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SGS Seeker Gaming Systems
The Laboratory Ship

In their pursuit of greater knowledge of the universe; private, corporate and governmental concerns conduct their research throughout the galaxy. While the findings of their research may be beneficial, the results may be of much greater consequence through the creation of products, jobs, markets and profits. Therefore, large investments are made to finance the requirements of research projects. The nature of many of the projects created the need for mobile research platforms. The 400-ton laboratory ship is one of the vessels designed to meet such requirements.

Laboratory Ship (Type L): Using a 400-ton hull, the laboratory ship is a mobile research and development station used for commercial experimentation. The ship has a class-12 jump drive, class-8 maneuver drive, and a 1,480 megawatt power plant, giving it a performance of jump-2 and 1-G acceleration. The fuel capacity of 1,342 kilitors is sufficient to support approximately thirty days of continuous operation and one jump-2. A computer Model/2 with software package is installed adjacent to the bridge. No turrets or weaponry are normally fitted, but two tons of space have been reserved for later installation of fire control equipment for the ship's two hardpoints. The ship has twenty state-rooms and no low berths. Cargo capacity totals 310 kilitors (23 tons); 1,150 kilitors (85 tons) are available within the ship for use as lab space. The lab ship carries one 40-ton pinnace and two air/rafts. The ship itself is unstreamlined.

The laboratory ship requires a crew of five: a pilot, a navigator, a medic and two engineers. Gunners may be added to the crew if the ship is armed; additional crew are carried to accomplish the ship's research functions. The laboratory ship costs MCr73,130, and takes sixteen months to build.

The lab ship is built as a ring structure, which is rotated to provide centrifugal gravity simulation. While approaching the ship, the most striking feature observed is the rotation of the ring. The play of light and shadow constantly reveals new facets of the exterior hull. The ship has minor thrusters positioned along the ring allowing the ship to institute spin or stop it as desired. Standard grav plates and inertial compensators are installed; they may be switched off and centrifugal force used instead to remove grav forces as a variable in experiments. A part of the ship which does not rotate is the small craft docking ring. Located at the end of the central spoke, the docking ring is specifically mounted to counteract the rotation of the ship, thereby making docking easier for lesser-skilled pilots. Locking bolts hold the craft in position as the lab ship moves. The docking ring can be entered by any six-meter diameter vehicle.

The lab ship's drives and the power plant are contained in two drive pods mounted on the hull. The forward face of each drive pod is equipped with a hardpoint for turret weaponry. To allow for the installation of research equipment, the main lab is fitted with a cargo access plate. This heavy, fully secured sliding panel is not normally opened; doing so requires the depressurization of the entire main lab. Unbolting the access plate requires at least two persons and several hours of labor.

Operations: Typically, a lab ship will be purchased (or chartered) and assigned to a specific system or world for a series of research projects. After jumping to a system, the ship takes up orbit and begins its regimen of experiments. Lab ships are capable of moving great distances, but they generally remain on station for long periods of time. The air/rafts are used for routine transport while the pinnace is used for heavier work or missions requiring greater speed.

Refueling: Because the lab ship is unstreamlined and therefore cannot skim fuel for itself, the refueling task falls to the pinnace. The small craft is assigned the routine of skimming a gas giant and ferrying the fuel to the lab ship. In systems where refined fuel is available, the pinnace will be called upon to transport fuel from the fueling point to the ship.

Ship's Vehicles

The 40-ton research pinnace is a small craft capable of scavenging for fuel, acquiring specimens and running errands to other parts of the system or to world surfaces. The pinnace is capable of 5-G acceleration and normally carries a crew of one. The bridge is equipped with two control couches, the first for the pilot and the second for the gunner if the craft is armed. The cargo area can carry up to nine tons of cargo; six passengers may also be carried. A fuel capacity of 162 kilitors enables the pinnace to undertake long range ventures within the system, in addition to ferrying fuel to the lab ship. The pinnace is streamlined and has integral fuel scoops.

The lab ship's two air/rafts are carried in separate compartments on the ring hull. They provide access to world surfaces, both for specimen gathering and for routine errands. Each air/raft bay is a large air lock which can be accessed using the remote triggers each air/raft is equipped with.
Ship Description

Quadrant One
1. Main laboratory.

Quadrant Two
2. Cargo bay.
3. Air/raft number one.
4. Drive pod number one lower level.
5. Drive pod number one upper level.
6. Hardpoint number one.
7. Corridor.
8. Bridge.
11. Medic's stateroom.
12. Engineer's stateroom.

Quadrant Three
14. Galley and mess area.
15. Private dining room.
16. Private lounge.
17. Staff stateroom.
18. Reception area.
19. Staff stateroom.
20. Staff stateroom.
21. Staff stateroom.
22. Staff stateroom.
23. Staff stateroom.
24. Staff stateroom.

Quadrant Four
25. Staff stateroom.
26. Staff stateroom.
27. Staff stateroom.
28. Staff stateroom.
29. Staff stateroom.
30. Auxiliary bridge.
31. Drive pod number two lower level.
32. Drive pod number two upper level.
33. Hardpoint number two.
34. Corridor.
35. Air/raft number two.
36. Auxiliary laboratory.

Research Pinnace
1. Bridge.
2. Airlock.
3. Fresher.
4. Passenger/Cargo area.
5. Drive room.

Universal Craft profile

Craft ID: Laboratory Ship, Type L, TL 15, MCr73.13
Hull: 360/900, Disp=400, Config=1USL, Armor=40G, Unloaded=2230 tons, Loaded=2640 tons
Power: 5/10, Fusion=1480Mw, Duration=30/90
Loco: 7/14, Maneuver=1, 11/22, Jump=2, Cruise=900kph, Top=1200kph, Agility=1
Commo: Radio=System
Sensors: Passive EMS=Interstellar, Active EMS=FarrOrbit, Densitometer=HighPen/1km, Neutrino=10kw, ActObjScn=Sort, ActObjPin=Sort, PasObjScn=Sort, PasObjPin=Sort, PasEngScn=Simp
Off/Def: HardPoints=4, DefDM=+4
Control: Computer=2x3, Panel=holodynamic link x 420, Special=headsUp x 3, Environ=basic env, basic ls, extend ls, grav plates, inertial comp
Accomm: Crew=5 (Bridge=1, Engineer=2, Steward=1, Medical=1), Stateroom=20, SubCraft=pinnacle, air/raft x 2
Other: Cargo=310 kiloliters, Laboratory=1150 kiloliters, Fuel=1342 kiloliters, Purification Plant, ObjSize=Average, EMLevel=Moderate

Note: As a mobile base for scientific analysis, it includes a laboratory. The price of subordinate craft is not included.

Universal Craft profile

Craft ID: Pinnace, TL 15, MCr27.765
Hull: 36/90, Disp=40, Config=1SL, Armor=40G, Unloaded=480 tons, Loaded=501 tons
Power: 9/18, Fusion=777Mw, Duration=6/18
Loco: 5/10, Maneuver=5, NOE=190kph, Cruise=750kph, Top=1000kph, Agility=5
Commo: Radio=System
Sensors: Passive EMS=Interplanetary, Active EMS=Planetary, ActObjScn=Diff, ActObjPin=Diff, PasEngScn=Sort
Off/Def: HardPoints=1, DefDM=+9
Control: Computer=2 x 3, Panel=holodynamic link x 62, Special=headsUp, Environ=basic env, basic ls, extend ls, grav plates, inertial comp
Accomm: Crew=1 (Bridge/Engineer=1), Seats=adequate x 6
Other: Cargo=121.5 kiloliters, Fuel=162 kiloliters, Scoops, ObjSize=Small, EMLevel=Faint

Note: This 40-ton pinnace is the favored model for use as a subordinate craft for the Type L laboratory ship.
Specimen
by M.T. Shozu

The 400-ton Type L labship was on a mission known to top executives and her crew alone, destined for a planet whose existence was a closely guarded secret. The potential profit to be gained from the planet was of an unprecedented magnitude. The labship was quietly dispatched from the corporate fleet to make an assessment of the planet. All studies were to be completed within 180 days; no difficulties were expected.

To meet the demanding corporate schedule, continuous operations for all personnel commenced immediately upon arrival in-system. Studies and analysis proceeded at a rapid pace, with large numbers of specimens and samples being brought aboard the ship for testing. The preliminary results were beyond the most optimistic projections of corporate planners. The planetary atmosphere would not require treatment or processing of any type. Raw materials of all types were available in abundance, and native vegetation was found to be well-suited for human needs.

The planets animals were quite docile; none of the species examined were believed to be exceptionally dangerous to humans. Most were believed to be suitable for human consumption. One creature warranting closer study, however, was a small amphibian which had severely injured one of the collection team members. The animal displayed characteristics unlike those of any of the other animals, and closer examination revealed a genetic structure alien to the planet. This discovery prompted the capture of several additional specimens; they would be returned to corporate laboratories for long-term studies. Certain developments would change those plans.

The small animals went into a cocoon stage shortly after their capture. Further testing was suspended, the research staff redirecting their efforts to the numerous other projects awaiting their attentions. Monitoring the cocoons was left to instruments alone. Several of the creatures died, much to the surprise of the staff, but those that survived appeared to be developing rapidly. All the researchers awaited with anticipation.

The creatures emerged from their cocoons much larger and, as indicated by a shattered laboratory and a missing technician, a considerable threat. Very little was known about the creatures themselves, as the recording equipment in the lab was also destroyed. How the beings had gotten out of the lab, as well as their current location, was unknown.

This story provides background information for one possible scenario aboard the 400-ton labship. The starting point for the adventure, as well as the events which follow the creatures' disappearance, are left to the referee's discretion.
The Ministry of Information announced today that a scout vessel on a routine survey mission recovered the logs of the Nova Explorer, a laboratory ship which was declared missing over three years ago. An unnamed government official stated that “a full investigation is already underway involving numerous agencies. We expect to have results within a week or two. I expect that we’ll solve this mystery.” The Nova Explorer and its crew of twenty disappeared under mysterious circumstances during a chartered expedition for an unnamed organization.

A flare of brilliant white light gleamed on the polished surface of the star cruiser as the automelder plodded along at a regular pace. The event went almost unnoticed at the sprawling corporate facility, being a daily occurrence. On this particular day, however, the light drew the attention of a brooding young executive, a man in need of a distraction.

“Just routine maintenance on a routine day I guess,” Brantley Dunston said to himself. “Must be nice.”

Dunston turned from the window and strolled back toward his desk, stopping along the way to meticulously remove a speck of dust from the tip of his left shoe. He couldn’t delay forever though; he warily returned to his assignment and the impatiently flashing prompt on his VisiScreen. As he settled into his chair, he spoke at the audio pick-up. “Access Record 3275. Authenticate Dunston, Brantley Marcus. Code Alpha Two.”

“Voice authentication confirmed. Record 3275 being accessed. . . Thank you for waiting, Mister Dunston.”

Thank you thought Brantley. Now if only you could tell me what happened to that ship.

Corporate Research Vessel 038, Type “L” Laboratory ship Nova Explorer had disappeared without a trace nearly three years earlier. The incident was regarded as an “unsolved mystery” until a scout vessel happened upon the ship’s records just six weeks ago. The badly damaged alloy container was discovered as it drifted in a remote area of space. After determining the container’s origin, the records were turned over to the Corporation amid much publicity. Now Brantley Dunston had been given the unenviable task of finding out what had happened to the rest of the ship.

The Nova Explorer had departed for its mission under the shroud of secrecy. The mission and the destination of the ship were known to a select few; all personnel involved were required to sign numerous release forms. System clearances and other legal documents pertaining to the vessel had been deliberately altered; Dunston knew that the ship had not been chartered by the “Tranquility Foundation.”

“So what was the big cover-up?” Brantley asked himself aloud. Apparently the ship had been part of a larger operation, code-named “Deepstar.”

“File on Operation Deepstar. Same clearance.”

“That file is unavailable. Code R1.”

What in the world? I thought I had complete access!

“Mister Anders, please.”
The gravelly voice of the Sector supervisor answered on the voice-only line.

“Yes?”

Brantley sat up in his chair despite himself. “Well Sir, I’m conducting the 038 inquiry, but I’ve been locked out of some information by a Code R1 again.”

“And so?”

“Well, if you could clear me temporary access to the material I could . . .”

“Listen, son,” the senior executive interrupted, “there are some things that you don’t want to fool with. Deepstar is one of them.”

“Yes Sir, but if . . .”

“Continue your investigation with what you have. I don’t want to have to tell you again.”
The line disconnected abruptly. Brantley grimaced as he stared across the room. He remembered what his section supervisor had told him two days before. “Take the job. Looks good on your record. It’ll be easy. Routine investigation. Nothing to it.” Right.

“Status Log Three, Report One. Senior Officer Wesley.” The man was sitting at a console on the auxiliary bridge. “Everything is ahead of schedule according to the research team. Preliminary reports show that terra-forming will not be necessary and that the planet will be self-
sustaining. Stand-by for video." Several views of a rich but deserted planet appeared, followed by scenes from the ship’s main lab. The scientists were clearly excited as they rushed from one console to another amid the abundant flora and fauna samples. The view of Wesley reappeared on the screen. “I recommend that Development send their teams as soon as possible to get things established. End report.”

Brantley placed the playback unit on “PAUSE.” That raises more questions than it answers. He scratched the back of his neck with the input stylus. A planet. A new planet? Where? “Maybe the next segment will have a few answers,” he said under his breath. I hope.

“Status Log Three, Report Two. Senior Officer Wesley.” The man was seated at the same position on the auxiliary bridge. “This phase of the operation is still ahead of schedule. The research team has verified that the planet can supply and sustain all requirements.” Charts documenting progress and resources followed, but Brantley didn’t know what half of the variables and symbols were. He took what notes that he could, evaluating and cross-indexing some of the statistics while Wesley resumed his briefing. “One minor incident of note. Technician Axmeran was injured on a collection expedition by some sort of amphibian. Doctor Stessal has stabilized him and put him in stasis. The science team is working on the amphibian problem. The species may need to be eliminated. End report.”

Brantley leaned back in his chair, shaking his head for the twentieth time that morning. He was no closer to determining what had happened to the Nova Explorer than when he’d started. He knew that the ship had gone to an unknown planet at an unknown location, and that the mission was under leadership of “Senior Officer Wesley.” Naturally, Personnel had no record of a “Wesley” as a command officer. Brantley also knew that a technician named Axmeran, of whom Personnel also had no record of, was nearly killed by some animal on the planet. And that was about it. Great. Time for a lunch break. He picked up his jacket and was heading out the door when a chiming sound indicated an incoming telecom call. He was greeted by a beautiful, smiling face when he answered.

“Hi, Brant. It’s Katrin. Doing anything for lunch?”
“I am now. Meet you in the lobby in five minutes?”
“I’ll be waiting. See you.”
As the lovely image faded from the screen, Brantley had to smile to himself. Katrin Ellsvium had been assigned by the Star Tribune to cover the story of the “Mystery Labship,” and therefore kept in close contact with him. Which was all the better since it had been an obvious case of love at first sight. She was quite a woman. The day is starting to look better he told himself as he left his office. Afterall, how many guys have the pleasure of dining with a stunning reporter? He was humming as he headed towards the lobby.

Brantley Dunston returned to his office and resumed his work, but the Nova Explorer was the furthest thing from his mind. What a woman! Brantley thought as he watched images of Senior Officer Wesley again. If Katrin hadn’t encouraged him to see the project through, Brantley would have dumped the assignment in his supervisor’s lap and told him a thing or two. But Katrin was very interested in what he was doing; it helped to keep their relationship going.

“Status Report Four. Senior Officer Wesley. We have confirmed quantities of developmental materials. The science team is still verifying their data, but we will be departing ahead of schedule. We should be able to meet the courier before it leaves the Tender.” Projected and actual schedules followed, supporting Wesley’s statements. “One item of note regarding the amphibians. The research team does not believe that the species originated on this planet. Several of the samples are in hibernation at this time. More conclusive results should follow. End report.”

“Well now that’s interesting, Mister Wesley . . . or whatever your name is. An alien life form. What happened to your ship and crew? Did the monster go and devour you and the Nova Explorer?” Brantley chuckled at the thought. “More than likely, you and the gang are enjoying your pension for a ‘job well done.’ That’s not much of a ‘Mystery.’” There was one recording left on the spool. Probably the Chairman of the Corporation Brantley thought. He’ll thank me for being a contestant in the Yes, you’re a fool game.

Status report number five was barely viewable; lines of video noise streaked across the screen and a strange reddish hue colored the entire picture. Brantley tried adjusting the monitor controls, with no results. “Playback image process. Ratio one point five.” The computer worked the image, bringing it to tolerable levels. Emergency lights were giving the the picture its reddish color,
compounded by the haze which hung in the air. Wesley had been replaced by another ship's officer. The woman's arm was in a sling, and a bloody bandage was wrapped around her hand. Brantley sat up in his seat; something had definitely happened. "Stabilize and play."

"Navigator Aldrahan. We're losing everything. THEY are tearing up everything." Aldrahan was badly shaken. "This is a disaster. Fornook is NOT habitable. I emphasize not. . . ." The screen went blank. Brantley was somewhat dazed himself. He replayed the video three times. *Maybe that amphibian . . . and Fornook?* Brantley accessed the records for Fornook. There it was: Gateway 0804. *But the survey lists it as an uninhabitable, toxic world.* The video he'd seen definitely contradicted that! *What's the Corporation doing? I should tell my boss, but then . . . maybe Katrin!*

Brantley Dunston's hands were trembling as he dialed the *Star Tribune* reporter. A mystery ship, a mystery planet, and a mysterious alien life form. *Unbelievable!*

"Hi. I can't talk right now, but if you'll leave a name and number I'll be sure and get back to you."

*Telecom recordings! I hate these things!*

"Uh . . . this is Brantley. I've got something that I think you'd like to hear. In person. How about the Starcross Lounge in two hours. I'm going home right now. You can call me there if you need to. Bye." He didn't wait for the computerized image to confirm the message.

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Are you sure?

"Yes, Sir. We had red flags going up all over the place with the topics and the amount of information he accessed."

"So he knows about Deepstar. We could send him on a remote assignment . . ."

"Well, Sir. That reporter he's seeing. We think he works for the other side."

"So we have no choice. Take what actions you deem prudent. And Anders?"

"Yes, Sir?"

"Let's keep this one quiet. No more publicity."

"Yes, Sir."
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**Interior Details**

**Interior Walls:** Interior walls are non-load bearing panels firmly fixed in place as partitions.

**Sliding Doors:** Set in interior walls, sliding doors save space over conventional swinging doors and are standard on most starships. Sliding doors usually aren't air-tight, serving merely as privacy screens.

**Bulkheads:** The major structural component of a ship, bulkheads represent the compartmentalization of the ship for damage control and environmental maintenance. Bulkheads also form the outer hull of the ship and they are very difficult to destroy. All deck floors are assumed to be bulkheads.

**Maintenance Hatches:** Maintenance hatches are placed in bulkheads to allow repair or service personnel access to machinery or equipment. Small and unobtrusive, these hatches are rarely used and generally remain closed. They are unpowred and lock with a common service key.

**Lift Shaft:** Elevators lifting personnel or goods between decks are called lift shafts. In the lab ship, this consists of a pressure-tight lift car and shaft extending along the spoke leading to the docking ring. Ordinary sliding doors close the shaft when a lift car is not present. The lift car is sealed with a sliding door which is pressure-tight. Between decks, the lift shaft is sealed by pressure doors, maintaining integrity between the decks.

**Iris Valves:** Iris valves are pressure-tight automatic portals set in bulkheads. The valve functions much like the iris of a camera; many panels retract into the frame to leave an open passage or extended to block the portal with solid metal. Iris valves may be horizontal or vertical. Iris valves are operated by pressing a stud on the wall next to the valve. A valve may be locked from either side or by computer. A red light glows on the indicator panel to reflect this condition. The iris valve will close automatically when a pressure difference is sensed between the two sides of the bulkhead. They will not close fully until the valve is clear of any objects.

**Manual Hatches:** A less costly substitute for iris valves, manual hatches are hinged pressure doors secured by a handwheel and extending bars. They are not automatic and have no interaction with the ship's computer. There may however, be a sensor which tells the computer if the hatch is opened or closed.
The 400-ton Laboratory Ship orbits the uncharted world, on a mission cloaked in secrecy. Your assignment to this project was a dream come true; research was proceeding at a rapid pace and several major discoveries had been made. Every goal had been met or exceeded... until some exotic specimens aboard the ship disappeared. Now your shipmates are disappearing one by one, victims of the elusive foe. The ship’s drives are damaged and the life support systems are slowly failing. The dream has become a nightmare as you search for the key to your survival.
Laboratory Ship
400-ton
Quadrant 1
Part 1
Drawn by S.R. Greene

SEEKER
Laboratory Ship
400-ton
Quadrant 1
Part 2
Drawn by S.R. Greene

SEEKER
Laboratory Ship
400-ton
Quadrant 2
Part 2
Drawn by S.R. Greene

SEEKER
Laboratory Ship
400-ton
Quadrant 3
Part 1
Drawn by S.R. Greene

To Quadrant 4

SEEKER