

TRAVELLER



*Supplement 16:
Adventure Seeds*

Life is either a great adventure or nothing

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TRAVELLER

ADVENTURE SEEDS

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INTRODUCTION

The game session arrives. You have not had time to prepare the game this week and *then* the players announce they want to jump to a system you have not yet fully detailed.

You need an adventure, quick.

This book finishes the referee's toolkit 'trilogy' that started with *Supplement 13: Starport Encounters* and continued with *Supplement 15: Powers and Principalities*. Supplement 16: *Adventure Seeds* rounds off your toolkit by providing a variety of methods to generate new ideas for adventures that can be sprung upon your players with very little preparation – just the thing for a busy referee!

The goal with *Supplement 16: Adventure Seeds* is to give the referee a multitude of jump-off points to launch new adventures with the minimum of preparation or forethought. Combined with the other books in this trilogy, and you will be able to create complex adventures that will keep your players entertained for hours, while filling them with realistic places, people, governments and corporations. Your players will think you a genius for creating such rich and varied universes!

This book covers three key areas to aid referees in creating adventures.

PATRONS

Most adventures in Traveller and, indeed, most roleplaying games, are driven by some kind of patron, a figure who motivates the players to search for a specific goal. Patrons are the drivers behind the events presented in this section, sometimes directly, sometimes indirectly. The following Plots and Rendezvous sections, when added to *Supplement 13: Starport Encounters* and *Supplement 15: Powers and Principalities*, form a complete referee's tool kit.

PLOTS

Plots are an essential part of any game. A well thought-out plot can lead to hours of exciting gaming. There are many sources of ideas for plots; television, books, newspapers, all of which surround the referee. Occasionally, however, the creative spirit runs dry and pre-prepared material is beneficial. Additionally, the players usually have a great deal of control over their actions and may go in directions which the referee did not anticipate and therefore could not be prepared for.

RENDEZ-VOUS

The starports, towns and cities of every Traveller world contain a wide variety of hotels, bars, shops and other locations which may be of interest to your player-characters (players). The rendezvous described in this section are not intended merely as meeting places for your players, but also provide;

- Interesting characters with whom your players can interact.
- Potential plot links and/or patrons for expanding into subsequent adventures.
- Background colour, useful services, and sources of rumours and information.



PATRONS

This section provides the hurried referee with support material for those gaming sessions where things are not going exactly as planned. It helps referees who have not got time to prepare a scenario for their next game by providing a resource full of plots to use and adapt.

There is also a mechanism for generating any number of situations which can lead to adventure, allowing this book to be used even after all the set examples have been played through.

The Four Ps of Adventure Writing

You are not just the referee but also playwright and director of the drama in which your players take part. Creating an adventure requires you to think of the Four Ps; Plots, People, Places and Props.

PLOTS

These are what you bought this book for! We will go into more detail in a minute on the basic dramatic situations and how to turn them into exciting and enjoyable scenarios for your players. Later in this section you will find scores of plot ideas – enough to keep your players in trouble for months.

PEOPLE

It is the characters and their interactions that will bring the plot to life. Of the three main types of conflict (hero vs. nature, hero vs. villain, hero vs. himself), pitting the players against Non-Player Characters is by far the easiest to write and referee.

Once you have chosen a plot, you should devote the bulk of your efforts to its characters.

Characterise: The major Non-Player Characters, especially allies and enemies, should appear as detailed as a player's character. You can best create this illusion by focusing on their motivations and appearance; while tempting, it is not necessary to generate characteristics and skills. A few

words in plain English suffice to note these traits ('Johnson is arrogant and greedy, and cracks his knuckles constantly'). Note the final 'tag characteristic' – the knuckle cracking – which helps to fix him in the players' memories and differentiate him from other Non-Player Characters.

Stereotype: Minor Non-Player Characters can be taken from a list of stock characters – such as the Burned-Out Cop, the Naive Rookie, the Criminal Mastermind, the Arrogant Pilot, or the Cynical Veteran. Watch any detective show or war movie and you will see a dozen of these (you can take notes during the movie if it helps).

Demonstrate: Do not tell the group what a Non-Player Character is like; show them. Do not say 'Smith is callous'. Instead, introduce him to the players by having him spurn a deserving beggar as they approach.

Recycle: Save yourself time by reusing Non-Player Characters. Recurring allies and villains, if not overdone, add greatly to the players' involvement and enjoyment. Minor Non-Player Characters can be renamed, given a new tag (Johnson the knuckle-cracker is now Kowalski, who is always talking about last night's sports coverage), and used again.

PLACES AND PROPS

It is tempting to spend a lot of time on these, but it is rare for a plot to depend on the location, or whether the villain uses a laser or a revolver. Use them as special effects to remind the adventurers that they are not on 20th century Earth.

One thing that is worth detailing is the players' base location – the place they call home, whether that is a starship, the Travellers' Aid Society hostel, or a cave system where they hide from ruthless Imperial troopers. It is also important to characterise Non-Player Characters who hang out in and around their base – the people the players may rely upon as employees or friends, suppliers of equipment, knowledge, and so forth.

THIRTY SIX DRAMATIC SITUATIONS

Thirty six situations are described below, which form a skeleton around which an adventure may be hung. Georges Polti identified these situations in 1921. They are not exhaustive, but the number does lend itself to random determination with two dice!

Each situation indicates the key characters or events and includes an example. Any reference to a character in this section may alternatively apply to a group of people. For example, a fugitive may be one person or a whole tribe of refugees.

You will need to decide how the players become involved in the situation. For a short adventure, playable in an evening, use just one situation; for a longer adventure, link several situations together using plot twists – see the sample adventure below for an example on how to do this.

To randomly determine each situation, roll two dice and cross-reference the results on the Random Situation Table, then find the entry in the list of 36 situations. Alternatively, simply choose one or more entries from the list below.

Random Situation Table

1D	1D					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	11	21	31	41	51	61
2	12	22	32	42	52	62
3	13	23	33	43	53	63
4	14	24	34	44	54	64
5	15	25	35	45	55	65
6	16	26	36	46	56	66

11: A Cry for Help

You need: Three characters – one who needs aid, one who can provide it (perhaps one of the players), and one threatening the first.

Example: Peasants ask the players to protect them against the annual visit of a corsair group.

12: Deliverance

You need: Two characters – a victim and a rescuer – and a threat (which might be a third character, natural disaster, etc.).

Example: One of the group's Non-Player Character followers is condemned to death for breaking a petty local law; the players must rescue him and flee offworld.

13: Revenge for a Crime

You need: Two characters – a perceived criminal and an avenger.

Example: Travellers abducted and murdered a local nobleman's daughter years ago, and he now revenges himself by harassing any travellers (perhaps the players) entering his domain.

14: Revenge for a Relative's Death

You need: Three living characters – the guilty party, the avenger, and someone who is a relative of both – and information about the dead person.

Example: The patron's mother died in an air/raft accident some months ago; he blames his estranged father for her death, and hires the players to embarrass or kill his father. However, during their investigations they encounter the patron's uncle, who has proof that the death was accidental.

15: Pursuit

You need: A fugitive character, and a punishment he is trying to escape.

Example: The patron is a fugitive who stows away on the players' ship to avoid execution for murder. If the players help him, he has information or skills of value to them, but they will be pursued by local police unless they can prove his innocence.

16: Disaster

You need: Two characters – the victim/loser, and either a victor or a messenger.

Example: The patron's children are missing after their air/raft crashed in dense jungle. The players must heroically overcome savage wildlife or natives, and rescue the children.

21: Cruelty or Misfortune

You need: An unfortunate victim, and either a misfortune or a cruel opponent.

Example: The players stumble upon an attempted murder, and rescue a naive young noble. Investigation will reveal that the noble is threatened by intrigue within his family, as an evil aunt is trying to kill him so that her own son may inherit the family estate.

22: Revolt

You need: Two characters – a tyrant and a conspirator against the tyrant.

Example: The players are recruited by freedom fighters seeking to overthrow a local warlord.

23: Daring Enterprise

You need: A goal, and two characters – a leader and an adversary.

Example: The players are a mercenary commando unit hired to destroy the surface sensors for a deep meson gun site, thus allowing their patron's fleet to attack the planet safely. Their adversaries are the installation's guards.

24: Abduction

You need: Three characters – a kidnapper, a victim, and a guard.

Example: The band are employed as bodyguards for an heiress. Brigands attempt to kidnap her for ransom.

25: Enigma

You need: A puzzle; someone to pose it; and someone trying to solve it.

Example: Marooned after their vehicle crashes, the players are captured by primitives who will kill them as trespassers unless they can solve a riddle set by the tribal shaman.

26: Obtaining

You need: A goal, and two or three characters – one trying to attain the goal, his adversary, and (optionally) an arbitrator to decide who wins.

Example: Faced with deportation for vagrancy, the players must plead their case before a magistrate against the legal official seeking to deport them. They must trick, bribe or otherwise persuade him to let them stay.

31: Feud

You need: Two characters, at least one of whom hates the other.

Example: The patron hires the players to discredit a hated sibling whom he feels stands to benefit unfairly from their parents' will; this will cause the family to change the will in the patron's favour.

32: Rivalry

You need: Two characters, and something or someone they both want.

Example: The patron has been jilted by his girlfriend, who prefers a mutual friend. Sure that he can regain her affection if he proves himself a warrior, he hires the players to attack the girl and her lover, humiliate them, and flee when he arrives to defend her.

33: Murderous Adultery

You need: Two adulterers and a betrayed spouse.

Example: The patron has discovered her husband with his mistress, and has killed them both in a fit of passion. Knowing one of the players, she appeals to them to cover up the murder and distract the police from her.

34: Madness

You need: A madman and their victim.

Example: The patron is being stalked by a madman for no apparent reason. The authorities are unwilling to act, as stalking itself is not a crime locally. The patron hires the players to protect her, and find out why she is being stalked.

35: Imprudence

You need: Someone to be imprudent; someone or something to be lost or destroyed as a result.

Example: Wandering into his father's laboratory, the patron has unleashed a dangerous animal which has killed his father and several neighbours. The band must hunt down this cunning predator and capture or kill it.

36: Involuntary Crimes of Love

You need: A lover, a beloved, and someone to reveal to them that their love is taboo.

Example: A noble wishes to marry, and the players are employed by his parents to investigate his fiancée's background to ensure that she is not simply marrying him for money. The investigation reveals that she is the noble's long-lost sister, raised as an orphan by traders who found her on a battlefield.

41: Involuntary Kinslaying

You need: A killer, and a close relative for him to kill.

Example: The party are aboard ship when the cargo bay is holed. To save the passengers, the captain orders it sealed off, but to his horror he learns that his son is still inside. Unable to leave the bridge, or reopen the doors without killing others, he appeals to the party to effect a rescue.

42: Sacrifice for an Ideal

You need: An ideal, the hero, and (optionally) someone or something for him to sacrifice instead of his own life.

Example: The players are in a government office when it is seized by terrorists, who threaten to kill everyone inside unless an official (responsible for the deaths of many of their comrades) surrenders himself to them. To save the innocent bystanders, the government agrees. The players must neutralise the terrorists before they can kill the official.

43: Sacrifice for Kin

You need: A hero, a kinsman to sacrifice for, and (optionally) someone or something for him to sacrifice instead of his own life.

Example: The players are the crew of the last ship taking refugees away from a war zone. A passenger offers to give up his place so that his pregnant sister can have it; the players must either think of a way to carry one more person than their life support is good for, or leave someone behind to face certain death.

44: Sacrifice for Passion

You need: A lover, the object of desire, and (optionally) someone or something for the lover to sacrifice instead of his own life.

Example: The patron is a priest of the local religion, prepared to forfeit position and career for the love of a crew member aboard the players' ship. He begs to be smuggled offworld. Unfortunately, this carries the death penalty for the priest and all who aid him.

45: Sacrificing a Loved One

You need: A hero, a beloved victim, and a reason for the sacrifice.

Example: Terrorists have seized the children of the local governor, and threaten to kill them unless he releases other terrorists from jail. The players must neutralise this threat as the governor cannot afford to be seen to give in to the terrorists.

46: Rivalry

You need: Two rivals (of equal or differing power/ability) and something they both want.

Example: The patron is one of two brothers whose father has recently died; each thinks he should inherit the family estates. The will favours the patron's brother, a suspected psionic; the band are hired to prove that he misused his alleged powers to have the will altered in his favour, which would render it void.

51: Adultery

You need: Two lovers, and a deceived spouse.

Example: The patron married for money, but is having an affair with a younger and better-looking partner. The players are hired to provide an alibi for the patron's absences from home.

52: Forbidden Love

You need: A lover, a beloved, and a reason why this love is forbidden.

Example: The patron suspects that her noble daughter is involved with a 'mere worker' – going against strict local tradition. She enlists the players to deter the worker from seeing the daughter.

53: A Loved One Dishonoured

You need: A guilty party, and one who discovers their dark secret.

Example: The patron is a senior official who suspects that his wife, an offworlder, is a spy who has married him to gain easy access to his homeworld. He hires the band to travel to her homeworld and check her history and parentage.

54: Obstacles to Love

You need: Two lovers, and an obstacle.

Example: An Non-Player Character wants to join the party, hoping to make enough money to marry his sweetheart, whose family insist he be "able to support her properly".

55: An Enemy Loved

You need: Two lovers who should be enemies; someone who hates one of them as the enemy.

Example: The patron is a police officer who has fallen in love with a member of a terrorist group he is infiltrating. His police superiors are laying a trap which will kill or capture the group. He hires the players to stop his loved one from reaching the rendezvous so that she will escape the trap.

56: Ambition

You need: An ambitious person; something he wants; an adversary.

Example: The patron is a rising executive in a megacorporation; he wants to take over the subsector office, and hires the players to find something he can use to blackmail or discredit the current subsector manager.

61: Conflict with an Immortal

You need: A mortal and an immortal.

Example: The players must make a trade agreement with low-tech natives. On arrival, they find that they cannot do so unless they convince the local priesthood that they are accepted by the local god. This requires the players to succeed in a number of ordeals.

62: Mistaken Jealousy

You need: A jealous person; someone for them to be jealous of (and a reason for it); the cause of the mistake.

Example: An arms merchant suggests to each of two neighbouring communities that the other plans an attack, to increase his sales. The merchant hires the players to escort his deliveries but they quickly realise neither community is aggressive.

63: Mistaken Judgement

You need: A mistaken person, guilty and innocent suspects, and the cause of the mistake.

Example: After criminals hide contraband in their luggage, the players are accused of smuggling.

64: Remorse

You need: A guilty party, a victim or a crime, and an investigator.

Example: The patron hires the players to find out what his recently-deceased father did with the missing family fortune. It transpires that the father was consumed with remorse for those he killed while in military service, and donated the money to charities helping the survivors.

65: Recovery of a Lost One

You need: A seeker, and someone to find.

Example: The patron hires the players to find an offworlder with whom she had an affair several years ago; her husband has since died and she is now free to re-marry. She can provide holograms of her lover and his last known location.

66: Losing Loved Ones

You need: A killer, a victim, and a witness.

Example: The players are requested to act as agents for a patron in a business deal with a rich client. The patron was

involved in the car accident which killed the client's daughter and thus dare not reveal his identity to the client.

PUTTING SITUATIONS TOGETHER

Imagine you want a scenario for a full day's gaming. You decide you need three linked plots and select dramatic situations 24, 52 and 65 – perhaps by dice, or maybe just because they look appropriate.

A Little Bit of Creativity

For the first situation – 24 – you need a kidnapper, a victim, and a guard. You decide to involve the players from the outset, so you make them the guards (one less Non-Player Character to work up, and more interesting for the players). You now need names and tags for the Non-Player Characters; the victim is Erica Turner, the daughter of a wealthy industrialist who has received several kidnap threats over the last few months; her tag is that she toys with a gold chain necklace. At this stage the kidnapper is a shadowy figure and we need not detail him.

Your middle situation is 52, and requires two lovers, and a reason why their love is forbidden. You also need a plot twist to switch the action to this new track. One of the Non-Player Characters must provide the link from 24, and the only one we have detailed is Erica, so it must be her. On a whim, we decide the second lover is the kidnapper we did not flesh out earlier, and the plot twist is that Erica and her boyfriend are behind the kidnap threats.

We now need a boyfriend and a reason for their love to be forbidden. Picking a name out of the air, we decide he is Simon Van Nostrand, has a spider web tattoo around his left eye (the tag), and has been forbidden to see Erica by her father, Gabriel Turner, as he is 'not our sort of people'. Erica and Simon have hatched a plot to elope, using the ransom money from the kidnap. We give Gabriel an overbearing manner and a short moustache while we are at it.

Considering the story so far, it is likely that Gabriel hires the players rather than Erica. To be fair to the players, you should drop hints about Simon while working through the first situation; perhaps Gabriel smashes a portrait of Simon, causing Erica to break into tears.

For your third act – 65 – you need a seeker and someone to find; and a plot twist to link it to the previous act. To save time, you decide that the seeker and his or her target will be two of the three Non-Player Characters you've worked out

so far, which suggests your plot twist; The third Non-Player Character is killed by one of these two. Note that you do not need to decide yet who lives and who dies – that can depend on the outcome of act 2.

Putting It All Together

So, Gabriel hires the players to guard Erica from the threatened kidnapping (situation 24). A hint about Simon's existence is dropped. After a couple of botched kidnap attempts, Erica disappears, and Gabriel is instructed to have the players deliver a ransom. While delivering it, the players somehow discover that the kidnapper is Simon; maybe they trail him, or maybe he leaves a clue (first plot twist, switch to situation 52).

The characters thus work out how to be present when Simon and Erica next meet. Unknown to them, Gabriel follows, and as the couple prepare to flee he attacks Simon. In the ensuing gun battle, one of the three Non-Player Characters is killed – let us say it is Simon; Erica denounces her father and flees (second plot twist, switch to situation 65). Gabriel now extends the players' contract to finding Erica and bringing her home, and what started as a day's adventure has the scope to extend to an entire campaign.

WHAT IF...

...It Doesn't Go To Plan?

This is why we minimise details, because the odds are the players will go off at a tangent; but since you have the characters, their motives, and the situations, you can react to the players' actions and still have a scenario that hangs together.

For instance, suppose the band shoot Simon in one of the botched kidnap attempts? Erica rushes to his side to help him; if he is injured, your first plot twist is just a bit early, that is all. If they kill him, the first twist is only a few seconds long, and the second follows almost at once as Erica flees in tears.

...The Scenario's Going Too Quickly?

Slow them down. Throw in random encounters, describe things in more detail, have the players arrested. Generally throw in a few complications to make them think.

...The Scenario's Going Too Slowly?

Speed them up. Yes, this sounds obvious, but some referees will let their players flounder too long – causing them to lose interest in the game. Eliminate random events and minor Non-Player Characters, describe less, and make the clues more obvious.



PATRONS

Patrons may be encountered by chance, by answering an advertisement, through mutual acquaintances or because they approach the players directly; whatever the opening, they have something they want the players to do...

P1. INTERNAL EXILE

Required Skills: Investigate, Admin, Advocate.

Required Equipment: Starship.

Players' Information: The players are hired by a close relative of a prisoner to try to find what has become of them. The prisoner was convicted of forging Imperial Currency and was sentenced to twenty years on an Imperial Prison Planet. Until recently, the relative has received regular letters from the prisoner, but over the last three months nothing has arrived.

Referee's Information: Enquiry at the Imperial Ministry of Justice confirms that the relative is held at a high security installation somewhere on the fringe of the Imperium, but no other details are forthcoming. With judicious use of their skills, the players should find the location of the criminal, who is held in an interdicted system. Any more details will require a visit to the system which will reveal:

1-2: The inmate has been very ill and could not write any letters for a month. Lags due to bureaucracy have caused the long period without contact. There is a good chance that the players can sweet-talk their way into meeting the convict at the facility while avoiding the fines or prosecution associated with visiting an interdicted system.

3: The criminal organised a protest at the prison over conditions and a riot ensued. At present, the prisoner is in solitary confinement so the Warden will not allow the players to meet him. However, they may be shown the video feed from his cell to prove he is well.

4: As 3, but the protest was entirely legitimate. The prison staff are redirecting much of the prison funds into their own pockets and get very jumpy if the players arrive asking questions. They will use any excuse to imprison nosy players ('entry to an interdicted system' and so on) who will then have the problem of escaping to tell the tale.

5: There are no prisoners alive. The prison staff are systematically executing the prisoners when they arrive, and

creaming off all the monies allocated to running the prison. No one has investigated before, as the minimum term for a prisoner here is two decades with no parole. Outside contact is only by letters, which are clever forgeries. Obviously, the staff will not want their dark little secret to escape with the players.

6: The prison is mining Lanthanum for the navy. Entering the system will provoke an aggressive response from the patrolling naval vessels who will try to board or destroy the players' ship. The characters' only real option is to run for jump if they have enough fuel, or hope that they can play hide and seek in a gas giant until they have refuelled.

P2. ORPHANS

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship (with at least 10 tons of available cargo space).

Players' Information: The players are contracted by a local system government to transport an important biological cargo to a nearby agricultural world (ideally the world has a captive government).

Referee's Information: The cargo comprises orphaned and abandoned children who are being shipped to the new world as part of a trade agreement between the two systems. They will become a cheap labour force for the colony agricultural world. The government will fit out the old as basic sleeping quarters, and also try to contract all the passenger space. Pay is at a premium rate. On both these worlds, this is not regarded as slavery but merely 'transference of legal responsibility' (should the players ask).

1-3: Whatever the legal situation, the players are effectively shipping slaves – presenting them with an ethical problem, followed by notoriety when offworld media gets hold of the story. However, the colony views the children as a valuable resource and looks after them well.

4-5: The escorts for the kids are brutal, and treat them badly. The players get the impression that this will continue, getting worse when they arrive at the destination.

6: The players' ship will be ambushed by pirates who have heard about the valuable cargo. They will not be happy to find the cargo is children.

P3. DOCTORS WITHOUT TRANSPORT

Required Skills: Astrogation, Pilot.

Required Equipment: Starship (with 2 staterooms and 2 tons of cargo space available).

Players' Information: While looking for speculative cargo, the players are approached by a rather worried-looking man who introduces himself as Dr. Usheglii, a medical researcher. A low-tech world 2-3 jumps away suffers from an endemic disease afflicting children and causing eventual blindness. Until now, the only treatment was expensive and required an offworld trip (to this world), something that most of the planet's inhabitants couldn't afford. Dr. Usheglii has discovered a cheap cure that can be manufactured locally, and wants transport for himself, a colleague and the prototype manufacturing facility.

Referee's Information: Unfortunately, the doctor cannot afford to pay standard charter rates, and appeals to the players' better natures to take him for free.

1: Dr. Usheglii and his colleague will work hard during the trip, doing whatever is asked of them (Dr. Usheglii turns out to be a gourmet cook). The people of the destination world are grateful and offer the whole party what rewards they can: perpetual trading rights, a hold full of valuable cargo, and the adulation of an entire world.

2: As above, except that there is little valuable cargo right now. The players will have to return after harvest to collect.

3: As 1, except that the megacorporation manufacturing the high-tech cure is not pleased. The players will be subject to low-level harassment – nothing disabling, merely minor annoyances, such as parts unavailable during their annual refit, a trade rival bidding up the price of a cargo, or a rumour about their safety record. The megacorporation is patient, and it never forgets.

4: As 1, except that the destination world's rulers use access to medical treatment as an easy way to reward their loyalists. They are not pleased that everyone now has access. The players may be welcomed by the people, but they are persona non grata with the government.

5: As 4, but the rift between government and people is deeper than the players realised. A revolution breaks out while they are dirtside, and they are stuck in the middle. They are regarded as genuine saviours of the people by the locals, but the government will use its military power to suppress the rebellion, including impounding and destroying the drug, threatening Usheglii, etc.

6: A combination of 3 and 4: The megacorporation and the government are in cahoots, exploiting the world with little concern for the population. Dr. Usheglii's colleague is a plant, who will sabotage the manufacturing machinery so that the treatment causes instant blindness. Riots ensue, whipped up by the government media. If the players can escape offworld their reputations will be ruined, unless they can find evidence to prove the complicity against them.

P4. DIED IN THE WOOL

Required Skills: Science, Medic.

Required Equipment: High tech medical equipment.

Players' Information: While taking a break on a low-tech pastoral world, the players are approached by a local woman who has heard of their reputation. Her father's groats are dying, and no one can tell why. Maybe the players, with their high-tech equipment, can discover the reason?

Referee's Information: Upon further investigation, it is not just this herd that is affected; everyone's groats are dying.

1: The groats are subject to a parasite with a long breeding cycle. The problem will naturally vanish in another few weeks, and remain dormant for 50-60 years.

2: The farmers have virtually exterminated most of the local predators. One of these predators, however, also eats a small burrowing rodent-like creature, which is acting as a disease reservoir. The farmers will have to choose between an endemic disease and allowing the predators to breed – resulting in future increased losses of groats to these hunters.

3: Local industrial interests want to expand into this region, but have been stopped by the farmers. They have introduced a tailored virus, planning on buying up the land at bankruptcy prices after the groats are dead.

4: The groats have been gene-tailored to live on this world. The adaptive genes have failed to breed true, resulting in allergic reactions to the pollen of a local tree with a long breeding cycle. The biotech company claims that any warranty has expired.

5: As 4, except that the genes have bred true but the tree was not planned for.

6: As 4, except that the genetic regression was planned as a product expiry method of ensuring repeat business. The company will offer a good deal on replacement breeding stock. If their machinations are revealed, they will be quite vengeful (and a biotech company has a lot of nasty tricks up its sleeve).

P5. ECCENTRIC CAPTAIN

Required Skills: Combat.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: While down on their luck the players are accosted by an eccentric-looking man, wearing a greatcoat and breeches with a parrot crouching on his shoulder. There is a nest of villainous infamy a few systems away, and he is looking for a few brave souls to help rid the world of a venomous plague. The players look like 'hearty lads, doughty, gallant, and up for a ripping adventure, shiver me timbers.' The players have encountered the notorious Sir Edwin Alpack, sixth captain of the *Brass Goat*.

Referee's Information: Depending on the players' skills, the plague could be a nest of pirates, an oppressive government, a world enslaved by a megacorporation, a poor world with a failed harvest, or an actual plague.

1: All is as it seems. Sir Edwin, while eccentric, is deadly serious. The need is real, time is short, and heroes are needed. Are the players up to it?

2: As 1, plus an amazing number of people owe the *Brass Goat* and her crew favours. If the players acquit themselves well, they receive an Imperial Pardon for just about any offence short of High Treason.

3: As 2, but the *Brass Goat* is really an undercover ship for Imperial Naval Intelligence.

4: As 1, plus the players have the opportunity to befriend a junior member of a cadet branch of the Imperial family, who will prove a valuable contact (or powerful enemy, if the players show cowardice during the venture).

5-6: The stories are true, the need is real, but this is an insane impostor rather than the real Sir Edwin. The players must cope with nutty ideas, a real emergency, and no secret backup.

P6. IMPERIAL NOBLE

Required Skills: Combat.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: The players are approached by a nondescript chap who invites them to a meeting where 'they will hear something to their advantage'. This proves to be at a rather exclusive club: the Irate Orangutan, where even the players' best attire is not quite good enough. Only the note and card from 'Captain Sir Hiroshi Amundsen (ret), SHE' gets them in the front door.

Referee's Information: The party meets with a rather debonair gentleman whose manner sets them at ease. Sir Hiroshi has obviously seen action, although he cannot talk about much of his service. 'Intelligence work, you understand. Not terribly dashing, but it must be done.'

Sir Hiroshi has an obsession. He believes, on the basis of reports he saw while in Naval Intelligence (INI), that a terrorist group are salvaging and deploying nuclear mines. This must be stopped for the good of the Imperium and the safety of innocent bystanders. He is recruiting for a freelance operation against these people. Note: If this plot is set in the Spinward Marches in the 1100s, the terrorists could be Ine Givar.

1: All is as it seems. Sir Hiroshi retired honourably, with more medals than he displays. He has considerable private resources, and can count on active support from INI when necessary.

2: As 1, except that INI will not assist civilians, even retired heroes.

3: As 1, except that Sir Hiroshi's private resources are fairly limited.

4: As 1, except that Sir Hiroshi has insufficient resources for his private war. He will expect the players to cheerfully pay their share, for honour and patriotism.

5: As 4, except that Sir Hiroshi is a crank. The whole adventure is a red herring. Imperial authorities will be unforgiving about offences committed and while Sir Hiroshi has considerable freedom as a noble, the players are fair game.

6: Sir Hiroshi is an Ine Givar agent, who hopes to use the players to trace lost war materials. Once recovered, they will be picked up by Ine Givar agents disguised as Imperial troops. The authorities will assume that the players are Ine Givar, unless they can prove their innocence.

P7. ARE YOU SEEING SPOTS?

Required Skills: Survival, Investigate.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: The party are approached by a woman asking them to help her rescue her brother on a nearby wilderness planet. He is a xenobiologist, and is overdue returning from his latest field study. Transportation will be provided if needed. She offers Cr. 10,000 plus reasonable expenses for her brother's return, or definitive news of his fate.

Referee's Information: The patron may wish to travel with the party on this expedition. The brother was studying a species of migratory ungulate.

1-2: The brother became lost in a very rugged region of the study area. He fell, breaking his leg in several places and wrecking his comm gear and emergency transponder. He is still alive, but barely. The party must find him based on sketchy clues in notes left at his base camp.

3: While following the herd the brother contracted a virulent fever and died. If the party find his remains they must each make an Average (+0) End check to avoid contracting the fever. The disease has a 1 week incubation period, a 2 week asymptomatic infectious stage and a 2-3 day acute stage. Left untreated, the acute stage will result in death unless the character makes a Formidable (-6) End check. During the infectious stage, the character has a 1 in 6 chance of infecting anyone with whom they have physical contact. The lethality and virulence can be modified at the referee's discretion.

4: The brother noticed an odd disease breaking out among the migratory herd. Upon investigation, he discovered that it was a tailored biological agent being surreptitiously tested by a biomedical company in advance of selling a more lethal agent. This will be marketed to an extra-Imperial client for use as a biowarfare weapon. He is still tracking the herd, hoping to discover the point of origin. Even testing such agents violates the Imperial Rules of War.

5: As 4, but the brother is on the run, hiding from mercenaries hired to provide security for the test. They will likely spot the party first. There are 8-20 mercenaries armed with small-arms and four grav cars mounted with machineguns.

6: As 5, but the disease also infects humans. It is harmless but produces patterned discoloration of the victim's skin – similar to leopard spots or zebra stripes. At the referee's discretion the effects may be temporary or permanent. The mercenaries have been vaccinated.

P8. MADE IN SYLEA?

Required Skills: Survival.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: The party are approached by a nervous, somewhat dishevelled man, who introduces himself as Dr. Alfred Ramirez. He says he has made a great discovery and needs to hire a discreet, competent group of people to help him recover certain items. He can only offer Cr. 2,000 right now, but assures the characters that they will share in the (potentially huge) profits from the trip, 50/50 with himself. The party will have to arrange transportation and equipment.

Referee's Information: Once agreed, Dr. Ramirez hands them a list of things to buy, and an additional Cr. 1,000 to cover these expenses. The list clearly indicates a wilderness expedition of some sort, several days long, at least. If any of the players are skilled in wilderness operations or survival, they will also note that some important items have been left off, and the doctor's money will cover the list only if they purchase the cheapest quality gear. Investigation will reveal that Dr. Ramirez is really Alfred von Stanich, a moderately well-known scientist in Ancient research. He has never made a significant find, and is regarded a somewhat of a crackpot.

1: While von Stanich will prove to be extremely irritating, clumsy and dangerous to himself and others in the field, he actually has made a significant find: an Ancient site with relatively well preserved buildings and a number of portable artefacts. At the referee's discretion, some of the artefacts can be in working order, for example; an ancient 'stapler' that fuses material into a single object, or a rounded object with several clear coloured bumps – pressing a bump causes a cone of bluish light to be emitted towards a nearby person or item, which then glows for several minutes before fading. Nothing else happens, but this should be enough to cause most players to have a mild coronary.

2-5: As 1, but the site is a carefully rigged practical joke, perpetrated by colleagues of von Stanich. Von Stanich will recognise the clues in a few days, and his friends will show themselves. The planet is a pleasant enough one, and has a small resort site on the opposite side from the site. The jokers will give the players coupons for 3 days lodging at the resort in return for their unwitting help.

6: As 1, but the site has been rigged by the well-known holoivid show Gotcha!. While the players and von Stanich excitedly explore the 'Ancient' site they are recorded by the hidden cameras. After a week or so, the holoivid show producers will reveal themselves, and the hoax, to the group. The footage will be edited down to the more hilarious and embarrassing moments, and the party and von Stanich will be studio guests when the studio segment is recorded. They will also be compensated by a week's first-class lodging at the resort on the far side of the planet (worth about Cr. 2,000 each) while the studio segment is recorded.

P9. IN THE EYE OF THE BEHOLDER

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: Someone claiming to be an agent for a reclusive art collector approaches the party. There is an auction of various paintings and other items later that week, and the patron wishes the group to attend and bid on her behalf. For personal reasons the agent cannot attend. The players are given a blank credit slip, made out to the auction

house, with the instructions that they are to bid on the painting 'Composition in Red and Gray #3' by Choksandra Hiirian, and are allowed to bid as high as Cr. 100,000 for the painting. The agent shakes his head at this, and tells the players that there's no way the bidding should go that high – Hiirian is a little-known artist, whose best price at auction previously has been Cr. 3,000.

Referee's Information: The players will be paid a flat Cr. 150 fee for the job, but the auction invitation also includes entrance to a black-tie charity dinner and dance. This will provide opportunities for making other, potentially more profitable high-ranking contacts. They are to transport the painting to the patron the next day once the auction house has verified the credit transfer.

1-2: The party can purchase the painting, which is actually quite ugly, for Cr. 950. Two useful contacts are made at the dinner however, which lead to other jobs – select another patron/plot from here or use a plot of your own.

3-4: There is somewhat spirited bidding for the painting, though the party are able to purchase it for Cr. 2,500. After the auction, the party overhear two other bidders saying 'something must be up with Hiirian, the old battleaxe wanted it pretty badly.' The party may infer that the people were talking about their patron. If the players investigate further, they will discover a small news item just in on the latest X-boat, mentioning an obscure artist who was killed unexpectedly, just as his paintings were starting to become popular. Of course any existing paintings will appreciate in value considerably. They may wish to hold out for more pay now they are in possession of the painting. The dinner leads to another valuable contact, as well.

5-6: There is considerably spirited bidding for the painting. The price goes up to Cr. 96,500 before the party succeed with the bid. This becomes the talk of the evening, and the party will find themselves the focus of much attention at the party and dinner. The painting, which on the surface is a mediocre example of recent art, is actually a stolen Picasso.

The thief blackmailed Hiirian into painting it over in an effort to hide it until such time as it could be offered on the black market. The patron is aware of the painting's true nature. Hiirian died recently and his widow is selling off his art collection. He was murdered by someone else who was looking for the stolen painting. The widow is unaware of the painting's value.

There are at least two other groups who were bidding for the painting. They will try to steal it from the auction house, or from the party or obtain it by other subterfuges. The party will be the targets of bribery offers, threats, and at the

referee's discretion, assaults. The rival groups may come to blows if they encounter each other. If the party involves the authorities, they may be caught up as conspirators in the original theft – as the patron will implicate them if pressed. If they examine the painting very carefully, they may become aware of its true nature.

P10. SI BARONI

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship (with 3 staterooms and 2 tons of cargo space available).

Players' Information: Just as the players are preparing to take off, they are ordered to stop their ship. A fast, expensive and richly appointed grav car approaches them across the starport landing pads. A local Baron, unknown to the players (but possibly in their library data), seeks passage urgently for himself, his aide, a bodyguard, and a 2 ton cargo container.

Referee's Information: If the players are so 'low' as to require payment, the Baron or his aide will assure them that they will be compensated when they arrive at their destination (which is on the players' stated route).

1: The Baron is totally legitimate and, upon arrival, will pay high passage rates for the staterooms and cargo space.

2: The Baron is legitimate but is also a criminal, fleeing this world with extremely valuable stolen religious icons. He fears the religious fanatics seeking the return of their icons.

3: As 2 but the Baron is an impostor, barely keeping one step ahead of the local authorities. System defence boats may attempt to intercept the players' ship before it jumps out. If the characters co-operate with the local authorities, the Baron and his retinue will draw concealed weapons (e.g. body pistols) and attempt to force the players to jump out of the system.

4: The Baron is a pirate. Once aboard, he and his retinue will attempt to disable the ship and hijack it, until their pirate friends can intercept them. The cargo containers hold two well-armed partners of the Baron.

5: The Baron is legitimate, but his cargo containers hold slaves, making him a criminal under Imperial law.

6: The Baron is actually a Zhodani! He will use his psionics to get aboard if the players resist him. He will attempt to take over the ship and travel to the nearest Consulate world. The cargo is valuable Imperial military equipment that he has stolen and is attempting to get to the Consulate, or at least out of Imperial space. (As an interesting twist, the cargo contains a very high-ranking Imperial military officer in cold sleep.)

P11. OVER THE HULLS AND FAR AWAY

Required Skills: Survival.

Required Equipment: Cold weather gear.

Players' Information: The party is hired to act as security/salvage assistants at the site of an epic, low orbit battle between raiders and Second Imperium system defence boats. The polar regions of a remote, frozen planet are carpeted with bits of fighting ship which a team (including the players) is to recover.

Referee's Information: Frostbite and other such dangers make the work hazardous (requiring protective clothing and appropriate precautions) but successful salvage work (e.g. employing mechanical or even intrusion skills) will amass a quantity of saleable souvenirs and artefacts.

1: The items salvaged will earn the party 2D x Cr. 1,000 in addition to their Cr. 100/day pay.

2: As 1, but the players also find an active low berth. If defrosted, this person could, plausibly, contest salvage rights for the whole fleet.

3: A member of the group the party are escorting wanders off to get a good picture of the site, and falls down a crevasse between two ships. The characters have to find him, stabilise his condition and get him out of the chasm, all before nightfall (just a few hours away).

4: As 3, but the photographer has fallen into an open missile magazine. Damage to the missiles might make them liable to explode or the warheads may be leaking radioactivity.

5: A combination of 2 and 3 – the casualty is badly injured and will only survive if placed in a low berth. The only berth available in time is that found at the site, requiring its current occupant to be revived.

6: As 1, but a fight develops between two of the party's employers over a choice artefact. The players have to intervene to prevent bloodshed!

P12. RUMBLE

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: The party is hired by a rich noble to ruin a party being held in a big, kitsch night-club in an unfashionable part of town. The adventurers are to make trouble, be obnoxious, trash the place and spoil everyone's evening. For shock effect they are issued capsules of stage blood (including the pink, bubbly kind), stink bombs and

small magnesium flares. They are being paid Cr. 50 each up-front, Cr. 50 more on completion. They have a contact number for a good lawyer if needed. Their employer will also pay all legal expenses.

Referee's Information: If the group needs extra encouragement, the patron will explain that he can 'square it with the law,' so there'll be no jail time, and the party will have no fines to pay.

1: The party ruins a perfectly good night out for the patron's ex-girlfriend and her mates. Referees should add fights and mayhem to taste.

2: The noble's target is a special guest at a private full-contact pro-celebrity mauling evening. The party could get flattened by bouncers, or they could find themselves in the ring...

3: As 1 or 2 except that, by an uncanny coincidence, the target happens to be a past friend of the characters. The proposed victim will try to get his old friends to do the dirty on their patron somehow.

4: The noble is a fraudster – he records the players' efforts using a concealed camera and submits the results to the local entertainment channel to be screened the next night. Over the end titles, the production company will solicit similar japes, offering Cr. 5,000 for each tape accepted. The players will be hunted down by the enraged party-goers.

5: The party are stooges, being used to cause a diversion, while the patron and his gang rob another night-club nearby. The characters will not get paid, will not get a lawyer and will be forced to explain why they caused so many police to be called away from regular patrols.

6: The patron is a rich psychopath who does not like foreigners. He is sending them to a very dangerous locale, confident that they will be hurt badly. He may decide to hang around and watch the results of his ploy (from a safe distance).

P13. EVERYONE'S A WINNER

Required Skills: Investigate.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: The party are retained by the Institute for Ethics, a charity with an abhorrence of gambling, to investigate the affairs of one Lucky Lucy, a publicity-seeking multiple lottery winner. It seems that she does not always buy a ticket, but wins whenever she does. This good fortune has made her into a local celebrity with her own confessional chat show, advice slot and range of non-fattening sofa-side snack foods.

1: Lucy is simply very lucky. Nothing else is going on at all. Her 100% success record is a perverse vindication of the laws of probability. Someone has to win and for no good reason at all, it is always her.

2: Lucy is a psionist, with an exotic talent that enables her to see the future. The gift is intermittent, hence her irregular gambling habits.

3: As 2, except that Lucy is unaware that she has psionic abilities. She buys tickets when 'she feels like it.'

4: Lucy is a good computer hacker and can falsify a winning entry for herself using valid security codes. She does this only irregularly to try to avoid suspicion.

5: Lucy works for the lottery operator. Trade has been slackening off and they needed a viewer-friendly gimmick to help sales. All the money she wins is distributed among the planet's charities.

6: Lucy works for a local crime syndicate. The lottery is run by organised crime so, whenever there's a big pay-out, they rig it so Lucy wins, and take back the money.

P14. LOST MARBLES

Required Skills: Deception, Stealth.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: The strangest thing happened to the patron, a visiting diplomat, the other day. She was in the local museum of Galactic Culture, when a priceless exhibit – a marble frieze – spoke to her. It asked to be taken back to her homeworld which, it revealed, is its own 'home'. The piece in question is 5 metres long, 1 metre high and 10 centimetres thick. It weighs a couple of tons. The party is to steal it, then deliver it to her embassy.

1: The patron has contacts with art smugglers, is near the end of her career and could do with a bigger pension. She will accept the item, then sell it on. The stone did not talk to her – that is just a ruse to confuse the players.

2: As 1, but to cover her tracks, the patron will arrange for the party to be filmed leaving the embassy, doctoring the record to make it seem she refused delivery.

3: The frieze is a solid-state audio recorder with a genetically-keyed playback mode. It recognised the patron's DNA as similar to that of the old ruling house of its homeworld and sent her its recognition code. The piece has hung in the museum for over one hundred years. Some of its stored data might actually be interesting.

4: This government of this world has, for some time, been chafing for a war with the patron's homeworld. They have selected her as a good way to manufacture a pretext. A sophisticated loud-speaker projected a sound so that it appeared to come from the statue. When the party break in they will be followed and then arrested during the hand-over, involving the embassy in a major diplomatic incident.

5: The patron's superiors are testing her sanity, using a loud-speaker as per 4. Once the party accept the commission, they will be contacted by embassy liaison staff, asked to swear an affidavit detailing the patron's request, and paid off.

6: The diplomat heard nothing. She is simply lying and pretending to be soft in the head so that her own people will begin agitating for the return of their heritage. Resorting to hiring mercenaries to steal for her will be presented as further evidence of how upset she was by the vision of national treasures in a foreign museum.

P15. THE PEASANTS ARE REVOLTING

Required Skills: Combat.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: The patron (a noble in exile) hires the party to be part of a combat team dedicated to 'freeing my simple people from the evil revolutionaries.' They will be dropped in the first echelon of an assault task force to retake his 'oppressed world'.

The players are tasked with seizing and holding a strategic bridge against all comers. TL9 equipment will be provided – cloth armour with a reflex liner, helmets, assault rifles, six spare magazines, RAM grenades, communicators and first aid gear. Any demolitions-qualified characters will get mines and explosives; any heavy weapons troops will get a single-shot anti-tank missile. The patron will even throw in a sniper rifle.

1: The party should be able to land, take the objective and hold it successfully against a shower of teachers and social workers armed with shotguns, crossbows and pipe-bombs. The patron is so happy that the party is recruited to continue work on the planet as counter-insurgency specialists (i.e. a death squad).

2: As 1, but the party are welcomed by local people who take shelter on the bridge to escape the revolutionaries.

3: As either 1 or 2 but just before the drop, the party are issued with cheap bullpup rifles, mouldy webbing, flak jackets without inserts, nylon helmets and two magazines each. Neither apology nor explanation is given and the party is forced into the drop vehicle by the threat of decompressing the ship.

4: The party is faced by twice their number of troops, just as well equipped as they are, who also have fire support from a light mortar. These opponents show no intention of making a frontal assault – they are waiting for the tanks to arrive...

5: The party, equipped as in 3, face small numbers of rebels equipped with much better high tech weapons and armour.

6: As 1, but the party face an inexhaustible supply of teachers and social workers. When they are on their last magazines, then three times their number of Revolutionary Guards, with equivalent tech equipment, will attack them.

P16. HAPPY FAMILIES

Required Skills: Survival.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: New Horizons Entertainment (NHE) hires the party to provide security for the popular show Family Conflict Safari. The idea is simple: take two really repulsive, dysfunctional families from the slums, fly them to a wild, photogenic world, then sit back and watch the fur fly. The adventurers are along to make sure that no-one actually dies and that no rival company wrecks the production.

Referee's Information: The players can use shock sticks on the families and rifles against the local wildlife.

1: Infuriatingly, the families get on really well and have a great, relaxing holiday together. Their respective sons and daughters fall in love and decide to marry when they return home. This will not make good entertainment at all, so the party is ordered to spoil things for them.

2: As 1, but the families are working for Interstellar Love Stories (ILS), which slipped the participants past NHE. ILS is covertly filming everything (using miniature video bugs and long range cameras) for a heart-warming exclusive. The party will know that NHE pays a bounty for beating up ILS employees.

3: The families hate each other. All the party have to do is break up fights and make sure that the sound technician records all the swearing.

4: As 3, except that two parents, one from each family, develop a sudden romantic attraction which causes even further conflict.

5: As 3, but one or both angry families decide to escape into the bush. The party have to round 'em up and rope 'em in, a job complicated by the presence of really nasty local predators.

6: Select any of 1-5 and add the spawning season for a small carnivore, hordes of which overrun the entire region.

These creatures will lay eggs everywhere and then eat until their legs do not touch the ground any more, so that their offspring will have nourishment when they hatch.

P17. AND WHAT DO YOU DO?

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: The players have been arrested (perhaps during one of the other patron adventures from this book). The local court system instructs the adventurers that they can work off their sentence by posing as locals during a walkabout by the King. The players are given cheap local clothes, lessons in chanting and flags to wave. An especially cute adventurer will get to give the monarch a bouquet.

Referee's Information: It's so obvious to the magistrate that he might forget to mention it (referee's whim) but, on no account must the King discover that the crowd are not his adoring subjects. The people on this planet really hate their ruler, whom they blame for the oppressive civil service. Their monarch does not know this. Indeed, he thinks they love him, so goes amongst the commoners at every opportunity. To prevent unpleasantness, the security police trap the inhabitants in their housing estates whenever the King comes to town and recruit offworlders as the adoring masses.

1: The King takes his time and talks to lots of people, including the character whose player most enjoys character interactions.

2: There are locals present – bomb throwing anarchists. They attack the King as he comes level with the party but he survives. As bona fide foreigners, the party will do as suspects, unless they can prove otherwise. His majesty will conduct the interviews in person.

3: As 2, but the party has the chance to intervene and save the monarch. This heroism wins his favour – for several days, at least.

4: The King takes a fancy to one of the characters (the one with the bouquet if possible). He will not walk on, and keeps asking how such an interesting person has escaped his notice previously.

5: As 1 or 4, but after the character has successfully disguised his foreign origins, the walkabout turns into an all-out republican riot, as the common people overpower the police and swarm onto the streets. They do not appreciate the offworlders masquerading as locals.

6: As 5, except that the party is so convincing as locals that no one believes they are not. Being so close to the King at the moment that trouble flared makes popular heroes of them.

P18. EXTRADITION

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship (with at least 1 low berth and 1 stateroom available).

Players' Information: The party are contacted by an agent of the local law enforcement agency who explains that they have finally captured the long-hunted leader of a rogue/pirate band. They need to take the prisoner to a nearby system for extradition, as per the legal agreement of co-enforcement of Imperial law. The agent wants to rent two staterooms on the vessel, one for the prisoner and one for the agents to guard him. They will consider a low berth for the prisoner if one is available and there is a certified medical doctor aboard the ship.

Referee's Information: The officials do not want the man on planet for any longer than absolutely necessary, since he has friends in low places everywhere and they will quickly hear of the capture. The agents are making a big display of putting the man on a government ship, but secretly arranging to use the party's vessel for the transport. The skill and the attitudes of the guards should be modified as needed, but they will not allow themselves to be disarmed.

1: The prisoner is a political prisoner, not a pirate as the officials claim. One of the characters recognises the person as originating from their own homeworld and needs to decide if and when to take action to free him.

2: As 1, but the officials on the first world do not want the prisoner to arrive at the second world. The guards have orders to throw the prisoner out of an airlock while in jump and then blame the party for the prisoner's 'escape'.

3: The criminal is truly an evil individual, and was personally responsible for killing the family or friends of one of the players. That character now has the chance to take the revenge which they have been seeking for many years. The guards will lose their jobs if anything happens to the prisoner, and may face criminal charges as well.

4: The prisoner is actually an agent for an enemy government; the piracy charges are a cover story. Unknown to the guards, the prisoner has weak psionic powers and will use telepathy and other similar skills to intimidate, charm and coerce the guards or players to secure his escape.

5: While the prisoner is stored in cryogenic sleep, the low berth experiences a malfunction. Alarms sound and the party are forced to remove the man from cryogenic sleep during jump for emergency medical measures to keep him alive. The guards have no medical knowledge and believe this is a ploy to free the prisoner.

6: The guards have been replaced by the prisoner's henchmen. Once the ship enters jump space, the 'guards' will attack the crew in an attempt to hijack the vessel.

P19. AN ANDROID'S LEARNING CURVE

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship (with 1 stateroom available).

Players' Information: Several members of the starship crew are outside the vessel working on repairs and/or organising the loading of cargo, when they are approached by a man obviously attempting to be in disguise. He carries two metal briefcases. He looks about nervously and asks if he could arrange for immediate passage off planet. He will appear unduly anxious to get aboard the ship and discuss the arrangement further in private.

He asks if any of the items in one briefcase are valuable enough to trade for the purchase price of his ticket, and displays a collection of electronic tools, which players with knowledge of electronics or trading skills can value at about Cr. 100,000. He seems to have no idea of the value of the tools, and will gladly agree to provide the entire case as payment. Once he has arranged passage, he will be content to go to his room and wait.

Referee's Information: The lone passenger is a prototype of an advanced android design. He has escaped the laboratory and wants to get as far from his creators as possible. He never asks about the destination of the vessel, since only the distance travelled is important to him.

The party may determine over time that he is not truly human, as his programmed information database is still limited. The android is quite human looking and has an extensive vocabulary. He is not truly artificially intelligent, but his learning potential is quite advanced. He is designed to mix with humans without detection, and so he eats and drinks without hesitation. He is not affected by any spice or liquor. He will observe a strict schedule as to when he 'sleeps' to attempt to blend in as human.

1: The android is designed to replace humans working in hazardous areas. He was not fully programmed at the time of his escape. He was not trained to lie, so careful questioning reveals his nature. He will not harm the crew, as he is restrained by the three Imperial laws of robotics; do no harm to sentient creatures, allow no harm to come to sentient creatures by inaction, and allow no harm to come to self, unless it would violate the previous two laws. He simply seeks to escape his captors at the lab.

2: As 1, but the android did receive a moderate level of programming in mechanical and electronics skills. He is willing to work on any task the crew requests, but he will not volunteer this fact unless specifically asked. His work will be slow but near perfect.

3: As 2, but the android's skills are in starship engineering and gravitics.

4: The android is designed to be an infiltrator, and has been trained to avoid all attempts to reveal this. He is still restricted by the laws of robotics (listed in 1), but will deny he is anything other than a human. He has no information to offer, as his database is not intact. If anyone asks a leading question, he will use the information and store it for future use (e.g. the question 'Do you work in a factory?' will lead him to respond; 'Yes, a factory.'). If his identity is discovered he will attempt to escape. If this is while the vessel is in space, he will put on a vacc suit (to maintain his human charade) and hide in an airlock. If anyone finds him here he will open the outer hatch to prevent the inside one being opened.

5: The android is an assassin, designed by terrorists. He was not fully programmed at the time of his escape and was not trained to lie, so careful questioning by the crew will reveal his nature. He will not harm the crew, since his combat and assassination programs were not installed when he escaped. (He does not, of course, have the laws of robotics installed.)

6: As 5, but he was programmed with a variety of combat skills. He will attack only in self defence, using whatever weapons come to hand.

P20. INTELLIGENT SHRUBBERY?

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship (with 2 staterooms available).

Players' Information: While grounded the party hears rumours about a ship recently being confiscated by the authorities on suspicion of illegally transporting aliens. Soon after, they are contacted by a small, mousy-looking older man asking if he can arrange immediate passage off world, with two staterooms. He is willing to pay the cost of a high passage ticket for each room to secure a berth on the vessel. He stresses it must be prepared to leave as soon as he arrives.

Once the agreement is reached, he will arrive at the vessel within minutes. He hurries aboard, dragging an old worn suitcase behind him. His identification says he is a botanist and an Imperial citizen. A second man in a cargo handler's uniform pushes a handcart nearly completely obscured by a large bushy plant. The older man tells the crew that the

cargo handler needs to know which stateroom can provide the necessary light for the plant. The players may notice that although there is no breeze, the plant rustles. If they ask any questions about the plant, he says it has been tended by his family for centuries and he will not be parted from it. He seems to dote on it, checking on it frequently during the flight.

Referee's Information: This weak little man is willing to negotiate up to twice the original price to get off the planet quickly. He is a slaver, and the plant is his captive, subdued using a special drug. The plant is actually a member of a minor race known as the Inleee, a race of intelligent plants. The plants communicate by psionics, but since they are telepathic and they know the Imperials fear psionics, they usually communicate by an elaborate sign language. Although drugged, the Inleee will initially try to communicate with the players (the rustling noted earlier). The specific creature being brought aboard the vessel happens to be an ambassador from a nearby Inleee homeworld. The slaver has to re-dose the Inleee with the narcotic drug at least once a day during jump.

1: Planetary officials are searching for the Inleee diplomat. The vessel will be boarded by customs for a routine but cursory inspection in which the plant's true nature is overlooked. (If the players are carrying any contraband, the officials can be bribed to look the other way for Cr. 10,000.)

2: As 1, but any contraband other than the plant will be discovered and the crew will be arrested (the officials cannot be bribed). If the ship has no contraband, they will be cleared to go.

3: Once in jump space, the ship becomes infested with insects that were residing on the plant. The insects bite, causing no damage but much irritation. Prior to landing on any world, they will be forced to enter a short quarantine while the vessel and crew are cleaned of these pests, at a cost of 1D x Cr. 1,000. If the players attempt to blame the botanist, he will offer them a bribe of 1D x Cr. 10,000.

4: As 3, but the insect bites will cause sickness and disorientation.

5: The slaver has used too low a dosage of the narcotic drug and the half-drugged Inleee begins to transmit strange dreams telepathically. These will not harm anyone, but provide hours of unusual experiences for the players during jump. The botanist will be able to increase the dosage once he is made aware of the problem, but this will require several hours to take effect.

6: As 5, but the dreams are terrifying nightmares.

P21. SMUGGLING AT GUNPOINT

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship (with at least 3 tons of available cargo space).

Players' Information: The party is contacted by a man who needs to make an appointment on the moon of a nearby gas giant within the next few hours. He is in a hurry and will pay up to Cr200,000 for the charter of a small vessel. He will provide an ID showing he works for Mychanni Imports. He wears business clothes and carries a large briefcase. He carries no weapons.

Referee's Information: The man is a plant for a group of smugglers who have contraband and stolen cargo waiting for transportation by a civilian vessel. Roll 1D to determine the type of goods.

- 1 – Illegal, unapproved, pharmaceuticals.
- 2 – Slaves (a minor race from a nearby system).
- 3 – Stolen goods.
- 4 – Cargo discovered by the pirates from a vessel which crashed on the moon.
- 5 – Cargo legal elsewhere but illegal due to local customs (e.g. alcohol).
- 6 – Nuclear and/or biological weapons.

They will take the vessel over by force once the cover of the business deal is blown. The crew will be forced to defend the vessel and should be captured. Once the crew is captured, they will be forced at gunpoint to attempt to smuggle the goods to the next system.

1: A customs team will inspect the ship before it is allowed to land at the next world. A Deception check and Cr. 1,000 will allow the inspection to be waived.

2: As 1, but the fee is Cr. 10,000.

3: As 1, but the customs officers cannot be bribed – the cargo must be hidden or disguised to avoid its discovery and ensuing arrest of the crew.

4: On landing, the ship is raided by customs officers backed by the local military, who have been tipped off by an informant about the cargo. The assault group will use lethal force unless the party surrenders. The smugglers will fight until half of them are killed. Arrest is inevitable and will lead to imprisonment and the loss of their ship.

5: Pirates attack the ship for its cargo, having been tipped off by an informant. The attackers have a small vessel and would prefer to catch the party on the ground.

6: As 5, but the vessel is a corsair, capable of destroying the players' ship.

P22. RACE AGAINST TIME

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship (with 1 stateroom available).

Players' Information: The party are dirtside on a remote planet with infrequent space traffic. A woman dressed in unusual clothes and covered in dust approaches the players and offers them Cr. 30,000 to take her to the neighbouring system as soon as possible. In order to make her deadline, she must leave immediately. She carries a single large carry-bag and apparently no other luggage.

Referee's Information: The woman is an archaeologist working at a remote dig. She has just received a notification that the legal dispute about her parents' last will has finally been resolved. There is a catch: she must arrive in the city of their birth within the next 9 days in order to claim her inheritance. If she does not appear in time, she will lose the entire inheritance to the local government. This legal battle has been going on for years, and the attorney in charge sent her a notice to appear over three months ago. Due to her remote location the message was held at the starport until she returned for supplies and she received it an hour before she met the party. Her inheritance is worth nearly MCr. 5 and she will not hesitate to increase the passage price until she gets an agreement. The adventure should revolve around both the regular and unusual delays experienced by normal merchant vessels. Each time a choice has to be made, the question is whether the cost is worth it?

1: There is a Cr. 1500 fine for filing a flight plan less than 12 hours before leaving the starport. She will reluctantly agree to pay it if the issue is negotiated well.

2: Customs still has to search the vessel and verify passports. If approached incorrectly, the customs agent may suspect they are attempting to hide contraband and delay the ship's departure for 5-10 hours for a more detailed search.

3: A serious storm is building and all vessels have been told to plan on delaying departure. Leaving now is hazardous, but the starport will not require ships to remain on planet. The storm is expected to last 10-20 hours. Departure requires several Pilot rolls for the vessel to depart safely. Failure of any task roll will cause minor damage to the vessel's exterior hull fittings due to wind-blown debris buffeting the ship.

4: Several minor mechanical problems have not been repaired at this time (e.g. the life support air filters have not been replaced yet, and if the vessel leaves before they receive the new filters, the new flight will be a rather smelly one).

5: The power governor for the artificial gravity plates in the vessel is malfunctioning. Safety protocols require the governor be turned to minimum settings to remove any potential hazard to crew and passenger safety. This means

that the entire flight will have to be completed in less than 0.2 standard gravities. This will make things interesting for a crew used to having full gravity during flights.

6: Use both 4 and 5 for a really bad space travel experience.

P23. A SCANDAL IN THE DARK

Required Skills: Pilot, Astrogation.

Required Equipment: Starship, preferably a Scout Courier (with 1 stateroom and 1 ton cargo space available).

Players' Information: Dovin Meriss, a historian from a world in the next subsector, contacts the party. His world has recently overthrown a totalitarian government, and is trying the most brutal members of the old regime for an assortment of crimes against humanity. Meriss believes that he can reconstruct many events by overtaking radio signals from the world's communications net, which will provide much needed testimony at the trials. He will pay standard rates for a 2-4 month charter, as well as the cost of installing and removing an enhanced passive sensor suite. The players may keep the sensors if desired, instead of the charter fee.

Referee's Information: The ship will be unstreamlined while the suite is installed.

1: The charter lasts 2-4 months during which the party catch up on a lot of reading.

2: As 1, except that Meriss is a proselytising revolutionary, and the characters will be subjected to lectures on the historical dialectic of *laisse-faire* capitalism and the inevitable triumph of Marxist-Freidmanism.

3: As 1, except that Meriss is fabricating his evidence. On a difficult task roll the navigator notices that the signals Meriss claims to be picking up in one system should be blocked by radio interference from a nearby gas giant. source. The government is guilty as accused, but the recordings Meriss is using come from a former member of the regime who changed sides when she discovered the atrocities. The deception is to protect this person.

4: As 2 and 3 combined together.

5: Real signals are being received, but they also indicate that a high-profile secret supporter of the revolution is a turncoat politician with just as much blood on his hands as his compatriots. Political considerations call for the suppression of this evidence (unless the players decide otherwise).

6: As 5, except that Meriss decides that suppression of the evidence includes wiping out all witnesses, i.e. the players.

P24. A SCENT OF PROFIT

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: The party are approached at or near the starport by a woman dressed in fairly good quality local clothes. She explains that she works for a local Cosmetics Laboratory, which is looking to export some of its scents offworld. She is doing market testing to determine whether the scents appeal only to the local population, or if they smell good to offworlders too. She offers the characters Cr10 each for up to an hour of their time, to take part in one of these tests.

Referee's Information: The tests will take 30 + (1D x 5) minutes – roll separately for each player. People wearing white coats will carry them out in a professional manner, and the characters will be kept separate from each other to prevent their reactions from influencing each other. The referee can either determine an outcome for the whole group or roll for each character individually.

1-2: The perfume smells pleasant, but nothing special to the players.

3-4: As 1-2, but local people find the smell very pleasant. The players gain DM+1 to any Deception or Persuade checks for the next 2 hours or until they wash it off.

5: The perfume samples are actually a biowar agent and antidote. Characters failing an Average (+0) End check will become unwell for 1D days, but then recover. Depending upon the players' reactions, the perfume company might offer compensation, or the party might take legal action. It is possible the experiments were sanctioned by the local government. If the players get too suspicious the perfume company may decide they need to be silenced...

6: The perfume samples are actually knockout drops. Characters failing a Formidable (-6) End check will fall unconscious for 1D hours. The players may be robbed or even shanghaied aboard a ship.

P25. COMPENSATION CULTURE

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship (with 1 stateroom available).

Players' Information: After the party post their ship's next destination, they are approached by Hin Chaudry, a Darrian. He is a tall, thin man, with greyish tan skin and white hair. He explains that he was sacked from his job as gunner aboard a Jameson Lines freighter, and he is seeking compensation from the company. Unfortunately, the hearing

has been arranged at the Jameson Lines local HQ, which is at the party's next stop. He cannot afford more than a low passage, but asks the characters if he can work passage or travel middle passage on credit. If he wins the case, he will repay them Cr. 5,000 for working passage or Cr. 10,000 for middle passage.

1: Hin Chaudry was dismissed for incompetence after drawing official attention to a Jameson Lines ship engaged in minor smuggling. The tribunal will award him Cr. 46,000 (a year's salary plus expenses and compensation). He will pay the party immediately.

2: As 1, except the tribunal finds Hin Chaudry was dismissed without notice, but otherwise fairly. It awards him only Cr. 6,000. He begs the characters to reduce what he owes them.

3: As 1, except the tribunal finds Hin Chaudry was dismissed fairly. He cannot pay the party.

4: As 1, except Hin Chaudry lies to the party and says he was awarded only Cr. 6,000. He begs them to reduce what he owes them.

5: As 1, but Hin Chaudry's case is for unfair dismissal on grounds of his race, and the judge awards Cr. 100,000. He will pay the party an additional 1D x Cr. 1,000 on top of what he owes them.

6: Hin Chaudry is a serial litigant, who makes a living out of claiming compensation. He will seek to find fault with the party aboard ship, and will do his best to record any incidents of unfair or prejudicial treatment. If he can, he will bring a case against them.

P26. RED ROSES FOR A BLUE-BLOODED LADY

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship.

Players' Information: The party are approached by a young man who introduces himself as John Singh. He is First Officer of an Imperial Lines passenger ship, the *Horsehead Nebula*. The ship's flight plan will be taking him out of the subsector for a while, and he has half a dozen plants to deliver to a Lady Jen Teller on a nearby world. The old lady is fond of roses, he promised to send her any interesting ones he came across, and he thinks she'll like them. He offers a Cr. 100 honorarium to deliver the roses to Lady Teller, with his compliments.

Referee's Information: If the party check the posted route for the *Horsehead Nebula*, it will be consistent with John Singh's story.

1-2: The roses are all very similar, red roses. Lady Teller will be pleased to receive them and may offer them further employment (for example, see patron P27).

3: The roses all die of some terrible pest while in jump. There is no risk to human or other sophont life, but let the players worry... If the party dare to tell Lady Teller, she will be disappointed but will not hold it against them.

4: As 1-2, but John Singh is a distant cousin of Lady Teller, who will be thrilled at the roses, and tip the players an additional Cr. 50 for their trouble.

5: As 4, but the roses die as in 3. Lady Teller will be very upset, and will shoo the party out of the door, wondering aloud whether 'little Johnny was trying to insult her. If the characters remain long enough to tactfully tell her that John Singh's present was genuine, or to try to take the blame for the dead roses, Lady Teller will cheer up.

6: Lady Teller is a former geneticist and a sociopath. She hopes to engineer strains of the rose to carry diseases or give off dangerous chemicals. The local police are watching her, and anyone becoming associated with her will also attract their suspicion. The players will find themselves being trailed until they leave the planet (and possibly next time they land here too).

P27. A ROSE BY ANY OTHER NAME...

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: Lady Jen Teller is a wealthy botanist who collects exotic flowers. She is always on the lookout for strains of Valentine's Rose. This flower, originally from Terra, was genetically reengineered during the Rule of Man, and spread throughout most of the Second Imperium. Since then, a number of variant strains have evolved and/or been geneered. Most variants of Valentine's Rose are red, and Lady Teller is particularly keen to find the yellow variety also known as Tex's Rose. She will pay Cr. 25 for good documentary evidence of a possible strain of Valentine's Rose, Cr. 50 for a living specimen of the rose, Cr. 1,000 for a specimen of a strain she has not got and Cr. 5,000 for a living Tex's Rose.

Referee's Information: Lady Teller ('But you must call me Jen, of course!') is what might be called an occasional patron. She will be happy to receive pictures of roses via x-boat transmission, and will pay up automatically, but samples will need to be delivered by hand as and when the players drop in-system. Whether Tex's Rose exists at all, and if so where it may be found, is for the referee to determine.

1-2: Lady Teller is a Baroness and has some influence with the local authorities, and may be a good person to know.

3: Lady Teller is delusional: she is not a noble, and she has only Cr. 2,000 in savings to spend on flowers.

4-5: As 1-2, except Lady Teller is also a sociologist, and is trying to follow up work done at the Imperial University of Sylea by Dr Shaliin Ap. The Cr. 25 for documentary evidence is her way of getting fieldwork on the spread of Valentine's Rose done cheaply.

6: Lady Teller is a former geneticist and a sociopath. She hopes to engineer strains of the rose to carry diseases or give off dangerous chemicals. The local police are watching her, and anyone becoming associated with her will also be treated with suspicion.

P28. HONEYMOON

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship (with 1 stateroom available).

Players' Information: The characters are approached by a man and a woman at the starport. The couple say they were due to start their honeymoon but their liner is three days late already. They ask the party to transport them either to their first destination (2 jumps) or, if that is not possible, an office of the cruise line (1 jump). Most of their spare money went on their honeymoon tickets, but they are willing to pay Cr. 10,000 per jump for the two of them to share a stateroom, middle passage.

1: A noble and his aide bumped the couple's middle passage reservations at the last minute and the liner no longer had a reason to call at the world. The couple are somewhat self-absorbed, and blissfully happy. They leave the ship at the agreed destination.

2-3: The couple are actually emigrating from their rather dull homeworld. Neither of them wishes to risk losing the other by taking low passage, but they can barely afford Cr. 16,000 for two middle passage tickets. Whether they are married is anyone's guess. They leave the ship at the agreed destination.

4-5: The whole operation is a complex insurance scam. The couple will present a forged receipt for 2 high passages at their destination, claiming on their travel insurance and pocketing the difference. If they are discovered, the party may be charged with aiding them.

6: The "couple" are Imperial Bureau of Shipping (BuShip) agents, investigating complaints by Tukera Lines that independent operators are illegally undercutting standard Imperial rates. If the characters accept the deal, they will be fined Cr. 50,000 for a first offence and formally cautioned.

P29. SPARE PARTS

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship (with 1 stateroom and 10 tons cargo space available).

Players' Information: The group are approached by a businessman, Ishiima Unchoto, with a proposition. Ishiima has received notice that the Imperial Navy is selling off a surplus of inoperative MFF-10 mobile repair vehicles. The bulk of these will be purchased locally, but Ishiima has put down a substantial deposit on a vehicle with the idea that he will ship it to his homeworld a jump or two away) and use it to produce parts for imported offworld vehicles and visiting starships. He therefore wishes to hire the party to help him transport the MFF-10 to their ship, then take him and the vehicle to his homeworld. He will pay high passage for himself plus double standard cargo rates for the MFF-10 and room to work on it – approximately 10 displacement tons. He will accept middle passage if there is no steward aboard.

Referee's Information: The mobile repair vehicle is effectively a mobile TL10 factory. Collecting the vehicle will take four hours and require a flat-bed transporter, which can be hired for Cr. 500-1,000.

1-2: Ishiima will tinker with his new vehicle all through jump and it will be able to move under its own power on arrival. Crewmembers will be welcome to wander into the cargo bay and observe, although if they linger they will be asked to lend a hand.

3-4: As 1-2, except the repair vehicle produces pollutants which threaten to overload the ship's air recyclers and contaminate the filters. Figuring out how to modify the recyclers requires chemistry or starship engineering skills. If they are not modified, the repair vehicle will have to be either turned off (which Ishiima will argue against) or operated in vacuum. If Ishiima is unable to work on his vehicle, he will refuse to pay more than half the normal cargo rates. To work in vacuum is likely to be more of a nuisance than a hazard, but it will be slow. Ishiima will try to convince skilled players to help out; if necessary he is prepared to offer up to Cr. 50 per four-hour work duty.

5: Although Ishiima is a genuine merchant, he is also a smuggler; the raw material hoppers of the repair vehicle are filled with contraband. If he is detected by the authorities leaving the planet (roll law level or greater on 2D to avoid detection) he will destroy the contraband. If Ishiima is detected, the players will be fined Cr. 50 and detained for 1D days while their complicity in the smuggling is checked.

6: Ishiima is actually a desperate hijacker/terrorist, a member of the anti technology group called the Society for Human Responsibility. He will use the repair vehicle to

produce parts for an automatic weapon. He will wait until the ship is in jump, then attempt to hijack it. If successful, he will have the players land at an out-of-the-way spaceport, where fellow dissidents will march the players off the ship, board and jump out. They intend to attack a large starport on a nearby world.

P30. OL' BETSY NEEDS AN ALTERNATOR...

Required Skills: Pilot, Astrogration.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: The party is approached by a wealthy patron wishing them to ferry an antique starship for her. It is a partially restored Orrimot logistics ship. It is 373 years old, and has seen far, far better days. It is a 2500 ton, Jump-3, flying brick of a ship. The characters will need to hire additional engineers, as the engineering complement for this ship is 29! The patron will offer the party Cr. 100,000 for the safe delivery of the ship to her private orbital space, plus up to Cr. 100,000 fees for hiring more crew.

Referee's Information: This could be a journey of one or more jumps and could (if the referee desires) turn into a sizeable campaign. The ship will break down frequently, in the most inconvenient way possible, and parts will be extremely hard to come by.

The patron may decide to come along for the adventure. As a collector of antique starships, she has a different idea of 'annoying' and 'discomfort' than the players. She has never travelled on such a vessel before and will become greatly distressed at any damage the ship receives during the trip or due to jury-rigging. Her expectations are based upon advertising material in which lovingly restored antique ships are used to sell designer clothes and furnishings. Naturally, the professionally restored ships she has seen are all shiny, repaired and running properly.

1-2: The trip is reasonably uneventful. There are several minor, mostly annoying malfunctions.

3-4: There are several major malfunctions, requiring the party to jury-rig major subsystems during flight, such as the electronics or gravitics. Something may not be repairable, e.g. a failure in the gravity-generating hamster-cage main-bearing, which leaves half the ship in zero-g.

5: There are catastrophic systems failures during flight. The characters will need to jury-rig major subsystems, such as life-support, just to stay alive.

6: There is a misjump during the trip. This forces the party to either scrounge or manufacture parts for the jump drives. Additionally, since the antique ship's computer uses jump-

tapes for navigation, new tapes will have to be located or cut to fly it back from the new location. If the party takes too long in getting the ship to its destination, the patron may think that they have stolen the ship and alert the authorities.

P31. WE'RE LIKE IMPERIAL EXPRESS... ONLY CHEAPER

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship.

Players' Information: While scrounging for cargo in a backwater port, the party is approached by Irina Diishiiri with a proposition. She and a number of her extended family are starting an express packet and freight service in this subsector, which is ill-served by the megacorps. If the characters are willing to sign an agreement, they will be added as a carrier for the Shining Dragon JIT Packet Carriers, Ltd. What this gains the party is probable guaranteed full cargoes in most of the ports of the subsector, free brokerage service, 20-50 tons of available warehouse space in those ports for their own use, and the right to plaster the company logo on their ship.

Referee's Information: What the contract requires is that the character's ship carries at least four cargoes in a calendar year, at the company's discretion, and that they check in with the company when they arrive in port. Irina, along with her brothers and sisters are hoping that if they sign up enough free traders as contractors they will be able to have a ship available at just about any time. Costs will be essentially zero; warehouse space is cheap, and the 'free' brokerage service is, in reality, collecting cargoes for the company.

Irina is cut from the same mould as the rest of her family: small time wheelers and dealers, always working on some new 'guaranteed' money-making scheme. The import/export business is full of oddball characters and her family, it seems, have an above average selection of them. When the party arrive in a port, the Diishiiri family will always welcome them, invite them to dinner, get them to stay for a drink, and give them the sales pitch for whatever scheme that member of the family is hatching that week.

1-2: The SDJITPC is actually starting to thrive. The party will be guaranteed at least a threequarters full hold at each port they stop in, if they are willing to move on immediately, at a 10% premium to normal freight rates. If they wish to (or need to) stay in a port for a period, the company will generally find another ship to carry that load. Using SDJITPC as a broker service will possibly (2 in 6 chance) gain them a one-quarter full hold of cargo at standard rates. The referee can choose appropriate times at which to hold the players to one of their four promised trips a year. Some of the cargoes are definitely odd.

3-4: The company is not doing as well as expected, and the party will be rigorously held to the contract they signed; they may be forced fairly often to jump with less than a full hold, usually with extremely odd or dangerous cargoes of the 'live radioactive flesh-eating groats' variety. If they break their contract, they will make enemies of the family who will try to sue them. Since the family has contacts with officialdom and organised crime throughout the subsector, life in and around the subsector could become very difficult for the party.

5-6: Irina's family is using the network of free traders they are developing to form the basis of a smuggling ring. The group will not be asked to actively participate unless they hint to her or a member of the family that they are willing to. (The family will not bring the subject up first.) Initially, they will be used as cover – e.g. carrying a supposedly suspect cargo (in reality a legal cargo) to distract attention from genuine smuggling on another SDJITPC ship. If the authorities begin to suspect the company, the party's life may be made difficult. They may even be coerced into acting as undercover agents for the law enforcement agencies.

P32. I CAN GIVE YOU A PRESS CARD IF YOU WANT...

Required Skills: Investigate.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: The group is contacted by August Delirisso, who presents himself as an editor for the Alpha1 wire service. The party may have heard about the service; if so, they are aware that it is a lesser known one, which is usually attached to offbeat stories. August wishes to sign them on as reporters, paying per story that they may pick up in their travels. He will point them at various rumours, tips, or other leads to stories if they contact him before they go somewhere.

They need to get the facts to the story (preferably with evidence and accompanying vid or holo pictures) and get back to him in person (or post it via X-boat, if necessary). He will pay them depending on how widely the story is picked up by the various subscriber organisations, usually somewhere around Cr. 100-1,000, more for big scoops or stories.

Referee's Information: He cannot pay for their travel expenses, of course...

1: August particularly wants the 'National Enquirer' type stories of The Mutant Leeches that Ate My Face, K'Kree Meat Feast Shock!, paparazzi photos of celebrities, and suchlike. This gives the characters an excuse to go out and snoop around without raising undue suspicion, but may bring them unwanted notoriety.

2-3: As 1, but August partners the party occasionally with another of his regular reporters. On these occasions the characters get caught up in very odd adventures: strange happenings, murders and even (allegedly) supernatural events.

4-5: August is interested in a wide range of data. His service, while having a public front of the 'weird story' wire service, is primarily a collection agency for private subscriber-only databanks, covering a wide range of information. From time to time, particularly as the team gets to be known by Delirisso, they may be asked to undertake more directed covert investigations.

6: As above, but if the group proves resourceful, he asks them to undertake more blatant industrial espionage. He will pay considerably more for such data, and provide some of the specialised contacts and/or equipment they may need. Their cover, of course, is as reporters for the wire service.

P33. WE FIND THINGS FOR YOU

Required Skills: Investigate.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: The party is approached by a messenger who hands them a sealed infochip. When they read it, they find that it is an invitation to a wealthy noble's home. When they arrive, they are ushered into the noble's office suite – well-furnished, but well-used. The noble – a Baroness Guilthain – will greet them warmly, and introduce herself; 'Call me Alicia, Baroness Guilthain is for tiresome dinner parties.' Her family, she explains, lost all but their noble title due to a spendthrift ancestor. Her current wealth has been built up by her father and then by herself. Her company, Guilthain Recovery, specialises in recovering stolen or lost properties. She charges a flat 50% of the insured value of the item if recovered, otherwise there is no charge. She and her father have made their reputations with a number of high profile cases and, over the years, have developed an extensive intelligence network on just about any subject.

Referee's Information: Alicia wishes to contract the party as field agents, on either a part or full-time basis. Her deal with her field agents is reasonable: on any case, they get 25% of her fee, after expenses. Since some recovered items have been insured for millions of credits, this can be a lucrative deal. However, since they will also often be dealing with dangerous criminals (who stole these valuable items in the first place) it can be a very dangerous profession too. Her agents often have the co-operation of local law enforcement, but just as often they will have to work around, or even avoid, the local law. Example missions:

1: To recover three stolen Ver Grenshiki artworks from the home of the reclusive millionaire who bought them on the black market.

2: To return a rare LSP Black Arrow speeder stolen by one of the many local street gangs.

3: To locate the money which went missing when a mob money-launderer retired early.

4: To recover blackmail material being held by a local noble incriminating a local politician.

5: To find a Zapatian lizard, the pet of a rich noble. The lizard was lost in the starport several weeks back. It likes heat and will eventually be found in a building's warm air exhaust pipe.

6: As 2, but the lizard crawled into a crate of its favourite Crawlfruit and was shipped offworld. The players must follow the shipment to find the lizard.

P34. THE LOBSTER POT

Required Skills: Admin, Advocate.

Required Equipment: Starship (with at least 20 tons of cargo space available).

Players' Information: The party are approached by Eneri Branagh, a local trader representing the local fisherman's collective. He has established a unique deal that promises to improve the situation of the local populace.

Referee's Information: The planet is politically dominated by one of the Imperial megacorps, which set up an advanced power plant manufacturing and refurbishment complex. The local fishermen and farmers are trying to gain some financial independence from the corporation by establishing offworld trade links. The party will not be offered any other cargo (as the corporation favours its own ships). Eneri wants the party to take the ship to the coast where the fishermen will flood the hold and fill it full of local crustaceans which are a delicacy on a neighbouring world. The players will then ship Eneri and his shelled friends to the world, where they will have a market advantage over the traders who work for the corporation – their cargo will be live. He offers them half standard shipping rates, plus 25% of the profits. As this is a delicacy, the party stand to make double the usual profit, at least.

1-2: The players do indeed make at least twice the usual shipping profit on this cargo.

3-4: En route to the destination, a minor failure occurs (ventilation, grav fluctuations, iris valve opens and floods a section). Although not catastrophic, it temporarily threatens the safety of the cargo and/or crew.

5-6: The crustaceans are contaminated with radioactive heavy metals which have settled into the local mud banks following discharge from the megacorp's facilities. The ship is impounded at its destination and the cargo cannot be offloaded. If the corporation has contaminated the cargo, this is likely to kill the entire trade and the fishermen's livelihoods. Once the players have decided what to do with a flooded hold of unsellable lobster analogues, Eneri will ask them to return to his world to help him prove the megacorp's guilt and take it to court for compensation.

P35. MISPLACED GOODS

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship (with at least 10 tons cargo space available).

Player's Information: Whilst at the starport on a world close to a major naval base or depot, the players are approached by Commander Robert S. Anders, an Imperial Naval Officer. He offers a lucrative contract to transport on some goods three jumps from the naval facilities close by.

1: Everything is legitimate – there has been a mix up in naval shipping plans due to unexpected redeployment of the transport squadrons locally. Anders has been ordered to resolve the cargo capacity shortfall as quickly as possible, and has been chartering vessels with spare capacity. The party is being employed to transfer an Imperial fighter to its new base. The party will only learn this if they break into the single 10 ton crate.

2: As 1, but criminal elements in the depot's logistics section have leaked the transfer to smugglers who will try and hijack or pirate the ship to steal the multi-million credit fighter.

3: As 2, but the theft will be attempted by Zhodani elements seeking the high technology equipment on the fighter.

4: Commander Anders is corrupt; with the mix up in shipping plans for the navy he has decided to make some money by selling the fighter. The papers he gives the party are falsified, claiming that the crates contain "machine parts". Should the cargo be inspected, the players may face substantial prison sentences unless they can prove their innocence.

5: As 4, but Anders is upfront about the illegal nature of the work, and will offer the party a small percentage of the profit if pushed. If they decline, or try to approach the authorities, Anders will arrange an 'accident' for the party as his clients will not be happy if he fails to deliver the fighter.

6: As 4, but this is a sting arranged by Imperial Naval Intelligence. Anders is an undercover agent, who has been trying to break a smuggling ring operating out of the depot for

the last twelve months. He has worked his way to a position of trust, and has arranged this shipment to break the ring. He will try to place two Imperial Marines (undercover) on the ship to protect the cargo and crew. The police will intervene when the players attempt to deliver their cargo; the players may be caught in the cross-fire with the smugglers.

P36. WITNESS RELOCATION

Required Skills: Admin and Advocate or Combat.

Required Equipment: Starship (with 1 stateroom available).

Players' Information: The party are enjoying a few final moments of peace in a dirtside starport lounge before returning to the ship and heading out to the next system. An attractive woman approaches the table, smiles nervously and asks for help, often glancing about the room. Her name is Dalia Vannista, and she needs immediate passage off world. She does not really seem to care about the destination world. Her only request is that the vessel leaves at once. She claims she is packed and ready to go, but she carries no luggage. She states that she is prepared to pay for her passage in trade goods. She does not have an Imperial Universal ID.

Referee's Information: The woman is really Delea Moichot, a legal witness for the government against organised crime on this world. Her government bodyguards were killed defending her against an attack and she fled the scene. She was near the starport so decided to get offworld. She is carrying several data crystals with information critical to an impending case against a local crime lord. She offers the players a Cr. 100,000 Imperial bearer bond for payment (redeemable at any Imperial starport or bank). She has three of these she stole from the crime lord.

At the referee's option, the bond is a high quality forgery – too good for the party to detect. When the players attempt to cash it, roll 2D. On a 2-7: the forgery is detected, the party are arrested but by incriminating Delea, they can avoid prison but must pay 1D x Cr. 5,000 legal fees; 8-10: the forgery is detected after the party leave the system, a warrant is issued for them and they will be arrested if they return to the system; 11-12: the players are lucky and the forgery is not detected).

1: A group of the crime lord's men will arrive just after the players agree to take Delea. The men will start shooting once they see the patron. They carry expensive weapons and wear expensive clothes but, thankfully, are disorganised and not very effective and will retreat if the players return fire.

2: A professional assassin is watching the port for the woman. He will attempt to capture her alive, in order to secure the data crystals. He is well-skilled in stealth and martial arts but is armed only with a garrotte to avoid weapon detectors.

3: The starport customs officials have decided this a good day to start cracking down on ID violations. A bribe (1D x Cr. 100) will be needed to get past the checkpoint.

4: As 3, but the official recognises the woman from local news reports and demands 1D x Cr. 1,000.

5: As 4, but then the official informs the local crime lord. A small ship's boat will be sent to intercept the players' ship as they approach the jump point. Claiming to be a customs launch, a small group of well-armed ex-marines (but wearing only vacc suits) will attempt to board the vessel and retrieve the evidence (and the woman if possible).

6: Shortly after the players take off, the local authorities notify the system patrol vessels to stop and search all departing ships for this woman. The players will have to hide her from an inspection party or pay a bribe of 1D x Cr. 10,000. Any attempt to flee from the patrol ship will result in attack.

P37. GETTING YOUR OWN BACK

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship (with 5 staterooms and 10 tons of cargo space available).

Players' Information: The players are approached by Commander Robert S. Anders, an Imperial Naval Intelligence officer. He wishes to charter their ship for an operation and implies significant rewards if they accept.

Referee's Information: Recently, smugglers stole a high technology Imperial fighter and have supplied it to an enemy state. Anders needs help to recover it. Payment for the mission will be good and perks may include free maintenance or fuel at naval facilities. The downside is becoming a known Imperial asset to the enemy state. Anders will make sure adequate gunners and weapons are available. The following options can be played individually or in the given order.

1-2: Anders asks the team to infiltrate the enemy frontier world by carrying a cargo in. He wants the players to establish if the fighter is being held at a certain facility at the starport. If it is, he wants them to plant a tracer and inform him, so he can launch a covert recovery option.

3-4: Anders (or the players, from 1-2) has located the fighter on a frontier enemy world and wishes the players to smuggle in his 10-strong unit and weapons (double-bunking to fit in 5 staterooms). The covert team will destroy or recover the fighter.

5-6: The players are to deploy Anders' strike team (see 3-4) by orbital re-entry 'chute. Shortly after, the players should perform a powered re-entry, pretending they have engine problems. They are to land at the enemy facility (whose defences should have been neutralised by Anders' team), load the 10 ton fighter and team on to their ship, then run for Imperial space.

P38. FOR THE GOOD OF THE PEOPLE

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship (with 1 stateroom available).

Players' Information: A woman who has made an obvious attempt to disguise herself approaches the party requesting passage to the next system. She needs to leave immediately and is willing to purchase High Passage instead of Middle Passage if it will mean lifting off sooner. She seems anxious, and watches the area around the meeting closely if it is in a public area.

Referee's Information: The passenger is a scientist who has recently made a major medical breakthrough in immunisation studies. She has created an incredible tailored virus that will protect individuals against a number of rare and infectious diseases across the Imperium. She will board the vessel as soon as possible and remain in her stateroom until the vessel is safely in jumpspace. If the party attempts to haggle for the price of the passage, she will agree to pay for an additional two High Passage tickets. The scientist knows she is being followed and will try to remain as hidden as possible. If confronted about her need to leave immediately, she will claim that lives depend on her urgent arrival in the next system. Her employers are working to locate her and return her to the labs.

1: The patron's employer has notified the authorities that she has been kidnapped and a local search has commenced. The players must leave the system quickly, before anyone thinks to search outgoing vessels at the starport. If they wait too long they will be discovered and arrested as her abductors.

2: As 1, but the authorities have only been told that the doctor is missing and that sensitive research information seems to have left with her. They are assuming theft is a possibility, not a fact. News reports of the woman's disappearance are being broadcast by the local media.

3: As 2, but her employers have decided that the doctor needs to be silenced. They have notified the authorities that the woman is a terrorist and is armed and extremely dangerous. They have also stated that the woman carries a biological sample that could be used as a terrorist weapon. The media will announce she is missing but will not mention any terrorist connection.

4: Her employers want no outside interference and have arranged for a retrieval team to find the doctor and return her to the company labs. They are armed, and in a hurry. They will not consider negotiation an option in the retrieval process.

5: Combine 1 and 4.

6: The doctor is actually an escapee from a mental hospital and has made up this entire scenario. She will not be missed at the hospital until two hours after she purchases passage with the players. At this point, local news broadcasts will begin announcing the search for her, and her face will be all over the news.

P39. THOU SHALT NOT COVET

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship or High or Middle Passage on a starship.

Players' Information: A player is approached to carry a message crystal to a person on the next world in the direction the vessel is headed. The standard offer for such a message is Cr. 50. This person is offering Cr. 1,000 to deliver the message with "no questions asked". The person seems to be nervous and not hiding it well. If asked any questions, the patron will lie quite poorly, even forgetting they said "no questions" earlier!

Referee's Information: The person is a corporate researcher, recently hired as a spy by a rival company. They have placed all of the company's data for a new radical anti-gravity breakthrough on the crystal and are sending it to a contact in the next system. This is the researcher's first attempt at espionage and they are not very good at it. The data is encrypted with an old software package that can be hacked by any good computer tech with a fair amount of time and a healthy curiosity. A counter-espionage team has been watching the researcher and will be attempting to recover the crystal.

1: There are 3 members in the counterespionage team. They will use stealth and intrusion to regain the data before lift off.

2: As 1, but the team will use intimidation and brute force as necessary.

3: As 1, but the team will purchase passage and pose as passengers. The crystal will be located and stolen during the last day of the trip.

4: The team will pose as customs officials to board and inspect the vessel in the starport. The players should become suspicious as they realise the team is searching for a specific item.

5: The team approaches the characters openly and asks for help. They are promised a large reward for turning over the spy and the data.

6: Use any of the above (except 3) but there is also a team attempting to ensure the spy's escape. The players will find themselves in the middle of an escalating corporate war.

P40. WAGE SLAVE

Required Skills: Investigate.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: Slavery is illegal in the Imperium. So is running out on debts. In the grey area between these two Imperial Edicts flourishes debt bondage; the forcible confinement of an individual on a world until all debts are paid or guaranteed by a reputable individual. At its most benign, debt bondage ensures that all bills are paid before a citizen emigrates; at its most sinister, debt bondage traps workers on a company planet, paying more for life support than they earn and thus condemning them to a lifetime of labour for the company.

A religious group that is dedicated to buying the freedom of trapped workers contacts the party. They need someone to go undercover to a world, to verify whether or not it meets their criteria for aid. They will have two months to discover the information, at the end of which they will be picked up.

1: The characters spend 2 months in Spartan conditions – life is hard, but not unreasonable and workers can earn enough to leave if they are careful. No action is necessary.

2: As 1, but life support surcharges mean that they end up further in debt than when they began work. If the religious group was not ready to bail them out, they would have been trapped.

3: As 2, but the conditions are brutal.

4: As 3, but the players run up such debts that the religious group does not initially have enough funds to buy their release; they are trapped for another 1D weeks.

5: As 4, but the reason their patrons cannot pay for their release is that someone embezzled the money and ran. Should they eventually be released, no doubt the players will want revenge!

6: As 4, but due to an administrative error, the religious group loses track of the players and no one is sent to buy their release.

P41. SCHOOL OF ASSASSINS

Required Skills: Investigate.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: The party are hired to locate the headquarters of an Assassin's Guild which is alleged to operate in the area. Rumours abound of the guild, its impregnable fortress HQ and the dark deeds done behind its doors. Alternatively, the players are hired to protect a person from the guild's attentions.

1: The rumoured existence of the assassin's school on a nearby planet is actually true. This world barely sustains any life and is very hostile to humans. Those able to actually discover and reach the school are invited to join this group of skilled mercenary murderers.

2-3: As 1, but the assassins are ascetic warrior-philosophers.

4-5: As 1, but the assassins have an ethical code whereby they require evidence of actual wrong-doing by a target before they will take on their assassination.

6: The assassins are actually a secret tool of the Imperium. They enforce the Emperor's will by assassinating troublesome nobles. They are run by several supposedly dead Imperial nobles.

P42. I CAME FOR THE WATERS...

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship.

Players' Information: The patron wishes to hire the party's ship for a cargo run to a mostly industrial region on a planet one or two jumps away. The factor will pay 15% over the normal rates, conditional on immediate departure.

Referee's Information: The cargo is labelled as 'Water Purification Equipment, Industrial' on the manifest. They are to deliver the cargo to a small secondary spaceport on the planet. The containers appear to be destined for a number of different customers, though if they open the containers and investigate, they will find that all of the contents seem to be modules for a single large purification plant.

1: The equipment is being delivered to a large industrial combine that has been dumping toxic effluent into a nearby river. A large city downstream has started to use the water to supply their potable water needs. The company is trying to quietly install purification equipment to prevent anyone linking them to the pollution.

2-3: As 1, but the company has already been found out as the source of the pollution, and the characters will get caught up in a conspiracy investigation. They may be detained, and their ship and/or other cargo impounded for the duration of the investigation.

4-5: As 2-3 but due to deaths from the tainted water, there has been a massive political shakeup in the city. Arrest warrants have been issued for the company officials and anyone else involved (e.g. the players). Their ship will be confiscated if they are caught.

6: As 2-3, but the populace has been whipped into a frenzy by rabble-rousers. They are convinced that the company only intends a cosmetic clean up, and that dangerous toxins

will remain in their drinking water. The characters will have to contend with a riot at the spaceport. If they are discovered to be transporting the equipment, they will become the target of the mob's fury.

P43. ROBOTICS FIELD TRIALS

Required Skills: Survival.

Required Equipment: Starship (with 1 stateroom and 2 tons cargo space available).

Players' Information: The players may respond to an advertisement or may be contacted directly by an assistant of Dr. Keene to arrange a charter for himself and a small amount of cargo. The doctor requires transport for himself and 2 tons of equipment to a nearby system where he intends to perform field tests of several robot prototypes. Dr. Keene's work is sponsored by Windhamm Electronics, who will pay all appropriate incurred expenses as well as Cr. 10,000 per month per crew person (to a maximum of MCr. 1.5 for the entire trip). Dr. Keene will require the characters to assist him in all aspects of his work at the test sites, including security, preparation of campsites and meals, providing ground transportation, etc. The trip should take the players to a number of different terrain types on several planets in one system, including a vacuum planet. Keene expects his tests to last for at least two months in system, as well as the time in jump.

Referee's Information: Dr. Keene is a brilliant young robotics consultant hired by Windhamm Electronics for their research into the automation of starship operations. The robots which have resulted from his work are used by some merchant lines, allowing them to reduce crew sizes and lower the risks involved in the more hazardous aspects of starship work. Keene is an honours graduate of both college and graduate school (to doctorate level). Keene has become wealthy relatively recently from selling a few of his patents; he hopes his continued work in advancing robotic technology will earn him a knighthood. So fixated is he with this concept that he has started to study fencing in preparation for the day he might enter the circle of nobles as a Peer of the Realm. He practices frequently with a training robot but is sufficiently arrogant to demonstrate his skill against a live opponent if provoked into a duel. He tends to carry either his beloved fencing foil, or a customised Magnum Revolver (a gift from a friend) dependent upon the local law level. He loves to race grav craft whenever he can, and owns an exotic grav speeder bike.

Dr. Keene is a young man, standing 1.8m tall, slender with a somewhat muscular build and long dark hair. He is good-looking, very intelligent, and rather arrogant at times. He is used to being spoiled and pampered in his work environment, and will not take kindly to anyone opposing his views. He is travelling with a portable robotics work lab, 6 research robot

prototypes, a remote control porta-comp (through which the prototypes are programmed and controlled) and additional tools and field equipment. In addition, he requires hold space for his Grav Speeder Racing Bike. His robot valet and robot-fencing trainer attend to most of his needs. In addition to normal wilderness encounters (both animals and natural events), one or more of the following events should occur during the tests:

- 1: Keene chooses to undertake tests in a hazardous (e.g. corrosive) atmosphere. Any accident, no matter how minor, can be extremely dangerous in such a climate.
- 2: One (or more) of the robots runs wild on the ground, physically endangering the party.
- 3: Keene re-programs a vehicle to allow one of his robots to drive it. At a suitably dangerous point, the robot's programming fails and the vehicle crashes (either while carrying the party or crashing into characters on the ground).
- 4: Keene decides to exercise his grav bike and offers to race one or more of the party on a suitably hazardous course.
- 5: A team from a competing company arrives to steal the prototypes and any technical information they can recover. The team will initially use stealth, but should they be discovered or frustrated in their attempts, they will resort to force. The number and weaponry of these agents should be adjusted to roughly match the number and armament of the players.
- 6: As 5, but the team is from Windhamm, who are hoping to obtain Keene's newest developments without paying his exorbitant fees.

P44. WANTED: IT OPERATIVES

Required Skills: Computers.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: The following message is posted to the Employment Opportunities section of the local computer nets;

*Programmers wanted for data analysis project, Cr. 250 per day. Relevant experience at Imperial TL 9 or equiv tech required. Apply Sef Makken, Bureau of Trade [*bt/gov/005/sef-mak]. The Bureau of Trade is an equal opportunities employer. Applications from non-humans and sophonts of indeterminate gender are particularly welcome. Applicants may be asked to undergo Imperial vetting procedure.*

An electronic application form is attached.

Referee's Information: Sef Makken is a nervous, overweight, balding bureaucrat. If the characters enquire about the job he will cheerfully – perhaps too cheerfully – discuss it, without giving any specifics, and will encourage them to apply. Should anyone apply, roll a Difficult (-2) Computers check to be appointed.

1: Up to 3 days work are required converting trade data from an old system to a new global database. Sef Makken is nervous because a deadline is getting close.

2: As 1, but the data is an analysis of interstellar trade data. A Formidable (-6) Computers check is required for a player to learn anything of interest. If successful, the character may apply DM+1 to one trading check on this world, or can obtain one speculative cargo at a 25% discount.

3: As 1 or 2, but earnings are subject to a 20% tax on exit (i.e. Cr. 50/day worked for Makken). Sef Makken will not reveal this unless asked directly.

4: As 2, but after taking advantage of their new-found knowledge, the player is arrested for industrial espionage and/or insider trading.

5: As 1, but the players can gradually work out that Sef Makken is nervous because he is stealing data from the Bureau of Trade and leaking it to friends; he fears the authorities are getting close. Reporting him brings official praise and local news coverage, but Sef's friends will not be happy to have lost their valuable source.

6: As 1, but Sef Makken is nervous because his career depends on completing the project on time, but the Government-appointed contractors are under-performing. He is paying the party out of his own pocket, which is against Government rules. Reporting this to the authorities would bring the players official acknowledgement but would wreck his career. The Bureau of Trade would also be extremely obstructive for the remainder of the groups' stay.

P45. GLOBAL WARMING

Required Skills: Investigate.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: A nearby colony is suffering adverse effects from a sudden warming of their climate; it is thought illegal industrial pollution may be to blame. The party are approached by a representative of SERAPH (the Society for Ecological Restoration And Planetary Healing), an environmentalist organisation, to conduct some tests for them. Suitable equipment will be provided. SERAPH are currently short-staffed, and are therefore hiring resourceful people to conduct routine work.

1-2: Planetary survey records are faulty; the planet has many volcanoes and suffers sporadic volcanic winters, one

of which was in progress when the planet was first surveyed and occupied. Colonists have found the world increasingly hot.

3-4: As 1-2, but the problem has been exaggerated by a nearby world aiming to make local industry less competitive by imposing extra costs on it (emissions cleaning). The nearby world is secretly funding SERAPH to 'prove' environmental crimes, but this is known only to two of SERAPH's directors.

5-6: Warming is the result of pollution by industry; traces of pollutants are detectable in certain areas. If the local authorities become aware of the players' mission, they will be liable to harassment, initially by ruffians but later by police and other officials. This could take the form of vandalism, physical threats or direct violence, as well as obstructiveness and sabotage.

P46. SHIPSHARE HIRE-ONS

Location: Jump-1 from a major world.

Required Skills: Pilot, Astrogation.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: The following advert is posted on the starport net.

*Experienced crew wanted for 4 week round-trip taking Free Trader for annual maintenance. Standard rates plus completion bonus. Apply Jil Mbewe [*shipshare/com/info/jil-mbe].*

If the group contact Jil Mbewe she will explain that the ship in question is run by a shipshare trust. 12 shareowners have use of the ship's passenger facilities for 4 weeks, during which time the ship must complete a run to and from the nearby major world. The trust is responsible for support and maintenance costs, and for finding cargo and low passengers at both ends of the run, and makes most of its money from cargo speculation. However, in the last 4 weeks of the operating year, the trust squeezes in a run for its own profit by sending the ship for its annual maintenance. This is when the regular crew take their vacation, and the party are needed as a relief crew for this run.

Referee's Information: The *Spirit of Harmony* is a standard Free Trader, 30 years old, and a bit shabby. The party have free run of the passenger accommodation. They can carry passengers, but must split the fee 50:50 with the trust.

1-2: The party will have to spend most of their two week stopover keeping tabs on the progress of the annual maintenance, but will have plenty of free time.

3-4: As 1-2, except the *Spirit of Harmony* is a month overdue for maintenance and is burning unrefined fuel (increasing the chance of misjump). Her usual crew said she was unsafe without maintenance and refused to take this mission.

5: As 3-4, but the *Spirit of Harmony* is 3 months overdue for maintenance (significantly increasing the chance of misjump).

6: The *Spirit of Harmony* is a total rustbucket and it is amazing that it is still spaceworthy. The critical systems (life support, drives and computer) are fine, but everything else is liable to fail more or less at random. This includes gravity and inertial compensators, the galley, the laser turret, sensor arrays, communicators and sanitary facilities. Backup systems are not guaranteed to work either.

P47. TRAINING EXERCISE

Location: Low law level world (automatic weapons permitted).

Required Skills: Combat.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: Major Shen Aquette is the commander of a company of mechanised infantry. His men have been on garrison duty for several months, and he suspects they are starting to get stale, so he is looking for volunteers to take part in an exercise against his troops as supposed guerrilla fighters. He does not necessarily want professional soldiers. He offers combat pay of Cr. 15 per day for ordinary volunteers, Cr. 30 per day for ex-service personnel (Army or Marine) and Cr. 50 per day for former Army or Marine officers, plus a Cr. 50 bonus if the guerrillas actually win.

Referee's Information: Aquette's company consists of three platoons of four armoured personnel carriers, plus a tank, two command cars and four light armoured cars. The party will be armed with simulated automatic weapons and light anti-armour rockets, plus flash grenades, and issued with laser-sensing flak jackets which register hits. Officers will be allowed to carry loaded side-arms in case of emergencies, but no other equipment has live ammunition. The players are asked to plan and perform several attacks against the company – while encamped and while on the move, with the intention of causing as much disruption as possible. Aquette's men know they are to be attacked, but have no idea of the players' plans or armaments.

1: The manoeuvres go well and the party has the opportunity to practice their combat and tactical skills in a safe environment.

2: Both sides take the exercise rather seriously, and the characters get involved in a brawl. Mercenary officers will turn a blind eye unless it gets too rough.

3: Someone – not necessarily a character – gets seriously hurt, and needs urgent medical attention while out in the wilds.

4: Aquette is training his men because he has heard rumours of a genuine guerrilla threat. The real guerrillas infiltrate the exercise and start shooting. The mercenaries are carrying live ammunition for just such an event, but the party is stuck in the middle of the firefight – potential targets for either side.

5: As 5, but Aquette created this exercise specifically as a trap for the guerrillas. He regards the players as expendable.

6: Aquette's men are vicious killers; they intend to have some fun hunting down and killing the players using live ammo.

P48. ADOLESCENT

Required Skills: Admin, Advocate, Broker.

Required Equipment: Starship.

Players' Information: The party are on a world with strict religious laws, most of which govern private life. While it has been an interesting and even fun place, everyone is glad to be about to move on. Enquiries into customs and beliefs invariably grow into large discussions with 2D officials and religious teachers involved. By tradition, such discussions may only be terminated by taking everyone to a feast (the cost is 1D x Cr. 10 per person). After the party have enjoyed their last breakfast on world, they return to the hotel to discover a robed and masked visitor. This is soon revealed to be a teenager who pleads with them to take him/her (it is hard to tell under the covers) offworld. If not, their parents will kill them!

Referee's Information: It is a local custom that adolescents are secluded while undergoing instruction, and hidden from view on the rare occasions they leave home. Players with good perception or sociological skills may have noticed this during their stay. Most players will have enjoyed the peace without realising why!

1: The situation is just teenage angst. If the teenager is discretely returned home, their parents, who own a local shipping company, will become valuable contacts for the party. If a fuss is made, the parents will be grateful and will offer a gift, but will not encourage future contact. If the teenager is taken offworld, they will be considered kidnapped. Worse yet, they will get homesick and change their mind halfway through the first jump! Remember that no serious problem is ever a teenager's fault!

2: As 1, except that it takes a month for the teenager to get homesick.

3: As 1, but the parents understand their child's concerns and, provided the party have been discrete, they will pay for their kid to have a long holiday. However, they will ask the players to take one of their company bodyguards (in disguise) on the trip to keep an eye on their child.

4: As 1, this is just teenage angst, but that has no place in this culture. Any contact with the parents will result in charges being laid for corruption of youth; a major crime in this culture.

5-6: By running away and revealing herself to strangers, the teenage girl has deeply offended her parent's honour. The punishment is death – they will be publicly killed as soon as

they are found. If the party take the girl home, this will happen right away; if they take the teenager to the authorities, they will see the execution on their way back to the starship. In either case, the referee should emphasise the girl's innocent beauty and try to make the players feel responsible for her bloody and painful death. If they do take the teenager offworld, they will have gained a devoted sidekick – with all the trials and tribulations that come with adolescence.



SITUATIONS

Sometimes the players are swept up by events over which they have very little control – they are dropped into a situation they need to resolve using their ingenuity and whatever comes to hand by way of equipment.

S1. TRAFFIC VIOLATION

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship.

Players' Information: The players have just completed frontier refuelling at a gas giant, when a vessel approaches them with no transponder signals, and orders them over the voice channel to heave-to and prepare for boarding. If challenged, the vessel identifies itself as a system patrol vessel, and informs them that they are in violation of the system traffic regulations, as they have refuelled without a permit.

Referee's Information: In cases 1-5 below, any attempt to flee to a safe jump distance will result in the players' ship being attacked.

1: The system government is facing a period of economic difficulty and has raised prices for refined fuel. Frontier refuelling requires a permit from the starport (costing Cr. 500). Fuelling without a permit incurs a Cr. 10,000 fine and a strict customs search. The approaching vessel is a systems defence boat or patrol cruiser.

2: As 1, but the fine is Cr. 100,000.

3: As 1, but the patrol vessel is a captured and refurbished corsair using its original name. The players may suspect foul play but the main world can verify the patrol vessel's lawful status.

4: As 1, but the main system world is balkanised and the two main powers are at war. A second (opposing) vessel will arrive soon after the first, and challenge its right to fine the players. This will rapidly deteriorate into a battle, during which the players may make their escape.

5: The vessel is a pirate, attempting to board the players' ship without engaging in ship-to-ship combat. Once aboard, they will disable the weapons and drives on the players' ship and loot it of valuables. At the referee's discretion, a patrol vessel (as in 1) may come to their assistance.

6: The vessel is a patrol ship owned by some down-at-heel Starmercs. They will impose fake fines to whatever level they feel they can push it, although they will make mistakes that may allow the players to realise they are being duped.

S2. AGENT

Required Skills: Admin, Advocate, Broker.

Required Equipment: Starship (carrying expensive freight).

Players' Information: The players arrive in system with a full cargo of freight (pre-paid). On landing, they are refused permission to unload.

Referee's Information: The company they are carrying the cargo for has filed for bankruptcy and the customs agent (broker) with power of attorney is refusing to handle the transaction. The cargo is still legally an asset of the failed company, so the players cannot unload it, nor leave the starport with it. The dock fees will begin to mount up...

1-3: The agent can be persuaded to unload the cargo if the players suggest it can be used as collateral against missing payments.

4: The players encounter a local crime lord who offers to take the cargo off their hands for a small fee, i.e. the players look the other way while some of his men steal the cargo.

5: As 4 but the company is placed into the hands of administrators who will take legal action against the players if they 'loose' the cargo.

6: As 5 but a megacorporation buys the failing company. They will use their recovery specialists to retrieve the cargo or equivalent assets if they feel the players are likely to abscond with the cargo or attempt to dispose of it in an illegal manner.

S3. ASTEROID

Required Skills: Pilot, Astrogration.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: While the players are at a class D or lower starport colony, the port's sensors detect an asteroid on a collision course with the world. A while later, low power radio signals are detected from the vicinity of the asteroid. Panic ensues on the colony, as the only ships in the port are several old launches (unless the players have their own starship).

Referee's Information: If the players do not come up with any ideas, the locals suggest using the highly enriched fuel from the orbiting naval sensor buoy to prepare a fission device to divert the asteroid's course. The players are asked to deliver the device using any available vessel at the port. Success, and a heroic reception by the colonists, is possible with care and preparation, although the hand-built bomb is hazardous to handle.

1-3: The asteroid has a very, very old solar-powered mining beacon which reactivated as it neared the planet.

4: The asteroid is a slower-than-light colony ship from a world hundreds of parsecs away (i.e. it has been travelling many hundreds of years). The crew are long dead and the drives are inoperative but a few of its systems still have battery power and emit weak radio signals.

5: As 4, but the ship's computer still works sufficiently to allow the initiation of an automatic braking sequence, putting the ship in orbit.

6: As 5, but the crew are alive. They are part of a TL10 military force sent to assist in the development of new colonies. They will attempt to retake their colony from the foreigners who have settled it after the ravages of the Long Night.

S4. YOU'RE NOT LEAVING THAT HERE!

Required Skills: Admin, Advocate, Broker.
Required Equipment: Starship.

Players' Information: The party accept a cargo of chemicals for trans-shipment at least two jumps on. The material is listed as safe and legal and the pay is top rate.

Referee's Information: When they get to the destination world the customs agents there announce that the material is, in fact, a dangerous waste. It is illegal here (and across most of the subsector) but not at the world it was loaded.

1: The players can get in touch with their broker's contact on this world who agrees with the authorities that the players can ship the material out to a government-approved orbital dump. The players will be recompensed for their trouble.

2: As 1, but the contact will require considerable persuasion to accept any responsibility for the shipment and will not pay the Cs unless they take him to court.

3: The players find their contact does not exist – they must persuade the customs to allow them to offload the material at the orbital dump (see 1).

4: As 3, but the players will also be fined Cr. 100,000.

5: As 3, but the players' ship is impounded.

6: As 3, 4 or 5, but the customs agents are quite open to bribery.

S5. BAD FOOD

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship.

Players' Information: Stopping at a D or E class starport, the players' steward is offered a good deal on supplies (and cargo if negotiated).

Referee's Information: If accepted, the crew will finish their existing foodstocks the first day into jump. The food purchased has been substituted with rotten, out of date products. This leaves them with a cargo of worthless mush and the problem of feeding themselves and their passengers (who may sue under the terms of the Imperial Passenger charter).

1: It is an accident, due to erroneous paperwork at the food wholesaler's warehouse.

2: It is deliberate – a theft and substitution by the local dock gang.

3: It is deliberate – a substitution executed by the company's agents.

4-5: As one of 1, 2 or 3 above, but the paperwork the cargomaster (steward) signed accepts the goods as checked, and the company denies all knowledge of any fault.

6: As one of 1, 2 or 3 above, but the company offers a full apology, re-supplies the ship and offers the crew a full cargo as compensation.

S6. YOU CALL THIS HIGH TECH?

Required Skills: Admin, Advocate, Broker.

Required Equipment: Starship.

Players' Information: This world is a key source of high technology in this subsector. The party are on a tight deadline to lift with a cargo of valuable goods but they need the correct certification to do so, and must pay off some bills.

Referee's Information: The local language is very complex and formal. Documentation needs the personal attention (symbolised by stamps and seals) of every bureaucrat whose hands it passes through. The impersonality of electronic systems and the in-built conservatism of the culture has resulted in a dependence on paper – unusual for the tech level. Equally, electronic fund usage is uncommon outside the port. The paper systems work well, except when a rush job is needed.

1-2: The party will have to visit the source of the certificates to obtain them quickly. This will require considerable diplomacy and patience.

3-4: As 1-2, plus the party will need to obtain a large amount of cash to pay the fees for the certification. Their obvious foreign behaviour will mark them as potential victims of crime. Finding a cash dispenser which accepts their cards may also be difficult.

5-6: As 3-4, but on the day the party is trying to get the certificate, all offices and shops close that afternoon as part of the local cultural traditions.

S7. REQUISITIONED

Required Skills: Investigate.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: The party is on planet with a repressive police state (e.g. Roup or Efate in the Spinward Marches) when one of the players is taken seriously ill. They are taken to hospital for an operation, but when the party goes to visit them later there is no record of their colleague.

Referee's Information: This can be as sinister or innocent as you like.

1-2: A clerical error caused the character's records to be misplaced, or their name mis-spelt – the party are quickly reunited with their colleague.

3: The character has been taken illegally for body parts. If the party ask the right questions of the right people they will manage to find the missing character on the operating table just before the procedure starts.

4-5: The character has been seized by the security forces, having been mistaken for a political agitator. They will be found soon after, dumped outside the hospital, having been interrogated and/or badly beaten.

6: The character has been seized by the security forces as a terrorist, based on an innocuous comment they made earlier in the week at a bar. To save them from disappearing permanently the party will have to break into a high security facility and get their friend off-planet.

S8. WHY I HATE FRONTIER

STARPORTS...

Required Skills: Broker.

Required Equipment: Starship.

Players' Information: The party have a cargo which must be delivered to a tight schedule. They are all set to launch when flocks of feathered birdlike creatures begin clustering around the ship. The players are contacted by the starport

legal representative, who informs them that they are not allowed to lift off.

Referee's Information: The port landing area doubles as an adjunct to the local town market. Local colonist-herders have little to their names but their colourful clothes, their vehicles and the flocks of shaggy, iridescent feathered birds in which their fortune is invested. The birds are prone to startling, and can become aggressive; if the ship moves, chaos is likely to result.

1-2: The herders can be persuaded to move their flock away quite quickly if the players use appropriate liaison or diplomacy skills.

3: As 1-2, but one of the birds will flap into an engine vent and begin nesting.

4-5: The herders seem unable to move their flock out of the way until a small bribe is offered (they regularly drive their flocks into the starport in the hopes of being paid to go away again).

6: As 4-5 and the herders will surreptitiously encourage their flock to enter the ship, nest in its engine vents, etc. in order to increase the bribe.

S9. CLAUSTROPHOBIA

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship.

Players' Information: The starship that the party are travelling on suffers a serious failure which compromises the passenger compartment – e.g. an electrical fault causes an explosion which compromises hull integrity over a large area. As a result, the crew and passengers are forced to cram into a small remaining safe area, e.g. the engineering area or crew quarters.

Referee's Information: The situation is very awkward for all concerned – the passengers are unfamiliar with surviving in a cramped area with limited food, oxygen and sanitary equipment.

1-2: With calm and sensible behaviour all the passengers and crew will survive.

3-4: Some crew or passengers panic and try to leave the ship in rescue balls or the ship's launch.

5: The damage to the ship has caused a misjump. The party have to deal with jump sickness and an unpredictable jump exit time.

6: As 5, but several passengers try to break into the weapons locker, as they see cannibalism as inevitable if the misjump is a long one.

S10. REFUGEE RUN

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship.

Players' Information: The party is trading on a world with an inhospitable atmosphere when disaster strikes. Major fusion explosions destroy the life-support centre and its backup facilities. Local supplies can last a matter of days, perhaps a few weeks at the outside. The local government commandeers all ships for an orderly evacuation.

Referee's Information: The populace panics and martial law is declared. Fearing for their lives, gangs of empowered citizens try to find a way off the world...

1: The authorities will enlist the players' ship and pack it with people; they will be asked to jump to the nearest world, then to return empty for another trip, bringing with them as many other ships as they can persuade to follow. No coercion is used as the officials assume that everyone is willing to help. Once the world has re-established itself, all ships that helped in the evacuation will be rewarded: no port fees, no duties, free refuelling and free labour for maintenance work.

2: As 1, except that the world is not re-established by the same government. There will be no material rewards.

3: As 1, except that terrified refugees will try to hijack the ship when it is only half full.

4: There are not enough ships for everyone so the government has prioritised children and young families over the old and childless. This is not popular with old, childless, rich people, who will offer astounding bribes to get offworld. Whether the party can leave crying children at the dockside to die slowly is up to them, but may result in a hate campaign by those evacuees that survive, adverse press publicity and perhaps legal action.

5: As 4, except that if the bribes are turned down, one or more players will be kidnapped by hired thugs and ransomed in exchange for places on their ship for the rich refugees.

6: As 4, but the government's view of the essential members of society is ministers and top people in all fields – plus their families, staff, and most valuable possessions.

S11. FREDDY'S DEAD... IS NOT HE?

Required Skills: Ability to scream loudly.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: The party wins tickets to a new amusement park, devoted to horror holovids and using state-of-the-art virtual reality technology. They will enter the park and stay overnight as part of a holovid show promotion. Having been repeatedly reassured that the VR park is totally

safe, they are asked to sign overblown waivers (all part of the standard show legalities). They will not be allowed to take weapons into the park! The theme of the show is 'these brave people will spend the night in the House of Horror... are you brave enough to come during the day?' A publicity stunt, in other words.

Referee's Information:

1-2: The characters have a good time and can win various prizes awarded by the holovid show.

3-4: Some or all of the party (and perhaps Non-Player Characters) are approached privately by a producer of the show. They will be given special makeup packs and other props so that they can become 'victims' of the maniacal Solomani Slasher running amok. They are cautioned to say absolutely nothing to the others, as the producers want to capture the maximum possible fright effect. The holovid company will reward them well if they convince the others that they really died.

5-6: A brilliant, but psychotic, robotics engineer designed the park. A woman who spurned him and made a mockery of him is among the guests for the show. He is aware of the producer's plans to have fake deaths among the group (as per 3-4). First, he will target a Non-Player Character for death and kill them in some gruesome fashion. By the time anyone realises this was a real death, the producer's robotic cameras have been taken over, the entire park is locked to outsiders and the party is trapped inside (the park is largely self-contained and has its own power plant).

The VR robots will begin genuinely murderous attacks. The psychotic engineer will appear as the Solomani Slasher, using a powered exoskeleton giving him enhanced strength and speed, and a fair amount of protection from whatever weapons the players will find to hand. He is intimately familiar with the complex, and can pretty much appear and disappear at will. He carries a hand computer which gives him complete control of the park.

The Non-Player Characters will act in typical slasher-flick fashion; running off alone, panicking, attacking the slasher ineffectually, etc. The maniac's goal is to kill everyone until only the woman who spurned him is left.

S12. PACKING YOUR OWN

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: The party have been on the surface of a middle or high law level planet. When passing through a local security checkpoint into the starport, a security agent halts one character. He says he may have detected contraband and asks to search the PC's effects.

Referee's Information: The security agent will ask the usual questions before checking the effects; Did you pack your baggage yourself?, Has anyone interfered with your baggage since you packed it?, Are you carrying anything for anyone else?, etc.

1: The agent is genuinely mistaken, but security will investigate the character's credentials more fully than usual.

2: Illegal drugs have been planted on the player prior to entering starport; the drugs would have been removed again by a pickpocket within the starport once through security.

3: The security guard plants illegal drugs on the character during the search in an attempt to force a bribe from the player. If the character's protests draw the attention of other officials, the first guard will disclaim any interest in a bribe and will charge and arrest the character.

4: A tiny but powerful bomb has been planted in the player's baggage. Investigation reveals there is not enough time to disarm it safely; it must be contained using inflatable blast shields. Five minutes after it explodes, it becomes clear that it was a distraction. Terrorists have breached security elsewhere and seized control of key areas.

5: As 4, but the bomb is fake and accompanied by a note from terrorists/rebels (perhaps the Ine Givar) saying 'If this had been a real bomb, you would all be dead. Liberate this planet now!'

6: The contraband item is actually a small local animal, seemingly tame and cuddly. However, when taken off planet, it uses its only weapon – a psionic scream that does 1D damage/day to the PSI of psionic characters, D3-1 to the Int of non-psionic players. The animals' brains are a key ingredient in offworld black market psi drugs. Consequently, the local authorities will believe the party to be involved in black market smuggling.

S13. Do Not I Know You?

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: While in a public place on a medium or high population world, a character is mistaken for someone else.

Referee's Information: Roll 2D to determine whom the character is mistaken for.

2: A wanted criminal with a high bounty.

3: An undercover agent. The player is met by a contact and given secret data. Any protestations will be interpreted as not breaking cover.

4-5: A minor local noble. Suddenly everyone seems very friendly and helpful...

6-7: A relation of a local family who have achieved local notoriety (or fame) in the media.

8: The character is the visual twin of a medium level, quasi-independent rogue in a local crime organisation. The police will keep them under surveillance and criminals will expect the player to do favours. The rest of the party will be viewed as a clean crew, people not known to be associated with the local crime group, brought in for a job

9: The player is believed to be the long lost and thought-to-be-dead member of a wealthy local family. Some people would prefer he stayed dead.

10: A person previously murdered by their spouse for financial gain or due to infidelity. Naturally, when the spouse sees their victim alive again, they will be very disturbed, prompting a cautious (but possibly dangerous) response!

11-12: The character is believed to have something that belongs to someone else... something very valuable.

S14. Is There A Doctor In The House?

Required Skills: Medic.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: While walking past the players, a local has what appears to be a major seizure and their pulse stops. However, none of the passers-by moves to render assistance.

Referee's Information: If the player(s) assist;

1-2: The victim survives and sues the party for illegally extending his life. The local culture believes that death comes when it comes. Only injuries that are not life-threatening are treated.

3-4: The victim survives and is extremely grateful to the character(s). They feel that they owe the players their life, literally. They will voluntarily become an obedient servant until they feel they have repaid the debt.

5: The victim dies and the character that assisted is arrested. It turns out that the treatment given, which would be perfectly normal for most humans, induces death in this minor human variant race. Unassisted, the victim would have recovered from the seizure.

6: The victim dies and the player is sued in court. Under local law, a person who tries to save another's life takes responsibility for that life, including its debts. And this victim was in serious debt!

S15. DETOUR

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship.

Players' Information: After jumping into a lightly populated system, the players are told by the Starport Authority (SPA) to use an isolated berth or landing field, due to problems with the primary landing areas. The communications are very poor as there is interference across all channels.

1: The normal berths are unavailable due to a local war whose effects have spilled over into the Imperial starport. No one has yet left the system to broadcast this information. The head of the SPA has decided that the war is contained and winding down, so is accepting commercial traffic.

2: As 1, but the SPA official is a war profiteer and is only allowing weapons smugglers into the main area port, to supply the locals. He cannot afford to let anyone discover his subterfuge.

3: The SPA official is an impostor and is directing the players into the hands of pirates, who will steal their starship and/or its cargo (using advance knowledge of starport cargo manifests).

4: As 3, but the pirates intend to kidnap a key passenger on board the players' ship.

5: The entire SPA has been taken hostage. Everything appears normal during landing, but the players' ship will be subjected to a customs search. Heavily armed SPA officials (criminals wearing SPA uniforms) will board the ship. The players may notice the ill-fitting uniforms, lack of familiarity with standard procedures, etc. before the criminals manage to take over the ship. They plan to strip the ship of its valuables, particularly its weapons.

6: As 5, but the criminals are rebels who want to use the ship against their enemies. However, an SPA engineer has managed to encode Signal GK and SOS messages into the starport transmissions. This is the source of the unusual interference when receiving comms from the port; a PC with appropriate skills can extract the warning message encoded into the interference.

S16. HOSTAGE BAR

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: While the party is relaxing in a starport bar, the general hubbub is suddenly silenced by weapons fire. A group of armed people storm the bar, taking all of its patrons as hostages.

Referee's information: There may be a small fight. If attacked, the hostage-takers will kill to defend themselves, although they are reluctant to do so otherwise. They demand a ship to take them out of the system – that is all. And they are in a hurry. They know that if they do not leave within a few hours, news of their acts could travel ahead of them such that authorities in nearby systems would be alerted and waiting for them.

1-2: The hostage-takers are Ine Givar terrorists. They had a ship of their own but it was discovered and neutralised. They have a pilot and starship crew amongst their number.

3-4: The hostage-takers are local terrorists seeking escape after a bombing. They are not capable of flying a starship on their own.

5: As 3-4, but the terrorists are seeking a publicity coup rather than escape. If they manage to get aboard a ship, they will attempt to rig it to explode, so as to cause significant damage to the starport. Failing that, they will kill all the hostages. They wish all Imperials to leave their world.

6: The hostage-takers have been falsely accused of crimes under a legal system with draconian penalties (death or life imprisonment) for minor offences. They are basically good people and will be very reluctant to kill people, although they are very desperate to escape.

S17. TABOO

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: Just after landing on a planet, the party encounters a local traveller selling good luck charm souvenirs.

Referee's Information: The seller will pester the players until at least one of them buys a charm.

1: The charm is totally harmless.

2: The charm is totally harmless on this world, but will offend religious and cultural sensibilities if worn on a neighbouring world.

3-4: The charm identifies the player as a good mark for pick-pocketing and other petty crimes.

5: The characters will run into a constant string of bad luck if they do not purchase a charm.

6: The player wearing the charm will get one exceptionally good piece of luck at some point in the following adventures – acquiring unexpected wealth, saving them from certain death, etc.

S18. THE DEMON DRINK

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship.

Players' Information: The players are aboard their ship, berthed at a starport, when their ship is struck by a small shuttle, air raft or fuel truck. The collision only does minor damage. Investigation shows the pilot was obviously intoxicated.

1-3: The pilot is voluntarily intoxicated.

4: The pilot has been intoxicated against his will by an unfriendly colleague.

5: The pilot appears intoxicated but is actually suffering from a virus. After a 12 hour incubation period, the virus causes increasing incoherence and incapacitation (characters lose Dex, End, Int and Edu points – 1 point of each in the first hour, 2 points in the second hour, 3 in the third, etc. When the Int or Edu is reduced to zero the victim becomes totally incoherent. When Dex or End reaches zero, the character enters a coma. The coma is indefinite but can be reversed by 1D+10 days of treatment at a specialist hospital.

6: The pilot is not drunk. The collision is a ruse to get aboard the ship and attempt a hijack.

S19. A ROUGH LANDING

Location: Amber zone.

Required Skills: Engineer.

Required Equipment: Starship.

Players' Information: The party's ship is landing on a world that has recently been downgraded from a red zone to amber. As they land, there is an explosion and one of the landing struts collapses, pitching the ship to one side.

Referee's Information: The world was at war until recently, and the starport was repeatedly fought over.

1: The starport has been mined since TAS lowered the travel zone to amber from red. One of the rival factions intends to capture any starships damaged as a result, to steal their cargoes and component parts. They will arrive within a few hours of the ship's landing, and a firefight is likely if the party will not surrender their ship.

2: The mine is an old anti-tank device which was missed by mine clearance teams; it detonated as the landing gear came into contact. The main difficulty the players face is raising the ship to complete repairs. The necessary parts can be fabricated in the ship's engineering shop.

3: The mine is part of the edge of an unrecorded minefield that has been missed during clearance. The party must repair the landing gear in the middle of an area peppered with antipersonnel and anti-tank mines.

4-6: The landing gear has suffered a hydraulic failure, and can be brought back into action with competent repairs. However, it may initially appear that the damage was caused by a mine, requiring suitable caution to be exercised.

S20. BORN UNDER A BAD SIGN

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: The party suffers a run of bad luck. For some reason there always seems to be a strange, fairly dishevelled character called Michael around when this happens.

Referee's Information: When the players get around to talking to him, Michael reveals that he is aware that they have a karmic-orgone grid-flux problem. Better yet, he knows how to fix it. The party will not be able to escape this man. No matter where they go, there he'll be. Dissecting him to find out why will not work either. In the end, they should end up agreeing to do what he says, which is to wrap a small hut in reflective foil, then spend three nights inside it with no food and only their own urine to drink.

1: The characters come to in bed, in a nice hospital. They are told they have been experiencing flashbacks from some weird trauma, but they are alright now. So why are people always watching them and taking notes?

2: As 1, but this is still part of a bad trip – after a further period of paranoia, the players wake up to find they are suffering delusions from drugs, food poisoning or lack of oxygen (e.g. from a faulty starship life support or very thin atmosphere).

3: The party is arrested for trespass and criminal damage to someone's shed. Michael never resurfaces, but their luck remains poor.

4: After doing the shed thing, the party suddenly get very lucky, then everything settles down to normal. They never see Michael again.

5: Michael is a psychopath psionist, who feeds off distress and discomfort. Now that he has found out he can play with the party, he'll never leave them alone.

6: As 5, but when the players finally fall for the shed trick, the overload from the three nights of anguish is too much for Michael, who dies with a smile on his face. His parting gift is a psychic residue which telepathically convinces everyone who visits the shed that the characters killed him.

S21. THE BLACK WIDOW DEAL

Required Skills: Broker.

Required Equipment: Starship (with available cargo space).

Players' Information: The players find a potentially lucrative cargo deal with the broker Neels Rago, an alien of a local minor race who speaks broken merchant pidgin. The owner of the cargo is a wealthy family of the planetary mercantile houses named Elmarra, headed by a woman named Rainalla. Rago tells the party they must all attend a ritual dinner to allow the merchant family to evaluate them before doing business. The broker assures the players that the family considers it a mere formality and the deal is as good as sealed. The broker will be the designated translator for the evening.

Referee's Information: Neels has made a serious error in the negotiations with the Elmarra and has misunderstood the true meaning of the dinner. The primary goal of the dinner is to arrange a marriage for the eldest daughter of the mercantile house. The offer of the cargo was to be payment to Neels for arranging the marriage contract. This dinner continues for many hours, during which time the players are given expensive gifts, several of the women of the household will flirt with the men (without any apparent jealousy from the local men) and a wide variety of food and drink will be served, including intoxicating liquor. The male crew will be evaluated during the dinner and then the one chosen by the bride's mother will be offered a special beverage. After consuming this drink the chosen merchant will pass out.

The family will insist that their guests stay the night (they should be quite tired now and at least one of them is already asleep). In the morning, the now-married crewman awakes in bed with the bride and is told he cannot leave the mercantile house. The main goal of the marriage is to father a new heir to the household fortune; since the house is a matriarchal lineage the man will have to stay until a female child is born. The players will have to try to explain the misunderstanding and extricate their colleague from this situation.

1: The household will be greatly offended, and demand the crew pay the bride price of the daughter (2D x Cr. 10,000). Refusal to pay will result in attack by the household guards. Paying the bride price also requires the return of the valuable gifts received by the crew during the party.

2: As 1, but the bride price is 1D x Cr. 100,000!

3: The players are accused of committing marriage contract fraud on the respected merchant house of Elmarra. The local authorities are contacted and the players' ship is impounded until a formal hearing. After 2 months of imprisonment and

1D x Cr. 10,000 legal fees, the case is reviewed. The crew is reluctantly released by the court and found innocent by technicality (they couldn't understand the language), but is warned never to return to the planet.

4: As 3, but the case takes 4 months and costs 2D x Cr. 10,000.

5: The household will understand the mistake, request the gifts be returned and allow the crew to leave. They will then hire a member of the local assassin's guild to kill the offending husband.

6: The husband awakes to find his hands and feet bound in preparation for an elaborate execution ritual. The religion of the mercantile house demands the execution of the husband the morning after the marriage nuptials. The screams of the intended victim should allow the other crewmembers a reasonable chance to rescue him before the final chants are completed and a ceremonial stone dagger is plunged into his heart.

S22. THE SKIN TRADE

Required Skills: Investigate.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: One or more of the players are kidnapped while away from their colleagues.

Referee's Information: The captives are taken to an illegal slave market held in a remote region where a number of notorious criminals and their rich patrons are gathering. It's up to the rest of the party to find them and effect a rescue.

1: A passer-by remembers seeing the player seized by a man wearing a slaver tattoo. The party can eventually track down their colleague(s) who are due to be sold as simple labourers. The slavers are well armed but security is lax.

2: As 1, but the victim(s) have already been sold to work in a hazardous mine.

3: As 1 but having shown interest in the slavers, the party are then hired by a rare and strictly pacifist alien species to rescue fellow aliens who have been taken by the slavers.

4: As 3, but a zealous environmentalist group are also attempting to rescue the alien slaves.

5: As 1, 3 or 4 but the slaves are also organising a revolt which may aid or hinder the party's efforts.

6: As any of the above, but several of the buyers fall out during the auction leading to armed conflict and possible harm to the slaves.

S23. RAPTURE

Required Skills: Investigate.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: The players are aboard a pleasure cruise liner when it suffers a slight misjump and arrives far out in the destination system – it will be three days late arriving at the starport. Over the first day, the ship experiences a seemingly unconnected series of murders.

1-2: Through investigation, the players can discover that there are a number of addicts of the designer recreational drug Rapture aboard who are running out of supplies. In desperation, one user killed a fellow user to steal their tabs. The other Rapture users got panicky and when one particularly paranoid user mistook the innocent attentions of a passenger for that of the murderer, they killed the passenger in “self defence”.

3-4: As 1-2, but there is a Rapture drug-runner aboard with a large stash he is willing to protect at all costs. The addicts have heard rumours there's a dealer on board and will use any means necessary to find the stash.

5-6: As 3-4, except the liner has actually misjumped into an uninhabited system – a fact the crew have been hiding from the passengers. Panic and violence ensue when this is discovered. Hopefully there is at least a gas giant here...

S24. SMUGGLING BLUES

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship.

Players' Information: The players' ship starts developing minor malfunctions that slowly grow worse with time.

Referee's Information: Upon investigation it is discovered that vermin (small rodents, beetles or something more alien) have come aboard with a normal cargo. The creatures have escaped, bred, and are causing havoc with the ship's systems.

1-2: The infestation can be controlled using traps, poison, etc. but the ship's systems will require minor repairs at the next starport.

3: As 1-2, but the infestation can only be controlled by evacuating all areas of the ship.

4: The ship has to be abandoned to the infestation and the crew and passengers attempt to abandon ship in too few life pods/launches.

5-6: As one of the above, but the vermin are a valuable component of a black market drug and were placed in the

cargo by smugglers. They intend to remove the creatures at the destination world and will be unhappy if they have been lost.

S25. THE SHIP COLLECTOR

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship.

Players' Information: A series of ships have disappeared along a well-used jump route – many more than can be explained by jump error. Ships are beginning to be unwilling to travel the route. The players may be hired to investigate the disappearances or may just be unfortunate enough to find out why the ships go missing...

1-2: A rich, mad, eccentric has been preying on vulnerable shipping. His intention is to collect an example of every known 'species' of ship. Thankfully, he wishes to take his prey intact and will rely upon intimidation rather than the firepower of his huge, well-equipped ship. The victims of his attacks are given the opportunity to join the pirates or be marooned on a remote world.

3-4: As 1-2, but the victims are actually sold as slaves by the opportunistic First Mate.

5-6: As 3-4, but victims who are of little slave or ransom value are spaced by the First Mate.

S26. HAIR TODAY...

Required Skills: Investigate.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: As a female player is wandering in startown, they are kidnapped by a team of ruffians. Her colleagues must discover what has become of her.

Referee's Information: The red light district of startown has been suffering a steady stream of disappearances. At first it was just lone women but now girls from better establishments are vanishing. No corpses have turned up, which the local police find unusual. However, this also means they are less bothered finding out what has happened to the disappeared women. The popular idea is that they have just run away.

1-2: A madman with a compulsion to collect is seeking to capture a girl with every colour of hair and skin. He keeps them locked in furnished rooms where he can spy on his collection and gloat. Some of them have been there for years, resulting in disturbing psychological effects.

3-4: As 1-2, but the henchmen regard the captives as their slaves and treat them badly.

5-6: As 1-2, but the collector only keeps his victims alive for a few days until he can have them permanently preserved.

S27. FANATIC

Required Skills: Investigate, Medic.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: One or more of the players suffers a fever on a low tech world. The locals regard them as cursed and will not provide aid.

Referee's Information: A charismatic cult leader became ruler of this world by dint of strange ceremonies, wild promises and the fact that his opponents have a convenient tendency to die. Their affliction initially appears to be a normal fever but they die a few days later, raving with wasted limbs. The ruler claims it is the divine will.

1-2: Careful investigation reveals that the cult leader's stronghold – an ancient building with a changing history of use – is connected directly to the ancient sewerage and water system. The cult infects each victim's water supply with a tailored disease. The players were affected accidentally.

3-4: As 1-2, but the cult have also been adding psychedelic and psychotropic drugs to the general water supply to pacify the populace.

5-6: As 1-2 or 3-4, but the players have been targeted deliberately because they offended the cult in some way (perhaps by accident).



ELABORATIONS

This section provides a selection of more detailed patrons that can be quickly developed into longer adventures.

E1. GHOST IN THE MACHINE

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship.

Players' Information: On arriving in a relatively minor system, a small error in the jump calculation places the players' ship far out in the system – several weeks manoeuvre from the target world. It would be far more efficient to perform an in-system jump, but the players' ship does not have enough fuel to jump again.

After a day's travel, the players encounter a small, badly damaged space base which appears to be abandoned. Scans reveal it is inoperative, with no energy emissions of any kind. It is not possible to tell if it was attacked or victim to some horribly violent accident. However, the fuel tanks appear to be undamaged on external inspection.

Referee's Information: The station is a secret psionics research station. When the party enter the station, or EVA to within a few metres of the station, each of them starts to hear unintelligible voices as if from a crossed communications channel. The station damage is from internal explosions and strange distortions. Strangely, the core portions of the station have operable life support that has simply been turned off. The base must be powered up to access the fuel storage; life support will automatically be turned on with the power. At the same time, ghosts begin to appear... The referee should secretly determine psionic ability for any players who have not already ascertained their capabilities.

1: The station crew died when they were attacked by pirates. However, they have been preserved as non-corporeal psionic entities. Some of these ghosts will appear to attack the characters physically but the damage inflicted is in the victim's mind; to a non-psionic this damage will appear totally real so the player will react accordingly, including losing consciousness. Any victim killed in this manner will actually die and, unless resuscitated or put in cold sleep, will become a ghost themselves. Psionics must make a Formidable Psionic task (draining half their psi strength) to realise the damage is imaginary.

2: The base is a trap for Zhodani. The ghosts are psionic illusions, created by an experimental system intended to combat Zhodani psionics. They can only damage psionically-sensitive sophonts, but such damage is permanent.

3: The base is a Zhodani trap, that destroys normal life and renders its victims into psionic ghosts. The ghost attacks reduce their victim's Int and End; when these both reach zero, the character becomes comatose and assumes a ghostly psionic form. After a number of hours equal to the victim's psi strength, brain death occurs and the ghost cannot return to its body. If healed prior to this point, the player will recover but may discover that this has brought out previously latent psionic abilities.

4: The ghosts are personnel who entered emergency low berths prior to the base being attacked. Damage to the experimental psionic equipment drove the other personnel – and then the pirates – quite mad. Subsequent power losses killed the low berth personnel but created psionic revenants from them. Some ghosts may be hostile to the players (attacking as per 1) but others will be co-operative and eventually inform the players that they must leave the station quickly. The power-up has activated the damaged psionic equipment, which will drive them mad unless they leave within 1D hours. They must race against the clock, and the troublesome ghosts, to get the fuel.

5: The ghosts are created by the mind of an 8-year-old Zhodani child – an experimental subject comatose in an emergency low berth running off battery power. Powering up the station has switched the berth to mains power but damage means the power is not reaching the low berth. The child is on the verge of death but may be saved using appropriate medical skills. The ghosts are distorted by the child's perspective (Imperial Marine guards will be ferocious and animal-like, Navy researchers will be cold and menacingly evil, a Zhodani noble ghost may be present in a guardian role). Once the child is awakened, the ghosts vanish. Eventually, the players will learn that the child, who has amazing psionic powers, caused the damage to the station.

6: The ghosts are holograms created by pirates (possibly Vargr) to frighten people away from the base, which is their secret refuelling depot. The system has little pirate activity but rumours of ghost ships abound. The pirates use the base solely for refuelling so as not to arouse suspicion. Careful inspection will reveal the station's true nature, but the party may not have long before a corsair arrives...

E2. *ACHILLES STATION*

Location: Spinward Marches (2120).

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship.

Players' Information: The players' ship suffers a misjump and arrives in the nominally empty parsec 2120 in the Lanth subsector of the Spinward Marches. To their astonishment (and relief) their sensors detect a group of asteroids just three days travel away, and emanating weak radio signals. Closer in, they can determine that two smaller rocks are being mined and a thriving colony of perhaps a thousand people is living on a huge ice asteroid. Once detected by the colony, the players will be challenged by a well-armed destroyer, of obsolete manufacture but undoubted power, commanded by a Captain Biktör.

Unless the players are hostile, Biktör will allow them to dock at the colony. He explains that the colonists are mostly miners from worked-out claims in other systems, plying their trade here at Achilles Station. They ship crudely processed metals in exchange for food and manufactured goods, but most of their money is made selling fuel to the occasional starships that pass this way. If the players do not explain that they misjumped, Biktör expresses some surprise that an Imperial ship knows of the station. However, he will allow the players to trade for fuel and other supplies.

While near the colony, the players will note that in addition to seekers and an occasional trader, there seem to be one or more unmarked military ships resembling corsairs... and they might question the purpose of Biktör's own ship.

Referee's Information: The Lanth subsector is a sparse grouping of stars with the Sword Worlds to rimward and a branch of the Spinward Main to trailing. Communication between Lanth and other Imperial worlds is slow, and trade somewhat limited. For this reason, a base in the sparse interior of the subsector has significant value. Some years back the misjumped Scout ship *Unforgivable Insult* discovered the ice asteroid, which provided them with fuel to reach D'Ganzio Naval Base for repairs. They reported to Scout authorities on Lanth that it was a possible waypoint for naval vessels, being Jump-4 from the bases at Lanth, Equus and Lunion, and a possible route for type S Scout ships to reach Lanth from the Scout base at Ivendo (2319) on the Spinward Main. Officially, this report was never followed up.

Achilles Station is of huge value as a refuelling base, so why has not the Imperial Navy simply taken over? In truth, they are already in charge; for all that Biktör's battered destroyer looks like a pirate, it was obtained from the mothballed reserve fleet at Trin only a couple of years ago. The crew are largely ex-service personnel, with a few scouts and colonists. Biktör is a Commander in Imperial Naval Intelligence but keeps to his psionic-screened quarters and bridge. The station is not intended to remain secret – in fact it is a trap for

invading Zhodani. Should the Zho's arrive, the ice asteroid will be vaporised with a huge fusion warhead, the existence of which is known only to Biktör and his executive officer. Without fuel, the Zhodani would hopefully be stranded.

Ling Standard Products has an exclusive contract for the metal extracted from the asteroids, and contributed most of the start-up costs. They believe Biktör to be a privateer of some sort, but are willing to do business with him. Corsairs do use the base, but never for long. Some have become part of Biktör's system defence squadron, while others return infrequently, if at all. Achilles Station is neither a haven for pirates nor too inclined to check up on the background of ships which call. Biktör secretly betrays the worst pirates to the Navy.

On leaving, Biktör will ask the players to be discreet about the station's location. If the party report the station's existence to the Imperial authorities, the latter will show surprisingly little interest – dismissing it as outside their jurisdiction.

1: A heavily armed merchant arrives at the colony and begins selling a strange variety of merchandise which appears (on inspection) to be pirated. If the players ask too many questions they will be told to mind their own business by the merchant crew, the colonists, and even Biktör.

2: As 1, but the merchant has battle damage. While it is being repaired at the station, its crew will be very sensitive to over-inquisitive players.

3: Biktör's ship suddenly recalls all crew from shore leave and heads out of the colony. Biktör is investigating a sensor blip which might be a Zhodani scout, but in reality it's a false alarm.

4: As 3, but Biktör finds a Zhodani scout which he attacks but, deliberately, allows to escape.

5: Biktör becomes suspicious of a new trader ship arriving at the station which he believes might carry Zhodani spies. The players will notice covert surveillance of the ship by Biktör's crew.

6: As 5, but Biktör suspects the players of having Zhodani spies among them!

E3. *THE SPINWARD MARCHES TOUR*

Required Skills: Combat.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: The party is approached by Geoff Qwon, the agent/manager of the neopop group Shattered Crystal. They are very popular, have just released a new album *Misjump*, and are starting a tour of the Spinward Main to promote it. If the party have the appropriate experience Geoff will say he has heard good things about them, and

wishes to hire them (Cr. 5,000/month each) as the security team for the tour. They will provide the band's personal security, oversee arrangements with local venue security, and manage the protection of the box office (tickets and takings). In reality, Geoff adds, they will also end up serving as babysitters for the band. It's inevitable, he adds, tiredly – everyone associated with the tour ends up doing that.

Referee's Information: The schedule is pretty rigorous, with 20 systems to be visited and up to 14 shows in each system. There will be a two week rest period in the middle of the tour. Geoff may charter the party's vessel if it is large enough for the band and retinue (five band members plus 15-30 odd techs, roadies, flunkies, groupies and other hangers-on). This could easily be the basis for a lengthy campaign.

At the beginning of the tour, life is a giant party. The party may be sucked into the lifestyle of the band, which revolves around loud music, self adoration and general chaos. Characters participating too enthusiastically in this lifestyle should suffer small negative modifiers (secretly added by the referee adding) to task rolls.

1: After one stop the Vargr drummer falls under the influence of a charismatic Vargr supremacist. He announces that he's not going to play with these 'souk'k monkeys' (an obscene insult) any more unless they make him the head of the band and rename themselves Vargrr'ok'hrok'. Naturally, the band refuses so he stomps off and joins the leader of the sect. Geoff requests the party to go and retrieve him – without undue violence! This will be a complicated process unless one of the party is a Vargr.

2: It was a lucrative two week tour on this planet. Two days before the party is scheduled to lift for the next stop, two roadies grab the weeks' box office takings – MCr. 3 – and vanish into the city. The party have only 48 hours to track them down and retrieve the cash.

3: The bass player picks up a young-looking groupie after the show. If the players check, she says she is of legal age but the next morning her father (alerted to her whereabouts by her friends) storms into the bass player's rooms and finds them misbehaving. Since he is from a culture that highly values a daughter's chastity, he's enraged. Under local laws he is entitled to either demand that the offending man marry his daughter (a problem, since the bass player already has two wives and a couple of girlfriends) or can challenge him to a duel to satisfy his honour.

4: The Harlik-le-el player falls in with some people after the show, and comes back three days later with a new spiritual

adviser – a Disciple of the Bright Way. The Disciples believe that the Face of the Deity can be seen by viewing naked jump space, using a secret combination of drugs and meditation to avoid the motion sickness and even madness that exposure to jump space causes to most people. While under the effects of such drugs, the Harlikle-el player is persuaded by his adviser to suit up, enter an airlock, open the outer door and lean out a bit to see the face of god. Such close proximity to the jump field may drive one or both insane; the efficacy of the drugs against these effects is by no means as guaranteed as the adviser makes out. The drugs also induce drowsiness and reduce cognitive ability (temporarily), such that they might well not have rigged their suits correctly...

5: While playing a show in a more conservative city, an anonymous tip leads the police to conduct a raid on the hotel in which the band is staying (the players may be caught up in the raid). Naturally, various 'substances' are found which may or may not be legal. However, there's a pompous uptight politician running for re-election, who decides the band are examples of offworld depravity. There will be a lot of media interest in the event. The party will need to stage a jailbreak or find the right person to bribe, before the case comes to court.

6: Following 4, the ship's engineer has been particularly quiet for several weeks. Unknown to anyone else, he also came under the influence of the Disciple and became hooked on the adviser's drugs – he procured a supply prior to the events in 4. While moving out to a jump point, he takes a large dose of the drugs. As the drives power up for jump, he locks himself in the main engineering room and begins broadcasting a weird, psychotic, rambling diatribe. Anyone able to monitor the jump power-up from another terminal in the ship will realise he has altered the sequence and will cause a misjump. Assuming no one manages to stop him, after one week, the ship exits jump space many parsecs off course, in the atmosphere of a low population, low tech world. The ship's residual velocity is too great to prevent it crashing into a remote area of the world, although good piloting can reduce the severity of the crash. Once the party, band and followers find the nearest habitation they will learn that occasionally starships land at a village on the far side of this continent. This distance must be traversed on foot or using draft animals. Offworld currency has no value here and the inhabitants have deliberately chosen a low tech life so high tech goods are taboo. If the band can be convinced to stop whining, they may be able to raise funds by playing (acoustic instruments only, of course) their way across the continent. The music preferred by the locals is considerably different to the band's usual neopop, though...

E4. LAST RITES

Required Skills: None.

Required Equipment: Starship with 1 spare stateroom and 2 tons cargo space.

Players' Information: The party is contacted by Mijel Tanklev, a senior executive from CHV Industries, a local subsector-wide corporation. His son, Vidor Tanklev, was recently killed in an accident, and he needs the body to be conveyed to their nearby homeworld for the funeral. Mijel will travel with the cargo; apart from this he is unaccompanied. He offers Cr. 10,000 total, payable on arrival at the homeworld. If asked about the accident he will explain that his son, an executive at the same corporation, was killed in an industrial incident at a local plant. In reality, his son was undertaking an inspection when a venting of poison gas killed him and several other staff. CHV has managed to hush up the affair to prevent local outrage, but the players may pick up rumours from the local press or from CHV employees.

The body is stored in a large metallic coffin, taking up 2 tons of space. The coffin is inlaid with numerous strange symbols, similar to hieroglyphics, although the symbols are not representative of any beings known to exist on any local worlds. Tanklev explains that the coffin is an antique, and that he purchased it locally. If the players, or local customs officials, ask for the coffin to be opened, they will find the body to be in excellent condition; it has already been subjected to high tech preservation techniques at Tanklev's employers' expense.

Tall and slender, with tightly cropped white hair and a light tan complexion, Tanklev could probably pass for someone in their early 40s. His taste in clothes seems expensive – he favours toned grey, well-cut business suits from up-market brand names. Although unfailingly polite, he does not engage in small talk and will spend the journey immersed in business reports. Occasionally, during the night, he can be heard to scream in his sleep.

1: On arrival at the starport, Mijel's grieving wife (who is the head of CHV) meets them. In addition to the money, the Tanklev family provide the players with a letter of introduction they can use at corporate offices throughout the subsector.

2: The body in the coffin is actually that of Chibor Ragen, the local CHV head of operations. The accident which killed him was due to a failure in a new, secret industrial process, of which the excellent preservation of the body is a side-effect. The body is being taken home for further analysis. The local press and the authorities are both on the trail of Tanklev to find out what really went wrong, and would probably close down the local CHV plant if they knew the truth.

3: The body in the coffin is that of Kenzit Zahl, a local journalist who was murdered by local CHV operatives when he seemed to be getting too close to the cause of the accident at the local plant. Tanklev is smuggling the body offworld. Zahl's employers are searching for him and have alerted the local authorities but only have sketchy details of his suspicions about CHV.

4: As 3, but Zahl has been kidnapped and is in cold sleep. The cold sleep will last until just before the ship goes into jump, at which point Zahl will wake up and start screaming and hammering on the inside of the coffin. When released, he will directly accuse Tanklev, who will respond by drawing a gun and attempting to kill Zahl. He may then bribe the players to forget this incident or, in an extreme situation, he may take a hostage or try to take over the ship.

5: The coffin is an ancient artefact that Tanklev has stolen from a local archaeological dig. Little is known about its background – there has been no time for an extended investigation. One of Tanklev's fellow executives in CHV is a collector of such artefacts and is willing to pay good money for such a specimen. The body is that of Halley Ganjak, the local rogue who organised the theft. Ganjak is in cold sleep. He will wake before the ship goes into jump; however he will remain in the coffin for the course of the journey. Various facilities to filter air and process waste have been provided within the coffin but Tanklev will need to smuggle him food and drink from time to time.

6: Everything is as Tanklev has described; however the coffin is actually a semi-sentient device with various psionic abilities. These abilities will be triggered when the ship goes into jump and will last for the duration of the jump. The effect is similar to that of a poltergeist, e.g. items will move around, levers and buttons are activated at random, minor devices may fail. Although none of the activity is malevolent, some of the resulting effects may cause the ship to misjump. Attempts by any psionists in the group to establish contact with the coffin (if they manage to work out the coffin is behind the mysterious occurrences) will only have the effect of intensifying the coffin's psionic activity. Shortly before the ship is due to exit jump, the coffin will telekinetically animate the body of Vidor Tanklev, which will leave the hold area and wander, jerkily and erratically, around the ship. Although the animated corpse is incapable of speech, it will seek out some substance (oil, jam, paint, whatever) which it will use to daub a pattern on a wall. Somebody may recognise this as a representation of a constellation visible from the world on which the coffin was found. The coffin's activity will cease when the ship exits jumpspace.

E5. RAISE THE TITANIC

Required Skills: Combat, Medic, Investigate.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: A representative of Chen Associates, a local gravitics consultancy firm, approaches the party. Chen has been contracted by General Products to oversee the repair of a failed grav city on a nearby world. The Chen Company, having dealt with megacorps before, are suspicious of GP's intentions, and intend to send a team of independent bodyguards on the mission. The pay is Cr. 700 per person per day, with a Cr. 20,000 bonus for the group on completion. Any character in the players' team with medical skills is offered an extra Cr. 100 per day.

The grav city in question, Alchan, was the home of three million people. About 6 months ago, for reasons currently unknown, the main contra-grav system failed, along with the four backup systems. Emergency compensation systems allowed the city to make a soft landing; however, the resulting damage caused the death of about a quarter of the city's population. In the subsequent period most of the dead have been cleared, and the survivors evacuated to a hastily established refugee station about 30 miles away. However, the city has not yet been sterilised to remove the diseases which ensued and protective suits may be required in some sectors (high tech General Products protective suits will be supplied if necessary).

Referee's Information: The local authorities have requested that General Products engage an independent group to re-initialise the grav systems onboard the city, and to report on any anomalies which may arise, in the hope that evidence may be uncovered concerning the cause of the disaster. The Chen team is almost all former senior consultants at Imperial Gravtech, a gravitics subsidiary of Sternmetal Horizons. They generally have a poor view of General Products' quality standards, and will be quite snippy about the technology in the city. The players will be positioned by the Chen team as Chen employees. They are given uniforms bearing the Chen Associates logo, and are asked to pretend that they are Chen's permanent security team.

Optionally, if the players' team has sufficient gravitics and other technical skills, they could be taken on directly by General Products to deal with the raising of the grav city, supplemented by other expert Non-Player Characters where necessary – and perhaps a Non-Player Character security group.

The Chen Associates Group

Michael Chen, Scientist, Male, Age 46

The former Chief Technology Officer at Imperial Gravtech, with an impressive knowledge of gravitics. Chen led the breakaway group to set up his own freelance organisation; some of his team have shares in the business. Tall, dark,

friendly and charismatic. He will get very wrapped up in the technical problems once on-site, and will leave most of the detailed running of the operation to Ms Goskin.

Jeannette Chen, Scientist, Female, Age 34

Chen's second wife (the first is still alive, on Chen's homeworld – they maintain amicable relations). Slim, good looking, friendly. Will look after most computer systems issues for the team and is a gravitics expert in her own right.

Karin Goskin, Bureaucrat, Female, Aged 36

Chen's Personal Assistant did not come from Gravtech but was recruited from another technology company. Responsible for most of the actual running of the organisation. An employee rather than a stakeholder – does not have a share in the business.

Jen Casley, Scientist, Male, Aged 32

Chen's star research assistant, now deputy head of Chen Associates. Comes across as an arrogant know-it-all. All too willing to start an argument, except with Chen himself. However, since he has no fighting skills, he may pick his moments more carefully with the players.

Veshan Kulek, Scientist, Male, Aged 36

The second research assistant. Generally withdrawn and quiet. He does not tend to respond to Casley's frequent taunts about being slow.

Gellar Quiron, Ex-Scout, Female, Aged 42

Like Goskin, an employee rather than a stakeholder. She was recruited for her starship piloting and engineering skills and will be responsible for any practical engineering work (on the grav city, there will be similar systems to those aboard a ship, for example the power systems). Friendly, with plenty of old scout tales, and will latch onto any ex-scouts among the players.

The Setting

An emergency habitat has been set up alongside the crashed city, along with a landing pad for Chen's ship, and others for GP supply ships. The city has the shape of a flattened sphere. There are about 300 grav modules set around the outside rim of the city, in clusters of 10; these are managed from a control room near the centre of the structure, and also connected to 4 emergency control rooms equidistant around the city. They are also connected to the power grid, the computing net and other such systems. Each of the grav modules, control systems (main and backup) and the power grid require inspection, using the appropriate skills. Each grav module requires replacement on 7+ on 2D; replacements are being held at the General Products station on the starport, and can be ferried over in batches of up to 12 units at a time.

The city can be raised with a minimum of half the grav modules and at least one control system operational.

Imperial regulations – which the Chen group will be familiar with – call for at least 3 of the control centres to be online. The subsequent reliability of the system is left to the referee.

External inspection of the city, and entrance to the city, is accomplished using grav belts. However the Chen team, from a position of informed paranoia, will also use magnetic tethers and boots to attach to the exterior of the city while work is underway. About 100 General Products representatives, including security personnel, are working on other aspects of the city repair. The team will be required to liaise with the GP head of operations, the head of security, and several of the technical personnel.

Each day, roll 1D. On 5+ an event occurs; roll 2D and consult the following list.

- 2:** An assassination attempt is made against one of the Chen team.
- 3:** A survivor is found within the city. If pressed, they will claim to have evidence of suspicious activity since the disaster (as appropriate to the outcome selected below).
- 4:** The players find 1D bodies.
- 5:** A grav nullifier is set off in one of the grav module clusters. Grav systems within 1D metres of the nullifier fail, including grav belts.
- 6:** An assassination attempt is made against one of the GP representatives.
- 7:** 2D bodies are recovered within the city.
- 8:** A refugee demonstration occurs.
- 9:** As 8, but followed by a riot.
- 10:** A fire starts within the city, threatening the power grid, and has to be contained.
- 11-12:** GP medical personnel announce a disease alert within a sector of the city. Work stops while the sector is sterilised.

Possible Outcomes

- 1:** The city failed because the grav systems supplied by General Products were faulty. Careful examination of the grav modules that do not require replacement will detect further potentially faulty units. General Products will accept the report but ask that it be kept confidential so that they can manage the situation.
- 2:** As 1, but General Products are already aware of the fault. They resent the Chen presence at the site and will try to sabotage the group's activities. Optionally, one of the Chen team may be a traitor working for GP.
- 3:** The city was sabotaged by one of General Products' competitors. The saboteurs have infiltrated the GP clean-up

team and will try to undermine the Chen team's activities. Optionally, one of the Chen team may be a traitor working for the competition.

4: As 3, however the guilty party are Sternmetal Horizons. The saboteurs have infiltrated the GP clean-up team and will try to undermine the Chen team's activities. Optionally, one of the team is a traitor working for Sternmetal.

5: As 3, however the sabotage has been conducted by a local terrorist organisation, committed to the destruction of the grav cities. The saboteurs have infiltrated the GP clean-up team and will try to undermine the Chen team's activities, or plant evidence incriminating GP. Optionally, one of the team is a terrorist infiltrator.

6: As 3, however the Chen team conducted the sabotage to enhance their reputation. They will use the exercise as an opportunity to vindicate themselves and to remove any evidence of their sabotage. However, a survivor (found in the city, or one of the refugees) will recognise one of the Chen group as having visited shortly *before* the city's fall – raising the players' suspicions. Optionally, one of the Chen team is an undercover agent for GP or local or Imperial law enforcement.

E6. DOWN THESE MEAN STREETS

Required Skills: Investigate.

Required Equipment: None.

Players' Information: A rich businessman – Harland Sim – approaches the group to search for his missing son Jaime. Pay is Cr. 2,000 per day plus reasonable expenses, for the whole group, plus a Cr. 10,000 bonus when Jaime is returned alive. Jaime Sim (age 27) has been missing for 10 days and his father is very worried. Jaime has been moving in the 'wrong sort of circles'; he has a gambling habit and Harland has repeatedly had to bail him out of trouble. This time, something snapped: Harland argued with Jaime, and Jaime walked out. When Harland had calmed down, Jaime had left home and was nowhere to be found.

Last night Harland received a message telling him to hand over Cr. 100,000 if he ever wants to see his son again. Harland claims not to be able to pay this ransom, although the players can find out that he lives in a large waterfront property in one of the most sought-after parts of town.

Referee's Information: The party should visit the local bars and gambling dives to get evidence that can lead them to Jaime. In the process, they should meet the following characters.

- Clara is Jaime's 22-year old sister. She will flirt outrageously with one or more players, and put on a show of not caring about what has happened to her brother. She is aware of the argument between her father and Jaime. She denies the stories about Jaime's gambling. She's not aware of the ransom demand.
- Zevon Kandle is the gangster who runs the local gambling business. He is a tough guy who surrounds himself with minders. He admits knowing Jaime and that Jaime owes him money, but he claims not to have seen Jaime for two weeks. Jaime has owed him money before and come through, so it will be a few more weeks before Zevon starts worrying – there are worse payers than Jaime Sim!
- Vel Thayim is the local chief of police. He's not looking for Jaime; nobody asked him to. He knows Jaime – in fact Jaime has acted as an informant for him in the past, and he paid Jaime handsomely. As for Harland Sim, now there is a guy who warrants further investigation... Where did he get that big house on his lousy, middle management salary?
- Olaf Chaman is a small-time cult leader. He runs a local retreat where Jaime has been staying while he 'wrote a book, or his memoirs, or something'. He left to move back in with his father about a month ago. One of Olaf's group acted as a runner for Jaime, liaising with Kandle and Thayim.
- Selena Chaman is Olaf's daughter. She was the runner Jaime was using and was also his lover. She has not seen Jaime since he moved back in with his father. She's worried sick something terrible has happened to him and will give the players any help she can.

The specifics of this story (the style and fittings of Harland's residence, aliens as key Non-Player Characters, Jaime's gambling games, etc.) should be adapted to the world on which it is set. The meetings with these key Non-Player

Characters should be interspersed with talking to barmen, waitresses, patrons, etc. at a variety of low-life venues. These contacts will eventually point them at the key Non-Player Characters.

In addition to using one of the following outcomes, the referee may opt to introduce another of the options as a red herring subplot.

1: Harland Sim has been spending way beyond his means. He recently took out an insurance policy on Jaime's life. Hired thugs are holding Jaime until it's convenient to have his body turn up so that Harland can collect.

2: One of Olaf Chaman's jobs was to take a ritual confession from Jaime; in the process he found out about Jaime's gambling and other bad habits. He asked Jaime to stop seeing Selena, but Jaime refused, so Olaf had some cultists kidnap him. The ransom demand is a cover; Chaman has finally decided that he must kill Jaime.

3: Clara and Jaime are working together, and have faked the kidnapping to blackmail their father for the money.

4: Zevon Kandle was under increasing pressure from the police until he found out Jaime was their informant. He plans to kill Jaime, but the ransom is a useful ruse and will pay off the debts Jaime owed him.

5: Vel Thayim is corrupt, as is half his force. He's been using the information from Jaime to blackmail Kandle for a cut of the takings. But Jaime began trying to blackmail Thayim with the threat of going to the press. He needs Jaime out of the way. He will ensure the ransom conditions are not met, to explain Jaime's corpse turning up.

6: As 3, but Jaime is working with Selena.

STARPORT CHATTER

It is a well known Traveller axiom that every adventure starts or ends in a starport, and the local news and rumours encountered around the starport often provide the spark for an adventure. These tidbits of information can be found on station bulletin boards, wanted notices, or even in conversations overheard in a bar or shop.

Red Hand Claim Three Victims!

The terrorist group known as the Red Hand has claimed responsibility for the explosion killing three people in the capital last month. The group states they will 'continue to fight against Imperial aggression until the nobles in power are thrown down.' According to Marquis Tmezial, many have disregarded this latest act as that of 'unfortunate extremists who cannot survive in a civilised world.' However, security has increased noticeably at some local noble houses, including Count Paul Montarra, who said 'I might not believe those people are widely supported, but I'm not risking my young family on that assumption.'

Record numbers of downport cargo handlers have been taking vacation time this week as part of their industrial action. As a result, traders are having to resort to hired help or direct payments to handlers to ensure timely loading and unloading. NuFlash/2-3-12/Marg/item?=265

NEWS

PortNews

'Repos killed my partner' claims Olen Vikas of the *Eventualis* – one of a dozen small merchant vessels seized in the past few months across the subsector in acts of aggressive skip tracing and repossession. Several law suits have been filed with the Imperial Ministry of Justice concerning undue violence used by the repo agents, including deadly force in response to crew members who have attempted to defend the vessel. Of the vessels seized some 15 crew have been killed; the remaining 32 crew are in custody awaiting trial. The IMoJ declined to comment.

Perionis Sceptres Stolen!

Jewellery collectors are concerned at a recent spate of thefts. Four Jeweller's Guild members have reported losses totalling Cr. 150,000, including the unique Perionis Sceptres that have been in the guild's Historical Society collection for over 100 years. In addition to Imperial investigations, the guild have hired independent agencies, creating "unnecessary tensions" according to the Ministry of Justice spokescreature. [NuzNow Inc]

Mines Closed Due To Spares Shortage

Three mining complexes have been shut down due to lack of spares for their power converter modules. The modules, by Nestoria Electronics, have been unavailable since the company went into Imperial Chapter 47.5C Bankruptcy 2 months ago. Existing supplies are exhausted and the mining corps are paying highly for anyone who can supply them. Several smaller firms have cut back on work and sold their converters for high prices and/or research data concessions

The Toporek has been sighted again...

This now-famous ghost ship was originally a reserve fleet fast frigate, lost during the Fourth Frontier War. The latest sighting was reported by two sensor operators on the bulk merchant freighter Algotha. Their official report stated the Toporek appeared on both passive sensors and long range visual. However, after inspecting the Algotha's sensor logs, its owners claimed 'no such sensor reports exist'. The two crewmen were fired within hours of producing a bootleg copy of the log. The crewmen and the log have since disappeared and are being sought by conspiracy fanatics.

RUMOURS

The following can be dropped into any campaign, as red herrings or the start of new adventures.

DUE TO A SUDDEN SHORTAGE OF POWER CONVERTER MODULES FOR THE LOCAL MINING INDUSTRY SEVERAL SMALL MINING COMPANIES HAVE BEEN BURGLARIED FOR THESE PARTS. THE INCREDIBLY HIGH BLACK MARKET PRICES HAVE LED TO THREE REPORTED BURGLARIES AND OVER A DOZEN INTERNAL AND UNREPORTED THEFTS.

IT IS RUMOURED THAT THE POLICE ARE INVESTIGATING THE DISAPPEARANCE OF AN F6MP 15 FROM AN IMPERIAL MARINE GRAV APC AT THE STARPORT TWO WEEKS AGO. THE MARINE WHO LEFT IT UNATTENDED HAS BEEN SEVERELY DISCIPLINED. HOWEVER, PORTSEC REFUSE TO CONFIRM OR DENY THIS STORY.

RECENTLY ZEALOUS CUSTOMS INSPECTORS HAVE BEEN CITING MERCHANTS FOR IMPROPER LABELLING OF CARGO CONTAINERS, EVEN WHERE THE STICKERS WERE ONLY A FEW CENTIMETRES FROM THE PRESCRIBED CENTRAL POSITION ON THE CRATES. MERCHANTS HAVE ALLEGED THAT THE INSPECTORS ARE JUST TRYING TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF BRIBES THEY CAN GET PER WEEK.

ROBOTS ALL OVER THE STARPORT HAVE BEEN ACTING STRANGELY. THEY HAVE BEEN MORE ALERT THAN NORMAL AT TIMES, AND SEVERAL HAVE DISAPPEARED. LOCAL AUTHORITIES BELIEVE THE MISSING ROBOTS WERE SIMPLY STOLEN, AND DISCOUNT THE STORIES THAT THE ROBOTS ATTAINED HIGHER INTELLIGENCE AND DECIDED TO LEAVE FOR A LIFE OF FREEDOM OFFWORLD.

LOCAL CRIMINAL SYNDICATES HAVE BEEN UNUSUALLY QUIET OVER THE PAST FEW WEEKS. POLICE SOURCES INDICATE THEY ARE EXPECTING SOME KIND OF CONFLICT TO ERUPT AT ANY MOMENT. SEVERAL WEAPONS DEALERS IN STARTOWN HAVE EXPERIENCED RECORD SALES LATELY.

VIOLENT STARSHIP REPOSSESSIONS ARE BEING UNDERTAKEN BY A NEW SHADOW CORPORATION WORKING ON BEHALF OF LARGER MEGACORPS WHO WISH TO AVOID ANY LEGAL REPERCUSSIONS FROM DIRECT INVOLVEMENT. THE GROUP ALLEGEDLY USES EX-MARINES BUT NO ONE WILL REVEAL THE NAME OF THE REPO CORPORATION RESPONSIBLE FOR THESE REPOSSESSIONS.

COPIES OF THE GALACTIC FLORA & FAUNA DATACRYSTAL BY FOREXCLUTAP HAS HAD SOME REALLY REVEALING VIDS HACKED INTO IT SHOWING SEVERAL LOCAL CELEBRITIES HAVING 'FUN' TOGETHER. THE MAKERS ARE FALLING OVER THEMSELVES TO GET BACK THE DATACRYSTALS WHICH WERE ALLEGEDLY HACKED BY A DISGRUNTLED EMPLOYEE.

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS

The following are commonly read or heard announcements found around starports.

DO NOT ALLOW ANYONE TO HANDLE YOUR LUGGAGE
DO NOT ACCEPT GIFTS FROM ANYONE WHILE WAITING TO BOARD YOUR FLIGHT.
*VIOLATION OF THESE DIRECTIVES MAY PLACE YOURSELF AND OTHERS IN NEEDLESS DANGER. PLEASE
NOTIFY PORT SECURITY OF ANY SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY. THANK YOU.*

NAV WARN

Space zone alpha-3 is off-limits to all shipping due to debris from the explosion of the trader *Yolanthis*. The corridor should be cleared within 48 hours by magno-dredge tugs.

MEDCENTRAL NOTICE

An outbreak of food poisoning at the Faery Lights restaurant has been identified as *yuliesisia fungi*. Crews having eaten at this restaurant within the last 24 hours are prohibited from flying and should report to port MedCentral immediately.

TRADCOM WIDECALL

All traders carrying type E/F grains or V-Nil foodstuffs should check for infestation with Crane's Bacteria brought in by a recent shipment. Infestations should be reported to Port Decon. Liability for compensation currently rests with the importer of the contaminated shipment.

RECALL NOTICE

ForExcluTap Inc. are offering a replacement plus a full 100% refund for returns of their *Galactic Flora & Fauna* dat-crystal which has a number of errors in its indexing system.

MEDCENTRAL NOTICE

Air irritant warning! Pollution levels are at an all time high this week. All persons prone to respiratory problems should wear their filter-masks.

RECALL NOTICE

All purchasers of the XHairs ship gunnery package versions 3.2f-k should return their software to a stockist of Lazware Inc. goods for a free replacement. These versions may suffer targeting mis-calibration with certain makes of turret installation.

TRADCOM WIDECALL

Ships with freshers fitted by QikFlud Crew Relief Inc. who have experienced an explosive blow back due to build up of methane should contact QikFlud for a free filter upgrade. Should the QikFlud toilet unit begin vibrating during use, vacate the area immediately!

ADVERTS

Wherever players engage in commerce, they will inevitably be bombarded by advertisements for other products and services.

*Problems with jumping where **you** want, when **you** want?*

Move up to **Hyperlight** nav mapping with our library of fine-tuned jump routes and one year's **free** co-ord updates from all good starports.

GET *Redundant Clones* TICKETS NOW!

Due to good fortune (okay, a jump drive failure on the *Forever Dawn*) the notorious counterculture musical band **Redundant Clones** have a layover of fourteen days in system. A whole **three** additional concerts have been scheduled, including a charity performance with your local favourites *Frequent Lift*. **These tickets will sell quickly, so get your tickets early**

– RedCloAdv Inc.

REWARD OF Cr. 2,500

Three pet Pomrafi were stolen two weeks ago from the **Baroness Reliss Mylagian**. These pets are very temperature-sensitive and cannot survive for long outside their specially designed cold weather habitats. The reward is for any information leading to the safe return of the pets.

Wanted

*Mechanic for surface starport cargo loading maintenance division. Excellent **pay** and **benefits**. Apply at the Main Terminal.*

Make A Difference In Your Work!

Customs inspectors are needed for the upcoming harvest domes export season. **No experience** necessary, **all training** provided. **Bonus** for certified shipboard skills or combat training.

Apply PortSec103A.

Wanted

Information on the whereabouts of **Inchi Fanga**, a technician at Extrax Mining. Fanga disappeared 8 days ago at the same time as a quantity of mining tools and a sealed air/raft.

Good Pay for Night Work

Bouncer required at the Cold Fusion Club. A fun place to work.

Nigella@coldfusion.dport.local.

WORLD SEEDS

These are little nuggets of information that a referee can apply to a world to help add flavour to it and, potentially, as a seed for further adventure ideas.

1. This world's universities are heavily politicised, and do not co-operate so much as they compete, so archaeology is conducted à la Indiana Jones. Valuable sites of pre-human settlement are claimed by institutions which do not have the resources to investigate them properly but refuse to let anyone else do so.
2. Certain ancient alien settlement remains here are famed for their aesthetic appeal and are important tourist attractions. There are a few good sites which are as yet much less well known (or even undiscovered) but many more that are overrated and little more than tourist traps.
3. Nomadic animal herders provide the sparse population of this fairly inhospitable, low tech world. However, they must have once had access to high technology for they have been using satellite navigation and other high tech navigation aids to herd their beasts for centuries.
4. The local environment is either cold with a thin atmosphere, very warm and humid, or very hot and dry. Protective gear is a necessity for humans who live or work outside the centres of settlement, but the local lifeforms are well adapted to the conditions.
5. This culture has a peculiar taboo against writing and depends on oral culture, but maintains a surprisingly high tech level through rote learning, memorisation, and apprenticeship.
6. This culture is very strongly family-oriented. Unlike most Solomani cultures, it has retained social organisation along kinship lines through technological advances – something more typical in Vilani culture. The locals extend these principles to offworlders, regarding them as extended members of the appropriate families according to their occupation and social grouping.
7. This high population planet's agriculture is based on the few imported species genetically engineered to adapt to planetary conditions. In spite of precautions, there is now a fast-spreading and virulent disease killing the key food animals. Thousands of people are nearing starvation. If the outbreak is not checked, it could be a major planetary disaster affecting billions.
8. A colony several centuries old has suffered a loss in agricultural productivity over the last two generations. The colony is small and does not have a good research institute to solve the problem, so the government has been appealing for outside help for some time but to no avail. The problem is a gradual build-up of trace minerals in the soil which poison the crops, something that more fertiliser does not fix. Reversing this requires complex agrochemical treatments from an offworld source.
9. A new settlement is having difficulty because it depends for transportation on a river which is prone to unpredictable and severe flooding, yet at other times may suddenly run low of water, making it almost impossible to navigate at times.
10. In one region of this planet, high humidity and an insidious lifeform make long-term storage of food very difficult, even with good food preservation technology.
11. Tensions are rising between two key cities situated on the same river. Both have been gradually expanding their irrigation networks. The downstream city claims the upstream city is taking more than its fair share of water and is polluting it. The smaller upstream city claims the other city is merely trying to bully it.
12. This culture wants to expand, but suffers from one or more natural obstacles; it does not have the agricultural potential, the climate is inhospitable, it lacks the manpower for large scale construction and engineering works, there are geographic barriers to surface transportation, its TL limits the speed of communication, or it does not have easy access to the materials, such as mineral resources or energy, to manufacture needed equipment, vehicles, or tools.
13. This world's topography makes surface transportation and communication difficult, so that the natural political subdivisions are city states, or individual nations. There is a world government, but it is not very strong; most inhabitants are more loyal to their own region.
14. This world's intelligent and able ruler has converted to a pacifist, humanitarian religion. After rising to power through rebellion and bloody warfare, he finally became appalled by the carnage and destruction of the battles that conquered his rivals.
15. Smaller cities are fought over by more powerful rivals. One particular city-state has been conquered 18 times in 24 years. This power struggle is sustained only because

the warfare is limited and the more destructive advanced weaponry is seldom used – the purpose of the warfare is to assume the assets and manufacturing capabilities of a city, so turning it into a ruin is pointless.

16. This culture puts a great deal of effort into constructing grand public buildings and monuments with symbolic rather than practical value. No expense is spared and the highest quality materials are used. A range of rare and expensive offworld raw materials must be imported for the latest creation to exceed the standard set by the last monument.

17. In this culture, domestic slavery is still practised. Foreign slave trade is forbidden, foreigners cannot be taken as slaves, and domestic slaves cannot be sold out of the culture. (Imperial law forbids interstellar slave trade.)

18. This world has a highly unstable law level and government, frequently switching between balkanised states and a charismatic dictatorship, depending upon whether the dictator controls a majority of the individual nations or only a plurality. The law level varies accordingly, depending on the paranoia of the current ruler.

19. On this balkanised world, a ruler of a minor nation is taking advantage of the fact that settlement patterns and technology have changed over the past century to propel his nation to prominence. He is well on the way to establishing an effective world government.

20. A new government has ordered revised versions of history texts to be used in the schools. Events related to the government and culture of the current rulers are added or emphasised, while events which were interpreted to legitimise the former government are downplayed or omitted. Changes in the arts curriculum are also being proposed.

21. Technological progress in the rural regions of this world is handicapped because the inhabitants persist in using an old and cumbersome form of writing that only a few elite can fully master. They also refuse to accept new technology-related words into the language.

22. This minor alien race remains minor in part because it refuses to adopt human decimal notation or standards for any of its technology. All numeric information normally expressed in the decimal system must be translated into the (superior, of course) duodecimal system.

23. Planetary law explicitly recognises castes or orders of society, such as Imperial nobility, planetary nobility, a middle or gentry class, and a peasant or free servant class. Different rules and privileges are extended to members of each class, and many of the interactions between them are regulated by law.

24. Local law forbids lawyers from arguing a person's case in court. Each person must argue his or her own case (using prior advice from a lawyer), except where physical or mental disability prevents the person from doing so.

25. Consumer protection laws include a possible death penalty for the maker of a product which kills a user; examples include: restaurant food poisoning, failed buildings, unsafe drugs, poisonous chemical spills. Equipment manufacturers are required to notify purchasers of all known hazards in using the equipment and bear a share of the risk of their occurrence, but remain fully liable for unknown hazards or defects in manufacture.

26. This society is based on small, tightly knit villages. Even larger cities are composed of distinct neighbourhoods. Villages interact only through designated spokesmen, and inquiries about the inner workings of another village are regarded as intrusive.

27. Marriage is formalised with a business-like contract. The bride is provided with a dowry by her parents, but they may require a bride-price from the groom or his parents. The wife is considered the property owner and in case of divorce, retains title to at least as much as her dowry. The husband, however, is considered the property manager.

28. This world is nearly uninhabitable except for one (or a few) particular region(s), e.g. a mountain range, crater, river or canyon. Even this area is subject to frequent natural disasters.

29. This world has abundant resources and has previously been a major exporter. Its self sufficiency and position off the Jump-1 main means that its populace are very self-centred, aloof and openly arrogant towards offworlders.

30. This culture's religion and philosophy are strongly influenced by cyclical orderliness. The people turn fatalistic in times of success and optimistic in times of trouble. This belief seems natural because the various natural cycles on the world are unusually regular.

31. There is a strong belief in spirits and the afterlife; so much that people routinely orient their behaviour towards making the spirits welcome. Tales of ghosts and various forms of spiritual intervention abound. Those who specialise in debunking the occult are not welcome here.

32. Lack of erosion means ancient human constructs are enduring reminders of the past. The people have a keen sense of history and often make decisions at all levels based on the 'experience' of events many thousand years ago, discussing them as if they had occurred recently.

33. The world's agricultural land taxes are collected annually after the harvest. Tax rates have been raised slightly despite a bad harvest, causing the farmers to block food supplies to the cities and demonstrate in the streets.

34. This world's rulers are despised as hated conquerors by the people they rule, in spite of their best humanitarian efforts to educate the populace and create goodwill.

35. The absolute ruler of this world is trying single-handedly to make a radical change in its religion. On this world religious interests are closely tied to economic and political interests.

36. One of the high-population worlds which had politically, economically, and culturally dominated the region has suffered a devastating reversal due to the collapse of its banking system. Several of the worlds it had influenced are now asserting their independence, though none have the same stature as the afflicted world.

37. The central government has collapsed within the last few weeks, and there is a general state of lawlessness and chaos. No one is able to command allegiance and restore the government.

38. This world is favourably situated on a jump main and is a major headquarters for shipping concerns. It specialises in building and operating more larger, longer-range ships than their neighbours and is therefore the major source of colonisation attempts and technological transfer to less-developed worlds.

39. Wealthy individuals are unfairly using the advantage of access to higher technology for their farms and industries; smaller farms and businesses are closing as they cannot compete.

40. The government rules through fear of its efficient military. Its high tech communication system alerts the rulers to any sign of insurrection and its advanced transportation swiftly carries military units to the site to swiftly and brutally repress the potential rebels. Calculated atrocities inspire terror and serve as an example to others.

41. The harsh central government of this world does not yet realise that one of its more important subject regions is secretly negotiating for offworld military assistance to overthrow the central government.

42. The world government is so respectful of free expression that it has attracted a huge variety of cultures and societies with their different religions, local institutions, customs, and

languages. Undertaking almost any dealing here involves multiple translators, variant legal systems, currency exchange, etc.

43. The government has strict control over agriculture, food processing, and food distribution, with stiff penalties for unapproved production, importation or sales of any foodstuffs.

44. An ancient civilisation left remains that appear to surpass known technology. Although various documents have been found, progress in understanding and translating them has been very slow, and only a few isolated words are known. The known documents do not appear to contain technical information, and the pace of archaeological research is glacial.

45. There is a rigid caste system, composed of managers, philosophers, warriors, merchants, technicians, and serfs.

46. The dominant religion is highly intellectual. People offer to have their lives evaluated by the priests who apply complex systems of appraisal, and offer their counsel and advice for improvement. Careful inquiry, logical debate, and even research are important parts of priestly duties. The best priests are excellent theoretical and practical psychologists.

47. The populace have a variety of genetic skin disorders, ranging from minor discoloration to bright-coloured warts over their entire body. The locals regard the skin alterations as a mark of godliness; outsiders showing disgust at the more extreme disorders will be shunned.

48. This world's religion abhors abstract representations of monetary value – all valuations and transactions are in goods or services; anyone trying to pay using cash will be arrested.

49. The population believe offworlders to be demons; only a very select group of priests have the necessary 'incantations' to protect them – allowing minimal trade. Offworlders straying from their ship without priestly protection will be killed and their brains extracted (to prevent the demon 'regenerating' a new body!) by the fearful locals.

50. This world's atmosphere is a mild hallucinogenic stimulant to some major races. However, hallucinating offworlders caused several major accidents, so the local law now requires all offworlders to wear filter masks which remove the taint. Some offworlders have become quite addicted and can be found lying around the starport in a happy haze.

PLOTS

The game session arrives. You have not had time to prepare the game this week and *then* the players announce they want to jump to a system you have not detailed. You need an adventure, quick.

The purpose of this section is to give referees a condensed resource of ideas. Rather than give a fully worked out scenario with all loose ends tied, a large number of basic plot ideas are presented. The referee can pick them up and run as presented, filling in the details as they go, or else work them into a large scheme.

TRAVELLERS' AID SOCIETY

The Travellers' Aid Society (TAS) is an exclusive club for those who travel the stars. Membership is expensive but may be acquired as a benefit when mustering out from various military services – a substantial reward reflecting exceptional service by the individual.

Among the many services provided by TAS, are the traveller's centres on most worlds with major starports. Many facilities are available at such installations, including ticket reservations, hotel bookings, local interest recommendations and cheap accommodation and food.

However, perhaps the most important service provided to players, is an indirect service – a location to meet other travellers and patrons. They may simply be interested in locating others who share their interests, or specifically be seeking gainful employment. Because of the wide variety of people who pass through, of all ranks and stations, it is a rich place for those seeking adventure or patronage.

PATRONS

This section also contains a number of patron encounters – people with potential employment for the players. These may be encountered directly at a starport or in a TAS facility, but in most cases the lead to the patron will be via a notice or advertisement.

Each Patron entry has multiple possible outcomes, which the referee may select using a die roll, or as best fits the game.

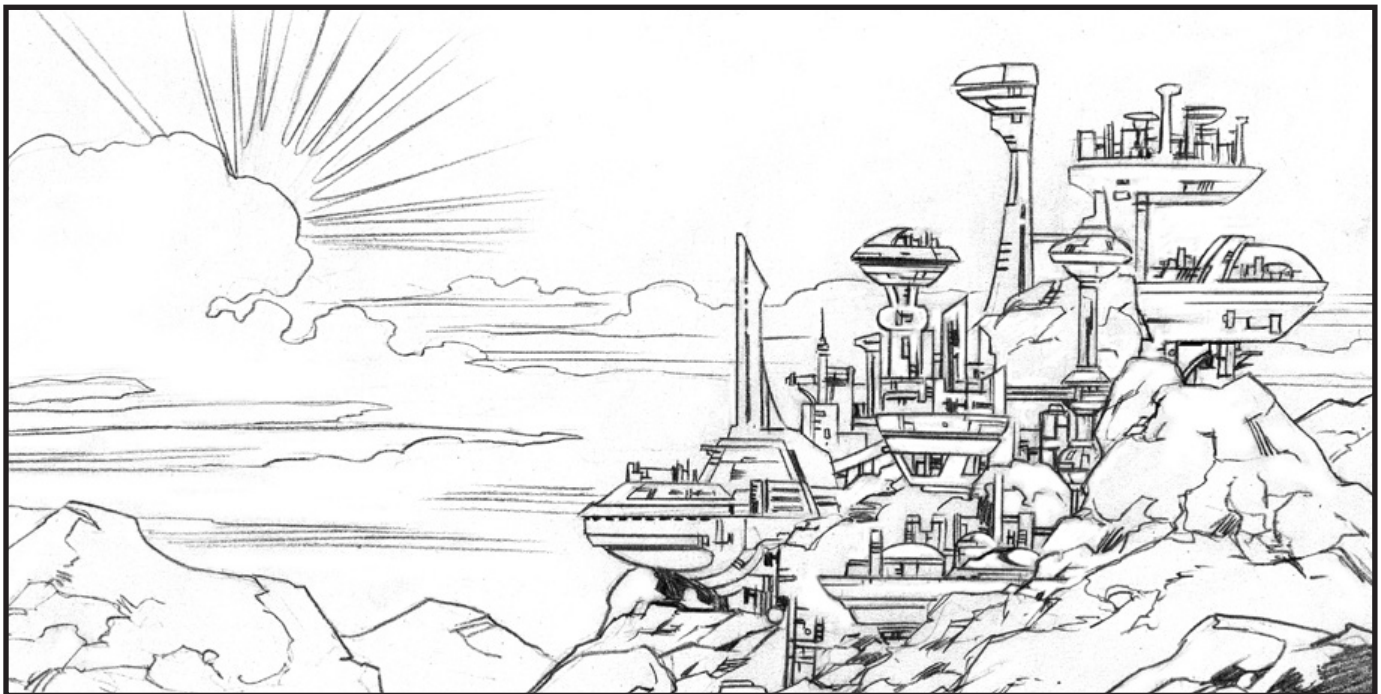
INTRODUCTIONS

Frequently, the referee may have a series of adventures they wish to run involving an institution that is part of the background. The Introductions section provides a number of example tie-in pieces to bring the players into contact with a selection of organisations.

NOTICES

These are various types of notices, advertisements and messages that may be encountered in a game. When the players pop into the local Travellers' Aid Society hostel and ask 'What's on the notice board?' you will no longer need to look at your pre-planned adventure and start reading... 'Small team wanted for...'

Instead, you can make life interesting, by disguising main adventure hooks amongst a range of other notices, some of which are red herrings, others potential leads, useful introductions, etc.



FULL PATRON ENCOUNTERS

One common source of adventure is the patron. A patron is someone the players meet who wishes to contract their services. Usually they have some sort of inducement to encourage the characters to do their work for them. Sometimes this is beneficial, like promised payment. Sometimes it is forceful, as with threatened legal action. Sometimes they just appeal to the players' good natures.

1. MERCENARY

The players are mercenaries or privateers in an area that has seen endemic warfare. They are approached by an officer of a privateer vessel who explains he has a delicate personal problem that they may be able to remedy. Should the players be willing to listen, he will explain that his captain has withdrawn their ship from a strategically vital attack, because he has been mortally offended by the captain of another vessel – nominally his employer, and thus superior, on this mission.

The employer has stolen the first captain's personal share of booty from a previous raid, simply to humiliate him. Rather than attacking his employer to regain what is rightfully his, the offended captain wishes to withdraw his services, and has forbidden his crew to seek revenge themselves.

The patron will explain that he does not want to see his captain break contract, as it would make it difficult to get future employment for the ship and crew. He would like the players to retrieve the stolen booty without worsening relations between the two captains, and ideally in such a way that relations can be speedily patched up.

Outcomes

- 1-2:** All is as described.
- 3:** The booty is a famous artwork or religious artefact that may have special significance for a player's culture.
- 4:** The booty is a frightened young prisoner of war who is either (roll 1D) 1-3: being held for ransom from her aristocratic family, or 4-6: being forced to become a concubine.
- 5:** The officer is actually working for the employer, attempting to ruin the reputation of the offended captain.
- 6:** The officer is an Imperial Secret Security agent, undermining the effective power of mercenary fleets.

2. INVESTIGATIVE

The players are employed by a journalist to gain evidence of human rights abuses. She has some evidence of police-organised killings of undesirables, but needs more graphic proof before she can publicise it. She has asked the layers to join the police to gain this evidence for her – she will tell them that the police are all thugs, and do not require character references, so it should be easy to join. The player may be quite insulted! Indeed, it is fairly easy to pass the recruitment requirements for the police.

Outcomes

- 1:** All is as above.
- 2-3:** Several weeks of boring training and basic legal matters are covered before the players end up assigned to a variety of positions depending on their skills. Eventually it will appear that their patron was wrong, or that things have been successfully covered up.
- 4:** Training occurs as in 2-3 above, but the players' main trainer seems unusually racist. He especially hates the impoverished underclass of the city, which he regards as 'barely human'.
- 5:** As 4, but should the players respond favourably, the trainer will have them assigned to a police patrol that works as a death-squad after-hours.
- 6:** The players are sent out almost immediately with experienced Non-player Characters and initiated into cleaning up the city. Little effort goes into hiding their activity.

3. PREMIUM CARGO

The players are contracted by a small shipping firm to express deliver a luxury cargo to the capital city of a world in the next system. The contractors will say it is the first urusk fruit of the season, and a premium price will be paid by importers. There are eight 2-ton cargo canisters. The patrons will offer twice the normal freight charge to the players.

Outcomes

- 1-2:** All is as above
- 3:** One of the cargo containers accidentally opens during jump, revealing the fruit to have a particularly disgusting and lingering stench. Fruit pulp or juice on clothing will leave a greenish, indelible stain and the smell will linger through many washes.

4: As 3, but large poisonous insectoids are hiding amongst the fruit.

5: The fruit have been injected with a controlled substance which the receivers are eagerly waiting to extract. If the players attract hostile attention from customs, this may be discovered.

6: The patrons have been contracted by an antagonist of the players to get them out of system for some reason.

4. GODS

The players are, for some reason, temporarily stranded on a pre-tech world where the natives mistakenly identify them as their gods.

Outcomes

1: All is as it seems – the players get to indulge their egos.

2: While outlandish behaviour is at first accepted, the natives grow suspicious at the players' lack of cultural knowledge.

3: The players' religious duties of giving blessings involve strange and disturbing ceremonies.

4: The natives' religion is fairly uninteresting to the players, being involved with ethical behaviour and exceedingly long debates on morality. They will not hesitate to put their 'gods' straight on matters of doctrine.

5: The natives' religion expects that mortal manifestations of their gods will show up regularly. They will be polite and respectful, but not overwhelmed.

6: As 5, but after a certain time, the mortal gods are sent back to heaven via a sacrifice ceremony.

5. THE TIP-OFF

Shortly before they are due to leave port, a regular contact of the players informs them that a firm which has contracted them to deliver freight is, in reality, controlled by organised crime. She hints they should not take the cargo or they will regret it.

Outcomes

1: The contact's information is correct, but this cargo is quite legal.

2: As 1, but the contact is found murdered. She was last seen with the players.

3: The cargo contains the carefully jointed corpse of an elderly man.

4: The cargo contains contraband. If it is not delivered the receivers will be highly displeased.

5: The contact is mistaken.

6: The contact has deliberately lied so that the business will go to another contact of hers.

6. PERSONAL PROTECTION

The players answer an advertisement for corporate operatives. Their employer works for an influential company in the subsector. He tells them that his own superior needs a job done; three potential employees of the company's R&D section have been targeted by a rival company. The players are to extract these scientists from their current places of employment before they can be kidnapped or assassinated. Any reasonable amount of equipment and expenses will be supplied, and a hefty bonus will be paid for success.

Outcomes

1: All is as above.

2: The patron's company has grown tired of the scientists' vacillations, and wishes to aggressively hire them immediately, figuring large enough salaries will ease the humiliation.

3: The scientists are actually on the hiring list of a rival company, and the patron's company is staging a pre-emptive strike. They would prefer to receive the scientists alive, but under no circumstances want them falling into the rival's hands.

4: As 3, but the rival company is well informed and will have rival teams to extract the scientists.

5: The scientists do not know anything about either company and will attempt to sue (the company's lawyers will successfully hang the blame on the players, if necessary).

6: The scientists are engaged in unethical medical experimentation, and will assume the players are a police team. Their vague and hysterical protestations of innocence may give the players hints that perhaps they can blackmail their patrons for more payment.

7. HELP ME!

While meeting a regular contact in a backstreet nightclub, the players notice a very young, very drunk man. He regularly buys drinks for all present, and openly buys drugs. When the venue is caught up in a police sweep, he latches on to the players, weeping and begging them to get him out and away. He promises vast payment and gratitude if they will help him.

Outcomes

1: All is as above. He can pay Cr. 1,000.

2: The young man's influential family reported him missing 2 days ago. An officer sees him with the players, and will draw attention to this fact.

3: As 2, but the players successfully get out with their charge. Some police will follow. The young man offers a story about being an international jewel thief, and offers them even more money to help him escape.

4: He's even younger than he looks, and the players are now suspected of various nefarious dealings with a minor. If apprehended, the family will insist on the players being charged with corrupting their son's morals, supplying him with alcohol and illegal drugs, and statutory rape.

5: As 4, only at some point the youngster manages to slip his ID, money and his father's credit card into a random player's pocket. If the players are apprehended, the charges now include kidnapping and theft.

6: The young man belongs to an organised crime family (which have not reported him missing). His family have searchers out looking for him. The police will not pass up the opportunity to get information out of the man if they apprehend him. The crime family may then believe the players were acting for the police...

8. THE LOVER

The players are approached by a stylishly dressed lady with two extra-large bodyguards. She introduces herself as Oraiste Yarom, a local business woman, and explains she has lent a large amount of money to a friend with whom she is no longer on speaking terms. He has declined to pay her back, but she does not want the embarrassment of going through public legal channels. She is sure her friend would come to his senses if they spoke face to face, and she would like the players to fetch him.

Outcomes

1: All is as above.

2: Ms. Yarom is highly placed in a local organised crime family. She made the mistake of having an affair with a member of another family. While the families are officially on good terms, she feels her reputation is being amaged by allowing her ex-lover to walk around with such a large debt. She wants him brought to her without either family, or the authorities knowing. She plans to kill him.

3: As 2, only the aftermath of the affair has indeed lessened Ms. Yarom's reputation. As she concludes her dealings with the players, an assassination attempt is made by the ex-lover's followers.

4: As 2, but members of Ms. Yarom's family attempt to stop the players.

5: As 2, but the ex-lover suspected a move like this, and is holed up in a secure area with many guards.

6: As 2, but the ex-lover is rumoured to be turning state's evidence. His family, the Yarom family, and the players are all after him. He is currently in protective police custody.

9. UNION BLUES

The players are employed by a representative of a shipping and warehousing company to deal with worker unrest. The company's workers are mainly drawn from its home world, and are employed at its facilities throughout the subsector.

Far from home and generally unskilled, they do not tend to cause trouble. However, safety regulations are not observed and there are long shifts. Contacts outside the workforce are heavily discouraged and the workers are paid well below the norm.

Now, a troublemaker has appeared, and is attempting to unionise the workers, ignoring the great benefits the company brings to their world's economy. At least one of the players is from the company's home world, and the patrons want the incipient union movement infiltrated and destroyed from within. They want the troublemaker thoroughly discredited with the workers before they take further action against him, as they do not wish to create a martyr.

Outcomes

1: All is as above.

2-3: The unioniser is rather naive and believes that seeing the workforce united against injustice will naturally lead the company to bring about better conditions. He may be easily tricked or misled.

4: The unioniser is a political science graduate of a university on the home world. While his knowledge is rather theoretical and abstract, he is genuinely horrified at the awful conditions and wishes to change them. Unfortunately, he tends to be a little disdainful of the uneducated workers and has alienated some of them.

5: The unioniser is a long time workers' activist, and has practical experience of how to create workforce solidarity and keep it going long enough to change things. His demands are sensible and realistic.

6: The unioniser is but one of a group of hard-line activists seeking to attract attention to the workers' plights by means of violent action, co-ordinated across all the worlds where the company has holdings.

10. STARSHIP APPRENTICES

The players are engaged in a local scheme to open up career opportunities to young people. They are expected to allow 2-4 apprentice level youngsters to observe them at daily shipboard work while they are in dock. Payment is merely the youngsters' board and keep, and a small stipend which the players are expected to pay to their apprentices as wages. Ships that take part in this scheme have been known to be looked on as 'good types', and have had decent freighting contracts put their way.

Outcomes

1: All is as above.

2-3: The players get fairly normal kids, aged 12-14 (i.e., they sulk, whine, get offended easily, but occasionally have great fits of enthusiastic work).

4: The players get a selection of problem kids, aged as in 2-3 above. They lie, steal, and drink the players' alcohol.

5: One of the kids has taught herself a great deal of one shipboard skill. She does not have much practical experience, but that will not stop her, e.g. trying to dismantle the jump drives to give them an overhaul.

6: A kid stows away, and is not found until the ship has jumped. (1-3) the kid is a starship enthusiast who wants to lead a romantic life, (4-6) the kid has some problem with the law.

11. QUICK DEPARTURE

The players are an hour or so from departure when a young couple come up and ask for low passage to the players' next stop. They are dressed in bright cheap clothes, have very little luggage, and say they want to start a new life on a new world.

Outcomes

1: All is as above.

2-3: The young couple are prostitutes fleeing their pimp. They have been spotted approaching the players' ship, but there is little that can be done by the pimp other than verbal threats.

4: As 2-3 above, but the pimp goes to a dockside lawyer and has a solicitor's letter served on the players, claiming they are helping his employees break contract. The players can ignore this ploy, but it might delay them.

5-6: As 2-3 above, but the young couple are fleeing with last night's takings for their own work, as well as the takings for all of the pimp's people. He will hire some muscle to intimidate the players into turning their passengers over.

12. A MESSY END

A wealthy businessman takes high passage with the players. On the third morning of jump, he is discovered dead in his stateroom, shot through the left temple (he was left-handed). A pistol lies on the floor.

Outcomes

1-2: All is as above, the business man has committed suicide.

3: The businessman's secretary (travelling middle passage) has shot him in a moment of rage on being told that their affair is over. The secretary (1-4 female, 5-6 male), is jumpy and guilt-ridden.

4: The businessman was intending to take up a job with a new company, and was assumed to have engaged in industrial espionage. His old company sent an assassin on the players' ship. The assassin (travelling low passage) had a heart complaint that necessitated a medic from his insurance company operating his low berth. The low berth was automatically set to release the assassin on the second night of jump, and automatically go back into operation 50 minutes thereafter. The assassin has the normal chance of dying, so this scenario may involve the players discovering that one of their low berths appears to have failed.

5: All the passengers seem to be acquainted with the dead business man; none liked him. Several seem to have had motives for murder (e.g. careers ruined, children seduced and abandoned, he was blackmailing them), and almost all of them had the opportunity...

6: One of the middle passengers is a homicidal maniac, who will strike again the next night, and the next...

13. RELIGIOUS FERVOUR

The strategically important planet on which the players are currently based suddenly experiences a wave of nationalistic fervour, with the rise of a native religious leader proclaiming herself destined to sweep away Imperial domination. Although she has been active for some time, only when a rally sparks off a huge riot do the Imperial authorities on world take notice and arrest her.

The whole city erupts, and riots seem likely to spread to other areas. The players are approached by some of her followers who ask them to aid in a jail break. They offer to pay in jewellery and other small items of value.

Outcomes

1: All is as above, the jail has standard security.

2: The Imperial authorities have no intention of allowing the world to slip into anarchy, and institute widespread arrests. All offworlders are put into government compounds for their own safety. The jail's security has been increased.

3: As 2, but the authorities are brutal in their putting down of the riots and relocation of offworlders. The leader is being held in the depths of the government buildings.

4-5: As 3, but the authorities have extracted information from the leader by unethical means. If rescued, she will slip in and out of consciousness and will be unable to walk. When her followers start being picked up, the players' names may come to official attention.

6: The leader has died under torture. Not only is this an embarrassment to the authorities (whose spin doctors are already at work), but if the players manage to report the fact to her followers, there will be wholesale insurrection.

14. POPULAR POET

The players are approached a distinguished Naval officer, Sir Gorodin. He has retired from active service and has since held a post in the local Naval Academy. At the appeal of local fans he has nominated a Sylean folk-singer, Baradon Diflin, for Imperial Poet Laureate. This has caused some controversy as popular music has never been classed as poetry in this regard before. Much as he has achieved his success through foreign appeal, Sir Gorodin thinks that the efforts of the players might have the same appeal.

What he wishes the players to do is to frequent import music stores and to pass out literature about the nomination and attempt to encourage locals to write letters of support to the

Imperial Ambassador. He is prepared to offer the players a letter of introduction to any Naval officer of rank Commodore or lower.

Outcomes

1: All is as it appears. Sir Gorodin has always been a fan and is very keen to see the nomination go forward.

2: Sir Gorodin has never had time for folk music. He put forward the political nomination due to local political pressure. He only desires to foist off the actual work on someone else.

3: The fans of Diflin on this planet are in the minority and largely made up of immigrants. Sir Gorodin feels this is a good chance to impress Imperial culture on the locals.

4: One of Diflin's more popular songs is being used prominently in a local election campaign by an Imperial sympathiser. Although the Imperium cannot interfere in local politics, Sir Gorodin's nomination gives an excellent excuse to promote the song.

5: Shortly before the nomination, Sir Gorodin bought the rights to a large number of Diflin's earlier, neglected works. He hopes now to increase their value enormously.

6: A large undercover Imperial operation is currently underway on this planet. The various broadcast literature and letter-writing campaigns surrounding this nomination allow for coded messages to be exchanged with little chance of the government's stringent anti-spy department's intervention.

15. CULLING THE HERDS

The local planet has experienced a wave of public fear recently that a strain of bacterial infection common in their Yip herds can cause a similar infection in humans through consumption of their milk and meat. Although a firm scientific link has yet to be established, the government has ordered the culling of all the herds. Unfortunately regulations call for the carcasses to be rendered in a fusion furnace and the planet's incinerators are overbooked.

To help ease the backlog the government is packing the carcasses into freight containers and hiring cargo ships to lift them off planet and send them on a collision course for the sun.

The party will be approached by someone intimating that they are from the Silver Panthers investments branch. They believe that ultimately the bacterial infestation will either be declared harmless or else a cure will be found. They would like the players to divert as many of the doomed Yips as possible. They will suggest either intercepting them after they are set on course for the sun, bribing the pilots to release them on a slightly different course, or else hiring on as pilots themselves.

Outcomes

1-2: All is as presented. They will be paid Cr. 500 per ton for recovered Yip cargo.

3: All is as presented. However solar flare activity will complicate retrieval of the Yip containers.

4: As 1, except that the local system defence boats are patrolling the solar chronosphere and will investigate any unusual activities.

5: The operative is not from the Silver Panthers, but is a concerned ecologist. The real Silver Panthers have, in fact, already substituted the carcasses on the dock and the containers contain soiled hospital linen.

6: As 5, but the Silver Panthers want revenge and have rigged some of the containers to blow if tampered with.

16. MARKET SURVEY

The players are employed in a market survey to find out if Gee Whiz Fizz soft drink is more popular than Check In. The work is boring but pays enough to subsidise a minimal lifestyle.

Outcomes

1: All is as presented.

2: players get the chance to make witty comments on the local radio station.

3: Check In is revealed to have mild aphrodisiac qualities. There is a rush on sales.

4: Both brands are acidic enough to strip the lining off tin cans. The players are hassled by irate nutritionists.

5-6: Whatever results the players obtain concern their employers, who sack them and also threaten them to ensure the results remain confidential.

17. THE VISIT

The players are approached by a lawyer. He will draw the characters' attention to a recent sensationalist news story about a woman sent to jail for refusing to comply with a court order allowing contact between her daughter and her violent, former partner. The lawyer represents the father and says he has a neurological chemical imbalance exacerbated by his nagging partner. The only stable point in his life has been his daughter. It is highly necessary that he maintains contact with her for therapeutic reasons. As the woman has been granted an appeal he still has not been able to see her and they will almost certainly lose the case as his condition worsens. He is willing to pay the players to bring the girl for a visit by whatever means possible.

Outcomes

1: All is as presented. The man will ring the players incessantly for progress reports.

2: As 1, but the man is beyond help and will scream and rave at his daughter, causing great distress.

3: As 1, but the man is a raving lunatic and the lawyer is in it only for the money. The man escapes from confinement and will try to kill the daughter, his former partner, the players, and the lawyer.

4: The man cares nothing for the girl and merely wishes continue his psychological harassment by embarrassing the woman and making her feel impotent.

5: The girl is very wayward and wants sex, drugs, and wild adventure. She will do anything the players request for any of the above.

6: As 5, but the woman has hired three 'minders' to keep her in line.

18. BANK CHECK

A government official of the planet the players are visiting contacts the group. She says that the Imperial Deposit Bank has been advertising widely on public channels offering a very good investment rate. It is based on a small asteroid in system orbit and thus outside the governments regulatory remit. The government is concerned that the bank is not protected by its insurance scheme and if it failed their citizens would unfairly demand reimbursement from the government. She wants the players to check out its operation.

Despite its grandiose name the bank itself does not claim specific imperial warrant. It refers all questions to its parent branch on a nearby world.

Outcomes

1: All is as presented. The bank is a legitimate operation.

2: The bank is a Silver Panther front for laundering money. The investors' money is perfectly safe, as it allows the Panthers to conveniently transfer funds. However, they do not like too many questions being asked.

3: The bank's premises are really just a large ship disguised as an asteroid. If any sort of legal action is taken they will break dock and jump out of system with their money.

4: The bank's parent branch is on a depressed world where the interest rates offered by that branch are comparatively low. They are simply trying to get access to hard currency to help their financial status.

5: The bank's parent branch is the same as 1, 2, or 3 above.

6: The bank is a wholly owned private concern of the Royal Family set up to generate non government funds to use for private investments. They do not like attention.

19. SCAPEGOATS

Sixteen local ex-generals are being tried for murder, attempted murder and conspiracy to murder in their support of violent police actions to curb public unrest just before the recent Imperial take-over. They claim they are being made scapegoats by the local government. The players are contacted by junior army representatives who wish to

hire them to help correct the situation. The true evidence was diverted and suppressed by the current government. They want the players to re-plant this evidence which will exonerate their commanders and lay the blame on the current political establishment.

Outcomes

1: All is as presented.

2: The evidence is faked and is a political ploy to support a coup.

3: The former generals had close ties with the Golden Vale Assassin's Guild, who will be present to ensure that none of the generals make it to court. The players' efforts will be mysteriously thwarted.

4: As 3, but the assassins will act to ensure that they have their day in

court. The players may be mysteriously helped in their work.

5: Information about the players has been leaked to the government and they will stop at no end to prevent the evidence coming to light.

6: As 5, except a task force of four heavies with government carte blanche will be dispatched to violently dissuade the players.

20. ORBITAL RESCUE

While outbound from a planet the players' ship is hailed by starport authorities and commissioned by Imperial law for a rescue mission. Earlier in the week, the *Blue Danube* was in remote orbit operations when a collision resulted in a catastrophic power plant failure. Thermal imaging revealed no possible life-harboring environment and the wreckage has been left to drift until a tug could be freed up. However, after one of the crew of the craft was pronounced dead, a close relative came forward and revealed that she possessed the psionic discipline of Suspended Animation. As this now means that she may be alive, a rescue must be mounted immediately – the players' ship is closest.

Outcomes

1: When the players arrive it is clear from the wreckage that there was nowhere that she could possibly have holed up; she is dead.

2: The players arrive and find a closet that kept its atmosphere integrity. Inside is the psionic crew member.

3: As 2, except the psionic died elsewhere in the ship; the corpse of another crew member is in the closet.

4: As 1, except that the intact computer module is found and the telemetry indicates that a transfer to a transponder-less ship occurred just prior to the explosion.

5: As 2 and 4, plus the survivor has evidence concerning the captain's dealing with smugglers.

6: As 5, except the smugglers knew they were to be turned in by colleagues within the starport authorities. The survivor is a plant, to ensure the turncoats are also named and get their come-uppance.

21. SUICIDE?

Two middle-aged brothers were found hanging from the same branch of a tree in a desolate beauty spot on the local planet. The police are mystified but are treating it as a suicide pact. Their mother is distressed and wishes to hire the players to find the real reason behind their death.

Outcomes

- 1: The mother is unknowingly responsible. Twenty years previously she nagged her husband into committing suicide in the same spot in the same way. The brothers came to the same conclusion.
- 2: The brothers were secretly in love with each other; this was beyond all cultural bounds of tolerance. Being unable to live together they decided to die together.
- 3: The brothers, and a large part of the local village, are members of a suppressed cult. In the latest ceremonies, one of the brothers was to be sacrificed. When they flipped a coin to decide, it landed on its edge.
- 4: The brothers had amateur photographic evidence of police corruption. When this came to light, the police drugged them, hanged them and are now covering up all evidence.
- 5: The brothers were cerebral twins with a government license for psionic interrogation. They were to be used in an upcoming trial of an alleged Golden Vale Assassins Guild member. The Guild harassed them and said if they didn't remove themselves that they would kill their mother, whom they dote on, in a particularly nasty way.
- 6: The brothers were ardent fans of 4Play. Having believed a spoof article that the band was breaking up they decided to end their life.

22. STRIKE!

The Shipping and Interstellar Portage Trade Union has called a strike at the current starport in protest over a refusal by Fliedermaus Chemicals to pay out compensation for a debilitating condition induced in one of its members due to alleged chemical exposure. The merchant ship *Beneficent Sponsor* has a contract with Bar Shipping to deliver a cargo to Agar Industries. This shipment is vital to the reputation of the fledgling line. The captain wants to hire the players to break the strike line and work on delivering the cargo.

Outcomes

- 1: Local pickets will form picket lines and harass the characters but will not physically intervene.
- 2: Pickets surround the dock with a human chain, preventing cargo being moved in or out.
- 3: As 2, except a sniper will also take pot shots at players if they physically intervene to break the human chain.
- 4: players will be threatened with sabotage to their ship or startown living quarters for their actions.
- 5: The players' actions spark off a riot in the star port causing millions in damages.

- 6: The players' actions precipitate a worldwide strike by sympathising unions.

23. VIRUS

News rushes over the docks concerning the death of an arcade gamer in a virtual reality unit. Rumours abound of a deadly Leonardo Virus that infects VR games and induces mental haemorrhaging. The arcades empty as officials investigate.

Official statements say that the death was caused by ingesting a bad batch of illegal drugs and was not VR related. The public remains unconvinced and the local Red Wizard Games representative contacts the characters. He offers 1,000 hours of free game time at any Realvision™ arcade if they will come to the local arcade and play games to prove their safety to the public.

Outcomes

- 1-2: All is as presented.
- 3: While playing, the players will experience the Leonardo Virus but aside from playing groovy music it will have no harmful effects.
- 4: players are contacted by a local pressure group Parents Against Virtual Reality who believe the games to be dangerously addictive. They will be bribed to report publicly about the bad effects of these games.
- 5: The players will be met in Virtual Reality by the arcade owner who is also a drug pusher. He will say he fried the brains of the dead gamer for threatening to go to the police. He will do the same to them if they do not play along.
- 6: Unknown to Red Wizard Games the local hardware has been tampered with by the franchiser to give an extra buzz to players. Each character must make an Average (+0) Endurance check or become addicted.

24. INTERVIEW

The local Travellers Aid Society in cooperation with local Ticket Agents is promoting interstellar travel. They would like to publicly interview the characters about the exciting life of an interstellar voyager.

Outcomes

- 1-2: All is as presented.
- 3: While telling one of their stories a player accidentally violates a severe local taboo. They are forcibly ejected from the interview.
- 4: As 3, except the interview was live. The players will be shunned and unable to get any work locally.
- 5: As 1, except one player was particularly impressive and is offered free TAS membership.
- 6: As 1, except one player becomes a local heart throb and gets the loud and clamorous attention of thousands of underage local hopefuls.

25. THE CHICKLIZARD

In a bar a player meets the acquaintance of a travelling noble who keeps a (relatively) tame chicklizard as a pet. In the course of attempting to pet it the chicklizard bites the character on the hand or arm and refuses to let go. The noble explains that he has trained it not to claw but has had no success in preventing it biting. He will not countenance any harm coming to Hannibal, the lizard, who steadfastly hangs on. The only inducement he knows of to cause Hannibal to release his bite is 'ploughman's pickle', a sandwich spread common several worlds away.

Outcomes

- 1: A local import/export shop at the starport maintains a stock of off-world food and can supply the pickle.
- 2: A shop just outside the extrality line has the pickle but customs will not let the character leave the starport with a lizard attached to their arm.
- 3: As 2, except local export regulations will not let someone with the pickle into the starport.
- 4: As 2, except that the shop stocks the wrong sort of pickle and it is the first of several fruitless leads.
- 5: As 4, except the trail leads to another continent.
- 6: There is no source of the pickle on this world at all and the players will have to travel to a neighbouring world.

26. WAR ZONE

While in a war-torn system, the players are approached by a well-dressed, well-spoken man in his early thirties. He wants immediate high passage off world for himself and his lady friend, and will charter the players' ship. He will be happy not to disrupt the players' schedule too much, and will accept their timetables, as long as they avoid certain systems (the players may find out these systems have extradition arrangements with the system they are currently in). The man has 3 tons of cargo, and well-appointed personal luggage. His lady-friend has extravagant personal effects.

Outcomes

- 1: All is as presented.
- 2: The man is a business executive, hoping to set up in a less volatile area.
- 3: The man is a disgraced government official, setting up life in a new sector.
- 4: The man is a high government official, fleeing his world with stolen wealth.
- 5: As 4, but he is a close associate of the chief noble fighting for control of the system. He, and any who aid him, will be tracked down, wherever they are.
- 6: As 5, but three starships (under the control of a cousin of the chief noble) immediately take up the pursuit.

27. COUP

The players are trapped on world when all exit visas are revoked during a sudden and violent change of government. An elderly man comes to the players, begging them for help in rescuing his employer. He tells them she is a great lady, of immense importance to his world, but cannot tell them her name. If they agree, he will lead them to an apparently wealthy house, which has had iron bars fixed across all windows, and which is guarded by soldiers. One of the soldiers requires a minimal bribe to allow the party to approach the house.

A middle-aged woman, dressed in filthy, smoke-damaged clothes, and with a cut, bruised face will appear at the window, and call out to the players in a strange dialect of the local language which they find very hard to understand. Their elderly guide will translate, saying she is asking them to help free her, to kill those in the government who have engineered the coup and to help reinstate her brother.

She promises great rewards, both monetary and spiritual. She seems quite deranged. The guards will explain that she is the wife of a naval general; she is schizophrenic, and has to be kept guarded since her last suicide attempt. They will laugh off the old man as a fool seeking to be a hero.

Outcomes

- 1: All is as presented by the guards.
- 2: The woman held the most important position in the local religious hierarchy, traditionally held by the eldest daughter of the ruling family. The religion forbids the mention of her name outside the religious ceremonies, and constrains her to speak only in an archaic form of the local language. If free, she could mobilise the powerful religious establishment against the coup.
- 3: Whether or not they decide to help, the players are followed by supporters of the coup who attempt to neutralise them.
- 4: The woman's brother retakes the city while the players are still trying to obtain for new exit visas. Vast civilian casualties lead to hatred of foreigners.
- 5-6: As 4, but he takes an immediate and intense interest in his sister's situation. If she says the players helped her, or tried to, he will reward them, but if they did not, he will attempt to have them arrested and punished.

28. SOMETHING TERRIBLE

A shabbily dressed woman comes up to the players and asks them to go to the warehouse district at 01:00 hours to stop 'something terrible'. She claims she know a crime will take place at that time, but she cannot go to the police, or tell the players her source of knowledge. She will appeal to their better natures, and cannot pay them anything.

Outcomes

- 1: All is as presented. The woman overheard her boyfriend planning a murder.
- 2: The woman is a petty thief, getting revenge on a former partner who will be fencing some merchandise at the appointed place and time.
- 3: The woman is setting the players up to be robbed.
- 4: The woman is psionic, and read the minds of some criminals who are planning a murder. She knows her evidence would carry no weight as she is unlicensed.
- 5: As 4, but the police have been following the criminals. They will swoop and arrest everyone at the scene at 01:00 hours. The players will also be assumed to be criminals.
- 6: As 4, but the woman actually read a novelist's mind as he planned out the start of his next crime novel.

29. THE DRUNK

The players find a small, grime-encrusted woman lying unconscious in a pool of vomit under their restaurant or bar table (if they are in an expensive restaurant, she is at first completely hidden under the table cloth). She will come round, and claw her way up their legs to what will come close to a standing position, and demand that the players buy her a drink, some food, and take her to the starport departure lounge. She has no ID or cash, but vaguely promises them rewards 'money cannot buy'. She seems strangely familiar, but none of the players can remember her name.

Outcomes

- 1: All is as it seems; she's a grimy drunk.
- 2: As 1, but she bears a passing resemblance to one player's old girlfriend.
- 3: She is the lead guitarist of 4Play, overlooked in the group's mad, drunken rush to make their boarding call. She can reward the players with various memorabilia, tickets, etc.
- 4: As 3, but she has been deliberately abandoned as a joke. There is barely time to get her to the departures area before the ship leaves.
- 5: As 4, but her ship has already left. Her comrades have at least booked her alternate passage. She will fly into an impressive rage if this fact is not made abundantly clear, and will end up getting the players arrested for breach of the peace.
- 6: As 5, but she was completely overlooked by the rest of the group, who will be surprised not to find her on their ship. She will attempt to get the players to loan her the fare, alternating between acting as an obnoxious rock star and trying to impress/scam the locals or players.

30. THE DIG

The players are employed by an archaeological consulting firm to assist in a preliminary dig. Those players without archaeological skills are given heavy work, while those with appropriate skills are tasked to draw plans, sort artefacts, etc. The site appears promising, which annoys the building firm which wants to build much-needed accommodation here.

Outcomes

- 1: All is as presented. The firm will gladly give players a reference for other archaeological firms.
- 2: The players are harassed by a local union representative who wants to see only local workers on the site.
- 3: One player uncovers an artefact of precious metal. The player may attempt to conceal this, depending upon whether they are being observed at that time.
- 4: There is some violence at the site during a protest held by local indigenous people who denounce all archaeologists as grave robbers.
- 5: The construction company will pay the players to hinder the dig, and to make it appear as if nothing of importance is to be found.
- 6: One player is injured on-site. On inspection, it seems as if some machinery has been sabotaged.

31. SECURITY

The players answer an ad for temporary security guards, placed by a high-profile corporation – FCO. Only players with clean records will be hired, and there is a lot of competition for the jobs, which are well-paid, with excellent benefits. The players will be given duties including guarding offices, warehouse and goods transportation.

Outcomes

- 1: All is as presented.
- 2: The players are treated as complete fools by an executive in the local offices, who humiliates and torments them daily. They begin to understand the high turnover rate of guards.
- 3: The players must guard a shipment of rare gemstones, carried by an executive. She will appear extremely nervous, and will constantly ask if they are being followed.
- 4: The players suspect some employees of pilfering corporate office supplies. While this seems trivial, FCO has a reputation of coming down very hard on such activities, and the players may fear they will be seen as accessories. They may have to launch a full scale, over-the-top investigation into the missing ball-point pens.
- 5: During the players' shift, burglars break in.
- 6: The players are approached by ex-security guards, and asked to participate in a robbery of the next goods transport they are on.

32. GAME FOR A LAUGH?

One PC buys a winning lottery ticket on the starport orbital station, and gets to take part in the local TV lottery show. Vast wealth could be just around the corner!

Outcomes

1: All is as presented, but the prize money is lower than hoped for.

2: The game is rigged so that only station residents will have a chance of winning the big prizes. The player cannot win more than a few hundred credits.

3: As 2, but there are also other prizes available. Roll 1D. 1-2: Weekends in mid-price hotels, 3-4: Locally-made consumer goods, 5-6: Joke prizes.

4: The show is actually a comedy show. The player is induced into humiliating themselves horribly.

5: As 4, but the next one to three patrons have seen this episode of the show.

6: As one of 1 to 5 above, but the player is the most popular guest of the week, and is invited back for the next show.



INTRODUCTIONS

Frequently the referee may have a series of adventures they wish to run involving an institution that is part of the background to their campaign. However a tie-in piece is needed to bring the players into contact with the organisation and reveal to them a little information about what they are dealing with. This section outlines a number of different introduction situations the referee may adapt to their own needs.

1. THE MORINMOSS PIRATES

The players are enjoying the scene at The Explosive Decompression, a Navy rum-bar on the docks. The Plutonium Rock music is interrupted by the strained voice of the DJ announcing that he has had a request he cannot refuse. The speakers begin blaring hornpipes and sea shanties. Cheers rise from a fairly wild, nearby table, and the patrons leap to their feet (and on to the table) and begin dancing jigs. Further howls of rage rise from another table (on the other side of the players) occupied by hardened Navy customers.

A massive fight ensues between chair-throwing, facial-tattooed Navy hams and chandelier-swinging, lace-riden pirates – with the characters caught in the middle. When the cops arrive the pirates make a break by vaulting over the dock railings and down a series of cargo canisters, dragging their incapacitated and inebriated companions with them. Mistakenly the players get dragged along as well. However, the pirate leader, Stee Jans, is sufficiently impressed with their actions to offer them an opportunity...

2. THE GOLDEN VALE ASSASSINS GUILD

The players are out shopping in a local planet arcade when suddenly a timed series of explosions take place, venting the arcade to vacuum (or a hostile atmosphere). The players have just enough time between explosions to get from one section seal to the next and are virtually the only ones to survive the attack.

They are approached by a dark skinned woman with green eyes later who commends them on their level-headedness under attack. From her descriptions of their every action during the event she appears to have an intimate understanding of exactly what happened. If asked why so many innocent people were killed, she passes it off as unimportant.

She will bring the conversation back to the benefits of having an ability to keep one's wits about one when chaos breaks out. Abilities like that have their uses and she may know something they are interested in...

3. THE NAVY

The players are in transit between outer and inner orbits when they get an encrypted request from the Navy giving them codes to change their transponder to a particular setting and adopt a certain course. If they check system scan they will discover there is currently a System Defence Boat, *Vengeance 479*, in hot pursuit of another ship rushing for jump orbit. Their transponder now reads as that of another System Defence Boat, the *Contra Contra Band 482*, and its heading puts them on an intercept course with the pirate.

If the players carry out the request the pirate ship will deflect their course to a new heading away from the players' ship. Shortly thereafter the real *Contra Contra Band* will reveal itself right in the pirate's path. After a short exchange of fire the pirate will surrender.

Lt. Commander Eva Gustavsson meets the players afterward and commends them highly for their brave actions. She likes seeing such loyal citizens. It is encouraging to the spirit. If the characters are game for it she can give them a letter of introduction to the local commodore who she knows is looking for such determined people...

4. SERABI GENETICS

While conducting trade business on the docks the players' cargo steward is approached by a floppy-eared, furry critter. It hands them the business card of a Lusamu Ildugan, and tugs at their sleeve to follow. If followed it will lead the character to a very strange office.

The door is guarded by smiling gargoyles who only part for the business card. The receptionist is a sprite fairy and the waiting room's bean-bag like chairs cuddle the players as they wait. Lusamu Ildugan is, reassuringly, quite normal and will usher them into his office where something resembling a purple monkey takes dictation.

He explains he is the local representative for Serabi Genetics who make genetically engineered creatures for work and leisure. They have a very high moral stance and keep very strict regulations about what sort of DNA they use. He has examined the players' previous ports and manifests and is pleased that they have avoided all ports and cargos that Serabi considers banned. If they are happy to maintain this they are eligible for preferential treatment for Serabi cargos...

5. *EBISAWA ELECTRIC*

Tomoko Oshima of the Human Resources department of Ebisawa Electric contacts the characters and asks for an interview. Ebisawa will arrange for a transit visa and pay for all transportation. She will explain that Ebisawa works closely with their employees and the local community in training and educating those youths with skills relevant to acquiring productive jobs. They have screened a number of people and the players, as a group, meet the qualifications for participating in an apprenticeship scheme.

They will propose to fund the appointment of a junior technical member to their group. Regular reports will be required and they will not allow misuse of the apprentice by the group or neglecting of duties by the apprentice to the group. Additionally the characters will receive preferential treatment from Ebisawa and a discount of 10% on any purchases.

6. *THE NOBILITY*

While availing themselves of an open night in the local Traveller's Aid Society, the characters fall into conversation with a member on the good and bad points of various thoroughbred riding animals appearing on the holo-entertainment screen.

Lord Theophilous becomes quite impressed with their knowledge of equestrian activities and invites them to accompany him to the local races.

At the races he makes rather large bets based on their appraisals. Win or lose, he is happy with their assessments and purchases whichever beast they rank most highly, including its trainer and rider.

When treating them to dinner and drinks afterwards he asks more about what they do. This raises an interesting possibility for him which he proposes to them...

7. *THE SILVER PANTHERS*

After a particularly successful series of cargo runs the characters are enjoying a congratulatory inhaler in a local sniff club. A very flashily dressed individual saunters through the crowd, which appears to part by magic around her. She sits at the players' table, pays their bill and introduces herself as Starless Night.

She compliments them on their handling of various customs and excise authorities. She underlines how badly the various authorities react to various levels of illegal cargo. She seems to have rather a detailed knowledge of the characters' previous manifests, but never makes direct reference.

She buys them another round of the most expensive inhalers and says if they are interested there are many other successful business opportunities they can pursue...

8. *DOLBERETH SMELTRY*

A short, grizzled man in coveralls knocks on a player's door one day with a crescent wrench. He eyes them up and down and grunts a few times before walking away.

Almost exactly a full day later, a fork-lift marked 'Dolbereth Smeltry' pulls up and an almost identical individual knocks again. This time he will ask for their engineer and start asking a number of abstract engineering questions. After this he will smile and walk abruptly away.

The next day a number of almost identical apparitions will appear, examining the characters' ship or other vehicle closely and making calculations with slide rules.

They will eventually approach the players and tell them that they do good work. They want to know if they want to do good work for them...

9. *THE PSIONIC INSTITUTE*

The players have cause to pass through a neglected area of startown. The dwellings are shabby and many of the locals live in shacks made from discarded cargo containers. Between the drug pushers, prostitutes and arms dealers, lie the homeless detritus of the space industry. The players witness a pointless act of cruelty by one of the dealers which they are driven to correct through charity.

The next day, that individual approaches the characters but this time she is plainly dressed and cleaned up. She explains she was working undercover in the Psi Corps branch of the local police, gathering evidence to thwart extortion. She was reading the players' surface thoughts during the encounter (as part of her job) and knows them to be a good and honest individual. Occasionally the Psionic Institute has odd jobs they need done and they might have something to offer the party...

10. *MAYES, FITZPATRICK, AND PIERCE*

In a previous job or during a junk sale, the players acquired some item of pre-Long Night technology. The local planet is known to have a good library on pre-Night artefacts but access is difficult. After some struggling with local customs and academic authorities they get a pass approved, not to visit the library, but to visit the Mayes, Fitzpatrick, and Pierce archaeological consultant firm.

Dr. Maria Medlycott will meet them and say that she understands they have been experiencing some difficulty. She is willing to appraise their artefact for free and allow them the use of their copy of the library, if they in turn, are willing to agree to sign on for a little job for them...

11. GOLDBERG FASHION DESIGNS

While shopping for reading material in a starport market, one of the players finds themselves going for the last copy of an entertainment industry magazine at the same time as a Mr. Geoffrey Chapman. The latter will apologise and say he is really only interested in one article – perhaps he could borrow it and copy it? If the character has previously been in any form of entertainment business, Chapman will eventually recognise them and offer to buy lunch at a local café.

Over lunch, he will explain that he works for Goldberg Fashion Designs and is trying to line up some market research, possibly leading to a new line and catalogue. There are a number of activities that are being co-ordinated around this. Perhaps there is a place for the character in this project...

12. THE SCOUTS

The local station gymnasium is offering free trials of their advanced microgravity facilities and oxygen permeable pool. While enjoying this, the players get involved in an impromptu game of grav-ball with a bunch of local Scouts. This leads to drinks afterward, a wild party, and sharing an overnight cell in a local lock-up.

When their commander bails them out the next morning, she has to count three times to work out that there are extra bodies. She pays for them anyway as some of her crew 'wants to keep them'. This is outside her jurisdiction but there are some activities related to their current mission that people of the characters' background might be able to help her with...

13. 4PLAY

The local startown is thronged with fans of the Plutonium Rock group 4Play. Clay tablets are posted everywhere announcing the arrival of their Mondium Overdrive concert tour. Tickets are completely unavailable and the army has been drafted in to deal with the crowds. The players may watch it, or ignore it, remotely.

Ten minutes before the band is due on stage, a local support group is playing. Suddenly a bunch of very trendily dressed people burst in and hurl themselves at one of the characters. They ask the player to confirm their planet of origin and that their name has an 'A' in it. Once the character confirms this, they will explain they are 4Play roadies and the lead guitarist will not go on stage until they find someone from that planet with a 'A' in their name.

If the players are willing to comply, the roadies will drag them into a helicopter and fly them to the top of the ziggurat from which the band is performing. Nightwing, the lead guitarist, will look disappointed but strut out in her silverchastened battledress to roaring crowds.

The players may stay for the after-concert party and can have as much drink, drugs, groupies, or 4Play memorabilia as they want. The band decides they are really 'radioactive' after all and says there are one or two other whims they might help with...

14. GARROT FOUNDRIES

After a long waiting time one of the characters receives a blade of quality that they have had on order. The workmanship is everything they expected but a chance encounter with a starport x-ray machine reveals a microscopic internal flaw. The blade has a lifetime guarantee and can be sent back.

Very shortly after sending the blade back the player will receive a letter of sincere apology from the company and a complete refund of their money. They will be given the business card of the local representative of the company (etched on paper thin, flexible tritanium) and given the pick of whatever is in stock – alternatively they can order a custom piece.

The local representative is very grateful that the character found this error and they are currently reviewing their entire production and quality control procedures. Assuming the PC chooses the replacement well they will be further impressed with their eye for steel and will engage them in conversation. If the player has some appropriate skills, the representative notes that the company has cause, from time to time, to contract out various jobs...

15. THE MARINES

One of the characters with a military background suddenly finds a squad of marines on their doorstep one day with reactivation papers. Although the player is mustered out, the marine sergeant insists that certain provisions allow for reactivation. If any resistance is given the entire group will be arrested. An armoured personnel carrier with sixteen battle-equipped marines waits outside for backup.

The characters will be put into a wardroom and given a bureaucrat to argue with. In the middle of this, Major Valor strides in and slaps the player across the back. He was a old bootcamp friend and perpetrated the whole incident as a joke. He offers to buy drinks to make up for it.

During the course of the evening he does say that there is a job the military wants done – something the marines cannot handle in person – and he would like to recommend the player for it...

The notices in this section concern genuine jobs from which the players may earn worthwhile experience, cash, or contacts.

ADVERTISEMENTS

Lava Surfing Instructors Required

High Pay

No Prior Experience Necessary

Contact Dusty – Royal Kiltearnan Hotel and Sports Club

It is considered a sport amongst the incredibly wealthy of the region to go 'lava surfing' on nearby volcanoes. Although the 3cm thick protective suits are quite heavy, the sheer mass of the lava makes it possible to float easily. The volcanoes (usually) only erupt gently and the suits enable enthusiasts to survive for 30 to 60 seconds if they take a spill. In such situations the suit's outer layer expands and ablates away the heat and any attached lava, while its built-in grav harness lifts the user clear of danger. Combined with the built-in cooling and breathing system (volcanoes give off plenty of unpleasant gases) each suit is pretty expensive, with the cheapest starting at Cr. 45,000.

The Sports Club will pay instructors Cr. 500 a week for training enthusiasts in simulators (new instructors will be given a week's training in the sims). After six weeks they will be expected to move on to the real lava flows and will have their salary increased to Cr. 1,500 per week. However, instructors are required to arrange their own insurance...

Discreet agent needed for mission of extreme sensitivity

Phone 'Red' at 8421169

Red (whose real name is Gladia Kirkwell) is the secretary of a senior business figure: Kenneth Rousseau of Spartan Amalgamated.

She wishes to have a child fathered by Mr. Rousseau but the strict caste system on their world prevents any social contact between them. What she wishes any respondent to do is to secure a genetic sample from Mr. Rousseau, as pure as possible, that she can take to a fertility clinic on a nearby world. She will not reveal that she is his secretary but will say she can provide them with inside information on how to get close to Mr. Rousseau, e.g. his daily routine and upcoming appointments.

Bodyguards needed

Excellent rates paid for a simple 24 hour contract

Come with equipment to Apt 1201, NW 15th Level

Gina Colnwyff has some trade she wishes to conduct and intends to get the best price possible. Argus 'Thin' Benik – the dealer with whom she intends to trade – is known for hiring muscle to intimidate buyers into paying unreasonable prices. She is seeking people who look sufficiently intimidating to balance any thugs Benik brings with him for the negotiations and the subsequent delivery.

Looking to charter ship

Route not yet fixed

*Ship must have effective weaponry (for defensive purposes **only**)*

Contact B. Mattila, 447862

Mr. Mattila is an elderly man, bent on pursuing possibly imaginary riches. His father shipped on a naval vessel which was rumoured to have been transporting military drugs of some sort. The consignment was never delivered, and supposedly never left the ship, which has since been decommissioned.

The ship is now owned by some freelance merchants who have just passed through port. He wants to see if the consignment is still somewhere aboard, and is willing to offer a generous share to a suitable ship and crew. Whether this involves covert entry into the ship while on the ground, or a full-blown hijacking is up to the players.

***A Seeker of Wisdom sought to carry
a message to the Gods of Jumpspace.
Inquire for Callipygia in Template of
Rose Dawn***

Callipygia is a spiritualist of a local totemistic religion. She seeks someone of the right 'character' to take an effigy of a local avian and to release it out the airlock of a ship in Jumpspace. She has no money to pay but in return for this service, she will give the character a token, made of resin and bone, that will bring success with small electrical appliances, according to her.

It's up to you to decide whether this has any real effect (perhaps giving a bonus on a single critical roll at some point in the future) or simply a useless item. Either way, you can mislead the character as to its real effectiveness by occasionally asking them to re-roll one die on a seeming relevant task roll, tutting quietly to yourself then modifying (or not) the results of their task to meet the needs of your scenario.

Female medical worker, 35, likes grav cycles, lava surfing, Sylean opera. Looking for professional man, 30-45, sense of humour. No Vargr. Box 1481

Niominka Elcka is looking for fun and companionship to cheer up her rather boring life. She knows everything there is to know (from magazines) about grav cycles and various dangerous sports. All she needs now is someone who will actually accompany her. She will hint that she has a high-powered surgical career, but in reality she is currently a dental nurse. She has passed sufficient college courses to begin her full dentistry qualifications but this is expensive, and she is having to save up for it, so cannot actually afford a grav cycle or lava surfing herself – she is expecting the new man in her life to supply all that for her...

Crew vacancy for ship's gunner

- Applicant must have current proficiency rating documents and good reference from previous ship*
- Minimum 10 Jump contract*
- Background checks will be carried out*

Apply to Executive Officer, Rainbow's End, Berth 237

The merchant ship *Rainbow's End* is running gold bullion under the decking plates, and feels an extra gunner would not go amiss. This will not be explained to the applicants. The executive officer Eliah Grange is looking for someone with Gunner 2, but she will accept Gunner 1 if no one better turns up within a reasonable time.

She will run a background check with the local authorities on any applicants. Eliah wants someone who is not a crook, but is balancing this with the need for a character who will not turn them straight into the authorities should they find out the crew is smuggling.

Infantry force available for immediate hire

*150 troops, also specialists in
Gauss heavy weapons.
Planetary engagements preferred.
Contact Cpt. Ivor Lawlor, 28655*

The troops are armed with advanced combat rifles and a number have been trained with gauss rifles, of which the brigade has two. There are three officers, headed by Captain Lawlor.

The brigade has most experience in planet-based fighting, and will be less effective if required to perform boarding actions. They will accept standard rates of pay.

For small local operations they will consider hiring out a section of troops for guard or security duty while awaiting a bigger contract – this may be useful to players who need some back-up in a hostile situation but who can only afford to hire a few troopers for a short time.

***Wallaby sitter of impeccable character
required***

Leave card with TAS front desk

An eccentric elderly noble, Dame Chutney, has a pressing social engagement, but her host is sadly allergic to wallabies. Only persons with above-average Social Standing will be considered, and they must be able to convince her that they will empathise and cherish her little Wuz-wuz, Woggles and Poodles.

These beasts are the soul of decorum when their mistress is around, but naturally assume their true nature as hyper-intelligent, evil, rabid, marsupial demon-spawn once she exits the door.

Should the players survive, Dame Chutney will be most happy on her return, and will offer them temporary jobs as chauffeurs, bodyguards, wallaby minders and secretaries, as she seems to have 'misplaced' her retinue. Needless to say, no one can put up with her absent-minded follies for too long especially as she has a habit of 'forgetting' to pay them.

Pastoral Specialist Required
to supervise transport of animals

** Own ship a bonus **

Respond to Box 4

A large number of the chicklizard herds of the local planet have been infected with a degenerative virus which has recently been proven to be contagious to humans. The local health authority has ordered the culling of all chicklizards, in a drastic move to eliminate the disease.

Chicklizards, however, are sacred to a cult from a nearby world. They have travelled here and made a deal with the local government. For half the cost of culling the herds they will transport them off-planet. They will be venerated in temples back on their home world. However, they urgently need to contract shipping to transport the beasts: any chicklizards still on the planet in 48 hours' time will be destroyed by the local military.

== Archaeological Surveyors or anyone with relevant skills required immediately! ==

Contact Mayes, Fitzpatrick and Pierce on 87609

A number of sites buried during the Long Night have been uncovered during recent building efforts. By Imperial Law they must be officially inspected before building can continue. Because of a recent inundation of such inspections, MF&P is taking on anyone whom they can justify certifying.

Specialist in perceptual modelling, catastrophe theory, societal dynamics, intelligent automata, or fractal mathematics needed (Combat experience and Heavy Weapons skill an added bonus)

Contact: Prof. Tim Murphy c/o City University

Dr. Murphy is a researcher into mathematical models of conflict. He develops systems for analysing situations of societal or military conflict. He has obtained funding recently from the Imperial War College to gather some more data to help refine his theories.

He is looking for people who have an academic background, who will understand the sort of data he requires. He also requires people with appropriate skills to help collect live data in suitable conflict-ridden situations.

Successful applicants will find themselves tasked with surveying the religious background of refugees fleeing a nearby war zone. Naturally the players will be subject to all the personal hazards such an area may contain.

Discrete courier services required

Box 2702

Freddi Corporate Operations have made some recent scientific progress in bacterial cloning technology. The resulting samples are incredibly valuable (insured at MCr. 20) and need to be transported back to a nearby major world for patent application.

They have a professional security company hired and a well-armed ship ready for transfer. However, they have been tipped off that the Golden Vale Assassins Guild is planning to destroy the ship using an inside man.

FCO are not totally confident that their security has been tight enough to vet every spacehand who has serviced the ship. So they wish to use their own ship as a ruse and transport the real samples via a separate route on a totally new ship with trusted security staff and several newly hired crew.

Responsible manager needed for short contract operation of a merchant line

Contact Bar at Milton Inn

Bar is the chief executive officer of Bar Shipping. Normally, she has complete hands on control of the line, but presently she needs to travel away for three months. She is interviewing captains to take control of the operations of one of her far traders for the duration of her leave. Shipping contracts are all in place and no speculation is required.

Rates of pay are good and success may lead to a valuable extended contract with Bar Shipping.

Geneticist needed for short term service
Must have **own** screening equipment

- *Contact Sir Myles, Corcoran Estate*

The current planet is fairly low tech. Someone has approached Sir Myles offering to sell him a guard dragon purportedly made by Serabi Genetics. He suspects fraud and requires someone with the appropriate equipment to do a DNA scan and look for the Serabi copyright notice encoded into the chromosomes.

A player with very high Engineer (electronics), Computers or moderate Medic skills would be able to put together an appropriate DNA scanning system using a suitable high tech medical kit (as these already include DNA scanning technology to identify genetic illnesses and other patient-specific data).

Inspectors Required

Enquire Smyth Recruitment, Fissure Avenue

Polo Amalgamated wishes to perform a surprise inspection on a local facility. Their official inspector was delayed, so they wish to hire others. They will seek people with either relevant inspection skills or past quality auditing, legal or administrative skills.

The exact nature of the PA manufacturing site can be adapted to the skills available to the players, or it could be something they have no experience of, in which case their key role will be to look officious and make lots of notes on their compu-clipboards while tutting in a knowledgeable way.

In essence all Polo Amalgamated require is to keep the local facility on its toes. Provided the players are capable of recording what they see and hear, the real auditor can follow up on their results at a later date.

Vacuum Environment experience required for planting operation

* *Contact Department of Expansion* *
* *Office 306B, Government House* *

Rosacap Fungus will grow almost anywhere. It is used as the first stage of biosphere creation. The Department of Expansion is seeding a satellite asteroid of the main planet

with this fungus as part of its development programme. They will pay Cr. 500 per week, per level of Vacc Suit skill, to spray the rocky surface of the planetoid with fluid saturated with Rosacap spores.

Fighter pilot required for civilian mission

*Contact Metal Foundry Manufacturing
Facility #27, Management Office 2*

Garrot Foundries has a special alloy whose combat strength they wish to test under simulated combat conditions. They are looking for one or more crews for small military vessels.

These crews will need to fly runs in a fighter hired by Garrot from the local system defence base, and launch ordinance against targets armoured with Garrot's new alloy, to determine (by later inspection) its performance against real weapons systems.

Demolitions or Explosive expert with **no moral** compunctions required. Best pay.

*Go to The Militant Frog and wear a **purple beret**.*

The Golden Vale Assassins Guild is preparing a bank heist. As a distraction they are planning to detonate a scheduled ammonia shipment near a school to draw off the emergency services. The characters will be offered Cr. 10,000 each on a success-only basis. Such a notice is bound also to draw official investigation...

It is also possible that this notice is simply a red herring to distract the authorities from the recruitment of the real bomber.

In either case, any player turning up at the Militant Frog wearing a purple beret will either be rejected by GAG for being such a gullible twit, or get jumped on by the local counterinsurgency security forces!

Contractual obligations require subcontracting of **security** job Minimal skill requirements. Please do not apply if you have any criminal convictions

Apply Murphy Associates, OhFourNiner

Murphy Associates has gone bankrupt. However, due to the strict contract terms agreed with one of their clients (Cornflower Consumables), it is obliged to do its best to fulfil the terms of the agreement or pay a further extremely painful penalty fee. Lilian and McTrask – the receivers who have taken over administration of the company during its closure – have scrutinised this in some detail and found that Cornflower becomes the preferred creditor for payment of the penalty, which would preclude any chance of salvaging the remaining value and assets of Murphy Associates. As a result, they are looking for the cheapest possible people they can dress up in security uniforms to conclude the contract.

There are three weeks left on the contract to provide premises security at Dataheads, a software support company which provides main computing and technical support for several Cornflower sites in the area.

The job could be exceptionally boring, except that after accepting the role, one or more of the players are approached by a man who wishes them to 'look the other way' while he breaks into Datahead. He could be a commercial competitor of Cornflower seeking to steal secrets from their database, or simply a disgruntled Murphy ex-employee who is hoping to make some money, as he was made redundant without any compensation from the company.

Ship's crew needed

*Ex-Naval preferred
Enquire for Contessa Mattila, TAS lounge*

Contessa Mattila has just inherited a safari ship which she wishes to use for some recreation and speculation.

She comes from a naval family and has an honorary commission. She is a good employer but will only pay normal wages.

She will travel around local systems, often hosting hunting parties for her rich friends. She will expect her crew to be appropriately skilled and reliable.

Scouting Expedition Requires Skilled Members

Contact Gyrallan in room 13

Gyrallan needs appropriate Scout personnel for a mission into an unexplored portion of the planet's interior.

This will involve significant periods of crawling around and mapping lightless tunnels and caverns in search of various rare subterranean species.

Successful applicants will end up recorded for posterity in the video documentary that Gyrallan creates during the exploration. This proves a great success some months after the expedition is completed – the players may be surprised to see their faces on prime-time vid channels at a later date.

Biology or Archaeology skills sought for Science expedition

Contact Dr. Simms at The Royal Sylean Hotel

Dr. Simms is an epidemiologist. She wishes to exhume corpses that died in a polio epidemic that ravaged the world 80 years ago. The objective is to recover DNA traces and examine them with modern Imperial technology, ostensibly to prevent such a tragedy from happening again.

Whether she has an ulterior motive for examining an otherwise extinct plague agent is up to the referee.

*** Justice Sought! *** Anyone willing to help?

Contact Angela in room 3, TAS visitor suite

Angela Comminski is an ex-Marine. Having received TAS membership after mustering out, she is now 'seeing the galaxy'.

While on-planet she signed up to a local computer database GotYou to advertise her abilities as a bodyguard. After several weeks with no contracts and her own money running short, she found out that the database had not been displaying her advertisement.

However, GotYou claim they have been experiencing technical difficulties beyond their control. They claim that now that they have corrected the matter (and her advert is on the planetary dataweb) this does not invalidate their agreement, and so they will not refund her.

However, Angela is just about out of cash and sorely peeved with GotYou's bureaucratic team, so she wishes to get her money back, or to cause them equivalent damages by whatever legal or extra-legal means are necessary.

RED HERRINGS

The notices in this section are hooks for jobs which may not be so profitable for the players...

Antiquarian needed for **professional** examination of Gold Statue of Ancient origin

Apply #4687 Kawarun Square

Deora Wine placed this advertisement; he is convinced that a twisted lump of metal that he dug up during his day job (in street construction) is, in fact, an artform from a lost trans-human culture.

Its apparent gold coloration is really a worthless metal suffering oxidation. It will take an awful lot to convince Deora otherwise. Alternatively he will offer Cr. 500 (or 10% of what it can be sold for) if a suitably impressive certificate of authenticity is given.

Botanist required for shipment of larches.

Contact Billy at 598796

Billy works in a cargo warehouse, and is part of the local underground. The larches (a local slang term) are in fact rifles that he has found a buyer for. He will converse in a very confusing manner, with plenty of nudges and winks. With any luck, the characters will decide he is selling dirty pictures.

Laser Pistol, nearly new
Cr1500 or nearest offer
Enquire at Soul of Heridd, berth 3

The ship's executive officer, Varina Letnerr, objected to the chief steward's (Leche Eferhard) recent purchase of a Laser Pistol and wishes to recoup some of the money by selling it.

Depending on who answers the call the players will likely get different answers, excuses, requests to come back later, etc. In short, anything but the Laser Pistol.

I've lost my password and need a software specialist to recover it. **Folden 8368336**

What Folden has is an Automated Teller card that was found in the street. He thinks that it is a relatively simple job to read the password off the magnetic strip and get into the account.

In reality the card was invalidated and thrown away several days ago.

Golden opportunity

Best cargos

Best prices

Honest Zile's Brokerage 363876

'Honest' Zile always runs this ad. He charges a small fee, with the promise of a brilliant cargo within 24 hours. However, he never rings back. If the players call him, he will say he could not contact them and had to give the cargo to someone else. But in another 24 hours...

Model required

*Enquire for Hicola Nicks at Guildhall Theatre,
B deck*

Hicola is, indeed, a local sculptor. She works in magnetised scrap hull-metal. Her work is abstract in the extreme and she is only seeking 'inspirational' models. She subjects applicants to lengthy psychological interviews and then, usually, rejects them. She may later turn her impressions of them into kinetic sculptures, although they are unlikely to notice any similarity.

Win a complete Virtual Office, with holographic handy computer, radio link and personal appointment book

Call 0891-900 741

Calling the number will result in a lengthy phone recording extolling the benefits of Crispian Technologies' new range of personal information managers.

Eventually callers can record, in 14 words or less, their answer to 'Why Crispian Tech really manages their information!'. If a player can roll all ones on 6D, their character will receive the free gift one week later.

Ursk Connoisseurs Required
Take the taste test
Cr1000 prize.

Dial Radio-4 on 8000 400

A small fraction of the local immigrant population consider the ursk fruit to be a special gift of the gods. The other 99% of the populace know of it as 'The most disgusting fruit in the Universe.'

To win the Cr1000, an entrant must participate in a 'taste test' on public radio. This involves eating varieties of the raw fruit, its juice, a carbonated derivative, etc. All of which requires the character to roll an Very Difficult (-4) Endurance check to avoid being very, very ill.

Coal hijackers required.

*Contact Victoria Strakhov,
Department of Planetary Physics,
Academy of Science*

Recent revolutions in the local government have caused radical restructuring and a shortage of funds. The local Academy of Science grant is three months overdue and the institution cannot pay their fuel bills.

Victoria wishes to cause a local incident to draw attention to their plight by stealing (very publicly) a fuel shipment.

Hornpiper required

For an audition, contact Stee at the Golden Raspberry

The Hornpipe is the hallmark of the Morinmoss Pirates. They are currently recruiting at the bar in question. They will ask many questions to determine if applicants have sufficient skills to join their merry band. If the answers are satisfactory, then they will proceed to the audition. They are quite serious about being able to play the hornpipe.

Cargo transport required
Free hip replacements available

Agar Industries produces high quality biocompatible titanium alloy replacement hip joints. They have a load available for transport to a nearby world.

Cash-flow problems mean that they can only offer payment in kind.

Free fusion gun with each Cr. 350 purchase.
Phone Electic Horticultural 179

Electic Horticultural sell a wide variety of hydroponic tanks and garden supplies. There has been a misprint in their notice. Instead of 'fusion gun' it should have read 'fusion gum' – a highly sought after hybrid. Local black market parlance frequently substitutes types of trees for various illegal weapons, which may cause even greater confusion.

Highly capable Guard Pandas available
Best Prices
Frances - 9810937

Chubb Pandas are very resourceful and very vicious. They would make excellent guards except that they are impossible to train. Frances will happily sell Pandas at Cr. 250 each. Her recommended strategy is to let them loose in the area they want guarded... then run.

High quality lot of Hazelhearth available
Amazing prices!

Contact Kingston Shipping, berth #14

Hazelhearth is a very high quality wood and fetches very high prices. However, due to its resinous nature it is only usable after a few decades of drying. The Kingston lot is nowhere near dry enough to be saleable.

Driver required
Contact Juan at Hitching Post

There is a bar in the starport called the Bitching Pot, however Juan is actually just outside the starport at the hitching post, where locals tether their animals.

He does not need a driver of automobiles or other mechanical contraptions, but rather a driver of yips, the local herd animal. He is prepared to offer three yip calves for driving his yips from the starport to his local village, 27 miles away.

*** Want to work for a good cause? ***

Call Ruth at 1211

Ruth has acquired a large lot of second hand Goldberg designer clothing from a local charity, for a nominal price. She now wants to auction it off and is planning a fashion show.

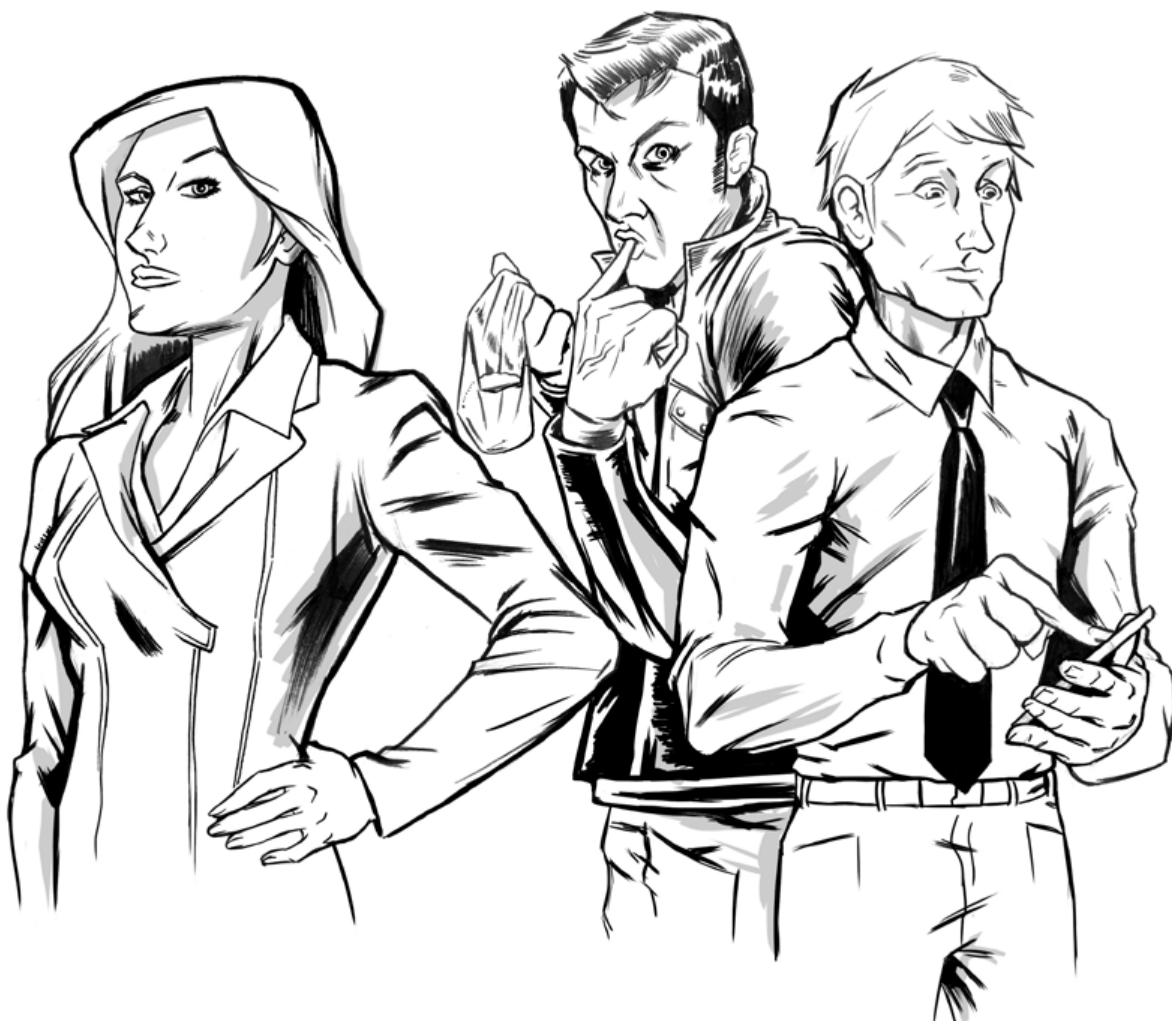
She needs people to help organise and model the clothing. She has already paid the charity so the good cause for further profit is herself. She will not advertise this widely.

Orbital Transfer Pilot

*needed for quick, once-off job
Enquire GravelHead House*

Dolbereth Smeltry has screwed up a job for a local company. To cover up their mistake, they have purchased a scrappy rust-bucket ship and loaded it with the defective shipment for transfer downworld. They simply require a pilot...

The plan is for the ship to malfunction and burn-up on re-entry. The players may suspect something is amiss, as the ship is rather decrepit except for the newly installed crew ejection system.



INFORMATION

The notices in this section provide links to information sources which may be of use to the players...

Starport Tours Cr. 10 Departures every hour Inquire at desk.

A local Scout, Olleneg Agate, is down on her luck and offers tours of the starport. Although the starport is rather like most others, she has no end of stories; of its history, the architecture of the older parts, what it is built over, etc. She can also point players in the direction of the best bars and, generally, give them enough information to get a 10% discount on almost everything.

Dar bunks with the local boss of the Amalgamated Stevedore and Cargo Handler's Union. Information about anything moving on the docks can be bought and good prices will be paid for information about what is coming, especially if there are any union concerns.

Not to miss!
Wyligi Chamber
Orchestra

Opening recital in
St. Finbar's Hall
20:30 alterday.

Blade Instruction Offered

Cr. 30 a lesson.
Prataxis - Box 27.

Prataxis is a retired gravitic engineer who is also an expert in the use of short blades. She is willing to teach what she knows, or learn from anyone better. She has useful local contacts in the starship fitting industry.

The WCO open their aquarian season with a star cast and a popular hit. Soloists in Zomtar's dreamy piece Intrepid include Wanice Jatson and Antini Culna, all conducted by Willow Ephod, whose own orchestra in Millen is a model of how to play on period instruments without sounding like a museum exhibit.

Dar's Buy & Sell:
Information Broker.

Worth the price.
7046957 after hours.

See the best, leave
the rest. Fax desired
subject and a sample
itinerary will be
returned within the
hour. #89237,
City Tours.

Wisp Berek does not run tours himself but knows most of the local companies who do. In return for directing tourists to each, he gets a cut from the agents.

**Hillwalking
companions desired.**

Contact Hanna Rice
at Sola Hostel.

Hanna is a bright and perky steward of a merchant liner in port. She is also an avid nature enthusiast. However, to get an entry permit for the local nature reserves, you have to have a group of at least four people. She seeks similar-minded compatriots to join her in a 3 day trek. She is quite knowledgeable about wilderness survival and flora.

**Afraid of Insurance
Fraud?...**

...Ring Lovato Shield on
191096

A number of companies in dubious ports are submitting false insurance claims for emergency surgery allegedly performed abroad. Lovato Shield provides a register of such places as an aid to fraud investigators.

What can **you**
do to prevent
desertification? Visit
Node 23:25.

A number of groups are agitating for action to combat erosion, defoliation, and poor atmosphere which are ruining the planet's flora. The computer node mentioned contains a considerable amount of information on the biology of the native fungal mats and the geology and geography surrounding them.

Speedy Patent Search.

Login to SPS, password
'tell me more'.

SPS have a comprehensive database of local companies, the technologies they have patented and any patent licensees.

An offer that cannot
be missed by fans of
4Play. Enrol now and
determine your band's
future. Send a Stamped
Addressed Envelope
to '4Play - The Next
Generation, 14 Lorcan
Crescent, Wilfville'.

Frustrated with corporate promotional delays, the plutonium rock band 4Play is taking their music to their fans. Enthusiasts are invited to enrol in this scheme for Cr. 500. They will receive 20 demo tracks and can provide creative input to the making of their next album. They will receive updates as to the progress of everything from re-recordings to artwork. When the album is finally released, they receive a limited edition copy.

Do you feel you
are being taken
advantage of? Join
SIPTU now! Inquire at
Liberty House, Main
Concourse.

The Shipping and Interstellar Porterage Trade Union caters for a wide variety of spacefaring professions. They offer a free legal advice centre for members. Joining the union requires an up-front fee of Cr. 10,000 (which may be waived in certain circumstances) and 3% of your wages thereafter. In return they will provide any legal support necessary to uphold your legal rights and can bring considerable pressure to bear if the circumstances merit it.

Realvision Tapes
sought for Swapping.
Contact Norm O'Brian,
ID# 83505971

Norm is an avid Virtual Reality fan. He has collected almost every tape produced by Red Wizard Games for their Realvision system. He has many duplicates and will swap them at good rates for the few tapes he is missing. He is quite knowledgeable about the industry.

Flower arranging
demonstrations

16:30, Crateredge
Hotel.

The Elderly Lady Anfinwen is from an old school of nobility. The Reis flower has a wide variety of uses from decorative corsages to virulent poisons. She seeks to pass on some of her skills to 'worthy' students in the last years of her life.

Hear the future now!
Mystic Peig knows
you are going to
call 123854.

Peig was persuaded by friends to enter into this profession. She is unconvinced and believes it all to be a random hoax. She maintains all the trappings, though, and does her bit to part people's money from them. However, she does actually have some basic precognitive and clairvoyant abilities.

Off-planet
travellers welcome
at Performing Arts
Discussion Group.
Visa and transport
provided. Contact
Maria Kelly in Human
Resources, Ebisawa
Electric, 8427222.

Ebisawa Electric have very advanced employee benefits, including sponsorship of occasional discussion groups for their employees on off-world topics, to promote an understanding of other worlds and cultures.

Are you a Noble watcher?

Subscribe to
NobleShock!millen!serabi.

This is a tabloid that has been formed to collect all sorts of media interest stories on the newly proclaimed nobility of the Empire. It ranges from biographical to plain scandalous.

Discover the Secret
Truth behind

Fliedermaus Chemicals.

SIPTU lecture theatre
#4, 7pm tonight.

A local action group is presenting information to the detriment of the chemical processing company Fliedermaus. Environmental rights are very topical on this planet and the company's reputation is spotless. The activists will present information showing that the company ships all its toxic waste to a nearby system with less strict environmental regulations, where it is simply dumped.

Educational,
entertaining and
mesmerising - Socio
Palaeontology Today.
Can you miss the
March of Humanity
Exhibition? Come by
the Central Museum.

The exhibition is well funded and well presented. It has a lot of information on spontaneous parallel human evolution.

* Parabolic Asteroid *

Required reading for all
UltraPlutonium JazzRock
fans. On a news-stand near
you.

Anything and everything that one might wish to know about anything in the UltraPlutonium JazzRock field can be found in the pages of *The Parabolic Asteroid*, interspersed with endless diatribe from the editor about his troubles with the authorities for advocating, using and distributing drugs.

Need to know what your
competitors are up to?

Exploit the legal
loophole of radio
tapping.

Contact 'Radar' on
101.734MHz

'Radar' continually records all broadcasts from personal transmitters within 100 miles of the city. There are laws against listening in to private messages but none against recorded messages. Her advanced decryption systems can turn around messages in four hours. She charges Cr. 100 per day per channel for her services.

PERSONALS

The notices in this section are personals, with no particular adventure link, but with the potential to confuse, distract, and perhaps amuse, the player-characters. Some may even spark a complete adventure...

Darriv. Must speak to you immediately. Rees has tracked Lorna and the Parshidona en route to Serabi. Phoebe - Box 197.

Leonardo - All is known! Flee the system!

Ton Davaryush: stay away from Constantine.

Level 3, Corridor 27. Be there. Umbar.

Nicky, have discovered The Secret. Meet me 1348, your Carlotta.

Ciara, when will I get my Pole Arm back? I miss it. Seamus.

Milo. Please return tollbooth. It is required.

Kaithar, Karodin has mobilised. Cannot meet you. I'll be in contact, Daegaer.

Klazog: I have A'n'an'ki. Deposit 250,000Cr in account 722122322, First Bank of Polo.

If the name 'Nemisis the Sadistic' means anything to you then I suggest you leave now.

We're down in the Golden Lavatory - Radford.

Fancy stroking my Tanagon? It's leashed and ready to rumble. Yours with cuddles, Septimus.

Wanted: the *\$&*!* who stole my 4Play albums. Huge reward. I'm coming to get you..

Maria, I miss you. I'm sorry I turned you in. I needed the money. Come back to me? A

Pole Arm for sale, cheap. Call C on 2376.

The Lizard is Leaping. Do not miss last call.

Blue. 15,000. Zebra-Alpha-Tango.

Who's a sexy wuz-wuz, then? Looking forward to reliving last night... cuddles.

GIMMICKS

Gimmicks are the magic items of Traveller. They are devices, gadgets, whizz-bangs, what-nots, or whose-a-ma-jiggers that appeal to players for their novelty, potential worth, or just usefulness. They are rare; sometimes remnants of pre-Long Night technology, sometimes the result of abandoned scientific research. They are seldom reliable.

1. MOLECULAR BONDER

This device resembles a twentieth century iron. It has a large flat plate with a handle and dial on the back.

When placed on the interior of a hermetically sealed area (up to 20 displacement tons in volume) it causes all joints to seal and fuse such that they subsequently appear to be a single piece of metal. A flush door could be made to disappear altogether.

Additionally, when scanned from outside, the interior of the sealed space will appear to have the density and electromagnetic characteristics of either vacuum, or hydrogen, depending on the immediately surrounding environment

2. BACTERIAL ADAPTOR

This gimmick is a small bacteria. If left on its own it will grow into a small colony of organisms. It will be seen as unusual as all the macro-extensions will be similar, but not identical.

If examined under an electron microscope, its chromosomes are small in number and broken into three sections. The first seems to be composed of basic blocks occurring in different orders in different samples. The second small block is a counter. Each time the chromosome replicates the counter counts down. When 'zero' is reached the blocks in the first section are scrambled slightly. Otherwise the chromosome always replicates perfectly. The third section is invariant and remains the same in all samples.

If the data on the nuclide pairs is taken as a binary stream and represented in a pre- Long Night data format it can be seen to be a copyright notice for a long-vanished company.

3. LABYRINTH ROBOT

This is a very large (20 displacement ton) robot of obvious pre-Long Night origin. It is very baroque in appearance, with many controls of indecipherable meaning.

The mechanism itself is complex but appears of crude manufacture. It is solid, sturdy and very, very old. If placed on a planet's surface and activated, it will burrow into the ground and begin excavation. It works in stops and starts.

If seismographic measurements are taken, it can be seen that the robot is inducing harmonics at a range of frequencies – a sort of sub-vocal fugue. In addition, it will carve repetitive designs on the walls as it digs.

Stopping the robot is much more difficult than starting it. If left on its own, it will collect trace minerals from the rocks it digs through; when it has accumulated sufficient quantities of these components, it will build a replica of itself.

4. CRYSTAL SWORD

Diamond fabrication has been commonplace in many areas of the empire. It is not that unusual for nobles to sport synthetic diamond swords.

When the players first come across this it may not elicit much excitement. However, upon further examination it will appear that not only is it of exceptional workmanship it does not appear to be diamond, but rather metallic crystal.

Some research may indicate a possible link with such a sword used by a number of Solomani Admirals from the Rule of Man. When brought near other Rule of Man artefacts it sometimes vibrates and gives off a ringing tone.

5. AUTOMATED ARMORIAL

Made for the pleasure of some past noble, this specialised hand computer contains all known information on the coats of arms of all Imperial nobles and their families.

Given any coat of arms it can trace the history and relative importance of the family and what relation, by marriage, they bear to other families.

It also contains all the corporate logos registered to any of these noble families.

6. LIE DETECTOR

This is a small figurine of a squat humanoid with its hands on its hips, glaring forward. When someone speaks, its eyes track and rotate accusingly.

When a lie is told (roll 2D – it will correctly detect the lie on 4+) it rolls its eyes and makes a ‘tsk-tsk’ chiding noise.

7. SIMON

Simon is a small, metallic snake, appearing much like a child’s ornamental bracelet. It is, however, a small robot and – when worn – will occasionally move from wrist, to arm, to neck.

Its true utility can be determined if the user ever tries to eat something that has been poisoned. Simon will spring to life and prevent the food from being touched or eaten.

8. COSH-O-MATIC

This appears as a small, fine-grained, night stick as might be worn by the unarmed police of primitive worlds. Around the base is emblazoned ‘Cosh-O-Matic’, with a activation switch and slots for standard batteries.

If used as a weapon and someone is hit across the back of the head with it they will roll up their eyes and collapse, unconscious, to the floor. They will remain in this state for 30 minutes.

9. SLEEP TABLETS

Contrary to the normal contents of such bottles, this contains pills that completely remove the need for sleep.

It contains 100 pills and each will remove the need for sleep for 24 hours, with no detrimental side effects.

10. GRAV GIRDLE

Initially, this might seem to be some sort of grav belt. However, it only applies partial grav coverage and only works for women. It gives firm, reliable, support for women and appears to be military issue for wearing under armour.

11. X-RAY GLASSES

These are more a helmet array than glasses. They are a heavy heads-up display with a link to a hand computer.

However, they are not the perfect voyeur’s dream – they do not actually see through objects. Instead, they use a combination of sophisticated reflection analysis and fractal extrapolation techniques to generate a good approximation of what is behind or under things.

12. SKIN SUIT

Originally, this comes wrapped in a small egg. It consists of a very thin and stretchable fabric that appears as an all-body leotard. It is hardly noticeable when worn. It parts to allow food to be eaten and other bodily functions.

When exposed to vacuum or low pressure it swells up and forms a thicker layer which completely shields its wearer from the effects of decompression.

13. ERASABLE CLAY TABLET

For all intents and purposes this appears to be a tablet of wet clay, equipped with its own stylus for primitive forms of writing. However, through a sequence of stylus gestures, a page may be saved and recalled later.

After some time, other gestures may be found that recall pages the user did not write. These are written in a script frequently found in the old Vilani First Imperium.

14. GRAV-STABILISED STILETTOS

Where height is the ‘in’ fashion, there are practical limits to just how outrageous an outfit can be.

These shoes, however, raise that limit by introducing micro-powered grav stabilisers into their 15cm heels.

Some models are sufficiently powerful to allow their user to levitate slightly off the ground.

15. HAIR GROWING SHAMPOO

When used sparingly, this product can cause hair to grow 10-20 cm overnight.

Care must be taken not to spill this on any location where hair growth is undesirable as the effects can be embarrassing or even debilitating.

An emergency defoliant cream is available for such situations, but costs twice as much as the original shampoo.

16. GRAV STUNNER

Of undetermined origin, these thin grey metal plates are usually circular, about 1 metre across.

When placed on a reasonably flat surface, one of these plates assumes a degree of transparency such that in dim lighting, or to a fast moving or distracted onlooker (e.g. someone in a fight) it appears to be part of the floor.

If anything weighing more than a few tens of grammes (heavier than a mouse) steps on, or over the plate, it turns on a strong gravitic field which pulls its victim down on to the plate.

Originally, these devices had remote controls, which allowed their user to activate and deactivate the plate remotely. However, few of the plates can now be found with their control units, so typically the only way to remove a victim from the plate is to slide them off it (by tipping the plate or throwing a rope to the victim to drag them out).

LIBRARY DATA

This section describes some of the entities, institutions and lifeforms referred to in the preceding sections.

4Play

A plutonium rock band popular amongst the youth culture of several planets. Their best selling reel-to-reels include 'Concert of the Century', 'Death of The Computer', and 'Dancing on the Moon'

Agar Industries

A collective formed from several independent mining groups. They are a growing company and have not yet achieved the bureaucracy (or organisation) of a large company.

Bar Shipping

A small service shipping line. It is struggling to establish a reputation but is continually dogged by quality control problems.

Chicklizard

A reptile of vile temperament. It produces eggs of 'strong flavour' and meat that tastes of whatever it is seasoned with.

Chubb Panda

Resourceful scavengers. These clawed beasts can eat almost anything, breed everywhere and highly resent enclosed spaces.

Cornflower Consumables

A light manufacturing company. Their conservative approach has won them many contracts in the tertiary industries.

Dolbereth Smeltry

Metal and ore processors. Of median quality they are known best for getting bad jobs done badly. They are often found in competition with Garrot Foundry.

Ebisawa Electric

Electronic manufacturing and components. A forward-thinking company with excellent employee benefit programs.

FCO

Freddi Corporate Operations. This company mainly deals in luxury goods and services. Their low-bulk, high-value, cargos are particularly sought after.

Fliebermaus Chemicals

A chemical processing company. Where fashionable, it is very concerned with environmental issues and usually ships all its waste to where such issues are less revered.

GAG

Golden Vale Assassins Guild. Assassination is only a small part of GAG's business. Their criminal activities are quite extensive and usually involve violence.

Garrot Foundries

High quality metal processing. This company is known for its extreme attention to detail and its high prices.

Goldberg

Fashion designs. This label is not high fashion, but is known on several worlds and benefits from cross cultural appeal.

Hazelhearth

A fine grained, slow growing tree. It is particularly prized for its carving qualities. However due to its resinous nature it is best left to dry for a number of decades.

Mayes, Fitzpatrick and Pierce

Archaeological consultants. Many worlds of the Imperium have sites of interest. Any excavation work that uncovers remains is required to get a certificate from consultants such as these.

Morinmoss Pirates

A hearty bunch of wild souls. This group is a continual source of irritation for the local Navy. Although reportably non-violent to the people they rob, their hornpipes strike fear into sensible sophonts.

Polo Amalgamated

A general purpose manufacturing company. Subsidiaries to the group are continually acquired and sold, on a number of worlds.

Red Wizard

A leader in the virtual reality games industry, their products and their Realvision hardware systems are highly sought after.

Reis Vine

This vine is very rare and delicate, and prized for the use of its flowers.

Rosacap Fungus

Subsistence fungus. This grows on solid rock, and can be eaten after processing.

Serabi Genetics

Creators of custom genetic creatures. Well known for its scrupulous moral standards, it never deals in intelligent organisms.

Silver Panthers

A criminal collective. They mainly specialise in 'white collar' crime and information dealing.

SIPTU

Shipping and Interstellar Portage Trade Union. One of the major trade unions in the region for dock workers and support staff.

Tanagon

A large rhinoceros-like creature with a dragon-like tail. A ferocious carnivore sometimes kept as a hunting beast.

Ursk

A repellent fruit. Considered by many as the most disgusting in the universe. A small ethnic minority praise it highly and name it 'The Emperor's Fruit'.

Wallaby

Small marsupial. Many varieties are bred as pets and for competitions (genetically enhanced wallabies are forbidden from entering competitions).

Yip

A shaggy fur-bearing creature. They are affectionate but have a grating cry. Their fur grows at an incredible rate and they produce a salty milk.



RENDEZ-VOUS

This part of the book is divided into sections according to the purpose of the buildings, from types of accommodation to services, shops and bars. Each entry has the following details;

- A brief indication of the most likely location of this building.
- A description of the building, outside and in, its purpose and specific details of its operation and facilities.
- The costs of the services available within the building.
- The most notable character(s) associated with the location.
- The play options which you may wish to exploit (including how to play the Non-Player Characters and suggested adventure plot ideas).

You should feel free to adapt any or all of this information to suit your campaign background and/or personal preferences.

SELECTING A LOCATION

Simply determine the type of building or service required and consult the Building Listing at the end of this book. If the desired building is not listed, try adapting a similar entry to meet your requirements.

You need only use one or two locations to inject interest into any given world. Read the entry through before using

it, as there may be aspects of the description which need to be adapted to the environment, technology or law level of the current world.

ADAPTING FOR ALIEN WORLDS

Players may journey to worlds of different sorts (from rocky asteroids to Earth-type planets), with a huge variety of environments (exotic atmospheres, low gravity) and cultures (governments and laws).

All the descriptions in this supplement assume a fairly Earth-like world, but it is easy to adapt the entries for alternative situations. For example;

- An exclusive hotel floating in orbit around a planet or a gas giant.
- A shopping mall for a belter community living within a hollow asteroid.
- A beauty salon floating on a lake.
- Apartments located on the floor of a shallow sea.

Take a few moments to determine the adjustments required to the building. For example, in non-standard atmospheres, the building will need airlocks and its own air supply or hydroponics. Alternatively, individual buildings, or the whole city, may be within airtight domes. In space or over water, a power plant and suitable propulsion are required.



ACCOMMODATION

Whether your players are high class nobles expecting the best of service, or hardened spacers for whom a night or two dirtside is simply a pleasant change, suitable accommodation is a necessity.

1. GRAYSEALEAN (HOTEL)

A high-class hotel found in the centre of a city, or perhaps near a class A or B starport.

Description: A tall, circular building designed around an inner multi-level courtyard. The external building surface is totally covered in a mosaic of tiles intermingling the hotel logo and name with a tropical jungle scene. Designed by the famous architect Welk Gorman, the entire hotel is quite a sight.

A highly ornate reception leads to three large and well-decorated dining rooms, each with its own jungle theme (rocks, pools and vegetation). A sub-level contains bars, a casino, an extensive gymnasium and a large aqua-pool. The first floor has a beauty centre, medical facilities and conference rooms (with the latest high tech communications systems).

All bedrooms (on the second floor and above) contain a double bed, the latest in entertainment electronics, plush furniture (wardrobes, dressing table, work desk, easy chairs) and a luxury bathroom (with huge bath). An auto bar and robo-butler service provide for every need. The five executive suites which occupy the top level have Hellboria wood furniture and a human butler service.

The central courtyard is on several levels, with a transparent roof and tropical plants throughout. Holoprojectors mask the inner walls of the building with jungle scenes. A novel mirror system designed by Gorman provides the appearance of natural light throughout the lower levels.

A vehicle park takes up several sub-levels beneath the hotel. The hotel maintains limousines and grav speeders for the use of their clients. Security and privacy are paramount, from super-secure locks to antisurveillance measures in the executive suites.

Costs: Standard rooms Cr. 300/night, Suite Cr. 1,000/night, Meals Cr. 10-100, Drinks Cr. 5-10, Facilities (fitness, etc.): free to residents, otherwise membership of

Cr. 2,000/year is required.

Characters: One of the executive suites is currently under permanent lease by the dictator Janti Hovant, who retired here after his people rebelled against his rule. His continuing extravagant lifestyle seems to confirm rumours of the millions of credits he misappropriated while in power.

Play Options: This hotel will not tolerate misbehaviour by its residents (unless they are exceptionally rich). Hovant may be the subject of an adventure, perhaps with the players hired to infiltrate the hotel and assassinate him. Alternatively, the paranoid dictator may mistrust his own security men and hire the players for a while.

2. SABORIAN (HOTEL)

A middle-class hotel, to be found in almost any location.

Description: A wide, low building built to conform to local architectural style. An overtly expensive reception area gives an impression of opulence, although the rest of the hotel is less plush. A huge dining room occupies half the ground floor, with a variety of bars, games rooms and a small fitness centre making up the remainder of that level.

Residents' rooms on the first and second floors are all of a similar standard, having a double bed, a comms unit, entertainments and video console, wardrobe, desk, dressing table and very comfortable easy-chairs. The fresher has a shower, toilet and basin.

There are two executive suites, each having two plush bedrooms off a lounge area, with a free drinks cabinet (restocked daily). A small vehicle park is located beneath the hotel, with additional vehicle parking nearby.

Facilities: Generally good. The video entertainment in the suites is far more extensive than for normal rooms. Food is better at weekends, when Will Faber (a protégé of the renowned chef Jan Wehel) is usually running the show.

Costs: Standard rooms Cr. 90-100/night. Suite Cr. 350/night. Meals Cr. 10-30. Drinks: Cr. 2-5. Facilities (fitness, etc.): free to residents, otherwise Cr. 10/day.

Characters: The staff are usually friendly and efficient. However, after a series of internal thefts, a new security officer (Zek Hebenar) was appointed several months ago. An ex-military police officer, Zek is rather overzealous. He skulks around the building watching the staff (most of whom hate him already) and asking impertinent questions of anyone he thinks looks suspicious (including residents). When not creeping about, he stays in his security room, where surveillance cameras allow him to watch over the hotel.

Play Options: Since players inevitably tend to act suspiciously, they will no doubt suffer the attentions of Zek. The slightest hint of lawbreaking (lack of a license for a weapon, suspicious goods or drugs in their room, etc.) will lead to Zek calling in the local police. Naturally, the hotel will compensate them for any inconvenience this causes.

3. *ARDHAERAN DEGH* (*VARGR HOSTEL*)

In the centre of a startown, starport, or Vargr community.

Description: A circular building of six levels, its walls decorated in garish colours.

A reception area leads into the communal lounge, from which wide arches lead to three small eating areas, an office and a set of lifts.

The upper floors are all residents' rooms, with the lowest class accommodation on the lower levels. All rooms are large and totally private.

Non-Vargr are not welcome here, although their presence in the lowest class rooms might be tolerated if they are accompanied by a high charisma Vargr. The communal area is noisy, with regular disputes among the residents as they assert their position within the Vargr social hierarchy. Food and drink are mostly raw meats and fruit-derived beverages.

Costs: Rooms Cr. 50-100/night. Meals Cr. 5- 20. Drinks Cr. 1-5.

Characters: The hostel (its name roughly translates as 'Travellers' Home') is run by Ghenz Frorl, an ex-Emissary, whose liaison skills are used to ensure conflict between residents is kept to a minimum.

Play Options: A stopping place for Vargr players and, perhaps, their human companions.

4. *The Travellers' Rest (TAS)*

Anywhere within the main starport complex.

Description: A tall glass-covered circular building, with a TAS holobanner on top.

'TTR', as it is known to the locals, is a franchised TAS facility, catering primarily for TAS members, although other travellers and members' guests are admitted.

The ground floor is one huge lounge, with the reception, bar, and lifts to one side. The walls are plastered with advertisements and personals, from cheap passage deals to offers of employment, from cargo brokers to bounty hunter rewards. Simple meals are served here.

The first two floors have rooms for non-TAS members. All the rooms are well equipped, with reasonable quality furnishings and small but functional en-suite bathrooms.

Above the second floor are the member-only facilities. Fitness facilities and entertainment booths are located on the third floor. The fourth through seventh floors are bedrooms, all with quality furniture, double beds, en-suite bathrooms and large windows giving a view out over the starport. The eighth floor has six higher grade bedrooms, with large jellobeds, full holo-entertainment suites, interplanetary comms facilities, a separate lounge area and en-suite bathroom, and the best views over the starport. These six bedrooms are fully shielded against most forms of surveillance.

The members-only restaurant on the ninth floor serves a range of cuisine, from quite simple dishes to 12-course extravaganzas. The chefs pride themselves on being able to cater for the palate of almost any alien race.

A small but luxurious penthouse suite is the home of Korlin Hand, the current owner of the TTR (the TAS franchise pays quite well!). There are two levels of vehicle parking beneath the building.

Costs: Standard rooms Cr. 40-100/night, non-member rooms Cr. 100-200/night. Suites Cr. 300-500/night. Meals Cr. 5-50. Drinks: Cr. 1-10.

Characters: Korlin Hand was a professional gambler who made a fortune fleecing casinos. He ran a night club, until this profitable TAS franchise became available. Korlin makes it his business to meet his clients, often mixing with them in the restaurant or reception area. He dresses casually and might well be mistaken for just another traveller passing through. Korlin often acts as

an intermediary for patrons with particularly sensitive jobs that could not be openly advertised. By knowing his clientele, he knows who to approach and who to avoid.

Play Options: Korlin normally allocates the better-paying jobs to a favoured few associates, so befriending him may open the door to profitable employment, from drugs smuggling to covert intelligence work.

5. SAARTI & HAMBURN (APARTMENT RENTAL)

In the centre of a city or startown.

Description: A small, three-storey office block on a prestigious street corner.

This rental company (S&R) specialise in luxury apartments, offering choice locations within the city and starport. These apartments are often those of wealthy individuals who are away for an extended period.

Costs: Rentals are Cr. 500/month upwards.

Characters: Arianne Saarti and Terence Hamburn are the rather upper-class proprietors of this company. They take a personal pride in showing clients around the apartments and trying to exceed their expectations.

Play Options: Wealthy players can rent themselves a prime apartment in which to impress friends or business associates! While in residence, the players will be accosted by an irate visitor who was expecting to find the real owner, not realising that they are away and that the apartment has been rented out.

6. RUYKUL ORGANZ (HOTEL)

A middle-class hotel, within the starport's main leisure precinct.

Description: The Ruykul Organz (meaning 'Meeting Place' in the native tongue) is located on one side of a multi-level leisure precinct, facing a wide range of shopping and entertainment facilities. The hotel's frontage has a number of entrances at each level of the precinct, and seating for the hotel's numerous bars and cafés often spills out into the precinct.

To the untrained eye, the hotel appears to be a conglomeration of much smaller hotels, each with its own reception, eating and drinking areas, and residential rooms. However, this labyrinthine hotel actually operates as a single, efficient, co-ordinated organisation under the control of manager Alberiyi Fnors.

A wide range of room types are available, all with en-suite bathrooms, from cheap simple accommodation (single bed, cupboard, desk, televid) to moderately luxurious suites (a communal lounge leads to multiple bedrooms, each with a double bed, quality furnishings and high tech entertainment and communication facilities). Conference rooms are located near some of the higher quality bedroom areas.

The hotel has few fitness or gaming areas since equivalent starport facilities can be found within a few metres of the hotel.

The hotel has a specific area allocated to it in the extensive vehicle park located beneath the starport complex.

To the casual observer, security appears lax. However, appearances are deceptive, for the staff are generally ex-military types (handpicked by Fnors) and a very discrete surveillance and alarm system operates throughout the hotel.

Costs: Standard rooms Cr. 40-200/night. Suites Cr. 300-500/night. Meals Cr. 5-50. Drinks: Cr. 1-10. Conference rooms Cr. 10/hour.

Characters: Alberiyi Fnors was a top ranked intelligence operative for a neighbouring world. He realised there was a market for a hotel offering a discrete meeting place, where people could stay in relative privacy. He moved to this world and bought up multiple adjacent sites in the starport, rebuilding these into the current labyrinthine structure of the Ruykul Organz. The large number of entrances allow clients to enter and leave the hotel with little possibility of being surveyed, while the privacy of the residents within the hotel is preserved by the ever-vigilant hotel staff.

In theory, the Organz operates within the law at all times. However, when Fnors desires, people (and items) can hidden within the depths of the hotel, beyond the reach of the police or any other agency.

Play Options: The Organz clientele range from businessmen with their 'secretaries' to mobsters planning their next heist. Fnors does not allow hard drugs or stolen goods within the hotel, but it is rumoured that many other vices are catered for. Fnors is also rumoured to have close links with the starport police. Whether the players are seeking sanctuary, or simply meeting a patron, there are many possibilities for adventure within such a hotel!

7. EARILYL EORIL (ASLAN HOTEL)

In the centre of a startown, starport, or Aslan community.

Description: A square stone building of four storeys with intricate Aslan writings inscribed along each wall.

The ground floor contains the reception, communal lounge, restaurant and gymnasium. The first floor has a series of meeting rooms and two shrines. The higher floors contain simply-furnished rooms for the residents.

Non-Aslan are not allowed beyond the reception area. The whole hotel has a quiet, spiritual air about it, which is respected by most residents, who are mostly female traders and business people. Occasional rowdy males are quickly subdued by the owners.

Costs: Rooms Cr 30/night. Meals Cr. 5-15. Drinks Cr. 2-10.

Characters: The hotel is run by a pair of ex-adventurers, Feorni Eoril and her muscle-bound husband Teo (nicknamed 'Xenofire' by his human colleagues). Feorni handles hotel administration and Teo acts as senior steward.

Play Options: Feorni and Teo have many a tale to tell of their adventures. They are surprisingly kindly Aslan and quite friendly to non-Aslan provided they do not trespass within the hotel.

8. SNOOZE EASY (MOBILE HOMES)

Within a city or starport.

Description: The Snooze Easy offices are a plain building near the city centre. The company specialise in providing temporary mobile accommodation for clients – anything from a small van with a bed in it, to a huge luxury grav lorry fitted with a luxurious bedroom, en-suite bathroom, lounge and kitchen, with droid butler.

Costs: Mobile homes Cr. 10-1,000/night.

Characters: Tanwyn Hex is an eccentric noble who lives permanently in a Snooze Easy luxury mobile home, usually parked quite randomly somewhere within the starport.

Play Options: The players find Tanwyn Hex has parked across their starship bay, preventing access to and from the bay. Once alerted to the problem, Tanwyn is apologetic and pays them Cr. 100 each for their troubles.

9. PALOMINO (HOTEL)

A lower-class hotel in the back streets of any town (or the starport).

Description: A tall building, rather shabby-looking, with a brash holographic advertising display over its frontage.

A small reception opens onto a large bar (which also provides simple meals) and a gaming room. An ageing lift carries residents up to their rooms. The first floor contains small one-person sleeping modules, each with a tiny televid and a cramped bunk. The modules are rarely cleaned; a single common area has toilets and wash basins.

The upper floors contain small rooms, usually with a single or double bed. The central lifts open into a lounge area, containing old sofas and a primitive televid unit. Off this hall are communal washrooms and shadowy corridors leading to the individual rooms. The only comms units available are pay-as-you-use systems in the reception area.

Costs: Standard rooms Cr. 20/night. Modules Cr. 5/night. Meals Cr. 1-5. Drinks: Cr. 1-3.

Characters: The owner of the hotel (Morell Haulp) is an unsavoury character, who always requires payment in advance, whether for rooms or food. He keeps a shotgun behind the reception to help control the less desirable elements who frequent this establishment.

Play Options: A good place to throw at your players if they've run out of money. The modules are usually occupied by vagrants and drunks, although this can be a quieter place to sleep than the upper rooms where rowdy residents may start fights over which televid channel to watch. Queue-jumping for the washroom can result in violence.

The Palomino is, however, a useful place to pick up information, as its inhabitants often have connections with the local underworld.

10. STAR'S END (HOSTEL)

Anywhere within a run-down district of a world.

Description: A large warehouse with no windows, a single doorway and a few roof lights. The name is shown on a battered sign over the door. Beside the door is a long list of conditions for entry into the hostel, including a total ban on alcohol, drugs, weapons, pets, etc.

This hostel caters primarily for homeless unfortunates. Single bunks are stacked 3-4 levels high in rows across the warehouse, with ladders giving access to the upper beds. A small locker is set into one end of the bunk for personal belongings, and a curtain can be pulled around each bunk for privacy.

One end of the warehouse is an open lounge, with a range of second-hand furniture and a cheap black and white 2D televid. The original office space attached to the end of the warehouse has been converted to hold a large kitchen, storeroom, sleeping quarters for the night-shift staff and several rooms which may be used as a doctor's surgery or counselling room. There is a large communal washroom.

Everything in the hostel is grimy, from the food to the bedding. Fights sometimes break out over who owns which bunk (top bunks are rated as the best), or who gets to search the body of the most recently deceased resident.

The volunteer staff work extremely hard for their residents. Meals are simple but relatively nutritious, and a doctor visits regularly to deal with ills, both minor and major.

Costs: Accommodation is free for the first 30 nights, and Cr. 1/night thereafter. Food is free, but all vices (e.g. alcohol and gambling), weapons, etc. are banned.

Characters: The current owner of the hostel is Sanya Toch, a countess who fell from favour but who has retained sufficient moneys to fund the hostel for a number of years.

There are many interesting characters to be found here, from army veterans who couldn't handle civilian life, to elderly scouts who drank away their retirement money.

Play Options: players in severe monetary difficulties might find themselves residing at the hostel, getting involved with the Nplayers within and perhaps having to fight for their bunks and what few possessions they have retained. The players may need to locate a hostel resident - perhaps a relative is trying to locate their father who has disappeared, or following up rumours of an old scout who murmurs in his sleep about a 'lost treasure'.

Naturally, Sanya is always seeking monetary aid - the players might undertake a fundraising campaign for her, or make a donation. And of course there's always the evil property baron who wants to flatten the hostel to make way for his new shopping precinct...

11. TAMBERLEY RENTALS (HOUSE RENTAL)

In the centre of a city or startown.

Description: A small, single-storey office. Tamberley rent all manner of cheap apartments and houses.

Costs: Rentals from Cr. 200/month for single apartments to Cr. 400/month for a large house.

Characters: John Tamberley and his wife Vanessa run the rental office.

Play Options: players can rent a temporary home or hideout. Unfortunately, there is usually a reason for the low price of these properties... a leaking roof, vermin infestation, blocked sewerage, or perhaps bad neighbours.

RESTAURANTS AND BARS

Whether your players are just plain hungry, seeking to impress a colleague with their knowledge of alien cuisine, or looking for a quiet place in which to get drunk...

1. HIERKINTUTH (RESTAURANT)

Within a rich city centre or an A or B class starport.

Description: A fairly large two-storey circular building with windows on the ground floor only. Two stewards wait attentively at the sparkling blue doors. A parking area with covered walkways surrounds the building. The cars parked here are mostly expensive sports cars, limousines and the like.

The doors are of expensive Hellboria wood (as is most of the furniture within the restaurant). The slowly changing blue grain striations of this wood go well with the aquatic theme of the restaurant. The stewards outside welcome guests, but their primary purpose is to reject unsuitable entrants. The entrance doorway has a built-in weapons scanner. Beyond is a small reception area with two more stewards (armed as appropriate for the law level) who check bookings (tables must be reserved in advance), take coats, communicators and any baggage, and then summon a further steward to direct the clients to their table.

A passage leads to the centre of the building where there are several doors leading to the kitchens - the steward always offers the guests the opportunity to look around the kitchen before (or after) their meal. A lift then brings the guests up in the centre of the upper level.

The reason for entering via the centre is that the majority of the upper level rotates slowly. The walls, floors and ceiling of this room are lined with aquatic tanks, containing all manner of alien sea life; the transparent floor area rotates a few degrees a minute, so that over several hours, the clients will complete several circuits and be able to view the contents of all of the tanks. The centre of the room is immobile, and contains separate lifts for customers and kitchen staff. There are also more tank displays, this time of the fishes available to eat!

The food is exquisite, service is exceptional and the price is accordingly high. Seafood dishes are a speciality.

Corellian Squirms and Tyler's Skittlefish are served live from tiny aqua tanks (at the table), or customers may choose the fish they wish to eat from the tanks in the room's centre. The fish is stunned and taken to the busy kitchens below.

Costs: Meals are Cr. 30-50/course with drinks from Cr. 10 upwards and liqueurs and wines up to Cr. 1,000/bottle (for a vintage Tolinquine wine). An average meal will cost around Cr. 200/person including a few drinks, although a special 'gourmand' menu (14 small courses sampling the entire range of the chef's expertise) is available for Cr. 250/person.

Characters: The owner, Gustaf Forbes, is a rich businessman (a director of Lyten Technical) who loves alien cuisine and wished to recruit the renowned chef Jan Wehel. Jan would not work as Forbes' personal chef, but agreed to become senior chef if Forbes created a suitably high class restaurant. Hierkintuth is the result, and Forbes eats here whenever he is on the planet.

Play Options: Forbes is always very touchy about any rumours that Wehel might be poached by a competitor. More than once he has hired people to watch her movements.

players may take clients to the Hierkintuth to impress them, or a patron may invite them for a meal. Simple tasks such as getting a table at short notice can become an adventure in their own right, perhaps requiring negotiation with the restaurant and several customers who might be willing to give up their booking if suitably compensated. Forbes' business competitors (or Wehel's rivals) might try to discredit the restaurant by tampering with the food (in the kitchen or at the table).

2. HALTERS (RESTAURANT)

Within a rich city centre or an A or B class starport.

Description: Halters occupies the bottom storey of a ten level office block owned by Weller Associates. Originally designed as a high class canteen for Weller staff, the chefs at Halters were so highly regarded that the number of guests at any time often exceeded the number of Weller staff. The restaurant was finally thrown open to the public, i.e. those executives who could afford to eat here.

Beautiful holographic works of art divide up the plush seating areas (switching these dividers on and off allow small or large groups to be accommodated easily). A range of small meals are available at a huge discount for staff, while the full price à la carte menu is used by non-staff and for business guests.

All tables have discrete comms points for those needing to stay in touch with their office, hold an informal conference call, or connect in to the planetary data net with a hand computer.

Costs: Staff meals are Cr. 5-10. Meals à la carte are Cr. 20-40/course. Drinks are Cr. 5-10, wines Cr. 20-200. A range of vintage alcoholic spirits are available for Cr. 10/shot.

Characters: Halters is regarded as the place to be seen by the sophisticated and chic members of the community. Many important business deals are sealed here, and Weller executives dine here regularly. However, of late a number of rich, but disreputable persons (with alleged underworld connections) have begun to frequent the restaurant.

Play Options: Halters may recruit the players to determine just how disreputable their new clients really are, or to investigate after one of these clients mysteriously dies of food poisoning (assassinated by a rival gang who infiltrated the restaurant's waiters).

The players may be hired to bug Weller executives during their meals, either by a rival firm or because someone appears to be dealing illegally in Weller's precious metals exchange, and Weller wishes to know which of their staff are involved.

3. *UTTER GOURMET (RESTAURANT)*

Within a city centre or a starport.

Description: A moderately small single storey building with large windows, shaded in the familiar red and green stripes of the Utter Gourmet (UG) restaurant chain. A steward dressed as a furry Talquil stands at the door. A small parkbay is located outside the restaurant.

Internally, glittering metal and soft leather padding adorn every surface. The other staff are also dressed as Talquils, flapping about in their over-sized furry feet. The kitchens at the rear of the building produce a reasonable range of family foods, identical to that available at any UG outlet. A central auto-vend caters for those seeking only light refreshments. Life-size cuddly Talquil robots scamper

about the floor, carefully avoiding being trampled, seeking out children to entertain (this is a major attraction at all UG restaurants).

Service is usually prompt and all the staff are extremely polite. They probably have a fixed smile, but it's difficult to see this under their Talquil costume.

Costs: Meals Cr. 5-30. Drinks Cr. 1-5.

Characters: The proprietor of this UG franchise is Annette Smyers, a young, friendly local who sees this as her stepping stone to managing a 'proper' restaurant.

Play Options: For several years UG restaurants have been subject to threats from FLUFF, ecological terrorists who are upset at the maltreatment of herd animals on farms supplying UG (whose aggressive purchasing policy precludes humane farming methods). FLUFF activists may demonstrate outside, mount a sit-in, or place a bomb somewhere in the restaurant. The players may be recruited by FLUFF, or by UG in an attempt to infiltrate FLUFF, or they may simply find themselves in the restaurant during a bomb scare.

4. *GREASY JOE'S (STARCREW CAFÉ)*

Almost anywhere in, or close to, a starport.

Description: A large, low building standing slightly apart from the others. Night and day, bright flashing lights and a heavy thumping beat emanate from the grubby windows. The doorway is a starship iris valve. Close up, the windows can be seen to be old starship pressure windows.

Inside, all the furnishings are from starships: the bar is that from a Belax class liner; the seating ranges from scout ship acceleration couches to luxury yacht sofas. The clientele are exclusively lower-ranked merchant crews and a few senior engineering types, scouts and belters. The room is dimly lit; the flashing laser lighting does little to illuminate the room although there are dim glow-bars set around the edge of the tables. The music makes the room thrum like a starship engine room, reducing audibility to a few feet.

The bar staff include an attractive young woman and the proprietor Joe, who can be seen to be wearing a grav belt. After a while, new customers will realise that Joe has no legs and only one working arm - however, he is quite adept at flinging himself around the bar using the grav belt and his one good arm.

Simple meals are available from a scoutquality auto-vend machine, but most people prefer the self-service buffet of alien cuisine. Toor suck-sticks and Quath gobbler cubes are a particular favourite. A 'trust box' is provided for payment if the bar staff are busy. The food is prepared in a small kitchen behind the bar.

Costs: Meals Cr. 1-5. Drinks Cr. 1-5.

Characters: Joe was a renowned starport engineer who, in his time, was able to fix just about any starship's engineering problems. Joe's career came to an untimely end while repairing a jump grid. A power spike induced a weak jump field that damaged Joe's legs and arm beyond repair. With his retirement money and gifts from his many friends, Joe was encouraged to set up this café.

Play Options: This is the place to find hardened spacers, where scouts tell of the strange places they have seen and engineers spend their meals discussing thruster plate alignment tools and telling lewd jokes.

Anyone not paying for their food (using the trust box) will get bounced by 30-40 irate ship's crew... anyone defrauding Joe is seen as the lowest sort of scum.

5. GUTTED CRESSAT (CAFÉ)

In a back-street somewhere...

Description: A small, cramped building squeezed between its neighbours. A laser system continuously draws the café name across its frontage, along with an animated picture of a Cressat (a small rat-like creature) being stabbed with a roasting fork.

It's no better inside. Cheap plastic furniture, out-of-fashion rubber artworks and dilapidated air plants provide the singularly unique decor. All the staff look depressed and service is abysmal. The menu appears extensive, but is mostly pre-packed freezer meals which are quick-cooked in the kitchen microwaves.

Costs: Meals Cr. 2-10. Drinks Cr. 2-5.

Characters: The staff suffer the tyrannical rule of Franki Pesco, the owner. Franki is a wild spirit, verbally abusive and liable to violence, who regards his staff as little more than slaves. Staff turn-over is rapid, but there's always someone who needs the money, so Franki always has someone to boss about.

Play Options: The players may be around when Franki picks on a young waiter or waitress. Franki may at first seem to be simply an abusive customer. If the players go to the aid of whomever he is berating, they will become the subject of abuse by Franki. Given the amount of repressed anger among his staff, such a situation might lead to Franki being beaten up or knifed by one of his slaves.

6. RAPIER (PRIVATE BAR)

In a back-street in the upper class area of a city.

Description: A four storey building built of local stone, with ornate carvings on every surface. The translucent windows have a constantly shifting colour scheme (temperature and light-sensitive chemicals trapped between the panes of glass). Little can be seen of the inside, although there are flashing lights on the upper floor. A discrete sign over the heavy door says simply 'Rapier'.

Rapier is a members-only bar visited by the rich and famous. Young nobles are often found here, partying throughout the night. The bottom floor has a small reception with two heavies who check membership and ensure no weapons are brought inside. A cloakroom, two lifts (to the other floors) and a 'quiet' drinking lounge fill the remaining space. The other three floors are all plush lounges, each with a well-stocked bar, washrooms and several curtained off cubicles. The upper level has a continuous disco. A discrete rooftop garden is reserved for the proprietor and special guests.

The bar is open every hour of the day; particularly rowdy parties can last days!

Costs: Drinks Cr. 5-500. Membership Cr. 1,000/year.

Characters: The staff are extremely well-trained and polite, being able to maintain a smile even when dealing with drunk clients.

The proprietor, Dieter Colan, owns the neighbouring house. He spends most of his time socialising with his clients, entertaining the most important in the rooftop garden.

Play Options: The players are passing when someone plummets from the rooftop garden. Did they fall or were they pushed?

7. THE BLACK ROSE (BAR)

At the centre of a city or starport.

Description: A rectangular two-storey building with an illuminated outline of a rose over the door. A couple of large windows give a view into the bar area, but all the other ground floor windows are small and high up.

Inside, two-thirds of the ground floor is a bar, furnished to a high standard, with a small stage at one end. Behind the bar are an office for the manager (Franz Gelgud), a stock room, staff room, boiler room, a door into the adjacent staff car park, and stairs to the upper floor. A side street entrance also has stairs leading upwards. The upper floor has several storerooms and an office for the owner (Paul Tyrone), and a private bar where a legal gambling operation is run for local underworld figures, businessmen and police officers.

The bar is the dirtside contact for a pirate group. The storerooms are sometimes used to store loot from hijacked ships.

Costs: Drinks Cr 1-10.

Characters: Tyrone deals with his pirate comrades, while Gelgud handles the dirtside liaison. The staff are mostly pirates, on R&R.

Play Options: Gelgud might recruit the players into the pirate group; certainly there are rumours that The Black Rose is a good place to find mercenary contacts. The players may be asked (by the police) to infiltrate Tyrone's group, to obtain evidence of the pirate activities. Alternatively, the players may simply be bystanders during a police raid on the bar.

8. TAMBOURINE (BAR)

In the centre of a city or starport.

Description: A low, silver, domed building, the upper half of the dome being a translucent blue colour.

The ground floor contains tables and chairs and a long bar around a central stage. A well-known hang-out for artistic types, the Tambourine has nightly dance reviews and other live entertainment, from magicians to comedians. Every weekend, the crowds flock in to see a performance from a small troupe of the Dancing Insects of Thrarg. The atmosphere is relaxed and jovial and there is rarely trouble.

Costs: Entrance Cr. 5. Drinks Cr. 1-10.

Characters: Rory Dafoe is the owner of the bar and is a cheerful and friendly guy.

Play Options: Rory is well known for taking pity on people down on their luck, giving them food, drinks and perhaps over-night shelter.

9. THE PANTHER (BAR)

In the back-streets of a city or startown.

Description: A two-storey building of plascrete, with small, circular, barred windows.

The ground floor is one large room, with washrooms at the rear and a bar running down the entire length of one wall. Behind the bar a door leads to a tiny office and stairs to the owner's apartment above.

The bar furniture is worn, but kept in good condition by the careful owners Gary and Sandra Wiley. The walls are covered in 2D posters of recent zipwire sports stars (the bar is named after Tim 'Panther' Williams, four-times subsector zipwire champion).

Costs: Drinks Cr. 1-5. Snacks Cr. 1-5.

Characters: Gary and Sandra are honest people, but their bar has attracted the attention of a gang of local youths who went wild and began causing damage inside and out (hence the barred windows).

Play Options: Gary fears they will be attacked themselves, and is looking to hire someone to protect the bar.

10. HOPPER'S REST (BAR)

Towards the edge of the starport.

Description: A two-storey building, apparently of local timber, with a brightly lit frontage advertising itself as the best drinking hole this side of the Pellomar Nebula.

The ground floor is one large bar, with a unisex washrooms at the rear. A locked door conceals stairs to the upper floor, which is the apartment of the owner, Ted Barsby.

The bar furniture was once of reasonable quality, but now looks worn and jaded. The walls are adorned with autographed claim certificates from belters who made their fortune. The clientele tend to be belters who would like to be rich, but have not yet found that 'lucky strike'. The hardened spacers who hang out at the bar often enjoy competitions of physical strength or endurance, from armwrestling to seeing how many times they

can take a bite from Ted's pet rock snake. Brawling is common, although serious injuries are rare - the belters regard it as just another sport.

Costs: Drinks Cr. 1-5.

Characters: Ted will regale customers (particularly newcomers) with stories of how his great insight has helped a number of belters find great wealth. In truth, Ted is often unable to tell truth from fiction, and most of his 'tips' are simply old rumours, altered over time.

Play Options: The players may be lucky enough to hear one of the truly valuable rumours which Ted knows! No doubt they will be challenged to a physical match with one of the belters, or entertained by a brawl...

11. FLOATERS (BAR)

In the centre of a city or starport.

Description: A low, circular, two-storey building, with arrays of large iridescent bubbles floating constantly around it.

The bar takes up both floors of the building and is in a constant zero-g field, maintained by a huge array of gravitic plates and a power plant in the basement. With no defined floor, every surface is well-padded and has soft cushions, pillows and padded tables abound. In the centre of the room is a spherical bar area, allowing customers to be served in any orientation. Thin nets divide up the building into smaller spaces, so that thrown missiles will not go too far, and if the zero-g fails, the nets will catch those who were on the ceiling! Rowdy behaviour is not tolerated!

Costs: Entrance Cr. 10. Drinks Cr. 1-5. Drinks are served

in sealed tubes, with pressure-sensitive valves to prevent spillage.

Characters: The owner of Floaters is Alfred Moliere, a well-known gambler and womaniser.

Play Options: A bar room brawl in this environment could be a lot of fun! Female players may also attract Alfred's unwanted attentions.

12. THE LONG WAY HOME (BAR)

In the centre of a starport

Description: This building is made from the hull of a 300 ton Extended Duration Survey Vessel with the name *Lintula Sunrise* barely visible at its bow. Externally, the ship looks as though it is complete (although the hull is scarred from impacts and combat damage). Internally it has been totally stripped - even the fuel tankage has been taken out to provide a 25m long lounge area, widening from 5m (at the entrance to the bridge, which has been converted to a VR games area) to 20m at the rear. A central bar surrounds the lift shaft which gives access to the owner's apartment on the upper deck, and the reception lobby below (previously the cargo hold).

Costs: Drinks Cr. 2-10, half price to Scouts.

Characters: The proprietor is Arak Bjorg, ex-Scout, who once flew aboard this starship.

Play Options: Arak has strange tales to tell of a series of inter-sector jump gateways which he discovered many years ago. He will talk loudly about the subject until someone asks too many questions, at which point he will become aggressive, demanding to know whether the person is a Scout or government agent sent to spy on him!

ENTERTAINMENT

At some point, everyone needs a break from work. This section provides some appropriate entertainment venues, sports facilities and the like.

1. HYANCITH (THEATRE)

Near the centre of a town.

Description: A large building comprising several overlapping hemispherical sections with 'artistic' girder structures surrounding it. The whole effect looks like the segmented body of a giant insect.

Built 140 years ago, the theatre is slightly shabby, although it retains its reputation as a centre for top quality work, particularly serious social dramas. A certain clique of well-known actors play most of the lead roles.

The front of house contains the usual reception hall, booking offices, cloakrooms and a bar. The single, huge, auditorium is laid out like a coliseum, with plush seating. The sound quality is extremely good throughout the theatre thanks to the reactive sound amplification system built into the walls.

The rear of house contains an office area, changing rooms, scenery/props storage area, costume room, plant machinery room and extensive wings allowing props to be easily transferred on and off stage. An array of gravitic units under the stage allow a wide variety of low-g and simulated flying scenes to be played. A holoprojection unit is also used to supplement the scenery displays.

Costs: Tickets range from Cr. 50 (front rows) to Cr. 5 (uppermost back rows). Drinks Cr. 2-10.

Characters: Alberto Pagaganin is the aged proprietor. His two daughters Arabella and Josephine actually run the theatre. Alberto insists that the theatre be run in a traditional manner, and he also ensures that his favourite actors (many of them now as old as him) get the lead parts. The theatre has been losing money of late, as its audiences have waned, but Alberto is deaf to his daughters' pleas that they should recruit new actors.

Play Options: players simply looking for entertainment will find this a good place for a restful, yet mentally stimulating evening.

Arabella is tiring of her father's stubbornness and wishes to take control of the theatre. She will hire someone to put her father in hospital and, when he still insists on trying to run things from his bed, she will have him killed in an accident. The players may be hired to attack/kill Alberto, or may be asked to guard Alberto after the first incident. Alternatively they or may be asked to investigate his death by Arabella, in an attempt to convince her sister that she was not involved in her father's murder (she is hoping the players are suitably incompetent, and she may have planted evidence incriminating her sister).

2. VIBRALIFE (CINEMA)

A leisure complex or town centre.

Description: A hundred or so small spheres, all linked by tubular passageways, forming a roughly cubical grid-work. Each sphere is emblazoned with the VibraLife logo (a cube with a spring at its centre).

A ground level dome contains the reception area where tickets are purchased. Moving walkways convey customers to a free dome, where they are strapped into a frame which supports most of their weight. Each dome contains a single frame which can take one or two persons (e.g. couples, or one child and an adult - minors must always be accompanied). The desired film is then projected onto the interior of the dome and the frame (at the centre) moves, shakes, rotates, etc. to simulate the movement observed in the film. Spray scents, temperature and lighting control provide a complete sensory experience.

The whole operation is run efficiently with just five staff; ensuring that customers are correctly strapped into the frames is the most onerous task.

Costs: Cr 10 per person.

Characters: The five staff are all film addicts who will be more than willing to spend a few hours discussing the computer animation effects in the latest horror video and who can name the main actors in almost every holovid made in this subsector.

Play Options: A prankster has infiltrated the computer system which runs the VibraLife site. He has begun by

changing the film order so that young children get horror movies rather than the animated cartoons they expected. He intends to start hacking the code for the frames next, possibly resulting in someone being thrown about sufficiently to cause harm. VibraLife will urgently require players with computer and investigative skills to help track down this prankster.

3. ENYA'S STAR (ADULTS ONLY)

Any moderate population world, either repressed with a low law level, or permissive, with any law level.

Description: A roughly hexagonal building of two levels, finished in modern plascrete, with no apparent windows. Each side of the hexagon has an entrance with two security guards. The heavy doors are plastered with an array of rules, a long list of DOs and DON'Ts. The large underground car park has several entrances.

The Star caters for a wide range of vices, from entertainment by employees of any sex (and any race!) to the use of drugs (whether legal or illegal on this world - tobacco, alcohol, hallucinogens, psi drug, etc.). If on a high law level world, the Star has an exclusive license to provide an outlet for these vices as the government has found this more productive than trying to eliminate them completely.

Internally, the Star is furnished to a high level. Once past the extensive security (guards, weapon scanners, etc.) customers select their preferred vices and whether they wish to enjoy them in seclusion or as part of a group. The computer then directs them to an appropriate room within the building.

Guards patrol internally and surveillance cameras watch every corridor. A medical centre provides a recovery area for those who have over-indulged themselves. Advanced Virtual Reality systems allow a number of pleasures to be experienced privately, without risk.

Costs: Entry fee Cr. 100. Strictly adults only. Individual vices cost from Cr. 5 for a quick smoke up to Cr. 1,000 for more exotic tastes.

Characters: The Star has around 300 staff, some of whom are aliens, and many of whom are recruited as personal entertainers.

The owner of the complex is Yitza Ferranti, a noble playgirl who believes strongly in a permissive, free society. Were it not for her wide-ranging contacts within the government, it is doubtful that she would have been

allowed to open, or continue to run, the Star.

Play Options: The list on the doors should be read carefully. No weapons, drugs, etc. may be brought in (the Star sources all drugs from a 'reliable' supplier). Strictly adults only. The management take absolutely no responsibility for any harm suffered within the complex, or as after effects, over whatever period of time.

Needless to say, Yitza has some exceptionally good lawyers. Last year, it was alleged that the Star had brainwashed a young woman into seducing an Imperial official but the case was dismissed for lack of evidence.

4. CELESTIAL GUARDIAN (CHILDREN'S ENTERTAINMENTS)

In a town centre, starport or green field site.

Description: A three-storey U-shaped building covered in white tiles, giving it a clean, clinical appearance. Large, irregularly shaped windows break up the monotony. Huge roof windows allow light into the upper floors.

CG is an entertainment complex for children (up to middle 'teens) sponsored by a religious group - the Stellar Education Co-operative (SEC). Holodisplays, printed materials and participatory events provide educational material for a wide range of subjects. Tutors are available to supervise children through the displays. Small recreational areas are interspersed with this wealth of data, encouraging children to alternately browse the displays, then exercise physically.

The SEC believes that education will eventually raise the human mind to a higher plane. The sect's principles are expounded in the educational displays.

Costs: Cr. 1 per child, per hour.

Characters: This establishment is run by Liam Getz, one of the SEC council members. Liam believes fervently that the 'greater consciousness' will eventually be achieved, but hopes to speed up the process such that it is experienced in his life time.

Play Options: Liam has instigated some new subliminal displays promoting the SEC cause, both for the children and in the reception area where parents will be affected. The players may be asked to investigate why interest in the CG site has suddenly peaked with certain parents and children (those most susceptible to the subliminal displays), to the degree that some appear to be addicted - they demand daily visits to the CG building.

5. ZMY COLLECTION (ZOO)

Centre or outskirts of a city.

Description: A relatively cramped zoo, using huge multi-level buildings to house a collection of rare animals (from across the subsector) in as small a ground area as possible. The emphasis is on sensationalism - ferocious monsters and cute furry creatures being the main attractions. The Iannik family who own the zoo often declare openly that their intention is purely to make a profit by pulling in as many punters as possible.

The zoo is widely advertised on vid and sound channels, with discount entry schemes. Special events might include 'watch the longtoothed jigers hunting a live wambart!'. Such hunts (and other events) are enhanced by the use of miniature cameras embedded in the heads of the animals, such that spectators can experience a jiger's eye view of the hunt in 2D or via a Virtual Reality interface.

The latest exhibit of interest is the Oluem – a deceptively cute and cuddly mouse-sized carnivore. This creature suffers sudden periods of frenetic activity. It can rapidly consume other animals of equivalent size within a few seconds, ballooning its own body to three or four times its normal size.

A number of expensive cafés and bars provide refreshments throughout the zoo.

Costs: Entrance Cr. 15/adult, Cr. 10/child.

Characters: The Ianniks are a family of game hunters whose favourite hunting grounds were gradually eroded by restrictive ecological laws. Their range of contacts allowed them to acquire a range of interesting beasts for the zoo before the regulations precluded the collection of such animals.

Play Options: For a huge fee, the Ianniks secretly hire out certain of their environmental areas for hunting. Carefully selected wealthy clients hunt jigers, snapclaws and triphants within the controlled environment of the zoo. The players might be hired to investigate the mysterious disappearance of a rich client (who was killed by a snapclaw on just such a hunt). Since these hunts are secret, the only clue is a large payment made to a holding company which can be traced to the Iannik family.

6. YELLOW CRUCIBLE (NIGHT CLUB)

In a back-street somewhere...

Description: A small entrance, squeezed between two buildings, with two suited heavies outside. The name, and a crucible with animated sparks spitting from the top, are outlined in fluorescent lighting above the door.

Through the doorway (where guests are checked for weapons and unsuitable clients are turned away) a long dark passage leads back to the club's glittering lobby and cloakroom. Beyond, the club expands out behind the main street buildings, to provide a huge dance floor space, several bars, and a lounge area. Lifts lead up to an over-priced restaurant on the upper floor, where the club offices and storerooms are located.

One of the most popular clubs in town, the Crucible is frequented every night by the chic and fashionable. Rumours of illegal drug use here are refuted by the management, who claim to run the cleanest club on the planet.

Costs: Entrance Cr. 15. Drinks Cr. 2-10. Snacks Cr. 1-5. Restaurant meals Cr. 20-50.

Characters: Mandy LaPreece, the owner of this club, is an avid dancer.

Play Options: The drugs rumours are unfounded except in one respect - Mandy is a psionic and holds a small stock of psi drugs for fellow psionics who hold occasional meetings in the club offices. The players might themselves be searching for fellow psi's or psi drugs, or may be recruited by an anti-psi organisation to infiltrate the club and determine which members are psionic.

7. PURE AND SINFUL CLUB (PRIVATE 'LEISURE' CLUB)

In a noisy side street, off a main town square on a permissive world, otherwise hidden away in a back street.

Description: An exquisitely decorated archaic mansion house, constructed during one of the more nostalgic periods of this world's history, but looking slightly out of place in this modern city. Wide steps sweep up to grand entrance hall where stewards wait to receive guests.

Advertising for this club is discrete, being found in high class magazines rather than scrawled on the walls of the local comm. booths. The ads offer 'freedom for all sexual persuasions', 'open to all species', and 'a relaxed evening full of the fun of the flesh'.

Beyond the entrance hall are lounge bars for clients to meet, with private cubicles. An array of bedrooms take up the second and third floors. The basement house an aquatic tank, zero-g area, and alien-specific rooms (e.g. a mud bath for Hyumians).

Decor and furnishings are good quality, staff are courteous, and security is tight. Clients are allowed to have fun, but not to hurt anyone.

Costs: Entrance Cr 100. Drinks Cr. 5-15. Service tips are expected...

Characters: Daniel Long was a renowned low-g dancer, who had always believed in sexual freedom. His acquired wealth was quite sufficient to purchase the mansion and open this club. Some might view this as a brothel, but the club offers a much wider range of services, including an introductory club for singles looking for a partner, and extensive sex education facilities, teaching safe practices.

Play Options: If your players are suitably liberated, they might wish to spend some of their hard-earned cash here. Alternatively, they may be hired to follow a diplomat, whose husband believes is having an affair. They can track her to the club but after some trouble should discover that she is attending an education course on how best to please your partner; she is, in fact, devoted to her husband.

8. ***HYPER!ACTIVE! (CYBER CAFÉ)***

Anywhere in a town or starport.

Description: A long low building with large windows onto which translucent holoimages of various computer games are projected.

The café is a single room, divided into booths, each with a computer entertainment console and links to the local network. A small bar provides soft drinks and snacks.

The windows show projections of any games in progress, or a random advertising display when the consoles are being used for non-gaming purposes.

Hyper!Active! is one of a chain of cyber cafés across the subsector used for surfing the local networks and exchanging information. Occasionally hackers use such cafés as a method of entering the networks anonymously, but the managers are vigilant and usually manage to evict these unwanted elements.

Costs: Meals Cr. 1-5. Drinks Cr. 1-5. Cubicle hire Cr. 5/hour.

Characters: Antony Crombie is the manager of this café. He is an ex-hacker himself, who saw the error of his ways and now spends most of his time writing games for Elven Worlds.

Play Options: Antony is an extremely useful contact for anyone needing advice or help with a computing problem.

9. ***VOLIN SPORTS (TRAINING HALL)***

In a city suburb.

Description: A large warehouse-like structure with roof-lights and a large sign including a stylised zipwire racquet.

Internally, the hall is divided into five zipwire courts, five half-size practice courts and a reception area with changing rooms and washrooms. The building is clean and tidy, with good quality furniture and equipment.

Only members can use the facilities, but newcomers can have one or two practice sessions before having to join. There are several highly skilled teachers available most of the time, several having been top league zipware players in the past. The wall décor includes trophies, medals and old racquets of these retired stars.

Costs: Courts Cr. 5/hour. Equipment hire Cr. 5/person. Membership Cr. 100/year.

Characters: The retired stars Anwa Johadi, Tim Foreman and J'kal Hob'ra own the hall and do much of the teaching.

Play Options: Several subsector champions have been trained here. Hypnosis is used extensively to sharpen reflexes and refine strategy and technique. The players may be hired to break into the club to steal the hypnosis tapes for a rival training centre.

10. FLASHING BLADES (FENCING CLUB)

In an upper-class city suburb.

Description: A two-storey building standing slightly apart from its neighbours. The sign over the door is a cutlass with 'Flashing Blades' inscribed on the blade.

The only entrance is through the reception, which leads to the changing rooms, club offices, instructors' room and the fencing hall. Stairs lead up to viewing gallery where a bar provides refreshments. The club has tasteful decor incorporating modern works of art and plush furniture. The fencing teachers are experts in their field, recruited from across the subsector. The clientele are mostly young nobles, learning how to duel.

One side of the building is divided off by a thick wall, the only entrance being through the club office. Beyond the wall is a gambling club for selected clients, with gambling tables downstairs and private rooms upstairs. The management frown upon ungentlemanly behaviour, but heavy drinking (among young nobles) seems to be an accepted hazard.

Costs: Entrance Cr. 5/person. Drinks Cr. 3-10. Fencing lessons Cr.50/hour. Membership Cr. 200/year.

Characters: A number of young nobles can be found here at all times of the day (fencing) or night (gambling). The owner, Yacob Nectarios, tries to run an honest business here, but the money from the gambling is useful.

Play Options: The players may be asked to retrieve an over-indulgent young noble from the clutches of his friends, who encourage him to spend all his money in the gambling den at the club. Alternatively, a young noble may die in a freak fencing accident. Their parents suspect foul play (although nothing could be proved) and hire the players to investigate.

11. KATHY'S PLACE (GYM)

Near the centre of a town.

Description: Previously the town hall, this old building has been stripped out to create a modern gymnasium. Around 30 customers can be accommodated at any time.

Costs: Cr. 10/hour.

Characters: The owner, Kathy DeHardt, is a retired gymnast, crippled by an arthritis-like illness which is barely kept at bay by her medics. With her winnings she

opened this gym. She still supervises, but relies heavily on her long-term boyfriend Taliq Rashien to help with day-to-day tasks. Taliq is fifteen years younger than Kathy and is a local boy, made good, who it is thought will be the next sector champion in the cyclic gymnastics event.

Play Options: Somewhere for players to exercise, to maintain high scores in their Strength, Dexterity or Endurance characteristics.

12. THE SOFT TOUCH (MARTIAL ARTS CLUB)

Adjacent to a Lindarport Security office.

Description: A modern building, similar in appearance to the office blocks around it. The gym was largely sponsored by Lindarport, who always have need of martial arts training for their staff. The ground floor has a reception area, changing rooms with showers, a first aid room (for treating minor injuries) and a stairway to the other four levels, each of which has one or two training rooms.

Costs: Lessons Cr. 5-15/hour (depending upon martial art style and quality of teacher).

Characters: The club is run by three senior teachers, each of whom specialises in one art.

Play Options: players may wish to brush up their unarmed combat skills or, if recruited by Lindarport for a job, may be sent to this school for a short training course.

13. SENSABATHE (SWIMMING POOL)

In the suburbs of a city.

Description: A huge domed complex, mostly built using liquiglass, which can adjust its transparency to filter the sunlight.

Off the reception area are a refreshments room serving drinks and snacks, and the changing rooms. The remainder of the dome is a series of large pools surrounded by tropical planting. Skin tanning and beauty treatment rooms are located at the edges of the dome, while soft-drink bars are to be found within some of the pools. All manner of water entertainments are found here, from bubbling spring 'baths' to exciting slides and water jets. The pools are all home to a variety of (harmless) fresh-water fish that are reputed to have a soothing effect upon the swimmers around them.

Costs: Entrance Cr. 5. Drinks Cr. 1-5.

Characters: The pool was built by the Herbametics corp to investigate holistic treatments involving aquatic life, but was then bought by the entertainments tycoon José Farrar and turned into a playground paradise.

Play Options: One or more disgruntled employees (or outsiders) have been putting poisonous rokspine fish into the water. Farrar will hire the players to investigate who is doing this and why (or one of the players might simply be swimming around in the pool when they step on something sharp...)

14. BOLERO (DANCE STUDIO)

A street near the town centre.

Description: A two-storey building, the ground floor of which is a snack bar. A side door and stairwell give access to the dance hall above, which occupies the entire upper floor with mirrored walls and stretching bars.

Lessons range from aero-dancing (for fitness) to classical and traditional dance styles. Many young men and women (particularly nobles) have learned their first dance steps in this hall, under the inspired leadership of Vanessa Pring.

Costs: Lessons Cr. 5/hour.

Characters: Vanessa is a retired dance choreographer who worked on many musical holo-epics in her time.

Play Options: A good place for young people to meet other young people of the opposite sex. The studio is renowned for the particularly close dance moves required for some of the more traditional styles.

15. MEGABOWL (FIREBALL STADIUM)

Within a major city.

Description: A huge, oval stadium, approximately 500 metres long.

This stadium hosts Fireball games almost every night. There are three local city teams, who play a variety of other cities and off-world teams. The place is generally packed to capacity, full of supporters wearing their team's colours. Vendors sell branded holorosettes, scarves, banners, clothing, etc.

The arena is sunk into the ground, the first seats being 20 metres above the arena floor (for safety). The remaining seats slope rapidly upwards to the executive suites around the rim, where the rich, famous or otherwise privileged elite wine and dine whilst watching the action.

Costs: Seats Cr. 15-30. Executive suite Cr. 1,000. Snacks Cr. 1-5. Drinks Cr. 1-5.

Characters: Most of the staff are either aspiring or ex-Fireball players, and are decidedly mean if anyone causes trouble!

Play Options: Last month a young spectator (Andrew Phipps) climbed the barriers and dived to his death in the arena. His parents wish to hire the players to investigate, in the hopes of disproving the rumours that he jumped while under the influence of drugs. (In truth, one of his school enemies took a hypnosis experiment a little too far...)

EMERGENCY SERVICES

Whether your players want to report a crime, receive treatment for an injury, or have been arrested, law and medical institutions can play their part in every campaign.

1. WEST 13 (POLICE STATION)

Any town or city.

Description: A three-storey plascrete office block with a vehicle yard protected by a high wall topped with razor-wire. The windows are bullet-proof and have anti-surveillance screens. Tiny video cameras monitor every area of the building (including the roof).

The entrance area has a registration desk protected by the ubiquitous bullet-proof glass. As with most internal doors, the entrance into the rest of the building has a palm-scan lock. Close to the reception are the visitor waiting areas, the 'ready' room (where a duty squad is ready to respond to any emergencies), a medical room and several interview rooms with extensive recording facilities and interfaces for the hand computers carried by all officers. On the middle floor are prisoner holding areas, cell blocks (including low berth storage) and interrogation rooms. On the top floor are the offices (time-shared between officers), computer room, common area (with a small kitchen and auto-vend machines), washrooms, equipment and weapons stores.

Costs: Fines, bail fees, etc. as appropriate.

Characters: The chief station officer, Phylip Jones, is a renowned coward and is always unwilling to commit his men to any significant action without authorisation from higher command. His indecisiveness and the resulting fiascos during the recent street riots, has led to West 13 being regarded as something of a jinxed station.

Play Options: The players might be brought here because of a misdemeanour, or might be hired to help break a detainee out of the station before they are transported to a higher security prison elsewhere on the planet.

2. PORT SECURE FACILITY (STARPORT POLICE)

Within a class A-C starport.

Description: Two large domes, abutted to form a connection.

The first dome contains the registration area and secure entrance to the rest of the building (most of the doors use palm or retina scan locks). Port troopers relax in a ready room close to reception. A medical room, equipment and weapons stores and trooper common room make up the rest of the ground floor. The upper floors contain offices for senior officers, divided into security, customs and planetary liaison sections. A comprehensive computer system provides internal security, gives access to a huge range of databases (from prisoner details to vehicle registration) and interfaces with other port facilities, from cargo handling to airspace control. An underground vehicle park (with a secure entrance) contains a variety of armoured vehicles.

The second, heavily armoured dome can be accessed only via a heavily guarded passage from the ground floor. Within this dome are the prisoner cells, interview rooms, low berth storage, and seized goods stores.

Costs: Customs fines, etc.

Characters: The station is run with meticulous precision by commander Gerard Depardic, a life-long port security officer. The entire staff moan about his strict rule, but it is noticeable that this facility has less than the usual share of 'bad' cops and wrongful arrests.

Play Options: Whether they have been brawling in a starport bar or caught smuggling, the players are likely to end up in this facility sooner or later. Alternatively, they may be hired as part of an intrepid plan to break into the second dome and steal the extremely valuable confiscated cargos (including drugs, gems, etc.) which are stored there.

3. GREEN QUARTER (FIRE STATION)

Near the centre of a town or city.

Description: A two-storey building with an arched roofed area sheltering three grav fire tenders.

The building contains a small office, a common room and cramped living quarters for the duty fire crews, an equipment store and small lecture room. A docking bay behind the tender shelter contains ten remote-controlled robot units used for particularly hazardous operations.

Costs: Courses Cr. 10/person.

Characters: The chief fire officer, Arnold Turner, has long been proud of the fact that his crews have been trained to deal with almost any manner of fire incident. Whereas many crews concentrate upon normal suburban incidents, his crews' knowledge has caused them to be called upon to handle fires aboard starships, a blaze at the port fuel dump and a crash at the local military base.

Play Options: The players might be interested in one of the station's regular courses on firefighting, including handling starship fires and special hazards (industrial chemicals, etc.). Arnold is very knowledgeable but does tend to blither on about the incidents he has seen.

4. DELTA FIVE (CRASH RESCUE CENTRE)

Near the centre of a town or city.

Description: A two-storey building with an array of communications antennas on the roof.

The ground floor has garages for five rescue units. The upper floor contains offices, centred around a massive bank of computers.

Advanced computer algorithms are fed with a mass of real-time data from stations around the city and updated every minute of the day to predict where significant incidents (from car crashes to robberies) will occur. Rescue units are then stationed appropriately. Prediction accuracy is only about 25%, but has led to an extra 75 lives saved per year. Lyten Technical, suppliers of the computer hardware and software, are constantly investigating enhancements to the system.

The high tech rescue units consist of an air/raft carrying a robo-medic (xenobiology specialist), a human medic, two autodoc units, full medkits and a VR link to the Delta Five centre. Day or night, the centre can then link the medic

with the nearest appropriate medical specialist to provide on-the-spot assessment and treatment until the patient can be gravlifted to hospital.

The centre also sells incident data and predictions to a few local corporations, to allow these bodies to determine when a catastrophe might strike them.

Costs: Free to planetary citizens, rescue fees are Cr. 1,000 per incident for offworlders.

Characters: The centre is the brain-child of Alexis Rombar, a Lyten engineer who is often to be found at Delta Five refining the computer software.

Play Options: Of late, Delta Five's success rate has dropped to -15%! It is thought that this might be due to a software error, but Alexis suspects a computer hacker is deliberately disrupting the unit's operation. He may hire the players to find out who is doing this, and why?

5. CAPITAL CARE (HOSPITAL)

At the centre of a city or starport.

Description: A collection of four huge five storey blocks, linked by passageways around a small courtyard area.

The courtyard is the ambulance bay, allowing patients to be transported quickly to whichever part of the complex can best deal with them. Air-raft bays are also located atop each block.

The bottom floor of two blocks deal with emergencies, while the other two have routine reception areas and out-patient areas. The second floor of each block contains analysis rooms (X-ray, haematology, pathology, etc.) and operation rooms. The third floors have a range of specialist clinics, including xenobiology and cosmetic surgery.

The upper floors contain small wards of 4 beds and private patient rooms.

The hospital has two areas of specialisation: psychiatric patients with a history of extreme violence, and neuro-surgery. The latter is often used to treat the former.

Costs: Medical costs can range from Cr. 10 for a simple injection to Cr. 100,000 for a particularly complex brain operation.

Characters: The renowned brain surgeon Yolanz Paris works at Capital Care.

Play Options: A nurse in the psychiatric ward is worried that one of her patients may not be the crazed psychopath her colleagues believe. The man's ravings indicate he may be in a long-term drug- or hypnosis-induced state. However, he is due to have his memory wiped in a few weeks, as part of his treatment. She recruits the players to investigate the man's background. (As an example, he may be an intelligence operative who out-lived his usefulness and has been placed here by the government, who will not tolerate an investigation of his past).

Alternatively, a player suffering from a major head injury (e.g. a gunshot wound) might be brought to Capital Care to be operated on by Yolanz Paris.

6. BIOMISSION (OPEN SURGERY)

In the suburbs of a town or city.

Description: A clean, modern, single-storey building with a welcoming smiling face over the doorway.

This is an open surgery where locals can obtain routine medical checks and treatment for minor illnesses. The waiting area contains a reception desk and a set of self-diagnosis autodocs. The doctors' offices and examination rooms fill most of the rest of the building. A recently upgraded compuscan unit allows treatment of the majority of sophont aliens. The back rooms contain a computer room, containing a patient database, a lounge for the doctors and a drug analysis unit (suspicion of rug abuse will cause the surgery to contact the local police station).

Costs: Treatments are generally cheap, as Biomission is a charity operation.

Characters: The senior practitioners are Dr. Lombard and Dr. Tasker. Dr. Tasker has recently been bribed by an unscrupulous manager at Herbametics to test a new fat

reducing compound on her patients; Tasker gives each the medicine as part of a blood balancing medication and then simply monitors their body fat as part of the normal examination process over a period of days.

Play Options: A young woman, in the peak of physical health, died of a heart attack shortly after seeing Dr. Tasker. One of the woman's relatives is a hospital surgeon who became suspicious of the repeated blood tests taken by Dr. Tasker, given that the woman was suffering from a minor mental disorder. He is therefore looking for someone to investigate whether Dr. Tasker's treatments were linked with the woman's death.

7. LIFE LINE (PARAMEDICS)

Near the centre of a town or city.

Description: A converted garage, with a small office area and covered parking for three ambulances.

Life Line are commonly called Cash Line, for they rush to the scene of a crash and acquire the victim, stabilising them in the emergency low berth stretcher (ELBS) carried aboard each ambulance. They will then refuse to release the victim to a hospital until their extortionate expenses have been paid.

Costs: Cr. 5,000 for use of the ELBS.

Characters: Life Line is run by Eliza Forth, a jack-of-all-trades businesswoman all of whose previous business ventures have ended in bankruptcy. She has recruited a number of disgruntled medics sacked recently by the local emergency services.

Play Options: Patients have been seen fleeing an accident site in order to avoid being placed 'in the chamber' (i.e. the ELBS). The players may find themselves the unfortunate victims of Life Line, or they may be hired to steal back a victim from these vultures.

SITES OF INTEREST

A selection of monuments, museums and other sites, each with some peculiarity or associated story which may perk the interest of your players.

1. FOUNDATION (MONUMENT)

At the edge of a city or starport.

Description: Three steel girders stand almost vertically in the ground just beyond the city limits.

The site is protected by the planetary conservancy trust, for these are the first girders erected when the town was founded several hundred years ago. The area is protected by a wire security fence. Guided tours of the city usually begin from this point.

Costs: City bus tour Cr. 5.

Characters: A number of tramps have made this area their home. Although the police continually remove them, they return each night to cluster around the monument. There are reports of occasional strange flickering lights around these girders at night, but local scientists claim these are just reflections from the town lighting.

Play Options: If approached in a friendly manner, the tramps will reveal that the lights sometimes take on the shapes of faces from their past. The true cause of these effects is one of the tramps, who is a latent psionic, and whose power randomly manifests itself while he is in a drunken stupor.

2. PALADIN MALL (INDOOR LAKE)

A large shopping mall in the centre of a city or starport.

Description: The centrepiece of the mall is a huge (150 x 10 metre) lake, coloured pink, with a series of fountains spouting purple fluid, which glows in the dark. As the purple and pink waters mix, a rainbow effect can be seen, with the colour gradually returning to pink. The lake is sponsored by a local Physkem site, to demonstrate their highly accurate thermosensitive dyes.

Characters: The Physkem public relations manager is a rather wimpy chap called Clark Kent; one of his responsibilities is to maintain the lake in good order.

Play Options: The lake has been plagued with problems since local youths discovered that urinating in the lake turned the water permanently black. Due to a legal complexity, the lake is not deemed to be within the jurisdiction of the mall security, so Clark wishes to hire the players to guard the lake and apprehend the youths.

3. THE BLACKNESS (REMOTE LAKE)

Near the outskirts of a small town or village.

Description: A lake in a forested or hilly area close to a town. The lake is inhabited by a small number of large voracious fish. Anglers from across the subsector travel here to do battle with these monsters. Three anglers have failed to return from fishing trips to this lake this year alone. However, far from dissuading them, the numbers of anglers are rising rapidly. A reward of Cr. 25,000 has been offered by a local paper for the first such creature landed this year.

Costs: Fishing license Cr. 10/month.

Characters: The local rangers are unable to prevent the anglers fishing, but have instigated a fishing license to dissuade too many foolish amateurs from trying their luck.

Play Options: The players might wish to try their hand at the Cr. 25,000 reward, or may be hired to investigate the disappearance of a fisherman. In truth, the man has been murdered and his body dumped in the lake.

4. REWINT ANIMALZONE (SAFARI PARK)

Wilderness area.

Description: Animalzone is an area of land set aside as a safari park. The park offers aerial tours to spot the rare and geneered species of animal kept within its confines. The owner is an anonymous and reclusive individual who has dedicated the land to the animals in perpetuity.

The public flock to see these animals in a natural environment. Some of the genetically engineered species (created by Hypagene) are particularly spectacular. One

of the natural lifeforms kept here is the Chert Cat, thought in some quarters to be the evolutionary link between basic felines and the Aslan. This is not a popular theory in extremist Aslan circles.

Costs: Aerial tour Cr. 25/person.

Characters: The owner of Animalzone is Sarah MacFidgean, an ex-director of Hypagene, who felt pity for the 'failures' produced by the company. Most of the geneered stock in the park are such 'rejects' whom Sarah has rescued from death.

Play Options: Several attempts have been made to steal some of the geneered species. The players might be recruited as new wardens to help protect the park.

5. CORIALANUS TRUST (BOTANICAL SANCTUARY)

In the suburbs of a large city.

Description: A collection of domed buildings, mostly transparent, filled with plants and trees of all varieties.

The Corialanus Trust specialise in the preservation (and conservation) of rare flora and fauna from across this subsector. This site is specific to plants, and is intended to maintain the gene pool for re-colonisation of future worlds as well as scientific research.

The most interesting plant in their collection is the Euphorbian Violet, which is thought to have very weak psionic abilities. The Trust's gardeners often find themselves feeding the plant more than they should, influenced at a subconscious level by the plant.

Costs: Entrance fee Cr. 2/person.

Characters: The head gardener at the sanctum is Frank Hardling, an expert in his field. He is concerned that one of his younger gardeners has been harvesting illegal drugs from several of the plant species.

Play Options: The players may be hired to keep watch at the sanctum, either to catch the drug-taker, or to trace them back to wherever they sell the drugs.

6. TILLWAY CENTRAL (CAR PARK)

Near the centre of a town or city.

Description: A large car park, part above ground and part below.

The car park can contain around 2,000 vehicles. It is reputed by locals to be haunted by a poltergeist, which occasionally damages cars. The local police more cynically view the damage as vandalism, but video-cameras have never observed the culprit.

Costs: Parking Cr. 1/hour.

Characters: Tom and Dick are the elderly park watchmen. They can both relate tales of supernatural events in the car park.

Play Options: The players may be hired by a parapsychologist who wishes to record the spiritual activity. After several nights, the players might realise that it is Tom and Dick who temporarily turn off the cameras and damage the cars... or there might really be a supernatural effect at work here.

7. THE QUAD (TOWN SQUARE)

At the centre of a town.

Description: A large square in the centre of the town, its perimeter marked by a row of poles with orange tasselled ribbons hung between them.

The square is of religious importance to a local faith - the Chronst Sect. A festival is held here every fourth day of the week. On the days directly before and after the square is covered in stalls selling food and souvenirs for tourists and pilgrims. However, on all other days, entry into the square is strictly forbidden, on pain of death. At night the Quad is lit by green lamps lending a rather nauseous air to the site.

Characters: The local sect, led by Frederick Burless, believe that their leader Chronst was buried beneath the square - hence the extreme value placed upon its sanctity.

Play Options: Unwary visitors (such as the players) may well not realise the importance of the square and may find themselves being chased by an angry mob should they enter it at the wrong time of the week!

8. ANDROSS MILITARIA (MILITARY MUSEUM)

Near the centre of a town or city.

Description: An old, large, mansion-like building built of traditional stone.

This museum specialises in old-fashioned warfare,

containing weapons and vehicles of war dating back for many centuries. Old rifles, revolvers and grenades are held here, with mock-up demonstrations on how these were fired and the impact that they had on warfare.

Computer and miniature displays show famous historical battles from across the subsector, explaining the tactics used.

Costs: Entrance fee is Cr. 2/person.

Characters: The chief museum curator is retired general Allan Bullock, once renowned as the greatest tactician in the subsector.

Play Options: Anyone with a question about previous or current military affairs would do well to ask Bullock. He is still occasionally consulted on strategy by the current leaders of the world's armed force.

9. LIFE LINE (ART GALLERY)

Location: Near the centre of a town or city.

Description: A three-storey 'S'-shaped building.

This gallery contains a mediocre collection of art, including sculptures by local artists Hery and Jzxwt, groups of 2D paintings and a few holographic pieces. There is nothing particularly notable here, which begs the question why this gallery has been broken into twice in the last month. Apparently, nothing was taken.

The gallery consists of a ticket office, shop, freshers, and 3 large gallery areas, one on each floor. The top floor also has a small 'education centre' for visiting classes of students.

Costs: Artworks cost from Cr. 500 to Cr. 10,000. Art lessons are Cr. 10/hour.

Characters: The gallery is owned by Janice Leets, a wealthy businesswoman who thinks she has some skill at art. Hery and Jzxwt have, to some degree, taken advantage of this misguided soul, using the gallery for their own ends. They take the art lessons, but their skills are also limited. Neither knows why the gallery has been broken into recently.

Play Options: The players may be asked to investigate the break-ins. These were caused by the eccentric designer Vil Rogers, who wished to copy some of the sculptures but could not bring himself to be seen in such a low quality gallery!

10. AIRCON (FLYING DISPLAY)

At an airfield near a city or starport.

Description: A 100 sq. km commercial airfield, with runways, hangars, warehouses, air traffic control, radar stations and emergency services. Several times a year the airfield opens its doors to the public for a huge flying display, bringing together the latest airspace defence fighters with ancient subsonic jets.

At each event, an array of aircraft are parked for viewing (and in some cases the public are allowed to enter the craft). A variety of mobile entertainment and refreshment stands provide for the needs of the large crowds that flock to these events. Other attractions include charity auctions (the winner gets to ride in a fighter craft) and recruitment stands for various flying schools.

Costs: Entrance Cr 10. Snacks Cr. 3-10. Drinks Cr. 2-10.

Characters: A number of famous pilots, experienced engineers, etc. can be found here.

Play Options: The players may enter the AirCon jet race. Entry is open to anyone with a pilot license. The jets are identical, provided by the airfield. The players should note the small print on the entry form disclaiming responsibility for any injury or death (pilots are often killed in this event). The prize is appropriately high: Cr. 250,000.

SHOPS

A selection of shops supplying goods which might interest your players, or perhaps provide a patron or alternative link to an adventure.

1. METAFIT (ARMED SERVICES OUTFITTERS)

In the city suburbs.

Description: A large open site with a high perimeter fence. There is a small visitor's office, several shabby-looking workshops, and storehouses.

This outfitters serves several surrounding systems, producing Scout, Army, Navy and other uniforms and badges. Security is high; shipments are dispatched under government seals. The workshops contain ageing robotailor units which work continuously.

Costs: Metafit can undertake small runs of uniforms and badges on demand. Cost is around Cr. 500 (for setting up the robots), plus Cr. 1/badge or Cr. 50/uniform.

Characters: Metafit is run by Garth and Roger Bennett. The company is not particularly profitable and the brothers have been accepting bribes to supply copies of various military and police uniforms.

Play Options: The players may gain access to counterfeit uniforms through the brothers, or may be employed by their service to investigate the use of uniforms in illegal or fraudulent activities.

2. POWERSERVE (COMPUTER RETAILER)

Near the centre of a city.

Description: A huge store on multiple levels, having a total floor area of one square kilometre. Powerserve sells various models of personal and corporate computers. The store is open continuously. Purchasers can trial the machines within the store, and there are repair facilities for faulty or damaged systems. Moving walkways transport buyers to the appropriate area of the store.

Costs: Powerserve pride themselves on having the lowest prices in the subsector.

Characters: The Powerserve staff are always polite and courteous.

Play Options: It is rumoured that Powerserve keep their prices low by recycling damaged and faulty stock. The players might find that a computer bought here seems to already have someone else's data on it...

3. AERCHIROUR REORL (ASLAN FUR CLEANERS)

In, or near a starport.

Description: A small shop in a shopping mall or arcade.

Aslans enjoy regular and thorough cleaning of their extensive coats. This exclusive salon provides a relaxing massage, thorough combing, wash and drying, and final brush out. Each client is provided with their own private room throughout the process.

Costs: Grooming Cr. 25-40.

Characters: Run by a group of young female Aslan, the shop does employ a few humans, but only in as assistants.

Play Options: A chance for Aslan players to indulge themselves!

4. CYFIX (CYBER REPAIRS)

Near the centre of a city.

Description: A multi-level complex with a shiny high-tech metallic frontage.

On higher tech worlds, once a human has suffered damage that cannot be repaired by cloned body parts or enhanced re-growth, the possibility of cybergrafts must be considered. This expert clinic can provide replacement limbs, eyes and other body parts for a negotiated fee. The clinic comprises 20 private bedrooms, 2 surgeries, 3 research labs, a records room, and 6 offices.

Costs: Cyber parts cost from hundreds to thousands of credits. The surgery and fitting costs must be added, for even with nanotech auto-adjustment systems, each part must usually still be tailored to its recipient.

Characters: Juney Carto is the chief cyber-surgeon at Cyfix. She is frequently asked to travel to other worlds to use her expertise to save statesmen and other VIPs.

Play Options: Should a player be severely injured, Cyfix might provide a means for rejuvenating them.

5. GYTON (SECURITY SYSTEM ENGINEERS)

In the centre of a town or city.

Description: Gyton are a broad-based security firm offering security patrols, alarm installations and security courier services. Their offices are protected by their own security systems and comprise a reception area, meeting rooms, demonstration area, offices and store rooms for equipment.

Costs: Above average, but Gyton are very efficient and offer an exceptional service.

Characters: Gyton staff are instantly recognisable by the distinctive blue uniforms that they all wear.

Play Options: The players may be asked to break into the Gyton offices to steal the codes for the security systems of a certain client, whom their patron wishes to burgle.

6. PROVIVE (SURVIVAL GEAR)

In a starport or on the outskirts of startown.

Description: A three-storey building built of plascrete, with a logo involving a planetary system orbited by the Provive name.

Run by an ex-Scout, Tony Vargo, this company sell all manner of survival gear for both local and off-world expeditions. The ground level of the shop contains displays of its wares; the next floor has offices and the top level has an advice centre for the more adventurous.

Costs: The shop charges standard equipment prices, although Tony gives fellow scouts and ex-scouts a 10% discount.

Characters: Tony was a good Scout and has many stories to tell of his exploits. He is more reticent about his later work, which was mostly involved with Scout intelligence.

Play Options: Certain governments hold long-term grudges against Tony and his ilk for the covert operations

they undertook. The players may be hired to locate Tony, or may help him survive an assassination attempt. In the latter case, Tony can return the favour, by calling upon some of his old intelligence contacts to help the players in some way.

7. MIJI'S (GENERAL STORE)

A back-street of a city or starport.

Description: A small, two-storey building on the corner of two streets. Miji Malone sells news chips, vid chips, snacks and minor medicines.

Costs: Cr. 1 for the latest news chip, etc.

Characters: Miji is an ex-mercenary who has defended his shop from a protection racket for several years.

Play Options: One of the players may be an ex-colleague of Miji's whom he will call upon to help in his hour of need when the protection racketeers become nasty. Alternatively, the players may simply be passing when the racketeers attack Miji's shop.

8. TELZXIN (DESIGNERWEAR)

In the centre of a city or in the main mall of a class A starport.

Description: A three-storey building, its frontage consisting entirely of silvered windows, except for a black doorway and a scripted 'TX' logo over the door.

The sales area of the shop has a ground floor and several suspended floors at various heights, all connected by winding silver staircases. Each area has a range of designer clothing on display. Towards the rear of the shop are fitting rooms and privacy changing booths. The proprietor, named simply Xia, is usually to be found at work somewhere on the ground floor, although this is merely a show for his clients; his exclusive designs are drawn up on the computer systems in his luxurious apartment on the top level of the building.

Costs: Garments cost from Cr. 1,000 to Cr. 100,000.

Characters: Xia has a very superior attitude which annoys many people, although he can be perfectly charming to clients if they appear sufficiently wealthy.

Play Options: This is the place to spend huge amounts of money on designer clothing.

9. SHARPSHOOTER (WEAPONS SHOP)

Near the suburbs of a town or the edge of a startown.

Description: The shop sells legal weapons to anyone with an appropriate license. However, if the client makes it clear that they are a mercenary, then the owner (Rob Redburn) will offer to let them examine a catalogue of less legal wares. Available for a premium fee are a range of heavy military weaponry supplied by Heretic Weapons. These items are not stored at the shop, but Rob has contacts within Heretic who can get hold of them at short notice.

Costs: Standard prices, +50% per law level that this world is higher than the level at which the weapon would be legal.

Characters: Rob Redburn is an ex-mercenary himself, having seen action in a number of wars and rebellions across the subsector. Having acquired sufficient funds, he decided it was safer to sell weapons rather than use them.

Play Options: The ideal source for your player gun-bunnies!

10. LECTRA (ELECTRICAL GOODS)

In the suburbs of a city or at the edge of startown.

Description: A small two-storey building with large display windows and a discrete sign over the door.

Well stocked with basic retail electrical goods, there is an under-the-counter supply of surveillance equipment, mini-vid cameras, rifle microphones, remote relay CCTV, etc. In fact, complete kits for surveillance and bugging.

Costs: The electrical goods are all at standard prices, but the surveillance equipment is quite expensive, since it is illegal on this world.

Characters: Lectra is run by Georgi Kalek, a retired private investigator who has an interest in electronics.

Play Options: If your players fancy a bit of snooping, this is the place to buy the equipment!

11. MONEY REALISATION ZONE (PAWNBROKER)

Anywhere in a town or starport.

Description: A small shop frontage.

Money Realisation Zones (MRZs) are a chain who allow people to 'realise the cash value of their assets'. Anyone can bring items here, which will be vetted by the assessment staff to determine their value and ensure that the owner realises the goods will be sold if not redeemed within an agreed period.

Costs: The MRZ will usually give the owner 50% of the actual saleable value of the item, setting the redemption price at 60-70%.

Characters: This MRZ chain is run by anex-mobster, Tammy Malori.

Play Options: Tammy also runs an illicit loan service. He occasionally hires individuals (the players?) to collect on unredeemed debts.

12. PLANETLOOK (CLOTHES SHOP)

Anywhere in a town or starport.

Description: A large three-storey block of archaic crafted stone on the corner of two major roads.

PlanetLook supply a huge variety of everyday clothing suitable for on-planet wear. They advertise themselves as being able to cater for any species and sex, although the selection of clothing for less common alien races is rather limited. One annoying feature of the store is that all the mirrors are programmed to detect clients wearing new PlanetLook clothing. The mirrors will then make inane comments, such as 'That looks great on you' or 'Just your style!'

Costs: PlanetLook clothing is generally quite cheap, without sacrificing quality.

Characters: This PlanetLook store is run by Trudy McFarlane.

Play Options: A computer hacker has managed to alter the mirror comments to less favourable ones, such as 'I

don't know if I would wear that...' The company would like to hire anyone with appropriate computing skills who can track down the hacker.

13. STAGE ONE (THEATRICAL RETAILERS)

Near the centre of a town or city.

Description: A large modern office block with a garage area in the basement.

Stage One supplies are used by all the major live performers on this planet. They sell every form of make-up, wigs, props, costumes, scenery, sound effects, music, etc. for a number of historical periods. Given sufficient notice they can create costumes and props to order.

Their catalogue is available by datalink, and the ground floor of the building contains an extensive display of their wares. Floor 1 is mostly offices, and floors 2 to 6 are stock rooms. The garage contains staff vehicles as well as Stage One's own delivery trucks.

A large warehouse site outside the city contains a variety of vehicles and old starships for use by film companies.

Costs: Props may be purchased or hired. A play laser gun may cost just Cr. 5/day, but a complete Imperial Emperor's costume, made to order, might cost Cr. 5,000 or more.

Characters: Stage One is run by Simeon van Hault, one of the most experienced makeup artists in the film business.

Play Options: An excellent place for players who wish to update their disguise kit, lease a tank (with deactivated weapon), dress up as their favourite film idol, etc., etc.

14. UP'N'DOWN (BUILDING SUPPLIERS)

In the suburbs of a town or city.

Description: A single huge warehouse, with a large vehicle park.

Up'n'Down stock most types of building supplies in common use on this planet, from steel girders to plascrete. They are unusual in that they also stock a wide range of more specialised materials from I.F.I, including construplast, superdense beams, protective paints and laminates and other materials that are more commonly used in building military installations, bank vaults, starship hulls, etc.

Clients are dealt with by an electronic system in the reception area at the end of the warehouse. Robots then locate the materials and bring them out to load them onto client's vehicle (a delivery service is available).

Costs: Up'n'Down charge an extortionate amount for their 'special' materials, as they are the only such supplier on this continent.

Characters: The robots here are all given individual names, are excessively polite, and finish every sentence with an irritating Up'N'Down slogan.

Play Options: players looking to build a bunker, protect their starship with armour laminates, or similar, will find this a very useful place. The high prices are only for government buyers - if the players can talk to one of the few human store clerks and convince them they are private buyers, they can get the items at a more reasonable price.

15. ANIMAGENICS (PET SHOP)

In the centre of a city or starport.

Description: A small shop front shows a variety of strange animals in cages and running around free inside the shop.

The shop extends back and has several storeys, the upper levels containing the more reclusive animals which dislike the bustle of the ground floor. Animagenics stock a range of alien creatures and have a franchise with Hypagene for producing fantastic and mythological creatures to demand;

- Peeker monkeys of increased intelligence, with problem-solving and toolusing capabilities. Popular for their endearing appearance, friendly nature, cleanliness and ability to learn and perform fairly complex commands and technical tasks. Peekers are used by the military for reconnaissance tasks.
- Farren cats, geneered to have a similar intelligence to the Peekers, but better suited to less technical roles (as guards or for combat). Farren cats are relatively small but have ferocious claws, a vicious and mildly poisonous bite, and a very loud howl.
- Baladragon - a small, dragon-like creature, available mostly as a curiosity. Able to eat almost anything and breathe small bursts of fire. Rarely house-trained.

Costs: Small cuddly pets cost as little as Cr. 100. Geneered semi-intelligent creatures such as the Peekers cost around Cr. 25,000.

Characters: The shop is run by Jenna Thorn, a likeable though slightly inept person whose life is further disorganised by her animals. It is sometimes difficult to determine whether she, or the animals, run this shop.

Play Options: A purrrfect opportunity to obtain a pet for the players' ship. Alternatively, the players may go to Jenna's aid during, or after, an attack on the shop by animal liberationists. She might hire the players to search for her favourite Peeker pair, taken by the liberationists. The players may be offered a free pet for their troubles!

16. THAXTEN SELLERS (PROPERTY AGENT)

At the centre of a town or city.

Description: A tall, narrow building of five floors. Projected onto the walls is a continuously changing display of properties.

The ground floor consists of a plush reception lounge with private meeting rooms for dealing individually with clients. The first through third floors house Thaxten staff, from property assessors to the office manager. The top floor houses the office records, the computer facilities, and a staff lounge.

Thaxten deal with over 2,000 non-commercial properties on this world as well as selected holdings on neighbouring worlds. Holopictures and VR walk-throughs of the properties are available, avoiding any need for the client to visit the site itself.

Costs: Prices range from Cr. 500/month rentals to multi-million credit estates. The latter are not publicised; the details are only disclosed to appropriately wealthy clients.

Characters: Dawn Salisbury is the manager of Thaxtens, who supervises the higher-priced properties. It is rumoured that she could sweet-talk a Talquil into eating its own feet off, if she ever wanted to.

Play Options: The players might wish to hire some property or invest their money in real estate. Alternatively, they may be hired by the thief Maria Charles to help her break into the office to steal the holo-plans of several luxury mansions, which she intends to burgle at some point in the future when they have been sold to appropriately wealthy people.

17. FLEETFOOT MAX (RAPID COURIER SERVICE)

In a city centre or starport.

Description: A small two-storey office building, with an attached garage.

The office is not much more than a reception desk, while the upper floor is a lounge area for the on-duty couriers. The garage houses speedy grav bikes and vans.

Fleetfoot provide a guaranteed delivery time to destinations across the entire subsector, priding themselves on a 99% on-time delivery rate. They can handle any small shipment, from a single holocrystal to be transported to the other side of the planet, to a cargo of valuable goods to be escorted to the other side of the subsector.

Fleetfoot have a good working relationship with the local Lindarport Security branch, who may be called upon to provide extra escorts for particularly valuable cargos.

Costs: High! But worth every credit!

Characters: Run by Olly North, ex-Scout.

Play Options: The players may simply need to deliver something somewhere fast, or they may be hired temporarily by Fleetfoot to undertake a courier or escort mission.

EDUCATION

However old and experienced your players may be, there is always something new to be learned...

1. COLLEGE OF TRADITIONAL SKILLS

On the outskirts of a town or city.

Description: A complex of modern buildings in a forested campus area.

This college aims to teach students old fashioned crafts and skills. Some of these (fire-building, weaving, crop skills, basic electronics, low tech computer construction) are of significant use for colonists on new worlds and the Scout Service has donated generously to this college. Other skills such as oil painting and shoe mending are more of an indulgence.

The college has around a thousand students at any one time. Course lengths depend on the subject and can range from a few weeks to several years.

The College comprises lecture halls, offices, workshops, woodland and farming areas, riding facilities, residential halls and a restaurant.

Costs: Courses cost from Cr. 100 to Cr. 6,000, averaging approximately Cr. 2,000 per year, excluding accommodation, etc.

Characters: Werner Brawer is the Scout Service liaison officer at the college, overseeing the raw recruits who form part of the student numbers.

Play Options: A useful place to learn some basic survival or craft skills. A number of useful Scout contacts may be made here.

2. AGRYT COLIGI (SCHOOL FOR TALENTED CHILDREN)

On the outskirts of a town or city.

Description: A small complex of domed buildings within a small fenced playing area.

The Agyrt Coligi is a school for human children aged 3 and over who have shown some form of unnatural mental

talent. The school is highly regarded by parents as a high-powered education facility, able to enhance a child's performance, advancing their mental age by up to 25%.

Many parents are willing to pay the excessive fees required to gain entry for their children, while truly gifted individuals receive the Agyrt scholarship.

Costs: Schooling fees are Cr. 15,000/year.

Characters: The nominal owners of the Coligi are the Agyrt Trust. However, the majority of the Trust directors are also covert members of the Stellar Education Cooperative (SEC). The hypnosis techniques used by the school are regarded as rather dubious in some quarters.

Play Options: The players are recruited by some worried parents to investigate the methods of teaching used by the school and the information which is being spoon-fed to their children.

3. DREAMON (SUBLIMINAL LEARNING CENTRE)

At the centre of a city, starport or startown.

Description: The walls of this building are solid sheets of black plasglas, covered in a continuous sheet of running water. Strange hazy visual images are projected across this shining surface.

Dreamon provides training using traditional and subliminal means to enhance training acceptance and reduce learning times. Most needs can be provided by a correspondence course, e.g. gunnery, computing and languages. However, this building is a larger office which can provide high intensity training for more immediate needs.

The building has a plush welcoming reception area, multiple training rooms, a restaurant, washrooms, and a computer centre from which the various training systems are co-ordinated.

Costs: Correspondence courses cost Cr. 100-Cr. 1,000 (depending upon the subject) to gain a working knowledge. More advanced courses may cost up to Cr. 10,000.

Characters: Dreamon was set up by the renowned psychologist Victor Ambrose, but has since been taken over by his assistant Tanya Kurtz - Ambrose has returned to a research post at the sector capital university.

Play Options: A customer who underwent an intensive Aslan language training scheme claims the treatment has revealed concealed memories within his brain. He claims a five year period of his memory has been altered to conceal his work as a top ranking Imperial agent. He hires the players to help solve this mystery. Are these new memories true, has the Dreamon treatment damaged his brain, or is he suffering from some form of delusion?

4. NEXTDOSE (PHARMACEUTICAL RESEARCH)

On the outskirts of a city.

Description: A huge U-shaped, six-storey building of shining steel and glass, surrounded by smaller buildings. A high security perimeter fence is broken only by a guard house and reception building.

Nextdose research new preventative medicines for stellar travellers; successful drugs are sold to larger companies to take to production. The site works on antiviral and antibacterial products (e.g. Hemaxicain – a prophylactic treatment for Vilen syndrome) as well as detoxifying drugs for certain atmospheres. The drugs can be administered before the traveller reaches their destination and provide protection throughout their stay.

A recent chance discovery has caused the company to branch out into the field of drug-enhanced learning; they now require volunteers to test the latest drugs before trying to sell them on for production.

Costs: Trial volunteers are paid Cr. 1,000.

Characters: The doctor controlling the learning drug trials is Pierre Stavrou, a renowned expert on neurological disorders.

Play Options: A successful trial would significantly increase the company's share value. Volunteers suffering side-effects from the treatment will be told to keep quiet... or else. The players might become volunteers, or be employed by a mother trying to find her missing juvenile son. The son volunteered for the trial in order to get some cash and has suffered severe side effects; he's being held in a secure medical bay in the Nextdose HQ.

5. VIPROTECT (SECURITY TRAINING)

Outside a city or starport, in an area of woodlands or hills.

Description: A vast private estate, ringed by security fencing. At its centre is an old military base, with barracks, a shooting range, canteen, stores, offices, hangars (containing a variety of civilian and military vehicles) and a mock-up civilian street.

Viprotect offer a range of security training, from one-day weapons usage to month-long diplomatic protection courses. The longer courses include a formal examination and those who pass are provided with appropriate certification. The courses are well attended, both by civilians (e.g. trying to obtain a gun license) and security employees (e.g. prospective bodyguards). The high quality of training at this centre is recognised on this and several neighbouring worlds. Lindarport Security staff train here regularly.

Costs: Courses are Cr. 250/day per person, for accommodation, food and equipment.

Characters: The Viprotect staff are largely experienced ex-military personnel, with a few ex-intelligence operatives. The centre is run by Colonel Arthur Scott, who has seen service in the marines and secret service.

Play Options: The players may pick up a variety of useful skills here. All the courses are extremely intensive, allowing a basic skill level to be attained in one or two skills (Gun Combat, Blade Combat, Demolitions, Tactics, etc.) during a month-long course (cost Cr. 9,000).

SERVICES

This section describes examples of those who sell a service, rather than just goods.

1. SAPPHIRE (DETECTIVE AGENCY)

In the back-streets of a town or starport.

Description: A small two-storey building crowded between houses and shops.

The proprietor of the Sapphire agency is an Aslan ex-Scout called Saffyre Tanzanada. Saffyre is an Aslan with an attitude. Provided there is a profit to be had, she will take on any problem. She often operates on her own but occasionally employs an ad-hoc team of assistants.

The ground floor of the building is her office: a front reception room and a rear office with cabinets containing various pieces of equipment and data records.

Saffyre's living quarters are in startown, and she has her own ship in the starport, allowing her to undertake off-world investigations.

Costs: Saffyre charges Cr. 100-500/day (plus expenses) depending upon the wealth of her client.

Characters: Saffyre is an outcast, her close family having been killed in a dispute with the rest of her clan. She maintains little of the honour code of the Aslan, having discarded such niceties in preference for her own survival in this hazardous career.

Play Options: Saffyre may be a useful patron for the players, given the wide variety of tasks she undertakes.

2. CYSERVE (ROBOTIC SERVANTS)

In the centre of a city or starport.

Description: A tiny office on the corner of a shopping mall.

The office houses just two administrative staff - the rest of the Cyserve operation is conducted from a warehouse complex on the outskirts of the city.

Robot butlers, chefs, stewards and even pseudo-biological companions are all available from Cyserve. The various robots are usually available for hire, although some clients can afford to buy them. Their services

are used by many well-known local officials, and are a necessity for the wealthier households.

Costs: Hire of a simple servant robot is Cr. 50/day. Highly skilled pseudo-bio robots could cost several million credits.

Characters: Cyserve is run by the Pendril sisters - experts in robotics and cybernetics.

Play Options: A Cyserve employee has been paid an enormous sum to re-program one of the robots to kill its next client. The robot is intended for a particular wealthy businessman, but just happens to be whichever robot the players are interested in...

3. FISHERS (BETTING AGENCY)

Anywhere in a town or starport.

Description: A small shop with animated Appans and their riders galloping continuously across its walls.

Fishers is a relatively small independent betting agency where odds on almost anything are offered, given a reasonable fee. Punters should beware the complex legal terms under which all Fishers bets are taken, for the agency often uses the more obscure clauses to avoid paying up.

The agency comprises a large front room where bets are placed electronically and a communications console for receiving bets remotely. At the rear is a large office where all bets are calculated. The agency keeps very little of its takings on site, preferring direct electronic transfer to its bank account.

Costs: Almost any form of bet is acceptable, with Fishers willing to pay out up to Cr. 10,000 on any bet.

Characters: Fishers is run by Larry Sanders, a disreputable-looking character with a shady past.

Play Options: The players will be hired by a client whose bet has not been honoured. A triple win by a certain zipwire player should have netted the patron Cr. 9,000 or so, but Fishers claim to have lost his electronic bet registration. He wants the players to break into Fishers and find extract the registration from their computer as proof of his bet.

4. REVIEW (BEAUTY SALON)

Location: At the centre of a city or starport.

Description: A long, low complex with a domed glaspex roof.

The Review salon provides new looks, hair styles, facials and alternative therapies for all manner of clients. A small reception area leads to changing rooms. The facilities include a large pool and separate treatment rooms for each client. A communal relaxation area has plush furniture and auto-meditation couches by an open fire.

The treatments use a wide range of natural products produced by Herbametics.

Costs: Treatments cost Cr. 25-200.

Characters: The salon owner, Sally Flynn, is a strong believer in herbalism and holistic medical practices.

Play Options: Sally undertakes therapy sessions for selected clients. She is not registered as a medical practitioner and thus might be prosecuted for undertaking this work, but she feels she has healing skills which should be used, rather than hidden.

A player with a seemingly incurable illness may find temporary or permanent help from Sally. She does have a healing ability, but whether this is a psionic skill or some other form of power is not known.

5. BFORTHUW AUCTION HOUSE

In the centre of a city.

Description: A traditional wood and stone building built in a square around a small garden.

The Bforthuw is well known for its unusual specialisation in the sale of inventions that never succeeded. A plush lobby on the entrance side leads to three large auction halls, one on each of the remaining sides of the square, all furnished in antique woods. The upper floors of the building contain offices, while the basement has a series of vaults for storing the auction goods.

Costs: Bforthuw charges a 10% commission on all sales.

Characters: The chief auctioneer is Erina Carpic.

Play Options: Erina has been tipped off about a failed invention that, due to recent advances in technology, might actually have significant value in the field of gravitic

field control. She cannot purchase the invention papers directly, nor does she have time to copy them prior to the auction. She will hire the players to bid on her behalf.

6. SUNRISE COMLINK (NEWS CORPORATION)

In the centre of a major city.

Description: The Sunrise offices are a huge imposing building with symbolic antennas protruding from its frontage.

Sunrise are a planetary news company that provides news reels for some of the larger subsector groups under contract. The building centres around a huge spiral staircase, with public reception areas at the ground floor, vidstudios on levels 1-3, sound studios on levels 4-5 and above that offices. The top level has a communications room for transmission across the planet. Several sub-levels provide storage for decades of previous transmissions, mostly on holocrystal media.

Characters: Sunrise is run by Parlin Lancer, an ambitious business tycoon. Sunrise's latest acquisition is the renowned reporter Argus Happel.

Play Options: Sunrise are always willing to pay good money for exclusive rights to an interesting story. The players might be hired to track down such stories, or to steal them from other news corporations.

7. QWOJER (INSURANCE BROKERS)

Near the centre of a town or city.

Description: A large office block, generally indistinguishable from its neighbours. The ground floor contains reception facilities and conference rooms. The first floor has a large computer facility, while the remaining floors are offices. The basement houses the utility systems (power, water, etc.).

Qwojer has just been declared bankrupt by a subsector-level audit commission. An inquiry is being set up to resolve how to compensate clients. The 17 worlds on which the company operated are in uproar over the scandal, and other insurance companies are watching the case closely.

Costs: Exceptionally high!

Characters: A dual computer security key is needed to access many of Qwojer's holdings. Their chief investment operative, Thomas Blyning, and his colleague

Gren Charles, were the only ones who possessed the key (for security reasons). However, both have suddenly disappeared, leaving Qwojer unable to access much of its funds. The company could have covered this up (until the computer security system was bypassed) were it not for a mysterious press tip-off, which led to an emergency audit and their bankruptcy declaration.

Play Options: The (unofficial) bounty on Blyning and Charles is around Cr. 1,000,000 and is growing daily; the company desperately needs those security keys or it will be forced out of business. Rumour has it that Blyning has been transferring funds to his own accounts and when he disappeared, he killed Charles to ensure the company couldn't determine where the money had gone before he had a chance to launder it...

8. POJUG PUBLISHING (PRINTING HOUSE)

In the suburbs of a city.

Description: This industrial complex has two huge warehouses, a vehicle yard and two modern plascrete blocks, one a printing shop and the other offices. The whole site is surrounded by security fencing.

Pojug is widely known for its educational works, in particular its treatises on the different human species, the Aslan and Vargr races, and the socio-political differences between these major sophont races. The company also publishes major philosophical and political works and, as a result, has been subject to several unsuccessful lawsuits in recent years.

The offices are well-furnished with modern computer layout facilities for translating works into a variety of hard- and soft- copy formats. In addition the chairman's office, the upper floor includes an extensive library of alien printed works. The library is open to researchers but not to the general public.

Costs: Pojug's volumes cost from Cr. 5 to Cr. 100, depending upon content and format.

Characters: The chairman of Pojug is Simon Templeton, a professor of xenobiological studies, who took over Pojug from his mother, and has since focused its works towards analyses of alien species. Among Pojug's range of philosophical books, by far the best sellers are the works of Feo da'Perin, with whom Pojug have an exclusive contract.

Play Options: Various staff within Pojug fear that Templeton's obsession with aliens is gradually ruining the

business. There have been a number of polite attempts to persuade him to continue producing philosophical books, but to no avail. An attempt on his life will be blamed on Feo da'Perin, whose latest work has just been rejected by Pojug. Feo will hire the players to clear her name.

9. DATAVIEW (LIBRARY)

Centre of city or starport.

Description: A towering pale blue skyscraper of thirty levels.

The library may be accessed remotely by data link or in person. Data is stored in a wide range of formats, from hardcopy and microfiche to softcopy and holo-data.

The majority of the levels are repositories for this data. The lower levels have private research rooms for hire. Downloaded soft data automatically scrambles itself after 2 weeks (to protect the copyright).

Some of the older records within the upper levels contain very old planetary geological data and records of seismic activity from a research centre long-since closed.

Costs: Cr. 5/hour for any form of search.

Characters: The chief librarian is Adolphus Reorch, a retired professor of astrographics.

Play Options: Last month someone attempted to covertly access the old geological data, by hacking into the library computers. The security system detected the attempt and disconnected the offender, but Adolphus would like to hire the players to find out why someone was so interested in this old data.

10. JOUHO RESERVE (BANK)

The centre of a city or starport.

Description: A square block of a building, decorated in splashes of varied colours which gradually shift across the walls.

Jouhuo specialise in providing a personal service to their customers. They are particularly interested in Vargr customers, having a special high interest account with the conditional clause that any account not used over a year long period becomes the property of the bank. Many Vargr are sufficiently rash and forgetful that the bank often exercises this clause. The bank office has a number of customer rooms, specific to humans, Aslan and Vargr, all decorated to the tastes of that race. Jouhuo have developed a niche market as many beings prefer

their personalised service to the automated systems elsewhere.

Costs: The bank can handle all the usual investment functions.

Characters: Paulo Frankil is a computer clerk at the bank. Paulo has noticed that with the emphasis on less computerised methods, there is an increased opportunity for fraud.

Play Options: Paulo can only extract the funds he has embezzled by getting a third party to open an account into which he can feed the money. He will pay the players a part of the proceeds to help him. Unfortunately, the bank is already keeping a watch on Paulo...

11. HENRY'S (VEHICLE HIRE/SALE)

The centre of a city or starport.

Description: A large forecourt displaying a range of vehicles, from motorbikes to air-rafts, with a small office to one side.

Henry Davenport has run this business for over 50 years and has been so successful that he owns a chain of garages. He will hire anything to anyone provided the price is high enough and the deposit large enough. Any minor marks on a vehicle on its return will cause a sizeable deduction from the deposit money. The office is spartan - Henry believes that efficiency requires simplicity. His vehicles are all regularly serviced at a local garage.

Costs: Henry's advertised prices are high, but he enjoys a bit of haggling, and can usually be reduced to a reasonable price.

Characters: Henry runs his garage chain from his simple but luxurious abode on the outskirts of the city.

Play Options: A good place to hire a good quality vehicle, provided the players bring it back without any damage!

12. TECHGEN (GENE BANK)

At the centre of a town or city.

Description: A large long building with a textured crystal surface such that it breaks the sun's rays into a myriad rainbows.

Techgen hold a huge selection of genetic samples taken from individuals, for purchase by research organisations. All samples are sequenced and this information is

available on a database which is available for an expensive fee. Requests for the database are mostly dealt with electronically, but in some cases an appointment is granted. Visitors will only see the reception area, with its stunning displays of how Techgen's work is helping solve problems across the subsector.

Costs: Gene bank samples cost around Cr. 1,000 per individual. Given that tests usually require several thousand individuals to be statistically significant, the profitability of this business is obvious.

Characters: Techgen is a subsidiary of Hypagene - its managing director Artur Claryn, is also a director of Hypagene.

Play Options: Recent newsvid documentaries have accused Techgen of misusing the information it holds, allowing supposedly anonymous donors to be identified. This has been vehemently denied by Techgen.

13. BMC (DATA STORAGE AGENCY)

Outskirts of a city.

Description: A complex of five rectangular metallic buildings with rows of opaque silvered windows, connected by walkways at each of their three levels.

BMC provides a continuous back-up store of data for many of the planet's companies. Should a major incident destroy a company's computer systems, BMC's mobile computer resources, with the company's restored data, can be one site and operational within hours, allowing the company to continue business.

It is rumoured that the underworld have tried to hack into the site, but the extreme security measures have so far withstood their attempts. The site itself is also secure, requiring innumerable forms of identification even to pass beyond the reception desk.

The five buildings contain offices and computing systems, but a final copy of all data is also held in a vault deep beneath the surface - supposedly immune even to a nuclear strike.

Costs: BMC charge high rates for their service, knowing that each company values its electronic data beyond measure.

Characters: BMC is run by Emil Senseil, an expert hacker who now applies his expertise to securing data against intrusion.

Play Options: It is only a matter of time before another attempt is made to hack into the BMC site. The players might be hired to help infiltrate the site, or they might accidentally find evidence of the hackers which could be given/sold to BMC or the police.

14. NOTRACE (TOXIC WASTE DISPOSAL)

Outside a city or starport.

Description: The Notrace headquarters are contained within a small, discrete, office block. Visitors are rarely allowed beyond the reception area, where a long hallway leads to the management offices, press liaison room, security room, and a staff common room.

Notrace recycle or dispose of toxic waste from industrial sites on this and a neighbouring world. Environmental groups keep a close watch on companies such as

Notrace, to ensure that the waste is disposed of safely and not simply dumped. Notrace has a number of disposal and recycling sites across the planet.

Notrace is owned (via a circuitous route through several holding companies) by the industrial chemicals conglomerate Physkem. This information is not generally known.

Costs: Notrace charge a moderate fee for their services and receive some funds from selling on reclaimed chemicals.

Characters: Notrace is run by Jill Daniels, previously a senior official in the government ecology department.

Play Options: The players are asked to break into the Notrace offices to find evidence of illegal dumping of chemicals. They may also discover the link with Physkem. For various political reasons, the corporation would rather that this information does not become public knowledge.



STARPORT

This section describes some starport-specific businesses and entities.

1. TRANS-SYSTEM STARWAYS (BOOKING OFFICE)

In a city centre or starport.

Description: A huge globe, the design and coloration matching that of the TSS logo – a striated world globe. The globe is suspended on aesthetically curving girders. Trans-System (TSS) are one of the largest trading corporations in this sector, running innumerable liners, traders and bulk-haulers.

Entry is via lifts in a wide pillar which runs up through the centre of the globe. The lower levels of the globe contain booking, cargo handling and customer relations offices. The upper levels contain the corporate offices, computer systems and administration centre.

Costs: TSS charge standard passage fees, but commonly offer discounts for regular travellers and corporate purchasers.

Characters: TSS is run by Buth Saffrin, a portly trader who worked his way up through the ranks to become chief executive officer.

Play Options: Buth occasionally goes adventuring and may hire the players to join him on a venture. In truth, the instant danger threatens, Buth's survival instincts will cut in, turning him into a cringing coward.

2. LITESPEED (MONORAIL)

A network of underground tracks throughout the starport.

Description: When certain services within the starport were privatised by the government, the monorail system was bought up by its own employees. This co-operative now run the most efficient and speedy means of getting around the starport, although service always seems to be ridiculously slow if carrying government officials or goods (the co-operative still harbour a grudge; if their buy-out had failed during the privatisation, they would have lost their jobs.)

Costs: Anywhere in the starport for Cr. 1.

Characters: The co-operative leaders are Yvet Grant, Tony Church and Ralil Ferhtar.

Play Options: While the players are travelling on an unusually slow monorail journey, a man in a suit pulls a hand grenade from his pocket and declares he is going to 'teach the *&!?!& co-operative a lesson'. He is a government clerk who has finally cracked...

3. ITZJUSCUMIN (TAXI FIRM)

Anywhere within the starport.

Description: An abandoned starship hangar is now in use as a vehicle garage for this taxi firm. Administration and car co-ordination is handled from an improvised comms system on one side of the garage, where on-duty drivers lounge around on old sofa and consume (hopefully) soft drinks.

The firm runs 25 vehicles ranging from high speed luxury air-rafts to a bi-wheeled ground craft. The company operates around the clock and is reputed never to report unusual incidents to the police (e.g. clients carrying guns, running away from the scene of a crime). They are also some of the fastest and most dangerous drivers on the planet...

Costs: Cr. 1/km + Cr. 1/minute.

Characters: The firm is run by 'Rob' Roy Williams, a jack-of-all-trades type with underworld connections. Certainly, the origins of some of the classier taxis are very suspect!

Play Options: The ideal taxi firm for players, who usually want to get somewhere fast, and without any questions asked.

4. GERMYTH TRADING (BROKER)

Central starport area.

Description: A small office building with a large warehouse behind it.

The offices include a reception, interview room, computing room (all deals are handled electronically and given a coded security seal). The secure warehouse behind the offices holds any stock in transit and is mostly operated by modern robot cargo-handlers.

With the motto 'Sharper than the average', Germyth pride themselves on being the most efficient brokerage in the starport.

Costs: Germyth will charge 1% less than any other brokerage in the starport.

Characters: Seven brokers are on hand around the clock to deal with clients, under the watchful eye of chief broker Aaron Hinds.

Play Options: Hinds wishes to hire the players to investigate a trader who has been using Germyth to handle small cargos of 'electrical goods'. The reason Hinds is suspicious is that the trader instructs Germyth to offer the goods on the 'open market', but it is always the same person who purchases the goods, placing their bid within moments of them appearing on the open trade list.

5. C&TRB (CUSTOMS)

Central starport offices.

Description: A bleak plascrete building with windows only on the upper floors.

The Customs and Trade Regulation Body (C&TRB) building contains an unwelcoming reception area, interview rooms, private offices, a large computer area (with a database of all incoming and outgoing cargos and passengers), a ready room, briefing room, arms lockers and a very secure vault in the basement for confiscated products.

Costs: Customs fees, duties, fines, etc.

Characters: The C&TRB staff have close links with airspace control and starport security, being able to call upon military ships in addition to their own patrol craft, and marines to support them within the port.

Play Options: The players are bound to end up here one day!

6. COMCENT (COMMUNICATIONS EXCHANGE)

Central starport area.

Description: A plain, single-storey plascrete building with an armoured door.

The majority of the starport communications are routed through this exchange. The building contains autorouting and signal sorting computers, relay systems with back-

up power supplies. Signals are received and transmitted through nano-fibre data links and rooftop antennas.

Characters: The infamous thief Maria Charles has obtained the security passes required to enter Comcent. She intends to use a relatively insecure data link into the starport customs computer to send an order that a very valuable cargo of confiscated drugs be dispatched for incineration the next day via a Lindarport Security vehicle.

Play Options: Maria will hire the players to help her, both during the break-in and, the next day, disguised as Lindarport staff...

7. VANGUARD (MERCENARY GROUP)

On the outskirts of a starport.

Description: An area of private land approximately 5 km square is protected by high security fences, video surveillance and airspace sensors (radar, etc.). Within this area, which is used as a training ground, is an inner compound, again protected by a double fence and comprehensive high tech security. This compound contains a luxurious mansion, hangar, barracks and starship landing pad. The mercenary unit has about 30 members and specialises in protection services for VIPs and small, valuable cargos.

Costs: Hiring the mercenary group costs (very roughly) Cr. 500 per man, per day.

Characters: This is the home of the reclusive thief Maria Charles and her Hyumian associate Septimus Lithier. Using false identities the two have invested their ill-gotten gains in this mercenary unit. Combining their own skills with hand-picked troops has created an extremely successful unit which, ironically, undertakes a number of government-sponsored missions.

Play Options: The players might be asked to investigate the mysterious owners of the mercenary unit, or be hired by Maria to help on a mission. The players might wish to join the unit, or to hire it themselves for a given task.

8. HYLAND STARCHARTER (STARSHIP CHARTER)

Central starport offices.

Description: Hyland stores a variety of small ships within a circle of domed hangars. The company offices are at the centre of the complex with a roof landing pad for air-rafts.

The luxurious offices also house interview lounges where clients are entertained while background checks are run on them. Hyland is a high calibre charter and rental group, willing to deal only with clients of exceptional reputation and credit-worthiness. For any rental, the client must present full astropilot qualifications for at least one of their party.

Costs: The client must be able to supply a deposit (in realisable assets) of 5% of the value of the ship they are renting. Costs are 0.1% of the ship's value per day; the client is responsible for all fuel, berthing fees, etc.

Characters: Run by the noble Artemsus Lear, currently a famous starship racing pilot.

Play Options: A place where players can acquire a ship without paying the full price.

9. STARLEC ENGINEERING (STARSHIP CUSTOM ENGINEERING)

On the outskirts of the starport.

Description: Three huge hangars within separate blast bunds, with a long, low office.

Starlec specialise in custom engineering jobs on almost any type of starship or spaceship. Whether it be a particularly troublesome repair job (which requires bodging old and new components together), or fine-tuning a souped-up manoeuvre drive to get the optimal thrust performance, Starlec are the people to turn to.

Starlec prides itself on its low prices, which are possible only by the use of Vargr staff, who are experts at scrounging materials and parts at a moment's notice (even out-of-date parts, and components which are supposedly available only to the military).

Costs: Usually at least 10% below the standard cost for a given job.

Characters: Run by James 'Scotty' Scott and Grifhderz 'Griffin' Draaergzadz, who have both served as chief engineers on a variety of merchant and military vessels.

Play Options: Somewhere for the players to have their ship repaired, customised, etc. 'Griffin' has one secret: much of his experience comes from having served in a corsair fleet - a fact he now tries to conceal.

10. THE TEMPLE OF THE STELLAR DIVINITY (CHURCH)

Location: Centre of the starport.

Description: A triangular two-storey building, the ratio of the length of the sides being 3:4:5. A huge montage of the life cycle of the universe runs round the entire building, culminating in a sunburst symbol. Inside, a reception hall leads to the high-ceilinged shrines in each corner of the temple, and to an administrative centre on the level above.

This church believes that all races were derived from star gods, and that the stars will ultimately destroy all life, to create the universe anew. Clearly, this has some basis in reality, but the church believes that the timescale from the 'Big Bang' to the end of existence is rather shorter than most scientists accept - a mere 300,000 years, in fact, of which 299,724 have already elapsed.

Followers wear distinctive black and gold robes and seem to spend a lot of their time chanting, to prepare for imminent destruction.

Costs: A monthly donation of at least Cr. 10 is expected from all members.

Characters: The Stellar Divinity is led by Augustus Monarch, a portly gentleman with a long grey beard. Augustus truly believes in the church, but certain of his immediate subordinates are using it merely as a moneymaking vehicle (all those donations add up to a multi-million credit operation!)

Play Options: A clerk at the church suspects one or more of the church elders is embezzling funds, but he wishes to employ the players to check this before approaching Augustus. The clerk will be found murdered the day after he employs the players...

GLOSSARY

This section describes some of the entities, institutions and lifeforms referred to in the preceding sections.

Chronst Sect

An extremely devout sect following the strict rules given in the writings of their long-dead founder Chronst. The sect spend much of their time copying ancient tomes which may not be read by any unbeliever. The sect is harmless but members tend to be very arrogant.

Corialanus Trust

A renowned biological research foundation, originally set up by the celebrated xenobiologist Frederick Kranf. Since his death, the foundation has been run by a committee of his senior researchers, which has led to an unhealthy degree of competition between the specialists in each research field.

Elven Worlds

Elven have managed to maintain their position as the top games publishing house in this subsector by always anticipating (or where necessary, creating) the latest gaming fads. They supply a variety of virtual reality games, often based around customised holocomputers from Lyten Technical.

Fireball

A team game played in a hardened arena. Each side wears combat armour and carries small flame-throwers and incendiary balls. Each side has ten flammable targets within their half of the arena, which they must defend, while trying to burn down their opponents' targets. There are few rules, although the armour usually prevents serious injuries.

FLUFF

An ecological terrorist group, calling itself the Fauna Liberation Ultra-Freedom Fighters. This group undertakes a wide range of campaigns, from the protection of endangered species, to terror attacks on those who over-exploit domestic animals and pets.

Hellboria Wood

The pale blue striated grain pattern of the Hellboria tree alters slowly with time, even once the tree is dead. Although rare and expensive, this attractive wood is used in a range of designer products, from the racquet handles of zipwire stars, to luxury furniture.

Herbametics

A firm specialising in herbal remedies for common ailments, weight loss, etc. Many of their claimed properties are, at best, only weakly exhibited. However, a select few of their medicines have some real potential.

Hot & Spicy

The latest craze among the youth culture of the subsector is the music of Hot & Spicy. The band has acquired a fanatical following, particularly after the release of their best selling holo-album *The Stars are Ours*. They have secured a number of lucrative advertising contracts. The band members are Rock Salt, Pepper, Nutmeg, Cinnamon and Ginger.

Hypagene

Specialists in genetic engineering lifeforms to meet the requirements of their customers. Hypagene have to stay within the very strict guidelines imposed by the Imperium, although they occasionally perform illicit geneering work for various secret military departments.

Hyumian

A sophont reptilian species, slightly larger than humans, vaguely resembling a heavily muscled Bwap (Newt), although the two species are not related. Hyumians have natural armour (scales) and weapons (claws, teeth and tail), making them formidable opponents in close combat.

In late adolescence, most Hyumians suffer a wanderlust, which drives them to explore the stars. After a period of up to 20 years, the matured adults return home to mate and settle.

I.F.I.

Interstellar Formulations Incorporated is a corporation specialising in protective polymers and coatings for hazardous environments.

Lindarport Security

A small security firm specialising in the transport and/or escort of selected high value cargos and VIPs. Each Lindarport office operates several small teams of exmercenaries and ex-law enforcers.

In addition to physical protection, they also provide privacy protection, including sweeping premises for surveillance devices, consultancy on alarm systems, etc.

Lindarport usually operate within the law (their operatives are all licensed and insured for any damage to themselves *and* their victims). On high law worlds they use experts in unarmed combat rather than carrying illegal weaponry.

Lyten Technical

A major manufacturer of compact high tech processors using three-dimensional etched crystal circuits. Lyten's components are used in a wide variety of high-end computers, from cryptographic units in ship transponders to powerful astronavigation computers.

Maria Charles

A Class II Imperial Criminal, with a bounty of MCr. 10 on her head (alive; MCr. 1 if dead). In the underworld she is renowned as one of the best thieves in the sector, specialising in small, high value targets. She uses only the highest tech equipment, is adept at disguise, and works with a small team of hand-picked (and totally trustworthy) colleagues.

She is also reputed to be a member of the infamous Grey Guild - a network of professional thieves and their contacts which allegedly stretches across several sectors.

Physkem

A chemical processing and manufacturing company, providing a wide range of compounds for other industries.

Stellar Education Co-operative

The SEC believes that all children must be enlightened in order that the stellar consciousness be raised. Eventually

they believe that this will allow humankind to reach a higher plane of purely mental existence. Although their educational facilities are excellent, their aims are often considered subversive.

The SEC was formed 200 years ago by Thomas Devine, a rich businessman who became dis-enamoured with his strict religious upbringing and sought out a new meaning in his life. The SEC, now run by a council of five of Devine's students, has spread widely. It is rumoured that Devine is still alive, sustained either by his beliefs, or by anagathics.

Talquil

A cute furry creature, 40 cm high, with big glassy eyes, red/green striped fur and large feet. Widely available on many worlds as a pet for children, because of its passive nature and ability to live on left-overs.

Weller Associates

Dealers in precious metals, Weller handle all aspects of the production process, from refining to casting. They provide the coinage for a number of lower tech currencies.

Zipwire

A game of pursuit involving a large court with two or more players (usually two for competitive events). The aim is to avoid being hit by the multiple zippers (small jet-propelled balls) while trying to knock said balls at your opponent using a racquet. A small helmet may be worn to protect the face. It is rumoured that there is an illegal version of this sport played using balls with poison-tipped spikes.

