

## DOCTOR BRUNDU'S JOURNAL

**An account of Imperial Science Team MS-133 mission to Aaris III:**

### **43.3.31/D49/Aaris III/MS-133**

Today we made our most ground-breaking discovery since we arrived here two months ago. After charting the ruins in this area, our team began excavations in earnest, slowly uncovering the remains of an ancient civilization which once thrived here thousands of years ago. Today our careful work paid off — Tansad discovered a way into one of the ruined metal structures in the fields near the shuttle. Although most of our activity will be near the shuttle, we are still maintaining our base camp in the larger field of ruins. Tansad, Jelok, two technicians and five troopers will move to a secondary camp closer to the shuttle.

### **43.3.34/D52/Aaris III/MS-133**

Jelok has been examining the chamber discovered a few days ago. The inside walls are covered in odd pictographs raised from the metal in an intricate bas relief. Each pictograph emits a long and complex series of sounds — beeps, rumbles, notes and chirps — when pressed. Jelok surmises that these pictographs are the key to some kind of language used by the ancient inhabitants of this place. The sounds could be some kind of augmentation for that language. Tansad, however, believes the pictographs — which are square and neatly ordered on the wall — could be some kind of pictorial dating system, and the sounds part of an ancient language which was rich in oral tradition and only just beginning to develop a written form. Both scientists have begun deciphering their findings according to their own theories. I have assigned Deremot to assist them.

Parts of the chamber are still covered in rubble, and some of the walls have corroded so much that the pictographs no longer “sing,”

as Tansad says. The rest of us are continuing our survey of the great expanse of ruins at the base camp.

### **43.4.5/D59/Aaris III/MS-133**

Today Tansad reported a breakthrough — he confirmed that the pictographs correspond to dates. His findings were correlated between the beginning sounds each pictograph makes, Aaris III's annual revolution, and the overall pattern and number of the series of pictographs.

Subsequently Jelok has abandoned his theories on the language and is now endeavoring to assist Tansad in deciphering the sounds.

### **43.4.6/D60/Aaris III/MS-133**

Jelok made another discovery today while helping Deremot clean up some of the rubble in the chamber. A concealed floor panel revealed a small alcove — within the alcove Jelok found a flat ingot of dull metal, roughly round and pitted along the heavier end. The piece is no more than one-quarter of a meter in diameter and is between two and three centimeters thick (increasing toward the heavier end). It seems lighter than one would expect for its size. There are no markings such as the pictographs found in the chamber's walls, nor are there any holes or hooks indicating this could have been worn as some ancient ceremonial gear. We examined it at the base camp and determined that the material was no metal the Empire had ever cataloged. Our scanners also picked up faint fluctuating energy readings from the ingot — we intend to return it to Moff Sarne's labs on Kal'Shebbol to see if this is some new, unknown energy source he could use.

### **43.4.7/D61/Aaris III/MS-133**

So far our survey of Aaris III has found no sign of intelligent life which did not die out

with the ancients who built these ruined structures. But today several troopers were uneasy, and reported seeing “spies” watching us from the fringes of the jungle foliage. Their commanding lieutenant (and our expedition's shuttle pilot) led five of them into the forest — an hour later we heard several blaster shots coming from a distant corner of the jungle. None of them returned. The remaining troopers opened their weapons locker and distributed sidearms to all other expedition personnel as a precaution against hostiles.

Despite this incident, Jelok and Tansad are continuing their work at the chamber. Deremot returned back to the base camp, complaining of feeling faint and fatigued. With the loss of our shuttle pilot and several troopers, I am seriously considering recalling the expedition (against Moff Sarne's explicit orders) in the interest of saving lives.

### **43.4.8/D62/Aaris III/MS-133**

We are certain hostiles from the jungle are attacking us. Jelok reported Tansad missing from their secondary camp near the chamber, and the two technicians assigned there were shot by somebody sniping from the jungle. Either the hostiles have energy weapon technology, or they have acquired the blasters from the missing troopers.

Last night hostiles took pot shots at our base camp, wounding another technician and Doctor Theda. The remaining troopers here returned fire, but appeared not to have hit anything. A survey of the damage this morning turned up several dead troopers — the ones who initially went after the hostiles yesterday.

I ordered Jelok back from the secondary camp at the chamber, but he resisted. He reported he was on the verge of deciphering

the ancients' language. He even claimed to have discovered the name the ancients had for the chamber — the Place of Kastays. While he didn't know exactly what it meant, Jelok felt it was proof enough not to abandon his work. I disagreed. I had the remaining troopers escort him back to the shuttle while the remaining staff began packing up the base camp.

### **43.4.9/D63/Aaris III/MS-133**

We were besieged last night. They must have gone for the shuttle, and hit it hard, because at one point an immense fireball erupted over the jungle. Despite Moff Sarne's insistence that this expedition was to be top secret, I began sending out a distress call, hoping Kal'Shebbol would send some kind of support. They have to. Deremot and I, along with two troopers and a technician, dug into the largest mound in our ruins and used the equipment from the base camp for primitive fortifications. We must protect ourselves and our findings.

### **43.4.11/D65/Aaris III/MS-133**

We are down to Deremot and I, along with wounded Theda, who has not been improving. The hostiles tried to take the base camp last night, and the troopers and technician charged over the walls to engage them. We had the repeating blaster set up, and Deremot fired at any hostile who came too close. So far nobody could confirm what the hostiles looked like, but they are real enough. The shootings, the ambushes, the shuttle ... I am continuing to call to Kal'Shebbol for assistance, but nobody responds. Is it possible the hostiles sabotaged our booster satellite in orbit? But how? Deremot suggested that perhaps Moff Sarne has betrayed us ...