

Stellar Reaches

A Fair Use Fanzine for Traveller

Issue #10: Autumn 2010



A Samardan Press Publication

Stellar Reaches

A Fair Use Fanzine for Traveller

Table of Contents

Letter From The Editor	3
BITS Task System	4
Using Your Model/2 bis – Revisited, Part 2.....	5
Hegemony, Republic, Duchy: Part I	8
Gateway Sector in 1248.....	27
The Golden Eclipse – Part 3 of the Lorimar Slot.....	38
Luminous Courier Class Starship	49
Legal	52

Credits:

Founder: Jason “Flynn” Kemp. Editor: 2005-2010

Cover Art: *Imperial Scouts inspect the ruins of Sibikliir, a then-uninhabited world, on 67-024 Imperial.*

The graphic is titled “After the Fall”, © Christopher Layne.

See his work at <http://karnodal.gfxartist.com/artworks/133600>

Cover Layout: Alvin W. Plummer

Contributing Artists: Philippe Bullo, Christopher Gerber, Steven Hägg-Ståhlberg, Richard Jeferies, KKohji, Ron Lanham, Christopher Layne, Robert Maschke, Max V. Nimos, pushinfaders, Chipp Walters

Contributing Authors: Joshua Bell, Mark Bridgeman, Christian F. Kelley, Alvin W. Plummer, Milo Thurston

Editor/Layout Design: Alvin W. Plummer

The Stellar Reaches fanzine’s website can currently be found at <http://stellarreaches.nwgamers.org>. Please feel free to browse the site for more information, as well as back issues and other downloads as they become available.

The **BITS Task System**, although modified to include Traveller T20 difficulty classes, has been provided with permission by **British Isles Traveller Support (BITS)**. Its presence here does not constitute any challenge to the rights for this system, and we gratefully acknowledge Dominic Mooney and Andy Lilly for their generosity in allowing our use of this system to allow future adventures to be written in such a manner as to be more useful to all published Traveller rules sets.

For more information on BITS, check out their website at <http://www.bits.org.uk/>

The **Stellar Reaches** fanzine is published without charge or cost under the appropriate Fair Use and Online policies published by the various holders of the Traveller license. For ease of reference and as required by these Fair Use policies, the appropriate text of these policies is included in the legal section at the end of this publication.

Copyright of Original Material:

All original material in the Stellar Reaches fanzine not designated as Open Game Content, or not otherwise protected under the copyrights of other entities, is copyright © 2010 by the original authors and artists, as identified in the byline with each article or contribution.

No portion of this fanzine may be reproduced in any form or by any means without permission in writing from the author or artist holding that specific content’s copyright.

Letter From The Editor

Greetings, Fellow Sophonts:

Due to personal issues, Jason “Flynn” Kemp, the founder of **Stellar Reaches**, is no longer able to maintain this fanzine. As I am both willing and able to take the position... here I am, the new editor of Stellar Reaches. I hope that I will be able to entertain and inform our loyal and very patient readership!

We will continue along the same course that Flynn set when he started this magazine, four years ago. As before, **Stellar Reaches** appreciates contributions to our pages, and **Stellar Reaches** remains a Fair Use fanzine for Traveller fans. The focus of the magazine will remain on the development of the Empty Quarter, but articles that explore original settings are welcome. Submission guidelines remain unchanged.

In this issue of **Stellar Reaches**, you will start off with Joshua Bell’s article on setting up your own word and sector generator using Javascript and the rules of **Classic Traveller** and **Challenge #25**. Next up is the first of a series of historical backgrounders for the Empty Quarter by yours truly - three cheers for plenty of cool pictures, thanks to the kindness of a host of fine artists. For fans of the **Traveller20** and **Traveller 1248** universes, we get a solid setting, an update of Gateway Sector by Milo Thurston. (Expect even *more* K’ree trouble!) The saga of the Lorimar Slot surges on, thanks to the hard work of Mark “Commander Drax” Bridgeman: hopefully, more installments are on their way. Finally, Christian F. Kelley gives us the details and plans of a comfortable courier, an inviting platform for a campaign of danger, excitement... and fine dining!

Thank you, Flynn, for getting this magazine up and running. I hope that I will not disappoint you.

Turning the page,
Alvin W. Plummer
Editor, **Stellar Reaches** fanzine

BITS Task System

From pg. 8, BITS Writers' Guidelines June 1999. Copyright ©1999, BITS. All Rights Reserved.
T20 Open Game Content from the article "Extending the Task Resolution System to T20" Copyright 2003, Jason Kemp.

MegaTraveller (MT), Traveller: The New Era (TNE) and Marc Miller's Traveller (T4) all use a graduated system of task difficulty ratings – Average, Difficult, Formidable, etc. 'Classic' Traveller (CT) and GURPS Traveller (GT) use modifiers to the task rolls instead. Traveller T20 (T20) uses difficulty classes (DCs) to define target numbers for skill checks. The BITS Task System provides a simplified common ground for all these rule sets, using difficulty ratings with corresponding task modifiers for CT and GT and DCs for T20 as shown in Table 1. The means by which spectacular (GT: critical) success or failure are achieved are defined by the rule set used. Similarly, the GM should apply the rules for special tasks – opposed, co-operative, hasty, cautious, etc. – according to the rule set used. As always, these are only guidelines – the GM may alter any task roll as appropriate to enhance the game.

TABLE 1: TASK DIFFICULTIES

BITS Task Difficulty	T4 Difficulty	T4.1 Difficulty	GT Target Modifier	TNE Difficulty	MT Difficulty	CT Target Modifier	T20 DC
Easy	Easy (Auto)	Easy (1D)	+6	Easy	Simple	-4	10
Average	Average (2D)	Average (2D)	+3	Average	Routine	-2	15
Difficult	Difficult (2.5D)	Difficult (2.5D)	0	Difficult	Difficult	0	20
Formidable	Formidable (3D)	Formidable (3D)	-3	Formidable	Difficult	+2	25
Staggering	Impossible (4D)	Staggering (4D)	-6	Impossible	Formidable	+4	30
Impossible	(5D)	Hopeless (5D)	-9	Impossible	Impossible	+6	35
Hopeless	(6D)	Impossible (6D)	-12	Impossible	Impossible	+8	40

Ex. Maria Charles is forging a complex document, which the GM rules is a Staggering task. Maria has Forgery-4 (GT: Forgery-16, T20: Forgery +18) and the relevant attribute (MT, T4) is INT 10 (TNE: INT 9, T20: 15).

CT: Task success is normally $2D + Skill \geq 8$. Maria requires $2D + Forgery \geq 12$ ($8 + 4$ for Staggering difficulty).

Alternatively, the GM may prefer to apply the target modifier as a negative modifier on the dice roll, i.e. $2D + 4 - 4 \geq 8$.

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

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

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

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

T20: Maria requires $d20 + 18 \geq 30$. (Note that the INT modifier is already factored into the skill check.)

Task definitions should always be used sparingly – the GM should be able to define the difficulty and required skills and equipment for most tasks using common sense. Where strange skills or equipment are needed, these can usually be listed, without requiring a full task definition. Where a full task definition is required, use the following format (you don't need to use the bold or italics formatting; plain text is fine):

To find a boar:

**Difficult Recon (GT: Tracking), or
Difficult Hunting (T20: P/Hunting), or
Formidable Survival**

+1 Difficulty if riding at full gallop.

+1 Difficulty if lost.

-1 Difficulty if moving slowly.

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

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

Failure: No tracks found.

Spectacular Failure: They have become lost.

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

NOTE: This system has been extensively play-tested but suggestions for refinements are always welcome.

Using Your Model/2 bis – Revisited, Part 2

by Joshua Bell

“A simple computer program could use this information to produce Aslan words...”
– Alien Module 1: Aslan

Welcome back! This is Part 2 of a series of articles intended to (re)introduce players to the pleasure of creating and sharing useful software tools, much as the creators of *Traveller* did while inventing the game. We’ve replaced floppy disks and BASIC with the Internet and JavaScript, but the fun is still there. It’s never been easier, let’s dive in.

Last time, I promised to revisit the basic *Traveller Sector Generator* from *Challenge #25*. I remember dutifully entering that listing into my Apple... and then spending hours trying to track down the inevitable typos! This time around we’ll skip most of the typing, thanks to the wonders of the Internet. The sample code for this article can be downloaded from: <http://travellermap.com/model2/>

The focus of this article will be how to understand, adapt, modify, and combine existing scripts to do new things.

Word Generation

The creators of *Traveller* were enthusiastic about creating algorithms for many tasks. A prime example of this was the word generation rules that were printed in the Classic Traveller Alien Modules. The algorithm for each language followed this pattern:

- Determine the number of syllables in a word (1D)
- For each syllable, determine the type - Vowel (V), Consonant-Vowel (CV), Vowel-Consonant (VC) or Consonant-Vowel-Consonant (CVC). Make two 1D rolls to look up the type from a 6x6 table. The table to use depends on the previous syllable.
- For each consonant or vowel, roll 1D to pick from one of six tables, then roll 1D twice more to pick the phoneme from the resulting 6x6 table.

Each language also had one or two specific rules to filter these choices, such as “a single letter vowel can never be followed directly by the same single letter vowel.” The straightforward nature of the algorithm meant that it was easily implemented on personal computers of the day using built-in languages like

BASIC - GDW even sold *WordGen* for the Apple II as a play aid. But is also an excellent candidate for beginning programmers to implement today, using a Web browser, HTML and JavaScript.

In the previous article, all of the program logic and display were present in one file. This time, the reusable logic is stored in a JavaScript file (*wordgen.js*) and the page-specific display code is stored in the HTML file (*wordgen.html*). Let’s look at the JavaScript file first.

To keep things tidy, all of the program data is held inside a *Languages* object. An object, or collection of named values, can be created and populated using the notation `var myobject = { "key1": member1, "key2": member2, ... };` or by creating an empty object `var myobject = {};` and then adding to it: `myobject.key = member;` Keys are typically strings, and members can be of any data type – numbers, strings, true or false, arrays (like lists) or even other objects. You can get data out of an object by writing `myobject["key"]` or `myobject.key` – the latter form is typically used if you know the key name when writing the code.

The syllable and letter frequencies for each language are stored in objects as well, added to the *Languages* object. Each language object has members named *basicSyllables*, *alternateSyllables*, *initialConsonants*, *vowels*, and *finalConsonants*. The value for each of these members is an array of pairs of symbol and frequency. A special member called *nextSyllable* is an object which “maps” from the name of the last syllable type to the name of the next syllable table to use. Since each language has slightly different rules, some languages have additional members. For example, a member called *reductionRules* allows sequences such as “SHSH” to be reduced to “SH” in Vilani and the unpronounceable “NCHCHT” to “NCH” in Zhodani.

The rest of the sample is the code to operate on these functions. It starts off with a basic *roll1D()* utility function, then a generic *selectByFreq()* function that takes an array of pairs and selects a random

member. The last utility function *pickAndFilter()* handles special rules found in languages that forbid certain syllables or phonemes from following each other – it “re-rolls” *selectByFreq()* until it gets an acceptable answer. The function must be given a *filter* function to use, which comes from the language definition itself.

The final function is *generateWord()* which implements the overall algorithm. It takes a language object, rolls 1D to get the syllables, determines each syllable, and picks the phonemes, implementing filtering where required by each language. One common JavaScript pattern that you will see here is *if(Lang.someFunction && Lang.someFunction(...)) { ... }* – this does nothing if a given language doesn’t have *someFunction* defined, and allows language definitions to be as compact as possible.

The HTML file includes the JavaScript file with the line:

```
<script type="text/javascript"
src="wordgen.js"></script>
```

This is followed by the script which generates five random words in each language and adds them to the page. Press the “Refresh” button in your Web browser to keep making new words.

Sector Generation

Another frequently printed and updated algorithm was world generation, originally described in *Classic Traveller Book 3: Worlds and Adventures*, updated in *Book 6: Scouts*, and tweaked and modified by practically every *Traveller* edition since. Marc Miller wrote a basic sector generator printed in *Challenge #25*, and a much more advanced and interactive generator was published in the next issue that handled varying stellar density and allegiances across a sector, and even Zhodani relay station placement. We’ll stick to adapting the simpler sector generator for this article. Once again, the reusable logic is stored in a JavaScript file (*sectorgen.js*) and the page-specific display code is stored in the HTML file (*sectorgen.html*).

Basic world generation is much more straightforward than word generation. Each world starts off as an empty object. Then each digit of the UWP is determined through a combination of die rolls and modifiers based on previous results, and assigned to the world object. Finally, trade codes are determined. This is done in the *generateWorld()* function, which closely follows the Applesoft BASIC code presented in *Challenge #25*, with a few bug fixes introduced to and changes to conform to *Book 6*.

A *makeUWP()* function is used to convert a world object into a UWP row that might be found printed in a sector data listing, using *Traveller’s* special form of “hexadecimal”. This is unfortunately just as inelegant in JavaScript as in BASIC; unlike practically every other programming language developed in the last 30 years, neither JavaScript nor BASIC has good string formatting utilities built in!

Finally, the *generateSector()* function is used to fill a whole sector’s worth of parsecs with worlds. The HTML page simply includes the JavaScript file, calls this function, and adds the results to the page – a new sector each time the page is loaded!

Using Your Model/2 Blender

Now that we have a way to generate both words and worlds, let’s put them together.

First, modify the source to the sector generator HTML page to include the word generator script – add the first script tag above the second near the top of the file:

```
<script type="text/javascript"
src="wordgen.js"></script>
<script type="text/javascript"
src="sectorgen.js"></script>
```

Then, modify the sector generator script to call into the word generator script to create a name for each world. Near the top of the file, add a function to capitalize the names:

```
function capitalize(word) {
    return word.replace(/^\w/,
function(a) { return a.toUpperCase();
});
}
```

Just after the world object is created in *generateWorld()*, generate the name:

```
var world = {};
world.name =
capitalize(generateWord(Languages.Vilani)); // Add this line
```

Finally, change the UWP generation script to include the name:

```
var uwp = "";
uwp += ljust(world.name, 22, " ");
// Add this line
```

Now, refresh the page and make sure it works. (The **sectorgen2.js** and **sectorgen2.html** are the "after" versions, if you want to verify your changes.)

Since it is only the basic sector generator, all worlds are generated with Imperial allegiance and therefore Vilani names are used. A more advanced generator would allow interactive specifications of allegiances, implement allegiance-specific world generation rules, include use a map from allegiances to languages, and

use appropriate languages to generate the names for each world.

Next Time

My two picks for what to tackle next are the extended system generation from Book 6, or graphical sector mapping. Have a preference? Have a different suggestion? Send me email:

inexorabletash@hotmail.com



This graphic is titled "Return of the Prodigal Son", © Steven Hägg-Ståhlberg
See his work at <http://stahlberg.cgsociety.org/gallery/>

Hegemony, Republic, Duchy: Part I

By Alvin W. Plummer



In the inner core of Urmair system, 993 Imperial

The graphic is titled “Dying Sun”, © pushinfaders. See his work at http://www.renderosity.com/mod/gallery/index.php?image_id=569597

Before We Begin...

This series of articles was originally meant to be a reference work, containing a summary of the history of The Empty Quarter. Based on the setting data published in Jason “Flynn” Kemp’s **Stellar Reaches** e-magazine, Issues #1 to #9 – found at <http://stellarreaches.nwgamers.org/> - the book was planned as a background aid to the Referee in campaign and adventure design within The Empty Quarter. A secondary goal is to provide a ‘God’s-eye’ view of The Empty Quarter, showing how the setting works over time. By showing how the historical logic of the setting worked to create the sector of 993, the Referee is given the tools he needs to build on the

narrative, or alter it to suit the story he wants to tell. He may even use this historical summary as a model to write his own history, for The Empty Quarter or for another region of space.

The difference between fiction and reality?
Fiction has to make sense.

Tom Clancy, fl. -2540 Imperial

Referees need not master all of the information in the article, and are free – even encouraged – to shift it, tailor it, or completely rewrite it to their individual campaign. The tone of the work assumes a ‘realistic’ campaign with a politico-military focus: this can and should be altered, depending on the needs of the

group. However, before an artist can create a universe, he needs something to push against, something that he can enhance, challenge, demolish, or rewrite. That is what this work is for.

This sector is dominated by the Third Imperium, the Rukadukaz Republic and the Hegemony of Lorean. A summary of the impact of the First and Second Imperia, as well as the recent history of their neighbours, is provided. The Duchy of The Empty Quarter is treated as the dominant 'local major state', in lieu of the truly vast Third Imperium. It is also more extensively detailed than other regions, as most Referees and Players are expected to have a pro-Imperial slant, largely adventure within this area, and maintain their 'home base' here.

Later articles are focused on the many years before 993, the start date of the **Traveller20** scenario. The observant reader may have noted the gap between 993 and 1117. These 124 years are not chronicled in previous Traveller material, nor are they described within these pages as background information. Instead, they have been left untouched, to be shaped as the Referee and his Players desire. Note that the official UWP for the 1105 Empty Quarter lists no non-Imperial military bases in the region: even in the Rim War era of 993, there are very few non-Imperial military bases in the sector.

The years after 1117 are not described in detail: but certain brief comments and maps within GDW's Hard Times and Survival Margin books have made it imperative that a reasonable description of the War of the Rebellion be provided, if a complete record of The Empty Quarter is to be provided. Some post-Virus information is also provided, for the games that are set in the **Traveller: The New Era**. Two alternate universes are also planned: one, a post-Rebellion scenario without Virus; the other showcases a weaker, more feudal, more loose Imperium. Extensive appendixes will round out the series, for the true Traveller grognard.

The Uses of History

...I heard voices of friends, vanished and gone...

Bruce Springsteen, *Streets of Philadelphia*,
-2528 Imperial

A good setting is grounded in a good history. Proper history, in the RPG sense, provides verisimilitude for the Players, an environment for PCs to play off of, ideals for the Referee to use as campaigns and adventures, and adds character, even gravitas, to a sub-creation (to steal from Tolkien for a moment). A

good narrative gives the Referee and the PCs solid ground to walk on.

This series of articles meets most of the requirements of a good history, but suffers from two notable flaws: length and complexity. However, the complexity and length is a necessary result of the sheer scope of the project, including

- time (5500 years)
- space (313 star systems)
- cultures:
 - the Ovaghoun, Irilitok, and Suedzuk Vargr cultures
 - Ikonaz & Imperial Vilani
 - Lorean humaniti, a vigorous blend of German, Slavic, Italian, French, Arab, and East Asian societies
 - Imperial Solomani, largely descended from Amerindian, Arab, and East Indian cultures
 - the Bwap, both Imperial and Protectorate
- and governments (assorted pocket empires in Beta Quadrant; a cycle of major Vargr states in Alpha Quadrant; three Imperia; an intruding empire from Arzul Sector; and a long-established empire to coreward, dominated by a minor human race.

that must be addressed. Thankfully, neither the Referee nor the PCs should ever have to use all the information here. It is better seen as a resource to be mined to beef up a Traveller game set in The Empty Quarter.

I tried to avoid impinging on the history of individual planets, to give the Referee maximum freedom to shape individual worlds as he sees fit. However, some worlds must be given prominence, due to previous Traveller Canon, previously published information in Stellar Reaches, or the implications of an extraordinary UWP.

The last is especially true for Ikon, whose UWP describes the world as wealthier than the rest of the sector put together. I elevated its importance to a "Vargr-historical" level: by the nature of what it is, the world of Ikon must have broad name-recognition among the Vargr, just as the high-pop, high-tech world of Vincennes is famous throughout the Domain of Deneb. Marhaban, home of the most successful minor race in existence, also has a notable impact on the history of all of Imperial Space. The sector on a whole is backward, but the jewels shine all the brighter because of it.



A Solomani girl and her biogeneered pet on Enola, 993 Imperial
The graphic is titled "Watching the sunset", © Max V. Nimos. See his work at http://www.renderosity.com/mod/gallery/index.php?image_id=1065517

An Introduction to The Empty Quarter

The Empty Quarter is a region of space that marks the coreward/trailing extend of the Third Imperium: it's also part of the rimward edge of the Vargr Extents. As of 993, there are 313 starsystems within the sector, excluding the pre-supernova star, Beta Niobe, located in the heart of the Beta Niobe nebula in hex 2825. (Beta Niobe is absent from the count, due to the fact that she has no planets or stellar bodies large enough to land on.) These starsystems are astrographically divided into a coreward half and a smaller rimward portion by a limb of the Lesser Rift.

As of 993 Imperial, the area is divided between three interstellar states:

- the Third Imperium and her 134 starsystems in the coreward region
- the Rukadukaz Republic, with her 60 systems dominating Alpha Quadrant
- the Hegemony of Lorean, in control of Beta Quadrant and 69 starsystems

Both the Republic and (to a lesser extent) the Hegemony are bound to the Julian Protectorate. Another interstellar power, the ancient Second Empire of Gashikan, is located nearby, and (in 993 Imperial) maintains extensive holdings in Meshan and Amdukan sectors – but no territory in The Empty Quarter. Amdukan sector is located directly coreward of The Empty Quarter, and is the wealthy centre of the Julian Protectorate: Meshan sector is the sector immediately to spinward of Amdukan.



Imperial Nobles on Eshigash/SummerSky, an artigrav city over Ushmigad, 971 Imperial.

The graphic is titled “sky city”, ©Robert Maschke. See his work at

<http://airage.deviantart.com/art/sky-city-24991647>

Between the Rukadukaz Republic and the Hegemony of Lorean lies the Ssilnthis Zone: a group of unaffiliated, pirate-infested starsystems that lies along the boundaries between Alpha and Beta quadrants. There are also a few scattered non-aligned systems on the edge of Imperial space and within the Lesser Rift. In total, there are 42 independent starsystems within The Empty Quarter. There is also a chain of eight Imperial Client systems, strung along a chain between the Rukadukaz Republic and the Hegemony of Lorean.

In regard to population, there are several contending cultures within the Quarter. On the Imperial side of the Lesser Rift, Arab and Indian societies dominate, with a scattering of Vilani and Amerindian cultures as well. Within the Rukadukaz Republic, the Ovaghoun Vargr retain both their partnership with the original Vilani inhabitants, and their usual senior positions in government, business, and society – but the majority of sophonts are Irilitok descendants of immigrants from the Asimikigir Confederation, the most important member-state of the Julian Protectorate.

Beta Quadrant was long dominated by the blood-thirsty Suedzuk – the feared ‘Red Vargr’ – that so famously smashed Gashikan in antiquity. However, the expansion of the Hegemony of Lorean into the area has broken the Red Sparks within The Empty Quarter. Those who could fled to the Ssilnthis Gap, where they extract their vengeance of unwary Travellers. The dwindling Suedzuk packs that remain within the Hegemony are unable to terrorise the starlanes like in the old days, as Suedzuk Vargr are banned from owning or crewing starships within that starnation. Only on a few worlds – most prominently Zuethun – can the Suedzuk still make their claws felt.

Hegemonic territory is now increasingly populated by Irilitok workers and labourers, under the authority of a Arzula humaniti ruling class descended from Slavic, Arab, East Asian, and Mixed Vilani peoples. (‘Arzula’ is derived from Arzul Sector, where the hearthworlds of the Hegemony are located.) Racial, work, and mobility restrictions on the Irilitok are being gradually if haltingly removed, increasing their ability to settle and spread to other nearby worlds. This is most clearly seen at Kulloerr (Flange/Empty Quarter 2103), an Irilitok Vargr-dominated world that

is now home to one of the most successful planetary economies in all of Beta quadrant.

Local humaniti, largely of Arab and Indian extraction, still number in the billions: but their cultural influence is rather subdued compared to their somewhat paler and definitely more militaristic Arzula overlords. Moreover, the conquered humans are still recovering from the Era of Horror that established Hegemonio dominance once and for all. In the meantime, the Arzula have already established small colonial settlements, to serve as models that the local 'Beta humaniti' can aspire to.

Historical Summary

The following is a more extensive historical overview of the 'mainline' Empty Quarter up to the year 993 Imperial, as depicted in Jason 'Flynn' Kemp's **Stellar Reaches**, especially #1 – #4. While there is clear evidence of sapient activity within the sector before the arrival of the Vilani, only low-tech Bwap artifacts and a few crude Pikii relics dates back before c. -50,000 Imperial, precluding any Ancient involvement in the sector. The region was originally part of both the First and Second Imperia, but was never heavily settled by the Vilani. During this period, the two local sentient species, the Bwap and the Pikii (later renamed the Surogotans), were first discovered. While both species were at a low technological level, the Pikii remained as they were, but the Bwap swiftly adapted Vilani technology and methodology for their own use. Moreover, Bwap psychology fitted well with the Vilani mode of government: within a millennium, the Bwap could be found on every major Vilani world, throughout Imperial Space.

The Rule of Man reshaped the demography of The Empty Quarter, providing Arabic and Indian immigrants into the region (both East Indians and, in much smaller numbers, American Indians.) The Vargr Pillaging had a much greater impact on coreward Quarter, establishing the Vilani-influenced Ovaghoun Vargr in Alpha Quadrant, and the bloody-minded Suedzuk Vargr in Beta Quadrant. The Vargr found it impossible to directly cross the Lesser Rift, delaying full-scale attacks on the rimward Empty Quarter until the Ovaghoun conquest of Antares was largely completed, near the end of the Pillaging. Even

so, the Six Subsectors would eventually gain their own set of scars from Vargr claws.

During the final thousand years of the Long Night, the Ovaghoun Vargr, increasingly shaped by Vilani culture, established the Ikonaz Sphere. Their superior business acumen allowed them to seed and strengthen colonies across three sectors – and their military strength was enough to sterilize a bubble around Ikon, killing all non-Ovaghoun Vargr within the region. However, the inward turn in the last centuries of the Long Night left them in a declining position, compared to the expanding power of the Menderes Corporation in Amdukan Sector and the Sylean Federation in Core Sector.

They say that men only think about sex.
That's not exactly true.

They also care a lot about power, world domination, money, and beer.

Owain F Carter,
fl. -2500 Imperial

What you provincial yokels don't realise is that 'World Domination' is the *lowest* rung of the Imperial Noble hierarchy.

Duke Gracial of Gimushi,
to a visiting group
of Vargr reporters from Ikon,
150 Imperial

Thanks to early Bwap contacts and successful diplomacy with the Hebrin Caliphate, the Third Imperium found the reabsorption of the rimward Empty Quarter largely accomplished by 100 Imperial. However, the leadership of the Menderes family, coupled with the anti-Vargr attitudes of the Solomani-dominated Imperial Nobility, led to the refusal of Ikonaz society – Vargr & Vilani – to submit to the Iridium Throne. The resulting Julian War devastated Alpha Quadrant, but Imperial forces failed to crack the central world of Ikon. Later in the war, when the Imperium was placed on the defensive, Protectorate forces – including Ikonaz warships – devastated trade in Imperial space, and raided worlds mercilessly. Orbital bombardments were also suffered by poorly-defended worlds, as was the case with the Imperial colony on Saffron.



A Saisung Galactic Survey ship observes the ruins of the Ylothi Megapolis, Tsosoe, c. 642 Imperial. At the time, Saisung (a notable world of Azrul sector, hex 0735) was a contender for leadership of the region, and the centre of her own pocket empire and interstellar trading network.

The graphic is titled “Another Lost Paradise”, © Max V. Nimos. See his work at http://www.renderosity.com/mod/gallery/index.php?image_id=825184

While the Great Powers ripped into each other, Beta Quadrant went her own way. Very late in coming out of the Long Night, interstellar commerce was rekindled in 280, as Vargr conquistadors from Ssilnthi briefly took over Beta Quadrant, bringing technology, superior social organizations, and real trade (instead of ‘gunpoint trades’) to the region. Humaniti was universally subjected to Vargr masters – typically violent, and sometimes hungry – until the War of Man rung in liberty on several worlds. The resulting release of pent-up creativity led to the Bright Age, a remarkably fertile time of immense progress and great freedom that ended in the tragic Nishhingh War of the mid-600s.

The brief post-Julian War boom eventually melted away, fuelling hostility between local Arab and East Indian nobility. While they rarely came to direct blows, the conflict manifested itself by innumerable intrigues, conspiracies, and proxy wars. The shadow conflict diverted time, energy, talent and wealth from constructive to destructive ends, crippling the post-war recovery within the region and permanently impoverishing local worlds compared to the rest of the Imperium.

In the meantime, things remained tense between the Julian Protectorate and the Imperium, but the cycle of cold war/cold peace was broken during the Imperial Civil War. The Imperial Empty Quarter was never a

major theatre of that Noble-on-Noble fratricide, but most of her systems were easy prey for any pack of pirates to come along. Although Arbellastra was acclaimed Regent in 622, the badly weakened state of the Imperium as a whole – militarily, economically and politically – meant that the Imperial Empty Quarter had to wait until the 630s before Imperial authority was seriously reasserted in the region.

After the Alkhalikoi Dynasty was solidly enthroned, one of their initial policies was the ‘Peaceful Borders’ policy, designed to give the Imperium time to recover. However, thanks to the initiative of Archduke Soegz of Antares, the Peaceful Borders policy paved the way to a genuine ‘warm peace’ between the Third Imperium and the Julian Protectorate. There has been increasing co-operation between the two great powers, which has smoothed over later controversies, such as the decision by Colony – a powerful and long-established Imperial Client State – to join the Rukadukaz Republic in 979.

As the Warm Peace stretches on, the the wealthy but increasingly sterile pro-Vilani Ovaghoun racial overlords are being slowly supplanted the by the ‘servitor race’ Irilitok (a.k.a. Julian, or Amdukan Vargr) throughout the Alpha Quadrant. Born and bred to please man, the continual immigration and rapid reproduction of the Irilitok Vargr is deeply resented, but the Ovaghoun can’t live without their

labour (so expulsion is out of the question), and refuse to bear the costs of parenthood. The Ovaghoun who can read the writing on the wall are increasingly migrating to their remaining strongholds in Mendan sector: some, subtly encouraged by the Vargr Archduke, are even making the jump into Imperial space in Antares. The majority, however, remain in Ikon, trusting to their wealth and social position to protect their primacy on the Ovaghoun homeworld.

The sudden rise of the humanist Hegemony of Lorean redrew the map of Beta Quadrant in the late 700s, absorbing numerous pocket empires and independent worlds into her expanding frontiers. It also directly led to the shattering of Suedzuk Vargr culture in the region, and its eventual replacement with the man-friendly Irilitok. Hostility between the Protectorate and the expansionist Hegemony peaked sharply, then declined as the overstretched Hegemony nearly destroyed herself, trying to gain

victory in a horrific war deep in Arzul Sector. Over 60 years were spent recovering from the Era of Horror – where Hegemon terror and violence annihilated resistance within Beta Quadrant, decimating the Suedzuk Vargr in the process – before the Hegemony again pressed into Protectorate space.

The long peace between herself and the Imperium indirectly persuaded the citizens of Ikon to declare a Jubilee, freeing all the Impservers – captured Imperials, enslaved for generations – in the mid-700s. The vast majority elected to return to Imperial space on veritable fleets of Imperial troop transports, operating under the watchful eye of the Star Legion. However, a small minority of 20,000 elected to remain on Ikon: by 993, their number has swollen to two million. Even their social status has improved: “At least they are not Irilitok!”



Previous page: Hegemony Motherships, Justice System, 989 Imperial

The graphic is titled "Mother Ship", © KKohji. See his work at http://www.renderosity.com/mod/gallery/index.php?image_id=1531471

The Hegemony, again ready and eager to expand their frontier, instigated the defection of the Damlaer Union from the Protectorate to the Hegemony. Protectorate outrage sparked the Lorean Strikes (933-936) in response. The failure of the Star Legion to recover Damlaer sparked a major political crisis within the Protectorate, which threatened the very foundations of the alliance. The immediate crisis was resolved only by a charismatic media-driven showdown between the Menderes family and their Vargr critics; however, internal tensions remained high until the Menderes, in a completely unexpected coup, persuaded the Hegemon to join the Protectorate as an Associated State in return for Julian recognition of Damlaer's absorption into the Hegemony.

The youngest government of the region, the Rukadukaz Republic, has an interest in upholding the Warm Peace, and the importance of the lesser worlds of the Republic: increasingly, they are also promoting the formal equality between Ovaghoun Vargr and Ikonaz Vilani. While the position of the Irilitok Vargr has substantially improved, they are still at the bottom of the social hierarchy. Most Republican worlds restrict the amount of rights and freedom the Irilitok enjoy, to a greater or lesser extent. The leaders of the Republic remain suspicious of the Hegemony of Lorean, but tolerate it as the Hegemonio taste for expanding borders has slackened.

In 942, the Protectorate and the Hegemony formally signed the Treaty of Var-Inaka (restricting naval basing) and the Julian Concord, incorporating the

Hegemony into the Julian Protectorate as an Associated State. In addition, Damlaer subsector was formally renamed Lorean subsector, and became the new capital of the Hegemony. Finally, on the insistence of the Rukadukaz leadership, a 'buffer zone' of neutral systems was marked out between the Lorean Hegemony and the Rukadukaz Republic, with an average of six parsecs between their borders, and restrictions on naval bases were put in place. The region has descended into pirate-infested lawlessness, but the political unwillingness to compromise on territorial claims restrains Star Legion action from addressing the problem.

As for the Six Subsectors? Several small worlds have not only recovered from the trials of the past, but are now leading The Empty Quarter in growth and sophistication. Most of the older worlds, however, prefer the status quo, in varying degrees. Local politics now centres on economic policy, instead of culture, religion, or dynastic feuds. The ascension of a Bwap as Sector Duke, while backed by local nobility, is seen as a necessary but unwelcome development by local humanity, from Subsector Dukes and goat herders. The mere fact that Duke Dethwabtakewebwakawa has survived three years on the sector throne – with his authority intact – points to a major shift in local attitudes regarding authority, legitimacy, and race. In the meantime, piracy has surged to again threaten interstellar trade: partly in response to the Sector Fleet's relocation to the distant Old Expanses, partly due to the increasing power of the Shadow Cartel.



The Monoliths of Thisuel. Thisuel system, 914 Imperial

The graphic is titled "Distant Shores IV", © Christopher Gerber. See his work at http://www.renderosity.com/mod/gallery/index.php?image_id=568961

Pre-Vilani Relics

The silent sentinels of Time.
 Researcher Dame Agnia Negro,
 on first seeing the
 Monoliths of Thisuel
 458 Imperial

The first thing the local historian should notice is the lack of Ancient involvement in The Empty Quarter. There are no Droynes, no Chirpers, and not a single Ancient relic. The last real hope of a genuine Ancient find, on the world of Corcoran, was revealed by the Imperial Interstellar Scout Service to be a fraud in 990. The lack of Ancient sites within The Empty Quarter remains a mystery, as they can be found throughout most other sectors of Charted Space.

Known examples of high-tech pre-Vilani activity include:

- the Ikonic Event (c. -10,200) and partial terraforming (c. -10,000 to -9050) of Ikon
- the Monoliths of Thisuel (c. -39,000). This world has several stone monoliths over fifty feet in height. Who made them? What are they for? Nobody knows...
- the relics found on Mikhail (c. -49,000). There are no examples of working technology from that era, due to the corrosive atmosphere.

Of these ancient occurrences, it's the Ikonic Event that was the most dramatic. According to the latest hypothesis, a large object, travelling at near-c speeds, shattered the northern hemisphere to a depth of 1000 km – this, on a planet that is only about 3000 km in diameter! Soon afterwards, there is overwhelming evidence that Ikon was terraformed – but work suddenly halted in c. -9050: researchers believe that this was just before life was to be introduced. The identity of the 'Ikonic worldshapers' is unknown.

The Ziru Sirka

What terrifies technocrats is not that the future will depart from a traditional ideal but that it will be unpredictable and beyond the control of professional wise men.

Virginia Postrel
(born -2561 Imperial),
The Future and Its Enemies

The Ziru Sirka (a.k.a. the First Imperium) began scouting this region of space in the distant past, at approximately -5000 Imperial. Almost immediately, they discovered the Bwaps on the Bwap homeworld of Taswabwapeaspa. The world was swiftly assimilated by the Imperium, and given the proper Vilani name of Lentuli. (Much later, it was again renamed to Marhaban, Arabic for “Hello.”) The Bwaps were very pleased with Contact, as they could happily fit themselves in the Order and Structure the Vilani had established across Civilized Space. They took the opportunity to rise from a worldwide culture of TL 5 to TL 9 within a century.

The rest of the sector – on both sides of the Lesser Rift – was surveyed without major incident. It took a few more centuries until the reclusive Surogotans (then called the Pikii) were discovered by Vilani scouts in -4500 Imperial. Eventually, Vilani shugilii arrived to indoctrinate the Pikii on Vilani mores and standards, which the Pikii adopted due to the inability to fight the advanced Vilani. The Vilani saw no benefit in upgrading their technology, as they did with their Bwap allies. As the Pikii posed no threat and gave no known economic benefit, they and their world – filled with dangerous wildlife – were promptly filed and forgotten by the bureaucrats.

Named Gushgus – translatable as “Chaotic Arm”, or “Home of Chaos” – this sector was never heavily settled by the Makhidkarun Bureaux of the Ziru Sirka. The worlds with the largest amount of desirable resources were typically desert worlds, while the better worlds were generally metal-poor or bore a biological foundation that was incompatible with the limited selection of then-known foodstuffs that was suitable for human consumption.

The Bwaps themselves proved themselves to be very adept at handling bureaucratic procedures: so much so that by -4000 senior Vilani aristocrats made it a point to always include a few Bwaps (and their families) in their retinue as they crossed the stars in their duties. Over the next millennium, this policy was carried over to the bureaucracies and mid-level Noble Houses. For their part, the Bwaps slipped right into place as pitiless cogs of the crushing Vilani bureaucracy. The same relentless will of Pax Vilani

that ground the spirit of other minor races into dust, exalted the Bwaps to an interstellar golden age. Their numbers multiplied to fill all the positions they could, until they became by far the most widespread and numerous minor race in Imperial Space.

Starfriends fight to forge
Order/Discipline
All-Under-Heaven
Little friends process
paper and pixels,
bringing Order/Discipline
to Rules & Procedures
We stand united
under the protective shade
of the Shadow Emperor,
each in our proper place
The Living Tradition
bless our weave/pattern
with stability and prosperity!

Traditional Bwap paean
to Imperial Nobility, first recorded
c. -3900 Imperial

(modified forms of this greeting are still in
use within Lentuli & Nulinad subsectors, c.
993 Imperial)

As they grew in wealth and power, the Bwaps – with their mastery of bureaucratic loopholes and political clout – were able to evade restrictions placed on the less favoured races. Getting permission to build their own fleet of jump1 starships in c. -3170 was quite a remarkable feat, but their crowning achievement occurred in c. -2800, when the Ishimkarun (Shadow Emperor) granted the system of Lentuli a license to build Jump2 engines – the only known legal exception to the Ziru Sirka restrictions of Jump2 technology. Bwap settlement of nearby worlds was also permitted as a special reward by the Ishimkarun: the first world to be colonized by the Bwap was Wesaswek in -3005, and additional worlds were licensed for Bwap colonization over the next 500 years.

Just how the Bwaps managed to gain these licenses is the subject of immense speculation among serious students of Bwap history, and a question supposedly answered by several famous Bwap literary and lyrical works. However, analysis of these works of Bwap art comes up with several conflicting meanings, which the Bwap authorities refuse to clarify. Actual scholarship into this question is very sparse: no historian have ever surmounted the sheer wall of Vilani and Bwap paperwork needed to even begin a decent investigation. Recent speculation on Bwaps building Jump2 starships before gaining formal

Vilani permission can be dismissed out of hand: after all, that would have been extremely illegal at the time. The Bwap never do anything that violates procedure, certainly not in the massive networked conspiracy that would have been needed to pull off such a stunt. Obviously then, claims of, say, an ancient, hidden Bwap starport tucked away in deep space are only the delusions of a Scout that really needs to see his family more often.

Understanding ancient Vilani-Bwap contacts motivate most sophonts who wish to study Ziru Sirka activity within Gushgus Sector. However, the sector, while a second-tier region at the time, was certainly not the near-destitute backwater it has become today. The Twin Pillars of Heaven – the industrial powerhouse Sibikliir and the agricultural breadbasket of Gimushi – dominated the rimward regions. Numerous additional worlds were settled by both the Vilani and their Bwap clients, including Irash, Wesaswek, Giimkirla (renamed Uduhis), Iisdirrii, and Ka-aswa. However, it is Ababat who has the honour of being the oldest human world in the sector. Established as a resupply post for Marhaban-bound traders, it was first settled in -4914 Imperial.

In Alpha Quadrant, the worlds of Ligi Khimudam (later renamed Madhi, and still later Aeghzivik), Dudikurgemunsu (renamed Tsai) acted primarily as settler worlds for Makhidkarun. As these worlds grew, economic & resource pressures from Mikasirka Sector (later renamed Antares Sector) led to the establishment of another industrial powerhouse on Zukhisa. A notable naval base was established over Mazaggukalu (later dismantled by the Rule of Man, who renamed the world Tokitre). The weak level of control in the region led to an unusually large number of minor idiosyncratic cultures in the area – later supplemented by exiled dissidents – displeasing the highly conformist Vilani nobility of the region.

Unique and valuable compounds were available from the oceans of Gulimizuurkush (later called Ikon), and even though the world was lifeless, its physical and electro-chemical profile required very little alteration

to accept imported life forms – almost as if Gulimizuurkush's was already 'prepped' to accept life. When the Vilani first colonized the world, they followed the typical pattern of settling in river valleys and rich fertile plains. The need for workers to live close to the undersea mines acted as an impetus to establish underwater settlements on Gulimizuurkush, with the land above used for ore processing.

While the rimward regions were settled early and quickly, and the Alpha Quadrant was reasonably settled by -3000, Beta Quadrant was inhabited only by outposts, religious enclaves, and exiles until the -2850s. At this time, the gloriously fertile world of Reshkhuda was selected for heavy settlement as the planned regional metropole, while Eguud and Egakhu (later renamed Justince and Tsooe) were tasked to provide industrial goods and raw materials. Diagemi was off the beaten track and settled late in the Vilani period, but her living conditions and lifeforms were quite pleasing the Vilani, who turned the world into a resort world. Further settlement of the area continued, but at a slow and leisure pace. Reshiigani was felt to be a fine world, once brought up to snuff with some limited terraforming: but the rot of corruption was seeping into the Makhidkarun bureau, and the project was milked for all it was worth. A job that was planned out for 50 years actually took 120 years, finally coming to completion in -2576 Imperial.

As Beta Quadrant was built up, renewed attention was given to the defence of the sector. Even as the Interstellar wars were starting up in the -2400s, the difficult to access world of Ashkheradda (later renamed Bravo Base, and still later just Bravo) was selected as a major military staging area, complete with industrial infrastructure and a notable chain of shipping yards. Four chains of secret fuel dumps were pre-positioned in the Lesser Rift, to allow warships from Ashkheradda to make surprise strikes throughout the sector – a project completed just before the Vilani surrendered to the Terrans at -2219 Imperial.

The Rule of Man

You can't buy this kind of awesome!
Able Spacehand Josey Wales
Observing the spectacular night sky over Marhaban
A.D. 2302 (-2218 Imperial)



In orbit over Terra, the colonial starship Safluat an-Nuh (Arabic: “Noah’s Ark”) gets ready for her long journey to the Empty Quarter in A.D. 2407 (-2113 Imperial). Travelling at jump2 across 160 parsecs, she finally arrived over Shuura at A.D. 2412. Shurra, the first Terran world of the sector, was prominent during the 25th and 26th centuries but later fell into obscurity.

The graphic is titled “Docking”, © KKohji. See his work at http://www.renderosity.com/mod/gallery/index.php?image_id=1527539

This sector was never a theatre in the Nth Interstellar War, which only reached Massilia (Vilani: Masilaa) Sector before the Ziru Sirka collapsed in A.D. 2299 (-2219 Imperial). The Gushgus sector government collapsed with the First Imperium at that date, as long-suppressed deviant Vilani organizations overthrew their masters. Terrans first entered the sector the following year, in the form of the New Frontiers Trading Group (a subsidiary of the Yamada Taro Combine), consisting of *Nightflight to Venus*, *Collector* and *Cancelled Leave*, captained by Major Kusanagi, Mister Thompson and Mister Supomo respectively. Their first trade goods – puzzle cubes, Hello Kitty™ toys and Vilani-format databases on Brazilian poetry – remain preserved in the Imperial Museum on Marhaban.

The region was ungoverned between A.D. 2301 and 2310 (-2219 and -2210 Imperial). Interstellar commerce dwindled to nothing, and several lightly settled resource colonies died out due to lack of resupply. With the arrival of the Terran frigate *Richmond*, a new regional government was established at Uubisuu (now Nulinad) at A.D. 2310, with a second capital established at Gulimizuurkush (promptly renamed Ikon) in A.D. 2322 (-2198 Imperial) at the other side of the Lesser Rift. Additional officers – mainly Ensigns and Lieutenants – were sent from the Terran Confederation to govern the region. These young officers were responsible for restarting commerce and interstellar trade, but their inexperience, combined with the tough conditions of

the sector, led to poor results. Only the Bwap worlds really got back on their feet again, more due to the

Bwap Will to Order than anything the Terrans did.



Anemôha settlement, an American Indian colony (Fox-Sauk tribe) on the world of Algonquian (later renamed Belumar). About A.D. 2730 (c. -1790 Imperial)

The graphic is titled “Star Colony”, © Richard Jeferies. See his work at http://www.renderosity.com/mod/gallery/index.php?image_id=1854284

As the Rule of Man (a.k.a. Second Imperium, later the Ramshackle Imperium) government was established in A.D. 2316 (-2204 Imperial), the first Terran settlers trickled in to populate the region. At the start of the Rule of Man, less than 20 systems were still populated, but by its collapse over 50 systems were inhabited. The first wave of settlers was of Arabic origin, generally Bedouin from the Arabic peninsula. Arriving in the early 2400s, they tended to become the aristocrats of the sector, due to their strong ties with the military forces of the Rule of Man. They preferred to remain on the Rimward side of the Lesser Rift. One of their number, Duke Mus’ad, renamed the sector The Empty Quarter in -2074, after a barren region in his native Arabia.

The second and third waves consisted of East Indian trading clans from across the subcontinent. Unlike the initial Arabic settlers, they followed the Hindu faith and preferred using Indian English as their shared tongue. Also unlike the isolationist Arabs, the East Indians they were more than willing to intermingle with the Vilani and the Bwap cultures. They arrived in two waves: the initial wave of the mid-to-late 25th century, and again in the late 26th century A.D. They could be found on both sides of the Lesser Rift, as well as Antares Sector.

“If I could travel back in time, I’d speak to the bureaucratic gnomes who decided to stick these Muslims and Hindus together. Didn’t they know that these folks have millennia-old grudges - before starflight, before the bloody Partition of India and the fall of the local Imperium, even before the discoveries of Prime Scout Columbus?”

“Probably. That’s the exact reason why they were stuck in the same sector – forced to work together, learn to live in peace and harmony, that sort of thing.”

(Pause)

“I know, I know. The social engineers of the Rule of Man definitely deserve flaying.”

“No, they deserve to see the butcher’s bill for their moral preening.”

Senior Scout Sir Kiomharaj
and Sector Chief Sir Denzoi
Heartguard Station,
IISS Sector Headquarters,
532 Imperial

Finally, a wave of American Indian settlers arrived in the sector, in the late 27th century A.D. In general, they preferred to settle with the East Indians, rather than with the Vilani or the Arabs. By and large, they spoke American English and followed Christianity, but a large minority followed a re-imagined form of Amerindian animism instead. The Amerindian religions within The Empty Quarter were heavily shaped by Hindu beliefs: by the time the Rule of Man fell in A.D. 2744 (-1776 Imperial), their religion had become an esoteric branch of Hinduism. The majority held onto their Christian faith, their ancestral heritage, and their memory of the First American Republic, producing a highly distinctive and individualistic culture – one with surprising connections with Vargr ways of thought

While all of these Terran cultures were influential far beyond their numbers would warrant, a large fraction of the human population would remain more-or-less Vilani in much of the sector. Despite Terran control, the Vilani were able to establish a new settlement; the mining colony on Pamushgar, on A.D. 2484 (-2036 Imperial). This colony quickly became very successful. Its regional prominence gave it the ability to delay, deflect, or water-down Rule of Man attempts to destroy their very Vilani society. As it was able to retain Vilani culture and governance, the populace did not suffer social disruption on the same scale as most other systems, and prospered while other Vilani worlds fell apart.

Ima gettin' ma lazer!
Human war cry
during the Vargr Pillaging,
A.D. 2120 – 2820
(-2400 to -1700 Imperial)

All thru the period of the Rule of Man, The Empty Quarter suffered from the Vargr Pillaging. But, the incessant raids shifted to full-fledged invasions during the last three centuries of the Second Imperium, savaging the Coreward portion of The Empty Quarter. To finance the fight against the Vargr, the rulers of Antares Province began to create more and more money. Inflation surged across the region, as did widespread poverty, especially among the weaker settlements and the declining Vilani cultures. Soon, the damage inflicted by Vargr assaults was duplicated by the pain of financial collapse and civil strife, all across the sector.

The Bwap worlds, long used to solid Vilani economic policy, failed to adapt to the new realities, and suffered bitterly: however, by c. A.D. 2670 (-1850 Imperial) the Bwap Tap-a-wewaka-atapas had grown strong enough to shield four worlds from Vargr aggression, while Bwap communities established a stable 'hard-money' currency regime what would outlast the Rule of Man. Due to a margin of economic stability, the protection of the Tap-a-wewaka-atapas and the insistence of certain crèches on holding the tech line regardless of cost, the tech fall of Marhaban and Wesaswek hits the bottom at A.D. 2920 (c. -1600 Imperial) at TL 9. The human worlds, stuck with a collapsing financial environment and political chaos, went thru greater agony: in addition to the impoverishing effects of runaway inflation, they also strove (and failed) to adapt to Imperial rules abolishing the Vilani caste system. The disintegration of the cultural fabric, coupled with increasing poverty, made planetary unrest and rebellions as common as Vargr pirates.



A settlement on Black Pearl (now Saeghvung/Nisaga/Empty Quarter 2618) suffers a Vargr bombardment, c. A.D. 2765 (c. -1765 Imperial).

The graphic is titled "Impact 2", © Ron Lanham. See his work at http://www.renderosity.com/mod/gallery/index.php?image_id=933715

The Long Night The Vargr Pillaging

Interstellar trade with Imperial Space began to die when the Central Bank at Hub/Ershur refused to recognise a money issue from the Bank of Antares in A.D. 2744 (-1776 Imperial). The Night fell quickly for The Empty Quarter: most of the Gushgusi worlds were already turned inward and away from the stars. ('Gushgusi' is the formal adjective for anything related to The Empty Quarter, derived from the old Vilani sector name.) Vargr raids rose in intensity: not a single world was spared, and several human and Bwap systems suffered losses of over 80% of their population.

There are some things that it is better to begin than to refuse,
even though the end may be dark.

Aragon, Lord of the Rings

In A.D. 2750 (c. -1770 Imperial), twelve systems led the fight in resisting the Vargr, even after the Rule of Man had vanished:

Ssilnthis (hex 1704)	Mikik/0228
Rakad/0833	Udusis/1831
Madhi/0510	Silkwood/0601
Gudina/0334	Sibikliir/2030
Iisdirrii/1937	Dumkashga/1527
Bravo Base/1520	Pamushgar/1537
and Black Pearl/2618.	

However, the Glorious Twelve each fought the invaders on their own: due to the severe lack of starships, they were unable to materially aid each other. Information was spread by radio, crossing one parsec in a bit over three years. FTL starship couriers were sent only in the direst need, and often failed to return. A strong emphasis was placed on defensive battlestations and space-mining: active patrolling outside of the immediate vicinity of the homeworld was frowned upon.

The result? By A.D. 2770 (-1750 Imperial) the human population on Madhi, Silkwood, and Black Pearl, all front-line systems, were exterminated – typically by initial orbital bombardments, followed up by hunting parties. The worlds were resettled by Vargr and renamed Aeghzivik, Byegh Aengz and Rrekoth respectively.

After repulsing numerous raids and invasions, Dumkashga suffered heavy bombardment of her high-tech industries in A.D. 2777 (-1743 Imperial), a wound that she never recovered from. Uduhis had to bear a two-century long occupation, until the Vargr oppressor was finally smashed in a ferocious uprising in the -1500s, leaving only a tiny Vargr population surviving the purges. Rakadan culture fought so many simultaneous minor and mid-scale invasions, that by c. A.D. 2770 (c. -1750 Imperial) her culture was extensively militarized, reformed to maintain a permanent war footing, up to the present day – changing her name to Arakaad in the process.

Mikik, the proudest and most unyielding of the Glorious Twelve, had her fleet slowly ground to dust between A.D. 2795 and 2820 (c. -1725 and -1700 Imperial), leaving her riches to be savaged by Vargr raiders throughout the Long Night. Ssilnthis was betrayed by treasonous leaders, leading to her piecemeal conquest in the A.D. 2780s (-1740s Imperial). Ikon, ‘Bulwark of Humaniti’, repulsed three major strike forces before finally falling to the Vargr in A.D. 2809 (-1711 Imperial).

Thru the ages of the world
we have fought the long defeat.
- Lady Galadriel, Lord of the Rings.

Sibikliir and her ‘twin’ Gimushi successfully repulsed two ground invasions (A.D. 2790, 2807 or -1730, -1713 Imperial), but at great cost. The Vargr leadership knew that they would never truly own the sector unless they took down the Twins of Heaven. Gimushi’s government, never part of the Golden Twelve, was willing to accept Vargr rule: but Sibikliir’s combative population never would kneel to the dogs. Therefore, the hunting and striker packs in the sector concentrated their forces into a single armada, strong enough to quickly take the world, and overawe remaining human resistance within the sector. However, Sibikliir had pushed her industrial capacity to the limit, bankrupting herself to create a large (if cheaply-built) jump-capable fleet, able to defend herself and her sister world of Gimushi. The vague outlines of this building program was known to the Vargr thanks to human informants, but the corsairs, conquistadors and pirate lords underestimated both the scope and the speed of the project.



An anti-raider patrol craft over Pamushgar, c. A.D. 2770 (c. -1750 Imperial). Her numerous and highly effective Trak dual-environment fighters, pictured above, were a key element in her successful defence against the Vargr assault.

The previous graphic is titled "On Patrol", © Chipp Walters. See his original work at http://www.renderosity.com/mod/gallery/index.php?image_id=1360321

In the Battle of Sibikliir (December 29, 2815 or 363-(-)1705 Imperial), the unexpected resistance successfully destroyed the troop transports of the invading Vargr, as well as most of the major capital ships. The numerous surviving Vargr were enraged, and retaliated by overwhelming Sibikliir's defences with missile strikes: cobalt-tipped nukes were extensively used, poisoning the air, land, and water for thousands of years. Even as Sibikliir's defenses were pushed to the breaking point, the Vargr ignored defending ships and focused on smashing every Sibikliir city they saw: when they ran out of missiles, they drove their small vessels into any untouched urban areas at maximum speed, extensively cratering the world. After the last Vargr ship died, the Sibikliir navy rescued as many people as they could, as quickly as they could, relocating them to Gimushi. The now-poisoned world of Sibikliir was abandoned.

The battle marked the death of Sibikliir, but also ended the Vargr war against the Glorious Twelve. Moreover, the destruction of the local Vargr raiding fleets marked the end of the Pillaging in the rimward Empty Quarter, and the beginning of the end of the Pillaging across Charted Space.

The Glorious Twelve!
The Saga of the Free
 shall ring thru the ages!
The Union of Man,
The Perfection of Brotherhood!
We Stand Together against
 the Terror of the Night,
 the Fury of the Beast.

- Fourth Practor of Ikon Barcc Geach,
A.D. 2754 (-1766 Imperial)

Only three of the Glorious Twelve successfully defied the Vargr largely intact, without suffering heavy bombardment or occupation. Gudina & Bravo Base were both central to the Rule of Man's administration within the sector, while Pamushgar was the industrial powerhouse. Gudina served as a central storage depot for Imperial records (and is still one today), but the Vargr saw no value in stealing mounds of paperwork. The 'prestige' of conquering such an insipid culture would actually damage the charisma of a would-be Vargr conqueror, to the extent that only token raids were ever launched against that world. Isolated, heavily-protected Bravo Base was one of the two major military installations for the Rule of Man within the sector. (Alpha Base was set on the Coreward capital world of Ikon, and was flooded and broken up during the final Vargr

conquest of that world. Charlie Base, on Nulinad, was pounded to rubble during a local civil war in A.D. 2758 (-1762 Imperial.) Pamushgar leveraged her industrial might to create a major source of war material, enabling her to keep up the fight and simply outlast the incessant attacks by the Vargr. However, local knowledge of jumpdrive construction was lost, neutering any ability to build her own pocket empire among the stars.

Zukhisa was not involved in the wars against the Vargr: her population went into free-fall soon after the death of the Ziru Sirka, but her bitter population made Solomani immigration impossible. During the painful 29th century (-1700s Imperial), her planetary population numbered only 30 million, squatting in the ruins of a collapsed economy and a ruined ecosystem: a floor of a million pure-blooded Vilani was finally reached in the 36th century (-1000s Imperial). A slow but broad-based recovery, governed by a deeply reactionary & isolationistic government, finally got underway at that time.

In the coreward Quarter, the end of the Pillaging in about -1700 left the Vargr in a clearly dominant position, relative to their human subjects. But in the rimward regions, the smaller number of colonists and the stronger positions of the humans led to violent anti-Vargr purges. Between the 26th and 28th centuries (c. -1700 and -1500 Imperial), the Vargr presence in the rimward quarter were either exterminated outright or reduced to a tiny minority; enslaved, declawed and otherwise maimed, and sterilized to some extent; hiding in the hard-to-cleanse locations on a planet, or – in the very best of circumstances – stuffed into crowded city ghettos or dumped in desolate wilderness reservations. The surviving Vargr made a slow and laborious adjustment to their grim circumstances, often making a semi-conscious decision to regain what they lost not by warfare, but by reproduction.

The Bwap Retreat

Considering the disasters and the xenophobia of the Long Night, the Bwaps did well enough in most of Charted Space, especially on Vilani-majority worlds. Even so, many Bwap crèches perished during the Long Night, even within The Empty Quarter - something the Tap-a-wewaka-atapas could not prevent. Between the 31st and 38th centuries (c. -1500 and -800 Imperial), many Bwap crèches within the Quarter were wiped out on human-majority worlds. This was not only due to xenophobia, but also because the Bwaps often represented the bureaucracy of a locally oppressive government: when the state

fell, the Bwaps as symbols of the state perished as well. Due to the many dry worlds within the Quarter, Bwaps outside of their four worlds had to compete with humans for water supplies: often this sparked

serious conflict with the human population, leading to a series of ferocious wars of extermination on numerous minor worlds.



*Bwap fortress on Marhaban, protected by 'friendly' Vargr mercenaries.
About A.D. 3000 (-1520 Imperial).*

The graphic is titled "Brujo Station", © Philippe Bullot. See his work at <http://www.darthmagus.com/>

It is true: the law of surge and retreat,
the pattern of blossom and fade
They apply to us as surely as they apply
to the [Order(Universe)].
But this truth is cold, dry, and dusty
[It/he] brings no comfort,
no life-bringing
[water/moisture/healing]
As our eggs are trod underfoot
our skins dry
our flesh shrivels
Under the relentless fury
of the Men of Sol
[Men of the Drying Sun]
The fiery, pitiless [Sun] *they* revere
And the [Deep Patterns] *they* follow

Priest Tafabase-pa-wath,
45th Grade of the Tesabwasas Rites
Inscribed during the
Great Purge of Manendra,
A.D. 3252 (-1268 Imperial)

(Untranslatable terms are approximated,
in brackets.)

The ineffectiveness of the Tap-a-wewaka-atapas in these desperate engagements is linked to the following factors:

- the small numbers of Bwap troops and starships that could be deployed at any one time
- the somewhat weaker physical aggression and strength of Bwap soldiers compared to men (soldiers or enraged civilians)
- the dependence on regular, heavy, bulky water supplies – a logistic flaw happily exploited by every enemy the Bwaps came across
- the relative rigidity of Bwap doctrine
- the need to carefully ration the number and length of military deployments

To their credit, the Bwaps (unlike the Vilani during their version of The Final Conflict) grew far more flexible in strategic and tactical doctrine over time. This was the result of observing the favourite military habits and reoccurring tendencies of the 'chaotic' warfare style of their enemies, and creating surprisingly subtle patterns, strategies and tactics to capitalize on the 'unexpected' actions of their enemies.

Despite this, the weaknesses of the Tap-a-wewaka-atapas meant that in major conflicts they could only act as a stop-gap measure for a few years. This allowed young Bwap females and young to be evacuated (and the eggs ceremonially crushed, as per Bwap tradition), but doomed the rest of the crèche. Bwap technological superiority and organization was more than matched by greater human numbers and unyielding hatred. In many instances, the smaller water needs of humans, their higher comfort level with extreme environments (hot or cold) again worked to their advantage. Finally, dust, extreme heat and cold, and unexpected local weather worked again and again to destroy equipment and foil the technological advantage of the Tap-a-wewaka-atapas (who had difficulty planning for failure) over the humans. Unfamiliarity with the local environment often meant sudden death for the Bwap troops – the annihilation of two battalions in Hebrin due to an unexpected (to the Bwaps) worldwide sandstorm in A.D. 3392 (-1128 Imperial) is the textbook example.

Things came to a head in the A.D. 3530s (-990s Imperial), when the Tap-a-wewaka-atapas requested permission to vaporise selected human cities from orbit, as a way to dissuade attacks on the Bwaps. After numerous arguments, the Grant Council decided against the proposal: while nuking a few million humans would produce some measure of security for the Bwap, the local human cultures were sure to exact vengeance. The possibility of the annihilation of the entire Bwap race would undergo a

measurable rise, and the likelihood of a Solomani-led sterilization of the Bwap homeworld of Marhaban zooms up to certainty: whenever it occurs in a century or a millennium hardly matters, in the end. The example of the Vargr Sack of Gashikan – and the methodically genocidal human response to that incident – worked to solidify Bwap opposition to the use of NBC (Nuclear-Biological-Chemical) weapons. “The humans are weak now – but they won’t always be weak. And when they are strong again...”

Imperial analysts and human psychologists generally agree that this was the right decision, long-term. But it still condemned many Bwaps to exile or death. By about A.D. 3720 (-800 Imperial), when the last of the anti-Bwap purges finally subsided, Bwap societies in the rimward Empty Quarter could be divided into three major groups:

- The four core Bwap-dominant systems of Marhaban, Wesaswek, Tapawa, and Ka-aswa,
- The thriving Bwap minority cultures on Gimushi, Gudina, and Pamushgar
- The persecuted but tolerated Bwap crèches on Arakaad and Zukhisa

There was a fourth group, the crèches on dying or marginal systems where even humans were in severe danger of dying out. These Bwap crèches were small enough to be completely evacuated by the Tap-a-wewaka-atapas by c. A.D. 3680 (c. -840 Imperial).

Gateway Sector in 1248

By Milo Thurston

History

Gateway sector shares with some areas of the Imperial core, particularly regions of the Black Imperium, the dubious distinction of being considered a "holocaust zone." The inhabitants of the sector have suffered severely at the hooves of the K'kree and their viral allies, and little in the way of a star-faring culture now remains. In 1125 there were 26 worlds capable of building starships; in 1248 there is but one, and few enough that can even maintain whatever relic ships they may have. However, there are some signs of recovery and should the other powers of charted space find a more permanent means of neutralising or eliminating the power of the Dominate then there may well be a brighter future for the inhabitants of Gateway.

The hard times experienced during the 1120s did not impact upon Gateway sector to any great degree, it being sufficiently far from Imperial territory to be unaffected by the open warfare taking place during the Imperial collapse other than loss of trade. Nevertheless, the sector had its own problems to deal with, such as the great prevalence of piracy. There was also the ever-present threat of invasion from the Lords of Thunder (LoT), an extremist K'kree state who had taken over the Renkard Union to coreward-trailing of the sector and were poised to advance further. The fear that the Imperium may intervene if they went too far, and the fact that they might expect fierce resistance from the Galian Federation and her allies kept the Lords of Thunder in check until around the middle of 1125.

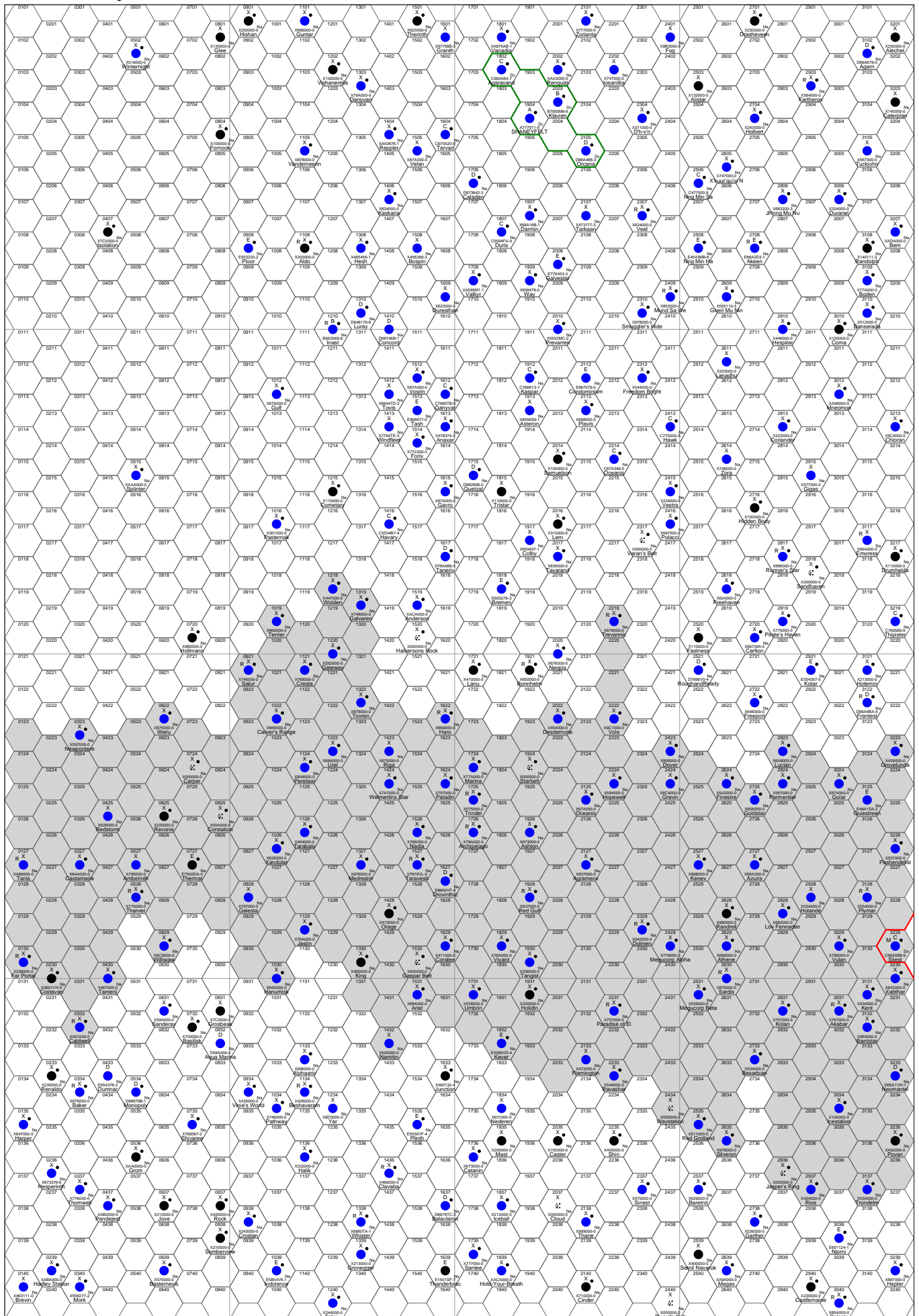
Kaxk'kaguraa'khan, the "Overlord of Lords" of the Lords of Thunder, had for some time been following information that descendants the G'naak, original racial enemies of the K'kree, were located somewhere in Gateway sector. By early 1125 he had tracked them down to the world of Trevannic, which was conveniently located outside any human interstellar state. Given this, and the fact that human governments were distracted by the threat of imminent war from the Hochiken People's Assembly (HPA), he assembled a battle fleet with the intent to annihilate the population of Trevannic. This would be a great propaganda coup for him, increasing support for a war of conquest against the "G'naak" of Gateway and allowing the Lords of Thunder to increase their territory. It may even have increased his prestige sufficiently to mount a challenge for the leadership of the 2000 worlds.

Unfortunately for him, the Galian Federation became aware of Lords of Thunder plans due to the work of the Gateway Xenoarchaeological Foundation. Allowing a K'kree fleet to bombard worlds as they pleased was thought likely to embolden them sufficiently to continue their conquest, and with the threat of war against the HPA this could not be risked. Thus, a Galian-led battlefleet was assembled to meet the K'kree at Trevannic and turn them back, the presence of an ex-Imperial BB-11, the "Emperor of the March," giving this fleet sufficient power. The inevitable engagement resulted in losses on both sides, but the K'kree were forced to flee with several escorts destroyed and their flagship damaged. This defeat resulted in great loss of face for Kaxk'kaguraa'khan and led to him being deposed as leader of the LoT.

Despite having dealt with this threat, the Galian and their Plavian allies were soon faced with a war on two fronts. The HPA, in alliance with the Viyard Concourse, initiated open warfare late in 1125. There were some initial successes for both the HPA and the Concourse in the first year of the war, the former capturing Orcana, Tarkaan, Galvestar and Way, whilst the latter was able to grab Orage and Taravesh. Thereafter, the lines of battle stabilised somewhat as both sides concentrated upon commerce raiding. By late 1128 dissatisfaction within the HPA about the conduct of the war produced changes of leadership as various admirals within their navy vied for control of the Assembly, hoping that a further advance into enemy territory would gain them the support they needed. Such ambitions were doomed to failure, as the lack of co-ordination allowed the Plavians to force HPA forces out of Way and Galvestar and even to bombard Valkyr, home of the HPAs elite troops.

Meanwhile, following a change in leadership within the LoT, they had re-commenced their assault into human-held territory. The Megusard corporate finally fell to a large LoT assault in 1129, the various warring human factions being too distracted to offer them any serious assistance. The corporate suffered the same subjugation as the Renkards before them, with humans forced into vegetarianism and made second class citizens by law. Sadly, as with the Renkards, there was no shortage of collaborators willing to gain some degree of power and status by assisting their new overlords in ruling their new territory. Following the subjugation of Megusard, it was possible for the LoT's new leader Anv'lull'lxux to

Gateway Sector



complete the task in which his predecessor had so spectacularly failed - the final destruction of their ancient enemies, the original G'naak. This was accomplished by a merciless nuclear bombardment of the surface of Trevannic, leaving nothing alive. Various pirate forces based in the system had fled before the attack, and there were no human naval forces available to resist on this occasion.

At this point the possibility of LoT invasion was now a clear and present threat, which convinced the human governments that they may wish to retain as much of their fleets as possible against this eventuality. An armistice was signed between the Galian/Plavian alliance and the Viyard Concourse, and although no such cooperation was forthcoming from the HPA they did at least suspend open hostilities. The LoT pressed forward, bringing the worlds of Hopewell and Dover under their control, although the Prince of Dover, his advisory council, and a small number of refugees were able to escape before the world was overwhelmed. Human resistance had hardened by early 1130, and the K'kree were held at this point for the best part of the year. It was then that Virus struck.

Virus hit the sector hard, affecting all races and governments. Many worlds had their population wiped out completely. Some toward the trailing edge of the sector were convinced that this was a K'kree secret weapon unleashed to overcome the stalemate against the Galian-led alliance then holding them back. Such was the suddenness of the collapse that they did not notice that the LoT were similarly affected, and to this day many worlds believe Virus to be a K'kree weapon (therefore, they do not take kindly to Cyms).

Those worlds which survived the initial onslaught began the slow process of recovery. Unfortunately for many, they were right in the path of their old enemies the Lords of Thunder, now re-formed as the Dominate. Dominate forces rampaged across the sector in 1187, exterminating anyone who offered the slightest resistance and often those who did not resist at all. A few humans were enslaved to entertain their conquerors, but most died. Most Lords of Thunder conquests had been lost during the collapse and the Dominate made no real effort to re-colonise them. Instead, they passed through on their way to spinward. Notable exceptions were Gateway prime, where the excellent shipyards were found useful for maintaining their war fleet, and which eventually became the site of the Dominate's last stand against Humanati's Grand Fleet.

Interstellar Government in Gateway Sector

There is little in the way of interstellar civilisation left in Gateway sector, although a few worlds are starting to crawl out of the wreckage. There are only three powers

that have any interstellar presence; one human pocket empire and the Dominate, which retains some scattered possessions in the coreward half of the sector.

The Dominate

Since the Dominate's defeat at Gateway they have little coherent presence in the sector, though their vessels may occasionally be encountered, particularly around Silest or in the few systems they still hold along their 1187 war path. These worlds are not under any unified control, though should a new leader arise Gateway sector could once again find itself trampled beneath the hooves of the Dominate. Almost the entire devastated area is barren from Dominate NBC attacks, with the occasional exception of a world where G'naak hating viral entities have enslaved the population for their own utility (e.g. food production for their K'kree allies) or simply for their amusement.

The main centre of Dominate activity in the sector at present is at Silest, which may be considered a dominate "sector capital". Silest was a possession of the Lords of Thunder before the collapse, controlled by their human collaborators using a paramilitary force known as the "Regulators". The regulators' reward was for their descendents to remain as the last few human slaves on these worlds. The support of attacks to coreward is not needed at present, but K'kree warships are still retained here and may be encountered on patrol within a few parsecs of Silest.

The Denkard Cooperative

The HPA had already about to fracture when the virus struck, and since that time one interstellar state has emerged from the wreckage. This is centered on the world of Shaneyfelt, which has retained a high population (boosted by immigration from other collapsing HPA worlds) and the capacity to build starships at TL9 - the only world in the sector able to do so.

The aftermath of the collapse resulted in a change of government to feudal technocracy on Shaneyfelt as efforts were made to retain a reasonable tech level. Over the next 40 years there was a gradual shift to a form of government known as a "corporate state", where power resides in the hands of civic assemblies that represent economic, industrial, agrarian, social, cultural, and professional groups. Although these are unelected bodies there is some democratic and meritocratic advancement within them. Despite being no means the most pluralistic of governmental systems this form of government, combined with much greater personal freedom following the overthrow of the Hochiken yoke, was able to bring some considerable advancement to Shaneyfelt. So, by the turn of the century their pre-collapse tech level had been regained as well as starport the starport improving to class-B with work well on the

way to bringing it back to class A. By 1211 starships were once again being constructed and all of the few remaining relic vessels that could be restored were flying again.

The populace of Shaneyfelt was of the opinion that they should do their best to re-contact neighbouring worlds and discover what had become of the surrounding region. To that end, they visited nearby worlds in an attempt to persuade them to join in a free-trade, mutual defence and economic assistance pact. The worlds of Agaravand, Klavien and Orcana were willing, with Agaravand and Orcana being particularly enthusiastic. This they named the "Denkard Cooperative" because this name suggests that the enterprise is one of co-operation as nominal equals rather than domination by one world. Although worlds within the cooperative are technically independent, the presence of advisors and assistants from Shaneyfelt is welcomed on Agaravand and Orcana and these worlds are effectively under Shaneyfelt's direct control until such time as they are able to build up their population and infrastructure. Orcana was heavily affected by Virus, which reduced the world from TLB all the way down to 3, and it is only now beginning to recover its main industry of harvesting waterweed, which is useful in the production of pharmaceuticals. Agaravand was less severely affected by Virus, losing only two tech levels, but descended into a brief and bloody civil war between Hochiken loyalists and anti-Hochiken revolutionaries. The war ended in favour of the latter, but with heavy casualties. On Klavien the ruling junta was replaced by the armed forces in a relatively bloodless military coup. The inhabitants of Klavien have been less enthusiastic for contact with Shaneyfelt than the other cooperative worlds and they are particularly keen on demonstrating their own competence at recovery and politely decline the offer of taking on governmental advisors. However, they appreciate the value of having a friendly neighbouring high-population world willing to trade and assist in defence should the Dominate make an appearance. Being of only TL6 they have very little space-faring capability, but do their best to maintain some orbital capability.

Shaneyfelt's navy is not very impressive and would not last long against a concerted Dominate attack. Luckily for them the Dominate has troubles of their own in Luretir!girr sector and is not able to mount any punitive expeditions in this direction at present, which may give some time for the cooperative to expand and increase their defences. They possess a handful of working pre-collapse vessels, including some Hochiken TL9 gunships, a few merchants, and even an ex-Swanfei Broadsword class cruiser that misjumped into the system and whose crew were persuaded to sign on. In order to overcome this deficiency a programme is in place to build planetoid monitors for system defence, as

these are cheap and well-protected, which may make up for the low TL at which they must be built. Radioactives are in relatively short supply so much use has to be made of laser armament on these ships. The Shaneyfelt admiralty is very keen to increase their stocks of nuclear weapons and this may well involve the establishment of more extensive mining operations.. A small number of 300 ton planetoid scout ships are also under construction. These are capable of extended operations, having tankage for three jump-1s, and are intended for exploratory and contact missions. It is thought that these ships could lie low in planetoid belts or in orbit around gas giants (attempting to pass themselves off as a typical moonlet) if hostile forces were encountered.

The origin of Virus is not clear to the cooperative members, who imagine it to be a K'kree invention unleashed by the Lords of Thunder that exceeded its creators' expectations. Thus, viral entities will be destroyed upon sight, and they have taken great pains to harden their systems against viral infestation. They know nothing about what his happening to coreward, and a high priority is to investigate the disposition of K'kree forces in that area and to determine whether any governments (such as the Galian federation) survive. Perhaps, even, to make contact with the Imperium, for if any human government could have resisted the K'kree onslaught surely it would be The Imperium...

The Akeena Union

The human population was strongly affected by Virus, although the Akeed have survived due to their extensive undersea civilisation. They have not made much progress in recovering, though, and have no interstellar capability. Should they be contacted by a friendly human power they would likely be receptive.

Other Worlds

Alphaaric

The human colony of Faarview was completely wiped out by virus, and it is thought that considerable damage was inflicted upon the Faar. However, no information about their current numbers are available. The Dominate had not seen fit to visit the world with bombardment as part of their drive towards Capital and they have been too distracted by internal conflict to do so since, so there may well be some remnant of the Faar civilisation remaining. No human interstellar government has had contact with this world since before the collapse.

Gateway Prime

The world of Gateway is not a pleasant place to visit at this time. The system is a mass grave full of the wrecks of the Grant Fleet of Humanati and their Dominate foes. Anyone visiting would risk viral infection of their systems, perhaps even from dormant strains of the Lucan virus, although the Dominate may well consider

salvage operations here when (if) they can overcome their current troubles. It is even possible that scout vessels from human powers to spinward may be encountered in the vicinity of Gateway prime, for they are very interested to know if the Dominate should show any signs of recovery or advancement again.

Trevannic

Trevannic is uninhabitable following a thorough bombardment by the Lords of Thunder, although Trevannic Alpha is almost untouched having had only a minor surface installation destroyed by attacking K'kree forces on their way to assault the main world. Unknown to them, Trevannic Alpha is a generation ship used by the ancestors of the Droashav to flee from Kirur in K'kree prehistory and later taken over by human pirates as a convenient hidden base. Its contents, however, have nothing more than archaeological interest, any useful items belonging to the pirates who inhabited it long since having been cleaned out and any useful Droashav machinery destroyed by warfare during their colonisation of Trevannic.

The Droashav are not completely extinct yet, for a few small colonies of them survive on other worlds towards the coreward end the sector, even on Shaneyfelt. Their presence is not a significant one anywhere, though, and the Dominate would be very interested to know that even a handful of them survive.

Adventures

Gateway sector is particularly devastated, and therefore well-suited to the sort of bootstrap campaign normally seen in the 1201 New Era setting. There are plenty of regressed worlds to choose from as a base for such a campaign. Should an exploratory campaign be desired then one possibility is to play the crew of a 4th Imperium (or similar) scout investigating the extent of Dominate presence in the sector.

Particularly interesting would be for players to crew one of the scout ships that are just about to be sent out by Shaneyfelt. In addition to finding out the fate of the various states of the sector and ascertaining the level of Dominate threat such missions could also involve the locating of derelict ships for salvage, reconnaissance of suitable worlds for contact or mineral exploitation, or similar missions. The vessel "Rock" in CT Adventure 6 is an example of ship along these lines and the deck plans are freely available on-line. Players engaged in such a mission should have access to the map and world data found in the Lords of Thunder adventure in MegaTraveller Journal 4. This represents the last known information about the sector before war and Virus overwhelmed everything, and will make an interesting comparison as they go about their mission.

Particularly sadistic referees may wish to bring characters from an earlier era into the present time by crippling their ship and forcing them into low berths, or even by subjecting them a strange misjump caused by the Deadspace phenomenon.

GATEWAY SECTOR - M1000 (GATEWAY) ERA

Modified for 1248

The data in the sector text files is laid out in column format:

1-14: Name
 15-18: HexNbr
 20-28: UWP
 31: Bases
 33-47: Codes & Comments
 49: Zone
 52-54: PBG
 56-57: Allegiance
 59-74: Stellar Data

```

.....1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8
Tanis      0127 XA89000-0 R Ba Fl          020 Na F0 V
Far Portal 0130 X238000-0 R Ba          023 Na M4 III
Harper     0135 X647000-0 Ba          015 Na F9 V G9 D
Brevin     0140 X463111-0 Lo Ni          320 Na F7 V
Costavan   0230 X3601VH-0 De Lo Ni         401 Na G0 V F4 D
Renaldo    0233 X230000-0 Ba De          023 Na K2 V M6 V
Hesperinth 0236 X673376-6 Lo Ni          405 Na F3 V
Hadley Station0239 XABA000-0 Ba Fl Wa       013 Na M3 V
Newpontere 0323 X597000-0 Ba          024 Na F2 V M8 D
Castamaria 0327 X64A000-0 Ba Wa          001 Na F6 V
Caldwell   0332 X401000-0 R Ba Ic Va       023 Na M9 V
Baker      0334 X876000-0 R Ba          005 Na F9 V
Thomwell   0337 X776000-0 Ba          001 Na G3 V A3 D
Mork       0340 X558277-2 Lo Ni          711 Na F3 V
Isolation  0407 X7C0000-0 Ba De          014 Na K1 V K8 D
Redstorm   0425 X626000-0 Ba          000 Na F7 V
Tamerij    0430 X467000-0 Ba          005 Na F2 V M9 D
Dumnar     0433 D554376-2 Ni          700 Na F2 V A3 D
Pendejest  0437 XAB2000-0 Ba Fl          021 Na M5 V M1 V
Winternight 0502 X516000-0 Ba Ic          022 Na M6 II M0 D
Splinter   0515 XAAA000-0 Ba Fl Wa       012 Na M6 V
Amberinth  0527 X785000-0 Ba Ri          000 Na G1 V
Tharver    0528 X775000-0 R Ba          011 Na F3 V
Monopoly   0534 D88879B-1 Ag Ni Ri         213 Na F2 V
Grom       0536 XAA0000-0 Ba De Fl          001 Na M1 V
Ithelu     0622 X675000-0 Ba          033 Na F4 V
Revonis    0625 X220000-0 Ba De          002 Na M7 V
Williwaw   0629 X9C9000-0 Ba          002 Na F3 V
Sanderay   0631 X59A000-0 Ba Wa          011 Na F5 V
Jove       0637 X210000-0 Ba          012 Na F4 V M0 D
Basternevis 0639 X575000-0 Ba          021 Na F6 V M4 D
Hollmann   0720 X9B0000-0 Ba De          013 Na M7 V
Carper     0724 X000000-0 As Ba Va         013 Na F4 V A4 D
Thermal    0727 E7500DA-4 De Ni Po         824 Na G6 V F1 D
Basilisk   0732 X750000-0 Ba De          024 Na F3 V
Shivaree   0735 X768567-2 Ag Ni          812 Na F7 V
Glee       0801 X130000-0 Ba De          010 Na K4 V
Fornook    0804 X100000-0 Ba Va          002 Na M0 V
Corstation 0825 X00A000-0 Ba Ic Va Wa       011 Na M7 V M0 D
Grosbeak   0831 X7C0000-0 Ba De          010 Na M9 V M5 D
Aqua Marina 0832 D58A456-4 Lo Ni Wa         300 Na G7 V M7 D
  
```


Rock	0837	X420000-0	Ba De	012	Na G4 V
Somberview	0838	X210000-0	Ba	002	Na F2 V
Hishan	0901	X200000-0	Ba Va	011	Na G6 V
Ploor	0908	E553220-2	Lo Ni Po	821	Na F4 V A6 D
Salur	0921	X746000-0	R Ba	011	Na M2 V M0 D
Galesta	0928	X797000-0	Ba	010	Na F3 V
Vinie's World	0934	X435000-0	Ba	001	Na M3 II G4 D
Crostan	0938	X243000-0	Ba	002	Na F4 V A3 D
Gulf	1012	X679000-0	Ba	013	Na F3 V
Pasternak	1016	X301000-0	Ba Ic Va	014	Na G3 V
Terrier	1019	X869000-0	Ba	013	Na K9 V
Carver's Range	1022	X669000-0	Ba	012	Na G2 V
Xandolar	1026	X626000-0	Ba	014	Na F7 V
Hanumisk	1030	X642000-0	Ba	012	Na G6 V
Pathway	1034	X748000-0	Ba	013	Na G0 V M9 D
Indolence	1039	E5854VK-1	Ni	512	Na F6 V
Guntar	1101	X896000-0	Ba	022	Na G5 V
Vandemeerin	1105	X878000-0	Ba	012	Na G4 V
Aldo	1108	X200000-0	R Ba Va	012	Na M1 V
Cresta	1121	X768000-0	Ba	011	Na K0 V
Perelaar	1124	X8A8000-0	Ba	023	Na F8 V M2 D
Tarabalu	1126	X454000-0	Ba	011	Na F9 V
Jastin	1129	X76A000-0	Ba	025	Na F8 V
Alphaaric	1133	X996000-0	Ba	032	Na F4 V
Beshavaram	1134	X426000-0	R Ba	035	Na G7 V
Halik	1136	X332000-0	Ba	032	Na M7 V K2 D
Vishanerella	1202	X100000-0	Ba Va	013	Na K6 V
Inast	1210	B663569-8	R Ni	412	Na F1 V M9 D
Cometary	1215	X110000-0	Ba	034	Na M2 V M8 D
Wolden	1218	X447000-0	Ba	015	Na F3 V M1 D
Gateway	1220	X562000-0	Ba	022	Na F0 V A2 D
Urel	1223	X88A000-0	Ba	013	Na F3 V A7 D
Yar	1234	X8D3000-0	Ba	000	Na G8 V F3 D
Falray	1240	X244000-0	Ba	015	Na F6 V
Danovan	1303	X79A000-0	Ba Wa	004	Na F0 V
Hesh	1308	X465456-1	Ni	912	Na F0 V M7 D
Luray	1310	D648179-8	Lo Ni	233	Na G1 V K1 D
Galvaren	1319	X748000-0	Ba	012	Na F8 V A3 D
Tovren	1322	X879000-0	Ba	013	Na F5 V
Medrealm	1327	X876000-0	Ba	014	Na K1 V
King	1330	X480000-0	Ba De	004	Na F5 V
Whister	1338	X6880TA-1	R Lo Ni	612	Na G8 V
Gronegger	1339	X213000-0	Ba Ic	013	Na K2 V
Reppler	1404	XA53676-1	Fl Ni Po	515	Na F6 V
Kaskaria	1406	X624000-0	Ba	023	Na M7 V
Concord	1410	D68746B-1	Ni	800	Na F5 V G3 D
Tovis	1412	X6644TD-3	Ni	310	Na F3 V F8 D
Windfleet	1413	X7794TE-3	Ni	410	Na F5 V M8 D
Havary	1416	C5534B7-4	Ni Po	912	Na F3 V F2 D
Riga	1423	X675000-0	Ba	010	Na G7 V
Welmertins Sta	1424	X7A7000-0	Ba	012	Na G7 V A2 D
Orage	1428	X410000-0	Ba	034	Na F9 V
Namitin	1432	X525000-0	Ba	010	Na M2 V G2 D
Clavaba	1436	X466000-0	R Ba	011	Na F4 V
Therinth	1501	X820000-0	Ba De	012	Na F0 V A1 D
Velan	1505	X87A000-0	Ba Wa	010	Na F5 V K0 D
Bospin	1508	X456269-3	Lo Ni	100	Na K4 V

Vosrin	1512	X87A000-0	Ba Wa	023	Na K2 V
Tash	1513	E968677-0	Ag Ni Ri	410	Na F0 V
Foriv	1514	X772200-3	Lo Ni	512	Na F0 V
Anderson	1519	XACA000-0	Ba Fl Wa	021	Na M8 V M9 V
Halversons Roc	1520	X000000-0	As Ba Va	012	Na F6 V
Nadia	1526	X766000-0	Ba	013	Na G6 V
Taravesh	1527	X7676VL-0	R Ag Ni	324	Na G6 V
Gaspar Belt	1530	X000000-0	As Ba Va	012	Na M4 V
Ariel	1531	X684000-0	Ba	013	Na F6 V K6 D
Plinth	1535	E5530VF-4	Lo Ni Po	313	Na F8 V M2 D
Granth	1601	X87756B-3	Ag Ni	910	Na F6 V F7 D
Tarvad	1604	C675520-9	Ni	412	Na F3 V M3 D
Duresthan	1609	X623000-0	Ba	010	Na M5 V M2 D
Ganyvar	1612	C7665TB-9	Ag Ni	112	Na F9 V
Anaxar	1613	X478374-3	Ni	312	Na F3 V A2 D
Gavro	1615	X87A000-0	Ba Wa	001	Na G3 V
Taneriv	1617	D76A666-5	Ni Ri Wa	714	Na G3 V A9 D
Haro	1622	X669000-0	R Ba	021	Na G8 V
Paladin	1624	X757000-0	Ba	012	Na G7 V
Drovinthic	1627	D8654VF-4	Ni	922	Na K8 V K0 D
Coralee	1629	X411000-0	Ba Ic	015	Na M2 V
Junction	1633	X560132-4	De Lo Ni	112	Na F3 V
Balacclaron	1637	D8678TC-3	Ag	414	Na F4 V M8 D
Thanderbrac	1639	E1501SF-7	De Lo Ni Po	910	Na K6 V
Caladan	1706	D673642-3	Ni	715	Na F3 V F5 D
Valkyr	1709	XA595M1-1	Fl Ni	813	Na K0 V
Quetzal	1715	D682698-0	Ni Ri	612	Na F4 V
Lanu	1721	X410000-0	Ba	013	Na M2 II M8 V
Marina	1724	X77A000-0	Ba Wa	012	Na F6 V A5 D
Trindel	1725	X575000-0	R Ba	014	Na K7 V
Archipelago	1726	X78A000-0	R Ba Wa	016	Na F2 V A1 D
Umbrin	1731	X558000-0	Ba	012	Na G9 V
Catanin	1736	X673000-0	Ba	012	Na F6 V A8 D
Santee	1739	X777000-0	Ba	014	Na F8 V F2 D
Vanadia	1801	XA875AB-1	Ag Fl Ni	801	Na F2 V
Agaravand	1802	C66A564-7	Ni Wa	811	Dc F5 V
Duris	1807	C5594FA-9	Ni	211	Na F3 V
Tristar	1815	X110000-0	Ba	000	Na M6 III
Bremen	1818	E693279-3	Lo Ni	711	Na F9 V
Viyard	1829	X76A000-0	Ba Wa	011	Na F5 V
Kever	1832	E5580VD-4	Lo Ni	911	Na F4 V
Nederen	1834	X631000-0	Ba	010	Na M7 II M6 V
Mast	1835	X200000-0	Ba Va	010	Na F4 V
Iceball	1837	X21A000-0	Ba Ic Wa	012	Na M1 V
Hold-Your-Brea	1839	XACA000-0	Ba Fl Wa	011	Na M6 V F9 D
Shaneyfelt	1904	A777911-9		313	Dc G4 V
Darmin	1907	X68A16B-1	Lo Ni Wa	301	Na G0 V
Way	1909	X658478-0	Ni	111	Na F1 V
Kaspar	1912	C766613-1	Ag Ni	524	Na F1 V M4 V
Asteron	1913	X8556S9-1	Ag Ni	120	Na F5 V K6 D
Colby	1917	X659437-1	Ni	610	Na F8 V
Bonnhelm	1921	X650000-0	R Ba De	022	Na F3 V M4 D
Starbelt	1924	X000000-0	As Ba Va	011	Na M2 V G0 D
Ashton	1926	X673000-0	Ba	014	Na F2 V A1 D
Red Gulf	1928	X637000-0	R Ba	003	Na F6 V
Tangist	1930	X336000-0	Ba	002	Na M6 III
Holidin	1931	X220000-0	Ba De	013	Na G7 V M0 D

Renquist	2002	XAA3000-0	Ba	F1	013	Na	M3	V
Klavien	2003	B7955M8-6	Ag	Ni	701	Dc	F2	V
Galvestar	2008	E778453-3	Ag	Ni	122	Na	G5	V F5 D
Prevarren	2010	X5552MC-2	Lo	Ni	713	Na	G7	V
Samuelson	2014	X100000-0	Ba	Va	014	Na	K4	V M4 V
Lern	2016	X310000-0	Ba		015	Na	F9	V F5 D
Tavarand	2017	X639000-0	Ba		002	Na	M9	V
Neopis	2020	X676000-0	Ba		021	Na	G6	V
Desdemone	2022	X454000-0	Ba		012	Na	F1	V M4 D K6 D
Caster	2035	X150000-0	Ba	De	022	Na	F6	V
Cloud	2037	X000000-0	As	Ba Va	010	Na	M8	V
Zorianta	2101	X777000-0	Ba		013	Na	F0	V A3 D
Orcana	2105	D86A468-3	Lo	Ni Wa	914	Dc	G2	V M4 D
Tarkaan	2107	X473777-3			820	Na	G7	V
Condominium	2112	E867579-0	Hi		210	Na	F3	V
Plavis	2113	X698000-0	Ba		014	Na	F3	V
Oceanis	2125	X67A000-0	Ba	Wa	001	Na	F9	V
Agramenx	2127	X837000-0	Ba		015	Na	F2	V
Flemington	2133	X472000-0	Ba		000	Na	F1	V
Thane	2138	X999000-0	Ba		014	Na	F5	V G0 D
Cinder	2140	X710000-0	Ba		011	Na	A7	V
Iosanillia	2202	X747000-0	Ba		000	Na	G3	V M4 D
Oceanis	2214	C67A346-5	Lo	Ni Wa	601	Na	G3	V
Trevannic	2219	X876000-0	R Ba		004	Na	F1	V
Vole	2222	X9C1000-0	Ba		011	Na	F0	V
Hopewell	2224	X584000-0	Ba		012	Na	F6	V A7 D
Paradise of El	2231	X757000-0	R Ba		013	Na	G4	V A6 D M8 D
Ravashar	2233	X544000-0	Ba		023	Na	K6	V
Shin	2235	X400000-0	Ba	Va	012	Na	M8	V M4 V
D'h-v'n	2304	X311000-0	Ba	Ic	022	Na	G3	V
Veel	2307	X624000-0	R Ba		001	Na	M2	V M2 D
Smuggler's Hid	2310	X978000-0	Ba		023	Na	K5	V G1 D
Freedom Bright	2312	X544000-0	Ba		011	Na	G7	V K7 D
Varan's Belt	2317	X000000-0	As	Ba Va	012	Na	M6	V M9 D
Dolmen	2329	X942000-0	R Ba		012	Na	F9	V
Sinest	2337	X575000-0	Ba		024	Na	K4	V
Fog	2401	X9B3000-0	Ba		020	Na	M2	III
Mund Sa We	2409	X853000-0	R Ba		014	Na	F6	V A6 D
Hawk	2413	C775200-A	Lo	Ni	212	Na	G0	V
Vestra	2415	X234000-0	Ba		001	Na	G0	V M4 V
Polacci	2416	X697000-0	Ba		012	Na	F0	V
Dover	2423	X899000-0	Ba		013	Na	F5	V G1 D
Gravin	2424	X6C4000-0	Ba		002	Na	K1	V
Megucorp Alpha	2429	X779000-0	Ba		012	Na	F4	V
Waystation	2434	X000000-0	As	Ba Va	010	Na	K9	V
Picard's Belt	2440	X000000-0	As	Ba Va	010	Na	F6V	
Alistar	2503	X120000-0	Ba	De	010	Na	G9	V M6 V
Nng Min Sa	2506	C477500-9	Ni		624	Na	F3	V
Nng Min Ha	2508	E4543MB-6	Ni		822	Na	K1	V K0 D
Fastness	2520	X110000-0	Ba		010	Na	M0	V K0 D
RoughandReady	2521	D7896V0-4	Ni		512	Na	F0	V
Kenev	2527	X898000-0	Ba		013	Na	F0	V
Megucorp Beta	2531	X539000-0	Ba		003	Na	F8	V
Red Grolland	2535	X511000-0	Ba	Ic	014	Na	M7	V
Baretnit	2537	X629000-0	Ba		001	Na	M3	V
Setnil Navarok	2539	X400000-0	Ba	Va	010	Na	A1	V
X'kuur'qu'io	N2605	X747000-0	Ba		013	Na	F6	V

Gneri Mu Nin	2609	X555110-3	Lo Ni	113	Na F6 V A8 D
Lanadhu	2611	X223000-0	Ba	000	Na F9 IV
Zora	2614	X748000-0	Ba	000	Na M3 V
Freehaven	2618	X624000-0	Ba	001	Na M0 V
Finestre	2624	X5A2000-0	Ba	014	Na M9 V K5 D
Randrell	2628	X980000-0	Ba De	011	Na F7 V
Athene	2629	X689000-0	Ba	014	Na F7 V
Sardis	2630	X876000-0	R Ba	000	Na F8 V M8 D
Silveron	2635	X978000-0	Ba	023	Na F3 V F7 D
Megas	2639	XA9A000-0	Ba Fl Wa	024	Na F6 V
Drasheveen	2701	X230000-0	Ba De	012	Na M0 III
Holbert	2704	X243000-0	Ba	012	Na F9 V K0 D
Akeen	2708	E66A2D3-1	R Lo Ni Wa	312	Na F5 V M5 D
Hidden Body	2716	X100000-0	Ba Va	013	Na A8 V
Carlton	2720	X667565-0	Ag Ni	825	Na F2 V M7 D
Freeport	2722	X646000-0	Ba	023	Na F5 V
Goldstar	2725	X658000-0	Ba	014	Na F5 V
Azuris	2727	X66A000-0	Ba	001	Na F4 V
Besarbian	2733	X534000-0	Ba	013	Na G3 V 07 D
Garther	2738	X536000-0	Ba	014	Na M1 III M7 V
Jh'nng Mu Nu	2806	X683200-3	Lo Ni	413	Na F5 V
Hespitar	2810	X446000-0	Ba	013	Na F0 V A7 D
Coriander	2813	X223000-0	Ba	001	Na M6 V
Runner's Star	2817	X686000-0	R Ba	013	Na F3 V
Pirate's Haven	2819	X775000-0	Ba	026	Na F1 V
Lucian	2823	X6A9000-0	Ba	011	Na M5 III 01 D
Parmentier	2824	X567000-0	Ba	025	Na G2 V K9 D
Lov Fennaden	2828	X682000-0	Ba	013	Na M1 V K3 D
Kolan	2831	X757000-0	Ba	014	Na F4 V
Jasper's Ring	2836	X000000-0	As Ba Va	014	Na M5 V
Fartheron	2903	X564000-0	R Ba	023	Na F0 V
Gigas	2915	X577000-0	Ba	000	Na K3 V
Sandhaven	2918	X000000-0	As Ba Va	022	Na F8 V
Kotar	2921	E554357-5	Lo Ni	624	Na F8 V
Holande	2928	X534000-0	Ba	000	Na M2 V A7 D
Rios	2937	X424000-0	Ba	022	Na A8 V
Castlemaine	2940	X230000-0	Ba De	012	Na M8 V A8 D
Duranel	3006	X324000-0	Ba	001	Na F6 V
Coma	3010	X100000-0	Ba Va	023	Na M9 III M9 V
Mneomon	3012	XA99000-0	Ba Fl	024	Na F4 V
Golar	3024	X87A000-0	Ba Wa	003	Na G5 V
Vulan	3029	X798000-0	Ba	024	Na F0 V
Akabar	3031	X767000-0	R Ba	024	Na F9 V
Icestation	3034	X10A000-0	Ba Ic Va Wa	011	Na M4 V
Njorni	3038	E651124-1	Lo Ni Po	632	Na K9 V
Celeste	3040	X85A000-0	R Ba Wa	011	Na F9 V
Agarn	3102	D66A679-0	Ni Ri Wa	712	Na F4 V
Tuckjohn	3105	X567300-0	Lo Ni	900	Na F1 V K0 D F8 D
Randolph	3108	X140111-3	De Lo Ni Po	912	Na F0 V K9 D M0 D
Boden	3109	X77A000-0	Ba Wa	012	Na G0 V
Banserada	3110	X512000-0	Ba Ic	013	Na M4 V
Emoress	3117	X66A000-0	R Ba Wa	010	Na F9 V
Hotemin	3121	X213000-0	Ba Ic	011	Na M5 V
Frantest	3122	D66A4BA-5	R Ni Wa	711	Na F4 V
Quiestreen	3125	E48A1SA-2	Lo Ni Wa	500	Na F3 V
Plymar	3128	X554000-0	R Ba	010	Na G8 V M3 D M3 D
Kent	3131	X434000-0	Ba	011	Na M9 V A4 D

Barristar	3132	X964000-0	Ba	011	Na	K4	V
Trondelm	3137	X53A000-0	Ba Wa	011	Na	F0	V
Alechet	3201	X230000-0	Ba De	010	Na	M7	II
Caterplan	3203	X140000-0	Ba De	000	Na	F5	V M6 D
Bem	3207	XADA000-0	Ba Fl Wa	011	Na	G9	V A1 D
Chloran	3213	X9C4000-0	Ba	001	Na	M4	V
Drumhelda	3217	X110000-0	Ba	032	Na	M4	V
Thipister	3219	C769569-9	Ni	323	Na	F3	V
Grovelunda	3223	X439000-0	Ba	023	Na	A0	III
Pashendelist	3226	X537000-0	Ba	001	Na	F6	V
Silest	3229	C99A56B-9	M Ni Wa K8 Cp	411	Do	G2	V
Xabthar	3230	X643000-0	Ba	001	Na	F1	V
Neomantel	3233	D65A1VH-1	Lo Ni Wa	911	Na	F7	V K7 D
Povan	3235	X430000-0	Ba De	023	Na	K1	V F7 D
Hepler	3239	X687000-0	Ba	021	Na	G8	V K0 D

The Golden Eclipse – Part 3 of the Lorimar Slot

by Mark “Commander Drax” Bridgeman

Author’s note: Due to the proliferation of Traveller systems out there in the world I can no longer justify publishing npc stats and ship descriptions for any specific system, though I may if I put together future revisions of this work (e.g. all of the Lorimar Slot adventures together). In the mean time npc personalities and patterns of behaviour will be elaborated upon along with descriptions of equipment used (though no stats), most of which I will try and draw from what is common to all versions of traveller, so please feel free to generate your own stats and descriptions, for your favourite game system, whether that’s Classic Traveller, MegaTraveller, Traveller: The New Era, Marc Miller’s Traveller T4, Gurps Traveller (3rd Edition), Traveller 20, Gurps Traveller Interstellar Wars (4th Edition), Traveller-5, Action Traveller or any other game system...

- Mark Bridgeman aka “Commander Drax” (May 2008)

The story so far...

If previous adventures have been used, the Players will have been employed by Davlan Polaris, sole heir to the Polaris Shipping Empire, which it seems, has wrongly been accused of piracy, organ harvesting and other nefarious activities, bringing them under a prolonged and debilitating Imperial Ministry of Justice (MOJ) lockdown. Whilst working for Davlan and in conjunction with the MOJ, the Players will have uncovered a terrifying secret, namely that the Imperium is under attack from a hitherto unknown psionic species, the exact details of which still remain unknown. Other evidence suggests that Polaris Lines have been “framed” by a rival company called ‘Majestic Lines’ with the help of the infamous Shadow Cartel (a large scale organised crime syndicate) that runs it’s “empire” in the historical style of the First Imperium Villani Bureaux...

Needless to say if you have not done so you are strongly advised to run the other adventures first and in their correct order,

Required Materials:

- Issue 2 Stellar Reaches - Empty Quarter Delta Quadrant Data.
- Issue 4 Stellar Reaches - Hebrin Nights (Part I The Lorimar Slot)
- Issue 8 Stellar Reaches -The Irash Express (Part II The Lorimar Slot)

Introduction

If the adventure continues directly from the events outlined in the Irash Express then the Players will have been asked to meet Reba Harrison (Full Stats in Stellar Reaches Issue 4 – The Irash Express) the local MOJ commander and a few significant NPC’s at the estate of Davlan Polaris (one of which is Shikai Gai Henderson – See Stellar Reaches Issue 4 – The Irash Express) on the humid and stormy world of Cooke (Empty Quarter 2030 A868837-9 Full Details in Stellar Reaches Issue 4), It will have been at least 3 months since they were last in this very same meeting room with Davlan, he will explain at length that he is immensely satisfied with the work done by the Player Characters and that they have established a rock solid reputation with him, that will doubtless see them getting more work in the future. As a special bonus each group member will be given

Cr100,000 in stock options in Polaris Lines in addition to the promised bonus of 1 million credits.

Davlan will also explain at length that he is exceptionally proud of the work done by the crew of ‘The Veritable Truth’ and whilst he needs them back on the main trading again, he is putting together an expeditionary force of seasoned veterans and medical personnel and has purchased a Broadsword class cruiser to function as a ‘medical frigate’ to continue serving the people of Iridia (Empty Quarter 1830 E561443-3). He will explain that throughout his life of privilege, serving the nobility of the Imperium, he scarcely considered what life would be like on a frontier world, recent reports from the Verity and from the Player Characters have impressed upon him the need to be charitable. In the mean time whilst the group is awaiting the arrival of everyone else the Player Characters are to consider

themselves 'honoured guests' and have the free run of his estate and buildings. Every luxury is catered for as the estate includes a well appointed spa and a high tech virtual sensorium for entertainment. A day or so later a g-carrier will land on the roof signifying the arrival of Reba Harrison, Shikai Gai Henderson and Reba's staff.

Within a few hours yet another meeting will commence after Reba's team have swept the meeting room and premises for bugs (a pointless exercise as Davlan's aides do this on a weekly basis). When the meeting begins Reba will thank Davlan for his hospitality and outline the following:

Reba will explain that the Player's investigation helped make it increasingly clear that Majestic lines were a definite 'Player' in the business of organ harvesting, piracy and other illegal and unethical activities. The result being that the company is having an exceptionally thorough investigation whilst under lock down and may soon cease trading altogether in the following months, especially if proven to be guilty of the charges levied. However one aspect uncovered most recently was that the Majestic Liner (Type M) "The Golden Eclipse" was reported lost (scuttled) in the lower atmosphere of Raven a small gas giant in orbit 6 of Lodestar (the Hebrin system's K3V primary star).

Hebrin is a very busy system, the bulk industry of which is supplying water and other resources to an obviously dying and populous world. Thus the skies teem with ice cutters, water tankers and wildcatters who make their living skimming water vapour and other useful compounds from the atmosphere of Raven and the other gas giants of the Hebrin System. Their expertise at handling immense pressures, speeds and gas-giant jet streams make them ideal personnel to conduct rescues when the unthinkable happens. So far investigators know that the 'Eclipse' imploded under the immense pressures of the lower atmosphere, somewhere close to the gas giant's metallic hydrogen core. The 'Eclipse's' launch was never deployed or perhaps never made it to safety as fragments of it have been identified in 2d maser stills taken of the 'accident' from a traffic control satellite in geo stationary orbit above the 'crush site'. However some individuals tried a fruitless escape in rescue balls prior to crush depth being attained. As you can imagine crush depth for a superdense hull is a lot lower than crush depth for a rescue ball and whilst some rescue balls were recovered after equalising with air pressures at higher altitudes, none of the occupants really stood a chance of survival despite being desperate enough to try. Despite this an attempt was made to recover the balls and by proxy what was left of the bodies so that identification of the occupants could occur and allow the families of the deceased to be informed. Identification is made harder when an organic form is simultaneously crushed, frozen,

irradiated and buffeted in Raven's atmosphere, though DNA is for the most part reliable. Reba will explain that one corpse recovered was wearing com dots and is believed to be a member of the group responsible for scuttling the vessel. As is common these com dots are often interfaced with another communications device, luckily one was found in the remains of the corpse's equipment. They only managed to recover the last 50 or so seconds of communications between the com dots and the network it was synchronised with. The resulting transcript revealed that everything was moving according to plan and that the mission commander was proud to have served with those aboard. This operation had all of the hallmarks of a suicide mission. The voice recording strongly indicated that the unknown personnel scuttling the ship knew that they would not be coming back, though as most military personnel are aware in those last desperate moments, when the realisation hits you, when death is no longer an academic idea, some people try anything for life, hence the rescue balls recovered at the scene.

Whoever this group was, they were professional, she will explain. Their equipment was sanitised bearing not so much as a serial number or manufacturers name plate and as such gave her people no clue to the origin of these attackers or who might be supplying them. Since the 'disaster' a number of criminal/terrorist organisations within the Hebrin system have claimed responsibility for the attack, though for the most part no direct evidence links these claims, other than the desire to have their profiles raised on the X-boat network and system news channels. Should any of the group ask about DNA tracing or fingerprint information, she will explain that none of the DNA recovered matches personnel on any Imperial Data Base, work is ongoing to check the databases of Imperial client states, though this is proving to be time consuming as by their very nature client states exist beyond the Imperial borders and not all of them have full databases covering 100% of their respective populations. Worse yet there are some that won't share what information they have as 'points of principle', whilst other wish to barter their data for something of value. That's why the Imperium has diplomats and intelligence agencies.

At first glance it would seem that the trail has gone quite cold, however her investigating agents have determined that Majestic Lines has almost completely changed the shipboard staff of several of their key merchant vessels and were in the process of gradually changing more of their crews aboard other significant ships, at the time of the company lock down. One of the vessels identified just happened to be 'The Golden Eclipse' another was the 'Smoke and Mirrors' a ship that has figured prominently in the Player character's investigations. Reba will explain that standing orders for Majestic ships are that deceased low berth

passengers are dropped off at the most populous world along a specific vessel's route as opposed to the next destination world (which is standard merchant practice). The Golden Eclipse was destined for Hebrin, so it's a fair bet that the drop off location was its port or designated Berth at Loren Highport (See Hebrin World Description – Stellar Reaches Issue 4 – Hebrin Nights, Pt 1 – The Lorimar Slot). Reba will further explain that her people are investigating the body trail and are trying to determine exactly where Majestic were disposing of their low berth passengers as some anomalies have been uncovered at Loren Highport. In the meantime with her staff being stretched to the limit thanks to the ongoing war with the Solomani, she needs the help of the Player Characters. Their brief is to investigate the scuttling of the Golden Eclipse with the full backing and support of the Imperial Ministry of Justice, having worked for her previously the same rates and benefits apply (although Player Characters who fancy negotiating can try to lever a few more credits or other benefits out of her).

At this point Shikai Gai Henderson will interrupt and suggest that the player's also try and wrap up some loose ends regarding the Magnum Opus explosion, as the people responsible have still not been identified, neither has a concrete picture of their motives been determined, leaving the MOJ with nothing but speculation. The facts are simple; the eclipse was a planetoid liner that exploded when docked at Loren Highport. Accident investigators have identified the most likely explosives used and know that several shaped charges drilled into the planetoid hull broke the ship apart, as for the motive or the people that did this, no one knows.

Players may be wondering what the MOJ and the Imperial Navy intend to do with regards to the psionic threat ('The Keepers') to the Imperium uncovered by their previous investigations. Reba will simply explain that her mandate is 'Imperial High Law and Order' and that their findings have been passed over to the Imperial Navy and the Sector Nobility. However as this investigation is related to this threat, she will be sending duplicate copies of their reports to Valston Tay (See Stellar Reaches 8 – The Irash Express) at the Hemant Primus Yards (Hemant 1729 BA97312-B). As for the Shadow Cartel, ongoing intelligence gathering is in progress. Reba will very firmly state that she intends to deal with them and smash their rotten organisation later, when the time is right, but first she needs to determine just how much involvement they have with this plot to destabilise the Imperium and just how much if any of their membership is infected by the Keepers.

The assignment is simple, visit Hebrin, trawl the Highport, speak to those in charge and uncover what they can, their MOJ identification tags will ensure that

the local constabulary and the port authority will cooperate with them. Players that object to their assignment on the grounds that they should be uncovering the extent of this alien threat to the Imperium (that they helped uncover) as opposed to investigating the mysterious demise of a ship will be told quite simply to do as instructed or be out of the loop permanently. Reba does not tolerate fools!

1st Plot Point: Hebrin Spaces

Players will remember that Loren Highport is a gigantic sprawling affair, as the main centre for all Hebrin bound traffic the Highport co-ordinates all orbit to surface traffic as well traffic across the solar system. Hebrin is a dying world, over populated and desperately short of water, the sheer numbers of in system water tankers, recycling barges and ice-pushers (dragging cometary materials to the Highport) is breath taking, whilst far below the wispy and metallic surface of Hebrin teams with 40,000,000,000 (forty billion) inhabitants, most of which live a life of economic uncertainty and quiet desperation. Hebrin is also home to the Cybes a criminal cult/gang previously encountered by the player characters (Cybe members can be found in the more seedy areas of Loren Highport and other areas of urban decay both on and off world, readily identifiable by their vulgar and prominent cybernetic attachments, usually on their faces or hands, deliberately placed where people will see them. Seasoned players will know that cybernetic attachments don't tend to be that useful at tech-9 and are probably installed for their shock value as opposed to any tangible benefit, as any right thinking Imperial Citizen would quite rightly want a biological replacement fashioned from their own DNA to replace any lost body parts.

"It's the look that gets me, everything single time I hand over my ID at the starport or step through one of those of all over body scanners, that look of pity or disgust, as if I would willingly choose to have a cybernetic leg, a lump of plastic, metal alloys and pseudo flesh fused to my nervous system. It was the best the service could do for me, it doesn't do anything special, it just replaces my old leg lost in a training accident at Drago's Belt. Some people must think that I am some kind of hero and that I lost my leg in an anti imperial uprising somewhere they've never heard of, but the simple truth is that I am one of a rare kind of individual who can't be cloned. Too much radiation damage to my DNA, too many mutations in any new growth, I'm on a permanent anti-cancer regime. What were my options? A primitive transplant! I mean walking around with someone else's leg, that wouldn't be right, so I opted for the cybernetic equivalent, at least it's all mine, just like my gun. As for the radiation damage that's another story entirely..."

Former Imperial Marine Sergeant Karl Gingku (Now living on Okori Empty Quarter 1932 E430231-9)

Bwappanhunabwapi

To begin their investigation a smart place to start would be the port authority and the local Hebrin Constabulary, the Hebrin Port Master is a large fat man by the name of Frigi Dingl, who as befitting his exalted position as the man in charge of the entire system's shipping is nervous, stressed and pushed for time. At 38 years old he looks as if he is 58, permanently sweating he will jovially promise any help he can to the investigators and order a member of staff to assist the player characters, passing over all records of the Golden Eclipse 'accident' stored so far. Frigi is much too busy to be bothered on minor issues but his assistant a dark blue patterned bwap named "Bwappanhunabwapi" will be instructed to help, like most Bwaps he is incredibly difficult to deal with and obsessed with minutiae and making order out of chaos. The Golden Eclipse accident is especially frustrating to him as there are so many nonsensical loose ends attached to the incident. Bwappanhunabwapi will be happy to help and hand over a full and truthful record of the investigation so far after all it is widely known that Bwaps cannot lie, though have been known to omit the truth occasionally which is almost as bad as lying! So player characters can consider him to be a good source of information and a useful contact, despite the painfully slow and ritualistic way he works, which is guaranteed to turn a short request for help into a long, drawn out process.

Raghr Vellinko

Is a well built vargr, tough, no nonsense and the chief of police, haven risen to the position of Hebrin Law Enforcement Commander. He will ask the player's if they've been to see 'the newt that runs the skies around here', expressing an effortless contempt for the Port Authority and Bwappanhunabwapi in particular. He will explain that bwaps are useless as investigative agents, they have no intuition and don't understand the value of a 'hunch' or a wild guess that pays off. Hence there are holes in the Port Authority investigation wide enough to fly a Fat Trader through as any hunches or ideas that have little or no basis in the facts of the case have been ignored. Raghr will simply state that if you want to find the people that scuttled the golden eclipse a good place to start is in the wildcatter communities around raven. They don't like nosey strangers and are too independent to cooperate with the police, but if you wanted to send a ship to crush depth in a local gas giant they'd be the people you'd call on to work out the best way to do it.

Raghr will explain that his men have visited their stations, rounded up as many of them as they can and 'tickled' them for information, yet no one's talking or perhaps genuinely don't know anything, though his gut

feeling that he's trusted for years is telling him loud and clear that someone out there is mixed up in this business, but this individual has a loyal following, the like of which would make politicians and religious leaders incredibly jealous. Such is the way of these inbred, rough neck communities he will lament. He will suggest that the player characters visit their stations and suck it and see for themselves, before wishing them the best of luck. Also he will ask if they can find the beltlers that destroyed the Magnum Opus while they're at it, as they simply don't have the man power to do this, given that the system is teaming with the rock mining rats (as he calls them). Player characters may want a further explanation, Raghr will simply shrug his shoulders and say, it's obvious, the Magnum opus was a planetoid ship that was blown apart by shaped charges, who else would you trust to do a good job but beltlers!

Raghr will then ask if the MOJ would like to share any pertinent facts with him regarding these occurrences. How much players decide to tell him is up to them, but he will be grateful for any facts shared and will offer his help in any future investigations making him a useful contact for the player characters. Should the group decide to tell him nothing, then he will simply shrug and state in a rather resigned fashion that 'it's what he's come to expect from the MOJ' and that the player characters shouldn't bother him in future as he's told them everything he knows. He will then turn over the case files (in electronic format) and ask the group to leave as he's exceptionally busy clamping down on gang activity across the planet.

What happens next is up to the player characters but their leads are as follows:

- Investigate the wildcatter communities around Raven and other gas-giants
- Investigate the numerous belting communities across the Hebrin system
- Investigate the case files for any significant facts.
- Investigate a possible link between the Cybes and either the beltlers of the system or the wildcatters.

The Pressure Dome

Raven is small gas giant world of tumultuous storms and high speed winds, colossal lightning forks and jet streams that race across the face of the world, a thriving system of artificial habitats and refinery stations can be found in low orbit (well within the radiation belts generated by Raven's magnetosphere). Atmospheric skimming operations take place every few minutes as wildcatters 'dip' the atmosphere for petrochemicals, water and essential gasses used in the system wide

industry all of which is needed to keep Hebrin functioning as a viable Imperial world.

The most populous habitat is Vulmir Station, a twenty thousand ton hollow cylindrical tube that rolls gently to simulate gravity varying from zero g in the dead centre (the port area) to 1.2 g in the outer ring. Most housing is in the 1g section well shielded from the intense radiation outside. Vessels enter through the 'north pole' and leave through the 'south' whilst some automated refining work goes on in the 1.2 G area. From a discreet distance of a 100km or so parts of the station can be seen venting waste gases and fluids to space, hence the informal nick name of the station as 'the black smoker'.

The wildcatters work hard and play hard, the entertainment district is replete with sleazy bars, flop houses, brothels, gambling dens and the occasional hotel that maintains an 'up market' image. The station has a nominal law level of 3 in stark contrast to the tightly controlled world of Hebrin and violence is common especially around the clubs and bars adjoining the refinery zone. Streetwise individuals or those capable of carousing will quickly establish that mercenary units from neighbouring systems frequently dock here for cheap materials and chemicals, as almost anything can be refined on request, the most popular of which are cryogenic gases/fluids used in low berths and explosive compounds used in demolitions and shaped charges. Indeed another nearby station turns minerals and chemicals deposited by belters and wildcatters into slug thrower ammunition and other ordinance. More trawling through the bars and refinery zones might turn up the following titbits of information.

Rumours

Last year some a greedy belter from the Petri belt deliberately dropped a 20 ton launch into the atmosphere of Lodemar as part of an insurance scam, he was caught and sent to prison at a work camp on a moon around Vultis.

'Oh yeah I heard about the Golden Eclipse I heard that it was a religious suicide cult that did it'.

'I heard about that accident, if you know what's good for you, you'd better not ask about it.'

'I was approached by a man from Hebrin, one of the Cybes judging by the state of his face, he reckoned that he could tell that I was lying through his ocular extension, gives me the creeps personally, I mean we're all entitled to privacy in our minds. He thought I was a member of some mercenary unit, he got that bit wrong.' 'Those Bwaps are slowly draining the soul out of this system with their love of paperwork and order, we're human beings damn it, not robots!'

'Belters really annoy me; I mean they're just miners, when it's all said and done. I can't stand the way they seem to think that they are so special, when most of the

one's I've met are just rich kids playing at prospecting. Ooh Look I've got a seeker, that rock looks interesting, someone please pay me! Now those ice cutter's they are real heroes. Hebrin couldn't survive without them.' 'Did you hear the news, water bandits, have hit Hebrin's great southern pipeline again, they got through the security cordon and managed to tap the pipe directly, stealing thousands of litres, before the leak was detected. Can you imagine how much money they made?'

Gilliki Nirish

After some time, player's will be told of a lucky belter, who is spending money like it's going out of fashion, apparently he's had a lucky strike, though most his 'peers' think that he's rather lazy, incompetent and was heavily in debt until last year, or to put it mildly, 'not a good man to be in hard vacuum with'. Though strangely enough, no one seems to know what minerals he uncovered or how much he got for them. Belter's like to brag, you can bet that if he'd had a genuinely lucky strike, the entire solar system would have heard about it! His name is Gilliki Nirish, he's 38 years old, pale skinned, roughly shaven, dark haired and dark eyed and looks as if he's been enjoying an exceptionally long drinking session (because he has). He will tremble with alcohol withdrawal and seek out the next drink when the character's find him in his usual haunt, 'The Pressure Dome' casino, (popular with belters and ice cutters). Not what you'd consider an attractive man, Gilliki is nevertheless surrounded by a group of attractive young females (human and vargr) at one of the gaming tables in the casino, whilst a 'newt' calibrates and runs an overcomplicated dice rolling machine. The atmosphere is raucous, with rants and cheers frequently drowning out a group of Sydite musicians on an elevated stage (who frankly aren't very good, but that's what you come to expect from Sydites!), whilst a Luriani girl swims semi naked in a giant aquarium...

On first contact, Gilliki will seem quite arrogant and rather aloof, though anyone perceptive will be able to tell that the man is massively over compensating for something, despite his forced jollity, it's obvious that he's not really happy. When questioned he will relate the story about his supposed luck strike, and state that he's now set up for the rest of his days and doesn't have to do any work any more. The first flash of any MOJ identity cards will make him panic, he will swear out loud in his native Villani, quickly draw his autopistol and fire it into the roof, the loud bangs will instantly cause panic in the casino. Gilliki will then attempt to disappear into the crowd, escaping in the mayhem he's caused. Players should pursue, if they do so, he will try to make his way through the busy entertainment district of the station to the port, where he keeps a brand new seeker, clearly he is anxious for escape. Should he catch sight of the players trailing him he will fire several

more shots to cause even more panic in the station concord and further hinder the player characters. Needless to say, local law enforcers will also join the affray though under no circumstances will they work with the player characters (unless of course they've cleared this prospect with any local commanders). Thus the local enforcers may suspect that the players are behaving criminally as well and try to intercept them and bring them down. Wise players might try and cut off Gilliki before he enters the port, however, Gilliki's reactor aboard his ship is cold and will most likely take a great deal of time to prime as his ship's systems have been running from a station umbilical for the last few months (due to inactivity).

What happens next is up to the referee, Gilliki might seal himself inside his ship and try to power it up, though he will have to blow his way out of the port with his mining laser if he's got any hope of escaping. Alternatively he may take a prisoner from a member of the public and hold them ransom (with a gun against their head) until he can escape, or if shot down on the run then he will be treated, stabilised and interrogated. The upshot is this.

Almost a two years ago, Gilliki was down on his luck, doing a bad job of prospecting, heavily in debt, drinking heavily with his career as well as his non jump capable mining ship's mortgage slowly hitting rock bottom. Under Interrogation he will reveal that he was approached by a man from the main world, who wanted to set up his own mining operation and needed the expertise of a seasoned belter like Gilliki to advise on technical and operational matters etc. The company hadn't been formed yet, but Gilliki was offered a directorship, the corporation would pay his mortgage for his mining ship and offer him an annual retainer of Cr50,000 with the proviso that he had to remain in the Hebrin system for the foreseeable future as the corporation would be based here and would need his expertise. Gilliki's first year's retainer was paid up front, at a time when the cash was really welcome. Whilst it was unusual for Gilliki to be 'head hunted' by anyone, he accepted the offer in the spirit he believed it was proffered in as a genuine stroke of good fortune. Gilliki was a man reborn, his self esteem improved, the drink stopped, he began studying the latest developments in belting and mining good practice, he genuinely felt that he'd been given a chance to prove himself and gain some respect from the belter community that held him in poor regard.

When asked he will reveal that the man's name was Davi Mahare, after a few months of messaging each other with Gilliki sending reports and recommendations for the benefit of the company and it's future success. Davi contacted him with good news that they had bought a planetoid liner from Polaris Lines. The ship

was old, profitable and could easily be converted to carry ore and refined materials for the emerging company. He was told that the ship would finish its current run and be handed over to them in the Hebrin system in a few months at which point the new company could begin trading. It looked like success was just around the corner. Two months later the *Magnum Opus* arrived in the Hebrin system and docked at the Highport. At this point Davi contacted him, stating that the company was in big trouble, a bank had called in its start up loan and that there wasn't enough money in the company to avoid bankruptcy. Just as success was upon them, some fat, greedy banker had pulled the rug out from underneath them. As a co-director Gilliki was informed that he would be personally liable for 50% of the company's debts which were huge given the cost of the ships and infrastructure of their fledgling company. Gilliki felt as if all hope for a better future had been destroyed. After a few days of alcoholic bingeing Davi contacted him with a proposal that no one else could ever know about, they would have to destroy the *Magnum Opus*. The insurance money would pay out enough to cover the debts and allow them to survive financially and continue to build the company albeit on a much smaller and slower scale. Davi assured him that the ship would be empty (having just bought it, there would be no crew or passengers aboard), then Gilliki could plant and drill in the charges and that they would 'blow the ship by informing the authorities of a suspected reactor breach. The port would blow the explosive bolts attaching their airlock to the ship in an attempt to get clearance from the station, when the vessel was a safe distance away it would be destroyed by a titanic explosion that would have all of the hallmarks of a hot reactor failure. The station plating was easily thick enough to ensure that the no innocents were caught up in the blast. Gilliki's first instinct was not to go ahead, that to do this was unthinkable, under pressure from Davi he reluctantly agreed and purchased the explosives, next he had to plant them and drill them into the ship's planetoid hull without the station noticing. Given the sheer volume of ships entering and leaving the port, that wasn't the big problem he envisaged it to be. He simply studied the ocular cameras on the station perimeter and tracked their movements. There wasn't any way that they could watch every ship at the same time. He simply planted the charges during the gaps in their surveillance. Satisfied that the task was done, Gilliki left the area, just as the vessel exploded.

He immediately thought that he had made a mistake, that the ship's exploding was accidental. His first thought was to get away from the authorities, then his thoughts turned to the damage done and the loss of life, he had become a murderer! In the mayhem that followed the disaster he easily made his way back to his ship. As if in answer to his unspoken question he found

a suitcase placed in his small galley containing Cr35,000,000 in used credits, along with a picture of his home belting community station and some of his immediate family. The threat was obvious! Any attempt to contact Davi after that failed, comm. lines no longer existed or simply switched to people unknown to him. His business partner and fellow director has disappeared. When the mayhem had died down and the port regained some sense of normality he was allowed to leave. Gilliki made it as far as Vulmir Station, bought a brand new seeker and began spending the rest of his money on booze and fast living, drowning out the pain it would seem...

2nd Plot Point: Higgs Station

This is a major breakthrough; investigating characters will want to report this to Reba whilst using their MOJ credentials to stick Gilliki in a secure cell leaving the MOJ and Hebrin Constabulary to run him through the judicial process. Clearly the guy was a pawn, slickly set up to destroy the Opus, needless to say a cursory check will reveal that the ship was never sold by Polaris Lines and remained in their possession right up to the moment it was destroyed. It was merely good fortune that some of the crew were off the ship at the time, enjoying themselves in the port. The Next Step of the Investigation is to look for any leads behind Davi Mahare. The electronic or comm. trail might have gone cold, but in a busy system like Hebrin someone else will have seen him. Should characters obtain a good description, they may be able to put together a photo id that they can ask around with. If the player characters have the good will of Raghr Vellinko he will of course assist by flashing up electronic images of this particular suspect across the entire system. The leads will be plentiful though eventually will be narrowed down to 12 good matches. One of which is provided by a rough looking mercenary named Trak Mar. Trak likes to hang out as a bit of bar fly at the 'shipper's restaurant' located in Higgs Station. The Station is a gigantic power conversion satellite found in orbit 0 of Lodestar the system's K3V primary. The filtered red light of Lodestar bathes the whole restaurant in a beautiful orange glow, evocative of tropical sunsets on many a garden world. Custom is light in the 'restaurant' despite the nice atmosphere mainly because the sustained red light is known to cause eye strain and headaches to those humans not accustomed to it so most of the clientele tend to be station employees and the occasional visitor.

Trak, is a bald headed man with an impressive scar on his face, when questioned will simply shrug and say that he looks familiar, though a bit of money might jog his memory. After being greased to the tune of Cr10,000 he will say that he knows the guy, he's a fellow merc from the 'Stellar Blades' corporation. He's good friends with of lots of guys from that particular unit and

he occasionally sub contracts his skills to them whenever he runs out of money. This man is obviously travelling under a false name, looks like Jenchi Toolmere, known in mercenary circles as the 'Coffin Jenchi' so named because he enjoyed travelling in low berths, through every jump. Apparently he liked the risk and used to get his fellow mercs to gamble their hard earned cash on his likelihood of survival, somehow or other he would always be successfully revived. Trak will go to great pains to explain that Jenchi wasn't always like that, he was just a regular guy until he blew some of his money on a safari holiday in the Mugama system... It was after this that he went from world to world in a cryogenic coffin, hence the name. If asked Trak may well volunteer that since his holiday Jenchi didn't seem to be himself, he became a misfit and started lots of fights with the other members of his unit, he then mustered out early and disappeared into general population of Hebrin. As far as he knows he's still there.

This is important news, the player character's will have already visited the Mugama system and be aware that there's an unknown psionic threat at large and centred on Mugama's Human and Droyne leadership. From the evidence gleaned (low berth travel, a like of violence) it's highly likely that 'Jenchi Toolmere is being controlled by the psionic threat referred to by the MOJ and Naval Intelligence as the Keepers, the character's need to report this urgently.

Coffin Jenchi

Should characters follow this lead to Hebrin's surface; a local directory will produce a valid comm. address for Jenchi Toolmere, that confirms his location on the planet as Penthouse apartment 22 baden complex, a relatively upmarket area on Hebrin that overlooks the Great Northern Park. Jenchi's home has its own vapour still, a trend that's on the increase amongst the more wealthy Hebrin citizens as chronic water shortages as well as water theft are a fact of life on Hebrin. Jenchi likes to display his wealth by maintaining a luxury rooftop garden with several water features, engineered to make the water behave strangely in Hebrin's thin atmosphere. To the citizens who live on the ground, such waste is unthinkable in a world where a single litre of water regularly exceeds Cr10 per container. Indeed player characters could make very good livings shipping water to the mainworld from out system sources.

Conflict/Resolution

What happens next is up to the player's they may want to discretely observe Jenchi from a distance and gather intelligence or otherwise go in when the time is right. His penthouse is well protected with the best local muscle and some ex-mercenary personnel, despite the high law level they are armed (in breach of local laws) and will happily and easily kill anyone who gets in their

way. A medium size (10 Ton) G-Carrier also sits comfortably on the rooftop's landing pad, equipment is occasionally ferried between it and the penthouse. Any attempt to penetrate Jenchi's home will set off a variety of imported Tech 14 sensors, (Computer Linked Passive Metabolic Sensors) so surprise is not an option. This will be a tough fight, his men are armed with autosub pistols, flak jackets and smoke grenades (designed to confuse and drug any would be attackers), they are also experienced and under the control of the psionic entity that has taken residence in Jenchi's mind, so hitting one will alert the entire group consciousness. This should be a tough and unforgiving fight, characters may win and if they are lucky capture Jenchi alive, alternatively they might even lose and be captured, severely injured or killed, unless player characters have had the sense to assemble an elite team of local law enforcement personnel, military specialists or MOJ operatives. Only overwhelming force will make any difference to how this plays out. A fast, furious strike is best. Jenchi will of course enjoy the violence and attempt to convert any captured player characters (in the midst of the combat) to become hosts of the Keepers.

As the combat progresses, a 30 Ton Ship's boat will fall out of the sky and hover a meter above the roof, whilst discharging some professional looking operatives (In combat environment suits with ACR's). Players might think that these are Jenchi's reinforcements and engage them in combat. Sharp eyed players will notice that the latest arrivals are actually targeting Jenchi's men and may wish to assist. This should sway the outcome in the player character's favour.

When the enemy has been subdued a tense stand off between the new arrivals and the player character will ensue, the arrivals commander (a vargr female who identifies herself as Groghen Skokka) will step forward and ask for the player character's leader to identify him or herself, at which point she will raise a pistol and shoot this person in the neck with a tranq round, before apologising to the group, stating that it is necessary and all will be revealed later on. No one will be harmed. She will demand that the player characters then stand down and prepare for transport as someone wants to meet them. Her people will disarm the group, but allow them to keep any non lethal equipment. The player character's leader will be unconscious and carried into the G-carrier. Players will also notice an unconscious Jenchi Toolmere being carried to the G-carrier, before being strapped into a stretcher. Skokka will then order her people to secure the 'low berths' and stow them aboard the ship. Her operatives will then be seen pushing self contained low berths aboard grav floaters to the ship's boat. At which point the group will be taken aboard at gun point. Skokka will then shout 'Phase Two!' as the ship clears the penthouse. Seconds

later the penthouse will explode and rain debris down into the streets below.

Whilst aboard the boat the ship Skokka will not speak any further to the player characters, some thirty five minutes later the ship will touch down, the personnel will disembark with the player characters onto a large sky scraper's flat roof, leaving the low berths behind. The ships will then lift to the skies and disappear out of sight.

Should anyone ask questions to Skokka and her people, they will be gruffly told to 'Shut up'.

Krandolf Viska

The player characters will be bundled into a small windowless room within the building and told to make 'themselves comfortable'.

Later on a slim, blond haired man in his mid forties will approach the player characters, entering the room with two of his vargr guards and introduce himself as 'Colonel Viska'. The colonel will explain that his people have been watching the player characters for some time, their system wide investigation has 'naturally' set off a few of their 'trip wires', some of their communications have also been intercepted. They know that they are working for the MOJ and are impressed by the combination of bravery and stupidity they've demonstrated in hunting down and attacking Jenchi Toolmere. He will explain that he knows all about Toolmere and the 'Keepers of Secrets' as they have an intelligence source within the MOJ. He will explain that he has some questions for the player characters, how they answer will dictate exactly what will happen next. They may be executed or given their freedom. As an aside he will explain that the sophonts in the low berths just extracted from Jenchi's penthouse are without hope as they have without question been consumed by the psionic parasites that his men have been fighting. At the present moment the ship's boat is accelerating at 6G towards Lodestar where it will be incinerated completely. No he would never ask his people to kill themselves like that, not unless it meant an essential victory. The boat is on autopilot and quite invisible to Bwappanhunabwapi and his traffic control personnel.

Should the player characters ask exactly who it is he is working for then he will quite proudly state that he and his people are working for the good of the Imperium and that for the time being is all they need to know. A few hours later when the player's leader has recovered from his or her drugging, the interrogations will begin.

Krandolf will then bring in an assistant (Kati Hillis) who will also have some nasty looking (human) guards, the assistant will then interview each member of the

player characters on a one to one basis and away from the other members of the Team.

Kati Hillis

Kati is a 26 year old former administrator who discovered that she was psionic, far from being frightened by the thought of psionics in general and the forbidden disciplines clamped down upon by the Imperium in the 800's, the thought of having secret knowledge and secret abilities excited her. Given the sheer volume of people living on Hebrin, she reasoned that there must be others like her, some of whom could give her training. When searching for 'an institute' she came to the attention of the 'Watch' and was recruited. Indeed when she learned that the Imperium was slowly being corrupted by an unknown alien force she felt that it was her duty to do something, even though psionic individuals like her are loathed and negatively portrayed in the Imperial media. Other members of the watch who were also psionic provided her with training turning her into a competent telepath and empath. Kati will interview the group and ask some of the following questions to each player character.

Who are you?

Who do you work for?

Can you remember the first time you were in life and death combat?

What was it like?

Describe your home world.

Who is your favourite Holo star?

What is your favourite sport?

Will you tell us all you know?

The questions themselves aren't that important, whilst asking the questions she is subtly probing the player character's minds, working out what their minds "feel like" whenever they lie or give false information to her. After interviewing the characters, she will step back, nod to her associates and the true interrogation will begin. The humans with her will begin by asking the characters questions about their origins and whereabouts, every time a character lies, Kati will inform the interrogators and occasionally elaborate on thoughts the characters have (picking up images and memories from their minds). Resistance will be very difficult with two experienced interrogators and a psionic individual in the room. The interrogation will range from nasty to nice and occasionally embarrassing as Kati picks out humiliating memories from the group.

Referee's if you have bad player characters, that are self interested and relentlessly pursue their own greedy ways, desiring nothing but money and power whilst acting cowardly in the face of danger, now is the time to punish them, their past sins can be ruthlessly unearthed by this telepath and bad role-playing can be punished. Secret bank accounts can

be emptied, hidden weapon's caches can be robbed, access codes to their ship can be recovered (indeed the ship itself can be taken). The Imperial Watch can and will remove any item of value or military potential for the good of their war effort. Player's might cry or protest but there's nothing they can do. Persistent moaners can also be beaten to within 1 hitpoint of their lives and moved on to the next scene. Needless to say honourable characters do not need such a wakeup call, their belongings and bank balances will be left in peace.... Who says there's no such thing as Karma?

When the interrogation is complete Kati will deliver her report to the Colonel and a few hours later some light, hot food and water will arrive followed by the Colonel and Lt Skokka.

He will explain that the group have been psionically scanned, he now knows everything that they know (he is bluffing as some gaps in knowledge will remain) and he knows that they have been looking for him. He will then confirm that his men made the ultimate sacrifice and scuttled the Golden Eclipse for reasons which will soon become apparent. Against his better judgement he has decided not to execute the group but to give them a chance to prove themselves. He will explain that he works for a secret and illegal organisation, set up to combat the threat of the alien species the MOJ has dubbed 'The Keepers' although they have a different name for them. The Colonel will earnestly state that his organisation needs to stay in the underworld if it is to be successful in this mission. When the Keeper threat is dealt with, there will be time then for celebrations and legal proceedings.

The Colonel will then explain that they finance their operation by stealing and smuggling water and selling it through a network of 'dealers' amongst the populace. It's not nice but all of this finery costs money! Then bitterly he will state that the Imperium wouldn't listen to 'the boss' and have done nothing in the face of this threat that they've known about for quite some time. He will explain that some 10 and 15 standard years ago, the Shadow Cartel was infiltrated by the Keepers. Player will remember that the Cartel's operational doctrine allegedly changed about this time, to be more anti-Imperial and grossly more violent. The Colonel will elaborate that he and his people have been fighting a secret war against the Keepers for the last 10 years. The war rages bitterly, but 'Operation Crushing Victory' was an outstanding success that they paid for with their best blood. Indeed destroying the Eclipse has set back the keeper agenda, by a few months at the very least as a number of Keeper infected people (some of which were seasoned military commanders) were aboard the ship in low berths. He will then state that as far as anyone knows the Keepers spread slowly from

world to world and always work themselves into positions of authority and influence. They seem bound together psionically and it is known that the effects of jump space seriously impinge upon this link which it seems heightens violent patterns of behaviour. If the keeper infected person is knocked out prior to jump this usually causes the link with the keepers to be broken on jump entry, why they won't wake up until precipitation out of jump space remains a mystery however.

These creatures he will state are psionic energy vampires, they thrive on the psychic stress of violence and violent situations which elevates their powers allowing them to consume a new host and spread to him or her, provided that person's will has been softened up enough to be broken by the combination of fear, stress and mental exhaustion that usually follows extreme combat or personal danger. Oddly enough the transition is easiest when the victim has some authority of his or her own, being a leader brings great responsibility, this sense of duty can be exploited by the Keepers, making it easier for them to gain a mental foothold and consume their target personality. This is why the group's leader was tranquilised after the violence at Jenchi Toolmere's penthouse. Psionic individuals are always those most at risk. Keepers are limited however they seemingly have no skills of their own and require the expertise and abilities of their host to be effective. In order to facilitate this some aspect of the original personality must survive they theorise but they can't be certain.

He is convinced that over time these creatures will make it to Core Sector and try to control the entire Imperium, ultimately by taking control of the Emperor. Should anyone ask what the name of his organisation is, the colonel will shrug and simply reply 'The Imperial Watch'.

The Colonel will explain that of course his people have informed the Imperium of this threat many years ago, when it was first discovered by his contacts and he is pleased that the player characters have also uncovered this threat and informed the appropriate authorities. What he needs to know however is what the authorities intend to do with this knowledge. This is where the player characters become useful. He will ask them to set up a face to face meeting with Reba Harrison, they can communicate everything they've witnessed through their usual channels. The player's will be go-betweens and couriers, the deal is this. Colonel Viska wants to know everything that the MOJ knows about the Keepers, in return they will pass them everything that the Watch knows about the Shadow Cartel. The Colonel will explain that he has enough information to cripple the cartel and their dependent criminal ties, such as the Cybes and the Slicks who are quite a problem on Hebrin. He will further explain that this will only be

possible if they can arrange a face to face meeting on neutral ground.

Smart players might be wondering how the Colonel can know anything about the Cartel, he will explain that they fight them every single day and that their leader keeps them one step ahead of the Cartel at all times. If they ask who the leader is, he will simply state that no one knows the leader's real name, indeed the real name isn't that important, they call him 'Maskrey', his intelligence and expert knowledge of the Empty Quarter Races keep the Watch in the lead at all times. Further questions about the leader will simply earn them a throwaway remark such as 'earn your place here and you'll find out'.

The colonel will then remark that Jenchi Toolmere had been consumed by the keepers when he was still a merc, hence his preference to travel low berth. He's recently been working within a division of the Shadow Cartel and successfully set up an organ harvesting and transplant network. This allows known criminals to change their identity by undergoing surgery. It has long been known that transplanting human bone marrow from one individual to another will give the recipient two types of DNA, their own and that of the Donor. What the cartel has been doing is similar, only much more advanced. The innocent nobodies stupid enough or simply not rich enough to travel in any other way than low berth are perfect for this. They rarely have criminal records a number of them are expected to die simply because low berths are dangerous. Taking their bone marrow, stem cells and organs then transplanting the dominant aspects of their bio chemistry into one of these criminals is good enough to fool most DNA scanners at starports and high security buildings (where drops of blood are required), especially on technologically inferior worlds like Hebrin, cosmetic surgery can then be used to make these crims look a bit more like their new identities, even new fingerprints can be generated through bio manipulation. He will remark that there's been a few high profile cases in the news lately where matched organs were rejected by their bodies auto immune systems, that's because what can't be used in this identity changing process have been sold on the black market to raise more cash. You can trust the Cartel's lower level operatives to be greedy enough to do this with leftovers and think that it won't have any consequences...

At this point an alarm will sound; the colonel's people will report that their building is under attack. The colonel will ask if Jenchi is still unconscious, one of his men will confirm that this is the case. He will order his men to defend at all cost and secure the prisoner, before asking if the perimeter has been breached. One of his people will report that it's the 'old enemy'. The colonel will address the player characters and state that he needs

as many combatants as possible to repulse the invaders, if they agree to help he will order his people to pass them some small arms and a comm. headset for each to wear and report, (plugging them into the tactical pool).

Characters will only have the clothes on their back, plus the equipment given to them if they decide to assist so should be careful if they are used to having some armour. Player characters will have met these attackers before; they are members of the Cybes, ruthless thugs and leg breakers from the wrong side of the law (See Hebrin Nights, Part 1 of the Lorimar Slot – Stellar Reaches Issue 4). Sharp eyed characters will notice Kati Hillis picking up an autopistol after donning a large bulky helmet (a psionic shield helmet). The cybes are all equipped with flak jackets and sawn off shotguns, with the occasional autopistol, not to mention a dizzying array of crude cybernetic attachments grafted to their bodies such as ocular enhancements to make targeting easier or assist by detecting body heat etc, or grossly inappropriate metallic claws in place of hands and similar. Each member of the cybes will also be plugged into their own network, communicating with each other via com dots, radio implants and short wave radios. Within moments the lights will go out, turning the inside of this building into a dark and shadowy maze of interconnected corridors and rooms, some of which are empty whilst others are stuffed full of Watch equipment. The battle should rage on until all the cybes are killed or incapacitated. When the mayhem is over, the Colonel will order a status report whilst wiping someone else’s blood from his uniform, Lt Skokka will report that the prisoner has been taken. The colonel will swear loudly but thank the Lt for her report, before asking her to begin damage limitation. Lt Skokka will confirm the order. At which point the Colonel will order a full scale evacuation of their high-rise building, an hour later a 95 ton shuttle will land on the roof and the base personnel will begin loading everything into it. At some point in the organised mayhem, Lt Skokka will confirm that damage limitation has been successful; the colonel will nod before turning to the characters. He will advise them to go back to the star port, stating that there’s an air/raft on the roof they can use, before

explaining that they can simply leave it at the port and it will be collected. Their brief is simple, communicate everything to Reba Harrison and set up a face to face meeting. He will give the characters a “one time” comm access code to contact ‘his people’ through the X-boat Network. The Future of the Imperium depends on it. If anyone asks about the damage limitation, the Colonel will simply state that the body of Jenchi Toolmere has been destroyed, which is a pity as they were going to try out a new type of interrogation technique on him. Eventually the shuttle will lift, occluding the red and angry light of lodestar as it momentarily hovers in the air before accelerating wildly to orbit. If the player characters are still present they will find the building to have been completely sanitised, nothing remains that can place any identity on the group or the personnel they’ve just met.

All that remains is for the characters to head back to their ship and file those reports. As for ‘The Watch’, the Cybes and the Shadow Cartel many questions remain unanswered. Some of these may be answered in the next thrilling instalment of The Lorimar Slot...

The Hebrin System Overview (Full Details in Hebrin Nights Stellar Reaches #4)

Lodestar K3V		
Orbit		
0 Broken Rock	XS000000-0	
1 Shenandoah	Y100267-6	
2 Hebrin	B550A88-9 N De Hi Po	
3 Dalmatian	Y653325-9	
4 Villi-skis	Y682532-6	
5 Tolls Belt	Y000443-9	
6 Raven	SGG	11 Moons
7 Petri Belt	Y000467-8	
8 Resell	YABA663-8	
9 Lodemar	LGG	21 Moons
10 Vultis	SGG	4 Moons

Luminous Courier Class Starship

by Christian F. Kelley

The Luminous Courier class of ships was designed to fulfill a need and take advantage of common design elements. The Beyond and Vanguard Reaches sectors of Know Space are full of relatively small political states, consisting of a handful of systems, often clustered near each other. In addition three great powers and many minor powers wield influence and act behind the scenes in these sectors. While any number of merchant ships could serve as courier or consular ships the desire to build a ship from the ground up which could act as a mobile embassy was present.

With numerous modular cutter pods on the market the ability to customize the load out of this ship was increased. She also was designed using off-the-shelf components for much of her construction, and her design allows easy assembly using those modular components. Access to sensors, drives, core engineering, life support and auxiliary systems is readily available throughout the ship. This makes keeping her in running order a pleasure, according to crew that has served aboard this design.

The Luminous Courier had to have long legs, often crossing gaps between the stars which standard merchants could not cross. This mandated at least J3 drives. With the addition of a fuel module and conversion of cargo space to fuel storage this can be extended to J3+1 if needed. Her aft cargo bay extends two deck levels, allowing for somewhat oversize cargos. The ability to land in remote locations, and refuel in wilderness conditions dictated streamlining improvements as well as fuel scoops and processors.

Fast in system transit times can often make a difference in negotiations and diplomacy. This mandated at least M3 thrusters, which also aids refueling or evasion, if necessary. The power plant was built overcapacity to add some maneuver agility, for defense as well as assuring continual operations at high speed.

Interior appointments are of the highest quality, reflecting the status due a diplomatic envoy. An oversize passenger airlock also serves as a reception foyer, capable of hosting an honor guard if needed. The

galley and lounge areas are excellently appointed and the dedicated steward can provide dining quality second to none. With the right 30-DTon module attached the consular staff can be doubled over listed passenger capacity. If an envoy has specific environmental needs those can be catered to with the right module. In dire circumstances the module can be jettisoned as an escape pod while the main ship draws away attackers. This is a move of great desperation, however.

Because of her role as a courier the Luminous class comes equipped with medium range sensors and communications gear. She boasts numerous receptors and antennae to allow massive parallel communications or to even act as a neutral communications hub between highly antagonist parties. There is some additional design space to add sophisticated jamming and spoofing hardware if desired. Often an EW/ECM/ECCM module will be carried if such a need arises, but this can be seen as a hostile act and may compromise the diplomatic immunity of the ship and its mission.

Her defensive array is oriented to evasion and escape; focusing on agility, speed, sand-casters and point defense laser mountings. She is not a gun boat by any measure, and has no additional armoring to her hull. Her greatest protection is her status as a diplomatic ship, not any fittings she may mount. The assigned gunner more often acts as a communications specialist and does second duty as an assistant to the steward.

Popular for her role in political and governmental duties, the Luminous class has seen wide use throughout the Beyond, Vanguard Reaches and further. Licensed copies exist and see use in many small and non-aligned states. While expensive compared to a smaller craft (e.g. Scout/Courier), her abilities and fittings far better suit the needs of the elite and nobles who make up the diplomatic corps of many governments. Indeed she is popular as a personal yacht and corporate executive transport, and sees use outside of official diplomatic channels. It is rumored that her speed and status as a protected craft make her popular with smugglers and spies, using her reputation as a cloak against intrusive customs inspections.

The Incandescent Herald

Luminious Courier Class Diplomatic Courier

A Traveller20 starship design by:

Father Fletch

Statistics:

350-ton Hull (Close Structure) - Streamlined

AC: 11 (8 vs. Meson Guns) AR: 0 SI: 130 Initiative: 1

Starship Size: Medium Cost: 167.573 MCr (209.467 MCr without discount)

Model/3 (PP: 42/12) Computer Avionics: Less than 600-ton

Sensors: Medium Range Communications: Medium Range

Cargo: 36.0-tons Extra Ship's Stores: 18 person/weeks of Luxury Stores, 14 person/weeks of Standard Stores,

Passengers: 8

Annual Maintenance = 16.757 KCr (8.379 KCr if routinely maintained)

Routine Maintenance = 4.189 KCr/Month (41.893 KCr per year)

Performance:

Jump-3 (enough fuel for 1x Jump-3)

Acceleration: 3-G Agility: 1

Power Plant: TL-12 Fusion (20 EP output, enough fuel for 4 weeks)

Fuel Scoops, Fuel Purification Plant (TL-12, 8hrs per 100 tons of fuel)

Atmospheric Speeds: NOE = 1,175kph Cruising = 3,525kph Maximum = 4,700kph

Active Defenses:

None

Weapons:

Hardpoints: 2

Triple Mixed Turret:

Pulse Laser TL-12, +1 To Hit, 1d10 (19/x2), Range: 45,000km

Sandcaster TL-12, +2 AC

Sandcaster TL-12, +2 AC

Triple Mixed Turret:

Pulse Laser TL-12, +1 To Hit, 1d10 (19/x2), Range: 45,000km

Sandcaster TL-12, +2 AC

Sandcaster TL-12, +2 AC

Ship's Vehicles:

1x 30-ton small craft (Internal Hangar)

Launch facilities for 1 Craft per turn

Accommodations & Fittings:

9x Single Occupancy Stateroom (9 People)

6x Single Occupancy Small Cabin (6 People)

1x Autodoc

4x Airlocks

Crew Details:

1x Pilot

1x Astrogator

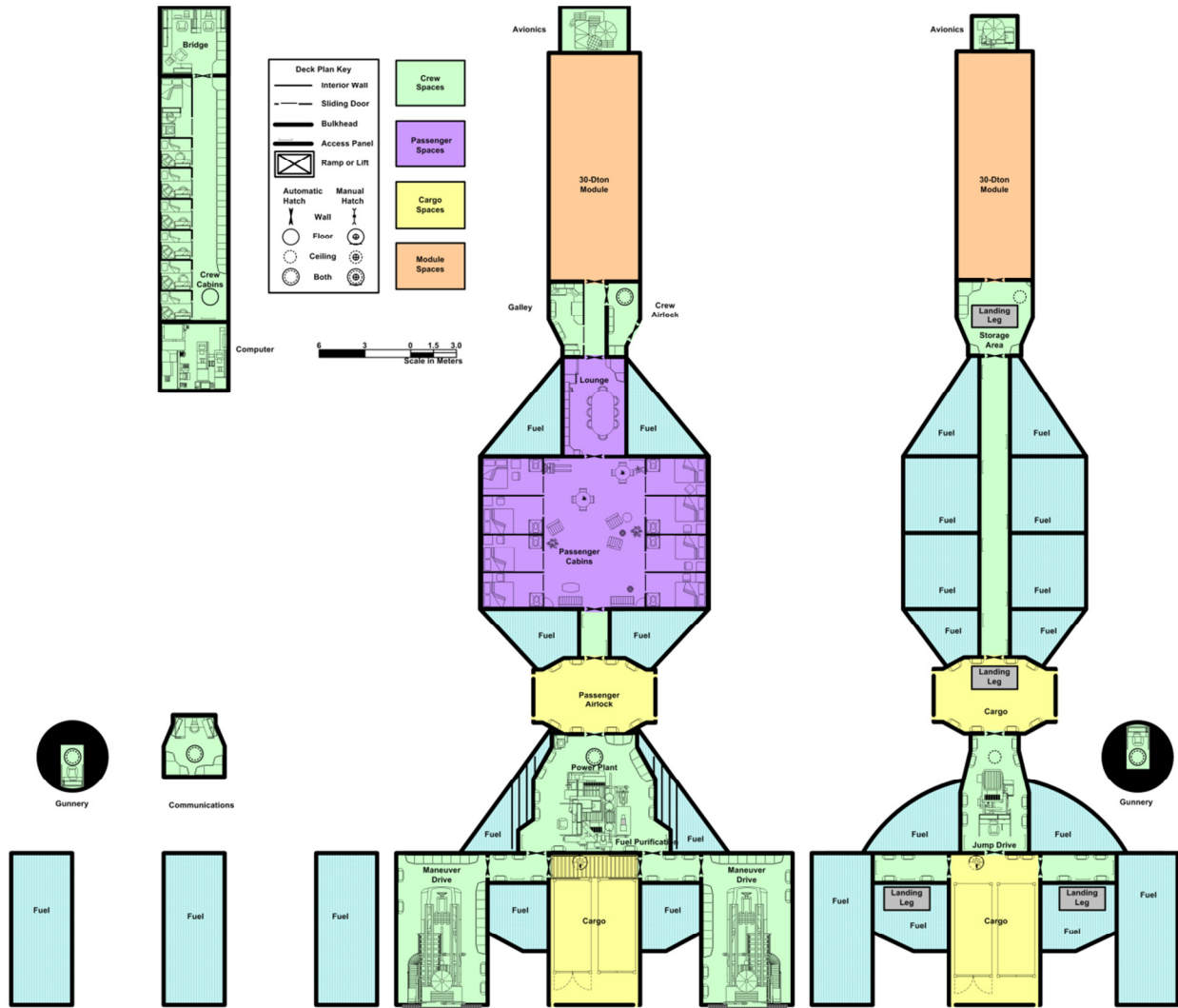
3x Engineer

1x Steward

1x Gunner

Description:

This starship was inspired by the Radiant VII diplomatic cruiser which appears in the opening scenes of Star Wars I: The Phantom Menace. Research on Wookipedia (http://starwars.wikia.com/wiki/Radiant_VII) revealed a few details about this ship which I used in this design.



Traveller T20 and Classic Traveller Fair Use Policies

Verbatim from Far Future Enterprises's Fair Use policy, which could be found at <http://www.farfuture.net/FFEFairUsePolicy2008.pdf>

"The Traveller game in all forms is owned by Far Future Enterprises. Copyright 1977 - 2008 Far Future Enterprises. Traveller is a registered trademark of Far Future Enterprises. Far Future permits web sites and fanzines for this game, provided it contains this notice, that Far Future is notified, and subject to a withdrawal of permission on 90 days notice. The contents of this site are for personal, non-commercial use only. Any use of Far Future Enterprises's copyrighted material or trademarks anywhere on this web site and its files should not be viewed as a challenge to those copyrights or trademarks. In addition, any program/articles/file on this site cannot be republished or distributed without the consent of the author who contributed it.

Traveller is copyright by and of Far Future Enterprises, and its use here is by permission. [http://www.farfuture.net/.](http://www.farfuture.net/)"

Verbatim from Quicklink's Fair Use policy, which can be found at <http://www.travellerrpg.com/fairuse.html>:

"The Traveller game in all forms is owned by Far Future Enterprises. Copyright 2002 QuikLink Interactive, Inc. Traveller is a registered trademark of Far Future Enterprises. QuikLink permits web sites and fanzines for this game, provided it contains this notice, that QuikLink is notified, and subject to a withdrawal of permission on 90 days notice. The contents of this site are for personal, non-commercial use only. Any use of QuikLink Interactive's product identity, copyrighted material or trademarks anywhere on this web site and its files should not be viewed as a challenge to those copyrights or trademarks. In addition, any program/articles/file on this site cannot be republished or distributed without the consent of the author who contributed it."

GURPS Traveller Online Policy

From Steve Jackson Games' online policy, which can be found at http://www.sjgames.com/general/online_policy.html:

Disclaimer

Some of the material presented here is the original creation of the contributing author, intended for use with the GURPS system from Steve Jackson Games. This material is not official and is not endorsed by Steve Jackson Games.

Notice

GURPS is a registered trademark of Steve Jackson Games, and some of the art here is copyrighted by Steve Jackson Games. All rights are reserved by SJ Games. This material is used here in accordance with the SJ Games online policy."

OPEN GAME LICENSE VERSION 1.0A

The following text is the property of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. and is Copyright 2000 Wizards of the Coast, Inc ("Wizards"). All Rights Reserved.

1. Definitions: (a) "Contributors" means the copyright and/or trademark owners who have contributed Open Game Content; (b) "Derivative Material" means copyrighted material including derivative works and translations (including into other computer languages), potation, modification, correction, addition, extension, upgrade, improvement, compilation, abridgment or other form in which an existing work may be recast, transformed or adapted; (c) "Distribute" means to reproduce, license, rent, lease, sell, broadcast, publicly display, transmit or otherwise distribute; (d) "Open Game Content" means the game mechanic and includes the methods, procedures, processes and routines to the extent such content does not embody the Product Identity and is an enhancement over the prior art and any additional content clearly identified as Open Game Content by the Contributor, and means any work covered by this License, including translations and derivative works under copyright law, but specifically

excludes Product Identity. (e) “Product Identity” means product and product line names, logos and identifying marks including trade dress; artifacts; creatures characters; stories, storylines, plots, thematic elements, dialogue, incidents, language, artwork, symbols, designs, depictions, likenesses, formats, poses, concepts, themes and graphic, photographic and other visual or audio representations; names and descriptions of characters, spells, enchantments, personalities, teams, personas, likenesses and special abilities; places, locations, environments, creatures, equipment, magical or supernatural abilities or effects, logos, symbols, or graphic designs; and any other trademark or registered trademark clearly identified as Product identity by the owner of the Product Identity, and which specifically excludes the Open Game Content; (f) “Trademark” means the logos, names, mark, sign, motto, designs that are used by a Contributor to identify itself or its products or the associated products contributed to the Open Game License by the Contributor (g) “Use”, “Used” or “Using” means to use, Distribute, copy, edit, format, modify, translate and otherwise create Derivative Material of Open Game Content. (h) “You” or “Your” means the licensee in terms of this agreement.

2. The License: This License applies to any Open Game Content that contains a notice indicating that the Open Game Content may only be used under and in terms of this License. You must affix such a notice to any Open Game Content that you Use. No terms may be added to or subtracted from this License except as described by the License itself. No other terms or conditions may be applied to any Open Game Content distributed using this License.

3. Offer and Acceptance: By Using the Open Game Content You indicate Your acceptance of the terms of this License.

4. Grant and Consideration: In consideration for agreeing to use this License, the Contributors grant You a perpetual, worldwide, royalty-free, non-exclusive license with the exact terms of this License to Use, the Open Game Content.

5. Representation of Authority to Contribute: If You are contributing original material as Open Game Content, You represent that Your Contributions are Your original creation and/or You have sufficient rights to grant the rights conveyed by this License.

6. Notice of License Copyright: You must update the COPYRIGHT NOTICE portion of this License to include the exact text of the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any Open Game Content You are copying, modifying or distributing, and You must add the title, the copyright date, and the copyright holder’s name to the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any original Open Game Content you Distribute.

7. Use of Product Identity: You agree not to Use any Product Identity, including as an indication as to compatibility, except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of each element of that Product Identity. You agree not to indicate compatibility or co-adaptability with any Trademark or Registered Trademark in conjunction with a work containing Open Game Content except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of such Trademark or Registered Trademark. The use of any Product Identity in Open Game Content does not constitute a challenge to the ownership of that Product Identity. The owner of any Product Identity used in Open Game Content shall retain all rights, title and interest in and to that Product Identity.

8. Identification: If you distribute Open Game Content You must clearly indicate which portions of the work that you are distributing are Open Game Content.

9. Updating the License: Wizards or its designated Agents may publish updated versions of this License. You may use any authorized version of this License to copy, modify and distribute any Open Game Content originally distributed under any version of this License.

10. Copy of this License: You MUST include a copy of this License with every copy of the Open Game Content You Distribute.

11. Use of Contributor Credits: You may not market or advertise the Open Game Content using the name of any Contributor unless You have written permission from the Contributor to do so.

12. Inability to Comply: If it is impossible for You to comply with any of the terms of this License with respect to some or all of the Open Game Content due to statute, judicial order, or governmental regulation then You may not Use any Open Game Material so affected.

13. Termination: This License will terminate automatically if You fail to comply with all terms herein and fail to cure such breach within 30 days of becoming aware of the breach. All sublicenses shall survive the termination of this License.

14. Reformation: If any provision of this License is held to be unenforceable, such provision shall be reformed only to the extent necessary to make it enforceable.

15. COPYRIGHT NOTICE

Open Game License v 1.0 Copyright 2000, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

D20 System Rules and Content Copyright 2000, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.; Authors Johnathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, based on original material by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson.

T20 - The Traveller's Handbook Copyright 2002, Quiklink Interactive, Inc. Traveller is a trademark of Far Future Enterprises and is used under license.

Modern System Reference Document Copyright 2002-2004, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.; Authors Bill Slavicsek, Jeff Grubb, Rich Redman, Charles Ryan, Eric Cagle, David Noonan, Stan!, Christopher Perkins, Rodney Thompson, and JD Wiker, based on material by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Richard Baker, Peter Adkison, Bruce R. Cordell, John Tynes, Andy Collins, and JD Wiker.

All original Open Game Content from "Stellar Reaches, Issue #10" Copyright 2010, Contributors: Joshua Bell, Mark Bridgeman, Christian F. Kelley, Alvin W. Plummer, Milo Thurston

DESIGNATION OF OPEN GAME CONTENT

The UWP's provided in various articles are designated as Open Game Content. The T20 information contained in the BITS Task System is designated as Open Game Content. Any and all other material derived from the System Reference Document, the Modern System Reference Document and the Traveller's Handbook is designated as Open Game Content.

The remainder of this document is considered Closed Content and contains Product Identity belonging to Far Future Enterprises. No challenge of their copyright is intended by its inclusion here.