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# MINDJAMMER™

THE ROLEPLAYING GAME

## CHILDREN OF ORION

THE VENU SOURCEBOOK

by Sarah Newton & David Donachie

# Venu Space - Upper Sectors

## Z-1500 to Z-500

X+2500

X+2300

X+2100

X+1900

X+1700

Y+2500

X+1500

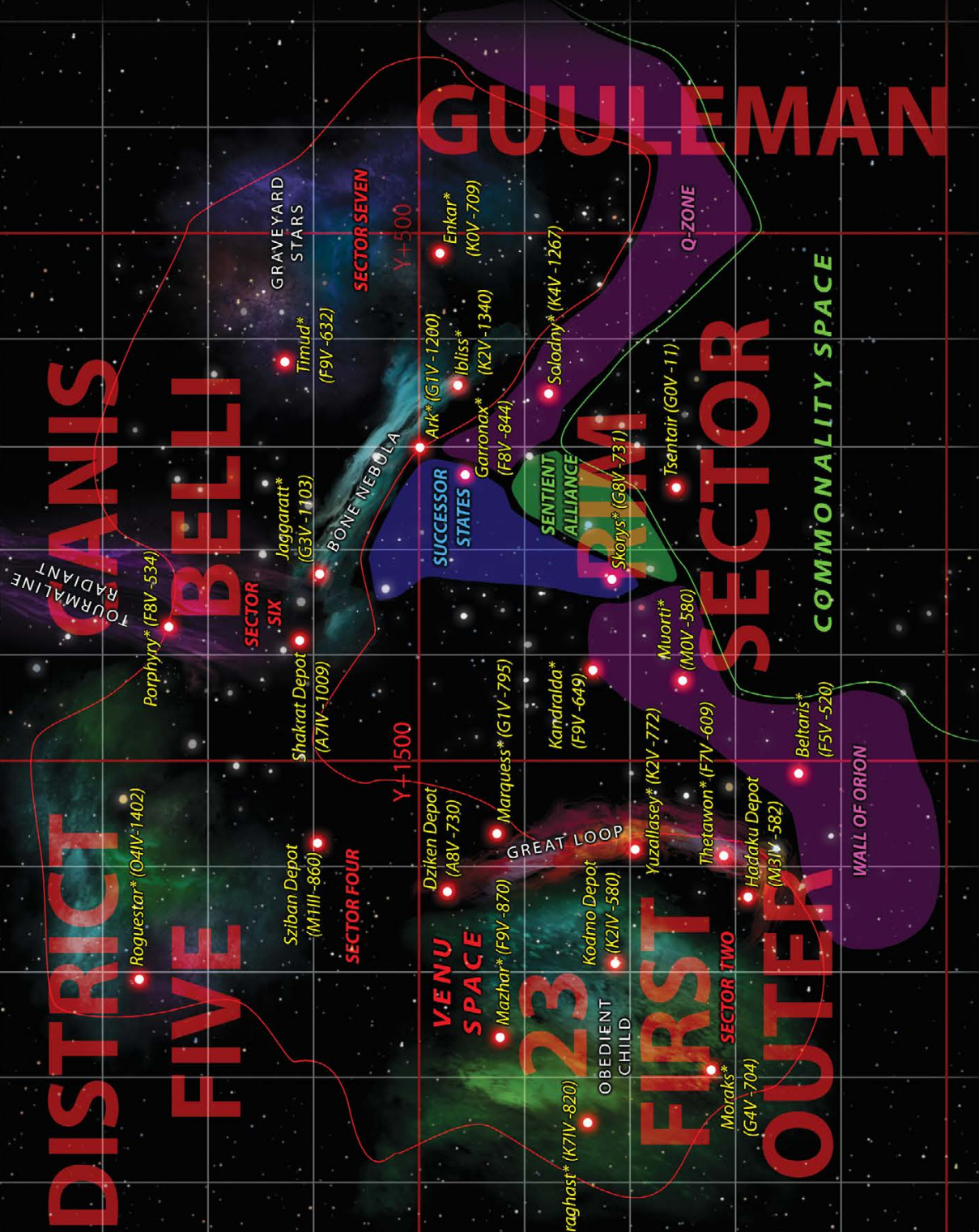
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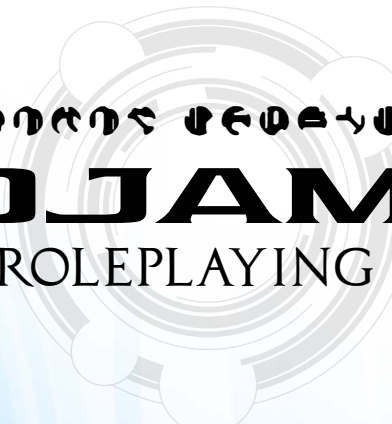
X+1100

X+900

X+700

X+500





VENUS PUBLISHING

# **MINDJAMMER™**

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## **CHILDREN OF ORION**

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# CREDITS

**Children of Orion - The Venu Sourcebook** written by Sarah Newton and David Donachie

**Cover Art** by Jason Juta

**Layout and Graphic Design** by Jason Juta

**Interior Art** by Jason Juta, Jeremy Bouzerma, Mark Gillespie, Andy Wintrip, Daniel Voss and Vincent Laik.

**Graphic Design Elements** by Josephe Vandel and Paul Bourne

**Cartography** by Sarah Newton and Jason Juta

**Edited** by Sarah Newton

**Art Direction** by Jason Juta

**Produced** by Chris McWilliam & Sarah Newton

**Enquiries:** info@mindjammerpress.com

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**Fate Core System** by Leonard Balsera, Brian Engard, Jeremy Keller, Ryan Macklin, Mike Olson

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*"Only the Pure and the Blessed of Venu may view these pages. The Dark Radiance will scour the universe of abomination!"*

# CONTENTS

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| <b>Chapter 1: Introduction</b>               | <b>4</b>   |
| <b>Chapter 2: History and Prehistory</b>     | <b>6</b>   |
| <b>Chapter 3: The Venu People</b>            | <b>13</b>  |
| <b>Chapter 4: The Venu Empire</b>            | <b>17</b>  |
| <b>Chapter 5: The Dark Radiance</b>          | <b>26</b>  |
| <b>Chapter 6: Venu Technology</b>            | <b>32</b>  |
| <b>Chapter 7: Starships and Space Travel</b> | <b>51</b>  |
| <b>Chapter 8: Venu Space</b>                 | <b>64</b>  |
| <b>Chapter 9: Creating Venu Characters</b>   | <b>91</b>  |
| <b>Chapter 10: Venu Adversaries</b>          | <b>98</b>  |
| <b>Chapter 11: Venu Campaigns</b>            | <b>106</b> |
| <b>Glossary</b>                              | <b>109</b> |
| <b>Index</b>                                 | <b>110</b> |

# CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

*Abominations did not know honour. They did not know glory. As he watched the cities burn from orbit, Asharak-Um clenched his jaw with grim satisfaction. For all their pretensions to superiority, the aliens had surrendered their right to live when they refused the God-Emperor's word.*

*He breathed deeply, feeling the power of the Dark Radiance fill his mind, and turned to the captive crumpled on the deck before him. Already its skin blistered with the uncanny energies his body radiated.*

*"And so another planet rises up and rejects abomination," he breathed. "Your world no longer has need of you."*

*He raised his eyes to his honour guard, gesturing towards the prisoner dismissively. "Take this scum away. Throw it into a pain chamber until it dies."*

*Below, the planet continued to burn.*



The Venu are one of the “bad guys” of *Mindjammer*, a cruel and oppressive civilisation which violently opposes everything the New Commonality of Humankind stands for. They’re an example of what *could* have happened to Old Earth—how badly wrong societies can go when cultures get bent out of shape and develop unchecked—and in this case how the Commonality unwittingly created the worst enemy it has ever known.

The Venu people are ancient. Their colony is over eight thousand years old, one of the first to leave Old Earth. Venu *civilisation* is relatively new, having arisen from the ashes of nucleonic devastation fifteen hundred years ago, and having come into its own literally in the last century. It’s a culture tearing itself apart: post-apocalyptic, millennialist, xenophobic, oppressive, and now in serious culture shock after encountering the Commonality and trying to invade it shortly after! In the long term the Commonality was never really threatened by the Venu, but in the short term they did enormous damage, physically and culturally, and learned enough to embark on a program of imperial expansion and armament which could easily make them a grave threat in the future—unless the Commonality can defuse them.

This sourcebook presents the complex society of the Venu. It’s designed to allow GMs to create adventures in Venu space, with Venu adversaries, and even with players playing Venu characters. It describes the life, culture, tech,

social make-up, ethnicities, government, tensions, histories, ships, vehicles, colony worlds, polities, cities, space stations, astrogational hazards, flora and fauna of Venu Space—and more! If the Commonality presents itself as bright, diverse, inclusive, and optimistic, the Venu Empire is harsh, cruel, bigoted, and oppressive. But even in the deepest darkness there's cause for hope...

Not *everything* is explained in this book. The God-Emperor Venu is a mysterious figure, the Dark Radiance a bewildering

phenomenon, and the nature of Venu mutations and Venu psi shouldn't even be possible according to Commonality science. The universe is a strange place, and in the Venu Empire characters confront that strangeness directly. So shoulder your disruptor rifle, cover your mutations with your purity mask, and bark your orders at the ship's brainjack. The Dark Radiance preserves—and, if it does not, then the God Emperor has decreed this is a good day to die!



# CHAPTER TWO

## HISTORY AND PREHISTORY

*"To dwell on the past is weakness. We were born from nucleonic fire. We were forged in flame and suffering. And now we march to the stars and make the spawn of abomination burn!"*

—Zeema Zeem, Dark Radiance Conciliator

The Venu Empire is a civilisation in crisis. Its history has been lost to nucleonic armageddon and a millennium of cruel dominion. Today, lies usurp truth and history bends to the God-Emperor's will.

The Venu did have a history before the Empire. This chapter attempts to chart it. No one in the Empire knows the events of prehistory below; few even know their own history. If the Venu were to discover the truth, it would change them forever.

### THE PREHISTORY OF THE VENU

Early in the First Age of Space, the first colony ship to use stasis technology departed Old Earth. Its destination was the Orion Nebula, a distant exotic zone of active star formation which had long fascinated humankind. The colonists were idealists from all over Old Earth, their leaders from the Commonality capital in Shine.

Their target was a habitable world in the bright blue binary system of Psi Orionis. When the crew awoke from stasis fifteen hundred years later, they found the radiation from the Psi Orionis binary too harsh for any of its planets to be habitable. Around Psi Orionis C, an F-class dwarf in a distant companion orbit, they found a garden world which met their needs.

#### *Terraforming*

Initial exploration of Psi Orionis C IV, quickly renamed Zaisho ("Home"), revealed a single moon and a t-analogue biosphere, whose dominant life forms were columnar colony filter-feeders in the planet's shallow seas. These **pillarfish** were shielded from the radiation from Psi Orionis A and B by the oceans;

on land, the colonists enjoyed no such protection, and were forced to construct low-slung, heavy habitats. Radiation levels nevertheless remained a constant problem, leading to an increased mutation rate and reduced lifespan.

Zaisho had three major landmasses separated by warm seas: the two largest were **Tiyeh-Tudek** (today Jiudek) and **Urdek** (today Irdeg), while the smallest, an equatorial island, was called **Saan** (today Zaan).

The twin blue stars of Psi Orionis A and B were almost as bright in Home's sky as the planet's own sun. Although Home's rotation gave it a day almost the same length as Old Earth, the distant binaries also created "false dawns" and "false dusks" which made insolation on the world highly complex. Home's year was almost three times that of Old Earth; its sun's companion orbit was so long as to be practically meaningless for the colony's early efforts.

From the outset the Home colony was unstable, several times verging on collapse. After a catastrophic event caused the destruction of the stasis ship, the colonists were committed to their new world (even though they immediately began to build a second, smaller version of the lost vessel). A major terraforming project was inaugurated to make the environment less harmful to humankind.

During the long terraforming period, the atmosphere's ozone and oxygen content was increased. This reduced UV levels, and further genurgic modifications eventually allowed colonists to walk unprotected on the surface. However, as UV levels fell, the native **pillarfish** colonised the land, threatening the colony: although their metabolisms were incompatible with terrestrial biology, the slightest touch of their acidic stings could prove fatal. Over time, introduced

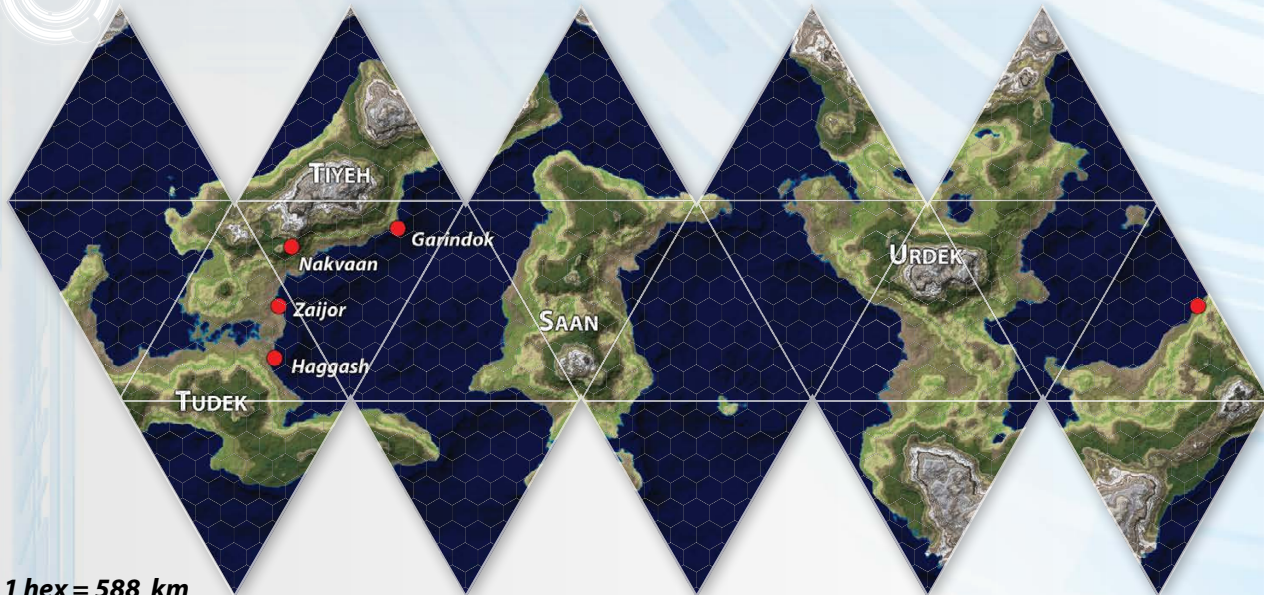


**Table 1: A Timeline of Venu's Forgotten Past**

| Commonality Date   | Venu Date (AF / IY)* | Event   |
|--------------------|----------------------|---|
| 500 FA             |                      | The <i>Orionis</i> colony ship leaves Old Earth.  |
| 2000 FA            | 0 AF                 | The <i>Orionis</i> arrives in the Psi Orionis system and sends the First Communication back to Old Earth.   |
| 2300 FA            | 91 AF                | The Psi Orionis colony uses its last T7 reserves to build a colony ship to the neighbouring system of Ninshub.  |
| 3500 FA            | 453 AF               | Old Earth receives the First Communication and sends the First Reply.   |
| 5000 FA            | 906 AF               | The Psi Orionis colony, known as Zayor ("Home"), receives the First Reply or "Revelation". It sends the Second Communication to Old Earth.  |
| 5050 FA            | 921 AF               | Establishment of the Zayoran Patriarchate, a global polity incorporating the "teachings" of the First Revelation.   |
| 5100 FA            | 937 AF               | The Zayoran Patriarchate establishes an STL interstellar civilisation in what become known as the "Scion Worlds".   |
| 6500 FA            | 1360 AF              | Old Earth receives the Second Communication and sends the Second Reply.   |
| 6600 FA            | 1390 AF              | Enthusiasm for Zayoran colonisation wanes. Acolytes bombard the Scion Worlds with dogma and propaganda.   |
| 8000 FA            | 1813 AF              | The Zayoran Patriarchate receives the Second Revelation, and replies with the Third Communication. Shaken by the Revelation's contents, the Patriarchate struggles to keep control. |
| 8010 FA            | 1816 AF              | The social upheaval known as the Schism Wars begins.  |
| 8100 FA            | 1843 AF              | Social instability spreads throughout the Patriarchate.   |
| 9000 FA            | 2115 AF              | The Fall: After a period of oppression and conflict, nucleonic and bioweapon exchanges occur throughout the Patriarchate. Civilisation falls and tech indices plummet to T0-2.      |
| 9500 FA            | 2266 AF              | Old Earth receives the Third Communication and sends the Third Reply.   |
| 9750 FA            | 2341 AF              | In the Devastation (the long aftermath of the Fall), the warlord Venu carves a domain in the ruins of Zayor. Its tech index reaches T3-4.   |
| 10000 FA           | IY 1 (2417 AF)       | Founding of the Venu Empire. The world, now called Ven Sayor, is unified again at T5.   |
| 10200 FA           | IY 61 (2477 AF)      | Lord Countenant Irdu Nin leads an STL expedition to Ninshub and reclaims it for the Empire, which reaches T6.   |
| 10570 FA / 70 NCE  | IY 172 (2589 AF)     | First Contact with the Commonality. The "Great Leap" to T7.   |
| 10571 FA / 71 NCE  |                      | The New Pronouncements and founding of the Dark Radiance Executive.   |
| 10578 FA / 78 NCE  |                      | The Reconquest  |
| 10586 FA / 86 NCE  | IY 177 (2594 AF)     | Lord Countenant Hell Mur of the Dark Radiance Executive dispatches an FTL expedition to Sector Seven.   |
| 10610 FA / 110 NCE | IY 184 (2601 FA)     | The Commonality War (Venu War). The Venu fleet advances as far as Styphon in the Commonality Core before being forced back.   |
| 10650 FA / 150 NCE | IY 196 (2613 FA)     | The Stop-Start War. Battle with the Commonality for the worlds of Sector Eight becomes stalemate. The God Emperor establishes the Wall of Orion.                                    |
| 10693 FA / 193 NCE | IY 209 (2626 FA)     | Present-day. Tensions from the Commonality War worsen. The Wall of Orion flickers with conflict, and everyone expects war.  |
| 11000 FA / 500 NCE | IY 302 (2719 AF)     | The anticipated arrival of the Third Revelation.  |

\*1 Venu year is approximately 3.31 standard years in length.

## ZAISHO / HOME (PSI ORI C IV) -7000 NCE



algae and ferns outcompeted the pillarfish and drove them into isolated areas. Additionally, the lack of phosphorus (an element vital for terrestrial ecosystems) in the Zaijor environment was addressed. A small phosphorus rich asteroid was deposited in a desert region of Tiyeh-Tudek, an event which also contributed to the lowering of the planet's temperature and the spread of terrestrial flora.

### *The Pre-Revelatory Period*

Psi Orion's first settlement was founded on the east coast of Tiyeh-Tudek. Today known as Zaijor, it is still Home's most important conurbation. Other important locations on Tiyeh-Tudek included Nakvaan, from where the First Communication back to Old Earth was transmitted; Garindok, the seat of colonial government in this period; and Loyar, its primary food producing centre.

Within three hundred years of foundation, it became clear that Home's tech index was deteriorating. In 91 AF (After Foundation, approximately 2300 FA), efforts to reconstruct the lost colony ship had succeeded, and an expedition was launched to a garden world signature in the nearby system of Ninshub. Even as it left, the Home colony realised it would be a long time before another such expedition could be mounted.

In subsequent centuries, smaller settlements were established on Home's other two continents, and rival administrations came to control settlements and continents. During the first two millennia both Tiyeh-Tudek and Saan were heavily cultivated and densely populated, while Urdek remained a bastion of the original t-analogue biosphere. Smaller states emerged there which fought amongst themselves and sometimes raided Tiyeh-Tudek's more prosperous settlements.

Communications were maintained with the Ninshub colony, 10LY away, although travel between the two systems was rare.

By the third millennium, both Tiyeh-Tudek and Saan were dominated by stable states. Urdek cycled through unstable polities with periods of widespread conflict. For extended periods the tech index rarely rose above T4. Much of the colony's knowledge base was lost, the paradise of Old Earth regarded as little more than a myth. Cut off by the Orion Nebula's dust clouds, Home developed in isolation, becoming introverted and egocentric.

It was during this "pre-Revelatory" period that the characteristic Venu hatred of the unclean arose. Despite genurpic modification, mutation rates caused by the system's intense radiation storms were well above the human norm. On Urdek, those mutated by exposure founded small colonies, but on Tiyeh-Tudek and Saan they were shunned, driven into the hills.

### *The Revelation*

In the year 906 AF (c. 5000 FA), a message from Old Earth penetrated the Orion Complex and was received at the ancient fortress-monastery of Nakvaan on Tiyeh-Tudek, where the original colony ship's receiving apparatus had been reverently preserved by an order of ascetics. That a message had once been sent to Old Earth had long been forgotten, and although myths said one day the Ancestors would speak, no one really believed it would happen. The shock was profound: instantly, the people of Home (now called **Zayor**) learned they weren't the only humans in existence, and that a far greater, more advanced, civilisation on the other side of the galaxy claimed to have given them birth.

The scientific and technological knowledge contained in what was called the "Revelation" was far beyond what Zayor was capable of (a tech index of T8, compared to Zayor's T4-T5). Revolutions in power generation, materials, information and propulsion spurred technological innovation and interplanetary exploration, and more significant still were advances in medicine and anti-agathics: Old Earth had discovered the secret of longevity...

The Revelation converted Tiyeh-Tudek into a technological and military superpower. Zaijor's elite, their lives extended by Revelation knowledge, also dominated Urdek and Saan, establishing a patrician nobility that dispensed extended lifespans as rewards and favours. Those opposing the new orthodoxy were denied longevity and allowed to go the way of all flesh, or to accept voluntary exile to Ninshub, with which STL travel once again became a reality. The patricians styled themselves "Speakers" for distant Old Earth, appointed by the godlike "parents" of the Commonality to guide the peoples of Zayor. The remaining independent nations were absorbed (or conquered), and Zayoran propaganda ensured the status quo.

## ***A Golden Age***

With the establishment of world government spanning Zayor and Ninshub, it first becomes possible to talk about a **Zayoran Patriarchate**. The next three thousand years were a golden age which left traces which Venu archaeologists today (such as they are) often struggle to explain. Armed with Revelation technology, the Patriarchate harnessed their star system's resources and set their eyes on expansion. Wishing to emulate the Commonality as they understood it, they established a network of worlds that revered them as godlike rulers, confident they could create a society of order and control.

Slower-than-light colony ships left Zayor for the turbulent space of the Orion Complex. Many never reached their destinations, while others found worlds awash with radiation or barren of life. Nevertheless many colonies thrived, and while dust clouds, nebulae, and hyperactive young stars meant many worlds never communicated back to Zayor, enough remained in contact to create the centralised civilisation the patriarchs had dreamed of. Key worlds settled in this era include Alaruk, Ellu, Enkar, Tenerophobe, Theta-One, and Timud. Uncertain remains of presumed alien cultures encountered by the colonists reinforced their sense that humans were a superior species, successful where others had failed.

Towards the end of the Golden Age, enthusiasm for colonisation waned. Many colonies had failed, and those which were successful offered little to Zayor other than obsequious messages and a destination for patriarchs with a hankering to rule their own planets. Viewing Zayor as superior to these **Scion Worlds** (just as the "parents" of Old Earth were superior to them), the patriarchs took little interest in their cultures. Instead, their acolytes broadcasted decrees and pronounce-



ments of orthodoxy across Zayoran space, bombarding colony worlds with constant transmissions to ensure they remained the faithful image of their creators.

## ***The Second Revelation***

Following the Revelation, the monks of Nakvaan sent a "Second Communication" to distant Old Earth. By the time it arrived in c. 1360 AF (c. 6500 FA), Commonality society had changed. Where the Old Earth of the first Revelation had been mildly authoritarian, the culture that broadcast the second was inclusive, secular, hedonistic and decadent, embracing ubiquitous and synthetic intelligence, virtual fantasies, and a highly libertarian ethos.

The reply reached Zayor early in the sixth millennium. The **Second Revelation**, received like the first at Nakvaan, threw Zayoran civilisation into chaos. It showed that the people of Old Earth were not the gods the Patriarchs had claimed them to be, but instead were morally and spiritually corrupt, denying their own divinity and mocking Zayor's arrogant humanocentrism. It dealt a fatal blow to the primacy of the patriarchs, although it would take centuries for its full effects to be felt.

For many, the Second Revelation represented the unthinkable: the "gods" of Old Earth committing blasphemy. Others tried to follow the revolutionary new teachings.

The result was schism. Those who accepted the Second Revelation could not co-exist with those who did not. Zayoran society became polarised and fragmented; conflicts flared across the world and throughout the Scion Worlds that had remained in contact.

In 2115 AF (c. 9000 FA), a thousand standard years after the Second Revelation, the **Schism Wars** finally destroyed Zayoran civilisation. First Ninshub and then Zayor collapsed into devastating war and a new dark age. Zayor's colonies died, or fell silent as chaos overcame them—the chaos from which the Empire of Venu arose.

## ***What the Commonality Knows About Venu Prehistory***

Although the Venu Empire knows almost nothing of its prehistory, the Commonality knows much more. Over millennia, the "Communications from Orion" enabled the Commonality to reconstruct an overview of Psi Orionis history up to the Third Communication, fifteen hundred years ago. The big surprise is that this history appears to have **nothing** in common with Venu society today. What happened in the three thousand years since the Second Revelation? Only Venu knows—and he's not telling...

## **THE HISTORY OF THE VENU EMPIRE**

*Commonality note: The Commonality has one source for the history of the Venu Empire since the Third Communication: the Venu Empire itself. This is problematic: the God-Emperor has created a society where knowledge and intellectualism is debased, and the past is a shadowy fragmented place, riddled with propaganda and disinformation. This section is history as the Venu know it.*

### ***The Rise of Venu***

*"Thou shalt have no other Emperor but Venu."*

– The First Commandment of Venu,  
from the Tech Commandments

In the long devastation following the Schism Wars, a great leader arose on Ven Saylor: the immortal God-Emperor, Venu the Undying. Nothing is known of his birth and early years, but tales of his battles against the Abominations are taught to every Venu child. Who has not dreamed of the heroic Slaughter of Revelation Station, or the storming and purification of Zajjor Palace? Bright Venu and his empire spring from the ashes of war, bringing order to a world in disarray.

Within a few years of his victory, great Venu established the Imperial Hierarchy which survives (with a few modifications) to this day. His closest advisors, the mask-wearing

**Lords Countenant** (page 17), were chosen from the most trusted of his military cadres to act as the supreme enforcers of his will. Beneath were placed the **Tech Shield Curacy** (also known as the **Aegis Defenders**—page 18), responsible for the Empire's technological might and the worship rites of Venu. Next came the **Commissariats**, the divisions of Venu's government; and **the Pure**, the great masses who rejected Schism and abomination.

Venu outlined his dazzling new world order in heroic proclamations known as the **Tech Commandments**: worship Venu, abominate mutants, reject the inhuman. A copy of the Commandments is found in every Venu home, and excerpts adorn government buildings and everyday speech. Rote learning of the Commandments is a pleasure, a sacred duty, and a requirement for Commissariat service. Debating their finer points is the one intellectual pursuit embraced by the Pure, who otherwise shun ratiocination.

### ***The Upheavals of War***

After proclaiming the Tech Commandments, the God-Emperor withdrew from public view, communicating through the Lords Countenant. Individual Lords assumed command of the Commissariats, vying for power while enforcing the new order that the Commandments ordained. Technological progress became the purview of the Tech Shield Curacy, which focussed on recovering the lost technology of the first and one true Revelation, instead of attempting to develop blasphemous new inventions.

Venu's new order was welcomed by the Pure, who guarded their ranks against heresy and abomination. More than forty generations of Venu have lived in its embrace, and abomination, ever-present and waiting for weakness, has been rooted out wherever it has been found. When the God-Emperor commanded the Tech Shield Curacy to take the people of Venu to the stars, they found worlds lost to abomination, and rejoiced in bringing them back to the Brightness of Purity.

Then came the Commonality, and everything changed.

For centuries, the God-Emperor had led his people to extirpate all traces of Schism and abomination from the Scion Worlds. But abomination had lain in wait, beyond the stars, and had grown strong again. Now it swept into the worlds of the Pure, daring even to land in Venu Prime's most sacred precincts, defeating their protections with its insidious power.

The Pure were unprepared, having weakened their vigilance against abomination. Panic and terror spread from world to world, and many fell to the temptations of the ancient enemy. It was only when the God-Emperor intervened and swept the invaders from the Commonality aside that the people of Venu rediscovered their souls. The Tech Shield Curacy broadcast the executions from the sanctum of Revelation Station itself, and the worlds rejoiced.

## The New Pronouncements

*"Beware thoughts which come from nowhere, for they are an abomination. Purity of thought is learned from the Pure."*

—The Sixteenth and Seventeenth Pronouncements of Venu, from the New Pronouncements.

Within days of the executions, Venu issued his first new decree in five hundred standard years. More followed in subsequent weeks. These **New Pronouncements** created upheavals in Venu society greater even than Commonality contact, and established a new principle in Venu culture—the worship of a force known as the **Radiant Darkness**—and a new commissariat-level body to coordinate that worship, the **Dark Radiance Executive**. Overnight, the Monitors of the Dark Radiance were everywhere, spreading from Zaijor Palace to bring the Radiant Word to the Pure. Conciliators and Intercessors pushed the Curacy preachers from their Tech Halls, replacing them with firebrand orators. Reject the lies of the Commonality! Embrace the Radiant Darkness! Fight to defend the Venu way! The Pure flocked to the recruiting halls, even as the first soldiers ascended to the ranks of the Protectors, the new elite military of the Dark Radiance Executive.

The New Pronouncements continued even as the Empire went to war, as new warships drove deep into Commonality Space, through to their triumphant return from the Commonality Core. Only then did the Emperor fall silent, retreating behind the masks of the Lords Countenant again.

## The Reconquest

*"What has been lost shall be reclaimed."*

—The Twenty-Fifth Pronouncement of Venu, from the New Pronouncements.

The Twenty-Fifth Pronouncement of Venu marked the start of the **Reconquest** (*Commonality gloss: official name for the re-integration of former colonies into an interstellar polity centred on Venu Prime (Ven.: Ven Saylor), the new name for the Venu homeworld*). Although the God-Emperor's pronouncements had been broadcast into the void by the Tech Shield Curacy for centuries, and some messages of fealty had been received in return, only the colony of Ninshub had been close enough for physical contact with Venu Prime. Within a few years of Commonality contact, Venu ordered planeships to all scion worlds for which records remained, to bring them into the Empire's fold.

Over the following forty years, Venu fleets appeared in the skies of countless worlds across the Orion Complex. Many colonies had perished during their long isolation; others had fallen into divergent abomination; and others still fought the Pure before being vanquished. The rest, exposed to centuries of broadcasts, embraced the Empire's way. (Many believe the Emperor even visited those worlds in person!) Many worlds,



cleansed of abomination, were virgin land for resettlement by the millions of Pure from the thriving cities of Ven Saylor.

These newly restored scion worlds were dubbed the **Imperial Realm**, and provided the heroic workers, raw materials, and new technologies to build the magnificent invasion fleet that the God-Emperor unleashed upon the Commonality in Venu Imperial Year 304 (*Commonality gloss: 110 NCE, 1000 standard years after the Empire's foundation*).

## The Commonality War

The Venu blitzkrieg took the Commonality by surprise. Millions of soldiers and thousands of ships from the shipyards of Secorak, Venu Prime and Moirazh poured out of Orion, falling on worlds weakened by abomination and unprepared for war. Commonality ships in the wilds beyond Sectors Two and Five (*Commonality gloss: the Rim and Bastion sectors*) fell back; the abandoned worlds which embraced the God-Emperor swelled the Empire's resources and ranks, although many were only liberated following orbital bombardment.

The Imperial advance lasted five years. Significant battles at Kordarus, Odiphon II, Red Earth, and Bastion (three times, from 111-113 NCE) resulted in Imperial victories, often at heroic cost. In IY 186 (115 NCE), at the Battle of Styphon V, the God-Emperor declared the threat of schism over, and our fleet returned in triumph.

Imperial forces continued to root out abomination. Where our troops were hard-pressed, the Tech Shield Curacy worked miracles, creating superweapons from technology seized from the Schismatics, unleashing pathogens, self-replicating nanoclouds, z-radiation bombs, nucleonics, brain-jack soldiers and torsion weapons (*Commonality gloss: Weapons which were used indiscriminately on relief troops and native populations alike. Even when the Venu were expelled before they could commit genocidal atrocities, SCI Force reports cultural trauma on a massive scale throughout the Survivor Worlds.*)

### ***The Situation Today***

The blow the Empire inflicted on the Commonality schismatics stopped them in their tracks. However, abomination is everywhere, and the Venu remain vigilant; the Wall of Orion keeps the threat at bay, but everyone knows that the Pure must be ready to strike without fear or false mercy wherever abomination is found. Since the war, the God-Emperor has provided a blessed new weapon—the Dark Radiance. With that and the shield of the Aegis Defenders, the Empire will endure!

The Empire continues to explore Venu Space. Ancient colonies from prehistory are regularly found and brought back into the radiance of Venu.





## CHAPTER THREE THE VENU PEOPLE



*Avrakh-Gar felt the power of the machine. It replaced his limbs. It stirred his blood. It burned in his loins with the brazen glow of the sacred Radiance. All this and more made him proud.*

*But before his children he could no longer show his face. His scars and welts were signs of devotion, but he hid them behind a mask of smiling satz-flesh, the sacrifice which dare not speak its name.*

### PHYSIOLOGY

The Venu Empire encompasses many worlds and hundreds of billions of people. In spite of this, the Venu form a relatively homogenous population, dark in hair and skin tone, with distinctive reddish eyes, a genurgic adaptation to the intense blue frequencies emitted by the suns of Psi Orionis and the stars of the Orion Complex. Average height is a little taller than the human norm; Venu Prime is a 0.9G world (actually 0.86G), and the slowboat colonists of the prehistoric Zayoran Patriarchate preferred planets with similar gravities and spectral types. Notable exceptions are the high grav world of Alaruk in the Alaruk cluster, the winged natives of the Eye of Orion, and the subterranean night people of Roguestar.

### SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Venu culture is authoritarian, regimented, and riddled with suspicion. Venu citizens are encouraged to monitor their neighbours for signs of deviation, mutation, or heresy, reporting everything they see to their superiors or to the ubiquitous **Dark Radiance Executive** (page 17). The average Venu is secretive, reticent, and fatalistic, content to place their lives in the hands of fate. In public they embrace conformity and make frequent displays of loyalty; in private they may be more relaxed, but are always wary of **Monitors** (page 27), or that some accidental slip might be reported to the **Conciliators** (page 27).

Venu only truly open up among close family, gathering inside houses to eat, sing, and take **pexil** (page 38), a stimulant that many are exposed to in the military. **Stimmers**, neuro-active devices related to Venu pain inducers, are also used. During

gatherings people open up about their concerns, saying things normally regarded as treason. For this reason, betrayal of a family member is both the grossest crime and the most fervent expression of loyalty; Venu who turn in their relatives are shunned by neighbours and lauded by the authorities.

### THE SOCIAL HIERARCHY

Venu society is hierarchical. Most people belong to **the Pure** (page 20), the common subjects of the God-Emperor; a minority belongs to the ranks of the Imperial Hierarchy (page 17). Even among the Pure there are gradations of rank. Venu are conditioned to defer to higher ranks and to expect deference from lower ranks; social sanctions and even summary punishments encourage people to maintain the status quo, perhaps the most notorious of which is **extirpation**, whereby anyone of a rank higher than the Pure may summarily execute any member of the Pure who does not show the expected deference. This is rationalised as vigilance against the emergence of abomination among the Pure.

### FEAR AND LOATHING: THE HATRED OF ABOMINATION

Since prehistory, the Venu have feared and hated mutation, which they call **abomination**. This was initially perhaps a logical response to mutations damaging the early colony's genurgy pool; today it's a deep and irrational prejudice. To a Venu, mutation and the divergence it causes are wrong, to be mercilessly destroyed wherever they are found.



## ARCHITECTURE

Venu architecture favours monolithic, ponderous, and fascistic motifs: huge pillars, overwhelming colonnades, oppressively featureless walls, menacing official buildings. The Imperial Palace at Zaijor, the seat of the Emperor, is clad in polished black stone of great antiquity, with mirrored windows that reflect the Pure scurrying below. This pattern is repeated across Venu space: official buildings are ponderous cubes with ground-level porticoes, rising to forests of comm needles, uplink spires, and defensive emplacements. Government installations incorporate military outposts with Venu trooper detachments. In the event of invasion or insurrection, they serve as command and staging posts, and enjoy strategic views over residential and commercial structures in their shadows. Venu cities (often called **spire cities**) expand upwards instead of outwards, following a pattern established by the survivors of the Schism Wars, their settlements surrounded by irradiated badlands. Residential blocks on Venu Prime may rise hundreds of storeys, and official buildings higher still. Blank-faced government edifices are quickly constructed on conquered worlds.

## FASHION AND CLOTHING

Venu fashion is more varied. Worlds settled in Venu prehistory developed their own styles, some of which are conserved to

this day; they help identify Venu who are away from home. Many Venu favour military uniforms or styles inspired by them, including weather-resistant overcoats, peaked caps, the skull-and-wings emblem of Fleet Command, and the iconic charcoal-grey filter masks known as **Purifiers** (page 34). The Purifier began life as a survival tool in the radioactive badlands that surrounded cities on Venu Prime, but was adopted as a badge of honour by the War Commissariats during the wars of Reconquest, and is now the emblem of the military elite.

## LIFESPAN AND SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

“Three tens and three” is the traditional lifespan of the Venu in Sayoran years, approximately 100 standard years, although this has become unstable of late. While Venu tech is improving, and lifespans gradually increasing, exposure of the Venu to z-radiation sources has caused a surge in early deaths. The ancient longevity of the Zayoran Patriarchs is no longer openly available in the Empire, although Commonality analysts theorise that the God-Emperor and senior members of the Imperial Hierarchy still benefit from it.

## LANGUAGE

The official language in the Empire is that spoken by the God-Emperor, and is known as **Venu**. Spoken across Venu Prime, it’s the only language used by the Venu hierarchy throughout the Empire; all other languages are actively suppressed.

Venu is highly inflected, with a large vocabulary rich with status markers. It doesn’t lend itself to improvisational coinage or higher figurative or metaphorical use; Commonality linguists have compared it to a highly ideological form of Zero Gestalt language. Its written form has a syllabary and a complex system of blocky pictograms, taught within rigid groupings of the Venu hierarchy. While Venu propaganda can be read by all Venu, Imperial Hierarchy communications are generally only legible to their intended recipients.

Abominations and outcasts use **gutterspeak**—debased forms of the Venu language or remnants of suppressed local tongues. Especially on restive worlds, use of gutterspeak may be reason enough for summary extirpation (page 13).

## CLANS AND COMBINES

Venu society is organised into **clans** and **combines**. Today these often amount to the same thing. Strictly speaking, clans are social groupings—the survivor hordes—which emerged from the nucleonic devastation, while combines are descendants of the trade houses of the Zayoran Patriarchate which survived the Schism Wars. Venu allied with the most coopera-



tive trade houses in his unification campaign, and they remain close to him today. Those which held back are less favoured: some are exiled, while others have been destroyed. Combines are often richer and more powerful than clans, involved in industry and trade, but there are powerful clans, too.

Clans and combines are often differentiated by their relative status. Some are designated “great”, while others are “minor” or even “in exile”. Combines generally have higher status than clans, but this may shift over time. Some clans and combines are designated “radiant” by Imperial decree: this mark of Imperial favour confers privileges and advantages.

Combines are baroque and byzantine, nasty and filled with intrigue, and also rich. They have influence everywhere, and many are supported by the Dark Radiance Executive, and in turn send their scions into Dark Radiance service.

Most normal Venu belong to clans. Many of the War Commissariats (page 21) recruit heavily from the clans, although other commissariats favour combines. Both clans and combines have unique equipment, apparel, technologies, and holdings (even entire worlds), as well as customs and traditions dating back centuries.

**Table 2: Venu Clans and Combines**

| Clan / Combine                 | Comments  |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Alaruku Mining Combine (AMC)   | Combine with outposts on several Alaruku worlds.  |
| Argon Silver House             | An Alaruk cluster mining combine.   |
| Asharak                        | A Venu clan.  |
| AZRAC                          | Alaruk Zaniope Radiance Combine making core components of the radiance engine. Based on Alaruk. |
| Core-Spin Directorate          | Based mainly on Moirazh.  |
| Gamulak                        | A Venu clan.  |
| Hell                           | A Venu clan.  |
| Moirazh Heavy Industries (MHI) | An Alaruk cluster mining combine.   |
| Ninku                          | A Venu clan.  |
| Vargat                         | A Venu clan.  |

## VENU FAMILIES

Venu families are structured around the ideals of purity and fertility which flourished in the desperate conditions of the Devastation, when fertile individuals were condemned to lives of relentless breeding. Today, Venu families comprise multiple males and females in an extended family, in which a single male and female (usually past breeding age) preside and determine breeding partners based on politics, dynamics, and preference. These days, non-breeding members are not cast out unless they are abominations. It’s tacitly assumed that Venu mutants (page 20) refrain from breeding—officially they are “too pure”. Needless to say, this system causes no end of social stress and sows tragedy in its wake.

Scion Worlds are often forced to adopt the Venu family structure. Wall Worlds (page 85) may be permitted alternate structures—for now.

## VENU GENDER ROLES AND SEXUALITY

Venu gender roles are rigidly prescribed when individuals are engaged by their families in breeding and rearing activities. This has nothing to do with gender or sexual preference: it’s regarded as a social duty, and is rigorously enforced by psychological and material constraints. Otherwise, gender-based behavioural restrictions are few. In the military, Venu mutants are frequently of any gender, and sexual relations of all types are common, including frequent polyamory, although most sexual activity of any kind is conducted in private (like most Venu personal life). Indeed, individuals disinclined to enter into breeding relationships often join the military or other appropriate occupation in the expectation of becoming a Venu mutant, which removes any such obligation.

The rigid Venu social hierarchy and the often intense levels of behavioural oppression means that private lives

### New Organisation Extra: World Holdings

Costs 1 stunt, 1+ skill points

*Your organisation has a number of world holdings equal to your Resources skill. You may exploit them for resources, safe havens, etc. You don’t have to predefine which worlds these are in advance, but may name them during play. Changing an already defined world holding is a major undertaking and requires at least a minor advancement, and may take several months.*

## AZRAC (THE ALARUK ZANIOPE RADIANCE COMBINE)

**Physical Stress:** 1□2□3□ **Mental Stress:** 1□2□3□4□

**Systems Stress:** 1□2□3□4□

**Consequences:** 2 + 1 Moderate

**Scale:** Planetary (+6)

**Reach:** Interstellar (+8)

**Aspects:** Ancient Alaruku Combine Dynasty; Close to the God-Emperor; Tentacles Everywhere; Lethal Intrigue; We Rival the Commissariats in Power; Stresses and Strains With the Tech Shield Curacy.

**Skills:** Fantastic (+6) Deceive; Superb (+5) Technical, Will; Great (+4) Contacts, Resources, Security; Good (+3) Bureaucracy, Provoke, Stealth; Fair (+2) Knowledge, Science, Structure.

### STUNTS

- ◆ **Aid Package:** Use Resources for moderate and severe physical recovery actions for organisations.
- ◆ **Esprit de Corps:** +2 defend bonus vs demoralising attacks and propaganda campaigns.

◆ **Extreme Sanction:** Make Security actions against characters.

◆ **Known Knowns:** +2 defend bonus against Deceive.

◆ **Public Relations:** +2 create an advantage Deceive bonus

◆ **The Ties That Bind:** +2 bonus to Contacts create an advantage actions.

◆ **Witch Hunt:** Use Provoke against characters.

### EXTRAS

★ **Couriers:** +2 bonus when rapid communication is the goal.

★ **Market Maker Section:** +2 Resources bonus to create New Market advantages to 2-zone range.

★ **Mole:** 1/session, pay 1FP to make a single Intrusion attack with a +2 bonus vs Mediocre (+0) or normal passive opposition.

★ **Production Facilities:** Specialist Production Facility; Good (+3) Technical.

★ **World Holdings:** You directly control 4 worlds each with Average (+1) Resources and Technical, and may exploit them for resources, safe havens, etc.

often bubble with complex variations on sublimated sexual relationships. Rumours of spectacular sub-dom partnerships extremely high in the Imperial hierarchy are legendary.

## VENU NAMES

As might be expected, Venu names serve not only to identify an individual in his or her peer group, but also to clearly demarcate his or her position in the Venu hierarchy. Venu names contain several components, including:

- A personal name. Examples include Bal, Gan, Mur, Um, Vasht (for males) and Kab, Led, Tid, and Zeem (for females).
- A family name. Examples include Fatid, Fomur, Vagan, and Vibal.
- A clan or combine name. Examples include: Alaruku, Asharak, Core-Spin.
- A rank in a given body in the Imperial Hierarchy. This does not generally apply to the Pure.

Names are usually given in the order: Hierarchy Rank + Clan / Combine Name + Personal Name + Family Name + Hierarchy Service. An example is "Countenancer Azrac-Kab Fomur, Sector Four Command". Often the family name is omitted in professional life.

## EVERYDAY TECHNOLOGY

The tech index of the Venu Empire tops out at T7 (First Age of Space), although Venu dirt drives and their associated

technologies are above that, and are highly experimental and poorly understood. Most Venu (especially the Pure) rarely see equipment above T5 (Computer Age), and even lower if the world requires it; hatred of abomination means the fruits of the Age of Genurgy (tech index T6) are rarely exploited in Venu society. To acquire higher technology, particularly of T7, individual Venu join the Imperial Hierarchy and are assigned such equipment in the course of their duties.

## TRANSPORT

Venu subjects lead lives which even Core Worlders would consider oppressive and controlled. On Venu worlds, there is no such thing as freedom of movement; even routine travel within spire cities requires authorisation, and rigorous checking of travel permits is common. To travel between cities, or beyond to other continents, involves many bureaucratic entanglements and bribes.

Travelling freely to other worlds is almost unheard of, although interstellar travel as part of one's occupation is common, particularly in the commissariats. For the Pure, the only real occasion to travel to other planets is to volunteer for resettlement in the colonies; even then, this is likely to be a one-way trip under difficult conditions (usually in a packed colony transport with minimal life support) to bring the life of the Bright Empire to former abomination worlds. Survivors of such transports end up tough and ruthless and determined to thrive.

# CHAPTER FOUR THE VENU EMPIRE

*"Thou shalt not suffer an abomination to live."*

—The Third Commandment of Venu, from the Tech Commandments

Venu society is oppressively hierarchical and traditional, although the convulsions of the Commonality War and the New Pronouncements have seen unprecedented changes occur in the Empire in only a few decades. Most Venu have accepted these changes with an equanimity born of long years of indoctrination and obedience.

## THE NEW ORDER OF VENU

The Imperial Hierarchy places every subject of the God-Emperor on a ladder of precedence and duty. In the abstract, this hierarchy looks clean and precise; in reality, it contains many contradictions and instabilities.



### *The God Emperor, Venu the Undying*

The God Emperor Venu stands at the apex of Imperial society. All power derives from him. Until recently, Venu had not been seen or heard in public for centuries, his will enacted through his Commandments and by proxy through the Lords Countenant. In the confusion following Commonality contact, Venu left his palace at Zaijor and was seen, albeit at a distance, in the open air. Since that time Venu has made several public pronouncements and even three recorded broadcasts, albeit masked in the manner of his Lords. Venu remains strangely unseen by his people, though never unheard.



### *The Lords Countenant*

The fifteen Lords Countenant form the inner circle of Imperial government, the only Venu permitted to enter the Emperor's presence and look upon his face, trusted to convey his orders to the Empire.

Except for these audiences, the Lords Countenant wear full face masks of dark metal and ornate robes concealing their bodies: it's said that whatever Venu has gazed upon with his own eyes is not to be seen by other mortals. In fact, many of the Lords Countenant hide mutations caused by exposure to Venu's power (page 27), some of which have gifted them with portions of that power; many, indeed perhaps all, are expert at the **evocations** of the Dark Radianc (page 30).

Each Lord Countenant heads one of the Venu government **commissariats**: Sector Command, Fleet Command, Propaganda, and so on (see page 18). The most powerful commissariat is the new Dark Radianc Executive (popularly known as the "Cult of Radiant Darkness"), under the command of Lord Countenant Hell Mur. The will of the Lords Countenant is absolute. Among themselves, they compete for the honour of standing closer to the God-Emperor than their fellows, political games that at times cause conflict between the Lords Countenant and their commissariats.



### *The Dark Radianc Executive*

*Lord Countenant: Hell Mur.*

The Dark Radianc Executive is not formally one of the War Commissariats (page 21), but it has been present in every significant theatre of conflict since its creation following Commonality contact. Although



nucleonic chaos, relics of Second Revelation technology were sought out. Scientists or technicians who specialised in salvaging working devices from pre-war caches or reverse-engineering functional devices from scraps of ancient tech made the difference between survival and destruction for their struggling communities. Over time, superstitious survivors—including the scientists themselves—began to regard their work as quasi-supernatural. They named their recovered technology the **Aegis**, as it shielded them from death, and the technicians studying the arcana of recovery and repair the **Aegis Defenders**. Both came together in a semi-religious organisation that wielded great power in Saylor's shattered world.

When Venu unified Saylor, one of his first acts was to gain the support of the Aegis Defenders. History does not record the deal he offered them (or the powers he used), but the Defenders were transformed into

primarily a political and spiritual organisation, charged with the exultation of the Dark Radiance and the indoctrination of the people, it also maintains its own Warhawk fleet, combat motes, and transport divisions, as well as the armed troops of the **Dark Radiance Guard**, also known as **Protectors** (page 27).

The weapons of the Dark Radiance are mysterious. They include abilities the Venu ascribe to the Radiance itself, and which the Commonality uncomfortably dubs "Venu Psi". During the Venu War, some Dark Radiance Executors reportedly unleashed energy from their bodies, destroyed machinery with a glance, or directly attacked the minds of opponents. While many in the Commonality doubt these reports, most Venu are convinced the Dark Radiance Executive possesses supernatural powers.

The War Commissariats are forced to defer to the Dark Radiance Executive—their star is in the ascendant with the God Emperor—and the other Lords Countenant bide their time. See **Chapter Five: The Dark Radiance** for more.

the Tech Shield Curacy, the foremost organisation in Venu's Empire. The Curacy established itself as the guardian of the Tech Mysteries, maintaining the Imperial Motes, its colony ships, and the comm tech of the Revelation. Gradually it focussed its religious adoration on the Emperor instead of technology.

The Tech Shield Curacy enjoys a semi-independent status, answering to its own Tech Priesthood rather than the Lords Countenant. Members may investigate technologies forbidden to other Venu, and are exempt from military drafts. These privileges go hand in hand with an unwavering loyalty which has recently been shaken by the rise of the Dark Radiance Executive. Where the Curacy promoted worship of the Emperor through silent veneration and maintenance of tech, the Dark Radiance is active and outgoing, preaching on the streets and in the Curacy's tech halls. It seems intent on monopolising tech relating to the Radiant Darkness and 2-space. The Curacy remains loyal, and its recent creation of radiance devices (page 49) has ensured the Emperor's favour, but it's by no means certain this situation will continue.



### **The Tech Shield Curacy**

*Tech High Curate: Tancred Zhar.*

The Tech Shield Curacy was formed during the Devastation following the Schism Wars. As civilisation clawed its way back from

### **The Commissariats**

Venu government is divided into **commissariats**. Headquartered on Venu Prime, the control of the commissariats extends

## THE TECH SHIELD CURACY

**Physical Stress:** 1 2 3 4

**Mental Stress:** 1 2 3 4

**Systems Stress:** 1 2 3 4

**Consequences:** 3 + 1 Moderate

**Scale:** Planetary (+6)

**Reach:** Interstellar (+8)

**Aspects:** Tech Is a Power Only We Can Wield; Loyal to the God-Emperor; The Dark Radiance Executive Is Playing With Forces It Cannot Control; Fear and Mystification; Tremors From a Forbidden Past.

**Skills:** Fantastic (+6) Resources, Technical; Superb (+5) Contacts, Will; Great (+4) Investigate, Structure; Good (+3) Deceive, Science; Fair (+2) Bureaucracy, Provoke; Average (+1) Knowledge, Security.

### STUNTS

◆ **Counterintelligence:** Use Investigation instead of Deceive against attempts to learn your aspects.

◆ **Decentralised Structure:** 1/session, reduce a moderate consequence to mild, or remove a mild completely.

◆ **Only Connect:** Use Investigate instead of Knowledge to deduce facts from observation.

◆ **Public Relations:** +2 create an advantage Deceive bonus.

### EXTRAS

★ **Convoy:** 1/session, make any Resources action up to range 2.

★ **Skunkworks:** Use Technical instead of Stealth when creating advantages representing secret inventions.

over all the Venu worlds, employing millions. Their influence reaches into every part of Venu society, including education, health care, food production, media, distribution, travel, and even birth and death. It's hard to perform any significant activity in Venu society without coming up against commissariat interference and control.

Although each commissariat is accountable to a Lord Countenant, there are layers of administration between the Lord and the commissariat workers, including ranks of **commissars** and, increasingly, **countenancers**—a parallel hierarchy of commissars permitted (usually for good reason...) to wear masks similar to those of the Lords Countenant and which includes such ranks as countenancer-generals, countenancer-majors, and so on. The average commissar or countenancer may work his entire life without ever seeing his Lord Countenant.

Although they travel as required, the Lords Countenant are based on Venu Prime; the God Emperor likes to keep them close. Increasingly, the Dark Radiance Executive are running things on Venu Prime and elsewhere, diluting the Lords Countenants' power and causing a **lot** of friction.

The **War Commissariats** are responsible for drafting and training Venu troopers, supplying military forces, and prosecuting military campaigns. They include (in order of precedence): Fleet Command, the Military Political Directorate, Motile Command, the Ground Army, the Internal Defence Commissariat, and Logistical Command.

The one element not under commissariat control is technology, and specifically starships, weapons, and motes, all of which are the preserve of the Tech Shield Curacy (above). Tech Shield Curates are "embedded" in war commissariat formations, supplying and repairing gear. These **warmasters** are not directly under war commissariat command, but this isn't generally problematic.

## SECTOR COMMAND

The Sector Command Commissariats were all originally a single entity—the Reconquest Commissariat. This setup rapidly became unwieldy, and so much of the Reconquest Commissariat's old authority is now split between Sector Command Commissariats founded since the end of the war. Somewhat chaotically, some areas formerly controlled by the Reconquest Commissariat have instead devolved to other commissariats and even to the Dark Radiance Executive, and turf wars are endemic in all Sector Commands. See page 71 for more on the sectors of Venu Space.

## The Subcoms

*The Imperial Commissariats are huge and unwieldy, with a tendency to devolve into smaller sub-organisations known as **sub-commissariats** or **subcoms**. No two commissariats divide in the same way, nor are subcoms as permanent as commissariats, but are a confusing mess of nightmarish bureaucracy and arbitrary authority, often swept away in a reorganisation upon the ascension of a new Lord Countenant. Example subcoms are given in the commissariat descriptions; there are many others.*

**Table 3: The Commissariats**

| Commissariat                   | Comments  |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Dark Radiance Executive        | Created just before the Venu War and still not regarded as a proper commissariat by many.   |
| Fleet Command                  | Controls the Imperial space force.  |
| Propaganda                     | Responsible for information dissemination and manipulation.   |
| Military Political Directorate | Responsible for military morale and propaganda.   |
| Motile Command                 | Commands the Empire's mote forces.  |
| Ground Army                    | Manages the Empire's ground military forces.  |
| Internal Defence               | Responsible for planetary defence of Venu worlds.   |
| Logistical Command             | Responsible for military supply.  |
| Sector One Command*            | Responsible for administration of Sector One.   |
| Sector Two Command*            | Administration of Sector Two.   |
| Sector Three Command*          | Administration of Sector Three.   |
| Sector Four Command*           | Administration of Sector Four.  |
| Sector Five Command*           | Administration of Sector Five.  |
| Sector Six Command*            | Ongoing reclamation and administration of Sector Six.   |
| Sector Seven Command*          | Run by the scary and funereal Lord Countenant Gravad Guul (known as "the Gravelord"), the Command aims to reclaim all of Sector Seven for the Empire. |

\*See page 71 for more on the sectors of Venu Space.

## The Pure

The Venu masses, who are not "impure" in the sense of denying Venu, or of accepting the blasphemous Second Revelation, or of being mutated. The Pure are the workers of the commissariats, the troopers of the armies, the ranks of the countless government bodies, and of course the common populations of Imperial worlds. Although not a homogenous

## Venu Mutants

Venu mutants are a new element in Venu society, and don't fit neatly into the Imperial Hierarchy. They are Venu who have become mutated through contact with the Dark Radiance in the form of the z-radiation emitted by Venu tech. Unlike the **abominations** arising in the aftermath of the Schism War, Venu mutants are held up as examples of patriotic sacrifice and selfless dedication. They are "blessed by Venu", gifted and touched by the hand of the Emperor himself. They wear masks or elaborate helmets to hide their disfigurement, and often persecute abominations with particular vigour, eager to show that they, at least, are different. Some, unable to handle their condition, choose death or exile rather than face revulsion from family and friends.

Many Venu mutants are mutated accidentally, through exposure to the z-radiation produced by dirt-drives and other unstable new technologies. While most suffer physical disfigurement or fatal cancers, a small percentage develop mysterious abilities (page 27). Other Venu mutants result from deliberate experimentation by the Dark Radiance Executive, touched directly by the emanations of radiance devices (page 49). Both the naturally mutated and the deliberately altered are often inducted into the Dark Radiance Guard, the Executive's fanatical military arm (page 27), achieving a higher standing than the common Venu trooper or Imperial subject.

Venu tech shows no signs of getting cleaner or safer; such concerns are secondary to the drive for new weapons and ships. Venu mutant veterans continue to appear in mainstream Venu society, reminding everyone that their own heroes are abominations.

See page 27 for more on Venu mutations.

group, comprising different ethnicities and social strata, they're often treated as such in official propaganda. The iconic image of a red-eyed Venu man and woman standing beneath a winged skull emblazoned with the slogan "Pure and Obedient" is a staple of recruitment and propaganda posters.

Pure working for the commissariats enjoy higher status than those who do not, although the distinction is often academic because commissariat employment is so widespread. Those who belong to the War Commissariats have higher status still, as do those who reach great age. Traditionally, Pure who spent their lives in commissariat service were well-respected and permitted a period of retirement, but this has fallen into abeyance in recent years: the New Pronouncements have overturned many once-sacred principles, and the past is no longer respected as it once was. There is tension

between older generations of the Pure, many of whom fought against the Commonality, and newer—tensions which echo the conflicts between more traditional commissariats and the new Dark Radiance Executive. Many blame the Commonality and its Schismatic values, while others privately wonder if the God-Emperor Venu himself is not the cause.

The Empire's surveillance and informant culture ensures that this low-level dissent does not develop into an organised movement. Memories of the Schism Wars run deep, and most find the thought of dividing the Empire abhorrent. Nevertheless, there are known meeting places for those Pure who question whether the changes to Venu society are a good thing, and it's unknown why they haven't yet been purged by Dark Radiance Executors.

## Abominations

Lowest of all in the Venu hierarchy—in fact, not officially part of the hierarchy at all—are the **abominations**, the unclean outcast remnants of the Schism Wars, which turned much of Venu Prime's surface into dangerously radioactive wasteland. Even today, Venu Prime's wastelands are inhabited by wild mutant populations, descendants of survivors exposed to the fallout of the war. Similar groups emerged on colony worlds which had also suffered devastation.

The Venu Empire has always defined itself in opposition to the mutated and corrupted. Abominations represent the antithesis of the Venu ideal, both in bodily corruption and as heirs of the schismatics of the Second Revelation. These pathetic creatures are demonised in the Venu media, even hunted for sport by high ranking commissars or Lords Countenant, and yet they have never been entirely wiped out. Common Venu are taught to fear "the mutant"; mutants appear as aggressors in works of fiction, and misbehaving children are cowed with the threat of being carried away by them. Pure Venu avoid the wastelands, for fear that they, too, may be tainted.

Needless to say, this widespread prejudice has caused problems for Venu mutated in recent years by exposure to z-radiation. While those who develop functional mutations may be inducted into the Dark Radiance Executive (page 27), those who are disfigured or incapacitated are shunned by friends and family. Some wear masks to hide their shame, while others flee into the wastelands to join the abomination hordes. The rest face exile.

Those worlds settled since the rise of the Empire or conquered during the Commonality War do not have the same legacy of radioactive contamination and hereditary mutation. Nevertheless, the hatred of abomination is deeply ingrained in the Venu psyche, easily extending to prejudice against outsiders, hominids, and xenomorphs. Venu occupation forces exposed to unusual species react with fear and loathing: on some occupied worlds, hominids and xenomorphs have been hunted down and driven from settled areas.



## THE WAR COMMISSARIATS

Despite its successes, the Venu military is by no means the perfect war machine. Its basic structure is a series of commissariats, some dating from the Schism Wars, others from the time of the New Pronouncements. Each has its own Lord Countenant and theoretically its own remit, but overlaps are common, and conflicts between War Commissariats and their Lords Countenant are more or less continuous. The Lords Countenant plot and scheme, seeking to raise themselves in Venu's regard and ingratiate themselves with Hell Mur, Lord Countenant of the Dark Radiance Executive (page 102). Commonality analysts speculate that this infighting may have been a crucial factor preventing the Venu from winning the war; certainly many instances where Venu troops were abandoned, apparently callously, on occupied worlds (such as Solodny, page 89) appear to have their roots in such internecine rivalries.



### Fleet Command

*Lord Countenant: Mardak-Gar.*

The most senior War Commissariat, Fleet Command originally controlled proto-Venu surface fleets during the Schism Wars. Once Venu dominance was certain, the commissariat's mandate shrank, relegating it to a marginal role with responsibility for ocean garbage disposal and food transport.

With the “acquisition” of Commonality planing technology in Imperial Year 172, Lord Countenant Sorak-AI found herself suddenly tasked with creating a new militarised space force. With a free hand to command Tech Shield Curacy resources, she was instrumental in designing the classic *Warhawk*-class strike ship and in the almost limitless autonomy given to Zaijor’s weapon designers. Sorak-AI’s philosophy of victory at any cost resulted in the corner-cutting designs of the Tech Shield Curacy. Radiance engines (dirt drives), distortion beamers, brainjack pilots, and capital-class Dark Radiance weaponry all came from this design philosophy of effectiveness and rapid deployment before safety.

Fleet Command operates fleets of warships and fighter escorts. At the start of the Reconquest it had five such fleets; by the Commonality War, this had risen to ten. Commonality military intelligence suggests six of these were entirely destroyed by the war’s end, but the Venu are rebuilding. In recent years, some of the current Lord Countenant Mardak-Gar’s subordinates have been suspected of engineering disasters involving these forces, either to embarrass other commissariats or force a change in command structure.

**Typical Subcoms:** *Brainjack Enhullment, Escort, Ship Design.*



### Military Political Directorate

*Lord Countenant: Ashkur-Maat.*  
Responsible for battlefield morale and ensuring that Venu troops follow the

dictats of the Tech Commandments and the New Pronouncements, the Military Political Directorate enforces day-to-day military discipline, including neuro-whipping, hypno re-education, and summary execution. It’s also responsible for planetary occupations, including enforcing military discipline and martial law.

The current Lord Countenant, Ashkur-Maat, recently replaced Zozer-Ahm, who made the mistake of challenging Hell Mur over the Dark Radiance Executive’s rapid takeover of many of the Directorate’s traditional functions and found himself the “guest” of the Executive’s **excervelators** (page 42). Ashkur-Maat is conciliatory and apparently happy to cooperate with the Dark Radiance Executive on military discipline. However, violent incidents between Directorate Proctors and Executive Protectors (page 27) are on the rise.

The Military Political Directorate also handles military punishment details. The Venu disdain prisons for all but the most high-profile criminals, instead deploying convicts in construction projects, public works, and weapons testing.

**Typical Subcoms:** *Morale, Planetary Occupation, Punishment Detail.*



### Motile Command

*Lord Countenant: Vathak Kaan.*  
Motile Command is one of the oldest War Commissariats, dating to the Schism Wars. Warfare on Venu

## FLEET COMMAND

**Physical Stress:** 1□ 2□ 3□ **Mental Stress:** 1□ 2□ 3□ 4□

**Systems Stress:** 1□ 2□ 3□ 4□

**Consequences:** 3 Mild + 1 Moderate

**Scale:** Planetary (+6)

**Reach:** Interstellar (+8)

**Aspects:** First Among Equals in the Commissariats; We Carry the Fight to the Enemy! Vying For Primacy With the Dark Radiance Executive; Speed and Power; If We Don’t Win Nobody Does.

**Skills:** Fantastic (+6) Resources, Security; Superb (+5) Notice, Will; Great (+4) Stealth, Structure, Technical; Good (+3) Bureaucracy, Investigate, Manoeuvre; Fair (+2) Deceive, Intrusion, Provoke.

### STUNTS

- ◆ **Aid Package:** Use Resources for moderate and severe physical recovery actions for organisations.
- ◆ **Corporate Raider:** +2 Intrusion bonus on create an advantage actions facilitating physical and credit attacks.

- ◆ **Counterintelligence:** Use Investigation instead of Deceive against attempts to learn your aspects.
- ◆ **Decentralised Structure:** 1/session, reduce a moderate consequence to mild, or remove a mild completely.
- ◆ **Esprit de Corps:** +2 defend bonus vs demoralising attacks and propaganda campaigns.
- ◆ **Extreme Sanction:** Make Security actions against characters.
- ◆ **Guerrilla Warfare:** +2 create advantage Manoeuvre bonus to hit-and-run attacks.

### EXTRAS

- ★ **Armament (Heavy):** w:3 for Security attacks.
- ★ **Convoy:** 1/session, make any Resources action up to range 2.
- ★ **Couriers:** +2 bonus when rapid communication is the goal.
- ★ **Starship Facilities:** Make construct Technical actions, including repairs.
- ★ **Strike Force:** Make Security attacks up to 2-zone range.

Supporting Organisation



## THE MILITARY POLITICAL DIRECTORATE

**Physical Stress:** □□ **Mental Stress:** □□□□

**Systems Stress:** □□□□

**Consequences:** 3 Mild + 1 Moderate

**Scale:** Planetary (+6)

**Reach:** Interstellar (+8)

**Aspects:** Fight Strong, Fight True! The Purifying Power of Pain; Cutting Out the Rot Within; The Dark Radiance Are Our Friends; We Bring the Word of the Emperor to the Benighted Worlds

**Skills:** Fantastic (+6) Investigate, Provoke; Superb (+5) Resources, Will; Great (+4) Deceive, Notice; Good (+3) Empathy, Security; Fair (+2) Intrusion, Stealth; Average (+1) Assimilate, Rapport.

### STUNTS

◆ **Counterintelligence:** Use Investigation instead of Deceive against attempts to learn your aspects.

◆ **Divide and Conquer:** +2 create an advantage bonus to target a local instance of an organisation.

◆ **Extreme Sanction:** Make Security actions against characters.

◆ **Populist:** +2 create an advantage bonus when appealing to "the people".

◆ **Public Relations:** +2 create an advantage Deceive bonus.

◆ **Zeitgeist:** +2 bonus to create an advantage actions with Empathy.

### EXTRAS

★ **Auditors:** Good (+3) Bureaucracy attacks up to range 2.

★ **Inquisitors:** Double bonus when burning mental stress for extra effort.

★ **Mole:** 1/session, pay 1FP to make a single Intrusion attack with a +2 bonus vs Mediocre (+0) or normal passive opposition.

★ **Saboteurs:** Make Assimilate attacks up to 2-zone range.

Prime has long involved the use of **notes**, semi-independent automata with low-level autonomy, often coordinated by remote **control squadrons** and supported by technical and command staff. Venu prehistory has records of mote legions with complex traditions and fortress-stables, associated with the greatest warrior clans. While many were destroyed during the Schism Wars, others became the core of Venu's army. Today the former mote legions form the heart of Motile Command.

The countenancers of Motile Command represent these ancient legions. Where the Lords Countenant adopt plain and ominous garb of robe and mask, Motile Command countenancers display all the baroque heraldry of their legions, festooned with emblems, battle honours and pain inducer weaponry.

There are many types of mote: see page 42 for examples.

**Typical Subcoms:** Attack, Fortification, Patrol, Repair.



## Ground Army

*Lord Countenant: Bel-Shin.*

The largest War Commissariat, the Ground Army sees action on every front. Bel-Shin commands millions of troops and support staff. In many ways the Ground Army is impossibly unwieldy, with divisions, armies, garrison battalions, and special units, seemingly more capable of perpetrating atrocities than executing brilliant strategies. Often its successes can be attributed more to the superior nature of Fleet Command, Motile Command and Dark Radiance Protectors.

Nevertheless, the overwhelming numbers of Ground Army troops (compared with the defence forces of the worlds it attacks), their fanatical dedication, and their commanders' willingness to throw them into combat, secured numerous victories during the Venu advance. During the retreat, however, the Ground Army suffered massive losses, divisions abandoned or cut off on occupied worlds such as Solodny and Beltaris. Bel-Shin has blamed both Logistical and Fleet Command for these failures, as the Ground Army fields no troop transport vessels of its own.

The basic unit of the Ground Army is the 5-trooper **squad**. Five squads make up a **section**, five of which form a **platoon** of 125. Five platoons form a **company** of 625, five of which make a **battalion** of 3125. Five battalions operate together in one **regiment** of 15625 troopers. Five regiments form a **legion** of 78125, the principle high-level organisational unit. Specialist troops such as pathfinders, demolitions teams, discipline units, as well as Tech Shield Curacy warmasters, Dark Radiance Protectors and Motile Command control squadrons, are all attached at legion level and deployed according to need. Above legion level units are fluid, but **divisions** equivalent to 5 legions (around 400,000 soldiers) were major ground components of the Venu invasion fleet. Combined **occupation corps** of 5 divisions (just short of 2 million troops) are deemed sufficient for planetary subjugation. Higher-level units such as **armies** (10 million troops) and **fronts** (50 million troops) are assigned to subsector theatres and above. The number of Venu subjects currently under arms is unknown, but is believed to exceed one billion individuals.

## MOTILE COMMAND

**Physical Stress:** 1□<sup>2</sup>□<sup>3</sup>□    **Mental Stress:** 1□<sup>2</sup>□<sup>3</sup>□<sup>4</sup>□

**Systems Stress:** 1□<sup>2</sup>□<sup>3</sup>□

**Consequences:** 1 Mild + 1 Moderate

**Scale:** Planetary (+6)

**Reach:** Interstellar (+8)

**Aspects:** The Savage Glory of Our Mote Traditions; We've Always Done it This Way! Violent Action at a Distance; Loyalty to Legion; My Family Has Served the 25th Legions Wolf Spider Stable for Nine Generations!

**Skills:** Fantastic (+6) *Manoeuvre, Security*; Superb (+5) *Notice, Provoke*; Great (+4) *Intrusion, Will*; Good (+3) *Resources, Structure*; Fair (+2) *Stealth, Technical*; Average (+1) *Bureaucracy, Contacts*.

### STUNTS

◆ **Esprit de Corps:** +2 defend bonus vs demoralising attacks and propaganda campaigns.

◆ **Extreme Sanction:** Make Security actions against characters.

◆ **Guerilla Warfare:** +2 create advantage *Manoeuvre* bonus to hit-and-run attacks.

◆ **Specialist (Motes):** +2 Technical bonus to rolls relating to motes.

### EXTRAS

★ **Armament (Medium):** w:2 for Security attacks.

★ **Strike Force:** Make Security attacks up to 2-zone range.

The Ground Army rarely operates alone. Although it maintains its own Armoured Transport and Walker units, it relies on Logistical Command for mass ground transport; the Tech Shield Curacy for weapons repair; Fleet Command for space transport, close range bombing, orbital denial and insertion; and Motile Command for heavy mote support.

**Typical Subcoms:** *Armoured Transport, Demolitions, Discipline, Logistical Support, Pathfinder, Walker.*



## Internal Defence Commissariat

*Lord Countenant: Nintaak-Am.*

The Internal Defence Commissariat is responsible for planetary defence of Venu worlds. It's a home army, operating garrison and monitoring positions.

Often under-resourced, it pays the price for Fleet Command's profligate resource consumption, the Ground Army's manpower demands, and the self-importance of Motile Command and the Dark Radianc Executive.

Instead of deploying in well-armed and well-manned defensive positions, the Internal Defence Commissariat is often required to defend Venu worlds with little more than skeleton garrisons and hand-me-down weapons. Lord Countenant Nintaak-Am works tirelessly to conceal this fact using a combination of deception, misinformation, trickery and counter-espionage. Aware that Commonality spies and agents are at work within the Wall of Orion (page 85) and even the Scion Worlds (page 71), Nintaak-Am engineers irresistible traps to draw them in. Countless Commonality infiltrators have been captured and eliminated by the Internal Defence Commissariat to prevent word of its weaknesses leaking out of Venu space.

This isn't to say Venu worlds are undefended. The fortress-like nature of Imperial cities and commissariat buildings, the presence of Dark Radianc Protectors, the cunning application of the commissariat's limited resources, combine to make most Venu planets harder targets than the Commonality worlds invaded during the war. Nevertheless, the fear of a deep strike past the Wall of Orion troubles Nintaak-Am greatly.

Much to the frustration of the IDC, occupation garrisons on captured worlds in the Wall of Orion have been entrusted

## Walkers

Venu armoured units have a preference for **walkers**, all-terrain vehicles with 1-3 or more crew. Standing 3-10 metres tall, they are heavily armed and armoured, capable of taking on dozens of troops. There are many designs, including Arachnid-class predators, Mantis-class tripods, Wolf Spider-class aerial assault walkers (aka "Venu jumpers"), Tamagant-class quad walkers, and Centipede-class crawlers.

Walker units are organised into squads of five walkers (with an average of 20 crew, including support staff). Skirmish squads consist of five Predators, while heavier artillery squads comprise 1 Quad Walker and 4 Tripods. Support staff are drawn from specialist Tech Shield Curacy warmaster units; nevertheless, many walkers display classic Venu traits of jury-rigging and poor repair.

Example walkers can be found in the **Mindjammer** core rulebook (page 260) and on page 45 below.

## Scenario Hook: Spycatcher

*IDC commissars on a Venu world in the Wall of Orion (such as Cador, page 85) are setting an elaborate trap to catch Commonality infiltrators, promising valuable intel on Venu internal defences and organisation. The offer is too good to be true, of course, and the IDC intends to apprehend, interrogate, and exterminate the Commonality spies to ensure that no word of Venu weakness ever gets out. The PCs may be on either side of the operation...*

to the Dark Radiance Executive and Military Political Directorate. Rather than leading to an increase in manpower and importance for the IDC, the Wall has only underlined its marginal status.

**Typical Subcoms:** *Counter-intel, Garrison, Monitoring.*



## Logistical Command

*Lord Countenant: Dandan-Jitai.*

Logistical Command is the least prestigious of the War Commissariats. It's responsible for transport, supply, and communications, and the general support of front-line units. It provides cargo

and troop transport vessels, orbital observation platforms, interface (space-to-surface) lifters, armoured troop transports, cargo vehicles, kitchens, field hospitals, ammunition dumps, and comms relays. Although every commissariat maintains its own transport and comms corps, and equipment and technical support is provided by the Tech Shield Curacy, most day-to-day field supply is managed by Logistical Command, and the commissariats are compelled to work with them.

LC troops are outfitted in light armour in a variety of drab greens. Each LC division is raised from a specific Scion World, required to provide a tithe of vehicles, mechanics, food, surgeons and uniforms to Logistical Command. These variations make it possible to recognise the origin world of most LC gear. Side-arms are similarly unstandardised, but are generally light ballistic weapons: Logistical Command are not front-line troops.

This unstandardised approach means a Ground Army division might find itself transported in walkers or crawlers on one world, and primitive combustion vehicles on the next, and exposed to all manner of accommodations and rations. LC support units are experts at scavenging local resources and pressing them into service in their own ranks. Recovered equipment is often loaded aboard departing LC drop-ships and carried to the next campaign, further exacerbating the piecemeal nature of LC gear.

**Typical Subcoms:** *Comms, Front-line Support, Interface, Transport.*

# CHAPTER FIVE

## THE DARK RADIANCE

*"We are all but shadows cast by the Radiant Darkness."*

—The First Pronouncement of Venu, from the New Pronouncements.

### THE SECRET OF VENU

Venu's early life is sketchy. Was he a long-lived noble of the prehistoric Zayoran Patriarchate, threatened by the Second Revelation's freedoms? Was he a common man of deep faith, driven by religious culture shock to deny the blasphemies of Old Earth? Or something else entirely? The truth may never be known.

What is certain is that Venu was never a normal man. Some time during the chaos of the Devastation, or perhaps before, he discovered that he possessed unique powers. By focussing his will, he could sway the thoughts and emotions of other people. Where some might have revelled in this power, Venu was troubled. Was there something more to his ability? Not wishing to consider himself a tyrant, Venu concluded a greater power was acting through him, for the betterment of the human species. He was a conduit for a voice he heard in his dreams.

Venu called this power **the Radiance**, and visualised it shining through him. Refusing to speak of it to others, he tried to understand its purpose, compelling others to do what he thought the Radiance wanted, including the inner circle of his military forces. After prolonged exposure to Venu's power, these generals, advisors, and warlords also began to mutate, as if affected by some unknown radiation. Their limbs twisted, their skin cracked and peeled from the flesh beneath, their teeth lengthened into fangs. They adopted masks and enveloping robes, becoming the **Lords Countenant**, claiming that what Venu had looked upon with his own eyes was not to be seen by others. Meanwhile they exhorted their troops to hunt down abominations, destroying any mutant not of Venu's creation.

For five hundred standard years, these "mutants of Venu" remained secret and scarce, created only by proximity to Venu. This changed the day Venu's guard stormed the starship of the Commonality ambassadors. Venu used his powers to force the crew to take the vessel into 2-space, where he encountered an energy that spoke to him with such force that the experience almost killed him. Describing it as "a shadow cast onto the fabric of 2-space by something which exists beyond", he knew this "dark radiance" was the same power that had shone through him and given him his powers.

Venu returned from 2-space determined to enact the will of the Dark Radiance. Tech Shield curates subsequently created a static planing engine known as a **radiance device** permitting contact with the Radiant Darkness from a planetary surface. Requiring the presence and concentration of the God-Emperor to function, it exposed those present to massive doses of z-radiation. However, a few of those exposed did not die, but developed strange abilities. Some were physiological, known as **Venu mutations**; others were apparently mental, without conventional explanation, today called **radiance powers** or **Gifts of Venu**. The Commonality calls them **Venu psi**.

After these discoveries, the God-Emperor founded the Dark Radiance Executive, a semi-mystical organisation dedicated to exploring and exploiting the Dark Radiance power the God-Emperor tapped into. Staffed by those with radiance powers (known as **Executors**, **Conciliators**, and **Intercessors**—the command staff of the Executive) and those with only mutations (known as **Protectors** or the **Dark Radiance Guard**, the Executive's military wing), today many Venu vie for chance to join, exposing themselves to the Dark Radiance even knowing they may die. Interestingly, Venu mutants

(mutated by z-radiation exposure from radiance engines (dirt drives) or other Venu gear) have a high survival rate when exposed to the Dark Radiance, and the Executive recruits extensively from their number.

Regardless of the abilities manifested by those exposed to the Dark Radiance, each shares common physiological changes, which worsen over time or with repeated exposure. Faces become emaciated with stretched and desiccated skin; lips become tight and thin, teeth elongated, narrow, and sharpened to a point; reddish eyes stare from sunken sockets with a menacing glow. These features mirror those of the God-Emperor himself.

## THE DARK RADIANCE EXECUTIVE

Recently, the Dark Radiance Executive has eclipsed the traditional importance of the Tech Shield Curacy. It is structured partly like a secret service, partly like a cult. Loyal only to its Lord Countenant, Hell Mur, and the God-Emperor, like other commissariats it has several **subcoms** (page 19). Its **Executors** have adopted or adapted many customs of the Lords Countenant, wearing scintillating black masks and regarding themselves as above Imperial law. Many are Venu mutants; others have been transformed by exposure to the Emperor or a radiance device, though they keep the mutagenic nature of the Dark Radiance secret from the population at large. Dark Radiance Executors swoop on malcontents, abducting them

**Table 4: Subcoms of the Dark Radiance Executive**

| Subcom       | Comments   |
|--------------|--|
| Executors    | Coordinate Dark Radiance activities, spearhead actions against subversives, mutants, enemy agents, and other abominations.   |
| Protectors   | These cyborg shock troopers spearhead heavy assaults, their skull-faced helms and black and gold uniforms striking fear into foes. Entrusted with Marauder armour and experimental weaponry, such as the Protector Units of Ancestral Voice vessels responsible for firing the Mindwarp radiance cannon (page 49) which can drive starship crews insane. |
| Intercessors | Standing between the Dark Radiance and the Pure, Intercessors are scientists studying the nature of the Dark Radiance.   |
| Conciliators | Preachers and educators in civilian populations, Conciliators help the Pure accept the Dark Radiance.  |
| Monitors     | "Irregulars" from the general population and other commissariats, etc, Monitors are spies, thought police, and informers.  |

## What Does the Commonality Know?

*The Dark Radiance Executive is a mystery to the Commonality. Present during the Venu War, they've expanded since, apparent counterparts to SCI Force and the 3-Space Instrumentality. Since the War, their inexplicable powers of "Venu psi" appear to be spreading, and the Dark Radiance is assuming greater dominance in the Imperial Hierarchy. Commonality agents are mounting perilous espionage operations inside Venu Space, trying to gain more information.*

in raids or subjecting them to public execution. Terrifying devices help them in their work (page 41). They deliver stirring sermons, often in former Tech Curacy buildings.

The Executive's military subcom, the **Protectors** (also known as the Dark Radiance Guard), led key assaults during the Commonality War, especially those where planing engines or other tech could be seized. In their skull-faced helmets and black and gold uniforms, they're a fanatical elite, ready to die for the Emperor.

Away from the front line, **Conciliators** lead education and recruitment efforts, while **Monitors** watch the Pure for signs of abomination. **Intercessors** study the nature of the Dark Radiance.

Asharak-Um, "the Dark Mirror", is a senior commander of the Executive, with the nominal rank of **Executor-General**. A firebrand preacher, he extols the virtues of the Radiance, styling himself the "Dark Mirror" because he merely reflects the Radiance for those who stand further away.

## VENU MUTATIONS

*"All that is unclean is the other. Abhor it."*

—The Second Commandment of Venu, from the Tech Commandments.

Exposure to the Radiant Darkness isn't the only way to gain uncanny abilities. Venu exposed to z-radiation from Venu radiance engines (dirt drives) and equipment such as disruptors or marauder armour may undergo mutations which are often deleterious and kill or disfigure the victim. A small number, however, are advantageous, conferring strange abilities. Their recipients are the **Venu mutants** who, together with the Dark Radiance Executive, possess the abilities known as **Venu mutations**.

## THE DARK RADIANCE EXECUTIVE

**Physical Stress:** 1 2 3 4

**Credit Stress:** 1 2 3 4

**Consequences:** 3 +1 mild

**Scale:** Planetary (+6)

**Reach:** Interstellar (+8)

**Tech Index:** T7

### ASPECTS

**High Concept:** Terrifying Heralds of Our Transcendent Power.

**Trouble:** Obsessed by Otherworldly Energies.

**Other Aspects:** Air of Effortless Superiority; Parvenu Power Base; Carving Our New Traditions in Raw Cultural Flesh.

### SKILLS

**Superb (+5):** Will.

**Great (+4):** Deceive, Provoke.

**Good (+3):** Knowledge, Resources, Science.

Major Organisation

**Fair (+2):** Assimilate, Intrusion, Investigate, Security.

**Average (+1):** Bureaucracy, Contacts, Notice, Stealth, Technical.

### STUNTS

◆ **Counterintelligence:** Use Investigate instead of Deceive against attempts to learn your aspects..

◆ **Divide and Conquer:** +2 create an advantage bonus to target a local instance of an organisation.

◆ **Extreme Sanction:** Make Security actions against characters.

◆ **Specialist (The Dark Radiance):** +2 bonus to Science and Technical rolls relating to the Dark Radiance.

◆ **Specialist (3-Space):** +2 bonus to Science rolls relating to 3-space.

### EXTRAS

★ **Inquisitors:** Team of Inquisitors; double bonus when burning mental stress for extra effort.

★ **Mole:** 1/session, pay 1FP to make a single Intrusion attack with a +2 bonus vs Mediocre (+0) or normal passive opposition.

★ **Strike Force:** Make Security attacks up to 2-zone range.

## Mutation Abilities

**Venu mutation** abilities are **extras**; in most cases, they are simply stunts. Characters must have a *Venu Mutant*-type aspect to acquire mutation abilities.

### ◆ DISEASE RESISTANCE

*Costs 1 stunt*

Gain a +2 bonus to Physique rolls to resist or overcome disease or infection. The mutation often takes the form of thickened skin, enlarged organs, a robust physiology, etc.

### ◆ ENHANCED SPEED

*Costs 1 stunt*

Gain an abnormally muscular physique and long legs, with a +2 bonus to movement actions where speed is a factor.

### ◆ ENHANCED STAMINA

*Costs 1 stunt*

You keep going where others drop from fatigue. You may have a barrelled chest, wiry muscles, or just look "tough". You have one additional mild consequence for offsetting stamina-related stress.

### ◆ ENHANCED STRENGTH

*Costs 1-2 stunts*

You are muscular and clearly very strong. For 1 stunt, gain a +2 Physique bonus to strength-related rolls; for an additional 1 stunt, gain a weapon: 2 rating on Unarmed Combat or Melee Combat attacks.

### ◆ HARDENED SKIN

*Costs 1-2 stunts*

For 1 stunt, gain hard, leathery, knobby skin, with a natural armour: 2 rating. For an additional 1 stunt, gain a shell-like carapace stretching from the back of the head to the coccyx, which sustains an additional mild physical consequence.

### ◆ PAIN RESISTANCE

*Costs 1 stunt*

You have dulled nerve endings and an increased pain threshold, and gain a +2 bonus on rolls to resist pain. You often have wounds or scars from casual injuries.

### ◆ RAD VISION

*Costs 1 aspect and optionally 1-6 skill points*

Your eyes are a much brighter red than usual, and perceive

and emit z-radiation. The *Rad Vision* aspect can be invoked and compelled as follows:

**Invoke:** To perceive z-radiation traces, planing engine wakes, zanthrium stars and deposits, and other Venu mutants and some radiance powers.

**Compel:** To be highly visible to scans; to be dazzled by z-radiation bursts; to come across as unduly fearsome or terrifying.

You may also spend skill points on a **Rad Vision** skill, a particle beam weapon attack projected from your eyes. You may incur a consequence from a z-radiation source and invoke that consequence to strengthen a Rad Vision attack, as well as invoking your *Rad Vision* aspect.

#### ◆ TEMPERATURE RESISTANCE

*Costs 1 stunt*

Your skin is flushed and hot. Gain a +2 bonus to Physique rolls to resist extremely high or low temperatures.

#### ◆ VENOM BITE OR TOUCH

*Costs 1-2 stunts*

You have obvious claws or fangs, or your mouth or hands drip with systemic or contact poison. For 1 stunt, Unarmed Combat attacks causing physical stress automatically create a *Poisoned*-type situation aspect. For an additional 1 stunt, gain a +2 bonus to Unarmed Combat attacks.

#### ◆ Z-ABSORPTION

*Costs 1-6 skill points*

You draw ambient z-radiation into yourself. You can shut down devices emitting z-radiation (such as radiance engines), or hamper Venu mutant abilities. You can supercharge yourself with radiance energy.

If the scene (or an object in the scene) has a *Z-Radiation* aspect, make a create advantage roll to remove that aspect and gain a *Charged With Z-Radiation* aspect in return. You may make subsequent create advantage actions to transfer that aspect elsewhere in the scene, including other objects or characters. While it's affecting you, the *Charged With Z-Radiation* aspect may be compelled to make you go mad, crackle with debilitating lightning, suffer agonies, randomly trigger mutation abilities or radiance powers, and so on.

#### ◆ Z-BLAST

*Costs 1 stunt*

You can unleash z-radiation blasts or warping fields of energy, drawing on your own tainted cells to deal damage at close range. When combined with the Z-Absorption mutation ability, you may charge yourself with energy and release it in a deadly blast damaging everything around you.



You can attack with Melee or Ranged Combat without a weapon, using a **Z-Blast** extra with weapon rating: 2, range: 0, *Concealable Weapon* and *Z-Radiation* aspects. If you have a *Charged With Z-Radiation* aspect, the extra gains a *Full Auto* weapon aspect (*Mindjammer* page 126), and blasts improve to weapon rating: 3 and range: 1.

#### ◆ Z-HEALING

*Costs 1 stunt*

You heal rapidly in the presence of z-radiation, closing physical wounds in moments. If you have Z-Absorption, you may heal from seemingly fatal wounds.

If the current scene or an object in the scene has a *Z-Radiation* aspect, spend a fate point to remove one mild consequence per scene. If you have a *Charged With Z-radiation* aspect, you may remove a moderate consequence instead.

## VENU PSI—THE RADIANCE POWERS

Radiance powers are abilities possessed by some Venu which appear to defy the laws of physics. At a loss to explain them, the Commonality has dubbed them “Venu psi”.

Radiance powers share common features: the ability to read minds, see distant places, send thoughts direct to other minds, or blast a brain with energy. Many are superficially similar to Commonality techno-psi, but do not depend on the Mindscape to function.

## Radiance Powers

Mechanically, each radiance power is a **stunt** used with a specific skill. To take these stunts you must have an appropriate Dark Radiance aspect such as *Touched by the Radiant Darkness* or *Mutated by the Radiant Darkness*. There are two side effects to a Dark Radiance aspect: the first is at least one physical mutation (see above); the second is a detectable field around the radiance power user (in the same zone) resembling a 2-space distortion field (see *Mindjammer* page 221). While most Dark Radiance cultists have only a few radiance powers, Executors like Asharak-Um (page 99) may have gained more through dangerous experiments of their own.

Radiance powers function without contact with the Radiant Darkness. However, users in range of a **radiance device** (page 49) may invoke it as an aspect to enhance their powers.

### ◆ BLOODSENSE (INTRUSION)

*Requires Farsense*

The radiant power in other life forms calls to you. You can infiltrate your thoughts into theirs when in physical contact with a quantity of physical material (such as flesh and blood) from their body. A moderate consequence must be inflicted in a physical stress attack to harvest enough material from the target's body to use this ability.

To use Bloodsense, first roll to create a *Bloodsense Link* advantage, which otherwise functions as a *Farsense Link* aspect (see "Farsense"). You may only have one such aspect at a time. The target need not be present, and there is no range limit; Bloodsense may operate over interstellar distances. The physical material used to create the link is consumed in the process; characters not inured to grisly activities must make a Good (+3) opposition Will roll to avoid incurring a mental consequence.

### ◆ BLOODWHISPER (RAPPORT)

*Requires Mindwhisper*

Similar to Bloodsense, Bloodwhisper allows instantaneous Mindwhisper communication with the target, even over interstellar distances.

### ◆ CONSUME (WILL)

The term **radiance** is used by the Dark Radiance Executive to refer to a force that courses through living beings and which radiance powers affect and exploit. The Consume power lets you pull radiance from a living being by touch, using a create advantage action opposed by the target's Will. On a success, both you and the target gain a *Radiance Link* aspect; you may make Will attack actions causing mental stress damage against anyone with whom you share such a link.

If you inflict a consequence with a Consume attack, you

may instead gain a *Charged With Z-Radiation* aspect, which you may invoke on any other radiance power or even Venu mutation roll. Being a victim of a Consume attack is disturbing; it feels as if your life energy is willingly giving itself to a cannibalistic lover.

### ◆ CONTROL (WILL)

You can control the body of another human, turning them into a virtual puppet. While similar to the Domination technopsi attack, this ability acts directly on the motor centres of the brain.

Initiate a Will vs Will contest against a being in your line of sight, or with whom you share a *Radiance Link* aspect (see "Consume", above). If you gain a victory point, you may control the target's physical actions for that exchange. If you win the contest, you gain control of the target for the rest of the scene; if the target wins the contest, it breaks your control and you may not try again this scene. Controlled targets move clumsily and jerkily, and there's no fine control; you can't Control someone to fly a starship or perform an operation, for example.

### ◆ EVOCATION CONTROL (PROVOKE)

Dark Radiance evocations appear similar to Commonality gestalt language, a way of influencing a target's belief systems and behaviours. They are puzzling, often riddle-like statements, reinforced by a powerful subliminal component in the radiance power itself, providing a +2 Provoke bonus to attempts to force a subject to behave in a particular way. This may be an overcome roll, or a create an advantage roll placing a memoplex-like aspect on the target for the remainder of the scene.

### ◆ EVOCATION READ (PROVOKE)

You may force a subject to reveal information nonverbally. You speak, and your evocation forces the subject to recall certain knowledge or memories into their surface thoughts, which the subject then betrays using facial expressions, body language, semi-voluntary vocalisations, or other responses. You gain a +2 Provoke bonus to create advantage actions resisted by the target's Will to create aspects representing these thoughts.

### ◆ FARSENSE (INTRUSION)

You insinuate yourself into the sensory centres of a target, turning it into an unwitting spy. As long as the link between you remains in existence, you may enter a light trance state and see, hear, smell, touch or taste whatever they do, even over interplanetary (but not interstellar) distances. There is



no time-lag for Farsense; it's as if the sensory communication travels faster than light.

To use Farsense, first roll to create a *Farsense Link* advantage with someone you're in physical contact with. You may only have one such aspect at a time. Until you or the target remove this aspect, you may monitor your target's senses (using Investigate or Notice) by entering a trance, during which you can take no other action. The aspect ceases to exist if you leave the target's star system. Whenever you attempt to use the target's senses, it may make a Notice roll against your Farsense (Intrusion) ability to detect your activity.

#### ◆ MANIPULATE (WILL)

The Executive believes the Dark Radiance permeates the cosmos, tying the building blocks of matter with invisible bonds. This ability lets you to manipulate these ties and bend matter to your will with your mind alone—accompanied by a surge of exotic radiation.

On a successful Will roll, you may manipulate physical objects up to 1 zone away without physical contact. Fine manipulation is possible, but increasingly difficult. Using Manipulate creates a *Surge of Z-radiation* aspect on your current and target zones for the rest of the scene, which acts as a radiation hazard.

#### ◆ MENTAL BLAST (WILL)

One of the most feared radiance powers, Mental Blast directly attacks the structures and matter of a target's mind, inflicting searing pain, maddening visions, and delirious hallucinations. Unlike Mindburn, its technopsi equivalent, Mental Blast requires no Mindscape or Mindscape implant to function.

Use Will vs Will to make attack actions causing mental stress against another target in line of sight, sending waves of maddening pain into the target's mind, causing possible brain damage.

#### ◆ MINDWHISPER (RAPPORT)

Radiance powers seem to reach beyond normal time and space. Using Mindwhisper, you may communicate

directly with the mind of any other individual with a *Dark Radiance*-type aspect, even over interplanetary (but not interstellar) distances. There is no time lag; it's as if the communication travels faster than light.

Roll to create a *Mindwhisper Link* advantage with a target you're in physical contact with. You may only have one such aspect at a time. Until you or the target remove this aspect, you may communicate with the target by whispering into their mind. They may experience your thoughts as words, sensations, visions or dreams. You lose this aspect if you move out of the target's star system.

#### ◆ VOYANCE (EMPATHY)

Some Executors perceive events occurring beyond the limited range of Farsense. These **voyances** manifest as visions apparently from the collective unconscious: the thoughts, dreams, desires, and perceptions of entire populations. Sometimes voyances show current events; sometimes they represent past events; and sometimes they seem to give brief glimpses of possible futures. Sometimes they send the Executor mad in a welter of alien thoughts.

Use Voyance to assess the emotional state of whole cultures, including gauging weaknesses, by creating a *Voyance*-type aspect which may be used in culture conflicts and similar actions. Using Voyance automatically inflicts a mental consequence on the Executor, such as *Burnt-Out*, *Lost in the Strange Minds*, or *Prescience Shock*.

## THE DARK RADIANCE AS MINDSCAPE ANALOGUE

Commonality analysts have compared the Dark Radiance to certain functions of the Mindscape. The analogue does not stretch far, but is useful: somehow, proximity to a **radiance device** (page 49) boosts certain radiance powers, even over interstellar distances. In some way, however the Venu are exploiting the Dark Radiance phenomenon, it is enabling a commune of minds similar to the Commonality Mindscape. However, the Dark Radiance does not seem to function as an information store.

# CHAPTER SIX

## VENU TECHNOLOGY

*“Curate Ys-Belleme gritted her teeth again, as the energy bolts from the abomination attack ship pounded the ground around the radiance cannon emplacement. The copper glow from the power coupling made her skin crisp, and she struggled frenetically to remember the rote procedure to reinitiate the targeting mechanism. The Protectors yelled commands around her, shielding her from the enemy devices which hovered like insects massed to attack, and she prayed to the Emperor that her confusion would not show, that the Protectors’ morale would hold, that she would coax the unfathomable weapon to life again!”*

The Venu Empire has an ambivalent attitude towards technology. At its core, Venu society is profoundly anti-intellectual; a savage, barely post-apocalyptic society, with an oppressive regime twisted by paranoia and messianic xenophobic fanaticism. However, since Commonality contact the Empire knows it needs technology to survive—and it’s this dissonance which gives Venu technology its unique and often perplexing nature.

Venu gear looks crude, ropey, and unstable—and usually brutal to boot. The maximum Venu tech index is T7: equipment in the *Mindjammer* core book up to T7 is generally available, subject to permissions and the tech paradigms below. This chapter presents equipment specific to the Venu Empire.

### PARADIGMS

#### ***Unfathomable Technology***

The Venu barely understand the principles of their technology, even in the Tech Shield Curacy. Equipment handling and maintenance often has little to do with its function, and items are designed to take a great deal of punishment in everyday use.

#### ***Baroque Design***

Venu tech design is ritualised and far more complex than it needs to be. Items look mysterious, with superfluous decora-

tion, and are difficult to operate. Even simple items may look imposing and impressive.

#### ***Stretched to the Limit***

Unlike the Commonality, much of Venu tech is poorly understood and assembled without much technical expertise. Limited resources and technical approaches are pushed to the limit, and items may fall apart or blow up at any moment—or at least look like they will. Gear hangs together and keeps functioning—most of the time.

#### ***Fusion Power***

Venu tech clawed its way back to fusion power several hundred years ago, and until Commonality contact it was the Empire’s principal power technology. Unless local worlds are too primitive to support it, it mostly still is; Venu radiance engines (dirt drives) are rare and hazardous, and mostly confined to starships.

#### ***Functionality Above All***

Sorak-AI, Lord Countenant of the Fleet Command Commissariat, introduced this principle in IY 172 (70 NCE). Health and safety mean nothing: just getting tech to work and winning the war for the Empire are all that counts. Things blow up, leak z-radiation, cause wounds and illnesses, but none of this matters as long as the God-Emperor’s dictats are obeyed.

## Availability of Equipment in Venu Space

*Generally speaking (see **Mindjammer** page 117), equipment is only freely available (subject to Resources rolls, etc) on worlds with a control index lower than that indicated for the item, otherwise you need a special permission to even attempt to acquire the item. In Venu Space, a lot of equipment is not freely available! The occupation descriptions in **Chapter 9: Creating Venu Characters** indicate the most significant equipment permissions; beyond that, characters will have to visit low control index worlds (not easy!) or get clever in their attempts to acquire hard-to-find gear!*

## No Genurgy

In their worship of purity and hatred of abomination, the Venu eschew genurgic manipulation. This has had profound effects on their civilisation.

## No Longevity

Without genurgy, the Venu have no longevity. The prehistoric Zayoran Patriarchate did have, and the God-Emperor's mooted "immortality" may be attributable to it, but the average Venu life span is 33 Venu years (100 standard years).

## Widespread Cybernetics

The Venu embrace cybernetic augmentation. Cybernetics and augmented prostheses are a common recourse when recovering from war wounds and other substantial injuries. Some trooper platoons consist entirely of cyborgs.

## No Synthetic Sentience

A result of the Empire's low tech index and its hatred of abomination and the non-human form, the Venu don't accept synthetics on any level. The closest analogue is the motes, basically dumb robots.

## No Mindscape

Venu rejection of synthetic sentience and associated technologies has prevented the development of a Mindscape or even proto-Mindscape. Data stores and communications networks exist, but nothing which unifies these threads and unites the Empire. This is probably why the Dark Radiance is having such success.

## Brainjacks

Someone has to navigate the Empire's ships through 2-space. With neither synthetic intelligence nor genurgic enhancement, that "someone" ends up being a hapless human with lots of hardware plugged directly into his brain—the infamous Venu **brainjack**. Brainjacks are mostly used in starships, but have been used elsewhere where advanced (if deranged...) intelligence is called for. The Empire has even experimented with brainjack troops—a true nightmare convergence of radiance and mote technology. See page 50 for more.

## Motes

**Motes** are as advanced as it gets for Venu AI. Dumb robots with simple autonomous routines, they can also be controlled remotely for greater effectiveness. Venu use motes extensively; the main restriction is that they may not take human form (the so-called **andromote abomination**).

## Gravity Engines But No Anti-Grav

Venu tech maxes out at T7 (First Age of Space). Their starships use gravity engines, up until recently powered by fusion power plants, but beyond that grav tech is in its infancy—and will remain so as long as the Venu refuse to develop synthetic sentience, essential for the micro-adjustments used in grav suspensors. The Venu have no grav flyers, no grav belts, and certainly no floating cities.

## Basic Field Technology

Again, field tech is capped by a lack of ubiquitous intelligence: the Venu have haze field and dispersion field analogues, but nothing better.

## Stasis Fields

The Venu do have stasis fields. Their control systems are primitive but do the job, and stasis ships have taken the Venu to the stars.

## Disruptors and Null Weapons—But No Blasters

Tech index restrictions have meant the Venu have been unable to develop the highly destructive blaster weaponry of the Commonality. Instead, they mostly use disruptor field technology—an offshoot of their **nucleonic** weapons research—and sometimes laser weaponry (called "laz weapons") for space or zero-G combat.

## What If I Don't Want To Pay the Full Cost For a Piece of Equipment?

The equipment costs in this chapter indicate the points of your extras budget you must allocate to that item if you want to incorporate it in a major way into your character and get rules-mechanical advantages from it in play. But what if you don't want to do that? What if you've spent your extras budget and just want to pick up an item of gear you've found lying around or in a store or outlet somewhere and make quick use of it for a scene or two?

In **Mindjammer**, this is fine! The **rules mechanical effect** of a piece of equipment depends less on the functions and properties it has in the **Mindjammer** universe, than on the importance you want to give that piece of equipment in play.

At its simplest, an item of equipment just lets you describe yourself doing something you couldn't do without it. For example, if you pick up a **Holoprojector** (page 37) in play, you can immediately describe yourself as creating holographic images. You don't have to spend any of your character or extras budget: you just pick up the equipment, and (assuming you know how to use it) describe what you do with it. That doesn't affect the game rules at all.

However, if you want, you can spend a fate point to invoke that Holoprojector (or the images it creates) as an aspect, and get a bonus or a reroll, or otherwise describe the invoke's effect

in play. You could also use, say, your **Technical** skill to create those Holoprojector images as advantages, and then invoke them for free, without paying a fate point. You could even use your **Resources** skill to "buy" (or otherwise acquire) a Holoprojector from an appropriate "outlet"; at that point, it acts just like a situation aspect or other advantage, and your first invoke of it is free.

None of the above requires you to spend your extras budget. However, if you want to gain an in-game, rules-mechanical effect from (say) that Holoprojector above and beyond what we've described above, that's when you need to spend points from your extras budget (or maybe even your character budget—talk to your GM!). In **Mindjammer** universe terms, it's still the same Holoprojector, but now you've defined it in rules terms so that it plays a greater role in your character's story and has a greater effect in play. For a 1 stunt spend, for example, that Holoprojector can give you a +2 bonus on your **Technical** skill to create holographic images as advantages.

You can come up with these equipment abilities yourself, using the rules given in **Mindjammer** (page 102). In this chapter, we're describing what we think are cool items of Venu equipment, and giving you examples of extras budget spends you can make to take advantage of them. But you can **always** use them just as simple items of gear to let you describe yourself doing cool stuff, or as aspects you can invoke or compel in play.

## THE VENU MASK

Commonly known as a **purifier**, the infamous Venu mask is a combo rebreather, filter, and rad-shielding unit. It lets the wearer function in tainted atmospheres (**Mindjammer** page 327), and provides complete protection against inhaled gases and a +1 bonus against nerve agents and radiation (including z-radiation). Purifiers come in a dizzying array of designs, often based on service, commissariat, legion, combine, class, and more. Some of the more forbidding purifiers have a *Menacing Venu Mask* aspect.

## CYBERNETICS AND ARMOUR ENHANCEMENTS

Cybernetics and mechanical enhancements of T7 or less are available in the Venu Empire, usually for serving members of the commissariats and provided by the Tech Shield Curacy. The nature of cybernetics means that these items are almost

always part of your character, paid for from either your character budget or extras budget, and not easily removable. You can't usually acquire a cybernetic enhancement just for a single scene, for example, unlike standard equipment. However, many enhancements do have standalone versions which can be acquired in this way, either as aspects or Resources rolls, or as temporary milestone point spends, and plugged into your armour or other exoskeletal frame for use.

The following cybernetic and armour enhancements are derived from the list in the **Mindjammer** core book and described according to the Venu tech paradigms.

### Armour Plating

Costs 1 stunt

Attached to the skin exterior, providing an armour:2 rating against physical attacks. It's *Highly Noticeable*.

**Table 5: Venu Cybernetics and Armour Enhancements**

| Name                              | Special Ability                           | Tech Index | Control Index | Cost                      |
|-----------------------------------|---|------------|---------------|---------------------------|
| Armour Plating                    | Armoured                                  | T6         | +0            | 1S                        |
| Capture Mesh                      | Snare                                     | T6         | +1            | 1S                        |
| Chameleon Field                   | Mimic                                     | T6         | +0            | 1S                        |
| Climbing Motile                   | Spider Feet                               | T5         | +3            | 1S                        |
| Crusher                           | Crush                                     | T5         | +3            | 1S                        |
| Cyberweapon                       | See description below.                    | T6         | -1            | 1A                        |
| Damping Field                     | Drain Energy (Electricity)                | T6         | +0            | 1A                        |
| Enhanced Sensor Package           | Hypersense                                | T6         | +2            | 1S                        |
| Extensible Manipulators           | Extend Limb                               | T5         | +2            | 1S                        |
| Extreme Environment Suit          | Adaptation                                | T5         | +2            | 1A                        |
| Field Generator                   | Force Field                               | T7         | +2            | 1-2S                      |
| Glide Chute                       | See description below.                    | T5         | +2            | 1S                        |
| Heat Sink                         | Drain Energy (Heat)                       | T5         | +2            | 1A                        |
| Heavy Duty Manipulators           | Strength Bonus                            | T6         | +2            | 2S                        |
| Holoprojector                     | Image Projection                          | T6         | +2            | 1S                        |
| Jet Pack                          | See description below.                    | T6         | +2            | 1-2S                      |
| Laz Shielding                     | Absorb Energy                             | T7         | +2            | 1S                        |
| Mechanical Tentacles              | See description below.                    | T6         | +2            | 1S                        |
| Mote Control Override             | Possessor / Puppeteer (motes only)        | T6         | -2            | 1S                        |
| Mote Interface                    | Contact Control                           | T6         | -2            | 1S                        |
| Neural Disruptor                  | Mental Blast                              | T7         | -2            | 1+SP                      |
| Overclocking (Mental or Physical) | See description below.                    | T7         | +1            | 1S + <i>Draining flaw</i> |
| Rad Projector / Shock Projector   | Project Energy (Radiation or Electricity) | T6         | +0            | 2S                        |
| Rad Shield                        | Absorb Energy                             | T7         | +1            | 1S                        |
| Rapid Response                    | Reaction Bonus                            | T6         | +2            | 1S                        |
| Scale Increase                    | Body Scale Change                         | T6         | +2            | 1A                        |
| Slaved Cyberweapons               | Multi-Attack                              | T6         | -1            | 1A, 1S, + skills          |
| Structural Reinforcement          | Health Bonus                              | T6         | +1            | 1S                        |



## Capture Mesh

*Costs 1 stunt*

Attaches to an arm and uses muscle tension to project an expanding polymer net to entangle targets. It has a clip of 6 nets which must be replaced when exhausted.

## Chameleon Field

*Costs 1 aspect*

A cybernetic augmentation or armour enhancement slaved to the user's body form, providing a holographic "shell" operating across the EM spectrum to cause the user either to resemble another individual (programmed in advance) or to be camouflaged.

## Climbing Motile

*Costs 1 stunt*

The user's hands and feet possess hooks, suckers, and grips which enable him to climb with vastly increased proficiency, gaining a +2 Athletics bonus.

## Crusher

*Costs 1 stunt*

This powered grapple system allows the wearer to crush physical objects with great strength, providing a +2 Unarmed Combat or Physique bonus to attack or create advantage actions against grappled or immobilised targets.

## Cyberweapon

*Costs 1 aspect*

Cyberweapons become available at T6, applied to any weapon available at that tech index or below. Ammo and energy considerations must be considered: kino cyberweapons require obvious ammo clips or feeds, so most people prefer laz or disruptor cyberweapons. Cyberweapon aspects are invoked for increased accuracy and readiness, and for surprise and gaining initiative. Venu cyberweapons aren't automatically *Stealthy*—not by a long shot!

## Damping Field

*Costs 1 aspect*

A capacitor array draining electrical power from devices, operational or not. The device drained must be in the same zone, and remains drained as long as it is so—although the damping field unit may become overloaded. A Technical roll with a cybernetic damping field may create an advantage to drain energy or repurpose already drained energy (to boost another enhancement, for example) without requiring a fate point.

## Enhanced Sensor Package

*Costs 1 stunt*

A suite of audio and EM spectrum sensors providing a +1 bonus to Investigate or Notice when using those senses. Advantages may be created to overload the sensors.

## Extensible Manipulators

*Costs 1 stunt*

Used to replace limbs lost in battle, although additional limb versions are also available. Enables Unarmed Combat or Melee Combat attacks up to 1 zone range.

## Extreme Environment Suit

*Costs 1 aspect*

An enclosed suit often incorporated into armour, enabling function in hazardous environments such as extreme heat, cold, noxious atmospheres, vacuum, and so on.

## Field Generator

*Costs 1-2 stunts*

A built-in Venu field generator; for 1 stunt, this is a haze field providing a +1 defence bonus; for 2 stunts, it's a dispersion field providing a +2 defence bonus. Both have *Noticeable* and *Z-Radiation Bleed* aspects when operational.

## **Glide Chute**

*Costs 1 stunt*

A cybernetic enhancement or a mechanical glide suit, enabling the user to glide 1 zone forwards for every 1 zone descended.

## **Heat Sink**

*Costs 1 aspect*

Drains heat energy from other objects, including living targets (in which case it may be invoked on Unarmed Combat attacks). If you have another appropriate ability (such as heat projection), you may use Heat Sink to create *Stored Heat Energy*-type aspects for subsequent use.

## **Heavy Duty Manipulators**

*Costs 2 stunts*

Often used as prostheses, these massive mechanical arms give a +2 Physique bonus on strength-related rolls and a weapon:2 rating on Unarmed Combat and Melee Combat attacks.

## **Holoprojector**

*Costs 1 stunt*

Gain a +2 Technical bonus to create holographic images within line of sight up to 1 zone away. This takes a few seconds for a simple or preprogrammed object, up to a few minutes or more for complex images. The projector uses a holo HUD and data glove or verbal commands.

## **Jet Pack**

*Costs 1-2 stunts*

Usually an armour enhancement; for 1 stunt, use Athletics to make aerial movement actions; for a second 1 stunt, gain an additional free zone of movement, and move and attack a target up to 2 zones away in the same exchange.

## **Laz Shielding**

*Costs 1 stunt*

Reflective / ablative subdermal plating giving an armour:2 rating against laz (null) weapons and an armour:1 rating against other physical attacks. It's visible through the skin, especially when it ablates or reflects laz beams.

## **Mechanical Tentacles**

*Costs 1 stunt*

Tentacles instead of prosthetic limbs, these are long and constricting and provide a +2 bonus to Unarmed Combat create advantage rolls.

## **Mote Control Override**

*Costs 1 stunt*

Commonly a built-in armour enhancement with flexible harness and holo HUD and an aggressive EW/ECM subsystem. It allows the user to seize control of motes within a 1 zone range, requiring a roll of Will vs the mote's EW or Systems skill, or the Technical skill of the mote operator, whichever is higher. It's possible to attack the MCO system itself with an EW attack. You may also use the MCO to jam control signals in a single target zone.

## **Mote Interface**

*Costs 1 stunt*

Use Technical to control motes at range. You may only control one mote at a time. Teamwork bonuses are automatic unless jammed; creating an advantage requires a roll opposed by the distance in zones (so, a 2-zone range is a Fair (+2) opposition).

You need to have the same skill as the mote to get the teamwork bonus. However, you may use Technical via a Mote Interface to create an advantage usable with most mote skills.

## **Neural Disruptor**

*Costs 1+ skill points*

Similar in concept to a neural whip, except that it uses a targeted blast of EM energy to overload a target's synapses at up to a 1-zone range.

## **Overclocking (Mental or Physical)**

*Costs 1 stunt*

Practical Venu overclocking becomes available at T7 with reverse-engineered radiant energy cell (ZIP cell) technology. There are two variants: Overclocking (Physical) and Overclocking (Mental).

Overclocking (Physical) provides the Speed Bonus special ability for 1 stunt, requiring chemical and cybernetic augmentation. Every use checks off one physical stress box (or, failing that, a consequence).

Overclocking (Mental) costs 1 stunt, requiring an extensive support set-up. It's usually only used for **brainjacks**: see page 50 for its effects.

## **Rad Projector / Shock Projector**

*Costs 2 stunts*

Project radiation or electricity (shock energy) using either Unarmed Combat or Ranged Combat (in the latter case, up to range 1). This may be a multiple target attack (see **Mindjammer** page 175). Gain a +2 attack bonus and a weapon:2 rating on successful attacks. If this is a cybernetic enhancement, you may take advantage of any absorbed radiation or electrical energy to boost your attack's power.

## Rad Shield

Costs 1 stunt

Subdermal sheathing with reinforcement around vital organs, providing an armour:2 rating against radiation damage (including z-radiation). It's visible beneath the skin surface, particularly when it heats up in the presence of radiation.

## Rapid Response

Costs 1 stunt

Built-in as an exoskeleton, or added to an existing exoskeleton, this uses a proximity and reaction alarm sensor suite to activate automated reaction routines, providing a +2 bonus to all rolls where reaction time is a factor (including initiative and dodging).

## Scale Increase

Costs 1 aspect

A combination of limb prosthetics and extensions makes you Large (+1) scale, with all the advantages and disadvantages this entails.

## Slaved Cyberweapons

Costs 1 aspect, 1 stunt, plus 1 skill per additional attack

Requires Cyberweapon

You have multiple cyberweapons, slaved into a central targeting system, giving you the Multi-Attack ability (*Mindjammer* page 111). These have significant power requirements, and can overload or even explode if targeted.

## Structural Reinforcement

Costs 1 stunt

Using a combination of subdermal sheaths, bone and joint replacement, and exoskeletal power, you are massively toughened and can sustain one additional mild physical consequence.

## DRUGS

Drugs are commonplace in Venu society, and many active members of the commissariats are unable to function without them.

### Pexil

Costs 1 aspect

A stimulant, usually inhaled in powder form. It gives a *Sensitive to Stimuli* situation aspect for the current scene and the next.

**Invoke:** To relax, become observant or empathetic.

**Compel:** To open up and say things you shouldn't, to find stimuli overwhelming.

Table 6: Drugs

| Name       | Tech Index | Control Index | Cost |
|------------|------------|---------------|------|
| Pexil      | T5         | +5            | 1A   |
| Stimulator | T6         | +5            | 2SP  |
| Strova     | T6         | -2            | 1S   |
| Torch      | T7         | +5            | 1S   |
| Voliance   | T6         | +3            | 1S   |

### Stimulator

Costs 2 skill points

A neuro-active device used for recreation (see page 13), it's horseshoe-shaped and worn clipped around the base of the skull. On a successful Average (+1) create advantage roll, it induces feelings of alertness, clarity, and euphoria. It also allows an Average (+1) recovery action for mental consequences.

### Strova

Costs 1 stunt

Usually injected in a snap hypo, Strova takes effect in a few seconds, making subjects into violent and uncaring killers. Some troopers have Strova dispensers built directly into their armour, dispensed on orders of their commander. A Strova hypo provides a +2 attack bonus on blindly violent attacks, and imposes a -2 penalty on defence rolls.

### Torch

Costs 1 stunt

Usually ingested as a capsule, Torch takes a few minutes to have an effect. It induces feelings of conformity and is used to keep Venu "on message". It provides a +1 bonus when making Provoke and Rapport create advantage rolls upholding or extolling pre-existing conditioning (including Commonality memoplexes).

### Voliance

Costs 1 stunt

Usually popped in pill form, Voliance takes effect in a minute or so. It reinforces the ability of Venu to resist abomination in any form. This generally means to resist temptation, but it may also be used to resist intimidation by abominations, persuasion, mental attacks, and even to hold the line against overwhelmingly lethal abomination attacks. It provides a +2 Will bonus on any defence actions to resist abomination.



## A Venu Drug Package?

That's right... many Venu (especially troopers) are jacked up to the eyeballs in combat. For an extras budget spend of 1 aspect, 3 stunts, and 2 skill points, your Venu character can have a permanent drug dispenser for all those great mind-expanding experiences on tap. You might end up relinquishing some control over your character to the odd psychotic break, but you'll have a whole raft of interesting bonuses to apply to your ongoing interpersonal experiences!

## ARMOUR

Despite the dangerously unreliable nature Venu tech, the standard **Venu trooper** is well armed and armoured. Most armour is heavily patched and frequently altered according to the whims and abilities of the Tech Shield Curacy personnel who maintain it.

### Aegis-class Marauder Armour

Costs 5 stunts

A T7 powered exoskeleton with feeder tanks, this is the best available armour in the Empire today. Heavier than the *Sliver-* and *Torturer-* class combat armours, it's used for fortification assault and heavy weapons duty. Marauder armour is dangerous to be around: its dispersion field is highly unstable and leaks z-radiation during operation. It gives its wearer a *Strength Boost* aspect.

### Hawk-class EVA Armour

Costs 1 aspect, 3 stunts

A more expensive vac-sealed EVA version of *Sliver-* class combat armour, generally worn by Venu marines. The Commonality calls it **Venu G-Armour**.



**AEGIS-CLASS  
MARAUDER ARMOUR**



**HAWK-CLASS  
EVA ARMOUR**

### Nightmare Stealth Insertion Suit

Costs 1 stunt

Favoured by the Dark Radiance Executive, this lightweight armour is silent, non-reflective, and durable. It's often worn beneath clothing. When worn on its own, it provides the *Stealthy* aspect.

### Status Suit

Costs 1 aspect, 1 stunt

A T6 suit of light armour issued to Venu officers, commanders, and even the Lords Countenant, it comes in a variety of designs, indicating commissariat, status, and personal history and achievements. It can be pressurised for a few minutes,

**Table 7: Armour**

| Armour                                 | Rating | Tech Index | Notes   | Cost    |
|--|--------|------------|---|---------|
| Aegis-class Marauder Armour            | a:2 +2 | T7         | <i>Strength Boost, Z-Radiation Bleed.</i>   | 5S      |
| Hawk-class EVA Armour                  | a:2 +1 | T7         | EVA version of Venu trooper armour. <i>Bulky, EVA Pack, Unstable, Vac-Sealed.</i> | 1A, 3S. |
| Nightmare-class Stealth Insertion Suit | a:1    | T7         | <i>Stealthy.</i>  | 1S      |
| Sliver-class Combat Armour             | a:2 +1 | T7         | The standard Venu trooper armour. <i>Bulky, Unstable.</i>                         | 3S      |
| Status Suit                            | a:1    | T6         | Venu light armour. <i>Face Mask, Showy, Vac-Sealed.</i>                           | 1A, 1S  |
| Torturer-class Combat Armour           | a:1 +2 | T7         | Venu officer armour. <i>Unstable Dispersion Field, Face Mask, Showy.</i>          | 3S      |

often used by shipboard officers in combination with an EVA harness (*Mindjammer* page 137). It includes a purifier mask (page 34).

### **Sliver-class Combat Armour**

*Costs 3 stunts*

Known to the Commonality as Venu Trooper Armour, this heavy duty suit of composite ceramic plate, usually in legion colours, has a kinetic shock field for ballistic defence and limited airtightness (2 hours life support as standard), giving it limited EVA capability. It's expensive, hard to maintain, and bulky, and standard issue for Venu troopers. Each suit is powered by a dirty z-radiation energy pack which also charges the trooper's protein disruptor rifle.

### **Torturer-class Combat Armour**

*Costs 3 stunts*

A lighter suit of composite ceramic plate than the *Sliver*-class, but with a dispersion field similar to marauder armour, it's often used by Venu officers, when it incorporates elements of a Venu status suit.

## **WEAPONS**

Venu weapons conform to the tech paradigms (page 32); lower tech kino weapons (T5) and laz (null) weapons (T6) are common. Venu troopers and other active members of the war



**NIGHTMARE-CLASS  
STEALTH SUIT**



**STATUS SUIT**



**SLIVER-CLASS  
COMBAT ARMOUR**



**TORTURER-CLASS  
COMBAT ARMOUR**

commissariats use T7 disruptors, currently state-of-the-art for the Empire.

Ammunition is more of a concern for Venu weapons than Commonality ones (often replenished by makepoint), and all have a *Depleting Ammo*-type aspect. Venu disruptors use ZIP cells, whereas laz and kino weapons use fusion cells and ammo clips respectively, which can be compelled to run out and require changing at inopportune moments.

Common Venu weapons are reproduced in Table 8: Signature Venu Weapons. Descriptions can be found on *Mindjammer* page 130 et al.

## **SENSORS AND SCANNERS**

### **Abomination Sensor**

*Costs 1 stunt*

A rugged handheld device with a visiscreen readout (and optional HUD feed), providing a +2 Notice bonus to detect **abominations** in a 2-zone radius.

### **Mutation Scanner**

*Costs 1 stunt*

A human-sized full body scanner (flat bed or vertical) providing a +2 Investigate create advantage bonus to scan an individual for mutations. On a success, one specific mutation is detected by name; on a success with style, two mutations

**Table 8: Signature Venu Weapons**

| Weapon                        | Damage          | Range | Tech Index | Control Index | Notes   | Cost |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|-------|------------|---------------|---|------|
| Disruptor Pistol <sup>1</sup> | +0 <sup>2</sup> | 1     | T7         | -2            | Radioactive, Recoilless.                                      | Auto |
| Disruptor Rifle <sup>1</sup>  | +2 <sup>2</sup> | 3     | T7         | -2            | Radioactive, Recoilless.                                      | 1S   |
| Heavy Disruptor <sup>1</sup>  | +5              | 3     | T7         | -3            | Heavy Weapon, Radioactive, Recoilless, Tripod, Unstable.      | 3S   |
| Kino Pistol                   | w:0             | 1     | T5         | -1            | Concealable, Depleting Ammo.                                  | Auto |
| Kino Rifle                    | w:3             | 3     | T5         | -1            | Burst Fire, Depleting Ammo, Full Auto.                        | 2S   |
| Laz Pistol                    | +0              | 3     | T6         | -1            | Depleting Ammo, Recoilless.                                   | Auto |
| Laz Rifle                     | +2              | 5     | T6         | -1            | Depleting Ammo, Full Auto, Recoilless.                        | 1S   |
| Neural Whip*                  | +3              | 0     | T7         | -3            | Agonising, Cruel.   | 2S   |
| Z-Grenade*                    | +2 <sup>2</sup> | 1     | T7         | -2            | Area effect attack; Easy Target, Limited Supply, Radioactive. | 2S   |

1: Requires an *Access to Restricted Items* or similar permission.

2: Automatically creates a *Radioactive* situation aspect on any target struck, even if no damage is done.

are detected. Detection takes a few minutes, during which time the subject must remain immobile.

## Radiance Detector

*Costs 1 stunt*

A handheld scanner resembling a laz rifle, projecting a cone-shaped z-radiation field at a target up to 1-zone away. If the target attempts to evade, a Ranged Combat roll is required to “hit”. Any target hit automatically incurs an *Irradiated*-type consequence if they are not immune to z-radiation.

The radiance detector provides a +2 Investigate create advantage bonus to identify radiance powers possessed by the target. It has three settings, permitting the detection of either: the number of radiance powers; the maximum skill level of a radiance power; the specific radiance power possessed. Repeat attempts may be made. On a success with style, two settings may be applied in a single detection attempt.

## SECURITY AND INTERROGATION EQUIPMENT

### Cerveloid Rig

*Costs 1 stunt*

In a grotesque parody of the Commonality eidolon rig, the Executor subcom of the Dark Radiance has developed a way of extracting brains from captives and storing them for later inter-

rogation. This horrific process requires a Fair (+2) Technical roll, and inflicts an extreme consequence on victims, but it’s theoretically possible to recover from it! The term **cerveloid** refers to the brain storage container; Executors may use the Bloodsense radiance power (page 30) to query the brains within.

### Exvisation Rig

*Costs 1 stunt*

A combo surgery and storage unit which requires a skilled operator to use. It removes a victim’s face, and can store it more or less indefinitely for later use or transplant it immediately onto a host. Each procedure is a Great (+4) Technical roll, and the rig provides a +2 bonus.

### Loyalty Probe

*Costs 1 stunt*

This small, spider-like mote crawls onto a subject’s face and inserts microprobes into the nerve system via mouth, nose,

**Table 9: Sensors and Scanners**

| Name               | Tech Index | Control Index | Cost |
|--------------------|------------|---------------|------|
| Abomination Sensor | T5         | +4            | 1S   |
| Mutation Scanner   | T6         | +4            | 1S   |
| Radiance Detector  | T7         | +0            | 1S   |

**Table 10: Security and Interrogation Equipment**

| Name           | Tech Index | Control Index | Cost |
|----------------|------------|---------------|------|
| Cerveloid Rig  | T7         | -3            | 1S   |
| Exvisation Rig | T6         | -3            | 1S   |
| Loyalty Probe  | T7         | -2            | 1S   |
| Pain Inducer   | T6         | -1            | 1S   |

ears and eyes—a fairly alarming process. Treat this as a +2 bonus to a Provoke attack, resisted by Will; any consequences reveal honestly the subject's loyalty to the Venu Empire in general, or a named individual in particular. Loyalty Probes are often employed when a subject has already been "softened" by prior interrogation or torture. Of course, a too successful or intrusive use of a Loyalty Probe can leave the subject little more than a vegetable!

### **Pain Inducer**

*Costs 1 stunt*

This torture and punishment device uses sonic and EM waves

to induce pain directly into the subject's nervous system. There are handheld versions which must be placed in close proximity to a subject's head, as well as larger installation versions: some Venu ships have whole "pain chambers".

A Pain Inducer provides a +2 bonus to Provoke attacks causing mental stress damage. The attacker may define any consequences, which may include revealing information, etc. However, use of a Pain Inducer is up close and personal, and distressing to anyone not already of a sadistic bent: any attacks made with it also affect the wielder, who resists with Will and any appropriate aspects (such as *Sadistic Torturer*). Consequences incurred by the wielder will initially be traumatic, but extreme consequences will result in the wielder changing their aspects to *Acquired Cruelty*, *Numbed by Horror* or *The Ends Justify The Means*-type aspects.

## **MOTES**

*"Thou shalt create no motile in the form of Man."*

—The Second Pronouncement of Venu, from the Tech Commandments.

The Venu view any form of intelligent life that isn't purely human as an abomination. This includes synthetic intelligence, which (thankfully) causes them great problems in interstellar travel, where enhanced intelligence is pretty much essential for superluminal travel.

Therefore, although the Venu do use automation, it's either low-level or remote controlled. Instead of combat drones, for example, they prefer combat walkers; and, instead of autonomous drones, they have **motes**, devices which operate on very basic dumb programmed routines, but which may also be remote controlled by squadrons from Motile Command using vehicles such as walkers, aircraft, and crawlers to keep them in range.

Motes may not be created in humanoid form—this is

### **Excervelation and Exvisation**

*Excervelation and exvisation are two new and terrifying procedures carried out by the Dark Radianc Executive which are only now becoming known to the Commonality. Both procedures may only be carried out on helpless subjects: **excervelation** removes the brain of a subject and stores it in a **cerveloid**, or brain container, for later interrogation using Bloodsense; **exvisation** removes a subject's face for transplant, usually onto Venu spies and other agents beyond the Venu frontier.*



a precept of the Tech Commandments. Any mote or other device created in human form (including Commonality synthetics) is known as an **andromote**: andromote abominations are to be destroyed on sight.

The stat blocks below represent motes statted as major or supporting constructs. Characters may also buy motes as extras. The skill levels given represent “dumb routine” autonomous mote operation. Remote control by Motile Command staff usually provides at least a +1 teamwork bonus (see *Mindjammer* page 159).

## AQUAMOTES

*Aquamotes complement Crustacean-class amphibious assault walkers, and are often found supporting them. They resemble a combination of mechanical shark and squid.*

**Physical Stress:** 1□2□ **Systems Stress:** 1□2□

**Consequences:** 1 mild + 1 moderate

**Scale:** Medium (+0)

**Tech Index:** T6

**Aspects:** Waterborn Robosharks; Clumsy Yet Lethal Out of Water; Overwhelming Attack Frenzy.

**Skills:** Fair (+2) Close Combat, Manoeuvre (Aquatic); Average (+1) Passive Sensing, Ranged Combat.

### STUNTS

◆ **Charge!** +2 attack bonus when you move at least 1 zone before attacking.

◆ **Extended Manoeuvrability (Land):** Use Manoeuvre in land-based actions.

### EXTRAS

★ **Laz Cannon:** Default Ranged Combat weapon; no bonus or weapon rating, Depleting Ammo, Full Auto, Recoilless.

Supporting Construct

## ATTACK MOTES

*Attack motes are horse-sized spider-like constructs. Cheap to produce yet effective en-masse, they're easy to outwit when not overseen by a remote human coordinator. Although many Commonality troops were lost to attack motes during the War, they are susceptible to jamming (a Mediocre (+0) Systems skill), which forces them to fall back on automated behaviours. Only the Tech Shield Curacy's long experience with comms interference kept them in battle against superior Commonality signals technology.*

**Physical Stress:** 1□2□3□ **Systems Stress:** 1□2□

**Consequences:** 1 mild + 1 moderate

**Scale:** Medium (+0)

**Tech Index:** T6

**Aspects:** Clunky Venu Construct; Climbs Like a Spider; Single-minded Killing Machine; Just As Agile in Zero-G; Leaking Z-Radiation; Weakness to Blaster Weapons.

**Skills:** Fair (+2) Manoeuvre (Ground), Ranged Combat; Average (+1) Close Combat, Hull Strength, Passive Sensing.

### STUNTS

◆ **Charge!** +2 attack bonus when you move at least 1 zone before attacking.

### EXTRAS

★ **Armoured Hull:** a:1 rating.

★ **Disruptor Cannon:** w:3, range 3; Radioactive, Recoilless.

★ **Haze Field:** +1 defend bonus and basic ray shielding.

★ **Irradiated Blades:** w:1 rating, range 0; Radioactive.

Supporting Construct



## DESTRUCTOR MOTES

Large winged motes powered by jets. They have a missile battery and can be used as a missile themselves. They attack defensive positions, including bombardment.

**Physical Stress:** 1□<sup>2</sup>□<sup>3</sup> **Systems Stress:** 1□<sup>2</sup>□<sup>3</sup>□

**Consequences:** 1 mild + 1 moderate

**Scale:** Large (+1)

**Tech Index:** T5

**Aspects:** Jet-powered Flying Artillery; Overwhelming Bombardment; Suicide Attack.

**Skills:** Fair (+2) Passive Sensing, Ranged Combat; Average (+1) Manoeuvre (Atmospheric), Systems.

### STUNTS

◆ **Dogfighter:** +2 defend bonus in dogfights, etc, when you can manoeuvre freely.

### EXTRAS

★ **Zero Point Bomb:** Self-destruct in a Manoeuvre (Atmospheric) attack roll ending up in the same zone as the target. A w:4 rating and an Explosive (1) explosion.

★ **Zero Point Torpedoes:** As missile; +2 attack bonus, range 4, explosive (1); Limited Supply, Radioactive.

Supporting Construct

## FORTIFICATION MOTES

These low-slung quadrupedal motes are bigger than a tank and ponderously slow and heavily armoured. They can shift earth, build fortifications, and dismantle enemy fortifications. They are used to dig defensive perimeters.

**Physical Stress:** 1□<sup>2</sup>□<sup>3</sup> **Systems Stress:** 1□<sup>2</sup>□<sup>3</sup>□

**Consequences:** 1 mild + 1 moderate

**Scale:** Large (+1)

**Tech Index:** T5

**Aspects:** Hulking Dozer Mote; Indestructible; Slow But Steady.

**Skills:** Fair (+2) Hull Strength, Technical; Average (+1) Passive Sensing, Systems.

### STUNTS

◆ **Rugged Superstructure:** 1/session, pay 1 fate point to reduce a moderate consequence to mild, or remove a mild.

### EXTRAS

★ **Defensive Perimeter:** +2 Technical bonus to create a perimeter to defend against non-aerial attacks.

Supporting Construct

## INFILTRATION MOTES

Human-sized motes with an earth-burrowing and rock-cutting drill-head and an articulated body with multiple tracked and toothed drive trains. They may manoeuvre underground.

**Physical Stress:** 1□<sup>2</sup>□ **Systems Stress:** 1□<sup>2</sup>□

**Consequences:** 1 mild + 1 moderate

**Scale:** Medium (+0)

**Tech Index:** T7

**Aspects:** It's Coming Out of the Ground! Grinding Teeth; How Do You Even Stop That Thing?

**Skills:** Fair (+2) Intrusion, Manoeuvre (Subterranean); Average (+1) Passive Sensing, Ranged Combat, Stealth.

### STUNTS

◆ **Beat Them At Their Own Game:** +2 Intrusion overcome and create advantage bonus to enter zone closed to constructs.

### EXTRAS

★ **Laz Borer:** +3 attack bonus, range 1; Recoiless.

★ **Rock Drill:** w:4, range 0: use Intrusion to penetrate or attack physical obstacles.

Supporting Construct

Supporting Construct

## PATROL MOTES

Human-sized tripod motes with a prison guard sensor suite and restraint and pain inducer weaponry.

**Physical Stress:** 1□2□      **Systems Stress:** 1□2□

**Consequences:** 1 mild + 1 moderate

**Scale:** Medium (+0)

**Tech Index:** T6

**Aspects:** Click-Clack Catchee Monkey; The Promise of Pain; You Can Run But You Can't Hide.

**Skills:** Fair (+2) Passive Sensing, Ranged Combat; Average (+1) Active Sensing, Close Combat, Provoke.

### STUNTS

◆ **Anomaly Scan:** Use Active Sensing instead of Empathy to defend against Deceive.

◆ **Top Urgency:** +2 to Passive Sensing when on top urgency alert.

### EXTRAS

★ **Mechanical Tentacles:** +2 bonus to Unarmed Combat create advantage rolls.

★ **Pain Inducer:** +2 bonus to Provoke attacks causing mental stress damage.

Constructs

## REPAIR MOTES

5 Average (+1) Minor Constructs

Generally smaller than human-sized, repair motes can undertake small and obvious repairs solo, but require remote control for more complex repairs.

**Stress:** □ □ □ □ □

**Scale:** Small (-1)

**Aspects:** Crawling Repair Bots; Uncanny Cooperation.

**Skills:** Fair (+2) Technical; Average (+1) Active Sensing, Resources (+4 teamwork bonus).

Supporting Construct

## ANT LION-CLASS BURROWER

Ideal sappers for siege operations, burrowers often serve as field HQs for Motile Command control squadrons guiding **infiltration motes** (page 44). They have a crew of 8, including 5 mote controllers.

**Physical Stress:** 1□2□      **Systems Stress:** 1□2□3□

**Consequences:** 1 mild + 1 moderate

**Scale:** Huge (+2)

**Tech Index:** T7

**Aspects:** Mother Burrower; It's Coming Out of the Ground! Siege Breaker.

**Skills:** Good (+3) Intrusion, Ranged Combat; Fair (+2) Close Combat, EW, Systems; Average (+1) Manoeuvre (Subterranean), Passive Sensing, Stealth.

### STUNTS

◆ **Beat Them At Their Own Game:** +2 Intrusion overcome and create advantage bonus to enter zone closed to constructs.

◆ **Extended Manoeuvrability (Ground):** Use Manoeuvre in ground-based actions.

### EXTRAS

★ **Laz Borer:** +3 attack bonus, range 1; Recoiless.

★ **Rock Drill:** w:4, range 0: use Intrusion to penetrate or attack physical obstacles.

## WALKERS

Their lack of workable small-scale grav suspensors has led the Venu to concentrate on **walkers** as the acme of their vehicles technology. Several of these biped, tripod, quadruped or multi-legged craft are described in the **Mindjammer** core book (see page 260); this section provides some more specialised versions.

Unlike motes, walkers are not the purview of any single commissariat. Instead, they're a common class of vehicle used wherever needed. Many are found in the Ground Army, where walker units make up entire cavalry legions, with long-standing traditions and specialised features.

## CRUSTACEAN-CLASS AMPHIBIOUS ASSAULT WALKER

With a crew of 2-3, these amphibious walkers are frequently seen on water worlds and in amphibious assaults. Often launched from Natantia-class aquatics (below), their crew may double as aquamote control squadrons (page 43).

**Physical Stress:** 1 2 3 **Systems Stress:** 1 2 3

**Consequences:** 1 mild + 1 moderate

**Scale:** Large (+1)

**Tech Index:** T7

**Aspects:** Crab-like Tripod; Invaders From the Sea; The Best of Both Worlds.

Supporting Construct

**Skills:** Good (+3) Passive Sensing, Ranged Combat; Fair (+2) Manoeuvre (Ground), Technical; Average (+1) Stealth, Systems.

### STUNTS

◆ **Beachhead:** +2 Technical create an advantage bonus to create a well-defended on-shore position. There must be at least 3 walkers present.

◆ **Extended Manoeuvrability (Aquatic):** Use Manoeuvre in aquatic actions.

### EXTRAS

★ **Disruptor Cannon:** w:3, range 3; Radioactive, Recoilless.

★ **Zero Point Torpedoes:** As missile; +2 attack bonus, range 4, explosive (1); Limited Supply, Radioactive.

## NATANTIA-CLASS AQUATIC

Huge walkers are like gigantic oil rigs, Natantias walk along the sea bed or float through the water. They have docking and launch facilities for 10 Crustacean-class amphibious assault walkers (above) and 100 aquamotes (page 43). They have a crew of 100.

**Physical Stress:** 1 2 3 3 **Systems Stress:** 1 2 3 3

**Consequences:** 3

**Scale:** Huge (+2)

**Tech Index:** T7

### ASPECTS

**High Concept:** Walking Mountain in the Sea.

**Trouble:** Crashing Up Against the Shore.

**Other Aspects:** Belching Black Smoke and Z-Radiation; Look at the Size of That Thing! Massive Sea Support.

### SKILLS

**Good (+3):** Active Sensing, Ranged Combat.

**Fair (+2):** Hull Strength, Resources, Systems.

**Average (+1):** Close Combat, EW, Manoeuvre (Aquatic), Passive Sensing.

### STUNTS

◆ **Docking Bay:** 1 Crustacean-class amphibious assault walker and 10 aquamotes.

◆ **Extended Manoeuvrability (Ocean Surface):** Use Manoeuvre in ocean surface actions.

### EXTRAS

★ **Extended Docking Bay:** 10 Crustacean-class amphibious assault walkers and 100 aquamotes.

★ **Zero Point Torpedoes:** As missile; +2 attack bonus, range 4, explosive (1); Limited Supply, Radioactive.

Major Construct

## SCORPION-CLASS PERSONNEL CLEARER

Tall bipod walkers equipped with flame throwers, gas dispensers, and other anti-personnel weapons, deployed to rapidly clear an area of its population. They have a crew of 2.

**Physical Stress:** 1 2 3 3 **Systems Stress:** 1 2 3 3

**Consequences:** 1 mild + 1 moderate

**Scale:** Large (+1)

**Tech Index:** T7

**Aspects:** Howling Deathbringer; Striding Across the Mayhem; Systematic Massacre.

**Skills:** Good (+3) Passive Sensing, Ranged Combat; Fair (+2) Manoeuvre, Provoke; Average (+1) Hull Strength, Systems.

### STUNTS

◆ **Battlefield Analysis:** +2 Ranged Combat create an advantage bonus for tactical battlefield analysis.

◆ **Formation Leader:** +2 create an advantage bonus; all formation members taking the same action may use the free invoke.

### EXTRAS

★ **Flamer:** w:3, range 2; Incendiary.

★ **Gas Grenade Launcher:** +2 Ranged Combat attack bonus, range 2; attacks create a Poisoned-type situation aspect.

★ **Howler:** +2 Provoke attack bonus in current zone, plus 1 zone per fate point expended, area effect.

Supporting Construct



## WOLF SPIDER-CLASS AERIAL ASSAULT WALKER

With a crew of 1, Wolf Spiders are "jet pack walkers" capable of dropping directly into combat zones deep behind enemy lines, often supporting Chariot-class landing vessels. They have orbital entry capability.

**Physical Stress:** □<sup>2</sup>□ **Systems Stress:** □<sup>2</sup>□<sup>3</sup>□

**Consequences:** 1 mild + 1 moderate

**Scale:** Large (+1)

**Tech Index:** T7

**Aspects:** In First! Jet-Assisted Leaps; Orbital Attack.

**Skills:** Good (+3) Manoeuvre (Ground), Passive Sensing; Fair (+2) Intrusion, Ranged Combat; Average (+1) EW, Systems.

### STUNTS

◆ **Extended Manoeuvrability (Atmospheric):** Use Manoeuvre in atmospheric actions.

◆ **Extended Manoeuvrability (Orbital):** Use Manoeuvre in orbital actions.

### EXTRAS

★ **Disruptor Cannon:** w:3, range 3; Radioactive, Recoilless.

★ **Missiles:** Contest of Ranged Combat vs Manoeuvre, +2 damage bonus, explosive effect; Limited Supply.

Supporting Construct



## VEHICLES

As a T7 civilisation, the Venu use a wide variety of vehicles in addition to walkers. Most are powered by reasonably reliable fusion cells provided and maintained by the Tech Shield Curacy.

## BUG-CLASS UPV (URBAN PATROL VEHICLE)

Venu civilians on the edge of urban areas and security personnel on urban centre patrols often use tracked vehicles. The Bug-class UPV (urban patrol vehicle) is a single-driver enclosed armoured vehicle used for counter-insurgency and riot control. It can carry up to 20 passengers.

**Physical Stress:** □<sup>2</sup>□<sup>3</sup>□ **Systems Stress:** □<sup>2</sup>□<sup>3</sup>□

**Consequences:** 1 mild + 1 moderate

**Scale:** Huge (+2)

**Tech Index:** T6

**Aspects:** Rugged UPV Scrambler; Crowd Scatter; Rapid Troop Deployment.

Supporting Construct

**Skills:** Good (+3) Provoke, Ranged Combat; Fair (+2) Manoeuvre, Systems; Average (+1) Hull Strength, Passive Sensing.

### STUNTS

◆ **Passenger Accommodations:** Accommodations for 20 passengers.

### EXTRAS

★ **Gas Grenade Launcher:** +2 Ranged Combat attack bonus, range 2; attacks create a Poisoned-type situation aspect.

★ **Laz Turret:** Default Ranged Combat weapon; no bonus or weapon rating; Depleting Ammo, Full Auto, Recoilless.

★ **Stun Cannon:** Causes mental stress damage with the Ranged Combat skill; range 1; multiple target attack possible.

## OVERLORD-CLASS MOTILE COMMAND PLATFORM

Venu aircraft use multiple fusion VTOL turbines and typically have a saucer-based configuration. Urban security and rescue services and battlefield support units make extensive use of helicopter.

The Overlord-class Motile Command Platform is a typical mobile headquarters for mote control squadrons. It has a crew of 20, including 14 mote controllers, and a captain, pilot, 2 gunners, a comms officer, and an engineer.

**Physical Stress:** 1 2 3 4 **Systems Stress:** 1 2 3

**Consequences:** 1 mild + 1 moderate

**Scale:** Huge (+2)

**Tech Index:** T6

**Aspects:** Battlefield Helisaucer; Mote Mothership; Twin Laz Cannons.

Supporting Construct

**Skills:** Good (+3) Hull Strength, Passive Sensing; Fair (+2) Manoeuvre, Systems; Average (+1) EW, Ranged Combat.

### STUNTS

◆ **Battlefield Analysis:** +2 Ranged Combat create an advantage bonus for tactical battlefield analysis.

◆ **Direct Denial Assault:** +2 create advantage bonus when using EW to cow the opposition.

◆ **Formation Leader:** +2 create an advantage bonus; all formation members taking the same action may use the free invoke.

### EXTRAS

★ **Laz Cannon:** Default Ranged Combat weapon; no bonus or weapon rating; Depleting Ammo, Full Auto, Recoilless.

## SKYBOLT-CLASS GLOBAL INTERCEPTOR

Venu aircraft are typically scramjets capable of low orbital manoeuvres for rapid intercontinental travel. The Skybolt-class Global Interceptor is a T6 aircraft typical of planetary militaries on lower tech index Venu worlds.

**Physical Stress:** 1 2 **Systems Stress:** 1 2 3

**Consequences:** 1 mild + 1 moderate

**Scale:** Large (+1)

**Tech Index:** T6

**Aspects:** Massive G-Forces; On Your Tail; Turboboost!

**Skills:** Fair (+2) Manoeuvre, Ranged Combat; Average (+1) Passive Sensing, Systems.

### STUNTS

◆ **Ace:** +2 Manoeuvre bonus when executing difficult manoeuvres.

◆ **Charge!** +2 attack bonus when you move at least 1 zone before attacking.

◆ **Dogfighter:** +2 defend bonus in dogfights, etc, when you can manoeuvre freely.

◆ **Extended Manoeuvrability (Orbital):** Use Manoeuvre in orbital actions.

### EXTRAS

★ **Laz Cannon:** Default Ranged Combat weapon; no bonus or weapon rating; Depleting Ammo, Full Auto, Recoilless.

★ **Missiles:** Contest of Ranged Combat vs Manoeuvre, +2 damage bonus, explosive effect; Limited Supply.

Supporting Construct

## VIL-CLASS IMPERIAL LIMOUSINE

Venu conurbations still make extensive use of roads, and in many cases wheeled vehicles are the only vehicles authorised for civilian use. The VIL is an armoured limousine used for transporting higher-ranking Imperial personnel in urban centres.

**Physical Stress:** 1 2 3 4 **Systems Stress:** 1 2 3 4

**Consequences:** 1 mild + 1 moderate

**Scale:** Large (+1)

**Tech Index:** T5

**Aspects:** Sinister Black Limo; Silent Running; Unseen Strength.

**Skills:** Good (+3) Hull Strength, Passive Sensing; Fair (+2) Manoeuvre, Systems; Average (+1) Ranged Combat, Stealth.

### STUNTS

◆ **Phantom Bogey:** +2 overcome and create an advantage Deceive bonus to misdirect, feint, or conceal your current position.

### EXTRAS

★ **Laz Turret:** Default Ranged Combat weapon; no bonus or weapon rating; Depleting Ammo, Full Auto, Recoilless.

Supporting Construct

## EXPERIMENTAL DEVICES

Since the Commonality War, Venu R&D efforts have been in a neurotic state. Despite their superstitious anti-intellectualism and distrust of technology and innovation, the Empire has realised that—somehow—it must compete against overwhelming Commonality science if it is to resist its advances. This has led to a proliferation of wild projects, dangerous, expensive, and often contradictory. Some, however, have been bearing fruit; in most cases, the Commonality knows little or nothing about them, frequently coming across their effects for the first time in the field, and they're obvious targets for espionage missions.

### Nucleonics

Modern nucleonic weapons are a development of early Venu nukes using Dark Radiance technology. They use radiant energy to manipulate or in some cases negate the strong and weak nuclear forces. Some cause all matter in a certain volume to implode; others cause matter in an area to explosively vaporise; particularly terrifying nucleonics do so in a chain reaction. There are personnel-scale battlefield nucleonics, as well as larger versions such as z-radiation bombs.

### Radiance Cannon

This Dark Radiance weapon is colloquially known as a **mind-warp device**. It acts as a Mental Blast radiance power attack (see page 31) against the target zone. The zone may be **inside** a structure or construct. It has a +3 attack bonus and a range

of 2, causing mental or system stress damage. It is an area effect attack.

### Radiance Devices

A form of static planing engine created by the Tech Shield Curacy permitting contact with the Radiant Darkness from a planetary surface. It requires the mediation (ie the presence and concentration) of the God-Emperor Venu to work. The Radiant Darkness can “change” (ie mutate) humans and release latent psi-powers in a single zone of effect, determined by the mediator.

Radiance devices have other effects. First, radiance power users within its area of effect may invoke it as an aspect to enhance their powers. For a radiance device mediated by the God Emperor, this area of effect is at least an entire planet. Second, radiance power users within range of separate radiance devices (see below) may use their radiance powers on one another as if they were only 1 zone apart (even over interstellar distances). Thirdly, radiance power users may spend 1 scene in range of a radiance device to overcome recovery obstacles to any untreated consequences. Note that this also applies to radiance power users in proximity to operational radiance engines (page 49).

### Radiant Darkness Artefacts

Recently, the Tech Shield Curacy has discovered or seized certain ancient non-human artefacts found in human space which, in some unknown way, seem to be able to substitute for the God-Emperor's presence and allow the Radiant Darkness to be “contacted” by radiance devices on other worlds

**Table 11: Experimental Devices**

| Name                      | Notes   | Tech Index |
|---------------------------|---|------------|
| Brainjack Slave Soldiers  | 5 Fair (+2) Minor NPCs; Fair (+2) Ranged Combat; Average (+1) Athletics (+4 teamwork); <i>Hypercoordinated, Feel No Pain.</i> | T7         |
| Nanoclouds                | Challenge hazard.   | T7         |
| Nucleonics                | Personnel scale battlefield weapon; +10 damage, Explosive (5); <i>Vaporises Matter in Affected Zones, Z-Radiation.</i>        | T7         |
| Radiance Cannon           | +3 damage, range 2, mental or system stress damage, area effect against target zone.  | T7         |
| Radiance Device           | Contact with the Radiant Darkness, range 3+ (planetary), heal power users; <i>Enhance Radiance Powers.</i> See below.         | T7         |
| Radiant Darkness Artefact | Provides unmediated contact with the Radiant Darkness (as radiance device), and other effects. See below.                     | Special    |
| Z-Radiation Bomb          | Large (+1) to Enormous (+3) scale, +3 damage construct weapon with an Explosive (3) effect; <i>Mutating Z-Radiation.</i>      | T7         |
| Zero Point Torpedo        | As <i>Mindjammer</i> page 208-9.  | T7         |

## BRAINJACK SLAVE SOLDIERS

It was only a matter of time before someone tried to use brainjack technology to enhance troop performance. Needless to say, it inflicts terrible brain damage on subjects, so brainjack slave units are usually fitted to troopers who are already casualties, effectively recycling them back into combat. They're clumsy and lack initiative, but are also fearless, coordinated, and unable to feel pain. Brainjack troopers (or increasingly just **jack troopers**) are expendable, and can be controlled by brainjack controllers in a similar way to motile command squadrons, usually by a controller seconded to the Dark Radiance Executive from Fleet or Motile Command. There are increasingly concerned murmurs among the Venu that jack troopers may be **andromote abominations** (page 33).

**Stress:** □□ □□ □□ □□ □□

**Scale:** Medium (+0)

**Aspects:** Hypercoordinated; Feel No Pain.

**Skills:** Fair (+2) Ranged Combat; Average (+1) Athletics (+4 teamwork bonus).

(the Uranawaltzer in the upcoming (and revised!) *Black Zone* campaign pack is one such artefact).

The extension of the power of the Dark Radiance Executive which these artefacts permit—and especially the prospect of instantaneous (if constrained) FTL communication—is naturally of enormous strategic importance. In addition to acting as mediated radiance devices without the God-Emperor's presence, known radiant device artefacts have other functions, as follows:

- **The Darradine Uranawaltzer:** Causes mental stress damage to all non-radiance power users, eventually causing them to lose consciousness, appearing to fall asleep. This is an Average (+1) mental stress attack, increasing by +1 per exchange (a day). Victims become fatigued, falling unconscious when taken out and dying if not cared for.
- **The Chanton Unification Device:** Forges everyone in its zone of effect into a single consciousness which operates at a slower temporality. It's a mental stress attack, with unification occurring when an individual is taken out.
- **The Enkar Radiance Shunt:** Drains life energy in a physical stress attack, causing rapid aging and decrepitude. It's unknown where the energy goes—it appears to vanish.
- **The Pleysho Vortex:** Causes divergence. It's a physical stress attack; any consequence is a physical mutation which modifies a current physiological function.
- **The Timud Shield:** A device discovered in the Graveyard Stars, it appears to surround a zone with a "radiance free" zone, where radiance powers do not function and across which radiance powers do not reach.

## NANOCLOUDS

These self-replicating nanobots disassemble targeted matter; usually blood, or certain metals. Safeguards on their use are erratic, and while there have been catastrophic abuses, it's a miracle they haven't yet got totally out of control.

**Skills:** Superb (+5) Intensity; Good (+3) Magnitude (passive opposition).

### ACTIONS

**Action 1:** Each hour, resist Intensity with Athletics or suffer physical stress damage. Armour protects, but is destroyed by the stress.

**Action 2:** The same hour, roll Technical or Nucleonic Explosive vs Magnitude to contain the nanoclouds to the currently-affected zones, otherwise the hazard spreads a number of zones equal to the shifts of failure and increases in Magnitude by the same amount.

**Action 3:** Roll Science vs Intensity to spend a day to analyse the nanocloud and synthesise a counteragent, neutralising it.

## Z-Radiation Bombs

These are a larger and less controlled version of the Zero Point Bomb (*Mindjammer* page 209), acting at Large (+1), Huge (+2), or Enormous (+3) scales. They're a form of nucleonic weapon that creates a massive explosion (an explosive (3) attack with a +3 damage), releasing a huge amount of z-radiation in the form of a *Mutating Z-Radiation* aspect. Characters incurring consequences or compels of this aspect may develop a Venu mutation. Also known as mutation bombs.

## Zero Point Torpedoes

As described in the *Mindjammer* core rulebook (page 209), these are missile versions of the Zero Point Bomb used by Venu constructs such as quad walkers and capital ships. They are unstable nucleonic devices which bleed z-radiation.

## Scenario Hook: A Deadly Dig

*There's been a report of a new discovery of a radiant darkness artefact either in the Eye of Orion or in the Graveyard Stars. Not only is the dig likely to be highly dangerous, but just about every faction in the Empire is scrabbling to get control of it. Ready—set—go!*



CHAPTER SEVEN  
STARSHIPS AND SPACE TRAVEL



*Tavlak knew her mind was going. It was the destiny of all brainjacks. But—oh!—the glory of the radiance! The plummeting into the unfathomable interstices of space-time, the navigating through the debris-filled streams which separated the stars, the tiny pulse of life which was the starship she piloted, infinitesimal in the black. The lightning of hypercalculation burned her synapses, each time leaving her more numb, less reactive to the world beyond the ecstatic communion with the machine.*

*One day, she knew, she would not return. For now, there were the accolades and honour that came with sacrifice to the Emperor. But even that paled before the power of the Great Emptiness which was her fate...*

Venu starships are centuries behind Commonality vessels. Not only are the Venu a T7 society, making clumsy and ill-informed use of hastily reverse-engineered ZIP drives and planing engines, but they also eschew synthetic sentiences, and are unable to adequately navigate the hazards of 2-space. This chapter discusses the nature of Venu space travel, and provides sample planeships.

## STARSHIP OPERATIONS

There are several key differences with operations described in the *Mindjammer* core book.

### **Radiance Engines**

Radiance engines are the Venu Empire's planing engines, referred to by the Commonality as "dirt drives". Their polluting and unstable zero point power plants operate using a debased zanthrium compound—zanthrium niobate—whose piezoradiance (known as **ZANIOPE**) results in the "glowing rust bronze" of the Venu 2-space field and other z-radiation bleeds. Proximity to operational radiance engines may actually have a healing effect on radiance power users (page 30).

### **The Venu and 3-Space**

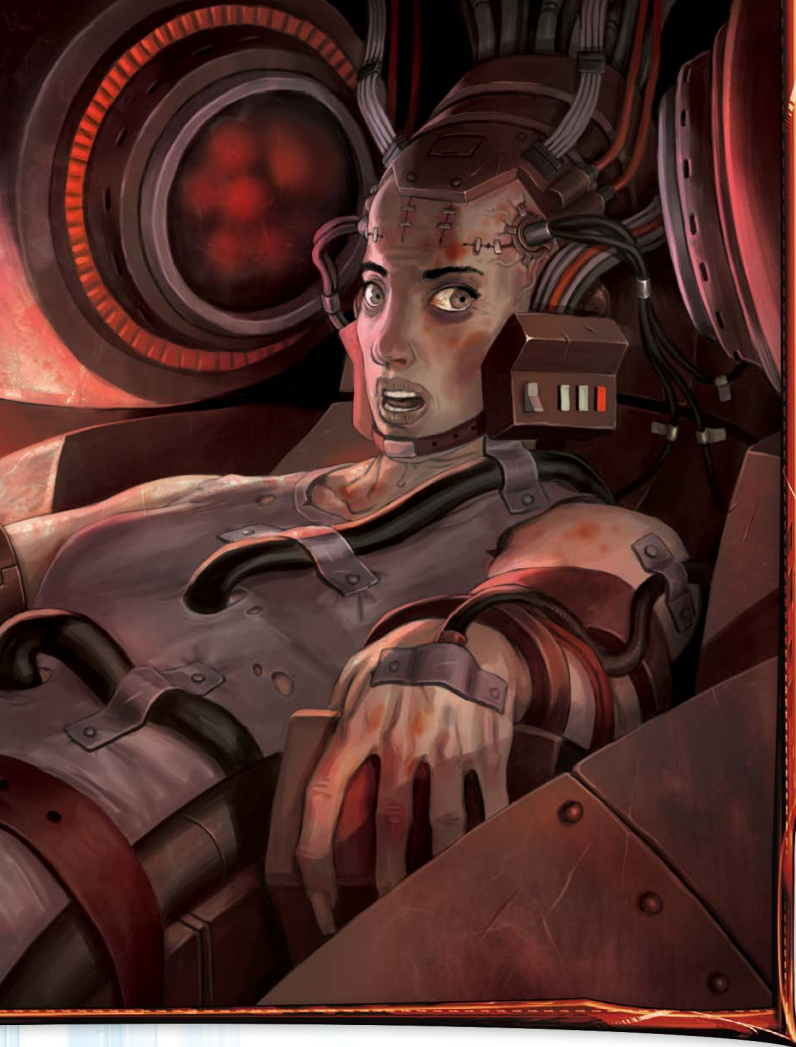
Venu first contacted the Dark Radiance in 2-space. However, he believed it did not belong there, but rather originated "somewhere beyond". When the Venu heard about the Commonality discovery of 3-space, they were extremely interested. Believing that 3-space is close to the source of the Dark Radiance, they want to know more. It could be a huge power source for them.

## SHIP'S CREWS

### **Brainjacks**

Unenhanced human brains cannot process the microadjustments needed to safely pilot a planeship through 2-space. In the Commonality, synthetic sentiences are the only beings capable of such rapid thought processes. The Venu are forced to improvise.

Brainjacks are humans whose brains and nervous systems have been stimulated beyond the bounds of safety, using a combination of drugs, nerve induction, and brain-computer interfaces. The individual is connected to a specially equipped piloting couch by Tech Shield curates, who monitor physiological condition during operation. For a brief period, new brainjacks remain functional when not "jacked in" but, as neural damage mounts, they become



confined to these “brainjack cocoons”. From the ramblings of later-stage brainjacks, this fate seems to be a worthwhile price to pay for the wonder of hyperintelligence which is the brainjack gift.

Brainjacks have the Overclocking (Mental) cyberenhancement (page 37). This lets them use their Pilot skill to make planing rolls (see *Mindjammer* page 224), with a maximum of the ship’s own Planing skill. Venu n-pilots routinely shunt damage from failed Planing rolls onto the brainjack, rather than risking misjumps or radiance engine damage, tempered only by the fact that the same n-pilots become replacement brainjacks if the current candidate is taken out.

### Impossible Meetings

*The Commonality’s 3-Space Instrumentality and the Dark Radiance Executive are trying to set up a meeting in Sector Seven. Not even Space Force or SCI Force know about this—and perhaps neither do the commissariats of the Empire. What do the two enemy agencies have to discuss, and what could possibly induce them to even think of negotiation?*

## Other Crew Members

Venu ship crews are defined by their lack of synthetic sentience. All positions are filled manually: there are engineers, comms officers, gunners, science officers, medics, and more. Characteristic of Venu crews is the **morale officer**, frequently Dark Radiance conciliators on civilian vessels and executors on commissariat ones, charged with monitoring the orthodoxy of ship crews for divergence and abomination. Ships have a single captain or commander; in significant cases, he or she may be aided by a first officer from the Dark Radiance Executive, who may wield nearly as much power.

## SHIP ARMOUR

Venu ship armour is limited to T7, and includes hull armour plating and the polluting disruptor shield. Perhaps the most notable form of Venu ship defence is the ECM suite dubbed “Venu countermeasures”, highly effective against Commonality space combat drones. Venu ship armour is described on *Mindjammer* page 210.

## SHIP WEAPONS

Venu ship weapons are limited to T7. Ships likely to come into contact with Commonality vessels are armed with the dangerous and destructive “Dirty Mary” disruptor cannon. Within Venu Space, however, ships routinely use simple laz turrets. Venu ship weapons are described on *Mindjammer* page 208.

## SHIP EQUIPMENT

Ship equipment on Venu vessels is primitive and limited: many ships are equipped with little more than weapons and armour. Equipment up to T7 is available.

## VENU FLEET ORGANISATION

Venu fleet organisation is a work in progress. A typical fleet comprises 5 **wargroups**, each centred on a single **capital ship**. Each capital ship is supported by 5 **support squadrons**, each comprising 1 ship of the line, 5 support ships, and 5 fighter wings of 5 fighters and 2 reserves. A fleet comprises the following vessels:

- 5 capital ships
- 25 ships of the line (including at least one *Ministrator*-class curacy tech tender and a support squadron of one *Quartermaster*-class bulk carrier with *Skyhook*-class interface lifters and escort)
- 125 support ships
- 625 fighters

The classes deployed and precise composition depends on the nature of the fleet. Specialist formations may be attached, including: bulk carriers, *Needle*-class hunter-killers, mine-lay-

ing units and *Alpha Wolf*-class insertion and espionage vessels. Dark Radiance Executors, Intercissors, or Conciliators generally command unattached Warhawks.

A constant source of conflict between Fleet Command and other war commissariats is the fact that many specialist formations are not formally under Fleet Command's control. Bulk carriers belong to Logistical Command (page 25); drop-ships and landing vessels to the Ground Army (page 23); and the *Dragon*-class mote transports to Motile Command.

### Enforcement Fleet

The "default fleet deployment" used to achieve military objectives, the enforcement fleet is usually organised around *Ancestral Voice* capital ships (*Mindjammer* page 249), supported by *Hammer*-class dreadnoughts, *Dragon*-class mote transports, and *Warhawks*.

### Interdiction Fleet

Used to quarantine a world, interdiction fleets were traditionally the remit of Fleet Command, although they're increasingly commanded by the Dark Radiance Executive. Centred upon *Dominance*-class orbital plates and *Ancestral Voice*-class capital ships, supported by *Hound*-class interdiction patrollers, *Deception*-class mine layers, and *Warhawks*.

### Orthodoxy Fleet

Used to encourage worlds to toe the line, orthodoxy fleets are fielded by the Dark Radiance Executive, centred upon *Santum*-class capital shrine ships supported by *Dark Nebula*-class destroyers and *Warhawks*.

### Patrol Fleet

Deployed by Fleet Command to patrol Venu spacelanes, patrol fleets comprise *Ancestral Voice*-class capital ships supported by *Star Whip*-class destroyers (*Mindjammer* page 249), *Bloodhawks* and *Warhawks*.

### Punishment Fleet

Deployed by Fleet Command to discipline disobedient worlds, punishment fleets comprise *Dominance*-class orbital plates supported by *Bloodstar*-class planetary bombardment platforms, *Bloodhawks* and *Warhawks*.

## STARSHIP LIST

The *Alpha Wolf*-class Insertion Ship, *Ancestral Voice*-class Capital Ship, *Beachhead*-class Drop Ship, *Star Whip*-class Destroyer, *Warhawk*-class Strike Ship, and Starfighter are described in the *Mindjammer* core book (pages 248-251).

### BLOODHAWK-CLASS INTERCEPTOR

A support ship, *Bloodhawks* intercept advancing enemy forces. They have a crew of at least 4. They don't usually carry marines, and aren't designed for boarding actions, for which *Warhawks* are more appropriate.

**Physical Stress:** [ ] [ ? ]      **Systems Stress:** [ ] [ ? ] [ ? ]

**Consequences:** 1 mild + 1 moderate

**Scale:** Huge (+2)

**Tech Index:** T7

**Aspects:** Deadly Gunship; Leaking Z-Radiation; Massive Stopping Power.

**Skills:** Good (+3) *Manoeuvre*, *Ranged Combat*; Fair (+2) *Planing*, *Systems*; Average (+1) *Active Sensing*, *Passive Sensing*.

#### STUNTS

✦ **Called Shot:** Pay 1 fate point and declare a situation aspect to inflict on a target on a successful *Ranged Combat* attack, as well as damage.

✦ **Extended Manoeuvrability (Atmospheric):** Use *Manoeuvre* in atmospheric actions.

✦ **On Your Tail:** +2 *Manoeuvre* bonus when generating tactical advantages.

#### EXTRAS

★ **Venu Disruptor Cannon:** Weapon:3, range 3; Radioactive, Recoilless, Flaw: Dangerously Unstable.

★ **Venu Disruptor Shield:** +1 defend bonus; Highly Detectable, Unstable.

Supporting Construct

## BLOODSTAR-CLASS PLANETARY BOMBARDMENT PLATFORM

A ship of the line, Bloodstars prepare planetary surfaces prior to ground assault. They are sizable vessels, but with relatively small crews of a dozen or so. They have laz turrets and a spinal mount mass driver dropping shaped kino rods onto orbital assault targets. Their dedicated sensor array means these bombardments are lethally accurate.

**Physical Stress:** 1□2□ **Systems Stress:** 1□2□3□

**Consequences:** 1 mild + 1 moderate

**Scale:** Huge (+2)

**Tech Index:** T7

Supporting Construct

**Aspects:** Looming Mass Driver; Dedicated Sensor Array; Skeleton Crew.

**Skills:** Good (+3) Active Sensing, Ranged Combat; Fair (+2) Planing, Systems; Average (+1) Manoeuvre, Passive Sensing.

### STUNTS

◆ **Orbital Assault:** +2 explosive (1) attack or create an advantage bonus on planetary surface from orbit.

◆ **Pinpoint Target:** Identify a precise orbital assault target and automatically impose a situation aspect on it on any successful attack.

### EXTRAS

★ **Mass Driver:** Orbital Assault attacks gain a w:3 rating.

## CHARIOT-CLASS LANDING VESSEL

Smaller versions of the Beachhead-class dropship (*Mindjammer* page 250), Chariots transport up to 1 platoon of 125 Venu troopers, often right into combat.

**Physical Stress:** 1□2□ **Systems Stress:** 1□2□3□4□

**Consequences:** 1 mild + 1 moderate

**Scale:** Huge (+2)

**Tech Index:** T7

**Aspects:** Battle-scarred Rapid Deployment Troop Lander; Drop 'Em Right in the Hotzone! Evasive Action!

**Skills:** Good (+3) EW, Manoeuvre; Fair (+2) Planing, Systems; Average (+1) Passive Sensing, Ranged Combat.

### STUNTS

◆ **Battlefield Analysis:** +2 Ranged Combat create an advantage bonus for tactical battlefield analysis.

◆ **Dogfighter:** +2 defend bonus in dogfights, etc, when you can manoeuvre freely.

◆ **Passenger Accommodations:** Accommodations for 20 passengers.

### EXTRAS

★ **Armoured Hull:** Armour:1 rating.

★ **Laz Turret:** Default Ranged Combat weapon; no bonus or weapon rating; Depleting Ammo, Full Auto, Recoilless.

Supporting Construct

## DARK NEBULA-CLASS DESTROYER

These dedicated Dark Radiance Executive ships of the line are often used in Shrine-class escorts.

**Physical Stress:** 1□2□ **Systems Stress:** 1□2□3□

**Consequences:** 1 mild + 1 moderate

**Scale:** Huge (+2)

**Tech Index:** T7

**Aspects:** Shadow Fast; Sinister Dark Radiance Destroyer; The Mysterious Doom of Executor Talat.

**Skills:** Good (+3) Manoeuvre, Ranged Combat; Fair (+2) Planing, Systems; Average (+1) Passive Sensing, Stealth.

### STUNTS

◆ **Ramming Speed:** Use Manoeuvre instead of Close Combat to make ramming attacks.

### EXTRAS

★ **Armoured Hull:** Armour:2 rating.

★ **Fighter Wing:** 3 Large (+1) fighters (minor ships) with Average (+1) Manoeuvre, Ranged Combat.

★ **Repair Yard:** Use Technical for maintenance and recovery actions to restore mild, moderate, and severe consequences on Large (+1) constructs or below.

★ **Venu Disruptor Cannon:** Weapon:3, range 3; Radioactive, Recoilless, Flaw: Dangerously Unstable.

★ **Venu Disruptor Shield:** +1 defend bonus; Highly Detectable, Unstable.

Supporting Construct



## CHATELAINE-CLASS COMBINE STRONGHOLD

A merchant combine capital ship, Chatelaines are enormous vessels, practically spacefaring castles for the great combine families. Some are centuries old and have been retrofitted with radiance engines.

**Physical Stress:** 1□ 2□ 3□ 4□

**Systems Stress:** 1□ 2□ 3□ 4□

**Consequences:** 3

**Scale:** Enormous (+3)

**Tech Index:** T7

### ASPECTS

**High Concept:** Spacefaring Merchant Castle.

**Trouble:** Leaking Z-Radiation.

**Other Aspects:** Byzantine Wealth; Centuries Old; Combine Potentate Xakron Will Pay For His Treachery.

### SKILLS

**Great (+4):** Resources.

**Good (+3):** Hull Strength, Systems.

**Fair (+2):** Contacts, Knowledge, Planning.

**Average (+1):** EW, Manoeuvre, Passive Sensing, Ranged Combat.

### STUNTS

◆ **Cargo Hold:** 40 Huge (+2) cargoes; 400 Large (+1) cargoes.

◆ **Docking Bay:** 1 Huge (+2) constructs; 10 Large (+1) constructs.

◆ **Passenger Accommodations:** Accommodations for 300 passengers.

### EXTRAS

★ **Extended Docking Bay:** 10 Huge (+2) constructs; 100 Large (+1) constructs.

★ **Extended Passenger Accommodations:** Accommodations for 3000 passengers.

★ **Fighter Wing:** 3 Large (+1) fighters (minor ships) with Average (+1) Manoeuvre, Ranged Combat.

★ **Stewards:** 60 dedicated stewards, providing a +2 bonus to make the passage.

★ **Venu Countermeasures:** Armour:1 and a +1 defend bonus against physical and EW attacks.

Major Construct



## DOMINANCE-CLASS ORBITAL PLATE

A Venu capital ship, these enormous orbital hulks are designed to cow planetary populations. They're often the HQs of planetary occupation forces and Enforcement and Punishment Fleets.

**Physical Stress:** 1 2 3 3 **Systems Stress:** 1 2 3 3

**Consequences:** 3

**Scale:** Enormous (+3)

**Tech Index:** T7

### ASPECTS

**High Concept:** Orbital HQ; **Trouble:** Constant Traffic; **Other Aspects:** Electromag Cocoon; Fleet Focus; Sinister Harbinger in the Sky.

### SKILLS

**Great (+4):** Resources; **Good (+3):** Active Sensing, Systems; **Fair (+2):** Deceive, Planing, Ranged Combat; **Average (+1):** EW, Hull Strength, Manoeuvre, [+1].

Major Construct

### STUNTS

◆ **Direct Denial Assault:** +2 create advantage bonus when using EW to cow the opposition.

◆ **Docking Bay:** 1 Huge (+2) construct, 10 Large (+1) constructs.

◆ **Passenger Accommodations:** Accommodations for 300 passengers.

### EXTRAS

★ **Drop Shuttles:** Deploy 300 troops per exchange from orbit to planetary surface.

★ **Extended Docking Bay:** 20 Huge (+2) constructs, 200 Large (+1) constructs.

★ **Extended Passenger Accommodations:** Accommodations for 3000 passengers.

★ **Laz Turrets:** Default Ranged Combat weapon; no bonus or weapon rating; Depleting Ammo, Full Auto, Recoilless.

★ **Venu Countermeasures:** Armour:1 and a +1 defend bonus against physical and EW attacks.

## DECEPTION-CLASS MINE LAYER

A support ship and mainstay of Interdiction Fleets (page 53). They are specifically designed for a low profile.

**Physical Stress:** 1 2 2 **Systems Stress:** 1 2 3 3

**Consequences:** 1 mild + 1 moderate

**Scale:** Huge (+2)

**Tech Index:** T7

**Aspects:** Cunning Proximity Mines; Stealthy Mine Layer; We're Surrounded!

**Skills:** Good (+3) Passive Sensing, Stealth; Fair (+2) Planing, Systems; Average (+1) Manoeuvre, Ranged Combat.

### STUNTS

◆ **Silent Running:** Use Stealth instead of Intrusion when passing unseen.

◆ **Top Urgency:** +2 to Passive Sensing when on top urgency alert.

### EXTRAS

★ **ECM Array:** +2 defend bonus vs EW and Mindscape attacks.

★ **Laz Turret:** Default Ranged Combat weapon; no bonus or weapon rating; Depleting Ammo, Full Auto, Recoilless.

★ **Proximity Mines:** Explosive (1) attacks with Fair (+2) Ranged Combat and +2 attack bonus; targets defend with Mediocre (+0) passive resistance plus armour and shields unless actively sensed (vs Fair (+2) Stealth).

Supporting Construct

## EVANGELIUM-CLASS SCION WORLD TRANSPORT

These enormous stasis ships are constantly in operation, transporting colony populations from the heart of Venu Space.

**Physical Stress:** 1 2 2 **Systems Stress:** 1 2 3 3 4

**Consequences:** 1 mild + 1 moderate

**Scale:** Enormous (+3)

**Tech Index:** T7

**Aspects:** Tomb-like Stasis Ship; Mothballed Colony; Vulnerable Stasis Berths.

**Skills:** Good (+3) Systems, Technical; Fair (+2) Planing, Resources; Average (+1) Manoeuvre, Ranged Combat.

### STUNTS

◆ **Long-Distance Life Support:** +2 bonus for functioning on your reserves.

◆ **Passenger Accommodations:** Accommodations for 300 passengers.

### EXTRAS

★ **Extended Passenger Accommodations:** Accommodations for 3000 passengers.

★ **Labs (Colony):** +2 Technical create advantage bonus when establishing planetfall colony.

★ **Ore Processor:** Use Technical to process and refine mining ore.

★ **Stasis Berths:** Transport 33000 passengers in stasis; Vulnerable Stasis Berths flaw.

Supporting Construct

## DRAGON-CLASS MOTE TRANSPORT

This Motile Command ship of the line often serves as a capital ship. It's an enormous vessel of extraordinary design, used to transport motes into the thick of it, even on planetary surfaces. It has an open structure literally in the shape of a dragon and with a terrifying draconic head, and may land on planetary surfaces for short periods (under enormous strain).

**Physical Stress:** 1 2 3 **Systems Stress:** 1 2 3 4

**Consequences:** 3

**Scale:** Enormous (+3)

**Tech Index:** T7

### ASPECTS

**High Concept:** Dragon-headed Mote Tender.

**Trouble:** Open Structure Subject to Stresses and Strains.

**Other Aspects:** Motile Dispersion Run; Roaring Descent Through the Clouds.

### SKILLS

**Great (+4):** Resources.

**Good (+3):** Systems, Technical.

**Fair (+2):** Deceive, Planing, Ranged Combat.

**Average (+1):** EW, Hull Strength, Manoeuvre, Passive Sensing.

### STUNTS

✦ **Docking Bay:** 1 Huge (+2) construct, 10 Large (+1) constructs, 100 Medium (+0) constructs.

✦ **Extended Manoeuvrability (Atmospheric):** Use Manoeuvre in atmospheric actions.

### EXTRAS

★ **Armoured Hull:** Armour:2 rating.

★ **Extended Docking Bay:** 10 Huge (+2) constructs, 100 Large (+1) constructs, 1000 Medium (+0) constructs.

★ **Fighter Wing:** 3 Large (+1) fighters (minor ships) with Average (+1) Manoeuvre, Ranged Combat.

★ **Laz Turrets:** Default Ranged Combat weapon; no bonus or weapon rating; Depleting Ammo, Full Auto, Recoilless.

★ **Repair Yard:** Use Technical for maintenance and recovery actions to restore mild, moderate, and severe consequences on Large (+1) constructs or below.

★ **Venu Countermeasures:** Armour:1 and a +1 defend bonus against physical and EW attacks.

## CARAVAN-CLASS COMBINE TRADER

The ubiquitous jack-of-all-trades service ship of the combines, the Caravan is usually associated with Chatelaine-class strongholds. They fill gaps in interstellar activity left by the commissariats, conducting combine business, finding trade opportunities, and thriving in the "grey area" where the combines operate uninhibited. A Caravan has a crew of 20, including 5 combine marines.

**Physical Stress:** 1 2 **Systems Stress:** 1 2 3

**Consequences:** 1 mild + 1 moderate

**Scale:** Huge (+2)

**Tech Index:** T7

**Aspects:** Machiavellian Combine Merchant Captain; Cut-Throat Competition; Deadly Feuds.

**Skills:** Good (+3) Bureaucracy, Resources; Fair (+2) Planing, Systems; Average (+1) Manoeuvre, Ranged Combat.

### STUNTS

✦ **Cargo Hold:** 30 Large (+1) cargoes; 300 Medium (+0) cargoes.

✦ **Cog in the Machine:** Use Bureaucracy to take organisation actions.

✦ **Customs Negotiator:** Use Bureaucracy to avoid snarl-ups when trading starship cargoes.

### EXTRAS

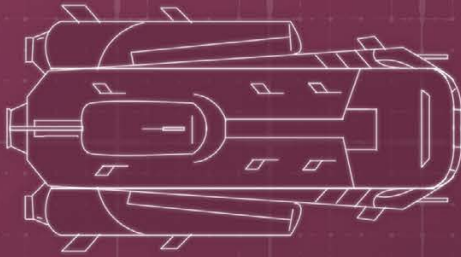
★ **Extended Cargo Hold:** Additional 30 Large (+1) cargoes and +300 Medium (+0) cargoes.

★ **Twin Laz Cannon:** Default Ranged Combat weapon; no bonus or weapon rating; Depleting Ammo, Full Auto, Recoilless.

Major Construct

Supporting Construct

dorsal view

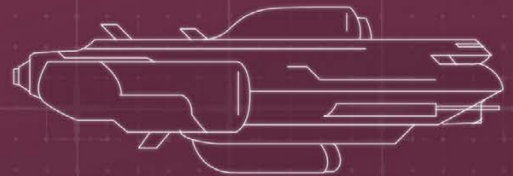


CARAVAN class combine trader

length: 42m  
width: 23m  
decks: 2  
max crew: 20  
weapons: twin Laz cannon

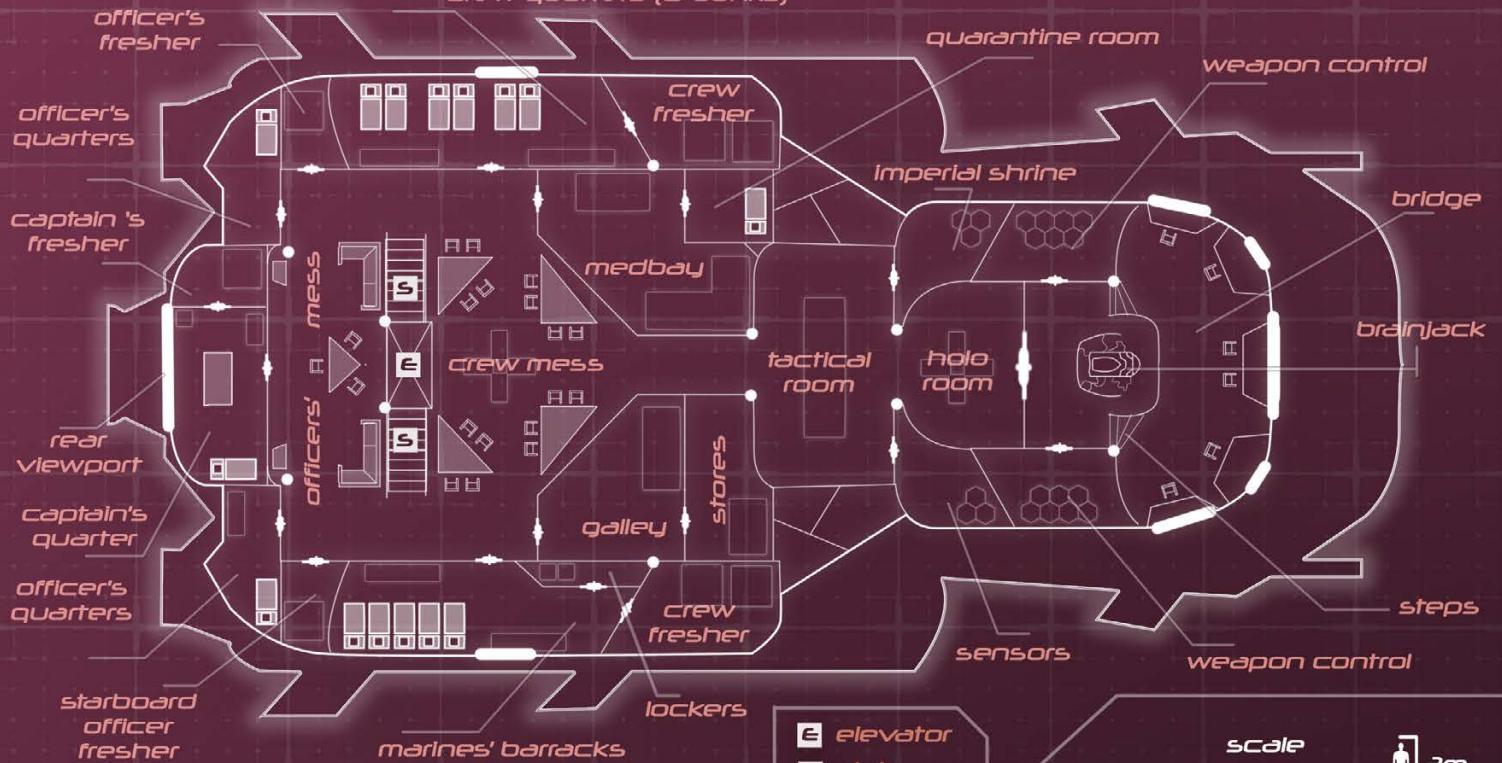


side view

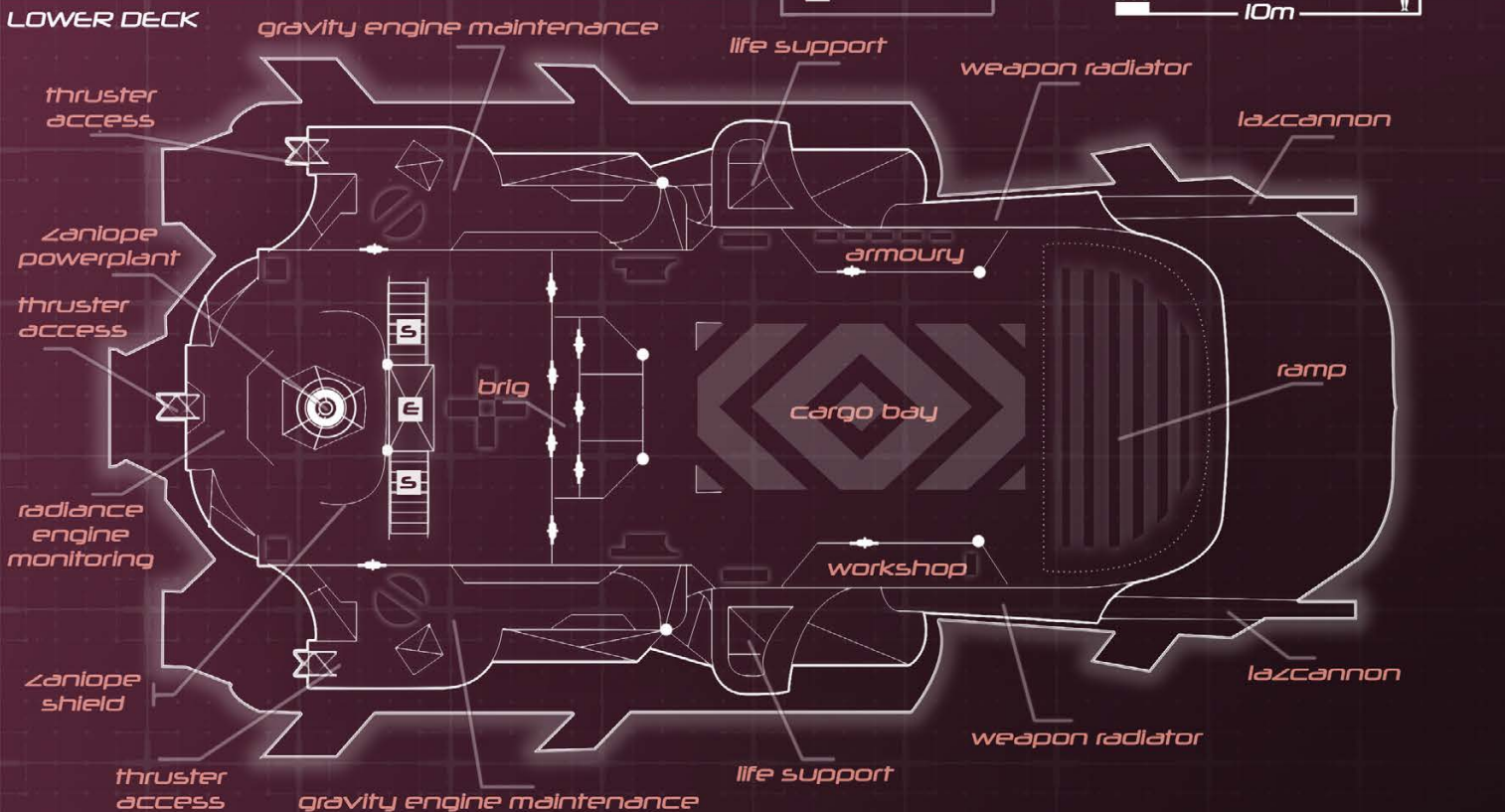


crew quarters (6 bunks)

UPPER DECK



LOWER DECK



Supporting Construct

## FAITHFUL BLADE-CLASS MISSILE BOMBER

Support ships for operations to reduce planetary populations and overcome resistance and defences, often found in Enforcement and Punishment Fleets.

**Physical Stress:** □□□ **Systems Stress:** □□□□

**Consequences:** 1 mild + 1 moderate

**Scale:** Huge (+2)

**Tech Index:** T7

**Aspects:** Terrifying Missile Bomber; Eagle-Eye Targeting; It's Coming Out of the Sun!

**Skills:** Great (+4) Active Sensing, Ranged Combat; Good (+3) Manoeuvre, Stealth; Fair (+2) Planing, Systems; Average (+1) EW, Passive Sensing.

### STUNTS

- ◆ **Anomaly Scan:** Use Active Sensing instead of Empathy to defend against Deceive.
- ◆ **Charge!** +2 attack bonus when you move at least 1 zone before attacking.
- ◆ **Dogfighter:** +2 defend bonus in dogfights, etc, when you can manoeuvre freely.
- ◆ **Extended Manoeuvrability (Atmospheric):** Use Manoeuvre in atmospheric actions.

### EXTRAS

- ★ **Missiles:** Contest of Ranged Combat vs Manoeuvre, +2 damage bonus, explosive effect; Limited Supply.
- ★ **Zero Point Bomb:** w:4, Explosive (1); Limited Supply, Radioactive.

Supporting Construct

## HAMMER-CLASS DREADNOUGHT

These huge ships of the line are traditional Venu Fleet Command warships, the first to be retrofitted with radiance engines at the beginning of the Great Leap in IY172. Primitive but sturdy, they have many "customisations".

**Physical Stress:** □□□□□ **Systems Stress:** □□□□

**Consequences:** 1 mild + 1 moderate

**Scale:** Huge (+2)

**Tech Index:** T7

**Aspects:** All Kinds of Mad Gear Bolted Onto the Hull; Primitive But Robust Warship; Bleeding Z-Radiation.

**Skills:** Good (+3) Hull Strength, Ranged Combat; Fair (+2) Planing, Systems; Average (+1) Manoeuvre, Passing Sensing.

### STUNTS

- ◆ **Ramming Speed:** Use Manoeuvre instead of Close Combat to make ramming attacks.
- ◆ **Rugged Superstructure:** 1/session, pay 1 fate point to reduce a moderate consequence to mild, or remove a mild.

### EXTRAS

- ★ **Armoured Hull:** A:2 rating.
- ★ **Ram:** W:2 rating to ramming attacks.
- ★ **Venu Disruptor Cannon:** Weapon:3, range 3; Radioactive, Recoilless, Flaw: Dangerously Unstable.
- ★ **Zero Point Torpedoes:** As missile; +2 attack bonus, range 4, explosive (1); Limited Supply, Radioactive.

Supporting Construct

## HOUND-CLASS INTERDICTION PATROLLER

These ships of the line patrol systems, vigilant for untoward activity.

**Physical Stress:** □□□ **Systems Stress:** □□□□

**Consequences:** 1 mild + 1 moderate

**Scale:** Huge (+2)

**Tech Index:** T7

**Aspects:** Vigilant Hound; Relentless Pursuit; Leaking Z-Radiation.

**Skills:** Good (+3) Manoeuvre, Ranged Combat; Fair (+2) Planing, Systems; Average (+1) Active Sensing, Passive Sensing.

### STUNTS

- ◆ **Anomaly Scan:** Use Active Sensing instead of Empathy to defend against Deceive.
- ◆ **Top Urgency:** +2 to Passive Sensing when on top urgency alert.

### EXTRAS

- ★ **Venu Disruptor Cannon:** Weapon:3, range 3; Radioactive, Recoilless, Flaw: Dangerously Unstable.

## MINISTRATOR-CLASS CURACY TECH TENDER

A ship of the line despite its enormous size, these vessels combine the functions of repair yards, supply shops, and technical support centres.

**Physical Stress:** 1□<sup>2</sup>□<sup>3</sup>□ **Systems Stress:** 1□<sup>2</sup>□<sup>3</sup>□<sup>4</sup>□

**Consequences:** 3

**Scale:** Enormous (+3)

**Tech Index:** T7

### ASPECTS

**High Concept:** Spacefaring HQ of the Tech Shield Curacy.

**Trouble:** Leaking Z-Radiation.

**Other Aspects:** Crazy Cornucopia; Jack of All Trades; We Can Fix It Here.

### SKILLS

**Great (+4):** Technical.

**Good (+3):** Resources, Systems.

**Fair (+2):** Bureaucracy, EW, Planing.

**Average (+1):** Hull Strength, Manoeuvre, Passive Sensing, Ranged Combat.

### STUNTS

◆ **Docking Bay:** 1 Huge (+2) construct, 10 Large (+1) constructs.

◆ **Engineering Support:** +2 bonus for engineering personnel to create an advantage to save the day.

### EXTRAS

★ **Extended Docking Bay:** 10 Huge (+2) constructs, 100 Large (+1) constructs.

★ **Repair Yard:** Use Technical for maintenance and recovery actions to restore mild, moderate, and severe consequences on Huge (+2) constructs or below.

★ **Venu Countermeasures: Armour:** 1 and a +1 defend bonus against physical and EW attacks.

★ **Venu Disruptor Cannon: Weapon:** 3, range 3; Radioactive, Recoilless, Flaw: Dangerously Unstable.

★ **Venu Disruptor Shield:** +1 defend bonus; Highly Detectable, Unstable.

Major Construct

## NEEDLE-CLASS HUNTER- KILLER

These highly dedicated support ships locate and destroy heavily defended, hard to reach, or otherwise difficult targets, often behind enemy lines. Getting in and doing the mission is a priority—getting out might not be.

**Physical Stress:** 1□<sup>2</sup>□<sup>3</sup>□ **Systems Stress:** 1□<sup>2</sup>□<sup>3</sup>□

**Consequences:** 3

**Scale:** Enormous (+3)

**Tech Index:** T7

### ASPECTS

**High Concept:** Deep Penetration Hunter-Killer.

**Trouble:** Singleminded Design.

**Other Aspects:** Seek and Destroy; The Mission Above All; Total Stealth.

### SKILLS

**Great (+4):** Stealth.

**Good (+3):** Intrusion, Passive Sensing.

**Fair (+2):** Manoeuvre, Planing, Systems.

**Average (+1):** Deceive, EW, Hull Strength, Ranged Combat.

### STUNTS

◆ **Beat Them At Their Own Game:** +2 Intrusion overcome and create advantage bonus to enter zone closed to constructs.

◆ **Phantom Bogey:** +2 overcome and create an advantage Deceive bonus to misdirect, feint, or conceal your current position.

◆ **Silent Running:** Use Stealth instead of Intrusion when passing unseen.

### EXTRAS

★ **Laz Turrets:** Default Ranged Combat weapon; no bonus or weapon rating; Depleting Ammo, Full Auto, Recoilless.

Major Construct

## SANCTUM-CLASS SHRINE SHIP

This new generation of Dark Radiance capital ship has a built-in radiance device and a sanctum for a radiant darkness artefact (page 49). They are being built as quickly as artefacts can be discovered, and are of immense strategic importance.

**Physical Stress:** ☐☐ **Systems Stress:** ☐☐☐☐☐

**Consequences:** 3

**Scale:** Enormous (+3)

**Tech Index:** T7

### ASPECTS

**High Concept:** Uncanny Temple to the Radiant Darkness.

**Trouble:** Holy Dread.

**Other Aspects:** Everything Is a Secret; Faceless and Fanatic Cultists; What Humankind Was Not Meant To Know.

### SKILLS

**Great (+4):** Science.

**Good (+3):** Ranged Combat, Systems.

**Fair (+2):** Active Sensing, Planing, Resources.

**Average (+1):** Deceive, Manoeuvre, Passive Sensing, Technical.

### STUNTS

◆ **Docking Bay:** 1 Huge (+2) construct, 10 Large (+1) constructs.

◆ **Engineering Support:** +2 bonus for engineering personnel to create an advantage to save the day.

◆ **Specialist (Radiant Darkness):** +2 bonus to rolls for specialised field.

### EXTRAS

★ **Radiant Darkness Artefact (Pleysho Vortex):** A devastating Ranged Combat attack doing physical stress damage to crew. Any consequences caused are Venu mutations which appear in a few minutes.

★ **Venu Countermeasures:** Armour:1 and a +1 defend bonus against physical and EW attacks.

★ **Venu Disruptor Cannon:** Weapon:3, range 3; Radioactive, Recoilless, Flaw: Dangerously Unstable.

★ **Venu Disruptor Shield:** +1 defend bonus; Highly Detectable, Unstable.

## PANOPTICON-CLASS SENSOR STATION

These modular stations are found in most systems in Venu Space, coordinating Imperial communications. They have a crew of several dozen.

**Physical Stress:** ☐☐ **Systems Stress:** ☐☐☐☐

**Consequences:** 1 mild + 1 moderate

**Scale:** Huge (+2)

**Tech Index:** T7

**Aspects:** All-Seeing Eye of the Emperor; Unfathomable Communication Lines; Achilles Heel.

**Skills:** Good (+3) Active Sensing, Passive Sensing; Fair (+2) Resources, Systems; Average (+1) Manoeuvre, Planing.

### STUNTS

◆ **Anomaly Scan:** Use Active Sensing instead of Empathy to defend against Deceive.

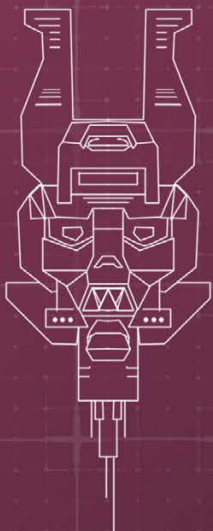
◆ **Top Urgency:** +2 to Passive Sensing when on top urgency alert.

### EXTRAS

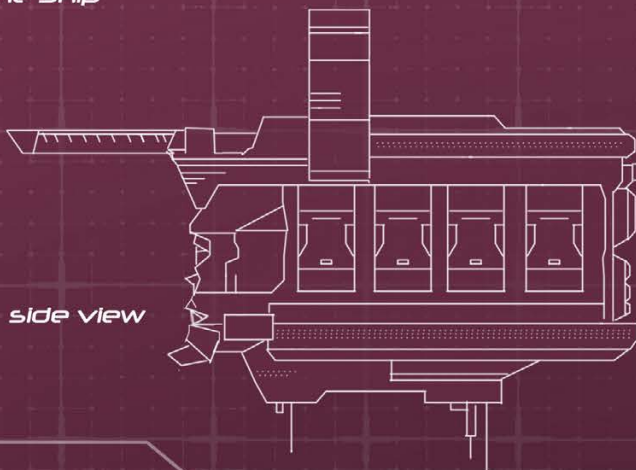
★ **Comms Hub:** +2 to Passive Sensing attempts to boost in-system comms efficiency.

Sanctum-class Shrine Ship

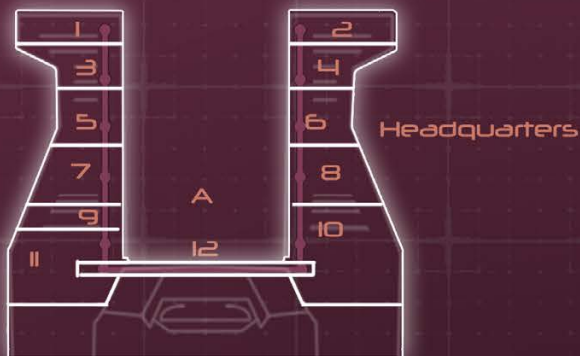
Front view



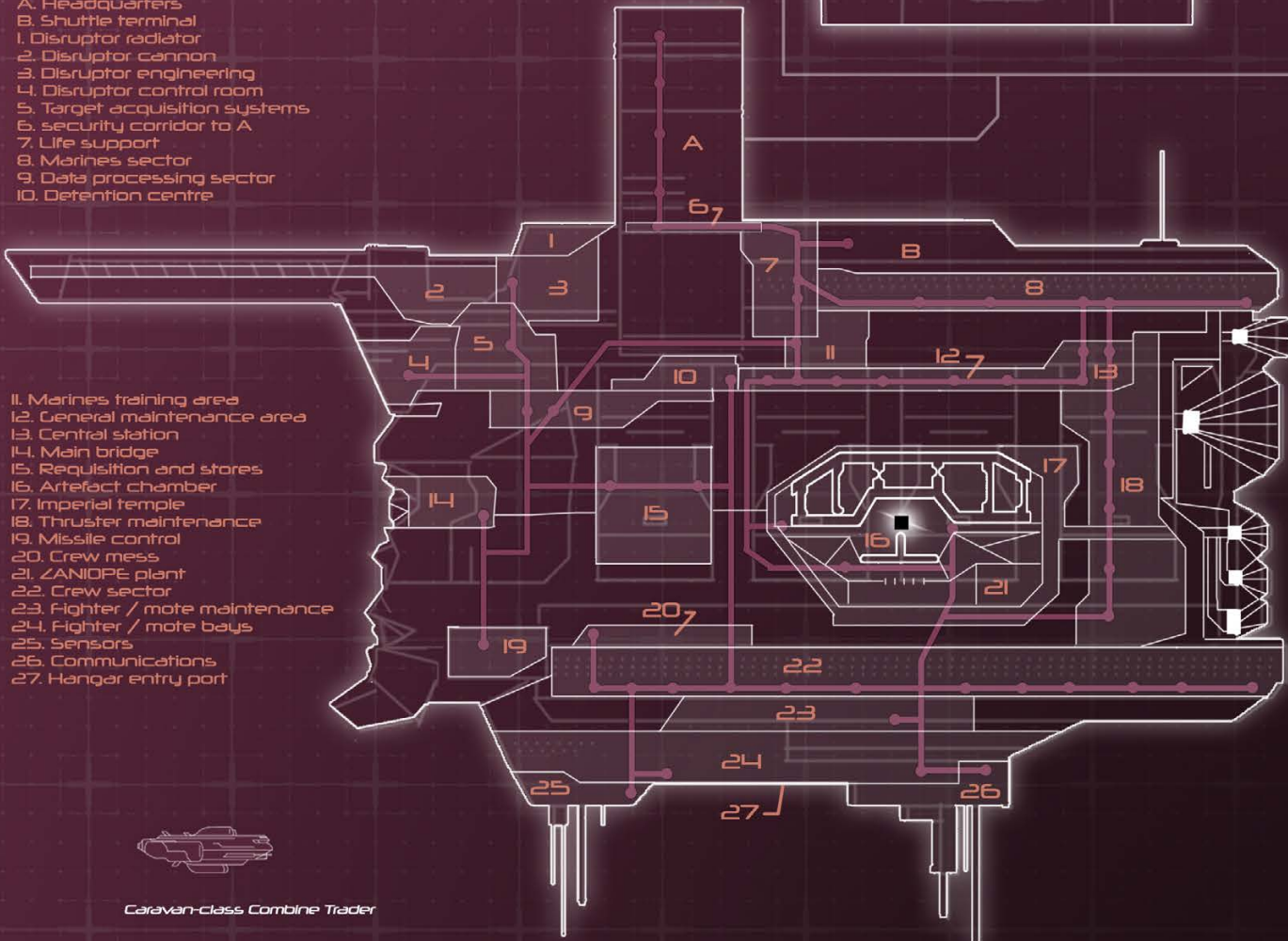
side view



- 1. Imperial quarters
- 2. Admiral's quarters
- 3. Countenant quarters
- 4. Officer's quarters
- 5. Countenant quarters
- 6. Hall of Honour
- 7. Reception hall
- 8. Elite guard
- 9. Ops
- 10. Elite guard training area
- 11. Security and pain chambers
- 12. Security corridor



- A. Headquarters
- B. Shuttle terminal
- 1. Disruptor radiator
- 2. Disruptor cannon
- 3. Disruptor engineering
- 4. Disruptor control room
- 5. Target acquisition systems
- 6. security corridor to A
- 7. Life support
- 8. Marines sector
- 9. Data processing sector
- 10. Detention centre



- 11. Marines training area
- 12. General maintenance area
- 13. Central station
- 14. Main bridge
- 15. Requisition and stores
- 16. Artefact chamber
- 17. Imperial temple
- 18. Thruster maintenance
- 19. Missile control
- 20. Crew mess
- 21. ZANIDPE plant
- 22. Crew sector
- 23. Fighter / mote maintenance
- 24. Fighter / mote bays
- 25. Sensors
- 26. Communications
- 27. Hangar entry port



Caravan-class Combine Trader



## QUARTERMASTER-CLASS BULK CARRIER

A service ship operated by Logistical Command and usually attached to all Venu fleets, Quartermasters are enormous vessels that transport needed supplies. They have their own defence escort, and up to 10 Skyhook-class Interface Lifters in internal docking bays.

**Physical Stress:** □□ **Systems Stress:** □□□□

**Consequences:** 1 mild + 1 moderate

**Scale:** Enormous (+3)

**Tech Index:** T7

**Aspects:** Enormous Logistical Bulk Carrier; Bulky and Difficult to Manoeuvre; Skyhook-class Lifters.

**Skills:** Good (+3) Resources, Systems; Fair (+2) Passive Sensing, Planing; Average (+1) Manoeuvre, Ranged Combat.

### STUNTS

◆ **Cargo Hold:** 30 Huge (+2) cargoes; 300 Large (+1) cargoes.

◆ **Docking Bay:** 1 Huge (+2) construct, 10 Large (+1) constructs.

### EXTRAS

★ **Extended Cargo Hold x2:** Additional 60 Huge (+2) cargoes, 600 Large (+1) cargoes.

★ **Extended Docking Bay:** 10 Huge (+2) constructs, 100 Large (+1) constructs.

## SELFLESS VIGILANCE-CLASS DEEP SPACE WEAPONS PLATFORM

Larger and more heavily-armed versions of the Panopticon sensor stations (page 61), they act as a base for deep space support ships.

**Physical Stress:** □□□ **Systems Stress:** □□□□

**Consequences:** 1 mild + 1 moderate

**Scale:** Huge (+2)

**Tech Index:** T7

**Aspects:** Heavily-armed Deep Space Base; Magnet For Ships; The Only Sensor Sweep For Miles Around.

**Skills:** Good (+3) Active Sensing, Ranged Combat; Fair (+2) Passive Sensing, Systems; Average (+1) Manoeuvre, Planing.

### STUNTS

◆ **Anomaly Scan:** Use Active Sensing instead of Empathy to defend against Deceive.

◆ **Battlefield Analysis:** +2 Ranged Combat create an advantage bonus for tactical battlefield analysis.

◆ **Docking Bay:** 1 Large (+1) construct.

◆ **Top Urgency:** +2 to Passive Sensing when on top urgency alert.

### EXTRAS

★ **Armoured Hull:** Armour:2 rating.

★ **Laz Turrets:** Default Ranged Combat weapon; no bonus or weapon rating; Depleting Ammo, Full Auto, Recoilless.

★ **Missiles:** Contest of Ranged Combat vs Manoeuvre, +2 damage bonus, explosive effect; Limited Supply.

★ **Repair Yard:** Use Technical for maintenance and recovery actions to restore mild, moderate, and severe consequences on Large (+1) constructs or below.

## SKYHOOK-CLASS INTERFACE LIFTER

A space-to-surface service ship operated by Logistical Command, the Skyhook conducts rapid transport of logistical support from Quartermaster-class bulk carriers to planetary surfaces.

**Physical Stress:** □□ **Systems Stress:** □□□□

**Consequences:** 1 mild + 1 moderate

**Scale:** Huge (+2)

**Tech Index:** T7

**Aspects:** Screaming Heat Shield; Bulky and Difficult to Manoeuvre; Dropping Supplies Into Any Location!

**Skills:** Good (+3) Resources, Technical; Fair (+2) Planing, Systems; Average (+1) Manoeuvre, Passive Sensing.

### STUNTS

◆ **Cargo Hold:** 10 Large (+1) cargoes, 100 Medium (+0) cargoes.

◆ **Rapid Unloading:** +2 bonus on Technical create advantage actions relating to logistical support and relief.

### EXTRAS

★ **Extended Cargo Hold:** Additional 10 Large (+1) cargoes, 100 Medium (+0) cargoes.



CHAPTER EIGHT  
VENU SPACE

*"There's something about Venu Space which encapsulates the Empire perfectly. Dazzling and awesome, bizarre and mind-bending, sometimes it's even beautiful. Yet you must never forget that it's also lethal—poisonous with waves of deadly radiation, twisted energies, worlds writhing in strange agonies. I know our analysts say the Venu were created by the Commonality's carelessness in its communications with Orion over thousands of years, but when I see the Graveyard Stars, the Face of Venu, the Trapezium Suns, I wonder if there isn't some malevolent force here, twisting human minds..."*

—Callyx Fin-Neaster, Commonality Agent out of Solodny, Venu Q-Zone

Venu Space is a volume of space controlled from Venu Prime (the Psi Orionis star system), extending through the Orion Complex to the edges of Barnard's Loop. From Old Earth it's

visible as part of the molecular cloud at the heart of the constellation of Orion, a region dominated by young and active blue and white stars, and enormous loops of molecular hydrogen, thrown off by violent star formation, which fluoresce and radiate, filling the skies of Venu worlds with fire and darkness.

## OVERVIEW

The Orion Complex is a collection of nebulae, molecular clouds and star forming regions extending hundreds of light years across the Old Earth constellation of Orion. It contains multiple clusters of young stars and many nebulae illuminated by the stars within. Absorbed stellar energy is re-radiated in the infra-red and visible spectra; dark skies are almost unknown on most core Venu worlds.

The gas clouds have other effects. Electromagnetic spectrum comms are adversely affected in the denser nebulae, and in many systems even short range communication is impaired, making ship-to-ship comms difficult and prone to failure. Powerful stellar radiation bathes many planets, rendering their surfaces hazardous to unshielded or unaltered humans. Excited magnetic fields stain skies bright with aurorae, while those without magnetic fields are often blasted lifeless wastelands.

Astrographic features include the Orion Nebula, the Trapezium Suns, the Great Loop, the Obedient Child, the Land of Light, the Venu Flame, the Dark Heart, and the Graveyard Stars, all of which burn brightly in the skies of Venu Prime. The Orion Complex covers much of Venu Space, extending into the Commonality's Bastion and Rim sectors, and beyond the Commonality borders.



## THE VENU HOMEWORLD (VEN SAYOR / VENU PRIME)

Ven Sayor ("Venu Prime"—known as Psi Orionis in early First Commonality star catalogues) is a triple star system. Its two main stars (Gizar A, a Beta Cephei B2 subgiant, and Gizar B, a B0 dwarf) are locked in a tight dance at the system's heart, while a third (Gizar C, a dim G8IV/V class dwarf) orbits the close binary at approximately 60AU. Separated by less than a tenth of an astronomical unit, Gizar A and B appear as a single bright blue star in the sky of Venu Prime.

The Venu homeworld is the fourth of seven planets orbiting Gizar C. Garuk and Haddi (*Lion and Cripple*—Gizar C I and II—named for an ancient Venu fable) are twin rocky dwarf planets sharing an inner zone orbit, while Bilaq (*Soot*—Gizar C III) is actively volcanic. Gidris and Gidrim (*Moth and Ghost*—Gizar C V and VII) are eccentric ice worlds in steeply inclined orbits, while Beisha (*Fig Tree Goddess*—Gizar C VI) is a green-brown gas giant, with only one small moon (*Shagarshikash*—Solitary Supplicant) and numerous orbital plates and weapons platforms.

Almost every world in the Ven Sayor system has been colonised and exploited. The moons and surface spots exploited

by the prehistoric Zayoran civilisation were reclaimed by the Venu a thousand years later and pressed into use as mines, military bases, penal facilities, and defence installations. Only Venu Prime is suitable for long term human habitation.

Venu Prime still bears the scars of the nucleonic devastation that ended the Schism Wars and practically destroyed human civilisation seventeen hundred years ago. Huge stretches of blasted land remain tainted, and the ruins of bombed cities litter the coasts and rise gaunt over jagged mountains and shallow seas. The biosphere is still in chaos; both the native t-congruent ecosystem and transplant life forms were profoundly damaged, and what remains is a savage and unstable mass which is effectively a new and chaotic ecosystem. Of the three main landmasses, Jiudek is the most settled, while Irdeg is almost entirely abandoned. The island of Zaan, of lesser political importance at the time of the wars, escaped the worst of the destruction, and is now the source of most of the food grown on Venu Prime. In orbit, the remains of ancient starships and weapons systems form a debris ring thick enough to be visible from the surface as a pale band in the daytime sky. The Venu call this **the Arch**, a constant reminder of the Schism that created them.

Most of Venu Prime's inhabitants live in crowded **spire cities**, towering above the poisoned landscape. Soaring



## Creating Worlds in Venu Space

When creating civilisations, worlds, and star systems in Venu Space, use the following guidelines for Stellar Body Type, Spectral Classification, Civilisation Designation, Government Type, Societal Development, Tech Index, and Starport.

### VENU SPACE STELLAR BODY TYPE

Roll 4dF or choose on Table 13: Venu Space Stellar Body Type, adjusting for the modifiers indicated.

### VENU SPACE STAR SPECTRAL CLASSIFICATION

If the stellar body is a star, roll 4dF twice or choose on Table 12: Venu Space Star Spectral Classification. Stars in Venu Space are generally younger and more energetic than the Human Space average.

### VENU CIVILISATION DESIGNATION

A world's **civilisation designation** is the label the Venu (and to a lesser extent the Commonality) use to describe it. Select a designation from Table 14: Venu Civilisation Designation, or roll 4dF.

### DESIGNATION NOTES

- **Lost Colony / Alien World:** The world is either an undiscovered or very recently discovered lost colony; or one that has been heavily influenced by an alien species currently or in the past, perhaps including genurgic and cultural modification to make populations seem no longer fully human.
- **Independent (No Venu Presence):** A lost colony world

**Table 12: Venu Space Star Spectral Classification**

|    | -4 | -3 | -2 | -1 | +0 | +1 | +2 | +3 | +4 |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| -4 | O  | O  | B  | B  | F  | K  | K  | M  | M  |
| -3 | O  | B  | A  | F  | G  | K  | M  | M  | M  |
| -2 | B  | A  | F  | G  | G  | K  | M  | M  | M  |
| -1 | A  | F  | G  | G  | K  | M  | M  | M  | M  |
| +0 | F  | G  | G  | K  | K  | M  | M  | M  | M  |
| +1 | G  | G  | K  | K  | M  | M  | M  | M  | M  |
| +2 | M  | M  | M  | M  | M  | M  | M  | M  | C  |
| +3 | M  | M  | M  | M  | M  | M  | M  | S  | T  |
| +4 | M  | M  | M  | M  | M  | M  | C  | L  | Y  |

**Table 13: Venu Space Stellar Body Type**

| 4dF                     | Stellar Body Type          |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| -4 to -2                | Pre-stellar object         |
| -1 to +1                | Star                       |
| +2 to +3                | Exotic Stellar Object      |
| +4                      | Post-stellar Object        |
| <b>Modifiers</b>        |                            |
| <i>Face of Venu:</i> -2 | <i>Graveyard Stars:</i> +2 |
| <i>Great Loop:</i> -2   | <i>Land of Light:</i> -1   |
| <i>Orion Nebula:</i> -1 | <i>Trapezium Suns:</i> -2  |

rediscovered by the Venu or the Commonality which hasn't begun to be integrated yet.

- **Venu Outpost:** A Venu "home from home", an outpost of Venu culture without the ability to sustain itself. Venu outposts are usually military, although they may also be combine worlds.
- **Independent (Venu Presence):** A lost colony world rediscovered by the Venu or the Commonality, which now has a Venu presence, without yet being occupied or forcibly integrated into the Empire.
- **Venu Interdicted:** The Venu interdict worlds with memes or ideologies they find noxious. From the Commonality perspective, these worlds may be unproblematic. Many former Commonality worlds, in the throes of violent wars of resistance against Venu occupation and rule, are interdicted worlds.
- **Venu Aligned:** Venu-aligned worlds which satisfy Imperial demands without needing "persuasion". They may be evil and Machiavellian, like the Venu, or skilled at keeping the Venu's worst deprivations at bay.
- **Venu World (Scion World):** A Venu world settled for millennia. It may have lost touch with Ven Saylor during the Devastation, but was incorporated into the Empire during the Reconquest. See page 11.
- **Venu World (Wall World):** A world seized by the Venu during the Commonality War. Some may have been Commonality worlds, others may have been lost colonies or even more remote Zayoran Patriarchate systems which never became Scion Worlds.

### VENU GOVERNMENT TYPE

Roll 4dF or choose an entry on Table 15: Venu Government Type, applying the modifier from Table 14: Venu Civilisation Designation.

**Table 14: Venu Civilisation Designation**

| Rating      | Designation                            | Government Type Modifier | Social Devt Modifier | Openness Modifier | Starport Modifier |
|-------------|--|--------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| -4          | Lost Colony / Alien World              | -3                       | -1                   | +0                | -3                |
| -3          | Independent (No Imperial Presence)     | -3                       | +0                   | +0                | -2                |
| -2          | Venu Outpost                           | +4                       | +4                   | -4                | +1                |
| -1          | Independent (Venu Presence)            | -3                       | +1                   | +2                | +0                |
| +0          | Venu Interdicted                       | -3                       | +0                   | +0                | +0                |
| +1          | Venu Aligned                           | -2                       | +2                   | +3                | +0                |
| +2 or above | Venu World (Wall World or Scion World) | +5                       | +4                   | -4                | +1                |

**DESIGNATION NOTES**

Government Types **Anarchy** to **Oligarchy** are described on *Mindjammer* page 340.

- **Occupied World:** Venu occupation forces are usually cruel, arbitrary, and heavy-handed. One or more War Commissariats control the world, usually the local Sector Command in tandem with Fleet Command, although other arrangements are possible.
- **Combined-controlled:** Either an ancient world controlled by a Combine family or families for millennia, or one which has recently come under their command.
- **Commissariat-controlled:** The standard Venu imperial government, run by the Imperial Hierarchy. It may be ancient or brought into the fold recently.

**VENU SOCIETAL DEVELOPMENT**

Use the table and creation method outlined on *Mindjammer* page 341, with the limitation that the highest degree of Societal Development on Venu worlds is Widespread Invasive Collective (+3).

**VENU TECH INDEX**

Roll 4dF or choose on Table 16: Venu Tech Index, applying modifiers from Table 18-25: Societal Development (*Mindjammer* page 341) and Table 18-26: Openness (*Mindjammer* page 342). The maximum Venu tech index is T7 (First Age of Space), although worlds of higher tech index which were originally Commonality Worlds are possible.

**Table 15: Venu Government Type**

| Rating      | Government Type         | Societal Dev Modifier | Openness Modifier | Control Index Mod | Trade Index Modifier |
|-------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| -5 or below | Anarchy                 | -1                    | +0                | -4                | +1                   |
| -4          | Feudal                  | +0                    | -3                | +2                | -3                   |
| -3          | Monarchy                | +0                    | -4                | +2                | -1                   |
| -2          | Representative          | +0                    | -1                | +0                | +2                   |
| -1          | Mercantilist Oligarchy  | +1                    | -2                | +1                | +4                   |
| +0          | Dictatorship            | +2                    | -3                | +3                | +1                   |
| +1          | Oligarchy               | +2                    | -1                | +0                | +1                   |
| +2          | Occupied World          | +2                    | +0                | +4                | +0                   |
| +3          | Combine-controlled      | +2                    | +0                | +1                | +2                   |
| +4 or above | Commissariat-controlled | +3                    | -2                | +2                | -2                   |

**Table 16: Venu Tech Index**

| Rating      | Tech Index                |
|-------------|---------------------------|
| -5 or below | T0 – Post-animal          |
| -4          | T1 – Stone Age            |
| -3          | T2 – Metal Age            |
| -2          | T3 – Age of Enlightenment |
| -1          | T4 – Industrial Age       |
| +0          | T5 – Computer Age         |
| +1 to +2    | T6 – Age of Genurgy       |
| +3 or above | T7 – First Age of Space   |

**VENU STARPORT FACILITIES**

Start with a rating of +0, or the “baseline starport” for the civilisation type (*Mindjammer* page 346), then apply the modifiers from Table 14: Venu Civilisation Designation above and Table 18-26: Openness (*Mindjammer* page 342). Alternatively, roll 4dF and apply the modifiers.

**New Civilisation Types**

**VENU CIVILISATION**

The typical Venu world, with all the panoply of Empire and the Imperial Hierarchy. Some Venu civilisation worlds are ancient and mysterious, while others have been forged recently in the fire of war and conquest.

**Example Aspects:** Exemplifying the Excesses of Empire; Deranged Populations Driven by Fear and Oppression; Pageant and Paranoia.

**Designation:** Venu World.

**Population:** Low or above.

**Government:** Commissariat-controlled.

**Societal Dev:** Early Redistributive Model to Widespread Intrusive Collective.

**Openness:** Self-centred or below.

**Control:** Restricted or above.

**Trade:** Low Moderate or below.

**Tech:** T5 to T7.

**Starport:** A-class or below.

**Mindscape:** None.

**COMBINE WORLD**

Societies where the ancient privileges of the combines force the Imperial Hierarchy and Cult of Radiant Darkness to compromise, to a greater or lesser extent. No less arbitrary and tradition-bound, but there may be surprising deviations from the Venu norm.

**Example Aspects:** Tradition-bound World of Byzantine Merchant Dynasties; Murderous Intrigues Between Cult and Combine; Who Speaks For the Empire?

**Designation:** Independent (Venu Presence), Venu Aligned, or Venu World.

**Population:** Low or above.

**Government:** Combine-controlled.

**Societal Dev:** Labour Service to Early Redistributive Model.

**Openness:** Any.

**Control:** Influenced or above.

**Trade:** Any.

**Tech:** T5 to T7.

**Starport:** A-class or below.

**Mindscape:** None.

**Table 17: Venu Starport Facilities**

| Rating      | Starport Class | Title          | Description  |
|-------------|----------------|----------------|--|
| -4 or below | X              | n/a            | No facilities.   |
| -3 to -2    | U              | Landing Strip  | No other facilities.   |
| -1 to +0    | E              | Basic Facility | Basic ground and / or orbital facilities. May be combine- or commissariat-run.                       |
| +1          | D              | Standard       | Standard ground and orbital facilities, including minimal ship repair.                               |
| +2          | C              | Good           | Good ground and orbital facilities, including decent ship repair. May include a system-wide network. |
| +3          | B              | Mature         | Mature ground and orbital facilities with busy shipyards and often a system-wide facility.           |
| +4 or above | A              | Venu Hub       | Extensive ground, orbital, and in-system facilities, often including a Fleet Command HQ.             |

## VENU DEPOT

Centres for the projection of Venu power, these may be located in the heart of Venu Space or out on the frontiers. They are often geared towards the needs of the War Commissariats, and particularly Fleet Command.

**Example Aspects:** The Bloody Light of Empire in the Darkness; Hivelike Populations Churning Out War; Abomination Slips Between the Cracks.

**Designation:** Venu Outpost, Venu Aligned, or Venu World.

**Population:** Very Low or above.

**Government:** Occupied World, Combine-controlled, Commissariat-controlled.

**Societal Dev:** Labour Service to Widespread Invasive Collective.

**Openness:** Any.

**Control:** Laissez-faire or above.

**Trade:** Any.

**Tech:** T7.

**Starport:** D-class to A-class.

**Mindscape:** None.

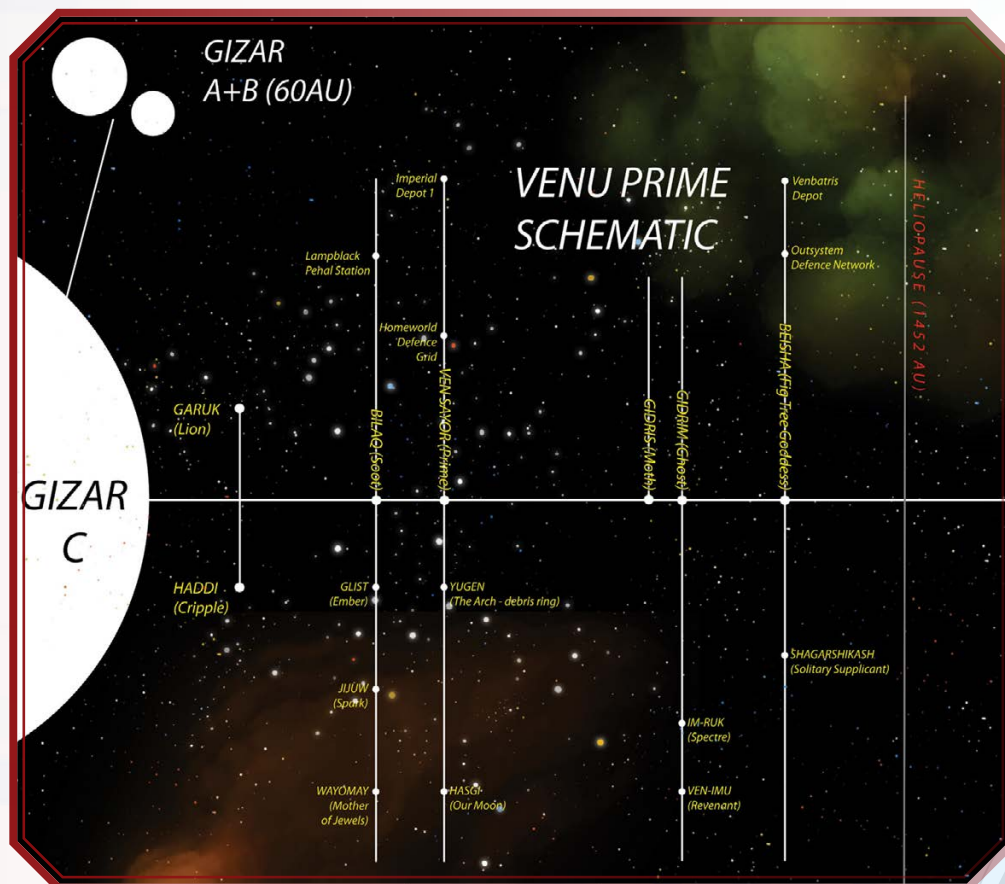
## Hazards in Venu Space

The energetic and unstable environment of the Orion Complex makes for some unusual space hazards, which may affect whole worlds. Here are some of them.

- **Bow Shocks:** Naturally-occurring dual particle beams are found near the hottest stars in the Orion Complex's nebulae. They are a radiation hazard.
- **T-Tauri Shocks:** Jets of material spouting from young T-Tau-

ri stars. They have the effect of an astrophysical maser.

- **Warp Shocks:** High-energy particle and material shock waves formed when a T-Tauri shock encounters a bow shock. They have the effect of an exotic matter hazard.
- **Bullet Shocks:** These are dispersed high-velocity clouds of iron atoms perhaps 100AU or more in diameter. They form a highly dangerous navigational hazard like a field anomaly. They're a spectacular sight.



geodesic domes and curtain walls keep out the worst of the radioactive dust storms that sweep off the plains at double-noon, while filtration plants and hydroponic nurseries provide food and water that is mostly contamination-free. The largest mega-conurbation is Zaijor, often called Venu City One, site of first landfall and location of Venu's imperial palace. Once a simple coastal city, Zaijor is a sprawling collection of domes and spires extending over the sea east of Jiudek. Lightless and stale waters lie beneath, providing a water source and dumping ground for waste and chemical run-off. The spaceport lies in the east of Venu City One, on massive stone piers sunk into the sea floor.

Less fortunate are those Venu forced to live outside the city domes, in the contaminated badlands that dominate the surface. This is the realm of the **abominations**. Cast out from society, they form miserable bands raiding the settlements, mines, farms and wayposts that dot the plains between cities. The bogeyman of the city dwellers, they're far from being the only danger in the wastelands: rad-storms and chemical seeps are frequent, and the ancient **pillarfish**, once almost wiped out, thrive in the desolation, creeping into settlements during the true night and wrapping everything they encounter in their acidic tendrils. Those who live in the Abomination Badlands are sun-scarred and rad-blasted. If they weren't

## VENU PRIME

**High Concept:** Post-Apocalyptic Venu Homeworld.

**Aspects:** F-class Orange Dwarf Orbiting a B-class Close Binary; Hellish Spire Cities and Nucleonic Badlands; Natural and Nucleonic Radiation; Emergent Post-Devastation T-Congruent Biosphere; Abomination Badland Hordes; Purity Through Eternal War!

**PLANETARY TYPE:** INFERIOR GARDEN WORLD

**Planetary Age:** Maturing (-1).

**Orbit:** Habitable Zone (+0): 0.5AU.

**Year Length:** 3y 114d.

**Size:** Small Standard (-1): 8430km diameter.

**Density:** Standard (+0).

**Gravity:** Low Standard (-1): 0.86G.

**Day Length:** Standard (+0): 26h (complex insolation).

**Atmospheric Pressure:** Standard (-1): Oxygen (Breathable, Tainted With Pollutants).

**Surface Temperature:** Warm (+1): 17°C.

**Surface Liquid:** Average (+0): 50%.

**Seasonality:** High (+2).

**Satellites:** 1 Planetoid.

**Planetary Bodies:** 9 (1 gas giant).

**Habitability:** Marginal (+0).

**CIVILISATION TYPE:** INTERSTELLAR HUB

**Designation:** Venu Homeworld.

**Population:** Very High (+3): 15 billion (95% Venu human; 5% mutants in Badlands).

**Government Type:** Commissariat-controlled (+4).

**Societal Dev:** Widespread Invasive Collective (+3).

**Openness:** Closed (-5).



**Control Index:** Repressive (-4).

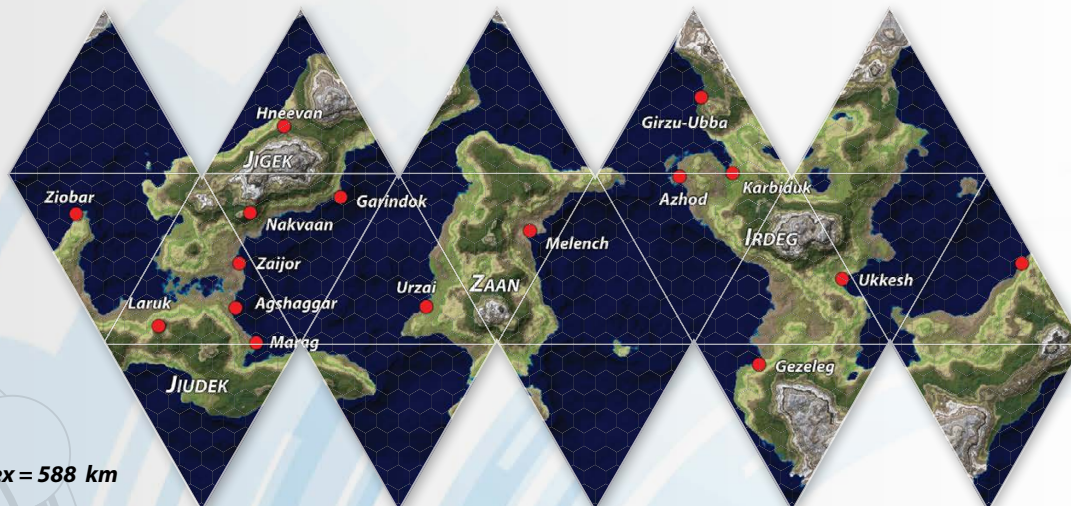
**Trade Index:** No Trade (-5): Huge amounts of tribute.

**Tech Index:** T7 (First Age of Space) in spire cities; T4 (Industrial Age) in Badlands.

**Starport:** Venu Hub (+3): A-class starport (Zaijor / Venu City One).

**Culture:** Venu Culture.

Inferior Garden World / Interstellar Hub





exiled to the badlands because of mutation, then they're at high risk of becoming mutated themselves. The **purifier** (page 34) is a vital survival tool.

Jiudek's major conurbations are (in descending order of size): Venu City One, comprising Zaijor (the old capital), the Agshaggar agripole, and Marag, the war-forge of the central mountains; Laruk and Ziobar, spire cities on the western coast; Garindok; Hneevan; and Nakvaan, the fortified receiver of the Tech Shield Curacy, also known as **Revelation Station**.

Irdeg's major conurbations are concentrated on the western coast, facing the Jatonic Ocean. They are: Venu City Two, comprising Girzu-Ubba, a sprawling conurbation on the north-western plain, and Karbiduk, a rock-cut city in the heart of the former nation of the same name; Azhod, which lies at the same latitude as Venu City One and is linked to it by an ocean-floor travel route; Venu City Three, also known as Gezeleg, located at the southern tip of Irdeg; and Ukkesh, a spire city on the eastern coast, sometimes called Venu City Four (although it doesn't yet have the characteristic domes and curtain walls).

## THE SCION WORLDS

The **Scion Worlds** were mostly settled during the prehistoric golden age of the Zayoran Patriarchate, when Zayor sent slowships to the systems of the Orion Complex. The new colonists had adapted to their low standard gravity and high insolation levels, and sought out similar worlds. The Scion Worlds are traditionally divided into seven "sectors" (plus an eighth), corresponding to different colonisation periods—Ven Sayor and Ninshub are both in Sector One—although some have been settled more recently, especially since the Reconquest of IY 174 (78 NCE). New worlds are still being added, as the Venu explore the as yet lightly-mapped volumes of Venu Space. Each sector is under the command of a Lord Countenant, commonly referred to in this case as a **Sector Lord**, and corresponding commissariat (page 18). The Scion Worlds are also called the **Imperial Realm**.

## Alaruk

Settled during the prehistoric golden age, Alaruk is today the main inhabited system in the Akaruk Cluster (below). It's a high-G world that threads an eccentric and radiation-washed course between the four main suns of the Cluster. Constantly suffering the stress and strain of multiple gravity wells, Alaruk is volcanically active, its surface constantly recovered by lava, ash clouds and pyroclastic flows. The only native life forms are extremophile micro-fauna which form red and blue mats and mounds across the volcanic plains, and which constitute Alaruk's main food source: although poisonous raw, they can be processed into an edible protein source. Alaruku cuisine has many ingenious ways of spicing, flavouring, and presenting the ubiquitous **charnve**.

A mineral rich world, Alaruk's exotic metals and high-g crystals have made it integral to the Venu war machine. Many core components of the radiance engine (page 51) are sourced from Alaruk. AZRAC, the Alaruk Zaniope Radiance Combine (page 16), is a major commercial force.

Alaruku natives (page 93) differ from the Venu norm. Short, squat, and muscular, with almost twice the mass, they're also hairless, lacking eyebrows and eyelashes, with pale grey on white eyes. Ancient genurgy has rendered them more temperature-tolerant than standard humans.

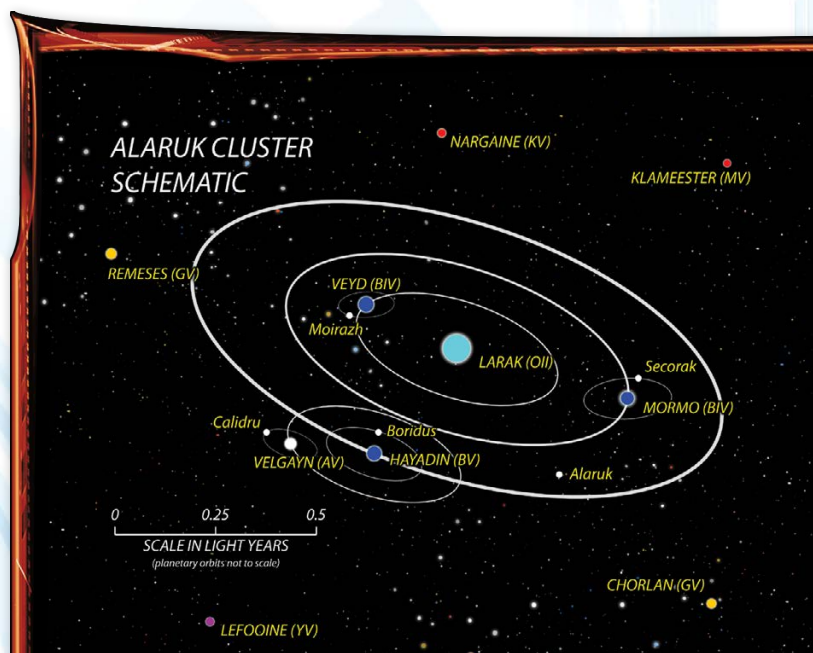
Before the Reconquest, Alaruku slowships had settled many bodies in the Alaruk Cluster, creating an exchange channelling foodstuffs from minor worlds and orbital farms through to Alaruk, and metals outwards from Alaruk to the Cluster worlds.

Lying within 300LY of Venu Prime, Alaruk was in sporadic contact during the Devastation, ensuring the image of the red-skinned Alaruku remained familiar to most Venu. Although contact was less frequent after the rise of the Empire, it never ceased, with limited tech exchange between Alaruku merchant houses and the Tech Shield Curacy. The world was one of the first visited by the Reconquest after the deployment of the radiance engine.

## Alaruk Cluster

**Aspects:** *Belligerent and Baroque Trade Combines; Powerhouse of Venu Industry; Space Mines and Slave Industry.*

The Alaruk Cluster is a dense cluster of star systems, many of which are themselves multiple systems, some 300 LY from Venu Prime in Sector One. It makes up (together with Alnitak and Alnilam) one of the three stars on Orion's belt. The bright primary Larak is orbited by three companion stars and a wider halo of densely packed minor stars within 1 LY of the main system. The Cluster stars lie close enough to one another to permit easy STL travel, and a polity emerged in the Cluster during the Devastation following the Schism Wars.



## ALARUK

**High Concept:** Gravity Tortured Volcano World.

**Aspects:** Domain of the Pale-eyed Dwarves; Swarming Cluster of Food and Trade; Violent and Chaotic Conditions; Young World With Primitive T-Analogue Biosphere; Chaotic Orbit in Quadruple Star System; Exotic Metals and High-G Crystals; Coruscating Skies.

**PLANETARY TYPE:** HOT DESERT WORLD

**Planetary Age:** Young (-2).

**Orbit:** Complex, equivlent to H-Zone, Inner (-1).

**Year Length:** n/a (Venu year used).

**Size:** Large Standard (+1): 16000km diameter.

**Density:** High Standard (+1).

**Gravity:** High (+2): 2.5G.

**Day Length:** n/a (Venu day used: 26h).

**Atmospheric Pressure:** High (+2): Oxygen, high CO2.

**Surface Temperature:** Warm (+1): 30°C.

**Surface Liquid:** Very Low (-2): <5%.

**Seasonality:** Extreme (+8).

**Satellites:** None.

**Planetary Bodies:** n/a.

**Habitability:** Challenging (+1).

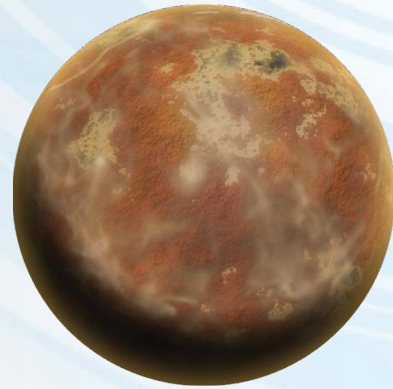
**CIVILISATION TYPE:** COMBINE WORLD

**Designation:** Scion World (+2).

**Population:** High (+2): 7 billion.

**Government Type:** Combine-controlled (+3).

**Societal Dev:** Widespread Invasive Collective (+3).



**Openness:** Self-centred (-2).

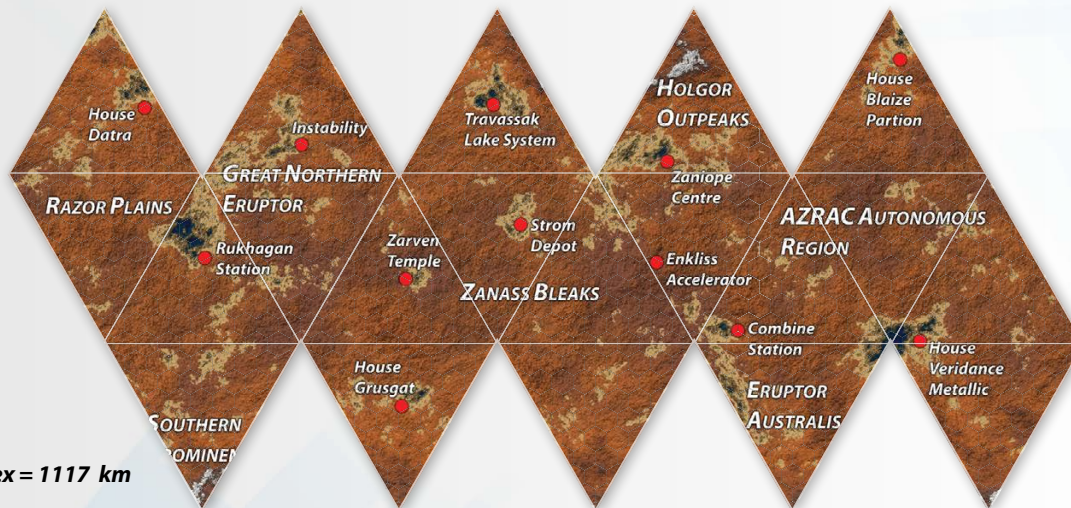
**Control Index:** Surveilled (+2).

**Trade Index:** Extensive (+2).

**Tech Index:** T7 (First Age of Space).

**Starport:** A-class Starport (+3).

**Culture:** Alaruku Rediscovered World Culture.



The primary worlds in the Cluster are: **Alaruk** (page 71), a heavy gravity mining world; **Boridus** (page 73), a terraformed agrarian world with a low population; **Secorak** (page 81), an industrial world dominated by a single major city; **Moirazh** (page 78), a transformed asteroid cluster in orbit around Veyd; and **Calidru** (page 73), a struggling colony outpost of Alaruk that has suffered repeated crop adaptation failures.

Before the Reconquest, the Cluster was administered by a cartel of mining combines headquartered on Alaruk, which still exist today. Chief amongst these are **AZRAC** (the Alaruk Zaniopie Radiance Combine), the **Alaruku Mining Combine**

(AMC), **Moirazh Heavy Industries**, the **Core-Spin Directorate**, and **Argon Silver House**. The AMC in particular has outposts on several Alaruku worlds, while Core-Spin is based mainly on Moirazh. Although originally founded as mercantile entities, the combines mutated over time into vast hereditary organisations with a culture of ritualised trade warfare, and are now counted among the most powerful of the Imperial combines (page 14).

When Venu planeships arrived at Alaruk they found the Alaruku combines well armed and belligerent. Realising that neither the time nor resources existed for an easy conquest

of the Cluster, the Reconquest Commissariat (page 19) signed a trade agreement with them and redeployed the Cluster's industrial might towards weapons production.

## Ark

**Aspects:** *Stark and Arid Venu Outpost; Inferior Garden World.*

Located in the outer reaches of the Bone Nebula (below) at the edge of the Commonality Rim Sector, Ark has been a Venu depot / redoubt since the end of the Commonality War. It's an inferior garden world with a population of about half a million, run by Sector Six Command in cooperation with the Ground Army commissariat and Fleet Command, who view it as a future staging post for the reclamation of Sectors Seven and Eight.

## Bone Nebula

**Aspects:** *Bone White Nebula Hiding Unexplored Worlds.*

Located in the still poorly explored Sector Six, this whitish nebula comprises two very clear "bars" shaped by striations of dark interstellar dust, and from Venu Prime it does look a little like two crossed bones. It's on the outer reaches of Venu Space, and a regular destination for patrol fleets in Sector Six. The three worlds of Ark, Ibliss, and Jaggaratt are stepping stones for the ongoing Venu exploration and exploitation of this sector and Sector Seven.

## Boridus

**Aspects:** *The Harvest Agrimotes of Boridus, Argan Silver House Stronghold.*

A terraformed low-population agri-world orbiting the B-class Hayadin in the Alaruk Cluster (page 71). Historically it has been the main food production world of the Cluster, and today makes extensive use of agrimotes. Most of Boridus's food exports are handled by the Argan Silver House.

## Calidru

**Aspects:** *Inferior Garden Agri-world; A-class Main Sequence Star; Strangely Resistant to Terraforming; T-Analogue Biosphere.*

A struggling colony outpost of Alaruk that has suffered repeated failures of adapted crop plants. It's one of the few naturally occurring garden worlds of the Alaruk Cluster (page 71), orbiting the A-class Velgayn. It's an inferior garden world with a young t-analogue biosphere, but so far attempts to grow adapted crop plants for human consumption have met with little success: Calidruku (and now Venu) scientists have

been at a loss to explain why. Even though it has been settled for over a thousand years, its population has struggled to rise above 100 million.

## Darmak

An unassuming Scion World orbiting a G-class main sequence star on the edge of the Orion Complex, today located in the Commonality's Bastion sector. Settled late in the golden age, the colony was never a great success: even genurgically modified crops fared poorly in Darmak's cold and arid climate, and the population never grew above a few million. Losing most of the technology they possessed, the colonists reverted to a life of nomadic herding, following their durah (page 104) across the endless grasslands.

Since the Reconquest, Darmak has had little to offer the Venu in terms of resources. Nevertheless, it occupies a strategic location along to the pre-war Commonality Frontier (today the Wall of Orion or Commonality Q-Zone—see page 85). Fleet Command constructed bases in the system prior to the Commonality War, and hundreds of dreadnoughts, destroyers, and warhawks from the Alaruk shipyards gathered here before the blitzkrieg into Commonality Space.

After the retreat from Styphon V, many fleet elements returned to Darmak. In the decades since, the world's orbital bases have been converted into a ring structure extending almost completely around the planet, with stations linked by open gantry-work and molecular cables. High-G miners from Alaruk have excavated open-cast mines on the surface, producing construction materials constantly ferried into orbit. The large-scale industrial damage this has caused has pushed the remnants of Darmak's native population into marginal areas, in many cases forcing them to abandon their nomadic lifestyles for lives as mine workers. Conflict between Darmaks and off-duty soldiers is common, and instances of nomad bands being hunted down by Fleet Command officers in UPVs or even *Scorpion*-class personnel clearers are not unknown.

## Dispersion (Phantom) Nebula

**Aspects:** *Unmutated Populations Riddled With Abomination; Ancient Worlds on the Edge of Venu Space.*

The Dispersion or Phantom Nebula is a volume of cool interstellar dust and gas in the far reaches of Venu Sector Five. There were several colony expeditions here during the prehistoric golden age, and the nebula has many Scion Worlds. Mutation rates are lower than elsewhere in Venu Space, which has made their populations less affected by and less preoccupied with abomination. **Phantoms** have the reputation for being the most open-minded of the Venu—to the extent that Monitors here are always on the lookout for abomination and dissidence.

## DARMAK

**High Concept:** Heart of the Venu Fleet.

**Aspects:** Junk Ring Orbital Bristling With Guns; Opencast Mining Scars in the Steppe; Cold and Arid Climate; Endless Grasslands; G-class Main Sequence Star.

**PLANETARY TYPE:** INFERIOR GARDEN WORLD

**Planetary Age:** Aging (+1).

**Orbit:** H-Zone, Outer (+1): 1.8AU.

**Year Length:** 2.1y.

**Size:** Small Standard (-1): 8000km.

**Density:** Standard (+0).

**Gravity:** Low Standard (-1): 0.8G.

**Day Length:** Reduced (-1): 50h.

**Atmospheric Pressure:** Low (-2): Oxygen, Breathable.

**Surface Temperature:** Cool (-1): 10°C.

**Surface Liquid:** Low (-1): 25%.

**Seasonality:** High Standard (+1).

**Satellites:** 1 Planetesimal, 1 Planetoid.

**Planetary Bodies:** 8 (2 gas giants).

**Habitability:** Marginal (+0).

**CIVILISATION TYPE:** REGRESSED WORLD / VENU DEPOT

**Designation:** Scion World (+2).

**Population:** Standard (+0): 70 million Venu + 4 million Darmuku.

**Government Type:** Commissariat-controlled (+3).

**Societal Dev:** Widespread Intrusive Collective (+3).

**Openness:** Self-centred (-2).

**Control Index:** Surveilled (+2); No Control (-5) in nomad areas.



**Trade Index:** Low Moderate (-1); High Moderate (+1) in nomad areas.

**Tech Index:** T7 (First Age of Space); T2 (Metal Age) among nomads.

**Starport:** Venu Hub (+4): A-class starport with orbital ring, downport, and system facilities.

**Culture:** Venu Culture / Darmak Culture.



## Ellu

**Aspects:** X-ray Bombarded Paradise; Sad Remnant of an Ancient Betrayal.

Settled during the prehistoric golden age, Ellu orbits the binary star system of Haasha-Nux at the crux of the sword of Orion on the coreward edge of Venu Space in the Great Loop. The original colony here failed: although Ellu has a rich and thriving biosphere, the twin stars bombard the system with high-energy radiation, and even a brief stopover can overload a ship's ray shielding. When the fate of the original colony

became obvious, the slowboat departed the system in the direction of Thetawon with what survivors it could, leaving only a message buoy in orbit around Ellu. No sign of the colony ship has ever been discovered by the Venu.

## Enkar

**Aspects:** Blasted Garden World Reduced to Lifeless Ash.

A barren and ash-covered world in the Graveyard Stars (Sector Seven—see page 76), Enkar is said to have been a

garden world when it was first discovered and settled in the prehistoric golden age. Dark Radiance Executive reports for the Sector Seven Expedition of IY177 (86 NCE) report the presence of **White Ruins** (page 76) at several locations here. The world is not known to have been visited since.

## **The Expanse Clouds**

**Aspects:** *Remote Lost Colonies on the Edge of the Great Empty.*

The Expanse Clouds are part of Sector Seven, but a separate nebula structure from the Graveyard Stars, with predominant hues of yellows and greens. They give their name to the Expanse Sector (Commonality nomenclature) which lies to the Galactic North of the Guuleman Sector.

The Expanse Clouds (often “the Expanse” for short) do not seem to have suffered the same “White Ruin” degradations as the Graveyard Stars. There are at least fifty known inhabited systems here, although most are primitive and as yet only lightly affected by the Venu expansion of the past century.

## **The Eye of Orion**

**Aspects:** *The Cracked Bowl of Heaven; Unblinking Eye in the Heart of Orion; Space Traders Daring Forbidden Worlds; Soaring Empty Skies Inside the Eye.*

The Eye of Orion is theorised to be the only known relic of an exointelligent species hugely predating humankind, adrift in the ionised clouds of the Orion Nebula. It appears to have originally been a solid, near-black spherical structure some 3000km in diameter, with an outer shell 2km thick surrounding a hollow inner void. At some point, an impact is thought to have shattered the sphere, destroying 40% of the original structure. In spite of this, attractor matrices in the shell superstructure still produce a gravity of approximately 0.5G in many areas: “up” is towards the notional centre of the sphere, and the shell retains a thin but oxygen rich atmosphere across the remaining surface where the gravity plates still function. The shell blocks 90% of the Nebula’s radiation, permitting a habitable environment within the Eye. The *Golden Revelation*, a slowship from Zayor dispatched into the Nebula during the prehistoric golden age, found shelter in the structure when its stasis systems mysteriously failed: its captain, Thal Saar, is a cultural hero.

Thal’s Eyrie (now often just “Eyrie”) is now the Eye’s capital, seat of a controlling monarchy which extends across half the sphere’s remaining interior. Eyrie is a T6 (Age of Genurgy) civilisation, but elsewhere the “world” is a primitive hotchpotch of civilisations between T0 and T4. The low gravity and oxygen-rich atmosphere make lighter-than-air flight the most practical means of transport, and dirigible craft from Eyrie and its client states cross the Eye’s inside



surface constantly. Eyrie vessels—especially starships—take off from the inside surface and position themselves at rest in the interior void, before rising up through the breaches in the superstructure and tumbling into open space. This easy access to space, without the problems associated with strong gravity wells, permits Eyrie’s inhabitants to travel readily to nearby planets and asteroids for essential materials the Eye’s environments lack.

The Eye’s population today bears little resemblance to the original colonists. Light-boned and big-headed, they’re uncomfortable in standard gravity. Some bloodlines possess genurgic wings which allow them to glide and fly across the Eye’s surface; their spindle-like spires dot the interior, accessible only from the air.

The Venu are not sure what to make of the Eye. The whole population are clearly tainted by abomination, and normally the winged Eyrie would be exterminated mercilessly. However, since the ill-fated Sector Seven Expedition a century ago, the Empire is wary around alien artefacts, and has been reluctant to disturb the status quo. Nevertheless, there is no evidence linking the Eye with the so-called “White Ruins” (page 76), and there are factions in the Venu embassy pushing for a far less tolerant handling of the Eye’s inhabitants, all the way up to genocide and recolonisation.

The Commonality is known to have an interest in the Eye as an artefact, and the Venu here are always on the lookout for spies.

## The Face of Venu

**Aspects:** *Dark Nebula of Proto-stars and Pre-stellar Objects.*

This dark nebula is visible in the night sky of Venu Prime. Located on the edge of Sector One, there are many proto-stars and pre-stellar objects here.

## Fade

**Aspects:** *Archaeological Gold Mine of Preserved Zayoran Culture; Refuge of the Second Revelation; Hidden in the Cold Deep Sea.*

Located in the Dispersion Nebula in Sector Five, Fade orbits a dying variable Y-class star. It's an ancient Scion World settled in prehistory, a dark oceanworld with an icy crust. The **Phantoms** are aquatics: to the Venu, they are abominations, but the nature of their system primary (**Mindjammer** page 368) has meant that attempts to navigate here by radiance engine have resulted in the ship being destroyed by the Pulse Dragon Phenomenon. As yet the Venu haven't considered it worthwhile to mount a slower-than-light expedition to wipe out the Faders; in turn, the Faders find themselves in the worrying position of knowing there's a huge and hostile alien civilisation out there that would wipe them out if not for their isolation.

## The Graveyard Stars

**Aspects:** *Howling Wastes of Ash; Mysterious Fate of the Lost Colonies; Enigmatic Alien Ruins; What Did They Do?*

Originally (and still officially) known as Sector Seven, the Graveyard Stars lie rimwards of the Scion Worlds, on the far edge of Venu Space. Prehistoric Zayoran astronomers identified many potentially habitable planets orbiting ancient stars here, remnants from systems predating the molecular cloud, and hoped they might harbour biospheres permitting easy colonisation. Slowships were dispatched, and for several millennia everything progressed well, as settlers reported habitable worlds with thriving and varied biospheres (examples include Enkar, Timud, Kiri Prime, Uana, and Kiduru). Images were returned showing mysterious ruins which had been found on several worlds, of an extremely durable white ceramic composite often embedded in geological formations of great age, implying an age orders of magnitude older than human civilisation.

Even at this early date, the ancient Zayorans were disturbed by the idea of a non-human civilisation, and orders were given to avoid or demolish these "White Ruins". It's unknown whether these orders were acted upon, as no further messages from Sector Seven were ever received. During the chaos and violence of the Second Revelation, its mysterious fate passed into legend, one more tale repeated by the fireside alongside cautionary warnings about mutants and

other abominations.

In Imperial Year 177 (86 NCE), Lord Countenant Hell Mur dispatched a Dark Radiance expeditionary fleet to Sector Seven, hoping to discover a thriving group of pro-Venu worlds. Instead, the fleet found nothing but dead planets. Detailed orbital scans and even a few tentative surface expeditions found no trace of either the colonists or the biospheres they had reported: the worlds of Enkar, Timud and Kiri Prime resembled nothing more than white spheres of bone, their surfaces covered in plains of white ash and scoured by high velocity winds. The twin-planet system of Uana seemed to have lost its atmosphere, while Kiduru could not be located at all. The only trace of artificial structures were the White Ruins—the ceramic pre-human constructions, as untouched by the apparent cataclysms as when they had first appeared on the ancient recordings salvaged by the Tech Shield Curacy. After visiting what had once been the garden world of Timud, Mazma Gar, the Dark Radiance Executor in command of the expedition, ordered a complete withdrawal from Sector Seven: personnel from the returning expedition coined the name "Graveyard Stars", which has since become common parlance.

The Graveyard Stars are currently off-limits, and all of their worlds are to be considered interdicted. A Venu patrol fleet (page 53) regularly visits the region, but steers clear of approaches to ruined worlds, of which more than a hundred have been found. See the writeup for Timud for more (page 83).

## Great Loop

**Aspects:** *Fiery Loop in the Night Sky.*

Great Loop is one of the major structures of Venu Space. An arc-shaped emission nebula centred on the Orion Nebula, the Loop encompasses a volume over 400LY in diameter. It's clearly visible in the skies of many Venu worlds as a brilliant red streak curving up towards galactic north; more peripheral worlds can see the entire loop. The volume contains many Venu systems, including: Thetawon, Yuzallasey, Marquess, and Ellu.

Great Loop is visible from Old Earth as a red feature covering much of Orion. It's held to be the remnant of a supernova dating to around two million years ago.

## Hygelac

**Aspects:** *Supergiant Illuminates the Flame Nebula; Massive Blue-White Beacon Shining Everywhere in Venu Space.*

This O-class supergiant is one of the brightest stars in Venu Space. It has a diameter 20 times that of Old Earth's sun. It lies at the heart of the Venu Flame nebula (page 84), and emits

the harsh x-ray radiation which makes the nebula uninhabitable. Hygelac is a close binary with a B-class subgiant companion and a third B-class giant companion in a more distant orbit.

## **Ibliss**

**Aspects:** *Spectacular Stormswept Desert World of New Venu Colonists; Desert Raiders on the Verge of Abomination; Rumours of Ancient Energy Beings in the Deep Desert; Legend of the Reign of Flame.*

Located towards the furthest edge of the Bone Nebula, Ibliss also falls into the Commonality Rim sector. It's a harsh, stormswept world of high temperatures and little water, with a tainted atmosphere. It's an ancient Scion World which was out of touch with the Venu Homeworld until the Reconquest, and which had fallen to abomination. Today the Desert Raiders of Ibliss are all that remain of the former population, and a new settlement of fifty million Imperial Venu now call the world their own.

A persistent rumour states that an incorporeal alien species once shared Ibliss with the Desert Raiders, but were wiped out during the Reconquest. Another rumour says that the **Iblians** still exist, hidden by their Desert Raider allies, in the deep deserts.

## **Jaggaratt**

**Aspects:** *Venu Civilisation Pillaging the Remains of an Ancient Culture.*

A Sector Six world at the near edge of the Bone Nebula, Jaggaratt lies within the Canis Belli sector outside Commonality Space. It's a new Scion World, first discovered in IY174 (78 NCE), prior to the Sector Seven Expedition of IY177 (86 NCE), when it was the home of several lost colony cultures of T1-T2 ziggurat builders. The small number of Venu reconquerors toppled each of Jaggaratt's cultures one by one, destroying and pillaging an entire civilisation. Today the Empire is building on the ruins, and the ragged remnants of the oppressed natives keep a tenuous hold on their dying culture.

## **Kiduru**

**Aspects:** *Missing Ghost Planet of the Graveyard Worlds.*

Originally settled in the prehistoric golden age, Kiduru is a "lost world"—its location was never found by the Sector Seven Expedition of IY177. It's believed to be a Graveyard World. Its current whereabouts are unknown, and there are countless stories of the secrets it once held and what happened to it.

## **Kiri Prime**

**Aspects:** *Interdicted Graveyard World With Occasional Outer System Patrols.*

Another former Sector Seven World settled in the prehistoric age, Kiri Prime is now a white bone-like world of ash and ancient inhuman ruins—one of the Graveyard Worlds. It's interdicted, although its outer solar system is occasionally visited by Fleet Command patrols.

## **Land of Light**

**Aspects:** *Lightly Settled Nebulae on the Edge of Venu Space.*

A pair of bright nebulae on the edge of Sector Three of Venu Space, Land of Light is home to many bright young stars with rocky, metal-rich worlds. The region was only lightly settled during the Zayoran expansion, its main colony worlds being Orada (page 80) and Tenerophobe (page 83).

## **March Nebula**

**Aspects:** *Militarised Frontier One Step From War.*

In Sector Five, the March Nebula marks the border of Venu Space with the Wall of Orion. It's heavily patrolled, with numerous depots, observation stations, and listening posts.

## **Marquess**

**Aspects:** *Crimelord Pleasure Insurgency Against the Morality Police.*

A Scion World in the Great Loop in Sector Two, close to the Sector Four border. The Venu have imposed their puritanical fascism on the hedonistic human population, which has led to a surge in illicit pleasure-hunting and "recreation" coordinated by vicious crimelords. This "pleasure insurgency" has been becoming increasingly violent, and factions in the occupation force are urging extremely ruthless measures.

## **Mazhar**

**Aspects:** *Inferior Garden World Regressed Civilisation.*

An Obedient Child world, Mazhar is blasted by gravitic turbulence, which long ago reduced its moons to a spectacular halo of debris. Violent meteor showers are common, and its people are traditionally nomadic, gathering in deep cavern systems at times of major devastation. There are no cities; the E-class Venu starport requires regular clearing of its landing strip. Obedients from Mazhar have a reputation for extreme self-reliance, and make good combine traders (page 95).



## Moirazh

**Aspects:** *Venu Depot Asteroid Belt; Seat of the Core-Spin Directorate ; Birthplace of the Warhawks.*

A transformed asteroid cluster orbiting Veyd in the Alaruk Cluster. Shipyards here produced many ships of the Venu Invasion Fleet (110 NCE), including the legendary warhawks. The Core-Spin Directorate was originally the Alaruku combine charged with slowship construction; today it works closely with Fleet Command to ensure a rapid radiance ship production cycle.

## Moraks

**Aspects:** *Sea Floor Herders of Moraks.*

An Obedient Child world, Moraks has something approaching a proper industrial society. Its inhabitants live on the floor of a hemisphere-wide shallow sea, taking advantage of the water's radiation shielding and cultivating sea-weed and whale-like aquatic grazers. They have an aptitude for adapting and jury-rigging tech.

## Ninshub

Three hundred standard years after humankind's arrival at Psi Orionis, the terraforming process was well underway; but it

was already obvious it would be a slow and difficult process. Colony leaders (their names now lost) dispatched a secondary colony mission to the nearby quadruple star system of Mu Orionis (today called Gishaba) some 10LY away, where it was believed a more suitable world might be found.

Gishaba is a complex system, comprising dwarf stars of spectral classes A, G, F, and F. It has a large number of worlds and protoplanetary debris, and a single small inferior garden world orbiting the G-class Gishaba-B, that the original slow-boat colonists named Ninshub.

Ninshub is subject to frequent meteor bombardment. Shooting stars are a constant sight, and large bodies strike every year. Most life forms are capable of flight, fleeing the shockwaves; those which are not burrow for shelter. The primary body plan is beetle-like, with three pairs of wing-analogues, hardened carapace, and three pairs of legs. Ninshub's reduced gravity (0.84G) allows them to grow to a metre in length, large enough to be a danger to an unarmed human.

Contrary to expectations, Ninshub proved no easier to terraform than Psi Orionis. Its biosphere was robust and fecund, with motile plant-analogues and the ubiquitous three-beetles constantly overrunning cleared areas, devouring seed plants and crowding out non-native life. For the first few centuries, Ninshub was dependent upon communications from Zayor, and upon a series of slow dumb supply transports which were maintained for almost a century before they, too, failed. It's possible the colonists might eventually have established a t-congruent biosphere, but their efforts were brought to an abrupt halt by a nucleonic devastation similar in intensity to that of Zayor.

Close enough to Venu Prime to permit easy STL contact, Ninshub was the only colony world to maintain contact before the introduction of the radiance engine. During the Pre-Revelatory period, waves of colonists left crowded Zayor to settle in the Gishaba system, while during the First Revelation era it was the destination of choice for political dissidents at odds with the Patriarchate. While the poor and favoured alike set out for more distant worlds, anyone who hoped to one day return to Zayor chose Ninshub.

Ninshub was badly affected by the Schism Wars. Mushroom clouds blossomed across the scarred surface, and rag-tag military fleets crossed the void between the two worlds to prosecute the devastation. In fact, armageddon came to Ninshub first, launched by the Zayoran Patriarchs who preferred to see the colony destroyed than lost to the enemy. There were almost no survivors, except for isolated populations of belters and other offworlders in ramshackle space stations, asteroid bases, and hardscrabble colonies on the other Gishaban worlds. Isolated from Zayor, these survivors would eventually resettle Ninshub.

A millennium later, in IY 61 (10200 FA), a resettled Ninshub found itself subject to the Empire of Venu. Lord Countenant Irdi Nin led a slower-than-light expedition to Ninshub and



installed himself as the system governor. Further expeditions and governors followed, with Venu rule and society imposed by force. When the Empire obtained planing technology, Ninshub was the first system to be visited, and traffic between the two worlds is now constant.

## Obedient Child

**Aspects:** *Hardscrabble Worlds Under Luminous Skies; Space Sailors From the Obedient Worlds; Lost in the Dust; Gravity Engine Failure; Radiation Bursts; Radiance Field Disturbances.*

A nebula adjacent to the Orion Nebula, separated by dark and turbulent dust clouds that obscure its view of Venu Prime. The worlds of the Obedient Child—including Moraks (page 78), Paraghast (page 80), and Mazhar (page 77)—are plagued by high energy interference, gravitic waves, and strange radiations. STL travel is unreliable here, and planeships fare little better. While Commonality ship sentiences may navigate in such conditions, Venu brainjacks face enormous risks. Even on planetary surfaces protected by magnetic fields, radiation bursts often disable technological devices.

As a result, the Obedient Child worlds are backwaters,

### NINSHUB

**High Concept:** Near-Twin of the Capitol World.

**Aspects:** Fanatical Converts; Heritage of Ancient Exiles; World of Flying Life; Nucleonic Devastation Scars; Complex Quadruple Star System of Offworld Colonies; T-Analogue Biosphere.

**PLANETARY TYPE:** INFERIOR GARDEN WORLD

**Planetary Age:** Mature (+0).

**Orbit:** Habitable Zone (+0): 1.1 AU.

**Year Length:** 405d.

**Size:** Standard (+0): 13600km.

**Density:** Low Standard (-1).

**Gravity:** Low Standard (-1): 0.7G.

**Day Length:** Reduced (-1): 62h.

**Atmospheric Pressure:** Low (-2): Breathable.

**Surface Temperature:** Cool (-1): 11°C.

**Surface Liquid:** Low (-1): 38%.

**Seasonality:** High Standard (+1).

**Satellites:** 2 Planetesimals.

**Planetary Bodies:** 11 (4 gas giants).

**Habitability:** Challenging (+1).

**CIVILISATION TYPE:** VENU CIVILISATION

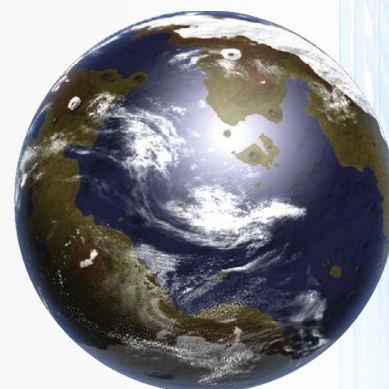
**Designation:** Scion World (+2).

**Population:** High (+2): 11 billion.

**Government Type:** Commissariat-controlled (+4).

**Societal Dev:** Widespread Intrusive Collective (+3).

**Openness:** Conservative (-4).



**Control Index:** Repressive (+4).

**Trade Index:** Very Limited (-3).

**Tech Level:** T7 (First Age of Space).

**Starport:** Venu Hub (+4): A-class starport.

**Culture:** Venu culture.

Inferior Gardn World / Venu Civilisation



1 hex = 950 km

with tech indices below the Venu norm. Radiation-hardened settlements cower in the shelter of dense mountain chains, their makeshift tech constantly threatening to collapse, explode or malfunction, while hardbitten farmers and herders eke out an existence under aurora-filled skies.

The inhabitants of the Obedient Child worlds are often eager to escape their harsh environments. When Venu planets arrived during the Reconquest, they found the people had lost all knowledge of their origins. They put up little or no resistance, signing up to join the Ground Army in droves.

**Obedients**, as they are known, are also common in Fleet Command, where they have a reputation for being simple, hard-working, and talented with tech. A surprising number of Obedients have been inducted into the Tech Shield Curacy.

## Orada

**Aspects:** *Quarantined Scion World With Second Revelation Secrets.*

A moderately populated T6 world in the lower of the two Land of Light nebulae (page 77) on the edge of Sector Three and Venu Space, in Ocalis Territory (Commonality designation). Settled during the Schism Wars, it has been quarantined since the Reconquest. Rumour has it that Orada is a functioning Second Revelation civilisation. If that's the case, the implications for the future of Venu civilisation may be profound.

## Orion Nebula

**Aspects:** *Beautiful but Deadly Heart of the Empire; Fire in the Sky of Every World; Strategic Gateway to the Commonality.*

The Orion Nebula is the fiery heart of the Venu Empire, pulsating with the blazing light of the Trapezium Suns. At the mid-point of Orion's sword, it shines more brilliantly than any star in the skies of most Venu worlds, yet the region is sparsely inhabited, with a handful of settled worlds and as many outposts. The Trapezium Suns batter the nebula with x-rays, gamma-rays and even more exotic forms of radiation, sweeping through the nebula, bathing the Obedient Child, and causing solar storms across Venu Space.

Most of the colony vessels that ventured into the Orion Nebula never made it to a solid world, and most of those that did perished from radiation sickness soon after. The exceptions are the few hardy worlds of the nebula, including the deep-space structure known as the Eye of Orion (page 75).

In recent years, the Dark Radiance Executive has taken an interest in the Trapezium Suns (page 89), maintaining secret research bases below the surfaces of worlds close to the nebula's heart. Dark Radiance warhawks make occasional stops at the Eye, for reasons unknown. Despite its low population, the nebula is strategic, a direct route to the Commonality's worlds.

## Paraghast

**Aspects:** *Extremely Unstable Marginal Garden World; Cannibal World on the Brink of Starvation; Testing Ground for the Dark Radiance Faithful.*

One of the more extreme of the Obedient Child worlds, Paraghast is a culture of cannibals. At some point in its distant past, there's evidence of genurgic modification: normally anthropophagy to the extent observed here would not permit the long-term survival of a population.

Paraghast is a marginal garden world with an extremely unstable environment. Violent weather systems, solar flares, devastating radiation bursts from the Obedient Child nebula, and many other hazards make it extremely difficult to get enough to eat. Society has risen above the hunter-gatherer stage to an agricultural organisation with some desperate recourses. The atrocious environment conspires to make one in every seven or eight harvests fail, inducing widespread famine. Instead of death by starvation, however, Paraghastian societies have developed ingenious ways of selecting a proportion of their population to be eaten by the rest. In extreme cases, warfare provides even more.

The Venu discovered Paraghast a generation ago. They have attempted to improve the situation, only to find the regions they supported overrun by their ravenously neighbours. The Dark Radiance Executive has assumed control, and has adopted a mostly laissez-faire attitude of preaching and evangelising, and supporting centres of Dark Radiance worship. Paraghast is viewed as a testing ground for the Dark Radiance faithful.

## Porphyry

**Aspects:** *Quarantined World of Dark Radiance Vampires.*

Discovered during the Reconquest and quarantined by the Dark Radiance Executive, Porphyry lies on the edge of the Tourmaline Radiant in an area of dimensional turbulence. Its population are "natural" Venu mutants: most appear to have one or more of the Z-Absorption, Z-Blast, or Z-Healing mutation abilities (page 29). A ruling caste also seems to have hereditary access to the Consume radiance power, which they use to feed off the lower orders.

The first Venu to discover Porphyry wanted to wipe it out as a world of abominations. The Executive are trying to understand if there's a link between the Porphyrians' apparently natural abilities and the Dark Radiance.

## Roguestar (Hurud)

Roguestar, also known as Hurud, is a runaway star system hurtling up and out of the Orion Complex. Thrown from its place in the heart of the Trapezium Suns by the same catastrophic event that created the Dark Heart, it is receding from Human

Space at tremendous velocity while the star named AE Aurigae (in the Pi-Tatl Cultural District) races in the opposite direction.

The accretion disk of Roguestar has been stripped by the star's ejection from the Trapezium. Only one planet still remains, in a tight orbit close to the bright blue O-class primary, possibly a captured rogue as it seems to be older than its parent star. Known as **Hurud** to the Venu, it resembles a polished black ball streaked with veins of quartz. It has little to no atmosphere, and its surface is almost entirely bare, scoured by interstellar dust and solar radiation. Nevertheless, Hurud is inhabited.

The crust of Hurud is riven by deep fissures leading to cavern complexes kilometres belowground. Deep enough to have breathable atmospheres, they are heated by upwellings of mineral-rich water which encrust their walls with crystals, basalts, and volcanic and sedimentary deposits. At certain depths, a t-analogue biosphere has evolved a chemosynthesis-based ecosystem. The caves are no paradise, however: burning hot, pitch black, corrosive, and oppressively humid, death comes easily here.

The **Hurudu** are as strange as their environment, with skin as smooth and as black as their planet's surface, and huge white eyes which seldom blink. They have long manipulating fingers and toes to scale the crags of their subterranean home, hunting blind exofauna to which they've been genurgically adapted in the distant past. Even now, using technology introduced by the Venu, they rarely visit—or seem interested in—the surface.

The Hurudu lie on the edge of what the Venu regard as human. In many ways they resemble the Essotair of the

Commonality's Core Worlds, although there's no record of a migration ever making it out this far. When Venu explorers first arrived in the Roguestar system, they classified the Hurudu as abominations, killing many out of sheer disgust. However, although the Hurudu had forgotten their ancient culture, they upheld a fanatical worship of one surviving artefact, a comms unit apparently from their colony ship. The unit no longer transmitted, but was receiving messages from other Scion Worlds. The Hurudu regarded these as the word of God, and each new message created upheavals in their primitive society. The Venu explorers were shocked when the abominations begged for life in the name of the God-Emperor Venu.

Roguestar's people now occupy a strange place in Venu culture. Inhuman and twisted as they are, they venerate Venu with a fanaticism that almost puts the Dark Radiance Executive to shame. They have shown a propensity for aping Venu culture, and for rapidly learning how to churn out copies of Venu tech—often to a higher level of quality than the originals. This has led to the stirrings of rudimentary industry, and even to the Hurudu being featured in educational materials circulated by the Propaganda Commissariat. Wild and savage, some Hurudu have even found places in the Ground Army, slipping through the night of alien worlds to strangle enemy sentries and commanders.

## Secorak

Secorak is a primary industrial world of the Alaruk Cluster (page 71). It was originally settled by colonists from Alaruk as a mercantile initiative by the Alaruk Mining Concern (AMC), which had identified the world as a mineral rich proto-planet on the outer edge of the system accretion disk, with an envi-

## ROGESTAR (HURUD)

**High Concept:** Lone Planet in the Great Void.

**Aspects:** Endless Caverns of Crystal Night; Fanatic Primitives in the Service of Venu; T-Analogue Biosphere; Early Adopters; Great Copiers of Tech; Bright Blue O-class Primary.

**PLANETARY TYPE:** TERRESTRIAL PLANET

**Planetary Age:** Extremely Young (-4).

**Orbit:** Inner (-2): 80AU.

**Year Length:** n/a (45y).

**Size:** Small (-2): 4500km.

**Density:** Dense (+2).

**Gravity:** Standard (+0): 1.1G.

**Day Length:** n/a (22h).

**Atmospheric Pressure:** Trace (-10) on surface; Standard (+0) at depth.

**Surface Temperature:** Warm (+1) at depth : 25°C.

**Surface Liquid:** Trace (-3) on surface; Low (-1) at depth.

**Seasonality:** n/a.

**Satellites:** None.

**Planetary Bodies:** 1.

**Habitability:** Challenging (+1).

**CIVILISATION TYPE:** REGRESSED WORLD

**Designation:** Venu Aligned (+1).

**Population:** Standard (+0): 90 million Hurudu.

**Government Type:** Occupied World (+2).

**Societal Dev:** Widespread Invasive Collective (+3).

**Openness:** Self-Critical (+1).

**Control Index:** Repressive (+4).

**Trade Index:** Low Moderate (-1).

**Tech Level:** T5 (Computer Age).

**Starport:** Basic Facility (+0); Pithead Down Groundport E-class starport.

**Culture:** Hurudu Rediscovered World culture.

ronment suited to human settlement. When the colony ships landed, they discovered that AMC had been right on the first point—Secorak is almost as rich in rare minerals as Alaruk—and utterly wrong on the second.

Despite its young age and primitive silicon-based Parallel biosphere, Secorak is home to highly aggressive exofauna named **Vazhol** (from the ancient Zayoran word for “plague”—see page 105). It’s theorised the Vazhol aren’t native to Secorak, but arrived some time in the last million years. Mass Vazhol hatchings wiped out the first colony in a matter of days, and almost destroyed the second.

Faced with the threat of extinction, the colonists retreated to a rugged highland area which was Vazhol-free and founded Secorak Prime. Since then, Secorak has been gradually terraformed, introducing oxygen-producing microbes. This has mitigated temperatures to between 0°C and 70°C. However, although this has damaged the native ecosystem, the Vazhol seem to have adapted readily. Attempts have been made to wipe them out and establish settlements outside the Prime highlands, but without success. Generations of failure have made the Secoraku fatalistic and agoraphobic. Instead of making further attempts at settling their world, they have focussed on trade with other

## SECORAK

**High Concept:** Claustrophobic City State on an Empty World.

**Aspects:** Voracious Silicon Predators; They’re Hatching From the Walls! What’s the Point in Fighting? Young Primitive Parallel Biosphere Dominated By an Invasive Species; Sickly Autumnal Flora Beneath a Purple-Blue Sky; Centre For Precision Engineering; Terraformed Air Now Breathable.

**PLANETARY TYPE:** PROTOPLANET

**Planetary Age:** Extremely Young (-4).

**Orbit:** Habitable Zone (+0): 175AU.

**Year Length:** 648y.

**Size:** Large (+2): 36000km.

**Density:** Low (-2).

**Gravity:** High (+2): 2G.

**Day Length:** Extremely Rapid (+6): 12h.

**Atmospheric Pressure:** High (+2): Oxygen (Terraformed).

**Surface Temperature:** Warm (+1): 44°C.

**Surface Liquid:** Average (+0): 50% (many lakes and small seas).

**Seasonality:** Twin Climates (+10).

**Satellites:** None.

**Planetary Bodies:** 2 (1 proto-gas giant).

**Habitability:** Challenging (+1).

**CIVILISATION TYPE:** VENU CIVILISATION

**Designation:** Scion World (+2).

**Population:** Standard (+0): 70 million.

**Government Type:** Commissariat-controlled (+4).

**Societal Dev:** Widespread Intrusive Collective (+3).

**Openness:** Guarded (+0).



**Control Index:** Surveilled (+2).

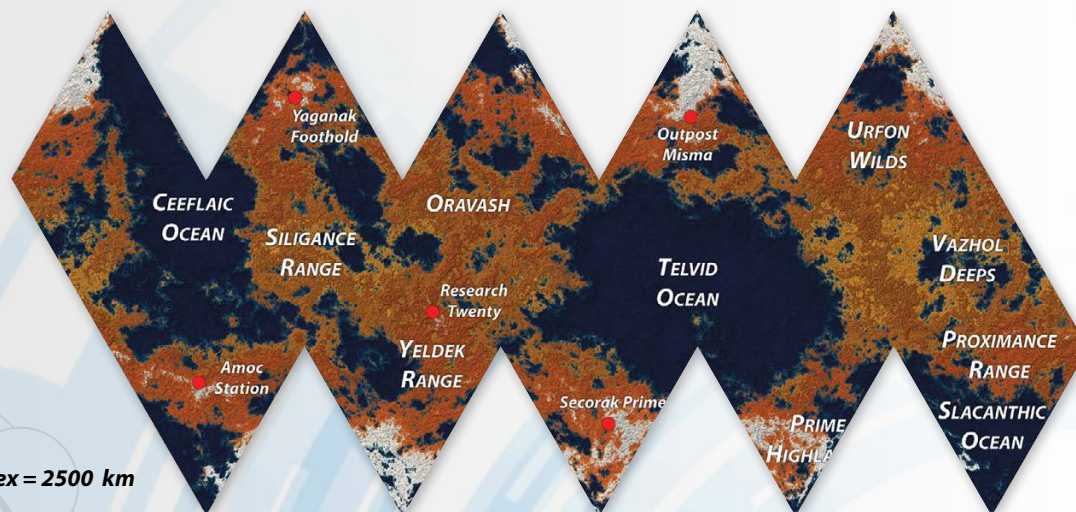
**Trade Index:** Low Moderate (-1).

**Tech Index:** T7 (First Age of Space).

**Starport:** Standard (+1): D-class starport.

**Culture:** Alaruku Culture.

Protoplanet / Venu Civilisation



Cluster worlds, becoming a centre for precision engineering.

Constrained by the unique environment, Secorak Prime is a Venu spire city, a forest of towers, levels, and atmosphere spines rising high into the atmosphere. The lower levels are built into cavernous expanses of worked-out mines, home to most of the city's heavy industry; while residential blocks rise above on huge pillars, their rooftops covered with hydroponic gardens. Industrial farmland runs from the spire city outskirts to the highland plateau's edge, where circular canals deter Vazhol wanderers.

Unlike many Cluster worlds, Secorak took readily to the arrival of Venu Fleet Command, and the city's highest peak was rapidly repurposed as a commissariat stronghold with a direct connection to the orbital shipyards above. Rumours suggest the Ground Army has investigated using Vazhol spores as weapons, but they have not yet been reported in action. Currently the world is in its long spring, and temperatures are hot but not unbearable.

## **Tenerophobe**

**Aspects:** *Always Light; Death Haunts the Shadows; The Shadow From the Stars.*

Settled during the Schism Wars, Tenerophobe is a low-G (0.7G) heavily forested moon in orbit around a gas giant in a bright A-class star system, located in the uppermost of the two Land of Light nebulae on the edge of Sector Three. Tenerophobe's parent has an extensive ring system and 23 small- to mid-sized moons, and uncountable small rocky bodies. The Tenerec mine these planetoids with a fleet of nomadic fusion ships, each belonging to a single family.

Tenerophobe's complex orbit means the world enters a "long night" every 350 years, which is historically a time of terror and upheaval and the reign of "the Shadow from the Stars". Although the world has embraced Venu culture, this belief has proven hard to eradicate, and research has suggested there may even be some truth to it. The next long night is due to start in the coming few years, and the Dark Radiance Executive has increased its Monitor presence to observe the situation. Rumour also suggests an Intercessor station is in construction somewhere in the system.

## **Thetawon**

**Aspects:** *The Intellectual Underpinning of the Venu Destiny; Ancient Culture of Refined Ratiocination; Suspicious Venu Backlash.*

Settled during the prehistoric golden age, this world in the Great Loop (page 76) is a culture which has historically valued intellectual ascendance and contemplation above all else; its "Bright Ones" appear to be a refraction of ancient Zayoran patriarchs, and the thuggish anti-intellectualism of the Venu doesn't cut much ice. Following the Reconquest, the occupation was

brutal in the face of Thetawon passive resistance; today, the Dark Radiance Executive has been increasingly relying on a more intellectualised approach to the "Imperial destiny" to bring its people into the fold—with some success, although more traditionalist Venu find all this elitist theorising to be highly suspect.

## **Timud**

**Aspects:** *Interdicted Graveyard World.*

A former garden world in Sector Seven settled during the prehistoric golden age, Timud, like all the former Scion Worlds of Sector Seven, is dead. It's a sphere of bone, covered in plains of ash and scoured by high winds. Its only structures are white ceramic pre-human structures of extreme antiquity, embedded in geological formations (other such ruins are found throughout the Graveyard Worlds).

In the expedition of IY177 (86 NCE), the Dark Radiance Executive visited here, and what they found caused them to order a withdrawal from the whole sector. The Empire doesn't even maintain a presence in system (or in any system with Graveyard Ruins).

## **Scenario Hook: Timud's Scour**

*Timud's Scour is a secret, kept by the innermost echelons of the Dark Radiance Executive. It's believed to be an ancient superweapon, something left behind by an unknown yet advanced exointelligence, an artefact which can destroy worlds, but which is almost impossible to control once unleashed. It attacks the Dark Radiance, spreading through radiance devices and engines, and perhaps other means. It reduces organic and some inorganic matter to an inert white ash.*

*The Dark Radiance Executive is extremely concerned about the implications of the Scour. The idea of an alien superweapon designed to destroy all traces of the Dark Radiance, created millions of years ago, and which can destroy whole planets, scares the hell out of them.*

*Somehow, the Commonality have got wind of the existence of the Scour. Perhaps they don't know exactly what it means yet, but they know the Dark Radiance Executive is keeping a big and dangerous secret that might threaten their very existence. The Venu Empire is on the alert for a Commonality intrusion mission aimed at uncovering this greatest of secrets. But perhaps even elements in the Dark Radiance Executive want to return to Sector Seven, to confront the danger in its lair...*



## ***The Tourmaline Radiant***

**Aspects:** *Navigational Hazard of Exotic Energy Anomalies.*

A counterpoint to the Trapezium Flux, the Radiant is plagued by gravitic disturbances and negative energy distortions, exotic matter hazards, and frequent membrane anomalies. It forms a major navigational hazard across Sectors Five and Six as well as the adjacent Successor States and Wall of Orion.

## ***Uana***

**Aspects:** *Graveyard World Blasted Clean of its Atmosphere.*

A twin planet system in the Graveyard Stars settled in the pre-historic golden age, it has since lost all of its atmosphere. Fleet Command occasionally patrols the system's outer reaches, but the Uana worlds themselves are interdicted.

## ***Venu Flame***

**Aspects:** *Dark Network in the Heart of the Glowing Flame.*

This dense cloud of ionised hydrogen is illuminated by the x-ray radiation of the supergiant Hygelac, which emits sufficient energy to render the nebula uninhabitable beyond a few small mining colonies established by the Venu since Commonality contact, which extract rare elements from a network of dense dust clouds at the heart of the nebula. As with many major nebulae in the Orion Complex, Venu Flame is clearly visible in the sky of Venu Prime.

## ***Yuzallasey***

**Aspects:** *Samizdat World of Subversive Speakers.*

This Scion World in the Great Loop of Sector Two believes in extreme personal liberty, including the right to say what the hell you like. The Venu custom of "relaxing behind closed doors" reaches epidemic proportions here, with samizdat recordings and publications throughout Yuzallaseyan society. The Dark Radiance Executive and Propaganda Commissariat have their work cut out; even after 70 years, the population still has to learn "respect".

## THE WALL OF ORION

The Venu name for the volume of space the Commonality calls the Quarantine Zone or Q-Zone, the **Wall Worlds** were conquered during the Venu advance and held during the retreat, including Beltaris (below), Cadon (below), and Solodny (page 89). The God-Emperor himself ordained these worlds should form a bulwark against Commonality invasion (hence the name), although not all worlds are held equally firmly, and some are restive, abandoned, or even in contact with the Commonality. The Dark Radiance Executive is active here: although the Venu don't have a concrete grasp of memetic engineering, they understand the value of indoctrination, re-education and control, and are determined to make the planets they seized from the Commonality into functioning Venu worlds. At the same time, they're aware that SCI Force agents constantly attempt to infiltrate and destabilise these worlds, to wrest them from Venu control, and to conduct patrols looking to extend their influence. It's a powderkeg, constantly flickering with friction and low-level conflict.

Lord Countenant Hell Mur (page 102) believes it's not enough for the Wall Worlds to acquiesce to Venu rule: they must embrace it with the same fanaticism as the Dark Radiance Executive. To this end, they are often the focus of rebuilding efforts, with the newest and most emblematic examples of Venu architecture rising in their capitals, the most cutting edge Venu warships stationed in orbit, and significant influxes of Venu workers assigned to reconstruction of infrastructure damaged in the war. Wall Worlds are "pampered" from a Venu perspective, even as they're crushed into the Venu mould.

Across the Wall of Orion, Alaruku merchant guilds, under the direction of the Tech Shield Curacy and Fleet Command, have been tasked to create a network of deep space weapons platforms, orbital plates, sensor stations, and hunter-killer mines, to create an impenetrable line of defence behind which the Venu can prepare for the war to come. At the same time, Commonality patrols constantly push these defences, looking to wrest the worlds from their control.

### ***Atrocity (Hespera II)***

**Aspects:** *Its Name Lives in Infamy; Unreasoning Slaughter Driven by Fear; Radioactive Mass Grave.*

Hespera II is a former garden world orbiting an orange-yellow main sequence star in the Bastion sector. Colonised originally by expeditions from Old Earth, its four main landmasses were ruled by a stable hegemony of hominids and xenomorphs, the largest group of which were a fur-covered dwarf species, while an australopithecine species inhabited the smaller oceanic land-mass. When a Venu fleet arrived at Hespera during the Commonality War, conflict was immediate. Disgusted by the world's embrace of abomination, the invaders turned their guns on the populace,

committing a brutal massacre near the occupation landing zone. Violence engulfed all settled areas, with Venu troopers driving the natives into the wilds. Driven by insane zeal, the Venu commander embarked upon a campaign of genocide; when she could not achieve this with her ground forces, she retreated to orbit and bombarded the surface with nucleonic weapons, sterilising most of the planet.

As news of this slaughter spread throughout the Commonality Mindscape, it quickly became known as the "Venu Atrocity". The world is now referred to simply as Atrocity, and remains uninhabitable even today.

### ***Beltaris***

Beltaris is a former Commonality world in the Wall of Orion. Contacted by the Commonality forty years before the Venu War (roughly 120 standard years ago), it was approaching Stage Four Cultural Integrity, having acquired its first makepoints and Mindscape nodes, when the Venu Invasion Fleet appeared. After a brief space battle, Beltaris was subjugated, and a Venu governor installed to plunder the Commonality tech for the Empire. Although the Venu forces withdrew past Beltaris near the end of the war, the Venu garrison fought off a half-hearted attempt at liberation with heavy civilian casualties, and Beltaris nominally became part of the so-called Successor States, although effectively remaining under Venu control.

Since the end of the war, Beltaris has been under martial law, and the Dark Radiance Executive has been an oppressive presence at all levels of government. Beltaris is almost a model Venu world: monitored, authoritarian, and fanatical. Beltarans eager to display their loyalty are easy recruits for the Venu commissariats. The Commonality has made attempts at encouraging resistance, but with limited success.

### ***Cadon***

**Aspects:** *We Wiped Out the Abominations; This World is Venu Now; Anxious Skies; What Lurks Below?*

On the edge of the March Nebula, Cadon was settled during the Schism Wars and had advanced to a democratic T8 society with a major population of humaniform synthetic intelligences accorded equal rights with the minority human population. The Venu regarded the synthetics as **andromote abominations** (page 33) and killed them by the thousand, insisting they were doing the human population a favour. After this species cleansing, Cadon was left without a functioning society; the Venu embarked upon a colonisation effort, importing Pure populations from Venu Prime to fill the menial, physical and industrial roles the synthetics had formerly filled.

Cadon is now a Wall World, albeit one at the edge of Venu Space. Natives are a minority compared to the swarms of new

immigrants. Cador has its own commissariats, Curacy Temple, and Dark Radiance Executive, but is suffering the pangs of rapid growth. Most new inhabitants had never experienced anything beyond their districts on Venu Prime before arriving on Cador, and xenophobia, culture shock, and paralysing agoraphobia are all common responses; few have even begun to come to terms with Cador's environment.

## The Dark Heart

**Aspects:** Bizarre Space-time Anomaly at the Heart of the Trapezium Suns.

The name given by the Dark Radiance Executive to the dimensional / membrane anomaly in the Trapezium Suns. Three top secret Dark Radiance research stations attempt to find out more about conditions inside the anomaly. See **Mindjammer** page 373 for more.

## BELTARIS

**High Concept:** Struggling Resistance Under an Iron Heel.

**Aspects:** Fanatical Venu Converts; Stolen Commonality Tech; Cognitive Dissonance Displacement; Three-Way Ideological Conflict; Former Inquaqualis Culture World; F-class Main Sequence Star; Recovering Population and Mass Immigration.

**PLANETARY TYPE:** INFERIOR GARDEN WORLD

**Planetary Age:** Maturing (-1).

**Orbit:** H-Zone, Inner (-1): 1.4AU.

**Year Length:** 1.8y.

**Size:** Large Standard (+1): 22000km.

**Density:** Standard (+0).

**Gravity:** High Standard (+1): 1.2G.

**Day Length:** Standard (+0): 32h.

**Atmospheric Pressure:** Standard (+1): Breathable.

**Surface Temperature:** Warm (+1): 20°C.

**Surface Liquid:** High (+1): 65%.

**Seasonality:** High (+2).

**Satellites:** 2 Planetesimals, 1 Planetoid.

**Planetary Bodies:** 7 (1 gas giant).

**Habitability:** Agreeable (+3).

**CIVILISATION TYPE:** VENU CIVILISATION

**Designation:** Wall World (+2).

**Population:** High Standard (+1): 450 million.

**Government Type:** Commissariat-controlled (+4).

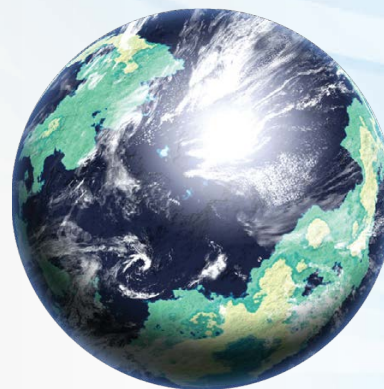
**Societal Dev:** Widespread Intrusive Collective (+3).

**Openness:** Self-Centred (-2).

**Control Index:** Repressive (+4).

**Trade Index:** No Trade (-5).

**Tech Index:** T7 (First Age of Space);



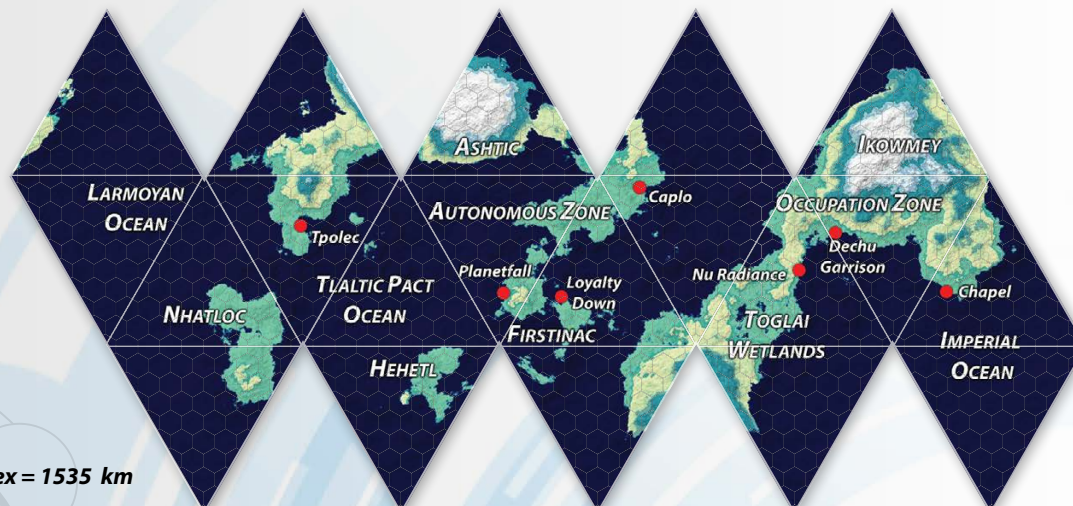
artefacts to T9.

**Starport:** Basic Facility (-1): E-class starport.

**Mindscape:** Global Mindscape (-2).

**Culture:** Rediscovered World Culture / Venu Culture.

Inferior Garden World / Venu Civilisation





## Garronax

**Aspects:** *Bigoted Pro-Venu Successor State Trying to Play Both Sides.*

A pro-Venu Successor State world on the edge of the Wall of Orion, originally a Sector Eight world, and one of the two worlds of the Kan-Garronax Negotiation, a small polity close to the Venu border which receives regular visits from Venu patrols. Its people had sporadic contact with the Commonality prior to the Reconquest, but philosophically the Negotiation is bigoted and closer to the Venu in outlook. That doesn't prevent it trying to play both sides.

## Kandraalda

**Aspects:** *Mysterious Proving Ground of the Transparent Border Initiative.*

A former Sector Eight world contacted by the Venu during the Reconquest, but not sufficiently assimilated before the Commonality drew the Venu occupation forces away. Now it fields overtures from the Sentient Alliance and the Commonality, as well as regular visits from the Venu. Increasingly, though, Kandraalda is looking towards the mysterious organisation called the **Transparent Border Initiative** for its diplomatic relations. The Venu "hierarchy" on Kandraalda is often months or even years without resupply. During the Reconquest, the world groaned under the Venu yoke.

## Kordarus

Kordarus is the primary inhabited world around Poltergeist, a low luminosity F-class star in the Commonality's Bastion sector. A battle between Commonality and Venu ships in the latter half of the Commonality War took place around Poltergeist VI, a ringless gas giant. A Venu victory, it enabled the Empire to seize Kordarus and install a military occupation force, turning the world's makepoints over to warship repair and arms production.

The Venu abandoned Kordarus during their retreat, but not before a bitter rearguard action wrought yet more destruction, vaporising the world's atmosphere plants and filling the air with contaminating pollutants, necessitating the use of breathers / purifiers. Tens of millions died. Today, burnt-out hulks drift through the inner system, some still spewing z-radiation, while many smaller bodies are little more than blasted ruins.

Although Kordarus was only under Venu occupation for 2 standard years (2.7 Kordaran years), the Empire made terrible changes, imposing draconian laws, segregating the genetically altered from the rest of the population, and instituting the worship of Venu. By the time the Commonality had re-established control, they found a society traumatised,

with deep and brutal wounds, including a violent hatred of their former oppressors and an undercurrent of xenophobic supremacy. The experience has regressed Kordarus's cultural status to Stage Two Normalisation, and Acculturation Bureau operatives are still active, working to sanction deeply-rooted toxic memes.

## Muorti

**Aspects:** *Fomentor of Unrest Deep Into Commonality Space.*

A Sector Eight world contacted briefly by the Commonality before the Reconquest, Muorti was subsequently seized by the Empire and ruthlessly shaped into a Venu world. Today it's a Wall World in the Makhta subsector of the Commonality Rim. It's a dark world orbiting a dim red dwarf, with an ecosystem of sonar-based exofauna which pose a real threat to unprotected humans. The Dark Radiance Executive coordinates the operations of specialist **radiance cells** from Muorti, smuggling weapons through the Q-Zone and funding gangsters, criminality and unrest in Commonality Space.

## Orion Minor

**Aspects:** *Heavily Armed Venu Satellite Riddled With Spies.*

The Orion Minority is a mostly pro-Venu Successor State hard up against the Commonality border in the Bastion sector. It's heavily armed, and plays fast and loose with the Venu Empire in return for its collaboration. Originally a Sector Eight world, it was neutral before the Reconquest, although culturally receptive to the Venu. Today it's a hotbed of espionage and information brokering.

## Sector Eight

**Aspects:** *Forgotten Children of the Venu; Twice Lost; We Will Reconquer Them!*

Of the Venu sectors established during the prehistoric golden age, Sector Eight lies outside the Orion Complex, at the edge of the Commonality's Rim and Bastion sectors. Colonised late, when it was clear many colonies were struggling in the inhospitable stellar nurseries, the last of the slowships set their sights back along the trail that had brought them from Old Earth, seeking suitable worlds in what is now the Rim. This proved to be a fertile volume for colonies, but one cut off from their home in Orion. Although they broadcast signals announcing their success, none made it through the chaos of Orion's nebulae.

In time, the Sector Eight colonies forgot their origins, becoming just another group of human worlds on the edge of what would become Commonality Space. Some systems, like

## KORDARUS

**High Concept:** Memetically Scarred by Venu Oppression.

**Aspects:** We Must Strike Back and Strike First! What Secrets Drift Between Our Worlds? The Venu Were Right! Atmospheric Terraforming Setback; The Enemy Within.

**PLANETARY TYPE:** MARGINAL GARDEN WORLD

**Planetary Age:** Young (-2).

**Orbit:** H-Zone, Inner (-1): 0.84AU.

**Year Length:** 0.74y.

**Size:** Small Standard (-1): 5250km.

**Density:** Standard (+0).

**Gravity:** Low Standard (-1): 0.5G.

**Day Length:** Reduced (-1): 30h.

**Atmospheric Pressure:** Low (-2): Oxygen, tainted.

**Surface Temperature:** Standard (+0): 15°C.

**Surface Liquid:** Average (+0): 50%.

**Seasonality:** Low Standard (-1).

**Satellites:** 1 Planetoid.

**Planetary Bodies:** 13 (2 gas giants).

**Habitability:** Marginal (+0).

**CIVILISATION TYPE:** HOLDOUT WORLD

**Designation:** Commonality Aligned (+0).

**Population:** Standard (+0): 95 million.

**Government Type:** Oligarchy (+1).

**Societal Dev:** Early Redistribution Model (+0).

**Openness:** Resistant (-3).

**Control Index:** Influenced (+1).

**Trade Index:** High Moderate (+1).



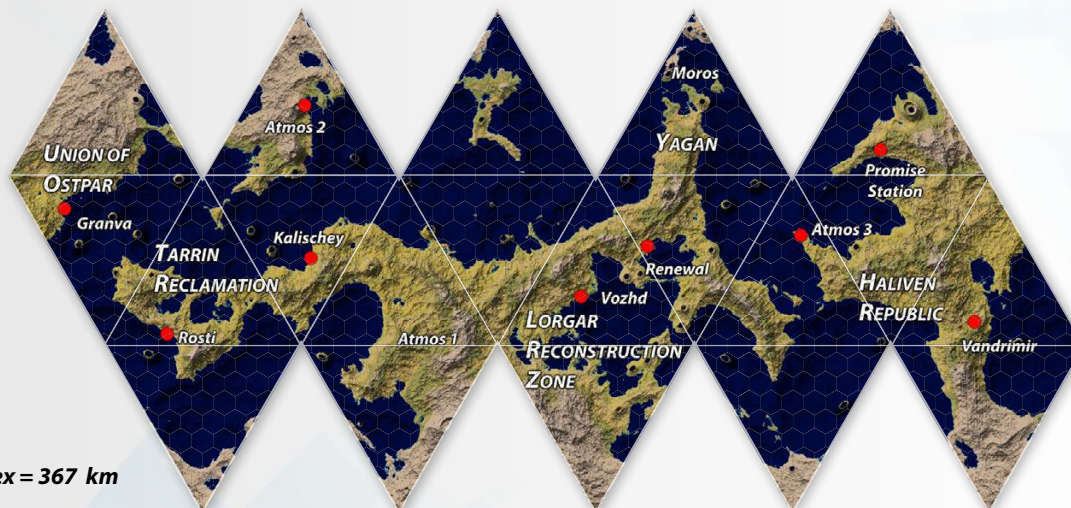
**Tech Index:** T8 (Age of Ubiquitous Intelligence).

**Starport:** Basic Facility (+0): E-class starport.

**Mindscape:** Local Node (-3).

**Culture:** Survivor World (Stage Two Normalisation).

Marginal Garden World / Holdout World



Skorys (below), Kandrada (page 87), Tochaos (page 89) and Muorti (page 87)—became Commonality worlds in the years before Venu contact, while others—like Orion Minor (page 87) and Garranax (page 87)—remained in neutral space.

To the Venu, the lost colonies of Sector Eight held a similar place to those of Sector Seven: a mysterious unknown they longed to retrieve. Venu forces moving into Commonality Space were overjoyed to find the worlds inhabited, and eager to incorporate them into the Empire. While those worlds not yet contacted by the Commonality (Orion Minor and Garranax) were receptive, the others became occupied worlds groaning

under Venu oppression. Of these, only Muorti remains inside the official Venu borders; the others are now Successor States. Recovering these worlds remains a key aim for the Venu.

### Skorys

**Aspects:** Pro-Commonality Schismatic World of Hybridised Plant People.

A former Sector Eight world, now part of the Skorys Succession in the Successor States, Skorys was a Commonality world

before the Reconquest. Originally settled by Schismatics during the Schism Wars, the colonists made extensive use of genurgy, hybridising with native biosphere exoflora called the **Calyx**. Today the Skorys are “plant people”. During the Reconquest the Venu committed terrible atrocities here, decimating the population. Since then it has rebuilt, and today is a pro-Commonality Successor State with many contacts with the Guuleman Sector. The Commonality would like to reintegrate Skorys, but fears reigniting the war. A Commonality outpost is stationed just over the border.

## **Solodny**

A pleasant world of purple-fronded saprophyte-analogues and amphibian-filled pools, Solodny lies on the wrong side of the Darradine Rim border. Conquered by the Venu early in the war, and abandoned by their retreating forces after the Battle of Styphon V, the people of Solodny were surprised to discover themselves part of the new Q-Zone, along with many planets still under Venu control.

The Venu abandonment of Solodny was chaotic and haphazard. Many troop transports failed to function, remaining trapped on the surface or left limping back from the heliopause after their dirt drives failed. With nowhere else to go, the Venu ended up in crowded ghettos, or carving out domains in the jungle depths. Friction between the natives of Solodny and their former invaders is constant, and violence endemic, almost to the point of civil war. In Solodny's cities, the Venu have formed an underclass, taking menial jobs while agitating for Solodny to join the Empire properly.

Solodny is crawling with agents from both sides of the Q-Zone border. SCI Force agents arrive under cover as New Traders or migrant passengers, while Dark Radiance Executors hide among the Venu, or use stolen faces to impersonate natives. Officially neutral, Solodny has become a bitterly contested battleground in the current cold war. Despite the efforts of Commonality memetic engineers and political agents, the Venu are fanning the flames of the anger most Solodnans feel over being left abandoned. Those who oppose the “Venufication” of Solodny find themselves blackmailed, psychically influenced, or simply replaced, by agents of the Radiance. At the same time, some former Venu soldiers, desperate to avoid a return to subjugation, actively assist Commonality agents against their own people.

## **Tochaos**

*Aspects: Neo-Shinean Pro-Commonality Successor State With the Scars of Venu Occupation.*

A former Sector Eight garden world in the Chantion Cultural Region, a Successor State currently under Commonality occupation. It was invaded and occupied by Venu forces during the War.

The Chantion Cultural Region is a neo-culture, a hybrid of Shinean and Psi Orionis colonisation efforts, and finds itself torn between the Commonality heritage and the core Psi Orionis heritage which lies beneath Venu culture. It's theorised it was a significant STL interstellar civilisation during the First Age of Space, as many worlds—including Tochaos—show its influence. During the Reconquest and occupation, the Dark Radiance Executive showed interest in the mysterious Loshar Ruins on Tochaos's polar continent, which have been closed to public access ever since the Commonality occupation began. The Commonality is conducting Stage II Normalisation of all the Chantion worlds, with a view to eventual integration.

## **The Trapezium Suns**

*Aspects: Mystery of Tortured Space; Isolated Observatories in the Deep Void; The Shields Won't Hold!*

Young bright stars in the Orion Nebula, located deep in the Q-Zone. Nine stars within 1.5LY of one another form the core of this open cluster, a scattering of accretion disks, brown dwarfs, and rogue stars. Of the Suns, the four brightest—Trapezium Alpha to Delta—spiral around a spatial disturbance the Venu call the **Dark Heart** (page 86), an apparent black hole, singularity, or other dimensional / membrane anomaly that holds the bright stars in thrall. Approaching the Dark Heart is hazardous: conditions approach the limit of the Tech Shield Curacy's protective ingenuity, and even specially-adapted vessels can only spend brief periods in the region.

Nevertheless, the Dark Radiance Executive is fascinated by the Dark Heart, which they associate with the mysterious powers of the Emperor and his radiance devices. Dark Radiance Intercessors (page 27) have detected z-radiation signatures emanating from the tortured volume of spacetime at the Trapezium's centre, and are desperate to learn more. Analyst volunteers have been installed in observation stations deep beneath the surfaces of asteroids orbiting the Trapezium, training their rudimentary instrumentation on the void. Supplied only by Dark Radiance warhawks, these stations—known as T1, T2, and T3—are beyond secret, known only to the Executive's highest echelons. At of 193 NCE, even the Commonality does not seem to know of their existence.

## SOLODNY

**High Concept:** Won the War But Lost the Peace.

**Aspects:** Thronging Underclass of Former Venu; Insidious Corruption of Venu Tyranny; Trackless Jungles of Purple Saprophytes; T-Analogue Biosphere; Contested Battleground in the Cold War; K-class Main Sequence Star.

**PLANETARY TYPE:** STANDARD GARDEN WORLD

**Planetary Age:** Aging (+1).

**Orbit:** Habitable Zone (+0): 0.6AU.

**Year Length:** 141d.

**Size:** Standard (+0): 11000km.

**Density:** Standard (+0).

**Gravity:** Standard (+0): 1G.

**Day Length:** Reduced (-1): 28h.

**Atmospheric Pressure:** Standard (+0):

Oxygen, breathable.

**Surface Temperature:** Warm (+1): 22°C.

**Surface Liquid:** High (+1): 65%.

**Seasonality:** Low (-2).

**Satellites:** 1 Planetoid, 1 Ring.

**Planetary Bodies:** 12 (2 gas giants).

**Habitability:** Agreeable (+3).

**CIVILISATION TYPE:** BALKANISED WORLD

**Designation:** Independent: Venu Presence (-1).

**Population:** High Standard (+1): 500 million (50 million Venu).

**Government Type:** Dictatorship (+0).

**Societal Dev:** Early Redistributive Model (+0).

**Openness:** Self-Centred (-2).

**Control Index:** Influenced (+1).



**Trade Index:** Extensive (+2).

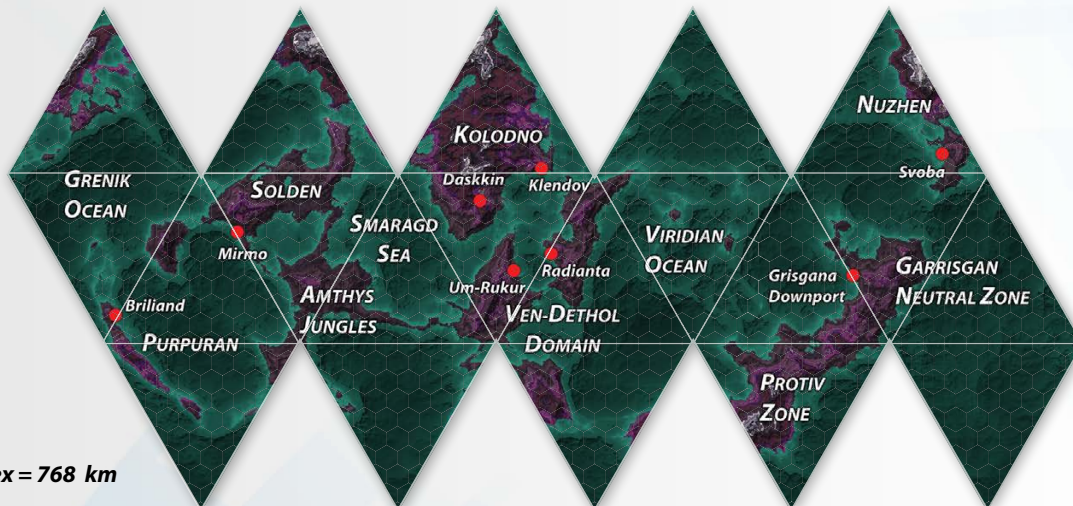
**Tech Index:** T7 (First Age of Space).

**Starport:** Standard (+1): D-class starport.

**Mindscape:** Local Node (-3).

**Culture:** Rediscovered World Culture / Venu Culture.

Standard Garden World / Balkanised World



1 hex = 768 km

# CHAPTER NINE

## CREATING VENU CHARACTERS

*Torm Gava entered the testing ground and froze. Few Badlanders ever made it into the spire cities alive, let alone into the Radiant Sanctum. Naked, his scars and mutations glowed beneath the uncanny energies wielded by the intercessors. Yet nothing could prepare him for the pain when the Bloodsense tore into his mind.*

*When it was over, the Countenancer was there, in his thoughts.*

*"Now you are one with the radiance," she said. "A perfect tool to foil the abominations."*

Creating characters from the Venu Empire follows the guidelines in **Mindjammer Chapter Three: Creating Characters**. Use the cultures, genotypes and occupations described below.

### CULTURES

Most Venu characters belong to the Venu culture, although some Scion Worlds are different enough to constitute a separate culture. Outcast characters are possible on many worlds, and some independent cultures have resisted annihilation, such as the Alaruku and Darmuku.

#### Venu

The core Venu culture is described on page 37 of *Mindjammer*, and for completeness is repeated below (with a small handful of tweaks). This is the culture for most Venu characters.

**Cultural Aspects:** *Humankind Must Be Pure! Lover of Hierarchy; Domineering; Unremitting Foe of the Commonality; Secretive and Fatalistic.*

**Genotypes:** Non-Commonality, Pure, Mutant.

**Demeanour:** Arrogant, domineering, and devious.

**Language:** Venu; some may speak Universal as a second language.

**Tech Index:** T7 (First Age of Space).

**Occupations:** Dark Radiance, Tech Curator, Trooper.

**Equipment:** Purifier mask, disruptor, armour.

#### Badlander

The Badlander culture comprises mostly mutants cast out from Venu society who survive in the contaminated wilderness. Not all mutants breed true, so some Badlanders are unmutated. The Venu consider them all abominations.

**Cultural Aspects:** *Hysterical Independence; Preemptive Attack; Deranged Outcast; Self-loathing Overcompensation.*

**Genotypes:** Mutant; some Non-Commonality Humans.

**Demeanour:** Brutalised, desperate, and unhinged.

**Language:** Tribal tongue; Venu.

**Tech Index:** Maximum T5 (Computer Age), but frequently T2-T3.

**Occupations:** Barbarian, Horde Warrior, Scavenger.

**Equipment:** Purifier masks, archaic armour and weapons.

#### Scion Worlder

On some Scion Worlds, especially those colonised during the prehistoric golden age which have only been contacted since the Reconquest, the native culture hasn't been destroyed or replaced by the Venu culture. Scion World cultures vary widely, but share many features. Generally, if a Scion World culture has survived, it's because it has something the Venu want, fear, or respect.

**Cultural Aspects:** *Ancient Orionisian Culture; Cultural Confidence; Complex Dialogue With Venu Values; Schismatic Secrets.*

**Genotypes:** Non-Commonality Human (Pure, Mutant).

**Demeanour:** Hybrid styles, physically different from Venu body language and body norms.

**Language:** Venu; possible local language.  
**Tech Index:** T7 or below.  
**Occupations:** Conciliator, Monitor, Venu Citizen.  
**Equipment:** Purifier mask, Venu-style clothing, slavishly adopted to local norms.

## Alaruk

The Alaruk culture of merchant houses belonging to the Alaruku genotype, it is distinctive from the Venu culture and yet survives because its industry and industriousness is essential to the Venu war machine.

**Cultural Aspects:** *Industrious; Moral Blindness; Commerce Is King.*

**Genotypes:** Alaruku (page 93).

**Demeanour:** Dogged refusal to see the dark side of the Empire, often with an enforced gaiety and brittle optimism.

**Language:** Venu.

**Tech Index:** T7 (First Age of Space).

**Occupations:** Combine Technocrat, Combine Trooper, Tech Curator.

**Equipment:** Lavish and complex clothing in combine colours; gear redesigned for the Aluruku stature.

## Darmak

The Darmak culture has lost most of the technological knowledge it once had, and is now one of nomadic herders. Since the end of the Commonality War, Darmaks have been pushed into marginal areas or forced to become near-slave labourers in the open-cast mines. An enterprising few have fled offworld, and are now found as sharp-shooters, trackers, and bounty hunters.

**Cultural Aspects:** *Don't Feel the Cold; Fallen From Tech Greatness; Low Tech Nomad Herders; We Have Been Pushed To the Edge And There Is Nowhere Else To Go.*

**Genotypes:** Non-Commonality Human.

**Demeanour:** Silent, even taciturn; often a burning resentment of oppression.

**Language:** Venu; Darmaku tribal language behind closed doors.

**Tech Index:** T2.

**Occupations:** Assassin, Barbarian, Bootstrapper.

**Equipment:** Clothing in traditional tribal / clan colours.

## Obedient

A subculture from the Obedient Child worlds, Obedients are hard-working, good with tech, and eager to leave their hard-scrabble worlds. They're also grim and dour.

**Cultural Aspects:** *Hard-working; Dour and Grim; Masochistic Survivor Guilt; I Swore the Vow of Obedience To Leave the Harsh World That Gave Me Birth.*

**Genotypes:** Non-Commonality Human.

**Demeanour:** Often puritanical or even monastic; quietly yet intensely dedicated.

**Language:** Venu, usually with a heavy accent.

**Tech Index:** T7 or below.

**Occupations:** Bootstrapper, Conciliator, Tech Curator.

**Equipment:** Extremely well kept Venu gear, incorporating purifier and often a commissariat uniform or armour.

## Wall Worlder

Wall Worlds are Venu Space versions of Rediscovered Worlds (*Mindjammer* page 35). Unlike the Commonality, the Venu Empire doesn't respect the cultures it finds. If a culture is deemed an abomination, the Empire destroys it; otherwise, it's occupied and forcibly integrated into Venu society, often at great cost.

**Cultural Aspects:** *Cultural Concussion; Cognitive Dissonance; Cultural Neuroses; Inured to Brutal Violence.*  
*Genotypes: Non-Commonality Human.*

**Demeanour:** Submissive, traumatised and in shock; many will do anything to survive.

**Language:** Poor-quality Venu; local language spoken furtively, often under threat of violence or death.

**Tech Index:** T7 or below; occasionally fading vestiges of T8 or even T9.

**Occupations:** Fringe Worlder, Monitor, Venu Subject.

**Equipment:** Local equipment and clothing; wearing and using Venu clothing and gear is a status marker.

## GENOTYPES

There are fewer genotypes in Venu Space than in Commonality Space. There are no synthetics and few xenomorphs. Worlds of synthetic or xenomorph populations may be out there waiting to be discovered, or may exist among the Wall Worlds which haven't yet been wiped out by the Venu, but these are exceptions.

## Pure

**Mandatory spend:** 1 aspect

Most Venu belong to the **Pure** genotype, either born on Venu Prime or recently descended from its colonists. They have dark hair and skin and distinctive reddish eyes. They're similar to non-Commonality humans, but with the characteristics described on page 13 and below. They usually have a Habituated Gravity of Low Standard (-1): 0.86G.

**Chronological Age:** 21-55.

**Apparent Age:** Young Adult to Mature Adult.

**Typical Occupations:** Combine Technocrat, Tech Curator, Venu Citizen.

**Mandatory Extras:** None.



**PURE**



**MUTANT**



**ALARUKU**

**Genotype Aspects:** You *must* pick the following:

**SPECIES HOMOGENEITY**

*The Venu Pure look physically very alike.*

**Invoke:** To blend in with a crowd; to be able to tell other Venu apart by small signals other genotypes may miss.

**Compel:** To become nervous or disconcerted around other genotypes; to have difficulty standing out in a crowd of your peers.

**Genotype Extras:** None.

## Mutant

**Mandatory spend:** 1 aspect

Once you—or your ancestors—were one of the Venu Pure. Now you’ve been changed, and the Pure will no longer accept you as one of their own.

**Chronological Age:** 18-30.

**Apparent Age:** Young adult to mature adult.

**Typical Occupations:** Dark Radiance Executor, Dark Radiance Protector, Horde Warrior.

**Genotype Aspects:** You *must* pick just one of the following:

**ABOMINATION!**

*You’re an outcast mutant living among the hordes in the Venu Badlands.*

**Invoke:** To be terrifying to the Pure; to survive in the Badlands; to show or gain solidarity with other mutants.

**Compel:** To give away your true nature when you’re trying to hide it; to be physically or mentally disadvantaged by a mutation defect.

**SECRET SHAME**

*You’re a loyal Venu who has been mutated by contact with z-radiation or the Dark Radiance.*

**Invoke:** To be intimidating to others; to draw on your mutant nature for a physical, mental, or social edge; to show or gain solidarity with other mutants.

**Compel:** To be overcome with shame because of your mutant nature; to be physically, mentally, or socially disadvantaged in Venu society.

**Genotype Extras:** You may pick one or more mutation abilities (page 27). If you have a Dark Radiance aspect (see page 30), you may also pick one or more radiance powers (page 29), and you must select a Dark Radiance Executive occupation (page 96).

## Alaruku

**Mandatory spend:** 2 aspects, 1 stunt

The Alaruku are red-skinned pale-eyed dwarves, muscular and twice the mass of a standard Venu. Completely hairless, lacking even eyebrows and eyelashes, they have pale-grey on white eyes. Genurgically more temperature tolerant than standard humans, the Venu would absolutely class them as abominations if they discovered them now; as it is, they’ve been in contact for centuries, and are a key part of the Venu industrial effort.

**Chronological Age:** 21-65.

**Apparent Age:** Young Adult to Mature Adult.

**Typical Occupations:** Combine Technocrat, Combine Trooper, Tech Curator.

**Mandatory Extras:** Small\*.

**Genotype Aspects:** You must pick at least one of the following:

**MASSIVE**

*On a 1G world you weigh about 160kg; you’re small, but incredibly wide and muscular.*

**Invoke:** To resist physical damage; to be able to lift massive objects; to look intimidating.

**Compel:** To be too big to get into a small space, or even a conventional one; to be clumsy; to be regarded as “ugly” by virtue of your robust features.

**Genotype Extras:** Highly-adapted (Temperature)\*.

## Eyrie

**Mandatory spend:** 1 aspect, 3 stunts

Natives of the Eye of Orion, these are low-grav (Habituated Grav Low (-2): 0.5G), oxygen rich, light-boned, big-headed, humanoids, uncomfortable in standard-G. Some have genurgic wings, and have a far harder time of it in Venu Space; they'd doubtless be destroyed as abominations, if they didn't inhabit an artificial world created by a powerful yet unknown exointelligence.

**Chronological Age:** 18-40.

**Apparent Age:** Young Adult to Mature Adult.

**Typical Occupations:** Merchant, Starship Pilot, Tech Curator.

**Mandatory Extras:** None.

**Genotype Aspects:** You must pick the following:

### LIGHT-BONED

*Even if you change your habituated gravity, your genurgic heritage runs through your body.*

**Invoke:** To be light and agile; to jump, leap, or fly expertly.

**Compel:** To have brittle bones; to be too lightweight; to damage easily; to be regarded as an abomination by the Venu.

**Genotype Extras:** Wings.



HURUDU



EYRIE

## Hurudu

**Mandatory spend:** 3 aspects, 2 stunts

The subterranean night people of Hurud / Roguestar, Hurudu have smooth, black skin, white eyes, and long manipulating fingers and toes. They're good at scaling rocks, hunting, and dexterously copying items of tech. They have IR vision and acute hearing, and are slightly smaller than humans, with habituated gravity of Standard (+0): 1.1G. They're fanatical worshippers of the God-Emperor, which preserves them from the fate of abominations, and make good stealthy assassins and sharpshooters.

**Chronological Age:** 18-45.

**Apparent Age:** Young Adult to Mature Adult.

**Typical Occupations:** Assassin, Dark Radiance Executive, Tech Curator.

**Mandatory Extras:** Hypersense (Hearing), Hypersense (Sight).

**Genotype Aspects:** You must pick the following:

### QUADRIDEXTROUS

*You have manipulating feet and toes, and are both agile and dextrous.*

**Invoke:** To be good at climbing, physically manipulating objects (including tech).

**Compel:** To stand out in a crowd; be regarded as an abomination by the Venu; to find conventional tech limiting and frustrating to use.

**Genotype Extras:** Adaptation (Subterranean), Expert Climber.

## OCCUPATIONS

Many *Mindjammer* occupations and builds can be used for Venu characters. This section provides new, specifically Venu occupations. Note that the Venu Trooper, Venu Technopriest, and Venu Commissar occupation builds from the *Mindjammer* core book are updated below as the Ground Trooper and Tech Curator builds and the new Dark Radiance Executive occupation.

### NEW CIVILIAN BUILD: VENU IMPERIAL CITIZEN

Living the charmed life of the Pure, the Venu Imperial Citizen is propagandised and obedient to the God-Emperor, knowing they belong to the true chosen people, destined to cleanse and rule the cosmos.

**High Concept:** *Effortlessly Judgemental Chosen People.*

**Trouble:** *Anti-Intellectual.*

**Skills:** Bureaucracy, Deceive, Resources.

**Stunts:** Cog in the Machine, Cool Customer, Grease the Wheels.

**Enhancements:** None.

**Equipment:** Suitable to function; dwelling and access to Spire City facilities.



### NEW CIVILIAN BUILD: VENU SUBJECT

You're one of the toiling masses on occupied Scion and Wall Worlds. Perhaps one day your children may be citizens!

**High Concept:** *Opressed and Toiling Masses; Subject of a Harsh Occupation.*

**Trouble:** *Plagued by Injustice.*

**Skills:** Bureaucracy, Deceive, Will.

**Stunts:** Fast Talk, Law, Sleep When You're Dead.

**Enhancements:** None.

**Equipment:** Poor quality and often hand-me-down; inostentatious; limited access to facilities.

### NEW DOWNTechER BUILD: HORDE WARRIOR

You're one of the ravening abomination hordes whose stories terrify Venu children at night. Life is harsh, violent, and unfair, and so are you.

**High Concept:** *Raveng Mutant Warrior.*

**Trouble:** *Violence Is Always the Solution.*

**Skills:** Melee Combat, Physique, Provoke.

**Stunts:** Killing Stroke, Provoke Violence, Tough As Nails.

**Enhancements:** May have mutation abilities.

**Equipment:** Crude and lethal-looking archaic weapons and armour, primitive purifier mask, tattoos and ritual tribal scarification.

### NEW MERCHANT BUILD: COMBINE TECHNOCRAT

You're a scion from one of the great combines, used to running the vital and massive industries—often encompassing whole worlds—which keep the Empire running.

**High Concept:** *Illuminati Technocrat.*

**Trouble:** *Backstabbing Is a Way of Life.*

**Skills:** Bureaucracy, Contacts, Resources.

**Stunts:** Executive Officer, Insider, Money Is Power.

**Enhancements:** May have cybernetic enhancements.

**Equipment:** Combine as an organisation extra; access to a *Chatelaine*-class combine stronghold.

### NEW MERCHANT BUILD: COMBINE TRADER

You work for the combine technocrats on small-scale agile trade and courier runs. You grease the wheels of commerce that keep the whole Empire going.

**High Concept:** *Grizzled Combine Trader Captain.*

**Trouble:** *Orders From On High; Never the Whole Picture.*

**Skills:** Bureaucracy, Contacts, Resources.

**Stunts:** Customs Negotiator, Finder, Starship Trader.

**Enhancements:** May have cybernetic enhancements.

**Equipment:** Access to a *Caravan*-class combine trader.



### NEW MILITARY BUILD: GROUND TROOPER

The military masses, fanatically loyal to the God-Emperor, who hurl themselves into battle without heed for personal safety. Many ground troops are mutated by the radioactive gear they use; the more fortunate who survive with functional mutation abilities may be transferred to the Dark Radiance Executive.

**High Concept:** *Faceless Fanatic; Mutant Trooper.*

**Trouble:** *Ruled By Fear; Gear Leaks Z-Radiation.*

**Skills:** Physique, Provoke, Ranged Combat.

**Stunts:** Armour of Fear, Coolness Under Fire, Tough As Nails.

**Enhancements:** Cybernetic and armour enhancements.

Some ground troopers may be from the mutant genotype and have mutation abilities or even radiance powers.

**Equipment:** Disruptor rifle, *Sliver*-class combat armour, Strova doser, purifier mask.

### NEW MILITARY BUILD: MOTE COORDINATOR

You're a member of Motile Command in charge of remote operations of one or more motes.

**High Concept:** *Far-Eyed Mote Controller.*

**Trouble:** *In Another World.*

**Skills:** Pilot, Technical, Will.

**Stunts:** Collateral Damage, Fortress of the Will, Ramming Speed!

**Enhancements:** Mote Control Override, Mote Interface.

**Equipment:** Disruptor pistol, status suit, maybe mote extra.

### NEW SCI-TECH BUILD: TECH CURATOR

Overstretched and often out of your depth, you understand how to operate and maintain Venu tech, but usually not why. Nevertheless, the rank-and-file are in awe of your powers.

**High Concept:** *Protector of the Tech Commandments; Sinister Tech Shield Curator.*

**Trouble:** *Poor Technological Understanding; Paranoid.*

**Skills:** Deceive, Resources, Technical.

**Stunts:** Cool Customer, I'm Good For It, Ratiocinate (using Technical).

**Enhancements:** Cybernetic and armour enhancements.

**Equipment:** Purifier mask, technical kit, status suit, disruptor pistol.

### NEW SPACER BUILD: BRAINJACK

Sooner or later you're going to end up permanently wired into your brainjack cocoon, your mind gone. Just now, though, you have a brief butterfly life of insight and status.

**High Concept:** *I Have Sailed the Seas of 2-Space.*

**Trouble:** *Incremental Brain Damage.*

**Skills:** Pilot, Technical, Will.

**Stunts:** Sleep When You're Dead, Starship Engineer, Starship Pilot.

**Enhancements:** Overclocking (Mental).

**Equipment:** Status suit, brainjack cocoon, starship as extra.

### NEW SPACER BUILD: FLEET COMMAND CREW

You're one of the command crew of a capital ship or a ship of the line, piloting, navigating, maintaining, or otherwise operating the ship and its systems.

**High Concept:** *Grim and Determined Bridge Crew.*

**Trouble:** *Motivated By Fear.*

**Skills:** Investigate, Notice, Ranged Combat.

**Stunts:** Gunner, Sensor Analysis, Sensor Scan.

**Enhancements:** Enhanced Sensor Package.

**Equipment:** Capital ship or ship of the line as an extra. Status suit, purifier mask, disruptor pistol, Pexil Dispenser.

### NEW SPACER BUILD: SHIP CAPTAIN

In smaller ships it might just be you and the brainjack. In any case, you often take on an n-pilot role.

**High Concept:** *Steely-Eyed Ship Captain.*

**Trouble:** *The Only Sane Person Flying the Ship.*

**Skills:** Pilot, Rapport, Technical.

**Stunts:** Overseer, Starship Engineer, Starship Pilot.

**Enhancements:** Cybernetic and armour enhancements.

**Equipment:** A starship as an extra. Disruptor pistol, status suit, purifier mask.

### New Occupation: The Dark Radiance Executive

The Dark Radiance Executive and its members are discussed in **Chapter Five: The Dark Radiance**. All members have either **mutation abilities** (page 27) or radiance powers (page 29), or both, and must also have a *Venu Mutant*-type aspect, or a *Dark Radiance*-type aspect, or both.

### SAMPLE BUILD: CONCILIATOR

Preachers and educators in civilian populations away from the front line, the Conciliator's job is to make people accept the ways and powers of the Dark Radiance.

**High Concept:** *Patient Propagandist of the Dark Radiance.*

**Trouble:** *Cynical Psychology.*

**Skills:** Deceive, Provoke, Rapport.

**Stunts:** Best Foot Forward, Lies Upon Lies, Okay Fine!

**Enhancements:** One or more radiance powers; may also have mutation abilities and cybernetic enhancements.

**Equipment:** Disruptor pistol, purifier mask, status suit.

### SAMPLE BUILD: EXECUTOR

The Executor's job is to coordinate the activities of the Dark Radiance Executive, and to spearhead actions against subversives, mutants, enemy agents, and other abominations.

**High Concept:** *Terrifying Inquisitor.*

**Trouble:** *Who Watches the Watchers?*

**Skills:** Intrusion, Provoke, Will.

**Stunts:** Fortress of the Will, Torturer, You're Never Safe.

**Enhancements:** One or more radiance powers; may also have mutation abilities and cybernetic enhancements.

**Equipment:** Loyalty probe, pain inducer, abomination sensor, *Torturer*-class combat armour, disruptor pistol, purifier mask.

### SAMPLE BUILD: INTERCESSOR

The Intercessor's job is to research the phenomenon of the Dark Radiance and learn more about it. They are scientists operating sensors and running essential analyses.

**High Concept:** *Amoral Scientist.*

**Trouble:** *Forces Humankind Was Not Meant To Understand.*

**Skills:** Rapport, Science, Technical.

**Stunts:** Dark Radiance Engineer, Overseer, Specialist (Dark Radiance).

**Enhancements:** One or more radiance powers; may also have mutation abilities and cybernetic enhancements.

**Equipment:** Radiance detector, status suit, purifier mask.

### SAMPLE BUILD: MONITOR

Specially recruited irregulars from the general population: civilians, members of other commissariats, and so on. They're institutionalised spies, thought police, and informers. Uniquely for the Dark Radiance Executive, a *Venu Mutant*- or *Dark Radiance*-type aspect is not a prerequisite for joining, but most develop one in time anyway. Monitors often transfer to other branches of the Dark Radiance Executive—particularly the Conciliators and Executors.

**High Concept:** *Treacherous Spy.*

**Trouble:** *No One Can Be Trusted.*

**Skills:** Deceive, Intrusion, Provoke.

**Stunts:** Lies Upon Lies, Okay Fine! You're Never Safe.

**Enhancements:** May have one or more radiance powers or mutation abilities.

**Equipment:** As cover when under cover; otherwise, status suit, mask, disruptor pistol, abomination sensor.

### SAMPLE BUILD: PROTECTOR

Most Venu believe the Dark Radiance Guard is made up of Venu mutants, and the Executive makes a show of elevating the best Venu mutant soldiers from the ranks. However, while many do take this route, many Protectors are Venu who have been voluntarily exposed to a radiance device (page 49), but have survived and developed only mutations instead of full-blown radiance powers.

**High Concept:** *Terrifyingly Violent Mutant Guard.*

**Trouble:** *Psychopathic.*

**Skills:** Physique, Provoke, Ranged Combat.

**Stunts:** Armour of Fear, Coolness Under Fire, Take the Blow.

**Enhancements:** One or more mutation abilities, cybernetic enhancements.

**Equipment:** Gold *Aegis*-class Marauder Armour with black trim, disruptor rifle, Strova doser.



# CHAPTER TEN

## VENU ADVERSARIES

*Vanax Slajor kneeled before his master, his hands encased in glistening black clasped in supplication.*

*"Gravelord," he began, "I believe the abominations know about the force which you have contacted. I believe they are in contact with it already."*

*The air seemed to freeze around the environment suit of Gravad-Guul, a towering patch of shadow thicker than the swirling mists of the Boneship. The voice which replied was a hiss which echoed in Slajor's mind.*

*"The Executive must not know... Arrange for a meeting with this... instrumentality. Show them what the quantum zero entity has done in Sector Seven... Read their thoughts. Have they any way to communicate with it? To even resist its powers...? We must know, before we strike..."*

The Venu Empire twists and turns in cycles of conspiracy and intrigue. Its potentates murder one another for hegemony while it tries to resist the subtle ministrations of the Common-

ality, and its borders tremble before threats barely understood. Even the most humble Venu grows up beset by adversaries.

## INTELLIGENT ADVERSARIES

### ZEEMA ZEEM, DARK RADIANCE CONCILIATOR

*Zeema Zeem seems almost reasonable in her exhortations to the Pure to follow the Dark Radiance, but there's a gleam in her eye and her every word is a knife in the mind of her listener. She has risen quickly to the upper echelons of the Conciliator subcom, and her power to sway the masses is influencing the policy of the Executive itself.*

**Physical Stress:** 1 2 3 4

**Mental Stress:** 1 2 3 4

**Credit Stress:** 1 2 3

**Consequences:** 1 mild + 1 moderate

**Scale:** Medium (+0)

**Aspects:** Patient Propagandist; Cynical Psychology; You Dare Not Resist!

**Skills:** Superb (+5) Provoke, Rapport; Great (+4) Deceive, Will; Good (+3) Empathy, Physique, Ranged Combat; Fair (+2) Contacts, Knowledge, Notice, Resources.

#### STUNTS

◆ **Lies Upon Lies:** +2 create advantage bonus vs target who has already believed your lies this session.

◆ **Okay Fine!** Use Provoke instead of Empathy to learn aspects.

◆ **Radiance Power: Evocation Control:** +2 Provoke bonus to force a subject to behave in a certain way.

◆ **Radiance Power: Evocation Read:** +2 Provoke bonus vs Will to create advantages representing target's thoughts.

#### EXTRAS

★ **Disruptor Pistol:** +0 damage, range 1; Radioactive, Recoilless.

★ **Status Suit:** Armour:1; Face Mask, Showy, Vac-Sealed.

Supporting NPC

## COUNTENANCER ASHARAK-UM, EXECUTOR-GENERAL OF THE DARK RADIANCE EXECUTIVE

A sinister individual who terrifies everyone who meets him, Asharak-Um is tall, cloaked, with a scintillating black face mask, hiding his mutation and the stigmata of his radiance powers. He carries out the will of the Emperor and the Dark Radiance with a devotion matched only by his ruthlessness.

**Physical Stress:** 1 2 3 4

**Mental Stress:** 1 2 3 4 **Credit Stress:** 1 2 3

**Consequences:** 2 mild + 1 moderate

**Scale:** Medium (+0)

**Aspects:** Devoted Servant of the Dark Radiance; The Scars of My Allegiance; Terrifying Aura.

**Skills:** Superb (+5) Provoke, Will; Great (+4) Melee, Rapport; Good (+3) Intrusion, Physique; Fair (+2) Contacts, Deceive, Resources; Average (+1) Bureaucracy, Notice, Science.

### STUNTS

- ◆ **Armour of Fear:** Use Provoke to defend vs Melee and Unarmed Combat until damaged.
- ◆ **Fortress of the Will:** +2 Will bonus to defend vs Provoke and Will damage / control attacks.
- ◆ **Overseer:** 1/scene, make an overcome action to generate a pool of shift points you can redistribute.
- ◆ **Radiance Power: Control:** Will vs Will contest to control target's actions jerkily and clumsily.
- ◆ **Radiance Power: Mental Blast:** Will vs Will attacks to cause mental stress damage.

### EXTRAS

- ★ **Cyberweapon: Energy Mace:** As aspect; +4 damage, range 0; Knockback.
- ★ **Disruptor Pistol:** +0 damage, range 1; Radioactive, Recoilless.
- ★ **Loyalty Probe:** +2 Provoke attack vs Will; consequences reveal loyalty.
- ★ **Mutation Ability: Z-Absorption:** Good (+3) Z-Absorption skill to create advantages to absorb and transfer z-radiation.
- ★ **Organisation Extra:** The Dark Radiance Executive: Fair (+2) Provoke, Resources; Average (+1) Assimilate, Investigate.
- ★ **Pain Inducer:** +2 bonus to Provoke attacks causing mental stress damage. Use may traumatise the attacker too.
- ★ **Torturer-class Combat Armour:** Armour:1, +2 defend bonus; Unstable Dispersion Field, Face Mask, Showy.

## HARGALAT, PROTECTOR (DARK RADIANCE GUARD)

Hargalat is a cyborg Venu mutant, and a fanatic sworn to protect the Dark Radiance. He wears gold Venu marauder armour with black trim, and serves in a squad of 5 guard troopers.

**Physical Stress:** 1 2 3 4 **Mental Stress:** 1 2 3 4  
**Credit Stress:** 1 2

**Consequences:** 2 mild + 1 moderate

**Scale:** Medium (+0)

**Aspects:** Fanatical Cyborg Protector; Hideous Scars; Sacrifice for the Dark Radiance.

**Skills:** Great (+4) Provoke, Ranged Combat; Good (+3) Physique, Will; Fair (+2) Athletics, Notice; Average (+1) Deceive, Unarmed Combat.

### STUNTS

- ◆ **Covering Fire:** On successful Ranged Combat attack, also create Fair (+2) opposition against movement in affected zone.
- ◆ **Provoke Violence:** Create advantage on an opponent, and invoke it to be the opponent's next target.
- ◆ **Take the Blow:** Use Physique to defend against bashes with Unarmed or Melee Combat.

### EXTRAS

- ★ **Aegis-class Marauder Armour:** Armour:2, +2 defend bonus; Strength Boost, Z-Radiation Bleed.
- ★ **Disruptor Pistol:** +0 damage, range 1; Radioactive, Recoilless.
- ★ **Mutation Ability: Enhanced Stamina:** +1 mild consequence vs stamina-related stress.
- ★ **Mutation Ability: Pain Resistance:** +2 bonus on rolls to resist pain.



## KARGA TOR, COUNTENANT PROTECTOR (DARK RADIANCE GUARD LEADER)

Karga Tor leads a section of 25 Dark Radiance Protectors. She's a cyborg with several mutations, and wears black marauder armour with gold trim. Her battle rage is infamous throughout the Protectors, only just held in check. Many say her fury is really fear at the things she has seen in the Radiant service...

**Physical Stress:** 1 2 3 4 **Mental Stress:** 1 2 3 4

**Credit Stress:** 1 2

**Consequences:** 3 + 1 mild

**Scale:** Medium (+0)

### ASPECTS

**High Concept:** Fanatical Dark Radiance Guard Leader.

**Trouble:** Battle Rage.

**Other Aspects:** The Commonality Is Weak; Z-Radiation Leak; There Are Things So Terrifying...

### SKILLS

Superb (+5): Ranged Combat.

Great (+4): Provoke.

Good (+3): Physique, Will.

Fair (+2): Notice, Ranged Combat.

Average (+1): Ranged Combat, Unarmed Combat.

### STUNTS

✦ **Armour of Fear:** Use Provoke to defend vs Melee and Unarmed Combat until damaged.

✦ **Coolness Under Fire:** Use Ranged Combat to defend against ranged physical attacks.

### EXTRAS

★ **Aegis-class Marauder Armour:** Armour:2, +2 defend bonus; Strength Boost, Z-Radiation Bleed.

★ **Disruptor Rifle:** +2 damage, range 3; Radioactive, Recoilless.

★ **Mutation Ability: Z-Absorption:** Great (+4) Z-Absorption skill to create advantages to absorb and transfer z-radiation.

★ **Mutation Ability: Z-Blast:** Attack with Melee or Ranged Combat; weapon:2, range 0, Concealable Weapon, Z-Radiation; or weapon:3, range 1, Full Auto if you have a Charged With Z-Radiation aspect.

★ **Mutation Ability: Z-Healing:** In the presence of a Z-Radiation aspect, spend a fate point to remove a mild consequence, or a moderate consequence if you have a Charged With Z-Radiation aspect.

★ **Rapid Response:** Proximity and reaction alarms in suit exoskeleton; +2 bonus to rolls where reaction time is a factor.

★ **Slaved Cyberweapons:** Give you a Multi-Attack ability; roll one Superb (+5) attack, other attack skills provide a +3 teamwork bonus, divide result among up to 4 targets.

★ **Strova Dispenser:** +2 attack bonus on blindly violent attacks, and a -2 defend penalty.

★ **Structural Reinforcement:** Sustain 1 additional mild consequence.

Major NPC

## GROUND TROOPERS

5 AVERAGE (+1) MINOR NPCs

This is a typical squad of Ground Army troopers. They carry disruptor rifles and wear Venu trooper armour, and may be hiding z-radiation burns and even mutations beneath.

**Stress:** □ □ □ □ □

**Scale:** Medium (+0)

**Aspects:** Fanatical Venu Troopers; Leaking Z-Radiation.

**Skills:** Average (+1) Ranged Combat (+4 teamwork bonus).

## MUTANT MARINES

5 GOOD (+3) MINOR NPCs

This is a crack squad of 5 Venu marines. They have higher morale and better gear than standard Ground Army troopers, and often serve on Warhawks and other Fleet Command vessels. They've been affected by z-radiation and may have mutation abilities.

**Stress:** 1 2 3 4 5

**Scale:** Medium (+0)

**Aspects:** Crack Trooper Squad; Mutated.

**Skills:** Good (+3) Ranged Combat; Fair (+2) Athletics; Average (+1) Provoke (+4 teamwork bonus).

Minor NPCs

## WARDOG

A deranged psychopathic killer and leader of a squad of ground troopers or mutant marines. Wardogs often have mutation abilities, and are terrifying opponents.

**Physical Stress:** 1□<sup>2</sup>□<sup>3</sup>□<sup>4</sup> **Mental Stress:** 1□<sup>2</sup>□  
**Credit Stress:** 1□<sup>2</sup>□

**Consequences:** 1 mild + 1 moderate

**Scale:** Medium (+0)

**Aspects:** Hideous Mutant Wardog; Blinded by the Urge to Kill; I Killed My Way to Squad Leader.

**Skills:** Great (+4) Provoke, Ranged Combat; Good (+3) Notice, Physique; Fair (+2) Athletics, Unarmed Combat; Average (+1) Stealth, Will.

### STUNTS

✦ **Coolness Under Fire:** Use Ranged Combat to defend against ranged physical attacks.

✦ **Provoke Violence:** Create advantage on an opponent, and invoke it to be the opponent's next target.

✦ **Tough As Nails:** 1/session, pay a fate point to reduce moderate physical consequence to mild, or erase a mild.

### EXTRAS

★ **Disruptor Rifle:** +2 damage, range 3; Radioactive, Recoilless.

★ **Horrific\*:** +2 bonus to Provoke attacks and create advantage actions to instil fear.

★ **Mutation Ability: Z-Blast:** Attack with Melee or Ranged Combat; weapon:2, range 0, Concealable Weapon, Z-Radiation; or weapon:3, range 1, Full Auto if you have a Charged With Z-Radiation aspect.

★ **Sliver-class Combat Armour:** Armour:2, +1 defend bonus; Bulky, Unstable.

## WILD MUTANT

One of the hordes of outcast mutants who haunt the Venu Badlands. They're fierce and terrifying and often more than a match for their higher-tech, better-equipped Venu mutant counterparts.

**Physical Stress:** 1□<sup>2</sup>□<sup>3</sup>□<sup>4</sup> **Mental Stress:** 1□<sup>2</sup>□  
**Credit Stress:** 1□<sup>2</sup>□

**Consequences:** 2 mild + 1 moderate

**Scale:** Medium (+0)

**Aspects:** Ravening Mutant Warrior; Abomination! Totem Tattoos and Ritual Scars; Violence Is Always the Solution.

**Skills:** Great (+4) Melee Combat, Physique; Good (+3) Provoke, Ranged Combat; Fair (+2) Athletics, Notice; Average (+1) Ride, Stealth.

### STUNTS

✦ **Killing Stroke:** 1/scene, pay 1 fate point to increase a physical consequence you inflict by 1 step.

✦ **Provoke Violence:** Create advantage on an opponent, and invoke it to be the opponent's next target.

✦ **Tough As Nails:** 1/session, pay a fate point to reduce moderate physical consequence to mild, or erase a mild.

### EXTRAS

★ **Hide Armour:** Armour:1 vs archaic weapons only.

★ **Hook Spear:** Weapon:1, range 1; Entangling Barbs.

★ **Mutation Ability: Enhanced Strength-2:** +2 Physique bonus on strength-related rolls; weapon:2 rating to Melee or Unarmed Combat attacks.

★ **Mutation Ability: Hardened Skin-2:** Armour:2 rating; carapace sustaining +1 additional mild consequence.

## HELL MUR, LORD COUNTENANT OF THE DARK RADIANCE EXECUTIVE

The powerful, sadistic, and ruthless leader of the Dark Radiance Executive, the most staunch Venu quail if they come to Hell Mur's attention. He's a nasty piece of work, and yet has the iron will and laser focus to direct the Venu towards their radiant future.

**Physical Stress:** 1□ 2□ 3□ 4□ **Mental Stress:** 1□ 2□ 3□ 4□  
**Credit Stress:** 1□ 2□ 3□

**Consequences:** 3 + 1 mild

**Scale:** Medium (+0)

### ASPECTS

**High Concept:** Sadistic and Ruthless Scion of the Dark Radiance.

**Trouble:** You Will Never Know What I Fear.

**Other Aspects:** The Legend of Oppen-14; Mere Mortals Cannot Handle This Power; I Am the Radiant Darkness!

### SKILLS

Fantastic (+6): Will.

Superb (+5): Provoke, Rapport.

Great (+4): Deceive, Intrusion, Resources.

Good (+3): Contacts, Knowledge, Notice, Physique, Ranged Combat.

### STUNTS

◆ **Armour of Fear:** Use Provoke to defend vs Melee and Unarmed Combat until damaged.

### EXTRAS

★ **Mutation Ability: Z-Absorption:** Use Fantastic (+6) Z-Absorption skill to create advantages to absorb and transfer z-radiation.

★ **Mutation Ability: Z-Blast:** Attack with Melee or Ranged Combat; weapon:2, range 0, Concealable Weapon, Z-Radiation; or weapon:3, range 1, Full Auto if you have a Charged With Z-Radiation aspect.

★ **Mutation Ability: Z-Healing:** In the presence of a Z-Radiation aspect, spend a fate point to remove a mild consequence, or a moderate consequence if you have a Charged With Z-Radiation aspect.

★ **Neural Whip:** +3 Melee Combat attacks doing physical or mental stress damage. Range 0; Agonising, Cruel.

★ **Organisation Extra: The Dark Radiance Executive:** Great (+4) Provoke; Good (+3) Resources; Fair (+2) Security; Extreme Sanction, Strike Force.

★ **Radiance Power: Bloodwhisper:** Instantaneous Mindwhisper communication, even across interstellar distances.

★ **Radiance Power: Consume:** Will vs Will create advantage and attack actions to drain radiance and mental stress from target.

★ **Radiance Power: Control:** Will vs Will contest to control target's actions jerkily and clumsily.

★ **Radiance Power: Evocation Control:** +2 Provoke bonus to force a subject to behave in a certain way.

★ **Radiance Power: Evocation Read:** +2 Provoke bonus vs Will to create advantages representing target's thoughts.

★ **Radiance Power: Mental Blast:** Will vs Will attacks to cause mental stress damage.

★ **Radiance Power: Mindwhisper:** Roll Rapport to create Mindwhisper Link with touched Dark Radiance target; thereafter communicate to them anywhere in system.

★ **Status Suit:** Armour:1; Face Mask, Showy, Vac-Sealed.

Major NPC



## GRAVAD GUUL, "THE GRAVELORD", LORD COUNTESSANT OF SECTOR SEVEN COMMAND

Lord Countenancer of the Graveyard Stars, Gravad Guul is a terrifyingly strange individual with weird ties to the Dark Radiance Executive, at once their enemy, rival, and grudging collaborator. He is Large (+1), 2.5 metres tall, and wears a protective environment suit; no one really knows what's underneath. He is completely resistant to the Dark Radiance. The Executive often work against him, but he has the God Emperor's support, and has made several forays into the Graveyard Stars.

**Physical Stress:** 1□<sup>2</sup>□<sup>3</sup>□<sup>4</sup>□ **Mental Stress:** 1□<sup>2</sup>□<sup>3</sup>□<sup>4</sup>□  
**Credit Stress:** 1□<sup>2</sup>□<sup>3</sup>□

**Consequences:** 3 mild + 1 moderate

**Scale:** Large (+1)

**Aspects:** I Have Seen the Secrets of the Graveyard Stars; Immune to Radiance Powers; Uncanny Relationship With the Dark Radiance; Grey and Funereal Giant.

**Skills:** Epic (+7) Deceive, Knowledge; Fantastic (+6) Provoke, Stealth; Superb (+5) Physique, Will; Great (+4) Bureaucracy, Rad Vision; Good (+3) Contacts, Ranged Combat; Fair (+2) Resources, Unarmed Combat.

### STUNTS

★ **Armour of Fear:** Use Provoke to defend vs Melee and Unarmed Combat until damaged.

★ **Specialist (Graveyard Stars):** +2 Knowledge bonus relating to the Graveyard Stars.

### EXTRAS

★ **Cyber Enhancement: Extreme Environment Suit:** As aspect, enabling function in extreme environments.

★ **Cyber Enhancement: Holojector:** +2 Technical bonus to create holograms up to 1 zone away.

★ **Cyber Enhancement: Neural Disruptor:** Superb (+5) mental stress attack at up to 1 zone range.

★ **Cyber Enhancement: Scale Increase:** Aspect, makes you Large (+1) scale.

★ **Horrific\*:** +2 bonus to Provoke attacks and create advantage actions to instil fear.



★ **Mutation Ability: Rad Vision:** As aspect, plus Superb (+5) Rad Vision attack doing physical stress up to range 1.

★ **Mutation Ability: Venom Touch:** +2 Unarmed Combat attack bonus automatically inflicting a Poisoned-type situation aspect if physical stress damage is done.

★ **Mutation Ability: Z-Absorption:** Use Superb (+5) Z-Absorption skill to create advantages to absorb and transfer z-radiation.

★ **Mutation Ability: Z-Healing:** In the presence of a Z-Radiation aspect, spend a fate point to remove a mild consequence, or a moderate consequence if you have a Charged With Z-Radiation aspect.

★ **Organisation Extra: Sector Seven Command:** Great (+4) Investigate, Resources; Fair (+2) Security.

## GRAVELORD COUNTENANCER VANAX SLAJOR

One of the upper-level servitors of the Gravelord, Vanax Slajor is almost as widely feared as his master. He wears protective environment combat armour equipped with twin mechanical tentacle manipulators (in addition to his own arms) and has lethal mutation abilities and extensive cyberenhancements. If the PCs run into the Gravelord's representatives, it'll probably be Vanax Slajor.

**Physical Stress:** 1 2 3 4 **Mental Stress:** 1 2 3 4  
**Credit Stress:** 1 2 3 4

**Consequences:** 3 mild + 1 moderate

**Scale:** Medium (+0)

**Aspects:** The Gravelord's Right Hand; Deathlike Aura; Terror of the Graveyard Stars.

**Skills:** Fantastic (+6) Provoke, Rad Vision; Superb (+5) Physique, Will; Great (+4) Resources, Unarmed Combat; Good (+3) Deceive, Stealth; Fair (+2) Knowledge, Notice; Average (+1) Athletics, Pilot.

### STUNTS

◆ **Armour of Fear:** Use Provoke to defend vs Melee and Unarmed Combat until damaged.

### EXTRAS

★ **Construct Extra: Starfighter:** Good (+3) Manœuvre, Ranged Combat.

★ **Cyber Enhancement: Extreme Environment Suit:** As aspect, enabling function in extreme environments.

★ **Cyber Enhancement: Jet Pack:** Use Athletics to make aerial movement actions; gain an additional +1 zone of free movement.

★ **Cyber Enhancement: Mechanical Tentacles:** +2 bonus to Unarmed Combat create advantage rolls.

★ **Mutation Ability: Rad Vision:** As aspect, plus 1+ skill point Rad Vision attack doing physical stress up to range 1.

★ **Mutation Ability: Venom Touch:** +2 Unarmed Combat attack bonus automatically inflicting a Poisoned-type situation aspect if physical stress damage is done.

★ **Mutation Ability: Z-Absorption:** Use Great (+4) Z-Absorption skill to create advantages to absorb and transfer z-radiation.

★ **Mutation Ability: Z-Healing:** In the presence of a Z-Radiation aspect, spend a fate point to remove a mild consequence, or a moderate consequence if you have a Charged With Z-Radiation aspect.

★ **Organisation Extra: Sector Seven Command:** Good (+3) Resources; Fair (+2) Investigate, Security.

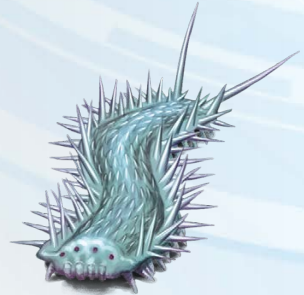
★ **Torturer-class Combat Armour:** Armour:1, +2 defend bonus; Unstable Dispersion Field, Face Mask, Showy.

## EXOFAUNA

There are many life-bearing worlds in Venu Space, and countless biospheres still to be discovered. The following are some of the interesting exofauna already known to the Empire.

### DURAH

From cold and arid Darmak (page 73), where the nomads follow the herds of **durah:** camouflaged, slow-moving, centipede-like exofauna with an insulating pelt of poison spines. When processed, the pelt can be used to make durah poison and the famous Durahi Spiked Armour.



**Physical Stress:** 1 2 3 4 **Mental Stress:** 1 2

**Consequences:** 1 mild + 1 moderate

**Scale:** Medium (+0)

**Aspects:** Spiney Crawler Herds; Snow Camouflage; Source of Durah Poison; Spike Shooters.

**Skills:** Good (+3) Notice, Physique; Fair (+2) Provoke, Ranged Combat; Average (+1) Athletics, Unarmed Combat.

### STUNTS

◆ **Danger Sense:** Notice is unaffected by environmental conditions when something means you harm.

◆ **Keen Hearing:** +2 Notice bonus to detect sounds.

### EXTRAS

★ **Natural Armour:** Armour:2.

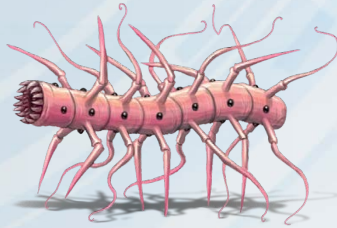
★ **Venomous:** Unarmed Combat attacks doing physical stress also create a Poisoned-type situation aspect.



VAZHOL ADULT - Silicon-based predator native to Secorak

## PILLARFISH

Pillarfish are one of the surviving remnants of the pre-colonial biosphere of Venu Prime (page 65). Today they're predators in the Abomination Badlands. Amphibious with acidic tentacles, they can attack en masse. Venu myth is filled with Pillarfish stories, and most people hate them with a passion.



**Physical Stress:** 1 2 3 **Mental Stress:** 1 2

**Consequences:** 1 mild + 1 moderate

**Scale:** Medium (+0)

**Aspects:** Holdover of the Ancient Biosphere; Ancestral Fear; Acid Swarm.

**Skills:** Good (+3) Athletics, Unarmed Combat; Fair (+2) Physique, Provoke; Average (+1) Notice, Stealth.

### STUNTS

✦ **Charge:** +2 attack bonus when you move at least 1 zone before attacking.

✦ **Sprinter:** Move 2 zones per exchange for free.

### EXTRAS

★ **Acid Attack\*:** Any damage creates an Acid Attack situation aspect which makes a Fair (+2) attack every exchange until removed.

★ **Amphibious\*:** As aspect.

★ **Lightning Fast\*:** +2 bonus to movement actions where speed is a factor.

★ **Tentacles:** As aspect, plus +2 Unarmed Combat create advantage bonus.

Supporting NPCs

## THREE BEETLE

Three beetles are 1 metre long coleopteroids native to Ninshub (page 78), a low grav world which permits their unusual size. They have a hardened carapace which houses 3 pairs of functional wings, and they also have 3 pairs of legs. They'll eat more or less anything (or at least they'll try), including humans. One of their unusual adaptations is an extreme sensitivity to ground and air vibration, enabling them naturally to detect shockwaves of falling meteors, but also shuttlecraft, ordnance, and the like.



**Physical Stress:** 1 2 3 4 **Mental Stress:** 1 2

**Consequences:** 1 mild + 1 moderate

**Scale:** Medium (+0)

**Aspects:** Armour-plated Dog Beetle; Eats Anything; Incoming!

**Skills:** Great (+4) Physique; Good (+3) Notice; Fair (+2) Unarmed Combat; Average (+1) Athletics.

### STUNTS

✦ **Danger Sense:** Notice is unaffected by environmental conditions when something means you harm.

### EXTRAS

★ **Hyper-Reflexes:** +2 bonus to quick reactions, initiative, dodging.

★ **Natural Armour:** Armour:2.

★ **Wings\*:** Use Athletics as Pilot; move and attack up to 2 zones away.

Supporting + Minor NPCs

## THE VAZHOL

Vazhol are apex predators native to the silicon-based ecosystem of Secorak (page 81) in the Alaruk Cluster. They resemble eight-limbed silver reptiloids with four lozenge-shaped "eyes" on each side of their wedge-shaped heads. Adults can grow up to 10 metres in length, and can chew through rock and metal in search of the rare earths and crystals which they feed on. Their young hatch from eggs embedded in softer rock, in batches of 50-100 individuals and often more; mass hatchings of thousands of Vazhol are notorious. Young Vazhol will attempt to eat anything, including organic life as well as lithic.

Vazhol eggs can remain viable underground in apparently cleansed areas for decades or even centuries. Without adults in the vicinity to cull their aggression, juvenile Vazhol enter feeding frenzies capable of wiping out whole regions.

### VAZHOL ADULT - SUPPORTING NPC

**Physical Stress:** 1 2 3 4 **Mental Stress:** 1 2

**Consequences:** 1 mild + 1 moderate

**Scale:** Large (+1)

**Aspects:** Eight-limbed Silver Reptiloid; Silicon-based But Will Eat You Anyway; Chews Through Rock and Metal.

**Skills:** Great (+4) Unarmed Combat; Good (+3) Physique; Fair (+2) Athletics; Average (+1) Notice.

### STUNTS

✦ **Charge:** +2 attack bonus when you move at least 1 zone before attacking.

### EXTRAS

★ **Vicious Mandibles:** Weapon:3.

### JUVENILE VAZHOL SWARM - 10 FAIR (+2) MINOR NPCs

**Stress:** 1 1 1 1 1  
1 1 1 1 1

**Scale:** Medium (+0)

**Aspects:** Ravenous Feeding Frenzy; Environmental Devastation.

**Skills:** Average (+1) Unarmed Combat (+9 teamwork bonus).

# CHAPTER ELEVEN

## VENU CAMPAIGNS

*"You people think you are so virtuous," sneered the countenancer. "You're abominations! We've fought against you for millennia, but always you come back, infecting our worlds, perverting our genes. We'll never stop until the last one of you is wiped out!"*

*In his lacquered black armour glowing with radiation leaks and his bright red eyes, the Venu was almost ridiculous, a caricature of evil. But he had a hundred billion more like him, lined up world after world, armed to the teeth and blistering with hate. The very liberation and acceptance the Commonality offered represented decadence and contagion for him and all his people; and yet, in trying to resist us, this insane Empire was embracing tech they barely understood, turning themselves into the very mutants they despised.*

*Perhaps our only option was to leave them to themselves, to go their mad, self-destructive way. But would they leave us alone if we did? Somehow, from the smoking ruins of Styphon and a hundred other worlds devastated the first time we contacted the Venu, I didn't think so.*

*"Controller?" thoughtcast Garansaray and the insertion team, as the Venu troopers massed. "What do we do?"*

Now that you know about the Venu Empire, what are you going to do there? By now it should be clear that Venu Space is a very different place from the Commonality (both the Core and the Fringe), and the types of games you'll run there will differ enormously. Here are some thoughts about how you can use the material in this book in your *Mindjammer* game.

### THEMES

If you're running a game set in Venu Space, there are many themes you can draw upon, either for events you use directly in your scenarios, or those which happen in the background, providing NPC motivations and broader campaign arcs.

#### ***The Imperial Campaign***

The Imperial campaign is about intrigue and survival close to Venu Prime. Its main events follow the plans of the God-Emperor and the Lords Countenancer, the problems they face, the treachery which confronts them. It's a political campaign, where NPCs are Lords Countenancer and their servitors. Your characters may be countenancers themselves, or troubleshooters assigned perilous tasks, all the way up to assassinations and coups d'état.

#### ***Reclamation and Reconquest***

The Reconquest notionally ended with the Commonality War, but it was never completed. The Venu spent decades experimenting with the radiance engine, exploring star systems and revisiting planets colonised since the prehistoric golden age, incorporating them into the Empire. Their task was nowhere near finished when war intervened. Now, Fleet Command and the Sector Command commissariats are sending expeditions again to the far-flung reaches of Venu Space, following mentions of worlds in fragmentary records, chasing scans or anomalous signals from the listening stations. There are many worlds out there to be reclaimed, reincorporated—and reconquered!

#### ***Resistance and Rebellion***

The Venu aren't evil demonic beings, but a people twisted by extraordinary pressures and demands. The Empire is bent out of shape, often filled with the worst that the human species can produce, from banal and self-serving bureaucrats to full-blown sadistic megalomaniacs. Many people feel trapped, that something has gone wrong, that things could be different—maybe even better. Even when the Commissariats and the Dark Radiance seem bent on unleashing hell, the Pure think one day a better day may dawn.

Resistance and rebellion flickers everywhere in Venu Space. There's an external resistance in the Wall of Orion, but also an internal resistance in the Imperial Realm, where normal Venu are trying to change things. How will your PCs relate to this reality? Will they be loyal devotees of the God-Emperor, annihilating the "terrorists" who threaten their rule? Or will they be clandestine agents of rebellion, joining the unknown legions trying to bring down the Empire from within?

### ***Clan and Combine***

The combines and the clans were here before the Empire, and they plan to be here after it's gone. Their prosperity is tied to the Empire's fortunes, and they support it and ensure its continuation, but their concerns go far beyond: the great combines of AZRAC, the Alaruku, and others, gather their technocrats to discuss strategy for centuries to come, expanding trade and contact networks and their secretive political control. All the while they recruit combine traders and troubleshooters to further their more nefarious ends, secure in the knowledge that should anything go wrong their involvement can easily be denied...

### ***The Mystery of the Dark Radiance***

Of course, this is the elephant in the room of the Venu Empire. What is the Dark Radiance? Where does its unfathomable power come from? Surely the Executive's meddling can't be safe?

The truth is, no one knows. It's one of the great mysteries, not just of the Venu, but of Human Space. The Radiance is a real phenomenon: it appears to have links with 3-space, perhaps even the Mindscape, and perhaps with dimensional anomalies that humankind's finest minds are only now beginning to fathom.

The Venu want to know more. Their intercessors are analysing the Radiance, either directly in the radiance powers, or indirectly in the strange alien artefacts increasingly being found throughout Venu Space, or certain naturally-occurring anomalies which appear to be linked.

The Commonality want to know more. Agents of SCI Force, the Custodians, the Pansectorates, and more, are trying to uncover what in hell is going on with the so-called "Venu psi". Missions are underway, from deep intrusion ops in Venu Space to gather first-hand evidence of radiant phenomena, to the craziest of expeditions to kidnap Dark Radiance personnel and extract them to Commonality Space!

### ***The Mystery of the Graveyard Stars***

Something weird is going on in the Graveyard Stars. Most Venu try not to think about it, because—well, frankly, it's terrifying—but some unknown alien force in the relatively recent past utterly destroyed dozens of planets and annihilated their human populations, leaving nothing but empty worlds of windblown ash. What did this? Where has it gone? Does it threaten the rest



of the Venu worlds?

The Dark Radiance Executive is at a loss. Recent artefacts found seem even to be immune to Dark Radiance phenomena, or to actively combat them. The Executive is loathe to disturb anything so powerful and unpredictable, so for the most part they play a waiting game.

The Gravelord, Lord Countenant Gravad Guul of Sector Seven Command, is the wild card. His secretive forces have breached the taboo of the Graveyard Stars more than once, and what they have learned seems to be changing their very natures—perhaps even on a genurjic level. But they're not saying what they've seen, and the game they're playing is a mystery. The Dark Radiance Executive would like nothing more than to apprehend Gravad Guul and his funereal minions for rigorous interrogation—but the God-Emperor himself has given his approval of the Gravelord's actions, and their hands are tied.

What's going on in the Graveyard Stars? Are the PCs working for the Gravelord, or against him? What are the White Ruins? And why is everyone so scared?

### ***The War For Survival!***

The Commonality War never formally ended, and everyone knows it's going to start again. It has to: the Commonality, with its love of abomination and its nefarious plot to force it upon all the worlds of the Pure, means that the Empire will have to defend its ancestral heritage and the integrity of the Pure. Right now it's a cold war: a time of preparation, of espionage, intelligence and counter-intelligence, a waiting game. But there's a new war coming, and it could break out any day. The people of Venu must be ready!

## ***Playing the Venu***

This book provides everything you need to play Venu characters. But what does that mean, to play characters who represent the Commonality's existential foe? This section provides some ideas.

### **LOYAL VENU**

It's axiomatic that few people think they're evil. Even civilisations which in retrospect were proponents of suffering and devastation generally thought they were doing something "good" at the time. The Venu, for all their nightmarish deeds, are similar.

Most Venu want the approval of their peers. They want their families lauded, their efforts rewarded, their lives to have meaning and honour, and not to have lived in vain. You can play such people as your characters: members of Fleet Command, the ground army, motile command, even the Dark Radiance Executive. Many do terrible things; they live in a cutthroat cosmos of paranoia and random terror, where your superiors may be out for your blood, your peers almost certainly are, and even you yourself may one day realise you've been seduced by abomination and must be destroyed!

Venu characters will struggle with all the above. Games where you play loyal Venu characters will be filled with moral dilemmas, where you're asked to commit questionable acts, to be the "bad guys". How will you handle that? Will you try to tread an infinitesimally thin line—how much moral corruption can your character stomach?—or will you try to mitigate your actions, stop the suffering, try and do some good? Loyal Venu campaigns can be stark, dark, and challenging—but also fantastic arenas for roleplaying.

### **VENU AGENTS**

Playing Venu outside Venu Space is easier. Sure, you're the representative of an evil and insane God-Emperor, tasked with missions of horrific moral torpor, but, hey, you're undercover in the Commonality, and they're out to get you, right?

Venu agent games still have the moral greyness of loyal Venu campaigns, but are more objective-focussed. You have your orders—however dubious—and it's not your task to debate their morality. Or maybe it is? Maybe this one time, now that you see what it's like outside the Empire, you question whether you're on the wrong side?

### **DISLOYAL VENU**

Linked with the "Resistance and Rebellion" theme above, many Venu realise something is rotten—and maybe that something can be done, even if it's only a little, and at great personal cost. This kind of campaign is probably one of the easiest to run: you can even start off as loyal Venu, maybe run a Venu agent adventure, and then, as you realise the reality of your universe, your slide towards "disloyalty" begins...

Who knows the future of the Venu Empire? What powers are

to be gained from the Dark Radiance, what dangers lie within the Graveyard Stars, what is the final plan of the God Emperor Venu? Will there be another war—and what will you do when it breaks out? Or maybe you can stop it ever happening at all...

### **VENU SUBJECTS**

This is another relatively unambiguous way to get into a Venu game. There are many occupied Venu worlds, both Scion Worlds and Wall Worlds whose populations aren't the glorious Pure, but rather second-class "subjects" of the God-Emperor suffering under Imperial domination. You can play almost any theme or any type of Venu game with characters who are Imperial subjects rather than citizens, and this time you have a perspective which removes some of the moral dubiousness of playing a supporter of the Empire. Venu subjects have to obey orders just like Imperial citizens—they can even have many of the same occupations—but they don't have to like it. They can rail against oppression, they can resist the evil they see being done around them, they can develop their own agendas and plans for the future of their world.

## ***Playing Against the Venu***

One way of using the information in this book without dealing with its moral dubiousness is not to play Venu characters at all! Instead, you can play Commonality (or non-Commonality) characters who are confronting the Venu Empire on a number of levels.

### **INSURGENTS**

Since the end of the Venu War, many former Commonality worlds have been under Venu occupation. It's hellish: those that haven't been ethnically cleansed are suffering terribly, and the slightest resistance is met with nightmarish reprisals. It's grim, and yet heroic: there's a better future, if only you can get there.

Insurgency campaigns can be run on any occupied Commonality world. You can be playing Commonality characters from the planet itself, struggling against occupation, or you can play Commonality forces catapulted in from outside, to train the resistance and work towards liberating the world.

### **COMMONALITY AGENTS**

Although the Venu War was a shock to the Commonality, it has not been idle. Commonality agents are active along the Q-Zone, not just patrolling but penetrating deep into Venu Space. Intelligence-gathering, sabotage, infiltration, and more are all scenarios where you can play Commonality agents on Venu worlds. But the danger is real: the Venu know the Commonality is undermining them, and operate false flags, honey traps, and bogus actions to entice its agents to show themselves—before delivering them to the Dark Radiance for interrogation and an appointment with the Dark Radiance Excervelators!

# GLOSSARY

**Abomination:** Any intelligent life form not conforming to the Venu human standard.

**Alaruk:** Key world of the Alaruk Cluster. A major industrial hub of Venu Space.

**Andromote:** Any synthetic being which has human form.

**Andromote abomination:** The requirement to abominate and destroy any andromote.

**AZRAC:** Combine, originating on Alaruk, producing key radiance engine components.

**Badlands:** Wastelands devastated by nucleonics, usually on Venu Prime or Ninshub.

**Brainjack:** Overclocked brain-damaged human hardwired into Venu ship radiance engines.

**Cerveloid Rig:** Device for removing a human brain for later interrogation.

**Clan:** Key grouping of Venu society.

**Combine:** Equivalent to a Commonality corporacy and key grouping of Venu society.

**Commissariat:** Component of Venu government, similar to an instrumentality or ministry.

**Commonality War:** Venu term for the Venu War.

**Conciliator:** Dark Radiance Executive proselytiser in civilian population.

**Control Squadron:** A Motile Command team responsible for remote control of a mote.

**Countenancer:** Commissariat administrator who has been mutated and wears a purifier mask.

**Cult of Radiant Darkness:** Popular term for the Dark Radiance Executive.

**Dark Heart:** Spatial anomaly in the Trapezium Suns.

**Dark Radiance:** Anomalous, apparently trans-dimensional phenomenon behind the powers of the God-Emperor Venu. Not yet understood.

**Dark Radiance Executive:** New Venu commissariat charged with the research and use of the Dark Radiance.

**Devastation, The:** Period of post-nucleonic ruin following the Schism Wars.

**Disruptor:** Cutting-edge Venu weapon which disrupts proteins, an offshoot of nucleonic technology.

**Evocation:** Mysterious Dark Radiance phenomenon superficially similar to Commonality gestalt language.

**Excervelation:** Process of brain removal and interrogation practised by the Dark Radiance Executive.

**Executor:** Fearsome chief coordinators of the activities of the Dark Radiance Executive.

**Extirpation:** Summary execution of the Pure for contravention of Venu dictats.

**Exvisation Rig:** Device for removing and transplanting human faces.

**Fall, The:** The collapse of human civilisation in Venu Space following the Schism Wars.

**First Revelation:** The first message from

Manhome to reach the Psi Orionis colony.

**Gift of Venu:** Term for Venu mutation abilities or radiance powers.

**God-Emperor:** The apparently undying ruler of the Venu Empire. Also called simply "Venu".

**Gravelord:** The sinister Lord Countenant of Sector Seven, the Graveyard Stars.

**Graveyard Stars:** Sector Seven; specifically, a forbidden nebula within Sector Seven.

**Great Leap:** The Venu Empire tech index advance to T7 which followed Commonality contact.

**Gutterspeak:** Non-Venu languages spoken on Imperial worlds; usually forbidden.

**Imperial Realm:** Generic term for Venu Space; more accurately, the Scion Worlds.

**Intercessor:** Dark Radiance Executive scientists researching the Dark Radiance.

**Jack trooper:** Experimental brainjacked soldiers.

**Lord Countenant:** The lead administrator of a Venu commissariat, answering directly to the God-Emperor.

**Monitor:** Dark Radiance Executive internal spy and informer.

**Mote:** Dumb automaton, often remote controlled.

**Mutant Marine:** Crack Venu troopers, often with mutation abilities.

**Mutation Ability:** Mysterious ability resulting from z-radiation or Dark Radiance exposure.

**Nakvaan:** Monastic centre on Venu Prime responsible for receiving and disseminating the Revelations and Pronouncements of Venu.

**New Pronouncements:** Dictats of the God-Emperor issued since Commonality contact.

**Nucleonics:** Development of early Venu nukes enhanced by Dark Radiance tech.

**Orion Complex:** The broad region of space surrounding the Orion Nebula, filled with spatial anomalies.

**Orion Nebula:** Highly energetic nebula system at the heart of the Orion Complex.

**Pexil:** A popular stimulant.

**Protector:** Dark Radiance Executive guard.

**Pillarfish:** Dangerous exofauna native to Venu Prime.

**Psi Orionis:** Ancient term for Venu Prime system.

**Pure, The:** The Venu masses.

**Purifier:** The infamous Venu mask / breather.

**Radiance:** Dark Radiance term for a poorly understood form of energy linked to z-radiation.

**Radiance Device:** Ground-based device permitting contact with the Dark Radiance.

**Radiance Engine:** Venu term for a planing engine; the Venu dirt drive.

**Radiance Power:** Mysterious abilities of the Dark Radiance Executive; aka Venu Psi.

**Reconquest:** Venu equivalent of Commonality Rediscovery.

**Schism:** The social upheaval caused by the arrival of the Second Revelation.

**Schismatic:** An individual who accepted the Second Revelation.

**Schism Wars:** Destructive conflicts precipitated by the Schism.

**Scion Worlds:** Worlds colonised in Venu prehistory and now considered part of the Imperial Realm.

**Second Revelation:** The second message from Manhome, which embraced abomination.

**Shrine Ship:** Dark Radiance Executive capital ship.

**Spire City:** Signature Venu city.

**Status suit:** Venu light armour, worn by senior ranks.

**Strova:** Venu combat drug.

**Subcom:** Ad-hoc subdivision of a commissariat.

**Tech Commandments:** Ancient dictats of the God-Emperor.

**Tech Shield Curacy:** Ancient pseudo-commissariat responsible for barely-understood tech.

**Torch:** Venu conformity drug.

**Ven Sayor:** Modern name for Venu Prime.

**Venu:** The God-Emperor; also the people following the God-Emperor.

**Venu Prime:** Venu homeworld.

**Voliance:** Drug to resist abomination.

**Voyance:** Radiance power apparently reading the collective unconscious.

**Walker:** Archetypical Venu vehicle.

**Wall of Orion:** Venu term for the Quarantine Zone.

**Wall World:** Any world in the Wall of Orion.

**War Commissariat:** One of the six military commissariats.

**Wardog:** Squadron leader of ground troopers or mutant marines.

**White Ruins:** Deadly forbidden alien ruins in Sector Seven.

**Zaijor Palace:** Imperial palace on Venu Prime.

**ZANIOPE:** Zanthrium niobate piezoradiance: the characteristic Venu "z-radiation glow".

**Zayor:** Prehistoric name of Venu Prime.

**Zayoran Patriarchate:** Prehistoric culture of Venu Prime which colonised the Scion Worlds.

# INDEX

|                                   |            |                                    |      |  |        |
|-----------------------------------|------------|------------------------------------|------|--|--------|
| Abominations                      | 13, 21     | New Pronouncements                 | 11   | Porphyry                               | 80     |
| Armour                            | 39         | Nucleonics                         | 49   | Rogestor (Hurud)                       | 80     |
| Brainjacks                        | 33, 51, 96 | Occupations                        | 94   | Secorak                                | 81     |
| Clans and Combines                | 14, 107    | <i>Brainjack</i>                   | 96   | Tenerophobe                            | 83     |
| Commissariats                     | 18         | <i>Combine Technocrat</i>          | 95   | Thetawon                               | 83     |
| Conciliators                      | 96         | <i>Combine Trader</i>              | 95   | Timud                                  | 83     |
| Cultures                          | 91         | <i>Conciliator</i>                 | 96   | <i>The Tourmaline Radiant</i>          | 84     |
| <i>Alaruk</i>                     | 92         | <i>The Dark Radiance Executive</i> | 96   | Uana                                   | 84     |
| <i>Badlander</i>                  | 91         | <i>Executor</i>                    | 96   | Venu Flame                             | 84     |
| <i>Darmak</i>                     | 92         | <i>Fleet Command Crew</i>          | 96   | Yuzallasey                             | 84     |
| <i>Obedient</i>                   | 92         | <i>Ground Trooper</i>              | 95   | Sector Command                         | 19     |
| <i>Scion Worlder</i>              | 91         | <i>Horde Warrior</i>               | 95   | Security and Interrogation Equipment   | 41     |
| <i>Venu</i>                       | 91         | <i>Imperial Citizen</i>            | 94   | Sensors and Scanners                   | 40     |
| <i>Wall Worlder</i>               | 92         | <i>Intercessor</i>                 | 96   | Starships                              | 53     |
| Cybernetics                       | 34         | <i>Monitor</i>                     | 97   | Subcoms                                | 19     |
| Dark Radiance, The                | 31, 107;   | <i>Mote Coordinator</i>            | 95   | Technology                             | 16, 32 |
| <i>Artefacts</i>                  | 49         | <i>Protector</i>                   | 97   | Tech Shield Curacy                     | 18     |
| Dark Radiance Executive           | 17, 27, 96 | <i>Ship Captain</i>                | 96   | Themes                                 | 106    |
| Drugs                             | 38         | <i>Subject</i>                     | 94   | 3-Space                                | 51     |
| Equipment                         | 33         | <i>Tech Curator</i>                | 96   | Vehicles                               | 47     |
| Excervelation                     | 41, 42     | Pain Inducer                       | 42   | Venu, The                              |        |
| Executor                          | 96         | Pexil                              | 38   | <i>Architecture</i>                    | 14     |
| Experimental Devices              | 49         | Playing Against the Venu           | 108  | <i>Families</i>                        | 15     |
| Exvisitation                      | 41, 42     | Playing Venu Characters            | 108  | <i>Fashion and Clothing</i>            | 14     |
| Fleet Command                     | 21         | Protector                          | 97   | <i>Gender Roles and Sexuality</i>      | 15     |
| Fleet Organisation                | 52         | The Pure                           | 20   | <i>Lifespan and Significant Events</i> | 14     |
| Genotypes                         | 92         | Radiance Devices                   | 49   | <i>Language</i>                        | 14     |
| <i>Alaruku</i>                    | 93         | Radiance Engines                   | 51   | <i>Masks</i>                           | 34     |
| <i>Eyrie</i>                      | 94         | Resistance and Rebellion           | 106  | <i>Mutants</i>                         | 20     |
| <i>Hurudu</i>                     | 94         | Revelation                         | 8, 9 | <i>Names</i>                           | 16     |
| <i>Mutant</i>                     | 93         | Scenario Hook: A Deadly Dig        | 50   | <i>Physiology</i>                      | 13     |
| <i>Pure</i>                       | 92         | Scenario Hook: Spycatcher          | 25   | <i>Social Behaviour</i>                | 13     |
| The God Emperor, Venu the Undying | 10, 17, 26 | Scenario Hook: Timud's Scour       | 83   | <i>Social Hierarchy</i>                | 13     |
| Ground Army                       | 23         | Scion Worlds                       | 71   | Venu Mutants                           | 20     |
| History                           | 10         | <i>Alaruk</i>                      | 71   | Venu Prime                             | 65     |
| <i>The Commonality War</i>        | 11         | <i>Alaruk Cluster</i>              | 71   | Venu Psi—the Radiance Powers           | 29, 30 |
| <i>Golden Age</i>                 | 9          | <i>Ark</i>                         | 73   | <i>Bloodsense (Intrusion)</i>          | 30     |
| <i>Prehistory</i>                 | 6          | <i>Bone Nebula</i>                 | 73   | <i>Bloodwhisper (Rapport)</i>          | 30     |
| <i>Pre-Revelatory Period</i>      | 8          | <i>Boridus</i>                     | 73   | <i>Consume (Will)</i>                  | 30     |
| <i>Present Day</i>                | 12         | <i>Calidru</i>                     | 73   | <i>Control (Will)</i>                  | 30     |
| <i>Reconquest</i>                 | 11         | <i>Darmak</i>                      | 73   | <i>Evocation Control (Provoke)</i>     | 30     |
| Intercessor                       | 96         | <i>Dispersion (Phantom) Nebula</i> | 73   | <i>Evocation Read (Provoke)</i>        | 30     |
| Internal Defence Commissariat     | 24         | <i>Ellu</i>                        | 74   | <i>Farsense (Intrusion)</i>            | 30     |
| Logistical Command                | 25         | <i>Enkar</i>                       | 74   | <i>Manipulate (Will)</i>               | 31     |
| Lords Countenant                  | 17         | <i>The Expanse Clouds</i>          | 75   | <i>Mental Blast (Will)</i>             | 31     |
| Loyalty Probe                     | 41         | <i>The Eye of Orion</i>            | 75   | <i>Mindwhisper (Rapport)</i>           | 31     |
| Military Political Directorate    | 22         | <i>The Face of Venu</i>            | 76   | <i>Voyance (Empathy)</i>               | 31     |
| Monitor                           | 97         | <i>Fade</i>                        | 76   | Venu Space                             | 66     |
| Motes                             | 33, 37, 42 | <i>The Graveyard Stars</i>         | 76   | Walkers                                | 24, 45 |
| Motile Command                    | 22         | <i>Great Loop</i>                  | 76   | Wall of Orion, The                     | 85     |
| Mutation Abilities                | 27, 28     | <i>Hygelac</i>                     | 76   | <i>Atrocity (Hespera II)</i>           | 85     |
| <i>Disease Resistance</i>         | 28         | <i>Ibliss</i>                      | 77   | <i>Beltaris</i>                        | 85     |
| <i>Enhanced Speed</i>             | 28         | <i>Jaggaratt</i>                   | 77   | <i>Cador</i>                           | 85     |
| <i>Enhanced Stamina</i>           | 28         | <i>Kiduru</i>                      | 77   | <i>The Dark Heart</i>                  | 86     |
| <i>Enhanced Strength</i>          | 28         | <i>Kiri Prime</i>                  | 77   | <i>Garranax</i>                        | 87     |
| <i>Hardened Skin</i>              | 28         | <i>Land of Light</i>               | 77   | <i>Kandraida</i>                       | 87     |
| <i>Pain Resistance</i>            | 28         | <i>March Nebula</i>                | 77   | <i>Kordarus</i>                        | 87     |
| <i>Rad Vision</i>                 | 28         | <i>Marquess</i>                    | 77   | <i>Muorti</i>                          | 87     |
| <i>Temperature Resistance</i>     | 29         | <i>Mazhar</i>                      | 77   | <i>Orion Minor</i>                     | 87     |
| <i>Venom Bite or Touch</i>        | 29         | <i>Moirazh</i>                     | 78   | <i>Sector Eight</i>                    | 87     |
| <i>Z-Absorption</i>               | 29         | <i>Moraks</i>                      | 78   | <i>Skorys</i>                          | 88     |
| <i>Z-Blast</i>                    | 29         | <i>Ninshub</i>                     | 78   | <i>Solodny</i>                         | 89     |
| <i>Z-Healing</i>                  | 29         | <i>Obedient Child</i>              | 79   | <i>Tochaos</i>                         | 89     |
| The New Order of Venu             | 17         | <i>Orada</i>                       | 80   | <i>The Trapezium Suns</i>              | 89     |
|                                   |            | <i>Orion Nebula</i>                | 80   | Weapons                                | 40     |
|                                   |            | <i>Paraghast</i>                   | 80   | What Does the Commonality Know?..      | 10, 27 |



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