



# AFTER EARTH

★ UNITED RANGER CORPS SURVIVAL MANUAL ★

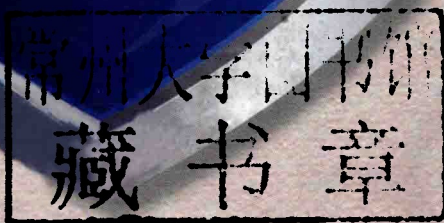
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# UNITED RANGER CORPS



# SURVIVAL MANUAL



MANUAL

COMPILED BY ROBERT GREENBERGER



INSIGHT  
EDITIONS

San Rafael, California



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—Robert Greenberger

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FILM | SCIENCE FICTION



**Go beyond *After Earth*** with this unique, in-universe journey into the world of the United Ranger Corps. From the history of the Rangers, to humanity's exodus from Earth, and the ongoing battle against the Skrel—a fearsome alien race, the *United Ranger Corps Survival Manual* immerses you in the *After Earth* universe. Study the secrets of ghosting—the art of singlehandedly slaying the vicious Ursa—and complete your mastery of the cutlass, a Ranger's greatest weapon, as you discover what it takes to be one of Nova Prime's elite. Filled with interactive elements, including a schematic of the Ranger base, a complete guide to the highly evolved animals of Earth, and even a handwritten journal entry from Cypher Raige, the *United Ranger Corps Survival Manual* is the essential companion to the *After Earth* film.

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COMPILED BY ROBERT GREENBERGER



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San Rafael, California





### A NOTE FROM COMMANDER VELAN

Cadet, you are honored to hold in your hands a true artifact of the world we left behind one thousand years ago. Printed on real paper using techniques not seen for a millennium, this unique edition of the *United Ranger Corps Survival Manual* is given only to those cadets who show exceptional promise in the field. In its pages you'll find not only detailed information on Ranger equipment, cutlass combat, and the strengths and weaknesses of our enemies, but also a complete history of Nova Prime and the sacrifices your predecessors have made over the years to keep our adopted homeworld safe. Throughout the book you'll also find a number of images and items from the personal collection of the Prime Commander, General Cypher Raige, thus making this edition truly indispensable. Read on, Cadet; you are well on your way to becoming the true pride of Nova Prime: a member of the United Ranger Corps.





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# INTRODUCTION

## **Our duty is to preserve humanity.**

That is who we are, and it is my responsibility to instill that into every citizen of Nova Prime who volunteers to serve in the United Ranger Corps.

We did not ask for this job, but for more than seven hundred years, we have had to maintain a stance of war in anticipation of attacks by our alien enemies, the Skrel and their vicious creations, the Ursa. Oftentimes, we encounter situations where, in order to preserve humanity, we must protect it from itself. In those dark days when humankind was nearly lost, for example, the United Ranger Corps rose up to ensure the human race survived. We struggled to keep civilization civil, allowing engineers and scientists to build the interstellar vehicles that would give nearly one million people a chance to survive. We then had to maintain that order for a century of travel, unaware that only half of us would make it to our new home. Once we arrived on Nova Prime, it was our job to explore the planet while containing the eager throng that wanted to begin building or to do exploring of their own. Managing expectations was a brand-new skill the Rangers soon mastered.

To become a Ranger is to accept a way of life that goes beyond the oath we all take when we graduate from training. It is to put responsibility ahead of all other concerns. To put our lives on the line to protect the lives of others. Every day that we put on our uniforms, we are a visible reminder that the Rangers exist to make sure humans can thrive in the hostile reaches of space.

I am a Raige, and with that comes a heritage of achievement and service that traces its way back to the formation of the Corps, and beyond. Our commitment to preserve humanity has become part of the Ranger DNA, and it can weigh heavily at times—asking us to put the needs of the people before our own or those of the people we love. Few are immune from this, and serving our duty can sometimes mask the deep personal pain that comes with the job. Not long ago, I was reminded of this all over again when my son, Kitai, and I were stranded on Earth. I had allowed a schism to form between us, almost letting blind devotion to the cause cost me the privilege of knowing my son and watching him become the man I had always hoped he would grow to be.

As the military arm of Nova Prime's tripartite government, the Rangers—more than our religious division, led by the Primus, and our scientific division, led by the Savant—can easily lose themselves in their service to others. It is a sacrifice we willingly make, but we must always be cautious not to let it wall us off from the very people we protect. If you take away anything from this survival manual, let it be that.



**General Cypher Raige**  
Prime Commander, United Ranger Corps







A BRIEF HISTORY OF

# EARTH'S LAST DAYS







# EARTH'S LAST DAYS

## ECOLOGICAL NIGHTMARES

*For all those who survived, so many more perished on Earth on October 23, 2071—the day Mother Earth turned against us. Over a century of environmental neglect and abuse led to sudden and drastic changes in the atmosphere, the water table, and food supply. All becoming lethally toxic. Rendering the planet uninhabitable. Billions perished in the following months. And, by 2077, Earth's human population was zero. Mother Earth had had enough.*

**WHILE THE STATEMENT ABOVE IS ACCURATE,** it is not complete. Concerns over the planet's long-term sustainability were first raised more than a century earlier. Ecology, recycling, and related issues became topics of concern, protest, and conversation. The continual pumping of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, dating back to the advent of the Industrial Revolution centuries earlier, continued to trap solar radiation, incrementally raising the planet's overall temperature. In time, the ozone layer protecting all life from harmful ultraviolet radiation began to grow porous, and by the beginning of the twenty-first century AD, the polar ice caps were receding and glaciers were dramatically shrinking in size. The great coral reefs were dying off at a frightening rate. Sea levels were increasing, and constantly warming weather patterns forced life on sea and land to adapt or die.

By 2011, it was believed the climate was nearing a "tipping point" that would be disastrous for humankind. New signals suggested that the Arctic was thawing and releasing additional quantities of carbon dioxide and methane into the air.

As early as 2012, experts surmised that the ecological tipping point would be achieved by 2050, but events accelerated, and scientists declared Earth had reached that pivotal event by

2020. The president of the United States of America secretly convened a video conference among global leaders that saw the birth of a bold, daring plan to save at least some of mankind. Project Next Generation was launched with scientist Athena Tsaparakis named its first director, tasked with finding ways to preserve life on Earth through genetic measures. The project's goal was to use every resource available to find a way to send as many people, animals, and plants into space, aiming these colonists toward the planet most likely to sustain life.

Within four years, all reports indicated a growing ecological nightmare. Following a rise in violent outbreaks, the United Nations, a well-meaning but largely ineffectual organization, sent peacekeeping forces to work with national armies, but all were overwhelmed.

While astronomers probed all available data to find viable planets that might be able to sustain life, other scientists attempted to work out how to ferry people to such worlds. Additional work was devoted to determining how best to transport living samples of plant and animal life during the voyage. Some were needed to propagate a new world while others were there to provide sustenance during the mission.

With humankind making ambitious plans to flee Earth, it became necessary that an increasing number of key people be exposed to one of the planet's best-kept secrets, a piece of classified information that dated back to 1908 AD: Humankind was not alone in the universe.

On June 30, 1908, an explosion occurred near the Podkamennaya Tunguska River in Russia. The early-morning event was first believed to have been caused by the air burst of a large meteoroid or comet fragment at an altitude between 5 and 10 kilometers above the Earth's surface. Different studies yield varying estimates of the object's size, with general

## A NOTE FROM COMMANDER VELAN



Why do we insist on Rangers knowing the history of Earth, even a millennium removed from departure? Because, as the old Earth adage goes, those who forget the past are doomed to repeat it. The fates have given us a second chance, and we do not wish to squander this opportunity. Earth's final days may have been horrific, but they would have been far worse had the United Ranger Corps not stepped up and kept order amid global chaos. Our proud history is intertwined with those final days, and it is vital that we always remember what it was like so that we never again hear a civilization's death knell. For all those who survived, billions more perished in the most unpleasant way possible. We honor their sacrifice and will always keep them in our thoughts.





ABOVE A bird's-eye view of the meteorological changes that swept the world. Here, a densely populated portion of the United States of America is facing an incoming hurricane.



agreement that it was several tens of meters across. However, when the source of the explosion was discovered, investigators found not a smoldering rock, but an alien spacecraft.

Over the following years, Russian scientists studied, measured, weighed, and theorized about how this spacecraft technology worked. Meanwhile, the country's leader, Czar Nikolay Alexandrovich Romanov, was more concerned about where the spaceship came from and whether it was a threat to his country. He tried to control the flow of information, but it was clear the expertise of the era's greatest international minds was needed. Among the men consulted were scientists and engineers including Nikola Tesla, Henry Ford, Thomas Alva Edison, and Albert Einstein, with private funding coming from financiers led by John D. Rockefeller, J.P. Morgan, and John Jacob Astor IV. This group of the world's finest minds was known as the Pan Global Scientific Research Consortium.

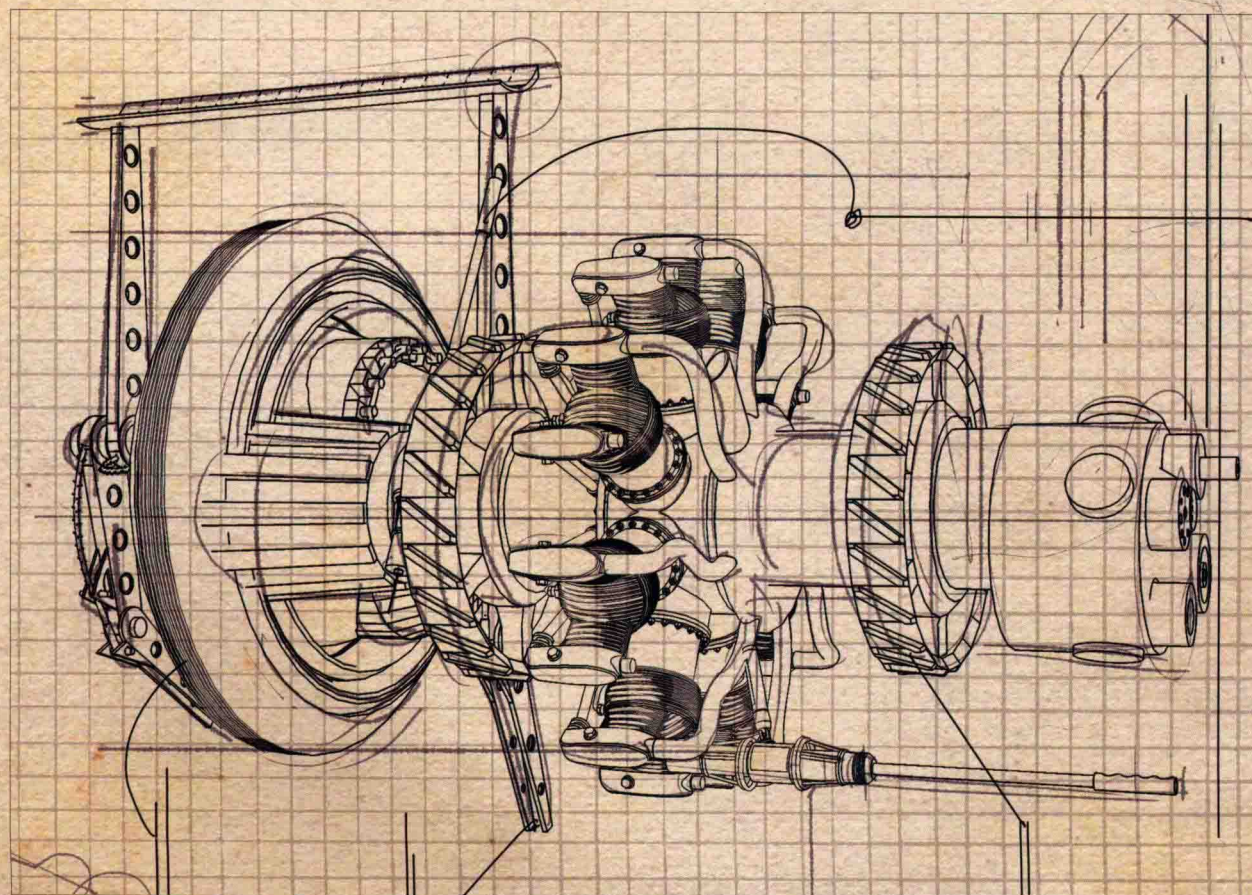
In time, enough was learned from reverse-engineering the alien technology to propel the world into a century of amazing progress. Over the following decades, the craft's engines yielded secrets that would lead humans to escape gravity's hold and examine the stars. The alien technology was named the Lightstream, or LST, Engine, a term borrowed from the popular literature of the day. What remained elusive was where the ship came from and what these aliens wanted from Earth.

In 2012 at the National Air and Space Administration's 100

Year Starship Symposium, NASA revealed that a method had been discovered to warp space, drastically cutting down travel time through the stars. Although the Lightstream technology was being discussed in public, its alien origins were not acknowledged. What was revealed, however, was that engines created using this proposed technology could generate a powerful wave that compressed space-time before a vessel and expanded space-time behind it, like the prow of a boat slicing through the water and creating a wake. The vessel that utilized this technology would actually be floating in a bubble along the wave being generated, literally surfing through space at a speed faster than light relative to objects outside the bubble.

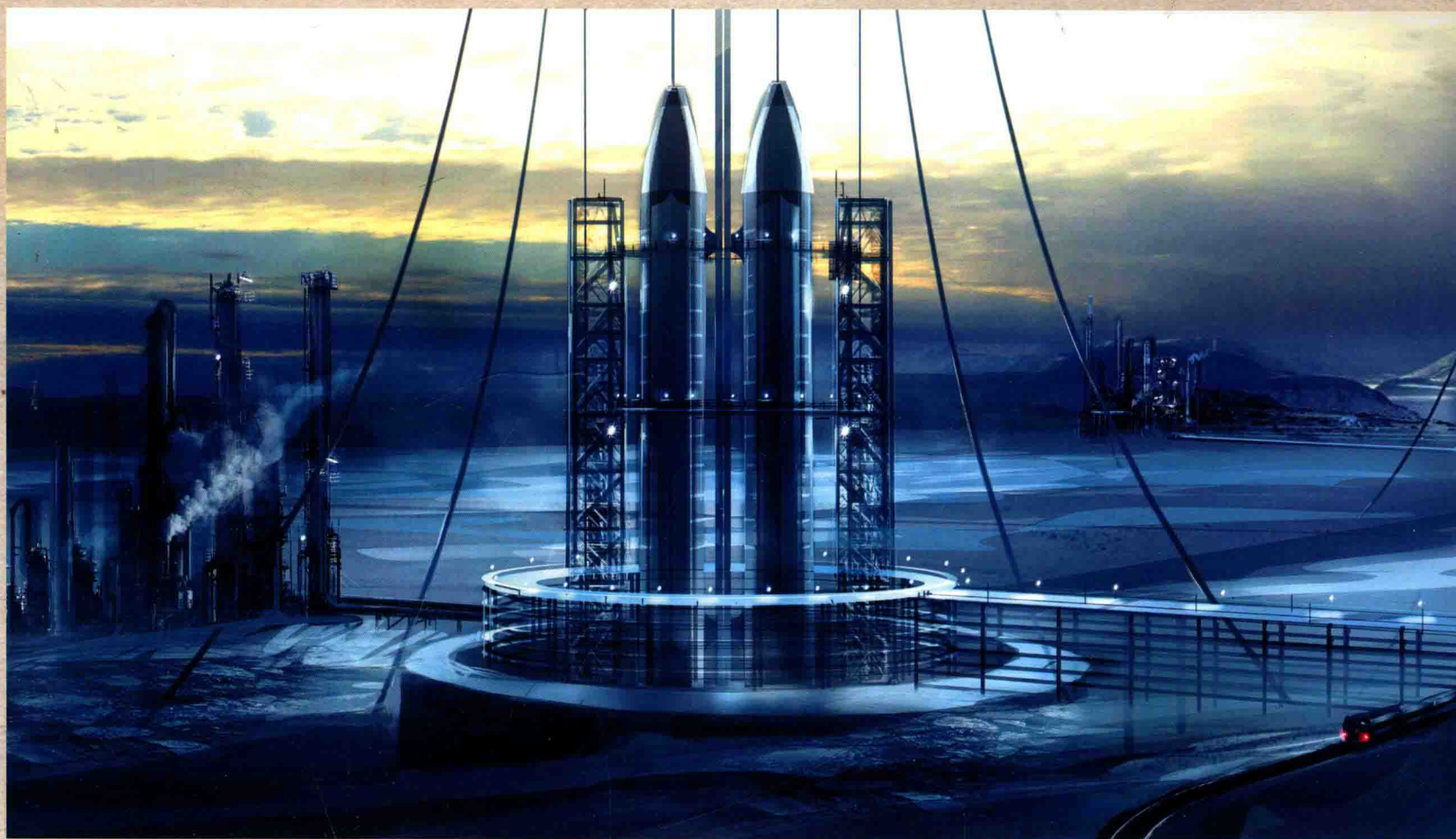
What wasn't revealed to the public was that the alien engines managed to tap into the universe's dark energy in ways that still perplexed scientists. Once that problem was solved, interstellar travel could become a reality.

Project Next Generation was determined to harness the LST Engines to power vessels that could transport people away from Earth. The alien engines could travel faster than light, and it was now believed that technique could be replicated with equivalent man-made engines. The revolutionary new method of travel was dubbed Lightstream Space, and best estimates pointed to humankind needing fifty years to have such vehicles ready. A Project Next Generation clock was launched, ticking down to a departure date of 2075.



LEFT An artist's rendition of the Lightstream Engine first discovered in Russia. On first inspection, this portion of the engine appeared to be its core unit, but it took decades to fully understand the device. OPPOSITE After collecting the necessary energy in the Sahara Desert, transport ship construction was carried out all over the world, including Antarctica.





## PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

In response to the escalating concern about the sustenance of the world's resources in the early twenty-first century AD, in October 2008, the Norwegian government built a "Doomsday Vault" in a mountain on the remote Svalbard islands between Norway and the North Pole to house the world's seed collections. This was considered the ultimate safety net, protecting them from a wide range of threats including war, natural disasters, lack of funding, or even just poor agricultural management.

A decade later, the "Noah Vault" was opened in an adjacent mountain, a repository for DNA from all available avian, insect, fish, and animal species.

When a selection of potential planets was finalized for additional study, the estimated travel time using the man-made LST Engines was more than a century to even the nearest option. This led a subset of scientists to determine how the crew and its passenger complement could endure the travel duration. A new approach to life-preservation was presented at a Geneva Conference in 2037 AD, showing that adding extra telomerase to cells in utero can prolong a natural lifespan. Set against the global catastrophes filling the headlines daily, people objected to the concept of prolonged life, sparking controversies that delayed the research. Two years later, scientists in the United States developed synthetic telomerase, replacing the portion

of a subject's DNA that was lost during cell division, effectively reversing the aging process. A year later, there was a call to ban any kind of telomerase, citing the logistical problems that would result from what was effectively immortality. The research was abandoned, but careful records and lab results were retained.

Concurrently, the predictions of early twenty-first-century futurist Ray Kurzweil came true in 2046 AD when fully cognizant artificial intelligence was achieved. This proved providential now that humankind needed to build space "arks" to transport huge numbers of people offworld and calculate stellar navigation on a scale never previously attempted.

Another breakthrough came with the creation of AI designed to exploit Lightstream technology. This finally provided scientists the additional high-speed processing power to solve the problem of accessing dark matter to power man-made engines. Interstellar space flight and man's survival was now a reality.

A short time later, Project Next Generation presented its astronomical findings for peer review. It was unanimously approved and forwarded to the world's leaders.

Simultaneously, a separate report was delivered to world leaders proposing the formation of an international corps of highly trained soldiers to protect not only the construction of the arks but also those individuals fortunate enough to be selected to leave Earth.