

W6

# ASTRO ADVENTURES

## ROBBING THE CRUSOE

by Matthew E Kline

A MINI-ADVENTURE FOR CHARACTER LEVELS 6-8



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Robbing the Crusoe is part of a series of mini-adventures designed to drop into existing adventures or campaigns. Use them as side missions or a way of getting in a quick adventure when you're short on time.



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The "Fleeing the Skitter-Shock" art used on the cover and above was provided by J. E. Shields

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# ASTRO ADVENTURES

## Mini-Adventure Module W6

### ROBBING THE CRUSOE

The Crusoe, a Nue-Energy Corporation research vessel crash landed on the planet Sirocco over a year ago. The planet's charged atmosphere and endless sand-storms kept the ship's valuable data and expensive equipment out of reach, until now. Of course you're not the only ones after its treasures...

#### About This Product

Robbing the Crusoe is designed for 4-6 adventurers of level 6-8, although it can be scaled by the Referee for groups of other sizes. Robbing the Crusoe is part of a line of mini-adventures designed as quick, drop-in scenarios. They're ideal for use as short side quests, or for gaming sessions where you're pressed for time. You could even string them all together as a mini adventure campaign.

Referees should feel free to adjust this adventure as they see fit to suit their group's style of game-play or level of difficulty.

It's recommended that the Referee read through this product at least twice in order to familiarize themselves with the adventure prior to playing. They should also take note of any new creatures or equipment listed at the end of the document.

This product requires the use of the *White Star: White Box Science Fiction Roleplaying* rulebook, copyright 2015 Barrel Rider Games, written by James M. Spahn.

On the pages that follow you'll find boxes like the one surrounding this text. These boxes hold suggested descriptions of the areas that can be read out loud to the players.

After most of the area descriptions you'll find one or more of the following symbols:



This symbol indicates that there's a creature or creatures present.



This symbol indicates that there's something of value nearby.



This symbol indicates that there's an obstacle to be overcome.

A description of the creature, valuable, or obstacle encountered follows after each symbol.

#### About Astro Adventures

A few years after my introduction to D&D I remember seeing a sci-fi RPG for the first time and thinking *Wow, you can adventure in space too!?* This was back around the time that Star Wars came out, the first one (which of course turned out to be the 4th one.) So, as you could imagine, the neighborhood kids latched onto this new setting like a giant space leech. Our *Astro Adventures* pay tribute to that time, a time when a whole galaxy of adventure opened up to us. A time when we were all still blissfully unaware of what a whiny little punk Darth Vader was as a kid. Those were good times. Good times...

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## Referee's Eyes Only:

The Nue-Energy research vessel *Crusoe* spent five years corp-time in orbit around the planet Sirocco, collecting data on its electrically charged atmosphere. High winds constantly whip across the surface of Sirocco, covering the planet in an endless storm of sand and lightning.

An exposed body on Sirocco would be sandblasted into nothing within a few minutes and the sand would find its way into any protective gear, vehicles, or equipment, rendering them useless. And that was if you managed to find a way to get down to through the planet's static charged atmosphere to its surface. Even the heaviest of shielding wasn't enough to protect a ship's vital systems from damage. To most Sirocco was the last place they wanted to be, to the Nue-Energy Corporation however it was a naturally occurring power plant with an endless flow of electricity.

The *Crusoe's* mission was to study the planet's electricity generating properties and determine if it could viably be replicated artificially. Five years into their mission the ship suffered a critical failure in its stabilizing engines and crashed into Sirocco, taking its data and research equipment along with it.

For years the ship sat out of reach on the planet's surface, rescue and salvage attempts made impossible due to the endless storms, until now...

According to at least one mad scientist's calculations there's going to be a lull in the storms, a 3-hour window of opportunity to get down to the *Crusoe*, grab what can be grabbed, and go.

Problem is, the crew's not the only ones who know about this...

## Set Up

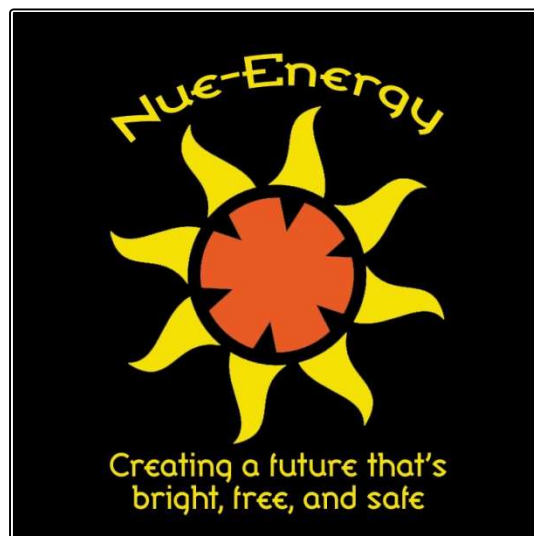
The crew is approached by Nevis Glamdri, a manic looking humanoid with an honest to goodness treasure map leading to the planet Sirocco and a tale of the *Crusoe* and the valuable data it contains. He also carries a bag filled with page after page of handwritten calculations which proves (at least to him) that there's going to be a storm free, three-hour period on the planet coming up soon, allowing access to the crash site. The fact that he's wearing an antique knitted koala hat doesn't help establish his credibility any.

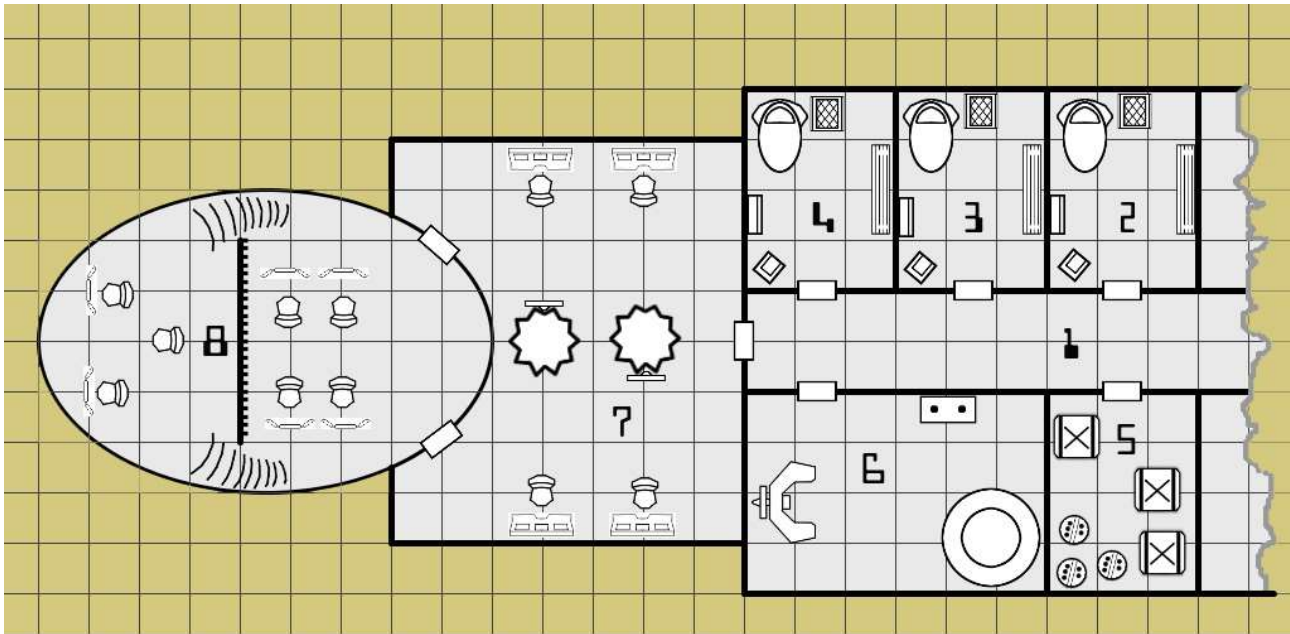
Nevis knows that Nue-Energy would be willing to pay some decent credits to get their hands on the *Crusoe's* research data. He also knows that their competitors may be willing to pay a little bit more...

## A Note to the Referee

This set up is only a suggestion. Feel free to introduce this scenario to your group in any way you see fit.

Possibly Nue-Energy hires the crew and Nevis to carry out salvage operations on the *Crusoe*. This way if something went wrong they wouldn't have to worry about rescuing two of their ships...





**THE CRUSOE**

50= 5''

### Arrival at Sirocco

It's assumed that the crew has access to a ship that they can use to travel to the planet, if not Nevis may have access to one. He'll insist on accompanying the players to Sirocco, not trusting them enough to cut him in on his share of their take if he's not present. Nevis will claim that he'll be able to calculate the location of the Crusoe crash site once they're in orbit above the planet. In truth he's already done so, but uses this as an excuse to be included in the journey.

The sight which greets the player's upon reaching the planet isn't a promising one. Sirocco appears to be nothing more than a violently swirling mass of sand and lightning; whatever surface there is, is completely obscured.

Shortly after reaching the planet, another ship will appear and fire a warning shot at the player's vessel, attempting to scare them off.

### SHRIKE (PIRATE)

Light Transport modified

AC	6 [13]
HIT POINTS	60
SHIELD STR.	1
MOVEMENT	9
TARGETING	+0
ATTACK	Light Laser (2d6) [pilot-linked]
MODIFICATIONS	Advanced Shielding (1), Faster-Than-Light Drive

The stats for Nevis Glamdri's ship, The Starstruck, are presented below, just in case the players have to use his.

### STARSTRUCK (NEVIS)

Medium Transport modified

AC	5 [14]
HIT POINTS	75
SHIELD STR.	3
MOVEMENT	6
TARGETING	+1
ATTACK	Light Laser x2 (2d6) [pilot-linked]
MODIFICATIONS	Advanced Targeting System (1), Light Lasers, Reinforced Hull (2)

After the pirate ship's been dealt with. Nevis will announce loudly "You see! You see! I'm not the only one who calculated the lull! The data is sound! And validated!" Then after watching the unabating swirling mass of deadly lightning and flesh stripping sandstorms in silence for a few moments he'll add, "of course I guess we could have just been followed..."

Then the storms will suddenly dissipate and the lightning will cease. Nevis will start laughing like a madman and slap the nearest player on the back. If they're in his ship he'll lunge for the controls and start piloting the Starstruck to the Crusoe's crash site otherwise he'll call out the coordinates to whoever's steering. Nevis will also start a 3-hour timer he wears on his wrist to keep track of the duration of his calculated "lull".

After descending to the planet and flying over the surface for a bit Nevis will excitedly call out "There!" and point to a spot where the severed front half of the



Crusoe lies. If Nevis is piloting he'll set the ship down 50 yards from the crash site, otherwise he'll instruct the pilot to do so.

Landing on Sirocco kicks up a relatively shallow layer of sand, exposing hard barren ground below. Apparently, the sand on Sirocco remains in the air and hardly ever lands, save for this current lull.

Sirocco has a breathable atmosphere, (when it's not full of sand) and the players are free to leave the ship and walk to the wreckage. Unfortunately, along the way they'll encounter one of Sirocco's few indigenous species; skitter-shocks (see New Creatures.) They've emerged from their burrows, hungry...



**Skitter-Shocks x5** (hp 34,29,27, 24,17): AC: 4 [15] HD: 6, ATK: 1d6+2 (bite) or shock (2d4, 3d4 against robots) Sp: burrow, shock Sv: 14, Mv: 15, HDE/XP: 6/525

## Key to the Crusoe

The jagged edge of the rear of the Crusoe sits 10' above the ground. Care must be taken in entering the ship to avoid being cut. The whole ship is tilted slightly forward, however the angle's not enough to present a footing problem.

### 1. Access Hall

A fine layer of sand covers the floor of this hallway. Three doors are set into the wall along the right side of the corridor, two along the left, and one lies at its far end.

There's no power to the ship so the normally automatic doors will have to be opened manually. This involves opening an access panel on the wall next to each and folding out a T bar that has to be turned several times until the door slides into the wall far enough to allow entry.

## 2. Dr. Pirax's Quarters

A small plaque on this door bears the name Dr. Pirax.

This is one of the crew's living quarters. It holds a pod like bed which can also serve as a cryo-sleep chamber for long voyages. While the ship is powered the pod can offer several entertainment choices, capable of providing holo-vids, games, and music. A vacu-wardrobe sits against the right wall. This device automatically vacuum seals when closed, compressing any clothes stored within in order to maximize space. There's a simple chair alongside a shelf in one corner. A nightstand/storage cube sits beside the bed.



Normally when an attempt is made to open a vacu-wardrobe it will start gradually cycling in air while slowly opening its door. Without power, any attempt made to open the vacu-wardrobe will cause its contents to burst forth, taking its door along with it. Anyone standing in front of the wardrobe at the time will take 2d4 damage and have a 50% chance of being knocked to the ground.



The vacu-wardrobe contains several spare uniforms with the name tag "Dr. Pirax" as well as several sets of female sleepwear.

Five antique books lie scattered about the room. Apparently they were on the shelf and sent flying during the crash. They're in good condition and could be worth

anywhere from 100 to 400 credits each to a collector.

The nightstand contains some personal knickknacks, as well as a couple of bags of junk food and a pack of "Nite-Patch" sleep aid patches.

## 3. Dr. Naud's Quarters

A small plaque on this door bears the name Dr. Naud.

The room is similar to the room found at **Area 2**, however the seal on the vacu-wardrobe broke causing its contents to be scattered about the room. A few spare uniforms with the name tag "Dr. Naud" and several sets of male sleepwear litter the floor.

There's also the remains of a small cactus-like plant in a shattered pot and a picture in a broken antique frame of what apparently was Dr. Naud and his family on vacation somewhere far away from Sirocco. These items were apparently on the shelf or nightstand before the crash.



The nightstand contains a flashlight, an empty bottle of Comet Tail scotch, and a pair of "Spaceport Tau" souvenir shot glasses. There's also an extractor tool necessary for retrieving the data cores from the storage units in **Area 7**.

## 4. Dr. Vashek's Quarters

A small plaque on this door bears the name Dr. Vashek.

This room is similar to the one found in **Area 2**.

A couple of broken data pads, a mangled multi-frame (similar to a current

day digital frame), and bits of a shattered vase lie near the chair.



The vacu-wardrobe here is still sealed. Attempting to opening it will cause it to burst. Anyone standing in front of the wardrobe at the time will take 2d4 damage and have a 50% chance of being knocked to the ground. Hopefully the players will have already dealt with this situation and have learned to stand away from its front while forcing the door open.



While the other doctors were scientists, Vashek was the ship's medical doctor. The nightstand contains a med kit and a still intact data pad that holds information on the health of the ship's crew during the mission. It could be worth as much as 1,000 credits to Nue-Energy. There's also a spare I.D. badge featuring an image of the doctor along with her name. The badge serves as a pass key for operating the med kit dispenser and medical vat in **Area 6**.

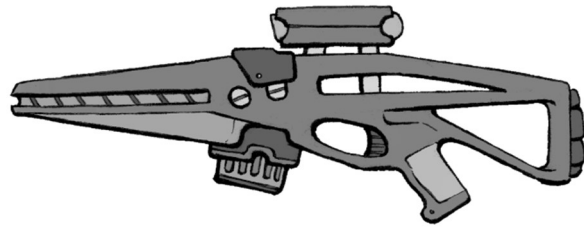
The wardrobe contains a few spare doctor uniforms as well as several sets of female sleepwear.

If the uniforms are searched an *adrenaline booster* can be found in one of the pockets.

## 5. Storage

This area served as one of the ship's storage rooms. There are three crates and three cylinders here. The crate nearest the door has broken open spilling an assortment of snack chip bags all over the floor.

This storage area held an assortment of supplies that the crew wished to keep closer to their living quarters. One of the crates, as stated above, held bags of



chips. Another crate holds fresh linens for the sleep pods. The third crate holds assorted parts for making repairs to the sleep pods, vacu-wardrobes, and chairs and control consoles found in **Area 7** and **Area 8**. The first cylinder contains 24 ration packs. The second cylinder contains 48 sealed emergency water packets. The third cylinder contains three dozen spare "hockey puck" size biomatter dissolvers for the ship's toilets.



The crate with the spare parts contains a tool kit.

If the crate with the snack chips is searched a large metal case will be found beneath the few bags of chips that remain in the container. The inside of the case is lined with the foam outline of a high-powered laser rifle along with two slots for holding energy clips. The rifle and clips are missing.

## 6. Infirmary

This was the ship's infirmary. There's a desk sized control console against one wall. A medical vat stands in one corner and a med kit dispenser hangs on the wall near the door.

Dimly flashing power lights on the console, medical vat and kit dispenser indicate that remarkably there's still some power to these devices. The infirmary has a back-up battery that allows them to be powered in emergency situations. Nevis



speculates that the charged atmosphere of Sirocco may have somehow kept the emergency battery charged.

The medical vat can be operated from the control console. The console will require Dr. Vashek's I.D. badge from **Area 6** to be within 10' of it to function (unless a player has the ability to hack it.) The vat only has enough juice to function for three hours (which is fine because if the players stay on the ship for more than three hours they'll have bigger problems than a few missing hit points.)



Bringing Dr. Vashek's I.D. badge within 10' of the wall mounted dispenser will allow it to be operated. The dispenser holds 4 med kits.

## 7. Operations Room

Three corpses sit relatively upright before the four computer consoles in this room, still held fast by their chair's safety harnesses. The consoles were all badly damaged in the crash. Luckily the two massive data storage units that stand near the room's center appear to still be intact.

If the one empty chair is inspected it will be discovered that the harness is unfastened. So, either someone survived the crash and unfastened it or it wasn't fastened before the crash.

If the three corpses are inspected their uniforms will be found to bear the name tags Dr. Naud, Dr. Jaffik, and Dr. Xix.



The data cores can be retrieved from the storage units however the players will require the specially designed extractor tool found in **Area 3** to do so. Nue-Energy will pay 5,000 credits each for their safe recovery.

## 8. Bridge

This is the ship's two-story bridge. Wires and pipes are visible in the walls and ceiling where panels broke away during the crash. Here in the lower section, one corpse sits fastened into its chair's safety harness before one of four consoles. Three other corpses are piled on the stairs that run along the wall to the right of the bridge as though they were trying to get up to the captain's bridge prior to the crash. Or its possible they were thrown there upon impact.

The consoles on the lower bridge have all been damaged.

If the corpses are searched the one in the chair bears the name tag Dowd while the three corpses on the stairs bear the tags Connor, Leena, and Fargo.

The players can access the captain's bridge by way of the stairs to the left of the doors, otherwise they'd have to climb over bodies and fallen panels.

Reaching the captain's bridge the group will make a startling discovery, the captain's chair, along with the navigator and pilot's chairs each bear large holes surrounded by scorch marks on their backs, as if each were shot with a high-powered laser. In fact, the control consoles here bear evidence of sustaining damage from laser fire as well. It wasn't a malfunction that brought the Crusoe down. It was sabotage!

The bodies of the captain (Osterman), pilot (Illig), and navigator (Wilkins) can be found, thrown against the front of the ship. Each bear laser wounds to their backs. The body of Dr. Pirax is here as well, crumpled against the front of the ship near the others. If inspected a broken high powered laser rifle will be found beneath her body.



While the high-powered laser rifle is broken it's clip can still be retrieved. The clip in the rifle still holds 5 shots and there's a full clip of 20 shots in the doctor's pocket. The clips function as standard energy cells however they deal an additional 1d4 points damage to their target and each time they're there's a cumulative 10% chance that the clip will explode dealing 2 points damage for each remaining charge to whoever's holding the weapon at the time.

## The Void Knight

Once the data cores have been retrieved the crew's free to head back to their ship. Unfortunately, as the group moves to exit the wreckage of the Crusoe they'll find a Void Knight waiting for them. The void knight Terrix, along with a small crew of mercenaries were hired by Infinite Suns, a competitor of Nue-Energy, to retrieve the Crusoe's data cores and destroy any evidence that may remain of their agent's tampering.



Terrix will demand that the crew turn over the data core along with anything else they took from the wreckage after which they'd be free to leave. He'll also remind them that they have a limited time to comply since it's in all of their best interests to get off Sirocco as soon as possible.

Terrix of course has no intention of letting the group live, regardless of whether or not they hand over the recovered items. It won't be long before the Void Knight gets tired of waiting and orders the mercenaries to open fire. He'll join the battle, taking matters into his own hands once the first mercenary falls (sooner if he's attacked.)



**Mercenaries x5** (hp 23,20,16,14, 13): **AC:** 6 [13] **HD:** 4, **ATK:** 1d6+2 (laser pistol) or mono-dagger (1d6) **Sp:** class abilities, **Sv:** 13, **Mv:** 12, **HDE/XP:** 4/120 **Gear:** Mono-dagger (5), laser pistol (5)

**Terrix (void knight)** (hp 30): **AC:** 3 [16] **HD:** 6, **ATK:** 1d6+2 (Star Sword) or Corrupted Energy (5d6) **Sp:** Star Knight abilities, Corrupted Energy, Force of Will **Sv:** 13, **Mv:** 12, **HDE/XP:** 8/1,400 **Gear:** *Star Sword*



Terrix possesses a recording stick that holds information on a contract made between him and a high-ranking employee of Infinite Suns regarding the retrieval of the Crusoe's data cores and the destruction of any evidence of foul play.

## Mission Accomplished

Once the Void Knight and his mercenaries have been dealt with the crew's free to put Sirocco far behind them, provided they make it out before their three-hour window closes.

The crew may notice that Dr. Vashek's body is not present. She was actually visiting a crew member on the rear section of the ship when the Crusoe crashed. The players may want to try to locate the rear section of the Crusoe, which actually lies a half mile northwest of the front section. The rear contained the ship's mess, kitchen facilities, additional crew quarters and the main storage hold. The crew may also wish to search for Terrix's ship, which lies 50-yards to the north of the front section of the Crusoe. The ship will be securely locked. Taking either of these actions are time consuming and could wind up standing the crew on Sirocco. Nevis should strongly caution the crew against taking either action, sighting the fact that they're window is rapidly closing and that his calculations may not be 100% accurate.

Nevis will want to take the data cores along with news of the intentional sabotage by Infinite Suns straight to Nue-Energy's corporate headquarters on the artificial planet of Nue-Frontier. The data cores are worth 5,000 credits each to Nue-Energy. The recording stick found in the Void Knight's possession should be enough to prove Infinite Suns involvement and be worth an additional 2,000 credits.

The final entry on the intact data pad recovered from Dr. Vashek's Quarters at **Area 4** states that she's having difficulty locating any medical information on Dr. Pirax prior to her joining Nue-Energy and that she suspects she might be a

"fabricated persona." Unfortunately, Dr. Vashek didn't have time to voice her suspicions to the captain before "Dr. Priax" made her move.

Nevis will want a lion's share of any credits coming their way, money and accolades; after all, it was his calculations that made it possible to get to the data cores. He'll settle for an equal share of monetary credits if it looks like the suggestion doesn't sit well with the crew.

## Continuing the Mission

Here are some suggestions for further missions:

🔍 One of the antique books recovered from "Dr. Pirax's" quarters in **Area 2** is found to contain a recorder stick in a small section cut out of its pages. The recorder stick holds a confession explaining how her real identity is Gleena Farrow and that she was coerced into sabotaging the Crusoe due to the fact that Infinite Suns had abducted her children. Gleena adds that she was told that her children would be released upon the completion of her "mission" however she doesn't really believe that to be the case. The crew may decide to take an interest in the children's welfare.

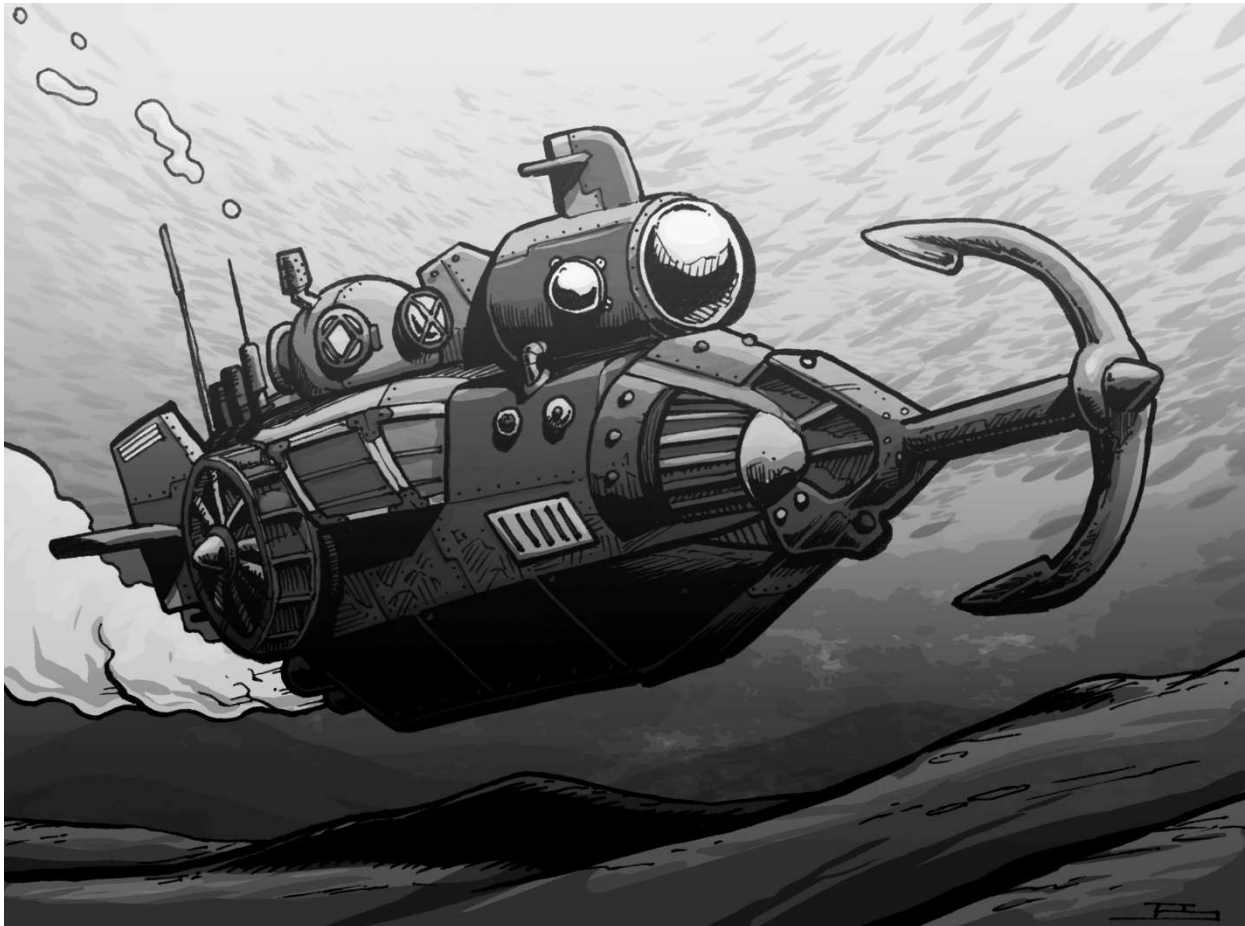
🔍 Nue-Energy offers bounty on the high-ranking employee of Infinite Suns and they want the crew to be the first to know. Fortunately, Infinite Suns recently fired the individual, claiming that his actions were not authorized and spinning the sabotage as the act of an overeager employee. Unfortunately, the ex-employee has gone into hiding.

🔍 Maybe the crew took too long, Terrix delayed them, or Nevis' calculations were off. At any rate they now find themselves stranded on Sirocco as the wind and sand kicks up and the atmosphere becomes recharged. The ship as it turns out isn't

the best place to be, its metal surfaces becoming charged with a dangerous level of electricity. Nevis figures out a way of rigging up a disintegrator-type excavating device using bits from the medical vat, the high-powered rifle and clips, and the biomatter dissolver pucks from **Area 5**, powering it with the emergency battery from the infirmary. He uses this device to excavate a "lightning free" living space in the ground beneath the Crusoe. There the crew can spend their time fighting off the occasional wandering skitter-shock while Nevis calculates how long it will be before the next lull. Hopefully the snack chips, crate of rations and water packs hold out until then. It's possible the crew may have to tunnel to the rear section of the Crusoe to gain additional supplies from its kitchen and storage hold. There's also the possibility of encountering other "tribes" of crash survivors who created networks of tunnels below the surface of Sirocco.

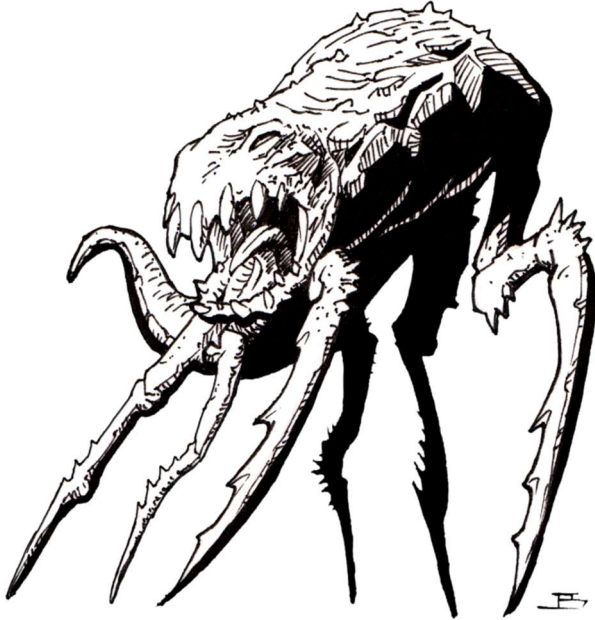
⚡ Impressed by the crew's ability to recover data from Sirocco, Nue-Energy looks to hire the crew to recover the data cores from the Nemo, a research ship that crashed under mysterious circumstances on the all water planet of Aqualore. Nevis gladly offers the use of his experimental submarine in exchange for tagging along again.

⚡ The crew could get almost twice as much if they take the items recovered from the Crusoe along with evidence of sabotage to Infinite Suns. Of course, if word gets back to Nue-Energy that this has occurred, the players could literally make themselves a powerful enemy. And Infinite Suns may come to view the crew as a "loose end", the only ones who knew what really occurred to the Crusoe. They may seek to eliminate a potential group of blackmailers...



## NEW CREATURES

### Skitter-Shocks



Skitter-shocks have only ever been encountered on the planet Sirocco. It's believed that they evolved from some other creature that either existed before the planet became its current volatile environment or from some alien species that became marooned there.

Skitter-shocks burrow into the surface of the planet, leaving only a small portion of their tail exposed to Sirocco's atmosphere. Their tails collect static electricity from the air which they then use in some way to maintain them during lengthy hibernation-like periods of stasis.

The creatures will emerge only once in a great while, during the rare periods of calm the planet experiences. Ravenous, they'll feed on other small burrowing creatures that emerge during this time, each other, or whatever else is available.

Skitter-shocks are fast, able to scurry quickly over rough or sandy terrain.

They're protected by a rock-hard shell and can deliver a powerful bite attack. Their tails also store a bit of electricity, allowing them to deliver a painful shock.

Do to their rarity, biologists are willing to pay good credits for a live specimen, or a dead one. Or one of the creature's eggs, if they lay eggs...

### SKITTER-SHOCK

AC	4 [15]
HIT DICE	6
THB	+6
ATTACKS	Bite (1d6+2) or Shock (2d4, 3d4 against robots)
SAVE	14
SPECIAL	Burrow, Shock
Movement	15
HDE/XP	6/525

### Art Credits

We'd like to thank the following companies, people, and resources for providing great spot art at low cost. It's due to their efforts that we can afford to keep the price of our products relatively cheap.

J. E. Shields provided the "Fleeing the Skitter-Shock" art for the cover and inside cover as well as the "High Powered Laser Rifle" on page 6, "Submarine" on page 10 and the "Skitter-Shock" to the left.

The Creature, Valuable, and Obstacle icons as well as the Nue-Energy Corporation logo (modified Sun icon) on page 2 were made by Lorc. These icons are available for download on [game-icons.net](http://game-icons.net)

Our portrait of Nevis on page 4 and Terrix on page 8 are from Terrible Character Portraits by Jeff Preston. We don't think they're terrible...

The map for our "old school" Crusoe research ship was created using dungeonographer mapping software from Inkwell Ideas.

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