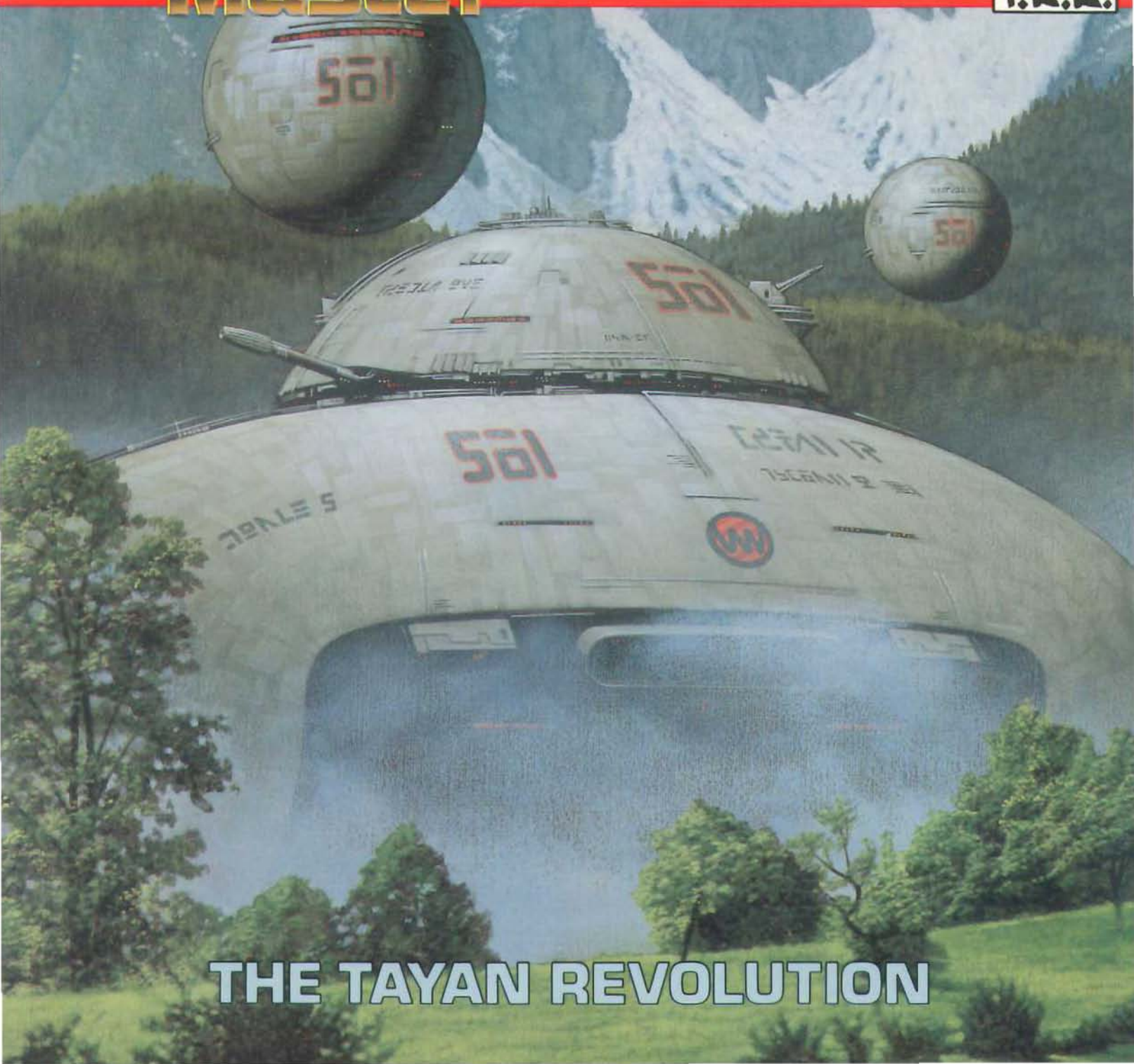


WAR ON A DISTANT MOON™

A **Space Master™** Adventure Module



THE TAYAN REVOLUTION

WAR ON A DISTANT MOON™

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0 GUIDELINES

1.1 Handling Play	2
1.2 Adapting this Module to your Game	2
1.3 Game Mechanics	2

2.0 GENERAL INFORMATION: DARRAN PROVINCE

2.1 Timeline	4
2.2 Systems Listing	4
2.3 Cultures of Darran Province	6
2.4 The Church of Darran	7
2.5 The Tayan Liberation Front	8
2.6 Demographic Chart	8

3.0 ADVENTURE: WELCOMING PARTY

3.1 Background Data	9
3.2 The NPCs	9
3.3 The Settings	10
3.4 The Task	10
3.5 Encounters	12

4.0 ADVENTURE: LIFE DURING WARTIME

4.1 Background Data	13
4.2 The NPCs	13
4.3 The Settings	14
4.4 The Task	15
4.5 Encounters	15

5.0 ADVENTURE: PUSH COMES TO SHOVE

5.1 Background Data	17
5.2 The NPCs	17
5.3 The Settings	18
5.4 The Task	18
5.5 Encounters	19

6.0 ADVENTURE: WHEN THE WHIP COMES DOWN

6.1 Background Data	21
6.2 The NPCs	21
6.3 The Settings	22
6.4 The Task	22
6.5 Encounters	22

7.0 ADVENTURE: LAST DITCH

7.1 Background Data	25
7.2 The NPCs	25
7.3 The Settings	26
7.4 The Task	26
7.5 Encounters	27

8.0 GAMEMASTER AIDS

8.1 Interstellar Distances Chart	28
8.2 Tayah Port	29
8.3 Darran Province Star Chart	30
8.4 Geosphere Record: Capella II: "Tayah"	31
8.5 Tayah Encounters Table	32
8.6 Vehicles Summary Table	32

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Dedication:

This work is dedicated to all warmongers everywhere – may their reign of fear dissolve and leave them friendless and hopeless. The rest of you – keep working. L.U.X. – T.F

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1.0

GUIDELINES

Welcome to House Darran, site of Iron Crown Enterprises' latest exploration of the Terran Empire, and a hotbed of political and military activity. The sequential adventures detailed herein are designed to introduce the Players to Darran Province in a step-by-step fashion, essentially entwining their characters further into the campaign environment, and ultimately yielding a behind-the-scenes look at an Imperial Province in the midst of a violent political upheaval. Although Darran Province has been placed just inside of Frontier Zones 5 and 6, with a small amount of modification this Adventure Module could take place anywhere within (or without) the Empire.

War on a Distant Moon is presented in four basic parts. Section 1.0 provides guidelines regarding the use of the Module. Section 2.0 is a general reference source, detailing the significant peoples, places, and events which shaped (and continue to shape) Darran Province. The third part is comprised of the Adventures – Sections 3.0, 4.0, 5.0, 6.0, and 7.0. As mentioned above, they are designed to be played in consecutive order, as their chronological sequence is important. Finally, Section 8.0 contains all necessary Gamemaster Aids and maps.

1.1

HANDLING PLAY

The Adventures, taken as a whole, comprise a sort of loose, short-term Campaign setting (Darran Province), and are meant to be undertaken by a group of Player Characters which will remain relatively stable throughout the course of the Module (there are, of course, untimely deaths, and the Gamemaster should arrange things so as to allow the introduction of new Players or replacement characters whenever (a) it is logical in terms of plot-line, and (b) it does not unbalance the game. As the Players proceed through the Adventures, learning more about the Province and its inhabitants and watching the political revolution take form, the challenges they are called upon to face will increase in difficulty. It is incumbent upon the Gamemaster to award Experience Points at the end of each Adventure or game session, as any characters fortunate enough to raise levels within the Module should certainly be rewarded for their efforts (they will find the extra level very handy). The first Adventure is designed for use with slightly experienced characters, levels two through five, who have gained some small amount of recognition/reputation. Although it should not be expected as a rule, it is possible for a well-played character to raise one level in each of the Adventures.

The Adventures are presented in the standard format. Background Data describes the basics of the Adventure and primary motivations for the characters involved. NPCs provides descriptions of all prominent Non-Player characters, including their stats. Settings describes and/or maps the Adventure site(s). The Task includes notes on starting the Adventure, as well as PC aids, obstacles, and rewards. Encounters covers probable or imminent meetings between the PCs and NPCs.

The Gamemaster should have read the entire Module before beginning play, as some events which occur at early points in the story will be explained/clarified later on, and these explanations should be borne in (the GM's) mind from the outset.

1.2

ADAPTING THIS MODULE TO YOUR GAME

This Module is designed for use with ICE's **Space Master** rules, but is easily adaptable to other SFRP game systems. All statistics are presented on a closed or open-ended scale of 1-100, and all maneuver modifiers stated are cumulative with the characters' own skill or stat bonuses. Only percentile dice (d100) are required.

1.21 CONVERTING HITS, BONUSES AND MODIFIERS

The concussion Hit Point figures given herein are meant to represent only general loss of stamina due to pain and system shock. Characters at zero Hit Points are *not dead* (Of course, they aren't moving, either.). Notable wounds and damage are referred to as Critical Strikes. If your game system makes no such distinction, characters' Hit Points should be doubled, or the amount of damage taken be halved.

Bonuses and modifiers: If converting to a scale of 1-20 (or 3-18), each +5 shown herein equals a +1 for your system. If converting to a scale of 1-12, each +8 equals a +1 (round to the nearest).

1.22 CONVERSION CHART

The following chart may be used to convert our 1-100 figures to numbers suited for your game system.

STAT CONVERSION CHART

1-100 Stat	D100 Bonus	D20 Bonus	3-18 Stat	2-12 Stat
102+	+35	+7	20+	17+
101	+30	+6	19	15-16
100	+25	+5	18	13-14
98-99	+20	+4	17	12
95-97	+15	+3	16	—
90-94	+10	+2	15	11
85-89	+5	+1	14	10
75-84	+5	+1	13	9
60-74	0	0	12	8
40-59	0	0	10-11	7
25-39	0	0	9	6
10-14	-5	-1	7	4
5-9	-10	-2	6	3
3-4	-15	-3	5	3
2	-20	-4	4	2
1	-25	-4	4	2

1.3

GAME MECHANICS

The following sections detail the game simulation of various circumstances and maneuvers, coded for the GM's ease.

1.31 DIFFICULTY LEVELS

Representing the relative ease or difficulty inherent in any particular problem or maneuver attempt, Difficulty Levels translate in game terms into a bonus or penalty which is applied to the dice roll made for the task. Often, the GM will have to decide upon the appropriate Difficulty Level to assign to a task suggested/attempted by the Players. This Mod is cumulative with any skill bonuses, stat bonuses, and miscellaneous modifiers applied to the situation. A "Static Maneuver" requires a net roll of 101 or higher in order to succeed, while a "Moving Maneuver" is checked against the appropriate maneuver table column.

The Basic DL's are:

Routine	+30
Easy	+20
Light	+10
Medium	+0
Hard	-10
Very Hard	-20
Extremely Hard	-30
Sheer Folly	-50
Absurd	-70
Insane	-100

1.32 TASK ABBREVIATIONS

A "Task" is any game situation which requires some sort of die roll to determine the degree of success or maneuver result (either Static or Moving). There are six kinds of Tasks, and each is associated with a given maneuver table or process, as noted below:

CN = Construction Project (CONSTRUCTION AND RESEARCH CHART)

MM = Moving Maneuver (PERSONAL MANEUVER CHART)

RP = Repair Project (MALFUNCTION/ REPAIR CHART)

RS = Research Project (CONSTRUCTION AND RESEARCH CHART)

SM = Static Maneuver (STATIC MANEUVER TABLE or modified 101+)

VM = Vehicular Maneuver (VEHICULAR MANEUVER AND ASTROGATION TABLE)

Tasks presented in this text are recorded in the following abbreviated fashion, consisting of three parts:

- 1) The first two letters indicate the Task Type, as shown above. This is followed by a slash (/).
- 2) The second abbreviation indicates the skill or stat(s) used to modify the dice roll. This is followed by a colon (:).
- 3) The last letter indicates the Difficulty Level of the Task. It is always the initial letter of the DL "name", except that "X" is used for "Extremely Hard" ("E" means "Easy"). Some examples:

CN/CybT:H (a HARD Construction Project modified by Cybernetic Technics skill)

SM/ME:E (an EASY Static Maneuver modified by Memory stat)

MM/ST&AG:L (a LIGHT Moving Maneuver modified by Strength and Agility stats averaged; always average mixed mods unless otherwise stated)

2.0

GENERAL INFORMATION: DARRAN PROVINCE

"At a certain stage of their development, the material forces of production in society come in conflict with the existing relations of production, or...with the property relations within which they have been at work before. From forms of development...these relations turn into their fetters. Then comes the period of social revolution."

- Karl Marx, Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy

CURRENT RULER: Viscount Mandarr
Egreth Usri Darran (Imp 436-)

HOMEWORLD: Capella I "Croix"
[+14+61+2]

POLITICAL ALLIES: The Imperium, Devon,
Minor Clan Detzeer

OPEN ENEMIES: None

GENERAL COMMENTS: Small and very loyal to the Imperium, House Darran is administered by a religious order called the Church of Darran, which holds sway over an indigenous Humanoid race (the Tsorosians). In recent years, the House has been shaken by recurrent (and escalating) civil disturbances, and has had its hands 'too full to engage in much interProvincial subterfuge. These internal difficulties have at last forced the Church of Darran to request Imperial aid.

One of the least powerful Royal Houses of the Inner Sphere, House Darran has nevertheless enjoyed a position of Imperial favor ever since its inception in Imp.152. Darran Province is a major regional supplier of basic and refined foodstuffs, ores and natural building materials, and maintains its economic rating with MERLOGH only by exporting the vast majority of its extracted resources. These resources are, of course, obtained and processed by the Darranian working class (which is comprised largely of Tsorosians). Many of the supply shipments which supported the original advances into Frontier Zone Five were provided for the Imperium by Darran Products (the corporate arm of the Church of Darran), and the Province still sends shipments to the Imperial colonies within the Zone. Houses Devon and Jade-London both engage in regular exchange with Darran as well - in fact, it has been theorized that the Church's emphasis on production and exportation of basic goods has forced it to become dependant upon other Provinces for its technology (most of which comes from these two Families, or from the Imperium itself). The "favored" status enjoyed by

House Darran gives the Province the economic edge it needs to remain solvent, much to the aggravation of Houses such as Colos and Carlisle, who (for different reasons) would desire to see otherwise. (The Colosians, desiring the Darranian systems themselves, have long held that the Church of Darran ought not to be recognized as a Royal Family at all; while House Carlisle merely disagrees with Darranian internal policy, and refuses to do business with the Church.) The actual market value of the Darranian Monit fluctuates almost daily, but usually remains somewhere between 0.76 and 0.95 Imperial Monits.

The obvious cause of the Province's Monetary instability is an ongoing working class revolt which has crippled Provincial extraction and production capabilities. The rebel activity began within the first year of Viscount Usri's reign, and has always centered around the moon Capella II: "Tayah" (foremost of House Darran's producing territories and HomeWorld of Minor Clan Tsoros). Over the last decade, revolutionaries calling themselves the Tayan Liberation Front ("TLF") have attacked and seized scores of major installations and arable territories, many of which now provide food and much needed supplies for the rebel forces. The Darranian Provincial Guard (the House's own defense force) has been tripled in size, and the Emperor has sent arms and supply shipments to the Church, but the resistance has grown as well. It is believed that the TLF has some assistance in the form of Colosian military equipment, but this charge has yet to be substantiated (House Colos is incensed at the accusation). In any case, although the scale of the conflict (and the civilian death toll) has increased exponentially, neither side has been able thus far to inflict permanent damage upon the other, nor to breach the other's communications networks.

THE VISCOUNT



2.1 TIMELINE

The following section sketches out a brief history of Darran Province, much of which will be learned by the Players throughout the course of the Module. Not all of this information is general knowledge – the GM should consider the source when providing any historical data.

PreImp.9582 – A group of Terran cryo-colonists sets off for the Frontier in a sublight vessel.

PreImp.9496 – The colonists reach the Capella system, settling on Capella II:1 "Tayah". Mining and farming installations are set up.

PreImp.7842 – The Capella colony is cut off from the rest of humanity as it is struck by the Universal Technological Recession. Eventually, they will lose almost all of their scientific knowledge, reverting to a rather primitive lifestyle. These simple folk are the forebearers of the modern-day Tsorosians.

Imp.144 – As Imperial interest in FZ5 heightens, the Emperor is approached by Vilgra Darran, a doctor of political science who has devised a social scheme for the creation and maintenance of a productive planetary workforce through quasi-religious teachings. The Emperor is impressed, and Darran's project is implemented.

Imp.152 – The Logum (leaders) of the Church of Darran are declared nobility, and are granted Search and Settlement rights. Later that year, they discover the Tsorosians, and claim the Capella system.

Imp.160 – The Tsorosians, having accepted the Church doctrines with little difficulty, are granted Integrating status. Darran Products begins purchasing huge tracts of Tayan land at ridiculously low prices. The first Tayan industrial complex is built. Many more follow.

Imp.209 – Darran Province is granted acquisition of the Acquire system for their assistance in FZ5. Tayah Port is completed, and the Tsorosians reach subsidiary status.

Imp.299 – An influx of Imperial colonists boosts the Province's population (still over 40% Tsorosian), and settlements arise throughout the Capella system.

Imp.308 – With production at an all-time high, the Tsorosians argue for, and receive, independent rule of Tayah, becoming a Minor Clan (although most of the moon's surface is still owned by the Church of Darran).

Imp.412 – Industrial waste and energy shortage problems begin occurring on Tayah.

Imp.440 – Boban Tsabano, a Tsorosian spokesman who advocates acts of civil disobedience, becomes a public figure (inadvertently sowing the seeds of the yet unforeseen Tayan revolution).

Imp.448 – The Church imposes martial law on Tayah, leading to the Great Tayan Riot. Later, the Church takes resistance organizers to the GCH, pressing charges of conspiracy and trespassing. Harsh penalties are enforced upon the striking Tsorosians, and production quotas are increased.

Imp.451 – The benevolent reign of Viscount Shamus II Darran (Imp.423- 468) creates a period of (relative) harmony, and the Church investigates several claims of industrial negligence against its own subdivisions.

Imp.468 – Shamus II is poisoned and dies, leaving no heir ascendant. The Emperor places Mandarr Usri Darran on the Provincial throne.

Imp.469 – Taxes are raised throughout the Province in order to provide funds for the House's defense force. Later that year, the TLF arises, taking seven Church Verbum (missionaries) hostage for over five months.

Imp.470 – Viscount Usri sends delegates to negotiate with the rebels, who agree to release the hostages in exchange for seventeen political prisoners (all Tsorosian). The exchange is made.

Imp.471-present – Uprisings turn to warfare as the TLF grows and becomes better organized. The Church asks for, and receives, Imperial aid shipments on an annual basis, while the rebels receive covert shipments of arms and supplies from unidentified sources.

2.2 SYSTEMS LISTING

Cosmographically speaking, Darran Province consists of three stellar systems, one of which (the Capella system) contains two major planetary settlements. The following sections provide detail on these four sites of interest.

2.21 CROIX

System: Capella G2 II

Planet: Capella I "Croix"

Province: Darran

Status: Provincial HomeWorld

Population: 8970

Productivity: 2.7%

Production Emphasis: Specialty foods, Media

Rating: Producing

Circumference: 14100 km

Gravity: 0.7 x Terran norm

Natural Satellites: 2

Day: 18.2 std hours

Year: 169.2 std days (232.4 local days)

Atmosphere: 18/73/6% oxygen/nitrogen/carbon dioxide

Hydrosphere: 23%

Climate: Hot/Arid

Mean Temperature: 40 deg. Celsius

Biosphere: Complex native flora and nonsentient fauna

Discovered and settled in Imp.152 by the Church of Darran, the innermost of Capella's six planets is a fertile desert-like world which nevertheless supports a complex hydrocarbon-based ecosystem. Most Croixan creatures are small insects and thick-skinned, furless "mammals" (few local lifeforms are dangerous). The plants of Croix have developed all manner of interesting means of accumulating and storing water (which exists in greater quantities underground than on the surface). Arable land is scattered around the planet in patches, and much of it remains untamed.

Under the religious rule of Church Darran, several areas of the planet have been built up into full-scale modern communities. In these areas, the technology level is just slightly behind the rest of the Inner Houses. The Imperial traveler will notice a marked lack of robots and androids on Croix – this is because Viscount Usri has a personal aversion to such constructs, and they are only used for tasks which cannot be performed by men (the fine for bringing a "mechanoid" off ship on Croix is 1000 EI).

Besides the (relatively standard) Spacefaring Port, Croix's major installations include the Royal Darranian Palace and Church of the Divine Process, the corporate headquarters of Darran Products, the studios of the Darran Media Network, and the Croix museum of Provincial history. Many large estates ring the built-up areas, some containing upwards of fifty square kilometers. It is considered fashionable on Croix to cultivate rare and exotic flora and fauna. Strange beasts and plants from many worlds can be seen within the walls of the estates (or within domed "pseudo-environs" created to simulate the lifeforms' natural habitats).

Orbital facilities above Croix include a standard Orbital Station (80 staff, capacity for 50 guests); a manned trajectory control satellite (all takeoffs and landings are performed by these representatives of the Church: failure to comply results in a fine of no less than 2500EI); and an Imperial Fleet Supply satellite (automated and heavily defended, containing arms, ammunition and "atmospheric defoliants"). Ships approaching the planet will be hailed from the trajectory control satellite for passage code verification and landing procedures ("Transfer all Astro/Pilot functions to Croix control, Microfreq 188.6 or tight-beam laser rig"). Both of Croix's rocky moons ("Kelek" and "Mearsda") support mining installations.

2.22 TAYAH

System: Capella G2 II
Planet: Capella 11:1 "Tayah"
Province: Darran (Supervising Government)
Status: HomeWorld of Minor Clan Tsoros, Darranian colony world
Population: 9,867,000
Productivity: 53.4%
Production Emphasis: Foodstuffs, Ore, Textiles, Lumber
Rating: Producing/Minor Clan
Circumference: 33500 km
Gravity: 1.4 x Terran norm
Day: (Lunar Rotation): 38 std hours
Lunar Orbit: (Around Planet): 84 std days
Planetary Orbit (Around Primary): 367.2 std days (241.6 local days)
Atmosphere: Thin; 17/68/10% oxygen/nitrogen/carbon dioxide
Hydrosphere: 30% (including large south polar icecap)
Climate: Cool/Wet & Dry (alternating seasons)
Mean Temperature: 5 deg. Celsius
Biosphere: Complex native flora, sentient & nonsentient fauna (Tsorosians believed to be indigenous, or Harbinger "seedlings")

Tayah was discovered in IMP.152 – the year the Church moved into the Capella system – but its history reaches back quite a bit further than that. The original Human inhabitants were a group of colonists who were cut off from the rest of mankind by the Universal Tech Recession, and eventually forgotten completely. Then, as now, the weather on Tayah was quite oppressive, and a large number of dangerous non-sentient lifeforms roamed wild (today, most of these beasts have been killed off, or moved into enclosed wildlife preserves). As living conditions were difficult, and technology was both distrusted and in short supply, the colonists turned to simple, group-oriented survival techniques. The low-tech lifestyle adopted by these ancestors of the present-day Tsorosians is still prevalent on Tayah, and the highly interdependent social structure created out of necessity made it possible (even easy) for the first Darranian Verbum (missionaries) to convince the Tsorosians of the plausibility of Church doctrine (see Section 2.4: *The Church of Darran*).

Today, most Tayans live in large apartment complexes built for the locals by the Church. Roadways, bridges, aqueducts and all industrial installations (the only *really* modern tech on the moon's surface) are maintained by the Church as well, by teams

sent out regularly from Croix. Upon the roadways there are the electric buses of the Tayans (cells charged via solar panels on the roof), great linked lorries carrying tons of mined ore, GEM and Grav vehicles driven by Church Verbum and Darran Products administrators, and various types of robots. Unlike Croix, Tayah is crawling with robots – mostly of the Service and Mech Interface variety, and specially fitted for their application/skill (ie; tunnelling, ore evaluation/extraction, cargo loading, etc).

The surface of Tayah is dotted with excavation sites and refining facilities, apartment communities and fenced off agricultural regions, but much of the moon is still in a wild state. Far from the major bodies of water and built-up areas lie tangled forests and dry, rocky chaparrals. Here, the native animals are more abundant, and the terrain more difficult – in these distant and sparsely populated regions the rebel forces conceal their bases of operation.

Orbital facilities above Tayah include an Orbital Station (150 staff, capacity for 50 guests), a planetary survey and disaster warning beacon, a manned trajectory control satellite (the Church controls the Spacefaring Port on Tayah – pilots must sign over controls as on Croix), dozens of media satellites, and a Church emergency supply pod containing disaster/rescue equipment and freeze-dried foods.

2.23 SHERR

System: Aguirre MO I
Planet: Aguirre IX "Sherr"
Province: Darran
Status: Active mining colony
Population: 6,125,000
Productivity: 9.9%
Production Emphasis: Ores and Radioactives
Rating: Producing
Circumference: 28500 km
Gravity: 1.75 x Terran norm
Natural Satellites: None
Day: 182.3 std hours
Year: 512.282 Imp.years (25290.94 local days)
Atmosphere: Thin; 12/60/8% oxygen/nitrogen/helium
Hydrosphere: Nil
Climate: Arctic/Arid
Mean Temperature: -5 deg. Celsius
Biosphere: No indigenous lifeforms

Discovered in Imp.203 by an Imperial exploration vessel, the ninth of Aguirre's ten planets was soon found to possess an abundance of mineral and radioactive ores.

The system was held up in Prospecting status until Imp.209, when His Majesty granted it to House Darran in gratitude for their support of the drive for FZ5. Within fifteen months the barely tolerable planet was promoted to Developing status. By late Imp.215, the Church of Darran had built three extracting and refining installations on Sherr, classifying the world as a Producing colony. For twenty-three years mining was done by massive geofarming drones, assisted by enviro-suited and grav-belted miners (colloquially referred to as "rockmites"). Eventually the three installations were enclosed by domes (to ward off the insidious rays of Aguirre as well as to provide a regulated, breathable atmosphere). Since then, three more such mine-domes and a Spacefaring Port have been added to the planetscape.

Today, the mines use controlled laser burst, and they are worked by humanoid and robot alike; the extracted ores are hauled in gigantic "Craters" – huge, tracked drones which slowly and perpetually roll back and forth between the refining center and the currently active mine mouths, carrying up to 100 tons of ore in their enclosed, rad-shielded cargo holds. The mines operate at all times, and pull between twenty-five and thirty million tons per Imperial year. The miners, families, Church Verbum and other citizens live in smaller domes alongside the mines. These "Civ-domes" are, in effect, small cities. Sherr Port is also enclosed, its visitors and staff separated from the outdoor landing bays by airlock systems.

Three standard Orbots circle Sherr, protecting large (5000 ton) cargo drones, and a manned trajectory control satellite waits to handle planetfall if desired (due to the large number of independent miners and foreign investors who visit Sherr, compliance with the Church landing policy is not mandatory here).

2.3 CULTURES OF DARRAN PROVINCE

Due to the large number of Imperial colonists who have over the years immigrated to House Darran, the Province lacks the sort of ethnocentric culture which is the earmark of many Inner Houses. Instead, the society is sort of a "melting pot" in which might be found smaller subgroups of just about any other ethnic/Provincial background. These people are primarily working-class citizenry, and some of them have joined the rebel forces (which are predominantly, but not exclusively, Tsorosian). The TLF notwithstanding, most

Darranian citizens prefer to handle their grievances through the formal channels established for that purpose by the Church of Darran, and trust the Church's defense forces to succeed in doing their job. The local attitudes and lifestyles represent a good cross-section of the Imperium as a whole – these people are the typical mass of relatively mindless and mediocre worker/consumers. Their lives are complicated only by the near-constant warfare between the Provincial Guard and the TLF, for each year more and more of them are taken hostage by rebels or eradicated in "defensive raids." The situation is not without its side effects – because extended living under such stressful conditions creates an almost intolerable state of nervous tension, the Darranian birthrate has risen 115% in the last five years.

It can be seen that this last trend will eventually instill a degree of homogeneity to the Province, but there is another, more powerful (and older) bonding force at work here. To one degree or another, most Darranian citizens are indeed followers of the Darranian religion – Tsorosians included (see Section 2.4: *The Church of Darran*). There is no functional separation of Church and State – the Viscount is the Provincial liege, chief political executive and Grand Logus of the Church. Many aspects of Darranian culture, business, behavior and administration, regardless of ethnic "flavor", may still be seen to have arisen out of basic Church doctrine.

2.31 RACIAL DESCRIPTION: HOUSE DARRAN

Homeworld: Capella I "Croix"

Basic Type/Form: Hominoid mix; 88% Human

Racial Statistics: As per Race

Background Picks: 4 (At least 1 must be spent on Status)

Racial Origin: Followers of the Church of Darran, the teachings of which were designed to create an interdependent workforce.

Political Structure: Monarchy/Theocracy supported by a central oligarchy of "Logum" (priest-lords).

Social Structure: Extended, patrilineal families, with a strong "serve thy neighbor" ethic (instilled by Church doctrine).

Military: Fairly large and extremely loyal (though undertrained) volunteer army and starmada (Imperial & Devonian equipment).

Language: A designed tongue called "Darpait" (created by the Church of Darran).

Currency: Monits are small rings composed of a part-titanium alloy, often worn strung under clothes on a decorated belt called a "Sirtash".

Housing: "Ekreetts"; large, round apartment buildings, 3-8 stories high, built around wide central courtyards.

Diet: Wide variety of Provincially-produced foods, mostly vegetables and sea/lake food.

Worship: In the Darranian religion, The Ideal is transient, modular, and (importantly) unconscious – that is to say, totally subjective. The Divine can be experienced but never analyzed, for it ceases to be when objectivity is applied to it (see Section 2.4: *The Church of Darran*).

Tech: Low average Imperial level (no Mods).

Media/Art: All prized arts are live, solo performances. The most "artistic" performers are those who please the most people, so even "High Art" is unobtrusive, unoriginal and usually comic.

Xeno Acceptance: Routine (+30)

2.32 RACIAL DESCRIPTION: MINOR CLAN TSOROS

Homeworld: Capella II:1 "Tayah"

Basic Type/Form: Humanoid 1

Racial Statistics: As per Humanoid 1

Background Picks: 3

Racial Origin: Pre-Recession cryo-colonists from Terra (this is not common knowledge – they are believed to be Harbinger descendants).

Political Structure: Patriarchal monarchy supported by a publicly elected council of regional/special interest representatives.

Social Structure: As House Darran.

Military: None, legally (being a Minor Clan), but many have illegally obtained arms and have become revolutionaries.

Language: A mixture of old Terran English and Darpait, known as "Ambatsya" (and discouraged by the Church of Darran).

Currency: Imperial Monits (though many use locally stamped silver ingots called "Kaba" – this is an illegal practice).

Housing: As House Darran (low-rent ekreetts built by the Church).

Diet: As House Darran.

Worship: Most follow the Church's teachings, but the old Tsorosian beliefs were animistic – some few still follow these traditions.

Tech: Stunted into dependence on the Church; all Tech & Sci Tasks are at - 50%, and are one Difficulty Level higher than standard.

Media/Art: As House Darran, plus some vestigial folk-crafts such as carving, painting, weaving, glassblowing, etc.

Xeno Acceptance: Light (+10); Curious but wary of strangers (especially aliens).



2.4 THE CHURCH OF DARRAN

In Imp.144, the brilliant political scientist Doctor Vilgra Darran (Imp.92-178) presented His Imperial Majesty with an outline for a long-term sociological experiment which could be performed on a Provincial scale. The purpose of the Darran project was to harness and control the cultural drift tendencies of a subject population via quasi-religious teachings and propaganda campaigns, thereby creating a perfectly effective and interdependent workforce. The "Church" of Darran was almost immediately granted go-ahead status, and members were selected for the original Inner circle of Logum. Throughout the next eight years, the basic tenets were laid out and refined as research continued. In Imp.152 the Logum of the Church were declared Nobility by the Emperor, and granted Search and Settlement rights – the rest is history (see Timeline).

Darranian Church doctrine is nothing new – mostly a rehashing of ancient Judeo-Christian ethical belief systems – but it does include one major twist: the Unconscious Divinity concept. This singular belief is the cornerstone of the Darranian teachings, and doubtless the single most powerful tenet of the Church. The idea is that the Divine is a universal process, which plays out its nature by manifesting reality; people, places, things, events, and information. Intelligence is seen as a survival tool which many species have adopted, but its rigid logic and demanding curiosity preclude it from ever grasping the Divine – in fact, Divinity (in its "true" form) ceases to exist as soon as it is questioned "objectively". In short, "If you ask, you can't understand." During the reign of Viscount Ullan (Imp.206-262), this concept was given yet a sharper twist. Ullan, a melancholic and melodramatic individual, had examined the Church tenets and reinterpreted them in a now classic work entitled *Reflections of Perfection*. "If the Divine exists everywhere but in the sentient observer," wrote Yulran, "...one must serve one's neighbor before and above one's self..." This altruistic belief has since crept into virtually every aspect of Darranian social relations. It is known in colloquial terms as the "Serve Thy Neighbor Ethic".

NOTE: *The Ethic is not applied to "Dactra" – nonbelievers – or to any alien (non-Hominoid) races whatsoever. It is basically an internal means of redistributing work effort which (in theory) should come full circle, creating a closely-knit*

and highly interdependent society. The desired effect has indeed been achieved on the individual level – most Darranians are so hopelessly dependant upon the Church and other people that they could not live for long without their accustomed support – but it has ultimately failed on the group level, as the mere existence of the TLF amply proves.

The Church's corporate division, Darran Products, manages all Provincial extraction, production and trade; it is the only Darranian corporation. Local offices and outlets can be found on all planets and stations within the Province, and the corporate headquarters is located on Croix. The chairman of Darran Products is elected by the Church Logum, and serves an indefinite number of five-year terms. Presently, this position is held by Neo-Logus Eldel Trafke.

The Inner Circle of the Church is comprised of the NeoLogum, chief of whom is the Viscount himself. They are an elitist group, fully aware of the designed nature of the Church doctrines (although they do generally hold to the teachings – at least out of decorum). Most of the esteemed individuals reside on Croix, either in the Palace itself or in the great estates which dot the beautiful planetside. When acting in any official capacity, Inner Circle members tend to use an extremely formal and convoluted speaking style. This "Church Rhetoric" is noted for its cool politeness and rigid grammatical rules, even as it is criticized for its frequent (and purposeful) ambiguity. Those who deal with the Inner Circle are well advised to bear this in mind during interactions – breakers of protocol will patronized at best, and negotiations might be terminated due to the visitors' "inability to conform to writ." The Circle goes to no great length to educate the public as to the proper use of Church Rhetoric. Tsorosian delegates to the Palace are frequently expelled from the Halls of Hearing due to this technicality.

CHURCH HIERARCHY

Viscount Darran	
Inner Circle (NeoLogum)	
Logum (Parish Leaders)	Verbum (Missionaries)
Dastedi (Acolytes)	Tacted (Local Assistants)

2.5 THE TAYAN LIBERATION FRONT

When the Darranians first came to Tayah, the Tsorosians were a naive and struggling race, possessing only the rudiments of civilization. Their technics level had fallen so low that even the most routine planetary phenomena were attributed to "the Gods", and Gods were everywhere – animals, plants, people, the forces of nature – each of these things had (or was in itself) a God, and each God had its own methods and desires. It is not difficult to see why the first representatives of the Church to land here were considered supernatural beings of some kind by the "backward" Tsorosians. The impressive technical gadgetry and medicinal knowledge displayed by the Church Verbum only served to enhance this impression, and the Darranians made good use of their "deific" status. It did not take long for the Tsorosians to grasp the basic tenets of Church doctrine, which they considered themselves to be the fortunate recipients of (thanks to the "Starmen" of Darran). Through the years, the Tsorosians were gradually brought up to the comparatively sophisticated technics level which they today possess, and eventually the Church representatives were no longer thought of as supernatural beings. However, since the Church still held a position of political and technological superiority, it was still respected (and feared) by the Tsorosians. The opinion of the Church was more weighty, the wisdom more profound, than that of a Tsorosian – the word of the Church was tantamount to law. Such was the state of the Province for nearly three centuries.

By Imp.412, the Tsorosians had reached Minor Clan status, and were no longer considered simply a colony of the Church. They began to manage more of their own affairs (still under Darranian "supervision"), and attempted for the first time to exercise some control over the fate of Tayah, which was beginning to show signs of environmental destabilization. The Church, however, had foreseen this eventuality from the outset, and had for years been purchasing huge tracts of arable land from the Clan (usually at naively-accepted low prices). When the Tsorosians finally tried to retain possession of these lands, they found that (according to Imperial law), they had no legal recourse whatsoever – the lands belonged to the Church of Darran. The Tsorosians had become the serfs of their own HomeWorld.

In Imp.440, a wise and charismatic leader arose from the ranks of Clan Tsoros; a theologian, philosopher and public speaker named Boban Tsabano, who preached the doctrine of passive resistance as a means of regaining control over Tayah. Tsabano was rumored to have been a Telepath in addition to his other accomplishments, and for seven years he rallied and spoke, leading his legions of advocates to create chaos for the Church. Public demonstrations, marches and sit-down strikes kept the Defense Force's hands busy and the Church's jails overflowing. Tayah's production rating dropped almost 70%, and the Church reacted violently, declaring Provincial martial law within its Tayan territories. A bloodbath ensued, during which over four thousand Tsorosians were killed for trespassing, and thousands more rioted in the streets and vandalized the Spacefaring Port in what has become known as The Great Tayan Riot. Amidst the furor Tsabano disappeared, never to be heard from again. Later that year, the Church pressed charges against hundreds of Tsorosian activists, taking their cases to the GCH. Once again, the Tsorosians found themselves without legal recourse. Since the disputed lands belonged to the Church, any actions undertaken on said lands against the Church's desires could indeed be considered Provincial crimes (to be adjudicated by the Darranian court). Needless to say, the Church prosecuted to the full extent of its own capability, and by Imp.448 the first Tayan resistance movement was little more than a painful memory.

Political tension eased during the reign of Shamus II, and several important executives were removed from their positions in Darran Products as a result of Tsorosian complaints. Production quotas were relaxed somewhat, and Tayah Port was rebuilt. The assassination (by poisoning) of the benevolent ruler came as a shock to the entire Province. Twenty-five days later the Emperor granted the Provincial Throne to Mandarr Usri, a Darranian general who had served as liaison to the Imperial Marines, and on that night the Tayan Liberation Front held its first clandestine meeting.

Several hundred Tsorosians and non-Tsorosian sympathizers, outraged and terrified, gathered in the ruins of a Darranian factory. Their cause was plain: the total liberation of the moon Tayah from the political and corporate control of any and all non-Tayans. An anti-Darranian propaganda campaign was launched, word spread through the Tayan underground and recruits were located, emergency stockpiles were cached away, and the movement grew. In Imp.469, the TLF officially declared war upon House Darran by taking seven Church Verbum hostages. The hostages were later exchanged for seventeen Tsorosian activists who had been held by the Church for conspiracy, and the five-month drama drew Empire-wide media coverage. The TLF ranks swelled again, although several factions had already splintered off from the main group.

Today, the Tayan Liberation Front is comprised of dozens of smaller factions, each with their own means and methods. Most such groups keep in contact with the others via shortwave radio and microfreq hamsets, or actually send runners between the settlements. Having seized enough installations to produce their own food, they have also managed to locate an outside source of armaments, and carry out regular guerilla warfare maneuvers on an almost daily basis. Now numbering in the hundreds of thousands, with millions of nonmilitant sympathizers both within and outside the Province, the "rebel band" has become a serious force to be reckoned with.

2.6 DEMOGRAPHIC CHART

The following table indicates the demographic breakdowns (by percentage figures) of all settlements and populated constructs within Darranian space. Population totals are assumed to have been rounded, but are accurate to within 5% (plus or minus). "%D" = Darranian, "%T" = Tsorosian, and "%O" = Other.

Location	Population	%D	%T	%O
Croix	8,970	88	6	6
Croix:1	722,000	42	49	9
Croix:2	1,311,400	36	54	10
Croix Orb.Stn.	80	90	5	5
Tayah	9,867,000	23	71	6
Tayah Orb.Stn.	150	90	6	4
Sherr	6,125,000	33	57	10
Total	18,034,600	28	64	8

ADVENTURE: "WELCOMING PARTY"

The PCs get their introduction to Tayah, and learn to avoiding making too many assumptions... This adventure (being the first in the series) is the easiest to complete, and first or second level characters may safely be used. The PCs themselves should possess at least a small amount of reputation/prestige/status, or else work for someone who does (any employer from the Devonian Services to the League of Merchants will do – whoever they are, they must have engaged in some sort of trade with the Darranian Church on at least one occasion). Professional classes recommended for use with this Adventure Module include all types, but it is important that the majority of the party be capable of handling combat situations (these incidents will increase in magnitude as the Module progresses – let's hope the PCs do...).

3.1 BACKGROUND DATA

The GM should be familiar with the entire Adventure Module before beginning play; for this Adventure, the sections on Tayah, the Tsoresians, and the TLF are of primary importance.

As the open warfare between the TLF and the Provincial Guard has escalated, a good number of Tsoresian refugees have been left homeless and jobless. Many of these displaced folk have migrated to isolated and hastily arranged camps run by the rebels, where "retrieved" foodstuffs and manufactured goods are distributed as best possible. Thousands of emaciated and downtrodden people, hungry and lacking proper medical care, gather in these hidden enclaves. Their only sources of support are the supply raids undergone by the TLF fighters on a semi-regular basis. Resources at these camps have never been abundant, but those groups which have bartered food for weaponry are now in an especially desperate position.

Recently, due to the fact that both sides were awaiting much-needed support and equipment, the war has undergone a bit of a hiatus. This break has afforded both sides a chance to heal their wounded and fortify their bases of operation, and to engage in any side-interests which have arisen. Two weeks ago, a TLF group calling itself "Havenband" came into possession of a nearly gutted vessel which had crash-landed 2000 km north of Tayah Port. In the wreckage of the ship, they discovered a functional Communications Torpedo and launcher, which they put to quick use. Drawing authentic names out of old mediadiscs and rumor, they had soon assembled a false distress message asking for manpower and supplies. The Commtorp was launched, and the band retreated to their forest home to await the results...

3.2 THE NPCs

This Adventure, like the rest of those in this Module, includes several settings in which the PCs might come in contact with a greater number of NPCs than can easily be detailed. "Incidental" characters are usually described as part of the Setting they can be found in. The NPCs noted here are those most likely to (or those certain to) have a major effect on the course of the Adventure.

3.21 FIELD MEDIC TSAMITA KYAMA

A small but surprisingly strong young Human (ST 95) with a great capacity for joke-telling. Kyama is also a skilled diagnostician and tireless researcher (who often spends needless hours double-checking the veracity of his findings). His cool, efficient working manner leaves him when the work ends, releasing an equally adamant social persona. His shoulder-length hair is straight, and its natural black color is tinted with a shiny indigo. Kyama is skilled in the use of all field medical equipment, having served two years as a Field Medic for the Devonian "Sabre" Starmada. He is considered support personnel (as opposed to command personnel) on this mission, and will defer to the PCs for all important decisions.

3.22 LOGUS SHUGHTRA MENNAN DARRAN

A distant member of the Darranian Royal Family, Shughtra is a reasonably competent Administrator and button-pusher who is in charge of the Darranian Orbital Station above Tayah. An overweight Human ("heavy bones – it runs in the family...") with large eyes and nervous fingers, he barely manages to put across the impression of power that a man in his position should seem to require. He is hesitant, uncomprehending, and ridiculously dependent upon Procedures, and he will no doubt frustrate the poor PCs to no

end. In truth, Shughtra is suffering from a great deal of stress himself, and relies upon regular doses of tranquilizing meds to keep from collapsing altogether.

3.23 TORATOMA

Manager of the refugee camp known as Havenband and captain of the rebel strikeforce of the same name, Toratoma is a devoted and resourceful leader (and the originator of the Commtorp plan which brought the PCs here). He is tall for a Tsoresian (almost 1.65 meters), and is familiar with a variety of fighting forms (he once "worked" as a ring-fighter on Croix). Although he is capable of killing without hesitation, Toratoma considers himself first a diplomat of sorts – always willing to negotiate rather than fight. He has held many jobs for many employers within Darran Province, and possesses rather cosmopolitan experience for a Tsoresian Tayan – he has actually seen the Darranian Palace, and knows how the Croixan rich live. He is an intense and complicated individual, very devoted to his refugee wards, and willing to take sizeable risks to ensure their survival. His plan for the PCs depends largely upon their reaction to the refugees; he does not plan to kill them outright, but would feel no compunction over holding them hostage (either for ransom or simply to bring attention to his cause).

3.24 TABRASTO ("OLD ROCK")

A venerable Tsoresian and master of "The Ancient Ways", Old Rock (this is a powerful title and honorific amongst the Tsoresians) is the eldest individual at Havenband, and the only one to possess any degree of Psionic talent. He is small, pale, almost completely hairless, and totally blind – none of which diminishes his status in the eyes of the camp whatsoever – and stays in a nearby hollow which Toratoma dug for him. Old Rock claims to have received the ancient teachings from his father, who remembered the days when Tayah Port possessed only one landing pad (this would have been about Imp.260), and who sold his 4 hectare farm to the Church for 980 Monits (modern value) in Imp.272. That year, family and friends moved to the undeveloped forests of what would later be known as GeoSector 45. Here, the group lived out their days, with Tabrastor eventually taking his father's place as the local tradition-teller, until most of them were killed by a poorly-placed artillery strike three years ago. Tabrastor is often very tired and he can't speak loudly, or for long. He usually relates his advices, teachings and tales of the past to Toratoma, who passes them on to the rest of the group.

In fact, Tabrasto is Boban Tsbano, the father of the original Tayan revolution. He retired from public leadership as a result of the failed "Peaceful Revolution" of Imp.448, and formed Havenband with help from loyal followers (including Toratoma). Many of the refugees here have no idea that Tabrasto's past is almost entirely fictional, and believe (like most of the Province) that Tsbano was killed by the Church years ago. The truth of his identity will *not* be revealed to the PCs in this Adventure (although they may find out later, by other means – see Section 6.5).

3.3 THE SETTINGS

3.31 "THE DAPHNE" HYPERSHUTTLE

This is the vessel given to the Players by their employer for the duration of the Darranian mission. It has been slightly modified so as to permit the carrying of up to six additional persons and cargo, so things are a bit cramped inside.

SHIP NAME: The Daphne
 PRODUCER: Devon Transtar
 CLASS: Hypershuttle
 TONNAGE/HITS: 450
 COMPUTER MK: 45
 SENSRS: 3 LY range
 LASER COMM: 10,000 km range
 TBD COMM: Nil
 ARMOR TYPE: CAT 22
 CREW: 1 Astro, 2 Tech
 MAX SUBLIGHT ACCEL: Rtg 8 = 80 km/Sec/Sec
 TRANSLIGHT DISPLACEMENT: Rtg 16 = 13 LY/day
 SCREENS: +30
 EW: +30
 ARMAMENT: Laser Cannon Mk.15 (Front)
 AUXILIARY SYSTEMS: Auxiliary Reactor
 OPERATING RANGE: 100 LY (total)
 OPERATING DURATION: 266 days
 OTHER FEATURES: Landing capable, Full Grav, Cargo Bay (6 cumefts), Galley.
 SPECIAL PROGRAMS:
 Gen.Reference; Xeno
 Gen.Reference; All Tech
 Ref.Progs SENSRS Progs @ +30;
 Course to Tayah.

3.32 TAYAH ORBSTATION

This is the Orbital Station run by Shugthra Darran. It has a large regular staff (mostly Darranian, although Tsorosians and even a few Xeno-Humans also work here), and handles a good percentage of Tayan export (the customs department occupies the same level as the landing bays). In addition, the Station is tied into the local TBD network (Access Tachyon Technology). The minimal security staff (most able-bodied troops have been sent planetside) is tense, and armed with Mk.3 Assault Stunners. The area carries a 10% chance of encounters every hour (see Section 8.5: *Encounters Table*).

TAYAH ONE

PRODUCER: Jade Voidmasters
 CLASS: Standard Orbital Station
 TONNAGE/HITS: 50,000
 COMPUTER MK: 200
 SENSRS: 10 LY range
 LASER COMM: 100,000 km range
 TBD COMM: 35 LY range
 ARMOR TYPE: CAT 26
 CREW: 22 Astro, 44 Tech, 20 Security, 12 Admin, 22 Support Staff
 MAX SUBLIGHT ACCEL: 5 km/sec/sec (maneuvering)
 SCREENS: +60
 EW: +40
 ARMAMENT: 2 Mk.20 Blast Cannons (Side-mounted 360 degree turrets) Mk.15 Explosive Missile Launcher (Uni-Turret below Station) 1000 Missile Magazine
 AUXILIARY SYSTEMS: Reactor, Bridge
 GUEST CAPACITY: up to 100
 DOCKING BERTHS:
 Pressurized/Internal: 1 (15,000 tons)
 Gravitic Pads: 3 (1000 tons each)
 OTHER FEATURES: Full Grav, Galley, Dispensary, Rec.Room
 CREW COMBAT SKILLS: All at +45

3.33 HAVENBAND (REFUGEE CAMP)

Havenband is located in the southern reaches of GeoSector 45, a dense and rainy environment crawling with bizarre local lifeforms (it is the forested sector just north of the sector containing the Port). The camp is set in a vast dirt valley (created by a large-scale explosive missile barrage), which has been completely covered by tying extensions onto the overhead foliage. Camouflage practices such as these (coupled with the oppressive environment) have kept the camp hidden for its four years of operation.

The valley is about 100 meters across, and perhaps 20 meters deep in the center. There are small hovels of various design scattered everywhere, and one larger wooden structure dominates the scene. From this building can be heard the cries of the sick and the wounded, as their brethren try their best to heal them with primitive equipment. Small Tsorosian children with gas-filled bellies and vacant stares meander naked amongst the stalls, and tiny hairless rodent-like animals called "Vishtre" scamper about, nipping at anything with an interesting smell (this includes almost everything and everyone here). Near the wooden building there is a great metal stove, made out of scrap parts and fueled with local woodstuffs, which is maintained by a constant flow of ragged women (these women get rather upset if a man approaches the stove, and will attempt to shoo him away by waving their burly arms and shouting).

Several decameters north of the camp proper there is a small, covered door leading down to the chamber of Old Rock (the door is VERY HARD [- 20] to spot from outside). Toratoma visits him daily, and always consults him regarding serious matters, which the old Tsorosian adjudicates by consulting his own authorities – his old, handwritten books, local animal totems, and the powerful spirits of the dead. Old Rock also possesses quite a collection of odd stones and talismans, which are arranged haphazardly on two little shelves beside him.

3.4 THE TASK

Initially, the PCs' task seems rather straightforward – a covert locate and rescue operation with a couple restrictive details – but it will soon become apparent that this task is somewhat less than easily accomplished. In fact (as only the GM knows), the rescue mission is a total impossibility, and the only *real* goal of this adventure is getting stranded on Tayah – *that* will prove a fate impossible to avoid. After entering the Capella system and approaching Tayah, the PCs may or may not have some difficulty with the staff at the OrbStation. Shortly after being grounded in GeoSector 45, they will encounter Toratoma and Havenband. The rest of the adventure is an introduction to the TLF lifestyle, and a test of the PCs' moral and political character.

3.41 STARTING THE PLAYERS

The PCs are contacted by their employer, who has a task to set before them; a distress message has been received via Commtorp which reveals the location of several missing operatives as being the moon Tayah in the Capella system. The message requests medical and materiel aid, stressing the dangerous nature of the environment. The PCs are expected to enter the Tayan atmosphere and approach GeoSector 45, sensoring for their alleged missing companions. This is to be performed "stealthily", for the PCs' employer knows enough about the situation on Tayah to want nothing to do with it. For this reason, the PCs are instructed to avoid contact with either the Church or the TLF, and to proceed with their rescue operation in as directly a fashion as possible. It is considered likely that the PCs will have to make planetfall in some covered area of GeoSector 45, conceal the ship as best possible, and complete the search on foot, using Multiscanners. The Daphne Hypershuttle has been prepared for their use, and carries the requested crates of support gear.

NOTE: It is a good idea for one of the PCs to be in control of the Hypershuttle (i.e., Piloting skills), for this adds to the excitement of the upcoming vehicular encounters. However, if none of the Players wants to be the Pilot, the GM could easily give this job to a robot (or even create another NPC, if desired).

3.42 AIDS

The Daphne's computer contains a number of programs which should prove of much use to the PCs, first and foremost of which is a preset coursetape for the Capella system. The computer includes all necessary defensive and standard operating programs, as well as all four SENSAR Analysis programs (Bio, Construct, Planetary & Stellar). In addition, its molecular memory stores contain all Tech Reference tapes at +10 (resourceful PCs come up with all manner of nifty construction/repair projects), and General Reference tapes which will allow studious characters to pull up Stellar and Planetary Readouts for all stars and settlements in Darran Province (as well as the General Information on Darran Province which appears at the beginning of Section 2.0).

The PCs' employer will not let them go totally empty-handed, either; each of them will be given ten energy cells or clips for their primary weapon, and sentinel helmets will be provided. The ship's galley is capable of synthesizing many varieties of digestible matter, and the fuel tanks hold a good deal more Andrium than will probably be required for the mission.

Kyama is especially well equipped, carrying a full field medkit (Medscanner, Tissue Knitter, Dermal Closer, Regenergun, Skeletal Field Knitter and Medtab Applicator), as well as an assortment of drugtabs (which he is responsible for the rationing of): 4 Alerlene, 6 Amboathorpin, 10 Andeline, 4 Interferon IV, 3 Jirolene, and 3 Perseverine Compound. He is armed with an Assault Stunner.

The six support crates contain all manner of medical and nutritional supplies, healing and anti-viral medtabs, freeze-dried field rations, two self-contained large tents with full life support, environmental suits and raw electronic/cybernetic parts (for miscellaneous gadgetry repair).

3.43 OBSTACLES

The staff of the OrbStation is an obstacle – if The Daphne is sensed by the Station (a very likely event) – these guys are a real pain in the coreward region, and great sticklers for detail. In addition to the details given in Section 3.5: Encounters, the PCs may end up paying fines or repairing parts of their ship (this is all up to the GM, of course, but all Pilots need a good rousing now and again, eh?) By and large, the Station staff are harmless wastes of time, but they will send out a Patrol Cruiser if the PCs mess with them and take off.

The Tayan climate is fiercely cold (think of Lapland or Alaska). Characters who are not suitably protected will soon begin to take damage from exposure: Subtract 5 from temporary AG, ST, QU and HP each hour. Once shelter/protection has been attained, recovery rolls for Stats are made on the *Stat Gain Chart* (see **Player Book**, p. 44) once every ten minutes.

The PCs may encounter one or more of the local lifeforms while wandering around in GeoSector 45. One such creature is described in the following Adventure (Section 4.0). Obviously, space precludes a diverse listing of all Tayan creatures, so feel free to design a few. Remember – these creature encounters should not be fatal, although the PCs should learn to appreciate the realities of life in the unfriendly Tayan wilderness.

Another constant source of danger anywhere on Tayah are the common reconnaissance and strafing runs performed by the Aerial Defense Division of the Darranian Provincial Guard. If spotted by these jets, the PCs' location will probably be reported and a Patrol Cruiser will be sent to investigate (see Section 3.5: Encounters). If for some reason the PCs have a number of rebels with them at the time, the entire group will be subject to an attack from above.

3.44 REWARDS

Unless they get into a fight with the Havenbanders before seeing the camp (and this should certainly be discouraged), the PCs will hear Toratoma's history of the TLF. This is true even if they are held for ransom, for Toratoma wants the plight of his people to be understood. Toratoma's history (allow the Players to read Section 2.5) is the PCs' introduction to the rebels' point of view, and knowing it will prove important later. If the PCs do something to help or impress the Havenbanders, they stand to receive gifts from Toratoma and Old Rock, as well. All of these possibilities are detailed in Encounters, below.



3.5 ENCOUNTERS

Random encounters aboard the OrbStation are rolled on column 1 of the *Encounters Table* (see Section 8.5). In GeoSector 45, there is a 10% chance of random encounters every 19 hours (1/2 of one Tayan day), rolled on column 2 of the *Encounters Table*. Preset encounters are detailed below:

1. SENSORED BY ORBSTATION.

As the PCs make their approach to Tayah, the OrbStation has a significant chance of spotting them: +45 for skill, +30 for difficulty (spotting by silhouette), minus The Daphne's EW bonus (if used). If the ship is spotted, the PCs will be hailed with the standard "Sign over controls for auto-landing" message. Failure to comply within twenty seconds results in another message, this time warning the approaching vessel that it has twenty seconds to identify or be fired upon (leaves little room for choice, doesn't it?) The Station staff are curt and official, and the PCs will be channeled into the administrations offices to await their meeting with Shugthra Darran once their Ident Discs have been read (this is a preliminary security scan at tier two, to determine whether the PCs are wanted for any crimes in Darran Province).

Even if the PCs are respectable members of some major Provincial Organization, they will be detained here for a day or two while Shugthra consults his own superiors, then contacts the PCs' superiors for mission verification. The PCs must pay for rooms and docking fees (standard costs), and four Station Security Armsmen will be placed at their ship. If they do nothing to arouse suspicion, they will be allowed to roam around the Station while waiting (games and body development equipment

may be found in the Rec Room); otherwise they will be expected to remain in their room(s). Upon leaving, they will be warned not to engage in any unnecessary flying (due to the risk of being targeted as a spy vessel by a Patrol Cruiser), and not to engage in any transactions with the rebels. If they do arouse suspicion (over-heard making plans to break out, etc), Shugthra will double up the security staff around The Daphne. This encounter is basically a time-waster, but it gives the PCs an introduction to the bureaucratic methods of the Darranian Church and the complexities of Church Rhetoric. PCs who insist upon breaking out may succeed by blowing their way through a wall and onto the landing pad (the interior walls are AT 20, with 80 hits per man-sized section), but this will certainly flag them as enemies of the Church, and set them up for the Patrol Cruiser encounter below.

2. PATROL CRUISER.

Whether or not the PCs broke protocol at the Station, there are Darranian Patrol Cruisers flying all around Tayah at all times, performing tasks of various sorts. These overhead passes are intended (in plot terms) to communicate the nature of the tension here on Tayah, and (more importantly) to keep the PCs on the ground. Indeed, if the PCs take off and begin zooming around, a Patrol Cruiser will approach and warn them to land or be targeted (the Cruisers are not in constant contact with the OrbStation). If they are not compliant, The Daphne **will** be driven to the ground – this is not a possibility; it is a reality. The first shot from the Cruiser will (in addition to any normal damage rolled) cause an **Extremely Severe** Life Support malfunction onboard the Daphne. The cold Tayan atmosphere will begin streaming into the ship, knocking any small, loose objects around and forcing the Pilot to land the

vessel in the forest below (at a -20 for the distractions).

The malfunction will prove impossible to repair without obtaining several important parts (this may be determined via Repair Scanner, or by utilizing the computer's Tech Reference programs – either method will provide the PCs concerned with fully detailed specifications for the required systems). Limited atmospheric flight (no faster than 100 km/hr) is possible, but the chances of being spotted by the Patrol Cruisers would increase exponentially. Once forced down, the Players should be convinced not to try flying again without clearance from Tayah Port (which is not answering any incoming communications except those of the Air Defense Force). The parts required for repairing the Life Support system are also likely to be available only at the Port (see where this is leading?)

3. TORATOMA AND THE HAVENBANDERS.

Eventually, the PCs find themselves grounded in GeoSector 45, combing the forests visually or via Multiscanners or ship's SENSRs. Shortly thereafter, they will spot one of two things: Multiscanners/ SENSRs may reveal the refugee camp itself, four kilometers north of the Daphne, or (as the camp is approached) Multiscanners or Perception rolls will reveal the presence of a number of hominoids surrounding the PCs. These are the Havenband fighters, and they are in sniper positions in the trees. It should be apparent that their behavior is more defensive than offensive, and that they have had all the opportunity required for an attack, although they have not attacked. If the PC make no sudden moves, a few of the rebels will slowly climb down and approach them (their weapons pointed at the ground).

STATS FOR NPCs: WELCOMING PARTY

Name	Lvl	Hits	AT(DB)	WpnOB	SklAdd	SklAdd	Notes
Tsamita Kyama	3	32	6(5)	40AstSt	20FAid	30MedDg	Human Medic; carries assorted drugtabs & Assault Stunner.
OrbStn Guards	3	35	8(0)	35AstSt	35Percp	25Stalk	Darranian Armsmen; 4 on Landing Pads, 6 throughout hallways.
Logum Darran	5	38	3(0)@	20ScScn	25Admin	35DrgTI	Darranian Administrator in command of Tayah OrbStation.
Toratomy	5	56	3(10)	90BIPI	50MA2St	40Hist*	Tsorosian Armsman; leader of Havenband.
Havenbanders	2	20	3(5)	45BIPI	20MA1St	20Trade	Tsorosian Armsmen, defenders of Havenband; over eighty in number.
Refugees	1	10	3(0)	10MA1St	15Trade	20Percp	Mostly Tsorosian; survivors of Darranian raids.
Old Rock	10	34	3(-5)	Nil	50Percp	80Hist*	Tsorosian Semitepath/ Theologist; Knows Mind's Truth & Mind's Eye lists to level 10; Has 20 PP & +2 Spell Adder. (see Sec. 7.5)

@ = Absorption Shield

* = Of Tayah & the TLF

The only member of this greeting party who speaks Angliaman is Toratoma, who will greet the PCs cautiously. He will state his name and the name of the band and ask the Players who they are. Within a short time he will gesture for them to follow him through the trees, and the Havenbanders will begin to follow. The PCs should realize that they have been accepted in some way. Any PC who succeeds in a SM/WpnT/L will notice that the rebels are packing Blast Pistols of Colosian manufacture.

Toratoma will take them into the camp and show them around (he will not take them near the stove or the "sick building", although he will explain what they are). He will then call for a few of the refugees in his native tongue. The bedraggled Tsorosians who approach bear peculiar objects of all sorts, which Toratoma explains one by one: statues of deceased family members or friends, starving babies, woodpaintings of bombed and ruined ekreets and factories, broken pieces of favorite possessions, etc. Finally, Toratoma will show them his own item: a large, beaten and scratched wall poster showing the Royal Darranian Palace in all its splendor, complete with colorful costumes and glimmering Grav Cars, and bearing a typeset quotation originally penned by Viscount Yulran:

"...All this being, vast and best, Needing naught – a scene divine – The program writ in every breast in sight except inside of mine..."

He then will accuse the PCs (as representatives of their employers) of crimes against Sentience of advocating the Church's practices by engaging in trade with them, and of being "every bit as heartless and mercenary as the overlords who raped this, our world." Toratoma will go on to explain that the PCs' missing comrades never existed – they were invented to bring the PCs here in order to make this statement. This exhibit is the rebels' way of testing the PCs – their reactions will determine the course of the encounter:

If the PCs attack, the rebels will respond in kind (the PCs are heavily outnumbered – convince them to retreat or you'll have a very short Module on your hands).

If the PCs offer their help to the camp, the rebels will welcome them and invite them to stay for supper. Toratoma will tell them the History of the TLF (the GM should read Section 2.5 to the Players), and some of the refugees will give them armbands of woven red leaves (which will keep other rebels from firing at them). They will also give the PCs ten Kaba (total value = about twenty man-days' food) for trading with other Tsorosians, and a warning not to let the Church see these coins.

If a certain PC really impresses Toratoma (ie; if they have damaged Church equipment or personnel, or if an exceptional Diplomacy skill roll is made, etc), they will be taken to meet Old Rock, who will listen to Toratoma's description and give the PC a token of appreciation: a chiseled rock with odd symbols (for reasons unknown even to Toratoma, this item will bring them success in stalking; call it a miscellaneous +10).

If the PCs decide to give their cargo to the rebels, they will not only be given Old Rock's gift, but the ancient Tsorosian will actually come out of his hole to join in the solemn festival of thanks which will be held

that evening. The PCs will be guests of honor, and Toratoma will even reveal that he had originally intended to kidnap them – as it is, he will not only let them go, but he will give them a map showing the safest overland route to Tayah Port. If the PCs have nothing to say one way or the other, and do not manage to impress their hosts, the rebels will capture them. Within a few days, Toratoma will manage to contact the PCs' employer and obtain ransom for them. In the interim, they be treated fairly, and will still get to hear Toratoma's History of the TLF speech (see above). Afterwards, they will be released as promised.

4.0

ADVENTURE: LIFE DURING WARTIME

The PCs learn more about the dangerous Tayan environment, witness the barbarities of urban warfare firsthand, and meet an informative Non-Player Character who explains the Church's point of view. The Players will be heading for Tayah Port; they may be in need of ship parts or flight clearance, or simply be on the run. Although this Adventure begins (in game time) just at the point when the previous Adventure ended, the GM should award Experience Points before resuming the series.

4.1

BACKGROUND DATA

The war has begun entering an active phase - the reasonably calm atmosphere enjoyed by both sides for the last few months is beginning to break down. This is due to a few factors: food caches stored away by TLF bands several months ago have begun to diminish, and the rebels have recently obtained new Colosian weapons which they are anxious to try out on their adversaries. In addition (and unknown to the TLF), the Church has received Imperial authorization for another aid shipment, which will be arriving shortly. This has boosted Darranian morale, and the obsequious soldiers of the Provincial Guard are making their presence known in force. Because most roads, factories and Ekreets on Tayah are Darranian properties, Provincial Martial Law has been declared in most settled areas – soldiers patrol roadways and major installations on foot and in armored groundcars, and jet aircraft comb the skies on the lookout for rebel activity. Curfews, rationing procedures and temporary holding facilities have been established, limited bombing runs have been authorized throughout the area, and the local TLF bands have been forced underground.

4.2

THE NPCs

4.21 DARRANIAN CITYGUARDS

A subdivision of the Provincial Defense Force, the CityGuard specializes in urban security procedures, crowd control and intelligence gathering. They are somewhat of a cross between regular police officers and garrison troopers, and are chiefly concerned with maintaining law and order within their own jurisdictions (ie; their own settlements), but have been called upon to be on the lookout for covert TLF activity. Due to the increased workload, most of these Armsmen have developed dangerously defensive attitudes – they are not in any mood to be messed with, and have been making arrests very frequently.

4.22 VERBUS DASHA PROTAUS

A middle-aged Verbus (missionary) of the Darranian faith, Protaus has lived just outside of Tae for eight years, bringing medical and religious aid to the scattered rural settlements in the area. Her tactful speaking style and unimposing good looks have brought her the respect and trust of the community CityGuards included, and she is capable of getting away with more than the average citizen because of this.



Currently, Protaus is looking for a few able bodies to accompany her on the long and dangerous trip to Tayah Port (a journey of several days' length). There she must meet with her Logus Superior to make her semiannual report. The trip is one she usually takes alone, but rumors of TLF activity in the innerlying region have frightened her into deciding that (at least this time) it would be wise to bring someone who knows their way around a gun. Not wishing to provoke any unnecessary attacks from either side, she has opted to hire foreigners – Dactra – for the task.

4.23 THE BLACK FLOWER (TLF DEATH SQUAD)

Of the various splinter groups which have fissioned out of the original TLF, some of the most dangerous are the so-called "Death Squads" of the urbanized areas. These fanatical groups are comprised largely of displaced Tserosian youths, whose values and morals have been utterly destroyed by the war. In many cases, Death Squad members come from families of which they are the sole survivors; others have smaller brothers and sisters to tend to. Whatever their circumstances, these young Armsmen are generally of violent and unchanneled temperament; their angst has led many of them to take to such dangerous practices as drug abuse, theft and murder. To them, war is a fact of life, and death a part of it; they disdain both the pacifist teachings of Boban Tsabano and the organized methods

employed by most TLF groups, preferring instead the short but glorious life of the urban warrior. This attitude has gained them the slang name of "Death-Wishers" (a term used by the CityGuard). The Black Flower is one such group, led by an eighteen-year-old Tserosian named Dobro Taima. The group has survived on the streets of Tae for years, and has recently made a small name for itself in the local media. Spurred on by this recognition, Taima and his followers have selected their next target.

4.24 DARRANIAN PROVINCIAL GUARD SQUAD

The standard small scale tactical unit in the Darranian Defense Forces is the six-man squad. Although many larger units exist (they are, in fact, made up of squads), it has proven most effective for the Church to spread itself thin on Tayah, mimicking the enemies' own scattered nature. For this reason, most of the PCs' encounters with the Darranian armed forces will be at the squad level. The squad in this Adventure (see Section 4.5: *Encounters*) has been posted alongside a major route into Tayah Port. Their job is to keep TLF personnel, weaponry, equipment and propaganda from entering the Port area, and they are searching all vehicles to pass this way. The duty is monotonous and uncomfortable, and these six men are quite low on patience. If the PCs don't walk the line, the Guards will use them as an excuse to blow off some job-oriented stress...

4.3 THE SETTINGS

4.31 THE WILDS

The forested regions lying between Havenband and Tae are known simply as "The Wilds", and have a reputation as the home of many predatory lifeforms and bio-active herbs. The weather is inclement and freezing (as usual). Strange foliage of all types may be found, including several interesting herbs (see Section 4.42: *Aids*), and travelers moving through the area will hear no end of odd noises. The GM may wish to create a few local creatures to place here (see below), as well as some more medicinal plants (the locals are familiar with the uses of most of these remedies, and may pay Kaba for them). While travelling through *The Wilds* for the first time, the PCs will encounter a dangerous creature known as a Pod Leaper (see Section 4.5: *Encounters*). In addition, since the Havenband group has been spotted in the area, the skies are policed by jet fighters and Patrol Cruisers (several of these will pass overhead each day), and some may decide to strafe any ground targets they spot. As the PCs move into the brief stretch of plain just south of The Wilds, they can hear the sound of gunfire off in the distance.

4.32 THE CITY OF TAE

A medium-sized urban community with several processing factories and its own (Darranian-owned) powerplant, the city of Tae has been torn by street fighting and defensive bombing runs. Darranian CityGuards patrol the area, walking in pairs down the ruined streets or investigating reports of suspected TLF operatives.

Some of these Guards will stop any approaching persons to check identification. Several hundred meters within the city limits is a wire-enclosed "Waiting Area" containing lesser troublemakers, drunk/drugged locals, foreigners and any others unfortunate enough to have lost their ident discs; these holdees are to be dealt with as soon as the CityGuard has the time to deal with them (don't hold your breath). Few loiterers can be seen; all people on the streets hurry to their destination, glancing fearfully about for snipers or CityGuards. Frightened faces peer down from the shattered windows of timestained Ekreetes, and armored groundcars filled with soldiers and equipment toss up dirt as they rumble through empty intersections. Occasional volleys of weapons fire can be heard, echoing off the curved walls. Above it all, the sounds of the factories drone ever on, and giant smokestacks belch tons of waste gases into the tired atmosphere.

4.4 THE TASK

Simply put, the task for the Players is to get into the city on foot, and leave it in the Verbus's car. Along the way, they will have to contend with alien lifeforms, arrogant CityGuards and the upcoming Black Flower attack (see Section 4.5: *Encounters*).

4.41 STARTING THE PLAYERS

If the PCs are on speaking terms with the Havenbanders, they will already have heard some stories describing the general state of affairs here on Tayah. It will be agreed that staying at Havenband is out of the question (this might bring unwarranted danger upon either group), and the PCs have some good reasons for heading toward Tayah Port (either for ship parts or flight clearance, or both). Before sending them off, Toratoma will recommend that they head for the city of Tae, where they will be able to obtain some sort of transportation to take them the rest of the way to the Port. He will also explain the uses of a few of the medicinal herbs which the PCs may encounter along the way (fastil and enlaba in particular), and will warn them not to sleep without posting watch.

If the PCs are on the run from (or on unfriendly terms with) the Havenbanders, they can easily be forced to move in the same direction (i.e., the woods to the north are very dense, encounters extremely dangerous, etc.), but will be doing so without the benefit of Toratoma's travelling tips.

In either case, they will soon find themselves moving on foot through The Wilds, and looking at a journey of about ten days. The GM should describe the setting to the PCs, and allow them to search for herbs, make studies of the local terrain and wildlife, perform any healing maneuvers necessary, etc. As they near the midpoint of their trek, they will encounter the Pod Leapers described below.

4.42 AIDS

The PCs have little to count on save their own skills in this Adventure; their own Perception skill will inform them when to seek cover from an approaching Patrol Cruiser, their own weapons skills will protect them during the more direct encounters. Of some note, however, are the herbs which the PCs may find growing in The Wilds. Most of the herbs found here have healing or other bio-active properties. These properties may be determined by asking people in the city, ingesting the herb in question, or using a Multiscanner on them (this last is the most difficult, requiring first that a SM/MtScn:M be made to determine chemical structure, followed by a R/BChem:H to determine the effect of that structure on Hominoids).

The Players will also find that merely having Verbus Protaus with them will serve them well – they will rarely be questioned as long as they are in her company.

4.43 OBSTACLES

The three main obstacles in this Adventure are all of a physical nature; the Pod Leapers, the CityGuards and the Black Flower attack are all detailed in the Encounter Section.

4.44 REWARDS

Besides the obvious benefit of transportation to Tayah Port, Verbus Protaus yields another type of significance; she is quite familiar with the History of the Church, and although she is not an Inner Circle mem-

ber, she is personally acquainted with several of them. Her stories of the Province's past will give the PCs some insight into the Darranian point of view (select entries from the Timeline and Section 2.4). If the PCs impress her, she will be willing to help them in all manner of ways; she can find them a place to stay near the Port, give them local clothing to keep them warm (and to keep them from looking too out of place), and provide food if necessary. If they *really* impress her (putting their own lives in danger to save hers, etc) she will pull a few strings as soon as the party reaches the Port and obtain some valuable identification for them in the form of "MercMarks". These inscriptions are placed directly on tier two of the Ident Disc, and indicate that the bearer has been granted near-full military status for a limited duration (one month) by the Church of Darran. The MercMarks will only be legible when read with a Security Scanner of tier two capability, and will afford the PCs a great deal more freedom of movement than the average foreigner.

In addition, should they prove instrumental in the capture of any of the five Black Flower assassins (see Section 4.5: *Encounters*), the PCs will be awarded the going rate – 200 Monits for each live prisoner, 50 for dead ones.

4.5 ENCOUNTERS

While moving through The Wilds en route to Tae, there is a 20% chance of random encounters every 19 hours. These encounters are rolled against column 2 of the *Encounters Table* (Section 8.5). In the city of Tae (column 3) the chance is 10% per hour. Finally, while travelling along the route to Tayah Port, the encounter chance is 10% every 9.5 hours (four times per Tayan day), and column 4 is used. Preset encounters are detailed on the following pages.

WILD HERBS OF TAYAH

Name	Form	Prep/Use	AF%	Effect
Diptha	Grn Fruit	Eaten Raw	12	Euphoria, +5 IN Mod for 2 Hrs
Enlaba	Brn Weed	Smoked	30	Doubles all healing for 1 day
Fastil	Blu Flower	Eaten Raw	25	+5 QU, -5 SD (Temps) for 1 Hr
Lorgosta	Brn Reed	Infusion	10	+20 to disease RRs for 1 day
Shubras	Ylw Leaf	Applied	5	Slows bleeding by 1/rd

1. POD LEAPERS

About mid-way between Havenband and Tae lies the territory of a Pod Leaper colony (the term "colony" is actually a misnomer, as the seemingly independent Leapers are actually part of a single organism with multi-ambulatory capability – the "pod" which these entities come from and retreat to is actually their central body, and contains the colony's brain and sensory organs). Sensing the approaching strangers, the colony has sent out half of its Leapers to determine whether they are edible. These roughly hominoid creatures are hanging in the twisted trees even now, their long arms tensed, awaiting the PCs' passage beneath them. The GM must secretly make rolls to determine whether the PCs spot the beasts before they themselves are spotted. Either a SM/MtScn:L or a SM/Percep:V will be applicable; Success indicates that the PC has the advantage (and one full combat action before the real fight begins); Absolute Failure indicates that the PC is surprised (stunned) for the first round of combat. Any other result indicates relatively simultaneous sightings by both groups (roll initiative as usual). The initial attack will consist of as many Leapers as there are PCs in the party. Once half of these beasts have been disposed of, the remaining few will try to take to the trees and return to the pod (they are HARD [-10] to track), where the rest of the Leapers await them. If the PCs press a fight within sight of the pod, all Leapers in the area will fight as if under the influence of Frenzy (skill). If the pod itself is destroyed, all of its Leapers die instantly.

NOTE: Even though the Leapers and the pod are actually one creature, it is easiest to consider them separate beings for the purposes of Experience Points. If a Player realizes that the pod should be destroyed before all the Leapers are dead, and the plan is carried out, that PC should receive Experience Points for the Pivotal Idea in addition to any Kill/Destroy points earned.

2. THE CITYGUARDS

As the PCs enter the city of Tae and get their first look around, they will notice the enclosed "Waiting Area" mentioned above.

POD LEAPERS' COMBAT ABILITY SUMMARY

Creature	Size	Hits	AT(DB)	MS/AQ	Lvl	Attacks & Probabilities
Leaper	M	20c	5(5)	F/VF	3	30MCI(x2)70/25MGr30
Pod	H	80	7(-25)	-/-	2	None

Just then, several Cityguards will approach them, ask for Ident Discs ("Just a routine procedure"), and inquire as to the nature of their business in Tae. Upon discovering that the PCs are of foreign Provincial citizenship, the guards will ask the PCs to accompany them to the Waiting Area ("For your own protection – the streets aren't safe for locals, let alone Dactra"). The guards are carrying Assault Straptors (Mk.3, with Stun and Disrupt settings), and there are numerous other guards in the area – it should be obvious that attacking these guys is out of the question. All weapons will be confiscated and tagged (unless hidden), and the PCs themselves will be shuffled inside. In the Waiting Area the PCs may encounter all manner of interesting characters (if the GM desires), but they won't be here for long...

3. VERBUS PROTAUS

When the PCs have stewed for awhile, they will each have a chance to roll a SM/Percep:V to notice a small, robed woman talking to one of the guards and pointing in their direction. The guard will then nod, enter the compound and call the PCs over to him. He will explain that they are to be released into the custody of Verbus Dasha Protaus, a highly trusted person in these parts who is in need of a few Dactra to accompany her to Tayah Port. Their weapons will be returned to them and the Verbus will greet them pleasantly, introducing herself as Dasha. Once the amenities are completed, she will begin to lead the PCs through the streets, talking about the town and her work with the Tisorosian poor. Protaus is dedicated to her work, and honestly believes that the Church has done right by the Tisorosian people, bringing them medical and technical procedures far beyond their original capabilities and replacing their "barbaric and childlike beliefs" with its enlightened doctrine. She believes that the TLF has no right to argue with the Church over long-settled land

rights agreements when their entire standard of living has been raised immeasurably as a result of the Church's intervention and guidance. Near the end of her speech the group will arrive at Protaus' Grav Car. If one of the PCs wishes to drive, Protaus will allow it (but she will not suggest this herself).

4. BLACK FLOWER ATTACK

Shortly thereafter, perhaps as the GravCar cruises slowly around a corner, the group will witness an anti-TLF demonstration. About fifty pro-Church zealots stand in a public park, shouting propaganda slogans and waving signs with such inscriptions as "TLF = Thankless Leeches & Fanatics," "One Province, One Government" and "Vape the Vandals." Cruising close to allow the PCs to look at the demonstrators, Protaus will point out media crews stationed on the nearby rooftops. "These anti-war demonstrations have been getting more and more attention lately. I think they're good for the Province – you know, a show of solidarity..." Just then her words will be cut off by the sound of screeching tires as a LandRover AFV slides around a nearby corner, heading toward the demonstrating group. Without warning, several masked youths (there are five in the AFV, including the driver) lean out of the careening vehicle and open fire on the startled crowd. The Verbus' Grav Car (being close to the scene) is targeted for IdIO shots, each of which has a 20% chance of shattering a window and hitting someone inside (determine randomly, and subtract 10 from the OB due to the window). Many demonstrators fall to the ground bleeding, and the others scatter in all directions as the driver of the AFV regains control of the vehicle and continues on down the street at top speed. Sirens begin howling and nearby Cityguards run for their HalfTraks, but none are as close as the PCs are. It is quite possible for the PCs to fire at (or even catch up with) the

STATS FOR NPCs: LIFE DURING WARTIME

Name	Lvl	Hits	AT(DB)	WpnOB	SkiAdd	SkiAdd	Notes
CityGuards	3	35	8(0)	40StrAs	20Percep	25ScnSc	Darranian Armsmen; carry Security Scanners; travel in groups of 2 and up.
Dasha Protaus	7	30	1(5)	10MAIS	38Diplo	35Hist*	Darranian Theologist; will try to avoid combat.
Black Flower	2	20	2(5)	35MdPI	20AFV	15St/Hd	Tisorosian Armsmen; fanatically violent youths.
Prov.Guards	3	40	10(0)	40StrAs	30MAIS	20QDraw	Darranian Armsmen; enforcers of Darranian martial law on Tayah.

*=Of Darran Province.

assailants if they act fast. When it's all over, Dasha will explain the origin of the Black Flower gang. The party will then be able (and undoubtedly more than ready) to continue their journey to the Port.

5. PROVINCIAL GUARDS

Around halfway to Tayah Port, the Verbus's vehicle will be forced to stop when it is waved over by a squad of Darranian Provincial Guards. These six men are responsible (amongst other things) for the personal inspection of all vehicles to pass through this area, and they are quite suspicious of the PCs at first. "I'm very sorry, Verbus, but there are no exceptions - I'm afraid we're gonna have to search this vehicle", says the squad leader, eyeing the PCs all the time. Their search will be a rather short one, as they are primarily concerned with making certain that there are no rebels or unauthorized weapons hidden in the car. The squad leader will take the Verbus aside and ask her whether she requires any assistance (i.e. whether she is travelling with the PCs of her own free will), to which she will respond politely, explaining that she contracted these Dactra from the Tae Cityguard. Once this is established, the Guards will relax their attitude toward the PCs (they won't even ask for Ident Discs), and allow the vehicle to move on.

If the PCs are uncooperative at any time during this encounter, Ident checks will definitely occur (at tier two). The GM may wish to make a reaction roll on IdIOO (cumulative Mods: -30 if the PCs have weapons drawn, -10 if the PCs mouth off to the Guards, -15 if the PCs are wearing the rebel armbands, +PR Mod of spokesman-PC). On an adjusted total of 50 or higher, the Guards allow the incident to pass without much more than a dirty look, and return the Discs. On 20-49, the Guards order the PCs to place their hands on the car, spread, and submit to a body search: all weapons of Mk.3 or higher, all Power-Swords, and any signs of rebel affiliation will be confiscated, and the Discs will be returned. On a total of 19 or lower, the Guards will get *really* ticked off: one of them will strike the most offensive PC with the butt of an Assault Struptor (treat this as a surprise "Martial Arts/Strikes" attack with "1 handed Crushing" Weapon Kata), and the rest of the squad will draw and aim their weapons. The squad leader will address the PCs: "Now then, are you vishtra ready to cooperate?" If they are, proceed as if 20-49 had been rolled above. If not, they're going to have to take these guys...

5.0

ADVENTURE: PUSH COMES TO SHOVE

The PCs make some powerful contacts just as the revolution explodes into full force, and pick up some very sensitive information.

5.1 BACKGROUND DATA

As the PCs' own experience can verify, the war for Tayah has escalated seriously within the last few weeks. Unsubstantiated rumor has it that the Darranian Church is at wit's end, and has been forced to request military aid (meaning personnel) from the Imperial Marine (this is true). Tales such as these have served to magnify an already tense situation, for neither the rebels nor the Church know exactly what will happen when the Imps arrive.

In the shanty Porttown which surrounds Tayah Port, terrorist groups, mercenary brokers and other folk of questionable repute are hastening to their forces and/or clean their records. Many of these busy administrators are neither Tsorosian nor Darranian but third parties (many of whom have no legitimate business being here). The Porttown has been a "neutral zone" throughout the course of the war, due primarily to the large number of Imperial citizens and administrators who visit for trade or public relations reasons. It is also the home of the TLF's main communications and acquisitions group.

5.2 THE NPCs

5.21 FREE-TRADER TOVI DAUSCHEN

A skinny man with short dark hair and tiny eyes, Dauschen is the favorite son of a wealthy member of Detzeeri parliament, and a self-styled rogue entrepreneur. He has many contacts in the Darranian government, and has been contracting mercenary corps to back up the Provincial Guard for the last year. In addition to his Church connections, Dauschen also has ties to Houses Devon and Vyrta, and to Minor Clans Baburnica and (of course) Detzeer. He is well capable of arranging deals with any of these parties, given incentive (a basic 15% broker's fee should be a good start).

5.22 NEOLOGUS ELLAGAER VIL NIMRA DARRAN

A hunched giant of a man, the Neologus of Tayah strikes an awesome impression upon first sight; his smooth, almost pointed bald head and piercing eyes give him a powerful, dangerous look which he makes full use of in conversation. He is also a semiTelepath, skilled in the Voice, Mind Assault, Mind's Truth, Armor, and Telepathy lists. It was Ellagaer who okayed the contracts for Dauschen's mercenaries (contracts which the Viscount never witnessed). He has come to Porttown in order to give Dauschen another assignment, and is accompanied by his archivist and protege Logus Emil Thorrolain Darran (who is currently being considered for Inner Circle status), and by Field Marshall Kato B'toma (a Tsorosian Armsman serving the Darranian Provincial Guard).

5.23 UNDERMINISTER JEREMIAH DRISCOL-SMITH

Driscoll-Smith is a tall, flashy young man who represents the Imperial Provincial Relations Ministry in Darran Province. It is his job to deliver unto Viscount Darran the Empire's decision to send Marine troops to Tayah, and he will be leaving for Croix almost immediately. Knowing that Ellagaer will wish to pull any questionable personnel out of his jurisdiction before the Marines get here, Driscoll-Smith has stopped off in Porttown to warn the Logus (anything to grease the wheels...).

5.24 SHIBA BANTO

A dark, graceful Tsorosian woman with an amazing vocal range, Shiba Banto is the latest entertainment sensation at Bora's Bar. Standing almost motionless beneath a thin spotlight, her large eyes outlined in luminescent gloss, she holds the crowd in rapt attention, alternating between currently popular tunes and old Tsorosian work-songs. Her diverse and somewhat controversial set appeals especially to the many foreign visitors which frequent Bora's Bar. Despite the mediocre performance of the house band which backs her, Banto is a consummate and provocative artist. She is also a rebel, and a highly valued fighter in the war for Tayan liberation.

5.25 TOBAR KABON

Leader of the Porttown TLF, Kabon is the person responsible for swinging the arms deals which supply Colosian weaponry to the rebel forces. His small group of highly loyal activists holds their headquarters in an abandoned oil refinery just outside Porttown, from which weaponry and communications are routed to various rebel groups. Kabon is a well-spoken man, and due to the fact that he has appeared in several media telecasts denouncing the Church, he is regarded by many to be the unofficial leader of the TLF. He and Shiba Banto have been romantically involved for a number of years.

5.3 SETTINGS

5.31 BORA'S BAR

A partially enclosed cafe and nightclub, Bora's is the most popular bar in the Porttown area, and a favorite hangout of Darranian well-to-do's who wish to impress extra-Provincial guests. The atmosphere is lax and cosmopolitan (for Tayah), with Darranian Church officials, common laborers and more than a few Dactra milling about and enjoying the show. Service is provided by Tzororian waiters. The drinks are not unreasonably priced, and the entertainment is excellent. Tovi Dauschen's table is near the main entry.

5.32 THE REFINERY (TLF HIDEOUT)

This time-scarred complex lies just outside of Porttown, and its rusted machinery still bears the marks of the great Tayan riot. Here the TLF stores arms and supplies, relying upon the metal surroundings to shield the presence of contraband weaponry from prying SENSRs. Beneath the refinery lies a massive chamber, once used as a parking structure, which now serves as the meeting hall of the Porttown rebels. The wide entrance to the chamber is guarded at all times by rebel gunmen. Inside, small, cramped "living quarters" are wedged in between boxes and barrels containing foodstuffs and fuel. Several decrepit-looking vehicles line the south wall. Large plastic crates of Colosian weapons and armor are stacked around the north wall, where Kabon's dugout sleeping hole can be seen to house a small tight-beam laser communications rig.



5.33 TAYAH PORT

Although rebuilt and updated in Imp.466, Tayah Port is still relatively stark as far as Planetary Downports go, possessing few of the non-essential luxuries Imperial travellers are accustomed to (see map, pg.29). A few of the more important areas of the Port are:

WAREHOUSES: It is here that the PCs' much needed ship parts will be found, as well as any other interesting goods/resources the GM Wishes to include. Four Darranian Portguards keep the area secure. The warehouses' doors are locked, requiring a SM/Locks:X to open them (of course, blowing the lock off the door will also work).

SECURITY: The barracks of the Portguards (almost all of whom are not present during the riot – only a token squad remains here to guard the place).

CUSTOMS AND ADMINISTRATION: The crowded and hectic center of the Port, this is where interProvincial passage sales are made and Port business is seen to.

AIR CONTROL AND COMMUNICATIONS:

This building has seen more use as of late than the others at the Port, for it serves not only as the communications link to Croix, but also as the focal point of reconnaissance findings reported by the Darranian Patrol Cruisers and Jet Fighters. The TBD relay installation can be seen on the roof.

5.4 THE TASK

The PCs' primary objective is to locate the ship parts they need and leave the area. Alas – this will require a bit of footwork. Dauschen will be easily found and persuaded to swing a deal for the parts, but he will encounter the NeoLogus before he has a chance to close the deal (see Section 5.5: *Encounters*). Shortly, the Underminister will arrive and deliver his warning to Ellagaer – a warning which will be over-heard by some of the TLF operatives at Bora's, and relayed through the grapevine of Porttown. An unforeseen general panic will ensue, quickly rising to riot proportions, and the rebels will distribute their remaining arms and storm the Port. In the midst of this chaos, the PCs will be left to their own devices. Their only option will be to take advantage of the confusion and attempt to get into the warehouses themselves.

5.41 STARTING THE PLAYERS

When they arrive at Porttown, the first thing the PCs will find is lodging – either at the home of Protasus' friends or in the local microtel. The GM may give them a day or two to settle in if desired, recovering from any wounds they have suffered along the way and making any minor purchases which seem appropriate. The Porttown is an ideal site for encounters of all types. When the PCs begin asking about ship parts, they will be advised to find Tovi Dauschen at Bora's Bar.

The PCs are pretty much on their own – although they may already possess a few items/datum of value. The names "Toratoma", "Havenband" or "Old Rock" will be enough to get the local TLF forces to listen to them seriously, and allow them into the refinery compound. The armbands which may have been provided by the Havenbanders will keep the Porttown rebels from firing at the PCs during the riot. In addition, if they bear MercMarks, the PCs will be able to avoid overcomplicated encounters with the Portguards.

5.42 OBSTACLES

Although the course of the Adventure might vary slightly depending on the PCs actions at Bora's Bar, there are no real obstacles until the riot begins and the Port is stormed. It will soon become apparent that Dauschen is too busy to deal with the PCs, and that they will have to hit the warehouses themselves. At the Port, obstacles include the outer perimeter fence (AT 20, 20 hits per man-sized section), the locks on the warehouse doors (mentioned above), the Darranian Portguards (see below), and the general air of confusion, in which anyone might accidentally take a hit or two. Every round that a character is exposed there is a 5% chance that that character will receive a number of concussion hits equal to a roll of 1d20 (high open-ended), from stray weaponfire. If the Players miss the foreshadowing clues and opt to remain in Bora's Bar, they will be there when TLF fighters charge in and cowboy the joint, killing Tovi Dauschen and any other citizens present.

5.43 REWARDS

Besides the ship parts required by the PCs, there are a few other items of interest in the Port warehouses. The GM should feel free to toss in any interesting and/or valuable items which the PCs need badly or are deserving of. All Portguards carry equipment which the PCs might be able to strip them of (see below), and most rebel fighters also possess such booty (as well as 1d100 Kaba each).

5.5 ENCOUNTERS

In the streets of Porttown (pre-riot), there is a 20% chance of a random encounter every half-hour, rolled on column 5 of the Encounter Table. When the riot begins this chance goes up to 20% every minute. At the Port (while the riot is going on), there is a 50% chance of a random encounter every minute (rolled on column 6). Preset encounters are detailed below:

1. BORA'S BAR

Having been steered in the direction of Bora's Bar, the PCs will encounter Dauschen sitting alone at his table, enjoying his Karoline Kooler and watching Shiba Banto's performance. He will be enthusiastic about the prospect of trading some old ship parts for the aid of a squad of adventurers such as the PCs (or for the Monits they can bring him), and will begin negotiations in earnest. Letting it slip that the desired parts can indeed be located at the Port Warehouses, Dauschen will inquire as to what form of compensation the PCs are capable of delivering to him, but the transaction will be interrupted before the PCs have a chance to answer.

A sudden stillness falls over the bar as NeoLogus Ellagaer strides in, accompanied by his lofty companions, and walks directly toward Dauschen's table. Dauschen, seeing the trio approaching, will quickly break off negotiations and ask the PCs to leave him for a while (if they are not convinced and attempt to remain seated, the NeoLogus can use his mental powers to drive the point home). After the PCs have put at least a few meters between themselves and Dauschen's table, they may be able to attempt to listen in on the ensuing conversation (this will require a SM/Percep:H) Field Marshall B'toma has located Havenband, and Ellagaer has decided to send some of Dauschen's mercs into GeoSector 45 to clear the rebels out. If the PCs step forward at this point and let it be known that they have been to Havenband, the NeoLogus will take an interest in them and invite them into the conversation again, offering them positions in the strike force. Whether or not this occurs, the proceedings will be interrupted again.

Underminister Driscoll-Smith enters the bar, spots the NeoLogus' party at Dauschen's table, and approaches (followed by his two TransHuman I bodyguards). He addresses the NeoLogus by his first name, and the two began speaking in hushed tones. Any PC who succeeds in a SM/Percep:V will hear the underminister

deliver his warning to Ellagaer: "The requisition has been okayed, and the Imps are already on their way – should be here in a few days. I suggest that you do any necessary house-cleaning fast, because once the Marines cool things down the next step will be to bring an IID investigative committee in here – and you know how they are. Just thought you'd want to know..." The Underminister will wink knowingly at the NeoLogus, and take his leave of the group.

If the PCs look around the room at this moment, they will notice that several of the locals (mostly Tsorosians) are beginning to clear out – it seems that the PCs are not the only ones who overheard the Underminister's message. Shiba Banto will wrap her set up quickly, thank the quickly dwindling crowd, and leave via the back exit (shooting a glance toward Dauschen's table as she goes). Ellagaer will address the Free Trader one last time ("You heard him, the job is over. Pull your men out"), and then leave the bar with his entourage trailing behind him.

2. PRE-RIOT RALLY

If the PCs follow Shiba Banto out of the bar, they will soon witness her getting onto the back of a primitive motorcycle driven by a young Tsorosian man. Tailing the pair on foot is a MM/Stalk:S, though the PCs may be able to hotwire a nearby vehicle (requiring a SM/Elec:T:H) to pursue in. The rebels will head quickly for the abandoned refinery at the edge of Porttown, and will be seen to pass through a wide hallway into some sort of underground room. A SM/Percep:M will reveal the presence of two gunmen near the inner doors. If the PCs indicate TLF affiliation (by mentioning Toratoma, Havenband or Old Rock, or by showing their armbands), they will be cautiously escorted into the crowded chamber.

Inside, Kabon and his compatriots hand out weaponry and armor to scores of anxious rebels, as TLF rally songs and chants echo off the rusty walls. Shiba rushes to meet her lover, who hands the task of disbursement over to one of his comrades to give her his full attention. The PCs may be lost in the commotion at first, but after a short time they will be approached by Kabon, who will praise these outsiders for "taking a stand against the evil Church of Darran", and strap on his fighting gear. He then leads a short rally cry as the last rebels suit up, and tells them he'll see them back here in a few hours. Dividing into small squads, the rebel army takes to the streets, heading in the direction of the Port.

3. THE RIOT

The riot explodes with frightening quickness upon the Port and the surrounding town. By the time the Provincial Guard responds, the rebel fighters have broken the Port fence in several places. Spurred on by the violence or by sheer curiosity, hundreds of civilians – both Tsorosian and otherwise – follow the TLF vehicles into the compound. Before long the Port is in absolute chaos. Throngs of screaming rioters face off against the Port Guards and climb the air control tower in an attempt to destroy the TBD relay beacon. The streets of Porttown are assailed by the cacophony of firefights and Civalert Sirens as the expanding mobs lay siege to the area. Windows are smashed and vehicles overturned, innocents are caught in fatal crossfire and buildings are torched. Shortly thereafter the sound of an approaching jet precedes the first of the gas-bombings.

It is very possible that the PCs will have several encounters on their way to the Port; reactions of encountered persons (from either side) will generally be extreme. When they make it to the Port (see map), the PCs will have to cross part of the compound in order to reach the warehouses – this will take them very near the center of the riot. On their way they will pass at least one squad of Darranian Guards (six men to a squad) who have a chance of firing at them (SM/Percep:H, minus PCs' worst Stalk score). In addition, two more Port Guards are posted in the warehouses themselves.



4. KABON'S DEATH

The PCs may end up at the refinery after their theft (in playtest the party caught a ride on a passing rebel AFV). If so, they will arrive just in time to see the rebel leader hunched over the laser comm unit near his bed. The garbled bursts of Ambatsya will be totally unintelligible, but Kabon will soon cut off reception and address the group, asking for everyone's attention. "Fellow fighters, this day is a dark one. You are all aware that I have been trading our own good food to provide us with the illicit arms we bear. Some of you may even know

these arms to be of Colosian make, but I have just learned their true origin..." The room is still as Kabon picks up and examines his Assault Blaster. "The men who sold us these weapons were actually Imperial Intelligence agents. I am afraid, brothers and sisters, that I have led us all straight into their hands...I have failed you all." As the significance of this turn of events begins to hit home, Kabon closes his eyes and asks for forgiveness – he then raises the Blaster to his head and pulls the trigger.

STATS FOR NPCs: PUSH COMES TO SHOVE

Name	Lvl	Hits	AT(DB)	WpnOB	SklAdd	SklAdd	Notes
Tovi Dauschen	6	45	5(5)@	40MAISt	68Trade	45Diplo	Detzeeri Criminologist; Free Trader & mercenary contractor.
Ellagaer	10	55	4(10)*	50LsrPI	72PbSpk	80Admin	Darranian SemiTel/ Administrator; NeoLogus of Tayah; 40PP (incl.x2 multiplier).
Driscoll-Smith	7	40	6(0)!	32PwSwd	60Diplo	55Seduc	Imperial Provincial Relations Underminister.
ShibaBanto	6	38	5(10)	35BlsPI	70Sing	40St&Hd	Tsorosian Entertainer and TLF fighter.
Tobar Kabon	10	70	10(0)	82BlsAs	60PbSpk	58Comm	Tsorosian Armsman & TLF leader.
TLF Fighters	5	35	5(0)	45BlsPI	35St&Hd	35Percp	Mostly Tsorosian Armsmen & Criminologists; varied personal equipment.
*Port Guards	5	30	8(0)	45StnAs	30Percp	25MtScn	Darranian Armsmen; have Tac-scanners & +10 Laser Targeting Units.

Shields: @ = Absorption; * = Deflector; ! = Barrier.

ADVENTURE: WHEN THE WHIP COMES DOWN

The PCs have obtained the needed ship parts and must travel back to the Daphne amidst the final bloody days of the war. To get there, they will have to cross The Wilds again – and before they can make it to their destination, the Imperial Marines make a dramatic and effective entrance.

6.1 BACKGROUND DATA

Although the initial uprising at Tayah Port caught the Darranians off guard, they soon recovered in full force. Now that the imminent arrival of the Imperial Marines is common knowledge the Provincial Guard have their work cut out for them, as the style of warfare has degenerated toward simple, bloodthirsty attrition tactics. The few mercenary bands still on Tayah are hurrying to get out of here by whatever means make themselves available. The TLF has realized (for the most part) that the revolution has failed, and that their remaining time is short. In light of these facts, most of the still-active bands have changed their fighting style; instead of surreptitious, maneuver-oriented guerilla tactics aimed primarily toward acquisition, they are now using all their might to simply destroy as much Darranian property as possible. Civil uprisings have begun occurring in most Tayan cities, setting each other off in an apparent chain reaction of unfettered angst. The Provincial Guard has responded to meet these challenges head-on; they have only to hold the place together for another three days.

The Imperial troops which are even now speeding toward the Capella system represent a relatively standard Planetary Peacekeeping Force of moderate size, although the contingent is notable in one respect (as revealed in current media transmissions): in addition to the usual Gunship Squadrons, Armor Companies and Dropship Troopers, four "Monitor" class MIRCS are being sent to Tayah. MIRCS (Maneuver Interface Robotic Comboids) are a relatively recent development in the Imperial arsenal. These gigantic humanoid constructs are driven by specially trained MIRC Pilots, and are capable of handling devastating ground warfare as well as airborne assault actions. They have never before been used against a civilian population.

6.2 THE NPCS

6.21 SHOTAKA BONI, TLF SCOUT

A large, homely Tsorosian woman with a gift for stalking and tracking, Boni is well known in TLF circles for her talent and knowledge of Provincial Guard tactics. She has lived at Havenband for several years now, although she often spends months out on reconnaissance missions, gathering information on Church activities and troop movements. She was, in fact, just coming back from such a mission when she was caught in the sights of a Darranian Jet Fighter on a strafing run, and seriously wounded. Having lain by the side of the road for several days, she has just returned to consciousness and is still rather disoriented. She wants nothing more than to somehow be returned to Havenband, for she has important news to deliver to Old Rock (whose true identity she knows – see Section 6.44: *Rewards*).

6.22 IMPERIAL DROPSHIP TROOPERS

The Dropship Troopers are a subdivision of the Imperial Marine. Trained in various methods of ground warfare (maneuver/attrition, urban/rural, etc) as well as alien environments, these armsmen are carried to their destination system and released from orbit in special vehicles called Dropships. The "Thor 704" class Dropships (see pg.28) used in this Adventure are large enough to hold one platoon each (forty men and four Halftraks). When the Dropships hit ground, they will be used by the troopers as fortified bunkers and bases of operation while the MIRCS do the heavy work of entering and neutralizing "hot zones." The initial mission of the forces sent to Tayah is to enforce a ceasefire (on both sides) by making an overwhelming show of power. This is a favored assignment type for most Dropship Troopers as the nature of the mission demands high presence and low restraint. Each Dropship

Trooper possesses the following equipment: ABS Battle Mesh (AT16), Laser Rifle, Sentinel Helmet, Tactical Scanner, Grav-Pack, Auto Tab Applicator (10 Andeline Tabs), 10 Ration Tubes, Water Accumulator, Utility Cartridge, 2 Weapon Cartridges, and 5 Utility Cells. There are five troopers in each squad.

SHIP NAME: THOR 704

PRODUCER: Imperial Transtar

CLASS: Tactical Troops Planetary Drop Vehicle

OWNER: Imperial Marine Corp

COMPUTER Mk: 20

CAT: 24

ARMAMENT: Mk.20 Laser Cannon in Universal Turret, bottom-mounted

TONNAGE: 75

HITS: 120

POWER: 10 days, Fusion Reactor

MOTIVE FORM: Fast Grav

SHIELDS: +50

EW: +30

SENSORS: 10,000 km range

LASER COMM: 10,000 km range

CREW: 1 Astro, 2 Tech

CARGO: 200 cumets

PASSENGERS: 40 men & equipment

MECH INTERFACE: P/W/S

AUXILIARY SYSTEMS: Bridge

OTHER FEATURES: Hull Interfacing with mothership, 10 Commforps

CREW COMBAT SKILLS: All at +55

6.23 THE CHISHOLM MARAUDERS

A mercenary band from Jade-London Province, The Chisholm Marauders are run by a small, pale rat of a man named Stiv Rastor. Having nearly completed their service contract with the Church of Darran, the Marauders were passing through GeoSector 45 en route to the Port (where their ship is located) when they were ambushed by Toratoma and his men. Caught unprepared, they defended themselves as best they could, but in the end almost all of them were slain by the rebels. Rastor and two comrades, Justyn Marles and "Hammer," are all that remain of the Marauders. They are currently hiding out in the forests of GeoSector 45. Having listened to media updates on their radio unit, the trio is aware of the current status of the war, and figure that the chances of their ship still being operable are next to nil. They have found the PCs Hypershuttle by using their Multiscanners, and wish to get off of Tayah before the Imps find them (their records are somewhat less than clean).

6.3 THE SETTINGS

For the most part, the description of The Wilds given in Section 4.31 still holds. However, the nature of the activity in the area has changed considerably, as can be seen by glancing at the *Encounter Table* (Section 8.5). After the third day the PCs will begin to see the telltale streaks of armored vehicles in planetfall against the grey sky, and hear the distant (or not so distant) booming of gigantic MIRC weaponry. While crossing The Wilds this second time, the PCs will incur a 20% chance of encounters every 19 hours. Of note is the fact that the more distant and destitute TLF bands do not know of the Imperial aid contingent yet.

6.4 THE TASK

Simply put, the task is to get back to the Daphne Hypershuttle as quickly as possible. This will probably entail acquiring a vehicle by some means. Hotwiring is one option and probably the best available (seeing as few car owners will be willing to allow their vehicle to be driven into GeoSector 45), although others may exist as befits the GM's desire to make things difficult. Without a vehicle of some sort, the journey would take over one (Imperial) month. It is recommended that you let them get their vehicle without testing them overmuch, for the real test of the Adventure is coming up.

Once they have eliminated that little problem, all the PCs must do is race across 1200 kilometers of rough, freezing terrain in the midst of an Imperial siege, while avoiding encounters with the local citizenry and fauna... sounds easy, huh?

6.41 STARTING THE PLAYERS

After Kabon's suicide, the Porttown TLF dissolves into a Chaotic blur of emotional reactions. A number of hours pass, during which the rebels tend their wounds and distribute foodpackets. Some even manage to sleep, despite the constant shouting and gunfire which echo off the walls of the refinery. Many of the rebels decide that their only possible course of action is to wreak as much havoc as they can before the Empire pulls the plug. These warriors quickly prepare their weapons, slap on a few MedTabs, and head back out into the mob-ridden streets. Others are too numb with shock or blood loss to participate. Soon, one of the wounded fighters picks up an Imperial news relay on Kabon's laser comm unit. The bulletin, broadcast live from Croix OrbStation, states unequivocally

that the Imperial Marines are indeed on their way to Tayah, and makes special note of the fact that the Empire plans to utilize Robotic Comboids against any forces unwilling to lay down their arms. Suddenly, a loud shockwave shakes the compound as an explosive missile strikes a nearby building. The rebels scatter for cover, disappearing into their cubbyholes or running into the mazes between the great empty tanks. The PCs should get the idea pretty quickly that this is becoming a very dangerous place to stay...

6.42 AIDS

As before, the PCs are pretty much on their own out in The Wilds – just themselves and their survival skills – although (hopefully) they are better prepared to deal with the situation this time around.

Shotaka Boni can be of great assistance if the PCs can somehow treat her wounds (see Section 6.5: Encounters); she is familiar with all the wild herbs of Tayah, and may attempt to find some each day she is up and about (she has a skill total of +55 in the required SM/Botan:H). In addition, her superlative Perception and Stalking scores (both +45) may prove quite useful. She is a storehouse of all manner of miscellaneous wilderness tips (such as "when attacked by Pod Leapers, find and destroy the Pod"), and an excellent hunter, as well.

6.43 OBSTACLES

As the nature of this Adventure is primarily traveling through dangerous terrain, the most likely obstacles are random encounters (see above). The final days of the Tayan revolution are chaotic and violent in the extreme, and pains should be taken to convey the absolute bedlam which rocks the planet. Except for the role of Shotaka Boni (see Section 6.2: The NPCs), this Adventure affords the GM the right to pursue an almost totally antagonistic valence – i.e., *you* versus *them*. The plot is simple; they want to get to the Daphne, and you want to get in their way.

When the PCs make it back to the Daphne, they will have another little surprise waiting for them in the form of Stiv Rastor and his slimy pals. This nasty trio is prepared to resort to just about anything in order to get off "this stinkin' ball" (see Section 6.5: Encounters).

6.44 REWARDS

In addition to whatever they can find growing naturally or strip from the bodies of fallen foes, the PCs may receive an actual reward from the Havenbanders if they manage to bring Shotaka home alive.

If relations between the PCs and the Havenbanders are good, Toratoma takes them to see Old Rock once more (see Section 6.5: Encounters), and the ancient Tzororian speaks to them in Anglaman (!), revealing his true identity; he is Boban Tsabano, the original father of the Tayan revolution. Tsabano will then give the PCs a large, handmade book written in Darpait. This is his own written history of the Tzororian people, and (depending on one's feelings about Tzororians) it could be considered a priceless artifact. Although most of the text deals with the life and times of Tsabano himself, the history of Tayah and the resistance movement, there are several supplemental chapters in which the old man has laid down some of his more abstract concepts. One of the most significant facts revealed in the book is that the Tzororians, contrary to popular belief, were never indigenous to Tayah at all, but descended from Terran Humans. Other sections of the text deal with Tsabano's experiments in Psionics. Any PC who reads these sections and succeeds in a SM/RE&IN:X will receive a +20 on the Psion Gain Roll when they attempt to learn the "Mind's Truth" or "Mind's Eye" lists.

6.5 ENCOUNTERS

While travelling through The Wilds, there is a 20% chance of encounters every 19 hours (rolled on column 7 of the Encounter Table). When they reach GeoSector 45, this chance goes down to 15%, and column 8 of the table is used. Preset encounters are detailed below:

1. SHOTAKA BONI

Just outside of Porttown, the PCs will spot a wounded figure by the side of the road, struggling to stand. This is Shotaka Boni. She is unarmed, and obviously very badly wounded. If the PCs pick her up she will almost immediately fall asleep, and will drift in and out of consciousness until she gets either a full night's rest or medical treatment. She is suffering over 30 concussion hits worth of damage, two broken ribs, and "medium" burns, and until healed, she is operating at -30 on all maneuvers. One time, in a semi-coherent state, she will mumble something about having to see Tsabano – a remark which should strike the Players as a little odd if they recall their Tayan history lesson (The truth is, she has discovered that the poison used to kill Viscount Shamus was a rare toxin called Cortelax, designed by the ISI and administered by Imperial assassins).

Later on, although she may develop a relationship of trust with the PCs, she will refuse to elaborate on this cryptic statement, saying only that they will have to wait until they reach Havenband – all will be revealed...

2. IMPERIAL DROPSHIP

One night, about two-thirds of the way to Havenband, the PCs will notice an incoming vessel which seems to be headed straight down toward them (a SM/Percep:V will reveal its actual vector to lie several kilometers to their west). Shortly afterward, the sound of retro-brakes and a dull thud indicate a successful landing. The vehicle is a Thor 704 Dropship, carrying 40 Imperial Troopers and 4 Halftraks, and the crew will be out of the vessel and combing the area within half an hour. The PCs have basically three choices at this point: either they strain their vehicle to its maximum speed in an attempt to leave the area quickly, carry on at normal speed, or go investigate the landing site. If Shotaka is with them she will insist upon evading this encounter.

Straining the vehicle is done like this: the driver of the vehicle states how hard they are willing to push it in terms of a standard Difficulty Level (minimum = **Hard**), and the appropriate penalty is applied to the Vehicular Maneuver Roll. For every -10 that the driver takes as a penalty, the percentage of movement indicated is increased by one-tenth, and the vehicle has a 10% chance of suffering a malfunction of random severity. (**Example:** The driver decides to strain the vehicle to a **Very Hard** degree. Since the penalty to the roll is a -20, the distance travelled as indicated on the chart will be multiplied by 1.2, and two rolls of 11% or higher will be needed to avoid random malfunctions).

If the party decides to investigate the landing site, they will spot the Dropship visually only when they get within 100 meters of it. The bulky vehicle sits in a flurry of dustmotes, shimmering and shifting like some weird mirage (this is the result of the ship's EW field, which is fully activated and allotted to cloaking). If the Marines inside SENSr the approaching party (the SENSr operator's skill total is +30), they will send out a squad (five men) to deal with them (see below). If the Players have the advantage, they can do as they like (just what did you have in mind?).

In 30 minutes four Imp squads will leave the Dropship and begin cruising around in the Halftraks, using Multiscanners to do their recon. Once again, if the Players (who have probably gotten rather far off by now) are scanned by the Imps, a squad will go after them to investigate. If they cannot be caught by the Halftraks, the

Imps will let them get away for now (but any upcoming Imperial encounters could easily be blamed on this original sighting).

If/when the party actually encounters an Imperial squad, the GM should roll 1d100 to determine the squad's initial reaction. This roll may be adjusted by the best Presence modifier in the PC group, and by an additional -30 to +30 depending on the party's appearance (ie, weapons drawn, weapons raised, wearing rebel clothing, etc.) – the GM will have to make a value judgement on this one. If the reaction total is greater than 80, the Imps will not request Ident Discs, and will maintain a courteous attitude while questioning the group about local activities/terrain/wildlife, etc. If the reaction total is between 40 and 80, Ident checks will be made (Security Scanners at tier two), any members of the party who are wanted by the Empire will be arrested, and any weapons greater than Mk.2 will be confiscated (unless the PCs are ready to fight these guys). If the reaction total is lower than 40, the players are in for a fight, as the Imps (taking them to be hostile) go straight for the attack.

NOTE: Any PCs who are arrested by the Imps will find themselves standing trial before the GCH within a number of weeks. If the GM wishes, the transfer points along the route may be mapped out so as to allow the PC a chance at escaping, but this is far outside of the scope of this Module (sometimes it's better to just pay the two dollars).

3. IMPERIAL MIRC.

In the middle of what had otherwise been a relatively uneventful day, the PCs will suddenly witness an awesome sight: a humanoid construct of incredible size flies by overhead, and lands on its "feet" several hundred meters away. The gargantuan machine slowly turns its great bulk around, apparently scanning the surrounding area (the PCs will probably be seeing their imaginary lives flash by their eyes by this point), and then fires an impressive projectile barrage into a dense tangle of trees 200 meters distant. Suddenly a group of rebels come running out of the woods, prepare a portable missile launcher (while the MIRC targets on them), and fire at the construct. The rebel shot damages the great machine, but not quite enough – the MIRC quickly responds by letting loose another barrage, decimating the area and leaving little or no trace of the offending rebel strikeforce. The PCs might decide to take the MIRC on while its "back" is turned, and for this reason stats are given below. However, only an extremely well-armed (and lucky) party is going to have any effect on this monstrosity – and that fact should be pretty obvious.

SHIP NAME: Monitor
PRODUCER: Imperial Science Institute
CLASS: Planetary Defense MIRC (Maneuver Interface Robotic Comboid)
OWNER: Imperial Marine Corp
COMPUTER MK: 50
CAT: 24
ARMAMENT: Mk.20 Laser Cannon in Universal Turret in "head" Mk.30 Blast Cannon in "chest" (Front-mounted) 4 Mk.12 Explosive Missile Launchers (two in each "hand")
TONNAGE: 50
HITS: 110
POWER: 100 days, Fusion Reactor
MOTIVE FORM: Fusion Boosters, Fast Grav & Walker
SHIELDS: +10
EW: +25
SENSORS: 50 km (ground), 500 km (atmosphere)
LASER COMM: 1000 km range
CREW: 1 MIRC Pilot
CARGO: 5 cumets
MECH INTERFACE: p/W/S
OTHER FEATURES: Manipulation +20, Maneuvering +35, Perception +25
CREW COMBAT SKILLS: MIRC Pilot +65

4. MARAUDER AMBUSH.

About the time that the PCs finally make it back to the Hypershuttle and begin their repairs, Stiv Rastor and his pals will be skulking around in the nearby woods. If the PCs have someone standing watch while repairs commence (a wise idea), a successful SM/Percep:X or an appropriate Scanner roll by that character will reveal the presence of the trio. If they are not perceived, the Marauders will wait until the PCs seem pretty involved in their activities (perhaps ten more minutes – allow extra Perception or Scanner rolls every minute) before making their move. Whether they are the aggressors or on the defensive, the Marauders will use the same tactics: they will concentrate all of their attacks upon the nearest member of the PC party, attempting to knock that character unconscious. They will then attempt to capture the unconscious character, dragging the supine form back into the trees with them (this will, they hope, allow them to bargain).

If they accomplish this goal, the trio will then call out to the PCs for a ceasefire and negotiation – “Cor, mates, all we’re wantin’ is a shunt back home! Let’s be civilized about this! We’re not wantin’ any trouble!” Let the Players decide what their response will be – the Marauders will wait patiently (meanwhile scanning the PC group and taking pieces of the fallen character’s equipment). This is an open-ended encounter – it should be entirely possible for the two groups to arrive at some sort of bargain, if that’s the way the PCs call it – for all their scuzziness, the Marauders can be good to have on your side. (Of course, it should also be possible for the PCs to blast them into tachyons to teach them some manners...)

5. HAVENBAND.

Should the Players succeed in returning Shotaka Boni to Havenband, they will be spotted (as usual) by a small patrol party somewhere near the camp. These warriors will approach cautiously, lowering their weapons as they do so. When they come close enough to make out Shotaka’s face, they will speak excitedly in Ambatsya and wave for the party to follow them into Havenband.

If the PCs’ original encounter with the Havenbanders ended on a negative note, Toratoma will address them directly, speaking in Anglaman. He will thank the PCs for returning one of their finest warriors back to her people, and will assure them that they will suffer no further animosity from the Havenbanders. He will then ask them to leave, so as not to disturb the upcoming ceremonial meal.



If the original Havenband encounter was a positive one, the PCs will be hailed by many members of the community (many of whom actually do speak Anglaman but usually don’t let on), and Toratoma will deliver the thanks of his people in an emotional speech. Afterwards, a great ceremonial feast will be called, at which the PCs will be the guests of honor. While the camp scurries into preparation mode, Toratoma will walk the party toward the cave of Old Rock. On the way there, he will ask them what they have seen in their travels, and what they have heard in the media or by word of mouth. (Note: In

situations such as this, with PCs relating large amounts of past campaign material to NPCs, it is often much more practical to ask the Players what data they will *not* reveal than what they *will*. When they reach the old man’s cave, Toratoma will explain to them that although he does not like to deceive anyone, in times of war some great secrets must be kept. He will then take them into the cave and introduce them to Boban Tsabano, the father of the Tayan revolution – who they may have met before as Tabrasto, “Old Rock” (see Section 6.44: *Rewards*).

STATS FOR NPCs: WHEN THE WHIP COMES DOWN

Name	Lvl	Hits	AT(DB)	WpnOB	SklAdd	SklAdd	Notes
Shotaka Boni	7	9/39	6(15)	40StrAs	45Percp	45St&Hd	Tsorosian Explorer; Scout for the Havenbanders; familiar with local herbs.
DropTroopers	5	40	16(0)	50LsrRI	65TcScn*	30Percp	Imperial Armsmen; Planetary Assault & Ground Defense personnel.
Marauders	5	30	8(0)	35BlspI	35MtScn	30St&Hd	Jadic Armsmen; Mercenaries for the Church of Darran.

* = includes intrinsic +50 due to nature of item.

ADVENTURE: LAST DITCH

The PCs just might succeed in getting out of this system for good, provided they are capable of handling the orbiting Imperial Gunship Squadron (in one way or another...) This Adventure may be resolved with a bit of Diplomacy and quick wits, or it may become a deadly N-space combat scenario, depending on how the Players call the shots (pun quite intended).

7.1

BACKGROUND DATA

When the Imperial Fleet arrived at the Capella system, several steps were immediately taken to insure the area's smooth transition through the Imperial martial law phase to Imperial Territory status. First the Church's stellar Defense Forces were taken off of active duty, and their starships turned over to the Imperial Fleet, whose Gunship Squadrons moved to secure the effected systems. Next, the Imperial Marine Dropships and MIRC's were released onto Tayah to enforce ceasefire and suppress any initial resistance to the proclamation of "Imperial Acquisition" (read: seizure). All personnel (and equipment) used by the Church of Darran to secure and police the surface of Tayah were "acquired" as well; they now serve and report to Imperial Liaisons (though they will soon be replaced by more Marines). Operatives of the Imperial Intelligence Directorate will now begin combing the moon's surface, finding (or planting) signs of Church ineptitude and corruption, and an Imperial propaganda campaign will be initiated to spread word of these findings and extoll the virtues of Imperial rule. Once all signs indicate that the populous has accepted the new regime, the state of martial law will be relaxed. The Inner Circle and related Nobles will be given the choice of appearing before the GCH in answer to the Imperial charges, or fleeing the inquisition and becoming Exiles.

All of this is in strict and well-orchestrated coherence with what might be termed The Imperial Takeover Plan – the *real* truth behind not only the Tayan revolution, but the entire course of the Darranian "fall". Instigated in Imp.468, The Plan came about as the result of the Imperial realization that in light of such problems as the failing production rate and the Tayan resistance movement, the Church of Darran was no longer capable of competing with its peers (or the newer Frontier Provinces). The settlement of Frontier Zone Five had used Darran Province as a springboard, and the House had outlived its usefulness. Due to the fact, however, that the Church had always been a fervent supporter of the Empire, it was difficult (and politically unwise) to simply

absolve the House without coming up with some good reason. The Plan (known only to a few IID operatives and the Emperor himself) provided this reason by making use of the already present social stresses within the House, manipulating the forces at play and causing the state of disturbance to escalate. Several steps were undertaken in order to achieve the desired culmination:

1. Viscount Shamus assassinated by IID agents;
2. Viscount Usri placed on throne (Usri is selected because of his reactionary attitudes and military experience, as well as his highly verbal support of the Imperium);
3. Colosian weaponry delivered to rebel forces by Imperial agents posing as Colosians;
4. Empire-wide media exposition of Church difficulties/war effort;
5. Eventually, House Darran is forced to call in Imperial Marines, publicly proving themselves unfit to rule their own Province. Thus:
 - a. Imperial martial law enforced
 - b. Systems & assets seized by Empire;

6. House Darran will be absolved by popular vote of Imperial Senate;

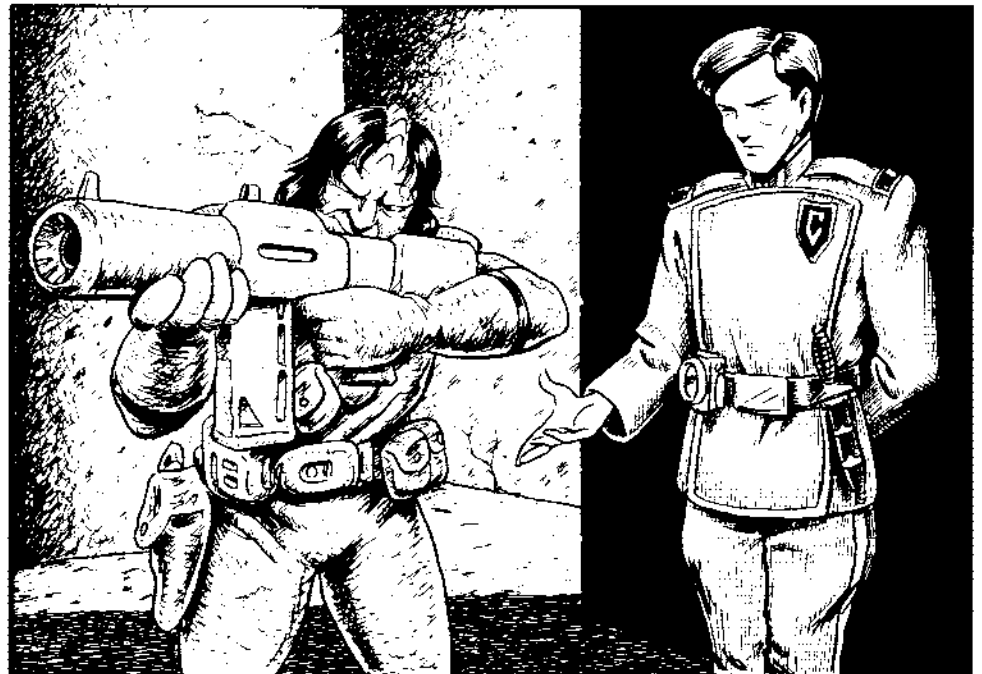
Above Tayah, six Light Gunships hold a defensive pattern around the Imperial Heavy Transport vessel which serves as the mothership for the Dropships and MIRC's. In addition to performing all standard system defense duties, the crew of these vessels has been charged with the task of checking all ships which attempt to leave the system. They are primarily concerned with two things: (A) that no Tayan citizen should be allowed to leave planetside; and (B) that no Free-Traders or other interests manage to smuggle any valuable goods/information out of the system. The lead gunship carries a representative of the IID aboard. Any characters who are stopped while trying to leave the system will be interrogated by this operative, whose job is to make sure that no word of the Imperial Takeover Plan has an opportunity to get out.

7.2

THE NPCs

7.21 THAIN ERIK LUVTAFFE III

Commander of the Imperial Light Gunship "Hercules", Erik III is the eldest son (and heir apparent) of Kivan Drail Luvtaffe, Baron of the Cih star system (coordinates 10/1/-16); an Imperial Territory which serves the Emperor as both a close defensive Port and major shipyard. Erik is a headstrong, sharp-witted young man of twenty-five and quite good-looking (Ap 93).



His sandy blond hair is worn in a short, sharp cut, and his clothes are striking examples of all the finest materials and most recent Core fashions (being of Noble blood, he is not required to don military uniform unless in the presence of a superior officer who is also Nobility). Erik is the Thain of Cih IV: "Opaline". His assignment as Commanding Officer of the Hercules (the lead vessel within the squadron) is part of a traditional arrangement between House Luvtaffe and the Empire, and a prerequisite for his eventual rule of the barony. As such, he takes his job quite seriously – he's not about to let some group of working class errand-boys get the better of him...

7.22 LEXUS MacHEILL: IID INQUISITOR

The only member of the Imperial contingent who knows the truth about the Imperial Takeover Plan, MacHeill has the difficult task of trying to ascertain just what the PCs know about the situation (and solving the problem if they know too much). A very large, round man with a deep baritone voice and small dark eyes, he walks around the vessel as though he owns it, and questions everything (no one is safe from the IID). To aid him in his inquisition, the Imperial Science Institute has provided him with an experimental device called a NeuroNet Overlayer. This machine is a variant on the Direct Response Environmental Actuator Matrix, or DREAMgame. It is capable of suppressing an individual's mental defense mechanisms by direct superimposition of sensory stimulus created by the inquisitor (who, in effect, is "wired" right into the subject's neural network), creating a state of consciousness not unlike a hypnotic trance. Theoretically, a subject under the influence of the NNO can be made to believe that he is in a totally different environment, or to "forget" his own normal mental responses to given stimuli. This makes the subject highly susceptible to the Inquisitor's questions and suggestions. There are some dangers associated with use of the NNO, including a slight possibility of permanent mental damage to the subject (more side-effects are possible through extensive use). The Inquisitor is very proud of the machine, and is anxious to prove its usefulness.

7.3 THE SETTINGS

IMPERIAL LIGHT GUNSHIP HERCULES

A modified "Charger" class Imperial Light Gunship, the Hercules is currently carrying a full Astro and Tech crew, and twenty Imperial Marines man security stations onboard the vessel. Unless the Hercules is somehow taken out, the other Gunships in the squadron will only act upon orders coming from Commander Luvtaffe. The interior of the ship is immaculate, as the vessel has just been refitted and cleaned, and a Mk.20 tractor beam has been added especially for this mission. With the exception of this weapon, the other ships in the squadron match the Hercules' statistics.

SHIP NAME: Hercules
 PRODUCER: Arc-Gotha
 CLASS: Light Gunship
 TONNAGE/HITS: 2000
 COMPUTER Mk: 35
 SENSORS: 20 LY range
 LASER COMM: 100,000 km range
 TBD COMM: 20 LY range
 ARMOR TYPE: 24
 CREW: 4 Astro, 8 Tech
 CARGO: 420 cumets
 PASSENGERS: 20 (military berths)
 MAX SUBLIGHT ACCEL: Rtg 12 = 110 km/sec/sec
 TRANSLIGHT DISPLACEMENT: Rtg 10 = 10 LY/day
 SCREENS: +40
 EW: +25
 ARMAMENT:
 2 Mk.20 Laser Cannons, linked in 360 degree turret below ship
 2 Mk.25 Blast Cannons, front-mounted
 Mk.20 Tractor Beam, in Universal Turret atop ship
 AUXILIARY SYSTEMS: Reactor, Life Support
 OPERATING RANGE: 350 LY total
 OPERATING DURATION: 150 #ays
 OTHER FEATURES: Landing capable, Full Grav, Sickbay for 12
 SPECIAL PROGRAMS: Evade +20, Targeting +15, All SENSr programs
 CREW COMBAT SKILLS: All at +40

7.4 THE TASK

The task is to get out of the Capella system by whatever means are available. This may be accomplished in several ways, ranging from peaceful cooperation with the Imperial representatives aboard the Hercules to launching a successful attack upon the Gunship and shunting out before it has a chance to blow The Daphne to bits. If they cooperate (by far the most prudent response), the PCs will have to submit to a search of the Hypershuttle and an "interview" with Thain Luvtaffe. Unless all their answers and possessions indicate total ignorance of the Imperial Plan, Lexus MacHeill will also have his turn with them – using the insidious NeuroNet Overlayer if he deems it necessary.

7.41 STARTING THE PLAYERS

Once The Daphne is repaired and ready to go, the PCs must decide whether they will attempt to contact the Imperial blockade and receive takeoff clearance or simply try to make a run for it (it is common knowledge that the squadron is in orbit above Tayah). If they succeed in hailing the Hercules, they will be given directions for assuming a compatible orbit and told to prepare for docking/boarding procedures (as a matter of routine). At this point the Daphne's location will be known to the Hercules, which will keep an eye on the Hypershuttle's vector to make certain that the PCs do indeed follow instructions. If the Players decide to ignore the squadron and simply make a break for it, they will have to take The Daphne into orbit (1 round of Atmospheric or Orbital Piloting) and then get out of the range of the squadron's guns (at least 2 rounds of N-Space Piloting) without being SENSrd by the squadron. Note that the Gunships are considerably faster than the Hypershuttle in N-Space; the PCs could easily be SENSrd further out, and the Hercules would still have a good chance of catching them (unless, of course, they shunt out of the Grav Well). The 2 round figure given above places The Daphne about 8000 km beyond the Hercules, which is attempting SENSr rolls every round to locate any escaping vessels. If they are SENSrd at any point during this escape attempt, they will be warned to turn back or be fired upon by the Imperial squadron, and the Hercules will begin pursuit. If the PCs do return immediately, the Imperials will be willing to overlook this small transgression, and the rest of the Adventure will proceed as normal. If not, then they will be forced to either engage in combat with the Gunship or shunt prematurely (causing 10d10 points of damage and 10 random malfunctions aboard The Daphne).

7.42 AIDS

Aside from the Hypershuttle's performance capabilities and ship's programs, the Players have little to go on initially. If they choose not to cooperate with the Imperials, this is all the aid they get. If they are boarded and searched, they can at least rest at ease that the Imperials are only looking for Tayans and Tayan contraband at this moment, and other violations will be overlooked (*this time*). The Imperial "interviews" (both with Thain Luvtaffe and Lexus MacHeill) are similarly lacking in thoroughness – after speaking with the Commander, it will become apparent to any PC who succeeds in a SM/RE&EM:L that the officials are more concerned with determining what the PCs *know* than what they *did* on Tayah. In addition, there are a few bugs still remaining in MacHeill's machine – should the device be used, a character with high Self-Discipline is capable of nullifying (or even reversing) its effect – see Section 7.5: Encounters.

7.43 OBSTACLES

The obstacles in this Adventure have all been touched on above. If the PCs really blow it somewhere along the line and end up being arrested for some reason, they will be placed in a smaller Hypershuttle and taken to the Transport vessel for holding (their last chance to escape is onboard that shuttle. If this happens, use the Tach 20c Hypershuttle in the *Space Master* sample Adventure – see your rulebooks).

7.44 REWARDS

Sometimes, being an adventurer can be a thankless job – the only way the PCs can manage to come out of this Adventure with a reward of any kind would be if they bear the MercMarks described in Section 4.44. Basically, when the Empire absolves House Darran of its political power, it also assumes any of the Houses currently payable accounts – and this includes payment for mercenary services (which are not illegal – only questionable). In order to avoid any undue hassle (and to keep any mercenaries from questioning the Imperial Takeover), the Empire will immediately pay all persons bearing MercMarks to the tune of 100 Elmonits per day (or fraction thereof) since the Marks were assigned. Incidentally, this is over double what the Church of Darran was paying.

7.5 ENCOUNTERS

Due to the nature and location of this Adventure, no random encounters will be rolled. Preset encounters are detailed below:

1. HAILED BY GUNSHIP

The initial encounter with the Hercules takes place over the two ships' communications systems. Chances of The PCs' vessel being SENSrd and hailed are detailed in Section 7.41, Starting The Players.

2. BOARDING PARTY

If/when the Imperial Gunship approaches The Daphne, the pilot of the Hypershuttle will be instructed to lock on to Microfreq 235.5 or utilize the ship's tight-beam laser rig to sign over control to the Hercules, which will make all necessary maneuvers to facilitate boarding. The Imperial Troopers who enter the vessel will first make sure that no weapons are within the PCs' reach, and will order the PCs out of The Daphne and into the Hercules' boarding airlock. They will then conduct a quick search of the Hypershuttle, looking specifically for Tayan citizens, Colosian weaponry and any items which were obviously removed from the moon. Should any of these things be found, the PCs will be arrested (although, oddly enough, such items as illegal MedTabs or other contraband will be ignored entirely). The PCs will be escorted to a nondescript cabin aboard The Hercules, where their Ident Discs will be checked. They will be instructed to wait there until the Commander's arrival (two Troopers will remain outside the door to stand guard).

3. COMMANDER LUVTAFFE

After a few minutes, the cabin door slides open and the Commander walks in. If the PCs have cooperated nicely thus far, he will apologize for the delay and thank them for their patience (otherwise, his attitude is short and officious). The Commander will put the PCs through a brief question-and-answer session regarding the nature of their visit to Tayah, but (as noted above) seems more interested in what the PCs know about the Tayan political situation than anything else (this subtle distinction can be made by a PC who succeeds in a SM/Admin:S or a

SM/Human Psych:X). Questions asked will include: "Are you aware of the location of any TLF hideouts?", "Do you have any idea where the rebels' weaponry came from?", and "What is the nature of your relationship with the Church of Darran?" If any of the Players' answers to these questions seem to indicate that the PCs know more than they are letting on, or if the PCs themselves are uncooperative or malign the Empire in any way, Luvtaffe will call Inquisitor MacHeill in to take over the interview process (once the Commander has made this decision, it would take a SM/Diplo:S to change his mind). If, on the other hand, this interview goes well, Luvtaffe will release the PCs without further ado (if they bear MercMarks, he will pay them before setting them free).

4. LEXUS MACHEILL

If the encounter with MacHeill takes place it is only because Luvtaffe believes that the PCs have some knowledge which cannot be obtained via ordinary questioning techniques. Shortly after MacHeill is called in, he and four Troopers will enter the cabin. Two of the Troopers are carrying bulky helmet-type arrangements, which are set upon two facing chairs. The first (most troublesome/suspected) PC will be asked to remain here while two Troopers take the others into the cabin next door (there are still two more Troopers in the connecting hallway). The Inquisitor instructs the PC to put on one of the helmets, and sit in one of the chairs (he does likewise with the other helmet), explaining that these devices will help them understand each other better ("These interviews can be such sticky situations, after all.") Once the setup is ready, with both MacHeill and the PC wearing their helmets, the interview/experiment begins.

First, MacHeill manipulates a dial on his helmet, looking at the PC's face as if gauging something, and a warm, comfortable feeling will begin to enter the PC's mind. The PC has a chance to make a SM/SD:H to resist the calming influence of this initial, low-level alpha wave desensitizer pattern (use the General column of the *Alternate Personal Maneuver Chart*). If the roll result is **Success**, the Inquisitor reacts by increasing the strength of the wave –

STATS FOR NPCs: LAST DITCH

Name	Lvl	Hits	AT(DB)	WpnOB	SkiAdd	SkiAdd	Notes
Erik Luvtaffe	9	68	7(0)	80StnAs	30MA2St	50Diplo	Imperial Armsman; Commander of The Hercules.
Lexus MacHeill	10	46	6(10)	38StnAs	40Percp	60Intrr	Imperial Administrator; Inquisitor for the IID.
Troopers	5	40	15(0)	40StnAs	25Targt	25Percp	Imperial Armsmen; carry Tac-Scanners and extra weapons cartridges.

effectively raising the Difficulty Level of the SD maneuver by one – this step will be repeated until the PC fails the roll (if the PC's roll result is **Absolute Success**, see below for possible actions).

Now the real interview takes place – MacHeill grills the PC on all aspects of the party's activities on Tayah, attempting to get a detailed, chronological report of their doings. The Inquisitor's questions will be interspersed with such suggestions as "You feel very guilty about lying", and "You want to tell the truth". Each time a question is asked that the Player wishes to respond to by lying or by remaining silent, the clarity-dampening wave will wash over the PC's reasoning, forcing an additional SD roll to be made against its powers (at the Difficulty Level arrived at via the first step). A result of **Success** allows the PC to remain silent or answer as desired, while anything lower forces the PC to answer the question truthfully. On a result of **Blunder**, the PC not only answers the question truthfully, but feels comfortable enough to expose the entire story of the PCs' adventures on Tayah (and so does). In addition, the **Blundering** PC must succeed in a SM/ME&SD:X in order to return to his/her normal conscious state (if this roll fails, the PC will be in the suggestive state until extensive psychotherapy is undergone). If the PC manages to obtain a result of **Absolute Success**, the effect of the NeuroNet is reversed – MacHeill's reasoning will suddenly become unclear, and he will be susceptible to the same sort of hypnotic interrogation as described above. Crafty Players may use this to their advantage in all manner of ways; one neat trick would be questioning MacHeill as to the details of his presence here (which

would force him to reveal the Imperial Takeover Plan). Another would be suggesting to the Inquisitor that he order the crew to release the PCs immediately, etc.

MacHeill will interrogate all of the PCs in this manner if necessary, to arrive at a final, total description of their actions and (more importantly) their knowledge regarding the Imperial Plan (if any). If the entire process yields no knowledge of the Plan, the PCs will be released.

5. BREAKING OUT

If at any time the PCs make a hostile move, opting to rely on combat skills to force their escape, they are in for quite a fight – there are two groups of five Troopers each that will need to be overcome before the party can reach the airlock leading to The Daphne (which will require a SM/CrimT:V or a SM/ElecT:X to open). PCs

who dally may be beset by more squads if the GM feels they need a push. If the break-out scene occurs while the PCs are separated from each other for interviewing (see above), the PC who overcame MacHeill will have to take out the two Troopers who are standing just outside the cabin door, as well (taking MacHeill's weapons from him would prove useful). All doors within The Hercules are considered to be AT20, with 25 hit points. They may also be opened by the proper security card (carried by the Commander, MacHeill, and one Trooper out of each squad). Should the PCs make it onto The Daphne, the Hercules will attempt to destroy the Hypershuttle as it breaks free of its moorings (which in itself requires a VM/OrbPt:V). The party would be well-advised to take the risks of an immediate shunt in this case (see above for damage caused by the shunt). Good Luck...

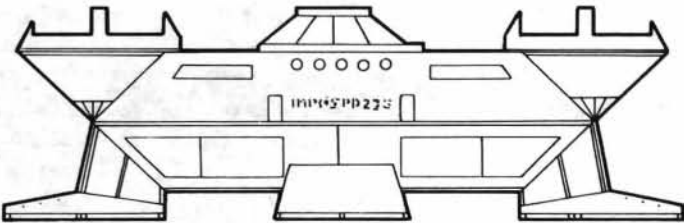
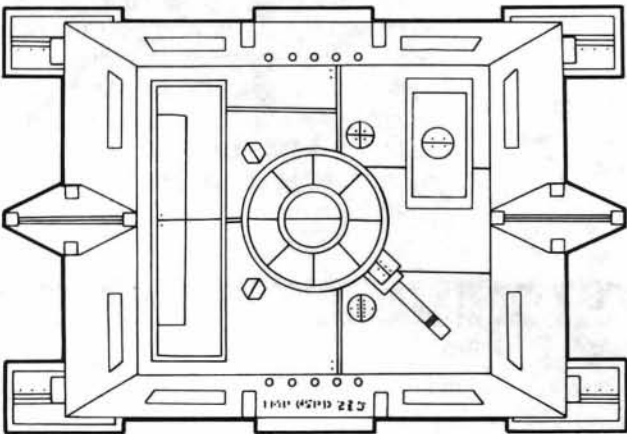
8.0
GAMESMASTER AIDS

This section contains all the maps, charts and appendages necessary to run the included (and other) Adventures within Darran Province.

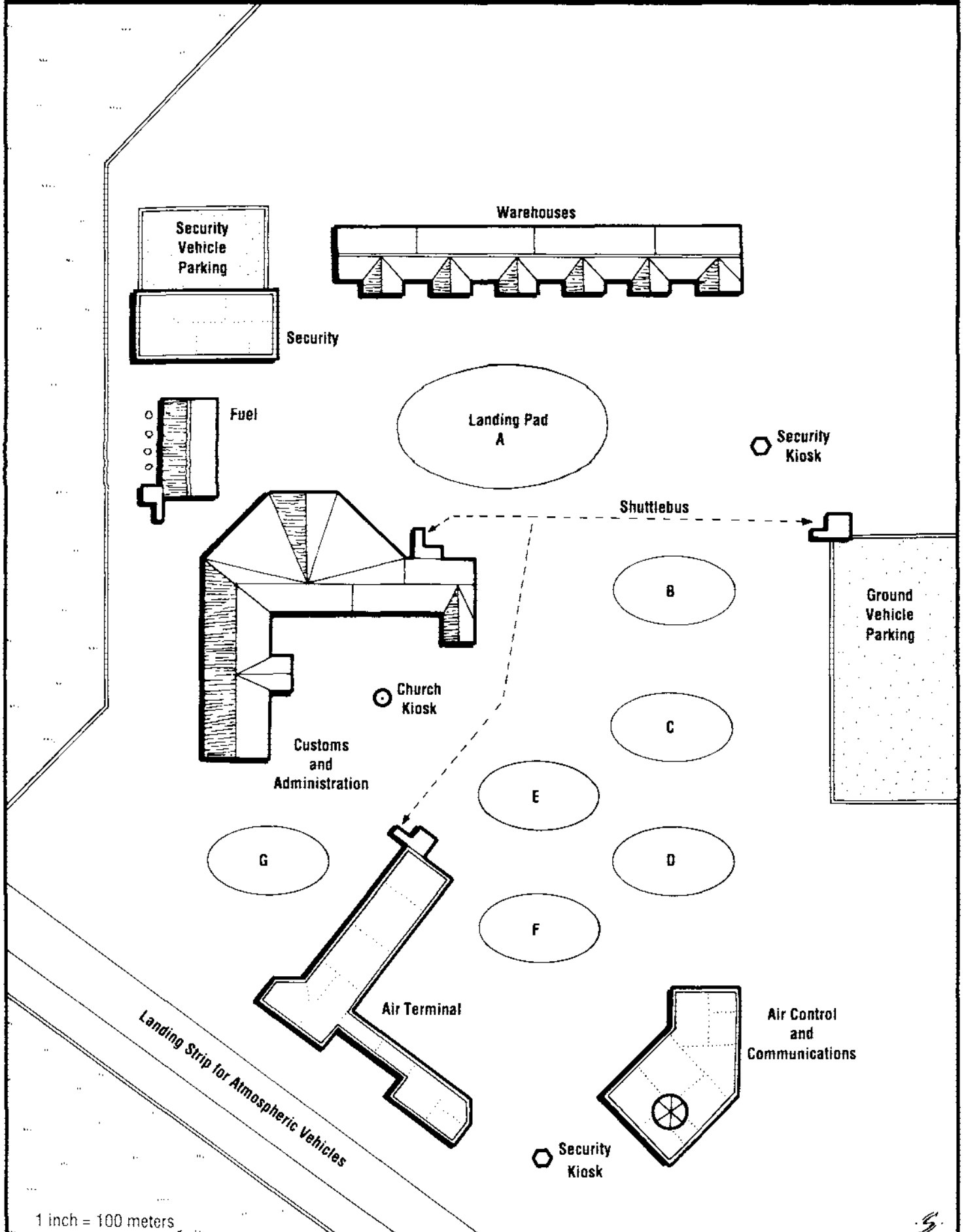
8.1 INTERSTELLAR DISTANCES CHART			
	Capella	Aguirre	Alpha Oram
Capella	—	—	—
Aguirre	33	—	—
Alpha Oram	26	13	—
Karoline	37	58	46
Gamma Vulpeculae	26	50	40
Megan 34	18	50	43
Taj	4	32	26
Ket	35	65	60
Sol	63	70	58

All distances are shown in LY, and are rounded to the nearest.

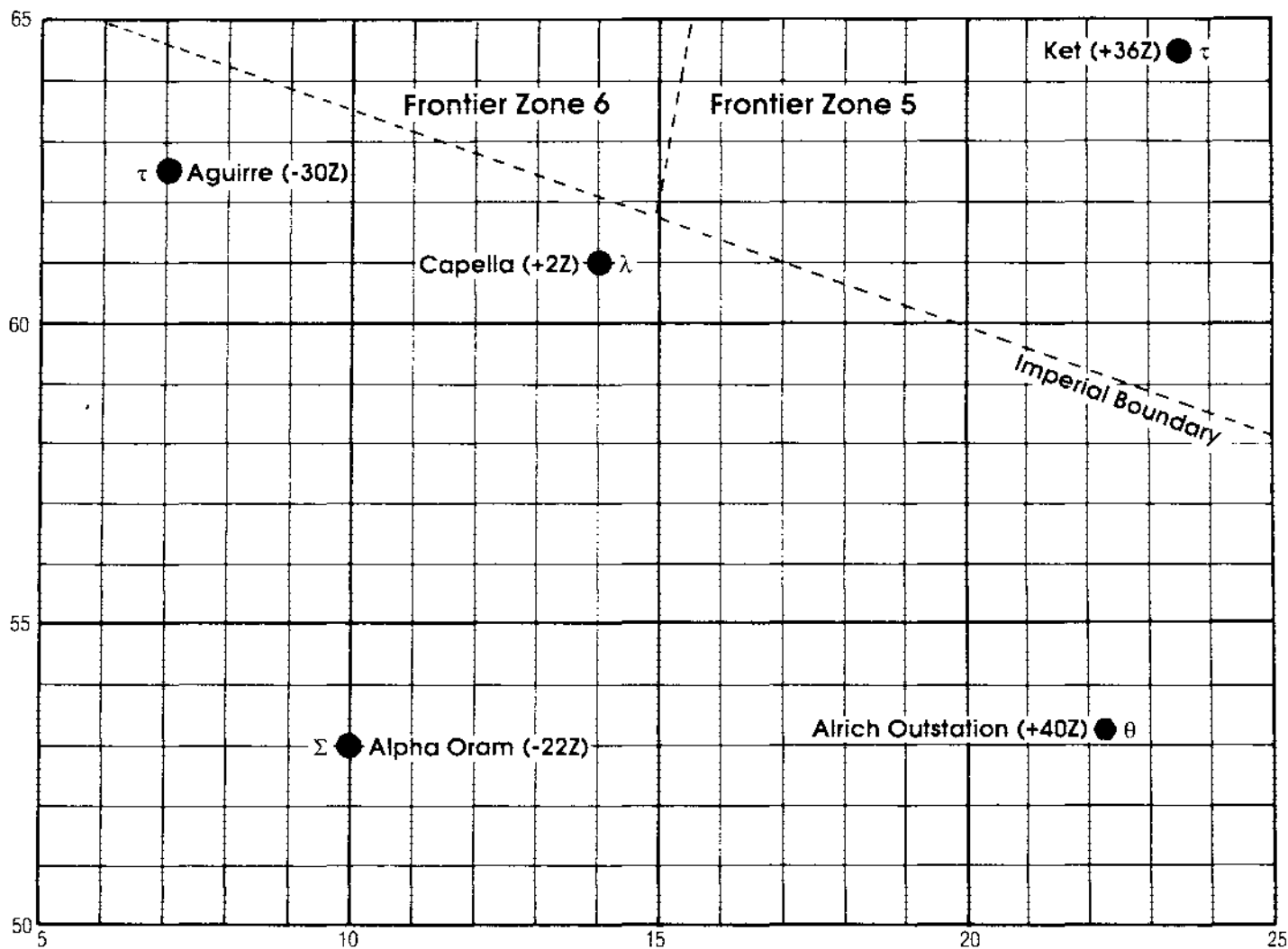
THOR 704 DROPSHIP



8.2 TAYAH PORT



8.3 DARRAN PROVINCE STAR CHART



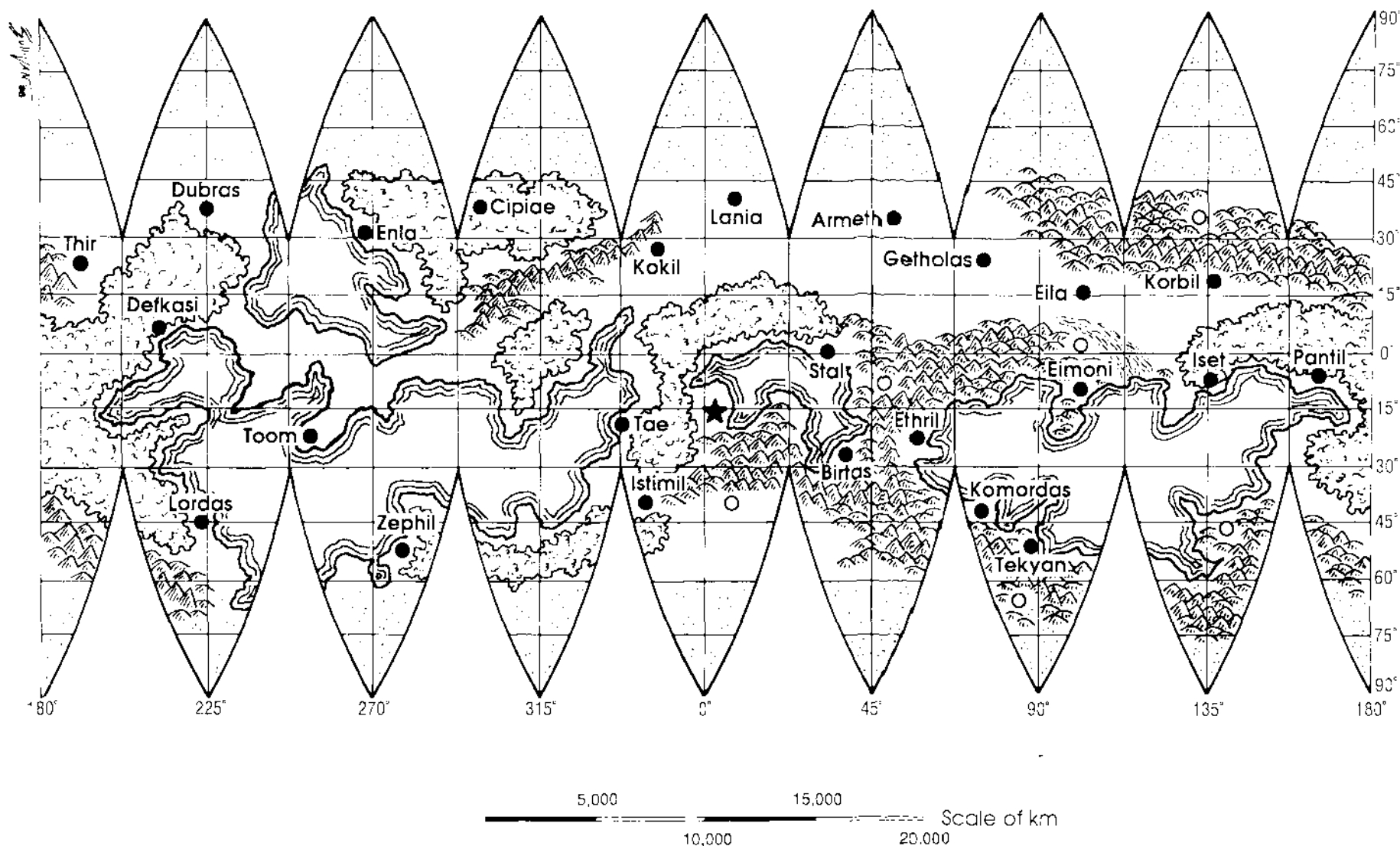
STAR SYSTEM NOTATION

type code location z coordinate
 θ • Ceril (80Z)
 name

SCALE

9 mm = 1 LY

- α • Type O Star
- ε • Type B Star
- ϕ • Type A Star
- λ • Type G Star
- π • Type K Star
- τ • Type M Star
- η • Type F Star
- θ • Outstation



Primary/Coordinates: Capella/ +14/+61/+2

Lunar Rotation Period: 38 std hours

Orbital Period (Around Planet): 84 std days

Orbital Period (Around Primary): 367.2 std days

Climate: Cool w. th wet & dry seasons

Gravity at Mean Altitude: 1.4 x Terran norm

8.5 TAYAH ENCOUNTERS TABLE

Throughout the course of the Module the GM is Called upon to make rolls to determine whether or not a random encounter/event takes place. The following table is designed to provide the basic nature of these events, covering both environmental and living encounters (which may require a second roll to determine actions/motivations) for all the most likely sites in the Module. Always attempt to contribute to the advancement of the PCs through the storyline as given (or at least not to distract from it) when fleshing out these encounters.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	ENC
01-10		01-05	01-05	01-05	01	01-02		A
11-25	01-05	06-15	06-10	06-12	02	03	01	B
26	06-07	16-35	11-20	13-30		04-10	02	C
27-28					03			D
29-35	08-15	36-40	21-30	31-45	04-20	11-20	03-05	E
36-38	16	41	31	46	21	21-25	06	F
39	17-18	42	32	47-48	22	26-30	07-09	G
40-41	19-21	43	33	49	23	31-33	10-12	H
42-55	22-23	44-50	34-37	50-58		34-43	13	I
	24-25	51-52	38	59-60		44-45	14-16	J
56-00	26-35	53-75	39-60	61-77	24-55	46-60	17-20	K
	36-40	76-80	61-70	78-80	56-65	61-63	21-23	L
	41-43	81-83	71-73	81	66	64-66	24-26	M
	44-60	84	74	82		67	27-43	N
	61-70		75			68	44-53	O
	71-90	85-90	76-90	83-95	67-90	69-73	54-65	P
	91-95	91-00	91-95	96-99	91-98	74-75		Q
	96-00		96-00	00	99-00	76-80	66	R
						81-85	67-75	S
						86-00	76-00	T

LOCATION KEY

- 1: Onboard Tayah Orbital Station
- 2: GeoSector 45 & The Wilds before Imp. arrival
- 3: Streets of Tae & Other Tayan cities before Imp. arrival
- 4: Route from Tae to Port before Imp. arrival
- 5: Streets of Porttown
- 6: Tayah Port during riot
- 7: Route from Porttown to GeoSector 45 & The Wilds after riot
- 8: GeoSector 45 & The Wilds after Imp. arrival

ENCOUNTER KEY

- A: Visiting dignitary from foreign Province (5% alien race)
- B: Church Logus or Verbus (1-7= with entourage; 8-10= alone)
- C: Citizens (1-4= working; 5-9= in transit; 10= TLF supporters)
- D: Systems Technician with squad of Mech Interface or Service Bots
- E: Id20 Mercenaries (80% on mission for Church)
- F: VegaPol investigating. (1-4= Colosian aid; 5-10= Church spending)
- G: Spy from foreign Province posing as/ travelling with (reroll)
- H: Imperial Observer posing as/travelling With [reroll]
- I: League of Merchants "Free Trader" doing illicit business
- J: TLF cache (usually food & herbal meds) or other looting opportunity
- K: Darranian Guards (1-5= afoot; 6-8= LandRover; 9-10= Halftrak)
- L: Darranian Troopmover truck (1-3= 5 squads; 7-10= drivers only)
- M: Hailstorm assails area; Arctic Survival skill roll or take Id10 HP
- N: Herbs/Medicinal plants located (see section 4.42)
- O: Pod Leapers (Pod is somewhere nearby); or GM-designed creature(s)
- P: TLF fighters (1= wounded; 2= ambush; 3-7= patrol; 8-10= resting)
- Q: Local uprising; 10-100 rebels with low-tech weaponry
- R: Area is gas-bombed/strafed by Patrol Cruiser/Jet Fighter
- S: Imperial MIRC (1-3= fly-by; 4-8= walk-by; 9-10= engaged in combat)
- T: Imperial Marines (1-3= afoot; 4-7= halftrak; 8-10= Dropship)

8.6 VEHICLES SUMMARY TABLE

VEHICLE CLASS	Jet Fighter	Patrol Cruiser	Halftrak AFV	LandRover AFV	Grav Car Sedan	Troopmover GravTruck
Motive Power	F Jet 10 hrs	Fusion Reactor	F Trak 10 days	F Wheel 3 days	M Grav 20 days	M Grav 50 days
Req Crew	2	2	1	1	1	1
Psngr Tot	2	2	5	4	4	22
Cargo	None	10 cumets	2 cumets	1 cumet	1 cumet	2cumets
Envir	Full	Full	Non	Semi	Full	Full
Tons/Hits	28/48	43/73	26/36	15/25	21/21	50/60
Comp Mk#	20	40	10	None	10	20
Mech Int	None	S	None	None	None	S
CAT	22	24	23	22	22	23
Shields	+15	+50	None	None	None	+20
EW	+10	+35	None	None	None	+20
Sensors	100km	300km	2km	None	None	10km
Comm	200km	300km	20km	50km	None	20km

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