

A supplement for

Traveller



Suitable for use with *GURPS Traveller* and *Marc Miller's Traveller*

101 PATRONS



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Traveller®

"Areghu yu li akuli yubha."

"Okay Neels, what did she say this time?"

"I believe she said the contract is sealed."

"Great, so we can expect the cargo to turn up tomorrow morning and we launch by midday. Wow, they sure are giving us this cargo at a bargain rate. Do they realise just how much we'll get for these statuettes?"

"Areghu quilek povbed temi?"

"And? Hey Neels, why's she suddenly coming on all friendly?"

"Er, hold on Arek, I'm just trying to determine the exact meaning of that last sentence."

"Mi areghu!"

"Hey, get your hands off. Neels!"

"Er, I think, er, when I used the word contract earlier, I think, er..."

"No! Woah! Hey, that stays zipped up, thank you!"

"You know I said 'contract'..."

"Yes? No! I didn't mean you – get your hands off!"

"Well, I think I just worked out that they also use that term round here to mean, er, a sort of partnership... in our terms, marriage."

"What? We've spent the last two days negotiating a marriage? But they showed us those statuettes – that's our cargo, isn't it?"

"I think actually that's your dowry: they're effectively paying the rest of us to leave you here."

"Mi areghu, mi areghu, yu vi losli mani!"

"Back off!!! Neels, what are we going to do?"

"What do you mean 'we'?"

- Merchants Neels Rago and Arek Thom, Far Trader "Vesper"

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101 PATRONS

or

"If you already have today's game worked out, this is the key source of scarlet haddocks, ruby cod, crimson plaice, cherry mackerels, cerise hake and other forms of red herring to side-track your players; if you haven't got a game worked out... then this is the key source for plots, adventures, patrons and situations with which to run your gaming session."

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**Ask at your local games shop for the latest
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Introduction

101 Patrons provides the hurried referee with support material for those gaming sessions where things aren't going exactly as planned. Like the earlier *101 Plots*, this book is designed to help referees who haven't got time to prepare a scenario for their next game by providing a resource full of plots to use and adapt.

This book presents a mechanism for generating any number of situations, allowing the book to be used after all the set examples have been played through.

Most scenarios in Traveller, indeed in any roleplaying game, are driven by some kind of 'patron', a figure who motivates the player characters (PCs) to search for a specific goal. Patrons are the drivers behind the events presented in *101 Patrons*, sometimes directly, sometimes indirectly. Along with *101 Plots* and *101 Cargos* this book provides the motivations for a gaming session. In a similar vein, *101 Rendezvous* provides places, *101 Travellers* people, *101 Lifeforms* creatures and *101 Religions* and *101 Governments* the social background for a referee's tool kit.

Contents

This supplement has the following sections:

Patrons

The PCs are engaged by a specific person to undertake a task or provide a service, usually for monetary reward.

Situations

The PCs are forced into a situation by external events or other peoples' actions. Described in a similar manner to patrons.

Elaborations

Six patron encounters described in more detail.

Starport Chatter

A selection of Traveller news, rumours and announcements to liven up any starport.

World Seeds

A variety of ideas to add flavour when describing a new world.

Format

The entries in the "patron", "situation" and "elaboration" sections are presented in the following format:

Location

An occasional field, appearing only when the plot or patron requires a specific location or era.

Required Skills

Indicates any skills needed by the PCs, either because the patron will require these before employing them, or because they are key to successfully achieving the goal. These are described by a number of categories, which have been kept deliberately vague to make them as era and rule-set independent as possible:

Administration/Legal	Combat
Computer	Criminal
Engineering	Investigation
Medical	Merchant
Scientific	Starship Operations
Survival/Environmental	

Required Equipment

Indicates required equipment – usually a starship of some kind with one or more spare staterooms, low berths and/or cargo space.

Players' Information

Provides the PCs' introduction to the plot.

Referee's Information

Gives additional plot information for the referee, including multiple possible outcomes, numbered 1 through 6. The referee may choose one of the outcomes (or several if they can be linked together) or can select the outcome by rolling 1D.

Index

These plots are all indexed at the back of this book to allow easy selection of the patron most suited to the capabilities of the PCs and the role-playing preferences of the players.

The index provides a very brief description of each plot and shows the required skills and required equipment using simple icons.

The “4 P’s” of Scenario Writing

You are not just the “referee” (*GT: “GM”*) but also the playwright and director of the drama in which your players take part. Creating a scenario requires you to think of the Four Ps: Plots, People, Places and Props.

Plots

These are what you bought this book for! We'll go into more detail below on the basic dramatic situations and how to turn them into exciting and enjoyable scenarios for your players. Later in the book you'll find scores of scenarios – enough to keep your PCs in trouble for months.

People

It is the characters and their interactions that will bring the plot to life. Of the three main types of conflict (hero vs nature, hero vs villain, hero vs himself), pitting the PCs against NPCs is by far the easiest to write and referee.

Once you have chosen a plot, you should devote the bulk of your efforts to its characters. A few hints and tips:

Characterise: The major NPCs, especially allies and enemies, should appear as detailed as a player character. You can best create this illusion by focusing on their motivations and appearance; while tempting, it is not necessary to generate attributes and skills. A few words in plain English suffice to note these things, e.g. "Johnson is arrogant and greedy, and cracks his knuckles constantly." Note the final 'tag characteristic' - the knuckle cracking – which helps to fix him in the players' memories and differentiate him from other NPCs.

Stereotype: Minor NPCs can be taken from a list of stock characters – the Burned-Out Cop, the Naive Rookie, the Criminal Mastermind, the Arrogant Pilot, the Cynical Veteran. Watch any detective show or war movie and you'll see half a

dozen of these (take notes during the movie if it helps).

Demonstrate: Don't tell the group what an NPC is like; show them. Don't say Smith is callous; introduce him to the PCs by having him spurn a deserving beggar as they approach.

Recycle: Save yourself time by reusing NPCs. Recurring allies and villains, if not overdone, add greatly to the players' involvement and enjoyment. Minor NPCs can be renamed, given a new tag (Johnson the knuckle-cracker is now Kowalski, who is always talking about last night's sports coverage) and used again.

Places and Props

It's tempting to spend a lot of time on these, but it's rare for a plot to depend on the location, or whether the villain uses a laser or a revolver. Use them as special effects to remind the adventurers that they're not on 20th century Earth.

One thing that *is* worth detailing is the player character's base location – the place they call home, whether that is a starship, the Travellers' Aid Society hostel, or a cave system where they hide from the ruthless Imperial troopers. It is also important to characterise the NPCs who hang out in and around their base – the people the PCs may rely upon as employees or friends, or suppliers of equipment, knowledge, etc.

Rules and Tasks

The patrons described in this book are sufficiently generic that almost all of them can be used for any Traveller milieu. Very occasionally, tasks are given in the text, using the BITS generic task system; this provides a common difficulty rating for all Traveller rule sets, as shown in Table 1. The referee should refer to the appropriate rule set for details of the appropriate task system.

Attributes, skills and equipment are generally common to all the Traveller rule sets; notes for GURPS Traveller are given thus: (*GT: note*).

TABLE 1: TASK DIFFICULTIES

BITS Task Difficulty	T4 Task Difficulty	T4.1 Task Difficulty	GT Target Modifier	TNE Task Difficulty	MT Task Difficulty	CT Target Modifier
Easy	Easy (Auto)	Easy (1D)	+6	Easy	Simple	-4
Average	Average (2D)	Average (2D)	+3	Average	Routine	-2
Difficult	Difficult (2.5D)	Difficult (2.5D)	0	Difficult	Difficult	0
Formidable	Formidable (3D)	Formidable (3D)	-3	Formidable	Difficult	+2
Staggering	Impossible (4D)	Staggering (4D)	-6	Impossible	Formidable	+4
Hopeless	(5D)	Hopeless (5D)	-9	Impossible	Impossible	+6
Impossible	(6D)	Impossible (6D)	-12	Impossible	Impossible	+8

The Thirty Six Dramatic Situations

From revenge to disaster

A way to quickly string a set of ideas together to form a plot for use in a gaming session...

Thirty six situations are described below, which form the skeleton around which a game may be hung. Georges Polti identified the situations in 1921. They are not exhaustive, but the number lends itself to random determination with two dice!

Each situation indicates the key characters or events and includes an example. Any reference to a "character" in the text below may alternatively apply to a group of people, e.g. a "fugitive" may be one person or a whole tribe of refugees.

You will need to decide how the player characters (PCs) become involved in the situation. For a short scenario, playable in an evening, use one situation; for a longer scenario, link several together using plot twists – see the sample scenario below for how to do this.

To randomly determine each situation, roll two D6 and cross-reference the results on Table 2 to find the entry in the list of 36 situations. Alternatively, simply choose one or more entries from the list below.

TABLE 2: RANDOM SITUATION ROLL

Second Die	First Die					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	11	21	31	41	51	61
2	12	22	32	42	52	62
3	13	23	33	43	53	63
4	14	24	34	44	54	64
5	15	25	35	45	55	65
6	16	26	36	46	56	66

The List Of Dramatic Situations

11: A Cry for Help

You need: Three characters – the one who needs aid, the one who can provide it (perhaps one of the PCs), and the one threatening the first.

Example: Peasants ask the PCs to protect them against the annual visit of a corsair group.

12: Deliverance

You need: Two characters – a victim and a rescuer – and a threat (which might be a third character, natural disaster, etc.).

Example: One of the band's NPC followers is condemned to death for breaking a petty local law; the PCs must rescue him and flee offworld.

13: Revenge for a Crime

You need: Two characters – a perceived criminal and an avenger.

Example: Travellers abducted and murdered a local nobleman's daughter years ago, and he now revenges himself by harassing any travellers (perhaps the PCs) entering his domain.

14: Revenge for a Relative's Death

You need: Three living characters – the "guilty" party, the avenger, someone who is a relative of both – and information about the dead person.

Example: The patron's mother died in an air/raft accident some months ago; he blames his estranged father for her death, and hires the PCs to embarrass or kill his father. However, during their investigations they encounter the patron's uncle, who has proof that the death was accidental.

15: Pursuit

You need: A fugitive character, and a punishment he is trying to escape.

Example: The patron is a fugitive who stows away on the PCs' ship to avoid execution for murder. If the PCs help him, he has information or skills of value to them, but they will be pursued by local police unless they can prove his innocence.

16: Disaster

You need: Two characters – the victim/loser, and either a victor or a messenger.

Example: The patron's children are missing after their air/raft crashed in dense jungle. The PCs must heroically overcome savage wildlife or natives, and rescue the children.

21: Cruelty or Misfortune

You need: An unfortunate victim, and either a misfortune or a cruel opponent.

Example: The PCs stumble upon an attempted murder, and rescue a naive young noble. Investigation will reveal that the noble is threatened by intrigue within his family, as an evil aunt is trying to kill him so that her own son may inherit the family estate.

22: Revolt

You need: Two characters – a tyrant and a conspirator against the tyrant.

Example: The PCs are recruited by freedom fighters seeking to overthrow a local warlord.

23: Daring Enterprise

You need: A goal, and two characters – a leader and an adversary.

Example: The adventurers are a mercenary commando unit hired to destroy the surface sensors for a deep meson gun site, thus allowing their patron's fleet to attack the planet safely. (Their adversaries are the installation's guards.)

24: Abduction

You need: Three characters – a kidnapper, a victim, and a guard.

Example: The band are employed as bodyguards for an heiress. Brigands attempt to kidnap her for ransom.

25: Enigma

You need: A puzzle; someone to pose it; and someone trying to solve it.

Example: Marooned after their vehicle crashes, the characters are captured by primitives who will kill them as trespassers unless they can solve a riddle set by the tribal shaman.

26: Obtaining

You need: A goal, and two or three characters – one trying to attain the goal, his adversary, and (optionally) an arbitrator to decide who wins.

Example: Faced with deportation for vagrancy, the PCs must plead their case before a magistrate against the legal official seeking to deport them. They must trick, bribe or otherwise persuade him to let them stay.

31: Feud

You need: Two characters, at least one of whom hates the other.

Example: The patron hires the PCs to discredit a hated sibling whom he feels stands to benefit unfairly from their parents' will; this will cause the family to change the will in the patron's favour.

32: Rivalry

You need: Two characters, and something or someone they both want.

Example: The patron has been jilted by his girlfriend, who prefers a mutual friend. Sure that he can regain her affection if he proves himself a warrior, he hires the characters to attack the girl and her lover, humiliate them, and flee when he arrives to defend her.

33: Murderous Adultery

You need: Two adulterers and a betrayed spouse.

Example: The patron has discovered her husband with his mistress, and has killed them both in a fit of passion. Knowing one of the PCs, she appeals to them to cover up the murder and distract the police from her.

34: Madness

You need: A madman and their victim.

Example: The patron is being stalked by a madman for no apparent reason. The authorities are unwilling to act, as stalking itself is not a crime locally. The patron hires the PCs to protect her, and find out why she is being stalked.

35: Imprudence

You need: Someone to be imprudent; someone or something to be lost or destroyed as a result.

Example: Wandering into his father's laboratory, the patron has unleashed a dangerous animal which has killed his father and several neighbours. The band must hunt down this cunning predator and capture or kill it.

36: Involuntary Crimes of Love

You need: A lover, a beloved, and someone to reveal to them that their love is taboo.

Example: A noble wishes to marry, and the adventurers are employed by his parents to investigate his fiancée's background to ensure that she is not simply marrying him for money. The investigation reveals that she is the noble's long-lost sister, raised as an orphan by traders who found her on a battlefield.

41: Involuntary Kinslaying

You need: A killer, and a close relative for him to kill.

Example: The party are aboard ship when the cargo bay is holed. To save the passengers, the captain orders it sealed off, but to his horror he learns that his son is still inside. Unable to leave the bridge, or reopen the doors without killing others, he appeals to the party to effect a rescue.

42: Sacrifice for an Ideal

You need: An ideal, the hero, and (optionally) someone or something for him to sacrifice instead of his own life.

Example: The PCs are in a government office when it is seized by terrorists, who threaten to kill everyone inside unless an official (responsible for the deaths of many of their comrades) surrenders himself to them. To save the innocent bystanders, the government agrees. The characters must neutralise the terrorists before they can kill the official.

43: Sacrifice for Kin

You need: A hero, a kinsman to sacrifice for, and (optionally) someone or something for him to sacrifice instead of his own life.

Example: The PCs are the crew of the last ship taking refugees away from a war zone. A passenger offers to give up his place so that his pregnant sister can have it; the PCs must either think of a way to carry one more person than their life support is good for, or leave someone behind to face certain death.

44: Sacrifice for Passion

You need: A lover, the object of desire, and (optionally) someone or something for the lover to sacrifice instead of his own life.

Example: The patron is a priest of the local religion, prepared to forfeit position and career for the love of a crew member aboard the PCs' ship. He begs to be smuggled offworld. Unfortunately, this carries the death penalty for the priest and all who aid him.

45: Sacrificing a Loved One

You need: A hero, a beloved victim, and a reason for the sacrifice.

Example: Terrorists have seized the children of the local governor, and threaten to kill them unless he releases other terrorists from jail. The adventurers must neutralise this threat as the governor cannot afford to be seen to give in to the terrorists.

46: Rivalry

You need: Two rivals (of equal or differing power/ability) and something they both want.

Example: The patron is one of two brothers whose father has recently died; each thinks he should inherit the family estates. The will favours the patron's brother, a suspected psionic; the band are hired to prove that he misused his alleged powers to have the will altered in his favour, which would render it void.

51: Adultery

You need: Two lovers, and a deceived spouse.

Example: The patron married for money, but is having an affair with a younger and better-looking partner. The PCs are hired to provide an alibi for the patron's absences from home.

52: Forbidden Love

You need: A lover, a beloved, and a reason why this love is forbidden.

Example: The patron suspects that her noble daughter is involved with a "mere worker" – going against strict local tradition. She enlists the adventurers to 'deter' the worker from seeing the daughter.

53: A Loved One Dishonoured

You need: A guilty party, and one who discovers their dark secret.

Example: The patron is a senior official who suspects that his wife, an offworlder, is a spy who has married him to gain easy access to his homeworld. He hires the band to travel to her homeworld and check her history and parentage.

54: Obstacles to Love

You need: Two lovers, and an obstacle.

Example: An NPC wants to join the party, hoping to make enough money to marry his sweetheart, whose family insist he be "able to support her properly".

55: An Enemy Loved

You need: Two lovers who should be enemies; someone who hates one of them as "the enemy".

Example: The patron is a police officer who has fallen in love with a member of a terrorist group he is infiltrating. His police superiors are laying a trap which will kill or capture the group. He hires the PCs to stop his loved one from reaching the rendezvous so that she will escape the trap.

56: Ambition

You need: An ambitious person; something he wants; an adversary.

Example: The patron is a rising executive in a megacorporation; he wants to take over the subsector office, and hires the PCs to find something he can use to blackmail or discredit the current subsector manager.

61: Conflict with an Immortal

You need: A mortal and an immortal.

Example: The PCs must make a trade agreement with low-tech natives. On arrival, they find that they cannot do so unless they convince the local priesthood that they are accepted by the local god. This requires the PCs to succeed in a number of ordeals.

62: Mistaken Jealousy

You need: A jealous person; someone for them to be jealous of (and a reason for it); the cause of the mistake.

Example: An arms merchant suggests to each of two neighbouring communities that the other plans an attack, to increase his sales. The merchant hires the characters to escort his deliveries but they quickly realise neither community is aggressive.

63: Mistaken Judgement

You need: A mistaken person, guilty and innocent suspects, and the cause of the mistake.

Example: After criminals hide contraband in their luggage, the band are accused of smuggling.

64: Remorse

You need: A guilty party, a victim or a crime, and an investigator.

Example: The patron hires the PCs to find out what his recently-deceased father did with the missing family fortune. It transpires that the father was consumed with remorse for those he killed while in military service, and donated the money to charities helping the survivors.

65: Recovery of a Lost One

You need: A seeker, and someone to find.

Example: The patron hires the PCs to find an offworlder with whom she had an affair several years ago; her husband has since died and she is now free to re-marry. She can provide holograms of her lover and his last known location.

66: Losing Loved Ones

You need: A killer, a victim, and a witness.

Example: The PCs are requested to act as agents for a patron in a business deal with a rich client. The patron was involved in the car accident which killed the client's daughter and thus dare not reveal his identity to the client.

An Example Scenario

Imagine that you want a scenario for a full day's gaming. You decide you need three linked plots. You select dramatic situations 24, 52 and 65 – by dice, or because they look appropriate.

A Little Bit of Creativity

For the first – “24” – you need a kidnapper, a victim, and a guard. You decide to involve the PCs from the outset, so you make them the guards (one less NPC to work up, and more interesting for the players). You now need names and tags for the NPCs: the victim is Erica Turner, the daughter of a wealthy industrialist who has received several kidnap threats over the last few months; her ‘tag’ is that she toys with a gold chain necklace. At this stage the kidnapper is a shadowy figure and we need not detail him.

Your middle situation is “52”, and requires two lovers, and a reason why their love is forbidden. You also need a plot twist to switch the action to this new track. One of the NPCs must provide the link from “24”, and the only one we have detailed is Erica, so it must be her. On a whim, we decide that the second lover is the kidnapper we didn't flesh out earlier, and the plot twist is that Erica and her boyfriend are behind the kidnap threats.

We now need a boyfriend and a reason for their love to be forbidden. Picking a name out of the air, we decide he is Simon Van Nostrand, he has a spider web tattoo around his left eye (the tag), and he has been forbidden to see Erica by her father, Gabriel Turner, as he is “not our sort of people”. Erica and Simon have hatched a plot to elope, using the ransom money from the kidnap. We give Gabriel an overbearing manner and a short moustache while we're at it.

Considering the story so far, it's likely that Gabriel hires the PCs rather than Erica. To be fair to the players, you should drop hints about Simon while working through the first situation, e.g. Gabriel smashes a portrait of Simon causing Erica to break into tears.

For your third act – “65” – you need a seeker and someone to find; and a plot twist to link it to the previous act. To save time, you decide that the seeker and his or her target will be two of the three NPCs you've worked out so far, which

suggests your plot twist: The third NPC is killed by one of these two. Note that you don't need to decide yet who lives and who dies – that can depend on the outcome of act 2.

Putting It All Together

So, Gabriel hires the PCs to guard Erica from the threatened kidnapping (situation “24”). A hint about Simon's existence is dropped. After a couple of botched kidnap attempts, Erica disappears, and Gabriel is instructed to have the PCs deliver a ransom. While delivering it, the PCs somehow discover that the kidnapper is Simon; maybe they trail him, maybe he leaves a clue (first plot twist, switch to situation “52”).

The characters thus work out how to be present when Simon and Erica next meet. Unknown to them, Gabriel follows, and as the couple prepare to flee he attacks Simon. In the ensuing gun battle, one of the three NPCs is killed – let's say it's Simon; Erica denounces her father and flees (second plot twist, switch to situation “65”). Gabriel now extends the PCs' contract to finding Erica and bringing her home, and what started as a day's adventure has the scope to extend to an entire campaign.

What If...

...It Doesn't Go To Plan?

This is why we minimise details, because the odds are the players will go off at a tangent; but since you have the characters, their motives, and the situations, you can react to the PCs' actions and still have a scenario that hangs together.

For instance, suppose the band shoot Simon in one of the botched kidnap attempts? Erica rushes to his side to help him; if he's injured, your first plot twist is just a bit early, that's all. If they kill him, the first twist is only a few seconds long, and the second follows almost at once as Erica flees in tears.

...The Scenario's Going Too Quickly?

Slow them down. Throw in random encounters, describe things in more detail, have the PCs arrested. Generally throw in a few complications to make them think.

...The Scenario's Going Too Slowly?

Speed them up. Yes, I know this sounds obvious, but some referees will let their players flounder too long – causing them to lose interest in the game. Eliminate random events and minor NPCs, describe less, make the clues more obvious.

Patrons may be encountered by chance, by answering an advertisement, through mutual acquaintances or because they approach the PCs directly; whatever the opening, they have something they want the PCs to do...

P1. Internal Exile

Required Skills: Investigation, Administration/ Legal.

Required Equipment: Starship.

Players' Information: The PCs are hired by a close relative of a prisoner to try to find what has become of them. The prisoner was convicted of forging Imperial Currency and was sentenced to twenty years on an Imperial Prison Planet. Until recently, the relative has received regular letters from the prisoner, but over the last 3 months nothing has arrived.

Referee's Information: Enquiry at the Imperial Ministry of Justice confirms that the relative is held at a 'high security installation' somewhere on the fringe of the Imperium, but no other details are forthcoming. With judicious use of their skills, the PCs should find the location of the criminal, who is held in an interdicted system. Any more details will require a visit to the system which will reveal:

1-2: The inmate has been very ill and could not write any letters for a month. Lags due to bureaucracy have caused the long period without contact. There is a good chance that the PCs can sweet-talk their way into meeting the convict at the facility while avoiding the fines or prosecution associated with visiting an interdicted system.

3: The criminal organised a protest at the prison over conditions and a riot ensued. At present, the prisoner is in solitary confinement so the Warden will not allow the PCs to meet him. However, they may be shown the video feed from his cell to prove he is well.

4: As 3, but the protest was entirely legitimate. The prison staff are redirecting much of the prison funds into their own pockets and get very jumpy if the PCs arrive asking questions. They will use any excuse to imprison nosy PCs ('Entry to an interdicted system' and so on) who will then have the problem of escaping to tell the tale.

5: There are no prisoners alive. The prison staff are systematically executing the prisoners when they arrive, and creaming off all the monies allocated to running the prison. No one has investigated before, as the minimum term for a

prisoner here is two decades with no parole. Outside contact is only by letters, which are clever forgeries. Obviously, the staff will not want their dark little secret to escape with the PCs.

6: The prison is mining Lanthanum for the navy. Entering the system will provoke an aggressive response from the patrolling naval vessels who will try to board or destroy the PCs' ship. The characters' only real option is to run for jump if they have enough fuel, or hope that they can play hide and seek in a gas giant until they have refuelled.

P2. Orphans

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship (with at least 10 dT of available cargo space).

Players' Information: The PCs are contracted by a local system government to transport an important 'biological' cargo to a nearby agricultural world (ideally the world has a type 6 "captive" government).

Referee's Information: The cargo comprises orphaned and abandoned children who are being shipped to the new world as part of a trade agreement between the two systems. They will become a cheap labour force for the colony agricultural world. The government will fit out the hold as basic sleeping quarters, and also try to contract all the passenger space. Pay is at a premium rate. On both these worlds, this is not regarded as slavery but merely "transference of legal responsibility" (should the PCs ask).

1-3: Whatever the legal situation, the PCs are effectively shipping slaves – presenting them with an ethical problem, followed by notoriety when offworld media gets hold of the story. However, the colony views the children as a valuable resource and looks after them well.

4-5: The escorts for the kids are brutal, and treat them badly. The PCs get the impression that this will continue, getting worse when they arrive at the destination.

6: The PCs' ship will be ambushed by pirates who have heard about the "valuable" cargo. They will not be happy to find the cargo is children.

P3. Doctors Without Transport

Required Skills: Starship Operations.

Required Equipment: Starship (with 2 staterooms and 2 dT of cargo space available).

Players' Information: While looking for speculative cargo, the PCs are approached by a rather worried-looking man who introduces himself as Dr. Usheglji, a medical researcher. A low-tech world 2-3 jumps away suffers from an endemic disease afflicting children and causing eventual blindness. Until now, the only treatment was expensive and required an offworld trip (to this world), something that most of the planet's inhabitants couldn't afford. Dr. Usheglji has discovered a cheap cure that can be manufactured locally, and wants transport for himself, a colleague and the prototype manufacturing facility.

Referee's Information: Unfortunately, the doctor can't afford to pay standard charter rates, and appeals to the PCs' better natures to take him for free.

1: Dr. Usheglji and his colleague will work hard during the trip, doing whatever is asked of them (Dr. Usheglji turns out to be a gourmet cook). The people of the destination world are grateful and offer the whole party what rewards they can: perpetual trading rights, a hold full of valuable cargo, and the adulation of an entire world.

2: As above, except that there is little valuable cargo right now. The PCs will have to return after harvest to collect.

3: As 1, except that the megacorporation manufacturing the high-tech cure is not pleased. The PCs will be subject to low-level harassment – nothing disabling, merely minor annoyances: parts unavailable during their annual refit; a trade rival bidding up the price of a cargo; a rumour about their safety record. The megacorporation is patient, and it never forgets.

4: As 1, except that the destination world's rulers use access to medical treatment as an easy way to reward their loyalists. They are not pleased that everyone now has access. The PCs may be welcomed by the people, but they are persona non grata with the government.

5: As 4, but the rift between government and people is deeper than the PCs realised. A revolution breaks out while they are dirtside, and they are stuck in the middle. They are regarded as genuine "saviours of the people" by the locals, but the government will use its military power to suppress the rebellion, including impounding and destroying the drug, threatening Usheglji, etc.

6: A combination of 3 and 4: The megacorporation and the government are in cahoots, exploiting the world with little concern for the population. Dr. Usheglji's colleague is a plant, who will sabotage the manufacturing machinery so that the treatment causes instant blindness. Riots ensue, whipped up by the government media. If the PCs can escape offworld their reputations will be ruined, unless they can find evidence to prove the complicity against them.

P4. Died In The Wool

Required Skills: Scientific, Medical.

Required Equipment: High tech medical kit.

Players' Information: While taking a break on a low-tech pastoral world, the PCs are approached by a local woman who's heard of their reputation. Her father's groats are dying, and no one can tell why. Maybe the PCs, with their high-tech equipment, can discover the reason?

Referee's Information: Upon further investigation, it's not just this herd that is affected: everyone's groats are dying.

1: The groats are subject to a parasite with a long breeding cycle. The problem will naturally vanish in another few weeks, and remain dormant for 50-60 years.

2: The farmers have virtually exterminated most of the local predators. One of these predators, however, also eats a small burrowing rodent-like creature, which is acting as a disease reservoir. The farmers will have to choose between an endemic disease and allowing the predators to breed – resulting in future increased losses of groats to these hunters.

3: Local industrial interests want to expand into this region, but have been stopped by the farmers. They have introduced a tailored virus, planning on buying up the land at bankruptcy prices after the groats are dead.

4: The groats have been gene-tailored to live on this world. The adaptive genes have failed to breed true, resulting in allergic reactions to the pollen of a local tree with a long breeding cycle. The biotech company claims that any warranty has expired.

5: As 4, except that the genes have bred true but the tree was not planned for.

6: As 4, except that the genetic regression was planned as a 'product expiry' method of ensuring repeat business. The company will offer a 'good deal' on replacement breeding stock. If their machinations are revealed, they will be quite vengeful (and a biotech company has a lot of nasty tricks up its sleeve).

P5. Eccentric Captain

Required Skills: Combat.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: While down on their luck the PCs are accosted by an eccentric-looking man, wearing a greatcoat and breeches with a parrot crouching on his shoulder. There's a nest of "villainous infamy" a few systems away, and he's looking for "a few brave souls to help rid the world of a venomous plague." The PCs look like "hearty lads, doughty, gallant, and up for a ripping adventure, shiver me timbers." The PCs have encountered the notorious Sir Edwin Alpack, sixth captain of the *Brass Goat*. (See the Imperium Games book *101 Starships* for a brief history of the various Sir Edwins and their odd starship.)

Referee's Information: Depending on the PCs' skills, the "plague" could be a nest of pirates, an oppressive government, a world enslaved by a megacorporation, a poor world with a failed harvest, or an actual plague.

1: All is as it seems. Sir Edwin, while eccentric, is deadly serious. The need is real, time is short, and heroes are needed. Are the PCs up to it?

2: As 1, plus an amazing number of people owe the *Brass Goat* and her crew favours. If the PCs acquit themselves well, they receive an Imperial Pardon for just about any offence short of High Treason.

3: As 2, but the *Brass Goat* is really an undercover ship for Imperial Naval Intelligence.

4: As 1, plus the PCs have the opportunity to befriend a junior member of a cadet branch of the Imperial family, who will prove a valuable contact (or powerful enemy, if the PCs show cowardice during the venture).

5-6: The stories are true, the need is real, but this is an insane impostor rather than the real Sir Edwin. The PCs must cope with nutty ideas, a real emergency, and no secret backup.

P6. Imperial Noble

Required Skills: Combat.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: The PCs are approached by a nondescript chap who invites them to a meeting where "they will hear something to their advantage". This proves to be at a rather exclusive club: the Irate Orangutan, where even the PCs' best attire is not quite good enough. Only the note and card from "Captain Sir Hiroshi Amundsen (ret), SHE" gets them in the front door.

Referee's Information: The party meets with a rather debonair gentleman whose manner sets them at ease. Sir Hiroshi has obviously seen action, although he cannot talk about much of his service. "Intelligence work, you understand. Not terribly dashing, but it must be done." Sir Hiroshi has an obsession. He believes, on the basis of reports he saw while in Naval Intelligence (INI), that a terrorist group are salvaging and deploying nuclear mines. This must be stopped for the good of the Imperium and the safety of innocent bystanders. He is recruiting for a freelance operation against these people. Note: If this plot is set in the Spinward Marches in the 1100s, the terrorists could be Ine Givar.

1: All is as it seems. Sir Hiroshi retired honourably, with more medals than he displays. He has considerable private resources, and can count on active support from INI when necessary.

2: As 1, except that INI will not assist civilians, even retired heroes.

3: As 1, except that Sir Hiroshi's private resources are fairly limited.

4: As 1, except that Sir Hiroshi has insufficient resources for his private war. He will expect the PCs to cheerfully pay their share, for honour and patriotism.

5: As 4, except that Sir Hiroshi is a crank. The whole adventure is a red herring. Imperial authorities will be unforgiving about offences committed and while Sir Hiroshi has considerable freedom as a noble, the PCs are fair game.

6: Sir Hiroshi is an Ine Givar agent, who hopes to use the PCs to trace lost war materials. Once recovered, they will be picked up by Ine Givar agents disguised as Imperial troops. The authorities will assume that the PCs are Ine Givar, unless they can prove their innocence.

P7. Are You Seeing Spots?

Required Skills: Survival/Environmental, Investigation.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: The party are approached by a woman asking them to help her rescue her brother on a nearby wilderness planet. He is a xenobiologist, and is overdue returning from his latest field study. Transportation will be provided if needed. She offers kCr10 plus reasonable expenses for her brother's return, or definitive news of his fate.

Referee's Information: The patron may wish to travel with the party on this expedition. The brother was studying a species of migratory ungulate.

1-2: The brother became lost in a very rugged region of the study area. He fell, breaking his leg in several places and wrecking his comm gear and emergency transponder. He is still alive, but barely. The party must find him based on sketchy clues in notes left at his base camp.

3: While following the herd the brother contracted a virulent fever and died. If the party find his remains they must each make an Average END (*GT: Health*) roll to avoid contracting the fever. The disease has a 1 week incubation period, a 2 week asymptomatic infectious stage, and a 2-3 day acute stage. Left untreated, the acute stage will result in death unless the character makes a Formidable END (*GT: Health*) roll. During the infectious stage they have a 1 in 6 chance of infecting anyone with whom they have physical contact. The lethality and virulence can be modified at the referee's discretion.

4: The brother noticed an odd disease breaking out among the migratory herd. Upon investigation, he discovered that it was a tailored biological agent being surreptitiously tested by a biomedical company in advance of selling a more lethal agent. This will be marketed to an extra-Imperial client for use as a biowarfare weapon. He is still tracking the herd, hoping to discover the point of origin. Even testing such agents violates the Imperial Rules of War.

5: As 4, but the brother is on the run, hiding from mercenaries hired to provide security for the test. They will likely spot the party first. There are 8-20 mercenaries armed with small-arms and four grav cars mounted with medium machineguns.

6: As 5, but the disease also infects humans. It is harmless but produces patterned discoloration of the victim's skin – similar to leopard spots or zebra stripes. At the referee's discretion the effects may be temporary or permanent. The mercenaries have been vaccinated.

P8. Made In Sylea?

Required Skills: Survival/Environmental.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: The party are approached by a nervous, somewhat dishevelled man, who introduces himself as Dr. Alfred Ramirez. He says he has made a great discovery and needs to hire a discreet, competent group of people to help him recover certain items. He can only offer Cr2,000 right now, but assures the characters that they will share in the (potentially huge) profits from the trip, 50/50 with himself. The party will have to arrange transportation and equipment.

Referee's Information: Once agreed, Dr. Ramirez hands them a list of things to buy, and an additional Cr1,000 to cover these expenses. The list clearly indicates a wilderness expedition of some sort, several days long, at least. If any of the PCs are skilled in wilderness operations or survival, they will also note that some important items have been left off, and the doctor's money will cover the list only if they purchase the cheapest quality gear.

Investigation will reveal that Dr. 'Ramirez' is really Alfred von Stanich, a moderately well-known scientist in Ancient research. He has never made a significant find, and is regarded a somewhat of a crackpot.

1: While von Stanich will prove to be extremely irritating, clumsy and dangerous to himself and others in the field, he actually has made a significant find: an Ancient site with relatively well-preserved buildings and a number of portable artefacts. At the referee's discretion, some of the artefacts can be in working order, for example: an ancient 'stapler' that fuses material into a single object; a rounded object with several clear coloured bumps – pressing a bump causes a cone of bluish light to be emitted towards a nearby person or item, which then glows for several minutes before fading. (Nothing else happens, but this should be enough to cause most players to have a mild coronary.)

2-5: As 1, but the 'site' is a carefully rigged practical joke, perpetrated by colleagues of von Stanich. Von Stanich will recognise the clues in a few days, and his friends will show themselves. The planet is a pleasant enough one, and has a small resort site on the opposite side from the site. The jokers will give the PCs coupons for 3 days lodging at the resort in return for their unwitting help.

6: As 1, but the 'site' has been rigged by the well-known holovid show "Gotcha!". While the PCs and von Stanich excitedly explore the 'Ancient' site they are recorded by the hidden cameras. After a week or so, the holovid show producers will reveal themselves, and the hoax, to the group. The footage will be edited down to the more hilarious and embarrassing moments, and the party and von Stanich will be studio guests when the studio segment is recorded. They will also be compensated by a week's first-class lodging at the resort on the far side of the planet (worth about Cr2,000 each) while the studio segment is recorded.

P9. In The Eye Of The Beholder

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: Someone claiming to be an agent for a reclusive art collector approaches the party. There is an auction of various paintings and other items later that week, and the patron wishes the group to attend and bid on her behalf. For personal reasons the agent cannot attend. The PCs are given a blank credit slip, made out to the auction house, with the instructions that they are to bid on the painting "Composition in Red and Gray #3" by Choksandra Hiiirian, and are allowed to bid as high as kCr100 for the painting. The agent shakes his head at this, and tells the PCs that there's no way the bidding should go that high – Hiiirian is a little-known artist, whose best price at auction previously has been Cr3,000.

Referee's Information: The PCs will be paid a flat Cr150 fee for the job, but the auction invitation also includes entrance to a black-tie charity dinner and dance. This will provide opportunities for making other, potentially more profitable high-ranking contacts. They are to transport the painting to the patron the next day once the auction house has verified the credit transfer.

1-2: The party can purchase the painting, which is actually quite ugly, for Cr950. Two useful contacts are made at the dinner however, which lead to other jobs – select another patron/plot from here or use a plot of your own.

3-4: There is somewhat spirited bidding for the painting, though the party are able to purchase it for Cr2,500. After the auction, the party overhear two other bidders saying "Something must be up with Hiiirian, the old battleaxe wanted it pretty badly." The party may infer that the people were talking about their patron. If the PCs investigate further, they will discover a small news item just in on the latest x-boat, mentioning an obscure artist who was killed unexpectedly, just as his paintings were starting to become popular. Of course any existing paintings will appreciate in value considerably. They may wish to hold out for more pay now they are in possession of the painting. The dinner leads to another valuable contact, as well.

5-6: There is considerably spirited bidding for the painting. The price goes up to Cr96,500 before the party succeed with the bid. This becomes the talk of the evening, and the party will find themselves the focus of much attention at the party and dinner. The painting, which on the surface is a mediocre example of recent art, is actually a stolen Picasso.

The thief blackmailed Hiiirian into painting it over in an effort to hide it until such time as it could be offered on the black market. The patron is aware of the painting's true nature. Hiiirian died recently and his widow is selling off his art collection. He was murdered by someone else who was looking for the stolen painting. The widow is unaware of the painting's value.

There are at least two other groups who were bidding for the painting. They will try to steal it from the auction house, or from the party or obtain it by other subterfuges. The party will be the targets of bribery offers, threats, and at the referee's discretion, assaults. The rival groups may come to blows if they encounter each other. If the party involves the authorities, they may be caught up as conspirators in the original theft – as the patron will implicate them if pressed. If they examine the painting very carefully, they may become aware of its true nature.

P10. Si Baroni

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship (with 3 staterooms and 2 dT cargo space available).

Players' Information: Just as the PCs are preparing to take off, they are ordered to stop their ship. A fast, expensive and richly appointed grav car approaches them across the starport landing pads. A local Baron, unknown to the PCs (but possibly in their library data), seeks passage urgently for himself, his aide, a bodyguard, and a 2 dT cargo container.

Referee's Information: If the PCs are so 'low' as to require payment, the Baron or his aide will assure them that they will be compensated when they arrive at their destination (which is on the PCs' stated route).

1: The Baron is totally legitimate and, upon arrival, will pay high passage rates for the staterooms and cargo space.

2: The Baron is legitimate but is also a criminal, fleeing this world with extremely valuable stolen religious icons. He fears the religious fanatics seeking the return of their icons.

3: As 2 but the 'Baron' is an impostor, barely keeping one step ahead of the local authorities. System defence boats may attempt to intercept the PCs' ship before it jumps out. If the characters co-operate with the local authorities, the 'Baron' and his retinue will draw concealed weapons (e.g. body pistols) and attempt to force the PCs to jump out of the system.

4: The Baron is a pirate. Once aboard, he and his retinue will attempt to disable the ship and

hijack it, until their pirate friends can intercept them. The cargo containers hold two well-armed partners of the Baron.

5: The Baron is legitimate, but his cargo containers hold slaves, making him a criminal under Imperial law.

6: The Baron is actually a Zhodani! He will use his psionics to get aboard if the PCs resist him. He will attempt to take over the ship and travel to the nearest Consulate world. The cargo is valuable Imperial military equipment that he has stolen and is attempting to get to the Consulate, or at least out of Imperial space. (As an interesting twist, the cargo contains a very high-ranking Imperial military officer in cold sleep.)

P11. Over The Hulls And Far Away

Required Skills: Survival/Environmental.

Required Equipment: Cold weather gear.

Players' Information: The party is hired to act as security/salvage assistants at the site of an epic, low orbit battle between raiders and Second Imperium system defence boats. The polar regions of a remote, frozen planet are carpeted with bits of fighting ship which a team (including the PCs) is to recover.

Referee's Information: Frostbite and other such dangers make the work hazardous (requiring protective clothing and appropriate precautions) but successful salvage work (e.g. employing mechanical or even intrusion skills) will amass a quantity of saleable souvenirs and artefacts.

1: The items salvaged will earn the party 2D x Cr1,000 in addition to their Cr100/day pay.

2: As 1, but the PCs also find an active low berth. If defrosted, this person could, plausibly, contest salvage rights for the whole fleet.

3: A member of the group the party are escorting wanders off to get a good picture of the site, and falls down a crevasse between two ships. The characters have to find him, stabilise his condition and get him out of the chasm, all before nightfall (just a few hours away).

4: As 3, but the photographer has fallen into an open missile magazine. Damage to the missiles might make them liable to explode or the warheads may be leaking radioactivity.

5: A combination of 2 and 3 – the casualty is badly injured and will only survive if placed in a low berth. The only berth available in time is that found at the site, requiring its current occupant to be revived.

6: As 1, but a fight develops between two of the party's employers over a choice artefact. The PCs have to intervene to prevent bloodshed!

P12. Rumble

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: The party is hired by a rich noble to ruin a party being held in a big, kitsch night-club in an unfashionable part of town. The adventurers are to make trouble, be obnoxious, trash the place and spoil everyone's evening. For shock effect they are issued capsules of stage blood (including the pink, bubbly kind), stink bombs and small magnesium flares. They are being paid Cr50 each up-front, Cr50 more on completion. They have a contact number for a good lawyer if needed. Their employer will also pay all legal expenses.

Referee's Information: If the group needs extra encouragement, the patron will explain that he can "square it with the law," so there'll be no jail time, and the party will have no fines to pay.

1: The party ruins a perfectly good night out for the patron's ex-girlfriend and her mates. Referees should add fights and mayhem to taste.

2: The noble's target is a special guest at a private full-contact pro-celebrity mauling evening. The party could get flattened by bouncers, or they could find themselves in the ring...

3: As 1 or 2 except that, by an uncanny coincidence, the target happens to be a past friend of the characters. The proposed victim will try to get his old friends to do the dirty on their patron somehow.

4: The 'noble' is a fraudster – he records the PCs' efforts using a concealed camera and submits the results to the local entertainment channel to be screened the next night. Over the end titles, the production company will solicit similar japes, offering Cr5,000 for each tape accepted. The PCs will be hunted down by the enraged party-goers.

5: The party are stooges, being used to cause a diversion, while the patron and his gang rob another night-club nearby. The characters won't get paid, won't get a lawyer and will be forced to explain why they caused so many police to be called away from regular patrols.

6: The patron is a rich psychopath who doesn't like foreigners. He's sending them to a very dangerous locale, confident that they will be hurt badly. He may decide to hang around and watch the results of his ploy (from a safe distance).

P13. Everyone's A Winner

Required Skills: Investigation.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: The party are retained by the Institute for Ethics, a charity with an abhorrence of gambling, to investigate the affairs of one Lucky Lucy, a publicity-seeking multiple lottery winner. It seems that she doesn't always buy a ticket, but wins whenever she does. This good fortune has made her into a local celebrity with her own confessional chat show, advice slot and range of non-fattening sofa-side snack foods.

Referee's Information:

1: Lucy is simply very lucky. Nothing else is going on at all. Her 100% success record is a perverse vindication of the laws of probability. Someone has to win and for no good reason at all, it's always her.

2: Lucy is a psionicist, with an exotic talent that enables her to see the future. The gift is intermittent, hence her irregular gambling habits.

3: As 2, except that Lucy is unaware that she has psionic abilities. She buys tickets when "she feels like it."

4: Lucy is a good computer hacker and can falsify a winning entry for herself using valid security codes. She does this only irregularly to try to avoid suspicion.

5: Lucy works for the lottery operator. Trade has been slackening off and they needed a viewer-friendly gimmick to help sales. All the money she "wins" is distributed among the planet's charities.

6: Lucy works for a local crime syndicate. The lottery is run by organised crime so, whenever there's a big pay-out, they rig it so Lucy wins, and take back the money.

P14. Lost Marbles

Required Skills: Criminal.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: The strangest thing happened to the patron, a visiting diplomat, the other day. She was in the local museum of Galactic Culture, when a priceless exhibit – a marble frieze – spoke to her. It asked to be taken back to her homeworld which, it revealed, is its own 'home'. The piece in question is 5 metres long, 1 metre high and 10 cm thick. It weighs a couple of tons. The party is to steal it, then deliver it to her embassy.

Referee's Information:

1: The patron has contacts with art smugglers, is near the end of her career and could do with a

bigger pension. She will accept the item, then sell it on. The stone didn't talk to her – that's just a ruse to confuse the PCs.

2: As 1, but to cover her tracks, the patron will arrange for the party to be filmed leaving the embassy, doctoring the record to make it seem she refused delivery.

3: The frieze is a solid-state audio recorder with a genetically-keyed playback mode. It recognised the patron's DNA as similar to that of the old ruling house of its homeworld and sent her its recognition code. The piece has hung in the museum for over one hundred years. Some of its stored data might actually be interesting.

4: This government of this world has, for some time, been chafing for a war with the patron's homeworld. They have selected her as a good way to manufacture a pretext. A sophisticated loud-speaker projected a sound so that it appeared to come from the statue. When the party break in they will be followed and then arrested during the hand-over, involving the embassy in a major diplomatic incident.

5: The patron's superiors are testing her sanity, using a loud-speaker as per 4. Once the party accept the commission, they will be contacted by embassy liaison staff, asked to swear an affidavit detailing the patron's request, and paid off.

6: The diplomat heard nothing. She is simply lying and pretending to be soft in the head so that her own people will begin agitating for the return of their heritage. Resorting to hiring mercenaries to steal for her will be presented as further evidence of how upset she was by the vision of national treasures in a foreign museum.

P15. The Peasants Are Revolting

Required Skills: Combat.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: The patron (a noble in exile) hires the party to be part of a combat team dedicated to "freeing my simple people from the evil revolutionaries." They will be dropped in the first echelon of an assault task force to retake his "oppressed world".

The PCs are tasked with seizing and holding a strategic bridge against all comers. TL9 equipment will be provided – cloth armour with a reflex liner, helmets, assault rifles, six spare magazines, RAM grenades, communicators and first aid gear. Any demolitions-qualified characters will get mines and explosives; any heavy weapons

troops will get a single-shot anti-tank missile. The patron will even throw in a sniper rifle.

Referee's Information:

1: The party should be able to land, take the objective and hold it successfully against a shower of teachers and social workers armed with shotguns, crossbows and pipe-bombs. The patron is so happy that the party is recruited to continue work on the planet as counter-insurgency specialists (i.e. a death squad).

2: As 1, but the party are welcomed by local people who take shelter on the bridge to escape the revolutionaries.

3: As either 1 or 2 but just before the drop, the party are issued with cheap bullpup rifles, mouldy webbing, flak jackets without inserts, nylon helmets and two magazines each. Neither apology nor explanation is given and the party is forced into the drop vehicle by the threat of decompressing the ship.

4: The party is faced by twice their number of troops, just as well equipped as they are, who also have fire support from a light mortar. These opponents show no intention of making a frontal assault – they're waiting for the tanks to arrive...

5: The party, equipped as in 3, face small numbers of rebels equipped with much better high tech weapons and armour.

6: As 1, but the party face an inexhaustible supply of teachers and social workers. When they are on their last magazines, then three times their number of Revolutionary Guards, with equivalent tech equipment, will attack them.

P16. Happy Families

Required Skills: Survival/Environmental.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: New Horizons Entertainment (NHE) hires the party to provide security for the popular show "Family Conflict Safari". The idea is simple: take two really repulsive, dysfunctional families from the slums, fly them to a wild, photogenic world, then sit back and watch the fur fly. The adventurers are along to make sure that no-one actually dies and that no rival company wrecks the production.

Referee's Information: The PCs can use Blur sprays and shock clubs on the families and bullpup rifles against the local wildlife.

1: Infuriatingly, the families get on really well and have a great, relaxing holiday together. Their respective sons and daughters fall in love and decide to marry when they return home. This won't make good entertainment at all, so the party is ordered to spoil things for them.

2: As 1, but the families are working for *Interstellar Love Stories* (ILS), which slipped the participants past NHE. ILS is covertly filming everything (using miniature video bugs and long range cameras) for a heart-warming exclusive. The party will know that NHE pays a bounty for beating up ILS employees.

3: The families hate each other. All the party have to do is break up fights and make sure that the sound technician records all the swearing.

4: As 3, except that two parents, one from each family, develop a sudden romantic attraction which causes even further conflict.

5: As 3, but one or both angry families decide to escape into the bush. The party have to round 'em up and rope 'em in, a job complicated by the presence of really nasty local predators.

6: Select any of 1-5 and add the spawning season for a small carnivore, hordes of which overrun the entire region. These creatures will lay eggs everywhere and then eat until their legs don't touch the ground any more, so that their offspring will have nourishment when they hatch.

P17. And What Do You Do?

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: The PCs have been arrested (perhaps during one of the other patron adventures from this book). The local court system instructs the adventurers that they can work off their sentence by posing as locals during a walkabout by the King. The PCs are given cheap local clothes, lessons in chanting and flags to wave. An especially cute adventurer will get to give the monarch a bouquet.

Referee's Information: It's so obvious to the magistrate that he might forget to mention it (referee's whim) but, on no account must the King discover that the crowd are not his adoring subjects. The people on this planet really hate their ruler, whom they blame for the oppressive civil service. Their monarch does not know this. Indeed, he thinks they love him, so goes amongst the commoners at every opportunity. To prevent unpleasantness, the security police trap the inhabitants in their housing estates whenever the King comes to town and recruit offworlders as the adoring masses.

1: The King takes his time and talks to lots of people, including the character whose PC most enjoys character interactions.

2: There are locals present – bomb throwing anarchists. They attack the King as he comes level with the party but he survives. As bona fide

foreigners, the party will do as suspects, unless they can prove otherwise. His majesty will conduct the interviews in person.

3: As 2, but the party has the chance to intervene and save the monarch. This heroism wins his favour – for several days, at least.

4: The King takes a fancy to one of the characters (the one with the bouquet if possible). He won't walk on, and keeps asking how such an interesting person has escaped his notice previously.

5: As 1 or 4, but after the character has successfully disguised his foreign origins, the walkabout turns into an all-out republican riot, as the common people overpower the police and swarm onto the streets. They don't appreciate the offworlders masquerading as locals.

6: As 5, except that the party is so convincing as locals that no one believes that they aren't. Being so close to the King at the moment that trouble flared makes popular heroes of them.

P18. Extradition

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship (with at least 1 low berth and 1 stateroom available).

Players' Information: The party are contacted by an agent of the local law enforcement agency who explains that they have finally captured the long-hunted leader of a rogue/pirate band. They need to take the prisoner to a nearby system for extradition, as per the legal agreement of co-enforcement of Imperial law. The agent wants to rent two staterooms on the vessel, one for the prisoner and one for the agents to guard him. They will consider a low berth for the prisoner if one is available and there is a certified medical doctor aboard the ship.

Referee's Information: The officials do not want the man on planet for any longer than absolutely necessary, since he has friends in low places everywhere and they will quickly hear of the capture. The agents are making a big display of putting the man on a government ship, but secretly arranging to use the party's vessel for the transport. The skill and the attitudes of the guards should be modified as needed, but they will not allow themselves to be disarmed.

1: The prisoner is a political prisoner, not a pirate as the officials claim. One of the characters recognises the person as originating from their own homeworld and needs to decide if and when to take action to free him.

2: As 1, but the officials on the first world do not want the prisoner to arrive at the second

world. The guards have orders to throw the prisoner out of an airlock while in jump and then blame the party for the prisoner's "escape".

3: The criminal is truly an evil individual, and was personally responsible for killing the family or friends of one of the PCs. That character now has the chance to take the revenge which they have been seeking for many years. The guards will lose their jobs if anything happens to the prisoner, and may face criminal charges as well.

4: The prisoner is actually an agent for an enemy government; the piracy charges are a cover story. Unknown to the guards, the prisoner has weak psionic powers and will use telepathy and other similar skills to intimidate, charm and coerce the guards or PCs to secure his escape.

5: While the prisoner is stored in cryogenic sleep, the low berth experiences a malfunction. Alarms sound and the party are forced to remove the man from cryogenic sleep during jump for emergency medical measures to keep him alive. The guards have no medical knowledge and believe this is a ploy to free the prisoner.

6: The guards have been replaced by the prisoner's henchmen. Once the ship enters jump space, the "guards" will attack the crew in an attempt to hijack the vessel.

P19. An Android's Learning Curve

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship (with 1 stateroom available).

Players' Information: Several members of the starship crew are outside the vessel working on repairs and/or organising the loading of cargo, when they are approached by a man obviously attempting to be "in disguise". He carries two metal briefcases. He looks about nervously and asks if he could arrange for immediate passage off planet. He will appear unduly anxious to get aboard the ship and discuss the arrangement further "in private".

He asks if any of the items in one briefcase are valuable enough to trade for the purchase price of his ticket, and displays a collection of electronic tools, which PCs with knowledge of electronics or trading skills can value at about kCr100. He seems to have no idea of the value of the tools, and will gladly agree to provide the entire case as payment. Once he has arranged passage, he will be content to go to his room and wait.

Referee's Information: The lone passenger is a prototype of an advanced android design. He has escaped the laboratory and wants to get as

far from his creators as possible. He never asks about the destination of the vessel, since only the distance travelled is important to him.

The party may determine over time that he is not truly human, as his programmed information database is still limited. The android is quite human looking and has an extensive vocabulary. He is not truly artificially intelligent, but his learning potential is quite advanced. He is designed to mix with humans without detection, and so he eats and drinks without hesitation. He is not affected by any spice or liquor. He will observe a strict schedule as to when he 'sleeps' to attempt to blend in as human. His UPP is BBBC37. (The social status of seven is for appearing totally average. If he is revealed as an android, his social status will drop accordingly.) He learns quickly, and will increase his education by 1 point for every four hours he spends reviewing the ship's library data, until he reaches EDU 7.

1: The android is designed to replace humans working in hazardous areas. He was not fully programmed at the time of his escape. He was not trained to lie, so careful questioning reveals his nature. He will not harm the crew, as he is restrained by the three Imperial laws of robotics: do no harm to sentient creatures; allow no harm to come to sentient creatures by inaction; allow no harm to come to self, unless it would violate the previous two laws. He simply seeks to escape his captors at the lab.

2: As 1, but the android did receive a moderate level of programming in mechanical and electronics skills. He is willing to work on any task the crew requests, but he will not volunteer this fact unless specifically asked. His work will be slow but near perfect.

3: As 2, but the android's skills are in starship engineering and gravitics.

4: The android is designed to be an infiltrator, and has been trained to avoid all attempts to reveal this. He is still restricted by the laws of robotics (listed in 1), but will deny he is anything other than a human. He has no information to offer, as his database is not intact. If anyone asks a leading question, he will use the information and store it for future use (e.g. the question "Do you work in a factory?" will lead him to respond: "Yes, a factory.") If his identity is discovered he will attempt to escape. If this is while the vessel is in space, he will put on a vacc suit (to maintain his human charade) and hide in an airlock. If anyone finds him here he will open the outer hatch to prevent the inside one being opened.

5: The android is an assassin, designed by terrorists. He was not fully programmed at the time of his escape and was not trained to lie, so careful questioning by the crew will reveal his nature. He will not harm the crew, since his combat and assassination programs were not installed when he escaped. (He does not, of course, have the laws of robotics installed.)

6: As 5, but he was programmed with a variety of combat skills. He will attack only in self defence, using whatever weapons come to hand.

P20. Intelligent Shrubbery?

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship (with 2 staterooms available).

Players' Information: While grounded the party hears rumours about a ship recently being confiscated by the authorities on suspicion of illegally transporting aliens. Soon after, they are contacted by a small, mousy-looking older man asking if he can arrange immediate passage off world, with two staterooms. He is willing to pay the cost of a high passage ticket for each room to secure a berth on the vessel. He stresses it must be prepared to leave as soon as he arrives.

Once the agreement is reached, he will arrive at the vessel within minutes. He hurries aboard, dragging an old worn suitcase behind him. His identification says he is a botanist and an Imperial citizen. A second man in a cargo handler's uniform pushes a handcart nearly completely obscured by a large bushy plant. The older man tells the crew that the cargo handler needs to know which stateroom can provide the necessary light for the plant. The PCs may notice that although there is no breeze, the plant rustles. If they ask any questions about the plant, he says it has been tended by his family for centuries and he will not be parted from it. He seems to dote on it, checking on it frequently during the flight.

Referee's Information: This weak little man is willing to negotiate up to twice the original price to get off the planet quickly. He is a slaver, and the plant is his captive, subdued using a special drug. The plant is actually a member of a minor race known as the Inleee, a race of intelligent plants. The plants communicate by psionics, but since they are telepathic and they know the Imperials fear psionics, they usually communicate by an elaborate sign language. Although drugged, the Inleee will initially try to communicate with the PCs (the 'rustling' noted earlier). The specific creature being brought aboard the vessel happens to be an ambassador from a nearby Inleee homeworld.

The slaver has to re-dose the Inleee with the narcotic drug at least once a day during jump.

1: Planetary officials are searching for the Inleee diplomat. The vessel will be boarded by customs for a routine but cursory inspection in which the plant's true nature is overlooked. (If the PCs are carrying any contraband, the officials can be bribed to look the other way for kCr10.)

2: As 1, but any contraband other than the plant will be discovered and the crew will be arrested (the officials cannot be bribed). If the ship has no contraband, they will be cleared to go.

3: Once in jump space, the ship becomes infested with insects that were residing on the plant. The insects bite, causing no damage but much irritation. Prior to landing on any world, they will be forced to enter a short quarantine while the vessel and crew are cleaned of these pests, at a cost of 1D x kCr1. If the PCs attempt to blame the botanist, he will offer them a bribe of 1D x kCr10.

4: As 3, but the insect bites will cause sickness and disorientation.

5: The slaver has used too low a dosage of the narcotic drug and the half-drugged Inleee begins to transmit strange dreams telepathically. These will not harm anyone, but provide hours of unusual experiences for the PCs during jump. The botanist will be able to increase the dosage once he is made aware of the problem, but this will require several hours to take effect.

6: As 5, but the dreams are terrifying nightmares.

P21. Smuggling at Gunpoint

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship (with at least 3 cT of available cargo space).

Players' Information: The party is contacted by a man who needs to make an appointment on the moon of a nearby gas giant within the next few hours. He is in a hurry and will pay up to kCr200 for the charter of a small vessel. He will provide an ID showing he works for Mychanni Imports. He wears business clothes and carries a large briefcase. He carries no weapons.

Referee's Information: The man is a plant for a group of smugglers who have contraband and stolen cargo waiting for transportation by a civilian vessel. Roll 1D to determine the type of goods:

1 - Illegal, unapproved, pharmaceuticals.

2 - Slaves (a minor race from a nearby system).

3 - Stolen goods.

4 - Cargo discovered by the pirates from a vessel which crashed on the moon.

5 - Cargo legal elsewhere but illegal due to local customs (e.g. alcohol).

6 - Nuclear and/or biological weapons.

They will take the vessel over by force once the cover of the business deal is blown. The crew will be forced to defend the vessel and should be captured. Once the crew is captured, they will be forced at gunpoint to attempt to smuggle the goods to the next system.

1: A customs team will inspect the ship before it is allowed to land at the next world. Bribery skill and kCr1 will allow the inspection to be waived.

2: As 1, but the fee is kCr10.

3: As 1, but the customs officers cannot be bribed - the cargo must be hidden or disguised to avoid its discovery and ensuing arrest of the crew.

4: On landing, the ship is raided by customs officers backed by the local military, who have been tipped off by an informant about the cargo. The assault group will use lethal force unless the party surrenders. The smugglers will fight until half of them are killed. Arrest is inevitable and will lead to imprisonment and the loss of their ship.

5: Pirates attack the ship for its cargo, having been tipped off by an informant. The attackers have a small vessel and would prefer to catch the party on the ground.

6: As 5, but the vessel is a corsair, capable of destroying the PCs' ship.

P22. Race Against Time

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship (with 1 stateroom available).

Players' Information: The party are dirtside on a remote planet with infrequent space traffic. A woman dressed in unusual clothes and covered in dust approaches the PCs and offers them kCr30 to take her to the neighbouring system as soon as possible. In order to make her deadline, she must leave immediately. She carries a single large carry-bag and apparently no other luggage.

Referee's Information: The woman is an archaeologist working at a remote dig. She has just received a notification that the legal dispute about her parents' last will has finally been resolved. There is a catch: she must arrive in the city of their birth within the next 9 days in order to claim her Inheritance. If she does not appear in time, she will lose the entire inheritance to the local government. This legal battle has been going on for years, and the attorney in charge sent her a notice to appear over three months ago. Due to her remote location the message was held at the starport until she returned for supplies

and she received it an hour before she met the party. Her inheritance is worth nearly MCr5 and she will not hesitate to increase the passage price until she gets an agreement. The adventure should revolve around both the regular and unusual delays experienced by normal merchant vessels. Each time a choice has to be made, the question is whether the cost is worth it?

1: There is a Cr1500 fine for filing a flight plan less than 12 hours before leaving the starport. She will reluctantly agree to pay it if the issue is negotiated well.

2: Customs still has to search the vessel and verify passports. If approached incorrectly, the customs agent may suspect they are attempting to hide contraband and delay the ship's departure for 5-10 hours for a more detailed search.

3: A serious storm is building and all vessels have been told to plan on delaying departure. Leaving now is hazardous, but the starport will not require ships to remain on planet. The storm is expected to last 10-20 hours. Departure requires several Pilot rolls for the vessel to depart safely. Failure of any task roll will cause minor damage to the vessel's exterior hull fittings due to wind-blown debris buffeting the ship.

4: Several minor mechanical problems have not been repaired at this time (e.g. the life support air filters have not been replaced yet, and if the vessel leaves before they receive the new filters, the new flight will be a rather smelly one).

5: The power governor for the artificial gravity plates in the vessel is malfunctioning. Safety protocols require the governor be turned to minimum settings to remove any potential hazard to crew and passenger safety. This means that the entire flight will have to be completed in less than 0.2 standard gravities. This will make things interesting for a crew used to having full gravity during flights.

6: Use both 4 and 5 for a really bad space travel experience.

P23. A Scandal in the Dark

Required Skills: Starship Operations.

Required Equipment: Starship, preferably a Scout Courier (with 1 stateroom and 1 dT cargo space available).

Players' Information: Dovin Meriss, a historian from a world in the next subsector, contacts the party. His world has recently overthrown a totalitarian government, and is trying the most brutal members of the old regime for an assortment of crimes against humanity. Meriss believes that he can reconstruct many events by

overtaking radio signals from the world's communications net, which will provide much-needed testimony at the trials. He will pay standard rates for a 2-4 month charter, as well as the cost of installing and removing an enhanced passive sensor suite. The PCs may keep the sensors if desired, instead of the charter fee.

Referee's Information: The ship will be unstreamlined while the suite is installed.

1: The charter lasts 2-4 months during which the party catch up on a lot of reading.

2: As 1, except that Meriss is a proselytising revolutionary, and the characters will be subjected to lectures on the elucidable historical dialectic of *laissez-faire* capitalism and the inevitable triumph of Marxist-Freidmanism.

3: As 1, except that Meriss is fabricating his 'evidence'. On a difficult task roll the navigator notices that the signals Meriss claims to be picking up in one system should be blocked by radio interference from a nearby gas giant. source. The government is guilty as accused, but the recordings Meriss is using come from a former member of the regime who changed sides when she discovered the atrocities. The deception is to protect this person.

4: As 2 and 3 combined together.

5: Real signals are being received, but they also indicate that a high-profile 'secret supporter' of the revolution is a turncoat politician with just as much blood on his hands as his compatriots. Political considerations call for the suppression of this evidence (unless the PCs decide otherwise).

6: As 5, except that Meriss decides that suppression of the evidence includes wiping out all witnesses, i.e. the PCs.

P24. A Scent Of Profit

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: The party are approached at or near the starport by a woman dressed in fairly good quality local clothes. She explains that she works for a local Cosmetics Laboratory, which is looking to export some of its scents offworld. She is doing market testing to determine whether the scents appeal only to the local population, or if they smell good to offworlders too. She offers the characters Cr10 each for up to an hour of their time, to take part in one of these tests.

Referee's Information: The tests will take 30 + (1D x 5) minutes – roll separately for each PC. People wearing white coats will carry them out in a professional manner, and the characters will be

kept separate from each other to prevent their reactions from influencing each other. The referee can either determine an outcome for the whole group or roll for each character individually.

1-2: The perfume smells pleasant, but nothing special to the PCs.

3-4: As 1-2, but local people find the smell very pleasant. The PCs gain a +1 bonus on reaction rolls for the next 2 hours or until they wash it off.

5: The 'perfume' samples are actually a biowar agent and antidote. Characters failing an Average END (*GT: Health*) roll will become unwell for 1D days, but will then recover. Depending upon the PCs' reactions, the 'perfume' company might offer compensation, or the party might take legal action. It is possible that the experiments were sanctioned by the local government. If the PCs get too suspicious the 'perfume' company may decide they need to be silenced...

6: The 'perfume' samples are actually knockout drops. Characters failing a Formidable END (*GT: Health*) test will fall unconscious for 1D hours. The PCs may be robbed or even shanghaied aboard a ship.

P25. Compensation Culture

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship (with 1 stateroom available).

Players' Information: After the party post their ship's next destination, they are approached by Hin Chaudry, an ethnic Darrian. He is a tall, thin man, with greyish tan skin and white hair. He explains that he was sacked from his job as gunner aboard a Jameson Lines freighter, and he is seeking compensation from the company. Unfortunately, the hearing has been arranged at the Jameson Lines local HQ, which is at the party's next stop. He cannot afford more than a low passage, but asks the characters if he can work passage or travel middle passage on credit. If he wins the case, he will repay them kCr5 for working passage or kCr10 for middle passage.

Referee's Information:

1: Hin Chaudry was dismissed for incompetence after drawing official attention to a Jameson Lines ship engaged in minor smuggling. The tribunal will award him kCr46 (a year's salary plus expenses and compensation). He will pay the party immediately.

2: As 1, except the tribunal finds Hin Chaudry was dismissed without notice, but otherwise fairly. It awards him only kCr6. He begs the characters to reduce what he owes them.

3: As 1, except the tribunal finds Hin Chaudry was dismissed fairly. He cannot pay the party.

4: As 1, except Hin Chaudry lies to the party and says he was awarded only kCr6. He begs them to reduce what he owes them.

5: As 1, but Hin Chaudry's case is for unfair dismissal on grounds of his race, and the judge awards kCr100. He will pay the party an additional 1D x kCr1 on top of what he owes them.

6: Hin Chaudry is a serial litigant, who makes a living out of claiming compensation. He will seek to find fault with the party aboard ship, and will do his best to record any incidents of unfair or prejudicial treatment. If he can, he will bring a case against them.

P26. Red Roses For A Blue-Blooded Lady

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship.

Players' Information: The party are approached by a young man who introduces himself as John Singh. He is First Officer of an Imperial Lines passenger ship, the *Horsehead Nebula*. The ship's flight plan will be taking him out of the subsector for a while, and he has half-a-dozen plants to deliver to a Lady Jen Teller on a nearby world. The old lady is fond of roses, he promised to send her any interesting ones he came across, and he thinks she'll like them. He offers a Cr100 honorarium to deliver the roses to Lady Teller, with his compliments.

Referee's Information: If the party check the posted route for the *Horsehead Nebula*, it will be consistent with John Singh's story.

1-2: The roses are all very similar, red roses. Lady Teller will be pleased to receive them and may offer them further employment (for example, see patron P27).

3: The roses all die of some terrible pest while in jump. There is no risk to human or other sophont life, but let the PCs worry... If the party dare to tell Lady Teller, she will be disappointed but will not hold it against them.

4: As 1-2, but John Singh is a distant cousin of Lady Teller, who will be thrilled at the roses, and tip the PCs an additional Cr50 "for their trouble".

5: As 4, but the roses die as in 3. Lady Teller will be very upset, and will shoo the party out of the door, wondering aloud whether "little Johnny" was trying to insult her. If the characters remain long enough to tactfully tell her that John Singh's present was genuine, or to try to take the blame for the dead roses, Lady Teller will cheer up.

6: Lady Teller is a former geneticist and a sociopath. She hopes to engineer strains of the rose to carry diseases or give off dangerous chemicals. The local police are watching her, and anyone becoming associated with her will also attract their suspicion. The PCs will find themselves being trailed until they leave the planet (and possibly next time they land here too).

P27. A Rose By Any Other Name...

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: Lady Jen Teller is a wealthy botanist who collects exotic flowers. She is always on the lookout for strains of Valentine's Rose. This flower, originally from Terra, was genetically reengineered during the Rule of Man, and spread throughout most of the Second Imperium. Since then, a number of variant strains have evolved and/or been generated. Most variants of Valentine's Rose are red, and Lady Teller is particularly keen to find the yellow variety also known as Tex's Rose. She will pay Cr25 for good documentary evidence of a possible strain of Valentine's Rose, Cr50 for a living specimen of the rose, Cr1,000 for a specimen of a strain she hasn't got and Cr5,000 for a living Tex's Rose.

Referee's Information: Lady Teller ("But you must call me Jen, of course!") is what might be called an occasional patron. She will be happy to receive pictures of roses via x-boat transmission, and will pay up automatically, but samples will need to be delivered by hand as and when the PCs drop in-system. Whether Tex's Rose exists at all, and if so where it may be found, is for the referee to determine.

1-2: Lady Teller is a Baroness and has some influence with the local authorities, and may be a good person to know.

3: 'Lady' Teller is delusional: she is not a noble, and she has only Cr2,000 in savings to spend on flowers.

4-5: As 1-2, except Lady Teller is also a sociologist, and is trying to follow up work done at the Imperial University of Sylea by Dr Shalin Ap. The Cr25 for documentary evidence is her way of getting fieldwork on the spread of Valentine's Rose done cheaply.

6: Lady Teller is a former geneticist and a sociopath. She hopes to engineer strains of the rose to carry diseases or give off dangerous chemicals. The local police are watching her, and anyone becoming associated with her will also be treated with suspicion.

P28. Honeymoon

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship (with 1 stateroom available).

Players' Information: The characters are approached by a man and a woman at the starport. The couple say they were due to start their honeymoon but their liner is three days late already. They ask the party to transport them either to their first destination (2 jumps) or, if that is not possible, an office of the cruise line (1 jump). Most of their spare money went on their honeymoon tickets, but they are willing to pay kCr10 per jump for the two of them to share a stateroom, middle passage.

Referee's Information:

1: A noble and his aide bumped the couple's middle passage reservations at the last minute and the liner no longer had a reason to call at the world. The couple are somewhat self-absorbed, and blissfully happy. They leave the ship at the agreed destination.

2-3: The couple are actually emigrating from their rather dull homeworld. Neither of them wishes to risk losing the other by taking low passage, but they can barely afford kCr16 for two middle passage tickets. Whether they are married is anyone's guess. They leave the ship at the agreed destination.

4-5: The whole operation is a complex insurance scam. The couple will present a forged receipt for 2 high passages at their destination, claiming on their travel insurance and pocketing the difference. If they are discovered, the party may be charged with aiding them.

6: The "couple" are Imperial Bureau of Shipping (BuShip) agents, investigating complaints by Tukera Lines that independent operators are illegally undercutting standard Imperial rates. If the characters accept the deal, they will be fined kCr50 for a first offence and formally cautioned.

P29. Spare Parts

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship (with 1 stateroom and 10 dT cargo space available).

Players' Information: The group are approached by a businessman, Ishiima Unchoto, with a proposition. Ishiima has received notice that the Imperial Navy is selling off a surplus of inoperative MFF-10 mobile repair vehicles. The bulk of these will be purchased locally, but Ishiima has put down a substantial deposit on a vehicle

with the idea that he will ship it to his homeworld (a jump or two away) and use it to produce parts for imported offworld vehicles and visiting starships. He therefore wishes to hire the party to help him transport the MFF-10 to their ship, then take him and the vehicle to his homeworld. He will pay high passage for himself plus double standard cargo rates for the MFF-10 and room to work on it – approximately 10 displacement tons. He will accept middle passage if there is no steward aboard.

Referee's Information: The mobile repair vehicle is a MFF-10, (from Imperium Games' *Central Supply Catalog*) – effectively a mobile TL10 factory. Collecting the vehicle will take four hours and require a flat-bed transporter, which can be hired for Cr50-100:

1-2: Ishiima will tinker with his new vehicle all through jump and it will be able to move under its own power on arrival. Crewmembers will be welcome to wander into the cargo bay and observe, although if they linger they will be asked to lend a hand.

3-4: As 1-2, except the MFF-10 produces pollutants which threaten to overload the ship's air recyclers and contaminate the filters. Figuring out how to modify the recyclers requires chemistry or starship engineering skills. If they are not modified, the MFF-10 will have to be either turned off (which Ishiima will argue against) or operated in vacuum. If Ishiima is unable to work on his vehicle, he will refuse to pay more than half the normal cargo rates. To work in vacuum is likely to be more of a nuisance than a hazard, but it will be slow. Ishiima will try to convince skilled PCs to help out; if necessary he is prepared to offer up to Cr 50 per four-hour work duty.

5: Although Ishiima is a genuine merchant, he is also a smuggler: the raw material hoppers of the MFF-10 are filled with contraband. If he is detected by the authorities leaving the planet (roll law level or greater on 2D to avoid detection) he will destroy the contraband. If Ishiima is detected, the PCs will be fined kCr5 and detained for 1D days while their complicity in the smuggling is checked.

6: Ishiima is actually a desperate hijacker/terrorist, a member of the anti-technology group called the Society for Human Responsibility. He will use the MFF-10 to produce parts for an automatic weapon. He will wait until the ship is in jump, then attempt to hijack it. If successful, he will have the PCs land at an out-of-the-way spaceport, where fellow dissidents will march the PCs off the ship, board and jump out. They intend to attack a large starport on a nearby world.

P30. OI' Betsy Needs An Alternator...

Required Skills: Starship Operations.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: The party is approached by a wealthy patron wishing them to ferry an antique starship for her. It is a partially restored Orrimot logistics ship. It is 373 years old, and has seen far, far better days. It is a 2500 dT, Jump-3, flying brick of a ship. The characters will need to hire additional engineers, as the engineering complement for this ship is 29! The patron will offer the party kCr100 for the safe delivery of the ship to her private orbital space, plus up to kCr100 fees for hiring more crew.

Referee's Information: This could be a journey of one or more jumps and could (if the referee desires) turn into a sizeable campaign. The ship will break down frequently, in the most inconvenient way possible, and parts will be extremely hard to come by.

The patron may decide to come along 'for the adventure'. As a collector of antique starships, she has a different idea of 'annoying' and 'discomfort' than the PCs. She has never travelled on such a vessel before and will become greatly distressed at any damage the ship receives during the trip or due to jury-rigging. Her expectations are based upon advertising material in which lovingly restored antique ships are used to sell designer clothes and furnishings. Naturally, the professionally restored ships she has seen are all shiny, repaired and running properly.

1-2: The trip is reasonably uneventful. There are several minor, mostly annoying malfunctions.

3-4: There are several major malfunctions, requiring the party to jury-rig major subsystems during flight, such as the electronics or gravitics. Something may not be repairable, e.g. a failure in the gravity-generating hamster-cage main-bearing, which leaves half the ship in zero-g.

5: There are catastrophic systems failures during flight. The characters will need to jury-rig major subsystems, such as life-support, just to stay alive.

6: There is a misjump during the trip. This forces the party to either scrounge or manufacture parts for the jump drives. Additionally, since the antique ship's computer uses jump-tapes for navigation, new tapes will have to be located or cut to fly it back from the new location. If the party takes too long in getting the ship to its destination, the patron may think that they have stolen the ship and alert the authorities.

P31. We're Like Imperial Express... Only Cheaper

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship.

Players' Information: While scrounging for cargo in a backwater port, the party is approached by Irina Diishiirli with a proposition. She and a number of her extended family are starting an 'express' packet and freight service in this subsector, which is ill-served by the megacorps. If the characters are willing to sign an agreement, they will be added as a carrier for the Shining Dragon JIT Packet Carriers, Ltd. What this gains the party is probable guaranteed full cargoes in most of the ports of the subsector, free brokerage service, 20-50 dT of available warehouse space in those ports for their own use, and the right to plaster the company logo on their ship.

Referee's Information: What the contract requires is that the character's ship carries at least four cargoes in a calendar year, at the company's discretion, and that they check in with the company when they arrive in port. Irina, along with her brothers and sisters are hoping that if they sign up enough free traders as contractors they will be able to have a ship available at just about any time. Costs will be essentially zero; warehouse space is cheap, and the 'free' brokerage service is, in reality, collecting cargoes for the company.

Irina is cut from the same mold as the rest of her family: small time wheelers and dealers, always working on some new "guaranteed" money-making scheme. The import/export business is full of oddball characters and her family, it seems, have an above average selection of them. When the party arrive in a port, the Diishiirli family will always welcome them, invite them to dinner, get them to "stay for a drink", and give them the sales pitch for whatever scheme that member of the family is hatching that week.

1-2: The SDJITPC is actually starting to thrive. The party will be guaranteed at least a three-quarters full hold at each port they stop in, if they're willing to move on immediately, at a 10% premium to normal freight rates. If they wish to (or need to) stay in a port for a period, the company will generally find another ship to carry that load. Using SDJITPC as a broker service will possibly (2 in 6 chance) gain them a one-quarter full hold of cargo at standard rates. The referee can choose appropriate times at which to hold the PCs to one of their four promised trips a year. Some of the cargoes are definitely odd.

3-4: The company isn't doing as well as expected, and the party will be rigorously held to the contract they signed; they may be forced fairly often to jump with less than a full hold, usually with extremely odd or dangerous cargoes of the "live radioactive flesh-eating groats" variety. If they break their contract, they will make enemies of the family who will try to sue them. Since the family has contacts with officialdom and organised crime throughout the subsector, life in and around the subsector could become very difficult for the party.

5-6: Irina's family is using the network of free traders they're developing to form the basis of a smuggling ring. The group will not be asked to actively participate unless they hint to her or a member of the family that they are willing to. (The family will not bring the subject up first.) Initially, they will be used as cover - e.g. carrying a supposedly suspect cargo (in reality a legal cargo) to distract attention from genuine smuggling on another SDJITPC ship. If the authorities begin to suspect the company, the party's life may be made difficult. They may even be coerced into acting as undercover agents for the law enforcement agencies.

P32. I Can Give You A Press Card If You Want...

Required Skills: Investigation.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: The group is contacted by August Delirisso, who presents himself as an editor for the Alpha1 wire service. The party may have heard about the service; if so, they're aware that it is a lesser known one, which is usually attached to offbeat stories. August wishes to sign them on as reporters, paying per story that they may pick up in their travels. He will point them at various rumours, tips, or other leads to stories if they contact him before they go somewhere.

They need to get the facts to the story (preferably with evidence and accompanying vid or holo pictures) and get back to him in person (or post it via x-boat, if necessary). He'll pay them depending on how widely the story is picked up by the various subscriber organisations, usually somewhere around Cr100-1,000, more for big scoops or stories.

Referee's Information: He can't pay for their travel expenses, of course...

1: August particularly wants the 'National Enquirer' type stories of "The Mutant Leeches that Ate My Face", "K'Kree Meat Feast Shock!", paparazzi photos of celebrities, and suchlike. This

gives the characters an excuse to go out and snoop around without raising undue suspicion, but may bring them unwanted notoriety.

2-3: As 1, but August partners the party occasionally with another of his regular reporters. On these occasions the characters get caught up in very odd adventures: strange happenings, murders and even (allegedly) supernatural events.

4-5: August is interested in a wide range of data. His service, while having a public front of the 'weird story' wire service, is primarily a collection agency for private subscriber-only databanks, covering a wide range of information. From time to time, particularly as the team gets to be known by Delirisso, they may be asked to undertake more directed covert investigations.

6: As above, but if the group proves resourceful, he asks them to undertake more blatant industrial espionage. He will pay considerably more for such data, and provide some of the specialised contacts and/or equipment they may need. Their cover, of course, is as reporters for the wire service.

P33. We Find Things For You

Required Skills: Investigation.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: The party is approached by a messenger who hands them a sealed infochip. When they read it, they find that it is an invitation to a wealthy noble's home. When they arrive, they are ushered into the noble's office suite – well-furnished, but well-used. The noble – a Baroness Guilthain – will greet them warmly, and introduce herself: "Call me Alicia, Baroness Guilthain is for tiresome dinner parties." Her family, she explains, lost all but their noble title due to a spendthrift ancestor. Her current wealth has been built up by her father and then by herself. Her company, Guilthain Recovery, specialises in recovering stolen or lost properties. She charges a flat 50% of the insured value of the item if recovered, otherwise there is no charge. She and her father have made their reputations with a number of high profile cases and, over the years, have developed an extensive intelligence network on just about any subject.

Referee's Information: Alicia wishes to contract the party as field agents, on either a part or full-time basis. Her deal with her field agents is reasonable: on any case, they get 25% of her fee, after expenses. Since some recovered items have been insured for millions of credits, this can be a lucrative deal. However, since they will also often be dealing with dangerous criminals (who stole

these valuable items in the first place) it can be a very dangerous profession too. Her agents often have the co-operation of local law enforcement, but just as often they will have to work around, or even avoid, the local law. Example missions:

1: To recover three stolen Ver Grenshiki artworks from the home of the reclusive millionaire who bought them on the black market.

2: To return a rare LSP "Black Arrow" speeder stolen by one of the many local street gangs.

3: To locate the money which went missing when a mob money-launderer "retired early".

4: To recover blackmail material being held by a local noble incriminating a local politician.

5: To find a Zapatian lizard, the pet of a rich noble. The lizard was lost in the starport several weeks back. It likes heat and will eventually be found in a building's warm air exhaust pipe.

6: As 2, but the lizard crawled into a crate of its favourite Crawlfruit and was shipped offworld. The PCs must follow the shipment to find the lizard.

P34. The Lobster Pot

Required Skills: Administration/Legal.

Required Equipment: Starship (with at least 20 dT of cargo space available).

Players' Information: The party are approached by Eneri Branagh, a local trader representing the local fisherman's collective. He has established a unique deal that promises to improve the situation of the local populace.

Referee's Information: The planet is politically dominated by one of the Imperial megacorps, which set up an advanced power plant manufacturing and refurbishment complex. The local fishermen and farmers are trying to gain some financial independence from the corporation by establishing offworld trade links. The party will not be offered any other cargo (as the corporation favours its own ships). Eneri wants the party to take the ship to the coast where the fishermen will flood the hold and fill it full of local crustaceans which are a delicacy on a neighbouring world. The PCs will then ship Eneri and his shelled friends to the world, where they will have a market advantage over the traders who work for the corporation – their cargo will be live. He offers them half standard shipping rates, plus 25% of the profits. As this is a delicacy, the party stand to make double the usual profit, at least.

1-2: The PCs do indeed make at least twice the usual shipping profit on this cargo.

3-4: En route to the destination, a minor failure occurs (ventilation, grav fluctuations, iris valve opens and floods a section). Although not

catastrophic, it temporarily threatens the safety of the cargo and/or crew.

5-6: The crustaceans are contaminated with radioactive heavy metals which have settled into the local mud banks following discharge from the megacorp's facilities. The ship is impounded at its destination and the cargo cannot be offloaded. If the corporation has contaminated the cargo, this is likely to kill the entire trade and the fishermen's livelihoods. Once the PCs have decided what to do with a flooded hold of unsaleable lobster-analogues, Eneri will ask them to return to his world to help him prove the megacorp's guilt and take it to court for compensation.

P35. Misplaced Goods

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship (with at least 10 dT cargo space available).

Player's Information: Whilst at the starport on a world close to a major naval base or depot, the PCs are approached by Commander Robert S. Anders, an Imperial Naval Officer. He offers a lucrative contract to transport on some goods three jumps from the naval facilities close by.

Referee's Information:

1: Everything is legitimate – there has been a mix up in naval shipping plans due to unexpected redeployment of the transport squadrons locally. Anders has been ordered to resolve the cargo capacity shortfall as quickly as possible, and has been chartering vessels with spare capacity. The party is being employed to transfer an Imperial fighter to its new base. The party will only learn this if they break into the single 10 dT crate.

2: As 1, but criminal elements in the depot's logistics section have leaked the transfer to smugglers who will try and hijack or pirate the ship to steal the multi-million credit fighter.

3: As 2, but the theft will be attempted by Zhodani elements seeking the high technology equipment on the fighter.

4: Commander Anders is corrupt; with the mix up in shipping plans for the navy he has decided to make some money by selling the fighter. The papers he gives the party are falsified, claiming that the crates contain "machine parts". Should the cargo be inspected, the PCs may face substantial prison sentences unless they can prove their innocence.

5: As 4, but Anders is upfront about the illegal nature of the work, and will offer the party a small percentage of the profit if pushed. If they decline, or try to approach the authorities, Anders will

arrange an 'accident' for the party as his clients will not be happy if he fails to deliver the fighter.

6: As 4, but this is a sting arranged by Imperial Naval Intelligence. Anders is an undercover agent, who has been trying to break a smuggling ring operating out of the depot for the last twelve months. He has worked his way to a position of trust, and has arranged this shipment to break the ring. He will try to place two Imperial Marines (undercover) on the ship to protect the cargo and crew. The police will intervene when the PCs attempt to deliver their cargo; the PCs may be caught in the cross-fire with the smugglers.

P36. Witness Relocation

Required Skills: Administration/Legal or Combat.

Required Equipment: Starship (with 1 stateroom available).

Players' Information: The party are enjoying a few final moments of peace in a dirtside starport lounge before returning to the ship and heading out to the next system. An attractive woman approaches the table, smiles nervously and asks for help, often glancing about the room. Her name is Dalia Vannista, and she needs immediate passage off world. She doesn't really seem to care about the destination world. Her only request is that the vessel leaves at once. She claims she is packed and ready to go, but she carries no luggage. She states that she is prepared to pay for her passage in trade goods. She does not have an Imperial Universal ID.

Referee's Information: The woman is really Delea Moichot, a legal witness for the government against organised crime on this world. Her government bodyguards were killed defending her against an attack and she fled the scene. She was near the starport so decided to get offworld. She is carrying several data crystals with information critical to an impending case against a local crime lord. She offers the PCs a kCr100 Imperial bearer bond for payment (redeemable at any Imperial starport or bank). She has three of these she stole from the crime lord.

(At the referee's option, the bond is a high quality forgery – too good for the party to detect. When the PCs attempt to cash it, roll 2D: 2-7: the forgery is detected, the party are arrested but by incriminating Delea, they can avoid prison but must pay 1D x kCr5 legal fees; 8-10: the forgery is detected after the party leave the system, a warrant is issued for them and they will be arrested if they return to the system; 11-12: the PCs are lucky and the forgery is not detected).

1: A group of the crime lord's men will arrive just after the PCs agree to take Delea. The men will start shooting once they see the patron. They carry expensive weapons and wear expensive clothes but, thankfully, are disorganised and not very effective and will retreat if the PCs return fire.

2: A professional assassin is watching the port for the woman. He will attempt to capture her alive, in order to secure the data crystals. He is well-skilled in stealth and martial arts but is armed only with a garrote to avoid weapon detectors.

3: The starport customs officials have decided this a good day to start cracking down on ID violations. A bribe (1D x Cr100) will be needed to get past the checkpoint.

4: As 3, but the official recognises the woman from local news reports and demands 1D x kCr1.

5: As 4, but then the official informs the local crime lord. A small ship's boat will be sent to intercept the PCs' ship as they approach the jump point. Claiming to be a customs launch, a small group of well-armed ex-marines (but wearing only vacc suits) will attempt to board the vessel and retrieve the evidence (and the woman if possible).

6: Shortly after the PCs take off, the local authorities notify the system patrol vessels to stop and search all departing ships for this woman. The PCs will have to hide her from an inspection party or pay a bribe of 1D x kCr10. Any attempt to flee from the patrol ship will result in attack.

P37. Getting Your Own Back

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship (with 5 staterooms and 10 dT of cargo space available).

Players' Information: The PCs are approached by Commander Robert S. Anders, an Imperial Naval Intelligence officer. He wishes to charter their ship for an operation and implies significant rewards if they accept.

Referee's Information: Recently, smugglers stole a high technology Imperial fighter and have supplied it to an enemy state. Anders needs help to recover it. Payment for the mission will be good and perks may include free maintenance or fuel at naval facilities. The downside is becoming a 'known' Imperial asset to the enemy state. Anders will make sure adequate gunners and weapons are available. (The following options can be played individually or in the given order.)

1-2: Anders asks the team to infiltrate the enemy frontier world by carrying a cargo in. He wants the PCs to establish if the fighter is being held at a certain facility at the starport. If it is, he

wants them to plant a tracer and inform him, so he can launch a covert recovery option.

3-4: Anders (or the PCs, from 1-2) has located the fighter on a frontier enemy world and wishes the PCs to smuggle in his 10-strong unit and weapons (double-bunking to fit in 5 staterooms). The covert team will destroy or recover the fighter.

5-6: The PCs are to deploy Anders' strike team (see 3-4) by orbital re-entry 'chute. Shortly after, the PCs should perform a powered re-entry, pretending they have engine problems. They are to land at the enemy facility (whose defences should have been neutralised by Anders' team), load the 10 dT fighter and team on to their ship, then run for Imperial space.

P38. For The Good Of The People

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship (with 1 stateroom available).

Players' Information: A woman who has made an obvious attempt to disguise herself approaches the party requesting passage to the next system. She needs to leave immediately and is willing to purchase High Passage instead of Middle Passage if it will mean lifting off sooner. She seems anxious, and watches the area around the meeting closely if it is in a public area.

Referee's Information: The passenger is a scientist who has recently made a major medical breakthrough in immunisation studies. She has created an incredible tailored virus that will protect individuals against a number of rare and infectious diseases across the Imperium. She will board the vessel as soon as possible and remain in her stateroom until the vessel is safely in jumpspace. If the party attempts to haggle for the price of the passage, she will agree to pay for an additional two High Passage tickets. The scientist knows she is being followed and will try to remain as hidden as possible. If confronted about her need to leave immediately, she will claim that lives depend on her urgent arrival in the next system. Her employers are working to locate her and return her to the labs.

1: The patron's employer has notified the authorities that she has been kidnapped and a local search has commenced. The PCs must leave the system quickly, before anyone thinks to search outgoing vessels at the starport. If they wait too long they will be discovered and arrested as her abductors.

2: As 1, but the authorities have only been told that the doctor is missing and that sensitive

research information seems to have left with her. They are assuming theft is a possibility, not a fact. News reports of the woman's disappearance are being broadcast by the local media.

3: As 2, but her employers have decided that the doctor needs to be silenced. They have notified the authorities that the woman is a terrorist and is armed and extremely dangerous. They have also stated that the woman carries a biological sample that could be used as a terrorist weapon. The media will announce she is missing but will not mention any terrorist connection.

4: Her employers want no outside interference and have arranged for a retrieval team to find the doctor and return her to the company labs. They are armed, and in a hurry. They will not consider negotiation an option in the retrieval process.

5: Combine 1 and 4.

6: The doctor is actually an escapee from a mental hospital and has made up this entire scenario. She will not be missed at the hospital until two hours after she purchases passage with the PCs. At this point, local news broadcasts will begin announcing the search for her, and her face will be all over the news.

P39. Thou Shalt Not Covet

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship or High or Middle Passage on a starship.

Players' Information: A PC is approached to carry a message crystal to a person on the next world in the direction the vessel is headed. The standard offer for such a message is Cr50. This person is offering kCr1 to deliver the message with "no questions asked". The person seems to be nervous and not hiding it well. If asked any questions, the patron will lie quite poorly, even forgetting they said "no questions" earlier!

Referee's Information: The person is a corporate researcher, recently hired as a spy by a rival company. They have placed all of the company's data for a new radical anti-gravity breakthrough on the crystal and are sending it to a contact in the next system. This is the researcher's first attempt at espionage and they are not very good at it. The data is encrypted with an old software package that can be hacked by any good computer tech with a fair amount of time and a healthy curiosity. A counter-espionage team has been watching the researcher and will be attempting to recover the crystal.

1: There are 3 members in the counter-espionage team. They will use stealth and intrusion to regain the data before lift off.

2: As 1, but the team will use intimidation and brute force as necessary.

3: As 1, but the team will purchase passage and pose as passengers. The crystal will be located and stolen during the last day of the trip.

4: The team will pose as customs officials to board and inspect the vessel in the starport. The PCs should become suspicious as they realise the team is searching for a specific item.

5: The team approaches the characters openly and asks for help. They are promised a large reward for turning over the spy and the data.

6: Use any of the above (except 3) but there is also a team attempting to ensure the spy's escape. The PCs will find themselves in the middle of an escalating corporate war.

P40. Wage Slave

Required Skills: Investigation.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: Slavery is illegal in the Imperium. So is running out on debts. In the grey area between these two Imperial Edicts flourishes debt bondage: the forcible confinement of an individual on a world until all debts are paid or guaranteed by a reputable individual. At its most benign, debt bondage ensures that all bills are paid before a citizen emigrates; at its most sinister, debt bondage traps workers on a company planet, paying more for life support than they earn and thus condemning them to a lifetime of labour for the company.

A religious group that is dedicated to buying the freedom of trapped workers contacts the party. They need someone to go undercover to a world, to verify whether or not it meets their criteria for aid. They will have two months to discover the information, at the end of which they will be picked up.

Referee's Information:

1: The characters spend 2 months in spartan conditions – life is hard, but not unreasonable and workers can earn enough to leave if they are careful. No action is necessary.

2: As 1, but life support surcharges mean that they end up further in debt than when they began work. If the religious group was not ready to bail them out, they would have been trapped.

3: As 2, but the conditions are brutal.

4: As 3, but the PCs run up such debts that the religious group doesn't initially have enough funds to buy their release; they are trapped for another 1D weeks.

5: As 4, but the reason their patrons can't pay for their release is that someone embezzled the

money and ran. Should they eventually be released, no doubt the PCs will want revenge!

6: As 4, but due to an administrative error, the religious group loses track of the PCs and no one is sent to buy their release.

P41. School of Assassins

Required Skills: Investigation.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: The party are hired to locate the headquarters of an Assassin's Guild which is alleged to operate in the area. Rumours abound of the guild, its impregnable fortress HQ and the dark deeds done behind its doors. (Alternatively, the PCs are hired to protect a person from the guild's attentions.)

Referee's Information:

1: The rumoured existence of the assassin's school on a nearby planet is actually true. This world barely sustains any life and is very hostile to humans. Those able to actually discover and reach the school are invited to join this group of skilled mercenary murderers.

2-3: As 1, but the assassins are ascetic warrior-philosophers.

4-5: As 1, but the assassins have an ethical code whereby they require evidence of actual wrong-doing by a target before they will take on their assassination.

6: The assassins are actually a secret tool of the Imperium. They enforce the Emperor's will by assassinating troublesome nobles. They are run by several supposedly 'dead' Imperial nobles.

P42. I Came For The Waters...

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship.

Players' Information: The patron wishes to hire the party's ship for a cargo run to a mostly industrial region on a planet one or two jumps away. The factor will pay 15% over the normal rates, conditional on immediate departure.

Referee's Information: The cargo is labelled as "Water Purification Equipment, Industrial" on the manifest. They are to deliver the cargo to a small secondary spaceport on the planet. The containers appear to be destined for a number of different customers, though if they open the containers and investigate, they'll find that all of the contents seem to be modules for a single large purification plant.

1: The equipment is being delivered to a large industrial combine that has been dumping toxic effluent into a nearby river. A large city

downstream has started to use the water to supply their potable water needs. The company is trying to quietly install purification equipment to prevent anyone linking them to the pollution.

2-3: As 1, but the company has already been found out as the source of the pollution, and the characters will get caught up in a conspiracy investigation. They may be detained, and their ship and/or other cargo impounded for the duration of the investigation.

4-5: As 2-3 but due to deaths from the tainted water, there has been a massive political shake-up in the city. Arrest warrants have been issued for the company officials and anyone else involved (e.g. the PCs). Their ship will be confiscated if they are caught.

6: As 2-3, but the populace has been whipped into a frenzy by rabble-rousers. They are convinced that the company only intends a cosmetic clean up, and that dangerous toxins will remain in their drinking water. The characters will have to contend with a riot at the spaceport. If they are discovered to be transporting the equipment, they will become the target of the mob's fury.

P43. Robotics Field Trials

Required Skills: Survival/Environmental.

Required Equipment: Starship (with 1 stateroom and 2 dT cargo space available).

Players' Information: The PCs may respond to an advertisement or may be contacted directly by an assistant of Dr. Keene to arrange a charter for himself and a small amount of cargo. The doctor requires transport for himself and 2 dT of equipment to a nearby system where he intends to perform field tests of several robot prototypes. Dr. Keene's work is sponsored by Windhamm Electronics, who will pay all appropriate incurred expenses as well as Cr10,000 per month per crew person (to a maximum of MCr1.5 for the entire trip). Dr. Keene will require the characters to assist him in all aspects of his work at the test sites, including security, preparation of campsites and meals, providing ground transportation, etc. The trip should take the PCs to a number of different terrain types on several planets in one system, including a vacuum planet. Keene expects his tests to last for at least two months in system, as well as the time in jump.

Referee's Information: Dr. Keene is a brilliant young robotics consultant hired by Windhamm Electronics for their research into the automation of starship operations. The robots which have resulted from his work are used by some

merchant lines, allowing them to reduce crew sizes and lower the risks involved in the more hazardous aspects of starship work, Keene is an honours graduate of both college and graduate school (to doctorate level). Keene has become wealthy relatively recently from selling a few of his patents; he hopes his continued work in advancing robotic technology will earn him a knighthood. So fixated is he with this concept that he has started to study fencing in preparation for the day he might enter the circle of nobles as a Peer of the Realm. He practices frequently with a training robot but is sufficiently arrogant to demonstrate his skill against a live opponent if provoked into a duel. He tends to carry either his beloved fencing foil, or a customised Magnum Revolver (a gift from a friend) dependent upon the local law level. He loves to race grav craft whenever he can, and owns an exotic grav speeder bike.

Dr. Keene is a young man, standing 1.8m tall, slender with a somewhat muscular build and long dark hair. He is good-looking, very intelligent, and rather arrogant at times. He is used to being spoiled and pampered in his work environment, and will not take kindly to anyone opposing his views. He is travelling with a portable robotics work lab, 6 research robot prototypes, a remote-control porta-comp (through which the prototypes are programmed and controlled) and additional tools and field equipment. In addition, he requires hold space for his Grav Speeder Racing Bike. His robot valet and robot-fencing trainer attend to most of his needs.

In addition to normal wilderness encounters (both animals and natural events), one or more of the following events should occur during the tests:

1: Keene chooses to undertake tests in a hazardous (e.g. corrosive) atmosphere. Any accident, no matter how minor, can be extremely dangerous in such a climate.

2: One (or more) of the robots runs wild on the ground, physically endangering the party.

3: Keene re-programs a vehicle to allow one of his robots to drive it. At a suitably dangerous point, the robot's programming fails and the vehicle crashes (either while carrying the party or crashing into characters on the ground).

4: Keene decides to exercise his grav bike and offers to race one or more of the party on a suitably hazardous course.

5: A team from a competing company arrives to steal the prototypes and any technical information they can recover. The team will initially use stealth, but should they be discovered or frustrated in their attempts, they will resort to

force. The number and weaponry of these agents should be adjusted to roughly match the number and armament of the PCs.

6: As 5, but the team is from Windhamm, who are hoping to obtain Keene's newest developments without paying his exorbitant fees.

P44. Wanted: IT Operatives

Required Skills: Computer.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: The following message is posted to the Employment Opportunities section of the local computer nets: "Programmers wanted for data analysis project, Cr 250 per day. Relevant experience at Imperial TL 9 or equiv tech required. Apply Sef Makken, Bureau of Trade [*/bt/gov/005/sef-mak]. The Bureau of Trade is an equal opportunities employer. Applications from non-humans and sophonts of indeterminate gender are particularly welcome. Applicants may be asked to undergo Imperial vetting procedure."

An electronic application form is attached.

Referee's Information: Sef Makken is a nervous, overweight, balding bureaucrat. If the characters enquire about the job he will cheerfully – perhaps too cheerfully – discuss it, without giving any specifics, and will encourage them to apply. Should anyone apply, roll a Difficult Computer (*GT: Computer Programming*) task to be appointed. There is no modifier whatever the sex or race of the applicant.

1: Up to 3 days work are required converting trade data from an old system to a new global database. Sef Makken is nervous because a deadline is getting close.

2: As 1, but the data is an analysis of interstellar trade data. A Formidable Intelligence roll is required for a PC to learn anything of interest. If successful, the character may apply a ±1 DM to one trading task on this world, or can obtain one speculative cargo at a 25% discount.

3: As 1 or 2, but earnings are subject to a 20% tax on exit (i.e. Cr50/day worked for Makken). Sef Makken will not reveal this unless asked directly.

4: As 2, but after taking advantage of their new-found knowledge, the PC is arrested for industrial espionage and/or insider trading.

5: As 1, but the PCs can gradually work out that Sef Makken is nervous because he is stealing data from the Bureau of Trade and leaking it to friends; he fears the authorities are getting close. Reporting him brings official praise and local news coverage, but Sef's friends won't be happy to have lost their valuable source.

6: As 1, but Sef Makken is nervous because his career depends on completing the project on time, but the Government-appointed contractors are under-performing. He is paying the party out of his own pocket, which is against Government rules. Reporting this to the authorities would bring the PCs official acknowledgement but would wreck his career. The Bureau of Trade would also be extremely obstructive for the remainder of the groups' stay.

P45. Global Warming

Required Skills: Investigation.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: A nearby colony is suffering adverse effects from a sudden warming of their climate; it is thought illegal industrial pollution may be to blame. The party are approached by a representative of SERAPH (the Society for Ecological Restoration And Planetary Healing), an environmentalist organisation, to conduct some tests for them. Suitable equipment will be provided. SERAPH are currently short-staffed, and are therefore hiring resourceful people to conduct routine work.

Referee's Information:

1-2: Planetary survey records are faulty; the planet has many volcanoes and suffers sporadic volcanic winters, one of which was in progress when the planet was first surveyed and occupied. Colonists have found the world increasingly hot.

3-4: As 1-2, but the problem has been exaggerated by a nearby world aiming to make local industry less competitive by imposing extra costs on it (emissions cleaning). The nearby world is secretly funding SERAPH to 'prove' environmental crimes, but this is known only to two of SERAPH's directors.

5-6: Warming is the result of pollution by industry; traces of pollutants are detectable in certain areas. If the local authorities become aware of the PCs' mission, they will be liable to harassment, initially by ruffians but later by police and other officials. This could take the form of vandalism, physical threats or direct violence, as well as obstructiveness and sabotage.

P46. Shipshare Hire-ons

Location: Jump-1 from a major world.

Required Skills: Starship Operations.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: The following advert is posted on the starport net: "Experienced crew wanted for 4 week round-trip taking Free Trader

for annual maintenance. Standard rates plus completion bonus. Apply Jil Mbewe [shipshare/com/info/jil-mbe]."

If the group contact Jil Mbewe she will explain that the ship in question is run by a shipshare trust. 12 shareowners have use of the ship's passenger facilities for 4 weeks, during which time the ship must complete a run to and from the nearby major world. The trust is responsible for support and maintenance costs, and for finding cargo and low passengers at both ends of the run, and makes most of its money from cargo speculation. However, in the last 4 weeks of the operating year, the trust squeezes in a run for its own profit by sending the ship for its annual maintenance. This is when the regular crew take their vacation, and the party are needed as a relief crew for this run.

Referee's Information: The *Spirit of Harmony* is a standard Free Trader, 30 years old, and a bit shabby. The party have free run of the passenger accommodation. They can carry passengers, but must split the fee 50:50 with the trust.

1-2: The party will have to spend most of their two week stopover keeping tabs on the progress of the annual maintenance, but will have plenty of free time.

3-4: As 1-2, except the *Spirit of Harmony* is a month overdue for maintenance and is burning unrefined fuel (increasing the chance of misjump). Her usual crew said she was unsafe without maintenance and refused to take this mission.

5: As 3-4, but the *Spirit of Harmony* is 3 months overdue for maintenance (significantly increasing the chance of misjump).

6: The *Spirit of Harmony* is a total rustbucket and it is amazing that it is still spaceworthy. The critical systems (life support, drives and computer) are fine, but everything else is liable to fail more or less at random. This includes gravity and inertial compensators, the galley, the laser turret, sensor arrays, communicators and sanitary facilities. Backup systems are not guaranteed to work either.

P47. Training Exercise

Location: Low law level world (automatic weapons permitted).

Required Skills: Combat.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: Major Shen Aquette is the commander of a company of mechanised infantry. His men have been on garrison duty for several months, and he suspects they are starting to get stale, so he is looking for volunteers to take

part in an exercise against his troops as supposed "guerrilla fighters". He does not necessarily want professional soldiers. He offers 'combat' pay of Cr15 per day for ordinary volunteers, Cr30 per day for ex-service personnel (Army or Marine) and Cr50 per day for former Army or Marine officers, plus a Cr50 bonus if the guerrillas actually win.

Referee's Information: Aquette's company consists of three platoons of four armoured personnel carriers (APCs), plus a tank, two command cars and four light armoured cars. The party will be armed with simulated automatic weapons and light anti-armour rockets, plus flash grenades, and issued with laser-sensing flak jackets which register 'hits'. Officers will be allowed to carry loaded side-arms in case of emergencies, but no other equipment has live ammunition. The PCs are asked to plan and perform several attacks against the company – while encamped and while on the move, with the intention of causing as much disruption as possible. Aquette's men know they are to be attacked, but have no idea of the PCs' plans or armaments.

1: The manoeuvres go well and the party has the opportunity to practice their combat and tactical skills in a 'safe' environment.

2: Both sides take the exercise rather seriously, and the characters get involved in a brawl. Mercenary officers will turn a blind eye unless it gets too rough.

3: Someone – not necessarily a character – gets seriously hurt, and needs urgent medical attention while out in the wilds.

4: Aquette is training his men because he has heard rumours of a genuine guerrilla threat. The real guerrillas infiltrate the exercise and start shooting. The mercenaries are carrying live ammunition for just such an event, but the party is stuck in the middle of the firefight – potential targets for either side.

5: As 5, but Aquette created this exercise specifically as a trap for the guerrillas. He regards the PCs as expendable.

6: Aquette's men are vicious killers; they intend to have some fun hunting down and killing the PCs using live ammo.

P48. Adolescent

Required Skills: Administration/Legal, Merchant.

Required Equipment: Starship.

Players' Information: The party are on a world with strict religious laws, most of which govern private life. While it has been an

interesting and even fun place, everyone is glad to be about to move on. Enquiries into customs and beliefs invariably grow into large discussions with 2D officials and religious teachers involved. By tradition, such discussions may only be terminated by taking everyone to a feast (cost: 1D x Cr10 per person). After the party have enjoyed their last breakfast on world, they return to the hotel to discover a robed and masked visitor. This is soon revealed to be a teenager who pleads with them to take him/her (it's hard to tell under the covers) offworld. If not, their parents will kill them!

Referee's Information: It is a local custom that adolescents are secluded while undergoing instruction, and hidden from view on the rare occasions they leave home. PCs with good perception or sociological skills may have noticed this during their stay. Most PCs will have enjoyed the peace without realising why!

1: The situation is just teenage angst. If the teenager is discretely returned home, their parents, who own a local shipping company, will become valuable contacts for the party. If a fuss is made, the parents will be grateful and will offer a gift, but will not encourage future contact. If the teenager is taken offworld, they will be considered kidnapped. Worse yet, they will get homesick and change their mind halfway through the first jump! (Remember that no serious problem is ever a teenager's fault!)

2: As 1, except that it takes a month for the teenager to get homesick.

3: As 1, but the parents understand their child's concerns and, provided the party have been discrete, they will pay for their kid to have a long holiday. However, they will ask the PCs to take one of their company bodyguards (in disguise) on the trip to keep an eye on their child.

4: As 1, this is just teenage angst, but that has no place in this culture. Any contact with the parents will result in charges being laid for corruption of youth: a major crime in this culture.

5-6: By running away and revealing herself to strangers, the teenage girl has deeply offended her parent's honour. The punishment is death – they will be publicly killed as soon as they are found. If the party take the girl home, this will happen right away; if they take the teenager to the authorities, they will see the execution on their way back to the starship. In either case, the referee should emphasise the girl's innocent beauty and try to make the PCs feel responsible for her bloody and painful death. If they do take the teenager offworld, they will have gained a devoted sidekick – with all the trials and tribulations that come with adolescence.

Sometimes the player characters are swept up by events over which they have very little control – they are dropped into a situation that they need to resolve using their ingenuity and whatever comes to hand in the way of equipment.

S1. Traffic Violation

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship.

Players' Information: The PCs have just completed frontier refuelling at a gas giant, when a vessel approaches them with no transponder signals, and orders them over the voice channel to heave-to and prepare for boarding. If challenged, the vessel identifies itself as a system patrol vessel, and informs them that they are in violation of the system traffic regulations, as they have refuelled without a permit.

Referee's Information: In cases 1-5 below, any attempt to flee to a safe jump distance will result in the PCs' ship being attacked.

1: The system government is facing a period of economic difficulty and has raised prices for refined fuel. Frontier refuelling requires a permit from the starport (costing Cr500). Fuelling without a permit incurs a kCr10 fine and a strict customs search. The approaching vessel is a systems defence boat or patrol cruiser.

2: As 1, but the fine is kCr100.

3: As 1, but the patrol vessel is a captured and refurbished corsair using its original name. The PCs may suspect foul play but the main world can verify the patrol vessel's lawful status.

4: As 1, but the main system world is balkanised and the two main powers are at war. A second (opposing) vessel will arrive soon after the first, and challenge its right to fine the PCs. This will rapidly deteriorate into a battle, during which the PCs may make their escape.

5: The vessel is a pirate, attempting to board the PCs' ship without engaging in ship-to-ship combat. Once aboard, they will disable the weapons and drives on the PCs' ship and loot it of valuables. At the referee's discretion, a patrol vessel (as in 1) may come to their assistance.

6: The vessel is a patrol ship owned by some down-at-heel Starmercs. They will impose fake fines to whatever level they feel they can push it, although they will make mistakes that may allow the PCs to realise they are being duped.

S2. Agent

Required Skills: Administration/Legal, Merchant.

Required Equipment: Starship (carrying expensive freight).

Players' Information: The PCs arrive in system with a full cargo of freight (pre-paid). On landing, they are refused permission to unload.

Referee's Information: The company they are carrying the cargo for has filed for bankruptcy and the customs agent (broker) with power of attorney is refusing to handle the transaction. The cargo is still legally an asset of the failed company, so the PCs cannot unload it, nor leave the starport with it. The dock fees will begin to mount up...

1-3: The agent can be persuaded to unload the cargo if the PCs suggest it can be used as collateral against missing payments.

4: The PCs encounter a local crime lord who offers to take the cargo off their hands for a small fee, i.e. the PCs "look the other way" while some of his men steal the cargo.

5: As 4 but the company is placed into the hands of administrators who will take legal action against the PCs if they 'loose' the cargo.

6: As 5 but a megacorporation buys the failing company. They will use their 'recovery' specialists to retrieve the cargo or equivalent assets if they feel the PCs are likely to abscond with the cargo or attempt to dispose of it in an illegal manner.

S3. Asteroid

Required Skills: Starship Operations.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: While the PCs are at a class D (*GT: Class II*) or lower starport colony, the port's sensors detect an asteroid on a collision course with the world. A while later, low power radio signals are detected from the vicinity of the asteroid. Panic ensues on the colony, as the only ships in the port are several old launches (unless the PCs have their own starship).

Referee's Information: If the PCs don't come up with any ideas, the locals suggest using the highly enriched fuel from the orbiting naval sensor

buoy to prepare a fission device to divert the asteroid's course. The PCs are asked to deliver the device using any available vessel at the port. Success, and a heroic reception by the colonists, is possible with care and preparation, although the hand-built bomb is hazardous to handle.

1-3: The asteroid has a very, very old solar-powered mining beacon which reactivated as it neared the planet.

4: The asteroid is a slower-than-light colony ship from a world hundreds of parsecs away (i.e. it has been travelling many hundreds of years). The crew are long dead and the drives are inoperative but a few of its systems still have battery power and emit weak radio signals.

5: As 4, but the ship's computer still works sufficiently to allow the initiation of an automatic braking sequence, putting the ship in orbit.

6: As 5, but the crew are alive. They are part of a TL10 military force sent to assist in the development of new colonies. They will attempt to retake 'their' colony from the 'foreigners' who have settled it after the ravages of the Long Night.

S4. You're Not Leaving That Here!

Required Skills: Administration/Legal, Merchant.

Required Equipment: Starship.

Players' Information: The party accept a cargo of chemicals for trans-shipment at least two jumps on. The material is listed as safe and legal and the pay is top rate.

Referee's Information: When they get to the destination world the customs agents there announce that the material is, in fact, a dangerous waste. It is illegal here (and across most of the subsector) but not at the world it was loaded.

1: The PCs can get in touch with their broker's contact on this world who agrees with the authorities that the PCs can ship the material out to a government-approved orbital dump. The PCs will be recompensed for their trouble.

2: As 1, but the contact will require considerable persuasion to accept any responsibility for the shipment and will not pay the PCs unless they take him to court.

3: The PCs find their contact does not exist – they must persuade the customs to allow them to offload the material at the orbital dump (see 1).

4: As 3, but the PCs will also be fined kCr100.

5: As 3, but the PCs' ship is impounded.

6: As 3, 4 or 5, but the customs agents are quite open to bribery.

S5. Bad Food

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship.

Players' Information: Stopping at a D or E class starport (*GT: Class II or I*), the PCs' steward is offered a good deal on supplies (and cargo if negotiated).

Referee's Information: If accepted, the crew will finish their existing foodstocks the first day into jump. The food purchased has been substituted with rotten, out of date products. This leaves them with a cargo of worthless mush and the problem of feeding themselves and their passengers (who may sue under the terms of the Imperial Passenger charter).

1: It is an accident, due to erroneous paperwork at the food wholesaler's warehouse.

2: It is deliberate – a theft and substitution by the local dock gang.

3: It is deliberate – a substitution executed by the company's agents.

4-5: As one of 1, 2 or 3 above, but the paperwork the cargomaster (steward) signed accepts the goods as checked, and the company denies all knowledge of any fault.

6: As one of 1, 2 or 3 above, but the company offers a full apology, re-supplies the ship and offers the crew a full cargo as compensation.

S6. You Call This High Tech?

Required Skills: Administration/Legal, Merchant.

Required Equipment: Starship.

Players' Information: This world is a key source of high technology in this subsector. The party are on a tight deadline to lift with a cargo of valuable goods but they need the correct certification to do so, and must pay off some bills.

Referee's Information: The local language is very complex and formal. Documentation needs the personal attention (symbolised by stamps and seals) of every bureaucrat whose hands it passes through. The impersonality of electronic systems and the in-built conservatism of the culture has resulted in a dependence on paper – unusual for the tech level. Equally, electronic fund usage is uncommon outside the port. The paper systems work well, except when a rush job is needed.

1-2: The party will have to visit the source of the certificates to obtain them quickly. This will require considerable diplomacy and patience.

3-4: As 1-2, plus the party will need to obtain a large amount of cash to pay the fees for the certification. Their obvious foreign behaviour will

mark them as potential victims of crime. Finding a cash dispenser which accepts their cards may also be difficult.

5-6: As 3-4, but on the day the party is trying to get the certificate, all offices and shops close that afternoon as part of the local cultural traditions.

S7. Requisitioned

Required Skills: Investigation.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: The party is on planet with a repressive police state (e.g. Roup or Efate in the Spinward Marches) when one of the PCs is taken seriously ill. They are taken to hospital for an operation, but when the party goes to visit them later there is no record of their colleague.

Referee's Information: This can be as sinister or innocent as you like:

1-2: A clerical error caused the character's records to be misplaced, or their name mis-spelt – the party are quickly reunited with their colleague.

3: The character has been taken illegally for body parts. If the party ask the right questions of the right people they will manage to find the missing character on the operating table just before the procedure starts.

4-5: The character has been seized by the security forces, having been mistaken for a political agitator. They will be found soon after, dumped outside the hospital, having been interrogated and/or badly beaten.

6: The character has been seized by the security forces as a terrorist, based on an innocuous comment they made earlier in the week at a bar. To save them from disappearing permanently the party will have to break into a high security facility and get their friend off-planet.

S8. Why I Hate Frontier Starports...

Required Skills: Merchant.

Required Equipment: Starship.

Players' Information: The party have a cargo which must be delivered to a tight schedule. They are all set to launch when flocks of feathered bird-like creatures begin clustering around the ship. The PCs are contacted by the starport legal representative, who informs them that they are not allowed to lift off.

Referee's Information: The port landing area doubles as an adjunct to the local town market. Local colonist-herders have little to their names but their colourful clothes, their vehicles and the flocks of shaggy, iridescent feathered birds in

which their fortune is invested. The birds are prone to startling, and can become aggressive; if the ship moves, chaos is likely to result.

1-2: The herders can be persuaded to move their flock away quite quickly if the PCs use appropriate liaison or diplomacy skills.

3: As 1-2, but one of the 'birds' will flap into an engine vent and begin nesting.

4-5: The herders seem unable to move their flock out of the way until a small bribe is offered (they regularly drive their flocks into the starport in the hopes of being paid to go away again).

6: As 4-5 and the herders will surreptitiously encourage their flock to enter the ship, nest in its engine vents, etc. in order to increase the bribe.

S9. Claustrophobia

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship.

Players' Information: The starship that the party are travelling on suffers a serious failure which compromises the passenger compartment – e.g. an electrical fault causes an explosion which compromises hull integrity over a large area. As a result, the crew and passengers are forced to cram into a small remaining safe area, e.g. the engineering area or crew quarters.

Referee's Information: The situation is very awkward for all concerned – the passengers are unfamiliar with surviving in a cramped area with limited food, oxygen and sanitary equipment.

1-2: With calm and sensible behaviour all the passengers and crew will survive.

3-4: Some crew or passengers panic and try to leave the ship in rescue balls or the ship's launch.

5: The damage to the ship has caused a misjump. The party have to deal with jump sickness and an unpredictable jump exit time.

6: As 5, but several passengers try to break into the weapons locker, as they see cannibalism as inevitable if the misjump is a long one.

S10. Refugee Run

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship.

Players' Information: The party is trading on a world with an inhospitable atmosphere when disaster strikes. Major fusion explosions destroy the life-support centre and its backup facilities. Local supplies can last a matter of days, perhaps a few weeks at the outside. The local government commandeers all ships for an orderly evacuation.

Referee's Information: The populace panics and martial law is declared. Fearing for their lives,

gangs of 'empowered' citizens try to find a way off the world...

1: The authorities will enlist the PCs' ship and pack it with people; they will be asked to jump to the nearest world, then to return empty for another trip, bringing with them as many other ships as they can persuade to follow. No coercion is used as the officials assume that everyone is willing to help. Once the world has re-established itself, all ships that helped in the evacuation will be rewarded: no port fees, no duties, free refuelling and free labour for maintenance work.

2: As 1, except that the world is not re-established by the same government. There will be no material rewards.

3: As 1, except that terrified refugees will try to hijack the ship when it is only half full.

4: There are not enough ships for everyone so the government has prioritised children and young families over the old and childless. This is not popular with old, childless, rich people, who will offer astounding bribes to get offworld. Whether the party can leave crying children at the dockside to die slowly is up to them, but may result in a hate campaign by those evacuees that survive, adverse press publicity and perhaps legal action.

5: As 4, except that if the bribes are turned down, one or more PCs will be kidnapped by hired thugs and ransomed in exchange for places on their ship for the rich refugees.

6: As 4, but the government's view of the "essential members of society" is ministers and top people in all fields – plus their families, staff, and most valuable possessions.

S11. Freddy's Dead... Isn't He?

Required Skills: Ability to scream loudly.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: The party wins tickets to a new amusement park, devoted to horror holovids and using state-of-the-art virtual reality technology. They will enter the park and stay overnight as part of a holovid show promotion. Having been repeatedly reassured that the VR park is totally safe, they are asked to sign overblown waivers (all part of the standard show legalities). They will not be allowed to take weapons into the park!

The theme of the show is "These brave people will spend the night in the House of Horror... are you brave enough to come during the day?" A publicity stunt, in other words.

Referee's Information:

1-2: The characters have a good time and can win various prizes awarded by the holovid show.

3-4: Some or all of the party (and perhaps NPCs) are approached privately by a producer of the show. They will be given special makeup packs and other props so that they can become 'victims' of the maniacal Solomani Slasher running amok. They are cautioned to say absolutely nothing to the others, as the producers want to capture the maximum possible fright effect. The holovid company will reward them well if they convince the others that they really 'died'.

5-6: A brilliant, but psychotic, robotics engineer designed the park. A woman who spurned him and made a mockery of him is among the guests for the show. He is aware of the producer's plans to have fake 'deaths' among the group (as per 3-4). First, he will target an NPC for death and kill them in some gruesome fashion. By the time anyone realises this was a real death, the producer's robotic cameras have been taken over, the entire park is locked to outsiders and the party is trapped inside (the park is largely self-contained and has its own power plant).

The VR robots will begin genuinely murderous attacks. The psychotic engineer will appear as the Solomani Slasher, using a powered exoskeleton giving him enhanced strength and speed, and a fair amount of protection from whatever weapons the PCs will find to hand. He is intimately familiar with the complex, and can pretty much appear and disappear at will. He carries a hand computer which gives him complete control of the park.

The NPCs will act in typical slasher-flick fashion: running off alone, panicking, attacking the slasher ineffectually, etc. The maniac's goal is to kill everyone until only the woman who spurned him is left.

S12. Packing Your Own

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: The party have been on the surface of a middle or high law level planet. When passing through a local security checkpoint into the starport, a security agent halts one character. He says he may have detected contraband and asks to search the PC's effects.

Referee's Information: The security agent will ask the usual questions before checking the effects: "Did you pack your baggage yourself?", "Has anyone interfered with your baggage since you packed it?", "Are you carrying anything for anyone else?", etc.

1: The agent is genuinely mistaken, but security will investigate the character's credentials more fully than usual.

2: Illegal drugs have been planted on the PC prior to entering starport; the drugs would have been removed again by a pickpocket within the starport once through security.

3: The security guard plants illegal drugs on the character during the search in an attempt to force a bribe from the PC. If the character's protests draw the attention of other officials, the first guard will disclaim any interest in a bribe and will charge and arrest the character.

4: A tiny but powerful bomb has been planted in the PC's baggage. Investigation reveals there is not enough time to disarm it safely; it must be contained using inflatable blast shields. Five minutes after it explodes, it becomes clear that it was a distraction. Terrorists have breached security elsewhere and seized control of key areas.

5: As 4, but the bomb is fake and accompanied by a note from terrorists/rebels (perhaps the Ine Givar) saying "If this had been a real bomb, you would all be dead. Liberate this planet now!"

6: The contraband item is actually a small local animal, seemingly tame and cuddly. However, when taken off planet, it uses its only weapon – a psionic 'scream' that does 1D damage/day to the PSI of psionic characters, ½D-1 to the INT of non-psionic PCs. The animals' brains are a key ingredient in offworld black market psi drugs. Consequently, the local authorities will believe the party to be involved in black market smuggling.

S13. Don't I Know You?

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: While in a public place on a medium or high population world, a character is mistaken for someone else.

Referee's Information: Roll 2D to determine whom the character is mistaken for:

2: A wanted criminal with a high bounty.

3: An undercover agent. The PC is met by a 'contact' and given secret data. Any protestations will be interpreted as not breaking cover.

4-5: A minor local noble. Suddenly everyone seems very friendly and helpful...

6-7: A relation of a local family who have achieved local notoriety (or fame) in the media.

8: The character is the visual twin of a medium level, quasi-independent rogue in a local crime organisation. The police will keep them under surveillance and criminals will expect the PC to do 'favours'. The rest of the party will be viewed as a "clean crew", people not known to be associated with the local crime group, brought in for "a job".

9: The PC is believed to be the long lost and thought-to-be-dead member of a wealthy local family. Some people would prefer he stayed dead.

10: A person previously murdered by their spouse for financial gain or due to infidelity. Naturally, when the spouse sees their victim 'alive' again, they will be very disturbed, prompting a cautious (but possibly dangerous) response!

11-12: The character is believed to have something that belongs to someone else... something very valuable.

S14. Is There A Doctor In The House?

Required Skills: Medical.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: While walking past the PCs, a local has what appears to be a major seizure and their pulse stops. However, none of the passers-by moves to render assistance.

Referee's Information: If the PC(s) assist:

1-2: The victim survives and sues the party for illegally extending his life. The local culture believes that death comes when it comes. Only injuries that are not life-threatening are treated.

3-4: The victim survives and is extremely grateful to the character(s). They feel that they owe the PCs their life, literally. They will voluntarily become an obedient servant until they feel they have repaid the debt.

5: The victim dies and the character that assisted is arrested. It turns out that the treatment given, which would be perfectly normal for most humans, induces death in this minor human variant race. Unassisted, the victim would have recovered from the seizure.

6: The victim dies and the PC is sued in court. Under local law, a person who tries to save another's life takes responsibility for that life, including its debts. And this victim was in serious debt!

S15. Detour

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship.

Players' Information: After jumping into a lightly populated system, the PCs are told by the Starport Authority (SPA) to use an isolated berth or landing field, due to problems with the primary landing areas. The communications are very poor as there is interference across all channels.

Referee's Information:

1: The normal berths are unavailable due to a local war whose effects have spilled over into the Imperial starport. No one has yet left the system

to broadcast this information. The head of the SPA has decided that the war is contained and winding down, so is accepting commercial traffic.

2: As 1, but the SPA official is a war profiteer and is only allowing weapons smugglers into the main area port, to supply the locals. He cannot afford to let anyone discover his subterfuge.

3: The SPA official is an impostor and is directing the PCs into the hands of pirates, who will steal their starship and/or its cargo (using advance knowledge of starport cargo manifests).

4: As 3, but the pirates intend to kidnap a key passenger on board the PCs' ship.

5: The entire SPA has been taken hostage. Everything appears normal during landing, but the PCs' ship will be subjected to a customs search. Heavily armed SPA officials (criminals wearing SPA uniforms) will board the ship. The PCs may notice the ill-fitting uniforms, lack of familiarity with standard procedures, etc. before the criminals manage to take over the ship. They plan to strip the ship of its valuables, particularly its weapons.

6: As 5, but the criminals are rebels who want to use the ship against their enemies. However, an SPA engineer has managed to encode Signal GK and SOS messages into the starport transmissions. This is the source of the unusual interference when receiving comms from the port; a PC with appropriate skills can extract the warning message encoded into the interference.

S16. Hostage Bar

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: While the party is relaxing in a starport bar, the general hub-bub is suddenly silenced by weapons fire. A group of armed people storm the bar, taking all of its patrons as hostages.

Referee's information: There may be a small fight. If attacked, the hostage-takers will kill to defend themselves, although they are reluctant to do so otherwise. They demand a ship to take them out of the system – that's all. And they're in a hurry. They know that if they don't leave within a few hours, news of their acts could travel ahead of them such that authorities in nearby systems would be alerted and waiting for them.

1-2: The hostage-takers are the Givar terrorists. They had a ship of their own but it was discovered and neutralised. They have a pilot and starship crew amongst their number.

3-4: The hostage-takers are local terrorists seeking escape after a bombing. They are not capable of flying a starship on their own.

5: As 3-4, but the terrorists are seeking a publicity coup rather than escape. If they manage to get aboard a ship, they will attempt to rig it to explode, so as to cause significant damage to the starport. Failing that, they will kill all the hostages. They wish all Imperials to leave their world.

6: The hostage-takers have been falsely accused of crimes under a legal system with draconian penalties (death or life imprisonment) for minor offences. They are basically good people and will be very reluctant to kill people, although they are very desperate to escape.

S17. Taboo

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: Just after landing on a planet, the party encounters a local "traveller" selling "good luck" charm souvenirs.

Referee's Information: The seller will pester the PCs until at least one of them buys a charm.

1: The charm is totally harmless.

2: The charm is totally harmless on this world, but will offend religious and cultural sensibilities if worn on a neighbouring world.

3-4: The charm identifies the PC as a good mark for pick-pocketing and other petty crimes.

5: The characters will run into a constant string of bad luck if they don't purchase a charm.

6: The PC wearing the charm will get one exceptionally good piece of luck at some point in the following adventures – acquiring unexpected wealth, saving them from certain death, etc.

S18. The Demon Drink

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship.

Players' Information: The PCs are aboard their ship, berthed at a starport, when their ship is struck by a small shuttle, air raft or fuel truck. The collision only does minor damage. Investigation shows the pilot was obviously intoxicated.

Referee's Information:

1-3: The pilot is voluntarily intoxicated.

4: The pilot has been intoxicated against his will by an unfriendly colleague.

5: The pilot appears intoxicated but is actually suffering from a virus. After a 12 hour incubation period the virus causes increasing incoherence and incapacitation (characters lose DEX, END, INT and EDU points – 1 point of each in the first hour, 2 points in the second hour, 3 in the third, etc. When the INT or EDU is reduced to zero the victim becomes totally incoherent. When DEX or

END reaches zero, the character enters a coma. The coma is indefinite but can be reversed by 1D+10 days treatment at a specialist hospital.

6: The pilot is not drunk. The collision is a ruse to get aboard the ship and attempt a hijack.

S19. A Rough Landing

Location: Amber zone.

Required Skills: Engineering.

Required Equipment: Starship.

Players' Information: The party's ship is landing on a world that has recently been downgraded from a red zone to amber. As they land, there is an explosion and one of the landing struts collapses, pitching the ship to one side.

Referee's Information: The world was at war until recently, and the starport was repeatedly fought over.

1: The starport has been mined since TAS lowered the travel zone to amber from red. One of the rival factions intends to capture any starships damaged as a result, to steal their cargoes and component parts. They will arrive within a few hours of the ship's landing, and a firefight is likely if the party will not surrender their ship.

2: The mine is an old anti-tank device which was missed by mine clearance teams; it detonated as the landing gear came into contact. The main difficulty the PCs face is raising the ship to complete repairs. The necessary parts can be fabricated in the ship's engineering shop.

3: The mine is part of the edge of an unrecorded minefield that has been missed during clearance. The party must repair the landing gear in the middle of an area peppered with anti-personnel and anti-tank mines.

4-6: The landing gear has suffered a hydraulic failure, and can be brought back into action with competent repairs. However, it may initially appear that the damage was caused by a mine, requiring suitable caution to be exercised.

S20. Born Under A Bad Sign

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: The party suffers a run of bad luck. For some reason there always seems to be a strange, fairly dishevelled character called Michael around when this happens.

Referee's Information: When the PCs get around to talking to him, Michael reveals that he's aware that they have a karmic-orgone grid-flux problem. Better yet, he knows how to fix it.

The party will not be able to escape this man. No matter where they go, there he'll be. Dissecting him to find out why won't work either. In the end, they should end up agreeing to do what he says, which is to wrap a small hut in reflective foil, then spend three nights inside it with no food and only their own urine to drink.

1: The characters come to in bed, in a nice hospital. They are told they have been experiencing flashbacks from some weird trauma, but they're alright now. So why are people always watching them and taking notes?

2: As 1, but this is still part of a bad trip -- after a further period of paranoia, the PCs wake up to find they are suffering delusions from drugs, food poisoning or lack of oxygen (e.g. from a faulty starship life support or very thin atmosphere).

3: The party is arrested for trespass and criminal damage to someone's shed. Michael never resurfaces, but their luck remains poor.

4: After doing the shed thing, the party suddenly get very lucky, then everything settles down to normal. They never see Michael again.

5: Michael is a psychopath psionicist, who feeds off distress and discomfort. Now that he has found out he can play with the party, he'll never leave them alone.

6: As 5, but when the PCs finally fall for the shed trick, the overload from the three nights of anguish is too much for Michael, who dies with a smile on his face. His parting gift is a psychic residue which telepathically convinces everyone who visits the shed that the characters killed him.

S21. The Black Widow Deal

Required Skills: Merchant.

Required Equipment: Starship (with available cargo space).

Players' Information: The PCs find a potentially lucrative cargo deal with the broker Neels Rago, an alien of a local minor race who speaks broken merchant pidgin. The owner of the cargo is a wealthy family of the planetary mercantile houses named Elmarra, headed by a woman named Rainalla. Rago tells the party they must all attend a ritual dinner to allow the merchant family to evaluate them before doing business. The broker assures the PCs that the family considers it a mere formality and the deal is as good as sealed. The broker will be the designated translator for the evening.

Referee's Information: Neels has made a serious error in the negotiations with the Elmarra and has misunderstood the true meaning of the dinner. The primary goal of the dinner is to

arrange a marriage for the eldest daughter of the mercantile house. The offer of the cargo was to be payment to Neels for arranging the marriage contract. This dinner continues for many hours, during which time the PCs are given expensive gifts, several of the women of the household will flirt with the men (without any apparent jealousy from the local men) and a wide variety of food and drink will be served, including intoxicating liquor. The male crew will be evaluated during the dinner and then the one chosen by the bride's mother will be offered a special beverage. After consuming this drink the chosen merchant will pass out.

The family will insist that their guests stay the night (they should be quite tired now and at least one of them is already asleep). In the morning, the now-married crewman awakes in bed with the bride and is told he cannot leave the mercantile house. The main goal of the marriage is to father a new heir to the household fortune; since the house is a matriarchal lineage the man will have to stay until a female child is born. The PCs will have to try to explain the misunderstanding and extricate their colleague from this situation.

1: The household will be greatly offended, and demand the crew pay the bride price of the daughter (2D x kCr10). Refusal to pay will result in attack by the household guards. Paying the bride price also requires the return of the valuable gifts received by the crew during the party.

2: As 1, but the bride price is 1D x kCr100!

3: The PCs are accused of committing marriage contract fraud on the respected merchant house of Elmarra. The local authorities are contacted and the PCs' ship is impounded until a formal hearing. After 2 months of imprisonment and 1D x kCr10 legal fees, the case is reviewed. The crew is reluctantly released by the court and found innocent by technicality (they couldn't understand the language), but is warned never to return to the planet.

4: As 3, but the case takes 4 months and costs 2D x kCr10.

5: The household will 'understand' the mistake, request the gifts be returned and allow the crew to leave. They will then hire a member of the local assassin's guild to kill the offending 'husband'.

6: The husband awakes to find his hands and feet bound in preparation for an elaborate execution ritual. The religion of the mercantile house demands the execution of the husband the morning after the marriage nuptials. The screams of the intended victim should allow the other crewmembers a reasonable chance to rescue him before the final chants are completed and a ceremonial stone dagger is plunged into his heart.

S22. The Skin Trade

Required Skills: Investigation.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: One or more of the PCs are kidnapped while away from their colleagues.

Referee's Information: The captives are taken to an illegal slave market held in a remote region where a number of notorious criminals and their rich patrons are gathering. It's up to the rest of the party to find them and effect a rescue.

1: A passer-by remembers seeing the PC seized by a man wearing a slaver tattoo. The party can eventually track down their colleague(s) who are due to be sold as simple labourers. The slavers are well armed but security is lax.

2: As 1, but the victim(s) have already been sold to work in a hazardous mine.

3: As 1 but having shown interest in the slavers, the party are then hired by a rare and strictly pacifist alien species to rescue fellow aliens who have been taken by the slavers.

4: As 3, but a zealous environmentalist group are also attempting to rescue the alien slaves.

5: As 1, 3 or 4 but the slaves are also organising a revolt which may aid or hinder the party's efforts.

6: As any of the above, but several of the buyers fall out during the auction leading to armed conflict and possible harm to the slaves.

S23. Rapture

Required Skills: Investigation.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: The PCs are aboard a pleasure cruise liner when it suffers a slight misjump and arrives far out in the destination system – it will be three days late arriving at the starport. Over the first day, the ship experiences a seemingly unconnected series of murders.

Referee's Information:

1-2: Through investigation, the PCs can discover that there are a number of addicts of the designer recreational drug "Rapture" aboard who are running out of supplies. In desperation, one user killed a fellow user to steal their tabs. The other Rapture users got panicky and when one particularly paranoid user mistook the innocent attentions of a passenger for that of the murderer, they killed the passenger in "self defence".

3-4: As 1-2, but there is a Rapture drug-runner aboard with a large stash he is willing to protect at all costs. The addicts have heard rumours there's a dealer on board and will use any means necessary to find the stash.

5-6: As 3-4, except the liner has actually misjumped into an uninhabited system – a fact the crew have been hiding from the passengers. Panic and violence ensue when this is discovered. Hopefully there is at least a gas giant here...

S24. Smuggling Blues

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship.

Players' Information: The PCs' ship starts developing minor malfunctions that slowly grow worse with time.

Referee's Information: Upon investigation it is discovered that vermin (small rodents, beetles or something more alien) have come aboard with a normal cargo. The creatures have escaped, bred, and are causing havoc with the ship's systems.

1-2: The infestation can be controlled using traps, poison, etc. but the ship's systems will require minor repairs at the next starport.

3: As 1-2, but the infestation can only be controlled by evacuating all areas of the ship.

4: The ship has to be abandoned to the infestation and the crew and passengers attempt to abandon ship in too few life pods/launches.

5-6: As one of the above, but the vermin are a valuable component of a black market drug and were placed in the cargo by smugglers. They intend to remove the creatures at the destination world and will be 'unhappy' if they have been lost.

S25. The Ship Collector

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship.

Players' Information: A series of ships have disappeared along a well-used jump route – many more than can be explained by jump error. Ships are beginning to be unwilling to travel the route. The PCs may be hired to investigate the disappearances or may just be unfortunate enough to find out why the ships go missing...

Referee's Information:

1-2: A rich, mad, eccentric has been preying on vulnerable shipping. His intention is to collect an example of every known 'species' of ship. Thankfully, he wishes to take his prey intact and will rely upon intimidation rather than the firepower of his huge, well-equipped ship. The victims of his attacks are given the opportunity to join the pirates or be marooned on a remote world.

3-4: As 1-2, but the victims are actually sold as slaves by the opportunistic First Mate.

5-6: As 3-4, but victims who are of little slave or ransom value are spaced by the First Mate.

S26. Hair Today...

Required Skills: Investigation.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: As a female PC is wandering in startown, they are kidnapped by a team of ruffians. Her colleagues must discover what has become of her.

Referee's Information: The red light district of startown has been suffering a steady stream of disappearances. At first it was just lone women but now girls from better establishments are vanishing. No corpses have turned up, which the local police find unusual. However, this also means they are less bothered finding out what has happened to the disappeared women. The popular idea is that they have just run away.

1-2: A madman with a compulsion to collect is seeking to capture a girl with every colour of hair and skin. He keeps them locked in furnished rooms where he can spy on his collection and gloat. Some of them have been there for years, resulting in disturbing psychological effects.

3-4: As 1-2, but the henchmen regard the captives as their slaves and treat them badly.

5-6: As 1-2, but the collector only keeps his victims alive for a few days until he can have them permanently 'preserved'.

S27. Fanatic

Required Skills: Investigation, Medical.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: One or more of the PCs suffers a fever on a low tech world. The locals regard them as cursed and will not provide aid.

Referee's Information: A charismatic cult leader became ruler of this world by dint of strange ceremonies, wild promises and the fact that his opponents have a convenient tendency to die. Their affliction initially appears to be a normal fever but they die a few days later, raving with wasted limbs. The ruler claims it is the divine will.

1-2: Careful investigation reveals that the cult leader's stronghold – an ancient building with a changing history of use – is connected directly to the ancient sewerage and water system. The cult infects each victim's water supply with a tailored disease. The PCs were affected accidentally.

3-4: As 1-2, but the cult have also been adding psychedelic and psychotropic drugs to the general water supply to pacify the populace.

5-6: As 1-2 or 3-4, but the PCs have been targeted deliberately because they offended the cult in some way (perhaps by accident).

A selection of more detailed patrons.

E1. Ghost In The Machine

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship.

Players' Information: On arriving in a relatively minor system, a small error in the jump calculation places the PCs' ship far out in the system – several weeks manoeuvre from the target world. It would be far more efficient to perform an in-system jump, but the PCs' ship does not have enough fuel to jump again.

After a day's travel, the PCs encounter a small, badly damaged space base which appears to be abandoned. Scans reveal it is inoperative, with no energy emissions of any kind. It is not possible to tell if it was attacked or victim to some horribly violent accident. However, the fuel tanks appear to be undamaged on external inspection.

Referee's Information: The station is a secret psionics research station. When the party enter the station, or EVA to within a few metres of the station, each of them starts to hear unintelligible voices as if from a crossed communications channel. The station damage is from internal explosions and strange distortions. Strangely, the core portions of the station have operable life support that has simply been turned off. The base must be powered up to access the fuel storage; life support will automatically be turned on with the power. At the same time, ghosts begin to appear... (The referee should secretly determine psionic ability for any PCs who have not already ascertained their capabilities.)

1: The station crew died when they were attacked by pirates. However, they have been preserved as non-corporeal psionic entities. Some of these ghosts will appear to attack the characters physically but the damage inflicted is in the victim's mind; to a non-psionic this damage will appear totally real so the PC will react accordingly, including losing consciousness. Any victim 'killed' in this manner will actually die and, unless resuscitated or put in cold sleep, will become a ghost themselves. Psionics must make a Formidable Psionic task (draining half their psi strength) to realise the damage is imaginary.

2: The base is a trap for Zhodani. The ghosts are psionic illusions, created by an experimental

system intended to combat Zhodani psionics. They can only damage psionically-sensitive sophonts, but such damage is permanent.

3: The base is a Zhodani trap, that destroys normal life and renders its victims into psionic ghosts. The ghost attacks reduce their victim's INT and END (*GT: IQ and HT*); when these both reach zero, the character becomes comatose and assumes a ghostly psionic form. After a number of hours equal to the victim's psi strength, brain death occurs and the ghost cannot return to its body. If healed prior to this point, the PC will recover but may discover that this has brought out previously latent psionic abilities.

4: The ghosts are personnel who entered emergency low berths prior to the base being attacked. Damage to the experimental psionic equipment drove the other personnel – and then the pirates – quite mad. Subsequent power losses killed the low berth personnel but created psionic revenants from them. Some ghosts may be hostile to the PCs (attacking as per 1) but others will be co-operative and eventually inform the PCs that they must leave the station quickly. The power-up has activated the damaged psionic equipment, which will drive them mad unless they leave within 1D hours. They must race against the clock, and the troublesome ghosts, to get the fuel.

5: The ghosts are created by the mind of an 8-year-old Zhodani child – an experimental subject comatose in an emergency low berth running off battery power. Powering up the station has switched the berth to mains power but damage means the power isn't reaching the low berth. The child is on the verge of death but may be saved using appropriate medical skills. The ghosts are distorted by the child's perspective (Imperial Marine guards will be ferocious and animal-like, the Navy researchers will be cold and menacingly evil, a Zhodani noble ghost may be present in a guardian role). Once the child is awakened, the ghosts vanish. Eventually, the PCs will learn that the child, who has amazing psionic powers, caused the damage to the station.

6: The ghosts are holograms created by pirates (possibly Vargr) to frighten people away from the base, which is their secret refuelling depot. The system has little pirate activity but rumours of ghost ships abound. The pirates use

the base solely for refuelling so as not to arouse suspicion. Careful inspection will reveal the station's true nature, but the party may not have long before a corsair arrives...

E2. Achilles Station

Location: Spinward Marches (2120).

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship.

Players' Information: The PCs' ship suffers a misjump and arrives in the nominally empty parsec 2120 in the Lanth subsector of the Spinward Marches. To their astonishment (and relief) their sensors detect a group of asteroids just three days travel away, and emanating weak radio signals. Closer in, they can determine that two smaller rocks are being mined and a thriving colony of perhaps a thousand people is living on a huge ice asteroid. Once detected by the colony, the PCs will be challenged by a well-armed destroyer, of obsolete manufacture but undoubted power, commanded by a "Captain Biktor".

Unless the PCs are hostile, Biktor will allow them to dock at the colony. He explains that the colonists are mostly miners from worked-out claims in other systems, plying their trade here at "Achilles Station". They ship crudely processed metals in exchange for food and manufactured goods, but most of their money is made selling fuel to the occasional starships that pass this way. If the PCs don't explain that they misjumped, Biktor expresses some surprise that an Imperial ship knows of the station. However, he will allow the PCs to trade for fuel and other supplies.

While near the colony, the PCs will note that in addition to seekers and an occasional trader, there seem to be one or more unmarked military ships resembling corsairs... and they might question the purpose of Biktor's own ship.

Referee's Information: The Lanth subsector is a sparse grouping of stars with the Sword Worlds to rimward and a branch of the Spinward Main to trailing. Communication between Lanth and other Imperial worlds is slow, and trade somewhat limited. For this reason, a base in the sparse interior of the subsector has significant value. Some years back the misjumped Scout ship *Unforgivable Insult* discovered the ice asteroid, which provided them with fuel to reach D'Ganzio Naval Base for repairs. They reported to Scout authorities on Lanth that it was a possible waypoint for naval vessels, being Jump-4 from the bases at Lanth, Equus and Lunion, and a possible route for type S Scout ships to reach Lanth from

the Scout base at Ivendo (2319) on the Spinward Main. Officially, this report was never followed up.

Achilles Station is of huge value as a refuelling base, so why hasn't the Imperial Navy simply taken over? In truth, they are already in charge: for all that Biktor's battered destroyer looks like a pirate, it was obtained from the mothballed reserve fleet at Trin only a couple of years ago. The crew are largely ex-service personnel, with a few scouts and colonists. Biktor is a Commander in Imperial Naval Intelligence but keeps to his psionic-screened quarters and bridge. The station is not intended to remain secret – in fact it is a trap for invading Zhodani. Should the Zho's arrive, the ice asteroid will be vaporised with a huge fusion warhead, the existence of which is known only to Biktor and his executive officer. Without fuel, the Zhodani would hopefully be stranded.

Ling Standard Products has an exclusive contract for the metal extracted from the asteroids, and contributed most of the start-up costs. They believe Biktor to be a privateer of some sort, but are willing to do business with him.

Corsairs do use the base, but never for long. Some have become part of Biktor's system defence squadron, while others return infrequently, if at all. Achilles Station is neither a haven for pirates nor too inclined to check up on the background of ships which call. Biktor secretly betrays the worst pirates to the Navy.

On leaving, Biktor will ask the PCs to be discreet about the station's location. If the party report the station's existence to the Imperial authorities, the latter will show surprisingly little interest – dismissing it as outside their jurisdiction.

1: A heavily armed merchant arrives at the colony and begins selling a strange variety of merchandise which appears (on inspection) to be pirated. If the PCs ask too many questions they will be told to "mind their own business" by the merchant crew, the colonists, and even Biktor.

2: As 1, but the merchant has battle damage. While it is being repaired at the station, its crew will be very sensitive to over-inquisitive PCs.

3: Biktor's ship suddenly recalls all crew from shore leave and heads out of the colony. Biktor is investigating a sensor blip which might be a Zhodani scout, but in reality it's a false alarm.

4: As 3, but Biktor finds a Zhodani scout which he attacks but, deliberately, allows to escape.

5: Biktor becomes suspicious of a new trader ship arriving at the station which he believes might carry Zhodani spies. The PCs will notice covert surveillance of the ship by Biktor's crew.

6: As 5, but Biktor suspects the PCs of having Zhodani spies among them!

E3. The Spinward Marches Tour

Required Skills: Combat.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: The party is approached by Geoff Qwon, the agent/manager of the neopop group "Shattered Crystal". They are very popular, have just released a new album "Misjump", and are starting a tour of the Spinward Main to promote it. If the party have the appropriate experience Geoff will say he's heard good things about them, and wishes to hire them (kCr5/month each) as the security team for the tour. They will provide the band's personal security, oversee arrangements with local venue security, and manage the protection of the box office (tickets and takings). In reality, Geoff adds, they'll also end up serving as babysitters for the band. It's inevitable, he adds, tiredly – everyone associated with the tour ends up doing that.

Referee's Information: The schedule is pretty rigorous, with 20 systems to be visited and up to 14 shows in each system. There will be a two week rest period in the middle of the tour. Geoff may charter the party's vessel if it is large enough for the band and retinue (five band members plus 15-30 odd techs, roadies, flunkies, groupies and other hangers-on). This could easily be the basis for a lengthy campaign.

At the beginning of the tour, life is a giant party. The party may be sucked into the lifestyle of the band, which revolves around loud music, self-adoration and general chaos. Characters participating too enthusiastically in this lifestyle should suffer small negative modifiers (secretly added by the referee adding) to task rolls.

1: After one stop the Vargr drummer falls under the influence of a charismatic Vargr supremacist. He announces that he's not going to play with these "souk'k monkeys" (an obscene insult) any more unless they make him the head of the band and rename themselves Vargrr'ok'hirok'. Naturally, the band refuses so he stomps off and joins the leader of the sect. Geoff requests the party to go and retrieve him – without undue violence! This will be a complicated process unless one of the party is a Vargr.

2: It was a lucrative two week tour on this planet. Two days before the party is scheduled to lift for the next stop, two roadies grab the weeks' box office takings – MCr3 – and vanish into the city. The party have only 48 hours to track them down and retrieve the cash.

3: The bass player picks up a young-looking groupie after the show. If the PCs check, she says she's of legal age but the next morning her

father (alerted to her whereabouts by her friends) storms into the bass player's rooms and finds them misbehaving. Since he is from a culture that highly values a daughter's chastity, he's enraged. Under local laws he is entitled to either demand that the offending man marry his daughter (a problem, since the bass player already has two wives and a couple of girlfriends) or can challenge him to a duel to satisfy his honour.

4: The Harlik-le-el player falls in with some people after the show, and comes back three days later with a new "spiritual adviser" – a Disciple of the Bright Way (see *101 Religions*). The Disciples believe that the "Face of the Deity" can be seen by viewing naked jump space, using a secret combination of drugs and meditation to avoid the motion sickness and even madness that exposure to jump space causes to most people. While under the effects of such drugs, the Harlik-le-el player is persuaded by his adviser to suit up, enter an airlock, open the outer door and lean out a bit to see "the face of god". Such close proximity to the jump field may drive one or both insane; the efficacy of the drugs against these effects is by no means as 'guaranteed' as the adviser makes out. The drugs also induce drowsiness and reduce cognitive ability (temporarily), such that they might well not have rigged their suits correctly...

5: While playing a show in a more conservative city, an anonymous tip leads the police to conduct a raid on the hotel in which the band is staying (the PCs may be caught up in the raid). Naturally, various 'substances' are found which may or may not be legal. However, there's a pompous uptight politician running for re-election, who decides the band are examples of "offworld depravity". There will be a lot of media interest in the event. The party will need to stage a jailbreak or find the right person to bribe, before the case comes to court.

6: Following 4, the ship's engineer has been particularly quiet for several weeks. Unknown to anyone else, he also came under the influence of the Disciple and became hooked on the adviser's drugs – he procured a supply prior to the events in 4. While moving out to a jump point, he takes a large dose of the drugs. As the drives power up for jump, he locks himself in the main engineering room and begins broadcasting a weird, psychotic, rambling diatribe. Anyone able to monitor the jump power-up from another terminal in the ship will realise he has altered the sequence and will cause a misjump. Assuming no one manages to stop him, after one week, the ship exits jump space many parsecs off course, in the atmosphere of a low population, low tech world. The ship's residual velocity is too great to prevent

it crashing into a remote area of the world, although good piloting can reduce the severity of the crash. Once the party, band and followers find the nearest habitation they will learn that occasionally starships land at a village on the far side of this continent. This distance must be traversed on foot or using draft animals. Offworld currency has no value here and the inhabitants have deliberately chosen a low tech life so high tech goods are taboo. If the band can be convinced to stop whining, they may be able to raise funds by playing (acoustic instruments only, of course) their way across the continent. The music preferred by the locals is considerably different to the band's usual neopop, though...

E4. Last Rites

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship with 1 spare stateroom and 2 dT cargo space.

Players' Information: The party is contacted by Mijel Tanklev, a senior executive from CHV Industries, a local subsector-wide corporation. His son, Vidor Tanklev, was recently killed in an accident, and he needs the body to be conveyed to their nearby homeworld for the funeral. Mijel will travel with the cargo; apart from this he is unaccompanied. He offers kCr10 total, payable on arrival at the homeworld. If asked about the accident he will explain that his son, an executive at the same corporation, was killed in an industrial incident at a local plant. In reality, his son was undertaking an inspection when a venting of poison gas killed him and several other staff. CHV has managed to hush up the affair to prevent local outrage, but the PCs may pick up rumours from the local press or from CHV employees.

The body is stored in a large metallic coffin, taking up 2 dT of space. The coffin is inlaid with numerous strange symbols, similar to hieroglyphics, although the symbols are not representative of any beings known to exist on any local worlds. Tanklev explains that the coffin is an antique, and that he purchased it locally. If the PCs, or local customs officials, ask for the coffin to be opened, they will find the body to be in excellent condition; it has already been subjected to high tech preservation techniques at Tanklev's employers' expense.

Mijel Tanklev, Bureaucrat, Age 50, skilled in administration and computers and a good leader. He can also handle a handgun.

Tall and slender, with tightly cropped white hair and a light tan complexion, Tanklev could probably pass for someone in their early 40s. His

taste in clothes seems expensive – he favours toned grey, well-cut business suits from up-market brand names. Although unfaillingly polite, he does not engage in small talk and will spend the journey immersed in business reports. Occasionally, during the night, he can be heard to scream in his sleep.

Referee's Information:

1: On arrival at the starport, Mijel's grieving wife (who is the head of CHV) meets them. In addition to the money, the Tanklev family provide the PCs with a letter of introduction they can use at corporate offices throughout the subsector.

2: The body in the coffin is actually that of Chibor Ragen, the local CHV head of operations. The accident which killed him was due to a failure in a new, secret industrial process, of which the excellent preservation of the body is a side-effect. The body is being taken home for further analysis. The local press and the authorities are both on the trail of Tanklev to find out what really went wrong, and would probably close down the local CHV plant if they knew the truth.

3: The body in the coffin is that of Kenzi Zahl, a local journalist who was murdered by local CHV operatives when he seemed to be getting too close to the cause of the accident at the local plant. Tanklev is smuggling the body offworld. Zahl's employers are searching for him and have alerted the local authorities but only have sketchy details of his suspicions about CHV.

4: As 3, but Zahl has been kidnapped and is in cold sleep. The cold sleep will last until just before the ship goes into jump, at which point Zahl will wake up and start screaming and hammering on the inside of the coffin. When released, he will directly accuse Tanklev, who will respond by drawing a gun and attempting to kill Zahl. He may then bribe the PCs to forget this incident or, in an extreme situation, he may take a hostage or try to take over the ship.

5: The coffin is an ancient artefact that Tanklev has stolen from a local archaeological dig. Little is known about its background – there has been no time for an extended investigation. One of Tanklev's fellow executives in CHV is a collector of such artefacts and is willing to pay good money for such a specimen. The body is that of Halley Ganjak, the local rogue who organised the theft. Ganjak is in cold sleep. He will wake before the ship goes into jump; however he will remain in the coffin for the course of the journey. Various facilities to filter air and process waste have been provided within the coffin but Tanklev will need to smuggle him food and drink from time to time.

6: Everything is as Tanklev has described; however the coffin is actually a semi-sentient device with various psionic abilities. These abilities will be triggered when the ship goes into jump and will last for the duration of the jump. The effect is similar to that of a poltergeist, e.g. items will move around, levers and buttons are activated at random, minor devices may fail. Although none of the activity is malevolent, some of the resulting effects may cause the ship to misjump. Attempts by any psionics in the group to establish contact with the coffin (if they manage to work out the coffin is behind the mysterious occurrences) will only have the effect of intensifying the coffin's psionic activity. Shortly before the ship is due to exit jump, the coffin will telekinetically animate the body of Vidor Tanklev, which will leave the hold area and wander, jerkily and erratically, around the ship. Although the animated corpse is incapable of speech, it will seek out some substance (oil, jam, paint, whatever) which it will use to daub a pattern on a wall. Somebody may recognise this as a representation of a constellation visible from the world on which the coffin was found. The coffin's activity will cease when the ship exits jumpspace.

E5. Raise The Titanic

Required Skills: Combat, Medical, Investigation.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: A representative of Chen Associates, a local gravitics consultancy firm, approaches the party. Chen has been contracted by General Products to oversee the repair of a failed grav city on a nearby world. The Chen Company, having dealt with megacorps before, are suspicious of GP's intentions, and intend to send a team of independent bodyguards on the mission. The pay is Cr700 per person per day, with a Cr20,000 bonus for the group on completion. Any character in the PCs' team with medical skills is offered an extra Cr100 per day.

The grav city in question, Alchan, was the home of three million people. About 6 months ago, for reasons currently unknown, the main contra-grav system failed, along with the four backup systems. Emergency compensation systems allowed the city to make a "soft landing"; however, the resulting damage caused the death of about a quarter of the city's population. In the subsequent period most of the dead have been cleared, and the survivors evacuated to a hastily established refugee station about 30 miles away. However, the city has not yet been sterilised to

remove the diseases which ensued and protective suits may be required in some sectors (high tech General Products protective suits will be supplied if necessary).

Referee's Information: The local authorities have requested that General Products engage an independent group to re-initialise the grav systems onboard the city, and to report on any anomalies which may arise, in the hope that evidence may be uncovered concerning the cause of the disaster. The Chen team is almost all former senior consultants at Imperial Gravtech, a gravitics subsidiary of Stermmetal Horizons. They generally have a poor view of General Products' quality standards, and will be quite snuffy about the technology in the city. The PCs will be positioned by the Chen team as Chen employees. They are given uniforms bearing the Chen Associates logo, and are asked to pretend that they are Chen's permanent security team.

Optionally, if the PCs' team has sufficient gravitics and other technical skills, they could be taken on directly by General Products to deal with the raising of the grav city, supplemented by other expert NPCs where necessary – and perhaps an NPC security group.

The Chen Associates Group

Michael Chen, Scientist, Male, Age 46.

The former Chief Technology Officer at Imperial Gravtech, with an impressive knowledge of gravitics. Chen led the breakaway group to set up his own freelance organisation; some of his team have shares in the business. Tall, dark, friendly and charismatic. He will get very wrapped up in the technical problems once on-site, and will leave most of the detailed running of the operation to Ms Goskin.

Jeannette Chen, Scientist, Female, Age 34.

Chen's second wife (the first is still alive, on Chen's homeworld – they maintain amicable relations). Slim, good looking, friendly. Will look after most computer systems issues for the team and is a gravitics expert in her own right.

Karin Goskin, Bureaucrat, Female, Aged 36.

Chen's Personal Assistant did not come from Gravtech but was recruited from another technology company. Responsible for most of the actual running of the organisation. An employee rather than a stakeholder – does not have a share in the business.

Jan Casley, Scientist, Male, Aged 32.

Chen's star research assistant, now deputy head of Chen Associates. Comes across as an arrogant know-it-all. All too willing to start an argument, except with Chen himself. However,

since he has no fighting skills, he may pick his moments more carefully with the PCs.

Veshan Kulek, Scientist, Male, Aged 36.

The second research assistant. Generally withdrawn and quiet. He doesn't tend to respond to Casley's frequent taunts about being "slow".

Gellar Quiron, Ex-Scout, Female, Aged 42.

Like Goskin, an employee rather than a stakeholder. She was recruited for her starship piloting and engineering skills and will be responsible for any practical engineering work (on the grav city, there will be similar systems to those aboard a ship, for example the power systems). Friendly, with plenty of "old scout" tales, and will latch onto any ex-scouts among the PCs.

The Setting

An emergency habitat has been set up alongside the crashed city, along with a landing pad for Chen's ship, and others for GP supply ships. The city has the shape of a flattened sphere. There are about 300 grav modules set around the outside rim of the city, in clusters of 10; these are managed from a control room near the centre of the structure, and also connected to 4 emergency control rooms equidistant around the city. They are also connected to the power grid, the computing net and other such systems.

Each of the grav modules, control systems (main and backup) and the power grid require inspection, using the appropriate skills (e.g. gravitics for the grav modules). Each grav module requires replacement on 7+ on 2D; replacements are being held at the General Products station on the starport, and can be ferried over in batches of up to 12 units at a time.

The city can be raised with a minimum of half the grav modules and at least one control system operational. Imperial regulations – which the Chen group will be familiar with – call for at least 3 of the control centres to be online. The subsequent reliability of the system is left to the referee.

External inspection of the city, and entrance to the city, is accomplished using grav belts. However the Chen team, from a position of informed paranoia, will also use magnetic tethers and boots to attach to the exterior of the city while work is underway. About 100 General Products representatives, including security personnel, are working on other aspects of the city repair. The team will be required to liaise with the GP head of operations, the head of security, and several of the technical personnel.

Event Table: Each day, roll 1D. On 5+ an event occurs; roll 2D and consult the following list:

2: An assassination attempt is made against one of the Chen team.

3: A survivor is found within the city. If pressed, they will claim to have evidence of suspicious activity since the disaster (as appropriate to the outcome selected below).

4: The PCs find 1D bodies.

5: A grav nullifier is set off in one of the grav module clusters. Grav systems within 1D metres of the nullifier fail, including grav belts.

6: An assassination attempt is made against one of the GP representatives.

7: 2D bodies are recovered within the city.

8: A refugee demonstration occurs.

9: As 8, but followed by a riot.

10: A fire starts within the city, threatening the power grid, and has to be contained.

11-12: GP medical personnel announce a disease alert within a sector of the city. Work stops while the sector is sterilised.

Possible Outcomes

1: The city failed because the grav systems supplied by General Products were faulty. Careful examination of the grav modules that do not require replacement will detect further potentially faulty units. General Products will accept the report but ask that it be kept confidential so that they can "manage the situation".

2: As 1, but General Products are already aware of the fault. They resent the Chen presence at the site and will try to sabotage the group's activities. Optionally, one of the Chen team may be a traitor working for GP.

3: The city was sabotaged by one of General Products' competitors. The saboteurs have infiltrated the GP clean-up team and will try to undermine the Chen team's activities. Optionally, one of the Chen team may be a traitor working for the competition.

4: As 3, however the guilty party are Sternmetal Horizons. The saboteurs have infiltrated the GP clean-up team and will try to undermine the Chen team's activities. Optionally, one of the team is a traitor working for Sternmetal.

5: As 3, however the sabotage has been conducted by a local terrorist organisation, committed to the destruction of the grav cities. The saboteurs have infiltrated the GP clean-up team and will try to undermine the Chen team's activities, or plant evidence incriminating GP. Optionally, one of the team is a terrorist infiltrator.

6: As 3, however the Chen team conducted the sabotage to enhance their reputation. They will use the exercise as an opportunity to vindicate

themselves and to remove any evidence of their sabotage. However, a survivor (found in the city, or one of the refugees) will recognise one of the Chen group as having visited shortly *before* the city's fall – raising the PCs' suspicions. Optionally, one of the Chen team is an undercover agent for GP or local or Imperial law enforcement.

E6. Down These Mean Streets

Required Skills: Investigation.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: A rich businessman – Harland Sim – approaches the group to search for his missing son Jaime. Pay is kCr2 per day plus reasonable expenses, for the whole group, plus a kCr10 bonus when Jaime is returned alive. Jaime Sim (age 27) has been missing for 10 days and his father is very worried. Jaime has been moving in the "wrong sort of circles"; he has a gambling habit and Harland has repeatedly had to bail him out of trouble. This time, something snapped: Harland argued with Jaime, and Jaime walked out. When Harland had calmed down, Jaime had left home and was nowhere to be found.

Last night Harland received a message telling him to hand over kCr100 if he ever wants to see his son again. Harland claims not to be able to pay this ransom, although the PCs can find out that he lives in a large waterfront property in one of the most sought-after parts of town.

Referee's Information: The party should visit the local bars and gambling dives to get evidence that can lead them to Jaime. In the process, they should meet:

Clara, Jaime's 22-year old sister. She will flirt outrageously with one or more PCs, and put on a show of not caring about what has happened to her brother. She's aware of the argument between her father and Jaime. She denies the stories about Jaime's gambling. She's not aware of the ransom demand.

Zevon Kandle, the gangster who runs the local gambling business. He's a tough guy who surrounds himself with "minders". He admits knowing Jaime and that Jaime owes him money, but he claims not to have seen Jaime for two weeks. Jaime has owed him money before and come through, so it will be a few more weeks before Zevon starts worrying – there are worse payers than Jaime Sim!

Vel Thayim, the local chief of police. He's not looking for Jaime; nobody asked him to. He knows Jaime – in fact Jaime has acted as an informant for him in the past, and he paid Jaime handsomely. As for Harland Sim, now there's a

guy who warrants further investigation... Where did he get that big house on his lousy, middle management salary?

Olaf Chaman, small-time cult leader. He runs a local retreat where Jaime has been staying while he "wrote a book, or his memoirs, or something". He left to move back in with his father about a month ago. One of Olaf's group acted as a runner for Jaime, liaising with Kandle and Thayim.

Selena Chaman is Olaf's daughter. She was the runner Jaime was using and was also his lover. She hasn't seen Jaime since he moved back in with his father. She's worried sick something terrible has happened to him and will give the PCs any help she can.

The specifics of this story (the style and fittings of Harland's residence, aliens as key NPCs, Jaime's gambling games, etc.) should be adapted to the world on which it is set. The meetings with these key NPCs should be interspersed with talking to barmen, waitresses, patrons, etc. at a variety of low-life venues (see *101 Rendezvous*). These contacts will eventually point them at the key NPCs.

In addition to using one of the following outcomes, the referee may opt to introduce another of the options as a red herring subplot.

1: Harland Sim has been spending way beyond his means. He recently took out an insurance policy on Jaime's life. Hired thugs are holding Jaime until it's convenient to have his body turn up so that Harland can collect.

2: One of Olaf Chaman's jobs was to take a ritual confession from Jaime; in the process he found out about Jaime's gambling and other bad habits. He asked Jaime to stop seeing Selena, but Jaime refused, so Olaf had some cultists kidnap him. The ransom demand is a cover: Chaman has finally decided that he must kill Jaime.

3: Clara and Jaime are working together, and have faked the kidnapping to blackmail their father for the money.

4: Zevon Kandle was under increasing pressure from the police until he found out Jaime was their informant. He plans to kill Jaime, but the ransom is a useful ruse and will pay off the debts Jaime owed him.

5: Vel Thayim is corrupt, as is half his force. He's been using the information from Jaime to blackmail Kandle for a cut of the takings. But Jaime began trying to blackmail Thayim with the threat of going to the press. He needs Jaime out of the way. He will ensure the ransom conditions are not met, to explain Jaime's corpse turning up.

6: As 3, but Jaime is working with Selena.

It's a well known Traveller axiom that every adventure starts or ends in a starport. The local news and rumours encountered around the starport often provide the spark for an adventure. These tidbits of information can be found on station bulletin boards, "wanted" notices or even in conversations overheard in a bar or shop.

News

⇒ Red Hand Claim Three Victims! ⇐

The terrorist group known as the Red Hand has claimed responsibility for the explosion killing three people in the capital last month. The group states they will "continue to fight against Imperial aggression until the nobles in power are thrown down". According to Marquis Tmezial, many have disregarded this latest act as that of "unfortunate extremists who cannot survive in a civilised world". However, security has increased noticeably at some local noble houses, including Count Paul Montarra, who said: "I might not believe those people are widely supported, but I'm not risking my young family on that assumption."

Record numbers of downport cargo handlers have been taking vacation time this week as part of their industrial action. As a result, traders are having to resort to hired help or direct payments to handlers to ensure timely loading and unloading. [NuFlash/2-3-12/Marg/item?=265](#)

◁ Perionis Sceptres Stolen! ▷

Jewellery collectors are concerned at a recent spate of thefts. Four Jeweller's Guild members have reported losses totalling kCr150, including the unique Perionis Sceptres that have been in the guild's Historical Society collection for over 100 years. In addition to Imperial investigations, the guild have hired independent agencies, creating "unnecessary tensions" according to the Ministry of Justice spokesperson. [NuzNow Inc]

PortNews: "Repos killed my partner" claims Olen Vikas of the *Eventualis* – one of a dozen small merchant vessels seized in the past few months across the subsector in acts of aggressive skip-tracing and repossession. Several law suits have been filed with the Imperial Ministry of Justice concerning undue violence used by the repo agents, including deadly force in response to crew members who have attempted to defend the vessel. Of the vessels seized some 15 crew have been killed; the remaining 32 crew are in custody awaiting trial. The IMOJ declined to comment.

Mines Closed Due To Spares Shortage

Three mining complexes have been shut down due to lack of spares for their power converter modules. The modules, by Nestoria Electronics, have been unavailable since the company went into Imperial Chapter 47.5C Bankruptcy 2 months ago. Existing supplies are exhausted and the mining corps are paying highly for anyone who can supply them. Several smaller firms have cut back on work and sold their converters for high prices and/or research data concessions.

The Toporek has been sighted again... This now-famous ghost ship was originally a reserve fleet fast frigate, lost during the Fourth Frontier War. The latest sighting was reported by two sensor operators on the bulk merchant freighter *Algotha*. Their official report stated the *Toporek* appeared on both passive sensors and long range visual. However, after inspecting the *Algotha's* sensor logs, its owners claimed "no such sensor reports exist". The two crewmen were fired within hours of producing a bootleg copy of the log. The crewmen and the log have since disappeared and are being sought by conspiracy fanatics.

Rumours

Violent starship repossessions are being undertaken by a new shadow corporation working on behalf of larger megacorps who wish to avoid any legal repercussions from direct involvement. The group allegedly uses ex-marines but no one will reveal the name of the repo corporation responsible for these repossessions.

Copies of the *Galactic Flora & Fauna* data-crystal by ForExcluTap has had some really revealing vids hacked into it showing several local celebrities having 'fun' together. The makers, are falling over themselves to get back the data-crystals, which were allegedly hacked by a disgruntled employee.

Local criminal syndicates have been unusually quiet over the past few weeks. Police sources indicate they are expecting some kind of conflict to erupt at any moment. Several weapons dealers in startown have experienced record sales lately.

It's rumoured that the police are investigating the disappearance of an FGMP-15 from an Imperial Marine Grav-APC at the starport two weeks ago. The marine who left it unattended has been severely disciplined. However, PortSec refuse to confirm or deny this story.

Recently zealous customs inspectors have been citing merchants for improper labelling of cargo containers, even where the stickers were only a few centimetres from the prescribed central position on the crates. Merchants have alleged that the inspectors are just trying to increase the number of bribes they can get per week.

Due to a sudden shortage of power converter modules for the local mining industry, several small mining companies have been burgled for these parts. The incredibly high black market prices have led to three reported burglaries and over a dozen internal and unreported thefts.

Robots all over the starport have been acting strangely. They have been more 'alert' than normal at times, and several have disappeared. Local authorities believe the missing robots were simply stolen, and discount the stories that the robots attained "higher intelligence" and decided to leave for a life of 'freedom' offworld.

Public Announcements

Do not allow anyone to handle your luggage
Do not accept gifts from anyone while waiting
to board your flight.

Violation of these directives may place yourself and others in needless danger. Please notify port security of any suspicious activity. Thank You.

NAV WARN: Space zone alpha-3 is off-limits to all shipping due to debris from the explosion of the trader *Yolanthis*. The corridor should be cleared within 48 hours by magno-dredge tugs.

◆◆◆◆MedCentral Notice◆◆◆◆

An outbreak of food poisoning at the "Faery Lights" restaurant has been identified as yuliesisia fungi. Crews having eaten at this restaurant within the last 24 hours are prohibited from flying and should report to port MedCentral immediately.

TradCom Widecall: All traders carrying type E/F grains or V-Nil foodstuffs should check for infestation with Crane's Bacteria brought in by a recent shipment. Infestations should be reported to Port Decon. Liability for compensation currently rests with the importer of the contaminated shipment.

Recall Notice: ForExcluTap Inc. are offering a replacement plus a full 100% refund for returns of their *Galactic Flora & Fauna* dat-crystal which has a number of errors in its indexing system.

◆◆◆◆MedCentral Notice◆◆◆◆

Air irritant warning! Pollution levels are at an all time high this week. All persons prone to respiratory problems should wear their filter-masks.

Recall Notice: All purchasers of the XHairs™ ship gunnery package versions 3.2f-k should return their software to a stockist of Lazware Inc. goods for a free replacement. These versions may suffer targeting mis-calibration with certain makes of turret installation.

TradCom Widecall: Ships with freshers fitted by QikFlud Crew Relief Inc. who have experienced an explosive blow-back due to build up of methane should contact QikFlud for a free filter upgrade. Should the QikFlud toilet unit begin vibrating during use, vacate the area immediately!

Adverts

Problems with jumping where you want, when you want? Move up to Hyperlight™ nav mapping with our library of fine-tuned jump routes and one year's free co-ord updates from all good starports.

Wanted: Information on the whereabouts of Inchi Fanga, a technician at Extrax Mining. Fanga disappeared 8 days ago at the same time as a quantity of mining tools and a sealed air/raft.

REWARD OF Cr2,500

Three pet Pomrafi were stolen two weeks ago from the Baroness Reliss Mylagian. These pets are very temperature-sensitive and cannot survive for long outside their specially designed cold weather habitats. The reward is for any information leading to the safe return of the pets.

Wanted: Mechanic for surface starport cargo loading maintenance division. Excellent pay and benefits. Apply at the Main Terminal.

Good Pay for Night Work

Bouncer required at the Cold Fusion Club. A fun place to work. Nigella@coldfusion.dport.local.

GET Redundant Clones TICKETS NOW!

Due to good fortune (okay, a jump drive failure on the *Forever Dawn*) the notorious counter-culture musical band **Redundant Clones** have a layover of fourteen days in system. A whole **three** additional concerts have been scheduled, including a charity performance with your local favourites *Frequent Lift*. These tickets will sell quickly, so get your tickets early – RedCloAdv Inc.

Make A Difference In Your Work! customs inspectors are needed for the upcoming harvest domes export season. No experience necessary, all training provided. Bonus for certified shipboard skills or combat training. Apply PortSec103A.

These are little nuggets of information that a referee can apply to a world to help add flavour to it and, potentially, as a 'seed' for adventure ideas.

1. This world's **universities are heavily politicised**, and don't co-operate so much as they compete, so archaeology is conducted à la Indiana Jones. Valuable sites of pre-human settlement are claimed by institutions which don't have the resources to investigate them properly but refuse to let anyone else do so.

2. Certain **ancient alien settlement remains** here are famed for their aesthetic appeal and are important tourist attractions. There are a few good sites which are as yet much less well known (or even undiscovered) but many more that are overrated and little more than tourist traps.

3. Nomadic animal herders provide the sparse population of this fairly inhospitable, low tech world. However, they must have **once had access to high technology** for they have been using satellite navigation and other high tech nav aids to herd their beasts for centuries.

4. The local environment is either cold with a thin atmosphere, very warm and humid, or very hot and dry. **Protective gear is a necessity** for humans who live or work outside the centres of settlement, but the local lifeforms are well adapted to the conditions.

5. This culture has a peculiar **taboo against writing** and depends on oral culture, but maintains a surprisingly high tech level through rote learning, memorisation, and apprenticeship.

6. This **culture is very strongly family-oriented**. Unlike most Solomani cultures, it has retained social organisation along kinship lines through technological advances – something more typical in Vilani culture. The locals extend these principles to offworlders, regarding them as extended members of the appropriate families according to their occupation and social grouping.

7. This high population planet's agriculture is based on the few imported species genetically engineered to adapt to planetary conditions. In spite of precautions, there is now a fast-spreading and **virulent disease killing the key food animals**. Thousands of people are nearing starvation. If the outbreak is not checked, it could be a major planetary disaster affecting billions.

8. A colony several centuries old has suffered **a loss in agricultural productivity** over the last

two generations. The colony is small and doesn't have a good research institute to solve the problem, so the government has been appealing for outside help for some time but to no avail. (The problem is a gradual build-up of trace minerals in the soil which poison the crops, something that "more fertiliser" doesn't fix. Reversing this requires complex agrochemical treatments from an offworld source.)

9. A new settlement is having difficulty because it depends for transportation on a river which is prone to **unpredictable and severe flooding**, yet at other times may suddenly run low of water, making it almost impossible to navigate at times.

10. In one region of this planet, high humidity and an insidious lifeform make **long-term storage of food very difficult**, even with good food preservation technology.

11. **Tensions are rising between two key cities** situated on the same river. Both have been gradually expanding their irrigation networks. The downstream city claims the upstream city is taking more than its fair share of water and is polluting it. The smaller upstream city claims the other city is merely trying to bully it.

12. **This culture wants to expand**, but suffers from one or more natural obstacles: it doesn't have the agricultural potential; the climate is inhospitable; it lacks the manpower for large scale construction and engineering works; there are geographic barriers to surface transportation; its TL limits the speed of communication; it doesn't have easy access to the materials, such as mineral resources or energy, to manufacture needed equipment, vehicles, or tools.

13. This world's topography makes surface transportation and communication difficult, so that the natural **political subdivisions are city-states**, or individual nations. There is a world government, but it is not very strong; most inhabitants are more loyal to their own region.

14. This world's intelligent and able **ruler has converted to a pacifist, humanitarian religion**. After rising to power through rebellion and bloody warfare, he finally became appalled by the carnage and destruction of the battles that conquered his rivals.

15. **Smaller cities are fought over** by more powerful rivals. One particular city-state has been conquered 18 times in 24 years. This power struggle is sustained only because the warfare is limited and the more destructive advanced weaponry is seldom used – the purpose of the warfare is to assume the assets and manufacturing capabilities of a city, so turning it into a ruin is pointless.

16. This culture puts a great deal of effort into constructing **grand public buildings and monuments** with symbolic rather than practical value. No expense is spared and the highest quality materials are used. A range of rare and expensive offworld raw materials must be imported for the latest creation to exceed the standard set by the last monument.

17. In this culture, **domestic slavery is still practised**. Foreign slave trade is forbidden, foreigners cannot be taken as slaves, and domestic slaves cannot be sold out of the culture. (Imperial law forbids interstellar slave trade.)

18. This world has a **highly unstable law level and government**, frequently switching between balkanised states and a charismatic dictatorship, depending upon whether the dictator controls a majority of the individual "nations" or only a plurality. The law level varies accordingly, depending on the paranoia of the current ruler.

19. On this balkanised world, a ruler of a minor nation is taking advantage of the fact that **settlement patterns and technology have changed** over the past century to propel his nation to prominence. He is well on the way to establishing an effective world government.

20. A new government has ordered **revised versions of history texts** to be used in the schools. Events related to the government and culture of the current rulers are added or emphasised, while events which were interpreted to legitimise the former government are downplayed or omitted. Changes in the arts curriculum are also being proposed.

21. Technological progress in the rural regions of this world is handicapped because the inhabitants persist in using an **old and cumbersome form of writing** that only a few elite can fully master. They also refuse to accept new technology-related words into the language.

22. This minor alien race remains minor in part because it **refuses to adopt human decimal notation** or standards for any of its technology. All numeric information normally expressed in the decimal system must be translated into the (superior, of course) duodecimal system.

23. **Planetary law explicitly recognises castes** or orders of society, such as Imperial nobility, planetary nobility, a middle or gentry class, and a peasant or free servant class. Different rules and privileges are extended to members of each class, and many of the interactions between them are regulated by law.

24. **Local law forbids lawyers from arguing a person's case** in court. Each person must argue his or her own case (using prior advice from a lawyer), except where physical or mental disability prevents the person from doing so.

25. Consumer protection laws include a possible **death penalty for the maker of a product which kills a user**; examples include: restaurant food poisoning, failed buildings, unsafe drugs, poisonous chemical spills. Equipment manufacturers are required to notify purchasers of all known hazards in using the equipment and bear a share of the risk of their occurrence, but remain fully liable for unknown hazards or defects in manufacture.

26. This society is based on **small, tightly knit villages**. Even larger cities are composed of distinct neighbourhoods. Villages interact only through designated spokesmen, and inquiries about the inner workings of another village are regarded as intrusive.

27. Marriage is formalised with a business-like contract. The bride is provided with a dowry by her parents, but they may require a bride-price from the groom or his parents. The **wife is considered the property owner** and in case of divorce, retains title to at least as much as her dowry. The husband, however, is considered the property manager.

28. This world is nearly **uninhabitable except for one (or a few) particular region(s)**, e.g. a mountain range, crater, river or canyon. Even this area is subject to frequent natural disasters.

29. This world has abundant resources and has previously been a major exporter. Its self-sufficiency and position off the Jump-1 main means that its **populace are very self-centred**, aloof and openly arrogant towards offworlders.

30. This culture's religion and philosophy are **strongly influenced by cyclical orderliness**. The people turn fatalistic in times of success and optimistic in times of trouble. This belief seems natural because the various natural cycles on the world are unusually regular.

31. There is a **strong belief in spirits and the afterlife**; so much that people routinely orient their behaviour towards making the spirits welcome. Tales of ghosts and various forms of spiritual

intervention abound. (Those who specialise in debunking the occult are not welcome here.)

32. Lack of erosion means ancient human constructs are enduring reminders of the past. The **people have a keen sense of history** and often make decisions at all levels based on the 'experience' of events many thousand years ago, discussing them as if they had occurred recently.

33. The world's agricultural land taxes are collected annually after the harvest. Tax rates have been raised slightly despite a bad harvest, causing the **farmers to block food supplies to the cities** and demonstrate in the streets.

34. This world's **rulers are despised as hated conquerors** by the people they rule, in spite of their best humanitarian efforts to educate the populace and create goodwill.

35. The absolute ruler of this world is trying single-handedly to make a **radical change in its religion**. (On this world religious interests are closely tied to economic and political interests.)

36. One of the high-population worlds which had politically, economically, and culturally dominated the region has suffered a devastating reversal due to the **collapse of its banking system**. Several of the worlds it had influenced are now asserting their independence, though none have the same stature as the afflicted world.

37. The **central government has collapsed** within the last few weeks, and there is a general state of lawlessness and chaos. No one is able to command allegiance and restore the government.

38. This world is favourably situated on a jump main and is a major headquarters for shipping concerns. It specialises in building and operating more larger, longer-range ships than their neighbours and is therefore the **major source of colonisation attempts** and technological transfer to less-developed worlds.

39. Wealthy individuals are unfairly using the advantage of access to higher technology for their farms and industries; **smaller farms and businesses are closing** as they cannot compete.

40. **The government rules through fear** of its efficient military. Its high tech communication system alerts the rulers to any sign of insurrection and its advanced transportation swiftly carries military units to the site to swiftly and brutally repress the potential rebels. Calculated atrocities inspire terror and serve as an example to others.

41. The harsh central government of this world does not yet realise that one of its more important subject regions is **secretly negotiating for offworld military assistance** to overthrow the central government.

42. The world government is so **respectful of free expression** that it has attracted a huge variety of cultures and societies with their different religions, local institutions, customs, and languages. Undertaking almost any dealing here involves multiple translators, variant legal systems, currency exchange, etc.

43. The government has **strict control over agriculture, food processing, and food distribution**, with stiff penalties for unapproved production, importation or sales of any foodstuffs.

44. **An ancient civilisation left remains** that appear to surpass known technology. Although various documents have been found, progress in understanding and translating them has been very slow, and only a few isolated words are known. The known documents do not appear to contain technical information, and the pace of archaeological research is glacial.

45. There is a **rigid caste system**, composed of managers, philosophers, warriors, merchants, technicians, and serfs.

46. The dominant religion is highly intellectual. People offer to have their **lives evaluated by the priests** who apply complex systems of appraisal, and offer their counsel and advice for improvement. Careful inquiry, logical debate, and even research are important parts of priestly duties. The best priests are excellent theoretical and practical psychologists.

47. The populace have a **variety of genetic skin disorders**, ranging from minor discoloration to bright-coloured warts over their entire body. The locals regard the skin alterations as a mark of godliness; outsiders showing disgust at the more extreme disorders will be shunned.

48. This world's religion abhors abstract representations of monetary value – **all valuations and transactions are in goods or services**; anyone trying to pay using cash will be arrested.

49. The **population believe offworlders to be demons**; only a very select group of priests have the necessary 'incantations' to protect them – allowing minimal trade. Offworlders straying from their ship without priestly protection will be killed and their brains extracted (to prevent the demon 'regenerating' a new body!) by the fearful locals.

50. This world's **atmosphere is a mild hallucinogenic stimulant** to some major races (e.g. Vargr). However, hallucinating offworlders caused several major accidents, so the local law now requires all offworlders to wear filter masks which remove the taint. Some offworlders have become quite addicted and can be found lying around the starport in a happy haze.

Index






What do your players want to do today?

The following is a list of the patrons and situations given in this supplement. The plots are grouped by adventure theme; each has a brief plot summary and the prerequisites (skills and equipment) are noted using the following icons:

















Skills

-  Starship Operations.
-  Combat.
-  Criminal.
-  Investigation.
-  Merchant.
-  Survival/Environmental.
-  Administration/Legal.
-  Scientific.
-  Medical.
-  Engineering.
-  Computer.








Equipment

-  Medical kit (high tech).
-  Starship (this also assumes possession of appropriate shipboard crew skills, so the "Starship Operations" skill requirement is not shown). Usually includes one or more of the following specifiers, to indicate what accommodation or cargo space the patron requires:
 -  Staterooms available.
 -  Low berths available.
 -  dT cargo space available.





Investigative

Theme/Title	Summary	Requires	Page
P1. Internal Exile	Find a missing prisoner	  	9
P7. Are You Seeing Spots?	Find a missing xenobiologist	 	11
P13. Everyone's A Winner	Investigate a lottery winner		15
P32. I Can Give You A Press Card If You Want...	Act as freelance journalists		24
P33. We Find Things For You	Help recover stolen/lost property		25
P40. Wage Slave	Investigate slavery operation		28
P41. School of Assassins	Find an assassins' guild		29
P45. Global Warming	Determine cause of global warming		31
S7. Requisitioned	A PC disappears from hospital		35
S22. The Skin Trade	PCs rescue colleagues from slavery		40
S23. Rapture	A misjumped ship suffers murders		40
S26. Hair Today...	Female PC kidnapped by mad collector		41
E6. Down These Mean Streets	Find 'kidnapped' son of rich man		48

Scientific Research

Theme/Title	Summary	Requires	Page
P4. Died In The Wool	Help farmers stop herds dying	  	10
P23. A Scandal in the Dark	Detect old radio signals in space	   	20

Starport

Theme/Title	Summary	Requires	Page
S15. Detour	Starport suffers disruption		37
S18. The Demon Drink	Starship struck by another craft in port		38
S19. A Rough Landing	Starship landing gear damaged by mine	 	39

Carrying Passengers and Cargo

Theme/Title	Summary	Requires	Page
P2. Orphans	Carrying slave children	☠ 10+	9
P3. Doctors Without Transport	Carrying a cure to help a world	☠ 2 2	10
P10. Si Baroni	A baron needs urgent transport offworld	☠ 3 2	13
P18. Extradition	Carry prisoner and guards	☠ 1 1	17
P19. An Android's Learning Curve	Carry an android posing as a human	☠ 1	17
P20. Intelligent Shrubbery?	Carry an intelligent plant and its kidnapper	☠ 2	18
P21. Smuggling at Gunpoint	A cargo turns out to be contraband	☠ 3	19
P22. Race Against Time	A passenger in a hurry	☠ 1	19
P25. Compensation Culture	Cheap passage to an industrial tribunal	☠ 1	21
P26. Red Roses For A Blue-Blooded Lady	Carry roses to a wealthy botanist	☠	21
P28. Honeymoon	Passage for stranded bride and groom	☠ 1	22
P29. Spare Parts	Transport a manufacturing vehicle	☠ 1 10	22
P31. We're Like Imperial Express... Only Cheaper	Join a cargo-shipping group	☠	24
P34. The Lobster Pot	Carry a hold full of crabs	☠ 20+	25
P35. Misplaced Goods	Transporting a high tech fighter	☠ 10	26
P36. Witness Relocation	A government witness needs escape	☠ 1	26
P37. Getting Your Own Back	Locate and recover a stolen fighter	☠ 5 10	27
P38. For The Good Of The People	A scientist wants to leave quickly	☠ 1	27
P39. Thou Shalt Not Covet	Take a message "no questions asked"	(☠)	28
P42. I Came For The Waters...	Why ship these water purifiers?	☠	29
P43. Robotics Field Trials	Transport robots and aid in their testing	☠ 1 2 *	29
P48. Adolescent	Runaway asks for passage	☠ 1 ☠	32
S21. The Black Widow Deal	Alternative ways of sealing a trade deal	☠ 1+	39
S24. Smuggling Blues	Ship faults caused by vermin infestation	☠	41
E4. Last Rites	Transport bureaucrat and son's coffin	☠ 1 2	45

Space

Theme/Title	Summary	Requires	Page
P30. Ol' Betsy Needs An Alternator...	Crew an antique starship	☠	23
P46. Shipshare Hire-ons	Crew ship for maintenance trip	☠	31
S1. Traffic Violation	A patrol ship gets inquisitive at a gas giant	☠	33
S25. The Ship Collector	Ship attacked by mad collector	☠	41
E1. Ghost In The Machine	Haunted abandoned space base	☠	42
E2. Achilles Station	Pirate starbase in deep space	☠	43

Escort

Theme/Title	Summary	Requires	Page
P8. Made In Sylea?	Help recover Ancient artefacts	* ☠	12
P11. Over The Hulls And Far Away	Help salvage old warships	* ☠	14
P16. Happy Families	Escort game show 'contestants'	* ☠	16
E3. The Spinward Marches Tour	Escort a rock band	☠	44
E5. Raise The Titanic	Guard investigators at crashed grav city	? ☠ +	46

Criminal

Theme/Title	Summary	Requires	Page
P14. Lost Marbles	Steal a museum exhibit		15
P17. And What Do You Do?	A light diversion whilst in prison		16

Military

Theme/Title	Summary	Requires	Page
P5. Eccentric Captain	Stop "villainous infamy"		11
P6. Imperial Noble	Hunt down terrorists		11
P15. The Peasants Are Revolting	Fight against revolutionaries		15
P47. Training Exercise	Act as rebels for military exercise		31

Legal Issues

Theme/Title	Summary	Requires	Page
S2. Agent	Unable to sell expensive cargo		33
S4. You're Not Leaving That Here!	A 'safe' cargo is actually hazardous		34
S6. You Call This High Tech?	Fighting red tape to allow departure		34
S8. Why I Hate Frontier Starports...	Departure delayed by flock of birds		35
S12. Packing Your Own	PC accused of carrying contraband		36

Disaster

Theme/Title	Summary	Requires	Page
S3. Asteroid	Asteroid on collision course with world		33
S5. Bad Food	The ship's supplies go rotten		34
S9. Claustrophobia	Disaster forces crew and passengers into cramped situation		35
S10. Refugee Run	Transport refugees from a dying world		35

Other

Theme/Title	Summary	Requires	Page
P9. In The Eye Of The Beholder	Act as an auction agent		13
P12. Rumble	Upset someone else's party		14
P24. A Scent Of Profit	Market testing cosmetics		20
P27. A Rose By Any Other Name...	Find new roses for a wealthy botanist		22
P44. Wanted: IT Operatives	Computer analysis work		30
S11. Freddy's Dead... Isn't He?	A VR park gets genuinely scary		36
S13. Don't I Know You?	PC suffers case of mistaken identity		37
S14. Is There A Doctor In The House?	PC witnesses passer-by fall ill	+	37
S16. Hostage Bar	PCs caught in hostage situation		38
S17. Taboo	PCs offered "good luck" charms		38
S20. Born Under A Bad Sign	The party suffers a run of bad luck		39
S27. Fanatic	PCs suffer strange fever	? +	41

*This supplement is suitable for use with all forms of Traveller, in particular **Marc Miller's Traveller** and Steve Jackson's **GURPS Traveller**.*

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