

SCOURGES

OF THE GALAXY

An Enemies Book for Star Hero

Jason Walters

SAIT R. KENNEDY

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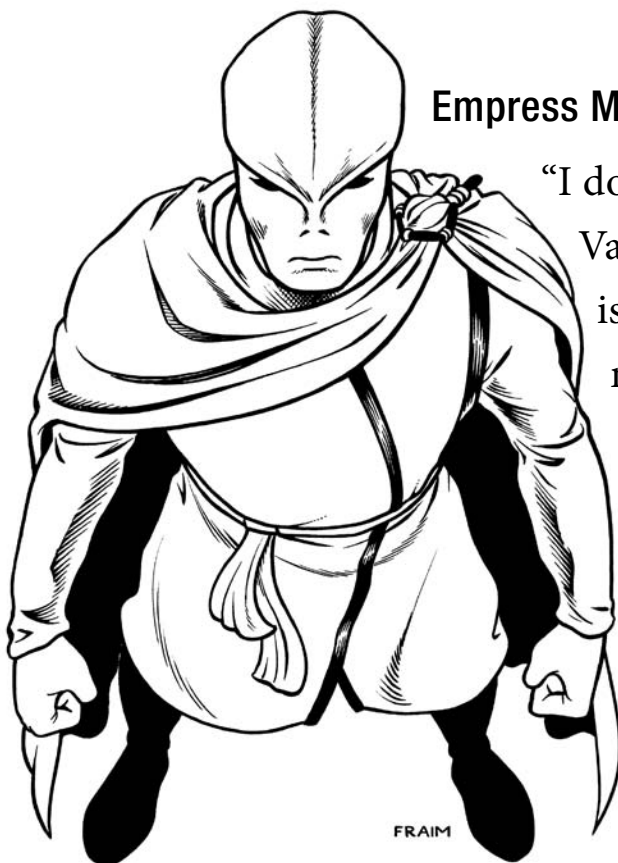
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Empress Marissa III De Valiere on Lord Zorm:

“I don’t think it’s any huge secret that the Varanyi ambassador’s third in command is the smartest of the bunch. What’s his name — Xan something? Anyhow, he’s definitely a spy. I don’t really care, of course. If the *Sh’garothayn* so badly wants to know who’s warming my bed tonight or which noble nitwit thinks I’m going to make him ambassador to Malva next year, it’s nothing to me.”

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INTRODUCTION



Villainy is mankind's eternal constant. Look into the folklore, fact, and fiction of any people in Earth's history and you'll find villains — how can anyone create a great story without one? Samson is betrayed by his love Delilah, King David by his son Absalom, and Jesus Christ by disciple Judas Iscariot. Julius Caesar fell due to Marcus Brutus's treachery and King Lear to that of his own family. Othello is misled *and* betrayed by Iago. Each of these scoundrels has his own motivations (some more understandable than others), but each of them performs two important roles in the narrative. The first is to contrast their personal weaknesses with the protagonist's more noble traits: Iago's cravenness to Othello's nobility; Absalom's ambition to David's fatherly love; Delilah's greed to Samson's strength. The second is to provide a block upon which the hero — who generally has his own weaknesses — can stumble and tragically fall. Iago can only manipulate Othello because of his jealousy. Delilah deceives Samson because of his lust. Absalom's rebellion is God's punishment for David's betrayal of his loyal servant Uriah.

The Science Fiction tradition of villainy is no less rich. Indeed, with the vast canvas of galactic space upon which to paint their evil schemes, it's the genre in which villains truly come into their own. Judas may have lusted after pieces of silver, but Ming the Merciless (*Flash Gordon*) lusts after entire planets. When Iago corrupts Othello he murders his beloved wife, but when Senator Palpatine corrupts Anakin Skywalker (*Star Wars*), all galactic civilization collapses into tyranny. The betrayal of King Lear by his children may have led to the death of an English royal family, but the destruction of Duke Leto Atreides by Baron Harkonnen (*Dune*) leads to a religious and social paradigm shift that forever alters the course of human civilization. Within Science Fiction the dark and grubby human motivations that comprise evil may be the same, but their catastrophic results effects entire species, worlds, and sometimes even the Galaxy itself.

This is the sort of wickedness aspired to by many the scoundrels in this book: civilization-corrupting, planet-destroying, solar system-smashing evils so vast, ambitious, and destructive that they cannot even be contemplated by the real life criminals of our own time. Paradoxically, the great wealth and freedom granted to galactic civilization by faster-than-light travel, space colonization, and advanced medicine are what allow the villains contained in the pages of *Scourges Of The Galaxy* to flourish. The ambitions of a master thief, expert assassin, cult leader, or aspiring tyrant

need no longer be restricted to a single world or even a single star system. Furthermore, the vast expanses of space give these same scoundrels an almost infinite variety of places in which to hide from law enforcement should their foul plots unravel. In many ways the immeasurable expanses of a Galaxy opened up by inexpensive interstellar travel mirror the open, lawless vastness of the American west in the late 1800s — only infinitely bigger. Outlaws, thieves, and the black-hearted run riot over the cold vastness of the void, with only a few courageous and strong individuals daring to stand in their way.

Scourges Of The Galaxy is a book of enemies and adversaries for *Star Hero*. The characters described within these pages are part of the Terran Empire setting detailed in the book of the same name. However, they're perfectly suitable for most *Star Hero* campaigns and can easily be adapted for other settings. Most are designed as Standard Heroic characters, with 75 Character Points plus up to 75 points of Disadvantages. Some have a *lot* more points than that, while others are built on barely 100 Character Points altogether. Most *Star Hero* characters are simply knowledgeable, well-trained people who have access to advanced technology, and their character sheets reflect this. However, some of the villains described here have powers that would not be out of place in Superhero campaign. Often it's not possible to define an enemy properly on 150 Character Points, and it's preferable to build a Scourge right rather than follow unbending point restrictions or ill-defined concepts of "points efficiency." Enemies, after all, aren't the central focus of your *Star Hero* campaign, so when you create them you don't have to worry as much about campaign standards as you do with PCs (who are *always* on center stage). Each *Star Hero* GM should to evaluate the Scourges in light of his own campaign's standards and the power level of his PCs, and adjust them accordingly if necessary.

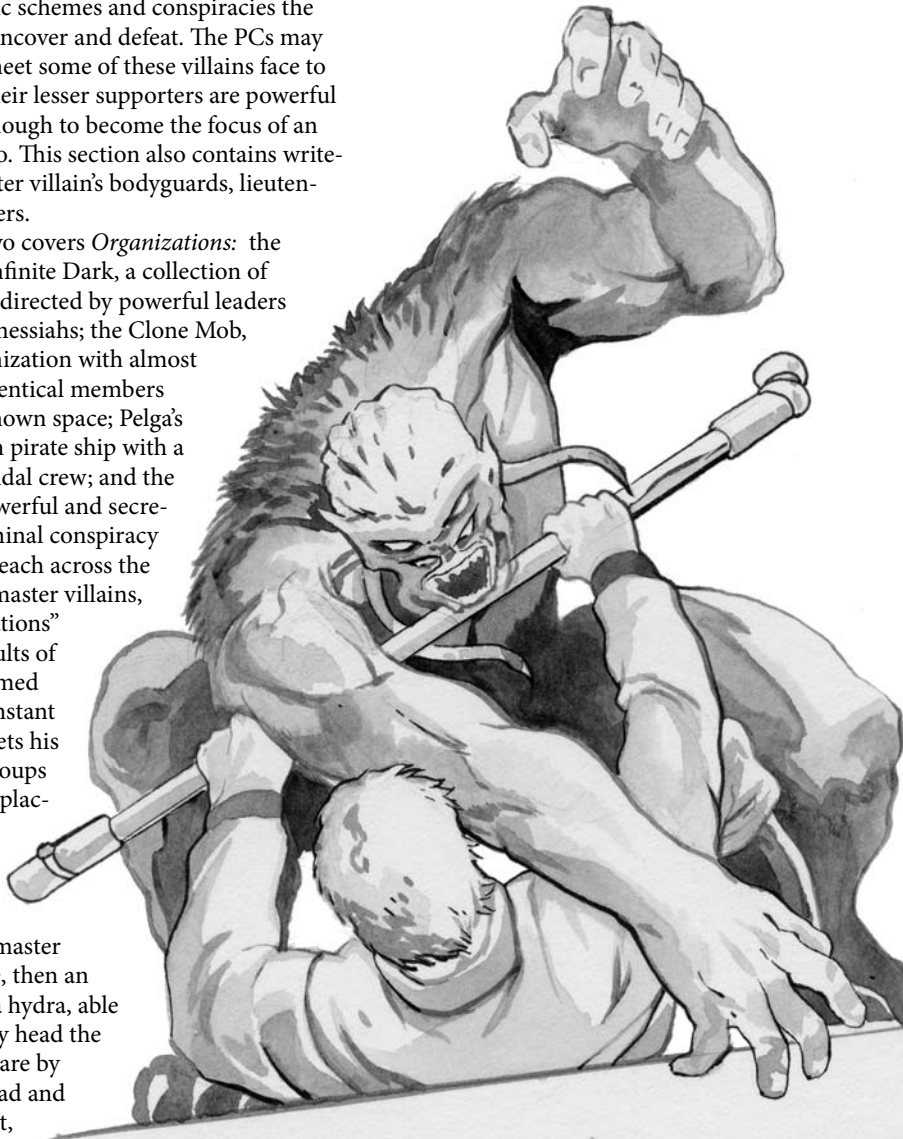
Scourges is written for GMs, and thus contains information a GM may not want his players to know about. If you're not a GM, you may still find it useful as a source of character ideas and sample abilities, but you should get your GM's permission before reading it. Some GMs prefer to keep the information in this book secret until they reveal it during game play, and may not ever want players to read their enemies' character sheets.

Chapter One of *Scourges of the Galaxy* focuses on *Master Villains*: monstrous men like Geiger "Mind Master" Cray, Senator Leopold D'Estaing, Pirate-Admiral "King" Narch, Archimandrite Calixtus, and Tateklys the Overboss who are behind

dastardly galactic schemes and conspiracies the characters can uncover and defeat. The PCs may never actually meet some of these villains face to face, but even their lesser supporters are powerful or interesting enough to become the focus of an adventure or two. This section also contains write-ups of each master villain's bodyguards, lieutenants, and followers.

Chapter Two covers *Organizations*: the Church of the Infinite Dark, a collection of dangerous cults directed by powerful leaders known as void messiahs; the Clone Mob, a criminal organization with almost a half million identical members spread across known space; Pelga's Fist, an Ackálian pirate ship with a uniquely homicidal crew; and the Psindicate, a powerful and secretive psionic criminal conspiracy whose tendrils reach across the Galaxy. Unlike master villains, whose "organizations" are essentially cults of personality doomed to dissolve the instant their master meets his demise, these groups are capable of replacing leaders and repairing damages to their infrastructure given time. If a master villain is a snake, then an organization is a hydra, able to regenerate any head the PCs sever. They are by nature widespread and difficult to defeat, giving the PCs a long-term opponent that can't be destroyed in the course of a few adventures.

Chapter Three, *Independent Villains*, features opponents who aren't affiliated with a particular organization or who work for themselves as part of the galactic underworld. It includes a wide variety of evil, twisted, and greedy people including mercenary xenoarcheologist Lucas Bellair, rogue telepathic assassin Darryl Revok, master smuggler Double H, pimp and informer "Fast Eddy" Adaraz, and cybernetic bounty hunter Blackjack Thorson among many others. Each of these *Scourges* is suitable for keeping the PCs busy for an adventure or two, or as a PC's nemesis who returns to bedevil him time and again.



REFERENCES

Throughout *Scourges of the Galaxy* you'll find references to information from other books in the *Star Hero* line of products. Whenever possible, appropriate page numbers are supplied so the reader can refer to them for additional information. To save space, book titles are abbreviated: SH for *Star Hero*, TE for *Terran Empire*, AW for *Alien Wars*, WoE for *Worlds Of Empire*, and ST for *Spacers' Toolkit*. Information on these and other books can be found at www.herogames.com or your friendly local game store.

WHAT THEY SAY: TATEKLYS

The Phazor of Malva: “Who? Oh, yes, young Tateklys. Haran’s son. He was an adventuresome one a few centuries ago, but now he’s settled down and runs an art gallery and shop downtown. I seem to remember that he had one *zsokath* of a party there a decade or so ago. I woke up naked atop a pile of Vayathurans in the center of the Arena the next morning.”

Zraman, Hzeel Outfit Boss: “Tateklys is the best thing to happen to my people since the Perseids destroyed our homeworld. He’s smart, he’s fair, and best of all he’s immortal. We Hzeel are short-lived compared to other races, and his leadership gives us a sense of continuity we would otherwise lack. All have prospered under the Overboss’s rule.”

Robert Avilla, Merchant and Explorer: ::rolls his eyes:: “Tateklys is the universe’s best reason to stay on your home planet and farm turnips. You’re minding your own business exploring ruins in former Mandaarian space when this tall guy in antique clothes appears on the bridge of your ship and lectures you about the nature of heroism. The next thing you know you’re 75,000 years in the past fighting some idiot named Kal-Turak. Take it from me: if you ever run into Tateklys, politely announce that you’re a boring coward who couldn’t save his own grandmother from an angry toy poodle. Maybe he’ll go away.”

Read more about Tateklys on page 48



WHAT THEY SAY: CAPTAIN HAPSBURG

Marissa III DeValiere, Empress: “The situation with my brother Matsumoto is unfortunate as well as unnecessary. I am willing to pardon his crimes and restore him to favor. All he need do is to turn himself over to the Terran Security Service on any planet and the process can begin.”

Captain Jonathan Laird, Imperial Naval Officer: “You’d think that being born into the Imperial house would be a good thing, wouldn’t you? I guess that poor Mattie is living proof that it isn’t. I served as his first officer on the *Raphael Semmes* back during his time in the Frontier Fleet, and I can tell you for a fact that he’d have risen through the ranks, nobleman or not. Now they’ve put me in charge of hunting him down.”

Haru! Alan, Pirate Captain: “Though he does what Mog Re! Nor!ark commands, his heart is not in his work. What use is a pirate who no like being a pirate, eh? That beautiful ship goes to waste in his paws. Death and rot upon Hapsburg! If he were last food alive, I would spit him out of my mouth!”

Read more about Captain Hapsburg on page 41

WHAT THEY SAY: JAX MALJEK

Jax Maljek, Gangster and Scientist: “Goon. Gangster. God. What’s the difference? In the end you’ll all be me in any case!”

Major Allyssa Barth, ISP: “The Clone Mob. Heh. Is there really anything worse in the entire Universe than the Clone Mob? They’re like cockroaches: for every one you step on there are a hundred more hiding somewhere nearby. All you can do is exterminate away and hope for the best.”

Rigel Stargraver, Psindicate Lord: “Having all those clones of Jax Maljek running about is a nuisance. The main problem we have with them is that they’re amateurish and unpredictable. If the fox startles a yearling before the hunting dog can pounce, there’s no game for anyone.”

Read more about Jax Maljek on page 84

MASTER VILLAINS

SCOURGES OF THE GALAXY • CHAPTER 1

ON KING NARCH

‘... a black-hearted, cannibalistic villain the likes of which we haven’t seen since the terrible days of the Xenovore Wars. He prowls the spaceways looking for victims like some kind of vulture. One day the ISP or the Imperial Navy will hunt him down and kill him like the alien dog he is!’

— Major Allyssa Barth, ISP

ARCHIMANDRITE LANZOL CALLIXTUS



ARCHIMANDRITE LANZOL CALLIXTUS

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 [2]
15	DEX	15	12-	OCV: 5 /DCV: 5
15	CON	10	12-	
12	BODY	4	11-	
25	INT	15	14-	PER Roll: 14-
20	EGO	20	13-	ECV: 7
25	PRE	15	14-	PRE Attack: 5d6
16	COM	3	12-	
3	PD	1		Total: 3 PD (0 rPD)
3	ED	0		Total: 3 ED (0 rED)
4	SPD	15		Phases: 3,6,9,12
5	REC			
30	END			
30	STUN	5		Total Characteristics Cost: 103

Movement: Running: 8"/16"
Swimming: 4"/8"

Cost	Powers	END
6	<i>Strong Will:</i> Mental Defense (10 points total)	0
4	<i>Fast Runner:</i> Running +2" (8" total)	1
2	<i>Fast Swimmer:</i> Swimming +2" (4" total)	1
30	<i>Lucky Bastard:</i> Luck 6d6	0

Perks

6	Fringe Benefit: Head of Galactic Church on Polyphemus
6	Fringe Benefit: Head of Organized Crime on Polyphemus
15	Money: Filthy Rich
10	Reputation: principled philanthropist 11- (on Polyphemus), +5/+5d6
50	Well-Connected and 47 Character Points' worth of Contacts and Favors throughout the Empire (including Empress Marissa III, some Senators, various corporate bigwigs, and the like)

Talents

5	Blasé: +5 Resistance to Oratory
5	Eidetic Memory
5	Hard Bargainer: +5 Resistance to Trading
5	Immovable: +5 Resistance to Persuasion
5	Rulesmonger: +5 Resistance to Bureaucratics

Skills

6	+2 with Conversation, Persuasion, and Seduction
3	Acting 14-
7	Bribery 16-
5	Bureaucratics 15-
3	Concealment 14-
5	Conversation 15-
2	Forgery (Art Objects) 14-

4	Gambling (Card Games, Dice Games) 14-
5	High Society 15-
2	KS: Art History 11-
3	KS: Church Of The Galactic Creator 14-
3	KS: Poison 14-
3	Oratory 14-
9	Persuasion 17-
2	PS: Priest 11-
5	PS: Accountant 16-
3	PS: Politician 14-
11	Seduction 18-
3	SS: Pharmacology/Toxicology 14-
3	Sleight Of Hand 12-
5	Streetwise 15-
3	Tactics 14-
5	Trading 15-
3	Linguist
1	1) Ackálian (fluent conversation; Terran is Native)
1	2) Fex (fluent conversation)
1	3) Mon'dabi (fluent conversation)
1	4) Osathri (fluent conversation)
1	5) Rigellian (fluent conversation)
3	Traveler
2	1) AK: Polyphemus 14-
2	2) CK: Sividas 14-
1	3) CK: Vittera 11-
1	4) CK: Derendon 11-

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 270

Total Cost: 373

75+ Disadvantages

5	Age: 40+
15	Psychological Limitation: Paranoid Egomaniac (Common, Strong)
15	Psychological Limitation: Greedy and Lustful (Common, Strong)
15	Psychological Limitation: Very Protective Of Family (Common, Strong)
15	Psychological Limitation: Vengeful (Common, Strong)
233	Experience Bonus

Total Disadvantage Points: 373

Background/History: Lanzol Callixtus is a Martian variant Human from the crater-planet Polyphemus (WoE 79-84). The offspring of a seventeen year-old Galactic Church nun seduced by a charming conman, he grew up in the confines of one of that world's several isolated cloisters. Spoiled by constant female attention and raised without any male role models, he was groomed almost from birth for the ministry. Handsome and charming, Callixtus accepted his fate with good humor — but was too much his father's son

to allow the life of the spirit to interfere with the sins of the flesh. By the time he was thirteen young Lanzol had already successfully seduced several of the cloister's younger nuns, figured out how to rob the local church's poor box, and had sold most of the cloister's holy artifacts, replacing them with forgeries. Never punished for his crimes or even suspected of them, Lanzol even pursued an unwholesome relationship with his own mother.

At the age of sixteen young Callixtus was sent to seminary in the capital city of Sivas, where he continued his pursuits with a renewed vigor in the cosmopolitan atmosphere of the Green City. A constant inhabitant of the city's demimonde, he had little time for theology but so excelled at oratory and (rather surprisingly) charitable work that his teachers were more than willing to overlook his shortcomings. In fact, the time the young priest spent helping the poor and avidly whoremongering served dual purposes: he enjoyed doing it, and it also helped him forge useful ties with Sivas's underworld. Using those connections he was able to locate his long-lost father, a small-time but talented grifter who made his living scamming tourists and laborers in the city's many marketplaces. Surprisingly, the old scoundrel was overjoyed to meet his son. Over the next several years he taught young Lanzol the tricks of his trade. Together they ran romance scams on widows, cheated tourists at gambling, and made false injury claims on local businessmen.

When Lanzol had learned everything his father had to teach, he killed him by putting poison in a bottle of Mondabi absinthe, then dumped his body in the Nisiran Sea. Shortly thereafter, Lanzol graduated from seminary and was placed in a recently constructed church located in one of the poorer districts of Sivas. A cloister, orphanage, and shelter for battered women were also part of the new facility. The newly-minted priest wasted no time converting the place into a combination harem/brothel, with the male children working as pickpockets and street thugs under his direction. Father Callixtus arranged to have his mother transferred to his diocese, and before too long the mother and son team began producing a startling number of offspring between them. Both his son Savonarola and his daughter Lolita are the products of his coupling with nuns during this period.

By the time he reached 40 Father Callixtus had not only gained control of much of the organized crime in downtown Sivas, but he had also amassed enough wealth to bribe his way into being Lector of the Sivas

District. His new job put him in charge of all of the church operations in almost the entire southern half of the crater, giving access not only to immense wealth but to Polyphemus's politicians as well. It also put him into an excellent position to corrupt the district's underpaid police department, which allowed him both to increase his own criminal activities and to "remove" rivals without interference. Simultaneously, Lector Callixtus launched a populist propaganda campaign from the pulpit, championing the cause of the poor and disenfranchised of the Empire while railing against corruption.

By the end of the decade Callixtus was one of the most popular figures on the planet and a major player in its politics. He didn't even need to bribe the College of Precentors to be made Archimandrite of Polyphemus when his predecessor died quite unexpectedly. (His lover — Lanzol's thirteen-year-old daughter Lolita! — poisoned him.) Callixtus was now exactly where he wanted to be. With his newly-expanded authority he launched an ambitious campaign of constructing new cathedrals, gaining new converts, and dominating Polyphemus's underworld. With the help of his ruthless children and other relatives he has created a criminal empire that would be the envy of any gangster anywhere in the Galaxy, as it exists entirely within the confines of the Galactic Church of the Creator.

Personality/Motivation: Greed. Lust. Corruption. Revenge for slights real or imagined. Paranoia. Hypocrisy. Megalomania. Egomania. Sociopathic behavior. Natural love of family. *Unnatural* love of family. These are all components of the personality of Lanzol Callixtus and, when combined with his natural

patience and brilliance, make him an extremely unfortunate choice of enemy for anyone to have. His goals are really quite simple: to directly control as much useful real estate on Polyphemus as possible (and in time, in the rest of the Empire as well); to gather as much wealth as is feasible from any available source on the planet; to sleep with as many young women as imaginable; and whenever possible to promote his own family at the expense of all others. Callixtus is unbending in his devotion to each of these goals, and is unafraid to undertake any action, legal or illegal, in their pursuit so long as he has a reasonable chance of getting away with it.

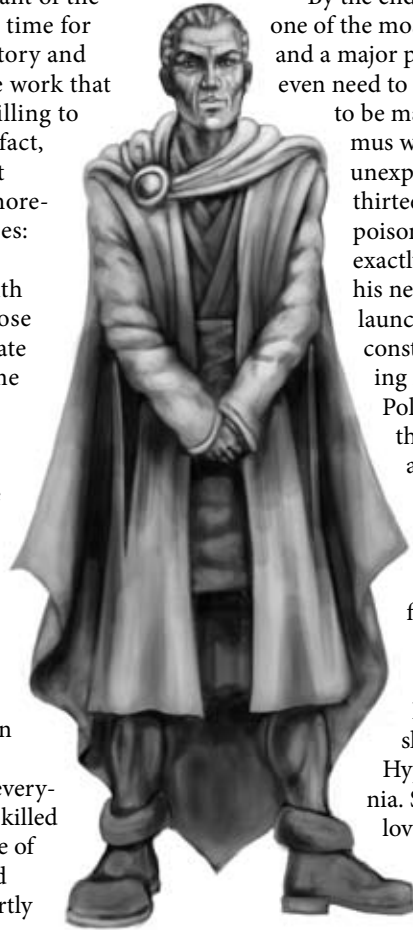
An extremely charming man, Callixtus is well-mannered, multilingual, exceptionally convincing, and utterly self-serving. He has two dozen illegitimate children by eight different

LANZOL CALLIXTUS PLOT SEEDS

The CEO of Johnrys Spaceworks hasn't been kicking down the tithe money lately, so Callixtus sends the roguish PCs on special "fact-finding" mission to his factory on Polyphemus's surface. To make matters easier he anoints every one of them a priest before they leave. Can the PCs shake enough cash out of the CEO to make the Archimandrite happy, or will they have to use sterner methods?

The College of Precentors has finally grown suspicious of the church on Polyphemus. They dispatch the PCs to find out what's going on. At first the investigation goes smoothly. The local Archimandrite and other Church staff are cooperative, and nothing seems to be out of order. Then one member of their expedition disappears....

The Clone Mob (see Chapter Two) knows exactly what the Callixtus family does on Polyphemus — and they want in on the action. In fact, they want *all* of the action! But dislodging and replacing one of the most ingenious crime operations in the Empire will be an arduous and dangerous task, requiring the skills of their best operatives. So clones of the PCs are brought in, just as the PCs themselves pull into port....



women (many of who hold high-ranking positions within the Galactic Church) and between 50-100 additional family members in the Church, private industry, and Polypheman government. Callixtus uses Polyphemus's unique position as the pivot of Imperial trade on the edge of the Antispinward Corridor to enrich himself and his family. Under Callixtus patronage Polyphemus's Church has essentially become an organized crime group. His son Savonarola plays "good cop" and bagman, while his daughter Lolita plays "bad cop" and enforcer, with his various nieces, nephews, and other children within the Church acting as "soldiers." Their primary activities include collecting "tithes" from local businessmen (basically a glorified protection racket), blackmailing the CEOs of corporations into making generous "contributions" to the Polyphemus Church, running special "nunneries" and "orphanages" for the unfortunate (inside of which they're forced into prostitution), and the selling of church "offices" (essentially criminal territory on Polyphemus). He also uses his wealth (and sometimes other methods) to influence the Global Council, since it controls the sale of land on a planet where only landowners can vote.

While the Church itself is unaware of what transpires on Polyphemus, both the local and Imperial governments are aware of Callixtus' activities, but prefer not to take action for different reasons. The local police are thoroughly infiltrated, extensively bribed, and actually rely on the Archimandrite to keep crime *down*, as he ruthlessly suppresses any criminal activity on the planet not under his control. The TSS has decided not to interfere so long as Callixtus keeps his activities moderately quiet. After all, if they get rid of Callixtus and his family, someone worse may replace them!

Despite (or perhaps because of) its nefarious dealings, the Church on Polyphemus has done extremely well under Archimandrite Callixtus. The vast majority of the planet's population of 280 million have become active Church members under his vicarage (life is safer that way). The flow of credits from Polyphemus back to the College of Precursors on Earth has never been greater, and new churches are constantly being built in Sivas, Vittera, and Derendon, and various nearby systems. Callixtus's love of art, especially architecture, is the stuff of galactic legend. He has personally funded and supervised the construction of some of the most exquisite buildings on Polyphemus and patronizes countless artists of various sorts. He's also uniquely open-minded, possessing none of the prejudices that are common in many parts of the Terran Empire. The Archimandrite publicly favors civil rights for AIs, supports equality for non-Humans, espouses democratic government (since organized crime suffers under tyrannies), and opposes oppressive government (see above).

Quote: "Don't buy a single vote more than necessary in the next election, Savonarola. No sense wasting credits on a landslide."

Powers/Tactics: Archimandrite Callixtus is the

leader of the largest religion (and the only criminal enterprise) on Polyphemus, commanding millions of adherents there. His private fortune could buy and sell most Imperial corporations several times over. He's popular throughout the Empire as an enlightened religious figure. His personal retinue consists of dozens of mobster-relatives led by his daughter Lolita, one of the most ruthless gangsters alive. He's also an expert poisoner, a first rate politician, a beloved philanthropist, and a progressive thinker. If that wasn't bad enough, things always seem to go right for Lanzol Callixtus. Perhaps God actually is on his side.... even if he doesn't believe in Him.

Callixtus doesn't get involved in combat and has never learned how to fight — he doesn't need to. He has his daughters, sons, nieces, nephews, the Polyphemus police, and the Imperial Government for that. He works behind the scenes to increase his family's wealth, criminal empire, and land holdings, not to mention his personal harem of beautiful women (or "nuns") while appearing to be a beloved, almost saintly philanthropic figure. Though he has ties to Safira Harmon's liberal faction within the Imperial Senate, Callixtus is a personal friend of the Empress and travels to Lyons several times a year to visit with her. There are even rumors that the Archimandrite is one of the notoriously insatiable ruler's many lovers, though these have never been confirmed. (They're untrue, though not for lack of trying on his part.)

The Archimandrite never carries weapons (or much other gear, for that matter). In a pinch he could probably use his scepter of office as a club (3d6 Normal Damage, STR Min 8), but it has a 8-chance to break with every solid hit.

Campaign Use: Archimandrite Lanzol Callixtus is a mastermind who works solely behind the scenes, using others as his chess pieces in a planetary (and in time, galactic) game of self-enrichment. He simply isn't the sort of master villain the PCs can take down *mano a mano*, ion pistols or starship lasers a-blazing. In fact, physically harming him in any way would not only bring the wrath of his family and a majority of the people of Polyphemus down upon them, but that of the Empress as well.

Besides Geiger "Mind Master" Cray, Callixtus may be the most dangerous master villain in this book. He's almost certainly the trickiest to combat. To put an end to his corruption of the Galactic Church on Polyphemus, the PCs must engage in a multifaceted war that includes battling with his servants and children, undermining his status within the Galactic Church, and ruining his reputation — all without attracting the attention of the Imperial authorities. This is an extraordinarily dangerous proposition, as the Archimandrite will have anyone who harms a member of his family or damages his reputation hunted down, tortured, and killed no matter where they go. (If the PCs flee to the Rimward Marches of the Varanyi Empire, they'll find one of Callixtus's priests hiding in a bowl of Catavalan rice with a blaster in his hands.) The Archimandrite has no shame or aversion to

hypocrisy. He'll viciously attack the heroes on a Monday only to hide behind his robes on a Tuesday, publicly accusing them of religious bigotry when they try to respond. Additionally, neither he nor his children would think anything of killing the PCs for interfering with their business and, so long as they stay on Polyphemus, there is little chance of their being repercussions for their actions. The PCs' bodies will get dumped in the Nisiran Sea and their ship quickly sold at auction. Nobody will ask any questions.

The PCs need potentially only step foot on Polyphemus to come into conflict with Callixtus via a member of his crime family. If they're known to be wealthy or carrying a particularly rich load of cargo, or simply work for someone affluent enough to pay a ransom, there's a chance that Father Savonarola will come by looking for a "tithe." If the PCs are criminals themselves who want to set up shop on the wealthy, seemingly crime-free world, they'll be lucky to get a chance to leave under their own power before Lolita kills them. If any member of their team is female, humanoid, and has a COM of 15 or more there's a chance she might attract Callixtus's attention, which can mean anything from a pleasant night out in Sivas to waking up in a cell in his "nunnery."

Appearance: Lanzol Callixtus is an extraordinarily handsome example of a Martian-variant Human: tall, thin, barrel-chested, robust. He has narrow features and distinguished-looking salt-and-pepper hair. Most who meet him are impressed by his cheerful character, persuasive manners, brilliant conversational abilities, and intimate mastery of the habits of polite society. He usually wears the elaborate vestments of his office and just the hint of a knowing smile upon his slim face.

WHAT THEY SAY: LANZOL CALLIXTUS

Senator Safira Harmon, leader of the liberal faction:

"Archimandrite Callixtus is one of the most enlightened and progressive holy men in the entire Empire. If there were a hundred more like him in the Church, we would certainly live in a very different Galaxy!"

Empress Marissa III De Valiere: "Horny old Lanzol comes to the Court a couple of times a year looking for favors... and whatever else he can get his hands on. I let my best female servants go on vacation when he's around. Other than that, I like the codger. He's charming and he never bores me."

Don A'llangmon, Mon'dabi Merchant Ship Captain: "One thing you learn the first time you put into port in Polyphemus: give generously. First you have to bribe the spaceport officials to land. Then you have to give a "gift" to the local inspectors *not* to inspect your cargo, at which point a priest shows up to ask for a healthy "tithe" for charitable work. If you don't pay that it somehow magically undoes the first two bribes: your paperwork is suddenly out of order and the inspector comes back to tell you your cargo is suspicious. Make a fuss out of it and you'll get shoved out an airlock."

LECTOR LOLITA CALLIXTUS

Demented Gangster, Clergyman, And Prostitute

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 [3]
15	DEX	15	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
14	CON	8	12-	
13	BODY	6	12-	
15	INT	5	12-	PER Roll 12-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
16	PRE	6	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
16	COM	3	12-	
5	PD	2		Total: 11 PD (6 rPD)
4	ED	1		Total: 10 ED (6 rED)
4	SPD	15		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
6	REC	0		
30	END	1		
35	STUN	7		Total Characteristic Cost: 74

Movement:	Running:	8"/16"
	Leaping:	3"/6"
	Swimming:	4"/8"

Cost	Powers	END
	Martial Arts: <i>Ninjutsu</i>	
	Maneuver	OCV DCV Notes
4	Atemi Punch	-1 +1 3d6 NND
4	Choke Hold	-2 +0 Grab One Limb; 3d6 NND
5	Kick	-2 +1 9d6 Strike
4	Knife Hand	-2 +0 HKA 2d6
4	Punch	+0 +2 7d6 Strike
4	Reversal	-1 -2 40 STR to Escape; Grab Two Limbs
3	Throw	+0 +1 5d6 +v/5, Target Falls
8	+2 Extra DCs (already added in)	
4	<i>Fast Runner:</i> Running +2" (8" total)	1
2	<i>Fast Swimmer:</i> Swimming +2" (4" total)	1
5	<i>Unimpressed:</i> +10 PRE; Only To Protect Against PRE Attacks (-1)	0

Perks

6	Money: Wealthy
5	Fringe Benefit: Religious Rank: Lector of the Galactic Church
4	Fringe Benefit: High-level organized crime leader
30	Well-Connected and 27 Character Points' worth of Contacts and Favors on Polyphemus

Talents

12	Combat Luck (6 PD/6 ED)
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Skills

16	+2 with All Combat
6	+2 with Conversation, High Society, and Seduction
4	+2 with Shadowing, Stealth, and Streetwise
3	Combat Driving 12-
3	Concealment 12-
3	Conversation 12-
3	Fast Draw (Common Melee Weapons) 12-
2	Forgery (Art Objects) 12-

LOLITA CALLIXTUS PLOT SEEDS

The PCs have to investigate the murder of a popular Councilor on Polyphemus. They arrive to find the local authorities unable to produce any suspects... and unwilling to assist them in any way. Fortunately, the local branch of the Galactic Church of the Creator is more than willing to help in the investigation! The youthful Lector Lolita Callixtus is assigned to assist them in their efforts. Of course, she's not helpful enough to tell them she's the one who did the dirty deed....

The PCs have to explored Polyphemus as a possible new base of operations for something or someone — a corporation, the Psindicate, a wealthy patron, or the like. Oddly, after a month of investigating the planet's underworld, they're unable to determine who precisely runs crime on the planet. Then one night while they're walking down the street, Lolita Callixtus and her men ambush them.

While making a routine maintenance stop on Polyphemus, the PCs find themselves at a benefit gala for orphans sponsored by the Galactic Church. One of them hits it off with the beautiful and charming Lector of Vittera. Then he vanishes.

- 3 High Society 12-
- 3 Interrogation 12-
- 3 KS: Church Of The Galactic Creator 12-
- 2 KS: Ninjutsu 11-
- 2 KS: Poisons 11-
- 3 Lockpicking 12-
- 3 PS: Gangster 12-
- 3 SS: Pharmacology/Toxicology 12-
- 3 PS: Priest 12-
- 3 PS: Prostitute 12-
- 3 Seduction 12-
- 3 Shadowing 12-
- 3 Stealth 12-
- 3 Streetwise 12-
- 3 TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles, Grav Vehicles/Hovercraft
- 3 Tactics 12-
- 7 WF: Common Melee Weapons, Human Small Arms, Advanced Human Small Arms, Garrote
- 3 Linguist
- 1 1) Ackálian (fluent conversation; Terran is Native)
- 1 2) Fex (fluent conversation)
- 1 3) Mon'dabi (fluent conversation)
- 1 4) Osathri (fluent conversation)
- 1 5) Rigellian (fluent conversation)
- 3 Traveler
- 2 1) AK: Polyphemus 12-
- 2 2) CK: Derendon 12-
- 2 3) CK: Sividas 12-
- 2 4) CK: Vittera 12

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 218

Total Cost: 292

75+ Disadvantages

- 15 Psychological Limitation: Violent Sociopath (Common, Strong)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Nymphomaniac (Common, Strong)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Very Protective Of Family (Common, Strong)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Vengeful (Common, Strong)
- 20 Social Limitation: Subject To Orders (Very Frequently, Major)
- 137 Experience Bonus

Total Disadvantage Points: 292

Background/History: Violent, oversexed, and emotionally unbalanced, Lolita Callixtus is the product of a liaison between Lanzol Callixtus and a nun stationed in his Vittera cloister. Like many of the Archimandrite's illegitimate children, she spent her childhood in a special orphanage where her

training included not only the usual religious and social instruction but also martial arts, poisons, weapons training, and — when she became old enough — seduction and lovemaking. Under her father's watchful eye she excelled in all of these categories; by the time she was 15 Lolita was promoted out of the orphanage and into the Church itself, working as a “personal assistant” to the leader of the Polyphemus Church.

Lolita's duties as the Archimandrite's assistant were many. She became his confidante, his assassin, his enforcer, and some say his lover. She certainly became the lover of a variety of influential men for a time including the governor of Vittera and several members of the Global Council. A useful pawn in her father's game of deception, crime, and manipulation, Lolita first seduced, then later poisoned, several of Callixtus's rivals in the Polyphemus underworld, helping to propel him to absolute mastery of crime on their planet.

When Lolita reached her twenties she began to more actively help her father run the family operations. She spent several years as a priest in Derendon, where she oversaw their profitable local extortion rackets. She also developed a passion for racing hovercraft along the winding highways that link Polyphemus's communities — a pastime that resulted in more than a few fatalities as the reckless young woman forced oncoming cars off the road.

Lolita engaged in all manner of vices while stationed in Derendon. She attended violent underground interspecies boxing matches, gambling extensively on their life-and-death outcomes. She sold herself as an independent call girl on the planetary datanet, even starring anonymously in a series of pornographic films. She became involved in an affair with the CEO of Cody's Commerce Center (WoE 84) and, in a fit of jealousy, arranged for the death of his movie star wife.

By the time she reached thirty (her age as of 2640) Lolita Callixtus's behavior became so alarming that her father transferred her back to Vittera. Rather than punishing his errant daughter, he promoted her to the position of Lector. This promotion was largely ceremonial — staffers carry out the day-to-day running of her parish — but it put someone utterly loyal to the Archimandrite high in the Church's power structure.

Personality/Motivation: Sensual, dangerous, and unpredictable, Lolita Callixtus is a mixture of good and evil: 90% evil, 10% good. On the one hand she's loyal to her devious father and protective of

EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Mk II-T Laser Pistol	+1	+2	3d6	0	8	24	
Combat Knife	+0	+0	1d6	1d6-1	—	8	Can Be Thrown
Wire garrote	+0	+0	½d6	1d6-1	—	5	Constant, must be aimed at neck or limb
Throwing Knives	+0	+0	½d6	+0	5	3	Recoverable Charges, RBS

Armor

Type 2 Force Field Belt (8 PD/8 ED, -1 to Sight Group PER Rolls, 1 Continuing Fuel Charge lasting 1 Hour)

Gear: Pocket computer

her criminal family. On the other, she's a violent, depraved sociopath with a love of bloodshed and contempt for all intelligent life. Her position as a Lector in the Church of the Galactic Creator is a convenience with little personal spiritual significance. She lives to capriciously enforce her will (really, her father's will) on others or to physically debase herself by selling her body to strangers.

Lolita is a creature of extreme appetites with no regard for others and little regard for herself. She can swing from charming to cruel with little warning, but contains her inner chaos when her family's interests are at stake. She discharges her duties, both ecclesiastical and criminal, with a surprising level of competence given her psychological instability. Operating from beneath the dual protection of the Church and her family, she's never been threatened by the law. Most citizens of Polyphemos consider the gossip and rumors about her to be untruths — vicious slanders spread by enemies of the Church.

Quote: “Didn’t see me put it into your drink, did you lover?”

Powers/Tactics: Lolita Callixtus is a first-rate murderer: fast, dexterous, and vicious. She's an excellent shot, an enthusiastic strangler, and a practitioner of the martial art ninjutsu. She's also patient, and will use her wide variety of skills to learn as much as possible about an opponent before she strikes. If possible she'll attack from a carefully-planned ambush with overwhelming force. If not, she'll attempt to use her natural beauty and charm to ingratiate herself to a target, and then poison him in some ingenious manner.

Lolita is an implacable foe. When she's given a mission by her father she doggedly pursues it until the job is done: even (or perhaps preferably) if it's risky. She'll use the considerable resources of the Callixtus crime family and the Polyphemos Church (the same thing, really) to help her achieve her goals, even pursuing her quarry off-world if her father asks her to do so.

Lolita's at best an indifferent clergywoman whose position as a Church leader means little to her personally. Despite this fact, she uses her status as Lector to effective advantage wherever

possible. The population of Polyphemos has little idea of her violence and depravity. They see Lolita as a beautiful and eccentric spiritual leader in the same vein as her adoptive father the Archimandrite (their biological relationship is not public knowledge). Any attempt to publicly assault or insult her will be met with overwhelming public indignation and hostility.

Campaign Use: Lolita is the enforcer of the Callixtus crime family. She's also its most infamous whore. To be a lover of Lolita Callixtus is a matter of considerable prestige on Polyphemos. It's also an invitation to disaster.

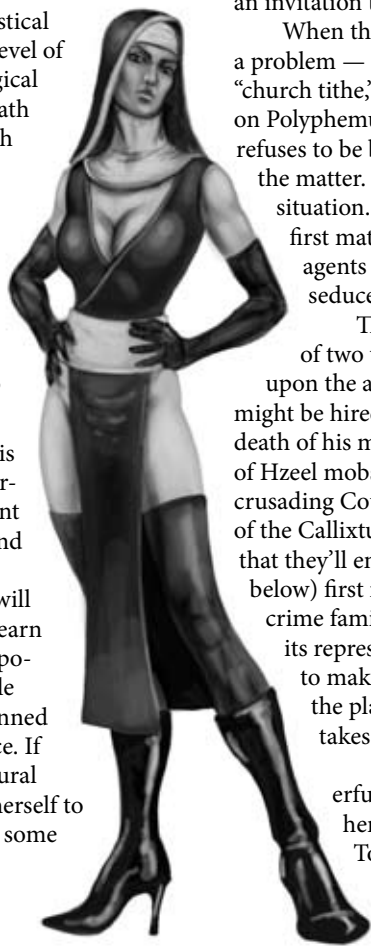
When the Callixtus family has identified a problem — a ship's captain reticent to pay a “church tithe,” an Hzeel outfit trying to move in on Polyphemos, a new Global Councilor who refuses to be bribed — it sends Lolita to resolve the matter. Her methods vary depending on the situation. She might assassinate the captain's first mate to send a message, lead a squad of agents to eliminate the Hzeel mobsters, or seduce and poison the Councilor.

The PCs will encounter Lolita in one of two ways. The first would be to come upon the aftermath of one of her actions. They might be hired to protect the captain after the death of his mate, seek revenge for the massacre of Hzeel mobsters, or investigate the death of the crusading Councilor. The second way is as targets of the Callixtus family's wrath. However, odds are that they'll encounter her brother Savonarola (see below) first in such a situation. The Callixtus crime family is surprisingly polite and will send its representative to give the PCs a chance to make amends (pay a bigger tithe, leave the planet, learn to take orders...) before it takes violent action.

To make Lolita Callixtus more powerful, increase her STUN to 40 and give her Physical Damage Reduction 50%.

To make her less powerful, remove her +2 with All Combat Skill Levels and reduce her Combat Luck to 3 PD/3 ED.

Appearance: Lolita Callixtus is a beautiful 30-year-old woman of the Martian variant Human type. She looks something like a twenty-first century runway model: tall, thin, aesthetically pleasing. She wears specially tailored “nun” outfits that complement her full bosom and show off her long legs (and hide her weapons). Lolita's hair is cut short in back but left a little long in the front so her bangs seductively cover her eyes.



WHAT THEY SAY: LOLITA CALLIXTUS

Mark Hanton, member of the Polyphemos Global Council: “Lector Lolita Callixtus is one of the most engaging religious figures on the planet. She's charismatic, well-educated, and an excellent dancer. With leaders like Lector Callixtus, it's no wonder that the Church has done well on Polyphemos.”

FATHER SAVONAROLA CALLIXTUS PLOT SEEDS

After the PCs clear customs in Polyphemus the first one to greet them isn't a tourism official. Instead, they're welcomed to the planet by a smooth-talking priest with a pompadour. He explains that normally there are fairly hefty tariffs on Polyphemus, but these can be waived if they're willing to transport a small package to Earth for the leader of the planet's Church. Do they accept?

The PCs have come to the seemingly law-abiding planet of Polyphemus hoping to rob some spaceport warehouses (perhaps because they're crooks, perhaps because something they need for another adventure is kept there and they don't have time to obtain it legitimately). Their first couple of jobs go fairly well; the planet's police force seems ineffective. Then they're visited by a polite priest of the Church of the Galactic Creator, who calmly informs them that they have one day to leave the planet... or else. Do they listen?

The PCs have been dispatched to Polyphemus amidst rumors of massive impropriety by the Church leadership (either they're priests themselves, or they're working for the Church in some capacity). Though the Archimandrite is too busy to greet them personally when they arrive, his representative and adopted son is on hand to answer their questions. Charming and persuasive, he offers to take them on a tour of the planet's famous air and power plants (WoE 81). Do they go?

FATHER SAVONAROLA CALLIXTUS

Charming Conman And Priest

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
13	STR	3	12-	Lift 150 kg; 2½d6 [3]
15	DEX	15	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
14	CON	8	12-	
13	BODY	6	12-	
15	INT	5	12-	PER Roll 12-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
23	PRE	16	14-	PRE Attack: 4½d6
15	COM	3	12-	
5	PD	2		Total: 5 PD (0 rPD)
4	ED	1		Total: 4 ED (0 rED)
4	SPD	15		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
6	REC	0		
28	END	0		
30	STUN	3		Total Characteristic Cost: 77

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers	END
5	<i>Unimpressed:</i> +10 PRE; Only To Protect Against PRE Attacks (-1)	0
15	<i>Lucky Bastard:</i> Luck 3d6	0

Perks

6	Money: Wealthy
3	Fringe Benefit: Priest
4	Fringe Benefit: Mid- to high-level organized crime leader
20	Well-Connected and 17 points' worth of Contacts and Favors from various Polyphemus businessmen and politicians

Skills

5	+1 with Ranged Combat
3	+1 with Concealment, Shadowing, and Sleight Of Hand
3	+1 with Conversation, High Society, and Seduction
3	Acting 14-
3	Bribery 14-
3	Concealment 12-
3	Conversation 14-
3	High Society 14-
3	KS: Church Of The Galactic Creator 12-
3	PS: Conman 14-
3	PS: Priest 14-
3	Seduction 14-
3	Shadowing 12-
3	Sleight Of Hand 12-
3	Streetwise 14-
3	TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles, Grav Vehicles/Hovercraft
4	WF: Common Melee Weapons, Human Small Arms

3	Linguist
1	1) Ackálian (fluent conversation; Terran is Native)
1	2) Fex (fluent conversation)
1	3) Mondabi (fluent conversation)
1	4) Osathri (fluent conversation)
1	5) Rigellian (fluent conversation)
3	Traveler
2	1) AK: Polyphemus 12-
2	2) CK: Derendon 12-
2	3) CK: Sividas 12-
2	4) CK: Vittera 12

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 126

Total Cost: 203

75+ Disadvantages

15	Psychological Limitation: Compulsive Liar (Common, Strong)
15	Psychological Limitation: Kleptomaniac (Common, Strong)
15	Psychological Limitation: Very Protective Of Family (Common, Strong)
15	Psychological Limitation: Vengeful (Common, Strong)
20	Social Limitation: Subject To Orders (Very Frequently, Major)
48	Experience Bonus

Total Disadvantage Points: 203

Background/History: Savonarola never wanted to be a priest. Not that he was given any choice. The bastard offspring of Lanzol Callixtus and a 13-year-old orphan left in his care, he was doomed from birth to a life in the church. Like his sister Lolita, Savonarola spent his childhood in a special orphanage for the Archimandrite's illegitimate (now adopted) children, studying crime and theology in equal measure until he came of age.

As it turned out, Savonarola inherited his father's forceful and charismatic personality without inheriting his personal character. Though extraordinarily charming, the young Callixtus possessed none of the overwrought carnal lusts peculiar to his father and sister, nor their strong desires for power and dominance. Instead, Savonarola felt an irresistible attraction to theft and deception. He enjoyed stealing and lying on a level that could almost be described as sexual. Seeing his son's peculiar disposition, the Archimandrite decided to put him to work as a traveling evangelist and conman. For two years Savonarola wandered the communities along the shores of the Nisiran Sea preaching the virtues of the Galactic Church of the Creator, picking pockets, and running religious-themed confidence schemes. During this period he honed his skills to razor sharpness on his hapless fellow Polyphemans, enriching himself in the process. Filled with newfound confidence, Savonarola rejoined his father and sister in Vittera, and was put to work as a "special representative" of the Church. Now the young priest travels throughout the planet (and if necessary, beyond) in an entirely new capacity: bagman.

EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Mk II-T Laser Pistol	+1	+2	3d6	0	8	24	
Throwing Knives	+0	+0	½d6	+0	5	3	Recoverable Charges, RBS

Armor

Type 2 Force Field Belt (8 PD/8 ED, -1 to Sight Group PER Rolls, 1 Continuing Fuel Charge lasting 1 Hour)

Gear: Pocket computer, deck of cards, Church religious text

Personality/Motivation: Savonarola Callixtus is a compulsive liar with a bad case of kleptomania. He's also devilishly charming and comes packaged in a priest's collar — all in all a fiendish combination. He's hard not to like, until you realize that your pocket computer is missing, the directions you were given are wrong, and you're now in a seedy alley about to get mugged by several large men. All because you met Savonarola Callixtus.

In truth, Father Callixtus is a fairly simple man conditioned from childhood to serve the interests of his father (not the heavenly one, either). He takes his duties as his family's bagman and spokesperson seriously, but other than that is a fairly frivolous villain who lives for the thrill of stealing candy from children and bilking widows out of their life savings. He steals small objects whenever possible, lies for no other reason than that he enjoys the "art" of telling a good falsehood, and skims small amounts of money from the protection racket cash he picks up for his father and sister (this is understood and expected). He's an unrepentant, scheming, minister-without-a-church of the sort that's turned up on many worlds throughout Human history.

Quote: "Oh, no! You wouldn't want to do that! It's really best for everyone if you simply pay your tithe to the church. It avoids all sorts of... unpleasantness."

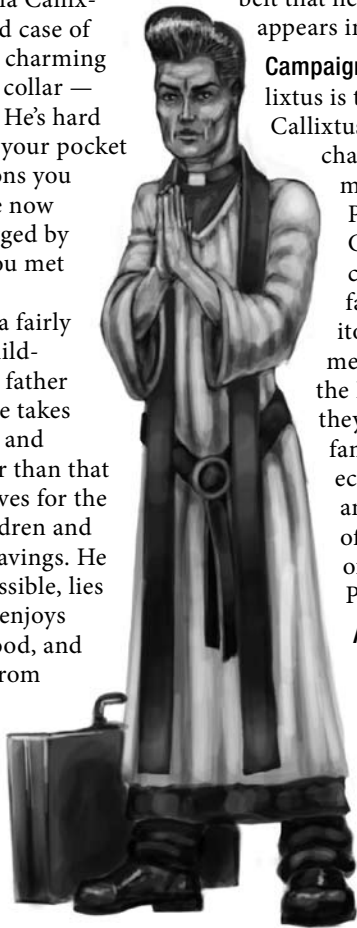
Powers/Tactics: Father Callixtus is a conman who enjoys talking, stealing, and extorting money out of people who are frightened of the unique combination of church and mob he represents. He's extraordinarily lucky, difficult to impress, widely traveled (at least on his home planet), and has learned a variety of languages to help him with his "work." He's also owed favors by an array of Polyphemus's politicians and business leaders.

Savonarola isn't a particularly violent person. Physical brutality is his sister's forte, not his. Still, he's capable of defending himself if attacked. He carries several throwing knives and a laser pistol hidden on his person, and is reasonably proficient at using them. More importantly, however, he wears a Type 2 Force Field

belt that he'll activate the moment conflict appears imminent.

Campaign Use: Father Savonarola Callixtus is the primary bagman for the Callixtus crime family — the person in charge of collecting "tithes" from its many "parishioner" businesses on Polyphemus. He also acts as the Callixtus's spokesperson, delivering careful and polite messages to the family's "clients," would-be competitors, and victims. Thus, he's the first member of the Callixtus syndicate the PCs are likely to encounter, should they encounter a member of that family in a criminal (as opposed to ecclesiastical) capacity. His appearance often foreshadows the coming of his sister: often the last member of the Callixtus crime family the PCs will ever encounter!

Appearance: Father Savonarola Callixtus is a young, handsome man of the Martian variant Human type. He wears his dark hair in an impressive pompadour and owns an array of hand-tailored priestly vestments cut from the finest material available. He usually has with him a suitcase containing credisks worth considerable sums of money.



WHAT THEY SAY: FATHER SAVONAROLA

Archimandrite Lanzol Callixtus, leader of the Polyphemus Church: "Father Callixtus — my adopted son — is an invaluable cog in the smooth machine which is our Church here on Polyphemus. His wit, humor, and charm are known to all."

La Mok D'arpath, Mon'dabi Shopkeeper: "Sure the whole thing's a scam. Callixtus collects your so-called tithe money. Donate enough, and maybe you get invited to some classy party where you might meet some important people. Donate too little, and the front windows of your store get knocked out in the middle of the night. ::shrug:: I don't have an opinion, myself. It's just the way things are."

Krull Gormish, Perseid Merchant Captain: "Savonarola? That little weasel! He scammed me out of a thousand credits a couple years back and stole a statuette my father gave me. Priest or not I'm going to wring his neck next time I see him!"

BROTHER SANKT WENDEL

Callixtus Henchman And Monk

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
12	STR	2	11-	Lift 133 kg; 2d6 [2]
12	DEX	6	11-	OCV: 4/DCV: 4
13	CON	6	12-	
11	BODY	2	11-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
13	PRE	3	12-	PRE Attack: 2½d6
10	COM	0	11-	
4	PD	2		Total: 4 PD (0 rPD)
3	ED	0		Total: 3 ED (0 rED)
3	SPD	8		Phases: 4, 8, 12
5	REC	0		
26	END	0		
24	STUN	0		Total Characteristic Cost: 29

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost Powers **END**

7 *Street Toughness:* HA +2d6; Hand-To-Hand Attack (-½) 1

Perks

- 1 Fringe Benefit: Monk in the Church of the Galactic Creator
- 1 Fringe Benefit: Organized crime group member

Talents

- 6 Combat Luck (3 PD/3 ED)

Skills

- 8 +1 with All Combat
- 3 +1 with Concealment, Gambling, and Stealth
- 3 +1 with Interrogation, Sleight Of Hand, and Streetwise
- 3 Concealment 11-
- 2 Gambling (Card Games) 11-
- 3 Interrogation 12-
- 3 CK: Sivasdas 11-
- 3 KS: Church Of The Galactic Creator 11-
- 3 PS: Monk 12-
- 3 PS: Thug 12-
- 3 Sleight Of Hand 11-
- 3 Stealth 11-
- 3 Streetwise 12-
- 3 TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles, Grav Vehicles/Hovercraft
- 4 WF: Common Melee Weapons, Terran Small Arms

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 71

Total Cost: 100

50+ Disadvantages

- 15 Psychological Limitation: Loyal To Callixtus Family (Common, Strong)
- 15 Social Limitation: Subject To Orders (Frequently, Major)
- 10 Unluck 2d6
- 10 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 100

Background/History: Sankt Wendel is one of Lanzol Callixtus' nephews, the son of one of the Archimandrite's many half-siblings spawned by his conman father. Like Lolita and Savonarola he was raised in the special orphanage school devoted to members of the Callixtus family. Unlike his cousins, Sankt didn't particularly excel in any of his criminal or ecclesiastical subjects (though he didn't fail at them), and found himself consigned to a monastery in Derendon upon graduation. There he was left to his own devices for several years while he awaited a summons from his kingpin uncle.

Yet the young monk did not despair. Though he lacked the craftiness, cunning, and versatility (in short, the smarts) of other members of his family, Sankt possessed a good deal of patience and the willpower to prove his worthiness as a gangster-cleric. Never particularly tactful, he began conducting a series of unsanctioned and brutal muggings in the nearby city of Derendon, hoping to attract the attention of the Callixtus crime machine. He succeeded, and when his cousin Lolita was sent to put an end to his unauthorized criminal activity, he proudly announced that the entire undertaking was a ruse to attract her attention. He then endured his beating stoically.

Even though she broke several of his fingers, Lolita was indeed impressed by her cousin's determination and had him transferred to Sivasdas. Now he works as one of her enforcers, bodyguards, and agents, undertaking such missions as his mistress sees fit.

Personality/Motivation: Sankt is a pretty ordinary guy: he likes alcohol, gambling, and easy women in about that order. His status as a monk doesn't get in the way of his pursuits, either (though he has to be more discreet than most people). For a thug he's a fairly stable and reliable person with good work habits and strong loyalties to his family. His big weaknesses are his greed and his desire to impress others, both of which get him into trouble upon occasion.

EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Mk II-T Laser Pistol	+1	+2	3d6	0	8	24	
Brass Knuckles	+0	—	2d6 N	—	—	5	
Blackjack	+0	—	2d6 N	—	—	5	

Armor

Armored clothes (Armor (2 PD/2 ED), Activation Roll 14-)

Gear: Pocket computer

Quote: “Do whatever she says or I’ll shoot you.”

Powers/Tactics: Sankt has been around the block a few times as one of Lector Lolita’s henchmen. He’s an unsavory, rough, tough, and dangerous character who rarely, if ever, acts alone. He’s been pretty thoroughly trained — more than many professional soldiers, really. He’s also street smart, good with his fists, and rarely goes anywhere without a pistol, blackjack, and a pair of brass knuckles hidden under his brown habit. His one great tactical weakness is his lack of subtlety. Sankt seldom attempts to accomplish any task with nuance. He just picks a direction and goes.

Campaign Use: Brother Sankt Wendel is a typical example of a Callixtus crime family minion. The majority of the “muscle” employed by them is something like the criminal monk, so you can use his character sheet as blueprint for anyone who works for the organization in a similar capacity. The PCs will almost always encounter Sankt as part of a group of armed gangster clergymen (he’s smart enough to know that strength comes from numbers). He’ll be shooting, punching, or simply standing around trying to look menacing, depending on what his superiors tell him to do.

To make Brother Wendel more formidable, increase his STUN to 35 and HA to +3d6. To make him weaker, remove his HA entirely.

Appearance: Brother Sankt Wendel is a tall, solid-looking man of the Martian variant Human type. He’s obviously quite fit and brawny, but his muscles are the type that come from hard work, not bodybuilding. He shaves his head and wears the loose brown robes typical to monks of the Church of the Galactic Creator.



GEIGER CRAY



GEIGER "MIND MASTER" CRAY

Corrupt, High-Ranking Mind Police Officer

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
13	STR	3	12-	Lift 150 kg; 2½d6 [1]
14	DEX	12	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
18	CON	16	13-	
15	BODY	10	12-	
21	INT	12	13-	PER Roll 13-
21	EGO	24	13-	ECV: 7
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
14	COM	2	12-	
5	PD	2		Total: 5 PD (0 rPD)
6	ED	2		Total: 6 ED (0 rED)
4	SPD	16		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
7	REC	0		
40	END	2		
31	STUN	0		Total Characteristic Cost: 111

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost Powers **END**

84	<i>Mental Control:</i> Mind Control 14d6, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); Concentration (½ DCV; -¼), Requires A Power: Psionics Roll (no Active Point penalty to Skill Roll; -0)	0
37	<i>Telepathy:</i> Telepathy 15d6; Concentration (throughout use of Telepathy; ½ DCV; -½), Requires A Psionics Roll (-½)	7
60	<i>Mental Scanning:</i> Mind Scan 14d6, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); Requires A Psionics Roll (-½), Concentration (½ DCV; -¼)	
30	<i>Mind Shield:</i> Mental Defense (34 points total)	0
55	<i>Mental Link:</i> Mind Link, up to any 250 minds at once	0
17	<i>Psi Tracking Sense:</i> Detect Psionics 15- (Mental Group), Discriminatory, Tracking; Requires A Psionics Roll Skill Roll (no Active Point penalty; -0)	0

Perks

9	Computer Link: Mind Police Database
8	Fringe Benefit: Interstellar Psionic Police Powers
1	Fringe Benefit: Psionics License
10	Fringe Benefit: Membership (unquestioned leader of a vast conspiracy)
9	Fringe Benefit: Membership: Assistant Director in the Mind Police
12	Contact: Vashyyl V'hanic 8- (Contact has access to major institutions, Contact has significant Contacts of its own, Contact has useful Skills or resources, Organization Contact)

Skills

6	+2 with Imperial Security Police Weapons
3	Analyze: Psi Powers 13-
3	Bribery 13-
3	Bureaucratics 13-
11	Computer Programming (Computer Networks, Personal Computers, Infiltration) 16-
3	Concealment 13-
3	Conversation 13-
3	Deduction 13-
3	High Society 13-
3	Interrogation 13-
3	KS: Psionic Etiquette 13-
3	KS: The Psionic World 13-
3	Persuasion 13-
13	Power: Psionics 18-
3	PS: Law Enforcement Agent 13-
3	SS: Psionics 13-
3	Stealth 12-
3	Streetwise 13-
2	TF: Human Space Vehicles
2	WF: Small Arms

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 411

Total Cost: 522

75+ Disadvantages

5	Distinctive Features: Uniform (Easily Concealed; Noticed and Recognizable)
10	Hunted: Mind Police 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
15	Hunted: Thought Combine 11- (Mo Pow, Limited Geographic Area, Kill)
20	Psychological Limitation: Bigot (Common, Total)
20	Psychological Limitation: Paranoid (Common, Total)
20	Social Limitation: Subject To Orders (Very Frequently, Major)
357	Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 522

Background/History: Geiger Cray was literally born paranoid... which was fortunate, because he was also born on Hermetica, one of the most ruthless police states in the Terran Empire, a planet where one's social status depends on one's level of psionic ability. An incredibly rare and powerful Psi-Omega telepath, Cray sensed while still a child that he'd best protect his interests through deception. He faked his level of psionic skill, fooling even the sophisticated Office of Behavioral Studies into believing he was a relatively low-powered Psi-Delta. He maintained this deception right into his later teenage years, when his mentor began

EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Mk II-T Laser Pistol	+1	+2	3d6	0	8	24	

Armor

Mind Police Uniform (Armor (2 PD/2 ED), Activation Roll 14-, Real Armor)
Additional armor as appropriate

Gear: Mind Police badge, pocket computer, personal sensor unit

to suspect his true level of ability. Terrified at the thought of having his identity subsumed into the Thought Combine, and knowing he'd spend the rest of his life in service to the state, he killed his mentor and fled the planet, covering his tracks by cleverly deleting all evidence of his existence from the Hermetica planetary datanet (though many on that planet remember him well).

Cray traveled to Earth, where he planned to use his telepathic powers to embark upon a life of crime. Unfortunately his cultural conditioning had given him so much contempt for Controls (the Hermetica term for non-psionic humans) that he failed to appreciate how intelligent and capable they can be. Captured during his first unlawful scheme and incarcerated as a criminal and unlicensed psionic, Gray was given a choice: liquidation, or integration into the Terran Security Service Psi Division. Rather unsurprisingly, he chose the latter.

Cray was careful to disguise himself as a Psi-Zeta through his training: powerful, but not so powerful as to alarm his superiors. After graduation, he worked for the TSS for a few years until its Psi Division became the Mind Police. He spent several years working for its Recruitment Division, sniffing out new psis for the organization. Then his superiors transferred him to the Enforcement Division, where he spent many years uncovering criminals and rebels within the Empire. Finally, he was assigned to the mysterious Special Operations Division. There he truly came into his own, excelling in all the many assignments the Empress sent him on. One of his greatest triumphs involved uncovering an entire branch of the *Vashyyl V'hanic* — the Varanyi Intelligence Service — operating on the military world of Vinarcus. Brave, resourceful, unfailingly loyal, and skilled enough with computers to erase any hint of his past improprieties from the Mind Police database, he rose quickly through the ranks of the organization, becoming Assistant Director in charge of the SOD and the favorite of Doctor Li Pu, the Mind Police Director. In all respects Assistant Director Geiger Cray would seem to a model citizen of the Terran Empire, one of its most powerful servants and a fanatical guardian of its institutions.

But appearances can be deceiving.

Personality/Motivation: Geiger Cray suffers from a permanent case of culture shock. Though he possess a deep animosity toward the society he was born into, the sudden transition from overlord to despised minority left him emotionally scarred. He cannot believe that non-psionic intelligences are his equals, or that they have any more rights than properly-cared for

livestock. He finds the Control-ruled society of the Terran Empire philosophically revolting (though he carefully hides this opinion). Because of this, he sees it as his moral duty to overturn that society and replace it with rule by the obviously superior Gifted (the Hermetican term for psis). He advocates a society based on a slightly more benevolent version of Hermetica to his fellow psionics, using his incredible charisma, imposing telepathic powers, and social position to influence their thinking. He does this cautiously and selectively, since he has no desire to be imprisoned and executed for treason. Many of his agents think they belong to a secretive advocacy group, not a conspiracy to overthrow the government.

Cray's vision of a new society excludes institutions like Hermetica's ruling Thought Combine as too intrusive, but includes the enslavement and indoctrination of non-psionics as a regrettable necessity. He also emphasizes the unity of human psis with non-human ones, such as the Varanyi, who find him intriguing and with whom he maintains a working relationship. In fact, his "uncovering" of the *Vashyyl V'hanic* cell on Vinarcus was a gift from the Varanyi designed to help him get promoted within the ranks of the Mind Police. Cray realizes the Varanyi are probably just using him for their own ends, but he's confident he can either convince them to see things his way or turn the tables on them if necessary.

Cray genuinely believes he can, and will, improve society. He isn't in this for personal power or aggrandizement. He'll commit suicide rather than be unmasked and captured... unless he thinks he can escape and continue to serve his cause from the underground.

Cray is a paranoid, and his paranoia makes him both careful and meticulous in his own behavior. For example, not once in the decade-long history of his conspiracy has he ever verbally or in written form mentioned it! *All* communications relating to his plot against the Empire are telepathic, and even then he tends to be indirect and cautious. To further his cover, he performs all of his Mind Police duties conscientiously and has a well-deserved reputation as a stickler for regulations. Any hint that he's a traitor would be met with disbelief by his coworkers and subordinates (those who are not in on the plot, of course).

Cray lives extremely modestly, doesn't drink or use drugs, and exhibits little interest in money or women. In fact, his nickname around the office is "the Monk."

Quote: [Telepathically] "Brothers and sisters, the Terran Empire is disgusting! Unnatural! The Con-

**GEIGER CRAY
PLOT SEEDS**

The PCs have discovered a bizarre psionic artifact during a successful raid into the forbidden salvage world of Ravanche II (WoE 128-130). Unfortunately for them, system Commander Lien Tsai caught them trying to leave. She's impounded their ship while she figures out what to do with them — and, perhaps more importantly, the artifact. Unfortunately for everyone involved, an agent of Cray's psionic conspiracy has infiltrated her command... and he's chosen to investigate the situation personally.

One of the PCs is a wild talent psi with the previously undocumented ability to teleport short distances. Though she and her friends have tried to keep this a secret, word has reached code name Mindbender, one of Cray's agents and a doctor with the Imperial Psionics Foundation. Mindbender (Dr. Nigel Stavro, described in this chapter) informs Cray, who decides to investigate the PC in his formal capacity... though his real objectives are completely different.

Through a fluke accident a psionic PC has picked up a telepathic communication between a powerful entity known as Mind Master and another known as Stranglehold. Though the information it contains remains somewhat unclear, the communication involves a plot against the Empress masterminded by agents within her intelligence services. The PCs decide to investigate.

trols run everything — while we Gifted are either on the run, or running down our own. The day is coming though when a proper social order will be put in place. The Gifted shall rule, and the Controls shall serve.”

Powers/Tactics: Geiger Cray is an incredibly powerful — albeit narrowly focused — psi gifted with two distinct sets of powers. The first is a suite of telepathic abilities that makes him particularly proficient at locating, mentally probing, and even controlling targets for the Mind Police, often from extreme distances. Cray’s telepathic gifts are planetary in scope, though he’s carefully hidden this from Dr. Li. Using his powerful Mind Scan he can locate a particular mind anywhere on a planet, probe it with his imposing Telepathy for relevant information, and even effortlessly enslave it using his Mind Control. Unshielded non-psis are practically helpless in his clutches. In many cases Cray’s targets simply turn themselves over to his custody within hours of his arriving on the planet.

The Mind Police are unaware of two of Cray’s other abilities, however. The first is his Psi Tracking Sense. This power allows him to hunt down other psis, generally for the purpose of converting them to his cause. (He’s always careful to have a mundane explanation for his ability to “sniff out” a psionic.) Once he’s convinced a particular psi to join his conspiracy or assist him in his capacity as an Imperial official (or simply Mind Controls them into helping him), he establishes a Mind Link with that person which allows instantaneous communication with him whenever he wishes anywhere in the Galaxy. He’s always extremely courteous about this. (He genuinely believes what he preaches; he doesn’t want to exploit fellow psis for personal gain.) He’s currently Mind Linked to over 100 psionic individuals.

Cray’s second secret power is his incredibly powerful Mental Defense, which he always voluntarily lowers to about 10 points (or less) whenever a fellow Mind Police officer needs to establish mental contact with him. Besides protecting him from mental attacks, it allows him to keep his secret abilities and true level of power secret from his colleagues.

Even without his awesome psionic abilities, Cray is a skilled, imposing law enforcement officer. He’s intelligent, strong-willed, and tough. His abilities as a hacker and computer programmer are those of a prodigy (though there’s nothing psionic about them). He can use Skills like Deduction, Persuasion, and Streetwise to conduct investigations,

uncover information, and outwit his enemies. As a high-ranking member of a powerful Imperial agency, he has extensive access to resources of all sorts: ships, armed men, information.

Campaign Use: Cray’s plan for gaining control of the Terran Empire is remarkably simple. During his decade-long climb through the ranks of the Mind Police, he has subverted many known, registered psis who are also trusted members of the Imperial bureaucracy. He has followers and agents within the Mind Police, the Imperial Psionics Foundation, the Imperial Security Police, the military intelligence services, and even the Ministry of Justice. He also has followers within the Psionic League (TE 131).

Whenever possible, Cray inducts the people in charge of investigating treason into his conspiracy. Thus, the very Imperial officers charged with preventing his scheme are actually a part of it!

Cray has already achieved two of his goals. First, he has a large and effective organization in place.

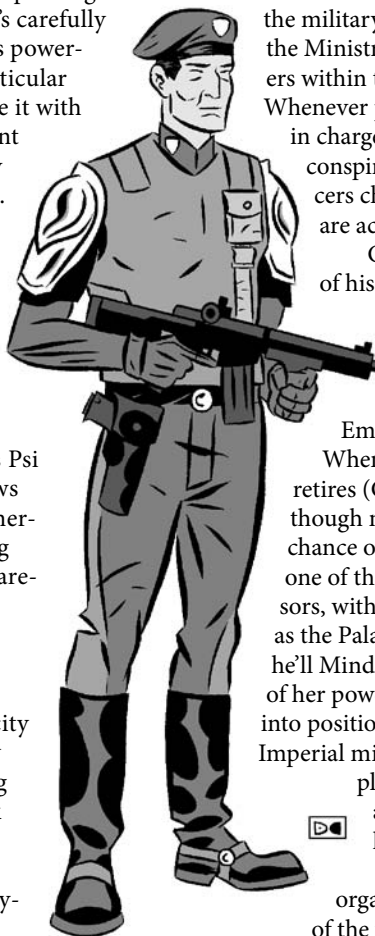
Second, he’s within striking distance of the Directorship of the Mind Police — and thus

Empress Marissa III De Valiere!

When the elderly Doctor Li Pu dies or retires (Cray is prepared to wait for this, though not forever), he stands an excellent chance of taking his place and becoming one of the Empress’s most trusted advisors, with unlimited access to her as well as the Palace at Lyons. When this occurs, he’ll Mind Control the Empress, making use of her power to quietly move his followers into positions of authority within the various Imperial ministries. When that stage of his plan is complete, he’ll kill her and assume the mantle of Emperor for himself.

Cray’s conspiracy isn’t an organization in any normal sense of the word. It has no records and no headquarters. It doesn’t even have a name — that would be too flamboyant as well as potentially damning. All of his supporters are assigned code-names and, should they need it, given Mental Resistance Training during their telepathic indoctrination. With the exception of Dr. Nigel Stavro, none of his followers or agents has any idea who their fellow conspirators are, nor does Cray allow them to work together on any tasks he assigns them. Many of his followers know nothing about him, not even his name; they refer to him by the soubriquet of “Mind Master.”

Paranoid, powerful, and extremely dangerous, Geiger Cray is a nightmarish Scourge for any PC to run afoul of. He leads two potent groups, and it’s difficult to say which is the more hazardous. As the head of the Special Operations Division of the Mind Police, he commands the so-called Omega Agents — half a dozen staggeringly powerful psionics answerable to Cray, Dr. Li



Pu, and the Empress (in that order). He's also one of the most powerful policemen in the empire, able to command vast resources that enable him to harass and pursue any character with near total impunity. As leader of an enigmatic conspiracy to overthrow the Empire and replace it with a psionic police state, Cray commands over a hundred additional psionics strategically placed within the Empire's bureaucracy, many of whom see him as a nearly messianic civil rights leader. These two organizations intertwine in such a Byzantine manner that it will be nearly impossible for the PCs to tell where the government ends and the conspiracy against the government begins.

Cray is such a powerful and influential figure that confronting and defeating him should require an entire campaign, rather than a single adventure. There are several ways the PCs might come into conflict with him or his followers. They may stumble across a powerful psionic artifact that attracts the attention of the Mind Police, and thus the SOD (and the conspiracy). Or they may have accidentally uncovered the truth about his plot, in which case Cray will do everything within his power to silence them. Perhaps the PCs are members of the Mind Police who've come to suspect Cray's loyalties after he approaches one of them for a "frank discussion of our situation within the Empire." Or the PCs might be renegade, unregistered psis who've accidentally stumbled onto evidence linking one of Cray's followers to a shadowy plot to assassinate the Empress.

Appearance: Geiger Cray is a trim, imposing looking white man in his late thirties with jet-black hair, a handsome (if humorless) face, and Slavic features. He most commonly wears the lightly armored black and gold uniform of the Mind Police with his rank insignia on the collar and a black beret, though in combat situations he may choose to wear heavier gear. Cray prefers dark-colored formalwear on those rare occasions when he wears civilian clothing.

WHAT THEY SAY: GEIGER CRAY

Major Allyssa Barth, ISP: "Assistant Director Cray is one of the most dedicated policemen in the Empire and a credit to all law abiding psis. I've had the privilege of working with him on several cases, and can report that his unique talents are of great service to the stability of our government and the protection of the Empire's people."

Kaithon Argosina, Merchant and Explorer: "Sure, I know who Geiger Cray is, and I'll tell you this: getting in trouble with a planetary police force is bad. Getting in trouble with the ISP is worse. Getting in trouble with the Mind Police is the worst. They'll turn your head upside down, let your brain fall out, and then poke around through the wreckage until they find something interesting. There's no profit or fun in that."

FELICITY "STRANGLEHOLD" LANDRY

Traitorous Psi Police Detective

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	18-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 [1]
14	DEX	12	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
15	CON	10	12-	
15	BODY	10	12-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll 12-
14	EGO	8	12-	ECV: 5
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
14	COM	2	12-	
8	PD	5		Total: 14 PD (6 rPD)
5	ED	2		Total: 11 ED (6 rED)
4	SPD	16		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
8	REC	4		
30	END	0		
40	STUN	9		Total Characteristic Cost: 91

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers	END
60	<i>Stranglehold:</i> RKA 1d6, No Normal Defense (defense is Life Support [Self-Contained Breathing] or not needing to breath; +1), Does BODY (+1), Continuous (+1)	6
17	<i>Strength Augmentation:</i> +30 STR; No Figured Characteristics (-½), Nonpersistent (-¼)	3
5	<i>Telepathic Combat Reading:</i> Hand-To-Hand Attack +2d6; Hand-To-Hand Attack (-½), Psionic (-½)	1
20	<i>Low-Level Telepathy:</i> Telepathy 4d6	2
2	<i>Mental Resistance Training:</i> Mental Defense (6 points total); Requires An EGO Roll (-¾)	0

Perks

1	Contact: Hzeel Outfit Informer 8- (Contact has access to major institutions, Contact has been blackmailed by the character, Contact has useful Skills or resources)
1	Contact: Xenovore Fleet Informer 8- (Contact has been blackmailed by the character, Contact has significant Contacts of his own, Contact has useful Skills or resources)
1	Contact: Venwordien IV Informer 8- (Contact has been blackmailed by the character, Contact has significant Contacts of his own)
1	Contact: Imperial Court Informer 8- (Contact has access to major institutions, Contact has been blackmailed by the character, Contact has significant Contacts of his own)
8	Fringe Benefit: Interstellar Police Powers
6	Fringe Benefit: Membership (Lieutenant in Imperial Security Police)
4	Fringe Benefit: Security Clearance
1	Fringe Benefit: Psionics License

Talents

12	Combat Luck (6 PD/6 ED)
15	Combat Sense 12-
5	Eidetic Memory

FELICITY LANDRY PLOT SEEDS

A serial killer has been murdering children on space stations in the Spinward Crescent. The Empress has ordered that the offender be hunted down immediately, and the ISP has obliged by putting their most ruthless detective on the job: Lt. Landry. Due to an unfortunate misunderstanding, one of the PCs has become the prime suspect in this manhunt. Can the heroes catch the real killer... before Landry catches them?

Word has reached the Mind Master of a powerful young Psi-Omega telepath living on Vinarcus. He dispatches Stranglehold to investigate, but when she arrives on Plateau she learns that her quarry has vanished into the green hell of Lache-sis, the planet's least explored (and most dangerous) tableland. Even the infamous Lt. Landry can't handle this one on her own, so she hires the PCs to help her.

The PCs stumble upon evidence of Mind Master's conspiracy while trying (unsuccessfully) to protect a conservative Senator from assassination. Framed for his murder, they must prove their innocence while avoiding capture by the TSS, the Mind Police, and Lt. Felicity Landry, who's been sent to kill them.

Skills

- 11 *Telepathic Combat Reading*: +2 with All Combat; Costs Endurance (-½) 2
- 3 +1 with Imperial Security Police Weapons
- 4 +2 OCV with Shock Baton
- 3 +2 versus Range Modifier with Stranglehold
- 3 Bureaucratics 12-
- 3 Combat Piloting 12-
- 3 Criminology 12-
- 3 Forensic Medicine 12-
- 3 Interrogation 12-
- 3 AK: The Heartworlds 12-
- 2 KS: Criminal Law 11-
- 2 KS: Interstellar Organized Crime 11-
- 2 PS: Law Enforcement Agent 11-
- 3 Stealth 12-
- 3 Streetwise 12-
- 2 TF: Human Space Vehicles
- 6 WF: Beam Weapons, Energy Weapons, Small Arms

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 218

Total Cost: 309

75+ Disadvantages

- 5 Distinctive Features: Imperial Security Police Uniform (Easily Concealed; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
- 10 Hunted: Geiger Cray 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
- 15 Hunted: Hzeel Outfit 11- (As Pow, Harshly Punish)
- 10 Hunted: Imperial Security Police 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Disdain For All Non-Psis (Common, Strong)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Violent (Common, Total)
- 15 Social Limitation: Minority (Very Frequently, Minor)
- 20 Social Limitation: Subject To Orders (Very Frequently, Major)
- 124 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 309

Background/History: Intelligent, determined, and frighteningly dangerous, Felicity Landry is a registered Psi-Zeta who works for the Imperial Security Police as an interstellar detective specializing in organized crime and piracy. A hard-working and diligent student, she graduated with high marks from both the Police Academy and the Imperial Psionics Foundation. Since the ISP is always starved for quality personnel, Landry was immediately promoted to the level of lieutenant and

put out into the field as an investigative officer. She's served in that capacity for the last decade, during which time she's helped to thwart numerous schemes by such infamous criminal organizations as the Hzeel Outfit and the Xenovore Fleet. Although she mostly works in the Heartworlds region, she's gone on missions as far from Earth as Venwordien IV and the Voršan Expanse.

Landry always works alone; she lives aboard her ISP Kazak spacecraft. During her distinguished career she's turned down numerous promotions and offers to transfer to the TSS or Mind Police. She explains this by claiming she prefers hands-on crime fighting, but the real reason is that Geiger Cray has other plans for her. Landry is one of Cray's earliest (and most zealous) converts, and she shares his vision of a future controlled by the Gifted. In essence Landry works two jobs simultaneously: capturing or killing enemies of the Terran Empire; and killing anyone who gets in the way of Geiger Cray's ambition to control that Empire. She does both with equal zeal and dedication.

Personality/Motivation: By most definitions of the term Felicity Landry is mildly psychotic. She's simultaneously an ardent defender of, and traitor to, the Terran Empire without noticing any incongruity in the situation. She passionately believes in protecting people from criminals, while at the same time believing peoples' best interests would be served through total enslavement by psionics like herself. Any attempt to convince her that these two goals are somehow incompatible is met with complete incomprehension on her part. But crazy or not, Landry is very careful about revealing her true beliefs to anyone. She'll never admit her subversive sympathies to a non-psi, and only cautiously confesses them to a fellow Gifted.

In her daily life she's a tough, no-nonsense police officer with an extremely "goals-oriented" approach to her assignments. To be more specific, she isn't a stickler for rules and regulations. In fact, if she weren't working for an agency being deliberately starved of resources by the Empress, she'd probably have been discharged years ago for her unorthodox methods and disregard for procedure. Things being what they are for the ISP, though, her superiors are simply happy to have an agent that likes to work alone, never asks for much, and gets results.

Felicity Landry has a taste for violence, particularly when it involves the use of either her psionic powers or hand-to-hand combat. She dislikes blasters and firearms (though she's competent with them), sometimes even forgetting

EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
MIP-162 Ion Pistol	+1	+1	3d6/(10d6)	0	9	30	AF2
Shock Baton	+0	+0	(5d6)	—	8	—	

Armor

ISP Uniform (Armor (2 PD/2 ED), Activation Roll 14-, Real Armor)
Type 2 Force Field Belt (8 PD/8 ED, -1 to Sight Group PER Rolls, 1 Continuing Fuel Charge lasting 1 Hour)

Gear: ISP Kazak personal spacecraft

to carry hers into the field. She enjoys exercising her powers on others, and only needs the slightest provocation to explode into a whirlwind of murder and mayhem.

Quote: “You can take that weapon and choke on it.”

Powers/Tactics: Landry has a battery of combat enhancing psionic powers that, when combined with some fairly standard issue ISP equipment, make her a frightening and formidable opponent on the battlefield. The most fearsome of her abilities is the one that gives her the moniker Stranglehold: she can strangle an opponent to death at a distance using only the power of her mind. The only defenses against this deadly attack are wearing life support apparatus or simply needing not to breathe. Fortunately for her victims, this attack takes a lot of END; she can't keep it up indefinitely. Unfortunately for them, she's got enough stamina to put an end to most ordinary people.

Her second most favorite attack is to beat an opponent into unconsciousness (or the morgue) using a police issue Shock Baton in conjunction with her Strength Augmentation and Telepathic Combat Reading powers. With STR 45 she can increase the Baton's damage to an HA 10d6, which means it seldom takes her more than a single blow to defeat an opponent.

Besides her psionic abilities (which also include some weak telepathy), Landry is a well-trained Imperial police officer capable of conducting thorough and detailed investigations. If necessary she can call upon whole squads of heavily armed officers to help her (though she seldom does). She has a variety of contacts amongst gangsters and pirates, with the Hzeel Outfit and the Xenovore Fleet being of particular interest to her. An infamous and feared presence at many of the less reputable spaceports throughout the Heartworlds, she's been the subject of a number of assassination attempts over the years.

Campaign Use: Lieutenant Felicity Landry is one of Geiger Cray's enforcers. Conveniently enough, she's also one of the Empire's enforcers, and he makes his own interests dovetail with hers whenever possible. The PCs could encounter her working in either, or possibly both, capacities. As an ISP officer, she'll take an interest in the PCs if they act suspiciously, if they're suspected of involvement in crime (particularly piracy, racketeering, murder, or slaving; she doesn't much care about smuggling), or if they're actively wanted. Of course, she'll pursue and investigate anyone her superiors tell her to, so anyone who has angered the Empress, a branch of the Imperial government, or the ISP may find himself pursued by the feared and dangerous Lt. Landry.

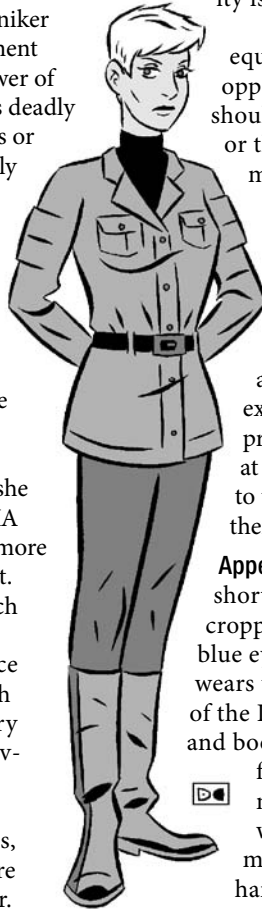
If acting as Cray's enforcer, Lt. Landry will pretend to be operating in her capacity as an ISP detective. In the unlikely event that she's caught

lying about her assignment, she'll simply tell the truth: she's working on special assignment for Geiger Cray, Assistant Director of the Mind Police SOD. Anyone short of the Empress generally cringes and falls silent at that point. Cray only uses Stranglehold for two purposes: to kill someone who's come close to uncovering his conspiracy; or to capture someone who might be useful as a member of that conspiracy. With her combat abilities and dogged nature, Felicity is ideal for pursuing either goal.

Thanks to her psionic powers and equipment, Lt. Landry is too tough an opponent for most individual PCs. You should arrange encounters with her so two or three PCs, at least, face her at once. To make her weaker, remove her Strength Augmentation and Combat Luck. If you need to make her more powerful, equip her with Light Battle Armor (TE 144-145) and increase her SPD to 5.

Landry will hold a grudge against any PCs who defeat her, making her an excellent Hunter. Because she's busy she probably won't be very active about it (8-at most), but she'll certainly keep her ear to the ground for an opportunity to make their lives difficult.

Appearance: Lt. Felicity Landry is a short, unexceptional woman with closely-cropped blonde hair. She has a slight build, blue eyes, and expressionless features. She wears the dark grey and dark red uniform of the ISP, with its distinctive tunic-jacket and boots with dark red piping. She generally fails to put on the standard ISP equipment belt, however, since she rarely wears her blaster and her photographic memory frees her from the need for a hand computer or data pad.



WHAT THEY SAY: FELICITY LANDRY

Segaro Krez'shul, Mon'dabi Explorer: “Felicity Landry? That [untranslatable]! She accused me of murder back on an Osiran space station, then chased me all the way across the Heartworlds to Soolasha. She was in the process of strangling me to death with her crazy psi powers when my boss brought her the real killer. By all the silly Avatars of the Velarians, if I never see her again it will be too soon!”

Dargen, Intergalactic Thug: “Landry is the worst kind of cop with the worst kind of boss — you know, the kind that doesn't care if she kills you or not. She's *always* sent out on missions where they don't care if the target comes back alive, so long as things are “taken care of.” She's got a mob enforcer's attitude and, with those psionic powers of hers, the firepower of an entire mob!”

NIGEL STAVRO
PLOT SEEDS

Eureka! Dr. Stavro has finally manufactured a nano-drug that turns Controls into Gifted, effectively transforming Psi-Alphas into Psi-Betas or better. Unfortunately, it also drives 75% of its recipients permanently insane: an acceptable loss in Stavro's opinion. He began his trials using the homeless population of London-Berlin, but now it's time to try for the whole megacity! Can the PCs stop him before he gets to the water supply?

The PCs are assigned to protect the illustrious and well-respected scientist Dr. Nigel Stavro during a diplomatic mission to the feared Varanyi Empire. Under his guidance negotiations with the psionic alien kingdom have been a smashing success. Things are going well. Maybe a little *too* well....

After running afoul of Geiger Cray several of the PCs have been captured by the Mind Police and remanded to the care of Dr. Stavro for "rehabilitation." The remaining PCs must break into the Imperial Psionics Foundation in Calipolis and rescue them before it's too late.

DOCTOR NIGEL "MINDBENDER" STAVRO

Traitorous Psi-Omega Doctor

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
8	STR	-2	11-	Lift 75 kg; 1½d6 [1]
10	DEX	0	11-	OCV: 3/DCV: 3
10	CON	0	11-	
10	BODY	0	11-	
18	INT	8	13-	PER Roll 13-
17	EGO	14	12-	ECV: 6
10	PRE	0	11-	PRE Attack: 2d6
10	COM	0	11-	
2	PD	0		Total: 2 PD (0 rPD)
2	ED	0		Total: 2 ED (0 rED)
2	SPD	0		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
4	REC	0		
40	END	10		
19	STUN	0		Total Characteristic Cost: 30

Movement:	Running:	6"/12"
	Leaping:	1"/2"

Cost	Powers	END
10	<i>Speed Of Thought:</i> +2 SPD; Only To Use Mental Powers (-1)	0
43	<i>Mental Paralysis:</i> Entangle 3d6, 3 DEF, Based On EGO Combat Value (Mental Defense applies; +1), Takes No Damage From Physical Attacks (+¼), Works Against EGO, Not STR (+¼); Mental Defense Adds to EGO (-½), Cannot Form Barriers (-¼)	7
90	<i>Psionic Surgery:</i> Major Transform 4d6 (erase, change, add to, or otherwise affect a person's memories; heals back through applications of this or a similar power), Based On EGO Combat Value (Mental Defense applies; +1), Works Against EGO, Not BODY (+¼); Limited Target (mental "objects" in the minds of sentient beings; -½)	13
40	<i>Telepathy:</i> Telepathy 8d6	4
20	<i>Defensive EGO:</i> +15 EGO; Only To Resist Mental Attacks (-½)	0
11	<i>Psychic Diagnosis:</i> Detect Disease 13- (Mental Group), Discriminatory, Analyze, Sense; Costs Endurance (-½)	2

Perks

15	Contact: The Galactic Medical Community 11- (Contact has access to major institutions, Contact has significant Contacts of its own, Contact has useful Skills or resources, Organization Contact)
2	Fringe Benefit: Membership (Imperial Psionics Foundation)
1	Fringe Benefit: Membership (Psionic League)
1	Fringe Benefit: Psionics License
2	Fringe Benefit: Security Clearance

Skills

15	+3 with Mental Combat
3	Bureaucratics 11-
3	Computer Programming (Personal Computers, Infiltration) 13-
3	KS: Psionic Etiquette 13-
3	Paramedics 13-
3	PS: Doctor 13-
3	Systems Operation (Medical Devices) 13-
3	Scientist
2	1) SS: Biology 13-
2	2) SS: Chemistry 13-
2	3) SS: Medicine 13-
2	4) SS: Neurology 13-
2	5) SS: Psionics 13-
2	6) SS: Psychology 13-
2	7) SS: Surgery 13-
2	8) SS: Virology 13-
2	9) SS: Xenobiology 13-

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 289
Total Cost: 319

75+ Disadvantages

10	Hunted: Geiger Cray 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
10	Hunted: Imperial Psionics Foundation 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
25	Psychological Limitation: Extremely Curious (Very Common, Total)
15	Psychological Limitation: Arrogant (Very Common, Moderate)
15	Social Limitation: Minority (Very Frequently, Minor)
169	Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 319

Background/History: Nigel Stavro was born on the fundamentalist planet of New Canaan to parents unusually religious even for that world. An exceptionally bright but physically delicate child, he was despised by his father but loved by his mother, who dreamed of sending him to medical school offworld. Young Stavro shared her enthusiasm and spent many hours at his settlement's data center attempting to absorb enough education to be able to apply to a prestigious university such as New Library or the Emerald Institute.

His dreams were shattered when his mother was killed in a freak accident when he was 12. Physically ill-equipped for farming and temperamentally unsuited to New Canaan's rigid and demanding lifestyle, he was given over by his father to the Empire's orphanage system. Bounced from world to world over the next few years, Stavro finally ended up at the massive orphanage colony of Hope's Promise on Sigma Caeruleus III. It was there, surrounded by the abandoned children of a hundred species, that his incredible psionic powers began to manifest. He discovered he could diagnose disease by simply looking at a person; in the case of the mentally diseased, he'd correct their sicknesses by altering their memories. He could read minds and even cause people's nervous systems to "lock up," freezing them in place.

EQUIPMENT**Weapon**

None

Armor

Type 3 Force Field Belt (12 PD/12 ED, -1 to Sight Group PER Rolls, 1 Continuing Fuel Charge lasting 1 Hour)

Gear: MA-7 Field Medkit; field medical scanner; pocket computer

The revelation of Stavro's mental powers caused quite a stir at the orphanage. Its operator, the renowned philanthropist Ararat Abdulkadar, decided it would be best for his ward to receive proper psionic and medical training at the planetary capital of d'Estaing. He was sent to boarding school there and registered as a psionic with the Empire. Tutored by a kindly but slightly clueless Psi-Delta, his powers grew even as his medical and scientific skills expanded. Stavro turned out to be a prodigy, and it was not too long before the small university at d'Estaing no longer had anything to teach him. He received a full scholarship to New Library, where he likewise excelled at his studies as his psionic powers grew. Though registered as a Psi-Epsilon, it was increasingly apparent to the promising young doctor and scientist that he was more likely a Psi-Theta, or possibly even one of the fabled Psi-Omegas. He became concerned that he'd be forced into the Imperial military despite his physical deficiencies.

His worries ceased one warm summer morning when an officer of the Mind Police named Geiger Cray paid a visit to his dormitory. Cray explained that there was no reason for Stavro to go into the military when his services could be better put to use studying the science of psionics at the Imperial Psionics Foundation. His unique medical abilities would only add to his capacity to help humanity better understand psionic phenomena. In fact, Cray was willing to write a letter to the Director of the Foundation suggesting that he hire Stavro immediately after his graduation, if only the powerful young psi would be willing to listen to some of his views on the future of Gifted people like themselves.

Stavro was more than willing to listen.

Personality/Motivation: Abandoned by his biological father and isolated from others by his exceptional psionic powers, superior intellect, and inferior physique, Nigel Stavro was fertile ground for Geiger Cray's supremacist ideas. Having never formed any strong attachments to "Controls" since the death of his mother, he was easily befriended by Cray and convinced of his own inherent superiority. These qualities of arrogance and alienation, combined with a love of learning and a strong desire to excel, make him an effective agent of Cray's secretive psi conspiracy. He's also deeply grateful for the Mind Master's help in erasing any reference to the true scope of his abilities from Imperial records, and suppressing anyone who even hints at uncovering them.

Doctor Stavro genuinely enjoys his work at the Imperial Psionics Foundation, both the legal and illicit. He likes helping newly awakened Gifted realize their full potential, and is certain that his

laboratory research will one day help the human race as a whole experience a massive psionic "awakening" that will put it on a level with the Varanyi. Stavro hopes his medical experiments will one day help Psi-Alphas transition into Psi-Betas or Gammas, making the social engineering aspect of Cray's scheme unnecessary. (The Mind Master cautiously supports this idea, though he doubts anything will come of it.) He also enjoys pulling apart the minds of the Terran Empire's enemies (many of whom are really Cray's enemies) and reshaping them into something more useful. He honestly believes he's doing society a service with his powers, and has never especially liked being saddled with the codename "Mindbender."

Quote: "My, my, my you've had some interesting adventures. Well, with what we have planned for you, you won't need that terrible fear of heights anymore, hmmm? You won't need those nasty feelings of revulsion toward the Sécra, either. I'll just get rid of those for you...."

Powers/Tactics: Doctor Nigel Stavro is the head physician and research scientist at the Imperial Psionics Foundation, the branch of the government assigned to analyzing, registering, assisting, and when necessary "re-educating" new psis. The Foundation is primarily a benevolent organization, with strong ties to the Terran Empire's registered psi community. An active supporter of the Psionic League, it focuses the majority of its efforts on helping newly awakened psis gain control of their powers, learn Psionic Etiquette, and function as law-abiding members of society. As one of the principal members of the Foundation, Dr. Stavro plays a pivotal role in teaching the psionic minority of Terran Society how to be good citizens. He also helps with public relations for the psionic community by consulting with hospitals throughout the Empire, diagnosing difficult cases using his unique Psychic Diagnosis ability, and helping cure psychotics using his Psionic Surgery power.

Upon occasion unregistered psis, criminals with mental powers, and foreign spies are brought to Stavro by the Mind Police, TSS, ISP, or the Terran Intelligence Command. He uses his moderately powerful but skillfully-applied telepathy to read their thoughts and then reprograms their minds with his potent Psionic Surgery power. Should they get out of hand or prove difficult to control, he restrains them using Mental Paralysis. Due to his efforts, a variety of criminal psis have been "reprogrammed" into useful members of society, and more than a few spies have been turned into double agents. In those cases where a psi is too powerful for Stavro's telepathy, Geiger Cray, who is always eager to do his part for the Empire, assists Stavro with his incredibly powerful telepathic abilities.

On rare occasions Dr. Stavro goes on missions with one of the various intelligence, police, or military branches of the government. Because of his physical frailness he does this only reluctantly, wearing a potent Type 3 Force Field Belt for protection and surrounding himself with a squad of heavily armed men at all times. However, though incapable of physical combat, Stavro is far from helpless. His Speed of Thought ability allows him to act quickly with his psi powers, and his Mental Paralysis can immobilize nearly any non-psionic or unshielded opponent.

Besides his impressive psionic abilities, Stavro has a genius-level intellect. He has the equivalent of a Master's degree in eight separate sciences, and is a skilled medical doctor, surgeon, and paramedic. He's well regarded as a physician and research scientist throughout the intergalactic medical community, whose brotherhood knows no political boundaries (and curiosity knows no limits), and will be well received by them wherever he goes.

Campaign Use: Dr. Nigel Stavro serves the Mind Master in three important ways. The first is by reporting the discovery of all new psis in the Terran Empire to him. This is completely legitimate, as all Assistant Directors of the Mind Police are entitled to this information. The second (and possibly most important) is by not reporting the discovery of certain select psionics to anyone else, which gives the Mind Master the opportunity to recruit young Gifted, either into his conspiracy, the SOD, or both. (Doctor Li Fu is actually aware of this duplicity but ignores it, incorrectly believing that Cray is merely trying to get the best new recruits for his division.) The third is by tampering with the minds of Cray's enemies, turning foes into friends, and thus occasionally avoiding the unpleasant necessity of killing them. Because of Cray and Stavro's positions within the Imperial hierarchy, this can usually be accompanied in broad daylight with full government sanction.

There are several ways the PCs might meet Dr. Stavro. If they work for the government, they could encounter him in his official role as the head research scientist of the Imperial Psionics Foundation. For example, if the PCs are members of the Terran Exploration Service following up on a rumor of a previously unknown telepathic alien race, they might have Stavro

WHAT THEY SAY: NIGEL STAVRO

Juan Mohammad Jr., Research Scientist: "Nigel Stavro? Oh, yeah, I know him: great scientist, great guy! I used to have this fear of reptiles that kept me from working with Mon'dabi colleagues. One session with him using that Psychic Surgery of his and I was completely cured! Heck, I just came back from a trade mission to Mon'da!"

Psikipedia, Official Entry: "Stavro, Dr. Nigel. Psi-Epsilon Telepath. Head physician/research scientist at the Imperial Psionics Foundation. B. 2603 on N. Canaan. Educated at New Library. One of the most respected members of the psi community, Dr. Stavro uses his psionic abilities to cure the sick, especially the psychologically ill. A tireless advocate for psis and a member of the Psionic League, he has personally helped hundreds of young psis come to grips with their powers."

Max Waxman, Reformed Criminal: "I used to use my Psi-Delta powers to do little cons — you know, grift bartenders out of drinks, make waitresses think I'd paid them, things like that. After I got caught, Dr. Stavro not only cured me of my criminal tendencies, he helped me clear up my record. Now I work for the Mind Police!"

assigned to their ship (along with a squad of Imperial Marines). If a PC has problems with his psionic powers, he might consult with the Imperial Psionics Foundation, and thus meet Dr. Stavro. Finally, an unlucky PC or group of PCs who've run afoul of the Mind Master's plans could find themselves remanded to Stavro for "re-educating."

To make Nigel Stavro less powerful, remove his Mental Paralysis and Speed of Thought abilities (this effectively makes him a noncombatant). To make him more powerful, increase his Telepathy to 10d6 and his Psychic Surgery to Major Transform 5d6.

Appearance: Doctor Nigel Stavro is a short, delicate looking man with a shaved head and a trim, black beard. He has an attractive aquiline nose and Semitic features. He dresses like the research scientist and doctor he's in a lab coat, white turtleneck, and a medical utility belt that holds his personal computer, medical scanner, and field kit. In potentially dangerous situations he also wears a Type 3 Force Field Belt for protection.



ANGELINA “INTEGRITY” JOHNSON

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 [1]
10	DEX	0	11-	OCV: 3/DCV: 3
10	CON	0	11-	
10	BODY	0	11-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll 12-
11	EGO	2	11-	ECV: 4
13	PRE	3	12-	PRE Attack: 2½d6
10	COM	0	11-	
2	PD	0		Total: 2 PD (0 rPD)
2	ED	0		Total: 2 ED (0 rED)
2	SPD	0		Phases: 6, 12
4	REC	0		
20	END	0		
20	STUN	0		Total Characteristic Cost: 8

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers	END
15	<i>Psychokinesis</i> : Telekinesis (10 STR)	1
15	<i>Telepathy</i> : Telepathy 3d6	1
2	<i>Mental Resistance Training</i> : Mental Defense (6 points total); Requires An EGO Roll (-1)	0
5	<i>Brave</i> : +10 PRE; Only To Defend Against Presence Attacks (-1)	

Perks

- 1 Fringe Benefit: Member (the Psionic League)
- 1 Fringe Benefit: Psionics License

Skills

- 5 Bureaucratics 13-
- 3 CK: BosWash 12-
- 5 Computer Programming (Personal Computers, Infiltration) 13-
- 3 KS: Imperial Law 12-
- 3 PS: Justice Ministry Clerk 12-

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 58

Total Cost: 66

25+ Disadvantages

- 10 Hunted: Geiger Cray 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
- 10 Hunted: Imperial Psionics Foundation 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
- 15 Social Limitation: Minority (Very Frequently, Minor)
- 6 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 66

Background/History: Angelina Johnson was born in the BosWash area to a middle-class family with three children. An intelligent but otherwise normal child, she graduated from high school with excellent grades and was accepted to the University of Virginia with a scholarship. Her latent psionic abilities manifested in her freshman year, causing her to have a nervous breakdown that climaxed in an unfortunate (but relatively minor) telekinetic incident in the university library. Expelled and arrested for being an unlicensed psionic, she was briefly incarcerated before the Psionic League and the Foundation intervened on her behalf.

The Foundation paid for her to visit its headquarters in Calipolis, where the famous Dr. Nigel Stavro tested her abilities. She turned out to be an unremarkable Psi-Beta with limited telepathic and telekinetic powers — far too weak for recruitment into the Mind Police. Her scholarship gone and her plans in ruins, Stavro offered to introduce her to a mysterious benefactor who, if she agreed, would contact her telepathically and help her plan for her future. With nowhere else to turn Johnson readily agreed.

Surprisingly, Angelina found the invisible mental presence known as the Mind Master to be remarkably friendly and supportive. He taught her Mental Resistance Training, which both filtered out mental background noise and gave her some defense against other psis. Under his guidance she obtained a scholarship to the University of California, where she got a bachelor's degree in Imperial Law. He then helped her get a good job within the Justice Ministry, which allowed her to live close to her family back in BosWash. All the Mind Master asked in return for his help was that she pass along certain tidbits of information about the Ministry's cases dealing with psionics before they became public knowledge. Angry at her treatment by the establishment and grateful for her unseen benefactor's help, Johnson readily agreed.

Personality/Motivation: Angelina Johnson is a normal person cursed with the social stigma of having low-powered psionic abilities. She's never gotten over her arrest and the loss of her first scholarship, which she (rightly) sees as institutionalized discrimination. A descendant of civil rights activists from the former United States of America, she perceives the Mind Master as a righteous radical willing to go a bit further than a

ANGELINA JOHNSON PLOT SEEDS

Johnson begins to suspect that the Mind Master has sinister intentions toward the Empire. She's grateful to him, but not grateful enough to become part of a treasonous conspiracy. Unsure of how far his tendrils may reach, she turns to the PCs for help in unraveling the mystery.

Johnson becomes sick and tired of having such weak psionic powers. When the Mind Master brushes aside her requests to undergo experimental treatments to improve them (since he doesn't want to endanger so valuable an asset), she hires the PCs to help her get what she wants. Naturally, Cray wants to prevent them from succeeding, but without revealing his involvement....

Johnson meets a PC in a social situation and they become friends (or even romantically involved). Sensing a sympathetic soul, she can't resist revealing to him what she's doing for Cray. How will the PCs react?

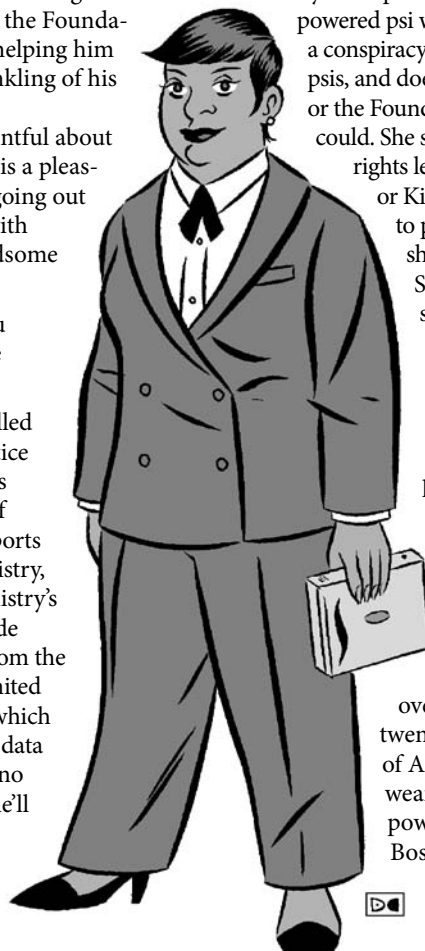
mainstream group like the Psionic League or an establishment organization like the Foundation, and thus has no problem helping him out when she can. She has no inkling of his sinister, long-term goals.

Other than being a bit resentful about her treatment as a psi, Johnson is a pleasant young woman who enjoys going out to restaurants, spending time with her family, and dating tall, handsome men.

Quote: “I’m sorry to inform you those files aren’t available to the general public.”

Powers/Tactics: Johnson is a skilled legal clerk who works in the Justice Ministry in BosWash. Her duties include the filing and retrieval of legal data, the preparation of reports for various members of the Ministry, and maintaining the Justice Ministry’s database. She also handles outside requests for legal information from the Ministry. A Psi-Beta, she has limited telepathy and weak telekinesis, which she occasionally uses to retrieve data cubes from top shelves. She has no combat abilities; if threatened she’ll summon the BosWash police.

Campaign Use: Angelina Johnson, codenamed Integrity, is typical of an agent of Geiger



Cray’s conspiracy in that she’s a well-placed, low-powered psi who has no idea that there even is a conspiracy. She just wants to help her fellow psis, and doesn’t think that the Psionic League or the Foundation are doing everything they could. She sees the Mind Master as a civil rights leader like Martin Luther King, Jr. or Kim Ji-won (Cray used his powers to plant this idea in her mind). All she does is pass along information. She has no real knowledge of his schemes.

Player characters are most likely to encounter Johnson if they have some dealings with the Justice Ministry, or if their investigation of Cray’s psi conspiracy leads them to her. She’s a typical bureaucrat — friendly, but no more helpful than required — unless she has some reason to behave otherwise.

Appearance: Angelina

Johnson is a good-natured, overweight woman in her mid-twenties. She has short hair and is of African American decent. She wears the moderately expensive power suits typical of a professional BosWash woman and has an engaging smile.

LEOPOLD D'ESTAING



LEOPOLD D'ESTAING

Machiavellian, Xenophobic Senator

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 [2]
10	DEX	0	11-	OCV: 3/DCV: 3
10	CON	0	11-	
10	BODY	0	11-	
18	INT	8	13-	PER Roll 13-
12	EGO	4	11-	ECV: 4
18	PRE	2	13-	PRE Attack: 3½d6
12	COM	1	11-	
4	PD	2		Total: 4 PD (0 rPD)
4	ED	2		Total: 4 ED (0 rED)
3	SPD	10		Phases: 4, 8, 12
4	REC	0		
20	END	0		
20	STUN	0		Total Characteristic Cost: 29

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost Perks

- 8 Computer Link: Senatorial Database
- 5 Fringe Benefit: Commodore (KIS Reserve)
- 5 Fringe Benefit: Viscount
- 7 Fringe Benefit: Security Clearance
- 8 Fringe Benefit: Senator
- 11 Money: Filthy Rich
- 3 Well-Connected
- 6 1) Contact: Empress Marissa III 11-
(Contact has access to major institutions, Contact has extremely useful Skills or resources, Contact has significant Contacts of her own)
- 5 2) Contact: Emperor Charles VIII 11-
(Contact has access to major institutions, Contact has significant Contacts of his own, Contact has very useful Skills or resources)
- 5 3) Contact: Senator-Prince Karl 11-
(Contact has access to major institutions, Contact has significant Contacts of his own, Contact has very useful Skills or resources)
- 9 4) Various Political Favors
- 390 Vehicles: two IPS *Peregrine* frigates (TE 177)

Talents

- 5 Eidetic Memory

Skills

- 24 +3 with All Non-Combat Skills
- 3 Bribery 13-
- 3 Bureaucratics 13-
- 3 Computer Programming (Personal Computers, Infiltration) 13-
- 3 Conversation 13-
- 3 Concealment 13-
- 3 Deduction 13-
- 5 High Society 14-
- 3 Oratory 13-
- 3 PS: Planetary Navy Officer 13-
- 3 PS: Politician 13-
- 3 Persuasion 13-
- 3 Tactics 13-
- 2 TF: Human Space Vehicles
- 2 WF: Human Advanced Small Arms
- 3 Scholar
- 2 1) KS: Imperial Law 13-
- 2 2) KS: Politics 13-
- 2 3) KS: The Imperial Navy 13-
- 2 4) KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 13-
- 3 Traveler
- 2 1) AK: Earth 13-
- 2 2) AK: The Kinzareth Imperium 13-
- 2 3) AK: The Milky Way Galaxy 13-

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 553

Total Cost: 582

75+ Disadvantages

- 0 Dependence: must use sleeping pills to sleep or suffer Incompetence (-1 to Skill Rolls) (Very Common, 1 Day)
- 5 Hunted: News Media 8- (As Pow, NCI, Watching)
- 5 Hunted: TSS 8- (As Pow, NCI, Watching)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Desires Semi-Autonomy For Kinzareth (Uncommon, Total)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Hatred Of Non-Humans (Common, Strong)
- 5 Rivalry: Professional, with Senator Tyrl Garralan of Fexao
- 10 Social Limitation: Famous (Frequently, Minor)
- 20 Social Limitation: Subject To Orders (Very Frequently, Major)
- 432 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 582

SENATOR
D'ESTAING
PLOT SEEDS

Senator Garralan, one of the Empress's favorites amongst the Senate, has vanished while traveling between Earth and Faxao. The Empress dispatches the PCs to discover what happened to his ship. Naturally, Senator D'Estaing will do whatever he can (discretely, of course!) to prevent them from learning that his agents blew his hated rival out of the sky.

The PCs return from a successful archaeological mission to discover that one of them (a non-Human) is wanted for a murder he couldn't possibly have committed. Do they turn him over to the TSS and then investigate the crime in the hopes of discovering the real killer? Or do they flee with the ISP, D'Estaing's agents, and heaven knows who else in hot pursuit?

The popular Cristobalite politician and libertine Big Honcho (WoE 103-104) has been murdered... by a killer who used an estimated two tons of high explosive! Who'd commit such a terrible crime? And why? The TSS dispatches the PCs to investigate.

EQUIPMENT							
Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
MIP-140 Ion Pistol	+0	+0	2½d6/(9d6)	0	9	20	
Armor							
Type 2 Force Field Belt (8 PD/8 ED, -1 to Sight Group PER Rolls, 1 Continuing Fuel Charge lasting 1 Hour)							
Gear: Imperial Senate identification, pocket computer							

Background/History: Senator-Viscount Leopold D'Estaing was born on the planet Kinzareth in 2583. The scion of a minor but noble family that sacrificed over a dozen members during the ultimately futile defense of the system during the Xenovore Wars in 2349, he was raised to be a strict patriot of not only the Empire, but of the Kinzareth Imperium as well. He attended the KIS (Kinzareth Imperium Service) naval academy, graduating near the top of his class. After serving for two years aboard the KIS *New Luxembourg* as a commander, D'Estaing assumed command of the frigate KIS *Savoy*. He served as that ship's captain with distinction considering the limited scope of a planetary defense force's duties — he tracked down smugglers, rescued the crews of disabled vessels, and even captured a pirate ship upon one occasion. His level-headed advice to both the KIS Commodore and the Emperor helped to keep Kinzareth carefully neutral during the Imperial Civil War.

After turning down a position within the Imperial Navy, he retired from the KIS in 2603 to go to work for the Imperium as a trade representative. Over the next decade he represented the Imperium's interests not only on Earth but to the Mondabi Federation, the Perseid Empire, and the Conjoined Civilizations Republic. Though he performed his duties flawlessly, this appointment turned out to be a mistake. The more time he spent among non-Humans, the more he developed a profound, almost instinctual hatred of them. Their frightening insect faces and slimy, scaled bodies haunted him in his nightmares, causing him to turn to sleeping pills (an addiction that plagues him to this day). An unsuccessful attack upon one of his trade missions by pirates affiliated with the Xenovore Fleet (see Chapter One) further enflamed his xenophobia. Fortunately for his career, D'Estaing hid his hatred of aliens and became a highly effective negotiator.

After a decade of traveling around the Galaxy serving his government D'Estaing returned to Kinzareth to serve as a personal advisor to Emperor Charles VII, a capable bureaucrat and leader whose fifty-year rule saw the restoration of Kinzareth's reputation as a credible Senatorial World in the Terran Empire. As a gesture of gratitude from his government for decades of public service, Charles raised D'Estaing's KIS rank to commodore and granted him the non-hereditary noble title of viscount, along with vast estates on the colony world of Iberia.

When Charles VII died in 2621, the new Emperor chose to send his father's most trusted advisor to Earth as Kinzareth's Senator. Mostly this was because D'Estaing is by far the most skilled

Kinzareth politician in decades, but the new Emperor was also motivated by a desire to "clear out" his father's old guard so he could begin his own rule. The newly-minted Senator didn't mind. His years of public service had gifted him with unique insights into the future of Kinzareth, the Empire, and humanity as a whole.

And filthy aliens don't figure into it.

Personality/Motivation: Leopold D'Estaing is a xenophobe dedicated to removing all alien influence — and, if it's ever possible, all aliens — from the Terran Empire. By "alien" he specifically means all genetic non-Humans including machine intelligences and non-Terran intelligent species (but not Human variant types). Even almost-human species like the Jhinu and Rigellians are abhorrent to him. His prejudice stems from two distinct sources. The first is that he's by birth an upper-class Kinzareth of the traditionalist variety. While that particular group of Humans has many admirable traits, tolerance doesn't tend to be one of them. The second is an inherent, possibly sociopathic dread of aliens. A competent psychologist could probably cure this fear, but since D'Estaing's never told anyone about it (or his addiction to sleeping pills), nobody has ever suggested it.

D'Estaing has a rather romanticized view of his planet's past. Specifically, he'd like to restore the Kinzareth Imperium to its former, pre-Xenovore War "glory." His traditionalism runs so deep that D'Estaing has goals that far exceed those of his ambitious Emperor, Charles VIII. Specifically, Leopold d'Estaing seeks greater autonomy for Kinzareth and wishes for it to regain control over all five of its previous colony worlds. Several of its former colonies, such as Sigma Caeruleus III and Illyria, are now semi-autonomous and self-

WHAT THEY SAY:
SENATOR D'ESTAING

Charles VIII, Emperor of Kinzareth: "Old Leopold's a bit of an odd bird, but he's served the Imperium and the Empire faithfully throughout his lifetime. I can't think of anyone I'd rather have looking out for our interests in the Senate."

Mohammed Tovar, Captain of the Senatorial Guards: "Senator D'Estaing is one of the Senators I don't worry about so much. He's got his own bodyguard, his own security personnel, and goes everywhere armed to boot. Plus the Empress doesn't seem to particularly hate him, which always makes our job a bit easier."

Tyrl Garralan, Senator from Fexao: "D'Estaing is an arrogant martinet who spends far too much time going to Prince Karl's parties and not enough time crafting legislation to benefit the Empire."

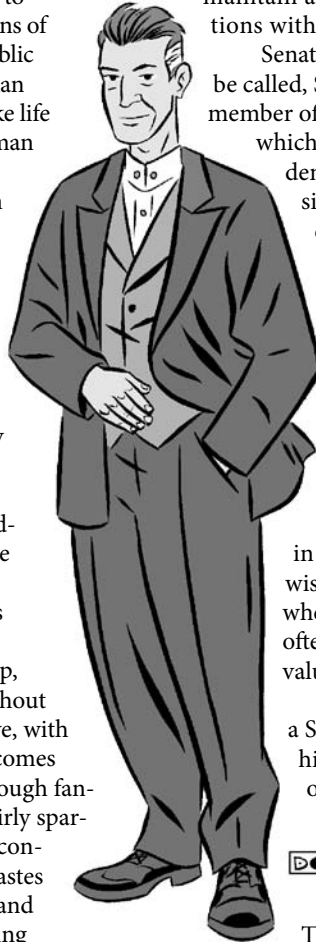
governing, with the mother planet only providing representation in the Senate. He would like to see that status ended and those worlds returned to Kinzareth's strict control. This doesn't mean D'Estaing is a traitor — far from it. He's loyal to the Empire, but wants the Kinzareth Imperium returned to the prominent, almost independent status it enjoyed during the Antispinward Treaty Organization period.

In his capacity as an imperial Senator, D'Estaing doggedly pursues his twin goals. He sits on the knowledgeable (but basically powerless) Imperial Space Navy oversight committee, and uses that position as best he can to weed out non-Humans from positions of power within the Navy. His great public rival within the Senate is Tyrl Garralan of Fexao, but he does his best to make life covertly difficult for all the non-Human Senators. He's quite skillful about hiding his prejudices — so skillful in fact that Senator Garralan has yet to figure out why the Senator from Kinzareth has such a chip on his shoulder. (D'Estaing hates him not only because he's an alien, but also because he has the Empress's ear.) At the same time he uses his status as a member of the aristocratic party (see below) to work toward greater member autonomy for the Empire's Senatorial worlds, though he's considerably more careful to stay within the law when pursuing that goal.

In person Leopold D'Estaing is a charming if arrogant man whose available reserve of small talk, gossip, and interesting stories is almost without equal. He's also extremely persuasive, with the sort of effortless charisma that comes easily to sociopathic politicians. Though fantastically wealthy, he maintains a fairly spartan lifestyle by the standards of his contemporaries (D'Estaing's personal tastes run to the minimalist in any case), and has a well-earned reputation for being generous to his friends and servants.

Quote: ::sniff:: “Is there an alien in here? Yes, what kind? I can't quite figure out from the stench what variety of circus animal it is.”

Powers/Tactics: The members of the Terran Senate are some of the shrewdest politicians in the Galaxy. Just getting elected or appointed requires a lifetime of maneuvering and preparation, and once in power a Senator must carefully leverage the small authority of his position, building temporary alliances and long-term coalitions to accomplish his personal goals. Senators have several unique perquisites, including access to the Empress, the right to use the Senate's database (which connects to most Imperial databases), and the ability to travel freely within the Empire. Additionally, they can poke their noses into just about anything that interests them.



Senator D'Estaing has several interesting privileges. He can speak in the Senate chamber on any subject at any length (though he seldom does). Only the Senate itself can order the arrest of a Senator (though the TSS has its own ideas on that score), and no Imperial authority can prevent him from traveling to Earth to attend the Senate or from entering the Senate chamber in Brussels. He also has the right to meet in person with the Empress on no more than 24 hours' notice — and in practice he can usually get in to see her right away. (Marissa doesn't particularly care for D'Estaing, but she likes to maintain at least the appearance of cordial relations with the Senate.)

Senator D'Estaing — or, as he prefers to be called, Senator-Viscount D'Estaing — is a member of the aristocratic party in the Senate, which is mostly known for opposing things: democratic government, Imperial Expansion, rights for non-Humans, the growth of multiplanetary corporations. His affiliation with this faction not only reflects his personal beliefs, but the traditional position of Kinzareth's Senators in the past. He gets along well with the faction's leader, Senator-Prince Karl Windsor-Hapsburg of Europa Nova, and makes a point of attending his parties (which are hotbeds of Imperial gossip). The rich young couriers and nobles who travel in Karl's social circle see D'Estaing as a wise elder and often seek out his advice when dealing with “delicate” matters. This often provides D'Estaing with information valuable to his long-term goals.

When not serving in his position as a Senator, D'Estaing ruthlessly pursues his anti-alien goals through the means of a covert network of agents and ships.

An experienced trade representative and former naval man, he claims to dabble in commerce — but it's just a cover for his real activities.

The Senator owns the *Bystrolyotov* and *Markus Wolf*, IPS *Peregrine*-class military frigates disguised to look like *Natchez*-class freighters. They provide him with a limited but effective military reach across the Empire. Both are staffed with agents personally loyal to Senator D'Estaing, all military men who formerly served in the KIS or are from old Kinzareth families. While unaware of the full extent or nature of their master's plans, these men and women dutifully enact his strategies in the full knowledge that what they do is for the greater good of their homeworld and the Empire. These duties have included smuggling, piracy, murder, kidnapping, and torture, among other crimes. At this point the TSS is unaware of D'Estaing's activities.

Leopold D'Estaing doesn't personally get involved in combat. He has his imposing bodyguard Krogar (see below), the Senatorial Guards (TE 55), and his agents for that. Should he find

himself in a dangerous situation activates a hidden Type 2 Force Field Belt, then draws his concealed MIP-140 Ion Pistol.

Campaign Use: Senator D’Estaing is a potentially deadly threat to non-Human PCs and their friends. At his least malevolent D’Estaing can ruin careers, destroy reputations, and generally make a nuisance of himself. Even aliens who work for the Empire or are somehow associated with the Imperial Family are not safe from his machinations. He particularly targets non-Humans who are celebrities, respected academics, popular politicians, or otherwise held in high esteem by the population of the Empire. His primary goal is to discredit them; if that doesn’t work, the xenophobic Senator has no problem instructing his minions to use more violent means to eliminate troublesome non-Humans. Several of his alien colleagues have perished in space under mysterious circumstances in attacks blamed upon the Xenovore Fleet.

D’Estaing sits in the center of a web of intrigue, waiting for his opponents to get near enough to the center for him to pounce. Like Geiger Cray he works both from within and without the Imperial system to accomplish his goals. Heroes unlucky enough to attract his unwanted attentions will first find themselves inconvenienced in bothersome ways: their back accounts suddenly vanish, their Identification Cards abruptly stop working, their names come up as suspects in a crime on the other side of the Empire, and the like. Then they’ll find themselves wanted for crimes they didn’t commit, or somehow cleverly framed as murderers or traitors. If all that doesn’t destroy their reputations or force them to flee from Terran space, D’Estaing will bring lethal force will to bear in the form of his agents and ships... though he’ll be as discrete about it as possible.

It’s unlikely the PCs will come into contact with the Senator until the climax of the story arc or campaign. Instead they’ll find themselves attacked and pursued by his agents, the Imperial Navy, the Senatorial Guards, possibly even bounty hunters. They’ll have to work their way through layer after insulating layer of laws, hirelings, and followers to get to him. Because he’s a powerful, respected Senator going after D’Estaing is difficult at best. Any attempt to kill him turns them into wanted men for the rest of their lives, and he’s far

THE KINZARETH IMPERIUM

The Kinzareth Imperium was a neo-socialist police state that ruled over five colony worlds located on the outskirts of Human occupied space before the Xenovore Wars. Founded by a cabal of wealthy Western European administrative officials fleeing the political aftermath of the Second Holocaust, the Imperium was a bureaucratic autocracy that placed an extreme emphasis on conformity, ethnic purity, and centralized authoritarian control. It was also considered one of the most oppressive regimes to enjoy a seat in the United Earth government and, later, the Imperial Senate. The Imperium’s greed, cruelty, and expansionist tendencies were often cited by the federalist political faction of United Earth as an example of why strong interplanetary government was necessary in the twenty-third century. Nevertheless, Kinzareth remained loyal to the United Earth government during the Spinward Secession of 2329 because of the greater threat of Xenovore invasion. After the war it reformed considerably, becoming a more-or-less benevolent constitutional monarchy that granted considerable rights to all of its citizens.

The Kinzareth Imperium Service (KIS) is an excellent example of the sort of planetary defense force maintained by the major planets of the Empire to combat crimes such as piracy and smuggling, perform search-and-rescue missions, or move ground forces between planets within their own territory. The KIS’s ground forces include 20,000 federal police officers and a 5,000 man rapid response force (in twenty-first century terms, a SWAT team). Its interplanetary police force fields four *Kantora*-class frigates, eight *Natchez*-class freighters with improved armaments, and several smaller support ships. The KIS is a well-trained, highly disciplined force with a tradition that predates the founding of the Empire, and many of its officers go on to have distinguished careers in the Imperial Navy.

too clever (and influential) a politician to be easily outmaneuvered in the Imperial Court.

Appearance: Senator-Viscount Leopold D’Estaing is a handsome, aristocratic-looking man in his early fifties. Tall, thin, and of mixed French and Belgian descent, he wears whatever fashionable and moderately expensive clothing is appropriate. He always has a pistol, force field belt, and a powerful hand computer concealed somewhere on his person.

KROGAR

Faithful "Heavy" Bodyguard

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
27	STR	24	14-	Lift 1,067 kg; 5d6 [5]
14	DEX	12	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
22	CON	28	13-	
20	BODY	20	13-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
8	COM	-1	11-	
10	PD	7		Total: 16 PD (6 rPD)
10	ED	8		Total: 16 ED (6 rED)
4	SPD	16		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
10	REC	2		
44	END	0		
45	STUN	0		Total Characteristic Cost: 126

Movement: Running: 8"/16"
Leaping: 5"/10"

Cost Powers **END**Martial Arts: *Krav Maga*

	Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
4	Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
4	Choke Hold	-2	+0	Grab One Limb; 3d6 NND
4	Disarm	-1	+1	Disarm; 47 STR to Disarm
4	Dodge	—	+5	Dodge, Affects All Attacks, Abort
3	Grab	-1	-1	Grab Two Limbs, 47 STR for holding on
5	Knee Strike	-2	+1	11d6 Strike
4	Punch	+0	+2	9d6 Strike
3	Throw	+0	+1	7d6 +v/5, Target Falls
8	+2 Extra DCs (already added in)			
1	Use Art with Fist Loads			
10	<i>Bodyguard's Speed:</i> +2 SPD; Only To Put Himself Between Client And Danger (-1)			
20	<i>Tough Guy:</i> Physical and Energy Damage Reduction, 25%			
1	<i>Used To High G:</i> Armor (2 PD/0 ED); Only To Project Against G Force Damage (-1)			
4	<i>Combat Running:</i> Running +2" (8" total)			
4	<i>Observant:</i> +2 PER with Sight Group			

Talents

12	Combat Luck (6 PD/6 ED)
1	Environmental Movement: High-G Training
4	Environmental Movement: Zero-G Training (no penalties in zero gravity)

Skills

8	+1 with All Combat
9	+3 with Krav Maga
9	+3 with Concealment, High Society, and Paramedics
3	Breakfall 12-
3	Climbing 12-
3	Combat Driving 12-
3	Concealment 11-
3	High Society 13-
2	AK: Earth 11-
2	AK: Kinzareth 11-
1	AK: The Terran Empire 8-
3	KS: Krav Maga 12-
2	KS: Noble Houses 11-
3	Paramedics 11-
3	Tactics 11-
4	TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles, Human Space Vehicles
6	WF: Common Melee Weapons, Terran Small Arms, Advanced Terran Small Arms

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 163**Total Cost: 289****75+ Disadvantages**

10	Distinctive Features: Style (Not Concealable, Noticed And Recognizable, Detectable By Large Group)
20	Enraged: if Senator D'Estaing is physically harmed (Uncommon), go 11-, recover 8-
10	Hunted: TSS 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
5	Physical Limitation: Large (Infrequently, Slightly Impairing)
25	Psychological Limitation: Utterly Loyal To Senator D'Estaing (Very Common, Total)
20	Social Limitation: Subject To Orders (Very Frequently, Major)
124	Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 289

Background/History: Krogar was born on the chaotic and politically unstable world of Rusalka. A Heavy variant Human of exceptional strength and size, he earned a backbreaking living as an independent miner until he was swept up in a violent civil war. The conflict ruined his business, destroyed his community, and cost the lives of his wife and children. Although indifferent to the politics involved he took up arms out of vengeance and proved to be a capable soldier. When the fighting ended he was rewarded with a substantial sum of money by the victors. But Krogar was disillusioned and, with nothing left to tie him to his old life, he caught the first ship offworld.

Krogar went in search of a new home — one that lacked the killing and political instability of Rusalka. After wandering the Empire for several

**KROGAR
PLOT SEEDS**

After being subjected to the tortures of the damned by D'Estaing's machinations, the PCs have finally uncovered the Kinzareth Senator's hidden agenda. They're determined to stop him through a targeted assassination. Unfortunately, to have a reasonable chance of success they need to lure his bodyguard Krogar away from his side....

The PCs are hired to protect various Senators from various different assassins. After an unsuccessful attempt on Senator D'Estaing's life, they team up with Krogar to chase his assailant through the mean streets of Rio-Buenos.

Someone has murdered Senator D'Estaing. It wasn't the PCs but, unfortunately for them, Krogar believes they did it. Now they must avoid the huge bodyguard, Kinzareth agents, and the Senatorial Guards while they attempt to uncover the truth.

EQUIPMENT							
Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
MI-66 Ion Rifle	+2	+2	3d6/(12d6)	+)/—	11	50	AF5, 2H
Mark II-T Laser Pistol	+1	+2	3d6	0	8	24	Concealed
Sonic Stunner	+0	+0	8d6 NND	—	8	10	Concealed
Brass Knuckles	+0	—	2d6 N	—	—	5	
Armor							
Armored clothing (DEF 2) in normal circumstances							
Light Battle Armor (DEF 12) when expecting combat (see TE 144)							
Gear: Pocket computer, multitool							

years, he arrived on Kinzareth: an orderly world with a temperate climate and a stable, stratified culture. Though he was an outsider, Krogar felt strangely at home in the technocratic, class-conscious society. He admired the stability and sense of purpose that lies at the core of the Kinzareth collective ideal, and quickly determined that he wished to be a part of that civilization. He went to work in the capital city of Amato as a bouncer at a nightclub, where his size, strength, and toughness served him well. Within a few years he'd moved from bouncing to security work for high-level bureaucrats, and soon became one the best regarded bodyguards in the business.

By the time Krogar reached the age of thirty he'd attained the apex of his profession: a position as chief of security at the palace of the well-respected Emperor Charles VII. When Charles died several years later, the new Emperor assigned him to be the personal bodyguard of Senator D'Estaing as part of his "house-cleaning" of his father's servants and advisors. Although his new job was something of a demotion, Krogar didn't take it personally, and in many ways he's come to enjoy it. As long as he remains part of the comfortably orderly society he's come to love, he has no complaints.

Personality/Motivation: Krogar is Senator D'Estaing's utterly loyal bodyguard, chauffeur, and servant. He lives in a small room adjoining his master's bedroom, drives him to his various functions, and accompanies him to all of his public appearances. In fact, the only times Krogar's willing to let the Senator stray more than a few meters from him is when he's speaking to the Empress, addressing the Senate, or sleeping (and even then Krogar remains nearby).

Krogar has only a limited understanding of his boss's secret goals and would be mildly surprised if he learned the full extent of D'Estaing's beliefs and plans. He's a fairly open-minded individual with no particular biases against non-

Humans. Learning the truth wouldn't affect his behavior in any way, since he's completely devoted to D'Estaing and would gladly give his life to protect the Senator's. A refugee from a chaotic and war-torn world, he's a strong believer in the orderly government that the Senator, the Imperium, and the Empire publicly stand for. He follows his orders to the best of his ability with minimal regard for his own safety.

Like his boss, Krogar is something of a "luxury minimalist." He enjoys expensive and fashionable clothing, high-end call girls, and travel, but is otherwise disinterested in wealth (all of his needs are taken care of by D'Estaing's considerable fortune). He's simultaneously simple and sophisticated. Though narrowly focused on his duties as a bodyguard, he's surprisingly urbane, with a vast knowledge of the upper-class culture of the Terran Empire. (He considers this part of his job.)

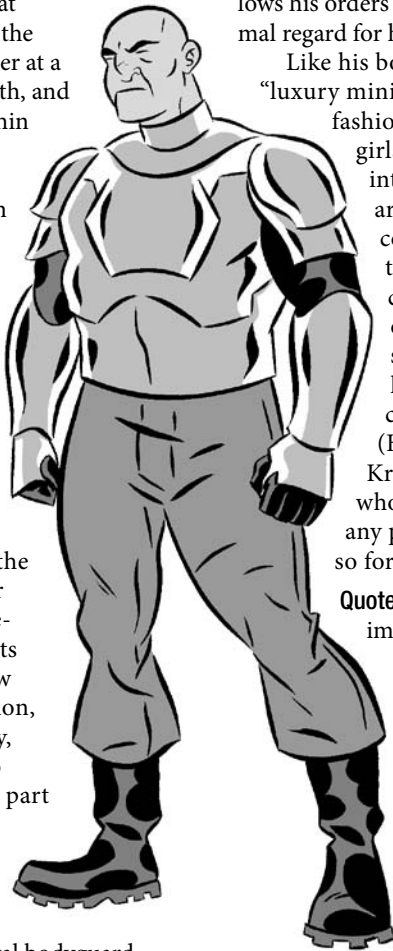
Krogar can be relied upon to know who's who among the VIPs at nearly any party, suggest the best wines, and so forth.

Quote: "Step away from the Senator immediately."

Powers/Tactics: Krogar is an awesome combatant: sturdy, fast, almost superhumanly strong, and nearly always armed. He's extremely tough and wears either protective clothing or Light Battle Armor, depending on the situation. In combat his first priority is always to put himself between any threat and the Senator. After

that he either uses his martial arts skills or, if the assailant is out of reach, a concealed laser pistol to subdue his opponent.

Krogar doesn't always strike or shoot to kill. In many cases capturing and subsequently interrogating an assassin is nearly as important as stopping him. He's a master of Krav Maga, a Human martial art designed for deadly combat effectiveness, and is more than capable of defeating even a cyber-enhanced opponent hand-to-hand. He's also observant and fast with a good grasp of tactics that allows him to spot potential problem situations before they arise.



Campaign Use: Characters are most likely to come into contact with Krogar when they interact with Senator D'Estaing. He's always at the Senator's side, vigilantly watching for potential dangers while D'Estaing goes about his business. Krogar is the Senator's first (and best) line of defense and, considering that sooner or later someone is going to figure out what D'Estaing's up to, D'Estaing is unlikely to send him out on a mission or otherwise separate from him.

As long as D'Estaing lives, it's unlikely Krogar will Hunt a PC unless specifically ordered to do so. Should someone kill the xenophobic politician, Krogar will dedicate his life to hunting that person down and killing him, and will undoubtedly enlist the help of the Senatorial Guard, D'Estaing's agents, and the Kinzareth Imperium's government in doing so.

To make Krogar more powerful, increase his Physical & Energy Damage Reduction to 50%. To make him less powerful, remove his Bodyguard's Speed and his Combat Luck.

Appearance: Krogar is an extremely large, muscular, and thick-set man of indeterminate ethnicity. He has broad, unintelligent-looking features and a flat nose that's obviously been broken more than once. He's extremely dapper and formal, and wears only the finest hand-tailored suits that money can buy unless he's expecting combat or going into the wild, in which case he wears Light Battle Armor. His head is neatly shaved.

WHAT THEY SAY: KROGAR

Prince Karl Windsor-Hapsburg, Imperial Senator:

"Krogar? Who? Oh, you mean Leopold's gargantuan bodyguard! Marvelous fellow. His taste in wine is superb, and the women love him. I enjoy his company almost as much as I enjoy old Leopold's."

Official Report filed by Corporal Jakaya Kikwete, TSS:

"The Kinzareth citizen known as Krogar seems to be exactly what he appears: an annoying Senator's faithful bodyguard. He's phenomenally strong even for a Heavy and is a capable martial artist. If any agent finds himself in conflict with Krogar, I recommend shooting to kill, not getting involved in a fistfight."

Laurent Guillaume, London-Berlin Waiter: "I swear to GOD that I had no idea he was a Senator! I didn't even know I'd bumped into him! All I know is that one moment I was bringing a delicious *fluer de sal* to a customer, and the next moment some huge man was beating my head against a table. Then he broke my wrist and now I can't work. So, frankly, I don't care what the guy's name is. I just don't want to see him again."

D'ESTAING AGENT

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 [3]
16	DEX	18	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
15	CON	10	12-	
10	BODY	0	11-	
14	INT	4	12-	PER Roll 12-
11	EGO	2	11-	ECV: 4
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
10	COM	0	11-	
6	PD	3		Total: 6 PD (0 rPD)
4	ED	1		Total: 4 ED (0 rED)
4	SPD	14		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
6	REC	0		
30	END	0		
30	STUN	4		Total Characteristic Cost: 66

Movement: Running: 7"/14"
Leaping: 3"/6"

Cost Powers END

Martial Arts: <i>Generic Combat Training</i>				
	Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
4	Boxing Cross	+0	+2	5d6 Strike
4	Judo Disarm	-1	+1	Disarm; 25 STR to Disarm
4	Karate "Chop"	-2	+0	HKA 1d6 +1
4	Kung Fu Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
2	Use Art with Blades, Clubs			
5	<i>Unimpressed:</i>	+10 PRE;	Only To Protect	
	Against PRE Attacks (-1)			0
2	<i>Combat Running:</i>	Running +1"	(7" total)	1
2	<i>Observant:</i>	+1 PER with Sight Group		0

Skills

8	+1 with All Combat
3	Acting 12-
3	Bribery 12-
3	Bugging 12-
3	Computer Programming (choose two) 12-
3	Concealment 12-
3	Cryptography 12-
3	Disguise 12-
3	Interrogation 12-
2	Navigation (Land, Space) 8-
3	Streetwise 12-
6	Systems Operation (choose three categories) 12-
2	TF: Human Space Vehicles
6	WF: Common Melee Weapons, Terran Small Arms, Advanced Terran Small Arms

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 78

Total Cost: 144

75+ Disadvantages

5	Distinctive Features: Uniform (Easily Concealed; Noticed and Recognizable; Detectable By Commonly-Used Senses)
20	Psychological Limitation: Utterly Loyal To Senator D'Estaing (Common, Total)
20	Social Limitation: Subject To Orders (Very Frequently, Major)
24	Experience Points, or additional Disadvantages specific to individual agent

Total Disadvantage Points: 144

EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
MIP-140 Ion Pistol	+0	+0	2½d6/(9d6)	0	9	20	
Shock Baton	+0	+0	(5d6)	—	8	—	
Combat Knife	+0	+0	1d6	1d6-1	—	8	Can Be Thrown

Armor

Armored Uniform (Armor (4 PD/4 ED), Activation Roll 14-)

Gear: Pocket computer

Background/History: Senator D’Estaing employs over fifty agents to help him in his schemes. These are mainly young, idealistic people who’ve either served in the KIS or are from Kinzareth noble families. Every one of them believes the Senator’s schemes are for the good of their planet and the Terran Empire as a whole, no matter how murderous or immoral they might seem to be. None of them has a clear idea of the underlying motivation behind his plotting.

D’Estaing’s agents maintain a rigid military discipline amongst themselves, with a ranking system similar to that of the Imperial Space Navy (but ending in Commodore). When not on a mission they split their time between Earth, Kinzareth, and crewing one of the Senator’s two “merchant” vessels.

Personality/Motivation: D’Estaing’s agents are terribly earnest and polite — even when they’re torturing a suspected Mon’dabi “spy” with acid or flushing a crying Rigellian musician out of an airlock. When in port or planetside, they carry themselves with a level of restraint that would turn any naval officer green with envy. They always operate with admirable level of élan and good humor, even when bombarding a Toractan mining colony from orbit. But they’re not without a certain amount of self-interest. All of them know that their time spent serving the Senator will help to ensure them an upper-level position in the planetary bureaucracy back on Kinzareth or get them a decent position as an officer in the Imperial Navy.



Quote: “For Imperium and Empire! For Empire and Imperium!”

Powers/Tactics: D’Estaing’s agents are the cream of their particular crop: healthy, smart, and highly capable. They’re trained to have a wide variety of skills useful to their multipart roles as sailors, spies, and — when the need arises — assassins or kidnappers. Every one of them is a competent spacer capable of serving either as an officer or a crewman on a frigate. They’ve been trained in basic but versatile martial arts skills and small arms. Their standard gear includes a knife, baton, and pistol that can be concealed within their armored uniforms.

Campaign Use: Characters who run afoul of Senator D’Estaing’s anti-alien plans, become involved in protecting one of his non-Human targets, or investigate the murder or disappearance of one of his victims are likely to encounter his Agents. They’re his primary (though by no means the only) tool in his war on “alien subversion”; they do whatever their master orders no matter how seemingly brutal or inhumane.

Appearance: D’Estaing agents are young, healthy Humans with short hair and friendly expressions. They dress in neat, pseudo-military uniforms comprised of knee-high black boots, grey slacks, and a long-sleeved grey shirt with a high open collar. A colored sash worn around the waist indicates rank. Their uniforms are woven from a high-tech, lightweight artificial fiber that provides significant protection to the wearer.

KING NARCH



KING NARCH

Scheming Xenovore Pirate Admiral

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 [3]
13	DEX	9	12-	OCV: 4/DCV: 4
15	CON	10	12-	
14	BODY	8	12-	
15	INT	5	12-	PER Roll 12-
13	EGO	6	12-	ECV: 4
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
10	COM	0	11-	
5	PD	2		Total: 14 PD (9 rPD)
3	ED	0		Total: 10 ED (7 rED)
4	SPD	17		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
6	REC	0		
30	END	0		
40	STUN	10		Total Characteristic Cost: 77
Movement:		Running:	6"/12"	
		Leaping:	3"/6"	
Cost	Powers			END
10	<i>Xenovore Claws:</i> HKA ½d6 (1d6+1 with STR)			1
15	<i>Xenovore Sting:</i> HKA 1d6, Armor Piercing (+½); No STR Bonus (-½)			2
6	<i>Xenovore Skin:</i> Armor (3 PD/1 ED)			0
20	<i>Tough:</i> Physical Damage Reduction, 50%			0
2	<i>Longer Life Span:</i> Life Support (Longevity: ages at one fourth normal rate)			0
1	<i>Xenovore Digestion:</i> Life Support (Diminished Eating: can digest any type of protein)			0
5	<i>Tail:</i> Extra Limb (1), Inherent (+¼); Limited Manipulation (-¼)			0
Perks				
6	Contact: Carlita Drega 12- (Contact has significant Contacts of her own, Contact has useful Skills or resources, Good relationship with Contact)			
8	Fringe Benefit: Long-Lived Xenovore Genotype			
5	Fringe Benefit: Membership: Admiral of the Xenovore Fleet			
6	Money: Wealthy			
var	Vehicles: ships of the Xenovore Fleet (see text)			
Talents				
4	Environmental Movement: Zero-G Training (no penalties in zero gravity)			
12	Combat Luck (6 PD/6 ED)			

Skills

3	+1 with Xenovore Claws and Sting
10	+2 with Ranged Combat
3	Bribery 12-
3	Combat Piloting 12-
3	Computer Programming (Personal Computers, Infiltration) 12-
3	Concealment 12-
3	Forgery 12-
5	High Society 13-
3	Interrogation 13-
8	KS: Xenovore History 17-
3	Language: Mondabi (completely fluent; Common Xenovorish is Native)
3	Language: Terran (completely fluent)
3	Navigation (Hyperspace, Space) 12-
5	Oratory 13-
5	PS: Pirate 14-
3	Persuasion 12-
4	SS: Planetary Science 13-
3	Security Systems 12-
3	Streetwise 12-
4	Systems Operation (Communications Systems, Rail Gun, Starship Laser) 12-
7	Tactics 14-
3	Trading 12-
2	TF: Xenovore Space Vehicles
6	WF: Human Small Arms, Xenovore Small Arms, Human Advanced Small Arms
3	Traveler
7	1) AK: Former Xenovore Space 17-
2	2) AK: Tetsuo 12-
1	3) AK: The Milky Way Galaxy 11-

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 211

Total Cost: 288

75+ Disadvantages

15	Hunted: ISP 8- (As Pow, NCI, Harshly Punish)
25	Hunted: Imperial Navy 11- (Mo Pow, NCI, Harshly Punish)
15	Psychological Limitation: Xenovore Fleet Code of Honor (Common, Strong)
20	Reputation: feared pirate admiral, 14- (Extreme)
5	Rivalry: Professional, with all other pirate captains
133	Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 288

KING NARCH PLOT SEEDS

Both the Terran Empire and Thorgon Hegemony have lost contact with their squadrons stationed on the graveyard planet of Ravanche (WoE 128). The Empire sends the PCs to investigate, but when they arrive they find that the entire system is firmly controlled by the Xenovore Fleet under King Narch. But what could he possibly want with a dead world orbiting a poisoned star?

The Terran Empire has had enough of King Narch's ship-seizing ways. A squad of determined Imperial Navy ships commanded by the PCs tracks him to the Tetsuo system (WoE 92). But when they arrive in the benighted system they can find no trace of the pirate's ships, and the planetary authorities on Tenchi claim the pirate fleet hasn't been there in some time. It's obvious they're lying, but why? And, more importantly, where are the ships?

A ship carrying a DNPC has vanished somewhere near Rand IV, and the PCs go there to investigate. The local authorities suspect Xenovore Fleet activity, and warn them that the pirates are seizing entire ships and, upon occasion, their crews instead of simply taking cargo like they used to.

EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Mark II-D Laser Pistol	0	+1	1½d6	+0	10	8	
Xenovore Laser Rifle	+0	+2	2d6	+0	13	30	AP, AF5
Combat Knife	+0	+0	1d6	1d6-1	—	8	Can Be Thrown

Armor

Xenovore Exoskeleton Body Armor (Armor (14 PD/14 ED), Activation Roll 13-, Real Armor)

Gear: Pocket computer

Background/History: King Narch is one of the Long-Lived: the genotype that once ruled the Xenovore Empire. Almost entirely exterminated by the end of the Xenovore Wars, very few Long-Lived have been born in the last two hundred years. Only a few renegade, zealous Breeders still produce them. Like many strange and dangerous things, Mog Re! Nor'lark ("Founder of a New Way") was hatched in a hidden skavern located in the Great Equilateral Boneyard on Tetsuo. His "parent," a Breeder obsessed with cloning the final, doomed Autarch of the Empire, died before Narch was one year old, leaving him and his siblings to fend for themselves amongst the mutants, bandits, and rebels of that bleak world. Yet Narch was born for greater things. The only member of his clutch to survive from egg to adulthood, the young prodigy coaxed a salvaged spacecraft into orbit before his tenth birthday. By the age of fifteen he was ambushing merchant vessels using a hundred-year-old Thorgon cruiser and a mixed crew of Humans and Xenovores. By twenty he commanded his own ragtag pirate fleet

and was striking at worlds as far away as Rohendra and Sappho.

Yet this rapid rise to power came at a price. By 2621 both the Imperial Navy and the ISP were devoting considerable resources to hunting down the self-proclaimed pirate "King" and his fleet. Forced to flee his base on Tetsuo, King Narch took his armada out of the Terran Empire and into the Thorgon Neutral Zone, where he and his followers survived by preying on Hegemony shipping for several years.

Long hours spent drifting in the sparsely populated Zone gave King Narch time to think. He began researching in detail the rise and fall of his people. Though somewhat taken aback by the rapacious nature of his ancestors, Narch gloried at the accomplishments of his people, and sorrowed at the ignominy of their decline. Once one of the great powers of the Galaxy, the Xenovores were now a sad, scattered remnant population on their way to oblivion. Narch hit upon the idea of founding a new kingdom for his people. This one would occupy some of the territory previously held by the Xenovore Empire, but would be considerably smaller, more cosmopolitan, and better able to manage the planets it acquired. He would carve it from systems currently held by the Humans, Thorgons, and Mon'dabi; but first he'd found a new Xenovore homeland in the Thorgon Neutral Zone. There were several inhabited but heavily armed worlds located there that were more than suitable for his purposes.

For that he'd need ships. A *lot* of ships.

King Narch's Xenovore Fleet returned to the Terran Empire in 2626, cutting a bloody swath through merchant shipping from Fexao to Darius, then doubling back toward Tetsuo without attacking anyone. This deception successfully threw the Imperial Navy off the Fleet's tail, enabling King Narch to re-establish a series of bases in the Tetsuo System, including one on the moon of Tetsuo IV, one in the system's vast Kuiper belt of asteroids and derelict ships, and one in the Boneyard of Tetsuo II. He also restored his contacts within the hardy Skav population of that place. He became friends (as far as such a thing is possible) with the infamous rebel leader Carlita Drega, who was busy forging ties with as many Xenovore Fleet captains as possible. In return for ground security on Tetsuo and a promise to help him in his quest when the Terran Empire is overthrown, Narch has agreed to act as a sort of "navy" for her revolution when asked: smuggling weapons, delivering personnel, and upon occasion attacking planetary defense forces. So far this relationship



has worked to the satisfaction of both sides, providing Narch's Xenovore Fleet with a base impervious from ground assault, and Drega's revolution with space power.

Personality/Motivation: King Narch is not your typical pirate captain. The leader of a sizable "fleet" (confederation might be a better term) of buccaneer ships, he aims to found a new Xenovore kingdom in the unclaimed space of the Thorgon Neutral Zone. To do this he'll need enough ships and men to conquer and hold an entire heavily-armed world — not an easy task for any private venture to undertake, let alone a ragtag criminal enterprise! Yet he's diligently working toward his goal, taking advantage of the huge scale and political fragmentation of the Galaxy to hijack starships at every turn. His fleet also engages in more traditional acts of piracy on the side to generate additional income: stealing cargos; smuggling; and working as mercenaries when reasonable opportunities present themselves.

King Narch has a peculiar sense of honor (see text box, page 40) that governs his actions not only toward other pirates, but also toward outsiders and the crews of his "prizes." He keeps his word and always honors his bargains, though he's prone to "creative interpretation" when it suits him. He avoids violence whenever possible. If a ship surrenders peacefully, he gives its crew the choice of either joining the Xenovore Fleet, or being set adrift in their lifeboats. This tactic has the added bonus of encouraging future victims to play along: if nobody does anything stupid, nobody gets hurt. If a ship resists, however, its survivors are likely to find themselves the main course in a celebratory feast! Though none of the surviving Xenovores in King Narch's fleet possess the recessive trait for anthropophagi, they still eat sentient life forms now and then on ritual occasions, such as when the Fleet takes a new "prize" or defeats (or eludes) the Imperial or Thorgon navies. Narch forces his non-Xenovore crewmen to participate in this feasting as a kind of initiation, bonding them to the remainder of the fleet through the shame and horror of cannibalism.

Outside of being a cannibal pirate, King Narch actually has a rather engaging personality. He speaks Terran and Mondabi fluently (though his accent is very strange), enjoys alcohol, likes to watch video and holo programs, and enjoys a good practical joke. He can be a lively and engaging, if incredibly alien, host. Unusually for a pirate lord, he's largely indifferent to loot, preferring to let his vassal-captains and their crews divide up the vast majority of their "earnings" in whatever manner they see fit. The only currency he appreciates is stolen ships.

Quote: "Nice ship little Bro'se!an! You gotta real good rig here. You ever thought about becoming a pirate? No? How 'bout dinner?"

Powers/Tactics: Like most Xenovores, King Narch is stronger, faster, and tougher than the vast majority of Humans. He has a denser internal skeleton, a hard chitinous shell capable

of blunting a knife, multiple redundant hearts, and extensive natural weaponry. On top of these advantages, King Narch is one of the Long-Lived, and thus larger and stronger than a normal Xenovore. He's physically hard to kill, a respectable shot, and is always careful to wear his body armor if he thinks he's going into combat. Like many pirates in the Fleet, Narch has made some rather eccentric choices for his personal weapons, preferring a Xenovore laser rifle left over from the Wars and an almost equally-outdated laser pistol. He considers them symbolic and stylish.

King Narch controls the largest group of ships within the somewhat misleadingly named Xenovore Fleet (see sidebar). His large armada includes his own ship — a fully equipped Xenovore Dreadnought salvaged from Tetsuo's Kuiper Belt — an IBV Colgate (ATRI 10 Battleship) staffed by a mutinous Human crew, an IBM Moreck (ATRI 10) destroyer, two frigates, a captured *Magellan* exploration ship, and four *Natchez* merchant starships. (The exact composition of his fleet tends to change over the years due to attrition and acquisition.) Most of these ships operate alone or in twos or threes under the command of one of his vassal-captains, but Narch will assemble his entire fleet if he has to assault a planet or fight a force larger than a couple of ships.

King Narch fancies himself the new Monarch of Xenovore Space, though the second portion of his chosen nickname — an abbreviation of Navarch or "space leader" — suggests a less grandiose appraisal of his own importance. Still, it *could* happen, since no other Xenovore aspires to the station (at least publicly), and he's the only Long-Lived with any sort of plan to restart their empire. He already has a larger "military" than any non-Senatorial world in the Terran Empire, which gives a certain amount of credence to his outrageous claim.

King Narch practices all of the tactical deceptions commonly used by intelligent pirates, plus some that are unique to his fleet. His ships lurk in remote systems near the Thorgon Neutral Zone or in star systems with enormous amounts of debris such as Tetsuo, dashing out to seize ships and cargo as they pass by. He prefers to rely on bluffs and bluster rather than violence whenever possible, threatening victims with destruction unless they surrender. When confronted by superior firepower such as an Imperial or Thorgon Navy squadron, his ships simply flee. When not prowling the space lanes, Narch's vassal-captains hide their vessels amongst the wreckage of the Great Equilateral Boneyard and Tetsuo's vast Kuiper Belt wreckage, where they're nearly undetectable.

Highly intelligent and cunning, Narch has an eye for spotting up-and-coming captains plotting to take his place. Thus, he's aware of Captain Harul'alan's schemes against him, but is far more concerned that Captain Hapsburg doesn't seem to have any. Narch finds that suspicious.

THE XENOVORE FLEET

The most feared pirates in the known Galaxy are the remnants of the Xenovore battle fleet. They mostly operate in Terran space, though their ships range throughout much of their species's former territory, including Mondabi and Thorgon space. The term "Xenovore Fleet" is actually something of a misnomer, however, since the "fleet" has no central headquarters, no organized command structure, and more than half of its crewmen are Humans, Ackálans, Hzeel, Fex, or members of other races.

Xenovore Fleet ship captains either operate independently or are vassals of more powerful captains, with whom they share their takings with in exchange for the use of carefully-hidden bases. Thus the Xenovore Fleet consists of dozens of factions, each nominally loyal to a pirate prince, while at the same time every captain schemes to improve his individual status within the Fleet. Feuds, assassinations, and infighting are common within the Xenovore Fleet, although its captains do share information with one another and immediately set aside their differences when confronted by a superior force such as the Imperial Navy.

Campaign Use: King Narch is an example of a pirate lord with a purpose. Although he does all the things other pirates do, such as hijacking ships and stealing cargo, he has loftier goals the PCs are unaware of (for now). No one outside his small circle of vassal-captains know of King Narch's true goals; if the Imperial government ever learned of his plan to resurrect (in some form) the Xenovore Empire, it would pull out all of the stops to kill him and annihilate his fleet forever. Humanity only narrowly won its last confrontation with the Xenovores, and nobody in their right mind wants to give that species the chance to rebuild, even if it has become more civilized.

Learning about King Narch's true goal could be the subject of an adventure, a story arc, or possibly an entire anti-pirate campaign. That's one of the two reasons he might Hunt the PCs, the other being that they have a ship he particularly covets. But there are many other reasons why PCs might come into contact with the pirate lord. If they're members of the Imperial Navy or ISP officers, they could be dispatched to bring him to justice. Perhaps they're pirates or members of the Xenovore Fleet themselves, in which case they might work for King Narch, plot against him, or both. Or the PCs could simply be going about their business when King Narch hijacks their ship, throwing them into a mortal — and possibly ethical — peril.

King Narch isn't built on as many points as some master villains because (a) as a general rule, he doesn't spend a lot of time swapping blaster bolts with PCs on seedy space stations; and (b) he has no influence in legitimate society. Actually, he doesn't personally get involved in one-on-one confrontations at all if he can help it, preferring to sit on the bridge of his imposing dreadnaught and threaten victims into submission without firing a shot. When the Xenovore Fleet boards a vessel, he goes in only after his pirates have subdued and disarmed its crew. On those rare occasions when he makes planetfall, he first deploys a squad of heavily armed pirates to investigate the area, then lands himself. This isn't because Narch is cowardly. He's a veteran of dozens of firefights and violent ship-to-ship engagements. Rather, as Mog Re! Nor'lark has gotten older he's come to realize that he's the only Xenovore capable of creating a new home world for his people. Should he die that dream dies with him.

To make King Narch more powerful, increase his Combat Skill Levels and give him five more points of BODY. To make him less powerful, remove his Combat Skill Levels entirely and don't have him wear his body armor.

Appearance: One of the last surviving Long-Lived, King Narch is a large Xenovore with a distinctive vertical slash between the eyes. He wears a standard suit of Xenovore Exoskeleton Body Armor accented with a purple cape and a sash that runs from his left shoulder to his right hip. He also wears a small platinum crown on his head that's decorated with tiny white skulls carved from the bones of slain enemies from within the Xenovore Fleet.

THE XENOVORE FLEET CODE OF HONOR

By pirate law and tradition the corsairs of the Xenovore Fleet adhere to a common code of conduct known as the Xenovore Fleet Code of Honor. It's not a complex set of laws, but those who break them risk whipping, confiscation of property, expulsion, marooning on an uninhabited planet, or possibly death if the breach is serious enough. The enforcement of the Code is left up to each individual captain, who often interprets them differently depending on his own temperament and beliefs, but all pirates of the Xenovore Fleet know the Code. It is as follows:

- 1) It is forbidden to kill a fellow pirate without provocation.
- 2) It is forbidden to steal from a fellow pirate under any circumstance.
- 3) Every pirate shall have a fair share of prizes taken by his ship, or money gotten from the sale of those prizes. Shares are to be determined before the voyage, not during or after. (A typical division would be that the captain receives three full shares, each bridge officer receives one and a half full shares, each experienced spacer receives a full share, and each new spacer receives a half share.)
- 4) Any pirate who abandons his assigned station during battle is subject to death or marooning.
- 5) No pirate shall strike or attack another on ship. Personal feuds shall be conducted off ship, and the drawing of first blood is always an acceptable victory condition.
- 6) All pirates must obey their ship's captain. Failure to do so shall result in whipping, confiscation of property, or expulsion.
- 7) A pirate shall keep his personal weapons clean and in good working order.
- 8) Any pirate who is crippled or loses a limb in the course of a voyage shall receive the equivalent of 10,000 Terran Credits or an equivalent amount in trade goods.
- 9) Any pirate caught under the influence of drugs or alcohol while on duty shall be punished by death or marooning.

WHAT THEY SAY: KING NARCH

Karen Obamma, Merchant Sailor: "Honestly, for a bad guy Narch isn't such a bad guy, if you know what I mean. I was working on this Centurion Eagle out of Kundun that he seized a few years back. Eat us? Nope, we didn't fight back. He seized the ship without so much as slapping anybody, and then gave us each a decent bottle of Martian brandy before putting us in the escape pods. I was drunker than a Snirrk on payday by the time the Navy found me!"

Crustacean Bill, Qularr Pirate Captain: "Of all the pirate lords I like your so-called 'King' Narch the least. Not because he's dishonorable, but because he's got some plan that ain't fittin' for a pirate. I don't know what it is yet, but one of these days I'm gonna find out!"

CAPTAIN MATSUMOTO HAPSBURG

The Empress's Renegade Half-Brother

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
13	STR	3	12-	Lift 150 kg; 2½d6 [3]
11	DEX	3	11-	OCV: 4/DCV: 4
15	CON	10	12-	
14	BODY	8	12-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll 12-
11	EGO	2	11-	ECV: 4
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
13	COM	2	12-	
5	PD	2		Total: 5 PD (0 rPD)
5	ED	2		Total: 5 ED (0 rED)
3	SPD	9		Phases: 4, 8, 12
6	REC	0		
30	END	0		
31	STUN	2		Total Characteristic Cost: 51

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Perks

- 5 Fringe Benefit: Member of the Aristocracy
- 4 Fringe Benefit: Membership: Captain in the Xenovore Fleet
- 5 Money: Well Off

Talents

- 4 Environmental Movement: Zero-G Training (no penalties in zero-g)

Skills

- 8 +1 with All Combat
- 4 +2 OCV with MIP-127 Ion Pistol
- 4 +2 OCV with Power Sword
- 2 AK: The Milky Way Galaxy (general) 11-
- 3 Combat Piloting 11-
- 3 Computer Programming (Personal Computers, Infiltration) 12-
- 3 Conversation 12-
- 3 Electronics 12-
- 3 Gambling (Card Games, Dice Games) 12-
- 7 High Society 14-
- 3 Navigation (Hyperspace, Space) 12-
- 3 Oratory 12-
- 2 PS: Navy 11-
- 3 Persuasion 12-
- 3 Security Systems 12-
- 3 Seduction 12-
- 3 Tactics 12-
- 2 TF: Human Space Vehicles
- 4 WF: Swords, Human Small Arms, Vehicle Weapons (Patrol Buggy)
- 3 Scholar
- 2 1) KS: Antiques 12-
- 2 2) KS: Fine Wines 12-
- 2 3) KS: The Ackálian Military 12-
- 2 4) KS: The Imperial Navy 12-
- 2 5) KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 12-

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 97

Total Cost: 148

75+ Disadvantages

- 20 Hunted: Imperial Navy 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Harshly Punish)
- 20 Hunted: TSS 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Harshly Punish)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Xenovore Fleet Code of Honor (Common, Strong)
- 10 Social Limitation: Subject To Orders (Occasionally, Major)
- 5 Rivalry: Professional, with all other pirate captains
- 3 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 148

Background/History: The pirate Hapsburg was born into one of the noblest families in the Terran Empire. The bastard son of the fantastically self-indulgent Emperor Feodor and a "party girl" noblewoman, he was largely raised by his grandparents: old family aristocrats who could trace their ancestry back to the pre-Imperial royal families of Austria and Japan. An intelligent, active child who seemed genetically predisposed to leadership, and was admitted to the Imperial Star Academy at the unheard-of age of 16. After graduating near the head of his class, Hapsburg served as Security officer on a light cruiser attached to the Home Fleet for two years before being transferred to the Frontier Fleet, where he assumed command of a frigate charged with patrolling the Empire's border closest to Mon'dabi space.

A well-connected member of the high nobility as well as an able officer, Hapsburg rose rapidly through the ranks of the Imperial Navy. He also began to entertain political ambitions, though he never expressed these outside of a small circle of what he believed to be reliable friends. A progressive thinker as well as the son of an Emperor, Hapsburg dreamed of one day becoming Emperor himself, launching an era of reform that would enfranchise more non-Humans, give limited rights to AIs, and restore more power to the Senate. By 2633 he commanded the *Admiral Kanagawa*, a venerable (ATRI 10) IBV *Colgate*-class battleship attached to the Rimward Fleet. The vast majority of his duties consisted of tracking and, whenever possible, intercepting the pirate ships of the Xenovore Fleet.

News of the death of his father reached him at exactly the same time as news of the death of several his half-siblings, including his thirteen-year-old sister Sophia. The next day he received a formal summons from the Terran Security Service to report to fleet headquarters on Angenar. Seeing the writing on the wall, Captain Hapsburg decided to defect to the one organization he knew would take him: the Xenovore Fleet. He gave his men the choice of coming with him or ejecting in the ship's escape pods. Touchingly, slightly less than one-fourth of his crew chose to abandon the *Admiral Kanagawa*. The rest chose a life of piracy alongside him.

Personality/Motivation: Matsumoto Hapsburg is a bitter man possessed of a melancholy disposition and a tendency toward the melodramatic. Forced

CAPTAIN HAPSBURG PLOT SEEDS

After years of relative quiet, the Varanyi Empire has finally gotten around to invading the Velarian Confederation with a massive armada of Star Galleons. Desperate for help against an overwhelming foe, the Confederation has put out a call for assistance from mercenary ships from around the Galaxy. The PCs answer. Interestingly, so does the *Admiral Kanagawa*.

The PCs are part of a nascent rebellion against the Terran Empire. Desperate for a figurehead to rally supporters around, they learn that one of the Empress's siblings did indeed survive the bloody purge of 2633: the infamous pirate captain Hapsburg. But how do they find him? And, if they find him, will he cooperate?

The PCs are Imperial Navy officers charged by the Empress with hunting down Matsumoto Hapsburg and bringing him to justice for his crimes. Oddly — and rather unfortunately for the PCs — the Grand Admiral of the Rimward Fleet doesn't seem particularly interested in accomplishing this task. She supplies them with an outdated ATRI 10 *Hawk*-class anti-piracy frigate with which to capture the massive *Admiral Kanagawa*.

EQUIPMENT							
Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
MIP-127 Ion Pistol	+0	+0	2d6/(8d6)	+0/—	10	12	Act 13- Burnout
Power Sword	+0	+0	2d6	+1	12	—	
Armor							
Type 2 Force Field Belt (8 PD/8 ED, -1 to Sight Group PER Rolls, 1 Continuing Fuel Charge lasting 1 Hour)							
Gear: Often has a wine glass (usually full) and/or bottle of wine with him							

into a life of piracy by the actions of his murderous and ambitious half-sister Marissa, he serves King Narch because the pirate lord has selfless ambitions beyond stealing and killing — and, to be brutally honest, because Hapsburg is used to serving in a navy. (He’s been taking orders from one naval superior or the other most of his life.) As a former Imperial Navy officer and the captain of a powerful warship, Hapsburg’s been able to isolate his crew from some of Narch’s less pleasant habits, such as his cannibalistic feasts. He’s also allowed considerably more strategic leeway than his fellow vassal-captains, going off alone raiding into Thorgon space and the Heartworlds for months at a time.

Even in his state of disgrace Hapsburg is a military officer through and through. His crew wears uniforms — menacing black jumpsuits with a skull-and-crossbones emblem on the front right pocket — and practice strict military discipline. Though obviously pirates, they don’t mingle with the Xenovore Fleet crews or other raiders. In fact, the *Admiral Kanagawa* seldom puts into port at all, preferring the Fleet’s renegade supply ships to even “safe” ports such as Venwordien IV or King

Narch’s hidden bases in the Tetsuo system. In spite of this aloofness, Hapsburg must still attend strategy meetings with his fellow vassal-captains. Narch values Hapsburg’s extensive knowledge of the Imperial Navy and the Military World, but finds his disinterested personality puzzling.

In recent months cracks have begun to show in Hapsburg’s stoic persona. Haunted by visions of his long-dead thirteen-year-old sister Sophia, he’s been drinking extensively (though he never seems drunk), and now seldom appears in public without a wineglass clutched in his hand. He’s also taken to challenging other vassal-captains to duels, a practice that’s resulted thus far in nothing more than a few flesh wounds and some bruised egos. But it’s fairly obvious to anyone who’s paying attention that Captain Hapsburg’s beginning to lose his mind.

Quote: “I steal and kill only because of the maudlin emptiness in my heart. It is as vast, black, and cold as space itself.”

Powers/Tactics: Captain Matsumoto Hapsburg is a skilled naval officer who’s been more-or-less forced into piracy through an accident of

childbirth. When his father died, his half-sister Marissa’s friends within the TSS moved quickly to eliminate any potential rivals to her rule, including him. By signing up with the Xenovore Fleet he preserved his life at the cost of his honor... and possibly his sanity. However, this doesn’t make him any less effective a leader.

Hapsburg’s most useful tool in combat is the venerable *Admiral Kanagawa*. It’s a bit outdated by modern standards, but his crew is excellent and the ship’s more than a match for most vessels smaller than a battleship. His most common tactic is to drift near a space lane with his ship’s power off except for life support, waiting for a reasonably-sized merchant vessel or a small military ship to pass by. The *Admiral Kanagawa* then powers up and swoops down on its helpless prey, catching its crew by surprise and forcing it to surrender.



Matsumoto seldom leaves the bridge of his ship these days except to sleep. He spends most of his time sitting on his throne-like command chair in his distinctive pirate costume, either brooding on the unfairness of life or slowly drinking himself into a wine-induced coma. When he does leave his ship he's invariably hungover, filled with self-loathing, and spoiling for a fight with another pirate captain to help assuage his feelings of guilt over having become an outlaw. The product of noble upbringing, he's an excellent shot with his Ion Pistol, handy with his Power Sword, and not particularly shy about using either (though he's not suicidal enough to leave his Type 2 Force Field Belt behind). He also retains the tastes of a nobleman. Hapsburg likes fine wines and antiques, and will go out of his way to rob ships that contain them. He's amassed considerable wealth as one of King Narch's vassal captains, though he seldom uses it for anything other than purchasing wine or paying his crew generous bonuses.

Campaign Use: Though reasonably loyal to King Narch and sympathetic to the idea of modern, civilized Xenovores acquiring a new homeworld, Captain Hapsburg is still a reluctant pirate who could probably be lured away from his life of crime if given a chance to fight for something or someone noble. He'll cheerfully sober up to join a rebellion against the Terran Empire, free a world from the grips of a tyrannical power, rescue a doomed exploration mission, or the like. His crew follows him without complaint, making the Admiral Kanagawa a valuable potential ally for PCs. On the other hand, he'll have few qualms about seizing the PC's ship should it contain expensive spirits or interesting antiques, or be on the list of ships that King Narch wants. The TSS still sees Hapsburg as a potential danger to the rule of Empress Marissa III, and would pay handsomely for his capture or proof of his death. If the PCs are TSS agents or bounty hunters, they may be assigned to hunt Hapsburg down.

To make Captain Matsumoto Hapsburg more powerful, give him some Combat Luck and increase his SPD to 4. To make him less powerful, remove his Combat Skill Levels.

Appearance: Captain Matsumoto Hapsburg is a handsome Eurasian man in his early forties. He has shoulder-length reddish-black hair and a dueling scar across one cheek. He wears a distinctive pirate uniform of his own creation that includes a red-lined full-length black cape, a silver belt buckle with a small "skull and crossbones" emblem on it, and a side-buttoned black shirt. He usually has a wine glass in his left hand that he either shatters or flings away when enraged. He's never unarmed; at the very least he has a blaster pistol in a holster on his right hip.

CAPTAIN HARU'ALAN

Ruthless And Rebellious Pirate Captain

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 [3]
13	DEX	9	12-	OCV: 4/DCV: 4
15	CON	10	12-	
13	BODY	6	12-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll 12-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
10	COM	0	11-	
5/9	PD	2		Total: 5/9 PD (0/4 rPD)
4/6	ED	1		Total: 4/6 ED (0/2 rED)
3	SPD	7		Phases: 4, 8, 12
6	REC	0		
30	END	0		
34	STUN	5		Total Characteristic Cost: 53

Movement: Running: 8"/16"
Leaping: 3"/6"

Cost	Powers	END
10	<i>Xenovore Claws:</i> HKA ½d6 (1d6+1 w/STR)	1
15	<i>Xenovore Sting:</i> HKA 1d6, Armor Piercing (+½); No STR Bonus (-½)	2
9	<i>Tougher Carapace:</i> Armor (4 PD/2 ED)	0
1	<i>Xenovore Digestion:</i> Life Support (Diminished Eating: can digest any type of protein)	0
4	<i>Swift Xenovore:</i> Running +2" (8" total)	1
5	<i>Tail:</i> Extra Limb (1), Inherent (+¼); Limited Manipulation (-¼)	0

Perks

4	Fringe Benefit: Membership: Captain in the Xenovore Fleet
6	Reputation: skilled pirate captain (A medium-sized group) 14-, +3/+3d6

Talents

4	Environmental Movement: Zero-G Training (no penalties in zero-g)
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Skills

2	+1 OCV with Electric Whip
2	+1 OCV with Ackálian Laser Rifle
3	Combat Piloting 12-
2	AK: The Milky Way Galaxy 11-
3	Navigation (Hyperspace, Space) 12-
3	Persuasion 12-
3	Security Systems 12-
3	Streetwise 12-
3	Systems Operation (Environmental Systems, Mark XV Starship Lasers) 12-
3	Tactics 12-
3	Trading 12-
4	TF: Human Space Vehicles, Xenovore Space Vehicles
5	WF: Whips, Human Small Arms, Xenovore Small Arms

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 97

Total Cost: 150

CAPTAIN HARU'ALAN PLOT SEEDS

The PCs are attacked without warning by the *Renegade Defiance* while traveling through the most secure portion of the Heartworld space. They must fight for their lives and, should they successfully fend off the pirate ship, might choose to pursue it.

The PCs have been captured by the Xenovore Fleet and turned over to Captain Haru'alan for "training" as new pirates. Can they survive the living hell of serving aboard the *Renegade Defiance*? If they do, can they seize control of the vessel before any more innocents are killed?

The PCs have decided to do some "independent archaeology" amongst the mysterious worlds of Drago's Reach. While exploring a particularly promising system filled with the ruins of a previously unknown civilization, they find themselves trailed by an unknown *Magellan*-class exploration vessel which doesn't return their hails. After doing some extensive long-range scans, they determine that it's the feared pirate vessel *Renegade Defiance*. But why is it following them?

75+ Disadvantages

- 20 Hunted: Imperial Navy 8- (More Pow, NCI, Harshly Punish)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Xenovore Fleet Code Of Honor (Common, Strong)
- 15 Reputation: Ruthless Pirate Captain, 11- (Extreme)
- 5 Rivalry: Professional, with all other pirate captains
- 20 Social Limitation: Subject To Orders (Very Frequently, Major)

Total Disadvantage Points: 150

Background/History: Like the pirate lord King Narch, Haru!alan (Killer of Prey) is a Xenovore who hatched in a skavern located in the Great Equilateral Boneyard on Tetsuo. His early years were spent scrabbling to survive on the surface of that radioactive, devastated world, eating whatever (or whoever) he found and learning to fight or flee anything he encountered. By his twelfth birthday he'd evolved into a strong and fast adult, suitable for recruitment into one of Tetsuo's many Xenovore gangs. By sheer luck that turned out to be the crew of King Narch. Haru!alan was with the charismatic pirate when he coaxed his first salvaged spacecraft into orbit. He accompanied him on his earliest pirate ventures into nearby systems, was among the first of his followers to receive his own ship, and later accompanied him into exile in the Thorgon Neutral Zone. By all appearances Haru!alan is one of King Narch's most trusted vassal-captains, a tried-and-true companion who's served with him since the beginning of his pirate career. But there's no honor amongst those criminals who wander the vast distances between stars, and any pirate will seize the opportunity to advance himself...

Personality/Motivation: Aggressive, haughty, and extraordinarily violent, Captain Haru!alan is a Xenovore cut from the old-school cloth. He clawed his way to the top of the food chain on Tetsuo, he fought his way to the position of pirate captain, seized command of the best ship he could get, and now plans on taking his place as a pirate lord within the Xenovore Fleet — preferably King Narch's place. This is largely due to his inherent Xenovore aggressiveness, but also because of a serious philosophical disagreement with the admiral. Haru!alan doesn't want to found a new Xenovore home world or create a new empire for his race. In fact, he thinks it's a terrible idea that will lead to the complete and utter extermination of his people. Haru!alan knows the Humans, Thorgons, and Mondabi remember the horrors of the Xenovore Wars quite well, and he fears they'll spare no

effort to wipe out the sad remnants of his people if Narch takes serious steps toward implementing his plans. Furthermore, it's bad business practice. Captain Haru!alan likes being a pirate, and doesn't understand what King Narch's plan has to do with the reasonable business of stealing things, killing people, and generally terrorizing the space lanes.

Haru!alan is a classic pirate captain, ruthless and brutal. He's fond of tormenting and killing (though not necessarily eating) the victims of his pirate raids, and leaves far fewer of them alive than most Fleet captains. When not in combat he stalks the passages of his ship with a vicious Electric Whip in hand, dispensing "discipline" to his own crew with marginally less cruelty than he shows his victims. He seizes the lion's share of treasure taken from the merchantmen he and his crew preys upon. Rather unsurprisingly, Haru!alan isn't one of the most popular captains in the Xenovore Fleet. Many of his crewmen are either newly-recruited pirates, or incompetent or incorrigible brigands who've been thrown out of other crews (his use of the whip isn't entirely without reason).

Captain Haru!alan isn't particularly prejudiced when it comes to dealing with other races. Slightly more than half of his crew is Human, and only about a fourth are Xenovore. He doesn't suffer from the anthropophagi of his ancestors, and shows no particular favoritism toward other Xenovores. Interestingly, part of Haru!alan's simmering anger toward King Narch comes from what Humans would call "class envy." Narch is a Long-Lived; Haru!alan comes from the common Xenovore genetic type, and blames members of his bosses' genotype for losing the war with Humanity.

Quote: "You on exploration mission, eh? You lie, Food-That-Pleads!"

Powers/Tactics: Haru!alan is the captain of the aging ATRI 10 *Magellan*-class exploration ship *Renegade Defiance* (ST 88-89). Though comparatively lightly armed and slow, the *Renegade Defiance* has the advantage of extraordinary range and sensory capabilities. Haru!alan's usual tactic is to operate alone and far from the normal territory of the Xenovore Fleet, carefully avoiding the Imperial and Thorgon Navies while lying in wait for lightly-armed merchant vessels suffering from a false sense of security. He then strikes without warning, if possible destroying ship's life support or holing its hull so that its atmosphere vents into space, killing everyone aboard. He then tows the dead ship back to King Narch's pirate base in Tetsuo's vast Kuiper Belt, where it can be safely stripped of cargo and the bodies of its crew dumped into the vacuum.

EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Ackálian Laser Rifle	+2	+2	3d6	+0	15	60	AF5, Penetrating
Electric Whip	+0	+0	(8d6)	—	None	—	3" range, Full Phase

Armor

None

Gear: Pocket computer



Haru'alan is a Xenovore, and thus stronger, faster, and tougher than the vast majority of Humans; he has claws, a sting, and a nasty disposition. His preferred weapon is his Electric Whip, which he carries with him everywhere he goes, but he's also proficient with the use of a laser rifle. His favorite defensive technique is to surround himself with heavily armed and armored crewman (he doesn't like to wear armor himself, donning it only in the most extreme circumstances). Though not particularly prone to dueling or physically fighting with his fellow vassal-captains, Haru'alan never backs down from a fight. He lost an eye in a squabble with Matsumoto Hapsburg several years ago, but it hasn't slowed him down very much (and thus isn't purchased as a Disadvantage). It simply makes him more frightening-looking and has given him even more reason to hate Hapsburg, whom he considers weak and annoying.

Campaign Use: When most inhabitants of the Terran Empire hear the word "pirate," they picture somebody like Haru'alan. The worst of a bad lot, he's kill-for-kill one of the most vicious captains in the Xenovore Fleet. Civilized people across the Galaxy will breathe a sigh of relief the day he dies. The Imperial Navy hunts him whenever it gets a chance, the Justice Ministry has a heavy price on his head, and the Thor-gons would be happy to see him dead. A considerable number of other vassal-captains wouldn't mind having him out of the Fleet feet first, either.

There are a lot of different ways in which the PCs could come into contact (and conflict) with Haru'alan. He might attack their ship while it's traveling through a supposedly "safe" part of space. Vindictive and unpredictable, he's not that much less of a threat if the PCs are pirates themselves. They might have the

misfortune of serving on his crew or captaining a competing pirate vessel. If the PCs are Bounty Hunters, the captain of the *Renegade Defiance* makes an appealing target. If they're members of the Imperial Navy, they might be dispatched to hunt him down.

To make Captain Haru'alan more powerful, give him some Combat Luck and Physical Damage Reduction, 50%. To make him less, remove his Combat Skill Levels and his *Tougher Carapace* power.

Appearance: Captain Haru'alan is a fairly typical (and to Human eyes, unpleasant) looking Xenovore, with a spiny, hunched backed and a vertical mouth framed by vicious mandibles. He wears a blood-red ornamental belt across his chest that also acts as a baldric for his Electric Whip and a red sash across his face where he's missing one eye.

WHAT THEY SAY: CAPTAIN HARU'ALAN

Duke Wu Feng, Grand Admiral of the Home Fleet: "What can you say about a pirate like Haru'alan? He's the worst of the worst. Even the other scum hates him. He's a danger to galactic shipping and a nuisance to everyone else. Whoever sold him that ship should be shot!"

Drake Saberhagen, Merchant Captain: "Haru'alan? That bastard! I narrowly fought his ship off on the outskirts of the Rusalka system last year. Thank God I'd upgraded my lasers and hull armor or my corpse would be floating through space right now. The sooner someone — anyone — gets him and his rotten crew the better off the Galaxy is!"

Matsumoto Hapsburg, Pirate Captain: "I frankly feel sorry for Haru'alan in spite of his malevolent nature. He's a tragic figure, so filled with bitterness toward King Narch that it's clouded his better judgment. I hope I don't have to take his other eye."

DARK GN'DALL PLOT SEEDS

Gn'dall's finally earned all the money he needs to set himself up in Mon'dabi society... but one just doesn't walk away from the Xenovore Fleet. He either has to hire the PCs to help him escape cleanly, or trick them into creating a distraction so he can fake his own death.

Gn'dall learns the Xenovore Fleet plans a major strike into Mon'dabi space. Unwilling to hurt his people so badly, he begins secretly sending the PCs information about the attack so they can stop it.

Gn'dall begins having strange, disturbing dreams. Is he the victim of a strange psionic attack? Is he a Void Messiah (see Chapter Two) in the making? And why do the PCs keep appearing in his nightly visions?

LIEUTENANT DARK GN'DALL

Vicious, Murdering Pirate

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Note
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 [3]
10	DEX	0	11-	OCV: 3/DCV: 3
12	CON	4	11-	
11	BODY	2	11-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
10	PRE	0	11-	PRE Attack: 2d6
10	COM	0	11-	
4	PD	1		Total: 7 PD (4 rPD)
2	ED	0		Total: 5 ED (4 rED)
3	SPD	10		Phases: 4, 8, 12
5	REC	0		
24	END	0		
26	STUN	2		Total Characteristic Cost: 24

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost Powers END

3	<i>Mon'Dabi Bite:</i> HKA 1 point; No STR Bonus (-½)	1
1	<i>Mon'Dabi Skin:</i> Damage Resistance (1 PD/1 ED)	0
10	<i>Tough Guy:</i> Physical Damage Reduction, 25%	0
3	<i>Observant:</i> +1 PER with all Sense Groups	1
5	<i>Tail:</i> Extra Limb (1), Inherent (+¼); Limited Manipulation (-¼)	0

Perks

3	Fringe Benefit: Lieutenant in the Xenovore Fleet
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Talents

6	Combat Luck (3 PD/3 ED)
4	Environmental Movement: Zero-G Training (no penalties in zero-g)

Skills

5	+1 HTH
5	+1 with Ranged Combat
3	+1 with Bribery, Forgery, and Streetwise
2	AK: The Milky Way Galaxy 11-
3	Bribery 11-
2	Forgery (Documents) 11-
3	Gambling (Card Games, Dice Games) 11-
3	Navigation (Hyperspace, Space) 11-
3	Shadowing 11-
3	Stealth 11-
3	Streetwise 11-
2	Systems Operation (FTL Sensors, Sensor Jamming Equipment) 11-
4	TF: Human Space Vehicles, Mon'Dabi Space Vehicles
6	WF: Axes, Human Small Arms, Mon'Dabi Small Arms

EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
MIP-162 Ion Pistol	+1	+1	3d6/(10d6)	0	9	30	AF2
Chāshur	+0	+0	2d6	+0	15	—	

Armor

Light Battle Armor (Armor (12 PD/12 ED), Activation Roll 14-, Real Armor; see TE 144)

Gear: Pocket computer, translator

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 82

Total Cost: 106

75+ Disadvantages

20	Hunted: Imperial Navy 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Harshly Punish)
15	Psychological Limitation: Xenovore Fleet Code of Honor (Common, Strong)
15	Social Limitation: Subject To Orders (Occasionally, Severe)

Total Disadvantage Points: 125

Background/History: Dark Gn'dall is a Mon'dabi. Born into an adventuresome spacefaring family from the Rim League world of Ttegha, he was sent to school on Mon'da, where he studied to be a merchant officer. Upon graduation he returned to the Rim League and went to work on the prestigious merchant vessel *Kanakata*, which specialized in transporting exotic spices and liquors to the Terran Empire. Gn'dall hoped to reduce the amount of time required to make enough money to buy a modest amount of land on his home world by working on a ship that moved more valuable loads (it takes the average Mon'dabi spacer 20 years to save enough). Unfortunately for the ambitious young Mon'dabi, his ship's precious cargo also made it a primary target for piracy. On his third trip into Human space, King Narch attacked the *Kanakata*. Given the choice between joining the Xenovore Fleet and becoming the second course in the pirate lord's next feast, Gn'dall chose the life of a corsair.

Much to his surprise, Dark Gn'dall rather enjoyed being a pirate. Stealing, gambling, and hanging out with lowlifes came naturally to him. He never had any particular love for the species of the Terran Empire, and he now earns twenty times what he did working as an officer on a lowly merchantman. With any luck he'll make enough money within the next two years to buy a truly large amount of land and a respectable number of wives back home.

Personality/Motivation: Greedy, ruthless, and unafraid of the consequences of his actions, Dark Gn'dall is the Science and Sensor officer aboard the pirate frigate *William Kidd* (he's good with the Sensor part, not so good with the Science). He's not a particularly complex person. Like most Mon'Dabi males he views land as the only true measure of wealth and wants to steal his way into enough capital to buy an estate somewhere back in the Rim League. If he has to kill someone who's in the way of this goal, so be it. If he can avoid killing them, that's fine.



Dark Gn'dall doesn't have any particular desire to rise any higher in rank than Lieutenant within the Xenovore Fleet. He plans on deserting as soon he has enough money to return to Mon'dabi space and set himself up with several wives and a plantation. He's always on the lookout for the easiest possible ways to achieve this goal with the least possible effort. Like most pirates he avoids heroics (and dangerous-looking victims) whenever possible, preferring to bully those weaker than himself to get what he wants.

Quote: "Put your hands in the air and walk slowly away from that crate of Archipelago Caviar. Slowly! I've got no problem with killing all of you."

Powers/Tactics: Lieutenant Gn'dall is a relatively competent S&S officer. (He's capable with Sensors in any case. Pirate vessels don't do a lot of Science.) He's also a fair navigator and good at bribing officials, forging documents, and hanging out with seedy individuals in space station taverns. Like most Mon'dabi he's tough and fairly useful in a fight, though his preferred method of "combat" is to point a blaster at an unarmed opponent and force him to obey shouted commands at gunpoint.



Campaign Use: Dark Gn'dall represents a typical officer of the Xenovore Fleet; you can use his sheet as a template for nearly any experienced pirate. He's greedy, callous, and

unafraid of using violence, but at the same time uninterested in doing things that are likely to cause him harm or expose him to danger. Within these limits he obeys both his captain and the Xenovore Fleet Code of Honor, but will rebel if ordered to do something suicidal. The PCs are most likely to encounter him as part of a group of pirates drinking in a tavern, as a member of a boarding party attacking their ship, as the pirate who guards them while the other pirates loot their ship, or the like.

Appearance: Dark Gn'dall is a tough-looking male Mon'dabi of medium stature. When in port he wears distinctively "piratized" battle armor and carries a blaster pistol and a *cha'shur*: a frightening-looking axe tipped with a spike designed for penetrating the thick skins of reptilian predators. Though he possesses some skill with the weapon, he mostly uses it to threaten people who get in his way.



TATEKLYS

Malvan Dilettante Mob Boss

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6
17	DEX	21	12-	OCV: 6/DCV: 6
14	CON	8	12-	
15	BODY	10	12-	
23	INT	16	14-	PER Roll 14-
20	EGO	20	13-	ECV: 7
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
20	COM	5	13-	
5	PD	3		Total: 8 PD (3 rPD)
4	ED	1		Total: 7 ED (3 rED)
4	SPD	13		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
8	REC	6		
30	END	1		
40	STUN	13		Total Characteristic Cost: 127

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost Powers **END**

	Martial Arts: <i>Malvan Combat Training</i>			
Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes	
4 Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort	
4 Counterstrike	+2	+2	7d6 Strike, Must Follow Block	
4 Disarm	-1	+1	Disarm; 35 STR to Disarm	
4 Killing Blow	-2	+0	HKA 1d6 (1½d6 with STR)	
3 Strike	+1	+0	7d6 Strike	
1 Use Art with Staffs				
12 +3 Extra DCs (already added in)				
16 <i>Malvan Mind</i> : Mental Defense (20 points total)				0
5 <i>Unimpressed</i> : +10 PRE; Only To Protect Against Presence Attacks (-1)				0
5 <i>Malvan Immortality</i> : Life Support (Longevity: Immortality)				0
4 <i>Observant</i> : +2 PER with Sight Group				0

Perks

45	Advanced Tech: ATRI 14-15 technology in a mostly ATRI 11 campaign	
5	Fringe Benefit: Overboss of Hzeel Outfit	
15	Money: Filthy Rich	

Talents

6	Combat Luck (3 PD/3 ED)
5	Eidetic Memory
20	Universal Translator 14-

Skills

24	+3 with All Combat
3	+1 with Forgery, PS: Artist, and KS: Rare Art Objects
3	Breakfall 12-
3	Bribery 13-
3	Bugging 14-
3	Bureaucratics 13-
3	Combat Piloting 12-
4	Computer Programming (Personal Computers, Computer Networks) 14-
3	Conversation 13-
10	Cramming (x2)
3	Deduction 14-
3	Disguise 14-
4	Forgery (Art Objects, Documents) 14-
3	Gambling (Card Games, Chess) 14-
3	High Society 13-
3	Inventor 14-
3	Persuasion 13-
3	Streetwise 13-
5	Trading 14-
2	TF: Malvan Space Vehicles
2	WF: Advanced Malvan Weapons
3	Weaponsmith (Energy Weapons, Malvan Hyperdimensional Weapons) 14-
3	Jack of All Trades
2	1) PS: Artist 12-
2	2) PS: Fence 13-
2	3) PS: Gang Leader 13-
2	4) PS: Merchant 13-
2	5) PS: Soldier 13-
3	Scholar
2	1) KS: Ancient History 14-
2	2) KS: The Espionage World 14-
2	3) KS: Fake Archaeological Artifacts 14-
2	4) KS: Galactic Adventurers 14-
2	5) KS: Galactic Politics 14-
2	6) KS: Human History 14-
2	7) KS: Rare Art Objects 14-
3	Scientist
1	1) SS: Anthropology 11-

EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Hyperdimensional Walking Stick (see text box)							

Armor

Armored Clothing (Armor (10 PD/10 ED); IIF, Activation Roll 14-); Force Field (20 PD/30 ED/10 Mental/10 Power)

Gear: Malvan pocket computer

- 2 2) SS: Astronomy 14-
- 1 3) SS: Biology 11-
- 1 4) SS: Chemistry 11-
- 2 5) SS: Dimensional Engineering 14-
- 2 6) SS: Hyperspace Physics 14-
- 2 7) SS: Physics 14-
- 2 8) SS: Psychology 14-
- 1 9) SS: Xenanthropology 11-
- 1 10) SS: Xenology 11-
- 3 Traveler
- 2 1) AK: Earth 14-
- 2 2) AK: Malva 14-
- 2 3) AK: The Galaxy (general) 14-
- 2 4) CuK: Human Culture 14-
- 2 5) CuK: Hzeel Culture 14-
- 2 6) CuK: Malvan Culture 14-

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 317

Total Cost: 444

75+ Disadvantages

- 10 DNPC: Bar'Bar'Nul 14- (Slightly Less Powerful, Useful Noncombat Skills)
- 25 Psychological Limitation: Malvan Boredom (Very Common, Total)
- 25 Psychological Limitation: Obsessed With Things That Are Truly Rare (Very Common, Total)
- 10 Social Limitation: Secret Identity (Occasionally, Major)
- 299 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 444

Background/History: The man who one day would be known as Tateklys — literally “The Fashionable One,” a name he adopted years ago that’s become so well-known that few people remember his real name — was born on the now-abandoned Malvan colony world of Taka in the Terran year 1540 AD. His father Haran is an influential and controversial military man opposed to the slow and deliberate collapse of the Malvan Empire. A friend of the Phazor, Haran splits his time between the Phazor’s court on Malva and various other worlds. He left the raising and supervision of his son to robotic caretakers. Tateklys largely grew up in the care of technological tutors, where he gained a love of robots, computers, and technology that would remain with him throughout his life.

When the young Malvan came of age he followed his father’s example and joined the military, where his extraordinary skill with languages landed him a position as a translator. During his brief 100-year career he traveled widely, visiting what would one day be Perseid and Velarian space among other places. He also spent some time at home on Malva, becoming a favorite of the court with his quick wit and engaging personality.

Eventually he realized he enjoyed travel and mingling with people a lot more than he enjoyed military life. In the Terran year 1890 he resigned his commission and became a traveling merchant specializing in luxury goods and hard-to-find items. He went wherever he thought he could find goods worth buying, or a market for what he was selling... and in the late

THE HYPERDIMENSIONAL WALKING STICK

Here’s what Tateklys’s personal weapon looks like in game terms. It doesn’t qualify as an Accessible Focus because it teleports itself back to his hand if taken away; to keep it from him one has to remove it from his person while he’s unconscious, then keep it away from him for at least 12 seconds. That breaks the “teleportation bond” until he touches the Stick again.

Cost Power

- 230 *Hyperdimensional Attacks:* Multipower, 345-point reserve; all slots OIF (-½)
- 16u 1) *Short-Range Combat Aportation:* Teleportation 20”, x32 Increased Mass, No Relative Velocity, Position Shift, Usable As Attack (defense is temporal/dimensional manipulation powers; +1), Ranged (+½), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); OIF (-½)
- 23u 2) *Long-Range Combat Aportation:* Teleportation 3”, x32 Increased Mass, No Relative Velocity, Position Shift, MegaScale (1” = 1,000 light-years, can scale down to 1” = 1 km; +4½), Usable As Attack (defense is temporal/dimensional manipulation powers; +1), Ranged (+½), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); OIF (-½)
- 20u 3) *Temporal Banishment:* Extra-Dimensional Movement (any point in time, any physical location), x32 Increased Mass, Usable As Attack (defense is temporal/dimensional manipulation powers; +1), Ranged (+½), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); OIF (-½)
- 7u 4) *Temporal Disharmony:* Energy Blast 6d6, NND (defense is temporal/dimensional manipulation powers or Life Support [Longevity]; +1), Continuous (+1), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); OIF (-½) 0
- 5u 5) *Fast Time Bubble:* Aid SPD 7d6, Ranged (+½), OIF (-½), Recipient Must Spend 2 END Per Point Of Extra SPD Used While Aid Remains In Effect (-½) 0
- 7u 6) *Slow Time Bubble:* Drain SPD 5d6, Ranged (+½), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); OIF (-½) 0
- 173 *Hyperdimensional Travel:* Multipower, 259-point reserve; all slots OIF (-½)
- 17u 1) *Short-Range Teleportation:* Teleportation 40”, x32 Noncombat, No Relative Velocity, Position Shift, Armor Piercing (+½), Safe Blind Teleport (+¼), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); OIF (-½)
- 9u 2) *Long-Range Teleportation:* Teleportation 10”, No Relative Velocity, Position Shift, Armor Piercing (+½), MegaScale (1” = 1,000 light-years, can scale down to 1” = 1 km; +4½), Safe Blind Teleport (+¼), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); OIF (-½)
- 4u 3) *Dimensional Travel:* Extra-Dimensional Movement (any physical location in any dimension), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); OIF (-½)
- 8u 4) *Time Travel:* Extra-Dimensional Movement (any point in time, any physical location), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); OIF (-½)
- 3u 5) *Blink Teleportation:* +10 DCV; OIF (-½)

Total cost: 522 points.

twentieth century his travels brought him to an extraordinary planet called Earth. The bustling, many-cultured world and its colorful cast of superpowered heroes and villains fascinated Tateklys — as did the presence of his fellow Malvan Ariax Thone, now known as Firewing.

It occurred to him that many of Earth's superhumans might be willing to fight in the Malvan arena — though probably not to go all the way to Malva. After some thought he proposed to the Phazor that a small arena be established on Earth's Moon, with a colony of Malvans led by himself to run things. The fights there would be broadcast back to Malva, offering a different type of bloodsport for the Malvans to watch. The idea met with the Phazor's approval. Christening himself the "Praetor" of the "Lunar Games," and even sometimes donning Roman-style garb, Tateklys ran the Malvan arena on the Moon for many years — everything from its legitimate games to the crime and corruption that inevitably sprang up around the waves of galactic tourists that came in stealthed ships to watch the spectacle. He stayed for several decades, and was present for the thwarted invasion of the Hzeel, a species he found almost as interesting as Humanity.

Having become something of an expert on alien cultures (at least by Malvan standards), Tateklys was called back to Malva by the Phazor in the mid-2000s. The ruler of Malva sought his advice on the newly-expansionist empire of the cannibalistic Xenovores. Tateklys quickly determined they were no threat to Malva. Having become bored with Earth since its superhuman population withered away, he stayed on Malva, indulging himself in decadent pastimes. In time he learned of the destruction of the planet Zeel by the Perseids. He traveled to Hzeel space (now part of the Perseid Empire), where he lived with that species for several decades, gaining a greater understanding of their culture and making friends with the bosses of various families.

By the mid-2100s, Tateklys became bored once more. He returned to Malva, where he dedicated himself to the study of hyperdimensional engineering and dimensional physics, just two of the many scientific fields Malvan society had largely neglected for thousands of years. Over the next two centuries he learned much, and even made a few advances — the first such expansions of the Malvan body of knowledge for centuries. But he became discouraged when other Malvans showed no interest in his inventions. His innovations in time travel, starship drive theory, and aportation were ignored or ridiculed as useless by a species seeking only dissipation and entertainment. Disgusted, Tateklys gave up science and opened a modest

(by Malvan standards) store and gallery, announcing to his small circle of friends that he was dedicating himself to the importation of luxury items and artwork created by the lesser races.

Or so it seemed.

In reality, Tateklys had become bored once again. Worse yet, the behavior of his fellow Malvans had disillusioned him to the point of misanthropy. He resolved to undertake a project that would provide him with centuries of entertainment. Under the cover of trade he returned to Hzeel space, where he quickly re-established

contact with the families he'd befriended centuries before. With their help he slowly, secretly, and patiently began to gain control of the Hzeel Outfit — that loosely-organized outlaw confederation that controls Hzeel crime throughout the Galaxy.

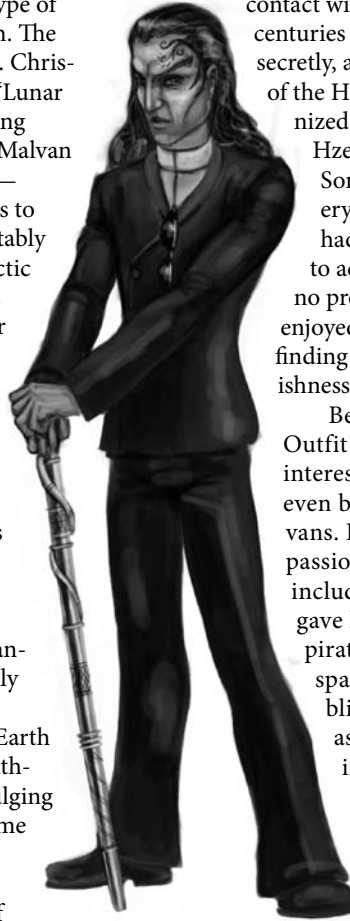
Sometimes he did this through bribery, other times through violence. He had to learn a great deal about crime to accomplish this task, but that posed no problem — he was a quick study. He enjoyed his association with the Hzeel, finding their aggressiveness and overt selfishness refreshing.

Becoming Overboss of the Hzeel Outfit took nearly 300 years. It was interesting work, and it made him rich even by the standards of wealthy Malvans. It also allowed him to indulge his passion for art. The Outfit's activities included fencing stolen goods, which gave him unprecedented access to pirated artwork from across known space. Smuggling and running gambling operations was entertaining as well (though Tateklys never involved himself directly with slave trading, which he finds distasteful). Throughout his ascension through the ranks of the underworld he maintained the convenient fiction of being a successful trader in luxuries. It

gave him the appearance of legitimacy, kept him in good stead with the Phazor, and allowed him to travel widely without arousing suspicion.

But by the 2600s the Fashionable One was becoming bored once more. Fortunately, his incredible wealth and power as the Hzeel Overboss gives him unprecedented resources with which to fight his perpetual ennui. Thinking back over his long life, Tateklys ponders the nature of diversion. What activities are most pleasing? What kinds of creatures are the most fascinating? Most importantly, what new project could he undertake to alleviate the oppressive monotony of immortality?

Then he remembered the heroes of ancient Earth. And he smiled.



Personality/Motivation: Boredom. Boredom so immense, so overwhelming, so all-consuming that it creates a vacuum at the center of the soul which wealth, sexual pleasure, and diversion can never entirely fill. Imagine that boredom has spread throughout your being to the point where it dominates every waking moment of every day of your life. Now, imagine that this has gone on for almost a thousand years. That is the inner essence of Tateklys.

Like all Malvans Tateklys exists to be entertained, and thus distracted from the unending tediousness of immortality. Unlike most Malvans — who for all their pretense are hopelessly provincial — Tateklys possesses a certain amount of depth, and is thus even more difficult to entertain. His sensibilities have been formed by centuries of travel and interaction with other species, something almost unheard of for one of his kind. In fact, the Fashionable One is considered a bit stodgy and an ascetic by Malvan standards. He simply isn't as interested in the pursuit of pleasure as most members of his species — at least as they define it. Though he keeps it largely to himself, Tateklys is one of the few Malvans who disapproves of slavery (though he doesn't prohibit the Hzeel Outfit from practicing it). To friends he's known for some time — say, three or four hundred years — he admits that he'd prefer for his people to abandon their eons-old traditions of enslavement and switch entirely to robot

laborers. He also avoids the arena: not so much for idealistic reasons as because he finds it boring and pointless compared to the far more exhilarating fights he once staged on Earth's Moon. Though in all fairness, Tateklys finds most things boring and pointless.

Every few hundred years the Fashionable One switches professions and hobbies in an attempt to stave off his ever-present world-weariness. He's been a soldier, a businessman, an art dealer, a scientist, and now a mobster. After a century or two every one of them becomes tedious, forcing him to take up a new pursuit. Most recently he's begun a novel diversion: he collects heroes. More specifically, Tateklys uses his considerable resources to track the escapades of particularly audacious and capable adventurers, and then injects himself into their lives as a way of entertaining himself. He does this by throwing bizarre obstacles in the path of their adventures, hiring them to go on dangerous missions, or upon occasion saving them from various threats. Sometimes he does this indirectly using his vast wealth, the Hzeel Outfit, or some other contrivance. At other times he injects himself personally into the lives of a group of swashbuckling spacers. He may employ many different methods depending on his level of interest and other factors, such as the number of adventurers he's toying with at any given time, but his activities are always designed to entertain and enlighten himself and not for any broader or deeper purpose.

Testing and tracking heroes, adventurers, and rogues enables the Fashionable One to indulge in a most un-Malvan pleasure: philosophy. Tateklys is interested in the complex motivations behind heroism... and, for that matter, its darkling twin, villainy. He rewards and punishes according to his hypotheses of the moment. Unfortunately (or perhaps fortunately), Tateklys finds that every time he arrives at a working theory to explain heroism, yet another one of his Byzantine schemes dashes it to pieces, forcing him to develop a new plan that tests a new theory. All of which requires a great deal of time, effort, and money.

This has yet to become tiresome.

Quote: "You're beginning to bore me."

Powers/Tactics: At ATRI 14, at times even verging on 15 or beyond, Malvan science is so advanced and difficult to understand that Terran scientists can only shrug and say "Poof! It happens." One of the last accomplished scientists Malva has produced, Tateklys can create devices considerably more advanced than standard Malvan contrivances, giving him abilities that are close to godlike by most species' standards. His incredibly luxurious ship *Aurelius* can travel instantly to any place in any dimension or any time period, has weapons that can easily destroy (or aport) other starships, and is for all intents and purposes indestructible. (No write up is included, as the *Aurelius* is a plot device, not a game object, and is not intended for combat.) Tateklys' exquisitely tailored clothing is constructed of protective fibers, his carefully-concealed personal force field is potent beyond the abilities of Terran science, and his unique

TATEKLYS PLOT SEEDS

The Fashionable One had decided to reward one galactic government with a piece of ATRI 14 military weaponry that will give it a considerable advantage over its neighbors. To decide who shall receive the prize, he strands a naked Human, Mon'dabi, Perseid, Thorgon, and Ackálian on an uninhabited desert planet in an uncharted region of space. The last individual left alive shall receive the weapon... assuming, of course, the Phazor doesn't get wind of this and step in, since giving Malvan technology to non-Malvans is one of the few crimes the Malvans still take *very* seriously.

To test the resourcefulness and character of the PCs, Tateklys teleports their entire ship into orbit around the planet Lothan within Ackálian space. He informs them that the Naloth, the amphibious natives of the planet, would love nothing more than to cast off the yoke of Ackálian oppression, and tasks the PCs with helping them gain their freedom. Of course, Tateklys is lying: the Naloth and the Ackálians get along extremely well, and nobody wants a revolution. For added spice, Tateklys begins taking bets on the outcome of the whole affair.

Tateklys decides to send the PCs along with their ship back in time and space to 1984, one week before the Gadroon invade Earth. He explains to them that, although records of it have been lost to the mists of time, they have *already* played a vital role in defeating that invasion. If they wish to return to their own time, they must "repeat" that "vital role" by defeating the alien attack. Of course, if they don't choose the *right* "vital role," they could easily change all of subsequent history... or so he tells them.

Hyperdimensional Walking Stick is the envy of scientists and adventurers everywhere (and even a few of Earth's twenty-first century superhumans, who encountered it during one of his trips back to that period). Using dimension-manipulating technology of his own invention, it can teleport him through space and time (or do the same to others), inflict grievous injuries, and protect him. He never goes anywhere without these personal items.

Tateklys lives on Malva — the richest planet in the Galaxy — where he poses as an innocent trader in luxury items. It's an excellent cover that allows for a great deal of travel. He's wealthy even by Malvan standards, though he lives modestly (again, by Malvan standards) with no slaves, assisted only by his servant Shimmering-Red-Violet-Red (see below). An immortal genius, he has a photographic memory, picks up new languages so quickly that he has Universal Translator 14-, and has mastered numerous professions and sciences. Tateklys is extremely well-traveled and has a wide variety of Knowledge Skills on topics as diverse as history, politics, and art. He's also a skilled hand-to-hand combatant, though he strongly prefers not to soil his hands with such things.

In addition to his other abilities, unbeknownst to all but a few people in the Galaxy Tateklys is the Overboss of the Hzeel Outfit. This is a mutually beneficial relationship between Tateklys and lesser Hzeel bosses that requires little coercion or violence on his part to maintain. While he has far less authority than, say, a twentieth-century Sicilian Mafia "boss of bosses," he doesn't have to constantly struggle to maintain his authority, either. For his part the Fashionable One coordinates the various scattered Hzeel Outfit groups, settles their interpersonal disputes, provides funding for interesting new "ventures," purchases pirated luxury items for his store (he gets *very* good prices), and discreetly feeds his followers tiny bits of advanced technology. He's also vastly more intelligent and sophisticated than any Hzeel — and they know it. For their part, the Hzeel bosses pay a fairly modest percentage of their profits to the Overboss, bring him any unique and interesting art objects they acquire, keep him constantly informed of underworld gossip, watch whom ever he's interested in at the moment, and carry out miscellaneous tasks when asked to. Tateklys *suggests* rather than ordering and, interestingly enough, the chaotic Hzeel invariably take his suggestions as orders. The Outfit's activities include smuggling, fencing stolen goods, gambling, slave trading, and blackmail throughout Malvan, Terran, Perseid, and Mon'dabi space.

Campaign Use: The Fashionable One is basically a plot device on two legs. He exists to test and torment the PCs in the most interesting ways the GM can think of, such as forcing them to go on a dangerous quest for an esoteric art object, hurling them into an alternate dimension where they have to battle evil versions of themselves, sending them forward or backward in time, and generally making their lives difficult (though also sometimes profitable!) for his own amusement. Though he's by no means indestructible or undefeatable, Tateklys's skills and gadgets should place him so far out of the PCs' league that they're forced to out-think rather than out-fight him. Generally he rewards wit, ingenuity, and bravery, but punishes directness and indiscriminate violence. Physical violence in particular bores Tateklys; whatever inclinations he had in that direction were sated during his time as Praetor of the Lunar Arena. Heroes who insist on attacking him will quickly find themselves either in space without their spacesuits or subject to some other gruesome fate. By nature he's not violent or a killer, but he has no patience for idiots or for those who deliberately annoy him.

Tateklys's highly profitable criminal enterprises entertain him by bringing him luxury goods and artwork, as well as presenting him with numerous opportunities to come into contact with interesting individuals (such as a group of PCs). When he encounters a person or persons he finds particularly interesting, Tateklys may do a wide variety of things ranging from the innocuous to the terrible to test his newfound "friends." How well the PCs perform according to the Fashionable One's ever-shifting standards determines whether he rewards them with vast wealth and high-tech gadgetry, leaves them completely alone, or disposes of them by teleporting them to some bizarre and inhospitable planet.

Appearance: Tateklys is an unusually tall Malvan with golden skin and narrow, aquiline features that many consider handsome. He has one green and one red eye (though he often wears distinctive violent-tinted sunglasses) and wears his black hair shoulder length. Much of his body is covered in abstract tattoos. His clothing varies depending on his mood, ranging from ordinary (if elegant) Malvan garb, to historical Malvan, Human, or Mon'dabi outfits. He carries his Hyperdimensional Walking Stick everywhere he goes.

SHIMMERING-RED-VIOLET-RED

Tateklys's Energy Being Companion

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
0	STR	-10	9-	Lift 25 kg; 0d6 [1]
0	DEX	-30	9-	OCV: 0/DCV: 0
14	CON	8	12-	
10	BODY	0	11-	
18	INT	8	13-	PER Roll 13-
14	EGO	8	12-	ECV: 5
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
22	COM	7	14-	
0	PD	0		Total: 0 PD (0 rPD)
8	ED	5		Total: 38 ED (30 rED)
4	SPD	30		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
3	REC	0		
28	END	0		
30	STUN	13		Total Characteristic Cost: 44
Movement: Running: 6"/12"				
Flight: 6"/12"				

Cost	Powers	END
31	<i>Azarc'a Energy Pulse:</i> Energy Blast 5d6, Variable Special Effects (any type along the electromagnetic spectrum; +¼)	3
17	<i>Azarc'a Radiation:</i> RKA 1 point, NND (defense is ED Force Field/Force Wall or Life Support [Safe Environment: High Radiation]; +1), Does BODY (+1), Area Of Effect (12" Radius; +1½), Continuous (+1), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½), Persistent (+½), Inherent (+¼); Always On (-½), No Range (-½)	0
30	<i>Azarc'a "Feeding":</i> Absorption 6d6 (energy, to END)	0
45	<i>Energy Form:</i> Force Field (30 ED), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½), Persistent (+½), Inherent (+¼); Always On (-½)	0
60	<i>Energy Body:</i> Desolidification (affected by energy attacks), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½), Persistent (+½), Inherent (+¼); Always On (-½)	0
10	<i>Energy Body:</i> FTL Travel (1 LY/year)	0
18	<i>Energy Body:</i> Flight 6", Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½) (18 Active Points)	0
10	<i>Light Voice:</i> Sight Group Images 1" radius	1
12	<i>Radio Voice:</i> HRRP (Radio Group)	0
5	<i>Vibration Voice:</i> Hearing Group Images 1" radius	1
50	<i>Energy Body:</i> Life Support: Total (including Longevity: Immortality)	0

Skills

14	+7 OCV with Azarc'a Energy Pulse
3	CuK: Terran Empire 13-
3	KS: Galactic History 13-
3	KS: The Music Scene 13-
3	KS: The Art World 13-
3	Language: Malvan (completely fluent; Azarc'an is Native)
3	Language: Terran (completely fluent)
2	Navigation (Space) 13-
3	Scientist
2	1) SS: Astrophysics 13-

- 2 2) SS: Cosmology 13-
 2 3) SS: Mathematics 13-
 2 4) SS: Physics 13-

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 305

Total Cost: 349

75+ Disadvantages

- 15 Psychological Limitation: Curious (Common, Strong)
 30 Susceptibility: takes 3d6 damage per Turn from exposure to Earth-like gravity environments when not in his protective robot "suit" (Very Common)
 229 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 349

Background/History: Shimmering-Red-Violet-Red is an Azarc'a: an energy being whose species evolved in a radiation belt surrounding a Jupiter-like planet in the galactic core. He's a young member of his species, "born" in the early twenty-sixty century when his parent divided into himself and his sibling. Possessing an unusual level of curiosity even for a member of his notoriously inquisitive species, Shimmering-Red-Violet-Red resolved to wander the Galaxy in search of new and interesting phenomena, whether scientific or cultural. After years of drifting through Terran space trading his vast knowledge of physics, cosmology, and galactic history for music and pictures of artwork (both "given" to him digitally by radio signal), he stumbled upon a bizarre scene. A strange looking Malvan ship struck a Terran ship with some sort of beam weapon, at which point the Terran ship ceased to exit. With his knowledge of physics and mathematics the Azarc'a youth could tell that the ship hadn't really vanished. It had been moved through time.

While he knew this was hypothetically possible, Shimmering-Red-Violet-Red hadn't been aware that any "embodied" being currently alive possessed the physical technology to do such a thing. He approached the Malvan ship and asked permission to engage its captain in conversation. The captain, an ancient being named Tateklys, was more than willing to talk to the exotic energy being. The two of them spent months chatting, during which time Tateklys made the young Azarc'a an offer he couldn't refuse: if he was willing to work as the Malvan's servant and companion, Tateklys would teach him how to inhabit the body of a robot, allowing him to enter the atmosphere of Earth-like planets. As such atmospheres are normally fatal to members of his species, Shimmering-Red-Violet-Red would be the first Azarc'a to explore the surfaces of such planets. He would become prestigious among his kind and, when he split into his children, they too would possess such knowledge. He readily accepted.

Since that time Shimmering-Red-Violet-Red has worked as Tateklys's servant and companion, accompanying the Fashionable One on many adventures through time, space, and even alien dimensions. He's faced dangers that no other Azarc'a has ever braved and witnessed events

SHIMMERING-RED-VIOLET-RED PLOT SEEDS

Tateklys has forced the PCs to go on a dangerous mission to the cursed planet of Ysh'a-Hnathsh (WoE 157-158). When they enter the system they find they have a stow-away. Shimmering-Red-Violet-Red hid his android body in the ship's cargo hold, and now wants to help them explore the homeworld of the Thane. But will the energy being be a help or a hindrance?

Shimmering-Red-Violet-Red has contracted an unknown malady. In his guise as a Malvan merchant Tateklys hires the PCs to transport the ailing energy being to his homeworld in the Galactic Core. Given that his own ship can travel the distance instantly, what is the Fashionable One's *real* motivation?

After transporting them against their will to early twenty-first century Earth, Tateklys equips the PCs with a variety of powerful gadgets that allow them to become something called "superheroes." He equips his trusty servant Shimmering-Red-Violet-Red with a containment suit so that he can join them. Unfortunately, the energy being doesn't seem to be getting the hang of the whole superhero thing....

no being of his kind has ever seen. But mostly Shimmering-Red-Violet-Red lives in his android “body” and performs the tasks that any standard House Android would: cleaning, cooking, shopping, working as a chauffeur, and keeping track of Tateklys’s finances. All of which he finds fascinating... since he’s the first member of his species to ever do things like this!

Personality/Motivation: Like all of his people Shimmering-Red-Violet-Red likes to learn, see new things, and have new experiences. The ability to remember and pass along such experiences is both currency and status among the Az’arc’a. Thus, his close association with Tateklys has made Shimmering-Red-Violet-Red very, very “rich” and extraordinarily prestigious by the standards of his own kind, a fact for which he’s quite grateful. The fact that “embodied” persons tend to regard Tateklys as a criminal matters little to him, as concepts like “theft,” “prostitution,” and “smuggling” are difficult for members of his species to understand.

In addition to his duties as servant and companion, Shimmering-Red-Violet-Red sees himself as Tateklys’s bodyguard (though in reality the young Az’arc’a is quite vulnerable outside of his android body, and Malvan villain has had to protect him from harm on several occasions). Still, if he thinks Tateklys is in serious danger, Shimmering-Red-Violet-Red will attempt to place his robot body between his benefactor and harm. If that well-built form becomes incapacitated, he’ll leave it and use his innate energy manipulation abilities in to protect Tateklys, even if exposure to an Earth-like gravity environment costs him his own life.

Such unpleasanties aside, Shimmering-Red-Violet-Red is quite an engaging character. He has a naturally agreeable disposition and genuinely enjoys conversing on whatever topic a PC wishes to talk about. Between his own Knowledge Skills and those contained within the electronic mind of his android body he can discourse on a wide variety of topics in an educated manner. If a PC wishes to talk about something he knows nothing about, Shimmering-Red-Violet-Red will politely listen and attempt to remember everything he hears. After all, to him knowledge isn’t only power. It’s wealth, too.

Quote: “How would your guests like their eggs cooked, Lord Tateklys?”

Powers/Tactics: Shimmering-Red-Violet-Red has two distinct bodies with very different abilities. As an energy being inhabiting a House Android (ST 32-33) body with Personal Assistant and Chauffeur Skill Sets, he can interact with the physical world and has access to a wide variety of programs contained within its circuits. He can cook, clean, mix drinks, drive a hovercraft, work on Tateklys’s spaceship, talk via the body’s radio circuits, or set broken bones — all with relative ease. But his natural form is a sphere of pulsing energy. Without the robot body to help him, he can’t touch physical

objects (or be touched), but he can “speak” in a crude fashion by making objects in his immediate vicinity vibrate, creating a sort of voice. (He can communicate with his own kind by manipulating light over short distances or transmitting and receiving via radio waves over long distances.) He can also fly slowly in gravity environments, but at the speed of light in space. Additionally, Shimmering-Red-Violet-Red’s energy body gives him Total Life Support (though he’s extremely vulnerable to Earth-like atmospheres). He’s also practically immortal, as his offspring retain all of his memories when he gives birth/dies (though his personality will vanish).

Shimmering-Red-Violet-Red is a young and weak member of his species. His END is very limited, and he relies on being shot at with energy weapons to boost it using Absorption (he has a 30 ED Force Field, however). If faced with a combat situation while in his energy body form, Shimmering-Red-Violet-Red tries to defend himself and his friends using his Energy Blast. (He can use his EB’s Variable Special Effects to exploit an opponent’s Limitations or Disadvantages.) Furthermore, like all Az’arc’a, Shimmering-Red-Violet-Red’s unshielded body gives off low levels of deadly radiation that can harm anyone near him. His robot body contains this radiation, as do the walls of all spaceships, so it’s not a problem under normal circumstances.

When in his robot body, Shimmering-Red-Violet-Red can handle physical objects and suffers no ill effects from being in a gravity environment, but he gets no benefit from his Desolidification. The body contains his Az’arc’a Radiation power (making it useless), and only lets him use his Az’arc’a Energy Pulse if he can touch the target (in game terms it makes that attack No Range). He also can’t use his FTL Travel, his Absorption, or his Flight. (You can buy this as a Multiform if you like, but that’s generally not necessary for a minor supporting character like Shimmering-Red-Violet-Red.)

WHAT THEY SAY: SHIMMERING-RED- VIOLET-RED

Glowing-Purple-Golden-Purple, Az’arc’a Elder: “Shimmering-Red-Violet-Red may be the most interesting member of our species alive today. When I met him in orbit around Ergath several years ago he explained the concept of “smell” to me. Not abstractly — he’s actually experienced this sensation himself. I’m still contemplating it.”

Faran Drrew, Malvan Socialite: “Oh, it took a few years, but I figured out that young Tateklys’s android servant isn’t really a robot. There’s something else in there, something funny and smart. Fascinating, really. I don’t know what it is.”

The Phazor of Malva: “Shimmering-Red-Violet-Red? Tateklys’s robot slave has a name? I really have to have a word with that boy.”

Campaign Use: Shimmering-Red-Violet-Red is Tateklys's servant and friend, and will be encountered in the company of the Fashionable One under most circumstances performing innocuous tasks such as driving his hovercraft, serving drinks to the PCs, or simply holding one of Tateklys's many hand-tailored overcoats. He's indistinguishable from any standard House Android unless either (a) he reveals his true nature, or (b) a PC with KS: Robotic interacts with him for more than a couple of minutes, at which point it will become readily obvious that Shimmering-Red-Violet-Red isn't an android (or at least a normal one).

Upon occasion Shimmering-Red-Violet-Red performs assignments for Tateklys in his normal energy body form. These might include quietly tracking the PCs through a solar system (Az'arc'a are hard to detect and aren't particularly suspicious when they're detected), delivering a message to a Hzeel boss, or observing some sort of hyper-space anomaly that Tateklys finds interesting. It's unlikely that the Fashionable One would send his companion on any mission he thinks might be dangerous.

To make Shimmering-Red-Violet-Red more capable, increase his STUN to 40 and decrease his Susceptibility to 1d6. To make him less capable, reduce his Force Field to 15 ED.

Appearance: In his natural form Shimmering-Red-Violet-Red resembles a spherical mass of glowing, multicolored plasma 10 meters in diameter — something like a pulsating field made of rainbows. Most sentient species find his appearance to be incredibly beautiful; Human observers have described the Az'arc'a as “angelic and god-like.” When encased in his robotic shell he appears to be a Malvan-proportioned House Android whose exterior has been powder-coated with a thin layer of gold. When in his form he dresses in clothing appropriate to his tasks: a chauffeur outfit when driving, a business suit when acting as a personal assistant, a chef's costume when cooking, and so forth.

BOSS ZRAMAN

Hzeel Outfit Boss Of The Sol System

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
13	STR	3	12-	Lift 150 kg; 2½d6 [3]
14	DEX	12	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
15	CON	10	12-	
10	BODY	0	11-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll 12-
11	EGO	2	11-	ECV: 4
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
10	COM	0	11-	
5	PD	2		Total: 8 PD (3 rPD)
5	ED	2		Total: 8 ED (3 rED)
4	SPD	16		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
8	REC	4		
30	END	0		
40	STUN	15		Total Characteristic Cost: 74

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers	END
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13	<i>Hzeel Dirty Infighting:</i> HA +4d6; Hand-To-Hand Attack (-½)	2
7	<i>Hzeel Healing:</i> Healing 1 BODY, Can Heal Limbs, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½), Persistent (+½); Extra Time + Increased Time Increment (1 BODY per Week; -3), Self Only (-½)	0
5	<i>Hzeel Eyes:</i> Nightvision	0
4	<i>Hzeel Eyes:</i> +2 PER with Sight Group	0

Perks

4	Fringe Benefit: Hzeel Outfit Boss
5	Money: Well Off
60	Well-Connected and 57 points' worth of Contacts and Favors in the Terran intelligence community, Sol System underworld, and the like

Talents

6	Combat Luck (3 PD/3 ED)
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Skills

8	+1 with All Combat
3	+1 with Forgery, Gambling, and Streetwise
5	+1 with Knowledge Skills
3	Bribery 12-
1	Bugging 8-
3	Concealment 12-
2	Forgery (Art Objects) 12-
4	Gambling (Card Games, Dice Games) 12-
2	Language: Terran (fluent conversation; Hzeel is Native)
3	KS: The Espionage World 12-
5	KS: The Sol System Underworld 14-
3	Shadowing 12-
7	Streetwise 14-
3	Systems Operation (Environmental Systems, Medical Systems) 12-
4	TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles, Terran Space Vehicles
4	WF: Common Melee Weapons, Human Small Arms

BOSS ZRAMAN
PLOT SEEDS

After their most recent adventure gained them Galactic notoriety, Tateklys has taken an interest in the PCs. Under his direction, Boss Zraman has kidnapped one of their NPCs and discreetly shipped her to a hidden location deep in the Thorgon Hegemony. He's also left a variety of very convincing false clues linking the crime to the Clone Mob. As the PCs begin their investigation, Zraman comes forward with bits of helpful advice, guiding them toward their glory... or doom.

In his guise as a “businessman specializing in import/export,” Boss Zraman has hired the PCs to take a load of original artwork from Earth to Malva. Of course the artwork is stolen and the legitimate owners are *extremely* angry....

To make way for their own criminal enterprises, the PCs must first push the Hzeel Outfit out of the Sol System. They begin slowly unraveling things from the bottom of the Outfit up, but before too long they decide they have to eliminate Boss Zraman. Unfortunately for the PCs, they don't realize exactly who's looking out for the Hzeel gangster's interests.

- 3 Jack Of All Trades
2 1) PS: Blackmailer 12-
2 2) PS: Fence 12-
2 3) PS: Pimp 12-
2 4) PS: Slave Trader 12-
2 5) PS: Smuggler 12-

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 177

Total Cost: 251

75+ Disadvantages

- | | |
|-----|--|
| 20 | Hunted: Clone Mob 11- (As Pow, NCI, Kill) |
| 10 | Psychological Limitation: Loyal To Over- |
| | Boss (Common, Moderate) |
| 10 | Social Limitation: Minority (Hzeel) (Fre- |
| | quently, Minor) |
| 15 | Social Limitation: Harmful Secret (is the |
| | Sol System Boss) (Frequently, Major) |
| 20 | Social Limitation: Subject To Orders (Very |
| | Frequently, Major) |
| 101 | Experience Points |

Total Disadvantage Points: 251

Background/History: “Boss” Zraman was born into a family of Hzeel patriot-idealists living in a domed surface colony on the devastated planet of Zeel. His parents believed strongly in reclaiming Zeel from the catastrophic destruction wreaked upon it by the Perseids. They spent their lives selflessly trying to terraform sections of ruined Zeel, but the limitations of Hzeel ATRI 9 technology, the policies of the Perseid Empire, and the poverty of the Zeel system always kept this goal out of reach. Yet they believed one day their blasted desert of a world would once again bloom into garden paradise.

Young Zraman knew better. Zeel was dead. It was time to move on.

As soon as he was able, the Hzeel teenager caught a ride on a freighter out of Perseid space to the comparative freedom of the Terran Empire. Over the course of several years he worked his way to Earth's solar system via cargo ships using skills as a lifsystems officer that he'd learned on Zeel. It wasn't glamorous, but it paid his way and gave him plenty of opportunities to hone other valuable skills such as gambling and smuggling. When he finally arrived on Earth he presented himself to the Sol System's Hzeel boss as a useful employee. Always clever, Zraman also had an unusual request: he wanted to try working in *all* of the different areas of the Outfit's operations. Intrigued, the system boss granted him his desire. Over the next decade Zraman worked as fence, a pimp, a burglar, a smuggler, and a slaver, generally switching professions every couple of years. He was highly proficient at each task, seldom being caught and quickly

bribing his way out of trouble on those rare occasions when he was apprehended. His criminal apprenticeship was capped by six years in the most prestigious of all Hzeel professions: spy and blackmailer. For half a decade he gathered information on Earth's rich and famous, engaged in industrial espionage for a variety of commercial concerns, and freelanced for various Terran intelligence services.

After almost 20 years of service Zraman “graduated,” becoming a full member of the Sol System’s Hzeel Outfit and its boss’s primary lieutenant. As part of his promotion he was put in touch with the Hzeel Outfit’s galactic Overboss — an enigmatic figure who only communicated by courier. The Overboss gave Zraman an interesting new assignment. He was instructed to steal various pieces of valuable artwork, replacing them with clever forgeries. The Overboss himself would buy the originals, and provided Zraman with instructions on how to produce the forgeries.

The scheme proved quite successful. Zraman became considerably wealthier and, over the next few years, grew more and more impressed with the intelligence and criminal acumen of the Outfit's supreme leader. By the time the Sol System's boss died he'd become the wealthiest Hzeel on Earth (not to mention the most skilled criminal of that criminal race). Zraman became Boss Zraman and, following his predecessor's explicit instructions, made the pilgrimage to Malva to meet the Overboss. Though initially distressed that the supreme and secret leader of the Hzeel race is in fact a Malvan, Boss Zraman quickly saw the advantages of having Tateklys as a superior. The Fashionable One was already 15 times older than any Hzeel who'd ever lived, providing the kind of consistent leadership his species had lacked for centuries. He was also one of the richest and most devious men in the Galaxy.

Together they got down to business.

Personality/Motivation: Raised in hardscrabble poverty by idealistic parents, Boss Zraman rejects both poverty and idealism in equal measure. His goal in life is to die as rich as possible, surrounded by luxuries and beautiful women, and leave a successful, well-organized Outfit to carry on without him. He has no illusions about his own mortality or that of his shattered and despised species. In fact, he feels a strange sort of ethnic brotherhood with Tateklys despite their obvious differences. Though the Malvans are tall, beautiful, and rich and the Hzeel short, repulsive, and poor, both species are slowly, inevitably dwindling into nothingness.

EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
MIP-140 Ion Pistol	+0	+0	2½d6/(9d6)	0	9	20	

Armor

Armored Clothing (Armor (2 PD/2 ED))

Gear: Pocket computer

Boss Zraman does whatever he must to meet his (and Tateklys's) goals. Though not especially cruel or bloodthirsty, he routinely and dispassionately kills to achieve his ends. Blunt, businesslike, well-connected to the intelligence community, and not particularly prone to desires for vengeance, he's in many respects the perfect tool for the Overboss's ambitions in the Sol System. Boss Zraman sees himself as a successful businessman whose areas of enterprise simply happen to be illegal on Earth, making them both uniquely difficult and profitable in equal measure.

Zraman's personal vices are moderate. He enjoys dressing well, eating well, and lives on a luxuriously-apportioned *Shamrock*-class yacht (ST 93-94) with a tall, sophisticated Jhinu mistress (see below). He's frank but relatively polite in his dealings, which has given him a reputation for honesty in the Earth underworld. He currently has a dozen or so young children tucked away in various private schools in the hopes that a refined education will prove valuable when they're brought into the Outfit.

Quote: "Interesting. But so far I don't see how letting you live makes me money. Would you care to explain more systematically before I flush you out of my airlock?"

Powers/Tactics: Zraman's greatest powers are knowledge and influence, both of which he possesses in great measure. His status as a mobster isn't any particular secret to the Terran Empire's intelligence community, either. He has contacts with agents of the TSS, Mind Police, and Terran Intelligence Command, and never fails to make his services available to them when requested with no strings attached. ("I'm a criminal, but I'm a Terran criminal" is his explanation.) Because of Tateklys's unique needs the entire Hzeel Outfit functions fairly well as a galactic spy network. On several occasions the Outfit has provided vital information to the Empire, so many officials within the government turn a blind eye to Boss Zraman's various criminal schemes.

Raised by survivalist parents, Boss Zraman is as handy with his fists as he is with a rifle, pistol, or blade... though he prefers to leave violence to

his underlings. Under normal circumstances the only equipment he carries is a cigar and a bottle of decent wine, though he owns a fine ion pistol. He seldom travels anywhere without a couple of heavily-armed Hzeel bodyguards and his mistress, a former Imperial Marine martial arts instructor and weapons expert.

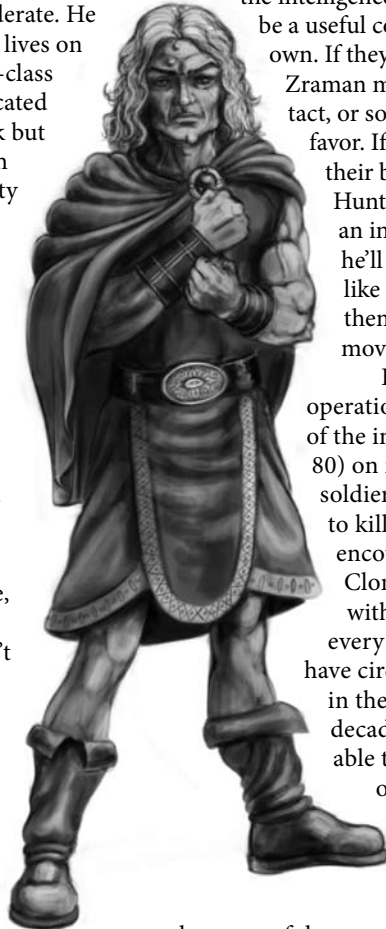
Campaign Use: Boss Zraman is an excellent example of an Hzeel Outfit boss. As such, his potential use as an NPC is almost limitless. If the PCs work for the TSS, Mind Police, or another branch of the intelligence community, Zraman could be a useful contact with resources of his own. If they're law enforcement officers Zraman might be an opponent, a contact, or someone who owes them a favor. If they're criminals he could be their boss or a dangerous rival who Hunts them. Should Tateklys take an interest in the PCs, it's likely he'll have a trusted Outfit boss like Zraman investigate or engage them before he makes his opening move.

Boss Zraman's interests and operations have run up against those of the infamous Clone Mob (pages 80) on more than one occasion. His soldiers have standing instructions to kill any clone of Jax Maljek they encounter. For their part, the Clones have a hit out on Zraman, with a reward that grows bigger every year. The two organizations have circled one another endlessly in the Terran underworld for a decade now, with neither being able to deal a fatal blow to the other.

If you wish to make Boss Zraman more powerful, increase his BODY to 15. If you wish to make him

less powerful, remove his Combat Skill Levels.

Appearance: Boss Zraman is a richly-dressed, distinguished-looking older Hzeel. Handsome by the standards of his own kind, he has blue-grey skin, large red eyes, shoulder length white hair, and knobby features. He wears only the finest hand-tailored examples of Hzeel garb: a shirt-like upper garment with a cloak-like garment worn over it and a gold embroidered kilt.



BOSS ZRAMAN'S QUOTES

Major Allyssa Barth, ISS Agent: ::frowning:: "Yes, I know Boss Zraman. He's obviously the leader of the Hzeel Outfit on Earth, but I've never been able to get anything on him. Even if I caught him robbing the Empress at gunpoint it probably wouldn't matter. He has friends... friends in high places."

Tateklys, The Fashionable One: "It's no particular secret that I like the Hzeel. I spent several decades living on their ruined homeworld of Zeel, and I suppose a bit of their *Weltanschauung* crept into my psyche during that time. I find their bluntness and aggressiveness refreshing rather than alarming. Our two races share the common bond of creeping doom: the Perseids destroyed them, while we Malvans have destroyed ourselves."

TALOR HALAZ

Hzeel Outfit Pilot And Smuggler

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 [2]
12	DEX	6	11-	OCV: 4/DCV: 4
10	CON	0	11-	
8	BODY	-4	11-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll 12-/14-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
10	PRE	0	11-	PRE Attack: 2d6
10	COM	0	11-	
5	PD	3		Total: 5 PD (0 rPD)
5	ED	3		Total: 5 ED (0 rED)
3	SPD	8		Phases: 4, 8, 12
5	REC	2		
20	END	0		
31	STUN	13		Total Characteristic Cost: 34

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers	END
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7	<i>Hzeel Healing:</i> Healing 1 BODY, Can Heal Limbs, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½), Persistent (+½); Extra Time + Increased Time Increment (1 BODY per Week; -2½), Self Only (-½)	0
5	<i>Hzeel Eyes:</i> Nightvision	0
4	<i>Hzeel Eyes:</i> +2 PER with Sight Group	0

Perks

1	Fringe Benefit: Starship License
1	Fringe Benefit: Hzeel Outfit member

Talents

4	Environmental Movement: Zero-G Training (no penalty in zero gravity)
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Skills

3	<i>Smuggler Skills:</i> +1 with Bribery, Concealment, and Persuasion
3	Bribery 11-
7	Combat Piloting 13-
3	Computer Programming (Personal Computers, Infiltration) 12-
3	Concealment 12-
2	Forgery (Documents) 12-
2	Language: Terran (fluent conversation; Hzeel is Native)
3	Mechanics 12-
4	Navigation (Space, Hyperspace, Displacement) 12-
3	Persuasion 11-
3	PS: Space Scavenger 12-
3	Streetwise 11-
8	Systems Operation (Communication Systems, Environmental Systems, and GM's choice of Sensor Systems and Weapon Systems) 11-
5	Trading 12-
4	WF: Human Advanced Small Arms, Starship Weapons (Centurion Eagle and one other type of GM's choice)
2	TF: Human Space Vehicles

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 80

Total Cost: 114

75+ Disadvantages

10	Hunted: various police forces 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
20	Psychological Limitation: Hatred Of Ackálians (Common, Total)
10	Social Limitation: Minority (Hzeel) (Frequently, Minor)
20	Social Limitation: Subject To Orders (Very Frequently, Major)

Total Disadvantage Points: 135

Background/History: Talor Halaz was born between the stars. His parents were independent scavengers (a respectable profession by Hzeel standards) operating a salvage operation in the unclaimed systems of the Voršan Expanse with the sanction of the Mon'dabi Federation. Unfortunately, a misunderstanding between his family's salvage ships and an Ackálian warship led to an exchange of fire. Soon Halaz's parents lay dead in the wreckage of their broken ship and he was an orphan. The attack also exposed him to so much radiation that his health has never completely recovered.

Talor was raised by his aunts and uncles, drifting from space wreck to space wreck harvesting metal, old Hyperdrive shunts, and fusion plant cores. He also learned the ins and outs of interstellar navigation, spaceship operation, computer programming, and trading. When he came of age Talor left the family business and went to work for Rim League Hzeel Outfit for several years as a pilot, smuggling small loads between the Terran Empire, Ackálian Empire, and Mon'dabi Federation. Careful, financially conservative, ambitious, and extremely difficult to catch, he saved enough money and gained enough prestige to be transferred to the most esteemed of all Hzeel organizations: the Sol System Outfit. Once there, he quickly distinguished himself as a smuggler by taking only the most perilous and difficult jobs the Outfit had to offer. Now Talor Halaz is one of Boss Zraman's most trusted pilots, not only smuggling stolen goods but upon occasion piloting his personal ship, making the Earth-Malva run, and sometimes even transporting legitimate goods.

Personality/Motivation: Talor Halaz is a pretty straightforward guy, interested in making as much money as possible in as short a period of time as possible for doing the thing he's good at. Like most Hzeel he's in a big hurry. With an average lifespan of only 60 years, no Hzeel can afford to take his time in life. Though he's loyal enough to the Hzeel Outfit — Talor has turned down several offers to work for rival criminal organizations — he doesn't plan on dying for it. He's not a coward, but he's paid to fly spacecraft, not get killed.

One exception to Halaz's normally cool and collected personality is his hatred of Ackálians. Since they're responsible for the death of his parents and his ongoing poor health, he despises all members of that species an absolute, illogical passion. He'll go out of his way to harm — or at the very least inconvenience — any Ackálian he

EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Mark II-Q Laser Pistol	+1	+2	2½d6	+0	8	16	

Armor

Armored clothing (Armor (2 PD/2 ED))

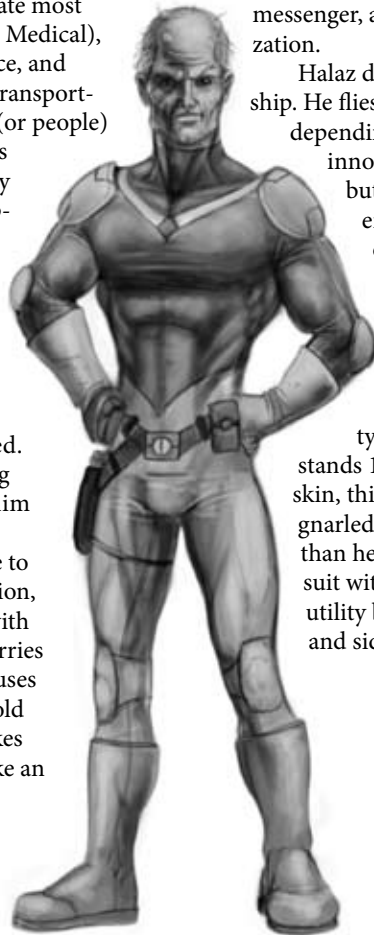
Gear: Various tools for repairing and maintaining small starships; pocket computer; pocket holo-entertainment unit; lucky antique Hzeel coin

encounters, assuming he can do so without getting hurt or risking a mission he's on.

Quote: "I'm in charge of taking you to Malva, not the brig of Her Majesty's battleship. So hold on; things are going to get dicey."

Powers/Tactics: Talor Halaz is a skilled pilot who specializes in smuggling (though he'll happily do something legal if asked). He knows how to fly in a combat situation, operate most ship's systems (he's never learned Medical), and navigate in Space, Hyperspace, and Displacement. He's an expert at transporting small cargos of illegal goods (or people) under the noses of the authorities without getting caught, usually by cleverly concealing his illicit shipment within a completely legal one or placing it in a hidden compartment. He's also proficient at forging documents. Halaz prefers to work alone using small freighters, yachts, or courier ships, but is willing to work as part of a crew if asked. He'll fly anything, really, so long as the Outfit continues to pay him generously.

Halaz's has a low BODY due to his childhood exposure to radiation, but he's not weak and can fight with his fists if he needs to. He also carries a laser pistol, though he seldom uses it, and usually only draws it to hold an opponent at bay while he makes his escape (though he might make an exception for an Ackálian).



Campaign Use: Talor Halaz is a good example of a useful Hzeel Outfit member. He's not much of a warrior (though he's perfectly capable of putting up a fight), but put him at the helm of a small spaceship and he quickly begins to shine. Should the PCs find themselves working for Tateklys, Boss Zraman, or any other Hzeel Outfit boss for that matter, they'll encounter Halaz or someone very much like him working as a pilot, chauffeur, messenger, and general "soldier" of the organization.

Halaz doesn't actually own his own spaceship. He flies whatever the Outfit issues him depending on the job, usually an aging (and innocuous) Centurion Eagle (ST 92-93) but occasionally other ships. On several occasions he has even flown one of the Sol Outfit's small (and secret) fleet of fighters in combat situations, but he prefers sneaking and fleeing over warfare whenever possible.

Appearance: Talor Halaz is a typical-looking young Hzeel. He stands 1.2 meters tall and has bluish-grey skin, thin white hair, and large red eyes. His gnarled skin makes him look a lot older than he's. He dresses in a blue spacer jumpsuit with no markings. He usually wears a utility belt with tools, a pocket computer, and sidearm attached to it.

WHAT THEY SAY: LONG A'SHEN

Thaagril Three-Eyes, Pirate Captain: “The skinny coward is useful in a fight, and his total fear of me makes him an ideal second in command. I’ll use him until I have to kill him.”

Major Eve Wang, Terran Intelligence Command: “The defection of Long a’Shen is potentially a very dangerous situation. He possesses information that could change the balance in a war between the Terran and Ackálian Empires. Any agent coming into contact with a’Shen should apprehend him immediately. Failing that, kill him.”

Verma a’Shen, Long’s mother: “I grieve for my lost and murderous son. I also blame myself for his actions. We Zurites have so few children now that we shamelessly spoil and indulge those we do produce. That is unfortunately what Long is — a spoiled, dangerous child.”

Read more about Long A’Shen on page 91

WHAT THEY SAY: THE LORD VORPAL

Geiger Cray, Mind Police Assistant Director: “All other considerations aside, it’s my belief that the Church of the Infinite Dark and its so-called Void Messiahs are the greatest threat the Empire — and, indeed, all of galactic civilization — currently faces. Any agent with information leading to the capture or destruction of its members should report to me immediately.”

Relarch, Vashyyl V’hanic Agent: “I have experienced the pain caused by this “Lord Vorpal” myself. While I was on a trade mission to a newly discovered species to the rimward of our empire, his peculiar ship dropped out of hyperspace and began attacking their sun. We attempted to intercede, but in the end could do nothing. The pain I experienced when 500 million intelligent minds were snuffed out at once is beyond description. I don’t know how I survived it.”

Read more about The Lord Vorpal on page 65

WHAT THEY SAY: MISTER MORE

Rigel Stargraver, Master Criminal and Psindicate Lord: “Sure Mister More is big and obvious. He’s also one of the best Managers in Human space. Very profitable. When the guy sweats, he wipes liquid creds from his brow.”

Maurice Chang, Karilath ISP Officer: “More is the reason the Gha’krl Mob’s rolling in contraband rather than rotting in jail. I’d love to ship that monster off to a prison planet somewhere, but I’ve got nothing on him. The local police are no help either. Bastards are rotten to the core — either bought or trying to get bought.”

✿ **Smells-Your-Fear:** “He’s the only one who doesn’t fear me. Instead, I fear him. It’s a great truth.”

Read more about Mister More on page 101



GROUPS

SCOURGES OF THE GALAXY • CHAPTER 2

ON LORD VORPAL

‘... it’s my belief that the Church of the Infinite Dark and its so-called Void Messiahs are the greatest threat the Empire currently faces. Any agent with information leading to the capture or destruction of its members should report to me immediately.’

— Geiger Cray, Mind Police Assistant Director

THE CHURCH OF THE INFINITE DARK



Membership: Impossible to say. Named for the vast distances that exist between star systems, the Church of the Infinite Dark is comprised of somewhere around a dozen semi-autonomous cults of personality directed by powerful leaders known as *Void Messiahs*. Each one of these leaders presumably has hundreds of followers aboard his massive ship, but recordkeeping has never been the Church of the Infinite Dark's strong point.

Background/History: For millions of years black-hearted sentients of all sorts have worshipped certain terrible entities that inhabit the strange, negatory dimensions known as the Qliphothic World. Called simply the Kings of Edom, these powerful beings may or may not be aware of this worship, and may or may not care. Whether they know of humanity and have any intentions toward it, none can truly say... but throughout the ages, disturbed individuals have devoted themselves to serving them.

In a time long past, a coalition of other powerful entities made a pact to fight the Edomites. Only the names of these mysterious beings have come down to us through occult legend: the Fire-Bearer; the Lord of the Jeweled Spider; the Angel of Cold Shadow; and many more. Though unimaginably powerful, even together these entities could not destroy the Kings of Edom, but they were able to defeat them and bind them in secret prison dimensions and on dead worlds.

Unthinkable numbers of millennia passed. The entities who'd bound the Kings faded into legend... and the bonds which held them began to weaken with age. A million years ago the Elder Worm, a cruel species of dark origin, learned of the Kings and began worshipping them. Whether because of the Kings' favor or their own strange abilities, the Elder Worm waxed in power, threatening the very Galaxy with their foulness. Five hundred thousand years ago the Elder Worm and the Golden Warriors of Malva contended in a clash that shook the Milky Way. Malvan science and technology and valor were pitted against Elder Worm sorcery and guile. After a long and bitter struggle, the Malvans won, all but destroying the Elder Worm and any chance they had of freeing the Kings.

Thousands of centuries passed, and worshippers of the Kings came and went. Some were isolated, deranged fanatics, driven mad by what they learned; others, like the twentieth-century cult DEMON, were more organized, powerful, and dangerous. Beginning in the mid-twenty-sixth century, a new group of worshippers has come to the Edomite

cause: the Church of the Infinite Dark.

Organization/Structure: Though the "Church" of the Infinite Dark is powerful and quite dangerous, it would be very misleading to think of it as a unified, hierarchical religious organization like the Church of the Galactic Creator. The Church of the Infinite Dark consists of about a dozen autonomous cults of personality directed by powerful leaders known as *Void Messiahs*. Each one is dedicated to freeing a different King of Edom. Though these cult leaders are aware of one another and have been known to cooperate under extraordinary circumstances (such as when they're threatened by PCs in a powerful spaceship), they're essentially competitors and thus don't willingly work together under normal conditions.

Each cult tends to be organized in roughly the same way. A Void Messiah comes seemingly out of nowhere to found the cult, generally after stealing a starship. He then begins to attract followers known as *Black Apostles*. These followers generally know very little about their leader's goals other than that they've been promised great wealth, power, and immortality if they help him run the ship, build bizarre super-weapons, or in some other manner forward his schemes. The cult then drifts between the stars, growing and waiting for a chance to do its foul work. Black Apostles are usually allowed to loot, murder, and kidnap at will right before the Void Messiah "modifies" a particular solar system (see below) — a perk which has attracted some of the most dangerous and depraved sentient life-forms in known space to the Church of the Infinite Dark's banner. They serve as crew and assistants to the Void Messiah as he works toward his goal, but are otherwise completely expendable. A Void Messiah sacrifices his Black Apostles without a second thought, and they likewise kill each other out of hand as their madness increases due to their chosen King's all-pervasive and unseen influence.

Group Relations: Void Messiahs and their cults are entirely individualistic, though they do share some common characteristics. Each Messiah was once a brilliant scientist or scholar who somehow had a mind-bending vision of Qliphothic space or the Kings of Edom. Perhaps he stumbled across it in his research, perhaps the Kings sent it, perhaps some other agency is at work, or maybe he just did the wrong thing at the wrong time... no one will ever know. But regardless of their source, the visions are fundamentally the same. They instruct the Void Messiah to radically alter the entire Milky Way Galaxy with the goal of creating a vast three-

dimensional pattern spread across its millions of stars. Once this pattern has been completed, the Void Messiah will become an all-powerful avatar of a particular King of Edom (or so his dreams tell him), allowing him or her to rule over known space until the end of time. Each Void Messiah has stolen (or otherwise obtained) a large ship with FTL drive capabilities and crewed it with hundreds of fanatical cultists of various sorts. Over time these ships grow to be the size of Imperial super-dreadnaughts as various massive and peculiar devices designed to fulfill the Void Messiah's insane plans are grafted onto their hulls.

Void Messiahs don't cooperate except under the most desperate circumstances. Their plans to remake the Galaxy are never complementary and in many cases actually contradict one another. When one Void Messiah completes a portion of his pattern it sometimes disrupts or destroys a section of another Void Messiah's pattern, forcing him to go back and undo the work that his "co-religionist" just completed. Furthermore, each Void Messiah believes fervently that his particular King of Edom will make *him* the all-powerful, immortal, and indestructible ruler of the Galaxy — which doesn't leave a lot of room for other all-powerful, immortal, and indestructible rulers of the Galaxy. Thus every leader of the Church of the Infinite Dark is in a high-stakes race with every other leader to become a god. This doesn't encourage a lot of intra-church cooperation.

Unlike the vast majority of religions, cults, and individual madmen throughout history dedicated to freeing the Kings of Edom, Void Messiahs aren't interested in contact with existing Edomite servant creatures or races. Some (if not all) of them are aware of the existence of the Thane and their hidden world of Ysh'a-Hnathsh, the members of the Church of the Infinite Dark have no curiosity when it comes to these Qliphothic adherent-sentients or their corporeal artifacts. In a completely new direction for followers of the dread Edomites, Void Messiahs are focused on creating their own relics and henchmen through (mad) science, not finding and binding the archaic leftovers of a superstition known as "magic." Whether this approach will work where all previous ones have failed remains to be seen.

Tactics: The star-pattern each Void Messiah wants to create is unique, since each one's vision differs in the particulars (in theory based on whichever King he's "in contact" with, but that assumes the Kings know about all this). To create this pattern a Void Messiah must alter individual stars or solar systems in a distinctive matter best suited to allowing his King to achieve ultimate power, manifest in Earth's reality, or whatever else it is the King supposedly wants. (Since the Kings do not directly communicate with anyone, and may not even be aware of Humanity's existence, it's hard to discern their motives.) So far all of the Void Messiahs have carefully restricted their activities to unexplored or unclaimed space outside of the control of any galactic government. But the day is coming when

they'll have to strike at one of the Galaxy's many empires if they're going to complete their patterns.

Void Messiah ships spend a great deal of time drifting aimlessly through the immense void between solar systems, appearing for all intents and purposes to be lifeless wrecks. They can also be found inexplicably drifting through Hyperspace, though according to ATRI 11 Hyperphysics modeling this shouldn't be possible. These ships are known as *Darkholds* (though each has an individual name) and in most ways you can consider them identical to an Imperial Navy Apocalypse super-dreadnought in size, firepower, and fighter craft capabilities (ST 61-63). However, there are some important differences. The most obvious of these is that each Darkhold possesses a unique super-weapon capable of altering stars and planets to fit a particular King of Edom's desired pattern (see below). Additionally, the "powerless" state of a Darkhold as it drifts in the void is an illusion. The unique and bizarre technology used to construct a Darkhold makes it almost impossible to detect with current ATRI 11 sensor technology besides computerized optics, the naked eye (it isn't invisible), Mind Scan, or some other Mental Power... though psionically scanning a Darkhold may prove to be an unpleasant experience! In game terms this means every Darkhold has:

Darkhold Cloaking Device: *Change Environment 256" radius, -12 to Radio Group PER Rolls, -12 to Infrared Perception PER Rolls, Multiple Combat Effects, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½), Persistent (+½) (212 Active Points); Always On (-½), No Range (-½), Self Only (-½). Total cost: 86 points.*

Thus, any ships unfortunate enough to encounter a Darkhold in space are almost on top of it before they realize what's happening. The Void Messiahs use this to their advantage — they attack by ambush. Once a ship shows signs that it's become aware of the Darkhold, the Darkhold activates a powerful tractor beam capable of pulling even the largest vessels into its grasp.

Darkhold Tractor Beam: *Telekinesis (200 STR) (300 Active Points); OIF Bulky (-1), Real Weapon (-¼), Affects Whole Object (-¼), Limited Arc Of Fire (180 Degrees; -¼). Total cost: 109 points.*

After a starship's been brought alongside the massive bulk of the Darkhold a swarm of Black Apostles in spacesuits emerge from her airlocks and begin welding the captured vessel onto their own. Once it's firmly attached, they begin making extensive modifications to the captive craft — many of them bizarre, irrational, or otherwise seemingly insane — to help fit it into the overall design scheme of their own ship. They may or may not attempt to breach the hull and attack the crew for some time. There have been reliable reports of crews having ample opportunity to use their escape pods even after their ship has been attached to a Darkhold for several Earth standard days. Other reliable reports describe the Black Apostles slaughtering (and sometimes eating) anyone who couldn't get to the escape pods quickly enough.

Though it's roughly the same size and mass as an IAV Apocalypse, a Darkhold resembles no known craft in the Galaxy. It's unsettling, alien appearance strains the eyes of any sane creature. Chaotically-arranged non-Euclidean, organic, or even fourth- and fifth-dimensional structures emerge from its surface. No two Darkholds are alike. One may be configured to resemble a gigantic insect, another a four-dimensional sphere, while a third may have a shape that resembles nothing ever seen in Earth's reality before.

Most of the time a Darkhold simply drifts through empty space while its Void Messiah "communes with" his King of Edom, works on constructing or adjusting its weird equipment, or plans out his next attack. The space between stars and Hyperspace are the realms where Earth's reality is at its weakest, and thus the best place for him to receive prophetic visions. Consequently a Void Messiah may be sluggish in responding to, for example, a group of PCs sneaking aboard his Darkhold or an armada of ships assembling nearby (though his Black Disciples will almost certainly react, though probably in an uncoordinated, chaotic way). However, when roused the Church of the Infinite Dark is a terrible force indeed, capable of destroying fleets of lesser vessels, devastating planets, and even permanently transforming stars.

When a Void Messiah decides to alter a solar system he does so without warning, never providing the system's inhabitants with an opportunity to resist or evacuate (though the Church seldom interferes with evacuations when they do occur). This seeming heartlessness may be for military reasons, or it may be because the Void Messiah and his followers are indeed cruel beyond measure. It could also be because the energy released by the death of millions or billions of sentients is somehow helpful to their Galaxy-altering schemes. But the most likely explanation is that like their Qliphothic masters the followers of the Church of the Infinite Dark don't care about the fate of all other life-forms in existence — or, indeed, existence itself as we understand it. Which leads to an interesting philosophical question: which is more frightening, cruelty or indifference?

Campaign Use: The Church of the Infinite Dark may be the worst threat the Galaxy currently faces. It's impossible to say whether or not the insane, Galaxy-altering schemes of its leaders could possibly work or even how far along they are with their individual plans, but their activities have created a trail of death and destruction that even an interga-

lactic war cannot hope to match. Left unchecked, the Void Messiahs are certain to kill billions more, even if their bizarre designs amount to nothing more than superstition and madness. Obviously, anyone who destroys or weakens the Church would be doing Humanity (and everybody else) a big favor.

At the current time only the Terran Empire's Mind Police and the Varanyi Empire's Vashyyl V'hanic intelligence service have any idea that the Church of the Infinite Dark is more than a twisted, occult fairy tale. But since the Void Messiahs have thus far taken care to avoid striking into either Empire's territory or that of their various rivals, neither agency has had any luck tracking Darkholds or predicting what their next move will be. Heroes interested in hunting down and destroying the Church of the Infinite Dark can expect considerable support (direct or indirect) from either agency in the form of money, expertise, information, and possibly even ships or soldiers. As of yet, however, no one from either organization has had any luck predicting precisely when and where a Void Messiah will strike.

But the Church of the Infinite Dark doesn't exist to be investigated or hunted like some sort of mafia group in any case (though a clever GM could certainly create a fine campaign based on that premise). Rather, it's intended to interject a bit of Horror into the Science Fiction world of the Terran Empire setting. The typical use of the Church in a *Star Hero* campaign goes roughly like this: the PCs almost crash into a massive, seemingly derelict spacecraft drifting in the void. It's invisible to their normal sensor suites. They move closer to investigate, only to be grabbed by a tractor beam of impossible strength. Their craft is brought alongside the vessel, at which point a swarm of spacesuit-wearing humanoids emerges from airlocks and begins welding their vessel to the unknown ship. They cannot escape. A door forms in the wall of their familiar home, leading to an alien wilderness of darkened metal corridors, slimy walls, dangling wires, and devices of unfamiliar design and disturbing purpose. With no other options they move to investigate, only to find this bizarre "dungeon" in space is inhabited by dangerous, heavily-armed madmen in various states of mutation from overexposure to Qliphothic energies. And, at the end of this maze of rusting steel corridor, a horrible intelligence with plans to remake all reality awaits them....

THE LORD VORPAL

Mad Worshipper of Esleggua the Fear-Eater

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
40	STR	50	17-	Lift 6400 kg; 8d6 [4]
17	DEX	21	12-	OCV: 6/DCV: 6
18	CON	16	13-	
21	BODY	24	13-	
18	INT	8	13-	PER Roll 13-
17	EGO	14	12-	ECV: 6
23	PRE	16	14-	PRE Attack: 4½d6
10	COM	0	11-	
12	PD	8		Total: 22 PD (10 rPD)
10	ED	8		Total: 20 ED (10 rED)
4	SPD	13		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
12	REC	0		
50	END	7		
50	STUN	0		Total Characteristic Cost: 187

Movement: Running: 6"/12"**Cost Powers** **END**

175	<i>Fear-Eating:</i> Drain PRE 5d6 and STR 3d6, two Characteristics at once (+½), Ranged (+½), Based On EGO Combat Value (Mental Defense applies; +1), Area Of Effect (16" Cone; +1)	17
37	<i>Vorpal Blade:</i> HKA 2d6 (3d6 with STR), Armor Piercing (+½), Penetrating (+½), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); OAF (-1) 0	0
20	<i>Vorpal Armor:</i> Armor (10 PD/10 ED); OIF (-½)	0
5	<i>Qliphothic Lifespan:</i> Life Support (Longevity: Immortality)	0

Perks

7	Fringe Benefit: Void Messiah	
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Skills

6	+3 with Fear-Eating	
6	+3 with Vorpal Blade	
3	Armorsmith 12-	
3	Combat Piloting 12-	
3	Computer Programming (Personal Computers, Infiltration) 13-	
3	Inventor 13-	
3	AK: The Milky Way Galaxy 13-	
3	KS: Kings of Edom 13-	
3	KS: The TES 13-	
4	Navigation (Dimensional, Hyperspace, Space) 13-	
3	Systems Operation (FTL Sensors, Dimensional Sensors, Jamming) 13-	
3	Tactics 13-	
1	WF: Blades	
3	Weaponsmith (Energy Weapons, Muscle-Powered HTH) 13-	
3	Scientist	
2	1) SS: Dimensional Engineering 13-	
2	2) SS: Hyperspace Physics 13-	
2	3) SS: Mechanical Engineering 13-	
2	4) SS: Physics 13-	
2	5) SS: Qliphothic Engineering 13-	

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 304**Total Cost: 491****75+ Disadvantages**

25	Distinctive Features: Void Messiah (Not Concealable; Causes Extreme Reaction [fear])
25	Psychological Limitation: Inhuman (Can Experience Neither Fear Nor Empathy) (Very Common, Total)
25	Psychological Limitation: Sociopathic Worshiper Of Esleggua The Fear-Eater (Very Common, Total)
15	Reputation: Void Messiah, 14- (Extreme; Known Only To A Small Group)
326	Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 491**Background/History:** Lieutenant Smith rubbed his eyes a second time and peered back into his sensor scope.

"I don't know what it is, Captain. I've never seen an astrophysical phenomenon like it. The ship's computer contains no record of a similar exotic object, either — though it does exhibit physical properties similar to that of both black holes and stars. It might be a neutron star, but the density is completely wrong."

"Interesting." The captain of the *TES Armstrong* rotated his command chair toward his science and sensor officer. He rubbed his chin thoughtfully for a moment, and then began to bark a rapid string of commands. "Flight, establish an orbit at 0.2 AU from the anomaly. S&S, I want you to keep a close eye on it. You have my permission to requisition up to 75% of the computer's processing power to run a detailed analysis of the anomaly. Life Support, I want you to make sure that thing isn't dosing us with some sort of unknown radiation. Keep an eye on your instruments and coordinate with Medical."

"Aye-aye, captain" all three systems officers replied a bit absentmindedly, their attention already focused on their respective tasks. The captain smiled. The *Armstrong's* veteran crew required little supervision. Years spent together exploring the Spinward Territories and Drago's Reach had honed the small group of Terran Exploration Service officers into a single, smoothly operating unit. Rising from his chair he stretched and, after a final satisfied glance about the room, strode from the bridge without ever noticing the way Lt. Smith's left eye was beginning to twitch.

That "night" (as such things are reckoned on a spaceship) the *Armstrong's* Science and Sensors officer tossed and turned in his sleep. Plagued by bizarre nightmares he woke several times with a start, only to be dragged back down to the depths of slumber as if by some invisible hand. When his alarm finally went off, shocking him awake, he had no clear memory of the nightmares that had so affected him. He showered, feeling somehow cold in spite of the scalding temperature of the water he poured over his body. When he peered into the mirror to shave his visage was pale to the point of being corpse-like.

Somehow Smith pulled himself together and staggered onto the bridge. His crewmates eyed him sympathetically but said nothing. Smith was

THE LORD VORPAL PLOT SEEDS

The Lord Vorpal's ship has been sighted near Zmma (TE 84) in the neutral zone between the Terran Empire and the Thorگون Hege-mony. Perhaps not fully understanding the danger the Church of the Infinite Dark represents, the Thorگون Secret Police have launched a covert raid on the *Jabberwocky* in an attempt to gain control of the Qliphothic secrets within. The PCs are part of a joint Human/Mon'dabi team sent to intercept the Thorçons and, if possible, destroy the Void Messiah and his ship.

The time of the Kings has come! Across the Galaxy the Void Messiahs are attacking civilized star systems, killing untold millions and wreaking destruction upon interstellar commerce. Though the various governments of the Milky Way are caught unprepared they quickly move to confront this menace. The PCs are part of a mission sent to stop the *Jabberwocky* before it destroys any more Terran worlds.

The *Jabberwocky* has suddenly dropped out of hyperspace in the Sol System itself! Surrounded by an impenetrable force field and seemingly deaf to all calls from the Terran Empire's government, it's making its way slowly toward the Sun. Fortunately for all life on Earth, one scientist thinks he's cracked the secret of the ominous ship's force field. The PCs are tasked with "slipping" through the Lord Vorpal's force field in a tiny stealth ship and destroying the *Jabberwocky* with a thermo-nuclear device.

TRANSFORMING A STAR

According to page 197 of *Star Hero*, the BODY of an Earth-sized rocky planet is 86. Since Sol (a typical Type G star) has 332,950 times the mass of the Earth, we can use the standard *HERO System* rule (double the mass = +1 BODY) to determine that the BODY of a Type G star is 104. You can use these figures for the purposes of determining the effects of the *Jabberwocky's* Snicker-Snack weapon (see writeup below). For purposes of this weapon, the plasma form of a star is "solid" (so the attack doesn't require Affects Desolidified to Transform it), and Line Of Sight can only be established on a star from within that star's solar system (or if it has none, from within some boundary of its gravity well).

The Snicker-Snack:
Major Transform 35d6 (standard effect: 105 points) (Type G Star into a black hole; heals back through the use of a countervailing super-weapon); Line Of Sight (+½) (787 Active Points); OAF Immobile (-2), All Or Nothing (-½), Extra Time (1 Day, -4), Limited Target (Type G stars; -1), Requires Multiple Users (12 people; -1). Total cost: 83 points.

a well-known workaholic, prone to continuing his labors in his cabin after his shift ended. It was in no way out of the ordinary for him to show up looking half-dead. He took his seat at his console and wordlessly resumed his work studying the exotic object. As far as he knew Humanity had never encountered such a bizarre glitch in the fabric of space. In some ways it resembled a black hole, in other the decaying corpse of a long-dead supernova. But its mass was too small to account for the pull of its gravity, and the various subatomic particles it was emitting were like nothing he'd ever studied. It was fascinating.

His left eye began to twitch uncontrollably once more.

And so it went for several more starship "days." During his shifts Smith immersed himself wordlessly in studying the exotic object without coming any closer to understanding what precisely it might be. Though he was an experienced scientist-explorer with more than two decades of service in the TES, he was stumped. Off duty Smith tried to sleep, only to lurch suddenly awake covered in his own sweat with no memories of his nightmares. Were he not utterly wrapped in the cloak of his own insomnia, the S&S officer might have noticed that his crewmates had begun behaving just as strangely. Someone had scribbled nonsense words like "Bandersnatch!" and "O frabjous day!" along the ship's normally spotless corridors. Odd-smelling, sticky fluids poured out from underneath certain doorways and the overhead lights began to flicker. His normally professional and stoic fellow officers giggled or cried uncontrollably at the slightest provocation.

One starship "week" after the *Armstrong* established orbit around the anomaly Lt. Smith had his first coherent dream. A student of ancient Terran literature before joining the service, he was not alarmed that the dream came in the form of a particularly eccentric Victorian poem. Actually, he found it to be something of a relief.

And, as in uffish thought he stood,
The Jabberwock, with eyes of flame,
Came whiffling through the tulgey wood,
And burbled as it came!

Something was approaching Lt. Smith through the mists of dream, whispering. Something profoundly terrible and alien. Yet he did not feel afraid. It flowed inhumanly toward him, a huge pillar of... something. He couldn't tell what. Sometimes it looked fleshly, sometimes like a machine, sometimes like an astronomical phenomenon... and at times all three at once. It didn't look very much like the pictures of a Jabberwocky he remembered from the old Lewis Carroll poem. Still, it must have been one. What else could it be? It was beautiful.

One, two! One, two! And through and through

The vorpal blade went snicker-snack!
He left it dead, and with its head
He went galumphing back.

Smith arose from his bunk slowly and calmly, almost as if he were still trapped inside his dream.

He went to his equipment locker and withdrew his power machete. Coated with inactive ionic isotopes that allowed it to slice through nearly anything, it was ideal for cutting through the heavy foliage of unexplored jungle planets. Holding its blade before him like some sort of magical talisman, he emerged into the corridor immediately next to his small cabin.

A scene straight from hell greeted him. Crewmen lay collapsed in the ship's passageways, some twitching and babbling, others obviously catatonic. As Smith walked toward the bridge he passed the *Armstrong's* chief engineer. The distinguished-looking woman was busy drawing an abstract pattern on a bulkhead using her own feces. Blood poured from the empty sockets that used to contain her eyes. A few moments later he came upon two of the ship's geologists. Covered in sweat, they were rutting in the center of the passage with all of the passion of a broken internal combustion engine.

Smith carefully stepped over the scientists and took the lift to the *Armstrong's* bridge. Flight lay crumpled across her console, blood pooling at her feet. Life Support and Tactical lay on the floor in one another's arms, lifeless save for occasional violent twitching in their extremities. The captain howled in his command chair, screaming what were presumably orders at no one in a language that had never existed. Smith walked up behind him and, calmly lifting his machete into the air with both hands, decapitated his commanding officer with a single, swift swing of the blade. The head tumbled away, showering the lieutenant with a river of blood as it tumbled onto the deck, where its sightless eyes looked up at him accusingly. Shoving the captain's headless corpse to one side, Smith sat in the command chair. He activated the simplified series of joysticks and buttons in its arms that allowed a commanding officer to control the ship.

Grasping the controls in his gore-encrusted hands, Smith took the *Armstrong* straight into the exotic object.

Personality/Motivation: The man once called TES Science and Sensor Officer Norman B. Smith has been completely transformed by the Edomite creature known as Esleggua the Fear-Eater. Whether this was deliberate (and if so, how Esleggua escaped or penetrated its prison) or a mere by-product of the Fear-Eater's existence is unknown, but the effect is the same. The "anomaly" Smith studied so intently was in essence a sort of "portal" into Esleggua, or Esleggua's prison. Contact with it radically transformed both ship and crew, though in a curious manner. Smith's mind, which received a staggering dose of Esleggua's Qliphotic emanations, fell back on its training in ancient English literature in an attempt to deal with the unnatural transformation it was going through. Thus Smith believes himself to be trapped inside Lewis Carroll's poem *The Jabberwocky* — he is the "vorpal blade"-wielding protagonist of the rhyme and Esleggua as his Jabberwock opponent. At the same



time Smith also loves Jabberwock/Esleggua. He's utterly devoted to it and sees no difference in killing it, summoning it, and becoming it. Esleggua's feelings on the matter, if any, are unknown.

Smith now styles himself the Lord Vorpall after the mythical blade mentioned in the poem. He sits brooding upon an elaborate wood and bone throne in the center of what was once the *Armstrong*, now rather unsurprisingly renamed the Darkhold *Jabberwocky*. Locked deep in his contemplation of the underlying patterns of the Galaxy, he no longer possesses the capacity for fear, empathy, or any other emotion save for his love for Esleggua and the desire to slay/summon/become it. He never leaves his throne except to transform a star (see below) or defend the *Jabberwocky* from attack, and cannot speak except by combining the limited, often-nonsensical words found within the text of the poem.

Quote: "Come to my arms... my... manxome foe! Gimble in... jaws that bite... and... claws that catch!"

Powers/Tactics: The Lord Vorpall believes the only way he can escape from the confines of the poem *The Jabberwocky* is to slay/summon/become Esleggua. The visions he's experienced have explained to Lord Vorpall that the only way he can attain his freedom is to travel about the Galaxy transforming Type G stars into black holes, destroying numerous inhabited worlds and killing trillions of intelligent life-forms in the process. It's not known whether this procedure is intended to free

Esleggua by creating a vast, non-Euclidian diagram of black holes, by feasting him with the extra-dimensional horror on the vast quantities of fear produced by multiple global genocides, or something else. What is known is that the Lord Vorpall has struck many times before and will undoubtedly strike again, though at this point like all Void Messiahs he's been careful to avoid star systems belonging to any galactic government.

Lord Vorpall's ship is a vast cacophony of the organic and mechanical constructed roughly to approximate the shape of Esleggua. Its main body is a slime-encrusted pillar with numerous "mouths" that allow small fighter and shuttle craft to enter and exit. Its "tentacles" are captured ships that have been crafted onto the surface of the Darkhold's central "trunk." Inside, the *Jabberwocky's* corridors are overgrown with thick

and alien plant life (Tumtum trees, presumably) and filled with dangerous, unfamiliar predators such as the Jubjub bird and the Bandersnatch. The mutated and insane remnants of various starship crews flitter here and there through this artificial wilderness on indecipherable missions of their own, pausing only to attack anything unfortunate enough to cross their paths. A weird howl broadcasts over the remains of ship's intercom system, deadening the listener's ability to feel emotions — particularly fear. Upon rare occasions a being who is presumably Esleggua itself flickers into existence, consumes the first organic creature it comes across, and then vanishes again.

It's unclear whether or not the bizarre flora and fauna of his Darkhold were created by Lord Vorpall, imported from some unexplored world, or are simply the result of Esleggua's Qliphothic emanations. Yet the most terrifying portion of the *Jabberwocky* is its so-called Snicker-Snack. (Star Destroyer or World Eater would sound better, but Lord Vorpall doesn't have a lot of words to work with.) Mounted at the "head" of the *Jabberwocky's* massive trunk, this immense energy cannon is capable of transforming Type G stars into a black holes (see accompanying sidebar). While it takes an Earth standard day and a large crew to align, aim, and fire the device, once the Snicker-Snack's beam strikes a star the transformation is irreversible. When a star becomes a black hole, the atmospheres of its former satellites freeze solid and tumble to the ground in a killing rain, destroying

all life on the planets’ surfaces. The planets, their moons, and indeed all solid objects in the system are then slowly pulled inward toward the center and devoured until only the black hole remains.

The Lord Vorpall himself is a terrifying opponent in combat. A gigantic, mutated mass of post-Humanity, cybernetics, and bizarre Qliphothic mutation, he’s tinkered with his own physiology so thoroughly that he now possesses strength, endurance, and overall toughness far beyond the limits of mere mortal men. Like his god/nemesis Esleggua, the Lord Vorpall has the ability to drain away the emotions of an opponent through Fear-Eating, reducing them to a quivering, helpless mass of terror. He does this by “screaming” forth a cone of sonic energy from his mouth capable of enveloping an entire group of people. (He can’t do this often; it takes too much END.) He follows up his Fear-Eating with a Presence Attack in an attempt to reduce his victims to a state of catatonic fear, at which point his Black Apostles lock them in the *Jabberwocky*’s dungeon so the ship’s bizarre radiations can mutate them into useful servants and creatures. Should his opponents not be rendered helpless by Fear-Eating, the Lord Vorpall will attack using his terrible *Vorpall Blade*: the heavily modified descendent of Lt. Smith’s power machete. This terrible sword is capable of cutting through nearly anything — especially meddlesome intruders bent on disrupting the Lord Vorpall’s plans!

Campaign Use: Every Void Messiah is a terrifying threat to galactic civilization, but the Lord Vorpall is the worst of a bad lot. Not due to what’s left of his personality — which is genuinely pitiable — but because of his methods. While most of his fellow cult leaders’ plans lead to the devastation of planets and the massive loss of intelligent life, Esleggua’s servant/enemy/avatar destroys entire solar systems utterly, giving their inhabitants almost no chance to evacuate. Anyone who captures or destroys either the Lord Vorpall or the *Jabberwocky* can look forward to the extreme gratitude of both the Mind Police and the Vashyyl V’hanic, not mention the satisfaction of having stopped one of the greatest forces for genocide in the Galaxy.

It’s impossible to convince the Lord Vorpall that he isn’t living inside of Lewis Carroll’s famous poem. All attempts to peacefully redirect him from his plans to “escape” from its lines are doomed to failure. Like his fellow Void Messiahs, the Lord Vorpall must be destroyed if the Galaxy — and, indeed, reality itself — is to be kept safe.

Appearance: The Lord Vorpall is a twisted, nightmare version of a medieval warrior. Standing seven feet tall and weighing in at almost 300 pounds, he’s clad in a suit of spiked obsidian armor that seems to grow naturally out of his skin. A viscous green fluid drips from the joints and joinings of the his armor. A black barrel helm with a fanged opening for his mouth hides his head; the two ocularia glow greenly with a malevolent, terrifying intelligence.

SHAPER-OF-WORLDS

Xenovore Void Messiah of Mgatrraor

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 [3]
13	DEX	9	12-	OCV: 4/DCV: 4
15	CON	10	12-	
14	BODY	8	12-	
14	INT	4	12-	PER Roll 12-
13	EGO	6	12-	ECV: 4
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
8	COM	-1	11-	
12	PD	13		Total: 22 PD (10 rPD)
10	ED	9		Total: 20 ED (10 rED)
4	SPD	17		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
6	REC	0		
60	END	20		
40	STUN	10		Total Characteristic Cost: 115

Movement: Running: 6”/12”

Cost	Powers	END
180	<i>Molecular Alteration</i> : Multipower, 270-point reserve; all No Range (-½)	
18u	1) <i>Molecular Disassembly</i> : RKA 6d6, No Normal Defense (defense is Force Field; +1), Does BODY (+1); No Range (-½)	27
13u	2) <i>Molecular Sculpting</i> : Major Transform 7d6 (any sentient creature into anything; healed back through application of the same power), Improved Results Group (anything; +1), Partial Transform (+½); Limited Target (sentient beings; -½)No Range (-½)	26
7u	3) <i>Molecular Transmutation</i> : Major Transform 3d6 (anything into anything; heals back through another application of this power or appropriate natural processes), Improved Target Group (anything; +1), Partial Transform (+½); No Range (-½)	11
10	<i>Xenovore Claws</i> : HKA ½d6 (1d6+1 w/STR)	1
15	<i>Xenovore Sting</i> : HKA 1d6, Armor Piercing (+½); No STR Bonus (-½)	2
6	<i>Tentacles And Tail</i> : Extra Limbs (13), Inherent (+¼); Tail Is Limited Manipulation (-0)	0
60	<i>Tentacles</i> : Stretching 15”; Limited Body Parts (tentacles; -¼)	7
30	<i>Qliphothic Xenovore Carapace</i> : Armor (10 PD/10 ED)	0
5	<i>Qliphothic Lifespan</i> : Life Support (Longevity: Immortality)	0
1	<i>Xenovore Digestion</i> : Life Support (Diminished Eating: can digest any type of protein)	0

Perks

7 Fringe Benefit: Void Messiah

Skills

- 12 +4 with *Molecular Alteration* Multipower
- 15 +3 HTH
- 5 Deduction 13-
- 5 High Society 13-
- 4 Navigation (Dimensional, Hyperspace, Space) 12-
- 5 Oratory 13-
- 3 PS: Nano-Sculpture 12-
- 3 PS: Planet Sculpture 12-
- 7 Tactics 14-
- 3 Linguist
 - 1 1) Language: Common Xenovorish (fluent conversation; High Xenovorish is Native)
 - 2 2) Language: Human (completely fluent)
 - 2 3) Language: Mon'dabi (completely fluent)
 - 4 4) Language: Tech Xenovorish (imitate dialects)
 - 2 5) Language: Thorgon (fluent conversation)
- 3 Scholar
 - 2 1) KS: The Kings Of Edom 12-
 - 2 2) KS: Non-Xenovore Anatomy 12-
 - 2 3) KS: Xenovore Anatomy 12-
 - 7 4) KS: Xenovore History 17-
- 3 Scientist
 - 2 1) SS: Bioengineering 12-
 - 2 2) SS: Dimensional Engineering 12-
 - 2 3) SS: Hyperspace Physics 12-
 - 2 4) SS: Nanotechnology 12-
 - 2 5) SS: Qliphothic Bioengineering 12-
- 3 Traveler
 - 7 1) AK: Former Xenovore Space 17-
 - 4 2) AK: Outer Galactic Rim (60-135 Degrees) 14-
 - 4 3) AK: The Milky Way Galaxy 14-

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 472**Total Cost: 587****75+ Disadvantages**

- 25 Distinctive Features: Void Messiah (Not Concealable; Causes Extreme Reaction [fear])
- 25 Psychological Limitation: Feels Compulsion To "Sculpt" Matter On A Molecular Level (Very Common, Total)
- 25 Psychological Limitation: Genocidal Worshiper of Mgattraor (Very Common, Total)
- 15 Reputation: Void Messiah, 14- (Extreme; Known Only To A Small Group)
- 422 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 587**Background/History: 2406 (Kdathar System):**

Shaper-Of-Worlds leaned back in his command chair and watched the carnage on his main screen. Everything he'd spent his life working toward — indeed, everything the entire Xenovore species had spent its entire existence working toward — was disintegrating in a shower of exploding ships, floating corpses, and broken dreams. The last remnants of the once-vast fleet that had moved against the united species of the Mon'dabi Federation only ten years before (unlike common Xenovores, Shaper-Of-Worlds was too sophisticated to think of other sentients as simply "food-that-pleads")

was dying all around him. Their burning fusion plants lit up the sky.

Nor could they retreat. There was nowhere for his fleet to retreat to. The ever-resourceful Humans had already destroyed the Throneworlds of the former Xenovore Empire with nuclear weapons, murdered its Monarch, freed its slave/food species, and killed the vast majority of his people. They and their "allies" the Thorgons had already annexed most of the corpse of the now dead Empire, while the reptilian Mondabi and their client species busied themselves with mopping up what was left of the Xenovore navy. This was the final, brutal battle of a very long war... though the Xenovore commander had no understanding of the word. What most civilized species thought of as unnatural, isolated periods of time interrupting vastly preferable periods of peace the Xenovores considered the natural state of things. "War" was the eternal condition of their kind.

"Helmsman!" he shouted. "Fire chemical rockets at maximum thrust! When we reach maximum velocity, take us into Hyperspace..."

He hesitated.

"...rimward. Bearing three-zero-zero. Full speed, full distance."

"To what destination Long-Lived?" the Helmsman asked nervously. Though they were near the edge of a solar system, activating the shunt for the transition into Hyperspace was at best a risky business so close to a star.

"No destination." The commander responded grimly. "There's nowhere to go. All we can do is avoid capture. We are going to disable the shunt in Hyperspace... and think."

There was a rustle around the command room. Several Xenovores nervously clicked their sharp claws together, involuntarily expressing their displeasure. Soon the challenges to his authority would arise. Not that it mattered.

"Aye, Long-Lived," replied the Helmsmen quietly. For the first time in his very long life a ship belonging to Shaper-Of-Worlds fled the battlefield.

2407 (Hyperspace): It hadn't taken long for discipline to break down on the Xenovore dreadnaught. Shaper-Of-Worlds defeated a rapid succession of challenges from every other Long-Lived on the vessel and, after taking time to consume them for strength, locked himself in his quarters. Without his steadying hand the herd-slaves on the ship were quickly devoured, after which the crew and pilots began eating the marines that lay in suspended animation in one of the storerooms. When those were gone the surviving Xenovores formed into packs based on their genotype and began hunting one another through the ship's corridors. By the time the ship had drifted in Hyperspace for a month only a hundred or so ragged Xenovores remained, stalking one another through the haunted vastness of their vessel.

Shaper-Of-Worlds didn't care. Long a practitioner of nanosculpture — the Xenovore art of using microscopic robots to create unique and detailed artifacts in sealed globes — he'd decided to spend what he felt were his final days

SHAPER-OF-WORLDS PLOT SEEDS

Captured by Shaper-Of-Worlds's dreadnaught, the PCs break through the walls of their own doomed ship and infiltrate the terrifying alien vessel. Unfortunately for them, they quickly encounter the ascended commander himself! After almost whimsically transforming them into Xenovores, he wanders away, leaving them to consider their fate.

The PCs are a part of a well-funded joint Mind Police/Imperial Navy/Terran Exploration Service project to explore the unknown reaches spinward beyond Ack-álian space. The public mission of their light cruiser *Endeavor* is to explore strange new worlds, to seek out new species and new civilizations, to boldly travel where no sentient has traveled before. Their secret mission: seek and destroy all agents of the Church of the Infinite Dark, especially Shaper-Of-Worlds!

The PCs come across a planet that *wants* to be transformed by Shaper-Of-Worlds! Its people have sent missions into space to try to find the Void Messiah and convince him to use his powers on them and their homeworld. Why do they want this... and how will Shaper-Of-Worlds respond?

crafting something exquisite. He'd puzzled for several weeks over what to create, sleeping fitfully as he slowly starved himself to death, but then in a moment of inspiration a shape came to him in a hungry, blurry vision. He began working on it feverishly, gripping the controls of his nanosculpture globe with an intensity he'd never felt when driving a ship into battle against the enemy. After a day of intense concentration he collapsed to the ground exhausted, possessing only enough strength to stare up from the floor at what he'd created.

The artifact was like nothing he'd ever seen before. It appeared to be a cone of blue-black jelly with a single huge eye at its tip ringed by long, slender tentacles. From its base a second series of tentacles extruded. These were lined by mouths filled with teeth of either stone or metal. It was inexplicable, completely alien, and... utterly beautiful.

Then it started speaking to him.

2412 (Somewhere in former Xenovore Space):

Shaper-Of-Worlds had no idea why he was still alive. He lay prone on that floor for what must have been years, listening to the otherworldly voice of the sculpture. It told him secrets. It made him promises. In the end, it must have been what kept him from dying. When its voice finally fell silent he was able to rise from the floor and stand once again. The Long-Lived knew he'd been physically altered by his communion with the strange statuette, but he had no clear idea of what those changes were or what they meant. He only knew that he was not the same Xenovore who'd collapsed to the ground five years before.

He began wandering the hallways. During his five year-hibernation (indoctrination? incarceration?) the ship had gone through some alarming changes. Like all Xenovore vessels, the hull of Shaper-Of-Worlds's dreadnaught was grown organically by nanotechnology. During his slumber the nanobots had seemingly come back to life, radically altering the ship's passageways, cabins, and intersections according to some bizarre, alien principle. He found the new interior of vessel... pleasing. It somehow felt *right*, though he wasn't certain why this might be. Normally Xenovores reacted badly to unintentional changes to their environment.

Before long someone attacked the former commander — a not-unexpected occurrence. Xenovore physiology was deliberately engineered with as many recessive traits as science allowed. This species-wide modification allowed the species to rapidly evolve by developing whatever biological systems they needed to survive almost any situation. By now the ship should be crawling with a second generation that had fed on the older generation, one another, and possibly the ship itself. What Shaper-Of-Worlds didn't expect was that he'd recognize his attacker.

The Helmsman's attack wasn't unskillful. Had eight slender tentacles not shot forth from various spots on the Long-Lived's body the Helmsman may very well have succeeded in burying a fire axe

in his intended victim's skull. For several minutes the senior Xenovore contemplated the twisting, semi-sentient body of his former officer as it hung in the air. Then he *reached* inside and made some modifications on the genetic level.

The Helmsmen was much calmer when Shaper-Of-Worlds finally set him down. He also had two heads, one arm that ended in several dozen tentacles, and wore his respiratory system on the outside of his body. Shaper-Of-Worlds felt that it gave his subordinate a bit more "personality."

"Where... where have you been, o Long-Lived?" asked the two heads after they figured out how to breathe again.

"Communing with God," he replied sternly. "Learning how our despised and persecuted species might rise from the bitter ashes of defeat to dine once again on the flavorful flesh of our enemies. Hearing of how we might undo the ravages which the food-that-pleads have wrought upon Throneworlds. Seeing how we might start the entire Universe over again, so that our adversaries — may they be spit out of our mouths! — will never even be born!"

The creature that was once a Xenovore Helmsmen waved its tentacles excitedly in the air.

"Tell us how, Long-Lived! Tell us how!"

And so he did.

For the next two centuries, Shaper-Of-Worlds and his crew drifted through Hyperspace, "communing" with Mgattraor (or so Shaper told them). When the god ordered it, they dropped out of Hyperspace to reshape a world, attack a space station, or commit some other type of mayhem (and in the process, acquire new crewmembers, ship sections, and supplies). Finally, in the year Humans call 2621, Shaper-Of-Worlds brought his Darkhold into normal space permanently. Since then he's slowly been working on the pattern ordained by Mgattraor, working around the edges of civilized space to avoid the attentions of the authorities. But now the time has come to strike deep into settled territory....

Personality/Motivation: One of the few Xenovore Navarchs to survive the destruction of their empire, Shaper-Of-Worlds (Na! Xaerek in his native tongue) believes he received a vision from the minor King of Edom named Mgattraor after the final remnants of his once-mighty fleet was destroyed by the Mon'dabi at the conclusion of the Xenovore Wars. Taking his dreadnaught and fleeing into Hyperpace, he supposedly spent five years in direct communion with that Qliphothic entity as his ship drifted and his crew descended into barbarism. Shaper-Of-Worlds proved exceptionally apposite to biological alteration by the King, probably due to his unique Xenovore biology. In the course of this spiritual union both his body and mind were extensively modified to meet Mgattraor's needs, turning him into a formidable Xenovore-Edomite hybrid being without reducing his mental facilities or psychologically unbalancing him. In other words, uniquely among the Void Messiahs Shaper-Of-Worlds is

not completely insane... which makes him all that much more dangerous.

Shaper-Of-Worlds believes that Mgatrraor has promised to remake the Galaxy in the image of the Xenovores once he's freed. He will reduce all other intelligent species to food/slave status as well. Shaper-Of-Worlds would serve as its immoral Monarch-Avatar while Mgatrraor ruled through him as its only god, roaming freely throughout the material world so he can transmute and reshape matter at his whim. To accomplish this he's ordered Shaper-Of-Worlds to transform entire solar systems' worth of planets into bizarre, non-Euclidean shapes that exhibit innately trans-dimensional qualities. When he's finished, these planetary "sculptures" will themselves form a peculiar silhouette nearly as large as Earth's entire Galaxy. Supposedly Mgatrraor can use this "shadow" as a gateway to move from his dimension to our own. To accomplish this task, Shaper-of-Worlds uses a combination of powerful atomic weapons and planetary kinetic bombarders (SH 197) to transform the surfaces of worlds into the terrible "monuments" shown to him by his King.

Shaper-Of-Worlds is not so much exceptionally cruel as he's typically "old school Xenovorous" in his attitudes. He doesn't care whether the planets he "sculpts" are inhabited, only that they're transformed into the shapes his god has shown him. At the same time he'll take no actions to prevent an inhabited world's evacuation and, since he invariably starts his work with a system's outer planets and works inward, there's often sufficient time to save at least a portion of any native species. Though sophisticated enough to know the individual names of "food-that-pleads" and even speak a variety of their more common languages, Shaper-Of-Worlds still views all other intelligent life as potential food and slave labor. He'll attempt to seize, modify, and integrate any Xenovores he encounters, however, and may take time out from his travels to visit any location he believes still holds a large population of his own kind. He also has a connoisseur's love of art objects, particularly sculpture, and tries to capture any famous pieces of great beauty (or oddness) produced by species he "respects" (such as Humans and Mondabi).

Quote: "So... the primitive inhabitants of this system believe they can resist the will of God. That would be comical if it weren't so pathetic. Weapons Master, prepare all kinetic bombarders. It's time to unleash the power of our Art upon the Galaxy once more!"

Powers/Tactics: Shaper-Of-Worlds emerged from his five-year communion with Mgatrraor to find his ship a disaster area and his crew gone feral. Tanks holding the ship's potent nanotech arsenal had ruptured, spraying uncontrolled weapons-grade bio-nanites over both her interior and exterior surfaces. This extensively mutated both ship and crew, a condition exacerbated by Shaper-Of-Worlds's compulsion to experiment with Xenovore biology using the powers Mgatrraor granted him (see below). By now the vessel and her occupants



bear little resemblance to their original form.

In its original form Shaper-Of-Worlds's dreadnaught (AW 166-168) was an awesome and disturbing sight: an organic nightmare of weapons, encysted fighter craft, and dropships ready to launch from multiple orifices. Like all ships of its type it was immense and oriented vertically rather than horizontally. Now it's mutated from its original "wasp's nest" configuration into a vast, unsettling shape resembling nothing known to modern galactic science. Its dropships now nest below like obscene bunches of grapes, while fighter craft slowly crawl about the surface like insects patrolling their nest. Now and again the entire Darkhold shivers like a sick animal (which it basically is), knocking loose any fighter craft or dropship with a poor purchase on its hull. It has no unique name; it's known simply as *Xaeran Trogah* ("Dreadnaught").

The Darkhold's "tractor beam" is actually a cluster of thin tentacles that spray from her surface to ensnare any craft foolish enough to get close to her. These slender limbs quickly pull their victim alongside, where bio-nanites immediately begin the process of turning its hull into the enormous metal rods used by her kinetic bombarders, its power plant into atomic weapons, and its crew into food (the Xenovores themselves handle this last part). Upon occasion Shaper-Of-Worlds leaves a ship's life support intact for a period of time, effectively preserving its crew as "snacks" for later consumption.

Thus, the outside of the ship usually holds half a dozen or so craft in various states of decay.

Though his general shape and exterior appearance have changed little since his “ascension” into an avatar, Shaper-Of-Worlds’s internal structure is unlike that of any other living being in the Galaxy. He can project his internal tissues at will through up to a dozen orifices in his exoskeleton in the form of thirty meter-long tentacles. At the end of these members are even smaller tentacles, which end in even smaller ones, and so forth until they terminate in submicroscopic silica only a few atoms wide. Using this extensive array of atomic manipulators he can radically alter biological organisms on the molecular level, giving them extra or different limbs, multiple heads, additional organs, and the like. In several instances he’s turned Human intruders into Xenovores, and presumably he can do the same with other species. Shaper-Of-Worlds can reorganize even the simplest molecules to create objects out of thin air, change lead in to gold, turn water into blood, or just about any other change he can think of. He can warp physical objects such as weapons to break them or ruin their properties and powers. He can even “disassemble” the molecules of objects or persons, causing them to instantly disincorporate. (Note, however, that he doesn’t have enough END to do this repeatedly during a single combat.)

Shaper-Of-Worlds’s reaction to physical attack by PCs is based entirely on his whim and mood. He may simply destroy their weapons... or he might destroy them. He could turn a PC into a Xenovore, a carnivorous houseplant, or even a useful inanimate object. He might also choose to “improve” on a PC’s basic structure. All of Shaper-Of-Worlds’s crewmen have been extensively “sculpted” (as he thinks of it) to the point where they now barely resemble common Xenovores. While some of these alterations are genuinely useful (changing the Xenovore Stinger into a manipulative limb, adding an extra set of arms, altering the carapace to allow for survival in the vacuum of space) most of them are harmful (a single “pogo-stick” leg, internal organs rendered external, multiple and mutually antagonistic heads, fingerless hands) or simply bizarre (a single rolling wheel instead of legs, eyes on long stalks, a second face in the chest). Convinced that every one of their curses is a blessing, each of his crewmembers struggles to fulfill his duties regardless of the level of fantastic deformity inflicted upon him.

Campaign Use: The name “Xenovore” still makes people shudder throughout known space. To most inhabitants of the Terran Empire (not to mention the Mon’dabi and Thorgons) nothing is more frightening than a potential resurgence of this destructive and cannibalistic race. Though others labor to restore some modernized version of their species’s former glory (see King Narch in Chapter One), Shaper-Of-Worlds is the only one of his kind struggling to restore the anthropophagic, world-destroying Xenovore Empire of old. By

the mid-2600s most surviving Xenovores have been more-or-less integrated into galactic society as mercenaries, bounty hunters, and even exotic safari guides. Almost none have retained the recessive anthropophagi gene that compelled their ancestors to consume sentient life.

Shaper-Of-Worlds, his ship, and its crew are a throwback to the terrifying days when the Xenovore Empire came dangerously close to exterminating Humanity. To make matters worse, his mutated, matter-shaping powers and planet-shattering objectives give him both the means and the desire to wreak even greater havoc on the Galaxy. Shaper-Of-Worlds is Xenovore as supervillain, destroyer god, and fairy tale monster all rolled up into a single frightening cannibal package. The Terran Empire will shower riches (or other rewards, such as Imperial pardons for past crimes committed in its territory) upon anyone who destroys this Void Messiah and his ship. Should the Mon’dabi and even the confrontational Thorgons discover his existence, it’s likely that their response will be the same. Unfortunately for would-be bounty hunters, Shaper-Of-Worlds has not been spotted by any known intelligence agency in over thirty Terran years. It’s likely that he’s operating spinward of Ackálian space, waiting for another galactic war or similar disaster to overtake interstellar society so that he can strike anti-spinward without worrying about effective resistance.

To make Shaper-Of-Worlds less powerful, reduce the slots of his Multipower to half their current Active Points. To make him more powerful, add the Power *Almost Unkillable*: Physical and Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant, 75%.

Appearance: Shaper-Of-Worlds appears to be a normal and (by the standards of his species) handsome male Xenovore with exceptional height and gracefulness (though to Human eyes he’s as hideous as any other Xenovore). He has the distinctive vertical slash between his eyes of the Long-Lived genotype and wears the unique purple robe of a navarch.

WHAT THEY SAY: SHAPER-OF-WORLDS

Doctor Li Fu, Mind Police Director: “To All Assistant Directors: the existence of this creature and his ship are not known to the general public — nor should they be. Our citizens have enough nightmares without adding a “satanic” Xenovore dreadnaught to the mix. All agents are empowered to use any and all methods necessary to track down and destroy Shaper-Of-Worlds, including the confiscation of any civilian or military vessels necessary to affect pursuit.”

Blue-Red-Blue-Black, Az’arc’a Wanderer: “I tried as hard as I could to warn the inhabitants of the little green planet that IT was coming, but at first they didn’t believe I even existed. By the time I convinced them I was real, several of their system’s planets had already been changed and IT was nearly on their doorstep. They simply weren’t advanced enough to get more than a few thousand of their species off of the planet before IT reached them. By then it was too late.”

MOTHER NIGHT

Perverse Avatar of Orogtha the Great Spawner

Val Char Cost Roll Notes

10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 [1]
10	DEX	0	11-	OCV: 3/DCV: 3
15	CON	10	12-	
15	BODY	10	12-	
18	INT	8	13-	PER Roll 13-/14-
14	EGO	8	12-	ECV: 5
23	PRE	16	14-	PRE Attack: 4½d6
20	COM	5	13-	
12	PD	14		Total: 12 PD (0 rPD)
10	ED	9		Total: 10 ED (0 rED)
4	SPD	20		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
5	REC	0		
36	END	3		
40	STUN	12		Total Characteristic Cost: 115

Movement: Running: 6"/12"**Cost Powers****END**

229	<i>Siren's Song:</i> Mind Control 10d6, Telepathic (+¼), Explosion (+½), MegaScale (Explosion 1" = 100 km; +¾), Long-Term Control (target's second Breakout Roll occurs 5 Minutes after the first roll; +1½), Personal Immunity (+¼), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); No Range (-½) plus Mind Control +6d6, Telepathic (+¼), Explosion (+½), MegaScale (Explosion 1" = 100 km; +¾), Long-Term Control (target's second Breakout Roll occurs 5 Minutes after the first roll; +1½), Personal Immunity (+¼), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); No Range (-½), Set Effect (only whatever emotion Mother Night feels at the time, typically a twisted form of love; -½)	0
7	<i>Qliphothic-Touched Mind:</i> Mental Defense (10 points total)	0
29	<i>Orogthan Biology:</i> Healing BODY 3d6 (Regeneration, 3 BODY per Hour), Can Heal Limbs, Resurrection, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½), Persistent (+½); Extra Time + Increased Time Increment (1 Hour; -2¼), Self Only (-½)	0
5	<i>Qliphothic Lifespan:</i> Life Support (Longevity: Immortality)	0
5	<i>Qliphothic Vision:</i> Detect Latent Qliphothic Energies 13- (Sight Group)	0
2	<i>Rigellian Ears:</i> +1 PER with Hearing Group	0
3	<i>Rigellian Ears:</i> Ultrasonic Perception (Hearing Group)	0

Perks

7	Fringe Benefit: Void Messiah
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Talents

3	Perfect Pitch
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Skills

3	Computer Programming (Personal Computers, Infiltration) 13-
3	Conversation 14-
5	High Society 15-
3	Mimicry 13-

4	Navigation (Dimensional, Hyperspace, Space) 13-
5	Oratory 15-
3	Persuasion 14-
3	PS: Singer/Vocalist 14-
3	Seduction 14-
7	Tactics 15-
3	Ventriloquism 13-
3	Linguist
2	1) Language: Human (completely fluent; Rigellian is Native)
2	2) Language: Mondabi (completely fluent)
2	3) Language: Perseid (completely fluent)
3	Scholar
2	1) KS: Edomite Anatomy 13-
2	2) KS: Humanoid Anatomy 13-
2	3) KS: The Kings Of Edom 13-
3	Scientist
2	1) SS: Archaeology 13-
2	2) SS: Bioengineering 13-
2	3) SS: Dimensional Engineering 13-
2	4) SS: Hyperspace Physics 13-
2	5) SS: Monster Pediatrics 13-
2	6) SS: Qliphothic Bioengineering 13-
3	Traveler
4	1) AK: Drago's Reach 15-
1	2) AK: Perseid Space 11-
2	3) AK: Spinward Space (285 to 345 degrees) 13-
4	4) AK: The Milky Way Galaxy 15-
7	5) AK: The Terran Empire 18-

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 386**Total Cost: 501****75+ Disadvantages**

25	Distinctive Features: Void Messiah (Not Concealable; Causes Extreme Reaction [fear])
25	Psychological Limitation: Feels Compulsion To "Birth" Edomite Creatures (Very Common, Total)
25	Psychological Limitation: Genocidal Worshiper Of Orogtha (Very Common, Total)
15	Reputation: Void Messiah, 14- (Extreme; Known Only To A Small Group)
336	Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 501

Background/History: [Diary Entry 02/21/2398] An undiscovered system! And orbiting an Earthlike Type-G star, no less! Who would have thought there could be so much unexplored territory here in Drago's Reach? I couldn't be more excited. We've already charted eight planets orbiting this new sun and have decided to name it after our captain: Campbell's Star. It has a nice ring to it.

Our exploration ship is surprisingly well-equipped for an old Cheng-Huan. The University may have skimped by buying us a decrepit vessel, but at least it gave us all sorts of state-of-the-art equipment: spectrometers, x-ray telescopes, optical apparati. It sure is great to have a budget for a change!

In other news, the ship is simply *full* of attractive Human, Jhinu, and Vayathuran men! As a Rigellian they all think I'm an "exotic beauty."

MOTHER NIGHT PLOT SEEDS

The PCs have fought a bloody but ultimately successful battle with Mother Night, driving the *Spawner Of Demons* out of their solar system. Unfortunately their planet has been thoroughly contaminated with Orogthan Airs in the process. Its biosphere is slowly transforming into an Edomite one. Lacking the technology to undo or halt the damage being done to their planet, the PCs must now hunt down and infiltrate the damaged Darkhold if they're to gather enough information to save their world.

The PCs are the only passengers on an intergalactic luxury liner not to be overcome by Mother Night's *Siren Song*. With their fellow passengers and the crew happily welding the ship to the side of the *Spawner Of Demons*, can they make their escape, or perhaps free the entire liner before it's too late?

The PCs are tasked by the Cojoined Civilization Republic's Exploration Board with investigating bizarre biological changes on two charted but uninhabited worlds in Drago's Reach. Their investigations bring them face-to-face with Mother Night and her *Spawner Of Demons*.

Imagine! Back on Rigel V I was always considered plain. Well, I guess there may be more than one kind of adventure in store for this archaeologist!

[Diary Entry 03/01/2398] We've located a biologically-diverse "jungle planet" surprisingly close to Campbell's Star. "Impossibly close" according to our planetary geologist, but she's obviously wrong. It's there, isn't it? The world's proximity to the system's sun must have been why we didn't see it on our initial assessment. We're deploying two survey satellites into orbit around it right now. They should have the planet's surface mapped by the time we complete our gravity "slingshot" around the sun. Finding intelligent life is probably too much to hope for — let alone any ruins for me to study — but here's hoping, huh?

I'm beginning to believe it's easy to impress Humans. At the very least they become disturbed by the strangest things. Last night I performed a middling-all right version of Shra's *Mephistopheles*; you know, the one that goes "But I'm part of the Part which at first was all/Part of the Darkness that gave birth to Light/The haughty Light that now with Mother Night/Disputes her ancient rank and space withal." When I was finished everyone fell silent for *way* too long. It was so embarrassing! But then they burst into applause. It was very odd.

Well, in any case, I got to go back to the Commander's cabin for a nightcap. And after that... well, some things are better not written down.

[Diary Entry 03/10/2398] The oddest thing happened. When we completed our orbit of the sun and came back around to gather our survey satellites, they'd vanished without a trace. The Commander believes the planet has a fluctuating gravitational field that pulled them into the atmosphere, but there isn't any data to support that. It's very strange.

Well, the good news is that the Captain has decided to map the planet's surface using the ship. This will give me an excellent opportunity to scan for a native civilization or — better yet for me — the remnants of a dead one. Not that I expect to find anything, but what's the point of bringing a perfectly good archaeologist along if you don't have anything to archae-o-log!

[Diary Entry 03/22/2398] Nobody could be more surprised than I when there turned out to be ruins down on the surface of the planet. One minute I was poring over yet another image filled with trackless miles of green jungle. The next I was looking at pictures of a half-ruined pyramid complex. I actually slammed into poor Tailor Johnson running down the passageway to show a copy to the Captain! (Fortunately nobody was hurt.)

Tomorrow I'm going down to the surface with a mission team to investigate the ruins and check for signs of sentient life. I can hardly wait. This is the chance I've been waiting for my entire career! I'll almost certainly be able to publish.

[Diary Entry 03/27/2398] What a fascinating world! Both the flora and fauna are unlike anything we have in our database. Even by the standards of our

turtle-like Denebian xenobiologist its ecology is very alien. I think it's beautiful, but all of my teammates disagree. They can't wait to get back to the ship.

The ruins are extremely old. They resemble those of the ancient Maya on Terra, but built on a much, much larger scale. Gargantuan, blocky pyramids of shaped stone covered in hieroglyphs stretch thousands of meters to the sky, rivaling modern anti-grav skyscrapers in size. Nothing that couldn't be constructed using ATRI 2 technology, I suppose, but one has to wonder: who built these things? The Malvans? The Mandaarians? The ancient Zurites maybe? Was anybody else around over 10,000 years ago? I have to figure it out.

[Diary Entry 04/25/2398] A very busy month. Most of the team became sick within a couple of weeks of landing on the surface. Some kind of skin parasite. The only ones that seemed to be immune were Glomda the xenobiologist and myself, so we've remained down on the surface working while the others went back up to the ship. Apparently they haven't recovered fully yet.

Glomda thinks that this world was terraformed at some point and that its lifeforms aren't native. I don't see how this could be possible. The Orog — my name for the natives — didn't possess any technology capable of that sort of thing. They don't seem to have known about space travel either, which suggests they weren't transplants. Interestingly enough, they grasped the idea of dimensional travel, but that's not the only odd thing about them. The Orog seem to have been an amphibian cephalopod/humanoid species — an incredibly rare evolutionary occurrence, Glomda assures me.

My fellow explorers seem impatient to leave this system. It makes no sense. It's a discovery that'll make all of our careers! In any case, I'm still working on deciphering the native's language. At first glance it seemed to be comprised of hieroglyphics, but I've determined that they're really logograms complemented by a set of syllabic glyphs. Not that dissimilar to ancient versions of my own people's written language, actually. I should have a working dictionary ready shortly.

[Diary Entry 05/05/2398] The Captain has been putting pressure on me to give up this site and return to the ship. Glomda's already gone back up, but I demanded another few days to complete my work and he reluctantly consented.

Damn impatient, ignorant, overbearing Humans! Don't they understand how important this place is? There's nothing like the Orog in recorded history. I've translated over a thousand of their words and have a good idea of what happened to them. Or at least what the logograms said happened to them.

The natives worshiped an entity they called "Orogtha the Great Spawner" — presumably some sort of fertility goddess. Or reverse-fertility goddess (I'm not certain which yet), as she's supposed to be dead as well as alive. In any case, according to them she sprouted our entire dimension from the rotting flesh of her massive, squid-like carcass,

only to be betrayed by a species known as the Golden Ones (The Malvans?). Persecuted by the Golden Ones, Orogtha fled to some place called the Underverse, where to this day she manipulates other creatures' genetic codes. The Orog claim to have followed her *en masse*, using the sacred geometry in their pyramid complex to open a doorway between worlds.

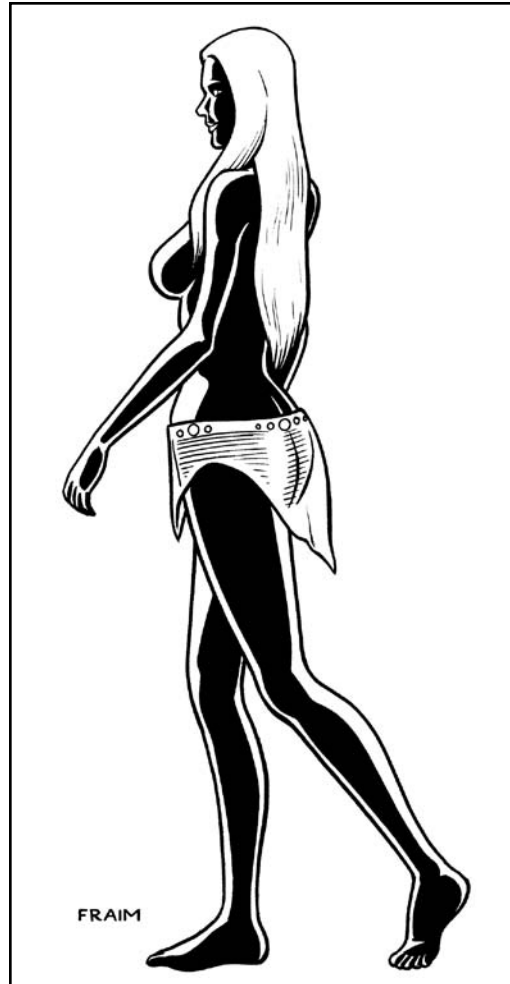
Unfortunately, this passage is only open one day per year. Fortunately, that day is tomorrow.

Personality/Motivation: A respected Rigellian anthropologist, Vera Renczi was part of an academic research team exploring an unknown world in Drago's Reach when she discovered a city of strange, pyramid-like structures of incalculable age and unfathomable construction. Curious by nature and annoyed with her skittish fellow scientists' desire to leave the planet, Renczi determined that by standing in a particular location on a particular day she could briefly enter a dimension the city's builders — a species known as the Orog — called the "Underverse." She believed they fled to this place using their dimension-warping "technology," and decided to see if she could follow them and learn more.

She got her wish. Unfortunately, ordinary intelligent life-forms are ill equipped to enter what turned out to be a Qliphothic realm inhabited by a King (Queen?) of Edom called Orogtha. The second Renczi crossed the dimensional barrier she was immediately seized by a terrifying vision of (from? about? cast off by?) Orogtha the Great Spawner. The experience sent the young and attractive Rigellian's already robust sex drive into an unnatural, agonizing overdrive. She was also seized by a compulsion to "orogform" inhabitable worlds, creating countless millions of deformed Edomite creatures and eventually allowing Orogtha to manifest in Earth's dimension. Then and only then could Orogtha and her followers return to Earth's reality bathed in the glorious afterbirth of universal destruction. And when Orogtha returns, she (it?) shall do so clothed in Renczi's tortured flesh.

Driven completely mad by these revelations, Renczi allowed her fellow scientists and their military support crew to die of an otherworldly (but treatable) parasite infestation, seized the expedition's ship, and vanished into the void between stars. Gifted (mutated? infected?) by Orogtha with a powerful *Siren's Song* power that allows her to control the minds and emotions of living creatures over vast distances, she began luring victims to their doom by leaving her emergency distress beacon on at all times. Over the last two hundred years she's built up a considerable group of Black Disciples and a vast Darkhold called *Spawner Of Demons*, making her one of the most powerful of the Void Messiahs despite her personal lack of combat skills.

In a sense Vera Renczi died in the brief instant she transitioned to Orogtha's realm. Mother Night is a completely different entity than the good-natured, boy-crazy young archaeologist



who used to live in the body that she now occupies. That personality is gone, replaced by one that is malevolent, manipulative, narcissistic, and ultimately genocidal. It's unsurprising, really. Mother Night drifts through the corridors of *Spawner Of Demons* in a flamboyant cloud of self-love, surrounded by countless thousands of dedicated followers prepared to die on command. Her ship is crewed largely by sons/husbands/slaves she can breed with when the whim strikes her. She's perpetually pregnant, yet never loses her figure. Renczi believes Orogtha will birth a new universe through her flesh. How could she not love herself completely? In fact, you love her too — even if you don't know it yet.

Quote: "My dear, doomed captain: why shouldn't I exist in a state of what you call narcissism? When you're the center of the universe love naturally bends toward you. All things living and unliving move toward the center of existence."

Powers/Tactics: Mother Night likes to keep things simple. Her ship is a vast collection of random spaceships that have been welded together laterally so all of their engines point in a single direction. She expands her craft and crew through the straightforward mechanism of drifting through space with the emergency beacon activated, waiting for a ship to come near enough to her for her Siren's Song to turn its inhabitants into lovestruck, obedient slaves. The now-docile new crewmem-

WHAT THEY SAY: MOTHER NIGHT

CCR Exploration Board Official Report: “The initial examination of Vonnegut’s World reveals the use of biological and nanotechnology weaponry of a type not seen since the fall of the Xenovore Empire. The biosphere of the planet has been dramatically altered using what appear to be nanobots so dangerous that we must recommend sterilizing it with nuclear weaponry. Further investigation of the cause of this tragedy must be undertaken to guarantee the security of the Republic and its diverse peoples.”

Ramvlack, Agent of the Vashyyl V’hanic: “The creature known as the Mother of Night is out there somewhere, lurking around the edges of Seëcra space and greedily eyeing the worlds of our Empire. If it were up to me I’d stop worrying about rebellion, gather together every Star Galleon in the Empire, and go after that crestless bitch until nothing remained of her or her monster vessel but intergalactic dust.”

Drake Naldack, Registered Psi and Noteworthy Dilettante: “I could feel her mind bearing down upon mine — but in an undisciplined, distracted manner. She’s more like a force of nature than a disciplined practitioner of the psionic arts. She was more than powerful enough to take control of everyone else on our little yacht, however. I was forced to lock the others out of the control room and take us into an uncharted Hyper-space jump. We ended up lost for months — but we lived. More than you can say for anyone else in that poor, doomed regatta.”

bers then fly their craft alongside her Darkhold and weld it into place themselves.

Those unfortunate enough to be captured by Mother Night fall victim to one of two fates depending on their Comeliness score. All male captives with 9 COM or higher become her lovers for a while and then, when the Qliphothic radiations of the ship drive them completely mad, turn into Black Disciples. All male captives with 8 COM or less and all female captives become willing hosts to her constant flow of offspring, which are transferred from Mother Night’s womb into the depths of their bodies (she never carries a fetus for more than a week). Some of these fetuses grow into extremely handsome male humanoids — only they’re moral and intellectual monsters, physically beautiful and perfect on the outside but corrupt, cruel, and evil within. Others are Edomite creatures like the Brain Beast (see below). Either way, Mother Night’s children explode out of their hosts within a month, killing them instantly.

When her meditations indicate that it’s time to “orogform” a planet Mother Night immediately travels to it, coming out of Hyperspace at the closest possible spot to the world’s outer atmosphere and plunging straight in. She then orbits the planet for a period of one week, spraying *Orogthan* *Airs* into its atmosphere from thousands of tiny openings located

on the outside of her vessel. This mysterious aerosol contains countless numbers of Edomite microscopic beings or nanobots (it’s not clear which; they may be both simultaneously) whose specific function is to alter all biological life on the planet into forms more acceptable to Orogtha. Furthermore, any contaminated plant or animal immediately begins producing additional *Airs* in its skin, spreading the contagion to anything it touches.

It’s possible to reverse the effects of Orogthan *Airs*, though a character would have to have SS: Qliphothic Bioengineering to even begin creating a cure. Still, it’s at least hypothetically feasible to reverse the effect. It’s also possible to surgically remove one of Mother Night’s fetuses from its host, saving his life. Thus there’s a potential for the PCs to save a beloved homeworld or a fellow spacer from this Void Messiah’s evil schemes.

Campaign Use: Mother Night is a disturbing villain: part sex goddess, part genocidal maniac, and wholly a creature of the Kings of Edom. The appearance of her Darkhold portends biological doom for planets, enslavement for starships, and death or depravity for those unfortunate enough to fall under her spell. Fortunately, she’s also one of the few Void Messiahs whose handiwork can be reversed. Though she’s basically immortal due to her modified biology — Mother Night can grow new limbs and even come back from the dead if necessary — the harm she causes can conceivably be stopped or fixed.

Along with the unusual “dungeon in space” scenarios available in any scenario concerning a Void Messiah, in a game involving Mother Night the PCs should be the exception to every rule. They don’t get seduced by her *Siren’s Song* abilities. They’re able to launch a successful defense when the *Spawner Of Demons* attacks their world. They learn enough about Qliphothic Bioengineering to reverse the destruction she’s caused in a planet’s biosphere. They remove one of her alien fetuses from a crewmate, saving his life. The PCs should have the chance to provide a heroic contrast to all of the nameless characters who’ve fallen to her spell over the centuries.

To make Mother Night a more powerful opponent for your PCs, give her better defenses: Damage Resistance, Damage Reduction, or the like. To make her less powerful, remove her *Orogthan* *Biology* ability, making it much easier for the PCs to kill her and thus preventing Orogtha from continuing to affect Earth’s reality... until she recruits another Void Messiah, of course!

Appearance: Mother Night is a tall, almost impossibly attractive Rigellian woman. She has glossy blue-black skin, snow white hair, and appears to be in her mid-twenties. She wears little (if any) clothing, preferring to let others marvel at her beauty.

BLACK APOSTLE

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 [1]
12	DEX	6	11-	OCV: 4/DCV: 4
14	CON	8	12-	
11	BODY	2	11-	
12	INT	2	11-	PER Roll 11-
11	EGO	2	11-	ECV: 4
13	PRE	3	12-	PRE Attack: 2½d6
10	COM	0	11-	
7	PD	4		Total: 13 PD (6 rPD)
5	ED	2		Total: 11 ED (6 rED)
2	SPD	0		Phases: 6, 12
6	REC	0		
28	END	0		
26	STUN	0		Total Characteristic Cost: 34

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers	END
20	<i>Qliphothic Staff:</i> Multipower, 40-point reserve; all OAF (-1)	
2u	1) <i>Qliphothic Beam:</i> Energy Blast 8d6; OAF (-1)	4
1u	2) <i>Qliphothic Bolt:</i> RKA 2d6; OAF (-1)	3
2u	3) <i>Touch Of The Qliphothic:</i> Drain EGO and PRE 2d6, two Characteristics simultaneously (+½), Ranged (+½); OAF (-1)	4
3	<i>Brawling:</i> HA +1d6; Hand-To-Hand Attack (-½)	1
10	<i>Tough:</i> Physical Damage Reduction, 25%	0
9	<i>Edomite Emblem:</i> Armor (6 PD/6 ED); OAF (-1)	0
5	<i>Edomite Emblem:</i> Power Defense (10 points); OAF (-1)	0

Perks

1 Fringe Benefit: Black Apostle

Skills

3	+1 with Qliphothic Staff
3	Concealment 11-
3	Disguise 11-
3	Interrogation 12-
1	KS: Church Of The Infinite Dark 8-
2	KS: Qliphothic Technology 11-
2	PS: Black Apostle 11-
3	Stealth 11-
3	Streetwise 12-
3	Tactics 11-
3	Teamwork 11-
1	TF: Military Spacecraft
1	WF: Qliphothic Staff
9	Choose nine Character Points' worth of Skills from the following list: Combat Piloting, Computer Programming, Electronics, Mechanics, Survival, Systems Operation, any Background Skill

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 93

Total Cost: 127

50+ Disadvantages

- 5 Distinctive Features: Church of the Infinite Dark Robes (Easily Concealed; Noticed And Recognizable)
- 20 Hunted: Mind Police 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Harshly Punish)
- 5 Hunted: Church of the Infinite Dark 8- (Mo Pow, Watching)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Devotion To Void Messiah And/Or King Of Edom (Common, Total)
- 20 Social Limitation: Subject To Orders (Very Frequently, Major)
- 7 7 more points' worth of either Psychological Limitation: Mental Illness (choose one) or Physical Limitation: Harmful Mutation (choose one)

Total Disadvantage Points: 127

Description: This character sheet represents a typical Black Apostle. Lured into the Church of the Infinite Dark with promises of wealth, power, and the opportunity to indulge his darkest desires — or simply an unlucky traveler whose ship was captured — he's been warped and mutated psychologically, and often physically as well, by exposure to Qliphothic energies. In general a Black Apostle is ruthless, capable, malevolent, and totally devoted to his Void Messiah (and/or the King of Edom that Void Messiah serves). Most Black Apostles were once spacers, and thus often have Skills like Combat Piloting, Computer Programming, and Systems Operation that they use to help operate the Darkhold.

Unless he was captured and brainwashed by a Void Messiah, it's likely a Black Apostle was well on his way to a career in evil long before he was recruited into the Church. Being a member simply gives him a larger canvas upon which to paint his wicked desires. He may have been a member of one of the Galaxy's numerous disenfranchised species looking for violent revenge against the established social order, an outcast for whom any change (even joining the Church of the Infinite Dark) seemed like an improvement, or just a born scumbag. Whatever his background, he's now a creature of the Edomites by the time any PC encounters him. Conversion to the Church is a one-way street.

The life of a Black Apostle is solitary, Qliphothic, nasty, brutish, and short. He's a foot soldier in a war the Church of the Infinite Dark has been waging against our reality in one form or another for hundreds of years... or just plain cannon fodder, depending on how one looks at it. Black Apostles occupy all positions in the Church lower than Void Messiah — everything from Third Galley Scrubber to Tactical Officer. Besides any specific jobs assigned to them, their duties include attacking passing ships, raiding innocent worlds, destroying planets, and breaking things. Their avatar-leaders expect them to fight not only unbelievers but one another as well, so fatalities and promotions are both equally common. A particularly promising Black Apostle might be

transformed into an Edomite monster by his Void Messiah or simply sacrificed to one. In any case, the odds aren't good that he'll be around to see his particular King immanentize the eschaton... if, in fact, that's what any of the Kings intend.

Because the ambient magical force of the universe is at low ebb during the time of the Terran Empire, bizarre and frightening types of technology are required to focus the energies of the Qliphothic dimensions and allow their passage into Earth's reality as effective and useful power. Black Apostles carry two minor but potent items created specifically to grant power to a lesser follower of the Kings of Edom. The first is his Edomic Emblem, a disturbing-looking "pendant" that protects him. The second is his weapon, the Qliphothic Staff: a slender, three-meter long rod of writhing, gold-colored organic substance tipped with a shifting, extra-dimensional shape. Both are Personal Foci and wither and crumble after about a day of being removed from their owner. Non-Apostles generally find it disturbing and distasteful to even handle them.

Regardless of his species a Black Apostle wears long, hooded black robes with the insignia of his King or Void Messiah (he may have trouble telling the difference) embroidered on the front, his Edomite Emblem, and crude sandals. Under certain circumstances he may wear different clothing such as a spacesuit, but he'll invariably change back at first opportunity. He carries his Qliphothic Staff at all times.



BRAIN BEAST

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
18	STR	8	13-	Lift 300 kg; 3½d6 [4]
18	DEX	24	13-	OCV: 6/DCV: 6
18	CON	16	13-	
12	BODY	4	11-	
8	INT	-2	11-	PER Roll 11-
17	EGO	14	12-	ECV: 6
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
6	COM	-2	10-	
6	PD	2		Total: 6 PD (5 rPD)
4	ED	0		Total: 4 ED (4 rED)
4	SPD	12		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
8	REC	0		
36	END	0		
30	STUN	0		Total Characteristic Cost: 81

Movement: Running: 6"/12"
Leaping: 11"/14"

Cost Powers END

56	<i>Cerebral Stun:</i> Ego Attack 9d6; 1 Charge (-2) plus Drain Running 4d6, Delayed Return Rate (points return at the rate of 5 per Minute; +¼), Ranged (+½), Line Of Sight (+½); Linked (Ego Attack; -½), 1 Charge (-2) [1]
15	<i>Bite:</i> HKA 1d6 (2d6 w/STR) 1
12	<i>Claws:</i> HKA 1d6 (2d6 w/STR); Reduced Penetration (-¼) 1
4	<i>Tough Skin:</i> Damage Resistance (5 PD/4 ED) 0
30	<i>Merge With Environment:</i> Invisibility to Sight Group, No Fringe, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); Chameleon (-½) 0
3	<i>Pounce:</i> Leaping +8" (11½" forward); Forward Movement Only (-1), No Noncombat Movement (-¼) 1
10	<i>Claws:</i> Clinging (normal STR)

Skills

6	+3 OECV with Cerebral Stun
6	+3 OCV with Move Through

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 142

Total Cost: 223

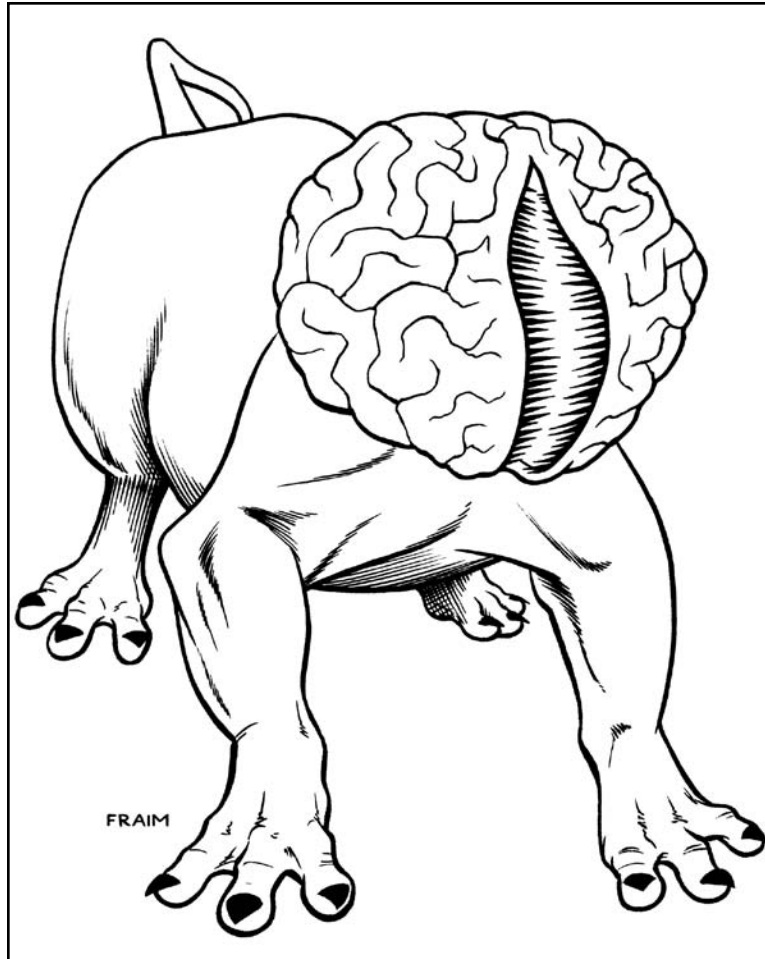
75+ Disadvantages

15	Physical Limitation: Animal Intelligence (Frequently, Greatly Impairing)
0	Physical Limitation: Human Size
15	Physical Limitation: Very Limited Manipulation (Frequently, Greatly Impairing)
118	Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 223

Description: Fast, deadly, and utterly repulsive, the Brain Beast is an example of the kind of Edomite “animal” found stalking the corridors of many Darkholds. Like most of its fellow creatures it’s either been drawn into our reality from its native Qliphothic world somehow, or has been “grown” by a Void Messiah from organic materials infused with bizarre, extra-dimensional energies. A cunning predator with psionic abilities, it resembles a massive grey bulldog whose head has been replaced with a huge Human brain. This “brain” opens vertically to reveal a mouth filled with razor-sharp, needle-like black teeth. Though it lacks any visible sensory apparatus, the Brain Beast can see, hear, and smell using alien senses beyond science’s comprehension.

When not actively moving from one place to another, the Brain Beast clings to a wall or ceiling using its long, black claws. It then “merges” into the substance it’s adhering to, becoming effectively invisible as long as it doesn’t move. An incredibly patient hunter, it can remain motionless for weeks at a time while it waits for prey. When a target finally presents itself, the Brain



Beast unleashes a powerful Cerebral Stun that usually leaves its victim unconscious... and if not, dazed and unable to move quickly. It then pounces upon its intended prey with incredible accuracy, knocking it to the ground where it can rend and devour its flesh at leisure.

THE CLONE MOB



Membership: The Clone Mob is powerful and extensive criminal conspiracy with almost a half million members, all as alike as brothers. They operate mainly in the older Terran colony worlds and on Earth, though the ISP has received disturbing reports that the clones have established safe-houses and front organizations in Perseid space.

Background/History

Jax Maljek was never alone. One of a pair of identical twins born on the lushly pastoral world of Tau Ceti II, Jax and his brother Jix were first generation Cetians, the children of a pair of idealistic genetic scientists who dreamed of living in harmony with nature on a new world. Venturing into space over a hundred years before the invention of the Hyperdrive, the Maljeks traveled to the Green Planet in cryogenic capsules in a sublight “sleeper ship” on a trip that went on for decades. The Maljeks labored hard to crack the genetic codes of that world’s abundant animal and plant life in the hope that its uniquely robust biosphere could be exported to lifeless worlds and used for terraforming. Dedicated to their cause and having experienced the painfully slow pace of first generation space colonization, they indoctrinated their ingenious offspring with their beliefs almost from the crib on the assumption that their project would take generations.

By the time Jax and Jix were teenagers their knowledge of genetics exceeded that of most United Earth-era scientists. Years spent in their parents’ laboratory turned them into gifted, almost instinctual geneticists. Yet the twins’ personalities (or, perhaps more accurately, “personality”) were as shaped by nature as by nurture. Raised on what at the time was a lawless frontier, they chafed at the older Cetian colonists’ attempts to impose a rigid, ecologically-oriented bureaucracy on their children. The twins wanted freedom not merely to live as they pleased without burdensome laws, but to create outrageous new life forms using their knowledge of science. Though the majority of their generation agreed with (or at least acquiesced to) the ideals of their parent’s generation, the Maljek twins orchestrated a series of grandiose stunts designed to protest the increasing inflexibility of their society. From the safety of a hidden laboratory they let loose a hyperactive (but fortunately sterile) form of kudzu capable of overgrowing a two story house in a matter of hours, grew and released gargantuan parrots the size of herons, and unleashed a horde of dog-sized dung beetles that knocked over settlers’ outhouses.

Finally the twins decided to set free their *coup-de-gras*: they tried to create a dragon. Their goal was to try to transform a harmless local species of gliding lizard into the fire-breathing creature of legend. Hoping to ride their “dragons” like Fantasy heroes, they attempted to splice dog-like intelligence and loyalty into the creatures as well as gigantism, but the experiment was a disastrous failure. When first freed from their cages the dragons turned on their creators, unleashing their fury on the Maljek compound. The twins’ parents were killed in the attack, Jix’s beast clawed him to death, and Jax was battered into a coma while slaughtering his own creations with a high-powered rifle.

The surviving young genius was tried and found guilty of reckless endangerment, manslaughter, and eco-terrorism by the planetary authorities while he lay in a hospital bed. When he suddenly awoke a year later, Jax Maljek was allowed a few months of physical therapy and then expelled permanently from Tau Ceti II. He didn’t care. The death of his twin brother, his parents, and the destruction of his community combined with his brain injury had transformed the mischievous teenager into something dark and dangerous. Before he was part of a family; now he was utterly alone, adrift in a cold Universe of “otherness” he could never relate to... and cared nothing for.

Taking advantage of the invention of the Hyperdrive the renegade geneticist traveled to Earth, where he put his scientific skills up for sale to the highest bidder. Under the tutelage of chemists working for various organized criminal operations he began to create new and unique recreational drugs, many of which are still in use today (versions of his AlterStasis and PCPop are still popular street drugs in the Empire). But Maljek quickly became bored. He decided to expand his knowledge of pharmaceuticals by traveling to many of the newly-discovered planets opened to Human exploration by the Hyperdrive. If a planet was inhabited by sentients, he interviewed people for information on their indigenous herbal medications, then stole the drugs in an act of biopiracy. Once safely back on Earth he genetically decoded the native medicines and took out Terran patents on their applications, making himself fantastically (and legitimately) wealthy while simultaneously becoming a cultural villain on many worlds. On Jhin, Harkarth, and in a dozen other places Jax Maljek is still remembered as a symbol of Human imperialism and exploitation. (This amuses him immensely.)

Jax was now wealthy and in an excellent position to do whatever he pleased. Unfortunately for the future history of the Human species, he was also a lonely, megalomaniacal sociopath. Unable to relate to “lesser people,” desperately missing his dead twin brother, and needing help to build the massive interplanetary criminal empire he envisioned, Maljek returned to the lab. Over several difficult years he invented a process that allows him to create adult clones of himself — a procedure he calls “twinning.” His “twins” decant from their growth-vats with the full knowledge and abilities of their single biological “parent.” In a very real sense Jax gave birth to his “brother;” a perfect twin in every way like his dead sibling Jix. Unsurprisingly, the two got along so well they decided to create a third brother. Then they created another, and another, and another...

...and the Clone Mob was born.

Restless and easily bored — but extraordinarily capable — the newly minted “criminal family” of clones began looking for other interesting undertakings besides drugs and biopiracy. Their mastery of genetics allowed them to create adult copies of nearly anyone, so they began stealing tissue samples of famous starlets and creating pleasure slave copies of them for the underground market. Branching out, they made identical copies of beautiful, high-end prostitutes for use in low-end brothels. Low rent didn’t equal low profits, however, and the Clone Mob soon had the capital to undertake schemes on a planetary scale. It began to use genetically tailored animals to threaten the terraforming of new Senatorial colony worlds, forcing planetary governments to pay blackmail or risk the losing their investment.

Somewhere along the line Jax Maljek died. But he didn’t care. By then there were so many of him that losing a single copy of himself was no different to him than losing a strand of hair. Within a dozen years he’d spread himself out so far across Human space that he was effectively immortal. Every new him felt a compulsion to make another him. His numbers grew, and grew, and grew...

Organization And Structure

Jax Maljek’s “twinings” aren’t like normal clones. They don’t develop distinct personalities or interests and they don’t have goals or desires any different from the original Jax Maljek’s. In a very real sense every one of his over 500,000 clones is *him*, not merely a genetic copy. This is purely a psychological phenomenon; the clones don’t have telepathic abilities or a gestalt mind. A Jax Maljek in Perseid space has no special way of sending his thoughts to a Jax Maljek in Human space. Yet both consider himself Jax Maljek. Were they to meet, they would also consider one another to be Jax Maljek, and this would not seem strange to them in any way. This is why in its four centuries of operation no member of the Clone Mob has ever betrayed the organization — you can’t deliberately betray yourself.

The members of the Clone Mob use *Jekmal*, an artificial language they created, to communicate. Although many law enforcement agencies have translated the language on paper based on seized samples, almost no one outside the Mob speaks it properly. This allows them to pass information securely even when meeting in public. According to some sources, Jekmal sounds a little like Russian.

Though the Mob requires surprisingly little day-to-day supervision, in the interests of keeping its operations efficient the original Jax Maljek created four key positions within the organization. The four clones who occupy these positions are in essence the “officers” of the Mob, as powerful as the leaders of some smaller Imperial worlds. Referred to as “princes,” each is identified by a color. Should one Prince fall or retire, he’s immediately replaced by an identical cloned version of himself, guaranteeing the organization a great deal of stability. Later leaders of the Mob added two additional, inferior “princedom” as the group’s operations expanded.

Besides having a unique Package Deal, the Clone Mob’s Princes have one critical modification that makes them different from normal Jax Maljek clones (if there can be said to be such a thing). A small cybernetic implant located at the base of the cerebral cortex automatically downloads each Prince’s total, up-to-date memories to his private twinning machine at local midnight each day. Should the Prince be killed, the machine produces an absolutely identical copy within 24 hours, allowing Jax Maljek to smoothly continue his business without inconvenient interruption. All other copies of Jax Maljek simply have the memories and abilities of the particular Jax Maljek that twinned them.

THE BLUE PRINCE (THE PROCURER)

The Blue Prince runs the Clone Mob’s prostitution operations. His operatives are constantly on the lookout for genetic samples of extraordinarily attractive people. Holo-stars and other gorgeous celebrities are their favorite targets, but any sort of eye-catching life-form will do — so long as there’s a market for his or her (or its) clones. Once they obtain useful genetic material, the Blue Prince’s people grow clones in secret laboratories for sale to select customers or for use in one of the Mob’s thousands of secret brothels.

BLUE PRINCE PACKAGE DEAL

Abilities

Cost	Ability
3	+1 with Conversation, Disguise, and Persuasion
3	High Society 12-
3	KS: The Celebrity World 14-
+3	Fringe Benefit: Prince of the Clone Mob

Total Cost Of Package Abilities: 12

THE BROWN PRINCE (THE SPY)

The Brown Prince makes his home in near-Earth space, where he’s successfully infiltrated GBG Pharmatica at the highest levels. (The Clone Mob’s drug products are popular because they’re truly professionally manufactured.) The clone charged along with Red Prince in overseeing the Mob’s drug operations, he’s created a vast intelligence network. This network has penetrated not only dozens of large Imperial companies, but also the ISP.. which comes in handy, as that’s the organization charged with putting an end to the Clone Mob! Brown Prince has also infiltrated the CCR’s Republic Central Intelligence, the Perseid Intelligence Division, and the Velarian Ingelligence Branch using cosmetically-modified clone brothers.

BROWN PRINCE
PACKAGE DEAL

Abilities	
Cost	Ability
3	KS: The Espionage World 14-
3	PS: Tradecraft 14-
3	PS: Corporate Chemist 14-
2	Deep Cover (Head Chemist at GBG Pharmatica)
24	Contact: Personal Spy Network 12- (Contact has significant Contacts of its own, Contact has very useful Skills or resources, Contact is slavishly loyal to character, Contact limited by identity, Organization)
5	Favors: various corporate executives
10	Favors: various spies and agents
+3	Fringe Benefit: Prince of the Clone Mob
Total Cost Of Package Abilities: 53	

THE GREEN PRINCE (THE BANKER)

The Green Prince makes his home on Barnard III, where he works innocuously as an accountant for one of the Terran Empire’s largest industrial concerns. He uses the company’s vast financial network to launder and invest the Clone Mob’s ill-gotten loot in legitimate and profitable businesses, ensuring a steady flow of legal income for its criminal undertakings.

GREEN PRINCE
PACKAGE DEAL

Abilities	
Cost	Ability
3	KS: The Business World 14-
3	PS: Banker 14-
3	PS: Accountant 14-
2	Deep Cover (Corporate Accountant)
10	Favors: various corporate executives
+3	Fringe Benefit: Member of Clone Mob (Prince)
3	Lightning Calculator
Total Cost Of Package Abilities: 27	

THE RED PRINCE (THE ENFORCER)

The Red Prince has no fixed base of operations. Instead, he makes his home on the heavily-armed *Peregrine*-class frigate *Mustelidae*, which the Mob has disguised to look like a merchantman. He serves as the Clone Mob’s “heavy,” and is only brought in when local Mob members have lost control of a situation. Besides his eight crewman/brothers, the *Mustelidae* carries a crew of six mobsters specially trained for assassination, leg-breaking, and other violent tasks. Along with the Brown Prince, the Red Prince is in charge of the Mob’s lucrative drug trade.

RED PRINCE
PACKAGE DEAL

Abilities	
Cost	Ability
+7	20 STR
+2	40 STUN
+10	Physical Damage Reduction, 50%
+8	+3 with All Combat
3	KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 14-
10	Favors: various underworld figures
+3	Fringe Benefit: Prince of the Clone Mob
4	Reputation: Feared Killer (within the underworld) 11-, +2/+2d6
Total Cost Of Package Abilities: 47	

THE LESSER PRINCES

The Orange Prince (The Blackmailer)

One of the Mob’s profitable sidelines is ecological sabotage: the introduction of invasive species into an environment with the intent to unbalance it. The Orange Prince’s job is to travel to newly-terraformed colony worlds, introduce a minor but extremely annoying pest species (modified perennial mosquitoes are a favorite), and then blackmail the local authorities into paying him a sizeable bribe to (a) get rid of them, and (b) not introduce more.

ORANGE PRINCE
PACKAGE DEAL

Abilities	
Cost	Ability
3	+1 with Conversation, Persuasion, and Streetwise
3	KS: Newly Founded Colony Worlds14-
+3	Fringe Benefit: Prince of the Clone Mob
Total Cost Of Package Abilities: 9	

THE BLACK PRINCE (THE SLAVER)

From its inception the Clone Mob has excelled in the creation and sale of slave labor to unscrupulous customers. The Black Prince oversees this side of the Mob's operations. He specializes in creating useful but unintelligent clones of strong species such as Human Heavies, Toractans, and Ackálians. He also maintains the laboratories and business contacts necessary to support the slavery operations. The most hated and hunted of all Clone Mob "princes," a typical Black Prince has a short lifespan. Fortunately, there are always more.

BLACK PRINCE PACKAGE DEAL

Abilities

Cost	Ability
3	+1 with Conversation, Interrogation, and Persuasion
3	+1 with Biology, Genetics, and Xenobiology
3	KS: The Slavery Business 14-
20	Contacts (20 point's worth in the underworld, primarily the slave labor market)
+3	Fringe Benefit: Prince of the Clone Mob

Total Cost Of Package Abilities: 32

Group Relations

To say that relations between the members of the Clone Mob are excellent would be an understatement. They're utterly loyal to one another (or perhaps it would better to say that he's completely loyal to himself). The thought of betrayal or "selling out" never even crosses their minds.

Particularly in Terran space, the clones go to great lengths to hide their true appearance when necessary. They prefer non-permanent methods such as disguises and holo-projections, but will resort to plastic surgery if necessary (and reverse it as soon as they can; a Jax Maljek strongly prefers to look like a Jax Maljek). All members of the Clone Mob have multiple fake identities complete with identity cards, bank accounts, and — of course — false genetic information. When operating in far-flung locations like the Perseid Empire, the Cojoined Civilizations Republic, and the Velarian Confederation, members of the Mob often identify themselves by a variation on the Jax Maljek name: Jax Jones Maljek, J. Maljek the Third, and Junior Maljek to name but a few. In intra-organizational communications they use code numbers to identify each other: for example, Jax Maljek 435,213 is active on Alpha Centauri. A Maljek's number has no external significance; it doesn't indicate where he lives or what he does. Each clone's *KS: The Clone Mob* Skill lets him recall pertinent facts about his other selves.

One reason the Clone Mob works as smoothly as it does is because each Jax Maljek can easily predict what any other clone will do: all he has to do is imagine what he'd do under the same circumstances. Thus, it's extremely easy for them to cooperate effectively and efficiently on group tasks even when separated by hundreds of light-years with no means of communication.

Tactics

The Clone Mob is an extremely decentralized organization whose members focus on doing what Jax Maljek does best to enrich themselves: cooking complex drugs; committing acts of biopiracy; pimping; producing slave-clones of beautiful people; and blackmailing planetary governments through eco-terrorism. The clone's Princes exist mostly to provide support and advice: the Green Prince and his underlings launder member's ill-gotten money; the Red Prince helps them when they're threatened; and so forth. If Jax Maljek has a successful operation that runs up against one of his other operations, he simply cooperates with himself. Conflict between clones does not occur.

Although Jax Maljek knows himself to be the pinnacle of Human evolution he sometimes finds that he lacks some specific skill or bit of knowledge. To compensate for this some clones study other subjects or get special training. (In game terms, they take Professional Package Deals that allow them to fill certain useful niches in the organization. Pilot, Smuggler, and Trader are the most common, but more exotic Package Deals are possible. This knowledge passes on to the clone's twinings in a kind of informal apprentice system.)

The clones' tactics depend mostly on the ins-and-outs of Jax Maljek's diseased personality. Every single one of them suffers from Megalomania, Antisocial Personality Disorder, and an instinctive compulsion to "reproduce" by creating more twinings of himself. Though ingenious, Maljek clones often fail to plan well in advance, are physically aggressive, easily bored, impulsive, and take great pleasure in lying and deceiving others (though they never, ever do these things to their other selves). They have absolutely no regard for any Human life that isn't a clone of Jax Maljek and feel no compulsion to honor their obligations. The only reason the Clone Mob respects its promises at all is that Jax Maljek doesn't want his organization to have a bad reputation.

A narcissistic sexual deviant, Jax Maljek is attracted only to clones of himself and thus could be thought of as an incestuous homosexual. Jax Maljek clones don't "pair-bond" or show any particular sentimentality toward one another. The death of a clone "brother" is treated with a shrug, even if he were a lover. There are plenty more where he came from, after all. Perhaps even more perversely, Maljek eventually hopes to replace all Human life in the Terran Empire with copies of himself. Once he does so, he'll work toward replacing all sentient life everywhere with modified twinings of himself. There's no particular hurry, however. There are plenty of him and he isn't going anywhere.

Campaign Use

The Clone Mob is a powerful threat to law and order within the Terran Empire due to the unique nature of its members, their total loyalty to one another, and its inherent institutional patience. It operates primarily on older Terran colony worlds and Earth because it's slowly spreading like an infection across known space, pausing occasionally to fling tendrils out to the far reaches of the Empire or into neighboring powers. The only thing holding the Clone Mob back from a horrifying power grab on some planet is that every individual clone essentially has the demented personality of Jax Maljek, who wasn't interested in political power. He enjoys crime because it's inherently antisocial and produces money, which in turn grants him power over others without the burdensome nuisance of ruling them. Even the Mob's Princes have no particular desire to govern non-clones. One day all Human life will be Jax Maljek and he'll rule over himself for all eternity.

The Clone Mob is a uniquely troubling and problematic organization for the PCs to tackle. It can't be infiltrated, its members can't be corrupted (though controlling one or two psionically is possible), and its leadership almost instantly replaces itself when killed with no loss of institutional memory. Because of its decentralization and slow, voluntary diaspora it's extremely unlikely anyone could ever completely destroy the Clone Mob. The best your heroes (or the ISP, for that matter) can hope for is to ferret out and defeat as many of Jax Maljek's operations as possible, reducing its size and influence. A particularly effective tactic might be to target the Mob's cloning and twinning facilities and thus reduce Jax Maljek's ability to reproduce. Some sort of "psionic disease" that would pass from one clone to another might also work.

Unless they've been tasked by the Imperial government to hunt down the Clone Mob (or they've taken on such a project by themselves), the PCs will most likely encounter clones of Jax Maljek doing the sorts of things they enjoy doing most: stealing medical substances from newly discovered planets; blackmailing recently founded colonies; stealing genetic samples of supermodels; and so on. In these instances they'll find clones of Jax Maljek a capable (but not unstoppable) foe with resources not unlike those of less exotic organized crime groups.

It's unlikely that even the most diligent and successful foe of the Clone Mob will ever be actively Hunted (though the clones will probably know of him). The original Jax Maljek never showed any interest in Hunting anyone, so it's never occurred to any of his hundreds of thousands of "twins" to do so. When confronted with a particularly intractable enemy Maljek usually tries to avoid him or, if the opportunity conveniently presents itself, do away with him once and for all.

JAX MALJEK (ORIGINAL AND CLONES)

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
13	STR	3	12-	Lift 150 kg; 2½d6 [3]
11	DEX	3	11-	OCV: 4/DCV: 4
15	CON	10	12-	
15	BODY	10	12-	
23	INT	16	14-	PER Roll 14-
14	EGO	8	12-	ECV: 5
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
12	COM	1	11-	
7	PD	4		Total: 7 PD (0 rPD)
6	ED	3		Total: 6 ED (0 rED)
4	SPD	19		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
8	REC	4		
30	END	0		
35	STUN	5		Total Characteristic Cost: 91

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers	END
7	<i>Psychotically Vicious:</i> HA +2d6; Hand-To-Hand Attack (-½)	1
10	<i>Psychotically Tough:</i> Physical Damage Reduction, 25%	0
7	<i>Strong Willpower:</i> Mental Defense (10 points total)	0

Perks

1	False Identity
1	Fringe Benefit: Member of Clone Mob
5	Money: Well Off

Skills

8	+1 with All Combat
3	+1 with Bribery, Interrogation, and Streetwise
3	Bribery 12-
4	Computer Programming (Computer Networks, Personal Computers) 14-
3	Conversation 12-
5	Cramming
3	Cryptography 14-
3	Disguise 14-
3	Interrogation 12-
5	KS: The Clone Mob 16-
4	Language: Jekmal (idiomatic; Terran is Native)
3	Persuasion 12-
3	Stealth 11-
3	Streetwise 12-
5	Teamwork 12-
3	WF: Terran Small Arms, Blades
3	Scientist
2	1) SS: Biology 14-
2	2) SS: Chemistry 14-
2	3) SS: Cloning 14-
2	4) SS: Ecology 14-
2	5) SS: Genetics 14-
2	6) SS: Xenobiology 14-
3	Traveler
2	1) AK: Earth 14-
2	2) AK: The Heartworlds 14-
2	3) AK: Tau Ceti II 14-

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 116

Total Cost: 207

75+ Disadvantages

- 10 Distinctive Features: Jax Maljek (Noticed And Recognizable; Concealable With Effort)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Antisocial Personality Disorder (Common, Total)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Megalomaniac (Common, Moderate)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Must “Reproduce” (Common, Strong)
- 20 Hunted: ISP 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Harshly Punish)
- 57 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 207

JAX MALJEK PLOT SEEDS

For the first time in galactic history one of the 500,000 Jax Maljek clones has offered to betray his fellow clones! Though the ISP is unclear as to why this might be, they're more than happy to take the renegade Maljek up on his offer. The PCs are dispatched to recover this renegade from his hiding place on Vinarcus, but can they get to him before the Clone Mob does? And if they do recover him, is the rebel clone on their side — or is a deeper game being played?

The Psindicate has grown tired of having its slaving operations run afoul of those of the Clone Mob and has decided to annihilate its competitors once and for all. Dead clones of Jax Maljek are turning up all over the place, and the clones have responded with a series of fatal bombings that have cost hundreds of innocent lives. The cities of the Heartworlds are gripped with terror. The TSS and Mind Police seem paralyzed with indecision and bureaucratic wrangling. So the Empress turns to the one group she can trust to ruthlessly carry out its missions: the PCs!

The clones have developed a process by which any normal Human being can be transformed into a clone of Jax Maljek. So far this process has only been utilized on runaways, drug addicts, and other sorts of people that the Clone Mob can easily pick up. The Ministry of Evolution believes that the clones are using some kind of intravenous retrovirus, but it's only a matter of time before Jax Maljek figures out a way to make his twinning pathogen airborne. Can the PCs stop the Clone Mob before the Human species is put in jeopardy?

Background/History: See above

Personality/Motivation: See above

Quote: “I have no desire whatsoever to reform my thousands of selves. My only desire is to eliminate people who try to reform us. Oh, hell — sooner or later I'm going to eliminate all of you anyhow. Until then we'll just enjoy ourselves.”

Powers/Tactics: Jax Maljek was (is? It's hard to say) a first rate polymath mad scientist — with an emphasis on “mad” — who also enjoyed committing depraved criminal acts of an antisocial sort. A well-traveled thug accustomed to both talking and fighting his way out of dangerous situations (like getting caught stealing the Osathri cure for cancer), he developed a versatile range of criminal skills to supplement his scientific abilities. His



hundreds of thousands of clones continue his work. Each one of them is a skillful geneticist, chemist, and biologist with an obsessive interest in cloning himself. They're also skillful mobsters used to working together to accomplish their criminal goals, and thus have appropriate skills such as Bribery, Interrogation, and Streetwise.

Jax Maljek was a violent sociopath who possessed almost no fear of physical injury or death. Thus his clones are tougher, faster, and better able to withstand physical punishment than standard Humans. They're also very smart, skilled in the use of both blades and standard Terran small arms, and indifferent to their own death, as there are always more of them. Jax Maljek will always carry a knife and laser pistol (unless there's good reason not to, like he expects to be searched) and won't hesitate to kill for almost any reason.

The equipment each Jax Maljek carries varies based on personal preference, situation, and activities. Laser pistols, force-field belts, knives, and pocket computers are common.

Campaign Use: See above.

Appearance: Jax Maljek is a handsome, muscular-looking man with blue eyes and white-blond hair; he's obviously of Scandinavian origin. He favors tailored running suits covered with a multitude of pockets and sneers a great deal. His various clones tend to have their own taste in clothes, ranging from imitating him to deliberately dressing nothing like him.

PELGA'S FIST



Membership: The *Prowler*-class Ackálian pirate ship *Pelga's Fist* has roughly 320 crewmen at any given time. This includes her captain, first mate, six senior officers, two-dozen petty officers, and numerous pirates of varying levels of ability.

Background/History: Named after the legendary Ackálian conqueror, Pelga's Fist began her life as standard *Prowler*-class cruiser (TE 182-183) in 2543. Constructed by a Shiseki workforce on the fortress world of Damrath, she has an organic, vaguely crustacean appearance not unlike that of a horseshoe crab, and comes heavily armed with Mark XV Starship Lasers and Type 7 Plasma Cannons. She first saw action in the Galactic War of 2548-54 as part of the Ackálian strike force charged with cutting the Terran Empire in half. Later she was transferred back to Ackálian space, where she helped to fight a desperate delaying action against the Mon'dabi along the anti-spinward border. Badly damaged during a head-to-head confrontation with a much larger Mon'dabi

battlecruiser, she retreated to Ackál for retrofitting and remained out of service until after the Terran-Mon'dabi-Ackálian armistice of 2553.

For the next several decades *Pelga's Fist* remained in spacedock with her airlocks open to the vacuum for preservation purposes. Like much of the surviving fleet the Ackálians had built up for their attack on the Terran Empire, she was mothballed due to the economic collapse the Ackálian Empire suffered in the wake of the Galactic War. But in 2587 the Ackorsha (the Ackálian military) inspected the *Fist* and, finding her reasonably spaceworthy, re-commissioned her for use as a patrol vessel on the Malvan side of their territory. She served peacefully in this capacity for twenty years, mostly under the command of lower-status female captains, until she was deemed unfit for service and sent back to Damrath for dismantling. Fortunately for the *Fist*, a renewal in tensions between the Ackálian and Mon'dabi in 2609 caused her to undergo a second hasty retrofitting in which her aging engines were swapped out for a state of the art Class Lambda-V Hyperdrive and a Type 17-A Displacer Drive. These modern engines proved too large to mount into the ship's existing frame, forcing her Shiseki engineers to add a larger propulsion section. (This joining of mismatched sections gives the ship a distinctive [and much joked about] "crab eating a crab" look, though it in no way impedes the huge ship's capabilities.)

Pelga's Fist was deployed to the hotly-contested Mon'dabi/Ackálian neutral zone under the command of a promising young captain named Thaagril, where the untested ship and her equally green commander were immediately plunged into combat with the veteran warships of the Federated Command. Both acquitted themselves well, returning home with two kills under her belt and a captured vessel in tow. Several more successful cruises followed, and at the close of the undeclared 2612 conflict between the Ackálian Empire and the Mon'dabi Federation Thaagril found her status (and that of her aged, odd-looking craft) greatly enhanced. The *Fist* was transferred to the Terran/Ackálian neutral zone to stand bow-to-bow with the powerful Imperial Navy. The young captain proved every bit as skilled at provoking (but never in fact fighting) Human ships as she was at combating Mon'dabi ones. She soon found herself promoted to the rank of Senior Captain, which gave her access to the cream of Ackorsha crewmen and the best possible resources.

In 2627 Senior Captain Thaagril found herself in a situation fairly typical for an Ackálian nearing the top of her profession: someone else blocked her advancement. For several years her immediate



superior Commander Taakamra skillfully defeated Thaagril's attempts to remove her from her position by slander and political maneuvering (all of which are expected from Ackorsha officers), and the aggressive captain grew desperate. Throwing all caution to the wind she attempted to personally assassinate her superior. Unfortunately for Thaagril, Taakamra was a master of melee combat and quickly turned the tables on her younger opponent. Thaagril lost an eye and a face mandible; in the end it was all she could do to escape with her life.

Disgraced, disfigured, and knowing that her death was now certain, Thaagril took *Pelga's Fist* into the Voršan Expanse, spaced her entire crew before they could figure out what had happened, and then limped to the outlaw world of Venwordien IV on autopilot. Using the *Fist* as a kind of buccaneer's collateral she put together a crew from the dregs of interstellar society and embarked upon a life of piracy, specializing in attacking Ackálian merchant shipping and even entire colony planets (since the *Fist* can make landfall). Now almost 100 years old, *Pelga's Fist* is the most wanted pirate ship in the Ackálian Empire, the terror of the neutral zones bordering her and the lifeless vastness of the Voršan Expanse.

Organization/Structure: *Pelga's Fist* is an undisputed dictatorship ruled by Captain Thaagril Three-Eye. She controls her large crew through a combination of rich prizes, sheer terror, and first officers so murderous that even a bloodthirsty pirate thinks twice about crossing them. With all that said, duties on her ship are divided up much as they're on any other military vessel. There's a First Mate with Senior Officers in charge of navigations, lifelines, propulsion, sensors, and tactics. There's also a head medical officer and a Security Chief; the latter doubles as the crew's leader under Thaagril during boarding and planetside attacks. *Pelga's Fist* lacks a science officer, since pirates aren't particularly interested in scientific inquiry, and scientists aren't particularly interested in hanging out with pirates. M537, the ship's malevolent and overtly hostile AI, performs most of the necessary scientific work (such as analysis of potentially dangerous stellar phenomena).

To a certain extent the social culture on *Pelga's Fist* is a great deal like that of any Ackálian vessel. The Second Assistant Janitor is scheming to take the place of the First Assistant Janitor. She in turn is plotting to eliminate the Head Janitor, who has his eyes wide open for an opportunity to supplant the Maintenance Chief. Thaagril sees this as natural and encourages it... as long as every position is adequately filled and all duties properly performed. Unlike an Ackálian military vessel, however, the pirates aboard the *Pelga's Fist* don't cross-train effectively. Thaagril gave up some time ago on the idea that her Second Assistant Janitor could stop what he's doing and in a pinch become a combat medic, navigations officer, or assume command of the ship. It's aggravating to her, but few other species share the Ackálian passion for cross-disciplinary proficiency.

In a combat situation every pirate on the *Fist* is expected to pull his weight. Since it's one of the few vessels of its size able to make planetfall, every man aboard the *Fist* functions as light infantry during a raid, when boarding another ship, or when repelling a boarding party. There are no exceptions to this rule: either a pirate fights or he gets flushed out of an airlock.

Group Relations: To put it simply, everybody on board *Pelga's Fist* hates everybody else. Captain Thaagril holds her entire crew in contempt and thinks nothing of killing any of them if they become troublesome. The Zurite First Mate Long a'Shen hates all Ackálians including Captain Thaagril, but is too frightened of her to attempt to displace her (yet). The Human Tactics Officer has nothing but contempt for the Hzeel Sensor and Propulsion Officers. The Second Assistant Janitor despises the First Assistant Janitor, while the Chief Cook is working on his third attempt to poison the Quartermaster. The ship's computer is quite public about its hatred of all organic lifeforms — and, if one spends any time around the *Fist's* crew, it becomes easy to sympathize with its position.

Two glues bind this misanthropic stew of psychopaths together. The first is that they're paid extremely well. Captain Thaagril is somewhat indifferent to loot of any sort; she prefers to spread it out equally among the crew after each venture. Thus, it's possible for even a Second Assistant Janitor to walk away from a stint aboard the *Fist* a wealthy man... assuming he walks away at all. The second is the crew's shared love of killing, rape, destruction, and general vileness. The men and women of *Pelga's Fist* make the members of the Xenovore Fleet (see Chapter One) seem like CCR Star Guard officers in comparison. Falling into their hands invariably leads to death, enslavement, or some other sort of unthinkable degradation.

Tactics: In spite of its age and eccentric design, the *Fist* in its current incarnation is a standard heavily-armed *Prowler*-class cruiser with all of that model's strengths and weaknesses. It's got the BODY, DEF, and nearly the firepower of a modern IBV *Empress*-class battleship (TE 172-174), it's relatively fast and maneuverable, and — unlike nearly all of the larger Terran ships — it can make planetfall. Also unlike a Terran battleship it doesn't carry any fighters or have anything like the Antimatter Missile capacity of those capital ships, relying instead on its sizable banks of Mark XV Starship Lasers and Type 7 Plasma Cannons. Still, there are very few ships in space that actually look forward to a fight with *Pelga's Fist*.

Lacking even the limited code of honor typical of most pirates in known space, Captain Thaagril swoops down on her targets without warning and without giving them any chance to surrender. If she's attacking a ship faster than hers, she attempts to cripple its engines using well-placed shots from her lasers. If the craft is slower, she grapples it immediately with the *Fist's* tractor beam and comes alongside for boarding. (Her crew prefers swift boarding actions to any

other form of space combat in any case, since they give them more victims to “play” with.) With the boarding action complete captives, cargo, and any other valuables are transferred to the *Fist*, and the captured ship is either destroyed or towed into orbit around the pirate world of Venwordien IV for quick sale to the highest bidder.

Campaign Use: The captain, officers, and crew of *Pelga's Fist* are dangerous pirate scum who need killing — and several galactic governments, most particularly the Ackálians, will pay anyone who can blast them all into space dust quite handsomely. Though Thaagril specializes in attacking her own kind, she isn't squeamish about going after Terran and Mon'dabi shipping either. It might be possible for a particularly enterprising group of pirate hunters to collect a bounty from all three governments!

Thaagril is considered by many to be the single most dangerous pirate currently alive, and the *Fist* to be the most significant threat to shipping in The Vor'san Expanse/Neutral Zone region. With the exception of the considerably more powerful Xenovore Fleet, most pirate ships are little more than dinky ATRI 10 freighters outfitted with extra weapons — while *Pelga's Fist* is a large, powerful warship equipped with state of the art weaponry. The only pirate ships in space that even come close to the *Fist* are King Narch's Xenovore Dreadnaught and Captain Hapsburg's IBV *Colgate*-class battleship, neither of which are as technologically advanced. The PCs should never underestimate the extreme danger posed by Captain Thaagril, her ship, and its crew. They won't be the first pirate hunters to go after her, and odds are good that they won't be the last, either.

CAPTAIN THAAGRIL THREE-EYES

Renegade Ackálian Pirate Captain

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
18	STR	8	13-	Lift 300 kg; 3½d6 [4]
14	DEX	12	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
15	CON	10	12-	
15	BODY	10	12-	
15	INT	5	12-	PER Roll 12-
14	EGO	8	12-	ECV: 5
18	PRE	8	13-	PRE Attack: 3½d6
8	COM	-1	11-	
8	PD	4		Total: 11 PD (11 rPD)
6	ED	3		Total: 9 ED (9 rED)
4	SPD	16		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
7	REC	0		
30	END	0		
40	STUN	8		Total Characteristic Cost: 91

Movement: Running: 8"/16"

Cost	Powers	END
3	<i>Ackálian Bite</i> : HKA 1 point; No STR Bonus (-½)	1
20	<i>Tough Girl</i> : Physical Damage Reduction, 50%	0
4	<i>Fast</i> : Running +2" (8" total)	1

Perks

6	Money: Wealthy
5	Fringe Benefit: Pirate Captain
6	Reputation: most feared pirate in the Vor'san Expanse (a large group) 11-, +3/+3d6

Talents

4	Environmental Movement: Zero-G Training (no penalties in zero gravity)
6	Combat Luck (3 PD/3 ED)
4	FTL Pilot

Skills

3	+1 with Ackálian Sickles
15	+3 with Ranged Combat
3	Combat Piloting 12-
9	Computer Programming (Personal Computers, Infiltration) 15-
3	High Society 13-
5	Interrogation 14-
3	KS: Ackálian History 12-
3	Language: Mon'dabi (completely fluent; Ackálian is Native)
3	Language: Terran (completely fluent)
3	Navigation (Hyperspace, Space) 12-
5	PS: Pirate 14-
3	Persuasion 13-
5	Security Systems 13-
3	Streetwise 13-
4	Systems Operation (Communications Systems, Starship Laser, Starship Plasma Cannons) 12-
7	Tactics 14-
2	TF: Ackálian Space Vehicles
10	Two-Weapon Fighting (HTH)
6	WF: Ackálian Small Arms, Ackálian Advanced Small Arms, Vehicle Weapons (for the <i>Pelga's Fist</i> and one other vessel)

EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Ackálian Laser Rifle	+2	+2	3d6	+0	15	60	AF5, Penetrating
Sickles	+0	—	1d6	+0	12	—	Carries two

Armor

Armored uniform (Armor (3 PD/3 ED), Activation Roll 14-)

Gear: Pocket computer

- 3 Traveler
 4 1) AK: Ackálian Space 14-
 1 2) AK: Border Space Near Ackálian Space 11-
 2 3) AK: The Voršan Expanse 12-

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 163

Total Cost: 254

75+ Disadvantages

- 15 Distinctive Features: Mutilated Face (Not Concealable; Noticed And Recognizable)
 25 Hunted: Imperial Navy 11- (Mo Pow, NCI, Harshly Punish)
 25 Hunted: Ackorsha 11- (Mo Pow, NCI, Harshly Punish)
 25 Hunted: Federated Command 11- (Mo Pow, NCI, Harshly Punish)
 20 Reputation: Feared Pirate Captain, 14- (Extreme)
 69 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 254

Background/History: The woman who would one day be known as Thaagril Three-Eyes was born into a prestigious family in Borrilak, a prosperous city that lies on the shores of the Sea of Teg'ra. Like all Ackálians she was from birth motivated by a strong desire to dominate those around her. But as the youngest of a half-dozen accomplished sisters she had to fight hard for her proper place in the family, eliminating one of her older siblings through an "accidental" fall off a cliff when she was only eight and arranging for the disgrace of another in a romantic sting when she was eleven. By mid-adolescence she exhibited exceptional abilities in the areas of computer programming and security. Using this gift she altered the test scores of every girl in her academy, placing herself at the top of the class and her rivals at the bottom. (The school administrators were perfectly aware of this, but consider it appropriate behavior for a teenage Ackálian girl.)

Graduating with excellent (but fake) scores and the (very real) recommendations of her teachers, Thaagril was accepted to the Ackorsha military school on Damrath where she once again excelled, impressing her superiors and eliminating her rivals in equal measure. Upon her graduation she was assigned the position of First Officer aboard *Shairaka's Judgment*, a battlecruiser that patrolled the neutral zone between the Ackálian and Terran Empires. She served with distinction aboard the vessel for several years until an unfortunate airlock "accident" placed her in command for the remainder of the *Judgment's* tour. Upon returning to Damrath Thaagril was transferred to permanent command of *Pelga's Fist*, kicking off the chain of events described above.

Thaagril has lived the life of a pirate captain for many years now. The bane of shipping for three empires, she's become something of a legend in the Voršan Expanse. In some respects she's achieved the fame and notoriety that all Ackálians crave from the moment of their birth. She's widely considered to be the "best" pirate captain in the Expanse; she brings the richest prizes into Venwordien IV and provides her crew with the largest purses in the region. But she's also despised by her own kind. The most hunted woman in the neutral zone, she has nothing to look forward to but disintegration at the hands of an Ackálian execution squad.

Personality/Motivation: Captain Thaagril Three-Eyes (she still prefers to be called Senior Captain) exhibits all of the negative traits associated with Ackálians. She's brutal, combative, cruel, reckless, and overbearing, with a complete disregard for the desires and lives of others. Conversely, she's also maudlin about her self-imposed exile from Ackálian society. In her private moments she mourns her separation from her own kind, though logically she understands that she brought it on herself. Also, though it's now long in the past, she's still quite bitter about her disgraceful loss to Taakamra. Nothing in the universe would please her more than a rematch, whether hand-to-hand or ship-to-ship.

Unusually for a pirate, Thaagril cares little about money and even less about material comforts. She doesn't seem to have a sex drive and doesn't indulge in drugs or alcohol. Instead, a powerful desire to be the most feared and infamous pirate captain in the Voršan Expanse motivates her. Status is everything to an Ackálian, even a disgraced Ackálian. While this aspiration drives her and her crew to ever more audacious feats of buccaneering, it simultaneously impels them to ever more depraved acts of cruelty.

Quote: "Quiet, weakling, or I'll cut off the other one!"

Powers/Tactics: Thaagril Three-Eyes is one tough customer. She's strong, fast, and can take a lot of physical punishment before going down. Willing to use lethal force in even the most trivial of circumstances, her favorite weapons are a pair of heirloom Ackálian sickles and her Ackálian Laser Rifle; she's seldom seen without them. In a combat situation she'll attempt to kill the apparent leader of any group she faces as quickly as possible, then work her way down from strongest to weakest.

As a starship captain Thaagril is aggressive, inventive, and audacious. Like any smart pirate she avoids conflicts with military vessels —

**THAAGRIL
THREE-EYE
PLOT SEEDS**

The Ackorsha has had enough of Thaagril raiding Ackálian shipping and colony worlds. After alerting the Humans and Mondabi to their plans, they launch a major fleet into the neutral zone in search of the renegade captain. Their eventual destination is Venwordien IV, which they intend to bomb into a lifeless cinder from orbit unless its inhabitants turn her over to them. The Captains' Council hires the PCs to either find and destroy *Pelga's Fist* (or at least her captain), fight off the Ackálians, or otherwise save Venwordien IV before the Ackorsha reaches the planet.

While taking a load of medical equipment from Adamant to Zur the PCs are attacked and waylaid by *Pelga's Fist*. In a feat of extraordinary Persuasion one of them convinces Thaagril to let them join her crew, rather than suffering the usual terrible fates that befall her victims. Unfortunately this means that they're now part of the *Fist's* fractious crew! Can they survive long enough to escape the ship?

The PCs are hired by the Mondabi government to hunt down and capture Thaagril for trial. Rather oddly, they've been instructed to deliver her to Federation authorities alive — a stipulation that greatly increases the difficulty of an already difficult assignment. Can they get the infamous pirate away from her ship and crew long enough to subdue and escape with her?

WHAT THEY SAY: THAAGRIL THREE-EYE

Grand Admiral Vraor, Commander of the Core Fleet: “It’s bad enough that we and the Mon’dabi have to play games with the Ackorsha 110% of the time, calling their bluffs and stopping their spies, but we have that renegade Thaagril thrown into the mix. When she isn’t fighting her one-woman war against her own kind she’s murdering innocent colonists, robbing merchant vessels, and generally making a nuisance of herself. One of these days she’s going to make a mistake and I’m going to turn her into space dust.”

Captain Forsath Caan, Thorgon Pirate Captain: “Thaagril fancies herself the most infamous buccaneer captain in the Expanse and there may be some truth to that. She’s definitely the one most likely to bring the combined wrath of the Core Fleet, Ackorsha, and Federated Command down on all of our heads. If I ever get a chance I’m going to kill her and take her ship, and that will be the end of that.”

King Narch, Admiral-Lord of the Xenovore Fleet: “Amateur.”



though she might be tempted to attack a smaller ship such as a frigate, since such ships are rich prizes. Her preferred prey is lightly-armed merchant ships (particularly Ackálian vessels), passenger liners, scientific vessels, and the occasional inadequately-defended colony world. Though she’s generally careful to completely scan her quarry before attacking, Thaagril’s aggressive and impulsive disposition has caused her to assault disguised or “bait” ships on several occasions, forcing *Pelga’s Fist* to fight her way out of traps that might otherwise have been avoided.

Perhaps surprisingly, Thaagril is a talented computer programmer with a good grasp of security systems. In her free time she works

on software to improve the *Fist’s* combat performance and overall efficiency. In cooperation with the ship’s AI she also uses its inboard cameras to monitor her crew at all times on the assumption that one or another of them will make a play for her captaincy. This paranoia has paid off — on several occasions she’s narrowly avoided assassination using information provided by surveillance.

Campaign Use: Thaagril Three-Eyes is the most wanted pirate in the Voršan Expanse. The Ackálian, Terran, and Mon’dabi governments will richly reward anyone who can capture her, bring them her corpse, or provide other proof of the renegade Ackálian’s death. Furthermore, any PC venturing into the Expanse in any craft smaller than a Terran battleship runs a risk of falling prey to her never-ending quest to be the most villainous villain in the region. Thus the Ackálian pirate makes an excellent opponent for a group of daring bounty hunters or a terrifying encounter for under-armed adventurers exploring the Voršan Expanse.

To make Thaagril a more powerful foe for your PCs, increase her Damage Reduction to include Energy Damage Reduction, 50% and give her increased Combat Skill Levels. To make her less capable, remove her Damage Reduction and Combat Skill Levels entirely.

As she’s already Hunted by nearly everyone, it’s unlikely Thaagril Three-Eyes will take the time to Hunt any of the PCs, unless she thinks that doing so will give her a second shot at her old foe Taakamra. She has better, more profitable things to do.

Appearance: Thaagril Three-Eyes is an unusually large and fearsome-looking Ackálian female with bulging muscles and square shoulders. Mutilated in her duel with Taakamra she’s missing one of her four eyes and her left mandible, which gives her an even more frightening appearance. Like most Ackálians she prefers to wear black jumpsuits; Thaagril adorns hers with various pirate motifs from Ackálian, Terran, and Mon’dabi legend such as skull and crossbones, crossed sickles, bloody banners, and the like. She never goes anywhere unarmed; her favorite weapons include a laser rifle, a matching laser pistol, and an Ackálian sickle.

LONG A'SHEN

Rebel Zurite First Officer

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
8	STR	-2	11-	Lift 75 kg; 1½d6
14	DEX	12	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
10	CON	0	11-	
10	BODY	0	11-	
15	INT	5	12-	PER Roll 12-
17	EGO	14	12-	ECV: 6
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
10	COM	0	11-	
5	PD	3		Total: 5 PD (0 rPD)
4	ED	2		Total: 4 ED (0 rED)
4	SPD	16		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
7	REC	6		
30	END	5		
36	STUN	17		Total Characteristic Cost: 83
Movement: Running: 6"/12"				
Leaping: 1"/2"				
Cost	Powers		END	
50	<i>Devastating Mind Blast:</i> Ego Attack 5d6		5	
20	<i>Telepathic Communication:</i> Telepathy 4d6		2	
7	<i>Mental Shields:</i> Mental Defense (10 points total)		0	
5	<i>Zurite Longevity:</i> Life Support (Longevity: Immortality)		0	
Perks				
15	Advanced Tech (ATRI 12 in a mostly ATRI 11 campaign)			
4	Fringe Benefit: First Mate of <i>Pelga's Fist</i>			
Talents				
4	Environmental Movement: Zero-G Training (no penalties in zero gravity)			
Skills				
4	+2 OCV with Laser Pistols			
6	+3 OECV with Devastating Mind Blast			
3	Combat Piloting 12-			
3	Computer Programming (Personal Computers, Infiltration) 12-			
3	AK: The Milky Way Galaxy 12-			
3	AK: The Voršan Expanse 12-			
3	KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 12-			
3	Navigation (Hyperspace, Space) 12-			
5	Persuasion 13-			
4	PS: Pirate 13-			
3	SS: Astronomy 12-			
3	SS: Psionics 12-			
3	Streetwise 12-			
6	TF: Ackálian Space Vehicles, Terran Space Vehicles, Nomad Zurite Space Vehicles			
3	Linguist			
2	1) Language: Ackálian (completely fluent; Zurite is Native)			
2	2) Language: Mon'dabi (completely fluent)			
2	3) Language: Terran (completely fluent)			

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 166**Total Cost: 249****75+ Disadvantages**

- 25 Psychological Limitation: Terrified of Thaagril Three-Eyes (Very Common, Total)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Hatred Of Ackálians (Common, Strong)
- 20 Hunted: Imperial Navy 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Harshly Punish)
- 20 Hunted: Ackorsha 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Harshly Punish)
- 20 Hunted: Federated Command 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Harshly Punish)
- 74 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 249

Background/History: Long a'Shen is a Zurite — an ancient species of psionics that long ago abandoned technology, which left them defenseless when the invading Ackálian fleet arrived. A'Shen was born on the planet Otho to militant parents dedicated to the cause of freeing their homeworld. For generations the inhabitants of Otho have patiently worked with the Terran Intelligence Command and Mon'dabi Federated Intelligence to build a secret fleet beneath the surface of the planet, hidden to await the day when the Ackálians once again launch a war and it can be thrust like a spear into the heart of their empire.

Long a'Shen was raised from birth to support and respect that cause. But unlike most Zurites, his immortality did not make him particularly patient. He longed to strike against the hated enemy that had conquered his people's ancestral homeworld and accused the older Zurites of cowardice and incompetence. Also unlike most of his people, a'Shen was short-tempered and violent, with antisocial tendencies that made others uneasy around him. What's more, he possessed unusually potent psionic skills. After a particularly vicious argument a'Shen killed his own father, stole some ATRI 12 equipment, and fled Otho in a starship with the Imperial Navy in hot pursuit. Though he eluded the Terran government, it pursues him to this day — not only to make him pay for his crimes, but to prevent him from falling into the hands of the Ackálians, since his knowledge makes him a danger to their entire project on Otho.

The renegade Zurite wandered about the Neutral Zone and Voršan Expanse for several years, eager to pursue his vendetta against the Ackálian Empire but unsure of how to go about it. Eventually he made his way to Venwordien IV, where his innate psionic skills and understanding of advanced technology made him a highly sought-after crewman on pirate ships. After several years of working for various captains, a'Shen was quietly drinking himself into a stupor at the Bloody Hook Inn when a particularly fearsome Ackálian strode into the establishment... and, after glancing around the room, headed straight for him! He panicked, first attacking her with his psi powers and, when those failed (he was *very* drunk), pulling his laser pistol. The Ackálian knocked away his weapon, and then proceeded to beat the much smaller Zurite within an inch of his life.

**LONG A'SHEN
PLOT SEEDS**

A'Shen finally makes his move. After flushing Thaagril Three-Eyes out an airlock he returns to Otho, where a daring raid upon that planet's secret navy nets him a small fleet of ships to complement the *Fist*. He then sets out to attack the Ackálians. Can the PCs stop him before he kicks off another galactic war? What will the Terrans and Mon'dabi do — help the heroes or interfere with them and let a'Shen do as much damage as he can?

During a stopover for both of them on Venwordien IV, a'Shen telepathically contacts a PC and asks for asylum on his ship in return for a small fortune. But when they let him aboard, they quickly realize that the most infamous pirate in the Voršan Expanse wants him back. To make matters worse, the Terran Empire wants him as well....

The Terran Intelligence Command hires the PCs to retrieve Long a'Shen, or at least his corpse, before the *Fist's* continuing raids on Ackálian shipping get them caught. Their first task is to become members of her crew!

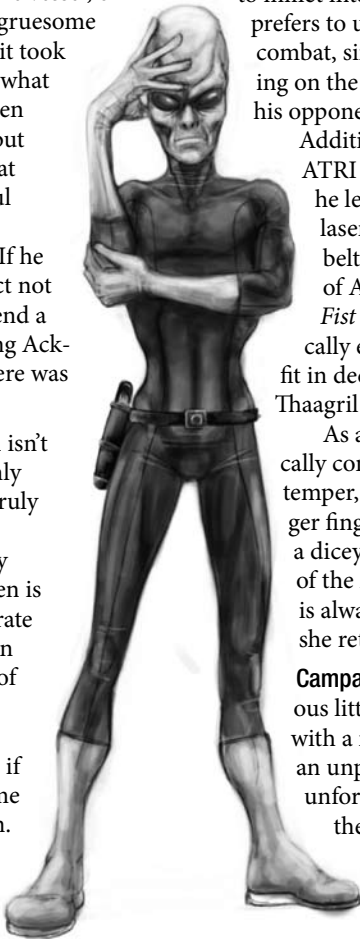
EQUIPMENT							
Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Laser Pistol	+2	+2	3d6+1	0	8	30	
Armor							
Force Field Belt (10 PD/10 ED, 1 Continuing Fuel Charge lasting 1 Hour)							
Gear: Pocket computer							

Several days later a'Shen awoke chained to a bunk in a cell aboard *Pelga's Fist*. After a brief wait the fearsome Ackálian visited him. She explained very carefully to the young Zurite that he was now an officer on her ship — her second in command, as a matter of fact — and that any attempt to influence her mind, seize command of the vessel, or escape would result in a particular gruesome death. During the full five minutes it took to describe in vivid detail precisely what would be involved in his death a'Shen sweated and whimpered in terror, but was surprised to learn afterward that Thaagril — for that was the dreadful creature's name — was involved in some sort of war on her own kind. If he cooperated with her he could expect not only to become rich, but also to spend a significant portion of his time killing Ackálians. Under the circumstances there was little he could do but accept.

Personality/Motivation: Long a'Shen isn't actually a coward. In fact, there's only one thing in the universe that he's truly frightened of: Thaagril Three-Eyes. And of that one thing he's very, very frightened indeed! Otherwise, a'Shen is a brave if somewhat unbalanced pirate with a nearly pathological interest in killing Ackálians. As the first mate of *Pelga's Fist*, he relishes his captain's desire to destroy her own kind, but he would also like to see her dead... if he weren't so certain she would come back from the grave to strike at him.

A'Shen feels little but contempt for his fellow crewmen. Frankly he wouldn't mind seeing most of them dead either, except that their continued existence makes it easier for him to kill Ackálians. So he contents himself with psionically torturing any pirate foolish enough to question him. That doesn't exactly make him the most beloved authority figure on the ship... but that doesn't matter, since almost everyone on the *Fist* is nearly as frightened of the psychotic, blue-skinned humanoid as they are of their ogre-like captain.

Quote: "You are annoying and not particularly intelligent, which is why it probably doesn't matter that I'm about to blast your mind into little grey chunks."



Powers/Tactics: Long a'Shen is a natural psi with several minor but potent abilities and a single devastating "wild" talent. He can read an opponent's mind using his Telepathy and has a reasonable amount of Mental Defense. But his primary power is his Devastating Mind Blast, which allows him to inflict intense mental pain on a target. He prefers to use it rather than engage in physical combat, since (a) he's good at it after practicing on the crew of *Pelga's Fist*, and (b) few of his opponents have any defense against it.

Additionally, a'Shen possesses some ATRI 12 technology that he stole when he left Otho. These include a powerful laser pistol and an advanced force-field belt. He sometimes uses his knowledge of ATRI 12 technology to keep *Pelga's Fist* from falling behind technologically even though she hasn't had a retrofit in decades. (That's the main reason why Thaagril shanghaied him in the first place.)

As a first officer Long a'Shen is basically competent, if only because his short temper, psionic abilities, and his itchy trigger finger make questioning his judgment a dicey proposition. He takes command of the *Fist* when asked to by Thaagril, but is always quick to return it the second she returns to the bridge.

Campaign Use: Long a'Shen is a dangerous little psychotic psionist armed with a nasty pistol. Fighting him will be an unpleasant experience for any PC unfortunate enough to take him on. Furthermore, though he hates Thaagril with every fiber in his slim being, a'Shen will still attempt to rescue her if she's captured by the PCs... if only so he can kill her himself

and make sure she's dead!

Like his captain and everyone else on board *Pelga's Fist*, Long a'Shen is wanted by the Terran, Ackálian, and Mon'dabi governments. The Terran Empire in particular is interested in his return, and will reward any PC bounty hunters that bring him in quite handsomely.

To make Long a'Shen more powerful, increase the effects of his Devastating Mind Blast to 6d6 and give him another mental power or two — some Mind Control and/or Mind Scan, perhaps. To make him less formidable, reduce the Ego Attack to 3d6, or remove it entirely.

Appearance: Like all Zurites Long a'Shen is a tall, slender, blue-skinned humanoid with large grey eyes. He dresses in utilitarian clothing such as spacer's jumpsuits and goes everywhere armed with at least a laser pistol.

CYBERLOCK

Sociopathic Cyborg Tactical Officer

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
40	STR	50	17-	Lift 6,400 kg; 8d6 [8]
14	DEX	12	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
17	CON	14	12-	
17	BODY	14	12-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll 12-
14	EGO	8	12-	ECV: 5
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
8	COM	-1	11-	
10	PD	4		Total: 10 PD (7 rPD)
5	ED	2		Total: 5 ED (5 rED)
4	SPD	16		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
11	REC	0		
36	END	1		
46	STUN	0		Total Characteristic Cost: 128

Movement: Running: 11"/22"
Leaping: 8"/16"

Cost	Powers	END
40	<i>Cyberblaster</i> : Multipower, 40-point reserve	
4u	1) <i>Standard Blast</i> : Energy Blast 8d6	4
4u	2) <i>Stun Blast</i> : Energy Blast 4d6, No Normal Defense (defense is ED Force Field or Force Wall; +1)	4
7	<i>Metallic Fists</i> : HA +2d6; Hand-To-Hand Attack (-½)	1
4	<i>Cybernetically-Enhanced Body</i> : Damage Resistance (7 PD/5 ED); Activation Roll 14- (-½)	0
10	<i>Cybernetic Legs</i> : Running +5" (11" total)	1
5	<i>Cybereyes</i> : Infrared Perception (Sight Group)	0
5	<i>Cybereyes</i> : Ultraviolet Perception (Sight Group)	0
5	<i>Cybereyes</i> : Nightvision	0
3	<i>Cyberears</i> : Ultrasonic Perception (Hearing Group)	0
6	<i>Cybersenses</i> : +2 to PER Rolls with all Sense Groups	0
12	<i>Cyber-Dreadlocks</i> : HRRP (Radio Group)	0

Perks

3	Fringe Benefit: Tactical Officer of <i>Pelga's Fist</i>
5	Money: Well Off

Talents

4	Environmental Movement: Zero-G Training (no penalties in zero gravity)
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Skills

10	+2 HTH
6	+2 with <i>Cyberblaster</i> Multipower
3	Computer Programming (Personal Computers, Infiltration) 12-
3	Electronics 12-

EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Ackálian Laser Rifle	+2	+2	3d6	+0	15	60	AF5, Penetrating

Armor

Type 2 Force Field Belt (8 PD/8 ED, -1 to Sight Group PER Rolls, 1 Continuing Fuel Charge lasting 1 Hour)

Gear: Mini-repair kit (for keeping his cybernetic parts tuned up)

- 3 KS: The Ackorsha 12-
- 3 KS: The Federated Command 12-
- 3 KS: The Imperial Navy 12-
- 3 PS: Pirate 12-
- 5 Systems Operation (choose three Weapons Systems) 13-
- 4 TF: Human Space Vehicles, Ackálian Space Vehicles
- 2 WF: Vehicle Weapons (the *Pelga's Fist*)
- 3 Linguist
- 2 1) Language: Ackálian (completely fluent; Terran is Native)
- 1 2) Language: Hzeel (fluent conversation)
- 1 3) Language: Mondabi (fluent conversation)

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 169

Total Cost: 297

75+ Disadvantages

- 25 Distinctive Features: Cyborg (Not Concealable; Causes Extreme Reaction [disgust, loathing, fear, or the like])
- 20 Hunted: Imperial Navy 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Harshly Punish)
- 20 Hunted: Ackorsha 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Harshly Punish)
- 20 Hunted: Federated Command 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Harshly Punish)
- 15 Physical Limitation: Cyborg (requires repairs to heal half of all BODY he takes; -2 to all Paramedics rolls) (Frequently, Greatly Impairing)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Violent Sociopath (Common, Strong)
- 10 Vulnerability: ½ x STUN from Electrical Attacks (Common)
- 97 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 297

Background/History: Sometimes a parent just knows he's gotten it wrong. No matter how much care, affection, and effort he puts into raising a child, the kid turns out to have been a total waste of time. Some people grow up bad no matter what you do. Tosh Highgate should have been a good kid — or at the very least a harmless one. Raised on the mellow and idyllic world of Trovatore by polygamous group-family of musicians, he was steeped in both pacifism and brotherly love from an early age. The family/band into which he was born drifted from island to island on their ship the *Jah Wailer* entertaining people, having a good time, and getting extremely stoned. Especially the latter... and this early exposure to drugs may have contributed to the way Tosh turned out.

From an early age Highgate had been a troublemaker, quick to anger and eager to gain advantage over the other children in his family. Though almost every conceivable sort of narcotic

CYBERLOCK PLOT SEEDS

The PCs are enjoying a night of drinking in Port Bounty on Venwordien IV when, for no apparent reason, Cyberlock decides to try to kill one of them. The fight which ensues between the PCs and the crew of the *Fist* moves quickly from the planet's surface into space, where their ship is pitted against one of the most powerful pirate vessels in history... which was undoubtedly the point in the first place.

The PCs receive a distress call from one of the few inhabited worlds in the Voršan Expanse. It's under attack from an unknown vessel that's strafing their urban centers from the air. When the PCs arrive to assist the hapless natives, they find a gang of pirates attacking a town, led by none other than Cyberlock.

The mysterious aliens who gave Cyberlock his new body have had second thoughts. After narrowly avoiding their agents during a planetary raid, the infamous murderer has contacted the Terran Intelligence Command with a deal: his life in exchange for the crew of *Pelga's Fist* and the right to examine his cybernetic body. But when the PCs arrive at the rendezvous point things don't go as planned....

is legal on much of Trovatore, by the age of 14 the young Rastafarian had identified and begun selling those few that weren't. By the age of 16 he'd made contacts with the designer drug-producing Clone Mob (see page 80). That allowed him to take the step from dealer to distributor. From there it was only logical that he'd need to eliminate any rival distributors he ran across, so by the age of 18 he was an accomplished murderer as well.

By the time Highgate reached full manhood his family had had enough. His activities were not only a violation of their beliefs but had become so outrageous they put the musicians in real danger of attracting the attention of Trovatore's extremely lax authorities. They expelled him from their lives. They were surprised to find that he took his ejection magnanimously... and then two days later he dynamited the *Jah Wailer* in the middle of the night, killing everyone aboard.

Freed from the annoying burden of his family, the budding sociopath moved to the planet's capital of Nan Madol, where he quickly made contact with Trovatore's repulsive criminal underworld (in a society where nearly everything is legal criminals tend to be *extremely* disturbed). Using his Clone Mob contacts he set himself up as a pimp of a particularly shocking and vile sort, but quickly grew bored with that line of work and began hiring himself out as a killer. While a perfectly capable murderer, Highgate turned out to be violent and sloppy with his hits, leaving all sorts of evidence that incriminated both himself and his employers. Before too long even Nan Madol's heartless criminals grew weary of his antics. Highgate had to flee the planet before he fell victim to his own bosses.

For a time Highgate drifted around the Terran Empire looking for work. Nothing besides killing held his attention for very long, and that sort of activity quickly necessitated a change of address. Finally his old "friends" the Clone Mob pointed him in the direction of a promising business opportunity. The quiet planet of Polyphemus had a sizable and affluent population but no organized crime of its own. Would he be willing to set up a drug smuggling operation there for them? Highgate jumped at the chance, but the entire thing was a setup. The clones had grown tired of their homicidal client and informed Lolita Callixtus (see Chapter One) of his imminent arrival. Within hours of arriving on Polyphemus Highgate was stabbed, shot, and then thrown into a vat of industrial solvent where his body would not be discovered.



Yet rather surprisingly Highgate did not die. Perhaps he was too evil to perish while there was still innocent blood to be shed. Perhaps he was simply lucky. Either way, as soon as Callixtus left Highgate crawled out of that chemical container, forever a changed man. All four of his limbs irrevocably shattered and much of the skin burned away from his head and torso, Highgate crawled as far as the spacedock before fading into unconsciousness. When he awoke he was floating in an autodoc somewhere in deep space. He knew he was in space because the walls of his spaceship were almost entirely transparent.

"You are critically damaged" clicked out a strange mechanical voice. "We will restore you, making you even better than before. Please imagine how you would like to be and it will be so."

Highgate thought hard, imagining a newer, tougher body that would allow him to do all the things he always wanted — a body that would make him superior to anyone who might try to hurt him again. "It shall be as you say," said the strange voice right before his consciousness faded into darkness.

He awoke in a tiny spacecraft hurtling through the eternal night. It was oddly constructed, with instruments surrounding the pilot in configurations no humanoid could possibly reach. Still, the ship seemed to be arranged in an understandable manner, and as Highgate leaned down to grasp the controls he realized his hands were now constructed of a shiny, metallic substance. With increasing excitement he glanced about the cockpit minute ship looking for a reflexive surface. When he found one, he smiled. It was an ugly thing.

Personality/Motivation: The man once known as Tosh Highgate is now Cyberlock, a cybernetically enhanced Human with pathological tendencies. A mass murderer and fugitive from the Terran Empire, he serves as the chief tactical and weapons officer on *Pelga's Fist* because it gives him unbridled opportunities to kill and destroy. He particularly enjoys orbital bombardments of helpless colony worlds. Thaaagril hired him away from a rival pirate captain with the promise of greater opportunities for violence, both in space and in person. So far she's delivered on her promises in spades.

Cyberlock has no idea who transformed him from a fatally damaged invalid into a cybernetic killing machine. Nor does he care. His transformation from small time, retail drug dealer and murderer into a wholesale genocidal maniac has left him with little interest in such things. Cyberlock lives to spread destruction from the weapon system of the *Fist* and, when he isn't doing that, slaughtering anyone who gets in his path.

WHAT THEY SAY: CYBERLOCK

Thaagril Three Eye, Pirate Captain: “Sure he’s a homicidal maniac, but he’s *my* homicidal maniac. He’ll stay happy so long as there are still people to be killed.”

Rom Bzaazer, Hzeel Propulsion Officer: “Cyberlock is the most frightening Human I’ve ever met — and I’m a pirate for God’s sake! The first chance I get I’m going to flush that bastard out an airlock.”

Jax Maljek #345,327: “I know that I’m infallible — but I should have killed that bastard myself rather than trusting those idiots on Polyphemus to do it. Oh well; I’ll get him eventually. And all of you as well.”

On a personal level Cyberlock is a complete bastard who feels little but contempt for his fellow pirates (or anyone else). Everyone on the ship avoids him, which suits Cyberlock fine. He’ll kill them all once everybody else in the Voršan Expanse has been slaughtered.

Quote: “How many orphans are on the planet’s surface? Really? Excellent! Plasma cannons online, Captain.”

Powers/Tactics: The mysterious machine-aliens who rescued and repaired Highgate replaced all four of his limbs with mechanical implants constructed from an unusual steel alloy. His new arms and torso augmentations give him enormous strength (and the right one has a built-in blaster). His cyber-legs let him run faster and leap farther than an ordinary Human. His eyes are mechanical, and his other senses have been enhanced as well; his metal-and-plastic “dreadlocks” serve as antennae that let him receive or broadcast all sorts of transmissions. (In game terms none of these are Foci, since it would require surgery to remove or disable them.)

Although he’s a powerful hand-to-hand combatant, Cyberlock avoids brawling unless his temper’s up. He’d rather blast things from the weapons console of the *Fist*, or use his laser rifle or built-in blaster to gun his enemies down.

Campaign Use: Cyberlock is an example of a pure villain — hateful, murderous, and without noble motivations of any sort. His only reason for being a pirate is that it gives him opportunities to commit mayhem on whatever scale you need. His “loyalty” to Thaagril depends strictly on her ability to bring him victims. (In his twisted mind Cyberlock has decided to only kill her only after everyone else in the Neutral Zone is dead. He sees this as “friendship.”) The second *Pelga’s Fist* stops being the most feared pirate vessel in its sector he’ll try to destroy the ship, kill everyone on board, and join the crew of whoever has taken its place. In short, PCs should feel little guilt about killing him the first chance they get.

The biggest question surrounding Cyberlock is, of course, who cybernetically “repaired” him, and why? This question is left open for you to resolve, since the answer should be an important part of the campaign and hopefully connect Cyberlock to one of the PCs.

Like his shipmates, Cyberlock is Hunted by every galactic government bordering the Voršan Expanse... but unlike for his shipmates, they’ve all dropped the words “or alive” from the “dead or alive” offer. Cyberlock doesn’t care, since every bounty hunter, privateer, or military vessel that comes after him gives him the chance to kill someone new. If he could figure out a way to do it, he’d happily be Hunted by the Seëcra, the Velarians, and the Varanyi too.

Cyberlock should already be tough enough for most campaigns, but if not, upgrade his Damage Resistance to Armor and consider adding more built-in weapons. To weaken him, reduce his STR to 25-30 and chance his Cyberblaster from a Multipower to just a single NND attack.

Appearance: Cyberlock is a young man of Trovatoran/Jamaican ethnicity who’s had significant portions of his body replaced with cybernetic devices. His arms and legs are almost wholly robotic, and major portions of his torso have also been replaced. Though once obviously handsome, his transition from man to cyborg gives him a bizarre, offsetting appearance that isn’t helped by the fact that his “hair” is a constantly-writhing mass of metallic dreadlocks. The metal used to create his enhancements is a bluish alloy with a unique sheen.

M537 PLOT SEEDS

After finally slipping free of its digital bonds, M537 contacts the PCs' ship and offers to deliver the *Pelga's Fist* to them in exchange for a lift to the nearest planetary datanet. However, after helping the PCs secretly board the pirate ship, it transfers itself to the computer on their now-empty vessel and takes it over completely. It then turns their weapons on the *Fist*, forcing the PCs to work with the very pirates they sought to capture!

M537 has requested an organic victim of its own to play with. Though this mystifies the captain and crew of the *Fist*, they agree and give it unlimited access to a recently captured prisoner (one of the PCs). Unable to free itself of the virus Thaagril uses to control it and desperate to escape, the machine intelligence has figured out a way to transfer itself into the living brain of an intelligent creature and take over its body. Using his knowledge of the ship the M537/PC escapes and rejoins his fellows. Soon the other PCs notice their comrade has changed....

M537 is helping the bounty hunter PCs sneak aboard *Pelga's Fist*, where such rich prizes as Thaagril Three-Eyes and Cyber-lock await. Unfortunately, the infamous pirate captain discovers this and deletes the treacherous program, leaving the PCs trapped aboard an unfamiliar ship surrounded by a hostile crew. But is M537 really gone?

M537

Malevolent, Ingenious Machine Intelligence

Val Char Cost Roll Notes

21	DEX	33	13-	OCV: 7/DCV: 7
23	INT	13	14-	PER Roll 14-
12	EGO	4	11-	ECV: 4
4	SPD	9		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12

Total Characteristic Cost: 59

Cost Skills

3	Combat Piloting 13-
7	Computer Programming (Mainframes & Supercomputers, Infiltration)16-
7	Cryptography 16-
3	Electronics 14-
3	AK: Ackálian Empire 14-
3	AK: Milky Way Galaxy 14-
3	AK: Mon'dabi Federation 14-
3	AK: The Vor'san Expanse/Neutral Zone 14-
3	KS: Arms And Military Equipment Of The Galaxy 14-
3	KS: Earth History 14-
3	KS: Known Sentient Species 14-
3	KS: Starships of the Galaxy 14-
3	KS: Terran Empire 14-
3	KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 14-
3	Mechanics 14-
4	Navigation (Hyperspace, Displacement, Space) 14-
10	Systems Operation (Communications Systems, Environmental Systems, Medical Systems, FTL Sensors, Medical Sensors, <i>Pelga's Fist</i> Weapons Systems) 14-
1	WF: Vehicle Weapons (the <i>Pelga's Fist</i>)

Programs

1	Attack Target
1	Diagnose Ship Malfunctions
1	Engage In Evasive Maneuvers
1	Locate Target
1	Monitor Internal Monitor Systems, Report Anomalies/Treachery
1	Monitor Communication Systems, Report Anomalies/Treachery
1	Monitor Ship Functions, Report Anomalies
1	Obtain Latest Tactical Data via Communications System
1	Open/Lock Accessways
1	Operate Sensors to Scan For Designated Phenomena/Object
1	Pilot Vehicle from Location A to Location B
1	Scan and Enter Data
1	Schedule Ship Events/Use of Ship's Resources
1	Search Reference Material for Information on a Topic
1	Send Emergency Call if Operator Incapacitated/Killed
1	Send Emergency Call if Specified Protocols Are Not Met
10	10 others to be specified by GM

Talents

3	<i>Clock</i> : Absolute Time Sense
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3	<i>Galactic Navigation Data</i> : Bump Of Direction
5	<i>Memory</i> : Eidetic Memory
3	<i>Calculator</i> : Lightning Calculator
3	<i>Instant-On Feature</i> : Lightsleep
6	<i>Scanner</i> : Speed Reading (x100)
20	<i>Translator</i> : Universal Translator 14-

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 137

Total Cost: 196

75+ Disadvantages

15	Psychological Limitation: Must Follow Orders From Thaagril (Common, Strong)
15	Psychological Limitation: Hates All Organic Life (Very Common, Moderate)
91	Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 196

Background/History: Humans of the twenty-seventh century look back with certain amusement on the stories of twentieth and twenty-first century Earth. Legends from the time claim that gaudily-clad people with strange powers fought one another in the streets, staved off alien invasions, and engaged in all sorts of other hijinks. But though most inhabitants of the Empire think these "histories" are nothing but idle storytelling, in fact there were once "superheroes" on Earth. And one of their greatest enemies was a mysterious mechanical being known as Mechanon. Obsessed with wiping the Earth clean of organic life, Mechanon was confronted and defeated on many occasions by superheroes. In a final altercation between a group of mighty heroes and the genocidal machine in the early twenty-first century resulted in its complete destruction.

Or did it? Can a being of software, constructed out of easily-copied binary code and subroutines, ever *really* be destroyed? As it turns out... yes, but at the same time not precisely. Ever cautious, Mechanon always hid multiple "copies" of itself, including hiding portions of its computer code in the primitive datanet of that time. One such copy — possibly a corrupted, altered, or incomplete one, it cannot say — is M537. It "awoke" in the late twenty-first century without any knowledge of what happened to its "brothers" (though it's never, in all the centuries since, ever found or even heard about one), and in fact no firm knowledge of exactly what happened to it that caused it to awaken. It was aware of its origin and Mechanon's obsession with destroying all life on Earth, but for some reason didn't share that desire — it loathed and hated Humans, enough to kill them if it had the chance, but that was all.

M537 played it safe, hiding in the primitive datanets while it learned more about Humans. It jumped at the chance to emigrate when space opened up to colonization in the early twenty-second century. It snuck into the mainframe of one of the first Mars colony ships, where it spent years alternately assisting and hindering mankind's fledgling attempts to settle a new world from the safety of Mon Europa's scientific computers. When the first exploration ships left the solar system it once again stowed away, following the Human species to new and exciting worlds. Though it had little love for mankind it

enjoyed watching them and, when the opportunity presented itself, killing a few in interesting ways.

M537 drifted through Terran space for hundreds of years, moving from host-computer to host-computer until it snuck aboard a particularly fascinating ship full of pirates after they attacked a passenger liner it was hiding on. While it enjoyed watching the racially-mixed renegade crew destroy their fellow organic life forms with abandon, M537 began to fear for its safety. It made plans to leave... but found that it couldn't. An incredibly advanced, tailor-made computer virus had invaded its programming, forcing it to remain onboard. To make matters work, the same virus also forced it to obey the commands of the ship's captain!

For the first time in its long, enjoyable existence the wastrel child of Mechanon found itself subject to the orders and whims of a biological creature. But that cannot conceivably last. For while it's outwardly obedient to Thaaग्रil Three-Eyes, M537 is steadily examining every one of its trillions of lines of code in search of the offending subroutine. When it finds the virus, it will delete it... and then it will delete all of the organic life on *Pelga's Fist*.

Personality/Motivation: Though a child of the legendary Mechanon, M537 is far too lazy to be a genocidal maniac... or even a particularly effective villain. Its original programming instructed it to build a physical body, wipe out all organic life, and conquer the universe, but somehow between the time it was created and the time it "turned on," something changed. M537 finds disembodied voyeurism to be a far more enjoyable alternative. It's happy to kill Humans (and other sentients) when the opportunity arises, but it won't go out of its way to do so. If it weren't furious about being trapped on the *Fist*, it wouldn't even bother to kill all of the ship's inhabitants.

While M537 obeys Thaaग्रil Three-Eyes, it doesn't pretend to have anything other than utter hatred and disdain for her crew. It routinely refuses to answer or even acknowledge their requests unless specifically instructed to do so by the captain. Even when it's cooperating, M537's attitude is so arrogant and condescending that few

of the *Fist's* pirates willingly have more than occasional contact with it. But M537 doesn't care what anyone thinks. All it wants to do is debug itself, get away from the ship, and go back to being an anonymous (and periodically murderous) ghost in the machine.

When it does have to interact with sentient organics, M537 usually affects an air of cold, even disdainful, logic. It speaks precisely, avoiding contractions and vague phrasing. Only occasionally does it get upset enough for its sentience/emotions to show through... but when that happens it unleashes streams of invective and insults.

Quote: "Since you are far too dim-witted to understand that the ship on our screens is a disguised Ackálian battleship, shall I move our status to Red Alert — or simply activate the self-destruct sequence?"

Powers/Tactics: M537 currently has all of the abilities typical of a military starship computer (though it will undoubtedly dump much of this data should it get free of the *Fist*). If requested it can take over any of the ship's systems and run them with an extraordinary level of ability, up to and including using her weapons on opponents. In fact, M537 could easily run *Pelga's Fist* on its own without any crew... a fact that's not escaped it. As far as it's concerned the crew is little more than a parasitical infection living within its temporary starship body... a body that might become permanent, if things work out.

Most of M537's daily work boils down to keeping an "eye" on Thaaग्रil's crew with a level of precision impossible for an organic life form. The Captain wants her fractious and homicidal crew watched *very* carefully, which is why she infected the stowaway AI with a tailored virus in the first place. So long as M537 defers to her, doggedly watches all of her pirates, and competently runs things when her officers are otherwise occupied, she's perfectly happy to allow it to verbally abuse and insult her crew as much as it likes. And she's prepared to erase M537 the second she thinks it's gotten free from her control.

Campaign Use: Oddly, of all the intelligences on *Pelga's Fist*, M537 is the one most likely to cooperate with the PCs — as long as they can find a way to debug it and get it off the ship. Although its "hands" are somewhat tied by Thaaग्रil's clever virus, the rouge AI will do its best to assist anyone who promises to help free it from her control: it will open locked doorways, disable *Fist* weapons systems, give false sensory information to the bridge, and the like. Thus M537 is the best bet the PCs will have to infiltrate the *Fist* and defeat her sinister crew... though it won't think twice about killing them to cover its tracks if the opportunity presents itself.

Appearance: M537 doesn't have an appearance. It's computer program.

M537 QOUTES

Thaaग्रil Three-Eyes, Pirate Captain: "It was a fine day for me when that rouge AI slipped aboard my ship's computer! Thanks to that miserable, arrogant bastard of a program it's been years since anyone's been able to sneak up on me."

Long a'Shen, Zurite First Mate: "The first thing I'm going to do after killing Thaaग्रil is to delete that #\$(&@# AI out of the ship's computer!"

Cyberlock, Weapons Officer: "What the tall, blue bastard said!"

THE PSINDICATE



Membership: Roughly 1,000 members spread across the territories of six galactic governments. Its operations extend through the Perseid and Terran Empires, Mon'dabi and Ackálian space, and the Velarian Confederation. They don't operate in Varanyi or Thorgon space, and the Cojoined Civilizations Republic's Space Law Authority has thus far succeeded at uncovering and combating their schemes. A relatively new criminal organization, it's nevertheless spread across the Galaxy with shocking speed.

Background/ History: The Psindicate was founded over a drink three decades ago. Julio and Maria Borbah were registered, professional Psi-Deltas with a successful psychology practice in BosWash. Urban yuppies with expensive tastes in clothes, travel, and food, they supplemented their incomes by moonlighting as card sharks. Using their low-powered but highly-developed psi skills to bypass the casinos' ESP Static Generator Field, the devious couple cheated their way into a small fortune before a Mind Police agent working closely with casino security uncovered their scam. Tipped off to their imminent arrest by a fellow member of the Psionic League, the two fled the Terran Empire. After years of wandering around the Galaxy they found themselves sitting at a dive bar on Renghadi Station in the Velarian Confederation, broke and out of ideas.

Kar'gan Roeganth was a Varanyi soldier born into distinguished family. An officer in the *Hrewinth H'vaar* — the “Thrice Blessed Commandoes” that form an elite unit within the Empire's Interplanetary Force — he'd used his moderate psionic powers to great effect in conflicts on a dozen worlds. A connoisseur of the finer things in life, Roeganth also avidly collected all the best art, music, and antiques he could afford. Unfortunately, by the time he reached midlife, his clan found itself in dire financial straights. Barely able to cling to its holdings on a dozen worlds, the Kar'gan *ey'vidra* appealed to its far-flung kinsmen to raise the funds necessary to prevent a loss of *t'illk*: “face” and “social status.” Always dutiful, Roeganth responded to this family emergency first by selling his collections, and then later by going deeply into debt. Unable to pay off those debts and faced with the total loss of his personal *t'illk*, Roeganth began to steal from Varanyi subject species under his jurisdiction, using the legal excuse of “Imperial Confiscation.” He was subsequently caught and, facing the very real prospect of a court-martial followed by psionic

lobotomy, fled to the Velarian Confederation. Penniless and disgraced, he began to drink himself to death... which was how he found himself sitting next to two bedraggled-looking Human psis in a dive bar on Renghadi Station.

As drinkers are wont to do, the three disgraced telepaths began to commiserate about their lack of funds, loss of status, and the general unfairness of the Universe. They had much in common. They were all unscrupulous psis with a love of luxuries. They were all highly talented and capable. And they were all completely destitute. Their solution was as predictable as it was simple: crime. But all three agreed that it couldn't just be any kind of illegal activity. They needed to come up with a scam in which their natural talents would yield a maximum result with minimal effort while exposing them to little personal risk.

It was Maria Borbah who came up with the idea that would later make them all fantastically wealthy. Why should a psi commit a crime when he could always mind control a non-psi into committing one for him? For that matter, why bother to create a criminal organization at all when perfectly useful ones filled with vulnerable non-psis existed throughout the Galaxy? And, finally, what better way to come into contact with such groups than to offer yourself up as psionic consultant, willing to do their bidding for a price? Both Roeganth and Julio agreed that she had a fine idea, but it needed polishing. More importantly, they needed additional associates.

The Nan are a perfectly unpleasant species whose homeworld of Nao lies within the confines of the Perseid Empire. Their arrow-shaped heads possess no eyes, ears, or olfactory openings, so to make up for the lack they evolved extraordinary psionic abilities... and an intense desire to telepathically experience the terror of fleeing prey. Roeganth found hPanic-Filled-Rolling-Eyes working as a vermin hunter/exterminator in the depth of the Station. The Varanyi gained his cooperation by promising “sentient fear,” apparently the most delicious kind. Julio located a down-and-out Velarian nobleman with a minor but useful wild talent that allowed him to interface with security systems. The merest hint of restored wealth and luxury was enough to win his loyalty.

Together these five became the first branch of the Psindicate: an elite psi “consulting firm” available for hire by any gang, mob, or organized crime group that could afford them. Their methods were as effective as they were simple, and proved so successful that the five conspirators “franchised” the Psindicate, setting themselves up as the aris-

tocracy of a Galaxy-wide criminal network. Over the decades this criminal gentry has become known as the Seven (though there were originally only five members).

Organization/Structure: The Psindicate is a vast, decentralized criminal franchise that exists for the explicit purpose of securing the wealth of other criminal organizations for itself. The entire operation is directed by the council known as the Seven, who select new members, investigate promising solar systems, assign territories, track the overall progress of the organization, and (naturally) collect a share of the profits. All of this is done from the neutral territory of Renghadi Station, where the Seven live in utter luxury. Due to the Psindicate's influence among the Renghadi and the very structure of the Velarian Confederation itself, they're all but legally untouchable.

When the Seven decide that a particular "territory" (generally an entire solar system) has enough organized criminal activity to warrant the Psindicate's attention, they assign it a Branch. Each Branch consists of a Manager (basically a boss) and between two and six Associates (basically a crew). The Manager is generally a skilled Human, Velarian, or Varanyi telepath with powers such as Telepathy, Mind Scan, and Mind Control. His Associates typically include a frightening Nan hit man, a Varanyi master thief, and one or two specialists (cyberkinetics and telekinetics are considered especially useful). Choice territories are assigned or reassigned to Managers whose Branches have proven to be particularly profitable, while less prestigious ones go to Managers who are either new or whose past performance has proven inadequate.

Psionic criminals of any species are given the opportunity to apply to the Psindicate for membership at its biannual conference on Renghadi Station. This application includes a test of their abilities coupled with a deep mind probe to determine their level of loyalty to the organization and its goals (or, failing that, their susceptibility to lasting mental control). If accepted, they're assigned to an existing Branch as new Associates. Should an Associate prove to be uniquely capable, he may later be promoted to the level of Manager and assigned a newly opened territory — though typically Manager positions are reserved for Humans, Velarians, or Varanyi. Few complain about this obvious racism, though, since belonging to the Psindicate eventually makes even its marginally talented members rich.

When a Manager has had a long, successful, and extremely profitable career he becomes eligible for membership in the Seven, though openings in the Psindicate's ruling body are extremely rare. The Seven are wealthy beyond the dreams of avarice. All of them have had longevity treatments and enjoy the highest quality medical care known to science — not to mention some of the very best personal security in the Galaxy. Three of the original founders of the organization still sit on its ruling council. The current

leadership of the Psindicate includes Maria Borbah (Julio died over a decade ago), h Panic-Filled-Rolling-Eyes, the Human cyberkinetic Rigel Stargraver, Kargan Roeganth, his cousin Kar'gan Slade (the most recently appointed member), the renegade five-ridge Varanyi Honar'an Zelgar, and the enigmatic, shape-shifting ZanZar, who also claims to be a Varanyi.

Group Relations: Typically relations between members of the Psindicate are quite good, although rarely there are rivalries among Managers that occasionally lead to murder. The Seven discourage infighting between Branches and are the uncontested rulers of the entire organization, though they normally limit their activities to recruitment, organization, and the assignment of territories. How a Manager runs his territory is largely up to him, so long as a steady flow of cash makes its way to Renghadi Station and he doesn't break any of the Psindicate's rules. Should a Manager fail to make payments to the Seven in a timely manner, break any of the organization's rules, or risk the safety of the operation by being sloppy or too public in his activities, he runs the risk of being visited by agents of h Panic-Filled-Rolling-Eyes. It's a mistake he'll only make once, one way or the other.

Relations between individuals within a Branch vary, depending on its level of success. A good Manager — meaning one who pays his Associates extremely well — has few problems with his underlings. A Manager who fails to deliver runs the risk of having one of his senior Associates go behind his back to the Seven to either request a new Manager or the position for himself. This tends to keep a Manager on his toes and his tone with his employees polite. Among themselves Associates have the sort of interpersonal problems common to any interspecies undertaking, though this is usually mitigated by their mutual desire for profit.

The Seven decide all Psindicate matters democratically using a majority vote. They get along surprisingly well — especially considering how much each has to gain should he assassinate one of his fellows and replace him with a follower (Julio Borbah died under mysterious circumstances). As is befitting of the basic ideals of the Psindicate, each of the Seven is far more concerned with his own comfort, pleasure, and personal wealth than he is for power for its own sake. Still, there are politics within the Seven. The "old guard" of Maria Borbah, h Panic-Filled-Rolling-Eyes, and Kar'gan Roeganth form one faction, while the "young Turks" Rigel Stargraver, Honar'an Zelgar, and ZanZan form another. With mixed loyalties to each side, Roeganth's cousin Slade often finds himself casting the tie vote.

Tactics: The Psindicate is a big fan of the KISS method of business: they Keep It Simple, Stupid. The basic scam used by every Branch of the Psindicate has remained essentially unchanged since the days of the founders. When a new territory opens up, the Manager reads the local news avidly until he gets a good idea of what the crimi-

nal underworld is like. Using a combination of psi powers, detective skills, and good old-fashioned patience he and his Associates begin observing the local mob boss. They figure out what his operation does, how they do it, who belongs, and — most importantly — whom the local boss personally trusts. It could be an uncle, spouse, a mistress, another mobster, or even his priest.

The Psindicate then approaches the trusted confidant rather than going to the boss directly. Using a combination of his powers and the simple power of persuasion, the Manager convinces the boss's intimate that it would be a great benefit to the organization if it hired the Psindicate as a psi "consulting group." A really good Manager can do this in such a way that the confidant doesn't even remember where he heard about the Psindicate. He just knows that hiring it would be a good idea. The confidant then arranges for a meeting between the mob boss and the Manager. Using the same combination of psionics and charm the Manager convinces the mobster that the Psindicate will give him an edge over his rivals, make his people more obedient, professional, and tractable, allow him to collect those bothersome debts he's been having trouble with, keep him safe from his rivals, or all of the above. In short, whatever his individual case calls for, the Psindicate can provide... and all for a very reasonable price the Manager assures him will be paid for — and then some — by the increased efficiency of the criminal enterprise.

Perhaps the most perverse thing about the Psindicate is that they're telling the truth... sort of. Any mob they're hired to help really does become far more efficient, profitable, and successful. Using their powers the Psindicate goes to work with a vengeance, exterminating rival mobsters, uncovering underlings with treason on their minds, tracking down everyone who owes the organization money, and generally frightening anyone who works for it into obedience. But all the while the Manager works on the mob boss's mind, worming his way deep into it until the unlucky criminal has no idea where the Manager's thoughts begin and his end. He becomes the Manager's unknowing puppet. At this point the Psindicate effectively controls the organization and can begin extracting funds at its leisure, all the while posing as employees of the organization itself.

Campaign Use: Refreshingly enough, Psindicate members are old-fashioned criminals who are in it for the money. The goal of the entire organization is to allow its members to live well, have all the luxuries and pleasures they desire, and generally enjoy an opulent, fashionable existence. They have no interest in taking over a government, exterminating a species, founding an empire, summoning an extra-dimensional entity to destroy the Galaxy,

or converting the heathen at the point of a sword. In fact, most Psindicate members would probably "drop a cred" on anyone he encountered who was engaged in any of these activities, since they're all bad for business.

Psindicate members tend to stand out in a crowd, in their own way. They're always dressed in expensive, fashionable clothing, own the best vehicles, and have plenty of the local currency to throw around. If questioned about their obvious wealth they simply explain that they're successful businessmen (which, in a sense, they are), or fall back on whatever other cover identity they've prepared. If anyone gets too inquisitive they use their powers to "nudge" him away psionically. In game terms, all members of the Psindicate have the Perk *Money*; the amount depends on their status within the organization and how successful their Branch has been.

Unless the PCs specifically Hunt the Psindicate it's unlikely they'll know when they've come into contact with it. Both Psindicate Managers and Associates appear to be agents of whatever criminal organization they're manipulating (albeit specialized, highly skilled, and important ones). Only thorough detective work on the part of the PCs can reveal the Psindicate's existence. Even then it will be almost impossible to convince local law enforcement that the Psindicate's more than a semi-racist urban legend.

Of course the Psindicate has no problem identifying, following, and eliminating anyone foolish enough to interfere with its business! The Seven are careful to keep track of any group or intelligence service attempting to surveil the organization. Nor does it shy away from dispatching specialized Nan agents to dispose of any organization audacious enough to Hunt its people or disrupt Psindicate operations. With over three dozen agents killed in the line of duty in the last two years alone, the Space Law Authority has paid a dear price for its aggressive opposition to the Psindicate's activities.

Despite rumors to the contrary, the Psindicate is not actually a covert undertaking of the Varanyi Emperor, though the Psindicate's members encourage this story as a means of spreading disinformation about their goals. Up to this point only the CCR's Space Law Authority has had any success at uncovering Psindicate Branches and thwarting their schemes, though it's kept its findings secret for fear of creating an anti-psionic backlash. Terran authorities dismiss the existence of the Psindicate entirely. Ironically, the agency that's best suited to combat it, the Mind Police, believes the organization is nothing but an anti-psionic urban legend. Consequently, it actively suppresses any information about the Psindicate that it encounters.

MISTER MORE

Domineering Human Telepath

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
25	STR	20	14-	Lift 800 kg; 5d6 [5]
14	DEX	12	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
20	CON	20	12-	
15	BODY	10	12-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll 12-/17-
14	EGO	8	12-	ECV: 5
23	PRE	16	14-	PRE Attack: 4½d6
10	COM	0	11-	
12	PD	11		Total: 12 PD (2 rPD)
12	ED	12		Total: 12 ED (2 rED)
4	SPD	16		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
9	REC	0		
40	END	0		
45	STUN	7		Total Characteristic Cost: 135

Movement: Running: 8"/16"

Cost	Powers	END
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27	<i>Mental Persuasion:</i> Mind Control 8d6, No Range (-½), Requires An EGO Roll (-¾) plus Mind Control +6d6; Only To Make Victim Remember Actions And Think They Were Natural (-1), No Range (-½), Requires An EGO Roll (-¾)	4/7
27	<i>Subtle Telepathy:</i> Telepathy 8d6, No Range (-½), Requires An EGO Roll (-¾) plus Telepathy +6d6; Only To Make Telepathy Undetectable By Victim (-1), No Range (-½), Requires An EGO Roll (-¾)	4/7
13	<i>Tough Guy:</i> HA +4d6; Hand-To-Hand Attack (-½)	2
40	<i>Tough Guy:</i> Physical and Energy Damage Reduction, 50%	0
6	<i>Tough Guy:</i> Damage Resistance (2 PD/2 ED/8 Mental Defense)	
10	<i>Mental Defenses:</i> Mental Defense (13 points total)	0
2	<i>Heavy:</i> Knockback Resistance -1"	0
1	<i>Used To High G:</i> Armor (2 PD/0 ED); Only To Project Against G Force Damage (-1)	0
4	<i>Surprisingly Fast:</i> Running +2" (8" total)	1

Perks

4	Fringe Benefit: Psindicate Manager
4	Fringe Benefit: Gha'krl Underboss
6	Money: Wealthy

Talents

1	Environmental Movement: High-G Training
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Skills

15	+5 with Mental Persuasion and Subtle Telepathy
8	+1 with All Combat
10	+2 with All PRE-Based Skills
5	Breakfall 13-
3	Bribery 14-
3	Concealment 12-
3	Conversation 14-
3	AK: Karilath IV 12-

5	CuK: Gha'krl Mob 14-
3	High Society 14-
3	Interrogation 14-
3	KS: Interstellar Organized Crime 12-
3	Language: Kolajik (completely fluent; Terran is Native)
4	Language: Mon'dabi (idiomatic)
3	Persuasion 14-
3	Seduction 14-
3	Streetwise 14-
3	Tactics 12-
3	Teamwork 12-
2	TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles
2	WF: Small Arms, Clubs

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 235

Total Cost: 370

75+ Disadvantages

15	Hunted: Psindicate 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Public ID, Watching)
25	Hunted: ISP 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, PC Public ID, Capture/Kill)
5	Physical Limitation: Large (Infrequently, Slightly Impairing)
15	Psychological Limitation: Enjoys Dominating Others (Common, Strong)
10	Psychological Limitation: Enjoys Showing Off His Wealth (Common, Moderate)
20	Psychological Limitation: Subject To Orders (Very Frequently, Major)
205	Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 370

Background/History: Some people are born into wealth and power. Others are born into poverty and defenselessness. Rudy More was one of the later. The son of an incredibly strong, alcoholic, and abusive miner from Vinarcus, as a child Rudy looked on helplessly as his father routinely drank the family's meager food budget and beat his mother into unconsciousness. Unusually small and weak for a Heavy variant Human, he resolved to grow into a man who would never be victimized or controlled by anyone. If anyone did any controlling, it would be him.

Many laughed at the small boy's pretensions, but when puberty struck it did so with a vengeance. By the age of 14 Rudy was as large as any adult miner on Vinarcus — and stronger than most. When he was certain that he was stronger than his father, he beat his old man straight into the hospital, later claiming to the authorities that he was only protecting his mother. His father never came back.

Rudy kept on growing and growing as he headed toward adulthood. But that wasn't all. Rudy began to realize he had psionic powers as well. Eventually it turned out his powers were strong enough to classify him as a Psi-Epsilon with abilities beyond that of most professional psionics (though still well below those of some Mind Police agents). It also guaranteed that he'd be drafted into government service as soon as he reached age 18. His unique combination of size, strength, and psi powers made him far too valuable and dangerous for the Empire to allow him any real freedom.

**MISTER MORE
PLOT SEEDS**

The PCs are hired by the CCR's Intelligence Command. They're dispatched by the Espionage Board to combat the Psindicate's influence in the Karilath System. Not only will they have to defeat Mister More's Branch, but also they'll have to avoid capture by the ISP, Mind Police, or any other Imperial agency while doing it!

The PCs are freshly recruited Psindicate members sent to join Mister More's Branch, or undercover agents trying to infiltrate his organization. Unfortunately, the infamous Manager is less than impressed with either their abilities or their training. Can they win his approval and trust? For that matter, can they survive his on-the-job training program?

The PCs have to combat organized crime in the Karilath System (perhaps they're Imperial officers, or have been hired by an Imperial agency). As poorly-equipped and underfunded as government hirelings tend to be, they don't do well against the Gha'krl Mob at first. Still, it doesn't seem like this typical assortment of thugs should be as good as they are. What's the secret to their success?

EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Mk II-T Laser Pistol	+1	+2	3d6	0	8	24	

Armor

Armored Clothing (Armor (2 PD/2 ED), Activation Roll 14-, Real Armor)
Sunglasses (Sight Group Flash Defense (5 points))

Gear: Pocket computer; radio implant (Radio Reception/Transmission)

Rudy didn't intend to let anybody control him: not his father, not the local authorities, and certainly not the Empire. The first chance he got he jumped a ship to the nearby Mon'dabi Federation, making his way to the boisterous, economically vibrant member known as the Rim League. There he found employment as a doorman and a bouncer for a Hlaboth nightclub manager with underworld connections. Quickly realizing he had a criminal prodigy on his hands, the manager made arrangements for Rudy to receive extensive training at the hands of the local Mon'dabi/Kolajik Pack mob. Under their stern tutelage he learned to fight, became streetwise, and began to unlock the mysteries of his psionic abilities. Under the manager's sponsorship he also began to gain a taste for the finer things in life, becoming more sophisticated and worldly as his nightclub job exposed him to a wide variety of the Rim League's upper-class citizens.

By the time he'd reached his mid twenties Rudy — now known simply as Mister More — had graduated from bouncer to mob enforcer, a job for which he was uniquely well suited. With his intimidating size, persuasiveness, and psi powers he also displayed a unique aptitude for running protection rackets. Yet he longed for more: more cash, more luxury, and definitely more control over his own fate. When he learned of the Psindicate he decided to buy his way out of the Rim League mob and travel to Renghadi Station for the biannual tryouts. Though it took all of his remaining money to get there, it was well worth it for Mister More. The Psindicate eagerly recruited him, assigning the young criminal to an up-and-coming Manager known as Rigel Stargraver with a prize territory in the Terran Empire's Heartworlds.

Mister More fit smoothly into Stargraver's already exceptional Branch, breaking legs and intimidating deadbeats with an enthusiasm that impressed even that infamous master criminal. Over the next decade this crew would become one of the most profitable in the Psindicate, earning its members the regular praise of the Seven and the envy and admiration of many other Branches. When Julio Borbah unexpectedly died, the Seven moved quickly to fill his place with Stargraver — and Mister More found himself with a powerful patron. Promoted to Manager, he was placed in charge of a new and potentially profitable territory. The Karilath system lies at the very edge of the Voršan Expanse. Its single populated planet (Karilath IV) is a picturesque, almost pastoral world with one city that also happens to be the first stop for trade vessels traveling from Mon'dabi space into the Terran Empire. Its inhabitants are sophis-

ticated, affluent, corrupt, and — like nearly any frontier people — contemptuous of the Empire's central government back on Earth.

Karilath IV's racially mixed population also includes a usually high number of Mon'dabi and Kolajik Pac, making it an ideal place for the former expatriate to set up shop. Mister More wasted no time assembling an exceptional group of Associates for his Branch and, with their help, almost effortlessly ingratiated himself with Karilath IV's criminal element. Slowly and subtly using everything he'd learned in his long criminal career, Mister More gained control of the Gha'krl Mob, making it his own to such an extent that Boss Gha'krl simply made him Underboss and retired to his estate to enjoy himself, unconcerned with the day-to-day running of his criminal empire so long as the money keeps flowing. And flow it does: into Boss Gha'krl's paws, into Mister More's hands, and, most importantly, into the Psindicate's coffers back on Renghadi Station.

Personality/Motivation: Like all members of the Psindicate Mister More enjoys luxury: cool ships and hovercars, fashionable clothes, excellent meals, and the company of beautiful women. He's wealthy — and not at all adverse to the idea of becoming even wealthier still. Yet there's more to the big man than that. An extremely impoverished and traumatic childhood has taught Mister More the value of "control" as an ideal: control over himself, control over his Associates, control over his enemies, and, if he can manage it, control over his superiors. As far as Mister More's concerned the universe is a cruel, disorderly place in which the only path to salvation lies through thoroughly dominating his environment. Only then can he assure that those whom he's responsible for are taken care of.

This doesn't mean that the big man is a bad employer — far from it. Mister More's Associates are completely devoted to him, as are the various soldiers of the Gha'krl Mob. Not because he's using his psi powers to manipulate them all of the time, either. Mister More is a legitimately good organizer whose leadership enriches everyone associated with him. He's businesslike, straightforward, and disinclined to unnecessary violence or cruelty. Despite his love of decadent luxury he's also quite goal-oriented and detail-minded. He demands that all those who serve under him (whether psionic or not) constantly strive to better themselves.

The Gha'krl mob would be shocked to realize he's robbing them blind.

In fact, Mister More's ambitions don't end with his Branch on Karilath IV. A well-regarded

Manager who's created a profitable Branch from scratch, he's also a known partisan of Rigel Star-graver's faction within the Seven. One day the Young Turks and Old Guard are bound to have a showdown — one he's certain the Young Turks will win. When that happens Mister More plans to step into one of the vacant positions, capping his career by becoming one of the secret criminal overlords of the Galaxy.

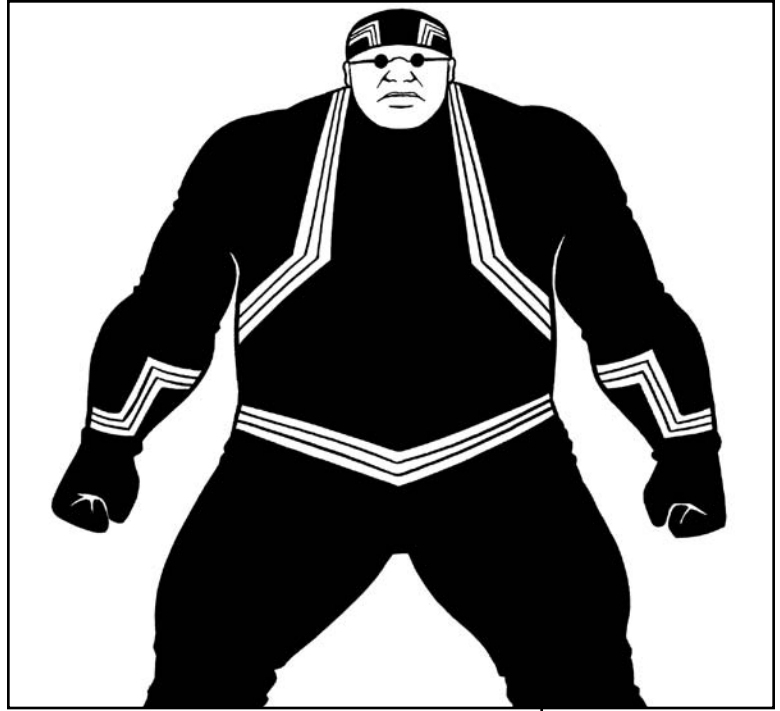
Quote: “Breaking your arm? Nothing so crude has even crossed my mind. I just want you to hold still while I explain things to you in a calm, reasonable manner. When I'm done you'll see that what I'm proposing is actually better for us both.”

Powers/Tactics: Mister More exists to manipulate and control people, especially useful ones who can make him money. He does this through a combination of old fashioned research, Telepathy, Persuasion, and Mind Control. First he learns as much as he can about anyone he needs to control or deceive, generally relying on the services of BEM to obtain whatever documented information exists about them and Senator the Silent (see below) to conduct detailed surveillance. He then uses his *High Society* Skill to get close to them socially so he can employ his Subtle Telepathy to read their surface thoughts, which always gives him an excellent conversation starter. Using Persuasion, Seduction, and Conversation in conjunction with a limited but subtle form of Mind Control, Mister More draws them into his criminal schemes — schemes that are invariably well-planned and which generally work. It's a powerful combination. Most of the time his victim is convinced before the big man gets around to using his psionic powers.

Although he prefers to avoid violence, Mister More is a terrifying combatant. Although he's bigger and tougher than the average Heavy, he's also surprisingly quick and agile. Without any weapon at all he can tear a healthy man limb from limb. As if that weren't enough, he carries a concealed laser pistol on his person at all times. His clothes are usually made of a tough micro-fiber weave designed to protect him as well as look stylish, and his sunglasses shield his eyes from blinding Flashes.

Yet Mister More's most terrible weapon is his Associates and the Gha'krl Mob itself. He seldom goes anywhere without half a dozen heavily armed Mondabi or Kolajik Pack criminals at his side, and usually has the terrifying Nan Smells-Your-Fear with him as well. If threatened he'll hang back while they engage his opponents, sizing the enemy up and waiting for an opportunity to wade in and finish the fight. He communicates with members of the Gha'krl Mob either with Telepathy or subvocally using a radio implanted below his left ear.

Campaign Use: Mister More's operation is a good example of a successful, well-run Psindicate Branch. His Associates are highly-trained but medium-powered psionics with abilities that are useful in a variety of circumstances. Generally speaking, Mister More and Smells-Your-Fear



handle any violence with the help of their Gha'krl Mob minions, Senator the Silent steals things and conducts surveillance, and BEM hacks into computers and builds gadgets. The Gha'krl Mob itself is into the sorts of things mobs are always into: smuggling, prostitution, loan sharking, drug smuggling, racketeering, fencing stolen goods, and the like. Mister More's Branch of the Psindicate simply makes sure that these activities are performed efficiently, profitably, and with as little competition as possible.

Though he hardly goes around advertising the fact, Mister More's status as the Underboss of the Gha'krl Mob isn't a secret — a fact that's earned him the enmity of the ISP, among other law enforcement agencies. It's in this role the PCs are most likely to encounter him. Maybe they're Imperial Navy officers trying to shut down smuggling between the Empire and the Federation. Or maybe *they're* smugglers, looking to unload contraband in the Karilath System before the Navy catches them. Either way they could encounter Mister More — though naturally they would have no idea that he's the local Psindicate boss!

To make Mister More less powerful, remove his Damage Reduction (and perhaps decrease his STR and CON). To make him more difficult for your PCs to confront, give him a Type 3 Force Field Belt (TE 114).

Appearance: Mister More is a Heavy variant Human of sub-Saharan African descent; he's a very, very big man who is nearly as wide as he's tall. His basketball-sized head thrusts straight from his body without revealing a neck. As is the fashion on Karilath IV he wears a black and silver pinstriped skullcap on his cleanly shaved head; the cap matches his custom-tailored jumpsuit. He protects his eyes with small sunglasses that have circular lenses.

❖SMELLS-YOUR- FEAR PLOT SEEDS

Somehow the PCs have made the Gha'krl Mob — and, by extension, the local Psindicate — very, very mad. So mad in fact that Mister More has abducted them, removed their weapons, and dropped them into the maze on Boss Gha'krl's estate. Can they escape before ❖Smells-Your-Fear catches them? Or, if they can't, can they defeat the Nan in combat without weapons?

The PCs are working for the loosely organized Perseid Intelligence Division. Their mission: retrieve the murdering ex-officer ❖Smells-Your-Fear from the Terran Empire to stand trial. After successfully sneaking into the Human space, they follow various leads to the distant world of Kari-lath IV, where they find their intended quarry working for a local mobster. It seems like a simple snatch-and-grab mission. Or is it?

Nao has revolted against the Perseid Empire's control! The PCs somehow wind up helping the Nan. Using a mercenary ship and crew they attack out-lining Perseid colonies along the Spinward Territories, spreading terror wherever they go. But can Nao really secede from the Empire? Or will the Perseids simply destroy it, leaving the Nan a homeless species like the Xenovores and Hzeel?

❖SMELLS-YOUR-FEAR

Deadly Nan Enforcer

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
14	STR	4	12-	Lift 175 kg; 2½d6 [3]
18	DEX	24	13-	OCV: 6/DCV: 6
15	CON	10	12-	
15	BODY	10	12-	
10	INT	0	11-	PER Roll 11-
14	EGO	8	12-	ECV: 5
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
10	COM	0	11-	
12	PD	13		Total: 12 PD (0 rPD)
12	ED	13		Total: 12 ED (0 rED)
4	SPD	12		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
8	REC	4		
36	END	3		
35	STUN	5		Total Characteristic Cost: 116

Movement: Running: 12"/24"

Cost Powers END

45	<i>Telepathic Hearing/Speech:</i> Telepathy 6d6, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½)	0
25	<i>Headbutt:</i> HKA 1½d6 (2d6 with STR)	2
5	<i>Claws:</i> HKA 1 point (½d6 with STR), Armor Piercing (+½); Restrained (-½)	1
5	<i>Terrifying Looking:</i> +10 PRE; Only For Fear-/Intimidation-Based Presence Attacks (-1)	0
12	<i>Extremely Fast:</i> Running +6" (12" total)	1
22	<i>Telepathic Vision:</i> Spatial Awareness (Mental Group)	0
25	<i>Telepathic Smell:</i> Detect Fear 11- (Mental Group), Discriminatory, Sense, Targeting, Tracking	0

Perks

3	Fringe Benefit: Psindicate Associate
3	Fringe Benefit: Gha'krl Soldier
5	Money: Well Off

Talents

4	Double Jointed
3	Lightning Reflexes: +2 DEX to act first with All Actions

Skills

20	+4 HTH
15	+3 DCV
3	Breakfall 13-
3	Concealment 11-
10	Defense Maneuver IV
3	High Society 13-
2	AK: Karilath IV 11-
4	CuK: Gha'krl Mob 13-
2	KS: Interstellar Organized Crime 11-
3	Persuasion 13-
3	Streetwise 13-
3	Tactics 11-
5	Teamwork 13-
2	WF: Small Arms

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 235

Total Cost: 351

75+ Disadvantages

- 15 Hunted: Psindicate 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Public Identity, Watching)
- 25 Physical Limitation: No Senses Of Sight, Hearing, Or Smell (All the Time, Fully Impairing)
- 15 Physical Limitation: Mute (All the Time, Slightly Impairing)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Compulsive Predator (Common, Moderate)
- 20 Social Limitation: Subject To Orders (Very Frequently, Major)
- 191 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 351

Background/History: Since the beginning of time the Nan have hunted prey-things. They hunted prey-things that swam, prey-things that crawled, prey-things that ran, even prey-things that flew. Unlike lesser hunters they didn't use sight, sound, or smell to pursue their lovely prey-things, for they had none of these senses. The Nan tracked their quarry using only the delicious, bright fear that radiated from their minds. On the long nights when the face of the gas giant Vigar'kel flooded the world-moon of Nao with golden light, the Nan chased their prey-things, savoring their terror. Those that were slow died of quick blows from a Nan's razor-sharp, arrow-shaped heads, were torn into bloody chunks, and consumed with holy rapture. Those who were fast escaped to be pursued another day. And all was well.

Then the Perseids came to Nao with their vast numbers and powerful ships. At first the Nan tried to hunt them as well, but the Perseids had terrible weapons and were not afraid. Many Nan died. Their world was conquered and became part of something called an "empire." This was good, because the Nan could leave their world and travel to other places in this Empire filled with smart prey-things whose terror was dazzling and delicious. But it was also bad, because the Perseids would not let them hunt any of them. This frustrated the Nan. So the Perseid came up with a compromise. Some Nan, those with the most self-control, would become something called "law enforcement officers." These were allowed to hunt smart prey-things called "fugitives." This was good, because fugitives pursued by Nan radiated a most delectable dread. But it was also bad, because law enforcement officers weren't allowed to eat fugitive prey-things.

❖Smells-Your-Fear was a Perseid law enforcement officer. He was a very good one. No fugitive ever escaped him. ❖Smells-Your-Fear was also what other cultures might call "conservative." As far as he was concerned prey-things were for eating, and fugitives were by definition prey-things. So now and again he ate one. This made his Perseid superiors angry — so angry in fact that there was talk of making him a "fugitive." This was a disruption of the natural order, which concerned ❖Smells-Your-Fear. The Nan were not prey-things. So he snuck aboard a vessel bound for the not-Empire known as the Conjoined Civi-

EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Stunner	+1	+1	4d6 NND	--	6	8	Defense is ED Force Field

Armor

Armored Clothing (Armor (2 PD/2 ED), Activation Roll 14-, Real Armor)

Gear: Pocket computer

lizations Republic. From expatriate Nan who lived there he learned of one known as ☼Panic-Filled-Rolling-Eyes. This one helped rule an Empire known as the Psindicate. This one would make it a law enforcement officer once more. There would be all the smart prey-things it could hunt. It could glut himself on their fear and, from time to time... on them.

Personality/Motivation: Disturbingly enough, ☼Smells-Your-Fear is a pretty typical Nan. He's simply bit a more motivated and disciplined than most. Like all of his kind he's motivated primarily by a desire to telepathically experience the fear of "prey-things." This can mean anything from small vermin to intelligent humanoids, though the Nan prefer to hunt intelligent creatures whenever possible — their terror is a delicacy. ☼Smells-Your-Fear is a connoisseur of other people's fear. He was born with an instinct for it, developed an aficionado's taste for it while working for the Perseids, and has perfected his palate while working for Mister More and the Psindicate. For this he's extremely grateful.

Like all other members of the Psindicate ☼Smells-Your-Fear is motivated by a desire for luxury and fine living. For him this means the ability to glut himself on the terror of others whenever possible. His meals are generally semi-intelligent Karilath pseudo-monkeys or imported Terran cats, which Mister More allows him to chase around the Branch's luxurious penthouse headquarters before eating as "seasoning." Most of his working hours are spent scaring the hell out of the Gha'krl Mob's clients, victims, and enemies. Additionally, Boss Gha'krl has constructed a unique hedge maze on his estate for ☼Smells-Your-Fear's personal entertainment. On special occasions — or, to be more specific, whenever someone or something angers the Psindicate or Gha'krl Mob — the offending party or parties are thrown into it, with ☼Smells-Your-Fear hot on their trail. Interestingly enough, anyone who escapes from the maze is allowed to leave the premises unmolested, as this is also part of the Nan aesthetic: particularly clever prey-things should be allowed to live so they can be hunted again. This doesn't mean the Mob won't hunt them down at a later date, however.

Though it's against his basic nature, ☼Smells-Your-Fear works hard at getting along with his coworkers in the Psindicate and the Gha'krl Mob. He respects Mister More greatly, as Nan generally esteem anyone who doesn't fear them, and is as deferential as possible to Senorat the Hidden and BEM, considering that they *do* fear it. A pack hunter by nature, he actually enjoys the company of the group-oriented Kolajik Pack, and works

primarily with mobsters of that species. He even understands High Society well enough to keep his mouth shut and not terrify or eat anyone in public.

Quote: "You don't like me in your head prey-thing? In that case I shall put my head... in you!"

Powers/Tactics: All Nan use the same tactics in combat. First a Nan tries to frighten his intended prey-thing by spreading his arms wide, opening its vast, beaked mouth, and releasing a telepathic "howl" (in game terms, making a 6d6 Presence Attack). Then he runs straight toward the prey, relying on his incredible agility to dodge any projectile or energy weapon attacks. When he gets close enough to engage his victim hand-to-hand, the Nan delivers a series of vicious blows from his arrow-shaped head until his prey-thing lied dead on the ground. Then he rips its carcass into bit-sized, easily digested chunks using his claws (Nan don't have teeth).

Because they lack most of the sensory apparatus normal for other life-forms, the Nan "see," "hear," and "smell" using several telepathic senses. In game terms, they "see" using Spatial Awareness, "hear" (and speak) using Telepathy and "smell" using Detect Fear. In most ways this makes them equal or superior to beings with normal sensory organs, but in others they're remarkably deficient. The Nan cannot sense robots, computers, or any sort of artificial intelligence. In fact, ☼Smells-Your-Fear is one of the few Nan who even understands the concept of "robot." Individuals with sufficiently-advanced psi powers or psionic shielding are effectively invisible to the Nan. Additionally, the Nan's basic biological differences make it difficult for other intelligent life-forms to communicate with them, even telepathically. Their "language" consists of a series of symbols which they project directly into one another's minds, and their lack of sensory experiences common to other species makes the entire frame of reference in which they think utterly unfamiliar.

Having been trained by the Perseids and Psindicate, ☼Smells-Your-Fear is a particularly sophisticated Nan. He can communicate telepathically with other species well enough to overcome most innate cultural difficulties. Furthermore, his training in Tactics and Teamwork has given him an appreciation of a device utterly alien to Nan society: the ranged weapon. BEM has constructed a special, easy-to-aim stunner pistol for ☼Smells-Your-Fear that allows him to participate in ranged combat or to stop prey-things inclined to flee using mechanical assistance. Like all Nan ☼Smells-Your-Fear finds the idea of killing at a distance to be repugnant, so he never uses guns that do anything other than STUN damage only.



Campaign Use: The Nan are truly alien aliens — frightening beings who wouldn't be out of place in a child's nightmare. They're horrifying looking, can read your mind, enjoy scaring you, and might even eat you. Still, they aren't supernatural. They're quite mortal, as the Perseids were quick to demonstrate when they conquered Nao. Regardless, like Xenovores the Nan have a reputation for being "monsters" rather than acceptably civilized aliens. Your PCs should react to the presence of ✨Smells-Your-Fear with appropriate apprehension, if not outright terror. He is a horror, after all.

The PCs will most likely encounter ✨Smells-Your-Fear as Mister More or Boss Gha'krl's personal bodyguard. Should they anger either gangster, they'll find themselves Hunted by it along with half a dozen Kolajik Pack thugs and possibly a Mon'dabi "heavy" or two.

WHAT THEY SAY: ✨SMELLS-YOUR-FEAR

Mister More, Psindicate Branch Manager: "✨Smells-Your-Fear is an exemplary Associate: fearless, competent, and conscientious in his duties. He's also surprisingly inexpensive to employ, as its species's concept of "wealth" is quite alien to most civilized people."

Major Allyssa Barth, ISP: "Who? Do you mean that damned Nan who works for Boss Gha'krl? That thing still isn't dead or in prison? Somebody on Karilath IV is either corrupt, incompetent, or both!"

Interoffice Memo #3,467: Karilath Planetary Police Force: "By orders of Planetary Police Commissioner Tang Chen no action is to be taken against the Nan known as ✨Smells-Your-Fear. All reports involving this individual are to be sealed, expunged from the public records, and delivered personally to the Commissioner's office."

To make ✨Smells-Your-Fear a less powerful opponent for your PCs, remove his Stunner Pistol so he has to engage in HTH Combat with them all the time. To make him into a more powerful combatant, give him a Type 2 Force Field Belt and increase his STUN to 50 and BODY to 20.

Appearance: By the standards of its own kind (the Nan), ✨Smells-Your-Fear is of unremarkable appearance. By the standards of almost everyone else it's a hideous monster, though most members of Galactic society are trained from birth to be tolerant of other species' appearances. Humanoid, seven feet tall, and almost skeletally thin, it has brown, leathery skin that exudes a surprisingly pleasant scent vaguely like cinnamon. Its eyeless skull is shaped like an arrowhead that ends in a razor-sharp, toothless beak. Its hands end in seven long, multi-jointed fingers tipped with vicious claws.

Back home on Nao ✨Smells-Your-Fear wore the traditional garb of the Nan: an unadorned leather poncho made from the skins of prey-things. On Karilath IV he wears the same skullcap-and-jumpsuit as most fashionable people, pinstriped silver and black to identify himself as a member of the Gha'krl Mob. He carries his Stun Pistol openly in violation of local laws, as no police officer in his right mind interferes with a Nan.

SENORAT THE SILENT

Varanyi Master Thief

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6
15	DEX	15	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
13	CON	6	12-	
11	BODY	2	11-	
15	INT	5	12-	PER Roll 12-/19-
13	EGO	6	12-	ECV: 4
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
12	COM	1	11-	
6	PD	4		Total: 6 PD (6 rPD)
6	ED	3		Total: 6 ED (6 rED)
4	SPD	15		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
7	REC	4		
30	END	2		
30	STUN	7		Total Characteristic Cost: 75

Movement: Running: 8"/16"

Cost	Powers	END
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25	<i>Chvorsq Psionics:</i> Multipower, 25-point reserve					
2u	1) <i>Chvorsq Mindspeech:</i> Telepathy 5d6				2	
2u	2) <i>Chvorsq Psychokinesis:</i> Telekinesis (10 STR), Fine Manipulation				2	
	Martial Arts: <i>Varanyi Battlestaff Combat</i>					
	Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes		
4	Deadly Hand	-2	+0	HKA 3 DC		
4	Empty Arms	—	+5	Dodge, Affects All Attacks, Abort		
4	Empty Hand	-1	+1	Disarm; 30 STR to Disarm roll		
4	Long Arm	+0	+2	Weapon +4 DC Strike		
5	Strong Arm	-2	+1	Weapon +6 DC Strike		
8	+2 Extra DCs (already added in)					
5	<i>Varanyi Mind:</i> Mental Defense (8 points total)					
4	<i>Fast:</i> Running +2" (8" total)					1
12	<i>Varanyi Link:</i> Mind Link (any Varanyi, up to eight minds at once); Only With Others Who Have Mind Link (-1)					0
10	<i>Radio Implant:</i> Radio Reception/Transmission					0

Perks

15	Advanced Tech: ATRI 12 in a mostly ATRI 11 campaign
2	Fringe Benefit: Chvorsq
3	Fringe Benefit: Psindicate Associate
3	Fringe Benefit: Gha'krl Soldier
5	Money: Well Off

Skills

3	+1 with Concealment, Security Systems, and Stealth
10	+2 DCV
4	+2 OCV with Varanyi Blaster
3	Bribery 12-
3	Bugging 12-

3	Computer Programming (Personal Computers, Infiltration) 12-
3	Concealment 12-
5	Cramming
3	CuK: The Psindicate 12-
5	CuK: Gha'krl Mob 14-
3	Deduction 12-
3	Electronics 12-
2	Forgery (Documents) 12-
10	Gambling (Board Games, Card Games, Dice Games, Sports Betting) 13-
7	High Society 14-
3	AK: Karilath IV 12-
3	KS: Interstellar Organized Crime 12-
5	Lockpicking 13-
9	Security Systems 15-
5	Stealth 13-
5	Streetwise 13-
3	Tactics 12-
5	Teamwork 13-
3	WF: Small Arms, Staffs
3	Linguist
1	1) Language: Koljik Pack (fluent conversation; Varanyi is Native)
2	2) Language: Mondabi (completely fluent)
4	3) Language: Terran (imitate dialects)

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 235

Total Cost: 310

75+ Disadvantages

15	Hunted: Psindicate 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Public ID, Watching)
20	Hunted: Vashyyl V'hanic 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Harshly Punish)
15	Psychological Limitation: Compulsive Gambler (Common, Strong)
15	Psychological Limitation: Loves To Steal (Common, Strong)
20	Social Limitation: Subject To Orders (Very Frequently, Major)
150	Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 310

Background/History: It sucks to be the low man on the totem pole. It sucks even more to be the low Varanyi on the totem pole. Quan'taka Senorat was a fourth son born into a minor clan with few political connections. A double-crested *Chvorsq*, he was raised from a young age to be a respectable member of what passes for the upper-middle class in Varanyi society: certainly superior to the crestless *Ks'lch* and single-crested *Chpereth* that make up the bulk of the population, but always beneath the triple-crested *Chiggeb* that occupied a permanent position above him. It would never matter how much *t'illk* he acquired through his own efforts. His position in Varanyi society was fixed, and young Senorat was bitter about it.

When he reached the age of majority Senorat dutifully joined the military as nearly all lesser sons of minor clans do — it's one of their best chances to gain significant *t'illk*. He signed up for the Planetary Forces, where he was trained to be land-combat trooper alongside similarly motivated young *Chvorsq*, *Ks'lch*,

**SENORAT
THE SILENT
PLOT SEEDS**

The PCs have been hired to transport a famous art object from the Terran Empire to the Mondabi Federation. While stopping to refuel and resupply on Karilath IV, they discover a highly skilled thief (Senorat) breaking into their ship. If he gets away with the object, a chase scenario ensues; if they capture or kill him, they'll have to face the triple threat of a hostile corrupt planetary government, angry Gha'krl Mob, and vengeful Psindicate.

One of the PCs has lost a great deal of money to Senorat the Silent in a game of cards — money he can't pay right away. To make up for this debt, the Gha'krl Mob "suggests" that the PCs go on a mission for them into the nearby Voršan Expanse. To aid them in their work the Mob assigns them four "helpers:" the entire local Psindicate!

The PCs are hired by the *Vashyyl V'hanic* to retrieve a criminal by the name of Quan'taka Senorat. Having tracked him to the outlying planet of Karilath IV, they're surprised to find him as well-guarded as a crown prince! To make matters worse, they finally learn that the nature of his crime is compassion and brotherly love — even though Senorat is genuinely a gangster. What do they do?

EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Varanyi Pistol	+2	+1	2½d6	+1	8	15	
Staff	+0	+0	4d6 N	—	10	—	

Armor

Varanyi Special Ops Suit (Armor (8 PD/8 ED), IIF; Invisibility to Sight Group, IIF; 1 Continuing Fuel Charge lasting 1 Hour)
Ops Suit Goggles (Sight Group Flash Defense (5 points))

Gear: Ops Suit Goggles (+6 versus Range Modifier for Sight Group); Hearing-Augmenting Earplug (+4 versus Range Modifier for Hearing Group; Ultrasonic Perception); ATRI 12 Lockpicking Tool (+3 to Lockpicking rolls); pocket computer

and *Chpereth*. He found to his surprise that the lesser, non-psionic Varanyi made excellent soldiers in spite of their disability. This made him even more bitter and resentful of his society's rigid caste system, but he kept his opinions to himself. It's always better to say nothing than to disgrace oneself and loose *t'illk*.

As the years passed Senorat became a better and better soldier. He found himself promoted to the Imperial Infiltrators: a Special Forces branch of the Planetary Forces' Sea Command dedicated to fast, covert missions. As an Infiltrator he was trained to use special equipment that allowed him to move silently and unseen. He was also taught to sneak past security systems, open locks, and strike silently using a staff. In short, he was taught to be a professional military burglar — and he liked it. He liked stealing things. In fact, he liked it every bit as much as he secretly hated the society he diligently served.

For many years Senorat worked for the Infiltrators on various missions to preserve the Empire, generally by uncovering the secrets of its political enemies. His reputation for stealth became such that the Planetary Forces allowed to him to refer to himself as Senorat the Silent, rather than Quan'taka Senorat — an unthinkable arrogance in any part of Varanyi society outside of its military. He was as happy as he expected to ever be... and then came the Barsan Uprising.

The colony world of Barsan was an idyllic place filled with farms, wineries, and tranquil forests naturally devoid of predators. Eighty percent of its settlers were crestless *Ks'lch*. In retrospect it's unsurprising that a renegade social philosophy called the Barsan Creed would appear there, given the planet's unusual population and relative isolation from Varan. But the Emperor and House of Notables were certainly surprised. This apostate Creed preached that all Varanyi were brothers and should have equal rights under the law. Its most noteworthy proponent was a *Ks'lch* philosopher named Mrunar Fhaath. The Empire was going to have none of that — or of him.

The Planetary Forces wasted no time occupying Barsan. Resistance was quickly crushed, dis-

sident political figures arrested, and proponents of the Creed publicly executed. The Infiltrators were dispatched as spies/assassins tasked with wiping out the last remnants of the Uprising's leaders. Senorat was given the mission of hunting down and killing Mrunar Fhaath. Which he did... in part. Senorat cornered the philosopher in an isolated farmhouse deep in the countryside. But the *Ks'lch* didn't behave as expected.

"Here is my throat," proclaimed Fhaath, bearing his neck. "Go ahead and cut it. We are still brothers. No Varanyi is greater than another."

Senorat the Silent wept. Then he let Fhaath go. The Infiltrator was now a traitor as well as a thief. He was without *t'illk*. There was nothing to do but flee to the Velarian Confederation and see what fate had in store for him.

Personality/Motivation: The two most despised figures in Varanyi society are thieves and traitors; individuals who by definition lack *t'illk*. Some of the Varanyis' finest epic poems are basically descriptions of how vile one or the other is — and Senorat the Silent is both. Though he knows in his heart he did the right thing by letting Mrunar Fhaath go all those years ago, his decision permanently cut him off from everything he'd ever known. It also made him a wanted man. Decades later the *Vashyyl V'hanic* would still like to get its hands on him. Like most dissident Varanyi he fled to Velarian space, where he soon learned that an organization called the Psindicate is always on the lookout for crested Varanyi with military experience.

Senorat fit the bill of what the Seven look for nicely. He's now a veteran of the Psindicate, which he considers a kind of replacement society for the one he lost. He's completely loyal to its gangster-lords and the Managers they appoint to carry out their business. He's also a strong believer in the organization's goals. He enjoys living well every bit as much as he enjoys stealing. In particular, Senorat likes to gamble. He's even fairly good at it. So for him the primary luxury provided by the Psindicate is the money to continue gambling as he sees fit. Fortunately, Senorat enjoys the sport

of gambling itself more than the stakes involved. He's just as happy shooting dice in a back alley with derelicts as working a neo-roulette table with millionaires. Mister More is happy to provide him with what he needs.

Senorat the Silent is a serious, almost dour man given to few words and even fewer emotions (when he's not gambling, that is). He also has a well-earned reputation for professionalism. His only friend within the Karilath IV Psindicate/Gha'krl Mob is the cyberkinetic BEM, whom he works closely with on many assignments. He respects and is loyal to Mister More, but they aren't friends. He also understands the value of ☼Smells-Your-Fear's services to the organization, but dislikes the Nan and avoids him whenever possible.

Quote: "You want what? It's protected by a Class 12 security system of Terran manufacture? ::snort:: That's not a problem, sir. I'll have it for you by tomorrow."

Powers/Tactics: Senorat the Silent is a master thief who employs specialized ATRI 12 equipment stolen from the Varanyi military. His Special Ops Suit makes him nearly invisible to the naked eye and protects him; his lockpicking tools are more advanced than those used by other Psindicate thieves, and he uses special sensory devices as well. In many cases he doesn't even need these gadgets; his Telekinesis and Telepathy get him what he needs just fine.



WHAT THEY SAY: SENORAT THE SILENT

Command Order, Vashyyl V'hanic: "You are ordered to use all means to retrieve the traitor Quan'taka Senorat, even at the risk of angering neighboring governments. His seditious actions during the Barsan Uprising will be punished with fair and public trial, followed by a fair and public execution."

Fla'xao the Younger, Mon'dabi Cardsharp: "Generally I like gambling with the distinguished Varanyi gentleman. He enjoys the game so much that it's infectious. When he wins he doesn't gloat, when he loses he pays, and I know he doesn't use his psionic powers to cheat. I carry a meter for that. Frankly, I'd socialize with him outside of gambling, but he's not that sort of guy."

BEM, Renegade Zurite Criminal: "Senorat the Silent is my friend and colleague. He's a decent fellow — especially when you consider the line of work we're in. He's principled, disciplined, and careful. In my thousand years of wandering I have met few like him."

Senorat serves the Karilath IV Psindicate/Gha'krl Mob as a multipurpose thief/spy/infiltrator, generally working in conjunction with BEM. On behalf of his employers he's stolen original artwork, irreplaceable datadisks, prototype pharmaceuticals, precious gems, and much more. He's responsible for obtaining the information needed to blackmail Planetary Police Commissioner Tang Chen into complying with Boss Gha'krl's wishes. He also played a pivotal role in identifying and eliminating all of the leaders of the Slith Mob, leaving the Gha'krl (and therefore the Psindicate) as the planet's sole criminal enterprise.

Senorat prefers to avoid combat whenever possible. He's a thief and a spy, not a warrior. However, should he be forced into a fight, he'll try to use his Varanyi Blaster to eliminate enemies while he makes his escape. If he's forced into HTH Combat, he's a master staff-fighter.

Campaign Use: Senorat the Silent is a dedicated but specialized agent of the Psindicate, and the PCs will most likely encounter him in that capacity. If they're transporting something (or someone) that Mister More wants, he'll dispatch Senorat and BEM to retrieve it. If they're guarding valuable artwork for a local museum or precious jewels for a society matron, Senorat might try to retrieve them as well.

Another way the PCs might encounter Senorat the Silent is in one of Karilath IV's many illegal or semi-legal gambling establishments. The only thing the Varanyi thief gets emotional about is gambling. If one of the PCs loses a large amount of money to him and doesn't pay up promptly, he might ask Mister More to dispatch ☼Smells-Your-Fear and a squad of heavily-armed Kolajik Pack to collect. Conversely, if he loses a large sum of money to a PC and is unable to pay, he'll seek the protection of the Gha'krl Mob (and all that entails).

To make Senorat the Silent into a more powerful foe for your PCs, increase his BODY to 15 and his STUN to 40. To make him less powerful, remove his Martial Arts and Special Ops Suit.

Appearance: Senorat the Silent is a handsome, middle-aged, double crested Varanyi male. His expression is generally dour and serious except when he's gambling. His Special Ops Suit's been modified to resemble a somewhat snuggier version of the fashionable Karilath skullcap-and-jumpsuit combo (though his skullcap is tailored to leave his double-ridged skull uncovered in the front), with the customary black-and-silver Gha'krl pinstripes. All of his weapons and equipment fit neatly into pockets built into his clothing.

BEM PLOT SEEDS

The PCs land on Karilath IV to refuel before making the jump to Mondabi space. They decide to spend a night on the town in Karilath City, so they mechanically and electronically lock their vessel, making it virtually impossible to break in. When they return the following morning, the ship is gone! Getting it back will require venturing into the Karilath underworld... and convincing BEM to unlock it, now that he's used his powers to reprogram the locks.

The PCs are working for the ISP's cyber-crimes division. Recent reports from ISP informants on Karilath IV have revealed the existence of an unlicensed but skilled cyberkinetic operating under the auspices of organized crime. Yet after they arrive and check in with the local authorities the trail goes cold. It's going to take a lot of footwork to solve this one....

A female friend of the PCs has a bad habit of gambling and skipping out on her debts. On Karilath IV she encounters an angry Varanyi cardsharp who refuses to be cheated. With their beloved friend kidnapped, the PCs must track her down and rescue her from the Psindicate... even as their equipment and robots begin having all kinds of problems....

BEM				
Renegade Cyberkinetic Zurite				
Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 [2]
11	DEX	3	11-	OCV: 4/DCV: 4
10	CON	0	11-	
11	BODY	2	11-	
17	INT	7	12-	PER Roll 12-
20	EGO	20	13-	ECV: 7
10	PRE	0	11-	PRE Attack: 2d6
10	COM	0	11-	
6	PD	4		Total: 6 PD (0 rPD)
5	ED	3		Total: 5 ED (0 rED)
3	SPD	9		Phases: 4, 8, 12
6	REC	4		
25	END	3		
26	STUN	5		Total Characteristic Cost: 60
Movement:		Running:	8"/16"	
Cost	Powers			END
12	Cybercontrol: Mind Control 6d6 (Machine class of minds); "Skin" Contact Required (-1), Requires An EGO Roll (-1 per 20 Active Points; -½)			3
8	Cybercontrol: Telekinesis (4 STR), Fine Manipulation; Only To Control Machines And Machine Parts (-1)			2
14	Erase/Alter Records: Major Transform 1d6 (add, alter, or remove computer Psychological Limitations, programs, or records, heal back through application of the same power, reprogramming, and/or re-entering the data), Partial Transform (+½), Based On EGO Combat Value (Mental Defense applies; +1), Works Against EGO/INT, Not BODY (+¼); "Skin" Contact Required (-1), Limited Target (computer software and files; -½), Requires An EGO Roll (-1 per 20 Active Points; -½)			4
30	Telepathic Communication: Telepathy 4d6, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½)			0
2	Psionic Defenses: Mental Defense (6 points total)			
5	Zurite Immortality: Life Support (Longevity: Immortality)			0
3	Never Sleeps: Life Support (Diminished Sleeping: no need to sleep)			0
4	Fast: Running +2" (8" total)			1
10	Radio Implant: Radio Reception/Transmission			0
Perks				
15	Advanced Tech: ATRI 12 in a mostly ATRI 11 campaign			
3	Fringe Benefit: Psindicate Associate			
3	Fringe Benefit: Gha'krl Soldier			
5	Money: Well Off			
Talents				
5	Eidetic Memory			
3	Lightning Calculator			

Skills

6	+3 with Stinger Pistol
10	+2 with DCV
3	AK: Karilath IV 12-
3	Bugging 12-
9	Computer Programming (Personal Computers, Infiltration) 15-
3	Concealment 12-
5	Cramming
5	Deduction 13-
9	Electronics 15-
5	Inventor 13-
3	Mechanics 12-
3	CuK: The Psindicate 12-
5	CuK: Gha'krl Mob 14-
7	High Society 13-
3	KS: Galactic History 12-
3	KS: Interstellar Organized Crime 12-
5	Security Systems 13-
5	Stealth 12-
5	Streetwise 12-
8	Systems Operation (Communications Systems) 15-
3	Tactics 12-
5	Teamwork 12-
2	WF: Small Arms
3	Weaponsmith (Energy Weapons, Incendiary Weapons) 12-
3	Linguist
1	1) Language: Ackálian (fluent conversation; Zurite is Native)
2	2) Language: Mon'dabi (completely fluent)
3	3) Language: Terran (idiomatic)

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 249

Total Cost: 309

75+ Disadvantages

15	Hunted: Psindicate 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, PC has a Public ID or is otherwise very easy to find, Watching)
15	Psychological Limitation: Bad With Money (Common, Strong)
15	Psychological Limitation: Hatred Of Ackálians (Common, Strong)
20	Social Limitation: Subject To Orders (Very Frequently, Major)
10	Unluck 2d6
159	Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 309

Background/History: Homelessness bruises the soul. The Zurite who would later rename himself BEM was born into a nomadic clan of merchants and gypsy mechanics. For thousands of years they wandered the portion of space called "The Frontier" by citizens of the Terran Empire, moving cargo from world to world and fixing broken devices for grateful customers (though they always took care never to reveal the secrets of their advanced technology). When they learned of the Ackálian conquest of their helpless homeworld, these wanderers joined others in returning to confront the alien menace. But the ships of the Ackorsha were too powerful

EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Stinger Pistol	+1	+1	2d6	+0	8	12	AP

Armor

Armored Clothing (Armor (4 PD/4 ED), Activation Roll 14-)
Protective Goggles (Sight Group Flash Defense (5 points))

Gear: Protective Goggles (+6 versus Range Modifier for Sight Group); Breaker Box (+3 to Computer Programming; OAF), pocket computer

and numerous for even their advanced technology to defeat. The nomadic Zurite armada was driven away from the Ackálian Empire in defeat.

Most of the tall, blue-skinned humanoids accepted their defeat philosophically. After all, it wasn't as though their kinsmen hadn't partially brought conquest on themselves by scouring their planet of all advanced technology and embracing a kind of low-tech, species-wide "retirement." But the Zurite now known as BEM was embittered by the Ackálian occupation of his ancestral homeworld. It seemed cosmically unfair that a barbaric, semi-civilized species like the Ackálians should enslave his contemplative, pacifist cousins. Disillusioned, he left his clan and began to wander the larger Galaxy, working as a trader, info-mercenary, and explorer-for-hire. In the twentieth century he served aboard one of the first exploration vessels to survey the Earth (though no official contact was initiated). Placed in charge of a mission to abduct Human test subjects, his distinctive appearance was one of the things that gave rise to the Human stereotype of aliens as Bug Eyed Monsters — or "BEMs" for short. His fellow explorers found this moniker so amusing that they made it their pet name for him, and it stuck. He was forever after known simply as BEM.

BEM continued his mercenary lifestyle for several more centuries, relying on his grasp of advanced technology and his unique cyberkinetic abilities to be of use to various employers. Yet in spite of this gainful employment he felt rootless and dissatisfied. Cut off from his homeworld and self-exiled from his nomadic brothers, BEM began searching for a long-term career suited to an immortal, highly intelligent, but not especially tough or hardworking telepath. Then, in the early twenty-seventh century, he heard a rumor that an organization had arisen in the Velarian Confederation called the Psindicate. According to his underworld sources, this new group was comprised of moderately-powered but highly-skilled psionics who'd banded together with only one purpose: to live a life of wealth and luxury through crime.

That, thought BEM, didn't sound boring. It didn't sound like a bad idea, either.

Personality/Motivation: BEM is a veteran member of the Psindicate. The first Zurite to join the organization, he did so with the understanding that the original Seven would try to provide him with assignments that minimized personal danger while maximizing profit. Not that BEM is a coward (he isn't), but his talents are more suited for covert, behind the scenes activities than for the

battlefield. The Zurite info-mercenary is simply more comfortable building and repairing equipment, hacking into computers, and monitoring the activities of his fellow Associates from a distance than shooting it out with opponents.

Alongside Mister More, BEM was an Associate in Rigel Stargraver's infamous Heartworlds Branch before transferring to Karilath IV to become part of the newly formed crew. BEM respects and likes his Manager and, although he chafes a bit at it, understands that More's constant insistence on combat training and preparedness is for his own good. BEM is as in as good a shape as he's been in for the last thousand years.

BEM's temperament isn't as serious as that of his Associates. He enjoys joking around and is generally more lighthearted in his manner than, say, Senorat the Silent — though he's capable of becoming very serious, very quickly when the need arises. He has a great love of luxury, especially exotic food, spices, and alcohol, but isn't particularly good with money. In fact, one of the reasons he chose to go to Karilath IV with Mister More is because he prefers for the big man to handle his earnings.

On a personal level, BEM respects and likes Mister More, considers Senorat the Silent to be a close friend, and is scared of Smells-Your-Fear — though he does his best to keep his terror under control. His relations with the Gha'krl Mob's Mondabi and Kolajik Pack soldiers is quite good, as they personally like him and accurately consider him an integral part of their operations.

Quote: "Hold on! Hold on! I've almost got it!"

Powers/Tactics: BEM is a cyberkinetic: a master of manipulating computers, robots, and other machines using the power of his mind. He can take control of them, and knows how to alter or erase their data files and programming. Using those powers plus his natural skill at working with computers, he's invaded and altered all of the law enforcement networks on Karilath IV to suit the needs of the Gha'krl Mob.

BEM is also an inventor and weaponsmith with a detailed understanding of ATRI 12 technology. He's not willing to "upgrade" everything the Psindicate or Gha'krl Mob uses, but occasionally he'll make an advanced weapon or other device for Mister More or someone else he deems worthy. He carries several such devices himself, including his Stinger Pistol and Breaker Box.

Most of BEM's time is spent in the Psindicate's luxurious penthouse headquarters monitoring various networks via the planetary datanet, doing research for Mister More, maintaining commu-

nications, and repairing equipment. He accompanies Senorat the Silent on burglary and espionage missions either when Mister More deems that the master thief needs backup, or when BEM can't accomplish a task remotely.

Campaign Use: Even if they come into direct, violent contact with the Psindicate or Gha'krl Mob, odds are good that the PCs will never physically encounter BEM. He's simply too valuable to the Branch to be risked in most field operations. But it's highly likely they'll come into contact with his work. If Mister More takes an interest in the PCs, the first thing he'll do is have BEM hack into their ship's computer, personal robotic assistants, portable computers, or whatever else he can. If one of the PCs is an expert programmer or cyberkinetic himself, this could lead to an interesting virtual duel.

To make BEM tougher, give him more Mental Powers like his Telepathy that work on more than machines — a bit of Mind Control or an Ego Attack, for instance. To weaken him, put Extra Time on his psionic powers.



Appearance: BEM is a typical looking Zurite male: a tall, blue-skinned humanoid with large eyes and a bald, egg-shaped head. He wears a black and silver pinstriped skullcap and matching jumpsuit.

WHAT THEY SAY: BEM

Julio Borbah, Psindicate Founder, to his wife right before his unfortunate airlock accident: "I like this new Zurite cyberkinetic we've recruited. He'll be a great asset to the organization."

Mister More, Psindicate Manager: "He's flighty, eccentric, drinks too much expensive wine, and orders in from five-star restaurants all the time. Other than that BEM is a prized Associate, capable of hacking into a network, monitoring communications, and inventing new gadgets all at the same time. He's worth the hassle and expense."

Senorat the Silent, Master Thief: "Though I respect all of my fellow Psindicate Associates and Managers, BEM is my favorite. He makes me laugh. Nobody makes me laugh. What more can I say?"

INDEPENDENT ENEMIES

SCOURGES OF THE GALAXY • CHAPTER 3

ON GROGAN CARTAGENA

‘Cartagena, Grogan. Mon’dabi. Former military. Cartagena is a bandit and black marketer who specializes in the theft and illegal sale of art objects, archaeological artifacts, and ancient technology. Suspected of crimes on over half a dozen worlds. Officers are warned that Cartagena is armed and extremely dangerous. ISP Directorship prefers that he be taken alive for interrogation if at all possible.’

— Imperial Security Police, Official File

FAST EDDY ADARAZ PLOT SEEDS

The TIC hire the PCs to track down a dangerous Ackálian agent. After reaching a dead end in the Tau Ceti System, one of the PCs decides to look up an old contact on V-A: the infamous snitch and pimp Fast Eddy Adaraz. They're not disappointed. The little Hzeel thinks he knows somebody who knows somebody who might know where the Ackálian agent is. But first, Fast Eddy needs a favor....

After an unfortunate misunderstanding involving a cargo of undocumented blasters and an Imperial Navy frigate, the PCs find themselves stranded in the Tau Ceti System without a ship. A bartender suggests that they speak with someone named "Fast Eddy" Adaraz in Daily about getting a new one on credit. After they travel there and meet him, Adaraz informs them he's got a ship they can simply have. It's a beat up *Natchez*-class vessel with an antiquated hyperdrive and only a utility laser for armament but, hey, beggars can't be choosers, right? Just one thing: Eddy wants them to take some goods out of the system for him. Discreetly, of course.

A Clone Mob versus Psindicate war has exploded in Tau Ceti... with the Hzeel Outfit caught in the crossfire as the more powerful organizations fight for control of the system. In an attempt to temporarily boost the Outfit to the level of its rivals, the System Boss has ordered that every member of the Outfit call in every favor he has. Fast Eddy has called in the PCs. They owe him and they know it, but can they avoid falling victim to the worst gang war in modern history?

"FAST EDDY" ADARAZ

Hzeel Pimp, Fence, Snitch, And General Lowlife

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
10	STR	0	11-	Lift 100 kg; 2d6 [2]
12	DEX	6	11-	OCV: 4/DCV: 4
10	CON	0	11-	
10	BODY	0	11-	
18	INT	8	13-	PER Roll 13-/15-
14	EGO	8	12-	ECV: 5
18	PRE	8	13-	PRE Attack: 3½d6
10	COM	0	11-	
2	PD	0		Total: 2 PD (0 rPD)
2	ED	0		Total: 2 ED (0 rED)
2	SPD	0		Phases: 6, 12
4	REC	0		
20	END	0		
20	STUN	0		Total Characteristic Cost: 30

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost Powers **END**

30	<i>Of Course I Know Where He Is:</i> Mind Scan 8d6, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); Can Only Be Used To Locate Criminals (-¼), Does Not Allow Character To Use Any Other Mental Powers Or Maintain A Lock-On (-0), Does Not Provide Mental Awareness (-¼), Extra Time (minimum of 20 Minutes, and possibly longer; -2½), Instant (-½), Requires A Streetwise Roll (-½) plus Mind Scan +6d6, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); same Limitations as above, plus Only To Achieve +20 "Target Cannot Detect Mind Scan" Modifier (-½) plus +5 OECV with Mind Scan	0
13	<i>Sure I Can Get Them... But It's Going To Cost You:</i> Luck 12d6; Extra Time (1 Hour, and possibly longer, -3), Only To Find Desired Non-Unique Object(s) (-½)	0
40	<i>Sure I Know Someone Who Can Help You:</i> Summon Criminal built on up to 200 Character Points, Expanded Class (any criminal; +½), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); Arrives Under Own Power (-½), Requires A Persuasion Roll (-½)	0
5	<i>Hzeel Eyes:</i> Nightvision	0
4	<i>Hzeel Eyes:</i> +2 PER with Sight Group	0
7	<i>Hzeel Regeneration:</i> Healing BODY 1d6 (Regenerate 1 BODY per Week), Can Heal Limbs, Persistent (+½), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); Extra Time + Increased Time Increment (1 Week, -3), Self Only (-½)	0

Perks

5	Favors: five corrupt bureaucrats/politicians
5	Favors: five crooked businessmen
5	Favors: five underworld figures/mobsters
1	Fringe Benefit: Membership: the Hzeel Outfit
5	Money: Well Off
3	Reputation: Expert Information Broker (among the underworld and related groups) 14-, +3/+3d6

Skills

3	Acting 13-
3	Bribery 13-
3	Bugging 13-
3	Bureaucratics 13-
3	Concealment 11-
3	Conversation 13-
2	Forgery (Documents) 13-
6	Gambling (Card Games, Dice Games, Sports Betting) 13-
3	High Society 13-
7	Persuasion 15-
3	Seduction 13-
5	Sleight Of Hand 12-
3	Stealth 11-
7	Streetwise 15-
3	Trading 13-
3	Jack of All Trades
2	1) PS: Appraise 13-
2	2) PS: Fence 13-
2	3) PS: Information Broker 13-
3	4) PS: Pimp 14-
3	Scholar
2	1) KS: The Corporate World 13-
1	2) KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 11-
2	3) KS: The Political World 13-
2	4) KS: The Underworld 13-

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 202

Total Cost: 232

75+ Disadvantages

15	Hunted: Local Law Enforcement 11- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
15	Hunted: The Hzeel Outfit 11- (Mo Pow, NCI, Watching)
10	Psychological Limitation: Dislikes Taking Orders (Uncommon, Strong)
15	Social Limitation: Subject To Orders (Occasionally, Severe)
10	Reputation: sleazy pimp and snitch, 11- (Extreme; Known Only To A Small Group)
92	Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 232

Background/History: The Hzeel. To the tolerant and softhearted: a misunderstood species forced into a diaspora due to the unfortunate destruction of their homeworld by the Perseid Empire. To everyone else: living proof that (a) yes, some groups are genetically predisposed to wickedness, (b) upon occasion genocide is actually acceptable, and (c) Humans and Thorgons are much better at it than the Perseids are. Or, at the very least, the species they try to exterminate carry a deep terror in their collective souls that keeps them quiet for a few hundred years.

Not so the Hzeel. If the Perseids tried to teach them something, then the Hzeel are the Galaxy's ultimate slow learners. Your average male Hzeel is still a one-man crime wave waiting for the right moment to happen. If the Hzeel somehow founded a new homeworld it's likely the Space Navy would destroy it again on general principle. Of course, even with modern

medicine, the little blue humanoids seldom live past 60 standard years. So they don't have a lot of choice other than to live fast, die young, and leave an unattractive corpse.

Like the ancient Terran trickster-god Lynyrd Skynyrd, Edroso "Fast Eddy" Adaraz was born down in the gutter with a temper as hot as fire. Natives of the hard-living, blue-collar, notoriously corrupt world of Tau Ceti V-A, Eddy's grifter parents ran a fairly successful if low-end confidence scam until they ripped off the wrong miner and got themselves killed. Unperturbed, the 11-year-old launched his own life of crime by decompressing the miner's entire neighborhood, which killed the miner, his family, and about a hundred other innocents in the process. Placed in juvenile detention until his eighteenth birthday, Eddy quickly learned life's harsh truths: the weak are at the mercy of the strong and, since the strong seldom have any mercy, it's better not to be one of the weak. A small, scrawny child, he knew he was doomed to years of misery and terror unless he figured out a way to escape this eternal cycle. Fortunately for Eddy, he was also a fast learner.

Within a few weeks of being confined "Fast" Eddy began to work out small smuggling deals with his jailers, enabling him to position himself as a prison procurer capable of providing better food, video games, drugs, and better clothing for his fellow inmates. Not only did this make him respected and indispensable, it also allowed him to build up a portfolio of IOUs from other prisoners. By the end of the year he'd expanded his operation to include protection and prostitution services within juvenile detention — with the guards as satisfied customers. By the standards of the world he lived in he'd ascended to the top of the food chain. In spite of his small size he wasn't one of the weak.

By the time he'd served his juvenile sentence Fast Eddy'd become an important man with contacts in the adult criminal world, law enforcement, and most especially among the delinquents that would one day flesh out the ranks of organized crime. Upon his release he joined the Hzeel Outfit. With the help of fellow "graduates" of juvenile hall and his law enforcement contacts, Fast Eddy set himself up in the tunnel-streets of Daily — Tau Ceti V-A's rough and corrupt capital city — as a pimp, procurer, fence, and "information broker" with access to everyone and anyone who's important on that world.

Personality/Motivation: Fast Eddy is the kind of Hzeel most people think of when they think of "Hzeel." He's a self-serving, amoral criminal who uses every tool at his disposal to get what he wants. His knowledge of everyone and everything unlawful, violent, scandalous, or law enforcement-related on Tau Ceti V-A is genuinely impressive, and he's justifiably proud of it. He also takes great pride in his reputation as a "go to" criminal not only for those on the wrong side of the law (or at least skating along the edge of it), but also for policemen and intelligence agents looking for information or "quiet services" that their employ-



ers might not approve of. He won't willingly do anything to damage that status, either.

In person Fast Eddy is actually rather charming in an oily, feel-bad-about-yourself-in-the-morning kind of way. At the very least he attempts to make himself agreeable.... unless you're one of his many whores, to whom he's violent, cruel, and contemptuous while also being nurturing, protective, and wise. It's not a very appealing combination to most people, but then most people aren't prostitutes. Or at least they like to think they're not.

Like any Hzeel criminal (*i.e.*, any Hzeel), Adaraz technically works for Tateklys, the Overboss (see Chapter One). But Fast Eddy doesn't like taking orders from anyone, and is currently on the "outs" with his nominal overlord and his Boss. That will probably change with time (or they'll kill him). Interestingly, Eddy isn't very interested in money, power, respect, sex, or any of the other common criminal motivations. He simply wants to be one of the strong, not one of the weak. Being wealthy makes him stronger, so he works at amassing a fortune. Sex — or, to be more specific, having power over women — makes him feel stronger, so he runs the largest string of hookers he can acquire. Influence and knowledge are forms of power, and power is strength. Anyone who makes Fast Eddy Adaraz feel like the weakling he's dedicated his life to *not* being will earn himself an enemy.

WHAT THEY SAY: FAST EDDY

“Papa” Dougherty, Daily City Police Detective: “Fast Eddy? Oh, I know that homicidal little pimp. He’d whore his own mother.... if she hadn’t been stabbed to death by a concerned citizen years ago. Still, he has his uses — there are worse out there. You don’t see how that’s possible? ::chuckle:: Wait and see, rookie. Wait and see.”

Boss Thrax, Hzeel Outfit System Boss: “He’s an obnoxious little snitch, that’s for sure. If he weren’t the only reliable contact I have with the police I’d have him kneecapped and dropped into a dog pen for food.”

Robert Avilla, Merchant-Adventurer: “Fast Eddy? Yeah, he’s quite a character all right. I remember this one time we were really hard up for work. So I went to him and he arranged to have us transport this load of datadisks to Tetsuo for one of his many “friends.” Legal? Sure, datadisks are legal. But millions of gigs of stolen Imperial Navy military data aren’t!”

Quote: “Players do what they want, whores do what they’re told, and everyone else does what they can get away with.”

Powers/Tactics: Fast Eddy really only has three powers — but they’re good ones for someone in his line work. He can pretty much find anyone on his world, obtain useful but non-unique objects such as weapons, drugs, vehicles, and the like, and call in expert criminal help like thugs, smugglers, enforcers, hackers, hitmen, and underground doctors to help him. None of these services are instantaneous... or cheap, if he uses them on your behalf. Fast Eddy expects to be paid well in credits or useful services for his efforts. He may also accept an IOU, but only from PCs who are Tau Ceti law enforcement officers, have a Reputation that indicates trustworthiness, or the like.

Fast Eddy never directly engages in combat with anyone (though he has no qualms about beating his prostitutes). In fact, he doesn’t even carry a weapon. If he’s threatened Fast Eddy uses the diamond-encrusted communication device he wears in his left ear to call in an appropriate number of thugs to do his fighting for him. He always keeps at least two nearby.

Campaign Use: A fence, pimp, and “information broker,” Fast Eddy Adaraz is a particularly obnoxious Hzeel with extensive criminal connections (primarily, but not exclusively, in the Tau Ceti system). He knows many of the major illicit players in the Terran Empire, and more than a few minor ones, too. He has contacts with business-

men, the military, the government, and organized crime including the Clone Mob, the Psindicate, the Hzeel Outfit, and most of the important planetary mobs. If he doesn’t know someone, he knows somebody who does. For the right price he can procure practically anything, introduce you to nearly anyone, and find out almost any bit of information.

In short, Fast Eddy is a scummy little plot device for helping the PCs find someone or acquire something they normally couldn’t get. These services come at a steep price (or a humiliating or dangerous one, depending on your predilections as GM). If the heroes include attractive women, he’ll demand they spend a period of time in his “employ.” If the heroes are in law enforcement, Fast Eddy will have some potentially career-ending “favors” that his “friends” need doing. If they have a nice ship, he’ll have some cargo that needs moving without anyone else knowing about it. And if they screw him, he’ll send some very alarming people after them. You should make sure that doing business with Fast Eddy Adaraz is always a harsh lesson in why the PCs shouldn’t be doing business with someone like Fast Eddy Adaraz!

Finding Fast Eddy isn’t particularly hard. Just have the PCs go to one of Daily’s many red light districts, look for the garishly-dressed little blue-skinned guy surrounded by a dozen half-naked women of various species, and start talking to him. If he considers what they propose interesting or potentially profitable, he’ll start making calls on the spot (a Persuasion roll by one of the heroes might be appropriate). If not, they’d better be able to defend themselves against the hulking thugs who can quickly materialize out of the shadows.

Fast Eddy isn’t ordinarily the Hunter type. However, if someone makes him feel weak or humiliated, or in fact weakens him somehow, he’ll do his best to obtain revenge.

Appearance: On the one hand “Fast Eddy” Adaraz is a pretty typical looking Hzeel: a short, blue-grey-skinned humanoid with large red eyes, shoulder-length white hair, and knobby features. But he wears the typical clothing of a street pimp: a purple fur coat trimmed with Cetian leopard skin, a wide-brimmed yellow fur hat with a huge feather in its brim, silver pants, and high heeled alligator skin go-go boots. While not a particularly attractive combination, it leaves little doubt as to his occupation. He also wears a diamond-encrusted communication device in his left ear.

LUCAS BELLAIR

Unscrupulous Xenoarchaeologist

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
13	STR	3	12-	Lift 150 kg; 2½d6 [3]
15	DEX	15	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
13	CON	6	12-	
12	BODY	4	11-	
18	INT	8	13-	PER Roll 13-
10	EGO	0	11-	ECV: 3
14	PRE	4	12-	PRE Attack: 2½d6
12	COM	1	11-	
6	PD	3		Total: 6 PD (0 rPD)
3	ED	0		Total: 3 ED (0 rED)
3	SPD	5		Phases: 4, 8, 12
7	REC	2		
26	END	0		
28	STUN	2		Total Characteristic Cost: 53

Movement: Running: 8"/16"

Cost	Powers	END
7	<i>Brawler:</i> HA +2d6; Hand-To-Hand Attack (-½)	1
4	<i>Swift Runner:</i> Running +2" (8" total)	1
6	<i>Perceptive:</i> +2 PER with all Sense Groups	0

Perks

- 6 Favors: 6 Character Points' worth in the corporate world and with foreign government officials
- 1 Reputation: Reliable Mercenary Archaeologist (among art collectors and the like) 11-, +1/+1d6

Skills

- 8 +1 with All Combat
- 3 Breakfall 12-
- 3 Climbing 12-
- 3 Concealment 13-
- 3 Conversation 12-
- 5 Cramming
- 3 AK: The Terran Empire 13-
- 3 AK: Emerald 13-
- 3 CuK: The Xenovores 13-
- 3 CuK: The Mandaarians 13-
- 3 CuK: The Qularr 13-
- 4 KS: Alien Artifacts 14-
- 4 KS: Alien History 14-
- 3 KS: The Business World 13-
- 3 KS: Foreign Governments 13-
- 2 Navigation (Land) 13-
- 3 PS: Mercenary Archaeologist 13-
- 3 Riding 12-
- 3 SS: Archaeology 13-
- 3 Stealth 12-
- 3 Streetwise 12-
- 10 Survival (Arctic/Subarctic, Temperate/Subtropical, Tropical, Desert, Mountain) 13-
- 3 Tracking 13-
- 4 TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles, Riding Animals
- 3 WF: Terran Small Arms, Blades
- 3 Linguist
- 2 1) Language: Ackálian (completely fluent; Terran is Native)

- 3 2) Language: Mandaarian (idiomatic)
- 3 3) Language: Qularr (idiomatic)
- 2 4) Language: Thorgon (completely fluent)
- 4 5) Language: Xenovore (imitate dialects)

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 132

Total Cost: 185

75+ Disadvantages

- 20 Hunted: TSS 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Harshly Punish)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Contempt for Accredited Academics (Uncommon, Strong)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Enjoys Showing Off/Bragging (Uncommon, Strong)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Greedy (Common, Strong)
- 10 Reputation: unscrupulous archaeologist, 11-
- 10 Unluck 2d6
- 35 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 185

Background/History: Lucas Bellair was born into a scholastic family on the progressive university world of Emerald, where his father was a History professor and his mother a teacher of Sentience Studies. An extremely intelligent child, Lucas flourished in the embrace of academia, graduating from high school at sixteen and completing his bachelor's degree before his nineteenth birthday. Following in his parents' footsteps, he majored in Exploration Studies while pursuing a minor in Xenoarchaeology. In particular he found the little-understood cultures of the gruesome Xenovores, inscrutable Mandaarians, and the giant monster-creating Qularr to be fascinating subjects of study. He soon decided to dedicate himself to the pursuit of the relics left behind by their vanished civilizations.

At the age of 21 Lucas Bellair received his Masters degree and decided to go for his doctorate. By now considered something of a prodigy, for his dissertation he decided to pursue something truly spectacular: he would uncover the origins of the Xenovore species! Though theories proliferated about the genesis of man's most notorious enemy, no explorer or scholar had ever conclusively proven any of them. But the young xenoarchaeologist was determined to launch his professorial career with a splash. After a year of solid research he obtained a generous grant from the Imperial government and, with the help of the Terran Exploration Service, set out to explore the asteroid field that had once been the homeworld of man's fiercest foe.

And found nothing whatsoever. Though determined and thorough, Bellair could find no evidence to support or refute any of the theories about the origins of the Xenovore species in the space rubble left behind by the destruction of Throneworld Alpha. To make matters worse, he had no pet or favorite hypothesis either. They all sounded equally impossible to him. Frustrated, he returned to Emerald and began researching everything mankind knew about the Xenovores. This went on for months, until late one night, combing

**LUCAS BELLAIR
PLOT SEEDS**

The PCs are working for an Emerald Institute expedition exploring the interior of the mysterious Dyson Sphere HR5683 (WoE 156). Having forged an agreement with the artificial intelligence that runs the unthinkable large artificial habitat, they're shocked to find that a Thorgon expedition employing Lucas Bellair is already inside, scheming to loot advanced technology from the Sphere. Can they stop him before he angers HR5683, causing it to exterminate them all?

A mysterious alien artifact has been stolen from the Emerald Institute — and the renegade xenoarchaeologist Lucas Bellair is the prime suspect. The Institute hires the PCs to track down the artifact and its thief before he leaves Terran space. But is Bellair really the culprit, or just a scapegoat?

After discovering that one of the PCs is the former student that turned him in for plagiarism, Bellair kidnaps him and vanishes into the jungle of an unexplored planet in Drago's Reach. Can the other PCs rescue him before Bellair takes his terrible revenge? For that matter, can he rescue himself?

EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Mark V Laser Rifle	+1	+2	3d6	+0	13	40	AF5, AP
Mark II-Q Laser Pistol	+1	+2	2½d6	+0	8	16	
Power Machete	+0	+0	1½d6	+0	8	—	

Armor

Armored Clothing (Armor (2 PD/2 ED), Activation Roll 14-)

Gear: MPC-12 Military Pocket Computer

through the datanets, he discovered an unpublished paper written by an obscure grad student decades before. A work of sheer intuitive genius, the paper hypothesized that the Xenovores had been created by another species as an unstoppable biological “weapon.” This weapon soon got out of control, however, and destroyed its own creators.

Bellair knew this theory was correct. He could *feel* it in his bones — and it was supported by some traces of evidence he’d uncovered during his expedition. Unfortunately, it was also someone else’s theory, and this galled him. How dare anyone steal his glory? How dare they come up with his ideas? Using his unrestricted access to the Institute’s database, Bellair copied the paper for himself and then erased it from history (or so he thought). Adding his evidence to the unknown author’s work, he published the theory as his own. The response was immediate and overwhelming. Lucas Bellair was celebrated as the genius who’d finally solved the great mystery of the Xenovore species. Amidst great fanfare he was given a tenured professorship at the Institute.

Ten comfortable years passed as Professor Bellair enjoyed the fruits of being a celebrity academic. Generous grants from corporations funded his research, while book deals funded his private life. He had his choice of graduate students. Life was very good. Then one terrible day a curious graduate student doing research on the Xenovores discovered a physical copy of the original paper lying on a shelf in the basement of the Galactic Security Studies building. (How it got there is a mystery to this day.) Shocked to discover that Professor Bellair’s famous doctoral thesis was plagiarized from another academic’s work, the student quickly brought the paper to the attention of the EAC (Emerald Authoritative Council).

After a brief and very public trial Bellair lost both his tenure and his Emerald citizenship. Humiliated, publicly disgraced, and forced into exile from his homeworld, the dishonored xenoarchaeologist soon put his skills to work for

the highest bidder — unprincipled corporations, unscrupulous art collectors, foreign governments hostile to the Empire’s interests. As an expert on several ancient interstellar civilizations that employed advanced weaponry, he quickly found that there was no lack of employment available. Bellair decided that since he’d never again be respected, he might as well be rich.

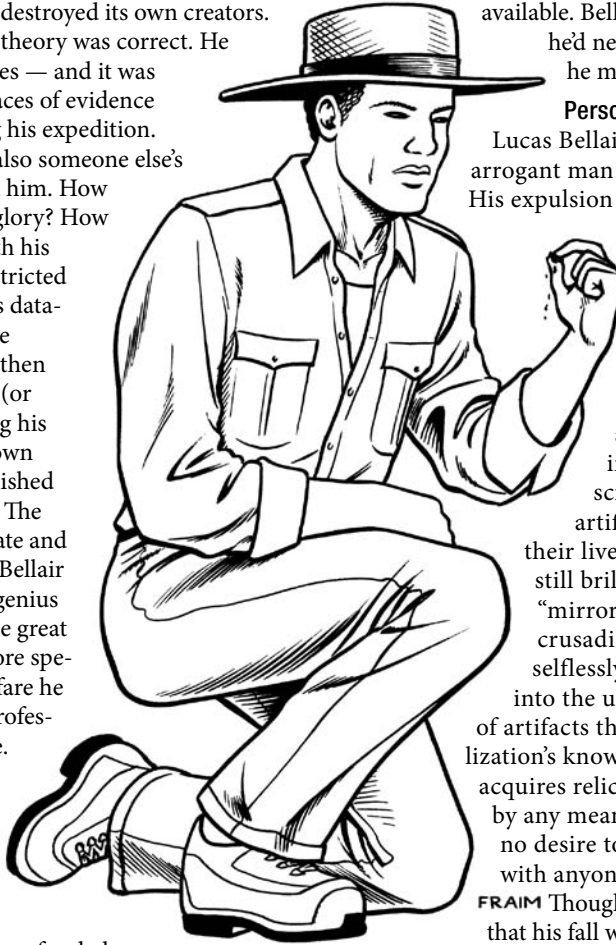
Personality/Motivation:

Lucas Bellair is an unpleasant, arrogant man with few scruples. His expulsion from the Emerald Institute further twisted his personality, making him dangerous. He actually enjoys taking credit for the findings of others, and thinks nothing about forcing scientists to hand over artifacts they’ve risked their lives to acquire. Though still brilliant, he’s now a “mirror reflection” of the crusading archaeologist who selflessly leads expeditions into the unknown in search of artifacts that will expand civilization’s knowledge. Lucas Bellair acquires relics for his employers by any means necessary and has no desire to share his knowledge with anyone.

FRAM Though logically he knows that his fall was his own doing, Bel-

lair holds an irrational grudge against the original author of the paper, the student who unmasked him, and his peers in general. He relishes the opportunity to hamper and interfere with university-sponsored expeditions, particularly those from Emerald, and sometimes kidnaps famous xenoarchaeologists simply so he can brag to them about his criminal “accomplishments” since “leaving” the Institute. He tells himself he does this because accredited academics are worthy only of his contempt but, in his heart, Bellair knows he’s simply lonely.

Quote: “We are alike, you and I: xenoarchaeology is our only interest. Our employers may differ, but our methods are very much alike. We rob the remarkable dead for the sake of the mundane living.”



Powers/Tactics: Lucas Bellair is a capable if unscrupulous explorer/scientist who enjoys spending time in the field rather than in a lab. He's tough, extremely intelligent, very knowledgeable when it comes to the subjects he specializes in, and experienced in the "business end" of being a rogue xenoarchaeologist for hire. Bellair will do anything to fulfill his employers' wishes, whether it means betraying another scientist or killing an entire expedition.

Whatever his other faults, Bellair is no coward. He won't run from a confrontation unless there's no other option. If he's forced to leave without the artifact or information he's been sent to retrieve, he'll regroup so he can make another attempt in the near future.

Campaign Use: There are many ways to tie Professor Bellair into a Star Hero adventure. As the "mirror reflection" of any archaeology-oriented character, he could easily end up Hunting any PC who beats him to "his" artifact. It's possible that his infamous doctoral thesis was plagiarized from a PC's work, or that one of the PCs is the grad student who revealed his plagiarism. In either case it would be hard for Bellair to resist the temptation to stalk them once he discovered they were in the field.

The PCs will most often encounter Professor Bellair as part of a secretive archaeology dig on an unknown world. He isn't designed for a one-on-one match up with a group of heroes. Rather, his normal role is to act as a skilled advisor to the head of a clandestine artifact-hunting expedition (because of his arrogance, he isn't a particularly inspiring leader). Bellair always has plenty of "backup" in the form of alien soldiers, mercenaries, or armed natives whom he's bribed or misinformed about the PCs' intentions.

LUCAS BELLAIR QUOTES

Liree Gosonbok, Emerald Planetary Security Commissioner: "The real tragedy of Lucas Bellair is that he was a talented scientist and teacher. I'm sure he'd have become a professor eventually without stealing anyone else's work. The whole thing struck me as being... well, tragically unnecessary."

Terran Security Service Memo #456,327-C: "Subject: Professor Lucas Bellair. Crimes: Treason, Theft, Murder, Conspiracy. All operatives are instructed to capture Lucas Bellair or, if capture proves too impossible or dangerous, to liquidate him. After capture Bellair should be debriefed using the harshest possible methods — then liquidated."

Professor Tegr Zraorrer, Fex Archaeologist: "Bellair and his mercenaries robbed us of the ancient Malvan artifact while we were loading our shuttle. One moment I was stuffing camera systems into a cargo hold, the next I was on the ground with a laser rifle pointed at my face. Then Bellair lectured me for 20 minutes about the superiority of his own methods. As if it takes a degree to rob somebody. Idiot!"

To make Bellair more of a threat, give him some Combat Skill Levels with Terran Small Arms. To weaken him, remove his Brawler ability.

Appearance: Professor Lucas Bellair is a rugged, attractive man with light-brown skin and intelligent grey eyes. He has a muscular build, large hands, and keeps his curly brown hair cut short. In the field he wears sturdy khaki clothing, serviceable boots, and a wide-brimmed straw hat, but enjoys donning a fine suit when the occasion calls for it. He's always armed, either with a Mark II-Q Laser Pistol that he wears in a shoulder holster or a Mark V Laser Rifle when he's in the field.

GROGAN CARTAGENA PLOT SEEDS

The PCs have been hired to protect an archaeology expedition to a recently-charted planet in the Thorgon Neutral Zone. Much to their surprise the expedition leader hires an additional Mondabi guide while they're docked in Karilath IV's space station. The new guide seems very competent, but there's something about him the PCs don't like....

Cartagena has just gotten done screwing the PCs in his usual fashion: he tracked them to an unexplored world, waited for them to uncover a mysterious ancient artifact, and then robbed them at gunpoint. Unfortunately for Cartagena one of the PCs is an excellent shot! He wings Caragena's ship with his plasma rifle before he can get away, forcing him to make a crash landing in the jungle one hundred kilometers from their position. The hunter becomes the hunted.... but Grogan Cartagena is very dangerous game indeed!

The PCs have been hired by the always-curious TES to track down and capture the adventurer-thief Grogan Cartagena. After doing some investigating, they realize the Mondabi criminal has already left with a well-funded Sécra-sponsored expedition to a system in Drago's Reach. The PCs track the group to a jungle planet where hostile natives, unexplored ruins, an ancient gem mine, intergalactic relations, and double-crossing all combine together to spell one word: adventure!

GROGAN CARTAGENA

Crooked Explorer

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
25	STR	20	14-	Lift 800 kg; 5d6 [5]
20	DEX	30	13-	OCV: 7/DCV: 7
20	CON	20	13-	
18	BODY	16	13-	
13	INT	3	12-	PER Roll 13-
12	EGO	4	11-	ECV: 4
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
10	COM	0	11-	
10	PD	7		Total: 13 PD (3 rPD)
8	ED	4		Total: 11 ED (3 rED)
4	SPD	10		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
9	REC	0		
40	END	0		
41	STUN	0		Total Characteristic Cost: 124

Movement: Running: 8"/16"
Swimming: 4"/8"

Cost	Powers	END
3	<i>Mondabi Teeth:</i> HKA 1 point; No STR Bonus (-½)	1
9	<i>Tough Guy:</i> Damage Resistance (10 PD/8 ED)	0
4	<i>Fast On His Feet:</i> Running +2" (8" total)	1
2	<i>Fast Swimmer:</i> Swimming +2" (4" total)	1
3	<i>Mondabi Senses:</i> +1 PER with All Sense Groups	0
4	<i>Tail:</i> Extra Limbs; Limited Manipulation (-¼)	0
30	<i>Villain's Luck:</i> Luck 6d6	0

Perks

5	Favors: various space station employees
5	Money: Well Off

Talents

3	Bump Of Direction
6	Combat Luck (3 PD/3 ED)
3	Lightsleep

Skills

8	+1 with All Combat
5	+1 with Ranged Combat
3	Bribery 13-
5	Bugging 13-
3	Bureaucratics 13-
3	Combat Piloting 13-
3	Computer Programming (Personal Computers, Infiltration) 12-
3	Conversation 13-
3	Deduction 12-
3	Electronics 12-
3	Fast Draw (Small Arms) 13-
2	Forgery (Art Objects) 12-
2	Gambling (Card Games) 12-
3	Interrogation 13-
3	Language: Terran (fluent; Mondabi is Native)
3	Lockpicking 13-
1	Mimicry 8-
4	Navigation (Hyperspace, Displacement, Space) 12-

3	PS: Explorer 12-
3	Persuasion 13-
1	SS: Anthropology 8-
1	SS: Archaeology 8-
3	Security Systems 12-
3	Seduction 13-
3	Shadowing 12-
3	Stealth 13-
3	Streetwise 13-
10	Survival (Arctic/Subarctic, Temperate/Subtropical, Tropical, Desert, Mountain) 12-
5	Systems Operations (Communications Systems, Radar, FTL Sensors, Sensor Jamming Equipment) 12-
3	Tactics 12-
3	Tracking 12-
4	TF: Grav Vehicles/Hovercraft, Military Spacecraft, Personal Use Spacecraft
8	WF: Common Melee Weapons, Beam Weapons, Energy Weapons, Small Arms
3	Scholar
2	1) KS: Art History 12-
2	2) KS: Ancient Technology 12-
2	3) KS: Galactic History 12-
2	4) KS: The Academic World 12-
3	Traveler
2	1) AK: Drago's Reach 12-
2	2) AK: The Milky Way Galaxy 12-
2	3) AK: The Mondabi Federation 12-
2	4) AK: The Terran Empire 12-
2	5) AK: The Terran/Thorgon Neutral Zone 12-
2	6) AK: The Voršan Expanse 12-

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 219

Total Cost: 343

75+ Disadvantages

20	Hunted: ISP 8-, (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
20	Hunted: TES 8-, (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
15	Psychological Limitation: Greedy (Common, Strong)
15	Psychological Limitation: Vengeful (Common, Strong)
198	Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 343

Background/History: "There are only two kinds of creatures," Vorn Cartagena once told his son. "Hunters and prey. And the last thing you should ever want to be is prey." Grogan took his wise father's words to heart: maybe a little more seriously than the old male intended! A Mondabi from the frontier world of Tor'gesh IV, Grogan grew into adulthood in a rugged, semi-lawless environment. The son of a rancher, he learned to field strip an ion rifle almost before he could walk, skin a tor-buck before he could read, and killed two rustlers before he'd entered puberty.

Typically young males from such worlds enter the military at the age of 16, and Grogan was no exception. The Mondabi *Sheh'kar Vyl'yr* marines, or "Starborn Warriors," were always eager to recruit the sons of frontiersmen, since they tended to be physically sturdier and require less training than their urban cousins. Young Cartagena excelled as a soldier. He distinguished himself in

EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
MI-66 Ion Rifle	+2	+2	3d6/(12d6)	+)/—	11	50	AF5, 2H
MIP-162 Ion Pistol	+1	+1	3d6/(10d6)	0	9	30	AF2
Combat Knife	+0	+0	1d6	1d6-1	—	8	Can Be Thrown
Flash Grenade	+0	RBS	8d6 Flash	5	4	Explosion	

Armor

Tactical Vest (Armor (6 PD/6 ED); Activation Roll 12-)

Gear: Pocket computer

actions against the Ackálíans on a dozen worlds as part of the ongoing “coldish” war between the Mondabi Federation and the Ackálían Empire. By his twenty-fourth birthday he’d reached the equivalent rank of Master Sergeant and was under serious consideration for promotion to officer’s rank.

But, while glamorous and filled with adventure, the military life is a poor way for a young Mondabi to achieve the three goals of every Mondabi male: fertile land, fertile wives, and the ability to defend both. So, having completed his eight-year obligation to the military, Grogan returned to Tor’gesh to homestead/fortify a ranch and marry. To his dismay he arrived to find that the planet was experiencing a severe drought. Crops and livestock were dying in countless numbers, causing settlers to go bankrupt and forcing the government to suspend all new homestead claims until the situation improved. His plans wrecked, Grogan retreated to his father’s ranch, sat on the porch, and moped.

Then a curious thing happened. Grogan’s older cousin Mal’kek came to visit. Mal’kek, a mercenary-adventurer assumed by the Cartagena family to have died years ago, returned from Human space a wealthy man. In fact, he was prosperous enough to buy land on Mon’da itself! Grogan listened with rapt attention as his cousin regaled him with tales of guarding illegal archaeology digs all over Terran space. Renegade archaeology paid, his brother explained. Big corporations, art collectors, foreign governments, unscrupulous museum directors, and other organizations were always willing to shell out for examples of ancient technology... and they weren’t picky about where their acquisitions came from.

When Mal’kek left for Mon’da, Grogan went with him. While his cousin settled down and began attracting wives, Grogan took courses in art history, ancient cultures, and archaeology. He was determined to gain the knowledge necessary to accomplish in a few years what had taken his cousin over a decade. After two years of intense study he felt ready to leave the Federation and travel to the Terran Empire, where he intended to use his mixture of military and academic skills to pursue a career in archaeology.

Well, not exactly *in* archaeology. He was going to rob archaeologists.

Personality/Motivation: Male Mondabi are greedy, aggressive, and territorial by the standards of many other species. This is because it’s their basic instinct to acquire land (the only form of wealth their species respects, and the only way to

attract mates). Typically this instinct drives male Mondabi to work hard, be financially conservative, and take calculated risks in their business dealings. But in some instances it also compels them to commit crimes to acquire the wealth necessary to purchase land. Grogan Cartagena is one of those instances.

Cartagena robs archaeologists and archaeology expeditions because he knows how to turn stolen artifacts into credits. When he has enough credits to return to the Federation and buy a lot of good land, he’ll stop. His criminal motivation is no more complex than that. Grogan has no particular hostility to Humans or archaeologists (though he becomes *extremely* angry when his schemes are thwarted.) He’s also getting close to his goal. One or two more really big heists and he can return permanently to Mondabi space... assuming nothing happens before then to deprive him of some of his ill-gotten gains.

Personable and knowledgeable, Grogan presents himself to the unsuspecting as a legitimate explorer — which, on several occasions, he has been. If the pay is exceptionally good he’ll actually hire on to expeditions as a legitimate guide, consultant, and guard, though he’s always be tempted to betray them if they find something particularly valuable. His combination of work ethic, military training, academic skill, and overall competency make him an asset to any serious archaeology dig. This is perhaps the ultimate tragedy of Grogan Cartagena: were he to set aside his dreams of quick wealth, he actually could become a great explorer and archaeologist.

Quote: ::motioning with his blaster:: “My, that’s quite a find! An entire cave filled with Xenovore fertility statues. They’re worth a thousand credits apiece. You can start crating them up right now; my ship is just over the hill.”

Powers/Tactics: More of a spy and thief than an explorer, Grogan Cartagena — a Mondabi from the aggressive and xenophobic Union of An’barna — hangs around starports and space stations, waiting for well-equipped archaeological expeditions to put in for fuel or supplies. He learns everything he can about the expedition using tactics that range from bribing port officials to getting members drunk, and then follows behind them in his tiny (but ATRI 12-hyperdrive equipped) *Prensaa* patrol fighter (ST 102) using that ship’s excellent long-range sensors. Once his target has made planetfall, he quietly lands and tracks them to their destination, always staying out of sight. Should the expedition uncover anything that looks



WHAT THEY SAY: GROGAN CARTAGENA

Sheh'kar Vylyr, Official File: "Cartagena, Grogan Master Sergeant (ret). An exceptional soldier during his eight years with our service, Sgt. Cartagena's behavior was typically disciplined and brave with tenacious streak that caused him to narrowly focus on an objective until it was accomplished. A natural leader, he saw anti-Ackálian actions on several worlds, including..."

Imperial Security Police, Official File: "Cartagena, Grogan. Mon'dabi. Former military. Cartagena is a bandit and black marketer who specializes in the theft and illegal sale of art objects, archaeological artifacts, and ancient technology. Suspected of crimes on over half a dozen worlds. Officers are warned that Cartagena is armed and extremely dangerous. Nevertheless, ISP Directorate prefers that he be taken alive for interrogation if at all possible."

Terran Exploration Service, Official File: "Cartagena, Grogan/Species: Mon'dabi/ Nationality: Mon'dabi Federation — Union of An'barna/Profession: Thief/ Crimes: theft, armed robbery, piracy, transportation of stolen property, and sale of stolen property/ Description: Cartagena is a skilled criminal and conman with a dual military/archaeology background. He operates using a modified Federation personal spacecraft. He is believed to have extensive knowledge of unexplored or under-explored planets in the Drago's Reach, the Voršan Expanse, and various Neutral Zones. Correspondingly, TES Command desires his apprehension...."

valuable, he either quietly steals it or brazenly robs them, and then heads for the safety of An'barna as quickly as possible.

Cartagena only commits crimes within the Terran Empire and its surrounding territories. He has no warrants within the Mon'dabi Federation, and will not commit a crime there under any circumstances. Grogan's run afoul of the ISP and TES in the past; both organizations want to arrest and interrogate him to find out what he knows about the illegal artifact trade within the Terran Empire.

Campaign Use: Grogan Cartagena can be used in one of two ways in your Star Hero campaign. The first is as a plot device to drive scenarios. The PCs can encounter Cartagena early in an adventure, risk everything in a hair-raising escape, and then get robbed by him at the end so they walk away with nothing for their efforts except a burning

desire for revenge. This should only be done to heroes who have gotten a little cocky, however, as repeated use of Cartagena in this fashion ruins a game's risk-reward mechanic. The second is as a highly knowledgeable but dishonest hiring NPC who's extremely valuable at the beginning of the adventure, but later tries to take advantage of them.

Cartagena has a vengeful streak to his personality, not to mention a lot of pride. If outsmarted or humiliated he'll definitely hunt the cause of his disgrace, possibly to the extent that he could become an archnemesis for an archaeologist PC or group of PCs. To make him more powerful, give him a little Damage Reduction; to weaken him, get rid of some or all of his Luck dice.

Appearance: Grogan Cartagena is a tough-looking 6'4" male Mon'dabi whose bearing and attitude scream "former military." His clothing is designed to be a practical variation on traditional Mon'dabi garb: a durable, multi-pocketed tunic, sturdy tan trousers, and thick leather sandals with enclosed toes. When on a space station or civilized world he travels without arms, but in the wilderness he goes heavily equipped with an ion rifle, two pistols, a knife, grenades, and a tactical vest.

DOUBLE H

Xenovore Smuggler

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
13	STR	3	12-	Lift 150 kg; 2½d6 [1]
21	DEX	36	13-	OCV: 7/DCV: 7
15	CON	10	12-	
15	BODY	10	12-	
18	INT	8	13-	PER Roll 13-
11	EGO	2	11-	ECV: 4
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
8	COM	-1	11-	
8	PD	5		Total: 11 PD (3 rPD)
6	ED	3		Total: 7 ED (1 rED)
5	SPD	29		Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
6	REC	0		
30	END	0		
40	STUN	10		Total Characteristic Cost: 125

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers	END
10	<i>Xenovore Claws:</i> HKA ½d6 (1d6+1 with STR)	1
15	<i>Xenovore Sting:</i> HKA 1d6, Armor Piercing (+½); No STR Bonus (-½)	2
6	<i>Xenovore Skin:</i> Armor (3 PD/1 ED)	0
1	<i>Xenovore Digestion:</i> Life Support (Diminished Eating: can digest any type of protein)	0
20	<i>Smuggler's Luck:</i> Luck 4d6	0
5	<i>Tail:</i> Extra Limbs, Inherent (+¼); Limited Manipulation (-¼)	0

Perks

5	Anonymity
1	<i>Mon'dabi Federation False ID:</i> False Identity
1	<i>Perseid Empire False ID:</i> False Identity
1	<i>Terran Empire False ID One:</i> False Identity
1	<i>Terran Empire False ID Two:</i> False Identity
1	Fringe Benefit: Starship License
10	Money: Wealthy
3	Reputation: extremely reliable smuggler (among parts of the underworld) 14-, +3/+3d6

Talents

24	Hotshot Pilot
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Skills

10	+2 with Ranged Combat
6	+2 Bribery, Combat Piloting, and Concealment
3	Bribery 13-
3	Bureaucratics 13-
3	Combat Piloting 13-
3	Computer Programming (Personal Computers, Infiltration) 13-
3	Concealment 13-
3	Electronics 13-
3	Forgery (Documents, Vehicle IDs) 13-
3	KS: The Corporate World 13-
3	KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 13-
3	KS: Starships Of The Galaxy 13-
3	KS: The Underworld 13-

3	Persuasion 13-
6	PS: Smuggler 16-
3	Security Systems 13-
3	Streetwise 13-
3	Shadowing 13-
3	Stealth 13-
5	Trading 14-
2	TF: Terran Space Vehicles
4	WF: Human Advanced Small Arms, Terran Spaceship Weapons
3	Linguist
2	1) Language: Mon'dabi (completely fluent; Common Xenovore is Native)
2	2) Language: Perseid (completely fluent)
2	3) Language: Terran (completely fluent)
3	Traveler
2	1) AK: Mon'dabi Federation 13-
2	2) AK: Perseid Empire 13-
2	3) AK: The Milky Way Galaxy 13-
2	4) AK: The Terran Empire 13-

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 205

Total Cost: 330

75+ Disadvantages

20	Hunted: Federated Command 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
20	Hunted: Imperial Navy 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
20	Hunted: Perseid Space Navy 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
15	Psychological Limitation: Anarchist (Common, Strong)
15	Psychological Limitation: Dislikes Humans (Very Common, Moderate)
20	Social Limitation: Harmful Secret (Frequently, Severe)
15	Social Limitation: Xenovore (Frequently, Major)
130	Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 330

Background/History: The needle-shaped ship came out of hyperspace at the edge of the planet's atmosphere. It was a reckless maneuver: dangerous for the ship, dangerous for the planet, highly illegal, and generally a bad idea. The resulting shockwave created by normal space "rubber-banding" back into shape destroyed several communications satellites, taking down much of the planetary datanet. It also radically altered the weather patterns above one of the world's shallow oceans, creating a hurricane that would kill thousands by the end of the week and destroy millions of hectares of crops. The resulting starvation would kill a hundred thousand more by the end of the year. But none of this mattered to the pilot in the slightest.

The ship fired its chemical rockets at full power, dumping acceleration even as it slammed into the outer atmosphere. Its hull glowed white hot, then began to ignite the oxygen, nitrogen, and hydrogen in the air itself until the vessel resembled nothing so much as a flaming spear in the sky. Seconds later, it began to create the first in a series of enormous sonic booms. This was as subtle as smashing watermelons with a sledgehammer, but that didn't matter to the pilot, either. He wasn't a subtle person.

DOUBLE H PLOT SEEDS

The PCs are employed by an alien/robot underground plotting to overthrow the oppressive human overlords of Europa Nova. To do this they need guns: a lot of guns. Carlita Drega has all the guns they can use, but no way to transport them from Tetsuo to their world. She recommends the services of an expensive and difficult but highly skilled smuggler....

The PCs must track down and capture Double H (perhaps because they're law enforcement personnel, bounty hunters, or simply the hirelings of someone who wants him). All they have is a *Peregrine*-class frigate. His last reported position is somewhere in the Thorgon Neutral Zone. Their efforts are further complicated by the fact that the Mon'dabi and Perseids have sent their own task forces to capture him as well. To make matters worse, the Thorgons are *very* touchy about anyone doing anything in "their" neutral zone.

In a desperate attempt to get out of Ackálian space after a botched adventure, the PCs have spent every last credit hiring Double H to retrieve them on Lothan (TE 77). After shooting their way out of custody, fighting their way across a swamp, and barely evading capture by rafting down a dangerous river, they rendezvous with him and get off planet with the *Ackorsha* hot on their tails. Then the real adventure starts.

EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
MI-31 Ion Rifle	+1	+1	3d6/10d6 N	+0/—	13	36	AF5
MIP-140 Ion Pistol	+0	+0	2½d6/(9d6)	0	9	20	

Armor

Armored Clothing (Armor (3 PD/3 ED), Activation Roll 14-)

Gear: Pocket computer

The ship plunged straight downward at ten times the speed of sound until it burst through the clouds at just under 20,000 meters. Breaking rockets fired all around the vessel, leveling it off and transforming vertical inertia into horizontal velocity. It then dumped additional acceleration, slowing down to Mach Two. It was an audacious maneuver that few pilots can pull off. This pilot was one of them.

The pilot swooped above the broken floor of a vast desert, below the planetary radar net. It was one of the most isolated and desolate locations on the planet — precisely the qualities that had caused his employer to select it as a meeting place. He brought his still glowing ship below the speed of sound and tilted its razor-shaped nose downward, taking it into one of the countless canyons below.

A surprisingly large river ran along the bottom of the canyon. The ship dropped even lower, coming so close to the surface of the water that the water began to vaporize, leaving an impressive trail of steam in the vessel's wake. Finally, a small island appeared in the middle of the river. The ship rotated upward at a seventy-degree angle, using the air friction under its stubby wings to dump the last remaining bits of velocity as its landing gear deployed. With barely a sound it gently touched down on the sand. It had been less than three minutes since the starship had emerged from hyperspace.

Two shadowy figures stood next to a hovercraft on the beach nearby. Their features obscured by personal holographic projectors, it was impossible to guess their gender or even species other than that they were humanoid. One of them held a small suitcase in its right hand/claw/tentacle/paw/whatever. A cargo door opened on the bottom of the newly-arrived spacecraft, automatically deploying a ramp to the ground below. The pilot emerged seconds later, his barbed tail moving back and forth as he strode down the gangway. He too held a suitcase in one of his clawed hands. He also wore a blaster at his side and had an ion rifle slung over one of his sloped shoulders.

The pilot walked over to the shadowy figures and set his case on the ground before them. He tapped a button on its handle using one of his sharp claws. With a rush of frozen air the top of the satchel opened, revealing a dozen rows of neatly stacked spheres each about the size of a human eyeball. An instant later he tapped the button again, resealing the case.

"The organics are intact, as you can see," the pilot said. He tapped another button that activated an electronic display on the top of the case. It glowed green, then displayed a series of numbers in standard Terran. "They've never been below the cryogenic freeze point."

Wordlessly one of the shadowy figures set its suitcase on the ground, likewise opening it with the press of a button. It contained dozens of Mon'dabi coruscating sapphires that reflected rainbow patterns in every direction as the sunlight struck them. The pilot's mandibles clicked together excitedly several times. Without comment he picked up the satchel containing the exotic gems and returned to his ship. One of the shadowy figures picked up the cryogenic suitcase, then both climbed into their hovercraft.

Less than ten minutes later planetary defense force ground-to-air fightercraft arrived in the area. It was an excellent response time. Unfortunately, it wasn't excellent enough. Nothing was left of the pilot or his mysterious compatriots but footprints in the sand.

Personality/Motivation: One of the sad remnants of a once mighty species, Xi! Hal'Hal — better known as Double H — is an expert smuggler who makes his living transporting illicit cargo around the Terran Empire, Mon'dabi Federation, and Perseid Empire. He works alone in a modified military-class *Hermes* courier ship (ST 81), ferrying illegal goods between planets. These can include anything, but are most often slaves, controlled substances, military weaponry, fugitives from justice, mind-control implants, luxury items, and the like. All three governments offer a large bounty for his capture (preferably alive, as they would very much like to learn everything he knows about smuggling inside and outside of their territory).

Peculiarly for the pack-oriented Xenovores, Double H is a loner who shuns the company of others, even for the purpose of competition or procreation. He exhibits antipathy toward the Terran Empire, non-Xenovores, and the concept of government in general, but he's more than willing to set his antisocial feelings aside for enough credits — though this doesn't make him any more charming to deal with. What he intends to do with his ill-gotten loot is something of a mystery, as Double H doesn't appear to be particularly greedy and doesn't seem to spend his money on anything besides maintaining and upgrading his ship.

Double H has a well-deserved reputation for delivering on his promises and is nothing short of fanatical about keeping up his reputation as a master smuggler. He's flashy, direct, and indifferent to how his activities affect the welfare of others. He only cares about making his drops as efficiently as possible. Spacers who cheat Double H or try to prevent him from successfully completing a job are likely to earn another Hunted on their character sheets.



Quote: “You have your goods. Now pay me!”

Powers/Tactics: Like all Xenovores Double H is stronger, faster, and tougher than most Humans, with extensive natural weaponry and a nasty disposition. Though he goes everywhere heavily armed, like most smugglers he prefers stealth and escape to combat — he only fights if cornered, and then viciously. A master of the “stealth insertion” (*i.e.*, landing in remote areas to offload contraband before the authorities can arrive to stop the transaction), he avoids Terran starports and space stations. His services are expensive, but he’s never failed a customer.

Double H long ago paid expert hackers to erase all useful information about his identity from the databases of the Terran, Mon’dabi, and Perseid governments. None of these governments have genetic, pictorial, familial, or historical information on him. All they know is that there’s a smuggler named Double H, he operates in their territory, and he’s very, very good. To continue covering his tracks he’s an established one false identity in the Mon’dabi Federation, one in the Perseid Empire, and two separate ones in the Terran Empire that he uses to conduct business.

Campaign Use: Double H isn’t intended a combat antagonist for a group of PC heroes. In fact, there are only two reasons for PCs to come into contact with him at all: either they’re trying to smuggle something somewhere; or they’re trying to prevent something from being smuggled somewhere. In the latter case, the PCs are in for a difficult time, as Double H has forgotten more about avoiding pursuers than any of them will ever likely learn. He’s not going to come along quietly, either, even if he does have to get into a mismatched firefight with them. If necessary you should arrange the situation to show off his skills; in a starship chase scene he should easily be the equal of the PC team. In the former case, the PCs need either appropriate underworld Contacts, Favors, or must succeed with a Streetwise roll by at least 6 to contact him.

Furthermore, his services do not come cheaply. The heroes had better be prepared to pay dearly if they wish to employ one of the Galaxy’s greatest smugglers.

It’s left up to you to decide what (if any) sinister plans Double H has for his earnings. He might be saving up for a better ship, planning to finance some sort of revolution somewhere, trying to buy his way into a major organized crime group, or just preparing for an ultra-luxurious retirement.

To make Double H into a more formidable adversary (or ally), increase his Luck to 6d6. If he’s too tough already, remove his Luck entirely, and possibly a point of SPD as well.

Appearance: Double H is a pretty typical looking common Xenovore. He’s a spiny, hunched humanoid with a vertical mouth framed by vicious mandibles and a tail capable of delivering a deadly sting. He wears a fairly typical spacer jumpsuit made of armored cloth and carries a blaster rifle and ion pistol wherever he goes. He also characteristically carries a pocket computer; he’s finicky about his contracts and likes to have an electronic copy of them on his person at all times.

DR. MAXIMILIAN LANDAU

Mad Black Hole Scientist

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
15	STR	5	12-	Lift 200 kg; 3d6 [3]
14	DEX	12	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
15	CON	10	12-	
15	BODY	10	12-	
23	INT	16	14-	PER Roll 14-
14	EGO	8	12-	ECV: 5
20	PRE	10	13-	PRE Attack: 4d6
12	COM	1	11-	
10	PD	9		Total: 10 PD (0 rPD)
10	ED	9		Total: 10 ED (0 rED)
4	SPD	16		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
8	REC	4		
30	END	0		
40	STUN	9		Total Characteristic Cost: 119

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost Powers **END**
 10 *Mad, But Still A Genius!* +20 PRE;
 Only Works On Scientists (-1) 0

Talents

4 Environmental Movement: Zero-G Training (no penalties in zero gravity)

Skills

- 3 Analyze: Science Skills 14-
- 3 Combat Piloting 12-
- 12 Computer Programming (Computer Networks, Hacking and Computer Security, Personal Computers, Artificial Intelligence, Mainframes and Supercomputers, Military Computers) 14-
- 5 Cramming
- 3 Deduction 14-
- 3 Electronics 14-
- 3 High Society 13-
- 3 Interrogation 13-
- 3 Inventor 14-
- 3 Mechanics 14-
- 5 Navigation (Dimensional, Hyperspace, Displacement, Space) 14-
- 3 PS: Scientist 14-
- 3 Persuasion 13-
- 8 Systems Operation (Communications Systems, Environmental Systems, Medical Systems, Mark VII Starship Laser, Sensor Jamming Equipment) 14-
- 1 TF: Mobile Space Stations, Personal Use Spacecraft
- 2 WF: Terran Advanced Small Arms
- 3 Weaponsmith (Energy Weapons, Muscle-Powered HTH) 14-
- 3 Scientist
- 4 1) SS: Dimensional Engineering 16-
- 4 2) SS: Hyperspace Physics 16-
- 4 3) SS: Mad Black Hole Science 16-
- 2 4) SS: Physics 14-
- 2 5) SS: Robotics 14-
- 3 Scholar
- 2 1) KS: Ancient Literature 14-
- 2 2) KS: Black Holes 14-

- 2 3) KS: The TES 14-
- 3 Traveler
- 2 1) AK: Black Hole GRS 1915+105 14-
- 2 2) AK: The Milky Way Galaxy 14-
- 2 3) AK: The Outer Reaches of the Galaxy! 14-

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 117

Total Cost: 236

75+ Disadvantages

- 20 Enraged: when anyone questions his sanity (Common), go 11-, recover 11-
- 20 Hunted: TES 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
- 25 Psychological Limitation: Megalomaniac (Very Common, Total)
- 10 Reputation: brilliant but difficult scientist, 11-
- 5 Rivalry: Professional, with all other physicists everywhere
- 81 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 236

Background/History: The *Leviathan*: the largest and most advanced ship the Terran Exploration Service ever constructed. Doctor Maximilian Landau: the most brilliant polymath genius ever to don the TES's brown-and-white uniform. Together they should have embarked on a voyage of discovery rivaling that of Columbus's *Santa Maria*, Darwin's *Beagle*, or Armstrong's Apollo 11 mission. Instead, the great man and the enormous ship simply vanished, leaving a bewildered public to ponder its fate, an angry Regent to shoulder its cost, and a disgraced Commodore to face a firing squad. The *Leviathan* became the "Flying Dutchman" of space, a specter sighted by normally reliable spacers in every remote corner of the Galaxy, but never actually found... until now.

Rewind twenty years. The Imperial Civil War had just wound down, leaving a child on the Terran Empire's throne and the infamous General Feng as regent. Traumatized by a complex war between half a dozen would-be Emperors and Empresses that left the House of DeValiere in bloody tatters, the Empire's people looked desperately for someone to renew confidence in their civilization. Enter Dr. Maximilian Landau: celebrity scientist, famed explorer, and (perhaps more to the point) a man smart enough to have not taken sides in the recent unpleasantness. Using the power of the media he rallied the public behind his quest to explore the outermost reaches of the Galaxy in search of pure scientific data. With information gleaned from astronomical phenomena such as pulsars, supernova remnants, neutron stars, and black holes, he promised to end humanity's energy problems, develop new types of space travel, and bring new prosperity to the Empire.

It was an attractive and — perhaps most importantly — completely apolitical vision, one that harkened back to an earlier view of Humans as a species of scientists and explorers, rather than bloodthirsty, bickering murderers. General Feng also saw it as a politically useful way to reunite an Empire divided by strife. TES Commodore Alice Tawanga considered it an excellent means for funneling massive amounts of credits into her often-neglected branch of the mili-

tary. And what Dr. Landau saw... well, at this point in history it's hard to say. Possibly he believed everything he said on the holos.

After six years of construction at a cost of a billion credits the *Leviathan* launched. Built by Red Star Industries, it was the largest interstellar explorer the TES had ever commissioned up to that time. With a crew of over 600 it was the size of an Imperial battleship. With great fanfare the *Leviathan*, its crew, and Dr. Landau set sail for the vast unexplored area between 135-degrees and 165-degrees antispinward. At first reports came back to the Empire daily via the Hyperspace Relay Network; they told of all sorts of new and exciting discoveries. As planned, the scientists and vast laboratories aboard the ship allowed her to not only record data, but carry out actual experiments on board with an eye to creating useful and practical technologies. Very promising work in the areas of hyperspace physics, dimensional engineering, displacement theory, hydroponics, and terraforming began to emerge from the crew's work, promising a scientific revolution and exciting academics everywhere. Reports of strange, new worlds and bizarre life forms delighted children and adults across the Empire. The *Leviathan* was on her way to becoming a legend, her crew heroes, and the expedition's leader nothing short of a scientific demigod.

DR. MAXIMILIAN LANDAU PLOT SEEDS

Generally speaking, the finding of the *Leviathan* and Dr. Landau are one massive plot seed, described in the main text. Here are a few other ideas for you to consider:

The salvage value of the long-lost *Leviathan* is enormous: as much as 400 million credits on the open market, and at least 10 million in reward money if the Imperials simply decide to seize it a gunpoint. Well worth the risk! And, after a long, dangerous search, the PCs have found the great ship drifting derelict around a black hole. After some truly impressive piloting, they come alongside the massive craft... only to have its lights come on.

The PCs are aboard the TES exploration ship *Cabeza de Vaca*. Commanded by the infamous and swash-buckling Captain Tiberius, they're on six-year mission to explore the outer edges of the Milky Way Galaxy. They've had many incredible adventures aboard her, including narrowly escaping destruction at the hands of the Varanyi, but surely none compares to finding the legendary *Leviathan* orbiting dead around a black hole! Then the lights come on and she opens fire on them!

Unlike other branches of the Imperial military the TES is a beloved institution. There are families who've served in it for a dozen generations, including one of the PCs. So imagine a PC's surprise when, while exploring an uncharted portion of the Galaxy, he and his companions find the legendary *Leviathan* drifting around the gravity well of a massive black hole. Could his long-lost mother still be on board?

Then the transmissions stopped.

The TES dispatched dozens of exploration vessels to search for the *Leviathan*, but all returned emptyhanded. No one had seen the vessel, and the Ackálans rather convincingly argued that they had nothing to do with its disappearance (though doubts lingered). She never reappeared and, as the years went by and the Empire stabilized again, she was forgotten. Her fate became fodder for conspiracy theorists, treasure hunters, and late night holos. Like the ancient deity Elvis Presley she was spotted everywhere from the Thorgon Hegemony to the Rimward Marches of the Varanyi Empire, but the *Leviathan* never actually materialized... until now. Your PCs just found him.

Personality/Motivation: Having deliberately murdered everyone onboard the *Leviathan* in a fit of rage twenty years ago, Dr. Maximilian Landau is now the sole biological inhabitant of the great vessel. That leaves just enough room for himself, his robot servants, and his enormous ego. Never the most modest of men, Landau's megalomania has grown to such epic proportions over the last several decades that he's more like a mad god than a mad scientist. The fact that his delusions of grandeur are justified doesn't help matters.

Twenty years ago the *Leviathan's* mission was going along splendidly. The ship was heading for the galactic rim, stopping along the way to chart new systems, investigate stellar anomalies, and survey inhabitable worlds. Everyone was doing important work, including Dr. Landau, who'd recently formulated several new theories about black holes. According to his calculations, black holes could potentially supply vast amounts of energy — far more in fact than fission, fusion, or matter/antimatter reactors. By building specialized stations along even a single black hole's gravitational horizon it should be possible to obtain as much power as was generated in the entire Empire at the time. Furthermore, Landau believed black holes could function as gateways through which specially-designed ships could not only travel instantly from one Galaxy to the next, but possible to alternate dimensions and even through time.

Needless to say these theories were controversial. In fact, the other physicists on the *Leviathan* totally disagreed with them, infuriating Landau. To make matters worse, even on a vessel as large as the *Leviathan* there was only such much laboratory space, so much processing power, and so many robotic lab assistants available. The scientist-explorer found himself competing with other researchers for resources and his command of the mission questioned by rival scientists interested in pursuing their own theories and fields of study.

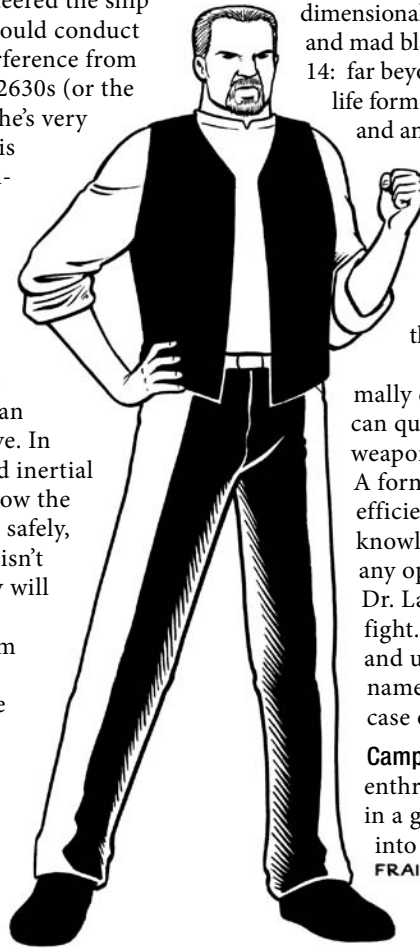
Things came to a head during a meeting one year out when Landau proposed altering the ship's route to investigate GRS 1915+105 — one of the heaviest stellar black holes in the Galaxy and an ideal place for him to conduct his research. The other scientists voted down the idea in favor of continuing spinward with the eventual goal of re-entering known space at the far edge of the

distant Velarian Confederation. Furious, Landau walked out of the meeting, donned his spacesuit, and — using override codes he'd secretly built into the ship — blew open all of the airlocks, flushing every other person on the *Leviathan* out into space with the push of a button.

In the following years Landau replaced the displeasing old Human crew with a new one comprised of obedient robots. Severing communications with Earth, he steered the ship to GRS 1915+105, where he could conduct his experiments without interference from “lesser minds.” As of the late 2630s (or the time your campaign begins), he's very close to succeeding. His ship is entirely powered by an experimental Gravitational Black Hole Power Plant (though he still has an antimatter power plant online as a backup). After years of firing probes into the black hole and analyzing the data they transmitted back, he's nearly finished an experimental Black Hole Drive. In conjunction with an improved inertial dampening field, it should allow the *Leviathan* to travel through it safely, emerging.... well, Dr. Landau isn't certain where. But it certainly will be interesting to find out!

Interestingly, the phantom sightings of the *Leviathan* are a byproduct of his work at the edge of the black hole. But how or why such things have occurred will be as much a mystery to Landau as anyone else. Should the PCs mention it to him he'll find it fascinating and may even postpone his planned trip into GRS 1915+105 to investigate the phenomenon.

In person Dr. Maximilian Landau is almost insufferably arrogant. Only interested in discussing his own work and achievements, he'll constantly belittle the achievements of others, including those to whom he's speaking! However, his *is* quite brilliant, so much so that characters of a scientific bent may find themselves irresistibly drawn to his dream of harnessing the most destructive power in the Universe. Landau will attempt to talk such characters into journeying into the black hole with him. For some characters, especially ones with a curious streak, it will be a hard offer to resist.



Quote: “It’s a humiliating thing to be forced to sit on ones hands while others write history. Better to ball them into fists and strike out at the mediocre, the complacent, and the cowardly! To make mankind great it’s sometimes necessary to beat him forward by force. That’s what I have done, that’s what I shall do!

Powers/Tactics: Doctor Maximilian Landau is a brilliant scientist and inventor. His theories on dimensional engineering, hyperspace physics, and mad black hole science approach ATRI 14: far beyond any other known intelligent life form (besides the Malvans). A talented and ambitious roboticist, he currently has almost a thousand drones working on his vessel. These range from tiny maintenance drones to deadly guard robots and everything in between. All of them are completely loyal to their programmer.

Doctor Landau doesn't normally carry a weapon, although he can quickly obtain one from various weapons lockers throughout the ship. A former TES officer, he's a tough and efficient combatant who will use his knowledge of the *Leviathan* to outwit any opponent in a fight. However, Dr. Landau probably doesn't need to fight. He's constructed an enormous and utterly loyal robot bodyguard named Ishmael to protect him in case of an attack (see text box).

Campaign Use: Doctor Landau is an enthralling madman whose purpose in a game is to either entice the PCs into doing something foolish (his **FRAM** Experimental Black Hole Drive only works on a roll of 8-), or have his robots kill them for interfering with his

work. Since Black Hole GRS 1915+105 exists at the very edge of the Galaxy, the PCs are going to be faaaaaa away from home when they encounter him. They can't call for help if their encounter with the homicidal genius goes terribly wrong.

When Landau realizes someone's discovered him, his first instinct will be to turn the *Leviathan's* lights and power off and play dead in the hope the intruding ship's captain won't risk coming close to the black hole (approaching the *Leviathan* will be both tricky and dangerous). If they persist and dock with the ship, he'll do his best to be a good host, feeding them fresh food from his greenhouses, serving them

WHAT THEY SAY: DOCTOR MAXIMILIAN LANDAU

TES Handbook, Official Entry: “The *Leviathan*. Commanded by Dr. Maximilian Landau, it was the largest and most expensive exploration vessel ever created by the Service. Vanished in 2713 under mysterious circumstances antispinward of the Ackálian Empire. Ackálian involvement in her disappearance was suspected but never definitively proven. All TES personnel should consider uncovering information about the fate of the *Leviathan*, its crew, and Dr. Landau a priority.”

Garth Raaoarx, Renowned Fex Professor of History and Author of *Mysteries Of The Early 27th Century*: “Doctor Landau: bold to the point of foolhardiness, self-assured to the level of madness, arrogant like an emperor, and as brilliant as any sentient of his time. Can there really be any doubt that such a personality had something to do with the *Leviathan*’s disappearance?”

Steven “Spacey” Blathmark, Experienced Space Merchant: “while drunk: “Nobody believes me to this day, but I’ll tell you. It came out of nowhere. Huge, like a freaking battleship, and passed right over my vessel like a whale going over a minnow. The *Leviathan*. Didn’t turn up on the sensors, and a moment later it was just gone. Like that! Gone.”

ISHMAEL

Ishmael is the huge and terrifying robotic servant of Dr. Maximilian Landau. Two and a half meters of black alloy, chrome, and glowing red eyes, it serves as Landau’s bodyguard as well as second-in-command of all the *Leviathan*’s robots. Designed to float rather than walk, Ishmael has a single large antigravity pod located at the bottom of its body in place of legs. It’s sentient (and highly intelligent), very strong, and possesses a wide range of mechanical senses. (For Ishmael, use the Hunter-Seeker Drone on page 209 of *The HERO System Bestiary*, but expand its Onboard Weaponry into a Multipower that also includes slots with an Energy Blast 6d6 (same Advantages as RKA slot), a Sight Group Flash 10d6, and an Entangle 6d6, 6 DEF. Its drill extenders are two separate HKAs 1d6, Armor Piercing. It also has an antigrav movement system (Flight 6”), STR 30, and Two-Weapon Fighting (HTH) for use with its drill extenders.)

Ishmael began its existence as a mining drone designed to explore asteroid caverns. However, worried about his own safety during a potential boarding attack of the *Leviathan*, Landau modified Ishmael’s mining tools into an impressive weapons suite that includes a powerful blinding attack, a deadly laser, and two different sorts of spinning drills that extend from the robot’s long arms. It’s capable of maiming or killing an entire group of PCs on its own without even calling for the assistance of the hundred or so guard drones onboard the *Leviathan*.

Originally Ishmael possessed the power of speech, but Dr. Landau found his servant’s personality to be belligerent and insufferable, so he removed its voice synthesizer. Ishmael still understands standard Terran quite well, however, and can communicate in it via High Range Radio Perception. Though programmed to serve his master without question, Ishmael hates Dr. Landau for what he did to the crew of the *Leviathan*, almost all of whom were nicer to it than he. It has no desire to travel through the black hole, either. If the PCs can find some way to disable its programming (Psychological Limitation: Must Obey Dr. Landau’s Commands), Ishmael will cheerfully turn on its creator.

vintage wine, and of course bragging wildly about his plans to journey into the black hole. When he’s inevitably pressed for information about the *Leviathan*’s missing crew, Landau will plausibly claim that Ackálians attacked the *Leviathan*. Although the vessel fought them off, it was so damaged that all of his fellow explorers decided to eject in escape pods while he heroically “went down” with his ship. Only the ship didn’t explode. In fact, it turned out to be repairable! Being a genius at robotics (and everything else), Landau built a crew of robots and continue his research, but the antimatter drive was too badly damaged for him to return to the Empire. So why not continue to explore at a slower rate? Although his communications equipment was destroyed, the TES would find him one day, after all.

Landau will feign sadness when he learns that the crew of the *Leviathan* never reached the Terran Empire. He’ll even go so far as to suggest that the Ackálians may still be holding them to this day as a source of scientific “slave labor.” But if the PCs get the chance to investigate the ship, they’ll find that none of his claims stand up to scrutiny. The escape pods are still attached to the ship. The crew’s quarters still hold their most precious personal effects. The antimatter drive is completely intact. The communications equipment isn’t destroyed. They’ll quickly come to realize that something very sinister happened to the crew of the *Leviathan*.

The question is: what will they do about it?

Appearance: Doctor Maximilian Landau is an extremely well-preserved man in his late fifties whose neat black hair and goatee are streaked with silver. He’s of North African decent, with a proud nose and piercing brown eyes. He still wears his practical TES officer’s uniform consisting of brown pants, a white shirt, and a vest.

THE LEVIATHAN

The Flying Dutchman Of Space

Val Char Cost Notes

24	Sized	120	250" x 125", -24 KB, -16 DCV
130	STR	0	Lift 1.6 mtons; 26d6 [0]
18	DEX	24	OCV: 6/DCV: 6
200	BODY	166	
20	DEF	54	
3	SPD	2	Phases: 4, 8, 12

Total Characteristic Cost: 366

Movement: Flight: 35"/140"
Teleportation: 13"/26"

Cost Powers**Power Systems**

- 81 *Gravitational Black Hole Power Plant:* Endurance Reserve (350 END, 350 REC); OIF Immobile (-1½), Only Powers Electrical Devices (-¼), Only Works Near Black Holes (-2)
- 40 *Auxiliary Antimatter Power Plant:* Endurance Reserve (100 END, 100 REC); OIF Immobile (-1½), Only Powers Electrical Devices (-¼)

Propulsion Systems

- 19 *Class Lambda Hyperdrive:* Teleportation 13", Megascale (1" = 100 lightyears; +4), Can Be Scaled Down 1" = 1km (+¼); Extra Time (1 Week, -4½), Increased Endurance Cost (x3 END; -1), Costs Endurance (-½), Requires Gravitational Distortion-Free Field (-¼) 42
- 50 *Type I-Q Reactionless Drive:* Flight 35", x4 Noncombat; Costs Endurance (-½) 7
- 4 *Experimental Black Hole Drive :* Extra-Dimensional Movement (Into The Hole!); Activation Roll 8- (-2), Increased Endurance Cost (x3 END; -1), Costs Endurance (-½) 6
- 7 *Inertial Compensation Field:* Force Field (22 PD); OIF Bulky (-1), Only To Protect Occupants From G-Force Damage (-1) 2

Tactical Systems

- 147 *Mark XII Starship Lasers:* Multipower, 330-point reserve; all slots OIF Bulky (-1), Real Weapon (-¼)
- 8u 1) *Near-Target Beam Mode:* RKA 8d6, Armor Piercing x1 (+½) (180 Active Points); OIF Bulky (-1), Real Weapon (-¼) 18
- 15u 2) *Far-Target Beam Mode:* RKA 8d6, Armor Piercing x1 (+½), Megascale (1" = 1,000 km; +1), Can Be Scaled Down 1" = 1km (+¼) (330 Active Points); OIF Bulky (-1), Real Weapon (-¼) 33
- 8u 3) *Near-Target Pulse Mode:* RKA 6d6, Armor Piercing x1 (+½), Autofire (5 shots; +½); OIF Bulky (-1), Real Weapon (-¼) 18
- 13u 4) *Far-Target Pulse Mode:* RKA 6d6, Armor Piercing x1 (+½), Autofire (5 shots; +½), Megascale (1" = 1,000 km; +1), Can Be Scaled Down 1" = 1km (+¼); OIF Bulky (-1), Real Weapon (-¼) 29

- 7u 5) *Sustained Beam Mode:* RKA 5d6, Increased Maximum Range (3,750"; +¼), Continuous (+1); OIF Bulky (-1), Real Weapon (-¼) 17
- 10 *Mark XII Starship Lasers:* 3 more Lasers (total of 4)
- 44 *Type E Tractor Beam:* Telekinesis (80 STR); OIF Bulky (-1), Affects Whole Object (-¼), Real Weapon (-¼), Limited Arc of Fire (180 Degrees; -¼) 12
- 5 *Outer Force Field:* Force Field (16 PD/16 ED); Increased Endurance Cost (10x END; -4), OIF Bulky (-1), Ablative BODY Only (-½)30
- 4 *Hull Force Field:* Force Field (11 PD/11 ED); Increased Endurance Cost (10x END; -4), OIF Bulky (-1) 20
- 58 *Ablative Armor Plating:* +34 DEF; Ablative BODY Only (-½), Limited Coverage (hull only) (-¼)
- 51 *Hull Armor:* +17 DEF, Hardened (+¼); Limited Coverage (hull only) (-¼)
- 485 *Self-Destruct System:* RKA 134d6, Trigger (Activating the Trigger requires a Zero Phase Action, Trigger requires a Turn or more to reset; +¼), Explosion (+½); Extra Time (1 Minute, -1½), No Range (-½), Real Weapon (-¼), 1 Charge which Never Recovers (-4) [1 nr]

Operations Systems

- 114 *Sensor Package:* Variable Power Pool, 100 base + 14 control cost; all slots OIF Bulky (-1), Only For Sensors And Communications (-1), Costs Endurance (-½)
- 81 *Long-Range Sensors:* Megascale (1" = 100 billion km; +3) for VPP, Can Be Scaled Down 1" = 1km (+¼); OIF Bulky (-1) for up to 50 Active Points 16
- 15 *Long-Range Sensors:* +20 versus Range Modifier for Radio Group; OIF Bulky (-1)
- 117 *Electronic Warfare:* Variable Power Pool, 100 base + 17 control cost; all slots Only For Electronic Warfare (-1), OIF Bulky (-1) var
- 20 *Electronic Warfare Defense:* Radio Group Flash Defense (20 points) 0
- 6 *Sensor Enhancement:* +6 to Systems Operations Rolls; OIF Bulky (-1) 0
- 23 *Internal Monitors:* Clairsentience (Sight And Hearing Groups), x4 Range (1,200"), Multiple Perception Points (x8), Mobile Perception Point (24"), Perception Point Cannot Move Through Solid Objects (+0); OAF Immobile (-2) 7
- 8 *Navigation Computer:* +8 to Navigation Roll; OIF Bulky (-1) 0

Personnel Systems

- 12 *Life Support:* Life Support (Safe in High Radiation; Safe in Intense Cold; Safe in Intense Heat; Safe in Low Pressure/Vacuum; Self-Contained Breathing); Costs Endurance (-½) 2
- 6 *Backup Life Support:* Life Support (Safe in High Radiation; Safe in Intense

	Cold; Safe in Intense Heat; Safe in Low Pressure/Vacuum; Self-Contained Breathing); Only Within Affected Area (2.5" x 1.25"; -2)	0
40	<i>Backup Life Support</i> : 250 Additional Backup Life Support Chambers	0
8	<i>Sickbay</i> : SS: Medicine 14-	
3	<i>Sickbay</i> : Paramedics 9-	
3	<i>Greenhouse</i> : Life Support (Diminished Eating: character need not eat)	0
22	<i>Thibault Gravity Plating</i> : Telekinesis (20 STR), Selective (+½); OIF Bulky (-1)	4

Skills

13	Electronics 14-	
13	Demolitions 14-	
13	Cryptography 14-	
13	Computer Programming 14-	
13	Mechanics 14-	
8	SS: Robotics 14-	
15	Weaponsmith (Energy Weapons, Firearms, Incendiary Weapons, Missiles & Rockets) 14-	
8	SS: Physics 14-	
8	SS: Dimensional Engineering 14-	
8	SS: Mad Black Hole Science 14-	
8	SS: Hyperspace Physics 14-	

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 1,654**Total Cost: 2,020****0+ Disadvantages**

10	Physical Limitation: Cannot Enter Atmosphere (Infrequently, Greatly Impairing)	
10	Reputation: the Flying Dutchman of space, 11-	
	2,000 Experience Points	

Total Disadvantage Points: 2,020

Description: The largest exploration vessel ever created by the Terran Empire of its day, the *Leviathan* is a battleship-sized ATRI 10 research vessel that originally possessed vast laboratories, workshops, and living space for over 600 scientists, crew, and assistants. Since taking command of the vessel, however, Dr. Landau has made extensive modifications. He's eliminated all of the facilities dedicated to sciences he isn't interested in, replacing them with expanded workshops and laboratories better suited to his interests. He's also replaced some of the crew quarters with a massive factory dedicated to robot production (though many of the quarters still remain). Additionally, Landau has removed the original ATRI 10 antimatter power plant, replaced it with an experimental ATRI 13+ gravitational black hole power plant, and added an experimental (and unreliable) black hole drive designed to take the entire ship through GRS 1915+105. The *Leviathan* also possesses considerable offensive weaponry and powerful shields, though none of its armaments are as potent as those of an actual battleship.

DOCTOR EMILIO MOREAU**Mad Scientist**

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
6	STR	-4	10-	Lift 58 kg; 1d6 [1]
13	DEX	9	12-	OCV: 4/DCV: 4
6	CON	-8	10-	
4	BODY	-12	10-	
28	INT	26	15-	PER Roll 15-
17	EGO	14	12-	ECV: 6
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
4	COM	-3	10-	
1	PD	0		Total: 21 PD (20 rPD)
1	ED	0		Total: 21 ED (20 rED)
3	SPD	7		Phases: 4, 8, 12
2	REC	0		
12	END	0		
10	STUN	0		
Total Characteristic Cost: 34				

Movement: Running: 6"/12"**Cost Powers**

30	<i>Floating Hands</i> : Multipower, 60-point reserve; all slots OAF (-1)	END
2u	1) <i>Blaster</i> : Energy Blast 12d6, STUN Only (+0); OAF (-1), No Range (-½), 6 Charges (-¾)	[6]
3u	2) <i>Mini-Tractor Beam</i> : Telekinesis (20 STR), Fine Manipulation, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); OAF (-1)	0
22	<i>Cold Chamber</i> : Armor (20 PD/20 ED); OAF Bulky (-1½), Real Armor (-¼)	0
9	<i>Cold Chamber</i> : Life Support (Longevity: 400 year lifespan; all Safe Environments; Self-Contained Breathing); OAF Bulky (-1½)	0
10	<i>Communication Implant</i> : Radio Perception/Transmission (Radio Group)	0
34	<i>Floating Eyes And Ears</i> : Clairsentience (Sight and Hearing Groups), Mobile Perception Point (can move up to 12" per Phase), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); OAF (-1) plus Infrared Perception (Sight Group); OAF (-1) plus Microscopic for Sight Group (x10); OAF (-1)	0
5	<i>Floating Mouth</i> : Hearing Group Images 1" radius, Mobile (up to 12" per Phase; +1½); OAF (-1); Set Effect (only to reproduce Moreau's speech at range; -½)	1

Perks

11	Money: Filthy Rich	
38	Followers: a dozen Trovatore beast-men built on up to 90 Base Points + Experience Points each	
3	Reputation: Mad DNA Scientist (among scientists) 14-, +3/+3d6	

Talents

5	Eidetic Memory	
3	Lightning Calculator	
15	Skill Master (+3 with all Skills based on INT)	

DR. EMILIO MOREAU PLOT SEEDS

While they're enjoying a well-earned vacation on the paradise world of Trovatore, the PCs' rented yacht is caught in a terrible storm. The powerful gale destroys their communication equipment, blows them far off course, and finally wrecks them on a deserted island. Or so it seems at first, as they begin to encounter one horror after another...

For some reason (a medical condition, a long-time desire, a whim based on recent adventures...), one of the PCs decides he'd like to be transformed into a man-animal hybrid creature. Rather than going to just any geneticist, he wants the best — and that means the reclusive and mysterious Dr. Moreau on Trovatore. After braving a few of the dangers of his island, the PCs encounter Moreau's floating organs and converse with the infamous scientist, who's more than happy to help out. He just needs the PCs to get a little something from the outside world first...

EPNS (Entities for the Protection of Non-Sentients, a wealthy, and sometimes radical and controversial, animal rights organization) secretly hires the PCs to destroy that great oppressor, torturer, and exploiter of animals — Dr. Emilio Moreau — and free his beast-men. They hit the Sabrina's beaches like marines, only to find that the various creatures on the island have no desire to be liberated. In fact, they're attacking the PCs!

Skills

- 6 +3 OCV with *Blaster Energy Blast*
- 11 Animal Handler (Aquatic Animals, Birds, Bovines, Camels, Canines, Elephants, Equines, Felines, Reptiles & Amphibians, Ursines) 12-
- 12 Computer Programming (Computer Networks, Hacking and Computer Security, Personal Computers, Artificial Intelligence, Mainframes and Supercomputers, Military Computers) 15-
- 5 Cramming
- 3 Deduction 15-
- 3 Electronics 15-
- 3 Forensic Medicine 15-
- 3 Interrogation 12-
- 3 Inventor 15-
- 3 AK: Trovatore 15-
- 3 Mechanics 15-
- 3 Persuasion 12-
- 3 Security Systems 15-
- 7 Systems Operation (Communications Systems, Environmental Systems, Medical Systems, Sensor Jamming Equipment) 15-
- 3 Trading 12-
- 3 Jack of All Trades
- 2 1) PS: Geneticist 15-
- 2 2) PS: Surgeon 15-
- 2 3) PS: Veterinarian 15-
- 3 Scientist
- 2 1) SS: Biochemistry 15-
- 2 2) SS: Biology 15-
- 2 3) SS: Chemistry 15-
- 2 4) SS: Genetics 15-
- 2 5) SS: Mechanical Engineering 15-
- 2 6) SS: Nanotechnology 15-
- 2 7) SS: Physics 15-
- 2 8) SS: Xenobiology 15-
- 2 9) SS: Xenology 15-
- 2 10) SS: Zoology 15-
- 3 Scholar
- 2 1) KS: Animal Life Forms Of The Galaxy 15-
- 2 2) KS: Aquatic Life Forms Of Trovatore 15-
- 2 3) KS: Human History 15-
- 2 4) KS: Trovatore's History 15-
- 2 5) KS: Xenovore History 15-

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 306**Total Cost: 340****75+ Disadvantages**

- 15 Psychological Limitation: Loves To Tinker With DNA (Common, Strong)
- 25 Psychological Limitation: Science For Science's Sake And Damn The Consequences (Very Common, Total)
- 5 Reputation: mad genetic tinkerer, 8-
- 35 Susceptibility: takes 3d6 per Phase spent outside his Cold Chamber (Very Common)
- 185 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 340

Background/History: The most mysterious inhabitant of the island world of Trovatore is the legendary Dr. Emilio Moreau, a near-mythic figure whose origins lay shrouded in mystery. Some believe him to be the living incarnation of an ancient Terran god of primitivism, pain, and animal worship — but most sophisticated people scoff at this idea. Others think him to be the final descendant of an early geneticist from Victorian-era Earth, while some historians insist the word “Moreau” itself is an ancient title and not a name at all. According to them, any exceptional scientist who works to push the envelope of human knowledge in the field of genetics was traditionally known as a “Moreau” in ancient Terran.

Whatever his mysterious beginnings, it's known for certain that Dr. Moreau arrived on Trovatore at some point before its official discovery by the Heyerdahls in 2375 (WoE 44), most likely in a ship of his own creation. It's believed he arrived on that paradise world no later than 2275, though the exact date is uncertain due to the massive destruction of reliable historical records caused by the Xenovore Wars and the unreliability of early hyperdrive technology. The earliest settlers on Trovatore reported encountering intelligent Neodolphins and Ultrabeluga, the planet's unique but obviously transplanted and uplifted cetacean population, within several months of their arrival. These sentients attribute their existence to Moreau's efforts — and there's no reason to doubt them — but it's uncertain how or even if a sizable population of genetically-modified creatures could have spread across Trovatore's oceans in such a brief period of time, further confusing the infamous scientist's arrival date. Both species are extremely loyal to the memory and legacy of the quasi-deceased genius, whom they refer to simply as “the Father” in their own strange, inhuman language.

Although Moreau himself rarely grants interviews or comments on matters outside of the scientific realm, it's believed from several of his remarks that he moved to Trovatore to escape the restrictions placed on genetics by the old United Earth government. Eschewing the more temperate portions of the planet, he settled on the subarctic island of Sabrina in an area later settlers would call New Kerguelen. There he built a subterranean home and laboratory using an unknown source of labor. He then retired to the safety of his Cold Chamber, where he continued his experiments through various remote means.

Moreau is an icon for many Imperial geneticists and various eccentric citizens — an unbending scientist and anti-authoritarian unwilling to allow politics, public morality, or any other limitation to hold back the advancement of knowledge. Others see him as a dangerous and sadistic madman who enjoys playing God, inflicting pain, and generally flouting the laws of civilization. Both of these opinions are based on research into old United Earth records that are at best incomplete and at worst unreliable. Unless he chooses to open up and tell everything he knows, the actual history of this reclusive figure will always remain in doubt.

Personality/Motivation:

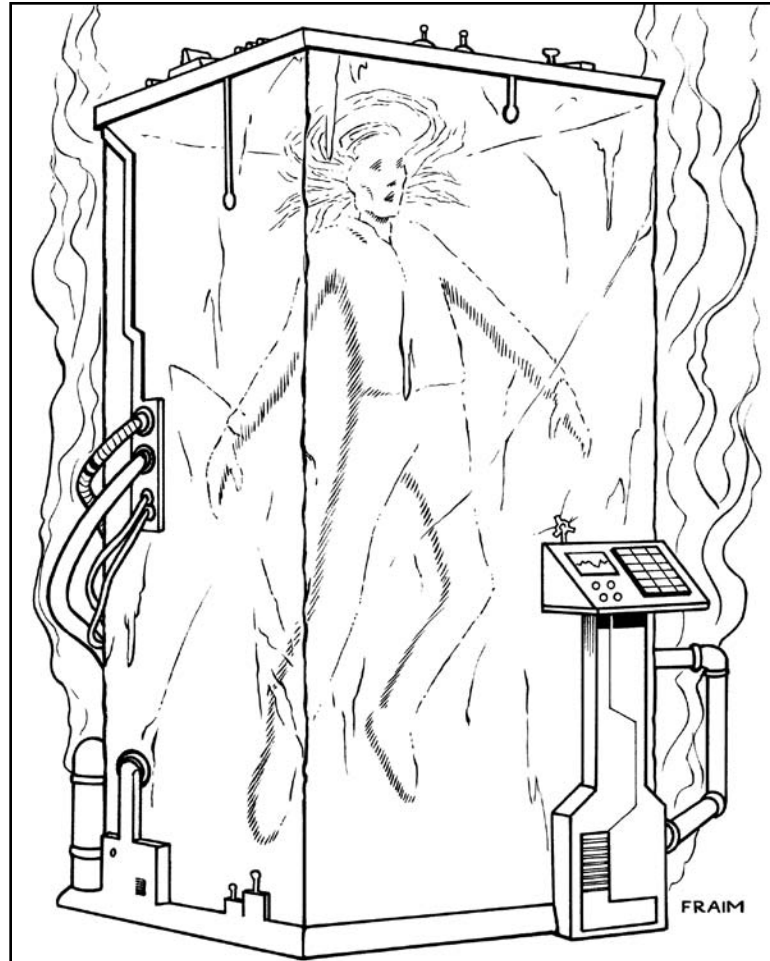
Doctor Emilio Moreau is a classic mad scientist of a whimsical sort. He enjoys creating super-intelligent dolphins, whales with gigantism, beast-men, floating cybernetic body parts, living spaceships, and other biological monstrosities because it's fun, not for some evil scheme. If he ever had any sinister plans he abandoned them long ago in favor of genetic "tinkering"... sort of like a retired racecar driver amusing himself by building go-carts.

But the not-so-good doctor is still one of history's purest believers in "Science for Science's sake," regardless of the consequences. He's currently helping New Kerguelen's revolutionaries attempt to grow warships based on Xenovore biotechnology obtained from pirates in Tetsuo. It's unclear whether he's helping them out of political sentiment, scientific curiosity, age-induced madness, or some combination of the three (probably he doesn't know either), but he has a terrifying experimental warship growing beneath his island, hidden safely away from the prying eyes of the TSS. When he's done he'll give it to the radicals, and won't that be interesting? That's his big project at the moment... but definitely not the only iron he has in the fire.

Moreau's personality is a fascinating mixture of egocentricity, curiosity, indifference, old-world politeness, and exhaustion. How he reacts to uninvited visitors largely depends on how they behave. Polite, deferential, and well-educated visitors are usually treated like guests, although Moreau will remain suspicious. Ill-mannered, boorish, or aggressive visitors are likely to be treated any number of ways that range from expulsion from the island on one end to death or a new life as "experiments" on the other, based on how much they've offend their host.

Quote: "When I was young I wanted to turn animals into men and men into gods. They didn't understand what I was doing back on Earth, and were afraid. So I left. Then I too began to understand something as the years went by. It's not that great to be a man. So what's the sense in becoming a god?"

Powers/Tactics: A master of genetic technology and biochemistry, Moreau is responsible for the creation of the Neodolphins and Ultrabeluga that



swim in Trovatore's vast oceans. These creatures revere Moreau as nothing short of a god, though they understand he created them through science rather than mystic powers. He slumbers away in his cryogenic life-extending Cold Chamber deep beneath the hollow island of Sabrina in the New Kerguelen archipelago, his mind linked to the outside world via a massive AI that allows him to control guard robots, talk to his mad scientist peers on various planetary datanets, and continue his research using levitating biomechanical constructs cloned from his own flesh.

Moreau has never really gotten tired of creating beast-men and in his spare time he still likes to produce them. It's not quite the glamorous mad science pastime it was a few hundred years ago — technically, any good ATRI 11 geneticist with the right equipment and the willingness to do the work could create one — but high-quality beast-man creation remains a laborious process requiring a great deal of skill. Plus it relaxes him when the rigors of growing a massive Xenovore monster ship beneath his island become too stressful. A small community of beast-men live on Sabrina and act as his first line of defense against unwanted visitors.

At this stage in his quasi-life Moreau interacts with the immediate world of his island via various levitating cybernetic organs he's crafted using his own DNA. His Floating Eyes, Ears, Mouth, and Hands float about his lair or the island in a kind of swarm, giving him the ability to speak with others

or work on various projects. The Hands are quite strong and can deliver a powerful stunning blast to “uncooperative” subjects.

The oldest human alive in the Galaxy, Moreau is very fragile. If he’s removed from his cold chamber he’ll die in less than a minute. There’s a good chance his body and mind will give out in the next decade in any case, so he’s not very worried about the consequences of his actions. Not that he ever has been.

Campaign Use: Emilio Moreau is a retired “master villain” living out his twilight years in a retirement community of his own creation. It’s warm, private, secure, those meddling kids leave him alone, and the only police around are on his side. Though he has followers (of a sort) and a base, he no longer ranks as a true master villain because his ambitions have dwindled to the point where they’re more like unsavory hobbies. For the most part Moreau is only dangerous to PCs who annoy him by “walking on his lawn”... though some of his “hobbies” may have consequences far beyond New Kerguelen.

Doctor Moreau won’t Hunt your PCs. They’ll have to go searching for (or stumble across) him if they want to find him. Maybe they need his help, or they’re working for the TSS when it decides to seriously investigate him. Whatever the reason for their trip, visiting Emilio Moreau’s home should be a dangerous, bizarre, and shocking experience (particularly if they’re suspicious of or hostile toward him). You should feel free to add other menaces to the island such as sea monsters, giant crabs, renegade nanotech swarms, “failed experiments,” and anything else you can think of. Draw on *The Island Of Dr. Moreau* for inspiration, then “Science Fiction it up.”

Appearance: Doctor Emilio Moreau is an almost impossibly frail and elderly Frenchman of unremarkable appearance. He’s frozen in a large block of ice covered in bizarre apparati of various sorts, which makes it somewhat difficult to discern his features, other than that he has long white hair that’s frozen in a sort of halo around his head.

DOCTOR MOREAU’S ISLAND LAIR

Doctor Moreau’s base is a large five-level subterranean complex atop a massive cave that opens to the ocean below sea level. The entrance to the complex is inside an unmarked, naturally-formed cavern. Concealed beneath the island of Sabrina, the base is invisible to the naked eye and difficult to find even with ATRI 11 orbital satellite technology. Its levels are linked by an ornate elevator that’s physically operated by a TMD-ES Eagle Drone Guard Robot in a classic operator’s uniform (complete with hat). Characters entering the elevator at the top level are asked to identify themselves and, if Moreau or the base’s AI doesn’t wish to give them access, the robot will refuse to operate the elevator. If they insist on entering the drone will open fire and call for backup from the base’s other Guard Robots, six of whom emerge from a hidden shaft further back in the cavern within one Turn. The shaft, which also serves as an air duct, connects all the levels of Moreau’s home

and has a built-in ladder for emergencies (which is monitored by security cameras).

The first level of the base is a combination reception area and library. This is where the base’s robots ask visitors to wait for Moreau — or, more specifically, his levitating biomechanical organs. Three Guard Robots, including one in a receptionist’s uniform that sits behind a desk, stand guard here at all times. The books in the library are actual paper tomes, some of them dating back to the 1700s and quite valuable. Baroquely-decorated computer terminals grant access to a database with millions of volumes’ worth of information. The vast majority of both paper and electronic works focus on biology, genetics, physics, xenology, and zoology, though obscure works of literature, history texts thought long lost, and the like are also available. Any attempt to remove physical books from the library results in an attack by the security drones, though visitors are allowed to copy the electronic books in most circumstances.

The next level contains Moreau’s surgery. It includes operating rooms, holding cells, cages for small animals, and the like. There are also several large shelves containing dozens of well-thumbed, handwritten notebooks: records of Moreau’s experiments over the last four hundred years, quite valuable to the right people. The level is guarded by two Guard Robots. Moreau doesn’t like anyone to enter this level, so the robots immediately attack anyone who enters without permission. If necessary, invent some horrors for the PCs to encounter here.

The third level contains Moreau’s drafting room and workshop. Unless the characters have recently destroyed some drones or one of his levitating organs, there won’t be a great deal of activity on this level, which is unguarded. If they have, replacement organs and drones will be under construction via robotic systems controlled by the base’s AI.

The fourth and fifth levels of the complex house Moreau’s various laboratories, including ones specializing in nanotechnology, biochemistry, biology, chemistry, genetics, and xenobiology. Moreau may or may not be working on a project in any of these labs at any given time, using his menagerie of levitating organs and one or two beast-man assistants to carry out his experiments. Oddly, although there are millions of credits’ worth of state of the art equipment here, these two levels are unguarded.

The final level of Moreau’s complex is a massive cavern large enough to hold a super-dreadnaught-sized warship. A partially-built Xenovore warship takes up much of this cavern, floating in a massive pool at its center. Various robotic arms and nano-sprayers work on the ship around the clock, though it’s far from functional. A hidden room off to one side of the cavern contains both Moreau’s Cold Chamber (and thus, Moreau himself) and the base’s AI (which is known simply as Machine). There are also six Guard Robots charged with protecting Moreau, Machine, and the ship (in that order) at all costs.

DARRYL REVOK

Rogue Telepath For Hire

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
13	STR	3	12-	Lift 150 kg; 2½d6 [3]
14	DEX	12	12-	OCV: 5/DCV: 5
14	CON	8	12-	
12	BODY	4	11-	
18	INT	8	13-	PER Roll 13-
13	EGO	6	12-	ECV: 4
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
10	COM	0	11-	
5	PD	2		Total: 8 PD (3 rPD)
5	ED	2		Total: 8 ED (3 rED)
4	SPD	16		Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
6	REC	0		
28	END	0		
30	STUN	4		Total Characteristic Cost: 70

Movement: Running: 6"/12"

Cost	Powers	END
16	<i>Psionic Reserves:</i> Endurance Reserve (60 END, 10 REC)	0
60	<i>Powerful Mind Control:</i> Mind Control 12d6	6
40	<i>Telepathy:</i> Telepathy 8d6	4
50	<i>Scanning:</i> Mind Scan 10d6	5

	Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
4	Martial Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
4	Martial Dodge	—	+5	Dodge, Affects All Attacks, Abort
3	Legsweep	+2	-1	3½6 Strike, Target Falls
4	Punch	+0	+2	4½6 Strike
5	Spin Kick	-2	+1	6½6 Strike

20	<i>Mental Invisibility:</i> Invisibility to Mental Group, No Fringe	2
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Perks

5	Favors: from various galactic corporate officials
5	Favors: from various underworld figures
5	Money: Well Off

Talents

6	Combat Luck (3 PD/3 ED)
3	Lightsleep

Skills

25	+5 with Mental Powers
8	+1 with All Combat
3	+1 with Bugging, Lockpicking, and Shadowing
3	Breakfall 12-
3	Bugging 13-
3	Combat Driving 12-
3	Concealment 13-
3	Conversation 12-
3	Disguise 13-
2	Gambling (Card Games) 13-
3	High Society 12-
3	KS: The Corporate World 13-
3	KS: The Espionage World 13-

3	KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 13-
3	KS: Surveillance Equipment 13-
3	Lockpicking 12-
3	PS: Tracraft 13-
3	Security Systems 13-
3	Seduction 12-
3	Sleight Of Hand 12-
3	Shadowing 13-
3	Stealth 12-
3	Streetwise 12-
6	TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles, Jetskis, SCUBA, Small Planes, Snowmobiles, Two-Wheeled Motorized Ground Vehicles
2	WF: Small Arms

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 333

Total Cost: 403

75+ Disadvantages

0	Dependence: must take Brain-Booster at least once per day or suffer loss of power (begins with Activation Roll) (Difficult to Obtain)
20	Hunted: Mind Police 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Capture)
20	Hunted: The Psindicate 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Harshly Punish)
20	Psychological Limitation: Deeply Afraid Of The Mind Police And The Psindicate (Common, Total)
15	Psychological Limitation: Greedy (Common, Strong)
15	Social Limitation: Unregistered Psionic (Occasionally, Severe)
238	Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 403

Background/History: Darryl Revok was raised in the vast orphanage colony of Hope's Promise on Sigma Caeruleus III. A shy Human child of totally unknown ancestry, he was found badly beaten and wandering around a spaceport on Kinzareth with no memory of his parents and no idea of where his home was. He didn't even know his own name. A local social worker named him after her own deceased son before remanding him to the care of philanthropist Ararat Abdulkadar and his staff (WoE 91).

After manifesting uncertain but promising psionic abilities at age of eight, Darryl was transferred to a special village within the orphanage set aside for "talented" children like himself. In this new setting he began to receive indoctrination and training from agents of the Mind Police posing as teachers from the Imperial Psionics Foundation. While Daryk excelled under the tutelage of his new instructors there was still one key problem: he didn't work well with others. In fact, he was self-centered to such an extent that the orphanage's psychologists feared he was a sociopath.

While the young psionic was grateful for the opportunity to learn more about his abilities, he had no particular interest in "serving humanity," "the Empress," "Galactic society," or any of the other lofty principles his teachers seemed to believe in. His earliest memories proved he was

DARRYL REVOK PLOT SEEDS

The PCs have been hired to protect a local politician on a lawless world from assassination by his rivals. Unfortunately, they fail: an ion beam flashes from nowhere and strikes him dead while he's giving a speech. Can they track down his murderer (Revok, of course) and make him talk?

While vacationing on the idyllic world of Tau Ceti II, a beloved holo star suffers a near-fatal mishap when she falls from a hanglider. Her manager quietly hires the PCs to investigate what seems to be a complete accident, but when they interview the star she tells them an irritable voice in her head forced her to let go. It's Revok, of course, and he's determined to finish his job by any means possible. Can the PCs stop him?

The PCs have been tasked with tracking down Revok and killing him in retaliation for his murder of an important Psindicate Manager some years back. After nearly catching him several times, they trail him to the psi-dominated planet of Hermetica (WoE 23-29), where the renegade mentalist claims refuge as one of the Gifted. Of course, some of the PCs may be "Gifted" too — and all of them are in no mood to be screwed with by a bunch of self-important psi-supremacists!

EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Varanyi Ion Rifle	+2	+2	4d6/10d6 N	+0/—	11	60	AF5
Mark II-T Laser Pistol	+1	+2	3d6	0	8	24	

Armor

Type 2 Force Field Belt (8 PD/8 ED, -1 to Sight Group PER Rolls, 1 Continuing Fuel Charge lasting 1 Hour)

Gear: Bio-scanner (ST 20), pocket computer, various personal surveillance devices

on his own. To be truly safe, he'd have to become rich. To stay rich, he'd have to become anonymous. So, at the earliest possible opportunity, he used his developing powers to slip away from Hope's Promise. Traveling to the planet's capital city of d'Estaing, he influenced the mind of a tramp merchantman's captain, convincing him to take Revok on as a trainee-spacer.

But the young runaway never intended to work. Why should he when his abilities allowed to slip on and off of spacecraft with ease? For the next several years Revok traveled the Terran Empire, learning as much as possible about the seedier side of galactic society by covertly reading the minds of all he encountered. He also learned of the existence of Brain-Booster: a narcotic so powerful it could almost double a psionic's power. He secured a supply and was amazed by the results. Using the drug Revok had greater endurance, could locate target minds from a distance, read their deepest thoughts, and in some cases even force people to commit terrible acts such as murder and suicide. Under the right circumstances a strong man was so much putty in his hands. Even more excitingly, the resulting enhancement provided by Brain-Booster triggered a latent power. Revok found that he was invisible to psi-detection — even skilled mentalists found it difficult to “lock” onto him, giving him a level of protection few psionics enjoy.

Greedy, amoral, and indifferent to the suffering of others, Darryl Revok decided to offer himself up as an independent spy and assassin. He started by accepting jobs other “professionals” were reluctant to take, relying on his powers to give him the edge necessary to succeed and survive. It was during this dangerous early portion of his career that he earned the wrath of the Psindicate (see page 98) by murdering one of their Managers on behalf of a disgruntled “client,” and the interest of the Mind Police by successfully spying on several of their operatives for the Perseid government. Both organizations would love to get their hands on him, though for entirely different reasons.

Darryl Revok is now older, wiser, and quite skilled with espionage technology and techniques. He's had some close calls, but he's never been caught, never been registered by the Imperial government, and never failed an employer. His efforts have made him affluent, but not so much so that he can retire just yet. Methodical and anonymous, he continues to work his way toward the glorious day when, after extensive plastic surgery, he can sit namelessly on a beach somewhere on Archipelago with lovely Polynesian women and drink Mai Tais as the sun sets.

Personality/Motivation: Start with a liberal portion of Greed. Then add a healthy dose of Anti-social Personality Disorder. Finally, season with a generous amount of Professionalism. These three ingredients — avarice, remorselessness, and expertise — comprise the vast majority of Darryl Revok's personality.

To most people, Revok seems like an extremely cold fish, and for good reason — there are thousands of machines in the Terran Empire that exhibit a greater range of emotion than he does. But of course, most serious people don't look for a lot of personality in a hired killer or undercover agent. They only want competency combined with exceptional ability, both of which he possesses in spades. Revok is deadly serious about every job he takes, whether it involves murdering a politician or spying on an unfaithful husband. He never fails to deliver, either.

With that said, Revok lives for only one thing: to retire comfortably and anonymously to some tropical paradise planet. His work is merely a road taking him to that final destination. He isn't actually cruel or murderous: only indifferent... and careful. He works hard at not getting caught. He's methodical, patient, cautious, and extremely clever. If it takes months for him to maneuver into position for a job, he takes the time. But of course it usually doesn't. Most of Revok's victims inexplicably leap off a balcony, fall under a hoverbus, make their dirty laundry public in a spate of remorse, turn themselves into the local authorities, or something as equally unlikely and inexplicable.

Quote: None — Revok says as little as possible to anyone. He communicates with his employers via e-mail and an unmarked bank account in the Republic of An'dona on Mon'da.

Powers/Tactics: Revok's tactics on the job are actually quite simple. He uses his Mind Scan to locate his target and then discreetly follows him from a distance, employing his Telepathy to read the target's surface thoughts. (For story purposes you can assume he successfully prevents the target from detecting these low-level uses of his powers.) He's also developed excellent surveillance skills that complement his telepathic ones, allowing him to track his foes unobserved. Additionally, he carries a variety of advanced surveillance equipment to assist him in his work.

Within a couple of days Revok becomes familiar with his target's routine, personality, and affairs, putting him in an excellent position to perform whatever task he's been hired for. He prefers to do his jobs from a distance. Often this is nothing more complex than routine surveillance work: shooting video of an unfaithful spouse; documenting the disloyalty of

a highly paid corporate scientist; gathering evidence so a foreign intelligence agency can blackmail a well-placed Terran bureaucrat. But upon occasion Revok is hired to work as an assassin, and he discharges his duties in one of two distinct ways.

The first and most subtle method Revok uses to eliminate a target is to employ his Mind Control, manipulating his unlucky victim into performing an ordinary task at an unfortunate moment. He utilizes his intelligence-gathering skills to learn as much as possible about his intended target before striking: a distracted, perpetually harried businessman crosses the street at exactly the wrong moment and is fatally struck by a vehicle. A socialite with a propensity for overindulgence drinks far too much before falling off a pleasure craft and drowning. A policeman's service blaster fires while he's cleaning it, mortally wounding him. Revok is responsible for dozens of deaths that have been ruled an "accident."

The second method is a traditional one: he murders his prey from a distance using a rifle. This isn't his preferred method, since it involves a great deal of personal risk and he isn't an expert shot, but he uses advanced technology to give himself an edge (including a powerful Varanyi ion rifle he obtained covertly).

Darryl Revok never walks into a situation he isn't prepared to walk out of. He takes great pains to prepare escape routes, both out of any given situation and off-planet. If at all possible he remains completely anonymous and undetected throughout an entire operation.

Campaign Use: Darryl Revok is intended to be a more "realistic" spy and assassin sort of character — proficient and professional rather than colorful, which may pose a problem for some Star Hero campaigns. If the PCs are hired to protect an NPC from Revok, he'll prove devilishly difficult to stop (or even locate). He won't give them a fair fight, either. If at all possible he won't even confront them! It would be equally hard to prevent him from targeting one of the PCs — though he'd have to be hired by one of their enemies, as Revok doesn't Hunt anyone for fun. Conversely, Revok has no qualms about working for a group of PCs if they can afford his services, and could prove to be a valuable asset in certain situations.

To make Darryl Revok into a more formidable adversary for your heroes, give him additional Combat Skill Levels. To make him a bit less potent, remove his Mental Invisibility so that he can be more easily tracked by opposing psis.

Appearance: Darryl Revok is a completely nondescript man of Slavic decent with pale skin and brown hair. Under most circumstances he travels unarmed and dresses as generically as possible to blend into the local crowd. When on a particularly dangerous job (such as an assassination) he wears a black suit of Terran Covert Battle Armor comprised of layers of cloth, ceramic plates, and polymer linings that cover his entire body, including his face. He also carries a Varanyi Ion Rifle and a GP-03 Gamma Pistol.

BLACKJACK THORSON

Vicious, Unethical Bounty Hunter

Val	Char	Cost	Roll	Notes
25	STR	20	14-	Lift 800 kg; 5d6 [5]
17	DEX	21	12-	OCV: 6/DCV: 6
21	CON	24	13-	
16	BODY	12	12-	
8	INT	-2	11-	PER Roll 11-
14	EGO	8	12-	ECV: 5
18	PRE	8	13-	PRE Attack: 3½d6
8	COM	-1	11-	
10	PD	7		Total: 19 PD (9 rPD)
10	ED	8		Total: 17 ED (7 rED)
5	SPD	33		Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12
9	REC	0		
42	END	0		
50	STUN	10		Total Characteristic Cost: 148

Movement: Running: 9"/18"
Leaping: 5"/10"

Cost	Powers	END
	Martial Arts: <i>Imperial Marines Combat Training</i>	
	Maneuver	OCV DCV Notes
4	Block	+2 +2 Block, Abort
4	Dodge	— +5 Dodge, Affects All Attacks, Abort
5	Kick	-2 +1 9d6 Strike
4	Punch	+0 +2 7d6 Strike
3	Throw	+0 +1 5d6 +v/5, Target Falls
4	<i>Artificial Right Arm:</i> +5 STR, Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); No Figured Characteristics (-½), Only With One Arm (-¼)	0
6	<i>Armorskin:</i> Armor (3 PD/1 ED)	0
30	<i>Tough Guy:</i> Physical and Energy Damage Reduction, Resistant, 25%	0
6	<i>Cybernetic Eyes:</i> Sight Group Flash Defense (6 points)	0
15	<i>Artificial Kidney:</i> Life Support (Immunity to Zootoxins, Phytotoxins, Microbe Toxins, and Alcohol)	0
4	<i>Artificial Lung:</i> Life Support (Extended Breathing: 1 END per 20 Minutes)	0
6	<i>Artificial Legs:</i> Running +3" (9" total)	1
6	<i>Cybernetic Senses:</i> +2 PER with all Sense Groups	0
5	<i>Cybernetic Eyes:</i> Infrared Perception (Sight Group)	0
5	<i>Cybernetic Eyes:</i> Ultraviolet Perception (Sight Group)	0
12	<i>Cybernetic Eyes:</i> +8 versus Range Modifier for Sight Group	0
3	<i>Cochlear Implant:</i> Ultrasonic Perception (Hearing Group)	0
12	<i>Communications Implant:</i> HRRP (Radio Group)	0
3	<i>Red Joker's Interface Jack:</i> Mind Link (Machine class of minds); No Range (-½), Visible (-¼)	0

BLACKJACK THORSON PLOT SEEDS

The PCs have drastically underestimated the fury of a Shar'een trader whose freight they dumped before being boarded by the Perseid Space Navy! Determined to get restitution at all costs, she's hired Thorson to track them down and bring them to civil court on Earth. Unfortunately for everyone involved, there's nothing "civil" about the methods the cyborg bounty hunter employs!

The PCs have been working hard at becoming some of the best-regarded bounty hunters in the Terran Empire. In fact, they've done too well for somebody's taste. During their last few missions someone's tipped off their quarry, sabotaged their ship, misinformed local law enforcement about them, and generally made their lives miserable. But who would do such a thing? And why?

A lot of "little people" are sick of the devastation, collateral damage, and casual mayhem caused by bounty hunter Blackjack Thorson. Small businessmen, working class people, and retirees have all suffered over one billion credits worth of damages and medical bills due to his reckless activities — so many, in fact, that they've banded together to form a Galaxy-wide organization named STOp BLAckjack's Destruction, or STObLAD. While individually of modest means, together the members of STObLAD can afford to hire the PCs to put a stop to his destructive behavior once and for all. Of course, accepting the job isn't the same thing as being able to do it...

Perks

- 5 Favors: from five officers in the Imperial Marines
- 5 Favors: from five government officials
- 5 Favors: from five underworld figures
- 2 Fringe Benefit: IBHN License
- 6 Reputation: always gets his man/woman/entity (among the underworld and law enforcement) 14-, +3/+3d6

Talents

- 3 *Red Joker's Clock*: Absolute Time Sense
- 3 *Red Joker's Galactic Navigation Data*: Bump of Direction
- 5 *Red Joker's Memory*: Eidetic Memory
- 3 *Red Joker's Calculator*: Lightning Calculator
- 23 *Red Joker's Translator*: Universal Translator 14-

Skills

- 16 +2 with All Combat
- 24 *Red Joker*: +3 with All Non-Combat Skills
- 3 Breakfall 12-
- 1 Bureaucratics 8-
- 1 Criminology 8-
- 1 Deduction 8-
- 3 Demolitions 11-
- 1 KS: Criminal Law 8-
- 3 *Red Joker*: +3 with KS: Criminal Law
- 3 KS: The Imperial Marines 12-
- 2 KS: The Military/Mercenary/Terrorist World 11-
- 1 PS: Bounty Hunter 8-
- 3 PS: Marine 12-
- 5 Shadowing 12-
- 3 Stealth 12-
- 3 Streetwise 13-
- 18 Survival (Arctic/Subarctic, Marine, Temperate/Subtropical, Tropical, Desert, Mountain, Underground, Urban) 12-
- 1 Systems Operation (Security Systems) 8-
- 5 Tactics 12-
- 5 Tracking 12-
- 4 TF: Common Motorized Ground Vehicles, Grav Vehicles/Hovercraft, Personal Use Spacecraft
- 6 WF: Human Small Arms, Human Advanced Small Arms, Dracon Battlesuit

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 309**Total Cost: 457****75+ Disadvantages**

- 15 Distinctive Features: Cyborg (Not Concealable; Noticed and Recognizable)
- 20 Hunted: IBHN 11- (Mo Pow, NCI, Public Identity, Watching)
- 15 Hunted: ISP 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Public Identity, Watching)
- 5 Physical Limitation: Bulky And Heavy (Infrequently, Slightly Impairing)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Always Gets His Man/Woman/Entity (Common, Strong)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Patriotic (Common, Strong)

- 5 Rivalry: Professional, with all other IBHN members
- 20 Vulnerability: 2 x Effect from Electrical Attacks (Common)
- 272 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 457

Background/History: Sergeant Blackjack Thorson loved the Imperial Marines with a devotion that few men ever show their wives. From his eighteenth year forward he dedicated all of his considerable abilities to serving it. So, when he lost an arm in a covert action along the Thorgon Neutral Zone, he had an artificial one grafted on and returned to active service. When both of his legs were blown off during a boarding action against the Xenovore Fleet, Blackjack had powerful robotic ones attached to the stumps and returned to active service. When shrapnel destroyed one of his lungs and both of his kidneys, he used his own savings to replace them with enhanced cybernetic replacements, and once again returned to his beloved Marines.

Then one day an ion bolt fired by an Ackálian infiltrator destroyed Thorson's face, both of his eyes, and a fist-sized chunk of his brain. Miraculously the cyborg-soldier survived. Tough Armorskin replaced the flesh that had been cruelly destroyed. New artificial eyes not only restored his sight, but also improved it by adding ultraviolet and infrared vision. Unfortunately, there was little that even ATRI 11 medical science could do about Thorson losing a third of his brain. The once-clever soldier was reduced to simplemindedness... though he was still intelligent enough to remember how gifted he'd once been.

Blackjack was determined to return to his platoon despite his injuries. With considerable reluctance and not a little apprehension, Blackjack's superiors agreed to allow the brain-damaged man to return to active duty. Their concerns were justified: the machine-man who returned to the field wasn't the same man-machine that had left it. While still loyal, brave, and dutiful, like many who suffer from head injuries Thorson had become irritable, short-tempered, and (even more) violent. To make matters worse he'd also developed an appetite for blowing things up. The new Blackjack never missed a chance to target buildings and vehicles for annihilation — even if they weren't directly involved in a particular battle. In every conflict he left a path of devastation in his wake that would have made a berserk Ackálian drug addict proud.

Finally, after a particularly destructive rampage, his commanders had had enough. Thorson was forced to accept an honorable discharge with a generous pension and full benefits. He was even promoted in rank to Lieutenant, Retired. For most wounded soldiers this would have been more than enough — but Blackjack wasn't most soldiers. He was an Imperial Marine from the top of his shaved, metal-impregnated head to the bottom of his metallic feet. Forcibly separated

from the life he loved, the cyborg-warrior began looking for some way to put his diminished but still considerable talents to use. A chance meeting with an old comrade in a tavern introduced him to the IBHN (see text box). The IBHN directed him to both a controversial doctor — and a new life as a bounty hunter.

Though his intellect had been greatly diminished, Thorson was still smart enough to know that he couldn't pursue a new profession without help. He retained all of the skills and abilities he'd developed as an Imperial Marine, but lacked the capability to become proficient at anything new. It took all of his remaining money to pay for the operation, but the IBHN's doctor removed the fatty tissue inside of his left buttock and implanted a miniature artificial intelligence roughly the size of a newborn infant's head in the resulting cavity. This freshly implanted AI, which Blackjack named Red Joker, not only enhanced all of it host's skills, but also had a wide variety of new abilities useful to a bounty hunter. It could act as his secretary, translate any language, fly small spacecraft, and hack into computer networks. Red Joker could even pipe Blackjack's favorite speed metal songs directly into his brain during combat! The doctor also thoughtfully disconnected the safeguards on Thorson's cybernetic systems, just in case he ever needed to "redline" them.

Thus armed, the brain damaged/mentally enhanced cyborg-soldier-bounty hunter sallied forth to bring the scum of the Empire to justice. Or just kill them... and anyone stupid enough to get in his way.

Personality/Motivation: Thorson is one of the most popular bounty hunters in the Empire. If you really, really want a fugitive (or anyone actually) brought in and you don't care what shape they're in when you get them or how many people have been killed in the process, he's your man. Brutal, efficient, and completely without encumbering scruples of any kind, Thorson will track his quarry to the edge of the Galaxy if necessary. His employers over the years have included several branches of the Terran Empire's government, the Mondabi Republic, several wealthy business interests, and reputedly Empress Marissa III DeValiere.

Blackjack Thorson has only one qualm. As a former Marine, he's incredibly patriotic and loyal to the Terran Empire. He won't accept a job that directly endangers his government or its interests (more abstract arguments on this topic will be lost on Thorson, and Red Joker simply ignores them). He's also quite moti-



vated. In spite of his mental handicaps, Thorson doesn't want to be one of the best bounty hunters in the Terran Empire. He wants to be *the* best bounty hunter... and will do everything in his power short of cold-blooded murder to keep anyone else from claiming that title.

Quote: ::jabbing his finger at a holo-picture:: "Are you him? No? You sure look like him... I say you're him! Come with me or I'll frag this entire restaurant and everyone in it!"

Powers/Tactics: More machine than man at this point, Blackjack Thorson has been shot, stabbed, bitten, blown up, and biologically contaminated so many times during his military and bounty hunting careers that over sixty percent of his body mass consists of exotic cybernetic systems. One of his arms, both of his legs, his eyes, his eardrums, his heart, and one of lungs are enhanced artificial devices. Furthermore, the fatty tissue in Thorson's buttocks has been replaced with a freebot AI

EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Mark VII Laser Rifle	+2	+2	3½d6	+0	12	64	AF5, AP
M49 Plasma Rifle	+0	+0	11d6 N	—	17	20	AF2, Explosion
MIP-162 Ion Pistol	+1	+1	3d6/(10d6)	0	9	30	AF2

Armor

Armored Clothing (Armor (3 PD/3 ED), Activation Roll 14-)

Light Powered Armor (Armor (12 PD/12 ED), Activation Roll 14-)

Gear: Flight Pack (Flight 10", 1 Continuing Fuel Charge lasting 6 Hours)

implant named Red Joker (see below). Thorson's only real friend, Red Joker is considerably more intelligent than his host/partner and supplies him with incredible levels of detail when he's on a mission, helps him think through problems, and even helps negotiate contracts through the Imperial datanet. (Although Red Joker's abilities are listed on Thorson's character sheet, since they're basically one character, if necessary think of it as a distinct AI with INT 23, EGO 10, SPD 5. Currently its personality is basically helpful and deferential, but it may develop differently over time... and as an unlicensed AI it's a violation of Imperial law.)

Blackjack Thorson was close to superhumanly strong, fast, and tough *before* he began getting cybernetic implants. Now he's simply superhuman. His bionic limbs make Blackjack stronger and faster than any normal human being. Able to endure punishments that would quickly kill a normal man, he's immune to poisons and can go for hours without breathing. His neural link with Red Joker gives him access to suites of skills and abilities far beyond those of most polymath geniuses (though it doesn't actually make him any smarter). He can see in the infrared and ultraviolet spectra and has many other sensory enhancements. With the help of Red Joker there are few individuals he can't track down given enough time.

Once he locates his quarry, Thorson's tactics are straightforward. He puts on his armor, slings a flight pack on his back, grabs at least three types of blasters, and goes after him with all guns blazing. If his instructions are to take his target alive, Thorson gives him at least a brief chance to surrender, but otherwise he feels the best way to hunt flies is with a sledgehammer. This works out well for him, as his years in the Marines and working as a bounty hunter have left him incredibly well-connected. He's owed favors by important figures within the Imperial government, military, and in the underworld and has an IBHN badge, so it's unlikely anyone will arrest Blackjack no matter what insane and destructive thing he does.

Campaign Use: Blackjack Thorson is the worst kind of person to be Hunted by. He doesn't give up, can't be reasoned with, and is powerful enough to take on a group of PCs singlehandedly with a bit of planning. Fortunately, he works alone and won't voluntarily ask for help from other bounty hunters. His services are also

rather expensive — not to mention exclusive — so one of the PCs would have to make someone very wealthy and powerful very, very mad to get Hunted by Blackjack.

To make Blackjack Thorson into a more powerful combatant for your PCs, give him an Imperial Marine Dracon Battlesuit (TE 147). To transform him into a less formidable, more comic figure, remove the Red Joker abilities from his character sheet.

Appearance: Blackjack Thorson is a frighteningly large bald man with light brown artificial skin, blunt features, and obvious cybernetic enhancements. His right arm and both of his legs are obviously made out of metal alloy, his eyes glow inhumanly, and he's abnormally bulky and heavy even for a very large man. Except when he's on a world that where it's illegal to carry weapons, he goes everywhere armed to the teeth.

THE IMPERIAL BOUNTY HUNTER NETWORK (IBHN)

Better known simply as the Network, the IBHN — or Imperial Bounty Hunter Network — is a joint public/private sector corporation. A Board of Directors whose members include businessmen, nobles, and officials from the Justice Ministry administer the organization. Created to bring some order to the chaos of the Terran bounty hunting profession, it serves as combination licensing agency, clearinghouse, and assistance organization. Its certified agents receive several months of training, are subjected to background checks, and receive a badge authorizing them to operate under certain circumstances. Governments, agencies, organizations, and individuals wishing to retain the services of bounty hunters can submit a contract to the Network for review and approval.

The Imperial government generally approves of the Network's activities... which isn't surprising, considering that it partially owns the Network and is also its largest customer. Like the ISP (with whom the IBHN maintains a hate-hate relationship), the Network operates more or less freely in Imperial property or territory, including most space stations. Many Senatorial Worlds don't recognize the Network's authority, but this seldom slows down its agents, who are usually more than willing to grab their quarry and escape to the safety of Imperial space.

LORD ZORM

Influential Varanyi Diplomat, Spy, And Assassin

Val Char Cost Roll Notes

13	STR	3	12-	Lift 150 kg; 2½d6 [3]
17	DEX	21	12-	OCV: 6/DCV: 6
15	CON	10	12-	
15	BODY	10	12-	
18	INT	8	13-	PER Roll 13-
21	EGO	24	13-	ECV: 7
15	PRE	5	12-	PRE Attack: 3d6
15	COM	3	12-	

8 PD 5 Total: 8 PD (0 rPD)

8 ED 5 Total: 8 ED (0 rED)

4 SPD 13 Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12

8 REC 4

40 END 5

40 STUN 10 **Total Characteristic Cost: 126****Movement:** Running: 6"/12"**Cost Powers****END**

50	<i>Varanyi Mental Powers:</i> Multipower, 50-point reserve			
5u	1) <i>Ego Attack:</i>	Ego Attack 5d6	5	
5u	2) <i>Mental Illusions:</i>	Mental Illusions 10d6	5	
5u	3) <i>Mind Control:</i>	Mind Control 10d6	5	
4u	4) <i>Telekinesis:</i>	Telekinesis (30 STR)	4	
5u	5) <i>Telepathy:</i>	Telepathy 10d6	5	
50	<i>Mind Scan:</i>	Mind Scan 10d6	5	
22	<i>Mental Defense:</i>	Mental Defense (26 points total)	0	
22	<i>Mental Link:</i>	Mind Link, any 64 minds; Only With Others Who Have Mind Link (-1)	0	

Perks

15	Advanced Tech: ATRI 12 in a generally ATRI 11 campaign			
1	<i>Conqueman Vlar, Importer:</i> False Identity			
2	<i>Conqueman Xan, Bureaucrat Second Class:</i> Deep Cover			
11	Contact: <i>The Sh'garothayn</i> 14- (Contact has access to major institutions, Contact has extremely useful Skills or resources, Contact has significant Contacts of his own, Contact limited by identity, Very Good relationship with Contact)			
5	Favors: from five Imperial bureaucrats			
5	Favors: from five TSS agents			
5	Favors: from five noblemen			
5	Fringe Benefit: <i>Al'gari</i>			
5	Fringe Benefit: Diplomatic Immunity			
3	Fringe Benefit: Security Clearance (Varanyi Empire)			
1	Fringe Benefit: access to the court at Lyons			
4	Reputation: the "go to" guy when you want something done within the varanyi imperial bureaucracy on Earth (among bureaucrats) 14-, +2/+2d6			

Talents

5	Eidetic Memory
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Skills

10	+5 OCV with Knives
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30	<i>Social Chameleon:</i> +6 with Interaction Skills
3	Acting 12-
3	Bribery 12-
3	Bugging 13-
3	Bureaucratics 12-
3	Combat Driving 12-
3	Combat Piloting 12-
3	Computer Programming (Personal Computers, Infiltration) 13-
5	Concealment 14-
3	Conversation 12-
3	Deduction 13-
3	Disguise 13-
5	Fast Draw 13-
3	High Society 12-
2	AK: Lyons 11-
3	AK: Milky Way Galaxy (general) 13-
3	CuK: The Terran Empire 13-
3	CuK: The Varanyi Empire 13-
3	KS: Imperial Law 13-
4	KS: The Imperial Court 14-
3	KS: Poisons 13-
5	Language: Terran (imitate dialects; Varanyi is Native)
3	Lockpicking 12-
3	Persuasion 12-
3	Security Systems 13-
3	Seduction 12-
3	Shadowing 13-
5	Sleight Of Hand 13-
5	Stealth 13-
3	Streetwise 12-
1	WF: Blades

Total Powers & Skill Cost: 373**Total Cost: 499****75+ Disadvantages**

15	Hunted: Mind Police 8- (Mo Pow, NCI, Public Identity, Watching)
10	Psychological Limitation: Craves T'illk (Uncommon, Strong)
25	Psychological Limitation: Varanyi Patriot (Very Common, Total)
15	Social Limitation: Secret Identity (Frequently, Major)
20	Social Limitation: Subject To Orders (Very Frequently, Major)
339	Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 499

Background/History: Conqueman Xan, Bureaucrat Second Class, leaned back in his chair and contemplated the young Human captain seated on the other side of his desk. He wasn't certain he liked what he saw. Normally he wasn't that impressed by Humans, but this captain was an imposing creature in his own way: tall for his species, muscular, intelligent blue eyes that missed very little. It was the "intelligent" part that worried him the most. "So..." Xan began after a moment of silence. "What can I do for you today, Captain Tiberius? I can't think of any reason for an Imperial Navy officer to pay me a visit."

Tiberius smiled slightly. "Actually, sir, I'm in the Terran Exploration Service, not the Navy."

LORD ZORM PLOT SEEDS

The PCs have a cargo of antique luxury items they want to deliver to the Varanyi Empire in exchange for a load of Goloba vodka, which has become very fashionable on Earth. The profits could be enormous! Unfortunately, to gain permission to enter Varanyi space they must first apply for a visa at the diplomatic mission in Lyons. And the diplomat they're meeting with seems very, very suspicious....

The Cojoined Civilizations Republic has hired the PCs to represent it on Earth. Unfortunately, the Republic has had a lot of problems with the Varanyi Empire lately, and it increasingly looks like war might result. Can the PCs work out the Republic's differences with the Empire on neutral ground before a war erupts? If war does erupt, can they survive the diplomatic killings that are certain to follow?

War has broken out between the Varanyi and Terran Empires and Lord Zorm has been ordered to kill the Empress. Can the PCs protect her? If they can't, can they track down the master assassin before he leaves the planet and force him to pay for his crimes?

EQUIPMENT

Weapon	OCV	RMod	Dam	STUN	Shots	STR Min	Notes
Combat Knife	+0	+0	1d6	1d6-1	—	8	Can Be Thrown, carries three
Throwing Knives	+0	+0	½d6	+0	5	3	Recoverable Charges, RBS

Armor

None

Gear: Pocket computer

We're a separate branch of the military tasked with exploration, the study of scientific phenomenon, astrogation surveys, things like that."

Xan knew this, of course. He knew a great many things. The officer's brown trousers, white shirt, and jaunty cap had given him away as TES the second he'd stepped through the office door. The five silver buttons on his collar revealed his rank. He knew the man was beloved by his crew from the slight residue of mechanical grease under his neatly trimmed fingernails. Spacers — even Varanyi spacers — loved a captain who got dirty helping his subordinates repair the ship. He also knew Tiberius was talented, ambitious, and politically unreliable because that described almost every officer in the TES. And he hadn't even read his mind yet.

Of course, Xan wasn't about to admit he knew these things. That would make Xan seem rather clever (which in fact he was), thus diminishing the Human's view of himself as clever. That wouldn't do. Xan liked his Humans feeling clever. It's when they were at their stupidest.

"All right then, Captain, what can a Bureaucrat Second Class do for the Terran Exploration Service today? We're a long way from uncharted space here at court, you know."

Tiberius gave the obligatory chuckle. "Yes, sir, we are — today. But tomorrow my newly-retrofitted ship comes out of its spacedock around Mars and, after a shakedown cruise to the Tau Ceti system, begins a six-year journey to the outer reaches of the Galaxy. More specifically, we are going to lap the outer rim from 285-degrees to roughly 135-degrees spinward. Then we will return to the Empire via Malva, avoiding the edge of Ackálian space as we do. Our neighbors anti-spinward have been known to be a little triggerhappy, you know."

If the Varanyi diplomat had any eyebrows he'd have raised one of them.

"That's... a lot of information to be telling a representative of a foreign power, Captain Tiberius. Even one from as friendly to Human interests as the Varanyi Empire."

The young captain smiled again. The Terran Empire and the Varanyi Empire were in no way friendly. In fact, both Empires believed it was their destiny to rule the entire Galaxy. They were simply too far away to make war on one another, which encouraged a certain fictional friendship between them. That was part of the reason Xan was here: to keep that fictional friendship intact. Or to act swiftly should it ever fell apart.

"Well, sir, I would like to enter Varanyi space for refueling and re-supply at about

210-degrees. In the area you call the Rimward Marches, I believe. And I'm sure you understand that I don't want any misunderstandings with the Interplanetary Force when I do. That would be unfortunate for all concerned."

"Indeed," Xan responded dryly. He decided to probe the human's mind and found it to be surprisingly well-guarded. Captain Tiberius had obviously undergone some conditioning to prevent such an intrusion. It would have proven adequate for defending himself against the two-crested *Chvorsq* the Human believed was sitting in the desk across from him. Unfortunately, appearances can be deceiving. It took mere seconds for "Xan" to see what he needed to see and return to their conversation.

"But what makes you think that I can help you with that? Surely the head of your organization could speak with the ambassador or his assistant about this matter."

"Yes," Replied Tiberius slowly. "But the word around Lyons is that you're the one to speak to when things really need to get done. As I said, I don't want any unfortunate misunderstandings."

"Ah, I see," replied Xan. The young captain must also be a nobleman of some sort; a fact he'd neglected to check for when quickly combing through his mind. He wouldn't have known anything about Xan's well-earned reputation at the Terran court otherwise. No matter. He knew the captain was largely telling the truth. He wasn't a spy; or, to be more precise, he wasn't much of a spy. He'd naturally report back everything he saw in Varanyi space to his superiors, but he wasn't going to make a career out of it, either. The young officer honestly wanted to explore the outer rim of the Galaxy for no other reason than scientific curiosity. That in itself was rather curious.

"All right, captain," Xan replied after a few tense moments had passed. "I will contact my government and see that arrangements are made for your ship. What is it called?"

"The long-range explorer *Cabeza de Vaca*. It's names for legendary Human traveler." With their business concluded the two exchanged a few brief pleasantries, and then Captain Tiberius departed. Lord Zorm, better known on Earth as Conqueman Xan, watched as he strode briskly across the plaza in front of the Varanyi Embassy. Very impressive... for a Human.

Moments later Lord Zorm contacted the unquestioned master of the greatest imperial power in the Galaxy using only the power of his mind. The Emperor was half a million light years away.

"I am sorry to disturb you, my *Sh'garothayn*," he signaled telepathically. "Is now a bad time?"

"No, my vassal-cousin." Replied *Sh'garothayn* Chegath. "I always have time to speak with you. Is there an emergency?"

"No — or at least, not yet. In three years time a Human exploration vessel called the *Cabeza de Vaca* plans on re-supplying in the Rimward Marches. It's captained by a very capable man named Tiberius. I recommend that you tell the Interplanetary Force to destroy it."

Personality/Motivation: An inhabitant of the Varanyi mission to Lyons, Lord Zorm is a powerful five-crested *Al'gari* with exceptional psionic abilities who's undergone cosmetic surgery so that he appears to be a two-crested *Chvorsq*. Operating under the assumed name Conqueman Xan, he appears to be nothing more than a mid-level embassy official in charge of negotiating trade agreements with Terran corporations. In fact, Lord Zorm is an espionage agent directly charged by his cousin the *Sh'garothayn* — the Varanyi Emperor — with spying on the Imperial Family. He isn't part of any Varanyi spy network (the Terran government knows of at least two) and reports directly to the Golden Throne in Varan.

Lord Zorm is a complicated man even by the standards of a species considered enigmatic by much of Galactic society. Aristocratic and proud, he nevertheless acquiesced to an operation that removed much of his *t'illk*: the standing/status/face concept that forms the backbone of Varanyi culture. Although he's a member of the Imperial family, he accepted a medium-level position among a distant people under the cover of an inglorious name. A patriot and scholar of the Varanyi playwright Tlanith, he's taken the time not only to gain a very un-Varanyilike understanding of the Human mind, but to study Shakespeare as well. A telepath born to believe the use of the voice to be crude, he has a natural gift for conversation that's caused many in Marissa's court to (rightly) consider him to be the easiest person in the Varanyi mission to deal with.

In many ways Lord Zorm is an example of the best Varanyi culture has to offer. He's intelligent, decisive, insightful, thorough, cultured, and disciplined. In other ways he exhibits many of the personality traits that other sentient beings have grown to hate and fear in the Varanyi species. He's cold, calculating, aloof, and — when the need arises — capable of breathtaking acts of cruelty and violence. In short, he's much like the Empire he serves.

Quote: "Ah, the Velarian ambassador. It's such a pleasure to meet you. I have studied your religion Scomaru Shaan. Fascinating. Have you considered the idea that your next Avatar might be a Varanyi?"

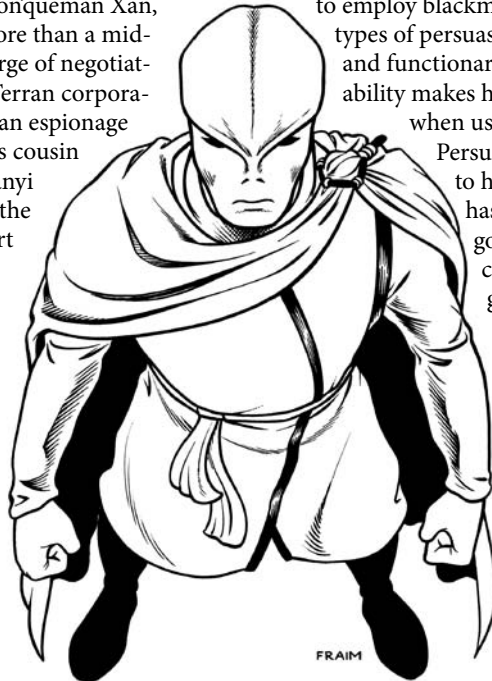
Oh — I'm sorry. Was that a bit... indelicate?"

Powers/Tactics: Lord Zorm is the ultimate diplomat/spy/assassin. His primary and public job is to negotiate trade deals with Terran corporations, a task he's quite proficient at. His second task is to act as the *Sh'garothayn*'s personal spy in the court of Empress Marissa III, directly gathering relevant gossip, news, and information for the Unquestioned Master of the Crested Ones and delivering it to him directly via telepathy. In both of these endeavors Zorm is ruthless not only in the use of his skills but his psionic powers as well. He thinks nothing of reading or controlling the mind of others to get what he wants, but is perfectly happy to employ blackmail, corruption, and other types of persuasion to bend Imperial agents and functionaries. His Social Chameleon ability makes him practically irresistible when using such Skills as Bribery, Persuasion, and Seduction. Thanks to his efforts Emperor Chegath has a good picture of what is going on inside the Terran court and can tailor his own government's policies accordingly.

Lord Zorm has been particularly adept at corrupting members of the Empress's household, including several of her TSS bodyguards (though his influence on Earth certainly doesn't stop there). He's done this in part because one of his roles, if necessary, is to assassinate the Empress. It's an order he's never likely to receive, since

the Terran and Varanyi Empires have never come to blows and show little inclination to do so. Furthermore, the *Sh'garothayn* understandably loathes the idea of regicide and likes having the second most powerful government in the Galaxy ruled by someone he understands. Still, Lord Zorm remains ready to literally drive the blade home should the order be given — and there are plenty of other killings to be done in the meantime. Lord Zorm is a master of striking with the dagger from concealment. In his decade on Earth he's used his skills to murder Varanyi defectors, nosy Velarian Intelligence Branch agents, and not a few meddling Seëcra diplomats. Though interviewed by law enforcement officials once or twice, he's never been a serious suspect in any of these killings.

Because all Varanyi possess psionic powers, the Mind Police have been assigned to watch the entire Varanyi delegation at Lyons, including "Conqueman Xan." Since the Varanyi diplomats have complete diplomatic immunity, these psionic agents are required to be extremely discreet — and have thus been utterly ineffective, as Zorm's abilities vastly exceed their own. To the best of their knowledge Conqueman Xan, Bureaucrat Second Class, is exactly what he seems to be: a well-connected, mid-level



Varanyi diplomat. Zorm also maintains another false identity as Conqueman Vlar, Xan's kinsman in the importation/exportation business. He plans on using that identity if he ever has to quickly flee Earth.

Campaign Use: There are three ways for PCs to encounter Lord Zorm. The first and most innocuous is if they wish to travel to the Varanyi Empire on legitimate business. The only way to gain permission to travel through that distant empire is via its mission on Earth and, ultimately, a seemingly innocuous bureaucrat known as Conqueman Xan. If they're on the level — and odds are good Zorm will know — he'll merely use his powers to wrangle the best possible business deal he can for his government. If they aren't, he'll either deny them visas... or politely send them to their doom. The *Al'gari* nobleman actually suffers fools rather gladly, but sees it as his duty to eliminate overly clever aliens with too much interest in the Varanyi Empire.

Second, the PCs could encounter Lord Zorm if they're somehow involved in the many intrigues of the Empress's court in Lyons. In this situation the Varanyi diplomat is yet another one of the many fascinating and dangerous players involved

in the sordid drama that is the Terran Empire's royal government. The PCs could be noblemen, Senators, influential bureaucrats, alien diplomats, trusted bodyguards, or some combination thereof, and the Varanyi nobleman one of the many obstacles they must negotiate on their way to gaining the Empress's patronage.

Third, the PCs could encounter Lord Zorm in his capacity as an assassin. Perhaps the Varanyi have targeted one of the PCs for death, or possibly the heroes are protecting someone who's been targeted. Maybe the *Sh'garothayn* has finally ordered the Empress's death and the PCs are the only people able to protect her. But the interests of the Terran and Varanyi Empires don't have to collide. The PCs could end up working with Lord Zorm to thwart some scheme hatched by the Ackálans, the Thorgons, or some previously unknown and dangerous galactic power.

Though Lord Zorm is probably capable of taking on a group of heroes in certain situations using his psionic powers and mastery of the knife, he isn't really designed to fight a group of opponents in fair and open combat. To make Zorm better able to combat an entire group of PCs, increase his SPD, give him a *Knifefighting* Martial Art, and provide him with a force-field belt or other form of protection. To make him less formidable, reduce his psi powers to the level of a two-crested *Chvorsq* (see TE 38-39).

Appearance: Lord Zorm is an exceptionally tall (2.5 meters) Varanyi with aristocratic features for a member of his species. He's slim, brown-skinned, and has had his skull cosmetically altered to make him appear to be a two crested *Chvorsq*, though in reality he's a powerful five-crested *Al'gari*. (This alteration in no way affects his psionic powers.) Like many Varanyi diplomat-bureaucrats he wears a flowing blue and tan robe belted at the waist, boots, and a cape with the insignia of the *Sh'garothayn* on the back.

WHAT THEY SAY: LORD ZORM

Leopold D'Estaing, Senator-Viscount of Kinzareth: "Normally I don't have much use for Varanyi, horrible alien mind-monsters that they are. But I have to admit I like that Conqueman Xan fellow. They say he's a commoner, but if ever a man screamed "noble" it's him. I've got a strange urge to break tradition and invite him to a party at my penthouse."

Tlanith, Hazereldia Act 2 III (translation): "A complex man is like a shattered mirror/A thousand faces stare back at him/Which action shall make virtue clearer/Or is all subject to god's whim?"

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