

The Dewfall in Landing Mode

Image

This is more or less what a womb ship looks like after it has landed. The force projectors (the green structures on the earlier image) and the impact shield (the blue outer shell) are jettisoned before the ship de-orbits.

There are now "pawdles" (handle bars) along the outside of the ship to aid in traversal during EVAs.

Before being jettisoned, the force projectors bleed off the ship's remaining kinetic energy until its ground speed is zero. The (as-yet-unrendered) supporting pylons connecting the impact shield to the pressure vessel are explosively decoupled, disconnecting the engine assembly from the pressure vessel. Once the two parts of the ship are a safe distance apart, the force projectors themselves explode, shattering the impact shield and other parts into smaller shrapnel that disintegrate on reentry.

This is done primarily for ritual purposes. Along with the ceremonial shattering of the main reactor chamber during the rite of alightment, the missionaries want to make it *very* clear that they bear no hostile intent by cutting off their only means of escape, and are putting themselves at the mercy of these alien sophonts. This attitude also informs the strict taboo against bringing weapons or money. The former is broken by Tod by bringing his power armor and the retribution field generator, and the latter is broken accidentally by all of them because there's loose 'pocket' change hiding in nooks and crannies of their impedimenta.

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