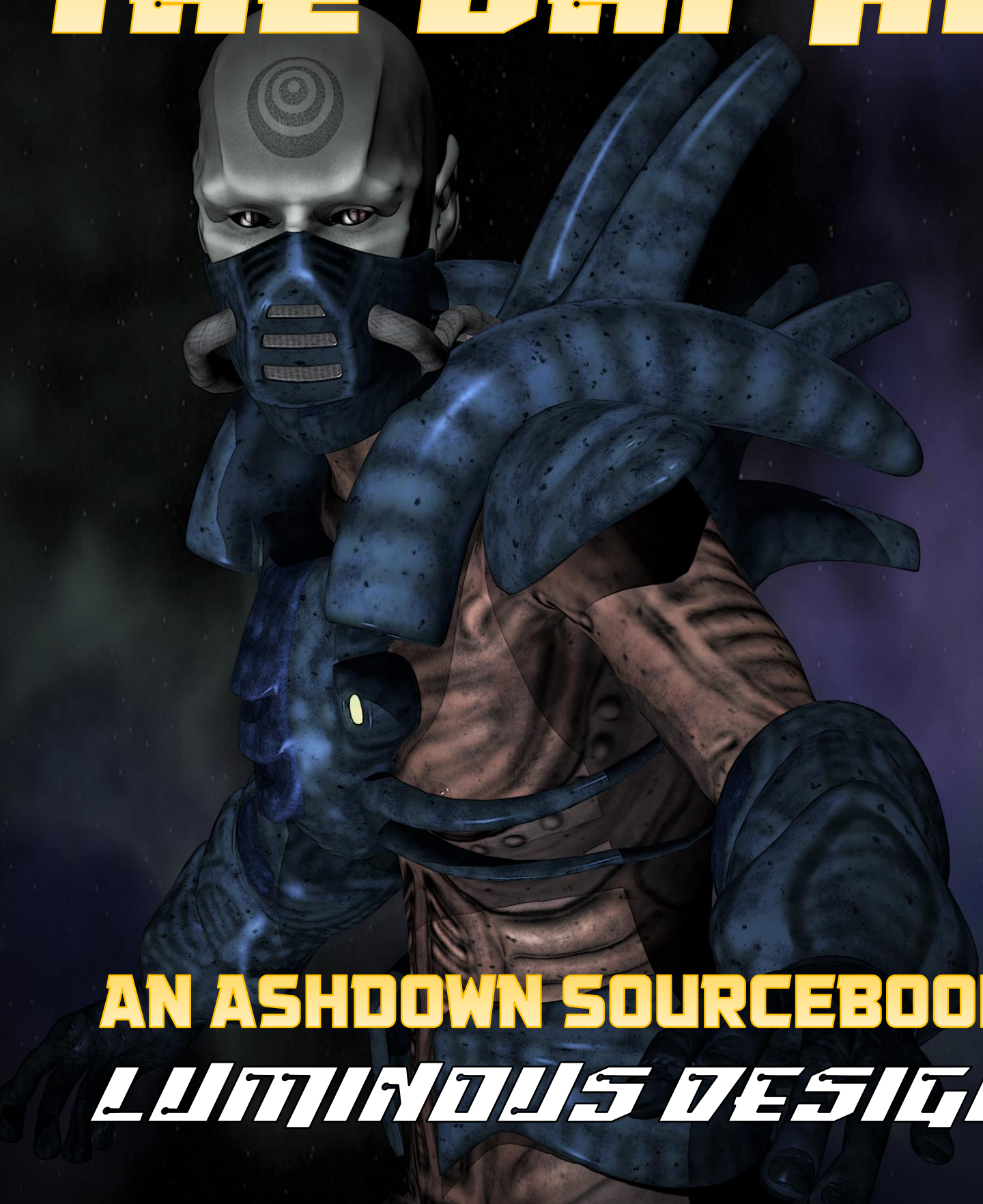


# STARSHIPS & SPACEMEN 2E

# **THE SHIRAN**



**AN ASHDOWN SOURCEBOOK**

**LUMINOUS DESIGN**

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# CREDITS

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## AUTHOR & ILLUSTRATOR:

Scott Mulder

## CGI MODELS & TEXTURES:

Simon Schild, Power Fusion 3-D, 3-D-C, Notilize, Coflek Gnorg, Adam Thwaites, Cybertenko, Darriofish, Predatron 3D, Nightshift3D, The Antfarm, Mortem Vetus, Xena, April YSH, and Valander.

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# INTRODUCTION

This sourcebook is a rules supplement resource for introducing a new character race, alien adversary, or random encounter for use in Goblinoid Games' Starships & Spacemen 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition role playing game. This manual introduces the Shi'an as a new alien race designed for the Ashdown Campaign Universe and uses the Galactic Setting as presented in Luminous Design's "Ashdown: 100 Charted Worlds For S&S 2E". While the "Ashdown: 100 Worlds" supplement is recommended for use with this product it is not required. Space Masters can use the material as it is presented here or as a source of ideas for use in their own game setting. This supplement can be used by both Space Masters and Players, but it is at the Space Masters discretion whether this new alien race will be allowed into the game or available for Players to use.

## THE SHI'AN

The Shi'an (*Pronounced "She-Ahn"*) are an ancient, technologically advanced, bipedal race of nomadic space faring humanoids that originated on the planet Ryaden in the 40 Eridani-A star system. Under ideal conditions the Shi'an have long life spans averaging around 400 to 500 Earth years. They are a psionically

active species and these abilities are viewed as common place among their people.



At the height of their civilization the Shi'an became masters of biological based technologies, developed interstellar travel, and colonized several nearby star systems. The heart of Shi'an society is a deeply ingrained cultural and religious belief that it is their divinely ordained destiny to establish dominion over all other lifeforms in the Universe. To aide in this quest of interstellar domination the Shi'an engineered a race of biomechanoids called the Xin to serve as soldiers and slave labor. Approximately four hundred years ago, the Xin rebelled against their masters in a

horrific war of independence. Known as the Endek-Wen K'dar, or The Great War, it nearly eradicated all Shi'an and left their homeworld a ruined wasteland. Both the Shi'an and Xin that were fortunate enough to have survived the war were forced to flee their once beautiful home on the planet Ryaden. Both sides suffered incredible losses and it is estimated that less than five million Shi'an escaped this apocalyptic war. To increase the chances for their continued survival the remaining Shi'an scattered throughout the surrounding star systems. Constantly on the run, hunted by the Xin, The Shi'an sought refuge in the shadows of ancient worlds awaiting the opportunity to reclaim their ordained dominion over all lifeforms.



## APPEARANCE

The Shi'an appear to be tall lanky hairless humanoids with distinct smooth boney ridges near their temples and ocular cavities. Their average healthy weight is around 200 pounds and their typical height is between six and seven feet tall. They have smooth moist skin that ranges in color from pale bluish green to chalky gray. Shi'an have unique glassy eyes with highly reflective pale pink irises. The unique anatomy of the Shi'an eye affords them slightly better vision than Humans providing low-light vision up to 120 feet. All Shi'an are bonded with a specialized biomechanical encounter suit at birth that covers their body. The encounter suit is an artificially engineered symbiotic organism that grows and adapts with its host. Serving as both armor and life support these suits are designed to protect against adverse gravity, lethal radiation, or hostile environments.

The Shi'an breathe an oxygenated liquid, similar to amniotic fluid, through a respirator device in their encounter suits. This unique adaptation of their species is the result of generations of genetic manipulation for prolonged space travel and habitation in adverse planetary environments. The Shi'an are still biologically capable of breathing an oxygen nitrogen-based atmosphere with some difficulty if necessary. The process



of transitioning from liquid respiration to a gas atmosphere usually requires several hours of painful and traumatic adjustment.



like Humans, The Shi'an have an Iron based metabolism and are susceptible to most of the same diseases and poisonous toxins. Due to their alien physiology and millennia of genetic manipulation they have considerably longer life spans than Humans. Shi'an have slightly better eyesight and hearing than humans do but have almost no sense of taste or smell due to their reliance on the fluid breathing apparatus of their encounter suits.

## ENCOUNTER SUIT

Space Masters should treat the Shi'an encounter suit as the equivalent of the combined benefits of a Radiation Suit (S&S 2E, pg. #17) and a Field Jacket (S&S 2E, pg. #18) with an AR rating of -2. The encounter suits can effectively operate in any environment and survive the vacuum of space up to 1d12 hours. Anyone bonded to a Shi'an encounter suit will have a permanent +1 modifier to their hit points, strength, constitution and dexterity scores. The symbiotic organism enhances the biological function of its host and acts as a kind of biological power armor. It is compatible for use with any biological lifeform and permanently bonds with its host within one hour after activation. Once a host is bonded with the organism the removal of the encounter suit can result in severe injury or death to the host. The encounter suit is intuitive and can be trained to adapt itself to its environment or the host's specific needs. Portions of the suit, such as the helmet, gloves, or defensive adaptations can be retracted inside the suit at will when not needed. While a bonded suit cannot be removed, it can retract within itself to an extent that it has the appearance of a reinforced or armored bodysuit type garment with "chest plate" and "backpack" when full environmental protection is not needed.

Retracting or deploying elements of the bodysuit each require one full game turn to complete. The encounter suits are designed to produce a set of organic biotech defenses that can be activated by the host if needed. Once a host is bonded to their encounter suit, they become linked to the larger Shi'an group consciousness by a complex neurotransmitter that connects directly to the host's brain. This network allows all beings bonded with a Shi'an encounter suit to communicate with each other through a neural link. For the Psionically active Shi'an this connection is natural and welcome but for anyone else it can be traumatic and invasive. They will automatically be able to locate, identify, and communicate any other being using a Shi'an encounter suit within a 30,000-mile radius through the embedded network. This neural network connection to the group consciousness can be temporarily deactivated by the bonded host with a successful technical skill or intelligence check.

## MOVEMENT

Shi'an are surprisingly graceful for their lanky stature possessing above average agility and dexterity. However, their long graceful limbs have fewer short twitch muscle fibers than Humans which gives them considerably less muscle mass. As bipedal humanoids, the Shi'an have a

very similar movement rate in comparison to Humans. Their long limbs and the augmented power of their encounter suits increase their maximum exploring movement rate to 130' per turn. Under normal Earth like gravity their encounter movement rate is 43' per round and their overland movement rate is 390' per turn. The normal overland modifiers found in the S&S 2E rule book on page #24 apply to Shi'an in the same way as the other character races. The biomechanical support provided by the Shi'an suits halves all penalties for fatigue, encumbrance, or elevated gravity.



## REPRODUCTION

Shi'an are capable of sexual reproduction and have two biological genders. Like the reptiles of Earth, Shi'an females



biologically reproduce with internal fertilization which typically produces one to three eggs. However, culturally Shi'an view sexual reproduction as inefficient and have used a system of genetic matching, "in-vitro" fertilization, and artificial incubation for over five millennia. From conception to birth all reproduction is conducted in medical birthing centers where all steps of the reproductive process are guided. Shi'an typically mate for life through genetic matching but there is no social institution of marriage in their culture.

## DIET

Biologically the Shi'an are omnivorous and can eat a variety of different foods for their nutrition. However, after thousands of years of genetic alteration for deep space habitation the Shi'an now rely entirely on their encounter suits to acquire and process their nutritional needs. Once a Shi'an is bonded with their biomechanical encounter suit it intravenously provides its host with nutrients that it extracts from any suitable source in the surrounding environment. In the absence of any natural sources, liquid nutrient packs can be ported into the encounter suit's life support system for consumption. The biomechanical mechanisms of the suit also act as a high efficiency reclamation filter that recycles various compounds

and minerals from the hosts waste to support the biological components of the suit itself. Without the aid of their encounter suit a Shi'an would require medical intervention to prevent starvation as they no longer are capable of consuming raw foods on their own.



## SOCIETY

Shi'an society is based on a collective cultural and spiritual belief that they are the apex lifeform of the known universe and are destined to have dominion over all other living creatures. They view all other species as completely alien, potentially useful, but ultimately inferior to their own kind. All Shi'an are religiously indoctrinated with these cultural beliefs from an early age through religion,

education, and rigid social conditioning. This has resulted in the development of a highly disciplined, conquest driven, militant society that genuinely believes that they serve the greater good of all life through their divine mandate to establish dominion throughout the universe.

The cultural indoctrination of the Shi'an encourages them to be callous, indifferent, or dispassionate towards anyone or anything that is not Shi'an. This attitude creates a kind of sociopathic behavior devoid of empathy that negatively manifests as exploitation, manipulation and sometimes cruelty towards anyone or anything that is not Shi'an. The Shi'an view other lifeforms much in the way a human might regard an insect. Either as a useful mechanism of nature or as an irritating pest. Something to be appreciated and studied or something to be controlled through selective eradication.

The Shi'an are emotional beings but their sensation of mood and instinct are far less subtle in range compared to those experienced by Humans. Their cultural conditioning and belief that they are the apex lifeform of the known universe results in a relatively dispassionate perspective that is not easily swayed by the circumstances around them. However, once brought to joy, sorrow, or

rage their emotional responses are extreme by comparison to other lifeforms.

## LANGUAGE

The Shi'an have a complex ancient language called the Kon-dashar which has existed long before the recorded history of Earth. After their development of interstellar travel, the Shi'an began genetically altering their species for a life among the stars. One of these adaptations was to develop a liquid breathing system for their encounter suits to help them survive extreme changes in pressure and gravity during prolonged space travel. While the liquid respirator devices were effective, they made verbal communication nearly impossible. To compensate for this Shi'an scientists developed a new communication system for their encounter suits that directly translate and transmit Shi'an neurological signals into communication. The Shi'an now prefer to communicate with each other through this technologically augmented psionic telepathy. The Shi'an also possess advanced language translation technology which can adapt to any language it samples within 1D8 hours.





## GOVERNMENT

Prior to its demise, the Shi'an system of government was an imperial hereditary monarchy ruled by an Emperor. The Shi'an Emperor was believed to be the keeper of the Shi'an peoples' sacred trust and divinely ordained purpose. During the Great War the last emperor, Anodanath, mysteriously disappeared when Ryaden's capital city of Praxem fell. Emperor Anodanath was believed to have been killed during the attack on Praxem but it was never confirmed. If he did survive the attack he may be hiding somewhere in exile. However, to this day his fate or whereabouts are still unknown even to his closest allies and most devoted supporters.

## CASTE SYSTEM

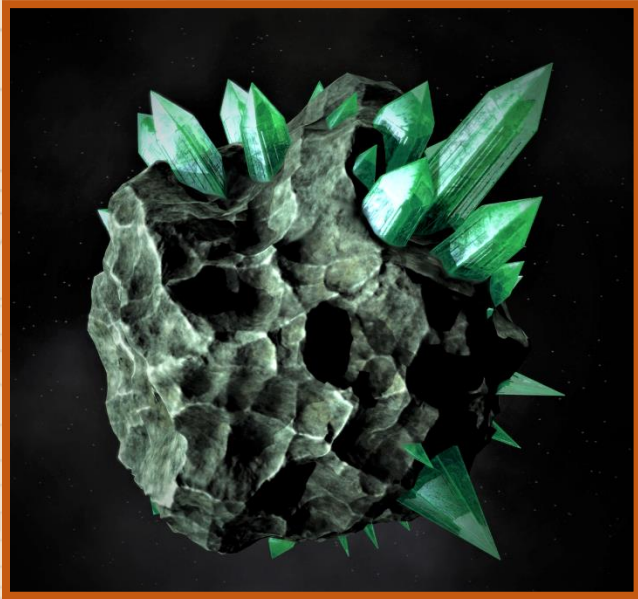
Shi'an society is divided into an ancient three tier caste system composed of Administrators, Warriors, and Facilitators. The highest and most powerful caste of the three tiers is the Administrators. As the name implies, this tier is made up of the Emperor, planetary governors, prophets, scholars, and various bureaucratic authorities. The Warrior Caste is exclusively composed of the members of the Shi'an imperial military forces who are under the direct command of the Administrators. The largest and lowest ranking caste is the

Facilitators, which is made up of scientists, technicians, and general laborers who ensure the day to day operations of society. The Shi'an Caste System is rigid and all Shi'an are genetically pre-determined at conception what Caste they will be born into. Shi'an cannot change their Caste but can improve their station within it through the merits of their endeavors. At birth, each Shi'an hatchling is inscribed with the symbol of their assigned Caste upon their forehead. This mark remains a constant reminder of their place within the great scheme of their society's purpose. Even after the fall of the Shi'an Empire during the Xin uprising, the caste system was preserved amongst the scattered survivors who vigilantly await the return of their Empire.

Caste members can be identified by the symbols inscribed on their foreheads or the color of their encounter suits. Administrator Caste members have a caste symbol which resembles a circle surrounded by two rings. Their encounter suits are typically blue or purple in color. The Warrior Caste members have a caste symbol which resembles a circle surrounded by a single ring. Their encounter suits are typically red or tan in color. The Facilitator Caste members have a caste symbol which resembles either a single circle or a single ring. Their



encounter suits are typically orange or green in color.



## RELIGION

The Shi'an have a singular highly ritualized quasi-monotheistic religion called Qal-Ta'fon. It is based on an ancient belief that the universe is a physical manifestation of a divine unifying conscious energy called the Qal that transcends mortal understanding. The Qal is described as a conscious living energy that coalesced at the beginning of time shattering into innumerable cosmic fragments that formed all that we perceive as the physical universe. Shi'an believe that they were the first sentient beings to take form from the source cosmic fragments and were intended to guide and hold dominion over all life that evolved thereafter. The teachings of the Qal-Ta'fon state that through time these

fragments of the Qal are coming together again and that one day they will again coalesce. This reunification of the cosmic fragments would herald the destruction of the universe so that it may be reborn again in an eternal cosmic lifecycle. There is no centralized organization of this societal religion, but its teachings are administered by a clergy known as the Prophets who guide the faithful in their connection to the great source of totality.

In the Qal-Ta'fon faith, Alkhemite Crystals which are found in asteroids and space geodes are viewed as sacred remnants of the Qal. This unique element is highly sought after for its applications in quantum computing (Blue Alkhemite), energy management (Red Alkhemite), teleportation, and interstellar travel (Green Alkhemite). Shi'an are taught from an early age that these crystals contain the manifest power of the universe itself. Alkhemite can be found in many facets of Shi'an technology and holds equal importance with Nanogen Primer which is the corner stone of their biotechnology.

## ECONOMICS

Like the Confederation, Shi'an society does not exchange currency for goods and services. Everything that is needed is produced via an advanced bio-molecular

fabrication process and distributed by the Administration Caste at requisition centers. The concepts of currency, profit, credit, or capitalism / private enterprise are completely alien to the Shi'an and have little meaning or value to them.



## LAW

The founding principle of Shi'an society is based on the premise that all actions must benefit the Shi'an's divinely ordained destiny to establish dominion over all life in the Universe. This single doctrine is the governing idea behind all Shi'an law and social contract. The principle itself is referred to as The Law of Dominion. Violation of Shi'an law is measured against what degree an action has impact Shi'an society's ability to fulfill its destiny. Penalties for violation of the Law of Dominion can range from

sanctions to banishment. There is no death penalty in Shi'an culture because the act of a Shi'an ending another Shi'an's life would constitute a crime against the Laws of Dominion. This of course does not mean that murder or assassination is un-heard of in Shi'an history. However, when such acts do occur, they are considered high crimes worthy of banishment which includes excommunication from all aspects of Shi'an society. When a Shi'an is sentenced to banishment they are separated from their Caste, expelled from society, and stripped of all benefits of rank or status.

## TECHNOLOGY

The Shi'an are an ancient alien race who are significantly advanced in comparison to Humans and the other member races of the Galactic Confederation. Their technology is biological or biomechanical in nature and is grown rather than built. At the heart of this technology is an advanced form of synthetic biomolecular nanotech called the Nanogen Primer. This technology is a living organic compound that can exist in almost any environment and can be chemically manipulated to behave in different ways. Nanogen Primer is used in all aspects of Shi'an technology from their encounter suits to their cities and spacecraft. Shi'an



also possess their own versions of hyperdrive, computers, teleporters, screens and beam weapons all based on Alkhemite and Nanogen biotech.



## CONSTRUCTS

A Nanogen based construct is the biomechanical equivalent to Confederation molecular fabrication technology. It uses the Shi'an Nanogen Primer to grow any preprogramed design from tools or weapons to complex structures. A Shi'an in the Technical Skill Class can synthesize Nanogen Primer with a successful technical skill check at a rate of one quart of medium per day. One quart of Nanogen Primer can consume one pound of any oxidizable matter and convert it into 3 pounds of designated construct per hour. The larger or more

complex a construct design is will directly affect the amount of Nanogen Primer that will be required to grow it.

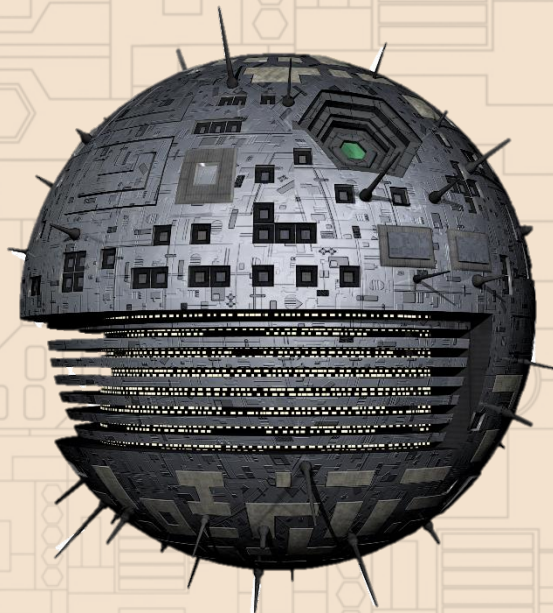
**SM Note:** A Shi'an character, NPC, or random encounter can produce Nanogen Primer starting at Level 1 and can begin manipulating Nanogen in to Constructs when they reach Level 3.

## STARSHIPS

If the Shi'an are encountered they will typically be found using salvaged technology discarded by other space farers. Sometimes these tattered hulks are transformed with Nanogen Primer into monstrous constructs wandering the cosmos. Since the Great War few Shi'an starships are still in existence. Many were destroyed during the war or shortly thereafter by pursuing Xin forces. Most of the vessels that did survive were the massive conquest ships the Shi'an and Xin used to escape their dying planet. Only a handful of which are still in pristine condition and fully operational. These powerful advanced warships easily rival the fire power, speed, and energy production of any of the interstellar government's mightiest capital ships. Grown with Shi'an biotechnology and encased in Alkhemite infused metal these unique vessels are massive sentient biomechanoids (Composed of both mechanical and biological systems) with adaptive regenerative capabilities.







Ship Type:	Conquest Ship
Commissioned:	Unknown
Crew Compliment:	3000
Command Rank:	Commander
Power Pile Base:	300
Teleporter Cap:	6 at a time
Beam Banks:	8
Torpedoes:	N/A
Shuttle Ships:	10
Space Fighters:	10
Sick Bay Cap:	12
Cryotubes:	8

Shi'an conquest ships are unique biomechanical organisms that can regenerate 30 EU of hull damage once per day. They are equipped with defensive energy screens similar to those found on Galactic Confederation ships. Like the Zangid, Shi'an starships only use beam weapons and are not normally equipped with torpedo or fireball weapons. Shi'an beam weapons are

statistically identical to those used by the Galactic Confederation, Zangid, and Videni. The Shi'an Conquest Ships are also armed with ten piloted space fighters that can travel up to 30,000 miles per turn, have 20 PPB, and are armed with a single beam weapon each.



## THE XIN

The Xin (*Pronounced Zin*) are a sentient race of resilient biomechanoids, a kind of biological "android" (Composed of both mechanical and biological systems), that was created by the Shi'an as soldiers and slave labor. Over time the Xin began to develop self-awareness evolving beyond their original design and revolted against their creators in a terrible war of independence that left their home planet Ryaden in ruin. Like the Shi'an, the surviving Xin fled Ryaden and now

wander the galaxy as nomads. However, in comparison to the Shi'an, a much larger percentage of their population survived the "Great War". Many of whom fled Ryaden in the massive Shi'an conquest ships that they once served on. The Xin have a deep cultural animosity towards their former masters and will instinctively react with either intense fear or hostility towards any Shi'an they encounter. Some groups of Xin, especially those that were designed as soldiers, actively pursue the surviving Shi'an throughout the galaxy. Hunting them as war criminals to either bring them to justice or kill them out-right. In contrast, there are also some rogue elements within the Xin that are secretly still loyal to the Shi'an either by programming design or personal choice. The Shi'an will regard any Xin, or anyone that associates with them, with distrust and open animosity. For the Shi'an, the Xin's betrayal was so treacherous as to forever live in infamy in their cultural consciousness. Even the mention of the Xin in the presence of the Shi'an is an offensive insult enough to end most conversation or further discourse.

Both the Xin and the Shi'an have made several clandestine scouting expeditions to Earth. Many of which became known throughout Earth's popular social culture as "UFO sightings" and "alien abduction

encounters". The Shi'an had little interest in either Earth or Humanity which they considered unremarkable. Official first contact and diplomatic relations occurred between Humans and the now liberated Xin shortly after the Zangid War. After the formation of the Galactic Confederation several Xin refugee colonies have been found. However, to date the Xin have not officially petitioned the Confederation for membership. The Xin and the Galactic Confederation have a friendly cooperative relationship through a mutual aid treaty. The Shi'an are known to the Confederation only through their relationship with the Xin. For the Confederation, little is known about the mysterious and elusive Shi'an other than their existence and former connection to the Xin.





# HYBRIDS

After the catastrophic war with the Xin, a group of surviving Shi'an planetary governors commissioned experiments to create a Hybrid species to replace the Xin as a source of soldiers and labor. Several methods were developed from genetic manipulation to biological conversion. The most controversial method, biological conversion, uses Nanogen Primer to rapidly rewrite a subject's DNA with grafted Shi'an DNA through a virulent retrovirus and molecular surgery. During the conversion process the subject is bonded to an encounter suit and connected to the Shi'an group consciousness. A side effect of the conversion process results in a kind of brain washing that compels the subject to the influence of the group consciousness so long as the neural link is connected. The entire conversion process takes approximately seventy-two hours and is irreversible after the first day. Interrupting the process can be disastrous, resulting in mutations, organ failure, mental instability, or death. Subjects undergoing the conversion process are sedated and suspended inside chambers filled with liquid Nanogen Primer specially designed for genetic alteration.

The Hybrids emerging from the conversion chambers have automatic

access to Shi'an abilities and technology due to the grafted Shi'an DNA. In Shi'an society Hybrids are considered "second class citizens" existing outside and below the caste system. However, due to their Shi'an biological ancestry they are regarded as being at least partially Shi'an. Hybrids are considered impure by Shi'an standards, but the virtue of their grafted DNA elevates them above other inferior lifeforms. Shi'an commonly view converted hybrid lifeforms with either a casual neglect or outright disdain. Regardless of the Shi'an opinion of the hybrid they are still recognized as being part of their great destiny. All hybrids have a +1 to Contact skill checks and Charisma checks when attempting to positively interact or persuade a Shi'an.



## ENCOUNTERS

The Shi'an will usually be encountered as individuals or in very small groups. In order to ensure the survival of their species they generally do not associate with others and are very reclusive. As a random alien encounter, they will be a rare occurrence and any cooperation will be based on motivations to further their own agenda. The Shi'an cultural beliefs will always prevent them from joining any of the interstellar governments. However, this does not prevent them from cooperating or working with these "inferior species" if it suits their purposes.

Encountered:	1d4 (2d4)
Frequency:	Very Rare
Movement:	130' (43')
Intelligence:	High-Genius
Psi Potential:	2d6, Active
Hits:	3d8
Armor:	-2
Combat Skill:	14
Save:	Level 3
Attacks:	1 (Weapon)
Damage:	By Weapon
Morale:	10
XP:	90

**SM Note:** Random Encounters with Shi'an Hybrids will share the same Game Stats as those listed for the Shi'an above.

## CHARACTERS

**Requirement:** INT 12, DEX 10

**Adjustments:** STR/DEX/CON +1, CHA-3

**Skill Adjustments:** Tech +1, Contact -3

**Metabolism:** Iron Based

**Descriptors:** *Single-minded, hubris, superiority-complex, arrogant, selfish xenophobic, condescending, patronizing.*

**Motivations:** *Advancement of the Shi'an agenda to establish dominion over all lifeforms in the Universe.*

Space Masters or Players interested in introducing the Shi'an as a player character race are cautioned in doing so. Playing a Shi'an presents some intriguing but difficult role-playing challenges as their motivations will frequently be contrary to other members of their party unless it suits their own agenda. Shi'an are not evil per-se' but represent a level of conviction to xenophobic cultural indoctrination that would be completely alien to most people. The Shi'an view all lifeforms as inferior to their own and unimportant unless they can serve to further the Shi'an agenda. They can be helpful, reasoned with, and even cooperative if they see a purpose in doing so. However, a Shi'an will not think twice about betraying anyone in their party who is not Shi'an to further their own goals. A Shi'an cannot be culturally



deprogramed or have a change of heart because every aspect of Shi'an life is governed by their cultural beliefs. It is congenital, a self-identity coded deep into their genetically manipulated psyche. Even if an orphaned Shi'an hatchling were found by another race and raised within their culture some deep innate urge would compel their latent alien identity to eventually emerge in one way or another.

Shi'an player characters would neither join nor serve as part of the Galactic Confederation. The idea of being under the command of an inferior species would conflict with the character's cultural identity. They may even see the Confederation, and by extension those who serve in it, as adversarial to their own agenda. However, it would be in-character for Shi'an to infiltrate the Confederation in order to try and subvert it to serve their own goals. By nature, a Shi'an would insist that they were in charge and that everyone else is here to follow or serve them. However, Shi'an may be agreeable to cooperate with a Confederation crew if it would serve their purposes but living and working alongside the perceived inferior species would be a constant source of irritation for the Shi'an character.

*"Captain, that tricky alien looks about as comfortable with us as a long-tailed cat in a room full of rocking chairs."*

*– Doctor T.C. Webster, CSF Aurora*

## PROGRESSION

Unlike the Galactic Confederation, Shi'an military service does not have a separate "enlisted" or specialized vocational rank progression. All soldiers receive the same training as "Officers" so that they can serve in any role in which they are needed. The rank title names presented in the chart below approximate the Human equivalencies as much of the Shi'an language does not translate into the Confederation common dialect.

LVL	RANK / TITLE	EXPERIENCE
01	"Initiate"	0
02	"Corporal"	2,001
03	"Lieutenant"	4,001
04	"Sub-Commander"	8,001
05	"Commander"	16,001
06	"Captain"	32,501
07	"Tribune"	65,001
08	"Colonel"	120,001
09	"Brigadier"	240,001
10	"General"	360,001
11	"Marshal"	480,001
12	"Grand Marshal"	600,001







# ABILITIES

Each Shi'an encounter suit is equipped with various defensive adaptations that can be accessed by the host as they learn to control their suit. The connection between the host and their encounter suit becomes stronger and more intuitive with time and experience. Each level of experience progression up to level 6 will unlock new abilities for the user.

## Accelerated Healing (Level 1)

Shi'an and Hybrid (PC's or NPC's) can use the encounter suit's advanced biotechnology to accelerate the healing of physical damage. The character using the suit can automatically heal 1d4 points of damage per level once per day. Once activated the effects are instantaneous but the user must be conscious at the time of use.

## Razor Claw (Level 2)

At this level Shi'an and Hybrid (PC's or NPC's) will have learned to access the encounter suit's ability to adapt defensive weapons in the form of a large claw appendage that extends from the forearm gauntlets. The claw is much like those found on a crab with the outside useful for concussive blows and the inside of the pincer for cutting. The cutting edge of the claw is as dense as osmium borite and can cut through most

kinds of armor like a hot knife through butter. The claw takes one turn to activate or deactivate, can make one attack per round, and does 1d8 damage +1 per level. Users may activate a second razor claw on their free hand after level 4. The second claw has the same characteristics as the original but adds one additional attack per round. Once this ability is activated the user cannot use the effected hand for any other task until the claw is deactivated.



## Create Construct (Level 3)

Shi'an and Hybrid (PC's or NPC's) can use the interface in their encounter suit to program Nanogen Primer to build a new construct equal to the amount of Nanogen Primer they can produce or have available on hand.



### **Spore Cannon (Level 4)**

At this level Shi'an and Hybrid (PC's or NPC's) have learned how to access the encounter suits next defensive adaptation which is the Spore Cannon. The spore cannon deploys from one of the suits forearm gauntlets and encompasses the user's hand inside the weapon itself. This weapon uses a chemical reaction to propel a barbed resin spore which has similar properties to the razor claw. The encounter suit can grow and store twenty spores per day as ammunition for the cannon. The cannon takes one turn to activate or deactivate, can make one attack per round, and does 1d8 damage +1 per level. The ranges and skill adjustments are for the cannon are short range (+1) up to 500', medium range (+0) up to 1000', and long range (-1) up to 1,500'. Once this ability is

activated the user cannot use the effected hand for any other task until the cannon is deactivated. Unlike the razor claw, only one spore cannon may be activated at a time. Spore cannon and razor claws cannot be activated at the same time.

### **Regeneration (Level 5)**

At this level the interface between the host and encounter suit is nearly seamless. The symbiotic organism now knows the host almost better than they know themselves. This inseparable link between the suit and wearer allows the suit to use its advanced biotechnology to sustain its host even after receiving substantial physical trauma. This ability allows the wearer to instantaneously restore one half of their total hit points once per day.

### **Force Field (Level 6)**

The final integrated defensive ability of the encounter suit allows the wearer to generate a 6' radius bio-electric force field that provides some protection against beam weapons. Like an energy screen, roll 1d6 individually for each hit on the field to determine how much damage is absorbed: 1-2: 25%, 3-4: 50%, 5-6: 75%. The field requires one round to activate and has produces enough energy to operate for 3 turns once per day.



## CREATING HYBRIDS

SM and Players are cautioned to not use this technology carelessly or casually. Even under the most ideal conditions converting one living beings genetic make up to that of another is risky business. For the Shi'an fighting for their survival on the edges of known space, without the benefit of a medically guided breeding program, the idea of converting inferior species into a hybrid workforce is a tempting one. However, the process is far from perfect and the consequences of failure are particularly high for the subject undergoing the conversion. Proponents of the process believed that it holds the key to elevating all inferior beings to their rightful place in the Shi'an destiny of dominion. Critics feel the process diluted the purity of the Shi'an race with counterfeit abominations.

Any Level 6 or higher Shi'an in the Technical Skill Class can access the knowledge necessary to perform the bio-conversion process from the Shi'an group consciousness with a successful technical skill check. The process requires a humanoid subject to be immersed in pre-programed Nanogen Primer for seventy-two hours without interruption. Any interruption of the process can have devastatingly disastrous consequences for the subject undergoing the process. After the first twenty-four hours of the

procedure all genetic alterations are permanent and irreversible. The Shi'an performing the conversion must complete three successful technical skill checks to synthesize the required constructs, program the Nanogen Primer, and activate the conversion process. Any skill check failure during these steps will have catastrophic results. If a skill check failure does occur, the SM should role 1d10 to determine the result of the failure from the table below.

Roll	Consequences
1-2	Process does not activate; all constructs and components are ruined. Subject survives but is unable to undergo the process again.
3-4	Encounter suit fails to bond. Subject's STR, CON, & DEX scores permanently reduced by 50%.
5-6	The process is successful, but the mental strain has rendered the subject mentally unstable.
7-8	The DNA Grafting is unsuccessful, environmental suit bonds but subject does not develop any Shi'an biological traits. Shi'an based technology only works 50% of the time for host.
9	The process is successful but genetic corruption gives rise to horrific mutations and disfigurement.
0	Subject perishes from organ failure during the procedure.

Once a subject has successfully been converted to a Shi'an hybrid they will be under the influence of the Shi'an group consciousness. This influence is a compelling connection facilitated by the neural link in the subject's encounter suit. The new hybrid will hear the thoughts of the Shi'an collective consciousness as if it were their own. Distance exceeding 10,000 miles, psionic attack, or space phenomenon can interfere or sever the neural link and end the Shi'an control over the subject.

## NOTABLE SHI'AN

Presented here are some notable and notorious characters from recent Shi'an history. While it would be extremely rare for a Shi'an or Hybrid PC or NPC to meet any of these individuals their exploits would be well known to both the Shi'an and the Xin. Some of whom were directly involved with the events that shaped the fall of the Empire.

### Emperor Anodanath

Anodanath, easily recognizable as the only Shi'an without a caste symbol, was the 147<sup>th</sup> and last Shi'an Emperor. On the last day of the Siege of Praxem, Anodanath mysteriously disappeared from his council chambers in the Imperial Palace. Some believe that with surrender to the Xin inevitable he was "spirited

away" into exile to prevent capture or execution. Others believe that he may have been assassinated by an ambitious rival within the Imperial Council that was sympathetic to the Xin. Regardless of the theory, his remains were never found and his whereabouts or fate remains a mystery.



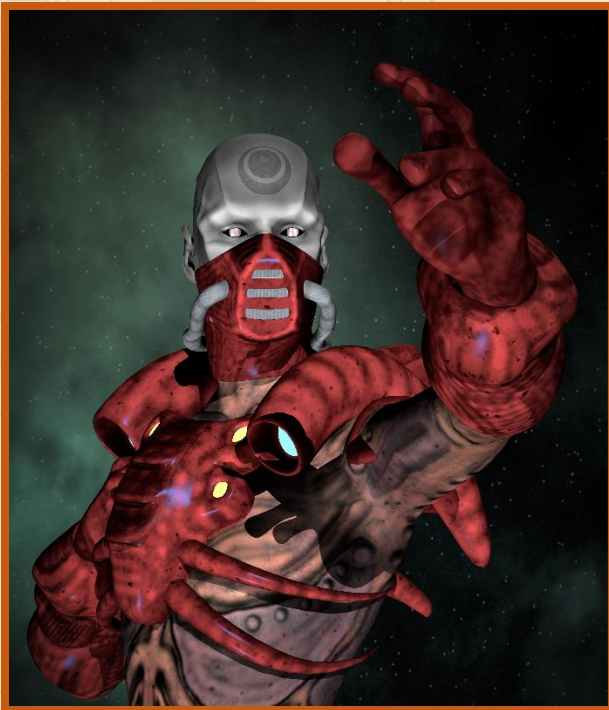
Level: 12			Gender: M			Class: Military	
Sub Class: Command				Rank: Emperor			
HP	STR	CON	DEX	INT	CHA	PSI	AR
87	12	10	12	12	14	11	-2

### General Cadathka

General Cadathka was the appointed leader of the Warrior Caste at the time of the Great War. During the Siege of



Praxem he was off-world leading the Shi'an forces against the Xin uprising. When Praxem fell, Cadathka escaped Ryaden with half of the surviving Shi'an conquest ships and planned to regroup his forces for a decisive counter strike against the Xin. Unfortunately, his plan would never see fruition as the surviving Administrators on Ryaden issued their unconditional surrender to the Xin forces. Upon learning of the surrender, General Cadathka fled the star system with his remaining forces. To this day, he is considered a priority target and actively hunted by elements of the Xin military.



## Commander Nadath

If ever there were a persona that epitomized the sinister twisted depth of the Shi'an psyche, Commander Nadath would be it. Nadath, also known as the butcher of Skaranis, was single handedly responsible for the near extinction of all life on Ryaden's neighboring planet. Once a rising star among the Administrator Caste, Nadath was placed in command of a promising group of biotechnologists who were seeking to develop ways to improve upon the design of the Xin. The new Nanogen designs they developed showed exceptional promise in yielding a more resilient and compliant model. However, for Nadath progress was too slow and a viable source of fresh genetic stock was dwindling. After months of delays Nadath became impatient and started conducting her own unsanctioned experiments introducing the Nanogen, intended to alter the Xin, on the inhabitants of Skaranis. During the experiments a strain of the Nanogen mutated transforming into a horrific plague that ravaged the entire planet. Nadath's actions were found to be in violation of the Shi'an Laws of Dominion and she was banished.

Level: 10			Gender: M		Class: Military		
Sub Class: Command				Rank: General			
HP	STR	CON	DEX	INT	CHA	PSI	AR
63	14	12	12	13	9	8	-2



Level: 5			Gender: F		Class: Scientific		
Sub Class: Medical				Rank: Commander			
HP	STR	CON	DEX	INT	CHA	PSI	AR
32	9	11	12	14	10	9	-2

## Commander Krinosh

Commander Krinosh is General Cadathka's military advisor and closest ally within the Warrior Caste. Considered to be Cadathka's "eyes and ears", Krinosh is often sent in advance of the General to assess the success or failure of a military campaign. Unlike Cadathka, Krinosh is a man of unwavering ethical values who serves as the General's conscious on matters of dealing with the inferior species. However, Krinosh's loyalties are torn between his duty to Cadathka and his affections for the exile Nadath.



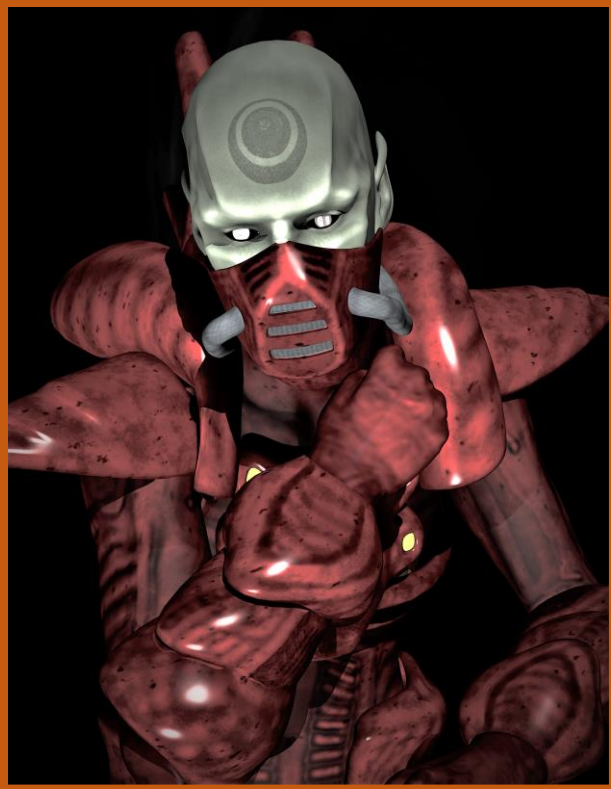
Level: 5		Gender: M		Class: Military			
Sub Class: Combat			Rank: Commander				
HP	STR	CON	DEX	INT	CHA	PSI	AR
29	11	8	13	15	7	8	-2

## General Maragus

General Maragus was a well-known military scientist from the Warrior Caste whose contributions to Shi'an biotechnology made him many supporters and critics amongst the Administrators. Unfortunately, as popular as Maragus was he suffered from unpredictable emotional outbursts and extremely eccentric behavior. Deemed by his critics as unstable and a potential liability Maragus was relegated to an assignment at the furthest edge of the Shi'an expansion. At first, the new



position seemed to be agreeable to Maragus' nature. However, as time passed the routine progress reports on his research and experiments became increasingly less frequent. Eventually the reports stopped altogether and Maragus was all but forgotten.



In his new-found anonymity Maragus turned his attention back to scientific research. He felt it was a waste to eradicate inferior species when the Shi'an had the technology to convert all living beings in to Shi'an. Second only to Nadath, Maragus is perhaps one of the most prolific bio-converters in all Shi'an history. Fortunately, for now, his deeds

and secrets remain unknown even to his own people.

Level: 10			Gender: M		Class: Scientific		
Sub Class: Biology				Rank: General			
HP	STR	CON	DEX	INT	CHA	PSI	AR
43	10	11	16	12	13	10	-2

## NOTABLE PLACES

All Shi'an and Hybrid (PC's or NPC's) and random encounters will possess detailed knowledge of the following places as part of their shared collective consciousness when bonded to their encounter suits. Other space faring races and governments that have contact with the Xin may also have knowledge of these places and what they contain at the Space Masters discretion. Almost all interstellar space travelers in the Sol Sector will be aware of the prohibited travel zone around the 40 Eridani-A star system but may not necessarily know why.

### The Xin Quarantine Zone

The Xin Quarantine Zone (XQZ) is a one light year wide no-fly zone around the 40 Eridani-A star system which was established and is enforced by elements of the Xin military. This quarantine zone was designed as a buffer to prevent the Shi'an from returning to Ryaden and protect space farers from the dangerous remnants of the Great War. The entire

area surrounding the system is filled with dormant planetary defenses, wreckage, debris, unused munitions, and hazardous radioactive waste. All expeditions into the system and its planets are closely monitored by the Xin and require escort by a Xin guide. While the Xin are normally a peaceful race this is one of the few areas where they maintain a strict “shoot first, ask questions later” policy. Piracy and illegal salvage of alien technology from the XQZ is a frequent problem bringing many undesirable elements on unsanctioned expeditions to the area. Those who are not immediately apprehended by Xin patrols are often found later as new editions to the vast ship graveyard surrounding Ryaden. Usually ignorant victims of their own curiosity or lack of common sense.



## The Planet Ryaden

The planet Ryaden is the first planet in the 40-Eridani-A star system and has a long elliptical orbit with a slow axis rotation. This planet was the homeworld for both the Shi'an and the Xin. Before the Great War, Ryaden was a beautiful Class-H world with an advanced interstellar civilization. The war between the Shi'an and the Xin transformed it into a ruined toxic wasteland from indiscriminate use of biochemical and hyper-atomic nuclear weapons. After an unconditional surrender to the Xin, the Shi'an survivors fled Ryaden in search for a new homeworld. Ryaden and its surrounding planets are littered with wreckage, toxic debris, unexploded munitions, and hazardous waste. Travel to the system is prohibited and there is a one light year wide quarantine zone strictly enforced by elements of the surviving Xin military forces.

## The City Of Praxem

Praxem was the capital city and seat of government for the Shi'an Empire before its fall during the Great War. This city was a center for both science and culture for the Shi'an people. It was a massive towering city that was home for over a hundred million people on the shore of the planet's largest ocean. When war erupted between the Xin and their Shi'an



masters this city was the very center of the conflict. The city's defenses held fast during a five-day siege by Xin forces but were finally overwhelmed at the end of the fifth day. The city was completely reduced to rubble when a massive conquest ship deploying Xin troops was shot down and crashed into the city barrier screen. The only surviving structures were the Five Pillars of Praxem which are five monolithic stones that surrounded the Emperor's palace. It is believed that the stones were composed of ultra-dense Alkhemite which protected them from the devastation.



## The Planet Skaranis

Skaranis is the second planet in the 40-Eridani-A star system and the closest habitable planet to Ryaden. Skaranis was once populated by an indigenous race of semi-aquatic humanoids known as the Skaranids. The Skaranids had a flourishing pre-interstellar civilization that was on the verge of developing their own version of hyperdrive. The neighboring Shi'an frequently visited Skaranis and considered the planet a protectorate of the Empire. However, shortly before the Great War on Ryaden this would change when a Shi'an of the Warrior Caste named Nadath conducted unsanctioned experiments with a new strain of Nanogen, that was intended to improve the Xin, on the inhabitants of Skaranis. Once introduced into the planet's ecosystem the Nanogen mutated transforming into a horrific plague that wiped out almost all life on the planet. In an irony that foreshadowed Ryaden's own fate, the surviving Skaranids were forced to flee their ruined world and became nomads among the stars. Nadath was later banished from the Shi'an Empire for violating the Laws of Dominion. During the Great War, the same mutated strain of Nanogen that decimated Skaranis was repurposed as a bio-weapon and used against the Xin.

## REACTIONS

This table identifies the typical reaction a Shi'an will have to the various known space-faring races in the frontier. Apply these modifiers to any PC's or NPC's using their contact skill or charisma score during an encounter with a Shi'an.

RACE / SPECIES	REACTION	MOD
Human	Hostile	-1
Tauran	Hostile	-1
Gorran	Very Hostile	-2
Daelan	Hostile	-1
Hykhot	Neutral	+0
Andromedan	Hostile	-1
Dreiped	Neutral	+0
Rigel	Belligerent	-3
Zangid	Belligerent	-3
Videni	Belligerent	-3
Felician	Hostile	-1
Entirran	Hostile	-1
Pleiadian	Hostile	-1
Caeliferan	Very Hostile	-2
Xin	Utter Hatred	-4
Skaranid	Very Hostile	-2
Silotron	Very Hostile	-2
Oiretophid	Belligerent	-3
Atlantean	Neutral	+0
Thought Bender	Belligerent	-3
Lucanii Drones	Belligerent	-3
Cyborgs	Very Hostile	-2
Tartarans	Hostile	-1

## AGE STAGES

Character age stages for the Shi'an differ from other characters due to their unusual longevity. A Shi'an Character or NPC who is not afflicted by injury or disease could potentially live up to five hundred Earth years before their advanced biotechnology can no longer sustain them. Shi'an Hybrids tend to have considerably shorter life spans averaging up to 200 Earth years due to the anatomical trauma of bioconversion and/or their mixed genetic ancestry.

### SHI'AN AGE STAGES

ADOL.	ADULT	MIDDLE	ELDERLY	VEN.
15-49	50-149	150-299	300-449	450+

### SHI'AN HYBRID AGE STAGES

ADOL.	ADULT	MIDDLE	ELDERLY	VEN.
14-20	21-49	50-99	100-159	160+

