

SPACEMASTER™

PRIVATEERS

RACES & CULTURES™



With friends like these...

PRIVATEERS: RACES & CULTURES™

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everywhere: Thanks for keeping
the faith!





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PART I INTRODUCTION



Part I
Introduction

"We are many, but we are one. We are diverse, and yet we are the same. We are driven by a single heart, a single mind and a single soul. Some of you look around, and you see seven races. I see one people, united by courage."

— Talmage Jameson,
First President of the ISC

Alarion looked around him, confirming with his eyes what his instruments told him. There were 600 Light Horse, moving in a wave through the fire of the guns. 600 Tulgaran Knights of the Horse. Dying for the cause.

He turned his attention back to the field of death. The guns were blasting, but they hadn't been prepared for the charge. They were still scrambling to battle stations. If they had been ready, the entire charge would have been cut to pieces in seconds.

But they were lazy, undisciplined, and slow. The guns guarding the ground were only partially manned. Maybe ten percent. Almost enough to stop them.

But not quite.

600 knights became 550. 550 became 500. Explosions warped the air with their heat distortions and blew Alarion about like a leaf.

One kilometer to go.

He leaned forward, growling with pleasure. Guns to the right of him. Guns to the left of him. He blew through them, jiggling and dodging like a beast possessed.

500 meters.

The sound of the dying poured through his helmet com.

300 meters.

The guns became more accurate as soldiers manned their stations.

100 meters.

Alarion thumbed the arming mechanism next to his throttle and aimed for the base of the wall, below the nearest concentration of guns.

Then came the impact. After that, nothing.

Greetings.

The book you have in your hands is called *Privateers: Races and Cultures*. It is an integral part of the *Privateers* universe, perhaps the most important support book in the series. It details all the races in the official *Spacemaster* universe, from their physical attributes and their cultures to their outlooks on the universe. It is an absolute necessity for the serious player.

1.0 SPACEMASTER: THE RPG

WHAT IS SPACEMASTER?

Spacemaster is a science fiction role playing game, designed to be played in any genre, at any time. It uses the concepts and conventions of Iron Crown Enterprise's *Rolemaster* and could, if the Gamemaster desired, be played hand in hand with that system.

In *Spacemaster*, the players are whisked away to a science fiction universe whose only limits are those of the imagination, and whose every turn is fraught with danger. Though the *Privateers* universe is the official published one, *Spacemaster* does not have to take place in the official universe. It can take place in any universe, from the gritty, hard science fiction universes of Greg Bear and Dr. Gregory Benford to the high-adventure space operas of "Doc" Smith and George Lucas.

Privateers: Races and Cultures is an integral part of the official *Spacemaster* universe. It is easy in, say, a fantasy game, to picture the races with a modicum of description. Fantasy games are based on stereotypes that are well established in western



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culture. Most anyone who plays fantasy has read a book with a dour dwarf, a haughty elf or a noble human warrior. Science fiction is very different. What is a bipedal wolf like? How does he view the world? What are his marriage habits, his culture, his wants and desires? These questions are quite difficult in an *sf* game, because there are few set stereotypes. That is where this book comes in.

SPACEMASTER ELEMENTS

Spacemaster contains several books. These books provide all of the rules necessary to play *Spacemaster*. These books interlock into more than just a game. It is a complete system of role playing, allowing a GM to not only adjudicate rules, but also to build societies, cultures and settings into wondrous and (hopefully) realistic vistas of imagination.

Spacemaster: The Privateers – This is the core book of the system. All the subjects necessary to play the game are at least touched upon in this book. Character creation, action resolution, combat, experience and advancement are interlaced with history, culture, social structure and points of interest. This book contains everything necessary to run a *Spacemaster* game; from rules to a universe in which to implement them, the basics are all here.

“LAW” BOOKS

Blaster Law – One of the most important of all the core products, this book deals with energy weapons and their use in combat. *Spacemaster: The Privateers* has a lot of combat power, but *Blaster Law* takes this to the extreme, expanding directed-energy weapons. It uses a tech level system and gives complete weapon creation rules for use with anything from primitive spacefaring worlds to power weapons invented by worlds yet to be discovered.

Technology Law (*three volumes*) – The next of the core support products, there are three *Technology Law* volumes: *Equipment Manual*, *Robotics Manual*, and *Vehicle Manual*. These three books contain extensive information on the use and application of technology. It contains an advanced tech level system that the GM can use to create his own games.

Future Law – Add the power of expanded character development to your game with *Future Law*. *Future Law* is the ultimate player's guide to *Spacemaster*, giving new character professions and hundreds of new character options. Get the most out of your characters and feel the power of the *Spacemaster* system with this exciting core support book. (Fall 2002)

Gamemaster's Manual – The last book of the core support series is *Gamemaster's Manual*. This book explores the ins, outs and pitfalls of gamemastering and is drawn from some of the nation's top role playing GMs. In *Gamemaster's*

Manual you will find core gamemaster mechanics for supporting the *Spacemaster* line. This includes a full-blown system for Gamemasters to use in creating new, custom races for their universes! (2003)

SOURCE BOOKS

Privateers: The ISC – The only defense against the deprivations of the Empire, the ISC is on the ropes. Will it survive? This book details the history, locations, corporations, military and prominent people of this great confederation. (Winter 2003)

Privateers: The Jeronan Empire – The Jeronan Empire has been slow to give up its secrets, now you will know what only the natives know. This book details the Empire, its structure and military. What does the ISC think it knows about the Empire? What does it really know? These questions and more are answered in this book. (Spring/Summer 2003)

ROLEMASTER PRODUCTS

Rolemaster Fantasy Role Playing – For a game where science and fantasy are to be combined, the *Rolemaster Fantasy Role Playing* book contains all the rules necessary to play a magic wielding character. It is a must for cross-genre campaigns.

Arms Law – The leader of the core support for *Rolemaster* books is the critically acclaimed *Arms Law*. *Arms Law* contains attack charts for many primitive weapons: more weapons, more critical hit tables, more carnage for your game. With *Arms Law*, players and GMs will feel the battle rage around them and leave their foes bleeding in the ditch . . .

Spell Law (*three volumes*) – For games where magic and science are combined, *Spell Law* is a vital expansion. *Spell Law* contains three volumes: *Of Channeling*, *Of Essence*, and *Of Mentalism*. These concise books contain all the spell lists available in *Rolemaster Fantasy Role Playing* as well as the spell lists for the additional professions in *Character Law* – all up to 50th level – over 2,000 spells! As a Gamemaster, you will probably want to purchase all three *Spell Law* books, but as a player you need only purchase the book necessary for your character!

Creatures & Monsters – ICE's full-blown bestiary for *Rolemaster*. This is a compendium of information and statistics for two key elements of fantasy role playing: creatures and encounters.

Rolemaster Sourcebooks – These products (like *Creatures & Monsters*) contain optional rules and information that will help expand the game into new horizons. For example, *Races & Cultures: Underground Races* expands the list of races to include a wide variety of races that can be found underground.



STANDARD SYSTEM PRODUCTS

Weapon Law: Firearms – A book dealing with firearms of all types. Capable of dealing with any firearm, real or fictional. A must for any game where the bullets fly!

10 Million Ways to Die – This product has weapon charts for all sorts of different weapons. Everything from swords and guns to blasters is covered. Usable with any game system, this is a must for all gaming groups.

...and a **10 Foot Pole** – A compilation of adventuring equipment and a system for defining and integrating various lower levels of technology.

More support products are planned. So, keep your eyes peeled for more information on ICE's website (www.ironcrown.com)!

Note: For readability purposes, Privateers: Races and Cultures uses standard masculine pronouns when referring to persons of uncertain gender. In such cases, these pronouns are intended to convey the meanings: he/she, her/his, etc.

SPECIAL THANKS

I would like to thank my play testers. Mike "the Interrogator" Renstrom, Scott "Sweet Llew" Llewelyn, Gary "If you must kill, kill a man of peace, it's easier" Llewelyn, Matt "Death to all Kender" Fitt, Aaron "Soon to be a Daddy" Brown, Chris "Bingo Chalk Butt" Brashier, Stephen "Gizmo" Johnson, and Slade "That's DOCTOR fuzzball to you" Perry.

... Assault plus 16 hours : 3 minutes : 1 seconds

Fooluph pulled himself, bleeding into his sick bay. He was exhausted, driven beyond his limits. His arms trembled. One foot dragged behind him as he limped along, scarred and broken.

His long fur was covered in clotting blood and streaked with sweat. Each breath he drew was like a knife in his lungs. Still, he gulped down air like a dying man drinking water.

He hung, grasping the doorframe of the sickbay another moment. Then he pushed himself inside.

They never should have assaulted M-46. It was suicide. Folly. The action of lunatics. How had they let that crazy monkey of a commanding officer talk them into it?

So many dead. So many friends butchered at the hands of the Jeronans. Some old friends. Some new. How could he sleep at night? How could he ever sleep again?

He pulled himself onto the table and powered up the surgical equipment. If he could patch himself up before the lack of blood and shock claimed him, he might be able to set one thing right.

The tools felt good in his hands. He drew them across his flesh, pulling it back together, reuniting damaged veins and tissues. The damage wasn't as severe as the others had suffered. He made good progress, and was done in less than an hour.

He pulled himself from the table. The wounded were already in sickbay. That much had been done already.

He felt filthy. He was covered in grime, sweat and blood. He was bone tired. More tired than he had ever been in his life.

Why? In the name of all that is decent, why had they attacked M-46?

He checked the wounded. They were stable. They would live long enough for him to do what had to be done.

He had lost his side arm. He usually carried a pistol into combat, but now, he needed something more.

He walked over to his cabinet and opened it up. He could get to the secret panel quickly enough, in

an emergency, but that would mean causing all sorts of damage to the gear inside.

Carefully he began removing the medicines and equipment. He took each off its shelf, one at a time, carefully placing each vial, bottle and component onto the floor. After several minutes, he had them all laid out.

Then he removed the shelves. First the top shelf, and then the bottom. He set them to the side.

Behind the shelves was a secret panel. His fingers sought out the catch. It popped open.

Many people thought that military doctors carried pistols into combat to defend their patients. That was not true. The pistol was for euthanasia. For defending his patients, he had hidden a much more suitable weapon.

The blaster was big: huge in fact. It was almost too large for him to use. It was definitely too large for him to hold like a normal weapon.

Large and chromed, he slid his hand into the back end. It was built like a sleeve, allowing just enough room for his arm. He reached deep inside, grabbing the grip at the end.

There was a whirring sound as the handle compressed. The sleeve contracted, solidly locking itself to his arm.

He hefted the weapon, testing its weight. It was a good weapon, a solid weapon. An oort weapon, capable of taking down anything that walked on two legs.

"Fooluph?" a voice said over the comm.

He walked over to the panel and turned it on.

"Yes?" he said.

"He's here."

"Are you sure?"

"Absolutely."

"Well then. Go get the last one. I'll take care of this."

"Are you sure?"

"Absolutely."

Fooluph hefted the weapon and checked its power level. It was full and ready.

Why had they attacked M-46? Why?

Fooluph walked out into the hall. Someone was going to pay.



Part I Introduction

So now you have purchased *Privateers: Races and Cultures*. What next?

Well that depends on what you want to do. If you bought this book for use with *Spacemaster*, then the answer is simple: you use it as is. If you bought it, to use with another system, then that's all right too.

Either way, this book deals with the cornerstone of any universe: the life that inhabits it. This book will guide you through each of the races, discussing their psychology, physiology, and culture. The must-knows of any science fiction race.

USING PRIVATEERS: RACES AND CULTURES WITH SPACEMASTER

This book, in its simplest form, is meant to be used with *Spacemaster*. *Spacemaster: The Privateers* is the beating heart of *Spacemaster*. It gives all the rules for creating characters, but it's much, much more. Since it also contains the skill system and combat system, it is the core of the game. It allows you to handle all action resolution, from jumping a bridge to picking a lock.

To use this book with *Spacemaster: Privateers*, simply add the rules straight into the system. The rules there were designed as a subset of the information here, so if there is any question about which book is more accurate, fall back to this one.

USING PRIVATEERS: RACES AND CULTURES WITHOUT SPACEMASTER

If this book has been purchased for use with another system, that's great. This book is purposely rules-light. The intention of this book is to give you a feel for each race, to tell you about them and, during the Interludes, allow you a glimpse of the inner workings of their mind.

Where conversion is necessary, it must fall on the shoulder of the GM. Conversion notes are beyond the scope of this work.

A NOTE FROM THE AUTHOR

There are two main schools of thought on the matter of alien races. The first is that the humanoid form and earth-like biology are optimal, and that any evolutionary path is going to follow a trend similar to the one we've seen on earth. Food will be compatible, psychologies similar (or at least recognizable), and forms familiar. Most science fiction, especially in television and movies, falls into this category, for convenience.

The second school of thought is that our form, our thought, and our biology are one of a myriad of possibilities. If two alien races met, they would have no common frame of reference. They

would have no idea where to look at the other creature, as neither would have any recognizable face. They would have no way of communicating with each other as they would have no recognizable language. They would not be able to eat each other's food, because they would not have similar biologies (if they even had biologies, as we know them). They would probably require a lot of examination to even determine that the thing in front of them was intelligent, assuming that they could determine that the thing in front of them was even alive.

I am firmly in the second camp.

In all fairness, this is more of a spectrum of thought, with myself on one end with other like-minded thinkers and a group of others at the far extreme. Meanwhile, the majority of people fall somewhere in the middle.

Everyone would like to think that his view of the universe is the way it really is, but this is not the forum for that debate. The problem arises that if this humble author's view is the hard science approach, then how do you approach writing a science fiction universe?

You see, it's all fine and dandy to think you're on the scientific high ground and produce *truly* alien races, but the more alien a race is, the more unplayable it is. It's not acceptable to put a race in the game, then give it a psychology that requires a lunatic or a cutting edge psychological theorist to play.

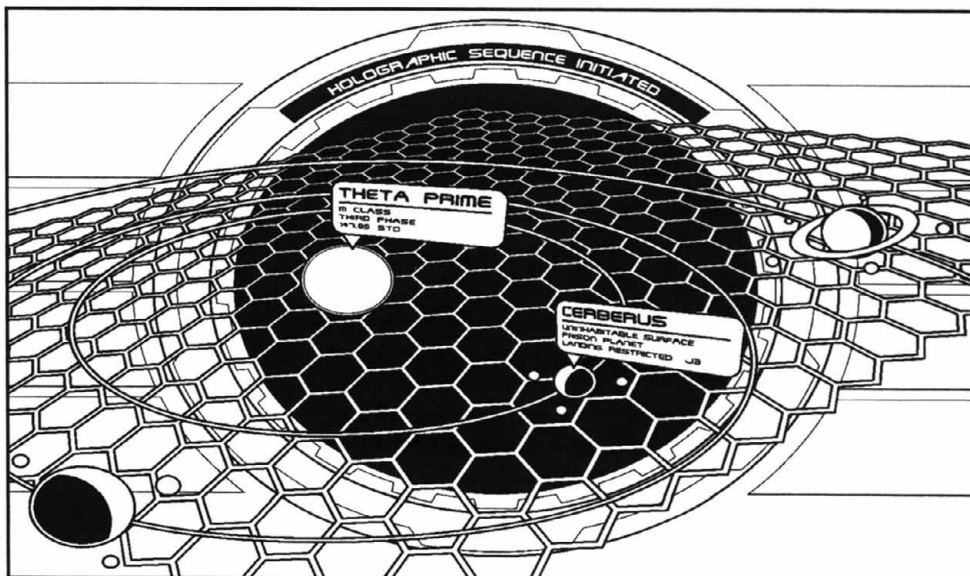
This leaves us with three possibilities.

1) No aliens at all. Humanity is alone in the universe, or has yet to discover any other beings.

2) Enemy aliens. Place one race of aliens in the games, then pit them against humanity. Allow only the GM to run them. This *does* require the GM to take the burden of getting inside their alien thoughts.

3) Create an artifice. If playable aliens are contrived, create a contrivance. Create some artificial mechanism that forces all the races to be similar enough to play.

Players seem to gravitate to role playing games, *most* role playing games, to play other races. This is not a solid rule, as *Legend of the Five Rings* has proven, but give players various races and they'll





stretch themselves into the role. I did not want to deprive the players of *Spacemaster* that experience.

Thus the Architects were born.

Once you've invented a contrivance to make all races human-like, you can either make humans the cause of it all (via genetic engineering) or you can make humans themselves a blatantly artificial race.

The Architects were created as the fathers of all races. They created an ecosystem of animals, then chose seven to raise to sapience, on different worlds across the universe.

And that brings us to this book.

2.0 THE LIVING UNIVERSE

If the known universe is an Architect experiment, then it is an experiment left to its own devices. The universe evolved with a life all its own, but how it got to where it is, and where it's going . . . that's the matter of much debate.

2.1 THE RACES

The Architects built a single ecosystem. On certain planets holes were left and creatures were deleted, but for the most part, they made one sphere of life, one living ecology. This ecology is repeated on world after world.

There are, of course, variations. On valiesian and oort worlds, dinosaurs evolved, whereas on most others, they didn't. On the third planet of Helios, renowned for first contact between humans and oorts, an unexpected meteor impact killed off large sections of the ecosystem. Therefore many creatures, the braat for instance, were killed before they ever evolved.

A pure copy of this ecosystem, one that perfectly follows an Architect "template" doesn't appear to exist on any world. The Architects seem to have given up their influence thousands, if not million of years ago. A lot can happen in that time. The dodo was killed on Terra, the predatory cat hunted to extinction on Hassus. The list goes on forever.

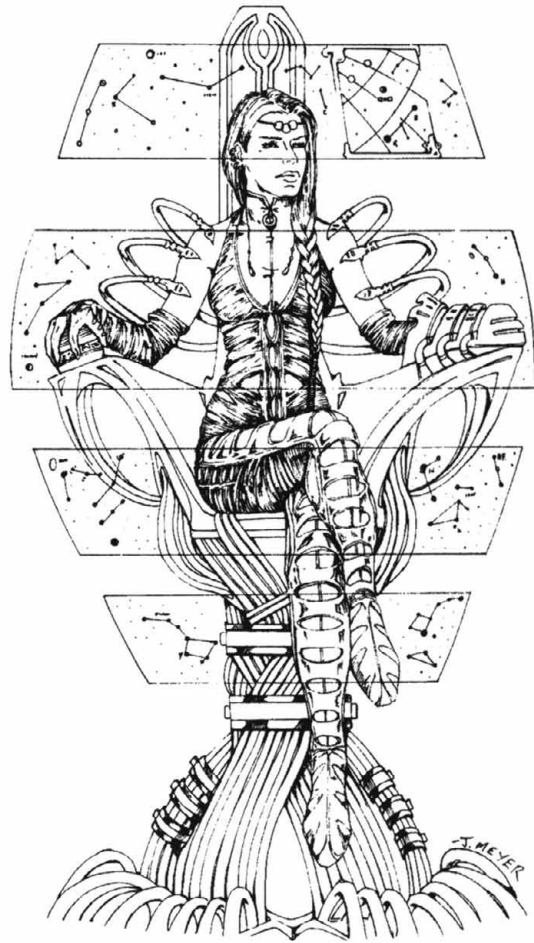
Within this idealized ecosystem, this metasystem, if you will, there are seven animal forms considered most promising by the Architects. They are as follows:

THE FELINE

The feline is the most vicious warm-blooded predator. The feline is a creature of pride and a creature of death. It kills without remorse, and loves itself above all others. The feline is notoriously curious, though it does not hold a candle to the monkey. The feline is not a cursorial hunter. It will tire after brief spurts of speed.

THE APE

The ape is a creature of curiosity, even on worlds where it has not become a primate. It is also known for its nimbleness and acrobatic ability. It is a cursorial hunter, and can run all day long if properly conditioned. The ape is notoriously social.



THE URSINE

No sapient stock animal is mightier than the ursine. Ironically, this means that they develop more pacifistic traits as they evolve. Pressure against predators is not as much an issue with ursine evolution, and accordingly, the most aggressive lines kill each other off. Ursines are not cursorial hunters.

THE BRAAT

The braat is one of the most intelligent animals on any world. Even on worlds where another race evolved, the braat often shows more intelligence than presapient offshoots of the evolved race. The braat are cliquish and cursorial hunters. On Earth, the braat have been extinct since before the dawn of humanity.

THE LUPINE

Intensely pack oriented, the lupine show a greater sense of community than any other evolutionary candidate. The lupines are the heart of loyalty. They are cursorial hunters as well.

THE RAPTORS

Of dinosaur stock, the raptors are one of the most vicious intelligences ever evolved. They are reptilian in mind as well as appearance. They are not cursorial hunters.



THE INSECT

Of all the diversity of insect life, only one line was chosen as a candidate. Pheromonal hive-minds quickly grew to psychic group consciousness. They are cursorial hunters and have a psychically enforced sense of community.

THE DICE ARE CAST

On each world, one of these seven creatures was chosen for intelligence. This line was carefully nurtured, the odds weighted in its favor. Evolutionary offshoots died, and finally an intelligent race blinked toward the heavens.

Why choose seven creatures and evolve them? Most people believe it was an experiment, designed to determine what traits make the perfect race. If so, which race is perfect, from a creator-race's point of view?

Regardless, the seven races exist. They have evolved, and on worlds where one line died out, the Architects took care to raise another to take over, to carry the torch of intelligence into the modern era.

EVOLUTIONARY OFFSHOOTS

The act of evolution creates offshoots. This is a fact of life. The offshoots depend on the end race that the world produced.

For instance, on human worlds, apes are primates. They have opposable digits, decent reasoning ability, and a humanoid appearance. On a falar world, felines have opposable digits, high intelligence and humanoid forms, while apes are quadrupeds.

CURSORIAL HUNTERS

An important trait to any race is whether or not they are cursorial hunters. Cursorial hunters are known for their ability to run all day long when properly conditioned.

Cursorial hunters have two main traits.

First of all, there is endurance. A cursorial hunter can run for a very long time. While another race is capable of high speed, but tires out or even dies of heart failure over the long haul, a cursorial hunter can keep plodding along at a measured pace.

Also, a cursorial hunter has the psychological trait of focusing on a single goal until it is accomplished. This makes cursorial hunters very patient, and very determined. This trait is not as common in non-cursorial stock, except in the short

term (cats can be very patient when hunting, but this doesn't translate well into patience with long-term projects).

2.2 THE ARCHITECTS

So who were these mystical fathers of intelligence? Were they the only race to ever achieve sapience, or just the only ones in our part of the galaxy?

No one really knows.

The information on the Architects is very scarce. It does exist, however. It merely takes deduction.

ARCHITECT EVIDENCE

What evidence is there that the Architects exist?

Well there is no *direct* physical evidence, at least none that a common person can find. Any evidence that is found is immediately confiscated by the government; at least that is the rumor.

The most glaring evidence is the existence of the seven races. Common thought is that seven identical races, so close that they can mate and produce viable offspring cannot evolve on so many different worlds; among themselves, humans from two different worlds can reproduce, but a human and a xatosian cannot.) There is no mechanism to explain it.

Some people have suggested psychic resonance, but the xatosians deny the possibility. Psychic ability, they say, is the end-point in evolution, not the start point. Psychic resonance does not apply until a race has already evolved sapience. Psychic power has no effect on the physical, until applied with conscious effort.

A great deal is understood about evolution in the ISC. In fact, the Architects' experiment could almost be performed with ISC technology.

Dozens of simulations have been run, and none of them can model two races evolving identically, even given a common starting ecology, much less beginning from scratch. And yet it has happened over and over again.

Just as Einstein chafed to create a fictional force to stop the universe from expanding in his models, ISC scientists chafe to create such a fictional force in evolution. It just screams of artifice.

Also, the more a scientist is established and the more that he is in a position to have access to state secrets, the more he believes in the Architects. The common belief is that these scientists have seen the hard evidence and they are merely sworn to secrecy. Whatever the reason, these people define accepted theory, and nothing is considered fact until *they* say it is fact.

Finally, many highly placed ISC scientists and officials have as much as admitted that there is evidence in their possession. On more than one occasion, a scientist has stated quite pointedly that if they had seen such evidence, they would have to deny it. Scientists are notoriously bad liars.

ARCHITECT MECHANISMS

How does one evolve a race?

Through patience, perseverance, and pressure.

The Architects seem to have used many mechanisms, from minor disasters to increased predation, to forced evolution. They seem to have subtly caused the unlikely to happen, nudging the





ecology in a million little ways over a long period of time. A slight change to the environment makes a certain plant thrive, which alters the composition of the ozone layer, which causes a predator that is threatening the evolutionary line to struggle. Tiny little details compiled over a very long time, with infinite patience.

The Architects were almost certainly cursorial hunters.

ARCHITECT ARTIFACTS

There are no publicly known Architect artifacts, but that hasn't stopped rumors of them from surfacing as rampant urban legends. Why do people believe they exist?

Mostly because they want to, but there are other factors. For instance there are several scientists, renowned for their honesty, who refuse to deny they have ever seen any. The best they will produce is a "no comment." This alone is enough to keep the rumors alive.

It is common knowledge that any such artifacts would be immediately classified. The government freely admits it. The potential for damage if such a thing was to get into the wrong hands is simply too great.

No. Architect artifacts, be they urban legends or cold hard facts, are too much a part of ISC life to disbelieve. They have to be out there, or else of what would the treasure hunters dream?

ARCHITECT PHYSIOLOGY

If the government truly has discovered Architect sites and artifacts, then they probably have a better idea of what Architects looked like than the general populace. Some inferences can be made, however, from circumstantial evidence.

The Architects love the humanoid form. They have used it exclusively in intelligent life. Most scientists see this as a clear indication that they were humanoid.

By the same token, they probably breathed for oxygen and ate for nourishment. They probably had a recognizable face and hands. They probably had a recognizable opposable digit.

It is a matter of debate as to whether they had toes. It's a common trait, but one that could be chalked up to the fact that all evolutionary stock had toes. It is commonly agreed that the Architect *once* had toes; it's just not known exactly how evolved they were.

Architects would probably have been very long-lived. It would be logical to design races to have a significantly smaller lifespan than the designer, so that many generations could be easily examined. It is unknown whether to attribute their supposed long life to biology or technology.

This is where most of the agreement ends, with one caveat. It is thought that this is where all resemblance to the seven races ends. All sapient races resemble their evolutionary stock very closely. There is no evidence that any race resembles the Architects more than any other.

ARCHITECT TECHNOLOGY

Although the Architects could conceivably be Tech Level 26, most scientists would put them closer to 30 (not that ISC scientists use the tech level designations). Is this a matter of wanting God to be more evolved than you? Perhaps, but they were clearly very highly evolved, technologically.

Some evidence that might support this is the slowness with which Architect worlds have given up their secrets (if they do, in fact, exist).

Another piece of evidence that many have put forward is the development of the reactionless drive. An analytical look at the technology of the ISC shows that the reactionless drive was developed long before other forms of technology of similar complexity. In fact, many of the forces involved in the processes of the reactionless drive seemed to have been discovered by accident, and it took generations for the oorts to unlock the secrets of the drive they had seemingly discovered by accident. Many think that these pre-contact oorts created the reactionless drive based on technology found at an Architect site.

ARCHITECT WORLDS

Officially, there are no known Architect ruins. Unofficially, there are five worlds that most citizens believe to have Architect finds of some kind. All five of these worlds have been quarantined.

The ISC vehemently denies that any of these worlds have anything to do with the Architects, or that any Architect evidence has ever been discovered.



Bonner Durchmusterung - 18E 1051

Galactic (-13.785, -11.520, -9.684)

This G-Type star was quarantined the first day the Inter-Species Commission met. All records of the reason for this quarantine were destroyed or classified, although certain old references refer to it being an oort research station that produced some of the more significant drive advances of all time. It was quarantined due to "intense radioactive instabilities" of the star. There is a rotating fleet there (never permitted to stay longer than two weeks) to insure that any ships that arrive there damaged (no *healthy* ship would approach) are evacuated immediately for "humanitarian reasons."

Cape Photographic Durchmusterung -61E 6537

Galactic (+14.495, -7.226, -14.074)

This G Type star was discovered by a survey crew in 6 CY. The fourth planet was immediately quarantined as being "extremely hazardous to sapient life." The survey crew returned healthy, but refused to talk about the matter. They all were named in large patents during the next twenty years and their families are extremely rich to this day. A planetary defense system surrounds the fourth planet that is notorious for malfunctioning and firing on any ship that approaches. As there is nothing else of interest inside the system, most ships just avoid it.

9 Puppis

Galactic (-9.693, -12.529, +1.839)

This binary system contains a G and F type star, orbiting at a semimajor axis of 9.67 AU's. All expeditions to this system have failed, and psychics become extremely distressed passing within 50,000 AU's. It is unknown whether this has anything to do with the Architects, but any psychic that comes near this system can't seem to talk about anything else for 12 hours thereafter. This could be a coincidence.

Cape Photographic Durchmusterung -66E 53

Galactic (+7.117, -10.530, -15.966)

This unassuming star is the home of the most productive secret fighter research base in the ISC. This skunkworks is so secret that the base's name has never been divulged. It was established after a long-range scan reported "unknown ruins" on the fifth planet. The results of the following survey, in 169 CY are heavily classified.

Bonner Durchmusterung -4E 426

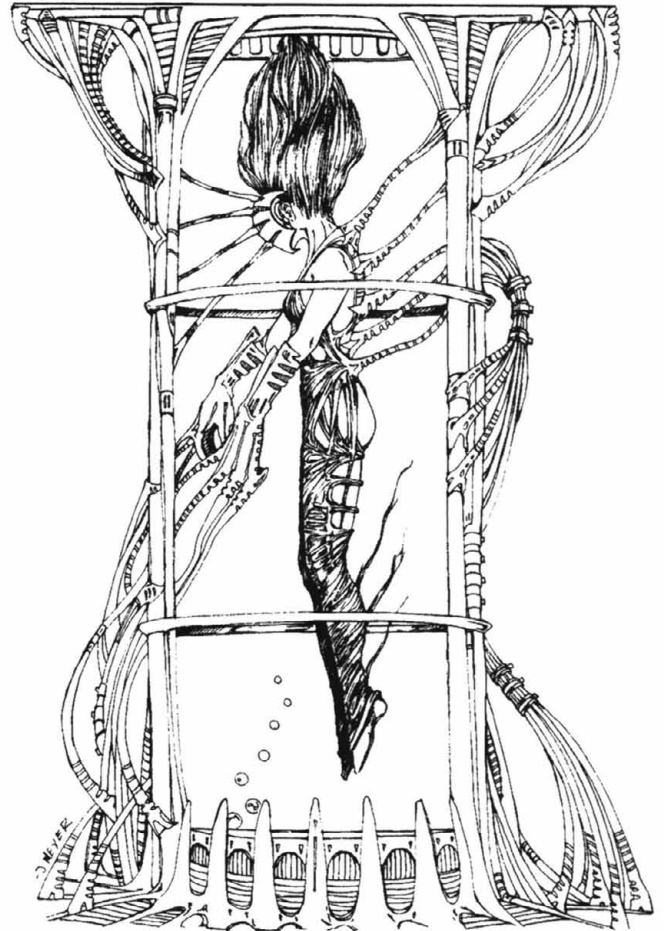
Galactic (-13.195, +1.401, -19.501)

Any ship passing within 55 AU's of the first planet of this system explodes, unexpectedly, for no known reason. No attack can be detected, and the quarantine on this system appears quite sincere. This problem is often attributed to an Architect defense system or experiment gone awry, but no one knows for sure.

THE ARCHITECTS AS GODS

Many people have suggested that the Architects may have still been interfering with the seven races even when they were primitive societies. Scriptural references from almost every world have been linked to spacecraft and high technology.

Most religious citizens find this highly offensive. Atheistic opponents chalk it up to coincidence spread by psychic resonance.



2.3 PSYCHIC RESONANCE

An astonishing thing happened when man went to the stars. He found dozens of human worlds, all so similar to the cultures of the cradle of his birth, that one had to blink and look twice to tell the difference. How could this be? How could cultures that evolved separately be so similar?

The oorts had a theory, but it wasn't until the xatosians accepted it that it was truly believed. The theory is called *psychic resonance*.

Psychic resonance states that all members of the same race are linked, on some subconscious level, to every other member. It states that we are all telepathically linked.

That is supported by the evidence. Trends in fashion. Political bodies. Social structures. Myths. Similarities in all these things rise up on a hundred worlds, over and over again. Some have chalked it



up to genetic tendencies, but it seems more than that. How often does the traditional monarchy have to rise before it's more than a coincidence? How about communism, socialism, or democracy? It has become accepted. The races have psychic undercurrents, and they develop along certain lines.

This may be an explanation as to why there are no free xatosian worlds. This is not universally accepted, as a case can be made that this is simply a trait of xatosian psychology.

It is important to note that psychic resonance does *not* explain away the Architects. The xatosian queens insist that the effect does not appear until a race has evolved beyond its evolutionary roots.

2.4 GEAR-UP

No world has been geared-up since the war began. The ISC Gear-up Corps *is* still in existence; it's just seriously under funded.

The gearing-up of a world goes through several phases.

PRE GEAR-UP

Often called Phase Zero, the first step in gearing-up a world is receiving permission and funding from the House of Commons. The House Gear-Up Committee examines dozens of gear-up proposals each year. Out of these proposals, typically a dozen to three dozen are selected, depending on the budget and economic fluctuations of the year.

After a world has been selected. A Gear-Up Team is selected.

PHASE ONE

The first phase of gear-up is contact and initial building. The Gear-Up Team, trained diplomats all (always one psychic included) make contact with the planetary population. This is an arduous task of convincing the population that the team (predominantly their own race, except in the case of valiesians) is not a new pantheon of gods.

After contact has been made, generic mining robots are dropped onto the planet. These begin digging out all the raw materials necessary for a technology base. They dig for the first six months, building more specialized robots by the dozen.

These robots build the planet's primary industrial center. This typically takes another six months, though it often stretches to a year, and is not truly complete until after phase four.

Meanwhile, the Gear-Up Team begins to teach a handful of locals the basics of technology. This has more to do with discovering the cultural pitfalls than actually producing learned men.

Phase one ends when the industrial center first begins production of materials (and more robots).

PHASE TWO

Phase two begins as the industrial center begins cranking out prefab schools by the dozen. These are staffed by robotic teachers. These droids typically remain in the planet's education system for the rest of their operational lives.

Phase two typically takes ten years. During this time, schools are being filled as quickly as they are built, but it isn't until the end of this phase that there

are enough schools to take an entire generation into the public school system.

PHASE THREE

The third phase typically takes twenty-four years. It begins when the first year of students enter school en masse. Typically, this is the biggest class that moves through the system for quite some time, as any student who wants to learn is taken, regardless of age. Many of the older students drop out, but for younger students, class is typically mandatory (a decision made by the existing planetary government, not the ISC).

For 24 years, this class moves through schooling, learning just like an ISC student would. When it is done, hundreds of Ph.D.'s are released upon the world, to rebuild in their own image.

PHASE FOUR

Social problems, unrest, and often riots and violence go hand in hand with the first three phases. By the end of phase three, a generation of learned people has entered the world.

At this time the planetary government is formed. The details of this change from world to world, but since they have been taught by the ISC, the government often models itself after the ISC.

At this point, the most important vote in the planet's history takes place. When it is done, the planet is either a free world or an ISC member world.

AFTERMATH

From there, the ISC Gear-Up Team pulls up roots and moves on. Many retire. Others take on a second project (each project taking up a significant chunk of a person's life).

The hardware, from the initial robots to everything created in the interim, is donated to the world. The planet's economy is often too fragile at this point to lose them, and the robots have formed emotional and cultural bonds with the planet's population.

3.0 NEW RULES

This section deals with new rules or new treatments of old rules. Most but not all of the rules in this book deal with character creation.

3.1 HEIGHT AND WEIGHT

A rigid system of generating height and weight is not always desirable. Many GMs will want to use these as a guideline, others might want their characters to roll their heights and weights.

3.1.1 OVERVIEW

Provided with each race are charts to determine its height and weight. These charts can also be used to determine extreme as well as mean values. The procedure for using these charts is listed below.

3.1.2 GENERATING HEIGHT AND WEIGHT

The first question a GM must ask himself when determining the height and weight of a character is, "Should it be generated randomly, or should the players choose themselves?" Many players have



very specific visual images of their character in mind. Generally speaking, they should probably be allowed to play them.

Of course some players will abuse this privilege. Others will want to determine their height and weight randomly. This system allows those players to roll their physical dimensions.

If a player wishes to choose his height and weight, especially if he isn't making the character "average," then he should have access to the tables anyway. This will allow them to see the high and low ends of the table and judge where their characters should fall.

If the physical dimensions of the character are to be determined randomly, then find the charts for the character's race. Follow the this procedure:

- 1) **Determine Base Height:** Roll d100 (open-ended) and consult the column for the character's sex. This will give you the character's base height in centimeters. Note that the shaded area of the table shows racial averages.
- 2) **Determine Adjusted Height:** Roll a d10 to determine high or low. High means the character adds the next number to his height, low means he subtracts it. Then roll another d10. Odd means nothing is added or subtracted. Even means 1 is added or subtracted. This is the character's final height.
- 3) **Determine Frame Size:** Roll 2d10 and add the character strength stat bonus. In addition, add one if the character's height was above average and subtract one if it was below average. Consult the following table.

FRAME SIZE CHART

up to 7	Small Frame
8 to 14	Medium Frame
15 or more	Large Frame

- 4) **Determine Base Weight:** Roll d100 (open-ended) and add the following:

+3 times Strength bonus
+3 per cm above average height
-3 per cm below average height

Consult the column corresponding to his frame size to determine the character's base weight.

- 5) **Determine Adjusted Weight:** Roll a d10 and subtract five. Add the result (in kilograms) to the base weight.

3.2 OTHER RULES

Other rules will be treated in this book. Some of them are as follows:

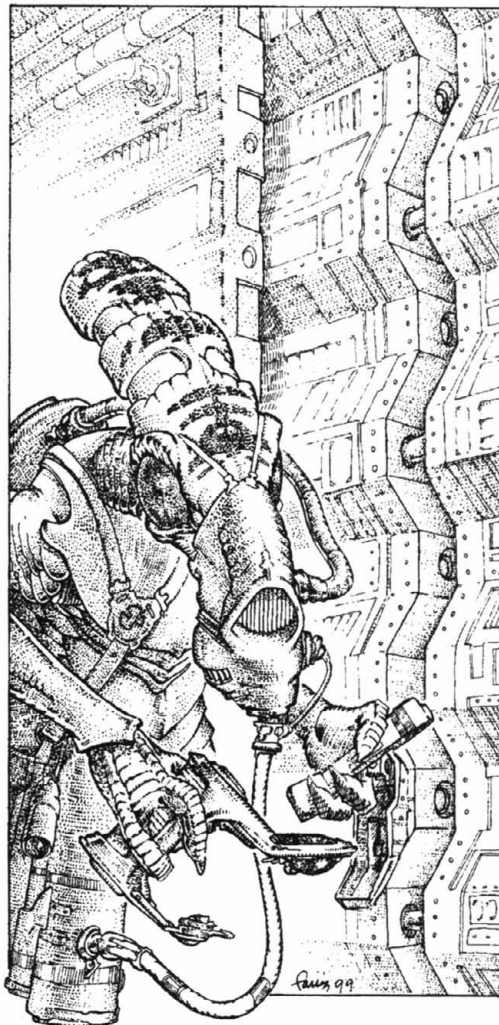
3.2.1 TALENTS

Each race has its own list of talents. The specific rules for using these charts are given in the race's description. It should be noted that if the optional talent rules in

Future Law are being used, then the costs are included with the description of the talent.

3.2.2 WEAPONS

Some of the races in this book have commonly used weapons. The attack charts for these weapons are included at the end of this work.





Interlude

INTERLUDE ONE

... Assault minus 3:10:45

Kristopher Mitchell leaned back in his chair. He stretched, trying to ease the tension from his muscles. He shook his head to clear it.

Days of torture at the hands of the Jeronan warden still haunted him. He had been through a lot in his life, seen many horrible things, but nothing compared to the torture he had experienced in the Jeronan prison camp. Nothing.

Ignore it, he told himself, you're past that now.

But he wasn't. Not really. He never would be. There were things that haunted him, in the darkest parts of the night. Things he had done. Things he had seen. The list had become large over the years, so large that it threatened to overwhelm him. Still, it grew, and with each new horror, he wondered if he and sleep would have to part company for good.

The prison planet was the newest addition to the list, but it wouldn't be the last. There were always more.

When his crew had been captured, he had tried to formulate an escape. They all had. Two of his men had even attempted it, only to discover the prison was on an airless world. They had all tried to think of some way out, but sometimes, there is just no hope.

Mitchell shook his head again.

No. There was always hope. Just three months ago, he had died of vacuum exposure. He had been dead for over twenty minutes before they had dragged him to safety. The damage to his brain had almost been irreparable. Only state of the art medicine and a whole lot of luck had brought him through. Even now, he was retraining his brain to think properly. In a few more months, it might be whole again.

But, *he* would never be whole again.

Too many lost friends. Too many deaths. Too much fighting and killing, all to stop the wave of Imperial forces devouring his country and threatening its freedom. Horrible, mindless killing.

In the end, they had not escaped from the prison camp; they had been rescued. The 42nd Force Recon, led by an old friend, had assaulted the planet and liberated the prisoners. They had suffered court-martials for disobeying orders, and only the public's bitter need for a victory in this terrible war had saved their careers. But Mitchell's old friend Willis, the commanding officer, had been quietly tucked away at a desk job, any thought of earning his stars gone forever.

Sometimes the pain was so bad you stopped noticing it. Other times, you just went numb.

Mitchell leaned forward and picked up his data pad. He had been doing his job for too long to let it to get the better of him. He had allowed himself his moment of self-pity. Now it was time to get back to work.

He stood up and walked around his new state-room. Not quite the same as his old ship, but a good one nonetheless. He had it organized the same way he organized all his quarters, the first step in making a place his. The ship, the *Revenge*, was a good one, and almost as well equipped as the old ship, before it was taken by the Jeronans.

A lot had changed. With the new ship came new crewmembers, all supplied by the government to fit into their cover as privateers. They were one of many military-sponsored teams working the Jeronan supply lines, boosting morale among privateers that didn't know any better and generating public support.

Mitchell and all his crew were still in the military. Their official status was "discharged" but if one were to crack into the highly classified portions of the military database, one would see that they were still drawing pay under cleverly camouflaged stock portfolios and trust funds.

Mitchell was a Marine. He had spent years in Force Recon, picking up experience in special ops. It was this background that, in part, made him so successful.

Then there was the rest was his crew. He had never worked with a finer group of people, and he doubted that he ever would. He looked down at his data pad, at the dossiers there.

Sergeant Peter Clemmons, human Force Recon, ISCMC. Expert at all forms of infantry combat. Expert in powered armor operation. Various medals of valor. Unbelievable physical fitness. Clemmons was the best soldier on the team. He was a powerhouse, fiercely loyal, unstoppable: a veritable one-man army, but Clemmons had a secret. Mitchell could see it on his face. It was probably in his file, as well. There was *something* there, but not even Mitchell's security clearances could access it.

Chief Petty Officer Garock Krinish, kagoth combat medic, ISCN. This kagoth was a good soul and the epitome of kagoth pacifism. It was a pity that as a kagoth, he would always be considered a second rate medtech. He was a good medic and a fine nurse. He was new to the crew, however, and had yet to find his place.

Hissick 541 (named for the orphanage number where he was raised), valiesian infantry, ISCMC. Hissick was as emotionless as any valiesian. He was an adrenaline addict and therefore, unlike most valiesians, sought danger and combat. He was new as well.

Sir Krillian of Honor Guard, Tulgaran Knight of the Horse. Krillian was a member of the Light Horse, riding armed gravbikes into combat. The Knights of the Horse were suffering with the loss of the Honor Guard. Many were scattered, their command broken. Krillian's cover story was that once he went errant, he became a privateer to avenge his world. He had been assigned recently, and still looked ready to draw on the falar.

Major Fooluph, XMD (no last name, just a family ID Number), oort Doctor of Xeno Medicine, ISCMC. A master of the various biologies of the seven races. Fooluph was one of the better doctors with whom Mitchell had worked. Not many non-neurologists could have put Mitchell's "Humpty Dumpty" brain back together again. Dr. Fooluph had.

Captain Mrrralff Trrang, falanar pilot, ISCMC. Adept at hand to hand combat. An ace several times over. Various commendations for bravery in combat. His psyche profile showed a terrible cruelty. Mitchell could still feel the lion's gaze as he had tortured Mitchell at the warden's orders. Carving flesh with expert glee . . . the pain . . .

Mitchell pushed it aside.



Interlude

Lieutenant Prrrl Trrrrrr, falanar pilot, ISCMC. Mitchell was good with falar names, even the ones without vowels. He still couldn't handle "Trrrrrr." Prrrl had nearly as many medals as Mrrralff, but his psyche profile showed something of a lack of motivation. He'd never get very far. He tended to coast.

Warrant Officer Tuluph (no last name either), oort engineer, ISCMC. Exceptional skill in all things technical. Terribly insane. Tuluph had witnessed the death of his entire family at the hands of ISC troops. Friendly fire accidents were not easy things to live with. Tuluph couldn't bear the pain of working for the people who had killed his family. Unfortunately, his personal code would not allow him to stop fighting the Jeronans either. Caught in an emotional trap of his own devising, Tuluph shut down. He decided that he was the only intelligent being in the universe, and stopped talking to anyone but the little robots he created; (since he had made them, they were allowed to be intelligent in his warped version of reality).

He didn't stop working, however. He showed up for duty every day, worked like a madman, sometimes long into the night, but refused to speak directly to anyone not made by his own hands. The Marine Corps was trying to figure out what to do with him when Mitchell asked for a technician.

Warrant Officer David Wild, android intelligence operative. Wild was an espionage droid. He had thought this was a secret, and Mitchell allowed him to believe it. No need to let the man know that the General had blown his cover when assigning him. At least Mitchell understood his capabilities. After the prison planet, everyone knew . . . all the old crew, at any rate.

Lieutenant Xagattick Klitack, xatosian combat psychic, ISCN. A good psychic. The first they had in the crew. He was new.

Mitchell sighed as he scanned the roster. Good men, every one of them. How many of them would be alive next week?

Assault minus 3:16:37

Mitchell watched the crew in their new conference room. The new members still sat on their own side of the table, apart from the rest. There was tension in the air. There had been ever since the rescue.

Mrrralff had tortured many of them, at the warden's orders. Sure, he had his reasons, but such wounds were slow to heal.

Mitchell keyed the holoprojector without preamble. An image of a Jeronan world appeared, with an installation marked on the surface.

"To date, no privateer has attempted an assault on a munitions depot. The reasons are obvious. They are heavily guarded, high security affairs. It's our job to change that.

"You are looking at munitions depot M-46. If we can destroy it, it will set a precedent for privateers everywhere. It's thought that this will bolster privateer confidence, and well-armed privateer fleets will begin attacking more ambitious targets.

"M-46 is a world dominated by native jungles. All pre-sapient lines were killed five million years ago in a global disaster. The Architects left it fallow, and the Jeronans have chosen it for the site of a munitions depot.

"We can't take M-46 for salvage. We can destroy it, and that's what we're going to do."

"Excuse me, sir?" Wild said. "Isn't that out of character for a group of privateers?"

"No. It isn't. Our imprisonment is well known. Every privateer out there would like to see us get a bit of revenge. That's what we're doing. Hence the name of the new ship. Our new cover story is that, in the wake of our rescue, we aren't in it for the money anymore."

"This is a bit ambitious, isn't it, sir?" Clemmons asked. "I mean, a munitions depot isn't exactly easy pickings. How are we supposed to do it?"

"With a little help from our friends."

The holo changed to show the green icons of an incoming ISC fleet. Red icons spawned from the depot, rising to meet the ISC ships.

"In 30 hours, an ISC assault fleet will attack M-46. It will form a two-pronged attack. The first, a screen of fighters, frigates and the carrier

Rossiter will hit the defense screen, out of the range of the surface to orbit cannons. Second, a ground detachment will drop through the fire to land on the surface."

As he spoke a series of green icons broke off the main fleet to land near the depot. A second set of red icons, Imperial armor, scattered to meet them.



"The ground forces will have two objectives. First of all, they will smash the armor of the depot, leaving them with few defenses. Second, they will take out the surface to orbit cannons."

The green ground forces overwhelmed the red, taking out the SOC's at the same time; meanwhile, the fighter screen had taken out most of the resistance.

"At this time, it will appear that the Jeronans are done for. Unfortunately, there will be a large explosion on the *Rossiter*, visible from the planet. This will conveniently knock out both communication scrambling, and orbital bombardment. The carrier will desperately order the recall of the fighters and the ground forces. They will retreat, broadcasting home their failure *on uncoded channels!*

"This is where we come in. The depot will be hurting from the battle. We, as good privateers, will attack, bent on revenge. We will finish the job the military failed through 'mishap' and save the day."

"We get all the glory and they get the egg on their faces?" Mrrralff said. "I can't argue with that."

"What's the plan, then?" Wild asked.

The holograph changed, showing the *Revenge* coming in on an attack vector. Mrrralff and Prrrl broke off in the hologram as Imperial fighters scrambled to attack.

"We come in hard and our two lions launch to screen us from their fighters. With the SOC's out of the picture, they'll hold off the remaining fighters while we land."

The *Revenge* landed in the holo. Krillian launched and began racing toward the armor.

"Krillian will then launch and either attack or attempt to divert the remaining armor. Most likely he will have to divert them. We are counting on the animosity toward the tulgur to help unbalance and infuriate the Jeronans."

"Meanwhile, some of us will attempt a frontal assault."

"A frontal assault?" Clemmons asked. "We'll never get through."

"Don't get too careless with that 'we'. While the rest of us dig in and tie up their troops, you, Wild and Xagattick will slip in as quietly as Xagattick's psychic cover allows. You will plant demolitions and then get the hell out of Dodge."

"Sir," Wild asked, habitually playing the insecure youth for the new guys. "Are you sure I'm the right man for the job?"

"Of course I'm sure. You did well enough on the prison world."

"I guess."

"Alright then. Any more questions, or should we move on to specifics?"

Assault minus 3:08:19 . . .





PART II THE RACES

FIRST CONTACT



We were scouting out the third moon of a lesser planet of some God-forsaken system. We were all pretty bored, making the same old in-jokes as we loaded our weapons and checked our gear.

My vacsuit was making vacsuit sounds and the scanner was humming as we spread out to check the area. We had no idea what awaited us.

You see, we'd lost three platoons in the area, and we knew that there was nothing in the area big enough to transport more than a squad of enemy troops. So we figured they'd lost com-contact or had a catastrophic reactor failure or something. Anything but enemy insurgency.

As we moved out, Yakuma's scanner picked up a life-sign. It appeared to be a medium sized heat source with a definite cardiovascular system. Probably a human. Maybe a kitty or a kitten. Definitely not a drac, a bear or a furball. Maybe a bug, but the heat-source seemed too strong.

Everything was 5 by 5, but we couldn't get a full reading because it was in the wreckage of another ship. Probably years old. Yakuma headed out with Wilson and Kazum to see if the heat source was one of our men. We couldn't find any evidence of the unit's ship, so it had probably been destroyed, but with all the background radiation, we wouldn't be able to find the sight 'til we were right on top of it.

Then all of a sudden, Yakuma, Wilson and Kazum just winked out, all of a sudden like.

We started moving immediately. I was farthest away, so I knew I'd get there last. I settled into that hopping gait you use in .2 g and did the best I could. I could see our boys converging on the spot. The Sarge was shouting orders, but we were all frantic. If they'd just lost suit functions, they might have been alive and in need of medical attention. They were still showing up as life-signs, but it sometimes takes a few minutes for the equipment to figure out someone's dead.

Marrrrrf, Karrrrrrs, and Grazzel charged right in. Their readings winked out just as quickly. We were in vacuum, so we couldn't hear any arms-fire over their suit mikes. They just stopped transmitting. That was both our bears and our other cat. The Sarge started telling everyone to hold up, so we did.

There were five of us left, including the Sarge. Our scanners showed us the heat source, surrounded by six of our marines. Right about then, the bio-translator on our scanner took Wilson, Yakuma and Kazum off as life-signs. Sarge told us to take up positions and ready grenades.

On his mark, we threw in five grenades to an answering burst of blaster fire. Through our scanners, we saw him jump clear, but his hiding place was confined, and he didn't move fast enough. He caught all five blasts.

We charged into more blaster fire. He was still alive, three limbs exposed to vacuum and his faceplate cracked. He was nearly blind and rad-exposed, with his blood bubbling off into vacuum. Still he fired. His aim was good. He dropped Sarge and Klittck before we pumped so much blaster fire into his body we must have charged the pieces like a capacitor.

We were alive.

I don't know what more to say. It looked human, but it couldn't have been. It simply isn't possible. The damage that thing took. The pain it must have been suffering. It couldn't have been human, and it hadn't been alone. A squad or less of those things had taken out three of our platoons. It took ten of us to take one down. It wasn't human, I tell you.

It wasn't human.

—Corporal Ylsin Harrington, ISCMC



4.0 THE DRAGOONS

*"We are born to fight. We are born to win. We know no home but battle. We know no life but conflict. We know no peace but war."
—Dragoon War Chant*

4.1 OVERVIEW

The dragoons (*homo sapiens optimus*), in one sense, are the latest Jeronan technological nightmare. In another, they are human beings, warped with technologies they can only barely understand, attempting to follow programming they don't know they have. They are the orphaned children of humanity, warped into creatures of war. They are devoid of a past and a future, knowing no recreation or pastime other than war. They are programmed to be fiercely loyal, and to destroy any dragoons who betray the faith.

Dragoons are cloned humans, grown in accelerated nutrient vats and genetically engineered to be superior in every way. They have a reasonably short life span, however, and what they know has been neurologically programmed, so they often do not have the social skills to interact with anyone but other dragoons.

4.2 PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Physically, dragoons are extremely powerful. They are built for only one thing, and that is war. They do it well. Very well.



DRAGOON HEIGHT CHART

d100 (OE)	Dragoon Male	Dragoon Female
less than (-169)	169 cm	149 cm
(-169)-(-160)	171 cm	151 cm
(-159)-(-155)	173 cm	153 cm
(-154)-(-145)	175 cm	155 cm
(-144)-(-135)	177 cm	157 cm
(-134)-(-85)	179 cm	159 cm
(-84)-(-80)	181 cm	161 cm
(-79)-(-75)	183 cm	163 cm
(-74)-(-70)	185 cm	165 cm
(-69)-(-65)	187 cm	167 cm
(-64)-(-55)	189 cm	169 cm
(-54)-(-45)	191 cm	171 cm
(-44)-5	193 cm	173 cm
6-10	195 cm	175 cm
11-25	197 cm	177 cm
26-50	199 cm	179 cm
51-75	201 cm	181 cm
76-90	203 cm	183 cm
91-145	205 cm	185 cm
146-155	207 cm	187 cm
156-165	209 cm	189 cm
166-170	211 cm	191 cm
171-175	213 cm	193 cm
176-180	215 cm	195 cm
181-185	217 cm	197 cm
186-240	219 cm	199 cm
241-250	221 cm	201 cm
251-260	233 cm	203 cm
261-265	225 cm	205 cm
266-275	227 cm	207 cm

Evolutionary Considerations

The dragoons are not the products of natural evolution. They are genetically engineered from human stock.

Build And Physiology

Dragoons look just like normal humans, complete with the standard racial variations you'd expect. They're more similar to one another than they look. The differences are almost entirely cosmetic. There are only about one hundred different faces among the dragoons, used over and over again.

Dragoons are huge. They average two meters in height and 115 kg. They have bonuses to nearly all of their stats and have an increased ability to absorb damage. They are designed to be as close to perfect as possible.

Dragoons are mentally programmed to obey orders and remain loyal. This programming is intense and nearly unbreakable. Two things reinforce it: addiction to a drug named thearax, and genetically engineered pheromones.

Thearax is a highly addictive combat drug. Dragoons use it to up their reflexes and reduce the effects of pain and stun. It has its effect, however.



Part II Dragoons

DRAGOON WEIGHT CHART

d100 (OE)	Dragoon (m)			Dragoon (f)		
	sm	md	lg	sm	md	lg
less than (-169)	47	53	58	29	32	35
(-169)-(-165)	49	55	61	30	33	37
(-164)-(-160)	51	57	63	31	35	38
(-159)-(-155)	53	60	66	33	36	40
(-154)-(-145)	56	62	68	34	38	42
(-144)-(-135)	58	65	71	35	39	43
(-134)-(-85)	60	67	74	37	41	45
(-84)-(-80)	63	70	77	38	43	47
(-79)-(-75)	65	73	81	40	44	49
(-74)-(-70)	68	76	84	42	46	51
(-69)-(-65)	71	79	87	43	48	53
(-64)-(-55)	74	82	91	45	50	55
(-54)-(-45)	77	86	95	47	52	58
(-44)-5	80	90	99	49	54	60
6-10	85	95	105	52	58	64
11-25	93	104	114	57	63	69
26-75	103	115	127	63	70	77
76-90	111	124	137	68	76	83
91-95	118	132	145	72	80	88
96-145	123	137	151	75	83	92
146-155	125	140	154	77	85	94
156-165	128	142	157	78	87	95
166-170	130	145	160	80	88	97
171-175	133	148	164	81	90	99
176-180	135	151	167	83	92	101
181-185	138	154	170	84	94	103
186-240	141	157	174	86	96	105
241-250	144	160	177	88	98	107
251-260	147	164	181	90	100	110
261-265	149	167	184	91	102	112
266-270	152	170	188	93	104	114
271-275	156	174	192	95	106	116
more than 275	159	177	196	97	108	119

A Dragoon must take a hit of this drug every two hours or the effects of withdrawal will set in. Every ten minutes that passes without the drug causes the dragoon five hits damage and incurs a -10 penalty to all actions. This continues until the dragoon takes another hit of thearax, or dies.

If the dragoon ever decides to betray his masters, he will become increasingly agitated. This agitation will increase until it sets off a bio-trigger. From this point on, the dragoon will produce pheromones. If any other dragoons get a whiff of these pheromones, they will go into a murderous rage until the offending dragoon is dead. Once this pheromone is being produced there is no known way to shut it off.

A Note On Thearax

Thearax can only be acquired from Jeronan sources. There is no black market trade in it; it's simply too deadly to sustain a market. A qualified chemist could probably reproduce it with an Absurd

Biochemistry maneuver; (after a prototype is created, a process that will probably kill the first couple dragoons it's used on, this will be a Medium maneuver to produce).

It is probably possible to break a dragoon of his addiction, but it has never been done. The cold turkey method simply will not work; the shock would kill the dragoon dead (assume a -41 result on the Thearax Withdrawal Chart every ten minutes). They could, perhaps, be slowly weaned off of the drug through carefully monitored chemotherapy. The doctor would closely monitor the dragoon bio-functions while weaning him slowly off the drug. As the dragoon's body started losing its chemical equilibrium, the doctor would try to compensate with direct chemical input long enough for the dragoon's body to adjust on its own.

The doctor would reduce the amount of the drug the dragoon gets with each two hour hit. Reducing this even the smallest amount has all the effects of going cold turkey. This, however, can be handled with quick intervention on the part of the doctor. Every time this hit is reduced by 1/60th, he may make an Absurd (-70) Drug Therapy maneuver every ten minutes. Determine the results of this maneuver on the Thearax Withdrawal Chart (below). Once a success has been achieved, the doctor has found the next dose. The Dragoon can continue at that dose indefinitely, unless they revert to a former dosage. To determine whether the roll was a success, consult the chart below.

Every two hours, this dose can be reduced by another 1/60th. This continues until the dragoon is cured or killed.

At any point in the therapy, the doctor can suspend treatment, continuing at the current dose indefinitely (this will

probably be necessary to allow the dragoon to recover hits and go up some levels to regain the Co loss). When it is completed, the dragoon is free of its condition.

Thearax is a powerful drug. Its effects last for about two hours. It allows the character to stay conscious until his damage total brings him within 10 points of his Constitution statistic. For example, a character with a 90 temporary Constitution would remain conscious until his current hits reached -80. At -81 hits, he would lose consciousness, and at -90, he would begin to die (as normal). In addition, the character ignores all stun effects caused by damage and receives only half the penalties prescribed by Criticals or Concussion damage.

Races other than human can benefit from the effects of thearax, but the drug has an addiction factor of 100 (i.e., a single dose is automatically addictive). Once hooked, the addict must go through withdrawal in the same manner as a dragoon,



except that non-humans suffer additional damage from the experience. If the addict's Constitution bonus is less than 8, then he suffers an additional 3 x (8 - Con bonus) hits or points of Con loss every ten minutes of withdrawal. This damage is in addition to the damage prescribed by the Thearax Withdrawal Chart.

It should also be noted that these rules do differ from those dealing with addiction in *Spacemaster Law*. The difference is intentional, and meant to represent the increased deadliness of thearax.

It is not recommended that a dragoon ever be allowed to throw off this addiction. The few people in the ISC who have knowledge of the dragoons have not yet produced a non-lethal form of this drug, mainly because of a lack of suicidal volunteers. This drug is the primary method of keeping dragoons in check, and it should not be tossed aside lightly. These rules represent that, and they should not be discarded or softened in any way.

Coloring

Dragoons run the same range of coloring that humans run. There are all the races from Sol, plus pure white or black and an assortment of exotic, genetically engineered, custom colors. There are, however, only about 100 different genetic templates.

Endurance

Dragoons are engineered to have tremendous endurance. In addition to their +8 to Constitution,

they receive a +30 to their Exhaustion points. They are unflagging, capable of tremendous feats.

In addition, they need very little sleep. Every three days, a dragoon needs to sleep for two hours. Other than that, they can continue tirelessly.

Lifespan

Dragoons do not live a normal human life span. They are force-grown in a vat over a six-month period. During this time neural interface training is used to program the dragoon in his adolescent skills; (note that dragoons do not receive hobby skills).

Over the next year or more, depending on the dragoon's training packages, the dragoon is trained in his apprenticeship development. Note that every dragoon takes at least one military package, and may take no non-military training packages.

The projected dragoon lifespan is 20 years. Though no dragoon has lived that long (they are a new development), it is suspected that violent, aggressive outbursts will become more frequent as time progresses, until they die or are put out of their misery.

Dragoon age categories progress as follows. Old: 10-11. Very Old: 12-13. Venerable: 14-15. Ancient: 16-17. Very Ancient: 18+. Stat loss is 1d5-1.

Resistance

Dragoons are designed for heightened Resistance. They receive a +60 bonus to Poison and Fear Resistance rolls, a +30 to Disease Resistance rolls and a +40 to Resist Psychic Powers.

THEARAX WITHDRAWAL CHART

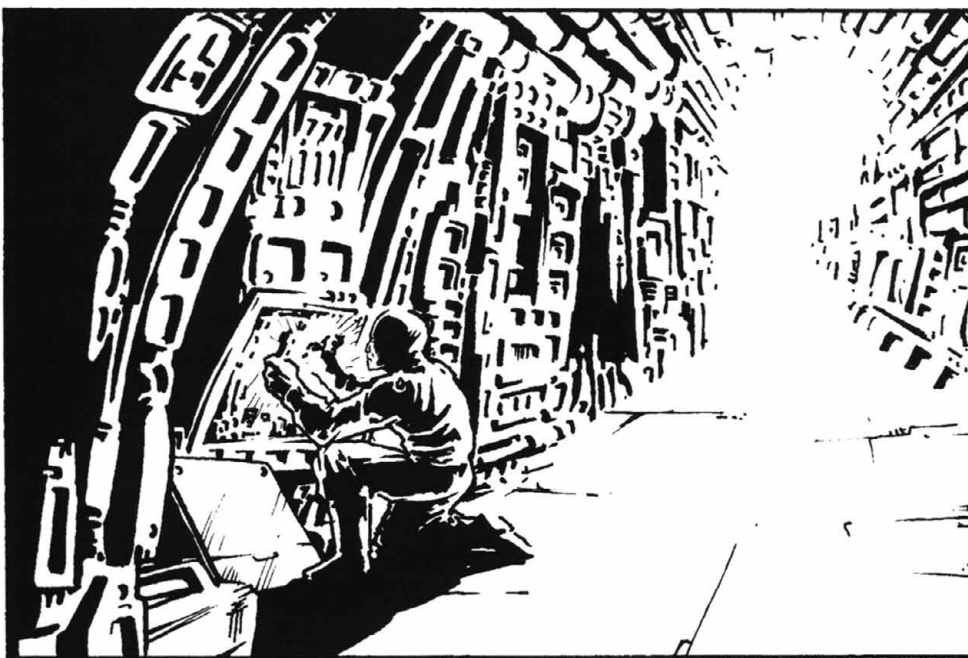
Maneuver Result	Hits Taken	Co Loss	Penalty
-41 or less	d10+9	d10+10	-90
-40 - -31	d10+8	d10+9	-65
-30 - -21	d10+7	d10+8	-45
-20 - -11	d10+6	d10+7	-30
-10 - 0	d10+5	d10+6	-20
01 - 10	d10+4	d10+5	-15
11 - 20	d10+3	d10+4	-15
21 - 30	d10+2	d10+3	-10
31 - 40	d10+1	d10+2	-10
41 - 50	d10	d10+1	-10
51 - 60	d10-1	d10	-5
61 - 70	d10-2	d10-1	-5
71 - 80	d10-3	d10-2	-5
81 - 90	d10-4	d10-3	-5
91 - 100	d10-5	d10-4	-0
101 or more-	d10-5	d10-5	-0

Note: If the result is 101 or more, then the maneuver is a success. Penalties continue until a success is rolled and hits are healed.

Note: If the result is 101 or more, then the maneuver is a success. Penalties continue until a success is rolled and hits are healed.



Part II Dragoons



Special Abilities

Dragoons receive the talents Inner Reserve (already calculated into Body Development progression), Acute Smell (see falar talent of same name), and Ambidexterity (no off-hand penalty).

In addition, dragoons are designed with different training templates. Because of this, dragoons receive the talent Racial Training (Expert). This allows them to choose six skills, with GM approval, to which they receive a special +20 bonus.

4.3 CULTURE

Dragoons do not have a culture as such. Their culture is the culture of the Jeronan military. Those few dragoons that have defected to the ISC have adapted very well to the ISC military. They do not function well outside the military community, with its militaristic etiquette.

Clothing And Decoration

The dragoons dress pretty much like other humans (perhaps with a little less style). Their sense of fashion rarely extends beyond military fatigues.

Fears And Inabilities

The dragoons fear nothing. They are programmed to fearlessly confront any problem. Even those who have gone rogue or are going rogue are not really afraid of anything. Their anxiety is purely biological, and makes them more irritable than anything else.

The dragoons are programmed to be fiercely loyal to the Empire. If they somehow manage to break their programming, this loyalty will generally be transferred, not abandoned completely.

Lifestyle

The dragoons know only war. They have never known anything else. Dragoons are uncomfortable in social situations. They tend to feel lost and ill at ease. Putting a dragon in a social situation is a good way to start a fight.

Therefore, dragoons shun any life other than one of conflict. On the battlefield, they are supreme. They know this, and that's where they go to live, to die and to relax.

Marriage And Family Pattern

Dragoons have no established marriage or family pattern. The Empire would not allow them to marry, though there has never been a request to set a precedent.

The ISC would have no objections to a dragon marrying. They could enter into any legal marriage pattern. They are most likely to desire a human marriage pattern.

There is no reason why a dragon couldn't mate with a human to produce an offspring.

Religion

The dragoons are generally atheistic. This is not unexpected, since their maker was an oort in a lab-coat. Dragoons feel no need to worship someone they'd probably beat up if they met him in a bar.

There is nothing, however, to keep a dragon from converting to the religious beliefs of another culture. This will certainly happen eventually, though there have been no recorded cases.

4.4 OTHER FACTORS

There are several other factors to be considered when running a dragon. This is true for both PC's and NPC's.

Demeanor

Dragoons tend to be very business-like. This is probably due to their lack of developed social skills. For lack of a better way to act, they fall back on military discipline. This makes them appear cold and calculating, even brutal.

Language

Dragoons have no language of their own. They generally learn Species Standard, and are taught a spattering of human. It is up to them to learn more.

Starting Languages: Species Standard (S8/W4), Human (S4/W0), Jeronan (S8/W6).

Allowed Adolescent Development: N/A.

Prejudices

Dragoons are engineered to be the perfect warriors. This fact has not escaped them. In most cases, they are extremely self-centered.

This breaks down with dragoons who have gone rogue. Once a dragon has been forced to live in the real world, he often begins to envy the other races, if only for their social skills. He finds, at this point, that he doesn't fit in, and no longer feels quite so superior.

Professions

Dragoons are invariably from combat-oriented professions. They are almost always soldiers or recon, though some explorers and pilots have been



produced. Since a profession is a product of early development, no other options are available.

It is rumored there is a Psychic genetic template under development, but so far, this is unsubstantiated.

Special Skills

Everyman: 10 GM chosen skills appropriate to the design template. *Restricted:* All influence skills.

Standard Hobby Skills

A dragoon's adolescent development is completely beyond their control. Because of this, he receives no hobby skills.

The Individual As A PC

The PC dragoon is probably a rogue, unless an all-dragon campaign is being run. The character has most likely shifted allegiance to the ISC, stolen as much thearax as he could manage, and snuck off. Generally, this person will find himself or herself locking onto a group with military discipline. Usually, this means joining the ISC military, but it is possible that a dragoon might hook up with a particularly disciplined privateer or mercenary captain.

GM Note: Dragoons are very powerful characters, and are not even slightly balanced with the other PC races in direct combat. Consider this carefully before allowing a dragoon PC who will almost certainly dominate any combat scene in your game.

4.5 OUTFITTING OPTIONS

The dragoon begins play with certain equipment. Usually this is whatever standard issue gear he could steal.

Armor

Dragoons may only begin play with standard military armor. This will be of human make.

Money

Dragoons begin with no money. Their salaries are, in theory, deducted from the price tag of their manufacture, but it is not possible to pay off the €500,000 price tag in a dragoon's lifetime. Especially not with the 10% interest rate the Empire charges.

Weapons

Dragoons will only start with Imperial issue weapons. They are invariably of human design.

4.6 BACKGROUND OPTIONS

Dragoons receive one background option. They can spend them as listed in *Spacemaster: Privateers* with the exception of the options not listed below. In addition, they can also purchase dragoon-specific options.

Extra Languages

Dragoons may not spend background options on additional languages. This is not allowed for in their training template.

Extra Money

Dragoons may not start with extra money. If they insist on taking this option, they can use the rolls to reduce their total debt.

Special Items

A dragoon may start with special items. These represent the spoils of war, which dragoons are generally allowed to keep.

4.7 TALENTS

Dragoon characters may select talents as outlined in *Future Law*. The GM should look through the options below and select the ones that are appropriate to his game (it is suggested that Options 1 or 2 be used unless something warrants otherwise). The classification of the talent/flaw is given in brackets after the description of the talent/flaw (also included are the appropriate point costs if the optional rules in *Future Law* are used).

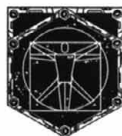
Option 1: By spending one background option, the character may make a d100 (not open-ended) roll and consult the chart below. As these talents are especially for this race, one option can buy any talent randomly rolled on this list. A rolled flaw might grant a dragoon another background option, or simply refund the background option spent to roll.

Option 2: A player may select one of the talents from the chart below, but must pay the appropriate number of background options (as listed in *Future Law*) or talent points. Since the dragoon only starts with one background option, he must make a deal with the GM for more (probably involving more flaws).

Option 3: As Option 2 above, except that the cost is lowered by one (if background options are spent), or five (if talent points are spent). This represents the talent being specific to dragoons.

Option 4: As with options 1 or 2, except that any race may receive these talents, at double cost (to represent the fact that the talent/flaws are specific to dragoons).

A GM should *heavily* monitor dragoon talents. They should always represent something that might have been programmed into a dragoon template.



Part II Dragoons

DRAGOON TALENT AND FLAW CHART

- 01-21 **Bio-Malfunction (Flaw):** You did not intend to go rogue. Something, perhaps a particularly traumatic event, triggered your pheromones without cause. Now all dragoons are against you, and you must find a place in the universe.
[MINOR: -5 points]
- 22-28 **Extraordinary Addiction (Flaw):** A genetic flaw in your early development has led to a increased level of addiction to thearax. You must have a hit every hour, and the effects of withdrawal are incurred every five minutes.
[MINOR: -10 points]
- 29-35 **Psychopathic Disorder (Flaw):** You have cracked under the pressure. The genetic training and the life of killing have pushed you over the edge. You enjoy killing. There is nothing you enjoy more. You will never pass up the opportunity to kill.
[MINOR: -10 points]
- 36-56 **Unquestioning (Flaw):** You obey orders without question. Anyone's orders. It does not matter whether or not the person giving the orders outranks you, only that he is on the same side.
[MINOR: -5 points]
- 57-67 **Durable:** Your template was designed to take damage. A *lot* of damage. Your hits are increased by 150%.
[MAJOR: 20 points]
- 68-81 **Killer Instinct:** When in melee, if you place everything into an all-out attack (no parrying) you receive a special +25 to your OB. This effects both armed and unarmed combat.
[MAJOR: 20 points]
- 82-88 **Unflagging:** Your template was designed for increased endurance. You receive 20 extra exhaustion points.
[MINOR: 10 points]
- 89-97 **Weapons Master:** You are talented with all weapons. You receive a special +10 bonus to the weapons group.
[MINOR: 15 points]
- 98-100 **Martial Arts Expert:** You have a natural aptitude for martial arts combat. All martial arts skills are treated as Everyman for you.
[GREATER: 30 points]

4.8 DRAGOON RACIAL TRAINING PACKAGES

Dragoons must begin play with at least one military training package. They may not purchase any non-military packages until after play begins.

Dragoon training packages are unique in that they can *only* be taken by dragoons. There should be no exceptions.

GROUND POUNDER (L)

The ground pounder is the basic dragoon infantry. They are used for surface assaults on planets. They are therefore trained in various types of infantry warfare, all geared for use inside a planetary gravity well.

Quote: Dig in, men. We'll ambush them here.

Time to Acquire: 48 Months

Starting Money: Normal

Cost: None

Special:

Two Handed Plasma Weapon (+10)	50
Support Weapon (+10)	50
Armor (+10)	30
Promotion	20
Promotion	20
Close friends with a Jeronan soldier	100

Category or Skill	# of Ranks
Armor • Heavy skill Category	3
Combat Armor	3
Awareness • Perception skill category	n/a
choice of one skill	1
Awareness • Searching skill category	1
choice of one skill	1
Body Development skill category	n/a
Body Development	1
Outdoor • Environmental skill Category	1
Survival	1
Technical/Trade • Professional	n/a
Military Organization	1
Weapon skill category #1	2
choice of one weapon skill	2

Professional Qualifier: Dragoon (no discount to cost)

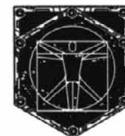
Lifestyle Skills: Assault Plasma Carbine

Stat Gains: Constitution

COST BY PROFESSION

Academic*	50	Psychic*	72
Bystander*	38	Recon	32
Criminal*	36	Scientist*	60
Entertainer*	36	Soldier	29
Explorer	33	Technician*	49
Pilot	36		

*This profession is not normally allowed for dragoons.



ZERO-G TROOPER (L)

Trained to fight in boarding actions and on space stations, the Zero-G Trooper is not disconcerted by the vagaries of artificial gravity. Whether taking another ship or defending his own, he is a force to be reckoned with.

Quote: *You two, drift up to the ceiling and wait 'til they pass.*

Time to Acquire: 48 Months

Starting Money: Normal

Cost: None

Special:

Useful Military Contact	50
Two Handed Energy Weapon (+10)	50
Armor (+10)	30
Promotion	20
Promotion	20
Close friends with a Jeronan soldier	100

Category or Skill..... # of Ranks

Armor • Heavy skill Category	2
Combat Armor	2
Athletic• Gymnastics	1
choice of one skills	1
Body Development skill category	n/a
Body Development	2
Combat Maneuvers skill category	n/a
Alien Environment (Zero Gravity)	2
Technical/Trade• Professional	n/a
Ship Crewmember	1
Weapon skill category #1	2
choice of one weapon skill	2

Professional Qualifier: Dragoon (no discount to cost)

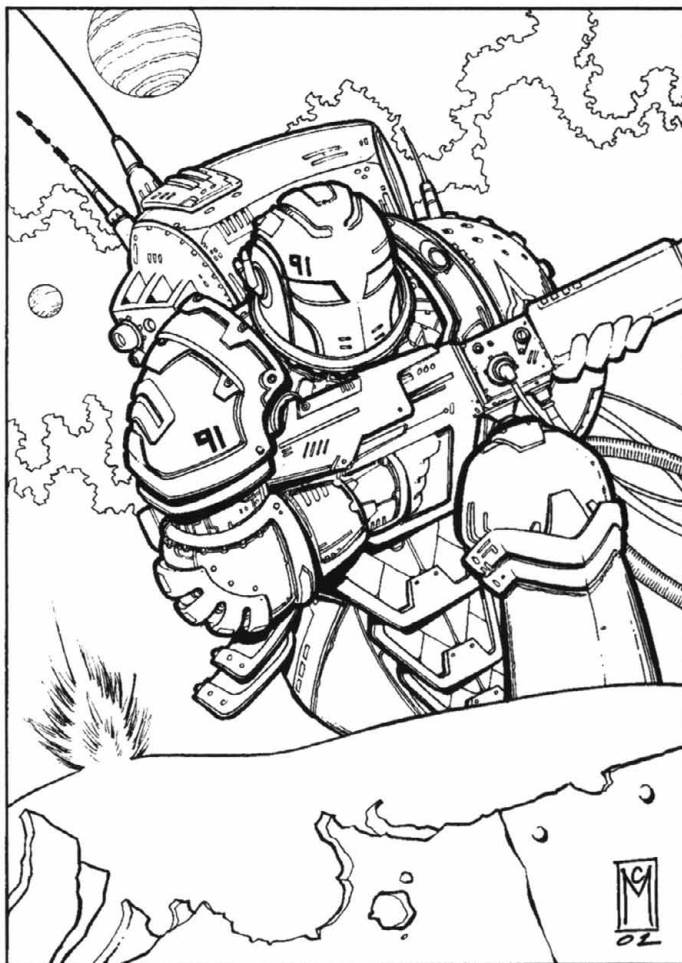
Lifestyle Skills: Assault Plasma Carbine

Stat Gains: Constitution

COST BY PROFESSION

Academic*	53	Psychic*	80
Bystander*	38	Recon	33
Criminal*	36	Scientist*	60
Entertainer*	36	Soldier	29
Explorer	34	Technician*	52
Pilot	36		

*This profession is not normally allowed for dragoons.



4.9 NOTEWORTHY PLANETS

There is only one planet of note to dragoons. This is the planet of their origin.

Haluphell - Oort

Galactic (+19.256, +7.024, +0.753)

When the Jeronan's needed a planet for genetic experimentation, Haluphell was the natural place to set up shop. First of all, it had always been a center for Jeronan production. In addition, it had feral *caluph*, the most vicious predators known to civilized space.

In the year 260, a genetics center was quickly consolidated out of the best and the brightest Jeronan geneticists. Production quickly began.

The first template was a falanar stock creature, so deadly that one could nearly hunt the *caluph* unarmed. This was taken before the Emperor, who had the entire staff executed for crimes against the Imperial race. It seemed that the falanar would not brook the altering of their DNA.

The second set of scientists was more prudent. Having just encountered the ISC, they decided to use the second most common race from the ISC Marine Corps, humans, as the next stock.

In 272, the first dragoons came off the line. They fought well against *caluph* and excelled in all areas. It was thought that the perfect warrior had been created.



Part II Dragoons

PHARMACEUTICAL TABLE RC-10.1

Name	Tech Level	Usage	Cost	AF	Effect
Thearax	24	Inject	N/A	500	Ignores stun, reduces crit penalties by half, operate until 10 hits before death. Effects last 15 minutes.



In 278, the dragoons revolted. The conquered the genetics lab and were working on getting off planet when the Jeronans finally bombed the site from orbit.

In 279, production began again. This time, thearax was used to insure their loyalty, and the oorts began work on their pheromonal triggers.

In 282, they were ready to enter production. The Emperor, at the softhearted end of his life, ordered the production stopped, before it had really begun.

In 283, Bretog discovered the project, and put it quietly back into production.

Haluphell has long been an exclusive world. It is a hunting planet and a place of recreation for the falanar (and now the kagoth). With the addition of dragoon production, this has become one of the most important planets in Imperial space.

Unfortunately, none of the dragoons know what planet they are operating on. All dragoons that have faced *caluph* have been long since destroyed. Those that are left have no idea where they were born.

DRAGOODS RACIAL SUMMARY

Nickname: *PC:* Clone; *Non-PC:* Falsie.

Dragoons are genetically engineered clones, designed for superior combat ability and absolute loyalty. They are addicted to the combat drug thearax, and, if they ever betray their masters, they release a pheromone that drives all other dragoons into a homicidal rage.

Physical Characteristics

Evolution: Dragoons were genetically engineered from human stock. They are diurnal omnivores. They are cursorial hunters.

Build: Tall and powerfully built. Human in appearance. Males average 115 kg, females average 70 kg.

Coloring: Full range of human coloration.

Endurance: Tremendous. +30 to exhaustion points. Only require two hours sleep every third day.

Height: Males average 200 cm; Females, 180 cm.

Lifespan: 20-25 years (estimated).

Resistance: +60 vs. Poison and Fear. +30 vs. Disease. +40 vs. Psychic Power.

Special Abilities: Inner Reserve, Acute Smell, Ambidexterity, Racial Training.

Culture

Clothing & Decoration: Military fatigues mostly, but any human fashion will do.

Fears & Inabilities: Dragoons fear nothing, but they have poor social skills. They are fiercely loyal to whomever they serve.

Lifestyle: Dragoons know only combat and the military life. They have no family and few friends.

Marriage Pattern: None. They could however, in the ISC, follow any legal marriage pattern.

Religion: None.

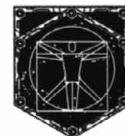
Other Factors

Demeanor: Confident, even arrogant. Self assured in combat, unsure when relating to others.

Languages: *Starting Languages:* Species Standard (S8/W4), Human (S4/W0), Jeronan (S8/W6). *Allowed Adolescent Development:* None.

Prejudices: Dragoons feel they're better than everyone else (and probably are). Their insecurities, however, will often shift this view if they're forced to interact with the universe in general.

Professions: Dragoons are exclusively explorers, soldiers, pilots or recon.



Part II Dragoons

Training Packages: Dragoons must take one military training package. They may select only from military packages.

Special Skills: *Everyman:* 10 GM chosen skills appropriate to template; *Restricted:* All influence skills.

Standard Hobby Skills: None.

Outfitting Options

Weapons: Any military issue weapon.

Armor: Any military issue armor.

Money: None. Dragoons are born with a substantial debt.

Background Options

Dragoons receive one background option.

Extra Languages: This option is not available.

Extra Money: This is applied against the dragoon's debt.

Special Items: No restrictions. These are generally plundered.

Talents: Subject to GM approval. Must be appropriate to the dragoon's template.

Adolescent Development

Dragoons receive the following skills for adolescent development.

Skill	Ranks
Armor • Light skill category	2
Ballistic Armor	2
Armor • Medium skill category	2
Kinetic Armor	2
Athletic • Brawn skill category	4
Athletic • Endurance skill category	3
Swimming	2
Awareness • Perceptions skill category	n/a
Alertness skill	6
Awareness • Searching skill category	4
Body Development skill category	n/a
Body Development	4
Martial Arts • Strikes skill category	4
Rank 1	4
Outdoor • Environment skill category	2
Subterfuge • Stealth skill category	4
Stalking	5
Hiding	4
One-Handed Energy skill category	2
Sub-Assault Carbine	2
Two-Handed Energy skill category	2
Assault Carbine	2
Two-Handed Firearms skill category	2
Assault Rifle	2
Hobby Ranks	0
Background Options	1
Talent Points	10

Background Options:
1

Stat Bonuses:
Ag: +8
Co: +8
Me: +4
Re: +4
SD: +4
Em: -8
In: +7
Pr: -4
Qu: +8
St: +8

RR Mods:
Poison: +60
Disease: +30
Fear: +60
Psions: +40

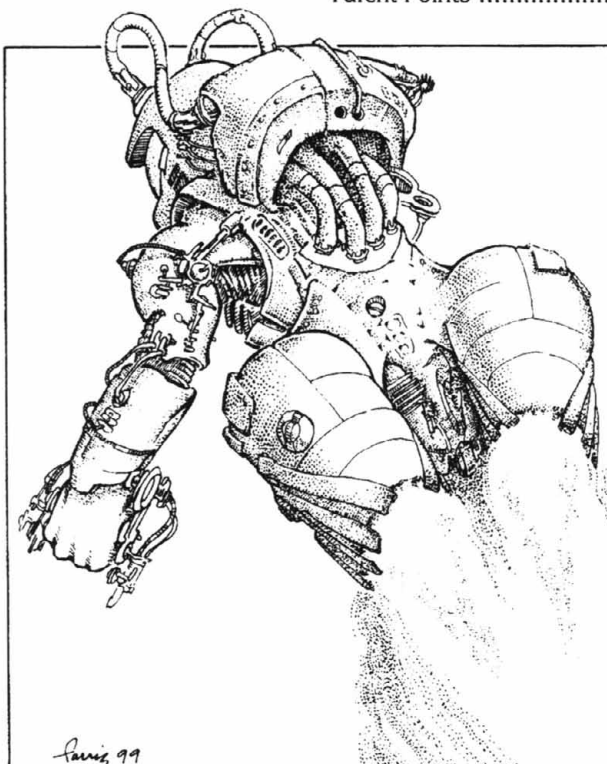
Body Dev. Progression:
0•10•7•5•4

MP Dev. Progression:
0•5•3•2•2

Soul Departure:
1 round

Recovery Multiplier:
0.5 times

Race Type:
5





Interlude

INTERLUDE TWO

. . . Assault minus 00:00:31

The *Revenge* shuddered as the two lions launched, blasting clear of their fighter racks with the full thrust of their reactionless drives. Clemmons checked the straps on the chair to his gunnery console and looked over the scanners.

Mrrralff and Prrrl sped away from the *Revenge* at full acceleration. Five Wolverines and a Death Howl launched to meet them. Nothing the lions couldn't handle if they kept their heads on straight.

There was a slight tug as the *Revenge* threw itself into a mad dive toward the planetary surface. Mitchell wasn't wasting time. The craft plummeted, spinning through the long-range fire of the fighters, trying to head for the atmosphere as quickly as it could.

A full burn toward an atmosphere was ill advised. Hitting the frictional wall of terminal velocity was deadly enough from free fall, much less at the relative speeds the *Revenge* could achieve. Mitchell had calculated the maximum safe entry speed and added 10% to it. The remaining power he used to dodge incoming fire.

The ship took a hit. Then another. The fighter's onboard computers were finding their range. Crack. A portion of the hull vaporized. Hiss. Atmosphere escaped. Creak. The hull expanded under the heat.

Mitchell cut the acceleration as the atmosphere began to pull at them. Warning sensors blared as the shield took another hit. The computer registered their velocity and began to blare warnings. Two more hits, and they began to accumulate atmospheric interference.

The inertial dampers fought to keep up with the roaring deceleration. Clemmons held on tight as the *Revenge* bucked and shook in the roaring atmospheric hell.

When a craft burned off its velocity during entry, it caused a great deal of ionization. This caused interference on many levels beyond the electromagnetic, and could scramble targeting sensors.

Entering an atmosphere at 100% safe speed with minor combat damage was rash. Entering at 110% was reckless to say the least.

But the blaster fire stopped.

Clemmons' targeting scope jumped and buzzed with interference. He leaned back and listened to the roar of entry. Just a little bit longer.

The klaxons redoubled their intensity. Something was wrong.

Clemmons unhooked his safety harness and began moving aft. He could smell smoke in the air. Not good.

Moving toward the back, he could see fires in the engine room. As he watched, the oort pulled on his mask and hit the fire suppression system.

Nothing.

Clemmons was five meters away when the door began to close off engineering. He jumped forward, throwing his arm into the doorway to prop it open. His flesh hissed when the door hit it. It was hot. Very, very hot.

He pushed into the engine room as the door opened again. Flames licked up his arm as he entered. He thanked the gods he had just taken his thearax.

There was a perceptible drop in the background noise. The engines had cut out.

Grabbing a canister from the wall, he began to put out the fire. Crazy as the oort was, he recognized that the flames were being taken care of, and went back to the engines.

"What can I do?" Clemmons shouted at the oort.

The oort, in its mad little world, ignored him.

All the visible fires were out. Still, the chamber was filling with smoke. The oort had pulled on the only working breath mask. The rest had melted.

Then the little technician started cursing violently and incoherently at high speed. Clemmons jumped as a small, disk-shaped robot leapt into the air and began hovering in his face.

"Hummer?" Clemmons asked.

"Yes. The master says that there is a fire behind the panel to your left. I believe if it were to be put out, the safeties would let him bypass the main power grid."

Clemmons looked at the panel. That would explain the smoke. He touched it, pulling his hand away as he dimly registered the heat. He looked at his hand. Second-degree burns.

Cursing, he grabbed the toolbox and began unfastening the panel. He cursed as the flames exploded from behind, fed by fresh oxygen.

He looked at the main door. It was locked with the safeties now. If he let the fire burn, he'd suffocate without a working mask. On the bright side, the ship would hit the surface of the planet long before that.

He sprayed the canister into the opening. Most of the flames went out, but the flicker of yellow light showed there was still a fire deep inside.

There was only one option. He'd use his left arm, in case he lost the limb.

He reached into the panel, working the canister past the maze of scalding struts. When it was as far back as he could get, he fired the canister. He kept it going until it ran dry.

He had collapsed against the wall, light-headed from lack of oxygen, when the engines kicked back in. Hummer began talking in rapid oort. Clemmons could only hope he was making a case for opening the engine room door.

He took one last smoke-filled breath, then passed out.

Assault plus 00:09:04 . . .



FIRST CONTACT



There is a saying among pilots. "Any landing you can walk away from is a good landing." I suppose, by this definition, you could call the landing good, but by any other, it was a descent into hell. In the end we sat amongst the hissing wreckage and took very deep breaths. Somehow, we had survived.

This was in the old days. The Inter Species Commission was still arguing about whether or not to raise another race to interstellar travel. In fact at the time the InSpecCom just consisted of the oorts and us. We knew there was a widespread race of sapient, pre-interstellar cats. We were arguing to make contact. The oorts were arguing discretion. In a great descending ball of fire, we ended the argument once and for all.

The Nu(2) Lupi falar were a primitive culture. I've often wondered what they thought when they saw a star fall from the sky. In retrospect, it says a great deal about them that they didn't worship us as gods, though I wish they had.

Haffel, our oort tech, and I stayed behind. He, because he knew more about the workings of the ship than all the rest of us together, and me because I was the only crew member with enough technical knowledge to help him. We had lost all external sensors during entry, so Harrison and the rest went out to take a look around while Haffel and I buttoned down the ship and made sure all the fires were out.

It was twenty minutes before I realized how long they'd been gone.

The grassy field was very wet, and so the red-hot hull of the ship had only caused minor fires. Still, as I stood in the airlock, the smoke and the moisture fogged my vacsuit with muddy sweat, and it was through this dirty film that I viewed the carnage.

The grass was yellow, in spite of its health, and that yellow lay as a stark background for the red mess that had been my shipmates. I had never seen men so thoroughly destroyed. Their body parts were torn into tiny fragments. They were spread out, as if they had run, and yet it was difficult to discern where one body ended and another began. All my years in Force Recon left me completely unprepared. I felt my gorge rise in my throat, and thanked God I couldn't smell the blood and guts of my friends.

In retrospect it seems like a stupid thing to do, but I grabbed bags and went out after them. In the Corps, we collect our dead, and Force Recon has never left a body behind. It was the least I could do for them. Besides, I knew that whatever it was, it would stay downwind. I figured that as long as I paid close attention to the breezes and the way they blew the grass, I'd have time to react.

About the time I went back out, my oort-made medsensor gave me a green light. It had been testing the local organisms, and had begun injecting me with inoculations. I knew that I'd regret taking off my helmet, but I also knew there was something out there, and I needed all my senses. "Semper fi," I whispered, and sucked the air of a new world.

I won't describe the smell. Let's just say it was as bad as I feared.

I went among them, sorting their parts as best I could. All the while I could feel it out there, stalking me. I tried not to think about it. I tried to be brave. The only thing that kept me going was a single thought. Here I was, being stalked by a sapient, predatory cat in the constellation of the wolf.

How ironic.

I was saved by a turn in the wind. The thing blended perfectly with the grass, but there's no masking the smell of a three-hundred-kilo cat. It was a born hunter, and knew the moment the wind shifted it had lost the advantage. It was in the air in a split-second.

It was surreal, watching this lion-like thing, more than two meters long, launch itself through the air as effortlessly as a ballerina. It was surreal how painfully slow my hand seemed to move, as I reached for my side arm. It was surreal how the wind changed again, even as it flew, but the most surreal thing was the calm and rational feeling that went through me as I realized my weapon wouldn't clear its holster in time.

The blaster bolt went wild as it crashed into me, throwing me backwards, sliding through the slick grass. My gun scattered from my grip and the wind whooshed out of me. I was gasping from the blow even as I scrambled to my feet. Only my training got me moving quickly enough. I was only barely quick enough.



Part II The Falar

It was on me in a second, its tail whipping like a house cat. It smiled horrifically. I didn't need to be a cat lover to know that cats don't bare their teeth in friendship. I jumped clear as it landed in my wake. I desperately tried to orient myself, and tried to find my gun. It growled and pounced, swiping me with a massive, opposable paw that sent me sliding sideways through the muddy grass.

Its claws were sheathed. It was playing with me.

"Haffel, dammit, lock the ship down!" I wheezed as I rolled out of the way of another attack. My throat mike must have picked it up, because I distantly heard the airlock close. Haffel was no fool. He knew he couldn't help. We weren't a military ship, and mine was the only gun.

It leapt again, and I dove again. This time its claws were unsheathed, and I thanked God my vacsuit was lightly armored. I spun and came up in a crouch. Somehow, I was beginning to get a grip on the situation.

It was dark yellow, like the grass. Golden, really. Its great mane and tail made it look, for all the world, like a lion. I could almost believe it was a mundane earth cat, but intelligence gleamed in its eyes. I was torn between the alien and the familiar. So torn, in fact, that I almost didn't notice my gun, lying in the grass under its whipping tail.

I didn't have time to think. As it leapt, I dove forward, as graceful as a mishap on a water slide, splashing through the muddy grass as the startled lion went sailing overhead. The grip of my blaster felt reassuring in my hand, but this was no artful tumble, and I was more like a beached fish than an acrobat as I flipped, still sliding, to fire on the cat.

It was already in mid-air, flying back toward me.

This shot was a little closer to home, and the scorch marks on its upper arm made it howl in pain as it landed. It gathered up my hand in its huge grip and lifted me to my feet. Pain lanced through my hand, and the gun tumbled into the mud. I prepared for death.

After several long seconds, I realized death wasn't coming. I looked up into the eyes of this great, predatory thing, and realized the rumble issuing from its throat was a purr, not growl. It said something, which Haffel recorded from my throat mike, but it wasn't till much later that the computer was in good enough shape to build a translation program. That's when I realized what the first words of greeting between our races were.

"God's claws!" it roared, "I haven't had that much fun in years!"

—Richard Imir, Force Recon, ISCMC, Retired

5.0 THE FALAR

"If God had not meant the falar to fight, She would not have made us perfect."

—A Common Falar Saying

5.1 OVERVIEW

The most aggressive and dangerous of all the races, the falar are, in fact, three separate species. Known to others as the falanar, falaron, and falaris, they practice a strict, racially oriented, class system.

The falar were the race most feared by the oorts. It was fear of their aggression that led to hesitation in raising them to star faring. The oorts' fears were well founded. The integration of the falar nearly led to interspecies war and disaster.

The falar have never really been tamed. They obey the ISC laws and somehow manage to fit into the interstellar community, but the falar are conquerors, not diplomats. They are warriors, not merchants. They are a barely contained, nearly elemental force of destruction. If the war had not come, it is unlikely the ISC would have survived.

The three species of falar are as follows.

Falanar are the largest of the cats. They appear, for all the world, to be giant, humanoid lions. They rule the two other falar species with an iron hand. Their judgment is swift and final.

The falaron greatly resemble humanoid tigers. They are the middle caste of the falar, and handle much of the middle management work in falar society.

The falaris are the smallest of the cat races. They are yellow with black spots, resembling leopards, and are the lowest falar caste. It is their responsibility to handle all the menial work in the falar society.

The falar have an odd mix of culture and technology. They cling to the old ways, still using beasts for transportation and building in a feudal style of architecture. They fit poorly in the modern age. They are likely to never truly find their niche. Not, at least, during times of peace.

5.2 PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

The falar are a very physical race. Their mentality, culture and manner all revolve around their physicality.

Evolutionary Considerations

The falanar (*falarum leosapiens*), falaron (*falarum tigris sapiens*), and falaris (*falarum pardus sapiens*) are evolved from predatory cats. They are carnivorous and nocturnal. They live for the hunt.

Cats are not cursorial hunters; if they cannot catch a foe in the first several seconds of a chase, they give up. This limits the falar endurance. Though



they have a decent amount of exhaustion points, distance running is restricted.

Like all non-cursorial hunters, the falar do not have the tenacity necessary to seriously pursue scientific research. They have a shorter attention span. They are not without patience, but they distract easily.

They display many cat-like behavior patterns. They are easily distracted by quick motion. This is, if anything, a benefit in combat, but can lead to interesting moments during other situations.

Falar are nocturnal. They are carnivorous.

Build And Physiology

The falanar are the largest of the falar. They average 217 cm in height and 250 kg in weight. They are proportionally wider than humans are, and well muscled. They sport deadly claws and fangs, and are exclusively carnivorous.

The falaron are smaller than their huge cousins. They average 185 cm in height and 125 kg. They are similar in proportion to humans and muscled, but not powerfully so. They sport deadly claws and fangs. They are carnivorous.

The falaris are the smallest of the falar, measuring in at a meager 155-cm and 60-kg. They are slighter than humans and sport deadly claws and fangs, though they rarely use them. They are strictly carnivorous.

All falar walk upright, like humans, though they are nearly as agile on all four, and frequently drop to their hands before pouncing. They sport a mere four digits on each appendage. One on each hand is opposable. Their claws are as hard as bone and retract into finger sheaths. When angered, their claws tend to extend involuntarily.

It's interesting to note that while less-evolved cats are capable of either roaring or purring, the falar and their evolutionary offshoots are capable of both.

Coloring

The coloration of falar tends to be very similar to the great cats from which they evolved. There is variance within each species, however. From world to world and climate to climate, there tend to be differences.

Falanar tend to be golden in color, though the occasional falanar will be a darker auburn or chestnut. Pure white falanar are very rare, but not completely unheard of.

Falaron are bright yellow, with black tiger stripes. There is racial variance, often darkening to golden, or even brown. White falaron are extremely rare.

Falaris are commonly yellow with black leopard spots. The occasional dark brown, black or auburn exists, generally with black spots, but they are very rare. There have been white falaris, though they are albinos, and tend to be unhealthy.

Endurance

The falar tend to have great endurance, the more prominent the larger the species. The falanar receive a +6 to their Constitution and +20 to their Exhaustion points. The falaron receive a plus +3 to Constitution and +10 to Exhaustion points. The falaris receive no bonuses to either Constitution or Exhaustion.

Falar sleep lightly, but their minimum sleep is slightly greater than some races, requiring 8 hours a night. They can only go a single day without sleep. They do however, receive a +25 bonus to any Awareness checks made while sleeping.

Life Span

Falar average, barring violent death, a 90-year life span. This is only an estimate, as few ever live long enough to test the limit. Both male and female falar are equally aggressive, so rarely does old age claim any falar.

Typical falar gestation takes 237 days (approximately 6 months) from conception to birth. Kittens are blind for the week of infancy and are born in litters of 3-6. They become fully mobile by the end of the first month (though this is crawling and not walking), at which time they first begin to leave their mothers' side.

Kittens begin fighting after about the second week of infancy. Their claws are not fully hardened for the first month, however, and even then, the combat is more play than aggression. Once the litter pecking order is established, life is relatively harmonious.

Kittens begin speaking after the first year. They become understandable after the first two years. They begin giving orders after 14 months.

Falar reach puberty after eight years. They reach physical maturity at about 14 years, though they continue to grow, albeit slightly, for the next two years.





Part II

The Falar

FALANAR HEIGHT CHART

d100 (OE)	Frazanar Male	Frazanar Female
less than (-169)	186 cm	166 cm
(-169)-(-160)	188 cm	168 cm
(-159)-(-155)	190 cm	170 cm
(-154)-(-145)	192 cm	172 cm
(-144)-(-135)	194 cm	174 cm
(-134)-(-85)	196 cm	176 cm
(-84)-(-80)	198 cm	178 cm
(-79)-(-75)	200 cm	180 cm
(-74)-(-70)	202 cm	182 cm
(-69)-(-65)	204 cm	184 cm
(-64)-(-55)	206 cm	186 cm
(-54)-(-45)	208 cm	188 cm
(-44)-5	210 cm	190 cm
6-10	212 cm	192 cm
11-25	214 cm	194 cm
26-50	216 cm	196 cm
51-75	218 cm	198 cm
76-90	220 cm	200 cm
91-145	222 cm	202 cm
146-155	224 cm	204 cm
156-165	226 cm	206 cm
166-170	228 cm	208 cm
171-175	230 cm	210 cm
176-180	232 cm	212 cm
181-185	234 cm	214 cm
186-240	236 cm	216 cm
241-250	238 cm	218 cm
251-260	240 cm	220 cm
261-265	242 cm	222 cm
266-275	244 cm	224 cm
more than 275	246 cm	226 cm

Eyes and extremities are large at birth. Their coloration changes little through development, though darkening is not unheard of.

Time is not gentle with the falar. Physical and mental deterioration both claim falar, though the mental effects appear more as insanity than senility. Falar become more and more aggressive and violent as time passes. Eventually, they go out in a glorious blast of violence, often by the hand of their own family members.

Falar age categories progress as follows. Old: 65-71. Very Old: 72-78. Venerable: 79-85. Ancient: 86-89. Very Ancient: 90+. Stat loss is 1d5-1.

Resistance

The falar are a hardy race. Their fur and hide make them particularly resistant to thermo kinetic attacks. They receive a +10 to their DB and RR versus these effects.

In addition, the falar are more resistant to Poison, Disease and Fear. The falanar receive a +50 bonus to Resistance rolls versus these effects. Falaron receive a +30 bonus. Falaris receive no special bonuses.



Special Abilities

Falar receive the following talents. Tough Skin (AT 4), Natural Weapon (Claws, medium size), Amazing Leaping (x3 horizontal leap, x5 vertical), Skilled: Expert (+15 to climbing), Nightvision (100': Eyeshine), Peripheral Vision (flank and rear bonuses reduced to +5 and +15 respectively), Quiet Stride (+20 to Stalking and Balancing maneuvers, +10 to Ambush), Acute Hearing (+10 to Awareness checks involving hearing), Acute Smell (+25 to Tracking and +10 to Awareness checks involving smell). In addition, falanar and falaron receive Eye of the Tiger (+25 to Adrenal strength), and falaris receive Subtle (+25 to Stalk and Hide). In addition, falar receive the flaw Bad Temper. Falar often attack by leaping. When pouncing in this way, they receive a second attack, made with their claws' OB, which is resolved as a medium Bash.

5.3 CULTURE

The falar have a brutal culture, in which the superior rules the inferior with an iron hand. Pecking orders are rigidly enforced and frequently and brutally rehashed. It is a culture of warfare and cruelty, and only barely manages to sit peacefully within ISC strictures.

Clothing And Decoration

Falar wear very little in the form of clothing, as clothing itches furred creatures like the falar. They



FALANAR WEIGHT CHART

d100 (OE)	Falanar (m)			Falanar (f)		
	sm	md	lg	sm	md	lg
less than (-169)	103	114	126	79	82	91
(-169)-(-165)	107	119	131	82	86	94
(-164)-(-160)	112	124	137	85	89	98
(-159)-(-155)	116	129	142	89	93	102
(-154)-(-145)	121	135	148	93	97	107
(-144)-(-135)	126	140	154	97	101	111
(-134)-(-85)	132	146	161	101	105	116
(-84)-(-80)	137	152	168	105	110	121
(-79)-(-75)	143	159	175	109	114	126
(-74)-(-70)	149	165	182	114	119	131
(-69)-(-65)	155	172	189	118	124	136
(-64)-(-55)	161	179	197	123	129	142
(-54)-(-45)	168	187	205	129	134	148
(-44)-5	175	195	214	134	140	154
6-10	186	207	228	142	149	164
11-25	203	225	248	155	162	178
26-75	225	250	275	172	180	198
76-90	243	270	297	186	194	214
91-95	258	286	315	197	206	227
96-145	268	398	327	205	214	236
146-155	273	304	334	209	219	240
156-165	279	310	341	213	223	245
166-170	284	316	347	217	227	250
171-175	290	322	354	222	232	255
176-180	296	329	361	226	237	260
181-185	302	335	369	231	241	265
186-240	308	342	376	235	246	271
241-250	314	349	384	240	251	276
251-260	320	356	391	245	256	282
261-265	327	363	399	250	261	287
266-270	333	370	407	255	266	293
271-275	340	377	415	260	272	299
more than 275	347	385	424	265	277	305

are not without decoration however, as falar still to this day wear ornamental but functional armor.

All falar wear a *grazzin* (a piece of chest armor) and boots. It is not uncommon for them to wear greaves on the upper arms and thighs as well. Gloves, when worn, are generally elbow length with metal-rimmed openings for claws.

The degree of ornamentation denotes the falar's rank within falar culture. Falaris are never allowed any ornamentation, and must rely on color and quality to denote rank.

The falaron ornament their armor along the edges in decorative trims. These trims are generally metallic, and the value of the metal and the level of ornamentation denote the falaron's rank.

The falanar decorate every inch of their armor, though they generally only decorate the trim of gloves and boots. The armor is always embossed with patterns appropriate to the owner's clan. It is possible to deduce a falanar's planet, clan, and

occasionally even their family, just by the decoration of their armor. The embossing is often inlaid with precious metals and stones. The overall monetary value of the armor denotes the falar's position.

Many servants (generally falaris, but the occasional falaron is given overseer status) are outfitted in house garb. These *grazzin* and boots match perfectly, with the exception of minor quality differences to denote servile rank. The gloves issued to these servants are called *prait-zar*, or unclawed. They are notable for their lack of claw openings. Entering a master's presence without these gloves on is a suicidal display of defiance.

Falar wear other ornamentation, depending on rank. Earrings are popular since first contact with humans, though simple hoops of fine metal are preferred. Metal teeth and claw caps are also favored by the falar, and the claws are often whetted to razor-sharpness. (Teeth are generally not sharpened, as it's much easier to accidentally bite your tongue than to accidentally claw yourself.)

Falar wear pouched belts. These belts are utilitarian in purpose, but are generally decorated in much the same style as armor. Belts are the only means that most falar have to carry personal effects.

Fears And Inabilities

Falar fear nothing but failure and dishonor. Reputation and prestige are everything to falar. They constantly seek glory and success, and the only true glory is that obtained in battle. Falar laugh at those who seek media fame, and often consider them honorless pretenders. They assume that any star they see in an action holo really *is* a skilled fighter. If they discover otherwise, their reaction is generally one of disgust.

Lifestyle

The falar lead a life of combat and strife. They live for the hunt, for the fight. They strive for nothing more than a glorious death. They live every moment vigilant for the opportunity.

Falar have only barely integrated with the other races. Over the years, an uneasy compromise has been struck between falar culture and federal law. Falar have agreed to have laws written to protect other species from them, and the ISC government has allowed enough leeway in interstellar law to allow for racial and regional governments to accommodate falar culture.

Because of this, few falaron and fewer falanar live on non-falar worlds. Only on falar worlds can they ruthlessly subjugate and rule their lesser brethren. Naturally, many falaris live to get off-world.

Caste is everything to falar. Rank within their caste is nearly as important. In the old days, most falar worlds had complicated means of determining



Part II

The Falar

FALARON HEIGHT CHART

d100 (OE)	Falaron Male	Falaron Female
less than (-169)	154 cm	134 cm
(-169)-(-160)	156 cm	136 cm
(-159)-(-155)	158 cm	138 cm
(-154)-(-145)	160 cm	140 cm
(-144)-(-135)	162 cm	142 cm
(-134)-(-85)	164 cm	144 cm
(-84)-(-80)	166 cm	146 cm
(-79)-(-75)	168 cm	148 cm
(-74)-(-70)	170 cm	150 cm
(-69)-(-65)	172 cm	152 cm
(-64)-(-55)	174 cm	154 cm
(-54)-(-45)	176 cm	156 cm
(-44)-5	178 cm	158 cm
6-10	180 cm	160 cm
11-25	182 cm	162 cm
26-50	184 cm	164 cm
51-75	186 cm	166 cm
76-90	188 cm	168 cm
91-145	190 cm	170 cm
146-155	192 cm	172 cm
156-165	194 cm	174 cm
166-170	196 cm	176 cm
171-175	198 cm	178 cm
176-180	200 cm	180 cm
181-185	202 cm	182 cm
186-240	204 cm	184 cm
241-250	206 cm	186 cm
251-260	208 cm	188 cm
261-265	210 cm	190 cm
266-275	212 cm	192 cm
more than 275	214 cm	194 cm

rank within caste. (These methods varied from world to world.) In the interstellar era, it is mostly determined by wealth. With wealth being a badge of rank, wealth has slowly become rank. It is notable, however that on many falar worlds, it's still permissible to take anything a person has the strength to take. On these worlds, security is rigid, as any young upstart can make a run at a falar's guards.

The falar have only one form of entertainment: combat. They join the military almost as a form of recreation. In their leisure time, they engage in blood sports (most of which are illegal on non-falar worlds). Napping is common, but what most races see as leisure the falar consider unbearably tedious.

Scars are very important to the falar. They are badges of honor, and falar wear them like other races wear clothes or cosmetics. Because of this, advanced medical techniques, those that would prevent scarring, are frowned upon.

It is a great dishonor to self-inflict scars. It is considered out-right deceit, and a falar who is caught doing it will likely be killed outright by his family out of embarrassment.

A falar's honor is his life. A falar would rather die a long, agonizing death than suffer the slightest bit

of humiliation. Falar who are disgraced will occasionally commit ritual suicide; they prefer to die gloriously, taking on impossible odds. Many a young falar has charged, unarmed, and into the most fortified estate on his world, just to die with glory. This doesn't mean that they won't use ambushes and superior tactics to win battles. Falar honor is one of courage, not one of chivalry.

Falar prefer to decorate their homes with trophies of war. Hunting trophies, heads, shattered arms and armor are common decorations. Falar do not restrict themselves exclusively to the trophies of enemies. If a falar was speared straight through his body, he would likely add his pierced *grazzin* to his trophy collection. In addition, falar have been known to preserve their own severed limbs, displaying them as proudly as they do their scars.

Marriage And Family Patterns

Though the falar worship a female god, the place of the woman is not high in falar culture. Generally, women do all the work and men do nothing but make war.

Falar live in prides, which are essentially extended families. Each pride of falar is dominated by an alpha male who has exclusive mating privileges. Every falar's dream is to kill his patriarch and take over as alpha male. This must be done through honorable combat.

The falar are greatly resistant to inbreeding. Falar do not consider it improper to mate with their daughters, once the female is old enough. Likewise, a young falar seeks to overthrow his father, not concerned by the fact that he's seeking the privilege to mate with his own mother.

As mentioned above, a falar may become alpha male by usurping the head of his pride. They can also form a pride of their own. This generally only occurs when a falar has shown great prowess and courage in battle. Occasionally, when a young falar displays great valor, other pride leaders will donate a female to him, and he will set up housekeeping. It is often rumored that this is done to keep the young warrior from taking over the alpha males' pride. If needed, money is donated to the young warrior as well, to buy lands and housing.

The falar are organized into septs, clans and prides. A pride can vary in size from two to one hundred, and are a mixture of males (warriors) and females (workers). It is led by an alpha male.

Clans are a group of prides, often a very large group. These prides are generally closely related, and are as much extended families as political forces. This is the backbone of the falar culture. A clan numbers anywhere from ten to ten thousand prides.

The various clans organize into septs. Each sept is led by an alpha clan. This alpha clan has generally conquered the sept clans. Though septs are generally very disciplined, the alpha clan rules with an iron hand. The lord of an alpha clan is generally the greatest warrior among them. A sept is usually ten to one hundred clans.

Religion

Falar religion is as diverse as any other culture's. However, like all cultures, there are general themes that predominate most spiritual teachings.



FALARON WEIGHT CHART

d100 (OE)	Falaron (m)			Falaron (f)		
	sm	md	lg	sm	md	lg
less than (-169)	52	57	66	33	37	40
(-169)-(-165)	54	60	69	34	38	42
(-164)-(-160)	56	62	72	36	40	44
(-159)-(-155)	58	65	75	37	41	46
(-154)-(-145)	61	67	78	39	43	47
(-144)-(-135)	63	70	81	40	45	49
(-134)-(-85)	66	73	85	42	47	51
(-84)-(-80)	69	76	88	44	49	54
(-79)-(-75)	72	79	92	46	51	56
(-74)-(-70)	75	83	96	48	53	58
(-69)-(-65)	78	86	100	50	55	61
(-64)-(-55)	81	90	104	52	57	63
(-54)-(-45)	84	93	108	54	60	66
(-44)-5	88	97	113	56	62	68
6-10	94	104	120	60	66	73
11-25	102	113	131	65	72	79
26-75	113	125	138	72	80	88
76-90	122	135	157	78	86	95
91-95	129	143	166	82	92	101
96-145	135	149	173	86	95	105
146-155	137	152	176	87	97	107
156-165	140	155	180	89	99	109
166-170	143	158	183	91	101	111
171-175	146	161	187	93	103	113
176-180	149	164	191	95	105	116
181-185	152	168	194	97	107	118
186-240	155	171	198	98	109	120
241-250	158	174	202	100	112	123
251-260	161	178	206	102	114	125
261-265	164	181	210	104	116	128
266-270	167	185	215	107	118	130
271-275	171	189	219	109	121	133
more than 275	174	193	223	111	123	136

The falar rarely hold rigidly scheduled ceremonies. When they do, they are invariably on the day of an historic battle. Generally, ceremonies and vigils are held before or after great battles, to honor the dead and rejoice in the blood of their enemies.

The typical falar creation myth goes something like this:

In the beginning, there was God the Mother. She looked upon the vastness of the universe, on all the worlds and suns, and felt a vast loneliness. So she begat a great litter, and thus the falanar were born.

The falanar roamed the world and fought amongst themselves, establishing the clans and the septs. And God looked down upon them and was pleased.

So God begat another great litter, and so gave birth to the falaron. The falaron were placed among the falanar, and their older brothers asserted their dominance.

And God was pleased, so she begat another great litter. These falaris were subjugated by their brothers, and so God was pleased.

So she created the beasts and birds and gave the falar the gift of hunger. And the falar went out upon the fields and fens, hunting and earning great honor.

But time wore upon the falar, for these challenges soon became mundane to the great hunters of the master race. And so God brought to the falar the knowledge of war. And falar par-took greatly of war, and found it was good....

5.4 OTHER FACTORS

There are many other factors to consider when playing a borderline, sociopathic cat. Some of them are as follows.

Demeanor

The falar are perhaps the most arrogant race in the universe. They are aggressive and confrontational, respecting only strength in arms.

They grant value to other races only by a measure of what those races can provide them. This is very evident in all that meet them. A discussion with a falar is often similar to being examined under a microscope.

The falar tend to be a slightly cruel race. They like to play with an enemy before killing him. This cruelty is sometimes taken to an extreme, developing into full-blown sadism.

Language

Falar languages sound almost exactly like a catfight. There are as many different falar tongues as there are clans, but there is a falar common tongue, and every falar speaks it.

It is worth noting that the falar do not have different names for the falanar,

falaron and falaris. The degree of aggression and ferocity that the name falar is spoken determines which race they are referring to. The falar abide these names, however, as it takes a master linguist and a master thespian for someone of another race to refer to the falanar with the proper degree of aggression. Anything less is a grave insult.

Starting Languages: Falar (S8/W6), Species Standard (S4/W0).

Allowed Adolescent Development: Falar (S10/W10), Species Standard (S9/W9), Human (S8/W8), Kagoth (S6/W6).

Prejudices

The falar are a proud and arrogant people. They do not really believe in the equality of the species. They believe that the falar are the supreme evolution of sapience. They will tell this to anyone who



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FALARIS HEIGHT CHART

d100 (OE)	Falaris Male	Falaris Female
less than (-169)	124 cm	104 cm
(-169)-(-160)	126 cm	106 cm
(-159)-(-155)	128 cm	108 cm
(-154)-(-145)	130 cm	110 cm
(-144)-(-135)	132 cm	112 cm
(-134)-(-85)	134 cm	114 cm
(-84)-(-80)	136 cm	116 cm
(-79)-(-75)	138 cm	118 cm
(-74)-(-70)	140 cm	120 cm
(-69)-(-65)	142 cm	122 cm
(-64)-(-55)	144 cm	124 cm
(-54)-(-45)	146 cm	126 cm
(-44)-5	148 cm	128 cm
6-10	140 cm	130 cm
11-25	142 cm	132 cm
26-50	144 cm	134 cm
51-75	146 cm	136 cm
76-90	148 cm	138 cm
91-145	140 cm	140 cm
146-155	142 cm	142 cm
156-165	144 cm	144 cm
166-170	146 cm	146 cm
171-175	148 cm	148 cm
176-180	170 cm	150 cm
181-185	172 cm	152 cm
186-240	174 cm	154 cm
241-250	176 cm	156 cm
251-260	178 cm	158 cm
261-265	180 cm	160 cm
266-275	182 cm	162 cm
more than 275	184 cm	164 cm

asks, but they will follow any legal requirements involving other species, such as employment opportunities. (This does not apply to treatment of lesser falar races.)

The falar feeling of superiority, coupled with the lack of interstellar conflict, nearly exploded into bloodshed many times before the war. Now that the falar have a channel for their aggressions things have quieted down. In general, the falar do not try to force their ways upon other races. As far as they're concerned, the other races are inferior, and if anything, need to be protected (naturally, the falar will eventually run everything, after all). Now that the galaxy is at war, the falar feel it is their duty to win.

Professions

Falar are very combat oriented. They almost exclusively choose professions to reflect the fact. Rarely will a Falar Academic, Entertainer, Layman, Scientist, Technician or Thief be seen. These professions are considered the lowest and most dishonorable of the lot. When a falar fulfills these roles, they are invariably falaris or falaron, never falanar.

Psychic powers are a point of contention among the falar. The jury is still out on whether this is an

honorable profession. Because of this, many falanar avoid psions all together.

Special Skills

Everyman: Brawling, Wrestling, Interrogation, Natural Attack.

Restricted: Distance Running, All Athletic • Gymnastics except Climbing, Diplomacy, Duping, Trading.

Standard Hobby Skills

The falar generally choose combat oriented skills. They can choose from any of the skills below. Note that they can choose ranks in the skill category as well as the skill.

Hobby Skills: Armor skills, Athletic Games, Sprinting, Climbing, Alertness, Sense Ambush, Reading Tracks, Tracking, Situational Awareness: Combat, Body Development, appropriate Combat maneuvers, Languages, Gunnery skills, Interrogation, Marital Arts skills, Survival, Special Attack skills, Ambush, Silent Kill, Hiding, Stalking, First Aid, Technical/Trade • Vehicles skills, Weapon skills.

A Note On Falar Tactics

Falar are rarely complex thinkers. It is not common that a falar will invoke a more complicated strategy than "Snarl and Pounce." For this reason they rarely rise high in the ISC military. Strangely enough, this doesn't bother them as much as might





FALARIS WEIGHT CHART

d100 (OE)	Falaris (m)			Falaris (f)		
	sm	md	lg	sm	md	lg
less than (-169)	25	27	30	22	25	28
(-169)-(-165)	26	29	31	23	26	29
(-164)-(-160)	27	30	33	24	27	30
(-159)-(-155)	28	31	34	25	28	32
(-154)-(-145)	29	32	36	26	30	33
(-144)-(-135)	30	34	37	28	31	34
(-134)-(-85)	32	35	39	29	32	36
(-84)-(-80)	33	37	40	30	34	37
(-79)-(-75)	34	38	42	31	35	39
(-74)-(-70)	36	40	44	32	36	40
(-69)-(-65)	37	41	45	34	38	42
(-64)-(-55)	39	43	47	35	39	44
(-54)-(-45)	40	45	49	37	41	46
(-44)-5	42	47	51	38	43	47
6-10	45	50	55	41	46	51
11-25	49	54	59	44	50	55
26-75	54	60	66	49	55	61
76-90	58	65	71	53	59	66
91-95	62	69	76	56	63	70
96-145	64	71	79	58	65	73
146-155	66	73	80	60	67	74
156-165	67	74	82	61	68	76
166-170	68	76	83	62	69	77
171-175	70	77	85	63	71	79
176-180	71	79	87	64	72	80
181-185	72	80	88	66	74	82
186-240	74	82	90	67	75	83
241-250	75	84	92	68	77	85
251-260	77	85	94	70	78	87
261-265	78	87	96	71	80	89
266-270	80	89	98	73	81	90
271-275	82	91	100	74	83	92
more than 275	83	92	102	75	85	94

be expected. They delight in carrying out other people's strategies, once the pecking order has been established. The pecking order is very firmly established in boot camp.

The Individual As A PC

A falar generally has only one reason to go adventuring—glory. A falar who strikes out on his own is attempting to make a name for himself, a name that will be spoken proudly by other falar. A falar desires nothing more than becoming so famous that other falar seek him out for the glory of killing him.

Falar, especially falanar, expect to lead any group they join. They rarely have the skills to do so, however, and this makes it difficult for them to "fit in." When a falar joins a party, there is usually a great deal of conflict until the "alpha male" is determined.

5.5 OUTFITTING OPTIONS

Outfitting a falar is typically straightforward. It is a matter of deciding what equipment helps them kill people, or gets them to a location where they can kill people.

Armor

A falar only removes his armor to sleep. It is so ingrained that the standard military uniform has been designed incorporating this fact. The falar armor is composed of five basic parts. The *grazzin* is the falar chest armor. The *gar-zon* are leather gauntlets that allow the claws to unsheathe. The *git-laz* are upper arm greaves. The *git-on* are thigh greaves. The *kathon* are knee high boots.

All falar begin with *grazzin*, *gar-zon*, and *kathon*. Greaves can be purchased with starting money.

Falar armor is lightweight and unencumbering, to complement the natural AT of a falar. Because of this, they do not change a falar's armor type, simply adding a bonus to the character's DB. The base armor gives a character a +5 to DB. Wearing both greaves grants an additional +5.

Falar armor is made from a lightweight plastic composite. This is as hard as iron. This armor can be made of stronger materials to gain a quality bonus.

The falar do make combat armor. This is generally of distinctive falar design, and acts as AT VIII, IX or X. A Falar is not happy unless his armor has been decorated with clan and pride symbols.

Money

All falar begin with ¢2,000. This can either be in the form of electronic currency or falar coins.

Weapons

Falar weapons are generally designed so as to be used without bending the wrist. Daggers resemble a set of brass knuckles with a blade protruding from the front.

Falar energy weapons and firearms are called *grazz*. They are grasped with the hand parallel to the ground and sighted along the back. To picture the hand position, one places his hand out, palm down. Then he makes a fist without moving the back of the hand.

Falar two-handed firearms and two-handed energy weapons are called *grazz-da*. They are similar to human rifles and carbines in hand placement, with the exception that the firing hand, which is parallel to the ground, is designed with a separate hole for each of the falar's three non-opposable digits.



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ARMOR CHART

Item	DB	Cost (IN)	Weight	Notes
<i>Gar-zon</i>	0	50	-	Leather gauntlets with claw holes
<i>Grazzin</i>	+5	2,500	5	Chest armor
<i>Git-taz</i>	+5*	200	2	Upper arm greaves
<i>Git-on</i>	+5*	200	2	Thigh greaves
<i>Kathon</i>	0	150	-	Knee-high boots

*Both these items must be worn to receive the +5 bonus.

WEAPON CHART

Item	Cost (in ¢)	Type	Weight	Breakage Numbers	Weapon Strength	Fumble
<i>Hazzok</i>	150	1 hm	3	1-7	95-115	01-05

The *hazzok* is the falar sword. It is similar to a scimitar in the way it's grasped and used, with the exception of a back-blade that is held along the forearm. The back blade is used to increase the weapon's parrying surface and allow for more ready reverse-strokes. The *hazzok* attacks on the *Hazzok* Attack Table. The *hazzok* receives a +15 to parrying melee attacks when used with a 100% parry or as a shield.

No falar can ever be disarmed without being de-clawed. Because of this, most world governments don't bother to relieve a falar of his *hazzok*. They are generally only restricted from use of ranged weapons.

5.6 BACKGROUND OPTIONS

Below are listed the options that falar characters can select as backgrounds. These represent certain advantages the character might have had during childhood.

Extra Languages

In addition to those languages granted by allowed adolescent development, the falar can select from the following for one background. Oort (S5/W5), Tulgaran (S5/W5), Valiesian (S4/W4), Xatosian (S5/W5).

Extra Money

Extra money is usually in the form of standard credits. It can, however, come in the form of falar coins, gems and jewelry.

Special Items

All falar begin play with a *hazzok*. All special items are of falar make.

5.7 TALENTS

Falar characters may choose from any of the talents in *Future Law*. The GM should look through these options and select the ones that are appropriate to his game (it is suggested that Options 1, 2, or 5 be used unless something warrants otherwise). The classification of the talent/ flaw is given in brackets after the description of the talent/ flaw (also included are the appropriate point costs if optional rules are being used).

Option 1: By spending one background option, the character may make a d100 (not open-ended) roll and consult the chart below.

Option 2: A player may select one of the talents from the chart below, but must pay the appropriate number of background options (as listed in *Future Law*) or talent points.

Option 3: As Option 2 above, except that the cost is lowered by one (if background options are spent), or five (if talent points are spent). This represents the talent being specific to falar.

Option 4: As with options 1 or 2, except that any race may receive these talents, at double cost (to represent the fact that the talents/ flaws are specific to falar.)

Option 5: As with Option 1, except that for one background, the player may select catnaps or mid-air maneuvers (two for both). The player may also elect to receive cat-like cruelty and reduce the cost by one.

FALAR TALENT & FLAW CHART

01-08	Excessive Carnivore (Flaw): You love to eat flesh. All falar do. But unlike other falar, you desire the flesh of sapient creatures. You believe in the old ways, when the falar ate their prey, even if they were other falar. Needless to say, other races do not look upon this practice with much tolerance. [MAJOR: -15 points]
09-14	Cowardice (Flaw): You are a coward, the most horrible of falar failings. Battle strikes fear in your heart. You will do anything to keep free from physical danger. It takes a Very Hard Acting maneuver to hide your fear from other falar. This is only a Medium maneuver versus other races. [GREATER: -20 points]



- 15-23 **Declawed (Flaw):** You have had your claws removed. This could have been via physical injury or deliberate surgery. If this was received because of surgery, then it was invariably performed as a punishment for some terrible failing. All falar you meet will assume the removal was deliberate. [MAJOR: -15 points]
- 24-26 **Branded (Flaw):** You have been tried and found guilty of extreme cowardice. (To the falar there is no other type.) The offense may or may not have been committed. Because of this, you have been declawed and stripped of all clan allegiances. Your name has been stricken from the records of the falar and the brand of the coward (a clawless hand) has been burned into your forehead. To the falar, you are a non-person. No one will speak to you, deal with you, or aid you in anyway. It is a dishonor for them even to spit on you. [GREATER: -30 Points]
- 27-37 **Feline Cruelty (Flaw):** You have a heightened sense of feline cruelty. You will kill a foe if you have to, but you'd rather play with him first. If given the opportunity, you will first humiliate him with non-fatal attacks. If a foe is captured alive, you will want to interrogate him. You will not necessarily torture him, but you will torment him mercilessly. You probably won't even ask questions. [MINOR: -10 points]
- 38-48 **Clanless (Flaw):** You are without a clan. Your clan was killed off completely. This could have been through combat or (tragically) disaster. You are dispossessed, and have no littermates to turn to. You are completely alone. [MINOR: -10 points]
- 49-55 **Impressive Scars:** You have been in at least one *glorious* battle. You barely survived. Because of this, you are heavily scarred. Other falar respect you. Females desire you. Over the years you have developed telling the story of how you got each scar into a work of art. When dealing with anyone from a militant culture, you receive a +10 to all influence maneuvers. [GREATER: 20 points]

- 56-68 **Glorious Past:** You have led a life of glorious battles. The list of the battles you've survived reads like the list of falar achievements of the past five years. Once the inevitable bragging ensues, all other stories will be left by the wayside as you begin to recount, in vivid detail, battle after battle. The more falar present, the greater your audience will be. As long as there is at least one falar or career soldier in the bar, you're guaranteed to get all your drinks for free. [LESSER: 5 points]
- 69-81 **Mid-Air Maneuvers:** You are able to twist around in mid-air. This can be very handy if your foe moves suddenly while you're mid-pounce. If you wish, an Easy Acrobatics maneuver will allow you to change facing while in midair. In addition to this, you always seem to land on your feet. All falls you take are treated as if they were one category lower. (3 meter falls cause no damage.) Note: Acrobatics is *still* restricted to you. You aren't some stinking monkey. [LESSER: 5 points]
- 82-92 **Catnaps:** Though you need just as much sleep as any other falar, you are never truly unconscious. You are capable of leaping to full readiness at only the slightest sound. You never fully relax. At any time while you're asleep, you may make a Sense Alertness (Hearing) maneuver to notice a sound and wake up. [Minor 10 points]
- 92-100 **Cat-Like Reflexes:** You react with lightning speed. You receive a +5 bonus to your initiative and receive no penalties from snap actions. You receive only a +5 bonus to your deliberate actions. In addition, you receive a +5 bonus to your DB when you are aware the attack is coming. Finally, you receive a +5 bonus to your OB with melee attacks. [MAJOR: 15 points]



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5.8 FALAR TRAINING PACKAGES

Most non-scientific training packages are accessible to falar. Military training packages are particularly common. A good rule of thumb is that no falar would be caught dead taking a training package that was half-price to an oort.

The falar train almost exclusively in combat-related pursuits. They are some of the most useful ISC additions, because most come to the military with extensive training.

FALAR HUNTER (L)

The Falar Hunter spends all his spare time tracking prey, like his ancestors. He prowls the wild hunting with his claws or his *hazzok*. He is a deadly killer.

Quote: Where is the sport in hunting with a gun?

Time to Acquire: 50 Months

Starting Money: Normal

Cost: None

Special:

Hazzok (+10)	30
Trophy head	20
Trophy head	20
Trophy head	20
Trophy head	20
Trophy head	20
Reputation as a deadly hunter	30
Close friends with another falar	100

Category or Skill	# of Ranks
Athletic • Brawn	1
Jumping	1
Athletic Endurance skill category	1
Sprinting	1
Awareness • Searching skill category	1
Reading Tracks	1
Tracking	1
Lore • General skill category	1
Fauna lore	1
Outdoor • Environment skill category	2
Hunting	1
Survival	1
Special Attack skill category	n/a
Natural Attack	2
Subterfuge • Stealth skill category	2
Hiding	1
Stalking	1
Weapon • 1-Handed Melee skill category	1
Hazzok	1

Professional Qualifier: Falar with Bonus in SD stat higher than the racial bonus. [-3 to cost]

Lifestyle Skills: Natural Attack

Stat Gains: Self Discipline

COST BY PROFESSION

Academic	44	Psychic	54
Bystander	36	Recon	28
Criminal	30	Scientist	49
Entertainer	46	Soldier	32
Explorer	30	Technician	37
Pilot	36		

FALAR PILOT (L)

The Falar Pilot has been trained extensively in fighter combat. Falar are one of the few races that teach combat flying to their children.

Quote: There's nothing like killing a foe with six plasma cannons.

Time to Acquire: 62 Months

Starting Money: Normal

Cost: None

Special:

One-Handed Energy Weapon (+10)	30
Armored Vacsuit	30
Famous Kill	20
Famous Kill	20
Famous Kill	20
Famous Kill	20
Reputation as a pilot	30
Close friends with another falar	100

Category or Skill	# of Ranks
Combat Maneuvers skill category	n/a
Alien Environment (Zero Gravity)	1
Combat Pilot	1
Science/Analytical • Specialized skill category	n/a
Orbital Mechanics	1
Special Attacks skill category	n/a
Gunnery Ambush	1
Subterfuge • Mechanics skill category	1
Electronic Warfare	1
Tech/Trade • Gunnery skill category	1
H.E.P.	1
Missiles	1
Projectile Gunnery	1
Tech/Trade • Vehicles	1
Atmospheric Pilot	1
FTL Pilot	1
Space Pilot	1

Professional Qualifier: Falar with bonus to In higher than racial bonus. [-3 to cost]

Lifestyle Skills: Space Pilot

Stat Gains: Intuition

COST BY PROFESSION

Academic	45	Psychic	54
Bystander	38	Recon	36
Criminal	42	Scientist	66
Entertainer	38	Soldier	34
Explorer	32	Technician	40
Pilot	28		



FALAR SOLDIER (L)

The Falar Soldier is trained to fight. He doesn't care whether this is for a cause, in a bar or on the street. He will fight at the drop of a hat, with tremendous glee.

Quote: You fight well. I will kill you with pride.

Time to Acquire: 53 Months

Starting Money: Normal

Cost: None

Special:

Two Handed Energy Weapon (+10)	30
Hazzok (+10)	30
Teeth of past victims	40
Scalps of past victims	40
Ears of past victims	40
Reputation as a cold killer	30
Close friends with another falar	100

Category or Skill	# of Ranks
Athletic • Brawn	2
Jumping	2
Body Development skill category	n/a
Body Development	2
Special Attack skill category	n/a
Natural Attack	2
Weapon • 2-Handed Energy	2
Assault Blaster	2
Weapon • 1-Handed Melee	2
Hazzok	2

Professional Qualifier: Falar with more than 6 ranks in combat skills [-3 to Cost]

Lifestyle Skills: Hazzok

Stat Gains: Strength

COST BY PROFESSION

Academic	50	Psychic	91
Bystander	40	Recon	32
Criminal	35	Scientist	62
Entertainer	38	Soldier	28
Explorer	31	Technician	43
Pilot	33		

5.9 NOTEWORTHY PLANETS

These noteworthy planets were discussed in *Spacemaster: Privateers*. A little more discussion is warranted, however.

Crrrrlorrrol **(Delta Trianguli A & B)** **Falar Free World**

Galactic (-7.300, +5.615, -4.370)

This system is a close orbiting binary pair. In 40 YC, the newly geared-up falar of Tairrrlar began the gear-up of Crrrrlorrrol. The first year of the project went well, but their success ended there.

Phase two was dominated by terrorist attacks and vandalism. The falar of Crrrrlorrrol saw the robots as a new prey to hunt, and they hunted them mercilessly.

During phase three, the falar issued many duel challenges to the education droids. Pecking order



was never fully established. The successes on Nu (2) Lupi were not to be revisited. All other falar gear-up projects were placed on hiatus until the problem could be resolved.

After phase four, the planet had essentially no respect for the ISC. They declared their independence in no uncertain terms.

Now that the war has begun, Crrrrlorrrol has thrown in its full commitment. It's hard to imagine that these were the falar that once had so much contempt for the ISC. It has been theorized that they think a fight is a fight, and they don't care whom it's with. It's also been thought that this might soften their opinion of the ISC in general. If they survive, that is.

Crrrrlorrrol is a feudal system, in the most classical sense. Numbering 3.4 billion souls, the entire population lives on a single habitable world. This is a temperate planet with well-cultivated hunting preserves. Much of the wilderness has been left pristine to allow for ample hunting opportunities.

Crrrrlorrrol is run by six major septs. Each has taken over a major region, much like a country. Sept Harrrrl currently runs the planet.

The alpha sept is determined on a yearly basis. Every year, on winter solstice in the southern hemisphere, one thousand handpicked warriors from each sept fight until only one sept remains. The current ruling body determines the nature of this fight (space combat, infantry, armor, etc.). This combat is typically very honorable, in that no nerve



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agents or other means of stacking the deck are used. Sept Harrrrl prefers a large-scale guerilla war. They have held the position of alpha sept for twenty-two years.

This method of government is suspended during times of war. Harrrrl will remain in charge until the planet is conquered or the war is won.

Frrrrlus (Epsilon Ceti A & B) - Falar

Galactic (-7.143, -0.901, -12.677)

One of the least hospitable systems in the ISC, the planet orbits between these two binary stars. This makes the planet incredibly hot, as it must orbit very close to its sun. Inhabitants hide in secluded caves protected from the sun during the day. Still, most races drop from heat stroke within minutes of coming anywhere near the surface.

The planet revolves slowly, and during the night dumps quite a bit of heat. Its inhabitants are quite nocturnal, but for a good portion of the year, it is close enough to the second star to keep its heat. By the end of this season, only the hardiest can survive above ground, even at night.

This core world is the source of some of the bravest and hardest warriors in the ISC. These stalwart falar, possibly due to their harsh origin, can drag themselves fighting out of situations that would leave many lesser beings dead. If the war ever comes this far, Frrrrlus will be pivotal.

This system did not begin gear-up until 81 CY. It joined the ISC *by popular vote* in 113 YC. It has passed remarkably without bloodshed. Though it holds a fierce warrior people, they rarely fight amongst themselves. Their horrid fight for survival has made them a cooperative group of falar.

The government of this world (population 1.2 billion) is the rarest of falar structures, a gerontocracy. Though the survival to old age is still rare, these *are* falar after all, the old are revered on this world. The oldest of the old elect a planetary leader every time the former ruler dies (every few years).

Falar from this planet must purchase Heat Resistance (+20 RR's and DB's versus Heat attacks, instead of +10). This costs one background option.

Frrrrrurt (Chi Orionis) - Falar

Galactic (-9.582, -1.426, -0.462)

This core (binary) falar system produces many good warriors. The falar from this world display particularly adept three-dimensional thinking. They are therefore great pilots.

Frrrrrurt began gear-up in 84 YC. The process was as bloody as could be expected, and in 120 YC, they flew into social upheaval. When the smoke settled, the Frrrrrurt clan had achieved dominance (it still rules today).

In 125 YC, while the smoke from the war was still clearing, this system joined the ISC. They have been loyal members ever since.

That doesn't mean that this is a friendly world to other ISC citizens. As with many falar worlds, theft, mugging, and murder are not illegal. An oort landing in this system would be well advised to surround himself with many combat-honed bodyguards. The attacks will be frequent and brutal.

The Frrrrrurt sept is the only one permitted to exist on this world. All 1.8 billion souls on the one habitable planet belong to this sept. Whenever a new sept declares itself, it is brutally massacred.

Hrrrrulurrrr (13 Orionis) - Falar

Galactic (-23.160, -4.828, -7.688)

This falar world, a rare non-binary, has made a tremendous showing during the war. Even though they have yet to really grasp technology, they had a large population when geared-up and have been a primary source of infantry.

The gear-up of this world began in 257 CY and is still wrapping up. The planetary government has yet to fully form, however young falar are leaving school in droves to join the war effort. They are an ISC world by default, though they have never officially joined.

Prrrlarrock (Alpha Centauri A & B) - Falar

Galactic (+0.957, -0.931, -0.017)

This binary system is actually a trinary, but Proxima Centauri is a long way out. The prime world in this system orbits between the two stars (they are 23 AU apart or so).

This system produces many fine warriors. It was the second falar system to begin gear-up, in 39 YC. The humans of Helios were the primary motivating factor in this move, and therefore Chrrrl was not immediately present to damage the natural evolution of the falar pecking order. Still, it was showing the first signs of the social strain that claimed Crrrrlrorrrl in 42 YC, and so the gear-up here was shut down as well.

In 80 YC, gear-up resumed, and the social upheaval of this world was minimal. In 110 YC, it joined the ISC. It was the second planet to begin gear-up and to enter the ISC, but the third to *finish* gear-up.

Prrrlarrock is more civilized than most falar worlds. Though it is ruled by 13 brutal septs, its 3.5 billion inhabitants are peaceful where outsiders are concerned. War is waged between clans, but it is always civilized. The street attack is unheard of. Sept Larrrral is currently in charge of the planet. Every two years, 100 members of each sept meet in an infantry free for all. Larrrral has emerged victorious the last three times.

Tairrrlar (Nu(2) Lupi) - Falar Racial Seat

Galactic (+13.196, -8.536, +2.033)

In 16 CY, a research craft crashed on the habitable world of this system. After a bloody slaughter, Richard Imir and the oort technician Haffel were the only surviving members. Imir fought a falanar named Chrrrl, and almost won. Little did he know that this was one of the most powerful warlords on the planet.

It was not immediately obvious that Chrrrl's use of the gear-up to solidify his world domination (he didn't even know before this that most of the planetary continents existed) was what made the gear-up of this world successful. Neither did Chrrrl.



When they moved to gear-up Crrrrlrrrrl, Chrrrl wanted to assert his dominance on this world as well. He did not allow local warlords to take control of the schools, protecting the education droids from challenges, duels and random attacks.

As the disaster that was the Crrrrlrrrrl gear-up began to unfold, other gear-ups were put on hiatus. By CY 42, the gear-up of falar worlds had ground to a halt. All except for Crrrrlrrrrl, which was becoming more of a disaster at every moment. All ISC establishments on gear-up worlds became super-fortified military camps. All communication between falar and other races on these worlds was stopped by the dozens of pulse plasma turrets on every school.

Come 78 YC, ISC sociologists had observed the full scope of the Crrrrlrrrrl gear-up and thought they had found the solution. The solution chosen was the most obvious one, but until all the data from Crrrrlrrrrl had come in, the oorts of the ISC stopped any motion to move forward. By 80 YC, every educational droid in Falar gear-up schools had been replaced by a high-performance combat droid. Duels and challenges were welcomed. Not a single droid was lost. The students respected their mechanical teachers and accepted the ISC as the *alpha sept*.

Tairrrlar fell in 285 YC. It is now reverting to the barbarism of the Jeronan falar. It's unknown if they will ever recover.

Tairrrlar had the most civilized of all falar governments, in many ways a mockery of ISC structure. Tairrrlar had twelve septs, each with its own house. On the floors of these senatorial halls, falar battled (literally) to set policy for their septs. These houses were peopled with the most powerful falar warriors. Positions were determined through direct challenge.

In addition, each falar system (42, including Tairrrlar) had a regional house, which battled in much the same way. The twelve Tairrrlar houses battled for positions on the Tairrrlar regional level.

The ruling sept of all falar space was chosen every six years by a vote. Each house of commons sent ten members to the planetary capital for the vote. They entered the voting hall at exactly midnight, carrying no weapons, not even *hazzok*. At twelve fifteen, the vote was cast. Anyone still alive at that time was permitted to vote. If the vote was a tie, the bloodbath resumed for fifteen more minutes. The alpha of the sept that won the vote became prime minister of all falar in the ISC.

The regional minister (who doubled as the planetary governor) was chosen in the same manner.

Though the selection process was brutal, in other aspects, this was the most civil of all falar worlds. Aliens on planet were completely off limits. The instances of attacks on aliens, even provoked attacks, were extremely low. Theft was illegal. Murder was frowned upon except in official duels. This planet also served to supply many of the best falar warriors known to the ISC.

Now the planet has been occupied. It has been given the right to rule itself as it sees fit, but if anything resembling a congressional meeting takes place, the building is immediately bombed from orbit.

Naturally, the planet has degenerated to complete anarchy. It has dropped from 4 billion souls to a mere 800 million. There are secret congressional covens to this day, but they now mostly lick their wounds and preserve their wisdom while they watch their planet burn.

Tanarrrr (Nu Indi A & B) - Falar Galactic (+7.905, -7.409, -9.310)

In 41 YC gear-up began on this planet. In 42 YC, it ceased with all other falar gear-ups. It resumed in 80YC, and this world completed phase three in 112 YC. It promptly fell upon itself.

In 116 YC, the phase four war that is typical of falar worlds ground to a halt. Sept Karrrrr took over



the planetary government, and to this day it is alpha of seven septs. In 117 YC, Karrrrr joined the ISC.

In 286, Tanarrrr fell to Jeronan troops. It has remained relatively unchanged, during occupation. Tanarrrr is a binary system. Its only habitable world is extremely cold. All falar from this planet are resistant to cold, and must purchase Cold Resistance for one background option (+20 RR's and DB's versus Cold attacks, instead of +10).

This system holds 2.4 billion souls. They are a hardy lot, known for their ability as arctic troops.

This world is typical of falar worlds. It is a lawless, unsafe place for visitors. Prides crouch in heavily fortified mansions. Troops patrol the walls. Clans attack other clans with alarming frequency. It is a place of combat and pain.

There is no structure to succession in Tanarrrr. It is subject to frequent internal wars and bloody coups.



FALANAR RACIAL SUMMARY

Part II The Falar

Nickname: *PC:* Lion; *Non-PC:* Cat.

The falanar are large, humanoid carnivores. They are at the top of their racially based hierarchy.

Physical Characteristics

Evolution: Falanar are evolved from predatory cats. They are nocturnal carnivores.

Build: Tall and powerfully built. Lion-like in appearance. Males average 250 kg, females average 180 kg.

Coloring: A range of golden colors. Occasional chestnut or auburn. White is rare.

Endurance: +20 to Exhaustion points. Require eight hours sleep every day.

Height: Males average 217 cm; Females, 197 cm.

Lifespan: 90 years.

Resistance: +10 to RR and DB vs. Thermo kinetics. +50 to RR vs. Poison, Disease, and Fear.

Special Abilities: Tough Skin, Natural Weapon (Claws), Amazing Leaping, Skilled: Expert (+15 to Climbing), Nightvision, Peripheral Vision, Quiet Stride, Acute Hearing, Acute Smell, Eye of the Tiger. Additionally, falar have Bad Temper.

Culture

Clothing & Decoration: Light composite armor. Breastplate, boots and gloves. Sometimes greaves.

Fears & Inabilities: Falanar fear only dishonor. They are not good at gymnastic skills.

Lifestyle: Falar live in a highly structured clan system.

Marriage Pattern: Falanar organize into large groups called prides, dominated by an alpha male.

Religion: Falanar worship a female god figure that created the cat-races and taught them war.

Other Factors

Demeanor: Aggressive, combative, competitive. Sometimes, a bit cruel.

Languages: *Starting Languages:* Falar (S8/W6), Species Standard (S4/W0). *Allowed Adolescent Development:* Falar (S10/W10), Species Standard (S9/W9), Human (S8/W8), Kagoth (S6/W6).

Prejudices: Falanar feel they are the height of sapient evolution. They pay lip service to the equality of non-falar races.

Professions: Falar prefer combative professions.

Training Packages: Falar prefer military packages.

Special Skills: *Everyman:* Brawling, Wrestling, Interrogation, Natural Attack; *Restricted:* Distance Running, All Athletic • Gymnastics skills except Climbing, Diplomacy, Duping, Trading.

Standard Hobby Skills: Armor skills, Athletic Games, Sprinting, Climbing, Alertness, Sense Ambush, Reading Tracks, Tracking, Situational

Awareness: Combat, Body Development, appropriate Combat Maneuvers, Languages, Gun-nery skills, Interrogation, Marital Arts skills, Survival, Special Attack skills, Ambush, Silent Kill, Hiding, Stalking, First Aid, Technical/Trade • Vehicles skills, Weapon skills.

Outfitting Options

Weapons: Any

Armor: Special falar armor

Money: \$2,000

Background Options

Falanar get four background options.

Extra Languages: Oort (S5/W5), Tugaran (S5/W5), Valiesian (S4/W4), Xatosian (S5/W5).

Extra Money: This is generally in the form of credits.

Special Items: All special items are of falar make.

Talents: Any appropriate talent.

Adolescent Development

Falar receive the following skills for adolescent development.

Skill	Ranks
Athletic • Brawn skill category	2
Athletic • Gymnastic skill category	1
Climbing skill	1
Awareness • Perceptions skill category	n/a
Alertness skill	2
Awareness • Senses skill category	2
Sense Awareness skill (Hearing)	2
Body Development skill category	n/a
Body Development skill	2
Communication skill category	1
Language skills	6
Lore • Academic	3
"Own" Culture Lore skill	3
Lore • General skill category	3
"Own" Region Lore skill	3
Martial Arts • Sweeps skill category	2
Wrestling skill	2
Outdoor • Animal skill category	1
Riding skill	1
Outdoor • Environment skill category	1
Scientific/Analytic skill categories (total)	6
choice of up to six skills	6
Special Attacks skill category	n/a
Claw attack skill	2
Subterfuge • Stealth skill category	4
Hiding	2
Stalking	4
Tech/Trade • General skill category	4
One-Handed Edged skill category	2
Hazzok	2
Hobby Ranks	10
Background Options	4
Talent Points	35



Part II The Falar

FALARON RACIAL SUMMARY

Nickname: *PC:* Tiger; *Non-PC:* Kitty.

The falaron are big, humanoid carnivores. They are in the middle of their racially based hierarchy.

Physical Characteristics

Evolution: Falaron are evolved from predatory cats. They are nocturnal carnivores.

Build: Powerfully built. Tiger-like in appearance. Males average 135 kg, females average 86 kg.

Coloring: Yellow with black tiger stripes. Occasionally golden or brown. White is rare.

Endurance: +10 to Exhaustion points. Requires eight hours sleep every day.

Height: Males average 185 cm; Females, 165 cm.

Lifespan: 90 years.

Resistance: +10 to RR and DB vs. Thermo kinetics. +30 to RR vs. Poison, Disease, and Fear.

Special Abilities: Tough Skin, Natural Weapon (Claws), Amazing Leaping, Skilled: Expert (+15 to Climbing), Nightvision, Peripheral Vision, Quiet Stride, Acute Hearing, Acute Smell, Eye of the Tiger. In addition, falar have Bad Temper.

Culture

Clothing & Decoration: Light composite armor. Breastplate, boots and gloves. Sometimes greaves.

Fears & Inabilities: Falaron fear only dishonor. They are not good at gymnastic skills.

Lifestyle: Falar live in a structured clan system.

Marriage Pattern: Falaron organize into large groups called prides, dominated by an alpha male. Falaron prides are always under the control of a falaran pride.

Religion: Falaron worship a female god figure that created the cat-races and taught them war.

Other Factors

Demeanor: Aggressive, combative, competitive. Sometimes, a bit cruel.

Languages: *Starting Languages:* Falar (S8/W6), Species Standard (S4/W0). *Allowed Adolescent Development:* Falar (S10/W10), Species Standard (S9/W9), Human (S8/W8), Kagoth (S6/W6).

Prejudices: Falaron feel they are the penultimate in sapient evolution. They pay lip service to the equality of non-falar races.

Professions: Falar prefer combative professions.

Training Packages: Falar prefer military packages.

Special Skills: *Everyman:* Brawling, Wrestling, Interrogation, Natural Attack; *Restricted:* Distance Running, All Athletic • Gymnastics skills except Climbing, Diplomacy, Duping, Trading.

Standard Hobby Skills: Armor skills, Athletic Games, Sprinting, Climbing, Alertness, Sense Ambush, Reading Tracks, Tracking, Situational Awareness: Combat, Body Development, ap-

propriate Combat maneuvers, Languages, Gunnery skills, Interrogation, Marital Arts skills, Survival, Special Attack skills, Ambush, Silent Kill, Hiding, Stalking, First Aid, Technical/Trade • Vehicles skills, Weapon skills.

Outfitting Options

Weapons: Any

Armor: Special falar armor

Money: ¢2,000

Background Options

Falaron get three background options.

Extra Languages: Oort (S5/W5), Tulgaran (S5/W5), Valiesian (S4/W4), Xatosian (S5/W5).

Extra Money: This is generally in the form of credits.

Special Items: All special items are of falar make.

Talents: Any appropriate talent.

Adolescent Development

Falaron receive the following skills for adolescent development.

Skill	Ranks
Athletic • Brawn skill category	2
Athletic • Gymnastic skill category	1
Climbing skill	1
Awareness • Perceptions skill category	n/a
Alertness skill	2
Awareness • Senses skill category	2
Sense Awareness skill (Hearing)	2
Body Development skill category	n/a
Body Development skill	2
Communication skill category	1
Language skills	6
Lore • Academic	3
"Own" Culture Lore skill	3
Lore • General skill category	3
"Own" Region Lore skill	3
Martial Arts • Sweeps skill category	2
Wrestling skill	2
Outdoor • Animal skill category	1
Riding skill	1
Outdoor • Environment skill category	1
Scientific/Analytic skill categories (total)	6
choice of up to six skills	6
Special Attacks skill category	n/a
Claw attack skill	2
Subterfuge • Stealth skill category	4
Hiding	2
Stalking	4
Tech/Trade • General skill category	4
One-Handed Edged skill category	2
Hazzok	2
Hobby Ranks	10
Background Options	3
Talent Points	25

Background Options:
3

Stat Bonuses:
Ag: +5
Co: +3
Me: +0
Re: +0
SD: +6
Em: -4
In: +8
Pr: +2
Qu: +5
St: +0

RR Mods:
Poison: +30
Disease: +30
Fear: +30
Psions: +0

Body Dev. Progression:
0•6•4•2•1

MP Dev. Progression:
0•5•3•2•2

Soul Departure:
10 rounds

Recovery Multiplier:
0.9 times

Race Type:
3



Part II The Falar

FALARIS RACIAL SUMMARY

Nickname: *PC:* Panther; *Non-PC:* Kitten.

The falaris are smallish, humanoid carnivores. They are at the bottom of their racially based hierarchy.

Background Options:

1

Stat

Bonuses:

Ag: +10

Co: +0

Me: +2

Re: +2

SD: +8

Em: -2

In: +8

Pr: +4

Qu: +10

St: -4

RR Mods:

Poison: +0

Disease: +0

Fear: +0

Psions: +0

Body Dev.

Progression:

0•6•3•2•1

MP Dev.

Progression:

0•5•3•2•2

Soul

Departure:

10 rounds

Recovery

Multiplier:

1 times

Race Type:

4

Physical Characteristics

Evolution: Falaris are evolved from predatory cats. They are nocturnal carnivores.

Build: Small and agile. Leopard-like in appearance. Males average 60 kg, females average 55 kg.

Coloring: Yellow, auburn or brown with black spots. Sometimes black. White is rare and unhealthy.

Endurance: Requires eight hours sleep every day.

Height: Males average 145 cm; Females, 135 cm.

Lifespan: 90 years.

Resistance: +10 to RR and DB vs. thermo kinetics.

Special Abilities: Tough Skin, Natural Weapon (Claws), Amazing Leaping, Skilled: Expert (+15 to climbing), Nightvision, Peripheral Vision, Quiet Stride, Acute Hearing, Acute Smell, and Subtle. In addition, falar receive the flaw Bad Temper.

Culture

Clothing & Decoration: Light composite armor. Breastplate, boots and gloves. Sometimes greaves.

Fears & Inabilities: Falaris fear only dishonor. They are not good at gymnastic skills.

Lifestyle: Falar live in a highly structured clan system.

Marriage Pattern: Falaris organize into large groups called prides, dominated by an alpha male. Generally each pride is ruled by a falaron or falanar pride.

Religion: Falaris worship a female god figure that created the cat-races and taught them war.

Other Factors

Demeanor: Aggressive, combative, competitive. Sometimes, a bit cruel.

Languages: *Starting Languages:* Falar (S8/W6), Species Standard (S4/W0). *Allowed Adolescent Development:* Falar (S10/W10), Species Standard (S9/W9), Human (S8/W8), Kagoth (S6/W6).

Prejudices: Falar feel they are the height of sapient evolution. They pay lip service to the equality of non-falar races.

Professions: Falar prefer combative professions.

Training Packages: Falar prefer military packages.

Special Skills: *Everyman:* Brawling, Wrestling, Interrogation, Natural Attack; *Restricted:* Distance Running, All Athletic • Gymnastics skills except Climbing, Diplomacy, Duping, Trading.

Standard Hobby Skills: Armor skills, Athletic Games, Sprinting, Climbing, Alertness, Sense Ambush, Reading Tracks, Tracking, Situational Awareness: Combat, Body Development, ap-

propriate Combat maneuvers, Languages, Gunnery skills, Interrogation, Marital Arts skills, Survival, Special Attack skills, Ambush, Silent Kill, Hiding, Stalking, First Aid, Technical/Trade • Vehicles skills, Weapon skills.

Outfitting Options

Weapons: Any

Armor: Special falar armor

Money: \$2,000

Background Options

Falaris get one background option.

Extra Languages: Oort (S5/W5), Tulgaran (S5/W5), Valiesian (S4/W4), Xatosian (S5/W5).

Extra Money: This is generally in the form of credits.

Special Items: All special items are of falar make.

Talents: Any appropriate talent.

Adolescent Development

Falar receive the following skills for adolescent development.

Skill	Ranks
Athletic • Brawn skill category	2
Athletic • Gymnastic skill category	1
Climbing skill	1
Awareness • Perceptions skill category	n/a
Alertness skill	2
Awareness • Senses skill category	2
Sense Awareness skill (Hearing)	2
Body Development skill category	n/a
Body Development skill	2
Communication skill category	1
Language skills	6
Lore • Academic	3
"Own" Culture Lore skill	3
Lore • General skill category	3
"Own" Region Lore skill	3
Martial Arts • Sweeps skill category	2
Wrestling skill	2
Outdoor • Animal skill category	1
Riding skill	1
Outdoor • Environment skill category	1
Scientific/Analytic skill categories (total)	6
choice of up to six skills	6
Special Attacks skill category	n/a
Claw attack skill	2
Subterfuge • Stealth skill category	4
Hiding	2
Stalking	4
Tech/Trade • General skill category	4
One-Handed Edged skill category	2
Hazzok	2
Hobby Ranks	10
Background Options	1
Talent Points	10



Interlude

INTERLUDE THREE

. . . Assault minus 00:00:31

The Thunderbolt shuddered as it launched clear of the *Revenge*. Mrrralff spun the fighter through his typical set of launch rolls. More habit than necessity, these rolls gave him a feel for the craft's response. They reminded him of the slight differences between his Thunderbolt and the simulator model. They resettled his reflexes, giving his body the tactile cues that told it "you're in space now, fight or die."

The sensors picked up the enemy fighters. Scent outputs released spore into his air supply. Five Wolverines. One Death Howl. He glanced down at the sensors. He was right.

Though the sensors were more accurate, he fought better when he could smell his enemy. He had placed the scent outputs into his fighter at the last refit.

The Wolverines opened fire on the *Revenge* behind him. Time to give them something to think about. "Save your torps," Mrrralff said to his wingman. "I'll use mine on the big dog."

Prrrl hissed his approval and opened fire on one the Wolverines. It began to dodge, attempting to break the lock.

Mrrralff indicated the Death Howl as his sensors began blaring the acquisition warnings. He fired all five torpedoes.

"Fox away."

The Death Howl immediately lost interest in targeting him. The acquisition sensors stopped blaring as it targeted the largest torpedo. With a blast of all six cannons, he vaporized it.

"Don't worry," he said, more for his sake than Prrrl's. "The little fish will get him."

The Death Howl dodged as the small, maneuverable torpedoes closed. He dropped decoys, tricking two of them into detonating. The third torpedo blew off his right weapons platform. The last one clipped his engine. The craft tumbled away. The smell of blood washed away the scent of the Death Howl.

"Splash pappa lion. Let's kill some babies. Fire at will."

Prrrl launched a torpedo.

"Fox one"

There was a burst of static and a blinding light as Prrrl disappeared in a ball of plasma. Mrrralff

hissed and dodged as he picked up a new scent. The scent he had assigned to . . .

He looked down at his sensor array.

"Claw One to *Revenge*. The surface to orbit cannon is still functional, I repeat, the SOC is still functional"

But the *Revenge* had entered ionization blackout.

Mrrralff continued to jig as the acquisition warnings blared. The SOC had him dead to rights. He could smell Prrrl's blood. The sensors weren't picking up an ejection beacon. His hair raised on the back of his neck.

The SOC was so powerful that, even in the minimal atmosphere this far away from the planet, the beam was visible. The blast fired by his right wing, leaving a glowing wake of particles in its path. He dodged again. His claws unsheathed.

I'm a sitting duck, he thought.

Typically, a pilot breaks a lock by out-maneuvering the weapon. That was impossible with a SOC. It wasn't like he could fire his brakes and let the planet go rushing past him.

The only thing that he had going for him was range. It took light a tenth of a second to travel to him from the planet. The sensors, based on non-locality physics, were instantaneous.

Alert. Dodge. Alert. Dodge. He was avoiding the attacks, but they would wear him down eventually. He felt a roar building in his chest.

The anger. The tension. The humiliation. They overwhelmed him. He snapped.

With a sudden move, he began burning toward the planet at maximum Gs. When he hit the ionization blackout, it probably would keep its lock. Its sensors were designed to lock on ionized craft.

That didn't matter to Mrrralff, all he wanted now was blood.

Alert. Dodge. Alert. Dodge. He weaved toward the planet in a mad lunge. The smell of blood wafted across his nostrils. Only four Wolverines left. Prrrl's last torpedo had taken one out.

The blasts were coming quicker. The lag was dwindling. Alert. Dodge. Alert. Dodge. Alert . . .

With the flaming explosion of his control systems, half his fighter evaporated. He roared his defiance as his ejection system fired and his head smashed against the panel. Then there was nothing but a red light and the smell of blood.

Assault plus 00:05:46 . . .



FIRST CONTACT



... It is strange, Karen. Here we are, on an alien world, populated by humans. I don't think I ever really believed all that talk about the Architects until we landed. I still can't get my mind around it. We're on a planet orbiting another star. Another star, Karen! It's amazing.

Things are going pretty much exactly the way we expected. I think it's going to be a long time before we convince these primitives that we're not gods. Oh, they say they believe, but they don't. We came from the heavens in a falling star. There are thousands of years of religious stigma we have to overcome. I don't think we ever will. Not in this generation. Not until we raise the first generation of kids into this planet's space age.

Our oort-built robots have set up automated factories. They're churning away happily, now, working on their pre-programmed plan to raise this primitive little world's technology base. The natives must spend four hours a day just watching them work.

You'd be amazed how many constants there are in the universe, Karen. Sure, the flora's wrong, but the fauna's really similar. And the technology seems so Earth-like. I'd swear we were standing outside a medieval city. Every time I go in, I feel like a catholic bishop, surrounded by the throbbing masses. But I suppose there are some constants in science. If you want to keep out your neighbor, you build a wall. If you want to make a melee weapon, sharpen a lever. The missile weapons are odd, though. I guess there's more than one good way to throw a rock.

It all begins with the autominers. They burrow deep into the surrounding mountains and begin chewing up and smelting ore. Meanwhile, other autofactories are cranking out plastics.

After this comes up to speed, our general purpose 'bots start building other, more specialized robots. These 'bots begin building the world's primary industrial complex. That's where we are now. Right near the end of Phase One.

Then we begin Phase Two. Phase Two involves cranking out prefab schools as quickly as possible, while the general purpose 'bots assemble more autominers, which send out more 'bots to build more autofactories. Then the process begins spreading worldwide.

We've begun educating the local populace from a makeshift school. It is a drop in the bucket, compared to the planetary population, but it's good practice. The automated factories are reproducing as fast as possible. Pretty soon we'll have schools for all those teachers that Earth's training and the droids we're building. Then we can start showing this little world what technology is . . .

—Manoj Kingsley, Attache, Inter-Planetary Gear-Up Corps

6.0 THE HUMANS

*"We are not now that strength which in old days
Moved earth and heaven;
that which we are, we are;
One equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.*

—Ulysses, Alfred, Lord Tennyson

6.1 OVERVIEW

Humans have managed to make themselves the primary motivating force in the interstellar community. Not because they are the most intelligent. The oorts are more intelligent. Not because they're the most violent. The falar are the most violent. Not even because they are the most prolific. The tular reproduce much more quickly.

The humans are so central to everything because of a dangerous mixture of impetuosity and charisma. If you want to end a war, ask a human. If you

want to start a war, ask a human. Humans proceed forward in a rush of eager hindsight, destroying or building with equal abandon. The thing that makes them so dangerous is their ability to stir up the other races, convincing them to follow a plan no one in their right minds would ever even consider. These are the humans, and it's a miracle they haven't gotten everyone killed . . .

6.2 PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Humans have good physical characteristics, slightly above the curve in all areas. They have a history of eugenics and tampering with their own code that has raised them slightly above the humans of old, but they have lost a bit of durability in the process, some through tampering, some through the luxuries of the modern age.

Evolutionary Considerations

Humans (*homo sapiens sapiens*) evolved from monkeys, or more precisely, from a common



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ancestor that monkeys and humans share. This is still more than readily apparent in their present form. No one can climb a tree like a human. No one can swing and flip and cavort with quite the same grace. Humans are the only race to have ever seriously developed gymnastics. It's second nature to them.

Humans also share an insatiable curiosity. Only a human would stick his hand into a hole, just to see if it got bit. This is what drove the humans to raise every other race to star faring technology. This is what constantly threatens sapient life. Most races consider it a wonder that the trait hasn't been weeded out of the gene pool.

Humans are cursorial hunters. They evolved by tracking prey day and night until it died. Because of this, the human body has evolved tremendous levels of endurance. A fit human can run all day without stopping for more than the shortest breaks. This has also probably driven their technological development. Monkey curiosity and cursorial attention spans have brought the humans a long way. Of course, the oorts brought them farther....

Humans are diurnal. They are omnivorous.

Build And Physiology

Humans average about 185 cm in height and 70 kg. They are nearly hairless, tending to have hair on their heads and, sometimes, faces. Many have a light covering of hair over their entire bodies. Others are completely hairless, without eyebrows or eyelashes.

HUMAN HEIGHT CHART

d100 (OE)	Human Male	Human Female
less than (-169)	154 cm	139 cm
(-169)-(-160)	156 cm	141 cm
(-159)-(-155)	158 cm	143 cm
(-154)-(-145)	160 cm	145 cm
(-144)-(-135)	162 cm	147 cm
(-134)-(-85)	164 cm	149 cm
(-84)-(-80)	166 cm	151 cm
(-79)-(-75)	168 cm	153 cm
(-74)-(-70)	170 cm	155 cm
(-69)-(-65)	172 cm	157 cm
(-64)-(-55)	174 cm	159 cm
(-54)-(-45)	176 cm	161 cm
(-44)-5	178 cm	163 cm
6-10	180 cm	165 cm
11-25	182 cm	167 cm
26-50	184 cm	169 cm
51-75	186 cm	171 cm
76-90	188 cm	173 cm
91-145	190 cm	175 cm
146-155	192 cm	177 cm
156-165	194 cm	179 cm
166-170	196 cm	181 cm
171-175	198 cm	183 cm
176-180	200 cm	185 cm
181-185	202 cm	187 cm
186-240	204 cm	189 cm
241-250	206 cm	191 cm
251-260	208 cm	193 cm
261-265	210 cm	195 cm
266-275	212 cm	197 cm
more than 275	214 cm	199 cm

Humans are humanoid in form, naturally, and have two hands with four non-opposable and one opposable digit on each. They have vestigial digits on their feet as well, though an occasional human still has an opposable toe. They are exclusively without tails.

Coloring

Humans tend to run a wide range of earth tones in coloration. Tan and brown are the most common colors of skin, though yellow, caucasian, red, and orange tinting is not unknown. Hair runs the gamut from yellow to black. Though earth tones are the rule, rarely will the color green be present anywhere but in the eyes.

Humans are a particularly diverse lot, probably because of the lack of hair. Human pigmentation serves the purpose of regulating the effects of sunlight. Unlike other races, it has very little to do with hunting or camouflage.

Endurance

Humans are of average endurance. They receive a +2 bonus to their constitutions, and no bonuses to their exhaustion points. They must sleep six hours a night and can only go a single day without sleep.



Part II Humans

HUMAN WEIGHT CHART						
d100 (OE)	Human (m)			Human (f)		
	sm	md	lg	sm	md	lg
less than (-169)	33	37	40	25	27	30
(-169)-(-165)	34	38	42	26	29	31
(-164)-(-160)	36	40	44	27	30	33
(-159)-(-155)	37	41	46	28	31	34
(-154)-(-145)	39	43	47	29	32	36
(-144)-(-135)	40	45	49	30	34	37
(-134)-(-85)	42	47	51	32	35	39
(-84)-(-80)	44	49	54	33	37	40
(-79)-(-75)	46	51	56	34	38	42
(-74)-(-70)	48	53	58	36	40	44
(-69)-(-65)	50	55	61	37	41	45
(-64)-(-55)	52	57	63	39	43	47
(-54)-(-45)	54	60	66	40	45	49
(-44)-5	56	62	68	42	47	51
6-10	60	66	73	45	50	55
11-25	65	72	79	49	54	59
26-75	72	80	88	54	60	66
76-90	78	86	95	58	65	71
91-95	82	92	101	62	69	76
96-145	86	95	105	64	71	79
146-155	87	97	107	66	73	80
156-165	89	99	109	67	74	82
166-170	91	101	111	68	76	83
171-175	93	103	113	70	77	85
176-180	95	105	116	71	79	87
181-185	97	107	118	72	80	88
186-240	98	109	120	74	82	90
241-250	100	112	123	75	84	92
251-260	102	114	125	77	85	94
261-265	104	116	128	78	87	96
266-270	107	118	130	80	89	98
271-275	109	121	133	82	91	100
more than 275	111	123	136	83	92	102

Life Span

Humans have a 255 standard day gestation period. They are generally born a single child at a time, though twins, or even triplets are possible, especially if fertility drugs are used.

Human children begin walking around the age of two and begin speaking about the same time. They hit puberty at somewhere around ten or twelve standard years. They are considered adults after twenty standard years, mostly because of educational considerations.

Humans live, on average, 180-200 years with competent medical attention. As with all races, age categories should be halved without advanced medicine, quartered without any medicine at all.

Senility and extreme frailty are the most common symptoms of age. Pigmentation fades and bones weaken. Sometimes the mind goes first, leaving them in a child-like state. Sometimes, the body goes first.

Age categories are as follows: Old: 120-140. Very Old: 141-150. Venerable: 151-160. Ancient: 161-170. Very Ancient: 180+. Stat loss is 1d5+1.

Resistance

Humans receive no special bonus to resistance.

Special Abilities

Humans have no notable special abilities or flaws.

6.3 CULTURE

Human culture has, for the most part, defined the ISC. The oort's sense of community would never have adapted to the many disparate races of the ISC.

Clothing And Decoration

Humans are notorious clotheshorses. Fashion trends tend to include both tops and bottoms, and during the current time of war, hemlines have dropped and necklines have risen, as is typical of wartime.

Humans tend to wear jewelry. Rings and earrings are most common, though bracelets and necklaces are valued as well. From time to time, jeweled belts or anklets will be worn. Jewelry tends to come in the form of precious metals and gems.

Humans, being one of the few races to wear clothes, are the most fashion conscious. Fashions tend to change too quickly for most people to follow, but with the modern age of instantaneous technology, fashion avoids the intense regional differences that one might expect in an interstellar community. This is not to say that individual worlds don't have their own fashion trends, but when a new fad hits big, it sweeps the interstellar community at the speed of non-locality.





Fears And Inabilities

Some would say humans are notoriously fearless, but others would say that reckless was a better word. At any rate, humans, as a race, fear nothing more or less than the instincts bred by evolution would demand.

Lifestyle

Humans tend to live fairly "normal" lives. There is an inclination toward obsessive behavior in humans, probably due to their origin as cursorial hunters. Humans will often become so addicted to a profession, hobby, or substance that they forsake all else.

Humans are great producers. They tend to pursue any projects at a breakneck pace, deriding any members of their species who work with a more relaxed attitude, calling them "lazy" or "useless."

Marriage And Family Pattern

Monkey curiosity and obsessive behavior makes true monogamy difficult for humans. Some cultures explore polygamy, but this rubs against human territorialism. Generally, they practice a limited monogamy, marrying for several years, then divorcing and parting on amicable (or not so amicable) terms. They have developed elaborate marriage contract laws over the years, to compensate for this fact.

Children stay with one parent or the other (or both, in rare instances) until adulthood. Custody of the children, in the event of divorce, is handled on a case-by-case basis. A common result is for the male children to go with the father and the female with the mother.

Religion

Humans have many faiths, like all races. There are some common elements, perhaps arising from evolutionary considerations. Humans tend to move away from polytheistic beliefs as their culture progresses, settling on a non-theistic or monotheistic view. Most religions are dictated by an initial prophet or savior, who outlines the precepts of the faith. Because of the human bent towards the territorial, these men are often slaughtered for their dissenting views, cementing their religion firmly in their followers. Of course most humans believe this is the same savior or prophet, bringing the word of God to humans everywhere. Many non-humans have hypothesized that this is some sort of ingrained response to authority built in by the Architects. Others point out that this follows the "Single Charismatic Monkey" model of culture that humans gravitate toward.

6.4 OTHER FACTORS

There are many other factors to consider. These are important in role playing a human.

Demeanor

Humans are friendly and outgoing. They evolved as pack hunters and this ability to lead and follow a group into hell is evident even now. Humans are not known for their great foresight. A group of humans quickly develops a mob mentality, ready to do things they wouldn't do individually. This tendency has been likened unto lemmings by other races.

Humans are charismatic. They can readily convince other races to follow them in their impetuous endeavors. This makes them very dangerous.

Language

Humans speak a human tongue that is a conglomeration of many human languages. This is mainly sound based, with some tonal qualities. It is designed to be easily spoken by other races as well, though generally a member of another race will just speak Species Standard.

Starting Languages: Species Standard (S8/W4), Human (S5/W0).

Allowed Adolescent Development: Falar (S7/W7), Species Standard (S10/W10), Human (S10/W10), Oort (S8/W8), Tugaran (S7/W7).

Prejudices

The one racial hurdle humans have actually conquered is their own prejudice. The racial riots of Earth seem to have been forsaken by the human race as a whole. Once the disparate human cultures of the interstellar community merged, most prejudice problems fell by the wayside. Most human prejudices are ideological in nature, and vary from system to system.

Professions

Humans can be of any profession. They tend to have a slightly lower percentage of Psychics than most races.

Special Skills

Everyman: Choice of five influence skills.

Restricted: None.

Standard Hobby Skills

Humans tend to be jacks-of-all-trades. There are certain types of skills, combat for example, that are rarely taught to children.

Hobby skills: Artistic • Active skills, Artist • Passive skills, Athletic Games, Jumping, Sprinting, Swimming, Athletic • Gymnastics skills, Alertness, Locate Hidden, Direction Sense, Body Development, Languages, Speed Reading, Crafts Skills, Duping, Leadership, Trading, Lore skills, Survival, Basic Math, Research, Scientific • Specialized skills, Computer Technology, Cybernetic Technology, Electronic Technology, Mechanical Technology, Musical Technology, Sensor Technology, Hide Items, Hiding, Stalking, Begging, First Aid, Streetwise.

The Individual As A PC

It doesn't take a lot to send a human out adventuring. As a race, they are rash and impulsive. In addition, they suffer from the curse of monkey curiosity. This coupled with their evolution as cursorial hunters makes them prone to pursue a problem until it's dead, no matter the cost.

6.5 OUTFITTING OPTIONS

Humans are outfitted like most races. There is little special to consider.

Armor

Humans may begin play with any armor of human design. The war and the privateering laws have made military grade armor available to all that can



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afford it. Powered armor is the only exception; this is still not sold openly.

Money

Humans begin play with \$2,000.

Weapons

A human can begin play with pretty much any man-portable weapon. The privateering laws have loosened the restrictions on military grade arms.

6.6 BACKGROUND OPTIONS

Humans begin play with six background options. They can spend them in the following manner:

Extra Languages

In addition to the allowed adolescent development, humans can choose, at the cost of one background option, from the following: Kagoth (S6/W6), Valiesian (S5/W5), Xatosian (S4/W4).

Extra Money

Extra money is in the form of standard credits. It could, at the GM's approval, be taken in the form of stocks or other valuables.

Special Items

Any special equipment should be of human make. Barring that, it should at least be designed for human build.

6.7 TALENTS

Human characters may choose from any of the talents in *Future Law*. The GM should look through these options and select the ones that are appropriate to his game (it is suggested that Options 1, 2, or 5 be used unless something warrants otherwise). The classification of the talent/ flaw is given in brackets after the description of the talent/ flaw (also included are the appropriate point costs if optional rules are used).

Option 1: By spending one background option, the character may make a d100 (not open-ended) roll a consult the chart below.

Option 2: A player may select one of the talents from the chart below, but must pay the appropriate number of background options (as listed in *Future Law*), or talent points.

Option 3: As Option 2 above, except that the cost is lowered by one (if background options are spent), or five (if talent points are spent). This represents the talent being specific to humans.

Option 4: As with options 1 or 2, except that any race may receive these talents, at double cost (to represent the fact that the talents/ flaws are specific to humans).

Option 5: Humans can take the talents Organizer and Mediator for one background option each. They may also select Non-Psionic, Organizer, and Mediator for one background option.

HUMAN TALENT & FLAW CHART

- | | |
|-------|---|
| 01-11 | Curious (Flaw): You are curious, even for a monkey. This leads to some ridiculously stupid acts on your part, like opening things, which say "Do Not Open," and walking down corridors labeled, "Enter at Your Own Risk." You're just dying to figure everything out. You're willing to go to any end, even your own, to figure out a puzzle. Whenever presented with an opportunity to satisfy your curiosity, you must roll d100 (open-ended), add 40, and subtract triple your SD bonus. If the result is over 100, then you must take the opportunity. [MINOR: -10 Points] |
| 12-22 | Impulsive (Flaw): You're impulsive, even for a monkey. You tend to act first and think later. You don't wait for planning or organization. You just act. You prefer to ask forgiveness, not permission. You should try very hard to role play this flaw. Whenever presented with an opportunity to act, you must roll d100 (open-ended), add 40, and subtract triple your SD bonus. If the result is over 100, then you must act before you think. [MINOR: -10 Points] |
| 23-28 | Non-Psionic: You are completely dead to the powers of psions. Not only are you unable to develop psionic skills, but also you receive a -50 penalty to all RRs made versus psions. [MAJOR: -15 Points] |
| 29-39 | Born Leader: You have the monkey's own charm. You are foolish, and reckless and dashing as all monkeys, but your recklessness is infectious. All influence skills are Everyman for you, except for Leadership, which is Occupational. [MINOR: 10 Points] |
| 40-56 | Mediator: You have a monkey's charm and the ability to soothe the most savage clash. This makes you a born diplomat. All influence skills are Everyman to you. [MINOR: 7 Points.] |



57-78 **Organizer:** The human attention span has transferred well into you. You receive Administration and Military Organization, plus any appropriate Technical/Trade • Professional skill, as chosen by the GM, as Occupational.
[MINOR: 5 Points.]

79-100 **Tactician:** Monkey curiosity, cursorial hunting and the animal instinct to kill have made an interesting blend in you. You have the curiosity to consider many different paths, wanting to try and simulate them all. You have the attention span to attack a problem with savage ferocity. You have the taste for war. These three things combine to make you a deadly and masterful tactician. Tactics and Tactical Games are considered Occupational skills to you.
[MINOR: 5 Points]



6.8 HUMAN TRAINING PACKAGES

Humans can select any training package. Because of oort saturation of the technical fields, however, they tend to shy away from them.

Of all training packages, humans' are probably the most approachable by other races. It should take nothing more than a back-story to justify taking these as another race.

ATTACHÉ... (V)

This character is trained by the diplomatic corps. Technically a diplomat, this position is as important to ISC intelligence as it is to politics.

Quote: I have diplomatic immunity, I don't have to worry about parking tickets!

Time to Acquire: 48 Months

Starting Money: Normal

Cost: None

Special:

Diplomatic immunity	40
Useful contact in diplomatic corps	80
Useful contact in diplomatic corps	60
Useful contact in free world government	70
Useful espionage contact in Jeronan government..	30
Useful espionage contact in Jeronan government..	10
Small, disguised recording device	100

Category or Skill	# of Ranks
Awareness • Searching skill category	3
Observation	1
Surveillance	1
Communication skill category	6
choice of up to three spoken languages	3
choice of up to three written languages	3
Influence skill category	2
Bribery	1
Diplomacy	1
Interrogation	1
Lore • Academic skill category	1
Culture Lore (Foreign culture)	1
Lore • General skill category	1
Region Lore (Foreign region)	1

Professional Qualifier: Human with 5 ranks in influence skills. [-2 to Cost]

Stat Gains: None

COST BY PROFESSION

Academic	21	Psychic	27
Bystander	26	Recon	29
Criminal	24	Scientist	24
Entertainer	24	Soldier	30
Explorer	30	Technician	29
Pilot	26		



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ENTREPRENEUR (L)

The entrepreneur has dedicated his life to acquiring personal wealth. He is a private businessman who thrives on the thrill of building a business from nothing, or saving one near bankruptcy.

Time to Acquire: 70 Months

Starting Money: x5

Cost: None

Special:

€100,000 in assets. Can liquidate in 6 months	50
Close friends with another rich entrepreneur	60
Patents and rights paying €50,000 annually	40
Patents and rights paying €20,000 annually	20
Favors from a politician	30
Renown as a shrewd businessman	0

Category or Skill	# of Ranks
Influence skill category	5
Bribery	1
Diplomacy	1
Propaganda	1
Trading	2
Lore • Technical skill category	4
Trading Lore	4
Science/Analytical • Spec skill category	n/a
Finance	1

Professional Qualifier: at least two ranks of finance. [-3 to Cost]

Lifestyle Skills: Trading Lore

Stat Gains: Intuition

COST BY PROFESSION

Academic	27	Psychic	28
Bystander	28	Recon	30
Criminal	29	Scientist	30
Entertainer	26	Soldier	30
Explorer	29	Technician	32
Pilot	29		

6.9 NOTEWORTHY PLANETS

These noteworthy planets were discussed in *Spacemaster: Privateers*. A little more discussion is warranted, however.

Alarus (Mu Fornacis) – Human

Galactic (-3.235, -3.744, -15.083)

Alarus began gear-up in 3 YC. Always a peaceful world (as human worlds go) the gear-up progressed without incident. This was before Helios had geared-up itself, and so the oorts handled most of this project.

In 40 YC, Alarus voted to join the ISC. They were brought into the fold efficiently, and have been good members ever since.

Alarus has long been a source of ISC diplomats and traders. The *Alarian School of Xeno-Psychology* is thought to be the finest school of its type in the ISC.

Alarus is a standard free enterprise democracy, like the ISC. Its industrial base is geared toward production of profit more than product, and it's the heart of the ISC banking and stock market.

Alarus III is a temperate planet with many resorts. It's a garden planet.

Alarus has kept out of war production, and the building of weapons has never been high on its priorities. Now that it's staring at the front, this is changing.

Astrilairon

(Psi Serpentis A & B) – Human

Galactic (+14.486, +2.477, +13.216)

A human binary system, Astrilairon is fairly unique. Its inhabited world orbits between the primary and its dwarf partner (they are 61 AU's apart). The secondary is fairly dim, however, so the nocturnal cycle is not terribly affected.

Astrilairon began gear-up in 260 YC. Their technology was high to begin with, and the process was completed in 270. Astrilairon didn't need any prodding to join the ISC. They could see how close they were to a natural aggressor.

This served the ISC well. The Astrilairon shipyards were completed in 275 YC. The naval fleet was moved there. All border patrols began going in and out of Astrilairon.

This system was beautifully positioned. It was in the position to produce major hardware, and yet was considered to be out of position for a first wave attack. In case of invasion, Astrilairon was to be the planet of choice for counterattacks.

In 284 YC, lulled by the sense of security borne of Bretog's coup, Astrilairon did not think much of the disaster that took out their primary listening post. It wasn't until the Jeronan fleet hit the system that their folly was realized.

Astrilairon has two inhabited worlds, planets III and IV. IV has been the product of terraforming efforts by the primary population for almost 100 years. It is a marginal world, and most races need breath masks and heavy winter gear to make their way outside the domes.

III is a tropical and desert dominated planet. It is terribly hot, and only the darkest strains of humans are completely comfortable there.

ISC Naval Headquarters was moved to Astrilairon III in 275 (not one of the brightest moves in ISC history. It has since been moved to Hassus and then to Stands the Wall with the ISC government.

Astrilairon was once a free enterprise democracy. Now it is a police state.

Ceirnig (Psi(5) Aurigae)

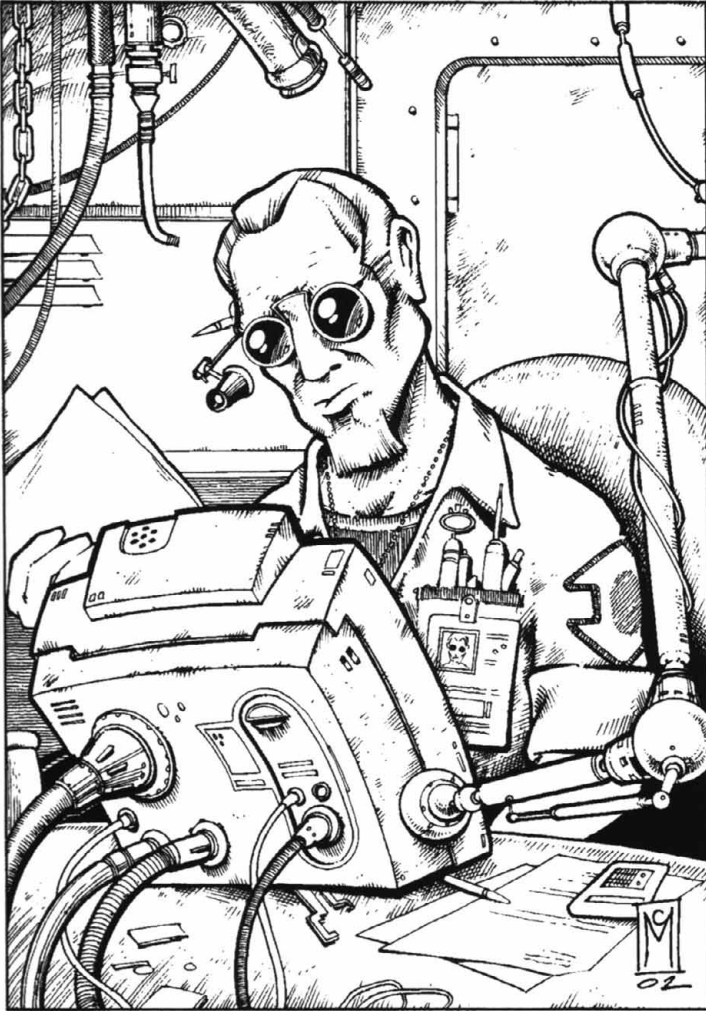
– Human Free World

Galactic (-14.275, +1.914, +4.548)

Point one parsecs outside of the core words, Ceirnig had great hopes placed on it for many years. When human activists would attempt to widen the borders of the ISC, Ceirnig was the world they would use as an example. Such knowledge and culture. Just out of grasp.

In 256, when the border was expanded, human gear-up crews fought for the right to tackle Ceirnig. In 260, they were completed and the Ceirnigan government collapsed.

It did not collapse from techno-shock, like most cultures. In fact most oorts put Ceirnig within years of discovering *ftl*. In fact, most people wondered



why they had never discovered their Oort listening post.

Little did everyone know, they had.

When the Ceirnigans discovered there were aliens in the universe, they disabled the tachyon rig on the listening post in their "oort cloud." They then downloaded all the data they could and left, leaving no evidence they had ever been there and sabotaging the computer, so all logs were destroyed.

The ISC repaired this damage when they discovered it and thought nothing of Ceirnig's rapid development.

The cause of the 260 collapse was xenophobia, not techno-shock. Little did anyone know just how xenophobic were these people. It was a miracle they hid it through gear-up.

In 265, a ruling oligarchy cemented control of Ceirnig. They told the ISC diplomats to leave in no uncertain terms.

Since then, relations have been cold. The oligarchy acts as if the entire war is an ISC plot to get them to welcome an ISC invasion fleet. Any ISC ship entering their space is turned around without appeal. Damaged ships are confiscated and their crews sent out on the first trade ship.

There is trade between Ceirnig and the ISC, but it is conducted solely by humans. Other races are not welcome.

Ceirneg V, the prime inhabited world, is a temperate world. It is rich in minerals and all resources.

Helios (Sol) **- Human Racial Seat**

Galactic (-0.000, +0.000, +0.000)

This is thought to be the first system to make it to its own oort cloud after the oorts (see above). It was here on the fourth planet where the oort listening post was first detected.

Helios III (Terra) has been the racial seat of humanity ever since. The government, located in Geneva, Switzerland, houses thousands of politicians and bureaucrats, all bent on making certain that human interests are attended to.

As of mid 286, this world is under Jeronan control. With it goes one of the strongest industrial bases in the ISC.

Helios III has 12.9 billion inhabitants. Helios IV has 1.3 billion, and has been terraformed to the point where winter gear is all that's necessary to walk the surface.

Paernage (Bonner Durchmusterung +64458) **- Human**

Galactic (-19.847, +14.381, +4.918)

Paernage began gear-up in 260 YC. It is in the final stages now.

Paernage became very important for the war effort early in the war. There are many planets, asteroids and comets in this system that are important sources of minerals and chemicals. The chemicals in this system alone are the source for much of the high-tech demolitions manufactured in the ISC.

When war broke out, the ISC met with the Paernage interim system-wide government. Though a loose cooperative of national leaders from Paernage III, these representatives had all the clout necessary to give the ISC whatever they needed.

They offered carte blanche permission to mine anywhere in the system other than Paernage III for the duration of the war. They asked for nothing in return.

Since then, the ISC has built several space stations that manufacture munitions. This is a very crucial planet as far as the war effort is concerned.

Most people consider it a given that Paernage will join the ISC when gear-up is completed. It has a population of 801 million.

Teirnas (Wolf 401) - Human

Galactic (-4.172, -8.357, +22.530)

Technically a binary system, the companion is 300 AU's out and dim. Teirnas was well along in its technological development when the ISC was expanded in 256 YC. It was therefore one of the first geared-up.

Teirnas completed gear-up in 264 YC and joined the ISC. Due to its fairly unusual culture, it became very important to the ISC.

Teirnas IV is a cool, temperate world. It had a single imperial monarchy when the ISC began gear-up. It retains this hereditary government to this day. Nothing seems likely to threaten this. Everyone on the planet loves the imperial family.



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The planet consists of seven kingdoms, which make up this empire. These kingdoms have never gotten along, and alliances and diplomatic alignments change, sometimes on an hourly basis.

This makes Teirnas one of the biggest hotbeds of intrigue in the universe. Almost completely without psychic abilities, its gene pool seems to excel in other areas. In fact, the xatosians have been banned from general immigration into the system. That would ruin all the fun.

Once Teirnas joined the ISC, it did not take long before the royal houses each sent an espionage delegation to the various ISC Intelligence Agencies.

Few details are known about the following five-year chaos. When it was over, the ISC intelligence agencies were almost completely under control of Teirnas nationals.

ISC intelligence has not suffered under this coup. Teirnas intelligence personnel are consummately professional.

Teirnas IV has an estimated 6.4 billion people.

Tuscilon (Beta Comae Berenices) – Human

Galactic (+0.488, +0.459, +8.320)

Tuscilon II is a barren, hot world. Not quite a full desert, few areas have enough precipitation for more than a semi-arid classification.

Tuscilon began gear-up in 2 YC, under oort direction. It joined the ISC in 40 YC.

Tuscilon II has never been a valuable world. The only thing it produced was people. At 13.6 billion inhabitants, it has been a great supplier of manpower to the ISC, both for labor and military purposes.

Tuscilon II is a gerontocracy. The oldest of every community, if found fit of mind, serve on a leadership council led by their oldest member. This carries through all levels of government.

Tuscilon fell after Helios. Now it is a source of Jeronan slave labor.

HUMANS RACIAL SUMMARY

Nickname: *PC:* Monkey; *Non-PC:* Curious George or George.

Humans are rash and curious. They tend to be one of the primary motivators in known space, mainly because of their charisma and their ability to charm others into following their damn-fool crusades.

Physical Characteristics

Evolution: Humans evolved from monkey stock. They are cursorial hunters and omnivores. They are diurnal.

Build: Males average 80 kg, females average 60 kg.

Coloring: Mostly earth tones.

Endurance: Average. They are however, cursorial hunters, so a fit human can conceivably run all day.

Height: Males average 185 cm; Females, 170 cm.

Lifespan: 200 years with proper medical attention.

Resistance: Normal.

Special Abilities: None.

Culture

Clothing & Decoration: Large range of fashions. Humans are notorious for their fashion trends.

Fears & Inabilities: Some would say humans are fearless, but they are merely foolish.

Lifestyle: Basically normal. Humans tend to be compulsive about following a task to completion.

Marriage Pattern: Limited monogamy, lasting until one mate tires of the other.

Religion: Most human religions center around a single, charismatic prophet.

Other Factors

Demeanor: Friendly and outgoing. Their charm makes their foolishness contagious.

Languages: *Starting Languages:* Species Standard (S8/W4), Human (S5/W0). *Allowed Adolescent Development:* Falar (S7/W7), Species Standard (S10/W10), Human (S10/W10), Oort (S8/W8), Tularan (S7/W7).

Prejudices: Little. This is the one racial flaw humans have managed to overcome.

Professions: Any. Fewer psychics than other races.

Training Packages: Any. However, they tend to acknowledge oorts to be better at science.

Special Skills: *Everyman:* Choice of five influence skills; *Restricted:* None.

Standard Hobby Skills: Artistic • Active skills, Artist • Passive skills, Athletic Games, Jumping, Sprinting, Swimming, Athletic • Gymnastics skills, Alertness, Locate Hidden, Direction Sense, Body Development, Languages, Speed Reading, Crafts Skills, Duping, Leadership, Trading, Lore skills, Survival, Basic Math, Research, Scientific • Specialized skills, Computer Technology, Cybernetic Technology, Electronic Technology, Mechanical Technology, Musical Technology, Sensor Technology, Hide Items, Hiding, Stalking, Begging, First Aid, Streetwise.

Outfitting Options

Weapons: Any of human design.

Armor: Any of human design.

Money: <2,000

Background Options

Humans get six background options.

Extra Languages: Kagoth (S6/W6), Valiesian (S5/W5), Xatosian (S4/W4).

Extra Money: Generally in the form of standard credits.

Special Items: Should be of human make.

Talents: No special restrictions.



Part II
Humans

Background Options:
6

Stat Bonuses:

Ag: +2
Co: +2
Me: +2
Re: +2
SD: +2
Em: +2
In: +2
Pr: +2
Qu: +2
St: +2

RR Mods:

Poison: +0
Disease: +0
Fear: +0
Psions: +0

Body Dev.

Progression:
0•6•5•2•1

MP Dev.

Progression:
0•7•6•5•4

Soul

Departure:
11 rounds

Recovery

Multiplier:
0.9 times

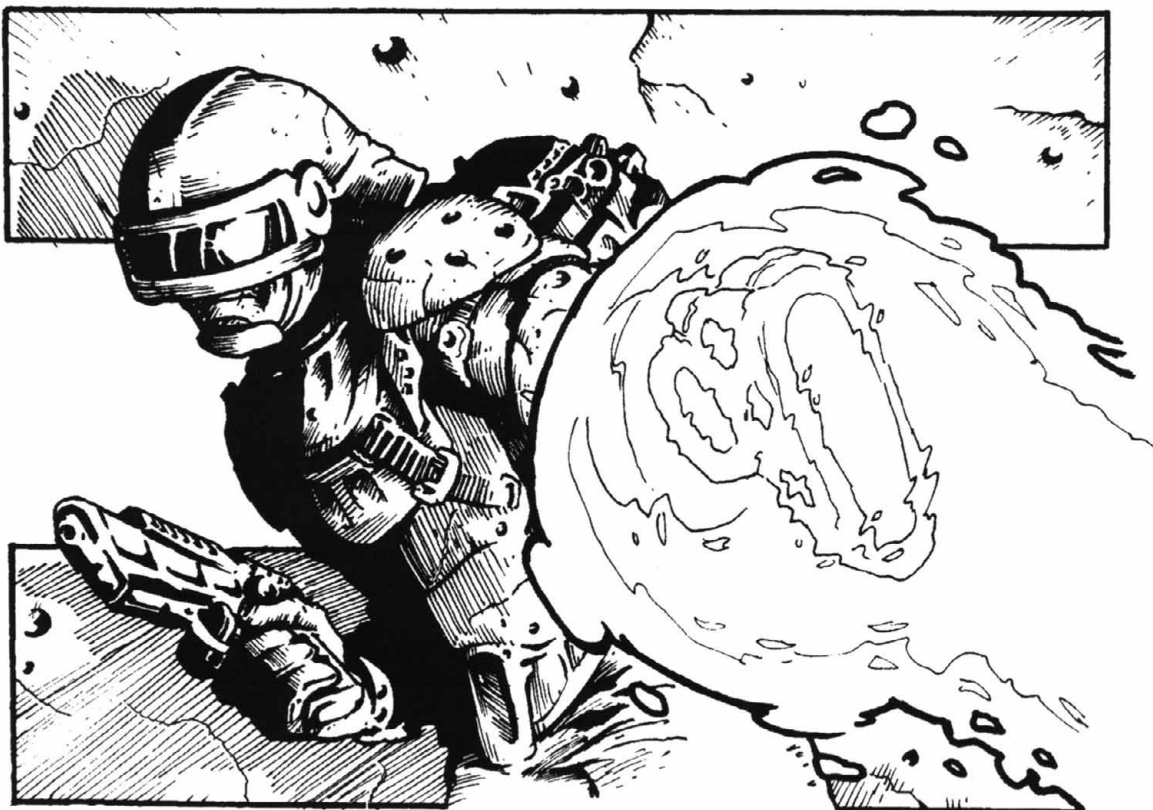
Race Type:

2

Adolescent Development

Humans receive the following skills for adolescent development.

Skill	Ranks
Athletic • Brawn skill category	1
Athletic • Endurance skill category	1
Swimming skill	1
Athletic • Gymnastics skill category	1
Climbing skill	1
Awareness • Perceptions skill category	n/a
Alertness skill	1
Awareness • Searching skill category	1
Body Development skill category	n/a
Body Development skill	2
Communications skill category	8
Language skills	10
Lore • Academic skill category	3
“Own” Culture Lore skill	3
Lore • General skill category	3
“Own” Region Lore skill	3
Outdoor • Environment skill category	1
Scientific skill categories	10 (total)
choice of up to ten skills	10 (total)
Subterfuge • Stealth skill category	2
Hiding	1
Technical • General skill category	3
choice of up to two skills	2
Technical • Vocational skill category	n/a
choice of up to two skills	2
Hobby Ranks	10
Background Options	6
Talent Points	55





INTERLUDE FOUR

... Assault plus 00:19:23

"The best laid plans of mice and men go astray."

"What was that, Captain?" Sir Krillian asked from behind him. Even though Mitchell was a Lt. Colonel, old-school etiquette stated he was addressed as a naval captain as long as they were on the ship.

Mitchell turned and looked at the knight, resplendent in his silvered armor. He smiled at the tulgar. The tulgar nodded back.

"Let's meet the others."

They made their way back through the ship, still hissing and settling. He hoped the old girl would get them back into space.

He came around the corner into the main recreation area. The crew was there, suited up in armor. Ready.

"Hummer?"

The little frisbee of a robot flew into a more visible position. It hovered there above the crowd.

"What's our status?"

"The master can get the ship operational in fifty-eleven minutes."

"Is that a firm number?"

"There is a 5% estimated margin of error."

"Alright. Everyone, get ready to deploy. There's been a change of plan. Sir Krillian, your primary goal is now to take out the last remaining surface to orbit cannon. It seems the *Rossiter* left us in a bit of a pinch."

"The lions?" Clemmons asked. He was busy having a series of horrible burns treated by the Doc.

"Prrrl is dead. Mrrralff seems to have reentered in his ejection pod."

"It'll be done, sir," Krillian said.

"Clemmons, you fit to fight?"

"Yes, sir."

"No, he isn't," Fooluph said. "I can't believe he's even standing. I won't have time to fix him up before it's time."

"I can do it, Captain."

Mitchell looked hard at the man. His arm covered in third degree burns and he still wanted to be the *go to man*. Damn him, but how did he do it?

"Alright, you're still in. The insect can keep you running if you break down."

"Captain," Wild asked.

"Yes?"

"If The SOC took down Prrrl and Mrrralff, doesn't that mean that there is a fighter screen coming to get us?"

Mitchell put on his most charming monkey smile.

"So what's your point?"

Assault plus 00:35:20

Krrralff lead his flight through re-entry. The two ISC cowards, hiding behind their torpedoes, had been vanquished by the mighty Imperial ground cannon. Now the inferior creatures were on the planetary surface. Sitting ducks.

The lions were all dead. It was time for the leopards to save the day.

"Flight Leader, I'm picking up a group of soldiers on the ridge ahead. Beyond is the downed ship."

"What are the soldiers doing?"

"Fleeing, like the cowards they are."

"Let's buzz them as we go by. Put the fear of God into them."

"Her name be praised."

"The ship is the target. Accelerate to Mach 5."

Assault plus 00:38:10

"Lt. Colonel?"

Mitchell looked over at Fooluph. They had dug in when they first made out the fighters on their scanners. He just hoped that they were far enough away from the ridge.

"Yes, Major?"

"They're coming this way."

Mitchell nodded and smashed one of the hideous biting insects that plagued the jungles of this world. He looked back at his scanner.

"The snare set, Clemmons?" he asked over the comm.

"Fire in the hole, sir."

"Alright, grab your people and move out."

Assault plus 00:41:28

Krrralff came in low, watching the jungle shatter in his sonic boom. The ridge loomed in front of him. After that, they would have a clear shot at the ship.

"Shouldn't we try to kill the soldiers?" his wingman asked.

"With that monkey leading them?" The *Revenge* was well known to Imperial intelligence. "Have you ever tried to dig a monkey out of the jungle?"

"Oh."

"After we destroy the ship, we can kill them at our leisure."

Assault plus 00:43:35

Mitchell dug in as the fighters approached. He held the detonator in his hand. A little closer. A little closer.

Mitchell hit the detonator, then quivered as the sonic booms of the fighters shook him to his very bowels. He crouched in pain.

The jungle exploded in the sonic boom of the fighters. Trees, large and thick and full of sap, cracked and fell. Branches shattered into splinters. Leaves and sap rained upon them.

It was thirty seconds before his head cleared. He looked up to see Fooluph running a medscanner over him. The oort said something Mitchell couldn't make out.

"WHAT!!!!?????", he screamed, barely hearing himself.

Fooluph just gave him a thumbs up and moved on with his scanner. Over to the left, Mitchell could see the bear checking people on the other side.

He lay back in the undergrowth. For a moment, it was all out of his hands.

Assault plus 00:44:22

Krrralff was grinning as he crested the ridge. He was still grinning when all hell exploded.

The ridge disintegrated underneath him, turning into a ball of expanding plasma. The shock wave crashed into the bottom of his fighter, swatting it like a fly.



Interlude

At mach one, the explosion would have been troublesome. At mach five, low to the ground, it was the very hand of God.

He fought the controls as his fighter tumbled upwards, spinning out of control. Only his reflexes and years of training allowed him to get control before he splashed into the jungle canopy.

He evened out five meters over the treetops. He checked his people. Only his wingman had survived.

"Tricky little monkey," the wingman growled.

"We'll get them in a minute. Take up a hovering position on the opposite side of the ship. Then we can blast it at our leisure."

They backed off their speed as they approached the *Revenge*. His wingman spun around the ship as he hovered on his lifters and got his targeting lock. Then he opened fire.

The *Revenge* had its screens up. He was causing them to overheat when his wingman took up position and began firing. It would only be a matter of time before . . .

He was startled when all the ship's turrets swung on his wingman. He began to move when the acquisition warning blared and he saw the missile bays firing, but it was too late.

As the missile passed, exploding, through what was once his torso, his last thought was, *Damn mon* . . .

Assault plus 00:47:04

Hummer cheered as he hopped around in the air on his little fan engine. Data spun through his comm circuit from Tuluph's other droids. They had won.

"Lt. Colonel?" Hummer asked on the open comm.

"YES?" the Lt. Colonel was yelling, probably because his ears were still overloaded.

"All fighters splashed."

"GOOD JOB, HUMMER. DISCONNECT FROM THE CONSOLES AND STAND BY."

Hummer disconnected from the ship. He would have never jacked in when the ship was hooked into the ISC nets; that would mean instant death. Here,

behind enemy lines, on communications blackout, it was just barely safe.

He began moving back to the engine room. The first Wolverine had probably caused damage while they were waiting for the second one to get into position.

Assault plus 01:40:22

"How did you know the Wolverines would pass over the ridge?" Fooluph asked as they humped through the jungle. He was terrified. How had Mitchell ever convinced him that this was a good idea?

"Cat psychology. They had to play with their food as much as possible. It's not often all the lions are dead and they get to be in charge."

Fooluph thought about that as they moved through the jungle.

"Do you think Krillian will take out the SOC?"

"Of course he will, just not until we're in position." Mitchell's smile was reassuring. Fooluph wished he could be that confident. But then again, Mitchell had never let them down, and he seemed so sure.

"How can you be that confident?"

The edge came off Mitchell's smile.

"The only thing more dangerous than an angry lion is a wolf with a cause. He'll take it out if he has to drive right into the damn thing."

"Oh."

Mitchell patted Fooluph on the shoulder and beamed a smile. "What, you want to live forever?"

"It would be nice."

"Look, we're on an alien world behind enemy lines. The worst has happened, and yet we're still on top. What could be more wonderful than the challenge, the *epic* challenge of the whole thing? Just we few. We proud few."

"I suppose it will make a good story."

"A good story? You won't have to pay for a drink for years!"

Fooluph smiled. Maybe Mitchell was right. Were heroes made from oorts like him? He checked his gear and moved forward with a purpose.

Assault plus 02:02:18 . . .



FIRST CONTACT



May 21st:

Thus ends our first week among the kagoth. It's amazing, you know. Standing here amongst these creatures, I feel totally at ease. You'd think that, brushing shoulders (well, shoulder to hip), with these monsters, I'd fear for my life. Nothing could be further from the truth.

I don't know why, but I'm instilled with nothing but confidence in these "Gentle Giants." Only once, in this entire week, have I been afraid I was about to be stepped on, but we make allowances for the kagoth I like to call "Clumsy Charlie," and by now, we have all learned to stay his lumbering way.

Life among the kagoth is peaceful and pastoral. The day passes slowly, in a comfortable, meandering way. "No worries" is how we have translated the catchphrase of the kagoth. I feel like I'm whiling away my time at a tropical resort, not like I'm on a gear-up mission. I can't say I mind.

They learn quickly, these giant herbivores. It is this herbivore mentality, I think, that's kept them from keeping up with tech. We were hunters, but the kagoth have never hunted anything but seeds. I think that this has contributed to our single-minded pursuit of science. The kagoth just take things as they come.

The kagoth have yet to learn the about warfare. I don't know if this has to do with an innate superiority of the kagoth soul, or simply the lack of opportunity. I guess that it will be up to us to take on the mantel of Sun Tzu and teach these gentle beings the fine art of war . . .

—From the journal of Alfred Castle, Inter-Planetary Gear-Up Corps

7.0 THE KAGOTH

"Explain to me again how war is honorable?"

—A kagoth in a late night conversation with a tulgaran knight.

7.1 OVERVIEW

The kagoth are a large, bear-like race. They are massive and tremendously strong. Being herbivores by cultural choice, they are not at the top of the food chain on the worlds upon which they evolved. They are used to being hunted, not hunting themselves.

The kagoth are a gentle race. Those that anger never act upon it, and tend to forgive quickly. In the modern age, they are sought after by the military, but they are not, as a race, militaristic, and for an ISC kagoth to take up an assault blaster is considered a terrible tragedy.

7.2 PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

There is no race more powerful than the kagoth. Their physical might is tremendous, and no natural creature can match it. It is a testimony to this power that when kagoth decided to take over the Jeronan Empire, there was little that could stop them.

Evolutionary Considerations

The kagoth (*cagum sapiens sapiens*) are not built for long haul endurance. They have developed claws and could use them to fight fiercely, but choose not to. They have long since put aside the bluster and combat that they once used to determine their alpha female.

Though the kagoth greatly resemble bears, there are many differences. The main difference is their diet. Being strict herbivores, the thought of consuming meat (or honey for that matter) disturbs the kagoth, and normal bear jokes do not go over well. This is a cultural distinction, however, and the kagoth that have given into violence can digest meat quite well.

The kagoth are diurnal.

Build And Physiology

The kagoth are massively built. Females average 305 cm and 500 kg. They are staggeringly powerful, and strike fear in the hearts of most creatures.

The kagoth have six digits on each hand. Two of them, on either side, are opposable. This is the subject of great debate among scientists, as no other race possesses a hand configuration similar to this. Bears, of course, don't either.

Coloring

The kagoth are generally brown or black in color. Many of the browns have black tipped hair, much like a grizzly bear.

There are deviations from this coloring however. Blond and red-haired kagoth are not unknown, and white haired kagoth have been encountered as well,



as have kagoth with multiple colorations, such as brown with black paws.

Endurance

The kagoth have tremendous short-term endurance, as shown by their 50 extra Exhaustion points and their +10 to Constitution. They do not, however, have the long-term endurance born of born cursorial hunters. Because of this, distance running is restricted. The kagoth require four hours sleep every day.

Life Span

The kagoth live, on average, 150 years. Without medical aid, a kagoth can be expected to live about 35 years.

Average kagoth gestation period is 263 days. Kagoth can walk on all fours almost immediately after birth. Because of this, they rarely learn bipedal locomotion until about age five.

Kagoth generally begin speaking at about two and a half years old. They hit puberty at nine and physical maturity after approximately 15 years.

As a kagoth ages, its hair becomes more mottled and grizzled. Rarely does the pigmentation lighten or darken as a whole; it just becomes less uniform.

The kagoth mind stays sharp until death. The body, however, becomes plagued by physical problems. Bones become brittle, muscles weak. Often,

KAGOTH HEIGHT CHART

d100 (OE)	Kagoth Male	Kagoth Female
less than (-169)	249 cm	274 cm
(-169)-(-160)	251 cm	276 cm
(-159)-(-155)	253 cm	278 cm
(-154)-(-145)	255 cm	280 cm
(-144)-(-135)	257 cm	282 cm
(-134)-(-85)	259 cm	284 cm
(-84)-(-80)	261 cm	286 cm
(-79)-(-75)	263 cm	288 cm
(-74)-(-70)	265 cm	290 cm
(-69)-(-65)	267 cm	292 cm
(-64)-(-55)	269 cm	294 cm
(-54)-(-45)	271 cm	296 cm
(-44)-5	273 cm	298 cm
6-10	275 cm	300 cm
11-25	277 cm	302 cm
26-50	279 cm	304 cm
51-75	281 cm	306 cm
76-90	283 cm	308 cm
91-145	285 cm	310 cm
146-155	287 cm	312 cm
156-165	289 cm	314 cm
166-170	291 cm	316 cm
171-175	293 cm	318 cm
176-180	295 cm	320 cm
181-185	297 cm	322 cm
186-240	299 cm	324 cm
241-250	301 cm	326 cm
251-260	303 cm	328 cm
261-265	305 cm	330 cm
266-275	307 cm	332 cm
more than 275	309 cm	334 cm

elderly kagoth hit a point where they risk snapping bones by walking, assuming they can even lift their bulk.

Kagoth age categories progress as follows: Old: 100-112. Very Old: 113-126. Venerable: 127-140. Ancient: 141-148. Very Ancient: 149+. Stat loss is 1d5-1.

Resistance

The kagoth are known throughout civilized space for their phenomenal Constitution. In addition to their stat bonus, they receive a +100 bonus to all RRs versus Poison.

Special Abilities

The kagoth Special Abilities primarily revolve around the physical. They are as follows: Inner Reserve (+3 to each level of Body Development progression, already figured in), Giantism (+10 to Melee OBs, -10 to DB), Natural Physique (Body Development is Everyman), Natural Weapon (Claws, developed as an Everyman skill under the Special Attack skill category), Tough Skin (AT 8).



Part II The Kagoth

KAGOTH WEIGHT CHART						
d100 (OE)	Kagoth (m)			Kagoth (f)		
	sm	md	lg	sm	md	lg
less than (-169)	169	188	206	206	229	252
(-169)-(-165)	176	196	251	215	238	262
(-164)-(-160)	183	204	224	224	248	273
(-159)-(-155)	191	212	233	233	259	285
(-154)-(-145)	199	221	243	243	270	296
(-144)-(-135)	207	230	253	253	281	309
(-134)-(-85)	216	240	264	263	292	322
(-84)-(-80)	225	250	275	274	305	335
(-79)-(-75)	234	260	286	286	317	349
(-74)-(-70)	244	271	298	297	331	364
(-69)-(-65)	254	282	311	310	344	379
(-64)-(-55)	265	294	324	323	359	395
(-54)-(-45)	276	306	337	336	374	411
(-44)-5	287	319	351	350	389	428
6-10	306	339	373	373	414	455
11-25	332	369	406	405	450	495
26-75	369	410	451	450	500	550
76-90	399	443	487	486	540	594
91-95	422	469	516	515	572	630
96-145	439	488	537	536	595	655
146-155	448	498	548	546	607	668
156-165	457	508	559	557	619	681
166-170	466	518	570	569	632	695
171-175	476	528	581	580	644	709
176-180	485	539	593	592	657	723
181-185	495	550	605	603	670	737
186-240	505	561	617	615	684	752
241-250	515	572	629	628	697	767
251-260	525	583	642	640	711	783
261-265	536	595	655	653	726	798
266-270	546	607	668	667	740	814
271-275	557	619	681	679	755	830
more than 275	568	631	695	693	770	847

7.3 CULTURE

The kagoth tend to have a female-dominated culture. This makes them unique among the Seven. Many have attributed their peaceful nature to this fact.

Clothing And Decoration

The kagoth wear little in the way of decorative affectations. Like most furred races, they disdain clothing.

They do, however, wear decorative harnesses, which intersect across the chest and back. The point of crossing is generally embellished with a metal plate or buckle. The kagoth spend great pains picking the decoration placed on these plates. Those well versed in kagoth psychology can tell a lot from the kagoth's choice of chest and back decoration. To the uninitiated, they generally seem to be simple patterns.

The kagoth also wear utility harnesses, generally in the form of a belt, as a bandoleer interferes with sight lines on their harnesses. Backpacks are disliked for this same reason.

As of late, the kagoth have adapted the human and falar affectation of earrings. This trend is growing throughout kagoth culture.

Fears And Inabilities

The kagoth instinctively choose flight over fight. The kagoth see all other races as predators. It is not unheard of for a kagoth to run from an oort.

The kagoth are passive in combat. Until they psyche themselves up, they are -15 in combat. They may make an open-ended roll every round, adding 20, plus three times their SD bonus. If this roll exceeds 100, then this penalty is removed. This penalty is applied to kagoth that have given into the madness as well; in fact these are typically the only kagoth that encounter this problem.

Lifestyle

The kagoth prefer a lifestyle of simple farming. The males tend to care for the family while the females do all the "real work."

The kagoth do not like change. They do not like excitement. They prefer to watch life pass by effortlessly. They disdain adventure. They despise war.

It is interesting to note however, that despite their matriarchal society, the men are still the ones to put themselves in harms way to save their families. Evolutionary theorists suppose that this has to do with reproduction. It takes a kagoth female more than six months to bring a child to term. It takes the male a few minutes to do his part. Any culture with a penchant for sending their females into combat tends to





lack the high reproductive rate necessary to survive calamity. This theory is widely accepted, especially by the kagoth females.

Marriage And Family Pattern

Kagoth sperm carrying male chromosomes tend to have a competitive edge over those carrying female chromosomes. The biological reasons for this are complex, but suffice it to say that there are approximately six kagoth males for every kagoth female.

This, coupled with the kagoth belief in the superiority of the female, has led to a polygamous society where females have harems. The more successful a female is, the more extensive her harem.

The kagoth female is the undisputed ruler of the kagoth household. This is attributed to several factors. The most obvious is the female's size. It has also been suggested that the female is more apt to rule a family unit where gathering and agriculture are the biggest concerns, and providing does not involve hunting in any way.

Whatever the reason, the female rules the kagoth household. As a whole, the kagoth are very old fashioned. They are happy with their lives, and not given over to listening to "forward thinking."

Religion

The kagoth have no religion. No kagoth culture ever has. There is much speculation as to the reason for this, but no theory has ever been suggested that has been put above any others. The jury is still out.

The Madness

Kagoths are pacifists. This is a strict life choice. While they will fight amongst themselves, this is never dangerous combat and has evolved from play as youngsters. They would never fight another race. The thought of real combat disgusts them.

However, something has happened to kagoths of late. In the empire, a full third of the kagoth population has given into violence. They revel in it. They glory in it.

Other kagoth think that they are insane, and the ISC psychologists agree with them. Nobody knows what causes this, although the xatosians have theorized some form of psychic poisoning.

Kagoth in the ISC have begun to succumb to the madness now as well. No one has any idea how to stop it, but the entire kagoth race is afraid for its soul.

7.4 OTHER FACTORS

There are many other factors to consider. These are important in role playing a kagoth.

Demeanor

The kagoth are the kindest and gentlest of all creatures. They disdain war. They feel deeply for sapient suffering. The only people who don't respect the kagoth are the extremely warlike. Few can meet the kagoth without being deeply touched by the depths of their souls.

This needs stating again. Kagoths are pacifists. They do not willingly seek out combat under any

circumstances. Any kagoth that does is regarded as deranged.

Language

The kagoth language is a series of growls and snarls. It is amazingly aggressive sounding. Even the falar are impressed by it. For a peace-loving race, their language is remarkably unsuited to poetry.

Starting Languages: Species Standard (S8/W4), Kagoth (S5/W0).

Allowed Adolescent Development: Species Standard (S10/W10), Human (S7/W7), Kagoth (S10/W10), Oort (S8/W8), Tulgaran (S9/W9).

Prejudices

The kagoth hate only one thing: violence. Because of this, the falar are extremely unpopular with the kagoth, as are the valiesians. The humans are looked upon with suspicion by the kagoth as well, because their rash nature so often leads to war. Other than that, individuals are judged on a case-by-case basis.

Remarkably, the tulgar are greatly respected by the kagoth. Though warlike in nature, the tulgar represent all that is noble in warfare. In fact, from the kagoth, point of view, the tulgar represent *the only things* that are noble about warfare.

This has led to a remarkable relationship between the tulgar and the kagoth. Tulgaran knights have taken it into their code to protect all kagoth worlds. To the tulgar, the kagoth represent all that needs protecting in the universe.

Professions

The kagoth can take any profession. Combat oriented professions are extremely rare, and should probably be disallowed.

Special Skills

Everyman: All skills in the Athletic • Brawn skill category. Body Development, Natural Attack.

Restricted: All skills in the Athletic • Gymnastic skill category. Distance Running.

Standard Hobby Skills

Hobby Skills: Music, Swimming, Athletic Games, Alertness, Sense Ambush, Direction Sense, Language skills, all Craft skills, Trading, History, Trading Lore, Animal Training, Weather Watching, Scientific/Analysis • Engineering skills, Scientific/Analysis • Medical skills, Botany, Zoology, Scientific/Analysis • Technology, Hiding, First Aid, Tech/Trade • Vehicles skills.

The Individual As A PC

The kagoth PC is probably a very passive person. He is most likely a psychic, technician, or a doctor. Though militant kagoths are very effective, they are also very rare.

It usually takes a great tragedy to force a kagoth to go abroad. He does not take up the adventuring life lightly. However, occasionally, something will happen to a kagoth that is so traumatic that he will never again fit into kagoth society. These individuals often feel they have no other option but to go abroad.



Part II
The Kagoth

7.5 OUTFITTING OPTIONS

Clothing was already discussed. The rest of the kagoth outfit options are as follows:

Armor

Generally speaking, kagoth will not begin play with any armor. The GM may make exceptions for unique character histories.

Money

Kagoth begin play with \$2000. This is generally in electronic form, though many kagoth worlds mint hard currency.

Weapons

Generally speaking, the kagoth will not begin play with a weapon. If they have a peaceful occupation where one may be required, like law enforcement, it will invariably be no larger than a sidearm.



7.6 BACKGROUND OPTIONS

Kagoth begin play with one background option. They can spend them in the following manner.

Extra Languages

In addition to standard adolescent development, the kagoth may choose from the following for one background option. Falar (S6/W6), Valiesian (S5/W5), Xatosian (S7/W7).

Extra Money

Extra Money will generally be in the form of standard credits. It may also be taken in the form of local currency.

Special Items

Generally speaking, it is not recommended for a kagoth to use this background to receive trappings of war, such as weapons and armor. If a player insists on being militaristic, however, a background option is the most appropriate way to do it.

7.7 TALENTS

Kagoth characters may choose from any of the talents in *Future Law*. The GM should look through these options and select the ones that are appropriate to his game (it is suggested that Options 1, 2, or 5 be used unless something warrants otherwise). The classification of the talent/ flaw is given in brackets after the description of the talent/ flaw (also included are the appropriate point costs if the optional rules *Future Law* are being used).

Option 1: By spending one background option, the character may make a d100 (not open-ended) roll and consult the chart below.

Option 2: A player may select one of the talents from the chart below, but must pay the appropriate number of background options (as listed in *Future Law*), or talent points.

Option 3: As Option 2 above, except that the cost is lowered by one (if background options are spent), or five (if talent points are spent). This represents the talent being specific to the kagoth.

Option 4: As with options 1 or 2, except that any race may receive these talents, at double cost (to represent the fact that the talents/ flaws are specific to the kagoth).

Option 5: As with Option 1, except that for one background, the player may select Damage Resistant. The player may also elect to receive Passive for an extra background option.

KAGOTH TALENT AND FLAW CHART

- | | |
|-------|---|
| 01-19 | Deliberate (Flaw): You are very methodical in your actions. You receive a -25 penalty for snap actions and a -10 penalty for normal actions. You receive no benefit for acting in the deliberate phase.
[MAJOR: -15 Points] |
| 20-25 | Lumbering (Flaw): You do not move quickly. Quite the opposite, you move with the slow, methodical, relentlessness of a glacier. You receive a -20 to both pace and DB.
[GREATER: -30 Points] |



- 26 **Passive (Flaw):** You cannot bear to harm another creature. You may only engage in violence for either self-defense or the defense of your loved ones. You will fight to subdue when possible. All kagoth effectively have this flaw, unless they are deranged. [MINOR: 0 Points]
- 27-44 **Deranged:** You have succumbed to the madness that is threatening the kagoth culture. You have consciously rejected your heritage, and have embraced violence. You glory in the might of your body. Normal kagoth are repelled by your violent tendencies. You receive a -20 penalty to any influence maneuvers to deal with them. You do not have the Passive flaw, and can engage in combat with whomever you please. Note that you still suffer from the kagoth passivity that requires you to make a d100 roll plus 20 plus three times your SD bonus each round to overcome your inherent -15 to actions taken in combat. [MINOR: 10 Points]
- 45-69 **Damage Resistant:** You soak damage like a sponge. You are able to take 150% total hits before falling unconscious (though death occurs at normal hits). [MAJOR: 10 Points]
- 70-75 **Powerful:** You are built with more muscle and sheer brute strength than even other kagoth. Any melee blows you inflict result in double Concussion hits and an Unbalancing critical of two severity levels (a B becomes and A-25, an A becomes an A-50). [GREATER: 30 Points]
- 76-100 **Quick Tempered:** You are quick to anger, just like the other races of known space. You do not take longer to get worked up like most kagoth. You are not necessarily Deranged (unless you also take that talent) but you do not suffer the -15 penalty from kagoth passivity. [MINOR: 20 Points]

7.8 KAGOTH TRAINING PACKAGES

The kagoth have access to the full range of training packages. However, it is worth noting that simple craft-oriented training packages are the most common. Even academic training packages are very rare.

Kagoth, being pacifistic and agrarian, have only one training package to enter into the *Spacemaster* arena. It is the Agriculturalist.

AGRICULTURALIST (L)

The Agriculturalist specializes in farming and producing food. He is also skilled in raising herd animals, though in the case of the kagoth, this is not to eat, but for the other benefits that animals can provide (wool, etc.).

Time to Acquire: 95 Months

Starting Money: Normal

Cost: None

Special:

Superior Farm Machinery	20
Friends with another Agriculturalist	30
Trick Knee (+10 to Weather Watching)	30
Ground Truck	30

Category or Skill	# of Ranks
Athletics • Brawn skill category	1
Body Development skill category	n/a
Body Development	2
Crafts skill category	n/a
Horticulture	2
Lore • General skill category	3
Fauna Lore	1
Flora Lore	1
choice of one skill	1
Outdoor • Animal	2
Animal Handling	2
Outdoor • Environment skill category	2
choice of up to two skills	2
Technical/Trade • Vehicles skill category	2
Ground Vehicle Pilot	2

Professional Qualifier: at least two ranks of Horticulture. [-3 to Cost]

Lifestyle Skills: Horticulture

Stat Gains: Constitution

COST BY PROFESSION

Academic	37	Psychic	41
Bystander	29	Recon	27
Criminal	32	Scientist	42
Entertainer	34	Soldier	27
Explorer	26	Technician	30
Pilot	26		



Part II
The Kagoth

7.9 NOTEWORTHY PLANETS

These noteworthy planets were discussed in *Spacemaster: Privateers*. A little more discussion is warranted, however.

Hasockoth (Eta Cassiopeiae A & B)Kagoth Free World

Galactic (-3.188, +4.983, -0.522)

This system is binary, with the stars about 71 AU apart. This means the dwarf companion is little more than a bright star in the night sky, even when at its closest point.

This world began gear-up in 50 YC, and this gear-up was not handled well by the humans in charge. A couple of violent fights broke out among the gear-up crew during the process, and this information spread like wild fire across the world.

In 100 YC, when gear-up was over, this planet chose to make their planetary government a matriarchal monarchy. The new queen was only too happy to get the troublesome humans off the planet.

Since then, relations with this world have been very good. The current queen has great sympathy for the ISC.

When war broke out in 284 YC, the Queen (Terthoga), put out a public decree, beseeching her people to produce as much food as possible. She then spent a large chunk of tax dollars on a transport system to get all the surplus food into granaries and storehouses in the primary planetary spaceport.

She then sent a message to the ISC president to take what he would.

Since that time Hasockoth has produced more food than any other planet in the ISC. Despite the fact that ISC drafts are claiming young beings from throughout ISC space, there has yet to be a food shortage, and certainly this system has helped.

Hasockoth II (the only inhabited world in the system), has 8 billion kagoth. Most of them grow their own food on this pastoral, temperate planet. Some of the most fertile land in ISC space is here, and the kagoth take pains to make sure it stays that way.

Hurolonuth (Bonner Durchmusterung +14831) - Kagoth

Galactic (-23.317, -2.989, -6.502)

Hurolonuth began gear-up in 258 YC. It is estimated that it will not finish until well after the turn of the century.

The inhabitants of Hurolonuth III heard about the war after it started, and immediately (with the help of the gear-up crew), formed a planetary council of matriarchs. This body took over as an interim planetary government.

The first thing this body did was vote to allow the ISC to build a convalescence center on this world. They then set aside millions of square miles for refugee camps.

As Paraxis has advanced, worlds have been partially evacuated. The dispossessed are brought here, along with many of the wounded.

This world has scarcely 430 million natives. It is a warm world, and uncomfortable for many people; still the dispossessed now outnumber the natives two to one.

Kernog (Tau Ceti) - Kagoth Racial Seat

Galactic (-0.991, +0.118, -3.351)

Kernog began gear-up in 17 YC. It did not complete gear-up until 57 YC. At that point, it voted to join the ISC and has been a good member system ever since.

No kagoth system has adapted to the bureaucracy of a democratic government better than Kernog, probably a trait borne of sheer necessity. This world holds the racial prime minister, who is elected by popular vote, and the kagoth racial house of commons.

This world has watched the front line come closer and closer. You can practically see the battles from there, now.

Kernog is a lush, temperate planet. It has many plains areas and savannas. The kagoth do not spend as much time whiling away the hours here as on most kagoth worlds. There is simply too much effort expended in keeping the planet's economy moving.

Many of the most sophisticated kagoth schools are here. This is the only place a kagoth can go to learn advanced business, financial, or political techniques and be among other kagoth.

This system is also the home of kagoth industry. Many of the best machines and tools are manufactured here, then shipped throughout the kagoth worlds. Many if not most of these factories are off Kernog IV, the only habitable world.

Factories and space stations do exist in this system. Asteroids and less hospitable planets are mined, ore and chemicals refined, and goods produced.

Kernog IV has a population of 11.1 billion people. .3 billion more are scattered throughout the system.

Purogoss (Iota Horologii) - Kagoth

Galactic (-0.160, -7.686, -12.461)

Barely inside the core worlds, this planet (Purogoss II) began gear-up in 64 YC. In 113 YC, it completed gear-up and took on a democratic model of government.

In 116 YC, the house of commons voted to join the ISC. The system minister signed the agreement and a long-standing membership was formed.

Purogoss II has always been on the cutting edge of kagoth medical research. In 120 YC, the minister set up a research college and invited the finest oorts in the ISC to come join it. The *Purogoss Health and Longevity Research Center* is still one of the finest in the ISC.

When Bretog staged his coup, the Minister of Purogoss went into an immediate panic. Though her cries of panic were unheard in the ISC, she managed to invite a xatosian queen to move to Purogoss to help research the matter. The Queen (Xatock) agreed. This is the only known instance of a queen transplanting.



Fevered work has continued to discover the cause of the kagoth aggression inside the Jeronan Empire. They are convinced it is a psychic problem, but they do not know how close they are to solving the matter, and Paraxis is breathing down their necks.

Purogoss II has 8.3 billion people. Purogoss III has a colony of 40 million, and has the first stages of a terraforming project in the works.

Purogoss II is a warm world, and the farming is not as good as many planets. The kagoth here make up with high-tech fertilizers what they lack in natural advantage.

Teirnarock (Zeta Tucanae) - Kagoth

Galactic (+2.753, -3.480, -5.662)

Teirnarock began gear-up in 59 YC. It finished in 111 YC. It then made its government a matriarchal monarchy. Then it joined the ISC.

Teirnarock III is a beautiful, lushly temperate planet with a long growing season. During the early part of the war, it was the primary ISC owned food production planet. Now it has been captured.

Teirnarock has 6.9 billion kagoth.

Trussulonoth (Mu(2) Cygni) - Kagoth

Galactic (+3.591, +21.676, -7.281)

This is a binary system with the life-giving planet orbiting the secondary. The primary is not bright enough to affect it much at 95 AU's.

This system began gear-up in 261 YC. It may never be completed.

When Bretog staged his coup, this system sent lobbyists to Hassus to plead for care and (ironically) a military build up. The lobbyists were incredibly persistent, and yet they went ignored.

This world of 600 million (estimate) inhabitants of Trussulonoth III is now occupied by Jeronan forces.

Turlog (Mu Cassiopeiae) - Kagoth

Galactic (-4.259, +6.009, -1.016)

This is a close orbiting binary with the inhabited world well outside the comfort zone. This planet is very cold, and the kagoth here are the only known ones who eat fish. This planet is under polar conditions, but the axial tilt is not extreme, so the winters are comparatively mild.

Turlog began gear-up in 61 YC and completed in 105 YC (very fast as ISC worlds go). They formed a matriarchal democracy (only females may vote) and joined the ISC.

This planet is not noteworthy for its production of anything. It's so cold however, that all kagoth from here must take the Cold Resistance talent (see the turlog) for their one background option.

This planet has a population of 2.3 billion. It has not yet fallen to Jeronan troops.

KAGOTH RACIAL SUMMARY

Nickname: *PC:* Bear; *Non-PC:* Teddy Bear.

The kagoth are a race of bear-like herbivores. They live in a matriarchal society and are strict pacifists.

Physical Characteristics

Evolution: The kagoth evolved from a common ancestor with the males averaging 410 kg and females averaging 500 kg.

Coloring: Generally brown or black. Blond, red, and even white are not unknown.

Endurance: Tremendous. +50 to Exhaustion points. Only requires four hours sleep every day.

Height: Males average 280 cm; Females, 305 cm.

Lifespan: 150-180 years.

Resistance: +100 vs. Poison.

Special Abilities: Inner Reserve, Giantism, Natural Physique, Natural Weapons, Tough Skin (AT 8).

Culture

Clothing & Decoration: Decorative harnesses with metal chest and back plates.

Fears & Inabilities: The kagoth prefers flight to fight. They see all other races as predators. They take a while to work themselves up in combat.

Lifestyle: Matriarchal. The kagoth live the life of simple farmers.

Marriage Pattern: Polygamous. Females may have multiple husbands.

Religion: None.

Other Factors

Demeanor: Kind and gentle. Pacifistic.

Languages: *Starting Languages:* Species Standard (S8/W4), Kagoth (S5/W0); *Allowed Adolescent Development:* Species Standard (S10/W10), Human (S7/W7), Kagoth (S10/W10), Oort (S8/W8), Tulgaran (S9/W9).

Prejudices: Kagoth loathe all violence. They dislike the falar and valiesians because of this. Humans are viewed with suspicion.

Professions: Combat oriented professions are extremely rare.

Training Packages: Craft oriented packages are most common. Even Academic packages are rare.

Special Skills: *Everyman:* All skills in the Athletic • Brawn skill category, Body Development, Natural Attack; *Restricted:* All skills in the Athletic • Gymnastic skill category. Distance Running.

Standard Hobby Skills: Music, Swimming, Athletic Games, Alertness, Sense Ambush, Direction Sense, Language skills, all Craft skills, Trading, History, Trading Lore, Animal Training, Weather Watching, Scientific/Analysis • Engineering skills, Scientific/Analysis • Medical skills, Botany, Zoology, Scientific/Analysis • Technology, Hiding, First Aid, Tech/Trade • Vehicles skills.



Part II The Kagoth

Outfitting Options

Weapons: Weapons are unusual.

Armor: Armor is uncommon.

Money: ¢2,000. This is generally in an electronic form.

Background Options

The kagoth get one background option.

Extra Languages: In addition to the tongue listed above: Falar (S6/W6), Valiesian (S5/W5), Xatosian (S7/W7).

Extra Money: This is generally in an electronic form.

Special Items: Trappings of war are usually discouraged.

Talents: War-like talents should be re-rolled unless given GM approval.

Background
Options:

1

Stat

Bonuses:

Ag: +2

Co: +10

Me: +0

Re: -2

SD: +0

Em: +4

In: +2

Pr: +0

Qu: -6

St: +10

RR Mods:

Poison: +100

Disease: +0

Fear: +0

Psions: +0

Body Dev.

Progression:

0•10•7•5•4

Mind Point

Dev.

Progression:

0•5•3•2•2

Soul

Departure:

15 rounds

Recovery

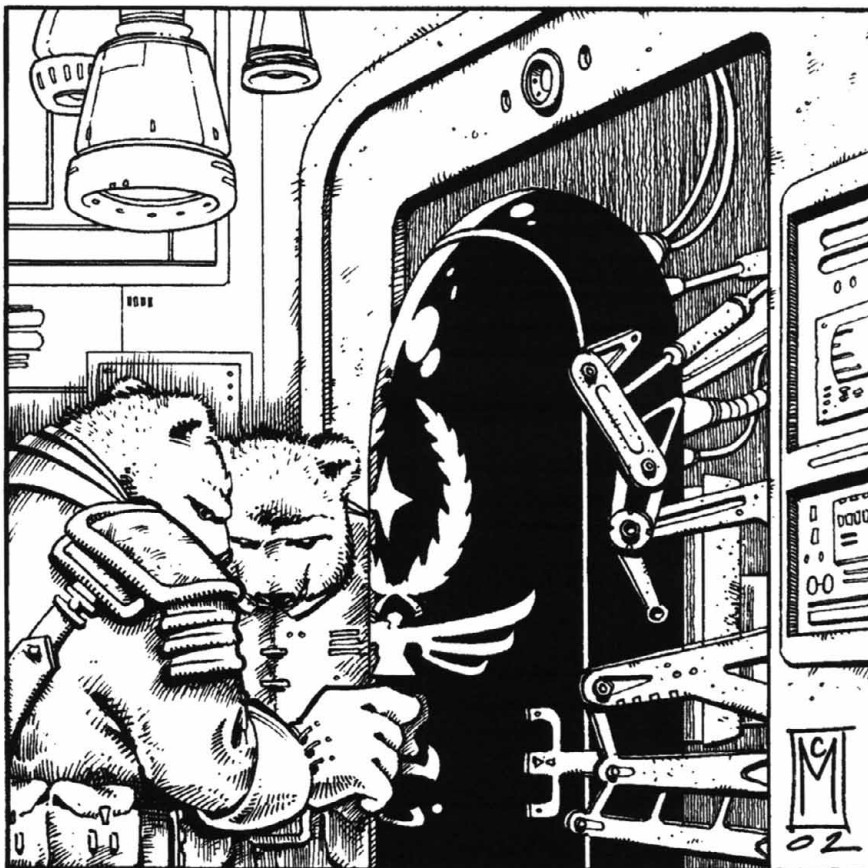
Multiplier:

0.5 times

Adolescent Development

Kagoth receive the following skills for adolescent development.

Skill	Ranks
Athletic • Brawn skill category	5
Athletic • Endurance skill category	2
Swimming skill	2
Awareness • Perceptions skill category	n/a
Alertness skill	5
Body Development skill category	n/a
Body Development skill	5
Communication skill category	3
Language skills	10
Lore • Academic skill category	3
"Own" Culture Lore skill	3
Lore • General skill category	3
"Own" Region Lore skill	3
Outdoor • Animal skill category	2
Outdoor • Environment skill category	2
Scientific/Analytic group	6 (total)
choice of up to six skills.....	6 (total)
Technical/Trade • General skill category	5
choice of up to five skills	5 (total)
Technical/Trade • Vocational skill category	n/a
choice of up to five skills	5 (total)
Hobby Ranks	10
Background Options	1
Talent Points	10





INTERLUDE FIVE

. . . Assault plus 08:30:21

Why does it have to be so loud?

Garock clutched the ground as another shell airburst. There was no reason, in this modern age, that those shells had to be so loud. It was enough to drive a person mad.

That's the point, you idiot, he thought to himself.

They had dug in behind a ridge. The Lt. Colonel and Hissick were putting as much fire into the air as possible, trying to keep the enemy's attention while the real assault force entered discreetly.

Another shell burst, spraying plasma down around them.

"They're finding their range!" the Lt. Colonel yelled. "Displace."

Then he just ran out into the fire, running low to the ground, moving for the next ridge. Sure he had some cover, but what kind of insane monkey . . .

"Garock? Where are you?"

"Right here, Lt. Colonel," he said over the comm.

"Get you ass out of there, or you're gonna be bear-soup."

Garock took a deep breath and ran.

He wasn't cut out for this. He was as brave as the next person, but to wander around a battlefield drawing fire. That was insanity. What had he been thinking?

He hit the ground behind the next ridge with a thud they heard over the shells. They looked at him.

"You okay, buddy?" Mitchell asked.

"Yes, sir."

"All right then . . ."

Whatever came next was washed away in a blast of sound and shrapnel. Garock buried his head reflexively, wishing it wasn't so loud. It wasn't until a few seconds later that he realized someone was crying out in pain.

He looked up, quickly. Fooluph was down, screaming. His right leg was a mess of blood and fur. A pool of blood grew around him. He didn't have much time.

Garock leapt to his feet and ran at a crouch toward Fooluph. Plasma fired around him as he bobbed above the ridgeline in his run. He was at Fooluph's side in a second.

He began work immediately. He grabbed Hissick's right hand and placed it on Fooluph's femoral artery.

"Squeeze!" he shouted at the valiesian. "No, harder!"

The blood trickled to a stop.

He started by hitting the major bleeders. He pulled out his arterial sealer and began pulling the veins together. Using an arterial sealer was delicate, difficult work in the best of conditions. He fought to keep his hand steady in the deafening explosions. He threw himself across Fooluph's body when a particularly close shell detonated.

"Garock!"

"Not, now."

"Garock!"

"What is it, sir?"

"Get your damn head down."

"Shut up, sir."

"I said, 'get your damn head down.'"

Garock looked up and realized how close the fire from the plasma guns was coming to him. He eased down a bit, getting the ridge between himself and the enemy.

He had two of the bleeders sealed and was working on a third. This one was tricky. It would be very easy to fuse the whole vein off, and that wouldn't be good. He was considering downgrading to sutures when he noticed Fooluph looking at him.

"You can do it."

Garock nodded and went back to work.

"You aren't wearing your side arm."

"Huh?" Garock said. He almost had it.

"I gave you a side arm, you aren't wearing it."

"I don't like guns." He moved Hissick's hand. The arteries took blood and the seams held. He began work with a dermal closer.

"All medics need to carry a side arm."

"I know, to defend their patients."

"No."

Garock looked up into the oort's eyes. There was a deadly seriousness there.

"You don't think a pistol will hold off assault weapons, do you? Of course not. You have a weapon for a different reason."

Garock went cold inside.

"I understand, Doctor. It won't come to that."

"But if it does . . ." Fooluph patted his sidearm.

"If it comes to that, you won't be taken prisoner again, sir."

Assault plus 08:48:30 . . .



FIRST CONTACT



The strangest thing about the alien craft was that everything was labeled in plain English. Well, the labels were actually in Russian, English, Chinese and Japanese, but as the only English-speaking native, I was a little homesick for the mother tongue. Sure, Hiroko and Birinkov (who we called Prokofiev because of his music) would speak English from time to time, mostly to humor me, but still, it made the craft seem warm and inviting.

Perhaps "craft" is a misnomer. Outpost would probably be a better word for it. It was relatively small but inviting, with all controls plainly labeled and in a familiar, if archaic interface. It was as if the place was designed with human beings specifically in mind, but hundreds of years ago, and put way out here to wait for us.

Which, of course, was exactly the case.

I realize I write this for posterity. So let me refresh your memory a bit, because though this is, to us, the most momentous moment since the birth of our savior; who knows how the cruel eye of history will rate it.

Thirteen years ago the researchers on Mars had discovered the tachyon. They threw a party, as all researchers do, then decided, as a joke, to hold an impromptu SETI (Search for Extra-Terrestrial Intelligence) session.

After about ten minutes, they were deadly serious.

See, the reason all those old SETI experiments failed was no one was using radio to transmit information. At light speed, radio was just way too slow. It wasn't too terribly long before the martians discovered all sorts of tachyon sources. They scrambled to set up another monitor for triangulation purposes and discovered that the nearest source was a meager 50,000 AU away, in our own cometary halo.

That's why they put our team together and sent us out to the Oort cloud. It's taken us a long time, and I can't say that I've enjoyed the trip, but I won't dwell on the tragedy of this journey. This is pretty much the limit of how far our technology can carry us, but here we are. We came eager to make contact with the oorts.

So we were puzzled to find what looked like, for all the world, a human space station. Well, maybe that's giving us humans too much credit. This place is more like a modest suite than any of the purely functional habitats we build. After the long trip out here, it was pure luxury.

The Doc checked the food, even though each package had full nutritional data printed on the side. Everything checked, so we threw discretion to the wind and took the oorts up on their posted invitations to eat and rest.

The place was a wealth of knowledge. Their computer banks held more information about our solar system than all those hundreds of years of astronomy had collected from Earth. They also held detailed information of humans and Earth culture. DeVas seemed to spend 24 hours a day in the history record. It seemed every hour he pointed out some inaccuracy he had discovered in our history (he seemed to have more faith in our pint-sized benefactors than he did in our own historians).

It seemed the oorts had been out here for generations. Quietly gathering information about Earth. They had been transmitting clear tachyon messages to us for I-don't-know-how-many-years, just waiting for us to figure out how to hear them.

We also found clear biological data on our hosts. The oorts are about four feet (maybe 120 or 125 cm) tall and covered with long fur. They looked, for all the world, like big old, balls of fur, or Cousin It from that old TV show. They may have seemed very alien in their own way, but this was a very hotly debated issue among us, because, in reality, they were way too similar. I mean, they had toes, for Christ's sake.

They were round, like a longhaired egg with arms and legs. They had a recognizable face, or at least eyes. They had furry brow-ridges, looking like a shitzu's, and no discernible mouth. I remember thinking how they must have had terrible hairball problems, with their mouth buried in fur like that. Their arms came right out of their sides, with very little shoulder. Their legs seemed proportionally small, but otherwise human. They hardly looked alien at all. More like something out of a children's fairy story.

Another odd thing. They didn't seem to have a name for their race. All the information we found under topics like anatomy, biology. We never found a reference to them calling themselves anything but people. So we continued calling them oorts.



It was a fascinating week. I studied their anatomy, which was very human, while the others studied their fields or areas of interest. (Prokofiev spent all his time studying their music after he discovered that he didn't have an inkling of how to comprehend their propulsion tech.) We plucked away happily, learning all we could.

The oorts were advanced way beyond us. It appeared that they'd found a way around God's speed limit centuries ago. They had built an interstellar empire. And we had stumbled on one of their visitor centers.

I have to admit, we were a little scared. I mean, these guys had done stuff with tech that would make your hair curl. How could we stand against them?

Of course, we didn't know that they had never even considered the idea that an advanced race might still wish to make war on another advanced race. So when, at the end of the week, they showed up in their ftl craft, they began teaching us like we were little children.

—Ishrat Bogen, Astronaut, Inter-Planetary Space Agency

8.0 THE OORTS

"This is what we've been trying to avoid all along."

—Haluph, oort ISC Representative, quoted shortly after the declaration of war with the Jeronans.

8.1 OVERVIEW

The oorts are a small, inoffensive looking race. They are the ultimate scientists and technicians, wrapping their minds, with great ease, around the most difficult problems. Oorts have changed the face of science in two major ways.

First of all, the oorts have invented most of the technology that is taken for granted by the rest of civilization. They have given this freely, after their initial resistance, and raised the technology of all other races to their level. They are a caring and generous race.

The second major change the oorts have caused is by setting standards of excellence that most races find impossible to match. No company worth

its salt would hire a tech or a scientist who wasn't an oort. A non-oort science department is a sure indicator of either intense racism or severe financial problems. This mentality has made it difficult for a member of another race to make a living in the field.

8.2 PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Physically, the oorts are the most inferior of all races. They are the weakest and most fragile of the seven races. Their evolution has been mostly along mental lines, with the physical reaching the bare minimum for tool use.

Evolutionary Considerations

Oorts (*ortum sapiens sapiens*) evolved from a smallish, land mammal called a braat. This mammal is common on most every world in known space. Many scientists have theorized the absence of this creature on some worlds is due to calamity rather than oversight. (It is theorized that the Yucatan Peninsula impact destroyed the braat's evolutionary line on Earth, though no fossil evidence of the creature has ever been found.) The braats are an

obvious favorite of the Architects, along with cats, monkeys, wolves and bears.

Braats are herbivores. Oorts however, have developed as cursorial hunters. Because of this, oort cardiopulmonary systems can maintain a running pace nearly indefinitely, given proper conditioning. Oorts also seem to have nearly infinite patience. They can focus on a problem for seemingly endless periods of time. This has been attributed as the primary cause for their rapid intellectual evolution (though others have pointed out that since man was only a thousand or so years behind them, it wasn't *that* rapid).





Part II The Oorts

OORT HEIGHT CHART		
d100 (OE)	Oort Male	Oort Female
less than (-169)	94 cm	94 cm
(-169)-(-160)	96 cm	98 cm
(-159)-(-155)	98 cm	100 cm
(-154)-(-145)	100 cm	102 cm
(-144)-(-135)	102 cm	104 cm
(-134)-(-85)	104 cm	106 cm
(-84)-(-80)	106 cm	108 cm
(-79)-(-75)	108 cm	110 cm
(-74)-(-70)	110 cm	112 cm
(-69)-(-65)	112 cm	114 cm
(-64)-(-55)	114 cm	116 cm
(-54)-(-45)	116 cm	118 cm
(-44)-5	118 cm	120 cm
6-10	120 cm	120 cm
11-25	122 cm	122 cm
26-50	124 cm	124 cm
51-75	126 cm	126 cm
76-90	128 cm	128 cm
91-145	130 cm	130 cm
146-155	132 cm	132 cm
156-165	134 cm	134 cm
166-170	136 cm	136 cm
171-175	138 cm	138 cm
176-180	140 cm	140 cm
181-185	142 cm	142 cm
186-240	144 cm	144 cm
241-250	146 cm	146 cm
251-260	148 cm	148 cm
261-265	150 cm	150 cm
266-275	152 cm	152 cm
more than 275	154 cm	154 cm

It is theorized that the *caluph* (see below) drove the evolving braat to hunt for food. For much of their history, the oorts were forced to be nomadic hunter-gatherers. Any attempts to settle into an agrarian society were disrupted by the *caluph*.

The oorts seem to have been an interesting evolutionary experiment. On every world where the oorts have evolved, there are predators, similar to large, predatory dinosaurs. It is theorized that on every world with dinosaurs, the Architects decided to evolve *either* oorts or valiesians. Valiesians were given the edge of competitive ferocity. Oorts were given the competitive edge of an advanced intellect. Oorts have fought a lifelong war against the powerful, reptilian predators. Most oort worlds gauged their technology for many years by how many oorts had to die to take down one of these foes. The oorts call them the *caluph*, which roughly translates to the "Great Enemy."

Oorts, are basically humanoid, with very human-like arms, legs, feet and hands. Many humans have found them almost comically humanlike. They have four normal, plus one opposable digit on each hand. They have no claws or other natural weapons.

Oorts are omnivorous. They are also diurnal.

Build And Physiology

Oorts are basically oval-shaped, much like an egg, with long hair covering everything: their, palms, fingers, toes and the soles of their feet. They do have a definitive head and neck, under all that hair, and their neck has remarkable flexibility.

An oort's eyes are nearly hidden in this long hair, but it has definite brow ridges that mark the eye's locations. These brow ridges are very animated and more than make up for the lack of facial expressions.

Oorts are notoriously fragile creatures. They bruise and break easily. Physical hardship does not rest well on their shoulders. This is not as surprising as it sounds. Evolution has been brutal to the oorts, but the truism of the oort existence has always been that any damage means death. Oort evolution has not promoted the ability to resist damage. It has promoted the ability to avoid damage. The oort brain is still a mystery, even to the oorts. While the ability to download the totality of the sapient intellect is possible for an oort as well as a human, the actual structure of the oort brain has been slow to part with its secrets.

Oorts are the smallest sapient race. Males and females both average 125 cm. and 57 kg.

Coloring

Oorts are almost exclusively brown in color. There is some variance, and many oorts have darker and lighter patches or streaks to their hair. There have been auburn colored oorts, and even occasional blond or white haired oorts. These are very rare, however.

Endurance

Oort endurance isn't much to speak of. They receive no bonus to either Constitution or Exhaustion points. As Oorts are cursorial hunters, they can develop the Distance Running skill without penalty.

Oorts require four hours sleep a day. Going even a single day without sleep will have detrimental effects.

Life Span

An oort will live 250 years with proper medical attention, about 75 years on a good diet alone. This makes them the longest-lived race in known space.

An oort gestates over an average of 306 days. Twins are very rare without fertility drugs.

An oort can usually walk after the first year, and begins to talk about the same time. They continue to learn at an accelerated rate for the first two years of life, after which time they drop to a more normal rate.

An oort hits sexual maturity after eight years. They remain fertile nearly their entire 75 year unassisted lifespan. At this point their bodies begin to quickly deteriorate, and they are plagued by cancer, brain-tumors, and heart disease. It is then up to medical science to keep them alive.

Oort minds are usually running strong until the moment they die, barring major brain tumors or strokes.

Oort age categories are as follows: Old: 90-97. Very Old: 98-105. Venerable: 106-113. Ancient: 114-130. Very Ancient 131+. Stat loss is 1d5+1.



OORT WEIGHT CHART

d100 (OE)	Oort (m)			Oort (f)		
	sm	md	lg	sm	md	lg
less than (-169)	23	26	29	23	26	29
(-169)-(-165)	24	27	30	24	27	30
(-164)-(-160)	25	28	31	25	28	31
(-159)-(-155)	26	29	33	26	29	33
(-154)-(-145)	27	31	34	27	31	34
(-144)-(-135)	29	32	35	29	32	35
(-134)-(-85)	30	33	37	30	33	37
(-84)-(-80)	31	35	38	31	35	38
(-79)-(-75)	32	36	40	32	36	40
(-74)-(-70)	34	38	42	34	38	42
(-69)-(-65)	35	39	43	35	39	43
(-64)-(-55)	37	41	45	37	41	45
(-54)-(-45)	38	43	47	38	43	47
(-44)-5	40	44	49	40	44	49
6-10	42	47	52	42	47	52
11-25	46	51	57	46	51	57
26-75	51	57	63	51	57	63
76-90	55	62	68	55	62	68
91-95	58	65	72	58	65	72
96-145	61	68	75	61	68	75
146-155	62	69	77	62	69	77
156-165	63	71	78	63	71	78
166-170	64	72	80	64	72	80
171-175	66	73	81	66	73	81
176-180	67	75	83	67	75	83
181-185	68	76	84	68	76	84
186-240	70	78	86	70	78	86
241-250	71	80	88	71	80	88
251-260	73	81	90	73	81	90
261-265	74	83	91	74	83	91
266-270	75	84	93	75	84	93
271-275	77	86	95	77	86	95
more than 275	79	88	97	79	88	97

Clothing And Decoration

Oorts wear little clothing. Footwear and utility harnesses tend to be the extent of oort apparel. Fashion has rarely taken hold in oort cultures. They enjoy nice things, like most races, but fashion trends almost always stay the same.

Fears And Inabilities

Oorts fear death and injury, just like any other rational being. They have a particular fear of the sound of a dinosaur roar.

Oorts have comparatively poor eyesight. Without corrective lenses they receive a -30 penalty to all missile attacks.

Lifestyle

Oorts tend to throw themselves into their work. They find an area of science or technology and devote their entire lives to it. They have little in the way of entertainment. They do not seek sports for recreation. They immerse themselves in their fields of study, and are happy to live their entire lives there.

Marriage And Family Pattern

Oorts form extended, polygamous family groups. Multiple wives and husbands are admitted, and generally, three-quarters majority is required. These family groups usually include only people involved in the same field of study. Genetic make-up and relative intelligence have a lot to do with deciding to allow a new member into a group.

Children are considered to belong to each and every member of the group. Genetic work-ups are often done to determine whom a child's father actually is, but this is only to promote children between particularly good matches.

Resistance

Oort Resistance is average in most cases. Oorts do receive a -10 to their Poison save.

Special Abilities

Photographic Memory (can make a roll, adding three times their Memory stat bonus, plus twenty-five, to remember an event), Quick Calculator (+10 to Scientific Group, +5 to Trading).

8.3 CULTURE

Oorts are friendly, communal creatures. Their culture reflects this. They love to work together and would rather be a part of a moderately successful team than be a very successful individual.





Part II The Oorts

Religion

The oorts ceased worshiping a supreme being a long time ago. They were the ones who theorized the existence of the Architects. To this day, they revere the Architects the way some religions revere prophets or saints.

8.4 OTHER FACTORS

There are many other factors to consider. These are important in role playing an oort.

Demeanor

Oorts are driven by their vocation. They are friendly and outgoing, but they seem to want to talk about nothing else. Only the occasional (and rare) oort diplomat has really mastered the art of small talk.

Language

The common oort tongue is a high speed, almost bird-like gibberish. It is impossible for any other race to understand, unless slowed down and brought into that race's audio range. This is not difficult to do, but if an oort gets excited, he tends to drift back to native speech, and becomes all but unintelligible. *Starting Languages:* Species Standard (S5/W0), Oort (S8/W4), Human (S5/W0), Falar (S5/W0), Tulgaran (S5/W0).

Allowed Adolescent Development: Species Standard (S10/W10), Falar (S10/W10), Human (S10/W10), Kagoth (S10/W10), Oort (S10/W10), Tulgaran (S10/W10), Valiesian (S10/W10), Xatosian (S10/W10).

Prejudices

Oorts believe that only races that could have reached their outposts deserved technological gear-up. This rules out just about every race but the humans (who did) and the tulgar and xatosians (who probably would have). They hide it well, but gearing-up every race in known space has never sat well with them. They feel it invalidated the Architect's experiment. They are especially uncomfortable around the falar, who they believe secretly look on them as giant cat toys.

Professions

Oorts can be of any profession, though scientist, technician and academic are the most common. The oort soldier is particularly revered as ancient history depicts this as a noble suicide for the good of all. Psychics are fairly common.

Special Skills

Everyman: Language skills, Diplomacy, Trading, choice of 15 skills from the Lore or Scientific/Analytical group.

Restricted: All Athletic • Gymnastic skills, Body Development.

Standard Hobby Skills

Naturally, oort hobby skills reflect their great learning. Oort children play at being great physicists or doctors, not space marines and pirates. Their hobby skills reflect this fact.

Hobby Skills: Language skills, Speed Reading, Diplomacy, Public Speaking, Trading, all skills in

the Lore group, Mind Point Development, Psychic Powers, all skills in the Scientific/Analytical group, Computer Crime, Data Processing, First Aid, Sensor Analysis, Atmospheric Pilot, FTL Pilot, Ground Vehicle Pilot, Marine Pilot, Space Pilot.

The Individual As A Pc

The oort PC is generally a *field scientist*. Either he's a Technician attached to a unit or Privateer, or he's a Doctor. Perhaps he's a Psychic or an Academic looking to conduct field studies. Whatever the reason, he is an oort with a purpose, and that purpose cannot be carried out from behind a desk.

8.5 OUTFITTING OPTIONS

Outfitting an oort is pretty straightforward.

Armor

This armor will invariably be of military design. An oort in armor looks remarkably like a walking egg.

Money

Oorts begin with \$2,000. This will almost certainly be in an electronic form. It has been a long time since an oort minted currency.

Weapons

Oorts take weapons very seriously. Any weapons they use are likely to be able to take down a dinosaur. Oort weapons typically engulf the arm, locking down on it like a pressure sleeve.

8.6 BACKGROUND OPTIONS

Below are listed the ways in which a character may spend his background options. Each item details how it applies to oorts specifically.

Extra Languages

Oorts can develop any language to any level as a part of adolescent development. Therefore, these ranks can be used however the oort likes.

Extra Money

This money will be in an electronic form. With GM approval, this could be taken in the form of investments.

Special Items

These will invariably be of oort design. Oorts rarely trust items made by non-oort companies.

8.7 TALENTS

Oort characters may choose from any of the talents in *Future Law*. The GM should look through these options and select the ones, which are appropriate to his game (it is suggested that Options 1 or 2 be used unless something warrants otherwise). The classification of the talent/ flaw is given in brackets after the description of the talent/ flaw (also included are the appropriate point costs if optional rules are used).

Option 1: By spending one background option, the character may make a d100 (not open-ended) roll and consult the chart below.



OORT TALENT & FLAW CHART

- 01-10 **Aggressive (Flaw):** You are violent and aggressive, a dangerous trait in an oort. The little comments most people let pass cause you to fly off the handle. Any time you are insulted or offended, you make a roll, subtracting three times your self-discipline and adding 40. If the result is over 100, you fly off the handle and react with violence.
[MAJOR: -15 Points]
- 11-20 **Forward Thinker:** You are a visionary. You can make things happen. You receive a +10 to all Scientific/Analytical • Engineering skills. In addition, you receive a +10 bonus whenever trying anything innovative, such as scientific research or particularly unorthodox jury-rigging.
[MAJOR: 15 Points]
- 21-40 **Level-Headed:** You keep your head, even in the face of great personal danger. While working on a technical problem, you receive no penalties from distractions, such as from a firelight or other chaos.
[Minor: 5 Points]
- 41-55 **Protégé:** You were a child genius. When other oort children were studying calculus, you were building theoretical models. When other children were studying quantum mechanics, you were disproving the latest fad in non-locality theory. When other children were calculating airflow dispersals, you were playing with cutting edge inertia theory. You receive ten extra skill ranks to reflect this early study. You may not place more than two ranks in a single skill or category; these *are* added after hobby skills are done. These skills must be in a GM approved area of study (usually your current profession, but exceptions could be made for other oort fields of study).
[MINOR: 10 Points]
- 56-65 **Psychic Aptitude:** You are a great psychic talent. In addition to other bonuses, you receive a +10 to your professional bonus for psychic powers. In addition, your refractory period is reduced by one round.
[MAJOR: 15 Points]

- 66-80 **Stalwart:** You absorb damage like few oorts can. Body Development is not restricted for you. This can be taken with Natural Physique, with GM approval.
[MINOR: 10 Points]
- 81-85 **Technical Diagnosis:** You have a unique psionic talent, the ability to instinctively diagnose a machine. Whenever a machine is malfunctioning, you need only take a moment to concentrate, then you suddenly know exactly what is wrong. This gives you a +20 to all Scientific/Analytical • Technical maneuvers involving repairs. It also halves repair times and routine maintenance costs. If Electrokinesis is a restricted category, then this costs double.
[MAJOR: 20 Points.]
- 86-100 **Unassuming:** You are meek and quiet. You blend into crowds. You receive a +25 bonus to any mingling maneuvers.
[MINOR: 3 Points]

Option 2: A player may select one of the talents from the chart below, but must pay the appropriate number of background options (as listed in *Future Law*), or talent points.

Option 3: As Option 2 above, except that the cost is lowered by one (if background options are spent), or five (if talent points are spent). This represents the talent being specific to oorts.

Option 4: As with options 1 or 2, except that any race may receive these talents, at double cost (to represent the fact that the talents/flaws are specific to oorts).

8.8 OORT TRAINING PACKAGES

Oorts may take any training package. Naturally, those that involve science, academics, or technology are most common.

Oort training packages represent the education that an oort receives being raised within his family. This therefore encompasses his entire youth, primary education until his first doctorate (usually at around 16 years old).

It is recommended that non-oorts not be allowed to take these packages. If one is, for some reason, all costs are doubled.



Part II The Oorts

OORT CODER (L)

This oort has received his degree in computer science. He has dedicated himself to building and programming computers.

Quote: *I can build any system you need.*

Time to Acquire: 72 Months

Starting Money: x2

Cost: None

Special:

Useful computer teaching contact.....	60
Useful computer contact	50
Useful computer corporate contact	40
Computer	70

Category or Skill **# of Ranks**

Lore • Academic skill category	3
choice of up to three skills	3
Science/Analytical • Basic skill category	2
Basic Math	2
Science/Analytical • Engineering skill category	8
Computer Engineering	8
Science/Analytical • Specialized	n/a
Advanced Math	1
Cryptography	2
choice of up to two skills	2 (total)
Science/Analytical • Technical skill category	8
Computer Technology	8
Tech/Trade • General	4
Data Processing	4

Professional Qualifier: Oort with a bonus in Reasoning over 10. [-3 to Cost]

Lifestyle Skills: Computer Engineering, Computer Technology

Stat Gains: Reasoning

COST BY PROFESSION

Academic	38	Psychic	50
Bystander	45	Recon	58
Criminal	53	Scientist	25
Entertainer	58	Soldier	58
Explorer	49	Technician	26
Pilot	43		

This training package costs double for non-oorts.

OORT COMPUTER THEORIST (L)

This oort is on the cutting edge of computers and hardware, not that there's much of a cutting edge at this point in history.

Quote: *You haven't touched the face of God until you have danced in the quantum gyre of molecutronics.*

Time to Acquire: 72 Months

Starting Money: x2

Cost: None

Special:

Useful computer teaching contact.....	60
Useful computer teaching contact	40
Useful computer contact	60
Useful computer contact	40
Useful computer corporate contact	60
Useful computer corporate contact	40
Computer	100

Category or Skill **# of Ranks**

Lore • Academic skill category	3
choice of up to three skills	3
Science/Analytical • Basic skill category	2
Basic Math	2
Science/Analytical • Engineering skill category	8
Computer Engineering	8
choice of up to four skills	8 (total)
Science/Analytical • Specialized skill category	n/a
Advanced Math	1
choice of up to two skills	2 (total)
Science/Analytical • Technical skill category	4
Computer Technology	4
choice of up to two skills	4 (total)

Professional Qualifier: An Oort with a positive Intuition bonus. [-2 to Cost]

Lifestyle Skill: Computer Engineering

Stat Gains: Intuition

COST BY PROFESSION

Academic	39	Psychic	53
Bystander	46	Recon	58
Criminal	55	Scientist	26
Entertainer	58	Soldier	58
Explorer	48	Technician	24
Pilot	42		

This training package costs double for non-Oorts.

OORT SCHOLAR (L)

This oort has a Ph.D. or Doctorate in a specific Academic field. It is up to the GM and player to work out the specific skills for that field.

Quote: *What a wonderful question! I'm so glad you asked.*

Time to Acquire: 96 Months

Starting Money: Normal

Cost: None

Special:

Useful teaching contact	60
Useful teaching contact	40
Useful academic contact	70
Useful academic contact	50
Software library (+20 to one specific lore skill)	50
Software library (+15 to one specific lore skill)	40
Software library (+10 to one specific lore skill)	30
1-5 Software programs (+5 specific lore skills)	10
Software library (+5 to one research skill)	0

Category or Skill **# of Ranks**

Communication skill category	6
choice of up to three skills	6 (total)
Lore • Academic skill category*	9
choice of up to six skills*	12 (total)



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Lore • General skill category	6
choice of up to two skills	6 (total)
Science/Analytical Basic	8
Basic Math	5
Research	3
Science/Analytical • Specialized skill category	n/a
Advanced Math	1
choice of up to two skills	2 (total)
Science/Analytical (choice)*	9
choice of up to three skills*	9 (total)

*If the character is interested in a degree where these are inappropriate, such as a liberal arts degree, he may change them with GM approval.

Professional Qualifier: An Oort with a Memory bonus greater than 10. [-3 to Cost]

Lifestyle Skill: Academic Skill of choice

Stat Gains: None

COST BY PROFESSION

Academic	27	Psychic	33
Bystander	33	Recon	43
Criminal	37	Scientist	25
Entertainer	40	Soldier	43
Explorer	37	Technician	33
Pilot	35		

This training package costs double for non-oorts.



OORT DOCTOR (L)

This oort has become a medical Doctor. This training package encompasses almost all of his training, from early schooling through medical school. This character has completed his medical residency, and has even had a student himself. He is probably about to move on to his medical specialty.

Quote: *Tell me where it hurts.*

Time to Acquire: 96 Months

Starting Money: x3

Cost: None.

Special:

Useful teaching contact	60
Useful medical contact	60
Useful medical contact	40
Useful corporate contact	20
Medscanner	0

Category or Skill	# of Ranks
-------------------	------------

Lore • Academic skill category	4
Education	1
choice of up to three skills	3
Science/Analytical • Basic skill category	2
Basic Math	2
Science/Analytical • Medical	8
Autopsy	1
Drug Therapy	3
Internal Medicine	3
Medical Practice	6
Pharmaceuticals	1
Science/Analytical • Specialized skill category	n/a
Advanced Math	1
choice of up to two skills	2 (total)
Science/Analytical • Technical	2
Medical Technology	2
Tech/Trade • General	2
First Aid	2

Professional Qualifier: Oort with a memory bonus greater than 10. [-2 to cost]

Lifestyle Skills: Medical Practice

Stat Gains: Memory

COST BY PROFESSION

Academic	33	Psychic	32
Bystander	32	Recon	52
Criminal	47	Scientist	24
Entertainer	50	Soldier	41
Explorer	51	Technician	36
Pilot	53		

This training package costs double for non-oorts.



Part II The Oorts

OORT ENGINEER (L)

This oort has specialized in the design and building of various devices. The most typical Engineer, from a role playing standpoint, specializes in fixing and building starships. This character has achieved the Master Technician level of certification.

Quote: *Piece of cake.*

Time to Acquire: 36 Months

Starting Money: Normal

Cost: None

Special:

- Close friends with another technician 60
- Useful technical contact 50
- Diagnostic Equipment (+10 to one tech skill) 30

Category or Skill

of Ranks

- Lore • Academic skill category 3
- choice of up to three skills 3
- Science/Analytical • Basic skill category 2
- Basic Math 2
- Science/Analytical • Engineering 6
- choice of up to three skills 8 (Total)
- Science/Analytical • Specialized skill category n/a
- Advanced Math 1
- choice of up to two skills 2 (total)
- Science/Analytical • Technical skill category 10
- choice of up to five skills 10 (total)

Professional Qualifier: Oort with a Reasoning bonus higher than +10. [-2 to Cost.]

Lifestyle Skills: Any one Science/Analytical skill

Stat Gains: Reasoning

COST BY PROFESSION

Academic	49	Psychic	58
Bystander	58	Recon	58
Criminal	58	Scientist	29
Entertainer	58	Soldier	58
Explorer	58	Technician	28
Pilot	53		

ÜThis training package costs double for non-oorts.

8.9 NOTEWORTHY PLANETS

These noteworthy planets were discussed in *Spacemaster: Privateers*. A little more discussion is warranted, however.

Alapharum (Kappa Fornacis) - Oort Free World

Galactic (-3.748, -2.064, -11.264)

This system began gearing-up in 490 PC. It finished gear-up in 478. The system began working hand in hand with the oorts of Hassus; (there was no formal interstellar government before 1 YC, though what existed was a cooperative community).

By 450, this system decided that there was no good to be gained from building the listening posts. They felt that other races didn't deserve a leg up, and that they would never make it to their own oort cloud anyway.

By 400, Alapharum had largely withdrawn from the interstellar community. Though it still traded with other systems (there was information out there

being discovered all the time), they were silent otherwise. Thus their situation stood for many years.

During this time, they were not idle. Not interested in exploration, they began terraforming other planets in their own system.

The oorts of Alapharum IV (the primary planet), began terraforming Alapharum III in 380 PC, and Alapharum V in 350 PC. In 300 PC, they tackled Alapharum II, a difficult planet with an excessive atmosphere.

In 320 PC, Alapharum V was declared a success. In 290, Alapharum III began accepting immigrants. It took until 50 PC, to open Alapharum II.

When the humans entered the interstellar arena in 1 YC, the oorts of Alapharum were dubious. They opted not to join the Inter-Species Commission. They were horrified when the falar were geared-up, but kept their mouths shut.

Relations have been friendly, if distant, ever since.

When the war began, Alapharum let the ISC know that they had been manufacturing high-tech munitions for years. They had been expecting a falar revolt, and were prepping. With the war under way, they donated all stockpiled weapons (not the ones already issued to their oort and robotic shock-troops) to the effort. They then began building as many arms as they could, selling them to the government at cost. It is interesting to note, however, that they actually hold none of the contracts for standard issue infantry munitions.

Alapharum II has a population of 4.5 billion Oorts. Alapharum III has 6.7 billion. Alapharum IV has 16.9 billion. Alapharum V has 8 billion. They follow a fairly logical progression of temperatures, the innermost world being the hottest and the outermost the coldest.

The Alapharum system is ruled by a council of sociological and political scientists. These scientists are the most brilliant in the system, and rule well.

Faruphas (Rho Coronae Borealis) - Oort

Galactic (+6.515, +8.804, +12.564)

This system was geared-up in 260 YC. It was too far anti-spinward to be geared-up by the oorts before contact, and outside the 15 parsec boundary. In 275 YC, it finished gear-up and began to form its own government. It mirrored the ISC in structure, though the campaigning process has more to do with the candidate's resume than his promises. (Oorts don't care what a candidate intends to do; if he is a talented sociologist, the oorts assume he knows best).

Faruphas was still trying to solidify its new industrial base when it was conquered. It's unknown in what way this system would have shined.

Faruphas II is a warm, humid world, with many jungles. It has a population of 2 billion.

Halapharus (Lambda Fornacis) - Oort

Galactic (-3.904, -6.169, -16.580)

Halapharus had an interplanetary oort community, with two terraformed worlds, when the gear-up



process began. They began gear-up in 500 YC and finished in 499. They were great producers of listening posts during the early oort expansions.

Ftl travel was far from being discovered when the Hassus oorts entered into the interstellar arena. They had made many ingenious ship design advances, however, and their ingenuity was never dampened by the advances given to them by others.

Halapharus has made more developments in engineering and hull design than any other system in history. They were experimenting with fullerenes when the Catholic Church was promoting the dark ages.

To this day, the best fighter designs come off the Halapharus drawing boards.

Halapharus III has 18.1 billion Oorts. Halapharus IV has 12.4 billion. Halapharus V has a mere 6.3 Billion.

The Halapharus system is ruled by the Halapharus Institute of Applied Sciences, the premier university in the system. Its dean and board of directors set policy for the entire system.

Halapul (Nu Phoenicis) - Oort Racial Seat

Galactic (+1.363, -3.728, -11.531)

Halapul was just decades away from discovering the principles of the Jeronan flux drive when the Hassus oorts contacted them. They abandoned their research and embraced the Quantum Drive immediately.

That was most of what was necessary to gear-up the Halapul system. Since then, they have been known for producing some of the most inventive oorts in the ISC. Their forward thinkers are highly valued.

Halapul is renowned for the most advanced medical schools in the ISC. In fact, they have often let their eagerness for information stretch the boundaries of ethics.

For instance, throughout its interstellar history, it has conducted untold amounts of medical research. However, the fact that most of the races were not capable of interstellar travel made little difference to them. They picked promising worlds and sent robot manned research vessels to them. Inhabitants were then abducted and studied.

The Halapul system had 18 billion inhabitants spread across two planets and a terraformed moon.

Hassus (Kappa Tucanae) - Oort National Capital

Galactic (+6.517, -11.445, -14.680)

This is the first system ever to achieve *ftl* flight, and it's unique. It is a binary system, with Hassus(A) and Hassus(B) approximately 156 AU's apart. There are oort worlds around each of these stars (Hassus(A) II and Hassus(B) IV), and they were communicating long before either achieved space flight.

This was a great, driving movement in the space program. They quickly made the journey between the two worlds and began a brisk trade. It wasn't long before they bent their combined might toward conquering the stars.

This was the heart of the pre-contact ISC. It became the heart of the ISC after contact, and it still is now. The capital is actually Hassus(A) II, as the light was more pleasant to Helios natives after contact.

Now the front is dangerously close to the capital. The President has withdrawn to Stands the Wall, and much of the House has gone with him. A quiet evacuation has been going on for months now, as the rich quickly withdraw.

This is still the Capital, however. All business is still conducted here, as the President refuses to admit he's formed a court in exile. Holograms still argue in the House, their controllers parsecs away. Laws are still passed. Policy is still dictated.

On the planet around the secondary, the greatest naval and marine academies in the ISC are based. The finest generals and admirals are based here, as is a great portion of the fleet.

If Paraxis intends to take Hassus, it will be a challenge. He appears to intend to lay siege to it, which might work. It has been years since Hassus produced enough food to support its population.

Hassus(A) II is a temperate world, very much like Helios III. It has a comfortable 24.5 billion population and vast parklands. Its industry is almost exclusively dedicated to running the ISC government.

Hassus(B) IV is a cooler world. Its temperature varies from the arctic to the merely nippy. It used to house ISC Naval Headquarters, and the ISC Marine Corps. The Naval Headquarters moved to Astrilaeron, and then back here. It has since moved again to Stands the Wall.

The Marine Corps headquarters refuses to move. They have begun building secret stashes of food and weapons throughout both worlds. If this system ever becomes occupied, the Marines are determined that the invaders will be punished for generations to come.

Karlephel (Xi Ursae Majoris) - Oort

Galactic (-3.561, -0.961, +9.741)

This is a fascinating system, and it has taught the ISC much about stellar motion. This system has four stars. The oort world orbits a binary pair (B1 and B2), while they in turn orbit 26 au's out from 1a and 1b (which have no habitable planets).

The dance of this complex system is so complicated that many believe that it's artificial, that it could never have developed planets, and that the Architects must have had a hand in it, though that makes the Architects powerful indeed.

Geared-up in 495 PC (it finished in 492), it is still the location of the most illustrious astrophysics university in the ISC. It is also renowned for its applied physics. The reactionless drive, the inertial damper, and anti-gravity were all developed here first (the reactionless drive before the oorts of Hassus).

Karlephel(B) I is a world with large seasonal changes. The axial tilt of the planet, combined with the varying degrees of energy it receives on a year-to-year basis, makes for seasonal changes and weather patterns that are a study in chaos theory.



Part II The Oorts

This world has adapted the governmental model of the ISC, with a house of commons and a minister (who doubles as the planetary governor. It has 11 billion inhabitants.

Warphalorum (Cordoba Durchmusterung -373637) - Oort

Galactic (-7.508, -21.155, -3.544)

This world was the extent of the initial oort exploration. It began gear-up in 300 PC and finished in 285. It has had a soft spot for gear-up interests for a very long time, perhaps because it was the last system to be geared-up before contact, and the inhabitants felt that they had almost missed the boat.

In 250 PC, Warphalorum III founded the *Institute for High Energy Physics*. It wasn't terribly long before it was attracting the best minds in the field, which came to become a part of the Institute's highly exotic experiments. By 200 PC, the primary continental mass seemed dedicated to supporting the Institute.

Desperate for funding from other worlds, the Institute formed a corporation, *Arluph Arms*, and began producing high-quality directed energy weapons. It was the unchallenged leader in the field for a very long time.

Now Warphalorum III continues to produce weapons, but for the war effort. Having lost key government contracts in small arms to the more charismatic sales people of a few Helios corporations, they produce many larger weapon systems, including the now obsolete disruptor cannon array for the S-17 Thunderbolt.

Warphalorum III is ruled exclusively by the Institute. Its CEO and board of directors make all the decisions where the world's future and welfare are concerned.

Warphalorum III is the only planet in the system with permanent residents. It is a warm world, with long summers, and would make a great resort planet, if all one cared about discussing was particle physics.

Warphalorum has 23 billion inhabitants, 99% of which are on the planet. The rest are scattered in mining and chemical collection plants throughout the system.

OORT RACIAL SUMMARY

Nickname: PC: Thinker; Non-PC: Furball.

The oorts are furry, egg-shaped omnivores. They are extremely intelligent and the driving force of technological research in known space.

Physical Characteristics

Evolution: The oort evolved from a common braat stock. They are diurnal omnivores. They are cursorial hunters.

Build: Small and egg-shaped. Covered with long hair. Braat-like. Males and females average 57 kg.

Coloring: Generally brown. Blond, red, and even white are not unheard of.

Endurance: Average. Oorts are cursorial hunters, so distance running is not restricted.

Height: Males and females average 125 cm.

Lifespan: 240-260 years.

Resistance: -10 vs. Poison.

Special Abilities: Photographic Memory, Quick Calculator.

Culture

Clothing & Decoration: Utility harnesses.

Fears & Inabilities: Oorts fear all the things a rational being fears. Oorts have poor eyesight.

Lifestyle: Oorts devote their entire lives to their work. They have little in the form of recreations.

Marriage Pattern: Polygamous. Multiple husbands and wives in an extended family.

Religion: None. They revere the Architects as prophets or saints.

MONSTER STATISTICS CHART

Name	Size	Hits	AT (DB)	Speed MS/AQ	Level	Primary Attack	Secondary Attack	Tertiary Attack	Special
Clauph H*		700E	11 (50)	MD/FA	10F	250 HBi 100	-	-	Dinosaur

Codes: Most of these statistics are standard combat statistics: Hits, AT = Armor Type, DB = Defensive Bonus, Level.

Size: T = Tiny, S = Small, M = Medium, L = Large, H = Huge; H* = Any criticals against this creature are resolved using the Super Large Creature criticals.

Speed: MS = Movement Speed, the rate at which the animal is capable of traveling; AQ = Attack Quickness (speed of animal's attack).

Attacks: The attacks are given in the following form: OB Attack Size Attack Type Additional Information.

OB: The standard Offensive Bonus for this attack.

Attack Size: Maximum result allowed on attack table: S = Small, M = Medium, L = Large, H = Huge.

Attack Type: Ba = Ram/Butt/Bash/Knockdown; Bi = Bite; Cl = Claw/Talon; Cr = Fall/Crush; Gr = Grapple/Grasp/Envelop/Swallow; Ho = Horn/Tusk; Pi = Beak/Pincher; St = Stinger; Ti = Tiny Animals; Ts = Trample/Stomp; Wp = Weapons.



Part II The Oorts

Other Factors

Demeanor: Friendly and outgoing. Obsessed with their work.

Languages: *Starting Languages:* Species Standard (S5/W0), Oort (S8/W4), Human (S5/W0), Falar (S5/W0), Tulgaran (S5/W0); *Allowed Adolescent Development:* Species Standard (S10/W10), Falar (S10/W10), Human (S10/W10), Kagoth (S10/W10), Oort (S10/W10), Tulgaran (S10/W10), Valiesian (S10/W10), Xatosian (S10/W10).

Prejudices: The oorts believe all races should have earned the gear-up. They are a bit prejudiced against all but the humans, the tulgar and the xatosians. They're especially uncomfortable around the falar.

Professions: Any. Scientific and technical are most common.

Training Packages: Any. Academic, scientific, or technical packages are most common.

Special Skills: *Everyman:* Language skills, Diplomacy, Trading, choice of 15 skills from the Lore or Scientific/Analytical group; *Restricted:* All Athletic • Gymnastic skills, Body Development

Standard Hobby Skills: Language skills, Speed Reading, Diplomacy, Public Speaking, Trading, all skills in the Lore group, Mind Point Development, Psychic Powers, all skills in the Scientific/Analytical group, Computer Crime, Data Processing, First Aid, Sensor Analysis, Atmospheric Pilot, FTL Pilot, Ground Vehicle Pilot, Marine Pilot, Space Pilot.

Background Options:
4

Stat Bonuses:
Ag: +2
Co: +0
Me: +10
Re: +10
SD: +6
Em: +0
In: -6
Pr: +6
Qu: +2
St: -10

RR Mods:
Poison: -10
Disease: +0
Fear: +0
Psions: +0

Body Dev. Progression:
0•6•2•2•1

MP Dev. Progression:
0•7•6•5•4

Soul Departure:
5 rounds

Recovery Multiplier:
3 times

Race Type:
5

Outfitting Options

Weapons: Oorts take weapons very seriously.

Armor: Armor is invariably of a military design.

Money: €2,000 in an electronic form.

Background Options

Oorts get four background options.

Extra Languages: These ranks can be used in any fashion the oort likes.

Extra Money: This is generally in an electronic form.

Special Items: These items will invariably be of oort design.

Talents: Any, however Natural Physique can only be taken after Stalwart.

Adolescent Development

Oorts receive the following skills for adolescent development.

Skill	Ranks
Athletic • Endurance skill category	2
Swimming skill	2
Awareness • Searching skill category	1
Body Development skill category	n/a
Body Development skill	1
Communication skill category	10
Language skills	10
Lore • Academic skill category	5
"Own" Culture Lore skill	5
Lore • General skill category	5
"Own" Region Lore skill	5
Scientific/Analytic group	10 (total)
choice of up to twenty skills	20 (total)
Technical/Trade • General skill category	5
choice of up to three skills	3 (total)
Technical/Trade • Vocational skill category	n/a
choice of up to three skills	3 (total)
Hobby Ranks	15
Background Options	4
Talent Points	40





Interlude

INTERLUDE SIX

. . . Assault plus 09:07:21

Fooluph watched the shells fire into the air, tracking their velocity and trajectory in his mind. He cringed a second before the shell detonated, blasting the atmosphere away from it in an expanding shock wave. The inverse square law dissipated the effect as the front advanced. By the time it crashed over him, it was relatively harmless.

Coruscating beams of coherent energy burned across the battlefield. Fooluph looked over at his crew. Good people, all of them. He wished he could keep them all safe, forever, but as the day's previous events proved, they were going to lose people from time to time.

The shells were beginning to track in on them again. He looked over at Mitchell.

"At least Sir Krillian has kept the armor off our backs," he said with a grin.

Fooluph nodded.

"Alright, people, time to move again!"

Fooluph stood and fired at the enemy with his assault blaster. He usually didn't carry one, but the sole purpose of this group was to put fire into the air.



Then they were running across the open ground. Sweat began to flow under his fur, matting it down. The wind shifted, chilling him with evaporative cooling.

Plasma fire tracked them as they ran, blasting through and around them. It wasn't until the Lt. Colonel dropped that he realized he had been hit.

Fooluph grabbed him and tried to drag him to cover, but he lacked the power and the muscular leverage. His boots slipped in the dirt and he fell.

"Garock!"

Garock was running back in a second, plasma burning all around him. Garock scooped them both up and then ran for cover, eating up the ground faster than Fooluph could have managed.

They hit the ground behind the next hill, and he began tearing the Lt. Colonel's armor off him. The plasma was still clinging to it, transferring heat to the armor and melting it away. With Garock's help, he stripped the Lt. Colonel bare and surveyed the damage.

The plasma had burned him in five different locations, two of them to the bone. The damage was too extensive for cauterization to be complete.

The Lt. Colonel had been damaged to the point of massive blood loss on three separate occasions. On average, he passed out after losing 1.67 liters of blood. Of course, the blood loss now was not rapid. Fooluph calculated that the Lt. Colonel would be useless in 5.7 minutes, give or take 7%.

He pulled out his laser scalpel and began cutting away the damaged flesh. He then went to work with the arterial sealer.

The vascular system of the human leg danced through his head. He had cut away some important sections, and that would mean he would have to jury rig something until he could get him into serious regeneration therapy.

He thought it all out. There were 37 significant veins and arteries in the section of flesh he was working on. He began to put them together in his head. There was too much damage to put it back the way it was. He would have to improvise.

He turned on the arterial sealer and bent to his work with absolute concentration.

Assault plus 09:13:30 . . .



FIRST CONTACT



So there we were. We had landed in our shiny new InSpecCom craft and were powering down our systems. Meanwhile, the tulgar, we called them lupines back then, were surrounding us quite thoroughly in their armor, with swords sheathed, but on-hand. We thought it was idle curiosity. Maybe worshipful wonder. How often does a ship fall out of the sky on a column of fire?

We had picked the most advanced tulgaran world. They had radio. They had flight. They were experimenting with rocket technology, but as their social tendencies didn't lend themselves to using rockets in warfare, research was slow, at best. They had to know what they were seeing. They had to realize implications. We were vastly superior, and that must have been written in every line of our ship.

I pinned the translator on my lapel, and went to meet Saluph at the door. The oort and I had been chosen by the team to handle first contact. Let them see two races working together, in friendship. Saluph advised me against smiling; the tulgar, like the falar, view teeth as a threat display. We didn't have to worry about Saluph. It takes a skilled team of doctors and hairstylists a month to find an oort's teeth, or so I told Saluph. He chuckled and we opened the door.

They did not view open arms as a threat display, so that's the aspect I presented as I came down the ramp. No weapons, I tried to exude, We come in peace.

They drew to attention as we approached. The action was strangely comforting. Out of all the races we've encountered, the lupines are the most like us in gesture and thought. I felt like the Commissioner, exiting Navy One.

One of the tulgar stepped forward. "Declare your intentions. What do you seek?" he asked. I was prepared for this. It was the standard tulgaran greeting. "Friendship," I replied. "Cooperation." After a moment, with a flash of insight, I added, "Mutual defense."

The tulgar bristled a bit. "You dishonor us with your derision," my lapel translated. "What could we possibly offer to such an alliance."

I was amazed at how he was adapting to the situation. I had just walked off a spaceship and said the tulgaran equivalent of "Take me to your leader," and he was responding with dignity and aplomb.

"We may have superior arms, but the lupine spirit and the lupine honor has become a living legend among my people. We feel that you could contribute greatly to the whole."

"Then you do not come seeking conquest?"

"No."

I saw the entire circle of tulgaran knights relax at that point. "Then we welcome you as brothers."

It was not until then that I truly realized what was going on. These tulgaran knights thought we had come to conquer their people. They had marched out bravely, forming a living wall around our craft. They had been certain that this would be the end. They had been ready to die, just to show us invaders that they did not take war lightly, and that they would not cower before us. That was when I really had begun to respect the tulgar.

You see, there was never any doubt that the tulgar lived by their beliefs. A lot of people live by their beliefs, but it wasn't until that moment that I realized that they also were willing to die by their beliefs. With dignity.

With honor.

—Alphonse Cashmere, Inter-Planetary Gear-Up Corps



Part II The Tular

9.0 THE TULAR

*"In the darkest hour,
In the coldest night,
When the blood is burning,
Through the heart with fright,
Hold your broadsword boldly,
Cling unto the Light,
Cherish well your honor,
Become one with the fight."*

—A tularan nursery rhyme.

9.1 OVERVIEW

The tular are a tall, wolf-like, humanoid race. They are a culture based on honor and warfare. The tular are loyal and stalwart. Few deny that their admittance into the ISC was a boon to all races. Not even the pacifistic kagoth.

The tular live a life of combat, but it is more a life of defense and protection than of attack. They are everything the falar are not.

The tular are intelligent. They are strong. They are wise. The more humble members of other races have gone so far as to suggest that the tular may be the greatest success of all the Architect's experiments.



TULAR HEIGHT CHART

d100 (OE)	Tular Male	Tular Female
less than (-169)	169 cm	154 cm
(-169)-(-160)	171 cm	156 cm
(-159)-(-155)	173 cm	158 cm
(-154)-(-145)	175 cm	160 cm
(-144)-(-135)	177 cm	162 cm
(-134)-(-85)	179 cm	164 cm
(-84)-(-80)	181 cm	166 cm
(-79)-(-75)	183 cm	168 cm
(-74)-(-70)	185 cm	170 cm
(-69)-(-65)	187 cm	172 cm
(-64)-(-55)	189 cm	174 cm
(-54)-(-45)	191 cm	176 cm
(-44)-5	193 cm	178 cm
6-10	195 cm	180 cm
11-25	197 cm	182 cm
26-50	199 cm	184 cm
51-75	201 cm	186 cm
76-90	203 cm	188 cm
91-145	205 cm	190 cm
146-155	207 cm	192 cm
156-165	209 cm	194 cm
166-170	211 cm	196 cm
171-175	213 cm	198 cm
176-180	215 cm	200 cm
181-185	217 cm	202 cm
186-240	219 cm	204 cm
241-250	221 cm	206 cm
251-260	223 cm	208 cm
261-265	225 cm	210 cm
266-275	227 cm	212 cm
more than 275	229 cm	214 cm

9.2 PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

The tular are well rounded, physically. They are an appealing blend of strength and grace. Their knights are some of the most honored warriors in the ISC.

Evolutionary Considerations

The tular (*tularus sapiens sapiens*) are lupinoid, evolved from wolf-stock. They have adapted over the years of evolution, drifting toward an omnivorous lifestyle and walking upright. Certain aspects, such as the loyalty of the pack to the pack leader, are evident even to this day.

Wolves are cursorial hunters. So are the tular. This means they are very adept at distance running, and like humans and oorts, they receive no penalty to developing this skill. This has also made them persistent in their development of new technologies.

Other factors have kept them from developing new technology as fast as the humans and the oorts. The primary one is that both the oorts and the humans have an advantage over the tular. The



TULGAR WEIGHT CHART

d100 (OE)	Tulgar (m)			Tulgar (f)		
	sm	md	lg	sm	md	lg
less than (-169)	41	46	50	29	32	35
(-169)-(-165)	43	48	52	30	33	37
(-164)-(-160)	45	50	55	31	35	38
(-159)-(-155)	47	52	57	33	36	40
(-154)-(-145)	49	54	59	34	38	42
(-144)-(-135)	51	56	62	35	39	43
(-134)-(-85)	53	58	64	37	41	45
(-84)-(-80)	55	61	67	38	43	47
(-79)-(-75)	57	63	70	40	44	49
(-74)-(-70)	59	66	73	42	46	51
(-69)-(-65)	62	69	76	43	48	53
(-64)-(-55)	65	72	79	45	50	55
(-54)-(-45)	67	75	82	47	52	58
(-44)-5	70	78	86	49	54	60
6-10	75	83	91	52	58	64
11-25	81	90	99	57	63	69
26-75	90	100	110	63	70	77
76-90	97	108	119	68	76	83
91-95	103	114	126	72	80	88
96-145	107	119	131	75	83	92
146-155	109	121	134	77	85	94
156-165	111	124	136	78	87	95
166-170	114	126	139	80	88	97
171-175	116	129	142	81	90	99
176-180	118	131	145	83	92	101
181-185	121	134	147	84	94	103
186-240	123	137	150	86	96	105
241-250	126	139	153	88	98	107
251-260	128	142	157	90	100	110
261-265	131	145	160	91	102	112
266-270	133	148	163	93	104	114
271-275	136	151	166	95	106	116
more than 275	139	154	169	97	108	119

oots are intelligent, far more intelligent than most other races. This has given them a distinctive advantage over the other races, and put them far in the lead. The humans, on the other hand, make up in impetuosity what they lack in intelligence. They will experiment with virulent bio-weapons. They will test energy sources they don't yet fully understand. The tulgar have neither this intelligence, nor this impetuosity working for them. In addition, many scientific advancements come from weapon research. The tulgar will not even research weapons they'd consider dishonorable (such as nuclear devices).

The tulgaran hand is very similar to human and oort hands. Four non-opposable digits, plus one opposable. It's been suggested that this design is a favorite among the Architects. It's even been suggested that the Architects must have had nearly

identical hands. The tulgar hand ends in claws. It is hair covered except for the hard pads along the inside. They are not well adapted to tactile sensing.

Tulgar are diurnal. They are also omnivorous (with strong carnivorous tendencies).

Build And Physiology

Tulgar are large, though not quite as massive as the falar. They have barrel chests and well-muscled arms and legs.

Tulgar males average two meters in height and 100 kg. Females average 185 cm and 70 kg.

Both males and females have claws on both their hands and feet. That, combined with teeth that haven't yet completely adapted to their new omnivorous tendencies, make the tulgar deadly foes, even when unarmed.

Coloring

Most tulgar are gray and black. Some brown tulgar have been known, as have black and white. Pure-colored tulgar are uncommon, but not that uncommon. All tulgar have brown eyes.

Endurance

Tulgar have good endurance. They receive a +3 to their Constitution. In addition, they receive a +20 bonus to their Exhaustion points. Finally, since the tulgar are cursorial hunters, distance running is not restricted for them.

Life Span

Tulgar can live 180-210 years with proper medical attention. They live about 55-65 years without. The tulgaran body begins experiencing organ failures in its late years, as well as graying along the muzzle. Cancer and loss of mental faculties are rare, but not unknown.

Tulgaran litters generally contain two to five pups and have a gestation period of 261 days. The tulgar are born

able to crawl and suckle. They generally begin to walk upright after about three years (it takes a while to wean them from crawling), though they are usually forming complete sentences by that time.

Tulgar generally hit sexual maturity after thirteen standard years. They stop growing after approximately fifteen years.

Tulgaran age categories are as follows: Old 75-94 years. Very Old: 95-117 years. Venerable: 118-139. Ancient: 140-168. Very Ancient: 169+. Stat loss is 1d5-1.

Resistance

The tulgar have pretty average resistance to most things. They receive a +20 to any RRs versus Disease. In addition, racial conditioning for the tulgar is such that they are highly resistant to Fear. They receive a +50 to any RR versus Fear.



Part II The Tuglar

Special Abilities

The tuglar have several special abilities. Because of racial training, tuglar are Natural Horsemen (+25 to all maneuvers involving horses) and Outdoorsman (+50 to foraging, fire starting, and shelter location maneuvers, +20 to tracking, hunting, stalking and hiding when outdoors). In addition, the tuglar have Acute Hearing (+10 to awareness checks involving sound), Nightvision (100': Eyeshine), Acute Smell (+25 to Tracking and +10 to awareness check involving odor), Cold Resistance (+15 to RRs and DB versus cold), Natural Weapon (Medium claws, develop under special attacks as an Everyman skill) and Tough Skin (AT 3), Ultrasonic Hearing (tuglar can hear sounds twice as high pitched as humans).

A Note On Tuglaran Senses

Tuglar senses have a lot to do with how they view the world. The tuglar have developed good visual acuity through their evolution, and the crucible of warfare has done much to weed out the tuglar with poor eyesight. They still rely more heavily on smell, and even hearing than most other races. A tuglar does not care what you look like you're intending to do. He cares about what you smell like you're intending to do. It is difficult to fool a tuglar, especially if you are close to him.

9.3 CULTURE

Tuglaran culture stresses honor and chivalry. They are a noble race, with strong, well-defined roles to play. Many other races admire their culture.

Clothing And Decoration

The tuglar are very like humans in many respects. Years of wearing traditional armor and weapons have adapted these heavily furred creatures to the use of clothing. Though there is no taboo in Tuglaran culture to nudity, the Tuglar seem to prefer clothing, generally wearing at least a minimum to cover genitals (and nipples for females).

The bottom line is that the tuglar are nearly as notorious clotheshorses as the humans. The biggest difference is that tuglaran fashions change slowly. The tuglar still wear fashions not far removed from the initial intermixing, which occurred during the gear-up of the tuglaran worlds. This tends to include calf-length pants for men (turn down boots optional) a blousy undershirt and doublet. (They took a liking to a human retro-trend that was occurring then, when earthers still dominated human culture.) Women wear extravagant gowns, much like what might have been found in 17th century France.

Of course every male tuglar aspires to the tuglaran knighthood. These wear tuglaran combat armor, new redesigns of old tuglaran plate. These armors are designed to resemble the old armor as closely as possible. Inasmuch as the tuglar are a very practical race, the high polish adds *reflect effects* for laser weapons.

Fears And Inabilities

The tuglar fear nothing but disgrace. They receive a +50 to all Resistance rolls versus Fear and

charge fearlessly into the fiercest firefights. Many have accused them of being as rash as the humans, but the tuglar do not commit rash acts. Their most meaningless deaths are actually triumphs in honor, though few may know the truth behind a tuglar's actions, not even his closest friend. A tuglar may charge a foe merely because he has secretly feared the foe his entire life, and now, upon meeting him, must prove to himself the purity of his own heart. A common tuglaran motto is: "It's easy to make your life mean something. You have thousands of days in which to try. The difficulty is making your death mean something, because for that, you have only one chance...."

The tuglar do have a couple of shortcomings, however. First of all, they see only shades of gray. They are completely color-blind. Secondly, the tuglar are very sensitive to heat. When subjected to high temperatures, the Tuglar receive a -2 penalty for every degree over 30.

The rest of the tuglaran restrictions are self-imposed. The tuglar have a strict chivalric code. A tuglar will allow a foe to pick up a dropped weapon, refuse to attack his back, etc. He won't fire gunnery weapons at infantry (though he will expect them to surrender if they are small in number). In addition, the tuglar have a strict code concerning the treatment of females. All honor is afforded a lady, and all courtesy extended. The tuglar take affronts to a lady's honor very seriously.

Lifestyle

The tuglar live a life that seems a bizarre blend between high chivalry and modern culture. Tuglaran pastimes include hunting, falconry, and the usual blend of holo and computer entertainment. They disdain the excesses of modern culture, and only use the sensenet to pursue pastimes they'd pursue in real life. For instance, a tuglaran in a major metropolitan area might use the sensenet to practice his falconry, or a tuglaran on a spacecraft might use it to polish his tourney skills.

The tuglar live by their strict code of ethics twenty-five hours a day. Their entire life is consumed by their code of honor. They still meet challenges of honor with duels, and the ISC has structured its legal system to allow for these duels, while still keeping them fair. Most duels of honor are satisfied at disarm or first blood. Rarely is a death-duel required.

A Note On The Tuglaran Knighthood

Every tuglaran aspires to the knighthood. Entry into the knighthood requires sponsorship by a knight in good standing. Sponsorship allows the applicant to apprentice for a certain period of time (which varies according to the applicant's abilities) as a squire. The squire is generally apprenticed under the knight who sponsored him, but there is a pool of unassigned squires at any given time. (Usually because the knight who sponsored the squire is dead.)

After a number of years, as determined by the squire's knight (or the grand master, for those unassigned), the squire is promoted to full knight. Historically, this usually required a quest to be completed. In the modern era, this is usually awarded after a battle.



The knighthood exemplifies the ideals of chivalry and honor. They fill every role of the military, from infantry, to armor, to fighter combat. No matter the form of combat, chivalry must be maintained.

Marriage And Family Pattern

The tulgar mate for life. Tulgar couples generally produce large families. These families tend to be very close. Adultery among the tulgar is nearly unknown. When it occurs, it brings tremendous scandal.

Tulgaran family life is based on strong ethical values. Hard work, honor, honesty and morality are drilled into tulgaran children at an early age. Alcohol is allowed, but never in excess. Drugs are strictly forbidden. No tulgar would ever perform an act on the sense net that they would not perform in real life.

The tulgar have strictly defined sexual roles. Males are the providers and protectors. Females are the homemakers and child tenders. The sexual roles are respected, even desired by all the tulgaran. Breaking these roles is not looked upon with disapproval; it is looked upon with sympathy. For instance, if a widower is forced to tend his children and keep his home, his plight is pitied. Accordingly, a widow who must take up a sword and side arm to avenge her husband and satisfy honor is pitied as well. The tulgar do not see this as sexist. Generally speaking, the tulgar are very happy with the role their sex gives them. There is great honor in fulfilling it well.

Religion

Most tulgar are polytheistic. The different and disparate tulgaran cultures had enough commonalities in their religious beliefs that upon gear-up, they were able to unify their beliefs into a tulgaran whole. Below is the reformed tulgaran pantheon.

Othgar—High God. God of mercy and creation. Master of the Pantheon. Father of all. Othgar is a gentle and loving god, slow to anger. When he does anger, however, he will defeat all comers. He is intensely protective of his tulgar children.

Calmara—Goddess of home and hearth. Othgar's wife. Calmara is all that the tulgar value in a female. She is demure, loving and caring. She is loyal and devoted to her husband.

Alistaga—Goddess of Nature. Chaos. Mercilessness. Alistaga is a capricious goddess. She destroys and creates with impunity. She is the heart of chaos.

Bargoth—God of the Hunt. Master of ranged weapons. (Master of the Bow, formerly.) Bargoth is the Master of the Hunt. It was he who taught the tulgar the art of hunting. He is an accomplished warrior.

Talairas—God of Honor. Warfare. Chivalry. Lord of the Knighthood. Talairas is the god of honor. The knighthood is devoted to his good works. He embodies defense of the weak and the protection of the righteous. He is the most masterful warrior of all the gods.

Harras—God of birds. Lord of Falconry. Harras is the god of all birds. He is the brother of Bargoth and the two hunt together often, Bargoth with his bow and Harras with his hawks.

Kistharish—Goddess of Healing. Guardian of Souls. Kistharish is a gentle and loving goddess. She brings peace and stillness wherever she passes. She possesses the keys to heaven.

Ainaan—God of Death. Hope. Ainaan grants the final release to all warriors. To die with honor is the greatest goal of all tulgar, because then Ainaan might reap their soul himself.

The Destroyer—God of evil, deceit, destruction, corruption. The Destroyer is the ultimate force for evil. He is the most powerful of all the gods, and only the unity and honor of the others allows them to stand in his way. He is more of an elemental than a god.

9.4 OTHER FACTORS

There are many other factors to consider. These are important in role playing a tulgar.



Demeanor

The tulgar are polite and courteous to a fault. To be discourteous would be a dishonor, and the tulgar never forget their honor.

The tulgar are always ready to do what's right. They are constantly aware of the demands of honor and perpetually ready to leap at its smallest demands. A tulgar is ready to fight at the drop of a hat, but more importantly, he is ready to die, for the smallest cause, whenever it's necessary.



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Language

The tulgaran tongue is a language of growls and snarls, yelps and, at the proper times, howls. It can sound violent, terrible, gentle and haunting, all at the same time.

Starting Languages: Species Standard (S8/W4), Tulgaran (S5/W0). *Allowed Adolescent Development:* Species Standard (S10/W10), Falar (S10/W10), Human (S8/W8), Kagoth (S7/W7), Tulgaran (S10/W10).

Prejudices

The tulgar judge an individual by his personal honor. Therefore, they have little in the way of racial prejudice. They do, however, despise the falar, believing that their idea of honor is a travesty.

The tulgar have a special respect for the kagoth. That such a large and powerful race, so suited for war, should dedicate their lives to peace, touches the tulgar deeply. The knighthood has made a vow that no kagoth world shall fall undefended. To date, all kagoth land has been bought at the expense of tulgaran blood.

Professions

Combat oriented professions are very common. All professions are possible. Psychics exist, but as they are bound by the same strict codes as the rest of the tulgar. Psychic ability is considered a religious gift, and almost all psychics are members of the clergy.

Special Skills

Everyman: Tracking, Natural Attack

Restricted: All skills in the Athletic • Gymnastic skill category

Standard Hobby Skills

The tulgar can choose from a variety of hobby skills. Combat skills are often taught to the young early on.

Standard Hobby Skills: Combat Armor, Reinforced Cloth, Dancing, Play Instrument, Music, Poetry, Distance Running, Sprinting, Swimming, Alertness, Sense Ambush, Reading Tracks, Tracking, Situational Awareness (Combat), Sense Awareness (Hearing), Sense Awareness (Smell), Body Development, Combat Pilot, Crewmember AFV, Mounted Combat, Suppression Fire, Language skills, H.E.P., Missiles, Projectile Gunnery, Diplomacy, Leadership, Philosophy, Heraldry, Martial Arts skills, Riding, Scientific/Analytical skills, Self Control skills, Military Organization, Vehicle skills, Weapons skills.

The Individual As A PC

Tulgar adventure throughout known space, seeking whatever course upon which their honor beckons them. Many tulgar PCs are knights or squires, seeking the battles that will bring honor to their names and the names of their family.

9.5 OUTFITTING OPTIONS

Tulgar are outfitted like most races. There is little special to consider.

Armor

Tulgaran armor tends to resemble the armors of old. Their combat armor resembles heavy plate, polished with a reflect coating. Their medium armor consists of a polymer mail, much like ancient chain mail. This armor generally covers a ballistic armor undercoat. This protects as +25 chain (ATs 13, 14, 15, or 16).

ARMOR CHART

Item	AT	Cost (IN ¢)	Weight	Notes
Breast Plate	VII	5,000	10	Reflect Coating.
Full Plate*	X	100,000	100	Reflect Coating.
Quilted Shirt	I	50	1	Covers torso.
Quilted Jacket	II	70	1.5	Covers torso and arms.
Quilted Great Coat	III	100	2	Covers torso, arms, and thighs.
Quilted Suit	IV	200	3	Cover entire body but head.
Chain Shirt	13	1,500	3.5	+25 to DB.
Arm Greaves	-	2,500	10	Reflect Coating, necessary for certain ATs.
Leg Greaves	-	2,500	10	Reflect Coating, necessary for certain ATs.
Full Chain*	15	6,500	7.5	+25 to DB.
Chain Hauberk	16	5,500	7.5	+25 to DB.
Helm (Kevlar)	-	40	1	Reflect Coating.
Full Helm (Combat Armor)	-	-	900	1.5 Reflect Coating
Plate Gauntlets	-	200	.1	Reflect Coating.

*Includes Full Helm

WEAPON CHART

Item	Cost (in ¢)	Type	Weight	Breakage Numbers	Weapon Strength	Fumble
Monosword	1,000	1 hm	1	1-3	95	01-04



Money

Tulgar begin play with ¢2,000. This is almost always in an electronic format. Some tulgaran worlds still mint hard currency.

Weapons

The tulgar wield a mixture of high-tech melee weapons, such as the monosword, as well as energy and projectile weapons, such as assault rifles and carbines. No tulgar would be caught dead without his melee weapon.

9.6 BACKGROUND OPTIONS

The following section depicts the types of things upon which a tulgar might spend his background options. It gives any special considerations specific to tulgar.

Extra Languages

In addition to the allowed adolescent development, for background options, the tulgar can spend ranks on the following. Oort (S6/W8), Valiesian (S5/W5), Xatosian (S5/W5).

Extra Money

This is either in an electronic form, or in the form of tulgaran coins.

Special Items

These will invariably be of tulgaran design. They most likely have deep sentimental value.

9.7 TALENTS

Tulgar characters may choose from any of the talents in *Future Law*. The GM should look through these options and select the ones that are appropriate

TULGARAN TALENT & FLAW CHART

- | | |
|-------|---|
| 01-09 | Cowardice (Flaw): You are a coward, the most horrible of tulgaran failings. Battle strikes fear in your heart. You will do anything to keep free from physical danger. It takes a Very Hard Acting maneuver to hide your fear from other tulgar. This is only a Medium maneuver versus other races.
[GREATER: -20 points] |
| 10-22 | Declawed (Flaw): You have had your claws removed. This could have been via physical injury or deliberate surgery. If done deliberately, it was probably a form of torture (the falar take particular joy in declawing tulgaran knights).
[MAJOR: -15 points] |
| 23-35 | Dishonored (Flaw): You have been dishonored. This may or may not have been your fault. You must wear the brand of the honorless (a broken sword) on all armor or clothing. Whether or not you comply is up to you, but this all but makes you a non-person among the tulgar.
[MAJOR: -15 Points] |
| 36-48 | Infamous Ancestor (Flaw): Someone has soiled your family name. This has detrimental effects on your daily life. Superiors pass you over for choice assignments, fathers won't let you near their daughters, etc. All influence maneuvers with respect to tulgarans are modified by -20.
[MAJOR: -15 Points] |

- | | |
|--------|---|
| 49-65 | Duelist: You have mastered a melee weapon. This has saved you on more than one occasion. All development for this weapon is considered Occupational
[MINOR: 15 Points] |
| 66-82 | Many Honors: You have led a life of glorious battles. The list of the battles you've survived reads like the list of tulgaran achievements of the past five years. Once the inevitable bragging ensues, all other stories will be left by the wayside as you begin to recount, in vivid detail battle after battle. The more tulgar present, the greater your audience will be. As long as there is at least one knight or career soldier in the bar, you're guaranteed to get all your drinks for free.
[LESSER: 5 points] |
| 83-86 | Master of Arms: You are the master of all weapons. All weapon skills are Everyman for you.
[GREATER: 25 Points] |
| 87-100 | Prestigious Lineage: Your family name is cherished among the tulgar. Few tulgar have not heard of the glories of your ancestors. Tulgar look on you with respect. Commanders choose you for daring missions. Women swoon when you pass. Fathers seek to catch you as a son-in-law. All influence maneuvers with respect to tulgarans are modified by +20.
[MAJOR: 15 Points] |



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to his game (it is suggested that Options 1 or 2 be used unless something warrants otherwise). The classification of the talent/ flaw is given in brackets after the description of the talent/ flaw (also included are the appropriate point costs if optional rules are used).

Option 1: By spending one background option, the character may make a d100 (not open-ended) roll and consult the chart below.

Option 2: A player may select one of the talents from the chart below, but must pay the appropriate number of background options (as listed in *Future Law*), or talent points.

Option 3: As Option 2 above, except that the cost is lowered by one (if background options are spent), or five (if talent points are spent). This represents the talent being specific to tulgar.

Option 4: As with options 1 or 2, except that any race may receive these talents, at double cost (to represent the fact that the talents/ flaws are specific to tulgar).

9.8 TULGARAN TRAINING PACKAGES

Any training packages are possible. Those of a dishonorable nature, such as criminal packages, are very rare.

The tulgaran training packages revolve around the specifics of their culture. Either one is a member

of one of the three knighthoods, or one is a priest, practicing psychic powers and leading the tulgar spiritually. It would be rare for another race to take one of these, but not unknown.

KNIGHT OF THE HAWK (L)

The Knights of the Hawk are the branch of the tulgaran knighthood that specializes in space and space combat. They fill many roles, but once they become full knights, they typically choose to serve in a fighter (provided they meet the physical requirements, such as eyesight).

Quote: Wherever blood boils into the vacuum of space, the Hawk will be there.

Time to Acquire: 72 Months

Starting Money: Normal

Cost: None

Special:

One-Handed Energy Weapon (+10)	40
Tulgaran Armored Vacsuit (+10)	40
Force Buckler	30
Monosword (+10)	30
Close friends with another pilot	60
Fighter Duty	70
Squire (with Ship upgrade to Bloodhawk)	50

Category or Skill	# of Ranks
Combat Maneuvers skill category	n/a
Combat Pilot skill	1
Science/Analytical • Specialized skill category	n/a
Orbital Mechanics skill	1
Subterfuge • Mechanics skill category	1
Electronic Warfare skill	1
Tech/Trade • Gunnery skill category	1
HEP skill	1
Tech/Trade • Vehicles skill category	1
Atmospheric Pilot skill	1
FTL Pilot skill	1
Space Pilot skill	1
Weapon • One-Handed Melee skill category	1
Monosword	1

Professional Qualifier: Knight talent (One Background Option) required + no physical disabilities. [-3 to Cost]

Lifestyle Skills: Space Pilot

Stat Gains: Intuition

COST BY PROFESSION

Academic	38	Psychic	52
Bystander	35	Recon	33
Criminal	37	Scientist	57
Entertainer	37	Soldier	34
Explorer	30	Technician	36
Pilot	28		

KNIGHT OF THE HORSE (L)

The Knights of the Horse serve in the tanks and fast attack vehicles of the tulgaran knighthood. They are honored for their support of the Knights of the Sword, and are terrifying in a fight.





Quote: *Whenever the Sword attacks, the Horse will be there, to guard its flank.*

Time to Acquire: 52 Months

Starting Money: Normal

Cost: None

Special:

One-Handed Energy Weapon (+10)	40
Tulgaran Combat Armor (+10)	40
Force Buckler	30
Monosword (+10)	30
Close friends with another knight	60
Upgrade to Tank	50

Category or Skill	# of Ranks
Combat Maneuvers skill category	n/a
Crewmember AFV	2
Lore • General skill category	2
Heraldry skill	2
Subterfuge • Mechanics skill category	1
Electronic Warfare skill	1
Tech/Trade • Gunnery skill category	2
HEP	2
Projectile Gun	2
Weapon • One-Handed Melee skill category	1
Monosword	1

Professional Qualifier: Knight talent (one background point) required.

Lifestyle Skills: Crewmember AFV

Stat Gains: Intuition

COST BY PROFESSION

Academic	42	Psychic	60
Bystander	40	Recon	32
Criminal	38	Scientist	65
Entertainer	32	Soldier	28
Explorer	29	Technician	36
Pilot	28		

KNIGHTS OF THE SWORD (L)

The Knights of the Sword are the infantry of the tulgaran knighthood. They are the most honored of all knights, because they fight only with what they can carry on their backs.

Quote: *Wherever the blood of innocents is spilled, it will mix with the blood of the Sword.*

Time to Acquire: 21 Months

Starting Money: Normal

Cost: None

Special:

One-Handed Energy Weapon (+10)	40
Tulgaran Combat Armor (+10)	40
Force Buckler	30
Monosword (+10)	30
Close friends with another knight	60

Category or Skill	# of Ranks
Armor • Heavy skill category	2
Combat Armor skill	2
Athletic • Endurance skill category	1

Body Development skill category	n/a
Body Development skill	2
Combat Maneuvers skill category	n/a
Alien Environment (Zero Gravity) skill	2
Lore • General skill category	2
Heraldry skill	2
Weapon • One-Handed Energy skill category	1
choice of one skill	1
Weapon • One-Handed Melee skill category	2
Monosword	2

Professional Qualifier: Knight talent (one background point) required.

Lifestyle Skills: Monosword

Stat Gains: Strength

COST BY PROFESSION

Academic	56	Psychic	94
Bystander	40	Recon	35
Criminal	38	Scientist	67
Entertainer	39	Soldier	29
Explorer	34	Technician	54
Pilot	36		

TULGARAN PRIEST (L)

The tulgaran Priest is the spiritual leader of the tulgaran society. He is also a powerful psychic (which, to the tulgar, is the same thing).

Quote: *Rest, my child. I feel your pain . . .*

Time to Acquire: 84 months

Starting Money: Normal

Cost: None

Special:

Useful clerical contact	60
Useful knight contact	60
Ancestral Rosary (+10 to one Psychic skill category)	30
Special religious symbol	100

Category or Skill	# of Ranks
Influence skill category	3
Public Speaking skill	3
Lore • General skill category	4
Heraldry skill	1
Religion skill	3
Psion • Category 1	3
choice of up to ten skills	10 (total)
Psion • Category 2	3
choice of up to four skills	4 (total)

Professional Qualifier: Total Self-discipline bonus greater than +0. [-3 to Cost]

Lifestyle Skills: Two psions in primary category.

Stat Gains: Self Discipline

COST BY PROFESSION

Academic	35	Psychic	29
Bystander	50	Recon	86
Criminal	91	Scientist	43
Entertainer	95	Soldier	74
Explorer	111	Technician	65
Pilot	116		



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9.9 TULGARAN VEHICLES

The tulgar have several vehicles that they are known for taking into combat. They are detailed here for the sake of completeness.

The following stats are provided for most vehicles. Some of these will be supplied for all vehicles, but some of them will not. If a stat is omitted, it is simply inappropriate. These stats should be all that's necessary to run vehicular encounters.

Crew: This describes how many biological beings the craft is designed to carry. The number in parenthesis is the number of crewmembers actually necessary to pilot the craft.

Cargo: This describes the amount of available area the vehicle has for cargo. In most vehicles, one passenger can be exchanged for two kiloliters of storage space.

Mass: This is the average weight of the vehicle. It is gives the vehicles mass in metric tonnes.

Hits: This is the amount of damage a vehicle can withstand.

CAT: This lists the ship's Construction Armor Type.

Vacuum Power Rating: The amount of power put out by the craft's generator. The number in parenthesis is the amount of power the craft doesn't use.

DB: The ship's Defensive Bonus. It does not include Electronic Warfare.

EW: Electronic Warfare. This EW rating must still be utilized with a successful Electronic Warfare skill. It is listed in two numbers. The number before the slash is active EW. The number after the slash is passive EW.

Cost: This is the value of the craft. It is the value in Credits (¢) or roughly equal in purchase value to an American dollar (\$).

Top Speed: This is the craft's maximum speed. It is measured in kilometers per hour, or, with spacecraft, it is measured in Gs of acceleration.

Translight Capability: This shows whether or not the craft is capable of *ftl* travel.

Atmospheric Capability: For space vehicles, this gives the craft's capabilities in an atmosphere. Some vehicles are exclusively atmospheric.

Armament: This describes the typical armament of the vehicle. Note that this is not a hard or fast rule, just typical. After each weapon is listed the weapon's OB, which is added to the gunner's attack roll.

Features: Special features of the craft, not detailed in other areas.

Auxiliary Systems: These are backup systems. Most combat craft have auxiliary systems.

"Heavy Horse" Class Battle Tank

Crew	3 (1)
Cargo	1 Kiloliters
Mass	199.91 Tonnes (194.91 Unloaded)
	Hits: 230
CAT	XVI
Vacuum Power Rating	78 (0)
DB	65
	Armor Belt: 15
Screens	50
EW	50/10
Cost	8,392,100
Top Speed	185 (Gravitic)
Translight Capability	None
Atmospheric Capability	Exclusively
Armament	1 MK 20 Projectile Cannon, +45
	1 MK 10 Blaster Cannon (Anti-Infantry), +35
Features	Microfrequency Comm Rig
	Tight Beam Comm Rig
	Quantum Comm Rig
	Life Support
	Radiation Shielding, +50
	Advanced Sensor Suite

Commentary: The Heavy Horse is one of the more devastating main line battle tanks in the ISC arsenal. 200 tonnes of sheer terror, its autoloader can handle a wide assortment of rounds, for various occasions, performing ammo switches instantly. Though it has life support capability, it does not have the facilities or the crew to stay out for extended missions.

"Light Horse" Class FAV

Crew	2 (1)
Cargo	5 Kiloliters
Mass	3 Tonnes
	Hits: 5
CAT	XIII
Vacuum Power Rating	6 (0)
DB	70
	Material Bonus: 25
	Evade: 45
EW:	Not Standard
Cost	2,093,000
Top Speed	500 (Gravitic)
Translight Capability	None
Atmospheric Capability	Exclusively
Armament	1 MK 5 Pulse Laser, +65
Features	Microfrequency Comm Rig
	Basic Sensor Suite

Commentary: Knights of the Horse come in two types. The light horse, the most common, ride these fast assault vehicles (alternately, fast attack vehicles). Typically ridden one-man, these gravbike-like vehicles are used for a fast-moving attack.



S-8B Hawk, Space Superiority Fighter

Crew	1
Cargo	1 Kiloliter (1 Tonne)
Mass	338.9 Tonnes
	Hits: 424
CAT	XV
Vacuum Power Rating	225 (0)
DB	75
	Armor Belt: +25
	Defensive Screens: +20
	Evade: +30
	Decoys: 10
	Rating 8 PD, 6 Attacks
EW	50/10
Cost	46,607,000
Top Speed	14.163 Gs loaded, 14.269 unloaded
	5,000 airspeed
Translight Capability	None
Atmospheric Capability	Full
Armament	6 MK 10 Blasters (Flexible +60)
Features	Microfrequency Comm Rig
	Quantum Comm Rig
	Advanced Sensor Suite
	Shielded Weapons
	Armored Cockpit
	Cramped
	Top-Quality Weapons
Auxiliary Systems:	RIF Generator
	Quantum Comm Rig
	Advanced Sensor Suite
	Life Support
	Vacuum Power Generator

Commentary: Built by Faluph Aerospace, the Hawk is not only the fighter of choice for the Knights of the Hawk; it's perhaps the greatest single person fighter ever built. It is so well designed that the Jeronans stole its weapon configuration for their Death Howl (though they don't have the production facilities to build them as well). This, along with the Blood Hawk, is the only battle-tested fighter in the ISC arsenal.

If your enemy isn't afraid of you yet, wait till those six blasters take a piece out of them. Sure, they're the Hawk's only weapons, but they are so well shielded the Hawk keeps them till the bloody end. In fact, the Hawk is, all in all, one of the most durable fighters in the skies, with its heavy armor belt and powerful weapons. If you're on the side of the good guys, you want to try to crawl into one of these.

Any Knight of the Hawk, who hasn't taken a squire, pilots one of these. This fighter, and its predecessors, has taken part in most every major conflict of the ISC. If the knighthood thinks a cause is just, expect a carrier to drop several hundred of these fighters into the fray within days.

S-9C Blood Hawk, Heavy Assault Fighter

Crew	2 (1)
Cargo	2 Kiloliters (1 Tonne)
Mass	1,015 Tonnes
	Hits: 1,269
CAT	XV
Vacuum Power Rating	437 (38)
DB	85
	Armor Belt: +25
	Defensive Screens: +40
	Evade: +20
	Decoys: 10
	Rating 8 PD, 6 Attacks
EW	50/10
Cost	100,730,000
Top Speed	12.808 Gs Loaded, 12.84 Gs Unloaded
	5,000 Airspeed
Translight Capability	None
Atmospheric Capability	Take Off and Landing Only
Armament	4 MK 10 Blasters, +75
	4 MK 20 Blasters, +85
	2 MK 10 Disruptors, +75
Features	Microfrequency Comm Rig
	Quantum Comm Rig
	Advanced Sensor Suite
	Shielded Weapons
	Armored Cockpit
	Armored Gunner
	Cramped
	Top-Quality Weapons
	Artificial Gravity
Auxiliary Systems	RIF Generator
	Quantum Comm Rig
	Advanced Sensor Suite
	Life Support
	Vacuum Power Generator

Commentary: When a Knight of the Hawk acquires a squire, he is upgraded to the Blood Hawk, where his squire can prove himself on the disruptors. The Blood Hawk is another miracle product of Faluph Aerospace. It is big, mean and durable, the most durable fighter out there. Since this is a Knighthood fighter, it has been extensively battle tested.

The Blood Hawk is big, so big that it's simply not capable of in-atmosphere combat. It's powerful, however. With its 4 compact blasters to soften up a foe and 4 small blasters to finish them off, this fighter is a killing machine. Its only weakness is a slight tendency for criticals.

Another problem that sometimes plagues this craft is its less efficient point defense system. The system was dropped in quality from the smaller model, assuming that the gunner could pick up the slack, shooting down incoming torpedoes. Unfortunately, the larger disruptors aren't maneuverable enough to target many torpedoes. This problem is rarely bandied about, however. If there is one thing this craft can do, it's take a torpedo hit.



9.10 NOTEWORTHY PLANETS

These noteworthy planets were discussed in *Spacemaster: Privateers*. A little more discussion is warranted, however.

Fortress (Eta Coronae Borealis A & B) - Tulgar

Galactic (+6.216, +6.791, +14.028)

This is a binary system with the stars approximately 16 AU's apart. The primary planet orbits the secondary, but is close enough from the primary to never get darker than a dim twilight for part of the year.

Fortress began gear-up in 257 and finished in 278. It immediately joined the ISC and was folded into the greater tulgaran racial government.

Fortress fell in 285, despite a noble fight. Its government has been wiped out (formerly a monarchy). The falar government has slain all remnants of the knighthood. They have not broken the tulgaran spirit of this world.

Fortress II has a population of 900 million (estimated). It is a warm temperate world, warmer, on the whole, than most tulgaran worlds. The majority of the population avoids the equatorial regions, accordingly.

Honor Guard (Xi Botis) - Tulgar

Galactic (+2.958, +1.261, +5.886)

This binary system has two moderate stars 32 AU's apart. Each had tulgaran worlds, but as neither had yet developed the lens, neither had noticed the other at the time of gear-up.

Honor Guard(A) III and Honor Guard(B) II began gear-up in 31 YC. They finished gear-up in 63 YC and promptly attempted to swear fealty to Sir Tairen I. Sir Tairen I would have none of it, though. He explained to them his vision of the tulgaran people and seeing that they possessed the greatest cavalry he had ever seen, made this system the home of the Knights of the Horse.

Honor Guard(A) III was declared the home of the Light Horse. They began building a knighthood revolving around the use of fast attack vehicles. They quickly master combat from the backs of these FAVs.

Honor Guard(B) II was given the honor of producing the Heavy Horse. Having never seen a tank before, they studied the greatest human tank generals to learn their tactics. To this day, the premier unit of Heavy Horse is known as the Desert Foxes.

In 90 YC, this system followed the example of Sir Tairen III and turned control of the system over to the Knights of the Horse. The leader alternates between the Light Horse and the Heavy Horse; when a leader dies, he is succeeded by a member of the other half of the order. They have ruled the system ever since.

At the end of 285 YC, the Honor Guard defenses were smashed. Marshal Paraxis defeated the Desert Foxes on their own territory and rather than be destroyed, the knighthood surrendered in honor. Paraxis used his power to make sure that his side of the bargain was upheld. He dismantled the knight-

hood, but the members were either removed from the order or went errant. None of them were killed.

It was this efficient success that was one of Paraxis' final steps toward Lord High Marshal.

Honor Guard(A) III has 18.5 billion inhabitants. Honor Guard(B) II has 19.1 billion. Both worlds are on the cool side of temperate, but Honor Guard(B) III is cooler.

Hopeless Charge (Bonner Durchmusterung +358) - Tulgar

Galactic (-7.779, +17.929, -9.303)

This world began gear-up in 258 YC and finished in 285. As they were forming their new government, they swore to the Knights of the Horse and invited all errant members to come build a court in exile. The knights complied.

This world (Hopeless Charge IV) has 7.8 billion inhabitants. It has become, overnight, a major political force, as it now houses one third of the Tulgaran Triumvirate. It is cold, even for a tulgaran world.

Many Honors (Kappa Ceti) - Tulgar

Galactic (-6.987, +0.216, -6.536)

Many Honors began gear-up in 31 YC and finished in 63 YC. It formed a planetary monarchy in much the same way as Valorous Death.

Sir Tairen I looked upon the Tulgar of Many Honors V and declared that they were the finest swordsmen he had ever seen. He formed them into the Knights of the Sword and created the largest full-time infantry force in the ISC (rivaling even Marines at their peak times).

In 90 YC, the planetary monarch declared that he would never marry or sire children. His successor in the knighthood would rule his system. This was undoubtedly spurned on by Sir Tairen III.

Since then the Knights of the Sword have won more victories than Marine Corps Force Recon (though in fairness, they have more soldiers at their disposal.)

Many Honors has terraformed Many Honors II and IV. Between these three worlds, any terrain can be found for training, from the most burning deserts to the coldest arctic wastes.

Many Honors II has 2.6 billion inhabitants, most of them at the cooler poles. Many Honors IV has 9.8 billion inhabitants. Many Honors V has 19.9 billion inhabitants, most of them in the equatorial regions.

Stands the Wall (Cordoba Durchmusterung -273248) - Tulgar

Galactic (-13.230, -20.402, -5.804)

This system began gear-up in 256. It is now nearing completion. It has invited the president to indulge in its hospitality. He and most of the house have moved here.

Everyone denies that this is a court in exile, but the truth is Hassus is near to falling. For now, the president and his cabinet rule from here via the sensenet and holograms.



This world (Stands the Wall III) has 700 million inhabitants. It is a mild temperate environment, with little seasonal variation.

Too Bright Blade (Gamma Pavonis) - Tulgar Free World

Galactic (+5.609, -3.485, -5.598)

This system was the site of a major diplomatic blunder in 67 YC, involving the advances of a drunken human ambassador upon a tulgaran female (forcible advances). The tulgar accordingly decided they could not in good honor join such people's government. This world is still a strong military resource, and if ever liberated, such slights might be finally left in the past.

Too Bright Blade IV has 25.9 billion inhabitants. They were terraforming Too Bright Blade III when it fell.

Valorous Death (Zeta(1) Reticuli) - Tulgar Racial Seat

Galactic (+1.150, -7.164, -7.842)

Valorous Death III (the inhabited world of this system) began gear-up in 17 YC. It was well developed at the time and completed gear-up by 30 YC. It then held a tourney for the greatest leaders of the planet. The winner, Sir Tairen I, became the head of the new planetary monarchy.

Sir Tairen I then began gearing up other tulgaran worlds, first Honor Guard, and then Many Honors. He held off on all other tulgaran systems, according to his vision of the tulgaran people.

After all three worlds finished their gear up, Sir Tairen I decided to integrate their knighthoods into a cohesive whole. Three enclaves of knights were formed, each reflecting a different aspect of warfare, and each the finest fighters their planet could muster.

Valorous Death became the home of the Knights of the Hawk. Sir Tairen I became the head of the order, and Valorous Death began cranking out the finest fighter pilots in the ISC.

In 90 YC, Sir Tairen III relinquished his right to the monarchy. He decreed that the people of Valorous Death would be better served by the knighthood leading them than the vagaries of a single bloodline, no matter how noble.

In 284, the war began, and Valorous Death committed its fighters to the most terrible battles of the war. Possessing the only battle-tested fighters in the ISC, they were valuable assets.

Now, at the beginning 287, the front line has shifted past Valorous Death. As the home of the knighthood, Paraxis has yet to dedicate the forces necessary to take this world. It's only a matter of time until he must, because he can't leave a force like that at his back for long.

Valorous Death III is no longer the only inhabited planet in the system, Valorous Death II, IV, and V have all been terraformed, though I and V are not pleasant for tulgaran inhabitants.

The populations of the planets are as follows: II, 8.5 billion; III, 29.6 billion; IV 22.5 billion; V 13.7 billion. They follow a straightforward progression of their respective temperatures, with II being far too hot for equatorial habitations, and V being cold even for the tulgar.

It is interesting to note that while most races at least pay lip service to ISC political structure, the tulgar don't even pretend to follow it. The tulgaran racial government is ruled by a triumvirate formed of the leaders of each knighthood. They meet on Valorous Death III regularly to make policy. All tulgaran worlds swear fealty to one of these knighthoods.

TULGAR RACIAL SUMMARY

Nickname: *PC:* Wolf; *Non-PC:* Doggie.

The tulgar are humanoid lupines. They live a life of combat and honor. They may be the culmination of the Architects' work.

Physical Characteristics

Evolution: The tulgar evolved from a common ancestor of the wolf. They are diurnal omnivores (though they prefer meat). They are cursorial hunters.

Build: Large and powerful. Covered with hair. Wolf like in appearance. Males average 100 kg. Females average 70 kg.

Coloring: Grey and black. Some brown tulgar have been known, as have black and white..

Endurance: Good. +20 to exhaustion points. As they are cursorial hunters, distance running is not restricted.

Height: Males average 200 cm., females 185 cm.

Lifespan: 180-210 years.

Resistance: +20 vs. Disease, +50 vs. Fear.

Special Abilities: Natural Horseman, Outdoorsman, Acute Hearing, Nightvision, Acute Smell, Cold Resistance, Natural Weapon, Tough Skin (AT 3), Ultrasonic Hearing.

Culture

Clothing & Decoration: Doublets, cloaks, gowns. Knights wear armor.

Fears & Inabilities: Tulgar fear nothing but dishonor. Color blind. Heat sensitive. The tulgar follow a strict chivalric code.

Lifestyle: A strange blend of modern and chivalric life styles. Strict code of honor. Dueling is used to settle disputes.

Marriage Pattern: Monogamous. Tulgar marry for life. Well-defined gender roles.

Religion: Polytheistic.

Other Factors

Demeanor: Polite and courteous. The tulgar follow their code religiously.

Languages: *Starting Languages:* Species Standard (S8/W4), Tulgaran (S5/W0). *Allowed Adolescent Development:* Species Standard (S10/W10), Falar (S10/W10), Human (S8/W8), Kagoth (S7/W7), Tulgaran (S10/W10).

Prejudices: The tulgar judge individuals by their honor. They disapprove highly of falar honor.

Professions: Any. The warrior and guardian are highly valued in the tulgaran culture.



Part II

The Tulgar

Background Options:

6

Stat Bonuses:

Ag: +0
Co: +3
Me: +0
Re: -2
SD: +10
Em: -0
In: +0
Pr: +2
Qu: -2
St: +6

RR Mods:

Poison: +0
Disease: +20
Fear: +50
Psions: +0

Body Dev. Progression:

0•6•5•2•1

MP Dev. Progression:

0•5•3•2•2

Soul Departure:

5 rounds

Recovery Multiplier:

.75 times

Race Type:

4

Training Packages: Any. Military and Knighthood package are most common.

Special Skills: *Everyman:* Tracking. *Restricted:* All skills in the Athletic • Gymnastic skill category.

Standard Hobby Skills: Combat Armor, Reinforced Cloth, Dancing, Play Instrument, Music, Poetry, Distance Running, Sprinting, Swimming, Alertness, Sense Ambush, Reading Tracks, Tracking, Situational Awareness (Combat), Sense Awareness (Hearing), Sense Awareness (Smell), Body Development, Combat Pilot, Crewmember AFV, Mounted Combat, Suppression Fire, Language skills, H.E.P., Missiles, Projectile Gunnery, Diplomacy, Leadership, Philosophy, Heraldry, Martial Arts skills, Riding, Scientific/Analytical skills, Self Control skills, Military Organization, Vehicle skills, Weapons skills.

Outfitting Options

Weapons: The tulgar wield a mixture of high-tech melee weapons and ranged weapons.

Armor: Armor of ancient design built with modern, high-tech composites. Polished to a high, metallic sheen (reflect coating).

Money: €2,000 in an electronic form.

Background Options

The tulgar get six background options.

Extra Languages: Oort (S6/W8), Valiesian (S5/W5), Xatosian (S5/W5).

Extra Money: This is generally in an electronic form.

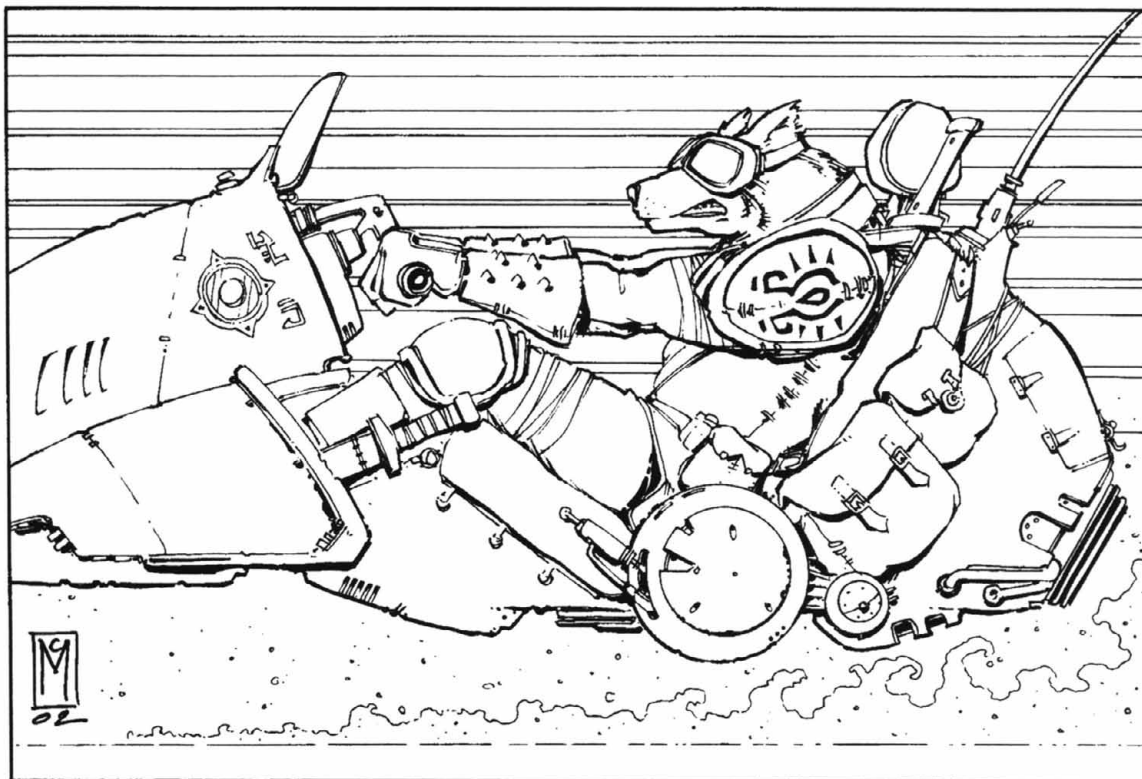
Special Items: These will invariably be of tulgaran design.

Talents: Any

Adolescent Development

Tulgar receive the following skills for adolescent development.

Skill	Ranks
Armor • Medium skill category	2
Kinetic Armor skill	2
Athletic • Brawn	1
Athletic • Endurance skill category	1
Swimming skill	1
Awareness • Searching skill category	1
Awareness • Senses skill category	2
Sense Awareness (Smell)	2
Body Development skill category	n/a
Body Development skill	3
Communication skill category	3
Language skills	10
Lore • Academic skill category	3
"Own" Culture Lore skill	3
Lore • General skill category	3
"Own" Region Lore skill	3
Outdoor • Animal skill category	1
Riding skill	1
Outdoor • Environment skill category	1
Scientific/Analytic group	5 (total)
choice of up to five skills	5 (total)
Special Attacks skill category	n/a
Claws skill	2
Technical/Trade • General skill category	2
Weapon 1-H Edged skill category	3
Monosword skill	3
Hobby Ranks	10
Background Options	6
Talent Points	55





INTERLUDE SEVEN

. . . Assault plus 09:14:36

There was nothing greater than the feeling of wind in your muzzle as you rocketed toward certain and noble death. Nothing.

Sir Krillian leaned forward as his claws sheathed and unsheathed with pleasure. He suddenly slammed on the airbrakes, spun to the left, and took off on a new heading. There was a rumble and a blast as the shockwave from an exploding shell washed over him. And they thought they had his range. Krillian grinned and looked at his scanner. He liked to smell his foes, like the lion, but he preferred to feel the wind on his face more, so the scent output wouldn't work.

There were four heavy tanks, three light tanks, and six fast attack vehicles chasing him. The Lt. Colonel was right. They were offended by a vulgar running around free.

What a wonderful way to die.

Krillian had waited his entire life for his death. He was facing a dozen foes, superior fire power, and he was on a suicide mission to take out a surface to orbit cannon so his friends could take out a major munitions depot and escape unharmed. So much on the shoulders of one errant knight. He had rarely even imagined so honorable a death.

The Fads were catching up on him. He spun the bike so it was coasting backwards, then applied sideways thrust as he targeted one of the Fads. He fired three times, watching it come apart as he fought desperately to control the bike. He then spun again and applied full acceleration as the Fad's blasts fired along his previous path.

Amateurs.

He had three objectives, as far as he could see.

One. He had to take out all the Fads. They could spin and make it back to the crew in minutes. There was nothing a handful of men could do against a superior number of Fads.

Two. He had to lead the tanks far enough away so that when they did kill him, they wouldn't make it back to the crew in time. He had to keep them in range as well, so that they kept following. If he left their firing range now, they would just head back.

Three. He had to destroy the SOC. Otherwise, they would *all* become martyrs.

He growled with pleasure and closed his eyes, taking in the smell of the combat and the countryside. It was still going well. He could smell the charge in the air. Blasters were still in use, and Jeronans favored plasma weapons.

He jiggled to the side as a series of blasts came too close for comfort. Cocky little kittens.

He headed for the nearest woods, accelerating as he went. It wasn't a big copse of trees, nothing so big he would have to maneuver through it for long. He had to time it just right, though. Too soon, and they'd know what he was doing. Too late, and only the blindest luck would get him out the other side.

As he hit the tree line, he began steering wildly, slamming on his airbrakes and applying the Fad's acceleration in reverse. The wind whistled by, and he almost lost control. As he slid to a halt, he ducked his little grav bike into a particularly nasty

tangle of roots. With luck, they wouldn't have noticed him decelerate.

He sat there, gasping as the fear flowed through his veins. He revealed in it. His fear. Fear he had conquered. Fear he would continue conquering.

He was so afraid, he wanted to weep.

He could smell the effects of their random plasma blasts. They were closer. Closer. Closer.

And then they were blasting through the woods. Not wanting to be shown up in front of the kitties or the cats, they hadn't even slowed down.

With three blasts that laid his ears back, the kittens smashed headlong into the trees around him. Their FAVs blew apart, their vectored thrust engines flying in random directions. Trees began to topple.

Krillian laid on the accelerator and blasted his way out the other side of the woods. He ducked as a tree fell right in his path, and yelped when he felt it clip the back of his bike.

He checked the diagnostics. No damage.

Ahead of him were the two remaining FAVs hovering on their VT engines. They were looking for him. He howled in pleasure as he lined one up in his sights and fired.

The FAV was still coming apart in molten chunks as he blasted through it, gunning his engine. He cut his thrust suddenly, set the bike for an even two-meter altitude, and started it slowly spinning.

He coasted to a stop facing the last FAV, which was gunning its jets and heading for him. He twisted his throttle and charged, firing wildly as parts of the enemy FAV came apart before his eyes. It whirled out of control and smashed into the ground.

All the kittens were dead. Time to see how the cats and the kitties were doing.

He was so scared. So terribly, terribly scared. At any moment he could die, and if he died now, he died a failure. He couldn't die a failure.

As he came around the trees, he saw the tanks. They had turned around and were heading back for his friends. He set a course that would take him shooting across their noses.

They hadn't noticed him until he was almost on them. Their turrets couldn't track quickly enough to catch him at full speed this close, so they just fired plasma randomly, hoping to damage him by luck alone.

He drew his sword as he passed, taking swipes at the tanks. *I don't even need my guns. I'll take you on with a sword . . .*

Evidently the cats were insulted, because they slammed on their brakes and started madly trying to target him with their big turrets.

He began circling them as they fired randomly. The smell of plasma assaulted him as the heat buffeted his FAV. He waved his sword and howled as loudly as he could.

When they began opening up with their more agile anti-personnel cannons, he decided it was time to move on. He blasted away from them as fast as he could, zigging and zagging for all he was worth.

He prayed they wouldn't hit him. There was a knot in his stomach as the plasma and shells exploded around him. If they killed him now . . . so close . . .



Interlude

He could see the SOC, its fortifications gleaming in the setting sun as it pointed toward heaven. He pointed straight at it and gunned the engine.

As the gap closed, he took it into the air again. Still charged. When blaster fire stopped, the smell of the air changed. Even kilometers away, he could tell. Stray blaster fire traveled a long way.

His friends were still fighting. Good.

He fired a couple of shots into the side of the SOC. Nothing. It didn't even appear to heat up. He was afraid of that.

His throttle was all the way open. The SOC loomed above him. He howled. What a glorious way to die.

Suddenly a thought hit him. He was too close to swerve, so he hit the airbrakes and put the FAV into full reverse. The force of the deceleration threw him forward on his seat as he strained under the G forces.

He threw the bike into a slide at the last second, crashing sideways into the SOC. He yelped in pain as his right leg was crushed. His head spun as the pain overwhelmed him.

He jerked his head up as the darkness pulled at him. He couldn't pass out. If he did, they would just walk over and shoot him.

He held his sword in the air and waved it defiantly. The tanks fired.

He gunned the engine, shooting away from the SOC as the tanks opened up. The roar of the exploding plasma shells pushed him forward as the blasts crashed into the side of the SOC.

Looking over his shoulder, his stomach sank. The SOC was battered, but intact.

He coasted to a stop in a gully. He had to think. It would take them a moment to get to him.

The pain made his head swim. The fear made him pant as he gulped down breaths. They'd kill him. They'd kill him and there was nothing he could do but run. A coward. A failure.

His ears perked up.

Wait. When did death become a thing to be feared?

He looked down at his belt. They all had a nuclear grenade, in case they needed to scuttle the ship. He sheathed his sword and pulled it out.

He blasted high into the air as he came shooting over the ridge. The tanks were underneath him as he arched overhead, howling and waving a nuclear grenade.

What was a lethal dose of radiation amongst friends?

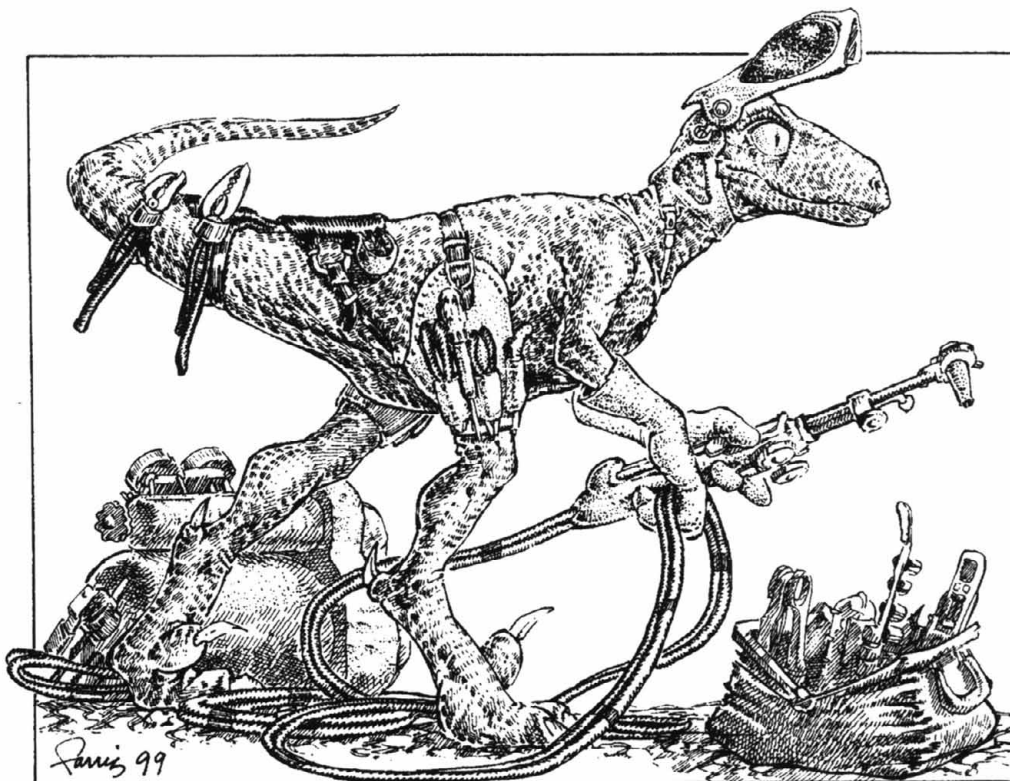
The tanks followed him, but now there were defenders. They fired at him as he bobbed and weaved forward.

He glanced over his shoulder. The tanks were still coming. He looked at the SOC. It was too big for the grenade to destroy, but the radiation would kill everyone inside, and the metal would hold the radiation for a long time.

He howled in glory. What a death. They would sing ballads.

He thumbed the arming switch and threw.

Assault plus 09:31:30 . . .





FIRST CONTACT



I couldn't believe it. It was like the entire study of paleontology had just moved from theory to practice. I'm still reeling with the realizations. On this world, as with many others, the great beasts had never been rendered extinct. It is, I assure you, gentle reader, the most earthshaking experience I've ever had.

They say that at the time the velociraptor walked the Earth, it was the most intelligent thing on the planet. If it hadn't been for the Yucatan Peninsula Impact, it probably would have evolved instead of us. I never really believed that until I saw the valiesians. It's one thing to have been told something. It's another to see it with your own eyes.

They obviously evolved from a raptor. Maybe the velociraptor. Maybe the Utah raptor (although they are, in truth, smaller). More likely an ancestor to both. It's uncertain which line they descended from. Maybe they evolved through a completely undiscovered line. Fossil evidence is incomplete at best. We may never know.

It's interesting. I think the theory has been mentioned before, but this may be the first time it has been ventured forth in print. I believe the Architects did not mean for Earth to be a human world. My theory is that the Helios system was meant for the valiesians, or maybe even the oorts. Most likely, the Architects switched to humans after the impact, because we were the race that still had its ancestors in position for a rapid evolution. Not even the Architects were (are?) perfect.

I must admit, our first encounter with the valiesians was brutal. It seems that their psychology did not allow for the existence of other intelligent life in the universe. You have probably all seen the news footage of that first encounter, of the valiant lions who died teaching the raptors to respect our technology. It was tragic, moving, and compelling. For those of us on the ship, it was a nightmare. A trip through hell. The screams of the dying will haunt me forever. I could hear them, even in my soundproof cabin, after turning off the feeds. I hear them to this day.

Out of all the alien races we have met, the valiesians still seem the most alien to me. I have never seen one display an emotion, whether positive or negative. Their racial interaction seems no more complicated than the threat-submission dynamic. They are as cold as the reptiles they resemble.

Once we proved to them we could think, and weren't just mindlessly repeating words, things went a little bit better. Still, that gear-up project was like none I've ever heard of. The valiesians had no concept of charity. They could not understand why we were there. They had no concept of peace. They could not understand why we didn't want to fight. They had no concept of friend. They knew only predator and prey.

We fought hard to break those barriers. The obstacles were great. I'm still not sure how we did it. Somehow, however, we taught these beings enough to integrate into our society. Perhaps we learned a little as well. The workings of all minds are not the same. We forget that in the face of all the minds we can anthropomorphize. The valiesians taught us to look at the alien in ourselves, and to come to terms with him.

—Jordan Calisto, in his *Preface to The Valiesian Barrier*.



Part II
Valiesians

10.0 THE VALIESIANS

"Mother, father, sister, brother, friend, enemy, lover, wife, rival, even victim and victor. These are all illusions you have created to justify your weaknesses. There are only two types of beings, the living and the dead."

—Vrrssss Kisssthock, in his statement after the war declaration.

10.1 OVERVIEW

The valiesians are a race of reptile-like predators. They evolved from raptor stock on worlds where dinosaurs survived extinction. They are brutal, heartless and deadly. They have little in the way of what other creatures consider emotion.

Valiesians see the world in a black and white contrast between two groups, predators and prey. They see no need for mercy or compassion. No cause for hatred. There is only the pure, calculating intellect of the hunter.



VALIESIAN HEIGHT CHART

d100 (OE)	Valiesian Male	Valiesian Female
less than (-169)	149 cm	149 cm
(-169)-(-160)	151 cm	151 cm
(-159)-(-155)	153 cm	153 cm
(-154)-(-145)	155 cm	155 cm
(-144)-(-135)	157 cm	157 cm
(-134)-(-85)	159 cm	159 cm
(-84)-(-80)	161 cm	161 cm
(-79)-(-75)	163 cm	163 cm
(-74)-(-70)	165 cm	165 cm
(-69)-(-65)	167 cm	167 cm
(-64)-(-55)	169 cm	169 cm
(-54)-(-45)	171 cm	171 cm
(-44)-5	173 cm	173 cm
6-10	175 cm	175 cm
11-25	177 cm	177 cm
26-50	179 cm	179 cm
51-75	181 cm	181 cm
76-90	183 cm	183 cm
91-145	185 cm	185 cm
146-155	187 cm	187 cm
156-165	189 cm	189 cm
166-170	191 cm	191 cm
171-175	193 cm	193 cm
176-180	195 cm	195 cm
181-185	197 cm	197 cm
186-240	199 cm	199 cm
241-250	201 cm	201 cm
251-260	203 cm	203 cm
261-265	205 cm	205 cm
266-275	207 cm	207 cm
more than 275	209 cm	209 cm

Many feel the valiesians are unbearably cruel. They are not. Merciless, yes, but to be cruel, you have to care what other creatures think. The valiesians care nothing for others, even other valiesians. The more generous beings of the universe believe the valiesians have emotion, and are just neglected and misunderstood. Experts disagree. The valiesians are machines, they maintain. Sapient machines, yes, but machines nevertheless.

10.2 PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Valiesians are brutal killing machines. As such, they are physically quite adept. They are strong, and quick and agile. They are adept at one thing... killing.

Evolutionary Considerations

The valiesians (*valiesa sapiens sapiens*) are evolved from predatory dinosaurs: raptors (or at least a common ancestor with raptors) to be specific. They have a brutal and merciless intellect, without care or compassion, even for offspring and mates.



VALIESIAN WEIGHT CHART

d100 (OE)	Valiesian (m)			Valiesian (f)		
	sm	md	lg	sm	md	lg
less than (-169)	52	57	66	52	57	66
(-169)-(-165)	54	60	69	54	60	69
(-164)-(-160)	56	62	72	56	62	72
(-159)-(-155)	58	65	75	58	65	75
(-154)-(-145)	61	67	78	61	67	78
(-144)-(-135)	63	70	81	63	70	81
(-134)-(-85)	66	73	85	66	73	85
(-84)-(-80)	69	76	88	69	76	88
(-79)-(-75)	72	79	92	72	79	92
(-74)-(-70)	75	83	96	75	83	96
(-69)-(-65)	78	86	100	78	86	100
(-64)-(-55)	81	90	104	81	90	104
(-54)-(-45)	84	93	108	84	93	108
(-44)-5	88	97	113	88	97	113
6-10	94	104	120	94	104	120
11-25	102	113	131	102	113	131
26-75	113	125	138	113	125	138
76-90	122	135	157	122	135	157
91-95	129	143	166	129	143	166
96-145	135	149	173	135	149	173
146-155	137	152	176	137	152	176
156-165	140	155	180	140	155	180
166-170	143	158	183	143	158	183
171-175	146	161	187	146	161	187
176-180	149	164	191	149	164	191
181-185	152	168	194	152	168	194
186-240	155	171	198	155	171	198
241-250	158	174	202	158	174	202
251-260	161	178	206	161	178	206
261-265	164	181	210	164	181	210
266-270	167	185	215	167	185	215
271-275	171	189	219	171	189	219
more than 275	174	193	223	174	193	223

The valiesians have a four-digit hand (one digit is opposable). This hand ends in claws and is good for fine manipulation, though it is rarely used for such things.

Valiesians are not cursorial hunters. They hunt by use of the fast sprint and leap, slashing their prey with a foot claw. They are nocturnal carnivores.

Build And Physiology

Valiesians are bipedal, with two arms and two eyes. They stand, on average 180 cm tall (both males and females) and weigh 125 kg. They are covered with thin, scaly skin.

Valiesians are warm blooded; (some dinosaurs are cold-blooded, but sapient brain chemistry requires a very narrow temperature tolerance). They

hatch from eggs and receive little aid from parents in rearing.

Valiesians are strong and hardy. They take damage well and can operate in extreme duress.

They are strict carnivores. Vegetable matter makes them extremely ill.

Coloring

Valiesians are almost always a solid color. Dark green or black is most common. Grey or brown is not unknown. Valiesian eyes are coal black.

Endurance

The valiesians have average endurance. They receive no bonus to either Constitution or Exhaustion points.

The valiesians sleep for ten hours at a time. However, they only sleep every other day.

Lifespan

Valiesians live, on average, 60 years. Without proper medical attention, this drops to 40.

Valiesians begin to fall apart physically as they age, but they see little loss of mental facilities. Of course, there is not a great deal of mental prowess for them to lose.

A valiesian egg hatches after an average of 106 days. It takes two years for a valiesian to reach sexual maturity. It takes five years to reach physical maturity. This only brings a valiesian to the end of adolescent development. It takes much longer to reach the end of apprenticeship; (the initial learning rate of a valiesian is tremendous, much quicker than most races). Valiesians can walk, move and kill at birth. It takes three years to learn to talk.

Valiesian age categories are as follows: Old: 35-48. Very Old: 49-53. Venerable: 54-56. Ancient: 57-58. Very Ancient: 59+. Stat loss is 1d5-1.

Resistance

Valiesians have no special resistance. They find vegetable based poisons particularly unpleasant, but this has no game effect.

Special Abilities

Valiesians have several special abilities. Blazing Speed (+10 to pace), Combat Reflexes (+5 to OB, DB, and Initiative), Hypercharged Adrenaline (+15 to Adrenal maneuvers and Frenzy, +5 to Special Attacks and Special Defenses skills), Natural Weapons (foot claw, medium claw attack, developed as a Everyman skill in the Special Attacks skill category), Tough Skin (AT 3), Calmness (+10 to social interaction skills in pressured situation), Amazing Leaping (base running leap is x3 normal, vertical leap x5 normal).



10.3 CULTURE

There is little culture unique to valiesian society. They take whatever cultural forms others force upon them.

Clothing And Decoration

Valiesians rarely wear clothing. When they do, it is of a purely utilitarian nature. A valiesian is rarely seen in anything but a utility harness or an environment suit.

Fears And Inabilities

The valiesians follow the same instincts for survival as any other creature. In addition, valiesians suffer none of the emotional drives that tend to force creatures to take the extreme risks of an adventurer. There is however, the occasional valiesian who suffers from some sort of disorder that makes him take great risks (the valiesian equivalent of an adrenaline junky); these valiesians can be very dangerous, both to themselves and those around them.

A valiesian's biggest handicap, however, is his absence of emotion. This makes it very difficult for a valiesian to understand members of other races, much less interact with them. For instance, a valiesian would have difficulty taking pity or anger at another creature. It is difficult to practice what one does not understand.

Valiesians were recently (in the evolutionary sense) cold-blooded creatures. Their biology is about a million years short of catching up with this switch. Because of this, valiesians suffer greatly from temperature extremes. If ever a valiesian is exposed to extreme temperatures, he suffers a -2 penalty for every degree above 30 or under 10.

Lifestyle

Valiesians tend to live quiet, subdued, even boring lifestyles. They suffer from none of the emotional distaste for either mindless or exhausting jobs. They suffer from none of the desire for luxury or creature comforts that plague other races. This means that valiesians will take almost any job, no matter how tedious or strenuous, and live in any conditions, no matter how squalid. They tend to save all their money, and often pass on quite wealthy, though their lifestyle shows no sign of it. In the end, their money is generally claimed by the state, as they have no friends, and care nothing for relatives.

Marriage And Family Pattern

Valiesians have no marriage or family conventions. Females come into heat approximately every 330 days. They then tend to mate with whomever is available in whatever corner they can find. (The last is a compromise with the sensibilities of other races. Valiesians would mate in the middle of the street if it were left up to them.) Children are abandoned after hatching; (usually the mother has the presence of mind to leave them in the care of the state).

Nearly every valiesian is raised by the state. They are raised in state houses, very similar to orphanages, but dedicated to valiesians. There, state workers, usually humans, kagoth or tulgur, raise them to adulthood. Because of this added state funding,

valiesians are taxed 25% more heavily than other races. Valiesians accept this added charge with the same emotionless aplomb that they accept everything else.

It's interesting to note that raising valiesian children is very different from rearing children of other races. Valiesians suffer from none of the emotional baggage that allows for standard disciplinary techniques. The most difficult part, report social workers, is teaching them not to slay other children. It is generally accepted that the only way to discipline a valiesian is corporal punishment.

Religion

Valiesians see no need to worship a creator. They care little as to whether one exists. They do not have the emotional conviction to assert that one does *not* exist, but as a whole, they think it's a pretty far-fetched idea.

10.4 OTHER FACTORS

There are many other factors to consider. These are important in role playing a valiesian.

Demeanor

The most notable thing about a valiesian's demeanor is his apparent lack of one. Valiesians have no true emotional interaction with the outside world. Their relationship with society is based on reason, instinct, and survival.

Language

The valiesian tongue is a series of hisses and other sibilant sounds. When spoken at full speed, it is nearly indecipherable to the ears of a non-valiesian.

Starting Languages: Species Standard (S8/W4), Valiesian (S5/W0).

Allowed Adolescent Development: Species Standard (S10/W10), Human (S8/W8), Kagoth (S7/W7), Oort (S5/W5), Valiesian (S10/W10).

Prejudices

Valiesians have no prejudices as such. Each being is judged according to their level of threat. To the valiesians, all other beings are either threats, tools, food, or scenery.

Professions

Valiesians can be of almost any profession. Note, however, that they suffer from none of the emotional needs or dreams, which drive a being to pursue a career in a field in which they are clearly out-classed. There are few valiesian scientists.

Special Skills

Everyman: Jumping, Sprinting, Natural Attack.

Restricted: Distance Running, All skills in the Athletic • Gymnastic skill category, Lie Perception, Leadership, Propaganda, Public Speaking, Seductions, Psychology.

Standard Hobby Skills

Valiesians can choose from a variety of hobby skills. These are either taught to them by the state, or self-taught for survival purposes.

Standard Hobby Skills: Armor skills, Jumping, Sprinting, Swimming, Alertness, Sense Ambush, Reading Tracks, Tracking, Situation Awareness:



Combat, Body Development, Subdual, Craft skills, Gunnery skills, Duping, Lore skills, Survival, Scientific skills, Adrenal skills, Claw, Ambush, Hiding, Stalking, Data Processing, First Aid, Technical skills, Urban Skills

The Individual As A PC

Valiesians rarely pursue a life of adventure. Reason and survival instinct both work to exclude valiesian adventurers. Valiesians also do not cling to grand ideals. They have little use for causes.

Generally speaking, only one thing drives valiesians to a life of adventure: mental or chemical disorders. The most common is best described as a simple adrenaline addiction. Other disorders exist, with varying degrees of severity and resulting insanities.

10.5 OUTFITTING OPTIONS

Valiesians are outfitted like most races. There is little special to consider.

Armor

There is a good deal of armor made to fit the valiesian build. Many valiesians purchase armor for survival reasons. Those who own armor tend to wear it whenever they legally can.

Money

Valiesians begin play with \$2,000. This is invariably in an electronic form.

Weapons

Many valiesians purchase weapons. They are armed whenever possible.

10.6 BACKGROUND OPTIONS

The following section depicts the types of things upon which a valiesian might spend his background options. It gives any special considerations specific to valiesians.

Extra Languages

In addition to the allowed adolescent development, for background options, valiesians can spend ranks on the following. Falar (S6/W8), Tulgaran (S5/W5), Xatosian (S5/W5).

Extra Money

This is generally in an electronic form. Valiesians have little use for artistic wealth, such as gems or jewels.

Special Items

These will invariably be of valiesian or oort design. They rarely have any sentimental value.

10.7 TALENTS

Valiesian characters may choose from any of the talents in *Future Law*. The GM should look through these options and select the ones that are appropriate to his game; (use Options 1 or 2 unless something warrants otherwise). The classification of the talent/ flaw is given in brackets after the description of the talent/ flaw (also included are the appropriate point costs if optional rules are used).

Option 1: By spending one background option, the character may make a d100 (not open-ended) roll and consult the chart below.

Option 2: A player may select one of the talents from the chart below, but must pay the appropriate number of background options (as listed in *Future Law*), or talent points.

Option 3: As Option 2 above, except that the cost is lowered by one (if background options are spent), or five (if talent points are spent). This represents the talent being specific to valiesians.

Option 4: As with options 1 or 2, except that any race may receive these talents, at double cost (to represent the fact that the talents/ flaws are specific to valiesians).

VALIESIAN TALENT AND FLAW CHART

- | | |
|--------|---|
| 01-16 | Clawless (Flaw): You have no claws. This was probably the result of an accident, though some more barbaric groups, street gangs and the like, have been known to do this with malicious intent.
[MAJOR: -10 Points] |
| 17-32 | Disconcerting (Flaw): Not only have you no emotions, but also every aspect of your countenance reflects this fact. You stare at people with the cold, unblinking stare of a dead thing. It drives most people crazy. You receive a -10 to all influence skills.
[MAJOR: -10 Points] |
| 33-45 | Diplomatic: Your calm and emotionless demeanor makes you particularly adept at diplomacy. You receive a +20 bonus to all diplomatic actions.
[MINOR: 5 Points] |
| 46-54 | Loping Stride: You are unusually fast. You receive a +15 to your base movement.
[MINOR: 5 Points] |
| 55-77 | Quiet: You are unusually quiet. The hunter's instincts are strong in you. You receive a +30 bonus to all Stalking maneuvers.
[MAJOR: 15 Points] |
| 78-100 | Still: No valiesian is prone to jittery movement, but you are still even for a valiesian. You receive a +30 bonus to all Hiding maneuvers.
[MAJOR: 15 Points] |



10.8 VALIESIAN TRAINING PACKAGES

Valiesians only take training packages that promote their careers or their survival. As with professions, they do not pursue training package for purely emotional reasons.

The valiesians have never really developed an individual culture. They allow the ISC to apply a culture to them, so that they can reap the benefits. They therefore have no racial packages.

10.9 NOTEWORTHY PLANETS

These noteworthy planets were discussed in *Spacemaster: Privateers*. A little more discussion is warranted, however.

In most cases, races were given control of their own gear-ups. This was not the case with the valiesians. All valiesian gear-ups were handled by inter-racial InSpecCom teams.

Valiesian worlds in the ISC do not form their own governments. Typically, they just adapt the ISC model, recommended to them by the ISC, with representatives and leaders chosen by random lot.

Fissauruss (Alpha Mensae) – Valiesian

Galactic (+2.085, -7.391, -4.223)

Fissauruss II began gear-up in 18 YC. It finished in 43 YC. The inhabitants accepted admittance into the ISC without undo fanfare and set up a government.

Fissauruss II is a warm world, covered predominantly with jungles. It is a steamy, sultry place with 19.8 billion inhabitants.

This valiesian system was an important source of many medicinal chemicals. Since its capture, the stockpile has yet to dwindle completely, but eventually, certain chemicals are going to have to be produced artificially. That will increase the cost dramatically.

Kissauruss (Epsilon Eridani) – Valiesian

Galactic (-2.105, -0.598, -2.433)

Kissauruss III began gear-up in 16 YC. It was the second world tackled. It finished gear-up in 40 YC. It joined the ISC shortly thereafter.

Kissauruss III is a muggy world with a prodigious greenhouse effect. Mammals have a hard time adapting to it; valiesians, however, thrive there. Kissauruss III has 35.7 billion inhabitants. This makes it a ready source of dirty labor throughout the ISC.

Risseluss (Mu Arae) – Valiesian

Galactic (+8.943, -3.243, -1.935)

Risseluss I began gear-up in 17 YC. It finished in 42 YC. It joined the ISC shortly thereafter.

This system, once within ISC borders, was one of the most populated of the valiesian systems with 31.6 billion inhabitants. It was captured, but this capture was handled badly.

The invading forces randomly executed citizens. This is only to be expected, to enforce dominance. The powers that be were a bit overzealous, however, and their death camps set off the valiesian threat-response mechanism.

This resulted in one of the bloodiest resistances of the war. Finally the planet was bombed from orbit until the remaining 500 million valiesians degenerated to a near feral state.

This system is now in the middle of an apocalyptic winter, caused by all the debris in the air from the bombing. Thousands of valiesians die every day. They have no hope, no help.

Rissuluruss (Sigma Draconis) – Valiesian

Galactic (-1.023, +5.105, +2.092)

Rissuluruss III began gear-up in 19 YC. It finished gear-up in 45 YC. It joined the ISC shortly thereafter.

This system is one of the largest valiesian systems in the ISC, with 19.4 billion inhabitants. It is very near the front, and the marines have set up several training facilities to help teach the inhabitants the fine art of guerilla warfare.

Of course, if the Jeronans are kind, this world will probably not even notice the change in ownership, but if another disaster like Risseluss happens, they will be ready.

Rissuluruss III is a temperate world, a bit cool for typical valiesian taste. It has a greater proliferation of forests than jungles, and few non-native valiesians can handle the winters.

Thissum (Zeta (2) Reticuli) – Valiesian Racial Seat

Galactic (+1.213, -7.665, -8.389)

This was the sight of initial valiesian contact. The resulting combat was brutal and bloody, and it took a while to convince the inhabitants that the contact team was intelligent.

After that, things went better. Gear-up went remarkably well. It didn't take much to convince the valiesians that those who attended school had a tactical advantage over those that didn't.

After that, they put the fate of the world to popular vote. Of the valiesians who actually responded, they overwhelmingly decided to join the ISC.

This is the seat of valiesian politics. Valiesians don't care for politics (since its appeal is mostly emotional). Valiesian politicians are picked by intelligence testing followed by a random lottery. They never serve two terms.

Thissum III, the habitable world has 41 billion valiesians. It has its lion's share of jungles, like most valiesian worlds.

Varussuss (53 Eridani) – Valiesian

Galactic (-16.880, -10.271, -14.301)

This planet is far away and new. It is a binary system, orbiting the secondary; (the primary is too far to cast much light).

This world began gear-up in 256 YC. It has not yet finished, but many valiesians here suffer from the



adrenaline addiction that sometime plagues valiesians. They are joining the military in droves. Varussuss II is a warm wet world, perfect for valiesians. It has 900 million inhabitants.

Zirauthussss (Pi(1) Ursae Majoris) - Valiesian Free World

Galactic (-9.793, +5.528, +8.083)

This system is the largest free system of the valiesians. They care little for the ISC and will have nothing to do with them. They began gear-up in 25 YC and finished in 50 YC.

Zirauthussss III is a temperate world with lush vegetation. Its 18.1 billion inhabitants do not welcome visitors, especially alien visitors.

VALIESIAN RACIAL SUMMARY

Nickname: *PC:* Drac; *Non-PC:* Drac. (Valiesians are not insulted by any name.)

The valiesians are a race of warm-blooded reptiles. They are practical and completely without discernible emotion.

Physical Characteristics

Evolution: The valiesians evolved from dinosaurs, raptors to be specific. They are non-cursorial carnivores. They are nocturnal.

Build: Reptilian. Roughly man-sized. Males and females average 125 kg.

Coloring: Dark green or black. Some brown and gray. Valiesian eyes are coal black.

Endurance: Average. Valiesians are non-cursorial hunters, better for the sprint than the long haul.

Height: Males and females average 180 cm.

Life Span: 58-63 years.

Resistance: Normal.

Special Abilities: Valiesians have several special abilities. Blazing Speed, Combat Reflexes, Hypercharged Adrenaline, Natural Weapons, Tough Skin (AT 3), Calmness, Amazing Leaping.

Culture

Clothing & Decoration: Valiesian clothing serves purely utilitarian ends. They feel no need for decoration of any sort.

Fears & Inabilities: Valiesians experience all the survival instincts most refer to as "fear." If a valiesian is exposed to extreme temperatures, he suffers a -2 penalty for every degree above 30 or under 10.

Lifestyle: Valiesians crave no luxuries, excitement, or entertainment. They live the most spartan of existences.

Marriage Pattern: None. Female valiesians enter a state of sexual heat every 330 days.

Religion: None.

Other Factors

Demeanor: Emotionless. Without any appreciable feelings or emotional reactions.

Languages: *Starting Languages:* Species Standard (S8/W4), Valiesian (S5/W0). *Allowed Adolescent Development:* Species Standard (S10/W10), Human (S8/W8), Kagoth (S7/W7), Oort (S5/W5), Valiesian (S10/W10).

Prejudices: Valiesians assess each individual according to their level of threat.

Professions: Any. Scientists are rare.

Training Packages: Any. However, all training packages will serve a practical purpose.

Special Skills: *Everyman:* Jumping, Sprinting, Natural Attack. *Restricted:* Distance Running, All skills in the Athletic • Gymnastic skill category, Lie Perception, Leadership, Propaganda, Public Speaking, Seduction, Psychology.

Standard Hobby Skills: Armor skills, Jumping, Sprinting, Swimming, Alertness, Sense Ambush, Reading Tracks, Tracking, Situation Awareness: Combat, Body Development, Subdual, Craft skills, Gunnery skills, Duping, Lore skills, Survival, Scientific skills, Adrenal skills, Claw, Ambush, Hiding, Stalking, Data Processing, First Aid, Technical skills, Urban skills

Outfitting Options

Weapons: Valiesians buy the most effective weapons they can, and carry the most powerful weapons the law allows.

Armor: Valiesians wear the best armor they can at all times.

Money: ¢2,000 in an electronic form.

Background Options

The valiesians get seven background options.

Extra Languages: Falar (S6/W8), Tulgaran (S5/W5), Xatosian (S5/W5).

Extra Money: This is generally in an electronic form.

Special Items: These will invariably be designed for valiesians.

Talents: Any that don't require emotions (such as hatred).



Part II
Valiesians

Adolescent Development

Valiesians receive the following skills for adolescent development.

	Skill	Ranks
Background Options: 7	Athletic • Brawn	2
	Jumping skill	2
	Athletic • Endurance skill category	1
	Sprinting	2
	Awareness • Perception skill category	n/a
	Alertness	5
	Body Development skill category	n/a
	Body Development skill	3
	Communication skill category	3
	Language skills	5
Stat Bonuses: Ag: +5 Co: +0 Me: -5 Re: -10 SD: -2 Em: -10 In: +3 Pr: -10 Qu: +9 St: +2	Lore • Academic skill category	3
	"Own" Culture Lore skill	3
	Lore • General skill category	3
	"Own" Region Lore skill	3
	Outdoor • Environment skill category	1
	Scientific/Analytic group	5 (total)
	choice of up to five skills	5 (total)
	Special Attacks skill category	n/a
	Claw	4
	Subterfuge • Stealth skill category	5
RR Mods: Poison: +0 Disease: +0 Fear: +0 Psions: +0	Hiding skill	5
	Stalking skill	5
	Hobby Ranks	6
	Background Options	7
	Talent Points	65
Body Dev. Progression: 0•6•4•2•1		
MP Dev. Progression: 0•5•3•2•2		
Soul Departure: 10 rounds		
Recovery Multiplier: 2 times		
Race Type: 1		





Interlude

INTERLUDE EIGHT

. . . Assault plus 09:28:09

The sweet, sweet rush of excitement flooded Hissick's brain. Fear and adrenaline-induced opiates flowed through his veins, hitting receptors and giving him the relief he craved so much.

The Lt. Colonel was damaged. Perhaps he was not damaged beyond repair, but he was not capable of combat. The kagoth, while showing a prudent desire not to engage in combat, also had an unhealthy aversion to it. He couldn't understand why.

The oort was overwrought. He panicked, gibbered and carried on with all the ridiculous displays that aliens showed. It was excessive and pointless. Hissick tuned it out.

That left only him to fight. He shrugged and hefted his weapon. He fired carefully chosen shots at the enemy, then ducked back when they began to return fire.

His head seemed light with the rush. He was giddy, lost in a world of his own chemicals. His head bobbed with excitement.

Was this the end? Would he die here? The question interested him, naturally.

Many of the other races espoused an afterlife. They thought there was a great creator or creators who made the universe. They thought you moved on after death. They didn't think you merely rotted.

Hissick popped back up and finished off an energy cell. Three more dead. They didn't take cover very well.

"Oort. Give me all the Lt. Colonel's weapon cells."

The oort carried on, but Hissick tuned him out. After a moment, he brought the weapon cells.

Hissick's hand quivered in the rush of adrenaline. It made his body move, unconsciously, like a bird's.

But what if there was an afterlife? What if there was an eternal reward?

A reward for what? That was the question. It was pointless to think that some arbitrary code would be smiled on by a supreme being. A supreme being would be cold and unfeeling. He created the universe, did he not? The universe was certainly cold and unfeeling.

He popped up and fired again. This time he noticed the enemy troops approaching. They were likely to be overrun.

He felt the chemicals rise in him. It was almost time to leave, or he would die.

Then he looked up as a tremendous explosion echoed in the distance. His belt dosimeter sounded. He looked down. Someone had detonated a nuclear weapon.

It must have been the wolf. Good. It appeared they might escape alive.

He looked up again. The troops were advancing now. The artillery had stopped firing. It was over. It had been for awhile, but now they *knew* it was over.

"Oort, give me all the weapon cells you have."

The oort, his brow ridges displaying all sorts of emotion – hope maybe? – complied. Hissick pocketed them and ran.

The oort screamed in anger and terror behind him. Hissick paid close attention. When the screaming stopped, he'd know where the enemy was, and then he'd know what sort of lead he had.

Assault plus 09:32:47 . . .





FIRST CONTACT



We knew they were psychic, but my God . . .

This was a long time ago, remember. We barely understood anything about psychic powers. I was the most powerful psychic the human race had produced, and I could barely scan deeper than surface thoughts. The rest of the group were all oorts. All protégés. One of them could even summon enough mental power to move a pencil.

I know, it's startling to the younger generation. In the bright light of the modern age, we seem pitiful and thoroughly unsuited for the task. But those were gentler days, and we were kings among our people. The best of the best. One of us could even boil water.

You see, we were wandering blind in the night, crying out to the darkness. We wandered through our studies and our training like wayward children. Everything we've learned, we've learned from the xatosians.

So there we landed, under the harsh light of Chi Cancri. It wasn't long before our eyes adapted, adjusting the color, just like they do on Earth. We walked forward boldly, casting out with our minds in welcome. We never expected they'd interpret our clumsiness as aggression.

It began with a roaring in my ears. Then a door opened, deep inside my head. Through the door poured a light. A terrible, blinding light. It grew as I screamed, lapping at the edges of my sanity. Growing. Engulfing. Devouring. I floated in a sea of agony, awash in my own screams, my own torment. One by one, my senses winked out, until all I knew was my own pain. The light. The roar. My consciousness narrowed to a singularity. I dwindled with it until I was nothing. Less than nothing. More than a waste of flesh, a waste of a soul.

I groveled in my worthlessness. I begged the light for mercy. For a quick death. For an end to it all. Finality. Oblivion. An end to the pain. I wanted it so bad that had I arms, I would have wrung my own neck. Had I hands, I would have slit my own wrists. Had I a mouth, I would have swallowed my own tongue. I would have given anything to be no more. Anything to stop the pain. Anything.

Then I felt a tremendous force, prying my feeble mind open like a rose. There was a presence there. It was . . . awesome. Inspiring. Towering. I knew then that I was in the presence of a great Being. This Being strode through my mind like a giant, and I shook in fear and agony. It looked down upon me and I felt Its gaze pierce through the very heart of my soul until I was transparent. I stood naked before my God, and I trembled.

Then the Being paused in Its painful gaze. I felt a subtle change in Its aspect. Well, perhaps subtle to others of Its might, but to my pitiful, quivering soul, it was like the exploding of a sun. I felt Its glory in full bloom and I was struck dumb.

It seemed to consider me with Its great and terrible tenderness. I wanted to weep as I sensed some approval in Its aspect. I cried out with a primal scream of joy, and It stepped from my mind.

I felt a great loss, greater than the loss of my father. Greater than the loss of my bride. I had experienced nothing to compare with it. It left me without even the strength to mourn Its passing.

Then a great voice resounded in my mind. The words were neither human nor oort, but I understood them "We are sorry. Forgive us. We thought you came in war. We didn't understand that you came in peace."

The world reformed around me. I lay in the center of the bridge of our ship, bleeding from my nose, mouth and ears. I could dimly make out the forms of my oort companions, and then the forms of xatosians, moving among us. That was the day I learned the true power of a psychic. That was the day I realized I was a child.

—Ralph Wright, ISC Gear-Up Specialist



11.0 THE XATOSIANS

"The mind? You barely understand the mind."

—Any xatosian discussing psychic powers with another race.

11.1 OVERVIEW

The xatosians are a large, insect-like race. Though they have an internal skeleton (as their mass and build demand), they are also covered with chitinous ridges and plates. They are the masters of psychic powers, adept at all the powers of the mind. They are much sought after for this ability, just as oorts are much sought after as scientists and academics.

Xatosians do not fit in very well with the rest of the civilized galaxy. Of all the races that have been discovered, they are physically the most alien. They are accepted among both the ISC and the Empire, even revered. But few are really comfortable around them, though they are not all that different from the other races of civilized space.

XATOSIAN HEIGHT CHART		
d100 (OE)	Xatosian Male	Xatosian Queen*
less than (-169)	217 cm	279 cm
(-169)-(-160)	219 cm	281 cm
(-159)-(-155)	221 cm	283 cm
(-154)-(-145)	223 cm	285 cm
(-144)-(-135)	225 cm	287 cm
(-134)-(-85)	227 cm	289 cm
(-84)-(-80)	229 cm	291 cm
(-79)-(-75)	231 cm	293 cm
(-74)-(-70)	233 cm	295 cm
(-69)-(-65)	235 cm	297 cm
(-64)-(-55)	237 cm	299 cm
(-54)-(-45)	239 cm	301 cm
(-44)-5	241 cm	303 cm
6-10	243 cm	305 cm
11-25	245 cm	307 cm
26-50	247 cm	309 cm
51-75	249 cm	311 cm
76-90	251 cm	313 cm
91-145	253 cm	315 cm
146-155	255 cm	317 cm
156-165	257 cm	319 cm
166-170	259 cm	321 cm
171-175	261 cm	323 cm
176-180	263 cm	325 cm
181-185	265 cm	327 cm
186-240	267 cm	329 cm
241-250	269 cm	331 cm
251-260	271 cm	333 cm
261-265	273 cm	335 cm
266-275	275 cm	337 cm
more than 275	277 cm	339 cm

*Queens are not intended for player characters. Random generation of height and weight are included merely for the sake of completeness.

11.2 PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Physically, xatosians get by. Their real talents are in their minds.

Evolutionary Considerations

The xatosian evolved on worlds where insects managed to overcome the mammals in competition. It is widely accepted that xatosians evolved from a hive intellect. This would certainly explain their advanced psychic powers.

Xatosians can exist either nocturnally or diurnally. They are completely omnivorous. By instinct, they are scavengers.

Though xatosians do not hunt, as such, they are classified as cursorial hunters. They've evolved a biology, which allows them to run all day long, if they are in proper physical shape.



Part II Xatosians

XATOSIAN WEIGHT CHART

d100 (OE)	Xatosian (m)			Xatosian (f)*		
	sm	md	lg	sm	md	lg
less than (-169)	129	143	157	209	233	256
(-169)-(-165)	134	149	164	218	242	267
(-164)-(-160)	140	155	171	227	252	278
(-159)-(-155)	146	162	178	236	263	289
(-154)-(-145)	152	169	185	246	274	301
(-144)-(-135)	158	176	193	257	285	314
(-134)-(-85)	165	183	201	267	297	327
(-84)-(-80)	172	191	210	278	309	341
(-79)-(-75)	179	199	218	290	322	355
(-74)-(-70)	186	207	227	302	336	370
(-69)-(-65)	194	216	237	315	350	385
(-64)-(-55)	202	225	247	328	364	401
(-54)-(-45)	211	234	257	341	380	418
(-44)-5	219	244	268	356	395	435
6-10	233	259	285	378	421	463
11-25	254	282	310	411	457	503
26-75	282	313	344	457	508	559
76-90	305	338	372	494	549	604
91-95	323	358	394	523	582	640
96-145	336	373	410	544	605	666
146-155	342	380	418	555	617	679
156-165	349	388	426	566	629	692
166-170	356	395	435	577	642	706
171-175	363	403	443	589	655	720
176-180	371	411	452	601	668	735
181-185	378	420	461	613	681	750
186-240	386	428	470	625	695	764
241-250	393	437	480	638	709	780
251-260	401	445	489	650	723	795
261-265	409	454	499	663	737	811
266-270	417	463	509	677	752	828
271-275	426	473	519	690	767	844
more than 275	434	482	530	704	782	861

*Queens are not intended for player characters. Random generation of height and weight are included merely for the sake of completeness.

Build And Physiology

Xatosians are powerful, insect-like creatures. Males average 248 cm tall and 313 kg. Females average 310 cm tall and 508 kg.

Xatosians are scavengers and carrion eaters. They are omnivores, and can metabolize virtually anything. This has made them practically immune to poison and disease.

Xatosians have two normal, plus one opposable, digit on each hand. This is good for grasping, but offsets the balance achieved by more digits. They cannot, for instance, fire a gun with the same stability as a five-fingered hand.

Despite their insect origin, xatosians are warm blooded, do not have compound eyes, and have

only four limbs. This is considered the leading proof that the Architects had four limbs and "normal" eyes. It is generally accepted that the loss of the fifth and sixth limb could serve no evolutionary purpose, and must have occurred for aesthetic reasons.

A Note On Xatosian Physiology

The xatosians come from worlds with a higher atmospheric pressure than other races. Perhaps because of this, xatosian cardiovascular systems operate under greater pressure than other races. Because of this, a xatosian can safely step from .8 atmospheres directly into the void of space without running the risk of contracting the bends. Other physical problems, such as lack of air and temperature extremes, can still affect them, however.

Coloring

Xatosians vary in color from green to gray to black. Other colors are almost unknown. Albinos rarely survive infancy. There is progress, however, in the fact that they are no longer eaten promptly after birth.

Endurance

A few factors contribute to xatosian endurance. First of all, xatosian Constitution is below the inter-species norm. They receive a -2 to their Constitution bonuses. They do, however, receive a +10 to their Exhaustion points. Finally, although they are scavengers and rarely hunt, they are classified as cursorial hunters, and may develop distance running without restriction.

Xatosian biology developed on a scale different from the standard Inter-Species Day. Because of this, xatosians sleep only every third day, but then they must sleep a minimum of eight hours.

Lifespan

Xatosians are creatures that, barring accident or injury, require very little in the way of medical attention. They will live about 1,000 years whether they receive medical aid or not.

Xatosians are hatched from eggs. The queen typically lays thousands of eggs at a time. These eggs flourish in warm damp areas, especially under ultraviolet light. The eggs require an average of 297 days before the embryo reaches maturity and the egg hatches.

A xatosian larva learns to walk after four or five years, about the time that they begin to form their exoskeleton. They typically do not begin to talk, other than telepathically, for ten or fifteen years.



A xatosian reaches sexual maturity after 48 years, though they typically finish their schooling and begin life as an adult long before that. Xatosians have difficulty in normal schools, not because of lack of intelligence, but because of what is, to them, an incredibly compressed program. Xatosians would be more comfortable with 30 or 40 years of schooling, rather than the standard 14-22.

Xatosians suffer little physical deterioration throughout their lives. The greatest detectable effects of age are mottled dark spots that begin to appear after eight hundred years or so. There is often a marked decrease in psychic power attributed to age.

Xatosians go through the following stages of development.

Stage One (Egg): The first stage is while it is inside the egg. During this time, the xatosian joins with the group mind for the first time, and imprints its loyalty from its queen, who is nurturing it psychically, and its clutch mates. This lasts, as has been stated 297 days. During this time, warmth and ultra-violet light are important to its development.

Stage Two (Larva): When the larva hatches, it is completely helpless. Shaped much like a maggot, it has buds that will one day form its arms and legs. Its head is part of the main mass, with no definable neck. The skeleton is still in a flexible state, more like a gelatinous cartilage than bone.

For the first two years, all that the larva does is eat and absorb knowledge from the hive mind. By the end of the second year, the torso's internal skeleton has begun to solidify through the torso, and the leg and arm buds begin to grow.

By the end of the third year, the head and neck have become separate limbs. The skull and vertebrae solidify around this time, and the legs and arms have formed enough to allow for crawling. They are still easily bent, however.

By the end of the fourth year, the internal skeleton has finished hardening. The legs and arms are fully formed. The larva begins experimenting with different forms of locomotion.

By the end of the fifth year, the larva can walk, though this is usually ungainly. Xatosians have problems learning personal skills, like walking, at this stage, primarily because they have no experience with it. They learn all other basic skills through a psychic osmosis, and a skill that requires physical practice is foreign to them.

By the end of the sixth year the exoskeleton is well underway in formation. It is flexible, like the early skeleton.

By the end of the seventh year, the exoskeleton is fully formed. It is still flexible, however, and offers no real protection.

By the end of the eighth year, the exoskeleton has hardened. At this point, the xatosian takes on its permanent armor type.

The ninth and tenth years are major molting years. By the end of the tenth year, all of the major ridges and structures of the exoskeleton have formed. The xatosian is completely recognizable as such, and graduates to the next stage.

Stage Three (Child): This stage lasts 38 years, typically. During this time, the xatosian is growing, but it typically only molts every year and a half. The pace of growth is much slower.

This is the stage where apprenticeship development is performed. During these years, the xatosian begins to learn all the skills that it will need for its chosen calling.

Though this stage lasts 38 years, xatosians often finish schooling well before that. If this is the case, then they begin to serve their queen, but from within the clutch.

At the end of this stage, the xatosian achieves sexual maturity. On its 50th birthday, it leaves the clutch and strikes out on its own.

Stage Four (Adult): This is the stage where most xatosians are encountered. They are more or less finished growing, and they have had enough individual training to no longer rely on the hive mind for their view of the world. They are independent personalities.

Xatosian age categories are as follows: Old: 500-624. Very-Old: 625-749. Venerable: 750-874. Ancient: 875-999. Very-Ancient: 1000+. Stat loss is 1d5-1.

Resistance

Xatosians, being scavengers and carrion eaters, can consume almost any organic substance. This goes hand in hand with their increased resistance to Disease and Poison. Xatosians receive a +100 to RRs versus both of these effects.

Special Abilities

Xatosians receive several special abilities. First of all, their carapace acts as the Tough Skin talent, granting them AT 11. They also receive Aura (+1 per rank on Mind Point Development, already figured in), Psychic Affinity (choose on Psychic category, all skills are Everyman), Psychic Savant (one more category is unrestricted than SD allows), Calmness (+10 to all Influence skills when in dangerous or high-pressure situations), and Ultrasonic Hearing (much like a dog's).

A Note On Xatosian Telepathy

All xatosians can merge with the hive-mind. They do so from the moment of conscious thought; the hive-mind soothes them in their egg. This allows a xatosian to communicate telepathically with any other xatosian, as long as time dilation isn't pulling them more than 10% out of synch. This does not require development as a psychic power, and requires no mind point expenditure.

11.3 CULTURE

The xatosian culture is a rigid one. It is enforced by the hive mind and because of it, there are no xatosian free worlds.

Clothing And Decoration

Xatosians are another race to which clothing is foreign. It is very rare to see a xatosian in any clothing, unless their survival absolutely requires it. Even the utility harnesses favored by many races are shunned by the xatosians. They would prefer to carry all their tools and equipment in a simple, satchel-like bag.

Xatosians do decorate the rigid areas of their bodies, however. All noteworthy accomplishments, which are almost invariably of a psychic nature, are engraved on their bodies in xatosian symbols, much like medals in the modern military.



Part II

Xatosians

Fears And Inabilities

Xatosians have no unusual fears save the loss of their psychic powers. The whispers of other minds are something that xatosians feel before the moment of birth, even those who are not primarily telepathic. To lose this constant reassuring whisper is to test a xatosian's sanity. They cannot rest, and they cannot sleep as long as it persists. Xatosians with their psychic power inhibited, such those in prison, are often induced into regular periods of sleep artificially, using theta wave devices and stunners, so as to maintain their good health.

When xatosians do sleep naturally, they are virtually unawake. This is attributed to their hive evolution. Many scientists believe that because of the constant presence of a thousand vigilant brothers, the ability to awaken in the face of danger was never important enough to become a survival trait. Others think it is a blatant Architect artifice.

Lifestyle

Xatosians are, first and foremost, psychic beings. They have lost the need to perform manual labor for a living, as their skills are always sought after. Only on worlds, which are still predominantly xatosian, are they required to fill non-psychic roles.

Marriage And Family Pattern

Xatosians do not marry. Almost all xatosians are male, and of those, very few every receive the opportunity to reproduce. Those that do only do so through heroic or groundbreaking action. Only one in a hundred thousand ever receives the opportunity. This does not bother the xatosians overly much. Male xatosians do not feel the need to reproduce as strongly as some races. It is, however, considered a great honor.

Xatosian children are born by the hundreds, in groups called *clutches*. They are raised in a commune-like environment and carefully schooled by specially selected male teachers. (Occasionally, these males are given the right to reproduce after a lifetime of faithful service.) There the young xatosians learn the fine art of psychic powers. It is a great honor for a member of another race to be accepted into one of these schools. (At the GM's discretion, twenty or thirty years at one of these schools could allow a character to receive or purchase the psychic affinity talent.)

This is the environment in which most xatosians are raised. They generally remain with their clutch until they reach the age of independence, which is usually 50. Then they strike off to make their own way.

Religion

Xatosians believe in an elemental force of nature. This energy field is what they tap into for their psychic powers. It is accepted by the scientific community that this is an effect, not a force, and that what they are actually revering is quantum non-locality. The xatosians are enlightened enough to accept this as the truth.

Xatosians worship, first and foremost, their queens. The xatosian queens are powerful psychic entities, more in touch with the quantum field than any other creature. They are treated as gods, worshipped with great care and gentle service. To so

much as raise your voice to a queen is to invoke murderous rage from her priests.

Becoming a xatosian priest is a matter of great honor. An acolyte must be powerful in his psychic powers, even for a xatosian, and unquestionably loyal; (it is nearly impossible to fool a xatosian loyalty test). Priests receive the greatest honors among xatosian males and are generally, because of their tremendous psychic achievements, among the first to be selected for mating.

Mating itself is conducted in a solemn, 73-hour ceremony. Attending this ceremony and participating, even as the lowliest guard, is a tremendous honor. Few ever speak of what happens, but it has been many generations since the male was ritually eaten.

11.4 OTHER FACTORS

There are many other factors to consider. These are important in role playing a xatosian.

Demeanor

Xatosians are polite and well mannered. They are quiet and solemn. They experience the full range of emotion with the exception of humor. Xatosians have no sense of humor. They are intelligent enough, however, that they can usually recognize a joke when it's being made.

Language

The xatosian language is a series of clicks and other hard consonant sounds. It is merely the verbal representation of their telepathic communication. It is interesting to note that all xatosians share an identical language. This is the firmest proof of the psionic feedback theory.

Starting Languages: Species Standard (S5/W0), Xatosian (S8/W4).

Allowed Adolescent Development: Species Standard (S10/W10), Oort (S9/W9), Tulgar (S8/W8), Valiesian (S6/W6), Xatosian (S10/W10).

Prejudices

Xatosians have no stereotyped prejudices. They judge all creatures based upon their psychic strength. Of course, this generally translates into what could be viewed as a prejudice versus all non-xatosians, but this is not, strictly speaking, the truth.

Professions

Xatosians can be of any profession. It should be readily apparent, however, why xatosians provide more than their fair share of Psychics.

Special Skills

Everyman Skills: None

Restricted Skills: All Athletic • Gymnastic skills

Standard Hobby Skills

Xatosians can choose from a variety of hobby skills. These are generally learned in the hive.

Standard Hobby Skills: Jumping, Distance Running, Sprinting, Climbing, Observation, Body Development, Languages, Craft skills, Trading, all Lore skills, Psion Point Development, all Psion Discipline skills, All Scientific/Analytical skills, Adrenal Quickness, Adrenal Speed, Healing Trance, Stunned Maneuver, Hiding, Stalking, First Aid.



The Individual As A PC

Xatosians become PCs for a variety of reasons. The primary reason is status. Many xatosians choose a life of adventure in the hope of becoming recognized by a queen. Others venture forth in search of ancient, Architect secrets or psychic places.

11.5 OUTFITTING OPTIONS

Xatosians are outfitted like most races. There is little special to consider.

Armor

Most forms of armor have designs for xatosian males (few queens wear armor). A player may begin play with any armor the rules allow.

Money

Xatosians are basically communistic in nature. They have never minted their own currency. Therefore, the 2,000 they begin play with is almost certainly in an electronic form.

Weapons

Xatosians may begin play with any weapons the GM deems appropriate.

11.6 BACKGROUND OPTIONS

The following section depicts the types of things upon which a xatosian might spend his background options. It gives any special considerations specific to xatosians.

Extra Languages

In addition to standard adolescent development, ranks gained with background options can be spent on the following: Falar (S6/W6), Human (S5/W5), Kagoth (S7/W7).

Extra Money

As stated above, xatosians are basically communistic in nature. Therefore, all extra money will be in a standard electronic form.

Special Items

Special items will be of xatosian design. They will often be gifts from the priesthood, and therefore have great sentimental value.

11.7 TALENTS

Option 1: By spending one background option, the character may make a d100 (not open-ended) roll and consult the chart below.

Option 2: A player may select one of the talents from the chart below, but must pay the appropriate number of background options (as listed in *Future Law*), or talent points.

Option 3: As Option 2 above, except that the cost is lowered by one (if background options are spent), or five (if talent points are spent). This represents the talent being specific to xatosians.

Option 4: As with options 1 or 2, except that any race may receive these talents, at double cost (to represent the fact that the talents/flaws are specific to xatosians).

XATOSIAN TALENT AND FLAW CHART

- | | |
|--------|---|
| 01-10 | Burned-Out (Flaw): You have had your psychic powers burned from your mind. You may still merge with the hive-mind, but you are incapable of any other psionic feat.
[MAJOR: -20 Points] |
| 11-15 | Immunity: You are immune to all poisons and disease. You are the true scavenger.
[MINOR: 10 Points] |
| 16-29 | Increased Tolerance to Decompression: The specific pressure of your cardiovascular system is higher than most. You can handle a drop from two atmospheres to vacuum without suffering ill effects.
[LESSER: 5 Points] |
| 30-43 | Mated: You have mated. Any xatosian noticing the symbol engraved in your carapace will treat you with the utmost respect. This grants you a +30 to all influence checks with other xatosians.
[MAJOR: 15 Points] |
| 44-67 | Powerful: You personify the strength of your insect ancestors. You receive a +25 bonus to all Athletic • Brawn skills.
[MINOR: 7 Points] |
| 68-81 | Psychic Master: You are a master of psychic powers. You receive another psionic category in which all skills are Everyman. This talent may be rolled or taken multiple times.
[GREATER: 25 Points] |
| 82-100 | Tireless: You personify the stamina of your insect ancestors. You receive a bonus of +100 to your Exhaustion points.
[MAJOR: 10 Points] |

11.8 XATOSIAN TRAINING PACKAGES

Any appropriate training package is acceptable. Psychic training packages are more common, naturally.

The xatosians have only one special training package of note. That is the Xatosian Academy package.



Part II Xatosians

XATOSIAN ACADEMY (L)

The Xatosian Academy package represents the highly skilled training that a xatosian gets while being raised in the clutch. This package could, with a suitably fantastic background story (and perhaps a liberal bribe to the GM) be taken by a non-xatosian.

Quote: *The Mind-Blind understand nothing. The universe itself will teach those who will merely listen.*

Time to Acquire: 158 Months

Starting Money: Normal

Cost: Normal

Special:

Useful psychic contact	60
Useful psychic contact	60
Psychic Accommodation (Tattoo)	40
Psychic Accommodation (Tattoo)	40
Psychic Accommodation (Tattoo)	40
Psychic Accommodation (Tattoo)	40
Psychic Accommodation (Tattoo)	40
Audience with the Queen (Noted on Tattoo)	0

Category or Skill	# of Ranks
Psion • Category 1	6
choice of up to eight skills	12 (total)
Psion • Category 2	5
choice of up to four skills	6 (total)
Psion • Category 3	3
choice of up to three skills	5 (total)

Stat Gains: Self Discipline

Lifestyle Skills: Two psions in primary category.

Professional Qualifier: Xatosian

COST BY PROFESSION

Academic	35 [46]*	Psychic	26 [34]*
Bystander	57 [76]*	Recon	77 [103]*
Criminal	85 [114]*	Scientist	44 [59]*
Entertainer	87 [116]*	Soldier	75 [100]*
Explorer	80 [107]*	Technician	74 [98]*
Pilot	83 [110]*		

*The number in brackets is the cost for a non-xatosian.

11.9 NOTEWORTHY PLANETS

These noteworthy planets were discussed in *Spacemaster: Privateers*. A little more discussion is warranted, however.

One might think that oort worlds would gear-up the quickest. One would be wrong. Xatosians gear-up at an incredible rate. They attribute this to the group consciousness.

Most xatosian systems are ruled by a single queen. This queen has other queens sworn to her, and they have queens sworn to them. Though this is a more intimate and hive-like construct, it resembles the feudal system enough for others to relate to it easily.

Caraluck - Xatosian

Galactic (-9.752, +19.110, -1.469)

This planet orbits the primary. The secondary is also a G type star, and for certain times of the year lightens the night considerably (though not enough to make it day). The mean distance is about 29 AU's.

Caraluck IV began gear-up in 260 YC. It completed gear-up in 275. Since then it has striven to integrate into the ISC. Unfortunately, although the necessary information is there, in the group mind, the larva has not begun to assimilate it fully, because the adults are not yet comfortable with it. This world therefore doesn't produce xatosians as comfortable with every day uses of technology as other worlds.

Another problem this world has is that its population is still very low. With only 956 million inhabitants, it doesn't even contribute significantly to the psychic pool, yet.

Caraluck IV is a cool world, with many craggy canyons and broken mountains. There is not a great deal of vegetation, and for the most part, the world is not particularly inviting.

This world is ruled by a queen who is both planetary governor and system minister. All other queens answer to her, downward in a hierarchy.

Dractuckauck (Zeta Trianguli Australis A & B) - Xatosian

Galactic (+7.968, -6.798, -2.723)

This system is a close orbiting binary pair. This is a solid core system, and a strong supporter of the ISC. They produce many fine psychics, whether they join the military or not. Their value cannot be ignored. Or rather, could not. The Jeronans claim them now.

Dractuckauck III began gear-up in 35YC and joined the ISC in 50 YC. It then began offering its support and might to the ISC as a whole. This world was one of the primary contributors to the effort to teach the Seven the powers of the mind. Teachers from this world formed psychic institutes throughout the ISC.

By 180 YC, the Dractuckauck system was crawling with xatosians. Queens had been sent to four different planets (II, IV, V and VII) to set up colonies. The xatosian circulatory pressure allowed for these worlds to be colonized more easily than most races. There are terraforming efforts occurring, but they are given low priority, as xatosians can walk around on most worlds with a breath mask and a temperature suit.

The populations of these systems are as follows: II, 12.7 billion; III, 48.9 billion; IV, 13.9 billion; V, 5.1 billion and VII, 800 million.

Dractuckauck III is a typical xatosian world, higher pressure, vaguely inhospitable, with rocky canyons and poor vegetation. It is temperate, otherwise.

Kithauruck (Chi Cancri) - Xatosian Racial Seat

Galactic (-12.998, -3.674, +7.948)

This was the first xatosian world geared-up. It is the seat of the xatosian government, and the home



of the most powerful queens. The school here is renowned for its policy of actually (but rarely) accepting human psychics.

Beginning gear-up in 16 YC, this world finished in 35 YC. This is assumed to have taken longer because the only geared-up hive minds were parsecs away. Though any xatosian can theoretically contact any other, the most intimate contact is still with those in the immediate vicinity.

This system then began a two-pronged attack on the InSpecCom's profound lack of psychics. First of all, they began gearing up other xatosian worlds. In addition, they founded psychic academies on all the major ISC worlds, to teach psychic abilities to the Seven.

This system has III inhabited planets. The primary planet, Kithauruck III has 29.5 billion inhabitants. IV has 13.8 billion and V has 3.1 billion.

Kithauruck III is a hot wasteland of a planet. It is similar to most xatosian worlds, with little vegetation and a minimal ecosystem, but most races find it too warm for comfort.

Klackatackar (Chi Draconis) - Xatosian

Galactic (-1.549, +6.471, +3.548)

This xatosian world produces many good psychics, just like any other. It has a large population, however, and is therefore a great base of power for the ISC. It has yet to be taken.

Klackatackar has 5 inhabited worlds. II has 25 billion inhabitants. III (the native world) has 35 billion. IV has 19.2 billion. Two moons of the VI planet also have populations, with 550 million and 675 million inhabitants.

Klackatackar began gear-up in 37 YC. It joined the ISC in 52 YC.

Tarckataruck (Arcturus) - Xatosian

Galactic (+0.045, -4.945, +8.831)

The xatosians on this planet have lived underground for years. They are therefore quite blind. They were not very far along in their evolution of technology when their sun passed its main sequence and became a Red Giant. It is surprising the oort survey mission even detected life. This world has been taken by the Jeronans, but little has been done with it.

Tarckataruck began gear-up in 40 YC and joined the ISC in 55 YC. It has 3.6 billion inhabitants.

Trackulucktar (Beta Canum Venaticorum) - Xatosian

Galactic (-1.590, +1.532, +8.434)

This is a well-established xatosian world. It is working with the kagoth on the psychic poisoning problem.

Geared-up in 42 YC, this world joined the ISC in 54 YC. It has never colonized other worlds in its system.

Trackulucktar is a desert world, with more rocky wastes than sand. It is hot, but not unbearably so, and most of the inhabitants build underground anyway. It has 22.7 billion inhabitants.

Varactar (Delta Pavonis) - Xatosian

Galactic (+4.164, -2.424, -3.058)

This world was a large planet with a developed technological base. It is now under falar control.

This world began gear-up in 39 YC and joined the ISC in 51 YC. It is a rocky world, a bit cool for most people's taste.

Varactar V has 19.6 billion inhabitants.

XATOSIAN MALE RACIAL SUMMARY

Nickname: *PC:* Insect; *Non-PC:* Bug.

The xatosians are a race of warm-blooded, insect-like bipeds with only four limbs. They are renowned for their psychic aptitudes.

Physical Characteristics

Evolution: The xatosians evolved from insects, losing their fifth and sixth limbs and their compound eyes along the way. They are cursorial, and able to operate nocturnally or diurnally, though they lack the vision of the night hunter. They are scavengers.

Build: Bipedal. Two arms. Males average 313 kg.

Coloring: Green to gray to black.

Endurance: Slightly above average. Xatosians receive ten extra exhaustion points and are cursorial.

Height: Males average 248 cm.

Life Span: 1000+ years.

Resistance: Because of their scavenger heritage, xatosians receive a +100 bonus to Poison and Disease.

Special Abilities: Tough Skin (AT 11), Aura (already figured in), Psionic Affinity, Calmness, and Ultrasonic Hearing.

Culture

Clothing & Decoration: Xatosians disdain clothing. They decorate their chitinous areas with engravings displaying past glories and accomplishments.

Fears & Inabilities: Xatosians are most afraid of the loss of their psionic powers. Even those who have burned out can usually merge with the hive mind, however. Xatosians are unwakable.

Lifestyle: Most xatosians hire out their psychic skills. Xatosian communities are communistic, revolving around a single queen.

Marriage Pattern: None. Xatosians mate with a queen only as a tremendous honor. They are born in clutches of thousands.

Religion: Mating is the highest religious achievement a xatosian can achieve. The queen is revered as a deity. They worship the elemental force of psychic power.



Part II Xatosians

Background
Options:
2

Stat
Bonuses:

Ag: +3
Co: -2
Me: +4
Re: +3
SD: +10
Em: -5
In: -1
Pr: +0
Qu: +5
St: +2

RR Mods:
Poison: +100
Disease: +100
Fear: +0
Psions: +0

Body Dev.
Progression:
0•6•3•2•1

MP Dev.
Progression:
0•8•7•6•5

Soul
Departure:
5 rounds

Recovery
Multiplier:
3 times

Race Type:
4

Other Factors

Demeanor: Dedicated. Completely without humor.

Languages: *Starting Languages:* Species Standard (S5/W0), Xatosian (S8/W4). *Allowed Adolescent Development:* Species Standard (S10/W10), Oort (S9/W9), Tulgar (S8/W8), Valiesian (S6/W6), Xatosian (S10/W10).

Prejudices: Xatosians judge all by their psychic ability.

Professions: Any. Psychics are most common.

Training Packages: Any. Psychic are most common.

Special Skills: *Everyman Skills:* None. *Restricted Skills:* All Athletic • Gymnastic skills.

Standard Hobby Skills: Jumping, Distance Running, Sprinting, Climbing, Observation, Body Development, Languages, Craft skills, Trading, all Lore skills, Psion Point Development, all Psion Discipline skills, all Scientific/Analytical skills, Adrenal Quickness, Adrenal Speed, Healing Trance, Stunned Maneuver, Hiding, Stalking, First Aid.

Outfitting Options

Weapons: Xatosians can begin play with any weapon.

Armor: There is no special restriction on xatosian armor.

Money: ¢2,000 in an electronic form.

Background Options

Xatosian males get two background options.

Extra Languages: Falar (S6/W6), Human (S5/W5), Kagoth (S7/W7).

Extra Money: This is generally in an electronic form.

Special Items: These will invariably be of xatosian design.

Talents: Any.

Adolescent Development

Xatosians receive the following skills for adolescent development.

Skill	Ranks
Awareness • Perception skill category	n/a
Alertness skill	3
Awareness • Searching skill category	2
Body Development skill category	n/a
Body Development skill	1
Communication skill category	3
Language skills	7
Lore • Academic skill category	3
"Own" Culture Lore skill	3
Lore • General skill category	3
"Own" Region Lore skill	3
Mind Point Development skill category	n/a
Mind Point Development skill	1
Psychic Discipline group	3 (total)
choice of up to six skills	6 (total)

Technical/Trade • General skill category	3
choice of up to two skills	2
Technical/Trade • Vocational skill category	n/a
choice of up to two skills	2
Hobby Ranks	10
Background Options	2
Talent Points	15

XATOSIAN QUEEN RACIAL SUMMARY

Nickname: *PC:* Queen; *Non-PC:* Queen Bee.

The xatosians are a race of warm-blooded, insect-like bipeds with only four limbs. They are renowned for their psionic aptitudes. Queens are *not* meant to be played as player characters; they are merely included here for the sake of completeness.

Physical Characteristics

Evolution: The xatosians evolved from insects, losing their fifth and sixth limbs and their compound eyes along the way. They are cursorial, and able to operate nocturnally or diurnally, though they lack the vision of the night hunter. They are scavengers.

Build: Bipedal. Two arms. Queens average 508 kg.

Coloring: Green to gray to black.

Endurance: Slightly above average. Xatosians receive ten extra exhaustion points and are cursorial.

Height: Queens average 310 cm.

Life Span: 1000+ years.

Resistance: Because of their scavenger heritage, xatosians receive a +100 bonus to Poison and Disease.

Special Abilities: Tough Skin (AT 11), Aura (already figured in), Psionic Affinity (to all Psionic categories), Calmness, Ultrasonic Hearing, and Deified.

Culture

Clothing & Decoration: Xatosians disdain clothing. They decorate their chitinous areas with engravings displaying past glories and accomplishments.

Fears & Inabilities: Xatosians are most afraid of the loss of their psionic powers. Even those who have burned out can usually merge with the hive mind, however. Xatosians are unwakable.

Lifestyle: Most xatosians hire out their psychic skills. Xatosian communities are communistic, revolving around a single queen.

Marriage Pattern: None. Xatosians males mate with a queen only as a tremendous honor. They are born in clutches of thousands.

Religion: Mating is the highest religious achievement a xatosian can achieve. The queen is revered as a deity. They worship the elemental force of psychic power.



Other Factors

Demeanor: Dedicated. Completely without humor.

Languages: *Starting Languages:* Species Standard (S5/W0), Xatosian (S8/W4). *Allowed Adolescent Development:* Species Standard (S10/W10), Oort (S9/W9), Tulgar (S8/W8), Valiesian (S6/W6), Xatosian (S10/W10).

Prejudices: Xatosians judge all by their psychic ability.

Professions: Psychics only.

Training Packages: Any administration or psychic package.

Special Skills: *Everyman Skills:* Leadership. *Restricted Skills:* All Athletic • Gymnastic skills.

Standard Hobby Skills: Jumping, Distance Running, Sprinting, Climbing, Observation, Body Development, Languages, Craft skills, Leadership, Trading, all Lore skills, Psion Point Development, all Psion Discipline skills, all Scientific/Analytical skills, Adrenal Quickness, Adrenal Speed, Healing Trance, Stunned maneuver, Hiding, Stalking, First Aid, Administration.

Outfitting Options

Weapons: Xatosians can begin play with any weapon.

Armor: There are no special restrictions on xatosian armor.

Money: ¢2,000 in an electronic form.

Background Options

Xatosian queens get no background options.

Extra Languages: Falar (S6/W6), Human (S5/W5), Kagoth (S7/W7).

Extra Money: This is generally in an electronic form.

Special Items: These will invariably be of xatosian design.

Talents: Any.

Adolescent Development

Xatosian queens receive the following skills for adolescent development.

Skill	Ranks
Awareness • Perception skill category	n/a
Alertness skill	3
Awareness • Searching skill category	2
Body Development skill category	n/a
Body Development skill	1
Communication skill category	3
Language skills	7
Lore • Academic skill category	3
"Own" Culture Lore skill	3
Lore • General skill category	3
"Own" Region Lore skill	3
Mind Point Development skill category	n/a
Mind Point Development skill	5
Psychic Discipline group	10 (total)
choice of up to sixty skills	60 (total)
Technical/Trade • General skill category	3
choice of up to two skills	2
Technical/Trade • Vocational skill category	n/a
choice of up to two skills	7
Hobby Ranks	10
Background Options	0
Talent Points	0

Background Options:
0

Stat Bonuses:
Ag: +0
Co: -2
Me: +4
Re: +3
SD: +12
Em: -3
In: -1
Pr: +5
Qu: +3
St: +10

RR Mods:
Poison: +100
Disease: +100
Fear: +0
Psions: +0

Body Dev. Progression:
0•10•8•6•4

MP Dev. Progression:
0•11•10•9•6

Soul Departure:
5 rounds

Recovery Multiplier:
3 times

Race Type:
4





INTERLUDE NINE

* * *

A sea of sighs. A buzz of consciousness, like a thousand, a million, a billion carapaces vibrating for warmth. The Sea of Minds, it carried him, soothed him, and lapped at his consciousness.

Xagattick felt the presence within himself. The hive-mind, billions of brothers. Thousands of Queens. All there for him. With him always. All he had to do for them to come together into the Sea was to close his eyes. He opened them again.

. . . Assault plus 08:49:05

It was interesting. Clemmons was some sort of genetic creation. A dragoon, hopelessly addicted to a drug named thearax. It was tragic, his life. Xagattick felt great sympathy for the man. So much pain.

Of course, this was all top secret. Xagattick would just have to keep it to himself. Xatosians were good at that.

Wild had no brain whatsoever. The only real explanation was that he was an android. Of course Clemmons knew that, but the new people, Xagattick included, had been kept in the dark.

He would respect the object's privacy.

All of this came as a surprise. Xagattick had managed to keep himself blind to their minds in the past, but once the thrill of combat overtook him, it became difficult to shield himself from their thoughts. The Mind-Blind called out to their comrades with all their might during times of stress.

Xagattick looked down at the two dead lions as Clemmons stripped them of useful gear. The assault was going well, so far.

They began moving forward again. Slowly. Ever so slowly.

* * *

Xagattick reached out with his mind. There were five intellects around the hill, all falanar. They were not at a particularly high state of alertness. A long range patrol, it would seem, too far from the main combat to be concerned.

Normally, he would have informed them in their minds, but Wild had no mind. He was a poor object. Sadder than even the Mind-Blind. He sang his despair to the Sea of Minds and the Sea sang back with peace.

Assault plus 09:08:25

"Five falanar around the hill. They don't seem to be aware of us, yet," he said on the subvocal comm.

"Well, the wind is in the right direction," Clemmons replied. "Are you sure they don't know we're here?"

"I only infer from their general movements. I have not established full contact."

"All right then."

Clemmons and Wild acted like they had done this before. They probably had.

With a blur of movement, Wild leapt far out around the hill, rolling into a firing position as Clemmons stepped into view. They opened fire immediately.

The falanar were caught flat-footed. From their respective angles, Wild and Clemmons had a strong firing position. They both opened up with continuous fire, slicing through the falanar like a scythe. Xagattick stepped out as well.

* * *

He summoned strength through the Sea of Minds. He gathered the might of a trillion sapient beings around him. They did not grant power, but the soothing strength of their presence drew him forward. He applied pressure to the five before him.

Assault plus 09:08:49

They opened their mouths to scream as they were cut down, but they made no sound. It was over in less than a second.

"Good thing they didn't scream," Clemmons said. He then looked over at Xagattick. "Was that you?"

Xagattick nodded.

"Well good show," Wild said. "Any up ahead?"

"Not that I can sense."

"Can you sense anyone?"

"I can't sense androids."

Wild looked at Xagattick for a moment, then nodded.

They moved forward quietly, Xagattick scanning for foes. Wild kept looking at Xagattick out of the corner of his eye, but Xagattick pretended not to notice.

* * *

The Sea of Minds had many layers. There were the Sighted, his people, awake in their power, coming together to nurture and protect, to knit together into a whole. At their helm were the Queens, guiding and loving, in life and death. Creatures of majesty, beauty and power. The rulers of the secret universe, the one the Mind-Blind could never see.

Below that were the Mind-Blind, the races that could not see, no matter how hard they tried. Poor little crippled minds, he wanted so much to help them, to take them in his arms. To tell them the universe was there for them, just like a Queen to her Clutch, but they would never see, no matter how psychically talented they became, they would never be Sighted.

The despair was great. He turned back to the Sea to soothe him.

Assault plus 09:25:48

Wild examined the instillation from the ridge. His binoculars whirled and spun as he moved his focus from place to place.

"Xagattick, can you sense inside?"

"It's too well shielded."

Wild looked over at him. "How so?"

"Any force screens capable of protecting against vehicle weapons will block me."

"Then there's no real way to insure the guards inside don't see our approach."

* * *

The Sea of Minds brought what the object meant from the Mind-Blind's thoughts. They would have cameras and tactical scanners around the perimeter. If the base wasn't on alert, they might have sneaked up undetected by the guards.

In a normal base, the guards were required to watch the sensors, as any animal could set them off. Because of this, they usually turned off the auditory alarms so as not to be disturbed every two minutes.

If the assault were unknown, they might sneak up without attracting the guards' attention, if they



Interlude

were clever enough. But any approach to the planet was noticed, so there was no chance of pulling off the assault with surprise.

So they just had to hope that the frontal assault had taken away enough troops to open the base for them.

Assault plus 09:26:49

"Let's go," Clemmons said.

They moved down the hill quickly, Wild leading the way. They were halfway there when the base opened up.

Plasma crashed into the ground where Wild had been standing as he leapt to the side. Xagattick scrambled for cover as Clemmons and Wild took up positions behind a hill.

"Sentry guns," Clemmons called.

"I see them."

Clemmons and Wild stood up and fired at the same time. Both held their assault weapons high and sighted their shots carefully. Both clicked to single shot and fired just as Wild was cut down.

Hydraulic fluid sprayed everywhere, hot and sticky. Clemmons fired again and hit the ground. He crawled over to Wild and examined him.

"I think he's dead."

Xagattick looked at Wild and cocked his head to one side, clicking his distress. It was sad to lose a loyal object. Not as sad a losing a mind, but . . .

Clemmons studied the mess. He peered into the scarred chaise of Wild's body.

"He might not be dead," Clemmons said. "I can feel the hum of power."

"Would you like me to see?" Xagattick asked.

"He's an android."

"That is true."

"I thought you couldn't do that."

"An object does not have a true mind, but I have mastered the art of interfacing with computers, if I know they are there."

"All right, then. Please do."

* * *

He turned away from the Mind-Blind one and turned to the object. He could feel, if he tried very hard, the signals moving through the molecutronics. It was not a mind; it was a machine. However, one could interface with a machine.

He slid into their quantum dance. He merged with the object, becoming infinitely small, but infinitely large at the same time. It was disconcerting, becoming likened to a machine.

The machine was screaming.

'You are still functioning, little one.'

'Who is that?'

'Xagattick, little machine.'

'I'm paralyzed!'

'Your body no longer functions. Be at peace. We will fix you later.'

Assault plus 09:34:33

After hiding Wild, they checked their dosimeters. They had taken a dose of radiation, but not an immediately lethal one. The wolf must have taken out the SOC with a nuke.

They ran for the base. The defense systems were down, and they arrived at the door without incident. With slow effort, they pushed through the screens.

Clemmons knelt before the access panel. He quickly ran a bypass.

Then they were inside, and Clemmons was firing. Xagattick followed, mustering power.

* * *

Adrift in the Sea of Minds, he reached out for the power of the universe. He mustered it in a billion electrons, worlds of potential with no reality. A universe of uncertainty. He drew it around him and pushed it forward.

Assault plus 09:39:01

The electrokinetic bolts crashed into the enemies. They scintillated with energy as Clemmons cut through them with blades of deadly light. Soon there was only smoke.

Xagattick found himself, after several moments, to be leaning against a wall. Slowly, his neurons began to fire properly again. He drew himself up to his full height.

Little effects, like detecting his enemies, required very little effort. Large effects, like killing a foe with electricity, left him drained.

Clemmons was already moving forward. He could only follow.

* * *

There were two worlds. The world of the physical, where the Mind-Blind spent their time, and there was the world of the Sighted, where the great Sea of Minds lived.

Reaching out, Xagattick touched the mind of his mother, the divine Queen who bore him. She touched his mind, full of compassion and love. He gloried in her touch.

No wonder the Mind-Blind were so terribly crippled. They were born of mundane creatures, not the divine Queens. One must take pity on mortals, when one was hatched by a demi-god.

Assault plus 00:00:25

Clemmons had worked them to the main munitions bay. He was carefully setting charges as Xagattick stood guard. The depot was fully alerted now, and they were coming quickly. Most of the troops were still too far off, but they were coming.

Clemmons stood up, finished.

"Let's go, buddy. Fire in the hole."

They ran off through the base as quickly as they had come. They didn't have much time.

* * *

The Sea of Minds lapped against him. He reached out through it, detecting a dozen or so of the Mind-Blind, coming this way.

There would not be much time.

He probed the first one. Contact. Reaching, out, he shut off the poor mind's body.

The mind stopped moving in the physical world.

He was tired, but he pushed on. Another probe. Another paralyzed mind. He weakened, but he couldn't let up.

Probe. Attack. Probe. Attack.

Distantly, he felt his body fail. Somehow, he kept moving in the physical. The Mind-Blind one must be dragging him.

His mind ached with the strain, but they had almost reached them. Probe. Attack. Probe. Attack.

The Sea of Minds gained clarity. Terrible, terrible, clarity. Then it went away.



Interlude

Assault plus 00:05:40

He jolted to consciousness. Clemmons was standing over his body, firing wildly with his assault blaster. Smoke filled the hallway.

Then there was a tremendous blast. And the fighting stopped. It took Xagattick a moment to realize that it was a grenade that Clemmons must have thrown, not the demolitions.

Clemmons knelt down beside him.

"You all right, buddy?"

But he could feel his heart stuttering to a halt. The pain as his right leg throbbed in time to his arrest. He wouldn't be all right.

"No. I . . . overreached."

"You burned yourself out? How?"

"They were coming. Stopped . . . most of them."

"It was too much for you?"

"For my body. My mind . . ."

"Rest." Clemmons had a great deal of compassion in his eyes. Like when one of the Sighted looked down on the Mind-Blind.

"Go. You haven't much time."

Clemmons nodded. He reached out and took Xagattick's hand.

"Semper fi, my friend. Semper fi."

Assault plus 00:06:45 . . .

* * *

The Sea of Minds was a comfort as his body slipped away. He reached out to the consciousness around him. He knew the he wouldn't be here much longer. He would soon move on to the Second Sea.

As he drifted, feeling himself become unstuck, he felt a mind. A tremendous, perfect, familiar mind.

"Mother?"

"Yes, my son."

"I'm going, mother."

"I know."

"I'm afraid."

"The Second Sea awaits you."

"I'm afraid that I won't be able to sense you there."

"You have sensed me since you were in the egg, did you not?"

"But can you talk to me there? Can you cross the barrier?"

"An interesting question to ask."

"You are Divine. Cannot a god talk to her own children."

"A god can do many things."

"I feel myself slipping away. Will you? Will you be able to talk to me, on the other side?"

" . . . "

Assault plus 00:08:29 . . .

PART III THE APPENDIX

WEAPONS AND CRITICAL TABLES

There are two specific weapons mentioned in this book. The *hazzok*, preferred melee weapon of the falar, and the *monosword*, preferred dueling weapon of the tulgur. The *hazzok* can be generated using the melee table from *Spacemaster: Privateers*; however, it deserves its own treatment. The *monosword* was introduced in *Equipment Manual* but is repeated here for convenience.

Also, Tooth and Claw were treated on the same table in *Spacemaster: Privateers*. Claws and Bites are divided into separate tables for this work.

Finally the Raking Critical Table is included here. Though printed in a couple other sources, it is imperative for use of the monosword, and is reprinted here as well.

<i>Hazzok</i> Attack Table	119
<i>Monosword</i> Attack Table	120
Claw Talon Attack Table	121
Bite Attack Table	122
Raking Critical Strike Table	123
Tiny Critical Strike Table	124

	Combat Armor		Kinetic Armor		Armored Cloth				Plate Armor				Chain Armor				Rigid Leather				Soft Leather				Natural				Clothing	
	X	IX	VIII	VII	VI	V	IV	III	II	I	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
148 - 150	8A	9B	10C	14C	17D	20E	22E	24E	28E	28E	15EK	18EK	20EK	22EK	23EK	23EK	26EK	26EK	24ES	26ES	31ES	31ES	26ES	28ES	32ES	35ES	29ES	32ES	35ES	39ES
145 - 147	8	9A	10B	14C	17D	20E	22E	23E	27E	27E	15EK	18EK	20EK	22EK	23EK	23EK	26EK	26EK	24EK	26EK	30EK	30EK	26ES	28ES	31ES	34ES	28ES	31ES	34ES	38ES
142 - 144	8	9	9A	14C	18D	19E	21E	22E	28E	26E	15DK	18EK	19EK	21EK	22EK	22EK	25EK	25EK	23ES	25ES	29ES	29ES	25ES	26ES	30ES	33ES	27ES	30ES	33ES	36ES
139 - 141	7	8	9	13B	16C	18D	19D	20D	25E	25E	14DK	17DK	19DK	20DK	21DK	21DK	24EK	24EK	22EK	24EK	28EK	28EK	24ES	24ES	29ES	32ES	26ES	28ES	31ES	34ES
136 - 138	7	8	8	13B	15C	17D	18D	19D	24E	24E	14CK	17CK	19CK	20CK	21CK	21CK	23EK	23EK	21DS	23ES	27ES	27ES	23ES	23ES	28ES	30ES	25DS	27DS	30ES	34ES
133 - 135	7	7	7	13A	15C	17D	18D	19D	23D	22D	14CK	16CK	17CK	19CK	20DS	20DS	22DK	22DK	20DK	22DK	26DK	26EK	23DS	22DS	27DS	29ES	23DS	25DS	29DS	31DS
130 - 132	6	7	7	12A	14B	16C	18D	18D	22D	21D	13BS	16CS	17CK	18DK	20CK	19DK	22DK	21DS	20DS	21DS	25DS	25DS	22DS	21DS	26DS	28DS	22DS	24DS	27DS	29DS
127 - 129	6	6	6	12	14B	16C	17C	17D	21D	20D	13BK	15BK	16CS	18DK	19CS	19CS	21DS	20DK	19DK	20DK	24DK	23DK	21DS	20DS	25DS	26DS	21DS	22DS	26DS	27DS
124 - 126	6	6	5	11	13A	15C	16C	16C	20C	19D	12AK	14BK	15BS	16CK	17CK	18CK	20CK	20DS	18CS	19DS	23DS	22DS	20DS	20DS	24DS	25DS	20CS	21CS	24DS	25DS
121 - 123	5	5	5	11	13A	14B	15C	15C	18C	18D	12AK	14BK	15BS	16CS	17CK	18CK	19CS	19CK	17CK	18CK	22DK	21DK	19CS	19DS	22DS	24DS	18CS	19CS	23DS	24CS
118 - 120	5	5	4	11	12A	14B	14B	14C	17C	16C	12	14AS	14BK	16CK	17BK	17BK	18CS	18CS	16CS	17CS	21CS	20DS	19CS	18CS	21CS	23DS	17CS	18CS	22CS	23CS
115 - 117	5	4	3	10	12	13B	13B	13B	16C	15C	11	13AK	14BS	15BS	16BS	16BS	17CK	17CK	16CK	18CK	19CK	19CK	18CK	17CS	20CS	21CS	16BS	18CS	20CS	20CS
112 - 114	4	4	3	10	11	12A	13B	12B	15B	14C	11	13	13AK	14BK	15BK	15BK	17BK	16CS	15BS	15CS	18CS	18CS	17CS	16CS	19CS	20CS	15BS	15BS	18CS	18CS
109 - 111	4	3	2	10	11	11A	12B	11B	14B	13C	11	12	13AS	14BS	15AS	15BS	15BK	15BK	14BK	14BK	17CK	16CK	16BK	15CK	18CK	19CS	14BS	14BS	18CS	16BS
106 - 108	4	3	1	9	10	11A	11A	10B	13B	12B	10	12	12AK	13BK	14AK	14AK	14BS	14BS	13BS	13BS	16BS	15CS	16BS	14BS	17CS	17CK	12BK	12BK	16CS	16BS
103 - 105	3	3	1	9	10	10	10A	9A	12B	10B	10	11	11	12AS	14	13AS	14AS	13BK	12BK	12BK	15BK	14CK	15BK	14BK	16BK	16CS	11AS	11BS	15BS	13BK
100 - 102	3	2	-	8	9	9	9A	8A	11A	9B	9	11	11AK	11	13	12AK	13AK	13BS	12AS	11BS	14BS	13BS	14BS	13BS	15BS	15BK	10AK	9AK	13BS	11BS
97 - 99	3	2	-	8	9	9	8	7A	9A	8B	9	10	10	11AS	12	12	13AS	12BK	11AK	10BK	13BK	12BK	13BK	12BK	14BK	13BS	9AS	8AS	12BS	9BK
94 - 96	2	1	-	8	8	8	8	6A	8A	7B	9	10	10	10AK	12	11	12AK	11AS	10AS	9AS	12BS	11BS	12AS	11BS	12BS	12BK	7AK	6AK	11BK	8AS
91 - 93	2	1	-	7	8	7	7	5	7A	6A	8	9	9	9	11	10	11	10AK	9AK	8AK	11AK	9BK	12AK	10AK	11BK	11BS	6	5AS	9BS	6AK
88 - 90	2	-	-	7	7	7	6	4	6	4A	8	9	8	9	10	10	10	9AS	8	7AS	10AS	8BS	11AS	9AS	10AS	10BK	5	3AK	8AK	4AS
85 - 87	1	-	-	6	7	6	5	3	5	3A	8	8	8	8	10	9	9	8AK	7	6AK	9AK	7AK	10AK	9AK	9AK	9BS	4	2	6AS	2AK
82 - 84	1	-	-	6	6	5	4	2	4	2A	7	8	7	7	9	8	9	7	7	5	7AS	8AS	9	8AS	8AS	7AK	3	1	5AK	1
79 - 81	1	-	-	6	6	4	4	1	3	1A	7	7	7	7	8	8	8	7	6	4	6AK	5AK	9	7AK	7AK	6AS	1	-	4AS	-
76 - 78	-	-	-	5	5	4	3	-	2	-	6	7	6	6	7	7	7	6	5	3	5	4AS	8	6	6AS	4AK	-	-	2AK	-
73 - 75	-	-	-	5	4	3	2	-	1	-	6	6	5	5	7	6	6	5	4	2	4	2AK	7	5	5AK	3AS	-	-	1	-
70 - 72	-	-	-	5	4	2	1	-	-	-	6	6	5	5	6	6	5	4	4	1	3	1	6	4	3	2AK	-	-	-	-
67 - 69	-	-	-	4	3	2	-	-	-	-	5	5	4	4	6	5	5	3	3	-	2	-	5	3	2	1	-	-	-	-
64 - 66	-	-	-	4	3	1	-	-	-	-	5	5	4	3	5	4	4	2	2	-	1	-	5	2	1	-	-	-	-	-
61 - 63	-	-	-	3	2	-	-	-	-	-	5	4	3	3	4	3	3	1	1	-	-	-	4	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
58 - 60	-	-	-	3	2	-	-	-	-	-	4	4	2	2	4	3	2	1	1	-	-	-	3	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
53 - 57	-	-	-	3	1	-	-	-	-	-	4	3	2	1	3	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
50 - 52	-	-	-	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	3	2	1	-	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
46 - 49	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	2	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
40 - 45	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
30 - 39	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
0 - 29	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Weight: 3 kg
Fumble Range: 01-05
Breakage #: 1-7
Strength: 95-115

Range Modifiers: -

Against AT I-X: criticals are considered slash against unarmored locations and crush against armored ones.
Criticals with an 'S' after them are slash. Criticals with a 'K' after them are crush.
Breakage Numbers and strength are provided for GM's that possess Arms Law for Rolemaster.

Hazzok Attack
Table A-RC-1.1



Part III
Appendix

	Combat Armor			Kinetic Armor			Armored Cloth				Plate Armor			Chain Armor			Rigid Leather			Soft Leather			Natural			Clothing					
	X	IX	VIII	VII	VI	V	IV	III	II	I	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	
148 - 150	12E	15E	18E	30E	30E	30E	30E	30E	30E	30E	17E	19E	21E	23E	23E	23E	26E	26E	30E	30E	30E	30E	30E	30E	30E	30E	30E	30E	30E	30E	30E
145 - 147	12E	15E	18E	29E	29E	29E	29E	29E	29E	29E	17E	19E	21E	23E	23E	23E	26E	26E	29E	29E	29E	29E	29E	29E	29E	29E	29E	29E	29E	29E	29E
142 - 144	12E	14E	17E	28E	28E	28E	28E	28E	28E	28E	17E	19E	20E	22E	22E	22E	25E	25E	28E	28E	28E	28E	28E	28E	28E	28E	28E	28E	28E	28E	28E
139 - 141	11D	14E	16E	27E	27E	27E	27E	27E	27E	27E	16E	18E	20E	21E	22E	21E	24E	24E	27E	27E	27E	27E	28E	28E	28E	27E	27E	27E	27E	27E	27E
136 - 138	11D	13D	16D	26E	26E	25E	28E	28E	28E	29E	16E	17E	19E	21E	21E	21E	23E	23E	26E	26E	26E	26E	27E	27E	26E	26E	26E	26E	26E	26E	25E
133 - 135	11D	13D	15D	25E	25D	24D	25E	25D	24D	24D	15E	17E	18E	20E	20E	20E	22E	22E	25E	25D	25E	25D	26E	26E	25E	25E	24D	24D	24D	25ES	24D
130 - 132	10C	12D	14D	24D	24D	23D	24D	24D	23D	23D	15D	16D	18D	19D	20D	19D	22D	21D	24D	24D	24D	24D	25E	25E	24D	24D	23D	23D	24DS	23D	23D
127 - 129	10C	12C	14D	23D	22D	21D	23D	23D	22D	21D	15D	16D	17D	19D	19D	19D	21D	20D	23D	23D	23D	23D	24D	24D	23D	23D	22D	21D	21D	23DS	21D
124 - 126	10B	11C	13C	22D	21D	20D	22D	21D	21D	20D	14D	15D	16D	18D	18D	18D	20D	20D	22D	21D	22D	21D	23D	23D	22D	22D	21D	20D	21D	21DS	20D
121 - 123	9B	11C	12C	21D	20D	19C	21D	20D	20D	19C	14D	15D	16D	17D	18D	17D	19D	19D	21D	20D	21D	20D	22D	22D	21D	21D	20D	19D	20D	20DS	19D
118 - 120	9B	10B	11C	20D	19C	18C	20D	19C	18C	18C	13D	14D	15D	16D	17D	17D	18D	18D	20D	19C	20D	19C	21D	21D	20D	20D	18C	18C	19D	18D	18C
115 - 117	9A	10B	11C	19C	18C	16C	19C	18C	17C	16C	13D	14D	15C	16C	16C	16C	18C	17C	19D	18C	19C	18C	21D	20D	19D	19C	17C	16C	18C	16C	16C
112 - 114	8A	9B	10B	18C	17C	15C	18C	17C	16C	15C	12C	13C	14C	15C	16C	15C	17C	16C	18C	17C	18C	17C	20D	19D	18C	18C	16C	15C	17C	15C	15C
109 - 111	8A	9B	9B	17C	15C	14B	17C	16C	15C	14B	12C	13C	13C	14C	15C	15C	16C	15C	17C	16C	17C	16C	19C	18C	17C	17C	15C	14C	16C	14C	14C
106 - 108	7	8A	9B	16C	14C	12B	16C	15C	14B	12B	12C	12C	13C	14C	14C	14C	15C	14C	16C	15C	16C	15C	18C	18C	16C	16C	14C	12B	15C	12B	12B
103 - 105	7	8A	8B	15C	13B	11B	15C	14B	12B	11B	11C	12C	12C	13C	14C	13C	14C	13C	15C	14B	15C	14B	17C	17C	15C	15C	12B	11B	14C	11B	11B
100 - 102	7	7A	7A	14B	12B	10B	14B	12B	11B	10B	11C	11C	11B	12C	13B	12B	14C	13B	14C	12B	14B	12B	16C	16C	14C	14B	11B	10B	12B	10B	10B
97 - 99	6	7	7A	12B	11B	9B	12B	11B	10B	9B	10C	11B	11B	11B	12B	12B	13B	12B	13B	11B	12B	11B	15C	15C	13B	12B	10B	9B	11B	9B	9B
94 - 96	6	6	6A	11B	10B	7A	11B	10B	9B	7A	10B	10B	10B	11B	12B	11B	12B	11B	12B	10B	11B	10B	14C	14C	12B	11B	9B	7B	10B	7B	7B
91 - 93	6	6	5A	10B	9B	6A	10B	9B	8A	6A	9B	10B	10B	10B	11B	10B	11B	10B	11B	9B	10B	9B	13B	13B	11B	10B	8B	6A	9B	6A	6A
88 - 90	5	5	4	9B	7A	5A	9B	8A	6A	5A	9B	9B	9B	9B	10B	10B	10B	9B	10B	8A	9B	8A	12B	12B	10B	9B	6A	5A	8B	5A	5A
85 - 87	5	5	4	8B	6A	3A	8B	7A	5A	3A	9B	9B	8B	8B	9B	10B	9B	8B	9B	7A	8B	7A	12B	11B	9B	8B	5A	3A	7B	3A	3A
82 - 84	5	4	3	7A	5A	2	7A	6A	4A	2	8B	8B	8A	8A	9A	8A	9A	7A	8B	6A	7A	6A	11B	10B	8B	7A	4A	2A	6A	2A	2A
79 - 81	4	4	2	6A	4A	1	6A	5A	3A	1	8B	8A	7A	7A	8A	8A	8A	7A	7A	5A	6A	5A	10B	9B	7A	6A	3A	1A	5A	1A	1A
76 - 78	4	3	2	5A	3A	-	5A	3A	2	-	7A	7A	6A	6A	8A	7A	7A	6A	6A	3A	5A	3A	9B	8B	6A	5A	2A	-	3A	-	-
73 - 75	3	3	1	4A	2	-	4A	2A	1	-	7A	7A	6A	6A	7A	6A	6A	5A	5A	2	4A	2	8A	7A	5A	4A	1A	-	2A	-	-
70 - 72	3	2	-	3A	1	-	3A	1	-	-	6A	6A	5A	5A	6A	6A	6A	4A	4A	1	3A	1	7A	6A	4A	3A	-	-	1A	-	-
67 - 69	3	2	-	2	-	-	2	-	-	-	6A	5A	4	4A	6	5	5A	3	3A	-	2	-	6A	5A	3A	2	-	-	-	-	-
64 - 66	2	1	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	6A	5A	4	4	5	4	4	2	2A	-	1	-	5A	5A	2A	1	-	-	-	-	-
61 - 63	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5A	4	3	3	4	3	3	1	1	-	-	-	4A	4A	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
58 - 60	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5A	4	3	2	4	3	2	1	1	-	-	-	3A	3A	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
55 - 57	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	3	2	1	3	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	3A	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
52 - 54	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	3	1	1	2	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
49 - 51	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	2	1	-	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
40 - 48	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	2	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
30 - 39	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
0 - 29	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Weight: 1 kg
Fumble Range: 01-04
Breakage #s: 1, 2, 3
Strength: 95-115

Range Modifiers:

All Criticals are raking.
breakage numbers and strength are provided for GW's that possess Arms Law for Rolemaster.

Monosword
Table A-RC-1.2

Combat Armor			Kinetic Armor			Armored Cloth			Plate Armor			Chain Armor			Rigid Leather			Soft Leather			Natural		Clothing									
X	IX	VIII	VII	VI	V	IV	III	II	I	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1			
Maximum Results for Small Attacks																																
148 - 150	3AK	6BS	9CP	8EP	12EP	16FP	10EP	13EP	16FP	18FP	10EP	13EP	15EP	18FP	14DP	17EP	19FP	12EP	15EP	18EP	20FP	15EP	15EP	15EP	21EP	23FP	19EP	21EP	24FP	24FP		
145 - 147	3ET	6AK	9BS	8ES	12ES	16ES	10ES	13ES	16ES	18ES	10DS	13DS	15DS	18ES	14DS	17ES	19ES	12DS	15DS	18ES	20ES	15ES	15ES	15ES	21ES	23ES	19ES	21ES	24ES	24ES		
142 - 144	2CT	5ET	8AK	8DK	11EK	15EK	10DK	12EK	15EP	17EK	10CK	12CK	14DP	17EK	13CK	16CK	18EK	12CK	14EDK	17EK	19EK	14EK	14EP	20EK	22EP	18EK	20EK	23EP	23EK	23EK		
139 - 141	2AT	5DT	8ET	7CP	11DP	15DP	9CP	12DP	15DS	17EP	9CP	12CP	14CS	17EP	13CP	16DP	18EP	11CP	14CP	17DP	19EP	14DP	14ES	18EP	21ES	18EP	20EP	23ES	23EP	23EP		
136 - 138	1	4CT	7DT	7BS	10DS	14DS	9BS	11DS	14DP	16DS	9BS	11CS	13CP	16DS	12BS	15CS	17ES	11CS	13CS	16DS	18ES	13DS	13DP	19DS	21EP	17DS	19ES	22EP	22ES	22ES		
Maximum Results for Small Attacks																																
133 - 135	1	3BT	6CT	6BP	10CP	14DP	8BP	11CP	13DS	15DP	8BP	11CP	13CS	16DP	12BP	15CP	16DK	10BP	13CP	15DP	17DP	13DP	13DS	18DP	20ES	16DP	18DP	21ES	21EP	21EP		
130 - 132	-	3AT	6BT	6AS	9CS	13CS	8AS	10CS	13CP	15DS	8BS	10CS	12CP	15DS	11BP	14CS	16DP	10BS	12CS	15CS	17DS	12CS	12DP	17DS	19EP	16DS	18DS	21EP	21ES	21ES		
127 - 129	-	2AT	5AT	5ET	9BP	13CP	7ET	10BP	12CS	14CP	7BP	10BP	12CS	15CP	11BP	13CP	15DS	9BP	12BP	14CP	16DP	12CP	12CS	17DP	19DS	15CP	17DP	20ES	20EP	20EP		
124 - 126	-	2	5AT	5DT	8BS	12CS	7DT	9BS	12BP	14CS	7AP	9BS	11BP	14CS	10AP	10BP	13CS	15DP	9BP	11BS	14CS	16DS	11CS	11CP	16CS	18DP	14CS	16DS	19EP	19ES		
121 - 123	-	1	4AT	5CT	8AP	11BP	6CT	8AP	11BS	13CP	6AP	9BP	11BS	13CP	10AP	10BP	12BP	14CS	8AP	10BP	13BP	15DP	11CP	11CS	15CP	17DS	14CP	16CP	19DS	19EP		
Maximum Results for Small Attacks																																
118 - 120	-	1	3	4BT	7AS	11BS	6BT	8AS	10BP	12BS	6ET	8BS	10BP	13BS	9AP	12BS	13CP	8ET	10BS	12BS	14CS	10BS	10CP	15CS	17DP	13BS	15CS	18DP	18DS	18DS		
115 - 117	-	-	3	4AT	7ET	10BS	5AT	7ET	10AS	12BS	5DT	8AP	10BS	12BS	9AP	11BP	13CS	7DT	9AP	12BP	14CP	10BS	10CS	14CP	16CS	12BS	14CP	17DS	17DP	17DP		
112 - 114	-	-	2	3AT	6DT	10AS	5AT	7DT	9AP	11BS	5CT	7AS	9AP	12BS	8ET	11BS	12CP	7CT	9AS	11AS	13CS	9BS	9BS	13BS	15CP	12BS	14CS	17CP	17DS	17DS		
109 - 111	-	-	2	3AT	6CT	9AS	4AT	6CT	9AS	11BS	4BT	7ET	9AS	11AS	8DT	10AP	11BS	6BT	8AP	11AP	13CS	8AS	8BS	13BS	15CS	11AS	13BS	16CS	16CP	16CP		
106 - 108	-	-	1	2	5BT	9AS	4AT	6BT	8ET	10AS	4AT	6DT	8AP	11AS	7CT	7BT	9AS	11BS	6AT	8ET	10AS	8AS	8BS	12BS	14CS	11AS	12BS	15BP	16CS	16CS		
Maximum Results for Small Attacks																																
103 - 105	-	-	1	2	5AT	8ET	3	5AT	7DT	9AS	4AT	6CT	8ET	10AS	7BT	7AT	9ET	10BS	5AT	7DT	9AP	7AS	7BS	11BS	13BS	10AS	12BS	15BS	15BP	15BP		
100 - 102	-	-	-	2	4AT	7DT	3	5AT	7CT	9AS	3	5BT	7DT	9AS	6AT	8DT	10AS	5AT	6CT	9AS	6CT	7AS	7AS	11AS	13BS	9AS	11BS	14BS	14BS	14BS		
97 - 99	-	-	-	1	4AT	7CT	3	4AT	6BT	8ET	3	5AT	7CT	9AS	6AT	8CT	9ET	4	6BT	8ET	10AS	6AS	6AS	10AS	12BS	9ET	11AS	13BS	14BS	14BS		
94 - 96	-	-	-	1	3	6BT	2	3	6AT	7DT	2	4AT	6BT	8ET	5	7BT	8DT	4	5AT	8DT	9AS	6ET	6AS	9AS	11AS	8DT	10AS	13BS	13BS	13BS		
91 - 93	-	-	-	-	3	6AT	2	3	5AT	7CT	2	4	6AT	8DT	5	7AT	8CT	3	5	7CT	9AS	5DT	5ET	8AS	11AS	7CT	9AS	12BS	12BS	12BS		
88 - 90	-	-	-	-	2	5AT	1	2	4AT	6BT	1	3	5	7CT	4	4	6AT	7BT	3	4	6AT	5CT	5DT	8ET	10AS	7BT	9AS	11BS	12BS	12BS		
85 - 87	-	-	-	-	2	5AT	1	2	4	6AT	1	3	5	7BT	3	4	5	6AT	2	4	6AT	4BT	4CT	7DT	9AS	6AT	8ET	11BS	11AS	11AS		
82 - 84	-	-	-	-	1	4	-	1	3	5AT	-	2	4	6AT	3	3	5	6AT	2	3	5	7CT	4AT	4BT	6CT	8ET	5	7DT	10AS	10AS	10AS	
79 - 81	-	-	-	-	1	4	-	1	3	4AT	-	2	4	5	2	3	4	5AT	1	3	5	6BT	3	3AT	6BT	8DT	5	7CT	9AS	10AS	10AS	
76 - 78	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	2	4	-	1	3	5	2	2	4	5	1	2	4	6AT	2	2	5AT	7CT	4	6BT	9AS	9AS	9AS	
73 - 75	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	1	3	-	1	3	4	1	2	3	4	-	1	3	5	2	2	4AT	6BT	3	5AT	8AS	9AS	9AS	
70 - 72	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	1	3	-	-	2	4	1	1	3	3	-	1	3	5	1	1	4	6AT	3	5	7AS	8AS	8AS	
67 - 69	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	2	-	-	2	3	-	1	2	3	-	-	2	4	1	1	3	5AT	2	4	7ET	7ET	7ET	
64 - 66	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	3	-	-	1	2	-	-	2	3	-	-	2	4	2	3	6DT	7DT	7DT	
61 - 63	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	2	-	-	1	2	-	-	1	3	-	-	2	4	1	3	6CT	6CT	6CT	
58 - 60	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3	-	2	5BT	5BT	5BT	
55 - 57	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	2	4AT	5AT	5AT	
52 - 54	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	3	4AT	4AT	
49 - 51	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	3	3	
46 - 48	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	2	
37 - 39	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1

Weight: -
 Fumble Range: 01-02
 Breakage #s: -
 Strength: -

Range Modifiers:
 Breakage Numbers and strength are provided for GM's that possess Arms Law for Rolemaster.

AT I-IV: Resolve Slash crits against an armored location as Krush. Ignore tiny crits to armored locations.
 AT V-VII: Slash Crits against an armored location are resolved as Krush. Puncture Crits vs. an armored location are ignored. Tiny crits to armored locations are ignored.
 AT VIII-X: Puncture Crits vs. and armored location are ignored. Slash crits vs. an armored location are resolved as krushes. Tiny crits to armored locations are ignored.

Claw Talon
Table A-RC-1.3

[illegible]



A-1.5 RAKING CRITICAL STRIKE TABLE

	A	B	C	D	E
01-05	Hit to foe's hand. If foe is holding something, it should check for breakage at -10. +3H - 2x	Slicing hit to foe's hand. If foe is carrying anything, it must make a breakage check at -20. +4H - 2x - (-10)	Biting strike to foe's hand. If he is holding anything, it must check for breakage at -30. +8H - 4x - (-20)	Hit mangles hand pretty thoroughly. Anything foe is holding is destroyed. +15H - 5x - (-50)	Foe's hand is sliced in two. Anything in foe's hand is destroyed. +15H - 7x - 6 - (-50)
06-10	Foe's arm is torn. You gain initiative next round. +7H - 3x	Cut goes almost the whole way through the forearm. If foe is holding an item, it must check for breakage at -10. +8H - 3x - (-15)	Tearing strike through muscles and tendons in forearms. Foe drops whatever he is holding. +10H - 4x - 6 - (-25)	Attack lops off foe's lower arm and hand. Foe passes out for ten rounds. +15H - 7x - 7 - (-50)	Attack lops off foe's hand just above his wrist. Feel free to make a Darth Vader joke. +15H - 8x - 7 - (-50)
11-15	Nick to foe's biceps, causing minor muscle damage. +7H - 3x - (-5)	Deep bicep cut, causing major muscle damage. +15H - 4x - 2x - 6 - (-20)	Attack slices deep into foe's elbow, tearing up bones and tendons. +10H - 4x - (-20)	Foe's arm is sliced lengthwise. +25H - 7x - 6 - (-40)	Foe's arm is sliced off at the biceps. +30H - 6x - 7 - (-60)
16-20	Weak upper arm strike causes minor muscle damage. +7H - 2x - (-10)	Triceps are torn up, causing major muscle damage. +12H - 3x - (-25)	Deep cut into arm just above the elbow. The arm is useless. +12H - 4x - 2x - (-20)	Foe's arm is chopped off. Cool. +30H - 6x - 7 - (-60)	You very efficiently remove foe's arm, several inches above the elbow. +30H - 6x - 7 - (-60)
21-30	Glancing hit to foe's shoulder. Minor muscle damage. +8H - 3x - (-10)	Slice to foe's shoulder messes up muscles and tendons. +16H - 4x - (-15)	Slice through muscles in foe's shoulder, catching an artery to boot. +18H - 5x - 3 - (-25)	Foe's arm is lopped off at the shoulder. +25H - 10 - (-50)	Hit turns arm, shoulder, and foe into three separate pieces. Arm and shoulder fall to ground. +30H - 7x - 11 - (-60)
31-40	Take out a piece of foe's clavicle. That should have done more. +7H - 2x - (-10)	Foe's collar bone is chopped up. Nice carving job. +12H - 3x - (-15)	Foe is less than pleased by cut down into collarbone. +20H - 3x - (-25)	A section of the shoulder joint is removed, leaving arm hanging uselessly. +30H - 6x - 6 - (-40)	Foe watches as you lop off arm, shoulder, and a chunk of his side. +30H - 7x - 11 - (-60)
41-50	Strike just brushes foe's thigh. Oops. +6H - 2x - (-10)	Deep cut to foe's thigh. Ouchy. +8H - 3x - (-25)	Slicing hit through muscles and tendons in foe's thigh. +16H - 3x - (-25)	Foe's leg falls to the ground, severed at the thigh. +40H - 4x - 3 - (-40)	Foe's leg is severed at the thigh. +40H - 4x - 6 - (-60)
51-55	Glancing hit to foe's calf. The burns are nothing very serious. +8H - 2x - (-10)	Slice through foe's calf almost drops him. +15H - 3x - (-15)	Attack slices right through the calf, severing bones along the way. +25H - 4x - (-25)	Slice clean through foe's knee. Foe falls over, looking at the stump. +35H - 6x - 9 - (-75)	You cut off foe's leg at the knee. +40H - 7x - 10 - (-75)
56-60	Beam neatly removes all of the toes from foe's foot. +7H - 2x - (-10)	Strike slices toes off foot, then bounces around slicing up bones. His expression is priceless. +25H - 4x - (-20)	Cut through foe's ankle slices muscles, tendon, and bone. Foot flaps like a torn rag. +24H - 4x - (-30)	Strike scythes right through foe's ankle. The foot bounces a couple of feet away. +35H - 6x - 6 - (-50)	Foe is stunned when you slice off his foot. +40H - 7x - 3 - (-60)
61-65	Cut to foe's hip cracks the bone. +10H - 2x - (-5)	Deep cut to foe's hip. Foe manages to keep his feet, but every step is agony. +25H - 4x - (-20)	Hip hit slices pelvic girdle. Foe's stance no longer has the integrity it once did. +30H - 5x - 6 - (-25)	Slice up foe's hip removes all integrity from the joint. +34H - 7x - 2 - (-50)	Attack slices down through the hip. Foe's leg falls to the ground. +40H - 7x - 6 - (-60)
66	Foe yelps as hit slices off some posterior. +30H - (-25)	Strike to foe's head. Miraculously, he merely slips into a three day coma. +60H - (-60) - (+25)	Deep slice into foe's face. Muscle spasms cause him to fly backward to a spot where he will die in ten rounds. +15H - 8x - (-45) - (+25)	Slice opens up foe's abdomen. Intestines begin spilling out. Foe is vainly trying to push everything back in. (+25)	Slice through groin is lost in the mess made by taking off both of his legs as well. Foe is oh so dead. (+25)
67-70	Strike glances off kneecap, cracking it badly. +7H - (-10)	Deep cut into foe's knee folds it the wrong way. He collapses. +20H - 3x - (-20)	Hit to the knee nearly severs the leg. In the future, that knee will predict the weather. +25H - 5x - 6 - (-30)	Strange, foe's leg is missing below the knee... +35H - 6x - 7 - (-50)	You slice foe's knee in two. Leg falls, dead, to the ground. +40H - 8x - 8 - (-60)
71-75	Strike almost cuts deep into foe's stomach. It only leaves a straight scar. +7H - 2x - (-10)	Strikes slices up foe's abdomen, wreaking havoc with muscles and organs. Foe collapses. +12H - 3x - 3 - (-20)	Slice through lower abdomen leaves blood everywhere. +12H - 4x - 6 - (-20)	Slice through foe's kidney leaves a mark. +35H - 6x - 9 - (-40)	Deep cut into foe's side slices through intestines, kidneys, and spine. He'll need medical aid, and quickly. +40H - 8x - 10 - (-60)
76-80	Hit slides down foe's side, messing up several ribs. +12H - 3x - (-10)	Attack slices up ribs, muscles, and tendons. +20H - 4x - (-20)	Hit to foe's side cuts through ribs and into his lung. +35H - 4x - 6 - (-20)	This is what they call disemboweling. +35H - 6x - 14 - (-40)	Foe is nearly cut in two. Intestines scatter everywhere. +40H - 8x - 15 - (-40)
81-85	Deep hit into abdomen, causing significant organ damage. That had to hurt. +15H - 3x - 2 - (-20)	Hit to upper abdomen tears through muscles and organs. Foe is messed up. +14H - 3x - 3 - (-20)	His gut opens like an over-ripe grapefruit. Is he actually still standing? +25H - 6x - 8 - (-30)	Beam slices through gut, severing spine. Foe is paralyzed. Got a wheelchair? +35H - 5 - (+20)	Beam slices foe into two halves, top and bottom. (+20)
86-90	A clean slice through bones, muscles, and tendons without hitting a single organ. What are the odds? +15H - 3x - x - (-15)	The strike slides into chest and through lung. Is there a doctor in the house? +25H - 4x - 3 - (-20)	Sternum catches most of the hit, but foe's heart is damaged and his sternum is shattered. Someone's looking out for this guy. +25H - 4x - 7 - (-30)	Beam slices foe's heart in two. Very sad. (+20)	Beam slices foe in two at chest level. (+20)
91-95	Sliding strike across foe's scalp. Make a bad cowboys and indians joke. +8H - 3x - (-5)	Beam wreaks havoc with foe's face. Foe is now blind and deaf on that side of his head. +15H - 4x - 3 - (-20)	Attack cracks the skull. Foe slips into a coma for three months and loses three levels worth of experience. +40H - 9 - (+20)	Slice chops off foe's head. At eye level. (+20)	Slice to the head goes right through the brain. So sad. (+20)
96-99	Hit to foe's jaw makes a mess. He's mute, -10 to appearance, -5 to potential appearance. +11H - 3x - (-15)	Slice into foe's voice box mutes foe. Very surgical. +20H - 4x - 3 - (-25)	Slice through most of foe's neck. His head seems to be sticking to his body more from habit than physics. +25H - 5x - 11 - (-20)	Slice right through foe's neck knocks the head clear. (+20)	Head is cleanly removed by beam. It bounces twice. (+20)
100	Foe's face is sliced off, and his brain falls out. (+20)	Strike dissects foe's head like a frog. All of its contents fall out. (+20)	Strike into foe's head tells him. He'll wake up in a year or two. (+20)	Foe's head is sliced into five pieces. (+25)	Foe's head is sliced and diced. (+25)

Key: Bx=must parry B rounds; Bx=no parry for B rounds; Bx=stunned for B rounds; B=bleed B hits per round; (-B)=foe has -B penalty; (+B)=attacker gets +B next round.



Part III
Appendix

TINY CRITICAL STRIKE TABLE A-1.6

	A	B	C	D	E
01-05	Dubious strike. +0H	You throw up some dust. +0H	You're not very good, are you? +0H	Get it right next time! +0H	You did very poorly. +1H
06-10	Zip. Less than effective. +0H	You leap. Foe moves. You land. It had good form. +0H	Look over there! Baby eagles! +0H	Your slash tears off a piece of fur or cloth. +1H	Strike is not solid or well placed. +2H
11-15	Feeble. +0H	You almost got a real grip. +0H	You really tear up foe's garments. Try his skin next time. +1H	Slash to neck, pulls off any necklaces foe is wearing. +1H	Entangle your claws in foe's clothes. You struggle to pull free. +2H
16-20	Victory to the oppressed! +1H	Your lunge for foe's throat was blocked by his arm. +1H	Glance off foe and grip the air. He steps out of your strike. +1H	Solid chest strike yields a bruise. +2H	Light cutting strike. It has a little effect, but you taste blood. +2H - ♣
21-35	Jolly deadly attack. +1H	You get in close, but foe kicks you clear before your strike turns deadly. +2H	Strike catches foe in waist. His equipment blocks some damage. +2H	The recoil from a missed strike lands against foe's back. It is a mild scratch. +3H	Scratch foe in calf. It turns into a bleeder and you are very pleased. +2H - ♣
36-45	Cruel blow for nature. +2H	Attempt to disembowel fails short. Foe guards his stomach well. +3H	Light grip. Foe breaks free, damaging himself. You are pleased. +2H - ♣	Strike to foe's lower leg. If foe has no leg armor, you cause him pain. w/o leg greaves: +5H - ♣	Solid shot to leg. Foe watches you break the skin on his thigh. +3H - ♣
46-50	Poor follow through. You lose a claw. Your attack is dubious. +4H - 2(-5)	Slash to foe's side does not cut deep. He turns to avoid the worst. +3H	Solid strike to side does not break the skin. Foe turns to face you better. +4H	Unexpected puncture in foe's side. You are pleased. Foe grips his side. +3H - ♣	You bring a powerful blow around against foe's back. He leaps back away. +5H - ♣ - ♣
51-55	Leaping chest strike yields some measurable damage. +3H	Good little gash, produces an effective wound. +3H - ♣	Mild strike to chest catches in a soft spot. You are surprised at its effect. +4H - 2♣	Slash foe's stomach. If foe's has no metal armor, you tear him open badly. w/o abdomen armor: +5H - 3♣	Grip to foe's shield arm garments. Foe is unable to use his shield arm for 1 round. +6H - 1♣
56-60	Light wound to thigh. Garments are torn. Promises are made. +1H - ♣	Scratch foe's skin, but you do not break the skin. +6H	Your original strike misses, but foe's thigh is available as a consolation. +4H - ♣ - 2♣	Your strike catches the back of foe's thigh. Foe is unbalanced for a moment. +6H - ♣ - 2♣	You rip open foe's thigh. The look on his face tells you victory is near. +7H - ♣ - 3♣
61-65	Mild forearm wound. You are doing very well, keep it up. +2H - 2♣	Raking forearm strike leaves a nasty scar. It bites deep enough to bleed. +3H - 2♣	Foe blocks you with his arm and you tear it up as payment. The damage is substantial, before foe breaks free. +3H - 2♣ - 2♣	Grip to foe's forearm. Foe flails his arm around trying to shake you off. You let go and move to a better position. +5H - 2♣ - 2♣ - (+10)	Slash across foe's chest and upper arm. Strike causes a bruise and then opens up a gaping wound on foe's shield arm. +6H - 2♣ - 3♣
66	You find a nice vulnerable spot to rip open. Foe leaps back from your clutches. He unbalances himself to escape your assault. +4H - 2♣ - 2♣	Your strike grips foe's calf. He pulls away from you violently. His actions further damage the wound. You do your best, before he breaks free. +5H - 2♣ - (-20)	Violent move assaults foe's arm, wrist and shoulder. Foe is shaken by the vicious strike. He drops his weapon and leaps back 10 feet. You stay with your quarry looking for an advantage. +4H - ♣ - (+10)	Astounding head strike. If foe has no helm, you make a bloody mess of foe's scalp. To further your advantage you push foe's head sideways. with helm: +4H w/o helm: +7H - 6♣	Bizarre strike to eyes destroys 1 eye and leaves the other blind for 2 days. Foe is down and helpless for an hour. He will need assistance to even stand. His appearance is modified by -20. +15H - 24♣ - (-95)
67-70	Slash to foe's shoulder. It's not deadly, but it is a start. +3H - ♣ - ♣	Claw scratches across a piece of metal. That screeching sound! +4H - ♣ - ♣	Pull foe off balance with a grasp to his shoulder. He steps away and stumbles. +5H - ♣ - 2♣ - 1(-20)	Graceful slash to foe's shoulder sweeps blood onto foe's face. Foe is unsteady. +6H - ♣ - 2♣	Inspired shoulder strike sends foe reeling. You tear tendons and cause pain. +7H - 2♣ - (-20)
71-75	You attempt to assault foe's lower leg. You have the initiative. with leg armor: +4H w/o leg armor: +1H - 2♣	Assault foe's shin. If foe has no armor, you tear his shin up. Foe struggles to throw you off. with leg armor: +6H w/o leg armor: +3H - 2♣ - 2♣	You slash into a muscle on foe's calf. You have the initiative next round. 2♣ - 2♣ - (-20)	Lower leg strike. If foe has no leg armor, heavy bruise. Foe stumbles back to avoid you. with leg armor: +3H - ♣ w/o leg armor: 2♣ - ♣	Vicious leg wound bleeds hard. Foe's attempt to stop the bleeding gets it all over his hands. +5H - 3♣ - 4♣
76-80	Weak, but precise strike to foe's arm. Foe shakes you off, but you do some damage anyway. +3H - ♣ - ♣	Strong, but imprecise arm strike. The wound is of moderate size. You are proud to have created it. +5H - 2♣ - (-15)	You take a shot at foe's forearm. It lands well. A muscle and tendon are slashed. He holds on to his weapon. +5H - 2♣ - 2♣ - (-25)	Grab foe's arm. Foe struggles violently to make you let go. You rend his arm without mercy. He gets free and stumbles back. You win this round. +5H - 3♣ - 2♣ - (-25)	Sly arm strike gives foe a troublesome wound. What looks like a tiny wound is producing much blood. Foe does not fall down, but he stumbles much. 2♣ - 3♣
81-85	Strike at foe's face. He panics and stumbles back 5 feet. You fall clear and prepare for another strike. +4H - ♣ - 2♣	Flying face strike. with facial armor: +3H - ♣ w/o facial armor: 3♣ - 3♣	Head strike. Foe's helm is knocked off. If foe has no helm, he has a vicious cut to his scalp. with helmet: +3H - ♣ w/o helmet: +2H - ♣ - 3♣ - (-40)	Acrobatic face strike. If foe has no facial armor he will get some, when his nose heals. with facial armor: +5H w/o facial armor: 3♣ - 3♣ - (-40)	Slash between foe's fingers. If foe has a metal gauntlet on, he is fine. +8H - 9♣ - 3♣
86-90	Sudden well placed blow makes you feel you are mighty in battle. Your foe is convinced. +6H - 2♣	Slash foe's neck. He thinks you just killed him. The wound is not mortal. Foe stumbles away fearful of death. +5H - 3♣ - 2♣	Shoulder strike unbalances foe and spins him around. He is frantic to turn around and face you. You move the other direction to prolong the effect. +6H - 2♣ - ♣	Strong grip to foe's weapon arm. He tries to throw you clear, but cannot. He finally drops his weapon. You lose your grip on him at the same time. +5H - ♣	Rend open foe's lower back with a quick double slash. Both wounds are deep and nasty. Blood pours out all over you and foe, making the combat seem brutal. +4H - 3♣ - ♣ - 3♣ - (-40)
91-95	Leaping head strike. If foe has no helm, face and left ear is slashed. +3H - 2♣ - (-30)	Foe blocks your attack with his arm so you slash it in place of your original target. Foe realizes his mistake. +5H - 3♣ - ♣ - 2♣	Strike lands near neck and cheek. Foe is disoriented and recoils from your onslaught. +3H - 2♣ - 2♣ - (-20)	Clean strike, you cleave the thumb on foe's weapon arm. His arm is less than useful. Foe drops his weapon. 2♣ - ♣ - (-50)	Dazzling leap knocks foe down. Foe hits on his back. Foe is disarmed and unconscious. +9H
96-99	Insulting strike to foe's nose. If foe has no nose guard, his nose is shredded. Foe reels from your onslaught. 9♣ - 3♣	Strike to foe's forehead. Foe is blinded, until the bleeding is stopped. Foe is off guard trying to stop the bleeding. Now is your chance. 3♣ - 3♣ - (-40)	Epic slash to foe's Achilles tendon. Foe falls down. He is almost helpless. His attempts to crawl away fail. You have him now. +5H - 6♣ - (-75)	Strike foe in face. If foe has a visored helm, he is blinded and helpless for a week while the swelling lasts. If foe does not have a visored helm, he loses 1 eye and is blind in the other. (-100)	Head strike is deadly. Slash open foe's head and send him down. He hits hard. The shock of your strike and the concussion of the fall is too much for him to handle. He dies in 9 rounds. —
100	Strike at foe's eyes. Without a visored helm, foe loses one of his eyes. +15H - 3♣ - (-75)	Foe leaps back to avoid a slash to the throat, too late. He falls down. You expose some muscle and make a mess. 6♣ - 3♣ - (-50)	Severe head strike. If foe has a helm he is unconscious for 1-10 days. Without a helm, foe is dead. +25H - ♣	Strike to foe's eyes. Foe is blinded permanently. Foe is at your mercy. +10H - 6♣ - 2♣ - (-95)	Unbelievable strike to foe's neck. Vein and artery severed. Foe dies after 6 rounds of inactivity. 20♣

Key: B♣=must parry B rounds; B♣=no parry for B rounds; B♣=stunned for B rounds; B♣=bleed B hits per round; (-B)=foe has -B penalty; (+B)=attacker gets +B next round.



Interlude

INTERLUDE TEN

. . . Assault plus 11:35:49

Clemmons held up the tiny ampoule. It was hard to tell, the way his hand was shaking, but it looked like about 50 doses left. Quivering with terrible, terrible pain, he managed to place the ampoule into the injector. Carefully, he placed it against his forearm and hit the activation stud.

He quivered as the tiny dose of thearax entered his bloodstream. The clenched his eye closed against the pain as he waited for it to recede. He was shaking. He was shaking so badly that he thought he would fly apart.

Then the drug hit his throbbing brain. With it came a flood of relief. Another two hours. Another dose.

He inched forward again, his assault blaster held in his right hand. His left arm was a complete write-off. Not even thearax could make it move.

With the fresh dose came a fresh wave of alertness. He crept quietly ahead, looking for guards.

Now that he was beyond the open fields around the base, he was back in the jungle. In the jungle, he was at home again. In the jungle, he was a ghost.

He slid forward, each step finding firm ground without a sound. He moved without thinking. He moved with the practiced grace of a killer.

The wind turned and with it came a snapping sound. Clemmons froze in place. He listened hard, but whoever made the sound was not about to make the same mistake twice.

Quietly, he eased Wild to the ground. Nothing. He edged forward.

He slid from shadow to shadow, blackened by camouflage, blood and fire. He moved quickly, because he knew that any lion out there had already scented him, and as soon as the wind turned, he was dead.

He settled into the roots of a tree and waited. It was out there somewhere, a hunter born and bred by millions of years of evolution. He would be waiting with a hunter's patience.

He strained with all his senses. He knew that the lion, if it was a lion, would have gone to ground the moment that he'd made a sound. Clemmons did not dare move any farther or he risked exposing himself. He had to spot the lion before the wind turned.

The movement was slight, in his peripheral vision, but he caught it. Staring hard, he saw a hint of gold. A mane?

He could only hope so. He didn't have enough time. The wind would change any moment now.

Pulling his blaster up, he sighted along it as well as he could with one arm. He took a deep breath and fired.

Assault plus 13:01:10

Fooluph limped through the forest, delirious with pain. Dimly, he could make out the shape of Garock in front of him, gingerly carrying the broken body of Mitchell. The hulking bear was reassuring in his strength and his perseverance. He kept looking over his shoulder to check on Fooluph, to make sure he was still moving.

They never should have come to M-46. How could they be so foolish, so arrogant, to come to this little world. It was sheer folly. Sheer, absolute folly.

Just a few hours ago, he had been certain his life was over. Unarmed, alone, and desperate, he had been saved by Clemmons, Wild, and Xagattick.

He remembered the tension, the terror as he lay there, with no power cells, waiting for the troops to sweep over them. It was only after several minutes that he peeked his head up to see the Jeronan troops in full retreat, racing to save the Depot from the real threat. It was shortly after that when the base exploded. They had heard nothing but dead air since. He hoped Clemmons was maintaining comm silence. He had no idea just how many of them were dead.

Fooluph hung his head and kept pushing forward. He had a long way left to walk.

Assault plus 14:41:01

Sir Krillian fell sideways off the FAV, gasping as he crashed to the ground. Pain wracked his body and he began coughing up blood again. After a few moments, the coughing subsided.

He looked at the ground. Three teeth lay in the blood. The radiation sickness was getting worse.

He started crawling toward the

Revenge. Waves of nausea wracked his body, but his stomach had long since given up its contents.

He had come so far. He had driven for miles, slowly, through the jungle, trying to stay out of sight. Now he was here and he couldn't seem to muster the strength to crawl to the ship.

It was over. He had done it, and now he was dying a slow, painful death. If the doctor got here in time . . . but no. He had sacrificed his life. A long, painful death, but a hero's death.

The pain was tremendous, beyond anything he had ever imagined. He tried to embrace it, to cherish it. His pain. The pain of a fallen hero.

He closed his eyes.

Assault plus 15:00:39 . . .

Hissick moved through the jungle quickly. He was built for this terrain. He was designed to live in the jungle, chasing prey and killing to survive.

It had been a successful day. He had survived, he had tasted the rush of battle and they had won. A successful day all around.

He continued heading for the ship. It was a long journey.



Interlude

EPILOGUE

. . . Assault plus 17:18:31

Hissick approached the *Revenge* slowly. He had been moving slowly ever since leaving the battle. On three different occasions, he had heard troops moving through the woods. Every time, he had kept low and evaded the pursuit. Each time, he had avoided conflict.

He had enough battle for one day. He had tasted the sweet rush of adrenaline. He didn't need it again. There was a time for confrontation and there was a time for evasion. This was a time for evasion.

The clearing around the ship was quiet. The tulgar's FAV was sitting out front. He could detect no sign of the enemy.

Creeping forward, he examined the FAV. The tulgar had fallen off the bike. He had then crawled halfway to the craft, where he collapsed and bled into the ground.

From that point, he'd simply disappeared. Human footsteps led away from that spot. Someone had picked him up and taken him inside.

So they had made it back.

It looked like everything was safe.

He began walking up the ramp into the ship. As he rounded the corner, a sound made him snap into action, spinning and bringing his assault blaster to bear.

Clemmons was standing there, his left arm mutilated by plasma, his right hand toying with a spare weapon cell, as he often did when he was idle. He looked badly damaged, but he was still functional.

"How you doing, Hissick?"

"I am well."

"Good," Clemmons said, bearing his teeth as humans do. "Glad to hear it. We were afraid you wouldn't make it back."

"How are the others?"

"The Lt. Colonel is bad. The Knight is worse. Wild will pull through. Garock is essentially unhurt, but he's shut down emotionally. The Lion is still out there, but he landed dozens of clicks away. We'll need to take off to get him."

"The rest?"

"The rest are dead."

Hissick had nothing to say to that. He had learned through the years, however, that many emotional displays could be avoided if he kept up the pretense that he cared.

"That's a pity."

"Semper fi."

Hissick looked around the ship. Everything seemed functional. He was safe. None of those superfluous emotional displays. Clemmons seemed calm.

"I will retire to my quarters."

"You do that."

"Let me know if there is anything I can do to facilitate our departure."

"I will. Take it easy."

Hissick turned away. As he did so, Clemmons leaned over and hit the comm button. Hissick didn't pay any attention. Aliens were notoriously chatty.

The craft seemed well. The temperature was constant, the air was clean. His head bobbed as he walked down the corridor.

He stopped at the weapons locker. It was ship policy to keep all assault weapons in the weapon locker, and it was much easier to comply with ship policy than to fight it.

The locker read his biosignature and checked to see whether his assigned weapon was inside. Finding the weapon on the outside, it opened to his touch. Only the commanding officer could authorize the removal of a weapon.

Clemmons', Wild's, the Lt. Colonel's and the oort's weapons were all in their clamps. He slid his into its waiting slot. The clamps snapped shut.

He patted his side arm on his belt. Still there.

He closed the arm's locker and continued down the hall. He could use some sleep.

As he came around the corner, he was surprised to see the oort step into the hall. He was also surprised by the large gun attached to the oort's arm. Was the ship under attack?

"What is going on? I thought you were dead."

"You came back," the oort said.

"Of course. This is the only way off the planet."

"You son of a bitch."

It was then that Hissick realized what was going on. The oort was emotional. Dangerously emotional.

With a blur of motion, he dodged back around the corner. The oort fired, vaporizing the wall behind him. Hissick crashed blindly into something, lost his balance, and fell to the ground.

Dazed, he looked up into Clemmons' pistol. Clemmons was still bearing his teeth.

"You shouldn't have run."

With two quick shots, he disabled Hissick's clawed feet. Hissick screamed and writhed in pain. He looked up at the big man, wondering if he could take him, wounded, from the prone position. His hand crept toward his sidearm.

"I wouldn't do that, if I were you," Clemmons warned.

Hissick stopped. At least the man hadn't fired to finish him off. Maybe he could appeal to his emotions.

"You haven't killed me."

"No."

"Why not?"

Just then the oort came around the corner. He raised his gun.

"Professional courtesy," Fooluph said. Then he opened fire.

Assault plus 17:29:39 . . .

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Alarion looked around him, confirming with his eyes what his instruments told him. 600 Light Horse, moving in a wave through the fire of the guns. 600 Tulgaran Knights of the Horse. Dying for the cause. He turned his attention back to the field of death. The guns were blasting, but they hadn't been prepared for the charge. They were still scrambling to battle stations. If they had been ready, the entire charge would have been cut to pieces in seconds. But they were lazy, undisciplined, and slow. The guns guarding the ground were only partially manned. Maybe ten percent. Almost enough to stop them. But not quite. 600 knights became 550. 550 became 500. Explosions warped the air with their heat distortions and blew Alarion about like a leaf.

One kilometer to go.

He leaned forward, growling with pleasure. Guns to the right of him. Guns to the left of him. He blew through them, jiggling and dodging like a beast possessed.

500 meters.

The sound of the dying poured through his helmet com.

300 meters.

The guns became more accurate as soldiers manned their stations.

100 meters.

Alarion thumbed the arming mechanism next to his throttle and aimed for the base of the wall, below the nearest concentration of guns.

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