

# Signal-GK

## #2



A Cry for Help—  
A Call to Adventure!!

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### ARTISTS IN ISSUE 2

Cover:  
“Aslani Rising” by Duncan Law-Green

Interior art:  
Stuart Machin [SM](p12-14), Nik Piper [NP](p6, 8, 16, 19, 38), Adrian Stewart [AS](p4), Duncan Law-Green [LG](p35, 47, 51, 53), Jae Campbell [JC] (p3, 5, 26, 30-31, 52, 66) and Len Robinson [LR](p34), Dee Smith [DS](p10, 25) & Richard Minty [RM](p18).

Subsector Maps: Andrew Pickford  
Warzone Maps: Leighton Piper based on Andrew Pickford’s originals.

Signal-GK is produced and distributed by: Jae Campbell.

Dagudashaag Development Team: Duncan, Adie, Leighton, Stuart and Jae with assistance from Nick Walker.

Signal-GK originally produced and distributed by: Jae Campbell. This issue originally edited by Jae Campbell.

This edition re-edited and produced by: Leighton Piper.

# Legends and Lore of Dagudashaag Sector

The following extracts were taken from the mem-clip, "Legends and Lore of Dagudashaag Sector", by Ishmaga Ershuk, published by Sherver Press, Ushra (1115). Used with permission, all rights reserved.

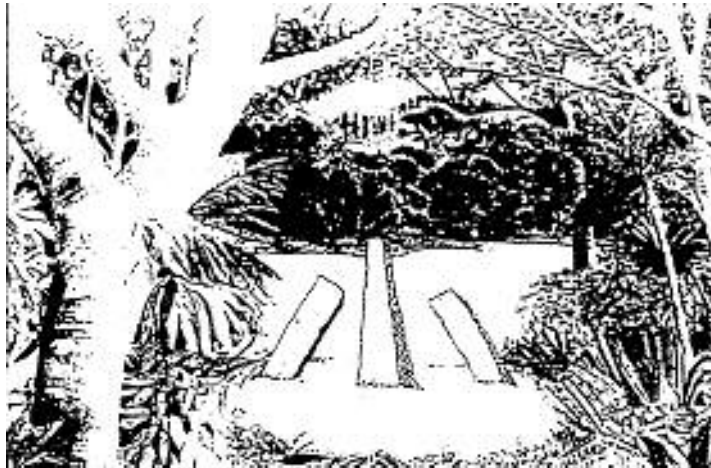
## ARGI

### 1. The Talking Temples of Uaam.

Uaam is home to an extremely primitive race of large simians, the Jala'Lak. They are a shy, unassuming race. Yet, for all that, they are a race surrounded in mystery. There are no signs that the race was ever further advanced or, for that matter, were visited by a more advanced species, prior to the Vilani. Yet the race can be found in two separate systems in Dagudashaag; Giirakh/Zeda and their home planet, Uaam/Argi. The Giirakh tribes are believed to have been transported less than 4,000 years ago. Who transported them? No one knows.

Both branches of the Jala'Lak practice primitive religious rites which centre around "temples" found on both worlds. Each temple is identical; two 0.5 tonne pillars, cut from the Atlas mountains 2,500 km distant, are set into the ground at a slant exactly 5.32m apart. A single 1 tonne pillar is set upright in the middle. Each of the stone pillars has been dressed and three perfectly symmetrical circles, each intersecting, have been carved into the inner face of the two outer stones. On Giirakh the temples are identical even down to the distance between the stones - 5.32m. Here, local stone from a mountain range 560km away were used. How did this race transport the stones such a distance? How did they measure the distance between them so accurately, and why? How did they cut the incisions? These are still mysteries.

Their language identifies the temples with a mysterious entity best translated as the "God-Creature". Who or what is the God-Creature? He is not the normal God for such a primitive race; he remained aloof from their affairs and was only interested in the creation and maintenance of the stone temples. There is a further mystery. One not often spoken of by the sober citizens of Uaam: Several good, upright citizens claim to have heard the temples talk. Between -407 and 600 there were 23 separate reports by local's that, while touching the stone



Jala'lak Temples on Uaam/Argi

incisions, they heard a voice speak to them in the Jala'Lak tongue. The voices sounded like a quiet whisper that filled the hearers full of urgency but to do what they didn't know. To further confound matters no Jala'Lak was generally within 20km of the sites at the time. Since the 600's the temples have remained as silent as the Giirakh temples. What is the answer? Are the Jala'Lak psionic? All tests seem to rule out that possibility but if that's the case who spoke. Unfortunately no recording was ever made and the Jala'Lak Language was only successfully translated in 843. Whatever the message, it is now apparently lost in the mists of time...

## PACT

### 2. The Road Builders of Cocor

The Cocor system, lying on the rimward fringe of the Pact subsector, should have little to offer the enquiring mind. Not so! Cocor is the scene of one of the most enduring mysteries in the whole of Dagudashaag.

Cocor - where the Roads are found.

Cocor is not the sort of place one would expect to find a mystery such as the Roads. The planet is the second world out from a cool M type star. It has an atmosphere largely composed of carbon dioxide, methane and sulphur compounds. It has many small lakes and seas of liquid methane. The atmospheric pressure is in excess of 150 atmospheres and the temperatures average -80°C.

The roads, wide highways of carefully dressed stone, cross the barren plains in absolutely straight lines - seemingly leading from nowhere to nowhere. They cross vast mountains or disappear into lakes only to emerge on the far shore, exactly on course. Occasionally the Roads cross one another or, more rarely, merge to form a single great highway. Most are in near perfect condition, only rarely are they broken, probably as a result of seismic activity.

Each road is magnificently built, consisting of carefully footed foundations topped by layers of tightly packed rubble and capped by carefully cut, interlocking pieces of masonry. Each road has drainage ditches either side, which still carry away the methane sleet that falls in winter. It

has been estimated that there are in excess of 10,000 kilometres of Roads, ALL built to the same exacting standards, and all in the same remarkable state of preservation.

What do we know of the builders? The answer is nothing! Cocor has no native life-forms and, due to the corrosive nature of the atmosphere, any organic, metallic or plastic that: the builder's may have Left will have totally rotted away. The earliest known records of the Roads (dating from the middle period of the Rule of Man) indicate that the first Vilani explorers, millennia before, had discovered the Roads much as we find them today. We have no clues, not even any hints, as to who expended many years of effort to construct such A Lasting and seemingly pointless monument.

### 3. Admiral Jenkins' Squadron

Many of my readers will have heard of Stone Jenkins'. The story is told to recalcitrant children by exasperated mothers, of his hiding in the folds of jumpspace hoarding his gold, waiting to catch the disobedient and burn them alive. The threat that ol' Stone would "come and get you" is familiar to most, but how did such a tale originate? Is Stone a fictional character invented by parents to quieten their offspring? No, the story is real, although greatly warped by time.

Everett Justinian Jenkins was born in 443 and having completed a formal education joined the Imperial Navy in 460. He quickly rose through the ranks and attained the Flag in 472. During his career he gained a reputation as a hard master. Legend claimed he was a sensitive as a stone and just as subtle. Crews disliked serving within Jenkins' squadron and rumour states that at least two midshipmen committed suicide rather than serve on his ship. Despite this, Jenkins' was an achiever and never failed to accomplish the objectives of his mission - until Dashi.

In itself it was unusual for an admiral to have command of a squadron but Jenkins' saw himself as a man of action. In his mind's eye he was the hero of his men, leading from the fore and always in the thick of battle. At least that's how the news services of his day saw him; his men knew a different story. In reality Jenkins' was rarely, if ever, in a position where he was in any personal danger. He frequently used a sledgehammer to crack a nut so as to avoid any personal danger to himself.

In 485 Emperor Cleon IV deposed the reigning Sector Duke, Tarok Viisarikaa, and elected Himuu Asaria in his place. He granted him a free hand to track down and 'dispose' of Duke Tarok. During the widespread unrest of Duke Asaria's short but bloody and tyrannical reign, Admiral Jenkins' was given an open mandate to find and destroy Viisarikaa before a civil war broke out. The Admiral saw force as the only means of putting down civil unrest. Applied heavily. On 44-485 there was a near mutiny when he ordered vessels under his command to fire on orbital facilities above Nexus that had refused

his ships permission to dock. On 312-485, acting on information received that Viisarikaa was hiding out in the Warrens beneath Sennii City (Dashi), he ordered a nuclear attack on the city. Thirty-two million innocent citizens were killed in the naval bombardment. The Duke surfaced a year later. He had never sheltered in Sennii. A naval inquest later cleared Jenkins' but questions were eventually raised at the Moot regarding claims that the Admiral had somehow influenced the decision. A courier was sent to request the Admiral's appearance at a special hearing. Before the courier arrived the Admiral vanished.



Admiral 'Stone' Jenkins, 484

excess of MCr.12,000,000 simply vanished. To this day no trace of the Admiral, the ships or the money has ever been found.

### 4. The Bradley Barrier

The Bradley system is primarily a naval facility. Its main claim to fame is the events of 993 which gave rise to the legend of the "Bradley Barrier". Late that year, the system's primary star SK-433677m, began producing an unusual, extremely regular sequence of flares. This lasted for two weeks and had no effect on stations in-system as they were adequately shielded. It did, however, affect traffic arriving.

Of the four vessels which jumped in-system during that time, one emerged into normal space with extensive thermal damage, its crew critically ill from Jump sickness. Two others re-emerged as thousand-tonne slugs of molten metal. The only undamaged vessel was a naval transport.

The Navy attempted to cover up the incident but media agencies rapidly picked up on the story. Speculation was rife. Some reported that the injured crew claimed to have been attacked by "monsters in jumpspace". The most popular theory was that the Navy had been testing an Ancient hyper spatial weapon, powered by the system's primary star. The Navy kept a wary silence but eventually released a statement pointing out that all the affected ship's had been manufactured by GSbAG, which had reportedly been suffering reliability problems with jump drive integration at that time.

In 1114, Dr. Raymond Horne, an astrophysicist at the University of Medurma-Korovall, reported that computer models showed that Bradley's primary would enter another period of instability "in the near future". Several commercial carriers suffered 'mutinies' as ship crews refused to honour freight contracts for Bradley. As of yet, the strange flare sequence has not recurred.

## 5. The Medurma Triangle

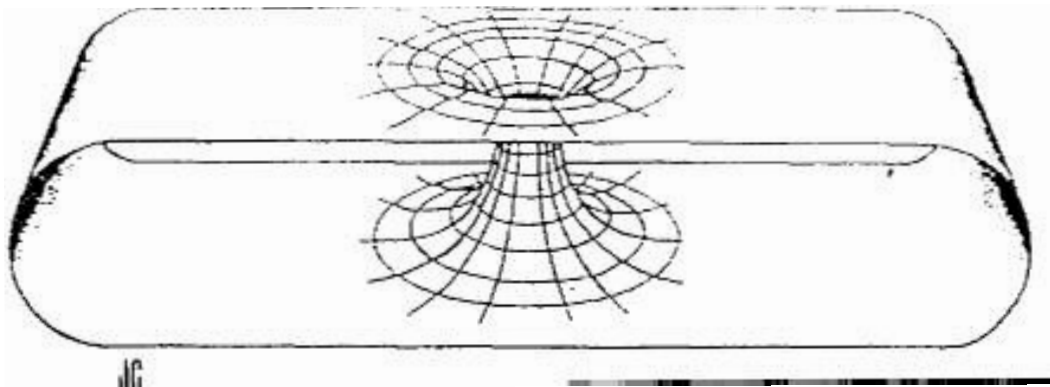
Until 1110 the triangle of space created by Medurma, Dipa and Nexus was not even legend. Then on 12-1110 a merchant vessel, the "Dawn Trader", filed a report with the Medurman University. While preparing to Jump out of the Dipa system the navigator spotted a bright reflection in space. Instantly he leapt to the controls as he knew that such a reflection could only come from a ship, yet all his sensors showed dear space. Thinking his equipment had malfunctioned, he radioed his position to the ship. There was no reply. He admits his next thought was that it had to be a pirate but, seconds later, he received a transponder transmission. The ship then vanished.

On analysis, the transponder reading proved to have originated on a Medurman Pact ship which vanished in -35. The whole exchange was recorded. The Dawn Trader's sensors were in full working order. There was no ship. Yet the recorder clearly received the phantom transmission.

Over the next two years, three other incidents occurred. In each case crew member's (and in one well documented case the entire crew and passengers) swear they saw what had to be a starship yet nothing showed on any sensor. Moments later a phantom transponder transmission is recorded. Each time a different ship. Each is of a Pact naval vessel lost between -100 and -25. Each was recorded destroyed while in either the Medurma, Dipa or Nexus systems.

It begs the question, why not recorded sightings prior to 1110? My personal theory is that somehow a doorway has recently opened that allows echoes from an earlier opening to drift through to our time. Unfortunately we may never know. The Triangle remains another unsolved mystery.

Credits: Original concept Road Builders of Cocor, Admiral Jenkins' Squadron by Adrian Stewart  
Bradley Barrier by Duncan Law-Green  
The Talking Temples of Uaam, Medurma Triangle by Jae Campbell.



The Bradley Barrier - A hyperspatial shield or faulty jump drives. An artist's impression showing Hyperspatial distortion caused by the shield.

## FURTHER READING

### 1. The Talking Temples of Uaam.

- \* Jala'Lak and the God-Creature James Henna, 1086
- \* Sophontology in the Vlandian Cultural Regions - Surthi Mataria, 1003

### 2. The Road Builders of Cocor.

- \* Adiga Gurirle likush Haupt Kamabuk, 1006
- \* Ancients and Cocor- Feslor Kurkiir, 873
- \* Ushla Cocor Khuunzesh - Iimep Lap. 973

### 3. Admiral Jenkins' Squadron.

- \* General History of Dagudashaag Ushra University Press, 1106
- \* History of the Face Subsector- Jalivent Esunimi, 1092
- \* Jenkins' Command - Williemp Bal, 775

### 4. The Bradley Barrier.

- \* Bradley Barrier - Rede Printemps, 1037

### 5. The Medurma Triangle.

- \* Transponder transcripts University of Medurma-Korovall

# WET, WET, WET: THE HAMANOK CONSPIRACY, PART I.

## OVERVIEW

This scenario is the first in a series of adventures based in the Dagudashaag sector and revolves around the pursuit of a commando team sent by Dulinor to spread havoc by use of a genetically engineered virus. The group of PC's will have little control over the initial events but as they uncover more of Dulinor's plot they will be in a position to prevent the widespread decimation of the population of Lucan's Imperium. This first scenario is set on the waterworld of Thalassa (Pact 2127 D56A557-9).

## SUMMARY OF NUGGETS

1. Something To Do: The characters are approached to undertake a search of the shallow seas where the harvester's boat went missing.
2. Water, Water Everywhere But Not a Drop To Drink: The PC's undertake a search over the featureless sea and note the various activities on its surface.
3. Something Down There: The PC's spot some wreckage on the sea bed near the edge of the Hassan Deep. An investigation shows that the wreckage is only a part of the missing boat and shows signs of battle damage.
4. Tarok Attack!: While the PC's are making further underwater investigations they have a close shave with a large aggressive carnivore, the Tarok.
5. Not Just Another Lost Ship: The PC's make an important discovery, a crashed far trader, which ran into trouble ten weeks ago. The characters find that the ship is already under investigation by the crew of a mercenary cruiser. This ship attempts to bide their meddling by removing evidence and witnesses (the PC's).
6. Away At Last: After leaving the crash site the PC's report their experience and findings to the authorities who initiate a full investigation. There is little to find about the salvage team, although the PC's will hear of an unidentified vessel leaving the planet at great speed.

## SET UP

The players are in an unfortunate situation stranded on the backwater world of Thalassa with little chance of travelling to a more exciting system. Read the following to the players: 'Taking the berths on the free trader was a risk from the start You could tell right from the beginning there would be trouble with this ship. Still it got you this far and you didn't have much choice, the captains bargain prices were the only way you were

going to move through this subsector. Now the ship's power plant has packed up and everyone's stuck on this backward, water-swathed world with little in the way of hard cash. Unless you can find some useful employ or passage out system you will all have to wait at least a month while the ship's captain tries to hitch a ride to Theta Cygni to obtain the necessary parts and return.

"You have been staying in a rundown hotel near the equally run-down starport offering a room and two meals for Cr.20 a night. There is very little to do and you're bored beyond belief and you've only been on Thalassa five days.

"And this place is so damned cold! You are surprised that seas don't freeze. But the seas don't freeze because of the heat derived from the underwater volcanoes. Consequently there is thick fog all the time.

"While wasting time watching the local TV a newflash comes on air describing the loss of a Suall-harvester's boat at the edge of the Hassan deeps. There is the report of a rescue operation which was abandoned after ten hours with no trace of the crew or the boat An interview with a union representative sheds some light on the poor safety record of the company that organises the Suall-harvesters, Thalassa-Gushmiik Organic Produce: four vessels have been lost in the last sixteen months alone. The representative also goes on to state that the company has failed to react to a number of incidents where boats have been attacked by Taroks."



Menku Shiliikh - Union Rep'

## 1. Something to Do.

The PCs are asked to help in the location of a lost boat.

Location is a hotel restaurant

Scene: You are just about to sit down for your evening meal when a middle-aged gentleman approaches and asks to join you for a chat. He introduces himself as Menku Shiliikh, the local union rep for the harvesters. You all recognise him from the television broadcast earlier in the day. He tells you he is under pressure from his members to arrange a more detailed search for his lost colleagues but has been unsuccessful in persuading the local authorities to carry out the task. He says that they complain about the lack of resources, they continually state that they haven't the manpower or equipment for the job. Menku Shiliikh proposes that you undertake the search for the lost boat. He knows you have been stranded on Thalassa and will be stuck here for several weeks therefore you have nothing pressing to do. He can raise a maximum of Cr. 5,000 each and possibly a bonus from the insurance if the wreckage is found. As you have nothing better to do you accept. The second-in-command of the subsidised merchant is prepared to lend you the launch to aid you in your search if he gets Cr. 6,000.

The PC's can be supplied with any underwater gear by the union rep, Shiliikh.

Action: If the players want any equipment impose the following restrictions:

### To locate a specific item:

[varies], Streetwise, Int, 20 min (unskilled OK).

Referee: The difficulty depends on in which tech code band the item falls into; pre-stellar or earlier - simple, early stellar - routine, average stellar - difficult, high stellar += formidable. Prices are 20% higher per tech code above pre-stellar (i.e. a TL 15 item (high stellar) would be 160% 'book' price).

## 2 Water, Water Everywhere, But Not a Drop to Drink.

The PCs start the search over the area near the 'Deeps'.

Location is just off the Camassan Shallows.

Scene: You have loaded the launch with all the material you wish to take and loaded the map coordinates into the vessel's computer. Your take off is smooth enough, traffic control gives you the 'all-clear' to head southwest and within a couple of minutes the starport is out of sight as you pass through a particularly thick fog-bank. Ten minutes later you are hovering over the site corresponding to the last known position of the harvesters' boat. Action: Get the players to write down or describe a search pattern. The fog will vary in thickness from time to time and a visual search of each hex around their position will depend upon this. The

water is shallow enough to see to the sea bed from a height of greater than 10 metres but less than 50.

### To observe wreckage on the seabed:

[varies], Recon, 1 hr (uncertain, unskilled O.K.).

Referee: The difficulty level is determined by a roll of 2D: 2-3 simple, 4-6 routine, 7-10 difficult, 11 formidable, 12 impossible. Cautious tasks apply.

The part wreckage of the boat will be found in the hex adjacent to the start of the 'Deeps', all other hexes will draw a blank.

## 3. Something Down There.

The PCs find some wreckage and bring it aboard the launch.

Location is just on the edge of the 'Deeps' within the Camassan Shallows.

Scene: You have been searching for a while now but finally you've met with success. There is something down there on the edge of the 'Deeps' that looks like part of a boat. It's time to go down and find out what happened to the vessel and its crew.

Action: The PCs may now want to go down and recover the wreckage and look for bodies. The launch is capable of underwater travel. The cargo hold can be adapted to make an impromptu air lock.

### To adapt the cargo hold to a giant air lock:

Routine, Engineering or Mechanical, Edu, 15 min (uncertain).

Referee: Mishaps will result in leakage of water into other parts of the launch.

### To manoeuvre the wreckage into the cargo hold of the launch:

Difficult, Underwater Env, Str, 5 min (hazardous).

Referee: Zero G-Environment skill-1 can replace the underwater skill. Combine the skills of two individuals for this task. Failure will mean damage to the individual wet/vacc suit, degree of damage should be reflected by the level of mishap.

Once the wreckage is finally aboard the launch the PCs can examine the remains of the boat for signs of the means of its loss. It will be obvious to every individual that the wreckage represents only part of the whole structure.

### To discover the reason for the boat's loss:

Routine, Gunnery or Engineering, Int, 10 min (uncertain).

Referee: A result of 'some truth' or better will give the lead the Players to conclude that the boat was shot out of the water with heavy laser fire.

The players are faced with the prospect of recovering the remainder of the boat, and discovering the cause of the boat's loss.

## 4. Tarok Attack!

The PCs investigate the seabed further and are terrorised by a marauding Tarok.

Location is just on the edge of the 'Deeps' within the Camassan Shallows.

Scene: Following the discovery of part of the boat you are faced with the possibility that you may need to recover the bodies and remainder of the wreckage. You are intrigued by the conclusion that the boat doesn't appear to have been lost by any natural means. Therefore to honour your mission obligations and to satisfy your curiosity, you have decided to continue the search.

Action: Make a search task similar to that in nugget 3. On success they will locate the remainder of the harvester's boat in the hex south-west of the first piece of wreckage (only 500m away but on a wide ledge on a near vertical drop into the 'Deeps', some 200m below the sea surface).

While recovering the wreckage (use a task similar to that found in nugget 3), a large, and dark shape will be noticed lurking at the edge of the characters' visibility. This shape belongs to the huge carnivore, the Tarok, 5m long and 2m wide at the anterior ('head') end. The Tarok has two jaws, one huge gaping maw (a metre and a half wide) and an upper 'projectile' jaw. The projectile jaw is about the size of two large cupped, human hands with six inch scythe-like teeth and held into place within the Tarok head with elastic-like contractile muscle. These muscles can propel this jaw up to two and half metres in a fraction of a second. The Tarok is incredibly accurate its attacks with the projectile 'hunting' jaw and thus in its attempts to grab/kill [prey prior to swallowing in the lower jaw]. The jaw is in effect a spear in an attack.

### For the Tarok to hit in an attack:

Routine, OffDM = +3, DefDM = Dex, 1 combat round.

Referee: The characters best defence against a marauding Tarok is a characters dexterity or dazzling it with bright lights from a portable source or the launch's lights. The Tarok will continue to attack until it has either dragged off prey or been scared off by bright lights. The Tarok's armour is equivalent to flak. Most weapons will be useless underwater, and attacks on the

creature must be confined to the hand unless gas-propelled weapons have been obtained.

Once the party has beaten off the Tarok, the PCs will notice another dark shape lurking at the edge of visibility. This is a human-shaped figure, although somewhat large, which quickly turns into the gloom. Exploration in this direction will lead to the discovery of a derelict far trader, attended by a mercenary cruiser. There will be several Was in what appears to be hostile-environment type vacc-suits leaving the stricken vessel for the cruiser. A few minutes after the last person has approached the cruiser it begins to rise from the seabed and leaves the site. The PC's may now want to examine this other wreckage themselves.

## 5. Not Just Another Lost Ship.

The PCs explore the starship wreckage.

Location is in the 'Deeps'.

Scene: You all shaken after the close encounter with the Tarok, but the appearance of other divers and the crashed far trader have rekindled your enthusiasm for the mission. If nothing else this ship could offer you a hefty bonus in the way of salvage. Yet as you approach the vessel there are two huge explosions 200 m from the trader. The shock wave knocks you over. After the dust settles you can see the ship has broken in two but is still basically intact. Someone or something was out to destroy you or the wreck or both.

Action: The explosions were caused by missiles launched by the fleeing mercenary cruiser, but in haste the missiles were fired without engaging the computer targeting system.

The characters may want to make a preliminary investigation of the outside of

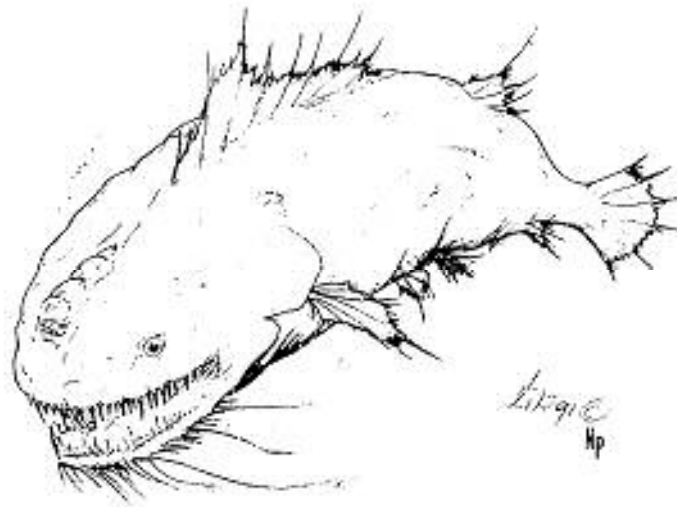
the vessel. The trader shows a massive hole at the rear, an explosion from the inside it appears.

### To determine how long the trader has been underwater:

Routine, Recon, Int, 1 (uncertain).

Referee: On 'some truth' reveal that the vessel has been submerged for less than four months. On 'total truth' inform the players that the ship has been underwater less than three months but more than two months.

When and if the PCs enter the vessel the following will be seen: the ship will be in a general state of disorder - there are bodies scattered throughout the ship, the



An Adult Tarok



majority will be found in staterooms, others will found at crew stations. Most bodies are partially eaten- the general site is not very pleasant There appears to rubbish and supplies from all over the ship scattered here there and everywhere. The vessel has been ransacked in addition to the chaos caused by the crash and the missile near misses. Searching the ship is going to be a messy and time consuming business.

### **To discover clues about the causes of the crash and the ship's apparent importance:**

Difficult, Recon, Int, 10 min (uncertain).

Referee: On any success roll 1D6 and consult the following table (if 'total truth' was obtained add a DM of -1 to the result):

1: Four bodies 'fresher' than the rest lie in the forward lounge - the missing boat crew from the descriptions you were given.

2: The ship's hold contains a fairly large consignment of electronic parts; most are sophisticated weapon sub-systems (obvious to any character with a military background). They are now useless.

3: The ship's log/flight recorder is hanging out of its normal location deep within the computer navigation sub-circuits. It is intact and contains the crew roster (and normal location) as well as full inventory of passengers and cargo.

4: Evidence of a power plant explosion - obvious to all. The charred, half-eaten body of the chief engineer lies next to the computer workstation.

5: An electronic notepad is found in the only stateroom without a corpse under a collapsed, crumpled berth. The notepad's memory has been totally wiped due to the invasion of seawater into the circuits. On the back is etched "KDA".

6: A map chip of Thalassa with an annotation on the holographic diagram representing the fat trader's position. The position is marked with: "S".

The PC's will now probably want to leave for the capital/ starport. The bodies of the boat crew should be taken back to the union rep. The characters may want to examine the log but they will not have the facilities at hand to make a worthwhile attempt. See following nugget for examination of the flight recorder/log.

## **6. Away at Last.**

The PCs deliver the bodies, the wreckage and the information they gathered to the union representative.

Location is the Thalassa starport.

Scene: You have retrieved the wreckage of the boat and more importantly that of the crew. Even more significantly you have stumbled across an unregistered crashed starship. The local authorities have been informed and a recovery expedition is under way to retrieve the other bodies, although the ship will remain on the seabed. You can make a salvage claim at the starport port authority and registration office, but a

formal application for salvage must be made within two months of notification and the application must be accompanied with a salvage registration fee of Cr.25,000 otherwise the claim lapses.

The authorities can do nothing about the attack on you by the mysterious vessel, indeed no starship was tracked out of the system at the time you claim But then again the monitoring facilities of this class D starport leave a lot to be desired.

Action: If the characters want to see the details on the flight recorder/log they will be invited to view the play back in the port authority administrator's office. The flight recorder/log will show that an instability in the fusion containment field led to a plasma leak. Secondary safety circuits failed to cut in with the explosion of the power plant as a final result The ship had stopped off at the starport for some extra supplies (recorded in the starport registration log) before leaving, apparently without refuelling (not uncommon). It would appear that the vessel took up water for fuel but developed power plant trouble soon after the take-off from the sea surface.

The ship is called the "Clement VII".

When the bodies from the far trader are retrieved there will appear to be one short as compared to the log/ recorder. The body missing would seem to belong to a Geffen Bulimic. No further details of this person are given.

The union rep will pay up the money agreed. He will thank the group and invite the party to weekend at union owned holiday apartment.

The characters may want to use their earnings to pay the salvage registration fee but they will not have the money to pay for the salvage gear. The union representative could be approached to provide financial backing for the salvage project. Due to expense of the salvage equipment involved and the poor market for 'wreckages' the union officials will want 80% of any profits. The referee should generate interpersonal tasks for this process; any failures should result in the union rep asking for a higher return (unless there is an outright failure where the union will withdraw the offer). The ship will generate  $4D6-2 \times 1\% \times$  new price if sold as 'scrap'. Costs for the salvage operation will amount to  $2D6 \times$  Cr.200,000.

The captain of the free trader will return with the parts the ship needs a week later. Three days after that the ship will be fit to leave Thalassa.

## THE HAMANOK CONSPIRACY

A five-part adventure set in Dagudashaag sector:

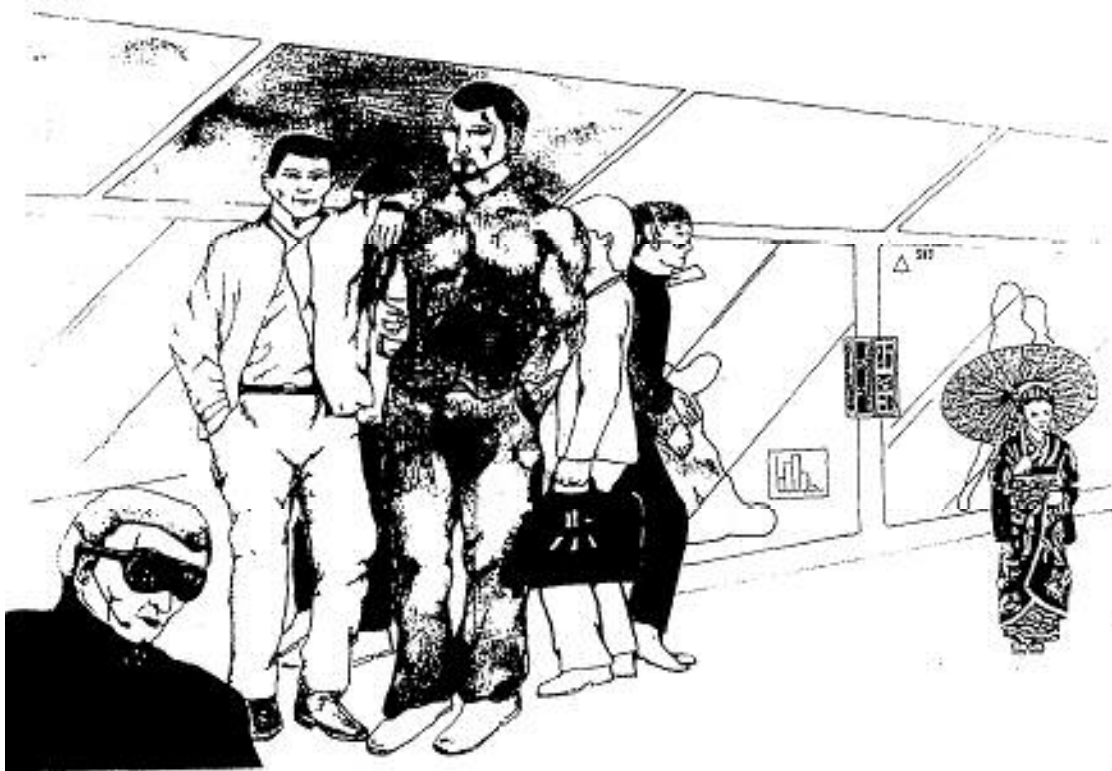
1: Wet! Wet! Wet! The characters investigate the loss of a boat on the water world of Thalassa (Pact 2 127) where they run into a mercenary Cruiser (occupied by an elite llelish commando team) trying to salvage a crashed starship or the sea floor.

2: One of Our Doctors is Missing. the PC's are contracted to locate the whereabouts of a missing scientist. the head of the department of Biomolecular Sciences at the University of Medurma (Pact 2124). The characters discover that the doctor deviate from his intended route and appears to have died in the starship crash on Thalassa that the PC's found.

3: Where (Red) Eagles Dare. The PC's are caught up in a terrorist raid on Hellas (Ushra 1416) apparently due to the resurgence of the Solomani group, the Red Eagles. The PC's are led to believe that this may have beer the work of another agency trying to divert attention away from other activities.

4: Breathless. The PC's are asked to undertake a very hazardous mission on Veluishim (Old Suns 1507). They are instructed to recover bodies and obtain information of a plague that has swept an agricultural world decimating its' small population. Evidence is uncovered that the was deliberately introduced into the planet's ecosystem and may have been a man-made disease. There is also evidence of those responsible which has a disturbing familiarity for the PC's.

5: The Hamanok Conspiracy. With a armful of circumstantial and tenuous evidence the characters go to uncover the chilling details of a plot by Dulinor's agents to devastate the high population worlds of Lucan's Imperium: the characters take on the responsibility of eradicating the threat and destroying the llelish commando team.



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# HELM OF ATHENA: STEALTH IN MEGATRAVELLER

## INTRODUCTION

Why have Medurma and Dipa survived the onslaught of the massed fleets of Lucan and Dulinor? The answer is simple; Technology. In particular, Medurma developed the "Helm of Athena".

The Helm is a full, 100% range capability stealth suite that comprises all known stealth techniques available at TL 16. This suite, named after the Helm of Invisibility attributed to the mythical Solomani goddess, has rendered much of the Free Medurman Federation's fleet effectively invisible. The test-bed for the current technology was the far trader, "Perseus", named for the Solomani hero, this vessel was initially intended for Dulinor's Fleet but, before production could begin, the Emperor was assassinated. The "Helm" is now being retrofitted to as many FMF ship's as possible. So far, the "Helm" has proved highly successful in combat, with the stealth ship causing total havoc among any intruding fleets. Unfortunately in 1117 the Perseus vanished while on a spying mission into Bolivar subsector and it was feared that its technology may have fallen into the hands of Dulinor but he apparently has not duplicated the technology. The current theory is that the Perseus was either captured by pirates or destroyed. As of mid-1120, some 30% of the secessionist Federation fleet have been equipped with the "Helm". Since the Perseus fiasco, certain security measures have been introduced to prevent capture of the technology. The vessel's Captain can set off a series of destructive charges designed to totally destroy the hardware while a rapid computer virus reduces the computers' cores to unintelligible rubbish. Because of the vital importance of maintaining the secrecy surrounding the "Helm", all crew are heavily vetted. Due to this vetting procedure, only major vessels and spy ships receive the "Helm".

## STEALTH

At the moment, only two kinds of stealth technology are available to the MegaTraveller ship designer, these are Electro-Magnetic Masking (EMM) and black globes. Both have limitations. EMM only works on ships' own electro-magnetic signature and not on the reflected emissions from active electro-magnetic sensors. Black globes do provide total invisibility to any sensor; however the protected vessel may not manoeuvre or use its weapons and is effectively blind. The offensive potential of this device is limited to surprise attacks etc. Once the target is in combat detecting the shielded vessel is relatively easy.

Often a vessel would wish to remain hidden and carry out its normal functions at the same time. This is stealth. There are two main aspects to stealth, passive and active. With passive stealth the vessel is designed

so that it becomes more difficult to detect. Active stealth counteracts any sensor signals that may reveal the ship.

At tech levels 6 - 10, the most important detection method is Active EMS. There have been several ways of defeating this. The first is hull design. If it is used, the difficulty of the detection task is increased by one level.

For gaming purposes use Table 1.

Config	Vol Mod	Price Mod
Open Frame	NA	NA
Needle/Wedge	x0.95	x1.2
Cone	x0.95	x1.2
Cylinder	x0.90	x1.5
Box	x0.85	x2.0
Sphere	NA	NA
Dome/Disc	x0.85	x2.0
Irregular	NA	NA
Planetoid	NA	NA
Buffeted	NA	NA

Also available are special preparations of the vessel's surface. These consist of special paints, finishes etc. to the vessel. Use the following values per kilolitre.

Power - 0 Volume - 0.001 Weight - 0.01 Price - 7500.

Like hull configuration, this increases the difficulty of the detection task by one Level.

Hull shaping is extremely obvious, even to the untrained observer and is thus a clear indication of a vessel's military nature. Also, due to aerodynamic reasons, atmospheric speeds are limited to 1000 kph (i.e. SL maximum). Surface finishing is available from TL 8+ but becomes obvious at TL 10. Both methods also function against passive detection.

At tech level 11, we see the first appearance of the densitometer. This instrument soon becomes the preferred method of detection because of its identification abilities and passive nature. This renders previous stealth equipment obsolete. In order to counteract this type of detection the vessel's gravitational signature would have to be altered.

Unfortunately the signature will change as objects of mass move around the vessel. The damping technology will have to detect this and react to it quickly enough so that the vessel will not be detected. The speed of computer necessary for this type of operation does not become available for several tech levels and then the computer-equipment interface has to be designed to react to the sophisticated commands at a similar speed. This only becomes available at tech level 16 when synaptic processing has evolved to the level where

computers can carry out independent actions. At this point, active stealth becomes possible. This is the sending of active transmissions in exact anti-phase with the active sensor transmission thereby preventing detection. The ship becomes sensor invisible. The computer must analyse the electromagnetic patterns across a series of passive arrays and then transmit the exact anti-phase transmission in order to function. There must be no apparent delay between receiving the sensor signal, analysis and transmission of the neutralising signal. These methods require at least the semi-Artificial Intelligence (AI) techniques associated with high percentage synaptic processing. The computer used must be high powered, but not necessarily AI, (a dedicated model/8 can provide sufficient processing power) however, the link between the computer and the detection/ neutralisation equipment must be. To achieve active EMS stealth, the vessel's surface must be fitted with a number of active and passive EMS arrays. The passive arrays pick up the incoming signal for processing and the active arrays send out the necessary counteracting signals. For gravitational field damping the following equipment is required. The ship's own gravitational signature must be analysed. The necessary signals are sent by the computer to an array of inertial compensators/artificial grav fields. These are shielded to prevent leakage and detection by densitometers. Their role is to effectively even out the vessel's distortion of the time/gravity continuum so that the vessel appears as empty space.

In gaming and ship design terms these countermeasures appear as the following:

Computers - Each system requires the minimum of a dedicated model/8. They can not be used for any other purpose than driving the countermeasures suite.

Active Stealth - One EMS Active and one EMS Passive Array are required per 100 tonnes vessel displacement. (This represents the series of sensors embedded into the surface of the vessel.)

Densitometer Neutralisation - A densitometer of at least 25 km penetration is necessary to achieve the required accuracy. In addition, a number of gravitational dampers are required. These are a series of internally directed and shielded artificial grav fields that neutralise the necessary gravitational fields normally detected by densitometers.

Both systems require synaptic processors which are available only at TL 16+. At TL 18+ the processor is incorporated into the main computer which (if model/12+) also handles the stealth capability as part of its normal operation.

## IN GAMING TERMS

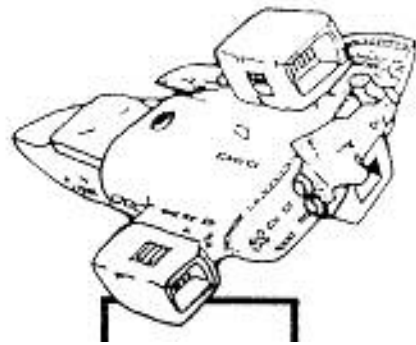
Synaptic Processor TL 16+ Power 0.007Mw Weight 2.4 tonnes Price MCr.18

Active Stealth requires: Model/8 computer, synaptic processor, one EMS-Active and one EMS-Passive array

per 100 tonnes displacement. The effect of active stealth is to increase the Active EMS detection difficulty by 2 levels.

Densitometer Neutralisation requires: Model/8 computer, synaptic processor. HiPen (25 km+) Densitometer, Grav Plates and Inertial Compensators (x1 mass, power and volume, x20 price). The effect of densitometer neutralisation is to decrease the detection difficulty by 2 levels.

Both systems require no obvious external arrays.



Trigger unit (see next page).

# HARD WIRED: RCS

## RCS - RAPID COLD START for TL16 FUSION POWER PLANTS

At TL 16 the understanding of fusion technology becomes complete and it reaches its true physical Limits. As a result a full comprehension of start up procedures becomes apparent.

It can be seen at this Tech Level that cold starts can take place much quicker using a sophisticated process involving the containment of semi-fusion Hydrogen within a magnetic/gravity bottle. This bottle remains stable as long as power is supplied and holds within it sufficient charge to engage a cold power plant as though it was pre-warmed. The semi-fusion supply acts as a pre-warm up catalyst that speeds up the warming process. This increase in speed is partially due to the fact that a fusion state doesn't have to be set within the power plant as it is already present in the storage bottle. Also, with the semi-fusionised hydrogen present, the power plant gets a considerable head start in its climb to standard operating temperature.

This concept can be fitted to all TL 16+ fusion-based vessels. Fill volumes etc. are per one kilolitre of power plant.

### Rapid Cold Start

Vol	Wt.	Pow(Mw)*	Price(MCr.)
0.03	0.06	0.21	0.06

\* From another power source.

The energy bottle is not very stable and all TL 16+ starports will require the discharging of all Rapid Cold Start (RCS) bottles before docking/landing. This potential instability will occur occasionally (12 on 2D). Should it instability occur use the following task:



Rapid cold start Actuator (Gravity Bottle)

### To stabilise the energy bottle:

Routine, Engineer, Edu, 10sec (Fateful, Hazardous)

Referee: Success means that the power plant will start as per a normal RCS. If a mishap other than destroyed

occurs the power plant will take twice the normal RCS start up time. If a destroyed result occurs, the power plant melts to slag and on a E+ on 2D, the resulting heat shock will disintegrate the ship. Increase the difficulty level by one level for every month the bottle is not discharged and cleared for at least 24 hours\_ If this cleaning process is carried out every week, the task becomes simple. (f a vessel is still using fusion power at TL 18+ this instability is rectified.

### Trigger Unit

#### PERSEUS Stealth Far Trader

Craft Stealth Far Trader, Type A2Z, TL16, MCr.316.603  
Hull 180/450 Disp=200 Config=4SL Armour=40G  
Unloaded=1876 tonne Loaded=2131 tonne.

Power: 2/5 Fusion=509Mw Duration=24/72, 14127 Fusion=2845Mw Duration=10/30.

Second power plant has RCS fitted

Loco: 5/9 Manoeuvre=1 8/16 Jump=2 NOE=200  
Cruise=750 Top=1000 Agility=0. With modular systems and secondary power plant =30/59 Manoeuvre=4 14/27 Jump=3 NOE=200 Cruise=750 Top=1000 Agility=3.

Commo: Meson Planet=16x1, Radio System=16x2, Laser System=16x2, Maser Sytem=16x1.

Sensors: EMM Package, Densitometer(25km)-16x1 Neutrino(1kw)-16x1, EMS-A-Far Orb-16x1, EMS-P-Interstellar-16x1, EMS-Jam-Far Orb-16x1. ActObjScan=Rout ActObjPin=Rout PasObjScan=Rout PasObjPen=Rout PasEngScan=Simple. PasEngPin=Rout Stealth paint, Active Stealth, Densitometer Neutralisation.

Offense: Missile=x02 PLaser=xx3 Batt 2 2 Bear 2 2 Defense: DefDM=+7/+10 Sand=xx4 Batt 2 Bear 2 Control Computer=6x3. Panel=holodynamic link z4, Special=Holo HUD x4 Environ=basic env, basic ls, extend la, grav plates, inertial compensators.

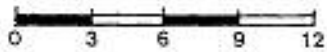
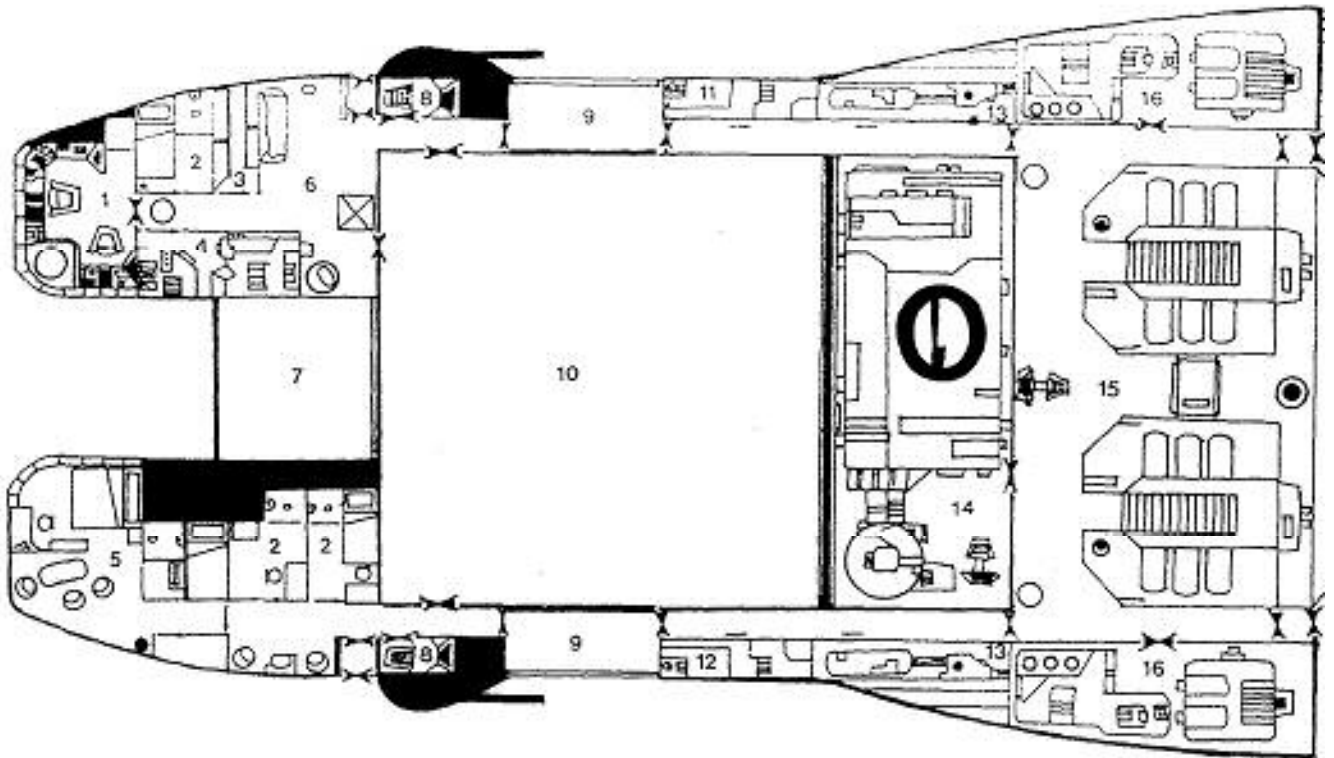
Acomm: Crew=4 (Bridge=1, Engineer=1, Gunnery=1, Steward/Medical=1) Hi Psg=5, staterooms lo.

Other: Cargo=13 tonnes (181 Kl) Normal Fuel=38 tonnes (545 Kl) Secondary Fuel=32 tonnes (460 Kl), ObjSize=Avg, EMLevel=None, Fuel Scoops, Fuel Purification Plant (36 hours), Battery Round=2 missiles, Electronic Circuit Protection. Triple Turret (PLaser, Sand, Missile) x2.

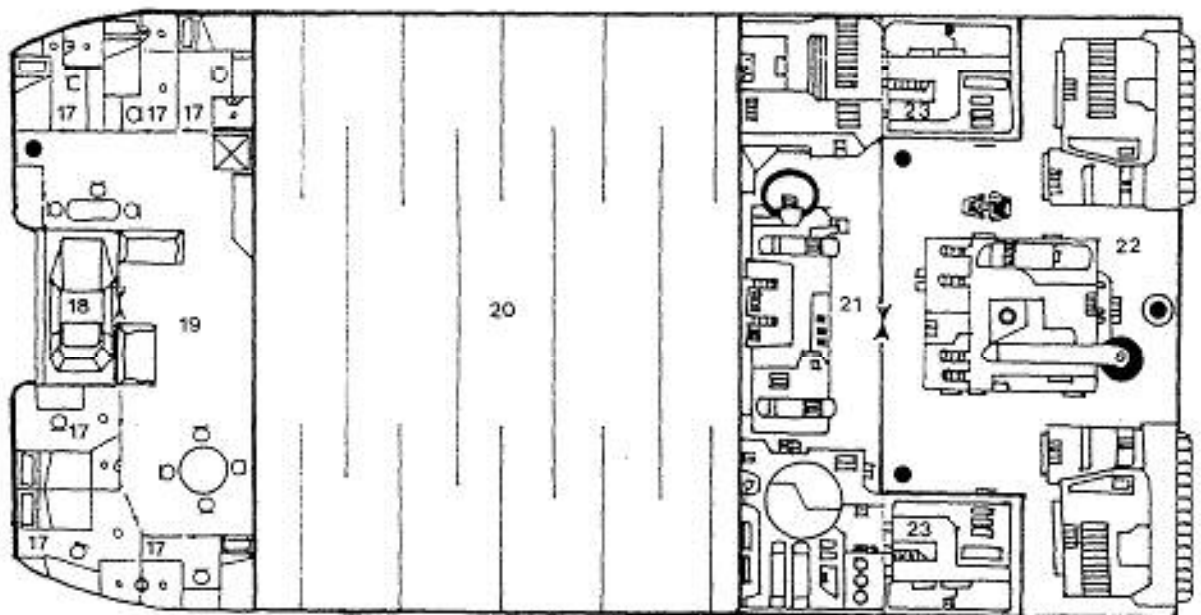
Notes: Cargo with "normal" AZ fuel load (671 Kl)=38 tonnes (515 Kl) Cargo with no secondary fuel=47 tonnes (641 Kl).

Secondary fuel drives the secondary power plant which powers additional Manoeuvre Drive, agility and weapons.

All stealth is powered by main power plant. For an explanation of Stealth devices and FCS see relevant articles. Active EMS detection=+3 detection levels (i.e. Impossible +), Densitometer detection=+2 detection levels (i.e. Formidable +). This means that densitometers will not detect at ranges of more than 150,000 km and Active fails as the range exceeds 50,000 km. Passive automatically fails (no signal). These figures assume state of



Deck 1 - LOWER DECK



Deck 2 - UPPER DECK

-  Lift Shaft
-  Interior Wall
-  Bulk Head
-  Sliding Door
-  Maintenance valve
-  Floor fire valve
-  Overhead fire valve
-  Fire ext.

the art TL 15 equipment. At the ranges quoted, detection chance is 2.8%, at 25,000 km less range detection chance is 8.3%. At 100,000 km for the densitometer and point blank for Active, detection chance is 16.6%. At 75,000 km densitometer detection chance is 41.796.

# INDISS

Key for layout of "Perseus"

## Deck 1

1. Bridge.
2. Crew Stateroom. More spartan than passenger accommodation.
3. Ship's Locker.
4. Computer Room.
5. Captain/Owner's Suite.
6. Reception area/Crew Lounge.
7. Loading Ramp/Outer Cargo Bay Airlock.
8. Gunnery and Fire Control (P/S). Each turret has pulse laser, missile and sandcaster racks.
9. Cargo Airlocks (PIS).
10. Cargo Hold. 47 Tonnes. At aft of hold is a fuel bladder capable of holding 29 Tonnes of fuel
11. Active Stealth Control System.
12. Densitometer Neutralization Control System.
13. Fuel Scoops and Purification Plant (P/S).
14. Secondary Power Plant. Supplies 75% of secondary power. FCS system also housed here.
15. Lower Engineering Deck - lump Drive. Identical to normal A2 trader.
16. Lower Engineering Deck Annex (P/S). Jump Drive booster and part of secondary power plant system.

## Deck 2

17. Passenger Stateroom.
18. Air-Raft Bay. Holds standard 4 tonne Air-Raft.
19. Passenger Lounge.
20. Fuel Tank.
21. Upper Engineering Deck Annex. Holds part of secondary power plant and part of Manoeuvre Drive booster.
22. Upper Engineering Deck. Identical to normal A2 Trader. Holds main power plant and Manoeuvre Drive.
23. Upper Engineering Deck annex (P/S). Holds part of Manoeuvre Drive booster.

It should be noted that those areas of the ship routinely seen by non-crew members are very similar to a normal trader. The blocked off area of the cargo bay is for "an auxiliary power plant to enhance ship agility". It happens to be true. Other sensitive areas are in locations previously held by items such as fuel tanks and fuel purifiers and are labelled as such. This is intended to discourage inspection by nose inspectors.

**INDISS** (INformation DISsemination Services) LIC is a news-gathering agency serving most of the territory of Dagudashaag Sector, headquartered on Medurma/ Pact. INDISS maintains branch offices in almost all type-R starport facilities in the sector. The agency has gained (perhaps unfairly) a reputation for accepting too readily the official line on important political and economic matters - in effect, for being a "mouthpiece for the establishment".

However, following the agency's merger with the advertising and news media group Makila-Selwyn-Tobermory in 1113, much of the agency management has been replaced, and INDISS has taken a more dynamic approach to journalism. The increased competition with rival companies such as TNS has resulted more than once in court cases, as each side has accused the other of unethical practices. It would be a rare occurrence for TNS and INDISS journalists to co-operate on a story.

As of 1116, INDISS has diversified its operations quite widely, and now trades in such fields as holographic reference material, and information-handling software. Stock Ownership: MS-Tobermory Holdings LIC, 28X, Fullerton Holdings LIC 24X, Zirunkariish 16X, Hortalez et Cie 10% Viisarikaa family 8%, other Imperial nobility 6%, private ownership 8%.

**INDISS and the Rebellion:** Following the capture by Lucan's forces of the TNS data processing centre on Collette/Gadda in 295-1117. The Office of Internal Security has been using those facilities for the production of propaganda material, in order to further the war effort. For many citizens of Dagudashaag, TNS information dispatches have become highly suspect, and they have turned to other sources of information about the progress of the Rebellion. INDISS has stepped into the breach. Its reporters try their best to reflect the basic neutrality of the Medurmans, and give a dispassionate view of the violent events unfolding around them. Naturally, a great many INDISS branch offices have had to close, and the agency has had to become adept in operating on a covert basis, particularly in the territory occupied by Lucan's Imperium. In a number of cases, INDISS reporters have been cross-trained in military skills by Medurman forces, and have accompanied reconnaissance missions into Lucan's or Dulinor's territory.

Submissions for INDISS news reports are welcome and should be sent to either Signal-GK or Dagudashaag Sector Analyst.

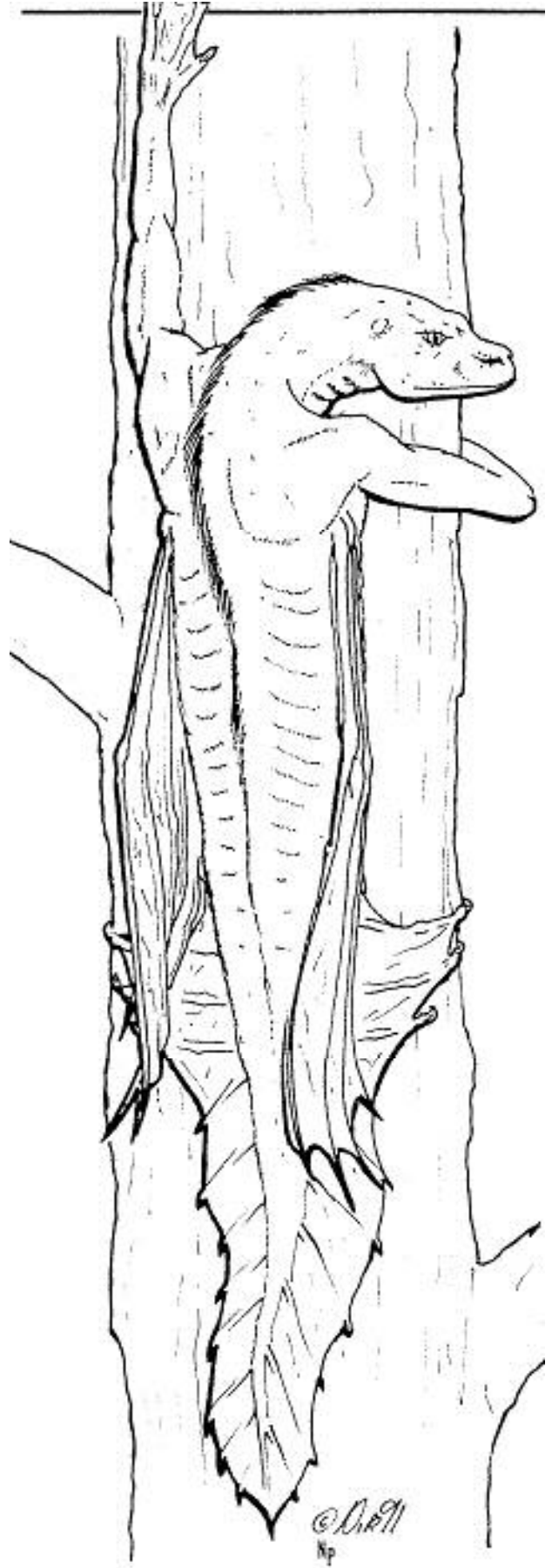
# CONTACT: THE GEEHRTAHE

## PHYSIOLOGY

The Geehrtahes are an alien minor race native to the planet Pr'Geehr (Pact/Dagudashaag 1829 B383435-9 S A (Ni 205lm G3V)). The Geehrtahes are a race of "Tree-dwelling" hunter-gatherers with two-metre long flattened bodies. The skin is covered in a fine hair (the average temperature of Pr'Geehr is  $-9^{\circ}\text{C}$ ). A more notable possession of the Geehrtahes is the thin membrane that stretches between the central two thirds of the body, extended on modified ribs. The membrane when extended allows the individual Geehrtahes to make prolonged glides on the dense air and low gravity environment of the planet. The Geehrtahes only possess two limbs on the anterior portion of the body, each ends in four digits which have retractable claws allowing them to make fine manipulations with their 'hands' and also enables them to cling onto rough surfaces.

The Geehrtahes live on average for 40 seasons (approximately 80 standard years). As they get older Geehrtahes begin to discolour going a dark yellow-brown. This pigmentation is due to the deposition of the breakdown product of a haemoglobin-like molecule. These depositions react with sunlight to give painful stimulation of the nerves in the skin, thus sufferers tend to avoid strong sunlight and live in the darker lower branches of the local trees. As an individual gets older his aging process can be marked by his descent towards the forest floor. The pigments can also make their way into the Geehrtahes brain where there is an insidious progression of neurological disorders. For many Geehrtahes the end comes as a consequence of this disruption of the brain. Very old, unstable individuals often make one last sortie to the top of the highest tree they can find. The intense pain from the photo-reaction with the pigments in the skin and the general mental instability usually results in victims launching themselves into the air to their death. "Tah'Muanallh Geehrtahen" ('the mad yellow one') is the name given to these poor souls. The bodies of these individuals are revered; their bodies are collected from the forest floor and suspended from the highest branches for one local year prior to burial, for individuals who have died by other means the bodies are suspended from branches that matched their status in life (higher the status, the higher the branch) for only ten local days before burial.

The Geehrtahes are omnivores showing an equal liking for flesh, nuts, berries and roots. They culture the Haahgeh tree, a source of a particular favourite fruit and useful fibres. The Geehrtahes also construct rough enclosures for the holding of Ehpra, a deer-like animal which forms a major part of their diet.





## CULTURE

Each female has several consorts - each year the female can have two litters of between two and four 'pups'. There is usually a separate father for each litter, the female selecting a mate on a 'rota' from her marriage group. The males do most of the work rearing the young with the female overseeing their labour. The only exception to this is with young females where they will step in and take control. All males in a 'marriage group' help to rear the pups and contribute towards keeping the family fed, warm, and safe. Males that aren't fathers have been known to have died defending the pups of a co-consort.

The parents of an individual male wishing to join with a female (whether a lone female or an established 'marriage group') set up a meeting of the interested parties. If this goes well then the parents will arrange and perform the 'joining ceremony'. All the stepfathers take part in the ceremony, with each having some important function in the arrangements. Once joined in the ceremony he stays with his female for the rest of his life. The female remains faithful to all those in her marriage group.

The Geehrtahe are presently in the process of rebuilding their society and culture. They have extensive contacts with the scouts and well aware of their existence as part of a larger universe but they remain doggedly determined to advance on their own initiative, intelligence and enthusiasm. They have repeatedly turned down offers of technological assistance. The tech level of the Geehrtahe is early 5. At the time of first contact the tech level hovered just above 1.

The Geehrtahe have an enterprising, progressive culture which at times is so competitive that it borders on the expansionistic. Force, however, is never used in an argument or dispute except in self-defence. The society is fairly cohesive in its views although there is a broad spectrum of opinion on most matters. Despite not wanting interference from the outside universe the Geehrtahe are nevertheless very friendly to offworlders and are never less than polite with any contact situation regardless of race

## BRIEF HISTORY

The population once numbered in the tens of millions at the time of their discovery but the Geehrtahe were almost completely wiped out following contact.

This was due to infection by a harmless, human gut bacterium which had a devastating consequence for the Geehrtahe. The bacterium led to an extremely aggressive skin infection which caused massive necrotic lesions. Subcutaneous invasion of these sites to deeper tissues by secondary, endogenous microbes complicated the disease. Death usually followed within a week of onset of the first (skin) symptoms by massive fluid loss and osmotic shock. Only with the rapid intervention of a scout medical team was the epidemic halted, but not

without disastrous consequences for the Geehrtahe culture. Only now, after centuries of isolation, has the Amber Zone status been lifted and travellers allowed land on the planet's surface (although travellers are restricted to a small region surrounding the starport).

## REFEREEING THE GEEHRTAHE

The Geehrtahe should be used essentially as 'background colour', unusual NPCs in an unusual place. The PCS could come across a Geehrtahe or two as liaison to the IISS, at the Pr'Geehr starport, or some other nearby world.

If players wish to tackle the Geehrtahe as characters the it is suggested that the basic stats used for Vargr be used with modifications:

Dex +1, Edu -1.

Due to their background of living aloft, all Geehrtahe have a natural ability to climb, therefore all climb tasks should be one level of difficulty or increment (or whatever rules system you may be using) lower.

For example in CT, skill bonus should be +2 or +3, in MT and TNE drop the task level by one. In T20 the Geehrtahe should have racial bonus of +4 or +5.

Also, Geehrtahe characters may receive a small bonus on skill checks relating to forests, jungles, trees and wilderness-type survival.

They are quick to learn so award the player character some small free-use skill points bonus on character generation.

Most Geehrtahe found off their homeworld will be Scouts, Information Collectors, Infiltrators and the like. Due to their high dexterity scores and being quick learners they would also make good mechanics, engineers and crafters.

# HIGHPOINT

## REFEREE'S INTRODUCTION

This scenario follows a band of adventurers in their attempt to liberate a valuable cargo from a space station in the Kakhirusar system, in war-torn Pact subsector. The date is assumed to be mid to late 1118, at the height of the fighting around the Ikabi system. The referee should be familiar with the adventure before he plays it.

It is necessary to have a copy of the MegaTraveller rules in order to play. Other useful books include the 'Rebellion Sourcebook' and '101 Vehicles'; other Traveller or MegaTraveller books may prove of value. No localised maps are provided - the referee will have to draw them as necessary.

The adventure is split into eight separate parts. These contain nearly all the information that the referee will need. Each part starts with a 'scene' which can read out to add atmosphere, and is followed by a section entitled 'Action', which covers what the characters can actually do. I have provided a brief explanation of each part of the adventure below.



1. The Characters meet Dervin Asuliade a bureaucrat, who knows the location of a valuable cargo. He hints that he needs some help recovering it. Asuliade knows that when he left the system it was under Ilelish occupation. Note that he left some weeks ago, and that the situation has changed radically since then.
2. The characters arrive in the system only to find that a major space battle is being fought. They are intercepted by some fighters and given the option of surrendering.
3. If they surrender they are taken to the main world and interrogated. They are declared Prisoners of War and sent to an internment camp.
4. While in transit to the camp they are given the opportunity of a last minute escape.
5. If the characters manage to manage to they are forced to run for the starport, the only place that has the facilities to get them offworld. Once there they have the opportunity to 'borrow' a shuttle and get to the orbital station.

6. Once on the station the characters find that they only have a few hours to find Asuliade's cargo, recover their ship, and get out of the system again.
7. This module covers moving around in the station.
8. The Epilogue.

Remember that this adventure is only a guide. The characters are not getting hired by Asuliade, only following up a rumour he has fed them. If they do decide to fly off to Kakhirusar they are doing so of their own volition. If the characters want to do something other than what the adventure covers, let them!

## 1. A Man in Need of Help!

Scene:

Somehow you got talking to the small man in the corner of the bar. Maybe it was because he looked as lost as you, dressed in clothes that had seen better days and sipping a cheap drink. Maybe it was because everyone else in the place only seemed able to talk about the latest reports from the battlefield only a few parsecs away. The man seems to have taken a liking to you, and finally introduces himself as Dervin Asuliade. After another round has been brought, he tells you his story.

### Dervin Asuliade's Story

"Until a few months ago I worked as a shipping clerk in HighPoint Orbital Terminal in the Kakhirusar system, in one of the transit holding areas. Following the death of the Emperor, and the subsequent mobilisation of Dulinor's and Lucan's forces all non essential staff were removed from HighPoint I stayed behind as part of a skeleton crew to maintain the station and deal with the few ships that passed through. Me and the rest of the personnel were finally evacuated before the Third Battle of Kakhirusar, just a few weeks ago.

"Just before the evacuation I took delivery of a consignment of 'strategic materials'. It was a cargo canister containing Lanthanum, bound for Lucan's naval dockyards in the Core. I placed it in safe keeping in one of the cargo storage areas on HighPoint, but was shipped out before I had time to check it into the cargo lists. So no-one but me knows its there.

“Its still sitting there, you know. About a million creds worth of metal, ail nicely wrapped, and with no paperwork. I even have a buyer for the stuff! Do you know what I could do with a million creds? I can get through Highpoint's security, no problem. I just won't get to Kakhirusar. And I don't think I'd want to, not without some good backup”.

#### Action:

Perhaps the characters can help? If they suggest that they may be of some assistance Asuliade greets the idea with enthusiasm, then slips back into misery. No way, he says. It would be a neat trick if it could be done, but it's impossible. Not so soon after a major space battle, and not with Ilelish troops in occupation.

Assuming the characters decide that a little trip to Kakhirusar is in order Asuliade will slowly come round to the idea. He has worked there for years, and knows the place quite well. He was forced to leave shortly before the third major battle in the system took place, but is quite familiar with events prior to that.

Before the battle the starport was occupied by Ilelish troops, but it only had a handful of men guarding it. Reports

indicated that there were still Imperial units fighting on the world, so most troops were being diverted to the surface. Even so, the chances are that all information he knows is out of date already, and is going to be worse than useless by the time the party arrives.

Asuliade points out another problem. Lanthanum is a strategic material, and should the authorities discover some in the adventurer's possession it will probably be confiscated. Although lanthanum is difficult to shift, he does know someone who is willing to take it, and this person has offered Cr 1,000,000 in cash.

#### Travelling to the System

Arrangements for getting to Kakhirusar are up to the characters. If they have their own ship they can use it or, if they desire, they can charter a vessel to get there. There is any number of disreputable merchant captains around the starport who would be more than willing to transport the adventurers - for the right price of course.

## 2. Entering the System.

#### Scene:

After a week in jump your ship emerges into normal space, and at once the sensor panels light up. Passive scans show a number of big neutrino sources, largely concentrated around the inner gas giant, and also reveal

that vessels in the area are using Active EMS. Occasional neutrino surges indicate that spinal weapons are being fired. The comms station is being bombarded with coded signals and spoken messages.

The characters have arrived in-system during the fourth battle of Kakhirusar. The sensors show heavy combat around the inner gas giant and a second, smaller action around its third moon, Kakhirusar. There appear to be at least eighty large vessels involved. The characters can identify the vessels around Kakhirusar as 'Planet' class heavy cruisers, 'SHE' class light cruisers (which seem to have taken a lot of damage) and a large number of 'Guidon' class escort destroyers. The ships fighting around the gas giant are muffled by the planet's background EM Emissions.

The characters are detected by a number of fighters on patrol duty. There is one more fighter than the



characters have armed turrets. If they have no ship mounted weapons there are two fighters. To detect the incoming fighters is a task. The players should determine the difficulty by checking their ships sensors on the design sheet.

#### **To Do A Passive Object or Energy Scan Of The Area:**

(Sensor Difficulty), Sensor Ops or Navig, Edu, (Instant). Referee: If they succeed tell them that they detect a number of small, metallic bodies, emitting neutrinos, travelling at six gee's acceleration, towards them. To positively identify the incoming craft is a task.

#### **To Do A Passive Object or Energy Pinpoint of The Incoming Craft:**

(Sensor Difficulty), Sensor Ops or Navig, Edu, (Instant). Referee: Success will reveal there to be X number of fighters, flying in formation. Each craft has a powerplant in the 180 to 190 Mw range, has a mass of ten standard tons, and carries two beam-laser cannons. They are closing to kill positions.

Once the fighters have closed to within laser range (assuming the characters don't open up on them first) the radio crackles into life and demands that the adventurers surrender their vessel. Unless the characters comply, space combat will occur. The fighters will continue to attack until they are all destroyed or until the characters ship is disabled.

## 3. Captured by Lucan's forces.

#### Introduction:

If the characters are unwilling or unable to see off the fighters, they will be escorted to orbit close to

HighPoint. A shuttle will speed across to them carrying a squad of marines, who will board their vessel, thoroughly search it, and dap all aboard into electronic handcuffs. The marines will remove all weapons and equipment from the characters; they are very thorough, and will find any concealed gear.

After the characters' names and details have been taken (and any necessary paperwork has been completed) they will be herded into the shuttle and taken to the surface of Kakhirusar. Of course, the characters could elect to take out the marines as they board...

Scene:

The marines waste little time in the desolate shuttle bays: apparently there are snipers in some of the communication towers, and your captors are not about to waste any time finding out for sure. You are frogmarched down a wide transit corridor into the warren of passages that lie below the starport. You are escorted through the tunnels to Kakhirus City, close to the starport, and eventually enter a vast chamber full of heavily armed guards and rows of bedraggled Illeish prisoners.

After several hours of intense questioning at the hands of a brutish Ministry of Justice officer you are issued cold weather clothing, a ration pack, and have the handcuffs thoroughly checked. After a lot more waiting around you are taken through yet more corridors and led onto a vast plasticrete plaza, where twenty APCs and their speeder escorts wait. Rows of prisoners stand in long queues: you can even see a few who bear the sunburst of Lucan's Imperium. It is very cold, and the wind howls around you. In the distance you can hear the dull thump of tank-mounted fusion guns firing.

Action:

Although the characters may develop some plans, they are probably doomed to failure. Any attempts to escape will be dealt with harshly by the guards. Even so, they can still try something. But remember that the Imperial forces have a number of Trepida grav tanks in the area, so even if the characters get to a vehicle the chances are they won't go far. There are also a lot of occupation troops in and around the city, and guys in handcuffs are not going to go unnoticed.

#### 4. Captives on Kakhirus.

Introduction:

The characters are to be taken to a holding camp deep in the wild outback of Kakhirusar. Once there they will be interned until they can be shipped to a proper Imperial prisoner of war camp somewhere inside Lucan's territory.

You are herded into the back of an old looking Astrin Grav APC, along with six individuals dressed in Illeish military uniform. A pair of Imperial troopers clad in filthy cold weather gear and carrying SMGs clamber in behind you. A sour looking sergeant eyes you up and down before sealing and locking the door. In the

distance you can hear the hum of the other APCs and speeders as they lift off. Your own vehicle judders slightly as the geemods cut in, and you feel a cold sinking sensation in your stomachs as the craft rises. The driver has to compensate for the strong crosswinds as the APC takes up its proper place in the convoy.

Time passes slowly. The guards stop all attempts at conversation, and the electronic handcuffs you are wearing begin to bite into your wrists. The only sounds you can hear are the hum of the geemods and the howl of the wind. But then there is another sound. At first it sounds like a distant explosion, but then you realise that it is thunder. It seems that the convoy is flying into an electrical storm.

The buffeting of the wind gets worse, and the driver struggles to keep control of the vehicle. He seems to level the craft out, but a second later the whole world goes mad. There is a spectacular shower of sparks from the driver's control panel, and all of the internal lights cut out. You hear a series of soft clicks as the onboard computer triggers the emergency releases on the handcuffs, and then everything spins like a top. Everything stops moving. In the blackness the radio crackles to life: "Backfire Six, this is base. Put out your emergency beacon. Help will arrive in two hours, repeat, two hours". None of the guards seem to realise that your handcuffs are undone.

Action:

The APC has been struck by lightning, and has ditched in the wilds of the planet. The gee-plates and the inertial comps have saved the passengers from serious injury, but without the life support systems everyone will very shortly be suffering from exposure in the freezing atmosphere of Kakhirusar. The driver and the guards, unaware that the handcuffs have released, clamber out of the vehicle to assess the damage and to set up the emergency beacon.

This is the characters' one chance to escape. They must overpower their captors and repair the vehicle before the rescue party arrives. Available weapons include rocks outside the vehicle, and pieces of metal tubing inside (which count as cudgels): the Astrin is unarmed. All six of the Illeish personnel are low ranking NCOs whose main purpose is to soak up losses. They will follow the characters' orders, but have no useful skills. If the characters are careful they can gain surprise.

Once the guards have been overpowered it will be necessary to repair the vehicle. It has taken minor damage to the grav modules and to the starboard hull side, and major damage to the life support systems. Repairing the damage is a task. Because the Astrin is a military vehicle its main components are in easy to replace units, and are readily accessible. It also carries a full toolkit and some basic spare parts.

**To Repair the Damaged Grav Module:**

Routine, Gravities or Electronics, Edu, 10 Mins (Uncertain).

### **To Repair the Damaged Life Support:**

Difficult, Mechanical, Edu, 5 Mins (Uncertain).

Referee: Each task can be tried by different characters at the same time. No more than two, characters can combine their SKILLS on any task. NO TRUTH indicates that the component cannot be fixed. SOME TRUTH indicates that the component is jury rigged and will operate, but all rolls to drive the Astrin increase by one and become hazardous. TOTAL TRUTH indicates that the component is fixed.

If the characters succeed in repairing the vehicle they are able to flee from the crash site in the Astrin and hide somewhere in the Outback. If the task takes too long, or if the characters fail the task, they had better consider running for cover amid the canyons. After about two hours (modify it for tension) a pair of Astrins accompanied by a military speeder turns up loaded with Imperials. Subsequent events are up to the referee.

Note that unless the life support is fixed (or if the characters decide to run to the hills) they will suffer 1 D6 hits randomly applied against their Str, Dex or End per half hour due to exposure. This will continue until they get to somewhere warm. See page 75 of the Players Manual for further information.

## **5. Escape!**

Introduction:

Having escaped from the 'rescue party', the characters have little choice but to head back towards Kakhirus City and try to get off the world. On the way they pick up a large amount of radio traffic, mostly in code. Apparently a unit of Illeish troops, who have been in hiding in the city, are attacking the starport area in a desperate attempt to capture a ship and get offworld. Because of the excitement no-one takes any notice of a lone Astrin running in low from the desert. The characters can make it into the city without incident.

Scene:

Staying at NOE, and skipping in among the ruined buildings, you just manage to avoid contact with military units. Tile shattered domes and towers zip past as you skim over the starport perimeter fence. To your disbelief your comms and sensors indicate that there are only two operating ships in the whole of the facility. One appears to be a 10,000 Ton Guidon class escort destroyer, while the other is the same shuttle that brought you down to the surface. On the far side of the port you can see the burning wreckage of Imperial transports, apparently caught by ground fire.

Action:

The destroyer normally carries a crew of over a hundred, and has sufficient firepower to devastate the whole of Kakhirus City. However, the Astrin's sensors indicate that it has suffered severe external damage, and all of the primary weapons are powered down. On the other hand, the shuttle is in an accessible bay and is unlikely to have more than a few guards.

Assuming that the characters decide that the shuttle provides the best avenue of escape, there seem to be two approaches to capturing it. The characters could try to bluff their way in. On the one hand there is a great deal of confusion, and a bold attempt could easily work. On the other the reports seem to indicate that the Illeish troops fighting in the city are heading for the starport. It may be more practical to go in with guns blazing.

### **To Bluff Past the Nervous Shuttle Guards:**

Difficult, Persuasion, Liaison, Int, (Uncertain, Unskilled OK).

Referee: Allow a favourable DM if the characters have had the foresight to liberate some officious looting ID, some uniforms, or the like. If the characters specifically state that they are from the Ministry of Justice the task becomes Routine. NO TRUTH indicates that the guards saw through the bluff straight away and attempt to arrest the characters. SOME TRUTH indicates that the guards were unsure. Rather than calling the starport officer they tell the characters to get some proper ID. TOTAL TRUTH indicates that the guards are convinced by the story and hand the shuttle over to the characters.

Once the characters have gained control of the shuttle they are able to power it up and fly it to Highpoint with few problems. Starport Control is presently off line, and no-one really expects a shuttle to lift off from a battlefield with its transponders and radio making it a nice juicy target. There is another windfall in the shuttle: all of their equipment (except for weaponry) is still in the locker.

## **6. Highpoint Orbital Terminal.**

Introduction:

This section assumes that the characters have either escaped from the surface of Kakhirusar or have triumphed in a space battle with the Imperial fighters, because there is combat both on the world and around the gas giant a ship that is running without its transponders will not draw too much attention.

Scene:

Highpoint Terminal hangs against the blue, cloud covered disc of Kakhirusar. From a distance the vast station looks barely marked, but as you net closer you are able to make out tile rends where internal explosions have torn chunks from the surface. Your imago enhancement gear brings the station into sharp focus: you can see a pair of damaged Planet class Heavy Cruisers and a Guidon class Escort Destroyer tethered to the docking arm. There are only a few lights on, mostly around the landing bays and the engineering section.

Action:

Highpoint's control centres are not functioning, and consequently no landing information is being fed to the character's craft. However, their ship has a system data program, which feeds the pilot a lot of the information he needs. Despite this, landing the ship is still a task.

**To Land a Ship 'Blind' on Highpoint:**  
Routine, Pilot or Ships Boat, Edu.

Once the ship is safely berthed the characters find that they have touched down in hangar bay 117 sub B. There are flashing orange lights overhead, and a soft female voice is repeating a message. "Extreme Danger. Abandon station. Extreme danger. Abandon station". Prominently displayed on viewscreens is a message stating that the thruster units are out and that the station is failing towards the planet. A small countdown indicates that the characters have roughly four hours before Highpoint enters Kakhirusar's atmosphere and bums up.

There are no guards anywhere, although the bays do have lights and power. Through the bay airlocks are the maintenance areas. These are unguarded, and are equipped with computer terminals which could contain useful information. If this seems like a good idea finding information is a task.

**To Scan The Computer Terminals For Info:**

Routine, Computer, Edu, 30 Sees, (Uncertain, Safe).

Referee: NO TRUTH indicates that the characters find some cargo manifests and a list of routine departures. SOME TRUTH indicates that the characters manage to call up a map of Highpoint one, along with some useful circuit diagrams and the like. TOTAL TRUTH indicates that they find the same as some truth, but it also marks the positions of personnel presently on the station. Most are in engineering.

If the characters arrived on Highpoint using a requisitioned shuttle, or if their own ship is incapable of jumping, they may wish to find out if there are any other jump capable vessels on board. Doing so is a task.

**To Scan The Computer Terminals To Find Out About Ships:**

Routine, Computer, Edu, 30 Secs, (Safe).

Referee: There are a number of ships on the station: two 'Planet' class heavy cruisers and a 'Guidon' class escort destroyer are tethered to the docking arm. and there are two type 'S' scoutships in hangar bay 113 sub F, about four floors up from where the characters presently are. If their own vessel was captured it will be with the scoutships. All of the ships have been refuelled and are ready to leave.

If the characters have arrived at Highpoint in their own ship they will probably need to refuel it. Normally refuelling is carried out slowly and carefully, and takes hours. The characters can rush loading fuel, skipping the crosschecks and tests that are generally required. Doing so is a task.

**To quickly refuel their Ship at Highpoint:**

Routine, Engineer or Mech, Dex, 2 Mins, (Fateful).

Referee: if the characters fail the task they are sprayed with liquid hydrogen. The mishap table indicates the severity of their injuries.

## 7. Into the Depths.

Introduction:

When the characters have done fiddling around in the maintenance bays they can make their way off to the transit holding area where Ashuliade's goods are being stored. It is about six floors down, not far above the engineering areas where the few remaining station personnel are located. Getting there is a task: the party only makes one dice roll: the result is how long it takes.

**To work their way through Highpoint Station.**

Routine, (average determination), 5 Mins, (Uncertain).

Referee: TOTAL TRUTH indicates that the characters reach their destination with little or no problems. SOME TRUTH indicates that the characters reach their destination but encounter some Imperial troops on the way. Subsequent events are up to the Referee. NO TRUTH indicates that the characters become totally lost; they are allowed as many free retries as they need. This task largely represents the time it takes to work through the station.

Scene:

Many of the corridors you work your way through are dark and have no grav plates. Others are damaged, or partially blocked with wreckage. At least once you have had to backtrack because of sealed blast doors. If it wasn't for Ashuliade you would have been totally lost. Eventually you clamber down a rung ladder, and enter a huge area dimly lit by red emergency lights. The gee plates are on here, which at least makes it a little easier to walk around.

Without warning there is a violent shaking, accompanied by loud rattling and creaking noises. It seems that the countdown might have been a little optimistic: the station is skimming the outer atmosphere of Kakhirusar. After what seem like hours everything calms down, and you finally begin breathing again.

Action:

The cargo is stored in the secure rooms on the far side of the transit holding area. Access is through a blast door that can only be opened by a retina scan. Only Ashuliade has security clearance to open the door, although judging by the marks on the panel someone else has tried to. Inside is a small, plain room with a wall-mounted computer console. Sitting in the middle is a cargo sled holding a small cargo module (which has a mass of about three kiloliters, but weighs in the region of two tons). This is Ashuliade's cargo.

Once the cargo has been recovered the characters will probably express a desire to leave the station in a hurry. The sled has a top speed of about ten km/h, which makes the return journey somewhat slower.

**To work their way back through Highpoint Station.**

Routine, (average determination), 10 Mins, (Uncertain).

Referee: TOTAL TRUTH indicates that the characters reach their destination with little or no problems. SOME TRUTH indicates that the characters reach their destination but encounter some Imperial troops on the

way. Subsequent events are up to the Referee. NO TRUTH indicates that the characters become totally lost; they are allowed as many free retries as they need. A really mean referee would inflict a some truth result, and play out a nail biting climax to the adventure. Will the characters think to check out the maps of the station on the nearby computer terminal? Can they sneak up on the guard? Does the station start shaking again just as they are doing so? Do they have to retrace their route after they find that some blast doors have sealed across a main corridor. Do they encounter more guards as they enter the hangar decks?

Eventually the characters should reach the bay where their ship is. It is up to the referee how difficult entering their vessel is, but this section should be played towards a spectacular finale. Once their ship is powered up they can fly it out and away from Kakhirusar.

## 8. And Away!

Scene:

A few minutes after your ship clears the hangar doors the station enters the upper atmosphere of Kakhirusar and begins to burn up. The docking arm, still with a Planet class cruiser attached, bends and twists slowly, like a candle too close to a fire. A series of explosions rip through the OQC facilities and the engineering decks and almost gracefully Highpoint Terminal begins to disintegrate. The massive structure bums and glows as it spirals down towards the surface of the planet, before suddenly erupting into an incandescent, expanding ball of light. You engage the jump drive and a few minutes later you are in hyperspace.

## Epilogue

After arriving back in the destination system Asuliade sets about disposing of the shipment He has managed to find a good friend of his who has contacts within Lucan's Ministry of Defense. The Ministry are not noted for their trustworthiness. If this scenario is being played as a one off adventure they pay up, and everyone goes off happy, each with a suitcase full of money.

If this adventure is being used as part of an ongoing campaign perhaps the Ministry lives up to its old reputation, and tries to double-cross the characters. There is also the chance that a third party will have heard about the shipment and will express an 'interest' in it. The forces under Sector Duchess Karyn Viisarikaa could certainly use some refined lanthanum, and the Red Eagles would not let it go amiss...

Besides, who wants such a valuable lot of goodies to get into Lucan's hands?

## PREGENERATED CHARACTERS

A list of pregenerated characters is provided below. They should be fed and watered at regular intervals, and should not be exposed to extremes of heat, tight, or player characters!

The Patron - Dervin Asuliade, Bureaucrat.  
UPP 539988, Age 32, 3.5 Terms, Rank: Manager, Liferforce 17, Hits 3/3, Determination 18.  
Admin 2, Liaison 2, Legal 2, Handguns 1, Computer 1, Gray Vehicles 1, Wheeled Vehicles 1, JoT 1.  
Dervin Asuliade is a minor bureaucrat who has spent most of his career working in the cargo offices of starports. His last position was as a clerk in one of the main transit holding areas on Highpoint Orbital Terminal in the Kakhirusar system

Imperial Marines:

Stats for Imperial marines are provided should the characters find themselves getting involved in combat. The troops in the Kakhirusar system are generally cold, tired and in need of a wash and a good meal. They have been drafted into Lucan's forces and lack morale. Reuse these characters as often as is required.

Typical Marine Officer:

UPP 778986, Age 25, 3.25 Terms, Rank: Lieutenant, Liferforce 22, Hits 3/5, Determination 17.  
Large Blades 1, Handguns 1, Combat Rifleman 1, Tactics 1, Leader 1, Vacc Suit 1, Computer 0, Grav Vehicles 0.

Typical Marine Sergeant:

UPP 85B664, Age 30, 3 Terms, Liferforce 24, Hits 4/5, Determination 17.  
Combat Rifleman 2, Large Blades 1, Brawling 1, Communications 1, Tactics 1, Leader 1, Grav Vehicles 0, Computer 0, Vacc Suit 0.

Typical Marine Trooper #1:

UPP A67564, Age 22, 1 Term. Liferforce 23, Hits 3/5, Determination 12.  
Combat Rifleman 1, Large Blades 1, Brawling 1, Grav Vehicles 1, Computer 0, Vacc Suit 0.

Typical Marine Trooper #2:

UPP 8A5744, Age 13, 1.25 Terms. Liferforce 23, Hits 3/5, Determination 12.  
Combat Rifleman 1, Heavy Weapons 1, Large Blades 1, Computer 0, Grav Vehicles 0, Vacc Suit 0.

All marines encountered on the surface of Kakhirusar carry Gauss Rifles. They wear filthy cold weather clothing and have both helmets and flak jackets. Their helmets are fitted with Distant range communicators.

On Highpoint Terminal all marines carry Gauss Rifles. They wear TL12 Vacc Suits, which are fitted with distant range communicators. The vacc suits are fitted with model A PLSS units.

## KAKHIRUSAR SYSTEM

Kakhirusar 2028 A664378 B N Lo NIn 903 Im M4 V

Primary Star. Name: Gikshushii, Spectral Class: M4 V, Stellar Mass: 0.244 Std, Stellar Radii: 0.241 Std, Stellar Luminosity: 0.322 Std. The star is a stable red main sequence that displays no uncharacteristic behaviour.

Planetary System. Four major bodies, including three gas giant planets. No planetoid belts. Eight major satellites. Kakhirusar is designated the main world and orbits the large gas giant Maremisha at 1,532 million kilometres.

(I) Maremisha. Large Gas Giant orbiting Gikshushii at 31.777 million kilometres. Orbital Period: 66 days, 3 hours, 16 minutes. Rotational Period: 38 hours, 11 minutes. Axial Tilt: 37 Degrees 47' 18". Gas Giant Diameter: 175,400 kilometres. Density: 0.201 Std, Mass: 517.196 Std, Gravity measured at 1000 kilometres into the atmosphere: 2.755 Gee's Std. Atmosphere rated as Massive, Exotic, Composition: 80% Hydrogen, 19% Helium, IX Ammonia, Methane, and other gases. Chemical compounds and weather patterns stain the atmosphere a dull, banded green.

(Ib) Kakhirusar. Second satellite of the Large Gas Giant Maremisha, which it orbits at 1.523 million kilometres. Orbital period: 9 days, 5 hours, 53 minutes. Rotational Period: 236 hours. 46 minutes. Axial Tilt: 35° 11' 56". Diameter: 10,367 kilometres, Density: 1.66 Std. Mass: 0.882 Std. Surface Gravity: 1.345 g Std. Atmosphere rated as Standard, Untainted, Surface Pressure: 1.079 Atm Std, Composition: Nitrogen 77%, Oxygen 22%, Argon, Xenon, Water Vapour and Other Trace Gases 1%. Hydrographic Coverage: 38%. Composition: Water Ice, mainly concentrated at the poles. Average Surface Temperature: -34 Degrees C, Maximum Equatorial Temperature: +2 Degrees C. Minimum Equatorial Temperature: -70 Degrees C. Primitive native life is present on the world.

### Details

Kakhirusar is extremely rich in all manner of metals, making it a very valuable resource for the Industrial systems in the Argi and Pact subsectors. As far as can be established there has been some kind of mining activity on the world ever since the days of the First Imperium. The naval base was established in 82, during the Pacification Campaigns, to secure the world's resources to the expanding Third Imperium.

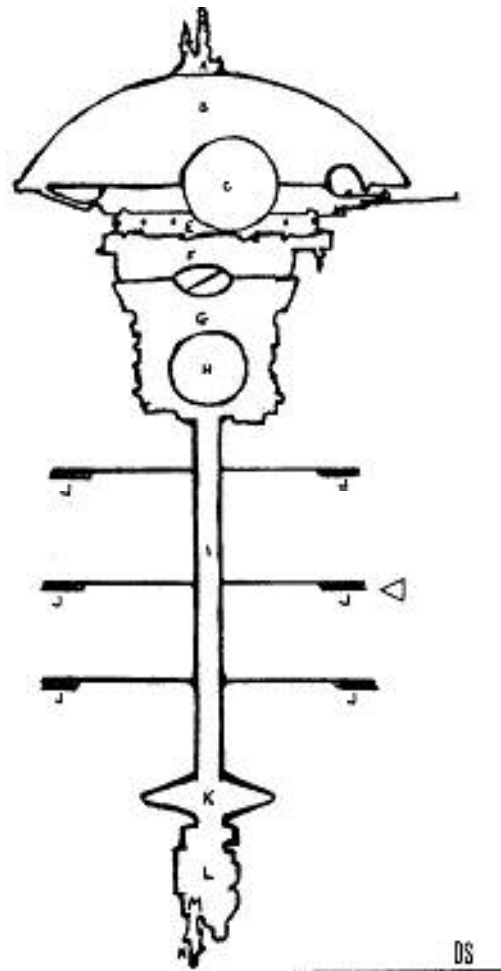
The planet presently supports a population of approximately 9,200 individuals, all Humans of Imperial descent. Most are there because the mining companies and the Navy are, although a few hardy souls operate as independent miners. The Imperial naval base commander acts as governor of the world; the government duties are carried out by the companies that operate mines on Kakhirusar, although their views on the 'correct' way to administer the affairs of the small populace vary considerably.



## HIGHPOINT ORBITAL TERMINAL

Highpoint is a 'Gerukhiish' Class orbital terminal, designed as a passenger and cargo facility. The original design was put forward in the 600s, and had been updated periodically ever since. Highpoint was constructed from prefabricated parts in the late 900s, when Kakhirusar's Starport was upgraded from class B to class A.

'Gerukhiish' Class Orbital Starport TL 13.  
Orbital Starport, TL 13, MCr.50,234.075  
Hull: 630,000/1,575,000, Disp: 700,000. Config = 6 USL, Armour = 40 F,  
Unloaded: 1,897,166.8 Tonnes, Loaded = 5,116,468.8 Tonnes.  
Power: 5,900/11,800, Fusion = 796,500 Mw, Duration 30/90. Loco: 180,012,400,  
Manoeuvre: 0.1G (Orbital Positioning Only).  
Comm: 10x Radio Comms (System), 60x Laser Comms (System), 30x Maser Comms (System). Sensors: 10x PassiveEMS (Interstellar), 10x ActiveEMS (FarOrb), 20x Densitometers HiPe/100m, 20x Neutrino = 100 Kw.  
ActObjScan = Rout, ActObjPin = Rout, PasObjScan = Diff, PasObjPin = Diff, PasEngScan = Simp, PasEngPin = Diff.  
Off: None.  
Def: DefDM +5.  
Control: Computer = 7/flb x8, Panels = Holographic Linked x70000, Special = Heads-Up Holodisplays x 1000, Large Holodisplays x20, Electronic Circuit Protection, Environ - Basic Env, Basic LS, Extended LS, Grav Plates, Inertial Comps.  
Accom: Crew = 675 (Bridge = 24, Engineering = 93, Maintenance = 691, Command = 34, Stewards = 423, Medical = 10), Staterooms = 6,000, Low Berths = 2,000.  
Other: Cargo = 2,713,500 Kl, Fuel = Internal 318,600 M (23,600 Tonnes), Available 4,060,000 Kl (300,000 Tonnes), ObjSize = Large, EM Emission Level = Strong.



### Key to HighPoint

- A. Control Centre
- B. Passenger Dome - Accommodation and Recreation
- C. Refuelling Facility
- D. Passenger Shuttle Bays
- E. Thruster Rings
- F. Hangar Bays
- G. Engineering and Repair Section
- H. Power Plant
- I. Transportation Chute
- J. Docking Arm(s)
- K. Orbital Quarantine Control (OQC) Facilities
- L. Crew's Quarters
- M. Communications
- N. Maser Communication Tower

# PORT OF CALL: DASHI

DASHI 1723 C15098B-E HI PO DE 404 IMP M2 V

PRIMARY: Hemen. Spectral class M2 V, mass 0.426, luminosity 0.386.

DASHI: Mean orbital radius 0.20 AU, Period 111.9 Std Days, Diameter 1,120 Km. Mass 0.003 terra. Molten core, density 1.35. Mean surface gravity 0.19g. Rotation period 35h 13m 10s. Axial inclination 17°01'15" Energy absorption 0.90.

Surface atmospheric pressure 0.48. Composition oxygen-nitrogen mix. Hydrographic percentage 0.1%. Mean surface temperature 32.07°C. Native life - amino acids, bacteria and algae present. Total system Population 4,540,000,000.

Satellites: One; Splinter, orbit 17, 16km.

**Primary cities:** No orbital ports. Ground: Shagukaar [Naasirka] 830,000,000 Corporate Starport Facilities only (CSF), Kadaka [Makhidkarun] 750,000,000 (CSF), Lantau [Delgado] 608,000,000 (CSF), Ki Phlaem [Independent] 702,000,000 Starport C, Hei ling [Sternmetal] 503,500,000 Spaceport F, Clearwater [Instellararms] 401,500,000 Starport C, Junk [Ling -Standard Products] 311,000,000 Spaceport F, Cleops [SuSAG], 230,000,000 (CSF)/Spaceport F, T'suen [GTL], 104,000,000 No port, Shek-Chu [Independents] 40,000,000, Shahtin 33,000,000, Xuen Tu 20,000,000. 11,000,000 classified as without city allegiance.

**World Government** is a Civil Service Bureaucracy paid for by the seven companies/cities known as the Combine. Law enforcement is primarily related to acts of theft or criminal damage and varies according to location. The law is enforced by private security paid for by the various corporations.

**Population Breakdown:** 77% Humaniti, mixed, Eurasian. 12% Humaniti, Vilani. 6% Humaniti, mixed. Medurman. 4% Aslani. 1% S'mrii.

**Social Outlook:** Conservative, indifferent, competitive, peaceful, harmonious, friendly.

**Legal Profile:** B-A7A46.

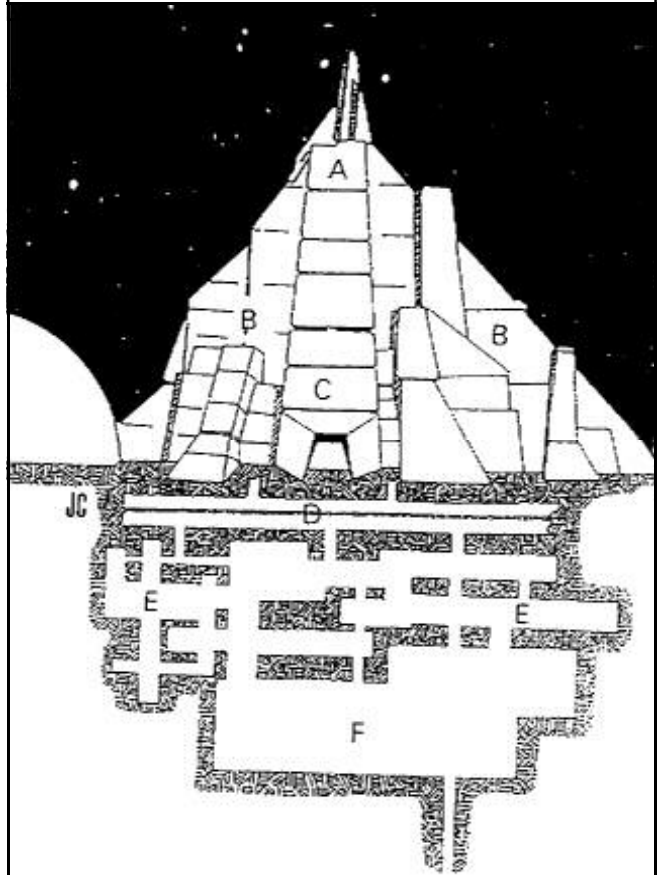
**Technology Profile:** ED-EBBBE-E0EB-EB-F.

## HISTORY

Due to its size and lack of apparent resources the planet was initially named Shudu and then ignored throughout the first and Second Imperium. It was eventually colonised as a frontier post during the Medurman Pact and at that time a discovery of fine platinum and gold caused a minor rush. Due to the nature of the planet and the need to import alt water, in the form of ice from the rings of Kaltra, only the traders got rich. It was they who built the first pyramid cities and began building electronic manufacturing sites on planet. Several

## Pyramid City

- A. Apex City.
- B. Museums. Corpse apartments and Parks
- C. Industrial Zone and Hydroponics
- D. Transport Section - Walkways and Mono-Rail lint.
- E. Warren. Living quarters for Tekhno's and Nulskil's
- F. The Maze



## SYSTEM-DATA

Hemen M2 V

- DASHI C15098B-E Hi Po De  
Splinter YS00100-D
- KaltraSmall GG  
Necros FS0056B-D  
Dalín HS00300-D
- Bellatrix Large GG  
Angros Y630000-0  
Debendra Y610000-0  
Vestri Y430000-0  
Koshi CS0036A-E Re
- Aprisal Small GG
- Avende Small GG

Megacorporations bought in and gradually absorbed the original companies. The pure silicon desert, dry climate and ready supply of pure metals made it an ideal manufacturing site and within a short period of time seven companies had virtually total control of the planet. The Large Eurasian population was imported from Argi and Sapphyre subsectors to act as cheap labour. Within 100 years Shudu had become a major force in the domestic electronics market making cheap tri-vees, holorecorders etc as well as a major exporter of electrical components. In 485 Shudu entered the main political arena when Emperor Cleon IV elected Himuu Asaria as Sector Duke of Dagudashaag and granted him a free hand to "deal with" the deposed Duke Tarek Viisarikaa who had refused to accept his succession to the throne. He unleashed Admiral Jenkins who ordered the nuclear destruction of Sennii city in the mistaken belief that the deposed duke was sheltering there. Over 32,000,000 died as a result. The city was totally destroyed. Reduced to a plain of glass. As a reminder of this terrible tragedy the planet was renamed Dashi (Japanese: Great Death). In 1117 the planet, under the guidance of Instellarms, geared up to produce electronic military equipment, primarily for Medurman forces.

## STARPORT PROCEDURE

Dashi is primarily a production site though it has a fairly large tourist trade made up of people who visit in order to enjoy its liberal social mores and cheap electronics. Only one starport, Ki Phlaem, is not company owned and offers docking facilities to independent traders and passenger transport.

**Landing Pattern:** Ships arriving in system are contacted with regard to allegiance and required facilities. Corporate shipping is handled by the company ports, once the ship enters High orbit, with overall co-ordination being handled by an independent body. The Combine Close Orbit Administration (CCOA). Private ships should note that priority is always given to corporate shipping. (Corporate landing procedure is outside the scope of this guide and therefore only the procedure relating to unaligned shipping is given.) Once a window has been allocated, the ship may land only at Ki Phlaem Port. Wherever possible ships will be requested to land at one of the runways that radiate out from the port. This is as much to save on fuel as to prevent overuse of the limited resources. Once landed the ship should receive clearance within 20 minutes of arrival. The party will normally consist of the Port Warden, Port Engineer and a health officer. Customs and immigration are handled by each city separately and independently. A successful application to enter a specific megacorporation city requires an identichip to be embedded in the left palm for each city to be visited. The identichip remains dormant for a period of 15 days. At the end of this period, the visitor is expected to reapply for permission to Stag. On the 16th day the chip activates a beacon which enables the corporate police to track down the offender.

**Starport facilities:** Only Ki Phlaem Port has extrality. Like all cities on Dashi, life is cheap and all vices are freely indulged - for a price. Each city and corporation has their own private port facilities. Ki Phlaem Port has 35 berths but relies mainly on runways for take-off and landing. Each runway has a hard shoulder on which starships may be berthed at a lower cost but, since all such ships are exposed to the elements and lack external security, this can prove to be more expensive in the long term. Ki Phlaem port claims to be able to accommodate a further 50 ships in this way. Traffic in the system is currently at 150% but only 25% of traffic is heading for Ki Phlaem. This means that 60% of the available berthing is in constant use. Starship construction and repairs are available to Tech 12 capability. There are limited independent Search and Rescue facilities in system although many of the corporations have excellent salvage facilities which are available for hire. INDISS has rated Ki Phlaem a 1.8 star rating with the system as a whole receiving 2. All other amenities are available for a price. There is no unrefined fuel on planet.

**Port Costs:** Refined Fuel Cr.750. Berthing Costs Cr.300 for the first 6 days, Cr.200 per additional day. Hard shoulder berthing is Cr.100 for the first 6 days, extended visits require hiring a berth or moving the ship out to the desert. Warehousing Costs Cr.10 per tonne per week. Security Costs Cr.20 per day. Water Tax Cr.20 per 4 litres per day. Additional water allocations can be bought. City Taxes vary, all are payable on entry. Shuttle fees - charter only. Transport costs vary. Transport to Ki Phlaem pyramid from the port is generally by underground monorail link which costs Cr.5 per person. Air-conditioned grav-limousines offer a night and day charter service and costs about Cr.280 per vehicle (each holds six passengers in extreme comfort). About 800 metres from the port is the entrance to the Do Muang automated walkway which is free but since it is often crowded, this is only recommended for visitors with light luggage.

**Regulations:** Within a pyramid city all grav vehicles are prohibited. As with most worlds Dashi prohibits visitors bringing in illicit drugs, explicit pornography or food stuffs. This is not due to any morality but rather to prevent competition with their own services. Practically any drug or vice may be purchased openly on the corridors of Ki Phlaem. Grav vehicles cannot be imported. Pet animals can usually be cleared through customs on arrival though veterinary vaccination certificates are necessary. Currency Visitors are allowed to bring in any amount of Imperial credits for personal use. No-one can take off-planet any Dashian Credit or currency (known locally as Bai-ht). Each of the major megacorporations issues their own credit cards and chits which bear the company's colour and holomarkings. Only one credit facility can be obtained at any one time and this must be repaid in full prior to departure. Dashi still uses coins among the poorer people and these must be cashed in prior to departure.

**Languages:** Most inhabitants are capable of speaking Galanglic. In addition, many of the kin use Vilani while

the large Nullskil population use a perverse variant of Thai which includes adopted words from Vilani, Chinese, Malayan...

**Portside Facilities:** Ki Phlaem boasts a Makhiir-Hilton and TAS facilities. Various tourist hotels have sprung up round the city, most of which rate a minimum of 2 star comfort. Most independent traders however, stay either at The Bar with No Name on Dustbowl Street or at MacKhan's in the Phya Thai district. Security in all other cities is provided by the appropriate Corporate Police while Ki Phlaem is policed by a conglomeration of the various forces working together. It is highly recommended that all visitors carry IDEX and have paid their water tax in advance. Food varies dramatically according to price. All cities have their own hydroponic facilities but most of the Nullskil are forced to survive on skimmed algae from the desert floor. Food is generally expensive but excellent, with Vilani and Thai food the most common. No alcohol is produced on-planet and this is reflected in the cost. Food costs between Cr.25 - Cr.50 a meal and alcohol Cr.30 per glass. General transport between the various cities is handled by an underground mono-rail link which charges about Cr.1 per kilometre travelled. In addition, the sub-surface level is fitted with automated walkways which increase in speed the closer to the centre lane you get. Walkways are free, but frequently packed and are common hunting grounds for pick pockets. Within the pyramid themselves travel is by sudan chair (average fare is about Cr.10 per kilometre but make sure you agree on a price before entering one), turbo lift between levels and automated walkways. Make sure you carry your IDEX when exploring the surface levels of any city as police harassment is quite common. Below the surface travel is mainly by foot, Sam-lor (pedicabs), or Taichi - a motorised skateboard onto which a single seat carriage has been built.

## A VISITOR'S GUIDE IN DASHI

**Ecology:** Dashi, the planet of Glass pyramids. Every building on Dashi is formed from the silicon desert, either as fused silica blocks or as screens of brilliantly coloured glass panels. The entire population reside either in the pyramids or in the hollowed-out warrens that lie beneath. There are no independent dwellings. These massive pyramids of fused multicoloured glass tower up to a height of 15km from the ground and burrow down a further 20km under the surface. Despite this, living space is extremely limited. In the warrens, entire extended families live in a single room 10m by 10m. Although classed as a desert planet the entire surface is covered in metre-high layers of Dashi algae, a blue-green plant which has been genetically altered to convert ultra-violet rays into oxygen. As a side product, the algae can be milked to produce insulin. This alga is harvested and mixed with essential proteins to provide a basic diet for Dashi's millions. The planet itself is relatively flat with no mountains over 1km and is almost entirely devoid of water. What little is present, can only be found deep underground. Violent and intense storms plague the desert tearing through the algae

covering and releasing the particles of silica and glass which can rip through organics in seconds and strip metal in minutes. These storms occur on an extremely frequent basis. The algae will regrow in less than a day repairing any damage done by storms or harvesting.

**Population:** Most are of Asiatic extraction, brown skin, small and slim with dark hair and brown eyes. Only amongst the Kin or Corpse classes may white Dashiian's, descended from Vilani and Solomani families, be found. Most of the poorer people are dehydrated since they generally exist on shared water rations while the richer people are considered "water-fat" by the masses.

**Culture:** A planet built on credit... Dashi is a small planet with a massive population. Most of the people work in the factories assembling electrical components. This may appear a dated form of manufacture but most Dashiian's receive an extremely low wage making it highly cost-effective. In today's market, items labelled "Hand Assembled" can carry a higher price tag. Couple the low wages and expensive living costs with a massive standing population willing to work just to survive, and you have the reason why so many are willing to accept the Corporation's easy credit terms to supply not so much the luxuries as the necessities of life. By allowing the people easy access to credit whenever they want it, while granting themselves the power under law to reclaim their money by any means necessary, the companies have created the ultimate corporate world. The population can be divided into several distinct classes according to their employment and credit rating:

**Kin** - Those who are sufficiently rich to not require any credit at all. These are generally members of the corporation upper echelons. They live above ground in the luxury garden apartments at the apex of the pyramids and have their every whim pandered to.

**Sararima (Corpses)** - Well-paid employee's who have all their basic expenses paid for by their corporations. Their homes, food, water, taxes and other living expenses are paid for. They too reside in the upper reaches of the city and are responsible for the efficient running of the Corporation's factories.

**Tekhno's-** Employee's who were in receipt of an educational contract as children and are now serving out a 20 year indenture. [1] Their contracts will generally grant them accommodation, water tax, and food in addition to a basic living wage. They reside interspersed with the factory sectors located around the ground level.

**Nullskils** - The masses, the unemployed and independently employed. No corporation looks out for them and they survive by accepting temporary contracts of employment, working for the "entertainment" industry or by breeding. [2] Despite the shortage of facilities there is no population control practiced.

**Unbonded** - Those who are incapable of working, criminals or are unable to repay their credit are classed as Unbonded. Their credit repayments are passed on to

their next of kin to repay and they are refused At credit facilities. This means that the person is refused access to water, food and accommodation. They must live as best they can outside the cities. Most die. [3]

Dashi is primarily a Buddhist world. However, it has very high religious tolerances and it welcomes the practice of any other religion. Hence a Buddhist temple and a Brethren Tabernacle on the same corridor is not an uncommon sight. The ceaseless pursuit of Sanuk guarantees a plenitude of festivals, fairs, sports and similar pleasures as well as a number of more solemn religious ceremonies. Most occur during the cool season.

Psychology Dashian's are considered by most off-worlders to be extremely self-centred and cruel. Few parents retain any real family tics to their children beyond the age of five and many appear to consider their children as little more than a marketable commodity. While this is an over simplistic vision, it is unfortunately reasonably accurate. Debt and the consequences of, non payment have made the people this way. They have to be in order to survive. The Nullskills, in particular, appear to have found some comfort in their many customs and traditions. These are the major focus of their lives, their reason for survival, not just of the individual, but of the family. Despite this the Dashian is far too genial and easygoing to expect a *farang* ("foreigner") to observe all their ways.

Some of the more common customs are; Dashian's do not shake hands. The customary greeting is the Wai, with the hands raised as in prayer. Traditionally the higher the hands arc held the more respectful is the greeting. Dashians are extremely neat in their appearance and even in the warrens it is rare to see anyone who is really dirty or unkempt. Sandbathing at least twice a day is practiced by those who cannot afford water showers. To say someone is Mai rieb-roi (not neat) is almost as serious as saying that he is Mai suparb (not polite). It is common to see two men walking along the street holding hands - a sign incidentally of simple friendship; nothing else - but very rare to see a man and woman doing it. Despite the profusion of sexual acts carried out in public, actual displays of intimate affection are frowned upon.

Three Dashian expressions sum up the Dashian attitude: Mai pen rai, pai-tio and sanuk. Mai pen rai is generally translated as "never mind", but is actually a state of mind as well as a specific reaction to a situation. It appears to be an extension of the Buddhist philosophy - a shrugging off of the unimportant, the merely transient. To visitors it can be an exasperating attitude, particularly when applied to something they consider "important". It is an essential element in the relaxed attitude of Dashi - the reluctance to get overexcited about things particularly things you can do nothing about. Mai pen rai is the tendency to accept difficulties casually, the preference for laughter over tears. Pai-tio means to stroll, to wander about with no particular aim, to see what's up. Dashian's need people around. they stroll to watch people and to observe. Pai-tio is a major activity and millions wander around watching each

other and gaining great enjoyment from the chaos around them. Sanuk means "fun" but it has a greater meaning among the Dashian's - Their love of fun, of joie de vivre, is deep-rooted and irrepressible and pervades every aspect of their daily existence. Everything in life is automatically divided into a category of sanuk or mai sanuk (never fun). Going poi-tio, viewing a kabbadi game, or visiting the maze are all considered sanuk. Work because it supplies the "luxuries" of life despite its seriousness is classed as mai sanuk ta ruu, "not fun but life"... The Dashian fondness for sanuk does not indicate a frivolous mentality or a refusal to face up to the less palatable realities of life; rather it reveals an ingrained sense of joy, without which, life would be a drab and meaningless affair. Dashian's also display an avid curiosity about subjects that would normally be considered private. Even total strangers will be interrogated as to their salary, how old they are, whether they are married or not, and why. Such questions, personal as they may sound, are not regarded as rude but as simply a way of showing interest.

You are not necessarily required to give correct answers, or any answer at all, as long as you accompany your refusal with a friendly smile to show that you have not been offended.

## CREDIT

Almost from birth a Dashian child begins to accumulate credit. All clothes, toys etc. (except food which is supplied free to all children until their fifth birthday) are automatically added to the child's own credit rating. The cost associated with the actual birth is considered the parent's responsibility. Once a Megacorporation has been chosen as a source of Credit all other sources of credit close. Interest is chargeable at a universal rate of 10% per annum - there is only one exception, children up to the age of 16 do not accumulate interest. [4] Excessive or abusive use of credit will lead to credit withdrawal. If an individual dies leaving an outstanding credit balance, the other members of the extended family have a period of five years, or until a child reaches the age of 16 whichever is Longer, to pay off the debt with the interest frozen. After that period interest rates are resumed.

## WATER TAX

Water tax covers access to the minimum daily water requirements. Indentured staff has the tax paid for them as part of their contract. Failure to pay the tax means access to water is prohibited.

## MEGACORPORATIONS

The seven companies that make up the Combine own the planet. Most have planetary specialities and interests beyond manufacturing.

Naasirka - owns 28% of the shares. Company colour - Black. Runs the Algae harvesting, water and protein reclamation facilities and Euthanasia Centres.

Makhidkarun - owns 21% of the shares. Company colour - Red. Responsible for water distribution and power (mainly solar).

Delgado - owns 20% of the shares. Company colour - Blue. Runs the bureaucracy and ice mining and transport facilities.

Sternmetal - owns 11% of the shares. Company colour - Grey. Runs the tourist facilities and entertainment.

Ling-Standard Products - 8% of the shares. Company colour - Yellow. Oversees the credit facilities and off-world contracts.

SuSAG - 7% of the shares. Company colour - Green. Responsible for education, on-planet transport and health.

Instellarms - 5% of the shares. Company colour - Purple. Responsible for planetary defence and overall co-ordination of security.

## ENTERTAINMENT

**Sport:** The most popular is Null-G Kabbadi (see insert), an ancient Terran sport which has come into its own. Among the Nullskils, Kaddabi is played in its more traditional form using any unoccupied square.

Tri-vee: each of the megacorporations produces their own entertainment channels which are beamed, free, to all dwellings on Dashi. They are mostly high profile advertising and propaganda but also include comedy, news and sports - mainly kabbadi tournaments between the Megacorp teams.

On-Line is a series of free community tri-vee channels consisting of programmes made by ordinary members of the population which are not subject to censorship. A portable studio can be plugged into any Tri-vee unit and beamed into the system. Each person can broadcast for up to 20 minutes at any one time and, at last count, there were in excess of 2,000 channels broadcasting day and night. Programmes range from religion to snuff films. Sex, violent duels, small business advertising and religion are the most common. Each "producer" is automatically allocated a timeslot to broadcast. If the show rates more than 1,000 viewers the "producer" can demand a regular slot which they will lose if their viewing figures ever fall below the 1,000 mark for two consecutive shows. At this point the "producer" is time barred from a regular slot for a period of 100 days. Most Tri-vee sets can automatically record programmes according to pre-programmed criteria or taste for replay at a more acceptable hour. The most popular show, as far as ratings are concerned, are the snuff shows which appear frequently. Different channels, times and Locations... Although the Central Authority can't stop the broadcast, the murder of someone without their consent is illegal and the authorities will do everything possible to track down and apprehend the broadcaster. Serial killing takes on a whole new meaning on Dashi. Many independent merchants will use On-Line to sell their stock by putting together a sleazy show or duet as a backdrop to their adverts. All broadcasts become the

property of the Combine who resells the more viable programmes off-world.

**Entertainment Sectors:** The largest and most popular is Ki Phlaem's Maze District. Here any form of entertainment may be bought - for a price. These sectors are mainly to entertain the rich and the tourist. In addition to sexual perversions, SimStims and drugs there are also the Euthanasia Centres. These centres were established to take advantage of the old, the sick - and the credit-weary. Here anyone over the age of 16 may elect to participate either in a death duel or a Euthanasia contract. Death duels consist usually of one-on-one fights until one or other is dead, mass gladiatorial games or against imported wild animals. The winner will receive either prize money or a previously agreed percentage of the revenue from the fight. The Loser's family generally only gets the water price, though some fight handlers do give a token offering in addition. When a Euthanasia contract is entered into, the participant faces a certain but exotic death. The fee paid to the family is either a set fee or percentage of the Initial revenue. A price is charged in order to view the extravaganza, either at the ringside or broadcast on a credit-only megacorp channel. Participating in the death adds to the cost. Euthanasia viewing is not for the squeamish or faint-hearted as most death scenes are designed to be innovative.

## PLACES TO VISIT IN KI PHLAEM

**Pyramid City:** The city, above ground, is a beautiful place. Small squares and tropical gardens are intermixed with apartments, small shrines and temples. Although the sectors are still crowded it is actually possible to find small pockets of complete serenity. (The manufacturing complexes are at ground level, as are the tekhnno apartments and the start of the hydroponic farms. The higher up the tower you go the less functional are the buildings.) Near the top, each apartment is set in a small but beautifully composed garden with the building itself made up of pastel coloured glass panels set into movable screens which form the walls. Every watt can be repositioned so that the whole building can be altered in minutes. Thus a relatively small home can become a single hall for entertaining or several small rooms for privacy. Each building is so designed that they blend into each other and the well groomed Landscape so as to form an aesthetic whole. Among the upper classes, conformity is more important than individuality. The apex sector is off-limits to all except residents and their guests.

**Leviathan:** In 943 a local Nullskil, Kohkeo Pisada, made a massive discovery while on Pai-tio in the Saiga Pae foothills. Fossilised remains. Not just a simple



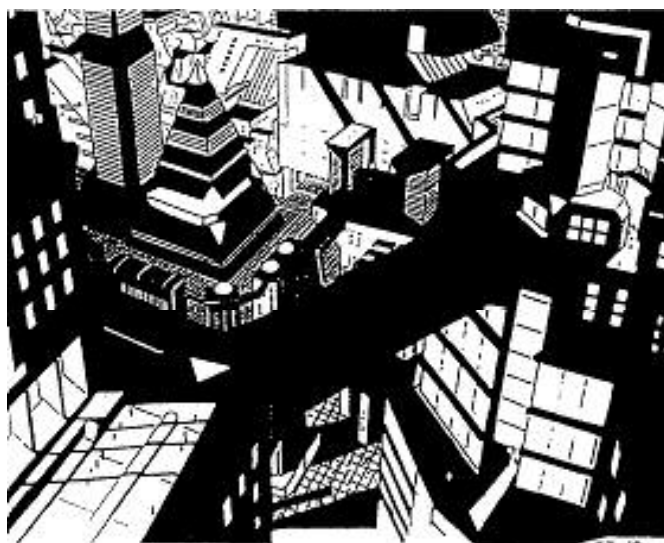
Leviathan Skull

mollusc or small mammal, but the remains of a legless reptile which must have measured over 2 kilometres long when it had been alive. The heat, dry atmosphere and sand had combined to mummify the corpse. Scientists who examined it initially believed that the whole thing was a fake but forensic tests and carbon dating carried out on a fragment revealed that the creature had really existed over 20 million years ago. Here was proof of evolution gone wild. A small, lifeless dustbowl of a planet apparently spawned the largest known reptile in Imperium space. Theories abounded as to its living conditions, its source of food and reason for extinction. Millions flocked to see the remains. Pisada wrote several best sellers on his discoveries and was much in demand for Lectures. Because of outdoor property laws, the remains became the sole property of Pisada. Almost over night he became a millionaire. Then, in 957, the truth was discovered after an investigation was made of Pisada's early credit history; the whole affair was a con perpetuated by Pisada and his friends. In 944 Pisada managed to arrange several simultaneous credit identities for himself with each of the members of the Combine, a miraculous feat in itself. He managed to obtain an incredibly high credit ceiling with each, considering he was an uncontracted Nullskil with no living kin. With the credit he bought moulds and gradually over the next four years, he literally built the Leviathan out of the desert soil. When the skeleton came to be tested he "persuaded" the scientists to restrict all their tests to two bones - bones he'd imported from Uaam/Argi the year before. The most amazing thing of all was that as soon as the news of his deception leaked out the tourist trade quadrupled. Everyone wanted to see the fake and meet the man who had conned the entire Imperial scientific community. Pisada died in 1001, a folk hero and very wealthy man. The Leviathan has now been transported to the Leviathan Hall in Ki Phlaem where it currently resides.

**Indenture Hall:** This is the closest that you can get to slavery on a civilised planet within the Imperium. Here people's lives are held in the balance as bonds and indentures are bought and sold. The Negotiator Guild long outgrew a single building and now they control an entire city sector. Hundreds of thousands line the corridors awaiting a new master. Servants, prostitutes, labourers, technician's... All can be found here if you can afford the price. Anyone who has a contract or indenture they wish to sell can put their staff on the block. In debt? Sell your staff. See a technician you like but wanted a servant? No problem. If you own the contract then you dictate the type of work providing it doesn't contravene the original conditions. If the worker doesn't like it then they either buy themselves out or head for a Euthanasia Centre. In addition to the bonded, many Nullskils line the walkways in the hope of being contracted on temporary contracts. Some Nullskils who have failed to win Indenture contracts as children have the foresight to educate themselves on credit. Many pick up a random selection of skills rather than a single specialisation which makes them extremely good at acquiring temporary contracts on a regular basis. Most

Temp contracts are posted on the JobNet by the Negotiator's Guild.

**The Maze:** The tower, underground warrens of Ki Phlaem consist of many kilometres of narrow, winding corridors and small cramped market areas. Hundreds of millions are crammed into about 20 kilometres cubed. Millions live and die without ever Leaving. Here Life is cheap and, it is said, anything can be bought. The Maze has many faces, offering just about any form of entertainment you could dream of. Some areas have been transformed into an unbroken neon forest of bars, nightclubs and Euthanasia Centres. Touts and bonded hawk their attractions at every entrance: restaurants, theatres and parlours are constantly packed with people. The corridors are aswarm with tourists, the upper classes slumming and Nullskil entertainers. Pedicabs and Taichi (motorised skateboards) buzz through the crowds at breakneck speed. Every Taichi-Nu (taxi driver) you encounter is prepared to offer you, sometimes on a card printed in several languages, a mind-boggling menu of vices catering for every imaginable taste. While no part of the Maze can be described as totally catering for Farang's (foreigners) many of the vice areas do have a predominantly tourist clientele. Even the streets are covered in smoked mirror tiles and the Shu (male and female prostitutes) can be seen openly demonstrating their trade. For those whose night tastes are really basic or perverse then the Phya Tai sector has a sleazy atmosphere reminiscent of the Shanghai dives immortalised in early Terran 2D films. The clubs in this area are not recommended for the squeamish, for couples, or for anyone too arthritic to dodge a beer bottle during the melees that frequently break out. Throughout the Maze, Shu are on open display behind one way windows and "customers" select the one's they want by their number. The usual length of service is an hour and prices vary from around Cr.10 to several thousand depending on the grandeur of the establishment, the type of "special service" required and the amount of injury caused to the Shat The Shu are bonded so do not get any of the fee. R generous tip is expected. Throughout the open corridors hawkers have



The Maze, Ki Phlaem

set up narrow stalls selling every imaginable type of goods. Food is also prepared at these stalls and varies from Sol'vee (Soylent Green) to excellent Thai and Vilani dishes. Fortune-telling and superstition holds a great sway in the Maze and includes face and palm-reading, fortune sticks and small birds trained to select from a prepared list of Futures.

Artist's Quarter: The Quarter is a seventy story section of the Warren which, unlike all other areas which delight in translucent multicoloured glass walls and garish neon lights, is developed from sombre black silica blocks. Here can be found some of the most delicate glass sculptures in the entire Imperium. Commissions are undertaken at extremely competitive prices. In addition, the area is home to thousands of live entertainers. These are an odd group of individualists who persist in the notion that computer-generated entertainment is not good as that Produced by live actors and singers. No amount of argument about the perfect pitch produced by synthesisers, the endless repeatability of the holoformers or the experience filled dreams of SimStim can convince them that human actors are in any way inferior. Worth a visit to see how man's earliest ancestor's entertained themselves. Odar'a Museum of Fine Art: Possibly one of the finest collections of early human artwork to be found anywhere. This museum was built specifically to house the combined art treasures of the ruling Megacorporations. The Museum itself is a cathedral of stain glass. Here can be found such ancient masterpieces as Warhol's Marilyn, the Mona Lisa. The Beatles Help Album, the sonar sculptures of Sharik Bhariikii and the infamous "Death of an Emperor" by Elton Kiruutai which depicts the assassination of Cleon the mad. The upper floor has the finest collection of glass sculpture in the Imperium and the tower vaults hold many valuable documents from the dawn of man.

On 230-1117, Admiral Wainfrost ordered the nuclear destruction of Dashi. Missiles decimated the pyramid cities of Shagukaar, Kadaka, Lantau, Clearwater, Cleops and T'suen.

The Warrens beneath, initially survived but, cut off from food and water and subject to hard radiation, most died. Ki Phlaem survived though the starport was totally destroyed. The officer in charge of the attack on Ki Phlaem was to be court marshalled but the order was overturned by Lucan himself. Elton Kiruutai's holo 'Death of an Emperor' now hangs in Lucan's own quarters.

The water convoy was eventually restored but it is believed that about 49% of the population had died. Although under occupation, Lucan's troops will rarely enter the Maze for teat of attack.

## THE LEGEND OF THE DREAMER'S VAULT

It had always been assumed that the seven Megacorporations, known as the Combine, own Dashi. Although it was several local manufacturing firms that initially started to develop the production sites, "history" recorded that they had been bought out by the seven In 85. Then, in 588 the truth came out Some of the original companies namely Cowan's Computers, Noguchi Interplanetary, Shimura-Volkswagen and Hiroki PLC had decided to lease rather than sell. Over 3096 of the planet had been passed over on a 500 year lease.

This was agreed to because the Combine believed that the chances of a manufacturing site still being profitable after 500 years were rather remote. Dashi not only grew, it prospered. In 585 the lease fell vacant. Under the conditions of the lease, any surviving kin of the original owners could claim their share. Investigators were employed to track down any descendants. None were found. This meant that, under Dashian law, the Combine was allowed to retain the lease until such time as claimants could be found. Rumour at the time said that the Combine had secretly assassinated the true descendants so as not to risk losing a controlling interest. Then a set of papers were uncovered. Apparently the original businessmen had actually built a secret cryogenics chamber on Dashi and had retired there to sleep out the 500 year interval. The vault was never discovered. They, apparently, never awoke to claim their investment. The location of the vault is still unknown to this day but it is



believed that the vault may contain documents that would allow the finder to reclaim the lease.

## NULL-G KABBADI

The game is played in zero-g environment within a marked "pitch" measuring 12.5m long by 10m wide by 10m high. The area is divided into two halves by a sensor barrier running across the middle. Each court is further divided in half by Baulk-lines; sensor screens running parallel to the central barrier. During the course of a raid an attacker must pass through the opponent's Baulk-line at least once. Two corridors run along the length of the pitch on either side. These are known as the galleries and are 1 metre wide. These only become an area of play after an attacker has touched an opposing player or has been tackled. Until then any player floating into one is considered out of court, and must leave the field. His team also concedes a point to me other team. A game lasts for two naives or thirty minutes each. Each team has seven players of Mixed sex. The teams start at opposing ends of the field in their respective courts and take turns to make raids. The aim is for one player to raid into opposition territory by venturing through the baulk-line into their



court, touching as many opponents as possible and returning safely to their own court. Throughout the raid the attacker must chant the phrase "Kabbadi, Kabbadi" in a single continuous breath. If he succeeds in touching and returning across the central barrier safely, all those touched or who stepped out of bounds are out and must leave the field. The defending team must try to avoid being touched or prevent the attacker from getting back through the barrier until they lose their chant. If caught, the attacker is out. Each team alternates between defending and attacking.

Scoring is as follows:

\* Every time an attacker makes a productive raid, (i.e., touches and returns) their team wins as many points as opposing players sent out.

\* If an attacker is unsuccessful, (i.e., loses their chant, fails to pass through the opponents Baulk-line, steps out of court) they are out and the opposing team wins a point.

\* Every time an attacker is successfully tackled by the defending team (prevented from returning across the central barrier) the attacker is out and the team wins one point

\* If an entire team is out, the opposing team wins a Lona (2 bonus points) and then the other team brings all its players back into play and the match continues.

\* If a team carries out three unproductive raids (i.e., if the attacker returns to their own court without touching an opponent) in a row, the opposing team wins one point.

\* If a player floats into the galleries before a touch has taken place then they are out and give away one point.

\* If the attacker, after being tackled, manages to break through the central barrier without losing their chant, all those who were still holding are out and the attacker's team wins a point for each one.

Unfair Tactics:

If a team plays dangerously or unfairly a point may be awarded to the other team.

\* A player cannot try to stifle an attacker's chant by shutting their mouth or by trying to throttle them.

\* Players cannot restrain an attacker in a scissor grip with their legs. \* Punching and slapping are prohibited.

\* Players cannot deliberately push an attacker out of court.

\* Tackles must be to the attacker's body (i.e., not the clothing, genitals or hair) \* Teams cannot delay more than 5 seconds from the end of their opponent's raid before sending in their own attacker.

\* Not chanting properly is considered unfair. A continuous chant is essential.

Kabbadi is considered an amateur game so, officially, players cannot be paid. The Megacorporations get round this by employing the best players as "Entertainment Consultants". The players are not expected to work but instead spend all their time training, playing in tournaments and winning matches. This competitiveness helps raise the corporation's profile. Players doing badly could be dealt with as being in default of their contract.

Footnotes:

[1] At the age of 5 all children are tested for IQ and special aptitudes. If they are found to have potential the Corporation's may make a bid to enable them to indenture the child. The parents will be paid a lump sum while the child receives their living expenses and all appropriate educational costs until they are 16. In return the company gains the expertise resulting from the education for a maximum contracted period of twenty years. During this period of indenture living quarters, food and a set wage are supplied. Failure to honour the contract or to achieve and maintain the appropriate grade of expertise is punishable under law with penalties ranging from fines or enforced labour contracts to death. At the end of the contract the Tekhno must pay off all outstanding debts to the company or sign on for a further period. At this point other companies may attempt to poach the Tekhno with more attractive offers. Most find themselves released without any offers to make way for younger Tekhno's with more up-to-date skills. Many will pay for additional training in order to try and improve their level of expertise. This can improve the chance of a secondary indenture. This system of education focuses on particular areas of expertise to the exclusion of all others with little or no cross-specialisation. The indenture holders, generally one of the megacorporations, may "transfer" people to other planets on a lease basis without notice and without the employee's consent.

[2] Children can be "sold" into bonded labour contracts from 6 upwards - the harsh work conditions result in many dying. It should be noted that there is no minimum legal sex age and no legal barriers to the practice of any sexual act other than assault.

[3] On Dashi, all dead are sent to the reclamation plants. There the bodies' water content is extracted. The next of kin are automatically awarded the water value - generally Cr.100. What is not so well known is that the rest of the carcass is also used- It is minced and mixed with algae to provide the essential proteins needed to sustain human life. This mixture, known jokingly as "Soylent Green" by the tin and corpse classes, is the basic diet of the Nullskils and costs about Cr.2 for a meal. Those who eat algae alone generally die of malnutrition within six months.

[4] The interest-free period granted to children is believed to be used by certain types of parents as a method of providing food and clothing (of the whole family. Although this is illegal there is no effective way of stamping this out. Youths, at their maturity, who have accumulated an excessive credit rating without obtaining an attractive indenture, may find that the only option available is to enter a Euthanasia Centre.

# A.K.A.

## Shaddrak Owen O'Reilly

AKA Shad'o; Gershom; Marik Shadu.

Str: B Dex: A End: 7 Int: 3 Edu: 8 Soc: 8

Lifeforce 28, Hit Points 4/6.

Age: 48, Ex-Naval Lieutenant, Ex-Merchant Captain.

### SKILLS

Pilot 3, Navigation 2, Sensor Op's 2, Vacc Suit 2, Gauss Pistol 2, Streetwise 2, Linguistics 1 (Trokh), Liaison 1, Carousing 1, Archaic Wpns 1 (Bow), Artisan 1, Forgery 1, Tactics 1, Leader 1.

### POSSESSIONS

Owner of "The Bar with No Name", 10% share in "The Sabra" Free Trader (42 years old), pair of silver handled Gauss Pistols, Cr.50,000.

### PERSONALITY

Friendly disposition, kind, not frightened by violence, loves a good fight but is never deliberately cruel or brutal, stubborn, nearly impossible to influence once his mind's made up, believes respect must be earned, amiable, committed to fairness, ruthless in achieving his goals, sociable, impulsive, moody.

### BACKGROUND

Shad'o is a Scanian sport; born to a Scanian father and Vilani mother he received only partial adaptation. He has the muscle and bone structures of the Scanian but his body lacks the additional fat layer, the protective excretions and his eyes are unadapted. He originally had a weak left arm which gradually deteriorated until at 18 it was decided to amputate. A cybernetic limb was fitted as a replacement. At 22 he eventually joined the Navy after proving to the Academy Commander that despite his cybernetic limb he was twice as good as any other recruit. He quickly rose through the ranks but his stubborn streak and lack of respect for superior officers meant that further promotion was denied him. In 1104 he was dishonourably discharged from the Navy on charges of mutiny and striking a superior officer. His ship had been ordered to rescue a merchant ship which was drifting into a star. His Captain ordered the ship to turn back once it became clear that the merchant could not be intercepted before being subjected to lethal doses of stellar radiation. Shad'o knocked the Captain



out and resumed command. Using extremely unorthodox methods he managed to intercept the ship and successfully rescued 4 crew members. Unfortunately two Naval personnel died in the attempt and he lost his right eye. What was worse was that the media instantly proclaimed him a hero. He is possibly the only person in the history of the Imperium to be awarded a Starburst for Extreme Heroism and a court-martialled for the same action. Given the choice of a cloned replacement eye and a cybernetic IR unit he chose the IR unit - he keeps it covered when not required. The owner of the Merchant vessel he tried to save presented him with a part-share in the replacement vessel and offered him a job as Captain. He stayed with the company until 1111 when he discovered that the line was running Psi drugs into the Imperium. A bit of investigation revealed that the whole set up was a front. After a rather violent "disagreement" which resulted in the "owner", Frank Stone, dead and his entire warehouse up in flames, Shad'o had to vanish. Unfortunately Stone proved to be connected to the Yancy syndicate and Shad'o had several near misses on his life during the next few months. He obtained a false Idex and travelled to Dashi where he used the money found in Stone's personal safe to buy up a bar. He quite quickly reverted to using his own name and his flowery language and concern for others quickly turned the bar into a social magnet. He never got round to naming the establishment and by default it became the bar "with no name". He is always polite but firm with his customers. As a droyne customer of his once said, if an Ancient ever visited Dashi his first stop would be the bar!

### ADVENTURE HOOKS

Recently, strangers have been seen hanging around the place asking awkward questions and Shad'o is seriously considering the possibility of moving on. He may turn to the adventurers as a means of transport off-planet or hire them to find out who the strangers are and what they want without giving himself away.

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Bar - Located well off the main highway and unsignposted, it is not easy to find casually. O'Reilly makes no effort to encourage customers, they just naturally flock to him. Part of his natural charm! There are two distinct sections to the bar - the forward lounge is mainly frequented by tourists and the curious. To the rear is an unmarked door that leads down to a long bar surrounded by separate booths. There are no stools, O'Reilly believes in his comfort, instead tall, easy chairs abound. The bar is extremely well stocked and the bar prides itself that it can supply any drink, regardless of rarity. The bar is undecorated except for scrawled "witty" sayings, puns and general points of observation. Each of the booths is fitted with full communit facilities and privacy cones (a sonic and holographic cone which prevents anyone overhearing anything that occurs within

the booth). All are swept regularly for bugs. For this reason, the bar is a favourite place for conducting business, both legal and illegal. The bar is also known as a good source of accurate and exotic rumours (except on a Thursday which is Tall Tales Night). However O'Reilly and his staff do not encourage prying and many the tale is told of over-inquisitive adventurers that passed the point of no return only to be straight-armed

by O'Reilly and dumped on the garbage pile out the back. Weapons are discouraged but not actually banned though it should be noted that the Barman, "Shots", didn't earn his nickname through his bar talents.....

Yancy - Descended from the Terran crime and drug syndicate formed in the West Indies in the early part of the 20 Century. They use superstition (voodoo rituals

are not unknown) and terror to keep a tight grip on a locality once they've moved in. The Yancy are not averse to hiring psionics to "assist" them in their work.

Personality Table  
 The following table is intended to be used by the referee to ensure that the character is portrayed accurately and is NOT intended to be used as die rolls...

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Reserved									★		Outgoing
Impulsive		★									Planner
Moody			★								Emotionally Stable
Submissive									★		Dominant
Serious							★				Fun-loving
Expedient						★					Conscientious
Timid									★		Venturesome
Tough-minded						★					Sensitive
Trusting							★				Suspicious
Practical					★						Imaginative
Forthright		★									Shrewd
Self-assured			★								Apprehensive
Conservative							★				Experimenting
Group-dependent									★		Self-sufficient
Uncontrolled			★								Controlled
Relaxed						★					Tense

**Karyn Dea Viisarikaa**

Str: 6 Dex: A End: 5 Int: B Edu: 8 Soc: F  
 Lifeforce: 21 Hit Force: 3/5  
 Age:27, Sector Duchess of Dagudashaag, 2.25 terms  
 (Noble) Born: 109-1090

**SKILLS**  
 Leader-1, Admin-1, Biology-2, Sophontology-1,  
 Computer-0, Grav Vehicle-0, Laser Weapons-1,  
 Linguistics-2 (S'mrii, NeoTrokh)

**Homeworld:** Medurma (Dagudashaag 2124 A9D7954-G G Sector Capital).  
 Large, Exotic Atm, Wet World, High Pop, Mod Law, Ext Stellar

**POSSESSIONS**  
 400-ton yacht "Oceanus", Laser Rifle, Speeder, Traveller's, MCr.(liquid): 1,649

**BACKGROUND**  
 Karyn Dea Viisarikaa is the eldest daughter of Raegis Viisarikaa IV, and became Sector Duchess on 137-1114, at the age of 14. As such, she is the youngest person currently holding this noble rank, and is in many ways a symbol of the renewed youth and vigour of a sector which had previously been regarded as ossified.

Karyn had a happy and contented childhood, living a life of luxury in the mountaintop palace complexes of Nuage. As a youth, she found the staid and conventional education of a noble's daughter uninteresting. Although



Karyn Dea Viisarikaa

she had a string of private tutors, she paid little attention to her studies. Instead, much to her father's

distress, she preferred to spend much of her time on Medurma's resort moon Ambrym (F266534-F).

During her adventures there, Karyn found something which captured her interest - the marine fauna of Ambrym. The moon has in extensive and unusual biosphere, and Karyn finally found a subject which had her father's (grudging) approval - marine biology.

At the age of 16, Karyn met Duke Skuissch\*r Kiaskui, who was attending an economic conference on Ambrym at the time. She admired his even-temperedness, and good humour - attributes which she felt her father lacked at times - and she recognised his plain common sense. The two became good friends, with Karyn often asking Skuissch\*r's advice on various matters.

In 1108, Raegis Viisarikaa travelled with his daughter to Capital, on the occasion of her appointment as Marchioness of Adelie. There, she was granted an audience with Emperor Strephon. It was at this time that a certain princeling became enamoured of her, but she found him to be contemptible, and rebuffed his clumsy advances. Little did she realise what greater repercussions this would have in a few years' time...

Raegis' sudden death in the ongoing warfare on Lenashuuk/Argi (Dagudashaag 1640) placed a great strain on Karyn. Many of the nobility felt that such a young and inexperienced Sector Duchess would have difficulty providing effective leadership for Dagudashaag. Karyn proved them wrong. She showed great intelligence, and equally importantly, a willingness to learn. She now has an extremely competent team of advisors led by Duke Skuissch\*r Kiaskui.

In the years of her reign, Duchess Karyn has done her best to revitalise the economy of a sector whose name had become synonymous with Vilani stagnation. She has

Karyn Viisarikaa and the Rebellion:

If anything, Karyn Viisarikaa is a survivor. Her intense personal dislike of Lucan Alkhalikoi, and her disgust at the murder of Strephon, has led her to attempt to pursue a "middle course" of neutrality. Her ally, Admiral Stiev Elliot, has preserved what he can of the shattered Dagudashaag Sector Fleet, in the hope of defending the twin strongholds of Medurma and Ushra. Her citizens have resisted one ill-conceived attempt by Lucan to take the sector capital, and she has narrowly escaped an attempt by his forces to take her hostage. The S'mrii give her all the assistance they can, but how long her luck continues, remains to be seen. Even on Medurma's surface, the fighting goes on...

Appearance

Karyn Viisarikaa is an exceptionally attractive woman. She stands 1.72m tall, has shoulder-length auburn hair and blue-green eyes. Her heritage is primarily Solomani, with European, Malaysian, and Amerind roots.

Personality Table

The Rebellion had a profound effect on Karyn's character. Use the figures shown by white stars for all pre-1117 encounters and the black stars for post-1117.

Playing Notes

Pre-rebellion, Karyn was very much of an iconoclast, challenging what 'old-style' Vilani Sector nobles considered to be appropriate behaviour. She enjoyed raising eyebrows with her direct mode of speech and her style of dress. Her people loved her for it. Indeed, she dislikes pomposity of any kind.

Karyn is quite a sensitive person; the premature deaths of both her parents affected her deeply, as did charges that she was too inexperienced to assume the position of Sector Duchess. She has adjusted well, however, to her new position of responsibility and projects confidence and self-assurance.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Reserved						★		⊛			Outgoing
Impulsive							★				Planner
Moody								★	⊛		Emotionally Stable
Submissive							★				Dominant
Serious					★				⊛		Fun-loving
Expedient								★			Conscientious
Timid								★			Venturesome
Tough-minded				★				⊛			Sensitive
Trusting			⊛					★			Suspicious
Practical								★			Imaginative
Forthright				★							Shrewd
Self-assured		⊛				★					Apprehensive
Conservative									★		Experimenting
Group-dependent				⊛			★				Self-sufficient
Uncontrolled								★			Controlled
Relaxed			⊛					★			Tense

confidence and self-assurance.

The Rebellion has left Karyn a frightened and suspicious person though she does her best to hide it. Her faith in human nature has been shattered after seeing Lucan's monstrous behaviour and the sycophancy of many Core nobles.

As the Rebellion progresses Karyn rapidly becomes more mature, wiser and indeed more manipulative. She's

succeeded beyond everyone's expectations, and has earned the loyalty of her citizens.

able to use her considerable charms to her advantage. She develops a skill in oratory At first she "plays the role" of a charismatic wartime leader but in time, she grows into it and becomes one in spirit.

# ONE OF OUR DOCTORS IS MISSING: THE HAMANOK CONSPIRACY, PART 2.

## OVERVIEW

The PCs are asked to undertake the search for a missing scientist who has failed to turn up at the Institute of Advanced Biology at the University of Khusgular (the doctor was on a six month teaching sabbatical). The group may or may not discover that the doctor departed from his official route, persuading a down-and-out to take his place on the leg between Theta Cygni, and took an independent far trader bound for but crashed on Thalassa where the doc perished.

## SUMMARY OF NUGGETS

1: A Job. The PCs are employed to uncover the whereabouts of Dr. Kavent Dai-Adulim.

2: The Trace, Part 1. The PCs check up on the doctors intended route and the carriers he had booked his passage to Khusgular.

3: The Trace, Part 2. The characters try to locate the doctor by tracing his steps, following the same route and deducing his actions.

4: Resolution: This nugget covers the PCs return to Medurma and assimilates the evidence they have gathered.

### 1: A Job.

The PCs are contracted to search for a missing doctor.

Location is Medurma (Pact 2124). It is recommended that the PCs arrive between major battles. It is up to the Referee to make the PCs realise they are in a war zone by arranging 'interesting' inter-system encounters. Also a full security check will be required prior to allowing a landing.

Scene: You have just cleared Medurma customs and are approaching a holo advert hoarding, where a respectable, middle-aged academic type is adding an advert via the interfacing terminal. You peer closer as he enters and display the ad. He looks over his shoulder noticing your interest: "Can I help? Or can you help? Are you interested in this job at all?"

Action: The gentleman is Dr. Hramon Cosalbis, deputy-head of the School of Biology and Medicine, at the University of Medurma.

If the party are interested Cosalbis will invite them for a synthcaf at the nearest street cafe and go into details of the ad he's just post. He informs the group that the head of the Biomedical Sciences department has gone missing on route to Khusgular; where he was due to take up a six month teaching post at the Institute of Advanced Biology. The department head Dr. Kavent Dai-

Adulim was due at the Institute 12 weeks ago, and after waiting two weeks a message was sent to Medurma to check on his whereabouts. Failure to locate the doctor on Medurma or Khusgular, the university is funding an investigation.

Dr. Cosalbis has authority to spend up to Cr. 30,000 and all documented expenses (within reason) to identify the whereabouts of the doctor. The doctor has no other funds he can access therefore negotiations for better pay will be un-rewarding. The doctor wants a report back in 4 weeks. He tells the group that Kavent Dai Adulim made his own flight arrangements with Imperialines local subsidiary Medurma Main Star Lines (MMSL) at the starport.

It is Dr. Cosalbis's opinion that Dai-Adulim was abducted by Solomani terrorists in order to prevent him finishing some secret (government funded) work that may be crucial in thwarting Solomani use of biological weapons.

### 2: The Trace, Part 1.

The PCs check on the doctor's flight plan.

Location is Medurma starport

Scene: You have located the offices of Medurma Main Star Lines, where you understand that Dr. Dai-Adulim booked his passage to Khusgular. You enter the spacious, modern, immaculate office and confidently stride up to the desk.

Action: It should occur to the players that they will need to check the passenger registration computers corresponding to the appropriate flight to confirm that the Dr. did indeed leave. Unfortunately it is not the policy of major Companies to give access to unauthorised personnel without the proper clearance or a court order. Any request will be firmly but politely refused.

The simplest and safest method obtaining the information is bribing the counter clerk to allow them to glimpse the files on the (passenger) flight in question.

**To bribe the clerk to allow a glimpse of the passenger lists:**

Routine, Bribery, Soc (confrontation, uncertain, hazardous).

Referee: The character attempting the bribe must make a cash offer of at least Cr. 250. If the offer is inadequate then increase task level to difficult. On a mishap the clerk will inform his superiors. For each bribery attempt that fails, double the minimum cash offer required.

The flight lists will confirm that Dr. Dai-Adulim did indeed book passage and board the long liner "Fiat Lux" bound for Khusgular, via Theta Cygni. The best option open to the players is to try and follow the doctor and see if he arrived at Khusgular or deviated from his booked plan.

### 3: The Trace, Part 2.

The PCs try to retrace the doctor's steps on his journey to Khusgular.

Location on Medurma, Theta Cygni and Khusgular.

Scene: You have decided to make the journey to Khusgular in an attempt to track down the doctor. You have been given authorisation to buy passage on the University's credit account. You are due out at midday tomorrow on the long Liner "Tragaddor".

Action: The journey to Theta Cygni (and to Khusgular) should go smoothly, although individuals may want to include an encounter or two to distract players' attention.

The interesting facts that can be picked up on the journey are that the ship's chief purser has just been transferred from the "Fiat Lux". He was persuaded by "a passenger, a doctor I believe, to allow a disreputable looking fellow use the second half of his passage [to Khusgular] without changing the ship's records. An irregularity easily overcome by a few hundred credits."

This information should only be released to the characters after they have successfully befriended the chief purser, plied him with drink, gifts and a little money. The PCs may decide to continue to Khusgular to try and identify the mysterious passenger who took the doctor's place from Theta Cygni. This will be difficult to do with only a rough sketch of me character. At Khusgular the PC's can check whether the doctor has arrived in the meantime (he has not). The PCs will find it more rewarding to leave the "Tragaddor" at Theta Cygni (assuming they have me information out of me purser by this time, otherwise they may have no option but to go on to Khusgular). On Theta Cygni can make inquiries about the doctor.



Armed with a detailed description of the doctor the characters should find out about the doctor's progress.

#### To pick up on the news of the doctor:

Difficult, Streetwise, Liaison or Soc, 1 day (unskilled O.K., uncertain).

Referee: Allow each character to make a roll. Only give the following information on 'total truth': a character answering the doctor's description was seen trying to locate passage to lash (Pact 1730). He managed to get a passage on a tar trader on route to Kakhirusar (2028) via Thalassa (2127). On 'some truth' only give selected portions of this evidence. If a second character achieves 'total truth' then reveal the following: a independent ship captain informs the PC that the far trader "Clement VII" didn't turn up at Kakhirusar, she was due to take on a consignment of electronic parts and now is significantly out of pocket. The captain will be found in one of the local bars drinking away her sorrows.

At this stage me PCs should be coming to one or two obvious conclusions about the doctor's fate. He was onboard the "Clement VII" that crashed into the 'Deep' on Thalassa. He and the rest of the passengers and crew were killed outright The PCs actually witnessed me recovery or me doctors body as well as certain notes on his experimental work by a llesh commando team. Once me characters have reach thus stage of reasoning they should present their theories to the University's authorities and Dr. Cosalbis.

### 4: A Resolution.

The PCs present their evidence to Dr. Cosalbis.

Location is at the

University of Medurma.

Scene: (The PCs have a straight forward task of describing what they believed to have happened to Dr. Kavent Dai-Adulim. This can be role-played out it desired or just read out the following but only reveal what is known to the PCs) You can confirm that the doctor did indeed take passage on an MMSL ship to Khusgular but from a eye-witness account he left me ship at Theta Cygni for a passage to lash. The doctor procured a berth to Kakhirusar but apparently it never arrived. The fact the ship was missing was only noted by another ship captain who had due to meet the captain of the lost vessel (the "Clement VII") for a consignment

of electronic parts. You inform the gathered group of officials that a few weeks back you personally came across of the fresh wreckage of a far trader answering the description of the "Clement VII" on me seabed of Thalassa. Interestingly at the time of your discovery a salvage group were already searching the sight. This group tried to remove evidence of the ship and their interference by tiring a couple of missiles at the spot, luckily they missed. An examination of the flight recorder and the bodies revealed that there was a body missing although the name was didn't match to the doctors.

Action: The assembled academics will be disturbed by your story but satisfied as to me apparent truth of it. Dr. Cosalbis will pay the group the agreed figure and any extra expanses occurred. In a final exchange Dr. Cosalbis asks them what their next step will take. And what have they planned? He informs them that he may get some other work lined up for them. He says he was impressed by their professionalism and apparent thoroughness, and it would be a pleasure to business with them again.

# CONTACT: THE ALIKASCH

*“To those who revile us, who call us criminals, outcasts, or worse, half-breeds I say this: We are the fusion of two great cultures into a greater whole. We are the heralds of a new Galactic culture. Look on us, and see the future!”*

Benjamin Sula 'Khaiostei - Alikasch member of the Medurman federation Congress

Alikasch (al-ee-KASSH)(Medurman Dialect):  
The derivation of the word is uncertain - possibly the Solomani Anglic alleycat, or the Trokh ayloi kh'esh (Those Who Fight With Metal Dewclaws).

Often portrayed as roving streetgangs, terrorising the downcit inhabitants of Medurman cities, the Alikasch are far more than that. They are Humans and Aslan who have learned, through centuries of bloodshed, to understand each other, and to live together in peace. The resulting hybrid culture shows many fascinating features from both “parent” cultures, but also has truly unique aspects, little known or understood by the outsider.

## PHYSIOLOGY

Although there are no truly accurate demographic data on the alikasch, it is believed that their overall racial composition is 60% Aslan (*Erecta felinas* var.), 40% Human (*Homo sapiens sapiens terrestris*).

The Aslan alikasch are primarily of the Teisuwan sub-race, and are somewhat shorter and stockier than most Hierate Aslan, with males averaging 1.96m and females 1.78m in height. Fur colour commonly ranges from amber to gold, though melanistic Aslan (“chokkats”) make up 1% of the population.

Human alikasch are primarily drawn from Solomani stock. FILL major sub-races of Solomani Humaniti are represented among the alikasch.

## APPEARANCE

Alikasch dress for the street; their mode of dress is always stylish, and often striking. Clothing varies widely between tribes, from gloss black inertial armour suits, to jumpsuits in primary colours. Garments often have actively cooled linings, as in vacc suits, to cope with the hottest downcit conditions. All but the lowliest tribe members bear ornate heraldic markings, derived from Aslan yoyeakhtef on their clothing and vehicles.

Many Alikasch have undergone RNA treatment to control their melanin production, and give them fearsome fur or skin markings mimicking predatory felines, such as the

Terran tiger or the Denebian saivaar.

## SOCIETY

The microcosm of Alikasch society mirrors the macrocosm of the Galaxy. This relationship between the inner and outer worlds is a central tenet of the Solomani Taoist faith, and of several of the older Aslan philosophies.

Alikasch society is typically broken up into groups, or tribes, with anything from 50 to 2,000 or more members. A tribe will lay claim to a particular area of territory which may extend over several tunnel levels, and even (for the wealthiest tribes) to holdings on the planet's surface (“sunlands”). A tribe is ruled by the Core, an Aslan male and female, and a Human male and female, who decide overall tribal policy, and administer justice.

The Aiteh: Central to the Alikasch tribe is its Aiteh, which is believed to be a form of electronic “tribal spirit”. The Aiteh absorbs the personality imprints of heroes and leaders, and over generations, comes to represent the very essence of the tribe. The Aiteh is both a shrine to ancestor-worship, and an oracle. Few non-Alikasch have ever seen an Aiteh but the technology it represents is viewed hungrily by several Human corporations.

The Hub is a council of 20 to 200 senior Alikasch within the tribe --members of the Core are elected from the Hub, usually for life. The Hub is the tribe's parliament, and votes on day-to-day matters - it may also be called on to make a ruling if the Core cannot decide on a particular course of action.

The Arms form the majority of an Alikasch tribe's membership. The Arm of Striking is the tribe's attack force, and also serves to keep order within the ranks. The Arm of Healing organises medical care for the tribe, and for the non-Alikasch population of surrounding levels. They also fit cybergear (q.v.) to tribe members, and are active in the manufacture and distribution of drugs (q.v.).

The Arm of Forging is the manufacturing sector of the tribe. Larger tribes will run their own legitimate companies, but all tribes have their secret workshops developing new and fearsome kinds of bionics, netgear and weaponry.

While the majority of Alikasch tribes pay at least tip service to Federal Law, there are those who operate outside it. These are the Streamers, Alikasch tribes who for one reason or another have turned criminal. Streamers are typically very heavily cybered (body



plating. etc.) and are almost universally hated by other Alikasch.

**Cybergear:** The Alikasch take an unusual approach to cybergear - rather than as a replacement after injury, a cybernetic limb (say) worn by an Alikasch is a symbol of pride, of accomplishment, and of responsibility to the tribe. Only those who have proved themselves worthy may have their abilities enhanced beyond the norm by cybernetics. An individual cyberlimb, progressively adapted and improved, may be handed down from generation to generation. R cyberlimb designed by a more affluent tribe is a thing of beauty, not a crude robotic manipulator.

Those warriors who have served the tribe well are allowed to wear astei'a or plates of precious metal engraved with sacred scenes on their cyberlimbs. It has been said that a bond of steel binds the Alikasch together.

**Drugs:** Many Alikasch tribes manufacture semi-legal and illegal recreational drugs for distribution among the downcity population. Their motives are purer than they appear: the substances the Alikasch make are advanced, dose-limited compounds of very high intrinsic purity, always with an inert chemical "tag" so that their origin can be traced - the drugs are sold direct, to avoid the risk of middlemen "cutting" the drugs and raking in a profit. They regard this as a social service - it forces criminally-motivated drug runners out of business, and ensures a cheap, reliable and safe supply. The Federal government doesn't always see it that way, unfortunately.

The range of drugs produced includes zilomatazine (hallucinogenic), kytopam (narcotic) benzoanatriol (narcotic) and beta-PCPA (euphoric/aphrodisiac).

*"..and you can tell that moth-eaten heaift' son of an alley tomcat if he ever shows his furball face here again ..."* Medurman local businessman, wielding Gauss Rifle.

### **NeoTrokh:**

NeoTrokh is a lingua franca extensively used by the alikasch and by many Imperial citizens in the Medurma cluster. The language g z has diverged greatly from the root tongue. Hierate Trokh, in the last thousand years it is worth noting at the outset that it would be extremely foolish to use NeoTrokh to converse with any Hierate Aslan - the language would be recognised for what it is, a GalAnglic hybrid, and an immediate challenge would result.

The pronunciation and grammar of NeoTrokh has been radically simplified, for the sake of its human speakers. Gender distinctions in vocabulary have been largely eliminated, except for a few basic words. Where the alikasch encountered difficulties in reworking their vocabulary, they simply imported GalAnglic words. For example, the NeoTrokh for "shoot" is syoot.

## **PSYCHOLOGY**

For the Alikasch, Aslan and Human are equivalent and complementary. Like yin and yang they coexist by recognising each others strengths and how they complement their own. Both have learned to understand, tolerate, and respect.

Discrimination between the sexes has largely evaporated among the Alikasch. Gender is no longer a significant deciding factor in determining an individual's career: both male and female Aslan may become technicians, for example, without fear of prejudice. The only real exceptions to this are the Warriors (Ftei 'rta), Squires (S'ouira) and Dancers (Htan'sa).

**Warrior:** The Alikasch warrior is perhaps the last bastion of traditional Aslan male culture within the Alikasch, defending the sacred territory of the Tribe. These cybered street-fighters are the most visible and feared manifestation of the Alikasch. Warriors are often subcontracted to work as mining corp security troopers - otherwise, they are active defending the tribe territory against incursions, and "gathering funds" for the tribe (i.e. protection rackets).

**Squire:** The Alikasch Squire is an experienced cybertechnician, almost always female, who accompanies a Warrior if he journeys away from the tribe for any period of time. The Squire is also well versed in the minutiae of Human culture and is well able to smooth over any disagreements which might otherwise end in unpleasantness ("Please, put those rippers away...!").

**Dancer:** The Alikasch Dancer (almost always female) combs the planetary computer matrix via her neural plugs for information which may be of benefit to the tribe. The Dancers are a tribe's Intelligence arm. Alikasch are self-reliant and resourceful. All those who aspire to rank must undergo Hsin Kh'ai (Cleansing-of-Heart), a 75-hour trial of survival on an exposed mountain ridge. Alikasch have a strong sense of justice and they fully realise that Human society has not treated them fairly. However, they seek redress and not vengeance. They to use all means, overt and covert to extract all the money and technology they can from the upper levels of Human society, without damaging that society. They are symbionts, not parasites. Alikasch view companionship as highly important. They also recognise that living space in their tunnel habitats is limited. Childbearing is an assigned privilege not a right and the Alikasch often form "group" marriages to give more of their number the experience of child-rearing.

**Human Attitudes:** Human attitudes to the Alikasch have varied widely over the centuries. They have been regarded as squatters, as petty thugs, and as useful mercenaries for foreign wars. All that, however, seems to be beginning to change. Medurman Humans are taking a pronounced (some would say prurient) interest in their Alikasch minority. Holofilms portraying the Alikasch as heroic figures (Street Warrior) are widely distributed. LightSpeed, a mixed race hyperrock group,

plays to packed arenas across the sector. Medurman nobles find it very chic to employ an Alikasch bodyguard or driver. Not to mention the numerous outcasts who simply have to do their best in Medurma's burgeoning "service" industry... A marginalised minority has been neatly packaged for Human consumption

## HISTORY

The story of the Alikasch begins during the depths of the Long Night. An lhatei fleet, jointly crewed by members of the Oakhtai'yal and Aohalai clans entered the Medurma system in -1019. The fleet had for some time been in serious danger of breaking up over disputes about its leadership, and the Fleet Executive Officer, Kiheasau'Oakhtai'yal, had only assumed her post after the assassination of the previous incumbent. The prospect of landfall on a reasonably pleasant world seemed like a godsend.

Medurma, however, was occupied. The human civilisation there was balkanised, system-bound and at least below the Aslan tech Level of 11. Negotiations were opened with the humans. A deal was formulated with the HighPeak Commonwealth for the ceding of territory to the Aslan, in return for a phased transfer of Sump and other technologies. Kiheasau'Oakhtai'yal, however, had done this without the express agreement of the Aohalai, and in particular the leading Aehaos ahriy, and conflict broke out once more. In the confusion, the Oakhtai'yal on the surface were stranded, and as ahriy fought ahriy, the Aslan failed to notice that the Humans had seized control of several of their ships. The Commonwealth was left holding the largest stock of undamaged vessels, and forced a peace settlement. Some of the stranded Oakhtai'yal settlers were bribed to put down the remaining resistance...and this had the effect of polarising the Aslan even more strongly into pre- and anti-Human camps.

In the years -1010 to -920, a series of intermittent conflicts, the Alignment Wars, washed across Medurma, as individual provinces fought one another for scraps of Aslan technology, and Oakhtai'yal-refugee troops and Humans fought Aohalai, as they sought to enforce their territorial [claims. by](#) -880, the HighPeak Commonwealth had united the world under a single government, and the Aohalai had more or less agreed to differ. Some of them left the system to settle Aiaiyal/Pact, while others established settlements in areas of the planet remote from Human habitation.

The Oakhtai'yal refugees had large grants of land with rich mineral resources, and the gratitude of a powerful Human government. It seemed they had a bright future, but it was not to be. An individual ahriy could not afford the economies of scale necessary for economical mining, so they signed agreements with Human mining companies, such as Metallurgias Generales SR and ICE Medurma. Contracts were defaulted on, documents "lost" during the wars, leaseholds expired, lands were repossessed - in short, the refugees were progressively cheated out of their holdings by the Human companies

and by -795, the vast majority of them were contracted, or "bound" employees of the mining companies. Human and Aslan contract workers were forced to labour side by side on the mine faces, and the Aslan Learned many things about Humans they wished they hadn't. Prejudice followed them everywhere - the epithets alleycat, tabby and furball rang in the air. Their touchiness sparked frequent violence, in which the Aslan usually came off worse, so they slowly learned to curb their tempers.

By -700, the Aslan and Humans had begun to come to some kind of cultural understanding. Asian Solomani, in particular, were able to discern many areas of cultural common ground with the Aslan. The revelation that the single word Tao had similar- profound religious meaning for both groups, was the seed for the flowering of a new and common culture. They called themselves Alikasch - an "in-your-face" rebuttal of the endless taunts they had received, and they used the name with pride.

The year -640 saw the beginnings of the Free Way Battles. The Alikasch, who had begun to form together into fair-sized groups for self-protection, came into conflict with corporate security shock troops, the Icemen. As mining workings moved deeper and deeper into the crust of Medurma, and more heat pumps came on-line, the conditions on higher tunnel Levels became more tolerable. The mining companies first tried to extort higher rents from the Alikasch for their living space, and later bodily attempted to force them to move tower, to free this newly-valuable space for development. Naturally, the Alikasch resisted the break-up of their communities.

The intercession of two Human Lawyers, Gilyann Harmston and Kalrian Vusuraykhar in -566, established the Alikasch right to purchase land which was no longer directly useful to the corps, and also settled many of the old Oakhtai'yal property claims. Many Alikasch groups, or tribes became sufficiently wealthy, as a result to break free from the corps and work as independent contractors instead.

The formation of the Medurma Pact in -524 and the subsequent conflict with surrounding states saw the Alikasch involved in many decisive battles as part of the Pact ground forces. The courageous holding action fought by the Alikasch volunteer Ahrei Legion in the Final Battle of Lumnu in -434 against the Aakhrians of Argi, still remains an example of textbook military strategy. The flyers of Medurma Interface Defence, however, closed their ranks to Alikasch entrants.

Upon his confirmation as Regent of the Medurma Pact by its governing Supreme Century in -401, Anthon Vusuraykhar (later vilanised to "Viisarikaa") declared his Grand Charter of Sentient Rights. Formulated partly as a challenge to the slaving policies of the Aakhrians, it also set down once and for all that the Aslan were in all respects equal to the majority Human population under the law.

By -300, mining corps such as ICE discovered that it was cheaper to subcontract out medical services to larger

Alikasch tribes: victims of mining injuries often found themselves fitted with jury-rigged prosthetics assembled from surplus hydraulic gear. The quality slowly improved as Alikasch technicians learned more - expert systems for cybergear design were in use by - 200, and "industrial espionage" for these designs between tribes became common.

Medurma's admission to the Third Imperium in 90 made little difference to the Alikasch. Admission to the Imperial armed services was difficult because of the somewhat irreverent attitude the Alikasch have towards formal lines of authority, but some did serve with the Scouts, and began to travel much further - often as far as central Gushemege.

In 441, GenMett LIC tested LEONIS, a teleoperator system for controlling robots in hostile environments. The system was unusual in that it involved direct interfacing, with the controller's visual cortex and cerebellum via one or more neural plugs. The system was found to be too inaccurate and unreliable to be a commercial success, but it resulted in several hundred Alikasch (mostly female - they were deemed to be more suitable) being fitted with neural plugs, and the Alikasch having access to a technology which had, definite potential.

By 550, the Alikasch had equipped their cyberdesign systems with primitive personality constructs (the forerunners of modern pseudoreality simulators), which allowed a particular cybertechnician to preserve her personality parameters: the system could reliably give her "opinions" on particular design problems. This slowly evolved into the present aiteh.

Population pressure became a serious problem among the Alikasch by about 590. Territorial conflicts between tribal communities became more common, and more vicious. Leading to the first displaced tribes, the forerunners of the Streamers (q.v.). Social pressures began to emphasize group marriages and the communal raising of children.

Medurma reached Tech Level 14 at about 740 and with this improvement, truly reliable mind-machine interfacing became possible. The first Alikasch cybercorcs were produced - their initial uses, however, were as multiplexers to interface with vehicles or other complex devices. True netrunning came many years later...

**The Transgenic Incident:** On 234-1107, an incident occurred which profoundly threatened the future of the Alikasch. The CitiSystem Report, a mass circulation news magazine, revealed in an exclusive report that an (unnamed) Medurman bioengineering company, acting in breach of every ethical convention since the Tokyo Human Genome Protocols on pre--starflight Terra, had succeeded in overcoming the fundamental incompatibilities between Human and Aslan DNA. The experiment had progressed to its logical conclusion - several transgenics had been produced - Human/Aslan chimaeras.

Evidence, including videoqraps, and even details of the geneering procedures used, were given to the Federal authorities. In the process, the company's name was leaked - Lucass-Silver Geneering. The company's shares went through the floor, and its laboratories were besieged by furious protestors, before they were cordoned off by Federal troops. Reports of attacks on Aslan, and those who associated closely with them, began to increase rapidly.

The truth emerged only 48 hours later. The "evidence" was proved to be a cleverly-contrived sham. Dr. Maxwell Saybre, a former senior bioengineer with Lucass-Silver, was apparently disgruntled at being replaced by an Aslan researcher, and had hatched a plot to wreak revenge on the company and the Aslan community. He was indicted by the Federal Supreme Court and imprisoned, along with two accomplices from the University of HighPeak Virtual Reality Department, for fraud, and "incitement to interspecies hatred".

Sullivan Cowan, in his excellent text 'Cry Tiger! Cry Wolf!' highlights the way in which the incident touched a raw nerve with the Medurman population: "...Even in the most harmonious of multispecies societies, there is a deep undercurrent of fear and mistrust. We all need to know what we are ..."

The damage to Medurma's biomedical technology base was serious and long-lasting. Many biocorps simply moved outsystem -- in fact, conspiracy theorists pointed to the speed of the exodus. Did the corps have something to hide...?

## ALIKASCH CHARACTER GENERATION

(Reference to *Alien Module 1: Aslan* is advised)

An Alikasch begins his or her career at age 16 standard years.

1) Choose the race of the character, or roll 2D (7-:Aslan, 8+:Human).

2) Roll personal characteristics ( See Table 1 ):

Table 1: Alikasch personal characteristics

	STR	DEX	END	INT	EDU	SOC
HUMAN	2D	2D	2D	2D	2D-1	1D+1
ASLAN	2D+1	2D-1	2D+1	2D	2D-1	1D+1

Table 2: Alikasch Careers

Career	Enlistment		Survival		Comments
	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Navy	-1	-1	-1		Imperial Navy
Marines	+1		-1		Imperial Marines
Army	+1		-1		Imperial Army
Scouts	-2				Imperial Scouts
Merchants	-2				Free Traders
Other	+2	+2			
Pirates	+1	+1			Rebellion Era <u>Only</u>
Belters	+1	+2			Medurma MainBelt
Doctors	-3				
Flyers	-2	-3			
Rogues	+2	+2	-1		
Scientists	-1				
Hunters	+1				

A number of unique careers are also possible:-

	Warrior MALE	Squire FEMALE	Dancer FEMALE	
Enlistment	9+	8+	8+	+DM equals Blood Trial Number Survival
Survival	6+	6+	5+	
DM+2 if	Str 10+	Int 9+	Int 9+	
Success	-----See Success Table -----			
DM+1 if	Str 10+	Int 10+	Int 9+	
DM+1 if	Dex 8+	End 8+	Computer 2+	
Special Duty:	5+	5+	6+	
Re-enlist	5+	4+	5+	

Skills: 2 for initial term, 1 per subsequent term, 1 for promotion, 1 for special duty

Table 3: Success Table

DIE:	
2	Outcast
3	Demoted one rank
4-6	No effect
7	Cyber -1
8 - 9	Promotion, Cyber-1
10 -11	Promotion, Cyber-2
12+	Promotion, Cyber-3, Astei'a

3) Choose gender.

4) Blood Trial: Roll 2D, count number of stats which exceed this roll. This forms the Blood Trial Number, and is used as an enlistment DM to some services. Humans receive an automatic +1 to Blood Trial Number.

5) Short Term (two years): If Int 8+, then add 1D-4 (min 1) to Edu.

All Alikasch receive:- Combat-1, Gun Combat-1, Grav Vehicle-0, Computer-0

6) Select Service & Enlist:

Alikasch may follow many of the careers given in *MegaTraveller Players' Manual*, though certain DM's apply - these are shown in Table 2:

Table 4: Acquired Skills

1. Personal Development Table

	<u>Warrior</u>	<u>Squire</u>	<u>Dancer</u>
1	Physical	Physical 2	Mental
2	+1 Dex	+1 Dex	+1 Edu
3	Hand Cbt	Vice	Interpers
4	Blade Cbt	Interpers	+1 Dex
5	Physical	Blade Cbt	Inborn
6	Gun Cbt	Mental	Gun Cbt

2. Service Skills Table

	<u>Warrior</u>	<u>Squire</u>	<u>Dancer</u>
1	Cbt Rfl	Grav Veh	Computer
2	Hand Cbt	Streetwise	Technical
3	Inborn	Gun Cbt	Streetwise
4	Environ	Vice	Grav Veh
5	Hand Cbt	Mental	Electronics
6	Grav Veh	Technical	Vice

3. Advanced Education Table

	<u>Warrior</u>	<u>Squire</u>	<u>Dancer</u>
1	Environ	Technical	Technical
2	Tactics	Liaison	Academic
3	Leader	Robotics	Commo
4	Interrog	Economic	Environ
5	Spl Cbt	Mechanical	Interpers
6	Streetwise	Medical	Intrusion

4. Advanced Education Table (Educ 8+)

	<u>Warrior</u>	<u>Squire</u>	<u>Dancer</u>
1	Spl Cbt	Robotics	Technical
2	Inborn	Science	Science
3	Tactics	Science	Academic
4	Technical	Academic	Environ
5	Spl Cbt	Medical	Economic
6	History	Inborn	Mental

Cyber points may be spent on a character's cybernetic augmentation:-

Class I Cyber(1 point)

Cyber eye  
 Cyber ear  
 Blade Weapon (rippers)  
 Subdermal pocket  
 Biomonitor  
 RNA Implant  
 Ayloi (human only)

Class II Cyber (2 points)

Cyber arm  
 Cyberleg  
 Neural Plugs (female only)  
 Chip Socket  
 Weapon Interface

Subsequent choice of the same item adds an enhancement:

CYBERARM: [Str 18, Dex 15] Add: +3  
 CYBERLEG: [Str 20, Dex 15] Add: +3  
 WEAPON INTERFACE: [+1 to Weapon skill] Add: +1  
 CYBEREYE: [Pseudobio, Passive IR] Add: Image Enhance, Digicamera  
 RIPPERS: 50cm monoedged blades extend back of hand  
 Pen: 12 (6 if Str 12-) Block: 1 Damage: 3  
 AYLOI: Artificial dewclaw implant  
 Pen: 2 Block: 0 Damage: 2

# PORT OF CALL: MEDURMA

MEDURMA 2123 A9D7954-G Hi 8231m G0 V

Primary: Tanyell, spectral class G0 V, mass 1.04, luminosity 1.06

**Medurma:** Mean orbital radius 1,15 AU. Period 1.209 std years/441.7 std days. Diameter 14,834 km. Mass 1.42 terra. Molten core, density 0.98. Mean surface gravity 1.08g. Rotation period 25h 30m 3s. Axial inclination 11°12'33". Energy absorption 0.537.

Surface atmospheric pressure 6.15. Composition: oxygen-nitrogen mix with sulphur compound taint at low altitudes. [Warning: Atmosphere unbreathable at low altitudes. Protective equipment required]. Hydrographic percentage 68%. Mean temperature (30° latitude, sea level): 91.6°C. Mean temperature (30° latitude, Base Habitation Level 12.5 km): 22.4°C.

Native life present, non-sentient. Total system population 8.209 billion.

**Satellites:** One. Ambrym, orbit 45,3361 km.

**Primary cities:** orbital - HighPeak Orbital, 89 million, Starport A; Korovall Orbital, 66 million, Starport A; Valblanche Orbital, 52 million, Starport A; GenMett Orbital Service Facility, 4 million, Starport B. Ground - HighPeak, 915 million, Starport A; Korovall, 832 million, Starport A; Valblanche, 774 million, Starport A; Monvass, 438 million, Starport B; Bordumerr, 431 million, Starport B.

**World Government** is a feudal technocracy, deriving its authority from Sector Duchess Karyn'a Julianne dea Viisarikaa. Social Outlook: Progressive, enterprising, competitive, militant, discordant, friendly. Law Profile: Territorial. 4-14552. Technology Profile: GF-GGGFF-GGGG-GG-G.

**Population Breakdown:** 87% Humaniti, Imperial, 12.7% Aslan, 0.2% S'mrii, 0.1% other minor races.

Extracted from "A Pilot's Guide to Pact Subsector" 121st Edn. 1115, TAS Universal Publications, Sylea

## STARPORT PROCEDURE

As Medurma is a sector capital, its starport facilities are under the joint control of the Imperial Port Authority and the Federation of Medurma Interface Ports Administration. Medurma is an important exporter of processed resources and is an both high-technology machinery, and as such is well-provided with orbital and ground-based bulk-cargo handling facilities.

**Landing Pattern** - Starships arriving insystem should first contact MACTAZ (Medurma/Ambrym Central Traffic

Zone Control) for approach vector allocation. The flow of traffic is such that vessels are often "stacked" for 1-3 hours in far orbit awaiting clearance for clocking with an orbital port or planetary landing. COTAC (Close Orbit Traffic Control) handles approaches to low orbit platforms and landings. COTAC often insists that landings be controlled by ground compute, due to traffic density and weather conditions.

\*\*\*\*\*IMPORTANT\*\*\*\*\*IMPORTANT\*\*\*\*\*IMPORTANT\*\*\*

Ambrym is an Imperial Preserve - Overflying of the Ducal Estates on Ambrym is NOT permitted. Medurman SysDef is authorised to use deadly force in the event of any violations.

[SPACEWAYS REG'S 22312 SEC 23/2 1115 ]

\*\*\*\*\*IMPORTANT\*\*\*\*\*IMPORTANT\*\*\*\*\*IMPORTANT\*\*\*

**Clearance** - IPA is generally highly efficient, arranging Inward Clearance within 30 minutes of landing. The Clearance party consists of a Port warden, health officer, and Customs and Immigration officer (often an Aslan) and their subordinates. Safety Inspections and customs searches are generally carried out by TL16 scan droids.

**Port Facilities** - All A-class surface ports have extrality zones, where Imperial laws are in force. All major ports have a minimum of 60 berths available. Jacqueline J. Martin/HighPeak Surface Port has 118 berths with a further 20 under construction at the time of writing. Current traffic levels are around 122%. Full starship construction and drydock/overhaul facilities are available, and are INDISS 4 star/ TAS A1 rated.

**Port Costs** - Refined Fuel Cr.420/tonne. Unrefined Fuel Cr.75/tonne. Ocean refuelling is legal, but pilots are advised to consult IPA weather reports, because wind-shear effects at low levels can be extremely severe. Berthing Costs: Cr.180 for the first six days, Cr.120 per day thereafter. Warehousing Costs Cr.9 per tonne per week. Security Costs Cr.40 flat tax per week. Shuttle Costs: Cr.6 per tonne of cargo, Cr.32 per passenger.

**Portside Facilities** - As befits a sector capital, the quality of accommodation on Medurma Ss generally superb, but also correspondingly costly - a suite at the Sheridan Constellar at HighPeak costs in the region of Cr.3200 a night. Trader crews on less extravagant budgets often stay at Suki's or the Touchdown Zone in HighPeak. where the nightlife decidedly lively.

Startown HighPeak is a domed area built into the terraces surrounding an ancient impact crater, which houses the port itself. The Startown is laid out in a ring/ray scheme - the thriving businesses on Rings Ten through Twelve can cater for the most broadminded of spacers...

Security is jointly provided by Imperial Marines and Federation Ports Administration enforcers equipped with neural weapons, and is generally low-key.

All of Medurma's ports and urban areas are served by efficient gravlev rapid transit networks. Seven-day transit passes are available for Cr.95.

Medurman restaurants can provide food from all of the major cultures in the Imperium, and many of the minor ones. Old Earth cuisine is a speciality of many establishments. Prices vary widely - travellers are advised to check on the local datanet.

## SYSTEM DATA

### Tanyell G0 V

1 Enfer	FS00263-C Re
2 Cytheria	H210121-F
3 Medurma	A9D7354-G Sector Capital
- 45 Ambrym	F266534-F Mi Im Preserve.
4 MainBelt	F000522-F
5 Lyon	Large GG
- 2 Arc	YR00100-G Re
- 5 Feyzin	F500365-G Mi Re
- 8 Sathonay	H100000-0
- 11 BHRignais	YS00000-0
- 17 Thurins	H210164-F
-125 Oullins	F320433-G Re.
6 OutBelt	G000422-F
7 Valence	Large GG
- 4 Soyons	HS00223-F
- 16 Alixan	Y200000-0
- 30 Besayes	H2A0224-F Im Preserve.
8 Avignon	Small cGG
9 Aramon	H100100-F
- 15 Noves	YS00000-0

## OVERVIEW

Medurma is an old world. Over many aeons, the gravitational influence of Ambrym, Medurma's massive nearby moon, has distorted the world into a "pear" shape, giving rise to a single continental massif covering much of one hemisphere. Subsequent faulting and erosion has broken this land mass into three smaller continents, but the sheer grandeur of Medurma's Landscape is still awe-inspiring. The highest peaks are almost 15 kilometres above sea Level - above the bulk of the dense, crushing atmosphere. Conditions above about 6km are quite pleasant, and it is in these regions that the majority of settlement has taken place.

## ATMOSPHERE AND CLIMATE

Medurma's atmosphere is classified by the IISS as "Dense High", with a pressure at sea level of 6.5 standard. Consequently, the planet's climate is far more influenced by altitude than latitude. The terrain can be broadly classified into several altitude "zones":-

**DeepLevel (Sea level to 4,500 metres):** A storm-wracked land of perpetual darkness, frequently drenched in acidic rain. The atmosphere acquires a sulphur compound taint from the constant volcanic activity. Surface water foams and boils constantly under the ninety-degree heat, but the sheer weight of the atmosphere prevents it boiling away completely. The oxygen partial pressure of 1.8 atmospheres is toxic to humans, necessitating full-body protection. Most of the terrain at this level is rocky desert or "badlands", carved into multitudes of steep-sided ravines by the powerful winds and frequent scalding floods.



However, in a few areas, life does flourish at this altitude. The primary flora is the Symmond's Tree Tree (*Caligoarbor subtilis symmondsi*), a thick-stemmed "bush" which grows to perhaps eight metres in height. The plant appears to be chemosynthetic, and is a symbiont with an underground network of hyphae or nutrient-carrying tubes, which can extend for many kilometres. Strangely, many aspects of the Symmond's Tree's biochemistry still defy analysis, and it has yet to be placed satisfactorily in the Medurman evolutionary scheme. The Symmond's Tree is economically important to Medurma (see later).

Important: Sulphonyl compounds present in the air cause the self-seal gel in Imperial military-issue vacc suits to crystallise and become brittle, making any suit punctures extremely hazardous. Native-produced TL16 suits function satisfactorily, but are correspondingly more expensive.

**Transition (4,500 to 5,500 metres):** As its name suggests, this is a transition region which is intermittently habitable, depending on variations in the

local atmospheric pressure. The local flora is primarily hotscrub, with coiled, wooded stems and small, spined leaves to resist water loss. Humans require thermal suits and filter masks/oxygen reducers to survive in this region.

A few brave souls live and work in the fifty-degree temperatures, harvesting genetically engineered flora for Medurma's pharmaceutical industries, and the tables of its most expensive restaurants.

**MidLevel (5,500 to 7,000 metres):** Life explodes into dazzling diversity at this Level, which is broadly analogous to the tropical regions of conventional planets. The atmospheric pressure drops below 2.0 standard, and is now classified as "Dense" and breathable without artificial assistance. Rainfall in this zone often exceeds 230 cm per year, as moisture-laden winds from DeepLevel are forced upward by the topography.

A tropical rainforest ecosystem blankets much of the planet at this altitude. Although great inroads on the forests have been made by human settlement, and plascrete conapt buildings and gravrail lines are never too far away, the Medurmans treat their world responsibly, and use their high technology to minimise the agricultural and urban pressures on the forests. Many think that since Medurma has been settled for so long, its jungles have given up all their secrets. Not so. Discoveries continue to be made - new fauna and flora, and even ruins left by the Medurmans' mysterious predecessor - race, the Miyavine...

**HighLevel (Above 7,000 metres):** The atmospheric pressure falls below 1.4 standard, and the climate becomes broadly temperate. The scenery is truly spectacular - only the ridges of the great continental mountain chains reach this zone. Visitors can gaze down from the neopine-clad slopes at the gold-tinged sea of clouds below, and marvel at the constant flickers of violent electrical storms.

**HighPeak, Korovall, Bordumerr** --All of the world's major urban areas are located in this zone, burrowing into the hearts of the mountain ranges, and down to their magma hearts. As examples of macroengineering. Medurma's cities have no parallel anywhere in the sector.

## VISITOR'S GUIDE

**The People:** As with any high population world, Medurma exhibits a great degree of social diversity. In general, however, Medurmans are a friendly, outgoing people with an optimistic, "can do" attitude. They are proud of their technological accomplishments --indeed, some say that they tend to display that technology rather too openly, as a symbol of their virility. The Medurmans are also a rather formal people, particularly among the affluent middle classes. Offworlders would do well to study Medurman social conventions, as the natives are rather quick to take offence. Most customs

are specifically directed towards courtesy and consideration towards others - yet duels are quite a common occurrence.

Although the culture is by no means patriarchal, Medurmans are very courteous, and somewhat protective towards women.

"Don't worry, a Medurman won't shoot you for jumping a queue. Usually." - Anon

**The Aslan:** Aslan form a significant minority of the Medurman populace. As such, they can be divided into two main groups:

i) The Aohalai: These Aslan maintain much of their original cultural identity, and tend to live separate from the Human population. Many Aohalai prides maintain free-flying grav settlements which occasionally "dock" with Human cities to replenish supplies and offload finished goods.

ii) The Alikasch: See "Contact! The Alikasch" this issue.

**The Cities:** The development of Medurma's mountain cities can be traced back to the planet's first phase of industrial expansion. The initial Solomani survey revealed extensive mineral deposits in a number of high mountain ranges, and by -1800 several mining companies, including Metallurgias Generales SR (now GenMett LIC), and ICE had begun to exploit them. Surface settlements grew up around the mining/industrial complexes, and given the intense pressure on productive land in mountainous regions, the urban areas inevitably began to expand into disused sections of the mine workings. Corporation executives lived on the upper levels, while mining labourers inhabited the humid, oppressive warrens below.

These early days have left their legacy in the social stratification of present Medurman cities. A city may have a thousand or more levels stretching over six kilometres in altitude, and thousands of square kilometres in area. In essence, an urban area such as Korovall is a dozen cities stacked on top of each other - each zone catering to a different social class. High technology has tended to reduce inter-class contact, and the need for "vertical" travel. A native may frequently travel on business to the opposite side of the planet, but never visit the part of his city a hundred metres below his feet.

City levels are typically numbered from 1000, where the excavation started, decreasing with decreasing altitude. The operation of geothermal heat pumps over centuries has progressively tamed the magma roots of the mountain ranges, but the lower reaches are still oppressively warm. Lower classes, including the Alikasch (q.v.) usually inhabit Levels 500 and below, whereas the social elite, the *Thousanders* live in the airy realms of 1000+. Medurmans even use the adjectives *upcit* and *downcit* to refer to a person's social level.



## POINTS OF INTEREST

**DeepLevel:** GenMett LIC and ICE (Indium Corporation of Europe) operate highly automated mines at DeepLevel, exploiting rich veins of platinum, palladium and other precious metals. The Symmond's Tree, long thought only to be a botanical curiosity, has proved to be a rich source of precursor chemicals for certain pharmaceuticals, including fibrinases and nerve growth factors. The residue can be easily processed into a protein-rich cake called symal, which can be used much like soya protein in food preparation. Huge plantations of Symmond's Trees are now harvested by corporations such as DeepLevel Harvesting and Symmonds Xenoculture, using advanced robots. Work at DeepLevel is difficult and dangerous. Corporations operating there frequently have a poor accident record, with workers complaining of migraines or strange hallucinations. Company physicians put this down to the effects of stress, and sensory deprivation while working in darkness...

**CitiCore:** The administrative centre of HighPeak, CitiCore is a subterranean faerieland of grav-suspended complexes interlinked by maglev routeways above Lake Vusuraykhar, which steams with geothermal heat.

**Zeyman'Ikaswu:** A major complex of ruins, dating from the Miyavine minor human race culture c.-19,500, Zeyman'Ikaswu is now almost encircled by the modern metropolis of HighPeak. The ruins exhibit remarkable architecture, including massive truncated pyramids of a pinkish marble-like stone, and huge stone hoops, whose purpose was unknown. Many buildings are covered with ornate frescoes hundreds of metres long. These are of particular interest, as experts are unable to identify several of the creatures depicted in them.

## HISTORY

### The Ancient Era

It is believed that the Ancients arrived at Medurma at about - 350,000, bringing with them Human specimens. The Humans were settled at three locations around the planet.

### The Miyavine Era

The Humans developed into a distinct minor race called the Miyavine, reaching a population of about 75 to 100 million by - 20,000. By about -19,000, they had reached a widespread TL4, with a few areas achieving TL5. Dirigibles were used for long-range transport. The Miyavine built extensive settlements at MidLevel and HighLevel (See "Places to Visit", Zeyman'Ikaswu), and extensive catacombs were dug into the mountain ranges where the stone was sufficiently soft. Mysteriously, archaeological records indicate that the Miyavine had more or less died out by -18,700. The reasons for this are unknown, but current theories include a genetically-programmed "time-bomb", which caused the Miyavine to become sterile after a certain number of generations.

### The Vilani Era

Naarsirka exploratory vessels first visited Medurma at about - 8,000. A number of exploratory mining bases were established during the years of the Ziru Sirka, reaching a total population of fifty thousand, but the harshness of the environment ruled out any prospect of further development.

### The Solomani Arrive

The Solomani first made a detailed survey of the Medurma system at about -2,150. The settlement programme which followed was sponsored by a number of corporations with Asian, European and North American origins. The landings began in -2,099, and the period which followed was known as the Cleansing - any Vilani inhabitants were deported or killed, and any evidence of Vilani settlement was systematically erased.

Follow-up surveys by the Solomani revealed extensive deposits of gold, platinum, iridium, palladium and traces of Lanthanum at DeepLevel. With their superior technology, corporations such as Metallurgias Generales were able to exploit these deposits.

### The Coming of the I hatei

I hatei ships spreading into former Second Imperial space reached Medurma at about -1000, during the depths of the Long Night. Contact with the Humans resulted in a schism among the Aslan colonists. The Alignment Wars which followed left a lasting mark on Medurma - many Aslan renounced the Way of Kusyu altogether, and were absorbed into Human society. (See the article "Contact! The Alikasch" in this issue). The reintroduction of Jump technology allowed scientific progress to accelerate, and brought a new expansionistic phase to Medurman culture.

### The Medurma Pact

In -524, an agreement signed by the governments of Medurma and Dipa established the Medurma Pact, an interstellar state which grew to cover much of what is now Pact subsector. At its height, the Pact reached a solid TL11. The historian Bryen Colveni draws many parallels between the Pact and the 'infant' Sylean Federation, particularly in their political and military structures, in his text "False Dawns", and suggests that the Pact had the potential to become the core of a much larger state. Its militaristic nature would, however be its downfall; after about -250, the Pact was in almost continuous conflict, particularly in the Slaver Wars with the Aakhri Empire to rimward. The state was economically overextended by the ongoing warfare, and was in decline by -10.

### The Imperial Era

Medurma capitulated to the expanding Third Imperium in 90, and was designated as sector capital in 274. The Viisarikaa family, which had given the Pact the majority of its Regents since -350, now became the Ducal family of Dagudashaag Sector.

In 311, the food potential of a form of plant life at DeepLevel was realised, and extensive harvesting Operations began three years later. The Symmond's

Tree became part of the staple diet of many Medurman inhabitants.

In 615, Julianne Viisarikaa killed "Emperor" Karl I in battle, to restore stability to rimward Dagudashaag, and install Cleon V on the Iridium Throne.

In 862, DeepLevel Harvesting LIC was formed.

In 1051, the IISS recorded that Medurma had achieved a High Common Tech Level of 16.

In 1114, Karyn Dea Viisarikaa (then aged 24) became Sector Duchess of Dagudashaag, following the death of her father in the ongoing warfare on Lenashuuk/Argi.

## GOVERNMENT

The Federation of Medurma is governed by a Feudal Technocracy: "Government by specific individuals for those who agree to be ruled. Relationships are based on the performance of technical activities which are mutually beneficial."

The government is divided into three arms, the executive, legislative and judicial, with the executive arm being considered as the representative authority. Non-technical officers in the executive branch are promoted on merit, as in a civil service bureaucracy. Technical officers (including Science Ministers) are provided on secondment from Medurman corporations, with the number provided being decided by the corporation's profitability. The more profitable a company is, the greater the impact it has on the implementation of policy in its area.

The legislative arm of the Federation of Medurma is the Federation Congress, a council of 660 members. 25% are elected by corporations, as above, 50% are elected on "science poll" (only those scientifically qualified may vote), and 25% are elected by an open poll.

### Legal System - Information For Visitors

Medurma's Legal system is administered by the Federation Department of Justice, which is strictly independent of the government. The overall Law Level of Medurma is 4, which is relatively lenient. Medurmans value freedom of expression deeply, though one should never abuse that freedom by being gratuitously offensive to another. The only significant exception to the standard law level system on Medurma is in the area of weapons possession. Medurman law emphasises the right of an individual to bear arms, it also emphasises freedom of choice, and the fact that an individual is always responsible for his own actions (the concept of "diminished responsibility" does not strictly exist in Medurman law).

The following is excerpted from the Personal Weapons Act, 455 TI: 4,53 viii) Weapons Clearance Application:

All Federal citizens and (under the terms of the Imperial Charter 92 TI) resident and non-resident Imperial

citizens may apply to the Federal Department of Justice for clearance to hold one or more personal weapons, on presentation of a certificate of competence in the weapon(s) concerned. The weapon categories and possession restrictions are as follows:-

a) Category One:("Green"): Semiautomatic CPR shotguns and rifles, handguns with a calibre of 9mm or less. Minimum age is 14.

b) Category Two:("White"): All light assault weapons, up to and including fully automatic Gauss weapons of 10mm calibre. Minimum age is 16.

c) Category Three:("Platinum"): No restrictions other than those existing under the Imperial Charter and other relevant Imperial legislation. All requests in this category are investigated by the Federal Supreme Court Committee on Special Weapons Possession.

4.54 ii) Exclusions: The following weapons require no clearance, and may be obtained freely:-Tasers/non-lethal electrical stun weapons, neural disruptor weapons, blade weapons with a length of less than 20 cm.

5.10 i) Holocards: Weapon holders must display their clearance holocards at all times.

Green and White clearance applications are usually processed in less than 48 hours. Visitors should note that custom requires that weapons be carried openly - concealing a weapon is tantamount to cowardice. The wearing of any obvious kind of armour without good reason is also viewed with contempt.

"Real men don't shoot tranqs..." - Anon-

## DUELLING

There is one major caveat that non-citizens should be aware of - duelling. Any individual who causes offence may be challenged to a duel by a holder of equivalent weapons clearance. This custom has been ascribed to both European (Solomani) and Aslan influences. Duels to "first blood" may be held on the spot, while duels to unconsciousness must be held with a Justice officer and medical expert present, though failure to do so is a minor misdemeanour. Duels to the death are illegal but do happen.

Killing an individual with lower weapons clearance carries a summary death sentence.

Visitors to Medurma should bear in mind that its inhabitants are generally responsible and law-abiding people. All-in firefights with automatic weapons are not common occurrences on upcit routeways. Anyone indulging in such gunplay is liable to experience the Medurman version of a "Citizen's Arrest" (sometimes, they forget to use tranqs...).

## Medurma in the Rebellion

Wars have rules, and so far as it suits the purposes of the combatants, those rules are obeyed. Karyn

Viisarikaa believed at first that she was dealing with rational, decent men, who had the best interests of the people of the Imperium at heart, and who would obey those rules. That was her greatest mistake.

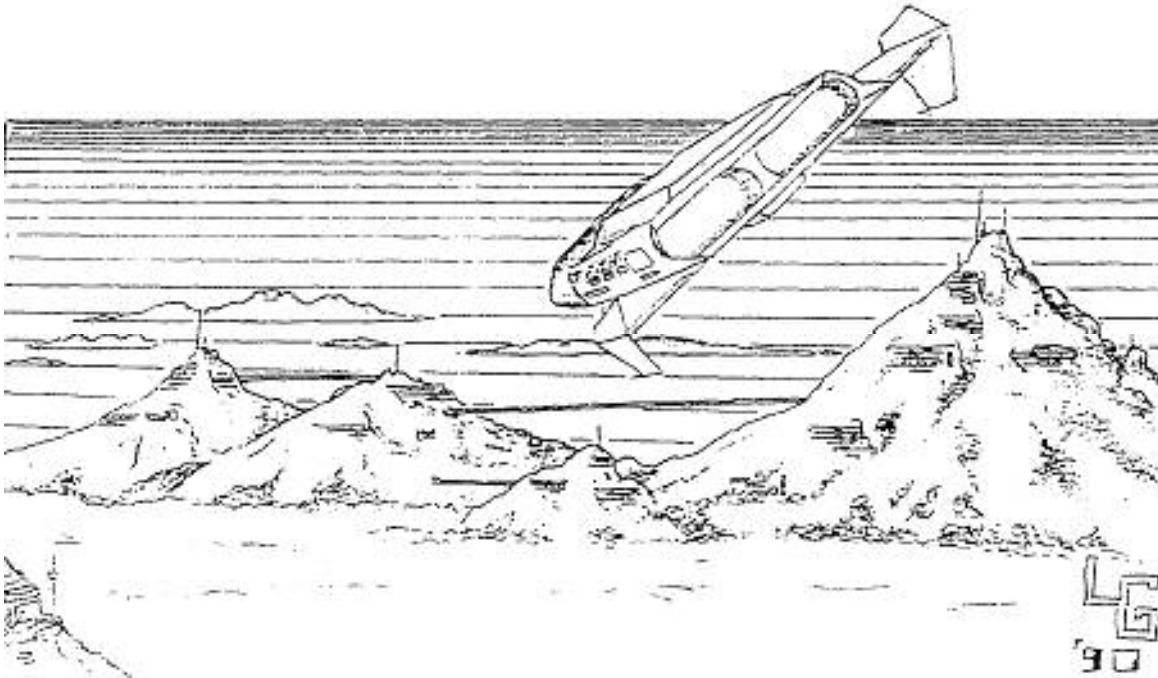
The Illardis Agreement, signed by the Sylean Federation in -212, and ratified by the Imperium in the First Reference Concord, sets out explicit requirements as to the treatment of casualties, prisoners-of-war, non-combatants, and non-aligned forces. One of the primary articles of the Concord is the open/closed planet rule, whereby a world which wishes to remain non-aligned may declare its space and ground-based colonial military facilities to be off Limits to both sides. In accordance with the Emergency Action Plan devised by Sector Admiral DeVitt-Langdon, on 305-1116 Medurma was declared *Conditionally Open To Diplomatic And Medivac Units Only*.

Korovall Orbital was prepared to act as a casualty receiving station. The system margin was seeded with

force based around SecFltCom Medurma, led by, the former Sector Admiral Joseph DeVitt-Langdon. Medurman forces attempted with little success, to preserve Pact's neutrality as battles raged in other nearby systems, but their home system remained untouched.

The news of the nuclear bombardment of Shankida/Remnants and Dashi on 230-1117 had an electrifying effect on the population of Medurma. What had been a major interstellar war became a battle for survival. Violent anti-Lucan and anti-Dulinor demonstrations flared all over the planet: symbols of the Imperium were attacked and defaced. Karyn had unanimous support as she declared the formation of the Free Medurman Federation. Although there was never a formal succession, Karyn acknowledged that Lucan's act of genocide severed ties she felt to the Imperium as it then existed.

The strength of Medurma's defenses, and pressures on



long-range sensor satellites. Merchant traffic was progressively confined to tightly-controlled corridors. Civilians practised their emergency evac drills, gazed at the skies, and waited...

As the first waves of war washed across the subsector, Medurma did its best to remain calm, and organised. Her spaceports were jammed with refugee traffic, her shipyards packed with traders clamouring to retrofit with weaponry, her spaceways crowded with a rag-tag collection of former Imperial and colonial naval units from Pact, Sapphyre and Remnants now claiming allegiance to Karyn. Arms merchants had a field day as mercenary units flocked to re-equip themselves to TL16 standards, and travel on to the conflicts flaring almost daily elsewhere in the subsector.

Throughout early 1117, the "rag-tag" fleet elements progressively re-organised themselves into an effective

other fronts, had protected the system from attacks so far. No longer. Karyn's defiance was too much for Lucan to stomach. He ordered Admiral Simcon Wainfrost to "make an example of her"...

On the morning of 080-1118, a medivac convoy headed by the hospital ship INNS Caduceus entered the Medurma system, requesting priority approach to Korovall Orbital. They were cleared through the outer defence perimeter, and were approaching the orbital city, when two of the transports were vaporised by massive fusion warheads. Radioactive "chaff" was spread throughout the close orbit zones, blinding sensor systems. Simultaneously, strike cruisers dropped their black globes at extreme orbit range and began launching assault boats.

On the ground traitors seized their opportunity SysDef Vice Marshal Yuriy Iranashi, now an agent for Lucan's

forces, managed to disable the computer controlling much of the world's active planetary defences. Even so, Lucan-Imperial forces braved an inferno of plasma fire as they landed at their targets - HighPeak Starport, industrial complexes at Korovall-Forrester, Lanthanum ore refineries at Bordumerr-Lascalles...

Although competently executed, the attack on Medurma was misconceived from the start. The terrain was hostile, important sites deeply buried, the defenders well-organised and equipped with superior weaponry, and fanatically opposed to the invaders. Imperial forces made some progress for the first few weeks, but the conditions began to take their toll. Relief forces of the Free Medurman Navy headed by Admiral Elliot arrived on 119-1118 and forced the bulk of the besieging units to retreat. Warfare continued on the planet's surface, but Lucan's forces were now largely cut off and were mopped - up unit by unit.

This is the situation which exists in early 1119. The Medurmans consider themselves bloodied, but unbowed. They have taken the worst that Lucan could throw at them, and survived. Many military units among the Medurman forces have taken on their old pre-Imperial Pact designations and the slogan '*Pacter and Proud!*' can be heard once more. It will be hard work repairing the damage done by the warfare but the Medurmans can do it, and they can take the fight elsewhere, and seek vengeance among the stars.



## REFEREE'S INFORMATION

### Secrets of the Ancients

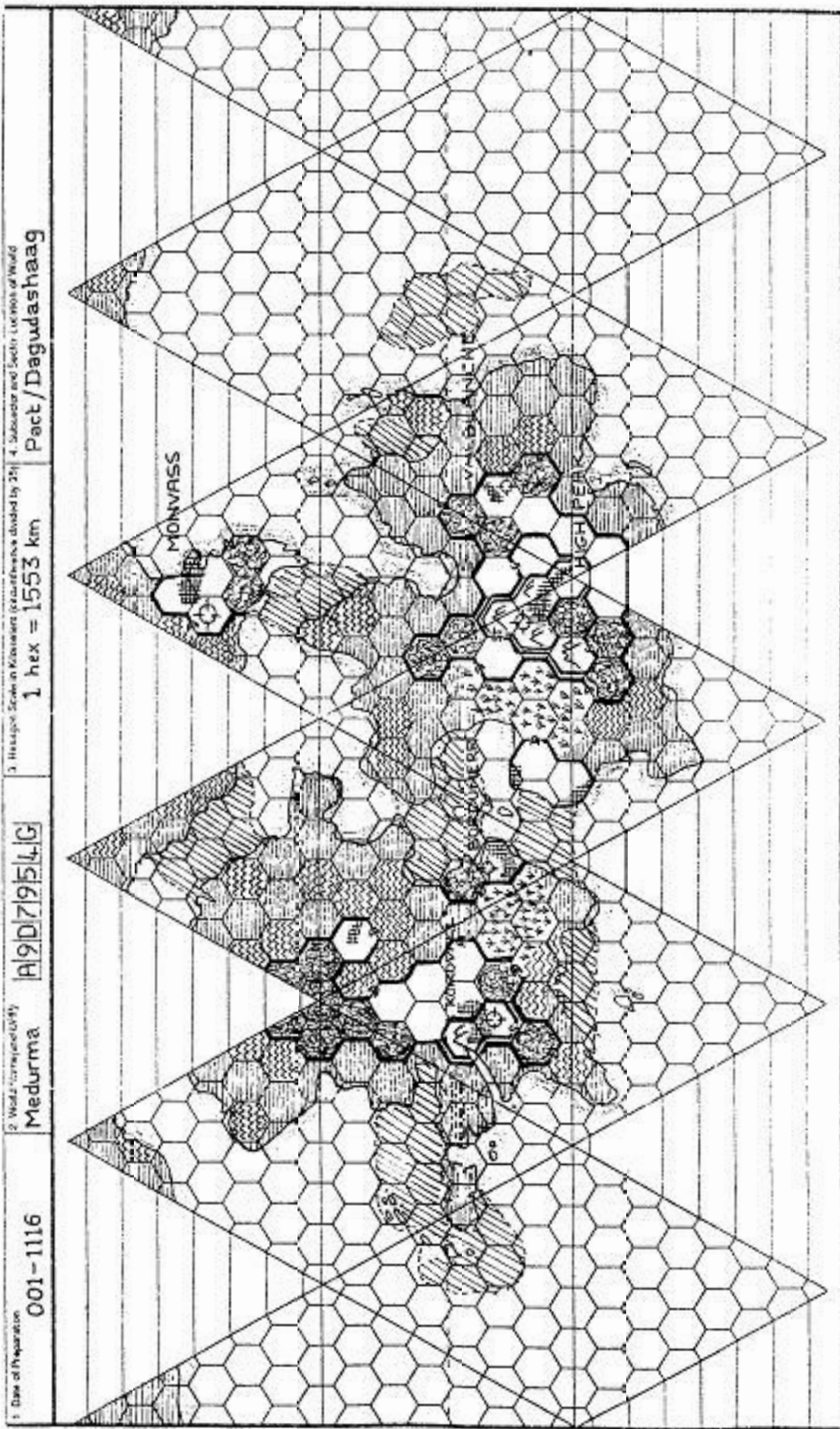
The Ancients arrived at Medurma at about -350,000, bringing with them Human specimens. The Humans were settled at some three locations around the planet. This group of Droyne was a research team investigating instantaneous communications. An asteroid station was set up in stationary, orbit around Medurma, and equipped with extensive tachyon transceiver systems. A plant from another system was geneered to act as a psionic receiving system and cultured at DeepLevel. Tachyons received at the orbital station were turned into psions (which are sublight particles) and beamed to this "living antenna", where the signals were decoded. The Droyne planned to geneer the Humans, so that they could tend the plants at DeepLevel, but this project was interrupted by the Final War.

Luckily, damage to Medurma during the Final War was relatively slight. The asteroid station was utterly disintegrated, as were the base facilities at DeepLevel, but the psionic plants, and the Humans survived. A number of half-mile-wide craters bear witness to the rain of debris onto Medurma - the largest of these now forms the site of the Jacqueline J. Martin Starport Facility.

A small number of Chirpers survived for a few millennia on Ambrym, but eventually died out (partly because of their small gene pool), leaving virtually no trace.

### The Fate of the Miyavine

The Miyavine minor human race shared the fate of many who were incautious when dealing with Ancient technology. They had developed pressure suits which enabled them to survive for extended periods at DeepLevel, and a number of expeditions were made. On one of these. they recovered a number of puzzling artifacts .... one of which unfortunately carried an Ancient-geneered retrovirus. The virus had no immediately obvious symptoms, apart from causing progressive sterility. By -18,700 the Medurmans had simply aged and died.



1 Date of Preparation 001-1116  
 2 World Coordinates (UN) Medurma A9D7954G  
 3 Hexagon Scale in Kilometers (Kilometers divided by 25) 1 hex = 1553 km  
 4 Subsector and Sector Location of World Pact / Dagudashaag

- Desert
- Rough
- Jungle
- Mountain
- Symonds Forest
- Urban
- Isobar (Atmosphere Contour)
- D = Dook
- S = Standard
- T = Thin
- Seasonal Ocean

# CONTACT: ATHAR

What follows is a detailed look at the Athar, a minor Sophont species native to the A'A'Suni system in Pact subsector. Athar are rarely encountered on Human worlds, although there is a small Imperial trade enclave attached to the scout office in one of the larger Athar cities.

## INTRODUCTION

The Athar are descended from six limbed carnivore chasers that originally adapted to a pack existence in the badlands and plains of A'A'Suni. The forerunners of the Athar hunted within clearly marked territories, preying on large herbivores as they followed traditional migration routes.

Two million years ago changes in the star caused massive climatic upheavals across the planet. The complex migratory patterns of herbivores began to differ, with the result that different species began to colonise new areas. The whole ecosystem that the proto-Athar relied upon began to disappear. As their numbers began to dwindle and their food sources became more scarce, new carnivores began to move into the few remaining proto-Athar hunting areas. It is believed that this was the final spark that triggered the development of intelligence.

## APPEARANCE

The Athar are homeothermic, trilaterally symmetrical quadrupeds. They have two pairs of powerful rear legs ending in a wide padded foot, and a single pair of forearms ending in dexterous hands. The head mounts the sensory organs, and sits atop a long neck. A broad flat tail is used to aid balance. Their bodies are covered in a thick leathery hide that acts

both as insulation and protection. They mass around 200 kg, and average five meters from the point of the snout to the tip of the tail.

Generally Athar are a pale blue in colour, with irregular blue stripes running across their backs. Their underbellies are white, and their eyes are bright red. Some older males and females develop a purple colouring around the neck and eyes. Their hide is covered in dense layer of mucus that prevents ice forming.



## PHYSIOLOGY

The head contains the brain and carries the main sensory organs. Atop the head are four eyes that when selectively closed can provide either binocular or all round vision. The Athar see light towards the infra-red range of the spectrum, and have an ability to 'zoom in' on whatever they are looking at. They hear sound at much lower frequencies than do humans, and have a strong sense of smell.

The forelimbs originally developed to assist feeding by grasping and manoeuvring live creatures. The hands end in three strong, dexterous, mutually opposable fingers. On A'A'Suni a creature will freeze solid just minutes after it dies, and because of this the Athar will only eat freshly killed food. Their head contains a thin hollow proboscis that is used both to inject a digestive juice into their meal and to suck out the resulting goo; the arms and hands are used to facilitate the insertion of this proboscis.

The internal organs of the Athar differ radically from those of Humans, although many serve similar functions. They utilise atmospheric oxygen, breathing through a series of holes along the sides of their bodies, four large structures within the body perform a

## THE A'A'SUNI SYSTEM (Second Survey Stats)

A'A'Suni 2227 C5468AD 5 S 300 Im M4 VI

Primary: K'Surrthi, Stellar Classification: M4 VI, Stellar Mass: 0.114 Std, Stellar Luminosity: 0.232 Std, Stellar Radii: 0.135 Std. K'Surrthi is a cold subdwarf star that displays no unusual characteristics or behaviour.

The tiny A'A'Suni system consists of three large planets and the three moons that orbit them. The main world and its moon Inuirsuk make up a binary planet system. Both orbit a common centre of gravity and share remarkably similar physical characteristics. The large amounts of cometary and meteoric material present in the system can pose a threat to ships.

A'A'Suni, Orbital Distance 27.8 million km, Orbital Period: 96 days, 18 hours, 10 minutes, Rotational Period: 22 hours, 19 minutes. A'A'Suni and Inuirsuk spiral around a centre of gravity located between them once every 6 days, 23 hours, 25 minutes. Axial Tilt: 34 degrees. Diameter: 8209 km, Density: 0.89 Std, Mass: 0.183 Std, Surface Gravity: 0.443 Gees. Atmosphere rated as Thin, Tainted, Surface Pressure: 0.813 Atm Std, Composition: Nitrogen 72%, Oxygen 27%, Argon, Xenon, Carbon Dioxide, Water Vapour and Other Trace Gases 1%. Atmosphere is classified as Tainted because of the unusually high levels of oxygen. Humans must wear filter masks at all times. Hydrographic percentage 62%, Composition: Water Ice. Average Surface Temperature: -127 °C. Native life present.

A'A'Suni and its moon Inuirsuk are binary planets, each spiralling around the other once every seven days as

function similar to lungs, and two hearts pump the blood. The digestive system is much simpler than that of humans, and can only accept fluids. Other organs in the body perform functions similar to the liver and kidneys, regulating the various chemical processes.

There are two sexes, male and female. Females are fertilised by the males and lay large leathery eggs, which hatch after roughly, one local year. The young are blind and helpless for the first couple of weeks after they hatch and have to be provided for. They are supplied with small animals which they instinctively grasp and feed on. They are able to see and move around on their own after roughly thirty local days. They develop over roughly twenty local years, until they are old enough to enter their first family hunt. During this time they are educated by their relatives.

## PSYCHOLOGY

The Athar think in a different way to Humans and we can never really hope to understand the Athar psyche. Like all intelligent species, their minds have evolved as a result of their environment. That at least gives hints as to the way their

they orbit the central star. Their close separation causes heavy seismic activity, and both worlds are plagued by earth tremors. The massive gravitational forces playing on the planets generate enough heat to melt some of the ice that lies deep inside each world. Across the surface of both worlds are massive chains of "ice canoes" that spew gases, water and ice hundreds of meters into the air.

The polar regions of A'A'Suni are swathed in layers of ice many kilometres deep. The ice extends out in enormous glaciers. where it is forced into flat seas, huge ridges, and canyons hundreds of meters deep. The small continents are tracts of high ground and the peaks of ancient mountains.

K'Surrthi, the central star, is only one fifth as bright as Sol, and the surface of the planet is constantly in a dim red twilight. A'A'Suni is a world of sparkling ice and inky black shadows, bathed in a deep crimson. Most plants have leaves ranging in colour from deep scarlet to vivid purple. Many creatures are similarly coloured, using the vegetation as camouflage.

Native life on A'A'Suni can only exist at very low temperatures. For most native species the ideal temperature is -130°C, but extremes to as high as -100°C or as low as -170 °C can be tolerated. Their chemical and physical makeup is entirely geared to these temperatures, and ceases to function beyond these ranges. If they were exposed to ideal human temperatures life-forms from A'A'Suni would boil to death in seconds. A'A'Suni is the homeworld of a minor sophont species, the Athar.

thought processes work. People frequently apply human attitudes to the Athar they are variously described as being conservative, aloof, and proud: they are, but there are deeper reasons for their behaviour.

Perhaps the biggest single drive within the Athar is the urge to feed. Feeding is the main focus of the day, and a meal is preceded by a series of rituals culminating in the capture and killing of live prey. All Athar revel in the thrill of the chase, and a strict hierarchy exists within the feeding group as to who gets the best targets. The leader of a family group always takes the first kill, and part of the meal is taken to those unable to take part in the hunt. Care is taken to ensure that all members of the family are well fed..

There are good reasons why the Athar place such value on feeding. A long term failure to feed (over more than three or four standard days) causes an Athar to become lethargic and slow. Eventually it enters a short period of dormancy, followed by what can only be described as a reversion to pure animal. It becomes totally uncontrollable and attacks anything close to it until it has been rendered unable to fight or has gorged itself.



Humans find Athar feeding habits at best unsavoury and at worst sickening. By way of an example, at a typical meal a family will gather in a large fenced enclosure and a number of animals will be set loose in it. The family descend upon the creatures, which are already in a state of panic, and set about them in a frenzy of killing and gorging. Large feasts have become the subject of legend. The Athar find preserved food distasteful, and synthetic food almost unbearable. The Athar place great emphasis on the extended family. In their eyes all members of the race are somehow related, and as such are kinsmen or brothers. Small family units are most important, but distant figures are still respected and revered. Status within a family group is based on strength as well as experience. In real terms a physically weak individual who exhibits cunning is as revered as an individual who displays great stamina: both are different types of strength.

Another aspect of the Athar one that seems common to many species of sophont carnivores, is territory. Individual Athar rarely hold their own land: usually it is owned by the family. Most territories are areas of wilderness carefully maintained to provide an environment for Athar food animals, and it is rare for this land to be used for any other purposes. Industrial centres and cities are most often constructed in areas that do not provide a suitable environment for food animals, and are usually run by the government.

## SOCIETY

The A'A'Suni system is ruled by the I'Suther, which loosely translates as Father or Leader. This is slightly misleading, as the I'Suther is equally likely to be male or female. The rank of I'Suther is a lifetime position: a new Leader is elected only when the old leader is incapable of further decision making. The I'Suther has the final say in any decision made by the Councils, although such a step is rarely taken. The I'Suther is a charismatic figure, respected by the Councils and by the populace at large.

The world is actually run by a bureaucracy divided into a number of Councils, all concerned with different aspects of life on A'A'Suni. Some of the most important include the Council of the Environment, the Council of Provision, and the Council of Defence. Usually a single extended family forms the core of a Council, and is headed by the leader of the family. Each of the Councils has a number of watchdog committees within it, whose membership is drawn from other families and Councils.

Athar buildings are huge rambling structures designed to provide shelter to an extended family, their possession and their livestock. They consist of a large central chamber and adjoining

apartments for the family leader and his close relatives, and a series of linked rooms for each of the other related families. A typical house may be some kilometres across and contain up to a thousand individuals. The Athar display a preference for rounded tines, domes, and arches.

Athar rarely wear clothing, but liberally adorn themselves with body paint and jewellery. Different styles of decoration denote an individual's place in society, as well as their occupation and rank. When clothing has to be worn (such as protective suits) it is usually functional and plain.

## BRIEF HISTORY

The Athar became sentient as a result of major climatic changes and pressure from other competing carnivores. They developed slowly, with migrating groups populating the surface of their world. They moved through a stone age, and developed agriculture (in the form of animal herding) by -400,000. Technology advanced slowly, but by -9000 the Athar had a budding TL 1 civilisation.

Around -9,000 the Athar were contacted by Vilani scouts, and almost immediately were inundated by merchants seeking new markets and exotic alien items. Their technology advanced in leaps and bounds, and by the time of the Consolidation Wars had reached TL 8. They began to explore their own star system, but never travelled beyond its bounds. During the Consolidation Wars the Athar briefly resisted the Vilani, but were forced to capitulate when they were threatened with nuclear weapons. They were inducted into the Pax Vilanica and remained as a stable TL 7 culture, supplied with external rather than self-produced technology. When the Solomani burst onto the interstellar scene and conquered the Vilani the Athar were quietly brought into the Rule of Man.

The coming of the Long Night marked the end of the golden age of the Athar. Their technology, artificially raised by both the Vilani and the Solomani, plummeted back to a TL of 3. The many small Empires that dominated the rimward edge of Dagudashaag never touched on the A'A'Suni system (although the Medurman Pact claimed it as a member state).

By the founding of the Third Imperium Athar technology had climbed back up to TL 4. The Athar were contacted by scouts, and voluntarily joined the Imperium in 83. Their technology has continued to climb since then, and is now bordering on TL 6. The Rebellion so far has had little effect on the Athar. They are quiet, patient members of Lucan's Imperium, receiving little from the Emperor and in turn providing little to his faction.



## FURTHER NOTES ON THE ATHAR

### Homeworld and Automatic Skills

The Athar homeworld is A'A'Suni, in Pact subsector of Dagudashaag. In homeworld generation terms it is rated as 'Starport C, Medium Size, Thin Atmos, Wet World, Moderate Population, Extensive Laws, Industrial Tech'. All Athar characters must originate on this world. The race developed from carnivore chasers, and still display the vestiges of their animal origins. All Athar receive default skills of Hunting 0 and Brawling 0. They do not receive the normal homeworld default skills

### Age and Aging

A normal healthy Athar can expect to live for approximately sixty standard years. Character generation begins at the age of eight (when an Athar reaches physical maturity) and can continue for a maximum of seven terms. Careers can continue beyond seven terms if mandatory reenlistment (roll 12 exactly for reenlistment) occurs. An Athar cannot attempt to find Anagathics simply because there are none available. Human Anagathics don't work on Athar, and no native Anagathic substances have been discovered on A'A'Suni.

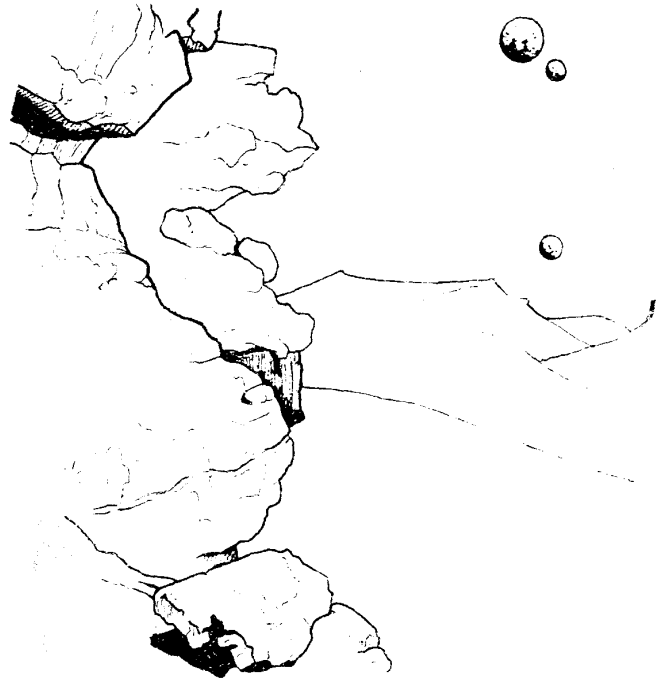
Physical aging begins at 20, and *affects* the character once every four years. It is identical in its effects to Human aging. Thus at ages 20, 26, 30 and 34 the character has to roll 8+ to avoid strength dropping by one point. From ages 38, 42, 46 and 50 the character has to roll 9+ to avoid strength dropping by one point, and so on. Athar that suffer an aging crisis usually elect to end their lives rather than placing a burden on the family group.

### Characteristics and Racial Maximums

Strength Rolled on 11D6+1. Maximum 10 (A).  
Dexterity Rolled on 2D6. Maximum 15 (F).  
Endurance Rolled on 1D6+8. Maximum 20 (M).  
Intelligence Rolled on 1D6+2. Maximum 13 (D).  
Education Rolled on 1D6+2. Maximum 13 (D).  
Social Status Special. Maximum 15 (F).

### Physical Characteristics

A'A'Suni has a much lower surface gravity than Terra, which means that objects that have the same mass and volume weigh less. Relatively speaking an Athar is just as strong as a Human, but in real terms Humans are far stronger. An Athar is never able to attain the levels of physical strength that a Human can reach. Athar and Humans are as dexterous as each other. While Humans have the ability to manipulate small and delicate objects with their articulate hands, Athar are naturally more athletic. They are able to jump, spin and twist with the grace and confidence of a Human gymnast, trait that evolved as a result of hunting small fast prey.



Athar hands are slightly clumsier and not as strong as Human hands.

Athar are naturally hardier and more enduring than Humans. They can withstand greater extremes of temperature, and can run faster for longer periods. Athar have an extremely rugged internal chemistry, one that is able to withstand the rigours of their world's environment.

### Mental Characteristics

Both intelligence and education are very subjective things, and are extremely difficult to measure. In Humaniti intelligence is defined as a combination of IQ, common sense and reasoning power, and education is defined as the ability to arrive at a logical conclusion, general knowledge, and memory. For an Athar this is no different: the average Athar is just as smart as the average Human. However, an Athar can never quite attain the levels of intelligence that exceptional Humans can reach.

### Social Status

Social Status is fairly fluid among Athar. It is based on their age, cunning and health. The base social level is 1D6-2 (minimum 1). This level is further adjusted as is detailed below:

- i) Add one to social status for every term that an Athar character completes.
- ii) The average lifeforce of an Athar is 23. For every five points of lifeforce that an Athar character has in excess of 23 add one to their social status.
- iii) The average experience of an Athar is 11. For

every five points of experience that an Athar character has in excess of 11 add one to their social status.

iv) Add one to social status for every level of Leader skill that the character receives.

#### Careers and Skills

There are only a few eligible careers for Athar. They can elect to join the Army, or become a Bureaucrat, a Rogue, a Hunter or a Barbarian. Should an Athar be subjected to the draft they enter the Army by default. All ranks, skills, and benefits are received as normal.

Only Medical skill is significantly changed within the game. Receipt of Medical skill allows the character to treat wounded Athar and diagnose Athar diseases, and also allows a character to care for other lifeforms native to A'A'Suni. It gives absolutely no benefits when dealing with alien lifeforms (such as Humans). Xenomedicine, the ability to treat alien species, is non-existent.

#### Role-Playing Notes

There are a number of Important aspects to Athar that have to be considered when using them within the game. The first and most obvious is that Athar are very different to Humans. They have evolved in a radically different environment, and have different senses. The way they perceive the universe and the things they consider basic are not what a human would consider normal.

Athar have a body chemistry that can function only in very low temperatures, and consider a temperature of around -130 degrees centigrade to be optimum. An Athar would boil to death in seconds on most of the Human inhabited worlds of the Imperium. Likewise, Humans would quickly freeze to death in temperatures that Athar find comfortable. The upshot is that Athar are forced to wear hostile environment suits whenever they journey to worlds inhabited by Humans, and vice versa.

Athar are very conscious of status and rank. They respect those who are senior to them and 'mother' those who rank below them. They respect distant authority (such as the I'Suther or Emperor Lucan), but have a more immediate respect for closer figures. They will obey the orders of high-ranking figures around them first.

Problem solving is considered to be just as important to an Athar as physically overcoming an obstacle. The cunning individual has received a place in Athar society equal to that of the great hunter. A character that deals with a problem using brains rather than brawn is highly regarded. Many of the revered figures in Athar society have been physically weak, but have excelled mentally.

Communal feeding is the focus of the Athar day, and the centre of Athar life. Once per day a family group will gather in the feeding enclosure. A number of live food animals are released into the enclosure, and will be chased and killed by the family. The leader of the family will always take the first kill. Athar will only eat live animals native to A'A'Suni. They totally refuse to eat preserved or artificial meals.

Failure to feed for four or five standard days causes a period of dormancy in Athar, which is followed by a feeding frenzy. These dormant/wild phases continue until the creature has eaten or until it is physically unable to move. In game terms dormancy will last for a period equivalent to endurance in hours, and is like a deep sleep. In the wild this was to allow other family members to provide food to their companion.

If no food is received the creature wakes up and goes berserk, attacking and killing all creatures that it can see. It will continue to do so for a period equal to 21 minus endurance hours. When in a feeding frenzy an Athar has both its intelligence and education reduced to one each, and has its strength increased by three (but not exceeding the natural maximums). It will continue to cycle through the dormancy and frenzy periods until its appetite has been sated.

# LIBRARY DATA: PACT

## Duchy Capital - Medurma.

Pact subsector is the most densely-populated and technologically-advanced of all the subsectors in Dagudashaag. As one Imperial economist once said "... The Dashi-Khusgulus-Argi triangle is a true industrial powerhouse." As befits such a region, it is a communications hub and the majority of the traffic between Core and Gushemege pass through this area. The open trading policies of the Medurman government have allowed high technology to "spill over" into surrounding systems. Most of the systems between Campbell and Dipa are at or above TL13. The subsector is named after the Medurma Pact, a petty state which dominated this region between -500 and -10.

Campbell	1722	B99A200-E	W	Lo	Ni	Wa				204	Im	M7	VI
DASHI	1723	C15098B-E		Hi	Po	De				404	Im	M2	V
New Titan	1726	CAA772-B	S	F1	Wa					714	Im	M1	V
EKliUCUSH	1728	A63698A-D	N	H1						312	Im	M4	IV M9 D
Ushmegili	1729	D86A204-A	S	Lo	Ni	Wa				722	Im	G1	V
Iash	1730	D203482-A			Ni	Va	Ic			804	Im	K2	V
Aiaiyal	1821	A572845-E								710	Im	K2	II
Bradley	1822	A246200-D	N	Lo	Ni					803	Im	M3	V M3 D M9 D
Iinir	1823	A467885-D								401	Im	M1	V
Kamgikiik	1824	C43655A-C			Ni					704	Im	Ki	V M3 D
Pr'Geehr	1829	B383435-9	S	Ni						205	Im	C3	V
Clan Home	1830	D789535-5			Ni					111	Im	M3	IV
No Hope	1924	B341699-D	S	Ni	Po					113	Im	K1	V
Shakhii	1926	A200697-D	S	Na	NI	Va				504	Im	M2	V
Junivaar	1927	C486112-A		Lo	Ni					800	im	M6	III
Asii	1928	C335894-7								205	Im	CO	VI
IKABI	1929	C0009DE-D		Hi	Na	In	As			800	Im	K4	V
Vipac	1930	A401230-D		Lo	Ni	Va	Ic			803	Im	M1	V
Jansaen	2022	B220310-B	N	Lo	Ni	Po	De			113	Im	M7	III M9 D
Draskeran	2023	B211454-C	S	Ni	Ic					612	Im	M4	V M5 D
Jarmael	2024	C512669-9		Na	NI	Ic				732	Im	M0	V
Sennirak	2028	A401797-C	N	Na	Va	Ic				414	Im	A3	V
Kakhirusar	2028	A664378-B	N	Lo	Ni					903	Im	M4	V
Cocor	2030	C6B2665-8	S	Ni	F1					303	Im	M3	V M5 D
Chandra's World	2122	C9966AA-7		Ag	Ni			A		803	Im	K4	V
Kediiga	2123	B778411-8		Ni						920	Im	C6	V
MEDURMA	2124	A9D7954-C		Hi						823	Im	G0	V
Thalassa	2127	D56A557-9		Ni	Wa					423	Im	K8	VI
Maiden	2130	B13069B-C	N	Na	Ni	Po	De			814	Im	M0	III M7 VI
DIPA	2223	C200AEB-F	S	Hi	Na	In	Va			701	Im	A4	V MS D
Nexus	2225	B666666-7	N	Ag	Ni	Ri				723	Im	C4	V
Theta Cygni	2226	A424100-E	S	Lo	Ni					702	Im	K7	II
A'a'suni	2227	C5468AD-5	S							300	Im	M4	VI
Kurkhi	2228	C401578-8	S	Ni	Va	Ic				514	Im	M0	V
Ishigumam	2322	B100587-D	A	Ni	Va					102	Im	K2	V M6 D
Tilmea	2324	C233644-8	S	Na	Ni	Po				500	Im	M1	V KS D
Station Two	2327	C160004-B		Lo	Ni	De				202	Im	M4	V
Mo'line	2424	B335655-C		Ni				A		113	Im	M4	V
For'star	2426	A623025-A	S	Lo	Ni	Po				505	Im	MZ	V M9 D



## **A'A'Ssuni 2227 C5468AD-5 S 300 Im M4 VI**

A'a'suni and its moon, Inuirsuk, are binary planets, each spiralling around a central point of gravity once every seven days, as they orbit the central star. The planet is covered in layers of ice many kilometres thick and the local life has adapted itself to the severe cold. A'a'suni has little to recommend it other than it is the homeworld of a minor sophont species, the Athar. The pacifistic Athar are descended from six limbed carnivores. They are rarely seen off-world as their ideal temperature is -130°C and they would boil to death in normal human tolerances. The world is actually run by a bureaucracy divided into a number of Councils, all concerned with different aspects of life on A'A'Suni. Some of the most important include the Council of the Environment, the Council of Provision, and the Council of Defence. Usually a single extended family forms the core of a Council, and is headed by the leader of the family.

[See 'Contact: Athar']

## **Aiaiyal 1821 A572845-E 710 Im K2 II**

Was settled in -877 by the Aohalai and Oakhtai'yal clans as a second-generation colony of the Asian community on Medurma. The world is now an important exporter of high-tech electronics and computer systems and houses drydock and ship construction facilities for Aohalai sector-wide trading firm Aospace. Aiaiyal is a true example of peaceful, constructive cooperation between Humans and Asian, with each group maintaining its own, distinctive culture.

## **ALIKASCH**

Alikasch: The derivation of the word is uncertain - possibly the Solomani Anglic alleycat, or the Trokh ayloi kh'esh (Those Who Fight With Metal Dewclaws). Often portrayed as roving streetgangs, terrorising the downcit inhabitants of Medurman cities, the Alikasch are far more than that. They are Humans and Asian who have learned, through centuries of bloodshed, to understand each other, and to live together in peace. The resulting hybrid culture shows many fascinating features from both "parent" cultures, but also has truly unique aspects, little known or understood by the outsider.

[See 'Contact: Alikasch']

## **Aospace**

An Aslan sector-wide merchant line, owned by the Aohalai. It mainly serves the Dagudashaag Main. The firm owns over 105 ships of 1,000 tonnes or under, all of which are armed. It supplies the Aslan communities as well as many of the feeder routes.

## **Asii 1328 C335894-7 205 Im G0 VI**

Home to approximately 24,870,000 people, mostly humans of mixed Vilani/Solomani descent. Due to the bitter cold and the thin atmosphere most of the population spend their entire lives within the sealed dome cities each of which are connected by overland monorail links. The world is governed by a surprisingly efficient series of regional councils. Although the attitude is essentially uncaring, each council is observed by 'watchdog' committees with the power to disband any that fail to treat the populace properly. Asii has gained a reputation for natural beauty. Among the more well known tourist spots are the vast ice seas, the spectacular Tubewood forests and of course, the aptly named singing caves of the Enishi Desert. Many claim that the winds whistling through the caves call the names of those doomed soon to die.

## **ATHAR**

Athar are six limbed pacifistic carnivores Native to A'a'suni. They are adapted to the severe planetary temperatures and as a result are seldom found off-planet. They are variously described as being conservative, aloof, and proud: they are, but there are deeper reasons for their behaviour. Perhaps the biggest single drive within the Athar is the urge to feed. Feeding is the main focus of the day, and a meal is preceded by a series of rituals culminating in the capture and killing of live prey. There are good reasons why the Athar place such value on feeding. A long term failure to feed causes an Athar to enter a short period of dormancy, followed by what can only be described as a reversion to pure animal. Humans find Athar feeding habits at best unsavoury and at worst sickening.

[See 'Contact: Athar']

## **Bradley 1822 A246200-D N Lo Ni 803 Im M3 V M3 D M9 D**

The Bradley system is the site of the Debeyer Imperial Naval Facility originally established to combat piracy on the Dagudashaag Main during the early years of the Third Imperium. Debeyer now functions as a small repair and supply base and also carries out research into new sensor and communicator systems in the 'noisy' electromagnetic environment near the far companion Basa; an M-dwarf binary. The Ushran corporation TerraTech LIC has approximately 100 staff insystem conducting advanced terraforming experiment on the world itself.

[See 'Legends and Lore of Dagudashaag "The Bradley Barrier"']

## Brethren, Church of the

Church descended from Solomani Roman Catholicism. The Church was formed in 2013 after the Pope declared that only humans had souls. Several Jesuit priests disagreed so violently with the decision they agreed to excommunication and proceeded to set up their own Church. The Brethren services are still full of ritual but great emphasis is placed on living the religion, especially the giving of charity to those in need. The Church teaches that all life is precious to God but that sentient life is the child of God.

## Campbell 1722 B99A200-E W Lo Ni Wa 204 Im M7 VI

Campbell is probably best known for its orbital transport facilities, which acts as an important trade junction between Pact subsector and Ushra, but the system also serves a second vital purpose which is all but unknown. Campbell is the biggest waste disposal reclamation system in the sector. Dangerous chemicals and other materials from all over Dagudashaag are sent here for treatment, recycling and/or final disposal. Campbell itself is manned by a small family firm who use the intense cold and stable environment to store the dangerous materials until processed.

## Chandra's World 2122 C9966AA-7 Ag Ni A 803 Im M3 IV

The "breadbasket" of Pact. The planet is primarily concerned with producing food for the subsector but has established a reputation for genetically enhanced basic food crops. One of the main seasonal crops is Ayau which is used as a flour substitute by humans but a certain strain, Rea Ayau, was recently found to bring on psychotic schizophrenia and act like a combat drug on Aslan. So far, no conclusive evidence has surfaced as to why this strain should effect Aslan in this particular way. The Imperial Research station is apparently studying the crop. The planet is also plagued by a hermaphroditic insect, the Adayn, that attacks in massive swarms and eats anything organic. So far, pesticides have proved useless in controlling it.

## Clan Home 1830 D789535-5 Ni 111 Im M3 IV

Settled about -1060 by Aslan migrants from Gushemege Sector. The colony was too small to form a viable technological base and Clan Home regressed to pre-industrial levels during the latter part of the Long Night. Aslan cultural prejudice turned to xenophobia and the world voluntarily isolated itself from the interstellar community in the first years of the Third Imperium. As of 1100, however, Clan Home has begun a tentative re-emergence and is slowly industrialising, with all its associated problems. Travellers to the planet should be aware that IISS technology import restrictions are in force, to shield the natives from 'culture shock'.

## COCOR 2030 C6B2665-8 S Ni Fl 303 Im M3 V M5 D

Cocor would be a near-deserted world were it not for the mysterious stone-built roads that traverse the planet. Tourists flock to the planet each year to examine the many kilometres of roads and to guess as to their origin. The only permanent site on-planet is the research base set up by the University of Medurma to research the roads and the independent mining sites.

[See 'Legends and Lore of Dagudashaag - "The Road Builders of Cocor"']

## DASHI 1723 C15098B-E Hi Po De 404 Im M2 V

A desert world run by a business conglomerate of seven megacorporations known locally as the Combine. The planet is mainly self-sufficient in water and food as a result of intensive hydroponics, mining of the ice rings of a nearby gas giant and strict water recycling. Its major export is cheap electrical and electronic equipment and components. It is a major producer of a wide variety of low-cost, high-tech goods. Billions of people exist on the planet either in the massive glass-built pyramid cities or in the deep caverns carved out beneath. Dashi is a favourite stop-over as its markets are full of cheap electronic goods and its culture is renowned for its extremely liberal social mores.

[See 'Port of Call: Dashi']

## DeepLevel Harvesting LIC.

Formed in 862 to break Symmonds XenoCulture Inc's monopoly on the Symmonds Tree harvesting, this company has recently pioneered many new and exciting discoveries in the pharmaceuticals industry based on Symmonds Tree extract and is currently running a major campaign to become the major supplier of Symbal on Medurma.

[See 'Port of Call: Medurma']

## DIPA 2223 C200AEB-F S Hi Na In Va 701 Im A4 V M5 D

Dipa is one of the main population centres of the Pact Subsector and a major industrial producer. The planet was initially colonised by religious followers of Father Emmanuel Dipa, a disgruntled Jesuit priest and a founder of the Brethren religion. It still remains a major religious capital today and millions of Brethren pilgrims visit each year. The Brethren religion, while followed by the majority of the population, is easy going with other faiths and, while under a firm rule of law, personal freedoms are extensive. The faith dictates charity is of immense importance, especially when directed at those the Church has classified as "unfortunate". On Dipa, "unfortunate" generally describes those off-worlders, not of Brethren faith, who are not permitted to secure employment but instead are granted charity by the state. Most of the population are located in two mega-

cities, John-Paul and Messiah because a considerable amount of the planetary surface is extremely vulnerable to volcanic eruptions. The system is closely linked with Medurma. During the days of the Pact, these two worlds formed the core. Even today, they tend to see eye to eye on most interstellar issues though generally for different reasons. This co-operation has increased in recent years and the Brethren beliefs are considered to be a major force for good on Medurman policy.

#### **Draskeran 2023 B211454-C S Ni Ic Im M4 V M5 D**

This gas giant moon was once home to one of the largest deposits of silver in the Imperial core but the lode is now almost played out completely and the system facilities are deteriorating as more and more locals leave in search of permanent employment.

#### **EKHUGUSH 1728 A63898A-D N Hi 312 Im M2 IV M9 D**

A tidally locked world, most of the land surface is on the twilight and darkside. The planet is mainly known for its computer programming systems and financial skills. The planet specialises in setting up business and stock control applications and customised government systems. The local university is known for its excellent financial training and brokerage and as a result graduates, known as Ekhui, with their distinctive three claw tattoo on the forehead are in great demand.

#### **For'star 2426 A623025-A S Lo Ni Po 505 Im M2 V M9 D**

This planet is inhabited purely as a transport junction. The planet is famous for its totally hostile environment. The air carries microscopic parasites which dissolve the lungs from the inside, the soil contains micro-organisms capable of surviving the toughest decontamination procedures which inject the host with minute traces of deadly poison. The forests and jungle are filled with creatures which can kill in seconds. The entire planet is poisonous to mammalian lifeforms. For this reason, all staff, mostly Dashian indentured, serve a maximum 3 month tour of duty. The most well known export is the Laggaa, a small domesticated "pet" with high intelligence, loyalty and the ability to spit its venom up to 20 metres with extreme accuracy.

#### **GEEHRTAHE**

Two-metre long, gliding snake-like hunter-gatherers. They live in the tropical and sub-tropical regions of Pr'Geehr, high up in the canopy of the fifty-metre tall tree-like native flora. They went undiscovered for 2,000 years, their sentience remained unrealised until the investigation of the world for the First Survey. Since that discovery the IISS have maintained a base within the system to monitor the Geehrtahe and prevent outside interference in the development of the Geehrtahe culture. The Geehrtahe resemble the descriptions given for the 'Tansui', the mythical winged

creature found in the literature of native fauna on Gateway (Argi 1331 B98A654-D). This has aroused speculation that the Geehrtahe once inhabited Gateway, transplanted there by agents unknown. This theory has been dismissed by most respectable sophontologists.

[See 'Contact: The Geerhtahe']

#### **GenMett LIC**

<Metallurgias Generales SA>

An ancient Terran mining company which moved to Dagudashaag with the first Solomani settlers. GenMett specialises in automated mining facilities throughout the Sector, primarily dealing in exploiting the richer metals. They have an uneasy working relationship with the other main mining company in Pact, ICE.

[See 'Port of Call: Medurma']

#### **Ghost Fleet, the**

Name given to the recorded phenomenon of historical transponder readings being received by current day shipping. The transponder signals have been collaborated as genuine and, to date, no logical explanation has been forthcoming as to their origin. In each case the signals have been from ships lost during the Pact Empire.

[See 'Legends and Lore - "Medurma Triangle"']

#### **Han, House of**

A sector-wide brokerage firm, based at Ekhugush, mainly employing Ekhui graduates with at least Broker-3. Subsidiary offices can be found on all A and B ports throughout the sector with affiliated firms on most C class starports.

#### **lash 1730 D203462-A Hi Va Ic 604 Im K2 V**

lash is a small tidally-locked moon of the large gas giant Gwaahm. Initial explorations indicated a rich deposit of Lanthenum. This turned out to be a cruel hoax for the thousands of prospectors who flocked to the system eager to make their fortunes and in the end lost all they had in trying to support their operations. This incident has worked its way into a local saying which is added to the end of sentences where the speaker is expressing disbelief at another's statement: "...and there's more substance in an lashan strike!"

## **Indium Corporation of Europe**

<ICE>

A Terran mining company that moved to Pact with the original Solomani settlers, they established extensive mining facilities throughout Pact and Ushra. They primarily work through strip-mining techniques and are known for their exploitive manipulation of local markets and their heavy handed treatment of employees.

[See 'Port of Call: Medurma']

## **linir 1823 A457885-D 401 Im M1 V**

Despite its population, linir is styled a modern "Garden of Eden". Its cities are all built under the oceans and the land is left totally undeveloped. Its wildlife is completely allergic to human blood and they have learnt to avoid attacking human's or other two legged creatures as a result. Tourists can walk to within metres of a sparring pair of Hxieh (20 metre long carnivores) In total safety. The planet also has no insect life to trouble the visitor.

## **IKABI 1829 C0009DE-D HI Na In As 800 K4 V**

Classed as one of the "Warrior Worlds", the population consists almost totally of members of the Kuunite Cult which is loosely based on Shinto; ancestor worship. The planet is home to several sects of Kuuni of varying fanaticism from the moderate Tchio, to the self-flagellation and self-mutilation of the Rhi.

Regardless of which sect they follow, all kuunites believe that their sole reason for existence is to be warriors. Kuunites are generally xenophobic in the extreme but off-worlders are safe while on-planet as kuunites would not wish to pollute the holy sites of their religion. Kuuni teaches that entry to paradise is guaranteed to those who slay unbelievers in battle. For this reason Ikabi has always been a major supplier of well trained mercenary troops throughout the Imperium.

## **INDISS**

<Information DISsemination Service>

INDISS is a news-gathering agency serving most of the territory of Dagudashaag Sector. Headquartered on Medurma/Pact, INDISS maintains branch offices in almost all type-A starport facilities in the sector. INDISS has recently diversified its operations quite widely and now trades in such fields as holographic reference material (such as Travel Guides) and information-handling software.

[See 'INDISS']

## **Ishigumam 2322 B100587-D A Ni Va 102 Im K2 V M6 D**

A large asteroid which initially attracted colonisation as a result of its mineral wealth. The cities are hollowed out of the rock and much of its oxygen is mined from surrounding asteroids. The asteroid was obviously part of a small planet which exploded millennia before and archaeologists believe that it may have contained sentient life going by the few relics discovered amongst the debris.

## **Janssen 2022 B220310-D N Lo Ni Po De 113 Im M7 III M9 D**

This planet is primarily a massive Petrochemical installation set up by Interstellar Petrochemical Processing LIC. It is notoriously lawless.

## **Jarmael 2024 C512668-9 Na Ni Ic 732 Im M0 V**

This system is controlled by the Medurman government. Among Its many resources was one of the largest deposits of Zuchai crystals found within the Imperial core. Unfortunately most of these resources have now been recovered. When first discovered, the crystals could even be found in surface deposits. Now conventional mining is required in order to obtain the remnants of this valuable commodity. Unlike many systems in the Pact subsector, Jarmael is primarily Vilani. This is due to the mining presence during the Ziru Sirka period and the continued presence of an effective monopoly system operated by the miners and their families which has prevented intrusion.

## **Junivaar 1927 C486112-A Lo Ni 800 Im M6 III**

The primary star of this system, RS-453662-G, is a 'Mira'-type long period variable, fluctuating in luminosity between 200 Suns and 20,000 Suns, over a period of about four and a half standard years. At maximum luminosity (Highsummer), Junivaar is a humid, tropical world. At minimum luminosity (Deepwinter) the planet is a frozen waste.

Even the atmosphere freezes onto the surface. Life on Junivaar has adapted itself to the rigours of these strange climatic conditions - the plant life and animal forms secrete insulating carapaces, or burrow deep underground to survive the intense cold. When Highsummer comes, the flora grows rapidly, forming impenetrable forests within a matter of months. LaForge Biotechnology and DeepLevel Harvesting of Medurma have established a joint base on Junivaar to assess the commercial potential of the local life forms.

## **Kakhirusar 2028 A664378-B N Lo Ni 903 Im M4 V**

Kakhirusar is extremely rich in all manner of metals, making it a very valuable resource for the Industrial systems of the Argi and Pact subsectors. As far as can be



established there has been some kind of mining activity on the world since the earliest migrations back in the days of the First Imperium. The Imperial Naval base was established in 82, early in the Pacifications Campaigns period, to secure the world for the expanding Third Imperium. The planet presently supports a population of approximately 9,200, all humans of mixed descent. Most are there because of the mining companies and the Navy but a few are operating as independent miners. The Imperial Naval base commander acts as governor of the world. The governmental duties are carried out by delegations from the various mining companies on a rota although their views on the 'correct' way to administer the world vary considerably. Visitors are advised to contact the Naval base for current information regarding which laws are currently in operation.

#### **Kamgikiik 1824 C43655A-C Ni 704 Im K1 V M3 D**

The Kamgiks are an extremely conservative and unaggressive race that seems to revere all life. It comes as a shock to visitors that the Kamgiks are actually cannibalistic. At the funeral services, which can often go on for days, they eat the cooked body of their dead relations even down to grinding down the bones and mixing it with meal so that no part of the body is "rejected". Even visitors to a feast are expected to partake of some of the less favoured parts. Only once a youth has eaten of the "Flesh" may they be named. They take on the name of the person they just consumed. This can cause confusion as the custom makes no distinction based on sex and as a result many female Kamgiks have male names and vice-versa.

#### **Kediiga 2123 B778411-8 Ni 920 Im G6 V**

Although the planet primarily deals in goat ranching, the planet is best known for its Redleaf plants. Yana, a highly addictive drug can be extracted from the leaves. It is illegal to possess, own or trade in Yana, but Redleaf plants, themselves, are exported as an exotic decoration. The complex laws surrounding the whole subject have driven at least one well known lawyer to join a secluded religious community.

#### **Kurkhi 2228 C401578-8 S Ni Va Ic 514 Im M0 V**

A small, cold world of little importance until the recent discovery of valuable mineral resources in the planetoid belt that orbits close to the primary. The discovery has led to the massive influx of prospectors and support personnel to Kurkhi and the system now boasts a population of just over half a million, four-fifths of which live within underground complexes on Kurkhi itself. As most of the water on Kurkhi, that is trapped as ice within the rocky crust, is labelled as a fuel source for the planets huge power stations, fuel for space- and starships is imported from the inner gas giant (Ankhi) and refined at the starport. A consortium of big business led by SuSag and backed by the subsector government on Medurma are investing heavily in the upgrading of

the starport and the development of the system to cope with the expected boom.

#### **Laggaa**

<Abdor For'exx var.>

A small rodent-like creature with cat-like head and sleek multicoloured fur native to For'star. They weigh 3-4 kilogrammes, and are about 80 centimetres long. They have a thin membrane between their legs which allows them to glide on air currents for short distances and a short, but extremely effective, prehensile tail. They are omnivorous, extremely intelligent and very loyal. They are capable of spitting an acid-based venom up to a distance of 20 metres with great accuracy. They have been partially domesticated and are gradually becoming popular pets though few will risk owning one with an intact poison sac.

#### **Maiden 2130 B13069B-C N Na Ni Po De 814 Im M0 III M7 VI**

Maiden was colonised soon after Medurma regained Jump Drive technology, by members of the population who had become disgruntled with its patriarchal scientific elite. Many of its earliest female settlers were women who had been, or still were, in the military. When the system was first colonised, the asteroid belt had been a habitable world but, within a hundred years, it was destroyed after a collision with a rogue planetoid. With additional immigrants from Medurma still arriving every day, a decision was made to colonise the less hospitable Maiden instead. One of the decisions which led to the exodus was an order from The Medurman High Council requiring that all women be shorn of their body hair to prevent further infection by an infectious mite, the Kacha, which was believed to be the carrier of the deadly Mottled Plague that was sweeping the planet. Since this order was only directed at women and not the men, many took deportation rather than agree to this sexist order. A cure for the plague was soon found but the women of Maiden still grow their hair long as a reminder of why they left. The government is purely matriarchal but males are regarded as equals in all other matters. The population has retained some aspects of Medurman culture, among them a propensity to duel. Most of the population carry arms, generally a knife in an arm sheath or a small duelling pistol at the waist. Due to the history and background of the original settlers, the planet has always retained a strong military presence. This attracted the Imperial Navy who built a major Naval academy there.

#### **MEDURMA 2124 A9D7954-G Hi 823 Im G0 V**

Medurma, the capital of Dagudashaag, was originally the subject of a major colonisation effort by the Solomani at about -2,093. Although there had been a few exploratory mining installations set up on-planet by the Ziru Sirka, Medurma had been largely neglected by the Vilani. Almost immediately, the Solomani colonists

made a startling discovery - extensive ruins indicated that Medurma had been home to a minor human race as recently as -19,000. The "Miyavine" civilisation had apparently reached TL4 or 5 at its height and there is no clue as to the reason for its disappearance. Since then, the planet has been extensively settled - the largest cities are sited inside mountain peaks, whilst high technology maximises the agricultural yield from the few high-altitude plateaux. At lower levels (known locally as DeepLevel), conditions are harsh, as the temperatures hover at about 80 - 95°C, and the pressure reaches 6.5 atmospheres. Mining operations are extensive and advanced at this level, as is the cultivation of the unusual "Symmonds Tree". As a result, Medurma is now more or less self-sufficient in staple foods. The population of Medurma is remarkably cosmopolitan (there is a sizable community of Aslan for instance). Imperial sociologists find Medurma particularly interesting as the population tends to be socially-stratified by altitude - the deeper-levels being populated by the lower classes.

[See 'Port of Call: Medurma']

### **Medurma Main StarLines**

<MMSL>

A sector-wide subsidiary of Imperialines running regular passenger and freight services to all A and B class starports on the Dagudashaag Main.

### **Miyavine**

Minor human race transported to Medurma by the ancients at about -350,000. They were apparently unadapted and built extensive settlements at MidLevel and HighLevel. They achieved a TL 4 or 5 but for some unknown reason died out about -18,700. The Miyavine are one of only two classified MHRs in the sector, the other being the Ziadd.

[See 'Port of Call: Medurma']

### **Mo'line 2424 B335665-C Ni A 113 Im M4 V**

The entire planet is run as a voluntary retreat. Those who elect to stay must have their faces tattooed and never cut their hair. Despite their high tech level the entire population of the planet are extremely superstitious and decisions are only made after consulting the I-Chang.

### **Nei'Tan Corporation LIC**

A biomedical co-operative run by the Snow Leopard tribe of Alikasch (q.v.) on Medurma, Nei'Tan specialises in research into new pharmaceuticals from native raw materials such as symal residues. Nei'Tan is expanding rapidly into the void in the market left by the Transgenic Incident, and is an excellent example of the

new respectability and prosperity being achieved by some Alikasch tribes. Rumours that Nei'Tan has developed a cheap and effective anagathic serum from symal residues have been consistently denied.

### **New Titan 1728 CAAA772-B S Fl Wa 714 Im M1 V**

The atmosphere of New Titan is primarily composed of methane and great care must be taken by all visitors to prevent explosive mixture. The planet is primarily broken down into family based clans that harvest the seaweed-like Havangii which is used to make cloth for export.

### **Nexus 2225 B666666-7 N Ag Ni Ri 723 Im G4 V**

This is one of only two agricultural systems in the subsector. Whilst not as large or productive as Chandra's World, it is still considered the major agricultural supplier to the rimward systems in the subsector. This world is governed as a personal fief of the Viisarikaa family. It is renowned as innovative in agricultural techniques and has successfully grown many rare transplanted crops. In addition, it is also known as a major centre of the Arts throughout the sector (and has been ever since the First Imperium), and its considerable contribution is actively encouraged by the Viisarikaa family. The system has a considerable population of artists, poets, designers, etc. The system is also the site of a large naval base but, in respect of the population, (and the influence of the Viisarikaa family) this has been mostly based on Kelemetia, a moon of the gas giant Obria.

### **No Hope 1924 B341699-D S Ni Po 113 Im K1 V**

This colony was originally named Nokhopii, Vilani for "Beauty". The planet was truly full of natural beauty. Then the Vilani colony utterly vanished without trace. 10,000 men, women and children disappeared leaving behind an empty settlement. Everything organic in the camp had vanished. A second colony was established and it too vanished. This time it was able to pinpoint the disappearance to a three month period corresponding to the summer. The planet was considered jinxed. It was renamed No Hope and remained uncolonised until 756 when ICE established a small research station which was ordered to record everything. That summer the orbiting station witnessed the deaths of their team-mates on the surface as the summer heat brought a carnivorous worm to the surface of the planet in such abundance that the entire surface of the continent seemed to squirm. The colonists hadn't a chance. Subsequently orders were given to hunt down and totally exterminate these creatures and successful colonisation was finally achieved.

## Pit Stops

Derivations unknown; Pit Stops are illegal establishments usually located on moons of outer gas giants or infrequently patrolled asteroid belts. It is here that pirate crews, skipped starship crews and other less than legal persons are supposed to go for R&R. These black spots are also supposed to be thriving black markets. The last such establishment (in the Vipac system) was closed down in 785.

## Pr'Geehr 1829 B383435-9 S Ni 205 Im G3 v

Pr'Geehr is a small, cool world (average global temperature -9°C) with a dense atmosphere. The initial surveys conducted by early Vilani explorers missed the planet's indigenous minor race the Geehrtahe. The planet itself had little in the way of resources to offer investors and the low gravity discouraged colonisation. Pr'Geehr was regarded as a pretty, little world unlikely to account for much. That was until the discovery of the Geehrtahe. All visitors are subject to a full quarantine prior to landing and are limited to visiting the human settlement of Handsoff.

[ See 'Contact: The Geehrtahe']

## Rothery, Dr. Middleton

Bolivarian paleontologist and archaeologist (1065- ), best known for his text 'A Deeper History' (1109), in which he reveals his discoveries on Ambrym and Besayes in the Medurma/Pact system, which purport to show that they were inhabited at around -355,000. Rothery attributes this settlement to a previously unknown technologically-advanced group of S'mrii, which he calls the 'Hierarchs'. Carballoy and plasteel fragments found at the sites indicate a level of technology at least equal to current Imperial maximum. Rothery states that he retrieved a complete mummified S'mrii specimen from the site on Besayes, and holographs of the find are included in the book. The specimen was, however, destroyed in a shuttle accident before it could be subjected to further study on Medurma. Rothery has little standing with others in his field, who mainly regard him as a crackpot. Since 1112, he has become increasingly irrational, and has made only fleeting

appearances since 1114, when he claimed that he was being pursued by a S'mrii "hit team".

## Sennirak 2026 A401797-C N Na Va Ic 414 Im A3 V

Originally colonised by Dashi, the planet failed to prove viable as an industrial site and the Combine cut its losses and withdrew in 357. Many of the families, however, decided to stay. Visitors are warned that failure to pay the local air tax results in instant expulsion. Plants, because of their oxygen-creating properties are held in high regard and wilful damage to a healthy plant is punishable by death.

## Shakhii 1926 A200697-D S Na Ni Va 504 Im M2 V

Shakhii is the outmost moon of the gas giant, Pesh. The world is covered by seas of dust. There is a single city/starport at Du'Saurier, and most of the population are independent miners. Status is gained through the granting of gifts to those poorer than yourself and great effort is made to find exotic gifts to grant so that the giver can increase their social position.

## Station Two C160004-B Lo Ni De 202 Im M4 V

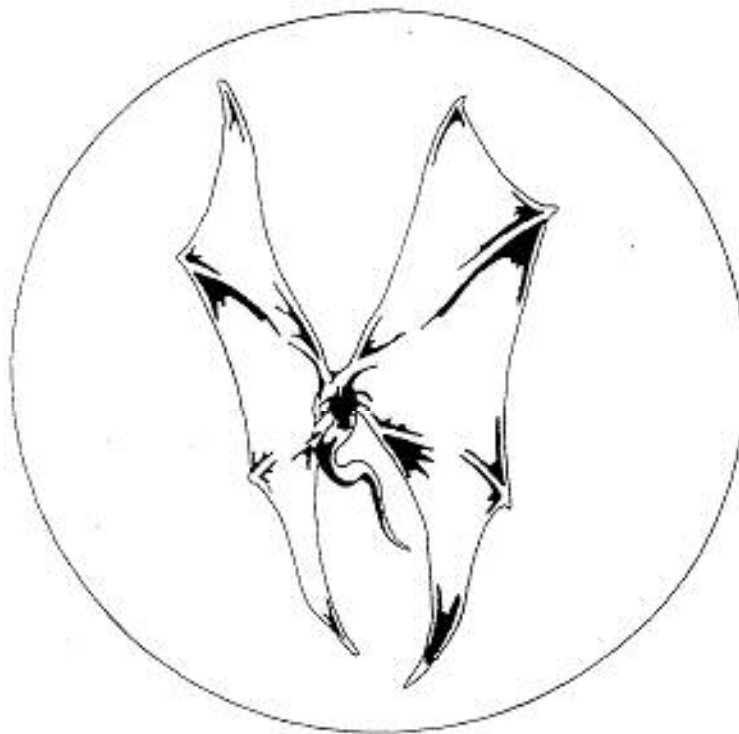
One of a chain of ten stations established on desolate planets throughout the sector at the time of the

initial Third Imperium infiltration. They were intended to monitor potential trouble spots such as the 'Pact'. They were discontinued in 342 and most of the bases were renamed and handed over to the IISS. Station Two was considered relatively useless and the base was simply stripped. The port is maintained as a near-automatic facility serviced by personnel from MMSL.

## Stormsingers of Medurma

<Procellacantor var>

A semi-mythical winged creature with a fifteen-metre span, the Stormsinger is said to ride the powerful updrafts which cause the violent electrical storms which periodically lash Medurma's populated areas. A strangely elusive creature, the Stormsinger has only been sighted on a few occasions in modern times, and



The Legendary Storm-Singer

only a few indistinct holorecordings exist. Many teams have attempted to track or capture the Stormsinger, but those who have heard its bewitching calls have suffered mysterious equipment failures, and there is still no satisfactory hard evidence. Links have been drawn with the legend of the Tansui on Gateway/Argi.

### **Symmonds Tree**

An unusual plant growing in the Medurma DeepLevel which is used as a food source as well as providing several unique pharmaceuticals.

[See 'Port of Call: Medurma']

### **Symmonds Xenoculture Inc.**

Founded by Frederick Maximillion Symmonds in 318, to harvest the Symmonds Tree they have since expanded to form a major agroproduct harvesting and shipping company in Pact. In recent years the company has been plagued by rumours of financial mismanagement. Its position as leader of the domestic Medurman market no longer looks secure as newer companies such as DeepLevel Harvesting LJC, are proving to be more productive and innovative.

[See 'Port of Call: Medurma']

### **Thalassa 2127 D56A557-9 Ni Wa 423 Im K8 VI**

This unimportant, water-covered world lies off the major subsector trade routes despite lying on the Dagudashaag Main. The relatively poor starport facilities are almost entirely due to the lack of available dry land; it is nothing more than a convenient stopping-off and refuelling point for the itinerant free trader captain. The small population is almost exclusively concerned with the farming of Qha which has various dietary and pharmaceutical properties. Even this is on the wane as products can now be more easily and cheaply produced synthetically. The world does note native life, all aquatic and all confined to the warm equatorial oceans. The two most notable species are the huge, carnivorous Tarok and the pseudo-crustacean Zyroach.

### **Thalassa-Gushumiik Organic Produce**

Company, based on Thalassa, which specialises in pisciculture on several water worlds in the sector. The company unfortunately has an extremely poor safety record.

### **Theta Cygni 2226 A424100-E S Lo Ni 702 Im K7 II**

A strategically important world serving as a connection between the rimward regions of the Main and the subsector capital, Medurma. The large fluctuations in temperature has deterred colonisation yet its location has required the construction of a high quality starport

to serve the abundant traffic that passes through this system.

### **Tilmes 2324 C233644-8 S Na Ni Po 500 Im M1 V K8 D**

Originally established as a mining community, the Tilmen are known primarily for their xenophobic traditions. All visitors to the planet must keep their mouth covered when in the presence of Tilmen and must not speak. The Tilmen themselves are prohibited from speaking to off-worlders and all contact must take place only in writing. Those who fail to follow these laws will find themselves facing an obligatory month of ritual cleansing.

### **Ushmegili 1729 D66A204-A S Lo Ni Wa 722 Im G1 V**

This large water world shares many features with Thalassa (Pact 2127). Lack of available land has restricted the expansion of the starport. The climate of the planet is unkind to human habitation (average temperature is approximately -37°C, with the equatorial regions a rather pleasant 20-22°C during the 'summer') despite the ideal atmosphere. The resident population is composed of scientists from the Imperial University of Medurma planetary physics department and the IISS undertaking a joint investigation into the 'Ushmegli Rings'. These rings are circular depressions in the seabed which have a varying number of concentric, evenly-spaced ridges emanating from the centre of these crater-like depressions. Their age, origin and purpose (if any) remain a mystery.

### **Vipac 1930 A401230-D Lo Ni Va Ic 803 Im M1 V**

Primarily a transport junction between Pact and Sapphyre, Vipac is staffed by Ikabian's who maintain the near automated starport facilities.

### **Weinhandlung Klosterhof Schuman GMBH**

<WKS>

The largest wine distillers and transportation company in the sector. They are best known for their generic house wines, rather than the many rare and delicate vintages they also produce which are mainly exported to Core.

## FOR YOUR EYES ONLY ... REFEREE'S INFORMATION

Bradley - The Bradley Barrier is indeed an Ancients' device that was being tested by Medurman's. In 1118 this device is transferred to Campbell and stored on Càirdeas in the secret Pit Stop there. Its influence unfortunately, is rather erratic.

Campbell- The outer moon, Càirdeas, is in reality a Pit Stop. Initially, it was established to allow indentured debtor's from Dashi to hide until a suitable ship could be found to take them to another subsector. Most were smuggled off-planet hidden inside chemical waste transporters which no-one thought to check.

Ghost Fleet - The transponder readings were actually from the 'Perseus' which used the signals to cover any accidental discovery during her trials. The transponder is capable of relaying any signal required. The ship, however, was only ever tested between Medurma and Dipa and only used the signal twice. The Nexus signals were actually forged by INDISS to create a much needed story. With the on-set of the Rebellion, the Pact transponder signals are still being used to put fear into the enemy.

Jarmael - With the on-set of the Rebellion, the system has seen little action. The convoys carrying the crystals are always well protected and the mines inaccessible, making raids awkward. This is not to say that it has not been tried...

Junivaar - As of 1118, Deepwinter is approaching and Karyn's forces are constructing a number of covert bases under the encroaching ice to act as listening posts.

Medurman Main StarLines - This company is actually a front for Lucan's spies. He allows it free access to and from Medurma to enable him to smuggle his agents onto the planet. Unfortunately for Lucan, the FMF know about it and are secretly tagging all agents and feeding them false information.

Pit-Stops - See Campbell

Rothery, Dr. Middleton - Dr. Rothery did, in fact, find a mummified S'mriicorpse. Unfortunately he instantly jumped to the wrong conclusions and failed to notice the clues that pointed to the base actually being constructed by another race - 'The Malaach', who had achieved TL18 before their final destruction at the hands of the Ancients. The S'mrii "hit team" are in fact a group of S'mrii scientists who wish to question him further about his discoveries.

[See Issue 3, 'Contact: The Malaach']

Symmonds Tree - See 'Port of Call: Medurma - Referee's Information'.

# WAR ZONE: PACT

## The Rebellion in Pact Subsector 1116 to 1120

The first of any form of fighting in Pact Subsector was on Ekbugush soon after the arrival of the news of Strephon's death on 211-1116. This fighting was limited however, and apart from a few military units, most of the rebel forces were civilians. Due to the rebel's lack of arms, this fighting had ended within a fortnight. This fighting, and a few isolated skirmishes on the balkanized worlds of New Titan and Kurkhi was the sole conflict in Pact during the last days of 1116. During the year the 218th fleet was moved from Sapphyre to Pact to act as a 'strategic reserve' despite the protests of that subsector's government. Everybody knew that worse was to come.

### 1117

By 30-1117 and 75-1117 long range scouting and strike forces from Lucan and Dulinor respectively had entered the subsector. Whilst these forces were relatively small, when they encountered each other, vicious battles often resulted, and these left scars on the civilian population and the Medurman forces trying to defend them. The majority of these battles occurred in the Enkugush/Ikabi cluster, and in this respect set up the major battle fields in Pact subsector.

The attacks by the major elements of the Vengeance Fleet did not begin until 90--1117, when Imperial forces coming out of Gadde headed immediately for what was now being referred to as the E-I cluster. Medurman forces were beaten off Kakhirusar, For'star, Theta Cygni, Thalassa and Sennirak. In many cases under the Rules of Engagement (ROE) defined by the sector Admiral DeVitt-Langdon, Medurman forces often just jumped away as soon as Imperial forces arrived. The exception to this rule was those worlds with naval bases and these saw heavy fighting. Nexus and Maiden (where some of the equipment from Depot/Gadde was stored) also saw fighting, but this was repulsed. But forward bases had been established for the trailing drive. At the same time forward elements of the Loyal Fleet had entered Pact. A fortuitous coup d'etat on Vipac gave Illeish a secure forward stop over point, and this was rapidly brought up to near naval base standards. Thus both Lucan and Dulinor struck from Ikabi and Enkugush. Neither world's governments were especially pleased with this attention and both resolved to repulse the invaders. The result of this was huge three way battles in which all participants came off heavily. This was especially true in Ikabi, where the system's religious warriors even resorted to using their vessels as manned missiles full of explosives. Damage to the civilian population was also extremely heavy.

Further coreward, elements of the Core Fleet had

battled their way through Khandi subsector and was attempting to strike at the Dashi cluster. Again, Lucan saw heavy resistance from Medurman forces, and the key naval bases of Bradley and Janssen did not fall. The siege of Dashi itself was complicated by the presence of Illeish raiding forces attacking the rather drawn out Imperial lines of supply. This led to some of the Imperial forces around Dashi and further spinward running low of supplies. As the year drew on, these attacks grew in magnitude, and Imperial High Command grew fearful of the consequences. In response to this, Admiral Wainfrost ordered the nuclear bombardment of Dashi on 230-1117. Hundreds of millions died almost instantly. Shocked, Illeish and Medurman forces withdrew, permitting Lucan to claim the world as 'liberated'.

Lucan and Dulinor continued to make small advances, but these were checked by the usage of crack Aslani mercenary units against Dulinor (still feeling rancour out of the murder of the Aslani clan ambassador), and a masterful raid by the new sector Admiral Stiev Elliot against Dashi on 293-1117, which forced back Lucan some 8 parsecs, in order to reorganise. Elliot had replaced DeVitt-Langdon only on 233-1117, in the wake of the defeats coreward.

In between the continuing fighting, Lucan sought to brow beat Duchess Karyn into submission. A small penetration fleet was sent to Medurma on 340-1117 to 'persuade' Karyn. This fleet was beaten off almost as soon as it arrived. It was given time to refuel and jump out. The 'battle' lasted all of six hours.

### 1118

Early 1118 saw several memorable events. First of all, the Free Medurman Federation (FMF) was formed by Karyn. The shock over the nuclear destruction of Dashi and a subsequent rise in Pact nationalism were major factors in its creation. Hereafter, FMF forces took a much more offensive approach in their dealings with the warring factions. Also, the Vilani seceded from the Imperium, and the Vilani megacorporations began moving all their assets, where possible, to Viand sector. Dagudashaag, and Pact in particular is on the direct route from rimward, and all of 1118 would see convoys of Vilani transports and escorts travelling through the sector and Pact subsector in particular. These vessels sought to stay outside the battle zones, and use frontier refuelling, but battles between Lucan and the Ziru Sirkaa forces were not uncommon. These battles saw frequent use of nuclear weapons due to barbarity on the side of Lucan and 'efficiency' on the side of Vland. Medurman raids against the Dashi cluster continued, and this together with the major offensive launched by Dulinor through The Remnants subsector, saw this region of space see heavy fighting. The ferocity of the

fighting forced FMF forces to leave the region and Bradley (a major staging post for these raids) was captured but not before a fleet of cargo ships left with a secret cargo for an unknown destination.

In mid-1118, Lucan launched a very heavy attack against the central region of Pact subsector in an effort to finally secure it for a major advanced base against Illeish. This was deemed necessary because those bases already captured could not meet the requirements that were being placed upon them (nobody had expected Dagudashaag, lying in the Imperial Core, to become a major battleground!) During this offensive Nexus fell, but several major battles in Dipa and Medurma repulsed this attack. This defeat permitted Dulinor to advance properly into Pact as the Imperial forces (now reduced by the abortive attack) supply problems had become quite critical in several units. In addition, Lucan was discovering problems with ships entering and leaving the Campbell system. Ships were misjumping; others were reduced to molten slag. All attempts to track down the "cause" were unsuccessful though, unusually, regular solar flares were occurring on Campbell's primary. This coupled with the Medurman "Ghost" fleet, which seemed to appear and disappear at will, was causing severe morale problems. Dulinor's revitalised offensive, with Lucan taking losses to spinward, being redeployed against the 'Real' Strehon and being used for personal whims, saw several worlds fall to him, including Ekhusush. This world did not suffer the fate of Dashi, due to the local Imperial naval commander refusing to attack civilians (he was later executed personally by Lucan for 'treason' after a naval court-martial had found him not guilty). Ikabi stood out, as did Maiden due to the ferocity of their defenders. Kakhirusar was the scene of heavy fighting - between Dulinor and Lucan.

In mid-1116, Karyn had sent messages to both Dulinor and Lucan concerning the use of Medurma or other 'neutral ground' as a place to negotiate a way resolving the conflict. Under the Illardis Agreement she declared Medurma "Conditionally open to Diplomatic and Medivac units only..." At the time both had rebuffed her attempts, but on 80-1118 a medivac convoy entered the Medurman system. Karyn, perhaps a little naively, accepted it. It was a fake. The convoy turned out to be a ruse to get a fleet through the outer defence. A Lucan agent, SysDef Vice Marshal Irinashi disabled much of the planetary defences and the invaders were able to land. Despite the fact that Lucan's troops had successfully landed, the FMF continued to fight with everything at their disposal. Karyn herself was captured at one point but was quickly liberated before she could be executed thanks to the effort of her bodyguards, Dunbar's Dragons and, it is rumoured, Scanian Sanheichiir. The invasion appeared to be going to plan for a few weeks, but native hi-tech resistance and the unusual conditions turned the tide, and Imperial forces were forced to retire to the outer system.

At this stage of the fighting, it was apparent that several worlds, that relied heavily on trading with other worlds (especially within the Vilani megacorps), were beginning to experience problems maintaining

equipment of higher technology than that locally available. The question that nobody dared to ask was "Is the Long Night about to return?"

#### 1119

1118 was a nightmare for the people of Pact, tens of millions had died so far during the rebellion and even away from the war zones proper, and trading was disappearing. The populace believed, however, that this was as bad as it was going to get. They were very, very wrong.

With the stabilisation of other fronts, Lucan was finally able to produce a sizable reserve. Dulinor was able to do the same. It was an example of their relative strategic and logistic skills that Dulinor's offensive came first.

A huge armada struck across Pact and beyond in a strategy based on the old Terran 'blitzkrieg', avoiding major enemy concentrations and striking instead at supplies, communications and at the enemy's command. Whilst this ran contrary to standard Imperial doctrine (but interestingly not Solomani doctrine, which emphasises deep strikes) which concentrates on capturing high population worlds, against him, he would strike at the Core and defeat Lucan once and for all. It very nearly worked.

As before, when confronted with a difficult problem, Lucan panicked. Instead of sending his fleets to cut off the deep attack by counter-attacking Dulinor's supply lines, he ordered his forces to fight to the death and brought his reserves to the Core sector boundary where, he confronted Dulinor directly and began gradually to push him back towards Pact. Dulinor slowly gave ground, with both sides (and anything in their way) taking extremely heavy losses. Dulinor gradually retired deep within his own original boundaries only to pounce on Lucan's pursuit forces in a classic envelopment (ancient military historians have compared it with Terra's Hannibal at Cannas and Schwarzkopf in Iraq). Lucan's forces retreated and when both sides drew apart in complete exhaustion, only two systems changed hands in Pact. Both fleets were virtually destroyed, but Lucan could never again muster enough forces to destroy Dulinor in one fell sweep. This condemned the remainder of the war, with a few exceptions, to one of attrition. Dulinor's gambit had worked.

But what did all this mean for Pact and the FMF? FMF naval forces had taken heavy losses and were almost down to being little more than an escort force. Many worlds had been devastated by the huge battles with huge civilian casualty figures. However, the main threats to Medurman independence had cancelled each other out. The FMF was bloodied, but still on its feet, just.

1120's events came as a welcome relief to the people of Pact. The two antagonists withdrew. Dulinor moved his forces to a less extended position to spinward, with a successful (well, sort of) offensive being launched into Argi subsector by other Imperial forces threatening to cut his fleets off. Ikabi finally tell to Lucan as the desperate Imperial forces started to nuke one asteroid after another (ignoring the millions living on them) in a bid to quell the Ikabians. It worked. The Ikabi gave in and claimed allegiance to Lucan. But like many other worlds in the rebellion, this was only in name.

With few forces available for rear-area suppression, Lucan was ready, however unwilling, to leave Medurma alone and due to over-extension, had to remove his forces from some systems.

Pact subsector, after four years of heavy fighting is a shell of its original grandeur. Only Medurma and Dipa of the major worlds remained in any resemblance to what they were like before. Many worlds were devastated, both by conventional warfare and by nuclear weapons. Millions are dead. Many worlds are seeing technological standards fall as trading fails. However, not is all lost. Medurma and Dipa are still in good shape, and with the rebellion moving further to spinward and rimward, the Free Medurman Federation is getting a chance to take a deep breath, and begin the slow climb to recovery.





# TRANSPONDER ALERT!

Examples of Murphy's Law from Issue 1

Contact: Scania - Referee's Only

Last line should read Karyn has appointed Carl Tarrant to liaise with the Scanian Sanhedra this time.

Stargates & Jumpsails

Corrections, Only one part in 900,000 of the fuel's mass is converted to energy. The true figure for proton-proton fusion is one part in 150...

Clarification, The surface area of a hull is determined by the two-thirds power (NOT the square root) of its volume. That is, surface area equals the cube root of the square of the volume. The Megatraveller Referee's Manual is incorrect in this respect...

Welcome to our first letter page. Before we continue I'd like to take this opportunity to thank each and every member of The Unofficial Dag. Development Team. This has truly been a team effort from Issue 1 and I'd like to say a big thank you to each and every person who has contributed so much time, effort and energy to the first two issues... to Stuart, Leighton, Adie, Duncan and of course Moragh who proofreads everything, and to those who are in the process of joining us; Nick, et al. Thank you!!

As you'd expect from any new magazine the letters mostly consist of questions.. Here goes.

> Nick Walker...

Hi, thanks for issue 1 of GK. Gosh what can I say, this must be the first UK traveller fanzine since Alien Star. Gobsmacked silence while I take this in...

Sorry! STarport beat us to to this particular distinction by a few years but its probable that GK is me first to be background and hardware oriented.[Jae]

The following are the few problems I found with GK 1. Contact: The Scania. This could have done with some notes on how to roll play this minor race and which character generation systems they follow and how they differ from the tables given in MT...

Two reasons come to mind Nick;

(1). Space GK is supposed to be 28 pages long and issue 1 came to 42 not including the special. We didn't have any space left to add to the mag.

(2). Role play notes were included under cultural notes - the major difference being their honesty and partial ability to read body language. Because of these differences I can't think of many players who would willingly choose them as characters. Think about it! A PC that was totally honest and wouldn't lie under any circumstances... I always thought of them as fun,

awkward NPCs. The ones that PC's can't just instantly lie to. Still if you wanted to work out how to govern these responses They were covered by tasks given in the mint adventure - "Gone Fishin'.." Remember there are only about 300 Sanhelchiir in total and only about 1% of the population are Scanian adepts. The race is still totally human and are in a long settled part of the Imperium. I would suggest the standard character generation applies though it should be noted that STR will always be 8 + 1d6 to a max of F and Social Status refers to non-Scanian status - Scanian's use EDU to determine personal status. All other factors can be determined by individual referees to fit their own campaigns. I personally grant a chance to gain a EDU type skill level per year. (10+ on 2D). For those who still want player notes Adie is trying to realistically re-design them as PC's...[Jae]

Port of call: port costs are given in tons when in MT cargo and fuel capacity are rated in kilolitres...

Now I'm showing my age. I'm so used to original Traveller I still use Tonnes (a metric ton) but you yourself solved the first part of this and thus you can award yourself an infamous GK No-prize; Divide the tonnage and price by 13.5 to get the kilolitre price etc. In addition, most warehouses would have a minimum cargo size they'd rent out I've set it at a Tonne. If you deposit less than that you still pay for a tonne's storage. For this reason I'm sticking to Tonnes.. Sorry! Think of it as one of S-GK's quirks... [Jae]

Gone Fishin'. It would be nice to see more information on the Andrea Fionna and crew...

The Andrea Fionna is the Perseus covered in this issue and background on the crew may appear if there is a demand. [Jae]

Subsector data could have done with the hex numbers printing on it to make the planets easy for idiots like me. Also a few additional snippets of library data wouldn't have gone amiss...

The map's will remain unnumbered because of the difficulty in adding them at that size. Sorry! Library data can be altered thankfully and has been. Hopefully we'll continue to grow and improve with support and help from the readers. [Jae]

Has more information on the Bwaps become available anywhere? If not shouldn't the stat's for Arlu read something like this? Arlu 1339 AA8A5D8-D. Because when I reread the Contact: Newts in JOTAS 11 all Bwap worlds were described as religious dictatorships, with high law levels representing the towel-heads obsession with proper behaviour... [Jae]

*No, my boob! Unfortunately the stats supplied are taken from the second survey and are unchangeable so here goes a self awarded No-prize... Although each floating city is a religious dictatorship with high law levels each 'pod' sends a chosen representative to a common council which makes planet-wide decisions hence the governmental code of a participating democracy. The recorded law level is that of the planet not the pods which are off-limits to those from outside the 'pod'. Further additions and changes can be found in the new A5 (It fits my folder!) library data supplied free. I would like to state that Nick actually supplied a long and detailed letter from which I extracted his Q's. He also contributed to the Argi library data rewrite. Constructive criticism such as Nick supplied is always welcome... [Jae]*

> Keven Parry

[Pre-launch] I wish you luck with GK. You may encounter a certain resistance to charging for GK. Many people take an evangelical approach to HIWG and believe that everything should be provided to everyone else for free. That's why HIWG only charges for physical production not intellectual production. It also means people will be more critical of the output! (I'm expecting grand things from GK!)

*And hopefully you got it! GK is on sale for £1.50 and consists of 28 pages minimum. That works out at a max of 5p a page not counting the cost of envelope or postage. Know anywhere else you can get a bargain like that? This magazine is totally subsidised. The only other traveller fanzine that comes close is Coreward, which I can't recommend enough. [Jae]*

[Post-launch] I liked GK a lot and I'm already looking forward to issue 2. I feel it complements STarport (which is mainly about computers) and provides an outlet for scenario's and info. I'd really like to see more races, bestiary and no spaceships...

*Sorry to disappoint you about no starships but I promise that they'll only be included when they are essential to the sector or adventure. Okay? Specials though are another matter. [Jae]*

> Jon Laidlow

Really enjoyed bits of GK, other bits were a bit dry for my taste. The actual layout design and editing were superb. Congratulations are in order. No other fanzine I have seen has had such a clear focus and consistency in their first issue or their tenth...

*Ah, praise!! Still we don't intend resting on our laurels as you can see from this issue we intend to keep improving. [Jae]*

My quibble is the usual one about 'hardware', because I like a drop of chat with my hardware; not irrelevant crap about the haircut of the edit, but designers notes, gossip and rumours (on a Galactic and Planetary scale) which can be borrowed, expanded, etc, colourful personalities with a base in the sector, rather than just rulers. Forgive me if I didn't notice these and while

some of this has been included in the text I enjoy things like the Traveller News Service in Challenge and boxes like the Ref's only are more interesting than the dry uncross-referenced library data for each planet. With GK it's clear that Traveller is in safe hands with its true players.

I too like a local viewpoint but I also like hardware articles. Perhaps I'm showing my age but I remember when fanzines used to support a game rather than be a chatzine or music review with the editor lording it over his readers. You have a say in the way this mag goes. Several people have written in complementing the hardware articles because they suit them. No mag can possibly hope to meet the needs of everyone but I hope everyone likes something. I'll probably never use the technical data in 'Stargates and Jumpsails' but at least I know that its available should I ever want to include it into my campaign. Several others have rated that article as the best in the whole issue. Regardless it was an innovative article and well scripted which I admire. Hardware will stay as long as there is a demand. Having said that we've added several new articles to add local colour; INDISS news service and AKA Check them out... Planetary Data stays - it was one of the most popular articles according to our survey. Check out the new format though... [Jae]

> Steve Hatherley

Enjoyed it but why do the Aquans have the blowhole on the rear of their necks when they float face upwards?

*Sorry Steve but you really should have read the article... Aquans are aquatic. They breathe water and the blow-hole is used to expel deoxygenated water. Not to expel air and rebreathe. Therefore unlike the dolphin and whale which survive underwater by holding their breath its not essential that the blow-hole is positioned in such away as to be first part of the anatomy to surface... [Jae]*

> Stuart Machin

Who or what is the Protectorate? And why not a list of contents?

*I should have explained. Sorry! The Protectorate is the Scanian Coast guard and conservation corps rolled into one.. As for a contents list, one of my personal pet hates are contents pages and editorials in which people blow their own trumpets. A contents page was at the back along side the editorial but due to demand I'm bowing to convention and adding a proper contents page from now on - at the front. No editorial though!*

*I received a confusion of letters on a single subject; the lack of playing notes and detailed maps. Some wanted all the detail in, more wanted the atmosphere rather than the hardware. Let me make it clear that my viewpoint is that each issue of S-GK will detail a full subsector - that means certain things may be left out to make way for other articles You're all big enough and ugly enough to create character data for yourself or draw maps. Simply Improvise! Still I promise not to cry If you disagree... [Jae]*

Now Your favourites:

'Stargates & Jumpsails/Psionics - I use psionics quite a bit so the Psionics article was quite helpful. 'S&J' is such a brilliant idea - why didn't I think of it?!' Andrew Bouilton

'My favourite had to be Stargates & Jumpsails. Its one of my interest areas..' Stuart Machin

'Port of Call - Gateway .. always had a soft spot for water worlds.' Keven Parry

'Akiva & Gateway. These make the worlds come alive and allows me to see how others treat the UWP for expansion.' Nick Walker

'Gateway. A good example of intelligent, well-reasoned building.' Duncan Law-Green

'Akiva & Scania - Such useful, original material. '

'Car Wars - Straight forward traveller adventure. Nice! '

'Planetary Data - A subsector to play with a enough adventure hooks to last a whole campaign.' Clifford Williams

'I felt as though I'd visited! Loved the illos.' Len Robinson

Nice to see enough detail so I can build on a visit to any world in the subsector. My players will never be able to guess which world has been detailed and which is just a short library entry.' Morgan Taylor

What Would You Like to See?

'I don't know. Surprise me!'. 'More on Red Eagles, also show faction borders through the rebellion years..', 'More races, bestiary and no spaceships!', 'More art, personality profiles, more general library data, random nuggets (one-paragraph adventure hooks), advice on refereeing Rebellion adventures, military Traveller stuff, comic strip..' Tech briefs, casual encounters, companies and organisations, ships, INDISS pieces, a diary of the rebellion, Get a better printer (*Ouch! That hurt.. For those who want to know, this magazine is set on an Atari 1040 STFM, using Timeworks DTP and printed out on a Star 24-10 at 360 DPI. This printer broke down last month and cost me £150 to repair so no new printer for a while!*[Jae]), An overview of Dagadushaag sector (see Duncan's HIWG papers for that), Bit cramped, be more spacious.. A couple of diagrams were near illegible (*Blame me and the photocopier, hopefully cured in this issue* [Jae]), A pet peeve is adventures that assume the PC's are fundamentally dishonest.. (*most are!* [Jae]) if not totally crooked. (*We can't please all but.. Check out WET,WET,WET and One of Our Doctor's is Missing in this issue*). [Jae]

Issue 1 Questionnaire Feedback	Average Score (out of 10)
General layout	7.6
Standard of artwork	6.8
Standard of writing	7.9
Crossroads	6.4
Contact: Scania	7.4
Akiva	7.6
Gone Fishin'	7.2
What are Psionics?	7.3
Subsector Map	7.0
Planetary Data	7.9
Car Wars	7.5
POC: Gateway	7.6
Friend or Foe	6.4
Fire & Water	7.1
Stargates & Jumpsails	7.7
<b>Overall</b>	<b>8.2</b>
Average Age	25
Percentage of readers who Refree	82%

That's all for this issue folks - Issue Three, Ushra will be out in November/December (a Christmas issue?) and contribution deadlines End of October. TTFN ...