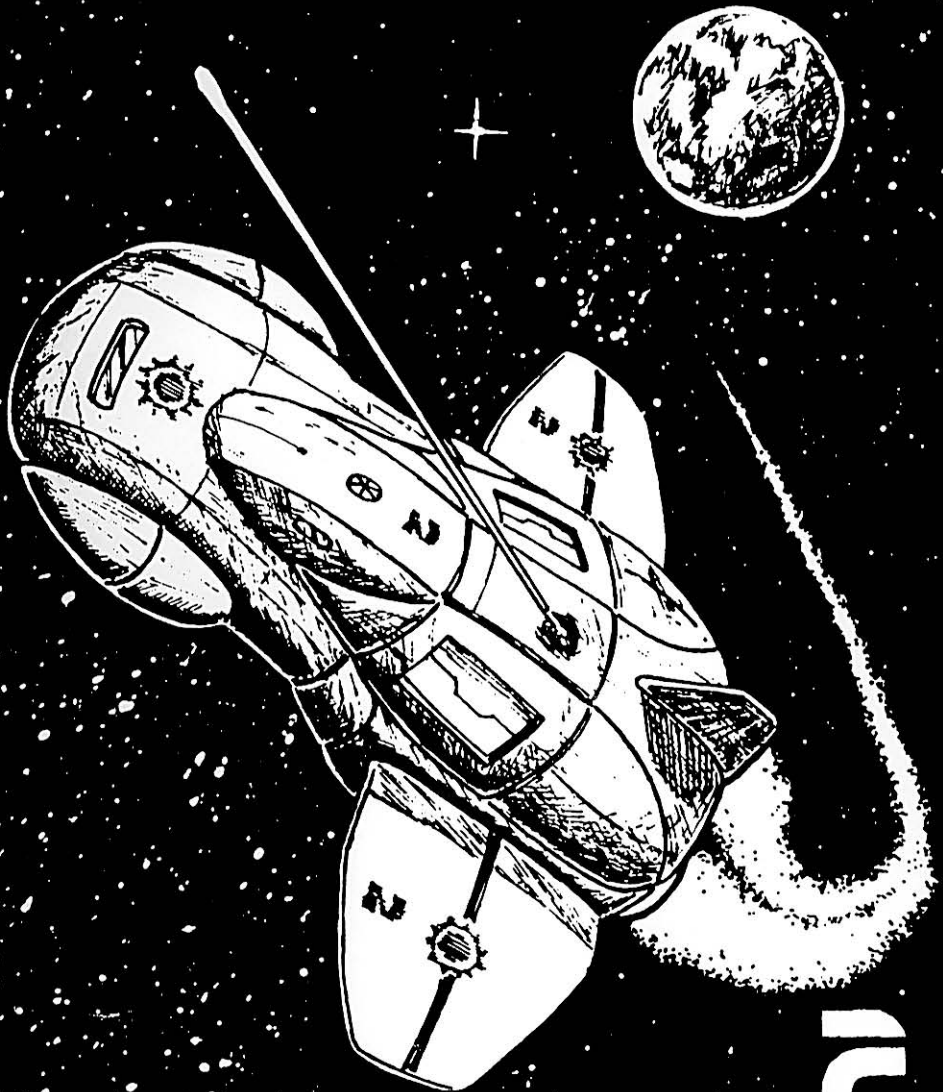


# THE TRAVELLER CHRONICLE

\$3.50US



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# The Traveller Chronicle

**A Magazine  
Devoted To  
Traveller In All Of  
Its Forms**

Issue #2 \$3.50US  
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**Submissions:** We are looking for good articles and illustrations for T.T.C. When submitting manuscripts and artwork enclose a stamped and self-addressed envelope with appropriate postage for return. We also would appreciate that submissions be presented on IBM compatible diskettes along with the hardcopy.

# The Editor Speaks...

Welcome to the second issue of the Traveller Chronicle. As you can see (for those returning) we have changed our appearance somewhat in an attempt to be more marketable.

Beginning with this issue we are presenting the Far Frontiers sector in depth. The information which will appear over the next several issues expands on the material which originally appeared in Ares™ back in 1984. After talking with Dale, I found out that this was only about 1/4 of the material he had written for a Far Frontiers supplement which was to be published by FASA, but which was dropped when FASA started producing their own science fiction roleplaying game. For those readers not familiar with FASA's Traveller products, they are some of the best material available and you really should try to find them somewhere. We hope that everyone enjoys this expansion of the Far Frontiers.

Traveller: The New Era expanded with the publication of Brilliant Lances, the starship combat and ship design supplement, by GDW, since we last talked. It looks VERY nice. Also, a small California company has released software in support of TNE. Planet III's product, the Traveller Navigator, is a must for those with an IBM compatible.

*Kevin D. Knight*



**Zilan**

**Eiswein**

*When you care enough to drink  
the very best!*

Some of the finest and rarest wine available in the Spinward Marches. Brought to you by **Oberlindes Lines** through a subsidiary contract with Fireu et Fille Winery of Zila/ Aramis. Available only through local licensees of the highest quality.

# The Far Frontiers

*(Please read the Editorial for notes on this article.)*

Beyond the borders of the Imperium lies the Far Frontiers sector, located some thirty to forty parsecs spinward of the nearest world under direct Imperial control. The sector is split roughly in two; the coreward portion is dominated by the Zhodani Consulate, while the rimward half is made up of numerous small client states and isolated worlds.

Though not under Imperial control, the Far Frontiers sector is of considerable importance, and strategic planners in both Imperial and Zhodani services are interested in events in the area. To the Zhodani, the sector is known as the "Stars of Destiny" and are considered to be under Zhodani dominion.

Absorption, however, has been painfully slow, so much so that Imperial involvement in the area has halted the process.

To the Imperium the region represents an important link the the "Policy of Containment" set down during the reign of Paula II. This policy promoted close ties between a number of client states and the Imperium. Those along the Consulate Frontier were of particular importance since they furnished a potential base for activities against the Zhodani in times of crisis, and forced the Zhodani to extensively

rethink their program of expansion along the Imperial border and in the Far Frontiers.

## General Overview

The designation "Far Frontiers" is usually applied to the whole of the sector lying immediately to coreward of the Vanguard Reaches and to spinward of the Zhodani Consulate. Properly speaking, however, the designation is limited to the Rimward Reach, the half of the sector lying outside the Consulate's borders. Only this portion of the sector will be described in this article.

Most client states in the Rimward Reach have entered into political alliances with the Imperium or the Zhodani Consulate, with only a few preserving a cautious neutrality. Between these interstellar states are other, nonaligned systems. Most interesting of these is Freedonia in the Inverness Subsector, which has combined a high tech level with shipbuilding industry to make it more valuable to all its near neighbors as an independent, neutral state.

## History of the Far Frontiers

The Far Frontiers sector has been inhabited by sentient beings for the last 6,000 years. The sector was originally settled by a minor human race known as the Vlazhdumecta. They are believed to be genetically related to the Zhodani and might be an offshoot of their gene pool.

During the period of initial Zhodani interstellar expansion, however, their homeworld was absorbed

along with many Vlazhdumecta colony worlds. Most of the remaining independent colonies, many in the Far Frontiers, were not self-sufficient. After the collapse of the Vlazhdumecta colonial empire dozens of these planets lapsed into low-tech barbarism, many never recovering. This continued for the next several millennia as the surviving Vlazhdumecta worlds in the Far Frontiers adjusted to their new situation.

This adjustment period was only disturbed once in the next 4,000 years by outside influences.

Around -4200 Imperial, a number of Vlazhdumecta planets were plundered by a race of outsiders known only as the Sky Raiders. They are mentioned in folklore and legends from a number of

planets in the Jungleblut and Taemerlyk subsectors, and are said to have dropped from the skies, spreading death and destruction in their wake. Plunder and pillage seems to have been the main object of these raids, and most of what was taken were rare metals and other items of lasting value. Most of the worlds attacked could have been no more developed than tech level 4 or 5. It has been estimated that the tech level of the Sky Raiders was 9 or 10.

Recent theories concerning their origin explain that the Sky Raiders were the remnants of the Loeskaith race which had been absorbed by the Vilani expansion of the First Imperium in the Gushemege sector, near the present day border of the Third Imperium. Fleeing in a huge asteroid ship, the Loeskaith

eventually arrived in the Far Frontiers where they played their legendary role as the Sky Raiders. It is interesting to note the similarities between the situations of the Vlazhdumecta and the Loeskaith. If the latter had not been so aggressive, these two races might have been able to cooperate in forming a new interstellar society. Who knows how the history of the area could have been changed by them? The point is moot, however, because after a few decades of planetary pillaging the Sky Raiders dropped out of sight, not to be heard from again.

**The Sky Raiders  
dropped from  
the sky,  
spreading death  
and destruction  
in their wake.**

The inhabited worlds of the Far Frontiers continued to develop over the centuries, unknowing and uncaring of the major changes going on around them.

With the collapse of the Rule of Man in -1776 Imperial, the Long Night began, throwing most of interstellar society into isolation. For the next 1500 years the only contacts the Far Frontiers had with outsiders were occasional Solomani or Darrian traders. By -300 Imperial, these areas were beginning to recover from their long period of stagnation and many planets were again interested in colonial expansion. Soon such areas as the Spinward Marches were being rapidly settled by Solomani and Vilani colonists. Finally the first settlers came to the even more distant Far Frontiers Sector.

By the beginning of the Third Imperium there were a dozen planets colonized by humans in the Far Frontiers sector. This number

rapidly increased over the next few centuries until 536 Imperial, when the first human state in the sector was formed, the Protectorate.

As more Imperial citizens settled in the Far Frontiers, the Vlazhdumecta dropped to the position of the lower class. The colonists brought advanced technology to the Vlazhdumecta worlds, but for the price of this development the new settlers took control of the worlds they colonized. Almost all Vlazhdumecta had their names changed to suit the new colonists. Through it all, these changes did little to upset the mild-mannered, somewhat fatalistic Vlazhdumecta, coming as it did with so much new found prosperity.

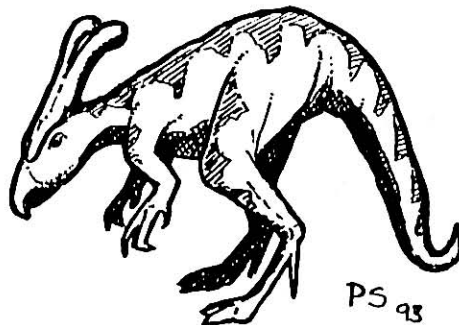
After 600 Imperial, new settlers poured into the Far Frontiers to get in on its booming economic growth, and because of the tension and internal strife in the Spinward Marches and other sectors, caused by the many frontier wars between the Third Imperium and the Zhodani Consulate.

In time the refugees fleeing from Zhodani expansion increased until almost all suitable planets for colonization in the Far Frontiers were inhabited.

After 700 Imperial, the many settled worlds in the Far Frontiers began to join together to form states for mutual protection and profit. With the many

major changes continuing in the mainstream of civilization near the Imperium, the Far Frontiers was basically ignored. Visited every ten years or so by Imperial scout or merchant vessels, little new reached the inhabitants of the sector concerning the activities of the Imperium until it was long out of date. The Zhodani were much nearer, but too concerned with happenings on the Imperial border to worry about the various states in the Far Frontiers. Some military and economic aid was given occasionally to ardent Zhodani supporters, but this was rarely enough to disrupt the balance of power in the area.

Over the years, local interstellar states began to be known for their pro-Imperial or pro-Zhodani stance, reflecting the antagonisms of their larger and more powerful mentors.



Throughout this period neither the Imperium nor the Zhodani had any interest in promoting these sympathies. Only out-of-date warships were ever able to be

purchased from the disposal yards of the Imperium, and Zhodani aid was just as rare. Diplomatic missions of both powers were at most capital worlds, but all parties were primarily interested in maintaining the status quo. This policy remains in effect to this day.

# Antideluvia Subsector

*Subsector I of the Far Frontiers*

Name	Hex	UWP	Bases	Trade Codes	Zone	PBG	Alleg
Acropolis	0103	A887556-9	B	Ag Ni		G	SC
Belekz	0104	A553413-A		Ni			SC
Drawmij	0105	E569955-7				G	SC
Salinaikin	0108	A000547-E	N	As Cp Ni	A	G	SC
Natlus	0205	C859457-7		Ni		G	SC
Stamfor	0206	D442885-7		Po		G	SC
Arbelletia	0208	C235435-9		Ni		G	SC
Yith	0209	C223558-C	S	Ni Po Rs	A	G	SC
Carcosa	0302	X400000-0		Va Ba		R	G
Pleroo	0304	BA86698-6	N	Ag Ni Ri		G	SC
Bytar	0306	A1325212-E		Ni IRP		G	SC
Mitra	0307	B975740-A	N	Ag		G	SC
Al-Jebel	0309	A330454-C	N	De Ni PF Po		G	SC
Machu	0405	B000400-D	N	As Ni		G	SC
Kretakios	0406	C998423-6	S	Ni		G	SC
Maried	0408	C656650-8		Ag Mi Ni		G	SC
Atlantis	0410	E768955-7		Ri	A	G	
Sere	0503	E6305A8-8		De Ni Po		G	SC
Servaas	0504	AA979B9-B	N	In		G	SC
Dunsel	0506	E7628D9-3			A	G	SC
Summer	0508	A8867A0-D	B	Merc		G	
Roentgen	0510	E8C7673-8		Ni	R	G	
Dreamland	0603	C431631-9	N	Na Ni Po		G	
Tanner	0605	A763AD9-A	N		A	G	
Hali	0610	B8A6759-B				G	
Drako	0702	B865AC9-A	N		A	G	
Nehagen	0707	A677A99-B	N	In		G	
Groneitz	0710	C696738-3		Ag		G	
Psagin	0807	A101722-C	S	Ic Na Va			

The Antideluvia subsector contains 30 worlds with a combined population of 62.48 billion inhabitants, including 326,000 Droyne (primarily from Pleroo and Dreamland). The highest population is 13 billion, at Drako. The highest tech level is at Salinaikin and Bytar. World allegiance of "SC" belong to the Salinaikin Concordance.

## States of the Far Frontiers

Salinaikin Concordance: The Salinaikin Concordance is the last truly neutral state in the Far

Frontiers. Located in the Antideluvia subsector, the Concordance was formed by Kaleb Escott Salinaikin, founder of the respected Salinaikin Institute of Knowledge. Seeing the growth of

# THE FAR FRONTIERS

**MAP LEGEND**

**World Type**

- Water Present
- No Water Present

**Asteroid Belt**

- ☼ Asteroid Belt

**Travel Zones**

- ⤴ Amber Zone
- ⤵ Red Zone

**Population Key**

- PRIMUS Plus One Billion
- SECUNDUS Minus One Billion

**Gas Giant**

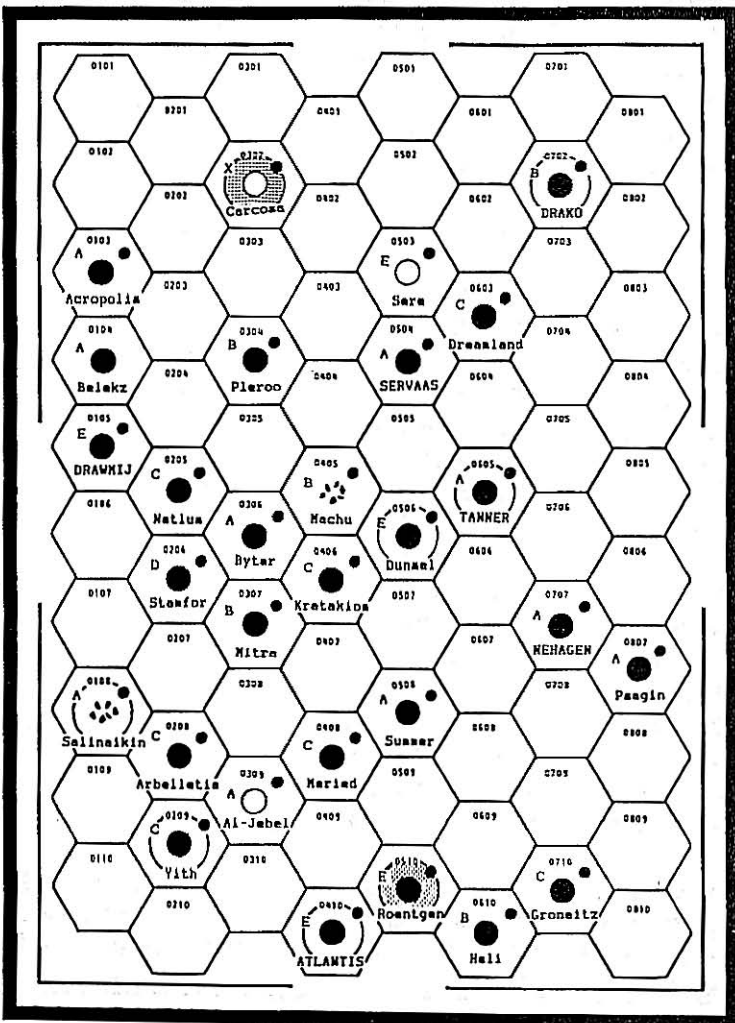
- ☾ Gas Giant

**Starport Type**

- D Starport Type

**Subsector Grid**

A	B	C	D
E	F	G	H
I	J	K	L
M	N	O	P



# ANTIDELUVIA



# Alsas Subsector

*Subsector J of the Far Frontiers*

<u>Name</u>	<u>Hex</u>	<u>UWP</u>	<u>Bases</u>	<u>Trade Codes</u>	<u>Zone</u>	<u>PBG</u>	<u>Alleg</u>	<u>Stellar</u>
Oskol	0103	X300209-A		Ni Va	A	G		
Mackay	0109	C5B3618-A		Ni				
Falkirk	0201	E100100-0		Ni Va		G		
Amristar	0204	D493654-7		Ni		G		
Tinahely	0206	B76A786-B		Ri Wa		G	Fa	
Odugama	0207	C651564-A		Ni Po			Fa	
Freemantle	0209	X3B0000-0		De Un				
Sevilla	0302	E440459-9		Ni Po		G		
Katano	0303	D120200-C	N	De Ni Po				
Lac Remi	0305	C9648D8-8				G	Fa	
McKne's World	0306	C652545-9		Ni Po			Fa	
Bulawayo	0307	D886563-8		Ag Ni		G	Fa	
Katherina	0309	B130300-C		De Ni Po Rs		G		
Afellahlah	0402	A6659C9-C	B	Cp		G	Fa	
Encrucijada	0410	X000000-0		As Un		G		
Darien	0501	X100000-0		Va Un				
Kaosiung	0504	X6A0510-4		Ni	A	G		
Elyptiya	0506	A664885-B		Ri		G	Fa	
Lachute	0509	C767764-7		Ag Ri			Fa	
Mafelong	0602	X4C0000-0		De Un		G		
Schwennin	0607	B472619-A		Ni		G	Fa	
Krugerschorp	0608	C887569-9		Ag Ni		G	Fa	
Antalya	0707	C763645-A		Ni Ri		G	Fa	
Chate Leavult	0709	C661993-9		Ic			Fa	
Sint Amsbern	0803	XB76000-0		Un		G		
Azut Leriz	0805	X766000-0		Un		G		

Alsas subsector contains 26 worlds with a population of 15.3 billion. The highest population is 9.1 billion at Afellahlah; the highest tech level is C, found at Katano, Katherina, and Afellahlah. Worlds labelled "Fa" belong to the Federation of Alsas.

Zhodani economic influence after the subsector split away from the Colonade Administration District in the early 750s, Salinaikin took it upon himself to meet with leaders of the various two or three system splinter groups and lobby for unity. Salinaikin met much resistance at first, but his logic and reasoning

ability, delivered with a gentle persuasion and a touch of humor, began to gain converts. His idea of a loose political grouping, in which member worlds were autonomous in their own affairs and united in mutual defence and trade, seemed more desirable when the continuous squabbling between various

# THE FAR FRONTIERS

## MAP LEGEND

### World Type



### Population Key

- PRIMUS
- Plus
- One Billion
- Secundus
- Minus
- One Billion

### Gas Giant

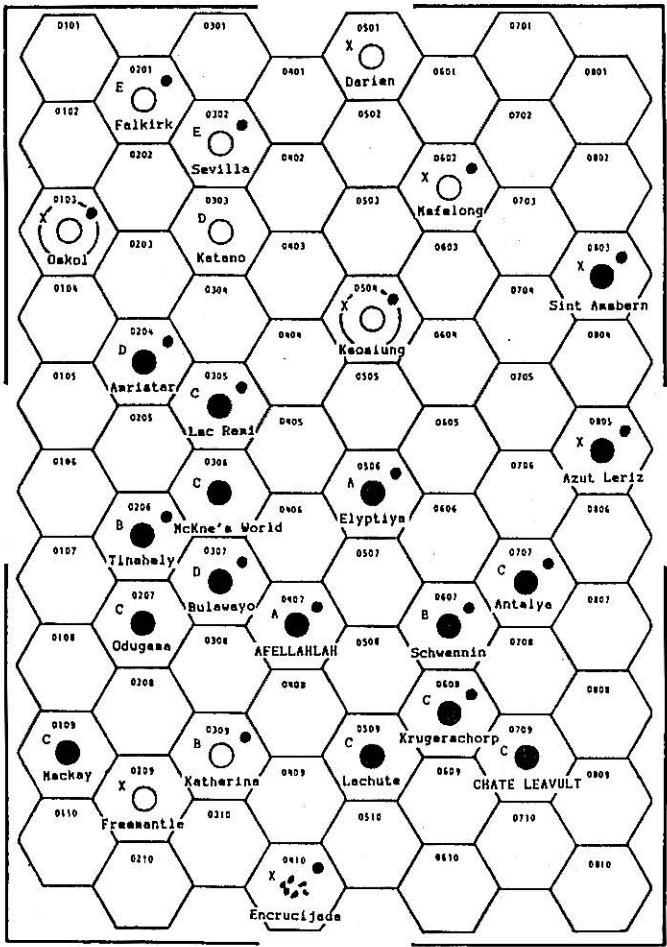


### Starport Type



### Subsector Grid

A	B	C	D
E	F	G	H
I	J	K	L
M	N	O	P



# ALSAS

political factions.

Still, it took the fear of subsumation into the Zhodani Consulate to convince these planetary leaders of Salinaiken's wisdom.

Representatives from two dozen worlds met on Acropolis/Antideluvia, and after months of deliberation ratified the declaration of the Salinaikin Concordance, named in honor of the man who helped bring it about. Salinaikin did not live to see the triumph of his ideas, having passed away two months before the convention. His name lives on, however, not only in the name of the state, but in the name of the asteroid belt where the capital is located.

In the past three and a half centuries of its existence, the Concordance has retained its neutrality and generally good relations with its neighbors. To ensure this, the Joint Defence Fleet was established and based at the central naval facility in the Machu asteroid belt. The individual planets in the Concordance have remained free to develop as they please. Although many preferred to be as self-sufficient as possible, others chose specialization. Bytar became known as an information center, its massive underground computer banks storing data for the worlds of the Concordance and its neighbors. Belekz became a major shipping and business center, with branch offices of all the major corporations in the sector located in its capital city. Pleroo is the agricultural center of the subsector and is considered the bread basket of the Concordance. Although there are still tensions around and within its borders, such as the rivalry between the Tannerite and Drakian

religions, the unrest concerning the Servaas dictatorship, the continued enslavement of the sub-humanoid natives of the planet MaReid by their Vlazhdumaecta overlords, the open sanctuary on Groneitz where criminals, terrorists, and political undesirables find refuge from the law, and the sometimes questioned wisdom of the Concordance's contract with the Summer Mercenary Cooperative to provide starport and security forces for the state, the past centuries have been years of peace, tranquility, and growth. In spite of these tensions, the Concordance remains secure in its neutrality at the spinward most reaches of the Far Frontiers sector.

**Federation of Alsas:** A pro-Imperial state in the Alsas subsector of the Far Frontiers sector, the Federation of Alsas is composed of twelve star systems. Dominated by the capital planet of Afellahlah, these systems joined together three hundred years ago for mutual defence. Most of the member planets leave the job of Federation defence to the armed forces of Afellahlah, thereby avoiding the expense of equipping themselves but allowing the Afellahlah government a lot of leeway in deciding Federation policy. Although not actively expansionistic, the Federation of Alsas is not opposed to intervening in the affairs of the independent planets surrounding it. The Afellahlah Navy is the strongest in the area, and there is rarely any argument to their judgement. Outlying systems do reap the benefit of having a strong neighbor to control pirate factions in the subsector, and regular patrols are conducted by Afellahlah.

— Dale Kemper —

# Mercury Quest

"That Imperial carrier didn't have a chance." The brightly-colored bar lights made the old man's smile seem sinister. "The squadron vectored in with the sun on our backs and released every missile we had. Just enough got through and blasted their engineering section." He took a long drink of brown liquid from his glass. "Her fighters got every one of us, Imperial scum! The rest of the fleet had to finish them off."

The young man on the other side of the table placed his drink down and leaned forward. Absentmindedly, he rubbed the deep scar on his wrist. "What happened to the carrier?"

The old timer drained his glass and peered out the bar windows at the landing field. Red and blue guide lights twinkled in the summer night air. "Last I saw of the *Nartor*, she was in a shallow dive toward the surface." A smile came to his face. "We kicked her in the ass and she ran for home."

The young man nodded. "Want another drink?"

He sat back and released a belch from behind his hand. "Maybe next time."

"Come on, you can have just one more. I want to hear more about the battle."

"What battle is that?" a tall man asked as he rested his hand on the old man's shoulder. His Terran Patrol uniform did little to hide his muscular frame.

The old man turned in his seat and smiled. "Hello, Orson. I was telling

Mr. —"

The young man jumped to his feet. "I really must be going." Before either man could say anything, he darted into the sea of patrons in the crowded bar.

Frowning, Orson sat down. "Who was your friend, Vladimir?"

Vladimir rubbed his chin. "He never told me his name. He just sat down and bought me a drink and started asking me about the Battle of Mercury."

"That was 118 years ago."

"Yes, he knew all about it too. Probably just a history major or something."

"Or something." Orson reached into his coat pocket and brought out a narrow box. He passed it across the table.

Vladimir's smile formed deep creases in his face as he opened the box and pulled out a delicately-cut glass bottle filled with green liquid. "It isn't?"

Orson smiled warmly. "Mars wine from the vineyards of Candor." Vladimir examined the foil seal. "Don't open it now. Save it for a special occasion."

"Okay. Tell me what's been going on. How's *Intrepid*?" They talked for hours.

Orson's watch beeped for attention. "It's getting late." He stood. "Our patrol circuit will bring us back to Earth in three months. I'll call."

"It was good seeing you again." Vladimir got to his feet and they shook hands. He gently patted the bottle. "Thanks." He watched Orson

weave between the tables and leave the bar. He turned toward the windows. Starport Paulo was bustling with activity 24 hours a day. Smiling, he watched the 1:00 a.m. shuttle lift for orbit.

Orson rushed into the hospital emergency room and stopped at the desk. A nurse seated at a computer terminal looked up. "I received a call about Vladimir Grechko. What's his condition?"

"Your name, sir?"

"Commander Orson Ridpath." The nurse began typing. "I don't have time to wait for you—"

"Is there a problem?"

Ridpath spun and faced a tall woman in green operating room scrubs. Her ID badge indicated she was a doctor. "I got a call that Vladimir Grechko was in an accident."

The doctor gently put a hand on his upper arm and guided him to an empty waiting area. "Mr. Grechko was the victim of an attack.

The police found him in the alley next to the Meteor Lounge at 1:30 this morning."

"What happened?"

The doctor shook her head. "He was injected with an unknown drug. We've never seen anything like it. It's attacking his nervous system. I gave him several counteragents, but his chances are not good."

Orson felt as if his heart was being torn out. "I want to see him." She took him a short distance down the hallway and pushed open a door.

Vladimir had the covers pulled up to his chin and his eyes were closed.

A small bandage was on his pale forehead. Ridpath forced back the tears as he walked to the bed. He glanced at the medical monitors, but gave up on understanding the readouts. With all his strength, he kept his voice clear and free of grief. "Vladimir?" The old man slowly opened his eyes. "Can you hear me?" Vladimir mumbled something. Orson knelt next to the bed. "Who did this?"

"The young guy with the scar is an Imperial spy. I'm the only living survivor. They want the *Nartor's* location. I never knew it. I lost sight of it."

Orson put a hand on Vladimir's cheek. His skin was cold. "Why do they want the location of the *Nartor*?"

The old man's body was racked with pain as he squeezed his eyes shut. "I don't know." His breathing was coming in gasps. "I — loved — you — like — my — own — son." He took one final gasp and was still. The medical monitors exploded in warning tones

and red lights.

Orson sat down on the floor as tears streamed down his face. He didn't hear the doctors and nurses rush in and work in vain to revive his friend.

A trim, young woman in a Terran Patrol uniform paced in front of the airlock hatch. Her silver lieutenant commander bars glistened in the bright lights. She stopped as the hatch opened.

A slightly older officer entered the ready room of the space station. Her grey duty jumpsuit had lieutenant bars sewn into the

**Orson  
rushed  
into the  
hospital  
emergency  
room...**

shoulders. "Any word from the skipper, Neda?"

Neda Larson shook her head. "This isn't like him, Sandy."

Sandy Clark smiled. "Maybe he has a friend?" The two officers turned as a side hatch opened.

With his hands behind his back, Ridpath strolled into the ready room. He scanned his officers with red-rimmed eyes. "Are we ready for departure, Lieutenant Commander?"

"Yes, sir. Traffic Control has been calling —" Ignoring her, Ridpath

walked past toward the airlock hatch, "Skipper?"

With disgust, Orson snapped around to face his first officer. "Tell Traffic Control we will be leaving shortly, Lieutenant Commander. Handle it!" His gaze turned to Clark. "Get me a channel with Admiral Lewis and put it through to my cabin." Without waiting for an answer, he entered the airlock of the Intrepid.

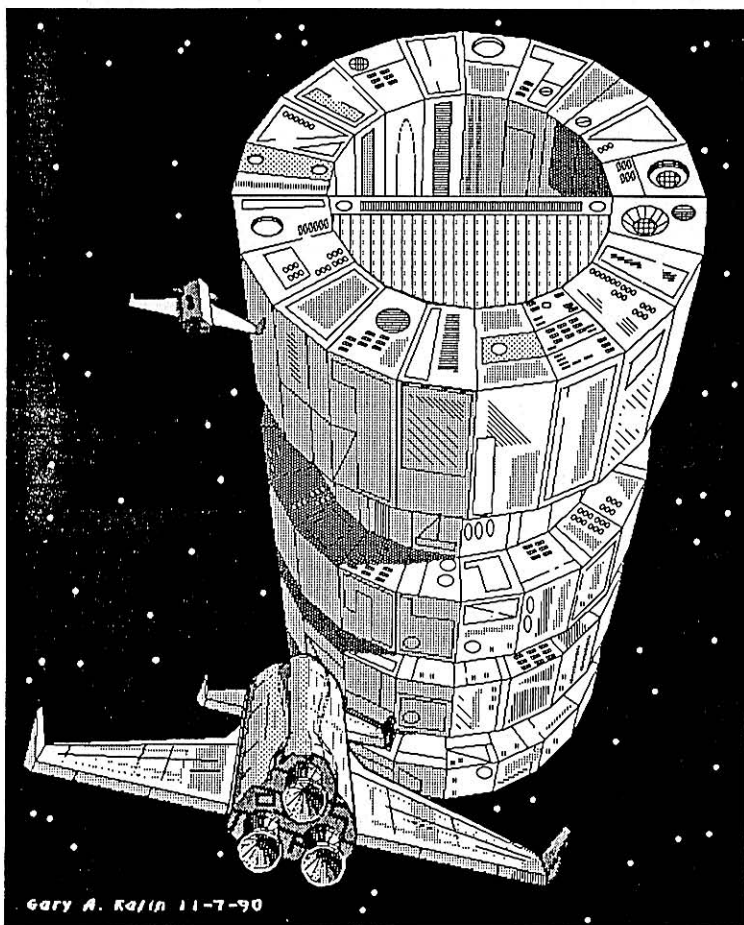
Clark leaned close to Larson's ear. "What happened to the skipper? Lewis is at Starport Paulo. It's 4:00 a.m. there! She'll blow a fuel pump

getting a call at this hour."

Neda nervously straightened her uniform jacket.

"Tell the crew to be on their best behavior until I find out what's going on." They entered the airlock and it slid shut.

Sitting at his desk, Ridpath slammed his fist down on the intercom button and



glared at the view screen mounted in the cabin wall. "Lieutenant Clark, where is that channel with Admiral Lewis?"

Clark's nervous features appeared on the screen. "Her aide is waking her now, Skipper. Sorry — here she is, sir."

The screen faded to a finely-furnished office. An older woman with white hair was seated behind an oak desk. "Good morning, Commander Ridpath," she said with annoyance in her voice.

"Admiral Grechko is dead, sir." Lewis covered her mouth as she looked away. Tears glistened on her cheeks. "He was murdered!"

Lewis jumped forward in her chair, "Murder?"

Ridpath picked up a small hand computer and read from the monitor. "He was injected with a lethal dose of Bordon-452. It took the hospital several hours to analyze it. Military records say that Bordon-452 is an Imperial truth drug. It killed Admiral Grechko because they didn't reduce the dosage to compensate for his artificial legs and arms."

"Did the police get any suspects?"

"No. I was with Vladimir before the attack, but before I got there he was speaking with a young man about the Battle of Mercury." Orson took a deep breath and willed his throat clear. "He told me they were searching for the location of the *Nartor*. I began going over the details of the battle —"

Lewis wiped her eyes with a handkerchief. "I remember. The *Nartor* was the command ship of the third Imperial attack force. Admiral Grechko's fighter wing attacked and damaged the *Nartor's* engineering

section. They retreated behind Mercury and jumped out of the system before our capital units came into range."

Ridpath typed on the small keyboard. "Vladimir's original report states that they lost sight of the *Nartor* during the battle with her fighters. *Nartor's* last heading was toward the surface of Mercury. It was assumed they used Mercury's gravity to slingshot away and make their jump."

"They had to, Commander. Search and Rescue was all over Mercury picking up the survivors of Grechko's fighter wing. They didn't see the *Nartor* or pick up any survivors. Besides, if a 1,000 meter long carrier was lying on the surface, someone would have seen it in the last 118 years."

Ridpath shook his head. "The Imperium still thinks the *Nartor* is on Mercury. I request permission to take the *Intrepid* to Mercury to search for the Imperial ship."

Lewis leaned back in her chair and closed her eyes. "Commander, I know you and the admiral were very close, but you have a patrol circuit to start. I'll contact security to begin checking —"

"Sir, we're just wasting time. I'm sure the Imperial ship or ships are already heading for Mercury. By the time security begins working on this, they'll be half way back to Capital."

The admiral stood. "Request denied. This is a security matter, Commander."

"No it's not, Admiral," Ridpath burst out. "I request a leave of absence."

"Request denied. You have your orders! Lewis out." The image faded.

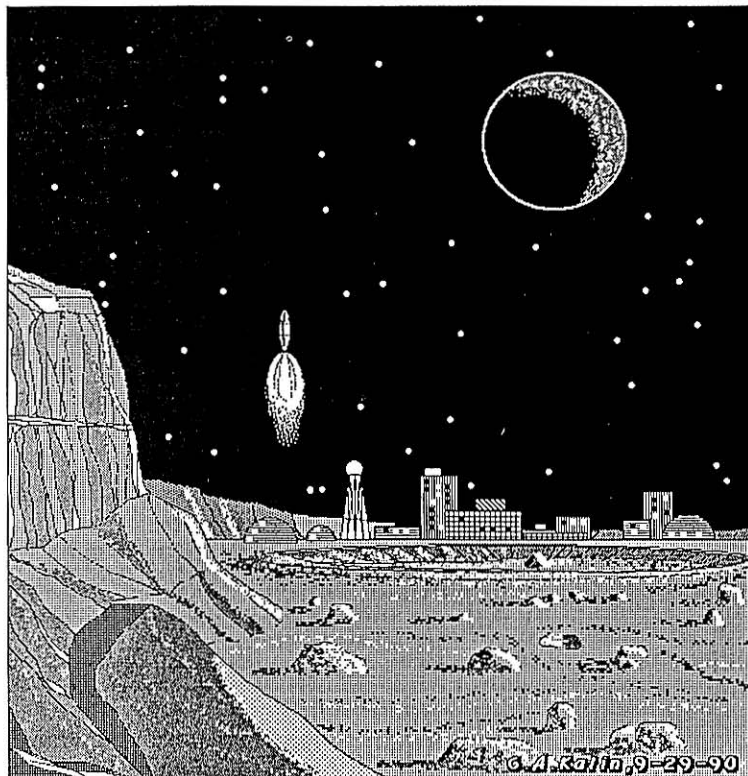
Slowly, Ridpath switched off the hand computer and stood. He walked over to the viewport and stared at the blue and white globe of Terra drifting below. His door chime buzzed. "Come in."

Holding her hands tightly in front of her, Neda Larson stepped in. "Uh,

same person who guided you and taught you everything that makes you who you are?"

Larson shifted her weight from foot to foot. "I don't know, sir."

The commander wiped his eye and slowly faced Larson. "I have a responsibility to a friend, and I need



Skipper, we're two hours late from departing."

Still staring out the viewport, Ridpath nodded. "How do you weigh a life and career, Lieutenant Commander?"

"I don't understand, sir."

A single tear inched down Orson's cheek. "How do you honor a person who saved your life more times than you can count, and this was the

to make one of the most difficult decisions of my life." The intercom beeped. "Ridpath here."

"Skipper," Clark said, "a condensed, coded message from Paulo came in for you."

"On my screen, please."

The silver and black emblem of the Terran Patrol glowed on the screen for a moment. It was replaced by Admiral Lewis. "I apologize for not



being able to discuss this matter during our previous communication, Commander Ridpath. We have known about an Imperial spy network on Terra for several weeks. Security has



informed me we don't know the extent of their infiltration. The information you provided is the best lead we have. I fear if I inform security here on Terra the spies may find out we have an indication of their mission. I'm giving you one month to search Mercury for the Imperial force and the *Nartor*. I won't inform the patrol forces at Mercury just in case the spy network is already there. Your orders are top secret and you are to maintain comm silence." With clenched fists, the admiral gazed at them. "I don't want to lose them, not after what they did, Commander. Good hunting, Lewis out."

Smiling, Larson took a deep breath. "What do you do on your shore leave? I had dinner with my sister's family."

Rubbing the scar on his wrist, the young man finished reading the paper on his desk. "Fool! You killed the old man."

Standing at attention, the muscular woman was like a statue. "Permission to speak, sir?"

"Denied," he hissed. "Your immense act of stupidity will cost you a grade six disrate on your service record. Dismissed."

The woman turned and marched from the room. A small man poked his head in the open door. He was wearing the uniform of an Imperial commander. "Are you finished making enemies with the medical staff, Stovel?"

Stovel's eyes fumed with anger. "You can find humor in the failure of this mission?"

The commander put a piece of paper on his desk. "It is not as severe as we first thought. Ridpath contacted Admiral Lewis with the news. He wanted to head for Mercury to investigate, but she's going to turn the matter over to Terran Patrol Security. They won't find anything more than we did. Cartography is charting the data we extracted from Grechko now."

Stovel scanned the paper. "Good. Set course for Sol One." The commander nodded and left the room. Stovel opened a drawer in the desk and retrieved a picture. He peered at the 3D image of a man and woman both in Imperial Navy uniforms. "Soon, we will go home."

In the haze of a summer morning, the common-looking merchant ship slowly lifted off the landing field toward space.

— Gary A. Kalin —

*To be concluded in issue 3*

# How To Annoy an Aslan In TWO Easy Steps!!!

Aslan reactions are similar to human reactions, except any uncooperative result often means the Aslan could eventually challenge the character to a duel if he/she persists. If the next reaction from the Aslan NPC is uncooperative, then the character (or the lead character in a group) is challenged to a duel.

Ordinarily, the duel is to first blood -- but if the result happens to be actively uncooperative twice in a row, the duel is *to the death*.

Tolerance skill, when held by an Aslan NPC, reduces the likelihood that interaction will result in a duel. As stated above, two passively uncooperative reactions in a row result in a challenge to a duel; two actively uncooperative reactions in a row result in a challenge to a duel *to the death*.

Tolerance skill adds to the number of consecutive uncooperative reactions necessary before an Aslan NPC challenges a character.

For example, Iroioah, the Seieakh military officer from MTA2, has Tolerance-1. If encountered, it will take three passively uncooperative results before Iroioah will challenge -- and three actively uncooperative results before a challenge to the death.

Note that Tolerance skill applies primarily to dealings with tahiwihteakhtau, non-Aslan barbarians. At the referee's discretion, it can also be applied to dealings with other Aslan. Understand, however, that Aslan are far less inclined to tolerate lapses of propriety on the part of their fellows -- barbarians may be ignorant, but Aslan should know better.



-- James A. Holden --

# Count or Country...

## *A Hard Times Amber Zone Adventure*

by

*Charles E. Gannon*

In addition to passing through the Niilushaga system, players may hear of this situation in any starport within the Shadigi subsector, or may be given this lead by any previous employer who keeps abreast of political disturbances in this area.

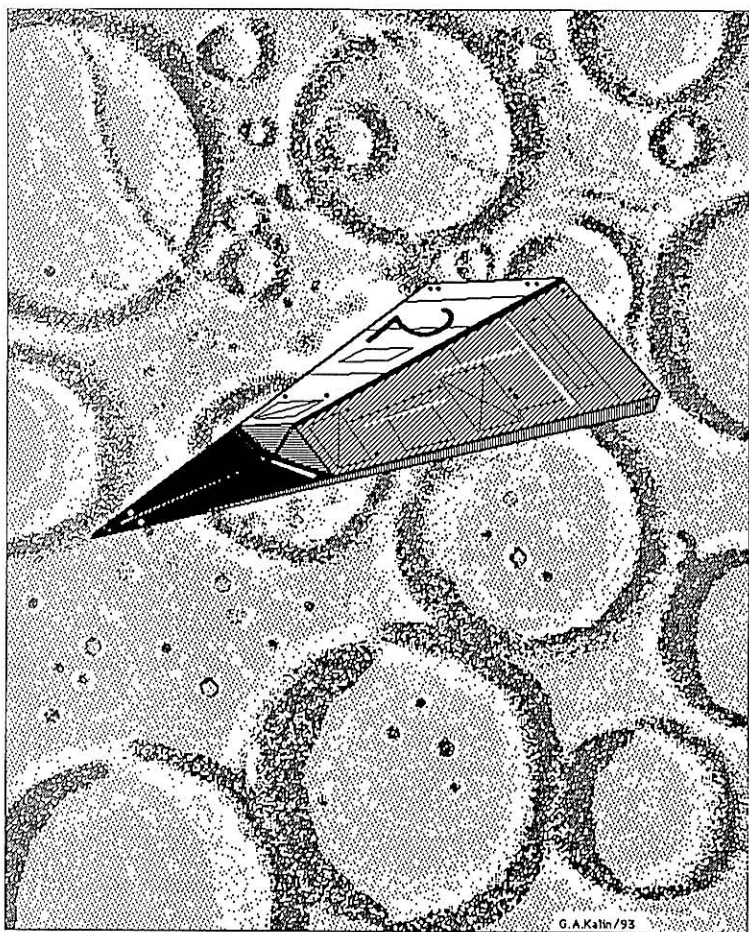
Niilushaga (0516, C773550-A) has a reputation for producing tough-minded and cantankerous businessmen and soldiers. Its Board of Administrators for Development (predictably nicknamed 'BAD') reflects these local characteristics, having a reputation for being extremely authoritarian and unafraid of resorting to force to ensure that its dictates are carried out. Since the end of the Rebellion, local dissatisfaction with BAD has grown and spilled over into clashes between government troops and armed civilians who demand reform. Indeed,

as 1128 drew to a close, it seemed as though a general revolt was imminent.

Enter ex-Count Kilakar Udrashaggi, a major landholder on Niilushaga until he was dismissed (and subsequently hunted) by Lucan's forces due to his 'treasonous association' with Duke Craig of the Federation of Daibei. Always a popular figure on his old homeworld, Udrashaggi had personally led the (admittedly modest) colonial contingents from Niilushaga and neighboring Gai into combat against Dulinor when Lucan had summoned the forces of the Imperium to war against 'Strephon's assassin.' However, dismayed by the brutality that was at first tolerated, and then espoused, by Lucan's commanders, the Count withdrew his forces to the safety of the Federation of Daibei in 1120. Since then, he has slowly worked his way home with his last few hundred men, having promised that they would get back to their planets of origin no later than he did.

Arriving on his own homeworld on the last day of 1128, Udrashaggi was shocked to find the people almost at the throat of their government. Adding insult to injury, BAD refused to recognize Count Udrashaggi's noble charter, dismissing his claims that he was entitled to have some voice in the world's affairs. Instead, BAD sent him a

tersely worded demand for 10 years of back taxes, payable immediately unless he wished to have his lands siezed by government forces. After a quick vote, all 324 of the Count's command elected to stay with him to fight for the liberation of Niilushaga and for the restoration of his title. Bitter battle was joined shortly thereafter.



## **THE JOB**

PCs who have mercenary backgrounds (or aspirations) should have no trouble getting work in this environment; Udrashaggi is hiring every competent soldier he can find, and word is that some forces from Daibei are even now on the way. The Count's side enjoys a slight advantage in technology (averaging B, with a fair amount of support equipment at TL A and 9). The forces of BAD enjoy numerical superiority and control of the planet's (limited) industrial base.

Non-military players may find a surprising amount of interest in working the diplomatic angle of this conflict, as the details provided below will suggest.

### **FOR THE REFEREE:**

Contrary to what common-sense might suggest, Count Udrashaggi is NOT the popular favorite in this conflict. The people of Niilushaga, true to their contrary and self-reliant natures, do not consider their current difficulties with the

BAD rulership to be the Count's business -- particularly after his 11 year absence. Most of them are disgusted with both sides in the conflict, although a significant minority actively support (and have volunteered for service with) the BAD units.

Individuals who research both sides will realize this, but those who hear of Udrashaggi's seemingly 'popular' cause and underdog standing and join his side unthinkingly will not become aware of the real situation for some time. Udrashaggi is surrounded by near-fanatical supporters (many of whom are his vassals, old employees, neighbors, etc.) who insist that the entire planet is firmly behind the good Count.

PCs who become involved with the diplomatic or covert aspects of this nasty little version of a 'succession war' will quickly realize that the populace of Niilushaga largely consider the Count to be a meddler who is obstructing their ability to negotiate (or compel) a proper settlement with the BAD government.

# Money Makes The W

Most MegaTraveller player-characters probably don't think much of money during a campaign beyond that it is pay to be collected, loot to be stolen, or funds to be spent on equipment, ships, living expenses, or entertainment. A closer look at money, credit, and financial institutions, particularly in light of the collapsing Imperium, will give any adventure additional complexity, color, and opportunity for profit.

## Currency

We know that the Imperial Credit has been the standard of exchange within the Imperium, and remains so within a number of the factions. It has been the major trading currency used for transactions between Imperial worlds and worlds within friendly stellar states.

Currently, Imperial Credits are accepted within Lucan's Imperium, Strephon's Imperium in Gushemege Sector, in Margaret's realm in Massila Delphi Sectors, and within the Domain of Deneb. They also remain valid for trade with the Sword Worlds and the Darrian Confederation, and with certain friendly Aslan and Vargr worlds bordering the Spinward Marches.

Imperial Credits have been superseded by the New Imperial Credit within Dulinor's realm, The Daibei Credit within the Daibei Sector, the Antarean Credit within

the League of Antares, the Sirka within the resurgent Vilani Empire, and the Solomani Mark within the Confederation's boundaries. Imperial credits are not recognized as valid currency on worlds within these factions, and must be exchanged for local currency at official exchanges on designated border worlds. Possession of Imperial Credits within Dulinor's Realm and the Solomani Confederation is a criminal offense. It is not a crime to carry Imperial Credits within the Ziru Sirka or the other factions, however, they will not be accepted by banks or merchants.

Within the territory in which they are still accepted, Imperial Credits are recognized as the "hardest" monetary unit available. They are used as a medium of exchange between worlds, and on worlds directly ruled by an Imperial or quasi-Imperial faction. Similarly, the Sirka, Dulinor's NCr, the Mark and other factional currencies are recognized as interstellar mediums

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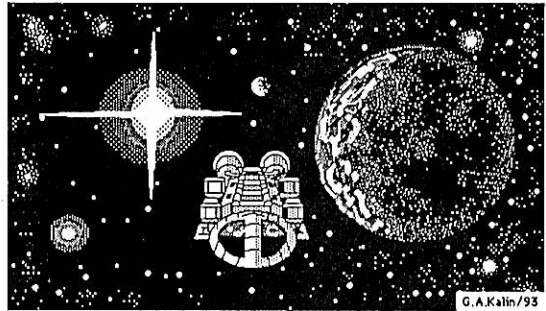
of exchange within their territories.

Individual worlds also have their own currencies, many of which are denominated in Credits. These may be purchased with an appropriate interstellar currency (sometimes more than one if the world lies between two or more factions) from local banks. Particularly if the world is moderate to low in technology, this currency purchase will give the traveler a favorable rate of exchange, especially if he or she has just arrived from a high-tech world.

On worlds with Class A starports and TL15 technologies, both local currencies and the Imperial Credit or other interstellar currencies are freely and legally accepted by businesses, banks, and individuals—except as noted above.

Worlds with lower technology levels and less sophisticated starports will have local currencies with a lower relative value than the Imperial Credit or other interstellar currency. (See the accompanying currency value table to determine the rate of exchange between local currencies and Imperial Credits.) Except as otherwise noted, merchants will always accept Imperial Credits or interstellar currency instead of local money. However, in addition to the currency regulations noted earlier in this article, local worlds may have other currency regulations prohibiting the spending of an interstellar currency outside starport boundaries. These

are imposed to make sure currency is exchanged through official channels so that the local government can get its share of valuable interstellar currency needed for off-world purchases. If characters have a legal encounter while spending interstellar currency outside a starport, they may be arrested for violating currency regulations unless they can otherwise talk or bribe themselves out of the situation.



For current exchange rates between Imperial Credits and other interstellar currencies, see the Interstellar Exchange Rate Table. For the relative value of local world currencies compared with the Imperial Credit, see the Currency Value Table.

Interstellar currency and local money on many moderate to high technology worlds are generally accounted for and transferred among individuals and corporations electronically. However, interstellar currency is available in bills and coins for convenient use in small individual transactions as well as interstellar funds transfer where

electronic means are not available, such as making the payroll and paying the expenses of an off-world starship.

Imperial Credits are issued in 10, 20, 50, 100, 500, 1000, and 10,000 Credit bills. Quarter, half, one, and five Credit plastic coins are also issued. Other interstellar currencies are issued in similar denominations.

## **Banks**

The banks MegaTraveller characters encounter are ready to provide a number of services in addition to currency exchange. On worlds of Tech 9 or higher, they provide electronic checking and point of sale services, the normal means of transacting financial business at higher technology levels. Electronic payments are much more convenient than paying with cash or paper checks, which are not often accepted from off-worlders.

## **Electronic Transaction Services**

Characters planning on spending more than a couple of days on a high tech world should open an account with a leading local bank and deposit their pay. In return for a small fee (usually between CR6 and CR12 per month automatically deducted from the account), the bank issues an electronically encoded plastic card. This electronic banking card is passed through a card reader attached to a sales register when a purchase is made at a store, restaurant, or hotel. When the sale

is rung up, the amount is automatically deducted from the card holder's balance. More sophisticated systems (TL12+) feature a microchip and tiny LCD display screen on the card which automatically displays the account's current balance. Card holders must track their balance manually with lower tech electronic payment systems.

The electronic checking system also enables characters to access their accounts, pay bills, and transfer funds to other accounts through any computer capable of accessing the local banking data system. Although cash is looked upon more and more as a nuisance as a world's tech level becomes higher, characters can still obtain small amounts of cash from bank automated teller machines found in high traffic locations such as shopping malls, busy street corners, transportation terminals, and starports as long as they have an electronic banking card and money in their accounts. Cards are automatically seized if anyone tries to withdraw more funds or make a purchase costing more than is in their bank accounts.

## **Loans**

Banks make money by lending money and charging interest. If they have a good credit rating, good references, and a reasonable repayment plan, Traveller characters can obtain loans for more purposes than for just buying starships. They can use loans and a down payment to buy vehicles and equipment, to finance a project such



as a mining or salvage operation, or to buy real estate. Unsecured personal loans of up to CR5000 may also be made without collateral. The characters own the equipment, vehicle, or real estate after the loan is paid off. They may also lease equipment or vehicles. Leases require little or no down payment, are paid for with monthly payments, and run for a stated period. When the lease is over, the characters may either buy the equipment or vehicle from the bank at a lower depreciated value, or return the leased property to the bank.

Any vehicles, equipment, or real estate purchased with the loan is considered to be collateral, and is seized by the bank if the characters fail to make their loan payments after a 60 to 120 day grace period. In addition, a bad debt report is filed with the local credit rating bureau, a report that is sent by X-boat to credit bureaus on major worlds in the local and neighboring subsectors.

Interest rates range from 4 to 12 percent for long term real estate or project finance loans, up to 18 percent for vehicle and equipment loans, and from 12 to 24 percent for unsecured personal loans. Personal loans are usually made as a line of credit accessed through a credit card used much the same as an electronic checking card, or with an electronic funds transfer into the character's checking account. Cash loans are available on worlds with a Tech Level of 7 or less.

Characters unable to qualify for bank loans may get small cash

loans at brokers in return for personal items of equipment or weapons held as collateral. These loans are generally up to 10 percent of the value of the collateral. The collateral is sold by the broker if these loans are not paid back with 25 percent interest within 30 days. The truly desperate may obtain small personal loans from illegal lenders who hang around Star Town at interest rates up to 100 percent per month. If these loans are not paid back, characters may be maimed or killed as an example to others.

#### **To obtain a bank loan:**

Difficult, Liaison, Soc, 5 min (fateful)

Referee: If the character can provide a local credit reference, the task becomes Routine. If the character has a bad credit report, the task becomes Formidable.

#### **Money Transfer Services**

Just how do ship owners make their monthly loan payments when they are six parsecs away from the bank which lent them money? They use the interstellar money transfer services offered by banks on major worlds along the X-boat routes to make their payments when they are away from their home port.

Major banks throughout the former Imperium have branches on many worlds. Before the Assassination and Rebellion, a number of financial houses maintained commercial banking facilities throughout the Imperium. The most prominent of these were Hortalez et Cie, LIC; and

Zirunkariish.

Today, Hortalez et Cie's commercial banking subsidiaries provide most of the interstellar money transfer services within Lucan's Imperium, while former Hortalez subsidiaries continue to operate in Massilia, Delphi, and Gushemege subsectors, and in the Spinward Marches, under independent ownership. Zirunkariish is the interstellar clearing bank for the new Ziru Sirka, while the newly founded Ilelish Interstellar Bank of Commerce performs the same function within Dulinor's territory. Leading Solomani banks now extending their influence into former Imperial territory include the Bank of America, Hong Kong, and Home; Citibank of Thetis, and the Banque National de Paris et Kukulkan. All three are major interstellar money transfer banks in the Solomani Rim.

In addition to the major banks' branch network, these banks also maintain correspondent banking relationships with other banks in their sectors. And, unless hostilities restrict commercial message traffic, they also attempt to maintain correspondent banking relationships with interstellar banks in the territories of neighboring factions. Correspondent banks have checking accounts established with each other in their banks. This allows them to make payments to each other, and their customers, when directed to do so by electronic funds transfer messages from their correspondents.

Electronic funds transfer messages between branches of major interstellar banks as well as between corresponding banks have been carried between worlds in the memory banks of the X-boat system. Tying the finances of the Imperium together was one of the most important services offered by the X-boat network. Reduced X-boat-based financial transfer services are still operating within the factions. However, the severing of communications links between factions and the subsequent disruption of money transfers between their banks is a major reason behind the disruption of interstellar trade and the economy. Consequently, much of the trade that had been based on electronic payments between worlds that are now in separate factions, no longer exists or is limited to barter or speculative trade by independent merchant captains. Historically, a similar breakdown of funds transfers proved to be one of the first steps down the road to the Long Night.

Where funds transfers still work, they work well. Thanks to funds transfer messages, a starship captain calling at Efate (Spinward Marches 1705), for example, can make a payment at a local bank and have it credited to his loan at a bank on Regina (Spinward Marches 1910) four weeks later. Because of the time lag involved, most banks consider a starship loan payment as made on the day it is paid at a branch or correspondent bank, as long as it is received at the bank's headquarters within 60 days of the actual due date.

Other interstellar financial transactions are possible through the correspondent banking network.

A Free Trader owner may use a letter of credit issued by the bank on his or her home world to finance a cargo purchase on a world light years away.

A crew member may send a portion of his or pay home to a relative, or receive from a relative, through X-Boat Service Interstellar Money Orders, good for up to ImpCR1,000 or the equivalent in other interstellar currencies.

A stranded ship's captain may have an interstellar funds transfer credited to him at a local bank by the ship's owners on the ship's home world in order to pay for replacement jump drive coils.

Drafts (similar to a cashier's check) issued to a merchant captain by a bank on one world may be carried to another and cashed to make a ship's payroll.

Naturally, these services are not free. The banks charge 1D percent of the face value as a service fee, and the X-Boat Service charges a ImpCR10 per jump message fee. Bank drafts on paper or magnetic or other media may also be carried from the sender to the receiver by a private messenger, such as a scout ship owner or Free Trader captain for a fee. This latter way of transferring funds is becoming increasingly common with the breakdown of the X-boat network.

An X-boat funds transfer take seven standard days for transmission to an outbound X-boat, a single jump of from one to four parsecs, and reception, processing, and delivery at the receiving world. Five days must be added for each additional jump on the X-boat's route.

## Savings

Characters with extra cash may open a savings account at a bank to keep their funds in a (usually) safe place and earn interest. This particularly handy if they have been paid a large lump sum for the successful completion of an adventure campaign and are about to embark on another. Or, they may have received a large mustering out benefit at the end of their careers that they may wish to invest. They can earn 1D+6 percent interest on their deposits for every three-month period their money is in a savings account. If they agree to leave their money in the bank for at least one year, add an additional 2 percent to the interest rate roll.

Although most banks are safe, there is always a chance that the bank could fail and the adventurers' deposits could be lost.

## To avoid a bank collapse

Simple, Admin, Edu (fateful, uncertain)

Referee: If both fail, the bank fails within 1D months. If one fails, the bank fails within 1D months but the character recovers 2D-2 percent of his or her deposit through deposit insurance. If both succeed, the bank

*(Continued on page 49)*

# ZHODANIAN BRAIN

*(Editorial Warning! Michael gets pretty graphic in his descriptions during this adventure. Those of you with weak stomachs may wish to read this under plastic. This article is rated V for Violence.)*

A horrifying MegaTraveller adventure for a scout and one or more player characters which takes place in the Imperium of Lucan or Dulinor.

The scout character will be contacted by the local "Imperial" authorities and "requested" to investigate a domed Imperial research station located on the moon of a gas giant of the system the players are in. He will be promised a "substantial reward" and possible decoration, depending on the situation they find there. He will be encouraged to bring along his "crew" (the other PCs) as "backup". The scout already has the necessary security clearance and the other PCs will be passed through if he can vouch for them.

## **The Briefing:**

The research station is engaged in secret military research. However, the local authorities don't know exactly what the base is working on. There is a beacon warning off unauthorized visitors. Several days ago the beacon stopped transmitting and the authorities have not been able to raise the station. They need "trained

investigators" to determine if the base is in trouble or is only having problems with its radio. The scout team's mission is to investigate the station, determine what is going on there and report back.

The moon is airless with near normal gravity.

The PCs are given a letter to conduct an inspection by the system's imperial governor and a security pass card to access the base. Any reasonable equipment requests will be provided (vacc suits, commo gear, etc.).

## **The Approach:**

As the PCs ship approaches the moon, they can attempt a sensor scan for the station:

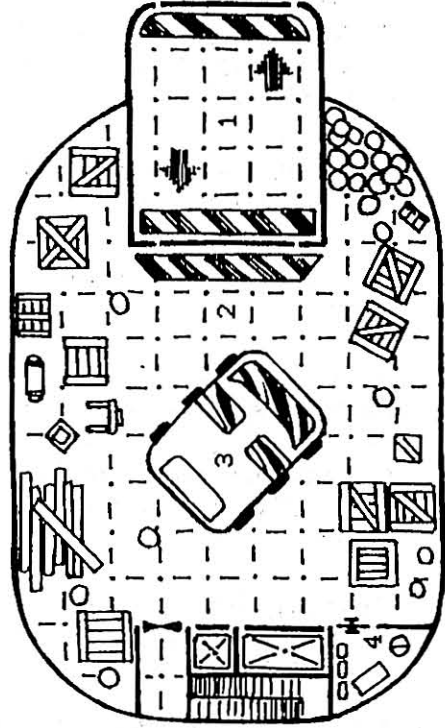
To successfully scan the station:  
Range, Snsr Ops, (Uncertain)

No truth: They can't even find it. Try again.

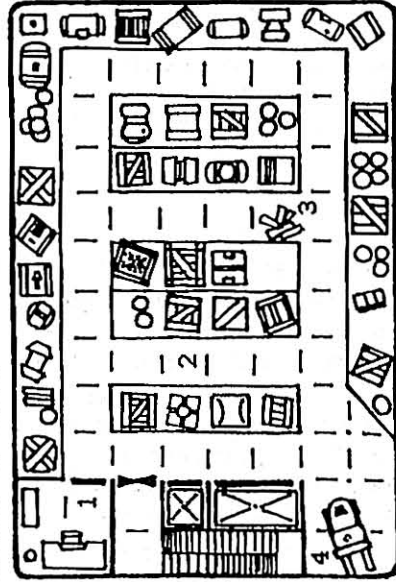
Some truth: They can tell the location and that its power plant is functioning. There are no radio, maser or meson emissions. The station will not reply to any communication attempts.

Total truth: They discover the above plus the fact that there are tunnels below the dome.

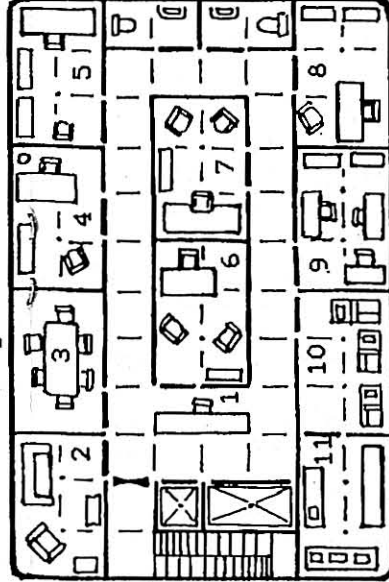
# PLAN OF SUBSISTENCE



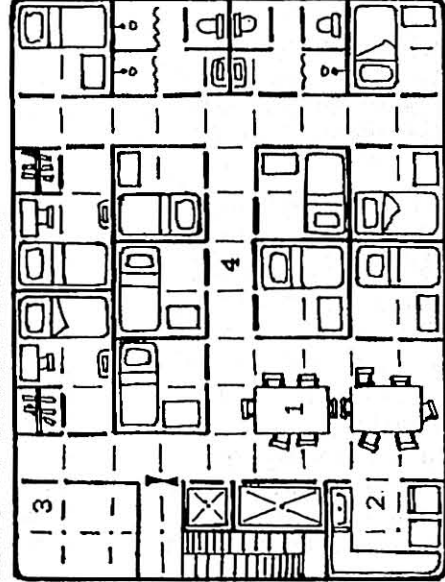
Level 1: Dome



Level 2: Storage

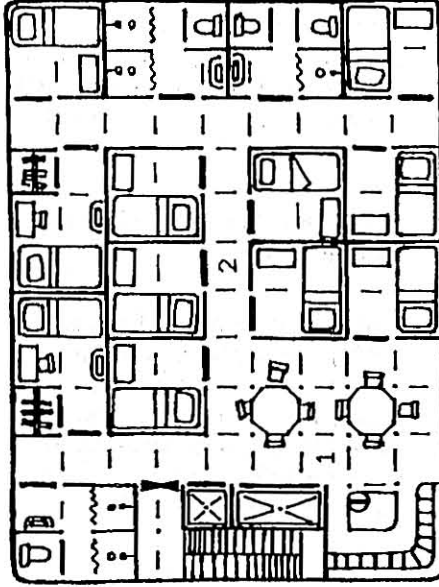


Level 3: Administration

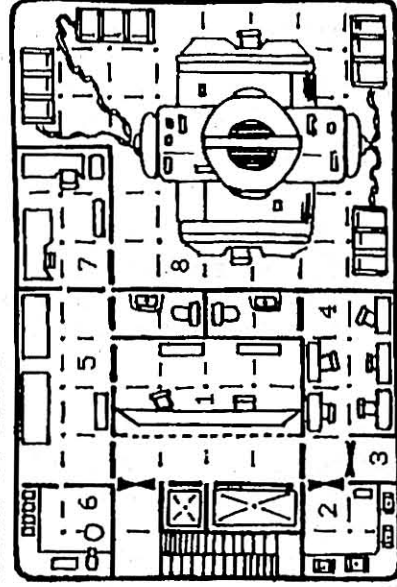


Level 4: Dining & Quarters

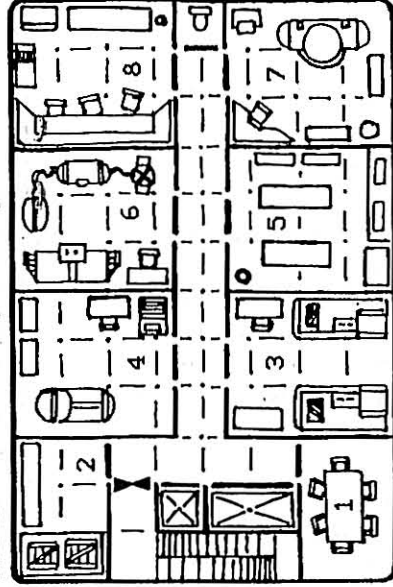
\*\* Classified: MOST SECRET \*\*



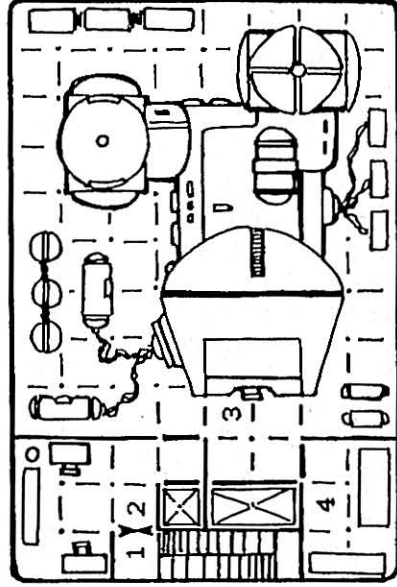
Level 5: Recreation & Quarters



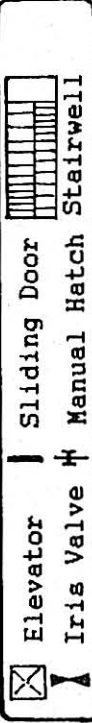
Level 6: Security & Computers



Level 7: Laboratories



Level 8: Engineering



### **The Landing:**

As the PCs begin their final sensor scan approach to the landing pad outside the dome, their ship will be actively scanned from the station, but only for a few seconds. There will be no communication from the station of any kind.

### **The Dome:**

The dome is opaque. The airlock is large enough to pass an ATV or air/raft. The PCs security pass will allow them to enter and cycle through the airlock. The interior of the dome looks like an abandoned construction site. There is a line of abandoned mining equipment left from the station's construction along one wall with a pile of empty packing crates opposite. Nearby lies a parked ATV. The lights are turned down low and no one is about. At the far end of the dome are large and small elevator doors, an iris valve and a small manual pressure hatch. The PCs may poke about for a while, but they will eventually try one of the doors:

The manual hatch leads to a small equipment storage room containing vacc suits, dome patches, paint cans, and a tool kit for the ATV.

The Large cargo elevator has a security camera inside which will swivel to watch the PCs. There is an intercom and buttons for the ground floor and seven underground levels. No one will answer them on the intercom. If the floor button is pushed before the security pass is inserted into the slot marked "insert security pass here" the elevator will go immediately to the security station on level five, activating an

alarm and remain there until reset.

The small elevator is similar except this one contains a several day old corpse of a man in a nice civilian suit.

### ***To determine the apparent cause of death:***

Routine, Medical or Forensics.

The apparent cause of death is explosive decompression.

His security pass is still in the elevator control panel. It shows his picture and lists him as Aller Dieter, supply manager.

The iris valve opens onto the emergency stairwell which parallels the elevator shaft. There is an exit on each level in case of emergency. There are security cameras on every floor which swivel and follow the PCs every move in the dimly lit stairwell.

### **The Setting:**

Whichever route the PCs take, they will end up going room to room on various levels, trying to figure out what has happened and who is responsible. They might start from the top level and go down, or the bottom up. It really doesn't matter. Everywhere they go strange things will happen: lights will go on or off by themselves, heavy boxes will be pushed from high shelves, narrowly missing the PCs, and their firearms may accidentally discharge. A PC with grenades will be walking down a corridor and hear a tinkle at his feet. He will look down and see one of his grenade pins, but which one?

The elevators may not necessarily go to the floor the button pushed was for. the doors will jam. The first time the button for level six is selected, the elevator doors will open onto the ground floor where the PCs will see the main airlock in the process of opening \*both\* the inner and outer doors. They better think fast or they'll end up dead like Mr. Dieter!

And the supply manager has company. As the players explore, they will discover the entire crew of the research station killed in various grisly ways: stabbed, strangled, shot, exploded, impaled, cooked, frozen, burned, gassed, etc.

### The Horrifying Secret:

Eventually the PCs will discover the truth about the station's diabolical secret project: A kidnapped Zhodani naval officer's disembodied brain was linked via cybernetics to a computer and a method was found to augment the brain's natural Psi rating by linking it to a power plant. The evil experiment was a success except for one small point. Instead of a computer-controlled, power augmented, psionic brain, they ended up with a power-augmented, psionic brain controlled computer.

Using the station security cameras and intercoms as its eyes and ears, the Zhodani brain made a terrible revenge against its tormentors, murdering the entire complement of the station in various grisly ways. It is now quite insane, entombed forever in the bowels of the research station. Lurking, waiting for investigators to provide more



sport...

Its Psi strength is virtually limitless as long as the powerplant and computer are functioning. It plans to kill the PCs eventually, but right now it only wants to have some "fun" with them. (Otherwise the PCs would be doomed.)

While running the adventure, try to maintain the atmosphere of terror and the mystery of what is causing things to happen. Fear of the unknown is the key. As long as the PCs don't know what is causing it, terror and confusion result. If possible, try to make it seem as if one of the PCs is responsible. Pass a lot of personal notes to individual PCs. Don't let them show them to each other. Some notes will describe things that the PC might have noticed, others might only say "You're beginning to sweat" or "You feel as if you are being watched".

At an appropriate time, have the weapon of the last PC in the back discharge (telekinesis moving the trigger), narrowly missing one of the other PCs. If they eventually figure out the cause is something psionic, they may believe it can control minds, especially if you pass a note to one of the PCs who feels something "invading his brain" (an attempt at telepathy). Ignorance leads to fear. Fear leads to terror. Terror leads to mindnumbing fun for everyone.

Remember, the computer is controlled by the brain. If the PCs attempt to use it to try to get a floor plan or other information, have the computer say "I am not authorized to release that information" or

"I'm sorry, Dave, I can't do that." The players may believe the computer has gone mad, like Hal in 2001. If they shut it down, the brain will wait a bit and start it up again.

If the computer is shut down or sabotaged the fusion plant will shut itself down automatically. All power will be lost except emergency life support and the security systems... at least until the brain eventually puts them all back on line again. During this time the brain is limited in power and distracted as it has to do repairs and restart the systems using its psionics augmented only by emergency power. (If the PCs see repair parts levitating down corridors from storage they may believe it's ghosts!)

#### **The Confrontation:**

Eventually the PCs will figure out something in the lab is responsible or will stumble onto the lab level accidentally. Once there, the closer they get to the brain's room, the more serious the attacks become. Eventually the brain will attempt a mind assault on anyone who tries to force open the lab door:

#### **To defend against the mind assault:**

Difficult, Telepathy, Int, Unskilled  
OK.

Failure results in unconsciousness for several minutes. If all the PCs are knocked out, the brain will bring a scalpel from the biology lab and cut their throats. The PCs will, of course, revive, just before the cutting begins, in time to parry the levitating knife blade.



Inside the room is a large glass tank full of nutrient solution and the brain, connected to a life support system. One grenade, a well placed shot or even a good stiff punch to the brain in the tank and it's all over.

## FLOOR PLANS

### Level One: Dome

1. Airlock. The airlock is large enough to pass an ATV or air raft.
2. Dome Area. Both walls of the dome are lined with empty packing crates, abandoned mining equipment, and other debris. An ATV is parked in the middle of the floor.
3. All Terrain Vehicle. The ATV seats six, and is fully functional.
4. Small equipment storage room. Contains a repair tool kit for the ATV, vacc suits, dome patches and other emergency equipment, including personal communication units.

### Level Two: Storage

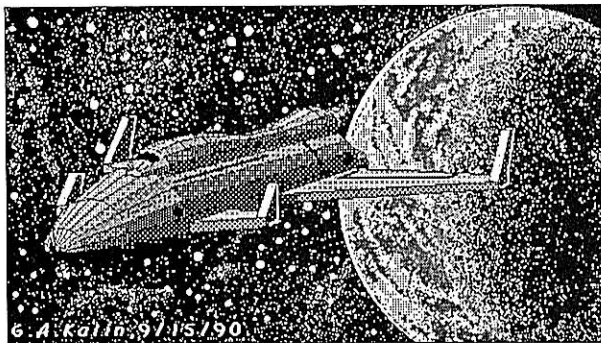
1. Supply clerk's office.
2. Ceiling high shelving covered with boxes of assorted supplies, tools, spare parts, etc. Sometime while the PCs are exploring here, a heavy box will be "telekinesed" off the top shelf, narrowly missing one of the PCs. This will

undoubtedly send them into a frantic search to discover "who pushed it", but it will be to dark and cluttered to tell.

3. The body of a supply clerk crushed by a packing crate full of spare powerplant parts.
4. The body of a supply clerk impaled against the wall on the tines of a forklift.

### Level Three: Administration

1. Receptionist's counter and desk with computer terminal.
2. Lounge with sofa, coffee machine, etc.
3. Conference room with chairs and a large table.
4. Project Director's office.
5. Biologist's office containing desk, terminal, diplomas, assorted biology journals, reference tapes, etc.
6. Administrator's office. The project administrator is here sitting in front of his computer screen with a letter opener stuck into his brain from under his jaw.
7. Psionist's office containing desk, terminal, assorted Zhodani psionics journals, a Doctor's of Humanities diploma from the



University of Vanejen, etc.

8. Cyberneticist's office containing desk, terminal, assorted journals, handbooks, diplomas and warranties.

9. Secretarial pool with a locked door. If the PCs force the door, they will find three suffocated secretaries sealed in here several days ago and left to slowly die.

10. Duplicating room for hard copies and data cubes.

11. Office Supplies storage.

#### Level Four: Dining and Quarters

1. Cafeteria.

2. Kitchen. The players will discover spoiled food on the prep table where lunch was being prepared several days ago and a steward face down in a large cold deep fryer (it wasn't cold when he fell in) with a large frying pan on the floor nearby. The brain had struck him in the head with it, knocking him out into the deep fryer. (A difficult shot, and the brain is quite proud of it.)

3. Freezer. A second steward can be found frozen inside the walk-in freezer which has a knife jamming the door closed from the outside.

4. Staterooms. All the rooms in this area are small staterooms for station personnel. None are occupied.

#### Level Five: Recreation and Quarters.

1. Recreation Lounge. This area is deserted. The holotank is activated and is playing the remake of an ancient Solomani space-opera entitled 2001.

2. Staterooms. This area contains unoccupied staterooms identical to those found on level four.

#### Level Six: Security/Computers

1. The dashed line is the security counter with wire mesh screen. Behind it lies the control panels for the station sensors, communications and security systems. A uniformed security guard sits at the controls with his brains blown out (by his own now holstered pistol).

2. The Armory. The iris valve to the armory is sealed shut and has a large hole blown through it by an FGMP fired through it from the inside. The armorer was trapped inside and as the air ran out, he donned a suit of battle dress and in desperation tried to blast his way out. The danger space killed him even in the suit of course. The PCs can see through the hole that everything in the armory is destroyed.

3. An empty holding cell.

4. The security office. Inside are several desks and terminals, all destroyed and mixed with the remains of the chief of security and six guards all killed by two telekinesed hand grenades from the armory.

5. The electronics repair shop. The repairman is slumped over his bench with several holes in his head from an electric drill on the bench.

6. Electronic parts storage.

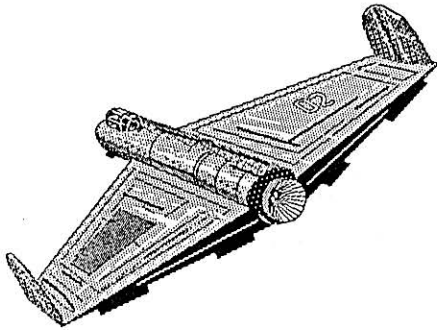
7. Programming office. One programmer has been electrocuted by his computer terminal, the other strangled at his desk by computer cables.

8. The computer core. (Running

just fine under the brain's direction.)

### Level Seven: The Labs

1. The conference room with several chairs and a large table.



2. Lab supply storage. The door is damaged from the inside but still locked. Trapped inside are two lab assistants overcome by toxic fumes from spilled chemicals before they could break the door down.

3. The biology lab. There is a scientist here nailed to the wall with dozens of scalpels. He looks like a dart board. Among the furnishings of the lab is a low berth unit along one wall with a neatly folded Zhodani naval uniform on top of it. Inside is the nude decapitated body of the Zhodani officer.

4. The psionics lab, full of strange equipment. On the floor lies the project's Psioniscist whose only apparent injury is some bleeding from his left ear. (How could the

PCs know that inside, his brain is blasted into jelly by the full power of THE ZHODANIAN BRAIN!)

5. A chemistry lab with lots of glass and tubing. There is a dead scientist with his arm shoved down the sink drain to his armpit. (How can his arm fit that far into a small drain like that? You have to run it through the disposal first, silly.)

6. The blood splattered cybernetics lab. The scientist here has been decapitated by an electric saw.

7. The Brain's lair. (see "The Confrontation".)

8. The computer lab with a large terminal and hard copy printer.

### Level Seven: Engineering

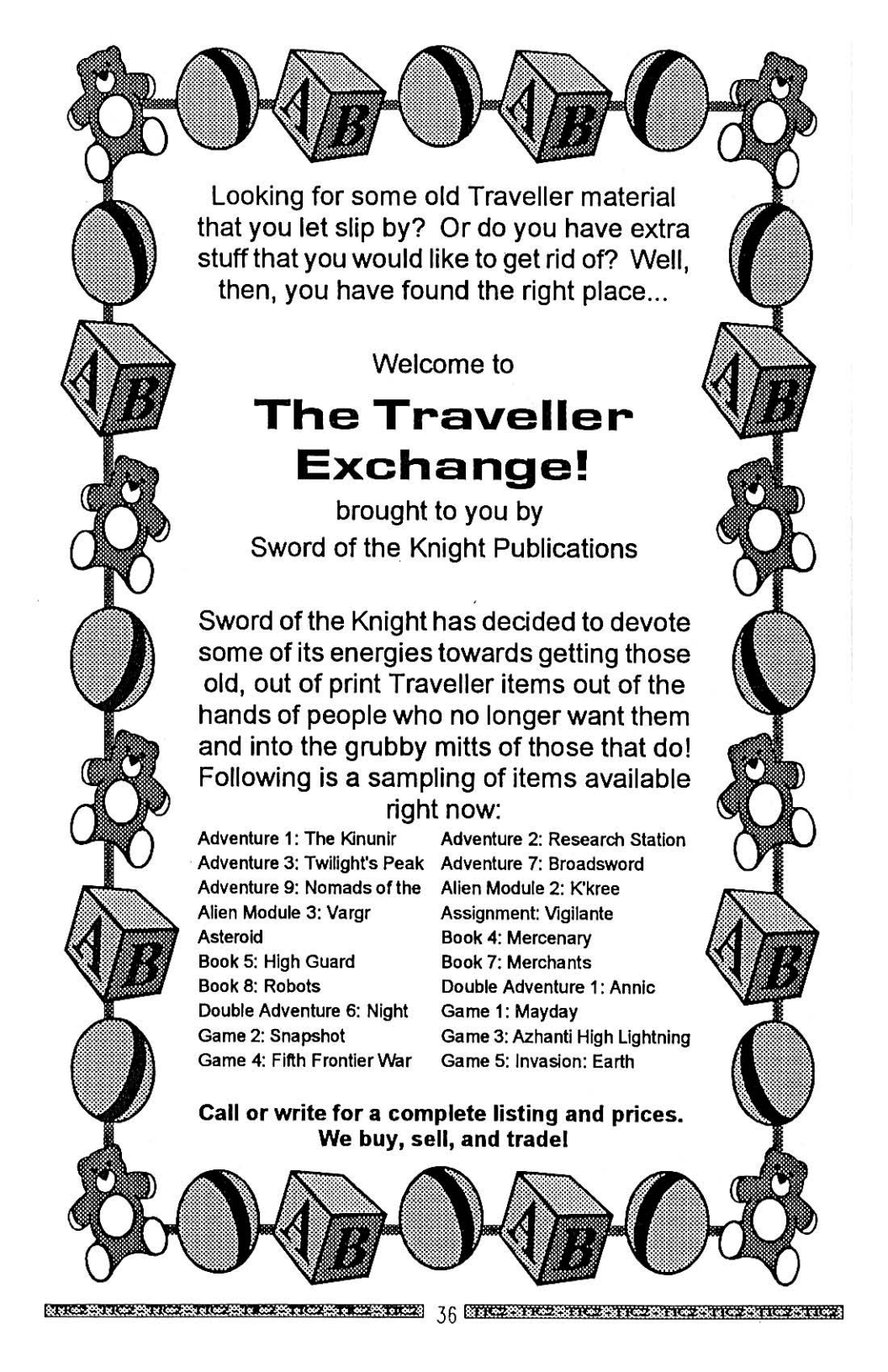
1 and 2. Half an engineer lies in the stairwell, half in the engineering office (room 2) cut in half by the iris valve.

3. The engineering section with fusion plant, life support equipment and a dead maintenance man pushed into a high voltage circuit by the telekinetic "hand" of the brain.

4. The maintenance shop contains power tools and sharp objects. It is a very dangerous place to be when an angry brain comes calling. A shop technician lies on the floor, dead with a screwdriver shoved through his ear into his brain.

— Michael Brines —

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# Astrogator's Update To Diaspora Sector

## Narquel Subsector

(A' of Diaspora Sector)

Date: 001-1129

**Rann:** This is the homeworld of the Eershe'yaat, a minor race of aquatic sophonts. Being the inhabitants of an interdicted world until the outbreak of the Rebellion, the Eershe'yaat became the hapless bystanders to interstellar conflict when a Solomani task force landed there late in 1118.

A protracted campaign to dislodge these invaders finally ended late in 1120, and left the most advanced industries on Rann in an absolute shambles. Since then the industrious Rann have managed to rebuild to TL 6. While they are not openly hostile toward interstellar visitors, they are not particularly receptive to further contact with off-worlders; their first impression of humanity (and the other major races) can hardly be called positive.

The Eershe'yaat resemble a cross between an eel and a flippered centipede. Although not comfortable on land, they frequent the surface of Rann's mineral-rich seas, where they conduct those industrial activities which are facilitated by open air (such as metallurgy, dry processing of organic materials, etc). There is absolutely no land surface on Rann and the Eershe'yaat have pointedly

avoided building any facilities which would make interaction and contact with off-worlders easier.

**Jumar:** This belt's humble population of three is actually the stranded family of a dangerously stubborn prospector who refuses to leave the system, despite the \*precarious supply situation. The better –Khulak Shamakusdii– is a fifty-year-old veteran belter whose Vilani ancestors have passed certain prospecting rights in this system down from generation to generation. Determined to keep faith with this 700-year-old tradition, Khulak has resisted the pleas of his 34-year-old wife to leave the system and move to a safer environment.

Unfortunately, these pleas have only strengthened Khulak in his resolve, turning him into a near-fanatic hierarch. His wife (who has no skills pertinent to asteroid prospecting or mining) fears for the health and safety of their four-year old child. Also, she knows that the lack of broader social contact and educational opportunities will start having a lasting (and decidedly negative) effect on little Sharakal within the next few years. Consequently, she has begun to consider the possibility of leaving Khulak by covertly requesting passage outsystem from the next starship captain who arrives in the Jumar belt.

**Bayse:** This world's long history of interdiction ended abruptly in 1118, when Imperial forces set up a base on planet for the purpose of system defense and logistical support of their ongoing offensive. Solomani invasion forces showed up to contest the Imperial presence on the world six months later. Both invasion forces discovered why Bayse was interdicted.

The humans of Bayse have a society in which a rigid caste structure pervades every aspect of personal and professional life. Over 30 distinct castes exist, with complex laws governing which may intermarry, work together, live together, engage in disputes with each other, touch the same objects, etc.: the full list of social restrictions and taboos is quite extensive.

However, central to this caste structure is the notion that everyone in the society has a 'place' in the overall schema. The worst punishment of all is to be declared a *shorbun*, or 'non-person.' Such individuals have no rights and are completely shunned. Indeed, it is the duty of certain castes to hunt such individuals down.

Unfortunately, having no roots in the society of Bayse, all off-worlders are considered *shorbun*. However, early in the years of initial contact, the Bayseans realized that they could hardly ignore the superior technology of off-worlders (and its implications). So they requested—and received—interdicted travel status as a means of preserving their own society and preventing unfortunate

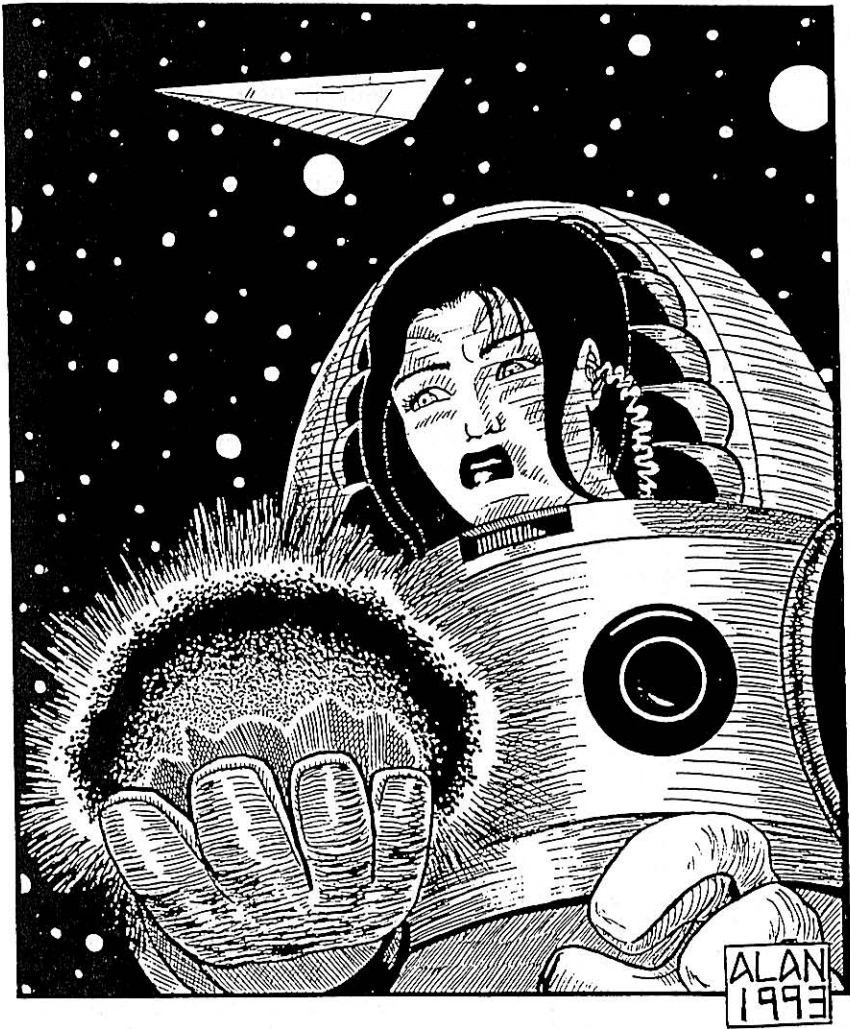
misunderstandings with outsiders.

When the Imperial and Solomani forces arrived, the Bayseans reacted violently. Although hopelessly outclassed by invaders' TL 15 battlefied technology, the TL 7 locals made everyday life a living hell for Imperial and Solomani alike. Sniping, concealed bombs, mechanical and electrical sabotage, food and water poisoning; the Bayseans used every means available to strike back at their foes.

In return, both the Solomani and the Imperial troops undertook pacification campaigns, designed to cripple the political and industrial infrastructure of the locals. Although they succeeded to some extent, the self-reliant Bayseans kept up their campaign of terror via cottage industries and basement munitions factories.

However, after the invaders finally departed, the Bayseans found that their organs of government had been completely shattered. Caste tensions erupted, producing a state of ongoing anarchy that continues through to this day, making Bayse even more dangerous to visit than it had been during the pre-Rebellion years.

**Guard:** This planet is best known for an indigenous species known as the guardbeast. This creature resembles an eight-legged, unusually flat civet. A ferocious hunter and unapproachable in the wild, this omnivore is extremely susceptible to social patterning influences when it is young. As



a result, many of Guard's population acquire newborn guardbeasts which then accept their owner as their 'mother' and become loyal (and often endearing) pets.

However, guardbeasts are also useful sentries and protectors. Being very territorial, these creatures will attack unfamiliar and /or unwelcome intruders. The attack of the guardbeast is a fairly unique

behavior, in which the animal balls itself into a tight, furry sphere, the eight legs still protruding in a bilateral radial arrangement. With its rugged segmented spinal carapace thus presented to the enemy, the guardbeast begins to roll itself forward at a startlingly high speed, using its legs to impart this wheel-like rotation to its body. When finally in range, the 40 kilogram creature uncurls into a leaping attack. It's long flat jaws are

armed with two rows of teeth, making it a dangerous adversary.

**The Rann Run:** The worlds of Soyuz and Gasudarsk, wary of the aggressive tendencies of the Ecclesiasty of Narquel, remain in close contact via what local merchants refer to as the Rann Run. Along with ongoing diplomatic exchange and attempts to coordinate defensive efforts, a booming trade in high-tech products and heavy industrial goods has developed.

Although not openly hostile to these developments, the Ecclesiasty is rumored to be attempting to interdict as much of this contact as possible.

Piracy along the Rann Run has been slowly increasing, as has the militance of various anti-Soyuz/ Gasudarsk groups.

**Gasudarsk:** This world is a prime example of how many high-population worlds have devolved into a societal shambles during the onset of the Hard Times era.

Uredno, the last of the world's Ultracrats, tried to declare herself queen in 1123. This led to a general revolt, followed by a swift decline into petty, warring states. After generations of autocratic rule, the people of Gasudarsk tried to follow their political traditions, resulting in an increasing balkanization under the banners of a growing number of totalitarian leaders.

However, as the chaos and violence continued, the populace began turning against the notion of

despotic rulers and the police-state favored by such leaders. This resistance evolved into a full-fledged social revolution, culminating in the current whiplash effect that has made Gasudarsk's population dead-set *against* power centralization of any kind.

The result; a tiny, airless world barely 1500 kilometers in diameter, inhabited by 12 billion individuals who REFUSE to adopt a central government. The largest 'states' tend to be hypertrophied civic associations, clubs, fraternal organizations, or local unions. Technology has backslid slightly (from D to C), but in general, those groups with control of research and production facilities —particularly those which provide key services and products such as environment, food, medical, defense, and transport— continue to do a lively business with the rest of their highly factionalized society.

Each group provides for its own needs and pursues its own policy. As a result, there is no 'common' law, and no individual will concede to giving up their right to bear arms. The largest cohesive organization still existing —the military— is also affected, with different commanders evincing different civic sympathies. Consequently, most actions now require a political consensus of the major factions within the military — a fact which undercuts the ability of Gasudarsk's forces to undertake rapid, focused action.

Luckily the one thing that everyone *does* agree on is that the Ecclesiasty of Narquel presents a



growing threat to Gasudarsk and that increased cooperation and coordination with Soyuz is advisable. This potential for external adversity may be the only glue that holds this fragile society together. A General Defense Council facilitates ongoing dialogues between the key factions on Gasudarsk, and serves as the arbiter in any matters that involve interaction with other worlds, but its word is law only insofar as the Councilmembers are able —or willing— to enforce it.

**Larisa:** Inhabited by a single family, this world is a pleasant place to visit, but very vulnerable to raiders. A husband and wife research team, Grey and Shanaku Iritak-Preston had originally arrived on Larisa as freelance employees for the government of Sadiishumar. The Iritak-Prestons were responsible for conducting a pre-colonization survey of the planet. Part of their research was to bring up a family there for a decade.

However, shortly after arriving, the Rebellion began and the government of Sadiishumar terminated the research project. The ship that had been dispatched to recover the Iritak-Prestons was destroyed by a corsair, stranding the small family on Larisa. The



ALAN  
1993

oldest of their three children is now 16, and an excellent jack-of-all trades with TL 6 technology.

### **Libert Subsector**

(‘B’ of Diaspora Sector)

Date: 001-1129

Laahii: The people of Laahii have a long history of keeping Chirpers as pets, a tradition which now stands

them in excellent stead. Some three hundred years ago, a local philanthropist established a building trust for the construction and ongoing expansion of a huge artificial preserve for the chirpers. This massive greenhouse/arboretum, long the habitat of the chirpers, is now under full-scale hydroponic cultivation, which eases the locals' dependence upon external food sources.

**Gate:** It was perhaps predictable that the natives of this world would call the largest of their indigenous predators 'Gators.' Oddly enough, the term is quite fitting.

The Gator is a huge reptile (averaging 6 meters and 1400 kg) with equally impressive teeth. It is amphibious, being a commonly encountered predator in Gate's extensive and very briny seas. Luckily, the Gator finds human beings completely unpalatable.

On the less lucky side of things, the Gator is extremely territorial and is quite willing to take on opponents many times its own size. A fast and powerful swimmer, Gators will not hesitate to overturn and/or ram small watercraft, will viciously attack anchor lines, and even shred garbage that floats into their aquatic domains. Although less aggressive when on land, it is inadvisable to make any approaches closer than 50 meters; they are almost certain to attack.

If Gators are captured when very young or if they are artificially incubated and hatched, they can often be turned into excellent

'watch dogs' (although the locals refer to them as 'watch dragons'). However, they will only recognize and share their territory with persons that they have a long familiarity with—making housecalls by casual acquaintances problematic, to say the least.

**Mixem:** After the sad sequence of events concerning the Droyne population on Umorphutwyo (Kushga subsector) during the mid 1120's, the Droyne community of Mixem became alarmed when this world's human leadership began to undergo changes tending towards greater militarism.

Upon the introduction of near-martial law in 1127, the Droyne decided to pull up stakes *en masse* and move to a small fertile crescent in the middle of the largely undeveloped Nasaku Desert. Numbering just under 80 million, many of the Droyne are still living in temporary shelters. In recent months, a number of human agitators have begun demanding that the Droyne be compelled to restate their allegiance to the world government of Mixem. The Droyne did not send a response; however, they have initiated regular aerial patrols along the periphery of their fertile crescent.

**Zeeland:** Known for its massive aquaculture projects, Zeeland's populace is currently torn over what to do about its massive Chirper population.

Once free to roam the lush island continents of this planet, Chirpers now face escalating encroachment by industries and private individuals

who are looking to develop Zeeland's landmasses, which heretofore had been protected environments. In the aftermath of the Rebellion, urgent needs for the resources offered by the three largest continents caused this protected status to be revoked.

As a result, billions of chirpers have been displaced and have no place to go. Many have been stowing away aboard nautical harvester ships, where they steal the catch and otherwise disrupt operations.

No answer to this dilemma has surfaced thus far, and local authorities are worrying that the angry harvester unions may begin trying to 'purge' the planet of its chirper population.

## **Sufren Subsector**

(C' of Diaspora Sector)

Date: 001-1129

**Sufren:** One of Sufren's most unusual features is the presence of a fairly large (over two million) population of *orca orcinus sapientus*: intelligent killer whales. An offshoot of the same genetic augmentation project that produced intelligent dolphins, the killer whale project was begun on Terra but was cancelled there only eight years later. Official reasons cited cost, but some rumors persist that fear had more to do with it. The project's creator, Rene Hodge, managed to convince a number of dedicated supporters on Sufren to fund the project's relocation to that planet's unusually (some say Ancient-

manufactured) Terran-compatible biosphere. There, the project thrived and its progeny became a distinctive part of Sufren's culturescape.

The killer whale program and its population never spread much beyond the seas of Sufren however, largely due to the size of the orcas and the expense of moving them. Furthermore, the orca have never seemed to be particularly interested in going anywhere else, although they have become quite involved in the affairs of Sufren itself.

In particular, a group of philosopher/elders of the Great Pod regularly convene in Sufren's coastal capitol of New Scotia to engage in discourse with various senior representatives of the System Congress. These orcas meet their human counterparts face-to-face through the glass-sided open-water pool known as (predictably) The Think Tank. The nature of these discourses are often confidential, but there is no small amount of public speculation that the orcas are keen social and military analysts with a zen-like concept of (and approach to) the manipulation of power and politics.

Because of the large orca (and dolphin) communities, Sufren's human population is very sensitive about the condition of the planet's oceans and has strict and exacting anti-pollution laws. Many off-worlders consider the punishment for even small transgressions to be excessive (10,000 credit fine for any littering, even of biodegradable

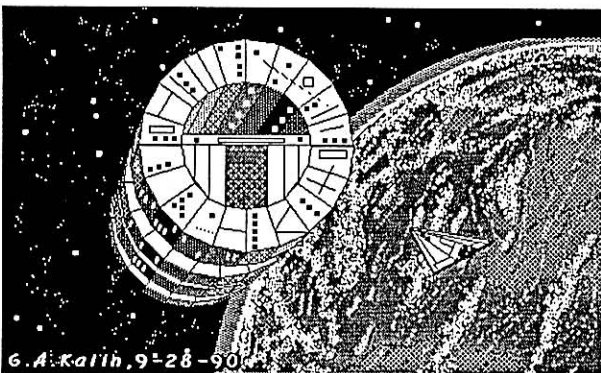
objects).

Sufren is also home to the unusual lifeform known as the whitelady. So named because of its ghost-like appearance (and possible lethality), the whitelady is a sheet-like organism of transluscent thinness. Hiding in shadows as a congealed white clump during the day, the whitelady unfurls with the cool of night and the settling of the first dew. It then rides the early evening winds in search of prey, mesmerizing intended victims with a faint play of green-white bioluminescence across its undulating surface. The creature envelops its prey, quickly paralyzing the victim with glands very similar to the nematocysts of the Terran jellyfish. Although the whitelady targets small animals and is therefore no threat to adult humans, occasional attacks against very small children have been recorded.

Lastly, no description of Sufren would be complete without some mention of its most unusual – and noticeable – lifeform, an airborne spore known simply as marsdust. Marsdust is a photosynthetic,

oxygen-producing organism that thrives on red light and reflects orange light. It pervades the middle reaches of Sufren's atmosphere and not only boosts the oxygen pressure to almost .25, but changes the quality of light on the planet. By removing much of the red wavelength and reflecting a great deal of the orange, marsdust functions as a color filter. The resulting surface light of Sufren is more white-amber than red, producing the appearance of a perpetually bright dusk to eyes accustomed to Terran equivalents. The sky of the planet changes color dramatically as evening approaches, fading from bright greenish-aqua to a deep blue.

**Gamov:** The Gamov belt's eight billion inhabitants gladly threw off the yoke of their fanatical pre-war theocrats and strung up many of the individuals connected with maintaining the ruthless police-state which had existed for almost two centuries. Wary of organized governments, the planet manages to avoid absolute anarchy via the informal ties that exist between family matriarchs.



Although Gamov's government had been an exclusively male province, females dominated economic, family, and medical matters. Although denied any voice in government or collective recognition,

the women of Gamov have long communicated through the unofficial channels of family matriarchs. This structure —and the system's interdependent ties with the stable markets of Sufren— is all that is keeping Gamov from splintering into a thousand mutually antagonistic gangs.

Another helpful factor in the ongoing effort to defeat the rise of anarchy is the astrographic dispersal of Gamov's population. More than eight hundred separate planetoids have populations in excess of five million, and yet only one — Gamov Prime— has a population as great as 100 million. This dispersal serves to undercut feelings of crowding and tension, allowing the matriarchs to smooth ruffled feathers before violence can erupt.

**Heymac:** Life on Heymac has not been improved by the pressures of the Hard Times era. Originally ruled by a trusted group of family elders, losses in technology and environmental systems drove one of the three original oligarchs away —and drove another mad. Convinced that he was the annointed of Arbu (the deity of an obscure Sylean religion), this once kindly grandfather slew his remaining partner and set himself up as the Annointed. A travelling missionary from Narquel subsequently convinced him and 18 others of the 32 person community

that Arbu was part of the Panamica pantheon, thereby converting the old fellow to the tenets of the Panamica Orthodoxy.

The 14 community members who do not approve of this recent course of events remain silent, however; the old fellow and his loyal followers have access to the community's only firearms (three SMGs and two shotguns).

**Naasha:** Naasha is best known for being the home of the glidewhistler, an airborne manta-like creature.

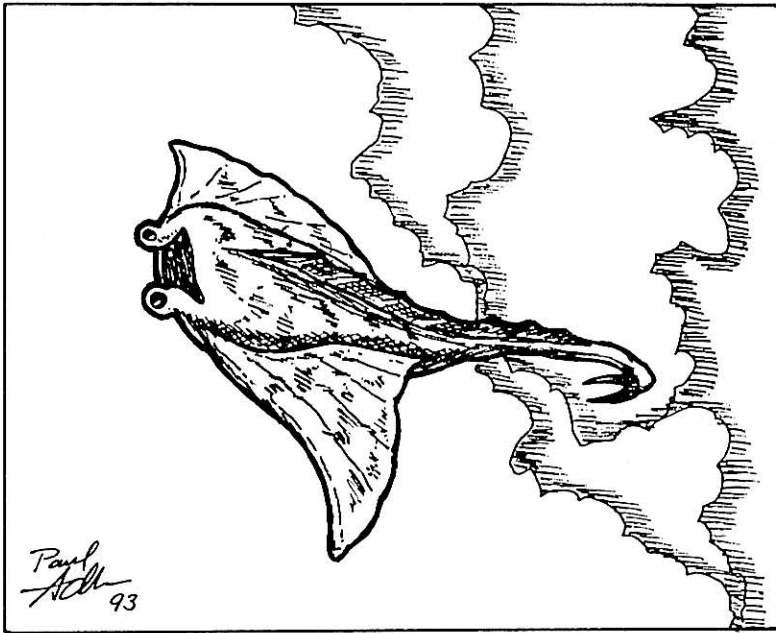
Losses in  
technology and  
environmental  
systems drove  
one of the three  
original oligarchs  
away —and  
drove another  
mad.

The glidewhistler is a gentle animal that functions as a flying air filter, consuming microbes, organic wastes, insects; anything that is small, airborne, and organic. As it feeds, it adjusts the size of its air filters, producing a gently wavering bass tone that most humans find extremely soothing. However, Vargr cannot abide the

presence of glidewhistlers, since their more accute auditory senses also pick up the ultra-high-pitched whine made by these creatures.

Glidewhistlers are easy to care for, although vaporized food must be dispersed into the air regularly if the glidewhistler is confined in a closed space; they need a lot of 'dirty air' to filter in order to get enough nourishment.

Also, glidewhistlers have no eyes,



navigating by echolocation and sensitivity to sound waves. This extreme sensitivity to sound makes the creature's nervous system very susceptible to audially-created disruption. For instance, loud arrhythmic sounds with a scattering of extremely high and low frequency emissions can cause the creature to suffer the equivalent of an epileptic fit, ending in death if the audial stimulus is not removed or changed. Consequently, glidewhistlers are not recommended as pets for devotees of the musical form known as classicrok.

**Neefi:** Neefi is a society in which children make all the major decisions. This strange (and for off-worlders, unsettling) tradition arose largely due to the stange bond that seems to exist between many

youngsters and a native life form known as the roggat. The roggat is a furred, homeothermic sea creature with glide-enabling wings. It becomes airborne by leaping out of the water into a headwind; once given a few meters of lift, it spins about to catch the breeze as a tailwind.

Children are almost inevitably charmed and fascinated with the spectacular antics of these friendly creatures, and the roggats seem to return the interest. Indifferent to human adults, the roggats love to swim alongside youngsters, protecting them from both aquatic intruders and the risk of drowning.

Early in the colonization of the planet, the settlers discovered that the roggats follow the same prey as the humans do; an eel-like creature

that the colonists export as a foodstuff and as raw stock for several major pharmaceutical products. The roggats are willing to share their finds with the children, but not with the adults, and they seem to be able to tell if the children are just 'fronting' for their parents.

So, in order to be able to follow the eels and maximize their catches, the colonists had to turn the reins of power over to their own children.

Not surprisingly, when the envoys of the Judiciate arrived on-planet, they were able to quickly manipulate the children into joining. However, since that time, there have been several incidents of the roggats actually attempting to attack various Judiciate representatives, and staying away from any ships that have them on-board. As a result, even the kids are thinking that maybe they should reconsider their willingness to make Neefi a member of the Judiciate. And if they don't take action, most adults are considering overturning tradition and taking charge once again. Judiciate observers are aware of these developments, and have brought military forces on-world to enforce Neefi's membership status —if necessary.

## **Khavle Subsector**

('D' of Diaspora Sector)

Date: 001-1129

**146-685:** This planet was severely hit by nuclear weapons during one of the many wars that marked the dissolution of the Empire of Man. Its

atmosphere heavy with post-holocaust pollutants and a number of 9th generation bioagent mutations, its inhabitants were reduced to utter savagery. This situation, which continues today, causes their lives to be so violent and short that they rarely live long enough for the taint of their atmosphere to significantly affect their health.

**Aight:** Droyne constitute 1/2 of Aight's 7 billion inhabitants and although there have been no signs of friction with their human neighbors, the stigma of Umorphutwyo (Kushga subsector) has certainly had its influence here. An increased number of warriors are showing up in the current census of one major city's oytrips. Droyne-owned businesses are moving increasingly toward heavy industry and applying for security exclusions regarding possession of firearms for 'protection of commercial properties.'

**lhishi:** This world is a sad example of the fragility of many Outland worlds. When pirates raided them three years ago, laser fire destroyed the lhishinis air filtration apparatus. Attempts to rebuild it have been futile and attempts to purchase a new one have not been successful. Almost all local industry has turned to the task of producing individual filter masks. As a result of this desperate concentration of industry and commerce, the local Droyne (who can breathe the air without difficulty) have increased in wealth and position. Indeed, the Droyne community still has access to limited TL 10 items, imported from (and by) the oytrips of Aight

Unfortunately, the Droyne do not seem to be willing to devote cargo space for the shipment of any filter masks, which are so badly needed by the humans. The first hints of human resentment regarding this are beginning to show up.

**Halle:** Halle is inhabited by the last three members of the family that homesteaded this planet some 346 years ago and then requested interdiction after numerous differences of opinion with merchant captains who insisted on making planetfall without permission.

The family first became aware of the Rebellion in 1119, when a Solomani fighter conducting an advance recon patrol homed in on their radio beacon and sent a wave-

riding missile at the facility, assuming it to be a group of careless Imperial 'skywatchers' (small teams of troops left behind to monitor enemy activity on abandoned worlds).

The missile killed one of the four family members as well as ruining most of the environmental equipment and the repair facilities. As a result, the three survivors—all in their fifties—are now living on borrowed time, hoping before hope that someone comes to rescue them (or bring them repair parts) before their jury-rigged air processor breaks down once again.

— Charles E. Gannon—

*(This is the first part of four which will detail Diaspora Sector in the year 1129 Imperial.)*

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(Continued from page 26)

can send them the interest payment. Interest from a large mustering out benefit can be a good second income, particularly when added to retirement pay.

### Interstellar Exchange Rates

	Currency/Imperial CR	Imperial CR/Currency
Solomani Mark(SM)	SM.75 per ImpCR	ImpCR1.5 per SM
Vilani Sirka (Sk)	Sk 1.10 per ImpCR	ImpCR.90 per Sk
New Imperial Credits (NCR)	NCR 1.5 per ImpCR	ImpCR.75 per NCR
Daibei Credit (DCR)	DCR 1.2 per ImpCR	ImpCR.80 per DCR
Antarean Credit (ACR)	ACR 1.15 per ImpCR	ImpCR.85 per ACR

Compared with historic currency:

U.S. Dollar \$2.00 per ImpCR ImpCR.50 per \$1.00\*

U.K. Pound £1.10 per ImpCR ImpCR.90 per £1.00

\*per conversation with M.W. Miller -2528.

### **Currency Value Table**

TECH LEVELS	STARPORT TYPES					
	<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>X</u>
15	1.00	.95	.90	-	-	-
14	.95	.90	.85	.80	.75	-
13	.90	.85	.80	.75	.70	-
12	.85	.80	.75	.70	.65	-
11	.80	.75	.70	.65	.60	-
10	.75	.70	.65	.60	.55	.45
9	.70	.65	.60	.55	.50	.40
8	.65	.60	.55	.50	.45	.35
7	.60	.55	.50	.45	.40	.30
6	-	.50	.45	.40	.35	.20
5	-	.45	.40	.35	.30	.10
4	-	-	.30	.25	.20	BART
3	-	-	.20	.10	.05	BART
2	-	-	-	.05	BART	BART
1	-	-	-	.01	BART	BART
0	-	-	-	-	-	BART

To convert Imperial Credits into local credits on a world, find the value at the intersection of the world's Tech Level and starport type. Then, divide the number of Imperial Credits being exchanged by the listed value. The result equals the number of local credits the Imperial Credit will buy. To convert local credits into Imperial Credits, multiply the amount of local credits being sold by the listed value. The result equals the number of Imperial Credits purchased. The "BART" designation indicates a primitive world economy where all transactions must be carried out by barter.

Other interstellar currencies may be substituted for the Imperial Credit in these calculations outside the Imperial Credit monetary zones.

-- Terry McInnes --

---

## **Solomani Requiem**

**Onward flows the stream  
to the river wide  
Beyond the valley  
beckons the dales far side  
O'er the mountain  
echoes the ocean tide  
Above the clouds  
near heavens darkside  
Higher still Luna  
in her shadow to stride  
Never more in fair Terra  
confines shall we hide  
Nor fiery Sols  
warmth to abide  
Into the void  
unto the Stars we ride**

**— Paul Sanders —**

# But I Wanted MY Character To Have...

---

## Traveller: The New Era Deliberate Character Generation Guidelines

<u>Pts</u>	<u>Stats</u>	<u>Skills</u>	<u>Benefits</u>	<u>Psionics</u>
0	7/8	8	2	no
1	14/16	12	4	yes/1 talent
2	28/32	18	6	yes/2 talents
3	42/48	25	8	yes/3 talents
4	56/64	32	10	yes/4 talents
5	70/80	38	12	yes/5 talents
6	77/88	42	15	yes/6 talents

This method of creating Traveller: The New Era characters is for those who like to have absolute control over how their characters turn out. There are no dice rolls involved.

A player has 9 development points, for a standard character, to divide amongst the different categories listed above. For example, a player could assign 3 points to Stats, 3 points to Skills, 3 points to Benefits, and 0 points to Psionics. This would yield a basically average character with 42 points to divide amongst her stats, a total of 25 skill points, and 8 benefits.

Of course, the referee can assign more development points for a more powerful character, or fewer for a weaker one.

In the Stats column, the number before the slash is for persons with no psionics, the number after the slash is used for persons possessing psionics. The points available to a character's stats are divided into Str, Agl, Con, Int, Edu, Cha, Soc, and/or Psi. After points are assigned, they are modified based on the characters homeworld and race.

Each benefit roughly equals the following:

1 term equivalent in cash

1 point increase in Initiative (all characters start at 1; with a max of 7)

3 points of Ship Die Modifiers for the Starship Table [p. 39]

1 level increase in rank [p.57]

1 level increase in Ship Type on the Starship Table [p. 39] (start at scout)

a special piece of equipment to be determined by the referee

etc.

-- Kevin D. Knight --

# A Solomani Safari

---

## INTRODUCTION

Wars come and go—as do Imperiums—but science marches on. In particular, the investigation of life in all its myriad forms continues to fascinate researchers, regardless of their political leanings. Many researchers don't HAVE any political leanings—which can make them the most dangerous type of scientist to get hooked up with. This fact may become painfully clear to the PCs as they become involved in one researcher's obsession with preserving a number of Diasporan species for posterity. Now if only the characters can preserve themselves . . .

## FOR THE REFEREE

The characters are travelling within the Diaspora sector when this two-scenario adventure takes place. *Solomani Safari* may be set anytime after late 1124. The characters may hear of the adventure opportunities presented in *Solomani Safari* during their travels in this region of space, or they may be specifically contacted by the key patron in this adventure. The characters should not be fully versed in the current state of affairs between the various rimward worlds of the Diaspora sector and their Solomani invaders.

The adventure and subsector data presented in *Solomani Safari* is an extension of the material presented in the *Hard Times/Astrogator's Guide to Diaspora* supplements. *Solomani Safari* may be used on its own, or may be used to expand the play opportunities of the supplements. Referees are encouraged to offer the player's the opportunity to pursue some of the situations presented in the library data as "sideline" adventures as well as "local color."

## A Scientist On Safari

**Where:** on numerous worlds throughout Iusea, The Blight, and Shumisdi subsectors.

**Contact:** While in any of the preceding subsectors, the players are likely to hear about this shady contract while:

- a) lounging in a starport bar
- b) conducting any deals of questionable legality

This adventure can begin on ANY world within Iusea, The Blight, or Shumisdi subsectors. Through less-than-reputable channels, the PCs learn that "a mystery woman" needs a ship and crew to carry her to several worlds within the sector. More information is forthcoming only if the PCs make contact with the mystery woman personally.

This contact can only be achieved through the auspices of whatever shady character brought this info to the PCs.

The referee should have fun with the sinister overtones of this opening.

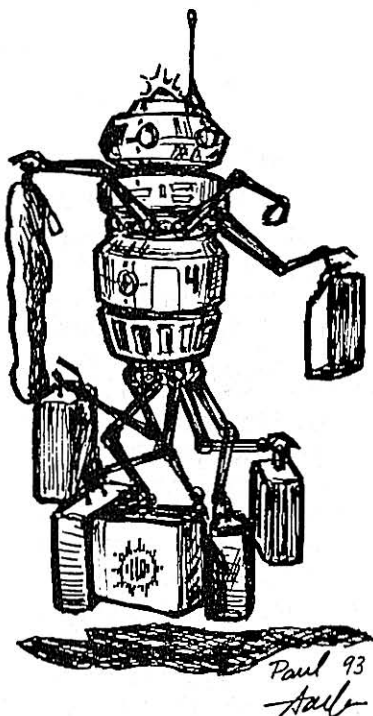
Just to keep things a little menacing, you might wish to include a run-in with local thugs. Adjust weaponry to conform to local law level standards. The number of thugs should slightly exceed the number of individuals in the party.

The meeting with the mystery woman takes place the next night in a seedy part of town. After a few close calls with the local law and lowlife, the PCs arrive at the assigned address and find a conservatively-dressed woman waiting for them. She is in her mid-thirties and her nervous demeanor suggests that she is not at all used to this kind of skulking.

The woman's name is Arlena Partocabra and she is a xenobiologist. Most interesting of all, she is a Solomani citizen. She is a native of Promus (1018, Alpha Crucis sector), where she is a professor at the Corringsley Institute for Evolutionary Studies. Her objective; to gather live, breedable pairs of several scientifically-significant species that are only found in Diaspora. Her problem; Solomani are not usually welcomed in these parts and, to make matters worse, she's here without the permission of her own

government.

But Arlena is a true scientist, and neither fear of pro-Imperial wrath nor Solsec prohibitions are going to stop her from going on this live-capture safari. Her interest in the party is basic; she wishes them to be her helpers, scouts, and security on this expedition. She will offer the group 200 credits per person per day, and an additional 1000 credits success bonus at the end. If the group has its own ship, she will pay them 30,000 credits per jump, in addition to freight rates for the three 70-kiloliter holding pens in which she plans to keep her specimens. If the group does not have a ship (or if they do, but the hold is too small), Arlena will have her own type K hunter starship, specially modified



to carry live specimens.

## FOR THE REFEREE:

If the group accepts the job, Arlena will reveal her ambitious itinerary, which follows;

*Planet/Hex/Subsector/Creature(s)*

Netti/2213/Alurza/chip chicken

Akko/2129/The Blight/cystal

Moncton/2125/The Blight/swarmer

Wescap/2322/The Blight/puffhair

Kandom/2116/Alurza/killer mouse  
(if possible, two very young grags)

Sufren/2004/Sufren/whitelady

The details on each creature and its environment are listed in the "Astrogator's Update," also published through this source (in the case of the swarmer of Moncton, this information is to be found in *Astrogator's Guide to the Diaspora Sector*). The nature and behavior of each creature can be fleshed out into a full adventure by the referee. Some captures might be easy and safe, others difficult and dangerous.

As the players travel from site to site, the following events can also offer opportunities for exciting play:

\* encounters with raider craft, or wrecks left behind by their savage attacks

\* trade and speculation with any remaining cargo space

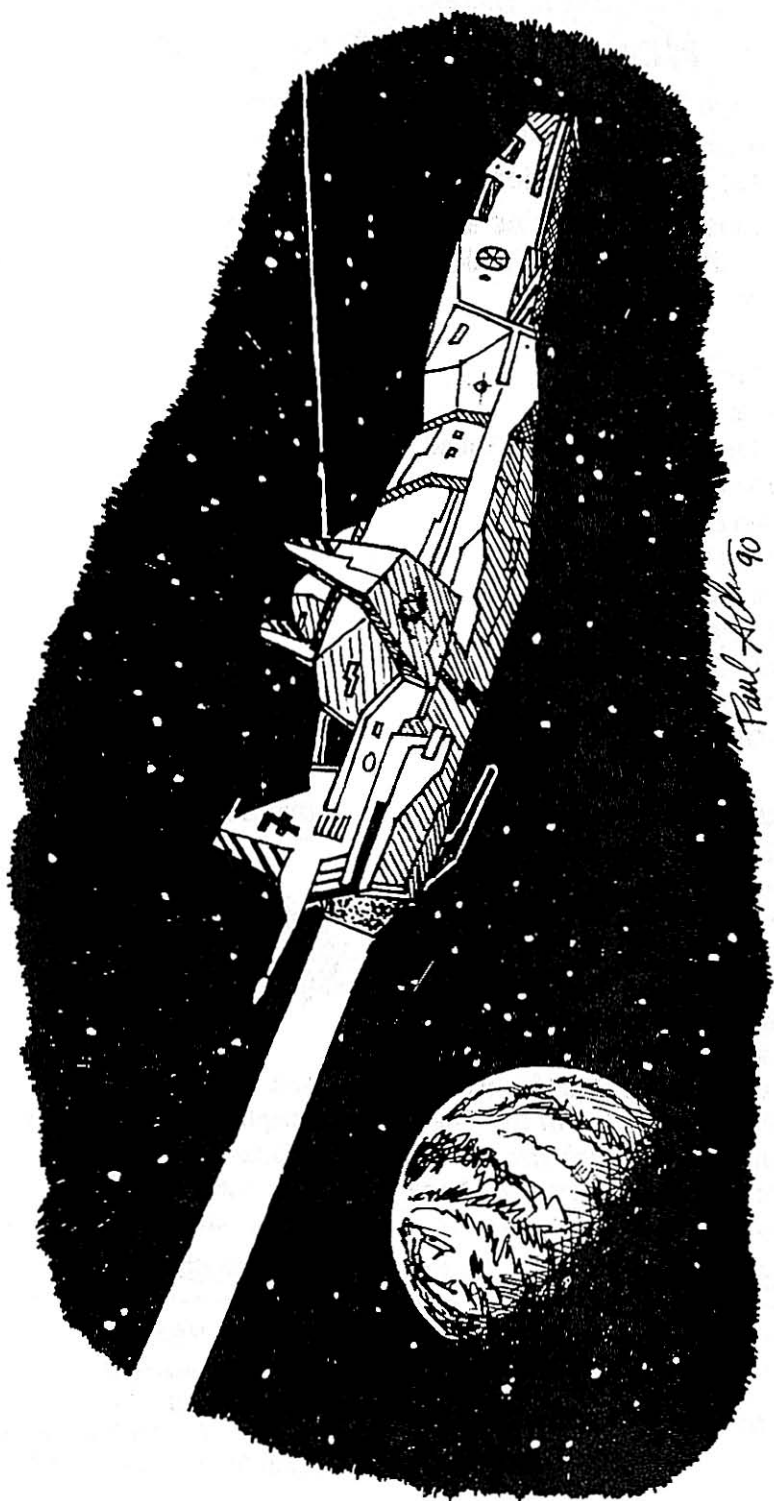
\* contact with any individuals who will want to inquire into Arlena's identity a little more deeply.

## A Perilous Passenger?

Once the trip is under way, Arlena will occasionally be observed secreting small electronic devices around the ship, as well as consulting a small Solsec procedural manual. The referee should try to make it appear as though Arlena's work as a scientist might in fact be a cover for another operation, but this is not the case. The small electronic devices are part of a radio-linked locator system (to keep track of any animal that might escape its pen). Her interest in the Solsec manual is not exactly innocent, but represents no danger to the players. She's simply trying to figure out how best to dodge the Confederations customs regulations regarding the importation of live animals.

The referee should present Arlena as a likable, enthusiastic, and—when it comes to xenobiology—idealistic individual, proving that not all Solomani belong to the radical minority which has given the Confederation such a bad name over the past couple of decades.

— Charles E. Gannon—



## How Are We Doing???

Please take the time to let us know what you liked and disliked about this issue. Just photocopy this page or write your responses down on a piece of paper. Thanks.

Rank the following articles and submissions on a scale of one to five, with one being 'Totally Awesome' and five being 'Most Heinous'.

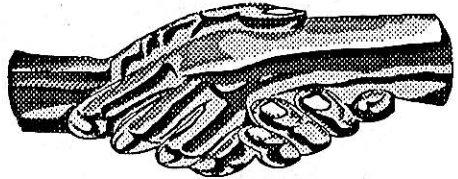
The Far Frontiers	1	2	3	4	5
Mercury Quest	1	2	3	4	5
Money Makes the Worlds Go 'Round	1	2	3	4	5
How To Annoy an Aslan...	1	2	3	4	5
Zhodanian Brain	1	2	3	4	5
Astrogator's Update to Diaspora	1	2	3	4	5
But I Wanted MY Character...	1	2	3	4	5
Art Work (Paul Sanders)	1	2	3	4	5
Art Work (Allen Gillispe)	1	2	3	4	5
Art Work (Gary Kalin)	1	2	3	4	5
Overall Quality of the Magazine	1	2	3	4	5

Thanks again for taking the time to fill this out.

### And the winner is...

In the first issue, we ran two contests, one giving away a 4-issue subscription and the

other an Azhanti High Lightning boxed set. Congratulations to Jim Ujcik, the winner of the 4-issue subscription, and Ryan Dooley, the winner of the Azhanti High Lightning boxed set. Thanks to everyone who participated. Look for a new contest in issue three.



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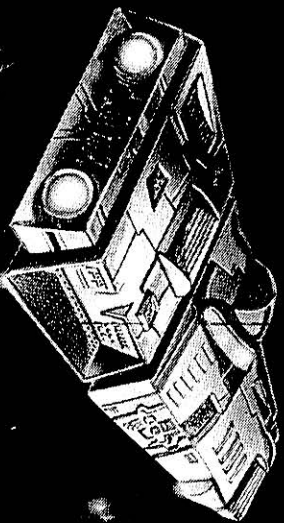
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