
SCARS
ABOVE

Name: Richard Robinson

Title: Commander

Age: 42

Qualifications: US. Airforce Pilot, Major, Ph. D. in Mathematics

Fitness level: Athletic

Parents: John and Mathilda Robinson

Height: 1.82m

Weight: 80kg

Blood type: AB Positive

Nationality: United States

Born in: Tampa, Florida

Scars Above is a challenging sci-fi third-person action adventure shooter combining the rewarding feel of overcoming difficulty with a compelling and intricate story, set in a mysterious alien world to explore.

A colossal and enigmatic alien structure appears in Earth's orbit and stuns the entire world; humanity names it 'The Metahedron'. The Sentient Contact Assessment and Response team (SCAR) - consisting of scientists and engineers - is sent to investigate.

Things don't go as planned and the Metahedron hauls the team across space onto a mysterious extrasolar planet. Playing the role of Dr Kate Ward - a SCAR member - who wakes up dazed, alone in a strange, hostile environment. Determined to survive, you set out to find your crew and unravel the mystery behind what's happened.

The SCAR team, Kate's colleagues, are as important to the story in the game as Kate herself. In this story teaser you will find some info, concept art and graphics about Kate's team and the Hermes, her spaceship. A short story will immerse you in the moments just before the start of the game and the Hermes lift off .

If you're curious now, then go ahead and take a look here:

Scars Above on Steam: https://store.steampowered.com/app/1196090/Scars_Above/

Mad Head Games: https://www.madheadgames.com/

Prime Matter: https://primematter.gg/

PRIME MATTER

MAD HEAD GAMES

BILDNER

Name: Mike Yoshida

Title: Doctor of Science

Age: 31

Qualifications: Ph.D. in Astrophysics and Computer Science

Fitness level: Athletic

Parents: Hiroto and Tomiki Yoshida

Height: 1.66m

Weight: 56kg

Blood type: A Negative

Nationality: Japan

Born in: Osaka, Japan

Name: Tamara Coleman

Title: Doctor of Science

Age: 35

Qualifications: Ph.D. in Medicine, Master of Science in Engineering

Fitness level: Athletic

Parents: Andy and Gretchen Coleman

Height: 1.72m

Weight: 61kg

Blood type: O Positive

Nationality: United States

Born in: Los Angeles, California

I carry a box under my heart. It‘s tiny and - most of the time - it‘s empty. Sometimes I stuff feelings into it...feelings I don‘t want to have: Anger. Hate. Insecurity.

Right now, the box is filled to bursting and it contains only one thing: fear.

The SCAR team enters the spaceport and ascends the decorated podium with the colourful photo wall. We, Commander Robinson, Tamara, Mike and me, line up next to each other In front of the logos of SCAR, ESA, NASA and other space agencies. We grin for the cameras, waving to the crowd. Microphones are held out to us. Mike quips for the reporters. Flashlights flash.

Tamara stands next to me; she takes my hand and squeezes it. Her smile doesn‘t flicker as she whispers to me, “Are you all right? This is our big hour. Your big hour!“

I swallow, pressing my lips together. Can anyone tell I am restless? Fear wants to break out of its prison, bring me down and make my knees tremble. „I‘m fine“, I lie. How do the others do it? Where do they get their composure?

It is the day before take-off. The media experts have forced us to appear one last time in front of the cameras: „The people want to know that their tax money is well spent. That its future is in good hands.“ As if we haven‘t been filmed, photographed or interviewed enough in the past six months! By now our faces should be better known than those of many Hollywood actors. Will the stage fright ever stop?

Commander Robinson gives one of his famous speeches and the journalists ask questions: „What will you say to the aliens when you meet them?“ - „Are you prepared for a hostile confrontation?“ - „How will you handle the pressure?“ Fortunately, I only get a few questions, most are asked of Mike - he‘s the favourite of the news channels, viewers find him accessible.

The press conference passes me by like a dream. I only have eyes for the HERMES.

A good quarter of a mile stretches between the stage and the launch pad. At the opposite end of the spaceport, the spaceship HERMES rises into the sky - a roughly delta-shaped vehicle, the epitome of technical progress and international cooperation as well as the pride of mankind. Liquid hydrogen wafts around the base of the ship as a light grey cloud - a coolant for the flanged-on engine boosters. After launch, they will be jettisoned and burn up in the atmosphere.

Hovering in the sky - the Metahedron. The destination of our journey is a huge, inverted pyramid, looming and dominating everything, but also promising hope. Its light blue glow colours the horizon. The sight strikes me as the establishing shot from a motion picture, a perfect mise en scène - the whole story to be told with past, present and future, all united in one shot. It‘s sublime and terrifying, depending on which side of the stage barrier you stand. I cross my fingers behind my back and discreetly wipe the sweat from my palms on the fabric of my overalls.

The mission is simple: fly the HERMES into low-Earth orbit and scan the alien object - and perhaps make contact with the crew if there is one. And yet it is complicated: billions of things that can go wrong, countless ways to be misunderstood by the Metahedron‘s builders. What am I doing here anyway?

News Life, Eurodaily, The California Times - reporters in the front rows still reiterate variations of questions we have heard dozens of times before. The Commander finishes a statement: „We will bring answers to humanity. Whatever the Metahedron is - by eighteen hundred tomorrow - at the latest - we will know more.“. His expression radiates confidence. Mike and Tamara nod in agreement.

I do the same. It‘s too late to back out. They are relying on me. Humanity is.

We step off the podium to the applause of the crowd. The launch preparations are underway and there is so much to do.

The box under my heart will have to hold on a while longer.

The evening before take-off, we have time to ourselves: a final medical check-up, a round of interviews in more intimate settings, but no more training or learning sessions. Finally, they put us in the recreation wing on the ground floor of the training building and lock the world away from us; there can only be a few distractions.

I sit on couches and doze on feather beds during the next few hours, surrounded by walls in pastel colours and ferns in glazed ceramic pots. It is quiet. Mike and Tamara play Jarmo, Commander Robinson reads Dickinson. This is the last free time we will have before the mission.

These hours also pass me by like a flash. I slouch on the mattress, resisting the urge to bite my nails and wishing for the tablet with the Metahedron studies to give my brain something to occupy itself with. One of the hard-working helpers of the SCAR initiative has already taken it to the HERMES, only there will I see it again. The calm makes me nervous.

Then, morning comes.

Six months ago, humanity learned of the existence of extra-terrestrials. At the same time, I set the project in motion with a rather casual remark when I suggested we go to the Metahedron for answers. The preparations are complete. Now it‘s time.

A shuttle bus takes us across the now deserted spaceport to the launch pad where there is the bustle of a beehive; technicians scurry around the spaceship, rechecking every seal and all the fuel lines. In the sky, the Metahedron towers over everything.

I look out of the window of the bus and see the stage from the day before as I drive by. No one has taken it down yet - it will be used later for our (hopefully glorious) return. It is a subtle signal to those camped with binoculars on the embankments outside the spaceport, to the camera teams and their telephoto lenses on the bleachers in front of mission control: We can do it! Optimism works wonders when it is shown.

I wish it would have an effect on me. We climb into the steel lift cage that takes us up the gangway to the HERMES airlock. Our boots clatter tinny on the grating and the box under my heart tightens with each step.

Boarding. The bulkhead seals automatically. One behind the other, we step through the central aisle - the ship is on its tail fins, but artificial gravity is switched on and gives us the feeling that the floor is „below“ - in fact, it‘s more like we‘re going vertically up a wall. Rooms branch off to the left and right: we leave the crew quarters and the laboratory behind us. Monitors are mounted in the corridor under the ceiling, usually showing the News Line programme. But before the launch, they are switched off. We need concentration.

The cross-section of the control centre has the rough shape of an arrowhead. One by one we take our seats: Tamara and Mike on the flanks, the commander and I in the forefront. Blue sky is in front of rather than above me. I can‘t see the Metahedron, it's just below the nose of the ship. But I know that it is there. The cyan glow colours the feathery clouds bluish.

Mission Control is connected to the cockpit and a computer shows the countdown; T minus thirty minutes. The cushion of the contour seat presses into my back. Not long, and it will be as hot and sweaty as my overalls. Furtively, I glance at the commander. His expression remains serene.

I can’t stop asking myself: how does he do it?

Twenty minutes, ten minutes, five. I save myself in routine checks: Are the systems working? Is everything set correctly? Any error messages from the propulsion system? This is not our first time on board the HERMES, not even the first launch; this day was preceded by five test flights in the atmosphere and several exercises „on dry land“, that is, in the landed state on the ground. The ship is now our second home, the crew compartment and the laboratory are full of personal belongings. We have already trained for over five hundred hours in the simulator.

Two minutes, thirty seconds, five.

Lift off.

The boosters roar.

Breathe in, breathe out, stop breathing.

We lift off. The pressure presses me into the seat. Gravity hits me with a multiple of its normal value as if a giant were standing with its foot on me and leaning on me with its full weight. An untrained person would faint from the strain, but I have the condition of an astronaut.

The ship speeds through the atmosphere at over five thousand miles per hour. We break through the clouds, the blue of the sky becomes darker. Stars become visible and we reach the lower orbit.

The pressure ebbs and the artificial gravity gains the upper hand once again. Breathing becomes easier. The first strain is behind us. What a relief! I hate this part of the launch!

I sigh and hope that the others don‘t notice. The blue spherical roundness of our home planet spreads out below us, a majestic, awe-inspiring sight - yet it pales against the monumental object that hangs over America and the Midwest in all its wordless complacency. It almost fills our view, yet it is still hundreds of miles away. I have the strange sensation of hearing it whisper.

Where are you from? I think. Who created you? Silently I focus, listening as if this strange giant pyramid was talking to me. I still fear the spaceport, but I couldn‘t turn back even if it overwhelmed me. The curiosity is too great.

„Initiate rendezvous,“ Robinson says. The commander is the pilot of the HERMES, and he and Tamara are the only ones with anything to do in the cockpit for the next forty minutes - that‘s how long the approach manoeuvre will take. Meanwhile, Mike‘s job is to calibrate the scanner.

For me, it means waiting.

The tension is too great. I‘m not going to spend the next few minutes in this seat, staring at the Metahedron and hoping for an answer before the scan provides it. Instead, I stand up and sign out. „I‘m retiring to crew quarters, Commander.“

Robinson nods without taking his eyes off the controls. „Stay ready for action, Dr Ward. We may need you at any minute.“

I know the planned procedure, so I nod and leave the control centre.

In my quarters, I sit down in my bunk and lean my back against the cool metal. The tablet I missed so painfully yesterday evening - it seems like years ago! - lies on the pillow. I activate the display and flick through the Metahedron file, recalling everything we know: weight, mass, presumed composition, astrodynamic properties.

How long do I sit here scrolling through scales, sketches and tables? I lose track of time. I have to look three times at some pages because I find myself just staring at them without reading. My thoughts wander. What is this strange object hiding from us? What if I don‘t like the answers?

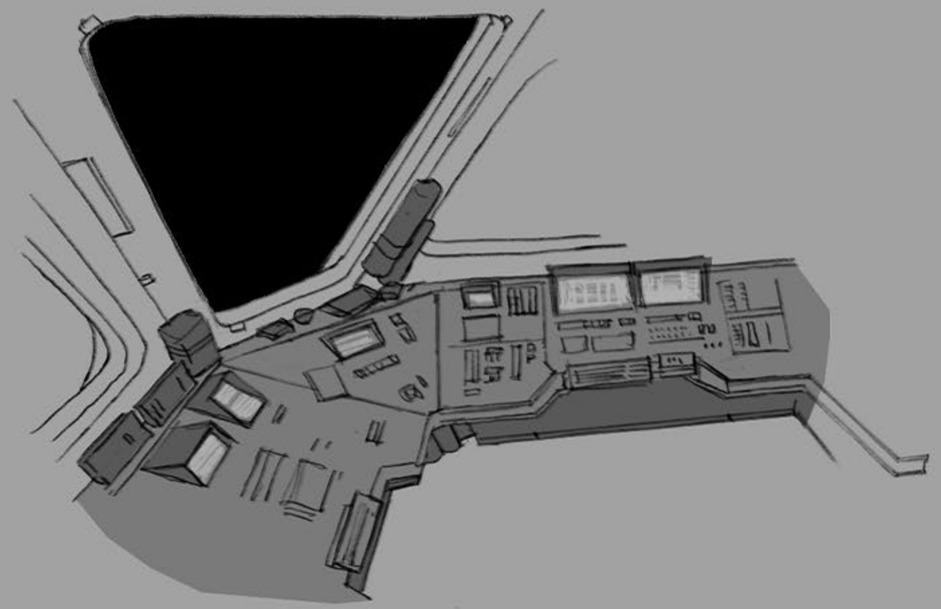
„Kate? We have an issue!“ Tamara‘s voice snaps me back to reality.

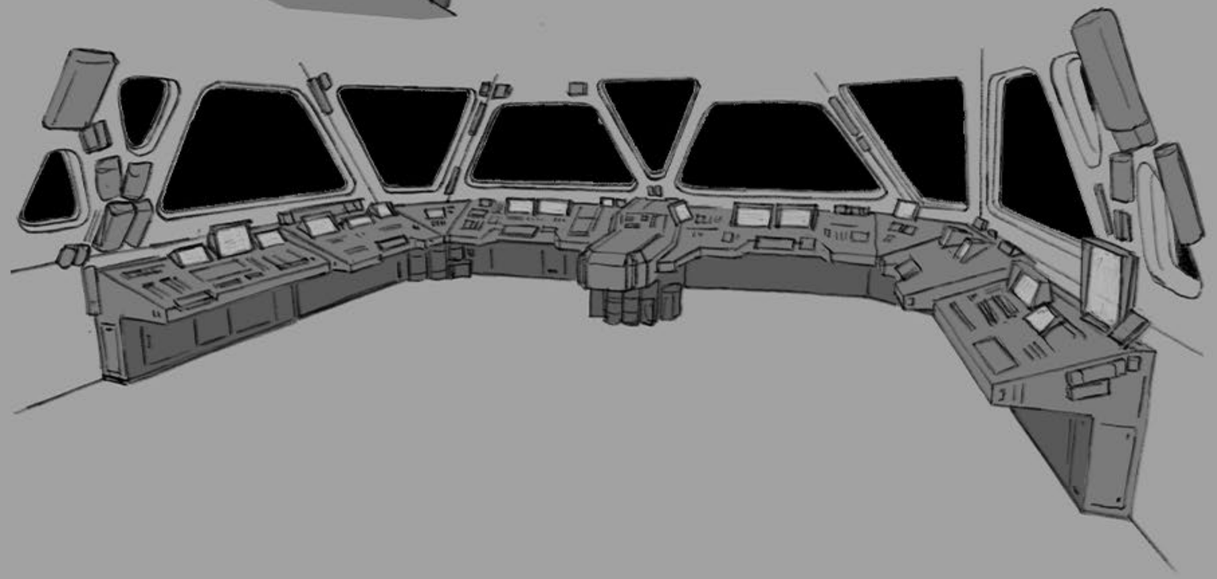
„Is there a problem with the scan,“ I ask? My heart skips a beat. Is it really time already? Am I ready for this yet? No, but now it‘s on.

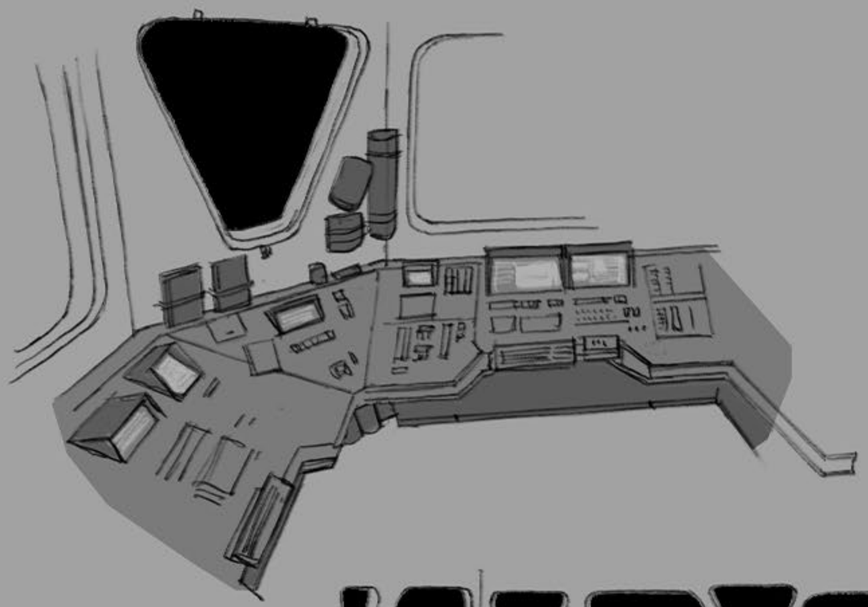
My friend and colleague brings me up to speed: “we underestimated the energy requirements for the scan, but Mike has an idea how to fix that. He‘s in the lab and needs help”, she says.

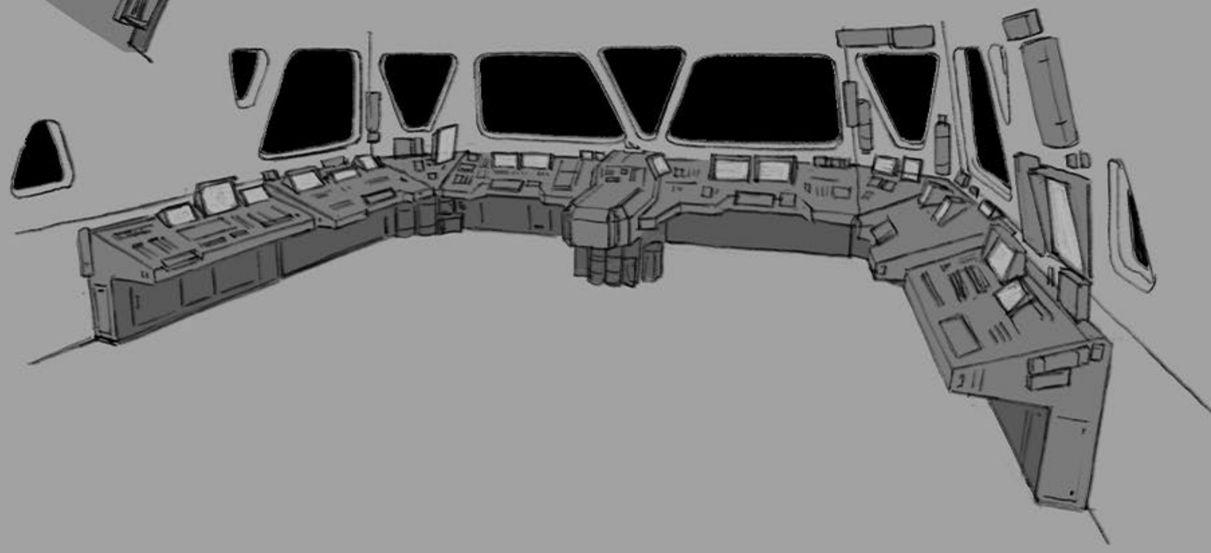
Very well. I take the fear and stuff it into the little box under my heart.

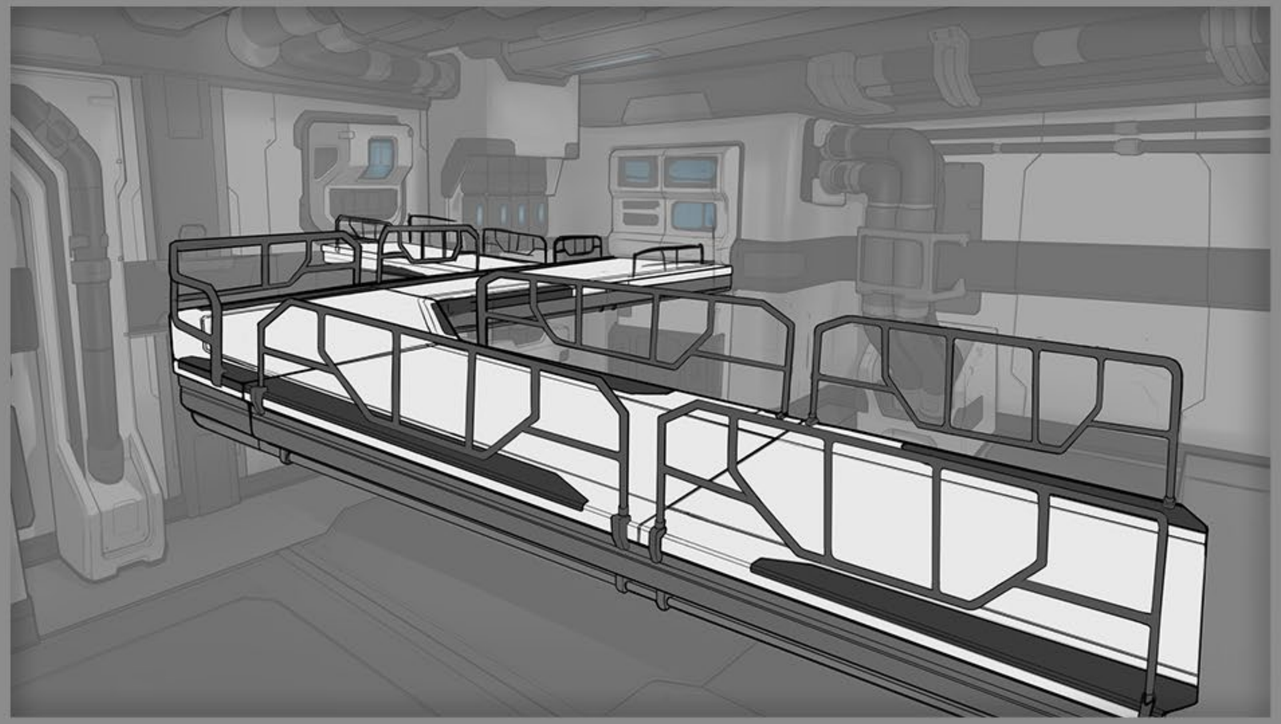
There is work to be done!

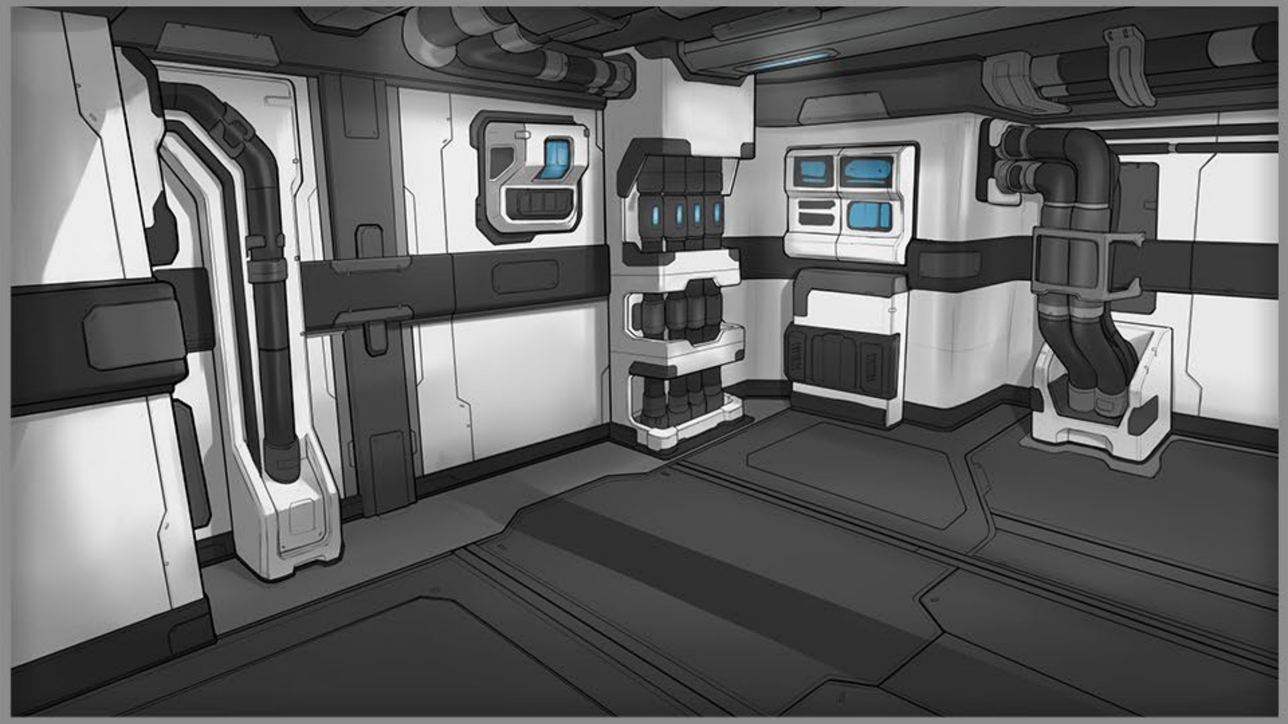


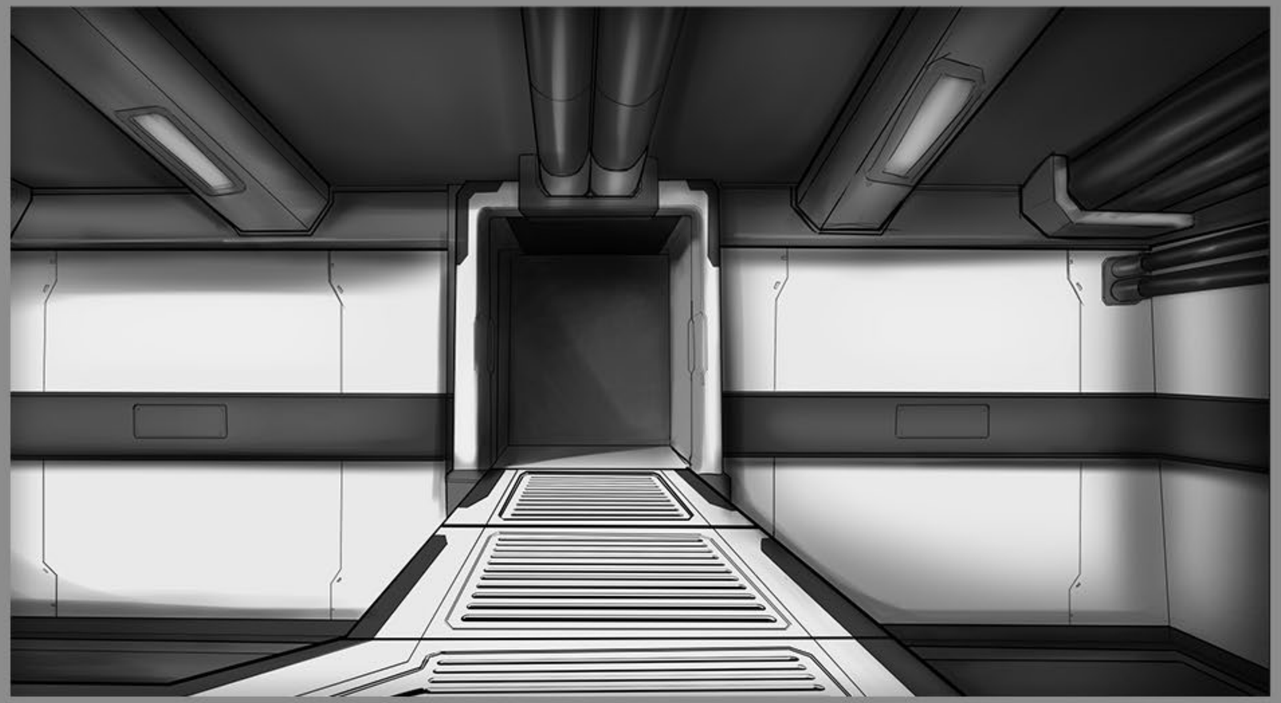


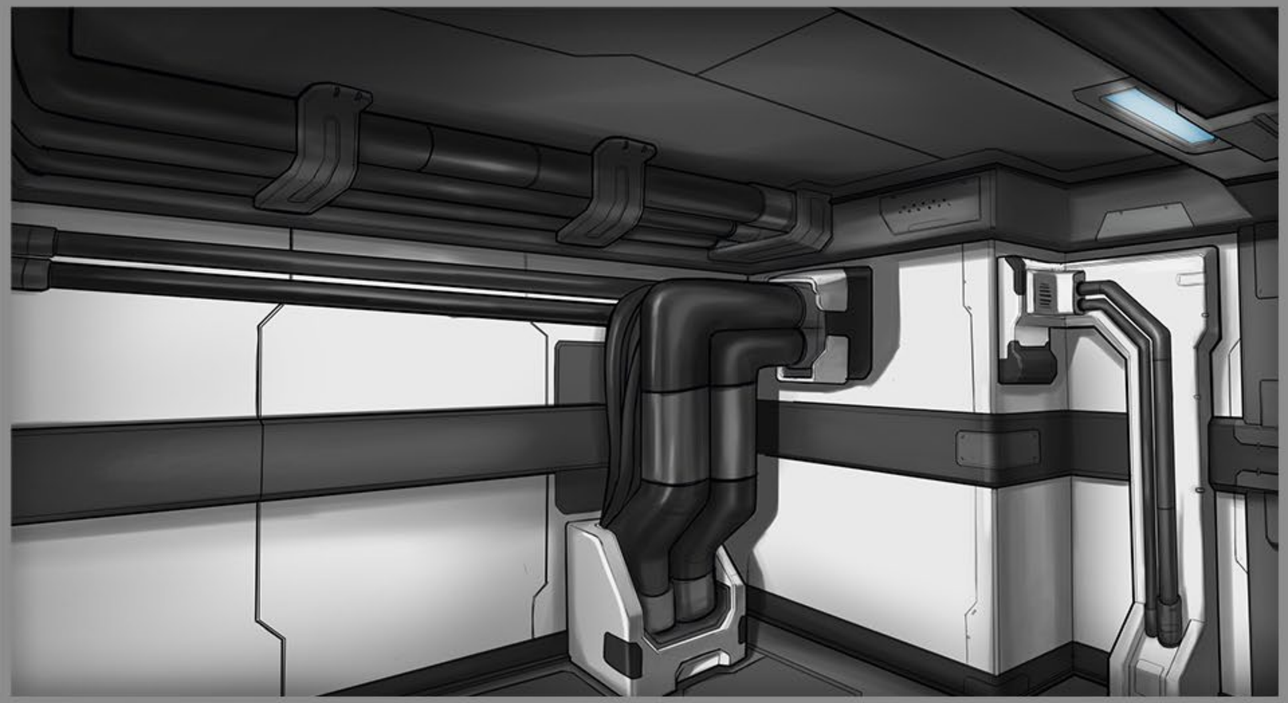


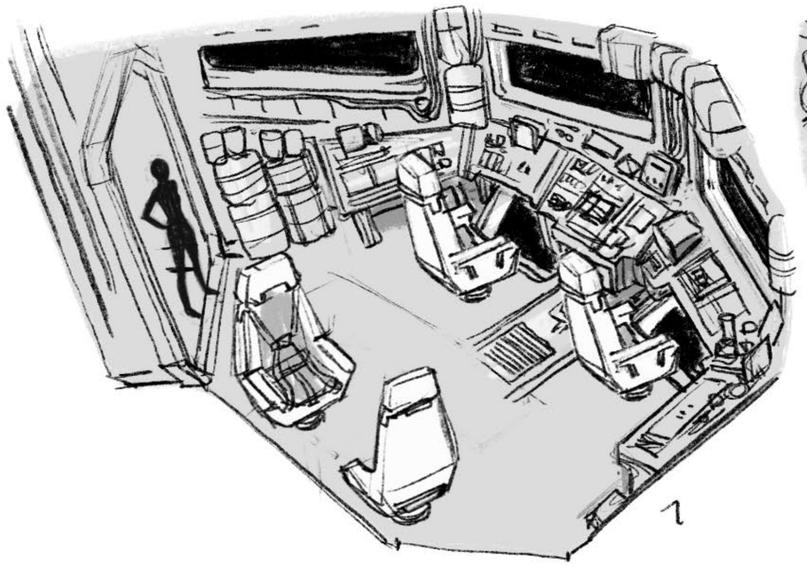








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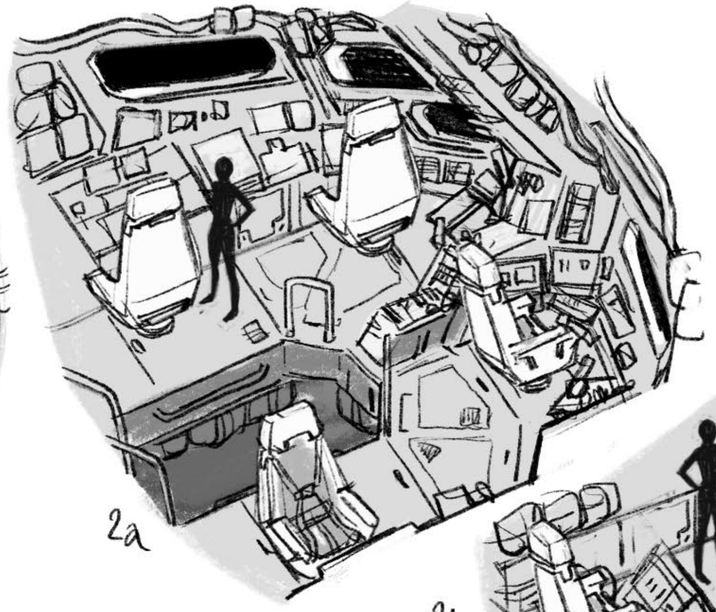
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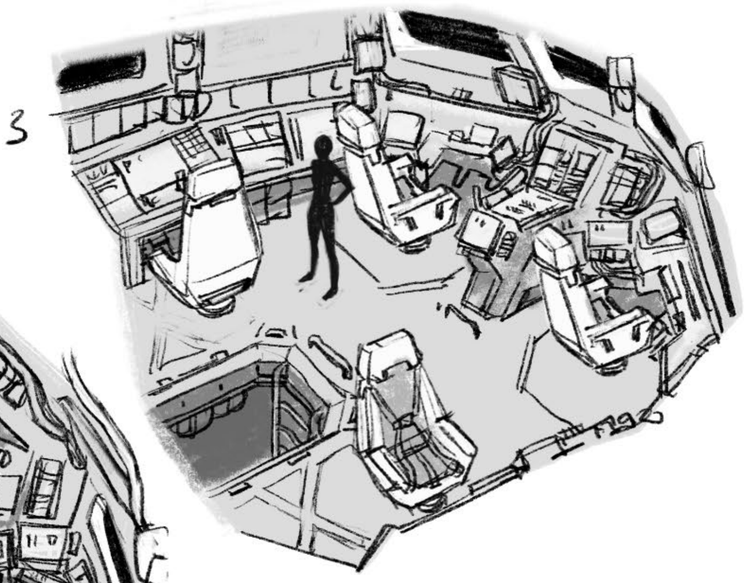
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