

Justifiers RPG:

Out of the Mists

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DUNIVANT

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Out of the Mists

A Justifiers RPG Adventure Sourcebook

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OUT OF THE MISTS

FOREWORD

This adventure is a work of fiction. All names, characters, events and locations described are fictitious. Any resemblances to actual persons (living or dead), organized events or location descriptions are purely coincidental.

This book is dedicated to the newest StarChild; Caitlin Elisabeth Barlow. Born to Gideon and Jenni Barlow on May 5, 1990.

INTRODUCTION

Out of the Mists is an adventure/sourcebook designed for use with the Justifiers RPG. This adventure can be played by 1 to 9 players. Despite the number of players, no one should be allowed to play the mission commander for reasons that will become obvious later.

This is not just an adventure module, but a complete planetary sourcebook with enough information to take the players through any number of adventures on this world. The actual adventure included here takes place on and about a land bridge between the two principal continents.

This adventure is set on Altair 3, a young world. In fact, it is a world so young that it shouldn't have higher level life forms but it does. How and why these people exist is the question the players have to answer before justifying Altair 3.

THE ADVENTURE

The players will take the roles of a group of Justifiers awaiting new orders on Colony World 6432-AS, nicknamed Pascal. The players' Corp is left to the GM's discretion. This makes it easier for the GM to work this adventure into an ongoing campaign.

GM READ THE FOLLOWING ALOUD:

At 05:30 this morning you were awakened and ordered to report to Col. Adamson in conference room D at 08:00. It is now 08:10 and the entire group is waiting anxiously for Col. Adamson, your control officer, to show up and begin the briefing.

Conference room D has several folding type chairs in the center of the room forming a rough semicircle in front of a vid-screen. The vid-screen itself is dark, but lights up suddenly as Col. Adamson enters the room, the remote in his hand. You all stand at attention.

"Be seated. This will be brief," begins Col. Adamson, "Your AI (Artificial Intelligence computer) is already programmed with most of the astronomical data we've accumulated, so I won't waste time on the details. You can each fill out your knowledge according to your areas of specialty."

The Col. is an imposing figure. A tall muscular human, he has enough telltale scars to prove he's risen to command from the field.

"This is Altair 3. Of course you're viewing a computer simulation based on radio and optical telescopic observations."

A holographic image is projected from the screen behind the Col. It shows a group of worlds orbiting an A7 star. There are six planets in all. As you watch, the computer simulation zooms in on the third world until it is the only visible object.

"Altair 3 is your mission. As far as we can tell, its general climate is tropical; three of its four continents fall entirely within this tropical zone. Two are extremely close together, with the possibility of a land bridge spanning the distance between the two."

The computer image shifts and zooms closer to reveal the hint of continents beneath the dense clouds. With close observation you can see the hint of a darker green smear joining the two continents across the blue-green seas.

"Your optimum exploration area is this questionable area between continents A and B. The only planetary anomalies appear to be a slightly higher than normal background radiation level. The boys in Planetary assure me this is to be expected from such a young world.

"Your equipment and weapons will be standard issue. You'll be taking along an ATV Van instead of an APC. We don't expect you to encounter any hostile



lifeforms. As young as this world is it'll be a miracle if you find anything bigger than a trilobite."

The Col. leans back against the vid-screen, his hands across his chest. "Any questions?" he asks.

At this point the Col. will answer questions for a few moments, but will give them no new information. He will restate the facts just as he has already stated them. If asked for specifics he will refer them to their shuttle's artificial intelligence program. If asked for additional weapons and or equipment he will deny the request.

Once the PCs (player characters) enter the shuttle they will get the following specific information from the AI:

"The world is very young, probably still generating some of its own heat. This accounts in part for its tropical climate. The exact age is roughly 1/2 that of Terra.

"The world's weather patterns are extremely slow. This might be a function of the thick atmosphere. The greenhouse effect plays an important part in both the weather and the climate.

"Of the four continents, three lie in the equatorial zone. All are somewhat small. The fourth continent is in the arctic region. The southern polar icecap doesn't seem supported by a continent at all."

The AI also will print out the following information:

WORLD LOG

System: Altair

World: Altair 3

System Position: Third

Number of Satellites: 2

Gravity: 1G

Land Area: 31%

Planetary conditions:

Length of Day - 28 hours

Atmospheric Density - Thick

General Climate - Tropical

Designer's Note: Altair 3 is 3.3 light years from Pascal. Real-time transfer will therefore take just over 3 months. Subjective time transfer will be instant.

This is all the AI will have time to show. While the crew settles into their stations aboard the shuttle, a powerful little robot attaches itself to the rear of the shuttle and pushes it through the TransMatt field. Instantly they are in orbit around Altair 3.

PLANETARY

Having achieved orbit without difficulty, the AI will now launch the communications and weather satellites and initiate a scan of the planet's surface.

The dense atmosphere seems to also contain mildly radioactive particles of a type the AI cannot identify. The readings themselves are too low to be considered hazardous, but they seem to interfere with the AI's ability to penetrate the cloud cover.

As they scan the land bridge between continents A and B. The AI will announce the following:

"Scans suggest a possible anomaly near the land bridge connecting continents A and B. There is a 77% chance based on available data that there is an artificial structure, possibly inhabited at Area 9, Sector 1."

If asked how it determined this, the AI will reply:

"Visual scans suggest a structure of some kind, possibly wooden. Its shape and size do not conform to the surrounding natural setting. This indicates that it is a construction, not a landscape feature."



"Thermal patterns in the immediate region suggest the presence of a populace. Any significant population area will have a distinct heat pattern. The pattern here suggests the presence of open fires of the type used for cooking, firing pots, or the primitive smelting of ores. These are preliminary findings and may be less than accurate due to the interference I am encountering."

In answer to any further questions, such as possible population or the nature of the population the AI will simply respond:

"Insufficient data."

If the PCs ask for a landing site, or if after several minutes the players do not ask for a landing site the AI will volunteer the following:

"There is a suitable landing site in Area 11, sector 3. This is 58.3 miles southwest of the anomaly."

Designer's Note: If the PCs take too long looking around from space, there are several ways for a good GM to speed up things. Give them a little nudge with a shuttle malfunction. Having their life support systems start to loose power is a good way to get their attention. Then during the landing have the AI continue announce the power drops. For example, "Life support is now at -20% power and dropping." It helps if you roll some dice while your making the announcements, just for effect.

THE FOG

Upon landing, the PCs will discover themselves surrounded by a dense tropical rain forest, tall fern-like plants and thick limbed trees. The air is rich with moisture and the ground is soft and deep with humus. The trees themselves tower over everything, including the shuttle, which now rests in a wide clearing, its landing gear up to their lug nuts in the soft earth.



Although it is almost mid-day, the sun cannot burn away the heavy mist that hangs in the air.

As the PCs unload they begin noticing malfunctions occurring with their equipment (GM's discretion as to the nature of the malfunctions). The break-downs should be annoying, but not too severe at this point. Even at very close range communicators produce severe background noise and transmission is unstable. If the PCs check their equipment, they find it in perfect working order.

After further checks and scans of the area, the AI reports that the fog contains the same trace radiations that interfered with its scanner operations. At closer range these elements seem to interfere with all electrical systems. The interference is similar to the EMP (electromagnetic pulse) from a nuclear warhead explosion, but on a much smaller scale. The AI still insists that there is no danger from the radiation, but it will continue to interfere with all electronics for the duration of the mission. Weather satellite observations show that heavier patches of fog will move into the area at nightfall. The AI generates the following chart to give the chance of a piece of equipment functioning normally at any given time of day.

Have the players roll percentile (using D100) on this chart any time they try to use a piece of electronic equipment.

Dawn	5%
+ 1 Hrs.	10%
+ 3 Hrs.	20%
+ 5 Hrs.	40%
Noon	
Dawn + 7 Hrs.	60%
+ 2 Hrs.	65%
+ 2 Hrs.	40%
+ 1 Hrs.	20%
+ 1 Hrs.	10%
Dusk	
Dawn + 14 Hrs.	5%

After dark all electronic equipment becomes practically useless, with a 1% chance of it operating normally at any given time.

Designer's Note: Electronic equipment includes such things as the vehicles that are on board the shuttle, all beam weapons, all scientific field instruments, and all types of exo-skeletons. Use your best judgment, don't let this become a source of frustration. Make it a challenge for the PCs. Scientific equipment needed to understand a clue to carry the players forward in the game can and should function when absolutely needed.

Only the shuttle interior is immune to the fog. This is because of its heavier shielding. Its on board systems will function normally, although it requires 30% more power than normal to maintain its area scans. This means that all non-vital ship board systems will be scaled down to compensate for the additional power drain.

Other vehicles can be made operative. The addition of shielding to their powerplants will slow down the vehicles to 60% of their previous speed and cut their agility in half.

From the moment that the PCs, land every motion sensor they have (when they're functional) will report that this entire forest is teeming with movement. All sizes of life forms are detected, from a barely detectable mouse-like creature burrowing through the humus, to a pig-like animal the size of a small dog.

The commander will order the ATV van assembled and a perimeter established. While on watch, the PCs will see many shapes, both large and small, moving through the fog.

Assembly time for the ATV Van under normal circumstances is 18 man hours (1 hour for each 5 points of body). With the additional shielding required to make the vehicle completely operable in Altair 3's radioactive mists it will take both engineers a total of 28 man hours to complete assembly.

Shielding will have to be fabricated from extra shielding currently in place in the shuttle's engineering section. This is extra shielding included as an additional safety measure and will not affect the shuttle's operation.

Designer's Note: One person working one hour is a man hour. If it takes 28 man hours to assemble, that is one man working 28 hours, 2 men working 14 hours, 3 men working 9.33 hours, etc. The character lending aid has to have the skill to do the job. Having helpers with no knowledge in the task would actually slow down the assembly time.

During the intervening hours the Commander will supervise the unloading and assembly operations. As she supervises, she seems to go out of her way to point out the slightest mistakes. Usually very loudly and with as much sarcasm as

possible. She will berate each crew member in turn, bombarding them with stupid and insignificant regulations.

PCs making a successful roll against their Corporate Structure skill will realize that the commander is out of line. She is taking most of what she is saying completely out of context or in the strictest interpretation. More experienced characters may try to challenge her knowledge or question her methods. She will meet even the most mildly phrased protests with a venomous attack on the questioner. Her "I'm in charge here! Do what I say!" attitude will infuriate everyone in the group.

Once the van is assembled, the commander will tell the entire crew they will go to Area 9, Sector 1, the suspected city site, the next morning. Commander Arden will hear no arguments or discussions on the matter. She will order that everyone must go, she doesn't want the crew separated at this point.

If anyone tries to stay at the shuttle, she will break into a heated tirade, calling that person a coward. If the PC is a Beta she will use racial slurs and personal details (from the character's personnel files) to embarrass and berate them. See **Personalities** (page 41) for a complete description of the Commander and the other NPCs.

Designer's Note: It is important that the Commander is as obnoxious as possible. To the point that some more creative players may try to arrange an "accident" or even an act of mutiny against her. This is to be encouraged. Yet it must fail at the last moment, with the Commander having full knowledge of the attempt. She will use it to threaten the player's career or even his life.

That night, the Commander will issue weapons to the crew from the shuttle's armory. She will insist on side arms only, afraid that any intelligent life they encounter might be frightened into the wrong actions by, "an overt display of weaponry." Arden will issue herself only a stopper.



The next day dawns and the disgruntled party sets out for the area of the suspected habitation. Along the way the Commander will order frequent (2D10 + 5) stops for the collection of "scientific samples," by the field scientists.

Roll on the following chart for random encounters with wildlife during these stopovers.

Roll D100

01-09	No encounter
10-25	D6 Swamp Rats
26-35	1 Flying Worm
36-41	1 Tentacles
42-49	D6 Swamp Lizards
50-63	D10 Beetles
64-78	2D10 Flying Worms
79-95	No encounter
96-98	D6 Swamp Rats
99-00	Poilu

See the **Bestiary** (page 53) for specifics on these creatures. If an encounter with the Altairians occurs, all the PCs will feel that they are under observation, but they won't see anything.

At each stop the Commander will remain in the van, exiting only if specifically asked to do so by a subordinate to examine some item or contribute in her field of expertise. If an encounter occurs while she is in the line of fire, she will freeze for 1D6 minutes. When she recovers she will either fire erratically (aiming at enemy and comrade alike) or she will throw down her weapon and run.

Afterward she will seem even more paranoid. If anyone speaks about her actions, she will foster the blame off on the character that spoke and write that person up for misconduct.

As the PCs go further over the land bridge, the land will become increasingly swampy. Three miles into the swamp, Arden will order the team members to walk in front of the ATV. If anyone protests this action she will verbally whip that person.

The Commander will defend her actions by stating that the ATV sensors are not working correctly. She further explains that she refuses to be responsible when the driver wrecks the ATV and gets it stuck in the swamp. Commander Arden will then volunteer to go out first to lead the way. For every 100 yards the ATV progresses there will be a 5% cumulative chance that Arden will lead the pilot in to a bog where the ATV will become stuck. The pilot may choose to roll

against his pilot ground vehicle skill but the van will eventually get stuck regardless of the crew's attempts.

As soon as the ATV becomes stuck she will demand that everyone (except the pilot) exit and help push the ATV out of the bog. The team will realize after several minutes of pushing that it is impossible to move the van. When someone mentions this to the Commander, she will send them back into the ATV so that she can think without their whining.

The Commander will stand with her back to the swamp kicking the ATV. Behind her, attracted by the noise, the Swamp Dwellers creep up on the van. There will be 1D10 of them travelling in a loose pack. As they approach, any PC making a successful WIS roll will pick up a faint whiff of decay. The smell will intensify as the Swamp Dwellers come closer.

Immediately upon sighting the Swamp Dwellers, the Commander will draw her stopper and fire. As she fires she will scream at the team to come out and fight. The Swamp Dwellers will then launch a shambling attack on the PCs, roaring wildly and attacking without any tactics.

Some of them (20%) will be carrying large crude clubs made from uprooted trees, the roots sharpened into deadly spikes (3D6 plus damage bonus). They will wield these with considerable accuracy (+20% to hit). The remaining Swamp Dwellers will try to grapple with the players, using their huge fists (Enormous Club 2D6 + 8 plus Damage Bonus) or constricting them with a vice-like grip (Damage Bonus each round). It is not necessary to make a Strike roll, the grip can only be broken by a successful Strength roll (D%).

The Swamp Dwellers' heap-like composition will stop damage like 5 inches of earth. They will not attempt to dodge and will cease their attacks only if a limb is severed. This happens when the total damage to the creature exceeds the Body of its armor.

If the PCs attempt to return to the relative safety of their van the Swamp Dwellers will rush the van. Their combined strength will be enough to tip it over. They will then begin to pound and beat on the vehicle until the inhabitants come out to play.

Soon after the conflict begins (in the 3rd combat round) the Commander will rush into the vehicle and grab a submachine-gun from the van's small armory. She will begin spraying the creatures mindlessly, endangering the PCs. Each Justifier in her line of fire will get their normal dodge roll, unless they are fighting with a Swamp Dweller. In which case they will have a 40% chance of being hit, no dodge. Any characters failing their dodge will be hit automatically.

At least one creature will turn on her at this time and grapple with her. She will not dodge. Instead, she will drop her weapon and fall unconscious at the

creature's touch. Definitely not appropriate behavior for a Commander of a Justifiers mission.

Just as the PCs begin to lose hope (they should be down to at least 75% of their CON), the "cavalry" arrives in the form of strange looking dwarves. The dwarves rush into the Swamp Dwellers, dropping out of the trees around and behind them and begin to hack them apart with their knives and axes.

If the Justifiers choose not to attack the dwarves, they will continue to aid the party. They will free the Commander who has suffered only minor injuries, but is still unconscious, and beckon the party to follow them. If the Justifiers decide



to follow the Altairians, the dwarves will carry the Commander's body and start in the direction of the team's targeted area.

If the team decides to stay and fix the ATV, the dwarves will not wait. After several minutes they will grow impatient and make intense beckoning gestures at the players. If the characters choose to ignore them, they will make threatening gestures. If the PCs try to detain them or continue ignoring them, unseen dwarves in the trees above the team will drop nets on them. Then the rest of the dwarves (2D10 + 8) will attack, doing only stun damage, rendering the players senseless. The Altairians will then strip the PCs of their weapons, bind and transport them on poles carried between two dwarves. A very undignified exit, to say the least.

The team will be led (or carried) to the edge of a small encampment and shown to a large, wooden hut. The dwarves will place the Commander's unconscious form inside the hut and motion for the rest of the team to follow. If the PCs refuse to go into the hut (if refusal is an option still available to them), the dwarves will become more insistent, making threatening motions.

INSIDE THE HUT

The Justifiers will be left alone for the night, but guards will have been placed at the entrance of the hut. If the Characters have been peaceful up till now, they will have retained their weapons. Still, the Commander's unconscious state and the presence of the guards should deter them from any attempt at escape.

Shortly after dark all electronics will cease to function. Loud animal sounds, screeches and the unmistakable noise of creatures locked in combat will surround the encampment. A huge bonfire is built up in the center of the camp, only a few yards from the hut and the Altairians cluster around it.

It is morning before the Commander comes around. Once she awakens, she will be more her old self, taking charge a little more, trying to communicate with the dwarves. She is operating in her field now and her abilities at translating the Altairian tongue are remarkable. She will order the team to follow and make no move to attack.

Immediately after dawn the team is served a meal of hard bread and dried meat by the dwarves. They barely have time to wolf it down before they are led out of the hut and back onto a nearby trail.

AMIDST THE TREES

After several miles of travel, the party will arrive at the Altairian "city." The dwarves are climbers and true to form have constructed a city strung between the branches of the enormous ferns that cover this forested land. Their city is a marvel of engineering. Intertwined branches, still alive and growing, make their



boulevards. Their houses are incredible constructions of leaves, some dried and other still living woven carefully to make a seal against the intrusion of the weather.

The dwarves are no less a marvel. Awesome climbers, fast and strong beyond belief, they move through the trees at incredible speeds. Even the children seem to fly from branch to branch. Only the youngest and oldest are confined to the crisscrossing walkways.

They are led into this maze of interconnected passageways and taken to, what seems to be a central location. Any conversation between other team members at this point is cut off by the Commander. She is herself unsure of the nature of these extraordinary little people, or how much of what they are saying the Altairians understand. She continues to record the dwarves, gathering data for her linguistics analyzer.

Any player making a successful WIS roll will see armed dwarves patrolling the walkways, but always in the shadows just out of sight. These guards will slip even deeper into the shadows if they realize (a successful WIS roll) they are being watched. They do not take their eyes off the party.

TRANSLATION: TROUBLE!

The party walks deep into the Altairian city, which is much larger than it first seems. After several minutes of walking they become surrounded by 2D10 x2 Altairian warriors. They raise their weapons only slightly as several small children appear. The children, no more than ten or twelve years old (relative to a Terran child), come forward and begin removing the character's weapons. Only if the PCs move to harm or threaten the children do the warriors take any overt hostile action.

The team will be taken into the dark hole of a very large (30 feet diameter) tree. The tree has been hollowed, using axes and fire. Torch marks show on the roof

and sides of the hollow. The total area is more than 20 feet across and perhaps 20 feet high. There are masses of piled skins scattered about to serve as seats.

There is only the single exit from the hollow and it is guarded. Like the other "doors" the team members have seen in this city, it lacks a barricade, being only a low slung opening.



Once alone, the Commander will huddle everyone together and brief them on what she has learned of the Altairian language. The dwarves let her keep her linguistics analyzer and personal computer, although even some benign items such as communicators and medicines are confiscated from the others.

The Commander speaks in a hushed voice, "I don't understand it, they are a complete anomaly. They can't be much more technologically advanced than 10th century Terra, but their language is incredibly complex. It's what you'd expect to find in a culture as advanced as our own. I just don't understand."

In the event of any speculation by other members of the party, the Commander will simply shake her head or shrug her shoulders and respond, "That could be, of course anything could be at this point. It's all speculation."

Now have everyone make a WIS roll. Those characters who succeed will notice that the guards are paying very close attention to everything that is said. Trying very hard not to be obvious, they strain to overhear their prisoners' conversation. They whisper amongst themselves softly.

If the party begins to talk of escape, the commander will vehemently override. Short of a full mutiny, there is no way she will allow the party to split. She is far too taken with the Altairian culture to have any desire to attempt an escape herself. Also, she has no intention of trying to cross the intervening miles back to the

shuttle on foot and will allow the group to do nothing to antagonize the Altairians.

After a while, an impasse is reached and the Commander refuses to discuss it further. She retreats into the tree and proceeds to bed down. Arden orders the rest of the team to bed down also because they don't know when the rest of the dwarves will return.

In fact, the Commander is awake most of the night. She has a partial translation for the Altairian tongue logged into her linguistics analyzer. When the rest of the party awakens she is using the analyzer to speak with the guards. After the Commander notices the awakening team she will come back from the doorway and huddle them into the rear of the room.

"This is incredible!," she exclaims. "I've gotten more information about the little buggers, or the Poilu as they call themselves. We have very near a working translator module programmed in."

"We're being kept here until their chieftain returns so he can speak with us and decide if we are hostile or not. He's apparently away on a hunting expedition of some kind, but he should return before noon today."

"Meanwhile, we are free to roam the city, but we'll be watched at all times."

If there is a Heavy-G in the party she will look at that person and add, "They seem particularly suspicious of you. Probably because you resemble them so closely, but aren't one of them."

"Whatever you do," she continues, "Don't do anything to offend them. We need their co-operation."

Two female Poilu appear at the door way and speak to Arden for a minute. The Commander turns to the rest of the team and translates, "The women called K'Kulia and K'Cilia are to be our guides around the city. They will take us to their gathering area so we can see their society and wait for the return of the Chief."



The women lead the team around the village pointing out houses of the important villagers. Any PC making a successful WIS roll will notice that the houses of more important villagers have pieces of a strange metal interwoven into the design of the house. If the PCs try to examine the material up close, K'Kulia hurries the team along, saying there will be a chance for closer inspection later. They must be in the gathering area before the Chief arrives.

THE GATHERING AREA

After several twists and turns the party comes upon a large square area filled with Poilu laughing, yelling and bickering. There are booths set up all over the square. They range from a simple board set on two stumps to elaborate open hut structures. K'Crilia will keep the characters close at first, leading them around. Later they will be allowed to roam on their own. K'Kulia disappears into the crowd.

As they walk, K'Crilia, through Commander Arden, explains what is going on at every booth. Once a week when the hunters return to the village, they hold a trading fair. Since every family in the village produces only one good or service, the villagers must trade goods and services to get everything the average family needs to survive.

The simplest booths belong to villagers selling their services as cooks or caregivers for the children. The most elaborate structures belong to the weavers, builders, tailors, weaponsmiths, and artisans. The medium-size booths belong to the hunters.

K'Crilia explains that there are two kinds of hunters: one for meat and the other for roots. Both have a higher importance in the tribe than other workers. Hunters are chosen for the Chief and council positions because they have been outside the village. If you are not a hunter there is little chance that you have gone more than a few hundred yards beyond the edge of the village.

K'Crilia stops in front of the fletcher booth and explains with pride how the fletcher make two dozen arrows for different purposes. Each arrow's feather color denotes it's different use.

The red arrows are marking arrows with the tips coated with a dye. The blue arrows are used in ceremonial contest and are made of a rare wood. The green



arrows are used for hunting the Swamp Dwellers. They are dipped in a potent poison. She goes on to explain the rest of the arrows. Soon, Commander Arden's translations slow down to only the purpose of the arrow (black: hunting Swamp Rats, etc.).

Suddenly K'Kulia appears through the crowd. K'Crilia turns to the team and says, through Arden, "I must prepare for the Chief's return. Please explore. I ask only that you not travel in a pack. You will scare the other villagers and will not see the true beauty of our ways." K'Kulia beckons K'Crilia and she leaves.

"Try to not be a nuisance to the villagers," the Commander orders as she turns and leaves.

Designer's Note: It is very important that the group be split up to the extreme of putting players in different rooms. This is so each player's activities to be unknown to the others. If the players insist on traveling in a group one way to split them up is to have a Poilu child come up to the group and steal something from one of the players. The reasons for this become obvious later.

THE BAZAAR

There are many things to do and see at the bazaar. The team will be allowed to go anywhere in the bazaar area they wish. If a character attempts to leave the general area a guard will appear and stop them from going any farther. Any players making a WIS roll will notice archers in the trees keeping track of the team members as they travel throughout the bazaar.

The characters can examine the houses on the edge of the bazaar if they wish. The huts on the sides of the bazaar belong to the more important members of the tribe and accordingly will have some mystery metal on the outside them.

As the characters walk through the bazaar they will be followed by small children at a distance. The Justifiers can try to talk to the children but they will run away only to return when the character becomes distracted.

If a booth is approached, the villager will be friendly and try to explain what good or service is available there. Most often they use gestures or offer the characters a bite or drink of what they have to offer. If not directly approached, the villagers in the booths will largely ignore the characters.

Designer's Note: The Altairian drinks at the bazaar are sometimes (20% of the time) made of fermented fruits and have a high alcohol content. Have characters roll vs. their CON - 5% cumulative (-5% the first time, -10% the second time, etc.) for each mug (8 oz.) of the liquor consumed or until they become intoxicated. Intoxicated characters are at -50% AGL and DEX. Characters who continue to drink after becoming intoxicated must continue to make their CON save or pass out entirely for 6D10 minutes.

Passed out players without companions to watch over them are likely to awaken having had whatever trinkets or valuables were on their person removed by Altairian children.

Also in the bazaar are games involving tests of skills. There are archery contests, axe throwing and bare-fist fighting. The team members will be encouraged to join any of the events. If they win they will be given a small prize (a piece of cloth, a mug of liquid, etc.) by the loser. If the character loses he will be expected to do the same. Giving too big or too small a prize will be considered an insult and the player may find himself faced with a physical confrontation.

THE CHIEF

The beating of hollow logs sound through the bazaar and the Poilu cease their activities and progress to the meeting area. The villagers will push along the PCs in their hurry to see the Chief and his council.

When the PCs arrive at the meeting area they will see Commander Arden on the podium. She will wave the rest of the team up to her. Gathering them around her she will tell them that she has had a chance to examine the podium and they should do the same. The podium is completely made up of the mysterious metal and covered with vines.

The Chief raises his hands and the crowd becomes silent. As he speaks, Arden translates for the rest of the team, "He is asking the villagers if anyone can tell him of anything we have done that is hostile." The villagers should report to the Chief what has gone on since they met the Justifiers team.

Designer's Note: The dwarves' tales should be as outrageous as possible without telling a direct lie. Any attempt by the PCs to protest the telling of the stories as lies should be countered with questions from the Chief. For example one of the Poilu tell the Chief that the march dwellers would have killed the whole team if the Poilu had not come to the rescue. If a team member questions the truth of their statements, the Chief will question that team member in the following fashion. Did not the Poilu come to your aid? Were not the marsh dwellers attacking your party?

All the questions the Chief asks should be framed so that the only answer possible is yes.

After some time of this kind of conversation, the Commander will turn the conversation to the mystery metal. She will want to know its origins, and if more of it exists outside the Altairian camp.

The Chief will rise and order a high ranking villager into his hut. When the villager returns he will be carrying a scroll written on the dried skin of an

animal. When the scroll is unrolled, it is revealed to be a crude map of the forest to the east of the village. See **Planetary Maps** (page 58).

The Chief will hunch over and point to an area on the map. Any players close enough will notice the area is marked on the map by a six pointed star. When Arden tries to examine the map more closely, a villager wearing a medallion of the mystery metal runs to the podium, pushing her back. The Chief clubs the man with his hand and a heated argument ensues. The Commander won't be able to get a complete translation because of the rapidity of the conversation.

"In a nutshell," she tells the players, "the little man claims the map is sacred and shouldn't be bandied about to strangers. The Chief doesn't seem to take quite so narrow a viewpoint."

After a few more moments the Chief puts his hand to the knife hilt at his belt and bares his teeth at the smaller man. The Altairian cowers back from his leader. The Chief crosses to the Commander and resumes his conversation as if nothing had caused him to pause.

After some further conversation the Chief agrees to lead the Commander into the forest allowing they wait another seven months. During the current time of the year the Poilu are forbidden by a religious prohibition from entering the woods. No matter what the commander promises or threatens nothing will make the Poilu go into the forest this time of the year.

BUT LATER . . .

After more discussion, the map is removed from the sight of the players and the feast begins. Heaps of food are brought out into the bazaar. There are tankards of some fermented fruit juice and a roast beast, best left unrecognized.



No further incidents will happen that evening, but players will again have the opportunity to join in games of skill and chance. After several hours of merrymaking, the drunken Poilu will be no competition for any player still sober.

Just before dawn, Arden will leave the Justifiers' hut. Any players making a successful WIS roll will be awakened inexplicably and notice her absence.

Later the Commander will return and arouse her subordinates with a hushed whisper, "Get your things ready. It's time to go."

Most players will be naturally curious as to the exact nature of this pre-dawn flight. Some may be prompted to ask such pointed questions as, "Huh?" and the ever popular "Go where?". But, the commander will not be talking by this time. She'll just grin a sly grin and point to a rolled up animal skin clutched tightly in her left hand, while motioning for quiet.

Assuming the players follow her orders, they will be undisturbed as they gather together what equipment is lying around the hut. Clearly any guards that might be lurking about have long since fallen into a drunken stupor.

The Commander will continue her silence, until the players have reached the edge of the city and are working their way to the ground. Once safely away from the huts the Commander spreads out the skin to reveal the map which had caused so much concern the night before.

She will order the scout to make two tracings of it, but she will allow no one else to touch it. Once the copies are made, she will roll it back up and start back toward the village, taking one tracing with her. She will order the rest of the group on ahead. She plans to replace the map then join them somewhere along the path.

All this should be structured so that the players have little or no time to think or ask questions of the Commander. She has already shown herself less than open to suggestions, and will be no more receptive here. If anyone tries to stop her she will show the same nasty temper that they all know and love. She will not answer how she got the map, or how she expects to return it.

About now one or more of the players should notice some edged weapon missing: a small knife, or dagger. The reason will become apparent later.

TO MAP . . . OR NOT TO MAP

The players now have two choices in pursuing this adventure. They can follow along the map or they can use their tracking abilities to make their way through the woods without it. Some characters may be reluctant to follow the well worn path indicated by the map, fearing ambush or treachery.

In this case skip this section and move to the next section: **The Clearing** (page 25) directly. If they choose to follow the path . . . read on, McDuff.

Designer's Note: If at any time during the adventure the players decide to enter the forest, even if they begin on the path, switch to the second scenario.

THE PATH

If the PCs follow the path they will encounter none of the trials and tribulations of earlier excursions into the forests. The only exception will be a character with psionic abilities. These PCs will be struck by a tremendous migraine (D6 damage/hour cumulative) and will have the cost for using their psionic powers doubled.

As before, use the table on page 8 to determine the usefulness of any of the PCs' equipment.

Any players making a successful WIS roll will have the sense of another presence watching over them. This feeling of being watched will increase in intensity until the hairs on their arms and the back of their necks are literally standing straight up. Any psychologically unstable PCs should be required at this point to make a successful WIS roll to keep from firing their weapons into the shadows.

When the sensations and paranoias are at their peak the players will spy a lone figure approaching them on the trail ahead. The fog and shadows will make it hard to discern anything but an outline. If the players take any overt hostile actions the figure will disappear into the fog. If, on the other hand, cooler heads prevail, the figure will approach close enough to be identified as a Beta-Armadillo, apparently unarmed and wearing a tattered uniform.

Players who make a successful roll (make them ask for it) against their track by scent, will notice absolutely nothing. This creature has no scent at all. This should strike them as strange.

Closer examination will reveal that the Beta is wearing the insignia of a Lt. of the same Corporation as the PCs. He looks haggard, and worn. There are some visible bandages.

THE ARMADILLO SPEAKS

As the PCs get within hailing distance the Beta speaks in a harsh whisper, "So . . . they've sent another . . .," and he faints.

After a few minutes of examination and a couple of successful skill rolls the medic will be able to discern the nature of his ailment as simple exhaustion.

However, all readings taken with medical instruments will at first show normal, then suddenly drop to that reading consistent with the medic's initial diagnosis. Only a Medic making a successful WIS roll will notice and may be inclined (GM's discretion) to write it off as a quirk caused by the surrounding mists.

If the medic administers any drugs they will have exactly the desired reaction and will cause the Beta to regain consciousness in the minimum time the drug might have worked. In short, everything will be perfectly normal.

If any mention is made of removing the Armadillo to the village, he will regain consciousness almost immediately. At this point he will answer any of the PCs questions with some or all the following information (GM's Discretion).

"I was part of a previous expedition to this planet. There was another before yours. I've been here . . . almost five planetary years.

" . . . All the others . . . dead . . . all dead. It's the forest, you can't go on . . . you'll die . . . you can't win."

At any mention of the village or the villagers the Armadillo will become highly agitated. "Don't trust 'em . . . they're . . . they're . . ."

At this point the Armadillo will be silenced by the proverbial arrow from the trees. He dies instantly.

As soon as the PCs' attention is drawn from the Armadillo his body will disappear. This will happen only when none of the players are watching. If players are watching the body, there will be a sudden sound from the trees in the direction the arrow came from. They should be distracted for an instant. Then the body will disappear.

UP THE PATH

If the players choose to heed the dying Beta's warning and turn back, go on to **The Last Mystery** (page 28). If they choose to ignore all warnings (as any PC worth his Buy-Back will) read ahead.

It can be assumed the players will take some time to search for either the bowman or the body, they will find neither. However, they will find the tracks or the scent of someone who had been standing off the path about 100 yards further ahead. A trail of blood leads away from the footprints.

The tracks are bare footed, and narrow, but are definitely bi-pedal. They run parallel to the path for another 30 yards or so and then come back onto the trail before disappearing entirely.

THE CLEARING

Not more than 200 yards from where the tracks disappear the players come to a large clearing. Here, overgrown with vines and weeds, they find what they have been searching for.

There are dozens of large, semi-cylindrical tubes. Most are shattered and rusted, but some are nearly intact. They are constructed of the same unique metal that the players found in the village.

A look inside the tubes will show the remnants of a couched area, about the size of the Poilu. A mass of circuitry fills the rest of the chamber. There is also a hinged lid on each pod, each fallen aside, that leaves no doubt that someone-or something-once exited this coffin-like structure.

Further examination will reveal a charred section at one end. The metal is partially fused. This would take great heat . . . such as the heat generated by re-entry into a planetary atmosphere.

There are also, what might be (successful roll against aircraft technologies skill) retro-jets attached to the underside of the pod.

Once the players are fully engrossed in examining the pods there will be a sound from the northern edge of the clearing. Judging by the noise something huge is moving through the trees and into the clearing. Through the mists the players can see the vague outline of a gigantic beast. It pushes aside the trees and staggers into the clearing.

The creature closely resembles a tyrannosaurus rex. If the players decide to attack it will gladly fight them. It will use its huge feet to trample them (enormous club 4D6) or try to grab them in its cavernous maw (enormous bite 3D6 + 8).

It will continue to fight no matter how much damage it takes. It does not bleed and if the players make a track by scent roll (make them ask) it will have no scent. It is, in reality, an illusion. Despite being illusory any damage done by this beast is real. Any wounds the players receive will be just as if they had actually battled this creature.

Only if the players flee the clearing will the attack stop. The instant they leave the creature will cease to be. If they remain any longer than 10 rounds of play the creature will suddenly appear to fade, eventually evaporating altogether.

Players inclined to do so may now explore the source of the illusion. If they use their track by scent abilities they will be tracking blood spoor. They will gather the scent almost immediately after the dinosaur evaporates.

THE BODY . . . FINALLY

Curled into a fetal position near the bole of a tree at the edge of the clearing is a body. It is similar in size to the Poilu, but that's where the resemblance ends. The head is much larger, with distended veins. The body is withered and the eyes, nose and mouth are practically non-existent.

In its hand is clutched a jeweled crystal. The crystal glows indigo in the alien mists. The creature is very obviously dead. The blood scent is coming from a gaping wound in its left side, a puncture wound much like the one the armadillo had. Any cursory examination will easily reveal the cause of death to be loss of blood.

If there are any psionics in the group, they will get an overwhelming sense of power from the dead creature. The crystal creates an overwhelming desire to hold it, caress it, to have for one's own.

Unless a successful roll is made against RES, any psionic character will pry the crystal from the dead creature's hands. As soon as it is touched by the psi, there will be a burst of bright blue light, which blinds all within 100 yards for D10 minutes.

Unless a second successful RES roll is made the psi will fall to the ground screaming and will bleed from the mouth, nose and ears (4D6 + 6 Damage-ignores all armor). If a successful RES roll is made the psi's MS will be immediately double if that takes the total MS above the normal maximum that this character has.

Any other psionic characters also will want to touch the crystal. The psi holding the crystal (if they can by this time) should resist any efforts to take the crystal away. Its pulsing indigo light is addictive and the player will behave like an addict, even resorting to violence if it is necessary in order to maintain the crystal.

If, for some reason, someone other than a psi touches the crystal first, that person has the opportunity to reroll for psi talents. Using the same rules that apply during normal character generation, if anyone is successful continue as above. Psionic talents, once gained this way, will remain with the character for the rest of his life.

If the player fails to achieve a sufficient score for psionic talents, the bright indigo light will simply fade harmlessly away. The crystal will then lie dormant until it is touched by a psi. If this happens, the crystal will behave as described above.

If the crystal is removed from the psi (no psi will give it up of their own accord) their MS score will return to normal. But, it will not drop below their normal

maximum, even if they were substantially weakened by earlier adventures. They will find themselves completely recharged.

Designer's Note: The crystals are used by the High Ones, as they are called, as a kind of psionic battery. They have a limited life expectancy that varies according to purity. There is no way to predict when it will die out. Simply use your discretion and try to make it occur during as a climatic moment as possible.

Just before the players start grumbling about getting back, there appears a globe of indigo light above the clearing. It will descend slowly, building a sense of desperate anticipation within the characters.

As it touches the ground, another creature, much like the one lying at the players' feet appears, the bubble dissipating. The creature will walk to its fellow never acknowledging the presence of the players. If they take no action it will simply motion calmly to at the body. The corpse will rise till its feet hover just above the forest floor and glide on unseen wings as the new creature turns and walks back to his landing site.

The bubble will reappear and the two creatures--one dead, one living--will ascend to the skies, fading into the clouds.

If the players make any motion that might be considered threatening, the creature will raise his hands to touch the indigo crystal at his throat. All the players will be paralyzed for the duration of his visit.

If by some miracle they manage to distract him and launch a physical attack, he will transmute (see New Skills) the attacking player's clothing and weapons into a noxious gas. This will leave everyone within 100 feet choking and blind for D10 + 10 minutes.

A BATTLE?

If any psionic player has managed to control the crystal, he may now use it to launch a psi attack on the creature. No psi without the crystal will be able to overcome the creature's RES and the resulting backlash will affect the player much like the psi backlash from the crystal itself.

If the psi can attack it on a mental level and force it to focus its powers on defense, a physical assault might be successful. However, unless attacked in some way, the creature will make no offense of any kind. It will not even attempt to retake the crystal if that is now in the hands of the players. It will simply reclaim the body of its friend and leave.

If the players try to follow the departing creature they will find the way barred by an unseen barrier. Anyone touching it will suffer severe pain for D10

seconds, but no physical effects. Any psi touching the shield will suffer 2D10 + 8 damage in addition to the pain. This damage ignores all armor.

CONCLUSIONS

The players will most likely want to return to the village now. Along the way they will attempt to draw conclusions about what has happened. The Game-Master should be familiar enough with the truth of these events (see **The Dark Truth** below) to drop some hints.

One obvious conclusion can be drawn by any planetary scientists, the crystal they discovered is indigenous to this planet. Its pulses produce the same harmless, low frequency radiation as the mists, but with some added agent that is undefinable. Even a small cache of these crystals (obviously psi enhancing) would be worth millions of credits to the Corps.

One confusing aspect of the encounter should be settled when they make a discovery on the path to the village. Suspended from a tree is the mutilated body of a Poilu hunter. The branches have grown into and split apart his body. At the foot of the tree is a broken bow and a quiver of shattered arrows.

THE DARK TRUTH

Okay . . . the facts. The Poilu hunter was breaking the taboo by entering the forest. He might have gotten away with it, but he came across the path of the players. During their meeting with the Armadillo (really the dead High One in disguise), the hunter decided to punish the infidels for doing what he was already doing. What's good for the goose is definitely not good for the gander.

The dead High One had been trying to scare the players away before they could discover the planet's dark truth. He used his transmutation skills to become the Armadillo and attempt to play off the Justifiers' distrust of the Corp. When this failed he killed the hunter and then used his teleportation ability to scoot down the path. Here he used his telepathic illusions to try to either scare the players away or destroy them before they had the opportunity discover his planet's dirty little secret.

The High Ones, the Poilu, and the Swamp Dwellers were once all the same race. The conditions on Altair 3 caused some of the primary race, the Poilu, to devolve into the Swamp Dwellers. The radioactive crystals caused some Poilu to be born with the strange psionic abilities.

THE LAST MYSTERY

The remainder of the journey back to the village will be uneventful. If the players choose not to return to the village, events should be fabricated to force their return. Several encounters with the local fauna are recommended.

In fact, there are few options but to return, particularly since returning to their ship would require them to pass through, or at least very near the village. Once they come near the village they will be spotted by the villagers and "escorted" back.

The villagers will be insistent (as when they were first encountered), but will take no overt hostile action. They will have a sense of urgency about them. It is important that the players respond to this.

Upon their return the players will be taken back to the bazaar where they will find the body of their "beloved" commander lying in state. Her face is contorted with pain, twisted into a bizarre mask of fear and suffering. She is very much dead.

Her equipment and all her weapons are missing, but there are remnants in the ashes of a fire at her feet. She is laid out on a small raised dais, covered in animal skins. Her linguistics computer is gone.

A full autopsy will require several hours and equipment found only aboard the player's ship. Yet, any player making a lengthy and complete examination (2D10 + 10 minutes) will discover an unhealed cut at the base of the commander's neck. There is some liquid residue mixed with dried blood there, and anyone with a simple analyzer (organic, tissue, or soil & rock) can get a reading on the chemical composition. Anyone making a successful track by scent roll will immediately recognize the scent as the poison encountered earlier in the bazaar. It is the very same poison the Poilu use to coat their arrowheads.

The commander was murdered.

THE GAME'S AFOOT

An estimate of the time of death (+ or - 2 hours) puts the time of death just after the players left the village that morning. So anyone could be guilty, including the players (or NPCs) themselves.

Many people had a motive, all had the means and everyone saw the poisoned arrow heads at the bazaar. It would have taken less than a second to make that incision and it could very well have been unfelt, if the instrument used to make it was sharp enough.

Questioning of the villagers will be difficult without the translation device, but they will volunteer the following information (using sign language and gestures):

Sometime shortly after the players departed they heard a scream. They rushed into the players' hut and found the commander lying there, just as she is now.

Her weapons and equipment were ritually burned to aid her in her passing to the next world.

The body was discovered by K'Crilia. She left to get the chief and several of the elders and brought them back to the body.

They are not disturbed by the players' venture into the woods. Their laws are such that only by direct observation of a crime, can a person be convicted. The players were seen to leave and to return, but since the villagers are forbidden to enter the forest, the players are safe from retribution.

If anyone presses on this last point, the villagers will explain their laws a little further. Unless a crime is witnessed, there can be no crime. Apparently they also believe if a tree falls in the forest and no one hears it, it makes no sound. Their laws are based entirely on direct observation.

This may lead players to a startling conclusion . . . since no one witnessed the murder, according to the villager's law . . . there was no murder. If the guilty party should be discovered, and even if they confess, there can be no punishment.

If the players search around their hut they will find the missing knife (see page 22). Even a cursory examination will provide enough visual and olfactory evidence to prove the knife is coated with poison. Suspicion now lies square on the player to whom the knife belongs. It is of course a frame-up, but one or another of the players or NPCs will feel obligated to point out to the rest that if a ready suspect is not presented to the Corp, then they will all be suspect. Knowing the fervency of the Corp Law Enforcement officers, any investigation will eventually uncover anything that anyone in the group has to hide. Any minor infraction, any little law bent, could result in fines, suspensions, even death.

THE TRUTH OF THE MURDER

There are many ways for the players to arrive at the truth. Once confronted directly, the murderer will openly confess since she has nothing to fear. In fact the commander was murdered by K'Crilia. The motive was blackmail.

It was K'Crilia who took the map from the Chieftain's hut. The Commander saw her in the theft of a bracelet from the bazaar. The Commander used that knowledge to force K'Crilia to comply with her wishes and to steal the map. It seems the Poilu punishment for any crime is the same: death.

K'Crilia was afraid of punishment for the theft, since she was seen by the Commander. Yet, no one saw her kill the Commander, so under tribal law, she cannot be found guilty. Short of starting a war, there is no way the players can punish K'Crilia for the murder. The Corps will be in the same spot. On the other hand the Corps may or may not choose to believe K'Crilia's confession.

The only substantiating evidence to support the confession would be the tracing of the map. This can be discovered hidden under K'Crilia's bed if the players decide to search her hut. Even this would be just circumstantial, since it was K'Crilia who discovered the body.

At this point it is up to the GM to help (or hinder) the players in the unraveling of the mystery. Good luck.

ABORIGINAL CULTURE

The dominant life forms of Altair 3 have evolved culturally and physically into totally distinct races. Their original forms, or their original cultures, can be guessed at only in light of what the PCs learn during the adventure.

Certain things can be deduced about the root racial stock of the Altairians:

They are from a culture at least as advanced as the players, possibly more advanced.

They evolved on a world with a heavier gravity than Altair 3.

They, or at least their ancestors, were criminals on their homeworld.

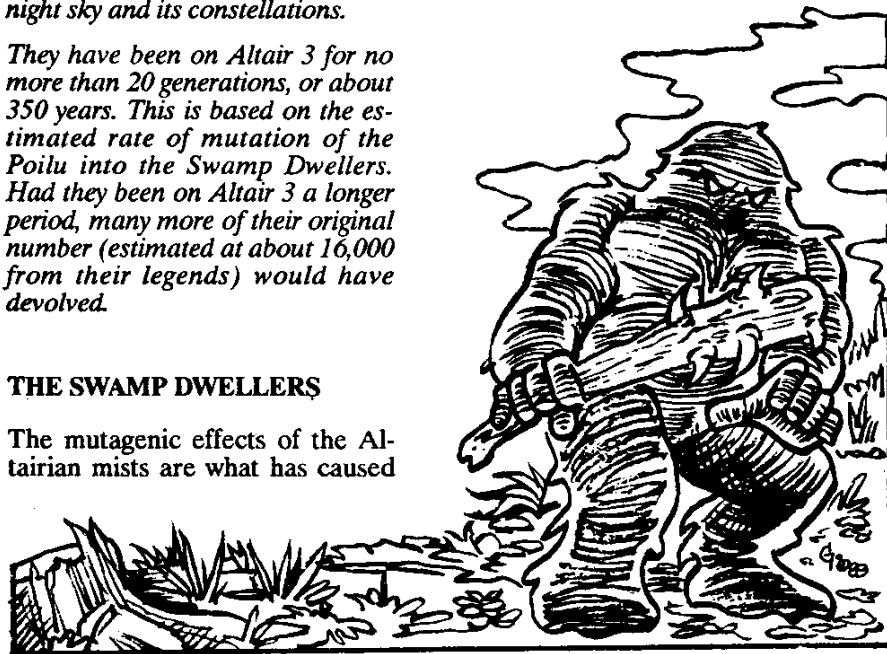
Corp scientists, having examined the transcripts of the Altair 3 Expedition's logs have concluded the following additional things:

Their planet of origin lies toward the galactic core. Exactly how far can only be guessed at, but estimates run from between 50 and 150 light years. This is based on careful examination of the metallic disk showing a view of their homeworld's night sky and its constellations.

They have been on Altair 3 for no more than 20 generations, or about 350 years. This is based on the estimated rate of mutation of the Poilu into the Swamp Dwellers. Had they been on Altair 3 a longer period, many more of their original number (estimated at about 16,000 from their legends) would have devolved.

THE SWAMP DWELLERS

The mutagenic effects of the Altairian mists are what has caused



the Poilu to devolve into the Swamp Dwellers. Between 55% and 60% of the Poilu children develop the marshy appearance soon after birth. Many of these are killed outright by the Poilu, but some (apparently enough) are simply thrown into the swamps by parents unable to bring themselves to destroy their offspring.

In some way unknown to us (perhaps psionic), the Swamp Dwellers are drawn to these infants. Once they are found by a group they will be taken into that family and raised as if one of their own.

There is some evidence to suggest that the Swamp Dwellers are also capable of breeding true. Although impossible to estimate the exact number, based on what the Corp scientists have discovered their numbers seem too great if they are replenished only by new births among the Poilu. Another possibility is a much longer lifespan than expected among these creatures.

SWAMP CULTURE

From recent observations it would appear that the Swamp Dwellers lead a nomadic existence, travelling the swamps in small familial groups searching for food. This consists of swamp grasses, roots and tubers.

Whether they are truly sentient is a matter of some debate. They can and do use tools. They obviously have some form of interpersonal communications, but they don't show any outward signs of a developing culture. They don't build, they don't expand beyond the swamp. They merely take what the swamp has to offer.

They do seem to exhibit evidence of emotional attachments. If one member of a group is attacked, all the group members will rush to its aid. Several groups have been known to come together for a single purpose (rescuing a captured creature for instance).

AVERAGE SWAMP DWELLER

CON 26 STR 130 DEX 60 IQ 29 WIS 30 AGL 9 PRZ 14 MS 79 BOD 13
RES 20 Speed 15

Base to Strike: 20% Damage Bonus: 13 Natural Armor: As 5 inches of Earth
(20/200) Track Scent: 40%

Skills:

Hand to Hand 17%

Hand Weapons (Ancient) 15%

Improvised/Crude Weapons 18%

Jungle Survival 78%

THE POILU

The Poilu seem arboreal (tree-dwelling) by nature, this might be due to the mists and the dangers that lie closer to the ground. It seems unlikely to be a holdover from their original culture.



Their societal structure is tribal, but with some differences. Gathering and hunting is done by a selected few, those with special skill in such things. It is the same with crafts, and everyday maintenance of the city. Everyone is fed from a communal pot, everyone who contributes eats. Those who do not or cannot contribute (above a certain age) are left to fend for themselves.

The rulers are the chieftain and his several council chiefs. They form a sort of ruling council. The chief's word is law and only a successful physical challenge can unseat him. All battles for his position are to the death and generally serve to keep the strongest (or most diabolical) in power.

Physically, the Altairians resemble short, wide bodied humanoids with pale green to dark green coloration and thick manes of white or grey. Their names usually start with a hard "k" sound with the ending "ia" for females and "ana" for males. Typical Altairian names would be K'kulia for a female and K'rana for a male.

Their reproductive cycle is much shorter than a human's; typical gestation time is 5 to 5 1/2 months and Poilu babies begin walking within just a few days of their births. Altairian females have much broader hips than human women and the babies are born with their hip and skull bones already intact, unlike a human baby.

Designer's Note: It appears that psionics are unknown among the Poilu. This may be because of their long standing feud with and their fear of the High Ones. It seems possible that psionics were eliminated among the Poilu by force. There is evidence to be found among their legends that any of the Poilu who exhibited signs of psionic ability were thought to be demons and were drowned.

Infant mortality among the Poilu is very high. This is partially due to the extremely hostile environment of Altair 3 itself. But it is also because so many Poilu children are born with the mark of the Swamp Dwellers. Because of this high mortality rate, the POILU have as many children as possible. The children on Altair 3 outnumber the adults by more than five to one.

THE CITY

The Poilu city is arranged around a central point, the platform that supports their gathering site.

Individuals dwell in tree-huts. These are small houses built both into and around the tree. Decks built of planks and shaded by the intertwining of tree branches are built around the exterior of the tree. Rooms are then hollowed out for the family to live in. The Poilu take great care not to kill the tree when building their homes.

Closest to the platform are the tree huts of the artisans, those of the Poilu that are craftsmen and makers of goods. It is also the area reserved for high city officials, chiefs and sub-chiefs.

As elsewhere in the city, the individual huts are connected by a series of narrow walkways consisting of wooden planking and braided ropes secured to the tree branches by intricate knots. Despite their somewhat rickety appearance these bridges are actually very safe, but are often left unused. The agile and strong Poilu will frequently choose a more direct route into and between the trees, leaping from branch to branch in such a way that would make a circus acrobat cringe.

Once beyond this area of the city its organization breaks down into complete chaos. Familial groups tend to cluster together, allies tend to cluster their huts close, etc., except for that there is no real structure. Clusters are scattered everywhere, the bridges that run between them have the appearance of being an afterthought.

Outside this area lies a well organized cluster of tree-huts. These are arranged in the highest and lowest branches so that anyone within can observe the greatest possible area at any given time. This is where the hunters and fighters are housed. In addition there are weapons-smiths, bowers and fetchers in this area.

Access to the city can only be gained by rope ladders that are dropped from platforms above. These ladders are lowered only by a signal and are never left in place.

RELIGION OF THE POILU

The Poilu religion is very much what one would expect among such a primitive people. They have their pantheon of gods related to the weather, the sun, the stars, etc. But, they have a single overriding theme that is a definite product of their immediate environment: racial purity. It is this single objective that drives them to detest the Swamp Dwellers, and to both fear and despise the High Ones.

The fact that High Ones are not themselves deified is probably a result of their original births among the Poilu.

AVERAGE POILU

CON 81 STR 130 DEX 72 IQ 65 WIS 47 AGL 90 PRZ 45 MS 112 BOD 17
RES 21 Speed 35/55 (Trees)

Base to Strike: 24% Damage Bonus: 13 Natural Armor: Hv Hide

Skills:

Jungle Survival 48%

Projectile Weapons (Special) 34%

Hand Weapons (Ancient) 33%

Tracking/Trapping 37% (Hunters/Soldiers only)

Improvised/Crude Weapons 22%

THE HIGH ONES

It is unlikely that very much will ever be known about the High Ones simply because they don't want it known and have enough power to enforce their desires.

Their culture is unlike anything humans can imagine, a sort of "group mind" where everything felt, thought or experienced by one is shared by each of the others. They experience full and constant telepathic rapport.

Evidently they lack nothing. They apparently have the power to produce anything they want by transmutation. Their current status is unknown, their numbers, their true natures, even their current physical appearance is unknown.

Besides their substantial psionic abilities, the High-Ones apparently use a unique radioactive crystal to enhance their natural psionic abilities.

The High Ones are born at the rate of about 1 per thousand births to the Poilu. They resemble the Poilu except they are shorter, thinner, have larger eyes, and are almost completely hairless.



HIGH ONES' CULTURE

The High Ones seem to live singly and have little or no physical contact with one another. However they are in almost constant mental contact with one another via telepathic rapport.

It is this same kind of rapport that brings the High Ones into the Poilu village every time a new High One is born. They simply walk in, collect their newest member, and leave. No one dares to touch them or make any attempt to harm the child. How the child is raised and when it leaves to fend for itself is a mystery.



AVERAGE (?) HIGH ONE

CON 81 STR 90 DEX 71 IQ 99 WIS 87 AGL 88 PRZ 65 MS 285 BOD 37
RES 28 Speed 25

Base to Strike: 24% Damage Bonus: 9 Special Abilities: Psionic-Telepathy, Telekinesis, Transmutation

Skills:

Jungle Survival 88%

Martial Arts 24%

NEW BETAS

There is a problem on the frontier Corporate Colony worlds: severe underpopulation. Corporate expansion has pushed so far, so fast, that the relative inhabitants haven't been able to keep pace. One side effect of the Corp underpopulation problem is a lack of good domestic help for the Corp-Exs, particularly the Veeps, and above.

In large part this problem has been alleviated by the creation of "House-Betas." House-Betas are special breeds of Betas created to act as everything from butlers and maids to gardeners. One popular use is as a combination "body guard" and "nanny" for small children, or others that might be vulnerable to terrorism or acts of vengeance.



Obviously, the traits most sought in a House-Beta are not necessarily those needed to be a successful Justifier. That keen instinct for survival, so necessary to a Justifier, has been replaced with subservience. Yet, children mature, enemies die (or are killed), and Corp-Exs move on. For many House-Betas this has meant automatic service in the field as Justifiers, virtually a sentence of death for most.

Rabbit

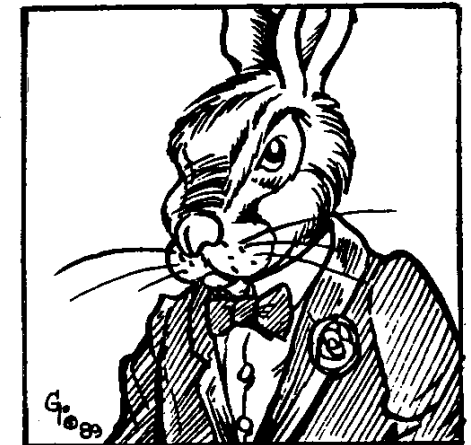
Armor: Lt. Fur Speed: 40

Attribute Modifiers: DEX +20,
AGL +20

Natural Weapons: 1 small Bite, 2
Small Claws

Track By Hearing 60%

One of the most successful of the House-Beta breed to turn Justifier has been the rabbit. Their keen hearing, quick reflexes and natural paranoia have served them well in the field.



Gopher

Armor: Lt. Fur **Speed:** 35

Attribute Modifiers: AGL + 20

Natural Weapons: 1 Small Bite,
2 Small Claws

Gophers have been used as Justifiers in the field primarily in the areas of mine engineering. They are also frequently utilized in the study of life sciences (specializing in Botany).



Lesser Panda

Armor: Lt. Fur **Speed:** 35

Attribute Modifiers: DEX + 25, Climb
80%

Weapons: 1 Small Bite, 2 Small Claws
Semi-Prehensile Tail (May use at 25% Dex)

The Lesser Panda, and to some extent the Raccoon (its closest relative) has been used as House-Betas in those jobs where a high level of dexterity is critical, such as chauffeurs and maintenance technicians, and especially in maintaining sophisticated technological equipment (most often surveillance equipment).



Greater Panda

Armor: Hv. Fur **Speed:** 20

Attribute Modifiers: STR + 25,
WIS + 30

Weapons: 2 Small Claws, 1 Small
Bite.

Like its animal counterpart, the Greater Panda-Beta is passive almost to the point of submissiveness. This is one reason they have not done well in the role of Justifiers. Seldom can they develop the aggressive instincts necessary for survival in the field. However, their natural curiosity and quick mindedness make them excellent scientists and engineers.



Squirrel

Armor: Lt. Fur **Speed:** 30

Attribute Modifiers: None

Weapons: 1 Small Bite

Squirrels have proven one of the most popular breeds of House-Betas due to their innate openness and general good disposition.

They have been used in a variety of roles, mostly in the area of general domestic staff (cooks, butlers, maids, etc.).



But Wait, There's More

Besides the House-Betas, one new Beta breed previously avoided by the Corps, has begun surfacing. Many have taken the appearance of such an unpredictable and dangerous breed to be an indication of increased tensions between the Corps.

Wolverine

Armor: Hv. Fur **Speed:** 40

Attribute Modifiers: STR + 20,
CON + 20

Natural Weapons: 1 Bite, 2 Large
Claws.

60% Track by Scent.

Wolverine-Betas, like their counterpart animals, are aggressive and dangerously uncontrollable. In any battle situation where the fighting lasts for more than 2 rounds the Wolverine-Beta has a 5% cumulative chance per round of becoming enraged.

Once enraged the Wolverine-Beta will continue to attack at all costs. He will not



retreat, nor will he accept the surrender of his enemies. He will stop only when all his enemies are dead.

If wounded, the Wolverine-Beta has a 1% cumulative chance for each point of combined BOD and CON lost of becoming enraged and attacking anyone in his direct line of sight. This includes all other party members, friends, relatives... anyone. While in this state the Damage Bonus is x2, but 1 point of extra BOD or CON is lost per round that this state is maintained.



PERSONALITIES

As with all Justifiers RPG Adventure SourceBooks, included are several NPCs for the players and GameMaster to use in the course of the game. NPCs may be used to fill gaps in the crew roster, or as cannon fodder, or even as PCs, at the GameMaster's discretion.

Please feel free to make any changes that will adapt these characters to your specific player group.

Mellia Arden Captain Cheetah-Beta Social Scientist

CON 49 STR 99 DEX 99 IQ 75 WIS 32 AGL 85 PRZ 43 MS 107 BOD 4
RES 13 Speed 78 Base to Strike: 33% Damage Bonus: 9

Skills:

Ancient (Written)	7%	Instruction	12%
Advanced Zero-G	7%	Linguistics	22%
Analytical Chemistry	7%	Mountain Climbing	7%
Anthropology	32%	Navigation	22%
Archeology	22%	Photography	7%
Basic Math	57%	Pilot Ground Vehicle	22%
Chemistry	7%	Projectile Weap. (Hand)	22%
Civil Law	7%	Psychology	17%
Communicator Ops.	22%	R/W Native (Basic)	82%
Computer Tech	22%	Scanner Systems Ops.	32%
Cuisine	43%	Speak Native	82%
Emergency E-suit Repair	27%	Sociology	17%
E-Suit Ops.	32%	Subduing	7%
Ent. (Voice-Guitar)	34%	Surveillance	7%
First Aid	22%	Swimming	7%
Hand to Hand	22%	TransMatt Ops.	32%
History	32%	Zero-G Training	22%

Personal Data:

Because Captain Arden is the Mission Commander her personnel records are sealed from the crew until after her death. Then they may be viewed by accessing the computer on board the shuttle. Arden was a House-Beta, part of the household of a powerful Sweep. Her job was as companion/protector to the Sweep's daughter. The daughter left the household to get married and Arden found herself reassigned as a Justifier. Arden thinks of herself as a human. She has the same attitude toward the other Betas in the group as a human would. In particular she has taken an intense dislike to Doc, the Rabbit-Beta.

Grimlok Private Komodo Dragon-Beta Scout

CON 85 STR 100 DEX 86 IQ 65 WIS 55 AGL 41 PRZ 62 MS 120 BOD 08
RES 15 Speed 42 Base to Strike: 28% Damage Bonus: 10

Skills:

Arctic Survival	26%
Basic Math	56%
Beam Weapons	26%
Botany	6%
Carousing	6%
Cartography	31%
Communicator Ops.	21%
Computer Tech	21%
Desert Survival	26%
Emer. E-suit Repair	26%
E-Suit Ops.	31%
First Aid	21%
Forest/Jungle Survival	26%
Hand Weap. (Ancient)	26%
Hand Weap. (Thrown)	26%
Hand Weap. (2 Hand)	26%
Hand to Hand	21%
Hostile Environments	21%
Martial Arts	11%
Navigation	21%
Pilot Ground Vehicle	21%
Projectile Weap. (Hand)	21%
Projectile Weap. (Spec.)	6%
R/W Native (Basic)	81%
Scanner Systems Ops.	31%
Smuggling	6%
Speak Native	81%
Subduing	6%
Surveillance	26%
Swimming	6%
TransMatt Ops.	31%
Weap. Tech (Beam)	6%
Weap. Tech (Projectile)	6%
Zero-G Training	21%



Personal Data:

Grimlok is moderately intelligent and relatively articulate, although to look at this hulking brute you would never expect it. His massive size and mediocre agility often work against him in his position as a scout. Although he makes up for whatever natural attributes he might lack by a utilizing combination of dogged determination and nearly fanatical enthusiasm. In short, Grimlok loves his work.

R.Z. Sgt. Hog-Beta Security

CON 99 STR 83 DEX 65 IQ 43 WIS 37 AGL 24 PRZ 23 MS 80 BOD 12
RES 18 Speed 38 Base to Strike: 21% Damage Bonus: 8

Skills:

Basic Math	54%
Beam Weapons	24%
Communicator Ops.	19%
Computer Tech	19%
Cryptology	29%
Dual Weapons	
(Projectile Weapons Hand)	
Elec. Counter Measures	19%
Emergency E-suit Repair	24%
E-Suit Ops.	29%
Exo-Skeleton Ops.	4%
First Aid	22%
Hand Weap. (Ancient)	24%
Hand Weap. (Thrown)	24%
Hand Weap. (2 Hand)	24%
Hand to Hand	19%
Heavy Weap. (Beam)	19%
Interrogation	29%
Martial Arts	24%
Navigation	19%
Nuclear Weap. Tech	24%
Pilot Ground Vehicle	19%
Projectile Weap. (Hand)	24%
Projectile Weap. (Heavy)	24%
R/W Native (Basic)	79%
Scanner Systems Ops.	29%
Speak Native	79%
Subduing	4%
Surveillance	29%
TransMatt Ops.	29%



Weap. Tech (Beam)	19%
Weap. Tech (Projectile)	19%
Vehicle Mounted Weap.	14%

Personal Data:

R.Z. is a typical security officer. He has little use for the Commander, but he will follow her orders to the letter and defend her to the death. He avoids the others in the mission and has little interaction with the other characters other than what is necessary to do his job.

Doc WO2 Rabbit-Beta Electrical Engineer

CON 80 STR 72 DEX 113 IQ 95 WIS 65 AGL 104 PRZ 54

MS 160 BOD 12 RES 13 Speed 78 Base to Strike: 37% Damage Bonus: 7

Skills:

Advanced First Aid	19%
Advanced Mathematics	29%
Advanced Navigation	9%
Advanced Zero-G	7%
Art(Drawing)	9%
Basic Math	59%
Communicator Ops.	24%
Computer Tech	34%
Computer Programming	34%
Computer Technologies	34%
Dual Weapons	

(Projectile Weapons Hand)

Electronic Diagnosis	29%
Emergency E-suit Repair	29%
E-Suit Ops.	34%
Exo-skeleton Ops.	34%
First Aid	22%
Fusion	29%
Hand to Hand	22%
Laser Tech	24%
Micro-Electronics	24%
Navigation	22%
Pilot Ground Vehicle	24%

Projectile Weap. (Hand)	24%
R/W Native (Basic)	84%
Robotics	19%
Scanner Systems Ops.	34%
Scanner Systems Tech	19%
Speak Native	84%
Solar Tech	24%
Subduing	9%
TransMatt Ops.	34%
TransMatt Tech	34%
Zero-G Training	22%

**Personal Data:**

Doc was a House-Beta. For most of his life he has served as a companion and valet to a college professor. A few years ago, when the professor died, Doc was pressed into service as a Justifier to complete his buy-back to the Corp. Doc is slightly older than most of his companions. He also seems a little better at keeping his calm than the rest of the Justifiers on this mission. The crew has a seemingly natural inclination to look to Doc for orders and advice in times of crisis. This irritates Arden to no end and she frequently takes her frustrations about this out on Doc.

Dwelf 2nd Lt. Heavy-G Human Planetary Scientist

CON 74 STR 98 DEX 43 IQ 65 WIS 20 AGL 19 PRZ 11 MS 85 BOD 7

RES 11 Speed 16 Base to Strike: 14% Damage Bonus: 9

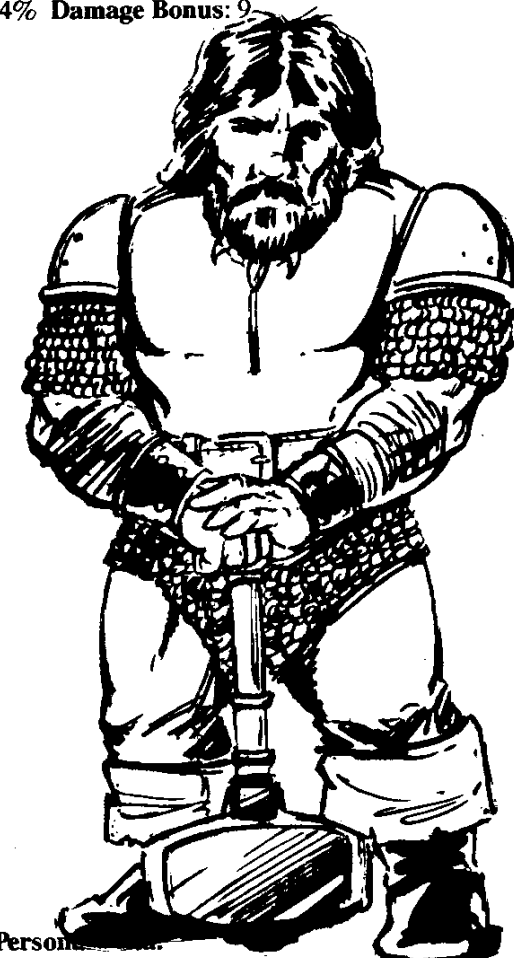
Skills:

Terran Basic (Spoken)	49%
Terran Basic (R/W)	11%
Aquatics	21%
Basic Math	56%
Botany	6%
Cartography	6%
Chemistry	26%
Communicator Ops.	21%
Computer Tech	21%
Demolitions	16%
Dual Weapons	

(Hand Weapons -All)

Ecology	6%
Emerg. E-suit Repair	26%
E-Suit Ops.	31%
Exo-Skeleton Ops.	6%
First Aid	21%
Geography	31%
Geology	31%
Geomorphology	21%
Hand Weap. (Ancient)	62%
Hand Weap. (Thrown)	16%
Hand to Hand	21%

Meteorology	26%
Navigation	19%
Photography	21%
Pilot Ground Vehicle	19%
Projectile Weap. (Hand)	21%
R/W Native (Cetan)	81%
Scanner Systems Ops.	31%
Smuggling	6%
Speak Native (Cetan)	81%
TransMatt Ops.	29%
Zero-G Training	21%

**Personal Data:**

Dwelf's most striking feature is his appearance which makes him closely resemble the semi-legendary dwarves of Scandinavian mythology, much to his delight. Dwelf tries very hard to play up his dwarf-like appearance. His long hair and beard are only one aspect of his peculiar delusion. His deep-seated desire is to have been one of those mystical creatures toiling away in deep mines, creating magical treasures. He often carries a pair of warhammers as a back-up weapon in case of a close combat situation. Dwelf's native tongue is Cetan and he speaks Terran Basic with an extremely thick accent.

Shatter WO2 Owl-Beta Pilot
CON 55 STR 97 DEX 94 IQ 62
WIS 30 AGL 57 PRZ 45 MS 92 BOD 5 RES 12 Speed 35/90
Base to Strike: 31% Damage Bonus: 9

Skills:

Advanced Navigation	31%
Advanced Zero-G	21%
Aircraft Technologies	16%
Air to Air Combat	21%
Basic Math	56%
Carousing	21%
Combat Driving	21%
Communicator Ops.	21%
Computer Tech	21%
Dual Weapons	

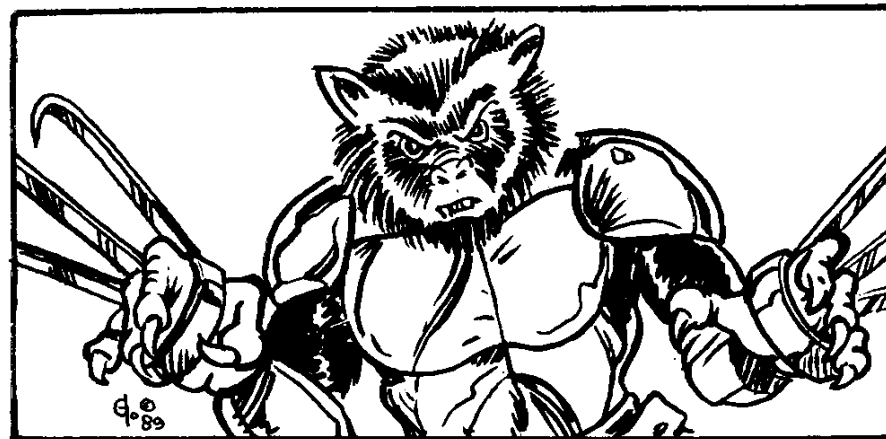
(Projectile Weapons Hand)

Emer. E-suit Repair	26%
E-Suit Ops.	31%
First Aid	21%
Ground Vehicle Tech	16%
Hand Weap. (Ancient)	6%
Hand Weap.(Thrown)	6%
Hand Weap.(2 Hand)	6%
Hand to Hand	21%
Heavy Weap. (Ancient)	6%
Meteorology	16%
Mine Engineering	6%
Navigation	21%
Pilot Aircraft	26%
Pilot Ground Vehicle	21%
Pilot Hovercraft	26%
Projectile Weap. (Hand)	21%
R/W Native (Basic)	81%
Scanner Systems Ops.	31%
Speak Native	81%
Subduing	6%
TransMatt Ops.	31%
Vehicle Mounted Weap.	26%
Zero-G Training	21%



Personal Data:

Shatter picked up his nick-name because of his incredible (for an owl) strength. He often forgets just how strong he is and when that happens-shatter! He invariably breaks something. Shatter is reasonably bright, although often preoccupied and often forgets things. He is only really close friend among the crew is Dwelf. From Dwelf, Shatter has gained an appreciation of, and some skill with, ancient weapons.



Vulf WO3 Wolverine-Beta Mechanical Engineer

CON 96 STR 70 DEX 56 IQ 65 WIS 40 AGL 48 PRZ 44 MS 105 BOD 9
RES 11 Speed 50 Base to Strike: 18% Damage Bonus: 7

Skills:

Advanced Math	31%	Hand Weap. (Ancient)	6%
Aircraft Technologies	26%	Hand Weap. Thrown	6%
Basic Math	56%	Hand to Hand	21%
Communicator Ops.	21%	Mechanical Diagnosis	36%
Computer Programming	6%	Metallurgy	31%
Computer Tech	21%	Micro-Electronics	21%
Dual Weapons		Navigation	21%
<i>(Hand Weapons -Ancient)</i>		Pilot Ground Vehicle	21%
Electronic Diagnosis	6%	Projectile Weap. (Hand)	21%
Emer. E-suit Repair	26%	R/W Native (Basic)	81%
E-Suit Ops.	31%	Robotics	16%
Exo-skeleton Ops.	6%	Scanner Systems Ops.	31%
Fabrication	26%	Speak Native	81%
First Aid	21%	Structural Engineering	31%
Fluid Systems	31%	TransMatt Ops.	31%
Ground Vehicle Tech	31%	Zero-G Training	21%

Personal Data:

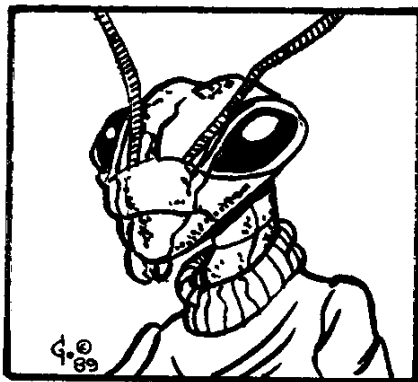
Vulf is not as physically developed as some of his race and he has developed an inferiority complex about it. He has all the natural aggressiveness of his kind as well as their natural aversion to companionship. Most often he is terse and quite. Although sometimes rude, he is never outright hostile to his crew mates. His hostile tendencies show only when engaged in combat. There, he often disdains from using ranged weapons and prefers to get in close for knife work.

Adabay Lt. Mantis-Beta Field Doctor

CON 57 STR 90 DEX 92 IQ 85 WIS 84 AGL 78 PRZ 08 MS 169 BOD 5
RES 17 Speed 57 Base to Strike: 30% Damage Bonus: 9

Skills:

Advanced First Aid	28%	Scanner Systems Ops.	33%
Analytical Chemistry	8%	Smuggling	8%
Basic Math	58%	Speak Native	83%
Communicator Ops.	23%	Subduing	8%
Computer Tech	23%	Surgery	33%
Cybernetic Tech	18%	Trauma Treatment	33%
Emer. E-suit Repair	28%	TransMatt Ops.	33%
E-Suit Ops.	33%	Zero-G Training	19%
First Aid	22%		
Hand to Hand	23%		
Internal Medicine	28%		
Med Tech Ops.	28%		
Navigation	23%		
Orthopedics	23%		
Pathology	33%		
Pharmacology	33%		
Pilot Ground Vehicle	19%		
Projectile Weap. (Hand)	24%		
Psychology	23%		
R/W Native (Basic)	88%		



Personal Data:

Doc Adabay is the Beta equivalent of the kindly old country doctor. He will listen to your problems, nod his head knowingly, and give you a couple of pills. He gives you the impression that he knows more than he is saying. His carapace is heavily scarred from past missions. How many past missions no one seems to know, but rumor has it that he has survived at least a dozen. His rank and position are a reflection of his casual attitude toward military protocol (he once addressed a Brigadier with, "Hiya, Toots!").

Adabay also has a unique set of skills that have served him well in the past. To augment his firepower, and in light of his four arms, Adabay has mastered the skill of Dual Weapons twice. This allows him to fire four weapons (one in each hand) in the same round. In the field he generally carries four sub-machine guns strapped across his chest. His favorite tactic is attack in a wild sort of, "Death from above" leap. Using his mantis ability to leap high into the air, all the while blasting away with his multiple machine pistols. This has been the last sight of a good many hostile lifforms in his many years of service.

Gwyniffer Lt. Sea Lion-Beta Life Scientist

CON 99 STR 74 DEX 107 IQ 71 WIS 67 AGL 105 PRZ 65 MS 138 BOD 9
RES 14 Speed 46/92 Base to Strike: 35% Damage Bonus: 7

Special Talents: Telepathy, Teleport, and Body control.

Skills:

Advanced Navigation	7%	Ecology	32%
Advanced Zero-G	7%	Emer. E-Suit Repair	27%
Analytical Chemistry	22%	First Aid	22%
Aquatics	22%	Hand to Hand	22%
Basic Math	57%	Martial Arts	7%
Beam Weapons	21%	Navigation	22%
Biology (Marine)	32%	Pilot Ground Vehicle	22%
Botany	32%	Projectile Weap. (Hand)	22%
Chemistry	27%	R/W Native (Basic)	82%
Communicator Ops.	22%	Scanner Systems Ops.	32%
Computer Tech	22%	Speak Native	82%
Dual Weapons		Subduing	17%

(Beam Weapons)



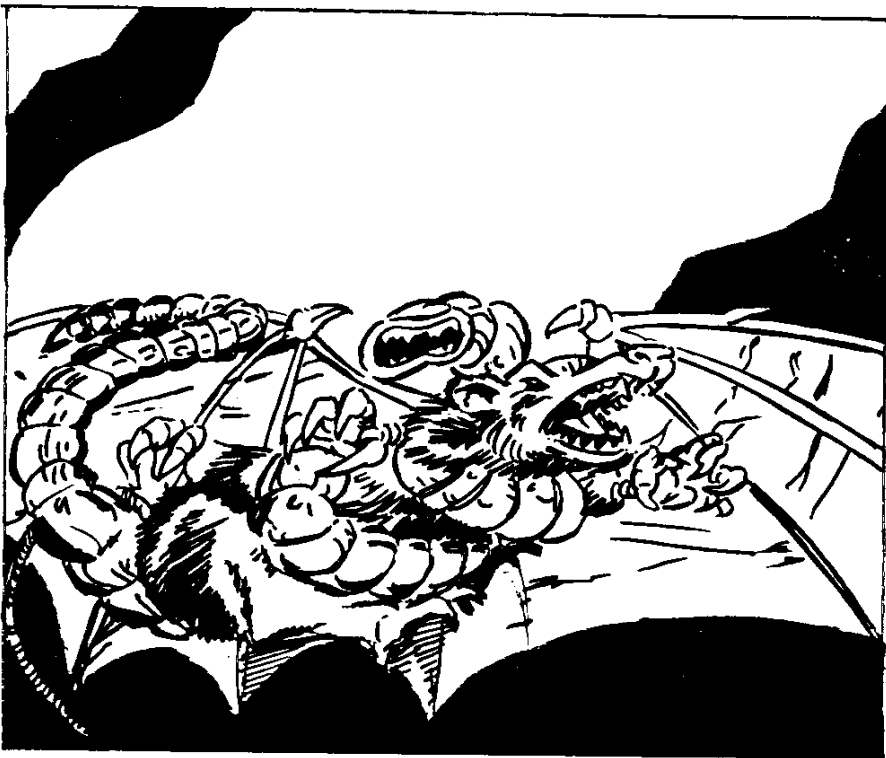
Personal Data:

Gwyniffer is shy and quiet. A confirmed pacifist, she refuses to carry any weapon other than stoppers (she uses two Dual Weapons). She will use passive Martial Arts and Hand to Hand techniques, always trying to subdue rather than injure.

Her psionics are a very private thing for her. She will use them only if absolutely necessary and then only sparingly. She will not use her telepathy to pry into

another's private thoughts. Neither will she discuss her abilities with the rest of the group.

Only by viewing her personnel chart (unlikely with this Commander) or by seeing her use her psionic talents (equally unlikely that she would allow herself to be observed) will the other players learn of her abilities. The Commander (having viewed the personnel records) does know of her abilities and is constantly suspicious of Gwyniffer. If an argument between the two occurs, accusations of mental prying will undoubtedly come from the Commander.



BESTIARY

The swamps of Altair 3 contain all the vile creatures that would be found in the dankest and most fetid of Terra's swamps. Leeches, mosquitoes, and poisonous snakes abound, as well as several dangerous species inherently Altair's own.

Tentacles

#App: 1 **Str:** +45 **CON:** +10 **Armor:** Hv. Hide
Natural Weapons: D10 Large Clubs 70% entangle

The tentacles are exactly what they sound like. These creatures can have up to 10 tentacles as long as 20 feet capable radiating out of a central "body". Each appendage is capable of ensnaring and crushing the life out of any prey that might cross their path.

Lacking mobile appendages they must lie in wait for their victims. They have evolved abilities much like the terrestrial chameleon that allow them to remain unnoticed. They have no eyes or ears, but rely on ground vibrations to tell them when prey is at hand.



Swamp Rat

#App: 2D10 **CON:** x2 **Speed:** 40 **Armor:** Hv Fur
Natural Weapons: 1 Large Bite, 2 Small Claws

The swamp rats are rodents of incredible size and ferocity. Unlike terrestrial rodents they have the sharp, tearing teeth of a carnivore. They will eat anything that they can stalk and take unawares (35% chance). Given the chance they will even attempt to eat each other. For this reason they do not travel in large packs.

Swamp Lizard

#App: 1/1D6 **Str:** +50 **CON:** +50 **Speed:** 20/55
Armor: Hv. Hide **Natural Weapons:** 1 Large Bite, 1 Large Club

Swamp lizards resemble heavy, wingless dragons. They are capable of moving at great speed, but for only short periods of time (3 rounds). They are entirely carnivorous and will gorge themselves on fresh kill before sleeping for as long as a week at a time. To disturb one while it is hunting means becoming its prey; to disturb one while sleeping is far worse. They will sometimes (25% of the time) hunt in packs of up to six adults. They are accustomed to the water and are powerful swimmers, but they are not truly amphibious.



Beetles

#App: 2D10 + 10 CON: x12 Speed: 40/75 Armor: Chitin
Natural Weapons: 1 large bite

These are giant (1-2 feet in length) primitive, flying beetles that travel in small swarms. They are relatively harmless, but will attack animals (or humanoids) if disturbed or provoked. Then they will bite and rip at their attackers with incredible ferocity.



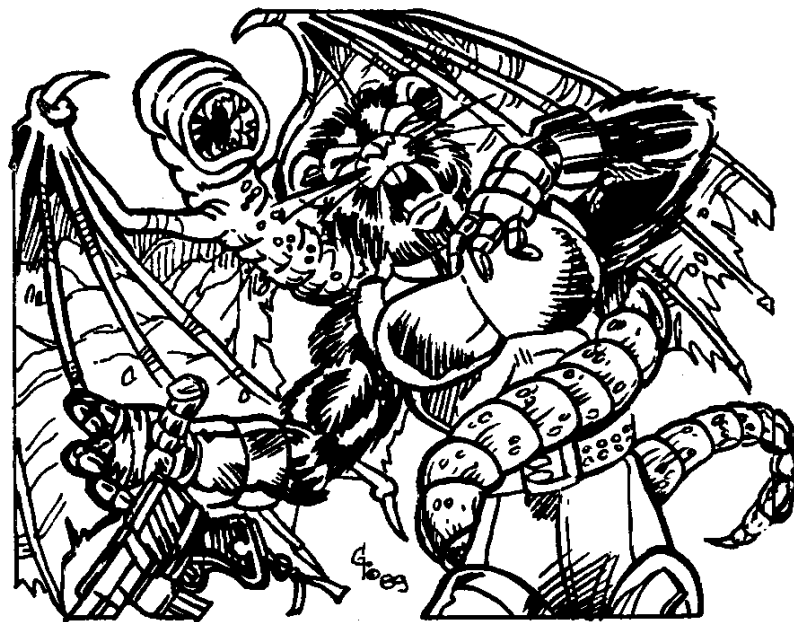
Flying Worms

#App: 1D + 1 CON: x1/2 Speed: 15/45 Armor: Hv. Hide
Natural Weapons: 1 Large Bite 1 Entangle 40% (Treat as a garotte)

The flying worms are a somewhat unique manifestation. Their feeding habits resemble those of the vampire bat. In fact their digestive tract is so primitive that blood is all they can feed on. From it they can extract what nutrients they need for continued survival.

A typical worm attack involves the victim being bitten on or near the neck or throat. Once the worm's teeth have locked onto the victim, the flying worm will coil its body around the upper torso of the victim for added leverage and to restrict the victim.

After securing the victim, the flying worm will then drain blood until it is satiated (1D6 rounds). The worm's saliva contains a special anticoagulating agent. Bleeding may continue for quite some time after (2D6 rounds more) an attack.



Treat as critical any attack when the teeth lock in. Treat anything less as a slashing attack with the creature's fangs. Even without penetrating (due to the anticoagulant) there will be additional bleeding (1D6 per round) to any creature whose armor is penetrated.

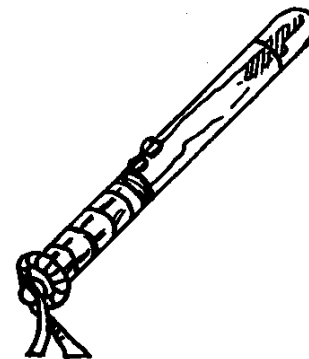
NEW EQUIPMENT

Stun Rod 550C

This is a heavy baton-like weapon that does electrical stun damage much the way that a stopper does sonic stun. The main difference is that actual contact with the target is required.

It is most often used by CorpSecs, but is popular in some circles with Justifiers since it can be used as a club (1D6 + Damage Bonus) as well.

Its functions and operations are identical to the stopper with the one exception being that its highest end setting is 15 not 10.



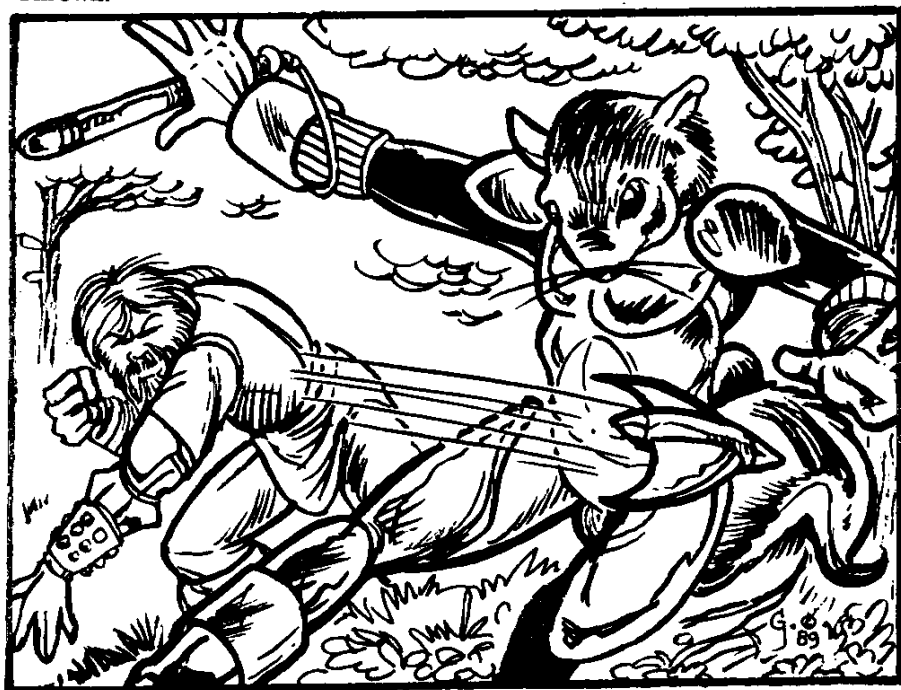
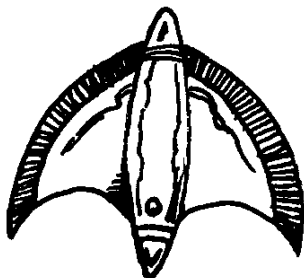
Jhal 350C

Range: x2

Damage: 2D10 (+ Damage Bonus)

The Jhal is a throwing weapon used among the Fenris, an intelligent, though war-like race from the world Ariadni's Thread.

In the hands of an expert it can be a deadly weapon and it can be made to return like a boomerang (5% cumulative chance per level of the user). However for non-fenris it is at -20% to the skill Hand Weapons Thrown.



NEW SKILLS

Transmutation

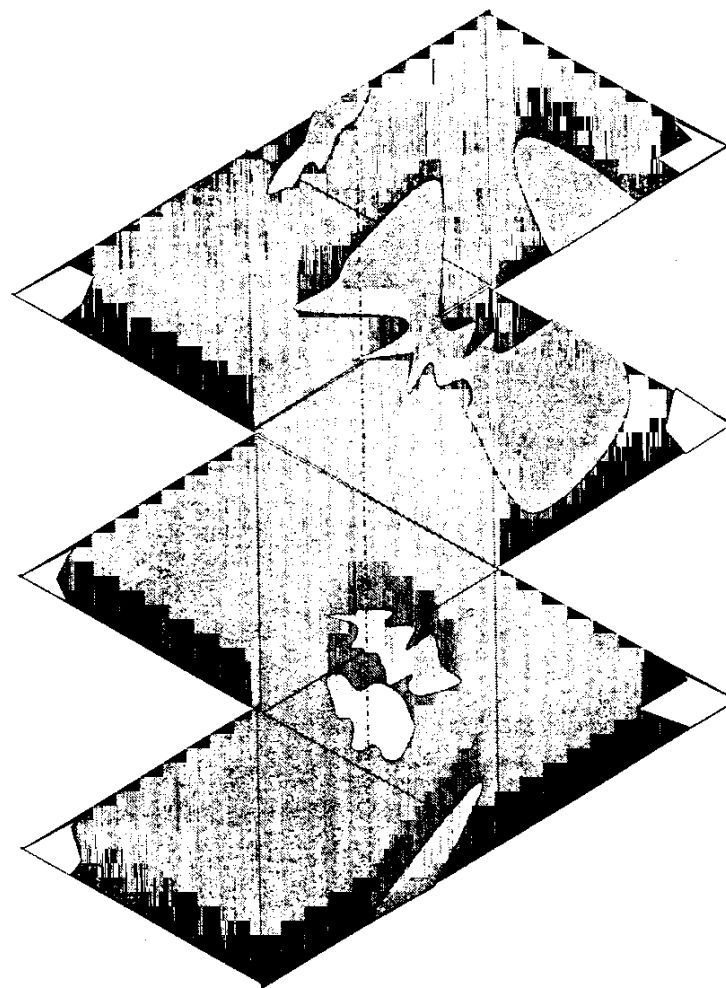
Like a living philosopher's stone, the individual with this power can transmute one element, or chemical compound into another. This is literally the ability to change lead to gold, wood into food, or cow chips into diamonds. Cost is 5 MS per gram of the object transmuted. The mass of an object cannot be changed, only its form. For example, you cannot change 1 gram of lead into a kilogram of gold.

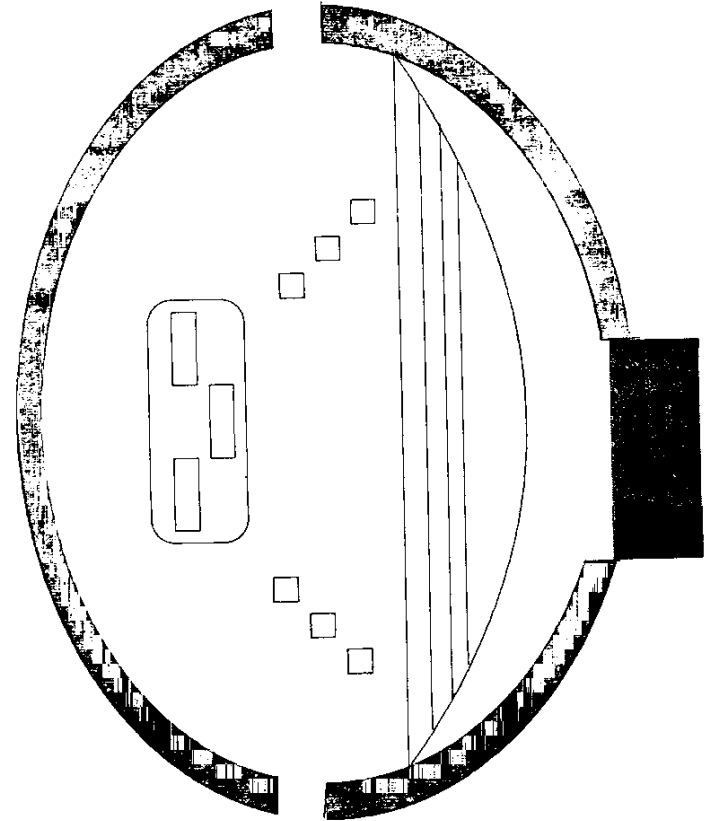
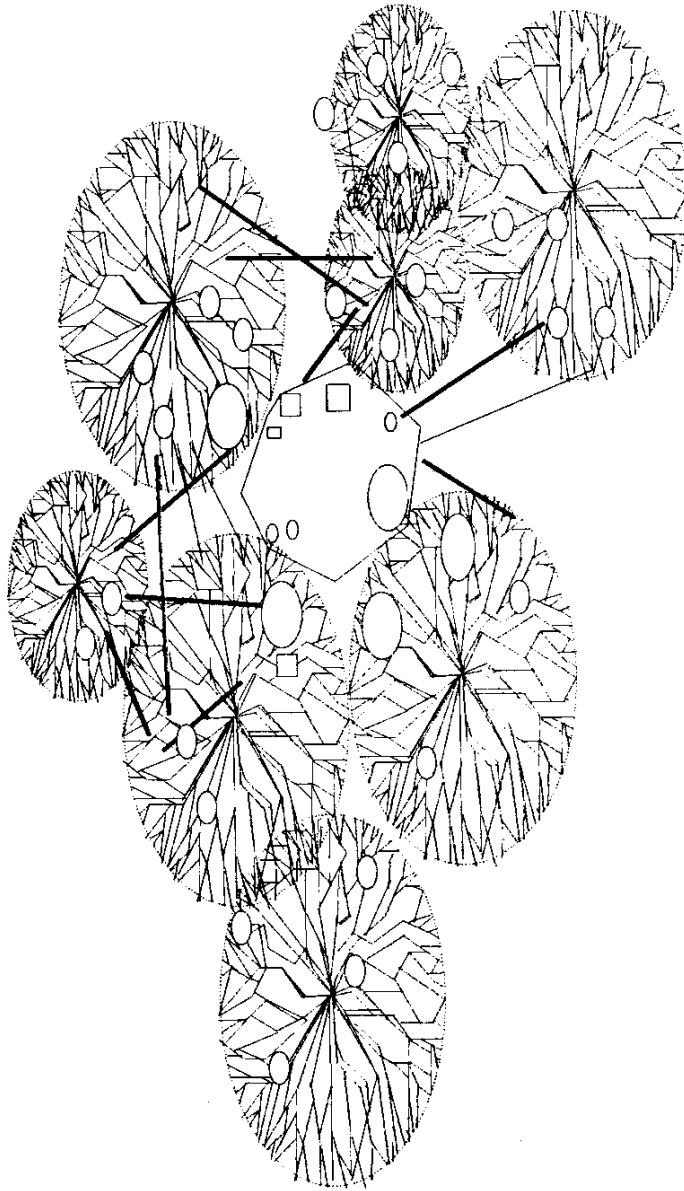
PLANETARY MAPS

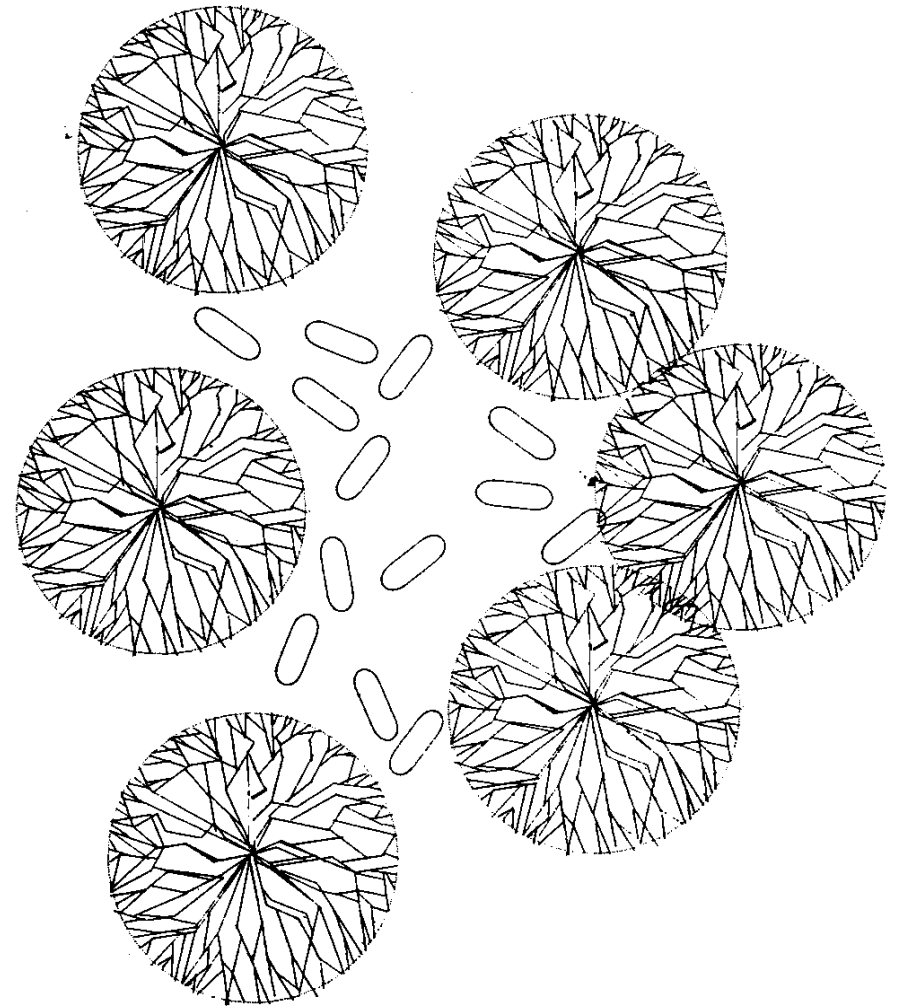
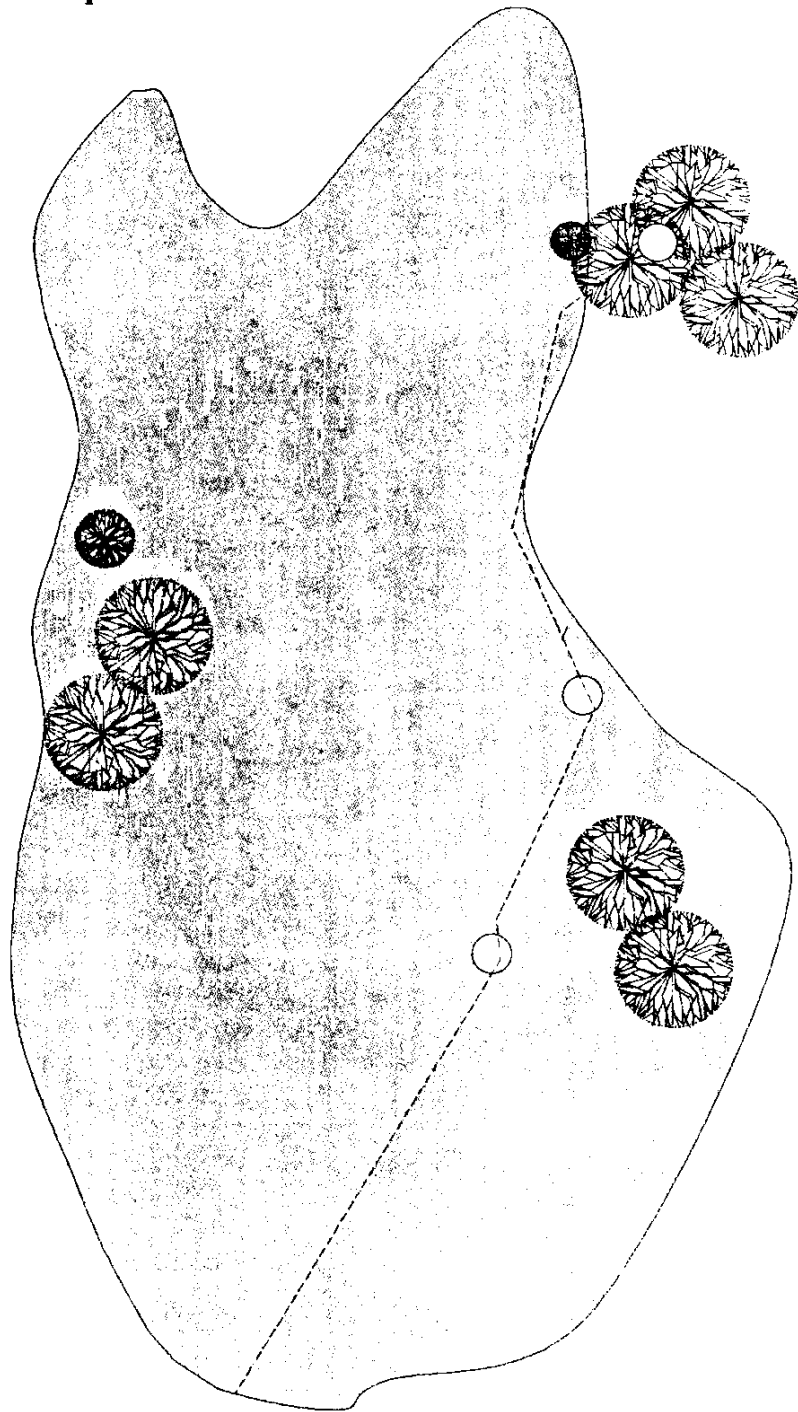
This sections features detailed maps of the planet and site the players will encounter as they explore. In addition to the world maps, you will find detailed floorplans of the various structures the players will enter.

GameMasters should feel free to adapt or change these maps to better suit the exact circumstances of their game. Permission to photocopy is granted for personal use only.

World Map (Mercator Projection)







CAMPAIGNING TIPS

So the mystery of Altair is solved, the TransMatt is constructed, the wilderness tamed, and there's nothing left to do on this miserable ball of mud, right? PZZZZZZT! Sorry, wrong answer (*lose 5 experience points*).

Even after the TransMatt is constructed, the players have options. They can write Altair 3 off as un-justifiable, pile into the TransMatt and go home. Players wishing to exercise this option should be reminded that the Corp spent a mint financing this mission, and they're going to want proof that this world is useless (everyone knows Betas lie like cheap rugs). The team's other option is to stay and continue to explore Altair 3. They've only seen one small corner of one small continent - there must be more to the planet than those infernal swamp forests.

So they send back a single crewman (*preferably an NPC*) to let the Corp boys know that they have a justifiable planet on their hands. The remaining team now has several months wait before anyone can get back. Don't just sit on your hands! Explore the planet, you fruitnobs!

The possibilities of what the team may find is endless. The choice is up to the GM.

Who's to say that this tribe of Poilu is the only one on the planet? What if there are more? A second tribe of Poilu may react differently than the first, depending on how environmental conditions may have shaped them. The Justifiers



think they have stumbled across another tribe of "friendly" natives, only to discover that this second group really likes strangers (*especially roasted over an open fire*).

How about a concentrated search for the "motherlode," that cache of crystals worth millions? Whoever finds it would look very good in the eyes of the Corp. But you risked your life to find the gems, so why should you have to turn them over to the Corps? Something would have to be done about the other Justifiers, but those are mere details. Remember - a million C's sure goes a long way.

What about the High Ones? Where have they gone off to? What kind of powers do they really have? If the High Ones are so protective of their privacy, what will be their reaction when they realize that hundreds or thousands more people will soon descend on their world? The idea of fighting beings with great powers should be a frightening prospect.

How about a continuing adventure attempting to locate the High Ones? If they are found, and providing the players can be persuasive enough, they may be willing to share some of their psionic secrets. Could the players learn these skills? Trying to track down the High Ones is a very difficult and dangerous assignment, but may have to be undertaken nonetheless (*better to find the High Ones before they find you*). Dangers will come at the team from all directions, and around every corner. Some of these dangers will be really, but some will be fits of imagination, inspired by the High Ones' incredible powers. Finding the High Ones will seem easy, compared with trying to persuade them to help you. Beings as secretive as the High Ones do not trust strangers, so it may be necessary to prove yourself to gain their confidence. A quest to face some unknown ancient evil is the standard scenario in this case.

Once the boys from Corp HQ arrive, there are still options available. One question is how the Corp will deal with the Poilu. History is littered with clashes between colonists and native cultures, and rarely do they go the natives' way. Not noted for their handling of aboriginal races, will the Corp be openly aggressive against the Poilu, thereby triggering the return of the High Ones? Could the end result be an all out war?

What if the player's story about the Commander's poisoning simply isn't believed? After all, the Commander's log contained plenty of incriminating evidence against individual crew members, more than enough to see one of the PC's charged in her death. Considering the suspicious nature of Corp security officers, one (*or all*) of the team may be charged with the murder. A summary trial held on Altair could make for an interesting diversion for the players, especially if one, or all their character's lives are on the line.

As you can plainly see, the myriad of possibilities are endless. A little imagination and you can turn the end of this adventure into the beginning of a roller coaster ride for everyone. As always, the goal of this or any Justifiers adventure is to have fun (*it's just a game, remember*).

In the mysterious forests of Altair...

...the climate is **MURDER.**

Explore the planet and make contact with the "friendly" natives - a simple mission with a simple objective. But the cold-blooded murder of the mission commander has complicated matters thoroughly. You and your fellow Justifiers must find the killer...

...before he finds you.



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