

Dragon's Flight

A Star Trek Adventure

By
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On stardate 2/2304.12, the Sellain Colony was established to survey findings of a long-dead civilization apparently wiped out by a war thousands of years ago. The scientific colony found and cataloged ruins all across the planet, making a startling find late in 2/2406: A number of large structures were detected beneath a range of jagged mountains. Rather than reporting this finding immediately, the leader of the scientific colony decided to further investigate the range. The scientists managed to uncover a section of the underground structure and attempted to cut through. Little did they realize that the structure they were cutting into housed the civilization's old, though still active, defense complexes. Frozen for thousands of years by a computer malfunction, the complexes' automated systems were freed by the scientists' actions, unleashing weapons of terror and destruction. With the first cut from a hand phaser, the scientists had opened a Pandora's box. From within a half-collapsed cavern came a tremendous boom. Moments later, a huge winged creature emerged, screeching, from the cavern. What appeared to be a dragon took to the sky, followed by others. Soon, nearly two dozen monsters began clearing the invading humans from the their world. They burned the human settlements with their breaths of plasma flame and ripped down the buildings with talons of steel. When the attack stopped, only a dozen or so colonists were alive to watch the dragons head up into the sky.

The few survivors are still in shock, trying to pull themselves together. In the meantime the dragons, actually automated alien attack ships, have already begun a long journey across interstellar space to visit the homeworld of their ancient enemy. Though the enemy has also been dead for thousands of years, destroyed by the same war, the dragons' programming has not changed. They must carry out their mission to destroy the enemy, even though the target world is no longer occupied by the enemy, but by a Romulan agricultural colony instead. They do not know, nor

do they care, that they will cross into Romulan space and thus begin a chain of events that may very well lead to interstellar war between the United Federation of Planets and the Romulan Star Empire. They only know what they must do.

INTRODUCTION

In this adventure, the player characters are officers aboard a Star Fleet vessel. Encounters take place in space, as well as on planet, while the characters battle an alien menace whose actions threaten to bring war between the United Federation of Planets and the Romulan Empire. The players will be involved in determining the nature and intentions of this threat, and will have to anticipate its moves to stop the menace before it is too late. This adventure does not require any particular type of vessel, nor does it contain any pre-generated player characters, so it can be easily utilized by an existing Star Fleet adventure group and their ship.

To the gamemaster, "Dragons' Flight" is a free-form adventure. Unlike linear scenarios, which are designed to carry the adventure through a specific set of plot lines, "Dragons' Flight" leads the players up to a major crisis point and leaves them there to determine their own fate and to resolve the crisis which has been unleashed upon them.

The referee should read through all background material prior to the start of the game in order to understand what the dragon fleet is, what it does and why, how the Federation and the Romulans will react to it, and so on. These can be found in the Gamemaster's Information section.

The Adventure

SETTING THE STAGE

As the game begins, the players are enroute to the planet Beta Reticuli III, a world located roughly 4.5 parsecs from the Romulan Neutral Zone and site of the scientific research station of the Sellain Colony. The ship is under orders to deliver a cargo of special equipment needed by the archaeological survey

taking place on that planet.

The colony has been studying a number of ancient ruins dating back before the formation of the UFP, possibly even before the human race ventured into space. The players' ship is travelling at warp 6 and is five days away from the colony when the communications officer receives a message from the colony.

The message is badly distorted, and the voice at the other end is obviously terrified and nearly hysterical. In the background are the sounds of thunder and of people screaming. "Help us. Dragons, dozens of them. Horrible. Destroying everything. Hundreds, dead. Bodies, horrible, burned."

A loud, inhuman roar is heard in the background, and the voice screams in terror. Static blasts the channel, then nothing more is heard. Then the signal is lost.

ARRIVAL AT THE SELLAIN COLONY

When the players arrive at the Sellain Colony, they will find it completely decimated. Where buildings once stood, only scorched and cratered ground remain. Pools of melted steel are splattered about. Hundreds of charred remains of the colonists are scattered everywhere. Nothing remains standing, and only a handful of people managed to survive the tragedy. The survivors, 15 in all, are still in a state of shock and are in need of medical attention. They are scattered about the countryside and have been cowering in shadows since the day of the attack. None of them have eaten or have had much sleep, too afraid to go out into the open and spooked by every sound. Some may be carrying hand phasers and will, more than likely, shoot first and ask questions later.

If any of these survivors are rescued, they will describe the events of the attack and those that led up to the attack. Each survivor's story will differ somewhat, with some greatly exaggerating details, and others being in such a state of shock that they remember nothing. The actual events are described in the following section.

EVENTS OF THE LAST DAYS

The following paragraphs describe the events which led to the unleashing of the dragons. Much of this information will not be known to the surviving colonists, but is for the gamemaster's benefit. The players may learn of the events through tricorder logs, physical evidence, questioning the surviving colonists, and so on.

The alien underground complex was accidentally discovered by colony scientists on Stardate 2/2406.21. Tricorder readings indicated massive underground structures made of a dense material opaque to tricorder scans. Up to this point, the researchers had little more than piles of ruins and a few handfuls of artifacts upon which to base their studies.

This new discovery was of tremendous importance to everyone involved. The colony leader, Dr. Alan Moxley, wanted to know more about what they had found before letting the news out. The research had been plagued by too many false alarms, and Moxley wasn't about to let it happen again. Organized into survey teams, the researchers probed the area in hope of finding shallow ground. He found what he was looking for in a huge, partially collapsed cavern. Utilizing existing colony equipment, a work party was able to uncover part of a structure. Finding no openings and impatient over this new finding, he used phasers on the structure. With phaser IIs on full power, he was able to cut open a man-sized hole. Attempting to visually probe the interior, the scientists found a tremendous chamber with proportions so large that none of the walls or the floor could be seen with the lighting on hand.

Tricorder scans indicated that the chamber was roughly two kilometers long and nearly 200 meters tall. While trying to see the floor of the chamber, the scientists heard the sound of something stirring in the darkness. A glint of reflecting light from the scientists' lamps showed movement. As one man peered in through the opening, trying to see what lay below, there was a flicker of light and a small puff of smoke from the

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hole. The man screamed, then lost his grip and fell to his death. None of the other people were close enough to him to actually see the laser beam strike his head. As the group stood in shock, an inhuman roar came from within the chamber.

Terrified by what they might have unleashed, the people fled. They sent word of what had happened to the other colonists via communicator, but they never reached their base. Within minutes, a loud explosion resounded from within the cave, and a huge, winged creature emerged—by all appearances, a tremendous black dragon. As it took to the air, it sounded out a horrible roar. It chased down the fleeing colonists and let out a fiery breath of white hot plasma. The dragon left the charred bodies and continued to fly around, looking for other invaders. Soon more dragons emerged from the cavern until there were 20 in all. They proceeded to destroy the colony, killing nearly everyone, and leaving not a single building or vehicle intact. The survivors could only watch as the dragons destroyed the colony and then fled into the sky.

SECOND DISTRESS

While the players are locating the last of the survivors they will receive a distress call from the *Remora*-class escort U.S.S. *Tigershark*. The vessel was responding to the distress at the Sellain Colony when it ran directly into the dragon fleet. The vessel immediately comes under attack and is swarmed. The communications officer of the *Tigershark* manages to broadcast a message: "Mayday, mayday. This is U.S.S. *Tigershark* calling. We are under attack by a swarm of alien—objects. Shields are gone, maneuvering is gone, many casualties. The captain is dead. We need help, please." The message ends

with the sound of ripping metal and rushing air. The last sound heard is that of voices screaming in a mixture of terror and pain. The sound fades and then the signal is lost. A successful communications systems operation roll will give the players the coordinates of the vessel. At this point the players are at a major crossroads. They may stay at the Sellain Colony to further investigate the disaster there; they may head for the *Tigershark* to look for survivors; they may try to chase after the alien menace; or they may even leave a detachment of personnel to investigate the planet while the players' vessel goes off to do something else. The gamemaster must now guide the players through the adventure as they search for a way to stop the dragonships.

Gamemaster's Information

TIGERSHARK

The U.S.S. *Tigershark* is the first vessel to encounter the dragonfleet. The ship was a *Remora* MkII-class vessel that was responding to the distress call from the Sellain Colony. Unfortunately, the vessel's course brought it head on into the dragonfleet. The ship was surrounded by the oncoming fleet before the crew knew what was going on. The dragonships attacked immediately and quickly crippled the vessel. That is when the *Tigershark* transmitted its distress call. The dragonships then closed in, hitting the vessel with their energy beams and blasting it with their plasma bolts. One of the dragons ripped the ship open with its powerful talons. The bridge was completely torn open during this attack, along with many other areas of the ship.

As a last action, the *Tigershark's* first officer had the ship's recorder log ejected clear of the dying vessel. This object is similar in appearance to, though much smaller than, a photon torpedo. As it is equipped with its own locator beacon, it can easily be detected among the debris floating near the hulk of the *Tigershark*. The recorder log

shows in detail all of the action that occurred on the bridge during the encounter.

THE DRAGONFLEET

The dragonfleet is a force of 20 semi-intelligent robotic starships which resemble dragons of earth mythology. They were constructed by the natives of Beta Reticuli III to provide defense against planetary invaders and to carry out strike missions against enemies of the race. The fleet has been housed within the protective confines of the underground hangar complex for many centuries. Only recently has it been released to once again carry out a mission to defend, or in this case, avenge, the race. The dragonfleet is presently enroute to a world located across the Neutral Zone in Romulan space. The journey will last approximately 87 days as the fleet makes a direct dash at warp 6. Each dragonship within the fleet has the location of this world recorded in memory and is programmed to let nothing slow the progress of the fleet. The dragonships are identical in appearance and function except for four command ships. These have navigation and communications gear which is slightly more advanced than the others. Though they appear identical to the other vessels, a successful communications systems operation skill roll will uncover a high-frequency burst signal occasionally being broadcast from these ships. This roll should be made once per hour, and the fleet must be within sensor range of the ship. When a vessel of the fleet detects a possibly hostile object, it will relay sensor information to its command ship. Four dragonships are under each command ship, and one of the command ships additionally directs the other command ships. Information is relayed to the primary command ship, which decides how to react to the threat. If the primary command ship is destroyed, then another command ship will take over for it. Normally, two dragonships will be sent in to destroy any object which outputs more than five points of power. If the detected object outputs more than 20 points, a second pair of ships will re-

spond. As many objects as possible will be engaged by the fleet as long as at least six dragonships, including the four command ships, are still in reserve. This main body will continue on course, while dragonships engaged in combat will continue fighting until the fleet is outside of sensor range. Engaged dragonships will then break off combat, if possible, and return to the fleet. If threatening vessels pursue, the dragonships will strike out again and then break off. They will maintain this cycle until the threat drops behind or until the dragonfleet is clearly in sensor range. In the latter case, the threat will then be fully reengaged again. Dragonships will also disengage from targets which are considered destroyed or neutralized. A target is destroyed if it produces no power output. The dragonships can be fooled by tactics such as shutting down the ship's engines. However, they do possess a limited memory and can recognize vessels they fought with in the past. Dragonships are semi-intelligent, and because of this, they sometimes are able to temporarily bypass their standard programming to do something unexpected. The gamemaster may simply throw in a tactical change or may roll percentile dice whenever a programming decision is made, such as breaking off from combat. There is a 10-percent possibility of a temporary tactical alteration at each major decision point.

The Dragonships

A dragonship is not really a ship as much as it is a semi-intelligent machine, or robot, which resembles the winged dragons of ancient earth mythology. These machines have dimensions very similar to medium-sized starships; they possess the capability of warp travel, and carry weapons and shielding just as a combat starship does. The primary difference between a dragonship and an average starship is that the dragonship does not have a crew, so it is unable to effect repairs quickly. However, it can still make some repairs to itself using a maintenance robot which roams its interior. Also, a dragonship is controlled by an semi-intelligent computer and is capable of performing some sophisti-

cated thoughts. It can carry out its mission and can handle most situations. However, its actions are controlled by its preprogramming. In cases of major operations, a central computer unit with more complex programming will transmit orders to the dragonships through the use of an extremely powerful set of transmitters. The range of the dragonships' sensors is slightly less than the average sensor range of most Star Fleet vessels. When an unknown object comes to within sensor range of a drag-

onship, it will pass sensor data onto its command ship, which will, in turn, relay the information to the primary command ship. The primary command ship will then decide how to respond to the possible threat. The level of the response relies primarily on the size of the detected object and its energy output levels. An object that is less than 1,000 tons will be completely ignored unless it comes within close sensor range (about four hexes in the Starship Combat Simulator) of any dragonship. Larger objects will be noticed out to maximum detection range (about 20 hexes in the Starship Combat Simulator) if they produce more than 5 points of power. If a dragonship is in pursuit of a vessel, it will continue to track and pursue until the object pulls well out of sensor range (25 hexes). If a dragonship is in the midst of combat, it will not stop until all power output from a ship is reduced to zero. The standard combat tactic for an attacking dragonship is to close with the enemy for as long as possible, then open fire as soon as the enemy ship is within eight hexes or as soon as the dragonship is fired upon. When attacking, the dragonship will close as much as possible, doing damage with the plasma jet and maneuvering onto its target. If at the end of a movement phase the dragonship is in the same hex as its target, it will make a physical attack with its talons. To determine if the dragonship successfully hits with these, the gamemaster must roll one die for each talon. If the roll is equal to 8 or less, then the target receives 1 point of superstructure damage. Shields may prevent this damage. To determine if they do, divide the strength of the shield the dragonship came through by two, and roll one die. If this roll is less than or equal to the die roll, then all physical attacks are blocked for this phase.

The Plasma Jet Damage Chart to the right should be used when resolving fire from the dragonship's plasma jet. These weapons work on the same principles as the Romulan plasma bolt weapon, and the rules for conducting fire are the same.

Dragonships have a special capability which makes them even more powerful in a group than individually.

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Dragonships may maneuver in a tight formation with two ships sharing a single hex. When in this formation, these vessels can overlap their shields and thus gain protection from both. In order to use this tactic, two vessels must have the same facing and must travel together for a full turn. A ship which is shielded by another ship receives one-third protection from that ship's shields. All fractions are rounded down. Any hits taken by the ship go proportionally to its own shield as well as to that of the shielding ship. All ships must maintain the same movement point allowance and the same course in order to stay in this state. For example, two dragonships are stacked together and are overlapping their forward shields. Vessel A allocated 12 points, while vessel B allocated 6. Total forward shield strength for A is 14 points: $12 + (\frac{1}{3} \times 6)$. Total forward shield strength for B is 10: $6 + (\frac{1}{3} \times 12)$. If ship A takes a 7-point hit, ship B's shields would take 1 point of damage, while its own shield would take the remaining 7—ship B is providing only one-seventh of the shielding for ship A.

THE DRAGONSHIPS

Hull Data

Superstructure Points: 16

Damage Chart: B

Size

Length: 123 m

Width: 120 m

Height: 38 m

Weight: 21,000 mt

Landing Capability: Yes

Other Data

Crew: None

Engines And Power Data

Total Power Units Available: 24

Movement Point Ratio: 2/1

Warp Engines Number: 2

Power Units Available: 11

Stress Charts: K/M

Maximum Safe Cruising Speed: Warp 6

Emergency Speed: Warp 7

Impulse Engine Power Units Available: 2

Weapons And Firing Data

Beam Weapon Type: Plasma Jet
Number: 1

Firing Arcs: Fwd

Firing Char: O

Power to Arm: 8

Beam Weapon Type: Energy Beam

Number: 2

Firing Arcs: 1f/p, 1f/s

Firing Chart: W

Maximum Power: 8

Damage Modifiers: 1-8: +3, 9-13: +2, 14-20: +1

Shields Data

Deflector Shield Type: N/A

Shield Point Ratio: 1/1

Maximum Shield Power: 12

PLASMA JET DAMAGE CHART

<u>Range</u>	<u>Damage</u>
1	24/12
2	24/12
3	22/11
4	20/10
5	20/10
6	18/9
7	16/8
8	16/8
9	16/8
10	14/7
11	12/6
12	10/5
13	8/4
14	8/4

SELLAIN COLONY

The following information is available to the players through use of the ship's library computer or through sensor scans of the planet.

World Log:

Beta Reticuli III (The Sellain Colony)

System Data

System Name: Beta Reticuli

Number of Class M Present: 1

Planetary Data

Position in System: Third

Number of Satellites: Ring and two moons

Planetary Gravity: 1.0 G

Planetary Size

Diameter: 14,600 km

Equatorial Circumference: 45,900 km

Total Surface Area:

669,700,000 km

Percent Land Mass: 89%

Total Land Area: 596,033,000 km

Planetary Conditions

Length of Day: 31 hrs

Atmospheric Density: Thin

General Climate: Desert

Mineral Content

Normal Metals: 33%

Radioactives: 27%

Gemstones: 1%

Industrial Crystals: Trace

Special Minerals: Trace

Beta Reticuli III is a desert world located in the Beta Reticuli star system, roughly four-point-five parsecs from the Romulan Neutral Zone. The year is only 190 local days long, with a day lasting approximately 31 hours. The seasons on Sellain Colony occur suddenly, changing from a hot, calm day to a violently stormy one almost without warning. The planet's sandy surface is broken up by rocky outcroppings, steep mountains, and jagged ridges. The soil on Sellain Colony is sterile and is incapable of supporting life.

Inside the Dragonship

The accessible areas within the dragonship are almost entirely maintenance access passageways. These long narrow corridors measure a little over a meter wide. The walls of the corridors are all lined with what appear to be large access panels, conduits, and piping. The largest open area within the dragonship is the control room, which provides access to the ship's controlling computer and can also be used to pilot the ship. Entry is through two doors located on the port and the starboard walls. The control room is normally dark except for a circle of light surrounding a large control panel in the center of the room. As soon as someone steps into this light, a number of view screens on both the forward and aft walls will activate. These screens show the view in front of and behind the dragonship. Smaller screens show actual parts of the ship's exterior. A final view screen shows a sensor display of all objects within maximum sensor range. The dragonship's computer not only controls the ship, but also contains a great deal of information that the players might be able to use to stop the dragonfleet. In getting information from the ship's computer, a character will have to use the same methods as described in the main complex brain unit description of The Alien Complexes section. The information contained within the computer will include mission data, target coordinates, recall instructions, and movement instructions. A tricorder can be used to store the information, or it can be sent to the players' ship's main computer through use of a tricorder. Successful analysis of this information will require a successful Computer Operations skill roll, which may be attempted once per hour. The results of the analysis will be the isolation of the dragonship's recall code. The players may then be able to transmit this code to the other dragonships to signal them to return to their base. However, this must be done in such a way as to match the approximate signal strength and wavelength as the ground-based transmitter on Beta Reticuli III. For a starship to do this, it would have to be fairly close-

by and may have to try several times before the conditions are exactly right and the code is accepted by the primary command dragonship.

The Alien Complexes

These underground complexes were built by the natives of Beta Reticuli IV thousands of years ago as a strategic forces control center—sort of the alien equivalent of NORAD. These were built to protect the planet from invaders and also as a central command center for mounting strikes against enemy worlds. The entire complex consisted of a hangar complex for housing the planet's robotic combat vessels, a pair of planetary defense weapon stations, a central computer control complex, and the alien command center. The great war which brought an end to the aliens' civilization destroyed the command center and one planetary defense station, and left the other damaged. With the loss of the command center, the central computer automatically took control of what was left of the alien complex. However, a freak malfunction in the computer programming caused it to lockup, unable to perform its mission of sending a strike force to the enemy homeworld. When the Federation scientific team broke into the hangar complex, the event broke the computer out of its critical loop and freed it up to perform its mission. The following section details the underground complexes found on the Sellain Colony. For more details on the planet itself, the gamemaster should consult the Sellain Colony section.

Hangar Complex

The hangar complex is the most likely location of entry into the alien complex. The complex is hidden beneath a jagged mountainside. Entry into the complex is through a huge, natural-looking cavern. This dark entrance measures

about 300 meters wide and 200 meters high. The cavern itself is about 2500 meters deep, narrowing to 200 meters wide and 50 meters high about two-thirds of the way in. Located about 500 meters into the cavern is a large door in the floor, measuring 200 meters square. This passage will be closed, but will open when approached by a craft of any size. When closed, the door is indistinguishable from the floor. In the center of the door is a man-sized hole. A second door is located 1000 meters further into the cavern. Beneath these is a huge underground hangar.

The Hangar: The hangar is a huge underground building measuring 2600 meters long by 800 meters wide with a ceiling clearance of 190 meters. Numerous lights shine down from the ceiling, producing circles of light on the floor 25 meters in diameter. This lighting, however, is not bright enough to illuminate the tremendously high ceiling of the hangar. Located in the ceiling of the east end of the hangar and also near the center of the hangar are large doors covering 200-meter-square openings. These are dimly outlined by a thin string of lights. Directly below this is a pile of rocks identical to those found in the cavern above. Somewhere beneath this pile is the body of the first colonist who was killed during the excavation. At the west end of the hangar is a set of three platforms, illuminated among the dark surroundings. Upon two of these are dragonships in various stages of repair. Inside one of the dragonships is a maintenance robot handling some electronics repair. Next to the center of the south wall are parked three dragonships. These vehicles have just been repaired and are being readied to launch to protect the system from invading vessels. Maintenance robots are loading the ships with fuel and other supplies. This will take them two hours to complete after the players arrive. The robots are getting the supplies from a building in the southwest corner of the hangar. This large building seems to be the source of a faint humming noise.

Gamemaster's Notes: The hangar area is meant to be the first spooky location within the alien complex. It is

dark and gargantuan with areas that are clearly lit from a distant source. The remaining dragonships will be launching within two hours, but the players will not necessarily figure this out. For players in need of help, the gamemaster may hype up the readying sequence to further indicate that the ships will be launching—perhaps warning alarms, lights, and ships powering up. The dragonships can be damaged by accurately placed phaser fire, but if the players do not knock them out quickly enough, a pair of security robots will be sent in to defend them. Also, the dragonships may be brought to life.

The Hangar Building: The hangar building is the primary place to explore within the area of the hangar complex. It is a large, single-story building measuring 300 meters long, 100 meters wide, and 10 meters high. Two main entrances into the building are located in the center of the east wall and the north wall, with doors of the type normally familiar to the players. They are very heavy and operate by sliding open when someone is detected close to the door. In addition, three large cargo storage room doors are located on the north wall. All of the outer doors will work automatically, with the exception of the cargo doors. These are set to open only for the maintenance robots. Most of the interior of the hangar building is dimly lit. The walls are of a smooth, plastic-like material which has the strength of reinforced concrete. All interior doors are of the hidden/open type that is described in the common locations and objects section.

Main Hallway: This large corridor is lined with structural supports forming triangular archways every 20 meters. The corridor has no apparent purpose, as there are no doors into or out of it, except for the main ones which lead out of the building.

Flight Control Room: This room is very dark. A single spotlight will illuminate a pedestal in the center of the room. This light will operate as long as someone is inside the room. If someone stands in the light, the walls of the room will come alive with images of the hangar deck, focusing on the dragonships

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located at the south wall of the hangar. A set of four symbols will flash on one of the screens in regular intervals—this is a countdown timer. The symbols are numbers, with the left digit counting first. After one complete cycle, the next digit will change, and so on. The alien math is based upon the number 6, so there are a total of 6 different symbols, instead of our 10.

Security Robot/Maintenance Robot Room: These two rooms are limited to authorized personnel only, so the players will not be able to enter in the usual manner, as the doors will not open for them. They are nearly identical in appearance, and are both simply storage rooms with three two-meter-square platforms located next to one wall.

Inside the security robot room is a globe-shaped security device located on the ceiling. This device will attack any unauthorized personnel. It is equipped with a single standard laser and will take 100 points of damage before it no longer functions.

Alien Cubicles Room: This room contains a row of cubicles set into the east wall. On the opposite wall is a set of geometric shapes painted in varying shades, mostly dark. As for the cubicles themselves, they each measure approximately three meters square. There is a panel on the north wall of each and a picture on the south wall. If anyone enters the room, a door will close off the west end. This door will only open for the occupant when he attempts to leave.

Gamemaster's Notes: These are privacy cubicles used by the aliens for just about everything from eating to sleeping. The panel controls lighting, temperature, music, food output, and so on. A waste disposal door is located in the floor but is not visible, like most standard doors. This door is controlled by the panel on the wall.

Security Monitoring Room: The entrance to this room is locked, and passage is given only to authorized personnel. If the players manage to get in, by wits or by force, they will find a large, dark room. Surrounding the center of the room are three panels, each illuminated in its own circle of light. If a person stands in any one of these circles, the wall screens will activate, displaying changing images of the hangar complex and the building.

At least one picture will always show each group of characters wherever they may be, including in this room. If any action takes place, it will be displayed here. Also, an overall map of both the hangar complex and the building will be displayed, indicating the positions of the security robots as well as any intruders (the characters).

Maintenance Monitoring Room: This room is open to entry. It operates exactly like the security monitoring room, except that the images shown on the screen will be from the point of view of the maintenance robots. A view will show the loading of the three dragonships, as well as the electronics repair of another dragonship. A large map of the hangar complex indicates the positions of the dragonships and the maintenance robots.

Combat Monitoring Room: This room is open to entry. It operates exactly like the security and maintenance monitoring rooms. However, this room is slightly smaller and contains only two panels. The view screens will project any images transmitted by the fleet. Because of the great distances, there is a time lag of several days, so the images will be several days old. These images will be constantly changing, showing views of the fleet, short- and long-range sensor scans, and ship status displays. Also displayed here is a star map. A successful Astronomy or Astrogation roll will identify this as a map of the local sector. A blinking light points out a star system in Romulan space, and a red triangle shows the position of the dragonfleet. It is heading directly for the blinking target.

Just as the players are about to leave this room, another set of ships will be

added to the list of active vessels and will be displayed on the screen. The views will concentrate on the three dragonships parked in the hangar. Status displays will be shown as the three ships appear to be coming to life.

The room is only to monitor the activities of the fleet. If the players destroy anything in this room, it will have no effect on the status of the fleet itself.

Brain Room: This room is the access center to the semi-intelligent computer which controls the hangar complex. This unit does not control the dragonfleet, nor does it control the planetary defenses. It will, however, control the launch of the dragonships now in the hangar and all systems within the hangar complex. The room is smaller than most rooms in the building and is unusually well lit. A single panel is located in the center of the room. On the east, south, and west walls are large, translucent columns which display shifting patterns of colors in correlation to activity by the brain unit.

The walls encasing the brain unit are shielded by a powerful force field. This field will absorb any normal phaser fire, but a fully charged phaser II set to overload will knock down this shielding. The control computer is then vulnerable to normal phaser fire. However, the instant the shield is dropped, security robots will be sent to protect the brain unit.

This unit can be deciphered and controlled in the same manner as the brain unit in the main complex. However, this unit only controls the hangar and the hangar building, as well as the launching of the three remaining dragonships.

Storage Room: The storage rooms are large rooms accessible only to authorized personnel and maintenance robots. The rooms are stacked with crates and containers holding various repair parts. None of these are usable by the players.

Transport Room: This relatively small room is dimly lit and contains four large, triangular platforms on the west side. One of these platforms has a pulsating glow to it. This platform is the only one contained in a circle of light. Also, a faint humming sound can be heard coming from it.

If all the people in the room step onto the lit platform, then they will be transported immediately to the transport room in the main complex. If other people in the room are not on the platform, then the unit will delay for 20 seconds. Any persons on the platform will become surrounded by a forcefield which is unaffected by phaser fire. After about 15 seconds, transport will take place.

Life-Support Room: This narrow room is brightly lit (comparatively speaking) and contains a single panel in front of the long west wall. On the wall itself are four large indicators. These devices are vertical bars reaching from the floor to the ceiling. A red bar reaches from the floor halfway up each indicator.

This is the life-support system control room for the entire hangar complex. The first of the indicators shows temperature; the second, pressure; the third, humidity; and the fourth, ionization levels. While the control panel can alter these levels, a built-in safety feature prevents these from changing dangerously.

Power Room: This large room located at the far west end of the hangar building serves to fulfill all the power requirements of the entire hangar complex. Taking up most of the floor space in the west side of the room is a huge shaft leading down into the darkness. This is the core of the main power generator.

The shaft is 120 meters deep and is lined with energy field conductors, control equipment, monitoring sensors, and so on. The shaft is dark, but the walls contain numerous lights running their lengths.

Behind the north and south walls are the hangar building's energy converters and power storage units. Each of the walls themselves have three large panels reaching from floor to ceiling. These panels glow with a color indicating their power storage status: Green for low, blue for medium, and red for high. All these will normally be red unless altered by a high power draw from the brain unit, heavy use of the transport device, charging and repair of the robots or dragonships, and so on.

Main Complex

The main alien complex is the control center for the dragonfleet and all the planetary defenses. The complex is located 200 meters beneath a desert plain. Four ventilator shafts lead up from the complex to the surface; however, all of these have been long covered over by the desert.

LEVEL ONE

Transmitter Devices: These large devices line the walls of the first level. On the front wall of each is a pair of columns covered with large, window-like panels. These flicker and glow moments before the devices begin transmission.

When this occurs all nearby electronic impulses on the planet's surface will be scrambled. Inside the complex, the transmissions will simply make communications impossible and will cause tri-

corders to give false readings. At the base of one of the transmitters is a locked access panel. Behind this panel is part of the transmitter circuitry. A successful Communications Systems Technology roll will reveal that this is an external tie-in to the transmitters. The players will be able to tap into this circuit if a successful Communications Systems Technology roll and an Electronics Technology roll are both made at one-fourth skill level. This may be attempted once per hour. The circuit may then be used to broadcast signals to the dragonfleet.

Central Core: The central core is a cross-shaped room which contains the complex's main life-support ducting, power conduits, and control equipment. In between each of the arms of the cross is a large, round column that seems to be sunk into the walls. These are the shafts for the complex's powered lifts.

Liftshafts: Each liftshaft contains six lifts lining the walls, each in its own cylindrical tube. Entrance is through a

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standard door. Inside the lift car is a triangular panel which controls the destination of the car. Pressing a part of the panel will activate the lift. Reaching the destination will take approximately 10 seconds per level travelled.

Ventilation Shaft: This wide, deep shaft is located in the middle of the central core. It is approximately 10 meters square and runs from level one all the way down to level two, 165 meters below. The opening has a lighted band surrounding it.

A horizontal band of light rings the shaft at 20-meter increments. The walls of the shaft are lined with ventilation ducts, conduits, access panels, service

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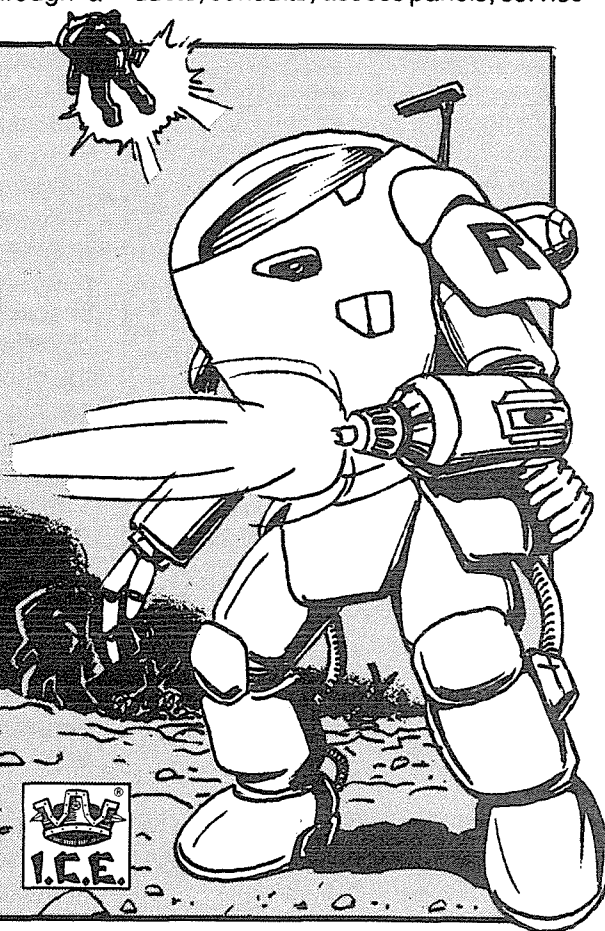
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platforms, and so on. None of these will be of any major use to the players. The shaft ends at the ceiling of level two, 15 meters off the floor.

MAINTENANCE ROBOTS

Dimensions

Height: 1.8 m

Width: 1.1 m

Mass: 200 kg

Mobility

Type: Antigrav

Action Points: 8

Combat

Strength: 80

Dexterity: 50

Armor: 20 points/attack

Hit Points: 200/100 points

Tentacle

Number: 4

Location: 1 front, 1 rear, 1 each side

Damage: 2D10 points

Skill: 50%

SECURITY ROBOTS

Dimensions

Height: 1.5 m

Width: 1.9 m

Mass: 500 kg

Mobility

Type: Antigrav

Action Points: 12

Combat

Strength: 80

Dexterity: 50

Armor: 100 points

Hit Points: 250/150 points

Stunner

Number: 1

Location: Right side

Damage: 75 points (Nonpermanent)

Skill: 75%

Laser

Number: 1

Location: Left side

Damage: 80 points

Skill: 75%

Tentacle

Number: 1

Location: Front

Damage: 2D10 points

Skill: 50%

LEVEL TWO

The Brain Unit: The main complex's brain unit occupies an area ringing the central core between levels one and two. This unit controls all the operations of the complex, as well as the planetary defense systems and the dragonfleet.

If the casing which houses the brain unit can be penetrated, someone might figure out how this computer works. It is alien in design; however, many of the components are similar to those found in modern Federation computer designs. If someone studies this device, utilizing at least a sciences tricorder, the research may yield some results. For each day of study, a character must make a Computer Technology roll and an Electronics Technology roll, both at one-fourth skill level. A successful set of rolls will indicate that the character has managed to decipher the alien computer system and may be able to make it operate as needed.

Making the computer operate properly will require a successful Computer Operation skill roll at one-fourth skill level. This can be attempted only after the computer system has been deciphered and can be retried once per hour.

LEVEL THREE

Power Room: This room contains access to the complex's main power plant. In the center of the triangular-shaped room is a huge shaft leading down about 225 meters, very similar to the one in the power room of the hangar building. Located on either side of the shaft are panels used to monitor and control power output.

Power Storage/Converters: Located in the north and south ends of this level are the energy converters and power storage units for the main complex. On each of the walls facing the central shaft are three large panels reaching from floor to ceiling. These operate in the same manner as those within the power room of the hangar building. These units provide power for the complex, the brain unit, and the transmitters.

Storage: These rooms are only accessible to authorized personnel. Located here are numerous crates and

other containers which carry various spare repair parts and supplies. These are used by maintenance robots for up-keep and repair of the complex.

Maintenance/Security Robot Rooms: These rooms are identical to their counterparts in the hangar building except for the number of robots located in each.

Transport and Life Support Rooms: These rooms are identical to those found in the hangar building.

Alien Chamber: Located at the east end of level three is a large chamber room containing a number of triangular boxes. These are one meter high and have transparent tops. Inside each is the body of an alien being. A row of indicators at the side of each show the vital signs of the occupant. The aliens are all dead, their now-reactivated life support units having failed some centuries ago.

Locations and Objects

Walls: The walls of the complex are made from an extremely strong material that feels like plastic, yet is very resistant to all forms of damage. The wall will absorb all damage from weapons which do less than 50 points in a single hit. Any damage beyond this will have a cumulative effect on the wall. After the wall has received 200 points of damage it will be holed; 200 additional points will create a hole large enough for an average-sized person to go through. For these purposes, a phaser set on disintegrate is assumed to do 100 points of damage.

Doors: Most of the doors within the alien complex are actually sections of the wall which are equipped with a device similar in operation to the transporter. These units will automatically dematerialize the section of the wall when a person steps within one meter of the door. Some doors are locked and will only open to persons carrying an authorization device. Security and maintenance robots are both equipped with such devices.

Control Panels: All the control pan-

els within the complex have a smooth, solid surface. A panel is divided up into many control surfaces which are like buttons, except that they are part of the panel face and activate by sensing the heat from the operator's touch. The internal electronics of these are similar to modern Federation technology.

Deciphering one of these panels will essentially require a successful roll on a skill related to the function of the panel, giving the character studying the panel enough knowledge to figure out what the panel is for. This roll may be attempted once per hour, then a roll may be made to decipher the exact controls on the panel.

This requires a successful roll on a related skill, but at one-fourth skill level, and it may again be attempted once per hour. Operating the panel requires a successful roll on the same skill, at one-half skill level. This may be attempted once per turn (10 seconds).

Maintenance Robots: Maintenance robots are 1.8-meter-tall units which are used to provide maintenance and repair within the alien complex and also on-board each of the dragonships. These units are powered by stored energy and will operate for 72 hours before needing recharging. If the robot is inactive, this can be stretched into several weeks.

It will take two disintegrate hits to destroy a robot. The first hit will immobilize it, while the second hit will destroy it completely. These robots will not attack unless provoked. Even then, they will only do so to defend themselves.

Security Robots: Security robots are 1.5-meter-tall, mushroom-shaped units which are used to capture or terminate any intruder within the alien complex. These units are powered by stored energy which must be replenished once every 48 hours.

The security robot's armor will absorb 100 hit points per turn from any weapon attacks. A disintegrate hit on the armor will completely destroy the armor only. Any further attacks will begin to damage the interior. When damage gets through the armor, the first 250 points done to the robot's interior will immobilize it. If it takes an additional 150 points, it will be completely out of commission.

The laser weapon used by the security robot has the same range characteristics as the hand laser. The stunner on the security robot has the same range characteristics as the phaser I-A set to stun.

Encounters in the Complex

While the players journey within the alien complex, there is a chance of encounters occurring with the robotic inhabitants. The gamemaster should check for an encounter once every 10 minutes that the characters move about inside the complex.

If the characters stay put in a single location, the gamemaster should only roll once every 20 minutes.

The primary encounter regions within the alien complex are the main complex, the hangar, and the hangar building. The gamemaster should choose the appropriate table for each encounter and roll one die.

The Alien Race

The people who once inhabited the planet Beta Reticuli III, presently referred to as the Sellain Colony, called themselves the Ralkyde. This ancient race was something of a cross between humans and reptiles. The average Ralkyde was shorter and slimmer than a human, with longer, thinner arms and more powerful legs. Mentally, the Ralkydes were very much like humans, with slightly higher psionic capacity. They also tended to have a bit more strength and endurance than humans and had a higher dexterity.

However, they were also much shorter-lived than humans, with an average life span of 40 years, and possessed much less luck and charisma. One of their most notable physical features was the possession of only two fingers and an opposing thumb on each hand, which led to the race's development of math based on the number six. Alien numerals are read

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ENCOUNTER TABLES The Main Complex

Die Roll	Result
1	None
2	None
3	None
4	None
5	None
6	None
7	None
8	Maintenance robot
9	Security robot
0	Security robot

The Hangar and Hangar Building

Die Roll	Result
1	None
2	None
3	None
4	None
5	None
6	None
7	None
8	None
9	Maintenance robot
0	Security robot

with the lower digits to the left and the higher digits to the right. So that their "16" is equivalent to the standard human number 61 (except that the 61 is a base-six number). The alien numbers are represented as the standard symbols shown on the Alien Numeric Table. Following these are some examples of the alien numerics translated into base six and decimal-based equivalents.

The Ralkydes were very group oriented, with each individual working toward the betterment of himself through the betterment of others. They were also very isolationistic, not liking to be disturbed by other races and not liking the fact that other races occupied the galaxy.

When the Ralkyde met their greatest adversaries, the T'Lachnam, a race of warrior humanoids, they were not sure what to do. They did not want to make contact, but the T'Lachnam gave them no choice. The Ralkyde wanted to push away other races, while the T'Lachnam wanted to conquer. The two races fought for control over the local area of space and finally ended up destroying

each other. The only examples left of the Ralkyde are the bodies which are kept inside hibernation capsules in the chamber located at the bottom level of the aliens' main complex.

Timeline

2/2408.09: The dragonfleet leaves Sellain Colony and heads for Romulan Space.

2/2409.18: The Lexena Transport S.S. *Lufkin* encounters the dragonfleet and comes under heavy attack. The ship broadcasts a distress signal, but is destroyed before it is completed.

2/2410.06: The dragonfleet enters the Neutral Zone. The *Shassarik* continues to tail it by order of Star Fleet. A Romulan patrol immediately attacks, but is nearly wiped out by the overwhelming forces of the dragonfleet.

2/2410.11: A Romulan fleet is grouping, with the mission of making a counter-attack should the Federation not stop the dragonfleet.

2/2411.02: The dragon fleet destroys the Romulan outpost and begins its journey back to Sellain Colony.

Reactions

As the game begins, the Romulans will know nothing of the ordeal as it is occurring in the UFP. Once the dragonfleet is spotted by a Federation starship and is determined to be heading for the Romulan Neutral Zone, Star Fleet Command may be under the impression that the ships are part of a Romulan raid returning to base on the other side of the Neutral Zone. Much speculation will be flying about the intent of the raid: Why did they attack? How long have they been operating in Federation space? Are they all headed back, or are there still more in Federation territory? It will be up to the players to determine the true origins of the dragonfleet.

In the meantime, the Romulans will consider the dragonfleet to be a creation of Star Fleet. There is little that the

Federation can do to convince the Romulans otherwise. Even if the Romulans are convinced that the dragonfleet is alien, however, that won't be enough for them. They will still hold the Federation responsible for using the dragonfleet as a tool of opportunity against the Romulan Star Empire, or will claim Star Fleet to be incompetent for not being able to handle the situation. If the Romulans believe that the Federation can stop the dragonfleet, then they will threaten to attack Federation outposts unless the dragonfleet is stopped. If it is not stopped, then they will carry out their threats.

In the end, however, neither side is really prepared for war and will attempt to prevent the situation from escalating greatly. The Romulans will settle for getting even, or at least showing that they are not weak. The Federation's goal is to stop the dragonfleet. If that fails, then it will simply try to keep the Romulans from doing too much damage.

Combat Forces

Those gamemasters with the necessary materials and interest may wish to enact some of the battles that may occur between the Federation, Romulan, and alien fleets. For this purpose, a basic order of battle has been provided.

The Federation forces will not be all grouped together, but will generally be split up into task groups spread out across the border area.

The Romulans, on the other hand, will probably be grouped into one or two attack fleets if they move into Federation space.

A Last Word

The gamemaster is encouraged to read through this scenario carefully and add onto it and fill in some of the details as he sees fit. This could include things like generating NPC stats for the surviving colonists, adding hostile animal life to Beta Reticuli III, and so on.

If the gamemaster wishes to put in the

INITIAL FORCES IN THE LOCAL AREA AS OF 2/2409.06

Dragonfleet: 20 dragonships.

Federation: 1 *Enterprise*-class Mkl cruiser, 1 *Remora*-class MkII escort, 1 *Andor*-class MkII cruiser, 2 *Baker*-class MkII destroyers, 1 *Wilkerson*-class Mkl destroyer, 2 *Nelson*-class MkV scouts, 1 *Keith*-class Mkl scout, 2 *Derf*-class MkIII tenders.

ADDITIONAL FORCES AS OF 2/2410.06

Dragonfleet: No change.

Federation: 1 *Northampton*-class MkIII frigate, 2 *Ranger*-class MkIII scouts, 1 *Reliant*-class MkIII cruiser, 3 *Solar*-class MkVI cutters, 2 *Wilkerson*-class Mkl destroyers.

Romulan: 3 V-8 *Bird of Prey*-class cruisers, 2 CS-2 *Graceful Flyer*-class scouts, 1 V-6 *Gallant Wing*-class cruiser.

ADDITIONAL FORCES AS OF 2/2411.15

Dragonfleet: No change.

Federation: 2 *Chandley*-class Mkl frigates, 1 *Remora*-class MkIII escort, 1 *Genser*-class Mkl escort, 2 *Thufir*-class MkIII destroyers, 1 *Lenthal*-class MkII destroyer, 1 *Wilkerson*-class Mkl destroyer, 1 *Enterprise*-class MkII cruiser, 1 *Durrett*-class Mkl cruiser.

Romulan: 4 T-10 *Bright One*-class destroyers, 1 V-6 *Gallant Wing*-class cruiser, 2 V-30 *Winged Defender*-class cruisers, 3 V-7 *Whitewind*-class cruisers.

ALIEN NUMERIC TABLE

<i>Alien Numeric</i>	<i>Symbol</i>	
	8	= 1
	7	= 2
	6	= 3
	5	= 4
	4	= 5
	3	= 6
<i>Alien Numeric</i>	<i>Base Six</i>	<i>Decimal Based</i>
87	= 23	15
76	= 61	37
65	= 43	27
54	= 24	16

extra work, he may modify the scenario so that some of the aliens are still alive to make things interesting and add a new twist to the situation. This will also require a great deal of work on the part of the gamemaster.

Numerous details must be covered in a case like this, including alien stats, personalities, reactions, technology, history, and so on. I had thought about putting this into the scenario, but to do so would make it too large to print here. So, this is left up to the gamemaster.

The important point when actually running the scenario is to keep up the mystery of the dragons. The players should not know what they are facing—keep them guessing and try to keep them worried. The trails of death and destruction left behind by the dragonships should indicate something beyond the usual Romulan, Klingon, or Orion confrontation, but it should not lead the players into thinking that this is simply a *D & D* adventure in the *Star Trek* universe.

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Finally, the dragonships are a powerful force to contend with, and even after the scenario is resolved, it is quite likely that all the ships will still be sitting on a world in Federation territory.

Perhaps this can lead to future adventures dealing with these ships.

- Is the main computer still active?
- Can it still command the dragonships?

- If the dragonships return, will they simply sit forever waiting for orders, or will they take up other actions?

These are just some of the things to think about. Good luck and have fun. I hope you enjoy playing this scenario as much as I did writing it. Ω

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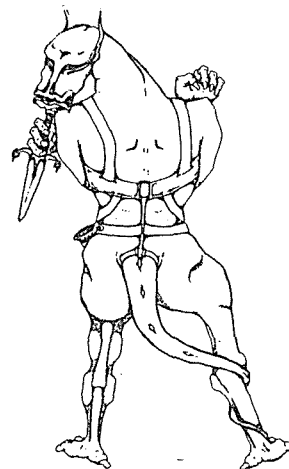
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