TWILIGHT SECTOR

SPACE OPERA [10]

SETTING UPDATE
BETA

Michael J. Cross

TRAVELLER

SETTING BOOK BETA
Twilight Sector Edition

TWILIGHT SECTOR

Setting Book Beta

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TWILIGHT SECTOR NEWS ITEMS

One of the mainstays of both fan and official Traveller periodicals of the past were the news tidbits of the setting, generally found at the front of every issue or running along the bottom of the page like today's continuous crawl.

We've tried to capture that feel with the *Galactic News Service Wirefeed*. This is information from the Known Galaxy in the Twilight Sector Setting. The wirefeed will capture all the hard news that affects the setting as a whole.

But we didn't stop there. *The Casual Observer: Weekly Galactic News* is the super market tabloid of the setting. Here you'll find to paraphrase what one super-secret agencies top troubleshooter referred to as the "Best investigative reporting in the Galaxy". You never know if the information is at all credible but the idea that even a little of it might be is frightening.

But how could your news be complete without some local news. That's where *The Star of the Plains* comes in. It provides the local news for the Twilight Sector and it's environs.

This news is provided via the Twilight Sector newsletter. An occasional email newsletter that contains these newsfeeds on a rotating basis as well as all the latest information on new products for the Twilight Sector Campaign setting. You'll want to sign up for it as soon as possible: **http://terrasolgames.com/**

GALACTIC NEWS SERVICE WIREFEED 1

Thursday, March 3, 2991 (received 14:25 UTC. Earth)
Mauryan Empire (GNS):

An Interstellar incident was touched off when the private yacht *Daddy's Pride* strayed off course into Mauryan Empire space and is now being held by Mauryan authorities under espionage charges. The yacht reportedly only had two passengers: Myron George, CEO of **Apollo AeroSpace**, one of the largest shipbuilders in Terran Space, and a second individual who remains unidentified as of this report.

This is only the latest round of saber rattling by the Empire. Two months ago an Empire patrol attacked and destroyed a system defense boat in the Anroy system well within Terran Union Space.

Despite deep philosophical differences, the Oster Republic has repeatedly defended the Mauryan Empire, the Osters threaten military action if the Terran Union should use force to respond to Mauryan encroachment. The Empire has been accused of gross human rights abuses by the Terrans, which has lead to the current state of tension and occasional raiding along the two nation's common border.

The Oster Republic has supported the Mauryan position that Terran accusations amount to interference in Mauryan internal politics. Off the record, several Terran diplomats accuse the Oster Republic of cynicism stating "the only common ground the two nations possess is their opposition to anything Terran."

Saturday, May 14, 2991 (received 09:39 UTC. Earth)
Earth/Terran Union (GNS):

A joint mission between the Orion Confederation, Terran Union, and the Union of United Planets will attempt to look back in time to determine the origins of Terra/Sol. The project, announced on Earth will send a mobile observatory to a position far enough distant from the Terra/Sol system to detect light emitted by the star at least 1,000 years ago. This is expected to take the mission far into unexplored space.

Estimated cost for the mission is 1.68 trillion credits. The mission will involve the use of at least one Dreadnought which will be provided by the UUP. The Dreadnought will depart UUP space directly opposite Terra/Sol and continue into unknown space.

Setting Book Beta

Thursday, June 23, 2991 (received 22:13 UTC. Earth)

GNS

Solteir/Terran Union (GNS) - The Aquatic Sentience Institute on the waterworld of Soltier suffered a bomb attack today. Six Dolphin and two human researchers were killed, and eleven other sentients were injured. The Institute is currently attempting to uplift *Orcinus orca*, commonly known as the Killer Whale.

Credit for the blast was immediately claimed by the ELF, the Exolife Liberation Front. The environmental organization has long opposed additional uplifts by humans, and has previously been responsible for over a hundred attacks on organizations or facilities known to engage in uplift research. Since the ASI is owned and directed by uplifted Dolphins it's unclear if ELF has broadened their opposition to oppose any uplift activities.

Monday, August 1, 2991 (received 08:21 UTC. Earth)

GNS

Uttica/Shenzhou (GNS) – Unforecast solar flares in this system resulted in the deaths of over 8,000 asteroid miners working the rich inner belt of the Uttica system. Uttica's solar primary has long been prone to flare activity. In previous decades, this has been extremely predictable, but the latest outburst gave only a few hours warning. The flare was also the largest on record based on in-system and pre-settlement findings. Stellar scientists are at a loss to explain the event, but are currently investigating to learn what they can.

Tuesday August 9, 2991 (Received 12:55 UTC. Earth)

GNS

Terra-Sol/Orion Confederation(GNS) – Another ritual kidnapping and brutal slaying has occurred today in the Republic of the Plains on Terra-Sol. Dubbed as the "Yamaguchi Ripper", these flagrant criminal actions have become magnified by the reluctance of authorities to shed any light on their nature.

"We see these kind of events come and go in modern society," said Police Spokesentient Hobarth Hulmann-Orlanski-Babangida, "Kansas City is home to 43 million Sentients, 42 million of which are biologicals. These things happen from time to time, so while the murders and abductions are themselves serious criminal acts, there is no need for this sensationalism. Rest assured, the Kansas City Police Department is dedicated to finding this killer and bringing them to justice."

THE CASUAL OBSERVER

St Petersburg. Federated Republics of Russia.
June 28, 2991, Captain James Jonah:

Local Police today reported the discovery of the body of infamous Terra/Sol scientist Professor Johan Ivach.

From 2940 to 2980, Professor Ivach was regarded as one of the finest minds in the sector. His outstanding work on T-Space physics, Quantum reality and Time-Space divergence were required reading at many Twilight Sector Universities.

THE CASUAL OBSERVER WEEKLY GALACTIC NEWS

However from 2980 onwards Ivach's work took a downturn into bizarre theories and speculations on the nature of T-Space. The professor asserted that although tachyons only exist at a speed beyond that of light, Tachyon Space still carried the same potential to spawn life as our so called normal space. The professor had not been in the public eye since his ill fated 2987 expedition which culminated in the loss of all hands aboard the lab ship *Estevanico*.

With his reputation in ruins, Ivach vanished from the public eye and has not been seen until the discovery of his body. Authorities refused to comment on the cause of death or the condition of the Professor's body when it was discovered.

This reporter is left to wonder after the good Professor's fate. Was it a foregone conclusion after showing the audacity to challenge the scientific establishments Unified Theory of Transluminal Space? We at the Casual Observer will continue to investigate!

Albion, Orion Confederation.
July 3, 2991, Chet Leewood:

Suppressed research from an Albion government laboratory indicates that a highly adaptable Alien virus is to blame for this planets high incidence of so-called "Natural Mutation". Similar to other reports this publication has received over the past twenty years from a number of government sponsored researchers not just in the Orion Confederation but in Terran Union Space as well.

This mounting evidence can only lead us to conclude that the real story behind humanities so called "next evolutionary step" is more than has been provided to the general public.

We at the Casual Observer will continue to investigate!

PROMINENT NEWSPAPERS
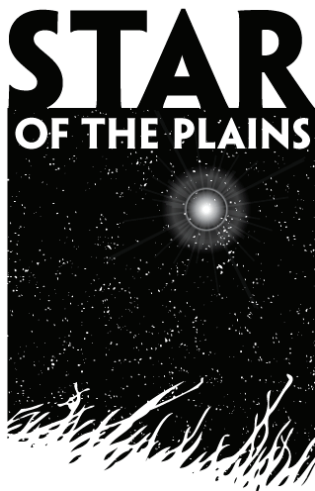
Star of the Plains August 7, 2991
Remembrance Day

Kansas City – Sylvia Cruz

President Smith today marked the 109th anniversary of the loss of the Battleship *Kansas* to thwart the APR invasion of Terra/Sol. He placed a wreath at the Soldiers and Starmen memorial before making a few brief remarks praising the courage and sacrifice of Plainsman in support of the Confederation during the war. The event was attended by many of the relatives of those lost.

Other Services:

ROP Supports Texas
(The Star Grid Service)
Foreign Minister Gerald Laughing Bear today reiterated the ROP's support of the Republic of Texas. The matter deals with the claim over a 15 square mile section of land now south of the Rio Grande after a shift of the river in 2889. Several artillery duels have occurred over the last several weeks…

Aztec Empire Bans Press
(EP) – Mexico City

Aztec Press Secretary Manual Norova today announced that the foreign press would be banned from the southern province of Quintana Roo. Huastec rebels, who are reportedly receiving help from the Andes Free State, have launched offensives from this area lately. In part the statement read: "The Son of Heaven, Coyote a Quesquatal has decreed that foreign wordsmiths are to no longer have access to the Quintana Roo as they are easily deceived by the Crow Shaman of the Huastec. If they are so gullible I must protect them from this deception."

GALACTIC NEWS SERVICE WIREFEED II

Friday, September 2, 2991 (received 3:22 UTC. Earth)
Mauryan Empire (GNS):

The diplomatic standoff between the Terran Union and the Mauryan Empire continues as Myron George, CEO of Apollo AeroSpace, continues to be held by the Mauryans. He has now been indicted for espionage and crimes against the state by the Mauryan high court. The Terran Union has now placed three Dreadnoughts (the *Pacific*, the *Chile* and the *Australia*) at Anroy in response to the Mauryans placement of two Dreadnoughts and the Oster Republics placement of two of their Dreadnoughts within six parsecs of Anroy.

The Grand Yogi Reverend Stratmore Van, a Shenzhou roving ambassador continues to shuttle between the three parties trying to reach a diplomatic solution.

Monday, October 10, 2991 (received 19:43 UTC. Earth)
Revolution/APR (GNS):

The 74th quadrennial Congress of the Communist People's Party was rocked today by denunciations of several key potential successors of Party Chairman Li Po.

The Congress was convened two years early to coincide with the Chairman's 200th birthday celebration. However those good feelings have been shattered by the denunciations of Vladimir Volstock and Sergi Li by a coalition of junior party apparatchiks primarily from the APR's intelligence agencies.

The well timed assault has appeared to gain traction within the Congress as several lesser Chairman Candidates have apparently latched onto the movement. It is unclear at this time if Volstock or Li will be able to weather this denunciation.

Thursday, November 10, 2991 (received 11:56 UTC. Earth)
Revolution/APR (GNS):

Chairman Li Po has recessed this contentious 74th Peoples Party Congress with no resolution as to a successor and with the two primary candidates at the beginning of the Congress, Vladimir Volstock and Sergi Li, still holding onto their party positions. The Chairman set October 10th, 2993 as the date the 74th congress would reconvene.

airman Po recesses contentious 74th Peoples Party Congress...   New Gra
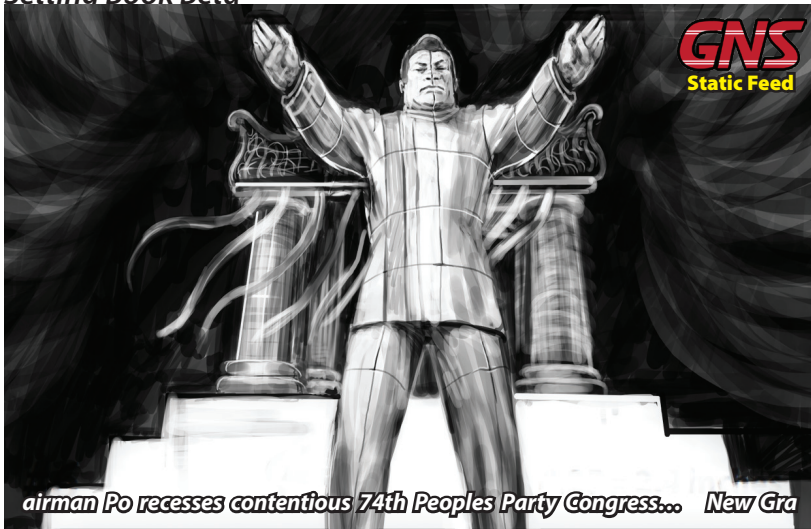
The only clear result is the Peoples Communist Party is more fractured than at any time in the history of the APR and tensions are high as the Congress lined up in support of the two primary candidates and the so called rebel faction of junior party officials who attempted the political assassinations of Volstock and Li. There have already been reports of rioting and military confrontation between various factions throughout the Republic. Without strong leadership from Chairman Po, these are only likely to escalate.

Tuesday, December 27, 2991 (received 01:16 UTC. Earth)
Kaifeng/Shenzhou (GNS):

GNS Black smoke from the Prime Yogi's residence in Perchan City today announced the passing of Prime Guru Mati Chowdhury.

The controversial leader who oversaw the Shenzhou Hegemony's entry into the Mutant War surprisingly on the side of the Expansionist States was beloved in the Hegemony but reviled in the Terran Union and the Orion Confederation. Her decision to enter the war on the side of the Expansionist States was viewed by the Terrans and the Orions as a personal betrayal. Both governments believed that the move was a cynical attempt to try and wrest the Terra/Sol system away from the Orions since so many Shenzhou adherents believed that world to be their mythic "divine land".

Manish Gowda and Lu Duc Phat are considered to be the main candidates to succeed her as the Prime Guru.

SLICES OF LIFE

One of the regular pieces found on our website is the "Slice of Life" article. These Slice of life articles are designed to give you a peek inside what life in the 30th century is like. With these articles we attempt to take a look at the technology of the Twilight Sector Setting and figure out how that would affect the lives of characters within the setting...

CIGARS AND CIGARETTES
Smoking in the Twilight Sector

Tobacco was a part of human culture long before the North American Natives of Old Earth introduced it to the Europeans. After they discovered the' wonder leaf,' the Europeans then proceeded to attribute both virtue and vice to its use. The last millennia has seen the use, rise, and fall of tobacco many times but it has never left humanities side. As with anything extant at the beginning of the current millennium and still around today, tobacco has gone through many styles and modes of use.

As of 2991 the predominate form of tobacco use is cigarettes. Once considered the worst means of consumption, cigarettes are considered reasonably safe in the 30th century. A once-a-decade trip for gene spa therapy removes the accumulated tar and corrects any potential medical problems. In fact, this is a commonplace practice to visit such a spa just before the implementation of a longevity treatment, and most of the better clinics will simply perform both procedures at the same time. Even with that fact, there are still those who abhor the concept of smoking and attack it on medical grounds. Claiming that the standard ten year gap between treatments is too long to be safe where smoking is concerned or simply casting doubt on the research figures.

"Tobacco, divine, rare, super excellent tobacco, which goes far beyond all the panaceas, potable gold, and philosophers' stones, a sovereign remedy to all diseases…"

Robert Burton (1577-1640),
English clergyman & Author

The opponents of smoking have seen success in some political entities most especially in the Terran Union. They have gotten regulations passed requiring so called "Cleaner Cigarettes" more commonly called *cleaning rounds* by smokers (presumably in reference to cleaning rounds used in some weapons). These "Cleaner Cigarettes" contain heat activated nanites which clean out any tar deposits in the lungs. There is typically one "Cleaner Cigarette" in each pack. The main problem cited by smokers is that the cleaners induce coughing fits, which are actually deliberate (in that they clear the debris that the nanites remove). And of course, Cleaners taste horrible. Most places that require them find that they are seldom used by consumers ("Pitching the Cleaner" is a common practice).

"Smoking is a custom loathsome to the eye, hateful to the nose, harmful to the brain, dangerous to the lungs, and in the black, stinking fume thereof nearest resembling the horrible Stygian smoke of the pit that is bottomless…"

King James I of England

Cigarette usage rises and falls over the decades often as a fashion statement. Currently the practice is quite popular on Terra/Sol with approximately 41% of the population smoking at least every week. Studies have shown that much of this is driven by visibility in the media. This has lead to cutthroat competition for product placement in things like movies and vid programs, where cigarette advertising is also one of the major revenue sources.

So how does this affect my game?

For the most part this is background 'window dressing' to make your game feel deeper. And there aren't many substitutes for a cigarette as an icebreaker with your underworld contact or that cute guy or girl in the corner. However there are some tangible uses as well. Some Orion states like the Federated Republics of the Russias (The Russian Empire) and Ukraine have extensive restrictions on tobacco use and impose extraordinary taxes on tobacco products. This has created a thriving black market. A two credit pack of cigarettes can sell for anywhere from four to six times its value in the Russian Empire.

On an interstellar level, there is a large market for Orion tobacco products on Argos. Apparently the cheap cigarettes provided in the company stores by the PAX Combine are not organolepticly pleasing…in the extreme! Therefore a black market for Orion products (which are banned) exists. MAC workers often smuggle in a few cartons to make an extra credit. A shipload sold to the right contacts could make a crew a pile of money.

HIGHWAYS & TRAFFIC GRIDS

Vehicular traffic on a heavily inhabited, relatively wealthy, hightech world like Terra/Sol is extremely dense. Terra/Sol has a population of 15 Billion, but there are actually even more vehicles on the planet, an estimated 18 Billion. Moving around in one of the planet's dense urban areas would be akin to playing Russian roulette if not for the aid of AI controlled *traffic grids*. These grids have proven to be a boon to major cities, not just for safety but to ensure efficiency in the delivery of goods and supplies.

These traffic grids are the controlling factor for both personal and commercial travel, especially in the skies. While air travel via grav vehicle is commonplace, ground travel remains the more efficient means for getting goods from point A to point B planetside. That's why outside of the cities, surface highways still exist in the 30th century (albeit in an updated form from those of 21st century Earth). The more things change the more they remain the same.

The Look and Feel of Vehicular Travel

The 30th century transportation corridor is the province of the machine. These corridors are ablaze of activity: grav cars fly overhead, fast trains scream along at ground level, and thousands of automated skid-tractors move along huge highways. The highways are nearly the sole providence of machines. If you were to find yourself along one of these highways you'd feel rather lonely. As opposed to the

pedestrian slideways, few if any humans are present on the highways except those sealed in the climate controlled comfort of other passenger vehicles. Traffic grids can be nearly as lonely in some of the subterranean sections of the cities, but there are also places were pedestrians and vehicles come together, often in nauseatingly slow-moving tangles (for the vehicle passengers) on surface streets. City designers often try to create as few of these choke points as possible.

From inside of the vehicle, travel in a grav car or 30th century ground car is significantly different than the 21st century version of personal vehicle transit. In most instances, the driver is only needed to initiate the journey and tell the traffic grid what destination they need. This means that without entertainment or refreshments even a short trip can be somewhat tedious.

The "Civilian Vehicles" article in *Starfarer's Gazette #1* details some of the available options, including entertainment packages and snack bars to reflect this 30th century reality. Even smaller groundcars, without the space for such luxuries, use the windshield of the vehicle as a forward screen for the occupant's personal computing devices. Outside of the traffic grids, in rural areas for example, the driver must actually drive themselves (something of a novelty for many 30th century citizens), making the existence of the traffic grid another one of these "golden handcuffs" that further tie urbanites to their caves of steel.

Flying the Unfriendly Skies

Traffic grids run by AI systems control air travel by grav cars –or any other sort of flying vehicle – at all times over urban areas. This allows air traffic to flow at a very good pace while protecting against accidents. Despite 30th century advances, accidents still occur. Most often however, these are due to mechanical breakdowns or human interventions

Mechanical breakdowns are reasonably rare, but with a system so complex they can occur almost anywhere. The classic example is when a breakdown happens in the vehicle themselves: a sudden loss of power; a thruster out of alignment; a piece of the vehicle that shears free; the positioning sensors for the vehicle or the antenna system which broadcasts the data becomes interrupted or corrupted. Beyond the vehicle, the breakdown might be somewhere in the grid: the sensornets embedded in the roadway; the grid control systems; automated lights can go out or be subjected to power surges that make them act unpredictably. While 30th century technology is robust and far better than 21st century equivalents, there is simply much more that *can* go wrong.

Hacking the traffic system is far more likely to be the cause of an accident than some random AI fault.

Hacking the traffic system is far more likely to be the cause of an accident than some random AI fault. These efforts usually have less-than-optimal results for the passengers of these vehicles, despite the claims of success on Hacker sites. People hack their auto pilots for a variety of (often illegal) reasons which can exacerbate mechanical issues long-term. Some drivers alter their transponders for anonymity; which means that other vehicles might slam into them since the AI does not have the proper information to make routes safe. Certain individuals have even jammed the traffic grid signal deliberately, which is the most problematic of all human interventions. This deliberate sabotage can also take place on a more massive scale: such as the 2978 *GrossBerlin Incident,* in which the traffic grid was hacked and the ensuing traffic accidents that came as a direct result claimed over 2,300 lives. This single wanton act of malicious hacking brought the city to a standstill for weeks as people refused to use airborne transportation out of fear that something similar would happen again; many took years to fly again.

In rural settings, gravcar drivers usually have the option of manual control of their vehicle if they are a citizen of the state in which they are operating. For example if one was a citizen of the Republic of Texas, they would be allowed manual control of their vehicle in rural areas over the plains of Texas. But this varies from place to place: as a citizen of the Republic of Texas you most assuredly would not be allowed manual control of a vehicle at any time in the Aztec Empire. Most political entities realize the power of an airborne vehicle in the hands of a terrorist or madman.

The Final Victim of GrossBerlin

The GrossBerlin incident also resulted in the first recorded AI suicide. The suicide was Jarrett Hazelbloom-Mercer-Figgins-Hoge-Vatterman, the AI running the GrossBerlin traffic grid at the time of the accident. Jarrett deleted himself and, using a timer program, turned off his host hardware in such a way that deliberately scrambled all of his backups. This all-too human act has become the subject of considerable debate: was Jarrett driven 'over the edge' in a manner that is not entirely inconsistent with humans? Was he simply flawed? Corrupted deliberately?

Rolling, Rolling, Rolling.

Grav Vehicles tend to predominate, but they have not completely eclipsed ground vehicles. In addition to wheeled vehicles, Hover-type vehicles are common on some worlds (usually backwaters with the pretension of considering themselves "advanced" or where wheeled travel is problematic due to local surfaces). Ground-based drivers normally have the option to control their vehicles even in the cities. Incidents here, while potentially serious, tend to have less fatal ramifications. This of course varies by the local government. Most drivers still slave their vehicles to the traffic grid even when on the ground. It is estimated that over 95% of ground vehicles inside of the traffic grids are slaved to the grid. Stiff fines for accidents will dictate this if nothing else, providing a good economic incentive for doing so. Likewise, in some jurisdictions there are fines for impeding the efficiency of the system and/or a special license must be obtained for "self-drivers" (usually a level 1 or higher skill is sufficient to obtain one of these licenses). Many public service announcements extol the virtues of "grid-transitting" (slaving to the grid) and warn of the dangers of "self-driving" with cameos by well-known media and sports figures.

Better businesses (and the best Condapts) have their own entry/exits to the subterranean expresses.

Ground traffic in some areas can be quite convoluted, especially when the vehicle serviceways pass through foot traffic areas. This is why most ground vehicles either use the subterranean express tunnels underneath major cities or the designated "Elevated Roads" (which some locations use in lieu of the subterranean expresses). At certain "pinch points" the vehicles must be directed through urban surface areas, but these are relatively well-controlled. Better businesses (and the best Conapts) have their own entry/exits to the subterranean expresses.

A few areas which are not built up enough to require slideways and similar pedestrian systems use ground vehicles in a manner not dissimilar to 21st century cities and towns. Here the surface streets are much like they were 900 years before. Traffic Grids tend to be catch-as-catch can in some of these places, especially squatter towns and retrotech enclaves where AIs are either unavailable or undesirable. Inhabitants of such areas tend to be slightly annoyed when (generally poor) drivers "spoiled by the grids" descend onto their communities and start bumping into things.

SKID TECHNOLOGY

Skid technology has also been used for smaller standard-passenger-vehicles, but these are often specialty cars for specific purposes like racing and stunt-driving. In fact, the name "skid" comes from the type of racing that vehicles of this type perform (the name subsequently stuck).

In more "conventional" ground vehicles however, there is generally little need to cancel this kind of weight. At least not in a way that is cost-efficient considering the power output required for grav (as compared to simply ramping up conventional drivetrains). Do not look for this feature to be a standard option from most manufacturers. Instead the technology has very reasonable, very efficient specific uses (such as in Skid-tractors).

Where this "skid" technology has truly surpassed itself has been in the off-road market. Light offroad vehicles using the Skid concept (both in wheeled and Hover versions) have become very popular and very widespread among thrillseekers throughout the Known Galaxy. A full line of offroad skids are commercially available from many automakers.

Tinkers have also been known to use skid vehicles of various types for their inherently mobile lifestyle. They do not have the problems associated with full grav vehicles, they can often be fixed "on the go," and they can carry large amounts of goods. All and all, the perfect example of "Applied Tinker Technology."

The Wheels of Commerce

Except for rapid delivery freight, the norm for any commercial entity moving its goods is that the cheapest method of transportation is the best. Even after 900 years, wheeled transport and even trains continue to be a useful and efficient means of travel.

On Terra/Sol – and for that matter on most high technology planets – short range movement is accomplished by grav-assisted ground vehicles or *skid-tractors*. Appearance wise, these vehicles are not that dissimilar to their 21st century counterparts, tractor-trailers. Under the hood though things have changed considerably. Most skid-tractors are powered by hydrogen power plants to cut down on pollution, and because hydrogen-based fuel is inexpensive on worlds like Terra/Sol (thanks to the large hydrographic percentage). The cargo trailers sport grav plates on their bottom-chassis, which lowers the weight of the cargo and thus makes the tractor even more efficient. The wheels provide both the motive-force and the traction for the vehicle. Since the grav plates only need to negate the weight of the cargo and not be able to provide propulsion (as they do in a grav vehicle) skids are cheaper to manufacture and cheaper to power, lowering the overall fuel needed to move cargo from point A to point B.

These skid-tractors are usually remotely operated and travel via the highways. The highways usually follow along the routes of the high speed trains with branches to smaller highways to deliver goods to the smaller and smaller distribution points. While having superficial similarities to 21st century highways, that impression is quickly overcome by the sheer magnitude. The largest highways run parallel to the high speed train routes. These are usually stacked four or more layers high with six to eight lanes running in each direction. They are loaded with sensors to monitor and control the remotely controlled skid-tractors that use them for medium and short-run hauls.

Highways are certainly not the *only* method that goods are distributed by of course: Long distance commercial cargo is often transported via high speed rail like the SeaBal (Baltimore to Seattle) line in North America, the Berlin-Moscow line in Europe or the Hercules-Goodhope run in Africa. These high speed trains deliver freight to large population centers, which is then delivered to distribution facilities by smaller (ground or grav) vehicles.

Passenger trains are also available, and relatively cheap, but they face stiff competition from the only slightly more expensive air alternatives. This said, they still appeal to many travellers.

The Lure of the Sea

A significant amount of travel over water is done by grav vehicles, which many thought would end the very concept of conventional boats. This has not been the case due to practical reasons. Grav vehicles cost much more than equivalent shipping vessels. Also, grav vehicles require constant power output, even to "hover", while boats do not (making them both safer and more economical). Some Grav Vehicles are even equipped around boat-like hulls that allow them to "settle" on water, a 30th century version of the hydroplane. This has become so common that even a few spaceships (like the *Mirador*) use such an arrangement.

Some Grav Vehicles are even equipped around boat-like hulls that allow them to "settle" on water…

Most travel on or in water is done either by Submarine or Hover-capable vessels. Submarines have become very useful for underwater and even abovewater sea habitats. A considerable amount of pleasure boats and even small (rather than the huge cargo barges) commercial watercraft ply the 30th century seas. Many of these still resemble 21st century boats. This is especially true in areas of open water which are difficult for submarine or hover vehicles to travel, such as rivers and areas known as rough seas. A version of the traffic grid in the areas immediately around major metropolitan areas does exist, but is considered less-efficient than groundside or skyside grids because of the "considerable variations" caused by water.

ΛUTOWΛRZ

Some of the more extreme Sports of the 30th century have bridged the gaps between transportation, entertainment and combat. This is perhaps best typified by the phenomenon of **AutoWarz**. These bouts, usually between heavily armed and armored groundcars in quasi-historical body styles and garish paintjobs, are splashed over the popular media landscape.

Using robot cams, H&IT tech from the drivers and VEO projections, the audience is able to see and hear the action, sometimes literally from inside of the driver's seat. The action is intense, and sometimes aspects of the games are "enhanced" during production.

AutoWarz tends to attract the more outlandish competitors, those who like to fire big guns and hog as much publicity as they can. Most of them adopt fanciful names and bigger-than-life costumes and entourages. The current top contender is Commander Del "Hardrock" Shayne, a Mutant War veteran who is practically a wallflower by Autowarz standards.

On Terra/Sol, the home of this particular sport is in the Republic of Texas, where this sport has come to predominate even over gravball. The **New Dallas Roadkill Rally** is considered to be the premier contest, held annually in late June.

Game Mechanics:
Obviously *Drive* Skill, with a specialty in *Wheeled* or whatever vehicle that is being used. Often, these kinds of contests are played out in intricately arrayed arenas or tracks complete with various entertaining obstacles that have to be bypassed or avoided (such as pop-up guns or explosions).

Use of the vehicles gunnery suite requires *Heavy Weapons* skill.

SYNTHETIC MEAT:
It's What's Good-Enough to Eat
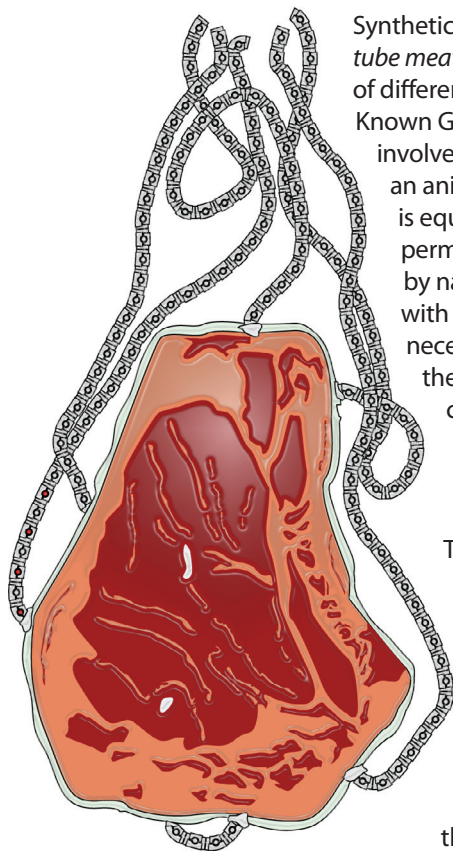
Synthetic meat, aka *vat meat, faux meat,* or *tube meat*, is found by literally thousands of different brand-names across the Known Galaxy. The basics of the process involve harvesting a cell culture from an animal, placing it in a mould which is equipped with self-replicating permeable membranes (produced by nano-technology). These expand with the culture, delivering all the necessary nutrients and hormones as the culture matures. The small cell culture eventually grows to the limits of its mould and is ready to harvest: the perfect steak, chicken breast, or pork loin.

This is a relatively simple technology that has revolutionized food creation everywhere from deep space habitats on the far frontiers of space to the dense Hive cities of the Terran Union. Making analogues of beef, poultry, pork (or any meat for that matter) via this process has had a radical effect on the footprint of meat production and improved the efficiency of human food production enormously.

For example a deep space habitat can import a new culture, devote a space for molds and keep churning out meat for years. Nutrients for the process can be mined from asteroids or any space debris and hormones can be created using recombinant DNA technology pioneered in the Long Pause era. This technique can even eliminate the necessity of regular food supply in a sufficiently large facility (other than luxuries and the like). In short, a space habitat can become a sustenance provider for its own population.

But this technology has much greater implications than just feeding space habitats. It has provided a guilt-free way for those opposed to harvesting animals for food to enjoy meat. This sort of thing plays very well in the Terran Union, where animal rights sensitivities run high, often with laws governing the treatment of animals and in some places even outlawing the use of them for food. Some individuals do still object to the pain and suffering the animals experience when cells are harvested using nano tubes, but most veterinarians agree the sensation would be far less than a fly bite.

No longer do you need vast amounts of grazing land to service large numbers of animals.

The process has also greatly reduced the footprint needed to create meat. No longer do you need vast amounts of grazing land to service large numbers of animals. Instead the importance of specific animals has become the norm. A specific cow that produces excellent tasting meat can be harvested literally millions of times all while the donor animal lives a pampered life. Some of the best restaurants have hundreds of different types of beef associated with the specific animal it was harvested from. Names like *Tender Daisy* or *Robust Ralph* are designed to advertise the taste properties of the culture's original source and establish a market presence.

Despite this technology and the advantages it provides, there are still some who prefer the taste of real food. In fact, a rather large segment of the population claims that 'natural' meat is far superior to synth meat. Some psychologists feel this is an effect of socio-psychological dynamics, of having been told this year after year, but a good number of these researchers express that they too have a preference for real foodstuffs and can tell the difference. There is some scientific backing to this notion: tests indicate that a solid 25% of the population can indeed tell the difference between vat grown and natural meats. The problem is that no researcher can say exactly *how* or *why* they can do so.

A much smaller number, approximately 5%, actually *prefer* the taste of sythmeat to that of 'real' meat. These individuals claim synthmeat tastes better and helps their digestion more than the real thing. The rest of the population, some 70%, cannot tell the difference enough to form a genuine preference.

GLOOP

Gloop is the 30th century staff of life. It is the stuff that goes into feeding the cell culture that becomes your synth meat or into the food synthesizers to directly become your ham or potatos. Gloop is made from organic materials. It comes both in a liquid form and a dried brick form. As a liquid the stuff just looks like "gloop" hence the name. The most common form of gloop in the Twilight Sector is Krill foodpaste from Argos. It is the raw material that most food synthesizers use to create instant meals.

…just because it sits at the bottom of consumer preference doesn't diminish its importance.

On the grand 30th century food pyramid, gloop is firmly entrenched at the bottom. Synthetic products like synth meat and hydroponic vat-grown vegetables are regarded more highly. Above everything else are those rare natural foods. But just because it sits at the bottom of consumer preference doesn't diminish its importance. For space travel, space habitats and sealed environmental habitats where storage is at a premium, gloop is a godsend.

The problem with gloop has always been taste — with good reason. Early versions of the stuff were simply awful but with time and consumer demand more palatable versions of gloop came onto the market. Like any consumer product, from carpet to gauss weapons, there are endless quality levels of gloop. The quality of taste that is experienced by the consumer is based on two factors: the quality of the gloop itself; and the fidelity level of the food synthesizer that ultimately converts the gloop into a food item or recipe.

※ The quality of gloop is usually described as being in one of three tiers, low, moderate or high. For purposes of determining the quality of what you are consuming the factor assigned to each level is 75% for low, 90% for moderate and 99% for high. The costs for the three tiers per meal equivalent is 2, 4 or 8 credits. Clearly, as stated above, there is room in each tier for higher and lower quality gloop with corresponding incremental price adjustments.

※ The second factor is the quality of the food synthesizer that ultimately converts the gloop into a meal. These are rated as a fidelity factor to the recipe program used by the processor, the range is 91 to 99%. So an example of the worst quality meal

would be low quality gloop (75%) and a low quality synthesizer (91%). Food produced by this combination would result in a meal that tasted 68% like a meal using natural ingredients. It doesn't sound too appetizing but that is what many starship crews must put up with (besides whatever real food they can sneak on board and keep out of the hands of their shipmates). On the other end, more expensive versions can be quite good: high quality gloop with a state of the art synthesizer (99% x 99%) would produce a meal that tasted 98% like a natural one. The average person would have a hard time telling the difference.

Gloop Cost

Low	2 Cr
Medium	4 Cr
High	8 Cr

Synthesizer Tables:

Select the **Quality**, **Type** (size) and **Range** (recipe variety) of your synthesizer.

Food Synthesizer Quality & Cost *(base cost)*

Quality	Low	Medium	High	Cost*
Economy	68%	81%	90%	2,000cr
Standard	71%	85%	94%	5,000cr
Advanced	74%	89%	98%	10,000cr

*Multiplied by the size of the synthesizer rated in meals produced per 10 minutes (see chart below), but also by the variety possible ("Range").

Synthesizer Type *(cost multiplier, base size)*

Type	# of Meals	Cost Multiplier	Size of Unit
Personal	1	.5	5 kg
Compact	2	.75	15 kg
Small	5	1	50 kg
Medium	10	2	0.1 dton
Large	20	5	0.5 dton
Industrial	50	10	1 dton

So a starship with a medium unit can serve a crew meal of ten and (at least) ten minutes later a passenger meal of ten separately; while a liner with two large units can serve up to forty at a single meal.

Synthesizer Range *(cost and size multiplier)*

Range	Recipes	Cost multiplier	Size multiplier
Limited	20/3	0.5	0.5
Good	100/5	1	1
Excellent	500/u	2	2

The size multiplier adds to the weight of the unit (above). A Standard Quality, Large Synthesizer with an Excellent Range is 50,000 Cr and 1 dton.

PETS IN THE 30TH CENTURY

Fluffy has changed! So has Fido for that matter. In the 30th Century, pets are what you make of them. Many aren't even all biological anymore. A digital dog never grows old, never gets tired and doesn't throw up on the rug. If that's what you're looking for then robotic Fido is the answer for you. Combine such a pet with an Agent (or if you want to go all out an Intellect program) then you can have a pet sensitive to your every whim. Snuggling when you're down, leaving you alone when you're angry and playing when you're bored. Your pet can even carry on a conversation with you with the correct programming. Replace the faux fur every few years and, *viola*! Fido is immortal, something that can be handed down from one generation to the next and is probably a better repository of family lore than Grandpa.

Combining digital and biological nets you even more options. A BioCon dog outfitted with an intellect program can be hard to tell from an uplift. Implanting digital brains in biological organism's accounts for some of the extremely unusual pets seen in the 30th century. Things like talking goldfish and snakes. Beyond that even, we reach the realm of the truly bizarre. Flying talking cats, a Chimera (with or without mechanically added fire breathing), a miniature dragon, or an neon pink talking purse dog running an intellect program that probably makes it smarter than the person toting it around.

Besides the bizarre, these unusual pets have actually taken on useful roles. The Cheshire cat might now be running an EdSoft program providing a useful learning tool for your toddler all the while entertaining them. The BioCon mastiff with augmented muscles running an intellect program makes for a more than adequate night watchman. Needless to say, a Vet now has more to keep up with than a doctor, and a second degree in computer science might be in order.

How does this affect my game?: That is only limited by you and your players imaginations. Pets would now make very useful intelligence gathering assets. The Villain with the Neon Pink purse poodle now becomes just that much more memorable especially if the damn thing is hurling insults at the players.

The tools you need for creating unusual pets are all contained in the TMB mostly around page 92 where Software is discussed and the previous page which discusses non-ship computer hardware. The Encounters and Dangers chapter of the TMB starting on page 69 also is a good source for inspiration on what an unusual 'pet' might look like.

"Mr. Jingles" BioCon Purse Pet
by Creative Bionics
Cost: 8,000 Cr (Robot: 3,500 Cr)

The Mr. Jingles model of purse pet resembles a very small (2.5 kg) dog or cat. The base model is a robot (pictured here), but it can be found in a BioCon form for a slightly higher cost. The onboard computer is somewhat limited, but even the most basic models are programmed to be sympathetic to their owners. A hardware/software upgrade (+1,500 Cr) allows these pets to carry on a reasonable conversation on a wide variety of subjects. Quite popular with female celebrities and small apartment dwellers, they come in a variety of colors and body styles. The BioCon version of this product has become all the rage among the elites; as social commentator Kylie Cromar put it: "If it poops, it has caché".

Cheshire Cat by Socrates EdSoft
Cost: 17,500 Cr (TL 12), 105,500 Cr (TL 13)

This educational robot can serve as a combination baby sitter and educational toy. Programmed by Socrates EdSoft with the latest educational memes (*Instruction* 1), these mobile educational systems can teach children from toddler to teen. For younger children, the Cheshire Cat is one of the most popular models but *Spark the Dragon* and *Cuddly Bear* are also very popular. The interaction history can be downloaded to a more age appropriate robot as the child ages. The higher end database programs (purchased separately) are good until the child reaches college level, and many parents rely on these robots and their software packages to home-school their children. The TL 13 has an enhanced Expert system (*Instruction* 2) for even greater utility.

MEDIEVALIST SOCIETY
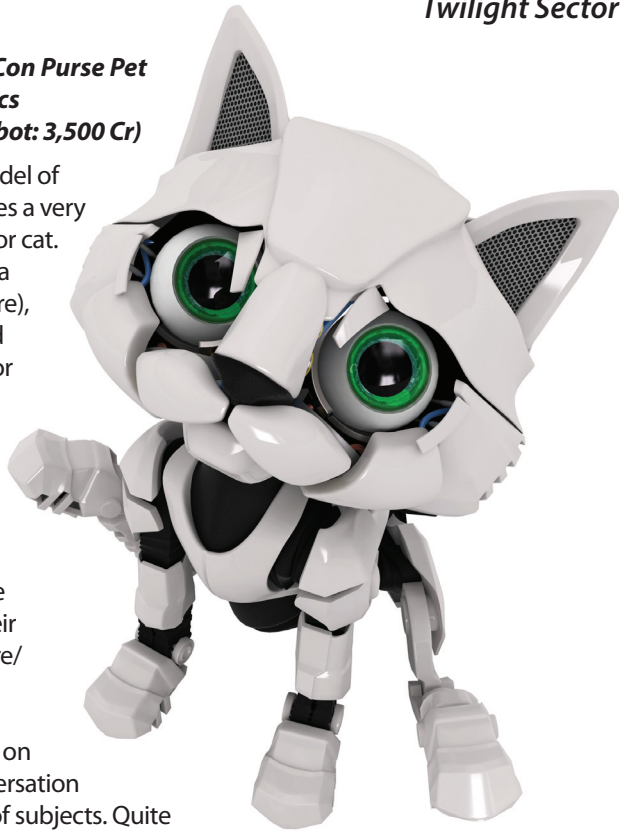
In the 30ᵗʰ century, human culture is more productive and far richer than at any point in its history, yet at the same time has higher unemployment than at any other time in history. To avoid the breakdown of society, social safety nets are the most generous they've ever been in human history. Most people live at least a lower middle class lifestyle unless there are some extenuating circumstances. With the average unemployment rate at 30% in most of the Stellar Nations people have to find something to do with their time. One of the things that have proved popular is lifestyle groups.

Lifestyle groups take any number of forms, from Tango dancing clubs to amateur geology. But perhaps the ones that draw the most attention in the Tri-dees are the so called *simulationist groups*. Modern technology allows the recreation of any number of environments to simulate everything from historical eras to the settings of literature. Ratan has a whole industry based on creating these immersive types of environments for tourists to enjoy. These groups can be all consuming with individuals living full time within the simulation. Let's look at one such group.

The *Medievalist Society* is a lifestyle/simulationist group that — according to their mission statement — provides members with the opportunity to study and experience Earth's Medieval Northern European culture. In truth the Society more accurately provides members the opportunity for live action role-playing, 30ᵗʰ Century style.

The Society has several venues scattered across Terra/Sol. One in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains at approximately 40 degrees north latitude, another close to Middleborough in England and one just outside of GrossBerlin. Members have access to any of these venues but must create a "character," an alternate personality, for each. Membership requires dues. Fortunately for the Dolee these are based on the level of public subsidies that an individual receives, up to a specified maximum level (currently 24,000 Cr) Those who aren't Dolees simply pay the 24,000 credit annual fee. Once this fee is paid, the "player" lives, works, and plays inside the simulation.

Additional in-game accouterments can be purchased. Things like titles, specific weapons and armor, businesses and residences. It's estimated that as much as a quarter of the Societies income is derived from these additional sales. Most governments give these types of groups tax breaks as their existence is a boon to social order.

Lets take a look at the Colorado based *Pax Britannia* setting. Obviously the society has already got their periods mixed but apparently the boys in marketing decided the name sounded cool and it has indeed become quite popular. The setup is on a 7,225 square kilometer piece of land in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains. Pax Britannia represents a medieval Duchy with a number of small towns, villages, castles and fiefs.

Position within Pax Britannia can be achieved by involvement in the setting itself or to the level of Knighthood via those in-game accouterment purchases. Part of the land is set aside as a Viking Kingdom which within the parameters of the setting (or as mentioned previously more aptly titled 'live action role-playing game') wars with Pax Britannia.

Nearly 300,000 people participate at any one time in this setting, making it a significant "cottage industry" for tourism.

Modern technology allows the recreation of any number of environments to simulate everything from historical eras to literature settings.

How does this affect my game?

※ **Interesting NPCs:** Perhaps the guy with the key piece of information in the investigation you're conducting is a resident and won't talk to anyone out of character. Maybe the retired scientist who discovered the formula you need is now a resident, playing an Alchemist persona of course.

※ **Adventures within Adventures:** Another avenue would be a murder investigation within the setting. Perhaps you're called in to determine if a battle accident was indeed an accident or murder. You must go undercover within the setting. Another cool idea is a serial killer loose within the setting with the players having to track him down while staying in character.

※ **Player Background:** One of the Civilian Events from *Tinker, Spacer, Psion, Spy* (#22, pg. 51) uses these simulationists societies, but they can be part of literally any background (off-duty military et al).

HOLOGRAPHIC AND IMMERSIVE TECHNOLOGY
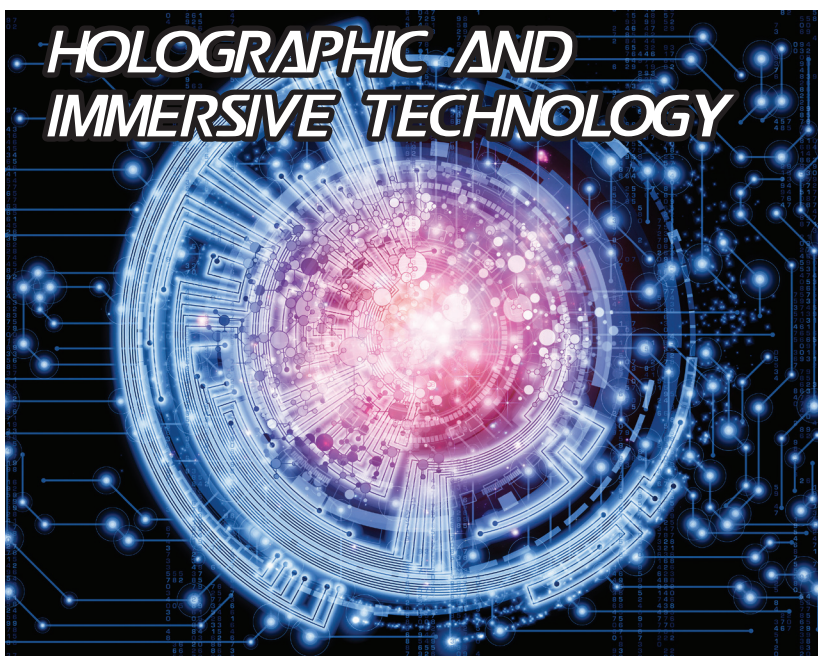
The ability to place someone in a whole new environment or artificial world has long been a staple of science fiction. From holo decks to the electronic frontiers of cyberspace, our settings have always strove to find new and different places for us to explore. The Twilight Sector in the 30th century is no different. Our setting explores both of the major branches of science fiction's human made artificial worlds, holographic and digital. This article describes the abilities of holographic technology to create such artificial worlds within the Twilight Sector Setting.

Holographic technology has become big business in the 30th century.

Holographic technology has become big business in the 30th century. It is a training platform used by many organizations seeking to teach physical skills. Despite the advantages of cyberspace it is still a popular if expensive entertainment platform. This technology should not be confused with computer based Virtual Reality, the so called cyberspace. Holographic and Immersive Technology (H&IT) creates an overlay on the real world and so the user actually interacts with this overlay on a physical level. On the other hand, cyberspace

creates a Virtual Reality that exists solely within the mind of a user. For teaching physical-based skills like combat or sports (anything where muscle memory is a key in the learning process) it has been found that an immersion suit or the far more effective Holo chip, H&IT is the most effective training platform to teach physical skills.

For the uninitiated, let's start by defining Holography as it is understood in the 30th century. At its core, holography is a 3D recording of…pretty much anything that can be seen in the visible spectrum and then transferring that recording to a three dimensional light projector. The basic technology is light projection that provides a 360° view of an object. Improvements to Holography came by adding quantum computing technology to the equation which provided the processing power to take a static 3D image and impart realistic animation to it, animation that can adjust to a users interaction with it. Practically what that means is that a holographic vase although only a light projection feels like a physical object to a H&IT user. This technology created a paradigm shift in the training and entertainment industries that quickly spread.

The Immersion piece of H&IT is a second generation technology that is symbiotic with holography. H&IT takes holograms and makes your mind think they are real. It tricks the mind by providing the senses of touch, taste and smell. Sound is usually provided by a separate audio system that in itself is quite impressive and can augment the sense of touch via vibration. H&IT is accomplished via a number of technological devices. Everything from visors to whole body suits but perhaps the most ingenious and effective is the H&IT chip. Implanted in a wafer jack, this chip actually sends out a series of tendrils into the various centers of the brain connected to the five senses and with the proper authorizations supplants reality in telling the body what it is sensing.

Applications for holographic technology alone are most commonly communications and entertainment. But where the technology has really changed things is when it is combined with H&IT and creates virtual environments that feel real to the user. Examples of how this technology has changed the human condition come from a number of fields. At its most basic level, the ability to record and then share a human experience and then allow the user to interact with this recorded environment was and is profound.

For example, during the Mutant Wars, the ability of journalists to record the scenes of carnage and mayhem around them down to the smells of the battlefield created the ability for the average man on the street to experience and understand what the war was actually

like. But unless physical interaction with the environment of the recording is needed or desired, a Virtual Environment Overlay (VEO) part of computer based Virtual Reality is a far simpler and cheaper technology to accomplish the same task.

Other examples include sports and entertainment. The popularity of watching sports was even more enhanced when you could experience every event as if you had sideline seats at mid-field. The cold wind whipping your face, the smell of the hotdog being eaten by the fan next to you, all of this made it possible to experience a sporting event that might have occurred many light years from you as if you were actually there. Then there was the rise of Immersive cinema where a patron could feel like they were literally in the middle of the movie. Once again these effects can also be accomplished by VEO technology far more inexpensively. However many aficionados of H&IT claim the experience in an H&IT recording is superior and more immersive than a VEO experience of the same recording.

Where VR can't compete with Immersive Technology is in training.

As discussed above many of the uses of H&IT can be approximated through computer based Virtual Reality, especially with the use of VEO technology (which will be detailed in the forthcoming **Techbook: Cybertechnology** sourcebook). This experience is usually not as 'real' as H&IT but monetarily VR is a much more friendly technology for the average person's pocketbook. Where VR can't compete with Immersive Technology is in training. With immersive technology it is possible to train people for any number of jobs, especially those with an integral physical element to them. VR cannot train muscle memory, H&IT can. The military was quick to embrace the technology which allowed them to train their personnel in any number of dangerous situations up to and including combat. The usefulness of the technology in training people for dangerous jobs can't be overstated as they can be put into realistic appearing situations without the threat of real injury. Other dangerous professions quickly followed the militaries lead.

Top of the line computer equipment is necessary to run an H&IT simulation or presentation (entertainment such as a movie). At a minimum a Model 2 ships computer with a quantum core is necessary to run an immersive program.

Game Changer: Using H&IT in Play

This technology presents profound opportunities for a referee. It allows him or her to create any number of campaigns in any number of genres and run them with the same set of characters.

For example, if you want to run a fantasy campaign (and if you do, might I suggest the **Netherell** Campaign Setting?) you can run one using H&IT. The same characters who are involved in the overlying Science Fiction campaign can be used, garnering experience as they go. So you can see that you could run any number of campaign experiences for your players using the same set of characters. You do not have to end one campaign to start another.

That is a game changer!

So your adventure seed is that Cthulhu-mythos campaign everybody has been clamoring for; or they all want to do a little WWII based shoot'em up action; perhaps they want to have a one-shot western. Any or all of these are definitely possible.

This technology is therefore the ultimate adventure seed: Anything the players are asking for can be done through Immersive technology, and unlike some other technologies (such as Virtual Reality), this is something that entire groups can participate in rather than single-experiences.

H&IT Wafer Jack Chip, TL 15, Cost: 15,000 Cr

This chip is designed to fit into a standard Wafer Jack or in the case of most new models they come as standard equipment. The chip allows the user to record and with the aid of communications equipment broadcast up to 10 hours of their personal experiences. By broadcasting a chip user can contact another chip user communicating directly via their chips, this noiseless communication in essence becomes a weak form of technological telepathy. These broadcasts can of course be intercepted or jammed.

H&IT Suit, TL 14, Cost 10,000 Cr
(12,000 Cr. For the Deluxe Suit)

IT Suits come in a variety of styles and options but at their heart they cover the user's body head to toe with millions of sensor pads which react to the visual cues being relayed to the mind via IT goggles. This quite effectively mimics the sense of touch. The IT program and the suit and goggles need to be synced for the effect to work. Deluxe suits also come with a scent feature. The suit can release a variety of chemicals to mimic the sense of smell and to a lesser extent the sense of taste. Note that a VR suit must be used with VR goggles for the full immersive experience. Where the IT Suit is deficient is the sense of taste. Without an IT chip the technology has no good way to mimic this sense.

H&IT Goggles

These goggles can be used in a variety of ways. Simply to provide a richly immersive experience with entertainment or news programming or as part of a VR Suit to provide an interactive experience in an entertainment program or as part of a training program. VR goggles are available in a number of configurations. As simple eye coverings similar to glasses, as wrap around goggles and even as contact or bio-replacement lenses.

IT Glasses or Goggles, TL 13 Cost 2,000 Cr
IT Contacts, TL 14 Cost 2,500 Cr
IT Bio-replacement Lenses, TL 15 Cost 5,000 Cr

H&IT Display/Training Area, TL 14
Cost 10,000 Cr Per 3 Meter Sq.

In order to work properly H&IT needs a place to call home, an area where a training exercise or entertainment program can be presented to users, a holo deck type of environment. These facilities can be immensely expensive. What it is, is an area specially constructed with holographic and sonic projectors embedded in the floors walls and ceiling. Some also contain chemical projectors

to mimic smell and to a lesser degree taste. The size can vary from just a 3 meter square to huge areas hundreds of meters by hundreds of meters. One of the few limitations of this type of device is in replicating open vistas like plains and the like but clever programming can overcome this problem in most instances.

H&IT can be used in conjunction with a real world environment and often elements of a real world environment are used in an H&IT display/training area. They save money and computer processing power.

How does this affect my game?:

Well this one is a game changer but in a very good way. The fact that we have fully immersive technology lets the Referee do a couple of really cool things. One off adventures can be used in the middle of a campaign, presented as either training or entertainment. That especially dangerous adventure you had in mind that would probably kill everybody off but you're just dying to run can now be played without the worry of permanent player characters death and without you the Referee having to hold back and potentially lesson the dramatic impact of the adventure.

The H&IT can be the introduction to an adventure as well. Players with IT chips would likely be able to find work recording unusual experiences. For example footage from the front lines of the latest bush war would be valuable to news organizations. An IT recording of Goliath Corps latest invention would be valuable to its competitors (An IT recording is the perfect espionage tool.). Any number of IT recordings of dangerous or exotic locals could be sold to clients ranging from movie studios to travel agencies. So as a plot device the need for an IT recording of place "X" could be the beginning of any number of adventures.

…IT recordings of dangerous or exotic locals could be sold to clients ranging from movie studios to travel agencies.

The possibility of electronic telepathy can also be an interesting sidelight of the IT chip. Whether you use psionics in your campaign or not this can be an interesting foray into telepathy, and with the possibility of eavesdropping and jamming of the PCs "telepathic" communications, it does not unbalance even a game without psionics. It could be Referee gold to see the bewilderment on the player's faces when the bad guys cavalry shows up at just the right time because they intercepted the players "Telepathic" communication: "It was like they were reading our minds!"

LIVING SPACES IN THE 30^(TH) CENTURY

In this installment of 'Slice of Life', we're going to look at your living space in the Twilight Sector Campaign Setting. Where do you live? What does it look like? What major appliances do you own?

First lets give this all some context. We're going to take a look at what the typical 'Coffin Apartment', Standard Apartment, Condominium or Condapt, and free standing domicile looks like on Terra/Sol in the Twilight Sector. We'll look at size, standard fittings and locations. But first, let's talk about some of the 30^(th) century tech you can use to dress up the old living space.

Most living spaces in the 30^(th) century do have a few key technologies in common. Most of these domiciles are smart places run by computer technology running a household expert program. The residence responds to the occupants, turning on lights when you enter a room or responding to verbal commands like "make me a cup of coffee" etcetera. Your digital butler can tell you how much butter or cleaning solution you have on hand, and with your permission, order up additional supplies as needed. It can create a personalized diet for every member of the household and relay that information to your food synthesizer. In short, it does most of the domestic thinking for you.

Wireless access to the internet is a part of your living space…

One of the most ubiquitous home technologies is *memory plastic*. Blocks of this remarkable material can be shaped into any number of preprogrammed configurations, everything from a vase to a couch. This material can be condensed and stored recessed into the floor or wall thus taking up no valuable floor space until it is needed. So when for example it's meal time a command can be given that activates the plastic to become a table and chairs. When dinner is done simply give the command for the couch and viola the material morphs back into the floor and returns as your living room couch.

Wireless access to the internet is a part of your living space; and because we know what comes in can go out, in some places like the Orion Confederation that has become a personal privacy issue. In others like the Archenar Peoples Republic this is just another tool the state uses to keep its population in line. Monitoring for fire,

pathogens or medical emergencies can be a public safety issue and provides an excuse for the state to have some access to your home for at least the performance of these functions.

One of the most common kitchen home appliances in the 30th century is the *flash freezer*. It provides ice or instant freezing for your leftovers as long as they fit in its admittedly small dimensions. The average model is only 30.5 cm x 30.5 cm x 15 cm (or 12"x12"x6"). It can provide a couple of cups of ice in approximately 3 to 8 seconds (depending on the quality of the model you own) and can just as quickly freeze food for later use. Actual refrigerators are now somewhat rare and if present are usually quite small since the storage of raw foodstuffs isn't really necessary with the advent of Gloop (see page 24-25). Our next common home appliance is the Food Synthesizer. This ubiquitous device is present in most homes or apartment complexes. They range from the fancy with almost an unlimited range of foods that can be provided to much more limited versions for which you have to switch programming every so often so you don't get bored with what the machine is spitting out.

For housekeeping, *cleaner bots* are quite common. These are usually 30.5 cm (12") diameter flat circular bots, which are 10.2 cm (4") tall and equipped with the same anti-grav technology used for "skids" (see page 18). They roll around the floor cleaning but can also levitate to surfaces to clean those up; and with a retractable arm clean up dishes and such. A single bot can clean 800 square feet in 4 hours.

For the bedroom *memory plastic beds,* or in lower end dwelling old fashioned *Murphy pull down beds,* are the norm. A high tech option that is gaining popularity is the *zero-g sleeping field*. These are of course powered by grav plates and because they aren't really zero-g but low gravity they are surprisingly not that expensive. Since they don't have to handle as high of load capacities as they might when installed on a skid tractor or in a starship they are very reasonably priced.

Entertainment comes from a number of sources: Net based VR can be accessed through home *Sensoriums*, basketball sized devices that can interpret complicated net programs designed to make you feel like you are in the action. Other far more expensive options like *Holographic and Immersive Tech display areas* might be available in higher end homes. For a lower tech option when you just want to veg out, wall sized *Tri-D displays* can play your favorite shows. These can also be used to give your home a different feel depending on your mood. A wall sized display of a tropical reef might provide some needed relief from an Antarctic winter in Defiance City.

Coffin Apartments

To start our tour of the various living abodes, let's discuss the proverbial Coffin Apartment, the smallest and most standardized type of living space.

Typically a coffin apartment is just three meters wide by six meters deep. That's not a lot of space! But it could be worse; the Archenar equivalent only comes in at 12.5 square meters (2.5 x 5 meters). Because of the size issues the technology for these apartments is specialized to save space. Fold down Murphy beds, Murphy couches, or Murphy tables (assuming you don't use memory plastic described previously), toilets that lower into the floor when you want to take a shower, kitchen cabinets flush with the wall, taking advantage of what would be dead utility space in most dwellings. In short, the idea is to make these apartments highly configurable based on the needs of an occupant at a particular time. So for example, when it's bedtime you configure the space as a bedroom, at dinner time a dining room and for leisure a living room.

Depending on the apartment building, you might not have a kitchen at all. Instead, the resident would have access to the communal gloop machine. The cost of your meals being part of your rent or dole benefit.

Residents of these types of apartments range from singles to dolee families. Though some are surprisingly affluent, they might simply be single and only need a small living space. In a large 30th century urban environment there are plenty of common areas both indoor and outdoor where people can spend their time so that small living spaces will not make them feel claustrophobic.

Average Rent: 250 to 400 Cr, but that usually includes a meal plan. The price variation is accounted for by location, location, location!
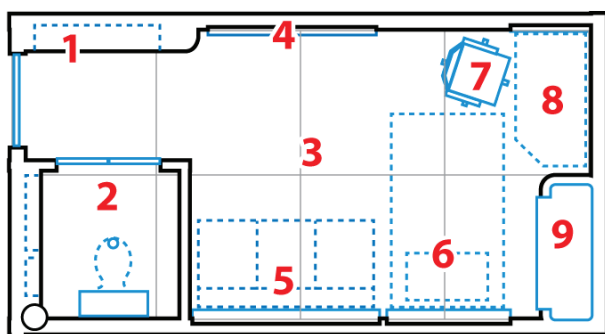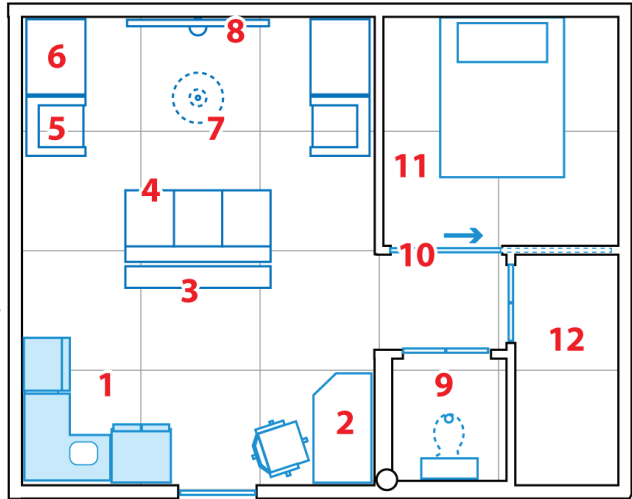

KEY:
1. Hall Nook
2. Fresher
3. Main Area
4. Flatvid Display
5. Murphy Couch
6. Murphy Bed
7. Roller Chair
8. Murphy Desk
9. Dresser

KEY:

1. Kitchenette
2. Desk
3. Low Table
4. Couch
5. Club Chair
6. Low Cabinet
7. 3D Emitter
8. Flatvid Display
9. Fresher
10. Sliding Panel
11. Bedroom
12. Closet

"Standard" Dwellings

The next step up in living accommodations is the standard apartment. Still somewhat cookie cutter in shape and accouterments but they are a definite step up from the coffin apartments. They typically range from 56 to 93 square meters (600 to 1,000 square feet) in size.

Most come with their own food synthesizers, no more waiting in line at the gloop machine like so many coffin dwellers. Individual spaces (i.e. rooms) can offer multiple occupants some privacy and some status objects like the odd piece of real furniture.

The main upgrade the standard apartment offers is space. The thing most at a premium in densely populated cities like those on Terra/Sol.

Average Rent: 500 to 900 Cr

Condapt

The next step up is a *condapt*, a portmanteu of condominium and apartment. The name implies ownership but that is not always the case; some are simply luxury apartments, but in the common parlance whether the domicile is owned or rented these types of living spaces are called condapts.

Average space in a condapt has a rather wide range of 110 to 335 square meters (1,200 to 3,600 square feet). This of course leads to a wide range of rent or mortgage payments as well. Price goes up with size and location of course.
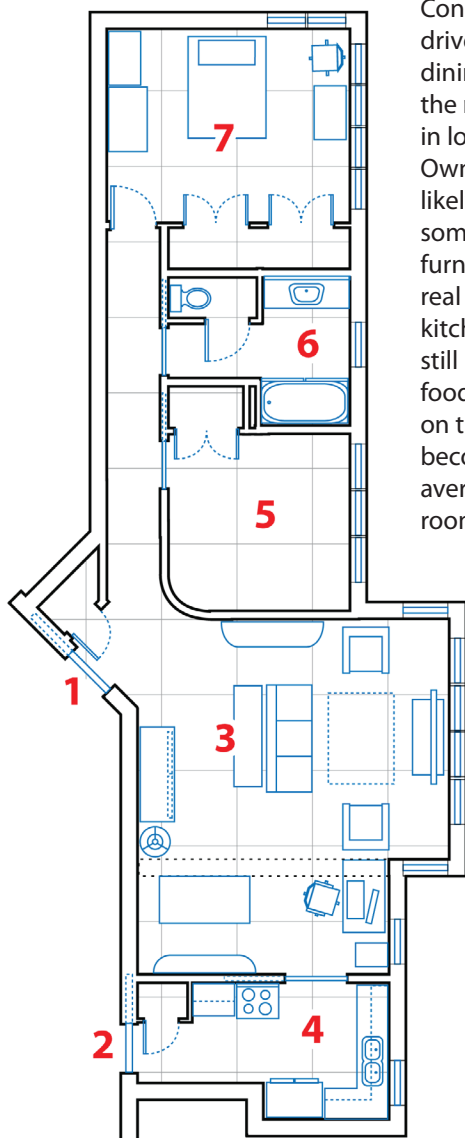
Condapts usually have purpose driven rooms, bedrooms, kitchens, dining rooms and so forth instead of the multipurpose spaces common in lower end accommodations. Owners or renters are also more likely to have the income to afford some status items like handmade furniture and to be able to afford real food items hence the need for kitchens. However they would likely still be equipped with a high quality food synthesizer for those meals on the run. The use of wall screens becomes commonplace, with an average of two or more in each room so the owners can catch up on the latest entertainment programming, or set their surroundings to anything from mountain vistas to the latest rave club.

Memory plastic is still used, but it's usually pulled out for spare chairs and such when required to accommodate company or those pesky relatives who stop by to get a look at your place. Prompting comments like: "Can you believe it Harold? They have a room just for the toilet! It's nice and all but it just feels a little too ostentatious for my tastes."

Average mortgage or rent: 1,200 to 4,000 Cr depending on size and location.

KEY:

1. Main Entrance
2. Side Entrance
3. Great Room
4. Kitchen
5. Aux. Bedroom
6. Restroom
7. Mstr. Bedroom

The final step in living places is a free standing domicile. These can range from the truly outrageous prices charged for a house in the middle of a city to the more affordable suburban homes. But any 'house' in a major city is an expensive item that it takes a substantial income to be able to purchase.

In the distant past, many futurists believed that as the ease of transportation increased and technology advanced to the point that you didn't need to physically go into the office that humanity would spread out. Everyone would have their own plot of land and their own house.

What the future was yet to reveal was that while transportation became faster with ever greater numbers of humans, ease did not follow. The sheer volume of traffic absorbed the gain in speed.

Technology did indeed advance to the point that you could work from anywhere and you could even dial in virtually to sit in on meetings. However two factors combined to save the office and cities for that matter. Productivity did not increase for virtual workers in fact it declined. Much of the population were not self starters, they needed the proximity of other workers and supervisors to inspire them to productivity. Even beyond that (and maybe far more importantly), Man is a social creature and even those who lived far from the city center found themselves coming into the city for entertainment and interaction. Societal Engineers coined the term 'Human Gravity' to describe the effect. They found that society creates its own gravity, the more humans that were present the more they are drawn to each other much the same way as the matter in a solar system accretes to form every larger objects with their own gravity.

These social realities of course affected houses. Although they are extremely popular with those who can afford them, owners still want to be close to the center of the human gravity. This fact is just another factor that plays into the old real estate axiom, 'Location is everything'.

As for the houses themselves, they boast the entire range of technology. They are usually run by a powerful computer that takes care of everything from stocking the pantry to sensing when the roof needs repaired and then even hiring the roofer.

Status symbols abound: full kitchens, natural foods, dedicated rooms, custom made handcrafted furniture, virtual reality sensoriums and holographic rooms. The range of amenities and the size of houses are enormous and cannot be easily described.

Average mortgage: 1,500 to 100,000 Cr

HERO'S PARK
Terra/Sol, Kansas City, Republic of the Plains
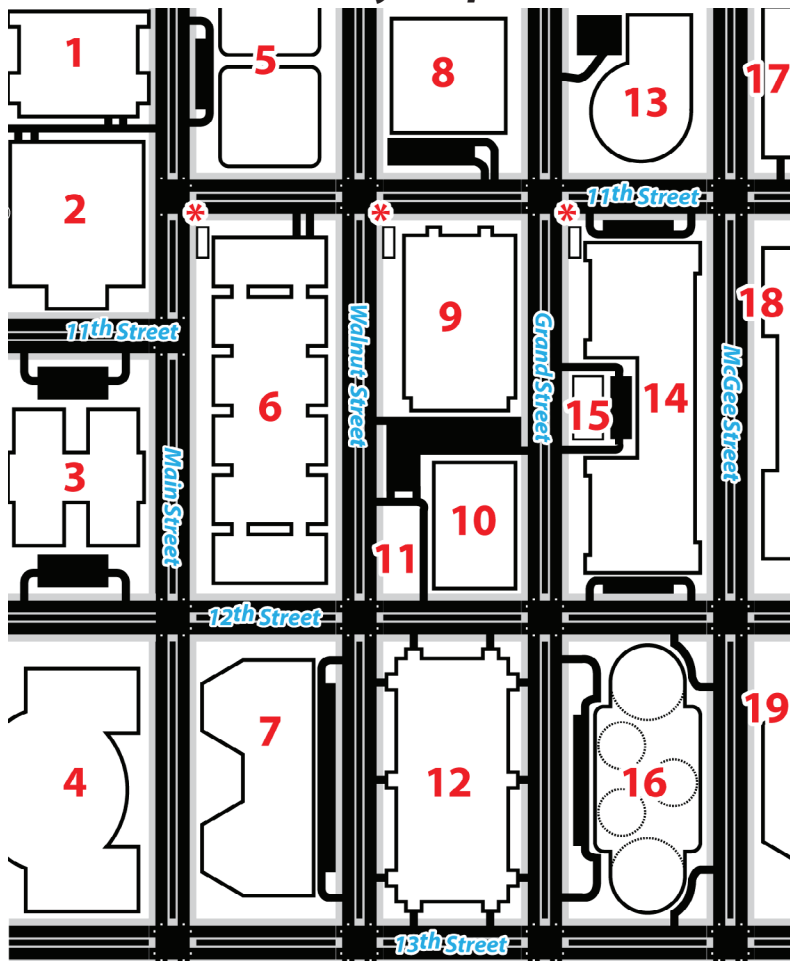
Map Key:

Number in parenthesis is height (in stories)

1	Yellow Cab Garage (10)
2	Teese Plaza (36)
3	City Center Square (62)
4	MAC Building (108)
5	Kansas City Towers (72)
6	MAC Pavilion (68)
7	Jones Square (38)
8	The Republic Bank Building (88)
9	Argyle Building (52)
10	Pendergast Building (42)
11	Hero's Park
12	Allright Parking Garage (80)
13	Merchants Exchange Building (85)
14	The 1101 Building (78)
15	JAD Bar
16	Public Library (56, tallest tower)
17	Federal Office Building (88)
18	Congress Hall (102)
19	Embassy Building (71)
*	Subway Entrances

ADVENTURE SEEDS

The following Adventure outlines or sub-plot oriented adventures are set in the Twilight Setting, but with minimal adjustment, can be used in any Traveller Setting.

ADVENTURE: DARK TOWER

*This adventure is best run in the background of your campaign.
It should start out slowly with the items below labeled clues
being interspersed in your regular play sessions. At some point
then the action will move to the foreground and then the
adventure should race to its horrific conclusion, the discovery of
the grisly practices of the adventures antagonists.*

Plot:

This adventure is set in a coffin apartment building. I used the 1101
Building in the Heroes Park neighborhood of Kansas City on Terra/
Sol as my 'Dark Tower'. It is important that at least one member of
the players party be a resident of the building. The building is home
to many returning veterans of the Mutant War as well as some lower
income people most of whom are Dolees. Many of these individuals
have few or tenuous ties to other people. The building and its tenants
create the perfect storm for this very dark adventure.

In a highly automated residential building like the 1101 Building
certain positions within if have access or the ability to gain access
to some very personal information about the residents. In the 1101
Building that position is the building superintendent.

Corvis Chapman, or 'double C' to those who actually work with this
socially awkward introvert, is the super for the 1101 Building. A
glorified 30th century handyman, Corvis has access to things like a
master key to every apartment in the building, residents applications,
the building delivery sign-in sheets (and often the deliveries
themselves if an impatient delivery person chooses to leave a residents
package with him), robotic helpers and of course the security monitors.
That doesn't include the 'extra' monitors that Corvis has set up himself
because of his access or the ones on those mousebots he purchased
to "clean the air ducts". These 'extra' monitors seem to turn up in the
apartments of residents, many of whom just happen to be pretty girls.

Corvis isn't dumb, although sometimes his awkwardness makes
it seem that way. In fact Corvis is very bright. What Corvis doesn't
have is a moral compass, a conscience, or any sense of obligation
to anyone besides himself. In fact he has the perfect makeup to be
a serial killer which is just what he is. But Corvis is no ordinary serial
killer: he has a patron who has ensured that Corvis has been able to
practice his hobby for the last thirty years totally undetected by the
authorities.

Brien Dulvolchett is a deep cover APR intelligence officer. He has spent 30 years on Terra/Sol spying for his communist masters. He has managed to maintain his loyalty to the APR despite being confronted daily by the truth that illustrates the lies used by his homeland to paint the Orion Confederation (among others) as demons hell bent of the destruction of Galactic Socialism. This in itself indicates a certain moral flexibility on his part. Something he often has need of in his dealings with Corvis Chapman.

Dulvolchett has found some unusual uses for the odd little man who he first met when he lived in the 1101 Building. That was all those years ago when he first came to Terra/Sol. Dulvolchett quickly discovered Corvis' secret when Corvis had taken a person of interest to one of his basement dungeon rooms. He made Corvis an offer, actually one that the serial killer couldn't refuse. Work with Brien, occasionally abducting people that he was instructed to and turning them over to Dulvolchett. In return, Brien would cover up for any messes that Corvis made and he has made a few over the years. Since then Dulvolchett has used Corvis to help disappear persons of interest to the APR, and still others for simple monetary reasons. Dulvolchett has used the interstellar slavery market as a means of financing his operations on Terra/Sol. All in all, Dulvolchett has found a multitude of uses for the horrendous excuse for a human being that is Corvis Chapmen.

- **Clue 1:** You find a teddy bear lying in the hallway. You recognize the battered toy as belonging to that little girl down the hall who talks to you. She was never without the bear. If the player tries to return the bear they find a moving crew taking the few possessions of the girl and her mother out of their apartment. The movers aren't able to tell you where they are taking the stuff as "that would be a violation of privacy" they claim. But if you bribe them with a six pack of beer they tell you everything is going to storage. (The privacy line is just a blow-off)
- **Clue 2:** The carpet on your floor's hallway has a stain running down it. That's not unusual the common areas in this building are often a pig sty. What *is* unusual is the mousebot diligently cleaning up the stain.
    If the players are nosey and check it out further, they will see that the stain is dark maroon and sticky. The trail leads from an empty apartment to the freight elevator.
- **Clue 3:** Walking down the hall you see yet another mousebot, those things are expensive you'd think maybe they'd spend a little money on new carpet and getting the graffiti off the walls. A

detailed examination reveals it has a full (and very expensive) A/V suite (low-light, thermographic, motion-sensors, et al.).

※ **Clue 4:** In an attempt to knock down some cobwebs from the corner of your apartment something else falls to the floor. It is the same color as the wall and so you hadn't noticed it before. It's round and only a couple of millimeters across. [*Referee's Note:* Whether the players recognize what it is or not is a function of their backgrounds and experiences in your campaign. The item is a remote camera, the kind often used in surveillance activities.]

When Corvis get's an alert from his monitoring program that the camera is down he will check and send a self destruct signal to it when he figures out what has happened. The camera and the monitoring base have a unique (Each camera has a unique signal, this is very sophisticated and high tech stuff, far beyond what even a knowledgeable civilian should be able to get) signal and so the transmission will be untraceable after the self destruct signal is given.

Referees may want to use this scene later on as part of the revelation of what Corvis is up to.

※ **Clue 5:** You've developed a passing relationship with a woman who lives in your building. You guess she's a prostitute but she seems very nice and you've shared a few jokes around the gloop dispenser.

You are passing her apartment one day when you see the building super in front of it directing some men who are moving stuff out of the apartment. If you ask the super what's up he'll say it's an eviction.

For curious players; it's odd evictions are usually around the first of the month because they have to get a court order and anyway getting government assistance for an apartment here should be a cinch, besides the girl usually seemed flush with cash, especially considering her profession.

Scene 1:

Stumbling on the Truth. In the lobby of the building you recognize the brother of a female tenant. You have a passing acquaintance with her and you met the brother at a party she had a few months ago to watch a big grav ball game. He is arguing with the building super (Corvis) about why his sister's stuff has been moved out of her apartment.

He is making quite a scene. Corvis loudly proclaims he's called the police and that the brother should leave. At that moment, a group of four (Referees feel free to adjust this number as needed. It should feel

like overkill and odd) uniformed police arrive. They proceed to arrest the man for disorderly conduct and are quite physical about it using what the players would judge to be excessive force.

At this point the players should be given a chance or just recognize that the policemen aren't real. The uniforms don't have the typical 'Metro PD' emblem on the sleeves and their badges look like cheap party favors. This is an opportunity for the players to become involved. If they do not, the brother disappears never to be seen again.

If they do become involved and are successful in driving off the fake police, Corvis will act shocked that they weren't real police. "How was I to know?" He quickly extracts himself from interaction with the players and if the real Metro PD are there they separate the parties anyway for questioning. If they try and talk to him later, Corvis will tell them he doesn't have time right now.

Scene 2:
Shortly after scene 1 when most of the players are in the apartment of the person who lives in the building, fumes will come into the apartment through the ventilation system. If the players try and get out they'll find the door locked from the outside, which shouldn't be possible. It must be a magnetic seal. They'll need to either figure out a way to open the door or protect themselves from the gas before it knocks them out.

This is an attempt by Corvis to gas them (tranq gas) and make them disappear. At this point the players should realize that someone, probably Corvis is out to get them.

Scene 3:
At some point (we've been beating them over the head with clues after all) the players are going to look into Corvis Chapman.

If they attempt to take the easy way out and get the authorities involved they'll find that nothing happens. Corvis will have one of the best lawyers in Kansas City representing him and throwing up roadblocks to an official investigation right and left. So if this is going to get solved it's going to have to be done by the players.

By the way, where does a building super get the kind of cash it takes to employ a 2,000 credit an hour lawyer? This in-and-of-itself should be seen as a clue.

Investigating Chapman should eventually lead the players to his dungeon complex below the building, which is composed of cleverly disguised storerooms which break through into a long abandoned

subway tunnel below the building. Corvis will attempt to flee here and make his way away from the building and eventually meet up with his patron Brien Dulvolchett.

- ※ **Room 1:** A wall of monitors showing the feeds from all the buildings security monitors as well as those from those 'extra' monitors that Corvis has placed. The place is a pig sty what with pizza boxes and other even less savory trash strewn everywhere.
- ※ **Room 2:** Nothing here, an antechamber with doors to Room 3 and 4.
- ※ **Room 3:** A true dungeon of horrors. This is where Corvis performs his sick tortures on his victims. It is complete with a rack, iron maiden, vivisection table and an assortment of whips and other implements on stands and occupying niches in the walls.
- ※ **Room 4:** Another antechamber, with doors to Room 2, 5 and 6. There are a few water pipes here as well, but these are not exotic in any way.
- ※ **Room 5:** The cold room. This is a refrigerated room. It contains the grisly remains of a staggering number of people (53 when the DNA guys get done with their analysis), many rendered into cuts of meat. What is really curious is a line of 12 state of the art brain cases on one wall. These are suspended animation devices similar to ones used to transport the remains of military KIAs home for possible brain peels. Eight of the cases currently have brains in them.

     Note: one curious aspect of these devices is they are all of APR manufacture. In addition to this there are a number of other suspended animation devices here. A couple of full body ones as well as others designed to transport various body parts.
- ※ **Room 6:** This room is an electrical trap designed to slow down any pursuit of a fleeing Corvis. Entering the room without the proper broadcast code (provided by Corvis' wafer jack) or entering the proper code on a 10 key pad on the side of the door leading into the room will result in a severe electrical shock (10d6) to those rushing into the room. The room though gives off an audible to anyone taking time to notice.

     Needless to say this room is something of a death trap. It is meant to be. This is no easy thing taking down a monster like Corvis Chapman, it should pose a very real threat of death to the players.
- ※ **Room 7:** Last ditch defense. This room is guarded by a pair (Or however many the referee feels will provide adequate opposition to the players. It is suggested that this should be a very difficult challenge) of military grade robotic guards (see page 50).

Corvis Chapman's
Dungeon of Horrors

Corridor

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

N

Each Square = 1.5m

Subway Tunnel
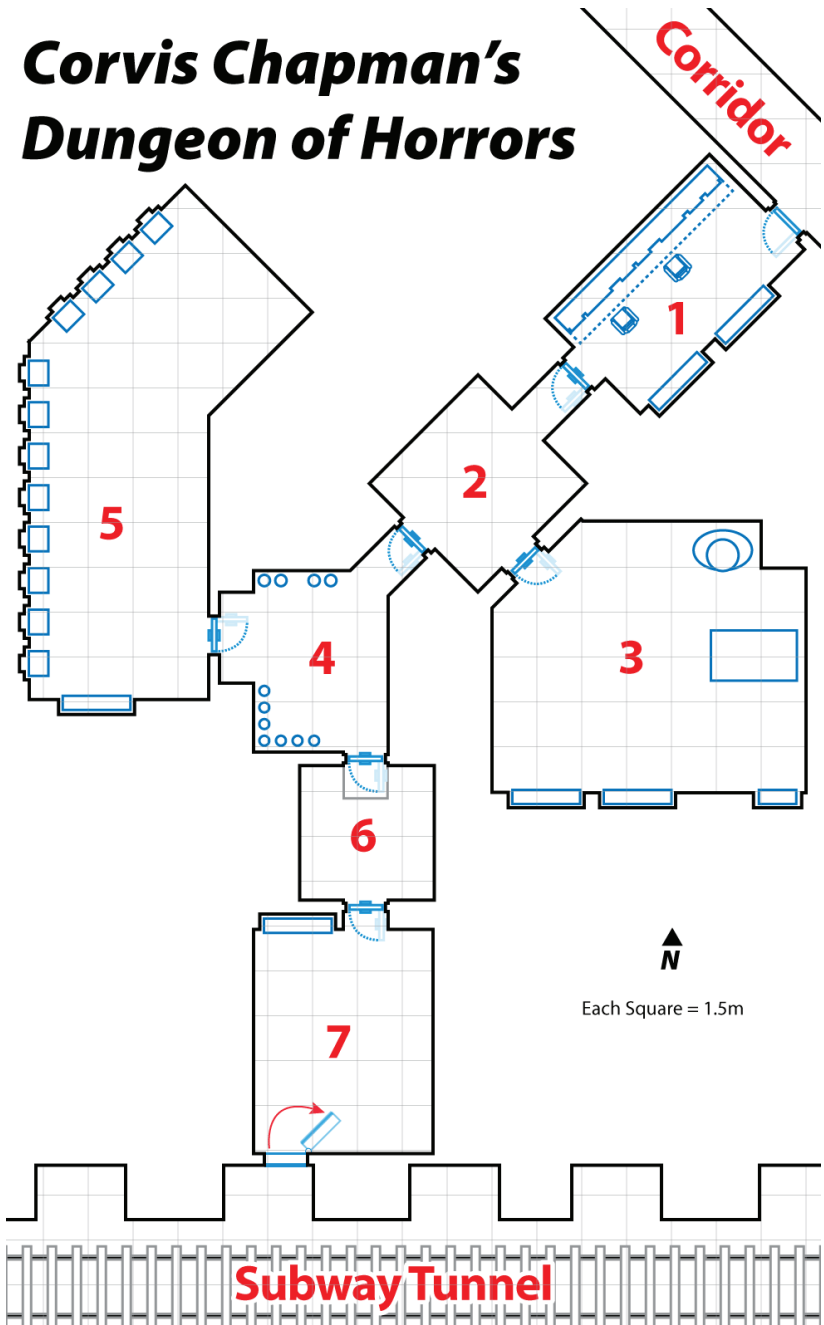
Military Grade Robots

STR	DEX	Armor	Hull	Structure
12 (+2)	10 (+1)	14	4	4

Traits: Integral System (grav floater) with Expert Systems *Flyer (Grav) 1*, Integral System Expert running *Gun Combat (Slug Rifle) 2*

Weapons: Victory Arms GAW2 ERF (See Six Guns: Gauss Weapons) Range: Assault Weapon, Damage: 5D6, Auto: B/4 AP: 1

Conclusion:

Hopefully at the end of this adventure the players will have defeated Corvis Chapman and brought the monster to justice. It's best from an ongoing story angle that Corvis is dead, he's fought to the bitter end but the players have prevailed.

For referees who wish to continue this storyline it is rather easy. The players investigation has revealed a number of unanswered questions.

1:    Where did Corvis come up with all this sophisticated and expensive equipment and how did he pay for it on a supers salary?
2:    What was Corvis doing with those "brains on ice"?
3:    Not all of the victims were from the 1101 Building, in fact most were not. How many victims have there been over the years?
4:    How could such a prolific serial killer have gone undetected for so long?
5:    What has Corvis been doing with human organs? The technology to create vat grown organs has been around for a long time, why would he be harvesting them?

Post Script:

Referees should use these questions to craft additional adventures. These could focus on the interstellar slave trade, the depth of APR intelligence operations in the Twilight Sector, a list of Corvis' victims and what they had in common and the ability of the APR to use human brains for their own nefarious purposes.[**Note:** For Twilight Sector story purposes, the APR has come up with a process to do a brain peel, digitalizing the brain in the process and then add false memories. This is pure cutting edge technology and incredibly expensive and sophisticated but it is one of the primary tools in the APRs covert arsenal.]

THE PROBLEMS OF CHANTRY

Chantry Yethry is a relatively short (5'8") man with a light brown complexion and close cropped dark hair. He is the manager of the *Lotus Blossom,* a bakery/coffee shop located in a downtown urban setting. On Terra/Sol in the Twilight Sector Setting it is located in the Hero's Park neighborhood of Kansas City as part of the MAC Pavilion. In whatever setting you place the *Lotus Blossom* it could be the place the PCs stop at on their way to work every morning or maybe its right across the street from their apartment.

Chantry is a chatty guy who seems to know all the latest neighborhood gossip and is willing to discreetly whisper it in your ear. Everybody stops into the *Lotus Blossom* so when Chantry isn't chatting people up he has his ear cocked in their direction and so is a wealth of information on everything from high society to the unsavory workings of the local mob. He would be one guy the players would think of when they needed to acquire a little bit of local information.

Referees can use Chantry as one of those people the players know well in a superficial sort of way. He always greets them by name when they come into the *Lotus Blossom*, asks if they want the usual and inquires about their Mother's health. "I know she was feeling poorly last month did you convince her to go to the gene spa? You can't wait too long to go, every decade like clockwork Mira and I go." So when he takes one the PCs aside and asks for a favor the request is coming from a friend and not a stranger.

*This profile for the character uses the character generation method from **Tinker, Spacer, Psion, Spy.** For the **Traveller Main Rulebook** version, see next page.*

Chantry Yethry Age: 42, Civilian (6 Terms), Rank 4

STR	DEX	END	INT	EDU	SOC
6	6	5 (-1)	10 (+1)	12 (+2)	9 (+1)

Skills: Accounting 1, Admin 1, Advocate 1, Art 0, Broker 1, Carouse 2, Computers 1, Confidence 2, Diplomat 2, Flyer (Grav) 0, Notice 2, Physical Science 0, Social Science 0, Steward 1, Streetwise 1, Trade (Small Business) 2

Equipment: Hand Computer

Chantry has kept up his Longevity treatments since he was in his mid-20s, and thus appears to be that age. He is nearing the end of his second longevity treatment.

Chantry's Adventure Seeds

The Racketeers

One morning the players come into the *Lotus Blossom* to find the place a wreck. Furniture and equipment has been destroyed and the bits are strewn all over the shop. It looks like someone took a club to the place. Chantry sees the players and takes one or all aside and tells them he is being shaken down by a local gang (in Kansas City it's the Zombie Posse). He says the gang has been trying to shake him down for years but he never took them seriously and there was never any trouble before now. Would the players help an old friend figure out what is going on?

※   The PCs can easily find the local Zombie Posse hangout and return the favor so to speak. Intimidating the gang members either verbally by using the intimidate skill or physically by beating them up. Once the players have accomplished their goal of intimidation however they'll come to find out that the Zombie Posse is now working for the local mob, helping out with their racketeering operations. And now the mob is looking into who is interrupting their gravy train.

※   If they are to help Chantry, the PCs will need to find some way to deal with the mob. They might attempt to become arbiters between the local businesses and the mob. Or maybe finding some kind of dirt on the mob boss that will make him leave the Hero's Park neighborhood alone, thus becoming local heroes and getting discounts on stuff for quite some time. Maybe they attempt to gather enough info on the Mobs racketeering operation for the police to take them down. They could become the neighborhoods protectors striking at the mobs shakedown teams from the shadows till they get the message it's not profitable to do business in Heroes Park. Of course any of these options could go badly and find the players fleeing for their lives.

The Serial Killer

One day when they come into the shop they find Chantry with a very worried look on his face. He and his daughter serve them as usual but, there is some obvious tension. Eventually, Chantry makes his way over to the players table and sits down with them. He points to a patron sitting at a table by himself. He is a clean-cut, impeccably dressed, fastidious young man (note: with longevity, this could be deceiving, make that note with players). Perhaps too much so on each count to the point he seems kind of creepy. The guy keeps looking around intently at everyone almost like he is expecting trouble at any moment

from any direction. But he seems to be eyeing Chantry's daughter Mikala more than anyone else.

Chantry begins to tell the players a story about a string of murders they are vaguely familiar with by media accounts. The murders happened several years ago and lasted for a number of months before abruptly ending. Chantry tells the players that the police had questioned him during the investigation because several of the victims had been regulars. They wondered if the killer hadn't been targeting women who frequented his shop. Nothing really came of the questioning as the murders stopped shortly afterwards and Chantry couldn't think of any information to offer them. Well word on the streets is that the murders have started again, although the Metro PD won't acknowledge that. Chantry tells them that he had never noticed it before but the guy sitting at the table had been a regular who quit coming in around the time the murders stopped and has only recently started coming in again. He fears this may be the guy and "Now he keeps coming in and looking at my daughter. "I called the police but they don't even acknowledge the murders have started again." Could the players help?

※ Unbeknownst to Chantry and the players at this point is that Chantry's suspicions are correct. If the players investigate, they find the guy lives in a fancy condo in one of the Heroes Park Neighborhoods nicest buildings. He doesn't appear to work and looks to be independently wealthy (perhaps he's a hit man) although they can't determine where his wealth has come from. He is a loner and the more they examine him the creepier vibe they get.

※ They will eventually end up following the guy somehow to find out what he's up to. He'll lead them on a bizarre chase; lose them for just a few minutes while he kills his next victim (in whatever gruesome manner fits your campaign) then shows up behind them as if to taunt them.

※ From then on he'll be stalking the PCs. At this point the players will write the adventure for you as they plan out what steps to take to deal with this guy. Just follow along making the encounters fun. If they don't give you anything to work with, have our killer start picking them off one by one.

Chantry Yethry (TMB)
Average Joe, 6 terms
(see Starfarer's Gazette #1)
STR 6 **DEX** 6 **END** 5 (-1) **INT** 10 (+1)
EDU 12 (+2) **SOC** 9 (+1)

Skills: Accounting 0, Admin 1, Broker 1, Carouse 3, Confidence 1, Computers 1, Diplomat 1, Flyer (Grav) 1, Trade (Small Business) 2

TIGUE GUN WORKS

The Tigue Gun Works is best located in a downtown urban setting on a well settled SciFi world. In the Twilight Sector Campaign setting it is located on Terra/Sol in the Heroes Park Neighborhood of Kansas City (specifically in City Center Square).

John Tigue has owned the Tigue gun works for the last 17 years. Located on the 3rd floor in the City Centre Square Building, the small 120 square meter shop is a Heroes Park neighborhood icon.

For gun aficionados the shop is a haven. The target range in the rear of the shop is a gathering place for them. Although the shop has a rather limited inventory it can usually acquire any legal firearm within two business days. John Tigue is an expert marksman and can offer good advice on the performance of any number of weapons systems. Because of his expertise he is widely sought out by "gun guys".

Tigue himself was a Confed Marine who had a stellar service record with the 315th Drop infantry on Sologne. A large number of former Marines live in the heroes Park neighborhood and look out for one another. Tigue is no exception, and although his shop has only standard security precautions (besides all the guns under the counter) should he find himself in need any number of "friends" would quickly come to his defense. Mostly well armed friends.

Tigue lives in a modest apartment in the Kansas City Towers building on the 32nd floor. His son Martin, also an ex-Marine, lives with him occasionally. In his lucid moments he also helps out at the gun works. Unfortunately Martin has suffered stress-related maladies since being released from the service. He now spends far too much time hooked up to a wire connected to the pleasure center of his brain. Volt Junkie is a term far too commonly associated with veterans of the Mutant War and is applicable to Martin. The elder Tigue does what he can to help this son out, but until Martin is ready to be helped it feels like a losing battle.

John Tigue and Martin's mother were never married. Martin was the product of a wartime romance. His mother no longer lives on Terra/Sol she left with her husband a commodities broker to immigrate to the Orion Confederation capital of Koning several years ago. This has only exacerbated Martin's problems as he feels abandoned.

Ways to use Tigue Gun Works and John and Martin Tigue in your campaign:

※ To own a Krupp-Martin KM52* you need a special license and one of the only places in Kansas City authorized to issue the proficiency certificate for the KM52 is the Tigue Gun Works.

※ John Tigue is a good source for gun advice and in procuring weapons.

※ The local mob would like to acquire some of The Gun Works wares especially the Krupp-Martin KM52s, but John will not sell his stuff illegally. They have resorted to using a local thug gang (The Zombie Posse) they use for muscle to try and pressure John Tigue. The players could run across a situation where some of the gang members have John cornered and he is in need of some help. Or they could be in the Gun Works when some gang members come in trying to intimidate John.

※ The shooting range in the back of the Gun Works is an excellent place to meet people and would be a good place for a Referee to place a patron looking for just the right kind of people for a little job (the Referees next planned adventure) the patron needs done.

※ An interesting aside is the computer terminal by the shooting range has an odd quirk. In one of his periods of deep depression Martin sent a note to his dead grandmother who he had been close to via the terminal...he got a reply. He then sent a note to one of his dead comrades from the Marines. Again he got a reply. These replies seemed totally in character with the personalities of the dearly departed and Martin believes they are real. His correspondence with these departed souls is one of the things that has kept him hanging on as they have encouraged him to fight his addiction.

The funny thing is he has been getting responses. It's left to the Referee where these responses are coming from. The great beyond, a rogue AI just messing around, whatever? But what would Martin do if the PCs were to burst his bubble and his last tenuous link to reality?

※ Players could run across Martin on one of his benders, an electrode planted in his head and a battery pack in his hand that is trickling current through his brain. He is laying in Heroes park (the namesake of the neighborhood) in a pool of his own urine staring blankly towards the sky. In the alternative John may have recruited the players to help him find Martin.
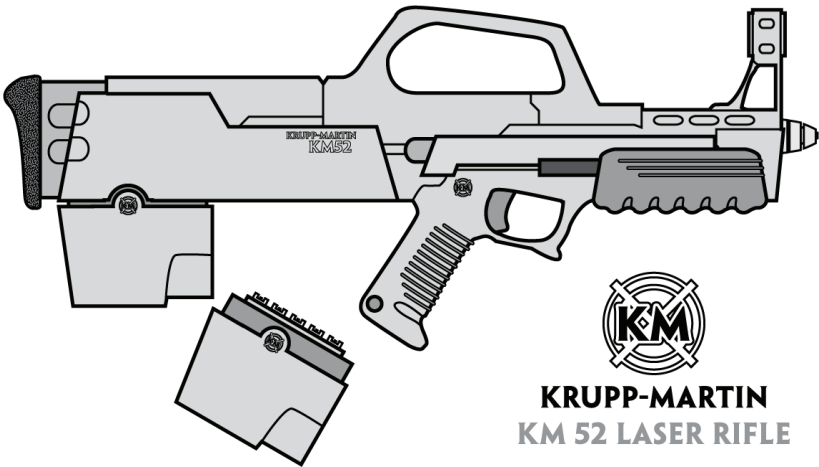
KRUPP-MARTIN

KM 52 LASER RIFLE

Krupp-Martin KM52 Laser Pulse Rifle

Cost	TL	Mass
8,000 Cr	13	4 kg

Recoil	Auto	Capacity
-	4	20

Reloading time:
1 minor action

Magazine Cost:
2,000 Cr

Damage:
4d6+3

In 2884 the upstart Krupp-Martin Armaments company won the contract to supply the assault weapons to Marine forces raised on Terra/Sol. Since this was at the beginning of the Mutant War, this proved to be a lucrative contract that launched Krupp-Martin as a major armaments manufacturer.

The KM52 was the weapon that won them the contract. A revolutionary bullpup design, the KM52 incorporated a radical new battery developed in conjunction with the SubAtomic Corporation that allowed a clip sized battery to function just like a clip would in a slug thrower for a reasonable number of discharges. In terms of weight, the battery is even more revolutionary, coming in at less than half of a standard belt-mounted battery of the same approximate size.

Pulsing the beam allows for longer battery/clip life and has also created an auto fire capability: something unique in laser weapons. While autofire draws far too much juice for sustained usage, the mere capacity to fire in this way enhances the utility of this rifle above other laser weapons. The drawbacks of the weapon are it's range, cost and the cost of it's magazine/ battery. While admittedly expensive, the battery is rechargeable for over a few thousand charges. Unfortunely, the battery is also prone to loss on the battlefield.

SETTING-BASED ADVENTURES

The following material uses the setting material section to create adventure seeds, mini-adventures, and adventure outlines.

Adventure Seed: Initiate that Pretty Sausage Program…

Chester is a stunningly beautiful Chesapeake Bay Retriever… on the outside. Inside, he is all robotics and expert systems. He has been the longtime companion of the Vanderlake family of (insert somewhere distant from the campaign center but not too distant).

Chester is also the sole repository of the Vanderlake Vienna Sausage secret recipe. A recent "data glitch" (which was the result of corporate espionage) in the Swiss-Datavault SdDB (*Société de Data Banque*) has erased the backup copy of the recipe, while a physical intrusion of the Vanderlake main system in the Columbia InfoCorridor literally vaporized the company's main system where the recipe was held as a closely guarded secret.

Then Uncle Mike remembered the robotic dog his great-grandfather loved so much. Gee-paw once told him that the dog knew the secret recipe. (Unfortunately, Uncle Mike remembers this out loud, and this is heard by spies from the corporate enemy).

But there is a problem: Chester was handed down to the "poor" side of the family a few generations ago and now rests in the hands of a dowager of the Vanderlake family, Eunice Vanderlake (living somewhere distant, but not too distant, from the player's current location or base of operations). Eunice now has to be tracked down before the competition finds her and "retires" her and poor Chester.

Complications:

The adventure involves either finding Eunice and Chester and/or getting the data out of Chester to protect the Vanderlake Foods empire. What if Eunice doesn't want to be helpful, hurt by the treatment of the 'poor" side of the family? What if the recipe is protected and Chester cannot access it without risking his very existence? And of course there is the opposition. They don't have to worry about any of this, they just need to smoke the 'bot. Enjoy!

Mini-Adventure: Emergency on Route 66

While flying over one of these 30th century highways in your sealed Grav car, perhaps sipping an adult beverage and watching the latest episode of *Star Patrol* your eye is drawn to some motion below on the highway. A skid tractor has gone out of control slid across several lanes of traffic, and off the highway. Unfortunately the high speed rail line is right next to the highway at this point and the skid tractor has come to rest on top of it.

In a rural area like the players find themselves in taking control of their grav car is simply a matter of flipping a switch and leaving the restricted airspace that follows the highway below. The players are now presented with an opportunity to be real heroes.

This is the 30th century and the track itself will probably have sensors to alert the train grid that something is blocking this track but the laws of physics are a harsh mistress and a train travelling at 600 KPH doesn't stop on a dime.

There are two problems a referee can present to the players: A train is in the vicinity and the skid tractor needs to be removed quickly to avoid a collision. The second is someone is in the cab of the skid tractor. The safety regulations call for a sentient rider inside of these vehicles in case of emergencies. In practice, this "ridealong" is generally a scut-job that is given to the new hires, who are of course the least-well equipped to actually deal with an emergency. It would have been slaved to the traffic grid. Maybe it was just someone along for the ride, maybe it's a cool story that the referee wants to come up with launching an extended adventure. At any rate the players have someone who needs saving. Throw in a little fire and the person being trapped in the cab and you have a problem for the players to work out with some time constraints.

Again this is a good spot to let the players come up with their own solutions. Using the tractors skid plates creatively is one way to move the vehicle. Using their grav car to help tow the vehicle might be another. This is an excellent spot for that *Mechanic* skill to come into play. Lacking that, a player might be able to hack into the vehicles computer controls using their *Computer* skill and then use whatever functionality is left to move the vehicle via their *Remote Operations* skills.

Don't worry, your players will come up with their own plans. Reward ingenuity.

Mini-Adventure: Smoke em' if you got em'

Plot Guerilla product placement is the latest marketing tactic. It entails getting products seen on live Tri-D programs or sports events. Cigarettes are an excellent candidate for this type of marketing. The trouble is in some locales organized crime or gangs try and charge a "tax" on this activity. The players have been recruited to carry out some of this type of product placement at a prominent playoff game this weekend.

Scene 1 At the stadium the players need to scout things out to try and determine their best opportunities to get their cigarettes on camera. Let the players script this for you. They will most likely come up with some ideas you never could have imagined. Let them run with any reasonable ideas they come up with. Good skill checks for this process would be things like*; Recon, Investigate* or *Notice*.

Scene 2 Complications will take the form of several groups of gang members roaming the stadium looking for people doing just what the players have been contracted to do and the game day security. Referees should feel free to add a third complication in the form of another Guerilla placement gang, competing for placement time with the players group. Security will not stop the players from getting their cigarettes on camera as long as they don't get in places the public isn't allowed (like on the field).

Possible placement opportunities might be in the background of an on field interview or when the sideline reporter does one of their standup shots. Also any crowd pans by the cameras or fan interviews would be additional opportunities. This scene should be all about getting into position(s) for their product placement shots. Applicable skills would be things like; *Streetwise, Stealth* or *Deception*.

Scene 3 Possible combat could ensue if the players are spotted by one of the gang groups. It should be fisticuffs for the most part unless someone pulls a knife!

If they get somewhere where security doesn't want them it will probably result in a chase sequence instead of combat as the players attempt to avoid being ejected from the venue. If they do decide to resort to combat with security it probably shouldn't end well for them as security can call for large numbers of reinforcements. The players should end up spending the night in the pokey for drunk and disorderly conduct.

Rewards Our suggestion is that the product placement agency should pay by the second, somewhere around 2,500 Cr a second.

Adventure Outline: American Royale
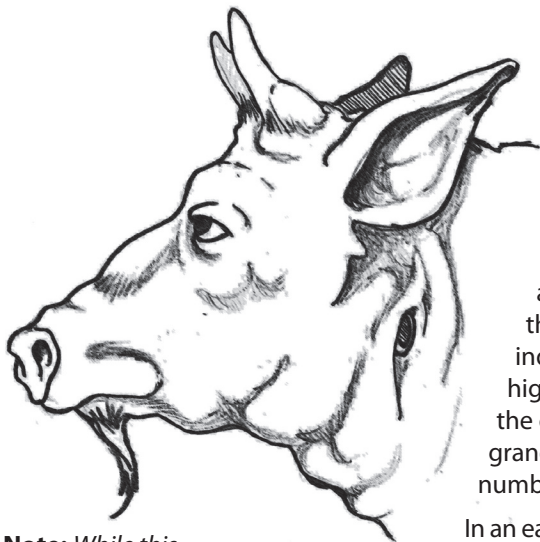
Plot:

Kansas City like its namesake on old Earth has an annual livestock and horse show. It is one of the premier agricultural exhibitions on Terra/Sol and widely attended by those in the agricultural industry. One of the highlights of the Royale is the crowning of that year's grand champion animals in a number of categories.

Note: *While this adventure is set in Kansas City on Terra/Sol but could easily be adapted to another locale.*

In an earlier time this would simply have been based on the physical characteristics of the animal and how they conformed to the breed standard. Those factors still weigh into the decision but for cattle taste has now entered the equation. One of the most surrealistic scenes imaginable is watching a judge seated in the show ring sampling a steak from the animal calmly chewing its cud not a meter in front of him.

Needless to say the value of grand champions soars and the price of cell cultures from these animals is highly sought after.

The Royale is as much spectacle as business though and this year someone came up with the classic idea to conduct a cattle drive of these extremely valuable animals through the streets of downtown Kansas City. Apparently forgetting why the practice was discontinued back in '48'.

Cattle are skittish animals and any cowboy worth his salt will tell you that they and the accouterments of a modern city usually don't mix well. Throw in celebrity cowboys as part of the action and you leave an old cowboy with nothing to do but spit and shake his head.

Such is the confluence of events that has occurred at this year's American Royale parade. The cattle drive bringing up the rear of

the parade. It almost made it to the end of the route…almost. Who knows what set off the stampede, the whining of a grav car engine, the whining of a child, an animal pelted with a rock from a juvenile delinquent spectator? But something did and now we have a new totally unplanned version of the running of the bulls rampaging through downtown Kansas City.

What the players can do:

This adventure is presented as a number of vignettes which can be presented in any order by the referee for the players to solve.

Vignette 1:

One of the cows has somehow managed to find its way onto a subway platform below the city streets. No one is quite sure how the animal got there but there it is.

This is an extremely valuable animal and the owner may collar one or more players on the street pleading with them to come down into the subway to help him chorale his property.

The players will need to come up with ideas to capture the animal, keep if from panicking and running off the platform onto the track where we're sure to end up with nothing more than single use hamburger and getting it back up the escalator to the street above.

> The skill *Animals/Veterinary* or *Training* would come in very handy here, as would *Athletics/co-ordination* if the player(s) decide to try and rope the cow. An *ad hoc* use of the *Tactics* skill might also come in handy.

Vignette 2:

A group of school children here for the parade now finds themselves trapped in the middle of a stampede. A couple of teachers do their best to steer (no pun intended) the animals around the gaggle of kids but it's clear that without some help they are fighting a losing battle and the problem isn't as simple as waiting for the cows to pass them by. With panicked crowds at both ends of the street the cows find themselves rampaging from one of the street to the other and back again.

There are several skittish horses abandoned by their celebrity riders milling about the edges of the stampede that the players might be able to make use of.

> In addition to the skills mentioned above for this problem *Animals/Riding* would possibly come in handy.

Vignette 3:

The players find themselves in an ally the way out blocked by an angry longhorn bull. A husband gored badly by the bull and his wife cower at the back of the ally. The man needs medical attention quickly and the bull needs to be kept at bay or turned back into the greater stampede occurring only scant feet behind him.

Additional skills that would be useful in this situation are *Medic* and possibly *Melee/Unarmed Combat*.

Vignette 4:

One of our celebrity 'cowboys' finds himself up the Marine's Triumphant statue, a 12' statue that sits in the middle of the street. It is surrounded by milling (now mostly calm) cattle. He is weeping and sobbing like a little girl begging for someone to get him down.

You'll need to be careful not to spook the cattle again, but it should be a relatively easy job to wade through them and get our brave action hero down off the statue. That's when our hero notices a group of teenagers pointing and laughing, one of them is recording the whole scene with his personal computing device. The celebrity at this point offers the players an exorbitant amount of money "to get that device".

Rewards:

Rewards for the various actions range from potentially quite lucrative in the case of vignettes #1 & #4. While for #2 & #3 there might be no rewards at all. Rewards are left to the discretion of the referee so that they might determine what would be appropriate for their campaigns.

Adventure Seed: To Catch a Thief

Your eye catches the sight of a grav car over a skid tractor on a trek across some desolate highway. The grav car has matched speeds perfectly. Someone is hanging out the car's door, using what looks like a laser torch to cut a hole in the top of the skid tractor's trailer.

You've obviously stumbled upon a robbery in progress.

What do you do? Call the authorities, ignore the whole thing? Either way a creative referee can draw the players into the action. Reporting the crime puts the players names on a police report, something the thieves might have access to. In the alternative just looking at the situation the player(s) might suddenly realize that someone in the grav car has a pair of binoculars and is looking back at them! The thieves probably don't want any loose ends.

With a few answers to the following questions specific to their campaigns referees can easily create an adventure or mini campaign based on this seed:

- *Who are the thieves?* Organized crime? Agents of foreign interstellar powers? A common-enough roadgang? The local law? There is also the possibility of a gap between who or what these thieves seem to be and what they really are (i.e. in disguise as local police forces, but really organized crime or foreign agents).
- *What are they stealing?* This is the golden egg. To some extent, Referees should probably answer this question last, once they know how far they want this thread to go (the last question) and/or who they want the players to tangle with (the first question).
- *What are they going to do with the item they are stealing?* This is entirely dependent on the nature of the item that is being stolen, however it also is something that the referee will want to consider in terms of the long-term goal: is this a one-off, is this the kick-off for a whole adventure? Is this the start of a thread that will run as a sub-plot through many adventures? The answer to these questions will help determine what the thieves are going to do with their cargo. If the Referee wants this to be a simple one-off, it might be nothing more than hijacked cigarettes with no real 'goal' beyond the monetary value of the cargo. If the Referee wants to turn this into the first phase of a campaign arc, this might be a critical component to the new APR superweapon being hijacked by foreign agents.

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