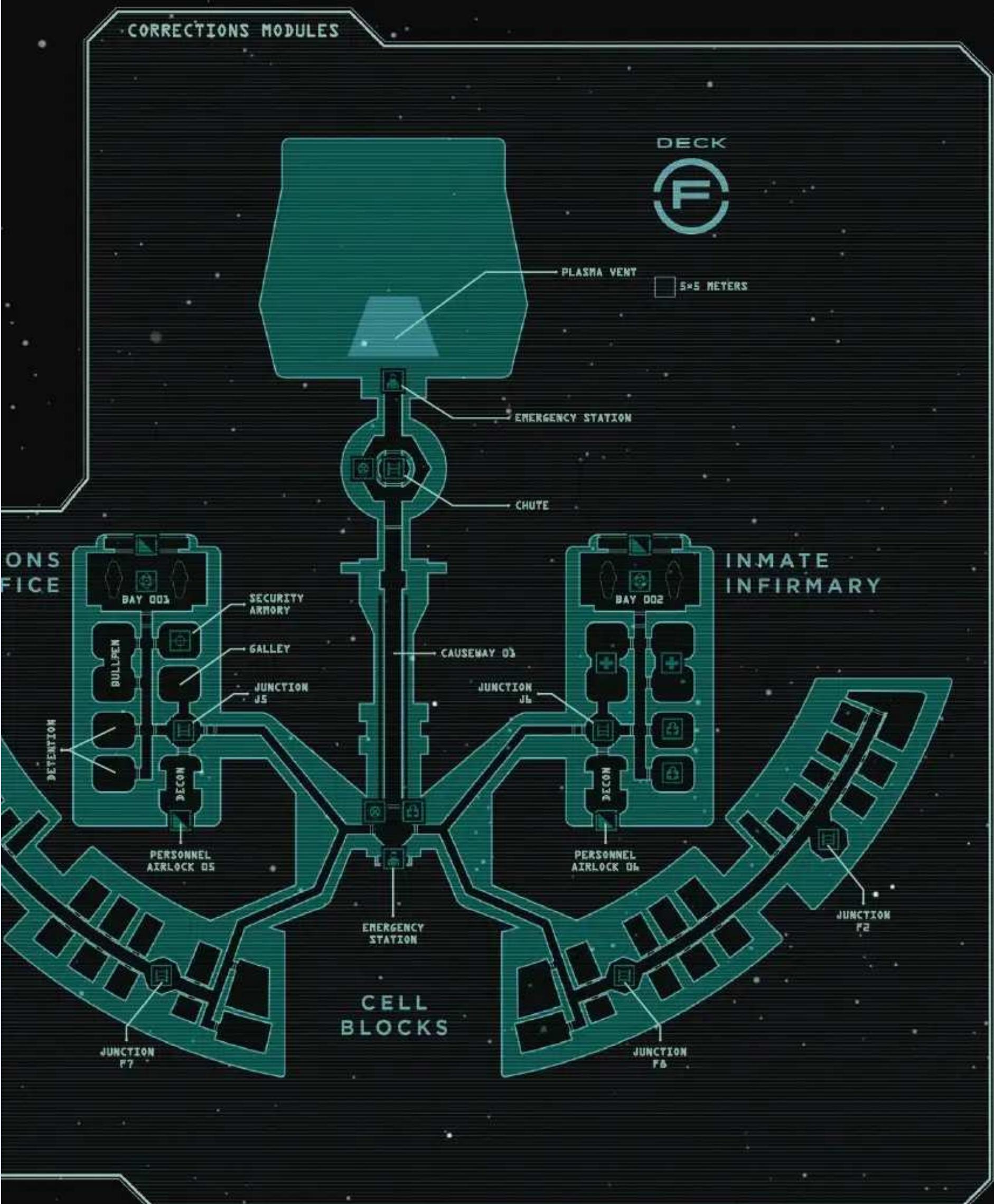
**DECK F: CORRECTIONS MODULES**

These modules have suffered lots of fire damage.

CAUSEWAY 01: This zero-G external passageway expedites movement along the deck. Causeway 01 is exposed to Weak radiation and offers an overwhelming view of the black hole (+1 STRESS LEVEL). See boxed text on page 7.

► **EMERGENCY STATIONS:** Located at both ends of Causeway 01, these alcoves each have four ECO2 EVA Suits, two ASSO-400 harpoon guns, and two spools of 100-meter line.

[STATION SIDE LOCATIONS]



HEART OF DARKNESS

PLASMA VENT: Controlled from Control on Deck B or the Boiler Room on Deck J with a successful COMTECH roll, this vent will flood Decks D through J with plasma fire Intensity 12. The fire will spread one deck per Turn through the Chute and burn until the airlocks are opened on each burning deck to cut off the oxygen supply.

CELL BLOCKS: Six **PASSIVE** Corrections Androids are throwing two screaming Conscripted Convicts (page 24) they've rounded up into fire-choked cells (Intensity 12). Several charred corpses lie behind bars here—It's not a pretty sight.

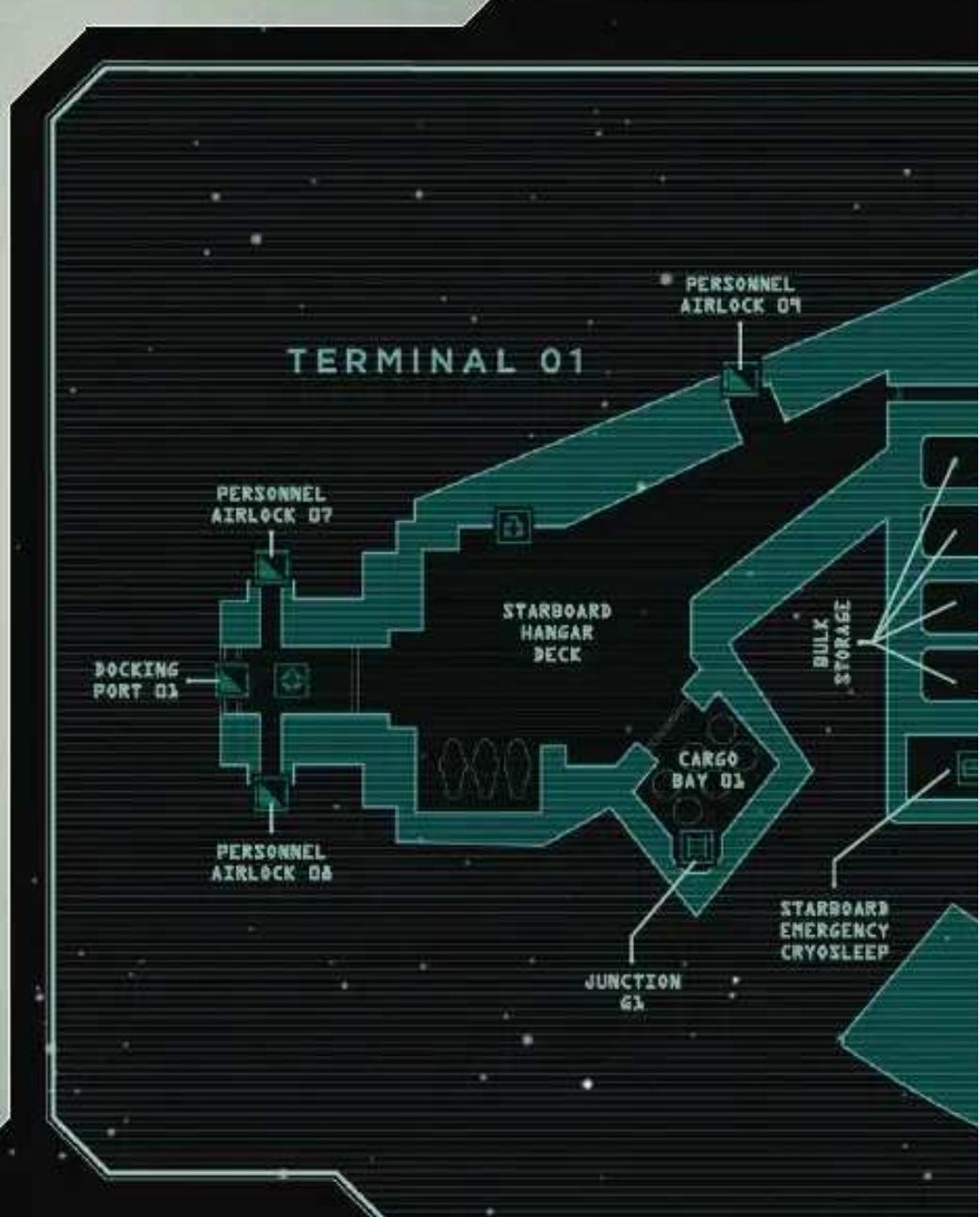
INMATE INFIRMARY: These areas have become an inferno of Strong radiation and plasma fire of Intensity 12.

► **DECON, AIRLOCK 06, AND BAY 002:** The fire here can be snuffed by opening the bay doors to space. The two charred EVA Pods in Bay 002 can be repaired with a successful **HEAVY MACHINERY** roll.

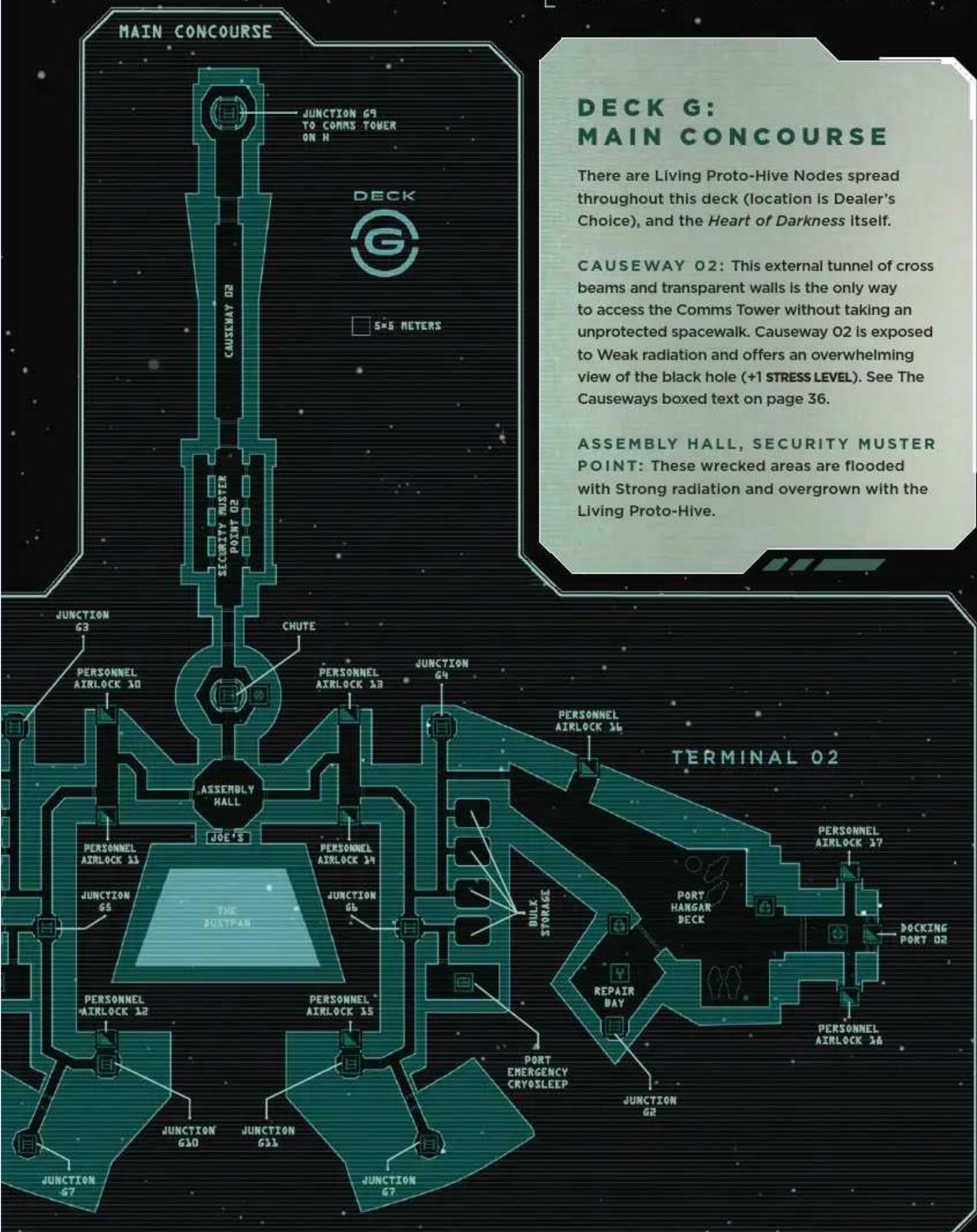
SECURITY OFFICE: This is the warden's base. The office is protected by four **PASSIVE** Corrections Androids, led by a Davis android model 404-4 designated "Crash." Unlike the other androids, Crash is personable and reasonable.

► **BULLPEN:** Desks here all face a centralized transparent wall with a blueprint view of the station on it. Monitors show all areas of the station.
 ► **DETENTION:** These open cells have been converted to quarters for Warden Stykes and Chief Cook Hobbs (see their bios)—the last surviving human staffers of *Erebos*. Any Androids asked will bring the PCs here (under guard) to see the warden. Stykes can tell the PCs how *Erebos* got like this. He's more interested in tracking Wicks' gang and dealing with them than the bizarre things happening here. At first he will insist the PCs help him retake the station, but a little persuasion may convince him they need to leave.

- **GALLEY:** This is Hobb's cooking kingdom. Delighted that the PCs are here to save him, he will cook them his "Bachelor's Special"—a surprisingly delicious meal made of whatever food scraps and ration packs are left in the cabinets.
- **SECURITY ARMORY:** This room is stocked with kevlar vests, tear gas grenades, stun batons, and both ES-4 and ES-7 weaponry.
- **BAY 001:** There are two EVA Pods on standby in this mini hangar.
- **DECON, AIRLOCK 05:** This sterilization room is undamaged. One Turn spent here during the decontamination process means the PCs are clear of Hessdalen Lights, curing any of them afflicted with Stage I Abomination sickness (Stage II and higher is untreatable). All NDD roll bonus totals (page 7) are halved.



STATION SIDE LOCATIONS



DECK G: MAIN CONCOURSE

There are Living Proto-Hive Nodes spread throughout this deck (location is Dealer's Choice), and the *Heart of Darkness* itself.

CAUSEWAY O2: This external tunnel of cross beams and transparent walls is the only way to access the Comms Tower without taking an unprotected spacewalk. Causeway O2 is exposed to Weak radiation and offers an overwhelming view of the black hole (+1 STRESS LEVEL). See The Causeways boxed text on page 36.

ASSEMBLY HALL, SECURITY MUSTER POINT: These wrecked areas are flooded with Strong radiation and overgrown with the Living Proto-Hive.

H E A R T O F D A R K N E S S

JOES: This is a storage/repair bay for twelve Corrections Officers Androids. The PCs can activate them. Three have been overwritten with biological imperatives from the Living Proto-Hive and will hunt all humans they find.

BULK STORAGE: The rooms here below the Security Office are empty storage bays. PCs can move through here to get to Terminal 01. The storage under the Infirmary is burnt out, having suffered a major fire.

STARBOARD EMERGENCY CRYOSLEEP: The twelve maximum-security cryotubes here were used for prisoner isolation. Each has a particularly nasty and violent—and dead—convict in it. Warden Stykes cut power to these pods weeks ago, leaving these men to die horribly of dehydration and slow suffocation.

TERMINAL 01: These large wing-shaped areas are for receiving ships both internally and via docking umbilical. The hangar deck in each Terminal has massive pressure doors over it, allowing a ship to enter and leave vertically. The bay in Terminal 01 houses the “meteor” recovered from the plasma flow.

► **JUNCTION G5:** The corridor is patrolled by two Corrections Officers Androids.

- **DOCKING PORT 01, STARBOARD HANGAR DECK:** The artificial gravity has failed here. The bodies of 18 dead Conscripted Convicts float around this large bay compartment—each with their neck snapped. Three EVA Pods and several drum-sized drained batteries also float here.
- **SURPRISE!** A PASSIVE Protomorph Deacon is getting ready to birth from one of the corpses (+1 STRESS LEVEL to all who see it).
- **THE HEART:** Parked at the end of the deck directly under massive dorsal pressure doors is a large, crusted mass with biomechanical tendrils rooting it to the deck. The pulsing thing is so big it barely fits in the bay. This is the *Cetorhina* (page 47).
- **CARGO BAY 01:** The drum-sized batteries (3 Encumbrance each) in here are all charged and ready to go—three of these are just what the *Cetorhina* needs.

TERMINAL 02: This wrecked area is consumed in an Intensity 12 plasma fire. Strong radiation conflagration.

► **DOCKING PORT 02, PORT HANGAR DECK, REPAIR BAY:** Nothing here is salvageable.

DUSTBIN: rare elements like yttrium, lanthanum, and neodymium are sorted from the Fluxgate and stored here.

DECK H: FACTORY COMPLEX

Most of this deck is packed with refinement machinery with few habitable spaces. The complex is a dank, cavernous, rusty industrial center. It was hit hard in the crash, flooding all areas on the port side with Intensity 12 plasma fire.

CENTRAL HUB: This is a containment core of plasma energy, filtered through the distillery and ion charged here to feed the reactors. The hub is cracked from the *Cetorhina*'s crash. Blue plasma fire Intensity 12 is pouring out of here to consume the port side of Decks F, G, and H. Nothing can survive in the hub—save for the Hessdalen Lights.

[STATION SIDE LOCATIONS]

REACTOR RODS: If the PCs attempt to overload the reactor from any of these four control rods or the Boiler Room on Deck J (a COMTECH roll), a DA/UT/UR will count down ten minutes over the public address system... and nothing will happen. While the plasma energy is building, the Hessdalen Lights will regulate the pressure and keep it from exploding.

PORT WORKSHOPS, MACHINE ROOM, PLASMA RELAYS, AND CAPACITORS: These areas are flooded with a plasma fire Intensity 9.

PORT AND STARBOARD SMELTING CONTROL STATIONS: These rooms were designed to withstand intense heat and are safe from any fires. An old mattress lies on the floor of the first station the PCs visit here—along with several empty food trays. Dr. Webb (bio) has been living here.

STARBOARD WORKSHOPS: Using the equipment in any of the workshops here adds +3 to HEAVY MACHINERY rolls made on the premises.

STARBOARD PLASMA RELAY STATIONS: These rooms monitor and control the Trawling Arms. The cutting tools (Weight 3) needed to fix the *Cetorhina* can be found here.

STARBOARD MACHINE ROOM: Wicks and her entourage of sixteen convicts have made their base here (six are on patrol with Cecil, but ten are home). PCs entering the area will find it covered in lit candles (Wicks insists on marking her territory). They'll soon be surrounded by four to six ACTIVE Conscripted Convicts who will attempt to take them prisoner.

► **WICKS' HIDEOUT:** When Wicks realizes the PCs aren't station crew, she'll explain what's going on—from her point of view, of course (page 11). She blames Stykes for bringing the "meteor" aboard the station (the

Cetorhina)—plus there is their sordid past.

She will demand the PCs help her by taking the Warden hostage at the Security Office on Deck F, and forcing him to deactivate the synthetic guards. Wicks intends to take the Operations Center on Deck B or the Boiler Room on Deck J, open the Plasma Vent on Deck F to burn the station, and steer *Erebos* head first into the black hole. While she will pretend to help the PCs fix their ship, she intends to destroy their FTL once aboard—the Perfected can't be allowed to leave the black hole.

STARBOARD CAPACITORS: *Cetorhina*'s batteries can be recharged by hooking up and laying down lengths of power conduit cabling (hundreds of meters worth) between here and the ship (HEAVY MACHINERY roll and a Shift's work).

WASTEBIN: A byproduct of the plasma and ore refining process is toxic corrosive gas that is collected here.

► **TOXIC CORROSIVE GAS:** Anyone without a pressure suit suffers an attack rolled with five Base Dice at the start of each Round. Every ♦ rolled inflicts one point of damage. If the victim is Broken, they must make a Death Roll every Turn until they die or are brought to safety. ECO2 EVA Suits protect against the gas. The Living Proto-Hive will begin to wilt and die, prompting the Perfected to regroup in Hydroponics on Deck C.

► **VALVE ROOM:** The Valve Room controls can purge the gas into space. Explosives or two Turns of hard work (HEAVY MACHINERY roll) will open the seals here and flood Decks F to J.

TRAWLING ARM 01: This extension arm takes in stellar plasma streams to be processed into usable battery power. It's dormant, but can be activated from Control on Deck A, the Boiler Room on Deck J, or any Plasma Relay Station on Deck H.

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: It's possible to "overfeed" the Living Proto-Hive by opening up the collector and taking in too much energy. The Hive will suffer a "food coma," halting the Perfected's progress for an hour or two (Dealer's Choice). ■

[HEART OF DARKNESS]

- ▶ **MAW 01 PLASMA COLLECTOR:** When the collector is active, the station descends into a plasma flow. The maw absorbs the energy, channeling it through the Distillery Tanks to prepare it for the Particle Acceleration Ring.
- ▶ **DISTILLERY TANKS AND THE PLANK:** These massive tanks process plasma. Set on top of them is the "Plank"—a personnel catwalk between the Plasma Collector and the Central Hub. A **PASSIVE** Protomorph Deacon rests here.

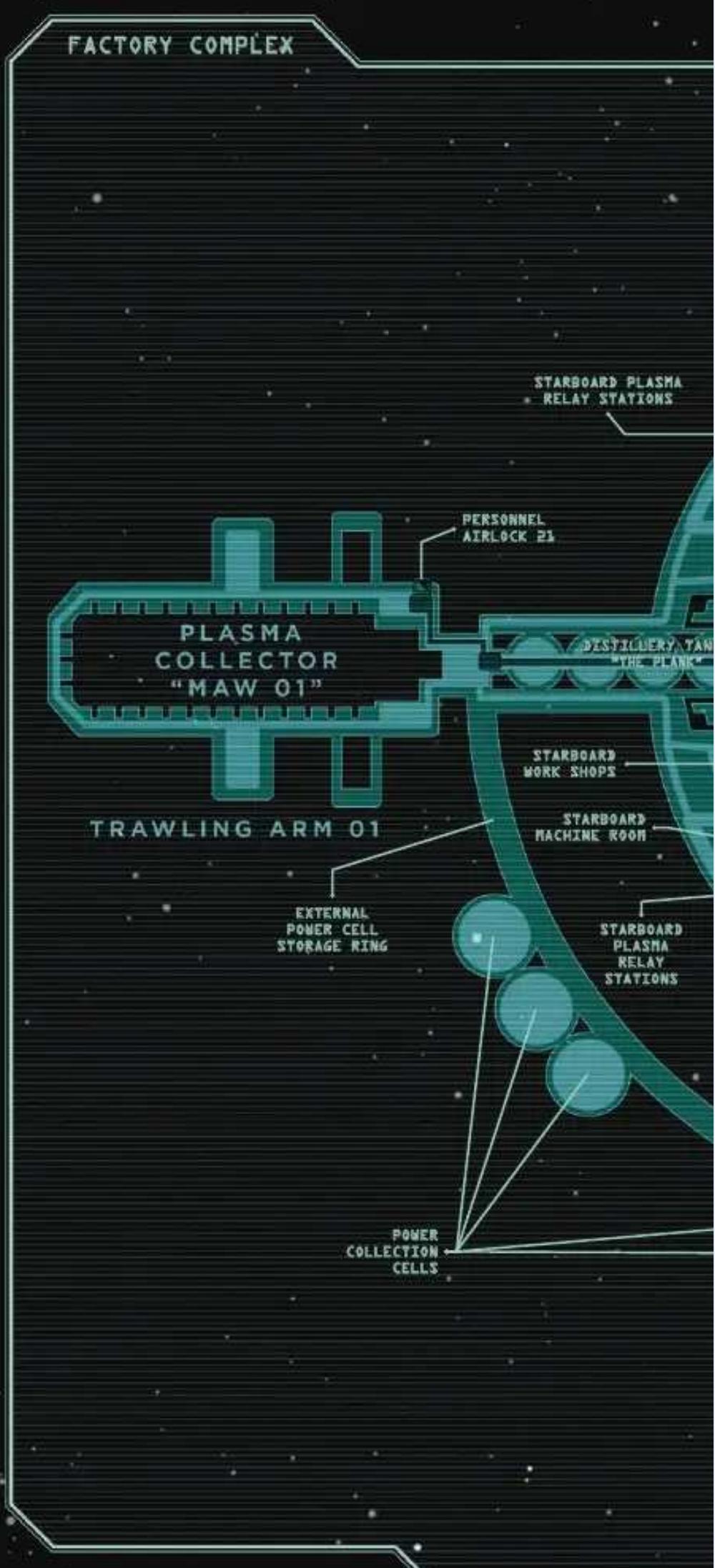
TRAWLING ARM 02: The layout here is identical to Trawling Arm 01, except these areas are consumed in a Strong radiation, plasma fire Intensity 12 conflagration.

- ▶ **MAW 01 PLASMA COLLECTOR, DISTILLERY TANKS, AND THE PLANK:** The fire here is raging out of control. Eventually, these areas will explode, destroying Trawling Arm 02 and triggering the Finale (page 59).

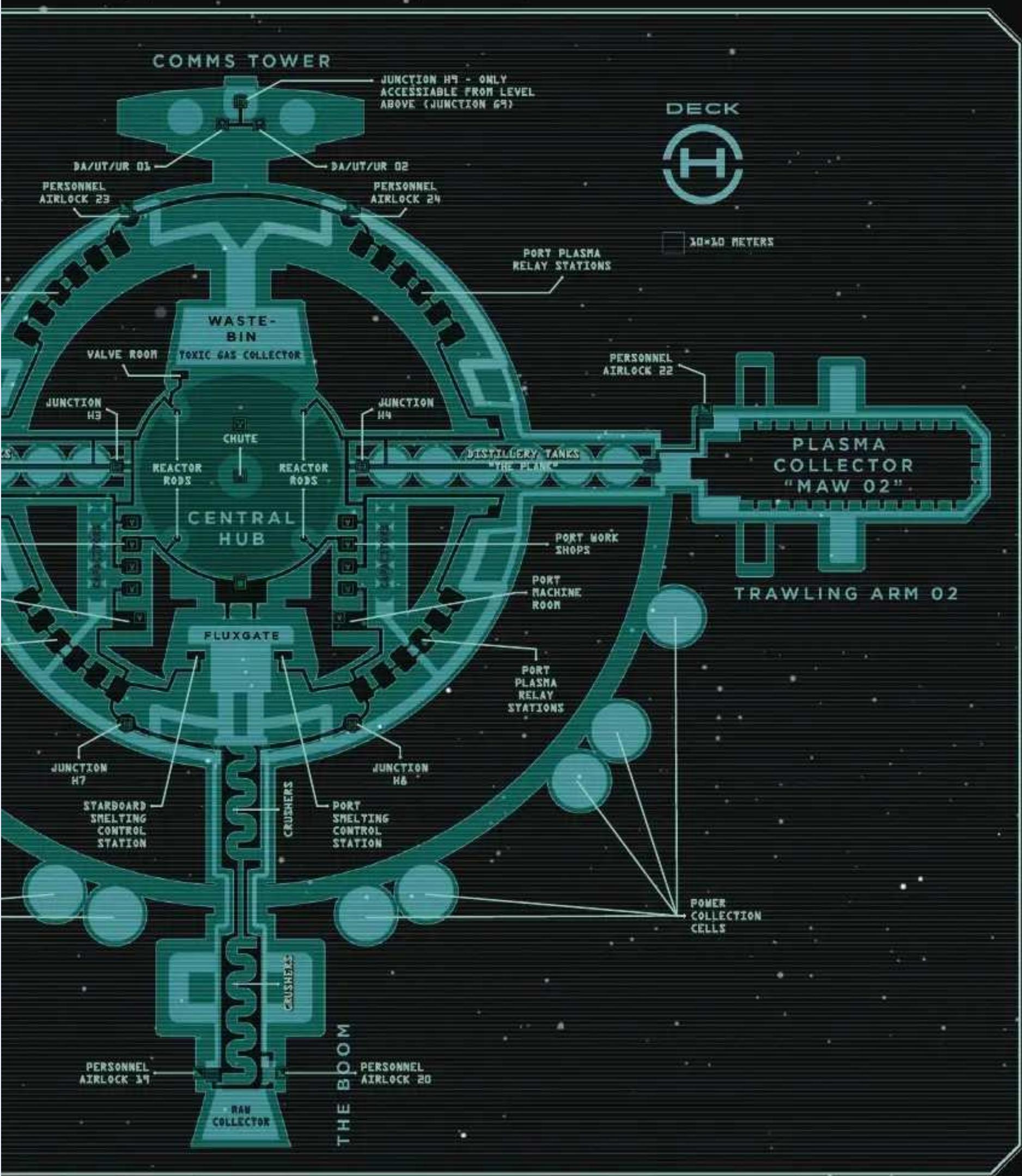
THE BOOM: This extension arm captures and breaks apart small asteroids, separates out different metals, and then feeds them to the Fluxgate and Dustbin. A 20-meter diameter tunnel stretches on for over 120 meters here. A series of massive metal grinding machines fill the space.

- ▶ **CRUSHERS:** Upon arrival, these massive screws are powered down—but an **ACTIVE** Conscribed Convict named Bobbie (page 24) will power things up and try to crush the PCs. A successful **MOBILITY** roll (slow action) is needed to escape and avoid being crushed (attack with six Base Dice, Damage 3).
- ▶ **FLUXGATE:** Any energy released from the pulverized asteroids is fed through here to the Central Hub. Precious metals are shunted up to the Dustbin (page 40).

FACTORY COMPLEX



[STATION SIDE LOCATIONS]



HEART OF DARKNESS

COMMS TOWER: This array of sophisticated listening sensors is designed to pick up and amplify transmissions bounced off the black hole itself. The DA/UT/UR supercomputers located here use the black hole itself to spy on the nearby UPP in a project called Ironfish (page 11). Each DA/UT/UR requires a passcode or a successful COMTECH roll to access. While the Comms Tower is bathed in Strong radiation, the DA/UT/UR access tubes themselves are shielded.

- ▶ **ACCESS TUBES:** The only accessible space here is through two vertical zero-G access tubes for the DA/UT/UR supercomputers. These white semi-circle terminals blink with thousands of yellow server-lights. The walls of these access tubes are fitted with keyboards and monitors on all sides.
- ▶ **DA/UT/UR 01:** This supercomputer is decrypting black files on the Network about a ship called the USCSS Cronus. She will finish compiling the data within a Shift of the PCs accessing

it—exactly when is Dealer's Choice. Once decrypted, all data about the Cronus mission should be accessible to the PCs.

- ▶ **DA/UT/UR 02:** Clerke networked DA/UT/UR 02 together with all the computer terminals across the station to increase processing power. They are running an algorithm on the chirping black hole transmission recordings from the Astrometric Observatory on Deck A. If accessed, the supercomputer starts spitting out numbers. Close examination reveals them to be sets of coordinates for a location hundreds of parsecs spinward of known space.

If the PCs ask DA/UT/UR (or the Perfected) to extrapolate, this is the location of Perfected Space. Researching the coordinates will see the area overlaps with the location of Earth's lost colonies. It's also where the Children of the Two Divines cult was headed in the campaign included in the Colonial Marines Operations Manual. This hook will be followed up on in a future campaign module for the game.

FAMILY MAINFRAMES

DA/UT/UR supercomputers run in tandem with a MU/TH/UR mainframe, allowing processing power for scientific exploration to not impede MU/TH/UR's ability to complete other tasks on the station. DA/UT/URS are

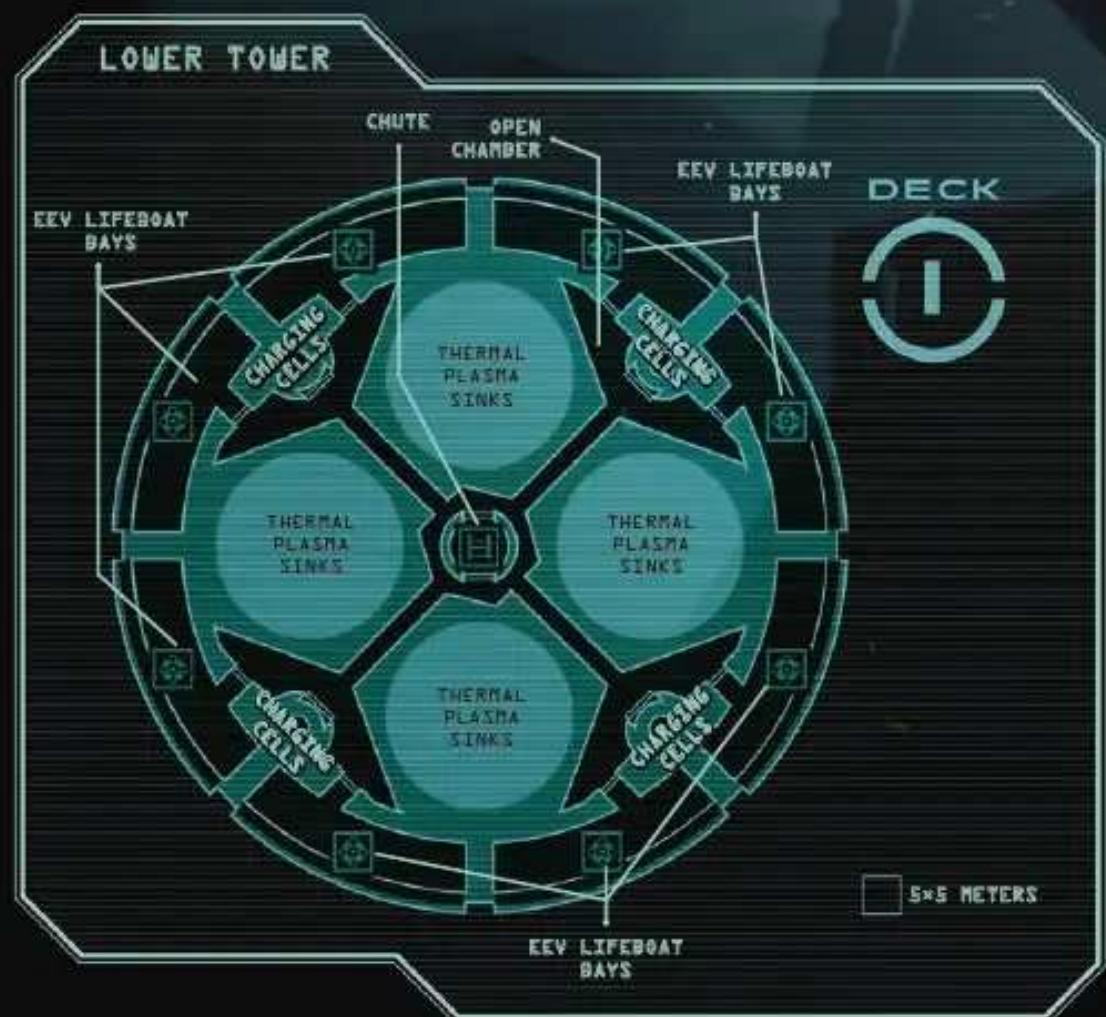
sophisticated, and insanely expensive. The Geholgod Institute has one. *Erebos* has two, because of the covert intelligence project called Ironfish (page 11).

DECK I: LOWER TOWER "THE STICKS"

Made up of vast, lonely areas filled with Plasma Tanks and automated Battery Rechargers, "the Sticks" is named so because no one ever comes down here. Everything echoes in this quarter-of-a-kilometer high chamber, making it very hard to tell exactly where a sound is coming from. The deck is flooded with Weak radiation.

CATWALKS: These bridges are suspended 100 meters up between four massive Thermal Plasma Sinks. A haphazard pile of twenty bodies litters the deck, directly in front of the Chute. Two PASSIVE Protomorph Deacons (page 67) are loading the Lifeboats with Living Proto-Hive Nodules (page 63) and dead convicts who are gestating Deacon embryos.

[STATION SIDE LOCATIONS]



HEART OF DARKNESS

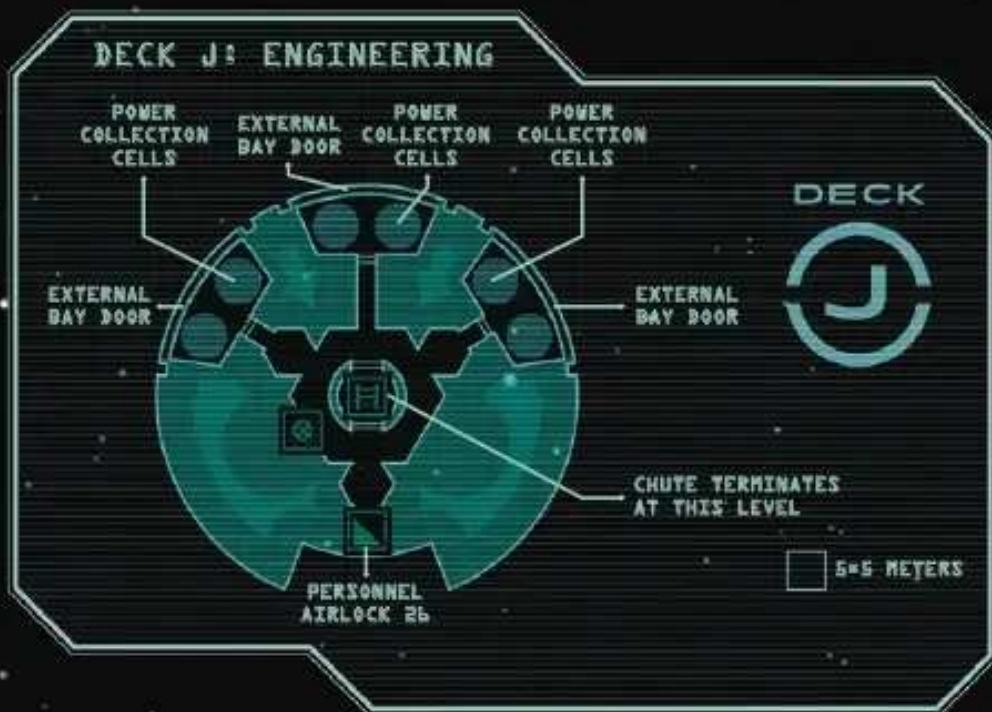
► **OPEN CHAMBER:** Anyone falling from the catwalks through the variable gravity in the Lower Tower suffers ten Base Dice of falling damage, mitigated by a successful MOBILITY roll (page 108 of the core rulebook). An access port at the bottom leads to the Boiler Room on Deck J (page 46).

THERMAL PLASMA SINKS: These 250-meter-tall tanks store processed plasma energy. Explosives used on one of the massive tanks will fill the deck with Strong radiation and plasma fire of Intensity 12. Unless stopped by venting airlocks on whatever level it has reached,

the fire will spread through Decks B-J, one deck per half hour, claiming the entire station within five hours.

EEV LIFEBOAT BAYS: Examination shows each Lifeboat is jury-rigged to break up upon entering a planet's upper atmosphere. Anyone with the Analysis or Breakthrough talents will realize these are "seed pods" and will spread the Nodes across a planet (see The Offer on page 53).

CHARGING CELLS: Cetorhina's battery cells can be recharged here, one Turn per cell.



DECK J: "THE BOILER ROOM" ENGINEERING CONTROL

With the right code (stolen from the engineer's desk on page 35 or a successful COMTECH roll) the consoles here can monitor the station's status, override thruster control, and/or set the autodestruct; for all the good it will do (see Reactor Rods on Deck H). Diagnostics show that the majority of station power is being diverted to the Starboard Hangar Deck on Deck G. This is to feed the *Heart of Darkness*, the *Cheiron* (page 47). There is also an external airlock here.

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR:
Seeing the Deacons perform these actions may perplex the players. If they ask, tell them it's a sign of higher intelligence at work, and that the Deacons must be under the influence of a more intelligent creature (i.e., the Perfected). ■

POWER COLLECTION CELLS AND EXTERNAL BAY DOORS: These batteries are charged with the station's plasma and stored in bays with external doors. The same batteries have been charging here for weeks. They are corroded and useless.

THE CHEIRON

Locked in orbit around the black hole for 72 years and now throbbing within Deck G's

Starboard Hangar Deck, the *Cheiron* is barely recognizable.

THE METEOR REVEALED

More Living Proto-Hive than ship, the *Cheiron*'s thick biomechanical hull absorbs all light, making it appear pitch black. Sitting on the Starboard Hangar Deck on Deck G, its outer covering expands and contracts like a beating heart. Bioluminescent tendrils and tubes, pulsing with Hessdalen Lights, connect the ship to the station through seven hangar deck power conduits. As the PCs approach the science boat, her airlock cycles open, inviting them in.

The Heart itself—the transformed *Cheiron*—will survive the death of the station/hive, simply going dormant to await a new opportunity. Unless otherwise noted, the external and internal hull, plus its connecting arteries, are starship scale, Hull 4, Armor 4.

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: The *Cheiron* has all the special properties of the Living Proto-Hive (page 62). Severing any external arterial connectors to the station will cause Acid Splash of 14 to those within ENGAGED range. If four or more connectors can be removed, the station's Living Proto-Hive is crippled and will go into hibernation. Six or more will kill the station's hive. ■

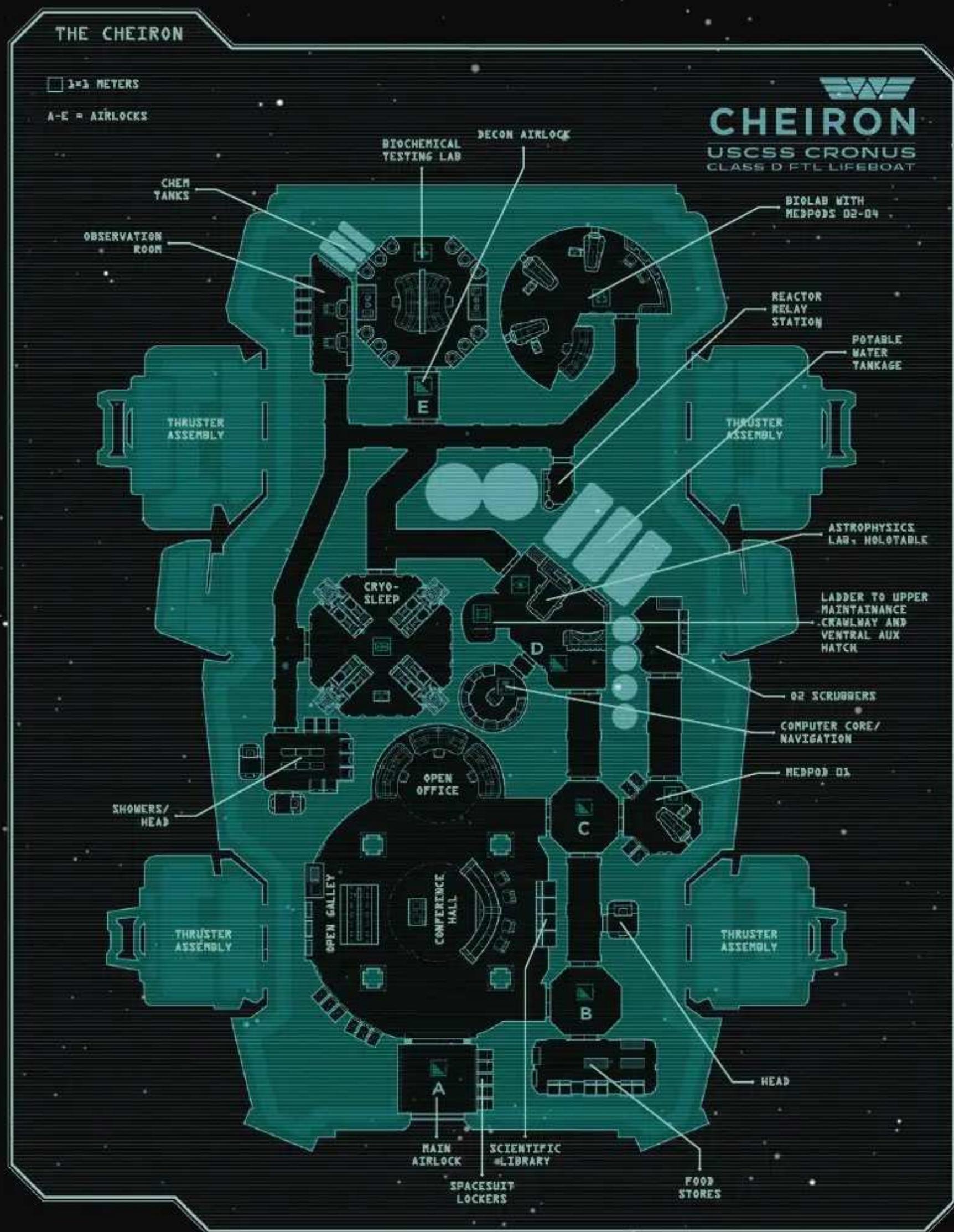
INTO THE HEART OF DARKNESS

Inside, the former science boat has become a living, twisted, *Heart of Darkness*. Overgrown with gray-blue mottled flesh—its interior chambers more resemble the inside of a living being than a starship. A thick but breathable atmosphere and a constant temperature of 40 degrees Celsius is maintained within.

The blood vessels, arterial passages, and ventricles of the Living Proto-Hive form a deadly maze inside the *Cheiron*. Several areas of the ship are overgrown with Living Hive and inaccessible.

The PCs can access a map of the *Cheiron* via any terminal—but it will show the ship before the change. Show the players the handout map.

[HEART OF DARKNESS]



[THE CHEIRON]

INTERIOR SURFACES: The fleshy walls inside the Heart have an Armor Rating of 4. If their armor is pierced, they deliver an Acid Splash of 2 (page 63).

**COMPUTER CORE, NAVIGATION,
BIOLAB, REACTOR RELAY, POTABLE
WATER STORAGE, OBSERVATION**

**ROOM, BIOCHEMICAL TESTING LAB,
CHEM TANKS, AND SHOWERS/HEAD
(INTERNAL ORGANS):** These areas are full of strange pulsing organs—the inner workings of the *Heart of Darkness*. They can be crippled with an incinerator or cutting tools (Health 8, Armor 4 (2 vs fire), Acid Splash 2).

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: If three or more of these areas are destroyed, the Heart itself and the station's Hive will go into a coma and take a few hours to regenerate itself. Attacking these areas alerts the Deacon hibernating at the DECON Airlock (page 50), making it ACTIVE. ■

MAIN AIRLOCK (CAROTID VALVE): The airlock looks like a fleshy heart valve, irisng open to expel gasses every other Round. Polyps directly inside the chamber are ripe with Living Proto-Hive Spores (page 63). Anyone failing a MOBILITY roll will receive a Spore blast to the face. Anyone in a Compression Suit is unaffected. These can be destroyed with an incinerator.

CONFERENCE HALL (atria CHAMBER): The large open room vibrates with a thunderous thumping. Skittering sounds echo across the chamber, their sources unseen (see Initial Greetings, page 49).

- ▶ **ACID POCKET PUSTULES:** These angry-red meter-wide growths blemish the walls and floor of the Atria. These are easily avoided unless a PC is engaged in combat, then a MOBILITY roll is required. Failure bursts the pustule and triggers an Acid Splash 6 attack.
- ▶ **OPEN OFFICE:** This area is clustered with six dangling Utero Pods—all of which have already burst.
- ▶ **OPEN GALLEY:** An PC openly investigating this area will find prizes under the bar—a

resin encrusted hundred-year-old unopened bottle of Mezcal with a worm larva in it (worth thousands) and a .357 Magnum pistol with six rounds left. A STAMINA roll is required to break the resin).

CORRIDORS (VASCULAR TUNNELS): These former corridors are roughly two-to-three-meter-high tubes made of pulsing biomechanical gelatinous resin.

- ▶ **INITIAL GREETINGS:** The first time the PCs enter a tunnel, three ACTIVE Squid Babies (page 65) who were hiding in the Conference Hall will follow them into the tunnel and attack from behind.
- ▶ **AUTOIMMUNE TRAP:** After the PCs have been to a few areas within the *Cheiron*, the tunnel they are in contracts and collapses into a chasm, four meters wide and deep. A successful MOBILITY roll is required to work around the slippery edge. Failure means the character falls and suffers falling damage of 2, mitigated by MOBILITY rolls (page 108 of the core rulebook). If the PCs don't vacate the area within five Rounds, the Deacon at DECON will investigate.

[H E A R T O F D A R K N E S S]

MEDPOD 01 (LOTUS CHAMBER): This room splits off Airlock B and is mostly overgrown with Living Proto-Hive. The dark fleshy parts of the room are arranged like an open flower with the ship's Pauling MedPod at the center. With a **HEAVY MACHINERY** Roll, the MedPod can be brought back online and used to heal any PCs. When performing any operation, roll a Stress Die. On a roll of **6**, the MedPod malfunctions, inflicting a new critical injury. Any drugs or med kits the PCs might need can be found here as well.

ASTROPHYSICS LAB (UNSTABLE VENTRICLE): The fleshy chamber is contracting and expanding as if it's breathing. Each character makes a successful **MOBILITY** roll to keep their footing. Failure means being stuck between contracting muscles and suffering an attack rolled with six Base Dice. If anyone in the group rolls a **6**, the tube behind them sphincters shut. On their way out, they will have to go a different route. Anyone examining the room will realize that there is a former ventral hatch built into the ceiling that can be opened with a **HEAVY MACHINERY** roll to leave the *Cheiron*.

DECON CHAMBER (VENULAE): A **PASSIVE** Proto-Xenomorph Deacon (page 67) dwells in this dark, cramped and partially collapsed passage. Any serious damage done to the Heart will make the creature **ACTIVE**.

CRYOSLEEP (NULL POCKET): While this chamber has a few Living Proto-Hive veins spread over the floor and ceiling, it otherwise appears intact. It's as if the Hive forgot to grow here. Of the eight capsules that should be here, one is missing and six are inoperative. Only one is online. A perfectly preserved human male lies nude in it—Nevin Lavigne, Third Officer on the Cronus. His medical chart explains he was the first crew member infected with Neomorphic spores that

they successfully tested the 26 Draconis Strain on. Scans show the Strain was active in his bloodstream before he was put to sleep. His pulse is in tune with the fusion reactor hum and lights on the station.

► **THE PILOT:** Revived, Lavigne can answer any questions the PCs have about the Cronus mission, 26 Draconis, the Perfected, and how the black hole was formed. He is aware he is infected, and can even suggest that the PCs take his blood for analysis.

Lavigne will insist that the Perfected aren't all monsters. 72 years ago, Chief Technician Lugar (Aloÿsia Lugar's great aunt) realized she was being "Perfected." She wrecked the *Cheiron*'s FTL so the Perfected couldn't leave the system, trapping them in orbit around the black hole. She then pushed Lavigne into this compartment and sealed it shut, stopping Lavigne's own transformation and hiding him from the others. The Perfected are blind to those in hypersleep—and the fact that the PCs were allowed to board the *Cheiron* and find Lavigne likely means the Perfected wanted them to locate him. He says the Perfected cannot be allowed to get their hands on an FTL—he says if the PCs have one, they should trash it.

► **TOO GOOD TO LAST:** After a few Rounds, Lavigne starts gasping for air. His skin darkens and withers from exposure to the air. The screaming man grabs the nearest PC and agonizingly disintegrates (+1 STRESS LEVEL to all present), raining black sticky globs on everything (Virulence 6 to anyone unprotected). Those who fail their Sickness Roll will become an Abomination within one Shift (page 69). If the PCs collect and analyze the globules, they discover particles of the original 26 Draconis Strain—which can help them either kill or bargain with the Perfected.

EVENTS

"I can't bring none of that shit back home with us. Can't let it happen. And I'll do whatever I have to to see that it doesn't."

"Make sure you do, captain."

CAPTAIN IDRIS JANEK AND
DR. ELIZABETH SHAW

The following section contains events that you can spring on the players, divided into Act I, II, and III. Not all of these events need to occur, and they don't need to occur in the order listed. Instead, see the events as an arsenal of drama for you to

use as you see fit. Some events are mandatory however—these are clearly indicated as such.

Remember to make the NDD rolls (page 7) and also give the players new Personal Agendas at the start of each Act.

ACT I: CHRYSALIS

The *Cetorhina* has crashed into *Erebos*, and the PCs are off to explore, gather what they need to repair the ship, and complete their agendas (they grow up so fast, don't they?). The station is dark and creepy, only just beginning to show signs of the Living Hive growing behind its wall panels.

THE GIFT: Out of a dark corridor, something stirs—something not human. It's Adrien, the station's pudgy tuxedo cat! Adrien has brought the PCs a gift—a "dead" Squid-Baby (page 65). The cat places the **PASSIVE** Squid-Baby at the PCs feet. But the Squid-Baby is playing possum—it will bolt when least expected, scurrying off under the flooring somewhere. No matter the outcome, the cat will follow the PCs, becoming available as a player character should one of them die (see Be The Cat on page 16).

STREAKER PART 1: The PCs can feel like someone is following them, always just out of sight. Food and smokes might suddenly disappear. This is Dr. Webb, and he's a little out of his mind (page 19). Webb doesn't allow himself to be seen as more than a shadow until Act II, Streaker Part 2 (page 55).

CUDDLES THE STARFISH: It looks like the PCs have found their first survivor. Someone is sleeping in the corner, their shadowy bulk facing away from them—his back rising and falling with the steady breath of sleep. It isn't a man at all—it's a curled-up **PASSIVE** Protomorph Trilobite (read the text Meeting Cuddles on page 52). Cuddles wants to give someone a fatal hug—and it won't take no for an answer. It attacks the nearest character (not the cat). If wounded, it will flee, but then stalk the PCs from a distance, harrying them when they are at their weakest.

HEART OF DARKNESS

RIOT CONTROL: Two Corrections

Androids are moving through the station, culling Protomorphs and wrangling up escaped prisoners. Encountering the PCs, the synthetics' eyes flash red as they attempt to ID them. The androids look for barcodes on the backs of the PCs' necks, which could cause some issues (see Hedenström's bio. The androids will be confused that his barcode is not in the system).

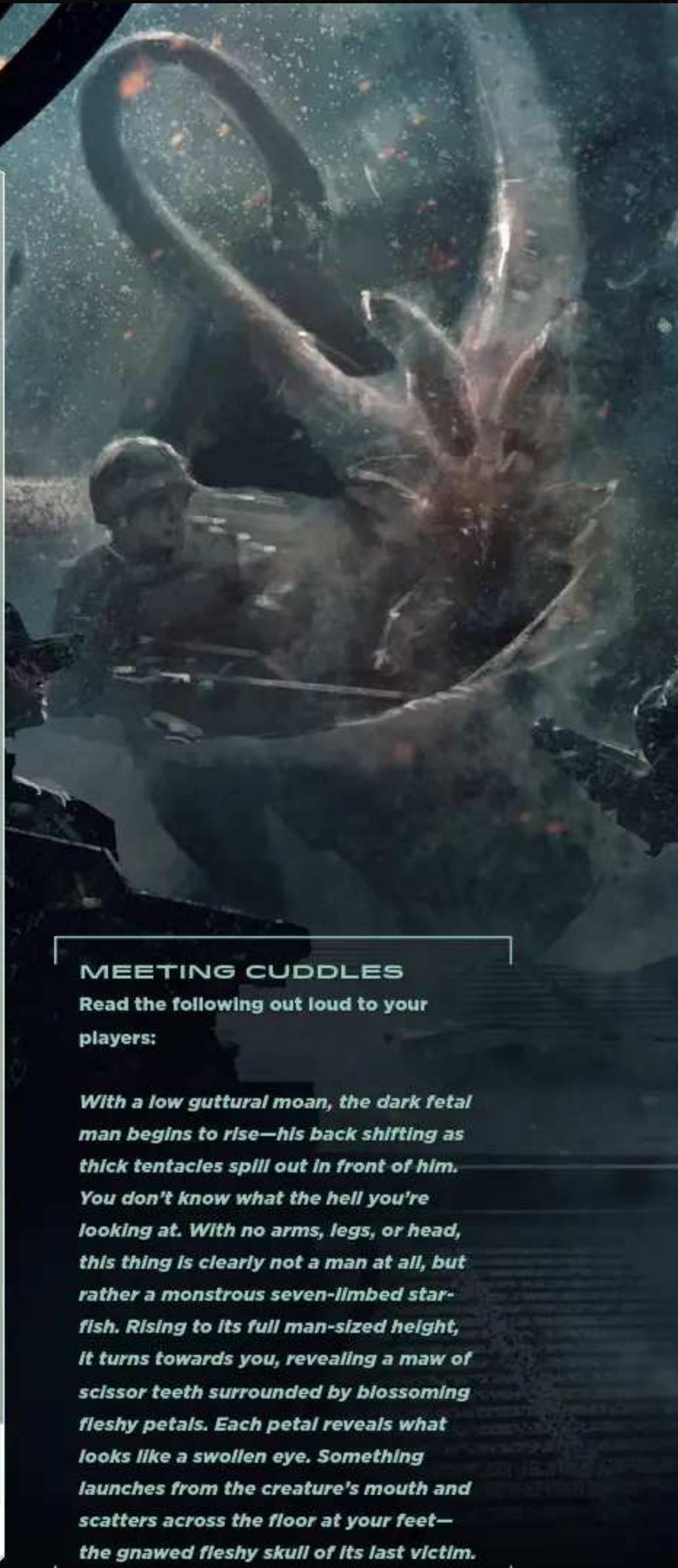
With MU/TH/UR offline, the androids' deductive reasoning is very limited. Uncertain if the PCs are scavengers, rescuers, or other, the androids will stand around confused, their eyes blinking red as they try to decide what to do. Unless challenged, they will default to taking the team to the Cellblock on Deck F for later questioning.

If the PCs demand to see who is in charge, the androids may be convinced to take them to the Warden (he's hiding out at the Security Office on Deck F. The PCs can then learn from survivors anything you want them to know about how the station got to this point.

WATCH THE WORLD BURN: Either while under escort of the synthetics from the event Riot Control or while facing off against a Protomorph like Cuddles, the PCs' adversaries are ambushed by Wicks' revenge squad—Cecil and six **ACTIVE** Conscripted Convicts. They will take the PCs to Wicks' Hideout in the Starboard Machine Room on Deck H to meet the prison boss herself.

THE HOWL: Play this event before Adrien becomes a PC. A piercing shriek echoes throughout the station, subsiding in the distance (+1 STRESS LEVEL). After a pause, the PCs hear a howling reply from the other direction. One way lies a **PASSIVE** Protomorph Deacon, the other lies the cat Adrien (page 20)—and the two of them are heading towards the PCs.

MU/TH/UR'S NOTE: This Protomorph Deacon can easily be the one that kicks off Act II.



MEETING CUDDLES

Read the following out loud to your players:

With a low guttural moan, the dark fetal man begins to rise—his back shifting as thick tentacles spill out in front of him. You don't know what the hell you're looking at. With no arms, legs, or head, this thing is clearly not a man at all, but rather a monstrous seven-limbed starfish. Rising to its full man-sized height, it turns towards you, revealing a maw of scissor teeth surrounded by blossoming fleshy petals. Each petal reveals what looks like a swollen eye. Something launches from the creature's mouth and scatters across the floor at your feet—the gnawed fleshy skull of its last victim.

ACT II: TRANSMOGRIFICATION

The Living Proto-Hive is rapidly spreading throughout the station, converting whole sections into smooth biomechanical tunnels and caverns. The Perfected make their intentions clear and offer the PCs a choice—find the 26 Draconis Strain or die. Personal Agendas will dominate the action in this act, as PCs attempt to accomplish their own goals as well as those of the group.

This act kicks off with a Protomorph Deacon finding the PCs. After an attack or two, a shrill whistle will resonate in everyone's skulls—not their ears. The Deacon will pull back and sit in the corner, waiting.

A Perfected steps out of the shadows, running their hand across the Deacon's smooth head. The Perfected reaches out to touch the nearest PC, beckoning without malice (if the GM so wishes, this can be Perfect Aly from page 31). The Perfected does not attack—but instead psionically

imparts information. The jarring communication is experienced by everyone present (+1 STRESS LEVEL). Read “The Offer” sidebar text to the PCs (page 53) and then return here.

The Perfected want the pure 26 Draconis Strain and will spare the PCs lives for it.

The PCs can then ask the Perfected three questions before the being turns to leave. These questions will be answered with flashes of thought imagery—for example, if the PCs ask how they can make the 26 Draconis Strain, the Perfected will flood their minds with images of a rib cage opening and the PCs being drawn into a black, beating heart (the Cheiron, page 47).

If a PC tries to stop the Perfected, a rustling in the shadows reveals there are now a total of four ACTIVE Protomorph Deacons with them. If the PCs back away, they are allowed to leave. If they persist, the Deacons attack.

THE OFFER

Images of grotesque and morbid beauty flood your mind—a flesh and metal tree twists in a surreal landscape—its bark made of a thousand writhing faces. Blue sky fades to white. Black vines dig in gray soil, birthing a ribbed landscape of swelling bronchi and pulsing aortas. The tree grows ripe and rots. Pollen explodes everywhere—choking off life, mutating whole forests. The planet's surface becomes a crisscross of wiggling tree limbs, grasping and closing off the sky above them.

The world explodes. Spiked trees impale other worlds, starting the process again. A broken genetic code appears in your head—an incomplete formula. One of you knows it—the 26 Draconis Strain—which one of you? It doesn't matter—now you all know it. A wave of forest rolls over this new world. It bears down on you. You give the formula to the Perfected. The wave strikes—but grows around you instead of through you. The message is clear—give this thing to the Perfected and be spared. Do not, and die.

[H E A R T O F D A R K N E S S]

OUT OF AIR: The Proto-hive's tendrils have seeped through the *Cetorhina* and destroyed its Oxygen Compression units. The PCs can no longer recharge their suit AIR supplies on the *Cetorhina*—they'll need to do it in Life Support on Deck C.

CATCH OF THE DAY: Wherever the PCs are, a computer prompt comes alive at a nearby screen, sent from the story-appropriate mainframe—be it the station's MU/TH/UR or either of the DA/UT/UR computers. The AI has been processing an equation postulated to it by Webb earlier and has devised a response. See the Handout "Serum Analysis."

If the event Streaker Part 2 (page 55) has occurred, this will help jog Dr. Webb's memory. This can refer to the necrotic virus Clerke and Webb were developing to kill the Hive or the reconstruction of the 26 Draconis Strain (whichever applies).

If the PCs decide to partake in hunting and subduing a Squid-Baby, a rock sample container or a cat carrier will not be too hard to find on *Erebos*. Bring the cat—Adrien can be useful in the hunt. After a brief search, they'll find a Squid-Baby with a rat in its death embrace. Capturing it won't be easy—make too much noise and a Trilobite might appear.

In order to capture it, a PC will have to grapple the Squid-Baby long enough for the others to restrain it (**STRENGTH** rolls). The creature will be uncooperative and attack at any given opportunity. A successful **MEDICAL AID** roll within the Medlab will extract the needed cells. The formula will then be ready for trials within a Shift.

HANDOUT: SERUM ANALYSIS

FORMULA INCOMPLETE

MISSING LIVING BIOLOGICAL COMPONENT ■

SUGGESTION:

SECURE LIVE PROTO-XENOMORPH, STAGE II+ ■

RECOMMENDATION:

TARGET HEPTOPUS TABELLARIUM

IMMATURE "SQUID-BABY" FORM ■

INSTRUCTIONS:

BRING SPECIMEN TO MEDLAB

EXTRACT LIVING MUTAGENIC CELLS FROM NEURAL GLAND

INTRODUCE CELLS TO EXISTING FORMULA ■

HANDOUT: NETWORK EXCHANGE

TO: EREBOS CLASS E - PRISON UNIT 453339

FROM: NETWORK

COMCON 76300- [UNDEFINED] MEYLAND

AWARE OF YOUR SITUATION ■

EXPEDITING RESCUE TEAM. ARRIVAL WITHIN SIX HOURS ■

ABSOLUTE HIGHEST PRIORITY.

VERIFICATION REQUIRED ■

TRANSMIT ENCRYPTED DATA DESIGNATION. IRONFISH ■

AWAITING ACKNOWLEDGMENT ■

A ROOM WITH A WOMB: There are several areas such as these throughout the station—rooms that have been converted by the hive into Proto-morph birthing chambers. The area is dank, humid, and smells like rotting flesh. A number of **PASSIVE** fleshy translucent-red Utero-pods (page 65) equal to the number of PCs dangle from the ceiling, each containing a fluttering Squid-Baby embryo that is not quite ripe-for-birth. If the PCs stay stealthy, they might be able to sneak past.

The PCs need to make a **MOBILITY** roll each Round to stay undetected. As soon as anyone fails a roll, the Utero-pods all become **ACTIVE**. At that point, anyone moving directly under a pod can trigger a Squid-Baby birth. The pod will burst its water and spill the Squid-Baby out onto the floor. A squid is slow to react at first, automatically getting initiative 10.

S.O.S.: A nearby terminal begins flashing red—a Network transmission has been received and is awaiting a reply. Show players the handout "Network Exchange." The message is from "Weyland," not Weyland-Yutani—a minor mistake made by the not-so-corporate messengers. The communication is a ruse from the nearby UPP destroyer SVV Snova Trakhnu. Pretending to be the company, the Snova claims that the transmission of the data is for security confirmation. They say the encrypted data will prove the PCs are who they say they are and not escaped prisoners.

The Ironfish data is inaccessible via terminal—it's stored in the DA/UT/UR supercomputers and backed up in the MU/TH/UR mainframe's mission recorder (page 32). If the PCs do manage to send the data, the Snova Trakhnu will acknowledge receipt, move in, and attempt to nuke the station (see the Retaliation event on page 58). If the PCs think to bargain for it, the UPP Captain will send an extraction team (the Rescue event on page 58). See the Ironfish sidebar on page 11 for more info.

STREAKER PART 2: Since Act I, the PCs have been followed and had things stolen from them

(Streaker Part 1 on page 51). Now, the PCs will be involved in some other task or conversation, and someone will run by in a lab coat with no pants. This is Dr. Webb, but he doesn't know that. Webb and Clerke were attempting to create a necrotic virus in Medlab to kill the Living Proto-Hive. With some help from the PCs (just by them talking with him or by Lark using her psychological training), Webb will begin to remember parts of what they had accomplished. He will be able to lead the PCs to the Medlab on Deck C so they can finish what he and Clerke started.

GRAVITIC SHEAR: This event should occur a few times, as knowledge of it will help the PCs save the station later if they so choose. The station suddenly shudders—and the PCs feel their stomachs drop. All PCs need to roll **MOBILITY** to stay on their feet. A gravity shear—not unlike the one that pushed the *Cetorhina* into the station in the first place, has struck. The PCs will feel G-forces hitting them momentarily as Erebus automatically engages sustained thrust to maintain a safe orbit. One of the NPCs will comment on it. "When the black hole acts up like that, the thrusters kick in. Fed by the stored plasma tanks, the thrusters are the only thing keeping us from falling into the swirling bastard and being crushed (see the Finale on page 59)."

QUARTERMASTER: The sounds of struggle come from ahead—it's five members of the Erebus Station crew and/or conscripts. This event works best if you include at least one NPC the PCs have previously met but have been away from, such as Stykes, Hobbs, Wicks, or Cecil. Unfortunately, these people are... transformed. Four **PASSIVE** Mutant Abominations are attempting to draw-and-quarter a fifth. They tear the fifth Mutant apart, each taking a limb and sitting down to eat it. Laying in his pooling blood, the quartered Mutant sees his own entrails laying near his head—and savagely begins eating them. Okay, maybe the writer has problems.

HEART OF DARKNESS

THE PERFECT DEMAND: A shrill noise and imagery explodes inside the PCs' heads. A Perfected and two of their Deacons have cornered the PCs again. They are overwhelmed with the Perfected's doubt—they question why the PCs have not delivered them the 26 Draconis Strain. The Perfected leaves them with a warning to fulfill their obligations.

The Deacons then stalk the PCs from afar. If the PCs deliver the Strain to the Perfected, their heads are filled with an overwhelming sense of relief, gratitude, and victory. The Perfected offer them the best reward it can conceive—strip and bathe in the Hessdalen Lights (any radiation zone) to become one with the perfect Living Hive...

"No longer were there individual destinies; only a collective destiny, made of plague and emotions shared by all."

—ALBERT CAMUS

ACT III: PERFECTION

In Act III, the impact of the NDDs (page 7) is starting to become overwhelming. Read aloud the boxed text The Change to the players to kick off Act III, make an NDD roll for each and give them their new Personal Agendas.

The metamorphosis complete, the station has become a Living Proto-thing of its own. After the change occurs, the station is crawling with a dozen newborn PASSIVE Fulfremmen (page 70). If the PCs haven't done anything

to stop the Hive tendrils from invading the Cetorhina, the Living Proto-Hive begins priming her FTL drive.

Whatever the PCs plan on doing—escape, assist, or destroy—now is the time. Within one Shift, the station will leave the system. The Living Proto-Hive will spread like a virus from colony-to-colony across the Outer Rim Territories. The PCs need to decide what they are going to do to stop it... or aid it.

THE CHANGE

The station groans and sways. The floors buckle and shift. The reactor reverberates in your chest, echoing your own heartbeat. Flesh covered metal bends and stretches like a wizened grizzly bear waking from a long winter's slumber. Dangling pods throughout the station pop and splash their

living contents across the floor, birthing more multi-armed monsters. The pipes on the walls pulse like arteries. The station sighs a hot fetid breath that blasts through the corridors. The Proto-Hive has transformed the station—Erebos is alive. The biomechanical behemoth yawns.

MR. MAN'S ESCAPE ARTISTS: Led by Tommy Man, six ACTIVE Conscripted Convicts (page 24) storm the *Cetorhina* in an attempt to flee the station. If they take control, they gun the thrusters—breaking the ship free, but with consequences. A hole is torn in both hulls,

causing explosive decompression (page 107 of the core rulebook and page 73 of the Starter Set rulebook). The same thing will occur if the PCs try to rush their escape as well. See the sidebar “Escape” for what happens next (below).

ESCAPE

If the PCs’ ship tries to pull away—be it the *Cetorhina* or any other vessel—*Erebos* bends and twists in defiance. Tendrils erupt from the station, lashing on to the ship and yanking it back to the station. The *Cetorhina*’s FTL drive begins cycling up, thrumming in rhythm with the station’s heartbeat. The ship isn’t likely going anywhere unless the Living Proto-Hive around it is killed.

Severing any external arterial connectors to the station will cause Acid Splash of 14 to those within ENGAGED range. These connectors have Hull 2, Armor 4 (page 167 of the core rulebook). If three or more connectors can be removed in one Turn, the station will let go. If the PCs are able to generate a plan that could free the ship, reward them and let it take off—just realize they will need to fight off the Living Station.

THE NINTH PASSENGER: Whether the PCs can free the *Cetorhina* from *Erebos* or not, they have a stowaway—a Protomorph Deacon has made its way aboard. While it will hunt the PCs throughout the ship, it will make its nest at the top of the two-story tall FTL engine, amongst the Living Proto-Hive tendrils that are growing through the deckplates to connect with it (see *Cetorhina* cutaway handout). If *Cetorhina* escapes without realizing the Living Hive is growing onboard the ship, it will be bringing death to civilized worlds. As this Hive is young, it can be killed with fire of intensity 9 and above.

THE BLIP: A proximity alarm alerts the PCs to a large mass in a slightly different orbital trajectory.

The second time it goes off, the system identifies it as Asteroid 1113B. Some calculations by the PCs, MU/TH/UR, or DA/UT/UR will confirm that if the station’s orbit isn’t changed, the asteroid will pulverize *Erebos* within the next two hours. Depending on their goals, the PCs can work to course correct *Erebos* or sabotage its ability to maneuver. This can be accomplished at Control on Deck B or the Boiler Room on Deck J either via a COMTECH and HEAVY MACHINERY roll or by wrecking the joint.

If the asteroid does hit, it’s a glancing blow. The station is severely damaged, not destroyed. It will begin spinning like a top as it dives into the black hole, giving your PCs another chance to escape.

[H E A R T O F D A R K N E S S]

THE "RESCUE": The "Weyland" rescue ship (see S.O.S. on page 55) moves in close enough to the station to be scanned, revealing itself to be the UPP Destroyer Snova Trakhnu. They are here to retrieve its operatives and destroy Erebus.

► **DEALER'S CHOICE:** The UPP may be persuaded to take the PCs with them. You can play this event in tandem with the events Escalation and Retaliation (page 58)—and have the Destroyer crushed by the living station.

SURVIVOR: This can be played with The "Rescue." A gray Cheyenne dropship (UPP Accipiter) docks at a port near the PCs—and is immediately besieged by three ACTIVE Protomorph Trilobites (page 66). The dropship crew is a Space Operating Forces commando team from the "Weyland" ship in the event S.O.S. (page 55). They are decimated by the Trilobites, leaving only one survivor—Sub-Lieutenant C'ng Pflüger (page 23).

ESCALATION: If the event the Rescue is in play, the Snova Trakhnu has moved in close to pick up the survivors. Erebus' trawling arms bend and reach for the Destroyer, embracing and crushing it. If Erebus no longer has the *Cetorhina's* FTL drive, it tries to take the Snova's.

RETALIATION: The Snova Trakhnu fires its nukes at Erebus from point blank range,

destroying itself in an attempt to take out the station as well. While the Cellblock on Deck F, Boom and Starboard side of Deck H are destroyed, Erebus's Plasma Collectors draw most of the energy in, momentarily supercharging the station. All lights aboard burn bright and burn out, blinding everyone for one round and forcing all Protomorphs to go into hiding (they don't like intense light). The force of the blast sends the station hurtling towards the black hole (See the Finale).

THE HELP: Great-Aunt Lugar (Perfect Aly, page 31) decides to help the PCs, warning them that the Perfected are going to use their FTL to leave the system. Aly won't actively defy the Perfected, but she will provide hints and attempt to stall any attacks against them. Aly can provide the PCs with whatever missing information you see fit.

THE DEATH THROES: This Event can be played if Erebus has been infected with the weaponized virus or poisoned by the toxic gas from the Wastebin on Deck H. As the virus swarms through the Proto-Hive pustulous globules swell and weep the acidic "blood" of the station. It hisses and corrodes anything it touches. Every now and then one of these globules bursts apart, spraying the area with an Acid Splash rating of 10. This may hit the players or simply make life harder for them in other ways.

THE FINAL SACRIFICE

Heart of Darkness is even harsher than the other ALIEN RPG Cinematic Scenarios—the PCs aren't expected to survive. It's important to remember that winning here

doesn't mean getting out alive—it means stopping (or depending on your agenda, aiding and abetting) the menace of the Perfected.

FINALE

Erebos is going down the Ablassen Drain. There's been a black hole sitting right outside for the entire Cinematic Scenario—surely you realized it would come down to this.

The Finale should run concurrent with the last event or two you have planned for the PCs. Whether caused by external circumstances or the actions of the PCs themselves, the station should start its descent into the black hole before the Fulfremmen threat is fully resolved, thus increasing the drama of the endgame.

Getting the station to fall into the black hole can be accomplished in several different ways:

- ▶ If it's been hit in the face by an asteroid (the Blip event), pushed out of orbit by violence (Retaliation event), or wracked by explosions from the fires on Deck H—*Erebos* is spiraling towards the black hole already.
- ▶ If the Living-Hive is in its death throes due to the PCs' use of a virus, fire, or poison against it, the station might try to throw itself into the black hole to take them down with it.
- ▶ It's also possible the PCs may just decide to push the station into the black hole, sacrificing themselves to save the colonies from the threat of the Perfected.

As *Erebos* enters a severely decaying orbit around the Ablassen black hole, its hull begins to buckle under the immense pressure (**STRESS LEVEL +1** for all PCs still aboard the station). Use the following points to increase the stakes as the finale progresses:

BEAT THE CLOCK: The station's remaining time is up to you, but the point of no return should be reached at the dramatically appropriate moment. Feel free to set up a timer for the amount of time you feel should be left—dwindling numbers on a tabletop can really get the PCs' adrenaline pumping.

ALL BETS OFF: Once the station is doomed, the Fulfremmen have had enough. The PCs have ruined their plans one way or another, so a lone **ACTIVE Perfected** is tasked with killing the PCs. The relentless **Perfected** (page 70) is wounded (remaining Health of 7) with a jagged piece of metal protruding from its abdomen, but is still a formidable threat.

LAST GRASP: Throughout the scenario, the thrusters have been firing to stabilize the station. Give the PCs a chance to realize they might be able to alter their trajectory. If the PCs manage to neutralize the threat of the Fulfremmen before the station is crushed, or their agendas aligns with the **Perfected**, or simply are too afraid to die, they may want to save the station.

PLOTTING THE ESCAPE: Accessing any station terminal will tell them what they need to do—calculate the proper trajectory to escape the black hole's pull and dump all the station's stored energy into the thrusters. A MU/TH/UR or DA/UT/UR can be used to calculate the trajectory, or a PC can do it with a **COMTECH** roll. A **HEAVY MACHINERY** roll made in the Boiler Room on Deck J will unlock the plasma values so the thrusters can fire full power, and then a **Formidable (-3) PILOTING** roll is required from Control on Deck B.

OVERRIDE CODES: If the PCs have the override codes that were left on a note in the Engineer's Office on Deck D, or they can get the info out of Stykes, the codes allowing them to make these rolls can be inputted into any computer terminal in the station or even on the *Cetorhina*'s bridge. Some of those override codes allow portions of the station to be jettisoned—the Astrometric Observatory (Deck A), the massive Comms Tower (Deck H), and the Living-Hive filled Lifeboats.

[H E A R T O F D A R K N E S S]

FAILING: If the PCs fail the PILOTING roll to change the station's trajectory, MU/TH/UR, a DA/UT/UR, or an NPC will tell them the station is too heavy and doesn't have enough thrust. The PCs have enough time to try one more PILOTING roll. If the station sheds some weight (see Override Codes above), or the *Cetorhina*'s own overpowered thrusters are fired at the right time, the difficulty of the PILOTING roll can be reduced (if the PCs don't think of the *Cetorhina*, Grey can suggest it). Reduce the difficulty of the PILOTING roll one step for each jettisoned

area. Firing the *Cetorhina*'s thrusters reduces the difficulty by two steps.

THE LONG GOODBYE: If all that fails, or if the PCs want the station destroyed, Erebus is now officially doomed. In two Turns, the station's Control Tower crumples in on itself. In four Turns, the station's trawling arms and boom begin to spaghettify, spiraling towards the center of oblivion. After six Turns, the station's hub cracks like an egg, igniting the lower tower's plasma supplies in a massive explosion that wisps away down the Ablassen Drain.

DESPERATE MEASURES

Unless something has happened to them, there are Lifeboats located on Deck I—but they have been packed with Living Proto-Hive Nodules (page 63) and bodies that are incubating new Proto-Xenomorph Deacons. If the PCs want to survive that badly, they can attempt to escape the station in one of those—but they risk spreading the Perfected to the colonies. An Incinerator can be used to kill the Living Hive in the lifeboat, but they will damage the life support system and need to wear compression suits

aboard. If they time things right and rupture the deck's Thermal Plasma Sinks right before launching the Lifeboat, (HEAVY MACHINERY roll followed by a MOBILITY roll to get the Lifeboat hatch closed in time) the force of the explosion can catapult them into a stable orbit around the black hole (PILOTING roll). Someone with Breakthrough or Analysis can figure this out, or a successful OBSERVATION roll can do the trick. The Lifeboat will be stuck in a high orbit unless someone stumbles upon them, but they will survive.

E P I L O G U E

AGENDAS & STORY POINTS

After it's all over, evaluate how well each player followed their PC's Personal Agenda for Act III, and hand out a Story Point to those who did. Then have the players reveal all their Personal Agendas for the scenario if they so wish, and have a debriefing

discussion. Story Points belong to players, not PCs, and players can keep their Story Points to use in the next Cinematic Scenario if they wish. No player can ever have more than three Story Points, however.

SIGNING OFF

It's more than likely the PCs aren't making it out of this one, dying to keep the menace of the Living Proto-Hive from spreading across the stars. If at least one of the PCs does make it, however, here is a suggested sign off message for them. The player can read the following message aloud, or adapt it according to what happened in the scenario.

"Final report from the Weyland-Yutani science team. [PC NAME] reporting.

THE FINAL FUCK YOU

Any PCs who survived by escaping in the *Cetorhina* or by lifeboat are in for a rude awakening. Hidden in a cargo compartment

Unleashed by the Cronus crew nearly 75 years ago, the lifeform discovered here is the ultimate expression of the 26 Draconis Strain. Lifeform is contagious and deadly to humankind. The crew and workforce of Erebus station are dead. Only [NUMBER] of us have survived. We've limited options left. We can only hope that Interference from the black hole doesn't prevent the Network from picking up this message before the UPP does. This is [PC NAME], signing off."

Is a growing Living Proto-Hive Nodule, and something outside the ship is scratching on the hull...

APPENDIX I:

THE PROTO-XENOMORPHS

Erebus hasn't just discovered new life, it has become it. The following section showcases the horrific delights the station has in store for your

PCs—including variations on some familiar aliens of truly Promethean design.

IONIC PROTO-PLASMA Mmorph “HESSDALEN LIGHTS”

Named after the centuries-old light phenomena observed over Norway's Hessdalen Valley, Luxiventem hessdalen is Latin for “Hessdalen living lights.” L. hessdalen are spaceborne microscopic particles of the 26 Draconis Strain that have

survived the breakup of LV-1113. Instead of vaporizing in the ionized plasma jets of the Ablassen black hole, they have self-organized into microscopic helical structures. They are life that shouldn't exist, living where life shouldn't be able to survive.

[HEART OF DARKNESS]

These plasma-based extremophiles live within the black hole's accretion disk. They can infect both machinery and biological entities by hitching a ride on radiation—then spreading through power conduits and circulatory systems alike. Humans and androids alike who suffer direct exposure to Proto-Plasmamorphs must make a Sickness Roll against a Virulence of 6. Those exposed become E Type Abominations (page 69).

CONTAINMENT AND TERMINATION

PROTOCOL: Stay away from black holes. If you bring these things aboard your ship and hook them up to anything with power, they will use that conduit to invade the vessel's power systems. If you get blasted with a radiation burst, you best check yourself for infection.

SECRETS OF THE 26 DRACONIS STRAIN

A derivative of Chemical A0-3959X.91 – 15 (page 287 in the core rulebook), 26 Draconis was a vaccine created by the Cronus crew to arrest the development of a Neo-Xenomorph embryo within a host, turning it into an inert benign tumor while turning the host into a monster. 26 Draconis was responsible for the creation of Abominations. It also was used to alter the DNA of Xenomorph XX121 during the Frontier War.

In orbit of the Ablassen Black Hole, the live viruses in the vaccine mutated and

morphed into the Proto-Xenomorph represented here. The Proto-Xenomorphic life cycle is a codependent symbiosis between four separate organisms created by the 26 Draconis variation—*Luxiventem hessdalen*, *Alvumventem erebos*, *Heptopus tabellarium* and finally *Plagliarus noxapater* (see the following pages).

For more on the 26 Draconis Strain, see the cinematic scenarios *Chariot of the Gods* and *Destroyer of Worlds*, as well as the *Colonial Marines Operations Manual*.

THE LIVING PROTO-HIVE

Created when Hessdalen Lights invade a machine's power systems, the biogenetic-material (scientific name *Alvumventem erebos*) will fuse itself with mechanical forms, leeching power from all systems and altering the machine's molecular structure to accept a self-replicating parasitic

growth of proto-plasmamorphic life within it. The infected machinery is altered as the lifeforms take root, growing acidic tendrils and secreting resin that begin to form on the machine's surface. This melding of biology and technology produces the Living Proto-Hive.

PROTO-HIVE SPECIAL ABILITIES

The special abilities described here are common to the Living Proto-Hive.

RADIATION: Most forms of radiation will nourish the Proto-Hive rather than harm it. Any section of Hive bombarded with radiation will regenerate 1 Health per Round for up to ten Rads without ill effects—i.e., the first 10 points suffered are ignored from any radiation rolls. After that, the overload of radiation takes its toll and damage is suffered as per normal radiation effects (page 76 of the Starter Set rulebook or page 110 of the core rulebook).

NO HEAT SIGNATURE: Using infrared and thermographic sensors to locate someone or something within the Living Proto-Hive is impossible—the entire structure radiates a mask of thermal energy.

ACID SPLASH: When a tendril, membrane, wall, vein, or artery of the Proto-Hive is damaged some of its acid blood may splash on its attacker and anyone within **ENGAGED** range. Only damage that draws blood causes an acid splash—hence a fire attack does not have this effect.

The strength of an acid splash is the Acid Splash rating of the Hive segment plus the amount of damage that the segment took from the attack, in Base Dice, with Damage 1. Armor reduces the damage, but for each ♦ rolled, its Armor Rating is reduced by one, as the acid eats through it. The

acid blood will also affect the environment, and may splash nearby ammo and grenades, or burn through floors, wiring, a ship's hull, and so on (GM's discretion).

The acid blood continues to burn after the initial splash. A victim who suffers damage from the initial splash suffers another attack each Round, at the start of the Round, just like for fire damage (see page 108 of the core rulebook). However, the number of Base Dice rolled for the attack is halved (rounding fractions down) at the start of each new Round, as the acid is slowly used up. If at any point an acid attack roll fails to inflict any damage the acid has burned itself out and the acid effect is over.

If a victim is Broken by the acid splash, or suffers further acid splash damage when already Broken, they must make a Death Roll every Round until they either die or are saved by a MEDICAL AID roll.

IRRITATING SPORES: These spore polyps grow around sensitive areas of the Living Proto-Hive and act as an early warning system for the Fulfremmen. Anyone within **ENGAGED** range of a polyp must make a MOBILITY roll (no action) each Round to not disturb it. Failure means the polyp bursts, spreading its spores. They can cause a nasty rash and irritation (+1 STRESS LEVEL), but no real damage. The spores can be washed off (and the stress modifier removed with it)—or the effects can be negated by an anti-allergic from any medkit.

LIVING PROTO-HIVE NODULES “NODES”

Nodes are resilient—they don't die easy. These man-sized fleshy organic pods have tendrils at their bases, covertly weaving their fast

growing veins through the flooring and into the machines to modify them into a Living Proto-Hive.

HEART OF DARKNESS

"PROTO-HIVE"

SPEED: 1

HEALTH: 24 per zone

SKILLS: None

ARMOR RATING: 8 (4 against fire damage)

ACID SPLASH 8

"NODES"

SPEED: 0

HEALTH: 4

SKILLS: None

ARMOR RATING: 6 (3 against fire damage)

ACID SPLASH 6

CONTAINMENT AND TERMINATION

PROTOCOL: Find the biggest, nastiest biomechanical glob of gunk around—that will be the

infection source. Kill it. Cut out the goddamn thing's heart.

PROTO-XENOMORPH XX033D DRACONIS TYPE

Similar to other Plagiarius lifeforms, the Proto-Xenomorph is a parasitic organism that gestates within a living host. Unlike the Proto-Hive, a Proto-Xenomorph's blood is only mildly caustic, but not acidic enough to cause damage.

Called Protomorphs for short, these

creatures are genetically linked to the Fulfremmen and will always respond to their empathic commands. Their life cycle goes through at least four known stages of evolution, the details of which are covered on the following pages.

PROTOMORPH SPECIAL ABILITIES:

SPRINT: All Protomorph varieties except Stage I can, as a slow action, sprint as if having used two run actions—i.e., through two zones or from an adjacent zone directly into the **ENGAGED** range of a target.

RESISTANCE TO VACUUM: A Protomorph can act indefinitely in the vacuum of space without suffering any ill effects.

IMMUNE TO THE COLD: Cold temperatures seem to have no effect on a Protomorph.

RADIATION: The Protomorph has proven extremely resistant to all forms of radiation. They can suffer 10 Rads before feeling any ill effects—i.e., the first 10 points suffered are ignored from any radiation rolls).

NO RESPIRATION: A Protomorph does not breathe in any way that human science understands.

[THE PROTO-XENOMORPHS]

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: Gestation periods typically take one Shift each. As with all endoparasitic alien lifeforms, the Protomorph's incubation cycle per stage is variable and dependent on the metabolism of the host organism. ■

STAGE I UTERO-PODS "WOMB-BATS"

Once the Living Proto-Hive has a significant foothold on a mechanical form, it will seek to fuse with biological entities. The Proto-Hive will sabotage life support systems to incapacitate and secure victims. It then suspends them from the ceiling, grows webbing over them and injects them with genetic material from Heptopus

tabellarium (page 62). This material consumes the cocooned hosts alive in a centralized chamber, metamorphosing them into translucent, Proto-Ovomorphic Utero-Pods. Within one Shift, these pods burst, spilling amniotic fluid and their contents to the floor as they give birth to Stage II Protomorphs.

STAGE II NAIAD (INFANT) "SQUID-BABY"

The Draconis variant of this pallid creature gestates within the Proto-Hive's Utero-pod. The Naiad is born resembling an aggressive if not particularly effective eyeless squid with only four grasping arms—but it's fast and has a vice grip. The creature will look for a place to hide until its tentacles split and it metamorphoses to Stage III.

CONTAINMENT AND TERMINATION PROTOCOL: Flash-freezing and medical

sterilization protocols will stun this thing for up to a Turn, but not kill it. If you really want to sterilize the goddamn thing, go for a good old incinerator unit instead.

LAUNCHING UNGULATION: As a slow action, the Squid-Baby can launch itself up to one Zone as if using a run or retreat action (not crawling).

"WOMB-BATS"

SPEED: 0

HEALTH: 2

SKILLS: None

ARMOR RATING: 1 (none against fire damage)

UTERO-POD SPECIAL ABILITIES: If a victim comes within ENGAGED range of a Utero-Pod, they must make a MOBILITY roll each Round (no action) to not disturb it. If they fall, the pod will burst and release a Squid-Baby. A Utero-Pod can release its young even at SHORT range—roll a Stress Dice each Round. On a , the Squid-Baby is born.

"SQUID-BABY"

SPEED: 2

HEALTH: 2

SKILLS: Mobility: 9, Observation 4

ARMOR RATING: 1 (none against fire damage)

[H E A R T O F D A R K N E S S]

"SQUID-BABY" ATTACKS

D6 ATTACK

- 1-3 SLITHERING ESCAPE: In a blur of whipping tentacles, the Squid-Baby flees one zone away, slipping into the nearest cover or air duct if possible. As soon as the PCs lose line of sight, combat ends and stealth mode ensues. After one Shift, the Squid-Baby grows into a Trilobite and begins looking for a host to implant.
- 4 REVULSION: The Squid-Baby's undulating motions are revolting to watch, inducing waves of nausea in everyone within close range. Victims must make a Sickness Roll against Virulence 8 or immediately drop what they are carrying, losing a round of action.
- 5 VICE-LIKE GRAPPLE: The Squid-Baby hurls itself at the victim and latches on with its tiny but strong tentacles. Roll using six Base Dice, Damage 2. If any damage is caused, the victim is grappled, automatically inflicting critical Injury #13 (even if the victim is not Broken) and triggering an Immediate Panic Roll.
- 6 SMOTHER ATTACK: The Squid-Baby snaps its tentacles onto the victim's head and squeezes with an unexpected crushing power. The attack has a strength of six Base Dice, Damage 1. Any damage sustained automatically inflicts critical Injury #16, but the Squid-Baby remains attached. The victim will suffocate unless the Squid-Baby's grip can be broken (see Suffocation on page 110 of the core rulebook).

STAGE III TRILOBITE (CARRIER) "CUDDLES"

First hinted at in the garbled recordings of the David Transmissions sent from the USCSS Covenant decades ago, the three-meter tall adult Trilobite is a seven-tentacled parasitic extraterrestrial organism. As it matures, *H. tabellarium* increases size and mass exponentially, growing from a two-kilogram juvenile to a half-ton adult in only one Shift. Just how the creature attains such enormous proportions in so little time has baffled the few scientists who've studied them. As the growth process has never been closely monitored, theories range from a bacterial mass propagation on a macroscale to the creature simply being able to feed off ambient radiation.

The Trilobite is a massive delivery system for a Stage IV Deacon embryo. It will use its large, grasping pincer-tipped tentacles to both brace itself and pin its prey, exposing the victim to the toothy maw located on its ventral side. Once so secured, six fleshy petals arranged around the mouth will open, revealing winking orifices that contain coiled prehensile tendrils. These whip-like

appendages grasp the head of its prey and hold it steady for oral proboscis insertion. After a successful penetration, *H. tabellarium* will go catatonic, covering the victim with its own body to protect the host during embryo implantation.

After embryo implantation is complete, *H. tabellarium* will remove itself from the host and die nearby. A Stage IV of the Protomorph life cycle will emerge from the dead host within another 1 Shift.

CONTAINMENT AND TERMINATION

PROTOCOL: This goddamn thing is huge, and hard to kill. Try not to get too close to it—if one of those thick tentacles grabs you good, it will either snap your neck or line you up and ram a meter long by twelve-centimeter-thick phallus down your throat. If you're lucky, you'll pass out from the pain before the thing lays its massive bulk over you, pumps you full of its genetic payload, and dies. You know what, fuck this thing. Napalm the son of a bitch.

[THE PROTO-XENOMORPHS]

"CUDDLES"**SPEED:** 2**HEALTH:** 9**SKILLS:** Mobility: 4, Observation 9**ARMOR RATING:** 5 (2 against fire damage)

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: If the embryo can be surgically removed from the victim within three Turns of implantation (MEDICAL AID roll with a -3 modifier), the victim will survive. They will still require 2D6 days to heal. ■

"CUDDLES" ATTACKS**D6** **ATTACK**

- 1 **INTIMIDATE:** The Trilobite rises to its full three-meter height, exposing its underbelly maw and sizing up its victim. Panic Roll.
- 2 **SIZING UP FOR HOSTS:** The beast silently undulates and shakes its tentacles as it surveys the available targets. It seems to be smelling or tasting the air in its search for the best host. Everyone within SHORT range gains +1 STRESS and must make an immediate Panic Roll.
- 3 **GRABBING TENTACLE:** The Trilobite whips out a tentacle, snaring the victim. It attacks with eight Base Dice, Damage 1. If the tentacle hits, the Trilobite immediately drags the victim to a neighboring zone. The victim goes prone. STRESS LEVEL increases by +1 for the victim and they must make an immediate Panic Roll.
- 4 **TOPPLING LASH:** The Trilobite lashes out with a tentacle, sweeping the victim's legs. It attacks with ten Base Dice, Damage 1. If the attack hits, the victim is knocked prone, dropping any hand-held items. The victim gains STRESS LEVEL +1 and must make an immediate Panic Roll.
- 5 **CRUSHING GRAPPLE:** The Trilobite wraps its tentacles around the victim, grabbing it. It attacks with eight Base Dice, Damage 2. If it hits it automatically inflicts critical injury #33 (even if the victim is not Broken) and the victim makes an immediate Panic Roll.
- 6 **VIOLATION:** The Trilobite entangles the victim with its tentacles, grabbing it. Make an opposed roll with ten Base Dice against the target's CLOSE COMBAT skill.
 - ▶ If the Trilobite wins, the victim is grappled, and tendrils force their head into position. Immediately roll for a new attack with ten Base Dice. If it gets one or more , the poor victim is immediately Broken and suffers critical injury #46. Their last sensations are horrifying as the Trilobite thrusts its proboscis into the victim's mouth, implanting its embryo before they pass out. The Trilobite goes catatonic, covering the victim with its own body to protect the host during embryo implantation.
 - ▶ If the victim wins, they fend off the proboscis for this attack, but they must still make an immediate Panic Roll.

STAGE IV AETHON (JUVENILE) "DEACON"

Stage IV Protomorphs carry many similar traits to Xenomorph XX121. For instance, they are both voracious, eyeless humanoid creatures with elongated skulls. The major differences lie in the

Protomorph's lack of biomechanical features, dorsal stacks and tail—as well as their completely different jaw structure.

HEART OF DARKNESS

A Deacon's upper jaw protrudes in a manner similar to a goblin shark when provoked, allowing it to pull prey in for the kill. That upper jaw contains human-like teeth, while the creature's lower and inner jaw sport hooked incisors for grasping. The curved and tapered head of the eyeless alien is reminiscent of a bishop or deacon's cowl, prompting its unconventional nomenclature. The deep blue-skinned bipedal Deacons have no tail. A Deacon born from a human starts off at about half a meter tall and grows to three times that size within one Shift, its strength and endurance increasing continuously during that time.

A gestating Deacon's cells rapidly consume organ, muscle, and bone mass directly from its host, killing the victim and leaving nothing more than an empty brittle-boned shell of a corpse in its wake. When the juvenile is ready to be born, it uses its pointed head to slice its way out of the deceased host's chest, bisecting the already

weakened ribcage and emerging with limbs fully developed. A newborn Deacon will flop out of its victim and to the ground with an amniotic feeding sac still attached to. Deacons are gangly and awkward, not unlike a newborn fawn. Curious creatures, they will take the time to survey their surroundings before making an attack. The Deacon's most chilling attribute however would be its signature shriek—a wailing cry that can freeze you in your tracks with fright.

CONTAINMENT AND TERMINATION

PROTOCOL: A newborn Deacon is disorientated at birth, needing a Round to disconnect itself from its feeding sack and take in its surroundings before it can act. If you want to kill it, that's as good a time as any. The shock of witnessing its birth can cause you to hesitate (Panic Roll), however, so I recommend that as soon as you gather your own wits you pull that trigger. And don't miss.

DEACON ATTACKS

D6 • ATTACK

- 1 **HORRIFIC SCREECH:** The Deacon emits an ear-piercing wail that shakes anyone present to their very core. All victims within MEDIUM range must make an immediate Panic Roll.
- 2 **RIPPING CLAWS:** By slashing hands and kicking feet, the Deacon's claws tear at its victim. The attack is made using six Base Dice, Damage 1 (armor piercing).
- 3 **PIERCING SHRIEK:** The Deacon focuses on the nearest target and emits a terrible war-shriek directly at them. The victim must make an immediate STAMINA roll (no action) or lose their next slow and fast actions. They gain +1 STRESS LEVEL either way, as the Deacon marks them for death.
- 4 **SLASHING LIMBS:** The Deacon uses its incredible agility to attack one victim with eight Base Dice, Damage 1, then pivots and slashes at a second target within SHORT range. This second attack is made with six Base Dice, Damage 1 (armor piercing). If there is no target within range the second attack is made against the original victim. All who witness this terrible display gain +1 STRESS LEVEL.
- 5 **HOOK JAW:** The Deacon's jaws spring forward, latching onto a victim's limb. The victim is attacked using eight Base Dice, Damage 2. If the attack causes damage, it automatically inflicts critical injury #36 (even if the victim is not Broken) and grapples the victim. Anything the victim is holding is dropped and the Deacon stays latched on. Any CLOSE COMBAT attempt to break the grapple suffers a -3 modifier. The victim must make an immediate Panic Roll. As a slow action on each of its initiatives, the Deacon can then attack the grappled victim using six Base Dice, Damage 2 (this attack cannot be blocked).
- 6 **SNAP SHREDDER:** The Deacon makes its Hook Jaw attack as above with one alteration—once latched on to the victim's limb, the Deacon immediately snaps its extended jaw back into its mouth. The victim is attacked using eight Base Dice, Damage 2. If the attack causes damage, it automatically inflicts critical injury #54 or #55 (even if the victim is not Broken). The victim's limb is shredded and severed in the process. This attack causes a Panic Roll.

[THE PROTO-XENOMORPHS]

"DEACON"**SPEED:** 2**HEALTH:** 5**SKILLS:** Mobility: 7, Observation 6**ARMOR RATING:** 6 (3 against fire damage)

A NOTE FROM MU/TH/UR: Scientifically referred to as *plagiarus noxapater*-or mimic father of night-the Deacon may be an early step in the evolutionary chain of even more complex *Plagiarus* forms. Although it most certainly has one, the Protomorph's fifth stage has yet to be confirmed. As such, their full capabilities are unknown. ■

ABOMINATION E TYPE VARIANT

A monstrous mutation of both humans and androids brought about by exposure to the Hessdalen Lights, the E variant Abomination goes

through two stages of gestation before achieving "perfection." For further variations of the sickness, see the cinematic scenario *Chariot of the Gods*.

STAGE I "THE TAINTED"

Changes begin with the onset of rapid surface mottling in the infected victim's extremities and moves inward towards the core body. Eventually the victim's cranium begins to soften and elongate as their higher functions are rewired. By the end of this stage, the process becomes excruciating, and the victim lashes out. As acidosis takes effect, the victim's pH levels shift significantly.

INFECTION: Exposure to the Hessdalen Lights

is treated as a disease with Virulence 6. If the Sickness Roll fails, the patient enters Stage I. For the purposes of this Cinematic scenario, you as GM are allowed to skip the roll and simply decide if a PC is infected, for maximum dramatic effect.

Within one Shift, the victim starts to exhibit the first symptoms. For humans, this causes their **STRESS LEVEL** to increase by one. Androids will simply be confused. Within another Shift, the patient typically advances to Stage II.

STAGE II "THE MUTATED"

Painful cellular mutations ravage the Abomination's body, causing them to take on an aggressive posture. The victim's limbs distend and become pliable, allowing them to contort into strange positions. The brain and skull continue to

elongate, and the victim takes on a feral appearance and attitude. Strength, speed, and agility are all heightened. Only a rudimentary knowledge of their former self remains, but they are still aware enough to use basic tools and weapons.

H E A R T O F D A R K N E S S

EFFECTS: The victim gains Speed 2, i.e. it gets to act twice per Round. **STRENGTH** increases by 3 (and Health along with it). **AGILITY** is increased by 1, while **EMPATHY** is reduced to 1. **EMPATHY**-based skills cannot be used. Firearms and other technological items cannot be used. The victim becomes immune to **MANIPULATION**.

The victim becomes aggressive and attacks others on sight. An infected PC can play out one

such attack, then the victim turns into an NPC controlled by the GM.

Other variations of the Draconis Strain transform the victim into further Abominations. On *Erebos*, a Mutant will stalk the corridors for one Shift, finally cocooning itself within the Living Proto-Hive to metamorphose into the Perfected.

FULFREMMEN "THE PERFECTED"

A hyper-intelligent form of xenobiological life, the Fulfremmen are the ultimate secret of the 26 Draconis Strain—it doesn't just turn people into Abominations—it evolves anyone who survives those stages into higher beings. The Fulfremmen have an affinity for the black goo, manipulating its coding to meld flesh and steel into biomechanical monstrosities like the Living Proto-Hives.

A forbidden evolutionary variation accidentally unlocked by the Cronus crew on LV-1113, the Fulfremmen seek revenge against the beings who engineered humanity. Unable to reproduce without hosts and the Living Hive, the Fulfremmen have no gender. They intend to multiply themselves through human and Engineer hosts and spread Proto-Hive spores across the middle heavens.

HYPERBLIND: The Perfected are unable to detect living things in cryosleep.

"THE PERFECTED"

SPEED: 3

HEALTH: 12

SKILLS: Mobility: 9, Observation 12

ARMOR RATING: 12 (5 against fire damage)

FLUIDITY OF MOTION: The Fulfremmen move with a measured grace that allows them to leap twice the distance of a human being without any negative side effects.

[THE PROTO-XENOMORPHS]



[H E A R T O F D A R K N E S S]

"THE PERFECTED" ATTACKS

D6 ATTACK

- 1 MESMERIZE: The Perfected stares down its victim in **SHORT range** with its pitch-black eyes. The victim must make a Wits roll (the attribute only, no skill) or be lost in the depths of those soulless voids, entranced and immobilized. If the roll fails, the victim loses their next fast and slow action. In addition, **STRESS LEVEL** increases by +1 for the victim and all friendly PCs in **SHORT range**. If uninterrupted, the **Perfected will attempt a Fatal Kiss attack (below) on its next action.**
- 2 TURN: The Perfected locks eyes with the nearest victim. Through a combination of mental prowess and pheromones, it can hypnotize a single victim into attacking their own kind. The victim must succeed at a straight Empathy test (no skill) or be compelled to defend the Fulfremmen who hypnotized them. The hypnotism lasts until the victim succeeds at an Empathy test, made at the start of each Round, or suffers damage, which breaks the link.
- 3 PSIONIC BLAST: This mental surge reverberates through the victim's skull, automatically causing critical injury #16 and ears, eyes and nose to bleed. The attack is made with ten Base Dice, Damage 2.
- 4 SLASH AND GRAB: Using six Base Dice, Damage 1, the Perfected attempts to rake its nails across its victim's torso. Unless the victim is able to contain the bleeding, the Perfected will be able to track the victim through the scent of their blood.
- 5 PSIONIC SUMMONING: A psionic whistling rings in the ears of everyone present, calling two Deacons to the Perfected's defense. They reach the zone the following Round, then draw initiative and can act.
- 6 FATAL KISS: Make an opposed roll with ten Base Dice against the target's CLOSE COMBAT skill (does not count as an action for the victim).
 - ▶ If the Perfected is successful, it embraces the victim, leaning in for a kiss. Immediately roll for another attack with ten Base Dice (does not count as an action). One or more  means the Perfected locks lips with the victim, lashing its barbed tongue into their mouth. The victim is immediately Broken by this and automatically suffers critical injury #46.
 - ▶ If the victim wins, they fend off the kiss, but must still make an immediate Panic Roll.

APPENDIX II:

G E A R

WEAPONS

WEAPON	BONUS	DAMAGE	RANGE	WEIGHT	COST	COMMENT
Bionational TX-9 Chemical And Biological Injection Air Pistol	+1	1	Medium	1/2	\$300	Delivers toxins or bioweapons, armor doubled.
Weyland ES-4 Semi-Automatic Electrostatic Pistol	+1	1	Medium	1/2	\$1,000	Stun effect, armor piercing.
Weyland ES-7 Supernova Dual-Action Electrostatic Shockgun	+2	2	Short	1	\$1,200	Stun effect, armor piercing.
Weyland Flammenmacher 3 Heavy Incinerator Unit	+1	3	Long	2	\$2,000	Fire Intensity 12
Norcomm QSZ-203 Semi-Automatic Pistol	+1	1	Medium	1/2	\$400	Armor piercing.

WEAPONS

WEAPON	BONUS	DAMAGE	RANGE	WEIGHT	COST	COMMENT
Norcomm AK-104s Pulse	—	2	Long	—	—	Armor piercing, full auto,
Action Suit Gun						included in the CCC5 Combat Compression Suit.
Armat U4C Civilian Crowd Control Projectile Launcher	+2	VARIES	LONG	2	\$1,100	Equipped with M230 Baton Rounds and T3 Tear Gas Rounds (page 74).

AMMUNITION

WEAPON	DAMAGE	WEIGHT	COST	COMMENT
M230 Baton Rounds (for U4C Launcher)	3	1/4	\$30	For U1/U4. Armor doubled. Any critical injury inflicted will be #16, #24, or #33 (equal chance of each).
T3 Tear Gas Canister Rounds (for U4 Launcher)	Special	1/4	\$30	If no eye and breathing gear, all skill rolls are -2 until the area is vacated and a MEDICAL AID roll is made.

OTHER EQUIPMENT

DEVICE	WEIGHT	COST	COMMENT
CBRN Detection Kit	1	\$800	Detects viruses, toxins, radiation and gives +2 to Sickness Rolls.

SUITS AND BODY ARMOR

SUIT	ARMOR RATING	AIR SUPPLY	WEIGHT	COST	COMMENT
Full Face Rebreather Mask	—	1	1/2	\$100	Protects against gaseous and airborne chemical and biological contaminants, but not vacuum.
					Breath underwater. Air Supply of 2. Built-in comm unit.
Kevlar Riot Vest	4	—	1	\$600	Built-in comm unit.
ECO2 All Worlds Systems Hostile Environment Survival Suit	8	6	3	\$20,000	Built-In comm unit. Air Supply of 6. Reinforced shell. Designed for high pressure environments.
Professional Hazmat Suit	1	3	2	\$1,000	Armor Rating 1, Air Supply 3. Built-in comm unit. Protects against chemical and biological contaminants and radiation.
CCC5 Combat Compression Suit	2	5	2	\$15,500	OBSERVATION -1, AK-104 attached

H E A R T O F D A R K N E S S

WEAPONS

BIONATIONAL TX-9 CHEMICAL AND BIOLOGICAL INJECTION AIR PISTOL:

This short-range pistol fires darts that can be loaded with a variety of pharmaceuticals or toxins, including bioweapons in serum form (page 109 in the core rulebook). Armor is doubled against this weapon, and it can never cause more than one point of damage—which it also needs to inflict in order to deliver its payload.

WEYLAND ES-4 SEMI-AUTOMATIC ELECTROSTATIC PISTOL AND ES-7 SUPERNOVA DUAL-ACTION ELECTROSTATIC SHOCKGUN:

Carried

by the Corrections Officers on Erebus, these electrostatic kinetic energy projectile weapons fire armor piercing rounds that carry a stun charge. Any human target that suffers damage from an attack must make a hard STAMINA roll (-2, doesn't count as an action) or be stunned for one Round, unable to act.

ARMAT U4C CIVILIAN CROWD CONTROL PROJECTILE LAUNCHER:

Designed for crowd control, this dedicated projectile launcher is equipped with the M230 Baton Rounds and T3 Tear Gas ammunition, but it can also fire other varieties.

EXPLOSIVES AND AMMUNITION

M230 BATON ROUNDS: These rubber projectiles are non-lethal deterrents. Armor is doubled and any critical injuries from these rounds will be #16, #24, or #33 (equal chance of each).

T3 TEAR GAS CANISTER ROUNDS: This non-lethal gas causes a stinging sensation in the eyes and upper respiratory tract. Any unprotected human or feline within the same zone as a fired canister suffers -2 to all skill rolls. The effect lasts until the victim exits the area and a MEDICAL AID roll is made.

SUITS AND GEAR

ECO2 ALL WORLD SYSTEMS HIGH PRESSURE SURVIVAL SUIT: Like the original ECO, this EVA hardsuit has fully articulated rotary joints and self-actuating fingers, providing a limited range of mobility. The ECO2 is designed for both vacuum and high-pressure environments. The helmet has a sophisticated heads-up display built in, and the suit has its own thrusters for tether-free zero G maneuvers.

PROFESSIONAL HAZMAT SUIT: This sealed bodysuit acts as protection against hazardous materials. The suit protects fully against chemical and biological contaminants as long as nothing has pierced it. It also acts as armor against radiation. Each time you suffer a Radiation Point, roll six Base Dice—if you roll one or more , the Rad is absorbed by the suit. HAZMAT suits have a built-in comm unit and an Air Supply of 3. They do not protect against the vacuum of space.

CBRN DETECTION KIT: This Chemical Biological Radiological and Nuclear Detection Kit includes a Geiger counter, a biological and chemical agent diagnostic device, four doses of neurotoxin inhibitors, four emergency respirators (good for one Turn each before they need to be recharged), a pair of acid proof gloves and goggles, syringes, sampling tools, chemical

detection paper, and four heat resistant specimen jars. Using this kit automatically detects the current Radiation Level (page 110 of the core rulebook and page 76 of the Starter Set rulebook) and any chemical or biological pathogen at the user's location. It also gives the user a +2 modification to any Sickness Roll (page 109 in the core rulebook).

APPENDIX III: VEHICLES AND SPACECRAFT

VEHICLES I

KELLARD AND HOWDESHELL MODEL DG-23B RORQUAL HARVESTER

CLASSIFICATION: ▶ M-Class Commercial Plasma Harvester/Tanker

STANDARD EQUIPMENT: ▶ 8 × Power Loaders

WEYLAND EVA-7C PRESSURE POD

▶ Extravehicular Activity Pressure Pod

▶ 4 × low-powered industrial lasers damage 2
▶ 2 × heavy, 2 × medium, 2 × fine manipulator arms provide +3 to HEAVY MACHINERY rolls

VEHICLES

VEHICLE	LENGTH	PASSENGERS	MANEUVERABILITY	SPEED	HULL	ARMOR
EVA-7 Pressure Pod	8m	1-2	+2	3	6	6

SPACECRAFT

SPACECRAFT	LENGTH	CREW	FTL	SIGNATURE	THRUSTERS	HULL	ARMOR
Class B Type 20 EEV	8m	4	N/A	-2	-1	2	2
USCSS <i>Cetorhina</i>							
M Class Harvester/Tanker	280m	2-8	6	+1	+2		
	9	5					
SVV Snova Trakhnu							
VP-153D Kremlin Class Destroyer	900m	18	3	+2	-1	15	10
Erebos Station Resurrection Class	1100m	160	N/A	+3	-2	15	8
Plasma Trawling Platform/ Recharge Station							

HEART OF DARKNESS

CLASS B EEV TYPE 20 SERIES

A cheap box-like, eight-meter-long pod with minimal thruster capability, the Type 20 has cramped seating, no capacity for cryosleep,

no FTL, and can sustain up to four occupants for only ten days. Type 20s cannot land on a planet and will burn up on reentry.

WEYLAND EVA-7 SERIES PRESSURE POD

Designed to perform deep space excavations and sample retrieval, the Extravehicular Activity Pressure Pod is a two-person armored bubble with engines, storage pods, an airlock and massive diggers and manipulator arms attached. The pod's

scanners use a form of echolocation to penetrate rock and map out what may be buried in it. The pod can withstand up to 30,000 psi of pressure, making it an ideal work vehicle near gravitational eddies.

SVV SNOVA TRAKHNU VP-153D KREMLIN CLASS DESTROYER

This UPP Destroyer has been sent to retrieve its operatives from *Erebos* and destroy the station. Equipped with an array of nuclear

weapons, the formidable warship also carries a squad of highly trained Space Operating Forces commandos

MANUFACTURER: NORCOMM-LIU

CREW: 18

FTL RATING: 3

SIGNATURE: +2

THRUSTERS: -1

HULL: 15

INTERNAL MODULES:

- ▶ Artificial Intelligence I
- ▶ Air Scrubbers IV
- ▶ Cargo Bay V
- ▶ Cryo Deck IV
- ▶ Docking Umbilical II × 2
- ▶ EEV II × 6
- ▶ Galley IV
- ▶ Hangar IV × 2
- ▶ Vehicle Bay IV
- ▶ Medlab II × 2

ARMAMENTS:

- ▶ Tactical Nukes
- ▶ 800MeV Particle Beam Weapon
- ▶ 400MeV Particle Beam Weapon
- ▶ Short Lance ASAT Missiles
- ▶ Orbital Mines

UPGRADES:

- ▶ Overpowered
- ▶ Thrusters
- ▶ Boosted Displacement Drive × 6
- ▶ Added Hardpoints





FREE LEAGUE

