

# SAGITTARIUS

September 3303

Your Galactic Network

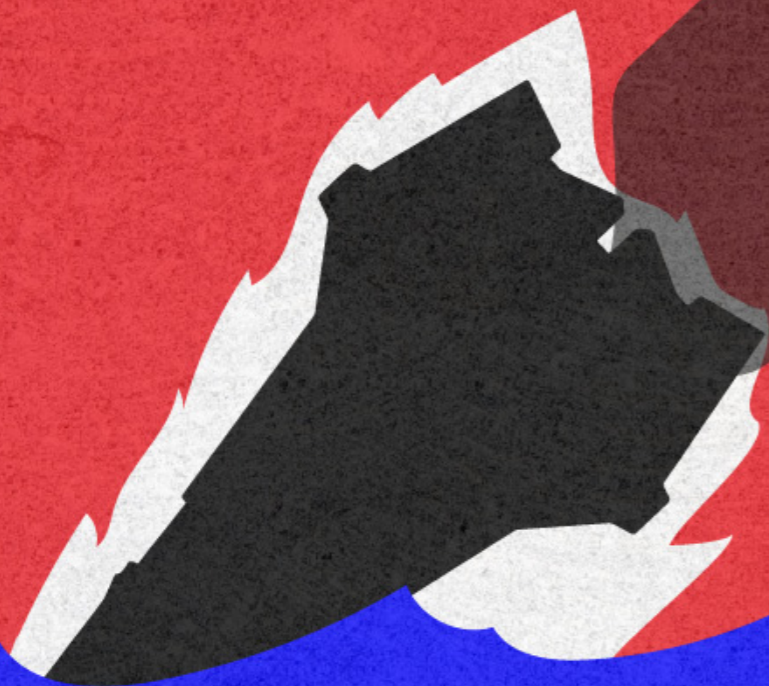
# EYE

Issue - 01

## **THE RETURN:**

**WHO THE HELL ARE THE  
THARGOIDS, AND WHAT  
CAN THEY POSSIBLY WANT?**

**LOOSE  
LIPS**



**SINK SHIPS**



**SUPPORT THE FEDERATION  
IN THE PLEIADES**



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FOR ALL OF MANKIND**



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**LAVIGNY'S LEGION**



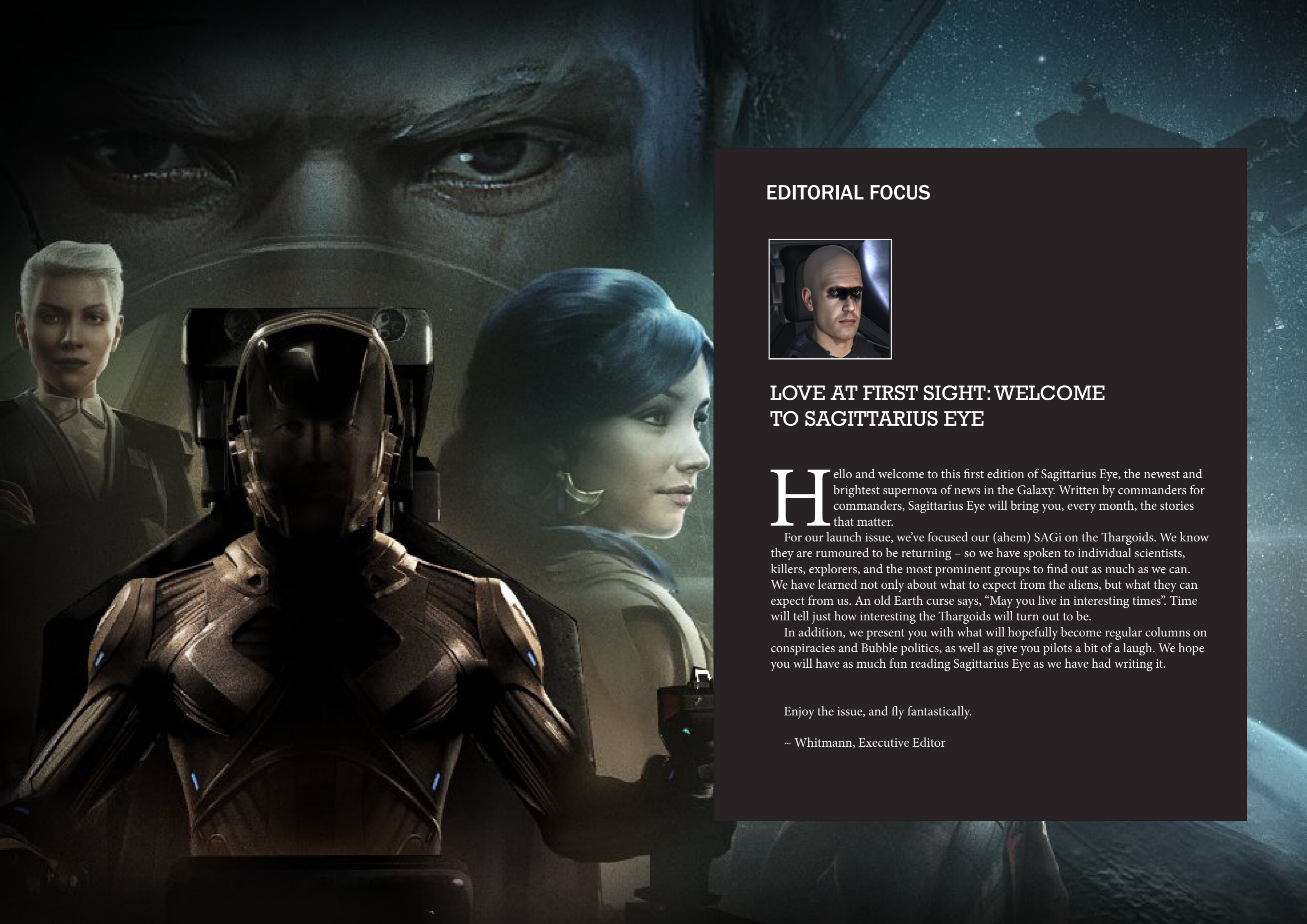
WHY WOULD YOU...

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WHEN YOU CAN...

**FIGHT FOR  
FREEDOM!**

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## EDITORIAL FOCUS



### LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT: WELCOME TO SAGITTARIUS EYE

**H**ello and welcome to this first edition of Sagittarius Eye, the newest and brightest supernova of news in the Galaxy. Written by commanders for commanders, Sagittarius Eye will bring you, every month, the stories that matter.

For our launch issue, we've focused our (ahem) SAGi on the Thargoids. We know they are rumoured to be returning – so we have spoken to individual scientists, killers, explorers, and the most prominent groups to find out as much as we can. We have learned not only about what to expect from the aliens, but what they can expect from us. An old Earth curse says, “May you live in interesting times”. Time will tell just how interesting the Thargoids will turn out to be.

In addition, we present you with what will hopefully become regular columns on conspiracies and Bubble politics, as well as give you pilots a bit of a laugh. We hope you will have as much fun reading Sagittarius Eye as we have had writing it.

Enjoy the issue, and fly fantastically.

~ Whitmann, Executive Editor



# WHO

THE HELL ARE THE  
THARGOIDS, AND WHAT  
CAN THEY POSSIBLY  
WANT?

**I**n recent months, much of the idle gossip and serious scientific study alike has revolved around the rumours that the alien species known as the Thargoids are about to make a significant entrance into human space. No news magazine worthy of the name could do anything other than attempt to find some truth within these rumours. Humanity needs answers - and we set out to find some.

**Sagittarius Eye met with Dr. Strange, Head of Xeno-technology at Canonn, for an insight into the Thargoids past, present and future.**

**SAGi:** Dr. Strange - thank you for agreeing to talk to Sagittarius Eye.

*Can I first ask - it's heavily rumoured an alien race known as the Thargoids are about to "return", which means they've been here before. Could you tell me when this was, and a brief history of how events played out?*

**Dr. Strange:** The Thargoids appeared a few hundred years ago within the 2800s. We humans as war driven as we are, went to war with them, the war was huge, casting large blows to both the Thargoid race itself and the Human race. However, we developed a biological/chemical weapon called the Mycoid Virus. This was so lethal it completely shredded the Thargoids, and led to a full-blown retreat. Many thought it had killed all of the remaining Thargoids. But now with the news of their return it appears that this is not the case.

**SAGi:** Right.

*So, what have we found in the last couple of years that have led the top scientists, including many from Canonn, to believe we are about to see a widespread return of Thargoids again? Many commanders, myself included, have been 'hyperdicted' without injury, and have visited structures such as the so-called 'barnacles' and the huge buried...things...what have we learned from them, and why, if the Thargoids are our enemy, has nobody been hurt?*

**Dr. Strange:** Since 3301 the discoveries of Alien objects or presence have grown increasingly since the Unknown Artefact was found, with a massive surge of them. These all seem to point in the same direction—the Thargoids. Even the formation of the Aegis science division, recently set up to study the Thargoids, suggest their return. Even though they have been widely seen, they still show no signs of immediate hostility. Some say they are looking for our weaknesses before they attack, but no-one really knows. The only sign of their 'hostility' is through the multiple wrecked Federal Convoys we see throughout the Pleiades that appear to be attacked by the Thargoids, though this may be simply self-defence. Nobody can tell whether they are still hostile at this point, but knowing humanity, it's likely we will be the reason for their hostility.

**SAGi:** *Is there a way, therefore, to appeal to all pilots to hold fire until we have evidence of hostilities? Many of the large groups have said they will not fire the first shot but will defend themselves, and humanity, if push comes to shove?*

**Dr. Strange:** At this point it seems very hard to get people to hold fire; while many have said that they won't fire the first shot, others I've heard are preparing to go to full blown war. Until we are aware of the situation, and where Humanity stands with the Thargoids, we cannot persuade people to lower their weapons. I for one will not be going to war. I wish to preserve the peace, and hope that others, too, share this wish.

**SAGi:** *Well, quite. Scientists are not usually the ones wielding lasers. I fear that this considered approach, however, will not be shared by all.*

*The discovery of some kind of machine at the newest alien sites showing what seems to be a holographic map - do we know if that's a map for us, or for them?*

**Dr. Strange:** Good question. The Holographic projection that many in the scientific community are calling the 'Star map' shows some sort of spiral galaxy, though we cannot confirm this for sure. The fact that three Unknown Objects are required to start the machine means it's highly likely it was built for them; it may also be a map to other sites, as the machine, once activated, gives off three audio signals which can be played to the Unknown Link (found within the sites) to find other structures.

**SAGi:** *Can the fact that this Star Map is not merely a dispensary of information but has clearly aesthetic qualities (at least to human eyes) tell us anything at all about the Thargoids? What can we infer from it in terms of what kind of culture they may have? We're clearly not just dealing with the mindless, swarming alien invaders of fiction...*

**Dr. Strange:** It may tell us that the Thargoids may not have a primary method of communication through sounds, or a 'voice' like we humans do, but might suggest they communicate and transfer information through means of imagery. It's unclear what the purpose of such an aesthetic projection means for the Thargoids. What we can tell is they do interpret the overall structure of galaxies in space the same as we do. It also appears they have a very organic and yet high-tech style of living, as their holographic projection technology in particular seems to be much more advanced than ours.

**SAGi:** *Are Canonn scientists still working on this map to see what it represents? If it IS the Milky Way - what could this mean for the Thargoids when they arrive?*

**Dr. Strange:** Canonn scientists are indeed still working out what this may be. Right now there seems to be very little to help us with that. If this is the Milky Way, this could show or suggest possible Thargoid home systems, though again it's very hard to tell at this moment in time.

**SAGi:** *Watch this space, if you'll forgive the pun. It certainly is fascinating stuff.*

*Finally - what can we expect to see in the near future? Just this week, a prominent member of my profession said in his publication he believes a Thargoid attack could be imminent - does Canonn share that view, and what can ordinary pilots do about it? Some have suggested fleeing the bubble for Colonia - there are a lot of very concerned pilots out there and I wondered if you had any scrap of hope for them to cling to?*

**Dr. Strange:** With ever-growing Military presence arriving in the Pleiades, I'd say it's most probable for an attack or even war to take place. Canonn cannot comment on whether we believe an attack is coming. It's certainly hard for us to tell whether they will be the ones to fire first, but we are always researching and looking out for their presence, and so if needed we can prepare you.

For those ordinary pilots, I recommend a few things. It's highly likely that our powers are preparing for the worst, so it'd be safer to stay within their reach. I also recommend keeping up-to-date with the news. If an attack is coming, you need to be aware. And my final piece of advice is not to panic! Many



pilots including myself have had many encounters with the Thargoids in recent months, and right now they show no immediate signs of a hostile approach to normal pilots.

**SAGi:** Thank you for speaking to me - I appreciate it. And I'm sure the rest of the galaxy will join me in thanking Canonn for the work you're doing for the good of us all.

Sagittarius Eye also asked prominent pilots and groups how they viewed the heavily-rumoured imminent arrival of the Thargoids:

**I am looking forward to them given they are our overlords and all, plus it will be fun to see commanders sandwiched between SDC and the Thargoids - should make for some nice drama.**

- Harry Potter, Smiling Dog Crew

**Mobius has always preferred peace and cooperation. So first contact will hopefully be peaceful. But if all else fails - we got guns.**

- Orkekum, Mobius

**If it turns out we can make money from Thargoids, we will find an effective way to quickly neutralise their ships and strip them of anything valuable. We are masters of aggressive negotiation.**

**Are we scared of the Thargoids? Not one bit. We will do what we have always done; adapt, overcome and get rich.**

- Majinvash, The CODE

**I like to think we can cooperate peacefully, but fear dark forces - politicians and rogue commanders who wish to create an "us and them" scenario for personal power - will push us into conflict.**

- Allitnil, explorer

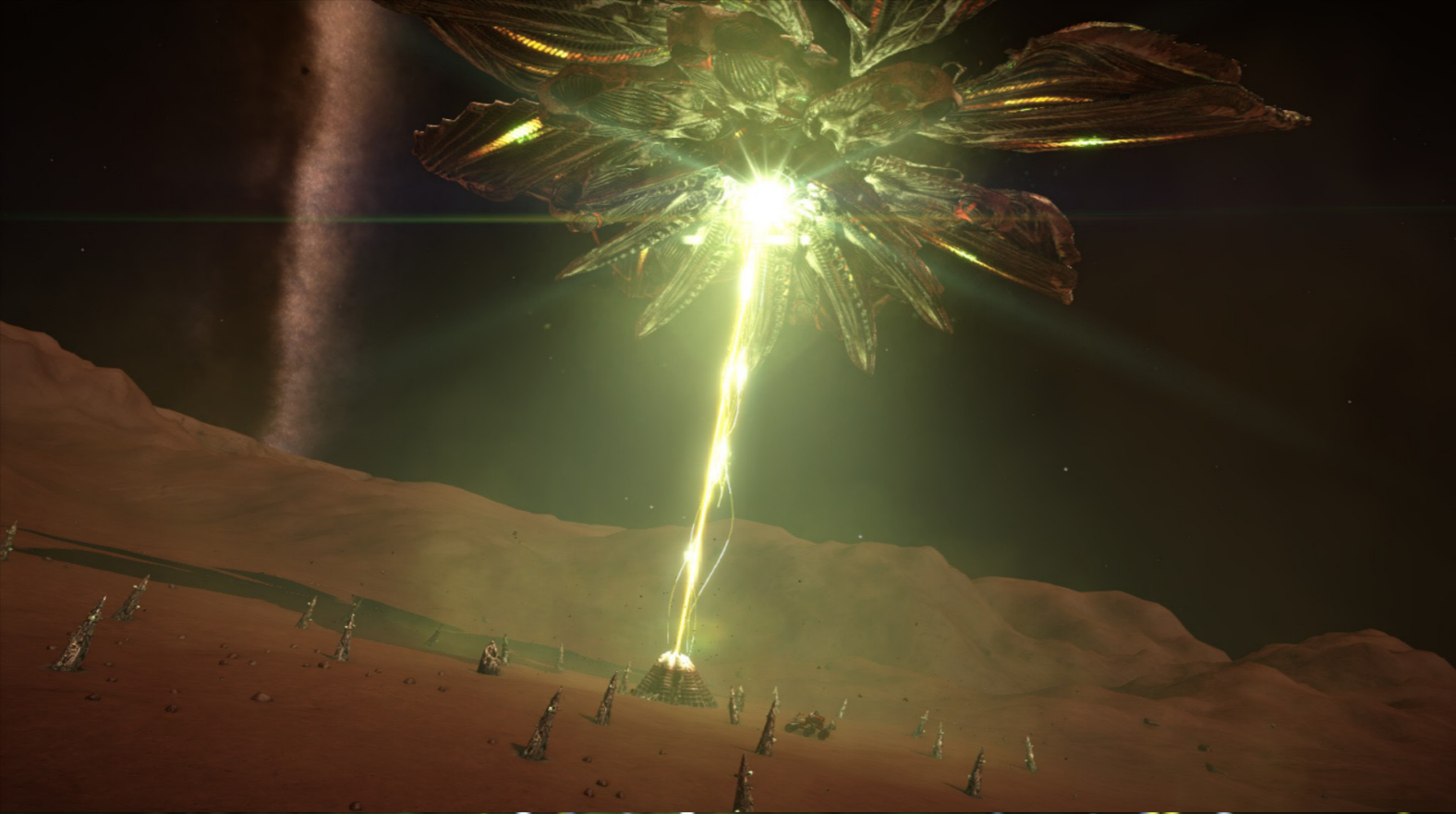
**Should the 13th Legion have first contact with the Thargoids, we will extend neither olive branch nor weapon fire. Rather, we will seek to gain intelligence on this alien species. What do they want? What are their weaknesses? How can they be killed? The 13th Legion does not seek to start an interspecies war, but make no mistake - if the Thargoids so much as think about harming the Empire or Imperial interests, we will lay siege upon them with the force of a supernova.**

- Nightshady, 13th Legion

**We at the Order of Enblackenment believe all creatures in this Universe are children of the Void, thus our brethren. We understand humanity feels threatened by these beings, however we do not yet know what the Void has prepared for us. Ultimately it is what the Thargoids do that will determine our response as a group. We will refer to our Oracles and seek guidance on what the Void's will is and take appropriate action.**

**We will begin with a peaceful stance. We all have been assigned a purpose, we seek to increase entropy which will hasten the heat death of the Universe, and if it comes down to defending ourselves in order to continue the pursuit of our objective, we will not hold back on striking.**

- Cardinal FinrodNV, Order of Enblackenment





“Many thought we had killed all of the remaining Thargoids. But it appears that this is not the case”

It is true that the original GalCop failed when tested against the Thargoids. It is clear that we are facing a new attack; the New Galactic Cooperative of worlds will make them pay for every station, planet and light year with blood and flames. We will hold the line. Humanity will not be forced to flee blind and afraid into the dark.

- Spokesperson, GalCop

The Sovereignty have long warned of the coming Thargoid threat. We have planned for the coming storm and stand ready to serve as humanity's protectors during the coming apocalypse. To this end every commander within our ranks has been ordered to fight until their final breath. They are then to join the exodus to Colonia, where we will prepare for the inevitable siege. The bubble cannot survive the Thargoids assault, but humanity can, and we will, eventually, prevail.

- DJ Truthsayer, The Sovereignty

Thargoids? Yeah, we've heard of them. Big "flower" ships right? They come down here with an attitude actin' all big and bad but the question is "are they fast"? Well...they're welcome to come along and try to prove it, but they'll have to present video or photographic evidence of their race times, same as everyone else. Are we scared? Nah, we have a secret weapon - his name's "cookiehole". If they can beat him THEN I'll be impressed. Oh, and that whole "Kick the Alien" thing ... it was a joke! They do understand that right?

- Alec Turner, Buckyball Racing Club

As explorers and pacifists, SEPP is fascinated by the discovery of this Alien race and the opportunities and significance this encounter means for the human race. We are still gathering information like everyone else, and following the discoveries attentively. We understand there's a great chance that we might be dealing with a hostile race, but if the conflicts in our own history have taught us anything, is that more often than not, such animosities are the consequence of deep initial misunderstandings, lies and deception.

At this time, we are still just observers, and we would hope for a peaceful approach, for which we need to understand them thoroughly before acting. However, if the circumstances lead us to a war with this race, SEPP is ready to defend our space, and the human race.

- Kancro Vantas, SEPP Chief of State

Nothing beats matching your skill with others. I'd love to have a challenge from the Thargoids.

- That 90s Kid, good/bad guy

Children of Raxxla, like many others, expect first encounters to be undermined by those who lurk in the shadows; the power blocks and their lackeys, and the Shadow Cartel puppet masters that have gone to great lengths to keep humanity fixated on our own tiny speck of the galaxy.

Unless people deal with our enemy within first, we have little hope of peaceful coexistence with our neighbours.

That being said, CoR will never take any blind steps in either direction, and will only act on the basis of careful observation and understanding before anything else. Considering all lifeforms equal, any signs of non-hostile movements will be met with friendly and observational behaviour, while on the other hand, any hostile action against us from any life form will be met with proper resistance and response.

- Erimus Kamzel, Children of Raxxla

I have my passenger's safety to take into consideration. It'll be the end of my business if they get abducted or something.

- Jennifer Law, passenger carrier

The Earth Defence Fleet is aware of the information publicly available about the return of the Thargoids, and have also had a small expeditionary team actively working on all aspects of alien research. The origins of the aliens and their true intentions are subjects of much speculation within this team, although the discovery of a wrecked Federation task force with damage from unknown corrosive weapons could be a marker for future encounters.

Whatever happens, the EDF remains steadfast in its mission to defend the Federation from any external threat.

- XanderVekk, Earth Defence Fleet

We are aware of the possibility of threat towards explorers during our missions from the Thargoids, and have been following the news carefully to be aware of their operations and areas of activity. We will continue to monitor the situation as it develops and will take all necessary precautions should an explorer under escort be at risk of Thargoid attack.

- Iridium Wing

Business as usual, as always. We have fuel, You don't. Any questions? And yes, if the Thargoids need fuel, we'll darn well fuel them too.

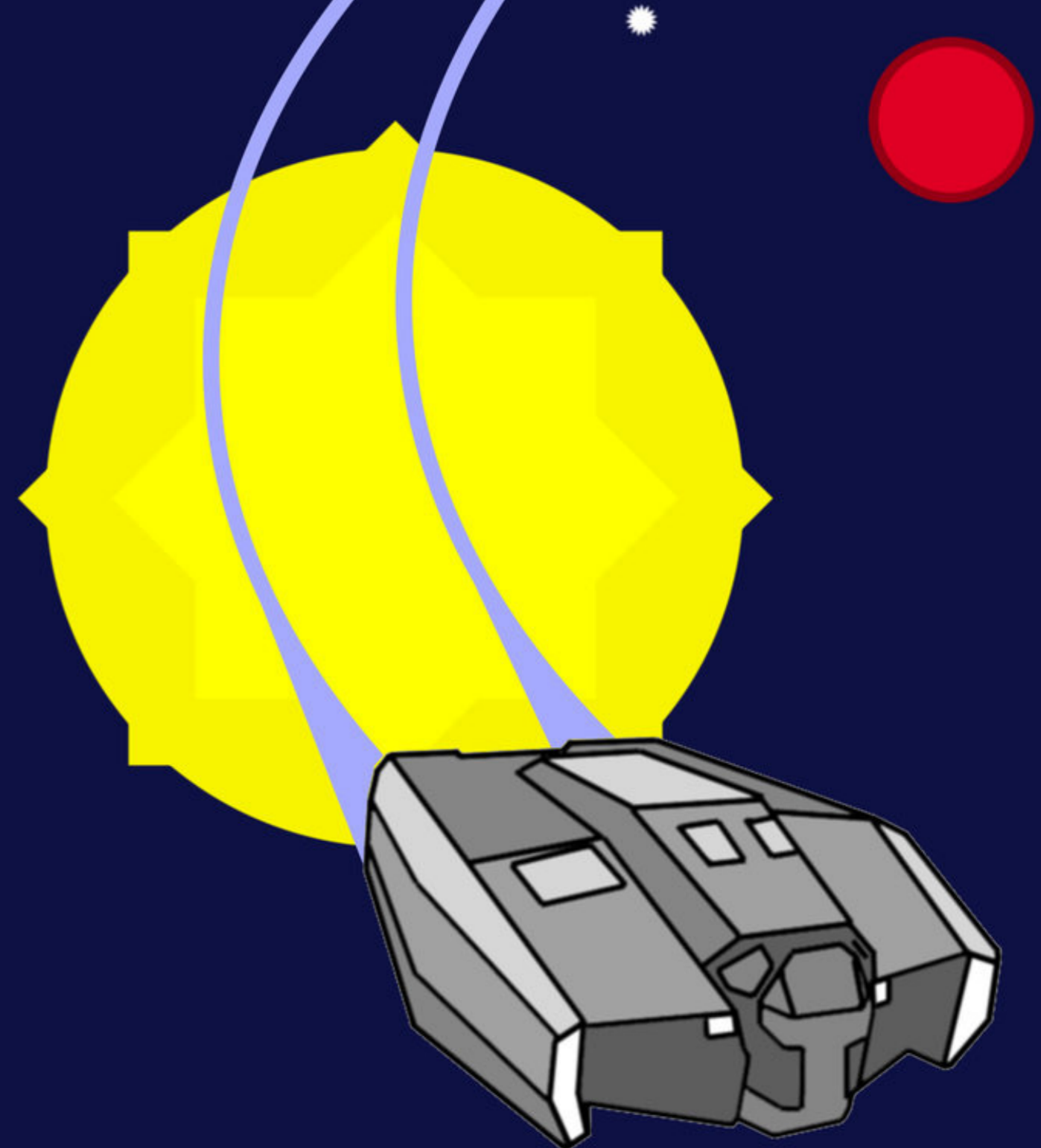
- Absolver, Fuel Rats

#### Final view:

In a galaxy this size, it seems that there are as many opinions and plans as there are pilots. We may still be in the dark about the Thargoids - for every answer, two more questions sprout forth. We neither know what they are, nor what they want. But perhaps who humankind is, and what WE want, can be gleaned from the ongoing mystery. One beacon of hope shines through the fog of uncertainty - we are determined, come what may, to stand firm against any threat that there might be. Perhaps not united - not yet. But determined, nevertheless, to meet this alien race head-on - with one hand extended in greeting, and the other on a weapon - just in case.

# THE LAKON TYPE 6

## Much More Than Just A Trader



**WIN**  
a ship paintjob  
of your choice

And now – your chance, dear reader, to get involved – and win a prize! We'd like you to caption this picture. Nothing NSFW or unpleasant – keep it clean, but make it funny. And the prize for the cleverest or funniest is – a paintjob pack of your choice.\*

Send in your entries to Whitmann on Frontier Forums.

\*excludes Cobra, Sidewinder and Eagle Variant packs, Pilot Starter pack and SRV Recon pack.



GALACTIC CENTRE

## GALAXY SONGS

Say hello, Lave goodbye  
Zaonce in a lifetime  
The song Kremainns the same  
Potriti Vacant  
You Betta Asp Somebody  
Quince you've been gone  
Baby got Keelback  
Lipstick on your Hauler  
Diamondback in black  
The hardest button to Hutton  
At Leesti it was here  
Nobody takes me Siriusly  
In the Altair tonight  
Girlfriend in a Cobra  
Hungry like the Wolf 359  
Sothis is how we do it  
Baby Pleiades Don't Go  
Sitting Conda Dock of the Bay

# Eye on The Sky

## The Tantalizing Type-8

By Rasudin

With the imminent release of the mysterious Type-10 Defender, questions have again arisen about the fate of the far more mysterious Type-8. Such questions are met only with puzzled faces and grim silence, and those who ask them often find themselves in deadly accidents of a nature too lethal and regular to be coincidental. The powers of the galaxy do not want us to know what happened to Lakon's last disastrous failure. However, I am not afraid to seek out the truth. As I write this piece in the Remlok storage closet of a deep-space exploration vessel under silent running in an uncharted system far from the bubble, I know my life is in danger if I speak out, but the journalist in me refuses to be silent. The galaxy must know what really happened if we are to resist the upcoming takeover, and resist we must. Therefore, here I give you the forbidden story of Lakon's Type-8 freighter.

The Lakon Type-8 Medium Transport went into development shortly after the lukewarm reception of the Type-7.

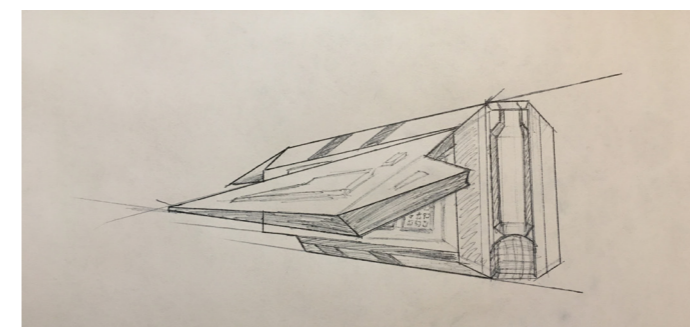




While the Type-7's decent cargo capacity made it a viable option for trade, pilots resented its large size and inability to land at outposts. Lakon's top designers got to work, and before long had come up with their greatest success yet. The Type-8 was a marvel in freighter design, almost able to match the Type-7's capacity for cargo while sacrificing none of its jump range or defensive capabilities, all at a very cost-effective rate. There was only one hiccup in the design of this technological masterpiece: it required a specialized, custom-made power plant called the "Type-8 Reactor." None of Lakon's factories were equipped to manufacture this unique piece of technology.

Eager to launch the new line of freighters, Lakon's leadership gave the go-ahead to construct a new factory on an airless moon. The project was placed under a shroud of complete secrecy, so as to protect the new reactor technology from competitors. I only discovered its existence myself a few weeks ago, when I was visiting Lakon's headquarters under the pretense of checking the warranty on my Keelback (I would never own such an environmentally unfriendly starship). I managed to slip into the classified information storage section when I told my guide I needed to use the restroom. Resting beneath the access codes for Lakon's illegal bank accounts in Archon Delaine's jurisdiction, I found a data pad containing all I needed to know about the Type-8's manufacture. My escape from Lakon's headquarters with the critical data pad was a harrowing ordeal involving a stolen prototype Taipan and a transparent flight suit, but as my journalistic fortitude is not the subject of this column I will spare you the details, dear reader.

In order to ensure speed and secrecy, the factory for the Type-8 Reactor was created through a partnership with the Federation's shadowy Section 3147, a mysterious organization whose practices of slavery and assassination will be the subject of a future column. As the laborers constructing the factory were all slaves, they could be killed as soon as the factory's construction was complete to maintain secrecy. After months of labor and trillions of credits in expenses, Lakon finally finished their factory. They held an opening ceremony, wherein a small number of Lakon's top executives were invited to witness the factory overseer starting up the assembly line.



I am uncertain of exactly what happened next. What I know for sure is that the factory detonated immediately upon the initiation of the assembly line, killing everyone present and cracking apart the moon upon which it was constructed. As for the cause of the catastrophic accident, though, even Lakon does not seem to know. As best as I can tell through holographic reconstruction of the factory's security footage, when the factory overseer went to type in the commands to commence manufacture, the "infinity" key on his keypad had been somehow rotated, so as to resemble the number "8." While we cannot be certain, it seems at least possible that the overseer accidentally entered a command something along the lines of: "Begin Type-Infinity Reactor Production." As the factory's main com-

puter received the commands, it interpreted them as an order to produce a reactor of infinite power, and caused the explosion in its attempt to do so. None remain who can say for sure, as all who were present died in the disaster. I have little doubt that the rotated infinity key was an act of deliberate sabotage—by whom, I cannot say.

The "accident" was devastating for Lakon. The project had already been horribly expensive, and sales of the Type-7 continued to decline. In desperation, those executives remaining who still knew of the Type-8 scrapped the whole endeavor,

**The "accident" was devastating for Lakon. The project had already been horribly expensive, and sales of the Type-7 continued to decline**

and the Type-9 was hastily designed as a means to address at least some of the Type-7's shortcomings. Advertisements for the upcoming Type-8, already played across holoscreens across the bubble, were pulled. Designers involved in the project were sent on vacation and invariably wound up dead or missing. All in all, it was a thorough, high-complete cover-up. Even I, with my extensive experience in this manner of research, stumbled across the truth through fantastic coincidence and a maze of close encounters. It was such an effective operation that today, none remember anything about the failed Type-8, even those who saw the advertisements for it many years ago.

How can such a comprehensive wiping of the collective memory be possible? Lakon, on its own, could never have achieved it. Could it have been the Federation's Section 3147? Possibly, but I suspect another faction is at play; a faction powerful enough to wipe the star system containing the exploded factory from all galaxy maps and computers, so that no one could ever find it. More than any other organization I have exposed in all my years as a journalist, I fear Them. I dearly hope you know who They are, dear reader; if not, you might be fortunate enough to find a black market copy of the last issue of Jameson's Ghost. That last issue contains a piece I wrote called, "Them, Themselves and They: A Comprehensive Exposé of the Galaxy's Master Manipulators." I dare say no more about the piece in this column, for fear that the newly launched Sagittarius Eye might meet the same fate as the aptly named Ghost. Perhaps They are responsible for the metaphorical black hole into which all knowledge of the Type-8 has sunk. Perhaps They are even the ones who rotated the infinity key on the factory overseer's keyboard, causing the experimental facility's destruction. I cannot say anything for certain.

I have remained in one place for too long and must move on. Keep a look out for my next column, dear reader. I can't say now what that column will reveal, but expect to see news of an embarrassment in the offices of a high-ranking government leader any day now. Fly safe, commanders... if you can.

**UNITING THE GALAXY!**  
*one system at a time!*



**DO YOUR PART. JOIN THE  
FEDERATION**



**JOIN THE ALLIANCE  
TODAY**

**WE FIGHT FOR TRUE FREEDOM  
AMONG THE STARS**

**WE EXIST 4 REAL**  
**FREE OATMEAL AND RASIN COOKIE ON MEMBERSHIP SUBMISSION\***  
\*supply limited, check your local Alliance outpost for details

# PICNIC AT THARGOID ROCK

By CMDR Wilfrid Sephiroth

HIP 14909 A 2. I made it.

I have just landed Synoptic Vision, my Diamondback Explorer, near the centre of the alien structure. This place is eerie, hostile. I cannot shake the feeling that I am sitting in the middle of a giant insectoid hand, slowly but inexorably emerging from the ground, trying to crush me. Granted, the DBX is not the largest of vessels, but even a Corvette would be utterly dwarfed by the enormous spikes, spires, and crooked archways that surround me. I have seen pictures of this place before, but no picture can convey the dread of being in the presence of these odd concretions: I cannot imagine what it must have felt like for the first person to ever witness this.

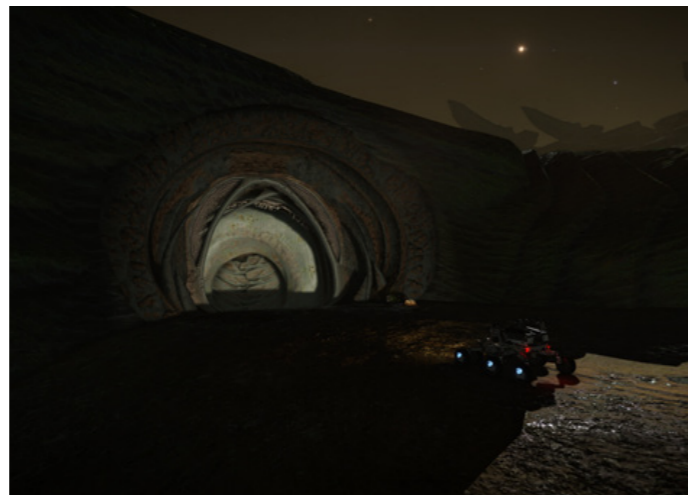
I wake myself from these disquieting reveries. Time to get in my SRV, and to have a closer look. My headlights reveal the fine details of these Thargoid... ruins? Structures? Is this a Thargoid's idea of fine architecture? It might even be a graveyard, a mausoleum of sorts. That does look like the skeleton of some organism...could that be a dead Thargoid? If that's the case, they are huge, and I am not looking forward to meet them in person.



I have visited the Guardian ruins before; as alien as their architecture and civilization was, there was something slightly familiar about them, like going through the personal effects of a long-dead ancestor. However irrational it seemed, when driving around those ancient archaeological sites I could not help but feeling a strange yet ultimately ephemeral sense of kinship. Here, not so. There is nothing familiar about this place, nothing benevolent or transmitting some serene superior wisdom. Every jagged edge here seems to ooze the same message: you are not welcome here. Chances are that simply by being here, I am desecrating some holy site – if the Thargoids even have any analogous concept.

I must hurry. The unknown probe in my cargo hold is damaging my SRV. It was already tricky enough to carry it all the way here in my ship, without paying a visit to Palin first. I carefully approach the giant door – will it work? All of a sudden this doesn't seem such a wise idea. Rationally, I know that dozens of commanders before me have investigated these sites, coming home unharmed. But my reptilian brain is screaming “get the hell out of here!”. We traverse unfathomable distances across the galaxy, we colonize distant worlds, but we are still little more than quivering apes when faced with the majestic indifference of the cosmos. Or, worse still, with mysterious subterranean alien structures. But I am here to do my job. I had better get on with it.

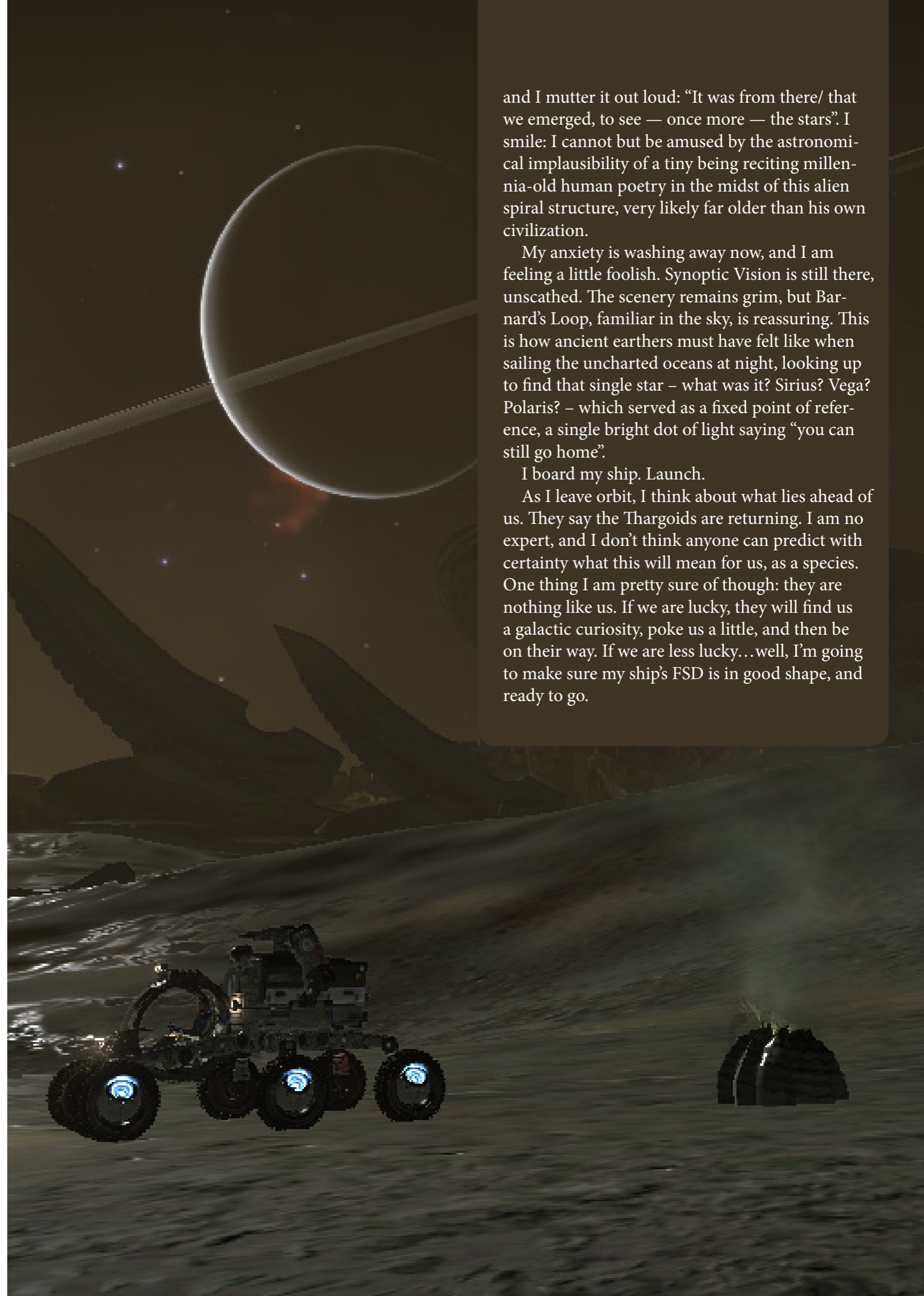
The door opens. There is some severe electromagnetic interference; my HUD is barely legible. I hope



that the engine won't have issues. I do not want to get stuck in this place. The greenish grey tunnels are dark, misty. I proceed slowly. Finally, an opening, a larger room. The ceiling raises up to form a dome, and it seems to be covered with objects disturbingly reminiscent of eggs, and pipe-like conduits running in and out of the walls. In the middle of it, hanging from the ceiling – yet part of it emerges from the floor, reaching upwards – there is a huge machine-like structure. This must be the “unknown device” (who comes up with these names?). The structure pulsates with some kind of energy – is this the cause of the interferences? It looks majestic. If I was a brave man, I would have with me all the necessary parts to “activate” this machine. I am not a brave man. I am most definitely not going to drive into a dimly-lit subterranean alien compound, surrounded by mysterious drones almost as big as my SRV, and press the ON button on some device whose purpose is unclear. I like xenobiology – but I also like living.



Besides, my duty as a reporter has been accomplished. I take a couple of pictures with my camera drone, and turn my SRV around. When I finally reach the door, I realize I had been holding my breath. The final verse from that ancient poem about a journey through Hell comes to my mind,



and I mutter it out loud: “It was from there/ that we emerged, to see — once more — the stars”. I smile: I cannot but be amused by the astronomical implausibility of a tiny being reciting millennia-old human poetry in the midst of this alien spiral structure, very likely far older than his own civilization.

My anxiety is washing away now, and I am feeling a little foolish. Synoptic Vision is still there, unscathed. The scenery remains grim, but Barnard's Loop, familiar in the sky, is reassuring. This is how ancient earthers must have felt like when sailing the uncharted oceans at night, looking up to find that single star – what was it? Sirius? Vega? Polaris? – which served as a fixed point of reference, a single bright dot of light saying “you can still go home”.

I board my ship. Launch.

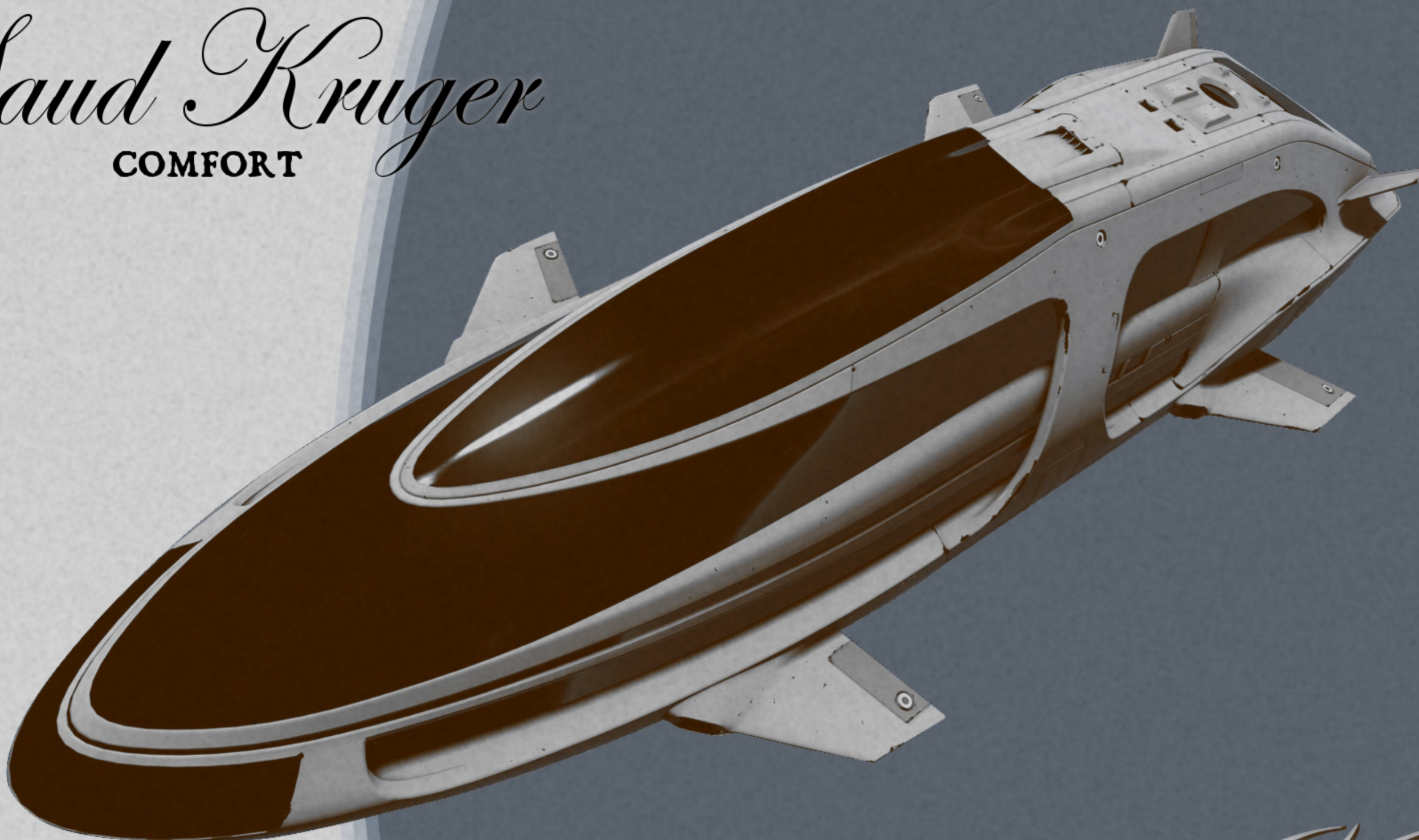
As I leave orbit, I think about what lies ahead of us. They say the Thargoids are returning. I am no expert, and I don't think anyone can predict with certainty what this will mean for us, as a species. One thing I am pretty sure of though: they are nothing like us. If we are lucky, they will find us a galactic curiosity, poke us a little, and then be on their way. If we are less lucky...well, I'm going to make sure my ship's FSD is in good shape, and ready to go.



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# BURSTING THE BUBBLE

## TROUBLE BREWING IN ISIS?

By BlackmailGnome

Over the past few months the Isis system has seen its fair share of problems, from infamous pirates masquerading as faction heads to youngsters killing themselves through 'Air Doming1' and 'Gasp-ing2'. Many people thought the fall of the Crimson Sons of Isis would bring stability to this small former military system, but the 'Isis Curse' continued.

Recently a high profile local figure, historian Dr Trisha Dent, was murdered, with many suspecting the now-fugitive husband. For a system that has a registered population of only a few tens of thousands, it seems strange that this in itself can support a Coriolis Station, outpost and planetary base. For this we have to look behind the veneer of Isis, to dive into what makes it tick.

To those outside of the system, Isis is one of many former military systems, once an important tactically controlled staging point, while the militaries of our bubble fought over the mining rights on the planets below. With a reasonable security level, traders find refuge within its borders and using down time to spend their well earned credits. Those on the right side of law and order feel confident enough to eradicate the paranoia that every other blip on the scanner is out to get them. In all, a secure enough system to trust.

Yet scratch the surface and a startling truth emerges.

When the self titled Marquis du Isis was revealed to be the infamous pirate, Hellbrand Higgins, outsiders began to look closely at that surface shine, a shell that hid what was the driving force behind an economy that confounds many. An alternative black economy based around piracy and other freelance career choices.

As Isis' importance as both a military and mining base of operations fell, it corresponded to the rise in the "Alternative Movement", a rag tag collection of like minded groups with a disdain for authority yet with the sole purpose of living "however they want". Officially, none of these alternatives live in Isis, but unreleased figures put the number into millions. Organised into small groups, if you can call a makeshift agreement not to rob one another as organisation, they use the Isis system as a staging point just like the military did years ago.

Yet the system is controlled by the Paladin Consortium, a systems wide faction based out of LFT 37, that offers security and safety to all who pass through, while punishing those lawbreakers found within its borders. So why is the darker side of Isis allowed to function within the so called lawful Paladin Consortium borders?

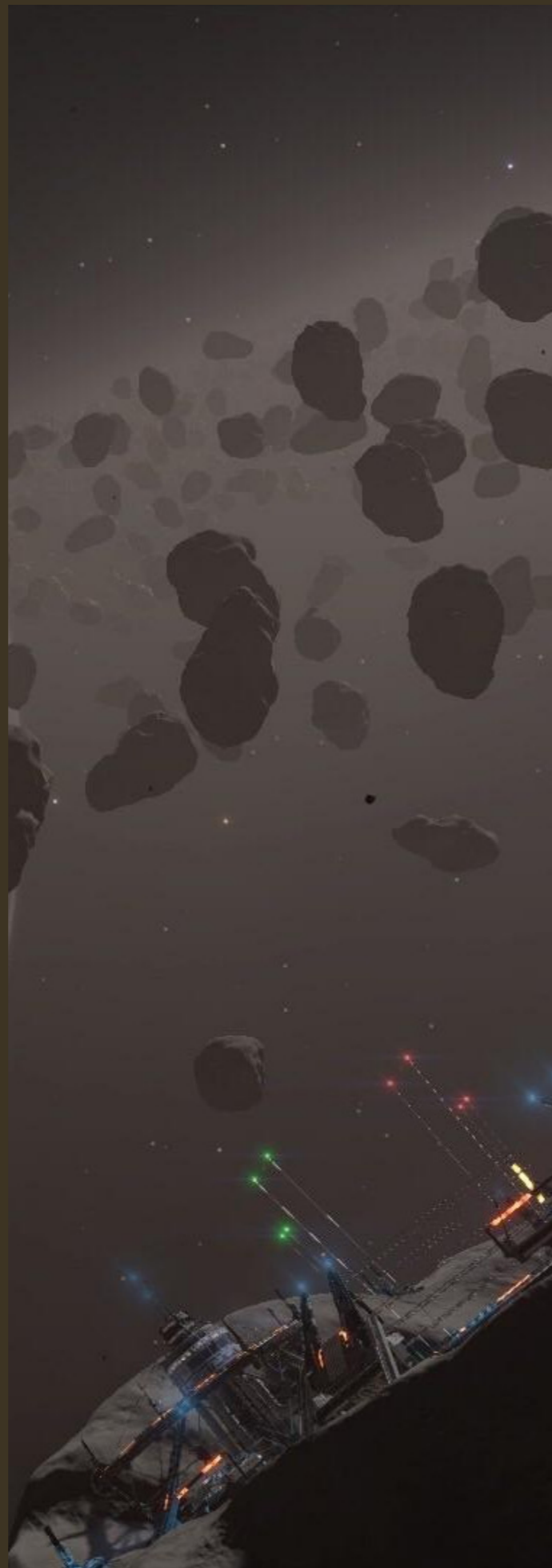
In ancient times, pirates that were sponsored by the state were called privateers, and providing they obeyed certain restrictions were allowed to officially pirate for Queen and country, so to speak. Having a navy full of modern privateers could give many advantages to those that control it. By selectively targeting systems or factions, it is possible to lay siege to those that pose a threat - real or imagined. This way you give pirates their targets, and keep your system relatively trouble free.

That was until recently.

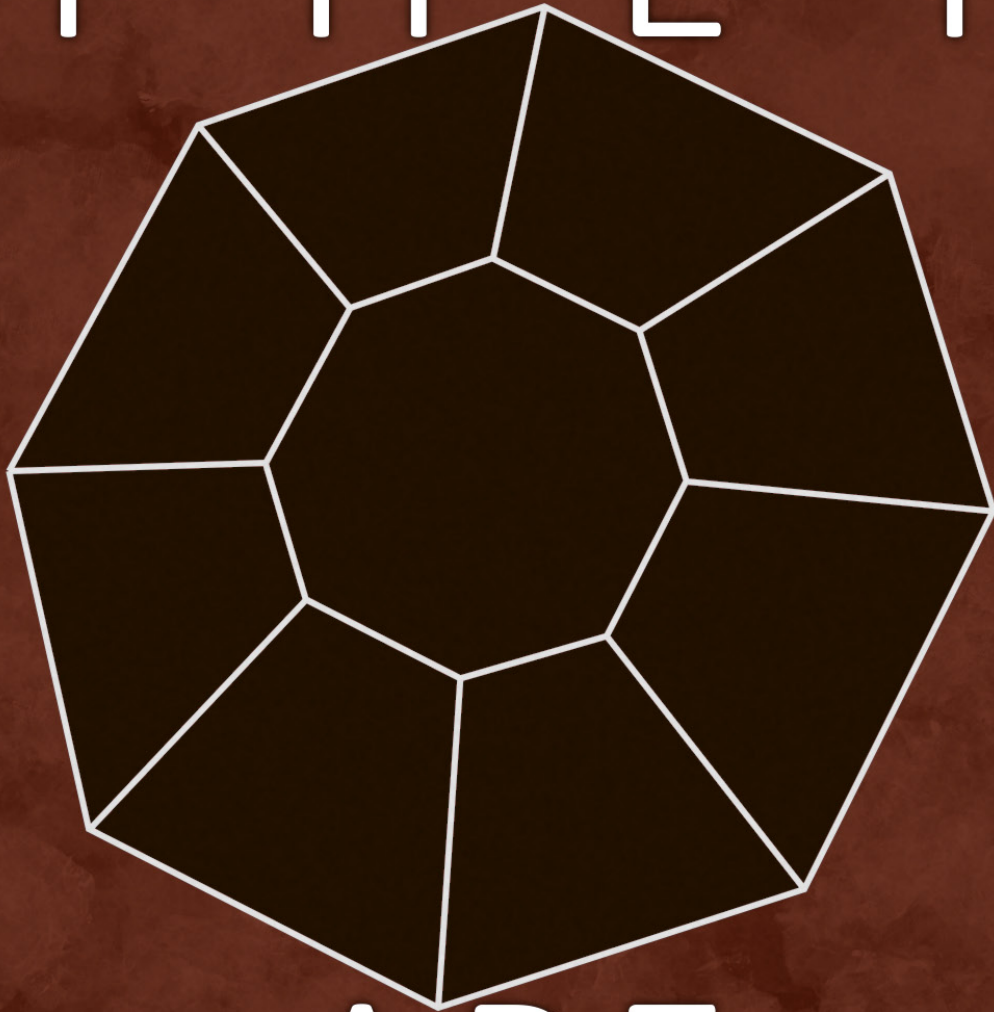
With the trouble that Isis has seen in the past few months, it is no surprise that many of the Alternatives are starting to rise up against the current status quo. With the infamous Hellbrand Higgins back in the piracy game, a few are starting to flock to his banner. Others are questioning the logic in privateering, after all Isis has a lot of traders passing through the system. While the authorities will see the fall of the Crimson Sons of Isis as inevitable for those groups that step out of line, others will see things in a different light - a somewhat darker hue than at first glance.

1. Air Doming is a growing dangerous trend amongst young party goers. It involves switching off life support to a building or structure while dancing away until there is only one Domer standing. Like the Rave culture of late 20th Century Earth, various types of narcotics are often consumed.

2. Gasping is when you turn off your ship based life support and try to race back to a station before the emergency air runs depletes. Some just use this in super cruise while the more adventurous turn off their life support 20 or 30 jumps away from home.



T H E Y



ARE  
COMING

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