
VOLUME
54
THE
EUROPAN
YOUR ONE-STOP PUBLICATION FOR ALL THINGS EUROPAN

#54

ARE WE THERE YET?

Hello my fellow Europans, and greetings from the staff of our moon's singularly superior periodical publication!

Some things never change – this saying that harks back to the distant green summers of planet Earth seems even more true in this day and age, where years and days blend seamlessly together, and the passing of hours is rendered meaningless by the pervasive round-the-clock dampness. I for one feel as though I haven't left my room in over a month by now! I don't know what I would do without my hallucinogenic slime monster pet keeping me company, of late.

Ah, tempting as it would be to give in to cabin fever, thalassophobia and general moping around, dear reader, do not. In fact, many things have changed, and some probably for the better! Reports keep coming in of ever longer expeditions, outposts are sprouting up in new locations, and while we've still got our work cut out for us if we mean to weather the dangers of this ocean, at least one thing continues to give this old editor in chief new hope: with each passing day, our numbers grow. What tides bring in these new faces, we don't always understand, and really, is that even important? It's so good to have you here, dear reader.

Even with these new advances, there is still much we don't know. What really lies at the end of the road? How long is the journey? Where is it that we're going, exactly? Probably best not to get too philosophical about it, though, since half of us are clowns and the other half are just so serious… No wonder we struggle to connect to each other! When we do get along and no one gets kicked, crews report strange lights and visions occurring deeper in the sea. Surely we wouldn't all hallucinate the same thing, so perhaps there's some truth to it – time will tell.

When we find out, dear reader, you will be the first to know*. For now, we wish to share with you some of the things we've learned in the meantime: in this volume of *The Europan*, we bring you the newest of the news, disputed discoveries, controversial curiosities and time-tested tips. From learning about our history to mastering your gardening skills, look no further than *The Europan*! We thank you for your continued patronage and hope you find both delights and insights on our pages.

**As soon as our publication schedule allows, that is.*



THE EUROPAN

Table of CONTENTS

4 NEWS

4 Jupiter's eating us alive – when should we start worrying?

5 Deregulated transport subs raise questions

6 What happened to the mantis?

7 Professor Kirke's monthly dig

10 JUICY BITS

10 Good Eats with Aunt Doris: Crawler Surprise

12 The ancients of Europa: An exclusive exposé

15 Nana's garden: Ballast flora

17 SPORTS AND CIRCUITRY

17 Annual Dunwice Face-Off gearing up, ambitions to expand inward

19 Conrad Smoot reviews Typhon II

21 Science And Technology Trivia Quiz!

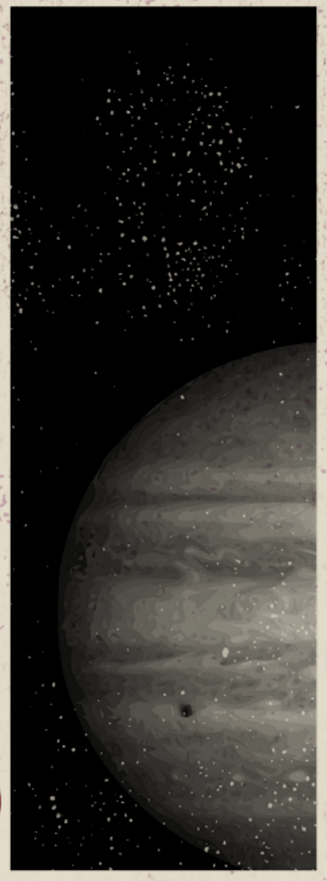
23 LEISURE AND LETHALITIES

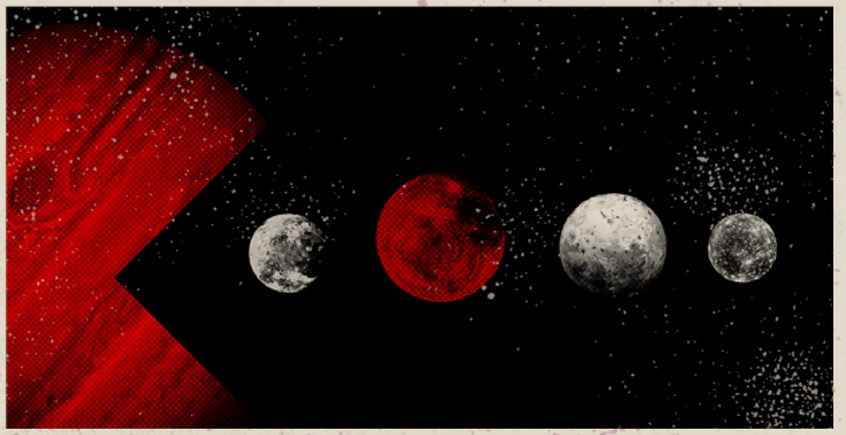
23 *Ask* Listen to Doctor Happy

25 Obituaries

26 Mudraptor anatomy schematic

JUPITER IS EATING US ALIVE





when should we start worrying?

Everyone who studied Europan literature in school probably remembers the famous poem "As he creates, so destroys", but what many do not know is that Carl Sandels's awe-inspiring ode to Jupiter is actually more accurate than one might think. Jupiter's tidal effect on Europa is what keeps life going on this icy moon: flexing the surface, creating heat that keeps the oceans flowing and the geothermal activity up. However, it's also a destructive force that bombards the surface of Europa, and every other Jovian moon, with enormous amounts of radioactive particles, scooped up by its massive magnetic field.

Jupiter's radiation has been a hot topic in recent years due to the yet-to-be-explained changes in the strength of the magnetic field, and consequently, the increase in radiation. Even though Europa's icy crust has so far offered us adequate protection against the radiation, there are many researchers who claim that if the intensity of the radiation keeps rising, many of the outposts located closer to the surface may become uninhabitable in a matter of years. These claims aren't entirely unfounded: some preliminary studies suggest that cancer and infertility have become more common in recent years, in particular in the outposts higher in the crust.

Editor's note: According to studies conducted at Coalition research outposts, these claims are highly exaggerated. There is no reason to believe that the radiation could rise to such high levels in the foreseeable future, and even if it did, lead-lined jockstraps and hats would be more than enough to protect oneself from most health impediments.

Let us speculate: what if the situation kept getting worse? What would we do? Lead-lined jockstraps and hats, as suggested by our wise Coalition researchers, would surely be a good starting point, but what if that isn't enough?

Even though many want to believe it won't come to that, I think as a society and as a species, we need to start evaluating our options – I mean, not believing in climate change didn't stop it from happening on Earth. Migrating to another planet is obviously no longer an option, so we need to find ways to survive here. Perhaps we should start improving our construction techniques to make building outposts deeper more cost-effective. Perhaps we should even start building those outposts, and think about how we'll go about relocating the people living in the more high-up outposts.

What is clear already, though, is that leisure trips to the surface are not a smart idea in this day and age, and may not be a thing at all in a couple of years.

Editor's note: For our dear junior reporter Thomas here, sadly, such trips really won't be a thing: He passed on shortly after composing this piece. We wish him smooth sailing in the afterlife.

?! DEREGULATED TRANSPORT SUSS RAISE QUESTIONS



There was a time when Europan transport captains needed to pass a rigorous test of their knowledge of the waters in which they plied their trade, memorizing routes through thousands of tunnels, caves, caverns and passages as part of the licencing process required to legally transport passengers.

That all changed a year ago, when Coalition management decided to deregulate the transport sector, with promises that greater competition and less red tape would create cheaper and more plentiful services for all Europans. Since then, passengers have had their own stories to tell, some criticizing the quality of the service now being provided by hundreds of new transport captains wanting a piece of the pie.

"I was at a Jupiter's Ascent party out at New Iapetus and wanted to head home after a few drinks. I managed rather quickly to find a transport that would take me, which certainly wouldn't have been the case last Ascent, but unfortunately, the captain couldn't even program his autopilot, much less navigate up through the Europan Ridge and into the Cold Caverns. It was a disaster! He ended up taking me halfway before hitting a chunk of free-floating ice, admitting he was completely lost and dropping me off at some little mining outpost 100 kilometers from home," recalls Gunther Snart, a sanitation engineer at Zamoroska Outpost. "Six weeks later, I'm still here waiting for a ride!"

Others are critical of the perceived honesty of these new transport captains: "It used to be that you could trust a transport captain, but these new captains are rude and they'll take advantage of you the moment your eye is off the meter. Just last week I was heading to my work shift at Xinzou Station. It's a journey of no more than six or seven kilometers, but the captain 'accidently' took me through twenty-five kilometers of crawler-infested side tunnels before finally getting me to work, and he left the meter running the whole way. Also, he was a clown, which, in retrospect, probably should have been a hint that things were not going to go well," George Mork, another disgruntled passenger, recounts.

"While there have been some market corrections with regard to pricing and service quality, Europans are simply better off with freelance transport solutions," insists Coalition vice president of transportation, Meltem Uygun. "Thanks to the deregulation we set in motion, Europans can now get about with Unter, for example, and what could be more exciting than racing through the Hydrothermal Wastes in a leaky vintage Dugong captained by a half-mad cultist who spends the entire trip talking loudly on his radio and injecting himself with husk parasites?"

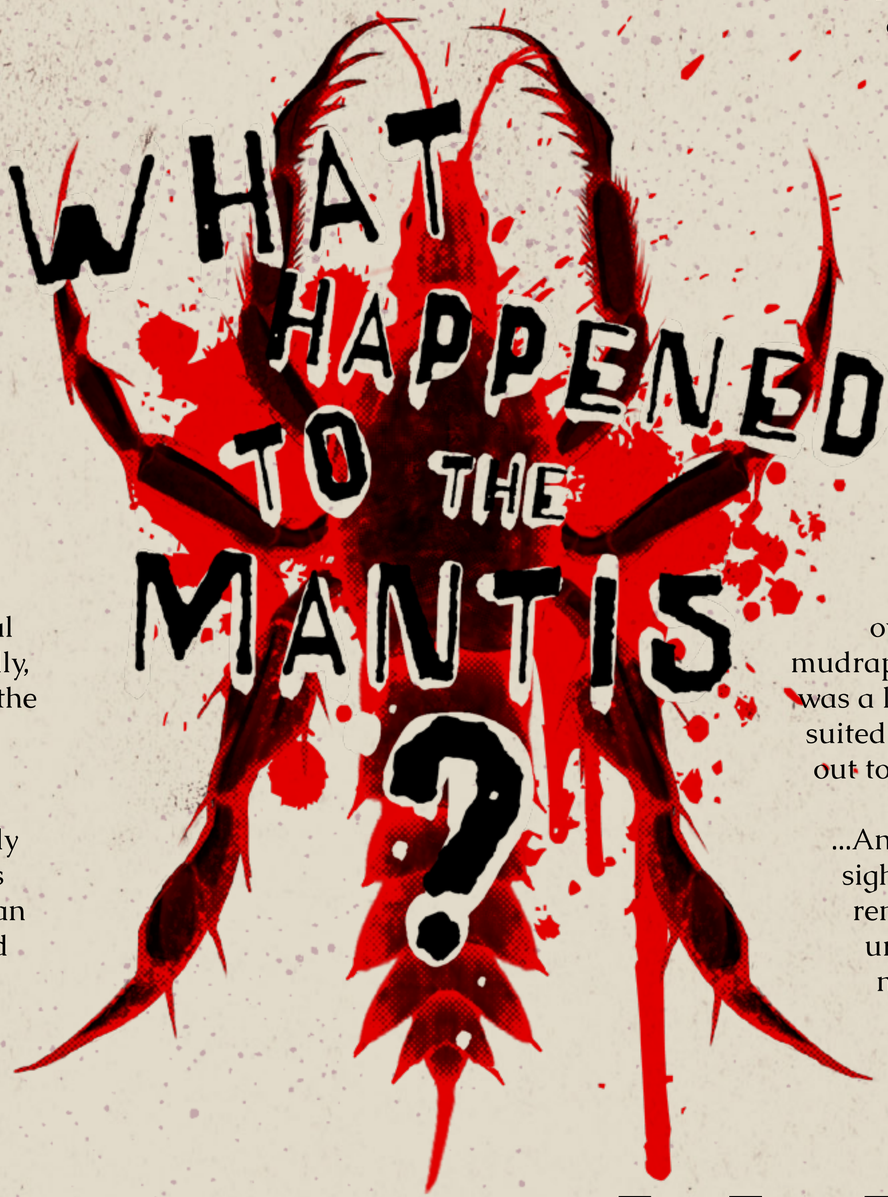
Indeed. The staff of *The Europan* will continue to report on further developments.

has anyone seen

Just a few months ago, a crew of divers discovered new video material of the last-known mantis specimen while exploring the abandoned Xenobiology Research Center in Skadi's Cauldron. The clip in which the researchers make the de-clawed research specimen "shake their hands" with the aid of a juicy bit of crawler meat may have been amusing, but it has also resparked discussion about the damage some claim humanity is doing to Europan flora and fauna.

"It's very clear that the human activity on Europa has had a profound impact on the native ecosystem. The extent of hunting and harvesting we're doing is not even the main cause; the fact that we've added a practically endless supply of tasty, easy-to-hunt mammals to the bottom of the food chain has destabilized the entire ecosystem," says Dr. Julián Brisket from the Huronia Institute of Xenobiology. "While in general this is of course very concerning, I have to say that personally, I'm glad this specific species is no more," he adds and rubs the stump that used to be his left arm.

But why exactly did the mantis go extinct so fast and so unexpectedly? There are various explanations, the seemingly most obvious one being that the frequent armed encounters with submarine crews were simply too much for the Europan mantis population to withstand. As they say, curiosity killed the crustacean, and sure enough, the mantises' apparent fascination with submarines and everything out of the ordinary probably resulted in them encountering submariners more often than was good for them.

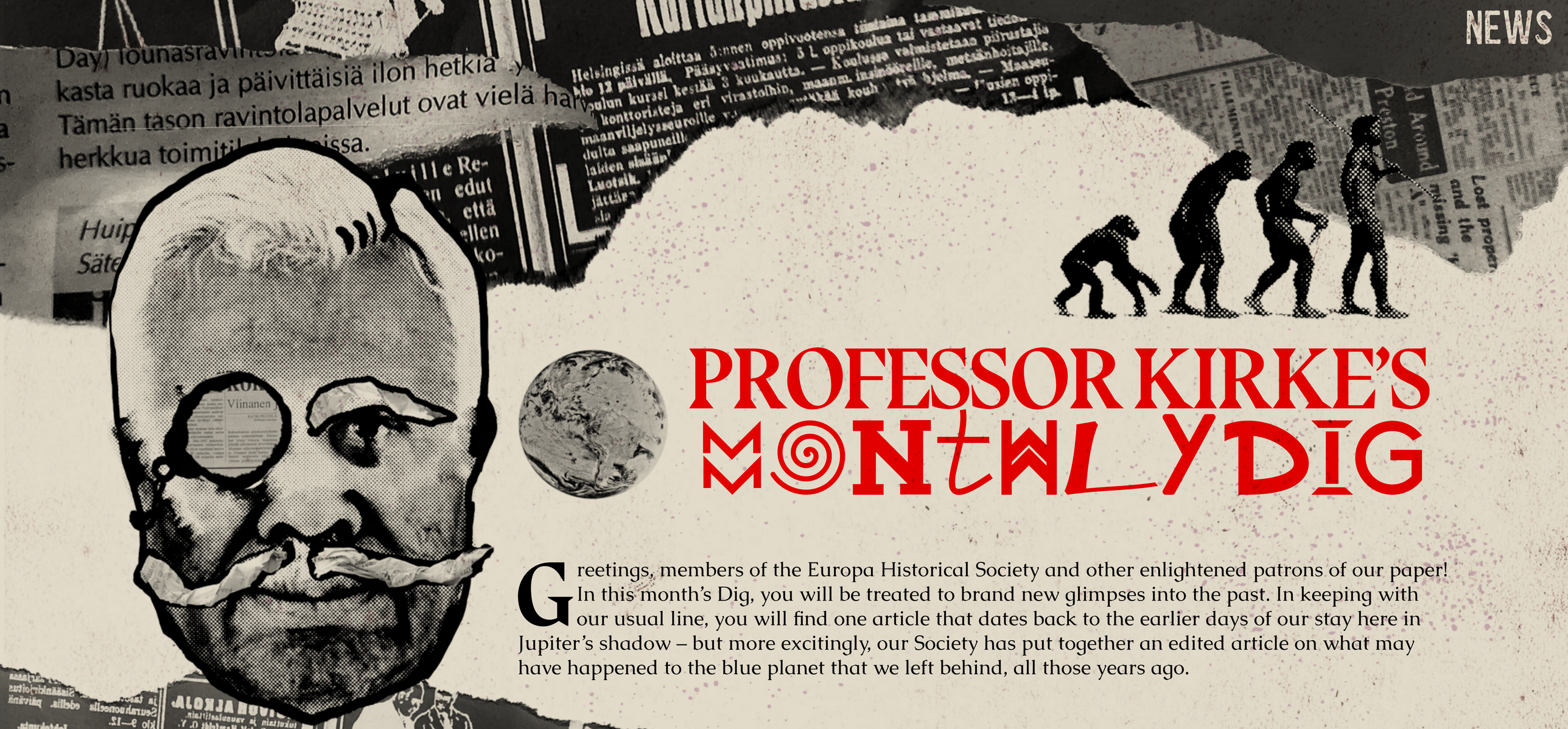


It may very well be that submarine crews were not the only cause to the disappearance, however, since mantises were also hunted for food and sport. Very much like mudraptor racing nowadays, mantis racing used to be a common pastime that more often than not led to the death of the mount. Juvenile mantises were also frequently captured as pets, despite it being widely known that bringing a mantis on board an outpost or a submarine would almost always end in tears: mantises don't tend to live very long on dry land, nor do humans when in the vicinity of a mantis.

Some researchers also say the mantis was already struggling for survival, and that human action merely sped up its extinction. This is supported by the figuratively and literally violent growth of Europa's mudraptor population in recent years, which suggests that these two species were fighting over the same ecological niche. "It's not surprising that the mudraptor won. If there's some kind of a god up there, I think he was a little off target when designing the mantis. It was poorly suited for aquatic life and the bright, yellow color made it stick out to predators like a sore thumb," says Dr. Brisket.

...And who knows, perhaps some of the rumored mantis sightings are true and there are still some hiding in some remote corners of the ocean – or perhaps those are just urban legends akin to the hammerhead shark, playfully named Josh, that some claim to have seen on EVA missions. Whatever the truth about and the cause for the mantis's sudden disappearance, their memory and the traumas they've caused will live on in the minds and nightmares of every seasoned submariner.

are they still there?



PROFESSOR KIRKE'S MONTHLY DIG

Greetings, members of the Europa Historical Society and other enlightened patrons of our paper! In this month's Dig, you will be treated to brand new glimpses into the past. In keeping with our usual line, you will find one article that dates back to the earlier days of our stay here in Jupiter's shadow – but more excitingly, our Society has put together an edited article on what may have happened to the blue planet that we left behind, all those years ago.

SOLEXPRESS DISCONTINUING SCHEDULED PERSONNEL TRANSPORT FLIGHTS BETWEEN EARTH AND EUROPA



The intersolar transportation company SolExpress has announced that their biannual personnel transport flights between Earth and Europa will be discontinued next year. Since SolExpress started their Trans-Europan shipping and personnel transport program towards the end of last decade, they quickly became the largest operator between Earth and Europa, servicing all major space agencies and most of the private shipping to and from the moon. In recent years, however, the decreased demand for work-based personnel transport has made it difficult to continue to finance the program.

”The sad truth is that it’s a question of money,” explains SolExpress’ spokesman Yvain Hagen. ”NASA has been one of our most important customers, but in recent years they have started shifting from transporting their workforce from Earth to hiring Europan locals for their research needs. The trend is also clear among other space agencies. A 500-million-mile commute is simply not cost-efficient. Another difficulty we’re facing is that Europa has become increasingly self-sufficient, and there is not as much demand for importing supplies anymore.”

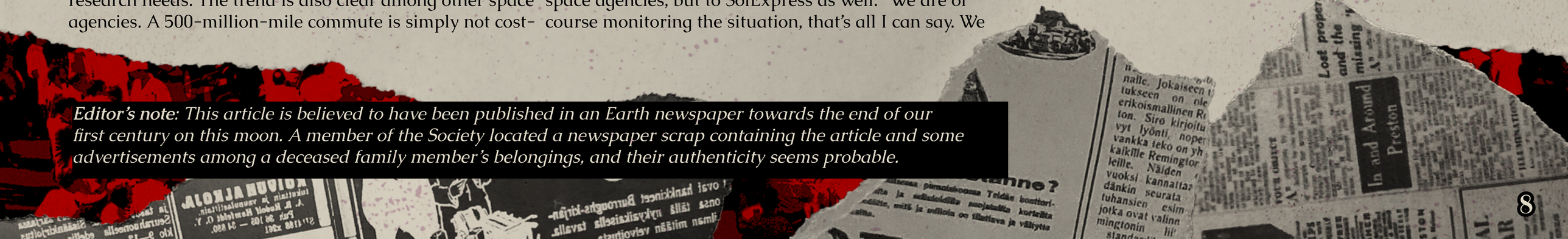
SolExpress wants to stress that they will still be shipping between Earth and Europa. ”Our unmanned cargo flights will go on as usual, and manned flights will be organized semi-regularly based on demand. According to our estimations, this could mean a flight every two or three years,” says Mr. Hagen.

Even though SolExpress has been reluctant to comment on the political climate on Europa, it is clear that the rise of exonationalism and the so-called Europa Coalition has had a significant impact on the decline in transportation needs. The recent disputes over the ownership of the outposts originally established by NASA in particular have been a major source of headache not only to the space agencies, but to SolExpress as well. ”We are of course monitoring the situation, that’s all I can say. We are a shipping company, and Europan politics are none of our business.”

We reached out to the Europa Coalition for comments and were able to organize a remote interview with Herbert May, a representative of the Europa Coalition who goes by the title of ”Captain of Foreign Affairs”.

”To be quite frank, I don’t give two shits,” says the Captain when inquired about his thoughts on the discontinuation of the flights. ”If anything, I wish NASA would come, pick up the rest of their Earther sissies and never come back. They still don’t seem to understand that these cities and outposts are not their property. Sure, they laid some of the groundwork, but since then it’s taken us decades of literal blood and sweat to shape this place into what it is now,” the Captain says while kindling his large crawlerbone pipe.

__Editor’s note:__ This article is believed to have been published in an Earth newspaper towards the end of our first century on this moon. A member of the Society located a newspaper scrap containing the article and some advertisements among a deceased family member’s belongings, and their authenticity seems probable.





PROFESSOR KIRKE'S MONTHLY DIG

SPECULATIONS ON THE FATE OF OUR ANCESTRAL HOME

Some Europans still remember and look back in horror to that day almost 50 years ago when Earth went silent. As one communications station after another reported losing contact with Earth, Europa fell into a state of despair and disarray almost overnight. Since then, we have managed to rise from the ashes and start paving our own path into the unknown, but the question still remains: what exactly happened to Earth? Why haven't we been able to re-establish contact with the old planet? With the help of five experts, we listed some of the most widely accepted theories, and a couple of the more outlandish ones.

NUCLEAR WAR

By far the most common theory is that something cataclysmic happened on Earth – perhaps a nuclear war. Based on what we know about the political climate on Earth before the blackout, many researchers consider the possibility of a devastating nuclear strike entirely plausible.

"The situation between the Eurasian Union and the West was tense, to say the least," explains Katinka Baadur, the author of the critically acclaimed historical book *Why We Should Start Worrying and Hate the Bomb*. "What had started off as a dispute over the Central European Territories first evolved into a cold war between the superpowers and eventually escalated into an all-out arms race. Both sides had more than enough firepower to vaporize the entire surface of the Earth many times over. However, we still have no idea what exactly was the match that set off the bombs."

This theory does have some flaws. Many argue that a nuclear war on a scale that wiped out all or most of the population on Earth would have been easily detected by the observatories on Europa. However, Ms. Baadur claims this is not necessarily true. "It is true that the usage of conventional nuclear weaponry would most likely have been detected, but we have to keep in mind that this happened following a period of intense weapons research and development by both parties. What eventually wiped out Earth may have been technology that's extremely far from what we'd call conventional."

TECHNICAL PROBLEMS

Some have suggested that the problem may not actually be on Earth's end, but instead in the radio telescopes or other communications devices here on Europa. It may be that the radiation from Jupiter, or the "Eye of Europa", the mysterious gravity well, or perhaps just the wear and tear from constant use has caused our observation devices to break down in a way that we have not yet been able to diagnose and repair.

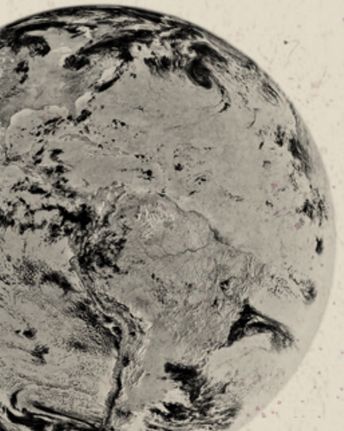
The proponents of this theory claim that the level of technological know-how on Europa has been regressing for decades and that we've reached a point where we simply don't have enough expertise to reliably operate and maintain extremely complex technology such as radio telescopes. While there may be some truth to this claim, most of the hundreds of engineers and scientists who have been trying to diagnose the problem over the years are convinced there is nothing wrong with the equipment.

A strong argument against this theory is that there have been no signs of Earth attempting to contact us by other means. Not a single spacecraft from Earth has arrived on Europa during all this time, which seems to suggest that the problem is not just on our end.

OUTLANDISH CONSPIRACY THEORIES

A common claim by terrorist groups aiming to denigrate the Coalition is that the communications have been intentionally blocked by the Coalition, presumably in an attempt to sever ties to Earth and to make it easier to rule over Europa without outside intervention. The theory is hard to rationalize without the belief in a grand conspiracy that spans most of Europa, since almost half of the observatories and communications stations are not affiliated with the Coalition.

"This nonsense is both ridiculous and insulting," says an engineer from the Callanish Observatory. "I can assure you we are not blocking the connection intentionally. We've spent tens of thousands of man-hours trying to get communications back online or to detect any signs of life on Earth, and so have all the other observatories. There's simply no way for the Coalition or anyone else to prevent us from receiving signals, assuming there are any signals to be received."









GOOD EATS WITH AUNT DORIS

CRAWLER SURPRISE

A decade or two ago, I attended the most interesting dinner party at Versas Station, back when it was one of the more fashionable stations to be seen at. I remember it like it was yesterday: an unusual fellow with very pale skin and the most charming sunken black eyes approached me as I was disembarking from the daily transport which would ferry us non-Versasians back and forward for each work shift. Now, this fellow had the charm and manners of a station manager, no doubt, and when he asked me if I would partake in 'communion', as those fancy Versas types would call dinner parties in those days, I jumped at the chance!

So off we went, not to some run-of-the mill stateroom or canteen, mind you! This fellow and a few of his good friends had chosen to entertain in a wonderfully atmospheric, dark, secluded corner of the engineering bay, lit only by candles. It was really such a clever idea, and so intimate!

Over song and dance, and ritual chants, we were served the most interesting meal. I didn't get a chance to ask my gracious host for the recipe due to my mouth being clamped open, as was customary at dinner parties back then, but over the years since, I've managed to create my own version which I think is pretty darn close. I'd love to share it with you now!

GOOD EATS WITH AUNT DORIS

INGREDIENTS

1 small crawler torso split down the sternum (Ours really was unusually small and pale, and tattooed, oddly enough, but a full-sized, untattooed crawler torso will do in a pinch.)
2 tsp fresh fentanyl
A good splash of ethanol (optional)
2 tsp salt
1 tsp any strong spice you can get your hands on
2 tbsp engine oil
2 cups sweetened pomegrenade sauce
3 tbsp minced sea yeast shroom
1 tbsp fermented slime bacteria sauce



INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 500°C.
2. Peel tough membrane that covers the bony underside of the ribs, taking care not to rupture thoracic organs.
3. Combine salt, fentanyl, strong spices, and half of engine oil, reserving the rest for the sauce. Pour seasoning over torso and thoroughly rub into the skin.
4. Place seasoned torso on a tray. Cover the tray with foil and bake for 1 hour.
5. Mix together basting sauce ingredients: engine oil, ethanol, pomegrenade sauce and fermented slime bacteria sauce.
6. Remove torso from the oven, remove foil and spread open the torso, coating organs and skin with the basting sauce mixture.
7. Increase oven temperature to 650°C. Return torso to the oven, uncovered, and bake for another 5 minutes, allowing the sauce to caramelize.
8. Rest for a few minutes to allow the juices to coagulate.

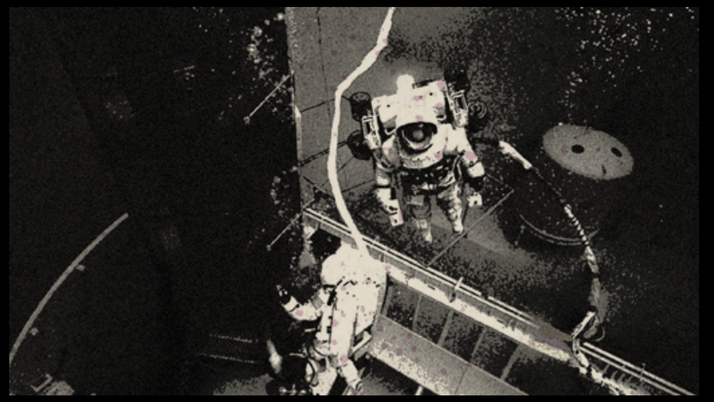
I should point out that my hosts served this particular delicacy VERY rare, almost raw! We all know the dangers of eating undercooked crawler meat, though, so give it time to cook all the way through – you won't get quite the same throat-tickling treat I had, but you'll get the idea. *Enjoy!*

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AN EXCLUSIVE EXPOSÉ

I'm standing in a vast chamber made entirely of black stone, approximately thirty meters from wall to wall and at least ten meters tall. The cavernous room is empty, aside from the ladder that we descended and some lamps that hang from the walls like industrial Christmas lights. In the middle of the floor is a hatch that leads deeper into the complex; exactly how deep into the ice the complex reaches, nobody knows yet. That's what the Institute for Undersea Research (IUR) sent me to find out.

Some of my colleagues and I are on a press excursion to a recently discovered, extraordinarily well-preserved ancient ruin near Adonis Linea. The trip is the first of its kind in that before, only heavily armed or foolhardy crews have had the opportunity to explore ruins like these. The management of Adonis Linea assures us these ruins are safe to explore; a crew of divers has scouted ahead and cleared out the traps and guardians, of which there were many, I hear.

We are secured together by a sturdy cable. This, I hear, is to prevent us from being separated, but I would much rather not be tied to my competitors. I bite my tongue and keep my opinions to myself, for now.

I take a look down the hatch. No lights have been set up ahead, but there is a faint blue glow, generated by some of the machinery built by the former occupants. The fact that it still remains functional after – decades? centuries? millennia? – has mystified researchers ever since the first of these Pandora's boxes was opened.

The IUR recently received a grant of reportedly hundreds of thousands of marks, and they are using that money to finally shed some light on the mystery. Who were the beings that built these massive structures, and where did they disappear to, after?



the ancients of Z

LIFTING THE VEIL

After a long descent, the vertical tunnel opens into a chamber smaller than the one above. The walls here are covered with what I can only assume to be monitors. As you'd expect, most of them are broken, with their insides exposed to water, but a few seem intact, with flickering geometrical shapes displayed on their slate-like screens.

Two opposing doorways lead out of the room. One has been sealed and labeled "Caution! No entry!" – one of a number of branches deemed unsafe for us to enter – so we make our way toward the other. It reveals a long hallway. Near the end of it stands a dangerous-looking device that measures almost from floor to ceiling.

When I approach the machine, it stirs to life and hums menacingly. Shards of some transparent material lie on the floor around it, signaling that this might be something the divers dismantled while first going through. I ask them about the apparatus, and they tell me that these machines are capable of projecting up to a thousand kilovolts of electricity in their close vicinity.

What could that amount of electricity be used for? I get my answer after I pass through to the next chamber, where I am met with rows of terminals connected to tall domes of crystal-like material. To my dismay, every single one of them is smashed into pieces or, in some cases, a hole is cut into them to – I assume – empty them of their contents. I question the divers about this, but they are tight-lipped.

the ancients of EUROPA

A SUDDEN END

Resolving to press the divers for more answers later, I turn to take more pictures of the destroyed machinery. Just then, the whole installation quakes, the room seems to tilt to its side, and water starts flowing deeper almost as though someone removed a plug somewhere. Our handlers spring to action and start ushering us back the way we came, and the radio is suddenly alive with orders and reports.

The consternation on the faces around us reveals the situation as both completely unexpected and potentially life-threatening. Even more intriguing are some of the snippets of radio chatter that I'm straining my ears to catch: the forward group has discovered some working instruments further ahead and managed to open some kind of a doorway, or portal.

By the time our group reaches the monitoring room, the current has grown so powerful it threatens to sweep us all down with it. I muster the courage to take a look behind me and instantly regret it: we're dangling by the security cable, like tiny insects in a giant drainpipe, with tons of water rushing down the hallway. I keep my eyes shut the rest of the way, until I feel myself being dragged onboard the Meander.

In the safety of the submarine, we take a tally. All of us reporters are thankfully alive, but the whole forward group of divers has disappeared. Even at the time of writing this, no bodies have been recovered, and neither has my camera.

Civilians are no longer allowed inside the ruin, and the IUR gave a press release, written by one of my colleagues, shortly after our timely escape. According to it, a psychosis-inducing artifact was discovered in the deepest chamber, resulting in spatial disorientation and hallucinations that may appear as golden flame-like tendrils.

I wish the Institute luck in their continued pursuit of the truth about the ones who came before us.









NANA'S GARDEN:

BALLAST FLORA



As you know, if you're the type who would leaf your way to this part of the magazine, the mildly toxic, fleshy-sinewy, ballast-dwelling organism commonly known as ballast flora makes for a lovely jar-grown bonsai. On the other hand, left to its own devices, this little beauty can bring down whole stations, so you need to be careful with yours before it turns into a real monster.

With all that in mind, how to make the most of your parasitic growth? A cabin without flowers is no cabin at all, so here are some time-tested tricks from an old security officer with an evergreen thumb.

BALLAST FLORA ANATOMY AND LIFE CYCLE

In the wild, ballast flora typically enters submarines via ballast pump intakes and takes root in wet areas – such as the floor and lower walls of a ballast compartment. It has an affinity for electricity and something resembling a brain; given time, it can take over anything with a current running through it and even learn to operate it to a degree. These extreme cases of metamorphosized ballast flora are called thalami (or thalamuses, depending on which sector of the sea you're in!), and you may have heard stories of them infesting wrecks of submarines lying on cavern floors. Those are not just stories, and that's why you don't want your ballast flora getting out of hand!

For cultivating your own garden variety ballast flora, you don't need to wait for it to show up in the nether-reaches of your workplace; spores are readily available at most research outposts, and small quantities will usually be sold for personal botanical use without too many questions asked (attempting to acquire the stuff in bulk may raise some eyebrows, as ballast flora could potentially be weaponized, even though no records exist of anyone actually having done that, and surely even Subra's own wouldn't use the colorless, odorless mildly corrosive gas as a tool of war!).

NANA'S GARDEN: BALLAST FLORA

Ahem. When you have your spores, here's what you'll want to do with them to get your very own decorative *flos navis* plant adorning your sleeping cubicle:

1. Soak spores in shallow water for about a month; I've found ankle-deep water in a cool but not too cold area to be ideal. Some say you should keep the nursery dark like the ocean, others that having lights around will encourage the mycelium to grow faster in pursuit of the nearby electrical current. Old Nana will let you be the judge of that – experiment and see what works best!
2. While it's quite possible to grow an open-air domestic ballast flora, I'd advise against it in the strongest of terms, since those are notoriously hard to contain; in fact, the Coalition really ought to issue some regulations against letting decorative ballast flora bloom unsupervised! So, after choosing a healthy sapling from the nursery, aways plant it in a hermetically sealed see-through container, with a finger's width of water covering the bottom. If you're looking to have your flora fill out its jar quickly, stick to something the size of a depth charge shell or smaller.
3. As for care, almost none is required: Simply conduct a low-voltage electrical charge into the jar once every couple of weeks, and additionally, about once a month – and only when you're certain that the flora isn't blooming – open the lid to add a splash of fresh sea water. Close the jar again securely.
4. Expect blossoms a couple of months from planting! Your flora will stay in bloom for a week or two and then revert to the growing stage, to bloom again later. DO NOT OPEN THE JAR while the contents bloom. If you do, you'll have gas and spores all over the place. One is invisible and the other is even worse for your lungs.
5. After plucking and planting your saplings, under no circumstances should you simply flush the remainder of the nursery out the airlock! The same goes for cuttings when you trim the bonsai – this is hazardous waste! Even if the Coalition hasn't enacted a fine for causing an infestation through negligence, always take care to handle ballast flora responsibly.

SAFE AND EFFECTIVE ERADICATION METHODS

An out-of-control ballast flora the size of a wall and in full bloom sure looks stunning, but you still never want to lay eyes on one. The toxic fumes aside, the growth can and will make a royal mess of your ship's electrical grid, so you'll want to apply that flamer generously if you start seeing fleshy flowers where they don't belong.

Indeed, high temperature is the only surefire way to cleanse a ballast flora infestation. It will effectively destroy both the main body of the organism as well as any airborne particles that may be about. Spraying the vines on the wall with a flamer is definitely a good start, but it may not be enough and you'll have to stay on the lookout in case new shoots appear later, and cross your fingers that it hasn't gotten into the wires.

Personally, I would recommend quarantining and subsequently heating to a temperature of no less than 1000 degrees Celsius the area immediately surrounding (let's say a radius of 3.5 meters) a wild sighting or a jar breach to be sure. (Ventilation ducts may complicate things further, though.) Applied in a timely fashion, that should do the trick!

ANNUAL DUNWICE FACE-OFF GEARING UP

AMBITIONS TO EXPAND INWARD!

The staff here at *The Europan* made a pit stop at the annual Dunwice 150 Custom Face-Off. The Face-Off, for those not in the know, is a race event held in Dunwice Colony, and it's open for all submarines with a displacement under 150 tons. Founded over 20 years ago by a scrapyard owner Steven "Dugong" Stevenson, when he and his sub tuner enthusiast friends raced to the neighboring colony of Molovsk, the inaugural race claimed the lives of all contestants save for Stevenson himself. Nowadays, the event attracts dozens of competitors from all over Europa, all vying for the first prize, which varies from year to year.

"Last year, the prize was a brand new HEPA filter for your oxygen generator. The year before that was actually a genuine piece of alien tech. I think the winner was hospitalized for third degree burns, so we don't do that anymore," says Stevenson. "Second place traditionally gets a lifetime subscription to *The Europan*, which is to say, a three-year subscription to *The Europan*. We'll figure out third place when more than two ships finish." Fingers crossed.

DCFO has ambitions to expand inward. "We're in talks of hosting a race in Tursas," Stevenson mentions, "but since all the separatist business started, progress has halted. We would love to bring the culture of sub tuning to other parts of the moon."

While the DCFO has seen considerable success in Dunwice, recently elected outpost administrator Ivan Narrock (Coalition Party) has made it clear the event and its organizer are not exactly in good standing with the local administration. According to Narrock, the Dunwice Face-Off attracts an unwelcome crowd to the colony. "The cleaning costs alone are enormous," he states. "The sub docks are full, guest bunks are overflowing and you can hardly hear yourself think. The only positive is that it keeps salvage crews and corpse-divers busy." Ivan Narrock ran unopposed in February after the only other candidate, representing the Workers For Food Party, disappeared under mysterious conditions. He is expected to run again in four years, almost guaranteeing that the Face-Off organizers will have to fight to keep their event from being cancelled.



Esther Annie Coffey-Left. Small colony girl that loves racin'.

In the pit area, *The Europan* met and interviewed a hopeful contender named Esther Annie Coffey-Left. Standing in front of her pimped-out submarine "Sweet Pea", Esther smiles nervously and keeps shifting her weight. "I'm just a small colony girl that loves racin'. I don't know about all this big city hooplah." Boasting a 3100-series reactor, a 500 kiloton thrust engine and a sweet green-orange tail fin, Sweet Pea is one of the crowd favorites. "Since the 3100s were banned in majority Europa, this is one of the only places I'm allowed to run it. Of course, somebody'll have to keep watch with this dang ol' water hose, or we're gonna have a re-peat of what happened with the Palyvoda crew."

What has been dubbed the "Palyvoda incident", where the whole eight-person crew of the Palyvoda perished after their reactor compartment caught fire, is to date the most tragic underwater racing related accident*. After the incident, every race vehicle is now obligated to carry a fire extinguishing system and at least 100 gallons of water, in case none can be found in the vicinity.

"We try not to focus on the tragedies of yesteryear, but on creating new ones for the future," declares Stevenson.

Esther and other hopefuls will start their engines on Sunday. The event will be shown on Dunwice's CCTV and broadcast on K-RAWLER FM.

**Editor's note: We are not counting the New Shanghai Husk Shindig, given that it can be argued the crew is still alive.*

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Conrad Smoot™ REVIEWS

ty-phon II

A stute readers will recall my review of the Dugong class sub, back in issue 42, and how underwhelmed I was by the shoddy workmanship, unsophisticated styling, third-rate electrical work complete with frayed, exposed wires hotglued directly to the bulkhead, and the general lack of essential amenities.

Against that backdrop, it was hardly surprising that the competing Uusi-Turcu Industries would reach out to me, asking if yours truly would take their remodeled next-generation Typhon out for a spin. Upon agreeing, I was promptly handed the keys to a brand new Typhon II by the company rep Janelle, a vulgar little woman with even less class than one might expect of a corporate shill.

typhon II

SPECIFICATIONS

Powerplant	1 5000 kW Horn & Wang 'Teller 3' model Light Fission reactor
Engines	1 4000 kN Triamphator
Navigation Systems	1 'Sonar King' brand sonar and course plotting array
Main Pumps	3 'Marmot' model C ballast pumps, in grey
Engineering Capabilities	1 brandless discount fabricator, 1 'Trash Smasher' type deconstructor
Armaments	2 'Volt' coilgun systems, 1 'Ampère' Railgun system
Crew Complement	4–9
Champag-nee Vintage	2199
Horizontal Top Speed	17 km/h
Vertical Top Speed	12 km/h
Displacement	181 tons
Dimensions	40x14m
Hammerhead Caviar Supplier	Gordon's Gourmet Organs and Miscellany
Recommended Retail Price	20000 Marks

The first thing to strike me while taking in the exterior styling of the sub was the hook from a loading dock cargo crane, which some oaf was swinging about like a moloch with a morbusine shot stuck to its ballast sac. With that unpleasantness out of the way, the second thing was just how similar it appeared to its brutish, snub-nosed predecessor. I would have concluded my review right then and there had it not been for the promise of hors d'oeuvres and champagne on the command deck.

Climbing through the regulation docking port, I found myself in a relatively spacious, if dimly lit airlock access area, complete with nearly enough diving suits for the whole crew and a selection of tasteful Venusian landscapes, most of which were even hung level. The ship's butler, a dour fellow by the name of Higgins, took my coat; however, I was to find out later that this fellow was in fact not a butler or any other form of manservant, but merely a common vagrant clown. Uusi-Turcu Industries have been invoiced for a new coat.

Further into the sub, I discovered the tiresome passageways of the original Typhon class subs had been replaced with much sleeker, aquarium-style viewing windows, complete with a fashionable pre-distressed look and feel. The fact that these windows are simply bolted onto the bulkhead and leak constantly was a little concerning, but a little concern is a small price to pay for a marvelous view.

With the sub got underway, the engine and pumps producing their whisper-quiet 120db hum, and having taken the opportunity to change into evening wear, I made my way to the command deck. En route, I noticed through those marvelous viewing windows my assistant Larry, whom I had sent out earlier to obtain photographs of the ridiculous exterior features, swimming his dear little heart out to keep up with us. This might tell you something about the performance characteristics of the Typhon II: top speed slightly faster than a panicking swimmer. Due to technical reasons, we were unfortunately unable to recover any of those photos to accompany this review.

The command deck is where the Typhon II clearly comes into its own class, and I cannot speak highly enough of the features: the Champag-nee from Dank Salthole was absolutely superb; fruity at the front of the palate, with hints of kelp and ethanol on the back. Full-bodied, rich and syrupy, this little drop is bound to please. The mantis canapés with pomegrenade blossom were delightful and fresh – quite a feat given how rare the mantis is these days – while the hammerhead caviar was a real treat. Never have I had something that salty, black or gelatinous in my mouth before! Also of note, the cheeky amuse-bouche of crawler ceviche and tobacco bud writhed very gracefully on its stylish ceramic serving spoon.

The icing on the cake really saved the day, this time. Three out of five stars for highlighting the, well, highlights of this ride, and glossing over the pitfalls with words so ugly even I hadn't heard them before – Janelle, you could make Gordon Lamprey blush. Well done, you were adequate.



you think you c

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY TRIVIA QUIZ

by Hans von Werk.

1. IF YOU HAVE A FEAR OF DEEP BODIES OF WATER, VAST EMPTINESS OF THE SEA OR SEA CREATURES, YOU MIGHT HAVE...
   - ☐ a. triskaidekaphobia
   - ☐ b. thalassophobia
   - ☐ c. thalassophilia
   - ☐ d. been better staying on Earth
2. DUGONG CLASS SUBMARINES ARE THE MOST POPULAR MODE OF TRANSPORT ON EUROPA. WHO IS CREDITED FOR DESIGNING THEM?
   - ☐ a. Steven Stevenson
   - ☐ b. John Johansson
   - ☐ c. Unknown
   - ☐ d. Joey Tempest
3. WHICH PLANET IN THE SOLAR SYSTEM HAS THE GREATEST MASS?
   - ☐ a. Jupiter
   - ☐ b. Ganymede
   - ☐ c. Europa
   - ☐ d. Neptune
4. WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING HAS THE LARGEST BRAIN COMPARED TO ITS BODY?
   - ☐ a. a human
   - ☐ b. a fully grown husk parasite
   - ☐ c. a clown
   - ☐ d. a mudraptor
5. THE CHITINOUS SHELL OF NOW-EXTINCT "MANTIS" SPECIES ON EUROPA WAS USED IN THE MAKING OF WHICH IN-DEMAND MATERIAL?
   - ☐ a. chitin
   - ☐ b. alcohol
   - ☐ c. hope
   - ☐ d. orange plastic
6. WHAT IS A GROUP OF CRAWLERS CALLED?
   - ☐ a. a swarm
   - ☐ b. gibs
   - ☐ c. joey
   - ☐ d. a school
7. WHAT IS THE LONGEST DISTANCE A MOLOCH'S CRY HAS BEEN RECORDED FROM?
   - ☐ a. 2 miles
   - ☐ b. 7.35 football fields
   - ☐ c. 11 millimeters
   - ☐ d. 18 kilometers
8. HOW MANY PARASITES DOES A EUROPAN HUMAN INGEST IN THEIR LIFETIME ON AVERAGE?
   - ☐ a. one
   - ☐ b. one hundred
   - ☐ c. one thousand
   - ☐ d. none
9. WHAT DOES THE COMMONLY USED DISTRESS SIGNAL "SOS" STAND FOR?
   - ☐ a. "Save our souls"
   - ☐ b. "Same old shit"
   - ☐ c. "Save our ship"
   - ☐ d. nothing
10. A COMMONLY CITED FACT STATES IT TAKES 8 MINUTES FOR LIGHT TO TRAVEL FROM THE SUN TO EARTH. HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE FOR IT TO REACH EUROPA?
    - ☐ a. it doesn't
    - ☐ b. who cares?
    - ☐ c. makes no difference anyhow
    - ☐ d. it's so cold

ANSWERS COMING UP!

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY TRIVIA QUIZ!

FEELING DUMB? CONSUME!

1. **B.** Thalassophobia is suffered by 1 in 12 Europans. Other common ailments in Europans include depression and vitamin C deficiency.
2. **C.** The lead designer for the Dugong line has kept their identity a secret for fear of being indirectly accountable for thousands of deaths. Steven Stevenson earned his nickname of "Dugong" thanks to his body type instead of any design achievements. Joey Tempest, obviously, was the lead vocalist of the classic Earth rock band, Europe.
3. **A.** Of the planets in the solar system, Jupiter has the highest mass. Neptune, while also a giant planet, only has a fraction of Jupiter's mass. Europa and Ganymede, on the other hand, aren't planets, but moons.
4. **D.** Mudraptors' brains have been measured to be roughly 50% larger than humans and some test subjects have demonstrated exceptional learning capabilities.
5. **D.** The distinct orange color in everyday plastic products used to get its color from organic polymers found in mantises inner shells. They are now colored artificially to give the impression that everything is the same as it ever was.
6. **D.** While crawlers don't conform in general taxonomy, they are most closely related to fish, thus called "schools" when in a group. Fun fact: this makes crawlers more educated than 97.8% of Europan humans!
7. **A.** The recording was at first mistaken to be caused by moving ice plates.
8. **B.** Most of the parasites on Europa are brain parasites, making their home in the hypothalamus. This affects the host's dopamine levels in unpredictable ways.
9. **D.** There are many variations, but officially the SOS signal was simply a distinct morse code used in distress calls. Fun fact: only 1 in 25 distress calls in Europa are ever heard by anyone!
10. Fun fact: most Europans grow up without knowing what warmth is.



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BEYOND HUMAN

THE DINNER PARTY

A completely normal gathering of sophisticated folks to discuss the possibility of immortality.

Talk to one of our brothers and sisters at the outposts for the exact time and location of the gathering.

ASK listen to DOCTOR HAPP



Instead of the usual Q&A about all things medical, dear patient, this time around, just read what I've got to say. Thanks.

Asphyxiation. Bones pulverized under tremendous pressure. Severe burns. Mysterious rashes in unspeakable places. These are but a few of the disturbing sights I have come to witness in my daily work as a submarine's head medical officer.

Gruesome though they may be, symptoms like these are often perfectly treatable, provided that the treatment is administered without delay. In fact, the field of medical science has advanced by leaps and bounds in the past couple of decades, making Europa if not quite human-friendly, at least increasingly less lethal an environment for mankind.

Still, our annual mortality rate seems to be on a steady rise. For the longest time I've been perplexed by these numbers: if we can cure more and more severe injuries, how come more and more of us keep dying every year?

A recent survey conducted by the Coalition Department of Statistics would appear to shed some light on the issue. The results are simply shocking: nearly 94% of all Coalition personnel exhibit some degree of reluctance to seek medical assistance from their onboard medic – even at the cost of their lives. The reasons vary, but the most common ones are "distrust in the medic's professional ability" and "fear of excruciating pain". Almost all participants also admitted to self-medicating as an alternative.

All this makes me...quite upset.

listen to DOCTOR HAPPY

You are, of course, completely valid in your opinion, and I believe I speak for the entire profession when I say we value your feedback. However, allow me to let you in on a little-known fact: there are no medical schools here – hell, we have next to no schools of any kind! People learn their crafts on the job. This is true for the mechanics, the security officers, and even some who would call themselves captains, so frankly, you shouldn't expect us medics to be any different.

If anything, you should be grateful people like us are able to take up the proverbial white coat and direct our urges towards healing. You see, it takes a very specific kind of personality to pursue a career in the medical field – a certain keenness and curiosity about the inner workings of the body. A great many of us start out as hobbyists, and most any medic you have come across during your sub-nautical adventures will have had a start in their career by performing autopsies on little home animals. How else do you think we could bear to look upon all your ugliness, from the pus-filled boils on the outside to the blood and mucus and all manner of unclean things on the inside, if not thanks to a gentle morbidity of character?

Alas, after some contemplation, I believe that same character trait may also be the true cause of your fear of the doctor. Yes, I regret to admit: while for the good doctor, a patient's grunts of pain are merely an added bonus, not the goal itself, there are also those "doctors" who practice medicine out of honest homicidal intent. Yes, it's true that at times, a trip to the med bay will turn into a trip to the afterlife, and not because of those lacerations or gunshot wounds that made you go there in the first place – some of us just want to see how your kidneys would fit into your eye sockets.

You are right to fear and loathe these charlatans. What makes me so angry is that you'd seriously think I'm one of them! If I wanted you dead, you wouldn't be reading this. I have functioned as the primary physician aboard several prestigious vessels with many, many years of experience in the service, and I'm not in the habit of half-assing my work. So now, dear patient, allow me to rid you of some of your delusions.

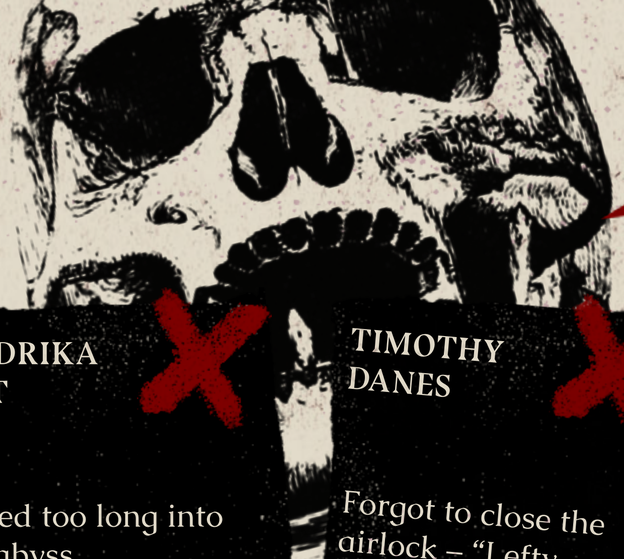
The good doctor does not skulk around the med bay hoarding supplies; she carries herself like she owns the place, because she does. She wouldn't be caught dead making excuses for missing neurotoxins, because whatever she did with them, she would do again. So, does your ship's doctor have a "quirky" disposition towards the sanctity of life? Who doesn't around here. But does she break out in a cold sweat when questioned about what happened to the assistant? She's a fraud, not a doctor, so flush her out the airlock and send her my regards!

There's a reason they call me Doctor, and that's because I know how to treat your asphyxiation and pulverized bones, at least about 60% of the time. The question is, will I? Keep giving me the cold shoulder when you've got those severe burns, and I'll leave you to take care of that mystery rash all by yourself, next time.

You ask me why it hurts so much when I operate on you, and I tell you: God is dead, you are not; therefore, the pain. If you want to keep being not dead, get a real doctor. If you want to entertain conspiracy theories, that's your problem and likely cause of death – sod off, husk infection denialists, wear a goddamn mask.

P.S. To my compulsively murderous colleagues: do better. You're making us all look bad.





OBITUARIES

FREDRIKA NJET

Gazed too long into the abyss

TIMOTHY DANES

Forgot to close the airlock – "Lefty loosey, righty tighty"

TRENT MARKTON

There is such a thing as too much of morphine

AUGUST PELOWSKI

Not actually dead yet, but will be once I get my hands on him

FESTUS HERTZLER

Spawned outside the submarine

DANIELA DUARTE DE PENDEJO

Impaled by own misfired railgun shell

BILL LIEW

Could not get out of the shuttle in time

THUTA KAUNG

Crewmate failed CPR skillcheck

HERKKO JUHOLA

Lost his body to science

THANDOLUHLE MBONGISENI

Watered a saltbulb, went boom

THOR YETCONTENT

Fractured pelvis – dead, but happy

RANDALL "YEE" HAW

Rode a depth charge like a cowboy

HARRIET LIVINGSTON

missing entity mother's providence (event id 200, entity id 374)

ERNEST RUMP

Shoved his head a little too far up his own ass

THOMAS FITZWATER

Suicide by morbusine and several gunshots to the head

LARRY WILLIAMS

Will be invoiced for lost photographs of the Typhon II

JOSH

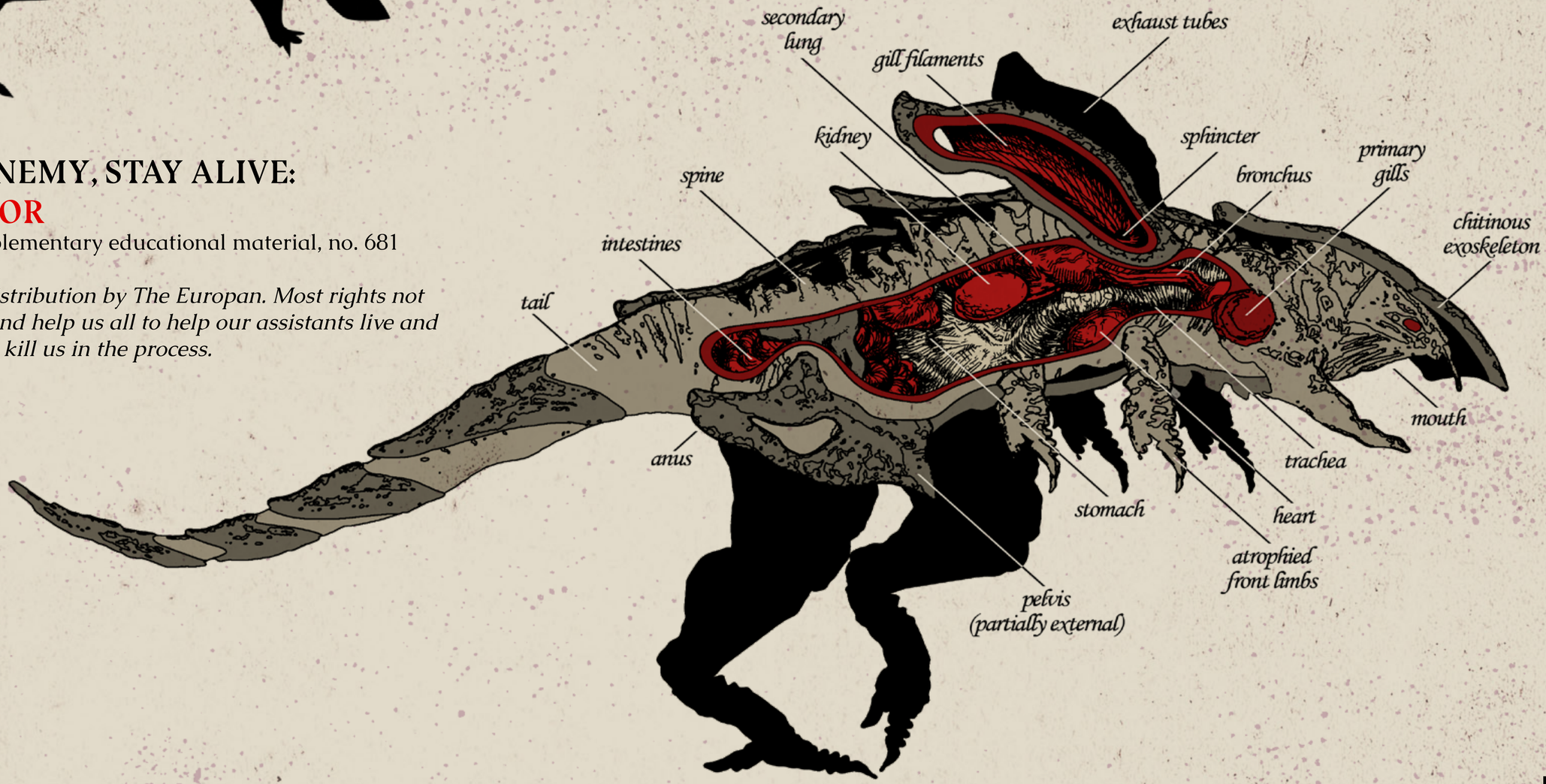
Natural selection

ANATOMY OF A MUD RAPTOR

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THE MUDRAPTOR

Assistant Academy supplementary educational material, no. 681

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