

An adventure for

# Traveller



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

# SPACEDOGS



# Spacedogs

An adventure for

# Traveller<sup>®</sup>

Lancer: "You people don't mind being ordered around by Vargr, then?"  
Muriel: "No, why should we?"  
Lancer: "Errr..."  
Ernesto: "Really, why should we?"  
Sheba: "Well, most humans won't obey orders from Vargr!"  
Muriel: "Dumbest thing I've ever heard."  
Ernesto: "Xenophobia, eh? Wow! I've only ever read about it in books."

- The Recruitment Interview

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# Spacedogs

or

**“The Magnificent Six ride out to right wrongs, free the oppressed and shoot the bad guys”**

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## Introduction

*Spacedogs* is an adventure for six pre-generated characters, based around a small, independent colony world.

The PCs are Vargr who desperately need money and are hired by representatives from the colony to guard their world from raiders.

The adventurers must first defeat the raiders then determine who is behind the scheme. This will lead them back to the Imperial capital for the final legal (and physical) confrontation.

## Format

This adventure is divided into a series of "nuggets", presented in chronological order, although the nuggets may be altered, removed or re-ordered by the GM to fit with the manner in which the players react to the storyline.

Scene-setting text to be read, paraphrased or otherwise conveyed to the players is shown as:

Example text to be read to the players.

Occasionally sidebars are used to present key data such as NPC attributes. A separate Library Data section starting on page 31 gives background information for this adventure.

## Background

This adventure is best set at any point in the early years of the Third Imperium, but can be placed at any point in Traveller history after the introduction of Vargr to the Imperium.

**Dates:** All dates herein conform to the Imperial Calendar. Time periods are in standard (Terran) minutes and hours unless otherwise stated.

**Location:** This adventure takes place on the Imperial capital Sylea (Core 2118) and on Little Heaven in the nearby system of Biin (Core 2012). Sylea may be replaced with any suitable Imperial core world with a nearby underdeveloped star system in which to place Little Heaven.

## Author's Notes

*Spacedogs* was first published as a BITS tournament adventure for Gen Con UK 1998. For tournament play, scenarios 1 to 9 only should be run to a time limit of 3 or 4 hours, with players marked primarily on their roleplaying ability.

## Characters

It is strongly recommended that this adventure be played with the pregenerated Vargr characters provided (pp.6-10) as these have the right mix of skills and personalities for an interesting game. However, existing characters (Vargr or non-Vargr) may be used provided they are suitably penniless and regarded as low-life by the local population ('wrong' race, ex-slaves, ex-convicts, etc.).

The characters all have backgrounds and motivations; roleplaying these is a key aptitude scored in tournaments – although *not* getting blown to pieces during the game scores too!

Guidance on roleplaying Vargr is given on p.11. GURPS Traveller (GT) Vargr have the disadvantages listed in the GT worldbook (p.83). A detailed description of Vargr can be found in the GT *Aliens 1* book.

## Non-Player Characters

The descriptions of key NPCs are given on pp.40-41. Minor NPCs are described in sidebars within the relevant scenarios.

The majority of NPCs do not require detailed descriptions; in this adventure their abilities are summarised in the format A/S (a/s) where "A" is the average attribute value and "S" the level in their key skill(s). The equivalent GURPS data are "a" and "s" respectively. The GM decides that an enlisted soldier's key attributes are Strength, Dexterity and Endurance. A NPC soldier graded 8/3 (11/15) would therefore have a UPP of 888— (GT: ST 11, DX 11, HT 11) and his key skills (e.g. weapons) will be at level 3 (GT: 15). Alternatively, a scientist's primary attributes might be Intelligence and Education, giving a UPP of ---88-.

Subsidiary attributes and skills will be one or more levels lower. The GM should only determine whether an NPC has a subsidiary skill if such a skill is specifically called for in the adventure. Where more detail is required, full NPC statistics are given.

## Rules

This adventure uses a generic task system with character data for the later versions of Traveller (T4) and GURPS Traveller (GT). This can easily be adapted to other Traveller rule sets.

Some skill and attribute names differ between rule sets, e.g. where Education is referred to, GT uses IQ. Care should be taken not to confuse skills, e.g. Navigation in earlier rule sets referred to interstellar navigation, whereas in T4 and GT this skill is Astrogation and Navigation refers to planet-bound mapping, etc. This adventure always uses the later definitions. Unless otherwise noted, data is given in T4 format with GT-specific information in *italics*, thus: INT 10 (*GT: IQ 14*).

Weapons statistics for GURPS are found in the Basic Rules (p.206) or GT Worldbook (pp.114-5).

## Tasks

Task definitions are used in this adventure. However, it is the responsibility of the GM to refine tasks and determine the required skills and equipment for each situation. Simple tasks are included in the text, e.g. "make a **Difficult Recon** (*GT: Tracking*) roll". Where a more complex task roll is required, it uses the following format:

### To find a boar:

- >Difficult Recon (*GT: Tracking*), or
- >Difficult Hunting, or
- >Formidable Survival

- +1 Difficulty if riding at full gallop.
- +1 Difficulty if lost.
- -1 Difficulty if moving slowly.

**Spectacular Success:** They have surprised a boar and have one round to act before it reacts.

**Success:** They have found boar tracks and can begin following them.

**Failure:** No tracks found.

**Spectacular Failure:** They have become lost.

+1 Difficulty indicates a harder task (e.g. an Average task becomes Difficult) whereas -1 Difficulty is an easier task (e.g. Difficult would become Average).

MegaTraveller (MT), Traveller: The New Era (TNE) and Marc Miller's Traveller (T4) all use a graduated system of task difficulty ratings – Average, Difficult, Formidable, etc. 'Classic' Traveller (CT) and GURPS Traveller (GT) use modifiers to the task rolls instead. The BITS Task System provides a simplified common ground for all these rule sets, using difficulty ratings with corresponding task modifiers for CT and GT as shown in Table 1.

The means by which spectacular (*GT: critical*) success or failure are achieved are defined by the rule set used. Similarly, the GM should apply the rules for special tasks – opposed, co-operative, hasty, cautious, etc. – according to the rule set used. As always, these are only guidelines – the GM may alter any task roll as appropriate to enhance the game.

### Example

Maria Charles is forging a complex document which the GM rules is a Staggering task. Maria has Forgery-4 (*GT: Forgery-16*) and the relevant attribute (MT, T4) is INT 10 (TNE: INT 9).

**CT:** Task success is normally  $2D + Skill \geq 8$ . Maria requires  $2D + Forgery \geq 12$  ( $8 + 4$  for Staggering difficulty). Alternatively, the GM may prefer to apply the target modifier as a negative modifier on the dice roll, i.e.  $2D + 4 - 4 \geq 8$ .

**MT:** Staggering difficulty is equivalent to MT's Formidable (15+), thus the task is  $2D + Skill + (Stat / 5) \geq 15$ . For Maria this is:  $2D + 4 + 2 \geq 15$ .

**TNE:** Staggering difficulty is equivalent to TNE's Impossible, thus the task is  $d20 \leq (Skill + Stat) \times \frac{1}{4}$ . For Maria this is  $d20 \leq 3$ , i.e.  $(9 + 4) / 4$  rounded down.

**T4:** Maria requires  $4D \leq INT + Forgery$ . (Note that T4's Staggering rating of 3.5D is ignored.)

**GT:** Maria requires  $3D \leq Forgery + Target Modifier$ , i.e.  $3D \leq 16 - 6$ .

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                 |
| Impossible           | (5D)               | Hopeless (5D)        | -9                 | Impossible          | Impossible         | +6                 |
| Hopeless             | (6D)               | Impossible (6D)      | -12                | Impossible          | Impossible         | +8                 |

The spacedogs ride out to protect the weak and innocent. Woof!

## Overview

The PCs are Vargr who are down on their luck and need to get money and/or get off planet. They are hired by two representatives of a colony which requires protection against raiders.

The colony is the only habitation on the planet. A semi-noble family – the Scropes – have recently discovered that the world has lanthanum deposits. The Scrope Foundation has therefore begun covert submission of a claim under the Rediscovery Rules of the new Third Imperium. They know the current 700 colonist descendents will dispute this claim and they are desperate to gain ownership before the colony finds out and registers their own claim to the mineral rights.

The Scropes plan to harrass the locals with raids, both by parolees from the Scrope Correctional facility and the Scrope's own pirate vessel *Hot Trad*, such that the colonists sell up cheap and move out.

The PCs will first have to blunt the raiders' attacks. They also need to take prisoners and find out why these attacks are happening. This should lead them to the Scropes. They need to acquire sufficient evidence of the Scropes' involvement to take back to Sylea, where they can pursue the colonists' case through the Imperial legal system. Naturally, the Scropes wish to prevent this...

### Scenario 1: Recruitment

The characters are recruited to act as a security force for a settlement of miners and farmers. The colonists are being attacked by raiders, from both land and air.

### Scenario 2: The Black Market

The spacedogs are given money to buy weapons. They may notice someone is watching them and will quickly find that the 'official' route for purchasing weapons is not open to them. They can find weapons on the black market but must be careful to check they get what they paid for!

### Scenario 3: On The Way

The PCs leave Sylea aboard the *Loose Booty* but find that customs officers have an unhealthy interest in them.

### Scenario 4: Blow Out

Just out of Jump, the *Loose Booty's* bridge explodes, killing the flight crew. It's up to the spacedogs to put the ship safely into orbit and use the air-raft to shuttle down to the surface.

### Scenario 5: Landing

The Vargr meet humans who don't hate them on sight! They need to take stock of the colony's situation and plan how best to defend the village.

### Scenario 6: The First Flight

A ground raid begins but is repelled until artillery rockets start hitting the colony. The spacedogs need to locate and destroy the artillery unit; in the process their air-raft is shot down, leaving them to walk back to the colony.

### Scenario 7: The Hot Trad Lands

The raider starship lands and the colony is held hostage. Our heroes must take out the drunken pirates, save the hostages, capture the starship and hopefully take prisoners to interrogate.

### Scenario 8: But There's More...

By asking the right questions, the spacedogs learn that there is another ship in the system.

### Scenario 9: System Sweep

Searching for the second enemy ship.

### Scenario 10: Back to Sylea

The spacedogs need to return to Sylea to pursue the legal battle for the colony.

### Scenario 11: In Sylea City

The party need to rent consular premises, engage a good law firm, and acquire diplomatic status. Meg also gets a chance to visit her family.

### Scenario 12: Kidnapped!

The Scropes aren't going to take this lying down. Meg's children go missing and a blackmail demand is received. Can the spacedogs (with the help of the marines) save the day?

### Scenario 13: Gunfight at the Embassy Ball

The Little Heaven Consulate holds its first diplomatic party but the Scropes drop in to say "goodbye". Time to finish these nasty nobles for once and for all.

Descriptions of the adventurers, their personalities and motivations. If less than six players are available, players should be allowed to run multiple characters or the remaining spacedogs can be NPCs. The GM is permitted to make copies of these characters to distribute to the players for this adventure, although it is preferable to copy them onto separate character sheets. Note that the UPP includes the Vargr "Charisma" rating, rather than human Social Standing.

## Benson

Ex-Law Enforcer

Vargr Male, Age 32, Homeworld Sylea (Core 2118)

**UPP D7C4A4**, 1.96 m, 95 kg.

Admin-1, Brawling-2, Grav Craft-1, Ground Craft-1, Melee Combat-2, Pistol-2, Perception-2, Streetwise-2.

**GT: ST 16, DX 10, IQ 9, HT 15, 6' 5", 210 lb.**

*Administration-12, Brawling-12, Drive (Car)-12, Guns (Pistol)-13, Judo-12, Piloting (Contragrav Vehicle)-13, Shield-12, Streetwise-13, Tonfa-13.*

*Advantages: Charisma +1; Combat Reflexes.*

*Disadvantages: Delusion (Police are important because they protect the weak and innocent).*

**Items:** 9mm Auto Pistol (standard police sidearm) with two reloads; Tonfa (side-handled police baton); Riot Shield (plastic with ballistic fibre mesh AV 1; GT: PD 3); Helmet (stiffened fibreglass and ballistic mesh AV 3; GT: PD 3, DR 16). Cr3.

**Background:** You are a very big Vargr indeed, with a noble lupine head and piercing yellow eyes. Your pelt is thick and luxuriant, especially around your head, neck and upper back, where it grows to about 10 cm, a bit like a mane.

You always wanted to be a cop, despite opposition from your friends and family. Unfortunately, your easy-going nature and devotion to self improvement (you studied hard) left you ill-prepared for the realities of life on the force. You were a public relations coup, loathed by many Vargr (for joining their oppressors) and, ironically, hated by your colleagues (except when your size, brawling ability and durability made you the best officer to put in front of violent drunks or rioting sports fans).

However, this did nothing for your self esteem and in the end it dawned on you that you were just being used. This came to a head when some of your colleagues started up their own protection racket in association with local organised criminals. As a consequence of this, the sergeant of your watch was also paid to destroy an evidence store, and you refused your cut. Ultimately, this will lead to their prosecution for conduct unbecoming, but for your own safety, you have been retired from the force. You have no pension, no job and no prospects. Your erstwhile colleagues want you dead. In recognition of this the Anti-Corruption Task Force has let you keep your gun (with two reloads), your baton, your riot shield and your helmet (the police logo on the latter two items has been painted out).

You have come to know several other Vargr from local politics and the job centre:

**Molly** is a semi-criminal whom you met as part of a criminal investigation. When you became a civilian she was initially cool towards you, but you have since become intimate and are living together. In recognition of the increased danger this puts Molly in, you've been teaching her to shoot a target pistol.

**Lancer** is an old marine who dedicated (wasted?) his life in Imperial service.

**Meg** is an ex-scout whom you met during an ill-conceived community relations exercise. When you left the force, Meg was a good friend and you've spent time helping her with her 'social services' work.

**Morgan** is a fine old engineer, despite his grumpiness. You envy him: he settled his scores the Vargr way, "with fang and claw". You definitely want him on your side.

**Sheba** is an intellectual who speaks your ancestral language and insists her name is *Rracvakh*, which apparently means something noble. She is well known to the police as an overly clever agitator and is also a suspected terrorist. She claims the Vargr were not uplifted by humans and your civilisation predates that of Humanity. She still doesn't entirely trust you and tests you to see just how far you're willing to bend or break the law.

## Lancer

Ex-Marine Sergeant

Vargr Male, Age 45, Homeworld Sylea (Core 2118)

**UPP 6B8956**, 1.7 m, 64 kg.

Battledress-2, Environment Combat-2, Gunnery-1, Heavy Weapons-2, Instruction-2, Large Blade-2, Recon-2, Rifles-4, Tactics-2.

**GT: ST 10, DX 14, IQ 12, HT 11, 5' 7", 140 lb.**

*Battlesuit-13, Brawling-13, Broadsword-13, Freefall-13, Gunner (Grenade Launcher, Machine Gun)-13, Gunner (Starship Laser)-12, Guns (Rifle, Lt. Auto)-16, Stealth-13, Tactics-13, Teaching-13.*

*Advantages: Charisma +1; Combat Reflexes.*

*Disadvantages: Intolerance (Human authority structures, most humans, the Navy).*

**Items:** Cutlass (*GT: Broadsword*) – a large, light-weight blade traditionally worn by all Marines). Cr1.

**Background:** All your life you tried to play the game: "yes sir, no sir". You were loyal and courageous in the service of the Imperial Marine Corps, but they still retired you just before pensionable age, and laughed while they did it. You have become habituated to being led and expect to follow others in all situations except combat. Your tactical skill and combat experience mean that you will never willingly follow a stupid plan (as a guideline, charging at a machine-gun nest across open ground, parachuting over a hostile built-up area in daylight or jumping up and down in a minefield count as stupid).

You've since found out that the idea of *esprit de corps*, "every marine is your brother" only counted among humans. You've since found five other Vargr who are now your closest friends and your loyalty to them exceeds anything you ever felt in the service:

**Benson** is a fine young dog, principled, brave, capable and loyal. He used to be a cop, which means that you and he share experience of the chain of command.

**Meg** used to be a scout. This is a bad point as far as the marines are concerned: scouts are scruffy, undisciplined, nature loving, tree-hugging, bunny-hugging, pacifistic hippy freaks. About the only good thing about scouts is that they need to be rescued from whatever they stick their noses in, which is always good for a laugh. Meg is natural leader, and a well known figure in the Vargr Barrio. She also isn't afraid to ask about things she doesn't know about and always follows good advice.

**Molly** is a civilian who works in the free hospital as a care assistant, but her main job is getting the supplies the hospital needs. Benson told you that she has a record for handling stolen goods and is under routine police surveillance. Molly is very personable and really good at getting things people need.

**Morgan** is an ex-swabby, extremely resentful and bad tempered. He beat up a snotty ensign and opened up a petty officer from shoulder to wrist, which put him in the stockade for 4 years. He's certainly better as a friend than an enemy, but he seems to find Benson a bit hard to take.

**Sheba** is the only college educated person you know. She's a real intellectual, is loud and outspoken and she's always picking fights. Benson says she's suspected of terrorist activities. She and Morgan are 'attached' but are not exactly romantics.

## Meg

Ex-Scout

Vargr Female, Age 32, Homeworld Sylea (Core 2118)

**UPP 7AB89A**, 1.68 m, 57 kg.

Admin-2, Astrogation-1, Communications-1, Environment Combat-1, Leader-1, Pilot-1, Recon-2, Rifles-2, Sensors-1, Survey-1, Vacc Suit-1.

**GT: ST 10, DX 13, IQ 12, HT 14, 5' 6", 125 lb.**

*Administration-13, Astrogation-12, Electronics Ops (Communications, Sensors)-12, Free fall-12, Guns (Lt. Auto, Rifle)-13, Leader-12, Piloting (Starship)-12, Tracking-13, Vacc suit-12.*

*Advantages: Charisma +3; Common Sense; Strong Will +2.*

*Disadvantages: Dependents (2 Children).*

**Items:** Cr2.

**Background:** You're a hard-working self-motivated go-getter, an excellent team leader. You have been involved in local politics ever since you left the Scout Corps. Your time out along the frontier convinced you there were great opportunities out there, but none of this seemed available to your people, the Vargr. You left the Corps to work for your people and to start a family.



Recent changes in the law have caused you to re-think your options. Your previously salaried post as an elected local official has been abolished: unpaid "community volunteers" and government appointed "team leaders" will do your job from now on. You can't afford to keep your children (Rex and Rover) at school, so they will have to find work or be drafted into the "environment task force". Your husband has to work double shifts in the armaments factory just to keep his job. You believe there may be opportunities off-world which could restore your esteem and earning capability. However, the furthest you've got so far is the dole office where you have met several Vargr who are now good friends (in fact you're temporarily letting a room in your house to Morgan and Sheba):

**Benson** is a youngster who still retains his touching belief in justice. He's stood by you in tricky situations (he saved you from a lynch mob once) and is 100% reliable. Your kids don't like him though and your husband thinks that you're having an affair with him, despite Benson living with Molly.

**Lancer** is brave and capable and you'd trust him with your life though he can be cynical and despondent. Your husband really likes Lancer.

**Molly** is an old friend from puppyhood. She had a burning ambition to make something of herself, was mad keen to start up business ventures and has a real knack for getting hold of anything you wanted. Her hopes dashed, Molly is now reduced to peddling stolen goods and dodging the law. She's got a thing going with Benson, which is sort of sweet, although it doesn't change your husband's view of things.

**Morgan** is violent, bitter, grumpy, stubborn and hates authority, the rich and his ex-employers (the Navy) with a vengeance. You often wonder what Morgan could have made of himself.

**Sheba** is easily the cleverest person you've ever met. *Rracvakh* (as she prefers to be called) is also the most mad, embittered and vicious. She's an outspoken political activist and a dedicated freedom fighter. As she's Morgan's lover, he's always willing to help her out and defend her, a predisposition she exploits by taking him into human bars and waiting to be thrown out.

## Molly

Rogue

Vargr Female, Age 35, Homeworld Sylea (Core 2118)

**UPP 5B78A8**, 1.63 m, 55 kg.

Admin-1, Brawling-1, Bribery-1, Broker-1, Medical-2, Pistol-1, Scrounge-4, Streetwise-4, Trader-1.

**GT: ST 8, DX 14, IQ 12, HT 10, 5' 4", 120 lb.**

*Administration-12, Brawling-12, Electronic Ops (Medical)-13, Fast Talk-12, First Aid-13, Guns (Pistol)-12, Medical (Diagnosis)-13, Merchant-12, Scrounge-16, Streetwise-16.*

*Advantages: Charisma +2.*

*Disadvantages: Generosity (Charitable); Pacifism (Never fight unless attacked first); Delusion (Doesn't realise she's too soft-hearted to be a merchant); Stubbornness (Only obeys laws she agrees with).*

**Items:** 7mm Target Pistol (long barrelled, custom balanced; hidden under your bed at home). Cr1.

**Background:** When you were at school, you showed promise at all those business studies things, and nurtured an ambition to become a big corporate type. However your hopes were cruelly dashed and it was suggested that you study nursing, on the strange argument that senior nurses become hospital managers. You did this and found out that it was a struggle just to be taken seriously on the wards.

You became involved in the local free clinic, distributing medicine to those who could not afford to purchase it. Then you went to prison for stealing drugs to keep the clinic supplied, and became a fence, clinic administrator and much loved community figure on release. However, the clinic and its entire neighbourhood has been repossessed to become the foundations for an interstellar grav-ball stadium.

Society (well, human society at least) has kicked you in the teeth one time too many. You still have a strong helpful streak for the under-dogs (okay, yes, even human under-dogs) but otherwise you're a confirmed cynic. This doesn't explain how come you're living with an ex-copper, though:

**Benson** is the only nice copper you've met. Now he's a civilian, you've shackled up together. Benson's hobby of political activism has brought you back into contact with your old friend Meg. Unfortunately Benson's corrupt ex-colleagues might well come round some time to teach him a lesson, so he has been teaching you to shoot. You have 'acquired' a target pistol, which you keep under the bed. You really love Benson, especially because he's frequently outwitted by the roaches in the hallway.

**Lancer** is always yacking on about the injustice of the Marine Corps. How come he didn't know about it before he signed up? Every one else did! Benson likes him though and Lancer can be very fierce.

**Meg** you've known all your life. She's two years older than you, and has been in space, but you have a lot in common (including being watched by the police). Meg talks about making things better and Benson and Lancer believe every word she says. You're not so sure.

**Morgan** is an old swabbie, tough, irascible, truculent, obdurate, scarred and not much better when you get to know him. However, something about him has retained the interest of your good friend Sheba.

**Sheba** was working as a hospital auxiliary to pay her college fees, when you first met her. You're the only one that knows she tells superb jokes and has the blackest, sickest sense of humour you've ever encountered. Nearly everyone else thinks she's serious. Morgan moved in with her while she was studying but she graduated recently and was chucked out of the students' hostel. Morgan got angry and wrecked the place! Worse, Sheba no longer has access to the labs to knock up drugs for your clinic.

## Morgan

Ex-Navy (3rd Engineer)

Vargr Male, Age 35, Homeworld Sylea (Core 2118)

UPP 6DB8A4, 1.63 m, 57 kg.

Brawling-5, Electronics-1, Engineering-3, Environment Combat-1, Gravitics-1, Gunnery-1, Intimidation-3, Mechanic-1, Rifle-1, Vacc Suit-1.

GT: ST 9, DX 14, IQ 12, HT 14, 5' 4", 126 lb.

Brawling-18, Electronics (Communications, Sensors)-13, Engineer (Contragrav Devices, Fusion Power Plants, Starship Drives)-15, Freefall-12, Guns (Lt. Auto, Rifles)-12, Gunner (Starship)-12, Intimidation-15, Mechanic-12, Vacc Suit-12.

Advantages: None!

Disadvantages: Bad Temper; Callous (Doesn't care if people get hurt – except very close friends); Intolerance (The Navy, humans generally).

Items: Cr1.

**Background:** You were seduced by the Imperial Navy recruiting campaigns, only to find out that "excitement and adventure" for a Vargr meant the worst jobs and the most dangerous assignments, with none of the glory or credit. Worst of all the humans, especially the stupid ones, were quickly promoted over you and bossed you about. One day you cracked: a snotty little ensign pushed you too far and was flat on his back before he knew you'd hit him. The human spacers who tried to restrain you paid for it too.

You spent four years in the stockade and served all of it, your behaviour was too bad to earn you any remission. When you got out you were vicious, bitter and had nothing to lose. You still don't... except Sheba. You met her two days after your discharge. She's even crazier than you and you began a frantic and emotional relationship. Through her you met a few other Vargr who have become exceptions to your rule of "hate everyone". Anyone who treats you like scum, bosses you around or looks at you in a funny way will feel your claws. Come to think of it, that's most humans.

**Benson** is a good lad in a fight and Meg's friend. Molly seems to like him, but he's an ex copper. You've known him for about a year now and he hasn't been anything other than fine, but time will tell.

**Lancer** is a marine and you hate marines, but somehow this one's OK. He's got a marine issue cutlass at home and you get the impression he knows how to use it. Mostly you both get along, in the way that good friends from arms of the service that despise each other so often do.

**Meg** is a real mother-figure. She's a good leader, puts together plans without being bossy, works out what needs doing and encourages everyone to contribute. The other good thing about Meg is that humans are always having a go at her, which gives you an excuse to step in. Her husband's pretty cool too: he makes bullets. You love her pups and want to persuade Sheba to have some.

**Molly** is Sheba's best friend. She smells nice, and is a cross between a talented gangster and a living saint. She spent most of her time stealing, conning and dealing to keep her clinic open, but now it's been closed to make way for a grav-ball stadium. Of course, the civil engineers have had an armed guard at the site since you went and had a little talk with them.

**Sheba** saved your life and gave you a purpose – someone to care for. She insists on being called *Rracvakh* (it sounds like a cross between a growl and a snap), but she'll always be Sheba to you. You know she's a bit of a political activist and she's clever: your team always wins on quiz night.

## Sheba

Political Activist

Vargr Female, Age 48, Homeworld Sylea (Core 2118)

UPP 5A9DD6, 1.65 m, 59 kg.

Brawling-2, Chemistry-3, Demolitions-3, History (Vargr)-3, Linguistics (Gvegh)-2, Philosophy-3, Pistol-1, Research-2, Streetwise-2.

GT: ST 9, DX 13, IQ 15, HT 12, 5' 5", 130 lb.

Brawling-13, Chemistry-15, Demolition-15, Guns (Pistol)-12, History (Vargr)-15, Language (Gvegh)-12, Linguistics-12, Philosophy (Comparative ethics)-15, Research-13, Streetwise-13.

Advantages: None!

Disadvantages: Callous (Doesn't care if people get hurt – except very close friends); Fanaticism (Vargr rights); On The Edge (Can go dangerously crazy in stressful situations).

Items: Cr1.

**Background:** You hold two doctorates: chemistry (but no firm would employ you) and political philosophy (which taught you why the Human empire doesn't want Vargr chemists). You also found out that your name came from a book of names for pet animals. It spurred you to learn your ancestral language, Gvegh. You have now picked your own name *Rracvakh* which means "promise". You have tried without success to have your friends call you by this new name. You've come up with appropriate race names for your friends. It is a fond dream of yours that they adopt them.

The upstart humans claim the ancient Vargr people are genetically modified human pets - a preposterous allegation. Your research shows that the Vargr were in space long before Humanity. The Vargr would be in charge now, were it not for the human lack of individual flair which makes the unimaginative idiots cluster together such that things seem to get done by sheer inertia!

You've decided that you'll do something about humans. Regrettably, you need to eat and that means finding a job. On the bright side, you've found some emotional happiness with Morgan.

**Benson** (*Turrgaes* – "Redemption") has certainly paid for his mistakes. He was the toughest, hardest and bravest copper in the city – and was sacked to save the lives of some pathetic human scum. It's the funniest story you know. You are beginning to trust *Turrgaes* – he might have been a race traitor, but he's got better and the 'medicine' which has affected him seems to come from your best friend Molly.

**Lancer** (*Kfoungzu* – "Courage") had aspirations which proved to be too much for human bigotry to bear. He and *Turrgaes* get on very well and he's an all round good lad.

**Meg** (*Laeksa* – "Before the Dawn") leads the other four. She is clever, kind, brave, capable and a total dupe who believes the Vargr can get justice through compromise and legitimate methods. You know better. You intend to win the struggle for Vargr freedom by any means necessary. Unfortunately, *Laeksa* is very persuasive and plausible and sometimes she does make good sense.

**Molly** (*Oengue* – "Nurture") is your best and oldest friend. This relationship even survived the awkward moment when she shacked up with a copper! *Oengue's* judgement proved correct and *Turrgaes* seems okay after all. Like a good pack mate, *Oengue* is making sure that he is leaving his name written in blood: law breaking, fencing and looking after *Laeksa*. *Oengue's* clinic has been closed to make way for a grav-ball stadium. This upset you so much you blew up the offices of the contracting architects. You know the police are after you so it might be a good idea to get off planet for a while.

**Morgan** (*Arragh* – "mine") is the hardest Vargr you know. He was thrown out of the Navy for decking an officer and is so frightening that humans cross the street rather than pass him. He's also your boy friend and you lived together in a university hostel until you graduated and were chucked out. He got pretty aggravated about that and hurt more humans. You and he are now living at *Laeksa's* home. You are devoted to *Arragh*, as he is to you.

# Playing Vargr

*Roleplaying an alien race*

This adventure is most fun if the players roleplay the Vargr as more than just humans dressed up in furry suits. This section is written so that it can be read and used directly by the players. For more detail see *GT Allens 1* or the T4 rule book, pp.146-147.

## Vargr

Vargr are dogs which have been genetically modified (uplifted) so that they are sentient. According to the Imperium's majority (human) population this was done by the ancient Solomani; it is presumed this was due to a sentimental attachment to domestic animals and, basically, because Solomani geneticists could do it – they were famous for their love of genetic tinkering. They uplifted cetaceans, manipulated human DNA to produce variant species adapted to extreme climates and attempted to combine animal and human traits.

The sudden collapse of the Second Imperium left Vargr populations on thousands of worlds. Human co-operation vs. Vargr internal squabbles often meant the humans gained control and the Vargr became an underclass, denied most social facilities and sometimes even basic rights. Their nature also led the Vargr to become associated with crime and violence.

## Vargr in Society

Vargr on human worlds get the worst housing, healthcare, education and jobs. They are so downtrodden that they don't even realise that they have their own language: instead they speak Galanglic and use Galanglicised names.

Low class humans live alongside and (rarely) amongst the Vargr, but Imperial housing policy is to segregate these groups and spread "dirty dogs take your jobs" stories to prevent any solidarity arising between them.

## Vargr Behaviour

Vargr are physiologically and psychologically very different to humans.

Vargr are gregarious, i.e. happiest in groups. Vargr groups ("packs" to detractors) are extremely hierarchical and Vargr are instinctively aware of each other's status within a group (represented by the "Charisma" attribute). In addition to advertising their social status through posture, actions, clothing and speech, Vargr communicate at a subconscious level using pheromones which are triggered by hormone

levels in accordance with each Vargr's self esteem.

Although Vargr can work well in a group with a dominant leader, they have a continuous desire to achieve a higher place in the hierarchy. Any weakening of the hierarchy may lead to bickering, competition and sometimes combat.

The Vargr tendency to gather in groups has been reinforced by a human tendency to pick on lone Vargr and shove them in a humiliating manner.

Group behaviours include mutual grooming, which all Vargr find relaxing.

## Racism

*Vargr are skivers: they're always sneaking off to snack* – Vargr are carnivores with short digestive tracts and need to eat small, frequent meals.

*Vargr are lazy: they're always dropping off* – Vargr work just as effectively but take short frequent naps rather than sleeping for a long time.

*Vargr are unfit: they're always gasping for breath* – Vargr cannot sweat: they cool down by panting.

*Vargr don't pull their weight* – Vargr are faster, but generally less strong than humans.

*Vargr are dirty: they are always sniffing each other or something disgusting* – Vargr have a much better sense of smell than humans, and use it to determine health, direction and status.

*Vargr are dangerously violent: they're always fighting* – Vargr do compete and sometimes this results in fights, but rarely is anyone injured. Humans don't have significant Charisma, so Vargr are unlikely to bother to fight them, except in self-defence or if offended by continuous racial insults.

*Vargr breed too fast: have too many children, eat babies, take our jobs, show us no respect and never thank us for uplifting them* – Says a lot more about the speaker than about his subject.

## Roleplaying

Vargr order their group according to Charisma and, like a family, they expect unconditional loyalty from each other. They display their emotions openly and tend to have an overactive curiosity. They have enhanced senses of taste, smell and vision. They are more easily fatigued by physical exertion. Their fur can keep them warm, but in warm climates it can cause them to overheat.

The characters are recruited to act as a security force for a settlement of miners and farmers.

## 1. The Mission

An introduction for the players:

Members of Sylea's dole queues are encouraged to present themselves to potential employers at 'Hiring Sites'. Anyone failing to present themselves forfeits their social benefits and thus quickly starves. The encouragement is such that you have all been forced to attend the same hiring sites. You have come to know each other from such appearances and have grown used to standing unwanted while all the humans get snapped up.

Recently the police have undertaken the sensitively named 'Operation Muzzle', involving zero-tolerance stop, search and detain operations against the predominantly Vargr populations of this part of the city. This has led to riots by aggravated Vargr and such local difficulties have, unfortunately, led to members of your species being even less employable than usual.

In a last effort to find work, you have all decided to chance your paws at work off-planet. You have been unsuccessful. It is now three hours before noon, it has begun to rain, they need the hiring site for a public relations stunt, and there are no busses back to the Vargr suburbs (where you live) for half an hour. If you want to drown your sorrows and keep your pelts dry, the only bar in the port without a "No Bugs, Zhodani or Dogs" sign above its door is the Kennel Club.

If they don't enter the bar, then the Little Heaven representatives (see later) will meet up with them outside the bar and encourage them into the bar to discuss their needs over a drink.

Assuming they decide to enter the bar:

Having taken shelter within its reassuringly warm confines, you pack yourselves around a window table, the familiar smells of rather better-off Vargr wafting around you. You cover appropriately as some higher Charisma Vargr pass by. A quick consultation confirms that you have enough money for three halves of lager between you.

All the PCs should make an **Average Perception (GT: Vision)** roll. Each success gains one or more of the following bits of information, in the order shown (make sure all are revealed):

- Looking out the window you see the rain is even heavier now.
- There's still no sign of the bus.
- The barman is pointing to a sign that says "This isn't a bus stop or a toilet – buy a drink".
- One of the heavily built Vargr bouncers is coming over...

Whether the characters decide to make trouble, or buy a drink, before they can make a fool of themselves, two humans approach them:

You suddenly notice two humans are approaching your table. One of the two is female, tall, thin, pale with red hair and bulgy eyes. The other is male, with sallow skin, dark hair and dark eyes. They both seem entirely unconcerned about being the only human customers in the place, although they are attracting hostile stares from the other Vargr. The woman introduces herself:

"Erm, hello. Lotte's Girl Muriel Talker and Saul's Boy Ernesto Shotfirer. May we join you? Can I buy you a drink? Some food?"

If the bouncer is there, she waves a few credits and says, "It's all right, they're with us". The bouncer looks bemused, but walks off.

Muriel will not stop pressing refreshments on the PCs until they have eaten and drunk something she has bought for them. This is a hospitality ritual of their homeworld Little Heaven: both Muriel and Ernesto will feel unable to continue until it is completed. This means that they can't actually mention that they want to hire the PCs until the ritual has run its course. Of course, the PCs are cold, wet, poor and hungry (don't let them forget this).

Once the hospitality ritual is complete:

Muriel says, "We got your CVs from the labour exchange. Are you still available?" She shows you a sheaf of hardcopies with your faces on them.

The PCs should be quite surprised that a human is interested in hiring them. If they ask why Muriel has approached them, she will simply reply, "Why not? You're qualified."

The PCs should ask what qualifications are needed. Muriel will tell them:

"We are from the world of Little Heaven and we need help. We are being attacked by raiders. You know about space ships and you can fight."

No doubt the PCs will have further questions (if not, they don't deserve to get any further). Typical questions and responses are given below. These include some key clues, so make sure all the relevant information is conveyed to the Vargr. If the party ask more detailed questions about the colony, its star system, etc. Muriel can tell them the library data on the system (p.42) and sketch them maps of the colony (p.20) or tell them to wait until they're on the ship.

#### **Little Heaven? What's that?**

Little Heaven is an old colony of 700 people in a tropical jungle. We have a small mining operation and some farms, but until now we haven't needed any military aid.

#### **What kind of raiders?**

Humans. Usually they attack by land, sometimes from the air. They have hand weapons and primitive grenades. The airborne ones have guns as well.

#### **How often do they attack?**

About once a month from the ground, every week from the air.

#### **How many are there?**

There are about forty ground raiders, and six to eight airborne.

#### **Who are they?**

No idea.

#### **What about prisoners?**

We've never caught any. They take their wounded with them. The corpses have tattoos though. Some are really elaborate while others just have "love/hate" on their knuckles and dotted lines round their necks.

#### **How have you held them off so far?**

We've mined the perimeter with prospecting charges on command lines and we've slaved a big mining laser to our air control radar. It's short range, but it stops the aircraft from coming too close.

#### **If you can hold them off, why do you need us?**

We can't do any work outside the perimeter. Pretty soon we won't be able feed ourselves or service the colony's debts. We need to end this.

#### **You haven't got any money then?**

We've got some money: 1,000 credits for each of you, plus room and board and anything you save from the arms purchase.

#### **Arms purchase?**

We need help in buying weapons.

#### **Are you sure you're in the right place? The police are pretty strict about that kind of thing.**

We're a sovereign state and we have an end-user certificate. Our budget is 100,000 credits. We need weapons, lots of ammunition and what ever else you think will help. Obviously we need you to train our people to use the weapons, too.

#### **But most humans won't obey orders from Vargr?**

Dumbest thing I've ever heard. Xenophobia, eh? Wow! I've only ever read about it in books.

#### **How do we get there?**

We've hired a ship: the *Loose Booty*. They're helping us in exchange for exclusive trading rights with our colony in future years.

## **2. First Clues**

Several clues were mentioned in the conversation with Muriel and Ernesto. For each clue, if the players did not specifically ask about their relevance, allow them to make the task rolls, but at +1 Difficulty.

#### **Tattoos**

An **Average Streetwise** task will determine that the tattoos are reminiscent of organised criminal and prison fashions.

#### **Number of Ground Raiders**

A **Difficult Streetwise** task will indicate that it would require a pretty large pirate ship to provide living quarters and support for 40-odd raiders. The regular monthly attacks also seems odd – why not a longer, concerted effort? If Sheba makes the task, she will remember that the Imperium tends to ship convicts in batches of 30-40 on prison barques, which might also explain the regularity.

#### **Number of Air Raiders**

A **Difficult Streetwise** or **Average Intelligence** task by Morgan or Meg will reveal that 6-8 people is the number of supernumeraries (gunners, stewards, etc.) that might be found on a small starship such as a subsidised freighter.

# The Black Market

Scenario 2

The spacedogs are left to find some weapons. They may notice someone is watching them and will quickly find that the 'official' route for purchasing weapons is not open to them. They can find weapons on the black market but must be careful to check they get what they paid for!

## 1. Go Buy Some Guns

Having signed up the PCs for the job...

Muriel and Ernesto leave you with an account card for 100,000 credits. Muriel warns you that she will be notified of any transactions, which she must then approve (the banking system will automatically contact her on her comm unit).

The pair indicate that they expect to meet you all at the ship well before sunset as that is when the ship's take-off slot is booked. It is now two hours before noon, so that gives you perhaps seven hours. Muriel and Ernesto also kindly provide you with bus passes and a cheap hand comm unit to call them (they give you their comm unit identity).

The spacedogs are on their own. Molly will know that the only way to buy weapons officially is to go to the "Gun Shop": slang for the Defence Sales Team office in the Government district. Luckily this is on the route of the 176 bus.

Unfortunately, the bus stop is right outside the *Soldier of Fortune* bar. This is populated by dumb macho bigot humans:

As you wait at the bus stop, you find yourselves directly outside the *Soldier of Fortune* bar. The windows are crowded with heavily built humans, dressed in combat fatigues. Some of them seem to be staring meaningfully at you...

Thankfully you can see the bus coming.

This is just to emphasise the anti-Vargr mentality around here. The PCs should avoid a fight: there'll be plenty of that later on.

## 2. The Watchers

If the Vargr should think to look around either outside their bar or at the bus stop, a **Difficult Perception (GT: Vision) or Streetwise** task will indicate that there appears to be a human in a long coat watching them from down the street. If they don't think to check, make the roll secretly at +2 Difficulty for each character.

There are actually four such tails and they're pretty good, so the PCs can keep rolling the task on the bus and at the DST office. They could

become paranoid if they think several people are following - or are they just imagining it?

The tails will avoid contact so the PCs shouldn't catch any of them. If by some chance they do, the tail will start screaming that he's being assaulted by Vargr thieves and the police will appear on the scene remarkably quickly (the tails have contacts in the police and a friendly cop car is awaiting their call around a nearby corner).

The Vargr should know better than to try to argue this out - they're guaranteed a night in the cells if they wait around; better to run off quickly!

If they are imprisoned at any point, Muriel and Ernesto will turn up and pay bail for them. However, this will use up Cr5,000 of the account card per arrested PC - that means less weapons for the colony, so they will be rather upset.

### Watcher 10/3 (13/15)

- Wearing a large coat which looks like it could conceal a nasty weapon. Actually unarmed and carries only a secure communicator. Trained in unarmed combat but will only use this if life is in severe danger.

## 3. Ye Olde Gunne Shoppe

You arrive outside the Defence Sales Team office - an executive agency of the Imperial government. A guard or doorman stands behind the transparent plasteel door. He's human, of course, and is staring at you.

The doorman won't let them until they make a stink, at which point a police officer will intervene to "restore public order". Provided the PCs show him their end user certificate, they will be allowed to gain admittance.

The guard reluctantly plants his hand on a palm lock in the wall and the heavy armoured door slides open smoothly. Within is a fairly small office. A clerk sits behind the single desk. There is a door behind him.

The clerk will be impressed by the certificate. He will check that Little Heaven indeed exists and will then "Just pop out the back to check the seal". When he gets back, he will tell them that the

certificate seems invalid so he will have to get his superior to check.

At this point, have the PCs roll a **Difficult Perception (GT: Vision)** task. Any of them that succeed will smell that the clerk is afraid and they may be suspicious that he's lying.

If the Vargr don't elect to run for it straight away, a **Difficult Perception (GT: Vision)** task will reveal:

Glancing around casually, you notice that the door to the street is closed and the 'locked' icon is on. The doorman is standing beside the lock, watching you very carefully. His right hand keeps straying under his jacket towards a fairly obvious bulge under his left arm. You're sure it's just your paranoia, but through the doors you can also see two humans standing in the street outside. They're wearing black trench coats.

It is time to leave. This will involve overpowering the doorman and using his palm to activate the door release. The two tails outside don't wish to get involved and will run off before the PCs even get out the door. The intention was that the group would be arrested by the police (who are already on their way). If the adventurers don't run off immediately, they should do so when they hear the approaching sirens.

The PCs should find somewhere to consider their options and contact Muriel. A bus to the Vargr suburbs would be a good idea as they can lie low for a short time amongst their fellows. Provided the party remain on home turf they should now be able to act freely.

If the Vargr don't contact Muriel within the next few hours she will call them on their loaned comm unit. She wants to make sure they meet the sunset deadline for leaving the planet.

#### **Clerk 6/1 (9/11)**

- Expert at cowering in a corner if threatened.

#### **Doorman 9/2 (12/13)**

- Wearing cloth armour with a 9mm autopistol in a shoulder holster. Heavily built and quite good at Brawling.

## **4. The Black Market**

Calling around the city should enable the PCs to assemble a reasonable selection of weapons from black market dealers, which they will have to pay for and drive to the ship. At best they will be able to organise one deal in half an hour, meaning (if they haven't wasted any time) they get about ten chances to find stuff before they'll have to collect, pay for and drive the stuff to the ship.

Benson and Molly will be the prime movers, having Streetwise skill. However, the others may join in suggesting the sort of equipment that they should be looking for and perhaps help to check it out once delivered.

Cr100,000 is quite a lot to drop into the lap of a black market arms dealer at short notice. If they had more than an afternoon, the PCs could certainly get much better equipment. As it is, an army reserve depot got turned over last night and there are some things so hot that the PCs can have them provided they approach things in the right way. There are also items recovered from the recent riot.

If the party need guidance, the non-military types can make **Formidable Intelligence** checks to get hints, e.g. that night vision equipment is good stuff to have, as are medical supplies and armour. Lancer and Meg can get the same clues using **Difficult Intelligence or Tactics (GT: or Strategy)** tasks.

For each opportunity, the party must decide what sort of thing they're looking for. If it's not on the Black Market Goods table (see p.16), then they will be offered one of the Average difficulty items from that table, or one of the items from the Legitimate Goods table instead.

Once they have identified an item they wish to find, they must make a **Streetwise** roll based on (GT: *modified by*) their Charisma. The task difficulty is determined by their choice of item (see the tables on p.16).

If they are successful, they have an opportunity to buy the items. If unsuccessful, they must try again. If they fail to get any decent stuff after 7 or 8 goes, start offering them shipments from the Legitimate table automatically, even if they fail their roll for a Black Market Item.

The PCs don't have enough money to buy a grav vehicle and although they could afford a couple of landrover type vehicles, Muriel did specifically ask them to buy weapons and armour, so she won't approve such purchases.

## **5. Shipment**

Don't give the group any hints, but if they don't inspect and accompany the entire shipment for the whole trip to the port, they will eventually find that all the ammo cases are filled with bone shaped dog biscuits under a single layer of blocks of bullets. (The trick to a scary fire fight is to make the players feel anxious about running out of ammunition.)



## Black Market Goods

| Item                      | Description          | Cost each | Number | Notes | Difficulty |
|---------------------------|----------------------|-----------|--------|-------|------------|
| 7mm ACR                   | Case of 20 rifles    | Cr 30,000 | 4      | (1)   | Formidable |
| ACR Ammo                  | Box of 250 rounds    | Cr 100    | 3      | (1)   | Formidable |
| ACR Ammo                  | Case of 5,000 rounds | Cr 2,000  | 20     | (1)   | Formidable |
| 9mm SMG                   | Case of 20 SMGs      | Cr 50,000 | 1      | (1)   | Formidable |
| SMG Ammo (HEAP)           | Box of 50 rounds     | Cr 250    | 100    | (1)   | Formidable |
| Combat Environment Suits  | Box of 10 suits      | Cr 15,000 | 2      | (2)   | Difficult  |
| Ballistic Mesh Tabards    | Box of 20 tabards    | Cr 5,000  | 10     | (3)   | Difficult  |
| Plate Inserts for Tabards | Box of 25 inserts    | Cr 2,500  | 1      | (3)   | Difficult  |
| Combat Helmets            | Box of 20            | Cr 500    | 1      | (4)   | Difficult  |
| Assault Shotgun           | 1 shotgun and armour | Cr 2,500  | 1      | (5)   | Average    |
| 9mm Autopistol            | 1 pistol             | Cr 350    | 6      | (6)   | Average    |
| Magnum-10                 | 1 magnum             | Cr 700    | 1      | (7)   | Average    |

### Notes

(1) These items were stolen in the last few days from an Army reserve depot. The seller will only sell if he knows the PCs are going to take the stuff off planet very rapidly.

(2) This armour is surplus stock and will fit Vargr (it has provision for a tail). AV3 (GT: PD 2, DR 24). It can be converted to a sealed vacc suit by the manual addition of air tanks (readily available at Cr500 each) using a **Difficult Vacc Suit or Armoury** task.

(3) This armour is manufactured off-world and is sold by the police to promote "alien conspiracy" stories. AV2 (GT: PD 2, DR 16). The plate inserts for the tabards weigh 3 kg (GT: 7 lb) and increase front torso protection (only) to a total of AV5 (GT: PD 4, DR 40).

(4) These helmets fit humans but are faulty and may shatter if hit by rifle fire. AV 2 (GT: PD 4, DR 24).

(5) This equipment was taken from a dead Vargr agent provocateur working for the security services. The armour is an AV5 (GT: PD 4, DR 50) flak jacket. The shotgun has a belt feed attachment, backpack magazine and 600 rounds of ammo.

(6) This pistol was taken from a dead policeman and includes two 15-round clips of ammo.

(7) This pistol was stolen from a mugged noble. It is very "hot"; the seller wishes it to leave planet fast!

## Legitimate Goods

| Item                    | Description      | Cost each | Number | Notes | Difficulty |
|-------------------------|------------------|-----------|--------|-------|------------|
| Bullpup (GT: 7mm) rifle | 1 rifle          | Cr 300    | 4      | (8)   | Easy       |
| Webbing and Ammo        | 1 set            | Cr 150    | 4      | (9)   | Easy       |
| 13mm Hunting Rifle      | 1 rifle          | Cr 4,000  | 1      | (10)  | Easy       |
| Night Vision Goggles    | Box of 5 goggles | Cr 10,000 | 3      | (11)  | Easy       |
| Field Medical Kit       | Box of 20 kits   | Cr 5,000  | 10     | (12)  | Easy       |

### Notes

(8) Includes one loaded magazine.

(9) Waist and shoulder webbing with ammo pouches: includes four loaded magazines for bullpup rifle.

(10) Comes in a presentation case with a box of ammo and a snake skin sling.

(11) Light intensifier goggles.

(12) Each kit contains field dressings, drugs, etc. for use by someone with appropriate medical skills.

The PCs get familiar with the *Loose Booty*, find that customs officers have an unhealthy interest in them and their cargo, and then have a few weeks to plan their strategy before arriving at Little Heaven.

## 1. The Starport

The PCs will make it to the docks before Muriel and Ernesto, who are off investigating getting official legal aid for their cause. They may well have been followed by more suspicious men in dark coats but no one will openly interfere with their arrival at the starport.

You press the button, the blast bay door opens and your gaze falls upon the free trader *Loose Booty*. For a moment you wonder whether this astonishingly tatty freighter can actually lift itself into the air. It looks dangerously as though something critical would shake loose and fall off if it tried to manoeuvre in an atmosphere.

At least there are a few crew around and as they see you approaching they seem to have genuinely friendly smiles.

The crew are expecting the party, of course, and have a diplomatic seal to slap on the outside of the crates of weapons. One of the crew (the engineer) is a Vargr, called Lassie.

The crew are described on p.40 and details of the *Loose Booty* are given on p.43.

The ship is preparing for take off and will lift as soon as their patrons arrive.

## 2. Customs

While manoeuvring to safe jump distance, the *Loose Booty* will be boarded by customs

officers. Although denied the right to look into the weapons crates (due to their diplomatic seals), these officers will question the crew and the Vargr very closely indeed. Muriel and Ernesto will expect some respect as diplomatic representatives but the customs officers are irreverent and abusive.

The party (especially Benson and Meg) should think that this kind of interference with outgoing traffic is rather strange. While the customs officers are on board, the crew will be very unhelpful to them and defensive about any slur to the ship, its crew or its passengers. However, once the customs officers leave, the crew will ask the PCs what they did to warrant such attention!

## 3. Jump

It will take three jumps (i.e. 3 weeks) to get to Little Heaven. If running this as a tournament, there is insufficient time to roleplay this, so each character should choose one key thing that they will be doing during that time. Useful activities include checking the equipment, training with the weapons, adapting the CE suits to vacc suits, etc. Determine appropriate tasks as required.

If they haven't already, the PCs should be asking about Little Heaven – details of the star system are on p.42 and are available from the ship's computer library.

Just out of jump, the *Loose Booty's* bridge explodes, killing the flight crew. It's up to the spacedogs to take charge.

## 1. Explosion

It's simulated night when the ship eventually exits jump into the Little Heaven system. You awake and gradually drag yourselves out of bed and into the lounge area to have breakfast. The crew call you over the comms system and tell you they have set course for the planet itself. A system map pops up on the screen. The bridge begins playing stirring brass band music "for your listening pleasure".

Suddenly a loud "crump" reverberates through the hull, the brass band disappears and the ship lurches, throwing you out of your chairs and breakfast over the floor.

The ship's gravity wavers for a moment; have all PCs roll an **Average Dexterity** task to avoid 1 point of damage from bruising, etc.

If they look at the ship's status display on a computer terminal (e.g. in the galley terminal):

There are bright flashing warnings indicating that the bridge has decompressed... explosively.

If they switch the comms to try to contact Engineering, they will hear a worried Lassie:

"Ah, thank the space gods you're still there! We're in trouble: looks like the bridge has gone. Telemetry and atmospheric integrity have failed. We're locked in here at the moment - is there anything you guys can do to go see what shape the bridge is in?"

No doubt they'll wonder where the rest of the crew are. Lassie can confirm Johnny and Lisa were on the bridge. She can't get any response from them. Sylvester is with Lassie as he was giving her a hand in engineering, while Elliott and Janet are somewhere on the ship but not currently answering comms calls. Since a lot of the ship's electronics are controlled from the bridge, that's not too surprising.

Elliott and Janet were in their cabin tidying up when the power in that area failed; that has affected the door locks, comms, etc. However, they will eventually find their way to vacc suits, a personal comms unit that is battery-powered, etc. and establish contact with the adventurers.

## 2. Space Walk

There is only one way to get the ship safely into orbit around Little Heaven: some of the adventurers need to space-walk out of the air-raft hangar to reach the bridge. Once there they should be able to jury rig what remains of the controls to enable Lassie to remotely bring the *Loose Booty* into orbit. Once the ship is in orbit, everyone can be ferried down to the surface in the air-raft (including the weapons and equipment for the colony).

If the party don't work this out, Lassie will contact them on the comms unit and suggest it.

This section provides opportunities for Benson, Lancer, Meg and Morgan to shine. Let them make appropriate task rolls for the space walk, electronics, computer and engineering jobs. If they're really good at it, Meg could even do the astrogation and piloting herself to put the ship into orbit. They won't find the bodies of Johnny and Lisa - anything loose in the bridge has been lost into space.

The ship will be able to stay in orbit indefinitely, but it has no atmospheric integrity and the lanthanum grid which covered the flight deck is gone (so using its Jump drive would be extremely risky and likely to cause a dramatic misjump or destroy the ship). To repair the *Loose Booty*, a mobile dock would have to be jumped out here. No one in the colony has that kind of clout with the Navy.

## 3. Drawing Conclusions

The explosion has killed the *Loose Booty's* captain/trade specialist and pilot/astrogator. It has also annoyed the remaining crew who, once on the ground, will sign up with the locals and fight as a unit, armed with snub pistols from the ship's locker.

If the Vargr consult with the crew and think carefully, about the only people who could have had an opportunity to plant a bomb in the bridge would have been the customs officers...

The adventurers should be pleasantly surprised to meet humans who don't hate them on sight. They need to take stock of the colony's situation and plan how best to defend it.

## 1. Meeting the Natives

As you shuttle cargo down in the air-raft, you get a good view or the settlement. Little Heaven lies in a wide, heavily forested valley, running north-south and edged by bluffs. The town itself is set around an open green area and comprises some forty two-storey buildings which seem to be made out of local wood and stone, but which incorporate old cargo containers and what looks like hull plates from an old starship. You can make out buildings which are probably barns or warehouses, a hall, a school and some form of religious building. There is a mining laser on an open mount to one side of the green.

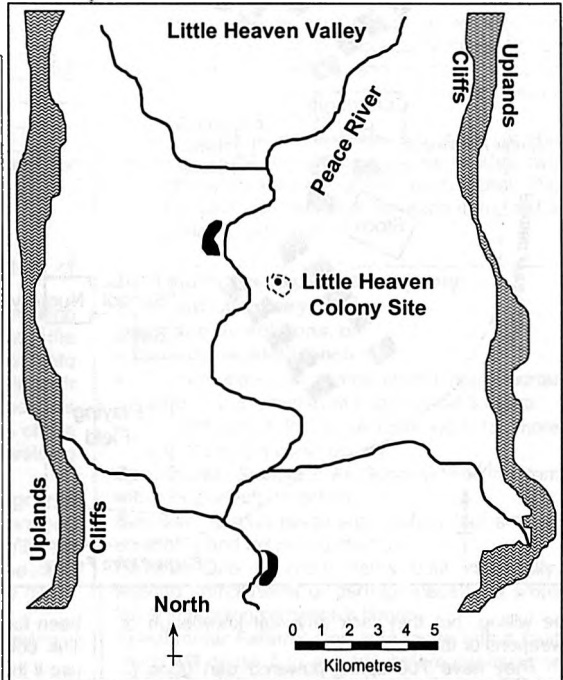
The entire settlement is surrounded by barbed wire entanglements and trenches. Outside this there are crop fields for several hundred metres all around. The fields adjacent to the barbed wire have been cleared to give an open swathe of land about 100 metres wide all around the colony. A few tracks lead off into the jungle.

The local people look grim and determined as they help to unload the air-raft.

On the final trip down you notice that trestle tables have been set up on the green and local people are setting out a large meal.

The spacedogs may want to perform some kind of aerial reconnaissance of the area. They won't find anything within a 50 km radius of the colony, but the thick jungle makes it very difficult to make out anything beneath the canopy.

The PCs are received warmly as the colony's rescuers. They will be fed, pampered and treated well, which should be quite a shock. Depending upon the amount of weaponry the adventurers managed to acquire, the locals will try to be polite but will probably be disheartened. The level of establishment opposition to the colony, the subversion of the Defence Sales Team and the

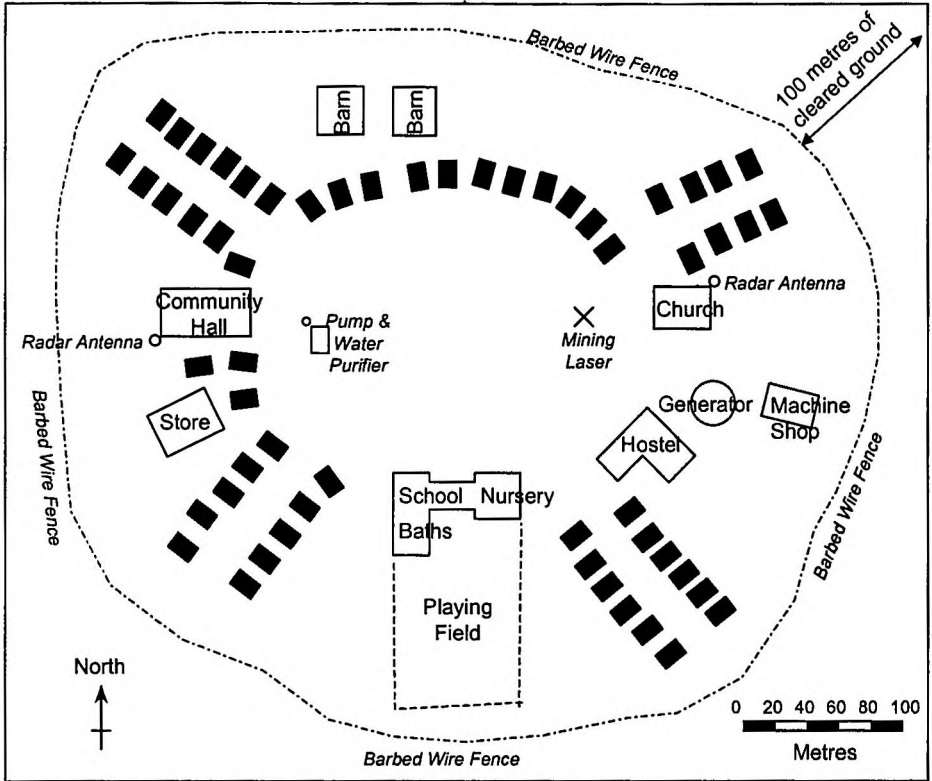


way the customs officers sabotaged the ship (the locals will conclude this even if the PCs didn't work this out earlier) are of great concern. They had been hopeful that there hadn't been any more attacks since Muriel and Ernesto left. However, the arrival of the spacedogs puts a different interpretation on the lack of attacks.

The Vargr get their own choice of billets and will be allowed a few hours to settle in but will then be expected to attend a meeting of the elders with Muriel and Ernesto to begin planning the colony's defence.

## 2. The Colony

The settlement has 700 members, 50 of whom are what could be called warrior material. Another 200 are too young or too elderly to be of any use. The remaining 450 (both men and women) may



be willing, but they lack any real knowledge of weapons or tactics.

They have 700 spring-powered dart guns (a rash purchase from a passing trader), 6 double-barrelled shotguns (12 shells left for each) and the ancestral ship possessed two 7mm bullpup rifles, now 365 years old, but which are still in service (this fact alone is worth about Cr150,000 in advertising to the manufacturers, Panopoly Weapons Systems)!

They are running low on prospecting and survey charges: the last set has been deployed.

Currently, all the colonists have a dart gun. Most of the fighters have two dart guns and a couple of hand-made grenades or petrol bombs.

The six shotguns are in the hands of a "flying" squad which reinforces any weak points on the perimeter during an attack.

The bullpup rifles have been tinkered with and now fire fully automatic (only), emptying their magazines with one pull of the trigger. They have

been fixed coaxially to a pintle mount on a jeep. The colonists hope that they might be of some use if the perimeter is ever breached.

#### **Spring-powered Dart Gun**

Single-shot weapons firing 30 cm (1') barbed darts, reloaded by pulling a lever running along the barrel. The darts have a reservoir which can be filled with sedative or poison – all the colonists have left is pot pourri-scented disinfectant.

2D, Short, 1 shot, 1.4 kg, TL4 (GT: Imp 1D-1, SS 10, Acc 2, ½dmg 30, Max 55, ROF ¼, 3 lb, ST 8, Rcl -1, Hld -2).

#### **Home-made Mortar or Rocket**

Typically only explodes on 3-6 on 1D. Causes 2D explosive damage. If wrapped in nails or equivalent, adds 1D fragmentation.

The allocation of weapons amongst the colonists is summarised in the following table (don't just give this to the players; let them work it out for themselves):

|                | Total | "Flying" Squad | Fighters | Others | Spare |
|----------------|-------|----------------|----------|--------|-------|
| Combatants     | 700   | 6              | 44       | 450    | -     |
| Dart guns      | 700   | -              | 2 ea     | 1 ea   | 162   |
| Petrol bombs   | 56    | 2 ea           | 1 ea     | -      | -     |
| Shotguns       | 6     | 1 ea*          | -        | -      | -     |
| Bullpup rifles | 2     | jeep           | -        | -      | -     |

\*Unless the shotgun ammunition is used for explosives – see Nugget 4. Making a Bang.

### 3. Preparations

The spacedogs should take careful stock of local resources before forming their plans.

Sensible initial actions should include checking there are sufficient guard patrols watching the perimeter, ensuring the locals are formed into units, issuing weapons and training them in their use. General task rolls should be made as appropriate to determine the effectiveness of the spacedogs in explaining their plans and training the colonists.

The settlers will take heart when the Vargr start to organise them, especially if the party managed to get some ACRs. If the PCs brought significant medical supplies with them, the locals will become confident. They will be a little peeved if the group bought dog biscuits by mistake.

Hopefully, the spacedogs will do the following:

- Organise the colonists into fire teams
- Arrange for logistical support of the front line
- Arrange for the evacuation of casualties.
- Mount the mining laser or equivalent heavy weaponry on their air-raft.

The colony has its own doctor, plus Louis (from the *Loose Booty*) and Molly (if she chooses). However, drugs and bandages are in short supply unless the spacedogs brought a substantial haul with them from Sylea.

### 4. Making a Bang

If Sheba has a look around the store, a successful **Average Intelligence** roll will alert her to the presence of all the necessary materials for making primitive rockets and mortars: 4 cubic metres of nitrate fertiliser, piles of sugar, lots of pipes, glue and string, etc.

The shotgun ammunition will have to be sacrificed as the percussion caps are needed: two for each mortar shell and one for each rocket. The following task can be rolled for each item, or for each period of 3-6 hours.

---

**To manufacture explosive weaponry:**

- > **Difficult Chemistry, or**
- > **Average Demolitions, or**
- > **Formidable Intelligence**

- Construction time: mortar shell 1 hour, mortar tube 6 hours, rocket with launch rail 3 hours.
- +1 Difficulty if the same team work for more than 12 hours continuously.

**Spectacular Success:** As Success, but the item will work perfectly in action.

**Success:** Item(s) made successfully (but are still unreliable and fail on 1-2 on 1D).

**Failure:** One or more items built incorrectly, wasting components or perhaps causing a small fire and burning someone's hands.

**Spectacular Failure:** One item made with a fault which will cause it to explode before deployed or when fired, killing several colonists (but *not* PCs).

---

There are enough tools for three people to work on shells (rocket or mortar) and one on mortars. Obviously they can choose to work through the night, but people get tired and explosives are dangerous things.

# The First Fight

Scenario 6

A ground raid begins but is repelled until artillery is brought up. The spacedogs need to locate the artillery but their air-raft is shot down in the process. This attracts aerial bombardment from a starship, leaving the Vargr to walk back to the colony.

## 1. Jungle Fighting

The Vargr will find it particularly difficult fighting in the tropical jungle climate of Little Heaven. It is very hot, very humid, and the visibility is generally poor: no aimed shots beyond Very Short range – 15 m (GT: 17 yd).

Vargr are furred, do not sweat, and have to pant (just like a dog) to keep themselves cool. Thus, whenever they have exerted themselves (after each fire-fight):

---

**To recover after physical exertion:**

➤ **Average Endurance (GT: Health)**

- +1 Difficulty if have previously failed this task and have not rested and recovered since.

**Spectacular Success:** Get back out there and kick some bad-guy butt!

**Success:** Tired, but otherwise okay.

**Failure:** All physical characteristics reduced by 1 point (GT: 1 fatigue point) until they rest and (preferably) have a little to drink. One point of each characteristic (GT: 1 fatigue point) is recovered for each 15 minutes rested.

**Spectacular Failure:** As Failure plus the PC temporarily passes out from heat exhaustion.

---

Drinking an excessive amount in one go (in such a hot and humid climate) will lead to temporary stomach cramps which gives a +1 Difficulty on all tasks for 15 – Endurance (GT: 20 – Health) minutes.

The GM should emphasise these difficulties but the players should be encouraged to roleplay: pretending to pant like a dog, etc.

## 2. The Attack

Two days after arrival, there is an attack in the pre-dawn. The day is dark, hot and close with thick storm clouds blocking out the sun.

The raiders use improvised Bangalore torpedoes to clear a path through the minefield and entanglements. Obviously if the defenders detect the approach, there will be some firing to and from the tree line. This is part of the attackers' plan: to spook and occupy the

attention of the defenders while encouraging them to waste ammunition. Lancer will realise this if he makes an **Average Tactics** task roll.

Ordering a cease fire requires a **Formidable Leader** task to control the over-enthused colonists. If the defenders don't stop firing within 5 rounds, they will have expended most of the ammunition they had been issued with. If they do stop, the attackers will continue their approach.

This is a good time to use the mortars and rockets to cause substantial casualties to the attackers.

However, the adventurers should be concerned when they realise that there are far more than 40 raiders assaulting them this time.

## 3. Incoming!

Sporadic shooting will continue to dawn, at which point the attackers will have ascertained the strength of the defence. They will withdraw to the tree line and proceed with their real plan: artillery fire from the other side of the eastern bluffs.

The Vargr will notice that the attacks have ceased but, unusually, the raiders have not taken any casualties with them. All the adventurers can make a **Formidable Perception (GT: Vision)** roll to detect incoming fire. Success alerts them to a contrail in the eastern sky.

If they fail they can try a **Difficult Perception (GT: Hearing)** task; if successful they hear a high pitched whine. If Lancer is successful at either task, he should drop to the ground and shout "incoming".

The first rocket will miss entirely and will land in the cleared area around the colony, in a random direction. It will be followed at four minute intervals by other explosions, which over and undershoot by differing amounts.

Lancer can identify the munitions as rocket-assisted, cannon-launched, high explosive rounds, probably around 80 mm calibre. This is indirect fire which Lancer will know (and the other PCs may guess) means the attackers must have a spotter who is directing their fire.

The rockets are coming from beyond the ridge line so there must be a large artillery piece somewhere out there. If the spacedogs don't take

out the source of the fire, the colony will be pounded into the mud.

The only way to get rapidly out to the ridge is to use the air-raft. The party may already have mounted some heavy weaponry (e.g. the mining laser) on the air-raft.

#### 4. Downed!

Occasional small-arms fire rattles up towards you as you fly out over the forest, but this quickly dies away. Periodically, larger rounds launch from ahead of you. You hear the explosions as they hit the colony area. The cliffs loom ahead of you and, although you don't want to, you have to gain altitude to cross the ridge line.

As you do so, the air-raft shudders. A quick glance shows you a grounded air-truck beneath you. It has a large gun on its roll bar, firing fully automatic at you. Tracer rounds zip past and your craft shudders again.

Keeping the air-raft in the air requires a **Formidable Grav Craft (GT: Piloting (Contragrav))** task. The driver must make a snap decision as to whether to land immediately. This requires a **Difficult Grav Craft (GT: Piloting (Contragrav))** task to avoid causing 1 point of damage to everyone on board.

The driver may elect to crash the air-raft into the enemy vehicle by making a second successful landing task. This will destroy the air-raft, a perfectly good Very Rapid Fire (VRF) Gauss Gun (a devastating weapon) and the air-truck it's mounted on.

The truck has two people in the cab, one controlling the Gauss weapon using a gun designator, the other the driver. Any adventurer getting within 10-20 metres of the vehicle will be able to see this on a **Difficult Perception (GT: Vision) or Average Recon (GT: Tactics)** task.

The cab is armoured but pouring fire into it will upset and frighten the driver who will either crash (spectacular success or a mining laser hit is required to actually kill him) or fly away.

##### **Air-truck Crew 8/1 (11/12)**

- Two men, armed with SMGs and daggers.

#### **If the air-raft stays aloft...**

...it will be hit again each round it remains aloft and requires the same task roll to keep it in the air. The landing roll becomes **Formidable** because of the extra damage taken.

It does allow the spacedogs to lay down airborne suppressive fire. If they use the mining laser this will melt big holes in the air-truck and either this or substantial small-arms fire will drive the gunners away from their vehicle. (The PCs may perceive that these guys are pretty cowardly).

#### **If the PCs land the air-raft...**

...they can attempt to approach the air-truck on the ground. They may note that there is a blind spot in front of the air-truck as the Gauss weapon is mounted too far back to fire over the cab. Stealthy Vargr can get within 10 metres (grenade range) of the front of the truck.

Approach from any other direction will be suicide: the enemy are expecting trouble and the Gauss gun will chew up the jungle around them, shredding trees with its hideous bursts of fire.

#### **If the PCs land or crash and then hide...**

...the air-truck will lift off after about a minute. It will fly towards where the spacedogs' air-raft set down. When it gets there, the Gauss gun will fire bursts around the whole area, shredding the jungle. After a further few minutes, artillery rockets will begin to zero in on the spot too.

#### 5. The Air-Truck Site

Once the air-truck is disposed of, examination of the area around its site requires only an **Average Perception (GT: Vision)** task to spot a land-line communications cable running west to the ridge line and east into the forest.

#### **If the spacedogs follow the line west:**

It runs for 250 metres, where it ends at an abandoned field telephone unit, a pair of infra-red electronic binoculars on a tripod and a SMG.

The spotter has run away.

Heading east, the heroes will may approach by ground or air...

#### **If they follow the line east on the ground:**

It runs for 300 metres, where it ends in a small clearing draped in camouflage netting. Under the netting is a howitzer, seemingly abandoned.

Closer examination is required to determine:



There are a box of shells (10), a camp table, four cups of coffee, a box of doughnuts, an empty machine gun mount and a case of MG ammunition, full but for one magazine.

Vargr who are already extremely suspicious and looking carefully around can make a **Difficult Perception (GT: better of Vision, Hearing or Smell)** roll. Ex-military types automatically make an **Average Tactics** roll. Success in either case makes them duck instinctively.

There is a flash from the bushes at the edge of the clearing and bullets begin tearing into the camp, sparking off the howitzer and the ammunition dumped around it.

The artillerists are hiding behind a nearby tree with the machine gun and ammo missing from the camp. Anyone stupid enough to remain standing during this blizzard of fire takes 8D damage. Assuming the Vargr return fire fairly quickly, the machine gun will soon stop firing – the gunners have run off.

#### Artillerists 8/1 (11/12)

- Two men and two women, all middle-aged convicts, armed with SMGs and daggers.

If any of the party were performing a cunning pincer movement instead of approaching the fire base directly, they won't be able to do it stealthily as none of them possesses the skill and this is thick jungle. However, they will find four very panicky soldiers hiding behind a big tree with a machine-gun trained on the fire base. They are muttering things like: "I don't know about this" and "I'm getting a bad feeling, man".

Essentially these troops are happiest when the enemy is the other side of a big hill and being shelled. They will forget the machine gun and run off if they come under fire.

#### If the PCs head east in an air-raft:

After a few moments you spot a peculiar dip in the tree canopy which you quickly see is a clearing with camouflage netting across it.

The location has a huge infra-red signature. The group can sweep the area with small-arms (or heavier) fire from the air. As soon as they come under fire, the gunners will run away into

the bush. If the PCs land they will encounter the same situation at the fire base as above, but the gunners won't have had time to grab the machine gun and have disappeared off.

## 6. Taking Stock

The party might now have acquired:

- An automatic 80 mm RAM howitzer which can be depressed for a direct fire role,
- 10 explosive shells,
- a VRF Gauss gun,
- a light machine gun (fires rifle ammunition but the longer barrel gives 5D damage),
- six SMGs,
- a good pair of binoculars,
- a high quality land-line,
- fresh coffee and doughnuts.

Everything's going way too well...

If they haven't already asked the question "Where's all this being directed from?", Lancer and Benson get to roll an **Average Intelligence or Tactics** task to work out there must be a central command, communications and control centre. There is too little 3C equipment here for this to be the centre, yet the fire base and assault units are being co-ordinated.

If any characters search the fire base in detail, a **Difficult Perception (GT: Vision)** roll will reveal there is another land-line, running up the side of a tree. If they climb the tree, they will find that its upper branches have been laced with a dispersed-mesh dish aerial oriented northwards, towards the equator. (The mesh is camouflaged and very difficult to see from the ground or air).

Meg (or anyone else making a **Difficult Intelligence** roll) will know that this is perfect for communicating surreptitiously with a ship in geostationary orbit.

## 7. Retributive Strike

Just as the party find the dish in the tree, or about five minutes after they took out the artillery team), the orbiting corsair which is co-ordinating the assaults on the colony fires her lasers at the howitzer position:

There is a huge "boom", a magnificent flash and a satisfying afterglow in the atmosphere directly above you. Most of you haven't encountered this before but you can guess from the trail back into the glowing sky that a ship's laser has just

vaporised the local cloud cover and ionised a big patch of the atmosphere.

The second shot will blow apart the forest canopy and turn the trees into fragmentation grenades (trees are water, water turns to steam, increasing its volume by 1,600 times, the trees blow apart, then catch fire). The third and fourth shots will be scattered quite badly by the subsequent ash, smoke, water vapour and soot.

If the spacedogs haven't already run out of the area by the time the second shot arrives, they are likely to be vaporised. Even those running need to put at least 15 metres of foliage between them and the clearing to avoid taking 1D shrapnel damage for each laser strike on the fire base.

If they think to use the air-truck, an **Average Intelligence** roll will tell them that the starship above can probably pick up the vehicle on its sensors and is highly likely to target it next. If they insist on trying, the air-truck will be blasted just before they reach it.

Each character has a chance of grabbing something before it gets blasted. They require a **Formidable Dexterity (GT: or Will)** roll to grab one item from the following list:

- the LMG,
- a case of ammunition for the LMG ,
- a clip of five RAM shells,
- half of the Gauss gun (barrel or receiver assembly),
- a reload for the Gauss gun (including power pack),
- an SMG,
- the binoculars,

- half of the mining laser (barrel or power pack).

Do not allow the players to consult – they should write down precisely what they are grabbing; if they don't get compatible things, that's just tough. They only have a few seconds before the site will be vaporised!

### The Long Walk Home

Whatever happens, the group's transport (air-raft, etc.) will have got pummelled. The characters will have to walk back to the colony. This requires them to clamber down the cliffs; thankfully these have plenty of fissures and landslides providing a non-hazardous descent. However, it will take 2-3 hours to get back to the colony.

The GM may choose to have the characters encounter hazards in the form of native flora and fauna on the journey back to the colony; suitable creatures can be selected from *101 Lifeforms* or created by the GM using the appropriate rules.

Such encounters should be relatively harmless (the spacedogs have enough to deal with!) but emphasise the alien nature of the terrain through which they are moving.

If a fairly dangerous creature or plant is chosen, the party should be given some warning of their impending doom, e.g. by having one of the fleeing artilleryists run into the creature and die, screaming loudly enough for the Vargr to hear.

They do have the advantage of their acute senses of eyesight and smell which should give them some advantage in detecting any native threat before they are attacked.

# The Hot Trod Lands

Scenario 7

The raiders' starship has landed and the colony is being held hostage. The Vargr must take out the drunken raiders, save the hostages and capture the *Hot Trod*.

## 1. Approaching the Colony

While the PCs leave the fire base, the corsair *Hot Trod* lands in the colony. If the party have a view in that direction:

A starship descends through the cloud base, red hot and firing her plasma engines to shed velocity. It has military or pirate markings and is probably two or three times the size of the *Loose Booty*. It drops slowly towards the colony. A single laser shot lances downwards, then the ship drops out of sight beneath the tree line.

When they see the ship, the colonists surrender – the laser shot was all that was needed to convince them that their plight was hopeless.

If any of the PCs remained in the colony when their colleagues went out to silence the artillery, this is a good time for them to hide – the colonists will suggest this if they don't think of it. Armed resistance by a character at this point will be opposed by the colonists as it's likely to get them all killed.

A while after the ship lands, the PCs' radios will come to life:

A gruff voice comes through on your radios: "Hi, dogs! We've got your friends here and we're going to kill them if you don't surrender now. Just radio in and we'll come and collect you. No pressure!"

(Later on they should be able to identify the voice as that of Graeme Graham, the captain of the *Hot Trod*).

Common sense should tell the Vargr that surrender means they'll probably be killed anyway. Assuming they don't give up, they will have to approach the settlement stealthily.

They could observe the colony for a few minutes from the forward observer's position on the ridge but they will quickly see the pirate ship turning a laser turret on that area of the ridge.

The laser fire shouldn't catch the characters, but it will start a major fire, which will just smoulder to begin with and pick up momentum as the day progresses. If they time it right, the background heat radiation should prevent the

spacedogs showing up on infra-red sensors by the time they reach the settlement.

## 2. Watching Carefully

The party should observe the settlement carefully before committing themselves to an attack. Climbing up a tree and looking through binoculars will reveal:

The pirate vessel is sitting right in the centre of the town. It's an ugly ship, about 600 tons, with plenty of turrets.

In the last few hours the raiders have improvised a large scaffold to one side of the ship. Muriel, Ernesto and the remaining crew of the *Loose Booty* are standing on it. They have placards round their necks with the word "unreasonable", on them. Lassie, the Vargr engineer has been stripped, shaved and is on all fours.

There is a pair of pirates patrolling around the ship and keeping an eye on the prisoners. You can see a few others running around and staggering as though drunk. You can also faintly hear whoops, yells and raucous dance music.

More detailed observation of the scaffold is advisable. A **Difficult Perception (GT: Vision)** roll reveals that all of the prisoners are tied to the scaffolding behind them, while Lassie is held in position by a collar and leash. A further roll shows that the scaffold is mounted on drums of oil.

The spacedogs should get the hint that the scaffold can be easily blown up if they take hostile action. This should not sway Lancer or Sheba: they have a mission to complete and, after all, you get casualties in war.

They may assume the jolity down there is a trap, but in reality the raiders are having a party. They're undisciplined, have just won a major fight and feel entitled to get drunk. The only exception is the watch officer (on the ship's bridge), who has taken a lot of stimulants to stay awake instead.

The counterattack should be a walk-over. The convicts who took part in the ground attack are the most drunk and are generally incapacitated. The pirate crew are more controlled but there aren't that many of them – 16 altogether, of whom half aren't combatants. Lancer will be able to guess this on an **Average Instruction (GT: Teaching)** or **Difficult**

**Intelligence** roll; he knows that most of a ship's crew are dumb swabbies who won't fight.

### 3. Revenge

The party need to do two things: take control of the ship and rescue the hostages.

#### The Scaffold

A good first step would be to disarm the bomb under the scaffold, which can be done simply by crawling under there and taking the battery out of the radio receiver (although the PCs may think it's going to be a major operation).

The hostages are all weak from their battle wounds or from having been beaten. However, once freed the fittest ones will ask for weapons and set off on a killing spree – the spacedogs will need to exercise leadership skills to prevent such thoughtless slaughter causing the alarm being raised before they've dealt with the ship.

#### The Hot Trod

A description (with deckplans) for the *Hot Trod* begins on p.28.

Taking the ship is moderately difficult. There are three air locks: port, starboard and the ventral cargo hatch; all are locked and require an iris scan and a numeric code to open.

If Sheba kept one of the 80mm RAM shells, she could mould the explosive into a crude shaped charge and prime it in 5D minutes given a successful **Difficult Demolitions** roll.

This charge can be ignited by sticking two wires to it and connecting them to a small battery (like the one in a comm unit or radio) or she could re-use the detonator from under the scaffold.

Alternatively, they can fool the iris scan using a pirate (who must have an uninjured eye). The numeric code might be extracted by intimidation of one of the pirates. Alert spacedogs will realise that this code must be short and easy to remember as the pirates need to remember it when severely drunk: it's "666".

Once inside the ship, the PCs need to make their way to the bridge. They'll find the door open (unless the alarm has been raised or they used a breaching charge to get in) and that "Twitchy Jake Speed Freak", watch officer and lonely man, is staring at a holographic chess game. He's playing black and keeps getting caught in Fool's Mate, and therefore resets the game every other move.

If their entry was somewhat explosive, then Jake has locked himself in and is hunkered

down behind his acceleration couch with a snub pistol trained at the hatch. A second breaching charge, the mining laser or crowbars will allow the PCs to gain access to the bridge. Jake will fire away as soon as the hatch opens, but his chair will only provides 1 point of armour, and that only against the first burst. Unrestrained automatic fire will mess up the bridge.

#### The Remaining Bad Guys

The party can wander around shooting drunk and collapsed raiders all night if they like. However, there are more important things to do – they need to keep some raiders alive to determine who's behind all this. In particular, the *Hot Trod's* captain – Graeme Graham (see p.41).

If the party went crazy didn't take any prisoners, then the locals will have captured a few for them, or some raiders will play dead only to recover and surrender when the locals have calmed down.

### 4. Searching the Ship

A search of the *Hot Trod* reveals a well stocked bridge locker with vacc suits, rifles, snub guns, tools and survival kits.

In a safe hidden behind a false computer console on the bridge are large supplies of hard drugs, both in capsules and powders, with scales, spoons, little self-sealing bags and syringes.

A chemical analysis will show that these are pharmaceutically pure compounds, cut with the legally required innocuous filler. Molly and Benson both know that the filler has a tailored molecular sequence identifying the factory of origin.

The drugs are a mixture of powerful euphoric analgesics (similar effects to heroin and cocaine) and nested time release capsules of stimulants and hallucinogenics.

The captain (Graeme Graham; see p.41) seems to fantasise about conducting a large orchestra – he has the latest Fantasy Holo-Symphony set, complete with baton and a set of tails in his cabin. He also has a monumental bong next to his bunk and a personal stash of resin and Chateau Mouton.

If any of the crew are asked to comment, they will reveal that he used to stride through the ship, wired into his HUD glasses and headset, conducting Blaashi's "Triumphant" Symphony in D flat minor. This was bad enough but his selfishness with his drugs and fine wine was hard to take. He would spend a lot of time boasting about how wonderful he was. In fact he wouldn't shut up.

He was clearly was a bit paranoid as well: there is a lot of surveillance equipment in his cabin – laser ears, directional audio microphones, bugs,

recorders, etc. A close inspection shows that there are bugs throughout the ship.

Individual bugs can be located using **Difficult Perception (GT: Vision)** rolls. Using a bug detector reduces the difficulty one level.

The captain has a bug detector but the party might miss it – it is disguised as his conductor's baton. Alternatively, a bug detector can be improvised from a radio unit on a successful **Difficult Communications (GT: Electronics Ops (Communications))**.

Spectacular success indicates that there are two sets of bugs: one set transmit to a recorder in the captain's cabin. The other set are more difficult to find (+1 Difficulty) and include a bug in the captain's cabin (which he seems to have missed somehow). These latter bugs transmit to

a relay near the bridge. A cable from this innocent-looking unit passes out with a bundle of sensors cabling to the outside of the hull and can be traced to a sealed battery-powered tight beam communicator on the top of the hull.

The processor controlling this device orients it toward a specific broadcast signal, then sends out the data in an encrypted burst. (This is transmitting to a tiny covert comsat in geostationary orbit above the colony. The comsat relays the data on via a tight beam link to a second ship hidden in the system gas giant (see Scenarios 8 and 9).

Close examination of the second set of bugs reveals that they cut off whenever they hear classical music.

## Ship's Data: *Hot Trod*

**Hull:** 600 dt, Streamlined, Size Rating 8, Armour 40, Structure 12, MCr205.1 (GT: 600-ton SL Hull, Total Compartmentalisation, DR 100, PD 4, EMass 1,542, LMass 1,606, HP 45,000, Size Modifier +9.)

**Drives:** Jump 2, Manoeuvre 3G, Power Plant 3. (GT: Airspeed 1,750.)

**Weaponry:** Fire Control Rating 2. Turrets 1, 2, 3 & 4: Triple Lasers (4/4/3/2) (GT: 405-MJ); Turrets 5 & 6: Triple Missile Racks (Barbette 5).

**Crew/Cargo:** 9 Crew, 12 Troops, 13 Staterooms, 15 dt Cargo.

**Electronics:** Small Military Controls. Sensor Rating A10 P4 J10. (GT: Hardened Military Bridge.)

**Fuel:** Fuel scoops, purification (8 hours), 200 dt fuel.

**Notes:** A "Vengeance" Class Commerce Protection Vessel, manufactured by Akis of Zimiin (Core 2115).

## Key to Deckplans

**A: Airlocks.** Extending ramp to ground level. Iris and numeric code lock.

**B: Bridge.** Control consoles for pilot, nav/comms, weapons and engineering. There is an extensive weapons locker and a concealed safe.

**CL: Crew Lounge.** Includes self-service galley and entertainment facilities.

**EG: Engineering.** Computer monitoring station. Emergency/maintenance access hatches at rear on lower deck.

**JD: Jump Drive.** Tupolek Khan-geng!his 101.

**MD: Manoeuvre Drive.** Rampart fast-ignition dual thruster drive.

**OF: Captain's Office.**

**PP: Power Plant.** Fortrex 2001GX fusion plant.

**S1: Captain's Stateroom.** Integral fresher.

**S2-S5: Officer Staterooms.** Integral fresher.

**S6-S7: Crew Staterooms.** Cramped, double occupancy, integral fresher.

**S8-S12: Trooper Staterooms.** Cramped, double occupancy, integral fresher.

**T1-T4: Laser Turrets.**

**(T5-T6: Dorsal and Ventral Missile Turrets.)**

**Lifts:**

a: Manual hatch into hold.

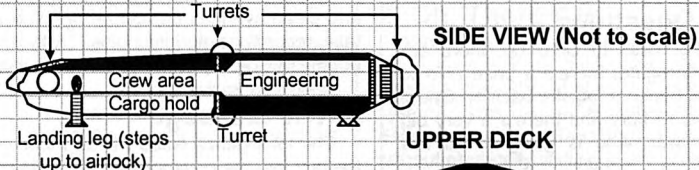
b: Inter-deck lift giving access to dorsal and ventral missile turrets.

c: Cargo ramp (doubles as a lift).

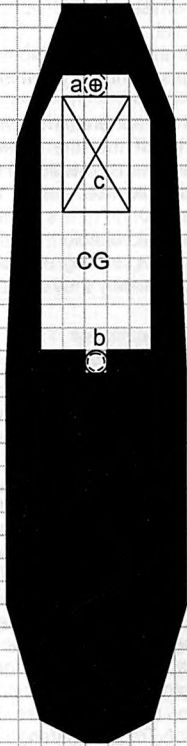
# Hot Trod



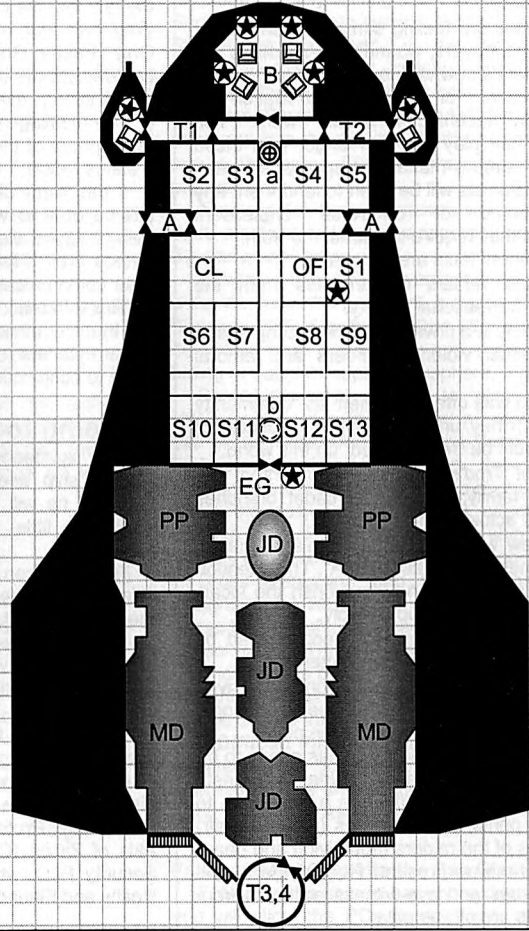
- Wall, door, bulkhead, maintenance panel
- ⊗ Iris valve (wall, floor, ceiling, both)
- ⊕ Manual hatch (wall, floor, ceiling, both)
- ⊗ Lift (up, down, up and down)
- ⊕ Couch (acceleration, normal)
- ★ Main computer terminal



## LOWER DECK



## UPPER DECK



By asking the right questions, the spacedogs learn that there is another ship in the system.

## 1. Asking Questions

There's a big mess to clear up, there are prisoners to interrogate, there's a prize ship to register with the Imperial registry back on Sylea, there are bodies to bury and there's a very big question to answer: who is going to all this effort, and why?

The pirates are feeling sorry for themselves: they have hangovers, wounds, their clothes are dirty and there's nowhere to sit which isn't sticky. The application of suitable intimidation or interrogation techniques should work. The characters can play out their anger with these raiders, or simply make the appropriate task rolls. The colonists will be keen to lend them any sharp, heated or otherwise unpleasant implements they require to extract the truth.

The pertinent facts are as follows:

- The land raiders are inmates from the Scrope Correctional Facility.
- The facility is a private, subcontracting prison for habitual violent offenders and amoral maniacs.
- This raid was offered to them as "community service"; they understood that if successful they would be "rehabilitated" on this world.
- The *Hot Trod's* crew are members of the Scrope family, although of cadet branches (none is actually called "Scrope").
- The crew were in charge of this operation, which they refer to as "Plan A". The intention was to so dispirit and impoverish the locals that they would sell up cheaply.
- The howitzer was provided and crewed by mercenaries (The Stargun Battery Co.)
- The mercenaries and extra convicts arrived from Sylea less hours after the spacedogs, with instructions to "expedite the plan".

If the Vargr don't realise that this needs to be recorded as legal evidence, Muriel or Ernesto will point this out. Similarly, it is a good idea to take finger prints, DNA samples (blood or hair) and pictures of the raiders (both living and dead) to prove who was present. Recordings of the ship, the drugs and eye-witness accounts from the colonists are all valuable.

The captain's cameras, the empty drug bags and clean syringes can all be pressed into use to take recordings and samples. Molly should point out the desirability of refrigerating the samples.

## 2. The Message

The intelligence issue will be made pressing by the fact that the communications system on the *Hot Trod* has just registered an incoming message. Only Graeme Graham, the captain of the *Hot Trod* can decrypt the transmission – his verification by a retinal scan is essential.

The message is from a second ship hiding in the atmosphere of the gas giant Tanyin. It is asking for a status report.

If the Vargr didn't keep Graham alive, they will still be able to work out that the transmission is being relayed via a comms satellite in geosynchronous orbit. The satellite itself has a tight beam laser communicator.

This information should enable the party to work out that the other ship is orbiting one of the outer system planets (unfortunately they are all currently close to conjunction).

## 3. Going to Look

The spacedogs need to commandeer the pirates' ship and check it out. If they question Graham, he will insist that his colleagues are on Kanlin (a little rock far away from their real position).

The party can take control of the *Hot Trod* with little difficulty: the raiders had never assumed that they would lose it, so the simple "666" code and the iris of a live pirate (or recently dead one if Graham's all they've got) will enable them to gain security access, change the settings and become bona fide crew members. They don't have time to check whether the ship has some nasty additional level of security waiting to catch them out later on.

Once they have security access, they can discover that the *Hot Trod* is a Vengeance class Commerce Protection Vessel, manufactured by Akis of Zimiin (Core 2115), operated by Graham Security PLC, who hold a mortgage from Shaim Realty and Finance.

The spacedogs search the system for the second pirate ship.

## 1. A Friendly Visit

The party may set off to the little iceball Graham told them about: Kanlin – see the system map on p.42. The spacedogs can begin both active and passive sensor sweeps of the system as soon as they are in orbit (presuming they think to do so):

**Scanning the Iceball for activity:**

➤ **Formidable Sensors (GT: *Electronic Ops (Sensors)*)**

- -1 Difficulty if using the sensors on the *Loose Booty* as well.
- -1 Difficulty beyond the orbit of Ferin.
- -2 Difficulty beyond the orbit of Tanyin.

**Spectacular Success:** There is absolutely no chance that even a concealed ship is on Kanlin.

**Success:** Unless it's well shielded, it's very unlikely there's a ship on Kanlin.

**Failure:** There are faint emissions from Kanlin but they could be from a geophysical source.

**Spectacular Failure:** There's a ship on Kanlin!

If they don't specifically scan for activity, prompt them to do so once they get within a few million km of Kanlin. They will soon find out that this was a red herring. This voyage will waste nine days.

## The Comsat

The spacedogs might choose to investigate the comsat (in a geosynchronous orbit around Little Heaven) which is relaying signals from the *Hot Trod* out into space – towards one of the planets.

However, they should realise that any interference with the satellite could alert the enemy ship to their tampering. Further, neither the colony nor the two starships carry equipment suitable for mounting on the comsat to measure the angle of incidence of the laser beam sufficiently accurately to derive a straight line pointing to its origin.

## 2. Oh, There It Is

When the party finds that there's no activity on the iceball (or if they didn't believe Graham anyway), they should start to investigate the entire system. This is a **Hopeless Sensors (GT: *Electronic Ops (Sensors)*)** task for one ship without physically visiting every planet. If the *Loose Booty* is pressed into service, the task is reduced to **Staggering**. However, if the two ships are positioned 1 AU apart, looking towards the outer planets with the system's star behind them, the task becomes **Formidable**, with -1 Difficulty as they move out into the system. All the system's planets are in the same 60° arc, making this a viable proposition.

If successful, the adventurers will determine that there are faint emissions, apparently artificial, from the gas giant Tanyin.

Assuming they head towards it at full speed, half a day out from the gas giant, a successful **Difficult Sensors (GT: *Electronic Ops (Sensors)*)** roll will determine there are neutrino emissions from a ship hiding in Tanyin's upper atmosphere.

Should the party attempt to 'ping' the hidden ship's transponder, they will get no reply. Naturally this will alert the other ship to the Vargr presence if it has not already detected their approach. Electrical interference and atmospheric effects within the gas giant reduce the effectiveness of starship sensors so the hidden ship would be unlikely to notice a suitably stealthy approach.

Cross-referencing with the database of ship designs in the *Hot Trod's* computer, the party can guess that the ship involved is a far trader (like the *Loose Booty*). Three hours later, the target vessel will increase its power output, suggesting that it is beginning to take on and refine fuel, then it will plunge deeper into the gas giant.

A **Difficult Pilot (GT: *Piloting (Starship)*)** roll is required for the *Hot Trod* to follow the mystery craft. Alternatively the ship's exit point can be predicted using a **Difficult Astrogation** task.

## Following the Ship into the Gas Giant

Following the ship in has more dramatic impact and will allow the PCs to enter into a protracted engagement within the gas giant.



The *Hot Trod* completely outclasses the trader in size, armour and weaponry. If the *Hot Trod* damages the merchant's drives within the gas giant, it will begin a long spiral orbit downwards until gravity crushes it. The spacedogs will have to EVA (**Difficult Vacc Suit or Environmental Combat**) to board the stricken ship. They don't need to worry about airlocks: they can go in through the holes their guns have made.

Naturally, the crew will put up a fight; there are ten pirates plus their VIP passenger – Miss Modesty Scrope. Details of these NPCs are given on p.41). The GM should determine how many of the pirates were killed in the space battle.

Once they realise they are doomed, the pirates' main priority will be to escape the gas giant's pull in the ship's air-rafts (one in the air-raft dock and one in the cargo hold). The *Hot Trod* should stay nearby in case the boarding group need assistance.

These sub-craft are no match for the *Hot Trod* so after some persuasion (shots across their bow, etc.) they will quickly surrender. In fact, some of the prisoners will be so pleased not to be dead that they will spill their guts with no urging at all.

### Waiting for the Enemy to Emerge

The *Hot Trod* will start the combat with an automatic sensor lock, but will only get two rounds of fire before the enemy will try to Jump out of system (risking a misjump this close in to the gas giant). If they fail to damage the enemy vessel sufficiently, they will have lost her.

However, if the trader is shot up in open space, the party can rig up a passenger tube for their guests, who will require very careful handling and body searches, inside and out.

### Searching the Ship

Assuming the party have sufficient time to safely board and search the ship, a detailed examination will reveal:

- The ship's locker holds vacc suits, survival balls and a selection of small-arms.
- A concealed safe on the bridge has a little box holding 100 platinum ingots (Cr 1,000 each) and Cr 100,000 in cash.

- A very close search will reveal a ship-wide system of bugs and surveillance cameras, linked into an anonymous remote unit in the shower of the portside luxury suite.
- The ship's communications records show regular transmissions via the bugs on *Hot Trod*.
- The ship's registry shows its name to be the *Spaceway Star*, operated by Spaceways Passengers and Freight PLC, who hold a mortgage from Zhunbara and Bloch.

### Modesty Scrope

The main prize for capturing the ship is Miss Modesty Scrope (occupant of the portside luxury suite), who is executive project director and vice president of Scrope Legal (details on p.41).

She is in charge of the whole show in the Little Heaven system. Naturally, she will not offer any information, but will attempt to keep her captors talking until she can figure out a way to improve her situation. She will emphasise that she is a noble and expects the appropriate treatment – the Vargr might choose to ignore this, but Muriel, Ernesto or other colonist leaders will want to keep her in one piece until they can sort out the legalities of her involvement.

### The Organiser

Modesty's personal organiser is a key piece of evidence. It can be accessed by forcing her thumb on to the thumbprint sensor and entering her password: "Teddy Bear". Alternatively its non-volatile memory store can be removed and decrypted (this is beyond the spacedogs' current abilities). The organiser has details of:

- The delivery of several ship-loads of convicts to the Little Heaven system.
- Miss Scrope's personal instructions to the assault teams.
- Financial transactions from various Sylean banks to certain accounts (for "facilitating" support from key individuals on Sylea). No names are mentioned here and the accounts are probably held in false names, so it would be difficult to track the recipients, but it's one more piece of suspicious evidence.

Intact within the organiser, this data is as good as a signed confession with strong physical evidence in support.

The spacedogs must decide how to return to Sylea and may be surprised by the much more courteous reception they get from Sylea customs.

## 1. The Legal Situation

The colony is a sovereign state which has suffered unprovoked aggression by a non-sovereign entity. Little Heaven contained the situation and took some of the criminals prisoner. They are entirely within their rights to try, condemn and execute the pirates, but the presence of a noble complicates things. Modesty Scrope is not a major noble, but she is entitled to a trial by her peers. As the Little Heaven colony is determinedly classless, there is a problem.

There is a similar difficulty with the two ships. Both seem to be owned by different general holding companies and careful examination of the ships' records indicate the payments on each seem to be in arrears. It is possible that there is a prior title.

The spacedogs will have to return to Sylea, complete with diplomatic credentials, and sort out this mess. Little Heaven grants them citizenship and the colonists elect them as attachés to their consulate at Sylea.

It is traditional for diplomatic representations to the Emperor to bring a suitable present – this is more symbolic than anything else, but whatever they bring should be of suitable quality. Coming from a world which produces cigars, ores and dream-fem resin does not help.

## 2. Which Ship?

The *Hot Trod* looks like a pirate ship, so the party should take the merchant. The *Loose Booty* crew (whoever has survived) will help run the vessel. The passengers should include Modesty Scrope, at least one surviving convict (as evidence), Muriel and Ernesto. Miss Scrope will argue that she deserves to travel first class, as befits her rank. A **Difficult Education (GT: Intelligence or Politics)** roll will determine that this is true.

If the party want to freeze her, she will argue that she can't travel by low berth due to a rare medical condition. No amount of testing will be able to prove that this isn't so. If they want to take the chance and shove her in a low berth, Meg can confirm that some people are particularly sensitive and might not survive the process.

Modesty will, needless to say, be a complete bitch all the way home. She will sneer, complain and keep notes on her treatment, using her organiser (if permitted) or pen and paper. If necessary she will write on herself and decline to wash. The cargo should include all the physical evidence available.

## 3. Customs Again

There will be not trouble until the ship jumps into the Sylea system. At this point, Muriel will wish to send a message direct to flight control, alerting the Diplomatic Corps to the incoming incident and the Admiralty to the need to convene a special court. The Imperial Moot will also want to know that one of its members is about to suffer some negative publicity.

The customs service will be on its best behaviour this time round. The party will be alert to the possibility of bombs, so will probably watch the inspectors closely.

The officers will decline to take Modesty off the ship, pointing out that they have no one of sufficient rank on their boat to receive her. As a lawyer, Miss Scrope knows this is rubbish and will insist that she depart with them, but the customs agents won't be swayed.

If the spacedogs think about it beforehand and bug Modesty's person, or point a directional microphone at her while she's talking to the customs officers, they will hear her say: "If you help me, Commodore Gemana will be extremely grateful – do you understand what I'm saying?"

Accessing Sylea's *Who's Who* system remotely from the ship will reveal that Gemana is the commander of the System Defence Squadron.

The spacedogs will be busy: they need to rent consular premises (at least for the short term), engage a good law firm, and acquire diplomatic status. Meg will also want to visit her family.

## 1. Diplomatic Matters

Most of the lesser worlds rent offices in Harmony Tower, a high security building with views over Cleon's palace and the Moot.

The party have ample funds to rent a suite here and luckily there's one available on the west corner of the 69th floor. It has a reception area divided in half by a low counter, three offices along one side and a long thin boardroom along the other side.

A safe is built into a structural girder in the most plushly decorated corner office.

The tower also has halls and gardens suitable for hire for functions and meetings.

## 2. Legal Affairs

From the moment the party's signal reaches Sylea, three firms (the best on the planet) pester them to be considered: Banasmur & Bailey; Weiss, Terr'Nove & Soegz; Zq'eal Associates. All are equally eminent and skilled. All will work on a contingency. If they think of it, the spacedogs could opt to share the work between all three – thus denying their services to the Scropes.

After a few days of apparently hectic legal wrangles (their lawyers have to make it look as though they're earning their huge wages) the following legal advice is concluded:

- Modesty Scrope quite definitely waged an illegal war on a sovereign state and suborned the judicial system to do so. She can and should be tried. Despite opposition from the Moot, the Imperial Ministries are quite determined that she be held to account and will assist the Little Heaven consulate in any way they can.
- The professional soldiers who worked the artillery piece are dead but the Stargun

Battery Co still exists and the colony has a claim against its assets.

- The customs officials who planted the bomb on the Loose Booty will be tried for murder and sabotage. Commodore Gemana would have been charged with conspiracy but unfortunately slipped when cleaning his cutlass. The *Loose Booty's* crew have a solid claim against the Sylean System Defence Squadron and possibly even cause of action against Cleon himself, although it would be tactful not to mention that part.
- The ships present problems. Yes, their users were engaged in piracy but there is another interest – the finance houses, who can allege barratry (the mortgage payments are in arrears). These financiers Zhunbara & Bloch and Shaim Realty & Finance are owned by a selection of investment funds and individual shareholders.

### The Ships

Closer examination of the ship finances (which the lawyers state will take months and cost a fortune) will eventually reveal that the many owners reduce to the Scrope Family Trust.

Needless to say, the Scropes are equally well acquainted with this so if this route is pursued, the financiers will offer the following deal – no contest to a salvage claim and immediate transfer of one third of each ship's full market value to the colony.

They will even pay for the *Hot Trod* before its return and will travel at their own expense to collect it from the Little Heaven system.

### Modesty Scrope

The Moot insists that self-imposed house arrest and her parole as a noble is sufficient guarantee that Miss Scrope won't skip on the next outbound ship.

Presumably the spacedogs will disagree. The Admiralty certainly does. Two possibilities arise – the party books her into a luxury hotel and watches her day and night, or they accept an offer from an independent Noble House, the Kung-Lee, who will undertake to keep her incommunicado.

### 3. The Imperial Tea Party

Muriel is the actual ambassador and has to present her credentials to Cleon at the Palace. She needs to take an armed escort, so the spacedogs have to design dress uniforms for themselves and have them cut. Aru & Wise, tailors to the Navy is one suitable outlet.

Muriel also needs proper clothes, so Sheba, Molly and Meg need to accompany her to a suitable couturier (Sharshamshi, Damma Treen and Balaija are all good choices).

When everyone is suitably clothed, a protocol officer Shaki Ben Suzuki (NPC details on p.41) calls round and arranges the audience for 4:30 pm in two days time. He also recommends a suitable hire company, Maurice, Morgan & Ponii – for the requisite landau. He will also ensure that they all know how to bow or curtsy; if not, he will give them appropriate lessons.

The trip through the Imperial park is fun. The landau is a closed, armoured grav car, flying close to the ground. Suzuki accompanies them and gives advice:

- Never turn your back on the Emperor.
- Leave the room walking backwards.
- Only laugh at his jokes if you think they were funny – he has a repertoire of bad material so he can weed out sycophants.
- Pick up the saucer in your off hand, balance your biscuit next to it – don't dunk it!
- Give him the present before your credentials. You didn't bring a present? Oops, time to go shopping, and you'd better make sure it's not obvious that you bought it locally.

Obviously, the presentation goes well – the household staff can do this sort of thing in their sleep. Even if the spacedogs turn up with a totally unsuitable present, which Muriel and Ernesto did not pick up on, the staff will know how best to save the day.

The spacedogs get to see the Emperor for themselves. Now is not a good time for Sheba to decide to exact Vargr revenge for their oppression by trying to murder the Emperor. They are expected to keep in the background and stay quiet while Muriel and Ernesto undertake the formalities with the Emperor.

However, the next step is for the Little Heaven representatives to host an embassy party of their own...

The Scropes aren't going to take this lying down. Meg's children go missing; the threat is obvious, but the spacedogs (with the help of the marines) can save the day.

## 1. Do You Know Where Your Children Are?

Anyone watching the news or following business and transport stories will notice a run on a range of shares and a rise in demand for gold and for manufactures suitable for new colonies.

At the same time there will be a rise in stories about the "doggy problem". Investigative reporters go to the barrio and look into the spacedogs' backgrounds. They are pilloried across the media.

Outbreaks of spontaneous racial violence follow, yet local humans will deny being among those attacking the Vargr.

Amongst this confusion, Meg's children will be kidnapped. If they had thought to guard Meg's family, the kidnappers will have murdered to get hold of the youngsters, or at least drugged the guards. Meg, if not all the group, should go absolutely wild at this news.

Perhaps surprisingly, the police will not be particularly helpful, so the spacedogs may conclude that they need to begin searching and talking to witnesses themselves.

## 2. Blackmail in Blood

After an anxious few hours, some fur, matted with blood will arrive at the consulate, as will a script. Essentially, the colony and the spacedogs are to withdraw all charges against Modesty Scrope and to "reveal" that in truth the entire campaign against Little Heaven was undertaken by a Vargr like themselves. When they took this Vargr prisoner, he persuaded them that it would be better for the race to frame a blameless human – and they agreed.

Even worse, key details (some altered) of the criminal past of each of the Vargr will be provided: Benson's corrupt activities as a law enforcer; Lancer's supposed cowardice under fire in the field which caused the death of his comrades; Molly's fencing of stolen goods; Morgan's Navy record of assaulting senior officers; Sheba's past as a political agitator and alleged close connections with terrorists.

The Scropes have a long reach and are calling in all their outstanding favours. The children will

be returned after the kidnappers see the story on the news.

They have six hours to comply... or else.

The end result is not totally credible but sufficient to raise reasonable doubt. Obviously widespread publicity concerning their past misdemeanours would embarrass the Emperor – who has only just given them diplomatic status. It would also prejudice any law court against any personal evidence they might provide.

Coupled with the anti-Vargr hostility following the recent troubles, this is not a good situation.

## 3. Search...

The police are unhelpful concerning the kidnapping – they don't seem to have any useful witnesses or other evidence (the Scropes have contacts and, after all, "It's only Vargr that are missing...").

However, the Palace will show an interest: Suzuki, who's taken a liking to the party, will offer them the following:

- Surveillance camera footage from the area of Meg's home.
- The Emperor's Licence to bear arms within the city.
- A warrant to seize and examine data pertinent to the kidnap case.

The surveillance data comes from concealed street cameras and also from high resolution cameras from the many satellites over the city. Apart from this data, the party will have to go to the relevant premises to get the footage.

The Admiralty indicates that it will help as soon as the spacedogs have concrete information on which to act.

### Big Brother is Watching

Patient study of the satellite data can be made easier using the appropriate computer equipment (and skills). The characters should make some Perception (*GT: Vision*) and/or Computer rolls to gain each piece of information. Failure will simply delay getting the data, but should add to the suspense as they only have a few hours.

Given the rough time and last location of the young Vargr – at a play area near Meg's home, they can find the appropriate footage.

The satellite systems show masked figures in an unidentified air-raft swoop in over a play area, fire a net gun at the children and then pick them up with a hook while they are entangled. The craft flies around the north sides of buildings, using the shadows of the buildings to stay out of sight of the satellite, and disappears.

Further searching will catch the air-raft again:

The street level cameras at "Barrio 3 Police Station" (aka Fort Barnard) show an air-raft carrying a netted bundle moving into the construction site for the Cleon Memorial Grav-Ball Stadium. The raft hovers over a big hole, presumably for some footings, and drops its cargo roughly into the darkness before zooming off.

No matter how hard they search, there is no further camera footage traceable from the construction area – Suzuki can confirm that because the building work is barely started, coverage in that area is sparse, and the children appear to have been taken underground.

#### **Delivery of the Package**

The other source of information is the delivery of the blackmail package to Harmony Tower. Searching later footage from the building's security cameras shows the package being delivered by a courier from Bike-It. The Bike-It offices are in the Trana district. Enquiries at the office will reveal that a private client brought the item into the office. The only record the office have of the client is his name: Mickensy Mousey. Yes, of course it's made up! However...

A camera outside the Bike-It office shows a well-built man in his fifties entering the premises with the parcel, then leaving empty handed.

On closer examination, the camera shows he has some form of tattoo on his left hand. Computer enhancement is required to identify the tattoo, which is from Marine Special Forces, 3rd Lift Company (The Jumping Junkies).

Given the lack of help from the police, the spacedogs need to turn to the Admiralty to provide a facial match for the marine. Their computers can quickly identify Gunnery Sergeant Levi Kant, 2012 Sunburst Street, known associate of Miles Strasser and Theoi Chun of 4545 Love Lane West. Back to the cameras:

Cameras from the Sunburst Street vicinity show some unmistakable Vargr children

emerging from a storm drain and being dragged into a rundown house.

Half an hour later, a courier from Imperial Pizza delivers a stack of pies and a case of Loopybru premium lager to the house.

There is no subsequent sign of anyone entering or leaving the house.

#### **4. ...and Rescue**

The best course of action is to request, one sovereign state to another, for the Marine Commando to go in. The Admiralty, Suzuki and simple common sense dictate that this is a job for professionals. Whatever the spacedogs' qualities they aren't crack anti-terrorist troops trained in close quarters battle.

Kant is holed up on the upper floor of the house with his two mates Strasser and Chun. They are well armed and armoured with weapons and equipment 'borrowed' from their barracks. They are not expecting trouble, but are still alert and are extremely proficient killers. The children are well secured and continuously watched. The street and rear entrances are monitored by small audio-video surveillance cameras with their displays in the captives' room.

If the Vargr hand over to the Marines, the raid will be a success, the children will get out alive and the one surviving kidnapper will soon say who hired them. The Navy's security branch will then be able to beat a trail back from the hirer to the Scropes. The Marines are peeved that one of their own got caught so easily and are very good at getting information. The Admiralty will ensure that Kant's body disappears.

If the Vargr insist on raiding the place, the Admiralty can only provide SMGs, concussion and sleep grenades and body armour that is available at short notice. However they will also provide backup, secure the perimeter, monitor communications and treat the occupants to a spoof news story along the lines they requested. These are standard procedures given a hostage situation. If the characters come up with similar suggestions on their own, reward them accordingly.

Anyone thinking to ask Imperial Pizza when they're making their next delivery will discover that four more shugilli seafood medley specials will be delivered inside half an hour.

Run the fire fight mercilessly – the kidnappers will use the children as hostages at the very least and will prefer to fight to the death.

# Gunfight at the Embassy Ball

Scenario 13

The Scropes drop in to say "goodbye".

## 1. Celebrations

A few days later, after the spacedogs have begun to relax and think that they can leave the Scropes to be dealt with by the legal system:

It is some days since the horrors of the kidnapping and the troubles have died down, both locally and in the Vargr quarter.

The Little Heaven Consulate is enjoying a honeymoon with the media as the plucky little colony standing up to invasion. There is a great demand for invitations to your inaugural party.

No one from the Imperial family can make it but it's a respectable B-list event nonetheless. Muriel has booked the whole suite and ordered a buffet: chaud-froid of hammermaw, devilled hoglet, lentil surprise, great pyramids of suntruffles, fresh fruits, cheeses, pastries, bread, all washed down with a cheeky Kain Riesling or freshly squeezed honeygourd juice. There will be dancing to Hammond and Moog's Big Band.

Suzuki arrives early with his wife and two daughters and makes sure that the hosts don't commit too many faux pas.

The rooms fill up with nobles, hangers-on and celebrities. Naturally, most of them have personal weapons. The PCs, not being nobles, shouldn't be armed. However, Suzuki will, if asked, point out that on a technicality – this being sovereign territory for the duration of the party – they should be able to get away with it.

It's up to the adventurers but it would be stylish, in a cruel sort of way, to invite Modesty.

## 2. Party Poopers

Just before midnight, when everything's going well, the Scropes arrive mob-handed. Things really couldn't be much worse for them and they have very little to lose, so they've

decided to raid the party, shoot the spacedogs and take some hostages so that they can get out of the system.

There are twelve raiders, armed with combat shotguns and grenades and wearing diplomatic armour (details on p.41).

As they are 'resigning' from the Imperium, the Scropes are keen to do so in style, so they have fencing swords and magnum pistols as well. These are not for friendly duelling – just a more honorable method of picking off individuals they dislike rather than indiscriminately spraying the reception with bullets.

They arrive in four air-rafts. They take a shaped charge to the back wall and come in through the breach operating as four teams of three combatants:

- Team 1 holds the exit.
- Team 2 scouts for hostages.
- Teams 3 and 4 go on a dog hunt.

As soon as the breaching charges go off, everyone with military training will disappear under a table, calling for help on a personal communicator. The Scropes sweep in – note that, unless the PCs stand up, all they'll see is legs.

The nobles will draw their weapons but keep their heads down. Some have bodyguards, who will pull compact automatic weapons and start blasting away at the intruders. The Vargr can opt to stay in cover, but will eventually have to defend themselves as the Scropes are intent on finding and killing them.

The firefight goes on until the Scropes are beaten off. If Modesty is a guest, the attackers will rescue her. She will seize a gun the first chance she gets and will take any opportunity to plug a Vargr on her way out.

Given the VIPs present, the whole area will be locked down by heavily armed police and marines within minutes.

If the raiders take hostages they will head for orbit directly in their air-rafts and will bargain their way to the 100 diameter point where they will (perhaps surprisingly) release their prisoners in escape balls just before Jumping out.

### 3. Loose Ends

The mess, diplomatically and physically is immense. The media will suddenly become hostile to Little Heaven, although there will be a steady trickle of applicants to emigrate, both Vargr and human. The story is that these peasants and urban scum shot up some convicts, made a big splash in the papers, had tea with the Emperor, then couldn't guarantee their guests safety at a tatty, third rate party. The hostility to Vargr, especially the spacedogs' family and friends is pronounced. The expected sales contracts aren't forthcoming, although there is a lot of elderly equipment the Consulate can buy for the colony.

However, there are some compensations:

- The colony will get clear title to the *Hot Trod* and *Spaceway Star* – the Scropes have left debts but Little Heaven had a prior claim.
- Stargun Battery's assets get transferred – Cr 150,000, two mortars, a grav truck and three tracked armoured vehicles all carrying universal quad mounted HMGs and two pods of three anti-tank rockets.
- As a once only, keep-your-mouths-shut gesture, the Navy shunts five old systems defence boats to the colony and even loans them a portable dock, to repair the *Loose Booty*. The Marines throw in a field

hospital and dressing station for those still injured from the original raids.

- The Defence Sales Team sends an insincere, apparently grovelling apology and some cases of surplus weapons, ammunition and armour.
- The *Loose Booty* survivors are invited to agree to a generous out of court settlement, which includes replacing their old ship with a new one: the *Risky Business*.

To every silver lining, there's a cloud. Suzuki visits the party and tells them that Little Heaven's success at uprooting a semi-noble house (albeit murderous pirates) has upset the Moot. It would be best if the colony kept a very low profile, accepting other unlovables and dissidents but not expecting much in the way of aid or trade.

He emphasises that they should persuade their friends and family to leave Sylea as quickly as possible – even with reliable security, there will no doubt be some anti-Vargr fanatics who will find a way to harm them.

He also says goodbye. He's got a new job as First Secretary to the High Commission on Vland.

### 4. The Ongoing Story

Ambitious GMs can, if they like, run a campaign covering the settlement and development of Little Heaven.

The further adventures of these six heroic Vargr are told in the forthcoming BITS adventure *Return of the Spacedogs*.



# Non-Player Characters

Key characters featured in this adventure

Only key attributes and skills are given; the GM should expand this data where necessary.

## Little Heaven

### Muriel 'Talker' (Diplomatic Representative)

Human Female, Age 32.

**UPP 6969CA**, Admin-2, Diplomacy-2, Liaison-2, Small Blade-1.

**ST 9, DX 12, IQ 12, HT 9, Admin-13, Diplomacy-13, Savoir Faire-13, Knife-12.**

- Open, honest and relatively inexperienced with off-worlders; she might appear naïve, but is not easily fooled. 'Talker' refers to her diplomatic role within the colony. Carries a concealed dagger and personal comms unit.

### Ernesto 'Shotfirer' (Diplomatic Representative)

Human Male, Age 26.

**UPP 78C53B**, Brawling-2, Computer-1, Electronics-1, Ground Craft-1, Prospecting-3.

**ST 10, DX 11, IQ 8, HT 15, Brawling-13, Computer Ops-12, Electronics Ops (Sensors)-12, Driving (Jeep)-12, Prospecting-15.**

- Open, honest and inexperienced with off-worlders but hardy and resolute. 'Shotfirer' refers to Ernesto being a senior mining engineer; he fires charges, not guns! Carries a simple handcomputer and comms unit.

### Typical Colonist

Human Male or Female, Age 17-55.

**UPP 777777**, Dart Gun-0.

**ST 10, DX 10, IQ 10, HT 10, Dart Gun-10.**

- Each has a specialist skill according to their clan/profession, but these will largely be irrelevant in this game.

## Loose Booty Crew

### Lisa Dean

Ship's Captain/Owner

Human Female, Age 42.

**UPP 569A77**, Gambling-2, Trader-4, Vacc Suit-1.

**ST 8, DX 9, IQ 13, HT 12, Gambling-13, Merchant-16, Vacc Suit-12.**

### Johnny Garcia

Pilot/Astrogator

Human Male, Age 35.

**UPP 4A9652**, Astrogation-2, Brawling-1, Bribery-1, Pilot-2, Sensors-1, Streetwise-2, Vacc Suit-1.

**ST 7, DX 13, IQ 9, HT 12, Astrogation-13, Brawling-12, Fast Talk-12, Pilot (Starships)-13, Electronics Ops (Sensors)-12, Streetwise-13, Vacc Suit-12.**

### Sylvester Armand

Gunner

Human Male, Age 25.

**UPP A98569**, Brawling-1, Pistol-1, Starship Gunnery-2, Ground Craft-1.

**ST 13, DX 12, IQ 11, HT 11, Brawling-12, Guns (Pistol)-12, Gunner (Starship energy weapon)-13, Driving (Truck)-12.**

### Elliott Awoo

Gunner

Human Female, Age 23.

**UPP 988658**, Brawling-1, Pistol-1, Starship Gunnery-1, Trader-1.

**ST 12, DX 11, IQ 9, HT 11, Brawling-12, Guns (Pistol)-12, Gunner (Starship energy weapon)-12, Merchant -12.**

### Janet Yip

Steward/Medic

Human Female, Age 24.

**UPP 798844**, Admin-1, Medic-1, Steward-1.

**ST 10, DX 12, IQ 10, HT 11, Admin-12, Cooking-12, Diagnosis-12, Electronics Ops (Medical)-12, First Aid-12, Savoir Faire (Servant)-12.**

### Lassie

Engineer

Vargr Female, Age 26.

**UPP 5A6766**, Communications-1, Computer-2, Engineering-2, Grav Craft-1, Pistol-1.

**ST8, DX 13, IQ 10, HT 9, Computer Ops-13, Electronic Ops (Comms)-12, Engineering (Starship Drives)-13, Guns (Pistol)-12, Piloting (Contragrav)-12.**

## The Raiders

This sorry crew is presented as they will be when the PCs face them. At their best (prepared, sober and ready for action) some of them are a much tougher prospect.

### Typical Convict

Human Male or Female, Age 22-45.

**UPP 666552**, Melee Combat-1, Grenade-1.

**ST 9, DX 9, IQ 8, HT 9, Broadsword (Club)-12, Throwing-12.**

- Carrying a club (1D; *GT: cr 1D*) and a grenade (4D explosive). There is an inexhaustible supply of these dupes.

### Pirate Trooper

Human Male or Female, Age 25-40.

**UPP 888773**, ACR-2, Knife-2, Bottle-0.

**ST 11, DX 11, IQ 10, HT 11, Guns (Lt. Auto, Rifle)-13, Knife-13, Bottle-10.**

- Carrying a 9mm ACR, knife and bottle. While drunk, all tasks are at +3 Difficulty and will try to fight without dropping their bottle. The bottle can be used as a weapon for 1D-2 damage (*GT: cr 1D-2 for first blow, then imp 1D-1*).

### Hot Trod Watch Officer

Human Male, Age 33.

**UPP E7E111**, Pistol-1.

**ST 17, DX 10, IQ 4, HT 17/34, Guns (Pistol)-12.**

- Out of his head on wow grass, brain-burn, etc. This man is entirely incapable of co-ordination and is at +3 Difficulty on all tasks. However, the drugs make him hard to kill.

### Pirate Crew

Human Male or Female, Age 25-35.

**UPP 787873**, Knife-1, Pistol-1, Shotgun-1.

**ST 10, DX 11, IQ 10, HT 10, Guns (Pistols, Shotgun)-12, Knife-12.**

- Carrying a snub pistol and knife. While drunk, all their tasks are at +2 Difficulty.

### Graeme Graham

Human Male, Age 39.

**UPP 778A94**, Pistol-1.

**ST 10, DX 10, IQ 13, HT 11, Guns (Pistol)-13.**

- Carries a magnum pistol. He will attempt to fight to the death. He's very much in love with his cool psycho killer image, so will attempt to treat the party to quips and witticisms in the best James Bond-bad-guy style.

## Spaceway Star Crew

### Pirate Crew

Human Male or Female, Age 25-35.

**UPP 787873**, Knife-1, Pistol-1, Shotgun-1.

**ST 10, DX 11, IQ 10, HT 10, Guns (Pistols, Shotgun)-12, Knife-12.**

- These will already be in vacc suits and, if able to access the ship's locker before the ship is boarded, will be equipped with shotguns.

### Modesty Scrope

Human Female, Age 28.

**UPP 5776AA**, Admin-2, Diplomacy-2, Fencing-1, Pistol-1, Law-2.

**ST 8, DX 10, IQ 11, HT 10, Admin-13, Fencing (Smallsword)-12, Guns (Pistol)-12, Law-13, Politics-13, Savoir Faire-13.**

- Carries a fencing blade and body pistol. She has black hair, black eyes and sun-starved skin. She is catty, cruel, spiteful and rude.

## The Palace

### Shaki Ben Suzuki (Palace Protocol Officer)

Human Male, Age 28.

**UPP 777AA9**, Admin-2 Diplomacy-4 Politics-4.

**ST 10, DX 10, IQ 13, HT 10, Admin-13, Diplomacy-16, Politics-16, Savoir Faire-16. Status +1, Comfortable Wealth, Empathy, Charitable.**

- Suzuki is a good-hearted professional dedicated to the imperial cause with a strong moral impulse to help 'underdogs'. As a commoner and a civilian, he hasn't felt the need to wear, or learn how to use weapons.

## The Party-Poopers

### Scrope Raiders

Human Male or Female, Age 18-24.

**UPP AA977A**, Fencing-2, Pistol-4, Shotgun-2.

**ST 13, DX 13, IQ 10, HT 12, Fencing-14, Guns (Pistol)-16, Guns (Shotgun)-14.**

- Wearing tailored body-suit armour (AV3; *GT: PD 2, DR 16, DR2 vs impaling attacks*) and carrying assault shotguns, magnum revolvers and rapiers. They have combat auto-injectors to give them various drugs and hyper-oxygenated blood for souped up reflexes and enhanced strength.

# Little Heaven

Library data for use by the GM and players

E651233-4 Po 733 M3 V M7 D

Little Heaven is the only inhabited world in the Biin system. It is smaller than standard but its dense core gives it a surface gravity of 0.92g. It is a warm and pleasant world, mostly covered in jungles, with a few major mountain ranges. Some 15% of the surface is covered with water, mostly found in thin seas which divide the land mass into six huge continents. The atmosphere is a little thinner than standard, but off-worlders rarely notice, since the reduced gravity compensates for the lack of oxygen when undertaking physical exertion. The native flora and fauna are relatively undeveloped (with no significant large animals to provide a threat to colonists) but are generally compatible with the human metabolism.

The world was colonised in The Long Night, around 365 years before the Third Imperium. The world has not gained any Imperial development grants and is still a low population, low technology, non-industrial world, with no starport.

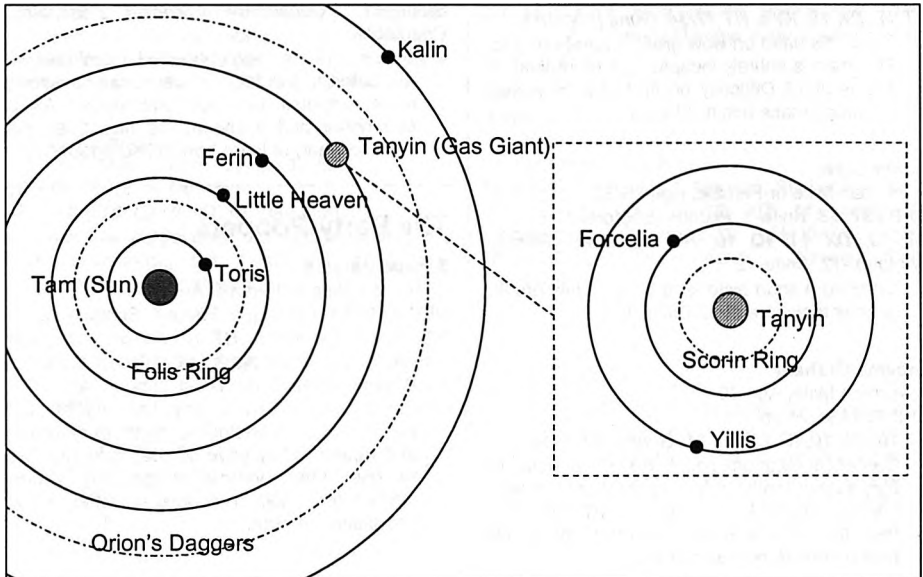
In theory Little Heaven is ruled by the Imperial Scout Corp as being ruled by a self-perpetuating oligarchy – effectively the elders of the colonists. In reality the colonists operate a "Specifist Clan"

system. In such a system the locals are all members of families, each of which has a specific job. Thus there are Talkers (diplomats and merchants), Fighters, Healers, Growers, Herders, Butchers, etc. Their names reflect their role in addition to matri- or patronymic names and nicknames, e.g. Sam's Boy 'Shifty Dickie' Talker.

Visitors wishing to do business within a "Specifist Clan" are generally required to undergo adoption into the most appropriate family. They must then uphold that family's interests and good name. Casual visitors may join the Guest family.

Once adopted into a clan, taking on the attributes or responsibilities of another clan is frowned upon except where necessary, e.g. in an emergency. Those who abuse local hospitality are expelled into the Pariah clan.

Biin is a binary system but the second star Yeird is distant with only a few rocks orbiting it. Worlds sharing Little Heaven's sun are: Toris (a hostile green-house); the thin asteroid rings of Folis Ring and Orion's Daggers; Ferin (a large cold desert world); Tanyin (a large gas giant, ringed by fine ice and dust and its own barren icy moons Forcelia and Yillis); Kalin (a small ice ball).



# The Loose Booty

"Princess Gunnhilde" Class Far Trader

## Ship's Data

**Hull:** 200 dt, Streamlined, Size Rating 8, Armour 10, Structure 6, MCr34.2 (GT: 200-ton SL Hull, DR 100, PD 4, EMass 284, LMass 557, HP 22,500, Size Modifier +8.)

**Drives:** Jump 2, Manoeuvre 1G, Power Plant 1. (GT: Airspeed 1,645.)

**Weaponry:** Fire Control Rating 0. Turrets 1 & 2: one Laser (3/3/2/0) (GT: 360-MJ), one Sandcaster.

**Crew/Cargo:** 4-6 Crew, 6 Passengers, 10 Low Berths, 10 Staterooms, 54 dt Cargo.

**Electronics:** Basic Controls. Sensor Rating A1 P3 J0. (GT: Basic Bridge.)

**Fuel:** Fuel scoops, purification (6 hours), 40.7 dt.

**Sub-Craft:** Air-raft in dedicated docking bay.

**Notes:** The "Princess Gunnhilde" Class trader is just one of the many variants on the ubiquitous far trader (Empress Marava, Prince Ferren, etc.), providing Jump-2 capability compared to "free traders" (e.g. Beowulf class).

## Key to Deckplans

**A: Airlock.** Extending ramp to ground level.

**AR: Air-Raft.** Dedicated docking bay.

**B: Bridge.** Control consoles for pilot and nav/comms; weapons locker and safe.

**CL: Crew Lounge.** Includes self-service galley and entertainment facilities.

**CR: Cargo Ramp.**

**EG: Engineering.** Computer monitoring station. Emergency/maintenance access hatches at rear on lower deck.

**F: Fresher.** Washroom with shower.

**G: Galley.** Steward's station. Includes passenger self-service systems.

**JD: Jump Drive.** Fornext 'Breezer' 48900 with adaptex hull grid.

**L: Lockers.** Vacc suits, escape balls, mechanical and electronic maintenance kits, first aid and survival equipment.

**LB: Low Berths.** 10 units.

**MD: Manoeuvre Drive.** Velaz Mecan I, single fusion feed.

**PL: Passenger Lounge.** Entertainment suite built into aft wall.

**PP: Power Plant.** Fortrex 1015I fusion plant.

**S1: Captain's Stateroom.** (Lisa Dean.)

**S2: Crew Stateroom.** (Janet Yip, Elliot Awoo.)

**S3: Crew Stateroom.** (Lassie – would normally be double occupancy, but even these 'well travelled' traders prefer to allow Lassie her own cabin.)

**S4: Bridge Stateroom.** (Johnny Garcia, Sylvester Armand.)

**S5-S10: Passenger Staterooms.**

**T1-T2: Turrets.**

**Lifts:**

a: Passenger lift.

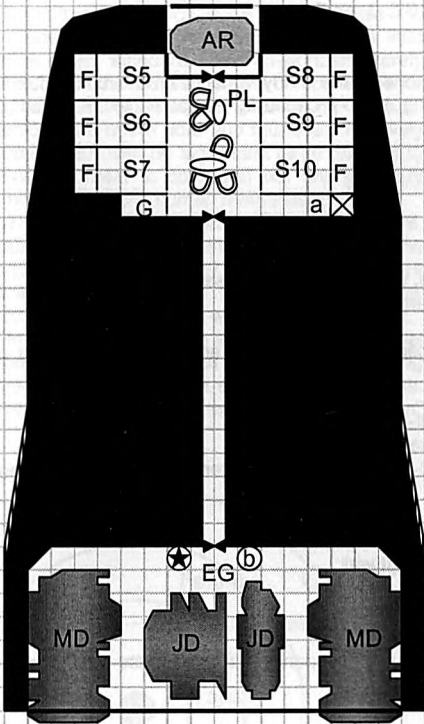
b: Engineering lift.

# Loose Booty

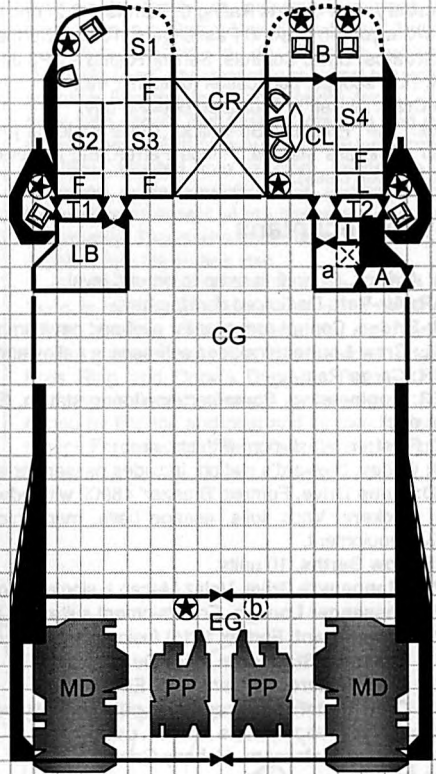


|  |   |
|--|---|
|  | Wall, door, bulkhead, maintenance panel   |
|  | Iris valve (wall, floor, ceiling, both)   |
|  | Manual hatch (wall, floor, ceiling, both) |
|  | Lift (up, down, up and down)              |
|  | Couch (acceleration, normal)              |
|  | Main computer terminal                    |

## UPPER DECK



## LOWER DECK



*This adventure is suitable for use with all forms of Traveller. in particular **Marc Miller's Traveller** and Steve Jackson's **GURPS Traveller**.*

### **Imperial Vargr...**

...uplifted doggies who do the dirty jobs. They are the underclass, doomed to live and die in the slums.

### **Little Heaven...**

...is a small colony beseiged by murderous pirates. They need help - and they don't care if you've got fur and fangs if you can fight! Saving the colonists is only the first step - the struggle continues all the way to the Imperial Court.

### **A detailed Traveller adventure...**

...containing pregenerated Vargr characters, deckplans and statistics for two starships, a description of the colony of Little Heaven, non-player characters, guidance on playing Vargr and a generic task system compatible with all versions of Traveller.



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