

The Last Mercenary Adventure

by Onno Meyer

The *Traveller* background has ample opportunity for characters to kill their fellow sophonts for money and then wave repatriation bonds around when things get too exciting. This adventure gives a last taste of the dark side of the mercenary business and a way out. The scenario is written for a party of up to eight mercenaries with the basic skills to operate a small starship. For maximum emotional impact, it would be nice if they own some grav AFVs.

The four chapters Setting the Stage, The Hammer Falls, Vargr Leave, and Dustoff must be played in sequence. The Panic Button chapter has advice how to keep the players on track. The Cast of Characters sidebar provides an overview of the NPCs. Some are fully described in the Characters chapter. The Ironmongery chapter contains some equipment. Finally, there is a Map.

Setting the Stage

Pequan (Spinward Marches 1210)

Starport: Class I.
Diameter: 4,868 miles. *Gravity:* 0.8 G.
Day: 30 hours. *Atmosphere:* Standard oxygen-nitrogen. *Surface Water:* 48%.
Climate: Normal. *Population:* 7,653,000.
Government: Dictatorship. *Control Rating:* 3. *TL:* 5. *Planetoid Belts:* 1. *Gas Giants:* 0.
Star: M5.

The local currency is the Pequan National Credit. It trades 33:1 to the Imperial Credit. Food, drink, off-base accommodations, or civilian clothing are dirt cheap for the mercs. Imported medicines or electronics are unaffordable for most locals.

Few people have ever heard of Pequan (*Behind the Claw*, p. 59), an underdeveloped world in the Jewell subsector. After the Fifth Frontier War, the Imperium and the Zhodani Consulate agreed that Pequan should become a part of the Federation of Arden. The government of Pequan disagreed, but it was not consulted on the matter.

Over the last few years, the Federation of Arden has quietly worked to destabilize the government of the current President for Life, James Preston. Publicly, Preston and his cronies have vowed to defend the sovereignty of Pequan with their lifeblood. Privately,

they have started to transfer their wealth into numbered bank accounts on Regina. The situation looks stable enough that the TAS did not even bother with an Amber Zone designation.

The mercenaries are approached by Undersecretary Georgia Howard from the Pequan Department of Defense about a long-term security ticket to augment the Pequan Defense Force (PDF), their national army. Undersecretary Howard will be frank about the fact that Pequan cannot resist an all-out attack by the Federation, but President Preston wants to prevent a quick decapitation raid or an insurgency incited by the Federation. By the terms of the ticket, the mercenaries are required to put up a credible fight; they are not required to win to be paid.

At a first glance, the contract looks very good. The pay is generous and the ticket will be *fat and long* (*Star Mercs*, p. 40) -- all expenses and necessary equipment will be covered by Pequan. If the characters do not own grav AFVs, a few Instellarms FA-300 Daggers will be provided. The financial details will be handled by the First Interstellar Bank of Jewell, a relatively unknown bank, but Undersecretary Howard can show a letter of credit from Hortalez et Cie. to the amount of MCr178. Any character with the Merchant or Finance skill (*Far Trader*, p. 103) will be aware that Hortalez does not in any way guarantee the deal, but the amount is still impressive.

The mercenaries will join the Attack Speeder Squadron Delta, based in Fort Delta, Lumberton, Pequan. At least one mercenary should be able to fly a speeder, the others can be additional pilots, backseaters, technical ground crew or security troopers.

After an unremarkable voyage, the GM should play out some encounters to familiarize the mercenaries (and the players) with their duty station. It helps to complicate the subsequent events if they make a few friends among the local troops and the civilian population.

Cast of Characters

It can be difficult to come up with several dozen background NPCs and keep the names straight, so here is a list. Cut or expand to taste. Any similarities with real names are pure coincidence.

Politicians

James Preston, President for Life. Never been near a ballot box.

Georgia Howard, Undersecretary, Department of Defense. Smooth lawyer.

Soldiers

Major General Benedict McDonald, Commanding General of the Northern Corps and Hastings' boss. Won't answer the phone or return calls.

Major Edward Blake, PDF Internal Affairs. Would be responsible for Lumberton. Bribed long ago.

Colonel Diana Hastings, CO, 7th Rifles.

Lt. Colonel Haakon Bogedal, CO, III Battalion. Swordic accent and a moustache.

Lt. Colonel Musush Grant, CO, II Battalion. Cynical about the political situation.

Lt. Colonel Uushgar Guamdim, XO, 7th Rifles. Believes he deserved the regimental command.

Major Patrick Smith, Jr., CO, I Battalion. Wants to talk armor tactics with the mercs.

Major Carol Trevor, CO, A Company. Alcoholic, but hides it well.

Major Bernard Weber, Chief of Staff, 7th Rifles. Plans to retire next year.

Captain Mazun Collins, CO, E Company. Actually cares for his troops.

Captain Frank Graves, MD, Surgeon, I Battalion. Usually in the junior officers' mess with a cup of tea and a medical journal.

Captain Enkiir Shumma, Supply Officer, 7th Rifles. Angry about the constant fraud

but unable to stop it.

Lieutenant William Harris, CO, No. 3 Rifle Platoon, K Company. Wants to organize a sniper school and seeks supporters.

Lieutenant Sally Ngo, CO, No. 4 Mortar Platoon, H Company. Promoted from the enlisted ranks and bullied by the other lieutenants.

Sergeant Major David Lee, RSM, 7th Rifles. Screamer, but effective.

Sergeant Nashu Menkiin, No. 2 Rifle Platoon, E Company. Chews a cigar all the time.

Private Charles Schneider, No. 2 Rifle Platoon, E Company.

Flight Lieutenant Khugi Miirgisi, CO, Miirgisi's Mavericks. Quiet, very professional. Not present if the PC's unit has enough pilots.

Pilot Officer April Taylor, Miirgisi's Mavericks. Complains a lot about the lack of air-to-air combat. Not present if the PC's unit has enough pilots.

Kouru Kuerrgaer, leader, radar team. A voice on the com.

Sergeant Atsdiatl, psyop squad leader, Federation of Arden Army. Professional; won't break cover until after the invasion.

Civilians in the Fort

Daniel Collins, son of Captain Collins.

Jerome Grant, husband of Major Grant. Architect, frequent guest in the senior officers' mess.

Edgar Prince, sells coffee and donuts from a bicycle cart (Hastings gets a cut). Leader of the Federation sympathizers in Fort Delta.

Civilians in the Town

Charles da Silva, wealthy mine owner.

Margaret da Silva, daughter of Charles da Silva.

Marco Benning, fencing and martial arts

instructor, frequent guest of the da Silva's.

Ivan Pavlov, retired railway manager, amateur painter, frequent guest of the da Silva's.

Ahmed Sabah, junior bank manager, frequent guest of the da Silva's. His home is the meeting place of the younger upper-class crowd.

Davies (first name unknown), butler of Charles da Silva.

- **Lumberton** is a city with about 100,000 inhabitants, working in coal mines, sawmills which gave the city its name, and the necessary service industries. There is a seaport and a non-SPA Class I downport (that is, a graded and surfaced landing field with a radio shack, a few sheds and a train station). The port is smaller than the main downport in the capital, Alpha City, but roughly the same quality.

When the characters arrive, the only other ship in port is a *Suliman*-class Scout/Courier with a tarpaulin-covered hole where the starboard engine should be. Faded letters proclaim her the *Sir Galahad*, an Imperial Mercant Vessel registered on Skull. The ship shows signs of rust and vines are growing up the landing gear.

- **Fort Delta** is the base camp for six grav attack speeders, plus any vehicles the party may own, and the 7th Rifle Regiment, PDF, a local unit with some 2,000 TL5 soldiers. The fort is on a hill southeast of the town.
- There are four Vargr mercenaries with a **radar** north of the fort. Their platoon is based in Northbridge, so they do not visit the Fort very often. Both the radar team and the fort are linked by telephone and a low-speed data line to the planetary command center in Alpha City.
- The fort is commanded by **Colonel Diana Hastings**, who wears three hats as "civilian" governor of Lumberton, commanding officer of the 7th Rifles, and commander of the attached mercenary units. Her key qualification for any of those jobs is the fact that she is the niece of the Secretary of Commerce.
- Society in the fort (and on Pequan in general) is highly stratified. There are separate quarters, mess halls and kitchens for male and female enlisted soldiers, for junior and senior NCOs (they are trusted to behave in co-ed facilities) and for junior and senior officers. When the first mercenary contingent arrived in Fort Delta several years ago, they agreed with Colonel Hastings' predecessor that all mercenaries should be treated as warrant officers, roughly equal to junior officers.
- The GM should start to use meals and dinner invitations to structure the weeks and days. These dinners will be an opportunity to meet important NPCs and the breakfast strike in the next part of the adventure will feel less artificial. On the

first evening, the mercenaries will be invited by the colonel to the senior officer's mess. A week later, the industrialist Charles da Silva will invite them into the city. Upper class civilians like **Daniel Collins**, **Jerome Grant** or **Margaret da Silva** can move freely in the fort and visit the gentlefolk in the mess.

- During some idle dinner talk, Hastings will ask the characters if it is possible to use normal TL5 paint on a speeder or a starship. (The answer is no, unless you want to repaint after each reentry.) The significance of this will become clear later.
- The local enlisted men and women spend every waking minute in formation. Platoons, companies, and even full battalions do physical training, Drills, or kitchen details under constant supervision by their NCOs. If the mercenaries ask for it, they can borrow a platoon or two for any scutwork in their part of the base. The soldiers will be eager to help, especially if the mercenaries scream less than their own sergeants, but they know very little about modern technology. **Private Charles Schneider** is a good example.
- Pequan is a TL5 world. TL5 is the best *commonly* available technology, but it is not the *only* available technology.

The southwest part of the city can be called quaintly pre-gravitic. There are nice brick houses, one to a family, with electricity, gas, water, and telephone lines. The bigger ones include rooms for a maid, a cook, a butler, and a driver. Respectful gardeners care for the front lawns and soldiers from the regimental MP company patrol the streets for a modest bribe. Most homes will have a few imports, if only a TL6 radio. The da Silva's have a TL10 air/raft (one of seven in Lumberton) in addition to several TL5 ground cars, a TL8 microwave in the kitchen, and a TL10 holoivid player in the library.

The northwest part of the city is less prosperous, but it doesn't show at first. The tenement blocks are well-built and clean, but they have no gas, electricity or telephones. If there is imported technology to be found, it will be something as simple as a digital wristwatch.

The east side of the city is a real slum. People live in wooden shacks with open sewers. Alleys are completely unplanned and impassable for ground vehicles. From time to time people from the west side talk about the public health problem. Most solutions start and end with razing the place, which completely ignores where the gardeners and street-sweepers in the better part of town come from.

- By custom and the terms of the ticket, Colonel Hastings cannot interfere with the internal affairs of the mercenaries, but she uses her tactical command of the task force and her logistics responsibility to meddle if she can get away with it, just to show her obnoxious self.

"You are supposed to keep two speeders ready for launch, not playing laser tag in the mountains. Those training missions are canceled."

- Just to remind the players that there is a conflict going on, throw in an **air defense alert** or two. A siren starts to wail. If the players specified that some pilots stayed in the cockpits, have them make a HT roll to find out if they are still awake and alert. Otherwise, it is time for a Running roll, followed by Piloting, Mechanic, or Armory rolls, to find out if the speeders take off in time. The enemy is a Federation starfighter (use stats for the Imperial *Iramda*-class fighter, **GURPS Traveller**, p. 138) on a high-speed recon run. The speed of the two craft makes it impractical to play the engagement on a map, and the fighter will try to avoid action anyway. Unless the characters roll a critical success on both Piloting and Tactics rolls, the starfighter escapes.

If they fail, they will be welcomed back by Hastings. *"My, my, that was less than stellar performance. Tell you what, we'll write it up as an enemy probe driven away with damage to both craft. Your engine doesn't sound good. I'll order a new one. No, no, only the best for our stalwart defenders."*

- Some time later, Hastings asks the characters if they want to earn a little money on the side. She needs mechanics to repair the *Sir Galahad*, which she got at bargain prices when engine trouble bankrupted the previous captain.

When the characters examine the ship and the engine which was placed in a shack nearby, they will find that several parts of the engine are burned out after an overload. The last owner left a list of missing parts. About half of them are already crossed off and stacked nearby, in shipping crates labeled *Spare Parts, Delta Squadron, Lumberton*.

- The next combat mission is **ground support** for a two-battalion search of the slum east of the river. The speeders circle overhead to intimidate the civilians and to provide precision fire if required. From their vantage point, the flight crew can see how the soldiers kick in doors. All the troops find are stacks of pictures which show Hastings whipping a peasant. It is difficult to tell the laser-printed computer graphics from real photographs (the light is a bit *too* perfect to be real). Hastings is livid. Five civilians are shot the next day.

PG Rating

The next two chapters contain quite a lot of violence and possibly even some sex. The purpose is threefold: It reminds the players that even surgical strikes leave a lot of carnage in their wake. It is a tactical problem for the characters. And it is a moral problem for the characters, who have to decide if they are part of the problem, part of the solution or just passing through. Make the violence just graphic enough to reach these goals. A GM should know how much the *players* can stand.

The Hammer Falls

When the players know enough about Fort Delta to notice a shift in the local conditions, things start to change. The following events should be played out in sequence over two or three days:

- As a mercenary passes a waiting line in front of the junior NCO mess, he can overhear a whispered exchange. *"What will you do when Arden moves in?" -- "Bug out. I've already scrounged two clips."*
- More engine parts for the *Sir Galahad* arrive, until only a drive electronics module is missing and the thruster is ready to be reinstalled.

While the characters do that, a few enlisted men and women clean the ship and load some crates of tinned food, again marked as supplies for the fort. Unlike the mercenaries, they are not being paid for their extra time . . .

- A paycheck from the government of Pequan bounces. Complaints to the local officials result in variations of *"surely just a clerical error, it will be straightened out in no time."* Questions to local bankers or businessmen result in comments like *"First Interstellar? I remember something of a scandal, on the back pages a few days ago."* A Research roll and 1d hours can tell the party that the First Interstellar Bank of Jewell went bankrupt two weeks ago. Smart mercenaries will recognize that their repatriation bond now hangs in limbo.
- When the characters stand in the breakfast line in the junior officers' mess (that is, away from their vehicles some early morning), they hear another air defense alert. If the characters decide to go outside, an artillery strike will come in just as they reach the door. Otherwise, they just hear the booms. The sirens fall silent and power goes out in the fort and the city. The attack consists of spike submunitions (*Starships*, pp. 53-54) against all grav vehicles in the fort and HE glide bombs against both armories (the TL5 stores are kept separately from the TL10 supplies)

and the only power plant in town. There are a few secondary explosions and fires as well. All communications are down. From the vantage of Fort Delta, the characters can see several other impact sites in Lumberton. One is the garage of the da Silva mansion, another the parking lot behind the Governor's Mansion, where Hastings kept her private air/raft.

The GM could roll a few dice during the attack and later when the mercenaries try to salvage equipment, but that is strictly for show. The mercenaries will find their personal kit, body armor, a few rifles or sidearms, a few rations, and a decent amount of small arms ammo. They may find some electronics like night vision goggles, radios or map boxes as well. No vehicles, no battledress, no tac missiles, no grenades, no crew-served weapons. Mercenary NPCs are nowhere to be found or dead.

If Daniel Collins and Private Schneider were introduced earlier, both are present in the mercenary part of the fort. Daniel is trapped behind a collapsed file cabinet and Schneider cannot get him out alone. It will be up to the players to decide if the two join the party or get left to fend for themselves. The private will not abandon the boy, which might set an example.

Vargr Leave

When they players are about to decide on some course of action, Colonel Hastings makes an appearance, smoke-stained but not injured. *"Fancy meeting you here. Do you guys need a lift?"* When she is asked what this means, Hastings offers a quarter-share in the *Sir Galahad* in exchange for an escort through the city and to the downport. The team will have to go to Hastings' office in the governor's mansion for some documents, including the registry of the ship, to a warehouse in the seaport district for the new electronics module, and then to the downport.

(Note that a standard Sulieman has life support for eight. If there are more people counting Hastings, Schneider, and the Collins kid, mercenaries with shipboard experience should start to worry. Hastings doesn't even know that there may be a problem.)

If the mercenaries press for a better deal, the colonel will quickly offer full ownership of the starship -- she knows no other qualified pilots. Should the characters wonder if and why the *Sir Galahad* has survived, Hastings will reassure them that no ships with Imperial transponder codes were hit anywhere on Pequan. Hastings will explain where the last missing part (the electronics module) can be found, but she does not go into detail about the documents.

The first part of the trip takes the characters from Fort Delta, across a bridge, through some slums, into the upper-class district of Lumberton and to the governor's mansion. On a direct line, the distance is only 2 miles, but it will be 3 or 4 miles on foot. Encounters en route will include deserters from the fort and looters. The GM can roll 1d each half mile or arbitrarily choose encounters:

Typical Deserters

Unless a deserter manages to join the party, there is no need for a detailed character description. Use these statistics:

Human (83% male, 17% female if that matters); age 20-30; dressed in a mixture of uniform parts and civilian clothing.

Attributes: ST 11; DX 10; IQ 10; HT 10.
Speed 5; Move 5.
Dodge 5; Parry 7 (Brawling).

Skills: Area Knowledge (Lumberton)-10;
Brawling-11; Guns/TL5 (Rifle)-12;
Orienteering-9; Spear-10; Stealth-9.

Language: Galanglic (native)-10 [0].

Equipment: TL5 rifle with bayonet and 2d rounds.

Typical Looters

Again, there is no need for detailed statistics:

Human (again 83% male, 17% female); age 15-25; dressed in ragged civilian clothing.

Attributes: ST 10; DX 11; IQ 10; HT 9.
Speed 5; Move 5.
Dodge 5; Parry 6 (Brawling); Parry 4 (Shortsword).

Skills: Area Knowledge (Lumberton)-12;
Brawling-10; Guns/TL5 (Any)-8;
Shortsword-9; Stealth-10.

Language: Galanglic (native)-10 [0].

Equipment: Machete (1d+1 cut) or baton (1d cr). Some may have found a firearm with 1d rounds which they use on default skill.

1d deserters move away from the fort. They ignore the party.

2d deserters move away from the fort. They fire warning shots to discourage pursuit, but they are not very interested in a fight.

Lieutenant Harris and his rifle platoon set up a roadblock. The colonel orders the lieutenant to hold his position and wait for orders.

3d looters empty a hardware store. They feel cornered by the party and try to fight their way past.

A deserter recognizes Colonel Hastings and shoots at her. He is a mediocre marksman, but he has a good position, so party will have to make a lengthy detour or take him out.

Two looters strip Margaret da Silva of jewelry, cash, and anything else. The victim is in the shadows, but it is pretty clear what is going on. The looters ignore the party.

When the party arrives at the governor's mansion, Lieutenant Ngo is preparing the defense with two rifle platoons and a mortar team. Colonel Hastings leads the party into her office where she puts a few papers into a briefcase. Should the characters manage to get rid of Hastings and keep the briefcase, they will find the *Sir Galahad's* registry and LSP stock worth Cr40,000.

The second part of the trip takes the characters from the business district through some middle-class housing to the seaport and a warehouse district. On foot, the distance is another 4 miles. The GM can roll 1d each half mile or arbitrarily choose encounters:

If the characters ignored Margaret da Silva earlier, there are now 1d deserters expertly beating up the two looters. Margaret approaches the mercs without a further look toward the ex-soldiers who rescued her and demands to be taken to safety.

A firefight is underway between 1d deserters and 2d residents armed with TL5 revolvers. They are too busy to notice the party, but there are stray bullets coming close.

2d looters run toward the party, apparently pursued by 4d other looters. The first group tries to slip or fight past, the second group may attack the party in the confusion.

1d looters try to set fire to a building. They ignore the party.

A well-organized group of seven looters empties an electronics store. They have a TL5 truck, two TL7 SMGs and five TL5 carbines. They fire warning shots to drive the party away, then attack with aimed fire.

2d deserters come around a corner, recognize the colonel, and attack. There is no way to avoid a fight, but the deserters are concentrating on Hastings.

In the warehouse, the party will quickly find the module. The spare part is 40 lbs. with the shipping crate, 28 lbs. without. Hastings had given no thought to this minor problem, and she expects the mercenaries to carry the thing. As the party leaves the warehouse,

they hear a supersonic boom. Nothing they can do about it, but it should add a sense of urgency.

The third part of the trip takes the mercenaries away from the warehouses, across a bridge, through a slum, and to the downport. On foot, the distance is another 3 miles. As they approach the port, there are more and more people hoping for a flight out. The GM can roll 1d each half mile or arbitrarily choose encounters:

1d looters search the corpse of a Vargr. They watch the party but take no action.

A building is on fire and residents form a bucket chain. They demand that the party helps.

A grav speeder seems to strafe the troops at the governor's mansion. If the party fires at it, the speeder will come after them, too.

Major Trevor (with one rifle squad) recognizes Hastings and starts to make a report which obviously makes no sense at all. Hastings orders the major to hold her position and wait for orders.

A wealthy couple offers Cr10,000 for two tickets out. If the party refuses, the man offers Cr10,000 for a single ticket. His wife screams and tries to hit him, without much effect.

A young man begs the party to take at least his wife and child off-world. The baby is crying.

The downport has a barbed wire fence. The crew of the Far Trader *Empress Katie*, the only other ship in Lumberton, guards the gates and only lets people with tickets through (they will make an exception for determined, armed mercs). Middle Passage to Rangent (Spinward Marches 1411) is currently trading at Cr12,000 and rising fast.

Dustoff

The mechanics will have to install the electronics module, then they are ready to take off. The mercenaries may not realize it, but the adventure is over at this point. The Federation of Arden does not want to antagonize the Imperium, so it will not fire on Imperial traders without serious provocation.

The characters now have a working starship and *probably* a legal title to it. If Hastings retains any shares, she will demand to become the captain. How to get rid of her can be the next adventure.

What the mercenaries have seen in this adventure, and the decisions they had to make, should at least cause some of them to question their line of work. The characters could try to sell the ship and buy new grav speeders, but a few encounters could remind them that they ended their last ticket under questionable circumstances. "*You're the guys who bugged out on Pequan, right?*" If the characters are not properly licensed starship crew

yet (*Far Trader*, p. 82), they should remedy that defect. With an unarmed, aging but mortgage-free Scout/Courier, they have a chance to begin a new life as traders.

Panic Button

The adventure railroads the characters toward one course of action. So what if the players do not cooperate?

- What if all technicians in the party are NPCs?
You can still play the adventure as long as the PCs and those NPCs fit into the ship. Let some techs survive the ortillery strike.
- What if the mercenaries insist on repatriation bonds from a reputable bank?
Have Undersecretary Howard tell them that it would be difficult to arrange on a world outside the Imperium, and have her offer to put another megacredit into escrow with the First Interstellar. When the bank goes under, so does the money.
- What if the mercenaries desert before the ortillery strike?
Their mercenary career is over. Hastings will make sure that the word is spread. They are approached by Edgar Prince, who puts them in command of two dozen deserters to take and hold the telephone exchange when the strike comes. If they survive, the Federation will give them a ticket out.
- What if the mercenaries start to look for the Federation psyop squad?
They run in circles for a few encounters. *"I got 'em from a bloke in a blue shirt. For free, can you believe it?"*
- What if the mercenaries refuse to repair the ship in their off-duty time?
Hastings will find another mechanic in Lumberton, but no crew.
- What if the mercenaries want to fight rather than bug out?
Now that is a difficult one. Let them find a working map board linked into the PDF command net which displays overwhelming odds. Say one TL9 lift infantry division against each of the TL5 rifle regiments and one TL10 armor battalion against each of the mercenary squadrons. Instead of offering a lift, Hastings orders them to escort her while she *"tries to save vital documents."*
- What if the mercenaries want to search for a vehicle?
The Federation had good intelligence. All grav vehicles in Lumberton were hit. They may be able to scrounge a TL5 car or truck. Private Schneider can drive. This allows faster movement, but they are more conspicuous, so the number of encounters stays the same. If they want to look for a train to go from the warehouse to the downport, let them find one. Perhaps they can bribe or intimidate the engine driver.
- What if the mercenaries want to save da Silva on their way through the town?

Add a few miles and a few looters to the route. Substitute some other upper-class girl for da Silva in the encounter table, who is a bit more grateful to the deserters and hires them to escort her home.

- What if one of the mercenaries is seriously injured?
The General Hospital is only TL5, but you can schedule a detour.
- What if the mercenaries want to shoot Hastings or da Silva instead of saving them?
It will be harder to go legit without the registry and Hastings, but that is the only problem.
- What if the mercenaries take off with an overloaded ship?
There are rules for life support overload (*Starships*, p. 59). As soon as Hastings is told what is going on, she will try to shoot the people who are "least useful" (to her). This may be the excuse the mercenaries need to shoot her . . .

Characters

Colonel Diana Uamdar Hastings (120 points)

The encounters show Ms. Hastings' personality. She is petty, corrupt, and cruel. Her current goal in life is to leave Pequan with her precious skin and as much money as she can carry. Her superiors have the same goal, so she doesn't steal from *them*, but that leaves everybody else.

Human (Mixed/Imperial) female; age 31; 5' 8", 125 lbs.; white skin, black hair worn in a braid, brown eyes, usually seen in dress uniform with a gauss pistol on her belt and a swagger stick under her arm.

Attributes: ST 11 [10]; DX 12 [20]; IQ 13 [30]; HT 11 [10].

Speed 5.75; Move 5.

Dodge 5; Parry 7 (Karate).

Advantages: Filthy Rich [50]; Military Rank 6 (Colonel) [30]; Patron (Secretary of Commerce, powerful individual, appears on 9 or less) [10]; Status 3 [0]*.

* Includes two levels of free Status from Rank and one level of free Status from Wealth.

Disadvantages: Bully [-10]; Duty (soldier, occurs on 12 or less) [-10]; Greed [-15]; Primitive -5 (TL5) [-25].

Quirks: Firm believer in snap inspections; Pretends to be a wine expert; Refuses any work that might get her dirty. [-3]

Skills: Administration-14 [4]; Area Knowledge (Lumberton)-13 [1]; Dancing-11 [1]; Fencing Sport-11 [1]; Guns/TL10 (Pistol)-14* [1]; Interrogation-13 [2]; Karate-11 [2]; Leadership-13 [2]; Orienteering-12 [1]; Piloting/TL10 (Grav)-12 [2]; Savoir-Faire-15

[0]**; Savior-Faire (Military)-14 [2]; Tactics-13 [4].

* Includes +2 for IQ.

** Default of IQ+2 from high Status.

Language: Galanglic (native)-13 [0].

Private Charles Schneider (50 points)

Charles Schneider is a career private. He lacks the aptitude for leadership, but he is a good rifleman. His superiors trust him not to drop an electronic tool just because it beeps suddenly . . .

Human (Mixed/Imperial) male; age 43; 5' 7", 150 lbs.; tanned skin, close-cropped gray hair, brown eyes, wears fatigues.

Attributes: ST 11 [10]; DX 13 [30]; IQ 11 [10]; HT 11 [10].

Speed 6; Move 6.

Dodge 6. Parry 8 (Brawling).

Advantage: Very Fit [15].

Disadvantages: Code of Honor (Soldier's) [-5]; Duty (soldier, occurs on 15 or less) [-15]; Primitive -5 (TL5) [-25]; Semi-Literacy [-5].

Quirks: Shaves three times a day; Terrified of actually flying in a grav vehicle (working near one is OK). [-2]

Skills: Area Knowledge (Lumberton)-11 [1]; Armoury/TL5 (Small Arms)-11 [2]; Brawling-14 [2]; Camouflage-11 [1]; Driving/TL5 (Automobile)-13 [2]; First Aid/TL5-11 [1]; Fishing-11 [1]; Gunner/TL6 (Machine Gun)-14* [2]; Guns/TL5 (Rifle)-15* [2]; Hiking-10 [1]; Orienteering-10 [1]; Savior-Faire (Military)-12 [2]; Scrounging-13 [4]; Spear-12 [1]; Stealth-12 [1]; Survival (Woodlands)-10 [1]; Tactics-13 [4].

* Includes +1 for IQ.

Language: Galanglic (native)-11 [0].

Daniel Collins (-100 points)

Daniel is the son of a company commander. He loves grav speeders and he will stick around until the mercenaries throw him out. But he'll be back in 1d days: *"I'm old enough to help now."* Play him as cute as possible.

Human (Mixed/Imperial) male; age 9; 4' 1", 65 lbs.; white skin with freckles, short red hair, blue eyes.

Attributes: ST 6 [-30]; DX 8 [-15]; IQ 8 [-15]; HT 7 [-20].

Speed 3.75; Move 3.

Dodge 3.

Advantages: Sanctity [5]; Status 1 [5].

Disadvantages: Primitive -5 (TL5) [-25]; Semi-Literacy [-5].

Quirks: Always around the grav speeders; Expects all Imperials to be Zero-G Ball fans (and experts). [-2]

Skills: Area Knowledge (Lumberton)-7 [0.5]; Aviation/TL5-6 [0.5]; Savior-Faire (Military)-7 [0.5]; Tournament Law (Zero-G Ball)-7 [0.5].

Language: Galanglic (native)-8 [0].

Margaret Ling da Silva (50 points)

Ms. da Silva is bright, beautiful and the daughter of a wealthy mine owner. She is the informal leader of the social set which would like to hang around any suitably dashing pilots. She might even fall in love with one, but there will be no scandal before marriage.

Human (Mixed/Imperial) female; age 21; 5' 6", 125 lbs.; dark skin, short black hair, brown eyes, tends to wear long dresses (she has dozens).

Attributes: ST 10 [0]; DX 11 [10]; IQ 12 [20]; HT 10 [0].
Speed 5.25; Move 5.
Dodge 5.

Advantages: Beautiful [15]; Heir [5]; Status 1 [5].

Disadvantages: Impulsiveness [-10]; Intolerance (Workers) [-5]; Primitive -5 (TL5) [-25].

Quirks: Distantly related to the Lings of LSP fame and extremely proud of it; Embarrassed to *work* in Daddy's office; Incompetence: Politics. [-3]

Skills: Administration-13 [4]; Appreciate Beauty-12 [8]; Area Knowledge (Pequan)-12 [1]; Carousing-11 [4]; Dancing-11 [2]; Fast-Talk-11 [1]; Fencing Sport-11 [2]; Literature-10 [1]; Piloting/TL10 (Grav)-10 [1]; Sex Appeal-10 [2]; Savior-Faire-12 [1].

Languages: Galanglic (native)-12 [0]; Vilani-11 [1].

Ironmongery

The mercenaries will be armed with some of their personal sidearms and rifles, probably from *GURPS Traveller*, *Star Mercs* and *Ground Forces*. The deserters, soldiers and looters will be largely armed with TL5 gear made on Pequan. Fortunately for any mercs in body armor, they fire *only* hot lead. The soft, heavy slugs can still do serious damage,

but a Combat Environment Suit stops most of them.

Name	Mal f	Typ e	Dama ge	S S	Ac c	1/2 D	Max	Wt	a Wt	Ro F	Shot s	S T	Rc l	Cos t	L C	Hi d	T L
Rifle, 11mm	16	Cr.	5d+	14	9	310	2,400	13	0.8	1/2	8	10	-1	75	4	-6	5
Carbine, 11mm	16	Cr.	2d+2+	12	7	160	1,700	6.6	0.5	3~	10	9	-1	50	4	-4	5
Revolver, 11mm	16	Cr.	1d+1+	9	2	70	1,100	2.3	0.3	1	6	8	-1	35	3	0	5

The new grav attack speeders make their appearance only to be blown to bits, but players might wonder if the GM had no writeup:

FA-300 Dagger Grav Attack Speeder (TL10)

Instellarms designed the *FA-300 Dagger* as an interceptor with a secondary ground attack role. It is not quite as fast as a proper starfighter, but the speeder is easier to maintain on frontier worlds.

The crew includes a pilot and a gunner. The speeder's fusion plant can recharge one xaser shot in 25 minutes at full thrust or in 6 minutes on the ground. The *Dagger* features heavy compartmentalization, a sealed body, basic stealth, basic emission cloaking and basic sound baffling.

Subassemblies: Body +4.

P&P: 3.125-MW Fusion, 2 Medium CGs, 25 Thrusters.

Occ: 2 RCS. **Cargo:** 0 Body.

Armor	F	RL	B	T	U
Body:	4/960 L	4/480 L	4/480 L	4/480 L	4/480 L

Weaponry

360-MJ AD Xaser [Body:F] (36) +2.

Equipment

Body: 2 Discharger Packs; Improved Avionics; Large AESA; 18 Light Energy Banks; Safety; Small PESA; 2 HUDWACs.

Statistics

<i>Size:</i> 21'x9'x6'	<i>Payload:</i> 0.2 tons	<i>Lwt.:</i> 20 tons
<i>Volume:</i> 1.5 dtons	<i>Maint.:</i> 10 hours	<i>Price:</i> MCr4.3

HT: 12 *HPs*: 3,000 [Body]

aSpeed: 1,730 *aAccel*: 20 *aDecel*: 14 *aMR*: 3.5 *aSR*: 4
CG lift 4 Gs.

Design Notes

Frame is extra-heavy for 1.5-dton streamlined body. Fusion plant is Core plus 5 Power.

The reward for the survivors will be a small starship. She is just a McGuffin during this adventure, but here are the stats. With the expanded rules in *Starships*, the new writeup is slightly different from the description on p. 130 of *GURPS Traveller*.

Sir Galahad, Sulieman-class 100-ton Scout/Courier (TL10)

This is the basic configuration of the venerable Scout/Courier, unarmed but with a turret to add weaponry at a later time. The standard crew are a pilot, a copilot and an engineer, which leaves room for up to five passengers. The hull has heavy compartmentalization.

Subassemblies: VGSL Hull +8, Turret +5.

Powertrain: Engineering, 3 Jump Drive, 20 Maneuver.

Fuel: 20 Jump Fuel Tank.

Occ: 4 Staterooms *Cargo*: 13 dtons

Armor	F	RL	B	T	U
<i>Hull</i> :	4/200	4/200	4/200	4/200	4/200
<i>Turret</i> :	4/100	4/100	4/100	4/100	4/100

Equipment

All: Basic Emission Cloaking and Stealth. *Hull*: Utility; 2 Fuel Processors; compact Basic Bridge; 0.5-dton Spacedock.

Statistics

Size: 123'×79'×45' *Payload*: 66.5 stons *Lwt*: 331 stons
Volume: 100 dtons *Maint*: 25 mh/day *Price*: MCr26.4
HT: 12 *HPs*: 15,000 [Hull], 1,200 [Turret]
sAccel: 2.4 Gs/3 Gs empty *Jump*: 2 *aSpeed*: 2,355 mph

Map

You can hand this **Map** (PDF, 8 kB) to your players. In addition to the landmarks described in the legend, the map has five military unit symbols.

- In the southwest corner of the fort is the 7th Rifle Regiment, a light infantry unit, understrength by one company.
- In the northeast corner of the fort is Attack Speeder Squadron Delta, a platoon-sized anti-armor unit.
- In the center of the town is the headquarters of the detached N company, 7th Rifles, a military police unit. Elements of N company are spread all over the town, mostly in the upper-class district.
- Northwest of the downport is a Vargr radar team.
- In the slums is an enemy psychological warfare squad. If the players ask what the symbol means, smile and say that they will find out. If they can read the symbols, let them speculate and confirm nothing. The psyops have forged the Hastings picture.